

MENDIP CAVING GROUP.

NEWSLETTER NO. 53.

JANUARY, 1967.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

Notice. The Annual General Meeting of the Mendip Caving Group will be held at the Cottage, Nordrach-on-Mendip on Saturday, March 4th, 1967. The annual dinner will take place in the evening. Apply to Pedro for details.

Election. An election will be held for all seven committee posts. Certain officers do not wish to stand for any post this year, and others do not wish to stand for their present posts. The posts to be contested are:

Secretary  
Treasurer  
Meet Secretary  
Cottage Warden  
Editor  
Recorder and Librarian  
Tacklemaster

Assistant Editor (not committee post)

Auditors (2)

Nominations. Full members may nominate members for these posts. They should be delivered (in writing) to reach the Secretary by Thursday, February 16th. Nominations will not be accepted unless the prior consent of the nominee has been obtained.

Postal Votes. Applications for postal votes must reach the Secretary by Feb. 16th.

CLUB NEWS.

Jugosl via, 1967. The following is a list of 18 names of those who are going to Yugoslavia this summer;

P. Mathews	P. Virgo	B. Hillman	R. Charnock
S. Knight	J. Virgo	S. Killingbeck	P. Charnock
M. Brace	M. Lovell	J. Seath	B. Pittman
A. Wicks	R. Wallington	P. Walsh	C. Fry
M. Quartermain	G. Jones		

Up to six more people can be accommodated but time is getting short so, if your name isn't here and you'd like to come, please advise me of any addition before March 31st. It is proposed to obtain a deposit of £5 per traveller payable by March 31st, unless a good reason is given, so start hoarding your money right now. The deposit will be paid to the coach driver to assist with the cost of the Channel crossing; Dover - Ostend.

Tony Knibbs.

Finances. On 9th. January there was £64 in the Land Purchase Fund, and £53 in the General Fund.

Reminder. Annual subscriptions became due on the first of Jan. Will those of you who haven't yet paid your guinea to the Treasurer please do so as soon as possible. Non-bouncing cheques or cash will be acceptable.

Meet Programme Alteration. As most people have already realised, the 1967 Spring Bank Holiday does not coincide with Whitsun. Therefore the Meet Programme should be changed to read:-  
Whitsun May 13th./14th. MENDIP. Longwood/August System  
(Rescue Practice (Sat.))

Bank Holiday May 27/29th. DERBYSHIRE. Giant's Hole, Jackpot (P.8)

Secretary's Telephone Number. Pedro can no longer be obtained on ABBey 5600 during office hours. His home telephone number is (London) 757 3485.

Change of Address. Arthur Cox has recently moved. His new address is 4D Milton Road, Hanwell, W.7.

Membership. We welcome the following people who have been accepted as probationary members. Good Caving!  
Mick Helsdon - 128 Woodlands Road, Isleworth, Middx.  
Pete Meadley - 292 Ellerdine Road, Hounslow, Middx.

Editor to be elected at A.G.M. As I will have been producing the newsletter for 2 years in March, I feel that someone else should now be given the opportunity to take over as Editor. For this reason I will be resigning at the A.G.M. The newsletter needs new drive and new ideas, and I hope that the next Editor will enjoy the post as much as I have done, and that he (or she) will receive as much co-operation and help from members as I have received.

J.C.R.

Staying at Axbridge C. G. M.C.G. members wishing to stay at the Axbridge C. G. will, in future, be asked to produce a current M.C.G. membership card.

Battery Charger. Arthur Spain has made a superb battery charger which is now installed in the tackle porch. Full instructions are displayed nearby, and it is extremely important that they should be followed most carefully. The charger takes up to 10 Nife Cells.

Our thanks to Arthur for this fine piece of equipment.

Quote 1.

"Did you learn to play the piano, or did they try to teach you?"

Chris Fry to Pete Mathews.

Quote 2.

"If U.B.S.S. get into Manor Farm before we get into Blackmoor, I'll buy all my own beer from now on."

Mig.

### WINTER LECTURE PROGRAMME.

The Association of the William Pengelly Cave Research Centre in conjunction with the Imperial College Caving Club will be holding a series of lectures during February and March:-

- Feb. 1st. Mr. R.J. Clarke - Man, Caves and Environment in Africa  
Feb. 8th. Mr. A. Coase - Recent Cave Discoveries in South Wales.  
Feb. 15th. Mr. H. Pearman - Caves, Mines and Deneholes of the Home Counties.  
Feb. 22nd. Dr. D.W. Snow - Oilbirds.  
March 1st. Mr. A.W. Wells - The Growth of Calcite in Caves.

