

Mendip Caving Group

NEWS

NUMBER 211

JUNE 1990

PEOPLE HAVE DIED HERE

by Mike Carson

Florida! home of the Everglades, the Keys, Disney World and Flipper. Home too, surprisingly for some very extensive cave systems. I went on a Family holiday to the State at the end of April this year and when I discovered there was a chance of a little spelunking I was in.

This was no ordinary cavern. As the notice at the entrance said, "PEOPLE HAVE DIED HERE"! The rules allowed only experienced people to enter and even then only as far as a gated section some 100' or so in. Yes this would not be a long trip but sporting it surely would be.

The entrance was about 4' high, causing little more than a slight stoop, but for reasons that will become clear it was negotiated with a flat out crawl of about 10' in length. Next a single guideline had been attached, not too secure, to a large pouloer to assist in the first obstacle. This was a 7' bold step over a 20' drop. Since the roof was too low to stand upright at this point, the technique was to lean out at about 45 degrees and push against the rock, grabbing the guideline as you fell. It worked but only just - this was America.

A hands and knees crawl to the end of the guideline presented few problems and then, there it was, some 35' below us the gated section. It was beyond that barrier that so many people had met their deaths. But how to get to it? In front of me was a sheer smooth rock drop of around 30'. At the bottom, the ground made a gradual, very gentle return to the horizontal to end in an almost flat sandy pedoing plane just before the gate. It was this gradual return to the flat which made our next manoeuvre possible. The technique was to sit on the edge of the precipice and slide off. The 30' vertical fall was exciting to say the least. Due to the unique contours of this cave, our descent was slowly arrested and we were gently directed to a standstill just in front of the gate.

A peer through the gate revealed a continuation of the cave but on a much smaller scale and since our one hand torch which we had between us was running low on batteries, we decided to return. The problem now was how to ascend the 30' vertical face. We had no climbing gear with us and there were no hand holds! There seemed no way out!

After a few moments deliberation the answer became clear. I quickly pressed the appropriate button on my BC (Buoyancy Compensator - lifejacket to you!), and up I went. Oh yes, didn't I tell you, *the whole cave is underwater!*

I was actually at a place called Ginnie Springs, one of the many outlets of Florida's artesian springs. This one spews out 30 million gallons (US) of water every day. All at a temperature of 72 degrees and all crystal clear. On the surface, a small lake has formed which is a swimmers and divers paradise. Its crystal clear water is about 15' deep, but through a hole at the bottom is the cavern described above. At Ginnie Springs Dive Shop qualified divers (with certification) can hire equipment and dive into the cavern but only to the extent of daylight. If you can imagine the upper entrance to Goatchurch as far as the Giant's Staircase full of water, it's a bit like that - only wider and higher. The depth of water at the gate is about 60' and a torch is needed to see further into the blackness of the cave. What you see is more of the sandy/gravelly bottom with many stones falling off the floor and being "blown" uphill by the water. In fact the flow of water here is strong enough to require a firm grip on the gate to stay put. The best view though is back towards the entrance where the silhouettes of divers are displayed on the vivid aquamarine of the distant surface lake - unforgettable.

People HAVE died there. The adjacent Devil's Eye spring has no underwater gate and is open only to certified cave divers. (Some say they should be!). More than 200 inexperienced divers have died there in the last decade, ignoring the underwater sign to "Go No Further". The experienced ones (J.R. take note) tell me that the underwater tunnels here are vast in size and have been explored for a distance of 2000' using aqua scooters and that was not the end. Quite where the water comes from no one knows. Some say the Appelachians, some say the Great Lakes. Wherever, it's the only place I've ever been caving or diving where it was safe to drink the water. They tell me it's purer than tap water - that wouldn't be difficult! More info, see me or phone 0101 904 454 2202

**** MCG 1990 MEETS PROGRAMME **** BANK HOLIDAY WEEKENDS IN ITALICS ****

DATE	AREA	MAIN EVENT	AND/OR
07 Jul - 08 Jul	Mendip	Thrupe Lane	Burrington Caves
21 Jul - 22 Jul	Yorkshire	Long Kin West	
04 Aug - 05 Aug	Mendip	Rescue Practise	Upper Flood
25 Aug - 27 Aug	Yorkshire	TBA	
08 Sep - 09 Sep	Mendip	Manor Farm	Novice Weekend
22 Sep - 23 Sep	Derbyshire	TBA	
06 Oct - 07 Oct	Mendip	Longwood clean up	East Twin Swallet
20 Oct - 21 Oct	Yorkshire	Hurnell Moss	
03 Nov - 04 Nov	Mendip	HALF YEARLY MEETING	BARN DANCE/BONFIRE
17 Nov - 18 Nov	S Wales	Pwll Dwin	
01 Dec - 02 Dec	Mendip	Charterhouse	GB Cavern
08 Dec - 09 Dec	S Wales	Craig-a-Ffynnon	
15 Dec - 16 Dec	Yorkshire	Alum Pot	Bar Pot
29 Dec - 01 Jan	Mendip	New Year Party	

