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EDITORIAL

At the Annual General Meeting held in 1972 it was requested by the members that the Annual Accounts and other relevant details be circulated separately and in advance of the October issue of the Journal. Those among you who wish to bind these details in with the current Volume, which ends in December, should hang on to your copies - for they may not be available again at the end of the year.

CLUB NEWS

Annual General Meeting and Dinner

Members are reminded that the A.G.M. will be held at Priddy Village Hall at 3.00 p.m. prompt on Saturday, October 20th, 1973. There is only one proposition which has been put forward by the Committee this year, and this is a small change in the Club Rules as a result of legal advice.

The Dinner is at 7.30 p.m. for 8.00 p.m. at Bishop's Barn in Wells. There are still some tickets available, so if you haven't ordered your tickets then write to: - Anne West, 10 Silver Street, Wells, Somerset. The tickets are £1.50p each. It is intended to provide a coach from Upper Pitts down to Wells and back after the Dinner. The cost of the coach will be 35p a head. Please send cash with orders for the tickets, coach etc and also a stamped addressed envelope - it makes Anne's job much easier. The Guest of Honour is Denis Warburton.

New Members

We welcome the following new members:-

Richard Websell, 36 Winchester Street, Salisbury, Wilts.

David Airey, 8 Attwood Road, Salisbury, Wilts.

Robert Elliott, Fir Tree House, Westbury-sub-Mendip, Wells.

Apologies

The List of Members as at June 1973 omitted the fact that Mr. & Mrs. A.R. Audsley are Joint Members, Mike Dewdney-York of Owkerstone Cottage, Townsend, Priddy, Somerset should also be added to the list.

Cave Access

The latest in our list is Stoke Lane. Visitors to this cave must pay 5p at Stoke Bottom Farm (662480).

MEETS

FRIDAY NIGHT CLUB

Friday October 19th	Pine Tree Pot
Friday November 2nd	Eastwater
Friday November 16th	St. Cuthberts
Friday November 30th	Lamb Leer
Saturday December 15th.	Wales
Friday January 11th	Reservoir Hole. Restricted access. Names to Richard please.
Saturday January 26th	Fairy Quarry
Friday February 8th	Cuckoo Cleaves
Friday February 22nd	Ubley Warren Swallet
Saturday March 9th	Swildons Shatter Passage

Friday meets at 7.30 p.m.

Saturday - Wales all day trip

Swildons and Fairy afternoon trip.

Enquiries to R.R. Kenney, 'Yennek', St. Marys Road, Meare, Glastonbury, Somerset, BA6 9SS.

OBITUARY

S.J. Pick

It is with great regret that we have to announce the death of S.J. Pick, one of our oldest members. He was always keenly interested in every aspect of the Club's activities, having joined the W.C.C. at the first general meeting held on November 4th 1934.

Frank Frost

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

"Chaumbey",
50 Wells Road,
Wells, BA5 1DN,
Somerset.

1st September 1973

Mendip Rescue Organization Call-out

Thank you for publishing current details of the M.R.O. in WCC Jnl. 148, 12, 312-14 in August. May I please ask Journal readers to correct two important mistakes of mine in preparing the original lists.

1. The revised 999 emergency call procedures will not come into effect now until the end of November 1973 owing to unresolved aspects of Police re-organization in the Mendip Division. In the meantime all cavers requiring M.R.O. services should continue to call Wells 73481 direct as per M.R.O. notices at all major caves in the area.
2. The telephone number of The Belfry (and M.R.O. Store) should be Wells 72126, of course, and not Priddy.

Also, since the publication of this list, Dr. Bob Pyke has told me that he is leaving the area to take up a hospital consultancy in Northampton and so will be unable to continue as a Medical Warden. Bob Mehew of the Shepton Mallet C.C. is leaving for London shortly and informs me that Alan Butcher will succeed him. Alan's home telephone number is Box 2441 (near the freestone mines!) and he may be contacted at work through his head office at Bath 28207. I would like to thank both Bobs for their active support and interest in M.R.O. on behalf of all Mendip Cavers.

Once full details of the revised 999 call-out procedure have been completed with the Police, I will republish M.R.O. lists and keep everyone informed.

