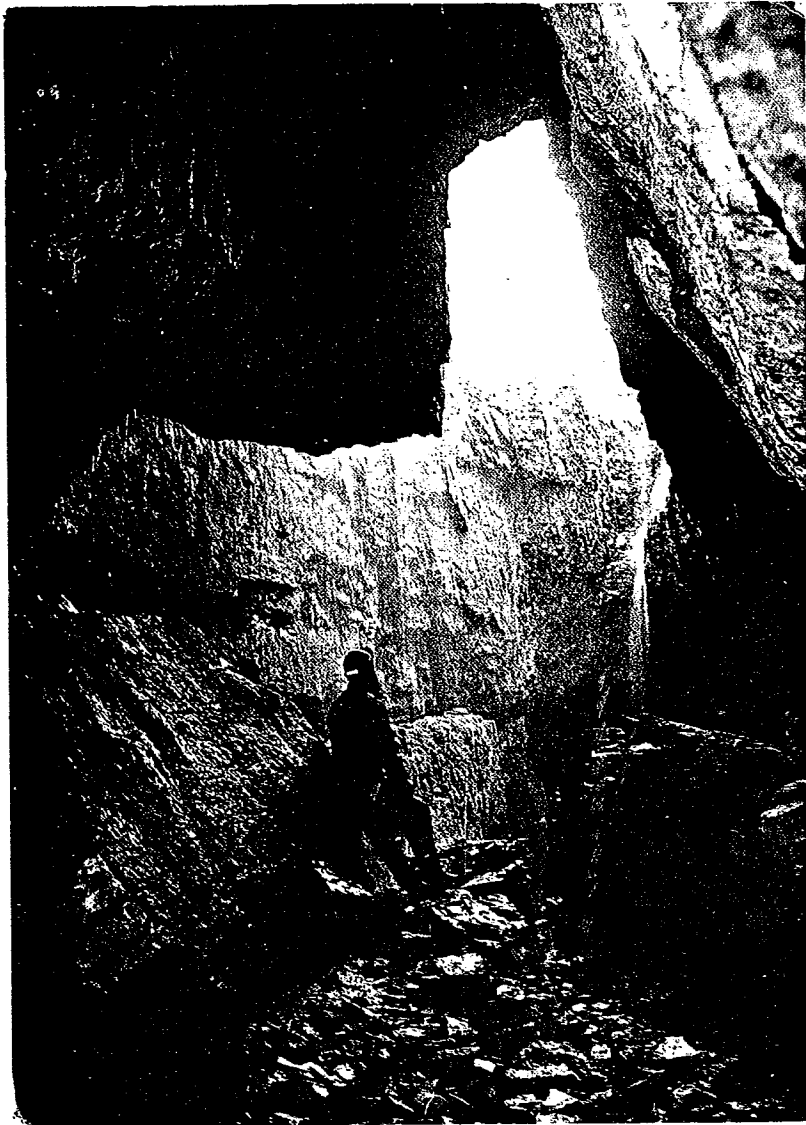


U.B.S.S.



NEWSLETTER

VOL 5 NO 2

Editorial

Thanks to everyone who contributed to this newsletter, especially to D. Willis, for his report on his holiday in the Cannibal Highlands. I hope to see a few more such reports from members who have been/are going to such places as Co Clare, Austria, Mendip, or where ever. There is also a lack of articles for the Blackmail Corner. A few more cartoonists would also be desirable.

The final date for the newsletter is Friday 13th October.

Andy Farrant

WESSEX CHALLENGE

This years Wessex Challenge is being held on the 17th June, at Priddy village Hall, and will comprise of a Batmobile race to Swildons Hole and back, where you have to collect two buckets of water, via an obstacle course. It should be made clear that under no circumstances do we want to win, as we shall then have to arrange next years event.

There will also be food, a Prize Draw, Disco, Sofa Rugby and other events. We will be entering a team, tickets are available from Andy Farrant.

GB ACCESS

Access to GB controlled by the C.C.C, and also the UBSS (under a sub-licence) and hence, everyone who goes down must have a valid CCC permit. If you have not got one, make sure you get one off the secretary.

Novices are NOT allowed into any of the CCC caves, ie someone is no longer a novice after at least 3 separate caving trips. (that doesn't mean a Rods, Sidcot, Goatchurch trip). Also anyone who is ill equipped is not allowed down - this also includes 'experienced' cavers. Party size is limited to 6, and no Carbide is allowed.

Please stick to these rules, or else we may lose our sub-licence, get kicked out of the CCC, and get a lot of flak from other caving clubs.



Gravel

A certain UBSS member, who shall remain nameless, reported a serious incident of bad air in the entrance to Ladder Dig in GB, and has refused to go down again.

Rumour has it that he was following Paul Drewery. Could it be that Paul had one of his infamous currys? Answers on a postcard to H.M Health Inspector....



F
U
R
Y
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A
T

The more wealthy cavers may have noticed a new face behind the counter at Bat Products. Tony 'J-Rat' Jarrat has taken over from Phil Romford. The shop is to be renamed 'Rat Products.'

RAT Products

SUPPLIERS OF CAVING GEAR TO THE
NOVICE



EDITORIAL. 2

The opinions expressed in this newsletter are the opinions of the individual authors and not necessarily those of the society.

Copy date for the autumn newsletter is Friday 13th October. Articles should be sent to:-

Newsletter Editor,
Spelaeological Society,
Students Union,
Queens Road,
Bristol, BS8 1LN.

HON. SEC'S. BIT.

At the AGM and the following committee meeting, several changes were made to the committee and officers:-

Hon. Secs	Paul Drewery
	Steve Cottle
Student Treasurer	Andy Farrant
MiC Tackle & Eqpt	Dan Harries
MiC Photography	Chris Bennet
Committee	Alan Edwards, Dan Harries, Paul Harvey, Nigel Lester, Paul Turner, Linda Wilson.

All other posts remain the same as last year.

Keyholders.

Name	Telephone No.	Keys Held
Paul Drewery	557239	L S M T
Steve Cottle	I 0.8 Churchill	L S M T
Andy Farrant	X 29 Wills Hall	L S M
Charlie Self	541728	L S M T
Trevor Shaw	Bath 883838 (Work)	L S M
Dan Harries	291162	L S M T
Tony Boycott	663587 (Work)	
	507869 (Home)	L S M T D
Graham Mullen	502556	L S M
Chris Bennet		T D

Key to Keys:- L - Library, S - Stack Room, T - Tackle Store, D - Dark Room.

If you need to get into the rooms, arrange with one of the above.

cont.-

Yorkshire Trip ¹16th June Onwards.

An end of year caving extravaganza will be held in the Dales from the ^{9th}16th June, some of us may be staying for a whole week but others will be coming back to Bristol on Sun. evening. Everyone is welcome, including any *old lags*, who have forgotten what GG main chamber looks like! We will stay in caravans so please let me know if you are coming so that I can book enough.

Permits.

We have some CNCC permits for the autumn. These are:- 28th Oct Gingling Hole, 12th Nov. Dale Head and 26th Nov. Pen-y-Ghent. Numbers are limited to about 8 people per trip so if you want to come along, please contact me.

