

W
e
s
s
e
x

C
a
v
e

C
l
u
b



Journal 342
June 2017



EDITORIAL

**President**

Donald Thomson

Vice Presidents

James Hanwell

Sid Perou

Derek Ford

Chairman

Les Williams

51 Churchill Rd. East,

Wells,

Somerset,

BA5 3HU

01749 679 839

Secretary

Frank Tully

16, Bedminster Rd.,

Bristol,

BS3 5PD

07890 862 709

Membership Secretary

Colin Shapter

Treasurer

Aubrey Newport

Caving Secretary

James Colling

Hut Warden

John Cooper

Librarian

Phil Hendy

Gear Curator

Jonathan Williams

Hut Administration

Mike Kousiounis

Sales Officer

John Gisborne

Webmaster

Mike Kousiounis

Hut Bookings

Ali Moody

Journal Editor

Noel Cleave

Opinions expressed in this journal are not necessarily those of the club or the Editor. Copyright Wessex Cave Club 2016. All rights reserved.

ISSN 0083-811X**Headquarters**

Upper Pitts,

Eastwater Lane,

Priddy, Wells,

Somerset,

BA5 3AX,

01749 672 310

Volume 34
Journal 342
June 2017

This issue is distributed with the covering address sheet in its proper, paid-for form, So a few words of explanation are in order. My aim as Editor has been to provide the best possible journal at the minimum possible cost. This has been an incremental process involving advances in DTP, colour printing and distribution. Getting our journal printed in Germany has reduced the cost to £0.84 each, which is remarkable for a 24 page, glossy, full colour publication. The next cost issue is postage. The jump above 100 gms in weight incurs a disproportionate increase in the cost of postage, from 76p to 122p. The journal is printed on the minimal possible paper weights, but in the lightest possible paper envelope, with a label, the weight is..... 101gms. Printing an address directly onto the C4 envelope still leaves it fractionally over the dreaded 100gm limit. Changing to a flimsy polythene envelope, with an almost equally flimsy address sheet, transforms the picture, bringing the weight down to 94gms.. This gives some leeway, as a BCA card can be enclosed without extra cost. (*BCA has also produced a plastic "Credit Card" with details of Weil's Disease. If you'd like one for your wallet, they are in the library in a labelled plastic box: the card information is on page 231*) It seemed sensible to see if space on the address sheet could bring in some advertising revenue. I've never "Sold" anything commercially in my life, so my target selection of appropriate advertisers was simplistic, to put it mildly. I confess to being astonished and delighted with their responses. But the juggling act continues as colour printing the address covering sheet (also done in Germany) incurs a cost. On balance the Wessex comes out around £220 a year ahead, so it is well worth it. I can pretty much guarantee that some members will object to this "Commercialisation", but the Wessex is the beneficiary and it's not obvious why commercialisation should be a dirty word in this context. Obviously we need to keep our advertisers "On side", so if and when you patronise them, please be sure to mention their Ad. in the Wessex Journal.

There are other way in which postage costs are minimised and our thanks are overdue to Brian Prewer for the hand deliveries in the local area. If anyone else would be happy to collect from Library, please let ether Colin Shapter or myself know; with surplus copies available yours should be safe there.

Following their almost instantaneous breakthrough in Tween Twins, some of the Fester Mafia have switched their aspirations elsewhere..... to 18 Acre. Jonathan reports on page 226.

One final plea.... I have many superlatively dramatic cave photographs, but the journal would better reflect its contents with more local ones, for example, diggers at work. And yes, I know, that cramped conditions, mud and steam are the enemies of "Good" photographs, but what's needed is illustration rather than quality!

Noel

CONTENTS

Upper Pitts Improvements	225	Canadian Nostalgia	230
Eighteen Acre Dig	226	Our Advertisers	232
Reciprocal Club Rights	228	Library Additions	234
SWCC Trip Tickets etc	229	Log-Book Extracts	236

Cover Photograph**OFD Streamway****Photo: Christine Grosart**



COMMITTEE AND ADMIN INFORMATION



Making better use of space at Upper Pitts.

It now appears unlikely that we will receive any funding from the UK lottery (Sport England) fund to replace the changing area at Upper Pitts. This proposal was somewhat controversial because the process of demolishing the existing facilities and totally rebuilding would have caused major upheaval to the club and effectively closed the hut for a long period because of the lack of changing and shower facilities. (Some estimate the whole project could have taken 6 months or even longer). The club finances would be severely degraded by the loss of income whilst the hut was closed.

