



THE WESSEX CAVE CLUB JOURNAL

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

Club News

Phill Hendy has been appointed Librarian by the WCC committee. He has also been asked to fill the vacant Ordinary Committee Member post which he has accepted, therefore bringing the committee back up to full strength.

The **tackle booking-out** procedure has now been simplified. Instead of several different books there is now only one. Please ensure all tackle is booked-out so that we can keep an accurate record.

If any one has any requests for the trip on the Sunday of the **AGM weekend**, please let Tuska know. He can then have plenty of time to arrange the trip.

There is talk about a possible Tuska Tour to **Iceland** in the year 2000. This trip will only take place if there is enough interest shown this year, as the trip will take quite a while to arrange. If you are interested please contact Tuska A.S.A.P.

The WCC are arranging a **Stomp** in Priddy Village Hall on Saturday May 8th. Music and beer, but no food. This is a fund-raising event for your Club so please come along and support it.

This summer will see the '**Ashes**' contested again. The date for the cricket match will hopefully be in the next Journal.

This year's **Wessex Expedition to Slovenia** is taking place from 9th - 20th August. The trip will follow the same guidelines as before visiting showcaves and exploring for new caves. However, this year, the Wessex has been granted permission to explore a whole new area. If you want to see what goes on during one of these trips, there're articles in previous Wessex Journals, but for further information, please contact:

Andy Morse, Dave Cooke or Les Williams.

Functions at Upper Pitts should be cleared with the Committee to avoid clashes with other events or a large guest booking. It would also be sensible for members to check with the Hut Bookings Officer if they intend to bring more than one guest with them to stay at Upper Pitts.

The Hut Bookings Officer is currently Wendy Williams who can be contacted on 01749 679839 or e-mail: wessex.bookings@virgin.net

Many thanks *Wendy*

DAY FEES

At the Annual General Meeting, the Club discussed Upper Pitts income, which is derived from overnight fees for members and guests, and from day fees. From this, we must cover the cost of insurance, fuel bills, water rates, septic tank emptying, the community charge, and repairs to the headquarters resulting from standard wear and tear and breakages, and also vandalism where the culprit(s) cannot be made to pay for their damage.

There are also the ever-present costs of cleaning tools and materials. Some funds will also have to be found in the not-too-distant future for major projects such as re-roofing. At present, Upper Pitts must be one of the best-equipped and comfortable caving club headquarters in the country. Guests seem to like coming back, and there is good usage by members. It is in the Club's best interests to maintain its headquarters in good condition.

The Committee has now set day fees at £1 per head. This charge is payable to anybody using Upper Pitts and not paying the night fee. It is not just applicable to members and guests who simply use the HQ for changing and showering. The 20p shower fee simply covers the cost of the shower. Even a couple of sheets of loo paper costs money, and using the loo contributes to what has to be pumped out of the septic tank.

Every member and guest using Upper Pitts and its facilities is now expected to pay fees, either overnight or day, each time they use the HQ. Day fees can be placed in the Conscience Box located in the Changing Room. It would also help if visitors could sign-in for mid-week visits, so that the Committee can gauge the extent of mid-week usage of the HQ. A sheet for this purpose will shortly be found opposite the overnight book in the Hall.

Please pay promptly and regularly; it may be convenient for you to let fees build up and then pay a lump sum, but the Treasurer prefers to receive monies promptly in order to facilitate balancing the booking-in sheets. It also helps him with his forward budgeting.

**DAY FEES - £1 PER VISIT
EVERY VISIT!**

New Members

Philip Brooks

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The WCC Mailing List

The point of this list is to provide a forum for Club Members to discuss Club matters. The most obvious use is to match people up with caving trips as many trips don't make the Journal in time or the details change. But it can also be used for humour, politics or any other Club-related topic.

It's operation is simple. You send your message to wessex@tpp.org. The tpp.org computer will then rebroadcast your message to all the people on the list. Whoever is so inclined replies to wessex@tpp.org and that message in turn is rebroadcast to everyone. And so the discussion continues.

If you ever need to get in contact with the owner of the list, (if you have trouble unsubscribing, or have questions about the list itself) send an e-mail to: owner-wessex@tpp.org. This is the general rule

for most mailing lists when you need to contact a *human*.

All WCC members whose e-mail address we know, have been added to the list. If you wish to subscribe send an e-mail to: wessex-request@tpp.org with the following command in the body of your email message:

wessex subscribe

If you ever want to remove yourself from this mailing list, you can send an e-mail to wessex-request@tpp.org with the following command in the body of your email message:

unsubscribe wessex

I would like to thank Damian Ivereigh, an erstwhile club member, for hosting this service on his computer for free. Thanks.

Caving news

Mendip

Fairy Cave, Quarry Caves

After 12 years of closure an access agreement and management plan has been agreed with Hobbs Properties Ltd. A non club based management committee similar to the Dan Yr Ogof system will operate, providing leaders for Shatter Cave, Withyhill and W/L Cave. It is hoped that access to the other sites within the quarry will be controlled by a simpler arrangement. Work is required before the site is suitable for regular visits, but it is hoped that these will commence from May.

Reservoir Hole

Due to damage by cavers Reservoir Hole will be closed for the winter season 1998-99.

Mud sump

The damaged pump has now been replaced, but at the time of writing (01/99) the sump is taking more water than can be pumped out!

MRO call out procedure

Only use the 999 number for an emergency. For overdue parties etc, please use the police control, in Bristol and Somerset phone Taunton police on 01823 337911, in Wiltshire phone Devizes on 01380 722341.

If you use a mobile phone on the 999 emergency number, please ask for the relevant police authority, e.g. for the Somerset and Mendip area ask for the Somerset and Avon police. For Wiltshire including Box, Brown's Folly and Swan Mine ask for Wiltshire Police.

Derbyshire

Serious pollution has been reported in **Knotlow Cavern**. If you are down there and you experience this please make a note in the log book; it may help to trace the problem.

The boulder chokes are moving in **Winnats Head Cave**. The first choke is bad but the second one reported to be very unstable. It is suggested you keep clear.

After floods, the drain in **Giants Hole** became blocked and the Windpipe sumped. It is now clear and the round trip is possible again.

The head of the final pitch in **Odin Mine** has had

a collapse. The Eco hangers can be seen but not reached so the pitch is now inaccessible.

The repairing of the shaft top in **Whalf Pipe Mine** is a bigger job than anticipated. It is very unstable and access will not be possible before spring.

Wales

The **Welsh Sump Index** is now available on the web. If you visit:

<http://www.users.globalnet.co.uk/~dmprice> which is the CDG welsh section home page this has a link to this site.

It has been suggested you keep away from **Ogof Hen Ffynhonn** (Poachers Cave) as sewage has been reported entering by Trout Passage.

The land above **Ogof Draenen** has now been sold, although the identity of the buyer is not known.

North

The collapsed boulder choke in Stalactite Chamber, **Gingling Hole**, below the fourth pitch has now been re-opened.

A wire grid has been placed over the entrance to **Lancaster Hole** (as well as the existing lid). It is larger and lighter than the old lid so it should be easier for cavers to cover the entrance behind them.

Rigging Guides are now available:

Rigging Guide No.1 £3

Covers:- Bull Pot, Rowten Pot, Jingling Pot, Swinsto Hole, Heron Pot, Notts Pot (Centre route), Pool Sink, Cow Pot, Lancaster Hole, Alum Pot, Dollytubs and New Goyden Pot.

Rigging Guide No.2 £4

Covers:- Rope care and maintenance. Notts Pot (3 Main routes), Rumbling Hole, Lancaster Hole, Fall Pot, Stake Pot, Top Sink, Sell Gill Holes, Calf Holes, Rift(new) Pot, Sunset Hole, Juniper Gulf, Hardrawkin Pot and Pillar Holes.

Rigging Cards £1 each

Alum Pot, Bull Pot, Diccan Pot, Hurnell Moss Pot, Ireby Fell Caverns, Jingling Pot, Juniper Gulf, Little Hull Pot, Notts Pot, Rowten Pot, Rumbling Hole, Sell Gill Holes, Short Drop Cave and Gavel Pot.