Other trips are arranged on an informal basis. If you want to come on a trip, come along to Crockers on Tuesdays or ring me (Paul D.) on 557239.

Library.

The Library will be open on Wednesday lunchtimes. If you want to borrow books, look round or just come for a chat, there will be someone there.

Museum.

Chris Hawkes, our museum curator is looking for volunteers to help to organise our collection of Roman and prehistoric remains. The suggested time is Tuesday evenings from about 8 pm. Chris can be contacted on (0749) 807474.

Tackle Order.

I will be placing an order for tackle towards the end of the Summer term. Discount will be 15% - 20%. If you need gear for the Summer, let me have your order with the money by June 15th.

Summer Meetings.

Over the Summer, that is from 27th June to 3rd Oct. we will meet in the Pumphouse, Hotwells Road - by the Floating Harbour. Tuesdays 9.30pm onwards.

Paul Drewery.

P.S. Does anyone fancy a trip to the Canary Isles at Christmas to see some lava caves?

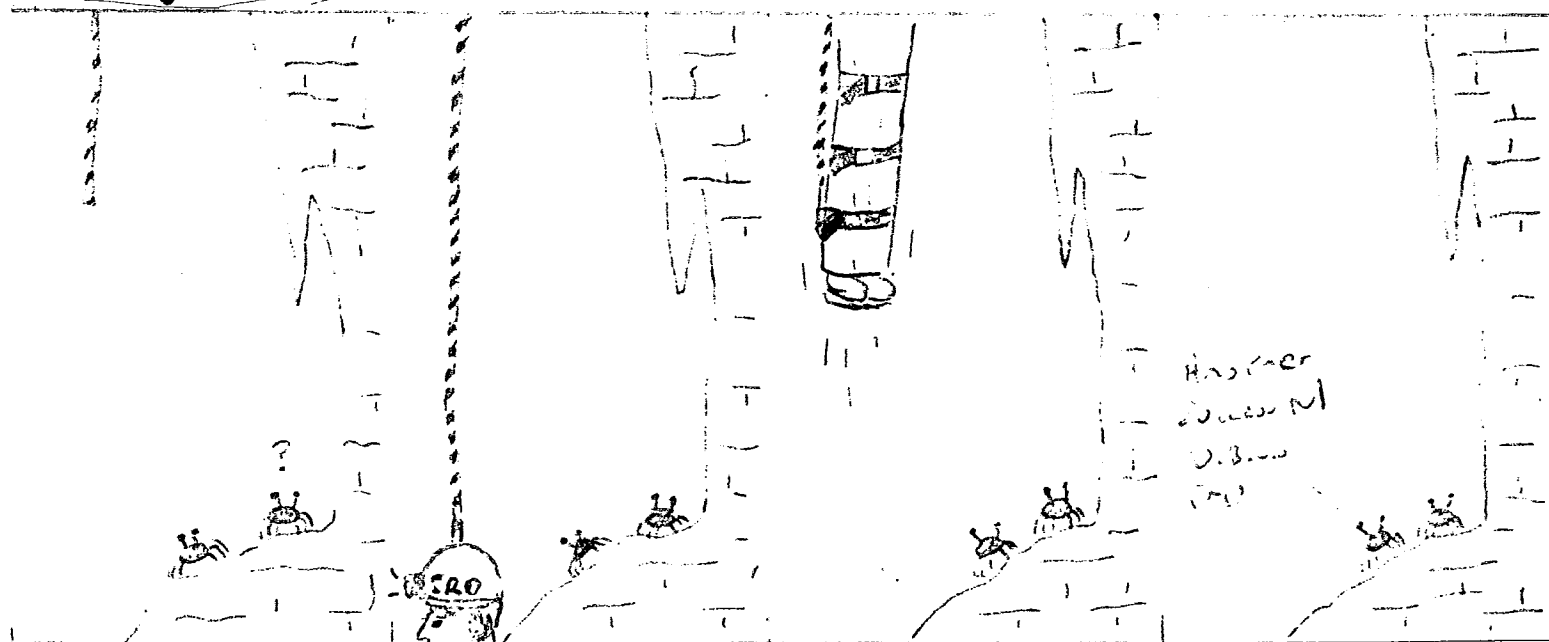
CALENDAR FOR 1989 - 1990

Now, here is something that will really amaze you, a calendar of events *before* they happen.

18 May	Committee meeting, 9 pm Spelaeo Rooms
16 June on	Post exam Yorkshire Trip. Clear your mind of work with Yorkshire beer and Yorkshire caves.
17 th June	Wessex Challenge, 6.30 Paddy Lillie Hall
5,6 Oct.	Faffy. Members will be conscripted to man the stall.
6 Oct.	Bar Crawl in caving gear. Go talent spotting and use such immortal chat up lines as "Do you want to play with my cows tails?"
7,8 Oct.	Mendip Weekend. Arrangements as usual.
10 Oct.	Slide show for the freshers, or "What We Did on Our Holidays." 8pm Spelaeo rooms. If anyone has any slides that they can lend me, or wants to give a short talk, then contact Paul D or Steve C.
14/15 Oct.	Freshers day trip to Mendip or S. Wales
21,22 Oct.	Freshers Yorkshire Weekend. (P)
28 Oct.	Gingling Hole Permit.
1 Nov.	Sess. Meet. - Chris Howes "The History of Cave Photography" 8pm Spelaeo Rooms
4,5 Nov.	Bonfire Party at the Hut.
12 Nov.	Dale Head Permit.
19 Nov.	Freshers S. Wales Trip.(P)
26 Nov.	Pen-y-Ghent Pot Permit.
6 Dec.	Sess. Meet. - Dick Willis "Caving in Australasia" 8pm Spelaeo Rooms.
9 Dec.	Christmas Dinner.(P)
14 Feb	Sess. Meet. possibly "Black Holes of Mexico" 8pm Spelaeo Rooms.(P)
10 Mar.	A.G.M. 4pm Spelaeo Rooms. Followed by Annual Dinner.
9 May	Sess. Meet. - Chris Richards "Calamine Extraction on Mendip" 8pm Spelaeo Rooms.

(P) - Provisional Date Only.

Troglolite



Treasurer's Report

Graham Mullan

Those of you who bother to read my reports annually, will remember that for the past couple of years I have been warning that although we have been well in the black it wouldn't last. A glance at the income & expenditure sheet in the attached accounts will show that I was right. This, fairly substantial, deficit is simply due to the fact that, despite record levels of income, costs have been rising even faster, especially the cost of producing Proceedings. This means two things: firstly that we are going to have to keep costs under control, and the Editorial committee are presently looking at this; and secondly that the non student subscription will have to increase. The AGM agreed, and so from March 1990 this will stand at £10 single and £15 joint. Will Members please, therefore, fill in and return to me the enclosed Bankers Order and Covenant forms. I hope that those members who have not previously paid this way will consider doing so, as it saves the Treasurer an awful lot of work. In addition, I hope that those of you who have not previously filled in a covenant will do so, as the income we have from this source is both useful and quite painless to the membership.