Yours sincerely,

Jim Hanwell

Hon. Secretary and Treasurer

Mendip Rescue Organization

FROM THE LOG

30th June 1973 SWILDONS HOLE

Sulo Suloman, Paul Hadfield, Pete Moody. Paul went solo down to IV via Paradise Regained expecting to meet the rest of us coming down the streamway. Unfortunately we were delayed by the Hunters and didn't start until about 3 hrs after Paul. We eventually met up in VII where Paul having given us up for lost was on his way out.

Suspicious had been aroused about the promise of the passage found on the 23rd by Rich Gordon who refused to come down. Paul now decided to leave the pushing to us while he tried to climb into other passages. It was soon abundantly clear why. The bedding plane was inclined at something like 80 degrees and liberally coated with mud. At the top we found a nasty traverse back across the bedding which led to a 25ft pitch to a cross passage, both ends of which were choked. A slippery climb up one side led to an alcove with no exits. There appears to be little promise of further extensions. A slow trip out and an unpleasant shock in IV where we found the dig flooded once again.

1st July-1973 SWILDONS HOLE

Rich Gordon and Pete Moody. A quick look around IV for an alternative dig when the main one is flooded produced nothing exciting. The pot upstream of the rope climb into the oxbow on the west of the streamway looks completely useless re digging possibilities.

10th July 1973 SWILDONS HOLE

Geoff Yeadon and Pete Moody. We augmented the ladder on the top pitch of Victoria Aven with a 120ft rope so that one can self lifeline the pitch. The dig at the end of Desperation Extension is no longer feasible to work. To clear the way on one has to back out of a flat out squeeze with armfuls of liquid mud. The only way to open the choke would be to bang over the top. After banging the hole found in the floor on 28/12/72 we made our way out. Owing to trouble with lights and the fact that we were both hungover from the night before the trip took 11 hours.

14th July 1973 SWILDONS HOLE

Paul Hadfield, P. Collett and Pete Moody. The one remaining passage not pushed on 30th June in VII was found to be a continuation of the bedding plane which was too tight. We returned to the dig in IV which has now dried out. After digging for about an hour we came out.

15th July 1973 SWILDONS HOLE

A. Mills and B. Wilkinson. A quick trip to II after a flash flood warning from Wells Police. We told everyone to 'get out' of the cave and then had it to ourselves - "very nice - must do it again sometime".

Satanic

22nd July 1973 NINE BARROWS SWALLET

Mike Roger, Rich and Dave Gordon. An attack on the choked aven shortly before the terminal choke. Approx one ton of cobbles removed at considerable risk, and deposited in the streamway. A small airspace was entered above the fill, with a reasonable draught coming from a minute passage which will need banging

D.G.

28th July 1973 THRUPE LANE SWALLET

T. Baker, A. Dingle, W. Edwards, S. Meade-king and R. Witcombe. Timbered shaft is now 20ft deep. The main cliff remains featureless but the other solid rock wall is undercutting. The fill comprises stream gravels, Old Red Sandstone cobbles and water eroded boulders, which are very sledge resistant. Two sleepers of the fourth ring were put in.

R.G.W.

18th August 1973 SWILDONS HOLE

Pete Moody and ?. Thrutch Tube in IX. Pushed the final squeeze to an aven which was too tight. The main passage went downhill shattering my theory that it was another Blue Pencil going to a high level Shatter type passage. Went down that head first but chickened out before reaching any definite conclusion. An incredibly nasty muddy - passage. About 40ft of new passage.

25th August 1973 CUCKOO CLEEVES

Rich Gordon, Paul Roger and Pete Moody. Removed the bang wire and digging tools from the MK 1 Dig. The BEC extension is about 10ft long in a rift becoming too tight. A pretty hopeless dig.

26th August 1973 RHINO RIFT

Alan Mills, D.S. and A.N. Went to check up on previous bang on the 19th at The Doddle (Satanic Walk). Did some gardening and tried to insert myself into the squeeze. Not very successful - put more bang in and retired from the cave.

A.M.

