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CAVING SHOP

FOR ALL CAVING BOARDSAILING
AND MOUNTAINEERING NEEDS

SPECIAL LOW PRICES TO MEMBERS

MAY 1982

WARMWEAR

WARM FIBRE DOWN	DUVET JACKETS	FROM	£32.50
WARM FIBRE DOWN	" "	"	£47.50
THERMAL PILE SLEEPING BAG LINERS	SLEEPING BAGS	"	£27.00
	" "	"	£62.00
		"	£16.00

VETSUITS

	4mm SINGLE LINED	3mm DOUBLE LINED	4mm SINGLE LINED KITS
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TROUSERS	£28.50	£36.50	£20.00
LONG JOHN	£16.00	£20.00	£14.00
BOLERO	£33.00	£38.50	£26.00
L. JOHN + BOLERO	£23.00	£28.50	N/A
SOCKS	£55.00	£65.00	N/A
	£ 5.00	£ 6.00	£ 3.50

Kits include marked-out neoprene, adhesive, tape, zips, etc.

BOOKS

GEOLOGY OF THE PEAK DISTRICT	£ 2.00
BRITISH CAVES AND POTHOLES (DEAKIN)	£ 4.95
CAVING AND POTHOLING (JUDSON)	£ 1.95
CARLSBAD CAVES AND A CAMERA	£ 5.25
SPELEOLOGY, THE STUDY OF CAVES	£ 2.95
CAVING MANUAL (LOVELOCK)	£ 7.95
THE DARKNESS BECKONS (FARR)	£10.50
DOWN TO A SUNLESS SEA (BOON)	£ 8.50
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VOL III INGLEBOROUGH (NEW EDITION)	£ 3.25
VOL V THE NORTHERN DALES	£ 2.50
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TEL. 0442 42029

Cover photograph - Helictite Chamber, GB, by Paul Merron

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CAVING ACCOMMODATION.

Mendip Caving Group, Nordrach Cottage, Charterhouse on Mendip, Blagdon,
Bristol BS18 6XW

Cottage Location: N.G.R. ST 5147 5605

Guest bookings should be made with the Cottage Warden.

WEEKLY MEETINGS.

Every Thursday from 8.30 pm at

The Fox & Hounds & Mawson Arms, Chiswick Lane South, London, W4.

M.C.G. MEET PROGRAMME 1982.

	Leader	Base
JUN 26 OFD / Dan-yr-Ogof	D. Samuel	S.W.C.C.
JUL 17 Lamb Leer	D. Walsh	M.C.G.
AUG 14 Giants Hole	G. Barton	Orpheus
SEP 18 Douber Gill Passage	T. Knibbs	N.P.C.
OCT 16 Rhino Rift	J. Miriam	M.C.G.
NOV 20 Agen Allwedd	P. Ingold	
DEC 18 Eastwater	I. McKechnie	M.C.G.

Following the September 18th meet in Yorkshire, a few members will be staying in the area for a full week. They plan to do some more caving (any grade - depending on who is there), and possibly some hillwalking, maybe even venturing over to the Lake District. If anyone else is interested in joining them, they should contact Tony Knibbs or John Miriam for further details.

COTTAGE BOOKINGS.

May	July
21 Phil Ingold + 20	2 I. McKechnie + 15 (Decca)
28 MEMBERS WEEKEND (Bank Holiday)	9 Phil Ingold + 20
	16 MEMBERS WEEKEND (Lamb Leer)
June	23
4 MEMBERS WEEKEND - RESCUE PRACTICE	30 MEMBERS WEEKEND
11 Dave Gibson	
18 MEMBERS WEEKEND	August
25	6

UNPAID SUBSCRIPTIONS (AGAIN).

Despite a reminder in the last Newsletter, our Treasurer has still not heard from a number of members concerning their apparent non-payment of subscriptions.

A list of names is given below; if your name appears on the list, PLEASE SEND A CHEQUE IMMEDIATELY. If you are on the list and have already paid, write to the treasurer and tell him so. Anyone who has not, according to our records, paid by the end of May, is liable to be removed from the membership list.

The records show the following members to owe subscriptions. Unless otherwise stated the amount owed is £10.

Kathy Baxter (£5), Mike Brace, Jean Paul Burch, Quentin Cowan (£5), Arthur Cox, Dave Hodby, Charlie Ruddick, Pete Virgo, Alan Wicks, Rosemary Wicks (£5), Bill Ducklin.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS.

Full membership has been granted to Mike Bygrave, Adrian Duckett, Roy Kempston, and Bob Varley.

Applications for probationary membership have been accepted from the following:

Peter Bulling, 126 Corsletts Avenue, Broadbridge Heath, Horsham, W. Sussex.
proposed by: Steve Taylor, Ian McKechnie.

Steve Lane, "Rossett", Hillcote, Bleadon Hill, Weston super Mare, Avon. BS24 9JU
proposed by: Martin Rowe, Mike Mintram

Gordon Lister, 26 Glenfield Road, Northfields, Ealing, London, W13.
proposed by: Martin Rowe, Mike Mintram

Alan Mellon, 133 Ellerdine Road, Hounslow, Middlesex. TW3 2PU
proposed by: Martin Rowe, Pat Walsh

Ian Parry, 30 Walton Way, Aylesbury, Bucks.
proposed by: Phil Ingold, Martin Rowe

Lesley Robbins, 28 Cobbetts Ride, Tring, Herts. HP23 4BZ
proposed by: Martin Rowe, Phil Ingold

Jerry Roberts, 16a Manor Road North, Hinchley Wood, Esher, Surrey.
proposed by: Martin Rowe, Malcolm Cotter

Graeme Tozer, 27 Bedford Road, Weston super Mare, Avon. BS23 4EJ
proposed by: Mike Mintram, Martin Rowe

Tony Ingold's address is in Forburg Road, not Forbury as stated last month. Tony tells us he has completed his PhD studies after 9 years work, and he is now threatening to start caving again. Congratulations, Tony, and we look forward to seeing you on Mendip.

A SWIM IN THE GREEN CANAL.

"We're off to see the Wizard,
The wonderful Wizard of Oz..."

After a walk through the Dan-yr-Ogof show caves among the tourists, and the unforgettable traverse of the lakes, by the time we reached the Long Crawl we were infected by a childish excitement. The impressions of the cave so far, and the anticipation of a swim in the Green Canal, conjured up fairytale images which caused us to break into song:

"We're going to swim the Green Canal,
We're going to swim the Green Canal..."