In addition to the above, we are also going to have to increase the Student subscription. The Union, who are themselves fairly short of cash, have cut our grant. Their argument is that we are very cheap to join and that we can easily recoup this money by raising the sub to £4, still a small figure in comparison with many. I cannot argue with their logic and so from October we will be asking the student members to pay £4. I hope this will not put people off from joining!

Will those who have yet to pay their 1989/90 sub please do so as soon as possible, and will those with forms to return, Bankers order, Covenant and Covenant tax return, please do so to me (not your bank) as soon as possible

UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL SPELAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY
BALANCE SHEET AT 31st JANUARY 1989

	£	£	Investments	£	£
<u>Hut Fund</u>			<u>Deposit Account</u>	1,500.00	
Balance at 31.1.88	373.98		P.O.S.B. Investment Account	4,639.13	6,139.13
Add net income	225.24	599.22			
<u>Printed Publications Fund</u>			<u>Current Account</u>		361.33
Balance at 31.1.88		780.00			
<u>Library Fund</u>			<u>Cash in Hand</u>		
Balance at 31.1.88	151.50		Hon. Secretary's	2.98	
Add net income	327.00	478.50	Hon. Treasurer's	30.57	33.55
<u>G.B. Cave Capital Fund</u>					
Balance at 31.1.88	71.64				
Less net expenditure	20.85	50.79			
<u>Lamp Hire Account</u>					
Balance at 31.1.88	146.75				
Add net income	152.88	6.13			
<u>Caves of County Clare Account</u>					
Advance for Publication	7,000.00				
Less net expenditure not yet recovered	2,723.00	4,277.00			
<u>Income and Expenditure account</u>					
Balance at 31.1.88	854.04				
Less net expenditure	511.67	342.37			
		6,534.01			6,534.01
		=====			=====

HONORARY AUDITOR'S REPORT: I have examined the above Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended 31.1.1989, and the attached Balance Sheet as at that date. I confirm that they are in accordance with the books and records of the Society and the explanations given to me by the Hon. Treasurer.



 J.A. GUNN, B.A., F.C.A.

UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL SPELAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY
EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st .

<u>EXPENDITURE</u>		<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>INCOME</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>
Publications:						
Proc.	18.2	4,191.50		Grant from Univ.of Bristol	850.00	
Postage		154.08		Other receipts	<u>427.30</u>	1,277.30
L.N.R.C. Reprint		<u>283.00</u>	4,628.58	Members' Subscriptions		959.00
Tools and Equipments:						
Capital		539.11		Student Members' Subscriptions		91.00
Current		<u>10.25</u>		Union Grants: Capital		
		<u>549.36</u>		Current	<u>624.71</u>	
Less Income		<u>45.00</u>	504.36	Interest on Investments: Bank	<u>575.00</u>	1,199.71
Library			138.30	- Post Office	<u>91.28</u>	463.42
Sessional Meetings			16.00	Sales of Publications (not C.of C.Clare)	<u>372.14</u>	1,007.55
Photography			91.75	Donations		882.58
Postages (not Proc.)			113.19	Tax Refunds on Covenants		237.74
Hon.Secs. Petty Cash			8.24	Treatman Fund		800.00
Stationery and Duplicating			274.02	Sundries		<u>17.50</u>
Rates and Taxes			35.04	Excess of Expenditure over Income		511.67
Insurances: Third Party		178.40				
Property		<u>165.50</u>	343.90			
Subscriptions and Licence			43.50			
M.R.O. Donation			10.00			
Travel Money			319.66			
Treatman Fund			800.00			
Shirts			112.93			
Fafly			<u>8.00</u>			
			7,447.47			
			=====			
				'CAVES OF COUNTY CLARE' PUBLISHING ACCOUNT 1988/89		
Balance at 1st February 1988		2,952.00		Sales of 'Caves of County Clare'		229.00
		<u>2,952.00</u>		Debit Balance at 31.1.89		<u>2,723.00</u>
			=====			2,952.00
						=====

It is my unhappy task to report the death of Mic Seavers in a mountaineering accident this winter in the Alps. Mic was one of a party of four who set out to climb the Tour Ronde, a mountain in the Mont Blanc massif. They planned an outing of two days, with bivouac, but they never returned. A prolonged period of bad weather, storms with heavy snowfall, then hampered the rescue teams and only one body has so far been found.

Mic joined the UBSS as a student in 1976 and was an active caver for several years. Like many Bristol cavers he also enjoyed rock climbing, and as his caving interest waned so his climbing flourished. In recent years he progressed to mountaineering and was leader of the second of his two Himalayan expeditions. Though Mic gave up caving with the UBSS, he still enjoyed the social side of the club. His party piece (as the smallest person present) was to eject Bob Churcher (the largest) from the Hut by means of a karate throw. Bob's only possible defence, to use his full strength, risked an even greater loss of face if he had hurt Mic, as both of them well knew. We will miss Mic's very original sense of fun.

Charlie Self

Below are a few typically idiosyncratic extracts from Mic contributions to Newsletter, taken from New Series nos. 6-9.

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

A two-man caving/climbing trip to the Alps by public transport

.... Which was why two wild looking Englishmen were found in the Paris Metro making a nuisance of themselves with 200lbs of caving, climbing and camping gear. 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.

OH! IS IT CLOSED? OR: P*N*A*K*O*E RE-VISITED

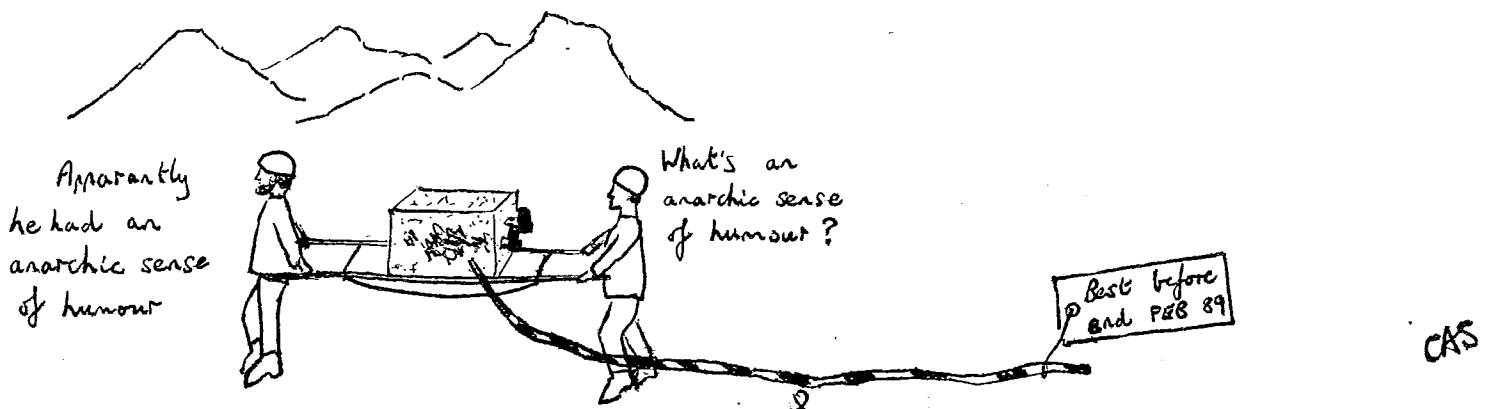
Events surrounding a middle of the night pirate trip down Penparkhole (under a housing estate in North Bristol)

