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<i>Hon. Secretary:</i>	P.G. Hendy, 5 Tring Avenue, Ealing Common, London W. 5.
<i>Asst. Secretary:</i>	I. Jepson, 7 Shelley Road, Beechen Cliff, Bath, Avon.
<i>Caving Secretary:</i>	J.R. Price, 18 Hurston Road, Inns Court, Bristol, BS4 1SU.
<i>Asst. Caving Secretary:</i> <i>(Northern Caves Only)</i>	K.A. Sanderson, 11 Pye Busk Close, High Bentham, via Lancaster
<i>Hon. Treasurer:</i>	B.C. Wilkinson, 421 Middleton Road, Carshalton, Surrey.
<i>Gear Curator:</i>	B. Hansford, 19 Moss Road, Winnall, Winchester, Hants.
<i>Hut Admin. Officer:</i>	W.J. Ham, "The Laurels", East Brent, Highbridge, Somerset.
<i>Hut Warden:</i>	P.L. Hadfield, 6 Haycroft Road, Stevenage Old Town, Herts.
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<i>Publication Sales:</i>	R.R. Kenney, "Yennek", St. Mary's Road, Meare, Glastonbury, Somerset.
<i>General Sales:</i>	R.A. Websell, Riverside House, Castle Green, Nunney, Somerset.
<i>Editor:</i>	A.R. Audsley, Lawn Cottage, Church Lane, Three Mile Cross, Reading, Berks.
<i>Journal Distribution:</i>	Vacant.

Journal price for non-members: 20p per issue. Postage 12p extra

EDITORIAL

Over the past few months, the journal has appeared rather infrequently and somewhat irregularly, thus causing some of our more vocal members to comment that the journal seemed to be turning into an 'Occasional Publication'. Some explanation for these delays is obviously due.

The more observant readers may have noticed the new look of the last issue of the journal, that the type face is smaller (10 point Times) and that the right hand margin is now justified - in other words no longer "ragged". Consequently, the journal is now thinner (for a given amount of material) and, more importantly, when one considers the present level of postal charges, LIGHTER. This apparently small change in the look of the journal is an outward sign of the upheaval that has taken place in its production. As many members will know, the actual printing used to take place at the bottom of Ron Foord's garden, in a building about the same size as the East Somerset hut (exceedingly small), where Ron used to practice the black art of printing more or less as a hobby. He now practices full time, from a printing works bigger even than Upper Pitts, a huge hall which overflows with the ingenious engines of his craft. His armament includes a computerised type setter and it is this particular piece of equipment which has given rise to the new look.

This complete change in the production of the journal has had its difficulties and has caused some unavoidable delays; however, the dust is beginning to settle and the engines starting to turn, in short the settling- in period is over and, hopefully, serious delays from this quarter are now a thing of the past.

CLUB NEWS

1976 AGM and Dinner

While attendance at this year's AGM was down (no barrel?) the Dinner made a surprising comeback. During the afternoon, the main interest was centred on Club insurance and the problems associated with having minors as members. The Dinner, held again at the Bishop's Barn, in Wells, saw Graham Jackson, of Wookey Hole Caves Ltd., as Guest of Honour. He gave a most entertaining speech while helping his wife to fend off a remarkable miscellany of missiles.

Honorary Member

Brigadier A.E. Glennie has been elected an Honorary Member of the Wessex as a token of appreciation for his outstanding services to caving.

Club Insurance

Tim Reynolds' proposals for new club third party liability insurance cover (as outlined in the AGM handbook) were accepted by the AGM and the Club is covered for the following:-

- a) Claims made against a landowner arising from the caving activities of Club members or their guests.
- b) An indemnity given to Bristol Waterworks in connection with the Charterhouse Caving Committee agreement.

This means that members and guests are not covered against claims for negligence from other cavers, non cavers, or outside organisations. Members are advised to take out their own insurance for this purpose, giving them up to £250,000 of cover. Many householders automatically have this cover as part of their home insurance, but they are advised to check with their broker if there is any doubt. Other members can get this cover as part of a "personal effects" insurance. Whatever course is taken, it is best to ensure that caving is not a specific exclusion. If any member requires further information, it can be obtained from the Secretary - please enclose a large stamped addressed envelope.

Affiliations

As a result of a change made to Rule 7 at the AGM, no minors (ie. persons less than 18 years old) can now be admitted to Wessex membership. This is because of the insurance and indemnity position regarding minors. The situation does not apply to minors in affiliated clubs, but an indemnity must now be obtained from both the parent or guardian and the authority to which the affiliated club belongs. The Assistant Secretary is actively engaged in drawing up suitable indemnity forms.

An apology

The Committee wishes to express its apologies for not bringing the Club's attention at the AGM to the retiring Treasurer. For the past two years Anne West has done an excellent job dealing with the Wessex finances, as well as striking a blow or two against the male chauvinist committee members. Many thanks, Anne!

OFD Pledge

When OFD was in danger of being partly quarried away, the Club made a pledge to support a conservation fund. Now that the cave is protected as a National Nature Reserve, the requirement for pledges, both from clubs and individual cavers, has disappeared.

Tackle

New ladder is being added to the store at an encouraging rate. The Gear Curator is now talking in terms of a stock of 1500ft!

Journals

During the course of the last club year a number of factors combined to allow the publication of only 5 editions of the Journal. Members are assured that there is every intention to rectify this in the near future and we will continue to publish 6 journals in each Club year. Non-receipt of journals by some members was a result of late payment of subscriptions or failure to notify the Secretary of a change of address.

Subscriptions

New subscription rates were agreed at the AGM - they are now £4 for full members and £5 for joint members. The 25p entrance fee for new members has been abolished. HQ box and locker fees remain at 50p and £1 respectively. All subscriptions now fall due; please pay them promptly, a form is enclosed with this journal.

Accidents in Spain

At the request of the AGM, the club is to make a donation of £25 to the relevant authorities in Spain who rendered assistance at the time of the two fatal accidents involving two members of the club, Chris Murray and Derek Tringham. If any member wishes to add to this sum, please send a donation to the Treasurer, before March 1st.

Journal Distribution Officer

A volunteer is urgently needed to distribute the journal. If anyone is interested the Secretary would be pleased to hear from him (or her).

Digging in GB Cavern

An unofficial dig has been found in GB. Members are reminded that, under the terms of the current access agreement negotiated between the UBSS and the remainder of the Charterhouse Caving Committee, all digging in the cave is strictly controlled by the UBSS.

Upper Pitts overcrowding

The HQ has several times recently been severely overcrowded to the extent that members are unable to enjoy the full facilities of Upper Pitts. Steps are being taken to reduce the size of guest parties and to discourage parties who arrive without prior booking. Without wishing to bring back official 'Club Weekends' guest parties are to be discouraged from using Upper Pitts on committee meeting weekends.

Library

The storage cabinets for the club library have been completed and the collection is now on the shelves. The library rules are published elsewhere in this journal. Unfortunately, two books have already gone missing. They are Tony Waltham's 'Caves' and the BCRA's 'Limestones and Caves of the Mendip Hills'. If any member knows of their whereabouts, the Librarian would be pleased to hear from him.

Surveys

Surveys of the major Mendip caves are being framed for display in the HQ lounge.

Upper Pitts painting

Volunteers are urgently wanted to help paint doors, windows etc. at the HQ. Apply to the Hut Warden.

Cave Gates

There has been another spate of gate-breaking on Mendip and currently the missing locks are being replaced. Readers are reminded that caves are either locked as part of terms of access with the landowner, or else to exclude the inexperienced caver

from exceptionally well-decorated or hazardous caves. If you are experiencing difficulty in getting a key to a particular cave, please let the Caving Secretary know.

Access to Northern Caves

Members are still experiencing difficulty in obtaining permission to descend caves controlled by the Council of Northern Caving Clubs. An Assistant Caving Secretary has been appointed (Keith Sanderson) and the CNCC are being instructed only to grant access facilities to Wessex parties who book through one or other of the Caving Secretaries. This should hopefully resolve all problems.

International Conference 1977

Many members now living abroad have expressed the wish to visit Britain for this event. Accommodation at Upper Pitts is, therefore, likely to be in heavy demand, particularly during the caving camps. Anyone wishing to use the HQ during this period is advised to book early with the Hut Administration Officer.

New Members

We welcome the following new members to the Club:-

Elected in October

M. Duck, 43a Belvedere Road, Crystal Palace, London SE19.

Elected in November

Alan J. Briggs, Creigfrin Cottage, Booth, Dyfed.

David P. Gibson, 39 The Ridgeway, Enfield, Middlesex.

Miss Elizabeth A. Yates, 3 Park Road, South Norwood, London SE25 6LA.

Dates for your diary

The 1977 AGM and Dinner will be held on Saturday October 15th. Provisional committee meetings are: January 9th., March 13th., May 8th., July 10th., September 11th. and November 13th.

CLUB MEETS

All meets at 7.30 p.m. Further details from Richard Kenney: "Yennek", St. Mary's Road, Meare, Glastonbury, Somerset, BA6 9SS. Tel: Meare Heath 296.

March 4th	Cuthberts
March 19th	Wales
April 1st	Cuckoo Cleeves
April 15th	Swildons

ADDRESS LIST CORRECTIONS

The address list published in journal no. 165 had a number of errors and omissions. The following is a list of corrections, as at 22.11.76.

D.A. Berrill	10 Dunsters Road, Claverton, Nr.Bath, Avon.
P.R. Blundell	8 Mendip View Avenue, Lodge Causeway, Fishponds, Bristol.
G. Bolt	Flat 9, 32 Catherine Hill, Frome, Somerset.
I. Buchanan	61 Rogers Lane, Stoke Poges, Bucks.
Miss G.A. Buckam	Flat 5, Dighton Court, Montague Hill South, Bristol 1.
H. Busby	61 Quarry Road, Witney, Oxford.
N.R. Clatworthy	207 Berrow Road, Burnham-on-Sea, Somerset.
J.C. Cocker	3 Redland Green Road, Redland, Bristol.
Q.C. Collier	19 Grangecliff Gardens, London SE25 6SY.
Mr. & Mrs. P.R. Cousins	8 Giffords Croft, Lichfield, Staffs.
Revd. C.H.D. Cullingford	41 Northgate, The Staithe, Beccles, Suffolk.
J.M. Darville	8 The Glen, Redland, Bristol.
K. Dawe	Glynn Hendra, Fletchers Bridge, Bodmin, Cornwall.
A.H.B. Deas	1 Falcon Close, Westbury-on-Trym, Bristol.
R. Drake	Yew Tree House, Yarley, Wells, Somerset.
Dr. D.P. Drew	Lismullin, Garlow Cross, Navan, Co. Meath, Eire.
J.R. Felstead	46 Chippendale Close, High Wycombe, Bucks.
P.H. Ford	34 New Street, Deinolen, Gynedd, Wales.

Brig, A.E. Glennie	Seaton House, Shrublands Road, Berkhamstead, Herts.
P. Gass	10 Seaward Avenue, Bournemouth, Hants.
G.C. Graber	301 East Fourth Street, Ontario, California, 91764 U.S.A.
R.C. Harper	66 Woodbridge Road, Knowle, Bristol 4.
E. Hensler	Gilead Balm, 12 Knighton Close, Woodford Green, Essex.
W.R. Hindle	53A Southview Avenue, Neasden, London NW10 IRE.
Revd. R.G. Hovil	Shaft House, Shaft Road, Monkton Combe, Bath, Avon.
Mr. & Mrs. K.D. James	Flat 2 Ulster Mansions, 9 Shrubbery Road, Weston-super-Mare, Avon.
B.W. Jones	8 Medway Court, Whalebone Lane, Becontree Heath, Dagenham, Essex.
I. Metcalf	94 Lingdale Road, Woodside, Bradford, Yorks BD6 2NX.G. Moore.
G. Moore	Sedgeley, The Street, Olveston, Nr. Thornbury, Bristol.
C. Norton	43A Belvedere Road, London SE19 2HJ.
M.R. O'Connor	Mountwell Caravan, Henley, Buckland Newton, Dorchester, Dorset.
A.J. Philpot	50 Claremont Road, Bristol BS7 8DH.
A.T. Rogers	11 Meadows Walk, Croespenmaen, Crumlin, Gwent.
R. Sabido	Current address unknown.
K. A. Sanderson	11 Pye Busk Close, High Bentham, via Lancaster.
Mr. & Mrs. R.A.E. Scammell	c/o 4 Prospect Place, Bathford, Bath, Avon.
R.H.B. Shapland	30 Bibury Crescent, Henleaze, Bristol.
R.D. Sutherland	11 Geraldine Road, South Yardley, Birmingham, B25 8BE.
Mr. & Mrs. R.J. Vanderplank	Windwhistle, Lampley Road, Kingston Seymour, Clevedon, Avon.
D.A. Walker	27 Bath Road, Frome, Somerset.
Miss J.K. Walsh	56 Howard Road, Woodside Green, London SE25 5BY.
R.G. Witcombe	39 Whitstone Road, Shepton Mallet, Somerset.
J. Wyatt	80 Southampton Road, Fareham, Hants.