We are therefore discussing plans to make better use of the existing space within the hut. These plans need to be timed to minimise any loss of income as well as potential corporation tax liability. To comply with the views expressed at the AGM they are designed to be completed without the involvement of those who are 'busy' with completing the sewage and drainage works. Some work may need to be undertaken by professionals but our aim is to ensure that everything is done properly and no job is left 'half done'.

The limited space in the changing area is one of the main areas of concern. The proposal is to move the tackle store into the main building and change the seldom used 4th shower/toilet into a single toilet cubicle, thus freeing the combined extra space into changing area.

To accomplish this the initial plan would be to give members notice that all of the old lockers in the locker room will be removed. (Some digging lockers could be moved to the shed in the car park.) We could then scrap most of the old lockers and redecorate the unsightly locker room and build a wall to separate off the new tackle store. Eventually we would purchase a bank of new small lockers (similar to those used in swimming pools) to be placed along the wall adjacent to the door to the changing room extension.

The next stage would be to remove the 4th shower in the changing room, move the nearby toilet and build a new toilet cubicle in line with the main showers.

The existing tackle store could then be demolished, possibly after installing suitable RSJs on the existing pillars and main wall to support the water storage tanks which are located above the current tackle store.

A further set of small lockers may be purchased and located in the modified changing area for people to leave their surface clothes thus reducing the 'clutter' when lots of people are caving.

The above shows that with a little thought we can complete the work in separate self-contained stages with minimum disruption.

We have agreed several other projects to improve Upper Pitts, again all of these should (must) not delay any potential work on the sewage system. These are:

Clear out the Shed in the car park and persuade members not to 'Dump' things at the Wessex because they think they may become useful one day!

Replace the old windows in the changing room and locker room with new double-glazed units.

Insulate the walls of the upstairs dormitory.

Roof the kit washing and adjacent storage areas.

Clear permanent food boxes from the kitchen once we have the new lockers in place.

The committee welcomes comments on these proposals and any suggestions for further improvements which will make Upper Pitts a better and more pleasant caving hut. Offers of help are always welcome!

Please note that the warning that the front door is unlocked and that the hut is insecure is a small and rather obscure red light above the inner porch door. Until this warning is made more obvious, take care when leaving the hut empty to look up and check that you have locked it behind you.

SAD FAREWELLS TO WESSEX MEMBERS AND PAST MEMBERS:

We have just learned that Ray Borrett died recently and have extended our sympathy to his family. We will be recipients of Ray's "Caving" library in due course.

Donald McFarlane writes: I am saddened to report that Alan G. Fincham died May 16th on his island home of Cyprus. Alan was a well-known Mendip (Wessex CC) caver in the late 1950's, then became a well-known Yorkshire caver via the University of Leeds before taking a position at the University of The West Indies in the late 1960's. He became the leading member of the Jamaica Caving Club, publishing the ground-breaking "Jamaica Underground " in 1977 - the first really comprehensive guide to a tropical caving region, anywhere. He provided inspiration, guidance and hospitality to several generations of Jamaican cavers, long after he left the island.

Editor's note: At least two other Wessex members knew and caved with Alan: myself and Paul Hadfield. I caved with Alan in South Wales and Yorkshire in the late 50s. He dragged me into two seriously tight and unpleasant Yorkshire pots - Hammer Pot and Magnetometer. This was on ladders and we failed to bottom either.

Paul remembers Alan in his diary excerpts on page **230**

On a Happier and Lighter note

Eighteen Acre Dig 1 Year On

After Fester Hole went in February 2016 and it became obvious that there wasn't going to be opportunity to dig in there regularly myself and Tim Clements began to have a scout around for somewhere else to dig. Using the fantastic resource which is the MCRA Google Earth data (www.mcra.org.uk) I fed in some basic criteria with which to narrow the search. Being inherently lazy diggers with a strict time-limit for our digging activities we were looking for somewhere which fulfilled most of the following criteria,

Close to home preferably in Priddy, even better if it was close to the pub.
Be close to the road. Who likes a long walk before digging?
Start of the dig close to surface (did I mention the lazy bit)

With all these criteria fed in to the electronic brain the list became dramatically short! So off we went to 18 Acre. On arrival, the lid was grown over and the padlock rusted shut so we were able to deduce there wasn't anyone actively digging. A search of the logs showed that the last Shepton team there had quit around 2001. I had vivid memories of a trip to the dig around 1998/99 with Tommo, Kathy & Nik-Nak after Tuska had persuaded us in the pub to go and have a look. I remember horribly loose boulders, suffice to say I never returned.

