



# UBSS

NEWSLETTER VOL. 3 NO. 1

## EDITORIAL

Some members of the UBSS will already be aware of the setting up of the Oliver Lloyd Memorial Fund, whilst others will be sent letters in the near future. For all those people who read this newsletter but are not members, an article relating to the fund is included in this issue.

Dates for activities next term are as follows ( but may be subject to minor changes ) :

Faffy : 2nd - 3rd October, 1986

Freshers weekend at Burrington : 3rd - 4th October. Transport will be available to and from the hut on both the Saturday and the Sunday.

Freshers film show : Wed. 8th October at 8pm in the Spelaeo rooms. Probably slides from UBSS expeditions, 1986.

China Caves film show : Friday 17th October at 6pm in Chemistry lecture theatre 1.

South Wales weekend : 18th - 19th October.

Yorkshire weekend : 13th - 15th November.

: 11th - 13th December.

UBSS bonfire night : Saturday 8th November.

The first sessional meeting of 1986 will take place on 29th October at 8pm in the Spelaeo rooms.

Any further details may be gained from Steve Hobbs ( tel. ( 0272 ) 303030 ext. 3829, or 735486 )

Treasurer's Note

Graham Mullan

In this newsletter you will find the Society's accounts for 1985/6. It is my intention to publish these in future as soon as possible after the A.G.M. This is for the benefit of those members who cannot attend that meeting. What they will not get is the detailed report given at the meeting by Desmond, merely this brief note by me. The Society's position is by no means as bad as the rather large deficit on the Income & Expenditure account seems to show. Much of this was due to some unusual and, hopefully, unrepeatable circumstances. However, the cost of printed publications continues to rise, and action to increase income must be taken if the present high quality of 'Proceedings' is to be maintained. Various plans are presently under consideration by the committee, and the support of all members is to be hoped for.

Could all members who have yet to do so; please return to me as soon as possible all subscriptions/banker's orders/tax forms etc. THIS MEANS YOU!

UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL SPELAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY  
 INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st JANUARY 1986

	£		£	
<u>EXPENDITURE</u>			<u>INCOME</u>	
Publications:			Publications:	
Offprints 17:1	628.14		Grant from Univ. of Bristol	850.00
Proc. 17:2	2,377.79		Other receipts	<u>167.00</u>
Postage 17:2	<u>82.82</u>	3,088.75		1,017.00
Sessional Meetings			Members' Subscriptions	665.00
			Student Members' Subscriptions	54.30
Tools and Equipment: Capital	141.60			
Current	<u>8.83</u>	150.43	Union Grants: Capital	149.10
			Current	<u>500.00</u>
Library: Capital	77.75		Interest on Investments: Bank	278.31
Current	<u>76.27</u>	154.02	P.O.	<u>68.00</u>
				346.31
Museum	44.81		Sales of Publications (not C. of C. Clare)	1,092.60
Photography	-			
Postages (not Proc.)	164.59		Donations	120.00
Hon. Secretaries' Petty Cash	11.62		Tax Refunds on Covenants	125.00
Stationery and Duplicating	169.89			
Rates and Taxes	22.97		Treatman Fund	600.00
Insurances: Third Party	60.00		Photography (sale of equipment)	<u>30.00</u>
Property	<u>93.04</u>	153.04		4,699.31
Subscriptions and Licence	31.00			
M.R.O. Donation	4.00		Excess of Expenditure over Income	556.08
Travel Money	317.95			
Treatman Fund	600.00			
Freshers' Squash	30.75			
Sundries (net)	83.03			
Water damage Insurance	228.54			
		<u>5,255.39</u>		

'CAVES OF COUNTY CLARE' PUBLISHING ACCOUNT 1985/86

Balance at 1st February 1985	4,557.96		Sales of 'Caves of County Clare'	542.09
Advertising	8.10		Debit Balance at 31.1.86	<u>4,023.97</u>
				4,566.06
		<u>4,566.06</u>		

UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL SPELAEOLGICAL SOCIETY  
BALANCE SHEET AT 31st JANUARY 1986

<u>Hut Fund</u>	£	£		£	£
Balance at 31.1.85	473.98		<u>Investments</u>	3,000.00	
Less net expenditure	<u>272.07</u>	201.91	Deposit a/c	<u>468.00</u>	
			P.O. Invest. a/c		3,468.00
<u>Printed Publications Fund</u>					
Balance at 31.1.85		280.00	<u>Current a/c</u>		228.27
<u>Library Fund</u>			<u>Cash in Hand</u>		
Balance at 31.1.85	78.00		Hon. Secretaries	6.77	
Add net income	<u>41.00</u>	119.00	Hon. Treasurers	<u>29.15</u>	35.92
<u>G.B. Cave Capital Fund</u>			<u>Debtors</u>		175.00
Balance at 31.1.85	28.11				
Add net income	<u>17.65</u>	45.76			
<u>Lamb Leer Fund</u>					
Balance at 31.1.85	7.19				
Less net expenditure	<u>7.19</u>	-			
<u>Water Damage Insurance a/c</u>					
Balance at 31.1.85	231.25				
Less net expenditure	<u>231.25</u>	-			
<u>Caves of County Clare a/c</u>					
Advance for Publication	7,000.00				
Less net expenditure not yet recovered	<u>4,023.97</u>	2,976.03			
<u>Income and Expenditure a/c</u>					
Balance at 31.1.85	840.57				
Less net expenditure	<u>556.08</u>	284.49			
		<u>3,907.19</u>			<u>3,907.19</u>

HONORARY AUDITOR'S REPORT: I have examined the above Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended 31.1.1986, 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. GINN, B.A., F.C.A.



## University of Bristol Speleological Society

Prof. R. J. G. Savage  
Department of Geology,  
The University,  
BRISTOL BS8 1RJ

### OLIVER LLOYD MEMORIAL FUND

The UBSS Committee has resolved to establish a fund to commemorate the memory of our late Treasurer and Editor, Oliver Lloyd. In view of the importance Oliver attached to the Proceedings we see it as highly appropriate that we use a substantial part of the annual interest on the fund's capital to help with the shortfall in publication costs.