AFFILIATIONS

Bournemouth School C.C. Eastway, Bournemouth, Hants.
Sidcot School S.S. Winscombe, Somerset.

OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE FOR 1977/78

<i>President:</i>	F.W. Frost		
<i>Vice-Presidents:</i>	M. Norbert Casteret, Rev. C.H.D. Cullingford, J.W. Duck, C.W. Harris, H. Murrell, Dr. E.K. Tratman, Dr. F.S. Wallis		
<i>Committee:</i>			
<i>Chairman:</i>	R. J. Robinson	<i>Secretary:</i>	P.G. Hendy
<i>Assist. Secretary:</i>	Ian Jepson	<i>Caving Sec.:</i>	J. Price
<i>Treasurer:</i>	B. Wilkinson	<i>Gear Curator:</i>	B. Hansford
<i>Editor:</i>	A.R.S. Audsley	<i>Hut Admin. Officer:</i>	W.J. Ham
<i>Hut Warden:</i>	P. Hadfield	<i>Committee:</i>	B. Gay, M.R. O'Connor
<i>General Sales Officer:</i>	R.A. Webesell		
<i>Other Officers:</i>			
<i>Hut Warden:</i>	J. Penge	<i>Publications Sales Officer:</i>	R.R. Kenny
<i>Journal Distribution Officer:</i>	Vacant	<i>MRO team Co-ordinator:</i>	H.A Pearson
<i>Assist. Caving Secretary:</i>	K.A. Sanderson		
<i>(Northern Caves only)</i>			
<i>Survey Sales Officer:</i>	M. Hewins		

DUTIES OF OFFICERS

<i>Chairman:</i>	Chairman of Committee Meetings.
<i>Secretary:</i>	Internal Club policy, liason with other clubs and outside organisations.
<i>Assistant Secretary:</i>	New membership applications, C.C.C. permits for members and affiliated clubs.
<i>Caving Secretary:</i>	Issue of cave keys, C.C.C. permits to non-members. Booking caves (asst. Caving

	Secretary deals with CNCC bookings).
<i>Treasurer:</i>	Overall club finances
<i>Gear Curator:</i>	Maintenance and construction of tackle.
<i>Editor:</i>	Articles for publication in the Journal.
<i>Hut Admin. Officer:</i>	Hut bookings, co-ordination of repairs and supplies for Upper Pitts.
<i>Hut Warden:</i>	Day-to-day running of Upper Pitts
<i>Deputy Hut Warden:</i>	Assists and deputises for the Hut Warden.
<i>General Sales Officer:</i>	General caving items.
<i>Publication Sales Officer:</i>	Journals and other publications to non-members.
<i>Survey Sales Officer:</i>	Cave Surveys.
<i>Journal Distribution Officer:</i>	Postal distribution of journals.
<i>MRO Team Co-ordinator:</i>	Raising a rescue team from the Bristol area members.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir,

By the time this journal is printed the Club will have raised its annual subscriptions to £4. On reading Barrie Gay's letter in the June journal, it is clear that he, at least, considers that the Club represents good value for his money. However, others may not be so sure, particularly if like me they are rarely active on Mendip. The fact is that probably one third of the Club's membership have no contact at all with the Club other than the journal and, in a few cases, the AGM & Dinner. Thus it is relevant to enquire what **THESE** members - and I include myself among their number - get for their money.

From the accounts we can see that five issues of the journal cost £353 last year - that is, £70 per issue. The membership list runs to 250 names and accounts suggest at the most 300 paid up members, so we deduce a print run of 330 copies. In round figures this works out at £0.22 per copy. Adding postage and envelopes and then rounding up most liberally, we arrive at a figure of £0.40 for a 25 page journal.

Wessex Annual Subscription	£4.00	£4.00
Less Wessex Journal	2.00 (five issues)	2.40 (six issues)
Effective Goodwill Payment	£2.00	£ 1.60

Opinions on this, as good value or no, will vary of course, but the plain fact is that the Wessex cannot afford to lose the goodwill of perhaps 100 members. Apart from the financial strain of extending Upper Pitts, the unit cost of the journal itself will rise if the print run drops - far better to print and "sell" twice as many.

It is interesting to compare the Wessex Journal with a similar Offset Litho publication. We find costs per issue of £250 for a print run of 850 and thus cost per copy of £0.30 - but this time for 30 pages per issue. From this we may conclude that the Wessex Journal is competitively priced, but would benefit from increased circulation. Doubtless the Editor would appreciate a parallel increase in contributions.

One conventional solution to the wide range of activity seen in the Wessex is to split the membership into active and associate. The latter would pay a reduced subscription, but guest rates if ever they stayed at Upper Pitts. A condition of five years active membership might well be imposed. This would entail a dramatic increase in the active caver's subscription to cover the loss in income. Arguably, the smaller effective club would be a happier one than it appears to have been of late.

There is, however, another solution which could reduce the cost of the journal - **to cease publication**. I believe that the existing National Caving Journals, Bulletins and Magazines still leave room for a journal of the quality of the Wessex Journal, providing that the journal has a regional flavour. That the Wessex Journal has not already reached the position of regional publication 'par excellence' is not because of its parochial content - it has consistently failed to record interesting club gossip - but because of its poor coverage of regional caving. Others are no better and there has long been a significant overlap in the readership across Mendip. In my active days I subscribed to no less than six caving periodicals, three of them Mendip based; no doubt others do the same today.

In conclusion then, perhaps the spirit of cooperation long seen among Mendip cavers in surface digs and expeditions abroad, could be extended to publishing, with benefit to all. I suggest that the Wessex Journal and several other publications should be replaced by a single journal, sent to members of all clubs cooperating and paid for in proportion to their membership. Individual club news bulletins could either be incorporated or published separately to give monthly or semi-monthly contact as required. The net cost to the Wessex would be no higher, but the value to Wessex members would be significantly increased.

P. R. Cousins

MENDIP NOTES

BY

Wimblestone

No Hiding Place

The crowds of cavers thronging the halls of Manchester University for this year's B.C.R.A. Conference were gratifyingly thick from the organisers' point of view, but not nearly thick enough for the liking of one young potholing villain. This was the thief who several months ago rifled the Belfry and disappeared in a northerly direction with his loot. He was spotted at the Conference by Mendip's caving constable, Nigel Taylor, who had the presence of mind to immediately mix business with pleasure and arrest the rogue. Nigel was later commended by his Chief Constable for this singular piece of Karst Policing.

Dogged Diggers

That enigmatic East Mendip sink, Withybrook Slocker, is once again under siege by diggers after an interval of ten years. A determined group of independent cavers led by Terry Baker and relying on sub-contract bangmen, have forced their way down a steeply inclined bedding plane and entered 70' of new passage. Much of this is of a phreatic nature running parallel with the road, but at one point a partly choked pot emits a noticeable draught, and it is said that during conditions of heavy rain, an ear to the ground here is rewarded by the distant grumble of a large stream. Digging is hampered at the moment by a lack of dumping space since all spoil is being stacked underground in polythene sacks, but the Maze area nearer the entrance can be used as a last resort. The worry of the Cerberus that the team might break into the back of Withhill Cave is receding now that the Slocker seems to have made up its mind to trend in an easterly direction.

Water Tracing at Wookey

The rapid flow time from St, Cuthbert's to Wookey has acted as a spur to diggers and divers alike since the 11 hour Lycopodium test in 1967. In November of this year it was decided to compute the times more accurately using chemical dyes. One half of the experiment went well and rhodamine dye placed in the Well in Wookey 25 by Martyn Farr emerged from the cave in 9 hours. The head waters of the Axe proved more troublesome. Cavers followed 140 g. of fluorescein all the way down the Cuthbert's stream way to Sump 2 but after 56 hours it had still not appeared in Wookey Hole. Of course, the answer could be that insufficient quantities of the dye were used, but on the other hand there is that small matter of Waldegrave Swallet and Rodney Stoke Rising...

Rummaging in Rhino

A cave with nearly 300' of pitches can't just end in a boulder choke 700' in. That's the feeling of a number of S.R.T. enthusiasts who hanker for a better excuse for sliding up and down Rhino's magnificent rifts. Alan Mills, one such devotee, has climbed avens above the pitches, has entered passages in the walls of the pitches, and is now intent on probing that final choke. Unfortunately there is not a lot of room in the final chamber, and since more than one person seems to be digging there, it's a case of pulling spoil out of one hole and dumping it into a neighbouring hole. He who digs most often should win.

King Cobble

Next to draughts, Old Red Sandstone cobbles seem to be the cave digger's most sought after pathfinder. If size is any token of the streamway yet to be revealed, then Viaduct Sink's cobbles foretell a mighty cataract. Although used to unearthing 20-30lb tiddlers in the early stages, the diggers were staggered to find a cobble in the floor of a choked rift 50' inside the entrance weighing nearly one hundredweight. Are there any challengers to King Cobble?

WANTED

Cavers for Yorkshire Trips

Jeff Price and Paul Hadfield have booked the following CNCC controlled caves for Wessex parties:-

Penyghent Pot	Sun. 20th February	Weekend 21/22 May
Lost Johns	Sat. 19th March	Sat. 18th June
Pipikin	Sun. 17th April	Sun. 23rd October

Would anyone interested in taking part in any of these trips please get in contact with either Jeff or Paul.

Jeff Price
18 Hurston Road
Inns Court
Bristol BS4 1SU

Paul Hadfield
6 Haycroft Road
Stevenage
Herts

Tel: Stevenage (0438) 723009
Work: Stevenage (0438) 2422 Ext. 2379

WESSEX CAVE CLUB SURVEY PRICE LIST 1976-77

Somerset

CAVE	SCALE	DATE	GRADE	PRICE
Aveline's Hole	1:120	1969	6d	30p
Balch Cave	1:120	1962	6	80p
Brownes' Hole	1:120	1964	6	20p
Brownes' Hole	1:240	1964	6	10p
Burlington Atlas		1973		40p
Caves of Cheddar Gorge	1:120	1965	6	55p
Cooper's Hole, Cheddar	1:120	1963	5	30p
Cuckoo Cleeves	1:480	1968	5	15p
Dallimore's Cave	1:240	1972	5d	15p
Draycott Cave	1:130	1967	2	5p
Drunkard's Hole	1:150	1972	5d	10p
Easter Hole	1:240	1956	3	5p
East Twin Swallet	1:240	1969	6c	10p
Eastwater Cavern	1:240	1964	5	70p
Fairy Cave Quarry System	1:4000	1973		7p
G.B. Cavern	1:800	1969		20p
Goatchurch Cave	1:240	1963	6	35p
Holwell Cavern, Quantocks	1:100	1958	6	35p
Hunter's Hole	1:240	1975	5d	25p
Lamb Leer Cave	1:240	1962	5	40p
Lamb Leer Cave	1:720	1970	5	15p
Lionel's Hole	1:480	1970	5	7p
Longwood-August (Plan)	1:300	1962	6	55p
Longwood-August (Section)	1:300	1962	6	30p
Ludwell Cave, Hutton	1:150	1974	5d	5p
Manor Farm Swallet	1:1200	1974	4	50p
Nine Barrows Swallet	1:260	1967	4-5	15p
North Hill Swallet	1:720	1971	4-6	7p
Pen Park Hole	1:420	1959		5p
Pine Tree Pot	1:120	1962	4-6	35p
Quaking House, Milverton	1:240	1963	4	10p
Read's Cavern	1:480	1966	5-6	15p
Rhino Rift	1:720	1971	5b	7p
St. Cuthbert's Swallet (Plan)	1:960	1970	4-6	30p
(Section)	1:480	1962	4-6	30p
Shatter Cave	1:360	1970	6	35p
Sidcot Swallet	1:240	1975	6	10p
Singing River Mine, Shipham	1:480	1971	4	20p

