

C.N.C.C.
ANNUAL REPORT

1998



COUNCIL OF NORTHERN CAVING CLUBS

**The Annual General meeting will be held on 14 March 1998 at 10am.
at the Hellifield Village Institute, Main Road, Hellifield**

AGENDA

- 1: Apologies for absence.**
- 2: Minutes of the last meeting, (taken as read if previously circulated).**
- 3: Matters arising from the minutes.**
- 4: Officers reports:**
 - Chairman
 - Secretary
 - Treasurer
 - Access and conservation officer
 - Legal representative
 - Training Officer
- 5: Meets secretaries reports:**
 - Leck Fell
 - Casterton Fell
 - Birks fell/mongo Gill
 - Penyghent, Gingling, Hammer
 - Other areas
- 6: Applications for membership.**
- 7: Applications for full member status.**
- 8: Constitutional amendments. (see over page)**
- 9: N.C.A. Reports. Equipment report, Training report, Re-structuring**
- 10: Election of officers and committee. (see over page)**
- 11: Any other business.**
- 12: Date and place of next meeting.**

NOTE:

All officers who are required to give a report, are requested to prepare a written report. Please supply at least one copy, this should be handed to the assistant secretary at the meeting.

COUNCIL OF NORTHERN CAVING CLUBS

Item 8: constitutional amendments

None received

Item 10: Election of officers and committee

Chairman:	R. Myers, prepared to stand again
Treasurer:	G. Jones, prepared to stand again
Secretary:	L. Sykes, prepared to stand again
Assistant secretary:	R. Wilding
Access & Conservation officer:	J. Harland
Assistant Conservation Officer:	A. Bolton
Training Officer:	P. Ramsden

Current Committee:

Bradford Pothole Club
Burnley Caving Club
Dent House Speleological Society
Porkey Potters Caving Club
Northumbrian Speleology Group
Red Rose Cave and Pothole Club
Yorkshire Ramblers Club
Yorkshire Subterranean Society

Notice first issued on 24/01/1997

Second issue on 24/11/97

COUNCIL OF NORTHERN CAVING CLUBS

**MINUTES OF THE C.N.C.C. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING,
Held on 14th March 1998, Hellifield Village Institute**

The meeting started at 10.10 hrs

1. PRESENT: Russell Myers (Chairman/CPC) Les Sykes (Secretary/ Technical Group/YSS, LUG) Glen Jones (Treasurer/ Technical Group/WSG) Roy Holmes (CRO/DHSS) Anne Hodgson (RRCPC) Pete Allwright (DHSS BCRC) Bill Quinton (OCG) Jim Sloane (meets sec/LUG) Janet Harland (ACC) Ron Cook (PCC) Stephen Bradley (PCC) Ian Lloyd (BPC) Ric Halliwell (CPC/HUSS) Geoff Barber (PP) David Kestell (PCC) David Leonard (ANT) Royanne Wilding (Assistant Sec./OCG)

2. APOLOGIES A May (NSG) Stuart Marshall (CNCC Meets Sec) S Goodwill (StHCC) Paul Ramsden (FTA)

3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING - were previously circulated and read. Signed by RM as a true and correct record.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES None.

5. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT RM gave notice that he intends to stand down but will endeavour to find a replacement beforehand. LS gave a brief resume of the complexities any holder of this position will be required to deal with.

6. SECRETARY'S REPORT LS submitted a written report.

LS noted that anchor replacement now includes bringing fixed aids up to industrial standards - all in all, very time consuming. He is therefore planning to train Ron Cook (PCC) over the next couple of years to take over the secretarial workload.

Apparently all CNCC member clubs are still members of NCA this year - a constitutional amendment will be needed to change this situation and will be mooted at the NCA AGM - but approval should be via postal ballot.

It was noted that there was nationwide disinterest in the NCA, ballot papers tend to be ignored by clubs, therefore allowing a non representative committee to put their point of view as coming from all cavers.

With reference to insurance, there was discussion on the PR advantages of offering separate insurance cover to landowners on whose behalf CNCC offers permits. It was not sure exactly what such insurance would cover. Cost is quoted as £6 per specified area. RM asked LS to look into the matter.

LS emphasised clubs would not be eligible for grant aid (e.g. from Lottery) if they were not NCA members.