Roll on nearly 20 years and Tim & I seemed fairly hopeful that it might be worth a look. Our online logbook records to first inspection visit on 28th February 2016

Jonthan W, Aubrey N, Murray K, Barry W, Chris George - 1 hour
Had a good look around to see where we thought it might best be start digging. A few weeks working down in the floor before the old scaffolding was thought best.

The previous team had pushed a scaffolding shaft down through the middle of boulders. After 17 years it looked decidedly unsafe, while two metres or so away a good solid wall was present and a slight draught was rising up through boulders. We began capping boulders in the floor and using the old shaft as a spoil dump. Sand and cement were carried in and we cemented as we went

By June we had made 3 metres of progress in the our new cemented shaft. Progress was swift as we had a convenient place for soil dumping. As the boulders where still decidedly loose we removed the larger ones with the use of multiple dets. A quick and easy method that allowed for immediate return to the dig face.

On the night of the EU Referendum a small decorated rift was uncovered.

Thursday June 23 2016 JW, TC - 2 Hours

Fresh sand and cement where delivered to the front. TC began walling on top of MKp's bridge stones from Sunday. A few skips of loose mud and spoil where then removed from below and several feet of open rift where revealed (Referendum Rift) containing some nice straws and nice flowstone wall. A scaffolding bar was placed across the freshly walled section to add support before a retire to the Vic.

Work continued throughout the summer months with a total of 35 logged trips before on 18th October it looked as though a change in character had been encountered. Our shaft, now around 8m deep opened up to a horizontal section. Later to be named "Clement's Folly" after Tim's daredevil push along it under hanging death it was to be the key to our ability to push the dig on during the wet winter months.

A number of small collapses slowed progress dramatically in the weeks leading up to Christmas. To ensure safety we cleared further and further back into the choke until we reached rock big enough to wall up. By December a sizable space among the boulders offered space to stand-up and work effectively, named "Trump Chamber" on the basis that it promised the earth but delivered nothing. **Jonathan**

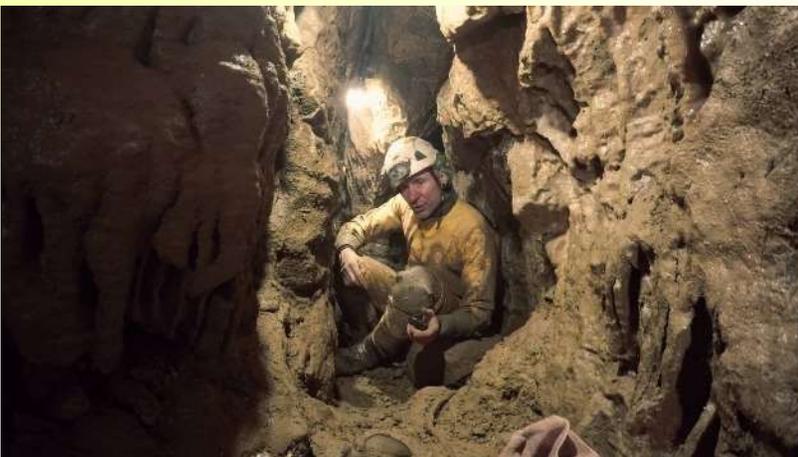
And from the "Molephone" (an ear to the underground.....)

From Facebook: Nick Chipchase to Chris Binding.

"Dear Christopher Binding.
It has come to my attention that you found 5m of cave recently. We have lost 5m of cave so I reckon it is ours. Please can you return it. Ours was brown with rocks in. The attached photo shows Mr Glanvill looking for it. Notice that the ropes now end in nothingness. I expect you have nicked it to mess about in at Wookey. That nice Becca can bring it back."

Editor's Note:

This photo of Andy Horeckyj, taken by him, in Perdition, Grebe Swallet suggests that Chris's dig there is also "Brown with rocks in", and that Nick Chipchase wouldn't really want it back in any case.