Deep in the heart of D*i*t*1, in the very centre of gin and Jaguar land, there lies a secret cave known only to a small and intrepid group of speleos. There is a sudden glare of headlamps and squeal of brakes followed by "Gude Evenin' Lads, and wot may you be doing at 3 o'clock covered in mud?" "Oh! We're cavers, Officer. We've just been down P*n*a*k*o*e." "Isn't that closed?" he said challengingly. "Oh! Is it?" we retorted innocently. The outcome was we swapped names and addresses for a "Muve along there, please", and stopping only to drag C*S out of the hedge where he had been hiding, the intrepid t*i*s headed home.

BONFIRE WEEKEND

1978

To the hut - eat, drink, eat, drink, gabble, gabble.
To the Plume - drink, drink, talk, talk, drink, BULLSHIT, drink, skittle, drink.
Back to the hut - fire, fire, drink, fireworks, AAAAH, drink, music, BOP, BOP,
fire, drink, potato, gabble, potato, gabble, drink, fire,
fireworks, AAAAH, drink, drink, drink, CRAASH!
Sunday - UURGH! OW! NNNZZZ! fry, fry, gabble, gabble, drink? Bleugh! chop. chop,
Bye Bye, Bristol, hitch, home.
Is this any way to live?



UBSS ANNUAL DINNER QUIZ FOR THE CHILDREN

At the 1989 Annual Dinner, did you

Arrive at the dinner drunk	2 points
Spill wine or beer on the table	3 points
Spill wine or beer over other people	5 points
Spit wine or beer over other people	30 points
Steal a bottle of wine from a club member	20 points
Steal a bottle of wine from the restaurant	25 points
Refuse to pay corkage on your wine	20 points
Take a picture from the wall and smash it	30 points
Remain seated during the loyal toast	1 point
(standing up but not taking a drink doesn't score)	
Heckle the loyal toast	5 points
Jeer and heckle during the memorial toast to Mic Seavers	30 points

SCORE	1-3 points	You lack style
	4-19 points	You are clumsy and stupid
	20-29 points	You are dishonest and a liability to the club
	30-39 points	You are pathetic
	40-79 points	You are a total spastic wanker
	80-171 points	You have just been ejected from the Joe Oates Fan Club
	172 + points	You can't even count, you drunken bastard
REMEDIES	1-3 points	Don't worry, we're all immature once
	4-19 points	You are obviously a cheap lager drinker. Have you considered changing to a better brand?
	20-29 points	Why not try obtaining your drinks honestly
	30-39 points	Consider changing clubs to the Young Conserv- atives - they're running short of ignorant boors right now
	40-79 points	If you were to say "I'm just going outside and may be some time", nobody would try to stop you
	80 -171 points	Try suicide, before someone thinks up something more-painful
	172 + points	Just use a calculator and take plenty of aspirin

FOOTNOTE Apparantly, one of the reasons why the children were so nauseating
this year was that some little shit-for-brains was spiking their
drinks with absolute alcohol. .

THE MORNING AFTER THE DAY BEFORE,

OR,

Charterhouse Warren Farm Swallet revisited

The 70th Annual Dinner was really, contrary to some reports, a quiet, refined and almost sober occasion, which explains why some of us woke next morning with our brains ticking smoothly over to the tune of 'I wonder if ...?' Early morning tea and choccy biccys at 38 Delvin Road was greeted with the cry of 'I'd like to go and take a look at CWFS'. So, after despatching a hearty breakfast, Graham and Linda and Pat and Arthur set forth, Tony was picked up from Westbury, and we soon arrived at CWF. Lightly brushing aside the ducks swimming in the farmyard, the intrepid explorers ...

At the swallet the first thing noticed was that the fixed ladder has gone from the open shaft, while the cover to the shored shaft is unlocked, so don't let your offspring play just there, unless well insured. Round the swallet, the moderate sized (say 15-20 cm) boulders dug from the shaft were in evidence in the spoil banks, as were the shallow depression on the south, up-valley side of the swallet and the slightly higher, level area on the north, down-valley side, which overlies the unexplored passages in the roof of Mitchell's Chamber through which Pete Smart thought the main bone bearing sediments may have entered the cave.

Walking on down the dry valley we soon noticed a series of 3 or 4 parallel low banks, say 15 cm high, < 1 m wide, and about 30 m apart, crossing the valley transversely. In the valley bottom each bank had acted as a sediment dam so that a positive lynchet had formed. On the west side of the valley we traced the banks up to the crest of the ridge between it and the next dry valley, while on its east side we followed them for 250 m until they disappeared beneath the stone wall at the east side of the field. Looking over the wall their continuation was not immediately obvious, although a suspicious slight hump showed up on the skyline ahead.

However the moment we went into the next field Graham picked up the line of the bank he was following just beyond the pond and we were then able to follow them ENE right across the field to near the farm. The total length of the banks seen is about 800 m and they appear to define a series of fields roughly parallel to the (? early 19th century) wall on the north side of the modern fields. To have survived modern cultivation it seems likely that these banks have a stone core and are the remains of old field walls.

The only similar field system previously known on Mendip (a phone-call to the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments suggests that our one isn't known) is on the other side of Cheddar Gorge (NGR ST 482537). On Dartmoor they have been shown to originate in the Early Bronze Age (although they may have gone on in use for many centuries), and to have been associated with cereal cultivation. At a guess the laying out of this field system may well have coincided with the appearance of the intrusive style of Bronze Age pottery known as 'Biconical Urn', which is represented locally by

finds from the Tynings Farm barrows dug by Porthos Taylor for UBSS 60 years ago.

These fields suggest a possible explanation for the bone bearing debris flow filling in the cave. It may be that at a time during the Early-Middle Bronze Age when the fields were under extensive cultivation, flash flood episodes like ones recently reported from the South Downs in Sussex, caused fluidization of the unprotected surface soil covering the sides of the dry valley, which swept away rubbish from nearby occupation and perhaps also some burials.

Without some such explanation it is difficult to see why debris flow would have occurred in a valley with a longitudinal gradient of 1 in 30, less than 2°, at a time when the surface should otherwise have been protected by vegetation, contrary to the situation obtaining under peri-glacial conditions during the Pleistocene. For what it is worth, the Great Flood of 1968 doesn't seem to have caused erosion in the valley probably because it was under long ley as it is now.

At the very least it will clearly be necessary to look carefully at the interpretation of the finds from the cave and the entrance shaft, difficult though this is, although it ought to be easier when the promised radiocarbon dates are known. For the time being my inclination would be to be cautious about ritual interpretations of the archaeological material from the site. Anyway, read the report in Proceedings (Vol. 18, No. 2) and see what you think (For fields see Brit. Archaeol. Repts. 48).

