

POT-HOLE RESCUE:

Two hundred and fifty expert potholers - enthusiasts who make a hobby of exploring underground caves - gather on Great Whernside mountain. But this is no holiday for them; it's a rescue mission. They are tackling Providence Pot - the entrance to Dow Gill Cave. If they succeed in their task, those ambulances may be needed. For two girls and four boys from a Bradford college are missing somewhere in that 300-foot depth - trapped between the flooded cave bottom and a rock-fall in the tunnel. Work goes on all day and far into the night to find the six youngsters who tried a descent no experienced potholer would have dreamed of making in winter.

And here's one of them, safe and sound - 20-year-old Peter Blackburn who was exploring for a way out when the rescuers cleared the rockfall and found him. And here's 19-year-old Joan Smith, who says: "We sang, marched, and slapped ourselves to keep warm. We weren't frightened".

In fact, it was the rescuers who were most anxious - because they knew the dangers of Dow Gill Cave, and they described the rescue as "the longest and most expensive we have ever done".

Eighteen-year-old Michael Casalet comes to the surface - like the others, he's cold and weary after two and a half days underground, but he's unharmed. And here comes the youngest of the party - 16-year-old Christine Woodward. Says Christine: "We never worried - though it was a bit grim at times". Say the rescuers: "It was sheer folly, and the six of them are lucky to be alive!"