

The Dodger's Dispatch

Yet Another Millennium Edition

September 2000

TOM FOWDEN

1912 – 2000

Tom Fowden was born and raised in the South Manchester area and lived in Stockport for virtually all of his long life. He died peacefully in hospital on 2 June after a short illness. He leaves

Marion, his wife of 60 years, a daughter, grand and great grand children. Tom worked as a grocer's delivery boy until he joined up in 1939. He was evacuated from Northern France in 1940 and returned to continue the war in Africa, Italy and Norway. After war service, he was working in Stockport when he met Alan Burgess of the Derbyshire



Caving Club (then the Northern section of the Orpheus Caving Club) some 40 years ago. He developed an interest in walking, climbing and then caving and mine exploration. In time, he became an honorary member of the DCC for his work at Alderley Edge. He celebrated his 80th birthday in Wood Mine at Alderley Edge and continued exploring mines in Wales and Northern England late into his eighties. He will be particularly remembered by thousands of young visitors to Alderley Edge who wondered whether the bearded and cloaked figure they met in the mines or at the DCC's information centre on the surface was the real Wizard of the Edge. Tom will be sadly missed by his friends and family but he will not be forgotten since the recently discovered shaft in the floor of the information centre, where he spent so much time, has been named "Tom's Shaft" in his honour.

40th Anniversary dinner

Everyone who attended the Anniversary Dinner (more than 50 members, partners and friends) seems to have had an excellent weekend.

The venue was superb, the meal was good and there were walks on both days and a caving trip on the Saturday. The Saturday night ended with an hour or



more of caving songs printed out by Todge and accompanied by Arthur. There were displays in the hotel showing activities by the club over the



last 40 years and potted histories of Len's and Nigel's caving careers in respect of their 50th birthdays in May and June respectively. All in all, this was a night to remember and it was sad that more

PRACTICE RESCUE

The next rescue practice with DCRO involvement will be on Sunday, 15 October at Alderley Edge. This is a highly valuable opportunity to show what the DCC is made of and to find out the latest about the DCRO equipment. Please support the practice.

If anyone wants to help in the organisation including deciding what we do and where, please contact Nigel now.

Christmas Social Evening

By popular request, a social evening has been arranged in November in Stockport.

The Bull's Head in the Market Place in Stockport has been booked for 18th November for a curry supper followed by a Disco. There should be a live band playing downstairs in the pub on the same night. The event will cater for not much more than 50 people so you had better buy your tickets soon. They are available from Nigel Dibben, Simon Dillon and ... [any volunteer to sell them at Alderley?]

The doors will open at about 8 pm and a buffet-style Indian meal will be served from about 9 pm. The meal will include assorted starters, a choice of main dishes, rice, nan bread, poppadums and chutneys.

ALL FOR JUST £10 A HEAD.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

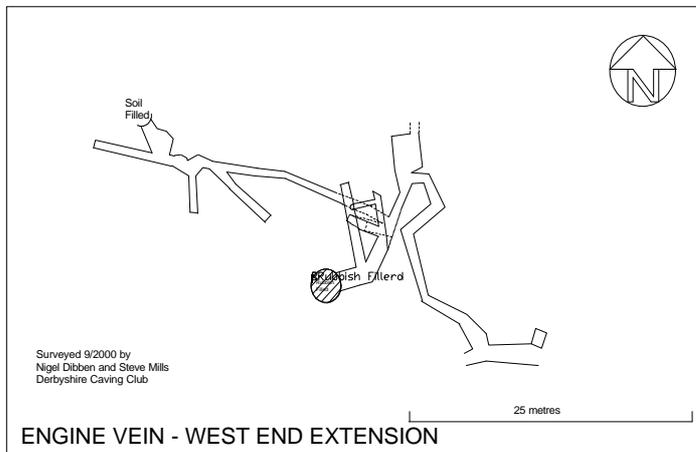
15 October	Practice Rescue at Alderley
5 November	DCRO training open day at Whitehall Centre
13 November	Committee Meeting
18 November	Curry evening in Stockport (see page 1)
11 December	ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING



Extension in Engine Ve

Work by Steve, Lee and others has opened up an extension of some 100 metres running 50 metres north-west of Balloon Shaft. The extension is partly on the north-south fault that has also been worked in the Cobalt Mine and partly on the east-west fault worked in Engine Vein. There are two shafts in the mine, one which is very shallow and is rubbish filled (late-Victorian) and the other which is earth filled and may

be about half way to Beacon Lodge. The appearance of the workings is similar to the Cobalt Mine and our first guess is that it dates from the 1805 – 1815 period when John Ashton and others were working the Edge for copper and later cobalt. The western end of the find would represent work trying to find a continuation of the Engine Vein copper. The find is still difficult to enter by anyone over average girth and we would like visits to be kept to a minimum until it has



been thoroughly photographed. There are NO tools or other items of interest in the workings. There are however some areas of loose roof which make them potentially dangerous.

Staffordshire Mines

Steve has also been busy at Limestone Hill in Staffordshire where an adit has been partly re-opened. More work is needed to pass a blocked shaft. There is a prospect of natural caverns as a substantial amount of water flows out of the adit. There is also some work to be done in Thors Wood where there is a 100m deep shaft and workings off it which have not yet been fully explored when Steve and Nigel visited the shaft 10 years ago.

Caving news

Is there any?? Nick and Simon have been tied up by family issues so the “hard” side has been quiet. Billy, Len and Nigel spent two weeks in Matienzo in early August (with Bill’s neighbour, Sue). Some work was done in a dig entered a few years ago but otherwise no new cave was found by the DCC contingent.

Richard Littleton

Richard, warden at Alderley Edge for nearly 20 years, leaves at the beginning of November. I think the club should do something to recognise his leaving such as a present. Do you agree and would you like to make a donation? If so, send it to me.

AND FINALLY ...

FRIENDLY FIRE?

During the later part of the twentieth century, K force was deployed to Kosova, on the 27th of April a large contingency of the D.C.C. Special Forces descended on Alderley edge, at approximately 7pm a barbecue was stated to feed the troops.

By the time light was fading, a few of the troops had got slightly nervy, this could have been down to a few sneak low level flights by a few daring bats that had circled the camp, at this point some rather large rockets soon put pay to there antics, and a medium barrage of air bombs made sure that they had left quickly via the woodland trees.



Rustling was soon heard near to the camp, and it may have been members of the under ground rabbit connection, who it is said, work close to the bats and sly fox, he is known to frequent the area with his side kick the artful owl, a decision was made to deploy a rather large ground to air barrage, the D.C.C. troops had positioned themselves on strategic seats disguised as garden deck chairs, Andy Burgess posing as club chairman and fire wutcher, sat his chair separate to the rest of his troops right next to a large bonfire in the centre of the camp.

The main group consisting of John Merriman, Charles Cleary, Christopher Wright (I'll keep digging for England), Ian Roberts, Anne (his other half) Mike Goodhall, Gareth Goodhall (bit shady), KERRY (the I am innocent honest!), Paul Stubbs (in charge of fireworks) sat in a row on the afore mentioned deck chairs.

The main battery of fireworks was lit, and paul beat a hasty retreat, the 100 shot rornan candle lit up the sky giving a good view of the sky and trees, no bats could be seen, and the following on set of 100 shot air bomb battery made sure that no rabbits, foxes or owls would stay around to spy on the camp. We must report at this point a fault in aiming occurred, friendly fire rained down in the camp narrowly missing Anne, who proceeded to throw herself at Ian, his chair fell over onto the others in the group and set up a domino effect, the last person in the line was John Merriman who was crushed and trodden on, Kerry,

Chris and Paul ran for cover at the back of the camp only to run further into the landing missiles.



As the smoke settled, Andy could be seen still sitting by the fire not having moved an inch but laughing quite happily to him self, as the troops regathered, one fatality was noted GRANNIES CHAIR it was soon discovered that John's grannies chair had been killed! Bent and twisted under the impact of so many bodies this poor thing had stood no chance at all a veteran of some forty years it had been felled in one fowl swoop

Urgent repairs were tried, but this bent sad old lady of the garden was beyond help, our deepest sympathy is sent to Grannies chair and her relatives we hope to hold a remembrance service at the September open day and black arm bands will be worn, we hope to hold a service in her honour, as it was the rest of the weekend went well if a little subdued due to this sad loss.

Reported on the spot by your travelling reporter,

PAUL STUBBS

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Worth that for the cable alone.