



UBSS

NEWSLETTER VOL. 3 NO. 2

EDITORIAL

The annual general meeting of the UBSS will be held on Saturday March 14th in the Society's rooms on the second floor of the University of Bristol Students Union building, Queens Road at 16.00 hrs. This will be followed by a video of the old UBSS caving films rather than a speaker. The dinner will, as last year, be held at Pudseys Restaurant, Clifton at 20.00 hrs and will cost £8.50. Reservations and cheques for the dinner must be recieved at least 2 weeks before the event. All communications concerning the AGM and the dinner should be sent to :

Steve Hobbs
University of Bristol Students Union,
Queens Road,
Bristol 8

Alternatively you may contact Steve by telephone :

(0272) 303030 ext. 3829 - daytime
(0272) 735486 - evening

Other events arranged for 1987 are as follows :

Wednesday February 18th - sessional meeting. To be given by Phil Chapman concerning his recent expedition to Madagascar. This will commence at 20.00 hrs in the Society's rooms in the Union building.

Wednesday May 6th - sessional meeting. Speaker to be decided.

Wednesday June 17th - sessional meeting. Speaker to be decided.

Caving trips for the spring term include a series of day and weekend trips to South Wales and a Yorkshire trip provisionally booked in for 6 - 8 March. An end of academic year trip to Yorkshire is planned for Friday 26th June onwards. An easter trip to Ireland is also being planned from 6th April for a period of about 10 days. All enquiries to the secretaries.

Steve Hobbs

TREASURER'S BIT

Graham Mullan

Some members have still to pay their 1986 subscriptions. This is your last chance, anyone who is not paid up by the 1987 AGM will cease to be a member. There are also still those who are £2 in arrears, please rectify as soon as possible.

MENDIP NEWS.

First, the good news.....

S.S.S.I.s at Priddy.

After six months of negotiations between the Priddy landowners, the Council Of Southern Caving Club's working party, & the Nature Conservancy Council (NCC), the following caves have now been reopened by the landowners : Swildon's Hole, Eastwater, Hunter's Hole & North Hill Swallet. As yet, Nine Barrows & Sludge Pit remain closed but it is hoped that this problem will be resolved in the near future.

In the first few months after the original notification was served on the landowners (under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981), the NCC showed little inclination to ^{discuss the} difficulties that had arisen with either landowners or cavers & in spite of various reports in the caving press indicating that a solution was at hand, no progress had in fact been made, due to the NCC's initial insistence that the biological & geological aspects of the Priddy area had to be dealt with in one notification. Neither landowners nor cavers were prepared to accept this position, mainly because treating the area as a "joint" site would mean that an enormous number of irrelevant restrictions would govern the use of the land & the caves & would unreasonably interfere with the landowners normal farming activities, such as grazing their livestock, & also with normal Mendip caving activities, such as digging & building blockhouses. Although the NCC had stated that they were prepared to "consent" to several of the more innocuous of the specified potentially damaging operations (PDOs), this was not acceptable to the landowners & the basic contention made by both cavers & landowners alike was that if the PDO list was both reasonable & relevant, the whole issue of consents would be unnecessary.

Objections & representations were made by landowners & cavers to the NCC, & this culminated in a meeting held in the Hunter's in September, at which the NCC (represented by Drs Duff & Richards from the Peterborough HQ & Mr Nicholson from the regional office in Taunton) stated that they were prepared to separate the area of biological & geological interest (ie Priddy Pools & the area overlying St. Cuthbert's) from the area of purely geological interest (ie the other caves) & deal with these effectively as separate sites with different PDO lists applying to each. A greatly reduced PDO list was circulated with regard to the latter area & no major objections were raised to it, as the list substantially followed the view taken all along by cavers & landowners, ie that the only activities that in this context were likely to damage caves were basically the following :- total/partial destruction of the cave (eg by quarrying), diversion of associated watercourses (ie the streams flowing into Swildon's & Eastwater),

pollution by toxic materials (in the revised list, this only applies within 5 metres of the cave entrances), & infilling/ modification of the cave entrances, (the NCC specifically excludes the gating of caves & the building of blockhouses from the PDO list).

In this light of this, it was decided not to press for the withdrawal of the notification on the minor sites (ie North Hill), as the PDO list restrictions were now not absurdly onerous on landowners or cavers. The NCC have now followed the procedure they outlined at the meeting & have confirmed the notification in so far as it affects the biological/geological area only & the remainder of the notification then lapsed. The NCC now intend to renotify the geological area using the revised PDO list. The caves have now been reopened by the landowners. (Incidentally, one of the original reasons for the closure of the caves was that one of the PDOs on the first list was "recreational activities", so under an Act of Parliament, caving had become a banned activity which could attract a £500 Fine).

One of the major worries for cavers in general over the past months has been the possibility that relationships between the cavers & landowners on Mendip might be irreparably damaged, however, this seems to have been avoided, but it is worth remembering that without the goodwill of the landowners we would be in serious difficulties, both now & in the future.

Next, the bad news.....

Lamb Leer Closure

As the above sub-title implies, this cave is now closed. (Yes, it is an SSSI, but, no, that isn't the reason). The 3 year access agreement negotiated by the C.S.C.C. with Somerset County Council ended in September this year & the new landowner, Mr Burge, stated that he wished the cave to be closed until a new agreement was concluded. His terms were basically as follows :- he was prepared to enter into another agreement, this time for the longer term of 18 years (so far, so good, however...), the price he set on this was £3000, ie £167p.a. instead of £20p.a. ^{under the previous agreement} As the next C.S.C.C. meeting was not due until November, poverty was naturally pleaded as an interim measure, but Mr Burge did not seem inclined to negotiate.

