

MCG NEWS

Newsletter of the Mendip Caving Group

Departure Lounge, Upper Flood (by Charlie Allison)

Number 345
October 2007

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Founded 1954

Last Tango in Swildon's

by Tony Knibbs

My first trip into Swildon's Hole took place on Sunday 4th July 1953 as part of a group from the Abbey Barn, Chertsey, Youth Club. More than a little time has passed since that sunny day. In 2004, I set out to join the Group's commemorative visit, but only got as far as the Old Grotto where I lost all control of my balance and was reduced to crawling back to the entrance. This ridiculous state of affairs was due to an as-yet-undiagnosed brain tumour (since removed). This forced retreat was a shock to my ego. I promised myself another attempt at what I have always regarded as an easy cave. Beyond one's seventieth year the prospects for caving trips become decidedly bleak.

Because we had decided to spend our summer holiday in the UK in 2007, I set my sights on a 'return match' with Swildon's. The initial intention was just a gentle potter down to Sump One. My optimism chipped in with the idea of continuing with a wallow down to Sump Two, which ideally would have required the wearing of a wetsuit! It is well known by the older generation that wetsuits have a tendency to shrink if not worn regularly. Mine had indeed shrunk and would not zip up. I therefore settled on Sump One as my target. I also decided that this would probably be my last opportunity to visit Swildon's. A cardinal rule of life is that 'nothing lasts unchanged' and this includes caving fitness.

The trip was duly planned for Friday 3rd August with Denise and Martin Mills (SMCC) to accompany me. The boulders not far inside the entrance seemed to have moved a little yet again but I soon found the top of Jacob's Ladder. The stream into the entrance looked quite lively. Conclusive proof that the water conditions were fairly high was provided on finding both of the 'Dry' Ways carrying active streams. A fair torrent was crashing down towards the climb down to the bottom of the 40ft Pot. The climb was the first 'obstacle' and I opted for a lifeline. A deafening roar heralded our approach to the 20ft Pot. I was prepared to find an eco-hanger in place of the old Rawlbolt, but it was a disappointment to find that the hanger had been positioned to allow the ladder to occupy the same finger-trapping worn trench that had been formed over the years of using the original bolt. Tradition may be an admirable thing, but improvement can sometimes make things easier!

The lively streamway was most enjoyable and soon I was looking down the first of the Double Pots. Traversing these, I became aware that my upper-body strength was not so good now (press-ups have now been incorporated into the daily routine). I was surprised to recognise the start of the climb up to Tratman's Temple (I have walked beyond it occasionally in the past). However, memory clouded over



Denise and Tony Knibbs with Martin Mills

From the editor



You will read, if you don't already know, that Mike Lovell is prepared to continue printing the newsletter for now. Although he has retired, he has been told he can go back to his old workplace to do the printing in his own time, and we are extremely grateful or that. (See the EGM notes, p8)

There is a lot of news from Upper Flood again, mostly put together from Newsgroup postings. We would be very happy for the authors to write articles for the newsletter - please.

Finally, don't forget it is fireworks at Priddy Green on Saturday 03/11/07 at 6.30pm. We managed to eat at the New Inn last year so that would be the best option for firework goers this year.

Yvonne

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On the move

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Sad news

Ted Gabb, an MCG member from 1960-64, has passed away. "I remember Ted very well; the last mental image of him is him leaving Netherwood Cottage on his rather small motorbike with his girlfriend on the back wearing their rucksack, dwarfing both Ted and the 'bike.'" *T Knibbs*

Ted's daughter has very kindly donated his caving books to the Group, including two rare early journals.

Ron Arkless, an MCG member in the late 80's/early 90's died recently from lung cancer. He had recently moved further north to his roots in Consett, Durham. He was in his early 50's, so no time to go really. *G Beale*

somewhat when I reached Barnes' Loop. I was suddenly confronted with a narrow rift into which the stream hurtled. It took me a few seconds to thankfully realise that this was the section bypassed by the Loop. I climbed up to the left and soon recognised the White Way. My usual descent back to the stream proved inadvisable. I have always favoured the use of the left-hand wall, where it meets the stal flow, using two small finger holds in the stal. But today this seemed too risky, so I opted for the sillier descent down to the right between the stal. flow and the right-hand rock wall. An untidy move, but less likely to result in injury if I came to grief. The succession of pools into which the stream plunged demanded more swinging on handholds than I could remember. The sump hove into view sooner than I expected. We stopped to enjoy a bar of chocolate. The scummy surface of the sump made me glad that I had no need to dive it.

The return was slow but without incident. Whether that really was my last trip into Swildon's may be open to question, but I'd be surprised to go down again. The cave was as wet as I have ever seen it, but the trip was certainly enjoyable.

Ed: Since I became editor for the first time way back in 1986 I have published many articles from new members about 'My first caving trip...', but recently I have started publishing articles about 'My last caving trip...'!