Since the founding of the UBSS in 1919 we have published 50 issues of the Proceedings. Its standing in speleological and archaeological circles is very high, because of both the quality of the contents - it is one of the very few refereed journals in the caving world - and the quality of the production.

As we are a student society, student members receive free copies as of right and the price to others is kept low to ensure adequate sales among cavers. The University provides an annual grant in aid of publication and from time to time other small grants can be obtained. But with the present stringency in academic finances there can be no increase from these sources; nevertheless printing costs continue to rise.

The quantity of good material suitable for publication continues to increase and it would be sad to have to reject any of it solely on grounds of poverty. The 1986 issue is expected to be large with a second group of papers on Gough's Cave in addition to other caving contents. In the coming year we shall be facing a shortfall of around in £500 in the printing bill. In attempts to avert this, Oliver last year recommended increased membership subscriptions, we are currently seeking advertising and other sources of grants.

Speleoes, present and past, may not all realise the enormous extent to which Oliver, like Trat before him, contributed to the Society's finances, anonymously and unobtrusively. We sadly miss that hidden funding. The Tratman Request is specifically to help students with caving expeditions and is not available for use in publishing the Proceedings.

We aim to raise £7500. The annual interest from such a fund would be of immense value to the society. So if you are still active in caving, or if you are still a keen reader of the familiar red backed Proceedings, or if you have a nostalgia for the good old days with Oliver, do please give us your support in perpetuating the memory of a very much loved speleao. Cheques small and large should be made out to *Oliver Lloyd Memorial Fund*, and sent to me at the above address.

Bob Savage  
UBSS President.

THE CHARTERHOUSE CAVING COMMITTEE A.G.M., 18th APRIL 1986.

Linda Wilson.

The meeting was held in the back room of the Hunters & all member clubs were represented, with the exception of the Cerberus & the B.E.C. Dave Cave-Ayland (the Hon.Sec.) was Chairman & Paul Hodge represented Bristol Waterworks.

At first, the meeting was largely uneventful & the majority of the business was transacted rapidly & amicably. The Charterhouse Centre's membership was renewed without objection & for a change there was no controversy with regard to G.B. The main point to arise in connection with G.B. was that over the past couple of months problems have arisen due to keys left in the blockhouse being picked up by the wrong party. On one occasion a thorough mix-up happened with at least two parties getting the wrong key, one party getting no key at all & a key being left hanging in the blockhouse at the end of the day ! On the second occasion, a party was left locked in when their key disappeared & their escape attempts damaged the door as well as the lock.

In the light of this, it was agreed that the practice of leaving keys in the blockhouse should be discouraged as far as possible. Member clubs issuing keys & permits should point out to visiting parties that their key is likely to be safer if kept with them.

The various dig reports were read out & can be summarised in the following "pro-forma dig report" :-

" Progress has / has not been made during the past year  
for the following reasons -- (delete if not applicable)  
too much rain / too little rain  
lack of enthusiasm / midges  
too much to drink / too little to drink  
general apathy / mud "

The meeting livened up somewhat in its later stages. The Wessex expressed concern over damage to formations in Charterhouse Cave, particularly in view of the fact that access to the cave is via a leadership system. Also, broken formations appear to have been removed from the cave, thus frustrating attempts at repair. The Wessex rep. stated that if such things continued they might find it necessary to close the cave. The basis for such unilateral action was queried & after "a full & frank discussion" it was decided that the "overall management of Charterhouse Cave is the responsibility of the Charterhouse Caving Committee."

The question of the appointment of leaders for the cave was also discussed & it was decided that if a member club wishes to change its leaders, it should notify the Charterhouse C.C. Hon.Sec., & he will then arrange for the proposed leader to be accredited by an existing leader.

Notification of Sites of Special Scientific Interest.

Linda Wilson

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (and its 1985 Amending Act) provides a framework for the notification (commonly referred to as "scheduling") of S.S.S.I.'s. Due to recent action by the Nature Conservancy Council (NCC) in notifying the area they have defined as "Priddy Pools and the Priddy Caves" and the heavy-handed way in which this has been handled by them, there has been a great deal of adverse reaction from the affected landowners, which has resulted in access to some caves being withdrawn. At present the caves which remain closed are: Swildons, Eastwater, Nine Barrows and Sludge Pit, Hunters Hole and North Hill Swallet. Also permission has been withdrawn with regard to a surface dig near Eastwater.

The practical result of the notification so far as the farmers are concerned is that at this stage, their land has been rendered virtually unworkable and that caving is technically a "potentially damaging operation" on the proscribed list of "thou shalt nots" served on the farmers, and therefore illegal.

A working party was set up at the Council of Southern Caving Clubs AGM in May to investigate the situation, support the landowners, make representations to the NCC and other bodies and generally attempt to help resolve matters so far as possible.

I urge all our members not to regard the landowners as being hostile to cavers but to appreciate the position in which they have been placed.

Time and space prevents a more detailed write-up on how the situation arose in the first place, but anyone who would like any further information is welcome to contact me.

LIBRARY NEWS

Work on the library is progressing slowly. Charlie Self has worked hard repairing, ironing, sorting and cataloguing the surveys and ordnance survey maps, which are now available for use. I am looking for a further glass-fronted bookcase to match the three already in use. If anyone knows of one in reasonable condition and reasonably priced I would be glad to hear from them.

ADDITIONS TO LIBRARY - SPRING 1986

Foley, Robert (Ed) Hominid evolution and community ecology. Academic Press 1984  
Sutcliffe, A.J. On the track of Ice Age mammals. British Museum (Nat Hist) 1985

New Exchanges:

Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society

Helictite (Journal of Australasian Cave Research) plus full set of back numbers.

Tony Boycott

CAVE RESCUE

Charlie Self is taking over as rescue officer. Unlike previous incumbents in the post he is in no hurry to organise a rescue practice down one of the Mendip caves. Though quite good fun, very little is learnt in the confines of a cave except that rescue is possible.

