



# THE WESSEX CAVE CLUB JOURNAL

VOLUME 22 NUMBER 243 NOVEMBER 1994

PRESIDENT	<i>RICHARD KENNEY</i>
VICE PRESIDENTS	<i>PAUL DOLPHIN</i> <i>GRAHAM BALCOMBE</i>
CHAIRMAN	<i>DAVE MORRISON</i> <i>Windrush</i> <i>42/45 Upper Bristol Road</i> <i>Clutton</i> <i>BS18 4RH</i> <i>01761 452437</i>
SECRETARY	<i>ANDY SUMMERSKILL</i> <i>16 Warren Close</i> <i>Sandhurst</i> <i>Camberley</i> <i>GU17 8EL</i> <i>01252 875453</i>
TREASURER	<i>MARK HELMORE</i>
EDITOR	<i>NICK WILLIAMS</i> <i>71 Pendle Road</i> <i>Leyland</i> <i>Preston</i> <i>PR5 2UN</i> <i>01772 421119</i> <i>01772 622279 fax)</i> <i>e-Mail: nick@confmnce.demon.co.uk</i>
MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY	<i>DAVE COOKE</i> <i>33 Laverstoke Gardens</i> <i>Roehampton</i> <i>London</i> <i>SW15 4JB</i> <i>0181 788 9955</i>
NORTHERN CAVING SECRETARY	<i>KEITH SANDERSON</i> <i>015242 51662</i>
CAVING SECRETARY	<i>VERN FREEMAN</i> <i>01252 875453</i>
GEAR CURATOR	<i>DOMINIC SEALEY</i>
HUT ADMIN. OFFICER	<i>MAX MIDLEN</i>
HUT WARDEN	<i>LES WILLIAMS</i>
LIBRARIAN	<i>MIKE DEWDNEY-YORK</i>
COMMITTEE MEMBERS	<i>CLLIN MASTERS</i> <i>ROSIE FREEMAN</i>
MRO CO-ORDINATOR	<i>GRAHAM BROMLEY</i> <i>0117 937 2542</i>
SURVEY SALES	<i>MAURICE HEWINS</i>

## Contents

Club notes	118
Caving notes	119
Practice Rescue	119
Croes Bleddyn Swallett	120
Charterhouse Steering Group	121
The Valley of the Trolls	122
Sixty years of the Wessex	124
Spar Cave	131
Club diary	132

WCC Headquarters, Upper Pitts, Eastwater Lane, Priddy, Somerset, BA5 3AX.

Telephone 01749 672310

© Wessex Cave Club 1994. All rights reserved. ISSN 0083-811X

Opinions expressed in the Journal are not necessarily those of the Club or the Editor.

# club notes

## New Members

A warm welcome to

**Andy Ewels**, 4 Fernside Road, Winton, Bournemouth, BH9 2LA, 01202 528779

**Brian Parkin**, C/O 77 Seagrave Road, Milehouse, Plymouth, PL2 3EP.

**David Garlick**, 43 Oaklands, Paulton, Nr Bristol, 01761 410164.

**Anthony Neal**, 38 Nailcote Avenue, Tile Hill, Coventry, CV4 9GL, 01203 421714

**Brian Morgan**, 26 Wilmington Close, Town Hill Park, Bittern, Southampton, 01703 551888

**Robert Delacour**, 3 Ashwood Gardens, Larchwood, Totton, Hants, SO40 8SZ, 01703 660880,

**Dr. Rodney Pearce**, 42 The Croft, Meadow Drive, Devizes, Wilts, SN10 1LU, 01380 724703

## Changes:

**Ross Stewart** is now at 1 Haw Farm Cottages, Hampstead Norreys, Berks, RG16 0TP, (01635 202155) and **Sean Kelly and Jenny** have moved to 91 Queen Edith's Way, Cambridge, CB1 4PL, (01223 412930). **Les and Wendy Williams** have moved out of the

caravans and are now at 51 Churchill Road East, Wells, Somerset, BA5 3HU, (01749 679839) and **Lee (Fez), Ferris** has been posted to 6 Divisional Road, Hull, HU3 3NT. Finally, **Carmen Smith** has moved back home to The Knapp, Milbourne Port, Sherbourne, Dorset, DT9 5AR, (0963 250594).

**Congratulations** to Les and Wendy Williams on the birth of a son, **Christopher James**, on 1 September. Weighing in at 6lb 2oz, he's already over the maximum height limit for Wessex members.

Following his accident in the Piaggia Bella this Summer, I am sure everyone will be pleased to hear that **Keith Sanderson** is making very good progress hopefully towards a full recovery. Keith would like to thank all his friends in the Club and on Mendip who have been kind enough to send their best wishes for his speedy recovery. He certainly hopes to be back in circulation in the not too distant future - in the Hunters if not underground.

payment discounts and the time limits for payment of **Club subscriptions** was introduced.

The subscription rates were raised slightly - a renewal notice giving the new rates accompanies this *Journal*.

The committee were asked to investigate the possibility of the Club acquiring group **SRT tackle** (ropes, hangars etc.).

A motion was passed instructing the Committee to

ensure that the Wessex will have a significant stake in any purchase by Mendip clubs of the **GB / Charterhouse Cave** land. A report on this, prepared by Richard Witcombe, appears later in this *Journal*.



A motion was passed supporting the idea of setting

up a lecture series on the use of explosives by cavers to commemorate **Luke Devenish**

## Annual Dinner

The Annual Dinner was a great success. Attended by over 120 members and their guests, a good showing of older club members enjoyed themselves meeting old friends and viewing the large collection of photographs depicting club activities both from the early days and more recently. Even better was the ritual humiliation of the Club gnomes (see photo's) although I gather there may be difficult times ahead for the less dimensionally challenged Club members.



## Sales – 60th Anniversary items

**One more order for anniversary items will be placed in December, so please contact Colin Masters on 01252 712530 by Christmas if you want to place an order. Details of the items available may be found in the last Journal.**

# caving notes

Issues discussed at the **CSCC meeting** held on 3 September included the fact English Nature have offered funds to help shore up **Compton Martin Ochre Mine**, that there is concern over access to **Shute Shelf Cavern** after a party of 30 from the South Bristol Caving Club were found in the cave, that **Nettle Pot** needs a gate to stop livestock falling in, and that there is still no access to any of the **Fairy Quarry** caves.

Speaking of the **Fairy Quarry** caves, apparently another application for planning permission to develop a show cave on the suite has been made.

Apparently, also, on the other side of the Bristol Channel, an investigation is being made into the possibility of developing **Craig-A-Ffynnon** as a show cave.

Elsewhere in Wales, **Ogof Capel** is now locked – keys are available from Doreen Gascoince (18 Groveside Villas, Pontnewynydd, Pontypool, NP4 6SZ and there is concern over conservation at OFD after an attempt was made to break into the Top entrance.

However, the big news from Wales is of the new discovery on Gilwern Hill by the Morgannwg Caving Club. The following press release has been received from Tim Long: **Ogof Draenen** is situated on the Pwll Du hillside, south-east of the Clydach Gorge in South Wales. It has been dug by a small team from the Cardiff-based Morgannwg CC for over three years and recently a breakthrough gained a major cave system trending southwards. To date the surveyed length is in excess of 11 km.

There have already been several incidents involving broken bones, and the entrance series is dangerously unstable. Extreme caution is required in all parts of the cave.

A great deal of work is required to stabilise and make safe a number of areas, plus surveying, taping, photography and conservation work. Morgannwg CC members have established a good rapport with local residents which must not be jeopardised. Access arrangements are still being finalised, in particular with respect to parking and the route to the cave. Formations in one 'out of bounds' area of the cave have already been damaged by visitors, and there have been unwarranted incidents on the surface due to

thoughtless actions by uninvited cavers. For these reasons the cave has been gated until work has been completed and, as much as anything, is installed to ensure that contact is made with Morgannwg CC before any trip is planned.

