



Mendip Caving Group Newsletter

January 1983

No. 160



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CAVING ACCOMMODATION is available at the MCG cottage on Mendip; Nordrach Cottage, Charterhouse-on-Mendip, Blagdon, Bristol, BS18 6XW. The map reference is NGR 5147 5606 (OS 1:50000 first series sheet 182). Guest bookings should be made with the Cottage Warden.

Weekly meetings are held every Thursday at 8.30pm at: The Fox and Hounds and Mawson Arms, Chiswick Lane South, London, W4.

NEXT NEWSLETTER is due on 10th February. Copy should reach the Editor before 4th February to ensure inclusion. Late news can normally be accepted up to the publication date.

MCG MEET PROGRAMME

Meet		Leader	Base
Jan 15	GB Cavern	Tony Knibbs	MCG
Feb 12	Lost Johns System, Yorks	Tony Knibbs	
Mar 19	AGM & Dinner		
Apr 9	Caves of Portland	Ian McKechnie	MCG
May 7	Swildons, Damp Link	Steve Lane	MCG
May 28	Gaping Gill, Yorks	Neil Hutchinson	
Jun 18	Stoke Lane Slooker	Jon Roberts	MCG
Jul 2	OPD / Dan-yr-Ogof	Denise Samuel	SWCC
Jul 16	Mendip Geology	Malcolm Cotter	MCG
Aug 13	Birks Fell Cave, Yorks	John Miriam	
Aug 18 - Sep 6	Pyrenees	Ian McKechnie	
Oct 8	Penyghent Pot, Yorks	Roger Wallington	
Nov 11	Giants / Oxlow System, Derby	Roy Kempston	
Dec 3	St. Cuthberts Swallet.	Tony Knibbs	MCG

GB CAVERN 15th Jan.- don't forget this "bonus" meet, for many of us probably the first caving trip of 1983.

LOST JOHNS SYSTEM is on Leck Fell, East of Pippikin Pot. This classic system can be descended to a depth of 138 metres as far as a long stretch of river known as Leck Fell Master Cave, and last year a through trip was made to Lost Pot. The trip includes at least one long free-hanging pitch - good practice for the Pyrenees?

THE AGM WEEKEND does not have a meet organised - but that needn't prevent you caving. What about investigating one or two ex-MCG digs which may be worth restarting, such as Blackmoor Shaft?

THE TREASURERS MEET in August/September now has a good nucleus of keen participants. Outline details were given in the December newsletter, and there will be further discussion following the Thursday "Armchair Meets" on 13th Jan and 10th Feb.. However - if you're interested, please contact Ian McKechnie as soon as possible so that we have a good idea of numbers, and perhaps try to book a farmhouse as base camp.

CASTLEGUARD CAVE, Canada, is not on our programme of caving meets, but is the title of the main film at our Thursday "Armchair Meet" on 10th February. In the back room of the Mawson Arms, (next to the Gents), this film by Sid Perou starts at 8.30pm. We even have a supporting film, entitled DESCENT - but don't be misled by the title, it has nothing whatsoever to do with caving, but is related to one of the MCG's fringe activities. If you want to know which, then come and see for yourself!

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

ANOTHER CARD has arrived from Martin Rowe. This one shows a sunny, palm-fringed beach, and it requires little imagination to see Martin there (and probably yourself too) being waited on by dusky maidens and.....

Sorry, where was I? Ah, yes; Martin's message as follows:

Dec 8, Honduras.

As you can tell from the card, not much caving here. We planned to go to Guatemala to meet some local cavers, but plan fell through at last minute (visa problems). Will be back around Easter, hopefully with something for the Newsletter. Merry Xmas. Martin.

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS were due on 1st January. If you haven't already paid, please send your £10 to the treasurer as soon as possible. (£5 for associate members)

VAL'S BARNDANCE on 18th December was a great success - very much enjoyed by all who were there. Val says she'll organise another if there's enough demand - watch this space for details.

