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EDITORIAL

As 1984 and its "splendid festivities" - as my predecessor so well described them - recedes, and the Wessex Cave Club's second half-century commences, Mendip itself is hinting of finds to come. Something like eight or nine digs are in various stages of progress, as a browse through the Log indicates, so perhaps the 1985 social events will be celebrating a few discoveries? The Club is indeed a very vigorous fifty-year-old, its members as active as ever and the Headquarters embarked on its improvements scheme, and it is as well to pause awhile to reflect on the efforts of our predecessors, upon whose work - both on the surface and underground - the Wessex continues.

1985 marks the Jubilee of our "neighbours": we wish the B.E.C. Happy Anniversary.

Happy New Year and Good Caving to you!

CLUB NEWS

THE DINNER was a highly successful occasion, in the plush surroundings of Cadbury Court Country Club: after-dinner activities included the use of the swimming-pool. Guest of Honour was Paul Dolphin, elected Vice-President at the A.G.M., who recalled his first trip (Eastwater entrance ruckle, with motorcycle headlamp lighting). The toast to Absent Friends was proposed by Paul Hadfield, with a reference to, among others, Steve Gough ("he's gone caving!") (Naré River).

The FRANK FROST AWARD winner of 1984 was Simon Meade-King, whose article on the Thrupe Lane Swallet dig, "The Long Winding Road" (J. WCC 17 No. 201) was described by the judges as, "Well written, presented, with both photos and surveys and a good storyline with the classic hopeful finish of the Mendip digger!"

The H.Q. ALTERATIONS are under way. The front porch has been built and the new tackle store and changing-room under construction. In the rest of the building, progress is slower but steady, with the kitchen being tidied and various painting and other small works under way.

JOURNAL BINDING; £10.80 inc return p&p with the volume to be bound to Mike York, either at 59 Kennington Avenue, Bishopston, Bristol, Avon or c/o Upper Pitts. They should be sent as they are to be bound, i.e. in the correct order, with or without covers as required, etc. Other volumes may be bound as well if wished, please send additional £10.80 for each volume.

GLASS TANKARDS are still available: 1 pint, £2.50, ½ pint, £1.75.

NEW MEMBERS.

The Club welcomes the following new members:

James Moon, 49 Somerville Road, St. Andrews, Bristol BS7 9AD.

Elizabeth Green, Glenview, Wells Road, Priddy, Wells, Somerset BA5 3AU.

Michael Spicer, 23 Jerome Way, Shipton-on-Cherwell, Kidlington, Oxon. OX5 1JT.

Douglas Mills, 18 Blandford Close, Nailsea, Avon BS19 2QQ.

Ian Prosser, 32 Cranbrook Road, Redland, Bristol.

Andrew Reid.

Josephine Beckett, 22 Sandmill Drive, Harrogate, North Yorkshire HG1 4JR.

Amanda Jane Hunt, 2 Westholm, Hampstead Garden Suburb, London NW11.

Mervyn Deryck Ingram, 1 Beechwood, Yeovil, Somerset.

NORTH

NOTTS POT

The streamway has recently re-excavated a hole in the floor of the entrance passage. Most of the water flowing in the cave now sinks here, re-appearing briefly to fall down the Blind Pot in the B.T. Route entrance crawl, and rejoins the B.T. Route via B.T. Inlet. Thus the pitch into Three Ways Chamber and the Double Buckets route are now dry under normal weather conditions.

PIPIKIN POT

Geoff Yeadon has passed the downstream sump to explore several hundred feet of streamway, including a forty-foot pitch. Beyond the pitch, after traversing in a rift above the stream, a second sump was reached. This was apparently plumbed to a depth of 90ft when the line broke. The plan now is to retrieve the line by diving from Gavel!

EASEGILL SYSTEM

The new entrance into Wretched Rabbit passage is well worth knowing. Opened up earlier in the year by the Red Rose C.P.C., it offers the easiest way out of the system without tackle. The 50ft pitch just inside the entrance, described in the R.R.C.P.C. August Newsletter is only three short, simple climbs - and if you don't like climbs they would easily succumb to combined tactics.

MAGNETOMETER POT

This Autumn, Trevor Faulkner and Keith Sanderson climbed 70ft up a narrow rift off the bottom of Caton Hall. After negotiating much loose debris and an awkward horizontal squeeze, the way on was blocked by jammed boulders. Fifteen minutes of exciting roof gardening enabled them to squeeze up into a 100ft of new passage.

Downslope the walls were covered in white flowstone. After a couple of short drops was a pitch back into Caton Hall. Upslope the passage chokes with a small stream falling through boulders in the roof.

DIGS

The Cave Projects Group dig in Ireby Fell Cavern, mentioned in the last Journal, has proved to be disappointing. In fact the protagonists have been forced to return to the dig in Notts Pot. This will certainly please the site foreman as he can view progress in relative safety while on holiday in New Britain.

Elsewhere, the N.C.C.'s recent run on back luck continues. After considerable effort in Vein Pot a narrowing rift belied the original promise of the cave's potential. Undaunted however, they are now attacking Resurrection pot and Boggarts Roaring Holes with characteristic vigour.

C.N.C.C. BOOKINGS

Club members wishing to book caves controlled by the C.N.C.C. or requiring any other help or information should contact Keith Sanderson (address in front cover).

The following 'closed seasons' are now in operation:

Leck Fell	April to June.
Fountains Fell (Gingling, Hammer)	November to Easter.
Birks Fell Cavern	December to April.

Recent applications have shown Leck and Casterton Fells to be virtually fully-booked at weekends until August 1935.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir,

Question: How many new fixed, aids did our benefactor install so that we mere mortals could descend Bull Pot, in Kingsdale, safely?

One rather disturbing facet of Yorkshire caving at present is the recent proliferation of unnecessary bolt anchors and fixed aids. Most of the anchors are characterised by an unusual red backing disc so it seems likely that one person or team is systematically visiting all the caves in the area.

The unnecessary fixed aids will of course be removed (we can all buy Allen keys), but once an anchor is in position one can only wonder at the thought processes of the person who put it at the bottom of a pitch, or in the middle of a horizontal passage, or even at the top of a six- foot wooden ladder.

Hopefully someone will point out to the persons concerned that 1985 is National Cave Conservation Year...

Keith Sanderson.

(Editor: Keith supplies the answer to his question. In a touch of levity, I separated it - as indeed as on the letter itself - to form a guessing game. I have put the answer on page 9. This does not mean, however, that I consider this letter to be making anything other than a serious point.

Bull Pot has five pitches: 35, 20, 55 broken, 55 broken, 35 narrow, feet. Overall Grade 3, wet. Ref. "Northern Caves" IV p.53.)

DAREN CILAU EXTENSION

Impressions by

Pete Cousins

I had the good fortune to visit the Daren Cilau extension a few weeks after the discovery. The entrance crawl is an absolute killer: we took over two hours each way. I would rather do Southern Stream any day even though it is about four times longer.

The extension is quite dramatic - a mixture of Agen Allwedd and Craig a Ffynnon. Lots of laminated mud in the initial passages, occasional overgrown formations, and some very large passages. We estimated that at the end - under Waun Cryn shakehole - we were about 400ft below the plateau.

The double entrance series certainly puts it in the top three Severes in the U.K., and is not passable for either the "Over 6' 1" ", or those with a large chest. Several S-bends are reminiscent of those above the 10ft pitch in Longwood.

(Reference

Chelsea Speleological Society Newsletter Vol. 27 No. 1 Oct. 1984, "Ogof Daren Cilau - Special Issue".

This includes description and surveys, history of exploration and a chapter on radio-location. The latter section may be of more general interest to surveyors as it briefly discusses the effects on the locating of the cave caused by a buried steel pipeline crossing the area.

-ED)

JURA FRANC-COMTOIS

Derek Sanderson

Following the successful descent of the Gouffre Berger in 1983, the Summer of 1984 saw John Gillett (Crewe C.C.), Keith Sanderson and myself back in France. Looking for a more leisurely time, we chose the area known as the Jura Franc-Comtois, near the Swiss Border. The limited information we had on the area suggested that the caves would be entertaining without being too taxing. Below are descriptions of some of the caves we visited.

GROTTE SARRAZINE Length 4115m. VR +90m.

Situated near the Source du Lison. A strange cave. The entrance is at the base of an enormous alcove 120m. high. Just inside is a chest-deep pool followed by a short calcite climb into a rift chamber. At the back of the chamber, to the right an exposed 8m. climb leads to the start of a sinuous bedding passage containing sharp ribs of dark rock.

After about 110m. of painful crawling the passage turns sharp right and a short climb leads to a second bedding passage where progress is best achieved by following a shallow trench which snakes its way for about 100m. To the right here, more bedding passage work leads back to the entrance.

To the left, a fallen block is a good signpost for the way on. Beyond, the passage rises to a boulder area and a climb to a higher bedding which forms two confused and confusing chambers, Salle du Kill and Salle Basse. I stopped while Keith went off to look for the 10m. climb called Chimney of Discovery, which is the key to the higher series This he found easily but retracing his steps to me was a bit more difficult. It is easy to get disorientated here.

The chimney climb is easy and is narrow enough to slither down on the return. Above, the rock is light grey and the atmosphere is completely different with a strong sense of remoteness. A series of arches leads to a narrow fossil galleries and a rift passage after 140m. Some traversing and a delicate climb down of 10m. took us to the upstream streamway. We followed this for a short distance to another confused area.

Here I stopped Keith from pushing on as I was dubious of our ability to find the way out. We were, in fact, very near the upstream sump. The return journey went smoothly. At the fallen block in the bedding passage we veered to the left where, after 110m. of wet crawling, we emerged high in the roof of the entrance chamber. A 20m. abseil took us back to daylight.

I found the cave hostile and fairly difficult. Keith disagrees.

Time: 3 hours.

Warning: The cave floods very rapidly.

GOUFFRE DE LA BAUHE DES CRETES Length 1700m. Depth 181m.

John seems to make friends everywhere. He acquired the friendship of Yanick, a local caver who agreed to take us into this cave. As it turned out, he knew only the first half!

The cave is one of several routes into the massive system known as RÉSEAU DU VERNEAU, which is now over 30km. long and 387m. (1258') deep. The through trip is claimed to be one of the hardest trips in France. We were merely dabbling at it.

The entrance is a dramatic 40m. shaft. Yanick rigged a handline down slope to a bolt at the head of the pitch proper. From here, a re-belay 10m. lower gives a direct drop to the bottom. This is not the best of routes for the rope as there are a few rub points.

At the base of the shaft the floor slopes steeply away to a depth of 100m. below the surface, in a massive boulder chamber with some excellent and dramatic formations. Beyond, some horizontal passage leads to a smaller chamber at the far side of which is a squeeze into a meandering rift. A 5m. climb and a series of slides drops into Salle des Dolois. The slides can be tiring on the return.

Salle des Dolois contains some good formations and, at the lower end an extremely muddy pool. Beyond, a short climb leads to a twisting squeeze which squirts you into a small chamber at the head of a 15m. pitch (bolt holes in place).

