

25th October 1987

Coniston Copper Mine - Paddy End Through Trip

Sixteen members and two guests participated. Most made their way to Arête Chamber by the usual route via the Funnel, but seven did so by the fine 130 foot abseil which descends on the same vein from a short tunnel close to Simons Nick, and which was discovered by Peter Fleming only last year. From the Arête Chamber horizon there was again a choice of route, and whilst some descended to Top Level by the normal 91 foot pitch, others abseiled down the ladderway which descends to Lake Stope.

Once on Top Level most people spent some time exploring there, using the diagram supplied by the Meet Leader. He continued down to Middle Level to fix separate abseil and prussick ropes through two ways in the floor of that level to another some 80 feet below. This has not been visited for some years, and contains one complete and another broken wheelbarrow, a wooden container which was probably used to carry gunpowder, and some very fine deposits of green and blue copper oxides. It is some twenty yards long, ending at a forehead to the west, and connecting to the east with the stope which contains the twin tunnels. Only three members took the opportunity to visit this level, but a few others climbed down into the twin tunnel stope, where despite a thirty foot wall separating the two parties, they were able to make visual contact. At the east end of this very shattered stope a gap in the floor seems likely to lead down to the final pitch of the through trip.

Back in Middle Level the fixed lines placed by Anton C-P-Thomas were followed past Paddy End Shaft and Pinnacle Rock to the top of the boulder slope leading to the final pitch. Descent of this had to be controlled for there is a danger that stones might fall onto anyone abseiling beneath if others were to descend the slope at the same time. Some of those who went down first put a rope down one of the holes in the floor of Hospital Level and made their way to the blockage in Hospital Shaft just above Deep Level, whilst others waiting their turn above were persuaded by Anton C-P-Thomas to haul timber up from Grey Crag Level to the top of the boulder slope for his next stabilising project. All were out in good time to be able to get changed and get to the Crown shortly after opening time. Thanks to Peter Fleming, Mike Mitchell and Chris Jones for rigging and supervising pitches.

Ian Matheson.

Members taking part were:

| | | |
|----------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Ian Matheson (Meet Leader) | Mike Mitchell | Peter Fleming |
| Chris Jones | John Helme | Mark Scott |
| Cheryth Wood-Johnson | Sheila Barker | Tony Keates |
| Hugh Taylor (Guest) | Guy Jones | Chris Moore |
| Gary Hetherington (Guest) | Gordon Gilchrist | Damian McCurdy |
| Paul Timewell | Dave Bridge | Angela Wilson. |

Anton C-P-Thomas was also present in Grey Crag Level, but did not take part in the through trip.

