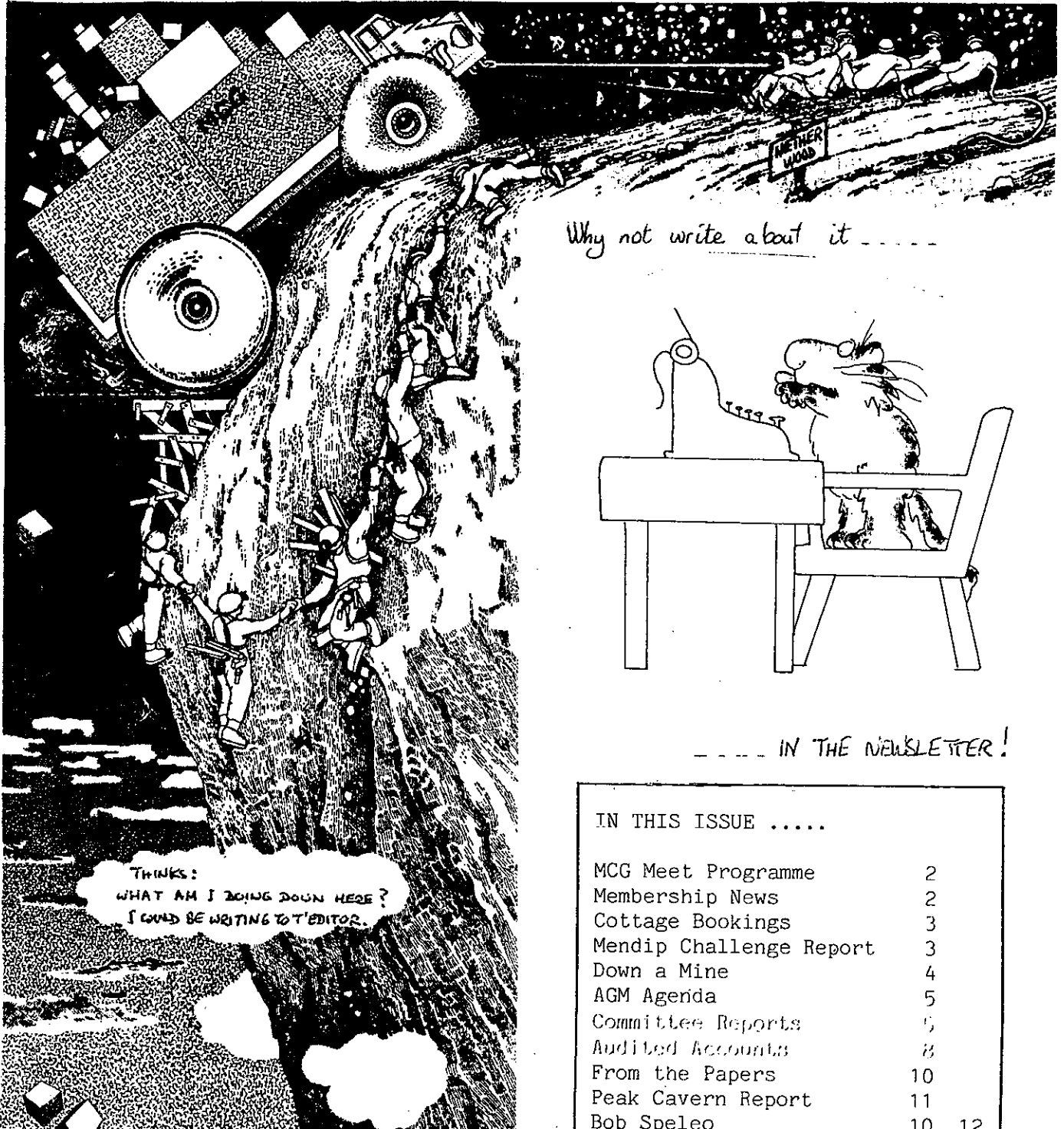


# MCG

## Mendip Caving Group Newsletter

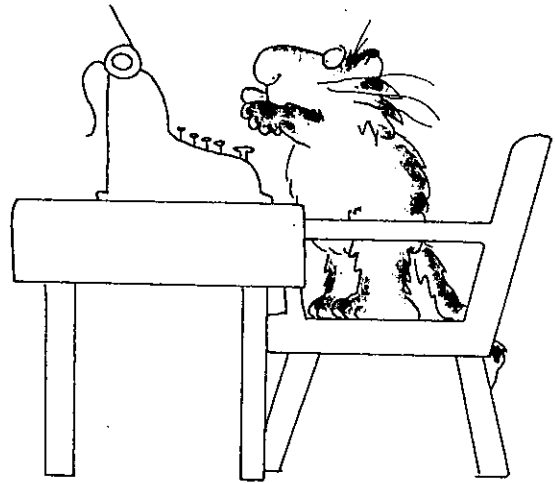
March 1984

No. 170



THINKS:  
WHAT AM I DOING DOWN HERE?  
I COULD BE WRITING TO EDITOR.

Why not write about it



..... IN THE NEWSLETTER!

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MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS ARE NOW OVERDUE.

IF YOUR ADDRESS LABEL IS MARKED RED, PLEASE PAY ASAP.

MENDIP CAVING GROUP

Secretary:

Tony Knibbs, 85 Cavendish Avenue, West Ealing, London W13 0JY  
tel (home) 01-997-2032 (work) 01-564-7741 ext 2199

Treasurer:

Arthur Spain, 57 Guildford Road, Broadbridge Heath, Horsham, Sussex.  
tel (home) Horsham 64068 (work) Crawley 542251 ext 63

Meet Secretary:

Geoff Barton, 5 Cricket View, Princes Road, Weybridge, Surrey.  
tel (home) Weybridge 49241

Cottage Warden:

John Miriam, 44 Chesterfield Road, West Ewell, Surrey, KT19 9QP.  
tel (home) 01-393-3955 (work) 01-736-1212 ext 3027

Tacklemaster:

Roy Kempston, 13 Florence Road, College Town, Camberley, Surrey.  
tel (home) Camberley 34338

Recorder:

Jonathan Roberts; 17 Kent Avenue, West Ealing, London, W13 8BE  
tel (home) 01-997-2916 (work) 01-278-3825

Editor:

Ian McKechnie, 30 Brittain Road, Hersham, Walton-on Thames, Surrey.  
tel (home) Walton 228292

CAVING ACCOMMODATION is available at the MCG Cottage on Mendip. The address is:  