For further details of meetings, contact Dave Tooke (tel: 0923-241522)

"Away" meets: accommodation can be booked by telephoning the relevant cottage warden:

Yorkshire	Northern Pennine Club	Steve Thorpe	0532 559214
South Wales	South Wales Caving Club	Janice Richards	0985 219111

WEEKLY MEETINGS are held at the Group's Mendip headquarters on Wednesdays at 7.00pm. and at the Eclipse Inn, Egham Hill, Egham, Surrey, on Thursdays from 8.30pm.
 CAVING ACCOMMODATION for 30 people is available at the MCG headquarters, Nordrach Cottage, Charterhouse-on-Mendip, Blagdon, Bristol, BS18 6XW Tel.0761-62797
 National Grid Reference 5147.5606 Ordnance Survey 1:50,000 sheet 182

COTTAGE FEES per night: MCG members, member's children, SWCC and NPC £1
 Guest clubs and member's guests £2
 ANNUAL SEASON TICKET: Optional exemption from cottage fees, for members £10
 ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION: Full and Probationary Members: £20; Associate Members: £10
 The subscription includes free day-time access to the cottage by the member, their children, and their accompanied guests



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 249 Feltham Hill Road, Ashford, Middlesex, TW15 1LU
 TREASURER: MARTIN ROWE tel: 0252-872006
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The Mendip Caving Group is a registered charity, number 270088
 The Group's Trustees are: Ron Saunders, Malcolm Cotter, Pat Walsh and Peter Matthews



ON THE MOVE (AGAIN)

Bill Headington has moved once more, to:
76 Church Road, Hanwell, London, W7 1LB
Tel: 081-567-5616

CONGRATULATIONS...

...to Norma Cotter who has rejoined the Group as a full member.
...to Geoffrey Beale who has been accepted as a probationary member.

PROSPECTIVE MEMBER

The following application for probationary membership will be considered at the next committee meeting on 04.08.90:
K. Arnold, N.A.M.C, Tai-Newyddion Twn-y-Maes, Bethesda, Gwynedd.
Proposed by B.Murlis, J.Beauchamp.



Congratulations to Neil and Janet Hutchinson (nee Cursi) who were married at Hurley on Saturday 02.06.90.

WARNING!

A full member's key has been lost near GB. It is possible that it may have been picked up by the same people who take pleasure in breaking into cavers' cars. Do not leave valuables unattended at the cottage (and don't leave them in your car either, if you are going to GB - but then where can you leave them?). If you notice anything missing from the cottage INFORM ANY COMMITTEE MEMBER IMMEDIATELY AND IF NECESSARY INFORM THE POLICE. Ensure that all cottage fees are collected from the cottage at the end of the weekend and posted promptly to the treasurer.

HALF-YEARLY GENERAL MEETING, FIREWORKS & PRIDDY BARN DANCE

There will be an informal meeting of the Mendip Caving Group at 3pm Saturday 03.11.90 at Nordrach Cottage. There is no set agenda, members may raise any subject they wish. However, proposals to alter the Constitution and Rules must reach the secretary by 13.10.90. As the HYGM falls on Guy Fawkes weekend there will also be a "bring-a-firework" party at 5.30pm. No boxes of bangers please, we would like everyone to bring one or more good quality fireworks. The Barn Dance at Priddy Village hall will commence at 8pm (sorry, no coach provided this time). Music and calling will be by Simon and Val. As in previous years we would like MCG members to prepare the food for the buffet (cost to be reimbursed on the night). Please let John Beauchamp know what food you can provide, he will co-ordinate so that we have more than just sausage rolls and lettuce. Cost £4 per ticket (cheaper than last year), available soon.

MCG SWEATSHIRTS...

...are now also available by post! Telephone John Beauchamp for details. Sweatshirts can still be purchased post free at the cottage. The new sweatshirts include the old Group "shield" logo rather than the "caver climbing" logo.

COTTAGE KEYS...

...are in the news again. Brian Murlis now holds all the keys for guest clubs, and Martin Rowe holds all the keys for new members as well as members changing their category of membership. Each committee member now holds a shop key.

YV'S SDROPPINGS

Brian: "When I go down with a bang..."
Yvonne: "I always thought you went up with a bang".

Martin: "Did you do the ladder pitch?"
Mary: "I don't know!!".

DEADLINE...