Below is a fairly large streamway over flowstone. This, Yanick informed us, was the Collecteur: the massive Main Drain of the Verneau. It was clear to us, however, that it wasn't. We headed downstream and soon passed a low passage to the right. We pointed out that, according to the map, this was the way on. "Non", said Yanick - and on he went. After passing a short pitch and spending at least an hour in the muddy rift beyond, Yanick agreed that perhaps we were right after all.

We retraced our steps and slithered into the low side passage to the head of a 5m. pitch (bolt holes in place). Below is a narrow, active vadose trench. Progress is possible at a variety of levels but it is best to squeeze along in the water. After a considerable distance we ducked under a low arch and found ourselves at the base of a "trémie" (nasty loose boulder choke). Keith eventually found the low route through: it looked horrific. We were now pressed for time, so we stacked the remaining gear in an alcove and returned to the surface.

Time: 5½ hours.

The next day, we returned quickly to the "trémie", passed quickly through it and dropped into the streamway beyond. The passage continues narrow with some deep pools until, after a flooded chamber, we found ourselves looking over a chute into the Collecteur. The guidebook says this chute is a 12m. pitch but we found it to be a 6m. handline slither.

The Collecteur is a very large, majestic streamway which can be followed upstream for several kilometres. After a quick drink from Yanick's water-flask (50% red wine) we set off upstream. The first part consists of chest-deep pools and climbable cascades. The width varies from 3 to 8m. and the roof is often out of sight. A few of the cascades are a bit tricky and abseiling is best for the return.

After a considerable distance we passed under the Salle du Sinai finally stopped at a 10m. cascade. It was tempting to push on but time again was pressing. Before returning to the surface we pushed the Collecteur downstream to an area of large mudbanks and a gloomy sump.

The de-rigging went smoothly and we surfaced feeling very satisfied with the trip. This cave gives a trip of top quality.

Time: 5½ hours.

GOUFFRE DU GROS-GADEAU Length 360m. Depth 112m.

This is the cave the local cavers prefer to do when it is in flood. When we did it, there was hardly any water in it at all. It consists of a series of shafts with an excessive choice of bolt-holes and traverses. All the pitches seem shorter than the guidebook suggests (16, 10, 5, 8, 15, 5, 11 and 12m.). The rock is dark and clean-washed. Below the pitches a horizontal passage leads to a couple of deep cascade climbs and a sump.

The cave is disappointingly short, but is friendly in atmosphere and technically interesting.

Time: 3 hours.

GROTTE DE MON LESI

A trip into Switzerland was necessary to visit this cave. It is an ice - cave of some note. We knew very little about it other than it was meant to be very easy and only a handline was required.

The cave is situated in typical Swiss lapiaz: high meadows and copses with a sprinkling of shafts. The entrance is difficult to find, even though it is signposted from the road. Finding it first time is a fifteen-minute walk.

The wide entrance shaft is about 12m. deep. An easy climb down via an old wooden ladder leads to the snow-plugged floor. The cave proper is entered by a flat-out slide on ice into a low-roofed circular chamber with a sloping ice floor. We slithered to the lower edge of the ice and followed the chamber wall round to the left as far as we could go. Here, we climbed gingerly up to one (of several) large ice formations, which we found to be hollow, containing a 2m. deep chamber.

Beyond the formation we emerged into another daylight shaft, where a further slide leads into a deep shaft. This was unexpected, and Keith very nearly slipped in. A sturdy ice screw has been placed at the head of the shaft. Further exploration, it would seem, requires more than just a handline.

Time: $\frac{3}{4}$ hour.

GROTTE DES GRANGES-MATHIEU Length 1173m.

We were shown around by the man who found the cave. He is probably in his sixties and is quite a character.

The cave is gated at the base of its 20m. entrance shaft, and is lit artificially by dim bulbs. It consists of a series of chambers and connecting galleries, each chamber seeming more decorated than the last and culminating in the "Salle des Milles Colonnes", containing a forest of stalagmites and columns over 15m. high.

The old boy got a bit impatient with us when we were photographing. After telling him to get lost we discovered that he spoke fluent English, which was a bit embarrassing for us. However, he found it amusing and he laid on an excellent barbeque and slideshow for us afterwards.

The cave is well worth a visit but it is unwise to "moonlight" a trip as that is a prisonable offence in this part of France.

Time: 2 hours.

GROTTE DE CHAUVEROCHE Length 7220m. VR +50m.

'Grottes et Canyons' claims that a trip into this cave should take between 30 and 35 hours with a dinghy or 16 to 22 hours in a wet-suit. This is a bit of an exaggeration. We nearly reached the end of the cave and were back in sunlight in under five hours.

The entrance is in a large gully in a wooded cliff near Ornans. A short fixed ladder leads to a low arch on the right, into a muddy gallery. Beyond a strongly-draughting muddy duck to the left muddy passage links a series of chambers, leading to a horrible muddy pool.

The mud is waist-deep and wading across it is difficult. On the far side a 1m. duck into drier passages is followed by a long series of dry galleries where there seems little chance of getting lost. Eventually another low duck (by-passable over boulders to the right) leads into the- main streamway.

The streamway is a fantastic place. The first couple of kilometres consists of a seemingly never-ending progression of chest-deep canals interspersed with innumerable gour barriers. The walls are seldom more than 2m. apart and the roof is often beyond the reach of a lamp. 2½km. into the cave we arrived at a deep pool and an easily-climbed 3m. cascade. Beyond, the streamway led us through more deep pools and much eroded rock until we reached another series of cascades.

3¼ km. into the cave, we reached a balcony on the right leading to the Galerie des Macaronis (Straw Gallery). Beyond, the streamway narrows and has a highly eroded floor: Les Marmites (Little Pots). The passage eventually widens and the roof lowers into Salle du Chaos - an area of fallen blocks - beyond which is a T-junction. To the right is the Grand Laminoir (bedding plane) whilst to the left is the final part of the main streamway. We turned round here, about 4km. from the cave entrance ('Grottes et Canyons' gives a figure of 5436m.)

The return journey was smooth and enjoyable. The cave is not technically difficult but it is long and lengthy periods of time may be spent in deep water. Exposure, therefore, may be a problem. It also floods. The streamway is one of the finest one is likely to come across. It is most unusual.

Time: 4¼ hours.

GOUFFRE DE POURPEVELLE Length 9700m. Depth 106m.

This is one of the most important caves in the area. Unfortunately I was banned from visiting it - I was, after all, meant to be on my honeymoon - so Keith and John went without me.

At the cave entrance John, in typical fashion, introduced himself to the nearest French caver. As a result they were given a conducted tour of the place. It consists of a number of pitches (12, 40 and 35m.) into very long galleries and passages running in a variety of directions.

The cave is said to be spectacular. After six hours underground Keith and John emerged with very broad grins on their faces. In that time they had visited about two-thirds of the system.

CONCLUSIONS:

The area has a lot to offer. There are more than 40 caves in the Department du Doubs alone, and two of them are over 308m. (1000') deep. There is considerable potential in the area for further discoveries. There are caves of all standards of difficulty - and the local cuisine and wines are excellent.

Bibliography and References:

"Speleo Sportive Dans Le Jura Franc-Comtois" Published by Édisud, 1983.

"Grottes et Canyons" p. Minvielle. Published by Denöel, 1977.

"Guide des Grottes d'Europe" Published by Delachaux et Niestlé, 1975. (Mostly tourist caves).

"Une Epoque Souterraine 1870 - 1975. Les Explorations Dans Le Verneau" Published by Groupe Speleologique du Doubs. An excellent publication, available from

Gerard Chorvot,
130c Rue de Belfort,
2500 Besançon,
France.

LEWIS R. (Chauveroché) WCC Journal 17 No. 196 p. 73.

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CANADA NOTES

Paul Hadfield
& Tony Bennett

P.H.

Early in November 1984 Chas Young led a largish party into the Small River area (the region being explored by the Sheffield), and picked up 500 metres of new main drain in Porcupine Cave, having to leave with open passage ahead of them, due to time considerations.

Perhaps of more immediate interest is that Ian Jepson and Rob Harper are planning to come out early in 1985 and join some of the locals in a trip to a very remote and seldom-visited area in a ski mountaineering expedition. The principal objective is the Cambria Icefield, adjacent to the Alaska Panhandle in the coastal mountain range. We have been able to trace only one visit to the area due to its remote and hazardous nature - this, coupled with the notorious coastal range weather promises an interesting outing.

Fall-back objectives have been established in the form of the Juneau Icecap (Alaska) or Wapta Icefields (Canadian Rockies). Training trips will be various mountain traverses in the Babine, Telkwas and Rocher Debole ranges of British Columbia.

T.B.

I have just returned from Canada (Sept.84), on the Anglo-Canadian Rocky Mountains Speleological Expedition 1984 (an essentially Sheffield-based venture following up last year's expedition around Mount Robson).

This year we moved 500 miles North to an area just South of Williston Lake, in Northern British Columbia. We found two major caves in this previously-unexplored region.

The larger, "The WHITE HOLE", under Bocock Peak, is 253 metres deep with 1500m of surveyed passage. It is the new 9th. deepest cave in Canada.

We believe the resurgence will be into Williston Lake, about 25Km to the North and 855m below the entrance. It is a complex system exhibiting two clear phases of development as well as four different entrances in a massive snow-filled surface fissure. The deepest point ends in a tight, wet passage. However, a bypass may exist in an, as yet, unpushed draughting squeeze in one of the parallel, dry, fossil passages higher up the cave.

The second cave, "THE SHORT STRAW", is 3 hours from Bocock, and is 120m deep with a fine 37m wet pitch. It ends in a gravel-choked bedding.

BULL POT:

Answer to Keith Sanderson's question (Letter to the Editor, p40

"Twenty-three rock anchors and five deflection belays - there may be more!"

CAVE HUNTING IN THE ARCTIC CIRCLE

Nick Hawkes

After last year's rainy expedition to Norway, you would have thought we would have had more sense than to go again! Nevertheless, five of us returned, dragging along with us two more people new to the Arctic, to explore a completely virgin stretch of limestone. For various reasons, people getting married and things like that, we were in three separate groups. Graham Johnson, Matthew Tuck (B.E.C.) and Nick Hawkes formed one group, travelling in a Transit van with the majority of the equipment and staying for six weeks. Glyn Bolt and Julie Wooton (later Bolt) came for three weeks, and Al Keen, Pete Hann and Pete Watts arrived a week later than everybody else and stayed for three weeks.

An unpleasantly early start was made on 14th July, after a last evening's drinking on Mendip. Newcastle was reached with more than enough time for Matthew and Nick to have a swim before catching the boat to Bergen, about a 24 hour crossing.