THE AGM is not too far away now, and any grave matters you may wish to raise, such as changes to the constitution, must be given adequate advance publicity. If you should wish to bring up any such matters at the AGM, please give notice of your proposals to a committee member as soon as possible (preferably before the end of Jan.)

COTTAGE BOOKINGS

January	April
15 Members w/e	2
22 Kingston Poly	9 Members w/e (Portland meet)
	16
February	23
5	30
12 Ealing College (12)	
19	May
26 Kingston Poly	7
	14
March	21
5	28
12 Ealing College (12)	
19 AGM (members only)	
26	

COTTAGE NEWS

THE SOAKAWAY was all but completed on 18th December - with the assistance of a barrel of Pride. A team of a dozen or so workers spent the whole of Saturday digging, rearranging boulders, fitting pipes, laying polythene sheets, and all the time

attempting to lower the level in the barrel. At the end of the day, everything was ready for the JCB to refill the hole. The JCB was duly notified, and all being well we should now have one hole less and one carpark more, Incidentally, the trench across the gate, freshly filled in, made a great trap for unsuspecting visitors on Sunday - cars would sink suddenly and mysteriously up to their axles, and many happy hours were spent extricating them!

COTTAGE BOOKINGS have had some silly moments of late. On a recent weekend, all beds were booked in advance, and a number of people who wanted to go to Mendip decided not to due to lack of beds. Come the weekend, almost half those who had booked either didn't turn up, or were there but stayed elsewhere. This attitude is not good enough. Not only is it reducing the Club's income; much more important, it is preventing people from caving. Let's hope that members will book beds more responsibly in future. and notify the Cottage Warden if they have booked and cannot go.

CAVING NOTES

The EASTWATER (PRIMROSE POT) trip planned for December last, did not get beyond the boulder ruckle. Having been postponed from Saturday to allow the soakaway to be completed, the party set out on a very wet Sunday morning to find a fine torrent at the cave entrance. After a brief reconnaissance trip through a fairly exciting showerbath, it was considered prudent to postpone the trip in view of the continuing rain and waterlogged ground. The best laid plans of mice, men, and cavers.... (nb - you needn't think you've got away with it - Primrose Pot will see us before the year's out.)

THE FULLER POINT (a brief history of the Griffin Brewery, Chiswick)

Beer has been brewed on the site for over 320 years - as far back as the reign of Elizabeth I - and research shows the first brewery to have been in the gardens of Bedford House on Chiswick Mall, gardens that are now part of the Griffin Brewery.

The first people with any long connection were the Mawson family, the brewhouse passing into their hands in 1685. In 1740, they leased it to one William Harvest for the princely sum of £180 per annum. The Mawson connection - one of the family was Matthias Mawson, Lord Bishop of Ely - has not been lost even to this day as the neighbouring pub still bears the title Mawson Arms and carries their heraldic sign.

In 1782 a long association with the Thompson family was begun when John Thompson, a maltster, and David Roberts, a distiller (both from Brentford) acquired freehold and copyhold rights from a nephew of Bishop Mawson. This partnership was soon ended by the death of Roberts, and Thompson was joined by his son, Douglas. The father died in 1807 and Douglas continued to run the business successfully, "acquiring John Newton's brewery and public house" in 1816 and later that same year siezing upon the name "Griffin" brewery when the title was relinquished by another company in the city.

1821 marked a turning point in the fortunes of the business when Douglas was joined by his brother Henry. Financial difficulties caused by deceit and mutual distrust led to them calling in outside help - from one Philip Wood, brother of Matthew, Lord Mayor of London. Wood soon saw the need for substantial funds to save the brewery, and in 1829 approached John Fuller of Neston Park, Wiltshire, Fuller joined the enterprise and shortly afterwards Henry Thompson left the business. When Philip Wood died in 1832, Fuller was left with Douglas Thompson as partner; it was a partnership fraught with difficulties, which John Bird Fuller inherited on his father's death in 1839. Two years later, these came to a head; Thompson fled to France to escape his creditors and the partnership was dissolved.