Upper Flood Swallet trip reports

15/09/07 Tim Francis, Julie Hesketh, Mike Richardson, Pete Glanville and Philippa Glanville. Pete couldn't fit through the choke beyond Andrew's grotto, even after quite a determined effort. Mike took him out whilst Julie took Philippa, Peter's 22 year old daughter, to the start of Neverland. Using Pete's camera we shot a few pictures to give an impression of the squeeze. *J Hesketh*



Far left: Keyhole squeeze in the boulder choke

Left: Julie in Golden Chamber

Below: Philippa in EasySqueeze

Photos: J Hesketh, Philippa Glanville



13/10/07 Mike Richardson, Joel Corrigan, Matt Sinclair (stand-in for Mark Shinwell who was ill) and Bill Chadwick.

We stopped at the Walk the Plank Aven which Joel thought tricky but do-able. Aided by the 50W spotter lamp we convinced ourselves there might be a way on up there. Then we pressed on to Zebra Aven as planned. Joel again thought it a worthwhile prospect and he and Matt set to on it while Bill assisted Mike with the nearby tube dig.

The tube dig looks innocent enough and at first the air seemed fresh. You know how mud sticks to wellies when you walk through a muddy field in winter - well that's what happened to our hands, the trowel, the tray and everything else down the tube. The fill looks loose enough as you poke the trowel in, but on handling, everything turns to sticky.... With two of us in there and a body plugging the tube we started to pant a bit. Mike left the tube in a state where he thinks Tim or Peat might be prepared to push it.

Back at the bolting, Joel rigged a traverse and then went up the dripping aven. After a while he passed a squeeze and then sadly the source of the water closed down to an impenetrable crack at a height of about 16m above the floor. *B Chadwick*

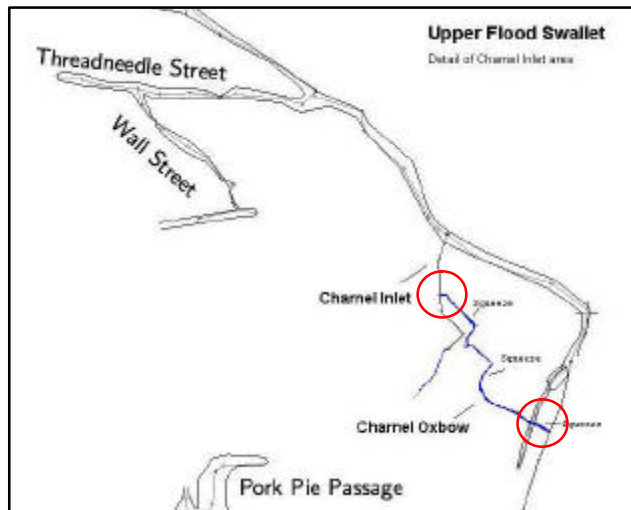
20/10/07 Tim Francis and SWCC

Tim forgot to ask about chest sizes until they were half way in. One chap had a 44 inch chest and found it very tricky going in. He seemed to be pushing bone in the Andrew's Grotto squeeze, Golden Chamber to streamway tube, and "Not Easy Squeeze". And he was over 55 so he certainly wasn't that flexible. A good effort. If we'd shown him the squeeze template in advance he wouldn't have bothered.

The tube off to the left in East Passage just before Zebra Aven was a bit disappointing. That's the mud-filled body-sized tube that Mike and co. were digging. Tim went for a look and squeezed past where the diggers had got to. It closes down to a body length or so beyond where they could see to. So the only possible progress would be to excavate the whole tube to see if there is any continuation in the floor. It does look like quite a lot of water must have come out there at some stage in the past. The trowel has been rescued and is now sitting in the drag tray.

Charnel side passage:

Peat had previously pushed this to where he could hear the sound of a streamway but rocks blocked the way on. Tim went back armed with a crowbar and hammer. It's pretty desperate at the end and reversing out was a challenge. Tim couldn't shift the rocks but managed to get his head up into the passage. It was actually a T-junction and all looked very familiar. The streamway could be heard on



the left. All very suspicious. He returned to the others and scoured the floor of the dry stuff just after you leave the streamway. After a bit of rummage they located the other end in the floor. A few rocks removed and the connection was made. So in effect it's a very tight oxbow (Charnel Oxbow?) that makes for a very difficult bypass to the main streamway. (See sketch above - the new passage is between the 2 circles.) A collector's item which won't receive much traffic! **T Francis**

Book sale - Tony Knibbs

Since the early 1950s I have acquired a fair quantity of caving books. Very few of them will I ever want to read again. It pains me to think that these could one day end up in a skip, so I have decided to sell all my caving books which are not in French (and therefore of potential use here). I cannot imagine sending items by surface mail unless specifically asked and postage paid; especially if Royal Mule is feeling bolshie. What I can do is to bring the books by road; London area or Mendip (to coincide with visits / holidays to UK) on an 'as required' basis. My next visit to UK will be at the end of the year. **T Knibbs**

