

MENDIP CAVING GROUP NEWSLETTER 92

ANNUAL MEETING ON MARCH 18

THE annual meeting of the Group will be held on March 18th at the cottage at 4 pm. In the evening the annual dinner will be held at The Star at Wells, tickets £2 each from Pete Mathews.

Main item on the agenda (at the meeting, not the dinner) will be a discussion on Upper Flood Swallet. At the dinner the main item (no abstentions or opposition please) will be Steak Bearnaise (ancient Mendip bear bones stewed in the fluid which emanates from the Wells City fountain).

NOT ANOTHER NEWSLETTER, SURELY ?

Your surprise at receiving a newsletter should be tempered with the prospect of fewer shocks in store. If Roger Wallington succeeds the present Editor there is some hope that news will conform to some sort of expected pattern. Not such fun as the present system, wondering if and when your magic words will appear in print, but more reliable as an information service. But you, never know, all Group Editors in the memorable past (and none more memorable than that which has just gone by) have started in blazes of glory, until slowly (or in some cases, quickly) the excuses have become substitute for print. So bear with the present Editor for a few lines longer: He is one of a noble line, following faithfully in their traditions, unwaveringly maintaining in the footsteps of his predecessors a scant regard for truth or frequency, and looking forward, in retirement, to the same thing happening, but not too soon.

On this very subject anyone possessing a copy of newsletter 91 should write at once to The Secretary. It is believed (if anyone can remember that far back) that it did not exist. There were, perhaps, two number 90s, or perhaps three four or even five.

CONGRATULATIONS to Pete and Joan Goddard who had twins, at Christmas.

Our beloved secretary, knowing the wiles of Editors past and present, writes: "I feel this deserves better than a two line precis". To show how magnanimous I feel in my final issue, I have decided not to shorten it, not by one word, no indeed, as a token of repentance for past misdeeds, I shall lengthen it. Knowing nothing about the place (beyond a yawning hole in the ground) I can add nothing technical, but I thought a few adjectives spattered here and there would be indicative of the gesture I am making -Editor. PS For the serious reader I will indicate the adjectives by printing them well spaced out.

THE GLORIOUS TALE OF UPPER FLOOD DIG

by our loyal, faithful and much beloved secretary and leader, PETER MATHEWS

THERE have been some extraordinarily interesting dramatic changes at this joyously beautiful and otherwise enchanting site and digging is showing remarkably encouragingly good progress. At the end of last warm sunny and birdsongful summer, our good and much loved and admired friend, Willie Stanton, and his overworked not to mention good looking Reservoir Hole team, had a long cool clear look at the gaping orifice-like dig and were physically, mentally and in only ten rounds knocked out by its remarkable prospects, but were unhappily amazed by the sheer typical MCG-like bone idleness, of the lack of effort we had made. The ontngl RHT have now put in a considerable effort which could equally well, well not equally, have been spent in the pub and the dig is now organised on a joint basis.

Well at least you have a taste of what an editor reads before his blue pencil turns it into two line precis -to avoid boring you and to save paper, we revert to something vaguely resembling, but undoubtedly shorter than, the original.

For those not familiar with the present state of the dig it is now possible to walk in almost to the end. To ease re spoil removal the drainpipe has been blasted and 78 steps built. Progress (at the time of writing, oh so long ago) was continuing, with the roof being blasted and mud removed to the surface using a bucket chain. The aim is to fill in the

How to dig UFS

Any number can dig - six people can remove spoil while smaller groups can stack it inside the cave.

But don't eat it

Quantitative analysis of the mud being extracted has shown that it contains 2% lead. It probably comes from the water which flowed out at one time from the old lead buddle pits. LEAD IS A CUMULATIVE POISON so elementary precautions should be taken after digging :

1. Wash your hands after digging
2. Wash your boiler suit after use (lead-rich dust could be inhaled when the mud dries)

This is probably the only Mendip dig where lead is present in this way but there is no danger if the elementary precautions are taken.

