

MENDIP CAVING GROUPNEWSLETTER NO. 63JANUARY 1968.

The Group sends its best wishes to Simon and his new Wife on the occasion of their marriage.

Mr. & Mrs. S. Knight now live at:-

8 Park Street, Bath.

Dave Hodby has moved to:-

"Dawn"
Aggisters Lane,
Wokingham,
Berkshire.

The Committee announces that all loans are being re-paid (under the loan scheme) by the end of January. Those concerned will be contacted by the committee official who is dealing with the loans.

Suggestions are requested from Group members about the location of the next summer meet.

The Queen Mary College Caving Society

This society is organising an expedition to Rumania this summer. Anyone interested should contact:

Queen Mary College Caving Society,
Mile End Road,
London E.1.

The cost of the trip will be roughly £40 and it is hoped to explore the Hosteg area.

LIBRARY ADDITIONS

Craven P.C. : Journal 1967. For those going to Ireland there is further news of discoveries in the Aille River Cave (+ survey). Foreign caves are dealt with in New Zealand, East Africa and East Greenland. Very useful accounts are given of the club trips to Turkey and the famous Antro del Corchia in Italy.

continued over

Gouffre Berger 1967 : Pegasus Club (30pp). A first class report of this year's expedition. The authors deal with every aspect of the descent and the various items of equipment used. The book also contains many fine photos of the expedition. It was very pleasing to note that none of the 'all wool' party wore wet suits and that everyone used carbide as the main form of lighting.

(we are particularly grateful to Dave Hill for donating this fine publication to the library).

Wessex C.C. : Journal 114: Caving in the Canadian Cordillera (9pp) by Derek Ford.

Speleo: SWETC. Caving in Norway (8pp) by David St Pierre

U.B.S.S. Proceedings Vol. 11 No.2

Excavations at Gatcombe by Barry Cunliffe.
The Little Neath River Cave by Norton, Savage and Standing, a preliminary report.

The Priddy Circles by E.K. Trautman, the remarkable feature of this site is the total lack of significant art facts. A detailed excavation and comparison with other sites leads the author to conclude that the site dates from the second Neolithic (i.e. c.2,200 B.C.). The general lack of use and the incomplete state of the fourth circle are presumably due to the monument being contemporary with the arrival of the "A" Beaker Folk.

The Geomorphology of Longwood Swallet by T. Atkinson, this paper is of special interest. The structural geology is given; a methodic description of passage details form the basis of the geomorphic history. The development of which is shown to have been under three phreatic regimes, modified by the usual erosion and aggradation cycles associated with periods of glaciation. The author concludes with a modern hydrology and discussion.

A Compendium of Caving no caver's bookshelf could be described as complete without 'Why was he born so beautiful, and other Rugby Songs'. A paperback by Spere original Limited at 5/-. Over 150 songs including "The Chastity Belt" and the complete "Eskimo Neil".

Let's hope the club singing improves soon!

HEARTHSTONE MINES - GODSTONE

Much courage having been taken at the 'White Hart', 17 grovellers make their way to the entrance. A mud slide, drops into a chamber where we amass.

Splitting into two groups, we lose ourselves in a maze of passages 5 - 20 ft wide, meant for hunchbacks. After much circuitous wandering, all gather round BSH and more important (much more by far), the survey. BSH gives encouraging comments regarding pit props and recent roof falls.

We set off ... but wait, who is that?..... muddy apparition, strange headgear, riding two wheeled tricycle, wielding roadworks lamp may be the result of beer and pickled onions? nay Dave Bacon on his Bacmobile. Now comes a loud banging like thunder roof falling in? no six sadists bent on demolishing an oil drum,

Forwards bunch up, backs in support, scrum down! what is this? never fear, hearthstone honkers versus godstone gophers in underground rugby final; roof falls force abandon play. The MCG all steel band now strike up the conga - Babom bom bom bom oi! the drunken band winds along the passages. Soon exhaustion brings thoughts of the entrance, but where is it and where is everyone else? We all reach the wrong entrance within $\frac{3}{4}$ hour of each other. This consists of concrete rings from which we emerge by a road side, greet the motorists and receive crude advice in return.

The advice is taken and we think ourselves proud to have proved that whatever the disease, MCG members will always find a hole.

WOL WALLINGTON

THURSDAY MEETINGS

At last years HYGM it was decided that the club should embark upon a more ambitious series of indoor meets. Our present home is already getting a bit of a squeeze - and our numbers are increasing. If we are to get speakers from other clubs, or even if we are to give our own speakers a chance, we will need a more spacious meeting place. The season of pub crawls being upon us members can now drink for a good cause and help find a new meeting place. Write your suggestions around the edge of a £5 note and send to Pete Mathews.

A new caving aid? only the other day, during a stroll along the Charing Cross Road, I happened to stop outside one of those shops that flogg jock straps and well, other surgical appliances. The focus of my attention and the reason for my pause stood in the corner of the window. It was a pale blue card bearing an advertisement for a cream which when applied to capacious parts of the anatomy would, it claimed, reduce them quickly and painlessly to slender proportions. The uses of such a product and its sales potential on the other side of tight squeezes can best be left to the imagination.....

