

CONTENTS

Editorial		145
Club & Regional Notes		146
Growth At The Grove (Portland)	N. Graham	147
Grove Cliff Caves Survey		149
AUSTRALIAN DIARY: CAVING IN NULLARBOR. Pt. 2 (Concluded)	N. Hawkes.	151
Christmas in the Wessex (Logbook compilation)		154
BRITISH SPELEOLOGICAL EXPEDITION, SW GUIZHOU, CHINA (Objectives and Aims)	P. Weston	156
50 Years Ago		157
From The Log		159
WCC ACCOUNTS 86/87		166
Back Page: Meets etc. Dates, Riddle.		

NEXT EDITION

THE CAVES OF PERIGORD (FRANCE) Pt 1	R. Taviner
RAILWAYS FOR CAVE DIGS	N. Graham

OFFICERS & COMMITTEE OF THE WESSEX CAVE CLUB 1987/88

PRESIDENT	LUKE DEVENISH	EDITOR	NIGEL GRAHAM 60 Williams Ave., Wyke Regis, Weymouth, Dorset DT4 9BP Tel: (0305) 789770 (home)
VICE PRESIDENTS	REV. C. CULLINGFORD SIR JOHN WEDGWOOD MR P. DOLPHIN	SALES OFFICER	PETE HANN 3 Queens Terrace, Sherborne, Dorset DT9 4ED
HON. CHAIRMAN	JIM MOON 49 Sommerville Rd., St. Andrews, Bristol BS7 9AD Tel: (0272) 425391 (home)	HUT ADMIN. OFFICER	MAIRI RANDS c/o Upper Pitts
HON. SECRETARY	ROB TAVINER 91 Bristol Road, Whitchurch, Bristol BS14 0PS	COMMITTEE MEMBERS	JIM RANDS DAVE MORRISON MALCOLM FOYLE c/o Upper Pitts
HON. TREASURER	BRIAN HANSFORD 34 Fleming Rd, Weeke Estate, Winchester, Hants SO22 6EE	LIBRARIANS	PETE & ALISON MOODY
ASST. SECRETARY	MIKE DEWDNEY-YORK 23 Northumberland Rd., Redland, Bristol BS6 7AZ	NORTHERN CAVING SECRETARY	KEITH SANDERSON Heather View, Newby, Nr. Clapham, Lancs.
CAVING SECRETARY	PETE WATTS c/o Wessex Cave Club	MRO CO-ORDINATOR	PETE LACEY 23 Old Banwell Rd., Weston-s-Mare, Avon
GEAR CURATOR	DUNCAN FREW Brackens, Castledon Rd., Downham, Billericay, Essex CM11 1LD		
HUT WARDENS	NICK POLLARD 32 Holsom Close, Stockwood, Bristol BS14 8LX GRAHAM JOHNSON 5 Dodd Avenue, Wells, Somerset BA4 3TU		

Opinions expressed in this Journal are not necessarily those of the Editor or of the Wessex Cave as a whole, unless otherwise stated.

Wessex Cave Club Headquarters: Upper Pitts, Eastwater Lane, Priddy, Nr. Wells, Somerset BA5 3AX
Tel Wells (0749) 72310

EDITORIAL

First, and most importantly, apologies for the long delay in the appearance of the last Edition of the Journal.

I held back for a time, hoping for the Club Accounts. These failed to materialise (and still have not), so I went ahead with publication anyway, but it was not until December 4th that I posted the artwork to the printer. The finished Journals were ready for posting on the weekend of 22nd January. Allowing for the Christmas holiday, that's a turn-round of at least four weeks.

This delay meant two things. The Gouffre Berger booking forms gave a payment-by date very close to the date the Journals would pop through the letterbox. This is unfortunate, but Jim Moon and the other trip organisers are aware of this. The second result was that the MCA Questionnaire described in the Editorial with the suggestion that members do complete and return it, was not distributed after all.

The sole reason for that as far as I am concerned, was that the return date had come and gone by three weeks. However, I should point out something I was not very pleased about. When the Questionnaire was mentioned by me in the Editor's report to the last Committee Meeting, several other Club Officers felt that we should not send it out anyway. Now, this is not the first time the Club has refused to distribute NCA forms; the previous one so withheld being the Conservation & Access survey a couple of years ago. The reason for the Committee's decision then was that the completed survey could easily result in ever tighter access restrictions. The WCC was by no means the only club to refuse to assist that survey, and it seems to have "died" anyway (fortunately).

This NCA Questionnaire was different however. Its aim was to obtain cavers' - your, my - views on the NCA's aims and purposes, and bearing in mind the Club's active role in CSCC matters and its affiliation to other Regional Councils, promulgating the questionnaire would seem a logical and reasonable thing to do. Not so to some people, it would seem. I must point out that there was no real Committee decision to withhold the form, nevertheless, the idea that Club members, Committee or not, should seek to prevent other members from expressing their personal views on caving matters is not one I would expect being practiced in the Wessex Cave Club. The Secretary left a batch of these forms in the Upper Pitts lounge for anyone who wished to submit one: I heard later most of these were burnt. I do not know the circumstances of this, all I will say on that, is that if the forms were destroyed by some individual who disagreed with their existence, for that reason, I hope he or she is ashamed of the action. For the record, I did not submit a completed questionnaire: no-one was under any compulsion to do so, but I would find very objectionable any attempt to deliberately withhold the opportunity from me.

So: if you looked in vain for the NCA Questionnaire supposedly enclosed with your copy of the last Journal, it was omitted simply because of the long delay in Journal publication. Which I regret: we are to try to take the appropriate steps to reduce the Journal turn-round time.

Something Pete Hann pointed out: advertising leaflets for the conservation journal "Earth Science Conservation" bear a photograph of the OFD Columns. The model has taken his boots off, but is nevertheless closer to the main stals than the tapes allow. Not bad, considering the magazine is produced by the Nature Conservancy Council. Perhaps the formations "have stopped Growing" as a Peak District show-cave guide answered, when Duncan Frew politely queried that guide's invitation to tourists to touch a formation which reputedly brought good luck! One Club member has threatened to blow in the entrance to his hoped-for future discoveries if any fine formations therein become damaged. Goodness knows by what self-assumed right, or what ethical can of worms that raises, but I must say I cannot blame him. -NG.

CLUB NEWS

BIRTH

"Boxing Day. DANIEL GEORGE HENDY exceeded ETA by 48 hours, but finally succeeded in passing the final squeeze with (non-MRO) assistance. Mother and baby doing fine, father took well-earned brandy and long sleep (I was standing, at least Lynne was lying down). Thanks to all for your well-wishes;

PHIL HENDY"

(from the Logbook)

NEW MEMBERS.

The Wessex Cave Club Welcomes:-

TREVOR LAURENCE FAULKENER. Four Oaks, Wilmslow Park, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 2BD.

BRENDA STEAD. 19 Catherine Hill, Frome, Somerset, (renewed membership)

AN APOLOGY

The Membership List sent out with the last Journal contained an omission from the HONORARY MEMBERS section.

Mr. M. THOMPSON is an Honorary Member: we would like to apologise for this slip.

WOULD ANY MEMBERS CHANGING ADDRESS (or other details) PLEASE PASS THE UPDATED INFORMATION TO THE COMMITTEE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. *See page 165

UPPER PITTS PROGRESS.

The Appeal has proved its worth: the Club Headquarters now has a new central heating system, and the new showers are in use. In January, there were still a few details to be attended to, and a few modifications may yet to be needed, but a major step forward has been made. The use of the new showers was a little premature as the old ones were removed before the painting, etc. in the new changing-room was completed, but they are certainly very good. Many very favourable comments have been passed on the quality of the new showers (which cost TEN PENCE a "go").

The drying rack is still to be made, the ladies' priority shower / unisex toilet to be completed, and various other fitting and finishing works to be done. Once the new changing-room is complete, the new ladies' room can be commenced.

PLEASE NOTE: The original ladies' dormitory is STILL just that. There is NO route through it to or from the new changing-room, for men.

THANKS are due to Brenda Stead for supplying new fire-bricks for the long-needed repairs to the fireplace. VARIOUS OTHER PROJECTS are under way. Archival work on the Frank Frost Photo Collection, and on 'Atty's' pictures, continues. A new Occasional Publication, a guide-book to the caves of Portland, is under way; Duncan Frew has started making new Club ladders and is reviewing the Club lifeline situation. (The Club's policy of not holding Club SRT rope stands.)

REGIONAL NOTES

MENDIP

WINNERS of the 1987 Digging Competition were WESSEX CAVE CLUB, with finds in EASTWATER CAVERN and WELSH'S GREEN SWALLET. The return challenge has been made and accepted, at the celebrations.

cont. on p 164

GROWTH AT THE GROVE

(PORTLAND)

Nigel Graham

The Grove Cliff area of Portland, Dorset, contains no caves to match those in Westcliff (Blacknor and Sandy Holes, Steve's Endeavour Rift, etc.) but it nevertheless provides a pleasant enough venue for an evening trundle. Its caves are easy enough to be popular with novice groups, but they do contain some interesting high-level traverse problems. Of the main caves, FLAGPOLE RIFT and GUANO RIFT have been known for a long time, as has FOSSIL Cave, a derelict waterworn passage choked hopelessly a short way in.

In the Summer of 1986, Nigel Graham joined two local independent cavers, Phil Strong and Martin Crocker, occasionally with Anthony Ward as well, to take a close look at these sites. Guano Rift, though a mass-movement cave like Flagpole Rift, contains distinct solutional features in a prominent bedding-plane in the rift walls, moreover these solutional tubes contain the sandy, gingery-brown silt seen in many of the waterworn caves of Portland. With all the evidence in favour of the rift having torn a long-dead conduit asunder, we set to work to extend the rift beyond its existing boulder choke.

At the time, the cave ended quite abruptly in two short branches each side of a huge flake, only a few feet beyond the head of the steeply-sloping entrance passage up into a fine rift chamber. A short crawl led from the right hand branch into boulders, so we started digging, dropping the rocks down a convenient small hole in the floor. About to abandon the dig as it entered a suicide-kit zone, we suddenly thought...

