



COMMITTEE-----

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RECORDER Greg Smith; 131 Hagden Lane, Watford, Herts.
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EDITOR Roger Wallington; 113 Upton Court Road, Slough, Bucks.
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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.

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.

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

Held at the Cottage, Nordrach on Mendip at 5.30 pm.

Present 16 members, 4 prob. members, 4 guests
Chairman Don Vosper

OFFICERS REPORTS

Meet Secretary (John Macmillan): Fairly good attendance on most meets but mainly from the same small group of people. Some fresh enthusiasts (and maybe some old ones) would be welcome on future trips next year. There will still be no Mendip meets on the Programme, but of course trips to Cuthberts, GB, etc., can easily be arranged on request. Next year's trips will include Penyghent Pot, Gingling Hole, Pippikin Pot, Birks Fell Cave, and The Isle of Skye. The Meet Sec. will not be planning any trips abroad, but it is understood that some members may be going to Eastern Europe again, next summer.

Tacklemaster (John Miriam): We have in stock 1000 ft. of Ulstron Rope; about 240 feet of Ladder plus 15 tethers. 80 ft. more of Ladder is under construction and we have materials for a further 275 ft. to be made, with 5/8 " dia. rungs and 3/32" dia. wire. The original Araldite test Ladder has been withdrawn after 4 years service, the reason being deterioration at the rung/wire interfaces, due to stress concentration. Regarding spares, we sell most things, except Carbide Lamps, which are too expensive. Tony Knibbs added that the Shepton sell Caving Boots for just over £3.00. If details of sizes are known we could hold a club stock.

Club Survey Equipment - where is it?..... It appears that Brian Hillman may still hold most of it. Bill Jones has agreed to investigate. Following this, new equipment will be brought, as required.

Cottage Warden (Wayne Hiscox): Financially speaking, a very good year for the Cottage. Work weekends are not generally well attended, so a list of jobs to be done will be put on the Notice Board, for attention on any weekend when Members are present. Tony Knibbs, in a flippant mood, suggested an "Excess Subs System" could be adopted, whereby rebates are made to workers for jobs done.

Recorder (Greg Smith): Basic policy has been to keep as much Material as possible on Mendip, where it is easily accessible (All Committee Members hold a key to the Library). It is a pity that Members do not use the Library more often, instead of buying such "Mass Media Mags" as "Decent". Club Newsletters and Journals give much better, more detailed news of activities within the caving world.

Treasurer (Ron Saunders): Main cause for concern has been our liability for Corporation Tax on the Deposit Account (LFF). Owing to our Interest exceeding £15 this year, the Bank has been obliged to send details to the Inspector of Taxes, who requires payment for previous years as well. The Committee has looked into the possibility of registering as a Charity, to claim exemption from the Tax, but unfortunately this is out of the question. We could raise valid objections with the Tax Officer, who would either forget us, since we are not worth pursuing, or would be antagonised to the point of being more ruthless. Ron has already managed to persuade the Tax Officer to forget a few years, but we may still have to pay. Clearly it would be wise to transfer our money into an account with, say, a Building Society.

Secretary (Pete Mathews): A short preamble by Pete, covering such topics as the Cottage Burglary and the saving of the "Cave of the Shortest Day", followed by:-

1. Blackmoor Shaft Liability - As the land now belongs to the S.E.C., it is extremely doubtful that we are responsible for anyone who happens to fall down the Shaft. Our fence still surrounds it, and the S.E.C. have erected a warning notice on the land. If these precautions are not adequate we are covered by our Insurance anyway.

2. Blackmoor Upper Flood Swallet - Despite earlier dissention about the Dig, both parties are working amicably together, with those who criticised the arrangement showing a good degree of tolerance. An agreement has been made, allowing Willie Stanton to keep to his 250 ft. criteria and MCG to explore open passage on a trust basis, having due regard for the Reservoir Hole Team. Pete thinks the two schemes are compatible and that when the time comes for a full exploration, things will sort themselves out.

3. Grant For New Cottage - The Committee will be making a proposal to Jim Fry, when the time is right, for a corner of his land near the old Axbridge Site. When we can present a concrete proposal for a building we will be in a favourable position for a grant from the London Sports Council. This Grant will probably be 50% of the total cost of land and building. A good Cottage shell could cost up to £4000, which will mean help from Members in terms of labour and money.