Nordrach Cottage, Charterhouse-on Mendip, Blagdon, Bristol, BS18 6XW  
Map reference NCR 5147 5606 (OS 1:50000 first series sheet 182?).  
Bookings should be made with the Cottage Warden.

WEEKLY MEETINGS are held every Thursday at 8.30pm onwards at:  
The Fox and Hounds and Dawson Arms, Chiswick Lane South, London W6.

MCG MEET PROGRAMME 1984

Apr 7 AGM		MCG
Apr 20-29 Inchnadamph	Geoff Barton	Grampian
May 5 Mendip	Clive Towner	MCG
May 26 Devon	Arthur Spain	
Jun 2 Mendip Geology	Malcolm Cotter	MCG
Jun 16 Gower	Ian McKechnie	
Jul 7 Mendip	Mike Mintram	MCG
Jul 12-29 Ireland (CANCELLED)	John Miriam	
Aug 4 Mendip	Pete Dymet	MCG
Aug 25 Pen-y-Ghent	Martin Rowe	NPC?
Sep 1 Mendip	Chris Whittle	MCG
Sep 15 OED/DYO	Denise Samuel	SWCC

Please note that the Irish trip has been cancelled, due to lack of demand. It has, however, been supplanted by a trip to the Spanish Pyrenees. The date of this has yet to be decided - it will probably be around the same time. Other plans are well in hand - contact Mike Mintram, Martin Rowe or Neil Hutchinson for details.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS.

CHRIS MARTIN AND PETE DYMET are now both full members of the group. We understand that Chris's proving trip took place immediately after a bout of flu, and immediately prior to tonsillitis. There's dedication for you!