26th August 1973 SWILDONS HOLE

Albert Sole (Salisbury Caving Group) and Pete Moody. Pushed Thrutch Tube to a conclusion. The passage found on the 18th continued steeply downhill for a few feet and then became too tight. It would be possible to dig the floor out but the chances of any significant discovery now appears very slight. From the nature of the passage at the end it appears that Thrutch Tube was not formed when the Second Capture began as is Causers Calamity/Damp Link/N.E. Tributary and so there seems no hope of getting into the "Master Cave" somewhere beyond Pirate Chamber. Returned to IV and dug for an hour. The dig was still wet and with only the two of us little progress was made.

2nd September 1973 RHINO RIFT

Alan Mills, B. Wilkinson and D.S. Went back to check up on bang. (Beyond The Doddle which is reached by traversing over the 1st pitch). Hole now large enough to enter passage 15ft long to pot. Pot 10ft deep with passage continuing a further 15 to 20ft to a small hole. Chamber just before named The Coal Hole. A small stream and a draught at the small hole. The final passage has a lot of fossils in it and black chert.

A.M.

MENDIP NOTES

by Grottomeare

Wookey Hole

Those of you who live in the Mendip area will probably be familiar with the latest developments at Wookey Hole in August. However, if like me you live as far away as Glastonbury - why then you may as well be in Shangri-La for news travels so slow. For the benefit of my fellow exiles here is a brief resume of the local situation.

When Wookey Hole Caves was bought by Tussauds it was inevitable that the new management would take a fresh look at the Company's position and its future prospects. The purchase of the old paper-making mill down in the valley also altered the situation.

First of all there was always the problem of displaying adequately the cave when ingoing parties were interrupted by outgoing parties. From what I can gather no one had strong objections to another entrance being formed, and the recent discoveries by divers in IX helped to clinch the matter. The divers found an aven which they were able to climb until the passage ended in a boulder choke with tree roots exposed. The altitude gained in this climb was 47 metres from the water surface. Brian Prewer was enlisted to help locate the boulder choke from the surface. However, he was due to go away on holiday and his minions were suitably instructed. I am told that they spent several happy minutes picking up amongst other things the Light Programme (a sure indication of the age group of these fellows). In the end Pete Murray was eclipsed by the steady "bleep-bloop" that everyone was waiting for. The fix was very positive and located a spot about 2ft square. The depth formula was applied and this gave a result of 10ft.

What do you do in a situation like this? An ordinary surface dig would be risky, for if it did not 'go' straight away management would lose much money by uninvited guests forcing their way in during dead of night. The answer lay in Plant - nice big shiny hydraulic Plant. A Hymak was hired and it gained entry to the site by elbowing aside the restricting gate posts.

Tensing its muscles it readjusted its pressures and thumped the ground with its scoop. The ground gave way and there was the hole with its roof only 3ft below the surface. It was all over in 10 minutes - the quickest dig on Mendip.

The next stage was a survey to determine the position of IX in relation to the cliff face. Now that this has been done it is quite a reasonable proposition to drive a tunnel from the canal side of the valley to IX. It could reach this chamber at a reasonable altitude above its beach thus affording a good view downwards to the water. The passage would then swing towards III and there are possibilities of "windows" into some of the other chambers en route.

Perhaps the most interesting problem of all is how to gain access to III. A horizontal passage, some few feet above water level, would cut straight through the springing of the arch that forms this chamber. It has been suggested that the answer may lie in a high level approach via steps from the roof.

The visitor would then be able to walk up the valley and admire its scenery - see Hyaena Den on the way - have a good look at the resurgence and then turn to the right into "nineways".

And what of the Mill? A Museum of Industrial Archaeology? Paper-making by hand? An improved Museum for the finds? Ideas are still coming in thick and fast - but one thing is clear - management are sensitive to their responsibilities - and I somehow feel that HEB would approve.

WATER TRACING NOTES

by W.I. Stanton

In the last Journal I mentioned that Hansdown and Thrupe Lane swallets had just been traced to Saint Andrew's Well by the Bristol Avon and Somerset River Authorities, using Rhodamine WT dye. The test was carried out when the swallet streams were well up after rain late in June. In the first phase Rhodamine was put into Hansdown Swallet and Pyranine dye into Slab House Swallet. As soon as the former had appeared at Saint Andrew's, a second slug of Rhodamine was poured into Thrupe Lane Swallet, and this too was soon detected in the shadow of Wells Cathedral. Two days later, although no Pyranine from Slab House had reached Saint Andrew's, a hefty dose of the said green dye was added to the stream at Windsor Hill Swallet. This too failed to reappear, even though sampling was continued for 7 days afterwards.

