

6th November 1983

Brandelhow Mine, Derwentwater/Force Crag Mine, Braithwaite

10 members assembled at the quarry car park at Brandelhow – 10:30 am inspected Whitewells level just below road, and Wood Level lower down over wall at edge of wood – level was dry for a change. Through the first x cut on left (west) of the level, through to the stopes. Pete Fleming and Mike Mitchell crossed the 30 feet deep shaft in the floor by bridging, to check the continuation of the level beyond – part run in, very loose sugar quartz, finishes in a blind forehead before the Northern limit of Wood Level proper (The main level). On return to surface a half-hearted dig was started below Wood Level on the vein outcrop, and soon finished due to very loose ground, and a lack of timber to support it. Having more or less exhausted the possibilities at Brandelhow, over lunch Pete Blezzard suggested that we adjourn to Force Crag Mine, as he had the keys to the gated levels, and wanted to carry out sampling in the rise before the ladderway between No.0, and No.1 level, for Sphalerite. Due to collapse in timbering at No. 1 level, entry was made through No.0, where the timber at the entrance has partly collapsed, damming the water up to knee depth. Members assisted Pete Blezzard to construct a dam across the head of the rise to divert the water, allowing him to carry out his sampling. After those present had inspected both levels, Pete opened up the mill using his keys, allowing those present an opportunity to inspect the jaw crusher, ball mill, flotation cells, and disc filters. The mill building is starting to deteriorate, due to the combined efforts of the weather, and vandalism, since the mine closed in late 1981, a great shame to see the last sulphide mill in Cumbria falling into disrepair.

Dave Blundell

Prepared from notes 16.10.84