

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE MENDIP CAVING GROUP

3pm, Saturday 1st April 1989, Nordrach Cottage.

AGENDA

Chairman to be decided.

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the AGM held on 26th March 1988.
3. Officers reports. Questions and comments are invited to:

Secretary: Neil Hutchinson	Treasurer: Mike Lovell
Cottage Warden: John Beauchamp	Editor: Yvonne Rowe
Recorder: Ian McKechnie	Meet Secretary: Martin Rowe
Tackle Master: Brian Murlis	Ordinary Member: Gordon Lister

4. Election of Officers for 89/90  
Nominations should be sent to the secretary, Neil Hutchinson, 19 Station Road Twyford, Berks, to arrive no later than 11th March 1989.

*The following committee members have offered to continue in their posts:*

<i>Mike Lovell: Treasurer</i>	<i>Yvonne Rowe: Editor</i>
<i>Martin Rowe: Meet Secretary</i>	

*In addition, the following nominations have already been received or suggested:*

<i>Cottage Warden: Brian Murlis</i>	<i>Tackle Master: Steve Redwood</i>
<i>Recorder: Jon Roberts</i>	

*The following committee posts are vacant and require nominees:*

<i>Secretary</i>	<i>Ordinary Member</i>
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5. Election of Auditors for 89/90 - General and MCG Shop accounts
6. Motions
7. Any other business
8. Date and venue of next meeting

*Minutes of the 1988 AGM and Officers reports are attached.*

# MINUTES OF THE 1988 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE MENDIP CAVING GROUP

Held at Nordrach Cottage, Charterhouse-on-Mendip  
at 3pm on Saturday 26th March 1988

Present - 42 Full Members, 5 Probationary Members, 1 Associate Member.

Hon. Chairman - John Roberts

1. Apologies for absence were received from Neil Hutchinson, Alan Mellon, Phil Ingold and Dave Edwards.

2. Minutes of previous AGM recorded in Newsletter No.199 and distributed to all members. Correction to item 6.2: The NCC Code should be included with the rules. The rules will be updated accordingly (action secretary).

3. Officer's Reports. These were recorded in Newsletter No.199.

3.1 Secretary's Report. Comments were invited from the floor. There were no comments on the secretary's report.

3.2 Cottage Warden's Report. John Beauchamp read a letter from Ron Saunders stating that no legal agreement exists between the MCG and the Frys giving us permission to take an electricity supply from the Frys. The cost of providing a proper supply from the road would be £4000. Bryan Pittman asked that the supply route and capacity be recorded for the benefit of future wardens. It was agreed that the committee would consider further the power supply situation. There was some discussion of the drying shed. John Beauchamp requested that more people attend on cottage work weekends, to save spending so much money, which may not be available next year. Roy Kempston requested that a replacement ladder be included in the budget. Alan Dougherty suggested that on work weekends, petrol (or beer) should be subsidised.

3.3 Treasurer's Report. Roy Kempston pointed out that the Government budgets for 1987 and 1988 will have reduced income from covenants. No covenant income has been claimed this year, but it can be claimed retrospectively. Bryan Terry (as an auditor) proposed a vote of thanks to the treasurer for the clarity of his accounts.

3.4 Recorder's Report. John Roberts asked for a status report on the Journal. There are a number of "minor" articles submitted but not enough to warrant publication. A full report on Blackmoor (Upper Flood) is awaited. It's up to you the members!

3.5 Meet Secretary's Report. Geoff Barton asked for comments on a proposal to subsidise overseas expeditions in some way, for example transport. A figure of £400 has been suggested, to be administered each year by the meet secretary and the committee. After much discussion, Pat Walsh proposed that the original motion be amended to read that "money spent on supporting expeditions should be on items which are held in common by members of the MCG, up to £500". Alan Dougherty stated that buying tackle is not necessarily a good idea, as it may not be fit for use after an expedition. Andy Beare pointed out that other items such as cooking equipment could be bought. A vote was taken on the motion as amended. Votes in favour 27, votes against 1, abstentions 13. The motion as amended is therefore carried.

3.6 Tackle Master's Report. Alan Dougherty asked for the telephone to remain in case of emergency callout. Personal usage or lack of it should not come into it. The MCG rescue team, made up of local members, is affiliated to the MRD. The question was raised as to whether any telephone subsidy from MRD is available as the phone is available for rescue purposes.

3.7 Ordinary Committee Member's Report. Pat Walsh proposed a vote of thanks for the work done, especially the Barn Dance and social events.