The unanimous view at the meeting was that apart from the simple fact that the clubs were not willing to pay such a high price, it would be an extremely dangerous precedent to set, both for Mendip & the rest of the country. The line of reasoning is obvious..... if Lamb Leer is worth £167p.a., what is Swildon's worth, or Giant's Hole, or Gaping Gill.....? Even if the money could be found

for one cave (& cavers were willing to pay it), we might soon find that we would be asked to pay for others & then more etc, etc, ad infinitum..... the mind boggles at the ramifications of this & if it carried on, we would all find it cheaper to go to Mulu each year for our annual caving trip !

So the cave remains locked & at the moment it is difficult to see how the deadlock can be resolved.

Now, the rest of the news.....

Browns Folly Mine.

The new locks put on by the Avon Wildlife Trust have been vandalised & clogged up with mud. As a consequence of this both entrances to the mine are now closed. The C.S.C.C. does not yet know what will be done about this, but it is hoped that the Trust will reuse the same type of lock. to spare clubs having to fork out more money for keys.

Box Stone Mines.

The rumour that Back Door had been gated has proved unfounded. The following entrances are still open :- Clift Workings Entrance, Back Door, Jack's Entrance.

Cuckoo Cleeves.

The lock has been noted to be collecting a lot of mud in the recent wet weather, causing it to jam. Tim Large (C.S.C.C. Conservation & Access Officer) is looking into the possibility of either building a blockhouse, or using some method of raising the entrance lid away from the ground with a couple of concrete pipes, on the lines of the entrance to St.Cuthberts.

Fairy Cave Quarry.

No progress has been made by the Cerberus Spelaeological Society in regaining access for cavers to the quarry caves. Negotiations with the quarry owner do not appear to have progressed at all.

Linda Wilson.

"WHAT WE DID ON OUR HOLIDAYS."

Linda Wilson.

For the first two weeks of September, Graham, Tony, myself & the dogs scrounged food & shelter off my father in Preston, whilst we spent a leisurely holiday, interspersed with some caving & mining.

During the first week, we went down to Derbyshire for a show-cave tour. We stopped first at Blue John Mine, intending to leave the dogs in the car, but a field full of sheep & unexpectedly clear skies put paid to that idea; we decided to go down in shifts, so someone could dog-sit above ground. To our surprise, we were told that Scruffy & Beela could go underground with us, as the management have no objection to dogs on a lead.

The mine is well worth a visit & at about £1.50 for adults, with dogs free, it is not an expensive trip. There are an awful lot of steps, so the trip is almost strenuous & as the notice at the entrance warns, it is not recommended for those with heart troubles or breathing difficulties. The guides are generally quite amusing, with comments along the following lines.....

---Pointing to the roof, "Look at that, a very rare curtain stalactite, only half a dozen of those in the British Isles."

---Gesturing expansively towards the end of the cave, "Lots of unexplored passage down there, at least fourteen miles."

---Different guide, same spot, "No-one knows how far the passages go, but there's at least three miles yet to be explored."

---Regarding formations, "Stalactites hang from the roof, there's one up there, looks like an anaemic bat."

From Blue John Mine, we drove via Winnatt's Pass to Treakcliff Cavern, as the road around Mam Tor has now migrated a considerable distance down the hillside, in a most spectacular landslip. A sign outside the cave proclaimed dogs to be welcome (on a lead), so they were able to add another trip to their logs. The cave is about the same price as Blue John Mine & was good value as we were down for nearly an hour. The large veins of blue john & the blue john pillar supporting the roof in one of the chambers are most impressive; the cave contains some fine formations, probably the best in the Derbyshire show-caves, & it also lacks the "dried-out" look, common to so many.

On our way back to Preston, we stopped for a walk around Alderley Edge, & I took the others on a guided tour of the sites in Alan Garner's books ("The Weirdstone of Brisingamen" & "The Moon of Gomrath"). After a certain amount of scrambling, we located the copper mines on Stormy Point; none of the mines in this area of the Edge are now accessible for more than a few hundred feet, & one section that I was able to get into ten years ago has also been blocked. We then

visited the Wizard's Well, near Castle Rock, where the old carving of the bearded face is still visible on the rocky overhang, with the roughly hewn words above the stone water-trough....."Drink of this and take thy fill, for the water falls by the Wizard's will." And-as usual, the Iron Gates remained closed.

Later on that week, we carried on with our interest in the lead mines of the Forest of Bowland. We obtained permission from the Water Board to drive up the private road beside the River Dunsop, as far as Brennand Farm, & were intending to see if it was still possible to enter Brennand Mine, which had been the largest in the area. Above ground, we noted various adit & shaft entrances, all blocked, an old rubble tip & several mine tracks, cutting around the fell-side.

The main ruins of the mine buildings lie on the opposite bank of the river from the farm & after asking the farmer's wife for permission, we went over to investigate an obvious adit. The entrance was loosely blocked with old planks, but it was possible to crawl underneath in the stream. Once inside, we were faced with a breath-taking array of rotting timbers, which were not making a very convincing job of holding the roof up & the walls apart. The passage rapidly diminished in height from standing room by the entrance to about 3ft after 30ft. The stream ran down through a roof collapse which might have been passable by the suicidally insane, but not by anyone else, as it would have entailed trying to force a way through the rubble, past the last pit-prop, following the stream. We retreated instead.

A short walk on the surface confirmed our suspicions; at least fifty feet of passage appeared to have collapsed, effectively blocking entrance to the mine. The farmer's wife told me that other people had walked about the area, but she didn't think anyone had been able to enter the mine for a long time. (If anybody does know of an open entrance, we'd be most interested to know of it.) Our thanks are due to Christopher Southworth of Lancashire Historical Guides for arranging permission for our visit.