The Long Crawl thus shortened with the aid of song (but perhaps lengthened for the rest of the party), we soon arrived at the Green Canal. A shelving floor took us into gradually deepening water, forcing us after a few yards to start swimming. The passage was winding, and half filled with cold, clear, water, which appeared bottle-green in the light of our caplamps. Handholds in the wall provided the opportunity of an occasional rest from swimming. It was found advisable to swim well clear of the person in front - a thrashing boot in the face would not be pleasant.

The canal ends suddenly like the edge of a swimming pool. You clamber out onto a slab, shake yourself, then sit back and enjoy the sight of the rest of the party doggy-paddling round the corner and dragging themselves back onto dry land. A few minutes rest - then back to the Long Crawl, looking forward already to your next swim in the Green Canal!

If you would like a swim in the Green Canal (and a visit to the rest of Dan-yr-Ogof), contact Denise Samuel, and join us on the MCG South Wales meet on the weekend of 26th June.

EXTRACTS FROM THE LOG BOOK.

December-January: Probably the worst winter on Mendip since (at least) 1963. Very deep snow everywhere. No caving between Jan 4th and Jan 22nd. A pipe fitting in the shower came apart, otherwise the cottage survived very well.

23.1.82: M. Cotter, Peter Spain, Adrian Duckett, Gordon Lister spent 2 hours (in Upper Flood) clearing spoil of last bang. A little digging required before more bang.

24.1.82: M. Cotter, Martin Rowe, and about 10 others removed spoil from Upper Flood.

31.1.82: G. Barton, I. McK., R. Kempston, M. Lowe, G. Wilson, removed remaining loose spoil from Upper Flood.

6.2.82: John Miriam, Chris Crolley, M. Rowe, Jerry Roberts, S. Lane, removed a fair amount of mud and rocks in Bone Hole, progressing downwards with one solid wall. Perched boulders overhead could prove unnerving. An animal bone was found in the dig.

Feb 82: Simon Knight investigated a small disused quarry just above East Horrington on the Wells to Maesbury road, on the left just before RH turn sign-posted Chilcote. Quarry face approx 40ft high. Small entrance 20ft above quarry floor was enlarged by 1hr digging. Entrance approx 725ft elevation, down dip. Near Hansdown Cottage, so possible name Hansdown Quarry Hole. Digging proceeds.

CAVE RESCUE COSTS.

As an aftermath of the Kingsdale rescue earlier this year, John Watson, MP for Skipton, intended to sponsor a bill in Parliament on the subject. The bill was to give powers to recover the cost of cave rescue from the victims.

The arguments against this are many. How could liability be assessed? Who would benefit, when the actual rescue work is carried out by volunteer cavers? How would the cost be recovered? Who would pay for the administration of such a scheme? Why pick on cavers, when there are other sports with far higher accident rates? What about the non-cave rescues in which cave rescue organisations are involved, eg animals in mineshafts, cliff rescues, above-ground searches? Would someone be refused rescue if he could not pay the costs?

An immediate campaign of phone calls and letters to MPs was started, and Mr. Watson has now withdrawn his bill. He says "It has become apparent that the time of the House of Commons is being consumed very heavily by matters concerning the Falklands crisis. In the circumstances I have, therefore withdrawn the bill, and I do not intend to reintroduce it for the time being. Before it is reintroduced I shall, of course, need to seek further consultation with the various cave rescue organisations involved."

End of round one! Before the bill is reintroduced, you may wish to write to Mr. Watson with your opinions on the matter, sending a copy to your own MP. The address is:

Mr. John Watson MP, The Coach House, Carla Beck Lane, Carleton, Skipton, N. Yorks

GETTING RESCUED.

If you are ever in the unfortunate position of having to call out the Mendip Rescue Organisation (MRO), then you should follow this procedure:

Find the nearest telephone, dial 999, and ask for the police.
When in contact with the police, ask for the MENDIP RESCUE ORGANISATION.
Give to the police:

EXACT DETAILS OF THE INCIDENT
LOCATION OF THE INCIDENT
THE PHONE NUMBER FROM WHICH YOU ARE CALLING

Stay at the same telephone until you are contacted by an MRO warden, who will ask for further details of the incident.

While a few minutes may seem like an age at the time, there must be a short delay before you are contacted by a warden, and this is a vital step in initiating a successful call-out. Please resist the understandable urge to leave the phone after you have contacted the police, as your personal knowledge gives the MRO a better chance to organise a speedy response with appropriate rescuers and equipment.

CLEANING OF TACKLE.

Ropes and ladders have been found in the tackle store still caked in mud from a caving trip. All tackle should be thoroughly cleaned and properly coiled before it is returned to the tackle store - not just so that it looks pretty, but to minimise deterioration, and to expose defects or damage.

Your life depends on our tackle - look after it!

ROPE IDENTIFICATION.

To simplify selection of the correct length of rope for your pitch, our Tacklemaster has devised and implemented a scheme for marking caving ropes with their length.

Each rope now has a number of black plastic sleeves shrunk on near one end. Each sleeve represents 50ft of rope. So a 150ft rope has 3 sleeves. What could be simpler?

And that's another good reason for washing the ropes after use.

CAP LAMPS.

Some response was received from Tony Knibbs' "new lamps for old" appeal, and the club now has two working cap lamps. But we need more, so please dig out your old headsets and spares, and hand them over to the Tony Knibbs caplamp repair and restoration workshop.

COTTAGE HEATING.

At this years AGM it was agreed that storage heaters would be installed in the cottage to provide background heating and help preserve the fabric of the building. One of the advantages quoted was the low installation cost due to the ready availability of second-hand storage heaters.

This is where you come in. Are you disposing of some storage heaters? Or do you know someone who is? If so, please contact a committee member urgently - we need to get the scheme under way as soon as possible if we are to benefit during the next winter.

CESSPIT EMPTYING.

A cesspit full and overflowing is not a pretty sight (or smell), and can be avoided by a regular check each weekend. Before leaving the cottage on a Sunday afternoon, a volunteer (or failing that, a pressed man), should be despatched to lift the cesspit manhole cover behind the entrance gate to the cottage. There is usually a steel rod nearby which can be used as a dipstick to determine the depth of material in the cesspit. If the level exceeds 4'6" (1.5metres) below the manhole cover, the cesspit should be emptied. Inform the cottage warden (or any other committee member) as soon as you can, and he will arrange for it to be emptied during the week.

If this is not done, you may find the cesspit overfull when you arrive one weekend, and that means no toilets, no showers, no washing - and possibly a car-park full of the worst kind of effluent.

FLIGHTS OVER MENDIP.

An aircraft and pilot have been provisionally arranged for two dates later this summer. The intention will be to provide flights over Mendip for photographic or sightseeing purposes.