The Discovery and Exploration of Honeymead Hole Part 2

Richard Witcombe

On Sunday 4 August, a large team made a detailed examination of the newly discovered passages below Slab House in the hope of finding a safer link with the entrance passages, but no satisfactory options could be found, and it was reluctantly concluded that the collapsed pit would have to be permanently shored. Two 6' lengths of steel angle were taken down to Slab House on the next Wednesday, and they were laid together as a strong channel across the upper end of the collapse. The writer concreted them into the walls, and then placed large rock slabs on top and grouted the matrix into the back wall, forming a "safety roof" over the pitch. A bolt was placed in the left hand wall of Slab House to allow a ladder climb down the pitch rather than risk footholds in the loose walls.

While this work was under way, Graham Bromley and Rob Taviner went below to enlarge the crawl access to the lower rift and 15' pot. Some trial digging was carried out in the bedding plane choke below the pot, excavating a mixture of mud, cobbles and rocks. Ahead it looked as though at least one large slab and a roof flake would require banging.

The next Sunday the diggers went underground in heavy rain, carrying more steel angle and concrete. In the lower series a small stream was falling from the inlet in the roof and running up-dip, but slightly downhill to pour down the 15' pot. The area was duly christened the Watershed. Two short sections of steel were wedged as a T piece in the lower part of the Slab House rift, and another concrete and stone roof was built up on top.

On Wednesday 14 August, Dave Speed, Graham Bromley, Rob Taviner, Mark "Gonzo" Lumley, "Buddy" Williams, Nigel Hellyar and Paul Stillman started the 15' pot dig in earnest. Spoil was hauled up the pot and dumped in the "redundant" upstream rift. The stream passage was low, muddy and squalid, but by negotiating around various large slabs and ridges of rock, 6' to 8' of progress was made. Ahead, rocks could be pushed into what looked to be a tight but reasonably open section of rift passage.

More clearing was done on the next Sunday and Wednesday, and by the following Sunday, Rob Taviner was able to crawl forward and peer around

a bend in the passage. He could look about 10' along a slightly descending rift passage, some 2' 6" high but very narrow - not man-sized without banging or the removal of some ledges by hammer. At the far end there appeared to be a puddle of water.

Mark Lumley meanwhile, had inspected the downstream end of the Slab House rift, clearing a way down to the left hand bend reported by Graham Bromley on his first visit. The way on was far too narrow. Later, Clive North arrived with bang and placed linked charges totalling two and a half slabs around the various constrictions in the lower streamway, firing successfully from the bottom of the entrance shaft.

On Wednesday 28 August, the team split into two, some clearing the debris from Sunday's very effective bang and the rest adding to the concrete and rock bridge above the Slab House rift. Clive North, assisted by Graham Bromley, fired a further Cordtex and slab charge on the following Sunday morning, and the afternoon team cleared back the broken rock. The next Wednesday saw Dave Speed, Graham Bromley, Clive North, Paul Stillman and the writer tackling a trial dig at the bottom of Slab House rift, while Mark Lumley cleaned out the Watershed crawl and Rob Taviner went ahead to look at the lower dig.

After about 15 minutes, reports came back that Rob was forcing the terminal squeeze. Mark and Graham quickly downed tools and descended the pot to join him. Rob had emerged after 10' of flat out crawling at a cross rift with a sizeable rift chamber, some 20' high by 10' wide and 15' long, off to the right. At the back of the chamber was a squeeze and an even tighter slot which was not forced, and overhead at least two inlet passages could be seen. To the left of the breakthrough point a climb down an 6' pot led to a 20' section of 3' by 3' T section canyon passage, ending in another pitch, this one roomy after a narrow top section and at least 20' deep. At the head of the pot was a fine grotto, and to the right a descending man-sized phreatic tube. Pot and passage were left for exploration by the full team at the weekend.

When the full news of the breakthrough reached the Slab House party, work halted on the rift dig.

The clearing of the Watershed wallow was completed and Clive went down to the breakthrough passage to lay and fire a charge on one of the remnant corner buttresses. The party retired well satisfied to the Hunter's and over a celebration pint agreed to name the rift chamber, Somerville Hall, in recognition of the Honeymead landowner. Following another enlarging bang in the breakthrough passage on Saturday 7 September, a large Sunday team gathered in stages. Graham Bromley started early to further enlarge the squeezes and to put in a bolt above the new pitch, now christened Keen's Pot after tenant farmer, Sandy Keen. Rob Taviner and Mark Lumley were able to further enlarge the final squeeze enabling Dave Speed, Bob Cottle, Paul Stillman and the writer to successfully negotiate it and assemble in Somerville Hall and the canyon passage beyond. A bulky Clive North could not manage the last section of the rift and had to retire to clear bang debris from the approaches where he was later joined by Dave Morrison and John Hill.

In due course the bolt was pronounced adequate and with an additional tether belay to a rock, 25' of ladder was lowered into the depths. Graham climbed down the slot in front of the grotto and after a few feet emerged in a roomy pot which belled out below him. The ladder at first lay against crumbly shale ledges but later hung free of a good limestone wall. Half way down Graham could see that the ladder did not quite reach the floor and he came back up to add a second ladder. He bottomed the pot after the first few rungs of the second ladder and stepped onto a flat gravelly floor, some 8' in diameter. A narrow horizontal rift passage with good formations in the roof led off at right angles to the ladder.

The rest of the team streamed down the pitch while Graham led the way along the rift. After 15' the passage turned sharp right at a stal coated run-in and ended in a partial choke. Some of the rock was cleared back to expose a tight, winding rift dropping away and a visible but not accessible up-dip passage. Despite some lump hammering, and a bloody finger for Graham no further progress could be made in the downstream direction.

The party duly returned to the top of the pot where Mark led the way down the phreatic passage to the right of the pitch head. After carefully crossing various small holes in the jammed rock floor connecting with the pot below, Mark crawled along a mud floor to a point some 20' in where a step down increased the passage size to walking height. Ten feet further on the ceiling rose and the floor dropped dramatically away to reveal an 8' wide and

at least 30' deep pitch. From the balcony like vantage point, fine formations could be seen on the opposite walls. After sightseeing by the rest of the group, an attempt was made to place a bolt but after problems with the kit, the descent of Balcony Pot was left for another day.

As a parting shot, Clive laid a charge on an awkward slab at the entrance to the passage below the 15' Pot. This nearly did not happen as Clive placed the bang down on a safe spot in the passage and then could not find it. He had abandoned the search and was about to climb the pot when he noticed the slab sticking to the knee of his oversuit! The charge was successfully fired.

On the following Wednesday, the regular team were joined by a NHASA contingent. Several assisted the writer with further steel and concrete shoring around the head of the Slab House rift, while others helped with the clearance of bang debris. The main party, Mark Lumley, Rob Taviner, Graham Bromley, Paul Stillman and Dave Speed, went through to the unclimbed shaft. After the bolting had been sorted out, Dave descended first, getting off the ladder at a depth of about 20'. Several ways on were open.

From the foot of the ladder, a 5' climb led down to a remarkable stooping height passage, partly carved out of red sandstone filling a presumed Triassic Neptunian dyke. It trended to the right and after a sharp left hand bend, passed under a chamber with an horrendous choke of boulders overhead. Beyond was a choked rift and a short climb leading down to a too tight slot. The passage was duly christened Blood Alley, but subsequent unavoidable muddying has regrettably somewhat dulled its appearance.

At the same level as the approach phreatic tunnel was a continuation rift passage, reached by an easy traverse passing close to fine formations on the right hand wall. Thirty feet further on, the rift opened into a small mud chamber with pure white formations on the right hand side and in a pit in the floor. The 15' long chamber ended in a mud choke just beyond a blind, 5' deep, mud walled pot, but overhead was an impossibly tight but high rift suggesting the possibility that this was a significant fossil route.