GB LOSES FIXED TACKLE IN ANTI-VANDAL MOVE

TO curb vandalism in GB Cave UBSS are arranging for the fixed tackle to be removed. This includes removal of the chains into the main chamber from the Devil's Elbow route and the fixed ladder to the Ladder Dig series. Entry to the UFS is now more complicated and the first man up should attach two ladders to the three rawlbolts or use etrier steps.

Not now a novices' paradise

Clearly, writes Pete Mathews, the grading of this cave is now much more severe especially when you bear in mind that both routes down are damp - The easy way has an almost permanent duck/sump involving a squeeze and the caver is no longer the easy trip for novices that it was.

BUT ST CUTHBERTS RELADDERED

While GB loses its fixed tackle, St Cuthberts is regaining some. It was removed last year for a trial period but is now being restored.

OFF CRG COMMITTEE The MCG has completed its current term of office as a committee member of CRG

CAVE COMPANY MAKES NO PROGRESS. Mendip Caves Ltd or

MCG NEWS 92

Group news

NEW MEMBERS

Wayne Hiscox has been elected a full member; Graham Gregory has been accepted as a probationary member.

FUND STATE

On January, with subs still coming in (have yours ?) the general fund stood at £101 and the land fund at £600.

INDIAN ROPE TRICK

Tacklemaster John Miriam is taking up with British Ropes the problem of kinks in the current batch of lifeline. BR appear to claim that all their rope is kinky.

MOO

The cow bell has returned to the cottage. Thank you Simon .

GAS

A calor cylinder is missing from the cottage. When returning empty cylinders the idea is to bring back a full one, not to pocket the deposit money.

OP THE RIGHT TREE

Meet sec John MacMillan has moved to 43 Shirley Gardens, BARKING, Essex, telephone at work 01-594 9321. The meet programme for 1972 is printed separately.

LOST

Excuses for the last time: Anyone finding any copy for this newsletter not printed here should be grateful- they will be the only ones to read it. Nevermind, Roger Wallington.....

FAREWELL

We have reached the peak of our intention,
And offer a prayer to
The deities that haunt these caves.
The return will be perpetual valediction,
For I shall never look again

At what my eyes have witnessed here. (The Descent into the Cave-Kirkup)

Mendip Caving Group

1972 MEET PROGRAMME

- March 11/12 South Wales, OFD and Pant Mawr
(accommodation at SWCC)
- March 18/19 Mendip, AGM and dinner
- March 31 Yorkshire, camping
EASTER
- April Mendip, rescue practice (see Bill Jones)
- May 6/7 Derbyshire (accommodation at Orpheus CC)
- May 27 Isle of Skye (camping)
SPRING BH
- June 24/25 South Wales, Dan yr Ogof
(accommodation at SWCC)
- July 15/16 Yorkshire, Little Hull and Hunt Pot
(accommodation at Bradford PC Brackenbottom)
- August BH
- Sept South Wales, Agen Allwedd
- October 7/8 Yorkshire, Lancaster/Easegill
(accommodation at Bull Pot Farm)
- November 11/12 South Wales OFD (accommodation at SWCC)

43 Shirley Gardens
Barking, Essex.

Tel at work 01-594 9321

John MacMillan
MEET SECRETARY

MENDIP CAVING
GROUP

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 1972

The annual general meeting of the Group will be held at the Cottage, Nordrach-on-Mendip on Saturday, March 18, 1972 at 4 pm.

AGENDA

1. To receive apologies for absence
2. To confirm the minutes of the previous general meeting
3. To receive the reports of the honorary officers :
 - a. The treasurer
 - b. The honorary auditors
 - c. The meet secretary
 - d. The cottage warden
 - e. The tacklemaster
 - f. The Editor
 - g. The recorder
 - h. The secretary
4. To discuss Upper Flood Swallet
5. Any other business
6. To elect (if necessary) the committee for 1972/73*

*Nominations so far include :secretary - Pete Mathews; treasurer - Ron Saunders; recorder - Greg Smith; meet sec - John MacMillan Editor - Roger Wallington; cottage warden - Bill Jones; tacklemaster- John Miriam.

DINNER

The annual dinner will follow at 7.30 for 8 at the Star, Wells, Tickets, £2 each from the secretary.