"That's a hole down there..."

"And we're in a rift of the typical Portland type..."

My word, we'll make the next International Speleo Congress yet with such profound speleo-academia...

Frantic doggy-style digging, boulders flying back down the entrance behind us, revealed a deep hole into continuing rift. A second dig slightly nearer the entrance produced a better bet, but at first sight overhangs and loose boulders indicated a ladder pitch. The next week saw a bolt and ladder in place. After some "After you" - "No, after you" shilly-shallying, the first man actually down found himself knee-deep in ladder at the head of a boulder slope below a 12ft. free-climbable drop. All down, we set off...

Spacious - if very crumbly and dusty - rift lured us on, round a couple of bends. Then whoa! - the rift had played a trick favoured by this genre of grotte. It ended abruptly at a blank wall, actually a T-junction with a far narrower rift. Right was tight and choked, left no better. Wearing wellies, Phil tip-toed up mobile holds to the roof, some 30 feet up. He found a slight draught, possibly from obviously-hopeless waterworn remains. So that was that. Flagpole Rift next?

Now I must digress. Around this time the Wessex went to the seaside for the weekend. Though the party was mainly at Portland for the diving, some of us visited Blacknor Hole: Alison Moody, Herbie Plant + 2, Malc; Foyle and me. Malc and I inspected the massive choke which had defeated my gallant little DCG / Speleo Rhal / WCC group, and I had a token scratch at the adjoining dig by Mike Read's Weymouth & Portland Venture Scout Group in an oxbow. The Prong and Hon. Ed. opened a rather insignificant little cross-rift, to our surprise. I informed Mike Read of what I had done, and he later pushed across that rift to the 600ft+ extension. He announced that in "Descent", in a way which implied, almost stated, Wessex piracy. This incident caused some friction between Mike and I for a time: I felt particularly bitter as the only one of that cave's original explorers still interested in it. If anyone could have been said to have been justifiably possessive, it was me, but bearing in mind the fact that a major problem in something of far greater stature than I - the cave itself - had been solved, I was delighted with Mike Read's group's discovery. Malc Foyle and I visited it, with Phil and Martin, soon after. We were certainly impressed.

So back to the Grove.

To Flagpole Rift in fact. Making quick progress through this old faithful, Phil, Martin and I arrived at The Letterbox - and stared in amazement. The Letterbox squeeze, through boulders and opening over a 15ft drop,

always a right b- as it is tighter than it looks, and an odd shape, had been bypassed by a short crawl. This goes round the side wall boulder of the squeeze and into a hitherto-unsuspected continuation of the rift from "Concrete Corner" to the Letterbox choke. On the floor lay a board. On it was

"Garnet Rift. WPVSU", and an arrow.

"Read, the b...r!" we shouted. The rift dropped via a squeeze into Guano Rift: our tight, choked, left hand way at the T-junction. "He can't spell 'Guano'", commented someone, acidly.

"No", I said, "It's not that - there are a few about who think it's called 'Garnet'". Muttering imprecations, we continued on our original quest, but to no avail. The far end of Flagpole Rift - my first cave, in 1973, and I've only seen the far end about four or five times - is nasty. Careful not to offend the boulders, we looked around. No waterworn traces, no hope of any continuation. So we went North.

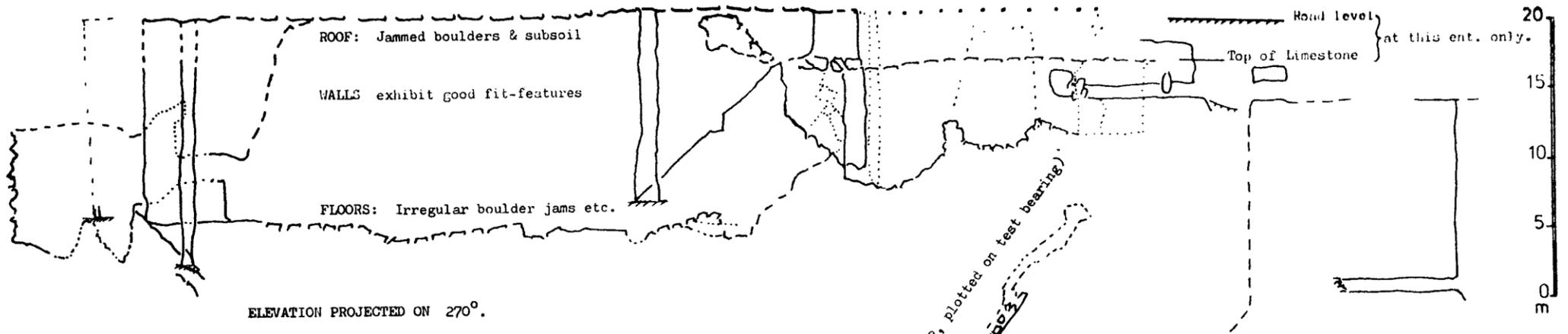
The path to Guano and Flagpole leads from a derelict roadside allotment, Southwards, down a steep gully (the remnants of a large rift wrecked by cliff retreat) and along the cliff. Above the gully was a choked phreatic tube, a tiny piece of it pierces an isolated rock left by superficial quarrying, above the opposite wall of the gully. Phil, Martin and Anthony had made a start on this dig when I was invited in. An attractive, roomy crawl, it was choked to the roof with current-bedded sands, above which was a layer of clay. Digging was easy and rapid.

About ten feet in, a large cross-joint was exhumed, just beyond which a small, powerfully-draughting air-space below a beautifully-moonmilky roof arrived to spur us on. A railway was installed, its cost in terms of the two sessions it took to make and install rapidly being outweighed by the digging rate going up to about ¾ ton per 2 hour evening session.

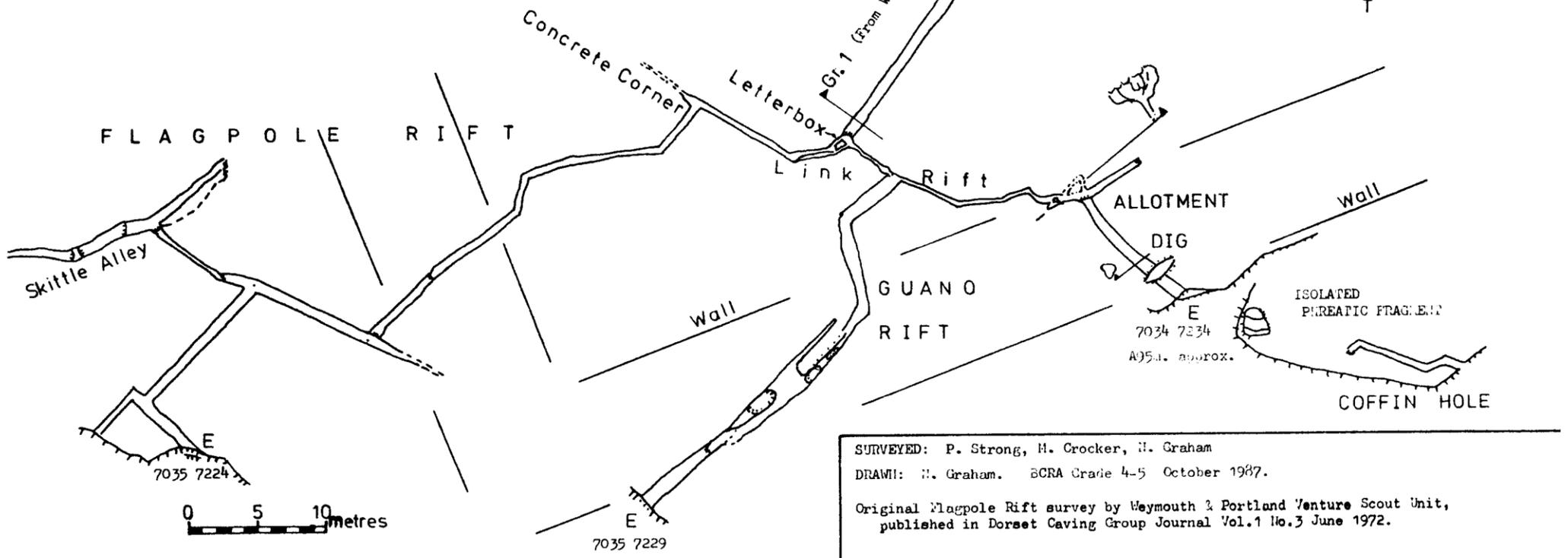
Some very odd formations were recovered from the spoil. Resembling flattish potatoes, they seem to be a sort of calcited sand "geode" lined with coarse, irregular, brownish crystals. The cave kept teasing us. Bends ahead seen through the air space did not exist when we pushed the face that far. The passage does in fact curve slightly, in a gentle arc from end to end. Wryly, I wondered about "Tantal Hole" for what so far was being logged as "Grove Cliff Dig", then equally wryly, decided that any Austrian readers might not like that: this place doesn't quite match the description I've read of the Tantalhöhle.

Then one night we saw the silt sloping down away from us. More doggy-digging and, yes, I think I can - just - yes I can get through- "Oh s...!" The tube had suffered the same fate as so many other karst caves on Portland. A later rift had smashed it to pieces. Moreover, the passage steps up into a large pocket which appears to approach the surface, and the cave is already very shallow. Breaching up through the road being bad for caving P.R., we sat down and Had Another Think. Later we were to learn this point lies under the Youth Custody Centre wall. Oops. Is the Home Secretary a caver?

Phil was first down the rift, through a dug squeeze. The ruins of the waterworn tube is seen in the roof of this rift, now with an easier entrance but with an entertaining wriggle further in, round a corner under a "singing-stal" (in wet weather). Later it occurred to us that this rift may be the right-hand one at the end of Guano Rift, so Phil went in to see. Voice connection, then light, then handshake. Within about ½ an hour we completed the second link. We now had a three-entrance system (sounds grand, that), hardly one to set the caving world afire with excitement, but entertaining nonetheless, and as has been said by other Club members elsewhere, it's still new cave.