The following day, we went caving near Carnforth, in Lancashire, after reading a description of Dunald Mill Hole in West's Tour to the Lakes. Convenient parking was nonexistent, so Graham was sent to brave the presence of a large German Shepherd dog to enquire of its owner if we could visit the cave. The gentleman was most obliging & also let us park outside his house. As the dogs were with us, on this occasion we did go caving in shifts.

The large entrance lies at the base of a cliff surrounded by trees; a stream runs past the ruins of the old mill & down into the cave. The entrance chamber is impressive & nicely decorated with stal flow on the walls; very well preserved considering how accessible it is. There are various small side passages, one containing a 20ft pitch; the stream winds through a couple of avens to a duck & thence through crawls to a sump. A short but enjoyable trip.

The next day, we had a trip booked into White Scar Cave, beyond the show-cave. Access is now available to cavers, cost £3 per head, by advance booking, (write to the manager, stating club, party size & choice of dates etc & be prepared to arrive at 10am). We were the only caving party going into the cave; it had been considerably extended since my first trip, aged four, to the viewing point by the first waterfall. The show-cave leads you to an impressive streamway where it is frequently necessary to swop to different sides of the passage so that you can keep a footing on the underwater ledges, but on a few occasions it is still necessary to swim, or launch yourself across to the other wall in the hope of finding a ledge. The water level may have been low on that particular day, but it was certainly extremely cold !

Route finding up through the boulder choke proved to be fairly easy, but be warned, the vertical squeeze into Battlefield is very tight & very muddy & is not likely to be passed by anyone of much greater than average dimensions. The large passage above is well worth the thrutch. Once back into the streamway, the route through the boulders is marked by diving line & the ducks don't present a problem, but I imagine they could easily become interesting in wetter conditions. Once the main route is rejoined the trip length depends on how far you feel like going. We were down for approximately four hours & whilst getting changed outside, we met a group of handicapped people who had just been down in wheelchairs..... they had a most unusual trip, the lights failed & the guide had to find his way out without a torch.

P.S. If anyone knows of other show-caves or mines which allow dogs, please let me know !

THE NATIONAL CAVING ASSOCIATION

Graham Mullan

As many of you may know, there is a debate going on at the moment regarding the future structure of British caving administration. Essentially there are two alternative proposals. Firstly that the present structure in which clubs belong to regional councils which then belong to the NCA should be retained with modifications to improve communication and accountability. Secondly that cavers as individuals as well as clubs should have direct membership of the national organization, with additional arrangements for national groups such as the CDG and regional access control bodies.

The Council of Southern Caving Clubs is presently preparing a discussion paper on the subject and will welcome constructive comment. Anybody with any ideas please send them to me and I will pass them on to Dave Irwin, the CSCC chairman. (See Dick, consultation)

ADDITIONS TO THE LIBRARY -- WINTER 1986

Tony Boycott.

- Caves of South Wales Tim Stratford 3rd Ed 1986
- Karst Landforms Marjorie Sweeting Columbia University Press 1973
- China Caves 85 Royal Geographic Society/ BCRA 1986
- A History of Lead Mining in the Pennines Baistrick & Jennings 1981
- Mines and t'Miners- Lead Mining in Wharfedale, Airedale & Widderdale 1972
- Caving Expeditions Dick Willis BCRA and Expeditions Advisory Centre 1986
- The Underground Atlas - A Gazetteer of the Worlds Caving Regions. John Middleton and Tony Waltham. Robert Hale 1986
- Records of Mining J Taylor London 1829 Reprint 1986 NRES
- S.R.T. - A Training Manual Dave Elliot Troll 1986
- Cave Minerals of the World Carol Hill, Paolo Forti & Trevor Shaw. NSS 1986
- New Exchange: Australian Rock art Research Journal

SSSI's IN SOUTH WALES

Graham Mullan

In the wake of the Mendip SSSI fiasco, we heard a rumour that the situation in South Wales could also cause concern. In view of the Society's long standing interest in the Little Neath River Cave we approached the Welsh office of the NCC in order to find out their intentions, and I have since met with their assistant regional officer, Ray Woods, to discuss the situation.

Briefly, although the INRC has yet to be formally re-notified, it is unlikely that there will be anything in it that will affect our interests. Specifically, there will be no changes in the access procedure for the cave. I will be receiving a copy of the notification when it has been prepared, so if anyone wants any more information please contact me.

CAVE RESCUE

In all the years that I have been a member of this club the UBSS Cave Rescue Team, per se, has not been called out. In other words, we haven't received a phone call in Bristol asking us to send a team. Specialist skills are another matter and Tony Boycott is regularly called out as a caving doctor. (There is a serious shortage of caving doctors available for rescue, both on Mendip and nationally). Another specialist skill is cave diving, and occasionally there is a diver call-out for caves that have water hazards after rainfall. My old flat (Northumberland Road) was put on diver standby one weekend for a rescue in Northern Ireland. Unsportingly, the water levels went back down again.

So why should students bother to form a rescue team? The answer is that they may find that they are the only cavers available, as happened in Yorkshire a few years ago. It hadn't been particularly wet in Bristol, but had been snowing in Yorkshire all week; we had the place to ourselves, just about. We did a Lancaster - Easgill exchange, had a grand piss-up and at 1am, while preparing for bed, were called out. The cave was Meregill and a large team was needed because the snow was melting and the cave was in flood. The "large team" was ourselves and the staff of Whernside Manor Outdoor Centre, all that could be found, and it took us all night to haul seven cavers out against the force of the water.

