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CLUB NEWS

Ringling out the Old, ringing in the New

October is always our most significant month, for it is during this month that the Annual General Meeting and Dinner are held and the new Committee is appointed. Thus, the Club's policy and administration is shaped for the coming year, for better or worse.

Please show your interest in the affairs of the Club by coming to the AGM full of sound advice and good ideas to pass on to the 1971/72 Committee. They need your guidance and support to make their term of office a successful one.

The Annual General Meeting will be held on Saturday, 16th October, and will take place, as before, in the Village Hall, Priddy. The business of the Meeting will commence at 3.00 p.m. prompt.

The Agenda, Secretary's Report, Treasurer's Report and the Minutes of the 1970 AGM are in this Journal.

The Annual Dinner will be held at the Masonic Hall, North Street, Frome on 16th October commencing at 7.30 p.m. (for 8.00 p.m.). Don Thomson, who was responsible for arranging last year's most enjoyable Dinner, has kindly undertaken the organisation of this year's, so it is hoped that members will book their tickets secure in the knowledge that they are almost certainly making a good investment.

Transport has been arranged leaving Upper Pitts for Frome at 6.30 p.m. (stopping if necessary at the Hunter's en route). Jenny Murrell will take bookings from those who wish to make use of this facility. The cost of the return journey is likely to be about 40p per person (please send this amount when booking - any necessary adjustment will be made on the coach).

Unpaid Subscriptions - an Apology

It has been brought to the Committee's attention that the list of members who had not paid their subscriptions published in the April Journal included a number of people who had in fact already paid. Sincere apologies go to those concerned for having been falsely accused and publicised in such an unwarranted fashion. The errors resulted from the confusion caused by the postal strike which meant that subscriptions were received generally later this year. Consequently, the list was drawn up rather hurriedly, whilst payments were still arriving at a fast rate.

Access to Caves and Relations with Landowners

Every member of this Club must surely realise the imperative need to treat farmers and landowners with respect and consideration, so that good relations are maintained and the minimum disturbance is caused. It is a credit to the esteem in which the Wessex is held in this respect, in that any general complaints about the behaviour of cavers are usually made to us in the knowledge that as a responsible group we will have the good sense to do all we can to help eliminate the cause of those complaints.

Recently, a number of unfortunate occurrences have been brought to our attention, and as a result members are asked to take particular note of the following points, and to explain the short-sightedness and thoughtlessness of their actions to anyone found contravening them:

1. Cars should be parked sensibly when visiting caves, so that they do not cause a hazard to other road users, and particularly so that they do not block the passage of any other vehicles which might need to pass by. Farmers must have access to and egress from their land at all times - after all it is their livelihood, and there can be nothing more annoying to a busy man than to find, for instance, that he cannot enter a field with a tractor because the access has been blocked by a caver's carelessly parked car.
2. Cavers must visit the landowner and/or tenant before crossing his land to a cave entrance. The nominal charge which is often made should not be begrudged - it is a small price to pay for the owner's goodwill and the continued right of access which that means.
3. At all times, consideration and politeness must be shown in our dealings with landowners - they are our friends and we should be proud of the good relations we maintain, which could so easily be disrupted by a few careless actions or ill-chosen words from just one or two irresponsible cavers.

It must be emphasised that Wessex members have not been specifically accused of any of the above misdemeanours. These points (with the exception of the last), are made at the request of the landowners concerned, so that this Club at least can be shown not to identify itself in any way with such bad manners and poor behaviour.

Vandalism in G.B. Cave

A case of vandalism in G.B. Cave has recently come to light involving a party who entered the Cave in the Club's name. Vandalism must always be deplored, but vandalism in a cave like G.B. is a serious and most disturbing matter. Unfortunately, no details of the party concerned are known, but future incidents of this kind (and it must be hoped there will be none) will be investigated fully and the appropriate action taken against the offenders.

To lessen the likelihood of a similar occurrence, applications for the key to G.B. will now be vetted more closely, and if there is the slightest doubt of the competence of the applying party to respect the cave's cleanliness and its formations, either they will be asked to provide themselves with a suitable leader or their application will be cancelled. Further, a complete record of the parties entering the cave under the Club's auspices will be maintained so that any would-be vandals among the members of their guests will be more easily apprehended.

It is regrettable in the extreme that it has been found necessary to publish this warning and take these measures, especially as the vast majority of members are careful not to condone vandalism. Their tolerance and forgiveness is craved. As always, the few spoil things for the many.

Keith Barber

CLUB EVENTS

- Saturday, 9th October Swildons, Double Troubles Round Trip. Meet on Priddy Green, 2.30 p.m. Wet suits etc. Names to Richard Kenney, "Yennek", St. Marys Road, Meare, Glastonbury, Somerset.
- Saturday, 16th October Annual General Meeting, Village Hall, Priddy, 3.00 p.m.
Annual Dinner, Masonic Hall, North Street, Frome, 7.30 p.m.
- Saturday, 6th November South Wales. Names to Richard Kenney (address above).
- Saturday, 13th November Slide Show - Trans-African Expedition by Dave Causer. Time and place to be arranged.
- Saturday, 4th December Swildons, Shatter Passage. Meet on Priddy Green, 2.30 p.m. Wet suits etc. Names to Richard Kenney (address above).
- Saturday, 10th December Don Whillans presents talk on the 1971 International Everest Expedition at the Town Hall, Bridgwater. Tickets, 50p. , from the Bridgwater Arts Centre, 11 Castle Street.

EVENING SYMPOSIUM on PRUSSIKING

At the WOOKEY HOLE INN (upstairs), on OCTOBER 9th at 7.30 p.m. A bar will be operating from 7.00, before and after the main proceedings.

The session will be chaired by Howard Kenney and will consist of three short talks on aspects and methods of prussiking, with plenty of time for questions and discussions afterwards.

DEMONSTRATIONS of prussiking will take place in LIME KILN QUARRY (NGR.5390. 4713) in the afternoon from 3 p.m.

There will be a collection (about 5p per head) to cover costs. I look forward to seeing you at this first session.

John Letheren.

Change of Address

Dr. and Mrs. Robert Pyke, 20 Owen Grove, Henleaze, Bristol BS9 4EH.

K.A. Sanderson, 8 Hud Hill, Shelf, Nr. Halifax, Yorkshire.

John Letheren, 25 Southstoke Road, Combe Down, Bath.

R.T.W. Jones, 38 Austin Road, Woodley, Reading, Berks.

Cdr. T.R. Shaw, "Gateways", 11, Bewley Lane, Lacock, Wilts.

A GRAND OLD MAN AND SOME FINE CAVE PAINTINGS

by John Letheren

This is a report on a holiday which was not intended to be a caving holiday, but when a caver goes to the Pyrenees - - - -

On arriving at the mountains, we headed for Pau, towards the Western end of the range, and from there on to Lourdes, pausing on the way to see the famous show cave (advertised all the way down through France) of Betharram. Access to this cave is original in that one is shut in a little cable-car and pushed onto a travelling cable which carries it over the ground up to the cave entrance. It seemed a very elaborate form of entry, but novel. The cave was large, dry in character, but not speleologically interesting. A short section comprised a boat ride, but this water was described as a lake, i.e. flooded passage, rather than a river. After some more walking, one came out, rather surprisingly, at the beginning of the cable railway.

Progressing in an Easterly direction, we arrived at a small town called St. Gaudens, and enquired at the Syndicat d'Initiative where Castel Mournalon might be (where lives Norbert Casteret). The man in charge promptly telephoned M. Casteret and made an appointment for that afternoon.

His house is not far from the centre of the town, and we were greeted on the steps by his housekeeper who showed us up to the very top of the building where Monsr. Casteret's study was situated. Unfortunately, neither my wife nor I spoke very much French, and M. Casteret spoke very little English, so communications were not too good. Having autographed a copy of Ten Years Under The Earth, we discussed the local examples of prehistoric remains in the caves, in particular wall paintings, engravings and clay statues. Unfortunately, the famous model of the bear, made in clay and used for ceremonial mock killings with a real bear's head stuck onto it, was not accessible in the cave of Montespan as this cave had been closed only one month earlier due to vandalism. He recommended us to see the hands at Gargas. This is a show cave, but not always open (in which case apply at the local town hall (the Mairie) in Aventignan). It contains the famous outlines of mutilated hands,, There is not really space here to describe them, or the theories to explain them. Nobody, probably, can describe them better than Norbert Casteret himself in Ten Years Under The Earth.

