

LANGSTROTH POT

Via a Hole in the Floor..

Date : 7th December 2013

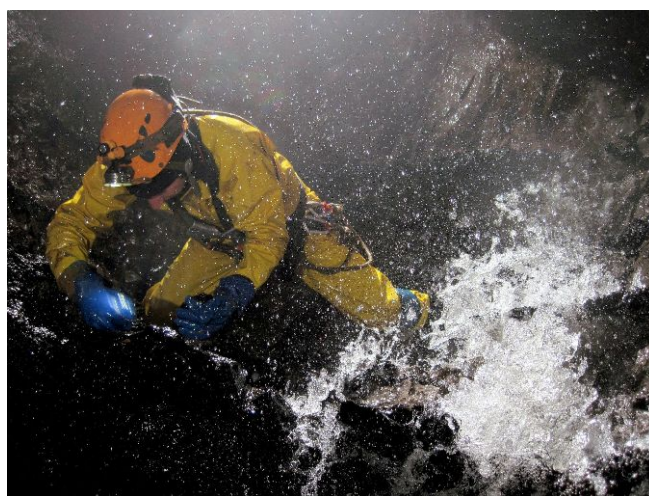
Present : Daniel Jackson, Alex Ritchie, Chris Sharman

Weather : Overcast

Myself and Chris Sharman met Alex at his house for the 40min drive to Langstrothdale. It had been raining overnight and the sky was overcast with showers forecast all day, so we spent a good while debating whether or not Langstroth Pot was a sensible option. In the end, given that heavy rain looked unlikely and the fact we were intending to avoid the long, low crawls encountered from the top entrance, we thought we'd give it a go.

Parked near the turn off to Yockenthwaite Farm from whence the requisite permissions were duly obtained. Alex had marked the grid coordinates (SD 8998 7880) of the Hole in the Floor entrance on a satellite printout and finding the entrance was easy. There was even a vaguely defined path to follow. We had been warned that this entrance might have collapsed/choked due to floods from the stream washing rubble in. Fortunately it was passable though great care was required on the climb down and the floor was covered in rubble and stones. (We met the original White Rose diggers in the pub afterwards who were pleased to hear it was still open, if a little less roomy than it used to be, but were concerned about the stability or a rather large rock that we hadn't noticed!)

The entrance crawl emerges just above the 4th pitch (which caused us some confusion as we thought it emerged above the 3rd!). After Alex had rigged without dropping any nuts or hangers whatsoever, we quickly made our way down the 5th, 6th (fun, wet free climb – see photos) and 7th pitches all of which were quite pleasant. According to NFTFH some of these pitches can be free climbed in dry weather, this definitely wasn't an option for us. Some of the pitches have recently been through-bolted (nuts but not hangers left in-situ) though not very well. All of the hangs went almost straight into the water. Most likely testament to the fact that the cave is usually done in drier and warmer conditions! Improving the bolting would be a nice little project if anyone has a decent drill to spare.



Just before the 7th pitch we climbed the inlet on the right as described in NFTFH. There is a small room with a pool before the 3m climb which is a convenient place to leave SRT kits as a few thrutchy bits follow. The effort is most definitely worth it though, as the chambers at the end contain some of the finest straws in the Dales.

After a good look around and some photo posing we made our way to the top of the last pitch from where the sump pool at the bottom can be seen. Again, the bolts had been placed so that the rope went straight into the water. This pitch was the biggest however and the water falling in a dense column, straight down where we would be prussicking back up. This, and the fact that the weather

wasn't great, meant we decided not to risk dropping it (as only myself and Chris were even considering diving the sump).



We quickly exited and decided to have a quick look at the bottom entrances and sumps. These can easily be located from the NHTFH map. The upper bottom entrance is only a minute from the sump. Feeling somewhat apprehensive, I donned my wet suit hood and started sorting my dive mask out but wait... oh no! The strap on my mask was broken! What a shame! Oh how heartbroken I was...we'd have to go to the pub instead! Chris had a quick look but the water was really cold. So pub it was. I do genuinely want to try the sumps though, preferably in warmer weather, and with a sturdier mask.

Chris had earlier informed us that the owner of The George Inn, a couple of minutes down the road, was a real prat. The new owner was clearly aware of this as a massive sign, informing the general public that it was under new management, had been draped over the side of the building. His endeavour was duly rewarded with our patronage and a fine pint was had in very pleasant surroundings (the building dates back to the 1600s) complemented by a nice chat with the original White Rose diggers of the Hole in the Floor entrance. All in all, a very jolly day out.

Daniel Jackson

Photos: Daniel Jackson

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