

MENDIP CAVING GROUPNEWSLETTER NO. 57.MAY. 1967.NEWS & INTEREST

SOMEONE HAS STOLEN OUR LIFELINE!. So give it back.
The Hon. Tacklemaster has reported that 170ft of Ulstren and 126ft of nylon is missing.

All Committee members now hold keys to the library cupboard at the cottage.

Jamaica. Imperial College Caving Club are giving a slide show on their expedition to Jamaica, presented by Pete Livesay. It is at the Royal School of mines, Consort Rd, S.W.7. , at 6.30 Friday June 2nd in the Geology Lecture Theatre 2nd Floor.

Miscellany is the title of the next slide show by Malcolm Cotter. The show will be held at the Royal Oak, Brentford on Thursday June 29th at 8.30.

Cuckoo Cleeves. Visitors are reminded that the cave has always been rather shaky and that a heavy boulder fall took place recently. Untill the concrete work in the N.W. corner of the shaft is completed particular care should be taken in this section.

Wessex in their never ending oneup campaign are planning to visit America during '68.

Probationary members who want to be full members are reminded not to take club library books underground, again.

Silence Please. Following complaints to the committee about excessive noise after one a.m. in the cottage, the Cottage warden has posted a notice requireing silence after 1a.m. This has the support of the committee.

Speleologist. Due to it's increased running costs each copy of the Speleologist you buy via Brian Mee will cost 3/- instead of the usual 2/6. The cost of a subscription direct from the Speleologist however is still 17/6 for six issues.

Congratulations to

Maureen and Richard Woolacott on the birth of a son, Mathew, and

Cynthia and John Barker on the birth of a second son Marti, Johnathon.

Welcome to Peter Johnson and David Bacon as new probationary members of the Group.

Rotten Verse Section

Little boy stands by the wall all alone,
Hands on stomach, gives out a loud moan,
Ur, Ea, Sp-eu-eu-eu
No cause for rebuke,
Richard Peat is Having a puke.

(anyone else got a similar type verse, all welcome.
M.D.B)

LIBRARY ADDITIONS

Wessex CC Journal No.111

Waterproof Zip Fasteners : notes on zips fitted on
the 'new' ex. W.D. goon suits.
Explosives and Cave Digs. : an introduction to use
of explosives.
Odds and Ends : notes on Perrins Rift,
Tankard Hole and Sayes Hole.

The University of Leeds Hydrological Survey Expedition to Jamaica.

Jamaica is a happy sunnyland made of limestone and
rotten with caves. The exploration of these is made difficult
by heavy jungle and nasty insects; there are no venomous snakes
in Jamaica. If you enjoy other cavers travels then this account
is well worth reading.

Lancaster Hole and Ease Gill Caverns.(CRG)

We've been waiting a long time for this to come out:
but CRG have done us proud with this account of our finest
cave system. Most of the publication is devoted to a well
written and lucid topographical description of the cave. I was
surprised to find the ease with which I was able to read my
way round the complex of half forgotten chambers and dim
memories of passages. Long forgotten details flooded back
with a vividness that only a second look could surpass (a
hint ?).

The rest of the book contains an account of the
origin and development, notes on the survey, a condensed
history of exploration and finally the survey itself.

If you doubt the quality of this production then
just you try to get the Librarian to part with it.

MNRC Bulletin Vol1 Nos. 1&2.

This is a new publication from the MNRC and is
produced bi-monthly by Peter McNab (he's one that goes caving).
The first two issues are of fine quality: contents include:-
MNRC digs, Drowning by Numbers (sumps 4&5 Swildons),
Censorship an article on G.B. was banned by UBSS, Haster Grotto
(Swildons) account plus survey of the new passage leading
from the 20ft pot, described as one of the prettiest places
in Swildons.

Shepton Mallet CC Journal Series 4 No 2.

Contains:-

Lundy 1966; Cavers guide to Lundy (the longest pitch is 260ft.)

The Paignton Zoo Caves, three caves are described, Traverse Closure, causes of error in surveying are discussed especially with regard to traverse closure. An appreciation of existing methods of correcting misclosures is given.