Anyone who is prepared to contribute to constructive work in the cave and who arranges a trip in advance will be accommodated wherever possible. Any new leads should be surveyed as they are explored and data passed back to Morgannwg CC. Uninvited groups turning up at the cave 'on spec' will not be given access.

The Morgannwg CC has been open about the discovery and hopes that this gesture will be respected by other cavers. Bear with us in the short term, and do not try to 'pirate' the cave, which has been discovered after so much hard work. We want to foster a spirit of cooperation and trust, not secrecy and jealousy.

Full details of the discovery and access arrangements are to be published in a special issue of *Descent*, which carries four extra pages, and is available on 10 December 1994.

MENDIP RESCUE ORGANISATION

Practice Rescue

## BATH STONE MINES

Saturday 3rd December

Meet 8:30am at the Belfrey.

*Please would all available Wessex team members attend*

The MCC contact for the latest information is: Tim Long, 01443 207549 (home). Fax: 01222 500771

Since this was written the cave has been extended to over 14km.

From Devon comes news that **Afton Red Rift** is now locked: please do not call at Afton farm for a key, but contact the Secretary of Devon CRO, P. Waite, on 01392 56438.

In the Dales, the Red Rose have announced that all old iron ladders (and a great deal of other rubbish) have now been removed from the **Easegill System**. The only ladder remaining in the system is in Stop Pot which is to be renewed shortly. Elsewhere, ladders have been replaced with stainless steel hangars for rope or electron ladder, so be advised that you may now need to carry ladder for trip that were previously possible without your own tackle. If in doubt, ask at Bullpot Farm.

Also in the Dales, the NCC have opened up a new entrance to **Lost Johns**, right at the top end of the master cave streamway. It's basically one big pitch, ending in a

*Continued on page 130*

# Croes Bleddyn Swallett

Colin Shapter

I have been digging on and off at Croes Bleddyn since 1977 with the help of many others, some of whom came to dread my calls "are you interested in visiting Itton this Wednesday"? Over the years persistence has paid off slow progress was made hampered by the fact that most of the cave is cut off by a sump from September to May each year.

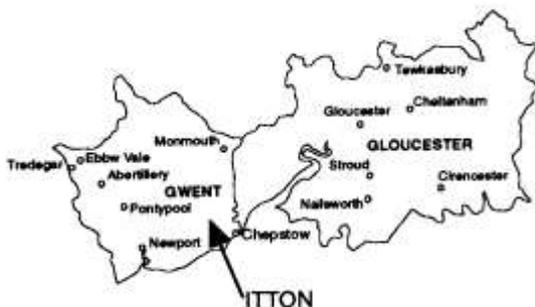
The dig started in 1977 on the 27th of July. The work was started on

digging in an obvious overflow sink downstream from the main stream sink against a bank after a collapsed it was realised that some

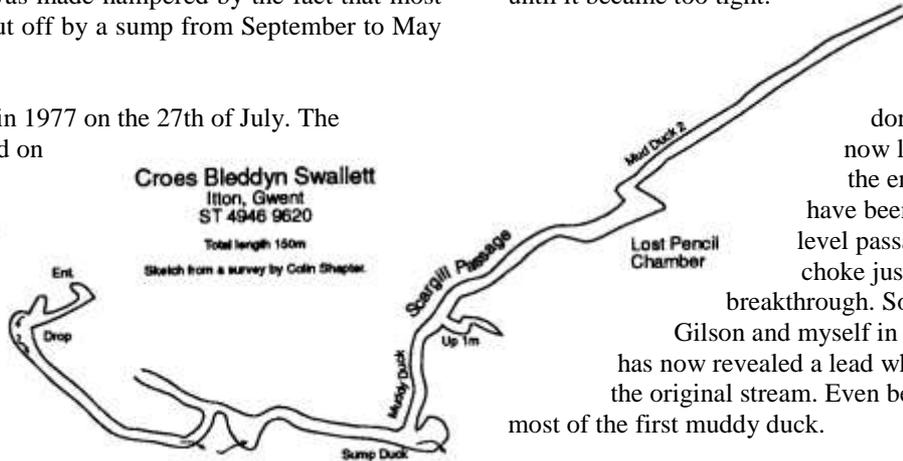
good shoring was required for the shaft and some scrap scaffolding was obtained. In 1978 and 79 a lot of work was done working from the bottom of the shaft towards the sound of running water Paul Taylor supplied the bang and Nick Geh put in a lot of work too as did many others. Eventually this route became too loose.

I started a new line at a slightly higher level and working on my own on 16th February 1980 I broke through into a large well decorated chamber with a low stream passage continuing. Returning a week later with Nick we explored 200 feet of passage from a well decorated chamber to where the roof lowered to a sump. Probing with poles seem to show a man size passage going on. So we sent for John Elliot. John came with a bottle but by now the passage had shrunk and John pushing his bottle before him could not persuade the bottle down the passage.

We waited until May. The sump was now a tight duck. Digging out the floor revealed the stream sinking in a small chamber and a tight passage going off. Four years of summer only digging by many teams eventually led to a breakthrough by Arthur Price.



Croes Bleddyn Swallett  
Itton, Gwent  
ST 4946 9620  
Total length 150m  
Sketch from a survey by Colin Shapter.



The passage went down to a squeeze into a stream passage. Not the stream in the first passage a smaller stream. Through a muddy duck and then a fork with a tight passage going up and the stream continuing low until it became too tight.

Since then very little work has been done. Yan and Dan are now looking at extending the end. John Elliot and I have been working on a high level passage above a boulder choke just beyond the second breakthrough. Some digging by Tim Gilson and myself in the first stream sink has now revealed a lead which may go back to the original stream. Even better it has bypassed most of the first muddy duck.

The whole cave starts with a 15 foot scaffolding lined shaft and a 10 foot crawl through an unstable scaffolding and steel supported boulder pile. A squeeze down leads to the chamber with some fine decorations. The stream passage goes down dip to a double dogleg and a short dry bypass where the streamway is too tight.

Rejoining the stream we soon meet the winter sump, which becomes a duck in the summer, leads to the first mud duck now partially bypassed. The duck often needs digging in the spring to clear excess silt. The stream sinks in a sandy chamber beside the mud duck. The passage now leads up a crawl away from the stream then drops down past a boulder ruckle to a squeeze through to another smaller stream. A short section of fine streamway with two pools leads to a chamber a squeeze down the back of a boulder leads to a crawl to a squeeze through the second muddy duck the current end of the cave. Where the stream passage becomes too tight. The way on is blocked by a boulder.

Since the cave has been open the mud in the second mud duck is gradually being replaced by sand. The stream sinking at Dyn has been dye tested to the stream at the end of Tunnels Left in Otter Hole.

There are three possible areas for future extension of the cave - at the ducks where the main stream sink in sand, a high level passage above the boulder choke and to push past the boulder blocking the streamway at the end.

*Continued on Page 130*

# Progress report of the Charterhouse Caving Committee GB Cave Steering Group.

Richard Witcombe

## 1. General

- 1.1 Negotiations are proceeding with the Somerset Wildlife Trust (SWT) and English Nature (EN) about the best way to safeguard cavers' interests in the GB cave area, including long term rights of access. These negotiations include detailed discussions between SWT and CCC solicitors.
- 1.2 The two best options remain:
  - (a) Freehold purchase of the fields by a CCC based caving body or
  - (b) Freehold purchase of the fields by the SWT and the purchase at nominal expense of a long (e.g. 150 years) lease in respect of the sub-surface features by a CCC based body. Such a lease would include watertight rights of access and would be a form of land ownership, recorded as such by the Land Registry.
- 1.3 The Secretary of State for the Environment has a say in the disposal of water authorities' land, and can require Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) to be sold to existing conservation bodies. Unlike the SWT, the CCC is not, in its present form a conservation body.
- 1.4 The Secretary of State has sought the views of EN on the disposal of the land, and EN have recommended Option 1.2 (b). Because of this, the Steering Group (SG) is currently discussing what form a lease from SWT might take and a draft document is in preparation for consideration by CCC member clubs.
- 1.5 It is known that there are other bidders interested in the GB area apart from SWT and CCC, and at least one has no declared caving interest whatsoever. Bristol Water (BW) will not disclose the names of these other bidders.
- 1.6 If the Secretary of State decides that the land does not have to be sold to a conservation body, BW could theoretically sell it to any bidder it chooses, including simply the highest bidder.
- 1.7 In that event, CCC would have to consider outright freehold purchase at a price which could go well above the #10,000 offered by SWT and CCC.