#### 4. Election of Officers.

4.1 *Re-elections:* John Beauchamp, Ian McKechnie, Neil Hutchinson, Yvonne Ward, Mike Lovell and Gordon Lister all agreed to stand again for their existing committee posts and all were re-elected unopposed.

4.2 *Tackle Master.* Alan Dougherty has resigned. Brian Murlis had been proposed and was elected unopposed.

4.3 *Meet Secretary.* Geoff Barton and Martin Rowe had been proposed. On a vote Martin Rowe was elected to the post.

4.4 *Rescue Co-ordinator.* Alan Dougherty was proposed for an ex-committee post of rescue co-ordinator, and was elected unopposed.

5. *Election of Auditors.* Bryan Terry and Peter Spain were elected unopposed as auditors for the main Group accounts. Geoff Barton and Alan Mellon were elected unopposed as auditors for the MCG Shop accounts.

6. *Motions.* A proposition was received from John Roberts "that the committee reviews future methods of payment for the cottage, consults members about the options described above (and any others that may be suggested), and reports back to the October Half-yearly meeting with definite proposals that may require voting on". Any new scheme would be expected to start on 01.01.89, when subscriptions are due. A full report supporting his proposal was tabled. (Relevant sections (pages 3 & 4) of "comments on MCG funds in 1987 and proposals for 1988 and 1988"). Wayne Hiscox suggested that before this, the committee should consider how much the group needs in reserve "in the bank". Brian Murlis suggested the annual subscription be raised to £21, then allow £5 optional fee allowing reduction of night fee to £1, £2 for guests, £1.50 members night fee, 20p for showers and 50p tackle fee. Roy Kempston stated that this would make administration of fees more difficult for the treasurer. Bryan Terry read a letter from Phil Ingold proposing a method of administering day fees. Several speakers stated that the important matter is that members are reasonable in what they pay. Alan Dougherty suggested that in the Mendip area disposable incomes are typically much lower than in the London area. John Roberts stressed that the most important aspect of his motion was not related to day fees and local members; it is what contribution comes from the membership as a whole to support the cottage. Tony Knibbs said he would be saddened if this issue was allowed to cause a rift between London and local members. He felt that the committee are well placed to make a balanced decision, having representatives from Mendip and London. Alan Dougherty pointed out that local members may visit the cottage weekly for a short period and any day fee should be set accordingly. Bryan Terry pointed out that the income from the the donations box during 1987 was £61 - about £1 per week and this is out of proportion to day usage. Ron Saunders decried the apparent bitterness from a tiny minority of non-local members, and pointed out that we are one club. This was met with an expression of whole-hearted support from the large majority of those present. On a vote, the motion was agreed unanimously.

7. *Any Other Business.* Tony Knibbs proposed that no more beer be consumed during the meeting. 16 voted for, 16 against. The Chairman voted for tradition, ie continue drinking.

8. *Date and Venue of next meeting.* It was agreed that the date would be about the same as this year, but an exact date could not be agreed as the date of Easter was not known. (Subsequently agreed as 01.04.89 at 3pm). Martin Rowe suggested that the cottage is not large enough for the AGM and an alternative venue should be considered for next year. The committee will consider, and publicise before the meeting.

I.D. McKechnie

Hon. Recorder, Mendip Caving Group

## NOTES OF THE HALF-YEARLY DISCUSSION FORUM OF THE MENDIP CAVING GROUP

*Held at Nordrach Cottage, Charterhouse-on-Mendip  
at 3pm on Saturday 8th October 1988*