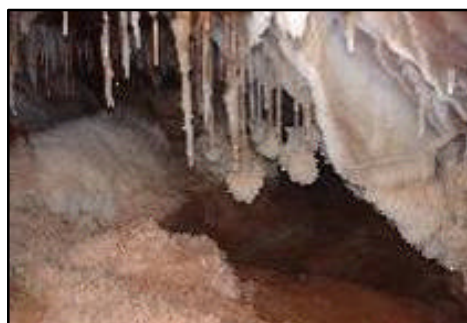
For a list of books please contact Tony Knibbs or use the following link: <http://tinyurl.com/2dkolp>

Book sale - Dave Irwin

Many of the caving books previously belonging to Dave Irwin are to be sold at Priddy Village Hall on Saturday 10th November at 5pm. Some books will be priced, the more valuable ones will be auctioned. **M Rowe**

Upper Flood pom poms

When I first saw Mark Shinwell's photos of Upper Flood, I thought the pom poms (left) would be unique. Now Joan has sent me an old postcard (bottom left) showing similar formations in Gough's Cave. Joan also spotted that there are pom pom formations in Steam Hole, Forest of Dean (below). The Gough's Cave pom poms appear to be very similar to those in Upper Flood! **M Rowe**



Novice equipment



Two sets of Duo lights, Spelios helmets and belay belts have been purchased for the benefit of beginners. The equipment is in a cage above the door in the tackle store. A combo lock has been fitted and all committee members have the number.

The committee considered whether to make a charge for hiring these items but agreed that we should allow free usage for novice cavers. They will be encouraged to supply their own AA or LR6 batteries, although a small supply of AA batteries (to be sold at cost) will be kept at the cottage for those who forget.

The committee agreed that the novice equipment can also be used in the case where a MCG member has forgotten to bring their own gear, but a £10 charge will be made to prevent abuse of the system.

Occasional Publication Number 5

Slightly overdue, but nevertheless welcome, OccPub5 has finally been produced and should have reached all MCG members in September.

Upper Flood Swallet entrance

Up to now there was only one Upper Flood key for MCG members to use, although MRO and Charterhouse Centre have always had keys (MRO for rescue and CC as landowners). This meant that the cave was sometimes being left open to allow multiple MCG parties to enter the cave, or for tired cavers to exit ahead of the rest of their party but leaving the cave unlocked. Charterhouse Centre asked MCG to consider the situation and as a result, Biff was asked to make a new self-locking lid and padlock system. He was asked to make a lid that can be unbolted from the inside without the key (similar to the arrangement in OFD) so that if one member of a party exits earlier than the rest, the lid is not left open.

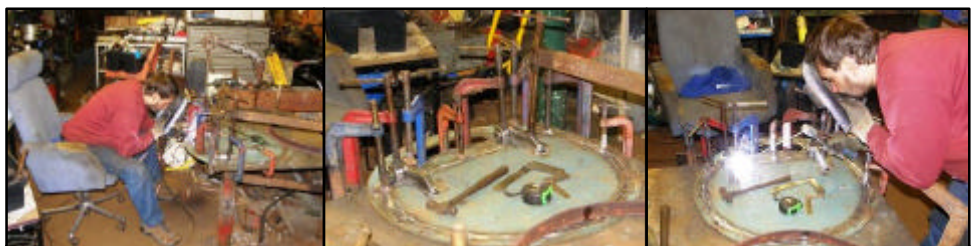
The new lid was installed on 07/10/07 by Biff with help from Mick Norton and Giles Martin.

When you unlock the new padlock, move the lever sideways and open the lid. While holding the lid open (rest it on your foot), relock the padlock, then enter the cave. The last man down shuts the lid. As the padlock has already been put in place, the lid is now safely locked on the outside but can be opened from the inside, without need of a key, by moving the lever sideways.

This arrangement means that anyone in the cave can safely exit without needing a key. (Someone in the party should still remember to bring the key out, as it is technically possible to exit, close the lid, then realise the key has been left in a hidey-hole in the cave!) Once on the surface, they can close the lid again to make the cave secure.

Eventually, additional keys will be provided and kept in the Upper Flood key box so that each party can have a key.