- 1.8 If the land was eventually sold to an individual or body other than SWT, CCC would have to start negotiating access to the caves from square one.

## 2. Land Ownership by a CCC Based Body

- 2.1 Both Options 1.2 (a) and (b) require the creation of a body which can legally hold land. The SG recommends that such a body should evolve from the existing CCC.
- 2.2 Two alternatives are available:
  - i) The appointment of Trustees (normally limited to 4) or
  - ii) The creation of a Limited Company with charitable status
- 2.3 SWT favour a Limited Company because they would like to see a conservation commitment built in to the Articles of Association of the company. This is not so easy to achieve in respect of Trustees.
- 2.4 The SG also favours a Limited Company as it offers greater legal safeguards and a wider spread of shareholders reflecting all the member clubs of the CCC.
- 2.5 In the event of the CCC endorsing the Limited Company option, the SG would recommend a number of operating principles as outlined in Para 3.

## 3. Limited Company Operation

- 3.1 Shareholding membership should be limited to CCC clubs i.e. no individual shareholdings, but procedures would be agreed to permit new clubs to join the company.
- 3.2 All CCC member clubs should have an equal, nominal shareholding, regardless of size or perceived importance or influence, and decisions should be reached on the basis of one club - one vote.
- 3.3 The club shareholders would elect a Company Secretary and a Company Treasurer.
- 3.4 The club shareholders would also elect up to four members to serve on a Joint Management Committee (JMC) alongside SWT and EN members.

*Continued on page 132*

With steady aim some fortune chase;  
Keen hope does every sinew brace;  
Through fair, through foul, they urge the  
race  
And seize the prey:  
Then cannie, in some cozie place,  
They close the day

(ROBERT BURNS 1759 - 1796)

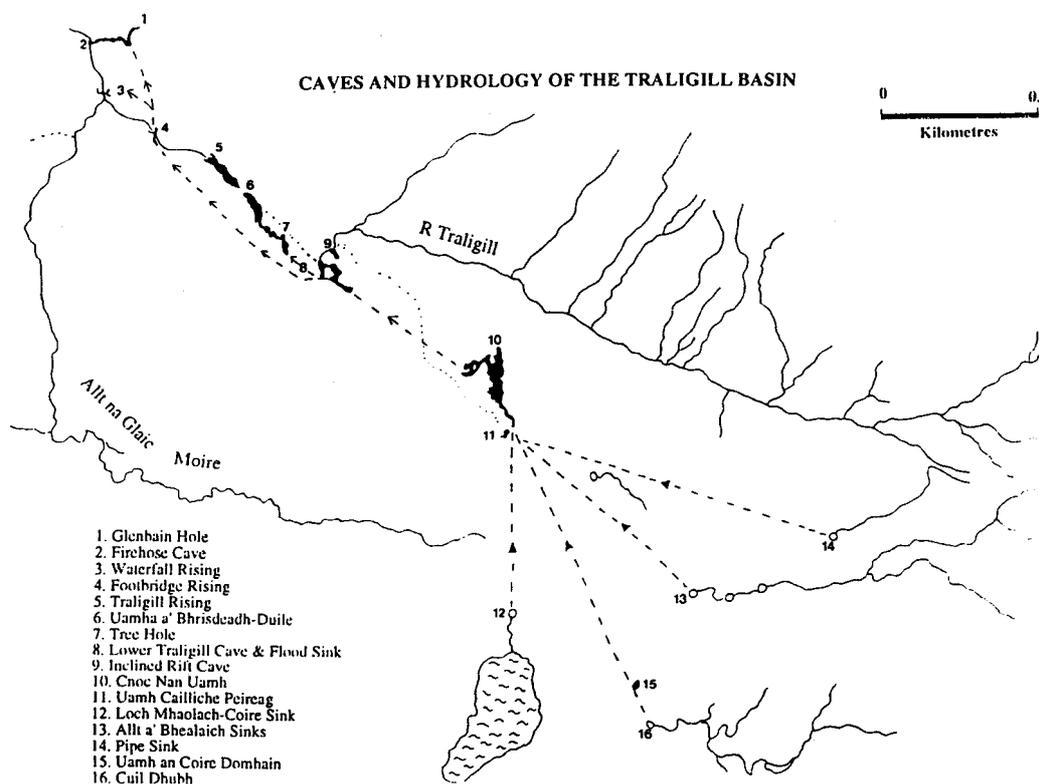
Mayday 1993, a cool spring evening, and I'm back in Sutherland, unloading firewood from the back of Gadget's van. He leans over, to extract what is for him, standard digging kit - Chainsaw, Angle-grinder, Hanging Gardens of Babylon etc. - which he proceeds to wield with unnerving efficiency. Looking around, I see that we've assembled a strong team, - 'best in the world I'll tell you' - says J- Rat, 'Diggers, Divers... and Gadget'. It's good that Tony's here, for he's the lucky weather mascot, and hopefully we'll find a bit of cave too. Having driven through the night, he's already seen action, extending Uamha a'Bhrisdeadh-Dulle (Disappointment Cave) in the Traligill Valley, by 10 metres. If that carries on, we'll be heading into hangover territory. Come to think of it, we'll head that way regardless.

Many of us involved in the previous years abortive siege of Allt Nan Uamh Stream (ANUS) Cave, had travelled to Scotland with no definite aim in mind, save to avoid ANUS at all costs. As J-Rat had been

hankering after a good crack at Uamha a'Bhrisdeadh-Dulle since 1991, and had already passed at least part of the section he'd been planning to bang along, it seemed as good a place to start as any, and the next morning, whilst Nick Williams and Julian Walford headed up to Uamh Ard, and the divers to Lower Traligill Cave, a small group of us kitted up in the dry valley outside. Discovered in 1976, this small cave, originally consisted of a small chamber, with the sound of the underground river emanating from beyond a seemingly too-tight inclined bedding. By thrutching up and then along the top of this bedding, J-Rat had reached a further small chamber, where the roar of the stream could be heard beyond a promising dig.

As a karst study area, the Traligill Basin is perhaps more akin to Norway than other British caving regions. Water, running from the quartzite mountains, Conival and Breabag, sinks at an altitude of around 280m, notably at Cull Dhubh, an impressive swallet. Apart from a brief glimpse in Uamh an Colre Domhain - a new cave, yet to fulfil its considerable potential - the stream is next seen in Cnoc Nan Uamh, where it plunges spectacularly down a huge thrust plane and disappears into a foaming sump. Half a kilometre downstream it reappears briefly, beyond the upstream sump in Lower Traligill Cave and a further section is entered at Tree Hole, but then, though it is heard at a number of points down-valley, it is not seen again until it reaches daylight at Traligill Rising, 2.5 kilometres and some 135m (450ft) below Cull Dhubh. Uamha a' Bhrisdeadh-Dulle, lay in an ideal spot, midway between Tree Hole and Traligill Rising.

After a brief struggle along the bedding, which is not dissimilar to Eastwaters' Blackwall Tunnel, only inclined at about 70 degrees, Tony, Rich 'Gobshite'





The dig at Umaah a Bhrisdeadh-Duile

Blake and myself commenced work on the dig, which started easily, in a sandy passage of small but not uncomfortable proportions, but soon degenerated into liquid squalor, as J-Rats' reverse Midas principle 'everything we touch turns to shit', took effect. Despite an impending breakthrough, after four hours and 5 metres of 'Death By Chocolate', we beat a cold, filthy, and exhausted retreat, J-Rats' chamber of the previous day now being an unpleasant crawl through a huge and wobbly chocolate blancmange, before finishing off with a splendidly rejuvenating trip round Cnoc Nan Uamh.