Back at Balcony Pot, Graham climbed above this passage to reach a third level. A tube went back over the approach passage but a thrutch upwards led into a tiny chamber with an opening into a larger void. Stones thrown into it fell through a hole in the floor into the middle passage. Graham hung a ladder down from the top of the climb, belaying it to

a somewhat doubtful piece of stal. Altogether about 150' of passage had been explored with several leads still to be pushed.

On Sunday 15 September, Dave Speed and Clive North, who was still unable to pass the long crawl, drilled two more shotholes on the left hand side, while Rob Taviner, Bob Cottle and the writer went on down to Balcony Pot to examine the choked middle level passage, soon to be christened Kate's Calamity after some accidental muddying of the stal coated walls. Digging in the mud choke soon revealed draughty spaces between stal coated rocks, and after an hour's work, a low way on could be seen. It stretched ahead for about 10' as a slightly inclined bedding plane over a stal and rocky floor until a levelling out and possible rise in the roof. Spoil was dumped in the mud pot in the floor just before the dig.

Work continued on the following Wednesday, and Rob Taviner and Mark Lumley were able to crawl flat out into the first 6' of a tiny 10' long passage. There was a small hole beyond a white grotto, but it did not look promising enough to justify destruction of the stal.

Rob and Mark turned their attention to a rift above Blood Alley, and after a short "gardening" session climbed into a void above some menacing hanging boulders - Neptune's Hall (after the Neptunian dyke). The chamber headed back up to the right, possibly in the direction of Somerville Hall, but the loosely jammed "floor" did not encourage a detailed examination.

Meanwhile Graham Bromley had placed a bolt at the top of his rift climb and re-rigged the ladder, after which the writer ascended to help with gardening around the entrance to the high level chamber - The Gods. After all the loose material had been cleared, Graham, on a lifeline, crossed the chamber around the left hand wall avoiding a hole in the floor connecting with the passages below, and reached a landing with a narrow but man-sized rift continuing downwards beneath good formations. In the roof off to the right, a large inlet passage could be seen.

Clive North fired a further charge in the long squeeze on 22 September, and after the debris had been cleared on the following Wednesday, Mark Lumley tackled the climb in the roof of Somerville Hall. After 15', it degenerated into two impassable inlets. Moving on to The Gods, Graham Bromley traversed carefully along the well decorated narrow rift passage beyond the chamber, but after 20' it

terminated in an almost complete stal blockage. Finally, Graham entered Neptune's Hall by means of a bold step onto some very risky boulders. It was a smooth walled chamber 15' high, 10' wide and 15' long with a disappointingly small, choked passage in the end wall.

On Sunday 29 September, five 4' lengths of aluminium maypole were taken down to The Gods to gain access to the roof inlet. A ladder was hung from four sections of pole and Graham Bromley and Rob Taviner climbed 15' to explore a 50' long ascending bedding plane with a further steeply climbing extension through boulders visible around a corner.

Meanwhile, Dave Speed and the writer completed a concrete retaining wall at the head of the Slab House rift, after which the writer joined Graham and Rob to examine the 10' pot at the end of Blood Alley. Some floor debris was dug out from the too tight continuation passage, but solid rock was soon encountered, leaving it still less than man-sized.

Further down the cave, Mark Lumley and Tony Boycott had drilled two shotholes in the impassable terminal rift below Keen's Pot, later firing a charge from Somerville Hall.

The next Wednesday saw a mix of tourist and working trips. The bang below Keen's Pot was, as expected, of limited effect because of the hardness of the rock and Tony and Mark drilled a further 18" long shothole, firing a charge on the way out. Rob climbed a rift spotted on Sunday in the roof of the phreatic passage leading down to Balcony Pot but it closed down after 6' or so.

Graham and the writer made for The Gods to conduct a voice connection test between the roof inlet and the impassable rift close to the initial breakthrough point above Slab House. The writer's climb was uneventful but as Graham reached the top of the ladder, the bolt pulled out, leaving the ladder held only on the traverse rope belayed to a small rock projection in the adjacent chamber. Graham carried on up into the inlet, pushing 6' beyond his previous limit, and tried shouting and listening. He heard only vague distant hammering.

Attempts to rig up an alternative ladder belay point using one of the aluminium poles were unsuccessful, and the pair had no option but to trust the rope belay for the ladder descent. Fortunately, being of standard Wessex dimensions, they came lightly and safely back to earth!

On the way out Rob climbed 10' up into roof of the Watershed to find 35' of roomy bedding plane, Rainy Day Inlet, ending in chokes after a fork. Daves Speed and Morrison spent most of the evening digging in the floor of Slab House Rift.

The next half dozen visits were devoted to further walling at the base of the entrance shaft, more drilling and banging below Keen's Pot, and the Slab House dig, where a second tiny left hand passage was uncovered. Clive North banged a boulder in the dig on 18 October and on Sunday 20 October, the team went underground after several days of very heavy rain. Water from the depression was emerging between the entrance pipes, and following the excavated route down to Slab House.

The showerbath in the Watershed was flowing in both directions, with the down-dip flow, augmented by the entrance water, sinking in the newly uncovered left hand passage to re-emerge from a roof inlet in Somerville Hall. It left the chamber through the too tight rift at the back and was seen again falling from an inlet above Balcony Pot. The water eventually entered Blood Alley and sank in the floor of the 10' Pot.

Now that a hydrological link had been established between Slab House Rift and Somerville Hall, there seemed little point in banging open the obviously immature passage in between, and the dig was duly shut down.

Library Report

Phil Hendy

In case anybody does not already know, I have been persuaded to take over the role of Librarian - a daunting prospect, in view of my illustrious and dedicated predecessor! Please bear with me while I assess the situation and get to find my way around.

Offers of help have come from many members; apart from maintaining the Library stock and making it accessible to members, my main concern is to find storage space for seldom-used journals, thus releasing space in the Library for those items which are most commonly used. I will also be putting up a magazine rack, where new issues of exchange journals can be readily found (and replaced!). I will also be corresponding with Alan Jefferies (Goon) regarding liaison with other club librarians and the establishment of a national database. For the record, I hold the 'Dragon' block used for embossing the cover of Wessex publications.

Phil Hendy

RECENT ACQUISITIONS

Images Below - Chris Howes

Darkworld - Martyn Farr

Secret Underground Cities - Nick J McCamley*

The Tunnels of Cu Chi - Tom Mangold and John Penycate

Mysterious Britain - Janet and Colin Bird

Newspaper Cuttings - 1949 to present - compiled by Bob Lewis

Belfry Bulletin (Dec 1998) 50, 7 (No 500)

Cave and Karst Science (BCRA) 25, 2 (Aug 1998)

CSS Newsletters 40, 12 (Dec 1998) 41, 1 (Jan 1999)

DC Speleograph 54, 7 (July 1998)

Derbyshire Caving Association Newsletter No 98 (Summer 1998)

Grosvenor Caving Club Newsletter No 90 (Jan 1999)

Journal of Cave and Karst Studies 60, 3 (Dec 1998)

NSS News (Nov 1998)

* Secret Underground Cities describes the 'secret' munitions dumps and bunkers developed for WW2, mainly in the Bath area but also covering other areas of Britain. Published at £25, the Club can obtain copies for £20. Firm orders should be placed with the Sales Officer or the Librarian (cash up front, please).

The 1999 Golden Gnome Challenge

Phil Hendy

For the fifth year running, the Wessex and the BEC gathered at the New Inn on January 2nd to compete for the Golden Gnome trophy. Neither team had had any practice for twelve months, and it showed.

The BEC started in fine form, and ended the first round with a 13 point lead. However, the Wessex pulled back to a 5 point lead by the end of the second. As the beer flowed, the Wessex grew stronger, while the BEC's game went to pieces, and for the fifth year running, the Wessex retained the Golden Gnome with a convincing 35 point difference. There was only one spare on each side, both Kevin and Bob Smith achieving scores of 14. The prizes were then awarded. The actual Golden Gnome was unable to attend the function, but he sent his larger and gaudier big brother, who was accepted by Tuska. Unfortunately, after a brief spell posing as a skittle, he was kidnapped (gnomenapped?). At the time of writing the Club is awaiting a ransom note.