Montespan, incidentally, has never been open to the public and the entrance is wet, although the original sump was drained many years ago. It was not clear whether the cave entrance is blocked or gated, but it seems it was blocked. Other caves to see are Niaux, Mas d'Azil, le Portel, and Be'deillac. We were to go to Foix, in the Ariège, and see a friend of his, a Messr Delteil at the Chamber of Commerce (tel.119). Incidentally, they pronounce all the consonants in these names, i.e. Mas d'Azil is not pronounced Ma d'Azee, but as it would be in English "Maz d'Azeel", so don't show off your school French in the Pyrenees. It seemed to be a sort of Mendip French, if you can imagine that.

However, to return to Casteret, his study was very sparse compared with, say, a Mendip caver's sitting room. There were a few show cases with just the odd tooth of a cave bear (Ursus Speleus, happily now

extinct as far as the cave explorer is concerned), a skull of a modern brown bear (*Ursus Arctos*) for comparison, and a case full of his books in almost every language, German, English, Spanish, Russian (translated from the English edition for some strange reason), Bulgarian, Czech, Portugese, etc. We departed after attempting to describe my method of photographic cave surveying with dubious success, and showing him a pair of Jumars (prussiking devices) without which he used to manage incredibly well!

Later that day, we followed his good advice and went to see Gargas. The cave was open and we joined a small party just inside. The charge for all these show caves was a few francs each (about 30p). The atmosphere was disappointing. The guide was a young lady who was cheerful and as helpful as she could be, but the party consisted of young chaps and their girls who seemed to regard the whole performance as one long joke. There was very little to prevent visitors from touching or brushing against the irreplaceable paintings on the walls. It was a constant source of amazement to me (and it still is) that a small neat set of images were created without apparently any erasure or alterations, and that they survived unharmed for between twenty and fifty thousand years, and now they are in constant danger from visitors and vandals.

The next day found us visiting Mas d'Azil, in Jurassic limestone, on Good Friday. Norbert had told us that the road crosses the cave. This seemed a little strange, but when the whole road was swallowed up by an enormous cave entrance, we began to see what he meant. There is plenty of room for the river too which runs through lower down. Well inside, we parked at a sizeable car park, and went in to see the show cave. This has very large dome-shaped chambers which have run one into another to give a vast curved entrance system, which has been inhabited on and off since the beginnings of human time. There are no paintings in this cave, but long low (stooping) passages eventually lead into a chamber with three glass show cases containing bones and teeth of extinct cave fauna, and a shoulder-blade engraved with the most intricate and detailed picture of a reindeer. Also preserved were mammoth bones (food) lying where they had been excavated.

On the Saturday (before Easter) we contacted M. Delteil with some difficulty. He told us he had been down Pierre St. Martin, Cigalere, and other great caves with Casteret. He has access to Le Portel and Be'deillac, two painted caves not open to the general public. We did Be'deillac that same afternoon. The entrance was vast, level and concreted and was, in war time, an underground factory where they repaired aircraft parts, and even had fortifications against the Germans. Further in the cave were wall paintings in black and red ochre (the black looking identical to carbide-lamp drawings), mainly of bison, and below were more pictures engraved in the clay floor. They were all very small, and we formed the impression that cave engravings and paintings must all be only a few inches long, or a foot or so at the most. At this point, M. Delteil said "Would you like to see some clay statues?" and my wife, having been disappointed at missing Montespan, said "Yes please", whereupon our guide (who just happened to be wearing full caving kit) disappeared into a crawl. We followed for some yards until the roof rose a bit and he opened another gate (these caves were all gated). On the floor, just at the entrance of the next crawl, was the "statue", but it was only a bison engraved in a small slab of clay. We went past being careful not to kick it with our Wellingtons, and found more small engravings and paintings.

On the way out, I was looking for the clay bison, when my wife informed me that I had just passed it. How easy it would be to scatter these clay works of art, the World's first attempts at some form of permanent art.

The following day found us again in the company of M. Deiteil, but this time he brought a friend along called Dr. Gaussens who wished to see the cave of Le Portal as he had not been down it since 1906. Now at the great age of 85, with ice axe and Leica, he wished to see it again. After a short descent to the usual little locked gate, (though this time the entrance was a little fissure-type of entrance in a quiet wood) we descended a slippery sloping passage. The Doctor slipped several times, each time coming up smiling. The whole system was fairly small, although there were one or two chambers of reasonable size. Here once again, were the now familiar Bison, facing each other in pairs, or falling into pits or traps represented by faults in the rock wall. In one of the small grottoes in this cave are a large number of paintings, some unfinished. The space is so confined that it is almost impossible to get in and look at them without rubbing one of them, and yet they cannot be seen from outside the chamber.

The final cave was Niaux, a show cave. This was Easter Sunday and therefore very crowded. The route lay up a road which leads up to the face of a cliff. At the top was another huge cave entrance. We noticed a large charabanc parked in one side. The visitors' entrance was down a narrow blasted tunnel into a large passage with gours or rimstone pools on the floor. There was no form of lighting installed in this cave. There were a few guides with large (smelly) acetylene lamps, but they were far away most of the time due to the very large Easter crowds. Happily, we thought of taking torches, but not boots which would have been useful. After a very long walk, by tourist standards, we came to some paintings on the walls. These were huge, Bison four or five feet long fighting, falling into traps, and so on, including another painting of a pair we had seen in Le Portel, and had been told to look out for. The guides unlocked small gated enclosures and went inside to point out the details of the paintings. Further on, when the cave had apparently lost its interest for us, we came into the Hall of Paintings. This hall must have astonished its discoverers beyond description. The walls are covered (but not cluttered) with huge paintings as clear as if they had just been finished. Even more amazing is the fact that earlier explorers actually wrote their names on the walls, between or even across some of these marvellous paintings, without noticing their existence, and yet they are as clear as they could possibly be and have never been touched up or cleaned.

That concludes the caving content of the holiday. Better writers than I have described both the caves and their paintings and statues. I have not filled this account with references, as the name of the cave, and a good map (the yellow series of Michelin maps, 1cm/2Km, No's 82, 83 and 86) and a copy of Ten Years Under The Earth is all that is required to find these marvels, the like of which is completely unknown in Britain - but why?

(also published in the MNRC Newsletter)

The Annual Report of the Honorary Secretary to the Wessex Cave Club 1971

All too soon we are approaching the end of another Club year, it has been an eventful year in some respects and it is hoped that the Club has prospered as indeed it should every year. Every time there is a large change in the Committee and also a new Secretary, new ideas are brought forward and implemented. It is hoped that any deviation in policy from past years is for the better, even though it may seem to have caused discomfort in certain quarters. Committee's and Honorary Secretary's come and go, but the Wessex still goes on. As the President said last year at the Annual General Meeting, "The Club has come a long way since its formation in 1934".

The Headquarters ensures the continuity of the Club for many years to come but its very presence brings problems. Upper Pitts in its completed state has now been in use for the first full Club year, and perhaps now is the time to have a very critical look at the administration of the premises. The building at the moment is used by an estimated 20% of the Club membership, of these only 10% are regular users of the premises and a smaller percentage actually contribute to any work there. The pundits may well argue that there was no need for a headquarters such as Upper Pitts, as comfortable surroundings tend to promote idleness, and the work involved in maintaining the premises absorbs the talents and time of those members most interested in the welfare of the Club. Hut building has more than once been the downfall of a Caving Club. We are now going through a difficult phase, as most of the members who have contributed a great deal to building of the headquarters have now had enough, and are awaiting others to carry on. The majority of the people who now use the premises are not as concerned about its welfare as they might be and so the jobs do not get done and the building gradually deteriorates. A further ramification of this phase is that caving activity also declines, and we get the "air of stagnation" mentioned by Donald Thomson in his Hon. Secretary's report for 1969/70. Perhaps time will solve this problem!