I had been so confident that all these swallets would feed Saint Andrew's Well that I began to doubt if the Pyranine was behaving itself. So at the next opportunity, afforded by prolonged heavy rain on August 3, 4 and 5, the test was repeated, but with the dyes and swallets reversed. This time the Rhodamine from Slab House and Windsor Hill swallets reached Saint Andrew's in 24 hours, but the Pyranine from Hansdown and Thrupe Lane did not reappear.

We now had four swallets that according to the Rhodamine test fed Saint Andrew's Well, but according to the Pyranine test did not. The only possible conclusion was that the Pyranine was decolorized in some way before it reached the rising. Pyranine had worked satisfactorily in the Finger Valley tests in January and March, but had given consistently negative results later in the year. Some of these, such as the Bowery Corner Swallet negative in May, seemed suspicious now.

In these cases, then, the Pyranine appears to have functioned properly in winter, but not in summer, independently of other factors such as the purity or otherwise of the water. One is reminded of the big Pyranine failure of June 1972, when 5kg of the stuff were washed into Nedge Hill Hole, never to reappear. No doubt the academics amongst us will provide the explanation in due course. The Rhodamine has given good results under all conditions.

In the first Saint Andrew's Well test, which lasted 14 days, the Main and Scotland springs were sampled separately, and their waters behaved identically under the fluorometer in respect of dye and background values. The Bristol Waterworks sources at Gurney Slade and Wells Athletic Ground were sampled throughout, and proved negative. In the second test, Wookey Hole, Dulcote Spring and Darshill Spring were sampled in addition to Saint Andrew's, and all three were negative.

CAVING CLUBS AND THE CAVE LEADERSHIP CERTIFICATE

by Jenny Potts.- Hon. Sec. NCA

It is a matter of great concern that the unsigned article entitled "The World About Us" in Wessex C.C. Journal No. 146 contains certain statements concerning NCA, BACI and the Cave Leadership Certificate which are just not true. I am therefore particularly anxious that these misstatements are corrected and that the correction should be as widely distributed as the original article was.

The article mentioned "the certification for caving recently circularised to education authorities by the Department of Education and Science". The circular referred to, which contains a section on caving among other outdoor pursuits, was issued by DES without any consultation whatsoever with either BACI or NCA and without our knowledge and approval, nor did they send a copy to either BACI or NCA. They have made use of part of a circular issued by BACI with NCA's approval and support. (Since re-issued as NCA Information Sheet 1, available from 5, St. Pauls St., Leeds LS1 2NQ at 3p per copy). This information sheet concerns itself solely with safety precautions and does in fact refer to the concern of caving clubs at the number of schools using caving as an activity. This has been quoted in part and out of context and the impression is given that only leaders with a Cave Leadership Certificate should be acceptable to LEA's. Both B.A.C.I. and NCA are protesting about this and we are writing to DES to complain of the entirely wrong impression given. BACI have minuted in their committee meetings their concern at this misuse of their work and have stated that they themselves do not regard the C.L.C. as the only qualification and that they consider that an equally valid "qualification" is that the person concerned should be an active and experienced club caver who can be vouched for by his club and regional council. Cambrian Caving Council came up against this problem last year and B.A.C.I. supported them in organising a proforma for club cavers which should be signed by club secretary and regional council secretary. In fact the notes on the syllabus for the C.L.C. state that it is not expected that teachers who sometimes do caving with their pupils should have to possess the certificate but that they should be advised to seek the help of members of reputable local caving clubs. It is regrettable that Somerset County Council should have misunderstood the DES circular and I am pleased that the matter is now cleared up but it would be a great help to NCA and BACI if we were given full information on exactly what was said officially by SCC so that we can use this as ammunition in our protests to DES. The C.L.C. is not accepted yet by most LEA's, Somerset and Glamorgan are the only ones who have so far attempted to use it as the only qualification and the correct situation has been made known to both authorities.