The cost we have been given for the aircraft is well below the normal hire cost. Based on this, a flight of 30 to 40 min useful time should cost £10 to £15 per person. However the pilot will be totally at our disposal, and flights can be as short or as long as you want, you will be charged accordingly.

Seats will be available in the aircraft from the London area to Mendip, and return at the end of the day. During the day, we hope to use a local airfield, possibly Weston, as a base.

Anyone interested should contact Ian McKechnie as soon as possible. The success of the venture depends on there being enough people to make it worthwhile, and to fill all the seats in the plane, so a fairly firm commitment will be needed.

The probable dates are weekends 24 /25 July and 7 /8 August.

CHARTERHOUSE MANOR.

Ian McKechnie

A few weeks ago, we decided to step over the road and see for ourselves what is going on in Charterhouse Manor (see newsletter 151 for feature article). We were shown round by Mark Shuckborough, one of the two brains behind the scheme.

The interior of the old isolation hospital has been renovated and redecorated, and accommodation is available in spacious double rooms at £7.50 per night, B&B. The large and apparently well-stocked bar is, we were told, reasonably priced (eg Wadworths 6X at 50p when available). You may have dinner in the restaurant, at a typical cost of £6 to £7 per head. The bar and restaurant is run as a club, and temporary membership is £1, annual membership £20 (£30 for family membership). However, we were quoted a substantial reduction in these fees for MCG members. Anyone interested would be well advised to go over and enquire further.

Charterhouse Manor plans to run week and weekend courses on various subjects. A possibility for the future may be a caving course. Any potential tutors out there?

We have seen a number of schemes come and go in the old isolation hospital. Let us wish every success to Charterhouse Manor, and hope that we in the MCG can assist them, to our mutual benefit.

NOT THE HOLE-IN-THE-ROAD CAVE.

At some time over the early May bank holiday weekend, diggers in a Mendip cave previously consisting of only a short crawl, broke into a reported 1000ft of new passage.

Unfortunately, there has already been vandalism in this new cave, and the padlock has been forcibly removed. So until access arrangements have been agreed (and we understand there is to be a meeting next weekend for this purpose), no more details will be given.

PETE & ALISON Moody have kindly donated a wardrobe, now installed in Ladies Room.

A BANG last week in Upper Flood looks promising - more news next month.

COVER PICTURES required for newsletter - prints to the Editor, please.

DON'T WORRY about the blank pages between 13 & 14 - just printing problems. (Some of the cover pictures are pretty poor, too - sack the printer.)

APOLOGIES to those of you whose contributions have not appeared this month - some items have been held back for a later issue.

CALLING ALL KLEPTOMANIACS

We are now busily acquiring publications old and new for our library, following Jon Roberts' sort out of our holdings. Members have been asked on three occasions - in the June 1981 and February 1982 newsletters, and in the 1982 AGM officers' reports - to return to the library any publications they have had on loan. Jon Roberts has reported at the May committee meeting one very recent instance where a casual visit to one member's home unearthed by chance at least two publications owned by the club which the person had not bothered to return.

That member's laziness has cost the club more than £2, as both items Jon retrieved had been re-ordered days earlier in view of their importance and their continued absence from the library. It has also meant that sum of money cannot be spent on other useful additions to the library. The committee accordingly wishes to advise all members that:

- publications when borrowed from the library remain club property;
- failure to return publications when requested will result in the member being liable to pay the full costs incurred in obtaining a replacement.

DO YOU STILL HAVE ANY PUBLICATIONS ON LOAN ? Any newsletters, books, surveys, journals, pamphlets, indices, references that rightfully belong to the club ? Will that next knock at *your* door be the Karst Police, or worse still Jon Roberts ?

Jon says he is particularly concerned by the continued absence of the following publications, which the club is known to own:

Pioneer under the Mendips (biography of H E Balch);
Descent No. 24;
Speleologist Vol.1 No.2; 1965;
Caves & Caving No.1; 1978;
1968 Speleological Abstracts (published as B.S.A. Cave Science No.47);
BEC Caving Reports: No.4 The Shoring of Swallet Cave Entrances
 No.13 St Cuthberts Report Part 0 - Miscellaneous Info;
University of Bristol Speleo. Soc: Proceedings Vol. 13 No.2 1973
 Vol. 14 No.1 1975
 Vol. 14 No.2 1976
 Vol. 15 No.1 1978;

Caves & Caving Vol.1 No.1, 1937;
Speleomundis - review of world speleology 1961, by Free Troglophile Assoc;
Pegasus Club 1967 expedition to the Gouffre Berger;
The Caves of Ireland, by J C Coleman, 1965;
Somerset, by Maxwell Fraser, 1934;
Annapurna, by Maurice Herzog, 1952.

A rough estimate puts the replacement value of the items above at over £80, that is £1 per member. So check your bookshelves, now, before you cause the club a great deal of unnecessary expense.

Having had a scheduled visit to Thrupe Lane Swallet snowed off the meet programme in mid-January, Sunday 2nd May seemed as good a time as any to recover lost opportunity. It was a typical English Spring day - cold and overcast with a fresh breeze and the promise of a few showers - ideal to spend underground.

We set off to the cave at the crack of noon, the party consisting of the scribe, John Miriam, Brian Terry, Phil and Helen Ingold, and Bob Varley. The sailboards on the Ingold roofrack must have puzzled a party changing near the entrance. However, they restrained their comments to asking if Brian always went caving in his Poseur Blue wetsuit. This failed to elicit the expected sharp riposte; indeed, I seemed to sense that Brian wished he'd asked himself the same question, if only to have a suitable rude answer to hand. And his whistle amazed them.

The art of conversation having died, we laddered the first drop of 25ft and set off down the knobbly and narrow entrance passage. With John and Bob leading, a steady pace was maintained to the top of the 60ft ladder at Perseverance Pot.

Beyond Cowsh Crawl, John and Bob went ahead with the tackle to ladder Atlas Pot, which they succeeded in doing before the rest of us (missing their scent a couple of times) eventually joined them at the end of Marble Streamway. The stream was not excessive and the 80ft descent proved enjoyable fun.

With people wasting no time in getting to the end of the streamway and back to Atlas, the lifeline was kept busy and the party soon assembled back at the head of the pitch. The party encountered outside the cave had arrived by this time and a somewhat brighter discussion took place concerning who should give way to make room for whom. They lost.

We paused to chew a few Mars bars at the top of the streamway and decided that, since everything was going smoothly, we should detour to visit Avalanche Pot on the way back.