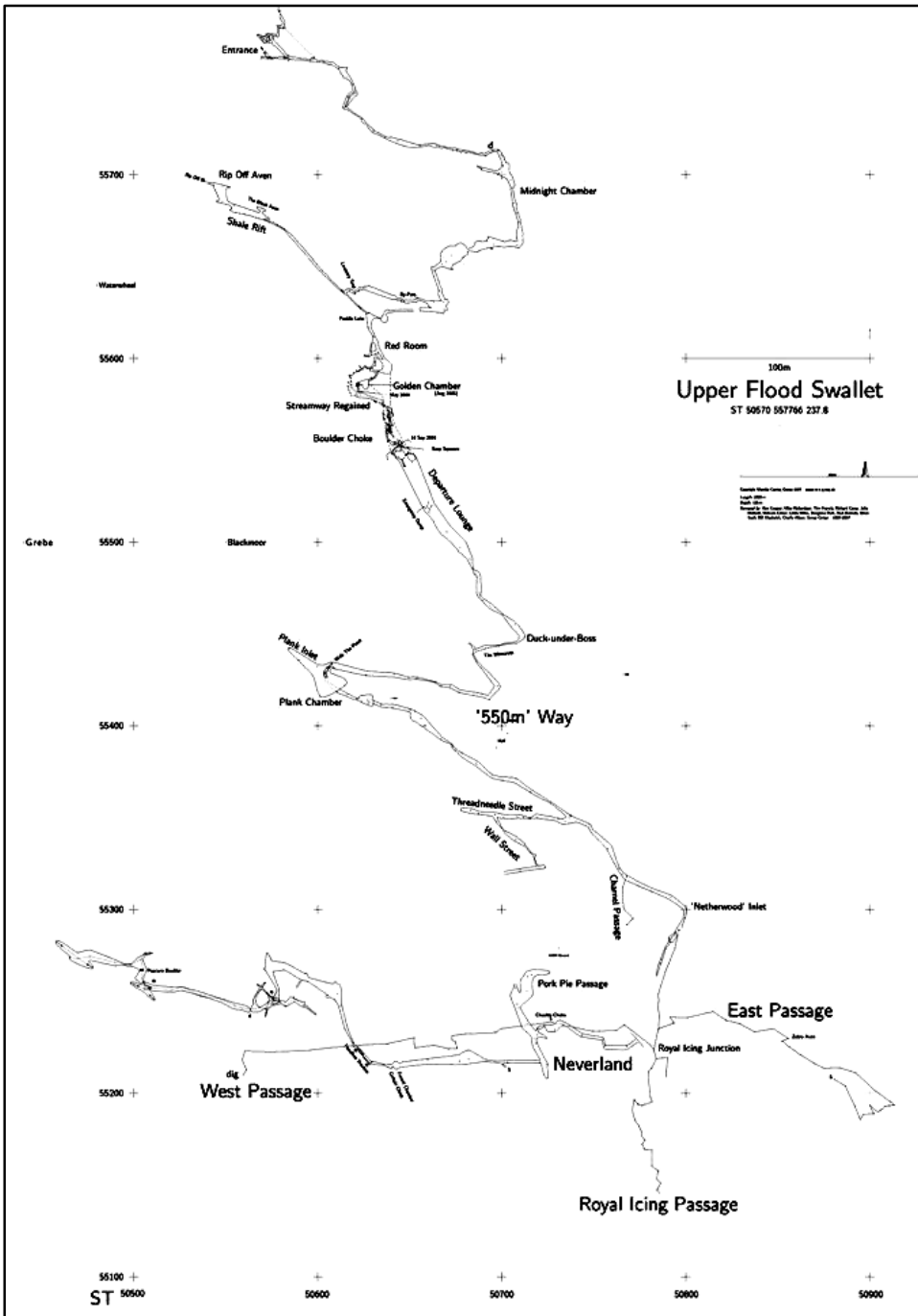
A temporary iron ladder is currently in place to make exiting less strenuous for tired cavers. Biff will make and fit a better one in the future.



Upper Flood survey

Ben Cooper is continuing to co-ordinate the survey of Upper Flood Swallet. At the last count, actual surveyed length was 2885.76m, with some known passages yet to be surveyed. Estimated cave length was 3100m. This did not include Charnel Oxbow (see page 3) so 3150m is still likely.

Some passages (e.g. Royal Icing Passage) are still shown as centre-line surveys and require the passage widths to be added.



The cave is now so large that you can only see the detail on the survey (above) when it is printed out at least A1 size. In fact, there is an A0 version in the MCG cottage, but it is out of date now of course!

The next stage is to add the surveys of the other Blackmoor Valley caves (Waterwheel Swallet, Grebe Swallet) and Blackmoor Shaft to see where they are in relation to Upper Flood Swallet. **M Rowe**

Waterwheel key

On 20/10/07 Mick Norton had to cancel a planned visit to Waterwheel Swallet as the MCG key was missing from the tackle store. They key had not been booked out and there was no ticket on the Call-out Board to say a party was down Waterwheel.

According to the Blackmoor Log, they key was last signed out by Martin Rowe and Mike Moxon on 04/08/07. They have both independently confirmed that the key was definitely returned to the tackle store after their trip.