More recently, I was in Swildons near Sump One when I met a chap who was obviously in a lot of pain. He had slipped, put his arm out and dislocated his shoulder. His party (he was the leader) were novices equipped with carbide lamps. I had an electric light, so I was able to remove my belt and turn it into a sling for his arm. With one person steadying him from behind and a tight lifeline helping him from the front, he was able to rescue himself from the cave in about 20 minutes.

Rescue can also work the other way, as some of our own members will gratefully agree. The Cave Flying Group (emblem: two wings, like a pilots insignia, but with both wings broken) comprises UBSS members who have survived a long fall; there are more of them than one might think.

So far I have talked about "real rescues", where the victim needs outside help. On expeditions abroad there may not be any help available. Even in this country a self-help rescue may be preferable. These rescues are seldom reported, but are so common they may be considered a normal feature of the sport. You don't need to go caving for long before one of the following happens: one of your party slips and slightly hurts themselves; you have equipment failure, or light failure; your leader gets (temporarily) lost; someone runs out of strength half-way through a trip ('flu can cause this, and can come on quite suddenly). The others rally round whoever is having trouble and become a de facto rescue party. In all this it helps to have had some rescue training. Not necessarily stretcher hauling, but little things like how to rig a lifeline through a prusiker for extra security, and when it is better to use a descendeur.

I always regard light failure by one or more members of a caving party as a self-help rescue. It is very easy to slip, twist an ankle, or worse if the others on your team are lazy about light sharing. In some special cases different techniques are needed, such as tandem prusiking to share light when passing rebelay. This can cause additional problems, an example being that deviations should be tied off as rebelay when tandeming.

Many rescue techniques are just a matter of common sense, but to be confident and safe in an emergency requires practice. We plan to have a series of weekly safety/ rescue sessions on the climbing wall of Woodland House (Woodland House is the University Sports Centre on Cotham Hill, about 100 yards up the road from Crockers). At the moment, we are being held up by the University bureaucracy, but if the bookings are agreed by the time this goes to press the dates are

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Charlie Self

Turks flock to polls in key test of opinion

By Andrew Finkel

TURKISH voters in 11 constituencies went to the polls yesterday in a series of byelections.

The campaign has taken on the excitement of a general election.

The vote has turned into a contest between the present generation of political leaders and those who governed Turkey in the 1970s.

Mr Turgut Ozal, leader of the conservative Motherland Party, may be safe in his parliamentary majority but he will be keeping a watching eye on the fortunes of the rival rightwing True Path Party whose key figure, the former Prime Minister, Mr Suleyman Demirel, has

been attracting huge crowds at his political rallies.

Mr Ozal's majority of 74 in the 400-seat Parliament is not at stake, but if he gets significantly less than 40 per cent of the vote he may come under intense pressure from the opposition to call an early general election.

Mr Ozal was elected in 1983 after three years of military rule in an election from which most of his rivals were banned.

Mr Ozal has already won on one count: the newspaper, Hurriyet said yesterday that 2,000 animals had been slaughtered by Muslims to his honour during the campaign, against 1,800 for Mr Demirel.

THE GUARDIAN—Monday September 29 1986



And on the vexed question : Is Turkey a civilised country ? 223 dead goats, 612 dead sheep and five dead camels (all voting by proxy) agreed that it was while the only dissenting voice was a donkey who had been run over by a bus and left to die by the roadside.

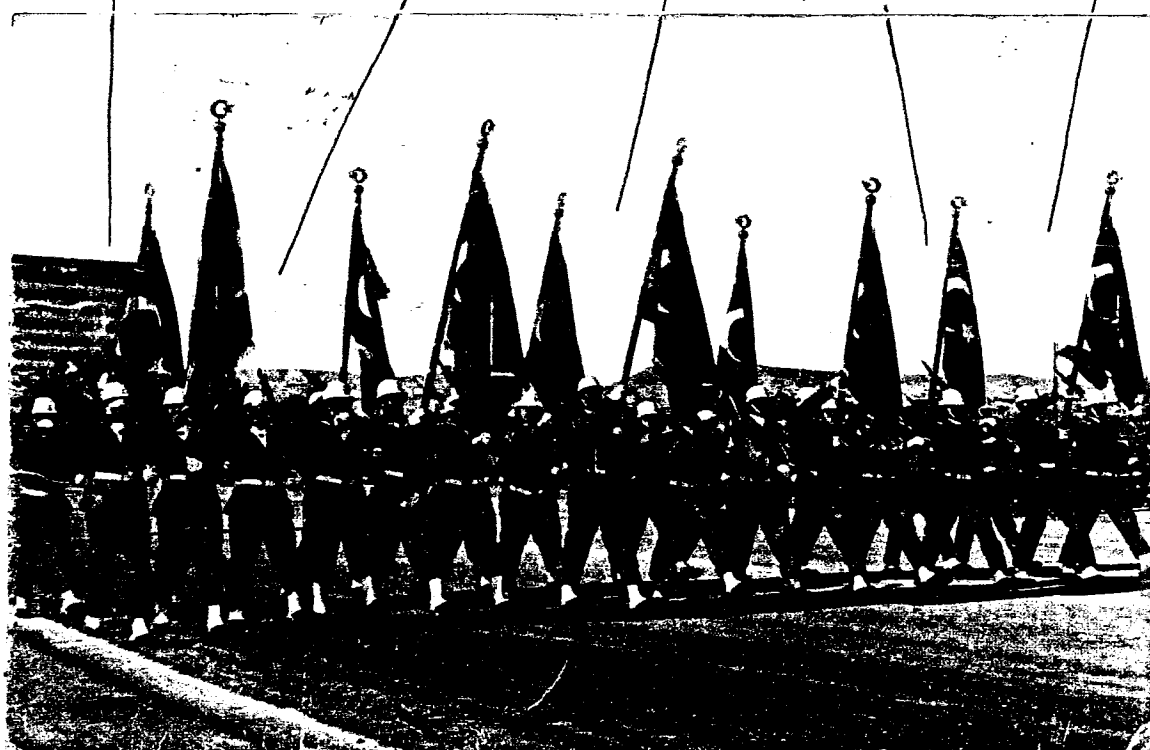
What's the difference
between Turkey and a
festering dunghill ?

