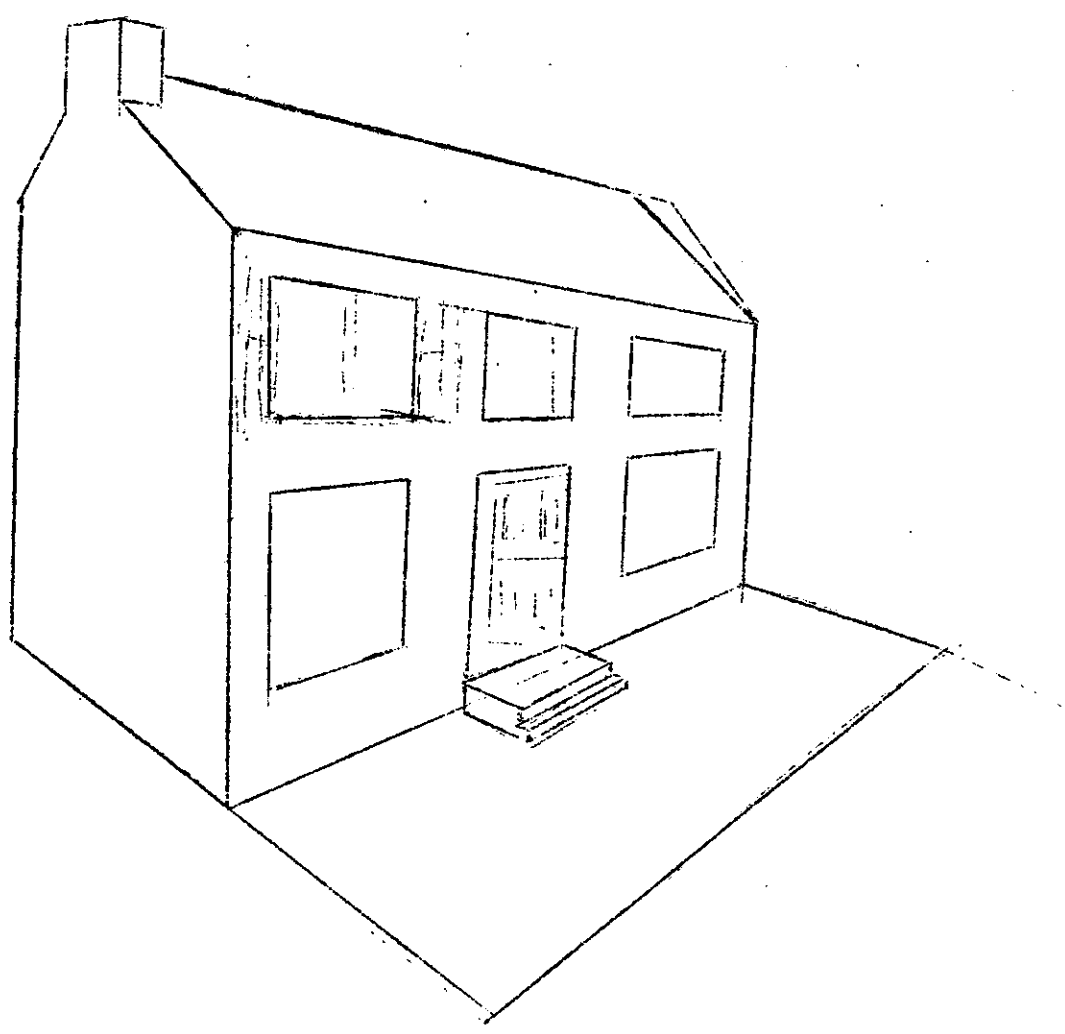


MCG NEWS

NO 102

A NEW CLUB COTTAGE?



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WEEKLY CLUB "The Royal Oak", New Road, Brentford, Middlesex.(Behind
MEETINGS Brentford Football Club Ground,) every Thursday night
till ejected.

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

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

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New Club Cottage!

Negotiations and planning for the New Club Cottage have now reached a crucial stage. Cottage plans are now being drawn up, and a site purchase is under negotiation at the present time! It is possible that we might be in the new cottage by the end of next year.

It is expected that an E.G.M. will be called in mid November to discuss the financial and structural aspects of building the new cottage. Both will require a great effort from all our members when construction starts. Most caving activity will have to be sacrificed to cottage building next year if our aims are to be fulfilled with speed and efficiency, and thus putting the club on a more secure and permanent footing. So be ready to divert all your energy from caving to cottage building soon. Pete Mathews has produced a questionnaire which will be distributed with this newsletter, regarding opinions held by yourselves about fund raising. It would be appreciated if they could be answered and returned as soon as possible.

M.C.G. Journal

The next Club Journal should now be published by Christmas. Most of the material is being printed at the moment.

Membership

It has been reported that Greg Smith could not be trusted to go out alone with a donkey on Ghar Parau

John Mirriam has retired from the Bottle Game, having received an undisplaced, spiralled fracture of the fourth metacarpal (right). Bust his hand.

