

# **BROWNLEY HILL MINE**

## **And Nentsberry Hags**

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Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> November 2003

Present: - Peter Dale, Duncan Jones

We planned to have an early start for this trip but due to unforeseen circumstances I overslept which meant we didn't leave till 5.40am! Still we made it to Nenthead by 7.30am and parked the car as near to the entrance as we could to save the walk. All changed and ready to go we set off towards the entrance a mere 100m from the car!

Entering the mine we were pleased at the warmth of the place since it was rather breezy outside, setting off down the entrance passage we strolled on towards the sound of a water fall. Reaching the first junction the water was flowing as usual to the left into a sump, which we looked down into (eerie!) but thankfully the sump was what was keeping the mine relatively dry! After looking at the sump we turned around and headed for our destination- Admiralty concession in Nentsbury hags mine. Unfortunately to get to it you have to climb down into hags mine and then after a lot of walking and wading there's a 70ft pitch to climb!

Reaching the bottom of the pitch we both looked up and I gave a reassuring tug on the rope to prove its safety! Since Dunc was faffing with his srt kit I started my ascent of the pitch and upon reaching the top I noted that the rigging was just as bad as bad as last time I was here. Dunc was soon at the top and commented on the rigging also, he was most impressed by the 6 belay points all to different lengths of scaffold pole and the old rail lines spanning the shaft all tied together with bits of tatty rope! We then headed for the climb up to the admiralty flats, a fun climb up poles and rock of 9m. Last time Neil bottled it on this climb!(and he said he was a mine explorer!) both at the top with no problems we started our hunt for witherite and Sphalerite and a nice find of galena mixed with Sphalerite was found in a large vug by Dunc. We even manage to squeeze into a rather cramped hole with some very nice specimens but with no way of getting them we had to leave them for next time. We then had a look around the rest of the flat and upon reaching the end of the passage we headed back to gather all our samples and pack them into the bags, the climb back down was entertaining as the bags nearly toppled me over a few times but both of us safely down we had a quick nosey of the lower workings and were lucky enough to find some Alstonite! We then headed for the pitch to take a few pictures of the shaft and then made our way back to the climb up into Brownley hill mine.

Climbing back up the dodgy ladders into Brownley Dunc took a few pictures and then we had a nosey around a few passages and then made our exit. Reaching the entrance to the mine we were pleased to see horizontal rain and gale force

winds! An inevitable quick change was made and a unanimous decision to abandon the smallcleugh trip was made. We than headed for home and I drifted in and out of sleep ending a very good trip to places not many know about or how to get to.

Peter Dale

*A [Black Rose Caving Club](#) trip report.*