I don't know

Havn't a clue, mate

Me neither

Didn't know
there was one



Introducing :

THE PRIVATEER GUIDE TO TURKISH HOSPITALITY

- No. 1 The Friendly Jandarma (looks like a thug - shaved head
 dresses like a thug - army fatigues, tin hat,
 rifle or machine gun
 behaves like a ~~thug~~ policeman)

We are interested in foreign
tourists

You are all under arrest

Would you like some tea ?

We're not letting you go just yet

Would you like to sleep in
a real bed tonight ?

I havn't buggered an Englishman
before

Why you come to Dinar ?

Are you an archaeologist ?

Ooh la la Bang Bang

Do you think I sound like Michael Jackson when I strum the trigger of my rifle ?

- No. 2 The Public Prosecutor

You have no permit, the
penalty is five years

You got too close to our opium
fields

..... 5 minutes later

That was a joke, ha ha

Next time it's a bullet in the back

- No. 3 Ten Year Old Male Children

allo, allo

Do you like little boys like me ?

I collect paper money

Do you like little boys like me ?



Oh
God please
not
MORE Tea

SEX ROMP SHOCK

FULL
STORY
PAGE
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A YOUTH expedition which has Prince Charles as its' patron turned into a sordid, sexy romp.

Operation Raleigh is supposed to breed self-reliance as boys and girls do their bit to aid Third World

By Madeleine Pallas

But an eight-week trip to the Bahamas was little more than a steamy orgy under the tropical sun.

One of the so-called leaders was sacked after being caught in bed with a nubile young girl.

romped with the youngsters and danced naked at drunken beach parties.

Two of the expedition staff were making such a noise during a torrid sex session that young adventurers threw a bucket of cold water over them.



SECRETARIES' REPORT MARCH 1985 - MARCH 1986

SUNDAY SPORT, September 14, 1986

As in the past, this report generally covers the period from one Annual General Meeting to the next; only in acknowledging grants and donations is the latter limit exceeded.

Research

Work by Chris Hawkes, Bruce Levitan, Peter Smart and others is in progress at the Beaker site in Charterhouse Warren Farm Swallet. The 'bone chamber' was surveyed at a large scale, and the visible bones have been identified wherever possible. Dating of the sediments and bones, analysis of the sediments, and survey work continue.

Steve Hobbs is conducting research on the hydrology of recharge and storage in the Carboniferous Limestone aquifer of the Mendip Hills, in conjunction with Wessex Water Authority and Bristol Waterworks Ltd. Instrumentation has been installed in Banwell Spring, Mangle Hole and several wells in the area. The study is also examining the effects of quarrying on the hydrology of the eastern Mendips.

Mick McHale and Rob Palmer were leaders of biological and geological projects respectively for the Bahamas phase of Operation Raleigh (the international youth scientific and exploring project). They concentrated on Cat Island where studies of the bat populations and cave geomorphology were carried out. Palmer also led an expedition to Andros Island, examining the biology and geology of the Blue Holes.

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Cave Telelocation Theory Fails to Impress

by Ray D. O'Fann

There was uproar at the BCRA Cave Science meeting in Bristol this year when one of the speakers, a Mr A. Dowser, claimed that he could receive through his body powerful signals when standing near a television mast in Upper Wharfedale. To the astonishment of the delegates he went on to claim that as long as he kept his back to the mast he could follow the signals.

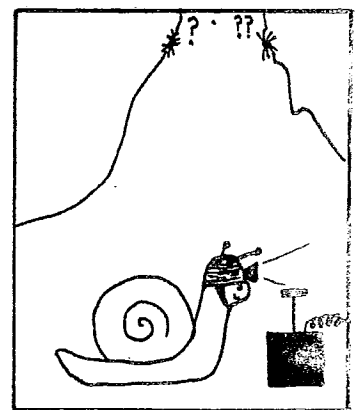
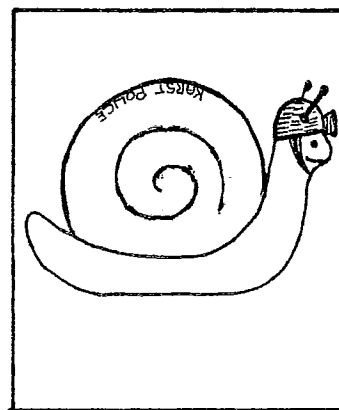
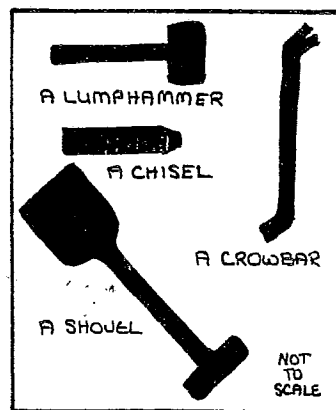
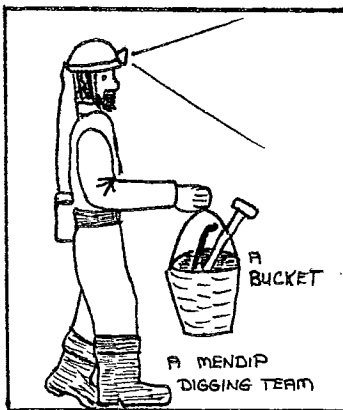
There were hoots of derision from the assembled scientists as he showed on a map how he had walked in an almost straight line from the mast to the nearest cave resurgence, explaining that this must be the course of an underground river.