It has to be assumed that a Full member has taken the Waterwheel key sometime between 04/08/07 and 20/10/07 and forgotten to return it to the tackle store. (The alternative explanation is that a party of MCG is still in the cave....!!)

If you have the key, it can be returned anonymously - no questions asked. If the key has been taken and lost, please let us know so that it can be replaced.

If someone you know has been missing for a couple of months..... **M Rowe**

Back issues

Missing an issue of MCG News? Members can now download back issues at <http://tinyurl.com/2dnf3m>

This is another Yahoo Newsgroup and so far issues 310 to 344 are available. More will be added later. **M Rowe**

Bath Swallet - Rod's Pot throughtrip

On Saturday October 6th, Giles Martin, Richard Paine and Michael Norton attempted the new Burrington through-trip from Bath Swallet to Rod's Pot. We were equipped with three ladders and drove up in the Gilesmobile to park outside the UBSS. Hut.

There are some curtain hangers for ladders (which will probably get "P" bolted one day). After a climb through a window onto the ladder, you go down about 10m to a little ledge, then proceed on to the second half of the 21m pitch.

There are two more curtain hangers for the second ladder, which only need be 8 metres long. Then into main trunk, turn left, then immediately right to a free climbable hole called The Digger's Pitch.

The route on is down about 8m and into The Boulder Chamber, over a boulder, a crawl through wet mud and squeeze up into Purple Pot.

Luckily the UBSS had already rigged a ladder, so we went up this and came out near the formation in Rod's Pot Main Chamber. After that is a clamber up the steep slope and over The Double Pots, up the rift to a high-ish window, then a bold step. Giles found the huge boulder in the roof loose. A quick dive out of the entrance was met by a thousand waiting scouts! *M Norton*

MCG at Hidden Earth

Having made probably the most important discovery on Mendip for 50 years, we felt obliged to put on a good showing at BCRA's Hidden Earth which was held this year in Tewksbury from 21st to 23rd September.

Although we had a few display boards made by Pete Goddard for the 50th dinner, we soon realised these would not be enough for our stand, so the committee bit the bullet and purchased two sets of 5x2-panel display boards. These were a tad expensive but fortunately the cheque for the compulsory purchase of our Bristol Water shares arrived at about the same time!



A couple of black tablecloths were purchased. A couple of black tablecloths later, and we had our display.

Mark Shinwell's A3 size photos of the 2006 discoveries were supplemented with a cross-section of other photos showing various aspects of MCG activities: caving in Mallorca, Slovenia and Argentina; digging in Roman Rake, Carcass Cave (with BDCC) and Upper Flood; social activities and cottage games.

At the last moment we realised even our 10x2 panel display boards would not be enough but Biff came to the rescue with two more panels which we used for his MM Mine survey and Bill Chadwick's A0 size copy of Ben Cooper's Upper Flood survey. Somewhere amongst all this we still found room for Bill's A1 aerial photo with the Upper Flood passages overlaid.

Also on display were items for sale: A3 copies of the Upper Flood survey, various Occasional Publications, a selection of books from the old MCG shop, MCG 50th Anniversary mugs and Upper Flood t-shirts (see page 7). Linda Milne designed and produced an MCG Cottage leaflet advertising our facilities and a more general MCG leaflet about membership.

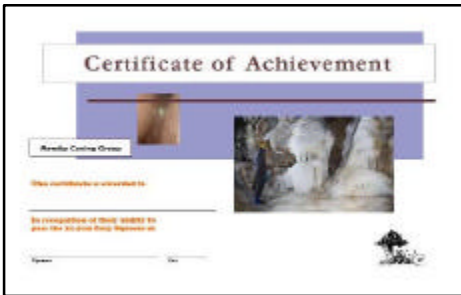


After researching the dimensions of the tightest squeeze in Upper Flood (which is arguably either 'Easysqueeze' or 'Not Easysqueeze' depending on your point of view), Brian Snell then engineered a wooden box christened the Upper Flood Swallet Squeeze Box. This proved to be highly entertaining and the most popular

Mike Richardson brought along his computer and a monitor which we used to display a 5-minute audio-visual presentation about Neverland, and on Yvonne Rowe's laptop we ran Surverx with the Upper Flood survey. We needed a few tables to go with the display and we had been planning to purchase two trestle tables to use for additional dining space in Nordrach Cottage so these were duly purchased.



As a bit of fun we also ran a 'Guess the weight of the cake' competition, but with a difference. Entrants had to guess the weight of one of Yvonne's chocolate boulder ruckle cakes made to represent the Upper Flood boulder choke. The winner won a framed A4 print of the Departure Lounge by Mark Shinwell. To raise MCG's profile further, Yvonne also entered a few of her caving paintings in the art competition.