Editor (Roger Wallington) :Where is he? (Ed. Inebriated)
No apology for absence received.

Any Other Business :-

Wayne Hiscox, nominated for the vacant post of Cottage Warden, was elected unopposed.

Q. How do you know when you've passed an elephant?

A. When you can't get the toilet seat down.

SLIDE NIGHTS 9 o'clock start at the Royal Oak, Brentford.

Thursday 25th January - Group Slide Show. Bring all your rotten slides along - if you don't there won't be a show! Hope to include Ireland, Skye, Yorkshire and Flood Swallet.

Thursday 22nd February - "Le speleogiste gastronomique" - A caving guide to France, including visits to caves in the Jura and Vercors. A number of blue slides will be included in this entertainment.

Bring any slides you have along. Come and see that everyone else gets rotten pictures as well as yourself.

This autumn the club held a meet in Yorkshire at Bull Pot Farm, Lancaster/Easegill being booked. When the opportunity arose of a trip down Gingling Hole with the N.E.G./Red Rose Combo, Lancaster Hole was soon forgotten (by me that is).

It was a pleasant walk in fine weather to the shooting hut and up to the pot. One vehicle was allowed by the landowner to the hut, so the tackle was no problem. The entrance pitch of 25 ft. led into a canal and a fairly tight twisting passage to the 2nd pitch of 15 ft. The passage then widened slightly into a high rift passage. 30 ft of ladder was dropped down the rift mainly to assist the ascent. We transversed down the rift to the top of a large decorated chamber. From here 40 ft. of ladder can be dropped into the chamber or a hairy traverse can be negotiated along the right hand wall on some cemented blocks to the bottom of the chamber. This chamber was the end of the system until the N.P.C. (Not a Potholing Club) dug through in 1966. A small hole in the floor into a bedding plane opened into a passage finely decorated with long straws. The formations are undamaged probably due to the restricted access. The next pitch was 40 ft. into a high wide passage but this soon became restricted. After an 18 ft. pitch the water dropped down the rift but we traversed at the same level in the narrow rift until a wooden stemple was reached. At this point a 30 ft. pitch led down to the 200 ft. pitch and one of the final sumps.

We continued traversing at the same level, formations obstructing progress from time to time. Soon the rift lowered and we were crawling in and out of deep gour pools, the airspace being 18 inches, until a round chamber was reached with a fine 60 ft. pitch. The ladder for the next pitch of 40 ft. hung over some loosely wedged boulders, the belay being a dubious one. Again the rift was high and narrow but here it suddenly became very muddy which aided progress through the tight parts. Three short pitches followed at frequent intervals, the belays being wooden stemples (Batty's handiwork)? A ladder was used as a handline into the sump which appeared very deep.

Due to the restricted nature of the system the return was long and arduous. Gingling Hole is deeper than Penyghent Pot and much more constricted, making it a more difficult trip.

<u>TACKLE</u>	<u>PITCH</u>	<u>LADDER</u>	<u>BELAY</u>
	1st	25	Direct to iron bar
	2	20	5 ft. to flake
	3	30	5 ft. to flake
	4	40	10 ft. to stalagmite
	5	40	5 ft. to flake
	6	20	1 ft. to helictite
	7	60	10 ft. to stalagmite
	8	40	30 ft. to loose boulder
	9	25	Direct to wooden stemple
	10	25	" " "
	11	25	" " "
	12	25	" " "

SUMMARY OF THE MENDIP RESCUE ORGANISATION ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1971-72.

Cave Rescues and Incidents

1. Porth yr Ogof, February 13th/14th, 1971.

Search for Paul Esser, who died in a diving accident, was carried out by divers from Mendip as well as Wales.

2. Priddy Green, May 23rd, 1971

At 12-30p.m. Wells Police informed Howard Kenney that a party of one teacher and seven pupils from Kingswood School, Bath, had been reported as overdue. They had left school the previous day with the stated intention of exploring Lamb Leer first and Swildon's 2 afterwards, returning early on Sunday morning. A strong party was rapidly alerted, as a result of the courtesy of Hunters lodge, but within a few minutes the party's van was found on Priddy Green with the eight missing cavers sound asleep inside.