Dr Smart then intervened with a declaration that caves could only be detected with radio waves, radiolocation he called it, and demanded an immediate demonstration of telelocation or the speaker would be shown to be a charlatan. Dr Waltham warned that there was nothing worth watching on the TV on a Saturday afternoon, and the demonstration was called off in favour of a coffee break.

FROM :- "101 ~~USEFUL~~ FACTS FOR THE SPELAEOLOGIST"

WHY

--- DID DR NOBEL INVENT HIS LINCTUS ?



"Hi Ho, Hi Ho" ----- THE CONTENTS OF THE BUCKET ----- AND ↑ ----- "ITS OFF TO WORK WE GO"

BECAUSE

IT'S THE QUICKEST WAY TO
WIDEN A SQUEEZE !

[REF : U.B.S.S. PROC. 17(3) pgs 218-226]

FROM AN ORIGINAL IDEA BY W.I. STANTON.

Letters

Privateer
4 Tyne St
BRISTOL 2

ON.....

You will all have heard of the Oliver Lloyd Memorial Fund and some of you may have already invested in it. The President and three members are Trustees of this fund, one being specially qualified to solicit, for money.

A selfless* examination of past fund-raising activities elsewhere has suggested two further ways of raising money.

The restorers of the Somerset & Dorset Joint Railway line through Midford near Bath, over which the Titfield Thunderbolt was ultimately to run, had much the same problems, which are recorded in a historic documentary film made in the 1950s by Ealing Studios. In an appeal for the church bells the Vicar had obtained rather less than £50 by the conventional bazaars, etc. So the organizers decided to think big and appeal to the local landowner, i.e. appeal to his interest as well as for it. By making a disused railway coach (previously used for sleeping and eating by its disreputable owner) serviceable and movable again and fitting it with a bar, they were able to sell drinks to travellers outside licencing hours. This certainly appealed to the local landowner, who gave his chequebook to the sponsors and told them to write a cheque for whatever they needed.

Now the Hut at Burrington used to be fitted with wheels¹, though their rather limited purpose at that time was to avoid, as a movable caravan, the paying of rates. It should not be difficult to restore the same degree of mobility to the Hut, and furnish it with alcohol. Surely there must be a local rich landowner?

A precedent for the second suggestion comes from that kangaroo caver, Dr Julia James. When she was a regular caver on Mendip in the 1960s, her kisses are said to have been sold for half a crown each in aid of the Chelsea funds (or was it WSG?). Such was their fame that at the 1981 International Congress of Speleology at Kentucky one was auctioned for \$ 28².

The OLMF should solicit in the same way. Auctions? Subscriptions for regular supply? Individual donations in favour of the fund should be arranged by private treaty, from susceptible and anonymous well-wishers. With good management it should then be possible to gain further money by blackmail.

AN ON

1. Tratman, E.K. (1965) A Short History of the Hut; MS. with U.B.S.S. (p.4).
2. Descent, (71), 1986, p.23.

* This is meant to shield the Editor from libel cases.

.....ANTON?

In the course of routine surveillance of the U.B.S.S. secret files, my attention was drawn to the draft of a letter written to the editor of Privateer by the head of the Qaksi Karst Institute, An On, suggesting ways of raising additional capitalist money for the Lloyd Fund.

Unfortunately he has been exposed to the civilising influence of P. Smart and the China Caves expedition; his suggestions are in consequence not very likely to be effective, depending as they do on persuasion with a small p. I would suggest that much larger sums can be obtained by Persuading the rich and more influential officers of the Society, such as the Vice-Commissars. Other rewarding targets would be those who have themselves received substantial grants to go caving abroad and in Charterhouse.

Why Swildons is Closed

by Lee Galigal

Many years ago the Nature Conservancy Council, the British Cave Research Association and the National Caving Association got together for a chat about cave conservation. They decided that since caves provide a habitat for some rare and very specialised life-forms, if at all possible the caves and their contents should be protected by law from outside disturbance. The years passed, Acts of Parliament were passed and then, all of a sudden, a large padlock appeared on the blockhouse at Swildons Hole.

The NCC proudly declared that the rare plants and flowers were now protected in Swildons Hole Nature Reserve. The BCRA and the NCA took to their beds in a state of catatonic shock and it was left to local cavers to try to explain to the NCC that there wern't any flowers growing in Swildons Hole.

"That's because you cavers picked them!" accused the NCC. "They'll be able to grow in peace, now."

Months passed and the cavers slowly came to realise the difficulty of their task: how to prove to the NCC that there still wern't any flowers growing in Swildons Hole, even though there wern't any cavers to pick them, while the cave was still locked. The midnight candle was burned over dusty law books and the cavers at last found what they were looking for: ~~the~~ National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act of 1949. Swildons Streamway was a public footpath by right of usage!

The cavers were now able to claim a legal right to go down the cave to see if there were any flowers growing there.

"Oh, no you mustn't," insisted the NCC, "you'll frighten the wildlife."

"What wildlife?" asked the cavers. And the NCC told them a story of how Swildons had one of the densest populations of large mammals of any cave in the world.

"They wouldn't be particularly active on Saturday afternoons, would they?" enquired the cavers.

"Yes! That's right," beamed the NCC. "Especially between 3 o'clock and 5."

"Boisterous and quarrelsome with sweet smelling breath?"

"Those ones are called Becks." The NCC were so pleased that we were all now in agreement.

