

Norsk Grotteblad nr 29, Desember 1994

Tunneldykking 8. november 1880

Tunnel diving November 8th 1880

Cave diving is not a common activity in Norway, while England is one of the leading countries in this sport. Martin Farr, one of the most experienced cave divers in the world, has written a book about the history and development of the sport. He introduces people who were far in advance of their time.

In 1880 the Great Western Railway Company began digging a tunnel under the Severn estuary to shorten the journey between London and South Wales. After seven years of work they struck a water reservoir which flooded the tunnel. To proceed they had to use divers. H.Fleuss had made a self-supplying breathing apparatus that allowed the reuse of oxygen. Alexander Lambert was given the job, which he managed using equipment in an experimental stage of development and without a back-up system. A path-breaking achievement the consequences of which he doubtless could not have imagined.