Cotgrave Closed After 32 Years

Also **Cotgrave** colliery (Nottinghamshire) **sunk in 1959-1962 by the National Coal Board**, **was closed after 32 years** when production ceased, also on **30th October 1992** but put on hold pending the investigations. However the colliery was abandoned at the end of **March 1993**. Production from the Blackshale seam, with 620 men, gave a total of 301,350 tonnes for the year.

Sinkers Came Mainly From Calverton

The sinkers came mainly from **Calverton** following the completion of work there. Site preparation had begun in**1954.**

Shaft positions E465113 N336420, E465205 N336387, 40m above sea level.

Shaft sinking in **1956** revealed

- 4th Waterloo / 1st Ell, 4ft (1.2m) at 510 yards (466m)
- Roof Soft / Deep Soft 5ft (1.5m) at 590 yards (540m)
- Deep Hard 4ft 6in (1.37m) at 600 yards (549m)
- Parkgate up to 5ft 0in (1.5m) at 625 yards (572m)
- Tupton 3ft 1in (0.94m) at 640 yards (585m)

- Blackshale / Ashgate 5ft 3in (1.6m) at 683 yards (624m), sump 684.5 yards (625.9m).

A cactus grab was used to load the shaft debris into kibbles, following the explosives being detonated.

Town and Country Planning Consent

Town and Country Planning Consent was required for both surface and underground workings and in**1971 for work inside the shaft pillar**.

The 2 shafts both 24 feet (7.3m) diameter, **No1** being 729 yards (666m) deep with freezing process to 126 yards (115m) and **No2** was 626 yards (572m) deep. Both shafts were initially lined with reinforced concrete to 275m and mass concrete to 625m. In spite of precautions taken during the construction of the shafts whilst sinking, parts of the concrete lining were attacked by the sulphates present in the strata and cast iron tubbing had to be installed through the water-bearing measures and additional reinforced concrete reducing the diameter of both shafts to 22’ 6” (6.86m).

Twin-Towered Headgears

The twin-towered headgears at 47 yards (43m) housed the 1,800 hp Koepe multi-rope winding engines with 15 ton skips at **No1** shaft. This tower housed 2 independently engines each powered by a 1,345 Kw electric motor giving 37 winds per hour, about 560 tonnes, each one operating a skip and a counter weight independently. The winding could be done either manually or automatically. Materials or 2 mine cars and manriding with 40 men x 2 decks at **No2 shaft** with a maximum winding speed of 11.3m per second.

Permanent headgears were completed **1958/59** as well as a fan drift at **No1 UC** shaft. Emergency shaft lighting by batteries was installed in **1958**. Temporary pithead baths were erected in **1958** and permanent ones in **1960**. Lord Robens **Chairman of NCB** visited the mine in **1961**. The official inauguration was by **Princess Margaret**. The colliery was first approved in **1954** with Stage II approval **1957** and it was over 9 years to first production. However the colliery never lived up to expectations and overall lost money. A new village was built with all recreational facilities to house the workforce with many men coming from the **closed pits in the North East**.

Correlation of the workings were carried out in **1961** by Weisbach triangles at **No2** shaft and in **1964** by single wire in **No1** shaft and 2 wires in **No2** shaft to fix to NMG (National Metric Grid) for first time and in **1972** using wires and check using a Gyro-theodolite and agreed on an existing underground base to 40 seconds of arc with the pit bottom position using a Wild Auto-plummet at **No2** shaft and a further check bearing on inbye bases in **1991** using the Gyro theodolite. A check levelling of the shaft depth agreed to 8” (0.201m) at **No1** shaft in **1976** and **No2** in **1977** using (electronic) EDM instrument. An unusual method of identifying theodolite stations underground was by each successive number starting at No1 and continuing as No 301, No 580 and No 1052 for example.

Underground locos: 2’ 6” gauge

- 2 x 4wDMF 48DLZ 1961, 0-6-0 DMF 100hp HC 1963
- 2 x 0-6-0 DMF 100hp HC 1964
- 2 x 4wDHF 28hp HE 1973
- 4WDHF 28hp

HE 1979.

Seams worked: Headings from shaft **1958** at 30’ 0” (9.1m) above Deep Soft. Production started with the Deep Soft **Jan 1964**-26/1/**1979** (excessive floor lift, causing the seam to be abandoned) and continued with a pit bottom in Deep Hard. This seam was worked Jan **1968**-**1990** and trials in the Parkgate -7/5/**1977**. Blackshale abandoned 16th October**1992**.