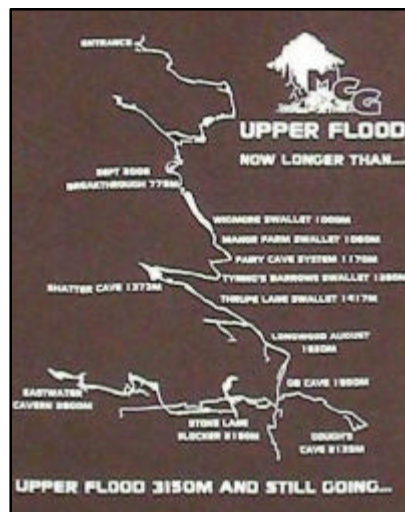
feature of the stand. For the record, the smallest dimension of the box is 20cms. Almost every visitor to the stand took up the challenge to try and pass through the squeeze box and those who succeeded (over 100!) were awarded with an official MCG 'Certificate of Achievement' confirming their ability. We decided to turn this

into a scientific exercise by taking the chest measurements of everyone who attempted the squeeze, expecting to find that there would be a maximum chest size over and above which the squeeze was impassable. Much to our surprise, we proved that chest measurement is not the critical factor! Some people with 46" chests could do the squeeze when others with only a 40" chest failed. By the end of the weekend, we concluded that there are two factors working together - chest measurement and age. Somewhere around 40 years of age, it would seem that the sternum and ribs become inflexible and cannot be compressed so that a young 46" chest can squeeze through the box when an older 40" chest cannot.



In MCG we have Tim or Peat who can almost do the squeeze box without touching the sides, but at Hidden Earth we went one better! We found one female student who could pass through the box without actually touching any of the sides. She then went one better again by asking a friend to join her and they both did the squeeze box at the same time, side by side!

On display was the new MCG t-shirt based on Ben Cooper's survey. Tongue-in-cheek it boasts that Upper Flood is now longer than many well-known Mendip caves. Much to our surprise, the design won the Best T-shirt Design competition and £100 of books from Bat Products!



Finally, Tim Francis gave his Upper Flood Swallet presentation on the Saturday lunchtime, followed by Martin's AV presentation.

Thanks to those who made the stand a success: Ben Cooper and the surveyors, Bill Chadwick for large-scale surveys and aerial photos, Biff Frith for additional display stands, Mike Richardson for IT, Yvonne and Martin Rowe for co-ordination, Linda Milne for publicity, Brian Snell for the squeeze box, and Biff, Bill, Jenny, Mike, Peat, Tim, Doug, Joan, Martin and Yvonne for manning the stand. Apologies for any omissions. **M and Y Rowe, additional photos by Biff**

Upper Flood t-shirt

The new MCG t-shirt (see opposite) is now available from any committee member, price £10

On the front is Ben Cooper's survey of Upper Flood Swallet. As the cave is over 3km long we thought it would be interesting to illustrate how much longer it is than other caves. Wigmore, Manor Farm and Fairy Cave are all overtaken between the Departure Lounge and the Duck-Under-Boss. By Plank Chamber, Tynings and Shatter have been surpassed. Thrupe Lane and Longwood are overtaken in the 550m Way. At Royal Icing Chamber, Upper Flood is longer than GB, and so on. In fact, now that we have passed 3km only Swildons, St Cuthberts and Wookey are longer.

On the back of the t-shirt are the dates of some of the important breakthroughs.

The t-shirts are in limited supply and no more will be produced, so order yours now to avoid disappointment.

Swildons rescue

On 25/10/07 a 999 call was made to the Police requesting Cave Rescue. Unfortunately, the response they gave was "Don't you think its irresponsible to go caving without knowing the number for the cave rescue".

You just can't get the staff these days...

EGM held on 06/10/07**Options for newsletter**

Following Mike Lovell's retirement, it was necessary to consider how the Newsletter would be printed and paid for.

1. Raise subs by £15 and use a high street printer. Give a discount to those who take an email copy.
2. Buy a laser printer and print in-house.
3. Use a printer close to the cottage, then collate and post the newsletter from the cottage.

A discussion followed until Mike Lovell arrived. Although he has retired he has discovered he can use the printing facility at his old workplace, at least until the 2008 AGM when we will review the situation.

Honorary members

It was agreed that Honorary members should have privileges similar to those of Full Members. (Previously the constitution did not say what privileges they may have.)

Feedback to the EGM from the committee

A request that probationary members have a key to the library and tackle store. *The committee have agreed that there will be no change on this.*

A request that hangers and karabiners are provided. *The committee have agreed these will not be provided.*

A request for computer broadband access.

This it is being pursued.

AOB The Occasional Publication had been a great success and Joan Goddard was thanked for all her efforts. *This was agreed unanimously.*

Library additions

Autumn is always a good time for the library as Hidden Earth provides an opportunity to view many recently published books. This year a stand by Speleoprojects displayed a number of NSS books and a selection has been bought for the Group's library.

