

SUBSCRIPTIONS DUE

Members who completed the first set of addressed labels for newsletters should have received the December issue together with a request for subscriptions. This newsletter will be distributed to all members, but subsequent issues will be sent only to those having paid subs at the time of publishing.

DINNER NOT TO BE AT EASTER

The date for the annual dinner and AGM announced last month has been changed to SATURDAY MARCH 21. This is partly because the original date was Easter and partly because Saturday March 29 falls this year on a Sunday. Book the date and start saving up the 25s 0d for your ticket.

GREG SMITH TOP COTTAGE-ROTTER OF 1969

Statistics are alleged to have revealed that Greg Smith was most frequent caver of 1969. In fact the figures show that he spent more nights at the cottage than anyone else. Here is the championship table ..

1 Greg Smith (36 nights); 2 Pete Mathews (35); 3 John Miriam 23.
Runners-up include: D. Graves 20, R. Stephens and Carl Ruxton 18
.. Knibbs 15 and Brian Hillman 14.

SEE SLIDES OF AUSTRIA

A slide show of the pictures taken during the 1969 Austrian expedition will be held at the Royal Oak on Thursday, February 26.

"But first things, first" says Pete Mathews, "Could I have the slides NO: please". There will be a get-together of participants at 155 Radcliffe Way, Northolt on Tuesday, February 17. If you want any beer - take it with you!

WATCH OUT FROM APRIL 1

Treasurer Ron Saunders has invested £50 of his money in premium bonds on behalf of the MCG. The bonds enter the draw from April 1. Their numbers are

5JH824311 to 5JH824360

The committee emphasises there will be no share-out if we win £25,000. The money is for the cottage fund. Anyone who doesn't fancy a bunk at Longleat.....

HOW MANY TOURIST CAVERS ?

The 1970 edition of the British Travel Association's guide for foreign visitors includes caves in its eulogy of Yorkshire and recommends "Pennine Underground" to tourists.

Anyone seeing three coachloads of Americans down Lost John's is invited to write to the Editor enclosing and cigar stubs found.

TRIFLING REWARD FOR MENDIP LIFT

A friend of Pete Mathews would welcome a lift almost any weekend to Bristol to see his wife and family. He will be prepared to travel at a moment's notice and to share petrol costs.

Tea on arrival is claimed to be unnerving as the youngest and oldest children are likely to shower you with trifle (Pete's own experience).

Telephone Michael White (01-977 4427 daytime). He lives at 189A Waldegrave Road Teddington Middx.

ROGER WALLINGTON TO ORGANISE POLAND

Roger Wallington (16 Kendall Drive Slough) is now organising the 1970 MCG expedition to Poland.

The Group's Polish host will be Zygmunt Kwasaok (or something like that)

JAMES GIBB HAS MOVED

James Gibb has moved to 3 Kiln Cottages, Wood Lane End, Hemel Hempstead, Herts. This is the remoter part of Hemel Hempstead, not on the telephone and where letters take 14 days to arrive and telegrams three days. A pony and trap service operates direct from Hackney marshes every three days.

THANKS

Pete Munt's Dog wishes to thank Pete Munt for taking an aged turkey to Mendip at Christmas - the turkey was inedible to Pete but delightful to the dog.

LAKE DISTRICT HOLIDAY

The Ramblers Association guest house at Hassness, Buttermere, welcomes walkers during the summer. Walk on your own or in organised parties. Details from the Editor.

BORDER USE LABELS

Border CC have adopted our scheme for address labels for newsletters

WHY NOT SPEND A CONGRUOUS WEEKEND AT BLACKMOOR HOLE ? asks Greg Smith

There is a marked lack of interest in digging - or even caving - at present.

If you think of some caves (Upper Flood Swallet- that nasty muddy hole up the valley!) this is not surprising, so a few enterprising members have restarted digging in the original Blackmoor shaft.

Conditions down here, as older members might remember, are quite congenial and the last flood made the place quite clean. It is true that there is a 30ft pitch, but there are many ledges on which to rest and there is ample room below for brewing soup - or even a seven course dinner.

A cold draught blowing from the dig does ruffle the hair from time to time and the rumbling of the nearby stream can disturb pleasant conversations. But these minor problems should not deter the keen digger. Contact - Greg Smith, Pete Munt or John Miriam

SAUNDERS FAMILY OUTING

Roger Saunders, elected a probationary member at the January committee meeting, reports on a trip consisting of Ron, Helen and Roger Saunders to Longwood-August. Leader was Arthur Spain.

Arthur led the party down by way of August where we found that those with the longest legs had the easiest time negotiating the 40ft drop below Christmas Crawl. We went down the fault chamber and both up and down the streamway.

We were very impressed with the formations in the passage and had the system to ourselves during the five hour ip

WHERE IS YOUR CCC PERMIT ?