NOTE: All passages are Mass-Movement Rifts, except Allotment Dig / Coffin Hole (solutional).



We commenced surveying in September 1987, working clockwise starting with the cliff line (partly so as not to waste a dry evening). The work was spread over several weeks, with a break to allow the Welsh's Green Swallet diggers to survey their finds.

The first session underground was in Flagpole. Reaching the first T- junction actually in the cave, the outer junction being behind an almost-separated stack, I chimneyed up about ten feet to measure passage height at the "obviously" choked branch. There above the choke "everyone knows is complete" - in one of Portland's busiest caves - was a squeeze past a dodgy flake into spacious rift. Incredulous, we squeeze in, carefully but vainly searching for footprints, etc. Delighted, we were about to start exploring and surveying it, when we heard strange rumbling noises. Rather eerie, they seemed to have no definite source. Then Martin thought he heard distant voices but there was only us in the cave? Recalling caving ghost stories, we put the sounds down to gunfire from either warships or the tank gunnery range at Lulworth, across Weymouth Bay to the East. Some time later, we were at one end of the new bit. Only then did a definite pattern become apparent.

"Skittles!" exclaimed Phil. Of course: the cave must pass under the alley of a private social club. I duly wrote "Skittle Alley Extension" on the survey pad.

Following this episode we attempted to push the next left-hand "T", but it proved too tight, though possibly wider beyond. Another look, with a precautionary footlooped rope for the return, is intended. This time, we did actually meet another party in there, a local youth group.

Current work (Feb.1988) concentrates on digging down the "tail" end of the Link Rift, below Allotment Dig. We are hoping its mud/scree choke is perched, permitting us to search for the conjectured continuation of Coffin Hole nearly 50 feet below. Digging Coffin Hole itself is the less-practicable option, probably involving mining through the cliff-retreat debris. So far we are about 15 feet down, digging a floor about 6ft long by 18" wide, the rocks becoming cleaner and slightly larger. Strong SE winds induce a good draught from the choke.

*** **

DESCRIPTION

ALLOTMENT DIG (NGR 7034 7234) is reached by a short, obvious traverse on the wall of the gully descending from the old walled allotment opposite the Youth Custody Centre fire-services gate. A roomy phreatic tube, its sculpted walls displaying mud stains corresponding to the silted level, it ends rather abruptly in a tiny, bouldery "chamber" above the start of Link Rift. To the right and down is the present dig. Ahead, Link Rift descends to a constricted comer then rises over boulders to a short crawl to the head of a narrow chimney. Beyond, a few feet of narrow going opens into Guano Rift.

GUANO RIFT (7035 7229) may be found by following the cliff South past the massive spoil heap, round a corner and up a 6ft "step" onto a steep earth slope rising to the cave. The slope continues up into the cave, to a short climb into a fine rift chamber. Steep boulders rise to a balcony above the entrance slope: anchors up here are for SRT practice sessions (no plastic rings though!). The way on is a hole in the rift chamber floor, revealing a careful free-climb down to a boulder slope. The rest of the cave is easy walking to the Link Rift T-junction: right is up to Allotment, Left up via a squeeze to flagpole Rift immediately beyond The Letterbox.

FLAGPOLE RIFT (7035 7224) lies around the next corner S of Guano Rift, above a short scramble. The cave is the obvious way through a set of interconnected rifts. Skittle Alley is entered through a squeeze about ten feet up the LH (partly-choked) branch of the first junction: right beyond the squeeze soon ends in a collapse, left leads over two blind pits to a choked narrowing.

CONT p155

EXTRACTS FROM AN AUSTRALIAN DIARY

CAVING IN THE NULLARBOR DESERT

NICK HAWKES

Part2

Concluded

Monday 27th April.

The original plan had been to do more surveying, but festering seemed to be the order of the day! Rudi, John and I followed several of the others out to Radio-location Point H, on the surface, a position which had been determined on C.E.G.S.A.'s previous trip. It was only a short walk, only some 15 minutes on the surface compared with 3+ hours underground. Just by it we found a blow hole which, after a small amount of digging, I could get into, but it didn't do much, just a 5ft drop into a tiny bell chamber. We continued walking and the others found another blow hole, but we could find only Aboriginal flints. Gary managed to pick up a couple of tektites, a type of meteorite, a cloud of them seemed to have swept across this area once upon a time.

Back at camp we spent some time flying kites in the afternoon. Rudi had brought several along as the Nullarbor is an excellent place to fly them. Also we chased a gecko, which are very slow, to get a photo.

Tuesday 28th April.

Today was a caving day. Either a trip to the South or to the North Cave. I decided to go with Max and Gary to the South Cave. The South Cave has a long crawl between its first and second rdf points. There are only three rdf points, each 250m apart, but we went in only 500m, this however took 1¼ hours. Then we went up a side passage where some surveying needed completing, into a chamber called APPLE CRUMBLE after its crumbly rock, and then down a very unstable boulder slope into another large chamber which we surveyed with all its side passages, none of which really went.

We spent all day, tying up all loose ends on the survey, coming out just as the sun had gone over the horizon. I put my name in the visitors' book in both caves, just in case any more people from Mendip pass through. The only other Brits I could see were Graham Wilton-Jones and Jane Clarke, Somerset, U.K.

Wednesday 29th April.

Ken and Graham went underground to tie up a tiny piece of surveying but the rest of us chose to stay on the surface, pack all our gear and enjoy the weather, which was warm, not hot since it was cloudy. Ken and Graham came back about 2pm, the last of the gear was packed and a convoy set off the THAMPANA CAVE about 50km down the track and a little further West, far enough to be into some trees again, not many and very stunted, but good to see them.

We set up camp on a slight rise between some trees, rather a pleasant spot in fact. Lots of creepy crawlies though: millipedes 6" long and ½" across with big hairy legs, wolf spiders with eyes like spotlights, and up in the trees are large nests which have caterpillars crawling all over them - good nightmare fodder!

We trundled off to investigate the cave entrance - owo! What an entrance! A gigantic blowhole with a phenomenal draught racing out, sticks thrown in this hole would come flying up with the strong draught howling out. This hole is at the base of a fairly wide collapse doline, it is really impressive. I decided to throw my hat in to see if it would come back out, with a bit of encouragement from the others, I might add! It did immediately, so I did it again and down it went until when nearly past the lower lip it came shooting up, but

not enough. Suffice to say it kept bobbing around for about five minutes, and with the help of a few stones to release it from the sides every now and again, it finally bounced up to me. A great source of entertainment! Geoff and Mac went back a little later and both their hats became lost down there, temporarily of course, until tomorrow when it's rigged.

Went for a short stroll around with Mark, looking for rabbits to shoot with his copper's pistol, but none were around, so went back to put the camp oven on and have the usual mix of vegies and Spam / tuna / corned beef, all stuffed into one pot, Then a compulsory three large helpings each to clean out the pot, another usual event, Gary had made what I thought he said was "condom pie", luckily however, since he was offering it around, it turned out to be "Quandom" (wild peach) pie. There were trees around our camp site but no fruit left on them; he had brought them from his home in Ceduna. The ones around the camp did have peach stones from which the kernels are edible.

Thursday 30th April.

A trip to Thampana Cave. A delayed start due to a large rain cloud hovering overhead, the cave floods when wet, but it passed without event and we descended into the magnificent blowhole. It was almost still when we went down but the sight below was no less impressive, a chamber belling out below this vertical tube, and even a few formations. A dead 'roo, a dead sheep, and lots of dead birds: apparently birds get sucked in when the draught is blowing inwards. There was a whole bunch of dead crows in one corner.

John and I went off early, but neglected to take our lunch, leaving it at the entrance. We found one of the main routes on, at the base of a long, large stream passage chamber, down the Plughole into the Drain, a long, crawly, slightly damp passage which finally led into the Terminal Chambers. The others followed after we had exhausted ourselves looking around a bit and wondering whether or not they were going to come this way. A survey team was found, which we managed to avoid! Mac and Geoff came through and went checking for a way on, then a bit later John, Mark and I did the same thing. I dug through a long, very tight crawl and came into some passage, but soon found it connected back, A much easier way continued however, and I went along alone for a while, through crawls and chambers. Anyway, I decided to head back. It wasn't far and I was hungry, but I just could not remember where the passage out was, and it was a "delightful" maze. I tried all over for probably fifteen minutes, maybe it was just ten, but it seemed a fearful while as it's not much fun being lost. Eventually someone shouted "Mick!" - what a relief! John had come to look for me, as he wanted his lunch!

I was by then glad to go out, back through the Drain, then up The Plughole. Here we decided to look around for The Tube, another passage going off the main chamber. I found strongly-draughting hole so dug into 50m or so of passage, then headed up and met Gary, who showed us where The Tube is. We decided to go quickly down there before lunch. Mark went out to make pancakes.

The Tube is pleasant walking-size tubular passage, going to a series of chambers, the later ones with stalactites of gypsum, with twinning crystals all over, producing some amazing shapes; most enjoyable. We came out, had some pancakes, enjoyed the sun, and went down again to take piccies in The Tube. Coming out of the entrance each time was exciting as there was an incredible wind blowing out - one's boiler suit filled up with air so you felt like a balloon climbing a ladder.

When we came out, Mac and Geoff had returned and had found a way on, and a good one. About 1km of new passage with some very fine formations in a chamber at the end. I had become lost just at the start of it.

Friday 1st May.

It was raining. Not really on in the Nullarbor; a desert and it goes and rains! Packing up camp was a fairly wet business but by 11 we were ready for off. Driving was most entertaining on the mud tracks, covered in puddles and exceedingly slippery, we were regularly sliding all over the road A bit like being on a continuous

skid pan. Luckily we never actually became bogged although fairly close to it all too often. Kangaroos bouncing along the roadside every now and again, and some Wedge-Tail Eagles - or "Wegies" - stopped any monotony.

After a slight detour taking the wrong track - there are tracks all over the place so it's pretty amazing we didn't make more mistakes - we drove on, turning South to WINBIRRA CAVE, a huge doline. We had lunch at the top, then went down the hole to a concert-hall-size chamber with a very small green lake just off it. The cave is formed in chalky limestone with some chert bands used by the Abos.