DINNER TICKETS are still available from Tony Knibbs, price 7. The dinner takes place at The Star, Wells, at 7.30pm on 7th April. A carriage has been arranged from the cottage.



and blow up a balloon until it burst). We were ably represented by Roy Kempston, Geoff Barton, Bryan Terry, Pete Dymont and Dik Houseago who started the evening with an outright win. A precedent was set for the remainder of the evening, in that "foul means or fair" were used to achieve success, just as long as the judges didn't see.

The ladies (Carol Nunn, Denise Samuel, Linda Gates, Jo Davies) then showed what they could do, by passing a carbide lamp on a string through for teams of blouses at opening - time speed. You will be pleased to hear that the lamp was not burning when its experience began, the first alight was the winner.

While a blindfold Tony Knibbs and Artur Spain assembled a completely knocked down carbide lamp (not the same one), the combined forces then ran across the fields to Swildon's Blockhouse and returned with a message which had been chalked inside the door.

"High Cockalorum" could have resulted in a few broken backs, but probably due to the relaxing effect of Butcombe, there were no serious casualties. Tony Knibbs, Geoff Barton, Pete Dymont, Bob Varley, Dik Houseago formed a chain, the head of each between the thighs of the one in front, and another team jumped onto their backs. The object was not clear, but if you fell over the points went to the other team.

The highlight of the evening was the Rescue Practice. Bill, being the lightest, was strapped on to the stretcher, and Roy Kempston, Denise, Tony Knibbs, Pete Dymont, Dik Houseago effected his rescue. The first obstacle was a tarpaulin sheet under which they had to crawl. Unfortunately members of competing clubs stood on the edge and made it as difficult as possible. Then, an obstacle course outside the hall, in darkness, included passing through tyres, and this where our team had some difficulties. Finally, back into the hall and over a ceiling-high scaffolding framework. To prove the victim was still alive, he was propped against the bar and fed a pint of Butcombe.

The event was advertised as a "fancy dress disco - Balch and Before", and each team entered two of their numbers to be judged for the best fancy dress. Among the Casterets, cave-men (and ladies) and candle-topped bowlers was an unpleasantly realistic mummy (Bryan Terry) and Wee Winkie Millie (Ian McKechnie) Bryan's mummy came second to a caver straight from the pages of "A Pict. Hist. of Swildons" (or was it "10 ans sous la terre"?)

Much to the surprise of the other clubs, the event was a draw - 20 points to the BFC, 20 to the MCG. This called for a tie-breaker, and the judges decided on ..... a ladies tug-o'-war! A scratch team of Carol Nunn, Jo Davies, Linda Gates, Denise Samuel, Yvonne Ward, Helen Jenkins, made a brave effort for the MCG, but sadly their charm and enthusiasm were no match for the weight and muscle of the BFC team. However, no honour was lost, and we came a close second overall. Just wait till next year.....

The rest of the evening was given over to dancing and drinking. (Some did more of one, some did more of the other). One who fell into the later category was reportedly observed in the cottage afterwards, fast asleep, and with his feet in a burning cardboard box. No, I can't believe that. Things like that don't happen in the MCG, do they?

#### DOWN A MINT

Andy Tizzard has spent a lot of time recently at a colliery in Nottinghamshire(?) and has arranged for a visit some time in the future. Date has not yet been decided, but anyone who would like to go along, please tell Geoff Barton so we have some idea of numbers.

THE CAVING SHOP can get you anything you need, and better any prices. Before you go elsewhere for your caving, walking, boardsailing, or mountaineering needs, why not contact Phil Ingold, on 0442.42029. Malcolm Cotter has a range of books, and furry suits, overalls, etc. Contact him on Ashford (Middx) 52643.

MENDIP CAVING GROUP  
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
Saturday 7th April 1984

3.00pm sharp, in the MCG cottage at Nordrach.  
(or Charterhouse Manor if available).

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the 1983 Annual General Meeting
3. Matters arising from the Minutes
4. Officers' reports (published in the March Newsletter):

Hon. Secretary	Tony Knibbs
Hon. Treasurer	Arthur Spain
Hon. Recorder	Jonathan Roberts
Hon. Cottage Warden	John Miriam
Hon. Editor	Ian McKechnie
Hon. Tacklemaster	Roy Kempston
Hon. Meet Secretary	Geoff Barton

5. Election of Officers for 1984/85.

- 6(a) Proposal to change item 7 of Constitution and Rules to increase the committee from seven to eight members.

