



Derbyshire Caving Association

Information Circular 2017/5, August-October 2017

DCA MEETINGS

NEXT MEETING: Open Council Meeting, Sat. 28 October, 10am. Monyash Village Hall
AGM 2018, Sat. 24 February, 10am. Monyash Village Hall, followed by Open Council Meeting

BOYD POTTS

Many Derbyshire cavers will have heard of the death of Boyd Potts, who died on September 17th. after a short illness. Boyd was a strong supporter of DCA and was a Trustee of the Association for many years; he also masterminded and organised the DCA contribution to the Cliffhanger outdoor activities event in Sheffield from its inception in 2006 until it moved to the city centre in 2015. The parish church in Hulland Ward was packed for his funeral and celebration of his life, with friends from both the local community and cavers from Orpheus Caving Club (of which he was Chairman and a Trustee), as well as other caving friends from all over Britain. Present also were representatives of BCA, BCRA, DCRO and his other two caving clubs: SWCC and Shepton Mallett C.C.

Jenny would like to thank all the many friends who came to Christ Church on 10th. October to say goodbye to Boyd and to celebrate his life. There were so many there it wasn't possible for her to thank each and every one personally after the service. The many kind messages received have meant a great deal and she very much appreciates your support. Boyd gave a great deal to what he considered to be his community and he won't be forgotten.

VIN MACHIN

Vin Machin, who has died recently, had been an inspirational cave instructor in the Peak District for many years. Still active in his 80's and closely involved with P.I.C.A. he will be sadly missed.

CONSERVATION & ACCESS

If you have any queries or problems about Conservation or Access in the region, please contact Christine Wilson on conservation-off@theDCA.org.uk, T. 01433 621149, M. 07713 416455 or Gary Noble on access-off@theDCA.org.uk, T. 07791 625370.

Suicide Cave, Loose Rocks

Pete Knight and Jez Parr spent an hour in Suicide cave on 9th. October attempting to remove the nasty rock that sat at the head of the far pitch. It came off with very little effort, probably quarter of a ton or more. Once this was down they had a good look at the area and found further, much larger, sections of rock that were also loose. Other large bits falling would possibly block to passage below and certainly kill anyone in the way. In Pete's opinion this pitch is a death trap waiting to be sprung. Advice to PICA is now to not use this with led groups or on training courses.

On 20th October a chain barrier was installed in the cave just prior to the scramble up to the 1st pitch. This was done in consultation with NT and is merely a visual barrier and warning for members of the public straying into the cave. The idea being that they are less likely to wander off past a safety barrier with their mobile phone lights and should therefore stay well clear of the far pitch instability. This is NOT an access restriction to cavers and nothing has changed in that regards. Simply lift the left side of the chain and duck under.

Nothing has yet been done to stabilise the far pitch or assess the anchors so it is still suggested that cavers give that part of the system a miss for the time being. The rest of the system is as it has always been.

Access to Kirkland Shaft, Devonshire Mine

Caving groups wanting to access Kirkland Shaft should note that it is actually in the garden of the landowner's house so permission will be needed in advance of your visit. Email the DCA Access Officer at access-off@theDCA.org.uk, giving the date (and approximate time), of your proposed visit and a list of the cavers involved plus their BCA insurance numbers. It will be useful also to give a contact phone number for the leader of the party.

Parking should be as usual for visits to Devonshire Mine, i.e. don't park in Underwood Road or in the turning circle at the top of the road. Park in the public car park or in the layby next to the New Bath Hotel.

For further information on the site, rigging, etc. contact the DCA Projects Officer, Pete Knight, projects@theDCA.org.uk.

Holme Bank Chert Mine

Sadly, since the recent change to the access arrangements, there has been a considerable amount of vandalism in the mine, particularly by way of spray-painting walls and artifacts. A clean-up team from PDMHS and Masson C. G. has been working to clean this up and it is hoped a more permanent solution to the problem can be found.

P8 Cleanup

A major clean up is being planned by SUSS, aiming to remove all the rubbish which has been left down the cave over the years. DCA will supply the skip to enable this to be done.

Access to Caves & Mines in the Peak District

The DCA website now has all the details for access to caves/mines in the Peak District, including location maps, preferred access routes and rigging topos where appropriate. We hope to be able to add links to surveys soon. (To find the information, click in the "Cave" logo on the left of the home page.)

If you find any errors or need for amendments/updates, please contact the DCA Secretary on secretary@theDCA.org.uk, and we'll arrange for the website to be updated so that the information is always current. (The old DCA Handbook, published in 2012 is now superseded and should no longer be relied on for up-to-date information.)

EQUIPMENT AND SAFETY

If you have any queries or problems about Equipment or Safety in the region, please contact the DCA Equipment Officer: Bob Dearman equipment@theDCA.org.uk or T. 01298-85594, or DCA Projects Officer: Pete Knight, projects@theDCA.org.uk or M. 07812 038233.

Suspect Bolts in J.H.

Following the identification and extraction of one duff P-bolt, please avoid using anchors at the head of the usual route down Leviathan. A second bolt in this area also failed its test but could not be extracted and this has been marked with red cable-ties.

Following a report of a suspect bolt in J.H. earlier this year, a programme of testing all the original anchor installations has been taking place, thanks to Henry Rockliffe and friends. Most of the anchors in JH were originally placed in 1994-5, using Hilti resin (which has now been superseded for anchor installation), and before the current installation system and adoption of DCA's IPTD (Installation Procedure, Training and Documentation). Even so the original bolts have lasted for over 20 years. A total reassessment is now taking place of all anchors installed in J.H. and, once this is finished and any necessary replacement anchors have been installed, a new topo. will be published on the DCA website.

CO₂ in Peak District Caves and Mines

All cavers should be aware that some of the sites in the Peak District sometimes have high levels of CO₂. This is partly dependent on weather conditions, the time of year, etc. and it is the subject of an ongoing investigation by DCRO and cave scientists. High levels of CO₂ can affect you adversely and you should know what signs to look out for so that, if required, you can make a smart exit and come back when conditions are better. DCA is working to ensure that a list of sites which may be affected is widely available and that, where the site is a mine shaft with an access lid, a warning is placed on the lid.

Toxicological symptoms in humans range from headaches (after 1 hour at a 3% level), increased respiratory and heart rate, dizziness, muscle twitching, confusion, rising through unconsciousness, coma (after 1 minute at >15% level), and finally death. The impact of CO₂ has also been summarised in the following table though no authoritative source for the table can be cited.

%CO ₂	Symptoms
2% to 3%	Shortness of breath, deep breathing
5%	Breathing becomes heavy, sweating, pulse quickens
7.5%	Headaches, dizziness, restlessness, breathlessness, increased heart rate and blood pressure, visual distortion
10%	Impaired hearing, nausea, vomiting, loss of consciousness
30%	Coma, convulsions, death

DERBYSHIRE CAVER NO. 146

The next issue of the Derbyshire Caver, No. 146, is now being printed and should be with you shortly - many thanks to Editor Mike Higgins. Mike would love to hear from you with your news, views, photographs, etc. ready for No. 147, due out in January. You can email him on newsletter@theDCA.org.uk or mike.higgins2@btinternet.com
Or you can send him your contributions by snail-mail: 56 Robin Hood Crescent, Edenthorpe, Doncaster, DN3 2JJ

FOR YOUR NEWSLETTER / NOTICEBOARD

<http://www.theDCA.org.uk>

22 October 2017

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