

THE COUNCIL OF NORTHERN CAVING CLUBS

URGENT & IMPORTANT

Annual General Meeting - Saturday 5th March 1988

The Council's A.G.M. will be held at 2.00 p.m.
at Ingleton Community Centre on the above date.
(Not as published in Caves & Caving).

The confusion and short notice is very much
regretted, but production difficulties have
severely delayed the circulation of the
necessary papers.

(all complaints should not be directed at the
Secretary, but at Dave Milner, who has been
the culprit of the current difficulty).

Council of Northern Caving Clubs
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Ingleton Community Centre, Saturday 5th March 1988 14.00 hrs.

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
 2. Minutes of last meeting (already circulated)
 3. Matters arising from the Minutes
 4. Officers Reports :
 - Chairman
 - Secretary
 - Asst. Secretary
 - Treasurer
 - Access & Conservation
 5. Meets Secretaries/Access Areas :
 - Penyghent/Fountains Fell
 - Birks Fell/Mongo Gill
 - Leck
 - Casterton
 - Other Areas
 6. Amendments to the Constitution (see below)
 7. Election of Officers and Committee
(No more than one member from each full member club)
 8. N.C.A. : Report from representative and other matters relating to the N.C.A.
 9. Motion on Casterton Fell :

That this Council notes the terms of the Agreement negotiated by the R.R.C.P.C. and endorses them.
 10. Any other business
 11. Date and place of next committee meeting.
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Clause 4 : Membership.

Amend 4.1 to read :-

There are three classes of membership:- Full, Associate and Honorary.

Insert the following clauses :-

4.8 Honorary membership can only be granted to properly constituted cave rescue organisations.

Clause 6 : Officers and Committee.

Amend 6.2 to read :-

The committee shall consist of five Officers viz. Chairman, Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Treasurer and Conservation & Access Officer and eight ordinary members. Each member of the committee shall represent a different Full Member club.

COUNCIL OF NORTHERN CAVING CLUBS

Minutes of Annual General Meeting

5th March 1988

Meeting commenced 2.05pm. Chaired by D Leonard. Chairman apologised on behalf of officers for late notification of meeting.

ATTENDANCE: B Rhodes (BPC), D Leonard (ANT), D Shepherd (EPC), J Ratray(BPC), P Parker (WRPC), P Ramsden(NCA REP), S Wilson (BCC), J Davis (RRCPC), B Bond (BCC), P Muckalt (RRCPC), A Speight (YSS), M Simpson (YSS), B Sudall(NPC K Sheard (YSS), I Crompton (YSS), R Myers (CPC), B Hunt (EPC), T Whitaker (CDG)

1. APOLOGIES: D Milner, A Hall, R Holmes.

2. MINUTES of last AGM accepted.

3. MATTERS arising

4. OFFICERS REPORTS

a) Chairman. Previously circulated

b) Secretary. Previously circulated

c) Assistant Secretary. No time to be involved at all during the year.

d) Treasurers. Only recently reviewed the books, main difficulty was establishing finances with NCA. Subs at 4th March, 81 clubs paid for 1988 membership stands at approximately 150 member clubs ie 70 clubs have yet to pay subs for 1988 (which were due Jan 1st). Accounts accepted.

e) Access and Conservation. Report circulated at meeting. Secretary had written to Bob Jarman and received no reply. Meets secretary received letter from Lord Shuttleworth stating that on a single day 19 cavers cars were parked on Leck Fell. These belonged to the Red Rose and White Rose Caving Clubs, the number is in contravention of the agreement. The secretary will write to the clubs concerned sending a copy to Lord Shuttleworth, also asking for a meeting to look into the problem further. The seriousness of the situation should be aired in the caving press (publication of said letter).

5. MEETS SECRETARIES.

a) Pennyghent/Fountains Fell. Report circulated at meeting.

b) Birks Fell. Not present, no report.

c) Leck Fell. Not present, no report, no apologies.

d) Casterton. Between April and December no permits issued, nobody asked for any but the fell was used. An access problem is likely to occur on Leck Fell.