After visiting this spectacular hole, we drove North to the next one in this series of dolines, all of which are thought to be parts of one gigantic cave system. The next was the KUTOWALLA DOLINE, a huge doline with a cricket-ground-sized area in the middle of it, and a few rabbits. Then again retracing our path North to the next little hole: a DIG!! Started, by Western Australia Speleo Sub Group, it's called a dig but they spent only one day on it, hardly up to English standards!

Next, ABRAKURRIE. Now this one was really special, the main cave consists of just one chamber, but it was big, really big, in fact the biggest chamber in Australia - it was HUGE! Approximately 25m high x 30m wide x 600m, and the amazing thing is that the floor is flat and sandy, so one can just stroll around in comfort, luxurious with not even an inkling of hard work. It feels as though one is in a huge hanger, a big, long passage with an arched roof high above you and occasional domes with a sprinkling of boulders beneath where roof collapses have occurred. Just inside the entrance Rudi, an archaeologist, pointed out some Abo paintings, well, handprints, on the wall. At the other end of the Abrakurrie Doline is a tiny dig with a howling gale, and this may lead into something on that side. Digging is unpleasant due to the strong draught, since each time one touches a rock a cloud of dust rushes into ones eyes, most unpleasant, goggles and face mask are needed; but the dig looks great, probably a couple of hours and one would be into something good, it's enough to make any British caver sick with envy!

After getting back to the 'main' track East to Eucla again, we continued on stopping briefly to look at some Abo. rockholes, waterholes, called the TOOLGAROA HOLES, a few dead animals around since people come and shoot them there, then on another 30 Km., still skidding in every direction, really exciting, with regular outbursts from Mark of "Oh no, we're all going to die!", but we made it to WEEBUBBIE, another large doline with a cave in. This one is known for its lakes and I was informed they were good for swimming in. It was still quite cool outside unfortunately, so I wasn't quite in the mood I might have been for a swim, but took my trunks and towel, climbed down into the chamber, down another big boulder slope through more white chalky limestone, finally arriving at a beautiful green lake. There are two lakes, a small one and a large one, so we went to the large one after a quick look at the small one. I stripped off, put my caving lamp and battery back on, then went in. It was reasonably warm, so no worries about staying in for a long time, which was a good thing as it is a 300ft swim to the end, and deep - up to 40m. - clear to the bottom all the time. At the end one can dive through 50m to another chamber. It must be a great dive, not like cave diving in England, beautiful clear green water. A few bats in the roof sounded a little unhappy by my shouting in the final echoing chamber before the sump. Then I swam back in silence to all the others who were sitting on the shore, a really incredible feeling swimming along in this beautiful green lake as calm as a millpond.

After coming out it was back on the track for just another 15Km and finally back to civilisation (of sorts!) and real roads. After a brief stop in Eucla to let the Police know we were out of the Nullarbor area, and leaving Brad behind there, we drove about 85Km East to camp just after sunset, by another cave, just off the main road. It's a large doline called WAVE CAVE, but no real cave at the base, just a little dig.

Saturday 2nd May.

The end of my Nullarbor trip and we wake up to rain. I don't believe it! Seeing a herd of camels by the side of the road later in the day was more appropriate.

ON the expedition:-

Graham Pilkington, Ken Boland (priest), John Taylor, Max Meth, Mark (policeman), Gary, Brad, Geoff, Ruddi (archaeologist), Tom and Mary (U.S.A.).



'Twas Christmas day in The Wessex. . . .

Compiled by the Editor from Logbook entries originally by various:

The 1987 Christmas / New Year holiday was a particularly active one for the Wessex, including as it did two well-attended away trips. A few stayed at Upper Pitts over Christmas itself, having installed all home comforts needed.

Christmas Eve: Graham Johnson and Nick Hawkes went to Longwood August - "not as good as Tasmania apparently. Reynold's a bit wet, not the place to be on Christmas Eve.... Wonder belay on Swing Pitch."

CHRISTMAS DAY. "Swildons Hole. Santa Hann and Rudolph the Red-Nosed Foyle (hic) down to the Old Grotto to see how the MNRC Elves work off their hangovers. Out in time for the dinner-time sermon by the rev. Roger Dors" P.H.

Charterhouse Cave saw two tourist trips led by N.G., taking more sand and cement to the dig site. The bank above Read's Grotto had slumped:

"P.H., Dunc, J.R. Two hours digging a promising little swallet near Charterhouse. Removed several large boulders and heaps of organic clatch. Once we'd opened up the entrance a bit of drystone walling to stabilise the area. The easiest 200 feet this year, pity the UBSS opened Read's Grotto in 1923."

Welsh's Green, Pierre's Pot and "Fester Hole" (Tween Twins) digs were dug: see appropriate 'From The Log' sections. Other tourist trips on Mendip were Swildons by (variously) Herbie + 4 Reading 76th Sea Scouts (to Two); Nick Pollard (Four, solo); Jim Rands, John & Joe of BEC and 1 SMCC (Two); and Reservoir Hole: Nick Hawkes and sister, Matt Tuck (BEC) Graham Johnson, who enjoyed a "very nice trundle around a superlative cave".

These trips come up to New Year's Eve, itself celebrated in fine style at the Hunters', though by noticeably less people this year.

Rich Websell recorded two South Wales excursions:

28/12/87. RW, Kev Gannon, Howard Price, Boris. OFD III. Nice trip, got lost, what a surprise! Met the WSG. Undergrond by 12 o'clock due to lack of Foyle Factor. Tommy Gunn (Howard) & the Goose Green Gang went caving!

Agen Allweld. RW and 2 Chelsea / Gloucester members, Phil Dunkerley and Mike -. Via very wet (in dry grots) Southern Stream Passage to the Gothic extension, where Mike had previously bolted up an aven about 200ft from the terminal choke. Mike climbed and lowered a ladder so we all went up to explore the leads. All very loose, not very promising. The extensions are very impressive with some very high avens, but the whole place is bone dry. Left Mike to camp overnight (headcase), Paul and I exited in 1hr 50mins from Gothic climb. The rest, including Foyle, festered.

Whatever he may have done or not in Wales, he certainly did not fester in the Dales: Mr. Foyle writes:-

30th December 1987. Lost John's. Pete Watts, Nigel Graham, Malc Foyle, Gordon Kaye, Keith Sanderson, Steve Pickersgill, Alan, Becky, Francoise (a Belgian friend), Andy (CPC), Trevor Faulkener, Dave St. Pierre. Rigged Centipede route on rope, down to Master Cave. Look up and down stream. Superb cave. (Got rigged over on way out by Belgian pirates -NG.)

Derbyshire was the venue for a very well attended Wessex meet, it was a shame about the flooding though. Tav records:-

1-3/12/87. WCC in Derbyshire. Large contingent descended on Technical Speleological Group hut (Castleton) for Peak Cavern meet. Peak was unfortunately flooded but some fine caving was done.

P8. Jim Moon, Doug Adams, Tav, Graham Johnson, Nick Pollard, Nick Hawkes, Matt Tuck (BEC). Fine if somewhat cocked-up trip in a very wet cave. Both pitches are exhilarating when the stream is high.

Giants Hole, GJ, NP, NH, Tav, MT, James Eaton, Tony Nagle. Pleasant ramble down a fine streamway.

Many thanks to John Cordingley for arranging accommodation and cave booking, and to the TSG for an enjoyable weekend. The Upper Pitts travelling sofa enjoyed it too.

Pete Hann however has rather untoward memories of the trip; writing:-

Peak Cavern. PH, Dunc Frew, Malc Foyle, NG, Jim Rands. Although the cave was flooded, we went in to photograph Swine Hole, on the left just inside the entrance (overflow passage going down to the resurgence sump). Water high and flowing fast, good for photos, or it would have been if a pulse of water hadn't washed the camera and tripod down the passage whilst PH was setting up the flashes. The camera was followed by Nigel and Malc who dragged the dripping wreck out full of water. As this made photography impossible we changed and got wet inside ourselves - in the pub.

A few also went walking around Castleton. Dunc and Judy Clarke (CSS), also visited Treak Cliff Cavern.

And thus did the Wessex ring out the old, ring in the new.

GROVE CLIFF CAVES (cont. from p.150)

Back in the main cave, passing the next junction a pit is crossed, in the walls of which a protruding ammonite and its corresponding cast show wall movement both laterally and very slightly longitudinally. The next point is Concrete Comer (presumably building work above punctured the cave roof), then The Letterbox choke. You have a choice: the Letterbox or its bypass to the right. Immediately beyond, right is the narrow descent to Guano Rift, ahead is a climb down in wider rift, then a climb up through another choke to a final, rather awkward, drop (possibly needing a sling or combined tactics to return) into a horribly-loose final boulder chamber.

Flagpole Rift exhibits fine features typical of this type of cave: a huge fit feature dominates the Skittle Alley. The cave is suitable for novices, out its upper levels between the second T junction, round Concrete Comer to the Letterbox Choke, provide an intriguing traverse line. Watch out for the chert though: it's sharp, and it's none too solid!

All told, the system provides nearly 700 feet of entertainment in rather unusual passage. You'll be parched after: nearest hostelry is The Clifton, back along the Grove Road...



TOWER KARST GUIZHOU

**BRITISH SPELEOLOGICAL
EXPEDITION 1988
SOUTH WEST GUIZHOU- CHINA**

OBJECTIVES, OUTLINE.

We have finalised our departure dates from the U.K., and have one group of cavers, ten including Bob Lewis (leader) setting out on February 6th; and a second group of six including Val and I leaving on February 26th.

Our expedition has permission to return to the Anlung area, which the reconnaissance group visited in 1986, and we are allowed to stay there until the end of March.