Kevin received a bottle of port for the highest male score (28) and a small gnome for the highest overall score. Sarah Walton also received a bottle of port for the highest ladies score. Prizes for the most consistent score went to Estelle (3-3-3) and Martin Butcher (7-7-7). In fact, both Martin and Roger Haskett achieved this, but Martin won convincingly in a sudden-death play-off. Booby prizes, bottles of Fiddler's Elbow, went to the two lowest scores, Les and Helen.

There was a small surplus made on the night, which has been forwarded to the MRO. Our thanks must go to Sue Owen for letting us use the alley once again, and to her children, who worked non-stop for nearly three hours sticking-up. I think everyone enjoyed themselves, I certainly did. I am now retiring, but if anyone else wants to organise a match in 2000, I will be pleased to advise. It's not difficult to arrange, but as far as I am concerned, I'm quitting while I'm ahead.

1999 GOLDEN GNOME CHALLENGE

W.C.C.				
	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Total
Phil Hendy	1	6	6	13
Pauline Grosart	5	5	0	10
Paul Weston	3	7	6	16
Keith Fielder	5	6	9	20
Roz Fielder	6	7	8	21
Pete Hann	5	4	8	17
Tuska	6	5	7	18
Robert Fielder	8	6	6	20
Mike Thomas	1	5	9	15
Sarah Walton	7	7	8	22
Kevin	8	6	14	28
Leg	3	8	5	16
Mak	0	8	6	14
Jo	5	7	4	16
Bean	8	5	7	20
Paula	1	6	3	10
Mel	7	0	5	12
Dave Meredith	8	8	9	25
Rosie	3	5	3	11
Jack	6	8	7	21
Andy Morse	2	9	3	14
Wendy	4	6	3	13
Les	4	1	5	10
Cookie	8	6	1	15
Malc Foyle	4	3	7	14
TOTAL	118	144	149	411

B.E.C.				
	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Total
Vince	5	4	6	15
Ros	7	6	7	20
Rich Blake	8	3	3	14
Toby	3	1	9	13
Bob Smith	14	5	1	20
Helen	0	4	3	7
Martin Self	8	6	0	14
Estelle	3	3	3	9
Brian Prewer	5	5	5	15
Brenda Prewer	6			6
Robin Gray		8	5	13
Roger Marsh	4	7	4	15
Becca	7	8	3	18
Jake	7	8	2	17
Mike Wilson	4	4	4	12
Roger Haskett	7	7	7	21
Hilary Wilson	0	5	3	8
Alan Butcher	4	4	6	14
Dave B	7	6	5	18
Antony Butcher	5	4	6	15
Keith B	2	7	6	15
Byron	6	3	7	16
Martin Butcher	7	7	7	21
Sean	6	4	4	14
Wendy	0	4	6	10
Martin Naunton	6	3	7	16
TOTAL	131	126	119	376

SMCC

Other

PRIZES

Highest Male
Highest Female
Most Consistent Male
Most Consistent Female
Lowest Male
Lowest Female

Kevin
Sarah Walton
Martin Butcher
Estelle
Les
Helen

Port and gnome
Port
Wine After play-off with Roger Haskett
Wine
Beer
Beer

472 Corrected for BEC only

Tributes To Yorky

This is the poem read out at the scattering of the ashes.

**If I should go before the rest of you,
Break not a flower nor inscribe a stone.
Nor when I'm gone speak in a Sunday voice,
But be the usual selves I have known.
Weep if you must - parting is such hell.
But life goes on - so sing as well!**

Many CSS members will be saddened to hear of the death of Mike Dewdney-York, the Librarian and joint Hut Warden of the Wessex Cave Club. Mike died suddenly at work in Bristol on 17th November.

I first met Mike York in the mid 1960's when he joined the Wessex; who were then based at the old Hillgrove Hut. He had, I believe, started caving in his native Dorset before coming to Mendip. Within a few years he was elected Hut Warden and became a part of the Mendip caving scene for the next thirty years.

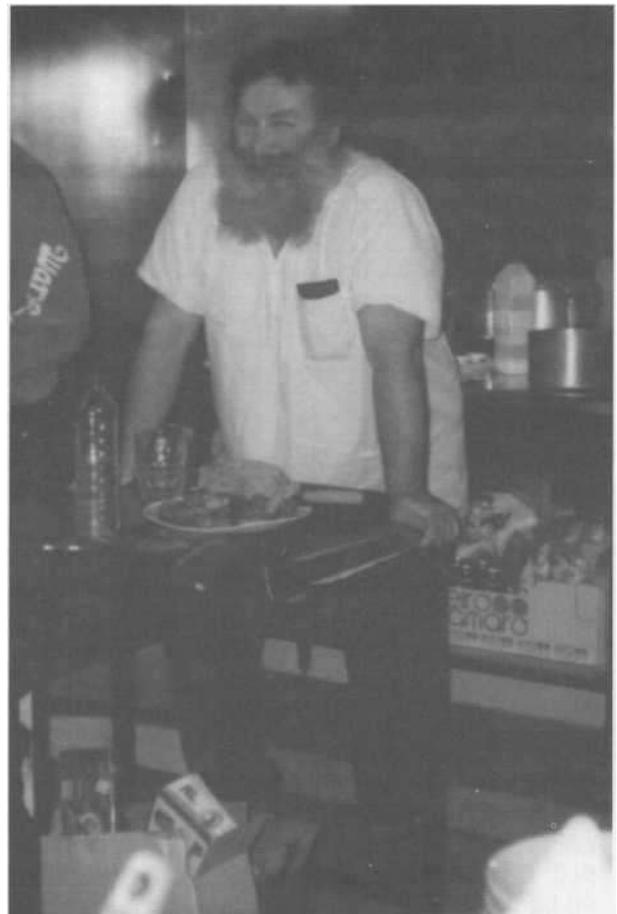
Shortly after the Wessex moved to Upper Pitts there was a call-out to the nearby Nine Barrows Cave. Mike and I walked across and descended rapidly to Crystal Chamber where we found a caver lying on the stal floor with an obviously broken leg. I felt useless as there was apparently nothing that could be done until the MRO team arrived; but Mike stripped to reveal several extra layers of clothing that he had brought to keep the unfortunate victim warm.

In 1968, Mike was one of the team who helped Denis Warburton and myself start to re-survey Agen Allwedd. He became a regular visitor to White Walls and may later have been a CSS member for a few years. In the summer of the first year the surface survey progressed rapidly and I have fond memories of eating burnt sausages at 5.30am on top of Llangattock waiting for the daylight!

Sometime in the 1980's Mike retrained as a Bookbinder and naturally began to apply his new skills to both his own, and other caver's collections of caving journals. In October 1991 he was naturally elected to the post of Wessex librarian and continued to both bind and index their library until his untimely death.

A generation of young cavers will remember the cheerful giant of the Wessex who lived in the Library. His memorial is on the shelves of the Wessex Library and on caver's bookshelves all over Southern England.

P R Cousins



Wessex Kitchen 1/1/1994

I was hoping to attend the WCC this weekend to deliver this message in person, however end of week circumstances have prevented this, so I'm e-mailing to you in the hope it will be noted.

It was with regret that the news of Mike DY's death was heard. Many of the NPC have, at some time stayed at Upper Pitts and we even share some membership (myself included).

No matter who else was at the cottage, you could always guarantee that Mike would be at home. He wasn't part of the furniture, he was part of the essence of the club. To many guests, he was the Wessex; the part of the club they first meet, and he made a terrific front man. He appeared devoutly organised and efficient, but was always sharp and rye. You knew very soon if you had been recognised by him, he became his acerbic best. However he would still make you a cup of tea if you looked like you needed it.

He was a summation of everything about the Wessex attitude, as if the club culture could be summed up in one individual.

Who ever adopts Mike's mantle has a tough road ahead, but we wish them every success. The Wessex Library was a credit to the club and a testament to Mike's skills. It would be fitting to see his restoration work continue and the Library to grow from strength to strength.