All the lectures will be held at the Department of Physics, Imperial College, Prince Consort Road, (Queen's Gate end), London, S.W.7 at 7.30 p.m. Admission Free.

### LIBRARY ADDITIONS.

We are now exchanging publications with the South West Essex Technical College Caving Club which produces "Speleo"; the latest issue contains accounts of Dan-yr-Ogof III and a reprint of that splendid first caving trip described by Thor Heyerdahl in "Aku Aku".

Other noteworthy library additions include:- "Memoirs" (1966) of the Northern Cavern and Mine Research Society; this is a must for all mine enthusiasts.

"Studies in Speleology" (Vol. I Pt. 4) by the Pengelly Cave Research Association; it includes articles on cave diving, cave flora and a fine piece on geophysics. (We should thank Robbie Charnock for kindly letting us have this).

"Craven Pothole Club Journal" 1966 contains accounts of the Kingsdale Master Cave and an article on Water-tracing on the eastern side of Fountains Fell leading to the discovery of Cherry Tree Hole. One cannot but be impressed by the high literary standard achieved in this journal, but much is explained by a five guinea prize awarded to the author of the best article. This is most likely the reason for a number of non-caving stories. The most entertaining of these tales tells of long ago (1941) when iron chimneys were apparently a great deal harder to come by than they are today. The story tells in some detail of how three C.P.C. members of that time removed in tact a 22ft. high cast iron chimney weighing two tons, from the top of a disused limekiln nearly 100 ft. high.

Pete Mathews.

Hon. Librarian.

### 'SECRET TUNNELS IN SURREY.'

A recent reprint of this publication, compiled by Harry Pearman of Chelsea Speleological Society in 1963, provides an interesting diversion from the exploration of limestone caves. In fact, there are one or two small natural caves in Surrey, but for the most part underground exploration is confined to disused mineworkings and tunnels. Surveys, but often not graded,

are provided for the larger systems, of which Godstone Hearthstone Mine, Godstone Sandstone Mine and West Humble Chalk Cave are the most extensive.

At 6/- this publication is a worthwhile buy. A limited number of copies are available from Brian Hillman.

A number of back issues of Wessex Cave Club's Journals can be obtained from Joan Robinson. Please ask to see the list which briefly describes the contents of each issue. A comprehensive selection of cave surveys are also available from Joan.

### CONCRETE CAVES.

Those styles in architecture, which for the lack of suitable adjectives might be described as modern, seem to have taken a backward trend in the higher class suburbs of Cannes. One type of residence currently much in demand is the cave-house. Basically this structure is formed in Readimix concrete upon a reinforced framework. The architect creates chambers, passages etc. according to his artistic whim or according to the availability of Readimix. Walls and ceilings are of unconventional shapes and are left rough. Only the floors obtain a finishing treatment that finally ends up with linoleum tiles or carpet. Cave houses have neither interior doors or windows; they are just like the real thing, for they have a gate at the entrance to keep the weejees out. Ventilation is provided by means of a high-aven which pokes out of the roof.

A cave house sounds like the sort of place no real trog could be without, but at a cost of from £50,000 (with running water of course) it would seem that Cooper's has just never been fully appreciated.

### Ogofwr Wen.

(There is, of course, no truth in the rumour that the Marquess of Bath is about to open Gough's Cave as a stately home).

### BLACKMOOR 1967.

During the weekend of January 7th./8th. some attention was given to the Group's Blackmoor Swallet Dig. The last efforts made here during 1966 were on October 15th. when two people removed some debris (Mainly clean rocks) from the lowest point in the down-dip entrance chamber. Numerous promising downward openings were becoming apparent but work had to cease when the angle of the growing debris slope exceeded a point of safety. These openings occurred beneath the stal-cemented wall faced as one enters this small chamber.

Recent examination shows an absence of deterioration due to rain-washed infilling. The only alteration is the presence of several baulks of timber thrown down by persons unknown. These timbers will not require removal since some shoring will probably be necessary in the very near future. The digging rig has

been dismantled and overhauled in readiness for further work. An increase in depth from 30 ft. to between 35 - 40 ft. will be required to allow full access at the down-dip end of the choke. This year's effort begins with a strong digging party during the weekend of January 28th./29th. when an increase of shaft-depth to 35 ft. is anticipated.