With regard to the administration of the premises at Upper Pitts, the problems of running such a place are vastly different than those of Hillgrove. During the past year most of the Committee Members took it in turn to be Duty Warden for a weekend, as there was no one person willing to act as Warden. It is a good scheme as it brings each member of the Committee more in touch with the problems of running the Headquarters. However, collective responsibility does bring its own problems, as there is no continuity of responsibility from week to week and periodically the faults of the system are brought to light. Both the Chairman and myself feel there is a need for one person to co-ordinate the activities of the Duty Wardens. Unfortunately this feeling is not shared by all the members who use the Headquarters.

In July the task of co-ordinating the maintenance of Upper Pitts was very kindly taken on by Richard Kenney. There is still a considerable amount of work to be done yet before the premises can be said to be finally completed. Most of the jobs are small but nevertheless essential. Unfortunately the Wessex as a Club is not endowed with many artisans amongst its membership and the number of members able and willing to do jobs to a good standard are very few. There is a danger of a gradual deterioration in the standard of the workmanship in the building if we are not

careful. There will be some jobs which will always have to be done by professionals, like plastering etc., but jobs like painting can be done by quite a few members. However it can be heart rending sometimes to do a good job of making something and find that others have made somewhat of a mess of it by poor painting. It is up to Richard to try and maintain the standard of workmanship, and perhaps there is a case for employment of a local person as an odd job man, from time to time. This would of course involve more expense, but as the Headquarters is used by only a small proportion of members, perhaps we ought to encourage more guests by advertising? We do not want to have to go as far as other clubs have gone by plastering notices everywhere, or by removing all crockery and cooking utensils and treating every person who stays at the H.Q., like a child, but it is a sad fact that most of the routine domestic chores are performed by the same few members. Perhaps it is time to think about offering a financial inducement to someone to act as Warden and run the place on the lines of a Youth Hostel?

Members who have been regular readers of the Committee Abstracts will be aware that the Committee are putting forward plans for an extension to Upper Pitts. It is to fit onto the Women's Dormitory and will be a self-contained workshop, to house more ambitious digging equipment. The negotiations are now well in hand and by the time you read this report we should be in a position to launch an appeal for funds to erect the structure. The reasons for considering such an extension are very apparent to members who use the Headquarters, as the changing and workshop areas are proving very congested at times. By moving the workshop outside, the changing area can be re-organised to relieve the turmoil caused by the fact that at the moment there are five doors opening into the changing area, which is also used as a thoroughfare to other parts of the building.

The Club tackle has been under the very able jurisdiction of Wally Wilcocks, who has organised the manufacture of 500ft of ladder, and is currently purchasing materials to make another 500ft. This together with the 250ft made last year, makes the Club's current ladder assets in the order of 1000ft, with a further 500ft to come. Thus it can be said that the Club's tackle is now in the best state it has ever been in.

The main reason for this increase in tackle has been the extension of Rhino Rift. To bottom the system now involves as much tackle as is required for large Yorkshire pots, and this is on Mendip! The extension of Rhino Rift early this year and the more recent extension to North Hill reflects the tenacity of Mendip diggers. The Club can be justly proud of the efforts of John Cornwell and his team in digging Rhino Rift and also the efforts of N.H.A.S.A. in breaking through at North Hill. Both these digs were highly organised long term projects, and they prove the only way to find more cave on Mendip is to become mechanised as well as organised. Fred Davies and his team have also been very active up Cowsh Aven in Swildons, as they have been steadily blasting their way up every Sunday morning for over a year now. A connection with Priddy Green Sink seems likely in the near future. In the summer of this year a small expedition organised by Fred Davies and Jim Hanwell set forth for the Karst areas of Spain. The latest news is that they have found a 650ft deep system which has a length of 3000ft.

It had been hoped to start another Club digging project during the year when preliminary investigations in the recent extensions to Wookey had shown the Twentieth Chamber to lie fairly close to the surface. It only remained for the divers to accurately locate the chamber by means of radio location equipment for the project of sinking a shaft into the chamber to gain momentum. The Club financed the building of radio location apparatus from the Survey Fund as an incentive to the divers to locate the chamber. However a combination of circumstances has prevented its use, and the chamber still has to be located. So we await the divers to provide the Club with a worthwhile project at some future date.

On the subject of the location of cave passages perhaps I ought to mention that the Resistivity apparatus on loan to the Club is now in the hands of Fred Davies. The interpretation of the data given by such an instrument is very difficult, and so at the moment he is concentrating upon the data obtained due to ground water percolation given between two fixed points brought about by varying climatic conditions. It is hoped that he will publish his findings in the Journal, as we must really justify the firm's generosity in loaning us the apparatus.

Now we come to the problem that always seems to be with us, namely that of ill-supported Club trips. Most of the Club trips seem to have been run for the benefit of only one or two members, and there is a feeling amongst the leaders that they are a waste of time. However ill-supported as they are, I feel that they should still be offered as they are part of the service offered to members. While the official Club trips appear to be on the wane, the private meets organised by Howard and Richard Kenney seem to be gaining in popularity. Most of the meets are held on Friday evening for Mendip caves, and either Saturday or Sunday for caves further afield. We are indebted to them and hope they will continue with the Friday Night Club.

One aspect of the Club which is probably unknown to many members, especially the younger ones, is the traditions which have been long established by its founder members. The very size of the Club reflects the loyalty of its members, many of whom are now no longer able to actively participate in the sport. Many of the current active 'few' are always moaning about the "silent majority" of the Club, but they do not realise that these members have done their bit for the Club in the past, and indeed some are still doing it. The Club Journal portrays these established traditions through its continual high standard of articles, many of which are written by members of the "silent majority". There is a wealth of experience in the Club and during the past year we have invited members who have done something interesting to give slide shows. These have proved to be immensely popular and we will try and continue them. There are one or two more shows in the pipeline, but we could do with some more. If there are any members able to give interesting slide shows of about one hours duration on a Saturday evening at Upper Pitts, I would be very interested to hear from them? If you are going on any interesting expeditions make a pictorial record so you can present a slide show to others less fortunate than you, it brings great pleasure during the Winter months and helps to bind the Club together socially?

The Journal has had a difficult year and owes a lot of the pleasantly-finished appearance to the patience of Ann and Ron Foord, our Honorary Members, who print it. Articles have come in at a steady rate but a somewhat disjointed relationship has existed between the Committee and the Journal. Perhaps the next Committee would like to organise its meetings for early in the month before a Journal comes out so that maximum tie-in can be achieved. The Journal gains a lot from having overall plans and themes. These cannot be achieved by any Editor if he cannot rely on copy coming in on time. Malcolm Newson has been in a good position relative to the production of the Journal, if a somewhat poor one for Mendip. It is hoped that after the completion of Volume 11 in December a Mendip-based Editor will appear, with Malcolm assisting in production and distribution.

The Journal has attracted international interest - in Russia and Spain, while the Occasional Publications have achieved for the Club a rare position in scientific journalism, a position which could well be remembered by those who consider that new passage is the only measure of progress.

Club membership at the moment is a matter of some concern, as due to the postal strike there was an abnormally high number of members who forgot to renew their membership. Of these it is thought a fair number could be persuaded to renew, and that the Club would lose about thirty members. The latest count is that there are 321 members.

The Club has continued to provide the sales service to members and Guests. A good source of boiler suits has been located and tapped, and an alternative supply of Cap-lamp bulbs assures that we will not have to revert back to carbide lamps yet. The drastic increase in the costs of badges and ties has caused Ian Jepson to buy stocks to order only, rather than purchase large stocks which take many years to clear. Wally Willcocks is buying bulk food and selling it at the H.Q. for the benefit of members and the Club.

Mike York is running the Club book scheme, where members can take advantage of reduced costs in buying books. Tony Philpott continues to administer the survey and publication sales with great efficiency.