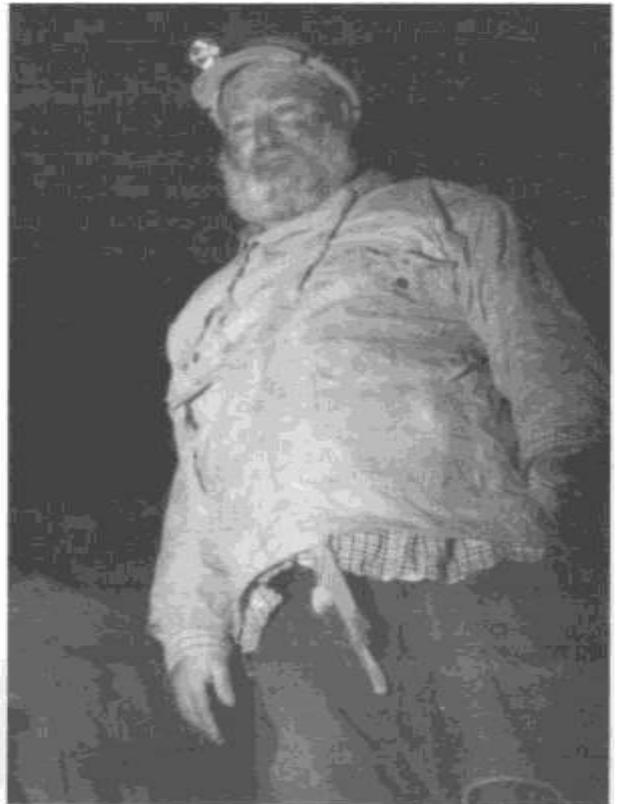


Mike was an asset, not just to the club, not just to the Mendip's caving scene, but to all that knew him. His death has saddened many of us and he will be missed.

Regards

Nic Blundell

For, and on behalf of, the Northern Pennine Club.



Mike in finest caving gear, Wookey Hole.

שלום ידיד נאמן

shalom yodid ne-emun

Goodbye old friend

תהי זכרו ברוך

t-hee zichro baruch

May his memory be a blessing

A few words from Brian Hansford

A Brush with Darkness

An Exhibition of Paintings, Drawings and Sculpture
on the Mendip Caves and Cavers.
Wells Museum, 15 November -12 December 1998

From our Arts Correspondent

Artistry in a caving context is usually prefixed by a 4-letter word beginning with P. It was refreshing, therefore, to visit this exhibition at Wells Museum. A collection of art, mainly by local cavers, shows the hidden talents there are in the caving world. Mostly graphic art, my eye was immediately drawn however, to two sculptures in copper sheet giving an impression of the Forty in Swildon's, and the entrance to Longwood. Clever cut-aways gave a real feel of the caves, with water depicted by streams of solder.

All of the pictures showed underground scenes, using a variety of media. Mark Lumley, who I am told has improved no end recently, used crayon and acrylic to give a sense of depth and atmosphere to his action scenes, both of abseiling and cave diving. Brightly-coloured overalls lend themselves really well to acrylics, particularly when given a dark background.

There were some depictions of flowstone and stal in thick oils which I found interesting. Rock can be difficult to portray on canvas, but all of the artists whose work was on display managed it very well. Chaz Wethered, known mainly for his cartoons illustrating the lighter side of caving, has an unusual but effective style when it comes to depicting cave passage. Pottery seems to be

another of his talents - his mugs made of clay from Five Buddles Sink

Ceris Jones, another well-known artist, displayed several pencil and wash pictures which portrayed action in a simple style, with some poignant still-lives. Bud Hogben is a name new to me, and of course Robin Gray himself was well represented. Mendip caves featured large in the exhibition, though there were scenes from Wales and Yorkshire. A touch of whimsy was supplied by Chrissie Price and her caving teddy bears, and there was a fine view of the beehive in Lamb Leer, painted for H.E. Balch by Ruth Murrell.

Robin tells me that part of the object of the exhibition is to put something back into caving, and that accordingly prices were much less than would be sought in London or Frankfurt. I will take his word for it. The ultimate test, of course, is to ask if you would give wall-space to any of the pictures on view, and my own personal answer would be an unhesitating "Yes". In fact, if my piggy-bank would have allowed it, I would have been spoiled for choice, the work on display showed real professionalism and a flair for showing the various aspects of caving. If you failed to see the show, then you missed a treat.

Editorial

Again I would like to thank every one for their articles. However, it still seem to be the same names appearing.

If you haven't written for the Journal before it's never too late, so write - topical or scientific - but get your name in your Journal.

I'm also trying to get more photos in the Journal so if you do send in a article please send pictures as well - I will always return them.

Last time I asked you all to send me letters on your views on club matters. So far I have had no replies, so this must mean one of two things: no one reads my editorial, or 250 members of the WCC are very happy with the Club's activities and the way that the Club is being run. If this is the case I'm sure we can look forward to a very short AGM this year!

If you have anything for me - letters, articles or just dates for the Diary - please send them as early as you can to make sure they make the deadline's.

Derbyshire Meet, 6-8 November 1998

Deborah Morgenstern

I wasn't aware that I would be spending the weekend in Derbyshire until a few days previously. Dom had, rather last-minute, been offered the opportunity of a weekend away in the Brecon Beacons with work that would further his professional development. Not exactly enamoured with spending a weekend at home alone, I decided to ring Les to see what was going on down in Mendip that weekend. The reply came:

"Well I don't know what's happening on Mendip, but we're all going to Derbyshire"

And there I was, I had actually happened, by pure chance, on one of Les' unannounced, didn't-make-it-quite-to-the-journal-before-it-went-to-print, Wessex Meets.

Butch and I were the first to arrive at the Peak Hotel, now under new ownership, and seemingly being run by (for those who watch these things) Geoff from Byker Grove. We were soon joined by Mak, Jo, Les, Max, Simon, Steve, Morse and Wendy, and entertained by the TSG's own character, PB. Smith, who kept us alert with riproaring stories involving a "Sack'o'Taters", which ended up as the trip motto. PB. Smith sadly passed away a couple of weeks later.

Cookie, in predictable fashion, turned up (with Mel and Emma) just after closing time and from that point on for all of us the lock-in ended. We were later informed that the landlady expected latecomers to grovel at the very least!

Saturday morning we set off for a Maskill Mine - Oxlow Cavern exchange. Well, most of us did. Cookie stayed behind to teach Emma SRT, and would be joining us at Oxlow later (he said). Mel, aware of Cookie's teaching abilities, stayed with them to ensure that Emma actually learned something.

We'd packed all the ropes, sorted out who was going in and out of where, set off, paid our money - it had never come into any of our calculations that, when we got there, another group would be getting ready to go down Oxlow. After brief discussion (well, actually Les railroaded them into it) it was agreed that the Wessex would go down Maskill, but some of us would come out on Loughborough Uni's ropes.

Maskill, at first, is a muddy cave, and care must be taken not to look up, lest a falling mud clump should hit you in the eye. Some dubious rigging at one point left those of us under six foot in height struggling and cursing - a free hanging rebelay at the end of a kind of a sideways pitch-cum-tyrolean, where it was impossible to even clip in, let alone release your cowstail after you'd achieved the impossible. It later turned out that this should be a deviation.

The cave totally changes character when you hit the streamway, turning into a series of clean washed, airy abseils ending in a magnificent chamber. This piece of misplaced Ogof Draenen leads to a somewhat disappointingly small link with Oxlow, which was to be exited by myself, Jo, Les and Andy. We even thought we'd got off lightly on the rigging when 2 of the 5 Loughborough students said "no-you go ahead, we'll de rig". We shot off ahead, me following Jo and prussiking as fast as my legs could go in the hope that Morse wouldn't catch me up with the bag I was supposed to be carrying. And then all our troubles began.