In the meantime several further things need doing. These include a survey of the field system, preferably with an EDM, systematic auguring and sampling of the sediments within the dry valley, particularly in the level area north of the swallet where they may have been dammed by one of the banks, perhaps followed by selective excavation, and careful examination of the artifacts and bones for evidence of transport in a liquid mud flow.

Finally one minor point. The correct grid reference for the swallet is ST 4936 5457.

Arthur ApSimon

Letter in the Times

A Saint for Lawyers?

from Mr R.G.Loosemore.

Sir. In his 'A Second Miscellany-at-Law,' Sir Robert Megarry quotes from a work by William Carr, published in 1688, which relates how a Lawyer named Evona went to Rome to ask the Pope to give lawyers a patron saint.

Evona was advised to go blindfold into the Church of St John de Latera, and to take as patron the saint represented by the first statue that he embraced. When Evona took off his blindfold he found that he was embracing the devil on whom St. Michael was standing.

The 21st International Association of Hydrogeologists Congress
10th - 15th October, 1988

The venue for the 21st congress of the IAH was Guilin city which is located some 500 km north-west of Hong Kong in the southern part of the Peoples Republic of China in Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region. The city covers an area of approximately 525 km² and has a population of about 400 000. It was described by Han Yu, a poet of the Tang Dynasty, as a city where "rivers wind like ribbons of blue silk and hills lie like hairpins of green jade". The rivers are now more brown than blue, whilst the hills are often obscured by thick haze, due partly to the sub-tropical climate, and partly due to pollution. These hills are the karst towers which have made the area famous. Within Guilin they can best be appreciated from the view point at the top of Piled Silk Hill, so named because of the resemblance of the rock strata to piles of silk. The city is also famous for its show caves which include Reed Flute Cave, Returned Pearl Cave, and the larger Seven Star Cave. All three caves have many wall paintings depicting local scenes, and are on the whole well decorated with speleothems. However, the beauty of the latter are often marred by the multi-coloured lights used to illuminate the caves. As well as visiting the caves in Guilin, the China International Travel Service can arrange visits to local schools and colleges, silk mills, botanical and geological institutes, and even a tyre factory.

Most of the conference delegates arrived in the city by air from Hong Kong, a flight which takes about an hour and with good weather affords an excellent view of the local scenery. On arrival at the small airport in Guilin we were treated to their "all expense spared" baggage delivery system. This consisted of two large trailers which were loaded with our luggage and parked in front of us. It was then up to individual passengers to climb up and help themselves. Customs checks were however very brief, unless you happened to be Chinese, in which case you were thoroughly searched. Conference delegates were accommodated in the karst institute, and in local hotels. Unfortunately, the hotel that some of us has booked into was not quite finished, so we were put into an alternative. This proved to be excellent with air conditioned rooms, fridge, colour TV and good service. The food in the hotel was also of a very good standard.

The conference which was specifically concerned with karst hydrology and karst environment protection was attended by some 380 delegates from 34 countries, with representatives from both research institutes and consulting hydrological firms. The keynote papers on the first day of the conference were held by themselves in the main lecture theatre, after which four sessions were run simultaneously in different rooms. Unfortunately, this meant missing some presentations, and also because of time keeping problems many of the lectures started and finished at different times. Only two of the papers were presented in Chinese, and for these translation facilities were available (only into English). However, no English - Chinese translations were available for the locals. The large number of different nationalities present ensured that results from work in a number of environments were presented. These were divided into the following groupings: strategy of comprehensive planning and development of karst area; general karstology; regional distribution pattern and systematic analysis of karst groundwater; parameter and modelling of karst groundwater; geophysical and remote sensing techniques; isotopic approach; karst geochemistry, groundwater tracing and thermal mineral water in karst areas; water pollution problems; mine dewatering in karst areas; leakage from reservoirs in karst areas; surface collapse problems; karst hydrogeological maps; hydrogeological problems in non-karst areas.

In total 263 papers are written in the two volumes of the conference proceedings, the reference for which is given below. They can be obtained from the Karst Institute in Guilin for US \$20 (excluding postage and packing).

A series of posters concerning various aspects of karst were also on display during the conference, and several scientific films were shown on one evening.

A break from the conference was arranged for the fourth day. This consisted of a boat trip along an 83 km stretch of the Lijang River between Guilin and Yanshuo, the return trip being made by coach. The river runs through some spectacular tower karst scenery, with many large cave entrances being visible from the boat. Other colour was provided by the variety of fishing boats using the river, along with house boats, one of which was anchored in the entrance to a large cave. As well as this trip a number of pre and post congress fields trips were organised for those delegates who wished to see more of China, and its karst landscapes.

The author would like to thank the Tratman Fund, the Natural Environment Research Council and his grandmother for their support.

The reference for the conference proceedings is:

Proceedings of the IAH 21st Congress, 1988, Karst Hydrogeology and Karst Environment Protection, Geological Publishing House, Beijing, China, 1261pp.

ISBN 7-116-00351-7/p.302

Steve Hobbs

THE NATIONAL CAVING ASSOCIATION - A.G.M. 1989

The year the N.C.A.'s A.G.M. took place on the 18th March 1989, in the Pump Rooms in Matlock Bath.

The C.S.C.C.'s delegation comprised of Linda Wilson, Andy Farrant, Alan (Butch) Butcher and Pat Cronin.

We left Bristol at 7.30 a.m. and arrived in Matlock in time for the start having stopped off for breakfast en route. After meeting up with Pat, we took up battle stations as far away from the C.N.C.C. as possible.

The actual A.G.M. contained a great deal of relevant (and lots of irrelevant) material to do with caving and caving politics. It was attended by all the regional councils in the C.S.C.C., the C.N.C.C., Derbyshire, Devonshire and the Cambrian Caving Councils as well as other bodies such as the B.C.R.A. and the British Cave Research Council, the C.D.G., the William Pengelly Cave Studies Trust and the Ghar Parau Foundation.

Of interest to the general caving populace was the Equipment Committee report on the rope testing project. This involved testing every single S.R.T. rope available and the results should be out soon, depending on finance and whether or not the manufacturers decide to sue the N.C.A. The N.C.A. is also investigating the problem of Radon Gas in caves, (if you call it a problem - depends if you are a chain smoking, commercial Derbyshire caver or not!!). They hope to set up a working party to organise future research and to advise on the health implications for commercial cavers and cave guides and also the application of the Health and Safety at Work Act.

Other exciting items on the Agenda were a report from the working party on N.C.A. structure (see Descent 86, p.19 and 87 p.36 - 'National Nonense') and associated changes to the Constitution. This, however, was prevented by the Derbyshire Caving Council and, as a result, an E.G.M. has had to be arranged for the 17th June. Anyone fancying a day out with a difference and who doesn't want to go to Yorkshire or the Wessex Challenge, then the N.C.A. E.G.M. is for you.