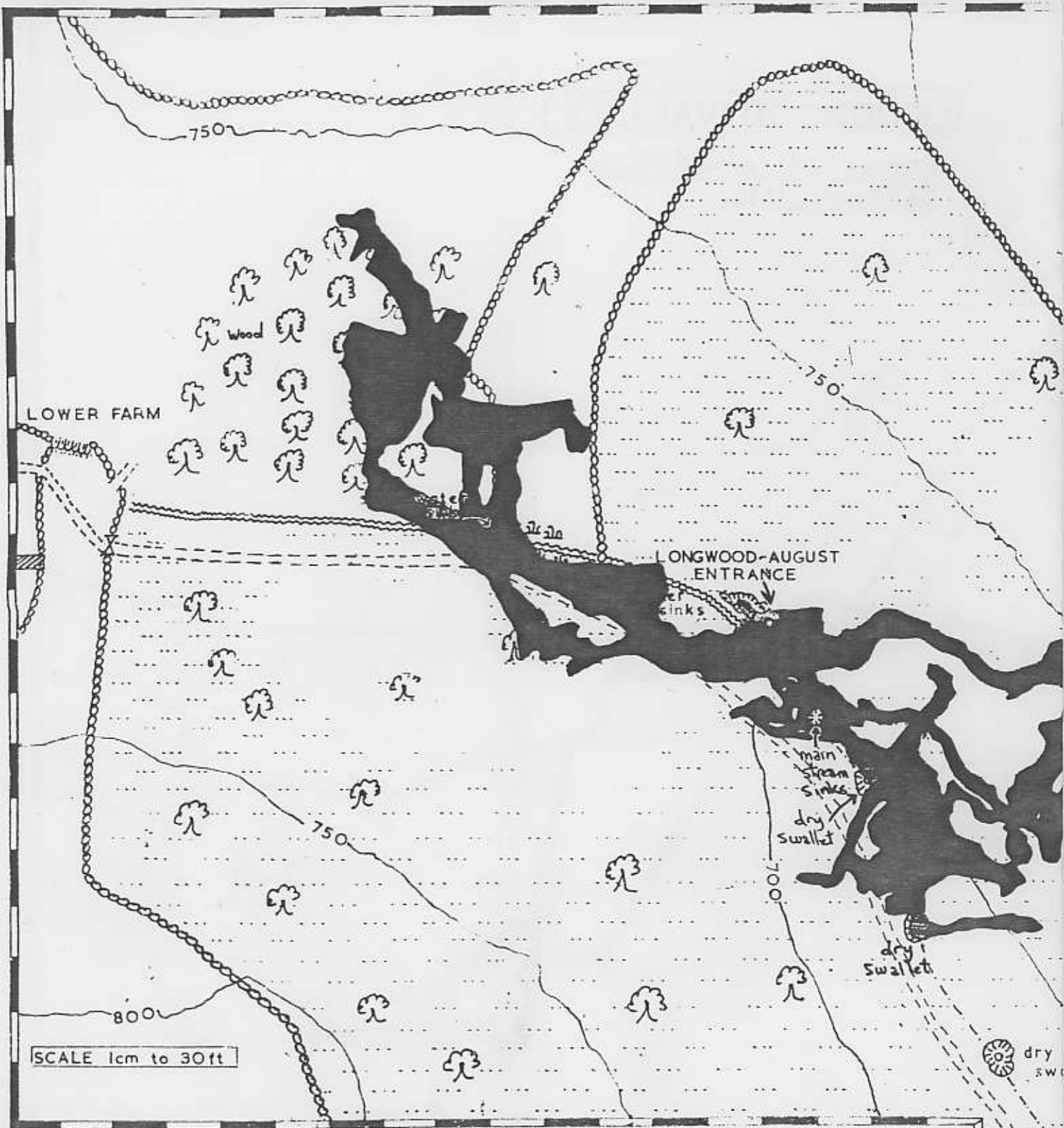
Dropping down through boulders between Butt's Chamber and Cowsh Crawl brought us to the 25ft pitch into Bridge Rift. Finding a suitable belay took a few minutes of boulder testing - most of them showed an inclination to move! John selected a grand piano which he was sure hadn't moved since his last visit, and down we went.

There was not much of a choice of belays for Avalanche Pot. An obvious chockstone was selected and provided only minor take-off difficulties for the 40ft ladder descent. In ones and twos, we set off to follow the stream down a rift and along a pebbly crawl until it became uncomfortably tight.

Back at the top of Avalanche, John gave an impressive demonstration of rope coiling - German style. This must be the only known method of coiling which actually increases the length of the rope. Well, it seemed that way as I followed umpteen yards of loose loops which, in turn, were following John up Bridge Rift.

Above Perseverance Pot, Brian dropped a rolled ladder down a blind rift and promptly fished it out using a jammed-open karabiner on the end of a rope. Apparently, it was the knot in the rope that did the trick. Thinks - wasn't it only a few weeks ago that underground fishing was raising a laugh at the Annual Dinner? So much for jokes.

And then it was all over. Time really does pass quickly when you are enjoying yourself; 4½ hours seemed to have passed at very high speed, the whole trip having gone like clockwork from start to finish.

