

# MCG NEWS

## NO 104

1988-1989  
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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, Blagdon, Somerset.  
Accommodation for over 30 - all essential services - Guests  
charged at 20p per night (or 20p day fee).  
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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Reynold's Passage - How Far Does It Go?

About a month ago, in a PCG Newsletter, a continuation of Reynolds Passage, August Hole, was claimed. A phone call from Allan Wicks and Andy Mole a week later, not only confirmed the report, but also suggested that at the newly discovered end, there lay a blocked 50ft pitch!

The very next Sunday the three of us descended Longwood/August to Reynolds, to be deterred by fumes from a Fred Davies Bang. The following Sunday just Andy and I returned, armed with an 80ft rope.

The normal 'tourist' end of Reynolds Passage is at the junction of a cross-joint, which forms a pocket-size chamber, holding a pool of water: the stream by this time has found a route lower down. From the pool, one continues crawling in a very dry passage, which keeps roughly horizontal. Soon a narrow slightly inclined tube about 6ft long, leads to a momentary widening of the rift. There is some flowstone around, moistened with drips from the roof and elsewhere. Running water can be heard not far ahead, and by thrutching downwards at an angle, a thin, vertical slit is reached. By squeezing 12ft down this to a widening, the stream is met. This quickly runs into a narrow rift once more. Roger Wallington and I visited this point a few years ago, and no doubt, other Mendip cavers in the past have reached here.

However, Andy and I were now faced with pushing beyond. The visible continuation of the passage was perhaps 9 inches wide, and made an undercut into the stream bed, before disappearing from view. It did not appear to open out significantly, and an obstructing rock made crawling at stream level impossible. After thrusting in for 10ft (feet first) I became stuck. By wriggling one leg downwards into the undercut, it was possible to gain a few inches. But no more.

"How the bloody hell did some bastard get through here?" I enquired.  
"Or better still, how did he get out?"

Following my extrication, minus a wetsuit leg, Andy tried, with greater enthusiasm he spent a long time trying different positions unsuccessfully. We then agreed that there could be no way on other than the squeeze. May be this this was the blocked head of the alleged pitch. If so where was it? The water although making an impressive sound, (as streams do in small passages) did not appear to be falling any great depth. We decided not to search for an answer any longer. Hurriedly a retreat was made back to the surface, and the Hunter's - At least we could manage to squeeze in there.

Greg Smith.

Annual Dinner / Annual General Meeting

Don't forget that the weekend of 23/24th March is the A.G.M. and Dinner weekend. Nominations for the Committee and Proposals for changes to the Constitution and Rules must be in the hands of the Secretary by 2nd March.

As the Committee are planning a reprint of the Constitution, the Secretary would be most annoyed to receive amendments immediately afterwards.  
So Get Those Amendments In Now!

The main course for the Dinner will be Duckling a l'Orange and the cost £2.50. at the Star.

Meet Secretary

John MacMillan has resigned pending the sale of his car!; Bill Jones has been co-opted for the vacant post until the A.G.M.  
\* Are you thinking what I'm thinking?

## A Visitor To The Dig

As the first gentle rays of the noon-day sun, broke the gloom of a certain speleo centre, deep in the heart of Nordrach, four caving types stirred in their pits. They had passed the night warm and dry, free from the throws of liquid laughter- a nocturnal hazard in these parts.

Another start to another day, and our speleo quartet set off for their dig deep under the hill. There was Bill Big-Bang, Justasec, Bottlehand and lastly old Banjoballs. The four rumbled along to the entrance, where they prepared to clamber down a short drop to the passage below.

"Mmm that smells good," sniffed Big-Bang as he reached the bottom. "Urrrrkk", gulped his companions as they reached over their boots. Big-Bang breathed deeply, "I smell mole, a nice mouldy mole": he was very hungry for he had not eaten his customary breakfast that morning. Gleeefully, he clawed up the putrid remains of the rotting animal, tossing them into the air with delight.

And on they hurried deep into the dig. What they could possibly be doing there I don't really know, but there they certainly were: and there they stayed until it was time to go, and then they went. A little weary they began their way back, but as they neared the surface they paused-----and listened-----Ccccrash----- Boom-----Thump----- but what was that noise they heard coming from the entrance? "Stewth" said Bangoballs, "The whole entrance is blocked with cavers' ladder-----there's miles of the stuff".

Then from somewhere above there came a lurch, then a scrape, and then an "Oh dear". This was followed by a noise rather like someone falling off a ladder and a long slow moan. And there, lying in the middle of a vast mound of ladder, lay a short round figure.

"Crikey, it's Crikey", said Bottlehand. The short round figure blinked, and looked up at them.

"Well well", echoed Justasec, "If it's not Crikey Mollins". Crikey Mollins was a well known and respected figure in these parts, being the Caving Member of Mendip's Nutters and Ramblers Club. His ability as a caver was really quite extraordinary, and had quickly become somewhat of a local legend. One of his more unusual feats was abseiling down the Main Chamber in Lamb Leer Cavern, - not so very difficult in itself, but something of a novelty when attempted down a ladder.

Well to continue----- here was Crikey, and moreover here was Crikey's ladder. "Crikey Crikey" roared Justasec. "Fancy frigging about on ladders without a lifeline, that's a very dangerous thing to do, you know, you might have killed yerself - clamber out and have another go".