All The Coal Went To The CEGB Ratcliffe On Soar Power Station

All the coal went to the **CEGB Ratcliffe on Soar Power Station** with trains shuttling back and forth, it being the first pit sunk south of the **River Trent**. Geological problems were experienced in **1988** and by Feb **1989** the pit had lost 11m in 9 months and it was proposed that 500 jobs had to go. First 1million tons in **1968/69**, with a total of 1,037,552 tons, produced by 1,316 men. Maximum output 1,056,788 tons and maximum manpower 1,808 in**1977/78**.

Modern systems of work were introduced and in **1986** there was 6 faces working, 5 in Deep Hard and one in Blackshale on 15 machine shifts. However the loader gates lips were bored and fired and the gateside

packs put on by hand! Chainless SERDS power loaders were in use and the stables eliminated by the shearers. A nucleonic sensor to keep the machine drum from cutting into the roof above the seam is shown in the photograph.

Heavy duty self advancing hydraulic powered supports were introduced and monolithic packing as an experiment. Dosco road headers were used for roadway development. Coal was transported from the faces by 900mm gate conveyors onto 1050mm trunk conveyors to a 200 tonnes horizontal bunker directly feeding the skip pockets. Several inbye horizontal bunkers and a 1,000 tonnes capacity vertical bunker controlled the flow of the run of mine. Large battery-operated locos were used for manriding and supplies haulage. One panel in Deep Hard approached within the curtilage of Tollerton airfield and close watch was kept for signs of subsidence that could affect air transport.

Roof bolting for Deep Hard **H65s** face salvage and gates was done just prior to closure.

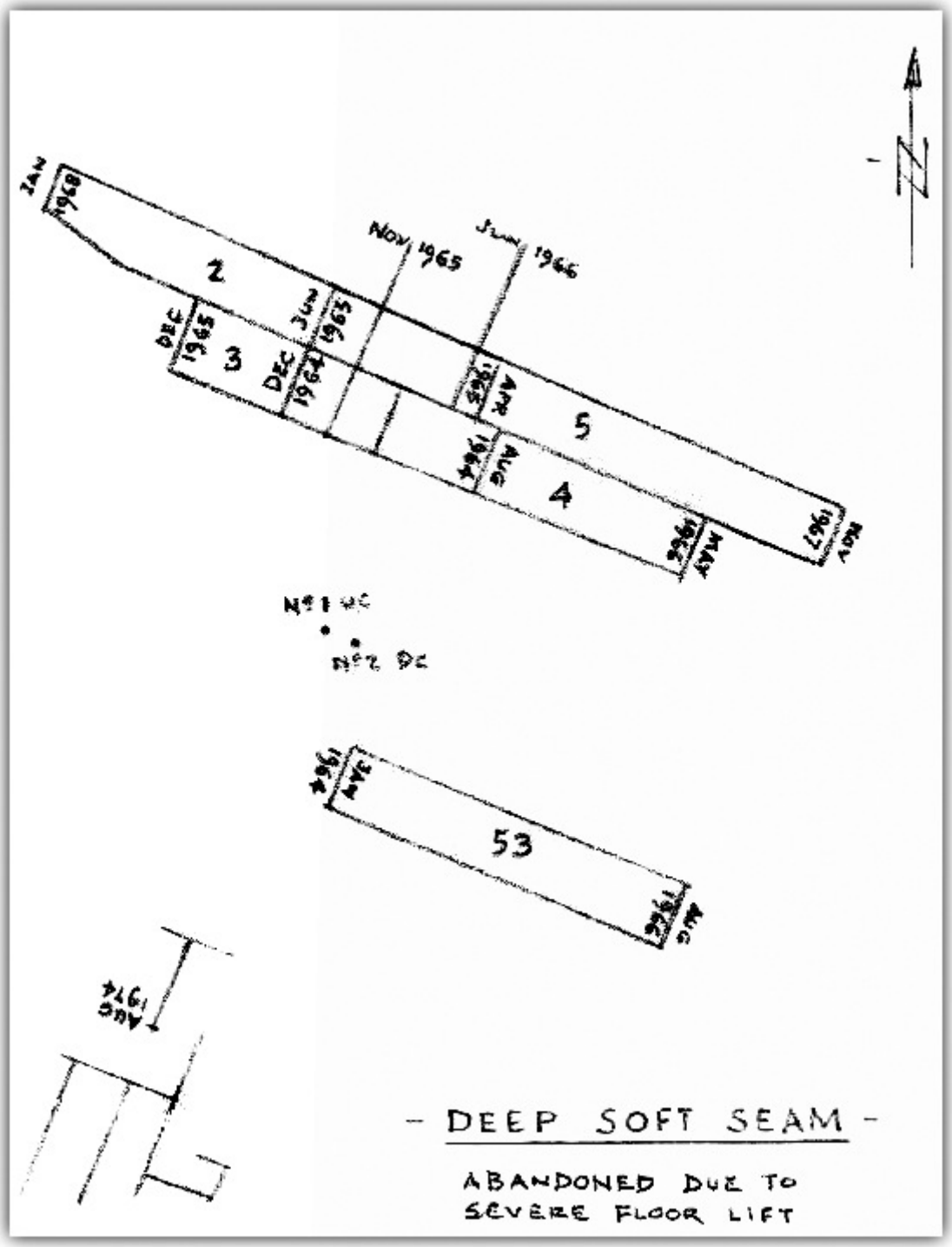
At the surface the run of mine was fed into a 750 tonnes bunker and regulated to the coal prep plant at 550 tonnes per hour. Dirt disposal was by TS14 20 tonnes capacity motorised scrapers to 2 sites and a conveyor delivered dirt to a third site. Slurry lagoons were constructed. Out of the total 199 hectares available for tipping some 42 hectares was let to local farmers and 26 hectares of land had been restored to farm land by **1986**. The system was ongoing even after the pit had closed.

