

**4<sup>th</sup> October 1987**  
**Patterdale**

This mainly surface meet was programmed to coincide with a period of glorious autumn weather. Something went wrong however, and it rained for most of the day! Members braving the elements were Meet Leader Ian Matheson, Don Borthwick, Dave Bowers, Eric Curzon, Peter Fleming, Anton, Sheila and Imogen C-P-Thomas, and Paul Timewell. Ian Tyler and Warren Allison were also in the vicinity working on a project of their own.

First stop was the site of the 1890 powerhouse at the confluence of Red Tarn and Brown Cove Gills. This has been demolished but the stone supports for the penstock still exist and these were followed up to the wooden header tank some 350 feet above. Nearby is a horse gin circle which presumably was used to haul materials up during construction. The leat was followed around the fellside to the dam in Brown Cove, which broke on October 29th 1927. Part way along the leat is a fireplace and flue built against rocks which was examined, together with what seems to have been the foundations of a stone hut.

After lunch, and a brief altercation between Anton's Alsatian and the Meet Leaders black mongrel, the earth dam at Keppel Cove was visited and then the stone dam higher up in Brown Cove. The latter seems to have once been intended to have been very much larger, as foundation trenches extend outwards on both sides. After visiting the ruined smithy, still with its broken anvil standing outside, some members went into the lower of the two Brown Cove Levels. Higher still, at around 2700 feet is Brown Cove Top Level, which was dug open by Ian Tyler and Co. just three weeks earlier. This was entered, and found to be a quite spacious level about 100 yards long, driven on a fault. The drill holes were made by machine and the stubs of a dozen or so candles remain in dobs of clay on the walls. There are traces of lead and of barytes, but it had never been productive. Near the end of the drive is some timber work which supports stacked deads.

At this stage Anton and family returned to Greenside, whilst the rest of the party climbed through the mist to the Helvellyn plateau and made their way via Lower Man and Whiteside to the smelter stack on Stang. The ruined chimney was followed down as far as the leat which used to carry water from Brown Dodd to the Top Dam at Sticks. This leat was then followed to the Dam and the Dressing Floors, where the remains of a round buddle and set of three roll crushers dating from about 1840 were inspected. An attempt was made to enter High Horse Level, but this was found to be run in a few yards from the adit. In the nineteenth century the miners 'shops' stood nearby and there is still a lot of clinker and broken crockery to be seen in the ground.

After this the ghyll was followed down to Low Horse Level. This was originally a tramming level from which material was carried via a bridge to the nearby bouse teams and dressing shops and from 1890 was used to carry the electricity cables down Willie Shaft to Lucy Level. About 1000 yards of this level is accessible and the party found that many of the fastenings and some of the insulators for the cables are still in place. The

level ends at a collapse of boulders and nearby a large ore tub is to be seen, built into some deads. Its detached axles and wheels lie beside it.

Finally the party made their way down to Greenside where further destruction and 'landscaping' of the mine remains has recently been accomplished and climbed down into the bed of Glenridding Beck where Peter Fleming lead them to the remains of the steam wagon Helvellyn, which once hauled materials at the mine. Unfortunately the copper boiler has recently disappeared and only the wheels and part of the chassis are left. The meet ended about six thirty.

During the day Ian Tyler and his partner examined the possibility of digging into a level above Greenside Beck opposite the YHA, concluding that it was not feasible. They then turned their attentions to a spoil heap adjacent to the site of the 1890 powerhouse, which they called Catstye Cam Mine. They gained entry to this after three hours digging, finding a short level consisting of ten yards of masonry arching, followed by nine yards in rock leading to a forehead. As the water was four feet deep they did not enter. Ian says that the amount of spoil outside seems to be disproportionately large in relation to the volume of the tunnel, so it is possible that there may also be a sump.

Ian Matheson. Oct 1987.