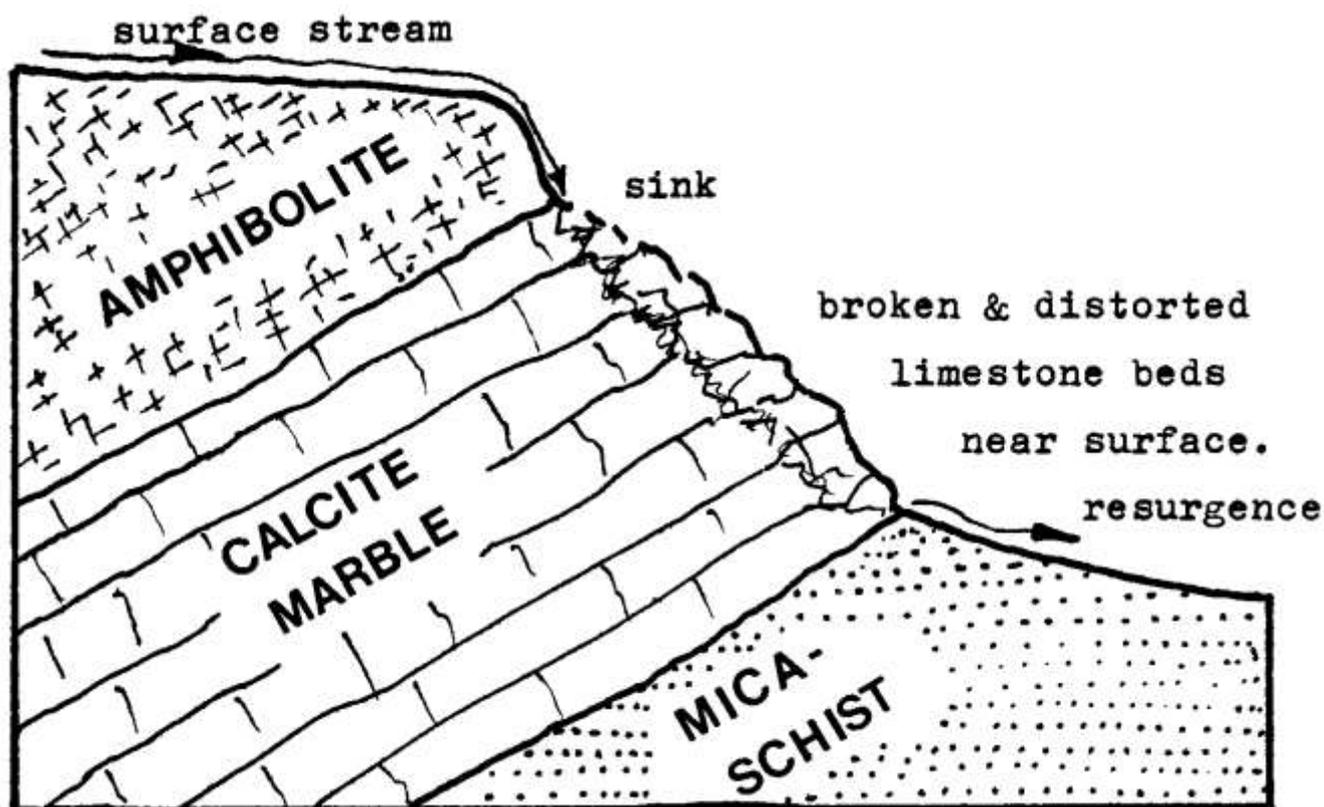
After arriving in Bergen, Glyn and Julie left us to "sort some papers out in Oslo", we wondered why as we drove Northwards. We camped by snow on the first night and then continued driving over Jotunheimen via Valdresflya Pass, which goes up to 1400-m., and is amazing scenery, with glaciers and snowfields all around. Then onwards through the night, to reach the tourist office in Mo-I-Rana the next morning at 9 a.m. Glyn and Julie had not arrived, so we left a message for them before driving past the Arctic Circle, on to Fauske, and waiting at a lakeside for them to arrive.

The limestone, actually calcite marble, in which we had come to search for caves, is at the end of Leirfjorden and towards the Swedish border (Grid Ref. 645015). On our arrival we discovered that a new road had been built to construct a hydro-electric scheme in the mountains. This road gave us much easier access to the limestone than we had anticipated. Nevertheless, it still took a good eleven hours the next day to walk to the limestone and back. On the way we passed a lake called Linnajavrre and walked across miles of barren rock, reindeer moss with a few interesting flowers, and over many patches of snow with only a few herds of reindeer and the odd eagle for company. As well as being able to find the easiest route to get to the limestone, and realising that wellies were better than wet boots and socks, we also found one or two sinks and resurgences on this preliminary visit. However it was obvious that, apart from being too small to get into the caves were also very short. Undeterred, we packed our rucksacks with basic caving equipment and five days' food in preparation for exploring the limestone band. The first day was completely wasted due to particularly bad weather and Glyn's "reindeer track" turning into a stream overnight and flooding half our campsite. The following day, several more small entrances were found, but none large enough to explore for more than 5 metres length.

The streams sink, but do not follow the bedding-planes as we had hoped, probably because the bedding-planes are not as well-defined as they would be in ordinary limestone, due to the deformation and recrystallization which has taken place. The glaciation over the whole area has caused the exposed rocks to be extensively broken and cracked up. This is especially noticeable in the calcite marble which is particularly susceptible to erosion. It is through such cracks that the streams run and hence they stay just beneath the surface. The caves are not large enough to enter, because of the broken boulders, most probably glacially derived, in the entrances (Fig.1).

After having found little on the top half of the band, we decided to walk to a large outcrop of limestone on the Swedish border. We returned to the road with all our equipment. During a day's rest, Al and the two Petes arrived and the motorbike which we had brought up in the van was tested out on the dirt track, but was found unsuitable for use off the track. The next day we set off into the mountains. Julie and Glyn took a day for a preliminary look at the area and a disagreement with a reindeer. Then Al, Graham, Matthew and Nick arrived to look more closely at the area. It took a day and a half to walk to the border, though some of us cheated and used a small rowing boat to go across Reinoksvatnet. We spent two days at the border looking for caves on the limestone, (GR: 645020) before running out of food and returning to the vans.

Fig. 1



Geological Setting of the Caves.

While we were in this location we followed all the streams which ran over the limestone, and though we discovered that most of them went underground, again they were only just below the surface, and often reappeared at short intervals. Their underground courses could easily be traced on the surface as the passage had collapsed so one could hear the streams running underground. It is possible that some caves may be present here, especially at the South of the outcrop, but they would be unlikely to be more than 200 metres long if a large enough entrance and passage could be found. This outcrop was similar to the band we had looked at in that all the possible entrances were blocked with boulders. We looked all over the outcrop on the Norwegian side of the border and down to the river between Stipirjaure and Vetjerjaure on the Swedish side. The limestone outcrop extends for a considerable distance into Sweden on the other side of the river: Unfortunately, we did not have time to look over that as well.

It was decided to have one further attempt at finding some real caves in this area. Only four of us went to investigate the lower half of the limestone band, since Glyn and Julie left, informing the

rest of us that they had an appointment in Oslo - to get married! It took two days walk to reach the lower part of the limestone and then one day to look quickly over it. We did not cover it as well as the other region, but we did follow the band (from Grid Ref. 610980 to 575965) before finally giving up. We found little in the way of blocked entrances in this region. However, the variety of rock types in that area was much more interesting geologically. Also, it was a time when the weather was good!

This walk concluded our study of the Linnajavrre area. We had proved it unlikely to find a cave of any reasonable size in the areas which we had just walked over without a lot of time to search thoroughly. Even then it is very likely that each cave in the region is blocked by glacial debris. If it was on Mendip there would be a dig every 100 metres! The geology of the area is very interesting and superb geological features are present. The geography is even better, and I think that I can say that for all of us, it was the best walking area we have ever been to. The hanging valleys, classic U-shaped valleys, terminal moraines, and other glacial features are extremely spectacular, especially as the glaciers are still there. Our enjoyment did rather depend on the weather however!

Since we did not find any worthwhile caves to the North of Fauske, It was decided our time would be best spent moving to Glomdal. This is a well-known caving area just South of the Arctic Circle, where we knew the Norwich University Caving Club would be. After the five-hour drive South from Fauske we found the Norwich University Landrover and tents, and waited for them to return, while being bitten to death by mosquitoes and horseflies. Eventually, at about midnight, in the first darkness we had had for three weeks, they arrived back from a caving trip. We learned from them that they had discovered a cave which was about 1Km. long, and since they had only one day left before they returned, they were working late to try and complete all the survey work.

The next morning, two more English cavers, David and Shirley St Pierre arrived, although they had not originally planned to meet us. They had come to finish some surveying work in the area. They have been regular visitors to this caving region for several years and have produced several reports on the area. They proved to be very useful, as they were able to tell us all about the caves in the area and give us a map of the caves' locations.

Al, Pete and Pete went walking while Graham, Matthew and Nick decided to visit Stobekkgrotta, a cave suggested by the St Pierres as a pretty Norwegian cave. It took a good two hours to get to the cave and we extended the walk considerably by visiting both the sink and resurgence of Glomvatnet, a large lake draining through a flooded underground passage for 500m. to a large open resurgence. We also met Walter Glom for the first time. He is a very friendly old man who lives by Glomvatnet in the middle of nowhere, and, unlike most Norwegians, speaks no English!

Storbekka (Pendant Cave) is a short way past Walter's house, just next to the main footpath. It is only a very short cave, but has a fine stream passage of smooth grey and white marble, notable for its rock pendants. There is also an upper series which we explored, but it is not so impressive. After coming out of Storbekkgrotta, we walked down to the footpath to meet two Norwich group members who were waiting for us. They took us to "their" cave (Grid Ref.507757). The entrance is through loose boulders about 50m after a stream sinks into boulders in a large valley, which terminates at the cave's entrance. The cave follows the stream along an inclined rift passage and then down a larger, steeply-inclined passage called "The Cascades" to a choked sink. At the top of The Cascades a passage leads upwards along a sandy crawl to reach "The Elktrap", a circular pool 10ft. across. The cave ends soon afterwards.

Just before the Elktrap, a passage enters from the right. This was found two days later to be a passage of note. The Norwich group had suggested that we investigate an entrance about 100m. North-East of theirs, so after a day lying in the sun we returned. The entrance is located beneath a small black cliff approximately 5m. high. It is a rift following the line of the cliff, and dropping into a partly ice-filled phreatic passage. This led into a series of sandy crawls, all of which had obviously been visited before, though we do not know by whom. Finding a tight passage which no-one had been through before, we dug a way, and were disappointed to find ourselves by the Elktrap in the Norwich group's cave. Another passage about 5ft. away was also found to link with their cave. More sandy passages were investigated, again showing signs of previous visitors. Two of these led to two more entrances to the small cave system. It is an extremely confusing maze of passages, and it took us a considerable time to find our way back to the original entrance. We were unsure whether to survey it, but assumed that the other people who had been down had probably done so. We noted an interesting entrance to the North where a tiny stream sank into boulders (Grid Ref. 507760). Unfortunately we never went down it.

