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WEEKLY CLUB "The Royal Oak", New Road, Brentford, Middx. (behind Brentford  
MEETINGS Football Club ground); every Thursday night till thrown out.

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COTTAGE Stirrup Cup, Nordrach-on-Mendip, Nr. Wells, Somerset.  
Accommodation for over 30 - all essential services - guests  
charged at 20 p per night.  
Guest party bookings through the Cottage Warden.

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RESCUE WARDEN Bill Jones; 91 St. Saviours Road, Croydon, Surrey.

CLUB NEWS

CHANGE OF ADDRESS - all is reveled, John Miriam now lives deep in stockbroker belt ..... 77 The Gateway, Woodham, Woking, Surrey  
 - Graham Gregory's new address is ....c/o Kent School, Hostert, B.F.P.O. 40.

ALL OUR FEAR'S CONFIRMED - following up the quote in the last newsletter, Greg was recently seen shopping in the small boy's departments of many well known West End stores.

CAVES recently bottomed by the club since last newsletter include ....Gavel Pot, Gingling Hole, Penyghent Pot, Agen Allwed, Marble Sink, Bull Pot of the Witches, Lancaster/Easegill..... notably by same group of persons who seem to have to do caving for the rest of the group.

EX-W.D. BISCUITS found in mountain huts labelled "Biscuits-plain" should be read as "Biscuits-Very plain".

AROUND AND ABOUT

POLOSKA JAMA, SLOVENIA .....The difference between the highest and lowest point is now 674m. The entrance is 720m above sea-level, the siphon is 145m lower, and the top of the cave is 1249m above sea-level. The total length of cave is now 10,050m and exploration is being continued by the Jamarski club Ljubljana-Matica.

POLAND.....The first show-cave in Poland was opened in June 1972. It is Jaskinia Raj(Paradise Cave) at Checiny near Kielce. The opening coincided with the 10th Polish Speleological Symposium.

RUMOUR HAS IT....that Willie Stanton has taken an interest in a big new dig just outside Dover. He is also reported to have enrolled for evening classes in French!

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GASTRONOMIC NOTES

Penyghent Cafe - Horton - Tea 12p per pint  
 Coffee 15p per pint ) not recommended  
 Craven Heifer - Ingleton - Pie & peas 12p, 3 varieties of pies only one of  
 peas always available - recommended.  
 Britannia Inn - Crickhowell - Sausages and Mash - 25p. recommended.  
 The Flying Horseshoe - Clapham - Pie,peas, & chips - 27p. Not recommended  
 by Egon Ronay Duckworth.

It was in July, whilst on a trip to Rift Pot, that we first flirted with Marble Sink on the Allotment. Although Jim Eyre said he'd seen rabbit holes finer than this particular cave, we; that is John Mac, myself, John Miriam, Dave Barker, and Big Sambo(both N.P.C.), returned a few weeks later eager to reach the bottom.

One by one we descended into the horizontal, well scalloped entrance tube feet first. After a restricted length of passage, not helped by an enormous adjustable stemple thankfully left by 'Karate' Bill the week before, the first pitch was reached. A stemple or suchlike was essential for this drop, there being no natural belays around, except outside the entrance 80ft away. Since the party contained no contortionists the pitch was not lined, though perhaps self-lining techniques might prove suitable. Immediately below the passage enlarged with greasy rock abounding, and flowstone with very interesting variegated bands. The party slithered down with relative ease, past such obstacles as Bastard Hole, Bomb Alley(careful of loose boulders here), Razor Pot, Grand Gallery, and Speakers Corner(short upward squeeze into a wider passage), and on to Split Pot. At the bottom of this was David's Traverse - a narrow rift widening along ashale band. The tightest sections of the sink were perhaps at the end of this, just before Discovery Pot where jammed boulders in the rift made further horizontal progress impossible.