The divers had suffered an equally frustrating day. For four years, the upstream sump in Lower Traligill Cave - a site complicated by fluctuating water levels, and passed only once, by Grampian member Pete Dowswell in 1988 - had repelled all their efforts, but finally, Messrs Glanvill and Mulholland had succeeded, surfacing not to the large and inviting passages they had been promised, but to a gloomy and uninspiring airbell, with nothing more than a too-tight bedding leading off. Despite all Petes' protestations of innocence, the divers christened the bell, 'Scotch Mist', considering that only the consumption of a large quantity of the aforementioned could account for the apparent discrepancy in his description. Later, it transpired that Petes' dive line had been found tied off under ten feet of water, forcing the divers to the somewhat obvious conclusion that they may just have surfaced too early.

Uamh Ard, had been more forthcoming, for one of the two sumps in the cave had apparently dried up, and with a strong draught leading the way, Nick and Julian were confident of achieving a small extension. Located high above the peat hags, on the shoulder between the Allt Nan Uamh and Traligill valleys, this remote and unusual cave

has considerable potential, which probably won't be realised until the local drainage is better understood.

Despite J-Rats' protestations of 'half-an-hour, and we're in', enthusiasm for a quick return to Uamha a'Bhrisdeadh-Duile was distinctly muted, and it wasn't until the following afternoon, sufficiently fortified with Murphys, that hostilities were reopened. Conditions had hardly improved, and it came as something of a relief, when exactly half an hour later, Gobshite suddenly disappeared head-first down a small

muddy hole, amidst a shower of shit and obscenities. Descending a narrow, sloping fissure, we suddenly debouched into a passage of very respectable proportions, with the entire underground river rushing along its base. This disappeared immediately downstream into a sump, but upstream lay open, and after a few handshakes all round, the three raced off to explore what was later to be named 'Eastwater', partly due to the direction of the source of the water, and partly because of a certain similarity to a well-known cave of that name. After some 100m of pleasant traversing, punctuated only once, by a low grovel in the stream beneath some particular hanging nasties, we reached the inevitable but spacious upstream sump. Content in the knowledge that we had narrowed the gap to Tree Hole by a considerable margin, and thus realised a substantial link in the traverse of the Lower Traligill Basin, we pushed a few dry leads to a swift conclusion, then headed out, gardening en route. Perceiving that the distance between the new upstream sump and the downstream choke in Tree Hole, was minimal, we decided to pay a quick visit to the latter, discovered by J-Rat in 1991, which although dangerous was known to contain enticing black spaces.

Room at the choke was severely restricted, so after passing the box of persuasions down to Tony, I nipped out for a fag. After a short while, the deafening silence suggested something was up and I was just about to head back in to find out what was causing the delay when a beaming J-Rat popped up out of the entrance. Bang hadn't been needed after all, and Tony and Rich had managed to excavate a small and decidedly dodgy route through the choke to discover a further 30m of passage ending in yet another sump. Outside, Rich -

News

Club continues to offer safe sporting trips in the spirit of its founders

# Sixty years of caving celebrated



Richard Kenney, front, the current president of the Wessex Caving Club, pictured in 1947 with his predecessor Luke Devenish.

Rocks featured largely in conversation when a group of people celebrated a diamond anniversary.

The subject was caving, and the people discussing it were members of the Wessex Cave Club at their meeting at the Wessex Hotel, Street.

On November 4, 1934, four cavers met at Ashley House, in Croscombe, near Wells, and founded the club.

At the time, most caving was associated with archeology and other sciences, and the idea of caving just for the sport of it was not popular.

From the outset, the Wessex aimed to be a sporting club, and to explore caves in their own right.

Sixty years later, the club has gone from strength to strength.

At its celebrations, cavers old and young met to reminisce and plan the future, helped by an extensive display of photographs and videos from the club's archive.



Members of the Wessex Caving Club during a dig at Hillgrove Street in 1974. Hillgrove was one of the last major Mendip swallows to yield its secrets.

## Club served by four presidents

The first president of the Wessex was the father of Mendip caving, H E Balch, whose 65th birthday happened to be the day the club was founded.

Balch remained president until his death in 1963.

They were involved in extracting a caver who had become stuck in a cave near Fridley the day after the dinner.

Mr. Devenish resigned through ill-



Wessex Club members first entered Snow Hole in 1938, but the entrance collapsed in 1949. Several attempts were made to reopen it; this one, in 1962, proving successful.

vers under Mendip in Gloucestershire.

They were involved in extracting a caver who had become stuck in a cave near Priddy the day after the dinner.

Mr Devenish resigned through ill-health in 1993, and was followed by Richard Kenney.

Mr Kenney had helped Balch in his archaeological digs at Wookey Hole and elsewhere while he was a pupil at Wells Cathedral School.

## Strong Mendip links

The Wessex Cave Club has always had strong links with Mendip, and continues to draw many members from the area.

Its first headquarters was at the Grange, near the Castle of Comfort, and later it had a wooden hut at Hillgrove.

In 1969, the club moved to Upper Pitts, its present purpose-built headquarters at Eastwater, near Priddy, where there is comfortable accommodation and changing facilities, and copious hot water. Upper Pitts is situated among the major Mendip cave systems, and is also conveniently near the Hunters Lodge Inn, spiritual home of so many cavers since the 1950s.

Club members have been responsible for major discoveries in Swildon's Hole, Eastwater Cavern and other caves.

## Spirit of adventure lives on

Wessex members have caved in most of the major limestone areas of the world, and many minor ones as well, in addition to arranging sporting or exploration trips to all the caving areas of the British Isles.

Links with the Yorkshire Dales are particularly strong. This was reflected in the presence of Ric Halliwell, of the Craven Pothole Club, as guest speaker at the celebration dinner.

In the summer of 1995, the Wessex is planning an expedition to one of the largest caves in France, the Gouffre Berger. At more than three miles long, and with a series of deep and often wet pitches taking the depth to more than three thousand feet, this is not a trip for the inexperienced, and serious training has already started.

No doubt the founder members did not foresee the contribution that their club would

make to the sport and science of caving over the next 60 years, but the Wessex is not resting on its laurels.

There is an active programme of cave digging and exploration on Mendip and elsewhere.

In the meantime, the Wessex continues to offer safe sporting trips of all grades of difficulty to its members, and the spirit of its founders seems set fair for another 60 years.

Wessex club members first entered Cow Hole in 1935, but the entrance collapsed in 1939. Several attempts were made to reopen it, this one, in 1962, proving successful.



The father of Mendip caving and the first president of the Wessex Caving Club, H E Balch, in Badger Hole, Wookey, in 1946.

Members of the Wessex Caving Club during a dig at Hillgrove Swallet in 1974. Hillgrove was one of the last major Mendip swallets to yield its secrets.

