

Paddy End Hospital Level Bridge Building **Sunday 11th March 1984**

Persons assisting in above project :- Gordon Spragg, Dave Blundell, Ian Tyler, Chris Jones (The Elder), Mike Maher, Martin Maher, Donald Cook, Bob Cook.

The timber for this work was provided by the writer from demolition work carried out at home! Being two 10ft lengths of 12" * 4" (used for the stemples) and one 14ft length of 8" * 3".

The two main pieces were cut to size inside the mine with Mike Maher's chainsaw (I would hazard a guess that chainsaws are rare visitors to mines!) they were then lowered into place from a pulley attached to part of the scaffolding "maypole" and beaten into position with a 14lb sledgehammer, wedges were then driven in at the ends.

Four lengths of steel piping approx 15ft each and 4" diameter had been gathered together lower down the fell below the mine entrance by Ian, these were brought in to form the platform of what is now a substantial foot bridge.

During the course of the above work the importance of "clipping-in" to a safety rope across holes in the floor was very well demonstrated when one of the original planks broke whilst being crossed.

Puddingstone Level Stope

After the bridge building a descent of this stope was made by Martin Maher & Mike Mitchell, backup was provided by Mike Maher, Chris Jones & Dave Blundell. After a little light entertainment at the top of the stope clearing debris while Martin fixed the belay bolts, the descent was made in three pitches of approximately 50feet, 80ft and 30ft respectively onto a pile of rubble which descended a further 15 to 20ft. It was fortunate that very little water was going down the stope on this occasion, as it would be inhospitable in normal conditions when there is usually a waterfall going over the edge.

However, nothing of any interest was found at the bottom, except a length of black cotton hanging down the stope which the writer had lowered down the "Windy Stope" on Middle Level some twelve months previous, with a battery & bulb attached (they were not found). Martin found a nice piece of Chalcopyrite whilst fixing a bolt, it was left undisturbed. They then returned up the rope to the waiting trio. The party then retired to "The Crown" in Coniston.

Footnote

It is possible that this stope is the deepest continuous stope in the Coniston Mines (above water level!). I believe it could be well in excess of 300ft and if it were entered from Middle Level, there is a good chance that there are sub-levels off the stope between Middle and Hospital Levels.

Mike Mitchell