7. TREASURER'S REPORT GJ submitted a written report.

GJ pointed out that the Auditor has virtually doubled his charges this year, owing to the number of entries he has to check (roughly 1000!). The Auditor says this work is worth nearer £400. IL asked if we needed to pay a full blown accountant - GJ pointed out he wants to be legally clear. There was some discussion on alternative ways to audit e.g. subcommittee, another club member. GJ is looking at ways to gets the costs down.

GJ recommended that subscriptions stay at £10 for another year. Individual club subscriptions to NCA can be paid via CNCC if desired.

RM thanked GJ for all his hard work.

JH queried why RRCPC hadn't received the CNCC contribution for the Bull Pot Farm phone bill last year. LS and GJ to look into this.

8. ACCESS AND CONSERVATION OFFICER'S REPORT JH submitted a written report.

With reference to trouble over digs, a note is to be sent to clubs reminding them of the need to get permission and to leave sites in a safe and tidy state.

Referring to the request for a list of caves suitable for Cave Leader Training RM suggested a list of unsuitable caves would be more relevant to conservation. There was a general feeling there should be no list at all.

AH has a consultation copy of the DETR document *Access to the Open Countryside*. Representations have to be in by the beginning of June.

IL brought the meeting's attention to the problem of diggers creating unnecessary new entrances to known cave systems. Extra/easier access creates conservation problems. A trend in this direction could well discourage publication of new finds. RM said there was a need for public debate on caving ethics that should be developed this year. LS suggested a carefully worded article/letter for *Descent*. RH pointed out that caves in other areas are gated/taped to prevent damage.

With reference to the Local Environment Agency plan for the area including the headwaters of Rivers Ribble and Lune - LS said the agency had failed to consult the CNCC, but the document accuses "potholers" of redirecting underground water courses!

Referring to the National Parks Annual Report, NCA has been offered £4000 to establish a cave register to enable them to manage this national resort. LS has written to ask why CNCC has not been consulted, and will meet the NP authority and discuss financial contributions to CNCC for conservation projects above and below the fell. It was noted that there is already a data base in existence.

RM thanked JH for her hard work over the year.

9. LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE No report.

10. TRAINING OFFICER PR sent a written report.

RH referred to item (4), suggesting that there was not enough evidence to state that the accidents concerned were due to "relatively simple errors."

With reference to item (5) IL pointed out that large clubs normally have regular training sessions, training within smaller clubs is more on an *ad hoc* basis and University clubs have not taken up offers of training. Discussion followed on provision of funding for training - money from NCA only for time and effort, money from Sport Aid Foundation for equipment, but either source involving complex admin. procedures.

RM thanked PR.

11. TECHNICAL GROUP LS and GJ presented a written report.

LS said he now receives worldwide queries re anchors etc.

12. MEETS SECRETARIES' REPORTS**1. LECK FELL** JS presented a written report.

JS to check on developments at Iron Kiln Pot

There was a discussion on permits not taken up. It was concluded this situation is unavoidable.

CDG appear to have their own agreement with the Estate. LS said the Estate Office is willing to consider extended access for long term projects, but contact should be made first via JS.

2. CASTERTON FELL A meeting to discuss access with the Estate is to be on 23rd March 1998, when it is expected the issuing of permits will be taken over by CNCC.

The Black Route is in a bad state as cavers are obviously ignoring notices to only use the Lancaster/Easegill route.

3. BIRKS FELL/MONGO GILL RH presented a written report.

There were seven applications for the 3 Robinson's Pot permits available for 1998. The lucky clubs drawn from the bag by committee members were:

Morley P C	-	13 June 1998
RRCPC	-	12 September 1998
Wensleydale S.G	-	10 October 1998

In view of the interest shown, RH will ask the National Trust for extra permits next year.

4. PENYGHENT/INGLING/HAMMER Written report present. (It was suggested SM be asked to delete/or at least shrink the NCA heading on his reports and permits.)

5. OTHER AREAS Mrs Smith (Skirwith Pot) is now happy with access arrangement.

13. APPLICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP None received.**14. APPLICATIONS FOR FULL MEMBER STATUS** None received.

15. NCA REPORTS Equipment report. GJ attended the meeting in June - discussed last meeting.

Training report - Covered by PR's Training Officer report
Restructuring - see Secretary's report above.