...for Bulletin No.10 is 30.06.90

... AND YET MORE**JOURNAL UPDATE**

June Searle has kindly offered to transfer the articles already on the BBC B/Wordwise disc onto an IBM PC, as well as taking on the articles not yet on disc. Yvonne Rowe will then edit the Journal and Malcolm Cotter will arrange laser printing of the master copies. The Journal is therefore well in hand so Yvonne would like all those articles that have been promised but not yet produced...

WATERWHEEL ACCESS

MCG now control a key which is for MCG members and their personal guests only. Charterhouse Centre have another key for non-MCG use. Any enquiries from visitors about a key should therefore be directed to the centre. The MCG key will now be kept on the library door. Please remember to record all Waterwheel (and Upper Flood) trips in the Blackmoor Log kept in the library - this is a condition of access.

CCC PERMITS

Please ensure that the stock of 14 day permits remains in the library at all times, not in the lectern. These permits should only be issued by full members to bona fide cavers, for which a fee of 30p is due. Please record the sale of permits on the current cottage booking sheet and send the money and yellow copy to the treasurer with the cottage fees - do not put the 30p in the donation box as it is not a donation!! The Group buys blank permits from CCC and then recoups the cost by selling the permits at 30p a time. A recent check of the yellow copies showed that we were not receiving all the 30ps due and that many permits were not signed by an MCG member.

EXPEDITIONS...

...or caving holidays will soon be upon us. Dave Tooke has details of a visit to Ireland in late August. Brian Murlis can be contacted for details of the trip to Vercors in July. Additionally, Tony Knibbs will be caving in Ardeche for one week or more from 06.07.90. By the time you read this, several MCG members will be in Arredondo, Northern Spain with Dave Elliot ("£200 encouragement to a competent team" - Ghar Parau Foundation recommendation to the Sports Council).

EARWIG...

...in on the committee:
 Drainage problem to be reviewed if new soakaway ineffective... Of 70 covenant letters sent out, 43 not returned; will write again... Upper Flood leaders under review... £1000 going into M & G Charifund as wide range investment... Wessex Water Share Certificate lodged with MCG's other documents... Closing Barclays Business Account and opening Deposit Account with Charities Official Investment Fund... Post Office Savings Account to be kept until we have a balance of wide and narrow range investments... Exterior walls to be pressure-cleaned... Revised membership & covenant form combined with package for prospective members... Bone Hole: date to be arranged for work on Skull Slope... Nettle Pot: start work in the Autumn... New map ordered for lounge... Arthur Spain to repair kitchen cupboard... Charterhouse Centre and the adjoining land no longer for sale, but new management system still likely, thanks to Jon Roberts and Ron Saunders for their work... No smoking notices to be displayed in cottage... Purchasing "Expedition Planners Handbook and Directory 88/89" and "Caving Expeditions"... Looking at cost of industrial waste collection by council, and seeking 100% exemption from Rates... Committee meetings to alternate between Mendip and South East, next meetings: Thurs 04.07.90 8.00pm Eclipse, Egham; Sat 04.08.90 8.00pm Nordrach Cottage; Thurs 06.09.90 8.00pm Eclipse, Egham.

BUYING NEW GEAR?

Try MCG Caving Shop before going elsewhere. Contact M.Cotter or P.Ingold.

NORTHERN ADVENTURES

by Arthur Spain

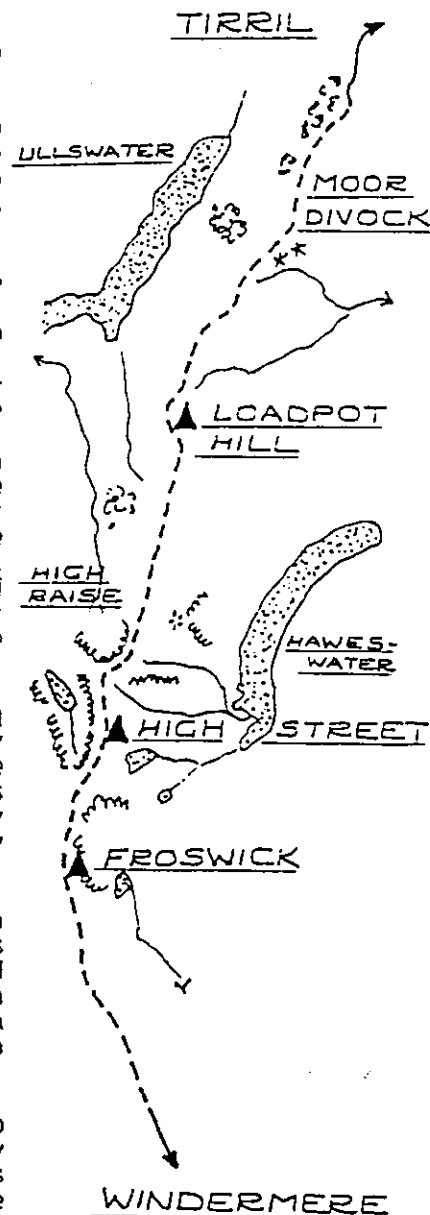
Stirred into action by the editor's stinging comments in the latest newsletter, it seemed appropriate to set down a few ramblings about a little-known Northern trip back at the beginning of March this year. It was conceived at Greg and Lilia's binge in January; Bruce Dean and Derek Walsh, one ex and the other nearly ex - MCG members, decided a hardy stroll across the Lake District Longsleddale Range from Windermere to Tirril (near Penrith) was in order especially if there was snow, a distance of about 18 miles across very hilly terrain.