The school apologise for the misunderstanding.

3. St. Cuthbert's Swallet, August 21st, 1971.

At about 4.30p.m. Martin Mills, caving with a party of Shepton, was struck on the right shoulder by a falling boulder, whilst climbing a newly discovered aven in Disappointment Passage. It was believed to have broken his collar bone, but this proved not to be the case. A caver was sent out to call out M.R.O. and to get Pulpit Pitch and Gour Passage Pitch laddered, as these had been descended by abseiling.

Mills climbed the Gour Pitch ladder with one hand, but had to be hauled up Pulpit Pitch in a bosun's chair knot. Nevertheless he set the pace and made such rapid progress that he reached the Arrete Pitch and Entrance pitch before rescue tackle was ready on either of them, climbing both easily. He was out by 7p.m.

This is another example of how a good caver can make a rescue easy in a difficult cave.

4. G.B. Cavern, 16th October, 1971.

Ian Harrison, a novice with the Portsmouth College of Technology, got caught by some falling boulders, trapping him by the leg and causing bruising. He was freed by members of his own party.

5. Eastwater Cavern, 28th November, 1971.

The day was one of steady drizzle and from about tea-time onwards the rain was very heavy increasing the stream into Eastwater Cavern. A party from Spelaeo Rhal were making their way out and met, in the Traverse a party from the Portsmouth College of Technology who were very tired and very apprehensive as to the safety of making their way out through the boulder maze, which at that time was extremely wet. Mike Haselden, who was leading the Spelaeo Rhal party, advised them to remain where they were, and as Haselden's party was in much better shape they fought their way out against the rising stream.

The police alerted Howard Kenney who in turn arranged a party from

Hunters Lodge. Meanwhile the Spelaeo Rhal party also alerted cavers at Upper Pitts. At the same time the rain slackened with the result that the stream subsided and the rescue teams were able to escort the Portsmouth party from the cave without difficulty.

6. Ogof Fach (penderyn), 15th January, 1972.

A party from the Westminster Spelaeological Group was down the cave; Roger Solari and Tony Giles were diving and there was a support party, two of which went as far as Sump 2. On the return of these two they found that the duck in the by-pass to sump 1 had sumped. One of them free dived it, but the second, Simon Mead King, was unable to do so. The first therefore came out of the cave for help. At 7.35p.m. Bob Churcher and Julian Walford entered the cave with a spare diving set. They found King at the sump and gave him the requisite encouragement to get through.

Insurance for Cave Rescuers.

In July 1971 the Home Office recommended to the police authorities that they should insure those who at the request of the Police or by arrangement with them take part in search or rescue operations. Through the County Treasurer, the Somerset Police have taken out an insurance policy for Personal Accident Insurance whereby benefits are payable for injury or death up to a maximum of £10,000. The cover is for rescue personnel either above or underground during the rescue. There is no cover for (a) mileage expenses, (b) having a car smash going to a rescue, (c) third party damages, (d) loss of earnings or (e) cave rescue practices. Car accidents should be covered by the member's ordinary motor insurance.

It follows from this that the Police must be notified in all cases where cave rescue operations are undertaken, even the most trivial, as otherwise there is no insurance cover for the rescuers.

New Rescue Depot

In July 1971 this depot or tackle store was established by kind permission of the B.E.C. in the right wing of the old stone Belfry. It is being organised by Howard Kenney and Brian Prewer. All members of the Committee are expected to do a fortnight's duty a year at the depot. During their duty they are expected to know what there is in the store, to check its contents and to take steps to remedy any deficiencies. They are responsible for seeing that all rescue tackle is returned in good order after use. Experience to date shows that the system is working well.

NOTE: - to be read in a gruff voice - with feeling!

It must have been the early part of November when I first realised that there was a plot afoot. I was deep in slumber, curled up beneath my desk at the London offices of Cable & Wireless when a stiff letter crashed onto my polished teak surface. Crawling out from the well between my drawers I slit the envelope with a souvenir letter-opener a grateful client from the Punjab had sent last Christmas. The contents within were written on bristol-board; the sinister implications of this were not however to become apparent until I reached the @th line.