GJ felt restructuring meetings had been positive, but afterwards DCA went its own way, insisting on NCA membership for its member clubs - therefore it is not voluntary for them. GJ therefore felt that his contributions as CNCC rep. had been a waste of time and energy.

RC from PCC read out a letter PCC has sent to Descent (not yet published), stating that PCC will not join the NCA as it considers NCA committee comprises mere paper administrators, not active cavers, unlike CNCC, which is far more relevant to the interests of those on the sharp end. The meeting was in general agreement with the sentiments expressed.

LS pointed out it is getting hard to find anyone willing to take up NCA officer's positions on a voluntary basis, but once payment is offered for any job, all officers of that organisation will expect remuneration.

16 ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Chairman	-	R. Myers
Treasurer	-	G Jones
Secretary	-	L Sykes
Assistant secretary	-	R Cook
Access & Conservation officer		J Harland
Asst. Conservation officer		A Bolton
Training Officer	-	P Ramsden

Current Committee

- Bradford Pothole Club
- Burnley Caving Club
- Dent House Speleological Society
- Orcus Caving Group
- Porkey Potters Caving Club
- Red Rose Cave and Pothole Club
- Yorkshire Ramblers Club
- Lancashire Underground Group

17. ANY OTHER BUSINESS # AH requested that CNCC information be sent to CNCC reps. as well as club secretaries.

GJ had 15 copies of the French Cave Rescue Manual (English translation) for sale at £5 each.

Date and place of this year's meetings

Committee meetings: 19th June 1998 Hellifield Village Inst.
 9th October 1998 "
 4th December 1998 "
 Annual General Meeting: 20th March 1999 "

The meeting closed at 12.55 p.m.

These minutes were taken by R. Wilding CNCC Asst. Secretary

R. Myers
Hon. Chairman.

COUNCIL OF NORTHERN CAVING CLUBS

Secretaries report to the 1998 C.N.C.C. AGM

Administration

A very busy year with an ever increasing paper work load. Unfortunately each reply requires a different approach with is very time consuming. Outside organisations also seem to think that the C.N.C.C. is a professional body with paid employees, and requests for information from N.R.A. and other such bodies can takes days to put together.

The amount of electronic mail is increasing at an alarming rate. Although it must be said that it is easier and cheaper to reply to e-mails, it's just that I never seem to get away from this confounded machine.

The C.N.C.C. newsletter is distributed to all member clubs of the C.N.C.C. and all the other constituent bodies of N.C.A. including N.C.A. who also republish the contents in Speleoscene. Looking for information to fill the newsletter can be a problem, and is often the reason for not publishing it regularly. Any club can contribute to the newsletter, the content and size of the newsletter is not a problem, it is there as an information circular for cavers.

C.N.C.C. publications

All the rigging cards and rigging guides are selling well, these guides still continue to finance the anchor replacement program.

C.N.C.C. insurance

I had stated at a committee meeting that all CNCC member clubs were insured through the BCRA as long as CNCC remained a constituent of the NCA. This is incorrect and the situation is thus; CNCC member clubs and individuals (I.e. officers etc.) that carry out work for, or on behalf of the CNCC are insured through the BCRA policy: thus, a club undertaking conservation work on behalf of the CNCC would qualify.

Access related problems

There has been a few problems this year, but all have been dealt with quickly and will be covered within the individual meet secretaries reports. The problems on Casterton Fell continue and the next meeting is arranged for 23.03.98 at Hawkshead Farm. I made a number of trips over Casterton Fell during 1997 and during January and February mainly at the request of the owners, to explain the damage to a route that should not be used. The route from the farm to County Pot, via the track and posts across the Fell, is in an abysmal condition, the boggy areas are getting deeper and wider. Numerous mentions have been made through the newsletter, Speleoscene and Descent and it is quite obvious that it has been ignored by the majority. Cavers that persist in using this route are putting the future access of the Fell at risk.

Permits for anchor placement, maintenance etc.

Comments to the permit secretaries when permits are refused like "I bet Sykes would get one if it was for anchors" not only annoy, but are not necessary. Permits for anchor replacement, testing and maintenance are not issued by permit secretaries, they are negotiated as required with the relevant Estate office, and although it gives the team immediate access to the site, a visit to the Estate office to explain the necessity and to gain permission is still required. When all said and done, the safety and maintenance of the anchor system is far more important than a survey.