Blackmoor Swallet is the most ambitious and promising surface dig on Mendip. Some really determined work is needed this year. If you are willing to assist with this Group project please let me have your name for inclusion on future digging sessions. Don't Delay - Dig Today!

Tony Knibbs.

LAMB LEER - Sunday 11th. December.

After a chase over most of Mendip, the key to Lamb Leer was eventually procured from the Wessex C.C. at 2 o'clock on Sunday afternoon. Although time was getting on, six of us (Brian Hillman, Sheila, Mike Brace, Pete Virgo, Greg Smith and myself) decided it would be worthwhile making a quick trip.

Half an hour later Greg and I were wrestling with the entrance padlock which took fully five minutes to free, after which we descended the entrance shaft quickly, and set off to ladder the main pitch. Reducing speed at the 30 m.p.h. speed limit sign on the scaffolding by the pitch, we stopped in time to admire the marvellous view of the chamber, and then set about laddering the pitch. After the others arrived we descended, leaving Sheila at the top, who decided that it was not for her and who therefore saved us the job of double lifelining. At the bottom we explored the main chamber which we thought was very impressive although parts of the floor were covered in thick mud and there were a few deep pits around. We then turned our attentions to the two side passages, the first of which turned out to be rather tight and muddy and not very rewarding especially to Mike Brace who, much against his will, explored a narrow side passage and came back dripping mud and muttering naughty things about it not being a second Ogof.

The second passage, entered by a rather rickety ladder, led to the Chamber of Falling Waters which surprised us all by its size and good formations. Most of us made the rope descent to see the famous initials carved in the stal at the bottom, after which we made rapid tracks for the entrance, as time was getting rather late.

When we came to lock the gate at the entrance more trouble was encountered from our friend the padlock which upon not locking properly, promptly fell down the 60 ft. shaft. Many swear words later I emerged with the wretched thing and handed it to Greg who succeeded, after five minutes, in locking it properly. Thus we disappeared into the misty night hating all padlocks but well satisfied with a good trip.

Mike Nightingale.

## NEW YEAR ON MENDIP.

It was on Saturday morning that four bedraggled bed-worshippers (having been up half the night trying to get in the Cottage with no keys) were rudely diverted from their morning cuppa by someone, seen dimly through matchstick-propped eyelids, telling us that C.R.O. wanted all members on Priddy Green for a rescue in Swildon's. We squinted at each other, downed the tea, grabbed our kit and sped to Priddy only to find the Green looking like a massive carpark and the rescue over. A party of cavers had apparently been sitting in Swildon's for 15 hours under the wrong impression that the gate was locked!

As we were already togged out we decided to do a cave and went to Eastwater, an unfortunate choice. Water pouring through the entrance ruckle provided us with a nice cold shower-bath thoroughly soaking us, much to our delight. The two verticals and the stream passage at the bottom were duly negotiated, and after a much needed chew on a soggy lump of chocolate we returned to the top of the first vertical. One of our number who shall remain nameless, but is the small one with the glasses, said he knew a short cut back to the top of the traverse. This turned out to be via Hallelujah Hole, which caused considerable comment regarding the extermination of the nameless one. The said squeeze was in the midst of devouring us when a loud explosion rocked the cavern alarmingly, followed by loud renderings of many well-used phrases known by most Mendip choirs. Recital being over, four shaking cavers staggered to the surface, spirits further dampened by the showerbath. We found out afterwards that someone was blasting the 380 ft. way.

New Year's Eve at the Hunter's needs no comment, and Sunday was spent visiting Glastonbury Tor and Wookey Hole.

Roger Wallington.

## 14th./15th. January.

Trips were made to Sandford Levvy, Eastwater Twin Verticals (Greg and Brian dug about in some mid near the terminal rift), and Pinetree Easy Street.

## 21st./22nd. January.

On Saturday Arthur Spain plus eight scouts went down Eastwater and on Sunday they descended Swildon's to Sump I. Meanwhile Sheila, Joan and Colin Carson had a quick trip down August Hole to the Downstream Series and Reynold's Passage, the latter by Colin. We returned via Longwood. The cave is extremely dirty again in many places, and it looks as if the 'Springclean' on March 5th. will be very necessary.

J.C.R.

## ADDRESS LIST.

Please will members inform the Editor of any errors in the address list which is being circulated.

MEET PROGRAMME.

Jan. 28th./29th.

Feb. 18th./19th.