What we caught up with was an inexperienced, first SRT trip (first ever caving trip!) girl in an ill fitting harness, so tight that blood circulation must have been impeded, and the sort of foot loop that Tall Graham would need to shorten, sitting on the rope 2 ft off the ground under a waterfall, getting colder and wetter while a similarly inexperienced lad stood at the bottom watching her freeze and the group leader tried to manually haul her up with his cowstail. Needless to say, they weren't going anywhere. Until, that is the "MRO On Tour" arrived.

It all just happened like a well oiled machine. Les got her off the rope and adjusted her harness, Morse rigged up the 2:1, I gave her my balaclava and gloves - a fact I was to regret later, especially as I was never bought a beer afterwards. Les drank my share. The hauling began. Les even stood under the waterfall to hold the rope. Hot coffee was being made at the top.

After a while Jo and I, now rather redundant, pointed out that if we didn't get moving soon, they'd be hauling us out as well, and we were allowed to go, or at least, would have been if Morse hadn't later asked me to wait for the lad, Dave, and take

him out. We waited at the bottom of the last pitch for 45 mins getting colder and colder until I got bored and went back to Morse to ask why Dave hadn't yet arrived. There almost was a cave mortality when Andy turned round and said "Why are you still here? I thought you'd gone out"

So Jo and I finally made it back to the cars - but where was Cookie? He, Mel and Emma were supposed to be in Oxlow. Odd - the Cookemobile was there. Yes, our very own Navigator of the Year had managed to descend Maskill instead! ("Well the guidebook said Oxlow had a manhole cover - how was I to know they both did?")

The rest returned, cold but unharmed, and we all ended up with a fireworks display, compliments of Mak and Les (with some inspiration from Robin Gray) at Mam Tor Carpark. I don't think Loughborough knew what had hit them!

You'd have thought that after such an eventful day, a leisurely evening in the pub would be allowed to pass without incident, and so did we - but we hadn't reckoned on Frank. Yes, Frank, the 89 year old piano player with a zest for life that he was going to share with others, whether they wanted it or not. We made the mistake of singing a caving song, and, reckoning we were a tuneful bunch, he shuffled over to us, magically producing out of his pockets the words to a song, to which we were to shout the chorus. It was a giggle, no harm in making an old man happy...and then...he produced the old war ditties songbook...

...Les had spent some of the evening chatting up the landlady and had assured us of a lock in 'til April, but most of us were bored of drinking shit beer and fearful of another rendering of "When Johnny Comes Marching Home", so slinked off back to the TSG where we exploded carbide bombs in the garden.

When one of these refused to go off, the pyromaniac division lit a fire behind it - unthinkingly on the far side of it so it would blow up in our direction. We all cowered in a doorway. Then, for some unknown reason, Steve walked out and it blew up in his face - he was covered in dust and had a cut lip and bruised nose. It was just as well that he wears glasses or he could have been blinded. We rushed him to the sink, washed his face off, ascertained that he was not mortally wounded, and then had a good laugh at his expense and carried on with the serious business of blowing things up!

The next morning, waking up, hung over in the cold, damp atmosphere of the TSG (whose building programme does not seem to have moved on much since we were last there) many of us did not feel like caving. Impetus was eventually gathered by some - Max and Butch descended Rowters, a deep mine shaft, and various others went down P8, Giants, and I can't remember where else. Mel, Jo and I (followed by Andy and Wendy - well, we overtook them!) led a daring attack on Peveril Castle, arriving at the gates looking anaemic enough to be charged student rates. Looking over the castle walls into the Cavedale Valley below, we saw that many had written their names in white rocks. So, after a refreshing ice cream we set off to destroy them and put in their place the HUGE lettering of WCC. With a little more manpower, we'd have had Ubique Primus underneath, and possibly even the full address and postcode!

That afternoon, people returned from their various trips, Hitch'n'Hike was visited, tea and cakes consumed (and Les never did find out who pinched his Kendal Mint Cake!), kit was sorted, goodbyes were said, and all set off in different directions but with much the same thought in mind - that it had been a truly excellent trip.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

The new subscriptions set at the AGM are as follows, but remember
'early renewal rates' were only applicable if you paid before 31st December last year.

	<u>Early Renewal Rate</u>	<u>After Jan 1st</u>
Single member	£25.00	£30.00
Joint members (1 vote)	£31.25	£37.50
Joint members (2 votes)	£43.75	£52.50
Senior Citizen rate	£7.50	£9.00
Food boxes	£2.50	£2.50
Lockers	£6.00	£6.00

To renew your membership, please send a cheque with your name, address and tel. no. (and details of the rates paid) to the Membership Secretary - address at front of Journal.

Rescue Practice Rod's Pot

Mark Helmore

THE CALL OUT

A phone call has been received by the MRO that a caver has failed to return home after a trip to the Burrington coombe area where he and a friend had been caving the evening before.

There was no further information given other than that they were travelling in a red Astra estate. A small team has been despatched from the WCC to try and locate the vehicle, and an MRO warden is to stand by in the Burrington coombe Garden Centre to relay any message by phone as necessary.

A vehicle matching the description is soon located adjacent to the entrance to Rod's Pot and a note left on view in the car indicates that the caver's are in Rod's Pot.

A quick search of the cave reveals that the two lost cavers are at the bottom of one of the blind pots and one or both are injured.

THE RESCUE

With the MRO warden informed a request is relayed to the WCC for the rescue team standing by to be sent to Rod's Pot with various items of equipment to carry out the rescue.

Back at the cave the rescue team have been unable to reach the casualties, as the pitch is not rigged (and the rescue team are unaware of the easy climb down the adjacent pot!).

With tackle, molefone, hot air and further rescuers arriving the rescue is now well underway.

The pitch is soon rigged and rescuers and molefone are soon with the casualties.

On the surface the control is now well organised. Radio communications have been made with WCC Headquarters from a point adjacent to the cave entrance (this is the first time that we have been able to do this and is probably due to our new Aerial).

Messages received from underground indicate that one of the casualties had fallen down the pot and is semi-conscious, and the other casualty is cold but otherwise fit and able.

With first aid being given to the casualties it is decided to assist the able casualty out of the cave before his condition worsens, he exits the cave soon after. With the condition of the other casualty worsening (she has stopped shivering and is drifting into unconsciousness) it is decided to expedite her removal.

On the surface the first casualty out of the cave is given first aid (and exits the scene). More tackle is requested for the pitch hauling rigging, this is sent into the cave. An ambulance is requested to arrive in approximately one hour. A member of the press attempts to hassle the surface controller into releasing details of the rescue. He is given the basic details and sent on his way.

Back underground the casualty is secured into the drag sheet and with the additional independent lifeline attached the haul commences and the casualty quickly reaches the top of the pot. The molefone is relocated nearer the entrance and the casualty soon exits the cave to glorious sunshine. Rescue carried out in just under four hours from initiation to completion

POINTS TO NOTE

Sitting at the bottom of the pot with the rescuers sat at the top without any tackle to reach us would have been rather distressing if we had been real casualties. Perhaps it would be a good idea if advance teams carried one ladder and some rigging with them. This would enable access to most situations of this kind and so give earlier more accurate information on the casualties' situation.

I also thought it strange that no one asked how I had managed to reach my injured colleague without tackle? It seems that they were not aware of the relatively easy climb down the connecting pot, and I was obviously too shocked to tell them! Detailed knowledge of the cave you are working in is useful, and lack of it can hinder the rescue process.