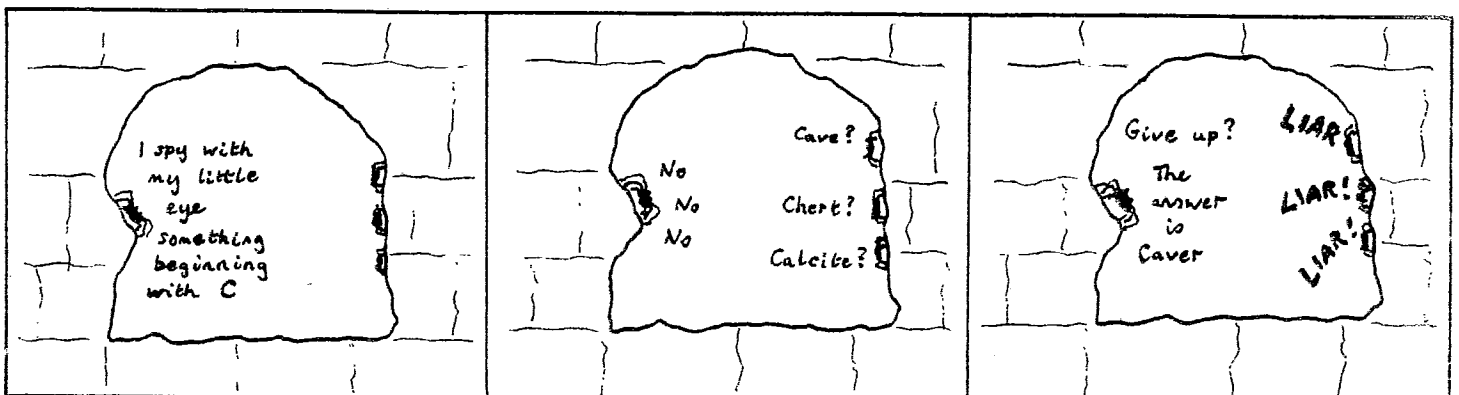
"That's the B.E.C.! The Bristol Exploration Club! And you've locked them OUT of the cave!" The cavers were furious.

"Oh, no we havn't. They're still in there and you are not allowed to disturb them." The NCC pronounced their final judgement and went off in a huff, refusing to speak to anyone until the next issue of :-

WHY SWILDONS IS CLOSED

Lee Galigal is an article clerk with Insufferably, Dull, Boring and Bland

Troglobite



To an impartial and suspicious observer, dressing up in suits of rubber must seem the depth of sartorial perversion. But most cavers do it.

To an impartial and suspicious observer, borrowing or stealing a sister's or girlfriend's clothes is a sure sign of transvestitism. But many cavers do it.

To an impartial and suspicious observer, going into a lady's clothes shop, trying on the trousers and complaining about the tight fit in certain crucial areas would commend a novice student caver whose eyebrows almost meet in the middle to a statutory "re-education" course. But we are not a centrally-planned socialist state, so Ian moved on to a menswear store.

QUESTION: How many University of Bristol hydrologists can you fit into Aldermaston Chamber in Mangle Hole?

ANSWER: Only one, and his name isn't Pete Smart.

I have just discovered why students carry a spare tether when caving in Yorkshire with Trevor Mosedale. Trevor rigs the pitch and goes down, followed by most of the others. The last man takes one look at the belay, a lousy bolt, and calls down the pitch, "Can you send a spanner back up on the lifeline?"

Reply from below, "It's with Trevor and he's gone down the next pitch."

"Then I'll have a tether."

"He's gone down the next pitch."

"TETHER!!!"

"He's gone down"

"£\$*&?!!!"

It's a great game.

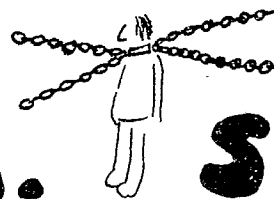
Now we know why Stephan has curly hair: he traps it in his descendeur when abseiling. Perhaps one of the more motherly of the old lags' wives would care to give him a pair of secondhand curling tongs for Christmas - before the poor lad gets it wrong one day and ends up bald!

HOORAY HENRY NEWS

The UBSS Male Voice Choir degenerated beyond previous levels of incompetence at the club pre-Christmas dinner when after only six songs from the UBSS songbook all attempts to match the words to any known tune were abandoned in favour of a repeat (yes, they had already sung it once) of their favourite dirge "The SWCC are a rotten bunch of bastards" followed by its intellectual descendant "Father Abraham". God help culture! (He doesn't seem to - Ed)

A summer romance for Steve "I love ewe" Hobbs at an international speleo conference in Barcelona. Apparently an American lady delegate was walking past when she got caught on his Velcro kneepads.

HON. SEC.

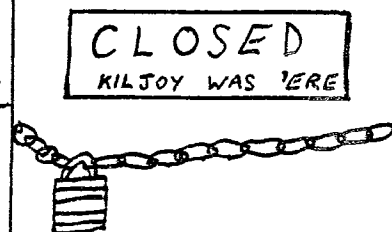


TAUNTON

MENDIP

PRIDDY

SWILDONS



Maxim

I am sure my readers have, like myself, noticed that year by year it becomes more difficult to go caving legally. If it's not permits in Wales and Yorkshire, it's keys on Mendip. In the old days one could just go "pirating" in Yorkshire, give an alias in Wales or take Dr Nobel's plasticene to the blockhouse gates of Mendip. What has changed?

The law has changed, and so has the judges' interpretation of the law. One has only to look at what has happened to the trade unions to see the vulnerability of collective groups (which include caving clubs). Even for the individual, in certain categories of crime the penalties now include sequestration of assets.

