

ITALIAN ALPS - SEPTEMBER 1989

by Dave Little

Is anyone interested in a caving trip that is being planned to the Marguareis region of the Italian Alps? The caving area itself is a large limestone plateau at about 2200m altitude surrounded by a horseshoe of 2500-3000m peaks. On one side these peaks form the French/Italian border. About 80km from the Med, there should be a fair chance of some good weather.

Amongst the thousands of known caves in the area many are typical Alpine systems with many deep shafts - ideal for SRT. The region also contains many lengthy horizontal systems, including a "walk in" entrance to the Piaggia Bella (Beautiful Place) system giving access to much of its 25km of passage. The Piaggia Bella also has nine SRT-type entrances taking the depth of the system to -925m. These entrances range from pleasant little shafts, through gaping chasms to muddy, tight sloping rifts. Fair potential for a major cock-up on a multiple exchange trip!

Gouffre Straldi is a major SRT cave. The third pitch, "Puits A. Marechal" is supposedly a legendary situation, sliding 80m down the wall of an immense where you can't see the roof, the floor, or any of the other walls. After many more pitches the cave breaks into a large amount of horizontal development.

Gouffre Cappa is another big SRT trip. The system has two entrances (one containing a 182m pitch) which drop into a 7km horizontal system.

The horizontal resurgence of L'arma del Lupo has a large streamway with many lakes where a dinghy is useful. The L'arma Superieur has an interesting climb up to the entrance with some excellent formations inside.

There are many more systems to those mentioned above. We are at present trying to book space in any one of various Italian caving huts for the first two weeks of September. Failing that, there's always camping. Anyone wanting more details should contact Dave Little on 0753-866659.

GRANT SHEPHARD

Mr and Mrs Shephard and their family, and his fiance Victoria Arbizu would like to thank all the members of the MCG who kindly sent messages of sympathy and support, and who attended Grant's funeral on 10th March 1989. Grant had been living in Angola where he often took risks flying in helicopters and light planes. He also had various scrapes during his travels, being washed away in flash floods or being evacuated by plane with an infection to an injured foot. Yet he died tragically, in a road accident yards from the MCG cottage.

Grant's family have expressed a wish that his memorial should be, to help others in difficulty to survive. To achieve this they have asked for donations to be made to the International Red Cross to help the victims of natural disasters. A collection was begun at the annual dinner and has so far raised over £150. Any further donations should be sent to Martin Rowe, 10 Greenleas Close, Yateley, Camberley, Surrey, GU17 7SL by 01.05.89. Please make cheques payable to "MCG". The Group will then forward the donation to Mr Shephard.

ON THE MOVE

Domini Barrett has moved to:
12 Chelsfield, Backwell, Bristol,
BS19 3LU. Tel: 0275-832449

Paul and Joy Merron have re-named their
old barn, "Green Brook Cottage".

Jon Roberts new tel. no. is 01-735-9423

THE STORK...

...will be working overtime this year!
He will be visiting Helen Miriam at the
end of July, Kate Taylor at the
beginning of August, and Joy Merron at
the beginning of September.
Congratulations and good luck!

YOUR NEW COMMITTEE

Officers elected at the AGM:

Secretary: Jon Roberts
1 Vauxhall Walk, London, SE11 5JT
Tel: 01-735-9423

Treasurer: Mike Lovell
4 Settrington Cl, Earley, Reading, Berks
Tel: 0734-663747

Editor: Yvonne Rowe
Meet Secretary: Martin Rowe
10 Greenleaf Close, Yateley, Camberley,
Surrey, GU17 7SL
Tel: 0252-872006

Cottage Warden: Brian Murlis
1A Arundel Road, Weston, Avon, BS23 2QG
Tel: 0934-412048

Tacklemaster: Steve Redwood
11 West Street, Banwell, Avon, BS24 6DA
Tel: 0934-823867

Recorder: Wayne Hiscox
3 Keward, Glastonbury Road, Wells,
Somerset.
Tel: (work) 0749-72081

Ordinary Member: John Beauchamp
St Hugh's Cottage, Charterhouse,
Bristol, BS18 6XR Tel: 0761-62929

DEADLINE...

For May's Newsletter: 29.04.89
For June's Bulletin: 27.05.89

**THIS MONTH'S £50,000
BOND WINNER LIVES IN
NORDRACH, SOMERSET**

The above headline unfortunately never
appeared in the papers. Whilst we were
still concerned with raising funds for
cottage building, Ron Saunders thought a
speculation with his money for the
benefit of the Group might provide an
unexpected windfall, so he invested £50
on 22.12.69 in Premium Bonds - it had to
be in his name. Anyway, he hoped for
windfall did not arrive and he felt that
as the Group appears to be financially
healthy and we've got the cottage he
might as well bring the investment to an
end. So that no one strains their
eyesight in future the old numbers were
5JN824311 - 824360. There were no
unclaimed winnings - sad to relate. Ron
has sent a cheque for £50 to the
treasurer.

**NO JOKING,
NO SMOKING!**

Members who smoke are FUMING! The AGM
voted to WEED out smokers and make the
cottage a NO SMOKING zone. It's a FAG,
but if a PASSIVE SMOKER objects you will
have to STUB out your CIGARETTE. If you
disagree, you can DRAG it up at the next
AGM. Passive drinking may continue - for
the moment....

WESSEX CHALLENGE

This year's challenge has issued by the
Axbridge Caving Group - a Batmobile race
to Swildons followed by a Stomp at
Priddy Village Hall on June 17th at
6.30pm (cost £3.50). Details from any
"local" MCG committee member.

AGM YV'S DRIPPINGS

Chairman: "Bryan's got his hand up".
Secretary: "Got his hand up what?".

Pat: "I've never thrown a guest out of a
bunk".

Meeting: "No, no, no...."

Pat: "Well, not since I've grown up!".

Treasurer: "We barc with Bankleys".