The Cave Leadership Certificate (not "BACI Certificate") is issued by the Cave Leadership Training Board which has as one of its members a representative appointed by NCA. It is not "issued from" the National Scout Caving Centre except insofar as the Centre makes its facilities available for the CLTB to hold assessment courses. The assessors for the course are appointed by CLTB as independent people of high standing in the caving world who are capable of assessing to the required high standard. They are not normally members of the staff of the centre nor are they even necessarily members of BACI. The assessors who have acted so far are:-

Don Robinson - Upper Wharfedale Fell Rescue Assn., Chairman CLTB.
Harry Long - BSA, UWFRA. Underground Leader, member of CLTB.
Roger Sutcliffe - Gritstone Club, Chairman CNCC.
John Wilcock - Archaeological Recorder C.R.G.
Barry Webb - Sheffield Univ. Spel. Soc., Gagendor Caving Group, member CLTB,
Sam Cook - Gagendor Caving Group.

Ben Lyon - Whernside Manor, member of CLTB.
John Russum - Happy Wanderers C.P.C.
Jack Rasdell - Rolls-Royce C.C., Secretary CNCC.

If assessment courses were to be held in other areas then the CLTB would ask local cavers of high standing to act as assessors as the Northern cavers have done for assessment courses held in the North. The assessment courses do not attempt to "teach caving" and a candidate for assessment has to produce log book evidence of his activity as a caver - the amount of experience required is such that it would be virtually impossible for anyone who is not a regular and active caving club member to obtain it. Thus there need be no fear of caving being swamped by teachers with a caving certificate who don't really care about caving.

There is no question of NCA "thoughtlessly championing a certification approach from one of its constituent bodies without consultation". NCA has been kept fully informed at every stage in the production of the CLC and the syllabus has been submitted to us for our approval. Copies were sent to all regional councils in 1969 and our comments were invited - I can vouch for the fact that DCA did comment and our views were taken note of by BACI. CSCC has, in the same way, been given every opportunity to discuss and comment upon the scheme. It is a pity if Wessex C.C. feels it cannot support the BACI scheme but it is a fact that CSCC has already done so and has voted its support at past NCA meetings. The BACI certificate says nothing about "school caving" as such nor does it set out any mandatory programme for the introduction of beginners to caving, nor has NCA done any such thing, feeling that if the leader concerned is an experienced caver then these matters are best left to his judgement. As there is therefore no "overall concept or detailed content regarding school caving" in the C.L.C. syllabus, it is difficult to understand what Wessex disagrees with, since the certificate refers solely to the competence of the individual concerned.

It is not a fair comparison to equate the Mountain Leadership Certificate with the C.L.C.; it is only now that the BMC has fully taken over the administration of the MLC and it is therefore the mountaineers themselves and not the educationalists who are "tightening up" on MLC assessment. I attended last December a Safety Conference organised by the BMC at which delegates from BMC, the Scottish M.C., British and Scottish Mountain Rescue Organisations and British and Scottish Mountain Leadership Training Boards discussed the problem of badly led school parties and it was said then, by the mountaineers themselves, that the only way to stem the appalling and growing number of young casualties in the mountains was to get every school leader to have an MLC. We hope that this situation will never arise in caving and provided that the regional councils accept their responsibilities as regards vouching for the suitability of club cavers who approach them for references and that cavers, through NCA, continue to support and take an interest in the work of BACI so that it remains controlled by cavers as it is at present, there is every reason to hope that the situation will continue to be controlled by cavers. It is inevitable that there will be some LEA's who insist on a certificate of competence no matter what NCA or regional council may say, and if there is not one controlled by the caving world, such LEA's may invent one of their own - surely we don't want that? There has already been an unhappy instance in Derbyshire of a Centre appointing a chief caving instructor who had never been caving because he had a general certificate in outdoor pursuits, whereas the local experienced and competent cavers who applied had no certificate to back their claim.

Please appreciate that NCA and BACI will be only too pleased if CSCC is prepared to take an interest in school caving and to act as Cambrian Council already does in vouching for the experience of club cavers who wish to help with school caving. It is a great pity all regional councils did not take this step some years ago!