Pete Mathews.

REVIEWS

Stop this old fashioned Digging !

I have always believed that digging with a spade was an oldfashioned way of finding caves. Kempsey S.S's report in Australian Spel. Federation newsletter 33 (Sept '66 - published on time but took a long time to get here) has convinced me.

"Having worked a long time on an efflux at Willi Willi without success, the chance to hire a bulldozer was firmly grasped. After 3hrs work bare rock was visible and an opening 24" x 15" exposed....."

Who's for having an excavator at Blackmoor

The same newsletter discussing Australian cave politics, reveals rifts and revolution down under against attempts to found a national body of sorts.

Mendip Cavers Cave Elsewhere !

The December 1966 Shepton Journal (just published) editorial bemoans the fact that Mendip cavers now seem to do their serious work elsewhere. To prove it, the contents range from caves in Paignton Zoo to Caves in Lundy.

Ogofwr Ddu.

YUGOSLAVIA 1967

Here is a list of people going:-

Pete Virgo	Mike Brace	Pat Walsh
John Virgo	Mike Nightingale	June Seath
Roger Wallington	Mike Quartermain	Robbie Charnock
Pete Mathews	Mike Lovell	Pam Charnock
Simon Night	Ken Newcombe	Sheila Killingback
Brian Pitman	Dave Hodby	Brian Hilman.
Chris Fry		

We pack Mini Buses on thursday evening, depart London at 7.p.m. on Friday, Catch the 00.30 Boat to Ostend and then across Belgium (remember to drive on the right) and camp the first night at Stuttgart. The second day we drive across Germany and camp on the Yugoslavian border, completeing our

journey on the Monday morning.

Mike Brace has agreed to act as Tacklemaster for the trip, Pam and Robbie Charnock will look after the medical side and Dave Hodby the Tranceport. There will be 19 people going out but we lose Pat Walsh and June in Jugoslavia and return with 17, unless we lose anyone else unintentionally or gain any women.

With-in the next month, I intend to call a meeting of all concerned so that we can thrash out a programme for the trip so that within reason everyone can say what they would like to do.

Now to more mundane matters, there are less than 8 weeks to go now and I want some more money from people. I will want all the money in by JUNE 24th but I would appreciate it earlier if possible.

HAVE YOU GOT YOUR PASSPORTS YET ?.

Brian Hilman

P.S. A useful phrase to be learnt by all:-

"Pazi na morskog psa".

SUMMER AT KNAPP HILL

For those not so acquainted with Knapp Hill, it is our No 2 dig (...sorry Arthur...Iforgot Coopers). It is situated about half a mile up the valley that runs alongside the A 39 and is just below the village of West Horrington. Usually the dig is reached by following the track from the B3139. The Swallet was found by Bob Knott and Don Searle by following the stream down to where it sinks in the Blackrock Limestone - what ever that may be. This is the situation as shown on the O.S. map (ST 567371). The stream which might be found further down the valley being due to a diversion made by diggers.

Knapp Hill is if nothing else, the prettiest dig on Mendip especially when seen during early summer. The valley is liable to be a mass of primroses, bluebells or wild garlic, according to when you go. Newcomers to the dig will at once be bitten not so much by enthusiasem as by nasty insects..... thinks, a more apt name might be Gnat Hill. Old hands (i.e. those who take their ale along) use insect repellent - 'Mylol' (Boots) has been found to work.

Since the initial work under the auspices of the Cowley-Mitchell Digging Co. activity has been rather spasmodic. During the past few years the only material removed of a summer has been the flood debris washed in during the previous winter. This of course, gets washed in again the next winter only to be dug out again the following summer. The overall progress accomplished during this cycle of events being nil.

This year has seen a very good start to digging operations. It should not be long before we reach clean rock again and resume blasting. The people found lurking around Knapp Hill this summer includes Greg, Dave Mitchell, Malcolm!., Bob Knott!., and Joan!..!. Special thanks to Dave Dingle and

friend(Wessex) for cutting back a dangerously overhanging bank.