From the

# Wells Journal

November 10 1994

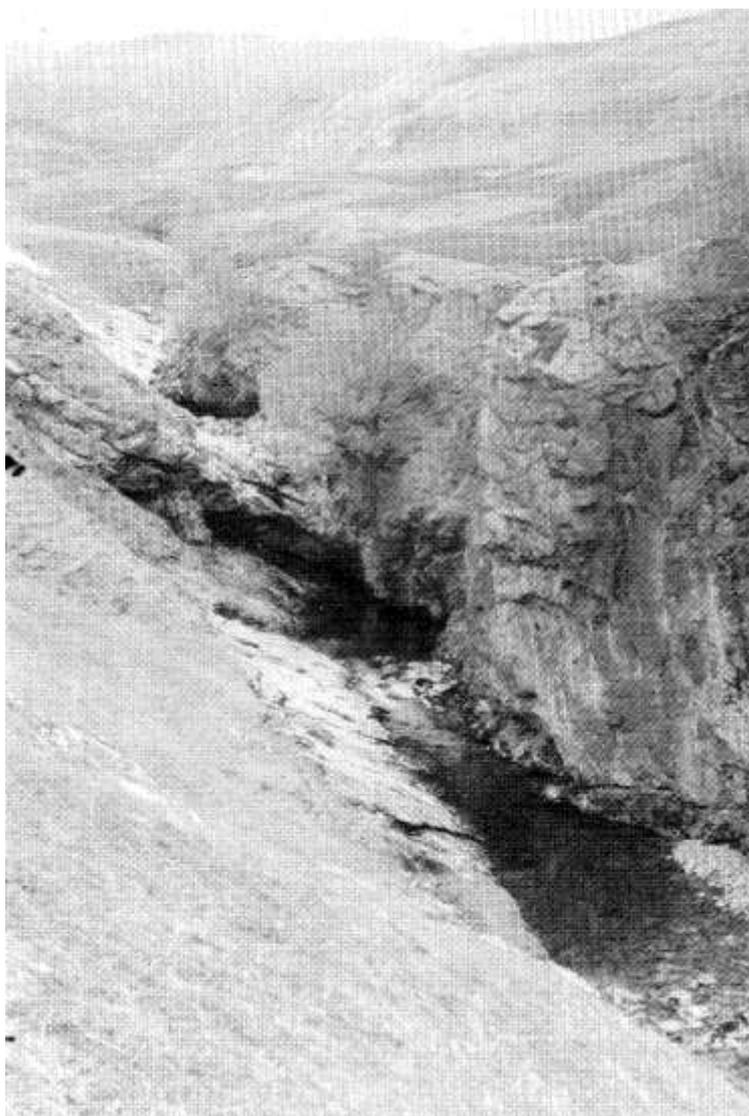
who by this time had been in a grand total of three caves in Scotland and extended two of them! - joked to Tony that he'd like to meet the twat who'd said the choke needed bang, to which Tony replied somewhat frostily that he was the only twat who had ever been there. The extension was duly christened 'Twats Temple'. A quick calculation showed that the gap between the newly discovered sumps in upstream Uamha a' Bhrisdeadh-Duile and downstream Tree Hole was so small that they were almost certainly one and the same. What was almost certainly a memorable celebration in the Inch - if only I could remember it - followed by more later at the hut, to the accompaniment of FX5 powered Battlefield Band, rounded off a splendid day.

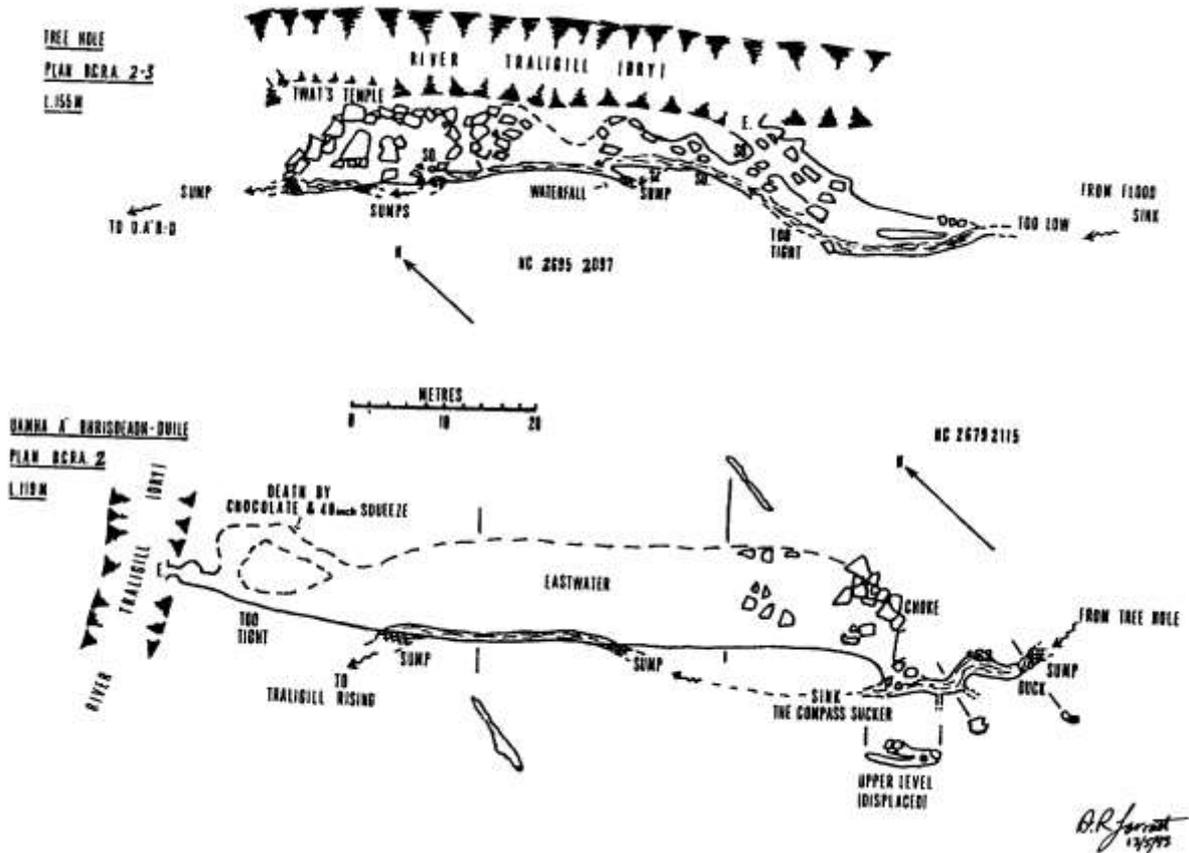
Arguably the most promising site in Sutherland is Sump 6 in Uamh an Claonaite, Scotlands' longest cave, and consequently Pete Glanvill was up at dawn the next morning, forcing cups of tea on reluctant and hungover sherpas. Early start or not, Pete still managed to contrive to arrive at the entrance an hour behind the by now damp and mutinous sherpa party, only to spend a further half hour prattling about reassembling his kit. Despite the odd bottle going off and Rich Blakes best attempts to gas everybody in the Sump 1 bypass, we made fairly rapid progress to the dry limit at Sump 3, and after reassuring the divers that we would be waiting to help them carry out - a complete lie - we headed up to the East Block, a series of large fossil passages which represent Scotlands' most remote spot for 'dry' cavers. A number of promising sites were logged for future reference, particularly toward the end of the strongly-draughting Infinite Improbability inlet.

After ascertaining that there was little to achieve without chemical assistance, we made sure that the divers were still safely away beyond the sumps before legging it back down-valley to The Inch. Meanwhile, the divers had failed to locate the way on in Sump 6, where the main flow is lost, although Malcolm Stewart managed to furlge a few odds and ends between 5 and 6. Whilst all this was going on, Nick, Julian and J-Rat had successfully re-opened Uamh an Coire Domhain (Cave of The Deep Depression), a new cave located close to Cull Dhubh, containing at least part of the underground river, which had become blocked by winter floods The streamway lies

beyond a series of breakdown chambers and crawls and is reached by a climb down from a sizeable chamber. To their amazement, this chamber had completely disappeared, full to the brim with thick peaty mud, doubtless from an impressive swallow-hole above, rendering the streamway with its' very promising sump, hopelessly inaccessible. Progress, at what by now had been re-christened 'Cave of the Deeply Depressed', would have to wait for nature to take its course, the danger being that continued collapse of the exposed and highly unstable entrance would seal the cave completely.

By common consent the following day was designated a rest day, and whilst various parties headed off to Eas Coulin, Britains' highest waterfall and the Old Man of Stoer, a famous sea-stack, the majority spent the day helping to lay the patio outside the new Grampian hut, broken only by the occasional demonstration of SLB. In the evening, a small group wandered over to some caves clustered behind the Grampian hut, taking in Uamh an Tartair, a fine stream cave - where J-Rat gave a once





only demonstration of a buttock-clenching free climb out of the loose pothole entrance - and the small but friendly Uamh Cul Eoghainn.