So what chance does a caver, or his club, have if caught illegally in one of the SSSI designated caves? What sort of penalties will the 1985 Amendment to the Wildlife and Countryside Act dish out? One shudders to think.

Ordinary insurance policies offer nothing, so the Privateer organisation has come up with a scheme of subtlety and simplicity. We invite you to join the Thurso Pothole Club of Liechtenstein. Fees are £10 for individual membership, £500 for club membership. At the first sign of trouble you can send all your assets in a plain brown envelope to a safe destination where no court in the world will ever be able to find them. We can guarantee confidentiality with our "unbreakable code" membership list procedure. An application form is at the bottom of this page.

JOIN UP TODAY!

R. Matey
pp Capt. Maxim
"Island Paradise"
The Tropics

I wish to become a member of the T.P.C. of L.

NAME
ADDRESS
SIGNATURE

(write Anon, it's safer)
(leave blank, you don't want
anyone to find you)
(don't be silly!!)

I enclose £10 / £500 / all my assets in cash (cheques can be traced, you fool!)

SEND TO : TPC of L, P.C. Box 541728, Banc de Suisse, GENEVA 0272, Switzerland.

II



Gravel

Christmas came early for Pete Smart's local garage - a VW Golf with a JCB imprint in the back. "Our first D-reg accident" they cried with delight. The owner didn't share their joy.

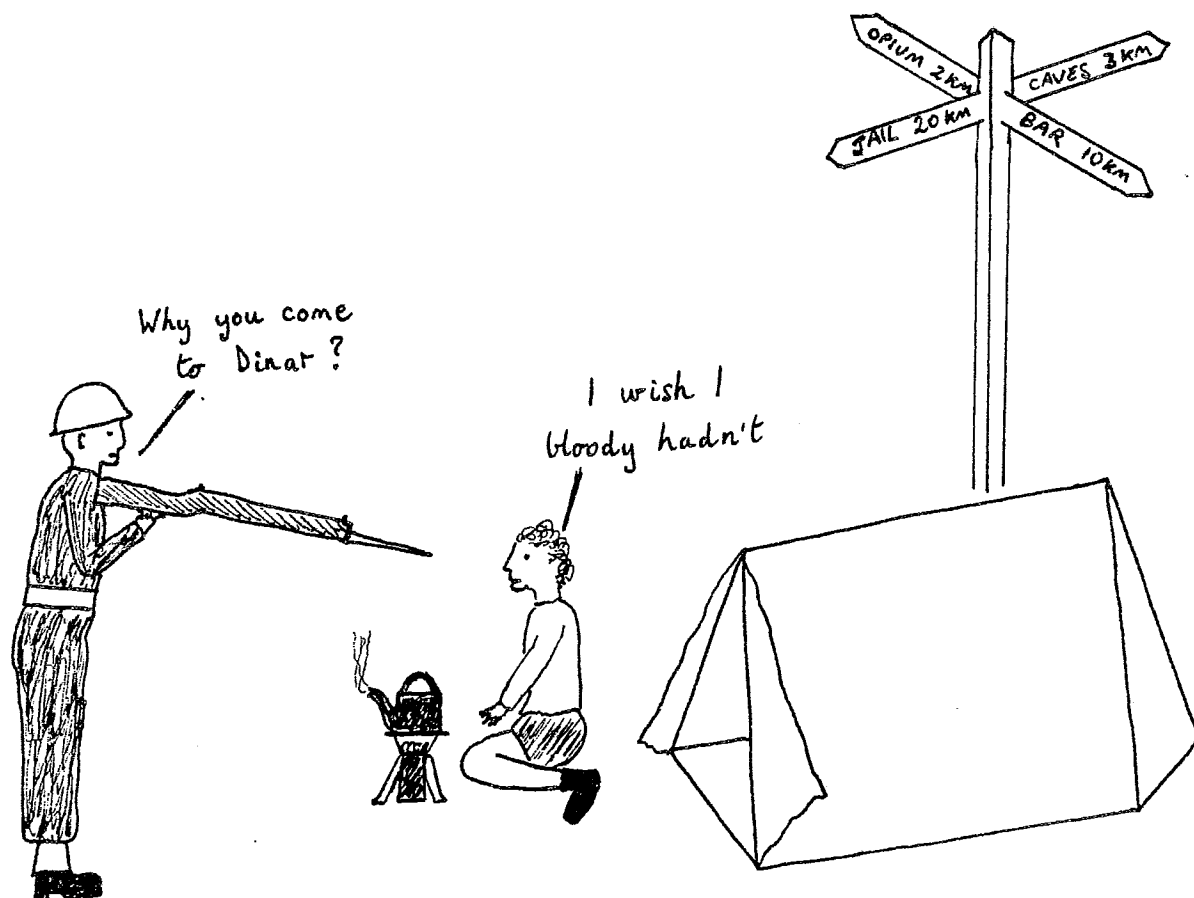
I had never thought of Martin Warren as particularly cunning, but moving to Cardiff when Chris Shirt joined the Bristol police force has to be a smart move.

Fold up the red flag again, boys. "Mastolini" intends to join the Royal Tank Regiment next year. And to go with his new image he is demanding a new name : we have to call him Marco from now on, though students may call him "Macho".

The betting odds on whether Marco gets accepted by Sandhurst have shortened considerably in recent weeks. The reason: he has a new poster on his bedroom wall, Mount Everest. On it is written "Best wishes Marco in the Royal Tanks, Chris Bonnington". Apparently it is the Great Man's old regiment.

PRIVATEER

No 12



WARNING from T.R. Government : opium cultivation can seriously damage your health (if you get too close to it)

Come to Turkey, where every tree has a soldier guarding it
and every poppy field an army