But I've mentioned in this, and earlier editions of the Wessex Journal, that I'd like some photos to illustrate the sheer squalor and discomfort that characterises most of the current digs.



RECIPROCAL RIGHTS CLUBS



The Wessex has reciprocal rights of accommodation with the following clubs

Derbyshire

- Orpheus Caving Club
- TSG

Devon

- Devon Speleological Society

Wales

- South Wales Caving Club
- Westminster Speleological Group

Yorkshire

- Bradford Pothole Club
- Craven Pothole Club
- Northern Pennine Club
- Red Rose Cave & Pothole Club
- Yorkshire Subterranean Society

Although there are some differences in usage rights, the basics are the same for all our reciprocal clubs:

1. We pay the same accommodation rates as their full members.
2. We must provide our own ropes and tackle, and not expect to use theirs.
3. Accommodation rights do not imply the right to use their libraries.
4. We should always, as a courtesy, contact them ahead of any visit when we expect to stay overnight.

Incidentally the Red Rose Cave & Pothole Club have recently received a grant of £400 from the Sedbergh & Kirkby Lonsdale (South Lakeland) Community Grants Fund to improve the access track to the club's centre at Bullpot Farm, Casterton in the Yorkshire Dales. In addition, there have been improvements to the parking on either side of the track, which will result in less congestion on the public highway on the approach to Bullpot Farm and less likelihood of the bridleway to Barbondale being blocked, especially at weekends, as this is a popular parking place for cavers visiting the Ease Gill Caverns system and for walkers on the Casterton Fell area.

We all enjoy the caving and hospitality of our "Sister" club, The South Wales Caving Club, so we were dismayed to receive the following message from their secretary.

Dear Wessex Caving Club

I trust everyone is fit and well.

I have a problem that I hope you can help me with. I am 99% certain that some of your members were smoking in OFD a few weeks ago. It would be a great assistance if you could remind your members that smoking is strictly banned in OFD and that a repeated breach of this very simple rule may lead to removal of permission to enter OFD.

My reading of current English Law is that it is currently a criminal offence to smoke in a cave. Your members may not be aware of this.

Regards

Gary



This was some time ago and we discussed it in committee. As far as we could ascertain, looking at dates and the Log Book, the guilty smoker was not a Wessex member, but rather than protest and cause any ill-will we decided that the event actually merited a timely reminder, not just about smoking, but also about the need to be meticulous how we behave as guests of the SWCC. It is all too easy to be casual about filling in the illustrated "Call-Out" chit on the next page.

SWCC/CODC

Guidance on the Completion of Trip Tickets

Trip Tickets serve several functions. **Rescue callout** is the most important function. However tickets also allow us to locate missing keys and they are used to compile statistical reports for the Countryside Council for Wales (who own the Ogof Ffynnon Ddu National Nature Reserve).

Please complete tickets in full as shown in this example:

CAVE *OFD1 / 2* **KEY** *5*

ROUTE *Through trip via Marble Showers Traverses. May look in Upper Oxbow Series en route. If stream in OFD1 is high will exit via Cwmddwr.*

NAMES
LEADER
E Martel
N Casteret
F Collins

CAR Nos
X981HMT

CLUB
Calcite Caving Club

ADDRESS OF KEYHOLDER
25, Calcite Close, London, NW2 5PW

DATE *06/11/07* **KEY RET. TO** *CDO*

TIME IN *11.00* **OUT** *18.00*

Obvious really but do be absolutely clear!

Keys do get left in oversuit pockets and tackle sacks. Also a useful cross-check for rescue – if the key is back maybe you are back, this could avoid a callout.

Please give full names clearly written. Avoid 'Martel + 2', nicknames etc.

As much detail as possible please – especially if you have a 'Plan B' in mind.

As with Key Nos. this can help us confirm if a party is underground or may actually have left.

Please give this part of your club's name in full. Calcite C.C. would be fine as would Gypsum Uni. S.S.

Date is vital for rescue: especially for mid-week trips.

Times are vital for rescue too. The 'out' time should tally with your chosen hook on the destination board

Once again may be helpful if there is uncertainty as to a party's whereabouts or in case of a missing key

Duty Officer:

Please place green part of ticket in the container in the key cupboard when the party returns.