Pete Mathews

SWILDONS HOLE, VICARAGE PASSAGE & DOUBLE TROUBLES. April 22nd

By Saturday mornig only three people were interested in making the posted club trip, which solved any possible congestion problems for us. those who went were Colin, Greg and Myself.

We entered the cave at about 11 a.m. and made the familiar trip to the Blue Pencil. Onreaching the first Trouble we set the siphon pipe going and also bailed with a resident plastic bucket. The water thus low enough we ducked under. Soon followed another duck which we assumed was the second trouble. Another followed and we were through to a roomy descending passage

With the sound of the SwildonsII stream rumbling in our ears we came to and descended the inclined rift into the streamway. Greg was the first down and by mistake, like a pendulum he slid into the stream rather faster than he was ready for. Luckily no harm was done, and after a wash in the stream a cavers feast in sued. Using a ladder up the inclined rift (which makes ascent here much easier) we forged on and soon found Vicarage Pot and laddered it. From here we investigated several continuation passages one of which yielded a few formations. Most however finished in muddy choakes.

We all wanted to see the North West Stream passage so leaving the tackle behind we entered a rocky bedding plane. After passing a small duck we came across a pitch which halted us. Colin volunteered to return for the tackle. This gave Greg and I time to find a belay and to observe what must be the most impressive pitch in Swildons. Leaving a return lifeline we climbed down the pitch and along an upward sloping passage. Halted again at another duck Colin and I eventually persuaded Greg to go through first. When my turn came to go through I was lucky enough to have been warned about mud entering the ears; so I stuck my fingers in them to avoid discomfort. An awkward passage followed which had at one time seemed to have taken a considerable vadose stream due to the number of potholes. This scolloped passage had two steeply descending tributaries the second of which Greg went down. Slippery sides inforced the employment of a rope to extract him.

At this termination we returned; it took three hours to the entrance and a total of 11 hours were spent in the cave. The size of the party was ideal (speed wise) but it was thought that more food would have been acceptable.

Malcolm Cotter

CRG SOUTHERN GENERAL MEETING May 6/7th

The Southern General Meeting of the CRG was held

at the Pengelly Centre at Buckfastleigh, Devon. Saturday morning was devoted to showing CRG members and guests over the museum and the various botanical and geological features of Higher Kiln quarry. Each party was also shown the demonstration bone site in Joint-Mitnor Cave. During the afternoon parties were taken into Reed's Cave and the diverse forms of calcite formations were explained by Mr Sandy Wells of the Pengelly Centre. Tea was served by Mrs. Longman and family afterwards. Lectures were held at Buckfastleigh. Dr. A. Sutcliffe spoke about the idea behind the Centre and Mr. B. Woods about the SWCC Expedition in 1966 to Balinka Pit. Dinner for forty was held at the Golden Lion Hotel Ashburton. On Sunday parties were again taken into Reed's Cave by Mr. S. Wells, and in addition Dr. Dalby took a party to Durl Head sea cave - a cave of special botanical importance and Dr. A. Sutcliffe took another party to Torbryan cave - a cave rich in bones. A very successful and informative weekend was enjoyed by all.

Robbie Charnock

A LITTLE OF ONE MAN'S EASTER

Tuesday 28th March, our big caving day. Dave Causer and I packed food and tackle and off to Nidderdale. We had no luck locating the tenant farmer of the land, so we went to Goydon Pot, which cannot be missed. Although the entrance is often buried by flood debris. A straw caught fifteen feet up in the branches of overhanging trees shows quite clearly that talk of flooding in this cave is not just a rumour.

Wading kneedeep at times we followed the Main Stream Passage for about 400 ft to a sump. A dark dismal looking place. Returning 200 ft upstream we climbed up into Gaskell's Passage. Via a 30 ft verticle free climb, an awkward 25 ft chimney up and finally down a 45 ft ladder to the stream passage beyond the sump.

Looking at the rising of the river from the sump we saw several of the fish that inhabit this cave, nearly 800 ft from the daylight. I do not know the species, geneva, or what have you that they represent.