N.C.A. AGM

The NCA AGM is on 21.03.98, all clubs have been sent the relevant details regarding the attendance procedure and voting. I shall not be able to attend this year because of the location chosen by the NCA national council. I have written to the Hon. secretary regarding the location and stated my reason for non attendance, and that I feel, that the choice of location is unconstitutional. As all member clubs have a vote, I urge as many clubs as possible to attend the NCA AGM. You all have one vote, this is your clubs chance to shape the NCA that you want, use it.

Email addresses

A number of CNCC officers and meets secretaries have email facilities, I must remind all clubs that permits cannot be booked by Email, and that it will require a constitutional change if that is the desired direction. The use of the Email facilities should certainly be encouraged for general enquiries, and it does guarantee a speedy response, due to cutting out the middle man (GPO). However, the setting up of and the upkeep of these facilities is at present at the owners expense. With the ever changing technological drive well under way, the CNCC will at some time in the future have to invest in a computer.

Les Sykes
Hon. secretary



C.N.C.C. Technical Group

During 1997 the C.N.C.C. Technical Group undertook 36 caving trips for the purpose of anchor installation, anchor placement courses, anchor inspections, testing & maintenance work. The 36 trips collates to about 430 caver hours spent underground. The time accrued to record keeping is just as alarming, for every single underground trip, at least three hours are required to amend, update or create the records to support the anchor placements for insurance and safety reasons, and as a product of our fine vertical systems the work load can only increase year on year until replacement is complete.

The anchor system

A careful review was made of placement procedures during 1997 which resulted in the Technical Group updating the guide lines accordingly. These updated guide lines were distributed by the 01.01.1998 to all the regional anchor co-ordinators in the UK

As part of the anchor replacement program, the Technical Group continues to maintain contact with resin manufacturers and industry to ensure that all new resins are tested to ascertain suitability for the anchor system. This regime ensures that the best possible resin is used for anchor placements.

Courses, testing & funding for 1997

All the courses budgeted for, for 1997 went ahead with the exception of the regional anchor co-ordinators workshop, which had to be cancelled due to lack of interest from the other caving regions.

All anchor installers working on behalf of the CNCC will be attending a refresher course during 1998.

Courses, testing & funding for 1998

The C.N.C.C. Technical Group has submitted to the N.C.A. a budget proposal for £1206.40. This will provide the following courses and anchor tests for 1998; anchor replacement courses x 2, anchor replacement refresher courses x 2, anchor replacement/removal/testing/maintenance seminar x 1, 2 anchor test beds covering 4 separate sites.

Caver relations

During 1997 the Technical Group formatted an informative presentation of slides and O.H.Ps. This has been, and will continue to be taken out into the caving regions to give the recreational caver all the available relevant information on the anchor system. Glenn presented the presentation at the DCUC caver event where it was well attended with excellent reviews for the presentation.

The CNCC Technical Group has continued to provide information national and international caving bodies who are in the process of looking at different permanent anchor systems, the most recent enquiry being from Tasmania. Over the next five years

we will be investigating the possibility of, and hopefully producing a CEN for cave anchor systems.

KMC rescue traverse cable

During 1997 a new cable was purchased from Bill Moore Lifting Tackle, Bill Moore has subsequently wavered the cost and any future cost for testing and maintenance of the rescue cables. The replacement cable is 316 stainless steel and will be used as the permanent cable. The original galvanised cable has been tested and stored, and will only be used to provide protection on the traverse when the stainless steel cable is away for test.

Anchor test records

There are only a few anchor tests outstanding for 1997 those being Notts Pot and Juniper Gulf, these have been programmed for test before June. the progressive testing of anchors now stretches into 2003 those being the caves on the 5 year test plan.

C.N.C.C. Technical Group web site

<http://web.ukonline.co.uk/members/andy.mccarron/cncctech.htm>

Les Sykes
Glenn Jones

COUNCIL OF NORTHERN CAVING CLUBS

AGM - 14th MARCH 1998

TREASURERS REPORT

ACCOUNTANTS' REPORT

The attached Accountant's Report summarises the accounts and financial transactions of the CNCC up to 31st December 1997. Whilst not intending to duplicate the accountants report, I feel it necessary to explain some items contained in the report.

LIABILITIES

Subscriptions Paid in Advance; 730.00.

This sum represents subscriptions to the CNCC, from member clubs, paid in 1997, for the 1998 membership year.

Creditors; 176.25.