At the end of the summer term, after the exams, there will be a series of demonstrations in the Union on rescue techniques. The main emphasis will be on self rescue (no pun intended) for small expeditions. All who attend will get the chance to knit a stretcher from a piece of rope and will learn how to rescue an unconscious victim from an SRT rope with no extra tackle. There will be opportunities to practise this, either on the outside of the Union building (if we can get permission) or in the Avon Gorge. All who use SRT should familiarise themselves with this technique - on SRT the speed of a rescue can determine whether or not a victim survives.

One fine summer evening there will be stretcher hauling practice in Burrington Combe - in the open, in daylight so that everyone can see what is happening. Cave rescue enthusiasts can then carry the victim through Goatchurch (if they like) while the rest of us repair to the Plume.

? ED

(Bristol 541728) CAS



Caving in the French Jura.

This Easter a small party from the U.B.S.S. visited the Jura mountains of eastern France.

Description of the area.

The Jura mountains run roughly from Basle to Geneva along the Swiss/French border. The highest peaks are over 1700m but the area is dominated by a series of large plateau at about 700m. There are a number of spectacular gorges and the landscape is similar to the Mendips, though on a grander scale.

Caves in the area vary from medium-depth vertical caves to very long and wet resurgence systems. With over 4500 caves known in the area poxy caves abound, often in confusing locations. Resurgences are often vast and sumped and some of the best systems are accessible to divers only.

The area appears to have become increasingly popular with British cavers over the past few years. The caving is excellent, the natives are friendly and it is easily accessible—about 9 hours driving from Calais, avoiding the rip-off motorways. Wine and pate are also cheap, but of course this is of only secondary importance to any dedicated "Hard-men".

Tackle.

In many cases pitches are accompanied by a sizable stream and some very technical rigging is often needed. Even short pitches are normally well endowed with bolts (but no red ones). Sadly these are often placed near or in superb natural belays. In addition to club S.R.T. rope, 200m of 9mm S.R.T. rope (privately owned) was taken. 2 ladders were taken, but only one was ever used.

Accomodation.

We stayed at the Speleo-refuge at Deservillers, situated directly above the Verneau System. It makes the hut at Burrington look like a luxury—it is difficult to keep warm, the roof leaks, and you sleep on the floor. The bog was typical of French bogs and using it required the usual gymnastics.

\*Any parties visiting the area for the first time would be advised to spend the first day locating entrances. Many are easily found using the guidebook and the 1:100000 I.G.N. map. However some are very elusive.

The Caves.

With one exception, all the worthwhile trips in the area are described in the area guide or in "Grottes et Canyons". However we would recommend the following: Gouffre de la Baume des cretes: This is the best way into the Reseau de Verneau, the longest system in the area (30km long, 385 m deep).

Gouffre de Pourpevelle: What we saw of it was very impressive. (5x20m passages and lots of pretties). Sadly the description in "Grottes et Canyons" is hopeless and a good survey is a must.

Gouffre du Gros Gadeau: An O.F.D. size streamway with 8 pitches. Best tackled in flood conditions (we did it after 4 days non-stop rain/snow/thaw) It is very rigged with bolts and long traverses, pendulums etc. keep you clear of the water.

Gouffre de Vauvougier.

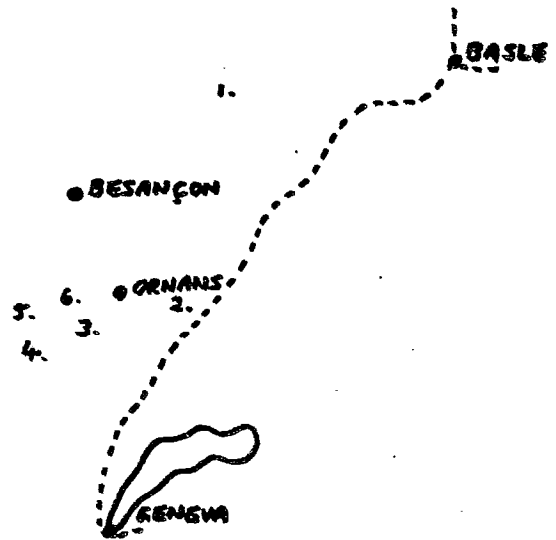
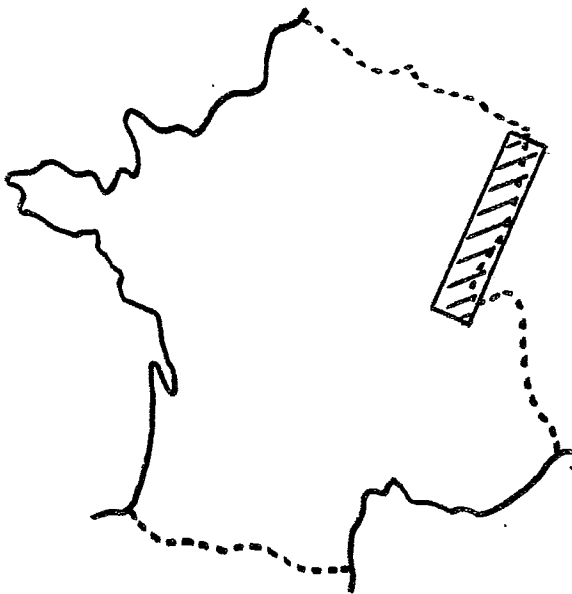
This cave begins in superb style with a 40m entrance pitch, followed immediately by a 10m tyrolien traverse (which can be rigged without etriers.) However the rest of the cave, is a real grind, and is best avoided.

Gouffre du Bois d'Ully.

This is a pleasant 90m shaft situated by the side of a road near Ornans.

Gouffre de la Legarde.

This cave was extended in 1984 to about -230m. The extension is entered at -137m through an excavated boulder choke (it is not described in the guide book) The cave makes a very worthwhile trip.



1. GOUFFRE DE POURPEVILLE.
2. GOUFFRE DE LA LÉGARDE.
3. GOUFFRE DU BOIS D'ULLY.
4. RÉSEAU DE VERNEAU.
5. GOUFFRE DU GROS ARCEAU.
6. GOUFFRE DE VAUVUGIER.

