

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The A.G.M. of the Group will be held at the Cottage, Nordrach on Mendip on Saturday, 1st March, 1975 at 2.00 pm. (SHARP)

AGENDA

1. Minutes of the previous A.G.M. held on 23rd March, 1974, and matters arising.
2. Hon. Officers Reports.

Committee (i) Secretary - Peter Mathews
(ii) Treasurer - Ron Saunders
(iii) Meet Sec - Bill Jones
(iiii) Tacklemaster - John Miriam
(v) Cottage Warden - Wayne Hiscox
(vi) Editor - Bryan Terry
(vii) Recorder - Greg Smith

Hon. Auditor's report will be given with that of the Treasurer.

Cottage Sub-Committee Report

3. Election of Officers

The committee as listed above are elected unopposed, there being no other candidates. Hon. Auditors for 1975 will be elected at the meeting.

4. Proposed Amendments to the Constitution and Rules.

para 6. SUBSCRIPTIONS to read "Annual rates: Full and Probationary Members over 18 years old - £3; under 18 year old £1 Associate Members - £1, Members Wives (under rule 3(e)) - 1.

para 10 FINANCE (c) to read The signatures of two trustees (as defined in para 14) shall be required on all cheques and notices of withdrawal.

(e) "£5 be altered to £10"

(f) "£10 be altered to £20"

The following alterations are required if the Group is to register as a charity.

para 2 OBJECT to read:- The object of the Group is, for the benefit of the public, the furtherance of all aspects of the scientific study and conservation of caves.

para 11 The constitution and Rules add the clause, "No amendment may be made which will cause the Group to cease to be a charity at law"

add a new paragraph 14; Dissolution of The Group to read

"In the event of the dissolution of the Group, and after satisfaction of all due debts and liabilities any remaining assets may not be distributed amongst the members but will pass to a body with similar objects established for exclusively charitable purposes or to some other charitable body"

Agenda Cont/...

- (5) Proposal that the Committee proceed with registration as a charity.
- (6) Bone Hole report from Arthur Cox
- (7) Czechoslovakia 1975, Don Vosper
- (8) Any other business
- (9) Close of meeting.

COTTAGE FEES FOR THE DINNER WEEKEND

There will be a standing charge of 30pence for the weekend to help to pay for the coach.

i.e The cost for members will be 50pence for one night, 70pence for two nights, The cost for guests will be 55pence for one night, 80pence for two nights.

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SKYE

Will members please note that there has been an alteration to the date of the week in Skye as published in the last newsletter. It is now the week starting Monday 26th May and not 1st June. This new date encompasses the Bank Holiday.

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UPPER FLOOD

Progress has been made in preparing drilling rods and in this connection a special mention must be made of Peter Lingwood, Bill Knott and Phil Ingold. On the 9th & 10th a great spoil moving effort was started. All the spoil taken from the face in the last 6 weeks has now been moved well up the cave and some to close below the entrance.

THE PHANTOM LID OPENER STRIKES.

On the 9th Nov. visitors to the cave found the Vertical bar holding the lid had been detached from the cross bar at the base of the pipes. The lock remained in position. The mystery remains unsolved.

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QUOTE OF THE MONTH

Scene: a dig in very "dodgy" surroundings

CAVER AT FACE "Christ, its all going to run in, let me get out!"

CAVER HIGHER UP "Pass up the tools first then!"

CAVER AT FACE "You seem more worried about the tools than us"

CAVER HIGHER UP "Well if it does collapse we may need them to dig you out!"

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COOLITE

A NEW CHEMICAL EMERGENCY LIGHT.

Coolite consists of sealed, transparent plastic cylinder 13-5cms long and 1.5cms in diameter. It is filled with a fluid in which floats a glass ampoule containing the activator solution. The light is activated by merely bending it to break the inner capsule and shaking the fluids together.

Coolite gives a strong light for 3-4 hrs, sufficient to give illumination at 5-8 metres. The cylinder will continue to glow for up to 36hrs. During test it still gave fair light at a metre some 10hrs after activation and was used to climb a ladder.

Coolite is a first class emergency light, it gives off no heat, it hermetically sealed and can be used underwater. The guaranteed shelf-life is two years.

Coolite is manufactured by Block & Hollender, 1301 Wien, Landstrasser, Hauptstrasser 72, Postfach 7, catalogue No 3317/C price OS44.