OGOFWR WEN

how long?

an error in the recent Speleologist gave the length of Mamouth! Cave at 150 miles (from the Guinness Book of records). The longest known cave is the Hollach in Switzerkand. At 53 miles. Next comes Flint ridge system at 49 miles and then mammoth cave at 47 miles. But as Flint ridge and mammoth approach within 200 feet at their nearest joints it remains to be seen how long the holloch holds its record.

OGOFWR WEN

REVIEW OF KENTUCKY SPELUNKER GROUP JOURNAL, Vol. XII No. 6

There are several articles worthy of mention in this issue, including one on the expedition of the Gootamundra Speleo Society of Brisbane to the Nullarbor Plain in 1966, in which some of the Americans took part.

It appears that although they visited several new caves and made some outstanding discoveries, the Sydney University Speleo Group had already made very full reports on these new caves and discoveries.

Another article describes how they have carried out a most detailed, survey of the Bone Cave Region, N.W. Sector in Kentucky, with the aid of the U.S. army and U.S. Marines' helicopters. (How about stating a helicopter purchase fund).

The most interesting article describes an ingenious device for finding subterranean passages, without digging.

It is somewhat technical but the main points can be summarised as follows:-

A radio transmitter emits a beamed radio signal at a frequency of 100 megacycles, or as they put it 100 megahertz. This beam is restricted to a width of 6cms by a high intensity magnetic field tube in which the antenna is housed.

As you may know, any radio wave carries harmonics of the base frequency, so that 100 mhz signal will have 200, 300, 400 mhz frequencies combined with it.

The beam is aimed at a constant angle to the surface of the ground and a continuous plot made of the reflected signal received at a similarly moving receiver. Due to the fact that rock and soil reflect or absorb various frequencies at different levels it is possible to note when a certain harmonic of the signal fails to reach the receiver. This indicates an air pocket in which the radio wave instead of being reflected, travels on in a straight line until it strikes another surface. The angle of this surface determines whether or not the signal is reflected back to the receiver or deflected in some other direction. By this means it has been possible to not only measure accurately, passages, as much as 300 feet below the surface, but also by reversing the direction of the beam, to measure actual width and depth of the subterranean passage as well.

Digging operations have proved this system to be very accurate and in one case a chamber of rectilinear shape was found to be only 3 inches wider than the 157 ft estimated from above ground. The cost of the transmitter was only 12 dollars (U.S.) and was constructed from a diagram by amateurs in one evening.

Arthur Cox.

There was a young caver on Mendip,
Whose lamp had a flame much extended,
Up ladders he groped,
Til, he burnt thro' his rope,
Then with calcite below he soon blended,.....

Roger Wallington.

Mary Brown - has tendered an application to the Committee for probationary membership.....

ANNUAL DINNER TICKETS ON SALE

Tickets price 21/- for the club dinner on March 9th at the Cliff Hotel, Cheddar. They are available from all Committee Members.

BUY BEFORE FEBRUARY 29th.

Light deposit on bank of sand.

When first I ventured underground in 1952 (gulps of nostalgia) I did so with the aid of a converted bicycle acetylene lamp. Thomas Alva Edison had been around for some while by then but his mining lamps were hard to acquire and most expensive. There were fewer cavers at this date and these few were rather self conscious of their caving habits. This meant that less litter was imported into caves. Today the situation has altered considerably. Vast hordes descend upon tiny caving areas each weekend and proceed to cram themselves into diminishing cave space.

The problem of litter is now much greater and the current fashion for high speed caving is perhaps not increasing our regard for the caves themselves. Mining caplamps are now very cheap indeed and it costs only a few shillings more than a new acetylene caplamp. As the uses of carbide lamps diminish so apparently does the care in their use. The unsightly deposits of spent carbide are still very much in evidence despite constant appeals for more attention to cave conservation. Most forms of litter are more or less easily removable from a cave, by specific cave purging operations or by the more conscientious cavers during routine visits. Spent carbide lends itself neither to the first or second of these and often causes permanent and irreparable damage to an otherwise uncontaminated system.

Leaders of caving parties must bear in mind that they have considerable responsibility for the deposition of litter in all its forms. As a leader I wish it to be firmly understood that under no circumstances will I accept into a caving party any person who uses a carbide lamp unless adequate means are provided to remove completely spent carbide. This may take two forms, either a spare lamp bottom with a screw top or a polythene container or similar receptacle. This edict need not worry the numerous users who already operate their lamps properly nor the younger members who use carbide lamps as a main lighting form and comply with this request. Having made my own position clear, it only remains for the other leaders to follow suit to ensure a great increase in the appreciation and practice of cave preservation.

Tony Knibbs.

COMMITTEE

SECRETARY Brian Mee, 91 Evelyn Drive, Pinner Middx
TREASURER Tony Fitzgibbon, 265 Eastcote Road, Ruislip
MEET SEC. Tony Knibbs, 2 Rectory Lane, Byfleet, Surrey
COTTAGE WARDEN Pete Goddard, 11 Lebanon Park, Twickenham
TACKLEMASTER Greg Smith, 131 Hagdon Lane, Watford Herts.
RECORDER Pete Mathews, 155 Radcliffe Way, Northolt,
Editor Mike Brace.

Printed & Published by M.D. Brace, 8 Froxfield Close,
Northwood Middx.

JMT/30.1.1968.....