The Club Library has been in the care of Chris Hawkes once again. The Library activity has been quiet this year, but when the Quiet room is completed it is hoped that it will be used a little more than it has been in the past. Next year's Committee will have to consider the problems of running the Library from the Headquarters.

The Committee has met five times during the past year, with two meetings to go. All the meetings were reasonably well attended with the exception of the difficult holiday period meeting. It looks as though there will be an election again this year, and also there will be a change of Secretary as I am hoping to move abroad in the very near future.

WESSEX CAVE CLUB
Balance Sheet as at 31st August 1971

1970				1970			
	<u>Hut Fund</u>				<u>New Headquarters</u>		
£2,692	As at 1st September 1970	£2,757.92			<u>Freehold Land and Buildings - Eastwater</u>		
	Add: Proposed transfer from						
100	Accumulated funds for 1971	66.36		£4,449	Cost to 1st September 1970	£4,625.86	
3	Proceeds from disposals of club huts	-		177	Add: Expenditure during year	46.01	
16	Profit from jumble sales	-		4,626	4,671.87		
2,811		2,824.28		1,918	Less: Grant received	1,918.00	
	Less: Period subscriptions relating to			2,708			2,753.87
53	Current year	52.75			<u>Hut Fund Investments</u>		
2,758		52.75		50	Balance at bank and cash in hand	17.66	
			2,771.53	2,758		2,771.53	
	<u>Survey Fund</u>				<u>Survey Scheme</u>		
	As at 1st September 1970	56.07			Stock of surveys at cost	35.09	
56	Add: Profit on sale of surveys in year	18.80		56	Balance at bank and cash in hand	39.78	
			74.87				74.87
	<u>Accumulated Fund</u>				<u>Current Assets</u>		
	As at 1st September 1970	407.59		130	Sundry stocks (see note 7)	320.59	
	Add: Surplus for year	154.66		29	Debtors and payments in advance	41.78	
		562.25		388	Balance at bank and cash in hand	305.35	
	Less: Proposed transfer to Hut Fund to be						667.72
408	approved by 1971 A. G. M.	66.36					
			495.89				
	<u>Current Liabilities</u>						
65	Subscriptions in advance	56.25					
14	Mossdale Memorial Fund	-					
27	Sundry creditors	82.95					
33	1969 Dinner surplus carried forward	32.63					
			171.83				
£3,361			£3,514.12	£3,361			£3,514.12

SUBJECT TO AUDIT

The notes attached form part of these accounts

WESSEX CAVE CLUB
Income and Expenditure Account
For the year ended 31st August 1971

<u>1970</u>		<u>1970</u>			
£ -	Tackle Expenditure	£ 97. 80	£400	Subscriptions for the Club year (see note 4)	£401. 75
2	Club dig and georesistivity expenses	2. 75	16	Affiliation fees	10. 87
275	Journal	251. 13	11	Entrance fees	6. 50
2	Library expenses	7. 00	53	Donations	29. 23
32	Third party insurance	47. 10	2	Use of duplicator	-
30	Stationery, postages and telephone	23. 75	20	Journal sales	26. 72
2	Meetings expenses	-	-	Profit on annual dinner and parties	3. 28
5	Bank charges and cheque books	5. 18	5	Charterhouse Caving Committee permits	3. 84
2	Lamb Leer expenses	-	1	Sundry receipts	-
3	Subscriptions (as note 3)	8. 00		Contribution towards cost of timber for Lamb Leer Platform	5. 05
13	Loss on annual dinner and parties	-			
28	Club Handbook	-			
7	Materials for Swildons blockhouse	-			
				SUBJECT TO AUDIT	
<u>401</u>		<u>442. 71</u>			
107	Surplus carried down	44. 53			
<u>£508</u>		<u>£487. 24</u>	<u>£508</u>		<u>£487. 24</u>
5	Deficit on goods supplied to members	-	107	Surplus brought down	44. 53
			50	Surplus on running Upper Pitts (as note 1)	13. 61
191	Excess of Income over Expenditure carried to Accumulated Funds	154. 66	39	Profit on sale of Occasional Publications	81. 86
				Surplus on goods supplied to members (as note 2)	14. 66
<u>£196</u>		<u>£154. 66</u>	<u>£196</u>		<u>£154. 66</u>

The notes attached form part of these accounts

WESSEX CAVE CLUB

Notes on the Accounts for the year to 31st August 1971

1. Surplus on running Upper Pitts

	1970	1970
Hut fees received	£265.28	£256
Less: Expenses:-		
Rates	62.24	27
Insurance	49.76	49
Electricity	11.47	5
Propane Gas	25.21	11
Central heating costs	60.37	81
Miscellaneous repairs and cleaning materials	42.62	33
	251.67	206
	£ 13.61	£ 50

2. Surplus on goods supplied to members

	1970	1970
Blazer Badges	£ .22	£(1)
Club ties	-	(1)
Carbide and carbide lamp spares	(1.09)	3
Nife and Edison lamp spares	8.18	(2)
Nife and Edison sets	-	(4)
Boiler suits	7.35	-
	£ 14.66	£(5)

Note: The figures in brackets represent a deficiency, those without brackets a surplus.

3. Subscriptions paid

	1970	
During the course of the Club year the Wessex Cave Club has paid subscriptions to other caving bodies as follows:-		
Cambrian Caving Conference	£ 1.00	£ -
Charterhouse Caving Committee	3.00	-
Council of Southern Caving Clubs	4.00	-
Cave Research Group	-	3
	£ 8.00	£ 3

4. Included in the amount of £401.75 for subscriptions for the Club year is the amount of £52.75 which represents the proportion of the period subscriptions received in previous years which relate to the current year. This amount has been debited to the Hut Fund.

5. The total figures of cash in hand and at bank appearing on the Balance Sheet are:- £362.79. This is made up as follows:-

Midland Bank, Solihull - current account	£210.49
Cash in hand with Hon. Treasurer (since banked)	17.55
Cash in hand with Publication Sales Officer (R. A. Philpott)	134.75
	£362.79

6. Included in the Accumulated Funds are profits from the sales of Occasional Publications as follows:-

	Total	Series 1		Series 2	
		No. 1	No. 2	No. 1	No. 2
Cash received:-					
Year to 30/9/68	£ 57.25	£ -	£ -	£57.25	£ -
Eleven months to 31/8/69	51.50	-	-	11.75	39.75
Year to 31/8/70	307.45	290.90	-	5.00	11.55
Year to 31/8/71	341.83	25.00	308.18	2.50	6.15
	758.03	315.90	308.18	76.50	57.45
Less:					
Production costs	830.39	399.47	314.28	55.92	60.72
Cash 'in hand' at 31/8/71	(72.36)	(83.57)	(6.10)	20.58	(3.27)
Add: Stocks at 31/8/71	221.00	120.00	77.00	2.00	22.00
	£148.64	£ 36.43	£ 70.90	£22.58	£18.73

It is intended that this sum and also profits from any future sales should be used to finance future Occasional Publications.

WESSEX CAVE CLUB

Notes on the Accounts for the year to 31st August 1971 (continued)

7. The figure of sundry stocks appearing in the Balance Sheet is made up as follows:-

Goods for resale:-

Club badges	£ 3.00	
Carbide and carbide lamp spares	18.30	
Nife and Edison lamp spares	34.84	
Boiler suits	13.80	
Occasional Publications	221.00	
		£ 290.94

Upper Pitts stocks

Fuel oil	24.45	
Propane Gas	5.20	
		29.65
		£ 320.59

8. The expenditure to date on the Upper Pitts H. Q. has been as follows:-

Land, fencing, car park and paths	£481.90	
Site drainage and septic tank	70.06	
		£ 551.96
Erection of shell	2,924.00	
Floors, ceilings, partition walls, internal joinery, paint and plastering	421.04	
Wiring, electrical and gas fittings	195.72	
Plumbing, hot and cold water system and drainage	181.77	
Central heating installation and boiler	363.29	
Fire escape	34.09	
		4,119.91
		£4,671.87

9. At 31st August 1971 the Club owned the following items of equipment:-

Roneo duplicator, ladders, ropes and caving equipment
Hut furniture and equipment

All these items were written off in the Income and Expenditure Account in the year in which they were purchased and so are not represented on the Balance Sheet.

