



OCTOBER 1981

NO 145

HALF YEAR GENERAL MEETING

This H.Y.G.M., which is to be held at the cottage at 3.00pm on Saturday 17th October is of the utmost importance to all members, and all members should do their best to attend. Group finances is the foremost item on the agenda.

JOURNAL

Now that caving activity is picking up reports suitable as Journal material are also being prepared. Some have already been completed in anticipation of that future Club Journal!

Consider your past caving activities, and your future plans, get writing and have those articles ready by the next A.G.M. There's plenty to write about:- Digging - Bone Hole - Upper Flood - Foreign Trips - equipment - and not to mention building the cottage. So get writing.

BROWNS FOLLY AND SWAN MINES

We now have a key for Browns Folly and Swan Mines. Members should take heed of the following information when visiting the mine.

Gates installed at the mine have been locked at the landowners request. All the accessible entrances to the mine have been secured and gates installed on two of these, one at either end of the mine, and our key fits both locks.

The extreme importance of ensuring that parties visiting the mine lock the gate after them on the way in must be stressed. Whilst it is accepted that many people do not like to lock themselves in, it is absolutely essential that this request is rigidly adhered to in this instance, since leaving the gate open may result in access by parties not having a key. Due to the complex nature of the mine, it is likely that such visitors would not be seen by the party on locking the gate, probably resulting in the unauthorised party being locked in. The only way to avoid such a situation is to ensure that the gates are locked at all times.

People wishing to use the car park at the Swan Inn while visiting the mine must ask the landlords permission. If we wish to continue using this facility kindly offered by the landlord, please ensure that he is always asked.

MENDIP RESCUE ORGANISATION

The M.R.O. have now purchased the Reviva from our donation. Those interested should contact Brian Prewer, who will be very pleased to tell you all about this equipment.

MENDIP CAVING GROUP COMMITTEE

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CAVING ACCOMODATION

MENDIP CAVING GROUP
NORDRACH COTTAGE,
CHARTERHOUSE - ON - MENDIP
BLAGDON,
BRISTOL, BS18 6XW

N.G.R. ST/5147.5605

GUEST BOOKINGS:-

To be made with the Cottage Warden

THURSDAY MEETINGS

THE FOX & HOUNDS & MAWSON ARMS
CHISWICK LANE SOUTH, LONDON W.4.
8.30.P.M.

NEW MEMBERS

Richard Woolacott is now a Full Member again.

We also welcome the following as Probationary Members

- Michael Bygrave, 2A Oakington Drive, Sunbury, Middlesex.
- William Ducklin, 5 Edinburgh Road, Sutton Surrey.
- David Howe, 41 Wick Road, Teddington, Middlesex.
- Richard Housego, Flat 3, 8 The Downs, Wimbkedon, London, S.W.20
- Steve Taylor, Flat 2, 29 St Pauls Road, Thornton Heath, Surrey.
- Derick Walsh, 74 Gresham Road, Staines, Middlesex.
- Robert Varley, 18 Apsley Road, Oxford, OX2 7QY.

Droitwich Scouts

Tony Knibbs has received a very nice letter from Ian Leaky, thanking the M.C.G. for making their visit possible and for our hospitality.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

'The Water Rate was a piddling amount', said Eric when discussing finance with the Committee.

COTTAGE BOOKINGS

MEET PROGRAMME

OCTOBER

- 9 WESTMINSTER SCHOOL
- 16 HALF YEAR GENERAL MEETING
- 23 IMPERIAL COLLEGE
- 30 DAVE GIBSON + 11

ST CUTHBERTS 2 PARTIES

NOVEMBER

- 6 MEMBERS WEEKEND
- 13 WEST MIDLANDS CAVING GROUP
- 20 MEMBERS WEEKEND
- 27 GEOFF DAVIES

DECEMBER

- 4 MEMBERS WEEKEND
- 11 DAVE GIBSON + 11
- 18 MEMBERS WEEKEND
- 25 CHRISTMAS

SPECIAL OFFER

50% off List Price of Varta Automotive Batteries to M.C.G. Members.
Please contact Bruce Dean on 01 848 3340 stating Make, Model and year of vehicle.
Also Please order early for Christmas your drink requirements.

HELMETS AND CAPLAMPS

It is hoped that some helmets and caplamps will be made available in the near future for Novice use. The caplamps will probably use dry cells and will therefore require little maintenance.

