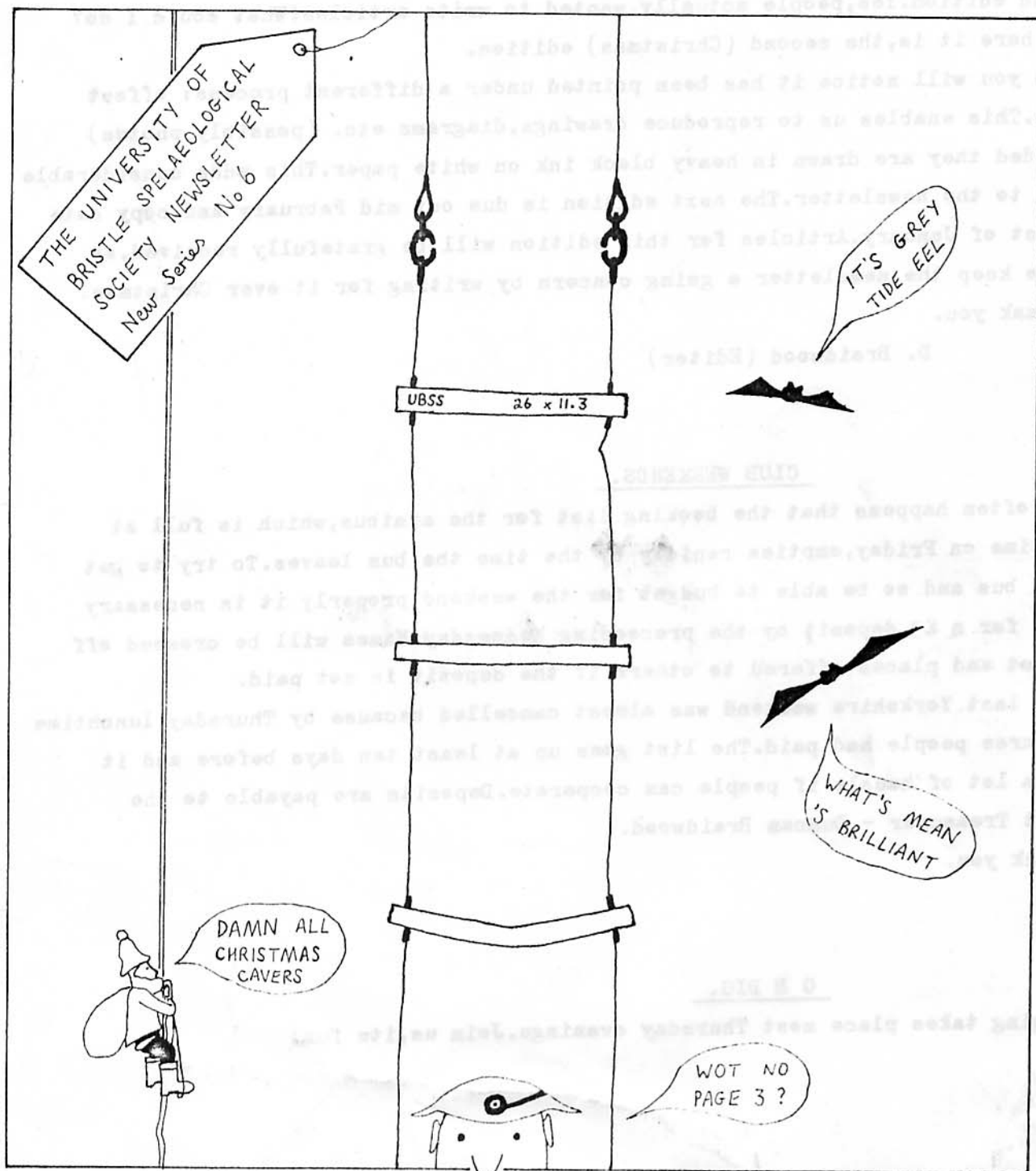


UBSS

GSM



SPECIAL CHRISTMAS BUMPER

ISSUE

DECEMBER 1977

EDITORIAL.