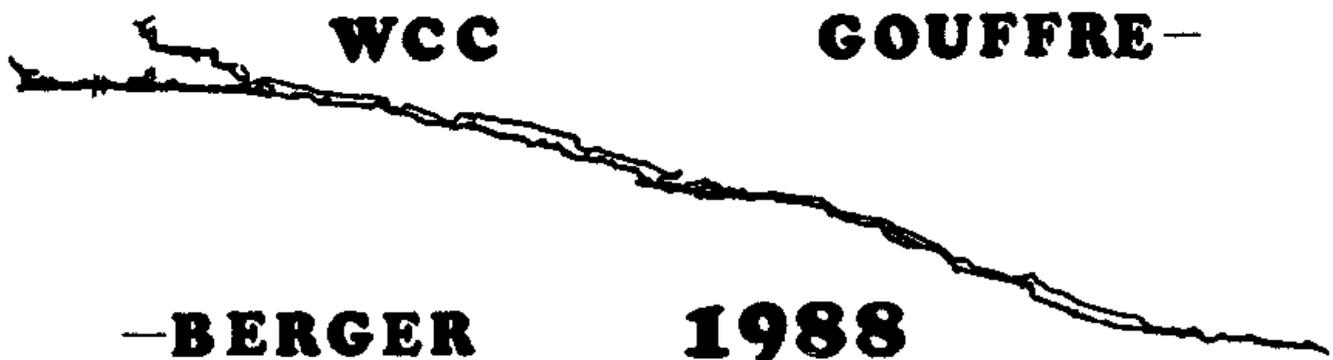
Both the Anlung County Government and the Guizhou Normal University in Guiyang are involved with us. We have been specifically asked to survey the river caves which we hope to explore. Hopefully this may be of some practical value to the people of Guizhou, whose lives are very hard in such a remote, rocky area.

The expedition is made up mainly of people from the Bristol / Mendip area, the largest "club" group being the Severn Valley. We have two medics, both from up North, Sarah Gregson and Paul Cooper. Ray Mansfield is our U.K. "agent" while we are away.

The Royal Geographical Society has recognised us, officially, but we have mainly financed ourselves. We have had some stal., brought back from the 1986 trip, dated for the Guiyang University. The cost of this was borne by the expedition (it was bloody expensive!) as a gesture of goodwill towards our Chinese friends.

Obviously we are all looking forward to our trip!

- PAUL WESTON
(Chairman)
12-1-88.



ENQUIRIES AND £50 DEPOSITS (for tackle purchase) to:
JIM MOON, 49 SOMERVILLE ROAD, ST. ANDREWS ROAD,
BRISTOL BS7 9AD. AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, PLEASE.

See Back Page

**STOP PRESS: Personal kit purchases via the Club at a Club DISCOUNT!
Details to be announced!**

50 YEARS AGO

From WCC Circulars 29 – 31.

These were short Circulars, of mainly administrative content.

No. 29 (December 1937). At the A.G.M. Mr. H.E. Balch was elected President. Vice-Presidents were: Rt. Hon. Earl Waldegrave, John Hughes, Mrs. Dobson and Prof. E.K. Tratman. It was resolved that Members who are professionally interested in caving may become Club Members. The Annual Dinner was attended by 84 Members and friends, and festivities continued until midnight.

Members were reminded of the access rules for Lamb Leer: a signed indemnity was required, non-members needed the signatures of two of the Trustees before being allowed to enter the cave. "No exceptions can be made under any circumstances to this Rule." Cow Hole was "notified as dangerous within the meaning of the caving code": members were "strongly advised" not to visit it. Mr. E.W. Sharpe was intending to start searching for "a lost cave on Western Mendip", and invited assistance. Forthcoming trips advertised an evening visit to Wookey Hole, a Club Supper (a Wednesday evening event), and a U.B.S.S. Meeting at which E. Simpson would talk on "Caves and Caving".

No. 30 (January 1938). A stern reminder - "YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED" - to members contemplating a dig to consult the Hon. Sec. first, to obviate any access problems and to ascertain conditions of permission. Forthcoming events included visits to Old Mill Colliery at Paulton, and Wells Museum, and an Informal Meeting, at which members could "Shew slides or give short talks on any subject connected with caving".

No. 31 (February 1938). Wells Cathedral School Caving Club, under the leadership of J. Carlton and C.W. Harris, with 10 members, became an Affiliated Club. A branch of the Wessex was formed at Oxford University, with Norreys R.K. Davis as its Hon. Sec. Further details on the Informal Meeting: talks would include Explosives (Harris), Surveying (Duck), the Rescue Organisation (Dr. Crook), Photography (Murrell), etc.

"Wednesday March 30th. Top of Swildons".

WESSEX CAVE CLUB

members - & guests - only weekend

June 4th/5th 1988

BARREL!

PUT THE DATE IN YOUR DIARY NOW !!

WCC AGM & Annual Dinner

15th October 1988

THE
WESSEX CAVE CLUB
HEADQUARTERS BIRTHDAY APPEAL

THE Appeal has now closed. Raised in order to enable the Club to have the new hot water and heating systems installed, thereby hastening considerably the completion of the Upper Pitts alterations and improvements, it has succeeded.

THANK-YOU then, from the Committee, all who have loaned or donated to the Appeal Fund, or who have helped by donating in kind, such as by giving materials or tools, or providing professional expertise.

WE would remind Members that the Appeal was set up with great care: the Committee sought legal advice on its administration.

Thank you-

-The Committee.

RIC HALLIWELL

has donated to the WCC Library a copy of his Doctorate Thesis, "Aspects of limestone Waters near Ingleton ... ". In three volumes, the thesis is the result of hydrological studies of (chiefly) Ingleborough and of Kingsdale. Its chapters cover historical studies and the development of karst research; the physical geography of the study area; purposes and methods of study and descriptions of sampling and study sites; chemistry of the limestones and waters; a detailed study of Swinsto Hole as one of the sampling sites; analysis of results, and conclusions; Summary. Appendices and Bibliography.

Full Reference:

HALLIWELL R.A. "Aspects of limestone Waters Near Ingleton, North Yorkshire", (Thesis, Doctorate of Philosophy), University of Hull, 1977.

A Member recently asked the Editor whether or not the "alternative" China Expedition was going ahead. He meant the one led by Paul Weston and Bob Lewis.

Yes it is: see elsewhere in this issue. I would say though, that though the word was used quite innocently, this NOT an "Alternative" expedition! It is a China Expedition in its own right, with its own definite aims based on the earlier Reconnaissance, so cannot be an alternative to anything.

It is interesting to note that the Bristol cavers' trip seemed to be organised without the great fuss and palaver of the BCRA one, though its members have largely paid their own way, with Sports Council assistance but not (Paul Weston tells me) commercial sponsorship. Where there's a will ...

-N.G.

So helicopter company Bristows are canvassing Parliament for contract Search and Rescue services, are they? That sort of thing wants watching....

FROM THE LOG

Charterhouse Cave

21st November. Pete Hann, Julie Bolt. More cement in "boulders' revenge". This time it decided to pin my head to the wall, do I really want to play any more? Good draught, still no sign of water. The entrance to Read's Grotto has fallen in.

Eastwater Cavern

17th October. Pete & Alison Moody, Geoff Newton. To Threadneedle Street. All to end to investigate possible lead. Geoff cleared out a fair amount of clatch and Alison was able to squeeze up to look. Straight ahead closes up, but back overhead it could open out. A large rock flake prevents entry. GN and PM defeated by the alternative high-level rote out: a ridiculous Letterbox squeeze. A very aptly named bit of passage.

24th October, To Blackwall Tunnel. The duck is still open, the drain taking quite a reasonable stream happily. It looks as if we've done it. (Hopefully) removed flake in Threadneedle Street on the way out.

7th November. PM, Mark Madden, Kev Clarke. Cave had dried out a lot from the previous weekend. Duck at start of Blackwall Tunnel was open, showing no sign of having sumped. On to Whitehall, where a brief halt was called when KC's wetsuit began to disintegrate. MM very nobly lent him a T-shirt to help out. Work face at end of Whitehall could not be reached: I found the going too tight where the narrow vertical slot drops into larger crawl, 20ft from the stal. constriction. Will have to get the wife - who's done it before - to come down and give encouragement. On to Cenotaph Aven, which suitably impressed MM & KC. Then slow haul out.
-P.M.

(31st October). P & AM, Nick Pollard. Cave very wet so aborted Whitehall trip and went to Threadneedle Street instead. Previous week's bang had been effective, we were able to squeeze into rift above squeeze. Unfortunately it pinches out, looks as if perhaps it heads back to connect with other rift. Tried for aural connection between Regent Street and original dig in first rift, without success.

11th November. NP, Max. Collected tools from Rift Chambers.

16th December. Aubrey Newport, Graham Johnson. Fired a small charge in roof of First Rift Chamber. Looks interesting. This dig is above Nick's original dig, is a rift, quite roomy and sloping up at about 45°. No connection to the main rift at all, apart from the bit we banged.

17th December. NP, GJ. To 1st Rift Chamber to see what previous night's bang had done. Graham started lump-hammering and after about ¼ hour had moved all the loose rock he could. Graham said it was still too tight, but had another go and managed to pass the constriction. Nick also managed to pass the squeeze after a struggle, it is horrifically tight. We then explored about 70ft of well-decorated rift passage, with all ways on too tight. This should settle the digging barrel! Thanks to Aubrey for lending his services.

19th December. NP, GJ, Nick Hawkes, Rich Websell, Rich - (non member), Tav. Surveying trip to the new find in Rift Chamber. Tav took Rich - on a tour, whilst Nick and Graham were the only two to negotiate the squeeze and survey the new stuff. Total about 90 feet +.

Pierre's Pot

14th November. P & AM. Surveyed part of Nasty Boulder Rift and high-level downstream continuation.

15th November. PM. Attempt to dig up in the roof of The Way On looks doomed to failure. Had a thorough look around trying to find an alternative site, without success. SEE 19-12-87, below!

Portland

21st October. NG, Phil Strong. Perused Westcliff for any sign of a dig site into South end of Sandy Hole, from which a choked passage heads apparently cliff-wards. No luck, any such seems buried under considerable depth of grassy debris slopes. Then over to Grove Cliff, to triangular survey approach to the caves there (so as to link cave survey to OS map).