Most of the pitches had sported restricted take-offs, and this one second from last, proved to be the worse. The body had to be forced downwards away from the ladder. This section recalled memories of Hammer Pot. Below, the rift became wider with muddy ledges and calcite flows. The last pitch, the only one with a spacious take-off, dropped to a crawl in the stream, but we found it easier to ascend a dry passage on the left leading to the largest parts of the system - Goliath Rift, Devil's Kitchen, and Saul's Shaft. By traversing around the top of Devil's Kitchen on delicate ledges, Saul's Shaft was reached where there were good formations and helictites. A low sandy passage to the left turned out to be Judgement Passage which we declined to follow to the end.

A quick rest preceded our journey back to the surface. Neck jams enabled us to pass such cherished items as Sambo's cigarettes and "thing" - a mass of odd tethers tied to a piton hammer. By the time we reached Bastard Hole Sambo's ciggies were gone and the bloody 'thing' was a ridiculous size, tiring all who carried it. A friendly 'cupped hand' when called for, was a help in ascending Bastard Hole(it really is). Removing bodies and tackle up the first pitch was the slowest part of the whole trip, but the last person plus stemple emerged to daylight after approx. 7 hours underground.

It was a sporting trip, though anyone larger than John Miriam(6ft tall, vital statistics 38-33-37) could find it exhaustive. Under normal weather conditions a wet suit is not needed, but the streamlining and reduction in bulk is useful.

A list of tackle is shown on the next page(I hope - Ed)

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TACKLE FOR MARBLE SINK

| Ladders |               | Belay  |
|---------|---------------|--|
| 30ft.   | Pillar Pot    | 20ft. to our stemple(taken out) or 5ft to very dubious iron angle. |
| 20ft.   | Bastard Hole  | 20ft. belay  |
| 40ft.   | Razor Pot     | 5ft belay to flake   |
| 20ft    | Split Pot     | 5ft belay to flake   |
| 40ft.   | Discovery Pot | 5ft belay to flake   |
| 30ft.   | Last pitch    | 5ft tether - numerous belays available.                            |

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The Editor is amazed to announce that he received a letter referring to one of his newsletters which shattered his belief that noone read it, so much so that it is here set out in unexpurgated version:

Dear Editor,

A "Letters to the Editor" feature seems to be lacking from recent newsletters, so here is a start. It is a protest at the innacurate, biased and generally garbled reporting of a recent E.G.M. which appeared in newsletter No. 95.

Confusion and uncertainty over ownership of the land led to Upper Flood Swallet being dug simultaneously by two separate teams, each with a valid and proper permission to dig. The only sensible course open was to proceed on a joint basis, and this in fact, was agreed in January 1972. The events leading up to this agreement were described in some detail at an A.G.M. held in March '72. As there was a general boycott of this meeting it is not altogether surprising that some members feel a lack of information on the subject.

It is certainly true that the committee which agreed to digging on a joint basis did not have the full facts before them. Some points, which might have been relevant to that decision, have only come to light in recent weeks. Possibly, events might have been different, but it is too late to consider alternatives now.

Whilst acknowledging the difficulties of condensing the minutes of an E.G.M. to a page of quarto, I find it impossible to see how a passing remark can justify two paragraphs. At a meeting held on 17th June both teams rejected 'fixed limit exploration' in favour of "exploration on a trust basis". Paragraphs 3 and 4 were therefore not even discussed at the meeting. (? - Ed.)

The fifth and final paragraph with the exception of there being two "t's" in committee is, in my opinion, the only one beyond criticism.

Yours Speleologically,

PETE MATHEWS 13th August 1972

(ED. Since the report appeared a lot of differences seem to have been put aside and the situation generally cleared which would seem to bear out the old saying - "The PENIS mightier than the sword")

The caucasian Mountains provide the Soviet Union with one of their most popular winter sports centres. Tourists are well catered for, and we made all arrangements through Intourist - the Russian State Tourist Office. Our five man expedition spent 18 days climbing in the most spectacular part of The Central Caucasus based upon the Baksan Valley. In all we conquered five summits above 4000metres(13,150ft) including of course, the majestic double-crested Mt.El'brus - The Mountain of the Winds.

