

17th January 1988
Coniston Copper Mines

CONISTON COPPERMINES 17TH JANUARY 88
Brow Stope, Middle Level, and Top Level Connection.

ML Peter Fleming and Ian Matheson.
Clive Barrow, Dave Bridge, Gordon Gilchrist, Guy Jones, Tony Keates,
Chris Moor, Paul Timewell, Dennis Webb, Angela Wilson.

A connection between Brow Stope and the Top Level Extension had been made beneath the restored ore tub just before Christmas. On this visit it was hoped to dig through the Four Way Junction at the foot of Jack Roll Shaft. Peter Fleming took a group of five via the Lake Stope ladderway and Orange Box Corner to the eastern side of the junction, whilst Ian Matheson lead the rest of the party via MAG's Catwalk to visit the Brow Stope Connection and then to the western side of the junction by way of the Shattered Stope. The supposed ladderway in the floor of Brow Stope seemed to have subsided a little since the last visit, when we were discouraged by some large and immovable boulders.

Once at the Four Way Junction each party could clearly hear the other working on the opposite side. Voices could be distinguished, and on one occasion Dennis Webb and Gordon Gilchrist could see each others lights from opposite sides. However, although several tons of material was shifted there was a continuous run of material from above, and no real progress was made.

Whilst this was going on Ian Matheson and Guy Jones returned to Brow Stope and were able to hear rock movement and voices beneath, though these were very muffled. Thus the three way connection has been established beyond all doubt. The sounds of work and thus the junction seemed to be a yard or two to the Levers Water side of the hanging chain in Brow Stope, where there used to be a ladder protruding from a depression in the bottom of the stope. A large pile of debris which has come from the surface some 200 feet above is probably the source of the run of material into the dig. Some stone was removed from the depression beneath the chain and its level lowered by about two feet. It was possible to see a further three feet down the side of the hanging wall. Before leaving Ian made a careful but rough estimate of the height of the depression using himself as a measuring stick and the blind end of Middle Level which lies beneath the last pitch of Brow Stope as a datum point. He estimated that the bottom of the depression lies some 6 feet above the roof of the level below. However, as this is not directly above the junction, there could well be a lot more material to remove to make a connection at this point.

Both parties finished work about 5.00 pm, having made no solid progress, but nevertheless encouraged by what had been done. Another session by a fresh team is likely to succeed. On the way out Guy revisited Brow Stope, but reported no change. However it would not be surprising in view of the amount of material extracted from below if some subsidence were to take place before the next visit and if that were to

happen it would provide more clues as to how best to proceed. Ian Matheson found a clay pipe in the false heading just to the east of the restored ore tub, and this was removed for safekeeping.