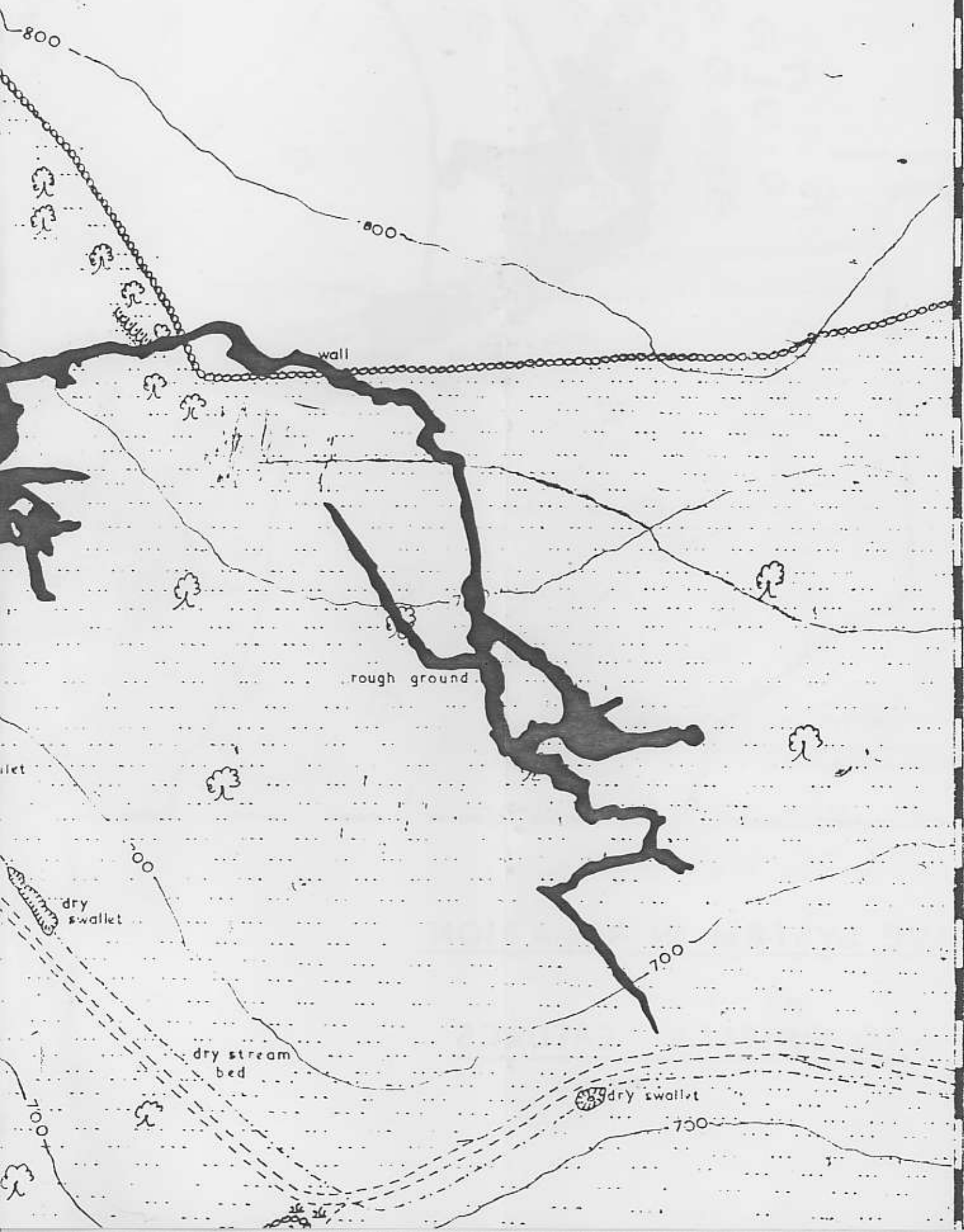


CAVE SYSTEM IN RELATION

TO SURFACE FEATURES

LONGWOOD VALLEY

corrected orientation
J.R.S. Roberts 1982, 1



NEW PLANS UNDER WAY FOR LONGWOOD/AUGUST

Back in 1961 this Group surveyed Longwood Swallet and August Hole, and the survey remains the basis for subsequent explorations. The Christmas Crawl link between Longwood and August was achieved on the basis of this survey. However the north point in the main plan was oriented wrongly at 323° rather than 360°, a regrettable error publicised in MCG newsletter 37, September 1965.

The internal plans of the cave remain accurate with respect to themselves, but use of a 323° northing has caused the inset plan showing the cave relative to surface details to be set 37° out of true around the one common feature, the entrance shaft. So at least the inset plan has needed redrawing.

There are various published additions to the known cave - respectively Fossil Passage, Sand Passage and Inferior Hole (see MCG Journal 4, 1967) and Fountain Passage (MCG Journal 6, 1976) - which have yet to be incorporated in the main plans. And we are still pushing (occasionally) in the Oxbows, with the prospect of further passage if overhanging boulders can be successfully disposed of.

Pete and Alison Moody of the Wessex Cave Club have now successfully pushed a major extension of Reynolds Passage in somewhat perilous circumstances to rejoin a main streamway downstream of the main passage's terminal choke in August Hole.

This combination of events leads logically towards a complete redrawing of our Longwood/August plans, not least to make enough room on the plans for the various extensions. Tony Knibbs has a complete set of our original survey notes, so we have not only the motive but the means. And as for the opportunity, well, we're not building our own cottage any more, are we ?

To whet the appetite, I have redrawn the inset plan showing the cave relative to surface details, to correct the 37° error. The main sink is now vertically over the Showerbath, which makes a lot of sense. Interestingly, the pre-Moody end of Reynolds Passage is now under Longwood Valley, beyond the intersection of the Rhino Rift valley and close horizontally, albeit not vertically, to Dave Morrisson's dig at Longwood Valley Sink.

Jonathan Roberts.

NEWS FROM BLACKMOOR

Wessex C.C. Journal 190 contains outline details of a revived dig at Charterhouse Warren Farm.

Whisper it not in Goth, but Grebe Swallet has been gated and padlocked.

A new cave has been discovered, explored, and subsequently filled in, directly beneath the surface of the minor road between the Hunters Lodge and Wells.

The entrance is in the centre of the road near Lower Lodge, NGR 549468, close to the last corner before Wells. On Friday, 23rd April, a contractor was digging a cable trench for BT when his JCB broke through the roof of a large cavern. The machine operator lowered a second person down the entrance on the JCB shovel, and he reported seeing footprints in the mud, but did not explore. BT contacted the police, who in turn called out the Cave Rescue (?) and cavers were asked to explore the cave. By Saturday evening 24th April, they had dug through to a fifth chamber, over 100ft from the entrance.

The cave consists of a series of chambers and avens connected by squeezes in glutinous, red mud. It is mostly in Dolomitic conglomerate, although some limestone beds are visible. The passages are phreatic and the cave is probably an ancient resurgence, cut through by the gorge behind the high wall adjoining the road.

The entrance chamber is about 10ft high, 10ft wide, 40ft long, and 2ft beneath the road. Downvalley, progress is soon blocked by mud and stal, but up valley a squeeze leads to a smaller second chamber. Hands and knees crawling, and some tight squeezing, leads to the 3rd, 4th and 5th chambers, all of which are extremely muddy.

On Sunday 25th April, Jon Roberts, Martin Rowe, Simon Knight, Lesley Robbins, and Ian Parry left the MCG Cottage at 8am in order to explore the new cave before the rest of Mendip arrived. They spent an hour looking around, and started digging at the stal blockage. However the contractor arrived and asked them to remove their ladder from his JCB so that he could continue his trench. This forced a rapid exit from the cave at 10am.

They returned at 4pm (minus Simon) to find about 15 cavers and assorted onlookers. Digging had been abandoned in the 5th chamber due to the air becoming foul, and was being concentrated at the stal blockage in the entrance chamber. The BEC were surveying, and preliminary results showed that chambers 1 to 3 are under the road but 4 & 5 are to the East.