18th November. ALLOTMENT DIG (hitherto logged as "Grove Cliff Dig"). NG, PS. Prospects not looking so good but we'll carry on at least a bit deeper.

9th December. NG, PS, Martin Crocker, There we were, changing prior to a session in ALLOTMENT DIG, in the layby opposite the Youth Custody Centre fire services gate. Strewn around were a pick, sledgehammer, rope, etc, etc. Then along trooped a Police dog patrol (on exercise?). Phil was ever so worried, anyone would think the dig, in a rift in the passage floor, is under the YCC wall... The Police didn't bat an eyelid, just exchanged "Good evenings"; though they had paused to look over the wall, down at the cave entrance - do they know all about it? Ah well, 2hrs steady progress.

-N.G.

Swildons Hole

7th December. AN, GJ. Rolling Thunder.

16th December. Merv, Max, Scotty. BARNES' LOOP DIG. Cleared spoil then looked at prospects. Not looking good, may have a look at opposite side of streamway.

Tween Twins Hole

29th November. Jim Rands, Aiden, Roz. Took Roz to see another mined passage (after a Singing River trip). Unfortunately there has been a (small?) collapse. After a bit of rabbiting we passed this obstruction into a chamber with a false (stal) floor. As Roz was admiring the formations:

Aiden: "Is that a snake?"

Me: "Yes, an adder I think".

Roz suddenly tried to push a 4" gap with great speed. There was no need as the snake had been killed by the collapse. The air problem seems to have been solved by a slight draught. Still worth-digging. -J.R.

1st December. Tav & Gen. Festered, what more can I say? (cave's nickname is "Festerhohle" -Ed.). Way on is 60° down and full of "tihs".

13th December. JR, Aiden. Stabilised collapsed area, making it safer. That took up most of morning. Stopped for a brew and soup, the kitchen was set up on the terrace: the "patio" is coming on quite well. After lunch, we were joined by Nigel G. and digging commenced in earnest. Draught intermittent, but no air problems now. 6 hours: it's looking good. -J.R.

Welsh's Green Swallet

24th October to 23rd December. GJ & Co. Thirteen sessions, making steady progress.

21/22nd November. Welsh's Green Swallet dye-tested by GJ, PH and Duncan Frew, assisted by Dr. W.I. Stanton. Tests to St. Andrews Well, Wookey Hole and Glencot Spring, sampled every two hours, proved 20 hour flow to St. Andrew's Well.

24th October. DRUNKARDS' HOLE, BOS SWALLET. Nick Pollard. Afternoon poke about. Bos was quite interesting but could do with a good clean up, lots of broken glass, etc.

24th October. SWILDONS TWO. Phil Hendy, Anne Hale, Colin Williams, +2. Sporting trip to Sump One. Not too much water, and no problems for the novices except for lack of speed. Colin, Anne and Derek

through the sump. Only two cases of lamp pox, but Phil's wetsuit fell apart, having rusted through underuse.
HF.

ALSO Rich Warman, Laurence Smith, to Two.

24th October. WOOKEY HOLE. Malc Foyle & Rich Websell went to bottom "end" of previous trip, plus that of Cuthbert's, Eastwater, ... Excellent trip to 24, explored streamway and side passage to head of pitch. 5½ hrs.
-M.F.

25th October. G.B. CAVERN Rescue Practice. WCC doing what comes naturally. Successful communications throughout, courtesy of Mr. Prewer's 'Grunterphone' (unlike the previous weekend's fiasco). Not a bad turnout, maybe we learnt something, even if it's "not to give the hot air breather to a diver to put together, you know what happens when they're let loose on high-pressure cylinders". CO₂ snow does not warm the victim up. Apart from the communications, the important thing, i.e. getting the victim out, went very smoothly.

17th October. WESSEX AGM - OR SWILDONS.

After a pint or two in the Hunters' what better to do than sleep it off in the AGM? This was not to be - Swildons rescue. Dislocated shoulder by Blue Pencil Passage.

PH stayed on surface with the Grunterphone, Jeff Price, Dunc (underground "Grunter"), Merv, Scotty,+2 Imperial College lads set off down, picking up Leg and Marachov at the Twenty, and Malc, Stumpy and Kev Gannon returning with diving kit from Nine. Reached the victim and sent message via Grunterphone to surface. This was the only communication during the rescue, due to operator error.

'The victim's shoulder went back in of its own accord during the rescue, and he made his own way out. Accumulated Mr. Drake, Dr. Boycott and numerous others along the way. The BEC let us down a bit, with the exception of Mr. Jarrett who brought the coffee to the Twenty.

Out just slightly late for the Dinner, which was held up for us by ½ hour. Victim and others somewhat bemused by the quick change to posh clothes. We learnt a lot about the Grunterphone. Mr. Hann had a pleasant afternoon wandering around the fields listening to the navigation beacons (no, not a new pop group, but a mixture of beeps, squeaks and woodpecker noises that the Grunterphone picks up. (Perhaps we could market this as the sound of the future, it's as good as some of the drivel...).

27th October. THRUPE LANE. NP, Martin Palfrey(SBSS). To Avalanche Pot.

30th. October. DAREN CILAU. NP, GJ. To look at Epocalypse chokes. Not impressed although a minute's digging in a side passage produced 30ft of passage: not a lot for Daren! We will be back soon.

31st October. GOATCHURCH CAVERN, M, J & E Hewins, gentle potter about trying to take photos amid the steam and boy scouts. Probably last trip of 87.

1st November. SWILDONS HOLE. Rich Websell (Uncle) and Russell Hicks (Nephew). Down to Sump Two, yuppie trip, 2½ hrs.

31st Oct. - 2nd Nov. NORTH. Hon. Ed's attempt on the Number-of-Clubs-Caved With-in-One-(Long)-Weekend.

KISDON CAVE (at Keld), on the Saturday, with Moldywarps Speleo Group on the occasion of their 21st Anniversary. Short, easy, gloriously claggy cave entered by old mine level, the was the venue of the MSG's first club trip, and we visited it after two of the founders had duly posed at the entrance for a copy of the 1966 group photo Evening: very enjoyable dinner at the Buck Hotel in Reeth, attended by about 40 people and rounded off by a slide show of their explorations over the years (including Portland). The day's caving had been suitably complemented by the dig in a shakehole near Keld, which yielded a narrow, loose rift to a constriction and view down: duly named "ANNIVERSARY POT".

Sunday: SWINSTO HOLE through trip with Parrot, the Halliwells and others on a Craven PC club meet. On ladder, wet and cold.

Monday: "Igue-bashing" (a Dordogne trip phrase) with Bob Pyke, Ken Dawe and two friends from Derwent Mountaineering Club (DMC trip): RUMBLING HOLE. Party somewhat diminished by a sprained back and an injured knee, so only head of 4th pitch was reached, but an interesting and worthwhile SRT 'Join-The-Dots' exercise. Superb entrance shaft. -N.G.

31st October. BONE HOLE. Tav & Gen digging with MCG. Thanks to John Beauchamp for the trip.

7th November. SWILDONS HOLE. Jim Moon, Doug Adams. Short Round Trip, with detour to Four. A fine perambulate through muddy reaches of the cave. Met 18 others en route - my word it's getting crowded these days. Doug appreciated the finer points of Blue Pencil on his first visit down it. Cowsh Avens were suitably disgusting. Water low in 1, 2 and 4 streamways but the ducks were quite full. Lots of wet puddles just before and after Blue Pencil - the roof must be developing a leak. Appreciated the "new" duck after the Troubles which has filled up since my last visit. 3½-ish hours and lots of people ruckles on the way. -J.M.

7th November. LANGCLIFFE POT / ODDMIRE. GJ, NP, 'Dalek' (BPC), Fritz, 'Bucket', Tony and Brian (CPC). To look at possible dig sites. Stopped short at Nemesis by large collapse blocking way on a little way beyond the pitch. A rather sick dig site now awaits, some work!

7th November. BOREHAM CAVE. Kev Gannon, Rich Websell, Malc Foyle. Early start planned (theory), late start in practice. Kev was bricking it, Rich and Malc were ... pass! Arrived at entrance eventually and kitted up. First sump great, big and clear. Second sump; Malc took 3-5 minutes to go as many feet, the slot is not as easy as you think if you're the wrong side of the line. The guide-book is not very clear, you have 4 dives to get to 9!! The dry cave is superb. China Shop is so good that when you have seen it, you think that you shouldn't go there again, because the stals are just so close to you. The rest of the cave is very good: fine stal and fine passage shapes. Dive out OK. Rich had a spot of bother in the slot - and wasn't the only one! This is a superb trip. (Dave, it was good). 6hrs. -Malc

7th November. YORKSHIRE: Mongo Gill.

LANGCLIFFE / ODDMIRE. GJ, NP, "Dalek" (B.P.C.), F. Following an abortive trip to Langcliffe to rig the cave at 3a.m. (we couldn't see the road so what chance Oddmire entrance?). Maggie the Flame-Queen, Tone & Tuffty (M.N.R.C.), Mahroom as well, Ric Halliwell, Dunc, Pete H., Tony Whitehouse (C.P.C.), Down Shockle Shaft, potted through to North Shaft where Ric and the MNRC free-climbed out to save the day by getting us to the pub on time by saving a couple of hours grovelling back the way we came. A brief investigation of South Entrance was halted by the imminence of closing time. Why does the Wessex keep booking this place? Admittedly it has its moments, but it's "not what I came 500 - well 250 - miles to do".

12th November Yordas Cave. Malc & Fi, Kev & Gaja, Rich W., Gary Smith, Tone, Tuffty - and the dog, Tex. Well we got underground! (not forgetting the pub: the Sportsman closed on time, the barmaid seemed sure Gary would survive until 7pm, we weren't so sure. Scenic Dales tour by PH & Sandy, DF, Tone and Tuffty. Yordas was - or looked - as crowded as Bernie's Cafe!