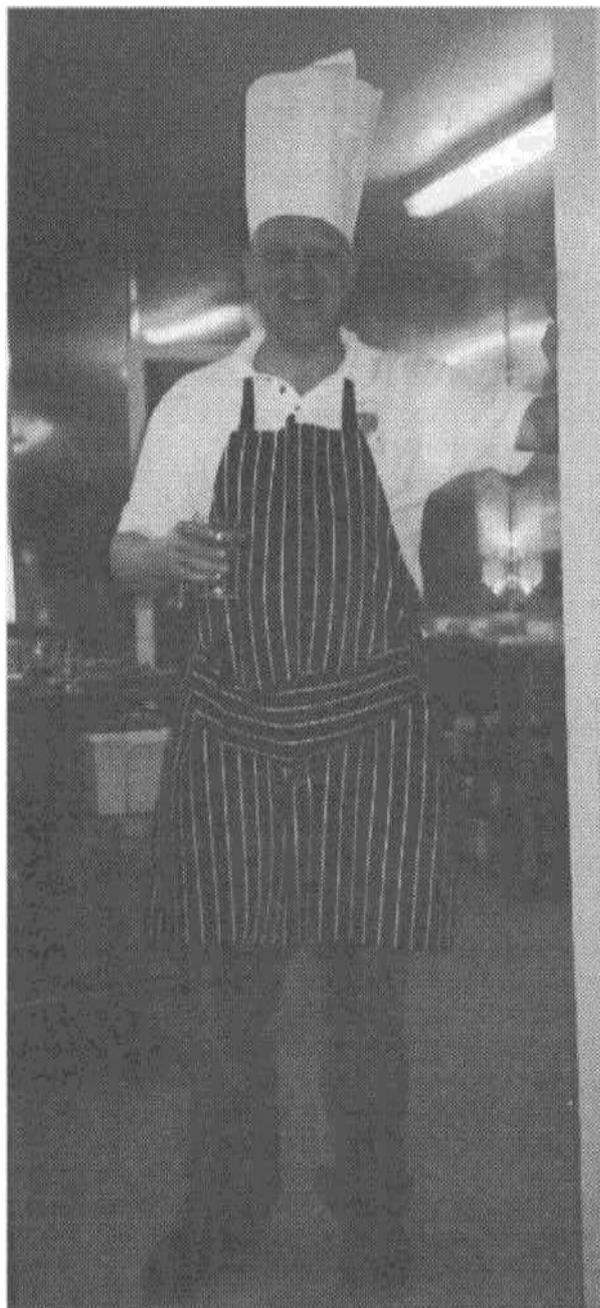
In closing I would like to thank all attendees at the practice, particularly Mel for 'offering' to be the casualty and to Brian Prewer for the MRO presence. These annual events are a necessary part of club activities and should be attended by as many members as possible.

Un-Paid Members

Harold Bampton
Andrew Bliss
Anthony Burleton
Peter Camilleri
Keir Clarke
Noel Cleave
Colin Cooke
Mark Dobbyn
David Edge
Neal Fay
Richard Gardiner
Christopher Glennie
Tim Greenwood
John Hanwell
Malcolm & Sue Hodge
Richard Hooper
Alan Jenkins
Jake Johnson
Tony King
Gill Lindsey
Ginny Maillet
Russell Mines
Steve Pickersgill
Howard Price
Graham Prole
Bob Pyke
Derek Sanderson
Ray Saxton
Vince Simmonds
Andy Sparrow
Rob Taviner
Ian Timney
Kenneth Tutton
John Vanderplank
John Venn
Stephen Waite
Mark Wildman
Barry and Marion Wilkinson

Chris Willey

Please see Page 34 for the Amounts you owe.



On behalf of all those 24 Wessex members who attended the New Year Dinner, I would like to thank Phil Henty for all the hard work that he put into organising the event and to all those who helped out on the night.

Phil did a superb job and made sure that everyone had enough of everything - I'm sure we were still eating it the next lunchtime.

During the evening a toast was held to Mike York who's idea the event originally was. Despite Yorky not being physically present, I'm sure that he was there and hope that he enjoyed it as much as everyone else seemed to - an excellent start to 1999!

Rosie

Friday Saw A Mad Rush North

Mark Helmore

Friday saw a mad rush North, with only one caravan booked (8 berth) and 17 people attending it made sense to get there early! Arriving first Max, Bean and myself quickly selected the worst bunks to leave the best spots for the others (no of course we didn't!). Time for the Pub and an early evening apera drink, with our meal of course, so we headed towards the Sun Inn at Dent. After a somewhat unscheduled visit to a farmhouse on route (well I thought it was the right way, it couldn't be through the closed gateway?) there followed a rather pleasant hour or so of refreshing ourselves. Max and Bean managed to squeeze a rather large sausage into themselves but I settled for something more modest.

Joining Dom and Debs at the Marton Arms we sat back and awaited the arrival of the hoards. After what seemed like several hours of drinking (and probably was) we meandered back to the caravan site for a well-earned rest (eventually after stopping Max from burning the caravan to the ground).

Saturday morning arrived and I felt like ****. I blame Bean for the whole sad affair, but after looking at my breakfast for a while it was all too soon time to go caving.

After the usual organised gear sorting frenzy we found we had enough tackle to rig every pitch in Lost Johns (our choice for the day) and so made our way to the parking area very near to the cave entrance (this cave must have one of the shortest walk ins in Yorkshire).

We were soon changed and raring to go (well Dom and Simon were) and rigging of all routes through the system progressed to combine at the start of the Battleaxe traverse. With Simon R at the sharp end the rest of us sat around doing the standard farmyard impressions to impress our Croydon C C colleagues. All too soon Simon had finished his job and we were forced to traverse out and then down into the main streamway. With the whole team stomping around in the main streamway (even Leg who made the effort after being told he was worse than Nigel Graham) the detackling was organised and the plod out was started. After ascending a couple of pitches our chosen route (Monastery) involved descending a couple of pitches before ascending again, outrageous. On nearing a pitch head I heard cackles of laughter coming from the

depths. Reaching out for the rope I was surprised to find that someone had left a bootlace hanging from the P hangers. It soon dawned on me however that I was expected to go down on this "rope" for want of a better word (apparently it's sold as accessory cord!). A quick descent saw me join the others in laughing at the next mug. On the far side of a rather fine chamber it was time to start the ascent again, still, we must be nearly out!. A couple of pitches later I was desperately trying to remember the survey when I met up with Max who was sat looking at a wet grovel, just what we needed. Still we must be nearly out!!! A draught was now blowing down the passage towards us, ah ha fresh air I thought?

NO CHANCE. In front of me was a vast chamber and stretching up into the blackness above was a @##!%\$ rope. Oh joy of joys another pitch, no wonder there was laughter coming from above. After waiting just long enough to tell Leg the good news I shot up the pitch faster than speeding slug! On reaching the top I stepped into the passageway, and moved towards the next pitch a couple of steps away. Suddenly I realised that there was no floor in front of me and looking down I could see the rest of the team waiting to ascend the main pitch over a hundred feet below. **** my old boots I thought and quickly clipped on my ascender and anything else I had dangling! Once across this obstacle my outhead switched on and I soon exited the cave to a fine Yorkshire evening, well, at least it wasn't raining.

Sitting in the Marton later it was generally agreed that this had been the best club trip that any of us had ever been on (well at least that was what we were going to tell Les). You should have been there man. It must be said that this was a classic trip in a fine Yorkshire pothole and I would recommend it to anyone.

After a more mellow evening than Friday, personally speaking that is, Sunday started with lots of good intent, with talk of a Swinstow pull through by some of the keener sorts. After breakfast, with the weather quickly deteriorating, a more sensible course of action was reached by all, apart from Max and Bean who insisted on a hike in the rain to try and find a cave entrance. The next couple of hours were spent gear shopping and tea drinking before collecting the two drowned rats and starting the long drive South.

The Frank Frost Award

1999 Wessex Photographic Competition

The last time the Club held a photographic competition, the standard of entries was very high. We have decided to organise another one, with entries to be displayed at the 1999 AGM and Dinner. You do not have to be Chris Howes or use a Hasselblad to enter, and don't forget, many excellent pictures have been taken by someone who had an inexpensive camera, but who just happened to be in the right place at the right time.

CLASSES

Formations

Underground Action

Portrait of a Member

A Club Event

Humorous

Prizes will be awarded in each class. There will also be a prize for the best portfolio consisting of one entry in each class.

RULES

1. Open to any Wessex member who is not a professional photographer. Entries must be the members own work.
2. Photographs or slides may be submitted in any size or format. The general subject should be caves and cavers.
3. There will be five classes, with a prize in each class, plus an overall prize for the best portfolio consisting of one photograph in each class.