The A.G.M. finished at around 5p.m. (with a normal N.C.A. Meeting thrown in for good measure) - suffice to say the coffee and biscuits were much appreciated!

A.F. 13

WHY WE WENT TO WAMENA

or (in deference to Graham's views on expeditions)

MY HOLIDAY IN THE CANNIBAL HIGHLANDS

We went to Wamena to look for caves. Where's Wamena you ask? Well, for geographical dimwits, Wamena is the main town in the highlands of Irian Jaya, just to the left (west) of the border with Papua New Guinea; apparently it's the largest city (sic) accessible only by air. Actually you could walk but it would be rather hard work.

Anyway, why Wamena? Well, 'cos it's more exciting than Yorkshire, more rugged than Derbyshire, more hospitable than Ystragynlais and the local stone age tribes are substantially more advanced than the CSCC (is this a challenge? - ed. "Red Dragon"). It has also got rather a lot of limestone which goes up to over 14,000 feet and has resurgences several thousand feet below, when you can find them.

In addition, it's a long way away and therefore qualifies for some financial assistance from such august and generous bodies as the Ghar Parau Foundation, Sports Council and Tratman Fund to which I owe considerable thanks for helping to subsidise my holiday. (For the benefit of younger UBSS members I would stress that I am now in the habit of applying to Trat's memory for such help, having been advised to do so by certain other elder statespersons of the Society whose valiant efforts to push back the frontiers of knowledge from their base in a holiday cottage on Doolin Strand have been so subsidised for some years - thanks for the tip, lads [and lass]).

Anyway, now you know where and why, what did we do..? Well, we didn't do any drinking (sorry, I know this is a serious breach of UBSS tradition) because the Baliem Valley is dry (so was our flight out on PIA; what abstemious chaps we are). The local people have a bad habit of biffing each other, even without the inducement of drunken stupor and in the month before we arrived 18 people were clubbed to death: last year 4 Javanese climbers were ambushed and had their limbs hacked off, consequently they suffered an acute attack of death. But that's a different story and as a BCRA secretary in retirement, I'm not supposed to talk politics.

So, no booze. We started to do some work (yes, work...) We wanted to go up the largest local hill, Gunung Trikora, to have a look for the holes in the ground which we had seen from an air reconnaissance. Unfortunately the local police chief (an Indonesian - they call the shots in Irian, sorry, what an unfortunate choice of words) wouldn't let us go there 'cos an Austrian paraglider had jumped off the top last year

and broken his ankles, he'd forgotten that the air is thinner at about 15000 feet, jolly silly. Anyway the police/army had been very embarrassed by all this and wouldn't let any tourists go back up there. Andy Eavis spent a long time explaining that we were international roughly toughies who were there to do "work", but Graham's letter on behalf of the CSCC, explaining that we were really on a sponsored holiday, had obviously got to him and he wouldn't give way. Paul Seddon (who is even older than Pete Smart), Colin Boothroyd and I got bored by all this and hitched a lift on a missionary plane to a delightful village called Kwiawagi at the highest airstrip in New Guinea.

The flight was very exciting and it was reassuring to know that God was on our side as we watched the pilot consulting his hand written book of notes to check on the approach to the strip. After landing and giving thanks in the time honoured manner (except that the great white telephone was missing and so we had to improvise and just throw up on the grass) we were met by a group of villagers and the pilot left us with a cheery wave: it was at this point that we realised that our helpful guide/interpreter, Sam, spoke even less comprehensible English than Marco: needless to say, we spoke no Indonesian.

Anyway it was quaint watching Paul being photographed in the company of the villagers. He was dressed in regulation holiday (sponsored) gear - thank you Mountain Equipment - and they were dressed in the world's least functional clothing, pointed gourd penis sheaths. At a lower altitude these are quite sensible, they keep the flies off your willie and allow you to impress the ladies without revealing the inevitable reality of what lies beneath... However at 9500ft, where it is cold, they don't do much to keep the wearer warm (editorial point - they do line them with possum fur). The ladies of course, not having the need for such garments, wear grass skirts except where the missionaries have got to them and then they wear a wonderful display of cast off Euro-clothing.

Over the next three days we were exposed to a continual display of a local subsistence society adapting to the 20th century and the value systems of American evangelical missions; namely we got ripped off at every opportunity. Nothing got stolen you understand, but, oh boy, do those guys know how to do business.

Finally, after much angst (this is a word which the Secretaries will probably need to look up in the dictionary; check the meaning of democracy while you're there will you chaps and send it to the NCA) we managed to get ourselves, tentage, gear etc up to a major bench at about 12000ft. (I'm sticking to imperial measurements 'cos I realise that this article

might reach the CSCC committee and I know they have trouble with modern ideas). We set up camp in a nice doline and ate partly cooked cus-cus, well that's what they say it was, as an (ex) zoologist I have the authority to say it was a rat, and a rare one too (rarer now...ed.). We spent the night sitting round the campfire listening to the porters singing war songs in close harmony.

It was jolly cold that night and, since they had only fur lined dick-sticks, the porters spent the night eating and singing to stay warm. By the morning they had no food left and we'd had no sleep. Wonderful. We then set off to look for a "big cave", only 4 hours walk away. Because it was so close, I suggested that we carry our own sacs to save the cost of a porter (75p per day - I used to be a UBSS treasurer, you know). 10 hours later we reached the cave, 10 hours of Seddon aggressively murmuring "seventy five pence" in my ear. With a lot of effort Colin managed to get his head into the dark zone, but only because his body was blocking out the evening sun. (Such a find on Mendip would have qualified for a double page feature in Descent, in Devon it would have merited a whole issue - ed. "Northern Caves"). On the way back the porters set fire to the bivvy.

The next day we had a big row. The local guys had renegotiated their contract with us, however they hadn't bothered to involve us in the discussion. This resulted in a very long meeting which got nowhere (and I'm used to those having been on the NCA executive) and in Colin calling their bluff and going off on his own. "They're bound to follow me, they'll never let me go off up here on my own; too risky". But they did.

Paul and I, knowing that on holiday it is de rigour to go sightseeing, went for a walk in the rain through thick scrub and over some very, very sharp limestones. Then we went down to Kwiawagi again and met Colin. Here we had a small problem in that, being 5 days walk from Wamena with no money or food, the locals decided they didn't like us and wouldn't talk to us. Fortunately the Missionaries came to our aid again and we were flown out, doing an exchange with DC and Sheila whose charm and diplomacy recreated good relations.

Meanwhile the others had got up to G.Trikora, assisted by a bunch of armed Indonesian guards who helpfully prodded the locals with their rifle tips to encourage them along. Unfortunately they were only allowed two days and the since the walk-in takes three, they weren't able to discover much.

After that we split up to cover a wider area. Tony White, Tim and Pam Fogg flew off to a small village to the south east, famous for being the site of the last case of the lo-

cals eating Europeans (ten years ago). Paul, Andy and I did a recce walk around an area of cone karst (if you aren't familiar with this phrase, consult Smart or Whittaker but don't forget to allow an hour and take a note-pad). However, remembering that grant aid is only made for subsidised holidays we ensured that we didn't work too hard and stuck to the easy tracks, all of which were on sandstone, and so we avoided any caves.