This represents the cost of the Accountants Report which will be paid from the '98 accounts.

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

INCOME to the year end 31st December was; **£3510.54**
and was made up of;

Subs/Grants Donations;	1713.00
Book Sales;	879.20
Resin & hanger sales;	592.63
NCA claims	137.14
Interest;	188.54

EXPENDITURE to the year end 31st December was; **£3,873.31**
and was made up of amongst other things;

NCA Subscriptions;	935.00*
Various printing costs;	974.69
Resin and ECO hanger purchase;	1,087.48

NB: the various printing costs include
£149.99 for the scanner.

NET DEFICIT **£362.77***

*The deficit figure of £362.77 is due to paying the 1996 NCA subscription in the 1997

financial year (£420.00) plus an underpayment of £55.00 for 1995, which the NCA assure me had not been paid by the previous CNCC Treasurer.

RE-BOLT PROGRAM

The cost of the re-bolt program for 1997 was: 1,184.03

The above expenditure was offset by income generated from the Rigging Guide and the onward sale of resin and anchors: 1,192.27

Balance of the two accounts as at 31st December 1997;

Community account; **£392.17**

High interest account; **£5,156.66**

Given that the CNCC's overall operating costs are still covered by the current level of income, together with the amended NCA subscription guaranteed for '98 and '99, I therefore recommend that the subscriptions, for member clubs, for 1999, remain at the current level.

ASSETS

ITEM	COST/VALUE(£)	YEAR PURCHASED
1 Scanner	149.99	1997
4 Tackle bags	45.00	1977
4 tackle bags	45.00	1966
Storage box	10.00	1966
6 Karabiners	30.00	1966
30 Petzl hangers	35.00	1966
30 7mm Maillons	45.00	1966
22m 10.5mm rope	20.00	1966
260m 10mm Marlow rope	260.00	1966
Xerox 5309 photocopier	916.46	1966
2 X 24v ni-cad dry cells & charger	141.00	1995
1 X Exchem resin applicator	40.00	1995
1 X Rexel CB3000 binding machine	129.24	1995
3 X Hilti 18mm drill bits	30.00	90/92/94
2 X Yuasa l/a batteries	22.00	1993
2 X Putsy pumps	12.00	1990/93
2 X 2 Yuasa l/a batteries (in ammo boxes)	52.00	1990/91
2 X Hilti resin applicators	60.00	1990

I am prepared to stand as Treasurer for the next 12 months.

Glenn Jones, Treasurer, CNCC

The Council of Northern Caving Clubs

Income and Expenditure Account
for the year ended 31 December 1997

Income

1835	Subscriptions/Grants and Donations	1713.00
1611	Handbooks and Rigging Guides	879.20
468	Resin and Hangers	592.63
-	NCA Training Contributions	137.14
69	Course Fees Received	-
<u>151</u>	Interest Received	<u>188.57</u>
4134		3510.54

Expenditure

440	Subscriptions	515.00
1080	Printing, Stationery and Handbooks	974.69
82	Accountancy Fees	176.25
312	Repairs	304.29
24	Room Hire	40.00
1753	Resin and Hangers	1087.48
543	Telephone and Postage	728.10
10	Sundry Expenses	10.00
5	Petrol	12.50
<u>391</u>	Conservation and Access	<u>25.00</u>
<u>4640</u>		<u>3873.31</u>
<u>(506)</u>	Deficit for the year	<u>(362.77)</u>

Balance Sheet as at 31 December 1997

<u>Assets</u>		
1403	Equipment	1552.72
053	Cash at Bank	5501.22
<u>435</u>	Payments in Advance	<u>43.75</u>
6488		5544.97
<u>Liabilities</u>		
835	Subscriptions Paid in Advance	730.00
<u>502</u>	Creditors	<u>176.25</u>
(1337)		(906.25)
<u>6554</u>		<u>6191.44</u>
<u>Accumulated Funds</u>		
7060	Balance brought forward	6554.21
(506)	Less Deficit for the year	(362.77)
<u>6554</u>		<u>6191.44</u>

Accountants' Report

In accordance with instructions given to us we have prepared without carrying out an audit the annexed accounts from the accounting records of The Council of Northern Caving Clubs and from information and explanations supplied to us.

John Greenall + Co.

