

MENDIP CAVING GROUP.

NEWSLETTER No. 25.

July 1964

From The Meet Secretary:Forthcoming Meets.

July 11th./12th.

August Hole. Digging in the Oxbows. If the building of the club lodge has commenced by this date, the meet may be cancelled.

July 18th./19th.

Coopers Hole. Digging.

August 29th./30th.

South Wales. Ogof Ffynnon Ddu and Pwll Pant Mawr.

Accommodation has been booked at the luxurious H.Q. of the South Wales Caving Club at Penwyllt.

October 17th./18th.

Rescue Practice - South Wales. This year the annual London Cave Rescue Organisation practice rescue will be from Agen Allwedd. The usual good turnout of M.C.G. members is anticipated.

October 30th./November 1st.

A proposed weekend course on the origin and development of British caves to be held at Keele University, Staffordshire.

November 14th.

C.R.G. Annual General Meeting at Skipton, Yorkshire. The

M.C.G. is a member club of C.R.G. and all members are invited to attend.

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It is obviously useless to ask members to give me notice of their intentions regarding the Meet Programme so perhaps I can ask you all to read the above dates carefully, then if I can get around to wasting my time asking members, maybe you will know what meets I am referring to. The spelological course at Keele University sounds very interesting and members interested are urged to keep in touch with the Hon. Meet Secretary for bookings and subsequent travelling arrangements. August Hole digging is another worthy cause, as is also the Coopers Hole dig. I shall be glad to explain what is being attempted in August Hole to cavers in good health, with their assistance, and guarantee a return to the surface in time for a trip to the well-known drinking fountain. Any members who have been with the club for about four years will gladly explain the Coopers Hole situation and give at least twenty reasons why he personally is unable to dig there. Dave Mitchell will give a similar explanation but will sound enthusiastic and will give a personal and very able demonstration of Coopers Hole as she should be dug. You dig?

Suggestions for a club fortnight meet next year have not been exactly numerous. From random exploration of the matter it would appear that a meet in County Clare, Southern Ireland would receive some support. The caves in this area (Slieve Elva Plateau) are long, interesting, clean, vaguely horizontal and numerous - what more need I say - sorry Pat, draught Guinness of course. The cost will be about £25 inclusive if we camp or hire a sort of "club" cottage which exists in the area. More comfort, at slightly more cost, may be had at the Savoy Hotel, Lisdoonvanna, from £8 - 0 - 0 per week. No dates have been suggested so far so now is the time to press your own preference. Names of those genuinely interested now please. Booking crossings to Eire is very tricky and should be made before the end of the year to be sure of a place, so don't just waft all this aside and then ask me next January for a place. If the expense worries you we may be able to set up a weekly contribution scheme for say 10/0 amounts; in which case the Hon. Meet Sec. and wife will be safely in the Bahamas before the boat leaves for Eire.

A, J, K.

SEQUEL TO THE C.R.G. MEET AT WELLS.To: The Mendip Caving Group.

On behalf of the Cave Research Group, may I thank you all for your help in arranging the recent meeting at Wells.

This was I feel, a great success and due in no small measure to the cheerful and efficient way in which you all assisted. I would particularly like to thank both M. Mee and Mr. Knibbs for their active help in arranging the excellent dinner, to mention just one detail.

If the Cave Research Group is well served by the support of the Mendip Caving Group then the latter is indeed fortunate in its choice of officers.

Yours sincerely,

ALAN W. ASHWELL.

## BOOK BARGAINS.

"Caves Of Mendip," the standard guidebook and a similar guide to Welsh caves, "Caves in Wales and the Marches" are now available to members at special rates. Apply to Pedro.

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## WEEKEND LECTURE COURSE AT KEELE.

A weekend residential course on THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPEMENT OF CAVES IN BRITISH LIMESTONE is to be held at the University of Keele, Staffordshire over the weekend October 30th./ November 1st. 1964.

Accomodation, meals and tuition are available at an inclusive fee of £2. 17. 6. or instruction is available to a limited number of campers at fee of 10/- (individual meals being bought by arrangements).

This course may be heavily booked an early application is essential. Forms (available from Pedro) should be returned accompanied by a non-returnable deposit of 10/- by July 16th.1964.

The programme is as follows:

Friday. (evryone is expected in time for supper at 7p.m.)

Introduction (David Cons, chairman C.R.G.)

### Saturday.

A.M. THEORY: Geology of limestone areas (Dr.T.D.Ford, lecturer at Leicester University)  
Caves and landscape (Dr.G.T.Warwick, lecturer U. of Birmingham)

Types of Cave (Dr.Warwick)

### P.M. OBSERVATION.

How to study a cave and Methods of Measurement and Survey.  
(Dr.Warwick and C.L.Railton, foreign sec.CRG)

### Sunday.

#### A.M. THEORY AND APPLICATION.

Theory of cave formation with reference to examples in South Wales and Yorkshire. (C.L.Railton and J.Myers)

SPECIAL NOTE FOR M.C.G. MEMBERS. Breakfast is served daily at 8.30 a.m.