Congratulations to Pat and Tony Ingold on the birth of their son Alexander on 24th August.

David Weldon has been accepted as a Probationary Member of the M.C.G.

Corks Required

John Mirriam requires all the corks that he can get for sealing ladder rungs. They can be any size or condition, so if you have any wine with your dinner for instance save the corks and give them to John.

Maner Farm Has Gone

It has been reported that at least 2000ft of passage has been discovered in Manor Farm Dig. The passages of which are like Sludge Pit.

G.B.

An entrance has appeared above the Gorge in G.B. cavern.

Stoke Lane

A gate has now been put on the entrance to Stoke Lane Slocker.

Quaking Pot

Quaking Pot Ingleborough, has now been extended by 500ft.

Prehistoric Cave Paintings

Prehistoric cave paintings have been discovered in caves near Burgos Spain. The paintings are in the Guarena caves north of the town and show representations of wild animals and symbols.

M.R.O. Call-Out Procedure

Certain changes have been made in call-out following re-organization of Local Government and Police districts.

Cavers requiring M.R.O. services should go to the nearest telephone dial 999 and ask for CAVE RESCUE VIA WELLS POLICE during DAYTIME and FROME POLICE during NIGHTS. Informants must stay at the phone until contacted by an M.R.O. Warden.

The Top Twenty

The International Union of Speleology give the following lists for the World's longest and deepest caves. These lists are provisional and will be presented and amended at the International Congress for Speleology in Olomouc September 1973.

The Deepest Caves

1. Gouffre de la Pierre Saint Martin, (Pyrenees) France/Spain.	1360m.
2. Gouffre Berger, Vercors, France.	1141m
3. Chorum des Aiguilles, Hautes-Alpes, France.	980m
4. Gouffre Cambou, Pyrenees, France.	935m
5. Abisso Michele Gortani, Friaul, Italy.	920m
6. Réseau Felix Trombe, Pyrenees, France.	910m
7. Spluga della Preta, Veronese Alps, Italy.	886m
8. Garma Ciaga-Sumidero de Callagua, Northern Spain.	868m
9. Gruberhornhöhle, Hoher Goell, Austria .	854m
10. Grotta del Monte Cuoco, Umbria, Apennines, Italy.	826m
11. Hoelloch, Muotatal, Switzerland	808m
12. Antro del Corchia, Tuscany, Apennines, Italy.	805m
13. Puits Criska, Massif du Grand Som, France.	780m
14. Sniezna Cave, Tatras, Poland.	772m
15. Sima de la Pena Bianca, Santander, Spain	745m
16. Lamprechtsofen, Weissbach bei Lofer, Austria	740m
16a. Abisso Enrico Davanzo, Friaul, Italy	735m
17. Ghar Parau, Kuh-i-Parau, Iran.	732m
18. Gouffre Georges, Ariège, Pyrenees, France.	726m
19. Complesso di Piaggia Bella, Piemont Italy	689m
20. Puits Francis, Isère, France.	688m

The Longest Caves

1. Flint Ridge-Mammoth Cave, Kentucky, U.S.A.	233.3km
2. Hoelloch, Muotatal, Switzerland	119km
3. Optimistic Cave, Podolien, U.S.S.R.	92km
4. Ozernaja Petzera, Podolien, U.S.S.R.	65km
5. Greenbrier Organ Cave, West Virginia, U.S.A.	55km

5a. Jewel Cave, South Dakota, U.S.A.	49km
6. Ojo Guarena, Spain.	ca.48km
7. Eisriesenwelt, Tennengebirge, Austria.	42km
8. Blue Spring Cave, Indiana, U.S.A.	30.4km
9. Tantalhoehle, Hagengebirge, Austria.	28.7km
10. Dachsteinmammuthoehle, Dachstein, Austria.	25.9km
11. Réseau de la Dent de Crolles, Isère, France.	25.7km
12. Ogof Ffynnon Ddu, South Wales.	25km
12a. Sloan's Valley Cave, Kentucky, U.S.A.	24km
13. Lancaster-Easegill System Yorkshire	23.3km
14. Baradla-Domica, Hungary/Czechoslovakia	23.1km
15. Butler Cave, Sinking Creek, Virginia, U.S.A.	23km

BANG!!!!

In 1846 a German born, Swiss chemist named Christian Friebiel Schönbein, spilled a mixture of nitric and sulphuric acid in his kitchen, (where he was forbidden to experiment.) In his wife's absence having done just that, he proceeded to wipe up the mess with her apron. The story continues that when he hung the apron over the fire to dry, it went poof, leaving nothing behind.