If Monday had been the sort of day you like to remember, then Thursday was definitely one to forget. Hopes of connecting Uamha a' Bhrisdeadh-Dulle to Tree Hole foundered on the inability of the 'fatboy' divers to pass the UBD entrance squeezes. Undeterred, we decided to continue with the survey but after only five stop-start legs, muggins here dumped two hundred quids worth of Tony Boycotts' survey kit into 'The Compass Sucker' a gurgling midstream sump. Desperate furling failed to redeem the situation, so after five minutes of beating my head against the wall we headed out, taking tape measurements en route.

Up at Lower Traligill Cave we inserted Pete Mulholland into what we took to be the undived downstream sump, which he pushed for 25m along a narrow thrust plane to where it could be seen to continue, although it later transpired not to be the downstream sump at all, but a passage reputedly pushed to a conclusion when dry!

A furlge around a few nearby holes, which revealed a possible way on in the intriguing Inclined Rift Cave, was rounded off with a quick trip to Firehose Cave where water levels in the usually incredibly damp entrance ramp were found to be surprisingly low, low enough in fact for the worlds' bravest (or most stupid)

bird to have built her nest on a ledge inside. Then it was off to the Inch to grovel to Tony Boycott.

The divers had experienced a better day. A few years previously, Malcolm Stewart had contrived to dive the 'too-tight' sump in Traligill Rising, and explore a short section of passage culminating in a boulder blockage. At the second attempt, the first being hampered by bad visibility and self-destructing kit, Pete Glanvill passed this obstacle to gain a further 50m of passage ending at another sump. This was later pushed by Malcolm for 15m and left still-going in comfortable proportions. The significance of this was that Traligill Rising now entered the equation for connection to UBD and Tree Hole, with the promise of creating a single system an estimated 450m in length. To date this has yet to be achieved, although it seems almost certain that a thin diver will be able to complete this very sporting traverse without undue difficulty. On the plateau above, Nick and Julian had achieved their small extension in Uamh Ard, though disappointingly this had not proved to be the elusive way on and had closed down very quickly.

Friday was the day of the planned push upstream in Tree Hole. The known cave had ended at a seemingly impenetrable sump but Tonys' 1991 discovery had revealed an impressive cascade - thought at that time to be the main Traligill river - jetting into the cave at head-height from a small and awkward hole. By a series of cock-ups, I managed to turn up at the Inch with no



Pete "Speleochef" Mullholland in mid-concoction

caving kit, so whilst Tony and Rich headed off to pursue this, I decided now was as good a time as any to have a good wander around the practically virgin plateau area above the two main caving valleys. Beginning at the Allt Nan Uamh, I headed up a steep, narrow ravine close to the famous Creag Nan Uamh Bone Caves, which I had been meaning to look at since 1992, which, whilst all the other significant valleys had been awash, had remained dry - suggesting water sinking somewhere along its route. Sadly nothing of note could be found. At the top of the valley I followed the conjectured line of the fault believed to carry the Uamh an Claonaite water behind the Bone Caves to the Fuaran Allt Nan Uamh, the main rising, noting a number of promising shakeholes, before cruising to the top of Bheinn An Fhuarain for nothing more than the view.

At regular intervals, the ring of quartzite mountains echoed to the sound of boulders relocating and by homing-in on these I bog-hopped across 'Hymac Heaven' - the heavily pitted Claonaite plateau - to eventually stumble across Julians' impressive Damoclean Dig, a large swallet located high on the shoulder of the valley opposite ANUS. Continuing over the river I ascended an endless deer-smothered col below Breabag to the head of the Traligill valley, discovering en-route that shiny, new gaiters are of little

value when you're up to your neck in quick peat. Staggering past Glenbain Cottage I was suddenly surrounded by breathless and ecstatic cave divers, who had finally regained the fabled Pete Dowswell extensions in Lower Traligill Cave. Pete had originally turned back at a low crawl beyond an impressive sloping thrust plane. Messrs Mulholland and Glanvill had pushed on through this obstacle to explore 'For Petes' Sake' a further 50m of impressive passage ending at a constriction, but it could be seen to enlarge beyond. Meanwhile, back in Tree Hole, Rich Blake had successfully chiselled his way to the top of the cascade, only to find the water emerging from a sump. Further investigation revealed this to be not the main way on upstream as previously thought, but merely an oxbow from a previously un-noticed sink further back in the cave. For his pains, Rich had suffered a gashed knee and the loss of a chisel to the mounting kit choke beneath the mountain.

With the divers in party mood, Gadge rigged-up lights and music from a generator he just happened to have with him, whilst Pete 'Speleochef' Mulholland concocted one of his famed culinary extravaganzas. Live entertainment was provided by Rich Blake defending his wounded knee from the scalpel wielding and positively

insistent doctors, the glint in Glanvills' eye suggesting he hadn't entirely forgotten Richs' anal indiscretion in the Claonaite sump 1 bypass. Whilst Graham took Rich and Estelle north to Smoo Cave - now replete with electric lighting - and the divers headed back with thin-man Aussie Mike O'Driscoll to Lower Traligill Cave, the rest of us vegetated at Damoclean, watching Nick reduce the sword to pitiful gravel. Back at base we learnt that Mike had successfully passed the constriction to enter 'For The Love of Mike', only to be thwarted by another, a mere 15m beyond. Sutherland '93 ended with a glorious sunset over Suilven, much to the Oohs and Aahs of the photographers - all that is except for Pete Glanvill, our only noted snapper, whose camera decided to pick that moment of all moments to jettison its' batteries all over the Knockan Field Hut. Ten minutes later, a cry of triumph announced successful reassembly, only to die on his lips as he re-emerged to total darkness.

Back on Mendip, collation of the weeks discoveries revealed some provoking possibilities, enough to warrant a flying weekend visit during August. Of particular interest was Inclined Rift Cave which promised to intersect the main flow from Cnoc Nan Uamh beyond the new terminal constriction in Lower Traligill Cave. A quick trip into Uamha a Bhrisdeadh-Duille revealed water levels considerably up on May, the streamway now

flowing along its' whole length and sumped to a depth of 6 ft someway back from the true sump. This effectively knocked on the head any plans for a diver to attempt the first traverse from Traligill Rising to Tree Hole, particularly galling as Alex Gee had proved thin enough to pass the UBD entrance squeezes. Inclined Rift Cave was more forthcoming, where J-Rat, by squeezing sideways along the thrust succeeded in descending some 10m beyond the previous limit. Cautiously passing through a finely-decorated squeeze, I pursued this through a small grotto containing attractive straws and curtains for a further 5m, where it closed down completely. Disappointed, I had a good look around for a corresponding inlet in Lower Traligill Cave before running the indescribable gauntlet of changing under the assault of relentless hordes of midges, pound for pound surely the most fearsome beast known to man. Later, after taking in the famous salmon leap on the River Cassley falls, I resumed operations in Uamh Cul Eoghainn, first uncovering a narrow virgin rift at the westernmost end of the cave before pushing the main streamway for 6m along a tortuous rift to a hopeless sump. After a quick look in nearby Un-named Cave, seen to be taking a large stream, I wended my way back to the Grampian over the secluded Abhainn a' Chnocainn basin.

With water levels so high, the following day seemed a good time to prospect the Upper Traligill Basin. After finding little of interest below Traligill Rising, I decided to project the presumed line of flow between Cnoc Nan Uamh and Lower Traligill Cave, discovering a small stream sink intriguingly covered with wooden stakes en route. Further up the valley, Uamh Cailliche Pelreag, once a major resurgence and occasionally still active, showed enough to warrant a closer look, as did two relatively open collapses close to Loch Mhaolach-coire Sink, one of the three major sinks in the Upper Basin. Further afield Cull Dhubh, which had more often than not been a deep black pool in recent months, had burst open, the usually blocked cave now being wide open, whilst the swirl-hole at the end of the Uamh an Colre Domhain depression had deepened to impressive proportions. A long walk around the eastern shore of the loch brought me back to the Allt Nan Uamh Valley and eventually Damoclean Dig, where the others had been rounding off the year playing with their toys.