Cave Minerals of the World (2nd Edition), by Carol Hill and Paolo Forti. Published 1997 by the NSS (National Speleological Society of America). We already have the first edition in the library but this one is much expanded. It lists and describes the various types of speleothems before going on to describe the different minerals. At the end of the book there are a number of essays on such subjects as cave microclimate, colour of speleothems, growth rates, dating, conservation etc. The photographs are excellent and the bibliography runs to 70 pages!

Cave Conservation and Restoration, edited by Val Hildreth-Werker & Jim Werker (2006). With the discovery of Upper Flood extensions, and the Group's concern that the beautiful formations should remain pristine, this book is an important addition to the library. It is a large tome (4.5cm thick) and contains much practical information – repairing and cleaning stal, taping, conservation management etc. A must for all diggers and explorers although a major disadvantage is the binding - the book will need careful handling if it is not to fall apart very quickly.

Caves - Life Beneath the Forest (2007). DVD by Ravenswood Media in conjunction with NSS, Indiana Karst Conservancy and the US Fish & Wildlife Service. This short DVD guides you through the variety of underground life found in caves in the Hoosier National Forest, S. Indiana. Although the species are different from those found in Britain, the theories on their evolution, ecology and protection are still relevant. I found it relaxing and informative - and the photography was wonderful.

The Hollow Mountain - exploring the deep caves of Tolminski Migovec, Slovenia 1974-2006 by Imperial College Caving Club. Quote: "A deliberate mix of surveys and silly cartoons, science and nonsense, tales of exploration and stories of curries and visits

to the pit". Early exploration was by the caving section of the Tolmin Alpine Club (JSPDT), ICCG joining them in 1994. Expedition reports follow (1994 - 2006) and there is a useful list of the longest and deepest Slovenian Caves. An excellent publication and extremely good value from Lulu.com

Belfry Bulletin Issue No.528 Summer 2007 contains an account and survey of Upper Canada Cave, a 77m long ochre working. Also reports on digging at Caine Hill Shaft, Priddy and on Megalaya 2007.

Roman Mining in Somerset - excavations at Charterhouse on Mendip 1993-1995 by Malcolm Todd, 2007. is archaeological rather than spelaeological. Chapter 4 provides an historical overview of the area and confirms that the Romans were mining at Charterhouse by AD 49 at the latest. (donated)

The Giant of the South – the exploration of Sima GESM 2006 by Marcus Taylor (DVD). A 40 minute documentary of the 2006 expedition by Andalusian cavers to try to extend the system. Despite the fact that the story has to be told via English subtitles, it is an interesting record of an expedition and the photography is good. Not many pretties though!

Index to Publications of South West Essex Technical College Caving Club Publications by Alan Jeffreys, 2007

Kendal Caving Club Publications 1957-2007 (DVD)

A Glimmering in Darkness – a collection from the "archives" of Graham Balcombe and published by the Cave Diving Group (2007). Nice big print in this book so the club wrinklies can read it easily! 2007 is the centenary of Balcombe's birth so it is fitting that this book should be published now. His exploits, together with Jack Sheppard, are legendary on Mendip and these extracts from his diaries and notebooks make fascinating reading. Quaintly written and therefore relaxing to read.

And finally, a hilarious read - **Super Ted and the Pothole Rescue** by Mike Young, 1985. It even features the rescue of a caver called Linda!

Joan Goddard

Cow Hole

I read the article on Cow Hole (MCG News 344). My name is Tony Crawford - I doubt you'll remember it, but I have news for you. In 1947 when I joined the Bristol Exploration Club with Pat Brown, Cow Hole was used for training us young boys of 14. We used a very heavy and wet rope ladder for starters. There was a nearby tree we used to tether this to, but a few weeks later someone knocked in a steel bar as better security.

After we formed the MCG I do not remember Malcolm or I using this cave as a training area. We preferred the base of the first waterfall in Swildons. Beginners had to be able to tie at least four of the most important knots they were to use in caving under those conditions!

My fond regards to all you modern cavers, I delight of reading of all your exploits particularly the ongoing exploration of Upper Flood.

Tony Crawford, co-founder MCG. Lost down under! tonyc@cosnet.co.nz

Letter from Nepal

Between kayak trips I have managed to visit a couple of "show" caves (charge is about 10p for entry). The Lake at Pokhara flows underground at Devi's Falls and you can visit the bottom outside the monsoon season



(unfortunately we are still in a late monsoon and when open there is an outrageous 90p entry fee!). This appears to be through glacial deposit rather than solid rock.

The Seti river also cuts a 2m wide canyon through the same deposit, being about 30m wide both above and below.

Just outside town is Mahendra cave which has very few formations and is more like a mine with a couple of side passages.



The more interesting visit is 200m away at the Bat cave - two large chambers with 100s of 6 inch bats and an interesting squeeze out of the roof which they encourage tourists to use.