# GOUFFRE DE LA LEGARDE

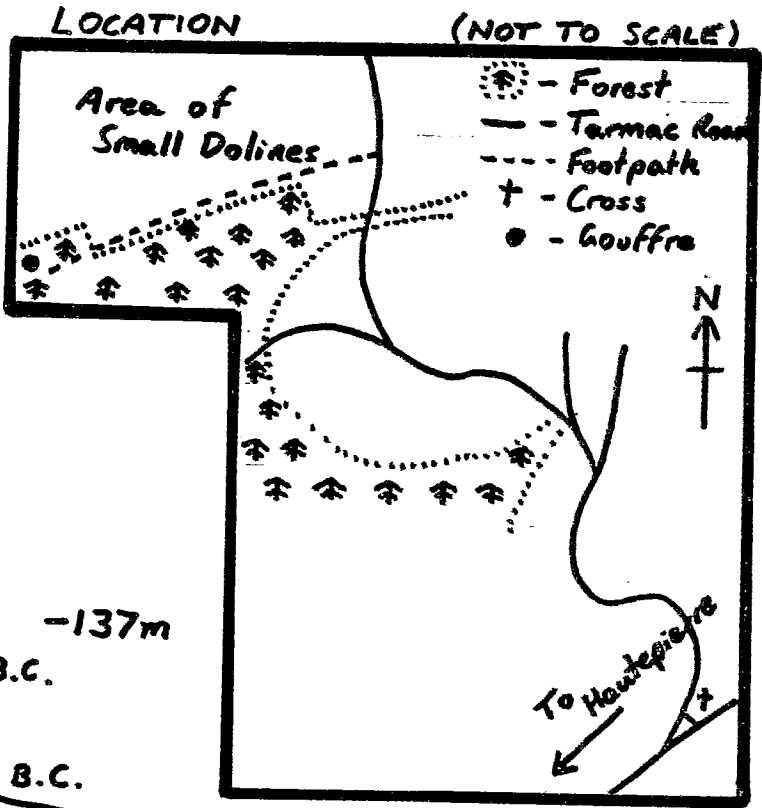
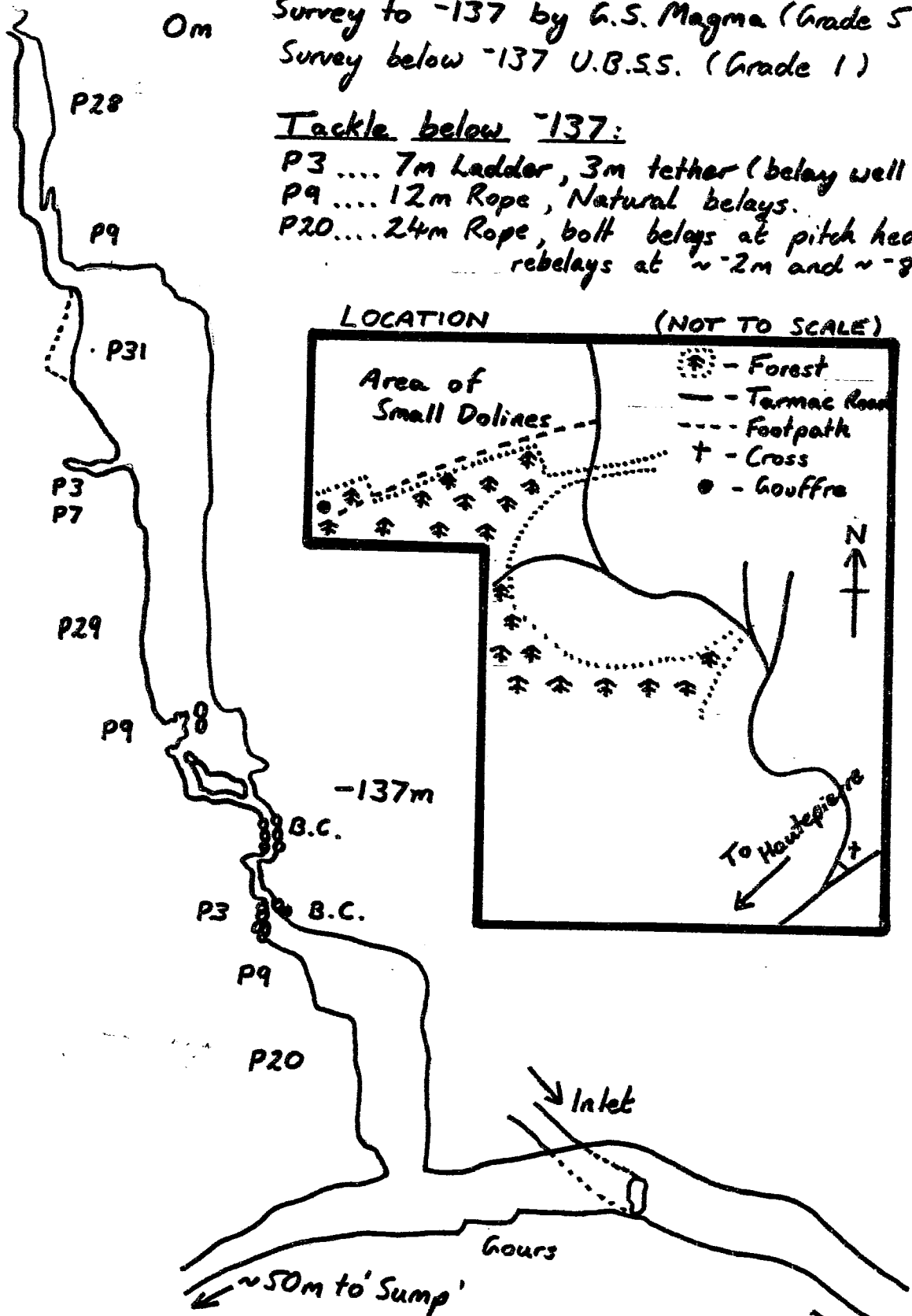
Survey to -137 by G.S. Magma (Grade 5?)  
Survey below -137 U.B.S.S. (Grade 1)

## Tackle below -137:

P3 .... 7m Ladder, 3m tether (belay well back)

P9 .... 12m Rope, Natural belays.