Due to the necessity of getting the last newsletter out in time to publicise the second sessional meet it was necessary to cut articles to the bare bones. I apologise to those contributors whose articles were précised or passed over. Since then I have been under considerable pressure from members to produce a second edition. Yes, people actually wanted to write articles! What could I do? Well here it is, the second (Christmas) edition.

As you will notice it has been printed under a different process: offset litho. This enables us to reproduce drawings, diagrams etc. (possibly photos) provided they are drawn in heavy black ink on white paper. This adds considerable scope to the newsletter. The next edition is due out mid February and copy date is 31st of January. Articles for this edition will be gratefully received, so please keep the newsletter a going concern by writing for it over Christmas.

Thank you.

D. Braidwood (Editor)

CLUB WEEKENDS.

It often happens that the booking list for the minibus, which is full at lunchtime on Friday, empties rapidly by the time the bus leaves. To try to get a full bus and so be able to budget for the weekend properly it is necessary to ask for a £3 deposit by the preceeding Wednesday. Names will be crossed off the list and places offered to others if the deposit is not paid.

The last Yorkshire weekend was almost cancelled because by Thursday lunchtime only three people had paid. The list goes up at least ten days before and it saves a lot of hassle if people can cooperate. Deposits are payable to the Student Treasurer - Duncan Braidwood.

Thank you.

G B DIG.

Digging takes place most Thursday evenings. Join us, its fun!

The song on page 10 was stolen from Cambridge University Caving Club.

All views and opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of individual members and not necessarily those of the Society.

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Spelaeological Society.

LAMB LEER ACCESS.

At last we can report agreement between the Somerset County Council and the Southern Caving Clubs Co Ltd. Basically the argument was over rent. Since 1938 we have been paying five shillings a year, but were willing to raise this to £5. The S.C.C. were not willing to accept a token rent and insisted on a commercial rent, namely £250 pa., which they were willing to drop to £200. They would not agree that a rent of £15 or even of £25 pa. represented a commercial rent.

After two hours of negotiating between Mr Drysdale of the S.C.C. and Oliver Lloyd and Tim Reynolds for the S.C.C. Co Ltd it was established that a commercial rent meant whatever they could get for it. So we agreed to write to the member clubs asking what they were willing to pay. After we had done our sums we were able to offer the S.C.C. £15 pa. They did their sums differently and demanded £40 pa. which was eventually reduced to £33½ pa. for three years. This was then agreed.

Clubs wishing to hold a key of their own will buy £10 of shares in the Co Ltd (returnable) and pay £4 pa. Clubs not wishing to hold a key will pay for the hire of a key 50p per visit if they are members of the CSCC and £1 if they are not. There will be a returnable deposit of £5 on the key. Clubs holding keys will regulate their own key-lease charges.

OCL

PUBLICATIONS.

The following publications are available from the sales librarian :-

Proceedings	6(I)	40p
	6(3)	25p
	7(2)	30p
	7(3), 8(2), 8(3), 9(I)	50p
	9(2) - II(2)	40p
	II(3) - I2(3)	50p
	I3(I) - I3(3)	75p
	I4(I) - I4(3)	£2

9(2) to I3(3) are all now being sold at half price. In addition, the current issue I4(3) is available to student members only at half price. There are also caving and archaeological offprints available at various prices. Some of the caving offprints are available at incredibly low, give-away prices; all you have to do is collect them. Caves of North West Clare now costs £6, but student members can buy it for only £3. Buy now while stocks last! A collection of offprints have been put together to update CNWC; the set costs £2.50.

SPB

PRACTICE RESCUE 4/12/77

As an exercise in team work and skill with caving tackle, the practice rescue from Lamb Leer Cavern proved a great success. Practice being the operative word all participants enjoyed performing different tasks on each of the pitches in the cave.