It was soon apparent that it was impossible for one man to run a brewery of that size alone so in 1845 John Bird Fuller was joined by Henry Smith, a partner in the Romford brewery of Ind & Smith, and their head brewer, John Turner, thereby forming Fuller, Smith, & Turner, as it is known today.

Since that date, the Griffin Brewery has gone from strength to strength, in 1910 acquiring the Beehive in Brentford, and thirteen years later, Siches Brewery. In 1929, one hundred years after the first Fuller had come to Chiswick, the partnership was dissolved and today's Limited Company was formed. Descendants of those first partners are on the Board today with all but the Smith family actively involved in the day-to-day running of the company. Major Lewis Turner, grandson of the original John Turner, has been chairman since 1973, and Anthony Fuller, great-great-great grandson of the first John Fuller, was appointed managing director in 1978. The Chairman's brother and son are both on the Board and his two nephews have recently joined the company.

In 1959, the company formed a special subsidiary with Charles Williams senior and his family - Griffin Catering Company, to run their managed houses and in the early '60s they opened London's first Motel, the Master Robert.

The majority of Fullers houses are run by tenants and many of them have family connections with Griffin Brewery going back several generations. The same is true of many of the two hundred or so people involved on the brewing and distribution of the beers and the hundred more looking after the administration of the company and its properties. One family alone served the brewery for almost 400 years, and it is not uncommon to find workers with 25, or even 40 years service.

It is thanks to all these hundreds of people that Fullers thrives today, based on a tradition built up over 320 years of brewing at Chiswick.

(Extract from the Fullers leaflet "A Taste of Tradition".)

DON'T FORGET that the brewery account is now run by Derek Walsh, and beer, sweatshirts, etc should be ordered from him. (Phone Staines 57785)

A CAMERA was found in the cottage after New Year weekend. If you've lost one, contact John Miriam.

RECORDER'S REVIEWS

by Jon Roberts

Bristol Exploration Club Belfry Bulletins 404-416, Dec 81-Dec.82 (Vol35/12-vol36/12)

Like everything else, the BEC take their newsletter numbering to excess. Not only do they have two concurrent numbering systems, the 13 potential newsletters hinted at by the figures turn out to be merely 6, and we haven't yet received one, 408/9. So my comments cover just five. And this is where the story really starts...

The first stage in reviewing the Belfry bulletin is to assert that it is not, essentially, unreviewable. Nor is it unreadable - far from it. No, what confronts the reader as a reviewer, is a problem of an altogether different nature. Have you ever tried reviewing a doggie poo?

There it lies, not two feet away from you, steaming. You can inspect it - at a closer distance if you wish, with a magnifying glass if you can stomach it. You may retrieve it using whatever means come to hand, in order to weigh it, test for moisture content and salinity, texture, colouring, fleas per square centimetre, or to ascertain what the dog ate twelve hours ago. Finally, moved to desperation, you might smell and prod it, and - if you are the Belfry's own Jeremy - eat it.

And this is where the story really starts. For in applying all the tests, you will have utterly missed the context - and thereby the point. The point is best illustrated by the story of the Fairy Cake and the Total Perspective Vortex, as described in "The Restaurant at the End of the Universe". The Total Perspective Vortex by all accounts gives just one momentary glimpse of the entire unimaginable infinity of creation, and somewhere in it a tiny little marker, a microscopic dot on a microscopic dot which says "You are here". And in seeing the whole infinity of creation, and yourself in relation to it, the shock completely annihilates the brain. (It is a matter of record that Zaphod Beeblebrox, confronted with this mind-boggling infinity, thought

the Universe a "really neat place" - thus confirming his opinion of himself as a "really terrific and great guy".)