Cotgrave was an isolated pit not connected to any other and 560m away to the west at the closest point from abandoned workings at **Clifton**. Around 3 gallons per minute of nuisance water was pumped to the surface, static head 573m from below Deep Hard and discharged into the defunct **Grantham Canal**.

5 panels in Deep Soft:

- **53s** - Jan **1964** working South East - Mar **1966**
- **4s** - Aug **1964** South East - Nov **1967**
- **3s** - Nov **1964** North West - Dec **1965**
- **5s** - Apr **1965** South East - Aug **1966**

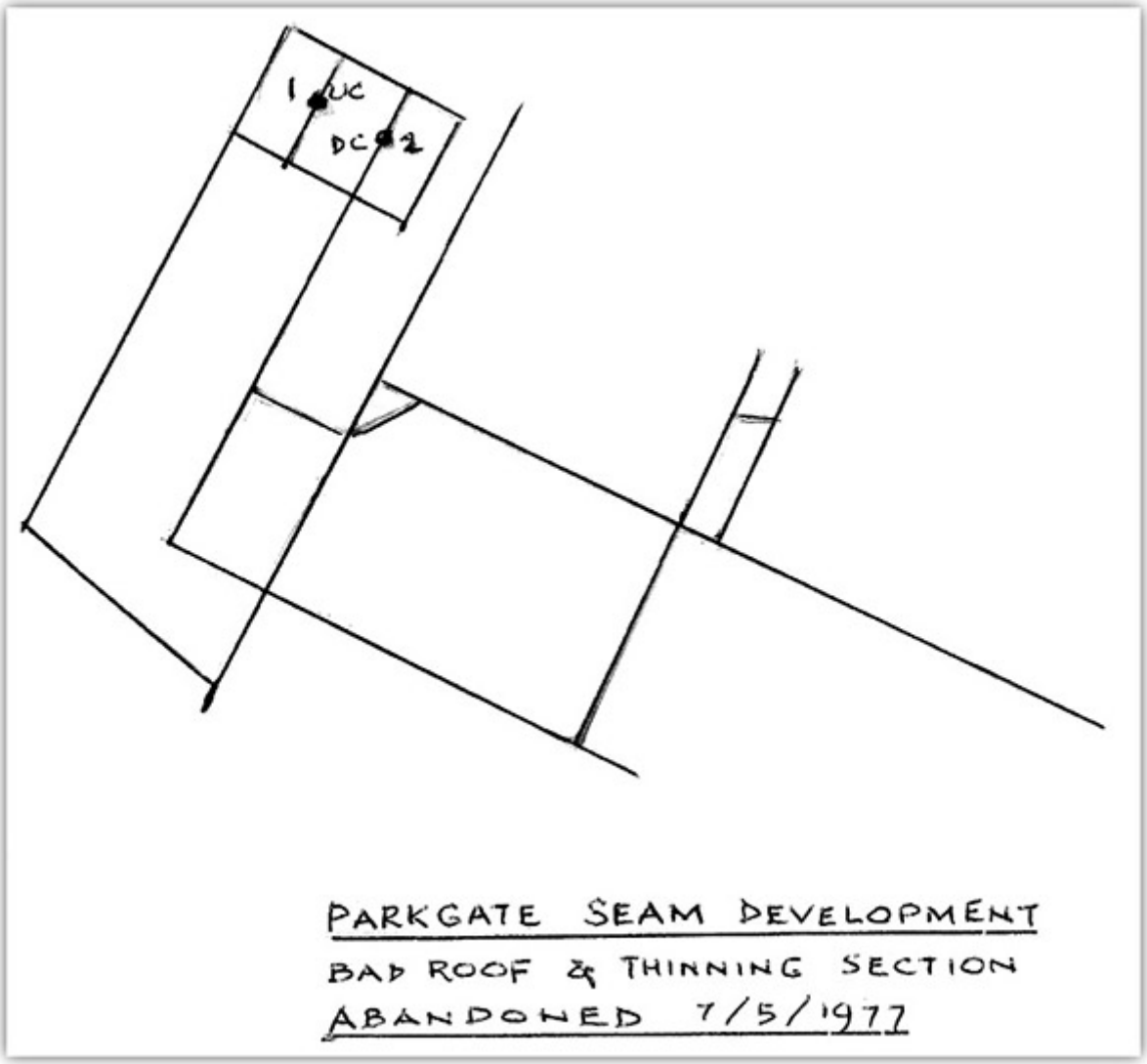
- **2s** - June **1965** North West - Jan **1968**. Excessive floor lift caused the seam to be abandoned.