Somerset *(continued)*

CAVE	SCALE	DATE	GRADE	PRICE
Stoke Lane Slocker	1:240	1959	5	55p
Swildon's Hole	1:1500	1965	6	65p
Thrupe Lane Swallet	1:480	1974	1-3	15p
Ubley Hill Pot	1:120	1963	5	25p
Ubley Warren Pot	1:60	1968	3-4	35p
Withybrook Slocker	1:120	1962	5	15p
Withy Hill Cave	1:80	1975	6d	15p
Caves of East Side Wookey Hole Ravine	1:450	1972	6c	7p

Cumbria

Goldscope Copper Adit	1:1500		4c	7p
Pate Hole, near Appleby	1:1200	1961	5	10p
Pate Hole, near Appleby	1:600	1961	5	20p
Rigg Head Mine	1:2400	1971	4b	7p
Scar Crag Cobalt Mine	1:300		4c	7p

Derbyshire

Eldon Hole	1:500			10p
Giant's Hole-Oxlow	1:1000			35p
Peak Cavern	1:5000	1959		10p
Peak Cavern	1:1400	1959		40p
P8 Cavern-Jackpot	1:200	1967		40p
Perryfoot-Sheepwash	1:430			35p

Gloucestershire (Forest of Dean)

Oldham New Dun Iron Mine	1:1200	1975	6sd	£1.25
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Iceland

Ruafar Holshellir	1:900	1971	5	40p
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Ireland

Callaun Series, Clare		1954		15p
Cave Notes, Co. Clare		1971	4	15p
Fergus River Cave	1:2000	1971	5	25p
Monastir Cliff System, Co.Fermanagh	1:600			7p
Poll-Caher-Cloggaun West	1:8400	1964	2-4	10p
Poll Cragreagh, Co. Clare	1:300	1960	4	10p

Ireland (continued)

CAVE	SCALE	DATE	GRADE	PRICE
Pollnagollum, Co. Clare	1:8400	1962	4-5	25p
Polticoghlan (Pulthy)	1:600	1959	4	7p
Vigo Cave, Co. Clare	1:1440	1962	4	10p

Scotland

Cnoc Nan Uamh, Sutherland	1:360	1973	5d	35p
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Wales

Cefn Cave	1:250	1966	6c	25p
Ogof Agen Allwedd	1:4000	1963	4	35p
Ogof Y Ci, Merthyr	1:1000	1972		25p
Little Neath River Cave	1:1500	1971	5c	75p
Porth Yr Ogof	1:350	1969	4c	70p

Yorkshire

Black Shiver Pot	1:720	1967	5-3c	14p
Cote Gill Pot	1:360	1968	5c	7p
Fell Close Caves (Sketch Map)	1:3600			7p
Gaping Gill-Far Country	1:1500	1968	5c	7p
Gaping Gill-Witsun Series	1:1200	1968	5c	7p
Grassington High Moor Lead Mines 6" to Mile				7p
Hangman's Hole	1:650		5	7p
Hurwell Moss Pot	1:700	1970	4	7p
Ireby Fell Cavern	1:600	1971	5	30p
Juniper Gulf	1:1200		3	7p
Keld Bank Caves	1:2400	1968	4	7p
Langcliffe Moor Caves	1:1200		5	7p
Leck Fell System	1:1800	1970		25p
Lolly Scar Lead Mine	1:720		5c	7p
Marble Sink and Pot	1:720	1968	5c	14p
Marble Steps Pot	1:600	1969	3-5	10p
Meregill and Little Merégill	1:800		5c	10p
Nick Pot	1:600	1972		7p
Nott's Pot, Leek Fell	1:900	1968	5c	7p
Pippikin Pot-Lancaster Hole	1:600		4-5	7p
Area Plan				
Pippikin Pot, Ratbag Area	1:5000			7p
Quaking Pot, Ingleton	1:600	1964	4	10p
Rumbling Hole, Rumbling Beck	1:600	1968	4b	10p

Yorkshire (continued)

CAVE	SCALE	DATE	GRADE	PRICE
Selside Pot	1:600			7p
Southerscales Pot	1:2000	1968	5c	7p
Sunset Hole, Chapel-le-Dale	1:600	1964	4	25p
Sweet Water Hole	1:1200	1967	4c	7p
Tank Pot Magnetometer Pot	1:480	£966	4c	7p
Tatham Wife Hole	1:2500		5	7p
Threaplands Cave	1:300	1961	2-4	40p
Washfold Pot	1:360	1964	4	40p
Waterfall Cave, Penyghent Gill	1:300			7p
West Kingsdale System	1:1500	1967	4-5	25p
White Scar Cave	1:10000			7p
Whirley Gill Pot	1:1500	1968	5c	7p
Yordas Cave, Kingsdale	1:240	1964	4	30p

Orders to Maurice Hewins, 31 Badshot Park, Badshot Lea, Farnham, Surrey. Please send 30p to cover postage. In a case where this is too much, a refund will be sent. An unfolded copy of the larger surveys cannot be guaranteed unless a cardboard tube is sent with the order.

THE DIG AND DEPOSITS AT BLACKMOOR FLOOD SWALLET

W I. Stanton

Background

Blackmoor Flood Swallet was one of the several holes opened up in Velvet Bottom by the well-documented Great Storms and Floods of July 10 1968. Water dammed back by the nearby track way embankment rose to almost half a metre above the level of the entrance, which burst open to reveal the cave. Previously, the entrance was marked by a small depression (remembered by no-one but visible on pre-1968 air photos) on the valley side, 4m above stream level.

The cave was first noticed and explored by Mendip Caving Group members. It was about 77m long, descending 18m to a choked sump, and was mainly remarkable for sloshy grey mud that had to be wriggled through. In the next year or two MCG tried to pump out the sump, without success, and dug into 10m of bouldery passage near the entrance.

I had seen the entrance in 1970, but had dismissed it as artificial on the basis of the square-cut tunnel and the dry stone wall retaining 2 sides of the entrance pit. However, Nick Barrington and I had another look in 1971, having seen a reference to a "stream passage" in the Cotham Speleo Soc memoirs, and were impressed by its potential. The passages seemed to be roomy (if the grey mud were ignored) and their position at the top of the Lower Limestone Shales, dipping at little more than 5 degrees, promised a Swildon's rather than a Longwood.

This part of Velvet Bottom had just been bought by Somerset County Council, and was in the charge of Tom Elkin, Warden of the Charterhouse Outdoor Activities Centre. Tom gave us leave to dig, and said that he understood that previous digging had been by Scouts.

The Reservoir Hole diggers were then taking their summer holiday at Pounding Pot, but when the bad weather set in we moved to Blackmoor, starting work there on October 13 1971.

The Dig

a) To the first stal barrier (SB1)

We expected the dig to be a difficult one, and decided to enlarge the passage to the sump (35m long) to bucket-carrying size, rather than rabbit in the wriggles without enough tipping space. In 52 trips we achieved this goal, discovering meanwhile that the cave had been used on a large scale by nineteenth-century slagers for lead recovery from buddle tailings. The evidence is described later, but the practical effect on digging was that we carefully washed our muddy clothes after every trip. Analysis of the grey mud showed that it contained an average of 5% lead and 2% zinc, and we felt that breathing the dust, if the mud dried on our clothes, could be harmful.

About half way through this phase of the dig we were "discovered" by MCG members, who told us forcibly that they had prior rights in the cave. We had not known of their earlier work there. Thenceforward digging was on a joint basis with MCG. The different teams mostly worked on different days, with, on the whole, satisfactory results, though there were times when our different philosophies of digging caused tension.

16m of flat-out crawl were raised to walking height, either by blasting down rock and massive stal from the roof, or by digging mud, peat, rock and stal from the floor. Numberless frogs, toads, newts and lizards in conditions between the extremes of hibernation and putrefaction were delicately removed. 34 steps were built. All underground tipping space other than side passages was filled with rubble. So was most of the entrance pit, which we converted into a shaft 3m deep, of concrete rings over a stone-built foundation. The slagers' stone wall was buried intact, and the entrance depression is now only one metre deep.

Another area that was filled with tip was a fairly roomy offshoot (the Bouldery Extension) that was festooned with wooden props and stemples when MCG first saw it. This tip is now retained by a flight of 18 steps, but there was at one stage a 4m drop. We jammed a post across this to help the climb, but one day it slipped out of place and I went down head first, turned a graceless somersault, and landed on my shoulders in grey ooze, suffering no damage at all.

The first 15m of the cave below the entrance appears on the evidence of shape and drill holes to have been considerably enlarged by the slagers, as described later.

MCG narrowly escaped disaster one Sunday when they dug out a lot of grey mud below a section of roof (half way from entrance to sump) that we had banged the day before. On our next visit the gentlest wiggling of a crowbar in a bedding plane started a fearful collapse - the whole of the roof slab, 4m long by 1.5m wide by 0.5m thick, crashed down in pieces, changing the passage from a mud wade into a boulder ruckle!

Intense frost one evening caused fog to form in the first 15m of the cave.

As we neared the sump we were usually forced by our limited numbers to dump spoil at a "halfway house", chaining it all to the

surface (a hated chore) before leaving for home. As stones were easier and cleaner to handle we sorted them out for this purpose, reserving the limited underground tipping space for ooze, with strong retaining walls. Twice, however, we recruited large bands of Sidcot School cavers, veterans of the Blackmoor district, and at these times we dispensed with the halfway house.

On April 12 1972 we were able to walk dry-shod and clean to the sump. We had used 16.5kg of chemical assistance.

One windy day a draught was heard blowing intermittently through a tiny hole in the stal-blocked rift above the sump. We had never detected any worthwhile draught in the cave, and this one, caused by gusts sending pressure waves down the passage, reinforced our belief that there was no air communication with the major caves beyond. We could expect only a short extension beyond the sump.

b) Through SB1 to SB2

We attacked the sump by blasting a walking-sized tunnel into the stal mass filling the rift, half a metre wide, above it. (Later in the dig, as we reached similar obstacles, we named them stal barriers 1, 2, etc., abbreviated to SB1 etc.) The tiny stream was ponded back in an ooze choke below. Shot hole drilling was the rule, but this dreary task was sometimes avoidable when convenient cavities in the stal were reached. Some of these were quite large, and when they connected with the stream way there were usually grey muddy watermarks at heights varying from one cavity to the next, indicating the level above which each was airtight.

Before long, when the stream rose after rain, we could hear a small waterfall through a chink between stal curtains that dipped below stream level. Excitement ran high.

We had agreed with MCG that whichever group made the breakthrough would contact the other to arrange a joint first exploration. On June 11 1972 the MCG team grew impatient with the slow advance of the gentlemanly tunnel and dug out the choke below the stal, lying flat in liquid grey ooze. Reaching the waterfall after 3m they found that it was a massive stal boss 1 m high almost blocking the passage, the squeeze above it being just passable. Beyond, they explored 50m of new passage. We followed them 5 days later, having enlarged the way to our satisfaction by raising the roof and blasting away the waterfall.

SB1 had been 8m long, and we (the Wessex part of the operation) had used 13.5kg of chemicals on it in 26 trips.

The new passage led after 5m to a chamber with some stal and a floor of cracked grey mud overlying peat-coated rocks. Rotting grasses on the walls up to one metre below the roof were relics of the 1968 flood. A few metres further on the horrors began, to wit: 10m of low narrow rift with nearly a metre of liquid grey ooze below water level, then, beyond a prettily decorated side aven, 10m of flat-out wriggle in more liquid ooze. The wriggle ended at another stal blockage with an impenetrable mouse hole over the top: SB2.

