

Diamond Drill

Out of the Past

September 8, 1960

Twenty five miners on their way to the surface after putting in an eight hour shift at the Bristol Mine Northwest of Crystal Falls were stranded for more than six hours after a Wisconsin Michigan Power Company power failure. The miners were in the process of being hauled to the surface in a double deck cage and were 150 feet above the thousand foot level when the power failure occurred. The cage and hoists at the Bristol are counterbalanced rather than suspended and with the release of the hoisting cable brake the men were lowered to the 10th level for what was expected to be a “short time” before power the power was resumed. With no power underground the battery powered helmet lights provided the only illumination in the totally dark underground space. After unanticipated problems and miscommunications the short wait extended to six hours. The stranded men decided to wait below instead trying to climb the 1,000 foot emergency ladder to the surface. The miners were in no worse for wear and viewed the incident as just a break in their normal routine.