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## A SUPER CAVING ORGANISATION - OR NOT?.

A discussion was held at the last M.C.G. general meeting to decide whether or not the group should support or encourage the formation of national or regional caving organisations. There have been a number of developements since then, and they are outlined here.

The Council of Northern Caving Clubs (of which the M.C.G. is an associate member with voting rights) has circulated all caving clubs in the country asking (1) Is a national caving body necessary? (2) Should there be regional caving bodies based on the main areas? (3) Are clubs prepared to join together for this purpose, or adapt existing groups?

First opinions sent to the Council favour a national body run regionally by a new association, or those existing. The objects of the new group are obscure, but their principal aims would seem to be co-ordinating access questions and advising outside organisations on training.

It should be appreciated that this idea comes from the North of England, where relations with landowners are less friendly than in the south. For example, a landowner recently "blew up" the entrance to a cave to prevent its further use after an accident. It is thought by some that a national body might be a more influential negotiator and perhaps bring pressure to bear on the Government or some other body to preserve caves as "places of national interest"

A number of Mendip clubs feel that this national body, if formed, would interfere with their internal organisation and some ways a north-south battle is beginning. There is a proposal to form a "COUNCIL OF SOUTHERN CAVING CLUBS", of all groups 'south of the Trent' to negotiate with the northerners.

Your committee has asked the leading lights of the proposed CSCC to call a meeting to discuss aims and objects and we have said that we do not wish to see north-south warfare develop.

Proposal that either the Cave Research Group or the British Speliological Association should be the new national body has been discouraged as the CRG's constitution limits its activities to "research" and the BSA has individuals as members as well as clubs, and this is thought unsuitable.

Personally, I expect that regional bodies will come into being, whatever we think, and ultimately national bodies too. We must make sure that they serve a useful purpose and do not interfere with clubs' internal affairs.

B.M.

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The following were made probationary members of the club at the last committee meeting (June 22nd.) :

Mrs. Penny Munt.  
Lew Pearson.  
Alan Waters.

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CLUB FINANCES. as at June 22nd.

The Cottage Purchase Fund now holds £144 - 3 - 9.  
The General Fund has £40 - 11 - 6.

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SURVEYS.

All members are reminded that cave surveys of all the major caves of Mendip are available. As Mike Rennie is unable to attend our Thursday meetings, Barrie has agreed to supply these.

PLANNING PERMISSION FOR COTTAGE.

Planning permission has at last been received for our new H.Q. at the Stirrup Cup, and building will be commencing on the weekend of July 11th/12th.

The foundations have been virtually completed thanks mainly to the marathon efforts of Simon and Peter over many recent weekends.

SOUTH WALES TRIP, WEEKEND JUNE 27TH, 28th.

In the early hours of Saturday morning we arrived on the tramway, Darling Pedro, Joan, Ottie, Mike and Lew'n'Al were already in residence. Ian, Gorgeous Fitzgibbon and two scots, Dog and Dick arrived soon afterwards, G.F. clutching a handful of his inevitable bread-pudding. After a swift lubrication session taken under the pretext of obtaining passes for the cave the party assembled and entered Agen Allwedd at about 3p.m. minus me who ate two Swiss rolls while they were away. Pedro and Barrie did valuable service guiding the party through the entrance series, but shortly after reaching the main stream way they were seized with violent pains due to caving during opening-hours, and so were escorted from the cave by Joan. The rest went on to reach a little further than Turkey Pool. The return trip was quite eventful, hon. leader managed to lose the way three times, G.F. and Mike's cells were running low, the reason for not going any further, and to cap it all Pete's Ammo box exploded (estimated 10 megatons) reducing him and Leakey, who was immediately behind him to shaking wrecks..... they were lucky to escape an accident, the moral being Do Not, Under Any Circumstances, Put Charged Carbide Lamps into Ammo Boxes, particularly if they have been in use. I think the whole party was glad to sign out at the entrance at about 11.30p.m. after a very enjoyable trip. P.S.

Dog and Dick scouts, not scots.

P.M.

TACKLEMASTER.

Gear left at the old cottage has STILL not been claimed. Club is buying twelve carbide lamps which will be available in the near future.

NEWSLETTERS.

All articles for the next newsletter must have been given in by Thursday, 23rd. July for publication by Thursday, 30th. July. Please send or give them to Penny Munt, "The Cedars" Upper Butts, Brentford, ISLeworth 8460.