Roger Wallington, Mike Lovell, Brian Pittman and myself left Slough at 7-ish on Thursday evening (I had already travelled 120 miles to get there) arriving in Yorkshire in time to have a swift pint before the pubs closed, then on to Derek's place in Ingleton. A caving trip was decided upon next day but prior to this we tramped around Ingleton and Settle searching for a suitably priced Gor-tex jacket for Wally, all in vain. So it wasn't until 4pm that we finally found ourselves at the entrance to Lancaster Hole, then to descend the 100ft pitch by SRT. Our aim was exiting either at County or if the water level was suitable, out by Wretched Rabbit. Fortunately our intrepid leader, Wally, remembered the route after one or two false moves, so on we went. Well, I for one nearly died of heat exhaustion through wearing a wet suit with an oversuit - not to be recommended for a dry cave. Anyway we had a relatively uneventful trip through Fall Pot, Starke Pot and on through Cornes and Snails Cavern to Eureka Junction using the fixed ladders where they existed, (get up there quickly, they are being taken out soon), until we branched off towards Stop Pot. Fortunately the stream had not sumped so we managed to take the more direct route out via Wretched Rabbit, a rather tortuous stream passage with a couple of rope climb pitches, to the entrance and onto the open drizzly moor with a long tramp back to Red Rose Cottage via Lancaster to retrieve the rope. We only just made the Marten Arms for a quick meal and several pints. A good trip.

Next day dawned reasonably OK except we were supposed to meet Greg at the Little Thief (Chef) outside Ingleton at 7.30am. However, after an irate Greg turned up later on Derek's doorstep we ended up there for breakfast. About 9.30 we found ourselves at the SR station carpark at Windermere (some clown who shall be nameless reckoned it would great to start there instead of Troutbeck - about 2 miles less walking!). Bruce ensured that we were adequately dressed. Boots, warm clothing, hats, gloves, wet weather gear and, for some, ice axes, plus hot and cold rations and off we went gradually climbing following the Garburn road (misnomer for rocky track), bearing north towards Yoke at 2309ft to meet more and more snow. Our highest point was at Ill Bell at 2476ft where we joined High Street, an old Roman road - they seem to eat everywhere, even that high. Just beyond the Knott towards High Rise, a lunch break was called at approx 2.15pm where Bruce came up with a marvellous bit of kit - an emergency rescue tent. The rucksacs were stacked in a pile and everyone (seven of us) each held an edge then went under to sit on the inside edge in a circle, nicely out of the biting, extremely strong wind, a very welcome place to eat our rations, building up a thick fog and not looking forward to going out again. At this point Bruce dug into his rucksac and came out with a portable telephone hand set which he proceeded to use giving our ETA.

However, all good things come to an end. So somehow packing the rescue tent in the howling wind, we went on our way following the continuing High Street Roman road which in the snow looked the same as the rest of the scenery, snow, rocks and the occasional cairn. However, despite the overcast sky and sleeting rain, fortunately not in our face, the scenery was magnificent especially looking down to the occasional valley - Haweswater then Ullswater. We gradually descended, the snow thinning and the ground getting very boggy in places, heading towards Penrith. It was getting dark by this time so we were glad to get off the mountain onto tarmac and with a certain amount of relief arrived at Bruce's place in the village of Tirril. After a welcome cup of tea, a roaring fire and hot shower we headed for a local pub ferried by Jean and Bruce.

Sunday was a weegee day visiting the Aira Falls then on to Troutbeck for a rather disappointing pint and snack. Finally arriving at Windermere where we parted company, the locals heading to their homes and us Southerners hitting the motorways, getting back in the early evening - a very enjoyable long weekend and thanks to Derek, Bruce and Jean for their hospitality and organisation.



JOTTINGS FROM JOHN

by John Beauchamp

ROD'S POT Following the collapse of the left hand wall (and as it turns out, the roof) back in January, the dig across the main chamber was re-visited on 23.05.90. Several skipfuls of cold glutinous mud were removed to regain access to the "collapsed" chamber. A cursory inspection revealed a large perched boulder requiring further investigation, but more interestingly the height of the chamber had increased from 8m to approximately 15m. On 02.06.90, Steve Redwood and Brian Murlis re-visited the site and climbed an aven decorated at the top with mud and calcite formations. There are no apparent leads, although work will continue. People visiting the area are warned of its instability. A collapse could block your exit!