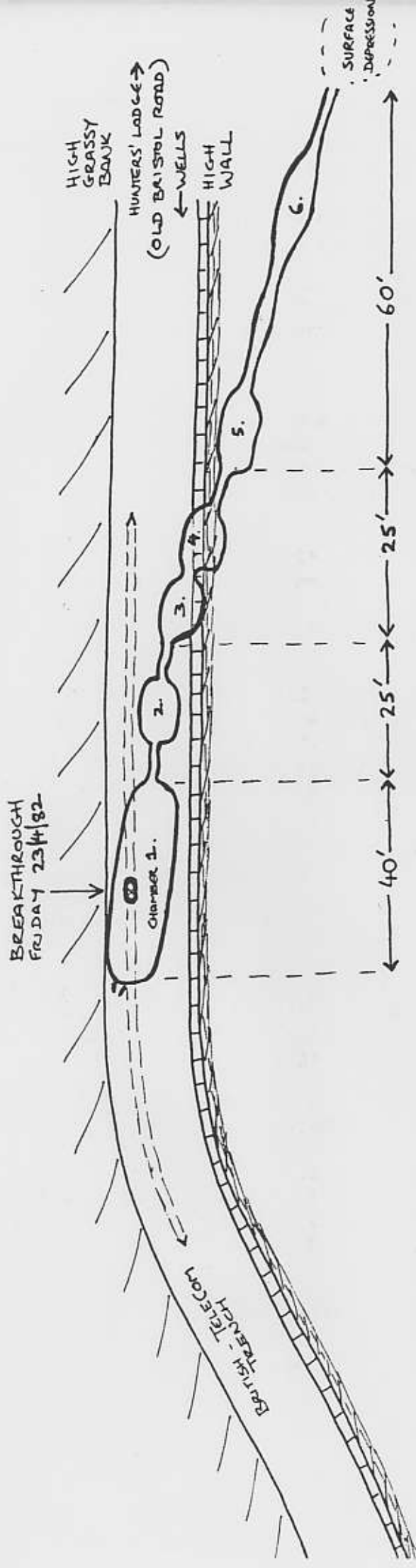
Pete and Alison Moody have now dug through to a sixth chamber, thought to be near a depression on the surface (possibly a collapse). A short extension was also pushed down-valley from the entrance chamber, before BT filled in the entrance with aggregate and capped it with concrete on 14th May.

The name for this new cave seems likely to be either Hole-in-the-Road Cave, or St George's Cavern. (it was found on St George's day).

In 1974 a collapse occurred in nearby Walcombe Valley, revealing a small chamber in Dolomitic Conglomerate. This was about 700yds up-valley from the new cave. The only other known caves in the area are inaccessible springs, and are all at higher altitude. The nearest major resurgence is St Andrew's Well in Wells.

OVERHEARD IN THE BAR...

John Miriam - two days before his wedding -
"I won't be able to do anything actively for a month or two..."



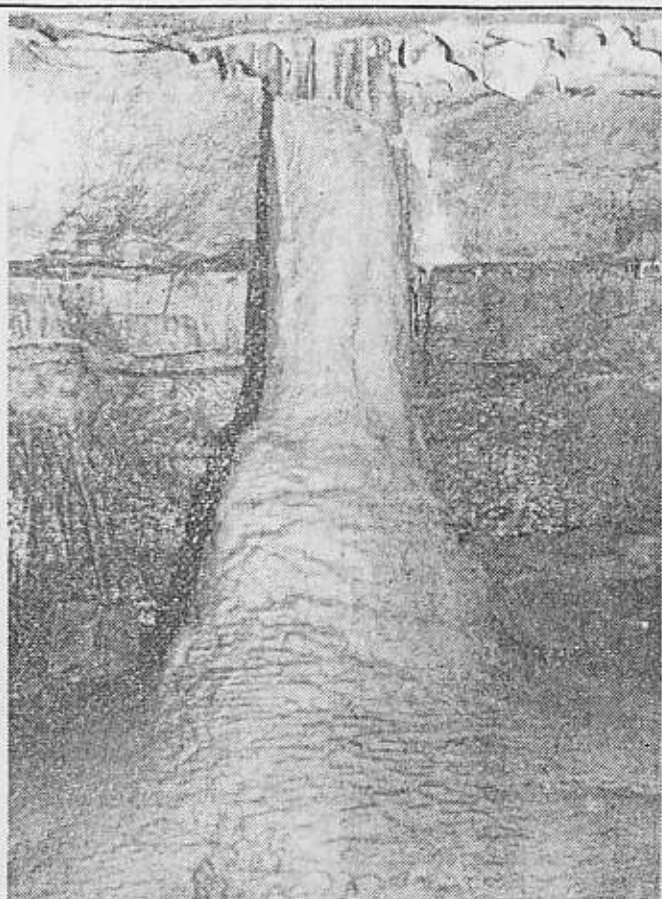
GORGE
(below road and cave level).

SKETCH PLAN
based on MCG visit 25/4/82
and discussions in the Hunters'.
JMSK

HOLE-IN-THE-ROAD
(also known as ST. GEORGE'S CAVERN)



The entrance to the mini cave system which has been uncovered in the Old Bristol Road at Wells.



One of the limestone wonders awaiting cavers exploring the series of caves, which road workers had discovered by accident.

Caverns revealed — but not for long

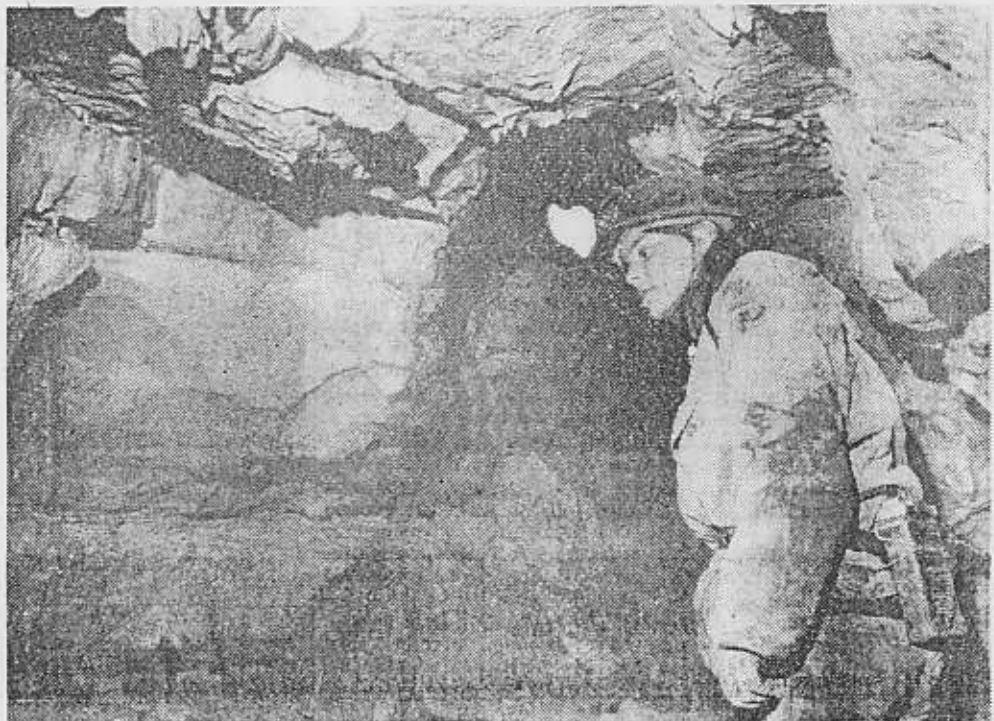
A SERIES of caves have been discovered under part of the Old Bristol Road, Wells, and cavers spent part of the weekend exploring them.