Report of the Honorary Treasurer for the year ended 31st August 1971

The accounts for the year to 31st August 1971 show a final surplus of income over expenditure of £155 as compared with £191 last year. The main variations in income and expenditure compared with last year have been as follows:-

- 1) Tackle - £98 (1970 nil). This speaks for itself since the Tackle Warden has made 500 ft of ladder this year and has purchased 900 ft of rope.
- 2) Surplus on running Upper Pitts - £14 (1970 £50). The decrease in income from this source arose from increased running costs - especially rates. The charge for rates this year includes two years water rates (1970 and 1971) and so is unusually high, next year it should be about £10 lower.
- 3) The rising costs which the club has experienced at Upper Pitts makes it necessary to reconsider the level of hut fees. These have remained nearly constant since 1948! The rates are now 10p a night for members and 20p a night for guests. Upper Pitts offers facilities considerably better than previous Wessex Club H.Q.s and most other huts on Mendip and so the Committee feel that a price increase to cover the rising costs is reasonable. It is also necessary for Upper Pitts to make a healthy surplus so that the Club can accumulate sufficient cash to carry out any major repairs that may be necessary in the future.
- 4) Profit on sale of Occasional Publications - £82 (1970 £39). The increased profits from this source arise from the sale of the "The Floods of Mendip; 1968". This publication has sold very well and has had to be reprinted. Unfortunately at 31st August 1971 (see note 6) this profit was represented by stocks of publications in hand. These publications are selling well and there is no doubt that the Club will sell the bulk of them during the coming year, but at present there is no cash available for printing a new publication. When we have cleared the bulk of the stocks the position will remedy itself, so if you have not bought an Occasional Publication - buy now!

As can be seen from the Balance Sheet the transfer to the Hut Fund is smaller this year. The transfer is made up as follows: -

Amount necessary to cover period subscription adjustment for year	£52.75
Surplus on Upper Pitts	<u>£13.61</u>
	<u>£66.36</u>

It is not possible to transfer more to the Hut Fund since the bulk of the total surplus of £154.66 is due to the profit from Occasional Publications of £81.86 and it is intended (see note 6) to retain this in Accumulated Funds and use it to finance future publications. This lower transfer to the Hut Fund arising from the low subscription surplus earned by the Club means that it is not possible to finance any expansion of Upper Pitts out of general club funds at the present level of subscription. So the finance for the planned new extensions will have to come from donations or increased subscriptions. Raising subscriptions at present is rather complicated by the existence of the period

subscriptions until 30th September 1973, since it would result in members paying widely different subscriptions if the rate was raised before that date. The Committee feel that it is possible to hold subscriptions at the current level of £1.50 per annum until the period subscription finally expires in September 1973s and that it will then be necessary to review the subscription levels at that date.

Two 'old faithfuls' crop up in the accounts again this year. The first is the survey scheme which now has £40 cash in hand. The Committee is considering the purchase of some survey instruments which should put at least some of this cash to use. The second is '1969 Dinner surplus carried forward - £33'. Well we did our best to try and spend it at last year's dinner but without much success, so we are going to try again this year!

The Club's overall financial position is sound, and as mentioned above it is the Committee's hope that subscriptions can be held at the present level until September 1973. This means that it will be necessary to finance any new building at Upper Pitts from donations, but since until the period subscriptions expire we are still in a sense 'paying' for Upper Pitts this seems reasonable.

* * * * *

British Karst Research Expedition to the Himalaya, 1970: report edited by A.C. Waltham and obtainable from him, price £1 (post free) at Dept. of Geology, Trent Polytechnic, Nottingham.

At last something out of the rut of expeditions to the Pyrenees, Yugoslavia, Mexico and the rest. To see Annapurna and a caving shot on the cover of this well-illustrated volume rouse the taste-buds for high adventure inside. Then there is - the expedition log providing the awesome details of the distances travelled in a good old British fire engine, the roads washed away by the Monsoon, the 47 porters who carried the kit to base camp, Katmandu and a cave used as a Hindu shrine.

After the thrills of the introduction the volume settles down to the sober tone which eludes most expedition reports. This one was clearly disappointed in its hopes for huge caves - the longest was under a mile, despite carrying 15 cusecs of river flow down a 150ft. sink shaft.

However, a very well conceived general pattern of karst was established and of course there is plenty of scope for the future. Scientific work on the hydrology, morphology and geology of the areas visited was admittedly local but any results are worthwhile at these really high altitudes in regions not crawling with Karst Police!

While it is hardly worth describing detailed locations here the reviewer can highly recommend the report for content and style. Even the advertisements are not without interest.

M.D.N.

WESSEX CAVE CLUB

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at Priddy Village Hall on Saturday, 17th October, 1970.

1. The Meeting opened at 3.10 pm. There were 68 members present.
2. The President, Mr. F.W. Frost, then gave the following Address:-

"It is my great pleasure to again welcome you to an Annual General Meeting of the Wessex Cave Club and I hope we will have an interesting meeting. I agree with the writer of 'Club News' in the last issue of the Journal when he suggests members should make active contributions to the discussions, but hasten to request that we are not too vociferous. Indeed I would ask everyone to make this a successful meeting by the constructive nature of their contributions.

"On September 29th we celebrated the Club's 36th birthday. It is very doubtful if the seven people who in 1934 decided to form the Club ever imagined that it would be in existence in 1970 with a membership of 327 (together with a subscription increase from 5/- to £2.50.), from a room over a stable to a £5,000. Headquarters, and from a single page circular to a Journal of an exceedingly high standard. This notwithstanding a large increase in the number of clubs caving on Mendip.

"All this is not just the result of chance, but is in part due to the element of continuity mentioned by Donald Thomson in his report. Looking at the list of Officers and nominations for 1970/71 it is obvious that the continuity is a little more tenuous than in past years. This may give the Committee a chance to remove (if it exists) the air of stagnation referred to in Donald's report. At the same time we must avoid the danger of change for change's sake.

"It is, and always has been, a fact, that only a very small proportion of the general membership appear to give active help in the work necessary to the successful existence of the Club, and it is obvious that the work at Upper Pitts has called for tremendous efforts on the part of the same small group of members. I should mention that they would welcome extra help from other members.

"But there are also the 'back room boys' - members who, while not being too good at using a paint brush, have given a lot of their time in many other directions. These include those who keep the Editor supplied with articles and those who construct the actual Journal. Also the Officers, Auditor and others, each of whom in his or her own way help run the Club. The general membership owe a great deal to all those who are giving, and have given their skills and help in furthering the Club's interests - in fact without their assistance there would be no Wessex Cave Club.

"I know you will extend your thanks to all for their help, and your good wishes to the Officers and Committee for 1970/71.

"I end by repeating my hope that we have a constructive and interesting meeting".

3. Apologies for absence were received from:- Marcus Barton, James Cobbett, George Hodgson, Alan Surrall, P.J. Winter, Mike Thompson, Mike Evans, Mr. & Mrs. H. Murrell, Miss S. Murrell, Mrs. A. Green, K. Sanderson, Mr. & Mrs. T.C. Bryant and D. Bryant.