The author of this miserable manuscript was an old friend of mine, Harry Stuckfast, who at the time held the distinguished office of a newsletter Ed. in a rather elite sporting club. The words scanned by my bleary gaze told a sorry tale. Apparently the 'run-of-the-mill' members of this fraternal institution were boycotting the newsletter, and when asked to write articles would scream and stamp their feet. This attitude of utter indifference had so upset my friend that his mind became temporarily deranged, which for a short while resulted in him hanging up his dirty mackintosh and ceasing to expose himself to old ladies and young girlies on the Tube. This pitiful parchment went on to request my advice and assistance as an ex-editor and a complete failure.

The following morning at 10.10 I found myself on the 10th floor of one of the many international brick design companys offices in Slough. I had left my desk in the desk-park downstairs and had come straight up to Harry's office. I was compelled to wait in the outer office a short while as Harry was going over some files with his secretary. My time was not spent idly however, as I fell into conversation with the typist, a certain Miss Brazen-Hussy, and together we discovered some interesting formations beneath her desk.

At 10.45am. the door to the inner office opened and Miss Twiddle emerged followed closely by Harry.

"George! - Georgq Thruخالot! - You've come!" crræäd Harry.

"Yes Harry! - I've come!" said I.

Shaking me firmly by the hand he pulled me into the office and beckoned me to lie on a rug, while he squatted on a bucket behind the desk.

"Now, what's all this about?" I chortled.

"Oh, I'm awfully sorry", burred Harry, popping his head up above the desk as he spoke, "but it's Miss Twiddle - she won't have it any other way".

"No, No", I said, "The letter, you silly chap - the letter!"

"Oh the letter. Oh thank God you've come George, it's been absolute hell", Harry moaned.

His face had taken on that dmstorted look I remembered having seen the night he returned from his first meeting of the Australian Sadists Society.

"They won't write", he cried, "I've begged, pleaded, and offered them things, but they just won't write!"

The poor blighter was quite distraught and appeared to be in the advanced stages of Writerlessitis. Just then the door flew open and a small boy ran in.....

....."H.S!, H.S.!" he screamed, "Miss Brazen-Hussy has got caught up in her 'Golf-Ball'!"

It was apparent to me that Harry would be unable to handle the situation, so I strode into the outer office.

"Oh Mr. Thruxalot, help me, help me!" cried the entangled Miss Brazen-Hussy. I grabbed hold of her in what I thought to be a secure position and proceeded to pull with all my might and mane. What happened next was difficult to grasp, for suddenly the 'Golf-Ball' released itself from the rest of the machine and disappeared down a crevice in Miss B.H's. dress. The pair of us lost our balance and fell back against the recently installed disposal chute and were almost sucked off. I clambered to my feet and then assisted Miss B.H. to hers.

"Oh Mr. Thruxalot, thank you", Miss Brazen-Hussy spoke adoringly.

"That's alright my dear", I replied. "Here, close your eyes and put out your hands, I have something for you".

She willingly obeyed my command - and that's when I gave it to her.

"Oh! Mr.T. What can it be?, why it's all knobby!" she cooed.

"Open your eyes my dear", I croaked.

"Why Mr, Thruxalot! It's my golf-ball."

Feeling that I had satisfied her I returned to poor Harry who had been so affected by all the excitement that his muscles had expanded, resulting in him being unable to remove himself from the bucket. From the front of the desk however, I could not fully appreciate Harry's predicament, and the only indication that all was not well, were his arms and legs waving frantically in the air.

"What's the matter back there Harry?" I said.

"Bucket! Bucket!" came the reply.

"How's that?" I queried.

"I'm stuck fast!" he yelled.

"Yes I know who you are Harry" I retorted. Coming around the desk - all was revealed.

"Get me out of here" Harry seathed.

"Okay Squire, just a jiff and I'll 'bang' you out with some of the jelly I have left over from yesterdays' lunch pack".

"Don't use that stuff on me" screamed Harry.