The caverns, which you can see in these exclusive pictures by Philip Hendry, of Silver Street, Wells, were found by accident as British Telecom workers, who were preparing a trench along the stretch of road, suddenly smashed their way into a cave below.

Cavers from all over the area spent several hours exploring the cave, and found it led into five other chambers, stretching more than 100 ft from the main one to underneath the Wells arboretum owned by Mr. David Tudway Quilter.

Mr. Brian Prewer, who was one of the first cavers on the scene, said British Telecom were now faced with something of a problem as it would take two or three tons of cement to fill up the hole.

"It is very low down for a cave to be discovered. Most of our major caves are well up on the Mendip plateau, way above sea level, and this is probably



A caver prepares to explore the first of a series of caves discovered below the Old Bristol Road at the weekend.

one of the lowest caves to be discovered."

Mr. Prewer thought it was an old water course from Prior's Hill, although there was no trace of water in the caves. But it was very muddy down below.

EXCITING

"It would have accrued water when the sea level was higher," he said, adding "new discoveries in the Mendips are few and far between."

Mr. Prewer, who went down into the caves three times at the weekend, said a survey was being prepared for British Telecom "and then it will depend on British Telecom and the people involved as to what they are going to do."

Mr. Graham Livings, who is a Wells City councillor and a Mendip District Councillor, said this week he had been down into the caves, and

described the find as an "exciting occurrence".

"I think it is important that the archeologists and geologists look at it before it is filled in, particularly in view of the rumour that they were going to fill it in with concrete at the weekend.

"I don't want to see officialdom not moving quickly enough to stop it being filled in," he said.

MENDIP CAVING GROUP



PATRON: THE MARQUESS OF BATH

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 1982
HELD AT NORDRACH COTTAGE, CHARTERHOUSE-ON-MENDIP
ON SATURDAY MARCH 27TH

The meeting opened at 3.20 pm and finished at 5.40 pm.

CHAIRMAN: Ron Saunders.

ATTENDANCE: 37 full members and 11 probationary, prospective and associate members.

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: were received from Arthur Spain and Richard Woollacott. Apologies for late arrival were received from Greg Smith.

2 MINUTES OF THE 1981 H.Y.G.M : were agreed.

3 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES: None.

4 COMMITTEE OFFICERS' REPORTS: These had been circulated in advance, with newsletter no.150.

5 MATTERS ARISING FROM COMMITTEE OFFICERS' REPORTS: None.

6 ELECTION OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS: Committee membership remained the same, with the exception of Wayne Hiscox, Hon. Cottage Warden, and Bryan Pittman, Hon. Editor, who both retired. John Miriam became Hon. Cottage Warden (unopposed).

A ballot was taken between Ian McKechnie and Brian Terry for the post of Hon. Editor; Ian McKechnie was elected.

7 PROPOSED CHANGES TO CONSTITUTION & RULES: The following changes were agreed by at least four-fifths of the members voting -

a) *delete* the wording of page 2, item 6, para.2, and *substitute*:-
"The amount of subscription shall be determined at a General Meeting and notified to Members in time to take effect from the next due date of subscription."

b) *add* after page 1, item 3(c)(Associate Members), para.2 :-
"Or (iii) persons who wish to become members of the Group, but who are unable to take part in the regular caving activities and who have been approved by a majority vote at a Committee Meeting."
delete page 1, item 3(e).

8 ADDITIONS TO NORDRACH COTTAGE:

a) OFF-PEAK BACKGROUND HEATING

John Miriam explained the need for background heating to protect the cottage structure. 'Economy 7' tariff for off-peak electric heating was preferred, with

three or four storage heaters around the cottage. At an off-peak tariff of 2p per unit, and an estimated 63 kW hours a day, running costs were £250 yearly if there were 200 days of heating, or £150 yearly if the heating was on 4 days a week. There was an installation cost of £85 for wiring and about £15 for heaters. Some members expressed concern about inadequate ventilation in the cottage leading to condensation. Wayne Hiscox pointed out the need also for high level heating in the changing room area. The A.G.M. voted to give general approval for the scheme, subject to final details being vetted by the committee.

b) BUILT-ON EXTENSION OUTSIDE CHANGING ROOM

A proposal for a 'lean to' outside the changing/shower area was discussed. It would allow muddy clothes to be discarded before entry, caving gear to be hung up to dry overnight, and some gear stored other than in the tackle room. The idea had been raised at the 1981 H.Y.G.M., and one design was presented featuring a built-on extension two-thirds the length of the eastern side of the cottage, half of it roofed over and the other half closed in. The outside sink would be moved from the rear to the side of the cottage as part of the proposal. The extension would not be subject to planning permission.