4. The Minutes of the 1969 A.G.M., having been previously circulated, it was proposed by Luke Devenish and seconded by Howard Kenney that these be adopted. This was carried unanimously.
5. Matters Arising from last year's minutes:-
 - a) Howard Kenney raised what had been referred to in the Minutes as "an inconclusive discussion on tethers" and said that there still appeared to be no tethers available in the tackle shed. He felt it would be better to face up to possible losses of these items and accept the fact that they were necessary for safety reasons. After a short discussion it was proposed by Howard Kenney and seconded by Richard Kenney that "More tethers be available in the tackle store and also the committee should give consideration to selling tethers to members". This was carried unanimously. David Tombs raised the question of insurance if members used their own tethers and the Committee were asked to look into this. Luke Devenish thought it should be stressed that members must use some kind of separator on ladders to avoid un-necessary strain on the top.
 - b) Howard Kenney reported that although the Mossdale Memorial Fund still appeared on the Balance Sheet about half of the sum had since been expended on new equipment for the M.R.O. first aid box and the entire amount will eventually be used in this way.
6. The Hon. Secretary's report had been previously circulated. The following points were raised:-
 - a) The Secretary had had some correspondence during the year with some affiliated members who thought that too large a proportion of the subscription was spent on the Journal. A discussion ensued on this, with Mr. Beauchamp putting the strong view that the subscription for affiliated members was rather high. Tim Reynolds pointed out that at present the subscription for affiliated members was one quarter that of full members and suggested that if the subscription for full members is raised in future then possibly we could consider fixing the affiliated sub at an amount, rather than a proportion of the full sub. Most of those present appeared to consider the Journal a very important part of club facilities and not to take too much of the present sub.
 - b) Future projects and aims and objects of the Club in future. Howard Kenney thought that we might well wish to purchase some very expensive equipment. He also gave details of the proposals at present being discussed by the Council of Southern Caving Clubs regarding the possible purchase of caves, or cave entrances, to ensure access rights. We would, of course, be given full details before anything was finally agreed, but there was a proposal at present that such purchases should be financed by possibly asking each member Club to pay one share for each 50 members. The Club would, of course, be consulted before any steps were taken to participate in this and details would be in Journal.
 - c) Howard Kenney raised the question of Club News in the current Journals. He said that this item appeared to be somewhat anonymous - due to various remarks contained in it it did not appear to be written either by the Secretary or by the Editor. Malcolm Newson said that it was, in fact, written mainly by him as Editor and promised to put a name at the foot of this item in future. In regard to the Journal some members were disappointed to find sometimes that the Journal did not arrive until it was too late to take part in some of the events or caving trips advertised. Malcolm Newson pointed out the many hold-ups which could occur in production and said that the answer to

this problem was to ask people who were willing to lead trips to fix them well in advance so that there would be ample time to publicise them in the magazine.

d) Howard Kenney raised the point that the Swildons entrance, which had recently been renovated by two of our members at Mr. Main's request, looked as if it might increase the danger of flooding, due to being easily choked with debris. The members concerned agreed to look into this point.

e) During the discussion on the Secretary's Report Donald Thomson said that he had been approached before the meeting by a young lady from Priddy and asked if our members would be prepared to sign a petition against the establishment of a slaughter house in the village. The main point on which cavers could object would be possible pollution of caves and Luke Devenish said that in the Wells Journal it had been stated that the effluent would be in a sealed tank. Christopher Hawkes pointed out that quite a number of local people were in favour of the project as it would bring some much-needed employment to the village. The Chairman instructed the meeting that members signing the petition against the slaughter house would be signing as individuals and not in the name of the Wessex.

7. The Hon. Treasurer's Report and Statement of Accounts had been previously circulated. It was proposed by Luke Devenish, seconded by Christopher Hawkes and accepted unanimously that the accounts be adopted.

8. Howard Kenney gave his Report as Auditor. When we spend the £50. which it had been agreed to use on equipping the Library then we shall have exhausted the Hut Fund. However, there was an amount of £129 from period subscriptions which had been loaned to the Hut Fund, and which should be put back into the general fund over the next few years. He thought that the Treasurer might be being rather complacent about the present profit on running the Headquarters. He felt that expenses were certain to increase and suggested that we fix the hut fees at 3/- rather than the 2/- per night which had been suggested.

We had spent nothing on tackle for two years and this might be leading up to having to spend rather a lot in the coming year.

We had £66 profit on publications and we ought to consider setting up a Publications Fund as this amount was intended to be spent on future publications. He felt that we had possibly over-valued our stock of Series 2 Occasional Publication. Our calculated risk on the Balch book had obviously been justified because we have made £30. profit on this so far. It had been hoped that the new publication "The Great Storms and Floods of 1968 on Mendip" would be available for sale at this meeting, but unfortunately all that we had at present was a single copy still wet from the printers ink. However, he was well prepared for this situation with a saucepan, a sheet of paper and a pen which would be circulated for members to enter their names and put in their ten bobs. It was hoped that some copies would be ready to give out at the Dinner. He felt sure that this publication, also, would be a money spinner.

We had some deficiencies on sales of various items of equipment to members, but this had always been regarded as a service to members rather than a money-making venture.

The Treasurer has helped us out and relieved us of worry about exchange regulations by spending the amount of money we had in an American bank.

We have a surplus on the sales of surveys and the Treasurer wondered whether we could widen the

scope of this fund and spend it to finance publications rather than on surveying instruments.

The Auditor stated that the Club's books had been extremely well kept and as Tim Reynolds was retiring from the post of Treasurer he wished to propose later that he be asked to become our Auditor for the coming year.

9. Treasurer's comments on accounts. The Treasurer wondered whether we ought to change the title of the Hut Fund but the Chairman read out Rule 19 and this adequately covers the situation so that the fund can be used for hut maintenance and not only for the provision of a new building.

The Treasurer thinks it would be a bad thing to increase the hut fees. Due to "teething troubles" with the heating system which had now been solved, and also to the fact that showers were now available and were proving to be a money-making item, the general running costs of the headquarters should reduce in the coming year. There was no point in deciding on raising the hut fees at an AGM as this could be done by the Committee if it did become inevitable.

On the question of tackle, Carl Pickstone reported that 200 ft. of ladder had been made recently.

The Treasurer would prefer efforts to be made to increase the membership of the Club because in this way we could avoid increasing the subscription.

He felt we might have to set up an "Occasional Publications Fund" next year, and he also thought that we should sell the Series 2 publication. Peter Cousins thought that we should use up the Survey Fund surplus on instruments as our present equipment was becoming rather antiquated. He also suggested that we could bind the 2nd occasional publication with the 1st one (which is being reprinted) and sell them together.

Howard Kenney suggested we ask the Committee to deal with the setting up of a Publications Fund for next year's AGM.

10. Mike York explained his proposition about asking Committee Members and Officers to spend four nights during the year at the H.Q. He said that many people who stayed regularly at the hut had been saying that they never saw the Committee Members who were supposed to be running the Club on their behalf, except when they came to attend a Committee Meeting.

Howard Kenney pointed out that many members did a great deal of caving and other things for the Club without staying at the hut, and he did not like the idea of compelling members to do this.

Although Mike York agreed with Howard's comments he said that it was, in fact the Committee Members who the ordinary members wanted to see more often as these were the people who were running the club. He felt that it was a communication breakdown which seemed to have occurred and that the proposed resolution might help to overcome this. Peter Cousins suggested that we have possibly failed to adapt our management arrangements to the increase in the size of the Club and thought there might be a case for a Hut Committee of four or five people who were more in touch with the membership.

The following proposition, by M.W. Dewdney-York, seconded by C. Pickstone, was then put to the meeting:-

"Recommendation to the 1970-71 Committee: that all Officers and members of the Committee shall be expected to stay overnight at the Club Headquarters on at least four separate occasions during their term of office".

On a show of hands the motion was carried, 26 being in favour and 23 against.