We couldn't avoid caving entirely however, and so at the end of the trip we went north to the Wolo/Ilugwa valley, a beautiful area with some really nice people who had been almost wiped out in a massacre in 1977. En route we dropped a few shafts (this is a technical phrase which is probably meaningless to those who cave only on Mendip, unless they interpret it as being something odd which could be done after indulging in a sexual act) and would have dropped a few more except that we encountered some avaricious landowners who demanded exorbitant access fees (have I heard of this somewhere before? - ed. "Derbyshire Caver"). At Wolo we had an exciting time looking at a big sink in which the water level had a nasty habit of changing by 4 metres (sorry, CSCC, slipped there) in about 3 hours.

We also did some really good caving which involved lots of water, technical rigging, superb streamways (with flood debris all over the roof) and a dead pig in an unavoidable duck - but if you want to hear about that you'll have to come to the lecture. (By the way, Hon. Sec's, I offered, when is it..?)

D. Willis



WHAT, CHANGE THE PAGE SIZE OF PROCEEDINGS?! OVER MY DEAD...!

Since time immemorial, before the memory of man/woman runneth, at least 65 years, the page size of our Proceedings has been what it is now, hence any idea of changing it would be hasty, pandering to Trotskyite deviationist tendencies, provocative of cardiac arrest among librarians, totally unnecessary, ... etc. What, I hear the defenders of ancient traditions cry (lie no. 1) is the present page size, and what is your specious excuse for change?

Well, present page size is what is called Royal Octavo, 240 by 151 mm or approx. 9.5 by 6 in., as trimmed for binding. The type page excluding folios (page nos to you) and running heads is 189 by 118 mm, in printers jargon 45 ems high by 28 ems wide (An em, strictly a 12 pt em, is the width of an 'm' in 12 point type; 72 points make an inch). From Vol. Vol.18.1, 1987, Proceedings has been set in 9 point on 11 pt type, giving 54 lines and about 660 words per full page, or rather less if paragraphs and headings are reckoned in.

So what's wrong with the present page?

Basically two things. First, being tall and narrow, it's not a good page for presenting illustrations. Too many tables and illustrations have to be printed sideways, always annoying, while the narrow width means that quite moderate sized drawings have to be excessively reduced, or that extra fold-outs are necessary, especially for cave surveys.

Second the page now looks cramped and the type line is not easy to read because it is too long for the type size. The reason for this is historical. Up to about 1972, Vol.13.1, the type page was 42 ems high by 26 ems wide (the traditional width for Royal Octavo), and the text was set in 10 pt type with 2 pt spaces (leads) between lines (hence 10 on 12 pt). A nice looking page, easy to read, but alas only containing about 490-500 words.

With printing becoming more expensive this layout looked wasteful, so editors since then have looked for ways of getting more words on the page. 9 on 11 pt type in 1973 was one way, then the page height was increased to 45 ems, finally with Vol.18.1, the width was increased to 28 ems, getting a lot more words on the page, but at the cost of making them tiresome to scan, - a well known thing, not a personal whim.

So what alternative do you suggest?

Well, the page unquestionably needs to be wider, but not appreciably taller because this upsets the librarians who can't get the new size on their bookshelves. This rules out A4, which anyway would be too floppy, and cut-down A4, which is nice, but bigger than we need. A wider page means a still longer type line, so if it is to scan easily, it means going to a 2 column format which many journals now use.

One solution would be a Crown Quarto page, which when trimmed for binding would measure 245 by 188 mm, that is only 5mm taller than the present page but 37 mm, 1.5 in wider. The type area would be 189 by 149 mm, giving 49 text lines in two columns 17 ems wide, making about 770-820 words per page in 10 on 11 pt type. A page

like this would look very much better, read easier and be much better for illustrations than the present one. There is one possible snag, for a given content, the volume would be thinner, making for problems in binding if the number of pages dropped much below 100. There are other possibilities, but I think this would be the best for us - starting with Vol. 19.

What would Trat and Oliver have said?

No! And they did, which is a very good reason for never changing anything. So lets keep it as it always has been, including the lovely red covers which make it such fun guessing which number you've picked up and give free eye tests for authors reading their Notes For. Anyway I guess I'm too new a member to start suggesting changes. See you at the 100th ...

Arthur ApSimon

SHORTS

"A. SPARROW" UP THE PUB ONE DAY
WAS HEARD TO TWITTER ON AND SAY...
"YOU WANT TO DO WHAT'S DONE IN AUSSIE
AND PULL THEM SHORTS FROM OUT THE CLOSSIE"

FOR SHORTS HE RECKONED IF USED RIGHTLY
WOULD STOP WETSUITS COMING UNSIGHTLY
HIS AUSSIE SHORTS IDEA IS DARING
TO HELP PREVENT BARE BUTTOCKS GLARING

SO WHILST WE ALL HOLE WETSUITS ROTTEN
WE'RE SAFE IN KNOWING THAT ANDY'S BOTTOM
IS STOPPED FROM SUCH WORLDLY EXPOSURE
BY SUCH A NATTYFIED ENCLOSURE

IF ONLY HE'D LET US KNOW EARLIER
OUR CAVING TRIPS WOULD BE LESS CHILLIER
PERHAPS WE COULD BE ON THIS ACT
IF ONLY HE'D ANNOUNCE THE FACT

THIS NEWS OF HIS IS HOT TO HANDLE
TIS AS THE "NIFE CELL" STRAIGHT FROM CANDLE
BUT WHAT TO DO JUST FOR THE BEST
THIS INFORMATION MUST REACH PRESS

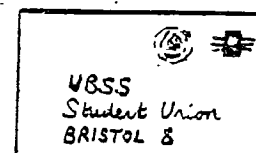
THIS LITTLE "GEM" MUST NOT STAY DORMANT
AS CAVING TIPS AS THIS SHOW PORTENT
TO PUBLISH IT AND KEEP US DECENT
WHERE BEST FOR IMPACT BUT IN THE "DESCENT"

K. WILLS
(A.C.)

The latest in nife tips coming soon!

Letters

ED. ACHE



Dear Charlie,

It is certainly useful to make sure that the editor of Proceedings knows what sort of paper is preferred by some of his readers. He does, though, have to achieve a balance between the interests of all individual members whilst ensuring that the whole content is up to the scholarly standard expected of Proceedings. As you may expect, he receives vehement pleas for 'no archaeology', 'no cave plans' (or 'holiday' accounts), 'no history', and even 'no science' — which, if complied with, would leave a rather slim volume.

A more positive and constructive approach stems from the fact that there are many people who think that each of these subjects is worthwhile.

