

26th December 1987
Coniston Copper Mines

BOXING DAY MEET

Ian Matheson, Mike Mitchell, Peter Fleming, Phil Merrin, Dennis Webb, Chris Jones, Mark Scott, Cheryth Wood-Johnson, Sheila Barker.

On show at the BMSC Hut was a superb pricker which Mark Scott had found beside Levers Water Beck close to the head of Hospital Shaft on Christmas Eve. About two feet long and completely intact, it has an iron handle with a round eye some three inches in diameter, whilst the business end is of copper, drawn to a fine point.

The plan, weather permitting, was to make a start on the preservation of the Low Water Turbine House and the Moss Head Brake House. However, the weather, heavy rain, wind, and low mist, made this a most uninviting prospect and it was decided instead to go underground and try to stabilise the new Top Level/Brow Stope connection. This was done by sending the loose material above down through the hole, where a small party cleared it away.

As this job neared completion a few members went to examine Earthquake Passage and the Shattered Stope with the twin objectives of seeing if there had been any more movement in the passage and of trying to locate the head of a timbered shaft which had been seen from below on a previous visit. The floor of the passage has indeed moved and seems to be falling into the Shattered Stope. In order to indicate future movements a stone was left wedged in an apparently widening crack in the floor near the end of the passage. The Shattered Stope was examined, and a bat was seen, hanging on the wall close to the passage leading to the Four Way Dig. The wall of the stope was followed from here towards its junction with Earthquake Passage and a crawl beneath huge jagged blocks led to a squeeze into a narrow part of the stope where the floor sloped downwards. This was followed and led to a debris strewn floor on the Middle Level Horizon. At the bottom of the slope was what appeared to be a shaft head. About eighty feet above, in the roof of the stope is some timberwork which seems to match up with this. Stones dropped down caused much rumbling of falling material and spontaneous runs also occurred, originating unseen from somewhere below. This is a very unstable area. There seems to be two holes, the nearer dropping straight down into a narrowing stope, whilst the other, about five feet further on drops down beside a masonry wall about forty feet high before sloping steeply down in the direction of the descent from the junction with Earthquake Passage. There was neither time nor inclination to proceed further, but before leaving we sent a member to shine a light down at the Earthquake Passage junction. This was seen to be about seventy feet above and thirty feet further along the stope.

Ian Matheson.