4. Members may submit up to five photographs, but are limited to one entry per class.
5. Entries should be marked on the back with the entrant's name, and the class. A caption and technical data are optional.
6. Judging will be by independent judges; their decision will be final.
7. The judges reserve the right not to award a prize in any class.
8. The Club reserves the right to publish any entry in the Journal, or any other place. Otherwise, copyright remains with the photographer.
9. Entries will be displayed at the AGM, and at Upper Pitts.
10. Entries will only be returned if submitted with an SAE. Alternatively, they be collected from Upper Pitts after the AGM weekend.
11. The closing date for entries is 31st August 1999.
12. Entries should be sent to:
Phil Hendy
Ashbourne House, Weston Town,
Evercreech, Somerset, BA4 6PD
(or via Upper Pitts) no later than 31st August.

So, no excuses - just get snapping!

*£10 provided from Frank Frost memorial fund.
Robin Gray (REG) has donated 7 framed and signed cartoons.
Suggest £10 plus cup and 2 cartoons for overall winner, with 1 cartoon for each class winner.*

Logbook Extracts

12.11.98 - Down Rhino Rift RH Route

Les, Danny, Steve Standing

Light failure on way in so rigged bottom pitch in the dark - exited in the dark and left 2 tarts to de-rig (Steve and Danny)... Longwood stream flowed all the way to Longwood Valley Sink which swallowed the lot - missed pub.

6-8th Nov - WCC Derbyshire Trip

Les, Andy Morse, Wendy Finney, Cookie, Emma, Mel, Butch, Debs, Max, Mak & Jo, Simon, & Steve
Stayed at TSG, arrived at Peak Hotel early and started a session. Landlord came over at 23.17 and said, "If you're leaving you have 3 minutes, if you're staying then move to the other bar" - we moved to the other bar. ½ hr later Cookie arrived - couldn't get served!!!

Sat 7th - a Maskell-Oxlow Exchange without the exchange. Rescued some freshers from bottom of Oxlow and assisted the party out, added 3 hrs to the trip, but we were recompensed at the "Castle" with vast quantities of alcohol.

Sun 8th - quick trip to Jackpot (P8) to wash our gear. Took old Derbyshire caver with us and taught him how to use LADDERS!! Water levels high and excellent fun had.

20.11.98

Arrived at the caravan at 6.30. No lights on at Upper Pitts. No lights, no welcoming greeting, no tea, no fire lit, no Yorky. Goodbye old friend. Rest in Peace - Maurice and Judy.

20.11.98

Arrived 8pm - still no-one around - weird feeling, but in true tradition the stove was revved-up courtesy of Yorky's excellent teaching last weekend - thanks Mike!

20-22 Nov 98

Wessex -> Yorkshire Dales

Friday night saw a mass exodus north as 17 people raced to Ingleton and the single 8-berth caravan - the winners got a comfy bed and lots of beer. The cunning saved their fuel, still drank lots of beer and camped near the pub. Butch (cunning but stupid) stepped out of his tent and fell down yet another embankment (probably to prove that he still could). Now I'm not stupid. I drove like a basta'd and arrived in good time to grab a bunk and drink loads of beer. For some reason I did neither and slept in a landrover. Now this was definitely going to be a good weekend.

Saturday - Lost John's. All routes rigged/de-rigged. A small quantity of beer was consumed at the bottom. Trip duration 7 hrs. What can I say other than:

"Les, you should have been there man!"

This trip must rate very highly against any previous Club trip anywhere. It was a resounding success (all things good about the Wessex) and dedicated to the memory of an old friend - Simon

It didn't go unnoticed that all the girls were on Dom's team - including Mak

29.11.98

The hut was full of visiting students but somehow empty - yet contained many small reminders. Mike, your memory lives on - Cookie

4.12.98 - Pwll-Y-Cwm, S. Wales

Our first cave dive without our friend MDY to do our worrying for us. We will miss that mate, as well as your warm fires! We still owe you a dive some day. Your divers, Michael

5.12.98

Les, Cookie, Jonathan, Malcolm (UKCC)

Following on from Tuesday night digging!!! Trip to Singing River. After two rescues following run ins and several run aways, caverns boundless to man (approx. 80') with river and artfacts.

"5¾" is the smallest I've seen" - Claire (UKC), 1.00am 6/12/98

"I don't think I can get it up again" - Vern, 1.01am 6/12/98

"If I didn't have bruises on it I'd probably do it!" - Chef (SI), 1.06am 6/12/98

4.12.98 - St Cuthbert's

Mel, Mak, Simon, Vern, Kevin

Great cave! - I'm glad that dam held!

30.12.98 - St Lukes dig (Just as a by the way)

Max, Bob S, Adrian Orchard and a student (replacement for Aubrey who is on his hols)

Very nice waterfall down there just for once - missed Max though. Wall building and photo's.

31.12.98 - Swildons Mud Sump

Mak & Jo

Went for a quick pump but unfortunately the shaft was broken! Met a hoard of sheep on the way out. Axebridge Xmas tree below old 40' was not a patch on WCC one of previous years.

18.12.98 - 28.12.98 -Assynt

Cookie & MCG (Julie, Peter, James, Les and Don)
Trips to Claonite, ANUS, Cnoc Nan and Smoo. Although the sump by-pass in Claonite was a sump, fortunately we were on the daylight side of it - unlike Goon a month ago (the Grampian log book entries for that night are very entertaining). ANUS excellent ... the water thundered through the cave. Some found the sound exhilarating, others frightening and ran away ... Sullivan is still there waiting for the next trip, which I hope will happen sooner rather than later.

1.1.99 - OFD Pendulum to Nave

Les, Mark, Morse, Max, Cookie & two Belgiums
Just as classic as it was two months ago.

1.1.99 - Upper Pitts - Dinner for the New Year

Superb spread put on by Phil and helpers. I've never seen a tenner buy so much good food and alcohol.

4.1.99 - Swildon's Mud Sump

Clare, Malcolm, Mark (UKC) & Jack
Took down replacement pump, but doesn't fit holes, so didn't install, or attach pipes. Only the one tackle sack so left it down there. Brought out old pump for fixing. Cave was wetter than a wet thing that's very wet.

6.1.99 - St Lukes

Aubrey, Max & Bean
Removed spoil and broke rock.

13.1.99 - St Lukes

Max, Bob, Bean, Paula & Aubrey
Lots of spoil removed including remains of last week's boulder. Bob's light lasted about twenty minutes (perhaps the longest for months).

16.1.99 - Wells: Apres-caving

Simon & Piers
Piers 1, Simon 0.
Resulted in a trip to Wells hospital.

17.1.99 - Mud Sump

Mark, Les, Steve (Hacket)
Working trip to replace u/s pump. Job done (nearly), more water entering Mud sump than can be pumped out. Don't bother for a month or six. Met Shag and Danny on their way in.

19.1.999 - Mud Sump

Mark, Les, Butch, Shag & someone else.
Another working trip to finish securing the pump. Cave a tad sporting after a rather damp couple of days! It came up six inches whilst we were in!!

Caving Events

February

20th Jim and Graham's Barrel
27th Max & Christine's going away party

March

6th Cave Science Symposium
Nottingham, Trent University
20th NCA AGM

April

10th CCC Ltd AGM, Hunters 10.30am

May

1st/3rd WSG South Wales Meet
8th WCC Stomp
15th CSCC AGM, Hunters 10.30am
28th/31st North Wales Meet. Rhosesmor

June

12th/13th BCRA Regional meeting
Swaledale, Yorkshire

July

12th/16th NSS Convention, Twin Falls, Idaho

August

9th/20th WCC Slovenia Expedition
28th/30th Bank Holiday Meet, to be arranged

September

10th/12th BCRA, Hidden Earth, Leeds
24th/27th NAMHO '99 Conference,
Forest of Dean

November

1st/7th First European Cave Rescue
Symposium, Goppingen,
Southern Germany