Here and there little streams joined the original one, and in these watery conditions the ooze became deeper and more fluid every time we went through it. Below the side aven it was waist-deep, quite frightening, before we dealt with it.

Grey muddy watermarks at different levels, as in SB1, occurred at several places along the new passage.

We were not willing to attack SB2 until the access to it was improved. A concrete dam 0.5m high was built at SB1 for stream control - it also allowed the luxury of washing off the worst of the mud underground in cold weather. Then the rift before the side aven was blasted and chipped wider, and the debris used to make a solid crust on top of the ooze. Much ooze was, of course, displaced, and it sludged down into the final wriggle, threatening to block it. The only practical tipping space was in the side aven, which was reluctantly sacrificed. Lowering the floor of the final wriggle was incredibly foul, floating flat out, nose in the ooze, scooping it in handfuls into a plastic boat which was pulled back and forth by rope. We also raised the roof of the wriggle by blasting and chipping.

All these operations were much criticised by MCG, who felt that we were vandalising interesting and beautiful sections of cave. To show us what ought to be done, they spent 2 days dragging some 50 plastic sacks half full of mud right out of the cave. We could only argue that it was not practical to marry conservation of such small awkward passages to a sustained major digging effort beyond them. Subsequent events, I consider, proved us right, but if SB2 had given immediate access to the major hoped-for system the MCG complaints would have been justified. The lack of a draught, already mentioned, indicated that it would not.

SB2 was reached after 15 of these engineering trips, and the expenditure of 3kg of chemicals.

c) Through SB2 to SB3

SB2 was attacked on August 2 1972. Shothole drilling was unnecessary, there being a variety of cavities within the stal mass. The barrier turned out to be only 1.5m long, and we passed it on August 18 after using 2.5kg of chemicals in 4 trips.

Alas, the new passage was only 6m long. It was about 2m square, with a narrow stream-cut channel incised 0.7m into the deep mass of grey mud on the floor. Roots and turf at roof level told of the 1968 flood, and there were fragments of older rotten wood on the mud floor. At the end of this passage was a massive stal blockage, SB3. The stream penetrated a small hole on one side, flowing over a ribbed floor consisting of broken stal curtains.

d) Through SB3 to SB4

The first day's probing of SB3 blocked the stream route through it and almost sumped the wriggle before SB2. After 10 days the increasing water pressure burst the blockage, but before attacking SB3 we spent 8 days blasting the wriggle roof higher.

The assault on SB3 began on September 15, and was pursued mainly by shot hole blasting, sometimes aided by natural cavities, over the full 1.5m height of the passage. There was not much tipping space near the face, and most of the rubble had to be ferried back 15m by boat through the flooded wriggle and dumped in the side aven. If the boat was not overloaded and the water was dammed back to the right depth this was a satisfyingly effortless procedure, but if the boat (a succession of plastic jerricans with one flat side cut out, all named "Venus" for some obscure reason) was holed through carelessness it became a chore. We even developed remotely controlled navigation around obstacles, using the pulling ropes, when conditions were right!

Progress was slow and monotonous through the massive stal, which was very tough except at and below water level, where it was partly rotted and cracked. The same weakening by the stream had been noted in SB1 and SB2. We soon found that experimental probing of the sumped stream way with a bar tended to block it, causing excessive flooding. Low-level shot holes then had to be drilled while sitting on submerged buckets! Usually the choke burst spontaneously, but once we had to fire an underwater charge to help it along.

Eventually the tipping-space problem became serious. We had to wall up the dump in the side aven, leaving only a vertical shaft to haul buckets up. When the aven was about 80% full we suddenly broke through SB3. The first sign of success came with the opening of a tiny chink transmitting the welcome sound of a distant waterfall. No draught though. Then a final blast broke a large hole in what had been a stal flow facing downstream. SB3 had been 6.5m long and we passed it on November 22 1972 after 38 trips, using 12.5kg of chemicals. MCG also did much hard work on SB3, including blasting.

We crawled through grey mud for 10m to a chamber (Second Chamber) about the same size as the first, with the water entering it over a bank of boulders. These we removed before exploring further, allowing the liquid mud to sludge away downstream and easing the arrival of the un-wet-suited.

Second Chamber showed the usual grassy evidence of almost complete water fill in the 1968 flood. There was not much stal, but the place was clean - a pleasant sight in this cave. Beyond it the way sloped down as a twisting canyon up to 1.5m deep, cut by the stream in grey mud, just wide enough to pass. In places the rocks beneath the mud were encrusted with peat. 37m beyond SB3 was a small chamber with deep ooze underfoot, ending in a stal blockage (SB4) over which the stream poured through a tiny gap and down a waterfall 2m deep, to judge by the sound.

We had reached an agreement with MCG which ensured (I hoped) a fair share of original exploration to each team, whichever one made the anticipated major breakthrough. So we halted at SB4 and I wrote to MCG saying that we would leave the next advance to them. Meanwhile we occupied ourselves with conservation and other works which included building weirs to prevent the stream undercutting tip walls, dye tracing (North Inlet to SB1), surveying, and trampling into liquidity about 20 tons (literally) of grey mud, for the stream, which was high in the wet weather, to wash away as muddy water. Our object was to remove the great mud banks downstream of Second Chamber, to improve access and to provide tipping space if necessary, and we duly achieved this goal. The wisdom of it was often debated, in case the mud settled out and blocked the way further downstream, but it seemed clear that this would not happen while the stream was flowing strongly. The debris from SB4, when it was blasted, would cause worse problems.

e) Through SB4 to SB5

MCG passed SB4 with a single bang on December 2. The promise of the waterfall was illusory. Below it the stream at once entered a sump beneath a massive stal barrier - SB5.

f) Into SB5

We drove into SB5 on December 20 1972. The stal mass filled a rift about 0.3m wide, and we blasted this clear, mostly using small natural cavities which were full of grey mud and made good shotholes. At once the sump under the barrier became blocked with the fallen rubble and the water backed up to depths as great as 1.5m, making useful work impossible. Apparently the blockages consisted of sand and gravel carried down into U-tubes. Usually they burst in due course of their own accord, but reformed as soon as the rubble was disturbed afresh. So we built a new concrete dam at the site of SB3, and by operating the two dams together were able to ensure several hours almost dry working at the face (now that the stream was low).

Several times we heard the "Noises of Blackmoor Flood Swallet". They came from a hole in the roof above SB4 that emits a shower in wet weather. Resembling (to the poetic or romantic ear) the rhythmic clashing of tiny cymbals, they were easily heard as far away as Second Chamber. They coincided with the rapid fall in water level as the blockage burst, and we surmised that air was being sucked through a tiny sump via a fissure connected with the terminal pool, as the noise stopped when the pool was dry.

To maximise tipping space we dumped rubble between Second Chamber and SB4, against the sides of the passage where previously had been the banks of grey mud.

Constantly troubled by high water levels, we slowly advanced into SB5. Occasional small grottoes in the stal mass helped us along; some of them opened into the streamway beneath the blockage, where the grey mud was at least 2m deep. After only 4m progress the orthodox tipping space above SB4 was nearly full, so we began dumping in the stream bed from Second Chamber down. The plan was to fill the whole passage except for a hands-and-knees crawl at roof level.

After 48 trips to SB5, and the expenditure of 14 kg of chemicals, we had had enough. Visits to the boulder ruckles of Reservoir Hole had resumed with increasing frequency, and we appreciated the luxury of working warm and dry (if terrified) in the Cheddar cave. We had driven 11m of man-sized passage into SB5, tipping space was shrinking fast, and prospects seemed bleak. The stream was now sinking in the floor only 4m beyond SB4, and there seemed to be no direct connection between it and the puddles that accumulated near the working face. Our last working visit was on June 1 1973.

MCG, undaunted, has continued the struggle. To date they have pushed 15m further into SB5, passing from stal into a massive choke of grey mud.

What are the prospects for this dig? The real cause of our defeat was the vast quantity of grey mud that largely fills what would otherwise be a roomy passage with good stal development, not unlike the Pretty Way in Swildon's. Considering the geological improbability of any steepening of the gradient for 500m or more, the mud deposits are likely to persist for at least that distance, unless an important stream joins the system. Even now the wet-weather stream is quite large, and with every small tributary its scouring power increases.

A few statistics. We (the Wessex team) made 191 working trips to the cave over a period of 20 months, averaging one trip every 3.1 days. The number of diggers per trip varied from 1 to 7. If MCG visits are included, the frequency of visits would probably be one every 2 days. Yet with all this hard labour the total new passage opened was only 120m, and 32m of this was constructed from nothing, using an estimated 80 kg of chemicals. In spite of the exceptional level of energy and enthusiasm the mean advance per trip was about 40cm. Not one of Mendip's most successful digs, but certainly one of the muckiest.

Industrial Archaeology - the Tailings Pit (diagram on survey)

It was immediately clear, as soon as the cave was opened, that "miners" had used the entrance passages. Two sides of the entrance pit were in sandy buddle waste supported by a well-built dry stone wall. Someone had obviously needed to keep the cave open. MCG reported that there were originally many wooden props and stemples in the bouldery extension, most of which served no real supporting function.

As we enlarged the entrance passages we found abundant evidence that they had been used as a partly natural "tailings pit". A current of water carrying the fine-grained washings ("tailings" or "slimes") from a buddle or other ore-washing device was led to the entrance and allowed to fall into a pool. In the turbulent water the denser lead-bearing mud and sand tended to settle to the bottom, while the lighter less rich material was carried away down the cave. As already mentioned, this "worthless" stuff contains 5% lead and 2% zinc. Periodically the artificial placer deposit was dug out and taken to the smelter.

The remains of a dam were found only 3m inside the cave (see enlarged section). A rotten post on the south side of the passage and a vertical groove on the north side clearly retained a dam of strong boards. Such a board, about 35mm thick, probably elm, lay flat in a shallow depression chipped out of the rock floor immediately upstream of the dam. We did not move the plank and so cannot say if it was used in the dam or was a floor board to make shovelling easier. Resting on the plank were various sand and mud layers, in one of which were many rotted pieces of thin deal (?) plank, and above them was a heap of fallen soil and turf marking the 1968 collapse. We covered over the plank and deposits and they remain undisturbed.

Just below this dam is a narrow vertical cleft at least 6m deep (the one I somersaulted down). The waterfall here must have formed a plunge pool in the chamber below, which was used as a secondary recovery pit. The outlet for the stream, a tiny creep largely blocked with peat deposits (see enlarged section) must at times have been completely choked with tailings, for these fill cracks high in the roof. Locally they are frothy, full of bubbles like Aero chocolate. In removing the deposit the operators dug deep into the peat floor. We did not reach the base of this second pit, which is now buried beneath a mass of tipped rubble behind the retaining flight of steps.

The operators widened the cleft to improve the access, as can be seen by shot holes here and there. They put in many unnecessary props, suggesting that they were inexperienced in underground work. Possibly they explored further into the cave, for the grey mud in the creep filled a channel cut in peat deposits which originally almost reached the roof. However, the channel was probably cut by natural means, i.e. the mud-bearing stream.

The end of a narrow stone-lined culvert is present (now buried) at the bottom of the dry stone wall in the N W corner of the entrance pit. It could well have carried tailings from the 5 round buddies that are still to be seen a short way NW of the entrance. The levels are about right. Tailings also came into the cave through the narrow North Inlet, but not through the main natural entrance 15m NNW of the present one.

Several deeply worn rope grooves are incised (now buried) in the limestone cliff forming the north side of the entrance pit, slanting down towards the entrance tunnel. They suggest that the upper dam was cleaned out very frequently. The lower tailings pit, which was much bigger and received impoverished tailings, would have been dug out less often. No rope grooves were

detected in the wall of the cleft above it.

When the tailings pit was finally abandoned the operators covered the cave entrance with planks supported by beams 50mm square resting on the dry stone wall on the south and on solid rock on the north. Eventually the cover was buried under a metre of buddle sand. The beams rotted and the cover collapsed, forming a small depression, well before air photos of the area were published in 1946.