The following day we visited the glacier Svartisen, taking the easy route by the ferry across Svartisvatnet, and then just a short walk up to the bottom of the glacier. We spent an interesting time there, wearing our crampons and ice-axes, trying to find a route across the crevasses to the top. We found several dead lemmings, lying around on the glacier, one of which was brought back and is now being examined in the British Museum of Natural History.

Al and the two Petes then left for England, while the rest of us spent the day going to Mo I Rana for provisions. Food in Norway is about twice the price of that in England, and luckily we had brought most of our food with us - but we didn't have enough, Julie! ("Pigs! "!" Julie.) The only cheap food we found was a kind of yoghurt called "Kultur Melk". We unsuccessfully tried fishing, but blueberries (and redberries) supplemented our diet of curries and more curries.

In the evening we prepared for a walk into the mountains with all the equipment except our tents, since we planned to stay in a tiny hut owned by Walter Glom, at the head of Glomdalen. At Walter's house we met Stein-Erik Lauritzen, a lecturer at Oslo University who studies karst hydrology (i.e. goes caving!) in all his spare time. He, like the St. Pierres, knows the region well and was very helpful to us as he speaks good English. We continued to the hut, but found when we arrived that there were four Norwegians in it, so we ended up sleeping in Pikhaugrotten, a cave about half a mile from the hut! Luckily the Norwegians moved out in the morning, so we settled into the hut and only just managed to force ourselves to go out into the cold. We walked to Trudehullet, a cave, it had been suggested, we might be able to link with another, called Fosshullet. Stein-Erik's directions were good and we found the cave behind a mica-schist slab, just off the path, as he had said, and went down. We found the boulder ruckle at the end without any problem. Nick climbed through the loose boulders until it became too tight to continue. Graham decided to try a passage beneath the ruckle and spent a long time trying to dig it open because there was a strong draught. He finally gave up, although the sand-filled passage does seem to continue.

It took a day to walk back, and the following day was spent visiting Gronliggrotten, Norway's show-cave. As cavers, the guides let us go where we liked, so we put our wetsuits on and shot off past the tourists, down the streamway, happy to be back in a nice wet cave! After some tight crawling, the stream finally reaches a 20ft. drop, however we were unprepared for this, so returned to, and quickly investigated, the upper dry series before coming out. We spent another lazy day, during which Nick investigated a resurgence close to the road (Grid Ref. 510710), but could not find any way into a cave.

After a rest day ("Festerday"), we were ready for another expedition to find caves. Kit prepared, we walked up to a ridge to the East of the Glomdal track, Stein-Erik had suggested that we investigate this area, since, to his knowledge, no cavers had been up there. One or two locals had talked to him about caves in the area, but had been reluctant to tell anyone where they were. Hence before we had left, the name "The Devil Holes" was chosen for any cave which we could find. Several promising entrances were found on arrival. Two large shakeholes were also investigated. One (Grid Ref. 513712) has several entrances, but all choked after a maximum of 20m. The other (Grid Ref. 530740) is very high up and a large lake drains down a cave but unfortunately it was too tight for us to enter, even after we spent a day digging to try and get in. It could be an enormous cave if one could get inside as it is at a height of about 900m. and the limestone is dipping under the Burfjell, a very large mountain. We had almost given up hope of finding anything as we started back from the second shakehole, but then stumbled across several enormous entrances, which appeared to continue for some way. At last, we thought, we have found "The Devil Holes".

We had to return to the van for more food and caving equipment, which took two days, however we found an easier route into the area by walking up from Raudsandakla. The road actually takes one to a height of 250m. We made camp near the caves we had found, in preparation for our descent.

The first entrance we went down was the main entrance and it was discovered that four other nearby entrances all linked to that cave. The cave turned out to be very big, probably about 6km. long. It consisted mostly of very large sandy passages about 5m. high by 7m. wide with some small formations (unusual for Norwegian caves). Streams entered the cave through several of the other entrances. Though a main stream passage in the cave could not be followed for any great distance, one could follow the very large, sandy, high-level passages. To our dismay, there were already footprints in the cave, and very obvious survey stations. Someone has found it, probably fairly recently, and not reported it, perhaps keeping it secret to preserve the fine mud formations. On another visit to the cave, we went in an entrance which required a 40ft. ladder down a pitch that had previously been undescended (this was obvious by the number of boulders we had to knock down before it was safe to descend!). However, after only a short distance, we found footprints once more and realised that we were back in the main cave. Several hours were spent exploring the cave, which required no tackle in the passages we visited, except for the one 40ft. ladder in a side entrance. All one needed was a reasonable sense of direction to find the way around the maze of mostly enormous passages with beautiful undisturbed mud formations. There were three more large entrances in a thin band of limestone lower down the mountainside (Grid Ref. 527723), but although the entrances were very promising, they all choked after about 50ft.

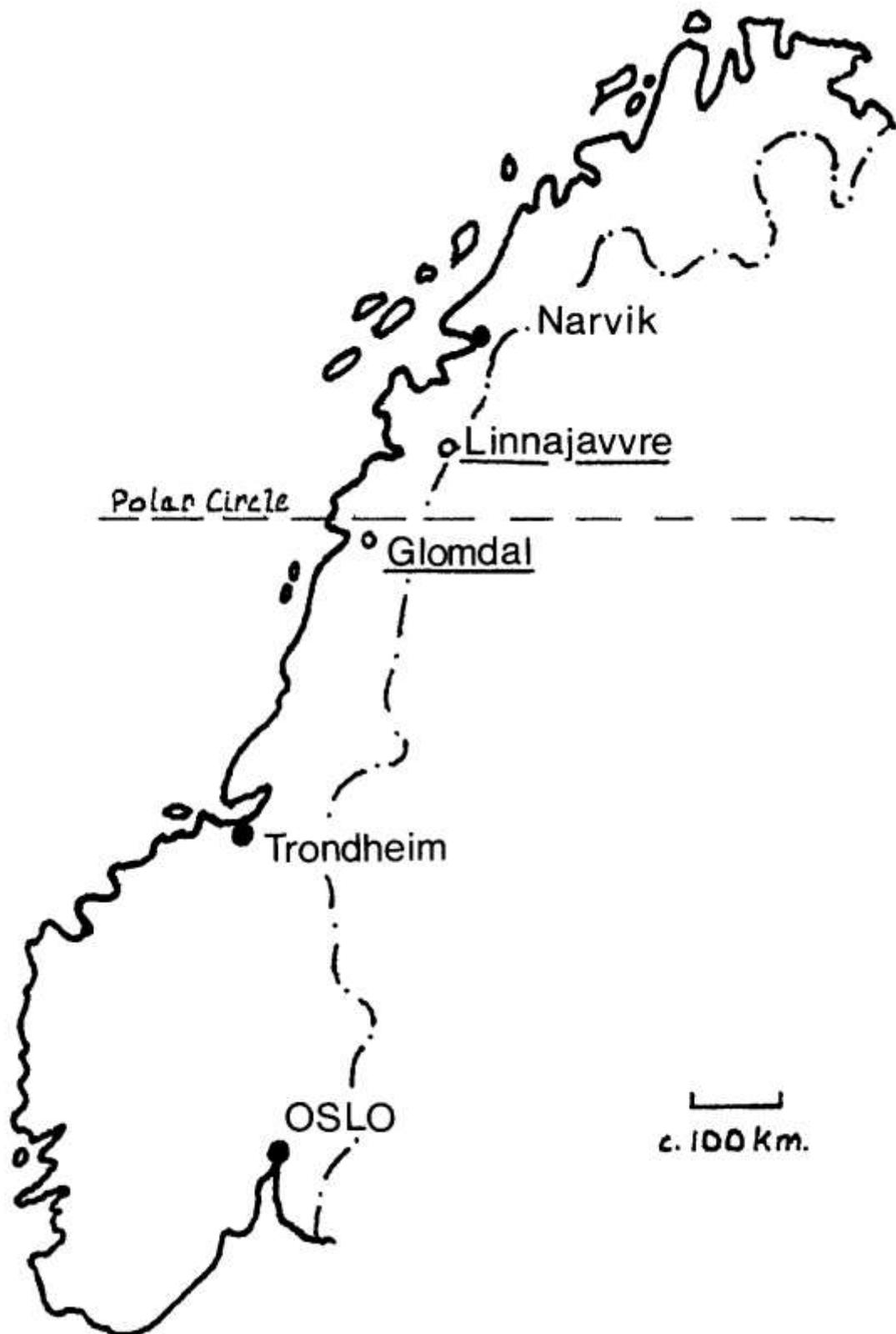
Having spent five days by the caves, we returned to the van. We were running out of time since our boat was due to leave Gothenburg in four days' time. We drove back through Sweden, since petrol is considerably cheaper there, and the roads are also better. We took it gently and stopped to camp every night. The first night by one of the enormous rivers running from the Kjol Mountains to the Baltic, the second a fabulous place on the Baltic coast and the last in a miserable commercial campsite, the first we had had to stay in throughout the six weeks. After having been away for so long in the rugged Norwegian mountains, none, of us looked forward to returning to England. Even the thought of a pint of Mendip bitter didn't seem to help: we had begun to enjoy our healthy new life in the land where alcohol is almost non-existent!

Reference:

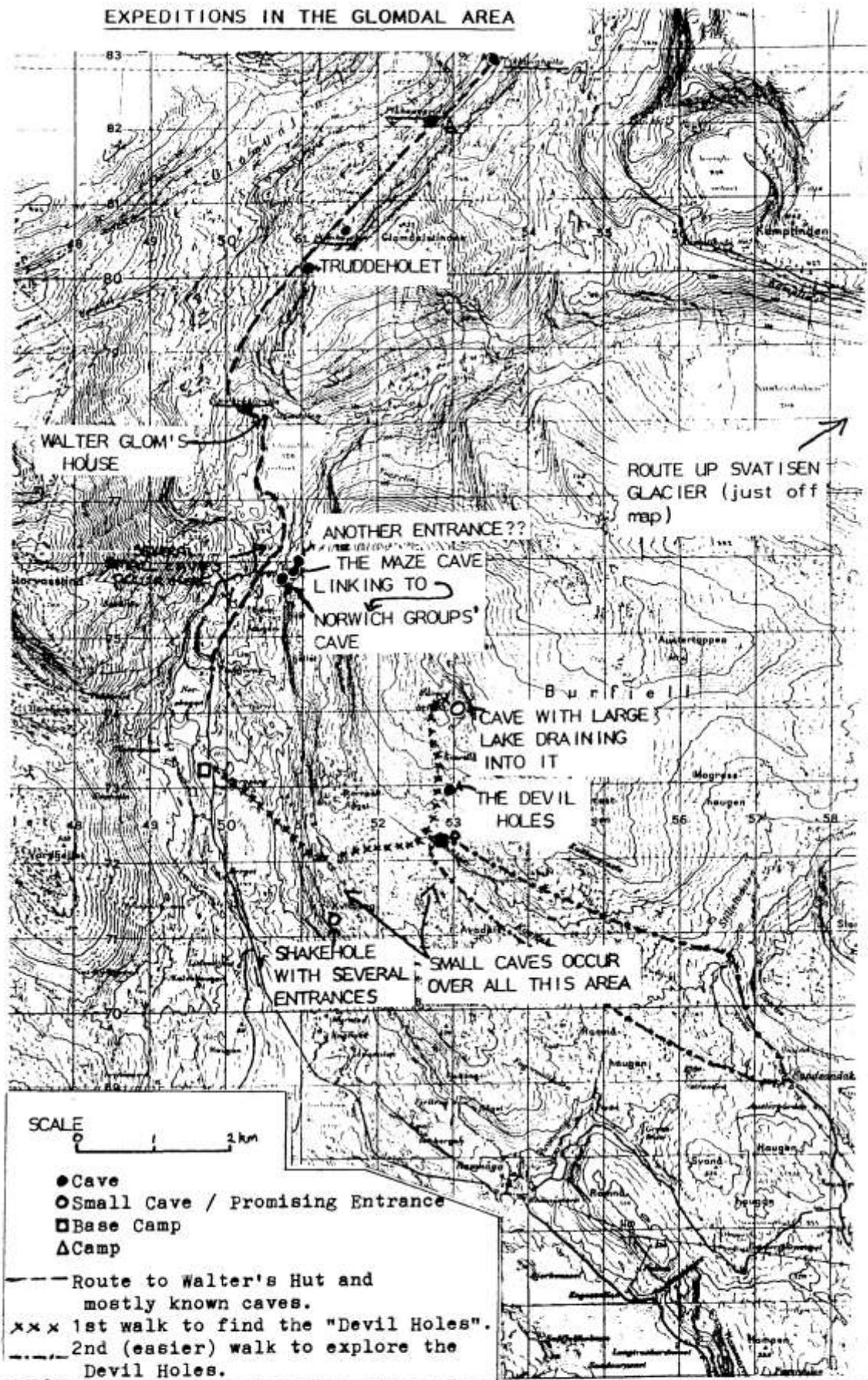
St Pierre, D. & S. "The Caves of Rana, Nordland, Norway." C.R.G. 11 (1). 1969.

Acknowledgements:

The writer wishes to thank the Sky Trust, Cambridgeshire College of Arts & Technology, for assistance, also Alan Rickard and Julie Bolt for reading through the manuscript.



EXPEDITIONS IN THE GLOMDAL AREA

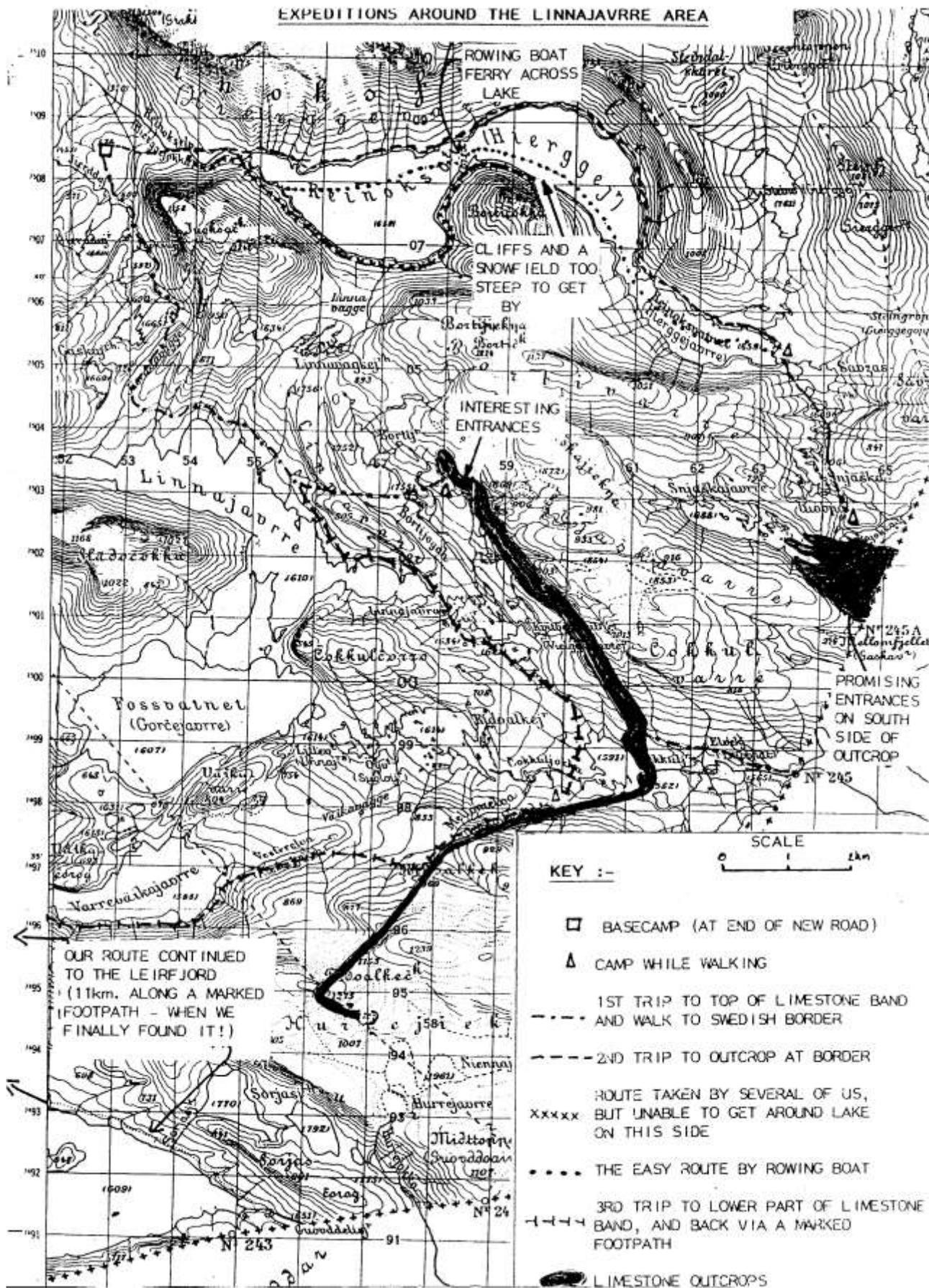


HELLEBOTM - OG - LINNAJAVRE Norwegian Geological Survey 150

LINNAJAVRE 2230 II Series M7-11 (1952)

GLOMDAL - SVATISEN 1928 II Series M7-11 (1974)
 Geographical Survey of Norway

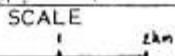
EXPEDITIONS AROUND THE LINNAJAVRRE AREA



KEY :-

- BASECAMP (AT END OF NEW ROAD)
- △ CAMP WHILE WALKING
- - - - 1ST TRIP TO TOP OF LIMESTONE BAND AND WALK TO SWEDISH BORDER
- - - - 2ND TRIP TO OUTCROP AT BORDER
- XXXXX ROUTE TAKEN BY SEVERAL OF US, BUT UNABLE TO GET AROUND LAKE ON THIS SIDE
- THE EASY ROUTE BY ROWING BOAT
- |-|-|- 3RD TRIP TO LOWER PART OF LIMESTONE BAND, AND BACK VIA A MARKED FOOTPATH
- LIMESTONE OUTCROPS

OUR ROUTE CONTINUED TO THE LEIRFJORD (11km. ALONG A MARKED FOOTPATH - WHEN WE FINALLY FOUND IT!)



WESSEX CAVE CLUB

1984 REPORT BY THE TRUSTEES FOR THE ANNUAL MEETING

The Trustees have visited Upper Pitts on several occasions both as individuals and together in order to look around and compare notes. We are pleased that the hut is widely used and well looked after for it is the Club's main asset. It is encouraging to see recent evidence of positive moves to put the extension to good use rather than using it as an expensive if convenient store room. Our main plea would be to keep this new impetus going so that inevitably dirtier toing and froing from caving is relocated away from the kitchen as foreseen. This should reduce wear and tear on the building, which is our main concern of course. It will also improve the quality and comfort of the whole place so that members and all guests are more likely to take greater care in using its facilities. The Library is a splendid room and a showpiece of what can be done. Please do not clutter it with equipment that we do not use nor, perhaps, even need.

The new front porch is obviously a good addition and draws our attention to the only cause for real concern over the years. Little still appears to have been done to weatherproof some external timbers and joints. The fate of exposed window sills and tiles in the past year is a warning of what might happen elsewhere unless we are more determined to keep Mendip weather outside the hut rather than letting it creep in. Such risks increase with every new modification and corner of course. Please attend to weatherproofing so that we do not have to repeat this plea in future reports.

We also take a 'heritage' view of the value of Upper Pitts to the Club as a whole. On the occasion of our Fiftieth Jubilee, it is appropriate to recall the older cavers, some now no longer members, who gave considerable time and effort to build a caving base fitting for Mendip's first and foremost sporting caving club. In their day, they also managed to go caving, write up their explorations and publish regular Journals. They did all this because the Club actually comprises of many friends who live around the world and cannot enjoy frequent visits to old haunts on Mendip. So, in urging those now active to maintain and look after our Headquarters, we look forward to more Journals with news of what's happening in caving for this is why so many retain their membership of the Club.

As we celebrate our Jubilee, we should resolve to let more members share in the exciting prospects for fresh discoveries on our own doorstep in Eastwater. North Hill Swallet may yet prove to be the major inlet! Whilst the Club Headquarters is a fine facility, the Club Journal provides the only record of our activity.

Jim Hanwell

on behalf of the Trustees

Philip Davies,
Don Thomson and
Richard Kenney.

Wookey Hole

November 1st 1984

“GOING UNDER THE ROCKS”

Paul Weston

Early in 1981 I wrote in the Wessex Journal of my caving activities with mentally-handicapped people from hospitals and local authority workshops in Avon. This created a good deal of interest and comment at the time, and as I am still asked on visits to Upper Pitts about this, my current article attempts to bring things up to date.

One of the most satisfying developments since then has been the interest of colleagues who came initially as helpers, who are now able to take small parties of handicapped people caving themselves, with reliable assistants, such as I had in them in the beginning.

Burrington Coombe remained the centre of activities in 1981, for it provides a variety of caving experiences within easy access from Bristol. Most of our trips continued to be in the Autumn or Winter, and those in which I was able to take part inevitably ended up at Upper Pitts for a cup of tea. There is often much interest in the photographs, surveys and artefacts, and I am often asked whose house it is! During 1981, staff at the Blackhorse Training Centre felt that some of the less able individuals who attend there daily should be given the opportunity of further adventure pursuits, and during that Autumn and Winter we spent time taking small groups to Burrington.

We organised visits to Avelines Hole and to Upper Goatchurch since this was about the limit many of our charges could manage at this time. The criteria for those taking part remained the same for all participants, parental consent was asked for and the handicapped individual had to want to take part. Each individual needed a degree of mobility that ensured they could walk or stagger from Burrington car park to the entrances of Avelines and Goatchurch. Experience has shown that most people who can get up to the top entrance of Goatchurch, can cope with the upper series of the cave! This applies equally to staff!