In addition to using the traditional Mendip Rescue Organisation carrying sheet, we were able to use for the first time a prototype carrying sheet which was designed and constructed by Dave Mager of Bristol Poly. Our experiences with the prototype have led to a number of suggested improvements. However for subject comfort and ease of tying up, the prototype showed advantage over the traditional design.

The only regrets regarding this enjoyable occasion were that none of the lesser experienced members of the society were involved So if another practice rescue is effected this session it would be a pleasure to see some new members involved! An experience not to be missed!

Mark Tringham

G.B. DIGGING

Society members are digging regularly at the terminal part of Bat Passage in G.B. cave. On the last four trips it has been shown practical to syphon excess water collecting in the digging passage into a nearby side passage using the pump made by Andy Wood and lengths of plastic piping.

Each evening trip has led to about two feet of progress in removing muddy and sandy sediment from the passage. This means two feet nearer the elusive cave which must connect the known parts of G.B. cave with the stream resurgence at Cheddar.

As with any long term venture, sustained effort will probably be required before rewards of open cave passage are gained. Digging trips are arranged for most Thursday evenings and also for some weekends (watch the notice boards), at least four persons being required on each trip.

The nucleus of regular diggers must have help from other interested members, whether on a regular basis or just the occasional helping hand, many hands making light work!

Mark Tringham

Next : Rescuing a caver from the G.B. diggers.

ACCOUNT OF THE WAACU (WHAT AN ALMIGHTY COCK UP) SUMMER '77 EXPEDITION

The original plan was that six of us in a Land Rover would explore the Gouffre Berger (- 1141 metres) and then attempt the Reseau Ded, also in France, which had been bottomed by only three people before. Great.

It was about a month before departure when things got a bit unstuck, namely there was trouble in getting a Land Rover by a certain date (buy Uncle Bob Churcher a pint and he might explain). So Uncle Bob and one C. Owen decided to go by themselves, having their own transport. From the rapidly crumbling expedition other arrangements were made such that Mr Perry went to Austria with some Cambridge cavers while Charles Self and I went our own way. Ken Baker had meanwhile got a job. With time rapidly running out a suitable plan was put forward: the Gouffre Chevrier (- 510 metres) in Switzerland followed by climbing in northern Italy.

Which was why two wild looking Englishmen were found in the Paris Metro making a nuisance of themselves with 200 lbs of caving, climbing and camping gear. We stayed in Switzerland for four nights, three of them in a cowshed, and got to - 360 metres in the Gouffre Chevrier. Here we could not find a small passage in the roof which led to the rest of the cave, and so we had to turn back. Having rested we decided to have a look at Italy, so we arrived at the foot of the Matterhorn a day later via a very pleasant bus trip over the St. Bernard Pass.

Unfortunately the monsoon had broken so we only saw the Matterhorn twice in four days. Managing only one day's walking, a pleasant trip to a 3000 metre ridge, we got a little fed up and decided to leave.

Stopping off only to pick up some gear left in Switzerland, Paris was again treated to the sight of self-propelled rucksacks. There were no problems getting back home except that CAS nearly had to be quarantined for rabies, but I told them that he always looks like that and things were OK.

Mind you the trip did have its successes. There was the litre of 12 year old malt whisky for £4, and I will always remember the sight of those beautiful snow covered peaks and crags of the Italian girls.

Anybody got any plans for next summer?

M Seavers

Friends say that MJS has been tired and emotional of late. He was last seen resting on a lamp post in Clifton. It is untrue that he wrote the above article on a beer mat. It is also untrue that CAS has ever bitten MJS hard enough to break the skin.

600 FEET THE HARD WAY (OR THE SRT RECRUITMENT CAMPAIGN)

Once upon a time megayonks ago the hard men of the UBSS would descend fearsome pitches of awesome depths over 50 feet! But over the years UBSS ladder deteriorated until at last there remained but 100 feet in the tackle room and only 50 feet at 6A. A bold and daring scheme was announced: "Why not make some?"