CAN SOMEBODY TRANSLATE?!!

The extract printed opposite is taken from "The Perambulations of the Forest of Mendip 1300 AD". Obviously my name is quite apparent, even though in a slightly different form (*Johannis de Beauchamp*). But even stranger is the fact that Alison's maiden name is Ham and her father's name is Peter (*Petrus de Hamme*). Perhaps our ancestors were neighbours! (*Ed. Neighbours, everybody needs good neighbours... la de da..*)

IV. 1300.

MENEDUP. Item in presentia Nicholai Pecche tenentis locum Sabine Pecche Forestarie de feodo Foreste de Menedup, Philippi le Ireys et Johannis de Beauchamp viridariorum foreste predicte, et Petri de Hamme tenentis locum Justiciarii Foreste, predicti Thomas de Bayouse et alii jurati simul cum predictis Gilberto [de Knoville] Johanne [Gileberd] Humirido [de Waldena] et Matthes [de Furneus]¹ sibi associatis ad predictam perambulationem faciendam sic processerunt, videlicet: Incipiendo apud Stoubergwe, et deinde transeundo per mediam brueram usque Thorlestone, et sic per mediam brueram usque Skynnindecliff, et deinde per mediam brueram usque ad furcas libertatis de Ceddre, dimittendo ens in foresta a dextris, usque ad la Dunstone, per mediam semitam descendendo usque le Foxweye. Et sic descendendo usque Slyperstone. Et sic usque Merethorne, et deinde usque Mariscum Johannis de Actone, dimittendo eundem mariscum in foresta, usque ad petram quam vetus Samuei ponere fecit inter feodum manerii de Ceddre et manerium Abbatis Giastonie, quod vocatur flonde, et deinde usque Nottepuile versus Clwvere, dimittendo a sinistris feodum Abbatis Giastonie et Philippi de Wyke, quod est extra forestam.

BOWERY CORNER SWALLET

The BEC are currently digging away at this cave which lies around the corner from the western end of Nine Barrows Lane. I am reliably informed from the other side of a beer mug that the location was once known as Puck Suds. According to court proceedings of 10th Feb 1661 reproduced here, people are to be fined 20/- for the 1st offence of immersing themselves in the water, £5 for a 2nd offence, and banished for the 3rd offence! There should, by rights be several BEC members permanently in the stocks on Priddy Green!

(*Ed. For younger members 1/- = 5p so 20/- (twenty shillings) = 100p*)

AT A MINERY COURT holden at Chewton Mendipp the 10th day of Feb'y in the Year of our Lord God 1661 it is Ordered by Richard Adams & his Fellows as followeth.