P20 .... 24m Rope, bolt belays at pitch head, rebelays at ~-2m and ~-8m



COUNTY CLARE, WHITSUN 1986.

Linda Wilson.

On Friday 16th May, an almost-but-not-quite-overloaded car containing Graham & myself, Chris Hawkes, Tony Boycott & a large amount of gear, left Bristol, heading for Doolin Harbour via Fishguard, Rosslare & O'Connor's Bar.

Chris made an early but unsuccessful attempt to avoid caving by announcing that he had left his helmet at home. This was quickly remedied by borrowing one from Colin Bunce at the Kilshanny Caving Centre, & Chris was introduced to Clare caves with a pleasant trip through Branch Passage Gallery in Pollnagollum. After that the weeks caving took on a vaguely archaeological slant, as later on the same day we were visited by Brian Judd (Burren Crawlers, works at Aillwee Cave, explorer of Poll na gCeim etc etc.), who pounced enthusiastically on Chris, on hearing that he might know something about bones. Apparently, Brian had found part of a human jaw-bone in the entrance passage to Glencurran Cave, & he was very keen for Chris to take a look. We ended up making several visits to Glencurran; the cave has a large entrance series with a definitely habitable feel to it. Bones were fairly plentiful, mostly sheep, cow, bird, mouse & some more pieces of human jaw & sternum.

We also noticed what appeared to be smaller versions of the Aillwee "bear-pits" in the passage floor, about 1.5m in diameter, with scratch markings around the edge; possibly badger hibernation pits, as the entrance area seemed to show signs of habitation by badgers. These pits certainly need further investigation, & many photos were taken, in case they suffer damage due to being directly on the route to Brian's fabled extentions, which he swears have now been dug out through the crawls to accomodate normal sized human beings. However, none of us felt like putting it to the test.

On one of our several visits to Aillwee for the usual "nosebag & chat" (& on one occasion for a trip beyond the show-cave), we drove via Poul nabrone, to show Chris the portal dolmen. To our surprise, we found it enclosed by large wooden scaffolding, topped by a sign proclaiming "Danger - Work in Progress". Apparently, severe frost last winter took its toll on the supporting slabs & ominous cracks appeared, also visiting parties climbing on top to pose for photos didn't help! The field around the dolmen is now covered with hundreds of mini Poul nabrones, thus lending weight to various theories concerning microlithic tombs & methods of dolmen-reproduction.

In general, the weather was very good, though high winds during the first part of the week prevented Tony from doing as much diving as he had hoped. We had a fair amount of sun, interspersed with some very heavy showers; unfortunately too unsettled for a trip to the Cave of the Wild Horses to be an attractive proposition. The sea calmed down enough towards the end of the week for Tony to be

able to justify the pile of diving gear he had insisted on stuffing the car with, & he investigated a couple of the green holes in Doolin Harbour.

On our last night, high winds started to come in from the Atlantic just after midnight & by the middle of the night it was blowing a force 10 gale in a most spectacular fashion: waves were breaking high over the harbour itself with spume flying up to the cottage door, & for a while Grab Island did a very convincing impersonation of Atlantis. The only damage suffered by the cottage was one slipped roof tile, though about 9.30am the power went off & as we later discovered all of Fisherstreet was affected. Visions of the usual farewell in O'Connor's began to fade as we imagined the Guinness pumps would be out of action, but on arrival in the bar we were most relieved to be proved wrong !

During our ten days we managed a fair amount of research for the next "Cave Notes" in Proceedings & also located a couple of promising digging sites. Chris appeared to be impressed by the archaeological potential in the area..... he came back loaded with bags of small mammal bones. I was fascinated watching him work, I never realised that a mattock & a crow-bar were such essential tools - you can get an awful lot of frog bones out of a cave with a few deft swipes of a mattock.

For those who are following the saga of Poll na gCeim in the caving magazines, Sump 5 has still not been passed. A "big push" was scheduled during the week with Tim Fogg coming down from Fermanagh to help Brian. Unfortunately, on one of the pitches between the sumps, Brian's bottle made a more rapid descent than he did, & landed on its pillar-valve, next to Tim. Exit Brian & Tim, the latter looking pale & unhappy. He was reported to have regained an improved view of life after several pints, later that evening. Another attempt on the sump was planned for the following weekend, but we haven't yet heard the result.

P.S. It appears that in O'Connor's at least, the test of whether someone is a "real" caver or not is still whether they have any connection with Bristol & the U.B.S.S. On talking to some of the older locals at the bar, several asked if I had known Professor Tratman & another said he well remembered Johnny Pitts, "a very fine gentleman."

Lodger's letter  
with  
Doodle Mc Doughnut

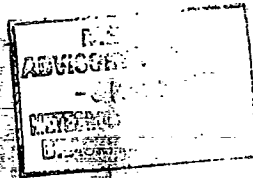
UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL

Telephone (0272) 303030

DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY  
UNIVERSITY ROAD  
BRISTOL  
BS8 1SS  
ENGLAND

30 th April, 1986

Meteorological Office,  
London Road,  
Bracknell,  
Berkshire.  
RG12 2SZ



Dear Sir,

I am a postgraduate student at Bristol and am currently working on a water budget model for the Banwell Spring catchment area which is located to the East of Weston Super Mare, Somerset. Thus I was wondering if you could send me weekly values of evaporation / evapotranspiration for that area for the years 1975 - 1985. Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