Mike Moxon

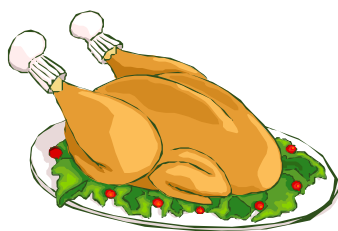
MENDIP CAVING GROUP



Christmas Dinner Saturday 8th December

7.30pm

At Nordrach Cottage



2 course dinner with
all the trimmings

Please book in advance as numbers will
be strictly limited. Veggies catered for.

Cost is usually around £5.00

Contact Linda on 01420 562315 or linda.milne@btinternet.com



Group Headquarters

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01329 280386

Conservation Officer

[Mick Norton](#)
01344 421469

Examiners

[Fiona Kempston](#)
(MCG member)
[Anne Pittman](#)
(External)

Booking the Cottage

Please make bookings
for Groups (whether
MCG or Guests)
through [Joan Goddard](#)
01934 732760 to avoid
double bookings



GROUP INFORMATION

Weekly Meeting	At The Hunters Lodge, Somerset, Tuesdays at about 10pm	
Monthly Meeting	At the Group HQ on the first Fri/Sat/Sunday of the month	
On-line Meeting	http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/mendip-caving-group/	
Accommodation	Available at the Group HQ (for members and guests)	
Cottage Fees	MCG members, members' children, SWCC, NPC	£ 2.00
(per night)	Guest clubs and member's guests	£ 4.00
Camping Fees	MCG members, members' children, SWCC, NPC	£ 2.00
(per night)	Guest clubs and member's guests	£ 4.00
Season Ticket	Available to members only	£40.00
Subscription 2007	Full and Probationary (excluding BCA insurance)	£30.00
	Associate Members (excluding BCA insurance)	£15.00
BCA Insurance	Cavers £15.00 Non-cavers £5.00 (all members must have cover)	

CAVING AND SOCIAL CALENDAR 2007/08

DATE	AREA	EVENT	CONTACT	TEL
Nov 2/3/4th	Mendip	Members Weekend		
Nov 3rd	Mendip	Charterhouse Cave	<i>Bob Templeman</i>	01923 773973
Nov 3rd	Mendip	Priddy Fireworks	<i>Linda Milne</i>	01420 562315
Dec 7/8/9th	Mendip	Members Weekend		
Dec 8th	Mendip	Swildon's Hole	<i>Bob Templeman</i>	01923 773973
Dec 8th	Mendip	Christmas Dinner	<i>Linda Milne</i>	01420 562315
Jan 4/5/6th	Mendip	Members Weekend		
Feb 1/2/3rd	Mendip	Members Weekend		
Mar 7/8/9th	Mendip	Members Weekend		
Apr 4/5/6th	Mendip	Members Weekend		
Apr 5th	Mendip	AGM		
May 2/3/4th	Mendip	Members Weekend		
Jun 6/7/8th	Mendip	Members Weekend		

THE 2007/08 MCG COMMITTEE

Secretary	Mike Richardson mike@quaking.demon.co.uk 01761 471069 <i>Clevelys, Upper Radford, Paulton, Bristol BS39 7PU</i>
Treasurer	Martin Rowe m_rowe@btoopenworld.com 01524 762664 <i>Abingdon, 11 Church Hill, Arnside, Cumbria LA5 0DB</i>
Tacklemaster	Peat Bennett peat.bennett@virgin.net 01223 245455 <i>7, Marshall Road, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire CB1 7TY</i>
Recorder/Librarian	Brian Snell brian.snell@tiscali.co.uk 01329 238341 <i>38, Serpentine Road, Fareham, Hampshire PO16 7EB</i>
Cottage Warden	Doug Harris atreemonkey@googlemail.com 01275 847750 <i>5 Goldcrest Way, Portbury, Bristol BS20 7ND</i>
Editor	Yvonne Rowe yvonne.rowe@btoopenworld.com 01524 762664 <i>Abingdon, 11 Church Hill, Arnside, Cumbria LA5 0DB</i>
Caving Secretary	Bob Templeman bob.templeman@btinternet.com 01923 773973 <i>11 Ebury Road, Rickmansworth, Herts WD3 1BL</i>
Social Secretary	Linda Milne Linda.Milne@btinternet.com 01420 562315 <i>Woodfalls, Abbey Road, Medstead, Alton, Hants GU34 5PB</i>

COTTAGE BOOKINGS

Group	Arrive	Depart	Nights	Beds	Rooms
C.Downing	Fri 16/11/07	Sun 18/11/07	2	10	
K Arnold (Scouts)	Fri 23/11/07	Sun 25th Nov	2	14	2

Members should co-operate with scout leaders with respect to sleeping arrangements