And so letters were written to purveyors of aluminium extrusion and many quotes were obtained. But who is this stranger claiming to be tacklemaster, overriding, and immediately taking over the writing of the letters? And so nothing more was done until the end of the year.

A new broom was elected to sweep out the tackle store. He wrote off to different purveyors of aluminium and received quotes for all the wrong materials at twice the previously quoted prices. Undeterred, he purchased all the wrong materials at twice the previously quoted prices.

Meanwhile honest Charles Whimper returning hot from India discovered that he could buy ready-made ladder for much less than the cost of making it, and so make 40% profit for himself. His kind offer was declined.

They then all went on summer vacation leaving a pyjama-clad freak, a lad doing a PhD in spelaeology and ladder construction and one with a third in roadsweeping to do the work. They began the task of sawing the 14 foot lengths of aluminium into 2400 $\frac{5}{8}$ inch lengths. During the summer more than a thousand were cut.

Many volunteers came to swell the ranks of the three until at last the wooden one cried, "It is done!" They had indeed thousands of handy $1\frac{1}{4}$ inch lengths of aly tubing only requiring sawing in half and drilling out to fit the wire, which suprise suprise was oversize.

The rung material was bought, and cut up by the medical school (fortunately). The oversize wire which Rob Roy had purchased was a job lot of prekinked scrap. (Editors note: Too harsh! It was just the wrong wire. The problem is the wire construction, 7 x 7 strands instead of 7 x 19 — making it very inflexible.) This was cut into random lengths, and some exactly 25 feet by our engineer. Can you spot the mistake? Then they all went away again, and Rob Roy emigrated.

The rungs finally having been drilled, all the crimps drilled out and the ladder threaded up, the bolt cutters were taken out of hiding and the crimping began. And so after twenty months of toil the first two ladders of 10 inch spacing rolled off the production line.

"But wait, we can't do the C-links up. Try removing four rungs. Yes, we can do them up now but we can't have 21 foot 8 inch ladders. Let's try 12 inch spacing. This is no good, they are too loose. I know, let's use the French spacing — $11\frac{1}{4}$ inch. Yes. That's it. They are just right." So we make them 28 rungs of $11\frac{1}{4}$ inch spacing, except the ones that have the wire cut too short where we have 26 rungs.