S. L. Hobbs

No F\*cking CHANCE  
RABBIT  
MET OFFICE

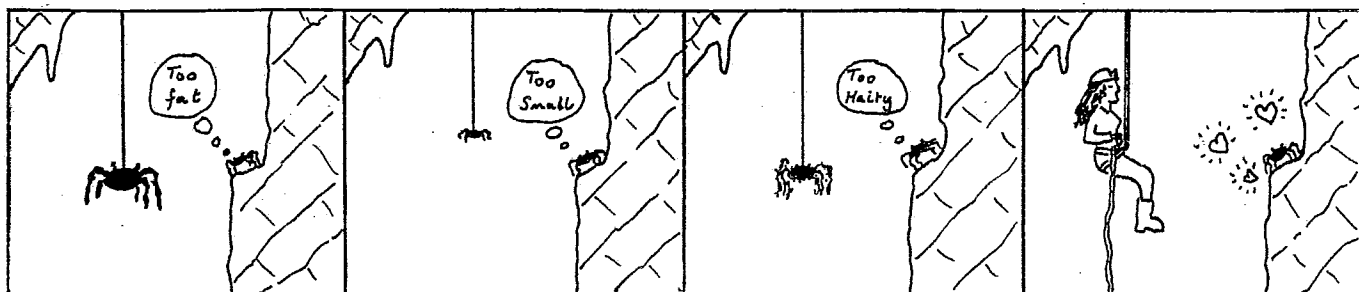
All rubbish  
gratefully  
received

Memorabilia  
will usually  
be published

# Mastermind

- Magnus And our next contestant is a spelaeologist from Bristol and his specialist subject is : "Gossip for Privateer".
- Magnus If Alison Newey goes caving in Yorkshire, how far does she get?
- Spelaeo Two pitches.
- Magnus Correct. If Pete Smart suggests you should do a spelaeohydrology project down Mangle Hole, what should you reply?
- Spelaeo Have you ever been down Mangle Hole, Pete?
- Magnus Correct. What climbs very slowly and silently in the pitch dark?
- Spelaeo The three toed tree sloth of Brazil?
- Magnus No. The correct answer is : Giles Marchant. If a Belgian caver gives you directions to the nearest french pothole, what should you do?
- Spelaeo Walk around in the rain all day, failing to find it?
- Magnus No. Go to the nearest pub. If a lady caver is invited to "look at some water in Wales", which should she take with her : a camera or a life-belt?
- Spelaeo A life-belt.
- Magnus Correct. If your name is Trevor and you have just been elected to membership of the UBSS, can you get into GB cave any time you want?
- Spelaeo No, you still need a key.
- Magnus Correct. How many fully grown Shield Ferns can you get in a Ford Cortina Saloon?
- Spelaeo Six. One on the passenger seat, three on the back seat and two in the boot.
- Magnus Correct. What looked like a moth-eaten bog brush?
- Spelaeo Joe Oates after a free haircut.
- Magnus Correct. Why is Martin Warren known as "socks"?
- Spelaeo It is more than my life is worth to tell you.
- Magnus That is the correct answer. And at the end of this round you have scored seven points with no passes.

## Troglobite



"I AM afraid, Watson, that I shall have to go," said Holmes, as we sat down to our breakfast one morning.

"Go! Where to?"

"To Bristol - to Southmead."

I was not greatly surprised. For a whole day my companion had rambled about the room with his chin upon his chest and his brows knitted, charging and re-charging his pipe with the strongest black tobacco, and absolutely deaf to any of my questions or remarks. Fresh editions of every paper had been sent up by our news-agent only to be glanced over and tossed down into a corner.

"I should be most happy to go down with you if I should not be in the way," said I.

"My dear Watson, you would confer a great favour upon me by coming. And I think that your time will not be mis-spent, for there are points about this case which promise to make it an absolutely unique one. We have, I think, just time to catch our train at Paddington, and I will go further into the matter upon our journey."

And so it happened that an hour or so later I found myself in the corner of a first-class carriage, flying along, while Sherlock Holmes, with his sharp, eager face framed in his ear-flapped travelling cap, dipped rapidly into the bundle of fresh papers which he had procured at Paddington. We had left Reading far behind us before he thrust the last of them under the seat, and offered me his cigar case.

"I presume," said he, "that you have seen what the *Newsletter* and the *Logbook* have to say.

"I must confess that I did not notice anything remarkable or remiss."

"It is one of those cases where the art of the reasoner must be used, in the absence of any direct evidence. Did you not notice that each of the slight mishaps of the young tacklemaster Marco during his recent French caving holiday mimicked in some way a similar faux pas made in the past by one or other of the old lags?"

"You mean abseiling down a shaft and leaving his prusikers behind, the way Martin did in Lamb Leer?"

"Exactly!"

"And rigging a pitch with too little tackle, so that more must be taken down to him to reach the bottom. Julian Walford was famous for it."

"Your memory is faultless, Watson."

"But surely Marco's most serious mistake was to drop the end of the traverse line when he was on the wrong side of a large drop. I do not recall any old lag making that error."

"Excellent, Watson; excellent!" murmured my companion. "The importance of the point struck me so forcibly, that I sent a special wire to Bristol yesterday to clear the matter up. There is no record of any such incident. Which leaves only one conclusion - a spelaeologist is missing."

"Can we be sure that each of these events in France is really a duplicate of an earlier one?"

"A good point, Watson, but I am confident that my deduction is correct. You will recall that only last year Marco copied a cave diving error in Bull Pot of the Witches?"

"The wrong upstream sump. Yes, I remember it well."

"So we must go to Southmead to find out from the Treasurer which of the old lags has failed to pay his subscription."

"But surely it would be easier to ask Marco who it is that he copied."

"Unfortunately not, my dear fellow. From the indisputable fact that the spelaeologist is still missing, one must suspect foul play. Even the fact that he is missing has been kept secret, so only an accomplice in the crime will know where to look for him. For that very reason I do not expect a confession from the young Marco whose re-enactment of the tragedy was, I believe, more a subconscious admission of guilt than an attempt to draw attention to the plight of the poor unfortunate who has disappeared. We must find out for ourselves who it is that is missing and then check back through the *Logbook* to find out when and where was his last caving trip. I am not confident that we shall find him in good health."

And my companion sank back into his corner of the carriage with a very grim expression on his face.



# Toblerone Warr's Diary

Thursday

Ah! Spring is here at last. The crocuses are bursting into bloom in all the gardens and fashion-conscious crag-rats are startling the jackdaws in the Avon Gorge with the whiteness of their kneecaps, hidden all winter long beneath joggers' longjohns. For the first evening in months I can go out without a jacket. Outside the Colston Hall I am spotted by Sally Brittan, coming out from a concert leading a very smart young man by the tie.