Red Rose /Casterton Fell agreement, they are issuing permits mainly to clubs from other areas. 20 clubs have paid £10 to go caving midweek.

6. AMMENDMENTS TO CONSTITUTION

Chairman proposed ammendments to the constitution

Paras

4.1 and 4.8 were revised as follows

Amend 4.1 to read: There are three classes of membership; Full, Associate and Honorary.

Amend 4.8 to read: Honorary membership can only be granted to properly constituted Cave Rescue Organisations.

Para 6.2 was also ammended to read: The committee shall consist of nine officers viz. Chairman, Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Treasurer and Consevation & access Officer and 4 meets secretaries representing different areas, and 4 ordinary members

Para 8.4 of the constitution was deleted.

7. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Chairman. Russell Myers.	Proposed: J Rattray BPC	
	Seconded A Speight YSS	ELECTED
Secretary Philip Parker	Proposed B Rhodes BPC	
	Seconded D Leonard ANT	ELECTED
Assistant Secretary	NO ONE PREPARED TO STAND	
Treasurer Dave Shepherd	Proposed: BPC	
	Seconded: YSS	ELECTED
Consevation & Access. Andy Hall	Proposed: NPC	
	Seconded: No Seconder	NOT ELECTED

Meets Secretaries.

a) Pennyghent/Fountains Fell.	J Rattray	Proposed YSS	
		Seconded ANT	ELECTED
b) Birks Fell/ Mongo Gill-	D Milner	Proposed ANT	
		Seconded Earby	ELECTED
c) Leck Fell. Vacant			
d) Other Areas. D Leonard	P	Proposed BPC	
		Seconded Burnley	ELECTED

Ordinary Members: YSS, Burnley, Earby, DHSS. ALL ELECTED

8. NCA REPORT

P Ramsden reported on NCA matters

9. CASTERTON FELL

Motion was carried, 5 for, 2 against, 2 abstentions. i.e. "This council notes the terms of the agreement negotiated by the RRCPC and endorses them"

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Subs: to be left at current rate.

Casterton Fell. Red Rose were elected as meets secretary for Casterton Fell.

11. DATE & PLACE OF NEXT MEETING

Flying Horse Shoes, Clapham. Friday 22nd April 8pm.

1987 ANNUAL REPORT - CHAIRMAN - David Leonard (A.N.T.)

Recently, I re-read Norman Thornber's introduction to his 1947 edition of "Pennine Underground" wherein he stated :

'Caving and pot-holing are becoming increasingly popular in the North of England. Each summer sees groups of young people, and older folk too, setting out from the villages around Penyghent, Ingleborough, Whernside and beyond,..... Each summer the number of these groups grows and each year something more is added to the total of discoveries.' The observation is as true today as it was then.

Under the heading of LANCASTER HOLE the final sentence read :
'It has been closed with a grille and has been leased to B.S.A., Settle.'

Happily, there are now very few caves in the North of England which are totally closed to cavers. If there was a noticeable increase in cavers as long ago as forty years, perhaps it is understandable that some landowners and/or land agents today view the number of cavers with a marked lack of enthusiasm.

Access to caves rightly takes up more Council time than any other subject : be it through reports of pirating or problems over access agreements - verbal or written - or whatever.

Last January, the Land Agent for Casterton Fell formally gave notice that the verbal agreement with the C.N.C.C. was to be terminated. In April, we learnt that future negotiations would be through the Red Rose Cave & Pothole Club and the news that the RACPC have now negotiated a weekend agreement is a fact which individuals or clubs may accept or reject. As in some agreements, there is probably a degree of flexibility which may be of help to larger clubs.

The original verbal agreement with the newly formed C.N.C.C. was for only one club to be permitted on the two Fells of Leck and Casterton at any one time. Although some might consider the RACPC agreement to be worse than what we enjoyed up to the 5th April 1987, can anything constructive be achieved by spending more Council time on the subject of Casterton Fell at this point in time ?

On National matters, it is disappointing that our Region has not found more cavers prepared to represent us on the National Caving Association. Now that the N.C.A. are in the process of examining their current structure and function, it would be of considerable help if volunteers could be found to attend the quarterly meetings of the various committees of the N.C.A. and anyone interested should contact our Secretary for details.

