

July 17th 1988

Nenthead

Brewery Shaft - Angela Wilson Dave Bridge Ian Matheson Phil Herrin Don Borthwick
Sedling Burn - Barbara Mitchell Mike Mitchell Ann Danson Peter Fleming

After a space of 3 years the mighty Brewery shaft again, this was to be the first time for Angela, Dave & Don & the second for Ian & Phil. At first the good doctor was undecided what to do that day, but made his mind up quickly when he found out that Ian had been down once before & PF twice. Previous SRT trips had belayed only at the top, it was decided this time to re-belay to speed up progress. (It never ceases to amaze me that some members have done this 80m pitch on electron ladders [savage amusement]). Dave re-belayed twice, firstly beside a level that leaves the shaft at about 35m down & again about 20m from the bottom.

On reaching the bottom it was very much a case of cameras out and explore, there is a lot to be seen. The air receiver (compressor) at the bottom of the shaft, a workshop (still with a few tools), two pelton wheels, a water wheel, a string of wagons & sundry other artifacts. Trips were also made along the Nentforce & Rampgill Deep Levels until deterred by very deep water.

The re-belays were to show their value on the long ascent, allowing more than one person to climb at a time and very significantly reducing the bounce at the bottom of the pitch. Nicely rigged re-belays and basically free-hanging pitches resulted in an average climbing time of only about twenty minutes per person.

A nice combination of the treasures of the Brewery shaft living up to expectations and the horrors of the climb out not doing so.