NORDRACH COTTAGE OCTOBER 1981

The following is a list of most of the work outstanding at present to be completed by Members.

- 1.00 LIVING ROOM
 - 1.01 Supply and fit closing controller to door into hall.
 - 1.02 Apply sealer coat to lounge floor
 - 1.03 Finish fire surround with quarry tiles
- 2.00 LIBRARY
 - 2.01 Fit shelving
 - 2.02 Fit Map cabinet
- 3.00 STAIR CUPBOARD
 - 3.01 All pipes within cupboard to be lagged (good quality Armarflex or similar)
 - 3.02 Paint walls - only when cupboard has fully dried out - this may be some time after pipes are insulated.
- 4.00 LADIES TOILET
 - 4.01 Supply and fit opening restrictor on door to prevent damage to hinge.
 - 4.02 Supply and fit new toilet seat.
- 5.00 CHANGING ROOM
 - 5.01 Supply and fit closing controller to hall
 - 5.02 Paint basin brackets.
 - 5.03 Paint walls eggshell or gloss (not emulsion)
- 6.00 SHOWERS
 - 6.01 Paint ceiling gloss - this must be done only when ceiling is perfectly dry, preferably beginning of a weekend when showers won't have been used, but must be done before winter.
- 7.00 LOBBY
 - 7.01 Paint walls - suggest eggshell or gloss
- 8.00 TACKLESTORE
 - 8.01 Ventilation required - suggest cutting carefully 25mm off top and bottom of door and rehangng.
- 9.00 FOREMANS LOUNGE
 - 9.01 Fix bunks to each other and to walls
 - 9.02 Lay lino tiles
- 10.00 LADIES AND BEDROOM 2
 - 10.01 Fix bunks to each other and to walls
 - 10.02 Finish painting the walls
 - 10.03 Lay lino tiles
- 11.00 ROOF SPACE
 - 11.01 Supply and fit fluorescent tube for light fitting
 - 11.02 Supply and fit polystyrene sheet for top of tank - before winter.
 - 11.03 Paint loft trap
 - 11.04 Suggest fitting loft ladder or some easy access device.
- 12.00 EXTERNAL WORK
 - 12.01 Form chutes at base of rainwater pipes to channel rainwater directly into gullies
 - 12.02 Make coal bunker and wood store
 - 12.03 Level car park and spread scalplings

The work fitting shelves and map cabinet in the library is progressing well and mortice locks have now been fitted to the front and side doors of the cottage.

THE M.C.G. LAUNDRY

Some of you may have noticed a derelict - looking washing machine behind the cottage. This is the M.C.G. Self - Service Laundry (phase 1).

Last weekend it was tried out and found to be ideal for rinsing out every thing including wetsuits - but don't try and put your wetsuit through the wringer! It has to be moved under the window for the mains lead to reach, and pumping the water out can be fun (the pipe below the wringer is removed for doing this) The official manufacturers instruction sheet will be hung in the kitchen in the near future, for the benefit of those without previous experience with these fiendish inventions.

So now there's no excuse for a pile of dirty gear on your lawn on Monday morning. Perhaps when times are hard, we can also swell club funds by taking in washing.

And phase 2 of the laundry? That's a spin - dryer, due for delivery next time there's room in the car (ie no barrel)

Ian McKechnie

IN THE BLUE RIDGE MOUNTAINS OF VIRGINIA

During this summer's holiday, we managed to persuade the rest of the party that a visit to a show cave or two was essential. The main area of caves close to our route was the Blue Ridge National Park, Virginia. From names like Shenandoah Caverns, Smoke Hole Caverns, Forbidden Caverns, Onondaga Cave, we chose Luray Caverns and Skyline Caverns.

Luray Caverns lie at shallow depth in 'Cave Hill' a short distance west of the town of Luray. The cave is entered on the west side of the hill by a stair way leading down from the entrance lodge. The cave lies beneath the central part of the hill, extending almost all the way underneath to the northwest side where one of the rooms misses a connection with a sink hole on the surface probably by less than a dozen feet. The caverns are well decorated, and the main tourist attraction is a 'stalagmite organ' in which stalagmites in a large chamber have been tuned to act as resonators for an electronic organ. For anyone interested in a detailed description of the system we have a copy of 'Geology of Luray Caverns, Virginia' Hack and Durloo (1972), Virginia Division of Mineral Resources.