As the Council reaches its first quarter century of existence perhaps the new Committee could consider some form of celebration ?

I am grateful to all Council members and Clubs who have contributed to the Council business during the past year. I have no desire to remain in the position of Chairman longer than necessary and will willingly stand down in favour of someone who has the time, enthusiasm and patience .

David Leonard

Three years ago the previous Secretary enticed me into the job by saying it was just a couple of letters per week, and the distribution of a few sets of minutes every now and then. There was no reason to suppose differently since things had been relatively stable, but instead cavers access in the North has been under attack and the Council is, I believe, at crisis point.

C.N.C.C. has restricted its role to one of negotiating access, tending to steer clear of the other issues, and consequently has had little interest or input in N.C.A. matters, or broader caving policy. Other Regional Councils do not have the same access administration or caves to control, but exist as a much broader forum discussing local caving issues and feeding policy into N.C.A. What would happen to C.N.C.C. if it no longer controls access to certain areas? - does it matter?

The biggest crisis is undoubtedly the Casterton Fell situation, arguably the most important cave system in the country. Several meetings have been held during the past year at which difficult decisions have been taken on this matter. Given the importance of the system and the threat to access you would expect these meetings to be packed, instead they have been barely quorate. This could be because:-

- a) The organisation is so efficient, and its officers so talented, that everybody is perfectly happy to leave a small number of people to take the decisions.
- b) C.N.C.C. meetings are notoriously boring, and a better time can be had elsewhere.
- c) The organisation is no longer relevant since lots of cavers do not belong to clubs, and simply cave in groups of 3 or 4.
- d) People are happy enough for C.N.C.C. to exist since they can pay lip service to it and pirate caves anyway.
- e) C.N.C.C. keeps a low profile, maintaining the status quo, and does little to actually improve access agreements.

Because of the role the Council has taken and the importance of Casterton Fell, the decisions on the future of that area is crucial to the overall philosophy of the organisation, and its future direction. Linked with that decision should be an analysis of what we want from the Council and how to get more people involved. Tragically the death of Roger Sutcliffe took away a person who had been involved with access negotiations from the early days, but who always maintained a fresh mind with ability to produce clear insights, he is sadly missed.

I no longer have the time to pursue Council business as thoroughly as it should be done, and will willingly pass the job on.

The Council of Northern Caving Clubs

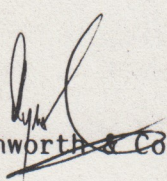
Income & Expenditure Account for the year ended 31st December

<u>INCOME</u>	<u>1986</u>		<u>1987</u>	
Subscriptions	660		1094	
Grants	484		-	
Building Society Interest	31	1175	9	1103
	<u> </u>		<u> </u>	
 <u>EXPENDITURE</u>				
Room Hire	8		7	
Insurance	100		100	
NCA Subscription	95		204	
Printing/Stationery	559		418	
Officers Expenses	105		36	
Working Party	60		-	
Legal Fees	240		-	
Audit	31		34	
Emergency Telephone	150		-	
Donation (Mountain Rescue)	-		50	
Sundries	-		17	
Bank Charges	5	1353	-	866
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Surplus/(Deficit)		(178)		237
		<u> </u>		<u> </u>

Balance Sheet as at 31st December

Assets	<u>1986</u>	<u>1987</u>
Cash at Bank	363	426
Nat. & Prov. Building Society	215	224
Britannia Building Society	<u>-</u>	<u>174</u>
	578	824
Liabilities	-	
Subscriptions paid in advance	(51)	(60)
	<u>527</u>	<u>764</u>
Accumulated Funds		
Balance Brought Forward	705	527
Surplus/(Deficit)	<u>(178)</u>	<u>237</u>
	<u>527</u>	<u>764</u>

Prepared by:


Dymond, Ashworth & Co.

3rd March, 1988

C.N.C.C. Conservation & Access Officer's Report 1987/88.

This year has seen some successes, some failures and some unconcluded issues concerning conservation & access issues to caves in the North of England.