The bulk of the tailings deposit throughout the cave consists of grey to grey-black mud, usually laminated. Rusty slime flows out of the mud here and there. There are layers of cross-bedded sand which consist of calcareous and siliceous limestone debris, limonitic iron ores, and much hard shiny charcoal. No coal ash was recognised.

Who were the operations of this pit? Gough (*The Mines of Mendip*, 1967) and Knight (*The Heart of Mendip*, 1915) agree that the last large-scale smelting at Charterhouse was carried out by the Mendip Mining Company, which, c. 1860-1885, profitably reworked the ancient slags and other lead-rich refuse of the Blackmoor area. This Cornish-based company introduced round buddies to the valley, and their best profit was obtained from the Roman deposit of "scoria, earth and charcoal, about two feet thick (Gough, page 194) of Town Field, part of the Roman mining settlement. Knight (page 509) noted that in the buddling process "the lighter and less valuable portions [of the ore] were swept away with the overflow, which disappeared down a swallet hole, coming out again at the lower end of Cheddar Gorge". Then, the Cheddar stream ran "in a semi-muddy state, objectionable to the sight, and utterly destructive of all the fish" (Gough, page 14).

I have little doubt that Blackmoor Flood Swallet is the swallet hole mentioned by Knight. The evidence already presented favours prolonged intensive use for tailings disposal, which accords with the Mendip Mining Company's activities rather than with the sporadic smaller scale slagging carried on by local men in the early and middle 1800's (Gough, page 183). Other considerations are the apparent association with round buddles, the abundant charcoal in the tailings (from Town Field; the Mendip Mining Co. used coke for smelting), the relatively unrotted wood of stemples and planks, and the improbability that, if the pit was used by the earlier workers, it would have remained untouched by the Mendip Mining Co.

So I conclude that the swallet was used by the Mendip Mining Company for convenient disposal of buddle water, and, the fall of water providing an opportunity for natural sorting and recovery of extra lead, the tailings pit was constructed at the entrance.

Most of the evidence is preserved in situ and is available for any future examination to settle the question.

Some Geological Curiosities

a) The stalagmitic peat deposits

These were mentioned in an earlier section. They are present at least as far down the cave as SB4, and are very unusual for Mendip. They lie directly on the rock and stal of the cave floor, and are overlain by the grey mud, which therefore post-dates them. At the lower tailings pit the peat bed was at least 2m thick before the slagers dug into it.

Under the microscope the peat is extremely fine grained, and is seen to be accretionary, deposited like stalagmite in laminae 1 mm or less thick. The mass is sometimes lightly impregnated with calcite. Within a single lamina the peat grains are often arranged in radiating patterns of columns or fibres normal to the lamination.

Evidently the peat entered the cave as a fine water-borne suspension, through the present entrance only, long after the main Blackmoor stream had deserted the system. Two metres beyond the lower tailings pit the peaty water ran down a crack in the floor, reappearing in the main passage below. At the crack the laminae turn vertically downward, and at one point, where the water trickled down the underside of a boulder, toothed stalactite curtains of peat, similar to the calcite variety, had formed.

Even today the Blackmoor stream turns brown with suspended fine vegetable matter if it is disturbed where it soaks through the peaty swamp below the main minery pond. The same is true of the Plantation Swallet stream in St. Cuthbert's Minery, and in 1972 I noted several cm of stalagmitic peat on the floor of Plantation Swallet, where it could not have been more than 80 years old.

The peaty water must have reached the cave entrance by human agency. Perhaps the stream was diverted into a channel along the valley side for some presently unknown purpose, by the Mendip Mining Co. or earlier smelters, and it opened up the present entrance. Later this was exploited for tailings disposal.

b) The broken stal

The main passage down to SB4 shows many examples of a common Mendip phenomenon: small stalactites growing from the broken stumps of much larger ones. The size of the new growth suggests breakage a very few thousand years ago. Broken stalagmites, though often seen elsewhere, are rare in this cave. Breakage of stalactites was not invariably followed by new growth, showing that the drip was diverted at the time of, or before, the event.

Various explanations for broken stal have been proposed, including frost shattering in a cold climate, crystallisation stresses,

changes in water chemistry, rock falls and earthquakes (the last severe earthquake in the Mendip area was in 1248 A.D., when it damaged the unfinished Wells Cathedral). However, in the Blackmoor case some features are hard to explain. Off the main passage, in North Inlet and the side aven, the large stal is still unbroken.

None of the special mechanisms proposed to explain the Blackmoor case is convincing. They include 1) Breakage by human explorers in Roman to medieval times, 2) frost shattering by a cold draught down the main passage at some time, 3) battering by floating objects such as logs during great floods. All three possibilities require the main passage to have been wide open, which in view of the solidity of the stal barriers seems unlikely. Also 2) presupposes a spell of almost glacial winters, and 3) a temporary change in the form of the valley floor.

The broken stal is so similar to that in many nearby caves that it may be more sensible to attribute it all to a single regional event. On present evidence I favour the earthquake hypothesis. Many stalagmites, large and small, growing on solid rock, have yielded to a single clean sub-horizontal fracture, and the snapped-off piece lies beside the stump. In such cases a considerable lateral force must have been applied.

The objection that not all stals are broken applies equally to the earthquake and frost hypothesis, and the latter suffers from the fact that breakages are as common deep underground as near the surface. In earthquakes, as in blasting, the shock is not transmitted equally to all parts of the rock mass. Also, the size, shape, and internal structure of each individual stal must affect the ease with which it snaps.

I suggest, therefore, that an important earthquake shook at least the Cheddar-Charterhouse area some 2000-5000 years ago. The hypothesis could be tested by dating the stal. It could also be argued that most of the fresh-looking cave breakdown dates from the same time, and that natural roof falls seldom occur except during earthquakes, in the present phase of cave development.

The Survey

This was made at intervals during the dig. The instruments used were a liquid-filled prismatic compass calibrated before each visit, a calibrated Abney level, and a Fibron tape graduated in cm. Co-ordinates were calculated by computer. A surface survey was undertaken to tie the plan to the National Grid, and the section to the 800 foot contour where it crosses a wall. Altitudes are thought to be correct to within one metre. No closures were obtained. Grade 5 is claimed.

Several permanent survey points were set up. The nearest to and furthest from the entrance are:

Eastings	Northings	Altitude	Description
50571.37	55774.52	237.36	Nick in top edge of top concrete ring of entrance shaft, on north side.
50663.73	55722.85	216.21	Drillmark in middle of roof, in niche facing upstream in stal flow.

Diggers Attendance List

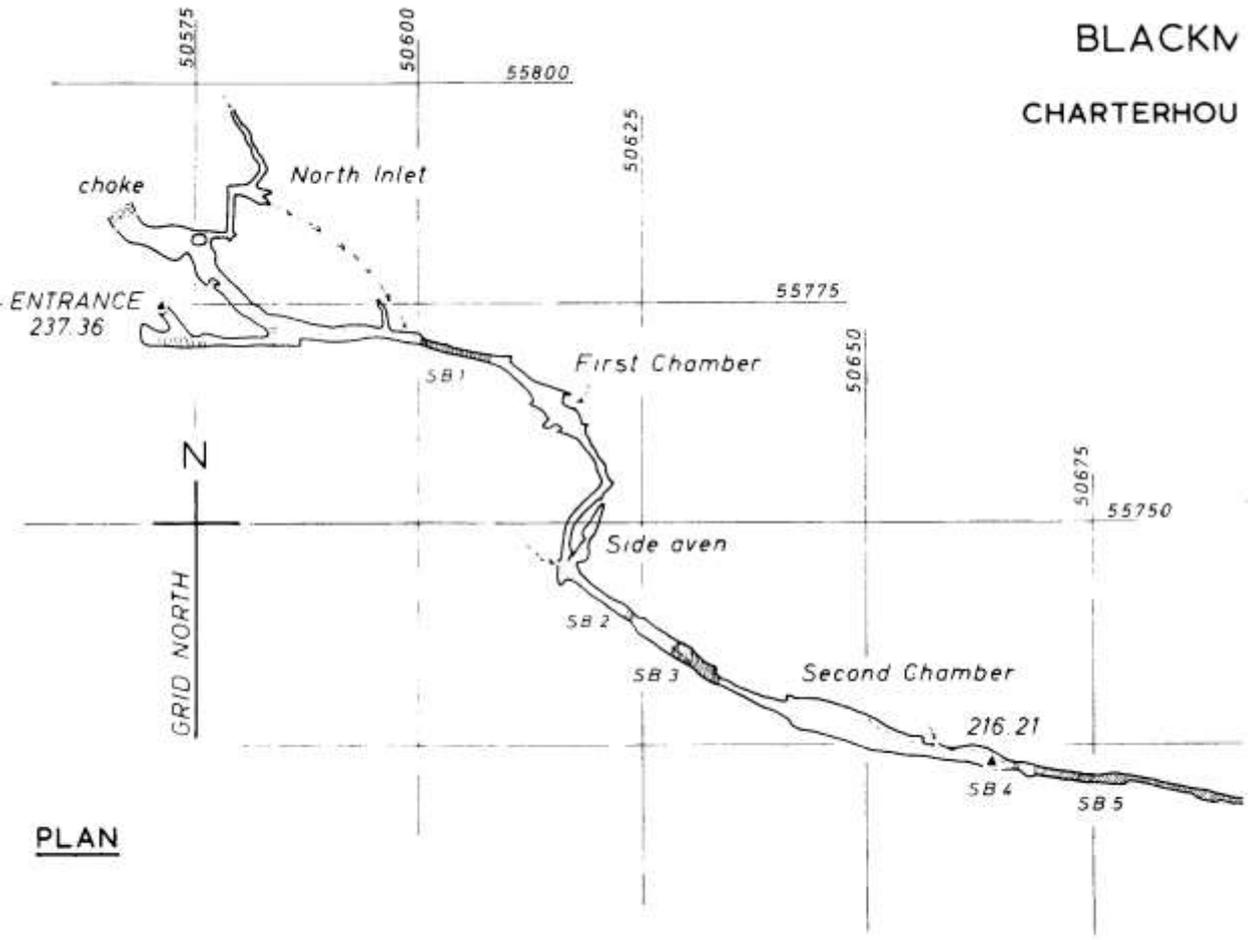
This is included in the expectation that it will provoke as much acrimony as have similar lists in the past.

John Aylott	12 working trips
Terry Tooth	12
Alan Clarke	22
Frank Reynolds	26
Alan Trickey	38
Bob Elliott	39
Will Edwards	64
Tom Davies	115
The writer	(silenced by natural modesty)

Acknowledgements

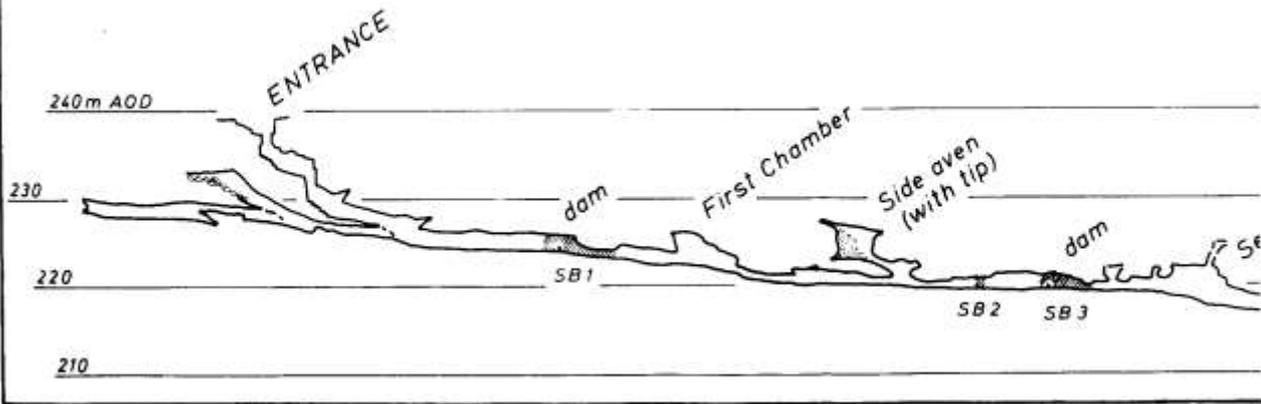
The diggers are very grateful to Tom Elkin, and through him the Somerset County Council, for allowing and encouraging the dig. They acknowledge the value of the co-operation with Mendip Caving Group, and the writer in particular is grateful for the patience shown by the MCG secretary, Pete Mathews, on occasions when he must have seemed arrogant and irascible.