The second cave we visited was Skyline Caverns, Front Royal, which were discovered in 1937 following surface surveys. The main attraction (apart from the guide) were the Anthodite formations - similar to clumps of calcite grass (to be shown in a forthcoming slide evening).

Neither cave seemed to be part of a known large system, the show cave covering around half the passages in each case. This seemed to be typical of the area. Both were worth a visit, though.

Ian McKechnie, and Geoff Barton.

EXTRACT FROM OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH APRIL 1981

Alcohol - The parts it can reach
Paragraph 3

Ironically drinking is encouraged in young men as a 'virile' habit. However the long term effects of the alcohol in males are, reduction of the sex drive and ultimately loss of secondary sex characteristics, and testicular atrophy..... Women are drinking more than ever and they are more vulnerable to the effects of alcohol,.....

Another paragraph in this publication..... Now that it has been shown that alcohol kills brain cells, cola rots your teeth, tea causes constipation and

coffee may be a killer, one wanders what there is left.

Further on The time taken to adapt from light to dark surroundings and vice versa, can be quite lengthy, and will vary directly with the degree of contrast. eg going from bright daylight to a darkend room will take up to 25 minutes to achieve 80% adaptation. The reverse is slightly quicker. They will be saying caving is dangerous next.

Malcolm Cotter

UPPER FLOOD ENTRANCE 18.9.81

Digging again! The session although planned with great enthusiasm the preceding night, nearly had to be aborted. All the people concerned had made their way through various caving trips and weather conditions had become decidedly wet and were still worsening.

On return from caving I found that half the volunteers had already had a shower and changed. The prospects of raising a digging party looked exceedingly poor. I had resigned myself to not going digging, when Geoff Barton quietly asked if I was still intending to dig, as he had not yet changed. Mike Lowe added that he was also interested. Thus fortified, it was easy to generate enough enthusiasm to continue. By the time we had downed some food and hot drinks the number of volunteers had risen to nine.

We all set off into a heavy storm with rain driving almost horizontally. Fortunately the trees alongside our path gave some protection and we realized what great benefit the plantation afforded our cottages.

Once the lid was off all hastened into the protective shroud of the cave, save a few devoted individuals who remained outside to stack some fence posts and assorted rubbish.

Once everyone had satisfied their curiosity concerning the end we set about removing the heap of spoil bags. Unfortunately many bags had been filled to capacity and could not be moved. The contents of these required redistributing to other bags. While some of the party were attending to this, the remainder commenced shifting back those containers that could be handled. In the initial stages the operation was exceedingly inefficient owing to the lack of knowledge on how to operate the skip system. Once the method was sorted out, the job ran smoothly.

One particularly interesting event occurred during our two and a half hours in the cave. This concerned the amount of water entering, when we began there were numerous heavy drips, but the floor volume was not remarkable. After an hour many of the drips had become continuous trickles, and the floor was a lively stream. This incidently helped in spoil removal as the skips half floated in the passages. One person remarked that we ought to build a whole flight of dams! Nearly all the water was coming from a hole in the floor at the side of the passage just above the first dam. (LHS looking down the stream). By observing the time it took to fill a skip from the pipe in the first dam, flow was estimated at about 30 gallons per minute.

About 40 bags of spoil were emptied and half that number left behind. The workers thought that with some more skips in the system moving spoil between relay points and improvements to gradients, operations could be improved.

The storm raged through out our return and a hot shower was much appreciated

Malcolm Cotter

MCG CAVING SHOP

WETSUITS

Long - Johns, Jackets, Shorties, Trousers, etc.
in 3, 4, & 6mm single or double lined neoprene
Zips, Tubes of glue (50p each), Tenax Fasteners
and sheets of double skinned neoprene.

CAVING SUITS

One Piece Petzl 'Speleo' Suits (Nylon/PVC)
One Piece Tailored 'Styx' Caving Suits (7oz P/V Proofed Nylon)
One Piece Thermal 'Furry' Suits.
Plus a full range of 'Thermal' Jackets, Trousers, Socks, etc.

SLEEPING BAGS

A Range of Down or Synthetic filled Sleeping Bags and Duvets
And for the very 'cold' Thermal Sleeping Bag Liners.

Satin Shorts (Very well tailored)

EQUIPMENT

Ladders and Belays
Viking 10mm or 11mm Nylon Lifeline
Abseiling/Prussiking Ropes and Equipment

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