Cotgrave Closed After 32 Years

- Continued -

In **1981** a major project to the East of the shafts with 2 drifts down 1in4 some 405m to exploit the Parkgate was abandoned due to bad roof conditions and thinning seam section.

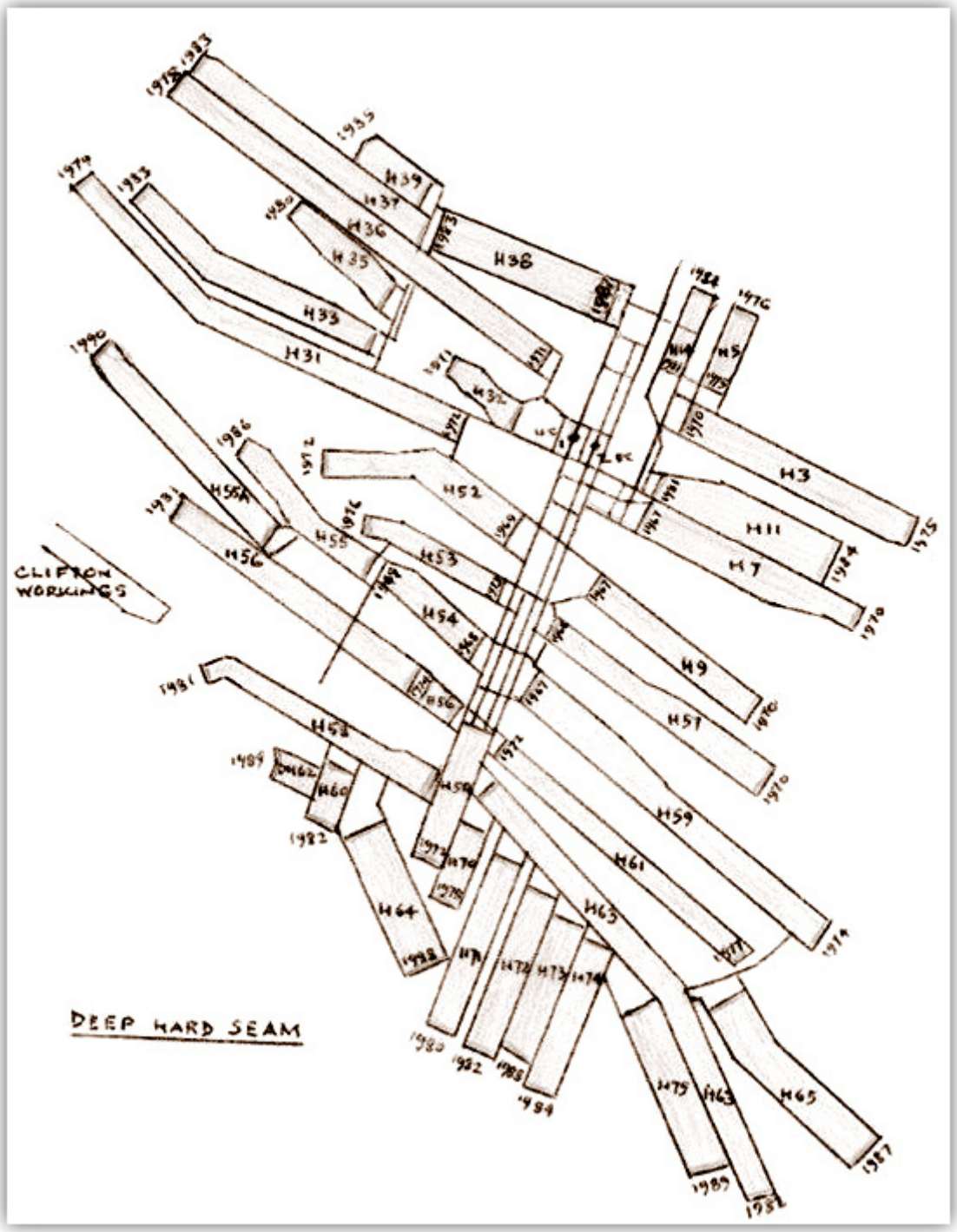


40 panels in Deep Hard: developed by drifts down from Deep Soft roadways. The first face **57s** starting in**1965**. The seam was riddled with faulting, resulting in most of the panels having to turn or shorten down or stop short.

- **H3s** working South East July **1970** - Apr **1975**
- **H5s** North East July **1975** - Oct **1976**

- **H7s** South East May **1967** - Nov **1970**
- **H9s** South East May **1967** - Dec **1970**
- **H11s** South East Apr **1981** - Jan **1984**
- **H14s** North East Feb **1981** - Jan **1984**
- **H31s** North West Nov **1972** - May **1979**
- **H32s** North West Apr **1970** - Nov **1971**
- **H33s** North West Mar **1979** - turn North Sep **1981** - June **1983**
- **H35s** North West June **1978** - Sep **1980**
- **H36s** North West Nov **1971** - June **1978**
- **H37s** North West Sep **1980** - Oct **1983**
- **H38s** South East May **1983** - Oct **1987**
- **H39s** North West Mar **1984** - Nov**1985**