March 4th./5th.

MENDIP - G. B. Cave (Sat.)  
Lamb Leer (Sun.)

MENDIP - Swildon's Hole I - II (Sat.)

MENDIP - ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND DINNER  
Longwood/August System "Operation  
Springclean." (Sun.)

COMMITTEE.

Secretary - Brian Mee, 88 Seaton Gdns., Ruislip Manor, Middx.  
Tel. 757 3485.

Treasurer - Tony Fitzgibbon, 265 Eastcote Rd., Ruislip, Middx.

Meet Secretary - Tony Knibbs, 2 Rectory Lane, Byfleet, Surrey.

Cottage Warden - Pat Walsh, 18 Oxford Rd. North, Chiswick, W.4

Tacklemaster - Pete Goddard, 11 Lebanon Park, Twickenham, Middx.  
Tel. POP 6057.

Recorder - Pete Mathews, 155 Radcliffe Way, Northolt, Middx.

Editor - Joan Robinson, Tel. POP 7937.

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Middx.

..... Tear here. ....

NOMINATIONS FOR 1967 OFFICERS:-

- SECRETARY .....
- TREASURER .....
- MEET SECRETARY .....
- COTTAGE WARDEN .....
- EDITOR .....
- LIBRARIAN .....
- TACKLEMASTER .....
  
- ASSISTANT EDITOR .....
- AUDITOR .....
- AUDITOR .....

Signature of proposer .....

Full members wishing to put forward nominations for any of the  
above posts should use this form and return it to the Hon. Sec.  
by February 16th.

MENDIP CAVING GROUP.  
MEET PROGRAMME 1967.

- January 7th./8th. MENDIP - Eastwater Swallet (Sat).
- January 28th./29th. MENDIP - G.B. Cave (Sat.).  
 Lamb Leer (Sun.).
- February 18th./19th. MENDIP - Swildon's Hole I - II (Sat.).
- March 4th./5th. MENDIP - Longwood/August System  
 "Operation Springclean" (Sun.).  
 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND DINNER.
- EASTER.  
 March 24th./27th. DEVON - Buckfastleigh area. Reed's Cave,  
 Bakers Pit, Pridhamsleigh Cave.  
 Visit to Pengelly Cave Research  
 Centre. Camping.
- April 8th./9th. MENDIP - St. Cuthbert's Swallet (Sat.).
- April 22nd./23rd. MENDIP - Swildon's Hole IV and Vicarage  
 Passage (Sat.).
- WHITSUN.  
 May 13th./15th. DERBYSHIRE - Giant's Hole, Jackpot (P.8).
- May 27th./28th. MENDIP - Longwood/August System; Rescue  
 Practice (Sat.).
- June 10th./11th. MENDIP - Stoke Lane Slocker (Sat.)
- June 24th./25th. SOUTH WALES - Penwyllt. Dan -yr- Ogof II,  
 O.F.D., Pwll Dwfn or Pwll Pant  
 Mawr. S.W.C.C. accommodation.
- July 22nd./Aug. 6th. JUGOSLAVIA - Postojina/Lubliana area.  
 Fourteen-day visit travelling by  
 coach. Advance Bookings only.
- BANK HOLIDAY.  
 August 26th./28th. YORKSHIRE - Notts Pot, Gingling Hole  
 (Fountains Fell). Camping at  
 Newby Cotes.
- September 16th./17th. MENDIP - Swildon's I - IV or Longwood/  
 August System.
- September 30th./Oct. 1st. MENDIP - HALF YEARLY GENERAL MEETING.



October 21st/22nd. MENDIP - St. Cuthbert's Swallet (Sat.).  
November 11th./12th. SOUTH WALES - Penwyllt. Tunnel Cave,  
Dan - yr- Ogof II, Llygad Lluchwr.  
S.W.C.C. accommodation.  
December 2nd./3rd. MENDIP - G.B. Cave (Sat.).  
Lamb Leer (Sun.).

NOTES. All persons visiting caves in the Charterhouse area  
(this includes Blackmoor Swallet) must be in possession of  
a Charterhouse Caving Committee Permit. These may be obtained  
from the Hon. Meet Secretary.

Prior Notice would be appreciated from persons wishing to  
attend meets in areas other than Mendip, and rescue practices on  
Mendip

20th. December 1966.

Tony Knibbs  
Hon. Meet Secretary.  
2 Rectory Lane,  
Byfleet,  
Surrey.