Revise opening sentence to read "The Group's business shall be regulated by a committee of eight members."

Revise second paragraph to read "The honorary officers shall be : Secretary, Treasurer, Meet Secretary, Cottage Warden, Tacklemaster, Editor, Recorder and Ordinary Committee Member."

- 6(b) Nominations for Ordinary Committee Member

7. Proposal to increase Annual Subscriptions to £15 for Full Members and Probationary Members, and to £7.50 for Associate Members. The increases would take effect on 1st January 1985.
8. Proposal to plan a second visit to the Arbas area (Reseau Trombe) area of the Pyrenees in summer 1985.
9. Any other business.
10. Date and venue of the AGM in 1985

COMMITTEE REPORTS.

To save time at the meeting, committee members' reports are reproduced below.

HON. SECRETARY'S REPORT - 1984

My reports to the AGM over the past two years have noted marked improvements in the Group's general running and in its financial position. Looking back over 1983, the most memorable aspects are concerned with the success of the Meet Programme and the visit to the Pyrenees. Indications this year suggest that this success will be repeated.

Currently, we have 111 members across the four categories. There is a remarkably high number of probationary members who have been with us for six months or more (6 years in one case!) and who should be actively seeking full membership.

Again, we have arrived at the end of March to find that almost 25% of members have not paid the subscription due on January 1st 1984. The next newsletter will contain a final demand to those in arrears. Non-payment by 30 April will be deemed to signify no further requirement to remain a Group member.

The controversy over Whernside Manor becoming the National Cave Training Centre spurred my attendance at a few of meetings of the Council of Southern Caving Clubs. The CSCC now takes a more moderate view of this development. Access to Mendip caves remains satisfactory: Robin Maine, at Manor Farm in Priddy, has requested that Swildons Hol should be utilised less, both at weekends and on weekdays. It is not yet known how this request can be satisfied.

The position of the MCG Shop operation has been discussed in committee and a framework of understanding has been minuted, which describes the shop function as it related to Group administration. The Shop operation is covered by a recent extension to our public liability insurance.

Considerable attention has been focussed in committee, on forward planning of finance. The Hon. Recorder's prolific production of statistics has spurred our thinking on this subject, hence the imminent rise in cottage fees and the decision to request the AGM to sanction an increase in annual subscriptions.

In summary, the Group remains an effective and thriving organisation, and its amenities are being enjoyed by an increasing number of people-members and guests.

Tony Knibbs.

#### TACKLEMASTER'S REPORT 1983/84

The tackle has been well used and new equipment has been added during the year. At the start of 1983 the group had 580' of ladder, 1300' of rope, 50' of dig ladder, 23 belays, 3 spreaders and 4 pulleys.

The summer expedition to the Pyrenees has lead to the group obtaining experience in the use of SRT, and a large amount of appropriate tackle has been purchased at low cost. This consists of 500m of SRT rope in various lengths, a large amount of hangers, anchors and Maillon-Rapides, a bolting kit and 4 tackle bags. The SRT rope is marked with a ring for each 20m (as opposed to 50' for the ordinary life line) and is stored by the committee. (Just let me know in advance if you want to use any of the gear).

Other tackle purchased has been 5 belays and 5 spreaders,, and recently 90m of 10mm nylon life-line. This has been divided into 4 x 50' and 1 x 100' lengths and marked with red rings.

During the year the group has 'lost' 40' of ladder, 3 x 50' of life-line, 4 belays, 4 spreaders and 1 pulley. This means that we now have 540' pf ladder, 1450' of life-line, 24 belays, 4 spreaders and 3 pulleys.

Please examine the tackle before and after use and pass me any defective items as soon as possible - don't return them to the store.

Roy Kempston.

#### Hon. Recorder/Librarian's Report 1983/84.

The committee held meetings approx. monthly during 1983; it wasn't a great chore! My main task has been the Library, for which 1983 was a very successful year. About 500 publications (books, newsletters, surveys) were acquired, and many hundreds were loaned out (and returned in due course). We shall need some new bookshelves soon.