1. There was considerable discussion on the "local newsletter". An area of noticeboard will be allocated for "news". Steve Redwood will act as local correspondent and inform the editor of all local news.
2. The recorder was asked to provide a "new additions to the library" section for the newsletter. Axbridge CC have asked about exchange newsletters.
3. Members were asked if anyone could provide duckboards for outside the changing room door.
4. J. Beauchamp pointed out that few cottage keys are returned when members resign. R. Saunders pointed out that there may be difficulties with insurance claims in the event of damage or loss inside the cottage if there are rogue keys around. Committee to consider whether action required eg change locks, or high security lock.
5. The meet secretary noted that someone had booked SWCC cottage in MCG name then not turned up. It was not known who this was, and MCG had paid fees to maintain goodwill. All bookings in MCG's name should be done through the meet secretary in future, although individuals may continue to make their own private bookings.
6. The treasurer pointed out a deficit on the cottage phone of about £130 over the past year. Committee to investigate buying payphone, as £46 of the quarterly charge is rental.
7. There was an appeal for assistance in organising social events in future eg armchair meets. Volunteers should contact the ordinary committee member.
8. Proposals for cottage fees were discussed as published in newsletter 202. Committee proposals were day fee 50p, non-members fee (24hrs or part thereof) £2. Members fee (24hrs or part thereof) unchanged at £1.25. There was considerable discussion with all points of view represented. There was loud applause when R. Saunders proposed that what ever solution we come up with, it should affect all membership types equally and not cause a rift between "local" and "away" members. On a vote (in principal): 17 would be prepared to pay a single annual fee with no members cottage fees; 11 would prefer to continue as present but with the same fee for day or overnight use; 1 abstained. The committee will now agree a fee structure based on these discussions. Such complications as members children, associate members, etc should be considered.
9. A. Dougherty proposed the purchase of a power drill (£200-£400) for drilling anchor and shot holes. Members were generally agreeable in principal, providing it can be looked after and risk of loss is minimised. The committee will consider any firm proposals.
10. M. Cotter proposed that the cottage should be a non-smoking area. Votes: 9 for, 9 against, 2 abstentions. This issue will be raised for discussion at the AGM.
11. A. Mellon proposed that a deed of covenant form be attached to membership application forms as a lot of work is involved in chasing new members to sign covenants. Secretary to action.
12. There is a rumour that Unicorn Leisure are buying cave entrances. Our information (A. Thomas, B. Murlis) is that this is not so and Unicorn are not paying any more than anyone else per head for access.

Attendance: 29 full, 2 associate, 2 guests.

*J.D. McKechnie, Hon. Recorder, Mendip Caving Group*

MINUTES OF AN EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETING  
OF THE MENDIP CAVING GROUP

Held at Nordrach Cottage, Charterhouse-on-Mendip  
at 3pm on Saturday 3rd December, 1988

Present - 17 Full Members.

Hon. Chairman - Alan Dougherty

1. *Purpose of meeting.* The meeting was called by the committee to discuss and vote on a motion to raise membership subscriptions from 01.01.89. This resulted from discussions at the AGM and Half-yearly Forum. It had been suggested that the membership subscriptions / cottage fees should more clearly reflect cottage usage, including day usage by members not sleeping at the cottage.

2. *Motion.* The motion under discussion was that "the annual subscription to the Mendip Caving Group shall be £20 for full and probationary members, and £10 for associate members with effect from 01.01.89".

The secretary read a letter from Phil Ingold, stating that he agreed with the motion, but did not agree with the committee's stated intention to retain cottage bed-night fees but not day fees. John Roberts stated that he agreed with the motion, but he believed there should be an option to pay a lump sum with the annual subscription to give a cottage "season ticket". The committee agreed to consider this. Roy Kempston asked why a bed-night fee was retained, bearing in mind the advice of the half-yearly forum to abolish them. The secretary stated that there were several reasons; one was to avoid taking membership subscriptions to a level which would discourage longstanding but non-active members from supporting the club; another was to maintain some level of control over cottage booking and use. Mike Lovell suggested that the fact that the membership subscriptions now include upkeep of the cottage should be included in the constitution and rules. This will be considered at the AGM.

A vote was taken of those present. There were 17 votes for the motion and none against, with no abstentions. Postal votes were 22 votes for the motion, 2 against. The motion was therefore carried by 39 votes to 2.

3. *A.O.B.* There was no other business and the meeting was closed.

I.D. McKechnie

Hon. Recorder, Mendip Caving Group

## TREASURER'S REPORT FOR YEAR ENDING 31-12-88

There was no major capital expenditure during the year and overall Group funds increased by £1585 to £7701.

Income from annual subscriptions was similar to the previous year and adequately covered the general running expenses of the Group, despite losses on the annual dinner and half-yearly barn dance.

The overnight use of the cottage by members and their guests declined in 1988 and the running of the cottage was only financially viable due to increased usage by guest clubs and midweek booking by the Navy.

Despite the apparently healthy picture of Group funds, it was decided at an EGM in December to increase subscriptions to £20 from January 1989. This increase was partly to offset the loss of income due to inflation since the last subscription increase in 1984 and partly to pay for members casual use of the cottage and their reduced bednight fee. This means that all members now contribute to the upkeep of the cottage which is the Group's main asset and it makes my life easier as I do not have to worry about the collection of day fees.