Parental consent was obtained almost without exception and there was a tremendous interest amongst the handicapped people, as the word had gone round that a day out in Burrington was generally a good deal! To this day, the greeting I inevitably receive when visiting the Blackhorse Training Centre is, "Hello Paul, how's your dog? When are we going caving?" Nipper is now in the 'Great Hunting Grounds in the Sky', but often accompanied us underground on these simple trips. Amazingly, rather than getting in the way, his presence often helped divert anxieties and worries about being in the dark. Such is the way of terriers.

Needless to say, despite the severe limitations of their handicaps, the participants during this period gave of their best in this new dark, damp world of mud and rock. They used the same equipment as we did, although due to the "mini" nature of our trips we limited the number of lamps we issued, since placing a carbide lamp on a helmet often caused more trouble than it was worth. Instead, guides and helpers lit themselves up like Christmas trees, back and front, to provide adequate light for all.

We took as many photographs as possible, later showing them at the Work Centre and giving them to the participants to take home. This was a very important part of our activities as pictures of underground exploits graphically demonstrated what was going on. Our photographs also showed parents and relatives that having a handicap is not the end of life.

Several incidents spring to mind. On one trip we had two very short but cheerful ladies of middle-age, making their way slowly through Goatchurch, laughing and joking as they went. They were very slow and deliberate in their movements, but so jolly it was good to be with them, and really they had the appearance of two explorers about to set out on a very serious undertaking, which to them it probably was. Getting them out of the lower exit was a bit of a struggle, but a strong police cadet helper assisted with a 'bunk-up' the steep bit. Rarely have we had to resort to using a rope as I feel that a bit of exertion and struggle right at the end nicely rounds off the adventure.

On another occasion, in a small party, we had a withdrawn young man and a quite erratic teenage girl. Much to my surprise, the young man became very animated and talkative and was willing to follow me into nook and cranny I chose, while the girl calmed down considerably, showed quite prolonged concentration and produced her mum's motorcycle gloves to protect her hands on the trip. The improvement in the behaviour of both of them was quite remarkable. Obviously it did them a deal of good in the short - and hopefully the long - run.

During this period I also managed a couple of trips with Clifford, aged 57, and Raymond, aged 48, from Hortham Hospital, and a slightly-younger Chris from Clevedon. Evergreen Clifford continues to refer to caving as "Going Under The Rocks". Looking back on a diary I kept of trips, I see that by late 1981 we were accommodating a variety of handicapped people. As well as going to Burrington Coombe, those included trips to the Twenty-Foot in Swildons and several visits to Lamb Lair winch platform. Amazingly, we had only two refusals to descend the entrance shaft. I regarded the lifelining of those who did descend very seriously, and belayed myself to a stout post in an ultra-cautious manner - i.e. with lots of rope!

We also had trips to G.B. and Agen Allweld for those who had passed the 'Grand Apprenticeship', i.e. the descent of two Burrington caves, usually Goatchurch and/or Sidcot / Rod's Pot, Upper Swildons, Lamb Lair to the winch platform and parts of Eglwys Faen.

Our last trip of 1981 was to Sidcot Swallet with four men from Hortham and from the Blackhorse Workshop. To my mind, this is an awkward little cave and a successful descent to the Water Chamber is worthy of praise. Actually, the best photograph I've ever taken underground was of Derek, from the Blackhorse, coming back through the Tie-Press in Sidcot. Later, he collared the print almost as soon as I'd had my film developed and I've never seen it since!

By 1982 Steve Jenkins, an instructor at the Blackhorse, was sufficiently experienced to organise trips himself with back-up help, so that my involvement was reserved for hospital residents and a small number of visits to caves Steve was not fully conversant with at the time.

My "own" groups again visited Swildons, G.B., Eglwys Faen and to the First Boulder Choke in Agen Allweld. Thanks are due to Mike York and John Cornwall for the loan of the electrics. Several trainees from Siblans Adult Training Centre, Thornbury, assisted at Alveston Dig where Al Dixon and Sandra Hargreaves were maintaining interest in caving activities. They had also successfully trained a small number of people with whom they work, on ladders, and a short descent of Sludge Pit was apparently very successful.

By the end of 1982, caving had really taken root as a viable activity for the mentally-handicapped in Northavon. Small numbers of staff who had started their caving activities solely with handicapped people had become sufficiently skilled and experienced to organise and develop schemes themselves, and the Avon Youth Service were proving to be very helpful with the hire of lamps and belts.

Our aims now remain the same as when we started: to provide people who are mentally handicapped with the opportunity to go caving, and through this medium to help them to further personal development.

Since there is a continuous demand for these activities to continue, I feel that we are achieving what we set out to do.

Ye Caver.

Befel, nigh Blossing Tyme, one Summer Day
On Mendyppe, to Ye Hunters I made way.
And ful of Folke yt was, that were so muckle
They wer as tyght as Boulders in a Rackle.
And therin satt a Caver and hys Crew
That to hys hand hadd eche hys Pott of Brew.
Thys Caver was an Hardy Man and Bold,
Hys Beard, yt was a stubble thre dais old.
Upon hys head he hadd an Helmet sett
That all of Plastik was, as Blak as Jett:
And al bifore, to give hym Light, Iween
Hee hadd a Lampe, yt was Acetylene.
Clad was hee in a Boyler-Suit, ifts hue
Was al be-muddde, I gesse yt hadd bin Blew.
Grete Bootes thik he hadd, and wel bespred
With Nayles, as thik as is a Fakirs Bed.
And al about hym hung hys other Gere,
Yt wer so moche, I may not list yt here.
Hee hadd moche lore in Speleology
Ful wel he kened yts Terminology.
Hee lerned could discours of Diffe and Strike
Of Vadose, and Phreatic and the Like.
For to seke out a Cavern hys delite
That was be-hung with mony a Stalactite.
And for to seke hym hardly wold hee toil
And by ye tunne wold hee shift ye spoil
Yn Pitch and Squeeze and Sumpe hee was ful
Yett to kepe trust att Digges ever tandy.
And thys a Caver was, that on hys Hatt
Hadd for Devyse a Dragone, or a Batt.

Edited from a Rare Manuscript
by H. C. Atwood

MOTHER LUDLAM'S CAVE

FARNHAM, SURREY

Tony Jarratt



MOTHER LUDLAM' CAVE c.1880

Photo: John Henry Knight (a celebrated inventor & motoring pioneer)

While working in the Farnham area recently, the writer was taken on a sightseeing (caves and ale) trip by Maurice Hewins and John Thomas. The entrance chamber of Mother Ludlam's Cave was visited and the low stream passage beyond stared into. Maurice was somewhat surprised to find that the place had not fallen in, as he had prophesied in his last article.

On the 29th October, the writer donned a wetsuit and waded up the stream passage to the V junction shown on Maurice's 1961 survey. A heap of sand in the centre of the V was partly cleared to give a better view into the left-hand inlet. This carried on for some 10ft., too low to enter without digging. The passage here is over 10ft wide with a reasonably sound ceiling and the writer suspects it to be completely natural. The passage may be formed mainly either by washed-down sand or roof eroded sand, though possibly several small "phreatic" inlets may have joined here.

Again, Maurice was surprised to hear that this area had not completely collapsed after 20 years, and that his original survey was still valid.

So - some 150ft. of, initially, artificially enlarged stream cave in sandstone. One wonders when the definitive "Sandstones And Caves Of Surrey" will be produced...

REFS.

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CSS Records Vol. 3 p. 40 1963 (reprinted 1977).

19th OCTOBER 1985

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
&
DINNER

UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL

PAUL
ESSER
MEMORIAL
LECTURE

Our lecturer for 1985 will be the underwater cave-explorer, JULIAN WALKER. He will be describing the Blue Holes of the Bahamas. For long the origin of these was a mystery and their penetration considered impossible, because of tidal currents. He will describe their origin and evolution and the technique which has been developed for their exploration. His lecture will be illustrated by slides and a film.

THE
BLUE
HOLES

Julian Walker, aged 23, is a third-year student in Mechanical Engineering at the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology.

13 FEB 1985

He has been caving since 1976, mainly in South Wales and on Mendip, but he has also accompanied a joint Bristol and Cambridge Universities expedition to the Totes Gebirge in Austria in 1981. In Spain in 1983, he joined the Leeds and

Manchester Universities expeditions to Treviso, with penetrations to a depth of 1169 metres, the deepest ever for a British team.

He started cave-diving in 1981 with the Welsh Section of the Cave Diving Group under Martyn Farr, and did much of his pool training at Bristol.

He has taken part in the Bahamas Blue Holes expeditions of 1982, 1983 and 1984, all of which were led by Rob Palmer, and he assisted in the discovery of several thousands of metres of new underwater passages. The biological study of these has been valuable.

The lecture will be given at 8.15p.m. on Wednesday, 13th February 1985 in the large physics lecture theatre, Tyndall Avenue, University of Bristol. The Acting Vice-Chancellor, Peter Haggett, Professor of Geography, will be in the Chair.

Admission is free. Parties coming from a distance may have seats reserved for them by writing to:

Dr. Oliver C. Lloyd,
Withey House, Withey Close West, Bristol BS9 3SX.

FROM THE LOG

EASTWATER CAVERN

Pete & Alison Moody, Tony Jarrett, Tim Large, "Quiet" John Watson (BEC), Rich Websell, Paul Whybro, Pete Watts, Geoff Newton, Graham Wilton Jones and Jane Clark (BEC).

30 July. J-Rat, T.L., J.W., R.W., P. & A.M. Excellent trip to the bottom of Greek Street. The inward draught at the end is one of the strongest I have experienced on Mendip. Only a rock pendant prevents access to a bedding continuation down but a better bet may be a tube directly above it. Alison found a squeeze for 6ft, to a further constriction through which the draught blows. P.M.

11 August. J-Rat, T.M., P. & A.M. Banged through squeezes at top of Blackwall Tunnel. Superb draught - went back in 10 minutes after firing charge, getting into start of typical Eastwater bedding-plane. One further squeeze prevents entry: put charge on this and came out.

15 September. J-Rat, P.W., P. & A.M. Continued work at end of Blackwall Tunnel, started on 11/8. After one bang, Alison entered large cross passage 10-15ft high by 4ft wide. The bedding continued across the other side of this, 6-8ft wide by 3ft high. To the left, a squeeze past stal into fiercely-draughting passage. To the right, a way climbed steeply over boulders. With no-one else able to pass the squeeze all the leads were left unpushed. Before leaving, a charge was fired, hopefully to make the constriction big enough for all of us next week.

27 October. J-Rat, J.W., Paul W., P. & A.M. Follow-up to 15/9 trip. Everyone managed bedding-plane squeeze O.K. Everyone on their best behaviour, taking it in turns to pick off the leads. The bedding-plane straight across quickly became too tight, a continuation at higher level Choked. Traversing across the bedding, another passage, soon choked up-dip

J-Rat stripped off to take the last lead, a squeeze on the left over some fine calcited pools. Of course, this was the one to go. Beyond another squeeze, the way opened right up: 20ft high, 5ft high. A climb down and traverse over a blind pit led to the balcony of a 40ft pitch with the sound of a stream coming from the bottom. Back up the passage, a descending rift was found but the last 20ft was too small to free-climb safely.