My tale is almost told, except for "dynamic" who used copper telurite on eight

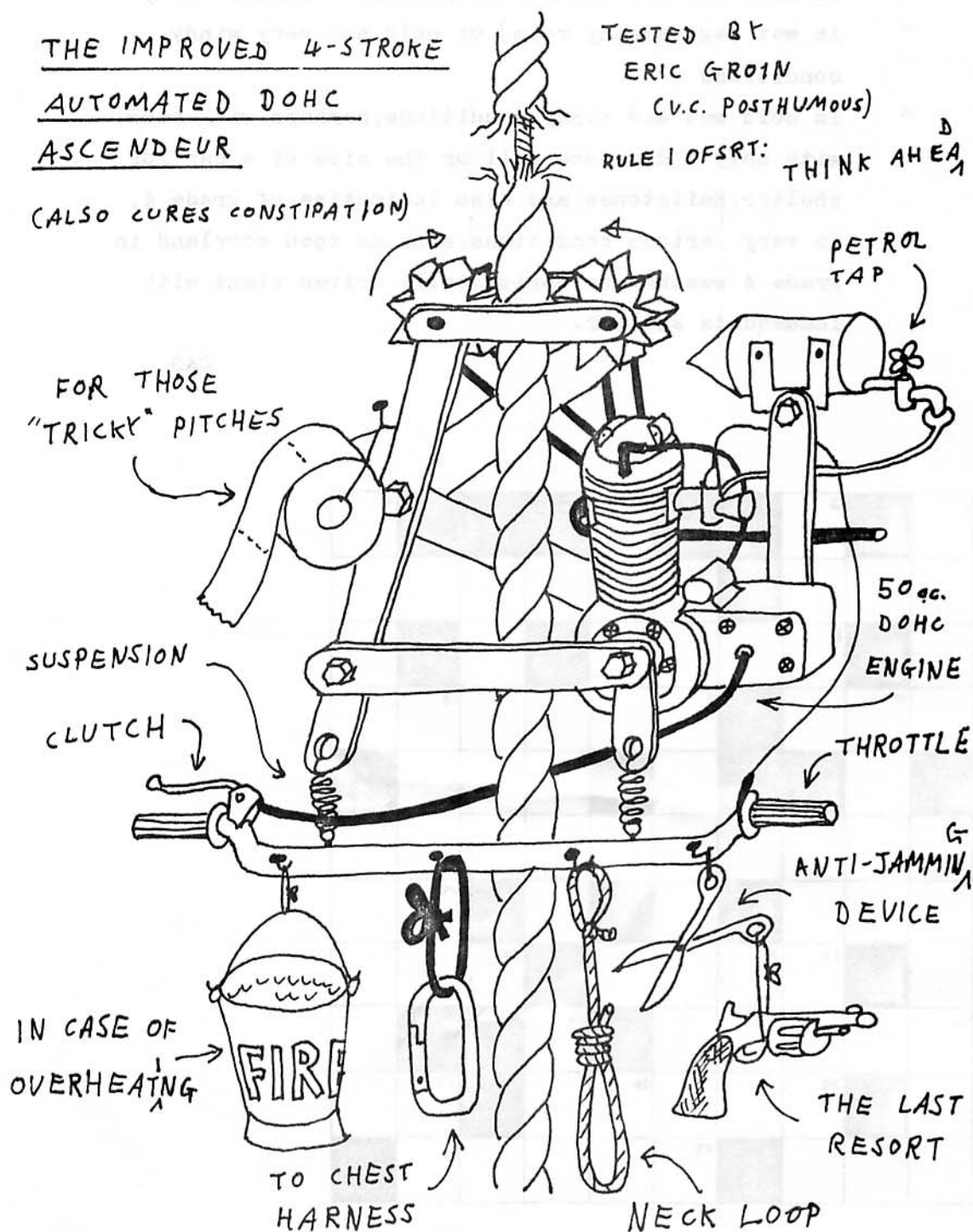
ladders for the end crimps. However the stiff wire will probably kink and snap before the end crimps part due to electrolytic corrosion. So that's 400 feet made, with 200 feet to go. Can you come backnext year?

The Moral: Have you ever seen this "safety at work" poster? "If in doubt, ask!" Of course, there's always the "Manual of Caving Techniques" : a whole chapter on ladder making. There are three people who don't want to do it all again, anyway.

By UBSS's second oldest student.