We intend to change our Barclays Bank accounts after the AGM so that we can obtain interest on our current account and a higher rate of interest on our deposit account. Most of our funds are invested in a Post Office investment account and the committee are considering other alternative investments that may give a better return.

I would like to thank Pete Spain and Bryan Terry for their efforts in auditing the accounts and Ron Saunders and Malcolm Cotter for their research into suitable investments for our funds.

### BANK ACCOUNTS

#### Balance as at 31-12-88

General Purpose Fund	Current account	£ 402.74
	Deposit account	£ 853.20
Special Post Office Account	Deposit Account	<u>£ 6641.97</u>
		<u>£ 7897.91</u>

#### Balance as per

Special Fund	£ 6127.65
Interest on	
Special Fund	£ 514.32
General Fund	£ 1255.94
Petty cash	<u>£ 148.11</u>
	<u>£ 8046.02</u>
Less unrepresented	
cheques	<u>£ 344.84</u>
	<u>£ 7701.18</u>

MENDIP CAVING GROUP ACCOUNTS, 31-12-88

INCOME

1987		1988	1987		1988
634.44	Cash at Bank 31-12-87	1448.38	19.15	CCC Permits	32.40
77.00	Cash in hand	39.75			
81.95	Bank interest	42.05	807.50	Annual dinner	971.20
			287.00	Half yearly dance	78.84
1582.50	Subscriptions (1988)	1582.50			
15.00	Subscriptions (1989)	80.00			
	COTTAGE FEES		122.20	Shop and Shirt sales	47.55
				Shop refund	201.00
			74.50	Phone receipts	143.00
944.55	Members	699.18	1.50	Miscellaneous	<u>73.60</u>
440.25	Members guests	417.25			<u>7935.91</u>
614.50	Guest clubs	855.75			
832.50	Royal Navy	948.90	665.62	Floats b/f	184.91
61.43	Donations	147.06	707.60	Unpresented cheques	344.84
				TOTAL	<u>8465.66</u>

EXPENDITURE

1987	COTTAGE	1988	1987	MISCELLANEOUS	1988
180.45	Coal/gas	233.24	3.35	Library (books, desk)	43.50
860.64	Electricity	675.00	421.42	Caving items	387.37
479.68	Insurance	572.36	57.30	Subs to other clubs	21.00
492.73	General/water rates	505.86	882.50	Dinner	1060.50
154.80	Refuse collection	5.75	247.99	Half yearly dance	161.08
105.97	Household	54.76		Miscellaneous	<u>107.55</u>
76.80	Phone	367.04			<u>1781.00</u>
	Cottage maintenance	<u>513.10</u>			
		<u>2927.11</u>			
	COMMITTEE			FLOATS OUTSTANDING	
25.00	Secretary	30.00	21.50	Treasurer	3.97
27.55	Treasurer	31.06	38.41	Editor	25.00
300.54	Editor	417.10	100.00	Cottage Warden	50.00
6.50	Cottage Warden	53.61	25.00	Recorder	40.00
	Meet Secretary	56.15		Tacklemaster	<u>50.00</u>
	Tacklemaster	24.39			<u>168.97</u>
70.49	General	<u>61.90</u>			
		<u>674.21</u>		Transfer to PD a/c	1500.00
				Cash at bank 31-12-88	1255.94
				Cash in hand 31-12-88	<u>158.43</u>
					<u>2914.37</u>
				TOTAL	<u>8465.66</u>

## TACKLEMASTER'S REPORT

The last year has seen a few changes and additions to the tackle store, as well as a few disappearances! Could whoever has them, please return 2 helmets, 1 complete with lamp and a sling (no.54). Generally tackle care has not been too bad, the main criticism being tackle left dirty and belay wires left kinked by mis-use. Even the addition of the new rope rack hasn't deterred some from leaving ropes on the floor! After making a few enquiries with other clubs, and trying one out ourselves, we bought a battery powered drill. A full report on this will follow soon. A full list of tackle held, and details of expenditure for the year 88/89 will be available for scrutiny. I will not be standing for re-election to tacklemaster, and would like to thank everyone who helped over the year.

## Tackle bookings for 1988/89

ROPE	BOOKINGS	LADDER	BOOKINGS
A	4	1	2
B	9	2	6
C	12	3	6
D	6	4	6
E	9	5	6
F	10	6	4
G	7	7	5
H	10	8	3 (LEFT AT DIG AT BONE HOLE)
I	1	9	3
J	5	10	0
K	2	11	9
L	4	12	0
M	2	13	MISSING
N	0	14	10
O	1	15	15
P	0	16	4
Q	0	17	9
R	0	18	0
		19	7
		20	9
		21	1
		22	12
		23	7
		24	0
		25	0

In addition 11 ladders were booked out by length only and one 110ft rope by length only.