This glimpse afforded by the total Perspective Vortex is derived on the principle of extrapolated matter analyses. Since every piece of matter in the Universe is in some way affected by every other piece of matter on the Universe, it is in theory possible to extrapolate the totality of creation, every sun, every planet, their orbits, their composition, and their economic and social history from, say, one small piece of Fairy Cake. Or, a doggie poo. And this is where the story really starts...

Because it is the same with the Belfry Bulletin. Which is not to say that it is a dog's dinner, or a caving blockbuster on the lines of One Day in the Life of Ivan Doggie-So-Bitch, or anything like that. No, the Total Perspective Vortex, if it proves anything, proves that the one thing sentient beings cannot afford to have in a universe of this size is a sense of proportion. Needless to say, the Belfry appears peopled by (a) Beeblebroxes, or (b - which may amount to the same thing) sentient beings with little or no sense of proportion, or (c) beings. Thus the contents of each and every BB tend precipitately to extrapolate the entire Universe of caving - and not just the underground activities, either. And if you cannot keep pace with the BEC's excesses, well, that's just (you guessed) tough shit.

So, gentle caver, beware. Before you open the Belfry Bulletin, consider. Can you outface the Total Priddy Vortex, or will your brain cells implode from the infinite panoply of caving commitment that bursts forth from the BB's pages? And this is where the story really starts... As there is another theory, that the only people who can brazen the Total Priddy Vortex (or indeed contribute to it) have already had their cranial lobes cauterised by immersing them in gallons of Butcombe Water. But this theory will not be pursued any further, for where would this place your reviewer and Recorder? So this is where the story really starts...

POSTSCRIPT. There is a certain joke running throughout this commentary. Readers wishing to follow it to its source are commended to the story they tried not to tell in the Belfry Bulletin 412/415 (Aug/Nov 1982).

POST POSTSCRIPT. Those individuals not wishing to read the Belfry Bulletin are advised to skip the following section. (+++ = mind-blowing. The rest isn't half bad)

In BB 409/405 - Alderley Edge copper mines. Tanne du Bel Espoir - Diau traverse +++. Buckets and pails in the Ardeche. Tito Bustillo (N Spain). The BEC get everywhere. Letters to the Editor (+++). St Cuthbert's practice rescue (1) and (2) (2's a poem).

In BB 406/407 - Wareham's cave, Gurney Slade. Early cave photographers... ..and their work (photographic lists) (+++). From Yellowstone to Florida. Wigmore revisited (again). From Vercours Plateau to Ardeche Gorge (+++). BEC subs Renewal reminder (+++).

In BB 410/411 - Stretching time in County Clare (+++). MRO incidents in 1981. Hanging Chamber - again. Charterhouse Cave. Long Chamber extension, St Cuthberts. Renaissance extension, Swildons Hole. The Diggers Song.

In BB 412/415 - Austria 1981/82 (+++). BEC membership list.

In BB 416 - A Trip to Remember (Yorkshire Pot, Alberta) (+++). 1983 BEC meet list (+++). Freke's Cottage Well. Notes on the Charterhouse Caving Committee. Wildlife and Countryside Act 1982. Hallowe'en Rift, Vookey. Tourist Caving Abroad. Conversion of Aquaflashes to take Nicad Rechargeable Batteries. Bonfire Night, or the Tale of the Wessex Cattle Grid (+++). Rumbings in Tynings Barrow Swallet. Is Caving hazardous to your Marriage? (+++).

OVERHEARD IN THE LOUNGE... Jill, before setting off on a trip down Thrupe Lane on the New Year weekend: "If we don't come back, can you put on the Christmas Pudding please".