- **H50s** South West Aug **1966** - Apr **1967**
- **H50s** rehead Mar **1970** - June **1972**
- **H52s** North West turn W Jan **1969** - Nov **1972**
- **H53s** North West Aug **1973** - Sep **1976**
- **H54s** North West Feb **1968** - July **1969**
- **H55s** North West Aug **1982** - Feb **1986**
- **H55sA** North West Feb **1988** - Oct **1990**, passed beyond T and CP boundary
- **H56s** North West Feb **1973** - Jan **1974**
- **H56s** North West rehead - June **1981**
- **H57s** South East May **1966** - Mar **1970**
- **H58s** North West Oct **1976** - Oct **1981** swung left 80 degrees
- **H59s** South East Dec **1967** - July **1974**
- **H60s** South West short life Nov **1981** - Feb **1982**
- **H61s** South East Apr **1972** - Feb **1977**
- **H62s** North West swung 90 degrees Nov **1988** Sep **1989**. The seam was abandoned Sep **1990** due to economics and bad geology
- **H63s** South East swung SSE - **Jan 1982**
- **H64s** South East - **Feb 1988**
- **H65s** South South East swung to SE - **June 1987**
- **H70s** South - **Sep 1978**
- **H71s** South - **Sep 1980**
- **H72s** South - **May 1982**
- **H73s** South - **Nov 1988**
- **H74s** South - **Apr 1984**