May I add a further note as DCA Secretary, concerning the incident in Carleswark Cavern, Derbyshire mentioned in the section on Safety on 267. There were in fact two incidents in Carleswark and your writer is confusing the two. The first concerned a junior cadet who was sent to "explore" the cave by himself by an Army leader - he tried to dive the sump, found the air space and was rescued. The second concerned a boy of 15 on a course at Whitehall Outdoor Pursuits Centre who was taken down the cave in a party of six novices with one instructor. The boy was lifelined down the pitch first and was drowned while attempting to find his own way out while the instructor was still at the top of the pitch. It was this second incident which led to a firm recommendation by the Coroner, advised by Derbyshire C.R.O., that there should never be less than two leaders with a party - something which is automatic in club caving since the novice here is normally in the minority. This point is not stressed in the note on safety. If youngsters are to be sent into a cave on their own to explore, it is vital that the person who sends them appreciates the possible lethal properties of an apparently simple cave and chooses his cave with due care. It is also vital that when youngsters reach the stage of going on to more advanced techniques where they will need some kind of instructions particularly in work on ladders, that there are at least two experienced cavers with them and an adequate ratio, not less than 1:3, of experienced cavers to novices.

From: Jim Hanwell
Chairman W.C.C.

To: Mrs Jenny Potts,
Hon. Secretary,
National Caving Association.

Dear Jenny,

Your lengthy criticisms of "The World About Us" (WCC Jnl. 146, 257-59) requires comment by us since it was prepared by me with the approval of our Club Committee. It was intended as an explanation of the circumstances prompting our motion to the CSCC concerning "Caving in Schools" (pp.259-68). You will know that this resolution was accepted by the CSCC meeting and so it is now up to them to amplify it at the next annual meeting of the National Caving Association.

The title of the article meant exactly what it said. Its contents were a compendium of unsolicited opinions given by many authorities outside the caving world who, nevertheless, are ultimately responsible for young people introduced to caving. Schools are only one of the many groups involved as you know. It was, and is, their view and not ours that the Department of Education and Science were recommending a specific certification scheme for their people. Also, they appear as convinced as the DES that this has the national support of cavers. I am glad you are taking steps to correct the matter; but, you might have expected this sort of confusion in issuing a leaflet like Information Sheet No. 1 clearly headed National Caving Association and British Association of Caving Instructors, and concluding with an invitation to write for further details of the Cave Leadership Certificate. Surely, it is not incorrect to term this "thoughtless".

We shall stand corrected if you can demonstrate to the CSCC the necessary minute giving NCA clear authority for its obvious alignment with any leadership and certification schemes. The annual meeting of the NCA in 1969 records "considerable reservations and concern" regarding certification. In 1970 the CSCC declined an invitation to become involved in such a movement, whilst in 1971 a proposal to give NCA "approval and support" was completely amended by the CSCC. This unanimously accepted amendment only empowered the NCA to "take note of the work" being done in this field. At

the last annual meeting in 1972, the only resolution seemingly associated concerns the setting-up of a sub-committee on "programmes and training" regarding the "possibility" of Whernside Manor "becoming the National Caving Centre". However, since the latter is still negotiable and you have been at pains to distinguish between Whernside, BACI and the independent Cave Leadership Training Board who issue the certificates in question, I conclude this to be irrelevant. So, I am surprised when you now tell us that the CSCC has voted its support of "such schemes" at past NCA meetings. This they have consistently and carefully avoided!

In my long experience as the CSCC chairman, I recall their delegates as being most anxious that the NCA should not "assess the merits of caving organizations..." You will remember this CSCC proposal being unanimously accepted by the 1971 annual meeting as a precedent for the then fully fledged NCA. In registering neither approval nor disapproval of certification as such, the CSCC feel that they honoured this vital principle.

Once again, I emphasize that the connections drawn between school caving and the nationwide aspirations of CLC were not ours. Many outside the caving world thought that we were now commending a scheme which had parallels with the Mountain Leadership Certificate courses they were supporting already. The 1973 programme of the National Scout Caving and Activity Centre at Whernside Manor stresses that the training and guidance of cave leaders is their "first priority" also, that the CLC scheme of the BACI is now in operation there and that it is recommended that "everyone engaged in leading parties of young people underground works towards this Certificate" (my underlining). This seems hardly the recommendation for teachers to seek the help of reputable local caving clubs that you assure us of. Neither, incidentally, does it help our understandable mistake in supposing that Whernside was the geographical centre of all three bodies.