Dave now made what to me is a new discovery, a small passage leading north, i.e. back to the outer side of the sump, opening some six feet up in the wall. It was awkward to enter and awkward crawling once in but we did not force it to the limit. After 30 ft further on the depth of the water increased until there was only six inches of air space left. but it went on as far as my lamp illuminated. The water was damn cold. I have no where found any mention of this passage and it was devoid of scratches. After a quick look at the next downstream sump we returned via Gaskell's Passage and Labyrinth series. After missing our way, we found a (to me) new connection which brought us into the main stream passage.

Collecting the tackle we made for daylight fast, needing beer, comfort and rest. It was snowing.

Fred Davies

OGOF AGEN ALLWED Sat 13th May

Pete Virgo led a party of nine consisting of Wally, Greg, Dave Hill, Dave Hankin two guests and myself. After leaving the key and notice of our intentions at the check point just inside the entrance we set off for the main chamber. This opening part of the cave lead through roomy passages to the first boulder choke. This boulder choke is forced to the main chamber by lowering oneself down a hole in the floor, thrutching through a tight blasted passage and up a short climb with the asistance of a chain.

We stopped for a while to eat a little food and await Dave Hankin negotiating a tricky mancever. Then we set off along the main stream passage which continued for about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile to the second boulder choke which is 60 ft of loose boulders and rumbling, tight passage. This took us to Key Hole passage which like the main stream passage was immense in cross section but it had a deep rift in the centre of the floor. This rift had to be traversed around with the use of a wire and then climbed do wn. We found it to be about 30 ft deep bringing us back to the stream which we walked along, three abreast, to N.W. Junction where we took where turning to the right turning to Turkey Pool, our main target. Unfortunately we took the wrong turning down Coal Cellar passage which only Wally and I explored to its extent, utter fcols, because it was tight and went nowhere except for $\frac{3}{4}$ mile into rough rock.

After this we returned to Key Hole passage where we endured muddy sardines, sandy raisins and soggy dried fruit and almost tea brewed in a carbide tin with sugar carried in the base of a carbide lamp - lucky escape. after this we left the cave after seven and a half hours exploration to be met with an evening view of the Breckon Beacons and a bright red setting sun.

Dave Bacon

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATIONS

The applications of the following for probationary membership will be considered at the next meeting of the committee.

Colin Carson, Wantage Hall, Reading, Darlington also.
Ken Newcomb, 29 Clonmel Rd, Fulham, S.W.6.

MEET PROGRAMM

June 10th./11th. MENDIP - Stoke Lane Slocker (Sat).
June 24th./25. SOUTH WALES - Penwylt. Dan -yr- Ogof II,
O.F.D, Pwll Dwf'n or Pwll
Pant Mawr, SWCC accom-
odation

July 22nd./Aug.6th.

JUGOSLAVIA - Postojina/Lubliana area.
Fourteen-day visit travelling by mini buses.
Advance bookings only.

COMMITTEE

Secretary - Brian Mee, 88 Seaton Gardens, Ruislip Manor, Middx.
Treasurer - Tony Fitzgibbon, 265 Eastcote Rd, Ruislip, Middx.
Meet Secretary - Tony Knibbs, 2 Rectory Lane, Byfleet, Surrey.
Cottage Warden - Pete Goddard, 11 Lebanon Park, Twickenham, Middx
Tacklemaster - Greg Smith, 131 Hagdon Lane, Watford, Herts.
Recorder - Pete Mathews, 155 Radcliffe Way, Northolt, Middx.
Editor - Mike Brace.

POST SCRIPTUM

Herzlich Gruss zu Felix Seizer.

Greetings to our old friend Felix Seizer from Austria who was our host in 1961 to our expedition to the caves of the Salzburg area, including the famous Tantalhöhle and Hennehöhle.

Felix is visiting Great Britain this week and will be staying at the Club Cottage on Mendip this Spring Holiday weekend.

Willkommen auch zu Irene, seine fraulein.