Tony offered his whole book collection for a rope but he had no takers. With no tackle there was nothing for it but to go out. At the breakthrough point we paused to hammer out a stal. squeeze and Alison dropped through into a phreatic tube. Progress was stopped 100ft further by yet another pitch. Slow trip out. 8 hours in all.

10 November. J-Rat, T.L., P.W., P. & A.M. Armed with a rope, four BEC expedition ladders, ammo cans full of food and stoves we returned to the extension found on the 27/10. The pitch down to the sound of the stream was rigged, to a floor of large, mud-covered boulders. A squeeze/climb dropped 15ft or so down to the stream. The air was very foggy, no draught at all and obvious signs of the water backing up at least 30ft. A climb over boulders led J-Rat to rift with the stream down below, but all very tight and pretty hopeless. P.M. went upstream to find a steeply ascending tunnel with voices coming from the top. It was Jeff Price and Geoff Newton of the 'B-Team', at the stream sink at the bottom of Blackwall Tunnel. A couple of bangs would open up a much easier route in through here.

Returning to the base of the ladder, the draught was found coming from a rift straight on. P.W. free-climbed the 15ft pitch to gain a large passage with many ways on. It was quickly determined that this was a continuation of the high-level we were in before. Tim found the way on, a comfortably-sized, pretty passage, 200 - 250ft to a downhill squeeze. Alison dug through and we squeezed up the far side of a U-tube into a continuation. 100ft further the way began to stal up and bang will be needed to progress further. Quickly checked most of the side leads on the way out: they are going to need a more thorough

going-over. After a brew at the top of the climb we began the slow trip out.

17 November. Jane Clark, Graham Wilton-Jones, G.N., P. & A.M., P.W. Went down Alison's pitch to the right of the breakthrough point: it is only about 15ft but very slippery. At the bottom, another typical Eastwater bedding-plane, quickly choked down-dip. Across the bedding a dried-up streamway with large sandstone cobbles was found. After 100ft of walking-size passage the way opened out into a superb aven, 30ft diameter and about 60ft high. We didn't get up it. By the ladder a very slippery bedding led up-dip, soon closing in.

Back in Blackwall Tunnel we met 'Basset' and Jane, who, after a tourist trip in the left-hand passages, were having a rather trying time attempting to survey.

15 December. J.W., G.N., P.W., P.M. Quick trip, opening out the squeezes to the aven, Blackwall Tunnel and what will be the bypass to the left-hand series. John's lamp fell to bits on the way in - he was "rescued" on the way out from the bottom of Dolphin Pitch, where he had been waiting in the dark.

P.M.

WARREN FARM

Pete & Alison Moody, Pete Watts, Geoff Newton, Kevin Gannon, Anne Lavender, Chris Milne, Nigel Graham.

9 September. P. & A.M., P.W., G.N., K.G., N.G. Shaft continues down, badly choked.

23, 30 September, 7 October. P. & A.M., variously P.W., A.L., C.M., G.N., Nick ?, N.G. Down through claggy mud to stalled rock bridge above open rift perhaps 10ft deep. Good draught again.

15 October. P. & A.M. Charge on eyehole fired. Returned half-hour later to drop into reasonable chamber: exploration left for the weekend.

20 October. P. & A.M., P.W., G.N. Really good look around chamber but exit is very badly choked (glacial debris), with no obvious digging site. A large chamber leads off one side of the chamber and several narrow rifts offer possible extensions.

P.M.

CHARTERHOUSE CAVE

Pete Hann, Julie Bolt, Clive Barlow, Merv Ingram, Pete Watts, Nigel Graham.

3 September. P.H., J.B., Jo Beckett, Steve Gough. Tourist and digging trip. "I've never carried cement through a cave before!"

S.G.

5 September, 10 & 14 October. P.H., variously J.B., C.B., M.I., N.G.

15 November. P.H., J.B., N.G. More cement in boulders hanging in fresh air. Boulders also getting bigger with more black stuff around them.

23 November. P.H., J.B., P.W., Aubrey Newport. More cement in boulders Cave very wet.

P.H.

PIERRE'S POT / PSEUDO NASH'S HOLE

1 September. Pete & Alison Moody. Surveying and photographing.

P.M.

SWILDONS HOLE

FAULT CHAMBER AREA / WATERGATE

Pete & Alison Moody, variously Pete Watts, Paul Sutton, Julian Taylor, Geoff Newton, Jeff Price, Anne Lavender.

8 September. P. & A.M., P.W., P.S., J.T., G.N: P.M. to Watergate via Fault Chamber to bail the upstream sump, the others made their way up from 4. With almost perfect timing, P.M. dried the sump just as the others arrived to bail the lower sump. Continuing up stream the next sump was dry and only a bit of digging was needed to get into the chamber discovered last year. The two leads off were checked: the aven, which normally has a small stream, would require banging while the passage heading off South looks a fairly long-term dig.

29 September / 6 October. P. & A.M., A.L, P.W., G.N., J.P. New dig started in left-hand passage of Fault Chamber approach, 2'6" wide, unknown height, have gone in some 20ft. Fill is sand and gravel - really a bit too civilised for us!

10 November. P. & A.M., P.W., G.N., N. Graham. After fighting through hordes, good digging stint at Fault Chamber. The passage is still good size but has turned sharp left and become more inclined.

25 November. P.M., P.W., G.N., 2 ACG. First went to Pirate Chamber: decided passage banged 3/11 worth pursuing (see below). On way to Shatter Chamber by avens near Causer's Calamity (Damp Link), Dug into narrow aven and climbed about 15ft to short squeeze preventing further progress.

1 December. P. & A.M., P.W., G.N., Martin Buckley. Alison looked at new aven - could not pass squeeze. Decided it was worth banging as it is very water-worn and quite draughty.

2 December P. & A.M. Fault Chamber dig: hard few hours - definitely looks long-term.

15 December. P.W., G.N. Fault Chamber dig still going left and down. Slight draught. Joined by Andy- and Paul- (ACG). Long term prospect. Visited Lower Fault Chamber to remove pipes, but siphon inoperable and dam full.

PIRATE CHAMBER / DAMP LINK

1 November. P. & A.M., P.W., G.N., John Watson. Dig into passage leading off Pirate Chamber stalled up. After all of 5ft. another possibility at bottom of the chamber - large stalled-in block banged.

23 November. Passage banged 3/11 worth pursuing: 2ft high tube partially blocked after 6ft by boulder.

8 December. P. & A.M. Damp Link aven. Seen continuing but guarded by large blocks which were banged down.
P.M.

LOWBOW

Pete Hann, John Scott, Clive Barlow, Merv Ingram, Greg Samways, Pete Moody.

10 September. P.H., J.S., C.B., M.I., G.S. Lot more spoil removed, passage very tight, needing banging.

15 & 24 October. P.H., C.B., J.S., M.I., P.M. Banged on 17/10, cleared for 4ft to another bend. More work on right-hand far corner may give us a look round corner. Draught still very strong.

31 October. P.H. Chiselled right-hand bend to gain view to next bend: too tight. Way on looks good for about another 10ft.

7 November. P.H., C.B., P.M. Charge on flake fired. When we got back to the Green, we were asked if we had heard thunder, or a large rock fall, underground. "No, all was quiet", we said, and left them looking rather sheepish.

11 November. P.H. Rock flake on left wall gone but bulge on right wall stops legs from bending round passage. The way on can be seen for about 6ft and a small stream heard.

14 & 16 November. P.H., P.M. Blasted both walls. Good deal of rock removed but shelf on left wall stops progress. Way looks as if it could enter an aven? Echoing.

21 November. P.H., J.S., C.B., M.I., Chris Jones. Removed all spoil from dig face and chamber. Unfortunately Pete Moody's last bang was not in the right place so the tight bit is still there. Banged 1 December.

HENSLER'S DIG

Nigel Graham, Jim Rands.

Various dates. Very slow progress in solid choke. Passage has turned left, pointing towards Water Rift wall, so Jim climbed Rift but found no definite passage (at roof level).

OXBOW SERIES

Pete Hann, John Scott, Clive Barlow, Merv Ingram, Steve Hall.

11 December. Night off digging!! Looking around Oxbows, P.H. got fed up and looked at boulder choke in Second Oxbow. Noticed black hole beyond. 10 minutes crowbar work saw us in 35ft high rift, 4ft wide and 20ft long. At top, tight passage needing some work. Some very fine formations.

16 December. P.H., J.S., C.B., M.I., and N.G. for short time (left early to meet another, already-arranged trip). J.S. and M.I. photographing, P.H., C.B., N.G. surveying. J.S. & M.I. then dug in floor, breaking back into Oxbows. P.H. & C.B. opened squeeze into 6' by 4' passage. 20ft 'upstream' to calcited boulders and too-tight hole. 15ft downstream to tight, out draughting hole. Getting out was fun for P.H.: a very large boulder fell out of roof while he was on wrong side. Fifteen minutes with P.H. pushing and Merv pulling brought relief - and a rapid exit!

P.H.

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10 June 1984. OGOP FECHAN

Rich Websell, Rob Harper, Julian Taylor, Paul Sutton. Epic trip. Suffering from amnesia so all got lost repeatedly. Horrible place, not very welcoming. Rob dived Sump 2 on double kit, returned and we both went through. Very easy sump. Passage beyond a bit like Swildons 5, with large, muddy chambers. Think we found 300ft of passage but not sure as previous exploration could have been flooded over. Exited wearily with many hisses and bangs and two knackered sherpas. Yoh!

R.A.W.

1 June. SWILDON'S TWELVE

Rich Websell, Pete and Alison Moody. Tourist around the sights and sites of 12. Decided Sump 12b looks worth another try. This passage, reached across the Sump 12 pool, leads 40ft along the bedding to a small sump pool. A reasonable flow of water was noted welling up in the floor and flowing off left where a hidden rift was found going off across the strike. Very small but taking a draught. We put a charge on one of the flakes.

23 June. Pete & Alison, Geoff Newton. Free-dived to Nine. Some work with a lump hammer soon removed the remaining flakes, but 6 - 8ft later it closed up completely. Straight ahead in 12b is another rift that you can see along for 10 - 15ft, but although we had bang with us we decided that it did not look too promising. There's definitely a draught there somewhere. Where it goes, God knows. Silage run-off has polluted the stream from Cowsh Aven to 12 (and presumably beyond); Swildons 5 and 6 are pretty grim.

P.M.

9 June. DAN-YR-OGOF

Rich Websell, Paul Sutton, Julian Taylor. Far North Series to Junction of Right & Left Hand Series, out via Abyss.