The Elbrus volcanic massif lies to the north of the main Caucasian Range to which it is linked by a ten kilometre ridge. Dominating the massif are the mountains' twin summits, the Eastern(5621m) and the Western(5633m) - 18,500ft for non-continentals. Away to the south-west on the mountain spur rise two further summits Kynkyurthyn(4623m) and Dome Kynkyurthyn(4965m). All four are considered mountaineering targets.

Weather in this area always tends to be a little unstable, even in summer, with frequent winds of hurricane force, blizzards, thunderstorms, and thick mists. In the absence of visibility even climbers well acquainted with the area can lose their way on the boundless ice fields of the Elbrus. Numerous glaciers flow down the slopes of the massif, of which some 150sq.km are permanently covered by ice. These are a particular feature of the southern slopes which receive a much heavier rainfall. Parties meeting with any gathering clouds on the ascent are well advised to return to base.

Ascents are best made during the months of July and August, The most popular way up is made from the village of Terskol in the Baksan Gorge. A well worn route leads via Picket 105 and Ice Base to "The Shelter of the Eleven" (Priint Odin Nudtsat). Situated at 4200m this makes an ideal base for acclimatisation before tackling the ten to sixteen hour trip to the summit. A preliminary acclimatisation period followed by a careful rate of ascent to the peak is the key to beating Elbrus, and must be borne in mind especially by climbers negotiating such altitudes for the first time.

We had poor weather conditions for the climb but managed to complete it, nevertheless, in four days. Temperatures on Mt. El'brus are always low, and tend to drop sharply as the weather deteriorates. During our visit the temperature at the summit was minus 25 degrees Centigrade, and added to this there was a cold wind blowing.

During our stay we also visited the tributary gorges to the Baksan; Adyl-Sec, where we climbed the snowy summit of Gumuczi(3809m) and the rocky peak of Andyuzi(4100m); and from the Donyuz-Own valley we ascended the peak of Nakra-Tau(4272m).