I should like to thank various members who have donated items- they find a safe home as we didn't lose any publications last year. Library policy is to keep up to date with surveys, guide books, newsletters and new publications - which are increasing in frequency these days as the market for caving books grows. A selection of some older publications is slowly being acquired, helped by exchanges of surplus material among other Mendip club libraries. Some priority is given to Mendip items, but we have managed to improve our collection of general and regional caving books and bibliographies, so that even if the Library doesn't hold the item, at least you will know what to ask for elsewhere. Specialist books acquired during 1983 include the various SRT descriptive publications, which were much in demand by Pyrenees trippers. Please let the Librarian know if you think s/he should acquire a publication - Librarians like to feel wanted. But don't tell me, as I'm resigning from the job to make way for a younger man. One stray thought - isn't it time the MCG had a girl committee member or two...?

Jonathan Roberts.

#### Editor's Report 1983.

Since last April, seven editions of the Newsletter have been published; an eighth, the special 30th Anniversary edition, is almost complete. Each month, 150 copies were produced, of which about 90 go to members, 40 to other clubs, and the remainder to prospective members and into store.

Although I have enjoyed producing the Newsletter for the past two years, I have decided that new blood would be a good thing, and I am resigning - to make way for a younger man?

Ian McKechnie.

#### Treasurer's report

Last year turned out to be a hard spending year, not just on cottage expenditure. The 'subsidy' for the French expedition of £340 (£864 - £530) was largely spent on tackle and ropes, which the club still has among its assets. The 30th Anniversary was also subsidised by £84 - but then how often do we have a 30th anniversary!

Our cottage expenditure is rising in line with inflation; electricity use is high, with storage heaters, immersion, etc, but we do have a comfortable cottage now. This year, cash will be required for improvements and maintenance, and cottage fees are being increased to meet our future costs. But an extra 25p / person / night should not upset the average caver's drinking habits too much. As can be seen from the balance sheets, the £1951 income more than covered cottage running costs last year, but our projections show that the increase is needed to beat inflation.

Our comprehensive library costs money, but if we are to have good references, we must pay for them. Committee expenses are low; The editor's bill is the only one in three figures, but he is to be forgiven as material costs are high, and we do get a first-class newsletter.

Insurance costs look high; that reflects a non-payment in 1982, and a consequent double charge in 1983. Sweatshirt sales have tailed off; if you don't have yours yet, Tony Knibbs will be pleased to sell you some at £6.50 each.

To meet our budget for 1985 onwards, there is a proposal to increase subs from next year. There has been no increase since 1978, and our costs have gone up dramatically since then. Projected budgets show that most of our reserves will have gone on running costs by 1986 at present levels of expenditure, hence the need for the increase, or for a cut in services like newsletter, tackle, library.

Finally, our reserve account is healthy at £2658 and earning 11%; and the deposit account stands at £726, rising as subs come in. The audited accounts are shown overleaf.

Arthur Spain.