To turn to your particular 'hate', Charlie, of 'history', and should we be constrained by the dictionary definition of spelaeology. Surface archaeology is not within that definition, yet we have published that since 1923 because our members have studied it and it has some bearing on cave archaeology. So we are free to examine the question of defining our scope on its merits. Is not the less restrictive term 'cave study' better than 'cave science'? It describes our normal scope and does not preclude the history of cave science (e.g. the Borch paper) or of cave tourism. Many of the printed national and international journals abroad (e.g. Die Höhle edited by Trimmel, Grotte d'Italia edited by Forti, and the International Journal of Speleology) include history as an integral part of their range of papers.

There is much to be said for increasing the breadth of Proceedings, provided its depth and quality do not suffer. There may be some who do not value the added subjects (which were not altogether absent in Trat's time), but equally there are others who do. Provided the issues get bigger (which they have) and can be paid for by attracting more donations and sponsorship (which they have), then no-one loses, some individual readers gain, the reputation of Proceedings extends into a wider field, and altogether it becomes more healthy. It also has more resilience to withstand temporary shortfalls in the production of papers in its more conventional fields.

What really controls the contents is the papers submitted for publication. The problem is that only a limited amount of worthwhile scientific work is done by members. Of that, some is never written up despite encouragement; and other work is published in larger circulation journals because of the cruel influence of academic advancement. What happened to the Sally's Rift dating, other U-Th dating, Mangle Hole, Picken's Hole, and Burrington water tracing?

It is in your (plural) hands. Ensure that, whether or not you are on the editorial committee, you write or cause to be written the sort of papers you wish to see. I had looked forward to a promised one on the karst of northern Greenland by C.A. Self, but it seems to have melted. Nevertheless, your letter can take its place in the bibliography when we come to your (non-biographical) obituary.

Adversarially yours,

Treasurer

* When this letter was written (in January) I knew that a well-wisher had offered the Society a donation sufficient to ensure that Proceedings 'broke even'. For some reason this offer was not taken up by the Treasurer, and the shortfall resulting was reported at the AGM.

Dear Editor

RECOLLECTIONS OF MOSSDALE

I noticed that Mossdale was mentioned in the Newsletter and I wondered if present U.B.S.S. members would find these recollections of a trip in the '50s helpful.

In 1957 Trevor Shaw, Pat Tangye, Rosemary Mines and Mick Balister decided to try and explore this cave at Easter to see whether it lived up to its sinister reputation. (R.D. Leakey's account, survey and recommendations in Cave Science, June 1947, were read religiously).

As usual, the planning took much time and thought and at times the heretical thought was voiced that it might not be worth it. M.B. had just entered the world of British Industry - paid jobs are sometimes necessary to finance the real work of caving - and found he could take Good Friday off for religious reasons. Some gear was sent ahead by train and a combination of trains and a private car brought four intrepid explorers to the appointed meeting place in Settle.

Cymmie, (i.e. E. Simpson, recorder of the British Speleological Assoc.) had reached the stage in life where he could sit in his room surrounded by books and papers with his leg stuck on a stool and direct others to do the caving, while he enthused about the potential of Mossdale with that passion peculiar to those who do not actually go underground.

The gear had arrived - good old British Railways - and camp was efficiently set up. It was really lovely at first up on the moor, fine and sunny - and the entrance to the cave was easily found and the first part explored. The cave seemed almost friendly until one noticed Guinness froth on the roof of the first chamber!

Next day the attack was launched and a goodly sections was explored but it was certainly a mysterious place. Water was everywhere and new sections were often reached by a sudden push through a 'drown or glory'. It seemed, however, to lack the sophistication of a trip through Swildons or Eastwater, with a positive end to a trip.

In any case, after one day, rain set in and surface caving seemed more appropriate. For striking camp warm weather returned.

I think a major attempt to probe its secrets should be reserved for a summer of extreme drought, the risk of being trapped is severe. Just before we entered, it had almost been flooded to the roof. A hut or farm close by the entrance for dry gear work and food would also help. There seems to be no problem about gating this cave or limiting access - nature does it alone.

Except for the reason for exploring and solving any mystery - because it is there - why go, If it is wet and lacking in the beauty which is the reward of Stoke Lane's Sump 1. Perhaps though it would be nice to make it friendly instead of evil, for with understanding, fear is destroyed and some access scheme to assure maximum safety for its explorers, evolved.

Ref: Cave Science, June 1947 R.D. Leakey 'The Caves of Mossdale Scar'.

Rosemary Balister.

Dear Editor,

I hope that being an 'old codger' who admits to being the author of a cave history paper in the proceedings, does not mean that I am biased (at least not too much!). However, I was wondering just how representative are the views of Charlie Self and his telephone contacts. The average caver's interest in historical articles seems to be reflected in the response to a questionnaire by DESCENT and published in the October 1988 issue:- 35% were 'very interested' in cave history; 51% were 'quite interested' and only 14% were 'not very interested'.

Given that there has been an increase in historical papers in proceedings in recent years, this has largely been offset by the rise in the number of pages per issue:- 90 pages in 1984 to 166 pages in 1988. In fact the 'cave science' content has been fairly constant. The level of field or 'above ground' archaeological notes and papers has dropped remarkably in the past 10 years but perhaps all of these factors are due to the level of interest shown by would-be contributors rather than the selectivity of the editorial committee!

Personally, I enjoy reading every type of article in what is still the best journal of its type in the country.

Yours objectively,

(sgd) Bob Williams.

GLOSSARY OF CAVING TERMS

SWALLET - Technique to be mastered in the pub.

CURTAINS - When you break your leg the wrong side of the Darren entrance crawl.

PRUSSICK - The feeling you get 200' up a rope.

THRUTCHING - Trying to have a piss in a one piece Warmbac wetsuit.

DUCK - Recommended action to be taken at UBSS dinners, especially if Oates is around.

RESURGENCE - The result of too many Swallets.

DIFFICULT FREE CLIMB.- The steps into the barn at Swildons.

S.R.T - Silly rope techniques, occasionally seen practised in Yorkshire, or at Faffy.

FREE DIVING - Controlled drowning.

SPELEOLOGIST - Small hairy mammal found commonly in pubs.

LIFELINE - Ask Joe.

BEDDING PLANE - What the old lags like to try with freshers.

DIG - What a Mendip caver does when the pubs are shut.

EXPOSURE SUIT - Andy Farrant's old wetsuit.

POT - Substance with similar effects to Charlies mushrooms.

THE DYNAMIC DUO, PLUS THE AXBRIDGE
CAVING GROUP. PRESENT THE



THE MEGA BAT MOBILE RACE

Time is running out for the Dynamic Duo...
The Task? - To get as much of the magical
chemical that disappears into Swildons Hole, on Darkest
Mendip, back to Bat HQ, in the Bat Mobile. (Must be
capable of carrying 2 buckets of water: wheels optional.)

PRIDDY GREEN + VILLAGE HALL 6.30 pm 17TH JUNE 1989

TICKETS £3.50 from Andy Farrant, Wills Hall (or Crockers.)
or Carole (0934) 742038

Preferably fancy Dress - Butcombe Essential

OTHER EVENTS :- STOMP, PRIZE DRAW, RESCUE GAMES, SOFA RUGBY
WELLIE WANCING, DISCO, FOOD + BAR ALSO AVAILABLE 'TIL LATE