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REVIEWS

NORTHERN CAVES, Vol 5 - NORTHERN DALES, published by Dalesman Books

£ 1 . 10 pence

ARCHEOLOGY OF THE MAMMOTH CAVE AREA - published by Academic Press

£ 8 . 00

THE OLD METAL MINES OF MID-WALES: Pt I. Cardiganshire - South of Devils' Bridge, published by The Pound House, Market Sq, Newent, Glos 82pence

THE BRITISH CAVER - vol 62, July 1974, published by Tony Oldham

75 pence

ULSA REVIEW 12, March 1974

40 pence

CAMBRIDGE UNDERGROUND - Journal of the C.V.C.C. 1974

IRISH SPELEOLOGY Vol 2 No:3 △△△△△△△△△△△△△△

B.C.R.A. Bulletin No.5 August, 1974 25 pence

OXFORD UNIVERSITY CAVING CLUB. PROCEEDINGS No.6 February, 1974

30 pence

SUSS Journal Vol 2 No:3 Summer 1974 30 pence

THE CRIKEY MOLLINS BUMPER FUN BOOK

This years fun book, which normally goes under the guise of the Cotham Caving Club Newsletter, contains yet more amusing episodes in the life of that much loved character, Crikey Mollins. Find out why he was involved in more rescue callouts than anyone else - he was just trying out the M.R.O. folks! Get an application form to Mendips Nutters and Ranters Club.

Perhaps the best story involves an argument with certain A.D.O. "I want you to give me back the reviews I wrote for British Caver"

.... "I never wrote that, and I want it back"

Crikey's sharp wit can best be appreciated by his final gesture when he lifted Tony Oldham by the lapels, leaving him sprawling in the gutter. Tony is now facing a 2000 writ from C.M. His gourmets penchant for grilled bats is also revealed.

PART TWO OF THE CZECHOSLOVAKIAN SAGA

Trout Supper

We saw a great deal of the Moravsky Kras. This is a Jurassic plateau. The principal features are two deep valleys. The Pusty zleb and the suchy zleb. These two valleys carry the two main roads across the plateau which meet, conveniently, at Skalni mlyn.

We also did a fair amount of caving with Mike visiting some of the smaller numbered caves. We also saw something of the work carried out by one of the professional caving clubs. They were constructing a tunnel from the Pusty zleb into the lower passages of Amaterska Jaskyne. This system is the largest in Moravia. With a few link-ups it is potentially the second largest in Europe with a possible 80km of passage. Unfortunately, access to the cave is very tightly controlled and is administered by the University of Brno. With the chaos of the impending Congress, it was not possible to obtain the necessary authorisation for a visit.

During our sight-seeing tours we visited a local trout farm, which we thought was one of the best we had seen. Best of all, though, was the few dozen fat trout that Mike was able to scrounge for an evening barbeque. This took place a bit later than planned. After we had met up with a local caving club and were somewhat delayed over a swift half. The lateness of the hour was demonstrated by the fact that we had to go round and get most of the other guests out of bed.

The trout were split in two, gutted, filled with butter and dipped in caraway seeds. They were then ready for roasting over the bonfire on the end of a stick. The fish were consumed with a vast amount of beer.

Rudickeho Propadani

This large cave is situated in the tree covered hills near Rudice, some way South of Skalni mlyn. It is quite separate from the main Moravian drainage of Sloup-Bila Voda - Punkva System.

On a hot and perspiring sort of day we drove up to a timber yard with Mike. After some while stomping through the forest we came to a sunny clearing in the trees. At the head of the clearing stood a small wooden chalet where we met "Malcolm and Wolly" from Speleologicky Krouzek, the local club responsible for the discovery and exploration of the cave. The woodland headquarters was greatly used by the club during exploration. Since those days, exploration had ceased and digging was no longer feasible with a two day return trip to the end without doing any work there.

Well, we didn't have two days so we changed rapidly. More accurately, our Czech friends changed rapidly putting on a boiler-suit over their clothes and pulling on thigh waders. We thought this was really smart caving, and struggled into our wet suits.

We entered the cave through a dry tube, one of many holes in the grotesquely sculptured cliffs above a sluggish stream. The stream dragged itself some way past the entrance to disappear in foam and spray deep in a cleft in the cliff. The entrance series was a roomy rift some 150m. deep and varying in width from one metre to ten. Descent of the rift was achieved by a string of fixed ladders. Most of these were made of rough timber and were wet and slippery. The last and longest ladder was of steel and dropped the final twenty metres to the streamway.