Sandbach

9 March 1998

Chartered Certified Accountants

Access & Conservation Officers Report
to the CNCC A.G.M. 14th March 1998

I contacted the Countryside Management Committee (Arnside & Silverdale AONB) regarding their problem with a dig reported earlier in the year. They have written to the person concerned, but as yet have had no reply.

I spoke to Alan Hulme of the Yorkshire Dales National Park regarding the complaint from the Ingleborough Management Committee about digs on White Scar/Newby Moss. He attended an annual meeting with them a few weeks ago and nothing was mentioned about digs or caving in general. He will be meeting with one of the farmers in the next couple of weeks (Mr Capstick) and will let me know if anything is said about the digs.

A main source of complaint we have is with digs is that are being carried out without permission from the landowner/farmer and/or left in a dangerous condition. I would ask diggers to seek permission to dig and keep the site tidy and safe.

The meeting to discuss the access to Casterton Fell has been arranged for Monday 23rd March.

Les has acquired some security fencing to use as a cover for roaring hole.

NCA are still asking for a list of suitable caves for Cave Leader training. I was not able to attend the last meeting in Stafford in January, but wrote to Graham Price and explained that we thought this task should be carried out (if desirable) by the Training Committee.

The NCA have published the Cave Conservation Policy and Handbook. They plan to produce a multi-media presentation on Cave Conservation, and an educational information pack.

NCA have suggested the following wording regarding memorial plaques:-
'The National Caving Association disagrees with the placement of memorial plaques inside or immediately outside a cave. The placement of plaques represents both a physical and visible intrusion in an otherwise pure unspoilt environment that is part of our natural heritage. Additionally they may be a source of pollution and subject to vandalism. The only exception should be in the case of a death occurring underground where it is impossible to recover the body.'

I had a couple of calls as a result of my contact details being included on the NCA web site. I understand from the minutes of the A&C meeting in Stafford that the regional council handbooks have been included in this data so as to make access information available (to fulfil one of the objectives of the cave register).

Janet Harland

REPORT OF TRAINING OFFICER TO CNCC AGM - 14/03/98

- 1 Please accept my apologies for absence - work calls.
- 2 Various training matters have been reported in Speleoscene.
- 3 I have attended meetings of the NCA Training Committee, panel meetings and workshops of Local Cave Leader assessors and Cave Instructor assessors. It has been suggested that caver skills training courses could be equally useful to any caver, whether he/she wishes to get an NCA qualification in instructed caving or not. Discussion on increasing the uptake of Cave Instructor certificate holders has taken place.
- 4 I gave a talk at the BCRA conference, looking at Cave Rescue incidents and how by preparation and training they could be avoided. At least 3 recent cave rescues involved relatively simple errors which could have been prevented by training.
- 5 The NCA is able to fund approximately 25% of any training that clubs may wish to organise. As mentioned previously, some clubs have benefitted more than once per year from these grants - yet there seems to be poor uptake from CNCC members. For details, contact Tony Flanagan - see below.
- 6 I would be interested to know how many CNCC member clubs have an organised training programme or training officer. We could organise a workshop to discuss and disseminate good practice.
- 7 I am willing to continue to represent CNCC on training matters if re-elected.

NMCA Training Co-ordinator - Tony Flanagan - tel 015242 - 41737

To discuss any training matters, contact
Paul Ramsden, Sun Lea, Joss Lane, Sedbergh, Cumbria, LA10 5AS
Tel: 015396 - 20828 (best after 7.00pm)

Leck Fell 1997/1998
Report to CNCC AGM 14.03.98.

A.1997.

Since the last AGM there has been a total postbag of 105 letters from member clubs in connection with applications for permits to go caving on Leck Fell. These applications have spanned both 1997, 1998, and a few for 1999.

During 1997 itself, 64 member clubs of the CNCC, were granted a total of 204 permits. The relevant statistical information in relation to 1997 is provided in the attached table, along with the figures for 1996, to allow for some comparison to be made. It is not considered that any particularly unusual or important trends are revealed in perusing this information, and it is quite clear that there is, somewhat predictably, most demand for access at weekends. Of the clubs who wrote for permits, the vast majority were fixed up with a permit, but about half of the clubs applying had basically to settle for dates that were not their first choice. Having said this during 1997 only two paid up member clubs who wrote for permits received none. In one case an alternative date was not taken up and in the other there were no weekend dates remaining, when the club applied.