Coming as close as we did to engineering a complete traverse of the Lower Traligill Basin, Sutherland '93 proved to be our most successful year to date. As with previous years, the answers we unearthed, only succeeded in raising yet more questions, but then this is one of the main reasons why we are drawn back year after year. No doubt 1994 will prove no different.

## References

1. **Traligill - A Brief Appraisal Of Speleological Potential** (P.N.F.Dowswell) *G.S.G Bulletin 2nd Series* 5(2) p. 15 (1987)
2. **Comparison Of The Results Of Quantitative And Non-Quantitative Tracer Tests For Determination Of Karst Conduit Networks; An Example From The Traligill Basin, Scotland** (P.L.Smart, T.C.Atkinson, I.M.S.Laddlaw, M.D.Newson, S.T.Trudgill) *Earth Surface Processes and Landforms* 11 p.249 (1986)
3. **Hydrology Of The Assynt Area - The Traligill Basin** (T.J.Lawson) *Caves of Assynt* { G.S.G Occ.Publ No.6) p. 19 (1988)
4. **Flooding In The Upper Traligill Basin (T-J-Lawson)** *G.S.G Bulletin 3rd Series* 2(5) p.23 (1993)
5. **Traligill - A Re-Appraisal Of Speleological Potential** (R.M.Taviner) *G.S.G Bulletin 3rd Series* 2(5) p.30 (1993)
6. **Lower Traligill Cave - A Promising Start** (P.N.F.Dowswell) *G.S.G Bulletin 2nd Series* 5(5) p.35 (1988)
7. **Lower Traligill Cave** (P.Glanvill, P. Mulholland) *C.D.G Newsletter* No. 108 p.27 (1993)
8. **Dive Reports - Traligill Rising** (M.Stewart) *G.S.G Bulletin 3rd Series* 1 (4) p.31 (1990)
9. **Traligill Rising** (M.Stewart) *C.D.G Newsletter* No. 108 p.28 (1993) Entry 7/5/93 Mistakenly Listed Under Lower Traligill Cave
10. **Uamha a' Bhrisdeadh-Duille** (D.Storey) *G.S.G Bulletin 2nd Series* 1 (4) p. 15 (1976)
11. **Tree Hole** (T.Jarratt) *Belfry Bulletin* 45(3) No.460 p.28 & *G.S.G Bulletin 3rd Series* 2(1) p. 12 (1991)
12. **Recent Discoveries At Uamha a' Bhrisdeadh-Duille And Tree Hole** (T.Jarratt) *G.S.G Bulletin 3rd Series* 2(5) p. 16 (1993)
13. **Uamh An Coire Domhain** (A.L. Jeffreys) *G.S.G Bulletin 3rd Series* 2(4) p. 15 (1993)
14. **Inclined Rift Cave** (R.M.Taviner) *G.S.G Bulletin 3rd Series* 2(5) p.7 (1993)
15. **Uamh Cul Eoghainn** (R.M.Taviner) *G.S.G Bulletin 3rd Series* 2(5) p. 13 (1993)
16. **Highland Fling** (P.Glanvill) *Belfry Bulletin* 44(3) No.455 p.4 (1990)
17. **Assynt Antics** (P. Glanvill) *Belfry Bulletin* 45(3) No.460 p.24 (1991)
18. **Elphin Epics** (P.Glanvill) *G.S.G Bulletin 3rd Series* 2(5) p.26 (1993)
19. **The Slanting Caves** (R.M.Taviner) *W.C.C Journal* Vol.21 No.230 p.66 (1991)
20. **Assault On Anus** (R. M.Taviner) *W.C.C Journal* Vol.22 No.240 p.68 (1994)

# caving notes

*Continued from page 119*

300ft free hang. The 'entrance' was first discovered from within the cave by bolting up avens above the main drain, but the surface connection was in doubt until it opened itself up in September. The pitch itself is fairly stable, but the entrance is very loose. It's called **Box Pot** after Allan Box who died in Matienzo in the Summer.

A caver died in **Old Ing** cave at the beginning of October. Apparently an experienced caver who was helping Preston Poly (as was) caving club with a novice trip, Peter Ball drowned after falling under a waterfall while helping people up one of the climbs in the streamway. The cave was in flood at the time and the CRO had just abandoned a rescue practice in nearby Birkwith cave. The victim had tied himself to a boulder and was unable to free himself from the water. The inquest was held on the 1st November and a verdict of accidental death was recorded. The coroner made two recommendations: a) that caving parties should carry a knife for dealing with situations such as this, b) that weather conditions should be checked for the previous week, not just for the day. *CD4976*

**Lechuguilla Cave** in Carlsbad Caverns National Park, New Mexico has advanced from fourth to third place on the list of longest caves in the United States, and from seventh to fifth place on the world list. An expedition into the cave that concluded on October 23 brought Lechuguilla Cave's official length up to 79.06 miles, which is more than 2.5 times the current mapped length of the park's famous Carlsbad Cavern. Lechuguilla Cave also remains the deepest limestone cave in the U.S. at 1,606 feet deep. Expeditions into Lechuguilla Cave scheduled for the remainder of 1994 include a surveying and mineral inventory trip November 19-27, a surveying and exploration trip December 3-11, and a science trip December 12-17. The science trip will be a follow-up visit by the Mars-study team that made their first trip into the cave in April 1994. The December trip will include a U.S. Geological Survey scientist, three NASA scientists, two scientists from the University of New Mexico and University of Massachusetts, and several technical support personnel. *Oran Tranberger CD4962*

A trip to Hawaii last month extended the depth of **Kazumura Cave**, a lava tube on the big island to a U.S. depth record of 888 meters or 2,913 ft.. Total surveyed length now stands at 47.2 kms (29.3 miles). 2,454 survey shots have been taken and subject to any obscure blunders yet undiscovered. Kazumura has a linear straight-line distance of over 28 kms! This may be the longest linear cave in the world. It is currently the longest and deepest lava tube cave in the world.

A recently formed group of cavers in **Saudi Arabia** has been exploring caves near Riyadh. John Pint reports that one lead was exceedingly narrow, but led into a big room

with shimmering white walls of pure calcite. A side passage lead to a room whose walls are covered with hundreds of delicate, milky- white helictites maybe 4 or 5 inches long, like so many ice skaters dancing in a mad whirl. It's hard to believe it is found in a country where - only a few years ago - geologists thought there were no formations at all!

"Getting out of this hole proved harder than getting in. We used a cable ladder, but found we could only get up so high, reaching a point where it was impossible to lift a knee in order to take another step. This was a most unpleasant feeling. We had to be lifted out by a crowd of bedouins who were extremely interested in what we were doing... and who invited us to their tent for dates and endless cups of sweet tea and cardamom-flavoured coffee. On our return we managed to destroy a tire and get hopelessly stuck in the sand but we eventually made it back to Riyadh. Naturally we plan to get back to the Teapot (so named because we found it right after having tea with bedouins last time) in the near future. Whistling? There's a hole in the wall in the last room we found through which wind is rushing audibly and through the hole you can see walking passage going off as far as your light can shine." *CD4975*.

Club members looking for an interesting Christmas/New Year trip may like to consider the '**International Caving Party**' being hosted by Hungarian cavers over the period 29 December to 2 January. The venue is Bodvaszilas, a village about 180km north west of Budapest. Further details from Nick Williams if you're interested. *CD4968*

---

## Croes Bleddyn Swallett

*Continued from page 120*

The sink is one of many active stream sinks in the Itton, St Arvans area that feed Otter Hole. This is an area that has not received as much attention as Mendip but is almost as close to Bristol. The cave is normally kept locked because of the proximity of house and local children.