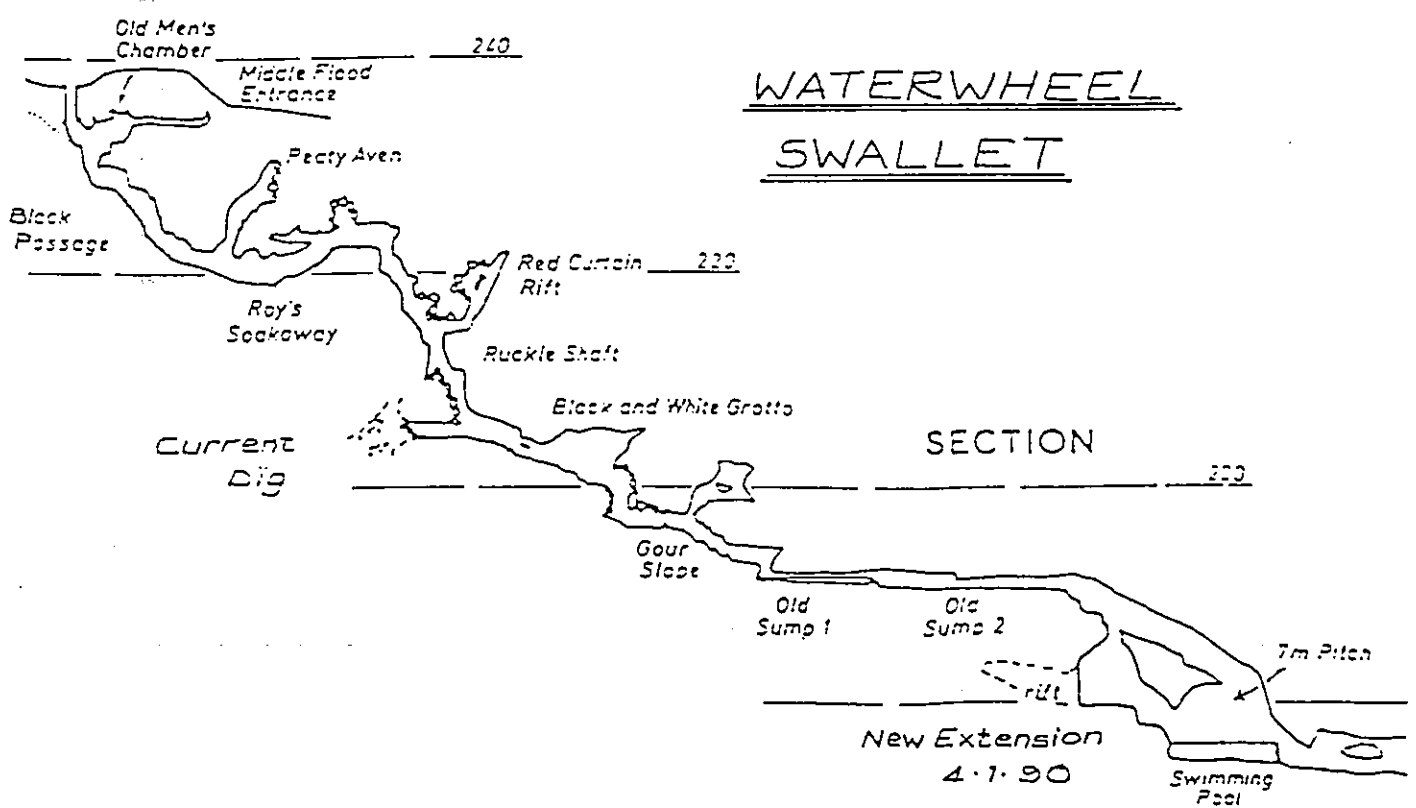
93. *For drawing the water at Pucksuds.*—WHEREAS there hath been complaint made unto us of this Minery Grand Jury by William Redman of great wrongs and abuses done unto him by Severall disorderly persons as touching a washing Pond or Pool and another watering piace for Cattell both lying and being adjoining to a piace commonly called by the Name of Puck Suds, which Said Ponds or Pools as doth appear unto us of this Jury have been made at the Proper Cost and Charge of the Said William Redman but for the publique Good as well of the rest of the Borderers as himself; And further it doth appear unto us that the Said Places do not hinder the buddling piace of any water that usually did come to the Said piace but rather help them to more; wherefore we of this Jury taking the p'mises into our Consideration do Order and make this decree with the Consent of the next ensuing Court, that if any person or persons whatsoever belonging to this Occupation Shall presume to draw any Water or cause to be drawn or wash with that Water there out of either of the Said Pools at any time but what doth naturally run in its Course, without the Special Licence and Consent of the Said William Redman or his Assigns, Shall forfeit for the first Offence 20^s. the One half to the Lord of this Liberty and the Other half to the partie grieved that Shall make just proof thereof, and for the Second offence 5^l. to be paid as afores^d and if he or they Shall be found to offend in the like nature the third time, they Shall be banished from this our Occupation, always Provided the Said Offence or Offences be found by Verdict of a Grand Jury. And to this Our Order we all agree and have Subscribed our hands.

KANEANA CAVE The cave is situated on the northwest side of Oahu, one of the Hawaiian islands, and is more or less on the side of the road. The entrance is about twice the size of Axbridge Ochre Mine and being easily accessible, is well covered in graffiti. I assume the cave was a gas pocket in the lava, truncated and exposed by the receding sea. The cave consists of one main chamber and a side passage on the left leading to a hands and knees crawl through a puddle to a very small chamber. We tried to take some photographs but the black lava against a black background didn't come out too well. A novelty cave to visit, to say that you've been underground.

If you want more caves there are some on the north/northwest coast of Kauai, namely Waikanaloa Wet Cave, Waikapalae Wet Cave and Dry Cave. Two sea caves exist on the coast near the Valley of the Lost Tribe; these, as the location suggests, are not so easily accessible.

Trivia: the centre of the island of Kauai is reportedly the wettest place on earth with 465 inches of rain per year.

WATERWHEEL SWALLET A minor extension was added to the cave, at the base of the rift at the end of old sump 2. After some chemical persuasion a constriction was passed entering 5m of upslope passage at the end of which the floor meets the roof! Probing has now been re-located upstream at the base of Ruckle Shaft. Here, the downward excavation has exposed clean washed rubble, although progress has been halted by a large boulder.