"Is he yours?" I ask in my best confessional manner.

"His name is Colin and he will be soon," Sally replies with a smile worthy of a cat from Cheshire.

Ah! Spring at last.

POSTSCRIPT. Sally says she meant her answer to be taken literally. They are to be married!

Friday

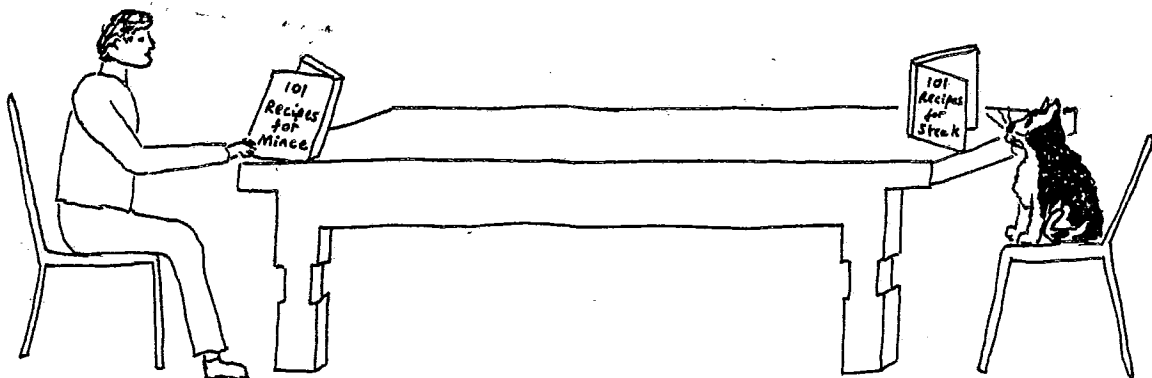
Three cheers for the Welfare State and in particular the National Health Service! Jenny Whicher went into the Bristol Maternity Hospital, received excellent attention and was delivered of a beautiful (she says) daughter, called Alexandra.

Quite different from when Jenny herself was born. She was delivered in a private hospital by the cleaning lady while the doctors were having a tea break. Her mother was so cross at the time that the doctors, when they had finished their tea, gave her a sedative to stop her complaints.

Saturday

I have always wondered why Charlie stayed so thin while his cat grew so fat. I now have the answer. Two doors down the road from Charlie's house there is a butcher's shop. Charlie goes in by the front door and buys mince; the cat goes in by the back door and is given steak.

Why doesn't he swap his meat with the cat, one might ask? Apparently, the cat's free steaks are so large that she has to drag them along the ground. By the time they are brought back to the house they are so covered with dirt that even Charlie "you can eat anything if you cook it long enough" Self won't touch them.



Sunday

It is my unfortunate duty to report that the Hut was broken into several times during the winter months. The Grandchild was twice attacked and gas bottles stolen. With so many of our ex-student members now defending us against communism, surely they can think of a way to put their military training to use on the Home Front. Come on, chaps!

Best laugh of the year had to be the expression on Martin Warren's face when, having just bought his first car, some other vandal pulled the doorhandle off while it was parked in a secluded spot.

The sudden increase in vegetation between the Hut and the Poll needs no subtle botanical explanation. The ferns from Oliver's garden went for a drive in Arbuthnott's car.

Enthusiasts for alternative power sources would be advised to visit Cheshire where Ken Miller's solar panelling provides instant tepid water on even the dullest days.

Despite the fact that there is neither water nor gas at the Hut at the moment, Charlie, Paul and Tony have built an enormous two-tier communal bunk. Whatever can they be planning?

Following the advice of a well-known verse of a well-known song, Tratman Fan Club member Thorley Sweetman has given advance notice to the newly formed UBSS rope rescue team that he is laying 10mm polypropylene fixed lines on a 23,000 ft ice mountain in the Himalayas this summer. He will be prusiking with a rucksack on his back and no chest harness.

A new addition to the Westbury Set with Chris Hawkes joining them for a Whitsun holiday in Ireland. Having the right Christian name to fill the place vacated by Chris Pepper may have been a deciding factor, for home address certainly was not. Our distinguished Vice President lives in Westbury-sub-Mendip not Westbury-on-Trym.

#### LECTURE NOTES.

.....woke up, struck by a thought.....looked down, it wasn't a thought that had struck, it was a stone chip.....wondered vaguely what was going on, why was the room littered with bits of rock ?

Visiting lecturer kneeling in middle of floor wearing leather apron, (standards of dress definitely slipping) bashing a lump of rock with a reindeer antler..... strange thing to do.....I thought you were meant to chew the antlers to get a palaeolithic buzz, like the hyaenas did.....must crib a set of notes on the last lecture I missed, it might help in the exams if hyaenas come up.....

Appears to be a demonstration of how to make a flint hand-axe.....interesting, but the flint seems to be getting smaller, & the debris pile getting correspondingly larger.....audience ducks occasionally.....

"Is it still destined to be a hand-axe," I enquire, tentatively. "Oh no, not at all," the expert replies, "That was ages ago, its now going to be an arrow-head." Audience nods, duly enlightened. Arrow-head gets smaller.....& smaller..... Expert holds it up triumphantly....."There, a perfect example of a microlith ! " (Definition : man-made rock fragment).

Question, "Were there lots of things like that in the Stone Age ?"

Answer, "Oh yes, heaps, everywhere was littered with them.....manufactured by very advanced techniques...etc....etc....." gestures expansively to large pile of rubble around him on the floor.....

I chew thoughtfully on a spare antler.....roll on the Bronze Age..... !

# Maxim



# Gravel

One of the problems of running such an informal vessel as the Privateer is a rapid turnover of crew. Every time we dock there are some who fail to return from shore leave and if it weren't for the efforts of the press every October we would never get underway again. In addition there are those who mysteriously disappear over the side and the odd nuisance who has to be pushed, so I hardly know who is on board these days.

