



NOVEMBER 1980

NO 135

NEW COTTAGE

Progress on the New Cottage rebuilding has been painfully slow recently. All windows and doors have now been installed and the roof structure is now complete, awaiting felting and tiling. This should be executed soon, bad weather contributing to the delay, and which has naturally prevented a start on the plastering, carpentry and fitting out.

The Builder being dissatisfied with his own progress has agreed to defer the last Stage Payment for four weeks. However once the roof is on, then progress should pick up rapidly. It is expected that painting will have to be done in the first two weeks of December. So Malcolm's painting team must keep that period clear so fitting out can proceed without further delay.

VELVET BOTTOM BAND

On 15th November the Velvet Bottom Band will be playing at Old Isleworth Public Hall for the M.C.G./S.M.L.G. Folk Dance. It will start at 7.45 continuing through to 11.45.p.m. There will be Fullers beer and the bar will be run by the Cross Keys. Tickets at the door or from John Pudduck. Price £1. 25p each.

MEMBERS WEEKEND

It started well with many Members arriving on Friday night. It was planned to do Tynings Barrow on Saturday, and two barrels were laid on for four Members Birthday Celebrations on Saturday night.

Alas things were not to proceed quite as expected. First a large party of guests arrived, resulting in no less than six Members having to book in to the Shepton as all the bed space had already been taken: four of whom were barrel contributors!

Saturday's Tynings trip nearly had to be cancelled, though not through lack of interest, but more through lack of tackle. Thought that problem was sorted out in September! However thanks to the guests, who had tackle in abundance, the assembled Members were able to borrow some for their Tynings trip.

Now to follow that the Saturday night Birthday Celebrations went off like a damp squib as Members having to stay at the Shepton did not return to the Cottage after the Hunters. Result, one barrel drunk, one barrel
Cont. P.3 Col.1

MENDIP CAVING GROUP COMMITTEE

SECRETARY	PETE MATHEWS	15 Dellcott Close, Welwyn Garden City. Welwyn Garden 21018 Welwyn Garden 3434 x 3436
	TEL (HOME)	
	(WORK)	
TREASURER	ERIC DOWLEY	32 Chequers Orchard, Iver, Bucks.
MEET SECRETARY	JOHN MACMILIAN	11 Whitehouse Way, Iver Heath, Bucks. Iver 652339 Slough 33611
	TEL (HOME)	
	(WORK)	
COTTAGE WARDEN	WAYNE HISCOX	3 Keward, Glastonbury Road, Wells Somerset. Wells 72081 x 41
	TEL (WORK)	
TACKLEMASTER	JOHN MIRIAM	18 Lorraine Court, Camborne Road, Sutton, Surrey. 01 643 7872 01 736 1212 x 272
	TEL (HOME)	
	(WORK)	
RECORDER	GREG SMITH	116 Nield Road, Hayes, Middlesex. 01 848 3340
	TEL (HOME)	
EDITOR	BRYAN PITTMAN	36 Manor Way, Egham Surrey. Egham 37540
	TEL (HOME)	

WEEKLY MEETINGS These are held every Thursday Evening at the BEEHIVE HOTEL
227 High Street, Brentford, Middlesex.

CAVING ACCOMMODATION M.C.G. COTTAGE, The Stirrup Cup,
Nerdrach-on-Mendip, Blagdon, Somerset.
N.G.R. ST55/5150.5605

29 beds are available, Guest bookings must be made with the Cottage Warden.

returned to London!!

Now as caving activity increases in the Group we must ensure improved planning and coordination of Group activities. Perhaps the old tradition of Members Only in the Foreman's Lounge should be re instituted. Any way lets hope the next Members Week end on 7/8th November runs more smoothly.

Ogofwr Ddu

CAVE DIVING CLAIMS NEW RECRUIT

Relentlessly seeking a suitable sequel to his daredevil act with a low - flying Morris Minor, Bernard Reeves has again stunned the Caving World - and almost himself - with a new variation on an old theme.

Unable to wait for Castle Farm dig to be opened by traditional methods, Bernard grew tired of watching the diggers clawing the slimy mud in the shakehole below him. He decided that open - air cave diving was the only answer to the slow and tedious work of excavation.

Leaning on a dead branch of a beech tree until it broke, Bernard hurled himself at the bottom of the shakehole to strike the earth a mighty blow with his full weight. This flying bundle of enthusiasm and photographic equipment narrowly missed bystanders and diggers as he landed up to his knees in squelchy mud - the Icarus of Mendip.

This brave act of almost self - sacrifice only failed because the ground broke his fall before open cave was reached. His next attempt at the impossible will take place after closing time on New Year's Eve

when a second dive will be made using two cylinders of heavy hydrogen and a weight belt.

PORT - ON - DOWN

After Caving, Diving, and Cave Diving what next? Ever to the fore front of speleological progress the M.C.G. has the answer, and is proudly pioneering the new sport of.....Dive Caving.

At the top secret B.E.C./M.C.G. experimental dig at C-st-a Farm, matters were looking exceedingly promising on Saturday 18th October. A pretty little stream descended vertically into one fondly imagined nothingness. (Imaginations always are wont to be fevered after lunch time in the Hunters)

At this point the prototype Dive Caving machine, the Reeves Burn - Hard MK1 was unleashed. Hitherto the Reeves MK1 had been employed on sedentary duties, as a security guard cum archivist, photographing relentlessly all the intruders and active diggers.