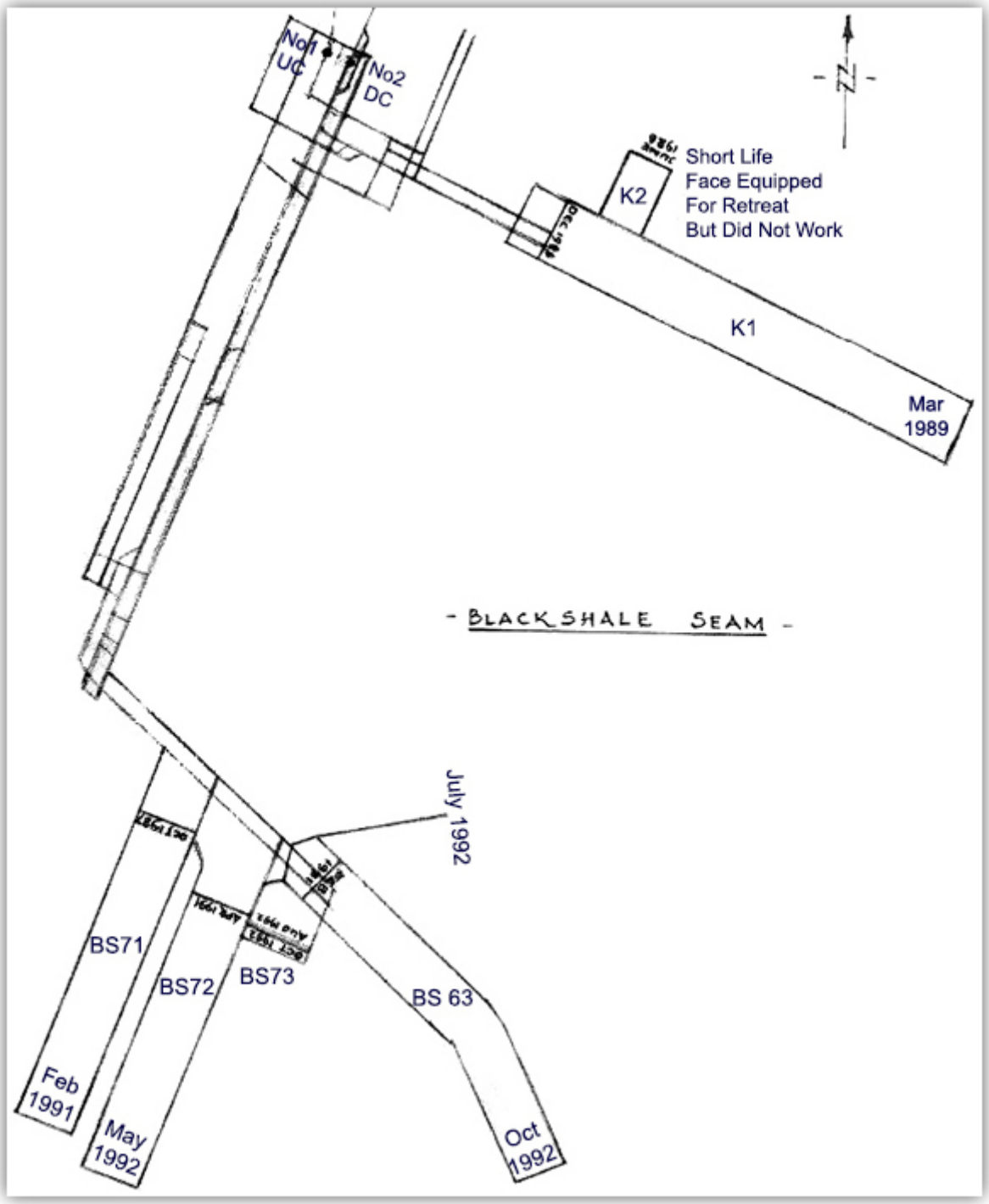
- **H75s** South East - **Feb 1989**
- **H55sA** salvage completed by 30/10/**1990**.



6 panels in Blackshale accessed from Deep Hard roads starting with

- **K1** working SE 12th Dec **1985 -** 8th Mar **1989**

- **K2** dev NE June **1987 -** June **1988**, short life for retreat, face equipped but did not work.
- **BS71** SW 24th Oct **1987 -** 15th Feb **1991**
- **BS63** SE 7th Feb **1991 -** 16th Oct **1992**
- **BS72** SW 15th Apr **1991 -** 1st May **1992**
- **BS73** SW 10th Aug **1992 -** 16th Oct **1992** **production at the colliery ceased**



A vertical bunker 33m deep was constructed in the pit bottom in **1983**.