RH Nov 06



Paul Hadfield writes from the Canadian wilderness, where he is recovering from a brush with the grim reaper. We are indebted to him for these delightful excerpts from his caving diaries. I wonder how many of us keep or have kept such log-books of all our caving trips, and how many others reading these wish, like myself, that they had done so.

Wednesday June 25 1980 **Toothpick** Paul Hadfield, Roy Jameson, Patty Mothes

Climbed up into newly discovered section (Boston Grotto, three weeks previously). A very bold move leads to more good technical going, reminiscent of Dowber Gill, mainly traversing to an area of high avens. A very loose climb up a tight rift led to the terminal series of rooms where we surveyed some 95metres of passage. Plenty more remains to be done. The characteristics of this area are mostly illustrated by the very unstable boulder piles present everywhere. Returned at stream level to the drop. A fine trip.

Paul

Thursday June 26 1980 **Canadian Hole** (Ontario Extension) Paul Hadfield, Roy Jameson, Patty Mothes

Patty led us very competently through the boulder piles of Almost Hell despite having been here only once before. Yonge Street was in some ways even worse, involving a lot of hands and knees crawling on bad floor surface, or stoop walking. The Ontario extensions, however, made up for it. Very impressive passages. Visited Twinkle Chamber, Terminus Choke, Temptation Streamway, Double Decker Passage, etc. etc. Ended up going to Alf Latham's dig beyond Tin Can Alley. A superb one man digging effort by Roy broke into virgin cave. This downstream going North..ie.... into the Clyde Cochran, Rush Run, Rusby & Hills drainage & potentially could lead to miles of new cave. After 200 feet or so of crawling over stream washed cobbles we broke into walking sized stream passage, but were stopped after another 100 for by a 15 ft pitch into a pool leading to a larger canyon passage below. En-route we had passed two avens dripping water - one with an obvious lead at the top and a side lead which Patty pushed for 100 ft or so and was still going.

We exited elated after almost 12 hrs underground. A superb trip. **Paul**

~~~~~  
Saturday June 28 1980 **Rubber Chicken** (via Snedegars). Paul Hadfield, Peter Zabrok

A tourist trip to familiarise ourselves with the Snedegar/Rubber Chicken link. Met Alan Fincham in the Rubber Chicken streamway (the Wessex gets everywhere again!). Went up to the entrance of Rubber Chicken as far as the foot of the entrance pit found the way on to the trunk maze but did not pursue it due to water. Small passage near the foot of entrance pit led to pool with draught over top of water. On the way out met Ralf Kennedy, Julie ? +2 others. Took 40min from Shake room to entrance. Also walked up the "Highway" for 30 minutes - this is impressive passage!! Huge mud tubes and boulders just going on & on!

A fine gentlemanly trip. 4.5 hrs. **Paul**

~~~~~  
Saturday June 28 1980 **Robins Run Dig** Paul Hadfield, Alan Fincham, Peter Zabrok

An inspection of Alan's dig - today without any sign of a stream. A bone dry stream bed. Dig is in an abandoned section of the cave in streambed cobbles & clay against a headwall. Object is to regain active stream passage below. The area drained by the stream is approximately 12 sq miles - about the same as that drained by the Friars hole stream, so potential cave is really there. **Paul**

Friday 04 July 1980 **Honey Creek Cave** (Near San Antonio, Texas) Paul Hadfield, Gary Poole, Tini Poole, Russel Hill, Peter Keys, Mark Minton, Steve and others

A resurgence cave with 70° F water pouring into a streambed to make an idyllic swimming hole. Went in 1000 ft to a breakdown pile. Travelled with Steve in water continually out of our depth. Without fins it was hard work, so Steve and I turned back at the breakdown, while the others continued. One party pushed



it's not what it used to be
.....
Nostalgia.....

on for several hours after the others came out and eventually got out late at night with reports of the cave just going and going, and getting bigger and bigger!! **Paul**

Saturday 05 July 1980 **Honey Creek Cave** Paul Hadfield, Russel Hill, Mark Minton, Steve

Went in as a survey team, the other team being Peter Kemp, Gary Poole and Tini. Started surveying about 1000ft beyond the breakdown at the “Su Madre” inlet. Soon caught up with the other survey team and we leap-frogged each other down the cave until the decorated chamber. Then Russell and I went on for several hundred feet more to a very low section, which we later found out lasted for a few hundred feet until things started getting bigger. However, at this point we turned round and started plodding out. The push team from the previous day came in and surveyed out from Su Madre to the boulder ruckle.