As far as 1997 was concerned the first booking for the year was received in February 1996, and the last weekend vacancy filled in September 1997. Therefore the fell took more or less 19 months to become 'booked up', with regards to weekend caving at any rate.

In terms of the average number of permits issued in relation to each application, the figures for 1997 and the previous twelve months were roughly the same, working out to be about three per member club who requested access. The figure for the average number of weekend permits issued for 1997 was approximately three per club. This again was similar for the 1996 average, which also about three.

In 1996 twelve clubs wrote for permits without first checking to see that CNCC subscriptions had been paid. In relation to 1997, there has been something of an improvement in this area, as only six clubs had to be initially turned away as a result of non payment. There was however some difficulty experienced in this area, due to one or two clubs not appearing on the 'paid up' list as a result of anomalies concerning direct debit payments, or clubs paying subs, and applying for permits prior to the issue of an updated 'paid up' list. Fortunately these problems were isolated in nature, and at the end of the day now seem to have been sorted out.

While no comments or complaints were received during 1996 about 'pirating', at least three clubs last year chose to draw attention to the occurrence of unauthorised caving on the fell. In two of these cases the clubs experienced considerable disruption to their own 'legitimate' caving as a result of the pirates causing congestion and delay. Two of the clubs who had these problems, chose to make their feelings known after spending a good deal of time, effort and money travelling considerable distances, only to have their trips ruined as a result of pirates. In addition to this, it is understood that the estate office, at various points last year became aware of this problem and commented on the same to the Secretary. It can only be emphasised here that the access agreement exists to maintain the ability for member clubs to go caving on Leck Fell and pirating will only at the end of the day, threaten the agreement itself, and make it impossible to

Leck Fell -Permits 1997

jan feb mar jul aug sept oct nov dec total %

lost Johns	5	9	10		5	7	7	12	10	13	78	38.4
Notts	6	2	4		6	6	3	7	5	9	48	23.4
Short Drop	4	3	1		3	3	2	4	6	4	31	15.1
Rumbling	1	5	6		6	1	4	1	4	2	30	14.7
Deaths Head	1	1	4		0	2	0	1	1	1	11	4.9
Long Drop	1	0	2		0	0	0	0	0	0	3	1.4
Owlfinger	0	0	0		0	4	0	0	0	0	4	1.9
											204	99.8
monthly total	18	20	27		20	23	16	25	26	29	204	
weekend	15	16	20		16	20	16	16	20	16	155	
weekday	3	4	7		4	3	0	9	6	13	49	
											204	

Leck Fell-Permits 1996

jan feb mar jul aug sept oct nov dec total %

Lost Johns	7	5	9		5	9	12	6	8	10	71	36.6
Notts	4	6	7		4	5	5	6	7	10	54	27.8
Short Drop	4	0	3		2	2	0	4	3	5	23	11.9
Rumble	0	4	3		2	5	5	2	0	1	22	11.3
Deaths Head	1	3	3		4	0	3	2	1	1	18	9.3
Long drop	0	0	0		0	0	0	1	1	0	2	1
Brntskill pot	1	0	0		0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.5
Dead Dobbin	1	0	0		0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.5
Lost pot	0	0	0		0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0.5
Peterson pot	0	1	0		0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.5
mth tot	18	19	26		17	21	25	21	20	27	194	
w/k d	2	3	7		1	3	8	5	2	9	40	
w/e	16	16	18		16	18	18	16	18	18	154	

argue for the prospect of improved access at some point in the future. In addition to these problems, it was necessary to deal with the issue of the dig at what has become known as 'Iron Kiln 'pot. An agreement has been reached with the estate office and English Nature about the future of this project

A.1998.

The figures for the current year show that overall so far 48 member clubs of the CNCC have been issued with access permits. Of these, 47 clubs have permits for weekends. Of the 156 weekend permits that are available, 137 have been booked and 19 remain, with most availability during August and December this year. While it appears as though booking for some reason has been exceptionally heavy, the majority of the member clubs who use the access agreement, request their permits on a once yearly basis, and by now have obtained their permits for the year. Having said this a few more requests for permits were received during the Autumn of 1997, than was the case for the previous year. The impression was gained that on the whole clubs were writing a little earlier for their 1998 permits.