14th November. SWILDONS SHATTER SERIES. NG, Paul Lambert. Paul's first visit there. Nigel not amused by other people's knitting on the Twenty. In Wet Way, out Dry Way, stream flowing very nicely, good trip. -P.L.

14th November. DAREN CILAU. NP, GJ, Tav (Rob Taviner, Matthew Tuck (B.E.C.) Good nine-hour trip to Far Epocalypse where we spent many hours digging a futile silted passage. Tav took many photos, mostly of the Antlers and Urchin Oxbow. Nick looked at lots of stupid, hopeless-looking side passages.

15th November. SINGING RIVER MINE. NG, PL, Simon -? (prospective). Sunday stroll up, down, round and round, cairns everywhere. Don't ask how, but we located the streamway and main chambers - and the way out. Pleasant wamble.

14th November. LONGWOOD HOLE. Doug Adams, Steve Marriot. Nice trip, cave to ourselves, very wet. Steve's first trip to Longwood; Though fit he felt it the next day. -D.A.

21st November. LONGWOOD / AUGUST. Doug Adams, Tav, Jim Moon, Di Rubery. A Saturday afternoon potter down a well-loved hole. Something of a training trip for Di. Wettish conditions made streamway (August) mildly entertaining. Our "novice" was very tired on way out - cave 2 Di 1? Met another party on way down: too many people, some on carbide. Tav said the necessary words! 3ish hours of amusement.

21st November. SWILDONS SHORT ROUND TRIP. A. Summerskill, N. Marachov, S. Hall, Lydia Ormerod (S.J.P.C.), R. Blake, I. McKenzie, B. McNeill (last three, Alberta Speleological Society, Canada).

After a G.B. trip, and not relishing the prospect of the Ladder Dig duck passing in Furries, returned to Upper Pitts for Nick, Sarah and Lydia, then drove to Priddy Green. Down Swildons, unhindered until just before climb up into Tratman's Temple. Swift progress to Mud Sump, where Ian turned back due to furry suit and having done the trip in '84. Easy progress to first Trouble, where bailing didn't open up the duck enough for Sarah, who exited with Mick. Rest continued with a short excursion to Sump 2, then out. First time for Lydia, Brian and Rick. First sump dive for the Canadians. Super trip, about 4 hours. -A.S.

26th November (Not in Log book). WOOKEY HOLE. Dave Pike (C.D.G. / B.E.C.) was rescued by accompanying divers during a practice / demonstration session with the sump rescue kit, when the mask flooded. He was resuscitated and taken to Bristol Royal Infirmary, subsequently making a full recovery.

29th November. SILICA MIMES (Pont Nedd Fechan). Rich W., Kev Gannon, Malc Foyle. Quick swim around to get over Wednesday (26/11). Big passage, nice and clear, but bloody freezing.

29th November. SINGING RIVER MINE. Jim, Aiden, Roz. 2 hr trip, first past the entrance series for Jim and Aiden, Roz's first trip down this lovely mine. Water levels high, great fun was had by all. No route-finding difficulty, surprise, surprise, this time! Then To "FESTERHOHLE" (see above). -J.R.

29th November. SWILDONS ONE. Tav, HG, Beverley -? Tourist trip for Beverley, who had only caved once before (in Burrington). Cave full of weege, but Bev enjoyed herself. And caved well. -Tav.

29th November. SWILDONS NORTH-WEST STREAM PASSAGE. GJ, Keir Malpas (an Australian caver, prospective WCC member). Good trip despite masses of people and the smell of carbide and turds at bottom of pitch into N.W.S.P..

30th November. EASTWATER CAVERN (West End). Nick Pollard, Martin Palfrey (S.B.S.S.). Good trip to beyond Blackwall Tunnel, Aberfan and Jubilee Line. Took club ladders off Lolly Pot on exiting. Please note: only Gladmans pitch is now rigged.

5th December. YORKSHIRE.

DEATH'S HEAD / BIG MEANIE. Extricated a stuck Parrot from Big Meanie - it sort of flapped its wings and asked for ladder, is this the second coming of Mr. Elliot, or what? Death's Head: NP, Matt Tuck, abseiled entrance pitch, took pictures, then out.

LOST JOHN'S. Keith & Ros Fielder, NG, DF, Vaughan + plus 2 from Edinburgh. A pleasant Sunday trip, Cathedral and Dome to Battleaxe traverse, since Rumbling Hole (our planned trip) was well and truly stitched up, dot-to-dot cave guide style. In retrospect I take it all back, Keith, I am now led to believe this other party was Mr. Sanderson & co: ie, on booking!! -D.F.

11th December. DAREN CILAU. GJ, N.P. Another silly digging session in Far Epocalypse.(Kitchen climb). Long-term stuff again. Next time - Time Machine area. Watch this space.

12th December. SWILDONS TWO. Ken and Angus Dawe, Jim Moon. A bit of honest touring. Down to 2, back to Approach Passage, on to Black Hole. Angus' first visit there, Ken and Jim had crossed it in the distant past. Off along the series to the bitter end, back down the Hole itself for a furl around, look in Kenney's Dig just for a giggle on the way out. Water very low: Sump One seems a bit silted up at present. We were hugely entertained by a poser abseiling the Twenty. He got it wrong and managed to tangle up his rack, leaving himself hanging, struggling, in the water!
-Jim.

13th December. BROWN'S FOLLY MINE. Tav & Gen. Gentlemen and Ladies' trip for "Bony Fidy" cavers (Quote from Wildlife loonies). 3 hrs, loads of photos, Entrance 2 is gateless.
-Tav.

Member to guest who had just ditched himself, his passenger and his motorcycle: "How did you manage to get from Camborne to here??"

Guest: "I came up with the bloke who hasn't arrived yet".

We think we know what he meant, but we can't be sure...

(cont. from p. 146)

LAMB LEER is still closed, no satisfactory access agreement yet forthcoming.

SLUDGE PIT & NINE BARROWS SWALLET are still closed, though they are no longer scheduled as SSSIs.

The NATURE CONSERVANCY COUNCIL Journal "Earth Science Conservation", dedicated to geological and geomorphological conservation issues, has been advertised in the caving press by the NCC, using a leaflet bearing a subscription form.

Maurice Hewins has submitted to the Editor an item from ESC No.23 (Sep'87) entitled "Conserving Geological Sites - the significance of the Wildlife and Countryside Act for geological conservation", by Dr Laurie Richards, NCC. The paper is quite a lengthy thesis - and would not be reproduced in this Journal without first obtaining permission - but is worth reviewing here. The copy itself will be submitted to the Club Library. Dr. Richards explains the Act as it applies to geological sites, the effects of various operations on such sites, and the mechanisms and problems of applying the Act. (Surprisingly perhaps, infilling of quarries can be a problem! : burying exposures.) The PRIDDY SSSI affair is discussed, very objectively, giving the background to the scheduling, the difficulties which arose, and the lessons learned especially regarding consultation between the various parties involved.

"Earth Science Conservation", pub. N.C.C. twice yearly, by subscription only (as a specialist journal) at £1.50 p.a.

WALES

The MYNYDD LLANGATWYG CAVE MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE Constitution has been formulated. It will consist of 3 NCC representatives, one of whom will be the Chairman, plus up to 12 cavers. The latter must have an active, continuing role in exploring the Llangatwg caves, and shall include the Agen Allwedd permit secretary and the Committee hon. secretary. The Committee's purposes will be the administration of Agen Allwedd access (on a nature reserve), and to advise the landowner and NCC on access to the other caves (not on a nature reserve, but in the Mynydd Llangatwg SSSI). Each member shall be elected to the Committee for two years, and shall submit reports on their work in the area if they seek re-election. Continued absenteeism / lack of interest will be grounds for replacement. Ex-officio specialists may be co-opted if necessary.

At DAN-YR-OGOF, a new craft shop / museum building will house displays relating to Dan-yr-Ogof, OFD and their surroundings, illustrating the various facets of speleology, archaeology and other natural sciences concerned. Its emphasis on conservation could mean it being eligible for assistance from the NCC, for whom

Mel Davies is acting adviser. Hopefully the new display will be ready for Easter 1988.

Aberystwyth Caving Club warn of the dangers of OXYGEN DEPLETION, following an incident in Cwmystwyth Lead Mine, in mid-Wales. There the oxygen had been used by bacterial action on materials, and the CO₂ produced dissolved in water in a sump drained by the explorers. The atmosphere left was almost all nitrogen, and the first caver in collapsed very rapidly. Rapidly hauled out, he soon recovered. Nitrogen asphyxiation is particularly insidious since, unlike Carbon Dioxide, it gives no warning of its impending effect, beyond possibly a feeling of apathy. CO₂ induces panting.

Recent finds in DAREN CILAU have now enabled access to Borrowed Boots Streamway via a very tight squeeze, the Micron, found by the Rock Steady Crew last October. This gives a dry link from the Hard Rock Cafe into the very remote Seventh Hour Sump approach in the divers' extensions.

Next door", AGEN ALLWELD now boasts a link from Gothic Passage into Maytime series. This was found in early January this year. Just what IS - what ELSE is - there in that mountain?

DEVON

Devon's caves may be relatively modest, but they are still interesting, with archaeological and biological sites well to the fore. Current work includes diving in Pridhamsleigh Cavern, Kitley Caves and caves at Chudleigh. Work at Kitley is slow, as archaeological finds continue to be made. Dartmoor has yielded a curiosity in the form of some 300ft of granite boulder ruckle streamway. The "Atlas of the Berry Head Caves" has been recently published, detailing caves both above and below sea-level. The Atlas is compiled by Chris Proctor.

SCOTLAND

News of two caves of personal interest to the Editor: see WCC J. 17 (194) p46. Digging is under way downstream of Uamh nam Breagaire, with hopes of finding another good-sized system at Applecross. Over the sea on Skye, planned roadworks on the Kyleakin - Broadford road risk damaging the Breakish and Breakish Bridge Caves (one system, connected by choked beddings). The Highland Regional Council have been corresponding with Grampian S.G. on this, with the hope that any damage will be minimised. Hopefully the upstream end of Breakish Cave will be well clear of the works, as it houses a superb grotto. The Council engineers are to keep GSG informed of developments.