## EDITOR'S REPORT

Well, here we are again, another year - my third in fact and I'm still enjoying being the editor even though it takes an average of at least 20 hours a month of my time. Since the last AGM we have produced 6 Newsletters and 3 Bulletins.

As you will remember the Bulletin was the answer to lack of material, time, and last minute dates and news not reaching all the membership in time. I would welcome any comments about your feelings on this new type of publication but for my part (and I'm sure Mike Lovells too) it takes some of the pressure off producing a full monthly Newsletter without denying the Group of any useful dates etc. Also, Martin and I have acquired a desk-top photocopier which means we can print the required copies of the Bulletin ourselves, and any other of the Group lists and forms that we have stored on the computer.

I would like to thank all those who have written very interesting and varied articles in the last year including those from our "overseas correspondents". I hope this trend keeps up as I like to produce a Newsletter with articles and news from Group members or about Group activities if possible.

Something that has given me great pleasure is the result of the four spoof articles that have been in various Newsletters - would you believe that each time somebody has fallen for them, no names mentioned (OH, BP, SB, Mrs BM).

One or two people have asked me about the journal, well, what I have is either on a disk, written on paper or yet to be written, but will eventually comprise articles about:

Archaeology of the Mendip Caves	Upper Flood
Caves of Mulu	Tunnelling
Majorca '86, '87 and '88	Air Currents
Spain '86 and '88 ('89?)	South East Asia

I don't know who has prepared and published the Journal in the past but I won't be able to find the time necessary to do it. I will be asking around for a volunteer, preferably with his/her own word processor.

My thanks to Jon Roberts for the loan of the computer, Mike Lovell for the printing and you for your support and articles.

## RECORDER'S REPORT

The library has been kept up to date with exchange newsletters from all the major clubs, and the usual caving publications. The number of new books this year has been lower than in the past. If any members wish to suggest books they feel should be in the library, please tell the Recorder. A significant number of books have been signed out to members for up to five years. Some have been returned following an appeal in the newsletter. If you still have a library book you haven't looked at for months or even years, please return to the library so that someone else can read them. There has been no further progress on the Journal. We have a selection of good material but not enough to warrant a Journal. We are waiting for the key item - reports and surveys on Upper Flood/Blackmoor. Members and diggers please note. Members who wonder what the committee talk about in their monthly meetings should note that back numbers of committee meeting minutes are kept in a file in the library and are available for reference purposes to any member who can stand the excitement!

## MEET SECRETARY'S REPORT

Since taking over as meet secretary I have continued the existing practice of arranging a Mendip meet on the 1st weekend of every month and an away (Yorks, Wales or Derbys) meet on the 3rd weekend. In addition, Lancaster/Easegill is booked as an alternative on every Yorks weekend.

Regretably, both home and away meets are often poorly attended. This has resulted in several "no-shows" at cottages booked for away meets. Because of this, I no longer book accomodation for these trips unless specifically requested.

There have been relatively few access problems as trips are booked up to 12 months ahead. As a result, we generally get the caves we want. The only problems have been Peak Cavern where access is limited by tourism, and parts of Yorks where access is "under review".

There were two trips abroad involving MCG - SIMA GESM/Coventosa and Majorca. Forthcoming attractions include Gouffre Jean Bernard and Spain/France. I would like to see the Group make a substantial financial commitment to these trips.

CCC permits are now issued annually to all full members on 31st December each year, and to any probationary or associate member on request. This is only possible thanks to the Group's BBC computer. In fact, the Group's membership list is now fully computerised allowing me, and the editor, to do all sorts of clever things such as sending personalised forms and letters. The computer is used to produce address labels for newsletters, and address lists of specific categories - for example, when the rescue warden wants to know all the full members living on Mendip or the editor needs a list of members who have not yet paid their subs. The computer has also made the task of keeping an up to date address list much easier, saving the editor much time and effort.

I have incorporated a covenant form into the application for membership, as requested by last years AGM, and sent a covenant form to all members to "catch" those who have not yet signed a form. The computer now holds on disk master copies of the cottage prospectus, cottage booking form, CCC permits, proving trip form, consitution and rules and covenant forms, membership forms, accounts, minutes of General meetings and committee minutes. These are all available on request.