Finally thanks to all the many persons who have helped to keep this project going. This has always been a dig involving many clubs. Thanks to those many RFDCC members and members of ACG ASS GSS HCC SWCC HADES and WCC.

# Spar Cave

Bob Lewis

The figure silhouetted against the snow some three-hundred feet below turned out to be female. Identification of gender arrived at the moment of the cry:

“Are you all right?”

I responded, without thinking, “Yes, are you?”; but bells were already ringing. Let me explain. When you think you’re progressing satisfactorily, in no real danger, adequately attired and so on, and someone shouts (not asks, shouts) “Are you all right?”, It doesn’t mean what you think it does, no, it means: “I am about to comment upon your performance or your equipment, or lack of these, disparagingly and above all to you, directly and in no uncertain terms.” This I have learnt. I was ready for the conversation which followed, as we closed on one another, she up the snow-slope and I down it.

“Where’s your axe?”

“Not with me.” (Pause; a few more steps)

“Why haven’t you got an axe?”

“Because it’s April.” I felt like saying: “Because all the books suggest that the Cuillin are free of serious snow and ice, sometimes all year, certainly by April, and because I didn’t come here to climb snow-routes and expected this easy stone-shoot to be no problem anyway”, with the possible option of force-feeding her some anti-hypertensive medication which would indubitably do her more good than it does me, but I desisted, tempting though it was. As it happens, I do own an ice-axe, but I waited until we were a couple of yards apart. She wasn’t giving up!

“Did you think you could do this without an axe? Why didn’t you bring one?”

“I didn’t bring my axe because it is six-hundred miles away, under the bed at my home in Bristol. I keep it there as a deterrent to intruders.”

She responded quietly to this: I didn’t hear her properly. If I’d been in her boots I’d have remarked that the notion of an axe, couchant, beneath a bed in an empty house, was *Ipso facto* no deterrent. She was not without wit, as her final remark made clear. “Happy landings”, she said.

The late snow was as much nuisance as are the midges and the rain, in summer. At the risk, admittedly remote, of criticism for 1) being alone, 2) having inappropriate clothing, 3) having neither boat nor helmet, and 4) possessing no guide, nor information on it, nor a map, I decided to visit Spar Cave, near Elgol.

Spar Cave is, apparently, in a sandstone of Jurassic age, cut by a dyke of basalt which, according to G. Johnstone, has been eroded more quickly by the sea than has the adjacent bedrock. There are several nearby features of this kind but Spar Cave is much larger than the rest: the

S.M.C. guidebook describes it as “300 yards deep, with a small lochan in it”, but that length includes the sea-inlet, which is unroofed. It isn’t worth going to Skye for, but in the right circumstances it could be most amusing, without S.R.T.. With S.R.T. or ladders half the fun is gone.

The traditional approach to Spar Cave would probably be by sea, beaching in the inlet itself. Others, at various tidal states, may wish to proceed as follows: go to Elgol, facing Coruisk and Soay across Loch Scavaig: before descending to the jetty, turn left at signpost bearing the name “Glasnakille”. There is a WC with sink - for washing - at the turnoff. Follow the road about one mile to a T-Junction, where the cave is almost directly ahead, and turn right. Continue about ¼ mile to a small parking/ changing place beneath a rock-face at a sharp kink where the road negotiates a small ravine. When I was there, a makeshift sign indicated: “NO CAMP”. I was uncertain as to the significance of these words, whether they referred to overnight stops or, on the other hand, represented some kind of social interdict.

A path leads down left of the little ravine (and eventually to the bottom of it); use this for a few yards then wander off left across the headland and follow the cliff-edge round the obvious bay beyond. After passing a couple of possible routes down to the beach, an ominous-looking slot presents itself, dark and narrow; the next feature after that is the gulf of Spar Cave, forcing walkers to detour inland nearly 400yards. Viewed from above, there seem no obvious means of access without equipment or a boat. The “ominous slot” appears to bar access from the bay.

Descend to the cove nearest to the aforementioned slot and scramble over rocks to an elevated “window” which communicates with it. This gives simple scrambling down to the mouth of the slot which may be crossed by way of a short easy leap. Then, according to the state of the tide, traverse out at sea-level on steep rock, or wade, or walk, to go round the little headland at the mouth of Spar Cave. Continue the traverse (passing a narrow ascending fissure which is of no help) until it is possible to reach the beach in the inlet. Walk up to the end, where two large passages suddenly appear. (This route is not at all obvious from the cliff-tops).

The right-hand passage quickly terminates. The other goes about 80 feet to a superb white stalagmite flow about 50 feet high. Ascend this (the “spar”) and go down some 25 feet beyond to the shore of the “lochan”. This fresh-water obstacle is fed by water trickling down the splendid clean formations which line the walls. Wet-suiters will disdain the awkward traverse on the right wall which leaves one’s top-half dry and, all things considered, a wet-suit is probably the ideal gear for this. The descending passage beyond the “lochan” does not seem to go very far, but this writer was not prepared to ascertain it in ordinary clothing.

Reference: S.M.C. Guide “The Island of Skye”

*The cave is named on “Landranger Sheet 32 South Skye” and is located at NG 538 128*

# club diary

## June

- 24/25th: 1995 Caver's Fair, SWCC, Penwyllt, South Wales  
25th: Committee meeting, Upper Pitts

## November

- 19th: CSCC Meeting, Hunter's Lodge  
26th: Yorkshire booking: Top Sink - Lancaster Hole  
27th: Yorkshire booking: Cow Pot  
26-27th: DCA Cavers' Workshop.

## December

- 3rd: MRO Rescue practice, Bath Stone Mines: meet 8:30am at Belfrey  
4th: Yorkshire booking: Little Hull Pot  
30th: Yorkshire booking: Lost Johns  
31st: Yorkshire booking: Notts Pot  
27th to 2nd Jan: International Caving Party, Bodvaszilas, Hungary

## 1995

### January

- 8th: Committee meeting, Upper Pitts  
14th: CSCC Meeting, Hunter's Lodge Inn  
28th: NCA Executive Meeting, Stafford

### February

- 11th: Yorkshire booking: Long Kin East / Rift Pot  
12th: Yorkshire booking: Nick Pot  
26th: Committee meeting. Upper Pitts

### March

- 5th: Cambrian Caving Council AGM, Brynmawr  
11th: Yorkshire booking: Gaping Gill Main Shaft  
12th: Yorkshire booking: Juniper Gulf  
18th: NCA AGM, venue TBA.

### April

- 15th: Yorkshire booking: Stream Passage Pot/Flood Entrance  
16th: Yorkshire booking: Disappointment Pot/Bar Pot

### May

- 6th: CSCC AGM, Hunter's Lodge  
14th: Committee meeting, Upper Pitts  
25th: BCRA Hydrology Meeting, Assynt  
27th: Yorkshire Booking: Hurnell Moss Pot  
29th: Yorkshire booking: Long Kin West

## July

- 14th: Wessex Gouffre Berger booking  
17th-21st 1995 NSS Convention, Blacksburg, West Virginia

## August

- 8th: Committee meeting, Upper Pitts

## September

- 17th: Committee meeting, Upper Pitts

## August

- 3rd - 9th: 1996 NSS Convention, Salida, Colorado

## 1997

### August

- 6th-20th: UIS International Congress of Speleology, La Chaux de Fonds, Switzerland.

## Charterhouse Steering Group report

*continued from page 121*

- 3.5 Access to the caves would be determined by the shareholders and incorporated into a Conservation Plan. The JMC would meet periodically to review all aspects of surface and underground management, and to discuss future work (including digs) proposed by its members.
- 3.6 It should be noted that a JMC would be a requirement of almost any purchase/lease scenario as EN are now taking a much more pro-active stance in their monitoring of SSSIs.

### 4. Next Moves

- 4.1 In parallel with the negotiations with SWT, the SG will examine the freehold purchase option, and the relative merits of Trustees and Limited Company as land holding bodies.

*Richard Witcombe*

10 October 1994