

MCG NEWS

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NEWSLETTER OF THE MENDIP CAVING GROUP

MALLORCA '86 - '87

by Neil Hutchinson

The MCG Christmas expedition took place for the third successive year on the Island of Mallorca, from 24th Dec to 7th Jan. Seven people were present - Andy Beare, Lesley Robbins, Ian Parry, Richard Stansfield, Martin Rowe, Yvonne Ward and Neil Hutchinson.

The weather was somewhat less kind than previous years with snow down to 300M the day before our arrival! Fortunately the temperature rarely stays below freezing during the day and things were back to normal within a few days.

As with previous years the main problem facing us was locating known cave entrances, however, at the start of the second week we managed to purchase a set of 1:25000 maps, from which the original coordinates for all the cave entrances were taken. This proved a real boon and made the task of cave location much easier.

The purchase of the maps coincided with the arrival of Yvonne (who flew out for the second week) and so the solving of one problem was met with the creation of another - how to get seven people plus caving gear into a Ford Fiesta! - the solution necessitating a complete shift in the seating arrangements every time 4th gear was selected!

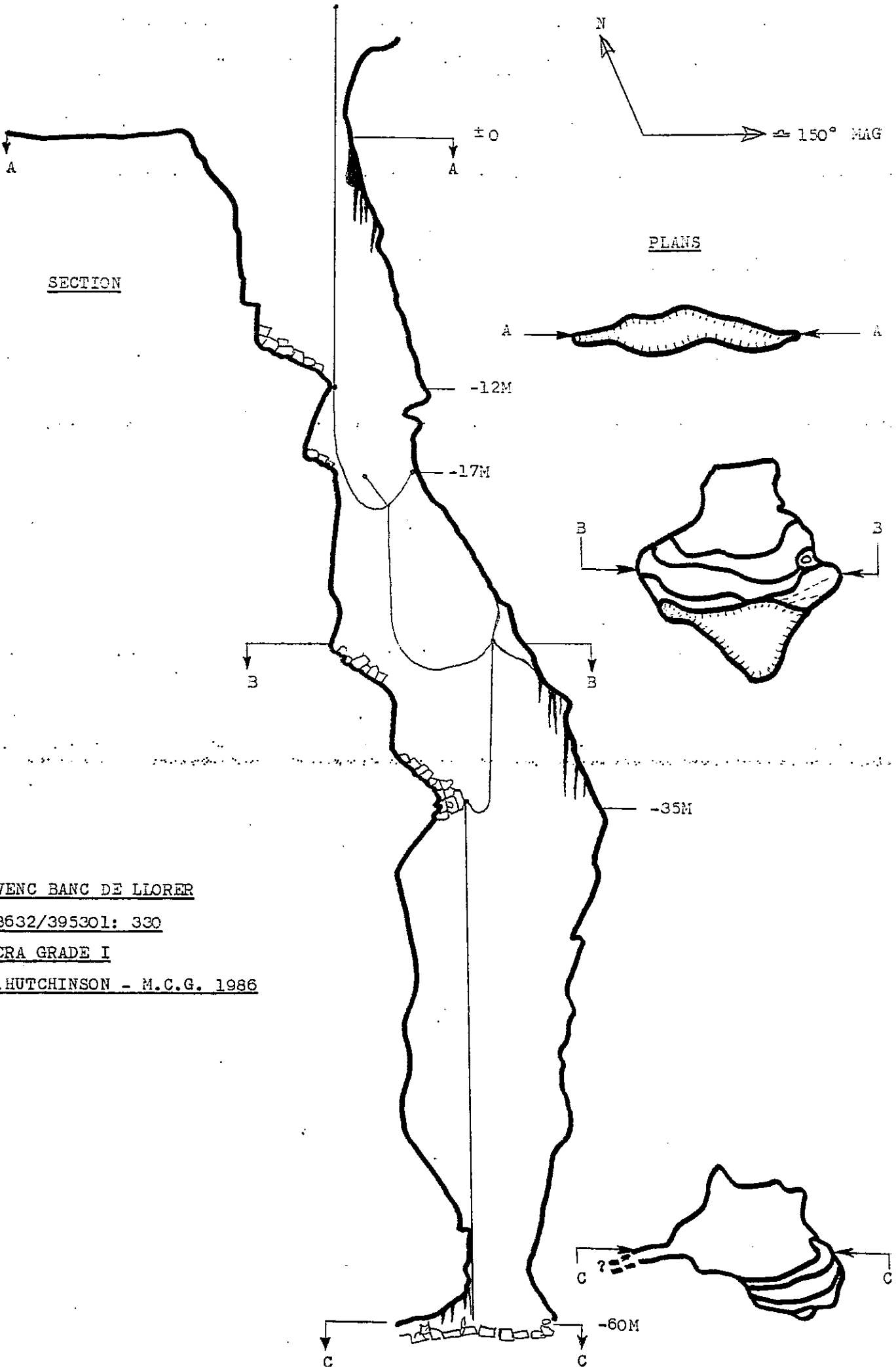
A total of eight different caves were visited during our stay, three of which were located this year with a further two located but not descended. Descriptions of caves visited previous years can be found in Newsletters 179 and 185 so here for the sake of completeness are brief descriptions of the caves located this year:

- AVENC MITJANIA - (Descended) a single shaft with excellently placed bolts to give a 92M free hanging descent to the boulder strewn floor - highly recommended.
- AVENC GORG BLAU - (Descended) at 178M one of the deeper caves on the island. A 40M entrance pitch leads via many shorter pitches in a narrow rift to a final large pitch of 45M down to a sump.
- AVENC DES GEL - (Not descended) a series of short pitches down to 100M.
- AVENC DE LLOREER - (Not descended) an enormous rocky and vegetated depression about 50M across forms the top of a 100M shaft dropping straight down to a boulder strewn floor.

And last but not least the latest MCG discovery - a 60M deep shaft found by Martin Rowe and almost descended by Ian Parry in 'free fall mode' as the entrance on which he was standing disappeared off down the hole! Owing to Ians convincing demonstration, a while was spent gardening the entrance before Neil was given a bag full of bolts and an extra large helmet and told to get on with it! A couple of hours later he was able to report the cave to be about 60M deep ending in a stalled-up constriction with all ways on blocked by boulders and containing rather copious amounts of hanging death. The cave was duly named AVENC BANC DE LLOREER after the nearest recognisable feature on the map. See page 3 for the survey.

So, all in all, a most successful expedition with four more entrances located and a further new discovery to add to last years finds -

We will return.



SECTION

PLANS

AVENC BANC DE LLORER

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BCRA GRADE I

N. HUTCHINSON - M.C.G. 1986