KSB

STOP PRESS : The latest in SRT :-



MJS

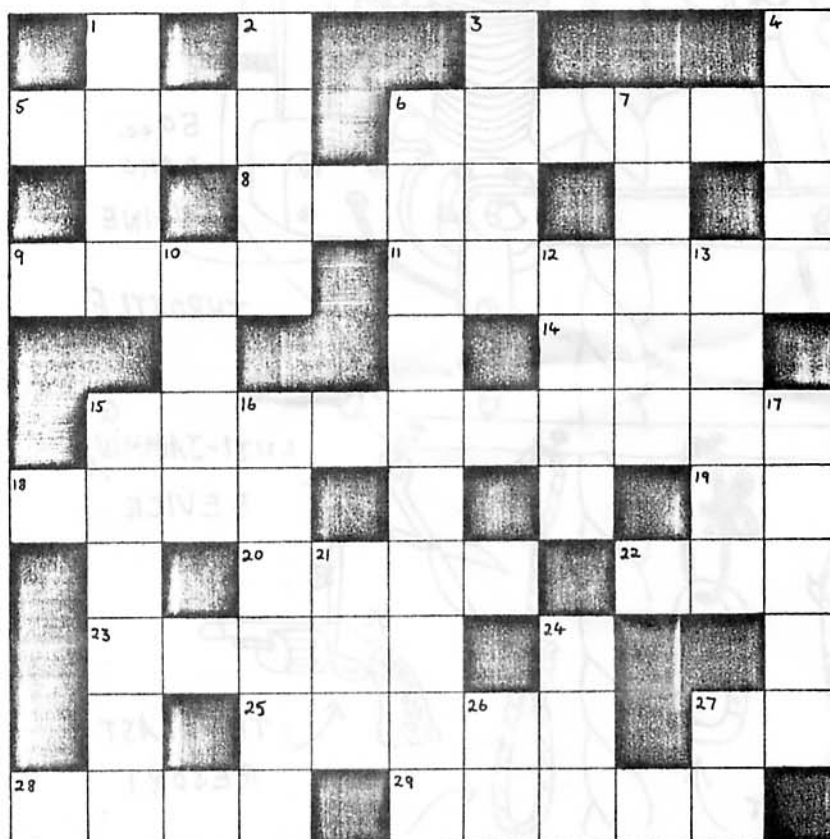
CAVING — A NEW SYSTEM OF GRADING

Who is the innocent who has never heard of a grade 4 change? But also, who could define a grade 4 change? The term is well known but at present the standard is arbitrary. I will attempt to give a more rational basis for the grading system; if you disagree then "publish and be damned". To give a greater scope to the grades, subjective factors have been taken into consideration by means of the suffices "superior" and "inferior". An example of a grade 1 sup. change is an outdoor change in pleasant conditions, warm and dry, but at night or into wet caving gear. For a grade 5 inf. change a good example is a windswept moor with a howling blizzard of horizontally driven sleet and an attractive young lady getting changed next to you. And now the grades themselves:-

Grade 0 : interior change in a house, club hut, barn or car

- 1 : outdoor change in warm and dry conditions
- 2 : " " in cold and dry conditions, perhaps a little windy
- 3 : " " in wet (eg. steady rain) or cold and very windy conditions
- 4 : " " in cold wet and windy conditions, perhaps with snow, with only a drystone wall or the side of a car for shelter. Hailstones are also indicative of grade 4.
- 5 : " " in very serious conditions, such as open moorland in grade 4 weather, or horizontally driven sleet with inadequate shelter.

CAS



CHARLIE'S CROSSWORD.

Across

5. Big in Wales (4)
6. Sundry loons (6)
8. Parts of a cavern, possibly part of a cavern (4)
9. Limit of safety for walkers (4)
11. Look back at frights on a glacier (6)
14. Fuss and do a change (3)
15. Caoutchouc isthmus is an insult for an American tourist (6 - 4)
18. A couple of notes are overdue (4)
19. Alright in retrospect (1.1)
20. Venetian beach and bathing pool (4)
22. Rough treatment for a college servant (3)
23. 12 down, or eastern city east
25. Juvenile gentile returns and eats one in France (5)
27. Personal objective (2)
28. Fool holds a degree and still puts questions (4)
29. Pertaining to a chamber (5)

Down

1. Beware of schoolboys! (4)
2. Short metallic ring echoes a dog-fox cry (4)
3. That which has length without breadth (4)
4. Goddess insures (4)
6. Doesn't sound like a climber (10)
7. Orientals about the fifth year get away (5)
10. Pointless climb suffers utter defeat (4)
12. Foul station! (4)
13. Like the King of the farmyard? (5)
15. Pole in violent passions moves at large (6)
16. The French turn up in laurels (6)
17. A low hill in South Africa (5)
21. Connubial statement (1.2)
24. Past a turn (3)
26. Halfway to midday? (2)
27. Personalised object (2)