11. The following propositions, which had been made by the retiring Committee in order to "tidy up" the Rules were then put to the meeting and carried unanimously:-
- a) Rule 7 - delete "21" and substitute "Majority".
 - b) Rule 8 - Substitute "£1.50" for "30/-", para. 1, line 1.
 - c) Rule 8 - Substitute "£0.25" for "5/-", para. 1, line 3.
 - d) Rule 8 - Substitute "£1.75" for "35/-", para. 2 line 4.
 - e) Rule 8 - Delete "on request", para. 2, line 7.
(This meaning that all new members will be given a membership card on joining the club).
 - f) Rule 9 - Substitute "That the charge for the use of Club facilities and tackle by non-members shall be regulated by the Committee. The size of a caving party shall be at the discretion of the leader".
12. The proposition, by J.D. Hanwell, seconded by M.D. Newson, that Mr. and Mrs. R.E. Foord be elected Honorary Joint Members of the Club in recognition of their services in connection with the Club's publications, was carried unanimously.
13. In the election for the Committee which had been held this year, Jim Hanwell reported that 88 votes had been received and the following were declared elected:- J.A. Alder, M.W. Dewdney-York, A.E. Dingle, A. Green, I. Jepson, J. Jones, A. Philpott, T.E. Reynolds, D.M.M. Thomson.
- As no nominations for the post of Asst. Secretary had been received he proposed that Keith Barber be put forward for this position. This was seconded by Carl Pickstone, and agreed to by the meeting.
- Howard Kenney proposed a vote of thanks to last year's Committee on their retirement. Seconded by Luke Devenish.
14. It was now formally proposed by Howard Kenney, seconded by Christopher Hawkes, that Tim Reynolds be elected Auditor for 1970/71. This was passed unanimously.
15. Jim Hanwell said that refreshments would be available at a small charge and that publications, etc., would be on sale after the meeting.

The President thanked Jim for having done his job for him as Chairman of the meeting and declared the meeting formally closed at 5.15 p.m.

REVIEWS

Mendip Inhibited (!) - a review of the Mendip '71 Exhibition and its accompanying volume, 'Man and the Mendips', published by the Mendip Society, 167pp, price £2.25

Critics rarely feel the pangs of conscience, except perhaps when giving a bad review to a well-meaning and largely voluntary effort. It is very easy to see the shortcomings of the Mendip Exhibition. It will be harder for those who've made the effort to organise it to bear the criticism. One can only hope that the shortcomings of order and style highlighted below appeared only to the reviewer and that the desired effect - to stimulate interest in the local environment by highlighting the pressures upon it - will be realised.

There are a variety of possible motives behind the spending of considerable time and money on such a project. One is that those who are actively working to conserve the countryside should demonstrate their accomplishments to us and receive the praise they deserve - the Mendip Exhibitionists if you like. Another is to educate the Masses. One suspects that this cannot now succeed after they've been battered by continual popular journalism about pollution. The third reason - and the best - is that a grand display is the one good way in which the rather gentle soul (who is the local naturalist or conservationist) can take on the aura of power and glitter which usually surrounds those who make the decisions about our environmental fates.

It is unfortunate, therefore, that despite the money and effort involved the Exhibition and 'Man and the Mendips' lacked power and order. The Enemy may be forced to conclude that the environmental camp is in disarray. At the open-air display in the Bishop's Palace the chipboard galleries enshrouded by inflatable domes emphasized the competition for space - but only between the visitors going hither and thither trying to pick up some kind of theme. There was no organic element, no Mendip flowers, animals or people - even the Mendip Exhibitionists were apparently absent. Only a thin evangelical type from London selling books on Birth Control in Bristol and a good argument between the 'stop Bristol Jumbo Jets' fellow and a pilot provided a reminder that the whole issue is anthropocentric (people count!). If you were, like me, trying to pick up the thread of the whole show you will have seen the giant label 'TRACTOR' upon a piece of equipment made by Mr. Massey and Mr. Ferguson and yet nothing to say that the photo of helicites next to the 'Buy a Tree for Somerset' board was not a parasitic fungus upon Quercus rober.

Luckily the indoor section, with a sale of maps and publications, together with a well laid out educational exhibition and film shows did Mendip justice. The book had far more of this section about it and this is good since it will long outlast the Exhibition. However, again in the book one suspects that the attempt at refreshing new design and materials has failed. A square book is difficult to store, pick-up and read. It is not all that easy to buy either - at over £2! The columnar style and lack of typeset variation (bold and feint only) is not that of a serious volume. The one article which is not a variant upon a vaguely topographical style is that by William Stanton on

quarrying. Here is an excellent example of a conservationist quantifying the environmental equation in terms of money and rock - the terms which the quarry owners use. It is simply not on to carry only emotional ammunition against those who will remove Mendip by early next Century. Quarrying is virtually THE issue for Mendip and it is just as well that Stanton is our advocate.

So there it is - plenty of moans! It will be unusual if, after putting in such an effort, the organisers will be able to take a big enough step back to view their work critically. The reviewer often finds the same trouble. However, they must do this. Particularly the educational initiative should be maintained. If the Mendip Society find their numbers vastly expanded after the return of the forms scattered round both book and Exhibition they must start putting out more flags, like a regular Mendip journal which has been suggested. Whether The Planners will have taken much note, we cannot yet tell. Let not the Exhibitionists be downhearted - as one farmer near Wookey said afterwards, "It was too much for them, the Mendips is too big to take on" - and few would disagree, apart from a few quarry-owners.

M.D.N.

Late Extra

It is clear from the 'Times' of September 11th that the above remarks are by no means the only view of the Exhibition and book. In a review entitled "Mendip's Example of Self Help", Tony Aldous (whose word carries some weight) describes the book as, "a beautifully produced volume". He concentrates on the archaeological backward and quarrying forward looks, being inspired by both. The Exhibition organisers receive full praise and the Bishop's Palace is described as an "idyllic setting".

* * * * *

'Observations on Tufa Deposition', by A.F. PITY, in 'Area', published by the Institute of British Geographers, Vol. 3 (3), 1971.

Doctor Pitty begins by pointing to the interest shown in tufa by those trying to interpret the significance, in climatic and physiographic terms, of its deposition during the Pleistocene. He has taken water samples at monthly intervals from Gordale Beck and matched them up with climatic data from Malham Tarn Field Centre. The variations in calcium carbonate concentrations cannot be ascribed to dilution by non-calcareous run-off because there is none of this in Gordale Beck. However, Pitty does not include the possibility that slight differences of runoff process within a wholly calcareous system could produce fluctuations.

The difference in content between water above and below the tufa screens at Gordale Scar waterfalls is plotted against the month of the year. There is always a loss of calcium carbonate but this reaches two distinct peaks, one in midsummer, the other in autumn. The autumn one is related to the high summer temperatures which promote microbial activity and high carbon dioxide concentrations in the soil, the delay being caused by slow through flow of this water to the stream.

It appears that the midsummer peak difference itself is due to possible light intensity effects upon the all-important mosses and algae which precipitate the tufa. At this time the plants on the tufa screen receive most sunlight (they are otherwise shaded in the deep gorge) and photosynthesize madly, withdrawing carbon dioxide and bicarbonate from the stream and causing deposition.

The article ends with a discussion of the possible palaeoclimatic effects on tufa. Is this really allowable we ask, with so few samples at monthly intervals?

M.D.N.

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The Little Neath River Cave by P.A. Standing, M.D. Newson and A.G. Wilkins. Proc. Univ. Bristol Spelaeol. Soc. 1971, 12, (3), 303-325

Like its counterpart on Porth-yr-Ogof, this UBSS publication of the Little Neath River Cave is available as an offprint. It is somewhat superior too, particularly since the discovery, exploration and surveying of this 5 - mile long system must rank as one of the noteworthy achievements of the "Spelaeos".

The system is developed off the left bank of the south flowing Afon Nedd Fechan in Breconshire. It is very close to, and associated with, the well-known Bridge Cave. The caving potential of the area was first noted by Jimmy Braithwaite, formerly of Weston-Super-Mare. For the record, "Bracers" was the brain behind the sampling of foul air in Swildon's in 1936 throughout the saga of diving Sump I. Had he then enticed Balcombe and Co. to Little Neath the UBSS might well have been robbed of their "find". In the event, the short sump ending Bridge Cave had to wait some 30 years before being passed by UBSS divers in January 1967 - Within a month the alternative Flood Entrance had been excavated and Sumps 2, 3, 4 and 5 were passed in March, May, June and July of the same year. Each section of passage is described very lucidly and in great detail. All measurements given are metric.

The descriptive part is followed by invaluable explanatory accounts of the system's geology, hydrology and geomorphology. Perhaps for the first time we see the distinctions among the respective scopes of the three disciplines in speleological writing. Too often they are confused. The language used is as direct and purposeful as has been the actual exploration of the cave.