MENDIP CAVING GROUP  
YEAR ENDING 31.12.83

1982	Income		1982	Expenditure	
3624.59	Cash at Bank 31.12.82	3304.59		<u>Cottage</u>	
1.76	Cash in Hand	4.44		Coal	73.70
264.04	Bank Interest	94.62	50.45	Gas	113.05
800.00	Subs 1983	865.00	273.71	Electricity	522.27
	Subs 1984	10.00	60.50	Insurance (includes £171.30 1982)	380.85
841.00	Cottage Fees (members) 1983	996.00	227.46	Ordinary Rates (Direct Debit)	219.81
1080.50	Cottage Fees (guests)	945.50	59.87	Water Rates/Wessex Water	61.75
	Cottage Fees (1982)	58.00	26.15	Refuse collection	18.40
	Sweatshirts	330.00	145.00	Sewage Disposal	30.00
7.97	Donations	29.09	43.73	Household Items	69.03
	Journal Sales	14.60	564.23	Misc. Cott. Expenditure	103.52
462.00	Annual Dinner Tickets	497.00		<u>1592.38</u>	
33.00	Income from Beer/coach collection	70.00		<u>Committee</u>	
	French Expedition (levy/ins.)	530.00	14.00	Cottage Warden	24.25
17.50	CCC Permits	43.15	20.00	Secretary	20.00
	Refund from contents insurance	48.35	30.43	Treasurer	27.99
	Income from Anniv. celebrations	206.50	52.00	Recorder	42.17
	Returned Cott. Wardens Float (1982)	6.72	387.86	Editor	250.92
	Editors Floats accounted for	63.20		<u>365.33</u>	
	Transferred from Special Account	1080.37		<u>Caving</u>	
64.53	Brewery Account	31.00	73.69	Tackle	631.07
	Excess inc. over exp.	(- 12.09)		French Expedition	864.63
		<u>9228.13</u>		<u>1495.70</u>	
			482.50	<u>Social</u>	
				Annual Dinner	586.40
				30th Anniversary	291.12
				<u>877.52</u>	
			408.06	<u>Miscellaneous</u>	
				Library	390.22
			79.00	Journal	459.07
				Subs to other clubs	29.50
			17.34	Sweatshirts	574.75
				Misc. Expenditures	102.26
				<u>1555.80</u>	
			3304.59	Transferred to Post Office Account	2500.00
			4.44	Cash at Bank + 1983 interest	787.91
				Petty cash	10.40
				cheque not presented	31.00
				<u><u>9228 13</u></u>	

Audited by:-

*AP*  
*M.G. Russell*

Date 11.3.84

Date 20.3.84



MENDIP CAVING GROUP

BANK ACCOUNTS

BALANCE AS AT 31ST DECEMBER 1983

General Purpose Fund	-	Current Account	61.72
		Deposit Account	726.19
Special Post Office Fund	-	Deposit Account	<u>2658.33</u>
		In Hand	<u>3446.24</u>

<u>Balance as per</u>	Special Fund	2500.00
	Interest on Spec. Fund	158.33
	General Fund	787.91
	Petty Cash	2.49
		<u>3448.73</u>

Audited By:- *M. G. Howell*  
*B. P. P. P.*

Date *15.2.84*

Date *11.3.84*

# £14 can stop you staring at the same old walls this weekend.

FROM THE PAPERS



Grotto of Han Sur-Lesse

Started counting the leaves on the wallpaper?  
Then why not take a weekend break with Sealink.  
Until 31st March 1984, we'll take you and three adults, plus car, on a return trip to Belgium for just £14 per person.\*  
Once there, you can visit the Ardennes, host to some of the most spectacular subterranean caves in Europe.  
On the other hand, you could always buy two new rolls of wallpaper.  
For further details call Teledata on 01-200 0200 or contact your nearest travel agent, principal rail station or travel centre.

## Sealink

Determined to give you a better service.

GUARDIAN  
7-3-84.



## Clubs dig deep to aid cave rescuers

**STOCKS** THE Cave Rescue Organisation based at Clapham, North Yorkshire, received several large cash gifts last year.

The Cinderella Breakers Club of Bentham had a "sponsored call-up" on Ingleborough, contacting more than 2,000 CB enthusiasts in 24 hours.

That raised £700 — more than enough to buy a new Molefone underground radio set. The set was developed at Lancaster University and tested by CRO members.

Members of the North Lancashire centre of the Caravan Club raised £713 at a rally near Kirkby Lonsdale in June. That will help to pay for a new purpose-built trailer being built in memory of Mr. John R. Blakey, who died on Ingleborough in February last year.

Other groups helped to raise funds to enable CRO members to have the best facilities to help walkers, climbers and cavers.

The CRO's income during 1983 was £335 more than the year's expenditure of £8,785.

**HIGH ACHIEVERS:** The talents of skilled mountaineers and potholers are being utilised by a Sheffield company to cut the cost of daunting civil engineering jobs. Workers for Can (UK) Ltd, Sheffield, are employed to go where no man has gone before, without the help of expensive scaffolding, cradles or hydraulic platforms.

Using ropes, the company claims that it tackles jobs — like this inspection and emergency repairs to Crookesmoor Flats in Sheffield — at a fraction of the cost of a normal civil engineering company. The only problem is that Can's workforce fluctuates, as the climbers and cavers often work to pay for their next expedition.