- a superb trip - despite the loss of two helmets and three lights! **Paul.**

Sunday 06 July 1980 **Honey Creek Cave** Finished survey, breakdown to entrance. Over 1.5 kms of Surveyed passage. **Paul**

A hidden hazard of caving: Weil’s Disease

Weil's disease is a severe form of leptospirosis. This is a type of bacterial infection. It's caused by *Leptospira* bacteria. You can contract it if you come into contact with the urine, blood, or tissue of animals or rodents that are infected with the bacteria. It can cause a wide range of symptoms, including:

- High fever
- Headache
- Chills
- Muscle aches
- Vomiting
- Jaundice (yellow skin and eyes)
- Red eyes
- Abdominal pain
- Diarrhea
- Rash

Many of these symptoms can be mistaken for other diseases.

The time between a person's exposure to a contaminated source and becoming sick is 2 days to 4 weeks. Illness usually begins abruptly with fever and other symptoms. Leptospirosis may occur in two phases:

After the first phase (with fever, chills, headache, muscle aches, vomiting, or diarrhea) the patient may recover for a time but become ill again.

If a second phase occurs, it is more severe; the person may have kidney or liver failure or meningitis. This phase is still called Weil's disease.

The illness lasts from a few days to 3 weeks or longer. Without treatment, recovery may take several months. There is an associated mortality rate of about 5%.

In addition, some infected persons may have no symptoms at all, but humans infected with leptospirosis can also excrete the bacteria in their urine for some time. Human-to-human infection though is not very likely.

It is quite a serious disease, so if in doubt, see your GP. He should take a blood test and send to the Porton Down RLIP unit for analysis. Many years ago a Wessex member called Oliver Lloyd (who was a professor of pathology, and wrote for the Wessex Journal as “Cheramodytes”) suffered an attack of Weil’s Disease. At the time he thought that he’d caught it in Stoke Lane, which was sewage contaminated then, but he had also been on an organised trip into the London sewers, and Weil’s was often called the “Sewerman’s Disease”, being an occupational hazard for them.

A few words on “Commercialisation” and filthy lucre.....

The reason that the Wessex Cave Club is financially solidly and safely prosperous is that year on year your committee (guided by a succession of careful treasurers) have balanced the immediate needs of the club against its long-term requirements. Inter alia, your subscription funds the production of the journal, and it is every Editor’s responsibility to agree a budget with the Treasurer, and produce each year’s journals within it. Whatever our various motivations for accepting this responsibility, I am certain that we have all seen the finances of production and distribution as a challenge, quite apart from the work of compiling and printing the journal. At present, this responsibility falls on me. I take it seriously and have been exploring every element of cost, production and distribution to give the club the best possible value for money. The superlightweight address cover with which we now distribute the journal saves us considerable postage (almost £130 per issue). It could go out as a blank white page simply with your address on it. I hope that on balance more members would feel offended were we to choose this, and pass up the chance to help the club’s finances, than perhaps do feel that selling advertising space on it is somehow wrong.

The advertising is only on the disposable cover sheet, although we will ask our external distributions to display it on their notice boards. So no space in the body of the journal has been sold for advertising, but I will occasionally publicise any relevant special offers, and (as in this issue) make space for free publicity for publications such as Martyn Farr’s new book. However, since I am breaking new ground here, it also seems worth adding a few words about our supporting advertisers, because they are seriously good providers of things we need as cavers.

Cotswold Outdoor: their hallmark is **quality**. The old description “Cheap and cheerful” meant, in reality, cheap and dreadful. Despite the sheer quality of their merchandise, in terms of value for money, Cotswold Outdoor is outstanding, particularly when they will give a 15% discount on production of your Wessex Cave Club membership card. For the climbers amongst us, their range of climbing aids, jammers and dynamic rope is vast, and the outdoor clothing and camping equipment similarly superlative. It’s also a lovely place to visit, on the lake, with an adjacent restaurant (and luxury hotel!).

