

**26<sup>th</sup> December 1989**

**Coniston Slate**

**BOXING DAY MEET - CLOSEHEADS ON CONCSTON OLD MAN**

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Eighteen members of CAT decided to forego re-heated turkey and join the Boxing Day meet at Coniston Old Man. The venue was the middle level on the main bank at Saddle Stone where, the meet-leader assured everyone, a bit of digging would gain access to the level which has been blocked for a number of years. Some of the elder members of the group thought they might just remember exploring this particular level in their youth before the entrance became blocked.

The dig started apace but spirits were dampened when it was realised that the task was not as easy as first thought. The level mouth appeared to have been blocked intentionally by explosives. Even the experts in the group became dubious. Eventually a small gap was opened up which looked as if it dropped down to what might be the level floor, but no one felt like squeezing down to see.

Ultimately, the dig was abandoned and the party made their way up the mountain to the Low Water Quarries where the meet leader felt there might be another site worth digging. After a half-hearted look round it was decided to repair to the Saddle Stone caverns at Moss Head. Surprisingly, a number of CAT members had never been in these huge closeheads which, we were reliably informed, are the biggest caverns in England. After looking round and taking photos, we all walked down to the cars in the dark and headed for the Crown Hotel in Coniston where a number of pints were drunk before we all returned to families and continued Christmas festivities.