### Bob Speleo β



Derbyshire. Peak Cavern.

Adrian Duckett.

Roy Kempston, Geoff Barton, Martin Rowe, Mike Hintram, Gordon Lister,  
Adrian Duckett.

The weekend activities started early when M.R. tried out a new cottage game on Friday night. It consists of the "volunteer" being rolled in the snow and then locked out of the cottage. It is then up to those inside to let the "volunteer" in just before he lapses into unconsciousness (good game well volunteered. Martin). We called it "Guess the Stages of Hypothermia.

As Saturday was such a super day H.D. suggested a walk to Dovedale, the motion was accepted and we set off down the Tissington Trail, which is the old railway that passes the Orpheus cottage. We kept on the trail for about 7 miles and found a nice pub for lunch, then after being suitably refreshed we went on to Dovedale, and a quick look at the entrance to Dove Holes. From the top of Dovedale we followed the River Dove most of the way back having great fun playing on the small frozen ponds. To our surprise and R.K.'s horror we found we had walked 18 miles.

Sunday morning was bitterly cold and an early start was needed as we had to be at the cave entrance by 10.30am. H.D. arose first to find fresh snow 1ft up the door. So it was a quick breakfast on with the snow chains and hope we could make the main road. We got to Buxton and made the customary visit to Carving Supplies, mainly to see what he had done with all the money he made from us last summer. Then on to Castleton, have you ever noted how a little bit of snow brings out the child in us all, we did when the M.C.G. held a snowball fight in the centre of Castleton High Street, while waiting for our Orpheus leaders to sort out access to Peak Cavern.

Then on up to the entrance which was festooned with icicles hanging precariously from the rock face, and to our horror whilst changing we found they would regularly fall and the crash would echo around what is the largest cave entrance in the country (330'x102'x60'). This large entrance was once used for rope making and still houses the old machinery. Once changed we were off and glad to be out of the freezing open air. Russel and Kenney our leaders from the Orpheus had told us that the previous weekend the show cave had flooded and sumped at the first low arch, the result of this was that the floor had a covering of mud which made the going a bit slippery. From the end of the show cave the passage narrows and then that nasty shock for which you can never really prepare yourself, an icy cold duck. The passage took us on and past the way up to Moss Chamber (one of the few pretty parts of the cave) and on to Sunrise View after a straddle traverse along a fine scolloped rift.

From Surprise View we went down the 20' fixed ladder into the main stream passage and then on down stream into excellent phreatic passage to Buxton Water Sump. Coming back up stream we stopped for a photo session in the streamway (some of us cave models have good portfolios and are thinking of turning professional) then on back to the ladder and on upstream to visit Boulder Hall and Far Sump. Branching off on the way back took us up to Lake Passage and Ink Sump. We all thrucked up a silly muddy climb to the right, just after diving Lake Sump. It's only 4' but you would climb 6" and come down 4"; however once up into the small chamber you realise the effort was worthwhile for the unique mud formations leave you speechless. After visiting Ink Sump we made our way back to the ladder, Sunrise View and on to the Treasury. Then back out, through the duck which now held less of a shock, and into the chilly winter air once again to get changed, with lumps of ice still crashing down around the entrance. At this point we realised the true worth of our cave guides as they knew a great little tea room in Castleton (The Ramblers Rest).

These Derbyshire people must be hardy for because when 8 mud smeared cavers crashed this quaint tearoom ordering pots of tea and toasted teacakes followed by cream scones and more tea they did'nt even flinch. So what must the local rif-rif be like (makes you shudder to think)?

After tea we made tracks for the cottage only to find it still snowing hard. once back at the Orpheus we walked down from the main road and assembled our kit and left not wishing to be snowed in. Because nobody wants to miss work Monday morning do they? (Reports the next day said Buxton was cut off.)

Conclusion.

The Cave. Quite a varied cave with a bit of everything, very nice walking stream passage but few formations in the parts we went to, and worthy of another visit.

The Weekend. The snow made a good walk excellent. The Orpheus were very friendly and accomodation good.



FROM A REMARK IN D.Y.O.