Involuntarily the Reeves MK1 engaged warp drive from its distinctly superior vantage point overlooking the dig, to attempt breakthrough by combining personal mass, the force of gravity, and inertia. - Suggestions that warp drive was activated by the breaking of a tree branch upon which the Device was ~~erecting~~ should of course be given the contempt they deserve.

The experimental log records that a black box was subsequently recovered from the remains of the prototype Reeves, and close inspection

was avoided by the realisation that the Imperial College contingent had more ladders stashed in their Transit than they would be using. Tackle at last - who needs a leader? In a flurry of wetsuits, and with a sneak peep at page 154 of Mendip's answer to the Koran a happy band - Roger Wallington, Mike Lovel, John Macmillan, Jonathan Roberts and Tony Knibbs - disappeared towards Tynings Barrow Swallet.

The simple act of obtaining the key from Tynings Farm proved unusually difficult; wading knee - deep across the farmyard through a noisy pack of miniture, snapping Baskervilles nearly resulted in devoured boots and tattered neoprene. It was either something I said, a number of well aimed kicks or the disgusting taste of my wetsuit that got me to the farmhouse unscathed. How much? Well, you don't buy a lot for 25p these days I suppose.

The entrance looked about as inviting as any other muddy hole lined with concrete tubes. Yes, a ladder certainly looked advisable on this little pitch, but the next one was descended by Roger and Mike before either of them realised it needed a ladder. Perhaps the ascent was easier on trunks.

we followed the gently - descending passage, noting (thankfully) the lack of its famed mudbath qualities, and set about making friends with the small stream which grew in size as each active inlet was passed. Unfortunately, the stream passage failed to gain any useful (ie easy walking) size until the last couple of hundred feet to the downstream chake. Much of the going was what might be called 'sporting' - brief periods of

upright progress interspersed with much grovelling and thrutching, but just falling short of being really hard going.

Pyramid Pot added a short but welcome wet pitch; a ladder was used but it would be more fun without one. After several brief spells of good sized streamway the end of the cave is as surprising as it is temporary - a hole ideally suited to large rodents of triangular cross - section. In deed, such rodents trained to wield entrenching tools might just shift enough pebbles to put the survey out of date.

It was decided to take a look at some of the inlets on the way back upstream. Drunken Horse Inlet was avoided due to some mention of mud and narrow passage; Dragon Chamber was elected next part of call because nobody knew where it was.

Without difficulty, the straight and steeply - ascending inlet rift was located and followed up to a tricky ten - foot climb to a small passage in the right hand wall. Roger and I set about eliminating the two most likely leads. Roger struck lucky and I followed him up a narrow vertical slot opening into a short rift up to Dragon Chamber. This area is seldom visited, judging by the freshness and instability of various items of furniture.

Roger checked a narrow downslope passage from the far end of the rift chamber and succeeded in making an audible connection with the other three waiting below the ten - foot climb. I looked into a passage on the

right hand side of Dragon Chamber, getting to the top of a down - dip passage partly obstructed by muddy debris. It was assumed that this was the passage which is shown on the survey to link with Paton Place. the passage looked uncomfortably tight and we returned to join the others at the climb

A rope descent looked difficult until a short tube was found to join the approach rift just above the original climb and a convenient stalagmite tower offered a useful belay.

The sun was still shining as five muddy figures emerged from the entrance. We didn't see all the system, but the trip had shown that Tynings Barrow Swallet is a sizable and quite sporting cave, comparable in interest, but not in size to its popular neighbour, G.B. Cave.

Tony Knibbs.

June Walsh

June slipped a disc in her back the other week. She was taken in to hospital and put on traction. I understand she is now making good progress and is off traction. Anyway I am sure the Group would wish her a speedy recovery.

ADDRESS CHANGES

John Miriam
18 Lorraine Court
Camborne Road,
Sutton,
Surrey.

MEET PROGRAMME

7/8 November

Northwest Stream Passage

Leader: Tony Knibbs

MEMBERS WEEKEND

14/15 November

Tony Snell + 12 Musicians

21/22 November

Swildons IV via II & III Hood end
face mask advisable.

Leader Jonathan Roberts

28/29 November

Tony Snell + 10

5/6 December

Thrupe Lane, Leader Pat Walsh
Barrel

MEMBERS WEEKEND

19/20 December

See Meet Sec or Cottage Warden

The Editor has not been told the trip yet!

AWAY MEET WHOOPEE ! ! !

14/15 March

South Wales O.F.D.+Dan Y Ogor

Meet Leader Denise Samuels

Anyone wishing to become a Dan Y Ogor or O.F.D. Leader should submit their names to Denise as soon as possible.

BULK PURCHASE AMAZING VALUE

DOUBLE SKINNED 4' x 3' 4 MM NEOPRENE SHEETS £7.50.

CONTACT MALCOLM COTTER

READY MADE BLACK ONE OR TWO PIECE 4MM WETSUITS £40

CONTACT PHILLIP INGOLD

CAVING BOOKS

CAVING BOOKS

THE DARKNESS BECKONS. BY MARTIN FARR.

(AN HISTORICAL ACCOUNT OF CAVE DIVING)

CAVING GUIDES

MENDIP UNDERGROUND. BY IRWIN & KNIBBS

DAIESMAN CAVING GUIDES (AS AVAILABLE)

GEOLOGY

GEOLOGY EXPLAINED IN THE PEAK DISTRICT. BY WOLVERTON COPE

MAGAZINES

BACK NUMBERS OF BRITISH CAVER

CAVING INTERNATIONAL

SPELEOLOGIST

SURVEYS OF MAJOR MENDIP CAVES AND ALSO SOME WALL

POSTERS ARE AVAILABLE

CONTACT MALCOLM COTTER