"+!?-x<sup>1</sup>!x get this x?x<sup>1</sup> ladder out of the x+vt: way, theres no room to get out", swore Bottlehand. But, bye and bye, all four pushed and shoved their way out through the vast tangle of ladder. After much crashing, bashing, cursing, and cussing, Crikey too, joined them once again in the fresh air.

"What the hell do you think you're doing down our dig," yelled the four.

"I er ---" began Crikey.

"We go down there to get away from bastards like you", continued Big Bang.

"I'm really sorry lads", cringed Crikey. "I only wanted to have a peep at your dig. Look would it be all right if I went down and locked it up afterwards, and took the key down the Wessex".

"Cheeky sod-----what a nerve-----Frise buffoon-----. What's our dig got to do with the Wessex? This is an all M.C.G. dig, Clear out your bastard", yelled Big Bang.

"Oh!" said Crikey. "Sorry, I only wanted a peep," Crikey went on. "But I'm sure someone told me that Manor Farm Swallet was a Wessex Dig".

"This isn't Manor Farm you thick fool. This is Upper Flood!" screamed Banjoballs. This startling news had a dramatic effect on Crikey. The puzzled worried sort of look, which had clouded his brow so far in our story, gradually passed. Crikey's face took on a deliberate, thoughtful expression, which in turn developed into a smile of one who had just solved a complex philosophical problem. Then finally there emerged the familiar Crikey grin.

"Oh lor", exclaimed Crikey, raising a fat paw to his head. "I seem to have slipped up -----Er, well, perhaps I could have a look round this one instead?" "Oh no you oan't", boomed Bill Big Bang, "I've just made a bloody big bang in the bugger".

"Well then ", started Crikey again. "Perhaps you would be kind enough to point me in the direction of the real Manor Farm Swallet?" Bottlehand thought to himself for a moment before indicating a direction that he felt sure didn't go anywhere near any Manors or any farms that he knew of. So with a grin and a wave and the clatter from his mountain of tackle, Crikey Mollins set off on his way. "Cheerio Chaps", he called as he trudged off along the route indicated, which as fate would have it, lay straight in the direction of the lake!

Ogofwr Ddu.

### In A Mist

Work in Upper Flood can get quite unpleasant if you have the misfortune to be down with someone using a carbide lamp. Ventilation at the end of the dig is very poor under dry conditions, though it improves somewhat when the stream is flowing. Air flows into the passage at low level and returns along the ceiling. Presumably, the air flow is caused purely by a movement of water.

In any event, the atmosphere at the end of the dig deteriorates quite rapidly. Apart from discomfort, this is a possible health hazard, especially to those working regularly in the dig. The use of electric lighting would therefore be greatly appreciated by most diggers.

### B. O.

Members might consider for a moment why M.C.G. are the loners of Mendip. Willie Stanton left us some months back to return to his old dig in Reservoir Hole, where he was quickly rewarded with a breakthrough. Peter Rose and the Boots Caving Club seem to have abandoned their clandestine work in Timber Hole, after mention of a joint dig.

The rejection of the M.C.G. by the rest of the caving world may seem a little puzzling to us. However, we do not have to look too far for the reason. Our cottage is the only caving headquarters on Mendip without a shower! Also our secretary's recent addiction to garlic certainly hasn't helped the situation.

So if you wish to get on with the other poofs on Mendip, or you fancy Bat Passage, might I suggest wearing a well sealed dry-suit down the Hunters.

Pete Mathews.

### Prospective Members

The Committee are beginning to accumulate a wad of application forms from Prospective Members. These have been reviewed at each Committee Meeting for the past six months. Just a tip - try bribing the Secretary with pints of beer, it usually does the trick lads!

### It Makes Sense

Boil your kettles on the stove, it conserves energy and saves the Club money

## Limestone & Caves of Mendip

B.C.R.A. and the Extra - Mural Department of Bristol University are holding a one day Symposium at Queen's Building University of Bristol, University Walk, Bristol 8. The subject of the Symposium will be as above and any one interested in attending should contact Greg Smith. The entrance fee is £1 which includes morning coffee, and afternoon tea and biscuits. The date on which it is to be held is Saturday 9th March.

## Top Ten Cottage Rotters 1973/74

1 JOHN MIRIAM	47
2 Pete Mathews	39
3 Wayne Hiscox	30
4 Eric Dowley )	29
John MacMillan )	
5 Bill Jones	28
6 Bernard Reeves	26
7 Don Vosper	19
8 Greg Smith	18
9 Pat Walsh	15
10 Phil Ingold )	14
Roy Bowden )	

## Others with double figures scores

Simon and Val Knight	11
Tony Knibbs	10
Brian Terry	10
John Pudduck	10
Dave Graves	13

## Descent

Copies of Descent will now be available from Greg Smith when published.

## Swine Vesicular Disease

The whole of Yorkshire is now an Infected Area, and access restrictions will be met in many rural localities.

## Booze Nooze

Having been forced to drop King's Brew, The Hunters have a fine replacement in Carlsberg Special.

## Membership Cards

Pete Mathews would like to hear from anyone able to print membership cards.

## Caves of Assynt, Sutherland

A Caving/Walking Week in Scotland is being planned. Pete Mathews would like to hear from anyone interested in going. However accomodation will be limited to about ten.

## Drink a Pint

Drink a Pint but remember to take your bottles home with you. Bottles are still littering the cottage.