For some 30 years, the Wessex Cave Club has sponsored local school caving groups via the type of do-it-yourself methods outlined in our motion to the CSCC. Successive meetings of the Club membership have charged committees with protecting and furthering this approach because we know that it has been highly successful. However, when such schools see widely circulated leaflets with all the trappings of national status and approval, they must feel obliged to enquire how it applies to them in this insurance conscious age. Quite simply, the Wessex are now seeking wider recognition for its methods within the constitutional framework of the regional councils and NCA. This cannot be done without reference to the alternative schemes which have necessitated our action. We very much regret having to raise the issue, I assure you. The matter now rests with the CSCC and will accept their findings.

As you have given your approval for your memorandum to be published in the Wessex C.C. Journal, I hope that you will allow me to publish this reply with it. I will also pass a copy to Ben Lyon.

Yours sincerely,
Jim Hanwell
Chairman: Wessex Cave Club

HOW TO BUILD YOUR OWN CAVE

from The Sunday Times, July 15 1973

LASCAUX'S 17,000-year-old cave paintings are being lovingly and expensively recreated by four artists only 300 yards from the Lascaux caves in Southern France, so that the public can once again see what is probably prehistoric man's greatest artistic achievement.

The public last saw the famous Lascaux originals in 1962, before the caves were closed because 130,000 tourists a year were upsetting the cave's ancient balance of humidity and bacteria, and the paintings were deteriorating. Now the four artists - two painters and two sculptors - are making a carbon copy of the paintings and the cave, using materials which include cement, chicken wire and natural paints.

Backing the project, which will take another eight years to complete, is the Comte de la Rochefoucauld, landowner of Lascaux and head of one of France's oldest families. He is risking £360,000 to recapture the visitors he lost when the caves closed.

Already a huge L-shaped hole has been gouged out of the hill just below Lascaux's entrance, to accommodate the new steel and concrete cave. "We stipulated in the agreement that the reconstruction must be immediately adjacent to the real cave," says Max Sarradet, head of Dordogne section of France's ancient monuments department. "By building here we will capture some of the site's original mystery for the visitors."

Lower down the hill in a large stone farmhouse, the artists' work is progressing more slowly. It has taken the painters and the two sculptors a year to execute eight big animal studies - just eight metres of the cave's length from the end passage beyond the great Hall of Bulls. So far only one, a pilot study of two bison, has actually been finished. Before they started, however they already had one great aid - a contour plan made by the French National Geographic Institute measured in sections one centimetre apart.

This survey was instigated by Max Sarradet's department when Lascaux was given to the French nation in 1971 as part of the reconstruction agreement.

"We had to find out every detail about the cave," says Sarradet. "We hold it in trust for our grandchildren until science advances sufficiently, perhaps by the end of the century, for our problems to be solved." Only then, says Sarradet, will the embargo on visitors be lifted.

The reconstruction of Lascaux is being prefabricated in an open barn at the farm. First a cage of iron bars is built, each one bent to conform precisely with sections, five centimetres apart, taken from the contour survey. This supports a mesh of chicken wire. On to that is plastered a three centimetre thick layer of cement coloured with mud from the field outside. This is moulded to follow the exact lines of the rock faces in the original cave.

The painters prepare life-size cartoons of each animal, copying from the originals for an hour every day. These studies - works of art in themselves - show every rock facet and minute colour change.

They soon abandoned modern synthetic paints and the three colours come from the soils around the cave, just as they did 17,000 years ago - black manganese oxide, red ochre clay and yellow mud.

A BRIEF ANARCHIST GUIDE TO BRITISH CAVE ACCESS

By R.G. Lewis

Ed. note. Bob wishes to make it clear that these views are not necessarily those of the Wessex or its Committee.

1. It has never been the legal right of cave explorers to explore a cave beneath land owned by another, without permission. This applies similarly to climbers, walkers and other trespassers on or under such land.
2. It is man's prerogative to explore his environment in whatsoever manner it pleases him, inasmuch as he does not intrude upon the prerogatives and legitimate activities of others. Common-sense is needed, of course. It is morally (though not legally) indefensible to place upon the explorer a restriction of activity based on any other criteria.
3. Though comments may be made and action taken, after the event, in respect of negligent or inept leadership of conduct in hazardous circumstances e.g. mountain areas, no undue restriction of personal freedom and choice of action pertains to climbing and mountaineering. This is not so of caving.
4. In no way does the first ascent of a peak or rock-climb confer upon those fortunate enough to have participated in it the right to limit future climbers.