There was a wide range of attitudes to the scheme, with suggestions ranging from use of the horse box where it stood to a covered-in extension along the full length of the cottage side. The general view was that the changing room couldn't cope well with muddy caving gear and this also made it unpleasant for those having a shower. Members who had been caving recently thought the project needed to get under way urgently; others thought differently. Roger Wallington pointed out that any facility had to be located conveniently for users, and had to be on our land - schemes therefore needed to be by the cottage side entrance but without interfering with the car park. Existing capital funds would be adequate to pay for the cost of an extension, roundly £800 for building materials. On a vote, members rejected acceptance of the existing design at that meeting, but at length agreed the following points:

- There shall be provided an extra facility for changing and for storage;
- £1000 with 10% margin would be allowed for the project;
- Comments on the existing design, and any alternative proposals, should be submitted to the committee by the end of April 1982. The committee would then decide what plan was to be adopted.

c) NEW SOAKAWAY TO RELIEVE CESSPIT EMPTYING DEMAND

There had been concern about the frequency at which the cesspit needed emptying, largely caused by use of the toilets and sink. Currently a local farmer was emptying it for a reasonable price, about £100 a year, but this could not be guaranteed as a permanent arrangement and the costs would rise to nearer £500 if the council's services were used. There was discussion on the need, desirability and legality of constructing a soakaway to abstract the surplus waters. The meeting concluded that the committee should wait and see, and give the matter further consideration if emptying costs rose unreasonably.

9 ANY OTHER BUSINESS: The following items of business were raised -

a) MCG CAVING SHOP ACCOUNTS, AND ELECTION OF AUDITORS

The meeting agreed there should be separate auditors elected for the MCG Caving Shop accounts, which owing to some accounting complications and the workload of auditing the MCG ordinary accounts, had not been finally audited for 1981. Greg Smith and Geoff Barton were elected auditors for the MCG Caving Shop, and Barbara Dewdney and Joan Goddard were elected auditors for the main MCG accounts, for 1982.

b) CROSSWORD COMPETITION

Brian Terry announced that Greg Smith had won the Crossword Competition, and that Jon Roberts had won a consolation prize for having totally abused the English language but having found words to match the crossword and the clues!

c) NEW COOKER

The meeting agreed that a cooker should be installed at Nordrach Cottage.

d) CURRENT MCG FUNDS, AND POLICY TOWARDS GUEST BOOKINGS

Tony Knibbs outlined the current balance of MCG funds, which stood at £4441.66. The current account held £140.67, the deposit account £3533.92 (including £50 cheque not banked by Wayne Hiscox), and the special land fund £767.07. The deposit account included the capital funds remaining after cottage construction. Running costs for the cottage for the period September 1981 to March (previous weekend) 1982 had been £739, to set against cottage income of £940, showing a £201 surplus. Income from guests was double that from members. Don Vosper commented that guests also incurred costs; it was noted however that guests more than paid their way, and effectively helped to subsidise the cottage costs for members.

There was a discussion about future policy towards guest bookings. Some members wished to reduce the number of guest party bookings, while others expressed concern that the cottage was not being used to its full potential by members or guests. The concensus was that the present system of cottage bookings was working reasonably, but that there should be more encouragement for members to bring their own guests down. The A.G.M. made no change to the present general allocation of weekends but voted in favour of members being allowed to bring down guests on any weekend, up to a maximum of 12 guests, subject to prior agreement with the cottage warden.

e) CAVING FUNDS

Martin Rowe asked whether the club had specifically set aside funds for caving activities, as the capping of Ubley Hill Pot had cost £50 and he hoped now to cap Cow Pot. Tony Knibbs said that normally such funds were allowed for in the Tacklemaster's budget, but that in any case the budgetting was sufficiently flexible to allow for items of that kind.

f) EMERGENCY FUND

Malcolm Cotter asked whether the committee had allowed a margin in the funds to cover large expenses that might eventually be needed on the new cottage in a few years' time. He suggested that a small percentage of yearly income should be allocated in reserve for this eventuality. Jon Roberts replied that the committee were fully alive to the need to have some margin of funds, and that after allowing for capital spending now approved, there would still be over £1000 on deposit which would give some cover against any large scale costs in the future. Committee members had also to budget in advance each year for significant items of expense, so that few major costs would materialise unforeseen.

g) COTTAGE FEES

Malcolm Cotter thought the present basis of charging cottage fees imposed an unreasonably high charge for persons who wished to use the cottage during the daytime for occasional purposes, as they had to pay the full rate for 24 hours. Tony Knibbs said there could be practical problems in charging partial fees, but that the committee, who were responsible for deciding on the level of fees, would give the matter some consideration.

h) VOTE OF THANKS TO RETIRING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Brian Terry proposed a vote of thanks to Wayne Hiscox and Bryan Pittman for their efforts on behalf of the Group. Wayne Hiscox commented that it had taken him ten years to find someone else to take on the job, and that he wished to thank everyone who had helped to build the Mk.I new cottage. Bryan Pittman reminded members he wanted articles for the 1982 Journal.

10 DATE AND VENUE OF THE 1982 HALF YEARLY GENERAL MEETING: To be at Nordrach Cottage on Saturday October 16th at 3pm.

4) NEW COVENANT

The meeting agreed that a covenant should be installed at Northwood Cottage.

5) CURRENT AND FUTURE AND FUTURE COVENANT AGREEMENTS

They further outlined the current balance of 2002 funds, which stood at £4441.66. The current account held £140.57, the deposit account £3333.52 (including £300 cheque not booked by Wayne Hinson), and the special fund £107.57. The deposit account included the capital funds remaining after mortgage construction. Running costs for the cottage for the period September 1997 to March (previous weekend) 1997 had been £177, set against cottage income of £940, showing a £101 surplus. Income from guests was double that from weekends. Don Cooper commented that guests also incurred costs; it was noted however that guests were then paid their way, and effectively helped to subsidise the cottage costs for weekends.

There was a discussion about the way in which the cottage was run. Don Cooper wished to reduce the number of weekend bookings, while others expressed concern that the cottage was not being used to its full potential by weekends or guests. The discussion was that the general nature of weekend bookings was working reasonably well but there should be more management for weekends to bring their own guests. The A.M. vote on items in the current general allocation of weekends was voted in favour of members being allowed to bring their guests on any weekend, up to a maximum of 12 guests, subject to prior agreement with the cottage warden.

6) GUESTS

Members have asked whether the cottage should be specifically set aside for certain activities, as the copying of letters will be done there. It was agreed that the cottage should be available to allow for these activities, but that the budgeting was sufficiently flexible to allow for these activities.

Ian McKechnie
30 Brittain Road
Hersham
Walton on Thames
Surrey KT12 4LR

7) BUDGETING

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9) NEW COVENANT TO BETHANY COTTAGE

Wayne Hinson proposed a vote of thanks to Wayne Hinson and Bryan Pittman for their efforts on behalf of the Group. Wayne Hinson commented that it had taken him two years to find someone else to take on the job, and that he wished to thank everyone who had helped to build the B.I. new cottage. Bryan Pittman reminded members he would continue for the 1997 Journal.

10) DATE AND VENUE OF THE 1997 HALF YEARLY GENERAL MEETING: To be at Northwood Cottage on Saturday October 18th at 7pm.