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During our trek along the stream we met numerous wooden ladders. Each one seemed to be considerably more difficult than the obstacle if was intended to by-pass. The finest of these, though not ascended these days, is a feature of the cave, it is a ladder erected by the first explorers forty years ago. The passage of time and the constant drip of cave water has left a petrified stalagmite puzzler for future geomorphologists. We struggled up and down slimy wooden ladders, and balanced our way along jammed baulks of timber. Every so often a warning from Mike "attention, attention" as we cavorted from a pair of steel wires slung across a black bottomless lake. The cave was arranged more on the lines of an army assault course with timbers and wires on every stretch which might otherwise have been a bit too easy. Perhaps, all these "aids" were for the benefit of the Czech style wader-caver. The black bottomless lake which we sweated across turned out later to be knee deep. At least we reached as far as we were going, about one third along the stream and a distance of about one kilometre, excluding side passages and detours. By coincidence the water here was thigh deep. This is just one restriction to the wader caver. Another we found was splitting your wader and getting a leg full of water.

Byci Skala

Since abandoning work in the impossible Rudickeho Propadani the Speleologicky Krouzek had turned their attention to the resurgence at Byci Skala, some 4 km away from the sink as the bat flies, with 1 1/2 km. separating the ends of the two caves. Here, between Krtiny and Adamov the club have their new headquarters just a short walk from the cave.

There are in fact two caves here at Byci Skala, or Bulls' Rock. The left hand entrance is dry and roomy, and was the scene of a number of archaeological digs during the last century. The principal finds included a number of magnificent bronzes and the remains of mass human sacrifices. Today the cave is used for the storage of heavy digging equipment. The dig we were to visit was in the right hand cave. A section of dry roomy passage led to a deep lake some 100m across. This might have been an obstacle, but now it can be crossed on a large steel boat. More walking on the far side of the lake and we were at the work face about one kilometre from the entrance. A permanent airline had been laid through the cave and is used to power pneumatic drills. A conveyor belt is used to remove spoil from the work face. The compressor is stored in the old archaeological dig and is brought out once a month for massive digging sessions. At the time of our visit a drive was being attempted through solid rock following a fault line, in an attempt to by-pass a meandering sump. We found the work face ready drilled awaiting explosive. The face was six feet high and five feet wide. A dozen shot-holes had been drilled each about nine feet deep and wide enough to load with your arm.

In Conclusion.

After our visit to Byci Skala we bid our farewells to 'Malcolm' and 'Wolly' and the rest of their group and downed our beers, bid another round of farewells, downed another round of beers, drank the health of someone's daughter... said goodbye... drank the health of the club president's car... bid another round of farewells...downed

Czechoslovakia Cont/....

drowned around a beer...around another beer...and somehow woke up back at Skalni-mlyn.

The next morning we drove East to the High Tatras where we did a bit of walking before being forced out by the crowds. Then South to the Low Tatras which are being developed as a skiing resort. Here we took in two more caves the Demanoska Slobody (freedom) Jaskyna and the Dobsinska L'adova Jaskyna. The Latter is an ice cave.(The different spelling is Slovak rather than Czech).

And, then home via Prague and the border town of Cheb where we couldn't find an extinct volcano, but did find an exhibition of petrified tree trunks we weren't looking for. Then our last plate of stew, a full tank of petrol, and another attempt at crossing Germany without stopping.

THE END

Pete Mathews. .

JOKE

An English potholer having recently emigrated to northern Canada decided to join the local caving club. On enquiring about membership he was informed by the rough tough Canadian Cavers that joining them was easy. All he had to do was undertake a three-part initiation ceremony.

On the night of the ceremony he trudged through the snow to the local Hudson Bay Trading Company shack that the cavers used for a club-house. After a few beers with the lads he was told what he had to do.

The Hon Sec. said "All you have to do is drink two bottles of bourbon straight down, go out and shoot a polar bear between the eyes and when you come back you have to make love to an Eskimos daughter!

Without much ado, our hero downed the whiskey, grabbed a rifle and staggered out the door into a blizzard. Within two hours he was back. He reeled through the door, a mass of blood and bruises hair missing in patches and his clothes in tatters.

"All right", he said "I've done the first two parts, now show me the Eskimo girl that I've got to shoot between the eyes!

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