Tonnage and Manpower NCB: **No6 Area EMD**:

- **1955**: prep sinking 30 men
- **1956**: 128 men
- **1957**: 179 tons, 198 men
- **1958**: 120 tons, 215 men
- **1959**: Deep Soft dev 421 tons, 238 men
- **1960**: nil tons, 200 men
- **1961**: nil tons, 182 men
- **1962**: 93 tons, 278 men
- **1963**: nil tons, 496 men
- **1963/64**: Deep Soft start Jan **1964**, 18,475 tons, 596 men
- **1964/65**: DS, 276,397 tons, 850 men
- **1965/66**: DS 566,739 tons, Deep Hard entry, 1,080 men
- **1966/67**: DH, DS, 614,752 tons, 1,112 men

South Nottinghamshire Area:

- **1967/68**: DH, DS, 693,957 tons, 1,279 men
- **1968/69**: DH, Deep Soft abandoned, 1,037,552 tons, 1,316 men
- **1969/70**: DH, 1,042,417 tons, 1,515 men
- **1970/71**: DH, 968,434 tons, 1,486 men
- **1971/72**: DH, 876,560 tons, 1,438 men
- **1972/73**: DH, 955,186 tons, 1,500 men
- **1973/74**: DH, 745,796 tons, Parkgate entry then abandoned, 1,505 men
- **1974/75**: DH, 915,622 tons, 1,534 men
- **1975/76**: DH, 994,495 tons, 1,677 men
- **1976/77**: DH, 1,012,280 tons, 1,714 men
- **1977/78**: DH, 1,073,749 tonnes, (1,056,788 tons), 1,808 men
- **1978/79**: DH, 1,154,570 tonnes, 1,778 men
- **1979/80**: 1,114,380 tonnes, 1,782 men
- **1980/81**: DH, 1,186,369 tonnes, **1,822 men (max)**
- **1981/82**: DH, 1,204,776 tonnes, 1,809 men (profit £4.096m)
- **1982/83**: Deep Hard, **1,238,506 tonnes (max)**, 1,808 men (profit £6.465m)

- **1983/84**: DH, 1,062,842 tonnes, 1,734 men (profit £715,000)
- **1984/85**: DH, 778,435 tonnes, Blackshale entered, 1,668 men (loss £7,852m)
- **1985/86**: DH, Blackshale start 1,180,134 tonnes, 1,647 men

British Coal

- **1986/87**: DH, BS, 1,152,704 tonnes, 1,592 men (loss £1.560m)
- **1987/88**: DH, BS, 1,000,252 tonnes, 1,417 men (loss £9.941m)
- **1988/89**: DH, BS, 889,520 tonnes, 591 men (loss £9.480m)
- **1989/90**: DH, BS, 611,226 tonnes, ? men
- **1990/91**: Deep Hard finished, BS, 589,319 tonnes, ? men
- **1991/92**: BS, 902,441 tonnes, 646 men down to 496 u/g, 75 s/f plus 52 under officials and 27 WPIS staff
- **1992/93**: Blackshale 301,350 tonnes. Coal face workers 156, Development 4, Roads 9, Salvage 0, Others 314, Surface 100.

Colliery closed 13th October 1992 but not abandoned until March **1993**. Shaft filling commenced 30/9/**1993** and was completed 3/11/**1993**. **Cotgrave lost money overall in it's life.**

Managers for **Cotgrave**:

- W Alan Jones (Agent Manager) 1957-1963
- Ken Butt ** (4675) 1964-1971 (Agent Manager, General Manager, promoted to Production Manager)
- Ken J Simmons (6132) 1971-1975 (General Manager, promoted to Production Manager **South Nottinghamshire** 1975-1982)
- Arthur Townsend (6400) 1976-1986 (General Manager transferred from **Brookhill**)
- David S Crisp (9601) 1986-1987 (General Manager transferred from Manager **Bentinck**, promoted to Production Manager)
- Howard G Awbery (10648) 1987-1988 (transferred from **Bentinck**, promoted to Production Manager **South Midlands Area**, later Senior Directing staff at the **Vache**, appointed Head of Management Centre **Bretby**)
- David M Betts (10958) 1988 (transferred from Manager **Creswell**, transferred to **Asfordby**)

- Reg J Fitzpatrick (10961) (promoted from Deputy Manager **Rufford**) 1988- Apr 1989 (whilst I was there on the third day of the colliery valuation Tuesday 9th April 1989 he was called from the meeting and arrested by the Police over personal matters and locked up and later sacked)
- Colin Stocks (11030) 1989-1992 (transferred from **Blidworth** after closure, transferred to **Sherwood** and**Creswell**)
- Steve Wright (9981) (transferred from **Creswell** for **closed colliery**). Derek R Bell (10149) signed Blackshale abandonment plan Nov 1993.