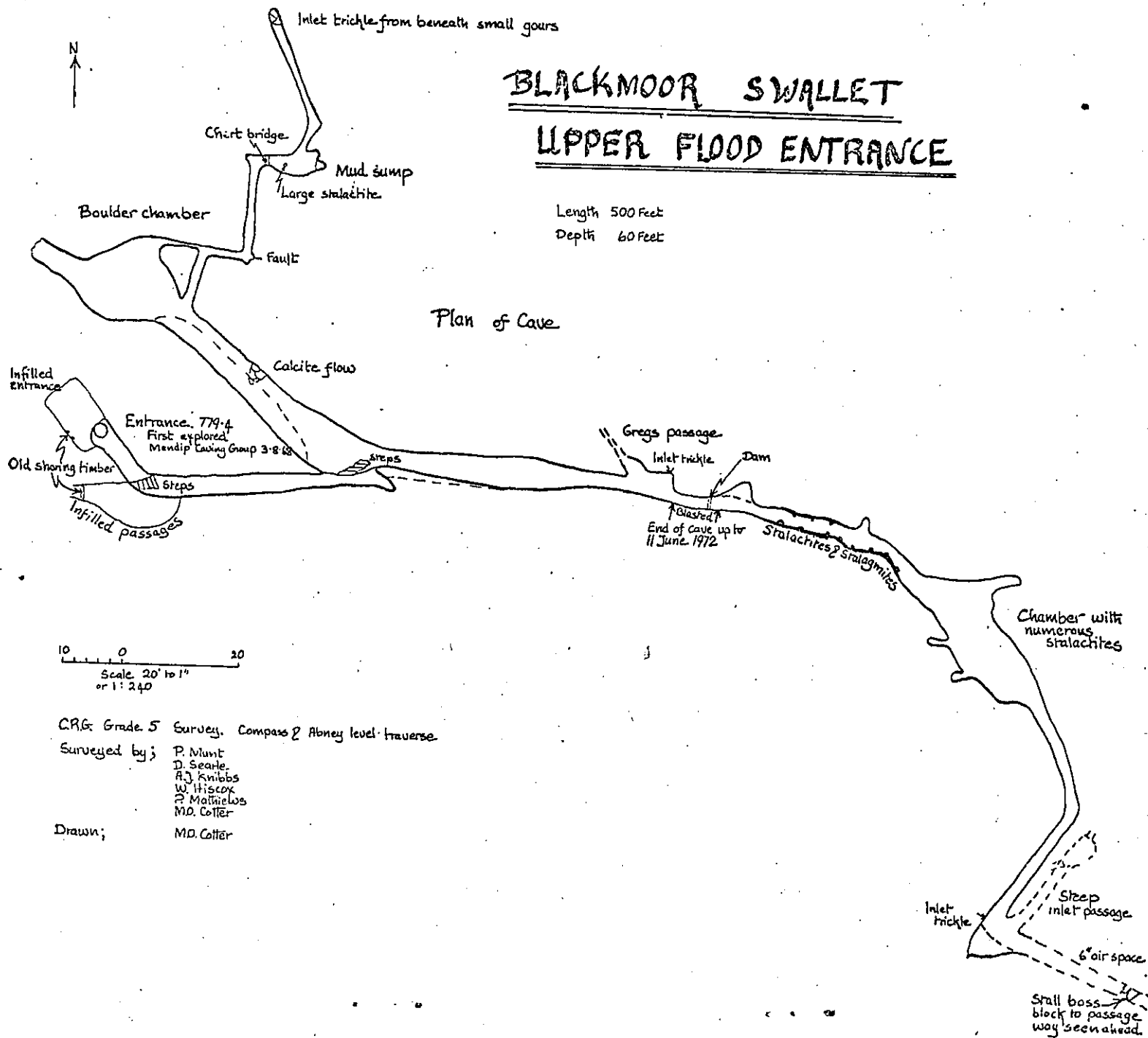
And then, it was back to our base camp at Hotel Hkol where we were in much need of recuperation after our holiday.

# BLACKMOOR SWALLET

## UPPER FLOOD ENTRANCE

Length 500 Feet  
Depth 60 Feet

Plan of Cave



10 0 20  
Scale 20' to 1"  
or 1:240

CRG Grade 5 Survey. Compass & Abney level traverse.

Surveyed by;  
P. Munt  
D. Seale  
A.J. Knibbs  
W. Hiscox  
P. Mathielos  
M.D. Cotter

Drawn; M.D. Cotter

Small boss  
block to passage  
way seen ahead.

A climbing holiday in Skye meant that few of the regular M.C.G. had been near Mendip for three or four weeks. In the meantime Willie Stanton and his team had been toiling along on their own. Anxious to set the balance right and see the extent of progress, the party descended in wet suits, where previously one had worn dry gear.

PARTY  
Pete Mathews (whose birthday it was)  
John MacMillan  
Don Vosper  
Pat Walsh

Preliminary inspection of the work-face revealed a low man-sized arch into a mud wallow, with room under the mud but limited air-space hampered by pendants and curtains. Lying flat out keeping one's face out of the mud and hammering at the roof was exhausting enough, but there was no turning back with Pat on your ankles "Get back in there you bastard, we're going through". Eventually J. Mac., realising resistance was foolish removed his helmet and ducked under the mud.... "I can see a way on.....its too tight to get through.....I won't be able to get back.....hang on, I'm going through.....its very tight. ....I'M in a little passage, formations everywhere.....seems to open up..... ..?+!% it, my lights gone out.

Numerous yellow stalactites and straws decorated the chamber, the best being near the squeeze (now well muddied). A six inch groove worn through the mud on the chamber floor by a stream trickle formed a natural path, banks of mud either side showing cracking to a depth of an inch with a pattern 18 inches across. All but the loftiest formations bore the tell-tale debris of the recent flooding.