Most of the cave trends down - the gentle south easterly dip of the limestone beneath an increasingly thicker gritstone cover. Local dip faults exert much control over the alignment and development, of major passages and are thought to play an important role in directing drainage to the Pwll Du resurgence further down the Nedd Fechan. No open passages are envisaged beyond the terminal Sump 6. A deep phreatic route is postulated beneath down faulted grits or, less likely, a tectonic cave within the grit. It is argued, however, that the known passages provide a scanty picture of the system which must exist; something which is conveniently ignored by many authors in arriving at conclusions concerning cavern development.

As the available evidence indicates that development was well advanced before the last glacial advance, many old streamways are considered to be blocked. Three classic phases are recognized with the proviso that the whole story may well be more complicated. Initially, superimposed rivers drained south east and so it is suggested that the first cave development was established towards the Mellte. Secondly, there was a decline of streamflow during a glacial phase which led to extensive infilling and stalagmite formation by percolation water. Finally, re-excavation by the modern stream has been accompanied by a swing of drainage towards Pwll Du prompted by the more rapid dissection of the Nedd Fechan along fault zones. Thus, the abandoned route to the Mellte is thought to remain blocked. Possible access points off Sand Chamber are proposed. Digging here would appear both feasible and worthwhile. Yet, there is always the flood risk to contend with. The paper contains very useful explanations of this problem along with rescue hints. Such hard won information ought to figure in all guides to flood-prone systems.

The Little Neath story will not end here. The clearly presented pullout survey will ensure that it becomes as regularly visited as some of its better known neighbours in South Wales. It is with the survey that the reviewer has a special word of praise but, unfortunately, also a few niggles. In most respects the method of surveying used and the computerised analysis of data are way ahead of those commonly in use. With such sophistication it is a shame that the linear scale illustrated has been so carelessly subdivided and that the finished reduction was not a little more to make an exact 1: 1500 drawing. Also, it is surprising that only a 6- figure Grid Reference has been listed for the entrance when all the other data is given to the nearest metre.

For 75p one acquires a model report with 23 pages of text, 9 black and white photographs and a Grade 5c survey with over 100 passage cross sections: an excellent publication on an exciting cave system.

J.D.H.

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"Analysis of scallop patterns by simulation under controlled conditions", by M.F. GOODCHILD & D.C. FORD, Journal of Geology, Vol. 79, 1971, pp. 52-62.

Though sciences, including Speleology, advance by dealing with generalities there is nothing like the assiduousness of a caver bent on explaining the minute particular in his particular passage. This makes for lively contention between members of most geomorphological caving parties and very few topics can have come up more often for argument than scallops. They are the more reasonably explained by reference to general mechanisms and this paper marks a useful step towards this by using a hardware model.

After reviewing the literature, which contains arguments for a positive relationship between the velocity of the water and the size of scallops until Eyre noticed scallops were bigger on the sheltered side of an obstruction to flow, the authors justify their efforts by suggesting that flow information about passages now dry could be gained from a hydraulic solution of the scallop

problem. They get hooked up on solution/abrasion for a couple of paragraphs and thrash about with some rather unhydraulic stuff like the insoluble bands on cave walls which stand out and yet crumble "at the slightest touch", thus illustrating to the possessor of this gentle but firm hand that abrasion does not occur in that particular scalloped location. Finally the hook is removed, sharpened and left for the next unfortunate with, "None of this evidence, however, completely rules out the possible influence of abrasion in the formation of such patterns".

There is an excellent description of the flume in which the experimental work was done, with helpful mention of the change from commercial grade of plaster of paris (which was used to simulate limestone) to reagent grade because of silting problems - The flume was operated at temperatures of 10 - 30 degrees centigrade and at velocities of 30 - 150 cm./sec. The latter seem a little low for the average natural condition and the relationships discovered might well change at flood velocities. The scallops were measured and their dimensions parallel to the flow standardized to avoid the variation over the experimental area. Velocity and viscosity were found well correlated with the mean length of scallops, velocity in a negative way. The simple conclusion - slow water = big scallops.

Field evidence from bands of different lithologies in Bonnechere Cave, Ontario, shows that this variable is also important but that there was no clear relationship between measured properties of scallops and rock chemistry or petrology. Thus the presence or absence of scallops remains as much a mystery but the authors have fulfilled their own aim; that of assessing the relationship of scallop size, where they do occur, to the flow properties of the water which flows (or did flow) around them.

M.D.N.

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NIFE CELLS

Ian Jepson is accepting orders for NiFe Cells. Owing to demand orders are being restricted to no more than two per member. Please send your orders to Ian, collection from Upper Pitts (don't forget the cash £2 per cell). Hurry! supplies are limited!

New Members elected 19/9/71

David A. Bacon, 15 Larkdale Street, Forest Road West, Notts.

Kenneth W. Bates, 98 Hillmorton Road, Four Oaks, Sutton Coldfield, Warwickshire.

Colin D. Dainty, 61 Clarence Road, Four Oaks, Sutton Coldfield, Warwickshire.

Christopher J. Gladhill, 5 Plasdraw Road, Aberdare, Glamorgan.

Benjamin R. Makins, 44 Wells Road, Wookey Hole, Wells, Somerset.

Robert L. Piran, 8 Bowhill, Bedford.

Richard D. Piran, 8 Bowhill, Bedford.

Michael Raymond, 639a Dorchester Road, Broadway, Weymouth, Dorset.

Bernard B Salmon, The Vicarage, Winscombe, Somerset.

A.G.M.

The 1971 Annual General Meeting of the Wessex Cave Club will be held at Priddy Village Hall on the 16th October 1971 starting at 15.00 hours prompt.

AGENDA

1. President's Opening Address
2. Apologies for absence
3. Minutes of the 1970 Annual General Meeting (previously circulated)
4. Hon. Secretary's Report (previously circulated)
5. Discussion of Hon. Secretary's Report
6. Hon. Treasurer's Report (previously circulated)
7. Discussion of Hon. Treasurer's Report
8. Hon. Auditor's Report
9. Discussion of proposed extension to Upper Pitts, and future policy
10. Election of Officers
11. Election of Hon. Auditor
12. Discussion from Floor.

Light refreshments will be available after the meeting. NiFe Cells, surveys, etc., will also be on sale.

The Annual Dinner is being held in Frome, at the Masonic Hall, 19.30 hrs for 20.00 hrs.

Nominations for Committee 1971-72

		<u>Proposed</u>	<u>Seconded</u>
President	F.W. Frost	J.D. Hanwell	T.E. Reynolds
Vice-Presidents	M. Norbert Casteret		The Committee
	Rev.C.H.D. Cullingford		The Committee
	Mr. C.W. Harris		The Committee
	Com. P.B. Lawder		The Committee
	Mr. H. Murrell		The Committee
	Dr. E.K. Tratman		The Committee
	Dr. D.S. Wallis		The Committee
Hon. Chairman	J.D. Hanwell	C.H. Kenny	T.E. Reynolds
Hon. Secretary	T.E. Reynolds	J.D. Hanwell	J.D. Hanwell
Hon. Asst. Sec.	K.E. Barber	C. Pickstone	A.R.S. Audsley
Hon. Treasurer	Mrs P. Green	T.E. Reynolds	T.E. Reynolds
Hon. Tackle Warden	W.J.R Willcocks	A.D. Newport	C. Pickstone
Committee	P. Davies	C. Pickstone	J.C.H. Alder
	A.E. Dingle	M.A.H. Hewins	K.E. Barber
	A.J. Green	M.W. Dewdney-York	J.C.H. Alder
	J.H. Jones	C. Pickstone	I. Jepson
	I. Jepson	J.D. Hanwell	T.E. Reynolds
	R.R. Kenney	C.H. Kenney	C. Pickstone
	R.A. Philpott	W.J.R. Willcocks	K.E. Barber
	R. J. R. Vanderplank	M.W. Dewdney-York	A.D. Newport
	M.W. Dewdney-York	T.E. Reynolds	A.D. Newport

As there are nine Committee places and nine nominees, there will be no election.