BLACKMOOR NATURE RESERVE In a letter dated 02.05.90 from Somerset County Council Education Committee, we were told "Council members have decided to take no action - at least for the time being - to declare the Charterhouse Centre surplus to requirements". We must not, however, assume that the matter will never come up again. MCG members should be vigilant and look out for any new. In the meantime, the committee have decided to wind up the Charterhouse sub-committee. Malcolm Cotter

MONEY TO BURN, A LESSON TO LEARN

Limericks from the Annual Dinner

This year's topic for the limerick competition was the club's funds, circa. £12000

Velvet Bottom with all its old mounds
 Couldn't be bought for £12000
 Because all the punters
 Spent their cash down the Hunters
 So tonight it must be Rogers round.

We've got 12 grand if you please
 We came by this with consummate ease
 We support monetarism
 Applaud Thatcherism
 In other words mad cow disease.

It was more than just £12000 quid
 That caused changes of rules to be bid
 Should rule 2CD
 Become rule 3CF
 Or should four fifths be added instead.

There's plenty of money in the MCG
 The facts are quite plain to see
 They dine in high style
 As they amass their great pile
 And give alms to poor clubs like BEC.

A caving club just down the way
 Were having trouble completing a survey
 So they went to the bank
 Who said, "Let us be frank
 Try the MCG they've got 12K".

The MCG's off the dole
 But a city bank isn't our role
 So the best thing for it
 Is a bottomless pit
 That ends up at Wookey Hole.

The library needs turning around
 And the Newsletters need to be bound
 It's only a whim
 But you could microfilm
 The lot for £12000.

There was an old man of Toulouse
 Who thought of a very good ruse
 The BEC need a hand
 They could do with a grand
 For a survey (or maybe a cruise).

A Mendip club is renowned
 For its assets of £12000
 But to spend it is bad
 To waste it is sad
 So let's spend it on plenty of rounds.

The MCG had some savings
 And a number of immoral cravings
 With twelve thousand pounds
 One could buy a few rounds
 As long as it doesn't involve caving.

With the sum of £12000
 You could buy almost 12000 rounds
 You could spend it on rope
 On carbide or dope
 Or just pile it up in big mounds.

This next ditty is not a limerick but
 was amongst the entries:

Entitled - HOW WE GOT THE £12000
 So, farewell then Mike Lovell,
 You signed the MCG's cheques, I'm told.
 But clearly no bank agreed with your
 handwriting.

Money to burn, a lesson to learn
 Don't waste it on boozing or saving
 Buy gold plated boots or gold lame suits
 Make MCG trendy in caving.

(ed: there was a winner, but I don't know
 which it was)

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MCG

Tailings

COTTAGE BOOKINGS

22 Jun - 24 Jun	Barnet Cave Group	(6)
22 Jun - 24 Jun	Southampton ATC	(15)
26 Jun - 29 Jun	Goff Daine	(??)
29 Jun - 01 Jul	Steve Taylor VSU	(12)
29 Jun - 01 Jul	Action Sports	(12)
03 Jul - 06 Jul	Goff Daine	(??)
07 Jul - 08 Jul	Members' Weekend	
10 Jul - 13 Jul	Goff Daine	(12)
27 Jul - 29 Jul	Hanwell VS	(6)
04 Aug - 05 Aug	Members' Weekend	
06 Aug - 10 Aug	Royal Navy	(??)
10 Aug - 12 Aug	Hanwell VS	(16)
23 Aug - 29 Aug	B'r Trust Cons Vol	(13)
03 Sep - 07 Sep	Royal Navy	(??)
08 Sep - 09 Sep	Members' Weekend	
01 Oct - 05 Oct	Fosseway School	(??)
06 Oct - 07 Oct	Members' Weekend	
03 Nov - 04 Nov	Members' Weekend	
01 Dec - 02 Dec	Members' Weekend	
29 Dec - 01 Jan	Members' Weekend	

WESSEX CHALLENGE '90

The Wessex Challenge is to be held at the Belfrey on Saturday 23.06.90 starting at 7.30pm. The fancy dress theme is "Civil Wars". Food, etc. is available after the customary chariot race at a cost of £4. Tickets available via the REC. If MCG are to enter a team we will need (a) six team members, and (b) a chariot - anything with wheels that is fairly light will do - a pram, pushchair, etc. The wheelbarrow used in the past is knackered and was too heavy. Please volunteer yourself by phoning John Beauchamp by 19.06.90.

CAVING IN N. WALES?

Wolverhampton Mountaineering Club's cottage near Llanberris is available to MCG for £2 a night, max.12 in a party. Booking secretary is Mike Burt, 14 Hanbury Crescent, Penn, Wolverhampton, Staffs. Tel: 0902-338282

DEAR EDITOR...