The lowest part of the chamber was barred by stal, soon shattered under Pat's (I'm a lumberjack) hammer, and we crawled on to a squeeze which met a similar fate. We were then in an enlarged dip joint 18 inches wide and eight feet high with mud to a depth of two feet. Hitherto the general trend of the cave had been along the strike.

This we thought, was the passage we had been looking for, and at a suitable enlargement where a large inlet passage entered from above a flowstone bank, we called a halt. Pat was, in the mean time, a little further ahead and reported a further obstruction. This proved beyond the powers of the hammer and took the rest of the summer to clear.

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UBLEY WARREN POT

ROGER SAUNDERS

A round trip was undertaken by Roger and Helen Saunders, Philip Ingold, and John Mac (He gets everywhere - Ed) collectively known as the M.C.G. Midgets; from Nettle Pot into Ubley Warren Pot.

The link between the two caves is at the top of the large chamber 40 - 50ft high in Nettle Pot where a tight short squeeze is to be found not passable by well built people, giving access to the entrance of Ubley Warren Pot - a round trip of approx. 10 minutes. Per 'Caves of Mendip' - "The level one (passage) enters Nettle Series through a crevice only passable by midgets".



The Cairngorms are situated in N.E.Scotland, south of Inverness. They are a compact mountain area with 200 square miles above 2000ft high, while the summit plateaux exceed 4000ft. Two deep passes, the Lairig Ghru and the Lairig An Lui divide them into 3 segments. The rocks of the Cairngorms are mainly coarse crystalline granite and red felspar.

I was accompanied into these hills by two 'small boys', Wicks & Smith, in September; we carried no tents as we were sleeping in bothies (a hut or refuge). The car was left at Linn of Dee and we walked past Derry Lodge up Glen Derry to Loch Etchachan and then over to Loch Avon and the Shelter Stone. This stone can accommodate about 8 sleeping underneath it in relative comfort.

The next day we climbed to the summit of Ben Macdui (4295ft) and then had an easy walk of  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles along the plateau to Cairngorm (4084ft), and descending Coire Cas and the traverse beneath the Cairngorm corries proved difficult due to a combination of thick heather and unstable boulders. The night was spent at Sinclair bothy.

We climbed in thick mist on the 3rd day to the top of Braeriach (4248ft), but fortunately the summit was clear, and peaks of 3500ft or more could be seen 'floating' in a sea of cloud, especially Ben Nevis - 51 miles away. Again we walked the summit plateau to Cairn Toul (4241ft), descending to Corrour bothy at the southern end of the Lairig Ghru. Here the hardier of the party had a starkers wash in the Dee. Needless to say Greg Smith (No.1 boy) had not washed for 3 days and was extremely smelly.

The 4th and final day was passed by a pleasant amble along the banks of the Dee back to the car.

.....Mr. MacMillan also modestly informs me that the same three "tigers" also completed the three peaks walk (Ingleborough, Penyghent, Whernside) in  $8\frac{1}{2}$  hours, and bottomed Penyghent Pot in 6 hours all in the same week!

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#### FORTHCOMING MEETS

NOVEMBER 11/12 South Wales - OFD, accommodation at S.W.C.C. (names to Meet Sec. for those wanting beds)

NEXT YEAR No dates as yet but relevant permits being sought.  
Penyghent Pot.....Gingling Hole.....Pippikin....  
...2 Welsh meets (OFD & DYO)....Cuthberts.....and  
possibly Burke's Fell.

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LESSON FOR SMALL BOYS: A well known small boy (No.1) decided to take a flask of hot tea down a dif with him. On the scrouge, as usual, for sugar he found some in a jar labelled Monosodium Glutamate and promptly emptied half the jar in his flask. Some hours later down below...splutter....bloody hell, I've been poisoned....he realizes the jar was correctly labelled after all.