For the future it is now possible to reach me by electronic mail on jimbo@saqnet.co.uk and as such clubs can now contact me first by this method, to initially ascertain if the dates they are chasing are free or not. All clubs however will still be required to write formally, using official club headed notepaper, with a stamped self addressed envelope, before they will have their permits issued.

Those clubs with no e-mail facility will continue to receive prompt attention from me, in sorting out their permit requests. This process will be assisted and considerably speeded up, if in the first place all clubs can specify as many alternative dates for trips as possible, when they initially write, or send e-mail.

Jim Sloane.
Meets Secretary Leck Fell
02.03.98.

Council of Northern Caving Clubs

Meets Secretary's Report for Birks Fell & Mongo Gill

General

This is my ninth year as access controller and I know of no problems regarding access to Birks Fell.

Birks Fell

The National Trust have made no comment on the working of the Access agreement to date. Although not as common I am still receiving reports that some of the boulders near the second pitch are moving and parties should take care in that area of the cave. Bookings have dropped slightly with 21 (27) bookings already made for 1998, this represents a further decrease on the pattern of a few years ago.

1977	32	1978	35	1979	40	1980	41
1981	50	1982	47	1983	52	1984	63
1985	46	1986	55	1987	44	1988	28
1989	32	1990	25	1991	41	1992	49
1993	35	1994	41	1995	39	1996	34
1997	35						

Average number per year for the last 10 years - 36 (37)

Robinson's Pot

The National Trust agreed to a trial period of two years with 3 permits available in each year. Due to the late reaching of an agreement only 3 applications were received for the 3 permits in 1997. A total of X applications have been received for the 3 permits available this year. I propose that the names be pulled out of a hat at this meeting, I have excluded the clubs who received a permit in 1997 from applying for 1998. With the permission of the AGM I would like to go back to the National Trust and ask not only that the agreement be extended but that the number of permits per year be increased.

Mongo Gill

The sale of "caving rights" relating to Mongo Gill to Gordan Hanley at Stump Cross, which was announced at the last AGM, was not infact finalised until early December. After discussions with Mr Hanley he is insisting that lockable lids be placed on all the entrances for safety reasons. He also raised doubts about the stability of North Shaft. The requested gates are currently being manufactured and agreement has been reached on the work he requires doing to North Shaft. It is hoped that this work can be completed and the gates be installed (by CPC members) in late March or early April. I have received oral assurances that access will be permitted once this work has been done, under similar conditions to the previous agreement. I presume that this means there will continue to be a May, June and July closed season so the earliest access will be August. I am hopeful that access will also be granted, albeit under a leadership scheme, to the Great Expectations entrance to Stump Cross.

Ric Halliwell

NATIONAL CAVING ASSOCIATION

COUNCIL OF NORTHERN CAVING CLUBS. **PENYGHENT AND FOUNTAINS FELL.**

Stuart Marshall, 39 Carlby Grove, Keighley, BD22 6DZ.

Tel: 01535/664271.

REPORT TO A.G.M. 14TH MARCH 1998.

Permit requests for 1997 are as follows -

Gingling Hole - 32
Hammer Pot - 12
Hunt Pot - 10
Little Hull Pot - 29
Penyghent pot - 44
Washfold Pot - 9
Hull Pot - 5
High Hull Pot - 2
Psilomelane Pot - 1
Gingling Sink - 1
Echo Pot - 1

Total Trips - 146.

1997 was a quiet year and no problems occurred with permit requests and the farmers/landowners.

A new access agreement was installed for Penyghent Pot to allow caving all year round.

Dalehead Pot is still (yawn!!) blocked - I am waiting for permission to remove material from the pot and transfer it to a nearby shakehole. Scaffolding and materials are in situ should anyone wish to volunteer?!!

Gingling Hole is blocked due to rockfall but permission has been obtained to take vehicles and equipment across the fell once time and personnel are available to undertake the work.

It would be appreciated if member clubs could pay their subs before applying for permits and send an sae - this saves time and expense!! Given permit requests for 1998 it looks as though there will be large numbers underground.

Unless I hear to the contrary I will be negotiating in the near future to include the 'new' find on Fountains Fell within the ambit of the permit system (?) - a number of requests have been made for access. Please accept my apologies for non attendance due to lack of available time and family commitments - I am happy to continue the post until the next AGM but for the above reasons, this year will be the last!!

Regards and best wishes



Stuart Marshall - Meets Secretary - Penyghent & Fountains Fell.