Schönbein recognized the possibilities at once, as can be realized from the name he gave the compound, the English translation of which is 'Guncotton' (Also called Nitrocellulose). Schönbein peddled the recipe to several governments. Ordinary gunpowder was so smoky that it blackened the gunners, fouled the cannon, so that it had to be swabbed after every shot, and raised such a pall of smoke that after the first shots battles had to be fought by dead reckoning. War Offices therefore leaped at the chance to use an explosive which was not only more powerful but smokeless as well! Factories for the manufacture of Guncotton began to spring up, and blow up almost as fast. Guncotton was too eager an explosive, it wouldn't wait for the cannon! By the early 1860's the abortive Guncotton boom was over, figuratively as well as literally.

Later, however, methods were discovered for removing the small quantities of impurities that encouraged Guncotton to explode prematurely. It then became reasonably safe to handle. It was mixed with Nitroglycerine, and Vaseline were added to the mixture so that it could be made into cords, hence Cordite. That finally was what emerged as a useful smokeless explosive.

Nitroglycerine was discovered in the same year as Guncotton. An Italian chemist, Ascanio Sobrero treated glycerol with a mixture of nitric acid and sulphuric acid and soon realised he had something when he nearly killed himself in the explosion that followed. Sobrero, lacking Schönbein's promotional impulses felt nitroglycerine to be too dangerous a substance to deal with. Although he suppressed information about it, but within ten years a Swedish family, the Nobels, took to manufacturing it as a 'blasting oil' for use in mining and construction work. After a series of accidents, one of which took the life of a member of the family, Alfred Bernhard Nobel, brother of the victim, discovered a method of mixing nitroglycerine with an absorbent earth called 'bieselguhr'. A stick of this impregnated earth could be dropped, hammered, and even burnt without explosion. When set off by a percussion cap however, it displayed all the shattering force of Nitroglycerine.

These 'Dynamite' sticks eventually made it possible to carve roads, railways, and dams out of rock at a rate unprecedented in history. Dynamite, and the other explosives that the lonely and unpopular Nobel discovered, made him a millionaire. Against his humanity will he found he was regarded as a 'Merchant of Death'. When he died in 1896, he left a fund out of which the famous Nobel Prizes were to be granted each year in five fields; Chemistry, Physics, Physiology, Literature, and Peace. A surprising end to the beginnings of Bang.

Reference to Bang :- The Intelligent Man's Guide to the Biological Sciences.
Isaac Asimov.

NORTHERN DIARY

June

Gingling Hole

Those present:- Rob Penn John Mac.
 Ron Saunders Greg Smith
 Helen Pete Mathews
 Roger Bill Jones
 John Miriam Phil Ingold
 Tony Knibbs

All descended to Fools Paradise, Spellbound by the fine formations many halted to take pictures, leaving the remainder to reach the final water level via the Long Route. This is more interesting than the 200' Pitch way, and involves a long thrutch down a narrow rift, followed by deep calcite pools, then about five pitches the largest of which is about 60ft deep, all in the same rift. The last three are very muddy and narrow, the final descent to the dismal sump pool was the filthiest of the lot!

July

Burks Fell Cave

Those present:- John Mirriam, Mike Lovell
 John Mac. John Evens
 John Wilkinson Don Vosper
 Northern Exploration Group Bill Jones
 Ian Bramble Pete Mathews
 Allan Wicks Roger Wallington

The entrance passage was low with wet crawls, leading to the 50' pitch. From the bottom lead an interesting stream way with many low wet bedding crawls. Bypass routes past boulder chokes were taken, followed by cascades and lofty passage to elbow bend. From there through sewer type passage to another 50' pitch. The passage in the rift at the bottom lead to Sticks Sump, where we turned about and returned to the surface. A great trip in which route finding was not too difficult.

August

John Mac. and John Miriam returned to Burks Fell again with N.P.C.

September

Pool Sink-Lancaster Hole Through Trip

Those present:- Greg Smith
 John Wilkinson
 Steve
 Cambridge U.C.C.

Whilst the party abseiled down Pool Sink, John Miriam laddered the entrance to Lancaster. He could not cave having fractured his right hand the week before. Wilky lead us to Hole Beck Junction, Easter Grotto, and through a crawl into Gypsum Cavern. Next to Stock Pot, the Minerets, and down to the Master Cave. Water flowing at a tremendous pace, due to heavy rain, caused us to jam and traverse in many places in the passage. Up through boulders we then proceeded, at Fall Pot, and hence to Lancaster Pitch where John was waiting with the life line.

Car Pot

Those present:- Greg and Steve

The first pitch required at least 50ft of ladder and a long belay. The second pitch was in a narrow excavated tube, so we poked ladder and belay through a narrow (not mansized) hole above. A short slide down this into Baptistry Crawl, which although restricted at the start opened out after the first five feet. The cave was straight forward from there to the bottom, but it took a long time to reach the surface. On emerging we found the moors dark and misty so we soon got lost. The heavy tackle caused us to fall over down the gentle slope of Trough Gill which we followed down near to Ingleborough Cave to meet a fuming John Miriam who had been waiting three hours for our return.

Regretfully recorded by Greg Smith owing to the illness romance of John MacMillan.