...I just thought I would drop you a line to thank MCG very much indeed on behalf of myself and the other "novices" for making our stay on Mendip (21/22 April) such an enjoyable and safe trip. Although it must have appeared that we weren't enjoying ourselves at one time or another, I can assure you that we haven't stopped talking about it. I don't think the manager of the department we all work in was too happy about our lack of effort today! It was dreadful to go back to work after packing so much into a weekend.

I gather from talking to Linda that another trip may be arranged sometime around September. Certainly from my point of view I would be very interested in going.

I heard that Martin is the Treasurer of the MCG so I hope he will accept the small donation enclosed with our thanks, as I am sure that £2.00 per night didn't cover MCG's costs for the weekend. By the way, I've just read the weekend "Telegraph" report on caving, the weekend outlined there costs £129!

Once again thank you very much indeed. I think the caverns of GB will remain in my memory for many years. *Philip Johns.*

Ed: Linda Gates and Gill Warren asked me if I would help them with a novice weekend and I was happy to oblige. There were 6 novices in all but a couple had been caving before. They were a great bunch of people and very sporting (especially with the cottage games!). On Saturday we took them down East Twin Swallet, Goatchurch and Sidcot and thoroughly wore them out (and ourselves). On Sunday there was a short trip to GB for a couple who wanted more punishment. The rest were shown SRT in the tree as they were interested in trying some abseiling. When they had the feel of it we went to Split Rock to try it for real. Unfortunately there was a rescue practice and as we felt it wasn't practical to operate alongside we went to Rock of Ages instead - not as high but better than we thought. I can honestly say that we enjoyed the weekend as much as they did and their letter and "small" donation of £30 makes it all the more worthwhile.

AGM YV*SDROPPINGS

On opening the 'dry' AGM
Pat W: "I declare this Guinness open".

On discussing...

...the Secretary's report
JR: "I'm afraid I've written a 20 pager."
Pat W: "Ran out of time did you?"

...the clubs £12000
Mike L: "After cottage expenditure, etc, we could be down to £9000."
Tony K: "It's a bit tight then?"

...the meets programme
Ian Mc: "I think Andy made a valid point."
Ian P: "That's a surprise!"
Lesley: "He can put it away for another year now."

...the Frys
Joan G: "Ken's easier to get on with than he used to be - you get more than a grunt now!"

...the Tacklemaster's report
Roy K: "Can someone tell me what climbing aids are?"
John B: "A disease you can catch when climbing."

...the library
JR: "I was the recorder for 4 years and it took me all that time and a lot of money..."
Pat W: "...to get it in the mess it's in now."

...elected officers
Pat W: "...Wayne Hiscock - er - Hiscox."
John B: "He's got two."

...votes for Secretary
Pat W: "We have one postal abstension!"

...post for Tacklemaster
Adrian: "I feel it's a job I can fit in with my lifestyle."
John B: "What, even though you're married now?"
Gordon: "He's learned a lot about the tackle business!"

...reduced subs (aged 60)
Roy: "That's not the statutory retiring age for men though."
Martin: "It is for cavers!"

BCRA DOINGS: NORTHERN NEWS

Long Kin West Work in Illusion Series has pushed the depth of this cave to a record 570ft and digging continues!

Bracken Bottom Pot A new find, after much effort by the Bradford, on Pen-y-Ghent. 300ft deep, the pot includes a 100ft pitch and a 60 x 30 x 30ft chamber with a good draught. Full details in their Journal.

The Swilly Hole Haymarket Caving Club have re-opened this cave at Haltcliff Bridge and extended the cave to 1475ft with over 600ft of new passage and more promised.

Brants Gill Resurgence Divers from the Bradford are building scaffolding 20ft below water 120ft in, in a boulder choke (Ed. must be totally mad!). Brants Gill is the resurgence for most of the water from Pen-y-Ghent and Fountains Fell, so they have a good incentive.

Savel Pot Earby Pothole Club have attempted to make the entrance safe but as it may still be settling care is needed.

Lancaster Ladders The future of the 40 year old fixed ladders is under review. The proposal is that the ladders on the main through route be removed and replaced with rope or ladder belay points. This includes Stake Pot, Fall Pot, Stop Pot and the ladder down into Graveyard. CNCC would like opinions before a decision is made.

Rowten Pot A caver broke his back when an anchor 2.5m down failed at a rebelay.

Kingsdale Following an incident on Slit Pot pitch, one of the party set off to call CRO. He slipped and fell off the Cascade climb but continued on. He was later found at the bottom of KMC Roof Tunnel pitch having drowned. It is unclear what actually happened.

Further details in Caves & Caving No.48.

STONED AGE
Traces of 4,000-year-old ale made from bran, honey, wild flowers and herbs have been found on the Isle of Rhum, Scotland.

SUN
SPANISH potholer Emilio Reyes yesterday gave up his attempt on the 365-day record for staying under ground after just 75 days.
SPOT