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MENDIP CAVING GROUP

The Mendip Caving Group was formed in the latter part of 1953. The objects of the Group are to further all aspects of Speleology, the latter being the science of caves and their exploration.

The name of the Group suggests that it is connected with the Mendip Hills; this is true but a much vaster canvas is also covered. Expeditions are made to all caving regions in Britain and visits are also made to the Continent.

Caving is a growing Sport, often said to be the reverse of Mountaineering, but there are more differences than similarities. The subject is many branched and is a mixture of sport and science. Among the activities are the descent of caves by means of ropes and flexible metal ladders; excavation by any means including the use of explosives; free diving by means of apparatus can be used as part of the initial exploration which is followed by survey work.

The sciences include Hydrology or water tracing; Biology, study of plant and animal life in caves; Photography, Archaeology and Geology.

Caves of interest to the Group are found in limestone districts. The caves, themselves, are formed by corrosion and corrasion, that is, dissolving action by moving water. We therefore expect to find underground streams and rivers in the larger active caves which are still being formed. Caves may be quite large and intricate systems of inter-connecting passages, some having

vertical drops of varying heights. The lengths of caves in Britain range from a few feet up to about seven miles.

One of the greatest attractions of caving is the ever present hope that a discovery will be made. Most Clubs undertake the work of digging in the hope of finding a new cave of vast proportions - unfortunately they are seldom rewarded, although new caves, thousands of feet long, are being entered at the rate of about one a year. The Mendip Caving Group has, of course, been engaged in the work of digging and we have made good progress at our site over the last few years. Enthusiasm is running high and who knows, we may be next on the list for a new discovery.

Caving is a sport which continues throughout the year, but since it is usually necessary to camp, activity is more concentrated in the summer. The alternative to camping is to sleep in various barns located in the caving areas.

Once one is fully equipped, the main expense in caving comes in transportation.

Equipment consists of a miner's helmet, lights, a boiler suit, nailed boots, waist sling and snap link (Karabiner), whistle. (See separate information Pamphlet No.2.) The cost is in the region of £5. Camping equipment is chosen according to personal preference.

Caving is one of the only ways left in Britain to satisfy explorers fever.

Membership of the Group is open to all and you will be made a welcome visitor if you wish to come

with us and see for yourself.

You can have a chance to meet us before going caving, since meetings are held every Thursday evening at 8.30 p.m. in the Private Bar of The Royal Hotel, Boston Manor, not far from Boston Manor Station (Piccadilly Line).

The Group has both Senior and Junior Members; Senior Members are persons over the age of 18 years.

Annual subscriptions are 21s.0d. 6s.0d. for Junior Members. No subscriptions need be paid by National Servicemen.

Issued by the Mendip Caving Group Committee.

Information Pamphlet No. 1.

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