"That's alright Harry, there's plenty more where this came from, and I've got to use it up because it's beginning to sweat a bit. Now just you sit tight, say no more, nudge nudge".

It could be argued that what followed had an uplifting effect. Miss Twiddle had to be helped down from the fluorescent fitting while Harry reposed, inverted, within the umbrella stand. When the situation reverted to comparative calm I suggested to Harry a solution to his editorial problems. "Well", I said, "If you persuade some fool to write a load of old 'rubbish', then all your readers would complain. When they do, tell them that if they supplied you with more material you wouldn't need to resort to printing garbage". Harry's 'Dial' took on a pensive look, but the agony of reasoning being too much for him, he threw his arms up and exclaimed, "Rubbish! Garbage! It's great! I like it!"

"That's it Harry! Rubbish! That's the name of the game", says I, "Well I'm off now - must be up at the crack of Dawn. Alright if I abseil down from your window, Harry?"

CERTIFIED SAFETY?

Last winter's tragedy in the Cairngorms seems to have caused a few repercussions amongst those involved in the outdoor activities. Education authorities are taking an attitude which they hope will rule out possibilities of a recurrence, which of course is impossible as no-one can predict the English weather, and accidents will happen. Their increasing use of red tape and certificates is making life difficult amongst youth workers.

But hang on, those involved in the Cairngorms incident were experienced mountain leaders with certificates to prove it. Well, says the authorities, their certificates weren't big enough. We must have the biggest certificates available, and that way accidents cannot happen, and if they do the certificate will double as a useful shelter. We must not fail to get the best leaders available. Take the example of Town End Primary School whose annual picnic to Hampstead Heath next summer is to be led by Chris Bonnington!

This attitude is also affecting speleology. Local authorities are beginning to insist on trained leaders for caving activities too. In particular they are demanding the B.A.C.I. (British Association of Cave Instructors) Certificate. The requirements of this were circulated to most clubs a few years ago, and rejected on the grounds that they were not relevant to cave leadership.

There seems to be a strong prospect of cave politics here.

AN OBSERVATION FROM MY ARMCHAIR

OGOFWR WEN

UPPER FLOOD SWALLET

Perhaps you too have noticed on your way down to the dig-face, that the 3 chambers we have so far also contain smaller inlets. Perhaps you may have noticed that the greatest gains in depth occur at these same points in the cave. The crawls, or what were crawls, are almost completely horizontal whereas the chambers descend relatively steeply.

Both crawls and chambers are extensively filled with flowstone, but this predominates in the former. Compared with other Mendip caves the extent of stal. deposits so close to the surface is peculiar. One might argue that the closing of the crawls through repetitive false flooring is due to the slow rate of flow along horizontal passages. The indications are that the present stream in the cave is saturated with calcium bicarbonate (how about some water analysis from our chemists?); and this in turn would tend to suggest that most of the stream is derived from seepage waters or water that has flowed most of its distance over limestone.

The enlargement of chambers coupled with the increased depth indicates increased erosion rate at these points. But, how can this take place with already saturated water, and with little

.....sign of collapse. The answer could well be that this section of the cave is an example of Böglis' "erosion by mixing waters". In this theory a mixture of two saturated waters derived from sources of a different pH, can be shown to have renewed aggressiveness towards limestone. Thus, where two such streams unite one might expect to find increased evidence of limestone solution, i.e. enlargement of the cave.

These conclusions, if they are valid, can tell us little about the next section of cave since jointing features etc. would have a more profound effect on passage development. Our present inlets probably close down quite rapidly, and are not worth pushing.

What is the capital of Ireland? --- 3/6d.

READING MATTER

Northern Caves Vol.1.- Wharfedale (D.Brook, R.G.Coe, G.M.Davies, M.H.Long, Dalesman 1972 144pp 90p)

The expansion of discoveries in Yorkshire has led to Pennine Underground becoming very dated although cramped on space. Three new volumes are intended as a replacement; the first volume covering the area to Penyghent Gill and Malhamdale, volume two the three peaks, volume three will include Leck Fell and the Northern areas. Generally information is well presented and all caves mentioned appear on area maps; three smaller scale maps of the general area are also included. Cave grades are given in a new system of five numerical divisions. All dimensions are given in feet and metric.