In Argyll, G.S.G. have explored further in the Clearmidge caves, and discovered Cave of the Lost Memory (200+ft streamway) and Black Rift Cave (200ft streamway to a low sump. The former is a through-trip.

photographs

we've proved we can print them so what have you?

All clear, not-too-contrasty, cave/caving/Club photos welcomed.

NEW ADDRESS: ROB TAVINER & GENEVIEVE JEFFREY.

Ground floor flat, 91 Bristol Road, Whitchurch, Bristol BS14 0PS. (0272) 831543.

WESSEX CAVE CLUB
 INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st AUGUST 1987

	1987	1986
INCOME		
Subscriptions for the Club Year	3,124	2,605
Affiliation fees	-	-
Donations	10	26
Permit fees (net)	212	271
Surplus on Club Dinners and Parties	25	-
Sundry receipts	-	-
	-----	-----
	3,371	2,902
	-----	-----
EXPENDITURE		
Tackle expenditure (Note 1)	44	77
Journal costs	1,043	886
Third party insurance	226	450
Stationery, postages and phone	129	338
Subscriptions paid (Note 2)	44	33
Library costs	75	106
Loss on Club Dinners and Parties	-	11
Donations	-	60
Bank charges	61	34
Sundry expenses	15	-
	-----	-----
	1,637	1,995
	-----	-----
SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) BROUGHT DOWN	1,734	907
SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) ON UPPER PITTS (Note 3)	181	(162)
SURPLUS ON GOODS SUPPLIED TO MEMBERS	460	462
WRITE BACK OF UNCLAIMED JOURNAL COSTS	630	-
	-----	-----
SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR	£3,005	£1,207
	-----	-----

The notes attached form part of these accounts

WESSEX CAVE CLUB
BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31st AUGUST 1987 - ACCUMULATED FUNDS

	1987	1986
SHARES IN SOUTHERN CAVING CLUBS CO. LTD	10	10
TACKLE (Note 1)	88	
CURRENT ASSETS		
Sundry stocks (Note 4)	1,725	2,457
Loans to - Southern Caving Clubs Co. Ltd.	50	50
- Mendip Rescue Organisation	200	200
Debtors and payments in advance	116	108
Cash at bank and at Building Society	4,089	3,151
	-----	-----
	6,180	5,966
	-----	-----
Less: CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Subscriptions paid in advance	34	122
Sundry creditors	992	1,598
	-----	-----
	1,026	1,720
	-----	-----
NET CURRENT ASSETS	5,154	4,246
	-----	-----
NET ASSETS	£5,252	£4,256
	-----	-----
Representing:-		
ACCUMULATED FUNDS		
Balance at 1st September	4,096	6,272
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	3,005	1,207
Transfer to Hut Fund	(2,000)	(3,383)
	-----	-----
	5,101	4,096
	-----	-----
JOURNAL AWARD FUND		
Balance at 1st September	160	156
Interest received	11	14
Awards made in year	(20)	(10)
	-----	-----
	151	160
	-----	-----
	-----	-----
	£5,252	£4,256
	-----	-----

The notes attached form part of these accounts

WESSEX CAVE CLUB
BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31st AUGUST (continued) - HUT FUND

	1987	1986
HUT FUND ASSETS - at Original Cost		
Freehold land and buildings - Upper Pitts		
- Net costs at 1st September	10,675	7,488
- Additions In year	2,545	3,187
	-----	-----
	13,220	10,675
	-----	-----
 Hut Fund Investments		
- Woolwich Building Society	1,399	
- Cash at bank and at Building Society	(406)	2
	-----	-----
	993	2
- Less: H.Q. Birthday Appeal loans	1,201	
	-----	-----
	(208)	2
	-----	-----
	-----	-----
	£13,012	£10,677
	-----	-----
 Representing:-		
 HUT FUND		
Balance at 1st September	10,677	7,106
Building Society interest	137	188
H.Q. Birthday Appeal donations	198	
Transfer from Accumulated Funds	2,000	3,383
	-----	-----
	£13,012	£10,677
	-----	-----

The notes attached form part of these accounts

AUDITOR'S REPORT

I have prepared the attached Income and Expenditure Accounts and Balance Sheets from such books and records of the Club as were made available to me. In my opinion these documents show a materially correct view of the state of the Club's finances as at 31st August 1987 and of the results for the year ended on that date.

T. E. REYNOLDS, F.C.A.
Chartered Accountant

8th February 1988
Leavenheath, Suffolk

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st AUGUST 1987

1. TACKLE

	1987	1986
Balance brought forward		77
Expenditure in year	132	
Charged to Income and Expenditure Account	(44)	(77)
	-----	-----
	£88	£0
	-----	-----

Major expenditure on tackle is being written off over three years

2. SUBSCRIPTIONS PAID

During the course of the Club Year the Wessex Cave Club has paid subscriptions to the following caving organisations:-

	1987	1986
British Cave Research Association	13	13
Cambrian Caving Council	7	6
Council of Northern Caving Clubs	4	4
Council of Southern Caving Clubs	-	6
Charterhouse Caving Committee	20	-
Southern Caving Clubs Co. Ltd.	-	4
	-----	-----
	£44	£33
	-----	-----

3. SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) ON RUNNING UPPER PITTS

	1987	1986
Hut fees received in the year	2,830	3,074
	-----	-----
Less: Expenditure:-		
- rates	522	405
- insurance	201	185
- electricity	141	181
- propane gas	110	82
- central heating - fuel	632	1,043
- repairs etc	60	109
- cleaning materials	240	100
- phone	200	183
- repairs - sundry	335	366
- living room door	-	324
- guttering	-	258
- tiles and grouting	208	-
	-----	-----
	2,649	3,236
	-----	-----
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	£181	(£162)
	-----	-----

The figure for hut fees received is based on cash actually received in the Club Year. The income from the electricity, shower and phone meters has been set against the expenditure on the respective headings.

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st AUGUST (continued)

4. SUNDRY STOCKS

	1987	1986
Goods for resale	1,335	2,228
Upper Pitts stocks (fuel oil, gas etc)	327	229
Journal covers etc	63	-
	-----	-----
	£1,725	£2,457
	-----	-----

5. CASH AT BANK AND AT BUILDING SOCIETY

The total figure for cash at bank and at Building Society at 31st August as shown in the Balance Sheet is made up as follows:-

Bristol & West B.S. - Main Account	923	3,081
- Award Account	231	220
Midland Bank Plc, Wells	2,527	(150)
Sundry cash floats	2	2
	-----	-----
	£3,683	£3,153
	-----	-----

6. CLUB EQUIPMENT

At 31st August the Club owned certain items of equipment which were not included on the Balance Sheet. These items were written off to the Income & Expenditure Account in the year in which they were purchased. Items treated in this way include:-

Roneo duplicator, hut furniture and equipment, Roneo addressograph, arc welding equipment.

7. MEMBERSHIP

Membership at 31st August - full		210
- joint		27
	-----	-----
		237
- honorary		20
	-----	-----
		257
	-----	-----

WESSEX CAVE CLUB SURVEY FUND
 PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st AUGUST 1987

	1987	1986
SALES	83	102
	-----	-----
Less: COST OF SALES		
Stock of surveys at 1st September	71	89
Survey purchases and other costs	85	62
Stock of surveys at 31st August	(85)	(71)
	-----	-----
	71	80
	-----	-----
PROFIT FOR THE YEAR	£12	£22
	-----	-----

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31st AUGUST

ASSETS		
Stock of surveys at cost	85	71
Due from Wessex Cave Club	-	-
Cash at bank and in hand	138	140
	-----	-----
NET ASSETS	£223	£211
	-----	-----

Representing:-

ACCUMULATED FUNDS		
Balance at 1st September	211	189
Profit for the year	12	22
Purchase of survey equipment	-	-
	-----	-----
	£223	£211
	-----	-----

The Survey Fund was set up in 1962 for the purpose of making cave surveys more readily available and to sell them at as lower price as possible. The surplus on this fund is to help finance the holding of a stock of surveys, to buy surveying equipment and to help in the production of surveys generally. The fund is operated under a Joint arrangement with the BEC, MCG and the SMCC.

BACK PAGE

YORKSHIRE MEETS LIST.

With the Gouffre Berger trip in mind, the Caving Secretaries have booked a range of predominantly-vertical caves primarily (though not exclusively) for the benefit of people wishing to gain further SRT expedience. Although a series of training trips has been proposed, the onus is nevertheless on individuals to ensure their own proficiency.

20-21st February	Long Kin East / Rift Pot. Long Kin West.
5th March	Pen-y-Ghent Pot.
19th March	Juniper Gulf.
30th April	Dalehead Pot.
29th May	Gingling Hole.
18-19th June	Stream Passage Pot / Flood Entrance. Hurnel Moss Pot.
10th July	Death's Head / Big Meanie.
10th September	Birks Fell Cave.
1st October	Top Sink / Link Pot.
12-13th November	Mongo Gill. Disappointment Pot.
3-4th December	Little Hull Pot. Hunt Pot.
30th December	Notts Pot.
31st December.	Lost John's.

Members wishing to attend these meets are asked to contact Keith Sanderson. Heather View, Newby, nr. Clapham, via Lancaster LA2 8HR. Tel. 0485 662. (SAE, please, with queries).

Keith points out that the W.C.C. has no Northern tackle store, and the C.P.C. has no Club SRT rope.

If you would like access booked to any cave (Dales or otherwise) please contact Pete Watts. The Club no longer has its own Agen Allwedd permit, but does have SWCC-vested permits and has OFD and DYO guest leaders.

WCC Committee Meetings: 20/2. 26/3. 14/5. 25/6. 6/8. 10/9*. 16/10.

Annual General Meeting: 15/10.

*This Committee Meeting date subject to change to avoid BCRA Conference clash.

Members & Personal Guests Only Weekend June 4th-5th.

Gouffre Berger booking: July 16th - 26th.

Have not had one for some time so here is a new

RIDDLE

Which well-known cave is this?

