

**MINUTES OF THE MENDIP CAVING GROUP ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
HELD ON 9TH APRIL 2005 AT THE HUNTERS LODGE INN**



The Mendip Caving group is a Registered Charity No. 270088

Chairman: Jonathan Roberts

Present: 23 Full members

Others present (non voting): 2 probationary

1. Apologies for absence

Andrew Brander, Lynn Furneaux, Tony Knibbs, Denise Knibbs, Mick Norton, Brian Snell

2. Minutes of the AGM held on the 9th April 2004

An amendment was made to the comments on the Editors report. The Yahoo site is moderated by Martin Rowe rather than controlled.

Accepted *nem con* as a true record of the meeting. Signed by the chairman.

3. Minutes of the EGM held on the 9th October 2004

Accepted *nem con* as a true record of the meeting. Signed by the chairman.

Outstanding actions: Malcolm Cotter to draft a paper for the newsletter, which provides a considered analysis of the issues surrounding why there is a need to update the regulation of the group and how this might be achieved by a change in Committee structure.

4. Matters arising from the AGM and EGM

Matters arising from the AGM: None.

Matters arising from the EGM: it was felt that further investigation was required on whether gift aid can be reclaimed on behalf of the full subscription. Or does the insurance element need to be separated out for full caving members?

Action: Malcolm Cotter and Fiona Kempston to investigate and report back to the Committee.

5. Officers reports and matters arising from those reports

These were circulated in advance of the meeting with the newsletter except for the Tacklemaster's and Caving Secretary's report. Both officers had resigned towards the end of the year. Each officer gave a brief summary of his or her report and highlighted key points of interest. The Group expressed particular appreciation to the Secretary and Treasurer for sorting out the BCA Insurance and leadership of the 50th Anniversary celebrations.

Secretary

It was pointed out that it is even more important than in previous years for subscriptions to be paid on time due to the deadline imposed by the Public Liability Scheme. Members were reminded that all members must pay insurance, whether they are active cavers or not. The Secretary indicated that after the

disruption caused by the insurance scheme the next challenge will be to increase membership numbers again: we are now at less than 100 members. It was felt that the website needed to be up to date to help encourage new members. And we need to be caving more often so please use the facilities and caving equipment and especially on members' weekends.

As a general point it was felt that more active cavers were needed to spread the load particularly with respect to beginners. Bob Templeman offered to take novice groups underground. It was clarified that non-members are not covered by the MCG's Public Liability Insurance policy.

Treasurer

The new system of collecting bed night fees is working well and considered by the Treasurer to be a great improvement on the old method.

It was clarified that the Group does not subsidise 'phone calls but does pay charges and line rental. It is important for there to be a 'phone at Nordrach Cottage in case of emergencies and specifically a cave rescue. A suggestion was that line rental should be shown as a separate line in the accounts.

Editor

Invariably the Editor has received plenty of articles for the newsletter this year apart from the last edition. Peat Bennett was thanked for providing the photo of Golden Chamber that is now the new masthead.

Cottage Warden

Major cottage work will be required this year due to the increasing age of the cottage. In particular the woodwork is starting to decay, and without the protection of the beech trees the cottage will potentially be more vulnerable to the weather. The cottage now looks very 'open' from the road and it was suggested that we replace the trees with hedging that could act as a screen. The drains have now been sorted (Malcolm Cotter, Doug Harris, Mick Norton).

Projects that remain uncompleted are: replacement of the fascia boards, the lounge floor and enhanced drainage for the car park. These jobs are being costed up. Potential projects for the future were discussed:

- splitting up the Foreman's Lounge into two rooms to help with guest bookings.
- putting photos on the website of each room of the cottage.

Tackle Master

A verbal report was provided by the Secretary on behalf of the Tackle Master. The backlog of old ropes that needed replacing has been sorted. Additional tethers and pulleys have been purchased.

Recorder / Librarian

Between 50 and 55 newsletters go to other clubs on exchange and the backlog has now been cleared. A signed copy of the caves of New Zealand has been donated (Tim Francis, Louisa Minahan).

Caving Secretary

The Caving Secretary has resigned and no report was submitted either in writing or verbally.

Social Secretary

A quick round up of the 50th Anniversary events was provided. A publication to commemorate the year is under way. £670 was raised from the auction and raffle and the Committee are looking for ideas on what to spend the money on. Ideas were sought from the wider membership. Suggestions included a scaffold tower that could be used for ladder and line / SRT training.

The beech tree has been planked and is being seasoned. It was suggested that the planks could be used to make a table for the lounge. The planks are two feet wide and 1½ inches thick. Concern was expressed as to whether the wood would be thick enough – at least 2 inches is required for a refectory table.

Custodian Trustees

One of the Custodian Trustees aims is to protect our investments against inflation and if possible gain a bit as well. It was noted that where possible it is advantageous to reinvest any dividends received. It was suggested that the Custodian Trustees meet up to review the performance and range of the investment portfolio.

Gift Aid Administrator

An excellent system is currently in place whereby new members are immediately sent a Gift Aid form.

Rescue Warden

Nothing extra to report.

Conservation and Access

Nothing extra to report.

6. Election of Honorary Officers

The following officers were elected unopposed and unanimously:

Treasurer: Martin Rowe

Cottage Warden: Doug Harris

Editor: Yvonne Rowe

Recorder/Librarian: Tim Francis

Social Secretary: Linda Milne

The following have agreed to be considered for co-option at the next Committee meeting:

Tackle Master: Martin Peck

Caving Secretary: Bob Templeman

No nominations or volunteers were received for the position of Hon. Secretary. It was agreed that the Treasurer would act as a temporary point of contact until the post is filled.

Action: the Committee to seek a volunteer.

7. Election of other officers

The following were elected unopposed and unanimously:

Rescue Warden: Keith Knight

Conservation and Access Officer: Lee Hawkswell

Gift Aid: Malcolm Cotter

8. Election of examiners 2005/2006

Fiona Kempston and Anne Pittman were elected unopposed and unanimously.

9. Motions

No other motions were proposed.

10. Any other business

- It was suggested that we revive the pub meet in the London area.

Action: Tim Francis to co-ordinate dates and venue.

- BCA insurance rates for new members are set by calendar quarters. There was discussion around what methods could be used to help ease the burden on the Treasurer. Direct debit, although flexible, was deemed as being too expensive. Standing orders have the disadvantage of being fixed and any automated system needs to be sufficiently flexible to allow for changing insurance rates.

11. Date and venue of next Annual General Meeting

This was agreed as being on the 1st April 2006 at 10.00am in the Back Room of the Hunters Lodge Inn.

(The half yearly will be on the 8th October)