A number of permits for members to visit caves in the Charterhouse caving area - Longwood-August, GB, Blackmoor etc - have been lost in the post. If you do not have a current permit, contact meet secretary Pete Munt 101.

MORE MOUNTAIN ACCIDENTS

The Upper Austran MRO was called out to 513 accidents in 1968, according to figures just published. These included 15 deaths, 278 badly injured and 159 lightly injured climbers and skiers.

HAPPY NEW YEAR FROM MCG'S HOST IN AUSTRIA

Dear Peter and the other cavers,

Thank you for your season wishing and I repeat them most cordially. I would like to be a member in your hotel in Wells, but my job over Christmas can not give me easy holidays. I am glad that I can get one of the slides, brotherhood drinking with wine in St Peter cellar.

In September/October I could take a big trip to the Island of Cuba by a cheap charter flight at a third of the usual price. Two weeks ago I was in Roumania and on the trip back in the castle mountain in the centre of Budapest I saw a commercial cave, very warm inside.

With kindest greetings, yours, Felix Seiser

LIBRARY ADDITIONS

BY Joan Goddard

HANDBOOK OF THE CAMBRIAN CC, 1969. A useful reference book dealing with cave rescue in Wales, the Cambrian cave registry, access to caves in the area, club addresses etc. Available for sale at 2/6. Plan your meets with its aid.

PIONEER UNDER THE MENDIPS, Wessex CC 12s Od. This is a short biography of H.E. Balch, by W.I. Stanton. For cavers interested in the history of Mendip caving and the early pioneers, this is good value. The text contains much original material and is well-written and illustrated. Worthwhile addition to any book shelf.

DESCENT, December 1969. Contains an interesting and simply-written article on the hydrology of limestone areas with particular reference to Mendip. Also a list of the world's longest and deepest caves and longest caves of Britain.

WESSEX CC Journal, August 1969. The discovery of Shatter Cave, with survey

ALSO: Orpheus CC newsletter 11/69, Stop Press (Sydney SS) 2 and 10/69, Westminster SG 11/12- 69 and Journal of London UCC autumn 1969

FIRST MEET OF THE YEAR

The first meet of the year is provisionally planned for March 7/8 to visit South Wales. Caves planned are Dan -yr-Ogof (if not flooded) and OFD.

This year's meet programme is published with this newsletter

ANNUAL MEETING

Secretary Pete Mathews gives formal notice that the Group's annual general meeting will be held in the Cottage at Nordrach-on-Mendip on Saturday March 21, 1970 at a time to be announced later.

Nominations for the committee and proposals to amend the Constitution and Rules must reach Pete at 155 Radcliffe Way, Northolt, Middx, by Thursday, February 26.

A COMPANY TO BUY CAVES ?

Various members of the Mendip fraternity are to investigate the possibility of setting up a company to buy caves. The object is to enable important caves to be acquired for the benefit of everyone. There would be a case for this when one of the existing Mendip farmers sold-up and there was a possibility of his successor being averse to the sport. Those concerned will be reporting to the next meeting of the Council of Southern Caving Clubs.

MRS SPEED UNWELL

Mrs Emily Speed, proprietor of the New Inn at Priddy, has been reported to be seriously ill at home. At present Phyllis is running the pub, but not opening at all hours.

WOOKEY 20 OPENED UP

A party, believed to be from the Independent Cave Diving Group, has now gone from Wookey 19 to a further 2,000ft of passage, to be known as Wookey 20.

PRIDDY NOW OFFICIALLY BEAUTIFUL

Priddy Green has now been declared an area of outstanding natural beauty. The CSCC has agreed to back Mr Maine against any attempt to require him to provide lavatories for cavers on the Green.

SOUTHERN COUNCIL HAS BACKED DOWN over its original policy of requiring unanimity at National CA meetings - AGM this month

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MENDIP CAVING GROUP

Meet programme 1970

- March 7-8 SOUTH WALES, Dan-yr-Ogof and O.F.D.
- March 21 Annual meeting and group dinner
- March 27-30 MENDIP, August-Longwood (Two day dig in the
Easter Oxbows and general cave clear-up)
- May 23-25 MENDIP, Blackmoor and upper part of Velvet
Spring BH Bottom (digging and surveying)
- June 20-21 SOUTH WALES, Dany-yr-Ogof and O.F.D.
- July 18-19 MENDIP, Nap Hill Dig, with lecture on tackle
and demonstration of rigging and use
- August 29-31 MENDIP, Timber Hole Dig. Also lecture on
Summer BH surveying and practical trial in small cave.
- September 19-20 YORKSHIRE, Penyghent Pot
- October 17-19 YORKSHIRE, Lost John's System
- November 12-13 MENDIP, Cooper's Hole Dig. Also lecture on
exhaustion underground, rescue etc.

January 1970

P.R. HUNT,
Meet secretary