At the moment I have a rather young crew who, at the most generous assessment, are slow to do my bidding. In many ways it reminds me of a voyage a few years back when I was obliged to tie myself to a keg of gunpowder and keep awake, chain-smoking, for three weeks while I faced down the scurvy swabs.

I do so hate mutinies.

R. Matey  
pp Captain Maxim  
Wakerley  
Northants.

Privateer is surely taking over as the club's premier publication. When Dick Marsh moved without telling anyone the Post Office returned his Newsletter and Proceedings to Tyne Street, not to the Union or the University. Privateer's address was discretely hidden on page IX of the last issue, as opposed to on the inside leaf of both the other journals.

Warning to all RAF personnel. Steve "Shuffler" Perry is now an eye surgeon, so don't get any cataracts. He will give you a local anaesthetic and spend the whole operation talking about his latest ski holiday.

An excellent, if unusual, reception after Dave and Christine Waddington's wedding in Edinburgh at the beginning of May. We were given Christmas dinner.

Since starting his PhD in spelaeo-hydrology Steve "Mr Velcro" Hobbs has become quite a skilled caver. Now, when he drops a rock he manages to hit his intended victim.

Those of us who have watched with fascination the steady increase in girth of Captain Bob have at last had our vigil rewarded. The army now address him as "Major Bob". Quite appropriate!

I gather Alison has been receiving some flak for not getting more than two pitches underground in any cave this Easter in Yorkshire. She may be recovering from a broken arm but it is all her own fault. When Martin broke his wrist he went caving in Clare where, as everyone knows, a skillful caver can avoid having to climb pitches.

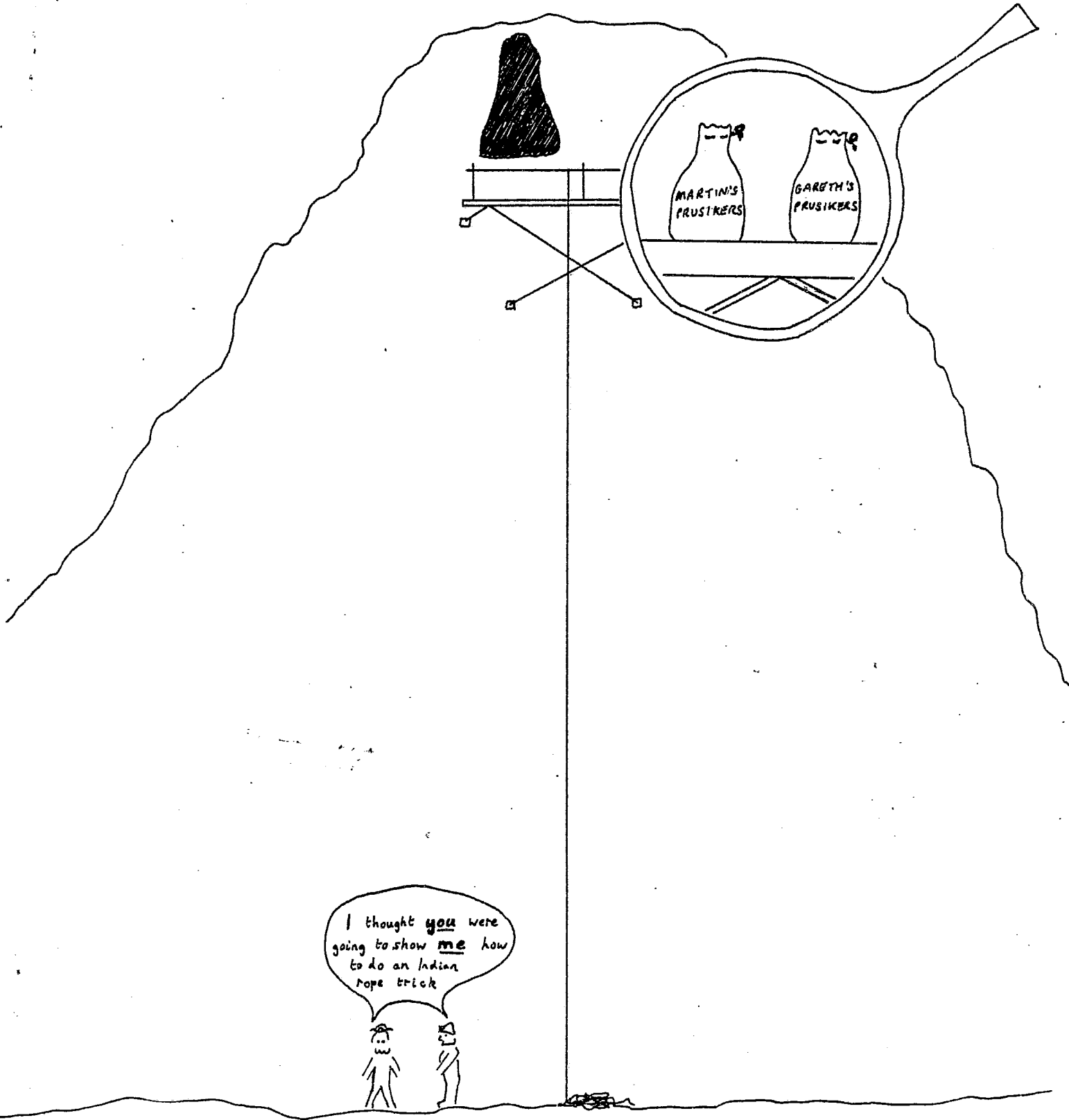
Adrian "Wonderful" Wilkins has always been renowned more for his enthusiasm than for his tact. At the New Year's dinner at the hut he proudly announced, "the mare's having a foal and Christine's having a baby." Perhaps it would have gone down better if he had said it the other way around.

Whatever happened to Ian "Daisy" Buttercup? He seems to have retired from caving altogether. Mind you, for a girl as delicious as the one he's chosen, many a speleo would hang up his boots.

Very rude students of geography have nicknamed Pete Smart's car "the Chelsea Sandwich". No prizes for guessing why.

# PRIVATEER

No 11



I thought you were going to show me how to do an Indian rope trick