BLACKM
CHARTERHOU



PLAN

EXTENDED SECTION

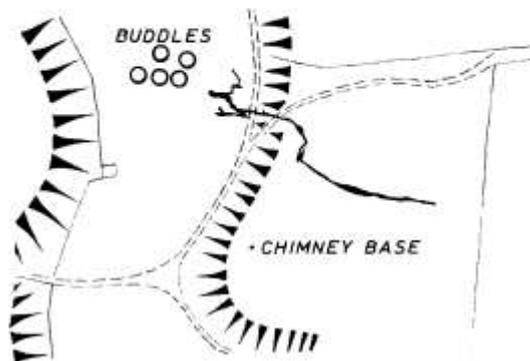


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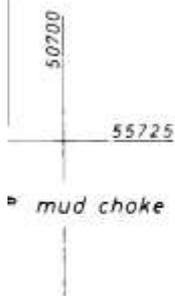
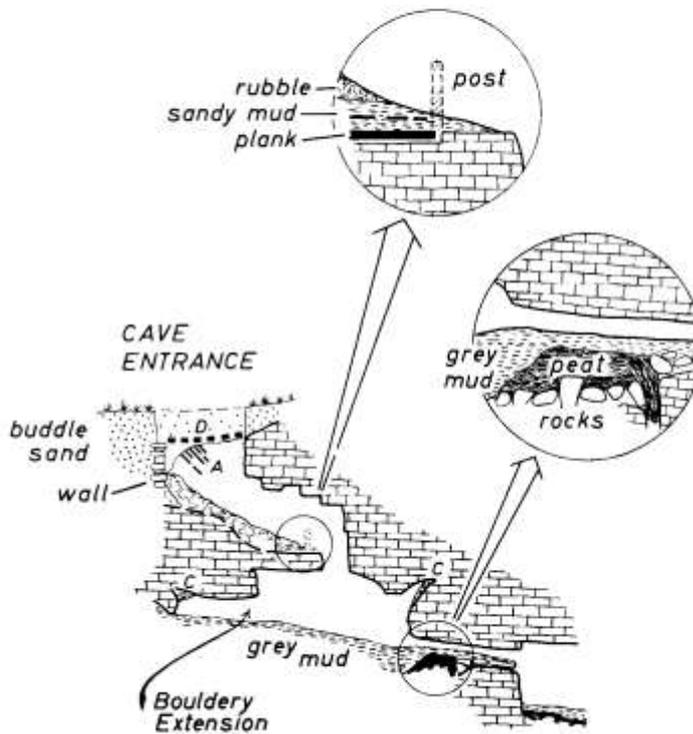
SURVEYED 1972-76 AT GRADE 5 AND
 DRAWN 1976 BY W I STANTON.
 CO-ORDINATES ARE NATIONAL GRID.
 THE SURVEY AND DEPOSITS ARE
 DESCRIBED IN WESSEX CAVE CLUB
 JOURNAL NO.167, 1976.

The cave in relation to the ground above



SECTION: THE TAILINGS PIT

- A ROPE GROOVES IN ROCK
- C GREY MUD IN ROOF FISSURES
- D WOODEN BEAMS SUPPORTING BUDDLE SAND



50 METRES

and Chamber



MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD AT PRIDDY VILLAGE HALL ON SATURDAY 16th OCTOBER 1976

The meeting opened at 3.15 p.m. There were 44 members present.

1. President's Opening Address

I must apologise for opening this meeting on a sober note and it is with deep regret that we have to record the death whilst caving, of Derek Tringham. Members will join me in expressing our deepest sympathy to his widow and Mr. & Mrs. Tringham and family for their sad loss.

We also have to report the death of Commander P.B. Lawder, a Vice President and one of our oldest members. The "Commander" as he was affectionately known was, when he joined the club, almost past the age at which most people cease to cave, but he soon began to take an active interest in club affairs and served on the committee for a number of years. He continued his interest in the club right up to the time of his death. He was held in the highest regard by all who had the privilege of knowing and working with him.

The deaths of these two members strikingly illustrates the broad nature of our membership. Derek the young active caver and the "Commander", a member of many years standing, continuing his loyalty to the club to the time of his death.

When the club decided to take out an insurance policy to cover the possibility of a claim against it in the event of a caving accident, we thought in terms of an accident caused by faulty tackle. As there appeared to be no precedent for a claim for damages due to a caving accident we knew that we were in an uncertain position and the accident just over a couple of years ago, involving two members, proved this to be so. The committee decided that it was of the greatest importance for the club to investigate the whole subject of caving insurance. This work was undertaken by Tim Reynolds and he has put in a tremendous amount of research and work on the subject. We owe Tim a sincere vote of thanks for all this time consuming work on the club's behalf.

We hope that everyone will read the report on pages 10 and 11 of the AGM literature (*The club's current public liability insurance situation*) and contribute in a positive way to the discussions under items 6 and 7 of the agenda.

The club has always elected its Chairman from those members who have had very considerable experience of club affairs, but this year the committee could not persuade any member in that category to take the office of Chairman. In the event, Mr. R.J. Robinson agreed to stand and we hope that he will have a successful year.

I must, on the behalf of the club, pay a sincere tribute to the outstanding work of our retiring Chairman. He has about worked himself into the ground in our interest and we have been very fortunate to have had the benefit of his guidance and work over the past three years.

Another member who has given the club sterling service is John Ham. His continuing work in and around Upper Pitts, has been of great benefit to members and visitors and we hope he will find it possible to continue his good work for a long time to come.

When the sponsors of the scheme to build a headquarters at Upper Pitts viewed the building on its completion, one at least wondered if we had overstretched ourselves by being too overambitious, but a glance at the record of the number of members and others making use of its facilities proves its value to a large number of cavers.

Some members will know that Howard Kenney has been seriously ill, but we are delighted to hear that he has made a very fine recovery, and we wish him continued good health in the future.

Your committee consider that in view of his valued contribution to the scientific side of caves and caving, this meeting should consider the election of Brigadier A.E. Glennie as an Honorary Member of the club, a suggestion with which we must certainly agree.

Thank you ladies and gentlemen for listening to me. I will conclude with the hope that we have a pleasant and useful meeting.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from the following:- Mr. & Mrs. A. Audsley, C.A. Beauchamp, P.P. Caldin, Rev. C.H.D. Cullingford, J.W. Duck, W. Edwards, Mr. & Mrs. R.E. Foord, Mr. & Mrs. B. Hansford, Mr. & Mrs. J.H. Jones, G. Moore, R.A. Phillpot, B.E. Prewer, K.A. Sanderson, R. A. Stevenson, Mr. & Mrs. N.J. Taylor, Mr. & Mrs. G. Thomas, D.M.M. Thomson, Mr. & Mrs. R.J. Vanderplank and R. West.

3. Minutes of the 1975 AGM

These had been previously circulated. It was pointed out that in Item 10, the sum of £128 referred to lay in the General, not in the Publication Fund. This correction was made and it was proposed by R. Robinson and seconded by H. Stanbury, that the Minutes be adopted as a record of the meeting. This was carried unanimously and the President signed the Minute Book.

4. Matters arising from the Minutes

a) **Lamb Leer:** Recent discussions between Southern Caving Clubs Ltd. and Somerset County Council had resulted in a basic agreement over access, but some more negotiation was needed to reduce the rent that Somerset County Council thought appropriate. The Company is awaiting a reply from Waldegrave Estates and the Duchy of Cornwall. The sum of £200 per annum was being suggested, but this was based on show cave rates. It was pointed out that the landowners would not be providing tackle, lights or guides. It was proposed by Jim Hanwell and seconded by Phil Hendy, that the rental of Lamb Leer should be a notional rather than a commercial sum. This was carried unanimously and the committee was asked to encourage CSCC to take this view. Jim added that he always regarded the rental as a goodwill fee rather than a commercial rent. The question of commercial exploitation of the aragonite deposits was raised. The President recalled that once, on getting stuck in the entrance shaft, Lord Waldegrave gave Digger Harris permission to blast it bigger - but the meeting agreed that every attempt should be made to protect the aragonite.

Jim Hanwell then asked about the situation regarding Lamb Leer access for non-members. The Secretary said that they were allowed into the cave on payment of fees, but that strict adherence to the rules was requested and a verbal warning given re. the state of the fixed tackle. The President pointed out that although we were not strictly abiding by the rules, this aspect of them had never been taken too seriously.

b) **Parental Consent Forms:** The Chairman recalled that last year, Wally Willcocks had obtained the meeting's approval for the committee to pay for legal advice on these forms if necessary. So far, this had not been done, though the committee reserved the right to do so if necessary. A lot of voluntary work had been done by two members, N.J. Hamilton and M.M. Thompson, which had undoubtedly saved the club a lot of money. Jim Hanwell moved that the meeting should thank these members for their advice; it was very much appreciated.

c) **Thrupe Loan and OFD Pledge:** Howard Kenney asked about these items. Part of the Thrupe Loan had been repaid. Tony Audsley, who was going to remind the team of their outstanding commitment, was on holiday, but the incoming committee would deal with this. On the question of OFD, now that the cave had been taken over by the Nature Conservancy, the need for the pledge had disappeared and would no longer appear in the accounts. This information is to be noted in the journal for the benefit of members who may have made personal pledges.

5. Report of the Hon. Secretary

This had been previously circulated and was taken as read. It was not open to acceptance by the Meeting.

6. Insurance Appendix

The following report has been prepared by Tim Reynolds. The club is indebted to him for his efforts.

THE CLUB'S CURRENT PUBLIC LIABILITY INSURANCE SITUATION

In March of this year the club's insurers (Midland Employers Mutual, which is now part of the Eagle Star Insurance group) informed the club's insurance brokers (Stewart Wrightson Ltd.) that they would no longer continue to provide public liability insurance cover for the club when the club's policy came up for renewal in October of this year. Similar letters were received by all of the other caving clubs who had insurance policies with Eagle Star through Stewart Wrightson. Stewart Wrightson initially had a series of meetings with Eagle Star in an attempt to get them to reconsider their decision. However, Eagle Star refused to consider any form of insurance cover for cavers or caving in spite of the fact that some of the policies had been in existence since 1948 and the Lamb Leer incident was the first major potential claim under these policies. Stewart Wrightson then approached various other insurance companies and eventually a consortium of three companies headed by the Phoenix Insurance agreed to provide insurance cover. But, the premium quoted for cover similar to that provided by the Eagle Star policy was in the region of £4.00 per member as against £0.36 per head per annum required by Eagle Star. The effect on the club's finances of an increase of this size in the insurance premium payable by the club, based on 300 members would obviously have been catastrophic.

In order to find a way round this problem, the whole basis of the type of insurance cover required by the club was considered. The Eagle Star policy had provided cover for the following:-

1. Claims for negligence against club members or their guests arising from:-
 - a) other cavers (including club members).
 - b) non-cavers or outside organisations.
2. Claims made against a landowner arising from the caving activities of club members or their guests.
3. An indemnity given to Bristol Waterworks in connection with the Charterhouse Caving Committee agreement.

Claims for negligence of the type categorised under 1(a) and 1(b) above are (in the case of a club with a constitution similar to that of the Wessex) personal to the individuals who have committed the negligent action - e.g. it is not possible to sue the club, only individual members and for a claim to succeed the members sued must have been negligent. Claims arising under 2 and 3 above are of a type which could (under certain circumstances) involve all the members of the club. As a result of further discussions, the Phoenix Insurance Company were prepared to provide a cover for 2 and 3 above at an annual premium of £0.61 per member per

annum for £250,000 cover.