In no way does the discovery of a cave confer upon the pioneers a right to dictate the manner in which future explorers equip or disport themselves at that site, while future explorers do not interfere with the prerogatives and legitimate activities of others (which they do if they cause damage to the natural surroundings).

Vid.: Agen Allwedd - c. 15 years.

G. B. Cave - c.34 years.

St. Cuthbert's - c.20 years.

Dan-yr-Ogof - c. 6 years.

5. In certain cases groups singly or jointly exercise access control of caves. Such control may have been admirable at certain times and has served to protect many sites to an extent. In formulating such agreements as may have been desirable to owner or caver, groups have failed consistently to view the future of the sport except in so far as they themselves are involved. Member clubs now constitute an elite faction and, in status terms, a majority one. No active member of WCC for instance can honestly object to some nondescript group placing a gate on Stoke Lane Slocker; as long as Wessex are a party to restriction at Rhino, Longwood, GB Cave and Lamb Leer it would be sheer hypocrisy.
6. Climbing is a "pure" sport - it is open to any and all. The best routes usually fall to the best (or first) parties. No obligation attaches in the way of equipment or anything else. Your future is yours only. This can hardly be said to be true of such pursuits as show-jumping (where the rider of the best - most expensive? - animal is at advantage) or motor racing (in which the driver of the best - most expensive? - machinery often wins). I do not believe freedom of the kind climbers enjoy is or has been for many years present in caving. Certainly access regulations have never been more widespread.
7. Access regulations are not only tiresome - they are positively dangerous. One may not be able to visit a chosen site at a time one wishes owing to booking systems and notice required, yet I have every right to base my visit upon what I consider weather conditions to indicate - I do not need the pressure of a set date to incur for me a risk outside my full control. One may be forced likewise to carry equipment which is not needed, in order to satisfy access conditions - yet, if I decide in the interests of the trip to dispense with some item of equipment that is my responsibility in full. The same goes for numbers comprising a party - safety does not enter into it. Such rulings are the more stupid in that their implementation has been by non-cavers (owners) advised by "interested parties". Regulations imposed by interested parties are

sometimes most- suspect, in my opinion. A gate is invariably involved. Thus arises perpetuation of status, not for the individual and not for cavers, but in the name of the specific group/s which approach/es the owner (and not, mostly, the other way about, as one is expected to accept!) One frequent result is that a member of a club having little or no caving experience is better able to visit a given site at short-notice than someone active for years with a different group. It is not a reciprocal arrangement because not all of us were around when it was easy to find caves. Given this, and a tendency to proliferation of fixed aids at controlled sites, is it any wonder that leader-systems and gates do not adequately protect formations?

8. I was about to add "PIRATE'S OF THE CAVING WORLD UNITE" - not that I have a great deal to learn from Marx - but it occurs to me that this time-honoured epithet has become corrupted. It used to indicate one who breaks through at a site actively pursued by someone else, see Pirate Chamber, Swildons Hole. It seems it may now be taken to mean one who ignores an access restriction. To my mind, if the cave is there and the caver is there, certain things ineluctably follow. I hope to God uninformed bureaucracy never changes that.

Refs: Socialism, Utopian and Scientific - Engels.
Personal Communications - Agen Allwedd Cave Management Committee.
CSCC Information Handbook - Ed. E. Catherine.
Personal Communication - SWCC.
Conservation and Access Report - Ed. J. Wilmut.

REVIEW

Caves and Conservation. Edited by John Wilmut. Published by the National Caving Association 1972. 38 pages A4.

The contents are in the form of a statistical analysis, and to quote from the cover it is 'A report on the state of conservation and access in caves and mines in England and Wales with comments on possible conservation policies'. The data has been compiled from questionnaires sent to the Regional Caving Councils and to selected members of other bodies.

I am afraid to say that it makes depressing reading, and despite its recommendations for future control of caves one is bound to conclude that the caving community are unable to protect their sites from damage. The graph showing the growth in Number of Caving Clubs highlights the point that for every caver who is educated on conservation this week there may be two new people to be seen next week. A copy of this Report is in the WCC Library.

R.R.K.