23 June. LANCASTER HOLE - COUNTY POT

Tony Williams, Ian Ochiltree, Paul McCarrick, Neil Payne, Terry Tooth A general tourist trip recapturing old memories! Mick Payne provided photographic services and the bruises were effectively numbed with Websters pint-size lotion and Northern hospitality at an inn that had abandoned closing time.

T.T.

9 – 13 July. YORKSHIRE

Keith Fielder, Ros Morgan, Nick Marachov, assorted QMCCC, Surrey Uni., & Nigel Graham. GAPING GHYLL - BAR POT, descended from Jib Tunnel. Penyghent Pot rained off, so West Kingsdale invaded; complicated four-team SWINSTO & SIMPSON'S Exchange / through-trip proved a recipe for chaos with only Ros, Nigel plus 2 actually completing their intended trip (Swinsto - Valley Entrance). Keith and Nick photographed YORDAS CAVE, while another group had minor epics in HERON POT. EASEGILL CAVERNS provided two successful trips: TOP SINK/COUNTY and LANCASTER/COUNTY. N.G.

11 July. HILLGROVE SWALLET

Jeff Price, Bob Drake, Kevin Gannon, Dave Collins. Inspected with a view to resuming digging after a four-year break.

28 July. BATH SWALLET

Phil and Lynn Hendy. Started digging. Good progress for an exploratory furlge. Two sites attacked: a pit at the old stream sink and a hole to the right. Access to the main, open, swallet is barred by a flake needing banging. P.H.

28 - 30 July. BLUEBELL CAVE (Hart Ranges, British Columbia)

Paul Hadfield, Ian Jepson, Ian McKenzie and J. Pollack (colonial guests). Total of five trips in this resurgence cave - sportingly wet and muddy - impassable by 5pm owing to diurnal flooding: snow-melt in feeder swallets? 700ft of very sporting cave reminiscent of OFD I, though generally larger and much colder and wetter. There's a potentially diveable sump (very clear) at the end, preferably for those CDG members in possession of 12mm heated wetsuits. Essential also is vast quantities of "bug dope". Grizzlies will eat you pretty quickly, but are not often seen. The mosquito / blackfly "no-see-um" swarms are scarcely any slower, and their presence is all too obvious. Fine cave in a fine area: where are all the cavers? I.J.

2/3 August. BATH SWALLET

Phil and Lynn Hendy. Dig progressing well in (Heavy) rain - no surface stream yet. Lynn is into an entrance chamber with the floor hidden under a ginormous boulder. Phil is about 3ft down at the sink with a few boulders in the back wall. P.H.

12 August. WOOKEY HOLE

Chris Milne and Annie Lavender. Dived to 20. De-kitting, we went to the far end of the dry passage. Here a fair draught was felt coming from small "uncaveable" tubes in the roof. 1½ hours were spent digging out a mud-choked passage apparently heading downwards.

18 August. Wookey 24. Chris & Annie. The water level has dropped 6ft in the 23 sump pool, making an entertaining exit! A.L.

18 August. WOOKEY HOLE

Sean Walsh, Kev Clarke, Rob Jacob. Wookey 9(i) to 3 in infinite vis.- like walking in space (I think)".

Thence to Ludwell Cave / Resurgence. Sump virtually disappeared: about 4ft left. Only Kev bothered to dive.

21 – 26 August. NORTHUMBERLAND & YORKSHIRE

Nigel Graham. Guest of Pete & Elaine Ryder, at Riding Mill, near Newcastle-on-Tyne (Moldywarps S.G.). Mainly prospecting: bench-full of interesting depressions above village of Alston. One was dug: two hours hard labour to move a couple of boulders opened a pot all of 10ft deep then hopelessly tight & choked - GRAFT POT. It was filled with dead branches to safeguard livestock. (Easy to clear).

PFR and NG visited ELPHA GREEN CAVES, Allendale ('Northern Caves Vol. 5, The Northern Dales' p113), the main cave being mostly wet and muddy wallows with a few decorated chambers, then surveyed the archaeological ruin SIWARD'S PELE to Grade 5.

Thence to G.G. for the Winch Meet, also attended by Ian MCKenzie (see 28 - 30 July entry above). Ambled around South and South-East Passages to South-East Pot and to Stream Passage / North-West Extension, in company of another on his first trip in the cave. N.G.

23 August.

"Mummy and daddy took me on my first caving trip, down Goatchurch". Thomas and Abbey Plant, aged 4 and 6 yrs respectively.

27-29 August. LITTLE NEATH RIVER CAVE and AGEN ALLWELD. Ace of Spades. Jeff Price, Bob Drake, Kevin Gannon, John Cooper + 2.

1 September. LIONEL'S HOLE

Alison Moody, Anne Lavender, Chris Milne. Checked whether water level in end sump had been affected by the drought. No change, and the cave is as enjoyable as ever! A.M.

7 September. HILLGROVE SWALLET

Jeff Price, Bob Drake, Dave Collins, Kevin & Mrs Gannon. Tried out winch motor, little bit of digging done. J.P.

12 September. TWIN TITTIES SWALLET

N.H.A.S.A. Went into small, highly-decorated chamber with multitude of straws. Very vulnerable: please keep away for time being, to allow photography and taping.

SWILDONS. Three-inch airspace in Sump One.

Brian Prewer.

18, 19, 29 September. BATH SWALLET.

Phil & Lynn Hendy, Brian Prewer. Prew laid a successful shaped charge on a boulder in Lynn's part of the dig. Rubble cleared, remains of boulder and half of another demolished by chisel. A possible way on can be seen but Dr. Nobel's rapid erosion technique needed on two boulders. Last charge not very successful but two large rocks hammered into submission, and used in the dry stone wall. Two small down-dip openings found, choked, draughting slightly, needing bang. Looking good. P.H.

22 September. BEACHY HEAD

Geoff Newton. Investigated cliffs between Birling Gap and Beachy Head, looking for more solution tubes like Beachy Head Cave. A pleasant time involving short "rock" climbs and some thrutching. Plenty to look at but nothing longer than 60ft. G.N.

27 September. LONGWOOD AUGUST

Jo Beckett, Steve Gough, Greg Samways. Cave was taking rather less than 20 cumecks. Went down and came out via August. See you all next year! S.G.

30 September. LONGWOOD VALLEY SINK

Simon Meade-King, Nigel Graham + 3. Dig progressing well. Backfilling and tidying has improved surface of site considerably. N.G.

30 September. VERCORS (France): GROTTE LE GOURNIER

Paul Whybro, Rich Websell, Rob Harper. Pleasant trip starting with a cold swim. We couldn't remember where the First Access to the streamway is, so spent some time looking in holes in the floor and finding short sections of stream. Eventually found the stream, and had an enjoyable time swimming, traversing and cascading (Sic). The wire traverses are in a poor state. R.H. and P.W. went to find top cascade, returned on one light, Rob's "gobbler". 7 hours.

GROTTE BE BOURNILLON was a foaming maelstrom, rain stopped play in the GROTTTE DE PRÉMARTIN.
R.A.W.

7 October. COFFIN HOLE (Portland)

N.G. and Gaynam Lock (S.R.C.C.). Very gingerly furling horribly shattered end of 40ft long relict water worn passage. Visited site of WHITE RIVER CAVE (along Grove Road) to assess chances of exhuming it from dumped stone-works residue. Found site had been levelled. At least it's not gone unrecorded: Mike D-York produced a survey of it some years ago.
N.G.

20 October. BLACKNOR HOLE

Pete Watts, Julian Taylor, Paul Sutton, Rich Warman, Jenny?, N.G. Three-hour tourist trip.

27, 29 October. LOST JOHN'S SYSTEM

Paul Hadfield, Rich Websell, Ian Jepson, Keith and Derek Sanderson, Rob Harper, Terry? Bottoming trips. Leck Fell is beautiful when its raining!
I.J.

24-25 November. SOUTH WALES

OFD: Paul Sutton, Julian Taylor, Rich Websell, Rob Harper (BEC). OFD III via Top Entrance, Chasm, etc. 6hours.

AGEN ALLWELD: R.A.W., R.H., Keith Sanderson. To White Cliffs, meeting Bob Drake and entourage, then Main Stream to Turkey.
R.A.W.

8, 9 December. SOUTH WALES

Large Wessex group plus Al Mills and Colin Houlden (BEC). Variously visiting Daren Cilau (with Chelsea members), Bridge Cave (diver training) Ogof Craig-a-Ffynnon to 5th Choke and parts of side series (led by Arthur Millet, C.S.S.), and walking.

8 December. LOWBOW

Pete Hann and Julie Bolt. Bang (5/12) very rewarding: rubble and a boulder removed to allow squeeze to rift continuation approx. 20ft to mud and boulders. Halfway along L wall is 3ft by 2ft phreatic passage, 10ft long to boulders: vibration of main stream heard.

On R wall phreatic tube rises to boulders 8ft above floor: . continuation beyond.

P.H.



BACK PAGE

H.Q. WARDENS

As no "full-time" Hut Warden was elected at the 1984 A.G.M., a rota system, as last year, has been established.

There are still a few vacancies for volunteer Hut Wardens: if you are willing to devote one or two complete weekends to this duty, contact the Secretary (Bob Drake).

The duties of Hut Warden are mainly those of ensuring members and guests leave Upper Pitts in a clean and tidy condition, issuing cave keys and ensuring the security of the premises. The details will be available at the Hut, but may be summarised here:

CLEANING. Obvious really. Request people to do their washing-up, if they have not done so, organise hut cleaning by members and guests on Sunday evening (kitchen worktops - including under the gas rings and tables, rings and stoves.). The changing-room should be tidied and swept and the showers swabbed. Sweep floors, wash kitchen, corridor, lounge and gents floors.

Guest parties, especially, often leave food behind in the kitchen.

If it will not keep, even in the fridge (eg milk), dispose of it - ask around the remaining members on Sunday evening, firstly to ensure you are not about dispose of anything still wanted, then to find anyone to use it. If it will keep and no-one wants it: free shelf or fridge as appropriate. (The 1983 Norway trip took with it a whole box-full of provisions for the use of, surplus left behind by successive Services groups unable to book even unwrapped supplies back into Stores.) Do, though, make sure you are not about to eat or give away anything still wanted by its rightful owner!! Clear the large fridge (contents into small fridge), wipe it clean, switch it off and prop the door ajar to air.

SECURITY. A systematic tour of the building, last thing. A vital job but it only takes a few minutes. Upstairs: fire-escape door latched, windows closed and latched. Downstairs, outside, gas bottles turned off, extension door padlocked, back door locked. Tour all downstairs rooms to check the windows and Fire escape, not forgetting the toilet windows.

Inspect cave key book to ensure no keys are still out. Board clear of trips? Finally, if you are last out, all lights off, power and lighting supplies turned off and the Hut Warden's key bunch locked away in the cupboard, and everything secure it only remains to lock the front door behind you . . .

but have you first ensured Meecho the cat is not in the building?

Just for a bit of light relief:

If I am wrong historically but helped by Oriental ideas, what series of which Mendip cave am I thinking of?

No prizes. No correspondence or bribery (such as inebriating the Ed.), answer in next issue.