

SECRETARIES REPORT.

MARCH 1997 – MARCH 1998

Archaeology.

Work is being carried out on the display and visualisation of data from archaeological excavations, using records from the Society's excavations at Picken's Hole. The Society's Museum collection has been well utilised by researchers both from the Department of Archaeology and elsewhere. Work on re-cataloguing the collection continues and a start is shortly to be made on preparing a report on the unpublished excavations at barrow T5, Blackdown.

Research.

Work has been undertaken to extend mass-spectrometrically dated (M.S.U.) flowstone growth phases from Lancaster Hole and Stump Cross Caverns in Yorkshire. This work has demonstrated that stalagmites show more prolonged growth than flowstones, the latter responding to high rates of recharge associated with stormy conditions. A cooling event at 122 ka within the last interglacial also suggests that instability can occur in interglacial climates.

Mark Roberts has obtained a 4000 point trace element record from an actively growing stalagmite in Brown's Folly Mine, for calibration with historic climate data. The record clearly shows annual, inter-annual and inter-decadal cycles in climate.

Two new projects have started: David Richards is examining variations in 14 C and M.S.U. ages in Bahamian speleothems, while Alice Jones is developing predictive models relating land use to water quality in Mendip springs.

At the 12th International Congress of Speleology in Switzerland, a new commission (of mineralogy) was created. The Commissioner, Carol Hill, has appointed Charlie Self as the Chairman of the genetic mineralogy working group. Charlie's task is to bring together Russian and Western aspects of cave mineralogy. The Russian approach to studying minerals is hoped to provide new insights on speleothem growth. Arjan Boonman is currently studying acoustic flow in bat echolocation.

Caving.

A number of successful caving trips have taken place in Yorkshire, Devon, South Wales and the Isle of Skye. Our traditional County Clare trips have been productive, with finds in Poulmagollum and Poulmagree, last summer and over the new year.

The society, in conjunction with other Charterhouse Clubs, has been digging the recently discovered mine shaft in Gruffy Field, near G.B. The other digs in Mendip, however, have not progressed well. Dr. Boycott has been to Pakistan, Thailand and is currently in India again with Andy Tyler. All of these trips have resulted in new finds.

Meetings.

Yet again these have been rather thin on the ground, those taking place being poorly attended.

Acknowledgements

The University of Bristol, through the Tratman Fund, have supported the production of *Proceedings* and travel abroad. The University Union grant has assisted in the day to day running of the Society. To all of the above, we are grateful.

A.K. Goulding and T. Williams.

LIBRARY REPORT

The Library has continued to grow by exchanges with proceedings and donations. Two new bookcases have alleviated the pressure on shelf space. Thanks are due to Tim Atkinson, H. Daniel Gebauer, Ray Mansfield, Mike Norton, Dave Savage and Max Unwin for donations of journals, manuscripts and books, and to Brian Boycott and Wanda Owen for bookcases.

New additions

Wigmore Swallet Bristol Exploration Club Caving Report No 23, Oct 1997.

Jamaica Underground: The Caves, Sinkholes & Underground Rivers of the Island. Alan G Fincham. The Press, University of the West Indies, 1997.

Malaysian Cave Bibliography. Liz Price. Privately published, 1997.

History of Cave Science. T R Shaw. Sydney University Speleological Society, 1992.

New exchanges

Theoretical & Applied Karstology, Romania

*Tony Boycott
Librarian*