The committee considered the situation and it was agreed to obtain cover for 2 and 3 at £0.61 per member. This cover doubles the cost of the club's insurance but it was considered to be essential. Without cover of this nature there is a theoretical possibility that a club member could be sued for a very large sum of money simply because he was a member of the club. But, as a result of the restriction of the cover to 2 and 3 above, the club's insurance policy as from October 20th 1976 WILL NOT PROVIDE COVER AGAINST CLAIMS FOR NEGLIGENCE MADE AGAINST MEMBERS OR THEIR GUESTS ARISING OUT OF CAVING ACTIVITIES.

The committee decided that the additional premium of £4.00 per head to provide this cover would cause an unacceptable rise in club subscriptions. It is, however, possible for members to take out their own personal public liability insurance policy which will meet claims for negligence made against them from a variety of causes, including claims of types 1(a) and 1(b) above. If the policy is taken out as part of a householders comprehensive insurance then the additional annual premium is in the order of £1.00 for £250,000 cover. If a policy of this type is taken out on its own then the premium is in the region of £2.50 per annum. When taking out this type of personal insurance it is essential to check beforehand that it will include claims arising from caving - most policies on the market at present do. It has, therefore, been left to members to decide whether they feel that they require insurance cover of this nature and to make their own arrangements.

Whilst the question of taking out a personal public liability insurance policy is an individual one, members are advised that there are two groups of members who are more likely to be on the receiving end of an action for negligence than other club members. These groups are:-

1. The officers and committee of the club. The involvement of the officers and committee in the running of the club mean that they are making more decisions and carrying out more actions regarding caving compared to a normal club member. They therefore have more 'opportunity' to be negligent and are thus more likely to have claims made against them.
2. Members who regularly take parties of novices caving. This applies even when the member is doing this voluntarily and the member would be especially at risk when one or more members of his party are minors (people under the age of 18). This situation arises because an experienced caver in charge of a party of novices has a legal responsibility for the safety of the party. If some of the novices are minors then the degree of legal responsibility is very much higher.

The question of indemnity chits is a separate subject in itself, but briefly the position is that the indemnity chits signed by club members over the age of 18 will, in most cases, prevent the member who has signed the chit from successfully suing another member for negligence. This does not alter the overall insurance position of club members, but it does reduce the risk of a claim under 1(a) being successfully made against a member.

7. Discussion of Items 5 and 6

a) **Affiliations:** Adrian Vanderplank asked when new affiliations would be considered, as some had been outstanding for a long time. Phil Hendy reaffirmed that the committee was doing its best to encourage affiliations, but we had to be sure that the insurance cover was satisfactory. Tim Reynolds said that future action would depend on Item 12, the proposed amendment to Rule 7. An indemnity from the organising body (e.g. a school) would be more reliable than a parental indemnity. Luke Devenish suggested that a nationally agreed indemnity form should be drafted. He was informed that this had been anticipated, and a recently - formed NCA sub-committee to look into insurance aspects would undoubtedly consider this - though the committee is to ensure that they do! Frank Frost said that the insurance position was the reason why the question of affiliation was taking such a long time. Tim explained that the Courts were currently very much biased towards the minor, and the club had to be sure that its interests were protected.

b) **Tackle:** Richard Kenney thanked the committee for giving him special access to tackle. He had always been able to find plenty of well-maintained ladder. Tim Reynolds mentioned that Wally Willcocks, as previous Gear Curator, had only just been able to keep on top of tackle maintenance. Now it was locked up, the new Curator, Brian Hansford, was able to increase stocks by making new ladder. Nigel Taylor asked if the committee had considered colour-coding tackle. He was informed that we were using red araldite in rung ends and were considering putting red-anodised rungs in new ladder. Nigel said that the BEC had recently revised its blue colour code. It was reaffirmed that SRT rope was not held by the club - it was a personal matter.

c) **Pictorial History of Swildon's Hole:** Of the 300 printed, 158 had been sold to date and costs were covered. The 142 left should realise £1600. Jim Hanwell said that the International Congress should be a good place to sell copies. Phil Davies agreed, but said that he was also keen to hear of other outlets. In view of the sum involved, said Howard Kenney, every effort should be made to make sales. Richard Kenney pointed out that although large numbers could be sold through the trade, the return was smaller. Frank Frost thought that a newspaper review might boost sales.

d) **Insurance** Tim Reynolds said that the brokers, Stewart Wrightson, had put a lot of effort into preparing the suggested policy. Those who prepared the original policy should be congratulated for the way in which their work has stood the test of time. Howard Kenney asked what was to be done about private insurance cover. Anne West said that the Norwich Union was offering competitive terms and that her company, Wells Brokers, was willing to offer this to members, splitting the commission between the brokers and the Wessex. There would be no advertising in the journal, there was merely to be a note in Club News saying that

the Secretary would send further details to anyone who might be interested. The policy would cover cave diving and the use of explosives up to a maximum single charge of 15lb. Most householders would automatically get this public liability cover - it was usually there unless specifically excluded. Anyone in doubt was asked to consult his broker. Non-householders could get the cover.

e) **Indemnity Chits:** Tim Reynolds explained the situation. The present membership form is valid and prevents adults from claiming against the club. Minors cannot sign an indemnity; parents can, but this can be circumvented by another relation for example, claiming on the minor's behalf. Total protection is, therefore, not possible, but in the case of affiliating clubs, the organising body could be asked to indemnify the club, as it would have more funds at its disposal. Paul Hadfield asked if it were possible to get the parents to take out an insurance policy to cover the cost of any indemnity claim that the club might ask them to meet. It is possible, but it is too expensive to be practical. Jim Hanwell said that when considering affiliations, the type of establishment should be borne in mind. For example, it was better to get a Director of Education, rather than a Headmaster, to sign an indemnity. In reply to a question from Richard Kenney, Tim said that even if the age were falsified on a membership form, a claim from a minor would still be valid. In discussing various hypothetical cases, it was established that, for example, children entering a temporarily unguarded Lamb Leer (i.e. with the lock removed by vandals) and sustaining injury, would most likely sue the landowner, who in turn, would sue the trustees for neglecting their part of the agreement. When a minor was making a claim against the club, it did not matter if he were a member or not, if he were on a club trip when the accident occurred. It was not thought, however, that if tackle were made available to minors on request, this could be construed as encouraging them to go caving, even if it were not apparent that they were experienced in the use of that tackle. Frank Frost said that it looked as though under-18s might not in future be allowed to join the Wessex. In conclusion, it was proposed by Howard and seconded by Richard Kenney, that the club should accept the recommendations of the insurance report. This was carried unanimously. Richard thanked Tim, on behalf of the club, for his efforts throughout the years on the club's behalf, recalling in particular his committee posts.

8. Report of the Hon. Treasurer and Accounts to 31st August 1976

Anne West, the Treasurer, said that she had been on holiday when the Accounts had fallen due and she was very much indebted to Tim Reynolds for putting them in order and writing the report. Tim mentioned some errors which had crept in:-

p. 15, Hut Fund Investments, 1975

For £1085 read £1080, for £934 read £935

p. 16, Subscriptions paid, 1975

Total should read £15 not £9.

9. Report of the Hon. Auditor

The Auditor, Howard Kenney, thanked Tim and Anne for their clear accounts. He said there was little on which he felt he should comment, except that the increased cost of running the central heating at Upper Pitts was in his opinion due more to increased usage at unusual times (eg. mid-week) than to just increased fuel prices on their own. He said, however, that the committee had dealt with the situation, as the Upper Pitts running surplus showed. Phil Davies then asked that the transfer of £160 from the Upper Pitts surplus to the Hut Sinking Fund should be made. This was carried unanimously. It was then proposed by Geoff Tudgay and seconded by Brian Pitman that the accounts be accepted, this was carried unanimously.

10. Discussion of the Treasurer's and Auditor's Reports

Paul Hadfield asked, in view of the recent arguments with CNCC over access to caves in their control, whether they had yet received our subscription. Anne said that we had obtained a receipt. Frank Frost then asked if the club could afford a professional painter to decorate the outside of Upper Pitts. It was obviously not a popular task amongst members. Various members thought that this should be done by members. The incoming Hut Warden said that he would obtain 'volunteers'.

On the question of completing the extension at Upper Pitts, Phil Davies said that major expense was still necessary. Glazing alone would be in the region of £40. Flashing and the main door had also to be considered; the total cost might be in the region of £400. Howard Kenney then proposed that as suggested in the Treasurer's Report, the sum of £500 be transferred to the Hut Fund. This was seconded by Jim Hanwell and carried unanimously. The sum will not leave much for internal fittings.

Maurice Hewins then said that he had only received 5 journals in the past year, instead of the usual 6. Was this an effort to economise? Phil Henty said that attempts were being made to bring things up to date, but Ron Foord had had to delay an issue while he moved premises and then the committee had delayed an issue so that the AGM booklet could be included.

Brian Pitman said that, in view of the two recent fatalities involving Wessex members in Spain, should the club consider making a donation to the local rescue body. Fears were expressed that the sum might never get to the right place. Ian Jepson then said that he had made a private donation and had got it to the local branch of the Crux Rosa. Brian made a formal proposal that the committee decide on a suitable sum to send. This was seconded by Adrain Vanderplank and passed by the meeting. Phil Henty suggested that the matter be mentioned in the journal, in case members wished to add personal contributions. This was agreed, with the proviso that the total donation be made in the name of the Wessex.

Mike York then asked if the Library needed to purchase any books. The Librarian, Chris Davies said that it did. No sum was agreed, but suggestions are to be considered by the committee. Chris mentioned the new rules, which have been agreed by the committee and are to be published in the journal. He said that all new acquisitions were being stamped to identify them. Two new

books had already gone missing; Jim Hanwell generously offered the club a surplus copy he has of one of them "Limestones and Caves of the Mendip Hills". This was gratefully accepted.

A 25 minute break was then taken for light refreshments.

11. Report of the Trustees

Jim Hanwell made this report on behalf of the Trustees. He recalled that they were a legal necessity and said that according to the dictionary the word 'Trustee' shared the same Latin root as 'Truss', a support! He congratulated everyone for not allowing the HQ to show the signs of its 7 years of usage and said that the Trustees approved of the way that money was continuing to be spent on improving the facilities, particularly the extension. Upper Pitts, in his opinion, offers the best facilities for cavers in the whole country.

12. Alteration to Club Rule - 7 - Proposed by I. Jepson, Seconded by T.E.

Delete the existing Rule 7 and replace it by a new Rule 7 worded as follows:-

"That any person desiring to join the Club must be nominated by two members and elected by the Committee. No applicant for full or joint membership shall be accepted for membership of the Club unless he or she has attained the age of majority. All members of an affiliated club who are under the age of majority must obtain the permission of his or her parent or guardian who will be required to sign a special form supplied by the Club. Adult members of an affiliated club must sign a form accepting the provisions of Rule 10. No caving club or society shall be accepted as an affiliated member of the Club unless the parent organisation has agreed to provide a suitable indemnity to cover the Club and its members".

Phil Hendy said that we had no minors in the club at present, but in the recent past we had refused them admission, but had afforded them special facilities (eg. reduced hut fees) in certain circumstances. Ian Jepson said that we did not receive many applications for membership from minors. Tim Reynolds said that the motion had been brought to stimulate discussion on the subject of minors. On the subject of affiliation, Jim Hanwell asked if any of the clubs currently trying to affiliate had been asked to supply an indemnity. Ian Jepson said that a Scout group had been asked but the request was refused by the Scout Association. Phil Davies pointed out that if the rule were modified, any member could cave with any other member safe in the knowledge that they were not minors. Pat Davies said that in the past many now-respected members had first started caving with the club before they were 18 - though the situation was different when the age of majority was 21. Howard Kenney said that it was a difficult choice to make - could not the committee sort it out itself? One of our stated aims was to encourage youth to cave, as stated in Rule 2. Richard Kenney suggested that a reduced membership for ex- affiliates between the ages of 18 and 21 might encourage them to rejoin as full members. Adrian Vanderplank said that the problem had dragged on too long; Ian Jepson agreed, saying that he currently had 7 outstanding applications and he wanted a decision. He did not look favourably on a suggestion by Howard Kenney that the motion be voted against, or withdrawn and the committee were asked to investigate the matter with some urgency. The motion was carried 24 for, 4 against, with 5 abstentions. The committee is to take legal advice in obtaining a valid indemnity. Frank Frost said that an amendment might be brought next year to bring the existing clubs into line.