Firstly success:- Near the beginning of the year, in March a meeting between the N.C.C., YDNP and the owners of White Scar Cave took place to which I was invited. This led to several restrictions being put on the application to extend the show cave into the Battlefield. The owners have since dropped their plans for this extension.

Secondly a failure:- Casterton Fell was officially closed on April 5th 1987 and the owner through his agents Davis & Bowring refused to negotiate with C.N.C.C. Negotiations continued however, involving the local club, myself and the Nature Conservancy Council. RRCPC represented by Jim Davis (as their Chairman) eventually reached an agreement with the agents and have been operating a TRIAL agreement with the agents since October. It seems a rather retrograde step that CNCC have so far been unable to back this agreement for at least a trial period.

Thirdly an unconcluded issue:- Bar Pot. In June 1987 a planning application to develop Bar Pot was submitted to Craven District Council. During last summer many objections were sent to the Council and YDNP including a submission from myself on behalf of CNCC. All this resulted in a recommendation from Craven District Council to YDNP for an outright refusal of the application. The Nature Conservancy Council and BCRA were concerned that if the application was refused and the applicant objected to the Secretary of State then the issue could go to a public enquiry. In order to clear the air and look for a possible compromise a couple of meetings were held during the autumn between CNCC, BCRA and the applicant Mr Jarman. The matter was eventually discussed at a recent CNCC committee meeting, where it was agreed not to consider any other means of access to the system. I understand that Mr Jarman has been notified of this. Here the matter rests at present and it remains to be seen whether Mr Jarman will resubmit his application.

The re-scheduling of the SSSI's across the Dales continues and about 70% have now been scheduled with very few problems and I have continued to liaise closely with the NCC both at the local office in Leyburn and the geologists at Peterborough with the result that several site boundaries have been altered slightly. Recently I have been elected to serve as the northern rep' on the Cave Conservation Emergency Fund.

Problems have arisen recently concerning access to Leck Fell. In September a problem arose concerning Burnley Caving Club and this was smoothed over. A second incident has occurred more recently and copies of letters from Lord Shuttleworth are enclosed. I would be grateful if the AGM would consider this matter urgently. In the meantime I have written to Lord Shuttleworth apologising for the delay and explaining that it will be discussed at this meeting with an offer to meet him in the near future as we have not met for some time.

Finally I must apologise for being unable to attend this meeting due to work commitments. I will continue to try to remain impartial and carry out CNCC policy if elected next year. You can all now stab me in the back!

Andy Hall

2nd March 1988.

A. S. Hall

P.S. It is worth pointing out that any decisions reached at this meeting are unconstitutional due to the AGM not being properly notified. What a shambles!

ANNUAL REPORT FOR YEAR 1987

Ribblesdale Meets Secretary

The number of permits issued over 1987 has been almost the same as the year before, totalling 274.

Unlike 1986, with it's bad spate of rescues, 1987 has been fairly quiet, but that's no excuse for becoming complacent and remember Pen-Y-Ghent Fell and Fountains Fell flood very quickly. Weather forecasts can easily be obtained and a phone number for such forecasts is printed in my circular which I have started sending along with or without permits to member clubs. The circular contains useful information such as where and when to send subscriptions for membership. This is quite handy as I have this year stuck to the strict policy of no subs no permit.

Easter of last year saw completion of the new bridge across Fornah gill on the Hammer Pot track. This bridge was damaged during a rescue in the aforesaid pot and this threatened our access to that part of Fountains Fell. Our thanks must go to members of Yorkshire Subterranean Society, Bradford Pothole Club, Earby Pothole Club, and Westminster Speleo Group. The landowner was most pleased with the work done.

Also this year Mr George Perfect, the game keeper for the local estate, retired. He has always been helpful and taken an interest in our activities. I thanked him on behalf of C.N.C.C. and wished him a happy retirement. I also spoke to the new gamekeeper Mr. M. Atkinson. I found him amenable towards potholing not as was previously thought during committee.

I would like to take this opportunity to ask members to read their newsletters and any other information from the council. Ian Wilkinson is still receiving permit applications from clubs a year after handing over this job!

Jim Rattray