Deputy Managers:

- Ken J Simmons (6132) (promoted to Manager) 1966-1972
- Tom A Rainford (8679) 1969-1984 (promoted from **Bestwood**, transferred to **Area HQ** -1987)
- John Gospel (11031) 1984-1988
- Mike W Stephenson (9999) 1988-1989, retired.

Assistant Managers:

- Mike Stevenson (8343) 1976-
- Dave A Marriott **** (9489) 1986- Colin E Dennis 1986-1988 and A Rodgers, R Hopps was Assistant to the Manager in 1977.

Undermanagers for Cotgrave:

- William Crompton (8149) -1965
- Geoff Franklin Mee (7699) 1965-1967
- Mike Stevenson (8343) promoted to Assistant Manager) 1967-1976
- Ged Morgan (8335) 1970-1972
- Des A Marriott (9489) (promoted to Assistant Manager) 1972-
- Colin Kenny (8894) 1976-(transferred to **Gedling**)
- MW Randle (10948) 1982-1985 (transferred to Undermanager **Gedling**)
- K Swinscoe (9985) 1982-1984
- Keith Tait (8947) 1985-1987
- John C Nicholson (10370) (transferred from **Gedling**) 1986-1988

- Paul G Shorthouse (11369) (transferred to **Rufford**) 1988-1989
- Chris J Daniels (12111) 1988 (promoted from Assistant Undermanager **Ollerton**, promoted to Assistant Manager **Bilsthorpe**, later Manager **Clipstone**, and **Hatfield** (RJ Budge and Russian Consortium)
- Tim J Fifoot (11815) (transferred from **Gedling**, transferred to **Harworth**, later Manager) 1988-1990
- Martin P Hopkinson (11...) (promoted from **Ollerton**) 1989-1992 (left industry, later Safety Engineer Staythorpe Power Station)
- Trevor Haywood (11133) (demoted from **Thoresby**) 1989-1993
- Russ J Nevin (11878) (promoted from **Ollerton**) 1993.

Surveyors:

- Stan J French (3622) 1957-1985?
- John Stapleton (5...) 1985?-1992 (promoted from **Mansfield**, transferred to **Ollerton**)
- Steve T Barnes (6278) 1992-1993 (promoted from **Bevercotes**, transferred back to**Bevercotes** as Surveyor on closure)
- John Potts (5611) Deputy, appointed temporarily at finish in 1993.

Nursing Sisters: included

- Mary Shipman (transferred from **Wollaton**)
- Joan Cowlishaw.

Fatal Accidents Cotgrave:

- Aston Knight (37) fell from winding tower 9/7/1959, died 11/7/1959
- David Walter Brown (28) electrocuted on the surface 5/12/1961
- William Patrick Padden (46) fell down the shaft whilst carrying out repairs, when the platform tilted suddenly 7/4/1962. Possible brake or failure on the sinking engine.
-  **Harry (Toby) Adin Taylor** (42) Area Shaft Engineer, fell down the shaft, found at the bottom of the sump 13/7/1965, nobody knows how or why.
- Charles Edward Woodward (48) fell into machinery, 16/10/1965

- Alex Massie (?) head crushed by machine whilst leaning over the Ranging Drum Shearer to see why the cowel had staked, when reversing the machine it was released suddenly, 8/12/1977
- William Robert Cummings (45) 1982
-  **Steven Henrye Wieczorek** (26) face trainee, caught by cutting machine whilst illegally riding on the armoured face conveyor 9/4/1983
- J Wildeman (?) ...1984
-  **Stuart Martin** (28) Chargeman electrician electrocuted underground 2/9/1989. He carried out all the necessary checks and locked off the equipment with 2 locks. He isolated a set of main feeder panels at 3.3kv rating and removed the front of one to change a part but did not realise it was a ring main and the other side of the panel was still live. The investigation into the unfortunate incident revealed several failings in the operation of such and following on from this various safety devices and new equipment was installed and the old design panels were phased out so that a similar incident could not happen in future.

Incidents at Cotgrave: One heating in 1986/1987.