Karst (An introduction to Systematic Geomorphology Vol.7) by J.N.Jennings 252pp MIT: Cambridge, Massachusetts, & London Jan. 1972 \$8.95

The author deals mainly with karst in Australia, New Zealand, New Guinea, and Malaysia; areas with which he has personal acquaintance. The classic karst regions of Europe, North America and Java receive barely a mention, but they are mainly covered in another new book;—

Karst: Important Karst Regions of the Northern Hemisphere. Ed. M.Herak, and V.T.Stringfield. 551pp (pub. Elsevier; London) \$22

A somewhat bitty collection of chapters by different authors. Nonetheless this subject has been dominated by Germans, Yugoslavs, & Czechs, and many of their ideas are presented here, in English, for the first time. A most useful addition to our local library.

Espeleologia e iluminacion (33pp)

If you can manage Spanish you'll find this a well written review of cave lighting. The author considers all aspects, weight, volume of cells, efficiency, price, etc. Additionally he produces polar diagrams of illuminations from various reflectors. All in a Venezuelan publication.

A recent interest has developed amongst some members in the expensive world of high-fidelity. Not wishing to let this new found distraction deter from their speleological activities, they've been looking for a suitable way of combining the two.

Such a prospect would surely daunt lesser men. But, our dedicated hi-fi enthusiast, on the other hand, has plans for mounting a 20 ft. diameter multi-mega-watt speaker in Swildons 4; thus, converting the entire cave, as it were, into an immense horn - enclosure. A similar conversion at Primrose Pot, in nearby Eastwater, would complete the equipment.

Once installed with this remarkable outfit the inhabitants of Priddy could enjoy the world's finest orchestral music in the most perfect stereophony. During balmy summer months caving types would idly sip cider on the Green, and listen enraptured to the Bucharest Express steaming its way along Ninebarrows Lane. Rousing marches played by 20,000 piece pipe-bands would be heard from the direction of Priddy Stores. The prospects appear endless.

But, sadly this heaven of audio-speleological bliss could not last for more than a few weeks, for the true hi-fi fanatic would be unable to stop in his never ending quest for the absolute in fidelity. One by one, every cave on Mendip would be carefully tuned, fitted with acoustic baffles, and converted in to another channel of the ever increasing sound reproduction complex. Cavers, of course, would be banned from their old haunts, for such colossal acoustic energy heard at close quarters, would instantly paralyse them, and the increased impedance of their bodies would also upset the stereo balance.

Caving clubs, by suitable amendments to their constitution, would become cavity prospecting societies dedicated to the furtherance of speleo-acoustics and geo-musical reproduction. They would still continue with their old digs, though, now they'd be searching for caves suitable as Helmholtz Resonators. After many years of excavation and toil perhaps Aveline's Hole could be pushed to give a clear B- flat; whilst Cuckoo Cleaves, on account of its superior dip and vadose development, could easily be persuaded to resonate a thundering middle C.

Distinguished musicians and acoustic experts would arrive from far corners of the globe, so establishing an Academy of Advanced Speleo-Acoustic Studies at the Hunters. One time eminent geologists would lay down their tomes on karst hydrology to enrol on courses, anxious to fill gaps in their geological education. Studying under learned scholars of the old singing room, of the effects of cave waters upon banjo strings. Austrian professors would discuss the frequency response characteristics of Hölloch, Northern bods would swot through the night to learn of the problems involved in turning Gaping Ghyll into a vast steam organ.

Working with maximum speed, lorry loads of speakers would be fitted to every cave and grotto, striving after the purest musical reproduction. A Sutherland top-A from the faithful trans-ducer in Stoke Lane would be capable of shattering a tankard as far away as the Vic. As its fame spread, Priddy would rapidly become the hub of the musical world; Caving huts being crammed with visiting professors, whilst scores of virtuosos would form queues to kip in Maine's Barn. By day, coach loads would flock to Priddy Green to enjoy the unique acoustic phenomenon. Eventually, when slowly this mammount musical undertaking was complete, the walker on Mendip's hills would hear, from every crack, nook and fissuer, music of the most sublime, and perfect fidelity.