13. Alteration to Club Rule 8 - Proposed by the Committee

A correction to the change as stated was made; it then read as follows:-

1. Delete £2.50 (first line) and substitute £4.00
2. Delete reference to membership entrance fee.
3. Delete £3.00 (tenth line) and substitute £5.00.

The Chairman explained that the increases were necessary in view of the increase in insurance charges, as well as costs generally. It was hoped that a further increase would not be necessary for another 3 years. A note is to be included in the journal to remind members that they would still receive 6 journals per annum. The increases were agreed, with 3 against. The affiliation fee was automatically increased.

14. Alteration to Club Rule 10 - Proposed by the Committee

Insert in line 7 after the words "..... (including death) sustained" and before the words "notwithstanding any negligence" the words: 'by whomsoever and howsoever caused' so that line 7 reads:-
"...(including death) sustained by whomsoever and howsoever caused notwithstanding any negligence of the guide..."

The Chairman explained that this alteration was on the advice of Nigel Hamilton, Q.C., and was intended to make the rule more watertight. There was no discussion and the change was carried unanimously.

15. Election of Officers and Committee for the year 1976/77

Nominations had been received for each post and there were no posts contested. An election was therefore unnecessary. As a result of the recent death of Commander P.B. Lawder, his name has been removed from the list of Vice-Presidents. The incoming Officers and Committee are as follows:-

<i>President:</i>	F.W. Frost		
<i>Vice Presidents:</i>	M. Norbert Casteret, Rev. C.H.D. Cullingford, J.W. Duck, C.W .Harris, H. Murrell, Dr. E.K. Tratman, Dr. F.S. Wallis		
<i>Chairman:</i>	R.J. Robinson	<i>Secretary:</i>	P.G. Hendy
<i>Asst. Secretary:</i>	I. Jepson	<i>Caving Sec.:</i>	J. Price
<i>Treasurer:</i>	B. Wilkinson	<i>Gear Curator:</i>	B. Hansford
<i>Editor:</i>	A.R.S. Audsley	<i>Hut Admin. Officer:</i>	W.J. Ham
<i>Hut Warden:</i>	P. Hadfield	<i>Committee:</i>	B. Gay; M.R. O'Connor
<i>General Sales Officer:</i>	R.A. Websell		

The Chairman then asked that the committee's decision to make Brigadier Glennie an Honorary Member be ratified. This was done.

Frank Frost then mentioned that the retiring Chairman, Phil Davies had been very involved with the Club in his three years as Chairman and in the previous three years as Secretary. Phil asked that Tim Reynolds should also be congratulated on his efforts. The Club showed its appreciation in the usual way.

16. Election of Hon. Auditor

Anne West and Tim Reynolds seconded, that Howard Kenney be asked to put in his 28th year in this role. This was carried.

17. Notices

The Chairman reminded the meeting of the Dinner arrangements and that by tradition, throwing was not started until after the Loyal Toast. A NiFe Cell was to be raffled.

The meeting closed at 6.20 p.m.

WESSEX CAVE CLUB RULES

1. That the Club shall be called the Wessex Cave Club.
2. That the objects of the Club shall be to promote the sport and science of caving by:-
 - (a) Initiating newcomers into the best tradition of the game.
 - (b) gating caves that are likely to be despoiled.
 - (c) publications.
 - (d) organizing gatherings to explore or excavate.
 - (e) by arranging for Members to visit caves in districts other than their own.
 - (f) erecting and maintaining huts where members can stay while cave hunting.
 - (g) maintaining gear for the use of members.
 - (h) maintaining for the use of members a library of books, literature and maps.
3. That the Club shall consist of Honorary Members and Ordinary Members who may be of either sex.
4. That the President, Vice Presidents and Honorary Members shall be entitled to exercise all the privileges of ordinary members, including the rights to stand for office and for the committee, and all voting rights. The President and Vice Presidents shall retire annually and be eligible for re-election.
5. That the affairs of the Club shall be conducted by a Committee which shall consist of a Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Gear Curator, Assistant Secretary, Caving Secretary, Editor, H.Q. Warden, H.Q. Officer, and three other members who shall retire annually and be eligible for re-election. These posts are honorary and must be filled by members of the Club. Any member standing for office or for membership of the Committee must be nominated by two members of the Club. The Committee shall fill any casual vacancies.

The Committee may appoint any member of the Club whether they be a Committee member or not to carry out any duties that the Committee consider necessary.

The Honorary Secretary of any properly constituted group within the Club shall be eligible to attend a Committee meeting in an ex-officio capacity, and may nominate a substitute to attend any meeting which he cannot attend personally.

An Honorary Auditor shall be appointed each year at the Annual General Meeting.

6. The election of the Committee shall be by postal ballot. The end of the Club Year shall coincide with the date of the A.G.M. The A.G.M. and the Annual Dinner shall normally be held on the third Saturday in October.
7. That any person desiring to join the Club must be nominated by two members and elected by the Committee. No applicant for full or joint membership shall be accepted for membership of the Club unless he or she has attained the age of majority. All members of an affiliated club who are under the age of majority must obtain the permission of his or her parent or guardian who will be required to sign a special form supplied by the Club. Adult members of an affiliated club must sign a form accepting the provisions of Rule 10. No caving club or society shall be accepted as an affiliated member of the Club unless the parent organisation has agreed to provide a suitable indemnity to cover the Club and its members.
8. That the subscription for Ordinary Members shall be £4.00 per annum due at the start of the Club Year. Any member whose subscription has become more than three months overdue shall be named in the next Journal, and if within one month the subscription has not been paid, the member's name shall be removed from the list of members, and notice to this effect shall be sent to the member.

The subscription of a member joining near the end of the financial year may be deemed, at the discretion of the Committee, to cover the subscription for the following year. Married couples, may become joint members paying an annual subscription of £5.00 They shall enjoy all the amenities of the Club, except that they shall receive one copy of each Journal issued, and one vote only. A membership card shall be issued to any member.

9. Charges for the use of Club facilities shall be regulated by the Committee.
10. That every person, whether a member of the Club, member of an affiliated club or non-member, making use of the services of a guide or guides, or taking part in any activity or expedition organised by the Club, or in which any member of the Club shall take part, shall do so at his or her own risk, and that he or she, or his or her legal personal representative or assigns or dependents shall have no claim or right of action against the Club, or any member thereof in respect of any damage, loss or injury (including death) sustained by whomsoever and howsoever caused notwithstanding any negligence of the guide or any members, or the body of members of the Club.
11. That an extraordinary general meeting may be called at any time by the Honorary Secretary when required to do so by the Committee, or in writing by ten members of the Club. Two weeks notice must in all cases be given. Such a meeting may not

pass a resolution, but by a simple majority of those present may draw up a resolution to be voted on by postal ballot within one month by the members of the Club. That members using the Club's Headquarters shall leave it in a tidy and clean condition.

12. That members using the Club's Headquarters shall leave it in a tidy and clean condition.
13. That no alteration shall be made to these rules except at the A.G.M. or by special resolution passed at an A.G.M. called at the request of the Committee. Alterations in subscriptions rates shall be effective from the date of the meeting at which they are passed.
14. Any person, or affiliated club whose membership is deemed to be undesirable by the Committee may have membership suspended by the Committee until, and not longer than the next A.G.M. at which the member or affiliated club concerned shall have an opportunity of being heard. A three-quarters majority of the members present at the A.G.M. may expel such members or affiliated clubs.
15. That the Committee shall have the right to refuse the use of Club possessions to members, or affiliated clubs, when they consider it desirable in the interest either of the Club or the member or affiliated club concerned, but the member or affiliated club concerned shall have the right to appeal to the Committee against this decision.
16. That caving clubs or societies attached to educational establishments for minors or youth organisations may become affiliated to the Club on the approval of the Committee and subject to the inclusion in the rules of the club to be affiliated certain rules as approved by the members of the Wessex Cave Club and compliance with regulations as laid down from time to time by the Committee of the Wessex Cave Club for the time being. The subscription shall be one quarter of the subscription of an Ordinary Member of the Wessex Cave Club for each member of the affiliated club. Each affiliated club shall have one vote and receive one copy of each Journal and other Club communications.

NOTE: The concession given by this rule is normally intended for minors under 18 who are not wage earners and who are still pupils at the educational establishments concerned or active members of the affiliated youth organisations. Adults attached to an affiliated club will normally be expected to join as full members.

17. That members of affiliated bodies may become Ordinary Members of the Club when their application has been approved by the Committee and the annual subscription has been paid.
18. That notices of motions for discussion at the Annual General Meeting shall be received by the Honorary Secretary not more than two weeks after the posting of the notices of the meeting. Such notices of motions must have the names of the proposers, and be circulated to the members at least seven days prior to the meeting.
19. That at each A.G.M., the Club shall decide on the sum of money that is to be placed for that year in the Hut Sinking Fund. This fund is to be used only for major repairs, extensions, additions to or replacements of the Club Huts. The administration of the fund is in the hands of the Committee.
20. No part of the Club's funds shall at any time be distributed by gift, division or bonus in money, to or between any of its members. On dissolution, surplus funds shall be applied in or towards the advancement of science in the fields of Spelaeology, Archaeology or Geology, or any of them.
21. There shall be four trustees of the Club. The first trustees shall be appointed by the Committee and the freehold, leasehold, shares and other property of the Club shall be vested in them to be dealt with as the Committee shall from time to time direct by resolution (of which an entry in the minute book shall be conclusive evidence). The trustees shall be indemnified against risk and expense out of the Club property. The trustees shall hold office until death, or resignation, or until removed from office by a resolution of a General Meeting of members who may for any reason which may seem sufficient to a majority of those present and voting at a General Meeting remove any trustee or trustees, from the office of trustee. If by reason of any such death, resignation or removal it shall appear necessary to the Committee that a new trustee, or trustees, should be appointed or if the Committee shall deem it expedient to appoint an additional trustee or trustees the Committee shall by resolution nominate the person or persons to be appointed the new trustee or trustees. For the purpose of giving effect to such nominations the President is hereby nominated as the person to appoint new trustees of the Club within the meaning of Section 36 of the Trustees Act 1925 and he shall by deed duly appoint the person or persons so nominated by the Committee as the new trustee or trustees of the Club and the provisions of the Trustees Act 1925 shall apply to any such appointment. Any statement of fact in any deed of appointment shall be in favour of a person dealing bona-fide and for value with the Club, or the Committee be conclusive evidence of the fact so stated.

REGULATIONS APPLICABLE TO AFFILIATED CLUBS

1. All members of affiliated clubs must comply with:-
 - (a) Rule 16 and other rules of Wessex so far as they apply to affiliated clubs.
 - (b) The Hut regulations and the orders of the Hut Warden and Assistant Hut Warden.
 - (c) The orders of the Tackle Warden when using Wessex tackle.
 - (d) Such sundry regulations or decisions that the Committee may make from time to time.
2. Members of affiliated clubs do not become, and must not represent themselves as, members of Wessex.
3. Each affiliated club shall produce to the Secretary or Assistant Secretary of Wessex a copy of its rules on request.
4. Each affiliated club shall send to the Assistant Secretary of Wessex in October of each year a list of members of the affiliated club, giving names, addresses, and ages, and the same particulars of any new members within one month of election shall be advised to the Assistant Secretary of Wessex.
5. Each affiliated club may have use of Wessex tackle, and Wessex Club accommodation only by advance application to the Hut Warden. No guests of affiliated club members will be allowed these facilities.
6. Each affiliated club shall receive one copy of each Journal and other club communications (see Rule 16). But affiliated clubs may make advance annual orders for additional Journals at a price to be agreed at the time.
7. Members of affiliated clubs shall receive, as far as possible, the same access arrangements to controlled caves as full members of Wessex.