BORROWERS TO BE FORECLOSED

Jon Roberts reports that he was recently successful in laying his hands on the former card index for the library. A comparison with the just published library list revealed a large number of outstanding long-term loans (at least several years)... he would be delighted, and in some cases positively amazed, to see the following items returned:-

- 'Still Digging - adventures in archaeology', Sir Mortimer Wheeler, 1958.
- 'Fossils - a guide to Prehistoric Life', Rhodes/Zim/Shaffer, 1962.
- 'No Room in the Arc (archaeology)', Alan Moorehead, 1959.
- 'Annapurna', Maurice Herzog, 1952. (Last loaned to Allan Wicks)
- 'Pyrenees Souterraines', Yves Griotel. (" " " ")
- 'Ma View Souterraine', Norbert Casteret. (" " " ")
- 'Somerset', Maxwell Fraser, 1934. (" " Wayne Hiscox)
- 'Dan-yr-Ogof', Swansea Valley caves official guide.
- 'A Camera Goes Caving', Derek Logsdon, from 9/9/1966 British Journal of Photography, pp 782-783.
- 'British Caves and Speleology', EA Martel, from The Geographical Journal, Vol.X No.5, November 1897 (11pp).
- 'The 100 Year Journey to Daylight - Gaping Gill/Ingleborough Cave', Derek Smith, Daily Telegraph Magazine, September 1970 (6pp).
- 'British Coal Mining Explosives'. (Last loaned to Roger Wallington)
- 'A Review of World Speleology (Speleomundus)', Free Troglophile Assoc., 1967.
- 'The Speleologist' Vol.1 No.2 March/April 1965.
- 'Moldywarps Speleological Group' Journal 1967.
- 'Liverpool University Mountaineering Club' Journals 1 (1958) and 2 (1959).
- 'Kendal Caving Club' Journal 4, February 1969.
- 'Chelsea Speleological Society' Newsletter c65/5, February 1959.
- 'Cave and Crag Club' Newsletter No.3, 1966.
- 'Caves & Caving' Vol.1 No.1, 1937.
- British Speleological Association Bulletin No.69, January 1966.
- 'British Caver' Vol.59, July 1972.
- 'Karst Hydrology Expedition to Jamaica', preliminary report December 1967.
- 'Carlsbad Caverns in Color', Helm & Sutherland, from National Geographic Magazine, October 1953, pp433-468.
- 'Swallow Holes on the South Wales Coalfield', TH Thomas, from The Geographical Journal, Vol.CXX Part 4, December 1959 (8pp).
- 'Ogof Ffynnon Ddu', 52pp booklet and survey by South Wales Caving Club, 1969.
- 'Plymouth Caving Group - Caving Safety Code', October 1963.
- 'Northern Cave Club - The Caver', Vol.1 No.3 (Sept.1966) and No.4 (January 1967)
- 'Northern Caving' Magazine Vol.1 No.1 and No.2 (May 1964).

plus seven items from Poland (dare I look in the Welwyn/Wheathampstead direction for these?):

- 'Taternik' 1 - 1970.
- 'Taternik' 2 - 1970.
- 'Do widzenia, Sonce', Maciej Kuczynski, 1963.
- 'Speleologia' Vol.iv No.1, 1969.
- 'Tatrzański Park Narodowy', Zembrzuski/Marchlewski, 1967.
- 'Jaskinie Polskie', Kazimierz Kowalski.
- 'Morskie Oko', Jerzy Młodziejowski, 1970.

Photos and survey plans for the following caves (jaskini):
Snieżna, Kasprowa Nizna, Wysoka, Kalackiej, Marmurowa,
Mietusiej Wyznziej.

And, remember, by hastening to your bookshelves *now* to check if you have any of these items, you may save yourself (and our esteemed Recorder) from becoming embarrassingly tongue-tied when he telephones to ask if you have Młodziejowski's tome or the plan of Jaskini Mietusiej Wyznziej...

The perennial problem of re-charging caving cells from a constant current source, when most ordinary mortals have only a car battery charger available, was presented to a certain learned fellow, who, producing a fag packet (Decca top secret designs for the use of) pronounced the opening sentences of the "liturgy-for-electronic-designing" (yes, let me see, no, ah yes, where's me rubber, etc.).

At the end of the gestation period, the enclosed drawing (more or less) was produced, and was built.

Behold,

Wonder of wonders,

It worked.

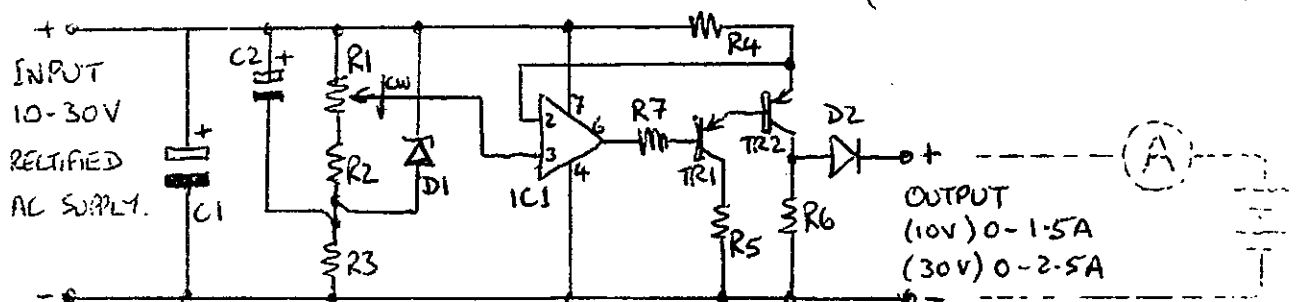
It can be used for charging 1 or 2 (in series) caving batteries at the battery manufacturess recomended current, (lead acid or nife) from a 12v car battery charger.

The oracle should be worshiped in this manner:-

1. Input; Red (+) lead of charger to + terminal
Black (-) lead of charger to - terminal
2. Output; Battery + to + terminal and battery - to - terminal
and an ammeter somewhere in between (the High Priest said it didn't matter which side you put it in??)
3. Adjust Pot to obtain charging current on ammeter.

The device will protect itself against open circuit and short circuit at the output, and prevent battery discharge through the device when the charger is switched off.

CIRCUIT DIAGRAM



C1	3000 μ F	50V	R3	1k	1W	D1	4.7V ZENER	1/4W
C2	10 μ F	10V	R4	0.5 Ω	5W	D2	1S 60S6 A	(4A)
R1	10k	POT	R5	100 Ω	10W	IC1	μ A 741	op amp.
R2	22k	1/4 W.	R6	1k	1W	TR1	2N 4036	
			R7	100 Ω	1/4W	TR2	2N 3789	



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	" "	"	£47.50
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L. JOHN + BOLERO	£23.00	£28.50	N/A
SOCKS	£55.00	£65.00	N/A
	£ 5.00	£ 6.00	£ 3.50

Kits include marked-out neoprene, adhesive, tape, zips, etc.

All Blacks equipment now available from the shop.

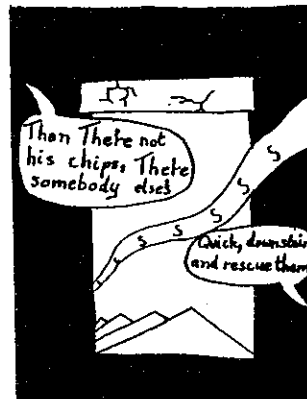
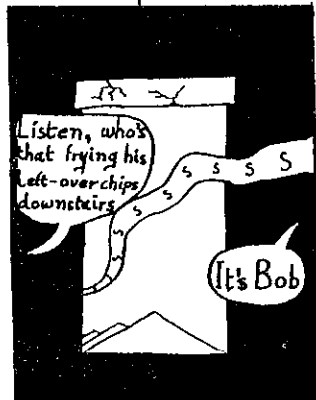
BOOKS

A WIDE SELECTION OF BOOKS IS AVAILABLE FROM MALCOLM COTTER AT LOW PRICES.

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Bob Speleo β



From a chance remark by Tony.