Snowcard: Wessex Cave Club members are natural migrants; we travel overseas endlessly. And overseas we cave, ski, climb, do via feratta, kayak, canyon, mountain ‘bike..... hard to think of an activity that we don’t embrace as yet another opportunity to break ourselves. Snowcard will cover us for even the most bizarre adventures (and repatriate us when damaged) and their wrist-band and “Credit Card” are portable instant proof to our rescuers that we are financially covered. Snowcard is also utterly straightforward, there are no tiny-print “Get-outs” in their policies.



Caveclimb: Has to be our first port of call for all our caving equipment. Their range is enormous. Perhaps even more usefully, when we take friends, children or grandchildren caving, we can hire everything they might need, correctly sized and perfectly maintained. Open on request.... what’s not to like!

Descent: When I see each thumbled and coffee-stained “Descent” in the common-room or library, it amazes me that any caver does **not** subscribe and have their own personal copy! My bi-monthly fix feeds an absolute addition. Particularly for members who can’t get underground as often as they would like, or away from the Mendips, it provides a rich mixture of news from every other club and UK caving area. It’s always a visual feast; featuring the work of many of the world’s best cave photographers. And the illustrated accounts of amazing caves in every country and continent can never fail to capture one’s imagination. When I’m asked “What do you want for Christmas?”, the answer is “Descent”! It’s the perfect present to give or receive in the caver’s world.

Photo Showcase. Swildons Double Pots.
Photo: Mark Burkey





More Club Admin and Information



From Mike Kushy

The next hut working weekend will be on August the weekend of the 5th. The hut is completely free and ideally we don't want anyone staying at the hut overnight apart from people coming to help do the jobs. I'm going to try and organise a BBQ for Sunday lunchtime as a bonus. We are going to buy all the materials needed by the end of July ready for the weekend.

Also there is a new section under the members pages tab on the website for 'sales' I've uploaded pictures and a downloadable price list.

Mike.

We welcome the following new members

Martin Robson

Michael West

Thomas Howard

RECENT ADDITIONS TO THE LIBRARY

As at 8th June 2017

B.C.R.A. Cave and Karst Science 44, 1 (Apr. 2017)

Council of Northern Caving Clubs. N/L 5 (Feb. 2017)

Chelsea S.S. N/L 59, 1,2,3 (Jan – Mar 2017)

Craven Pothole Club 'Record' 125, 126 (Jan., Apr. 2017)

Derbyshire Caving Association 'The Derbyshire Caver' 144 (Spr. 2017)
Information Circular 2017/3 (Mar/Apr. 2017), Annual Report for 2016

Descent 255 (Apr/May 2017) (*Vurley Swallet, Hobnail Hole*)

266 (Jun/July 2017) (*Obits. Tony Knibbs, John Buxton*)

Gloucester Speleological N/L 'The Journal' Summer 2016, Feb, May 2017)

Grampian S.G. 'Bulletin' 5th Series, 2, 2 (Mar. 2017)

Shepton Mallet Caving Club Journal 13, 6 (Feb 2017) (*Thailand, Surveying with Smartphone, Cutler's Green, Normandy*)

NSS (USA) 'News' 75, 3, 4,5 (Mar., Apr., May 2017)

Journal of Cave and Karst Studies 78, 3 (Dec. 2016)

Plymouth Mineral & Mining Club N/L 45 2, 3 (Oct.15, Feb.16)

46 1, 2 (Jun 16, Oct 16)

Red Rose Cave & Pothole Club. Journal No. 11 (2009 – 2016) (*Packed full of Northern information*)

White Rose Pothole Club N/L 36, 1 (Mar. 2017)

Haigh D. & Cordingley J. *Adventure Underground* (2017)

Other Book News

For anyone who missed out on the very limited printing of “A spider’s Web of Shining Silver” by the late Mike Boon. You can now get a new version of the book Edited by Andrew Chapman

It is 2016. 6 by 8 inches. Hardbound. 351 pages. US\$40, Canadian \$ 50. Post paid. This new edition has had rather mediocre reviews because of the poor print quality, and because the “Great San Augustin Rescue” hasn’t been properly corrected from the photocopies.

Editor: I’ve received an Email from Vertebrate Publishing:

“This spring independent books specialist Vertebrate Publishing is releasing a new edition of *The Darkness Beckons*: The history and development of world cave diving by internationally renowned cave diver Martyn Farr.

First published in 1980, the book has been fully updated for 2017 to reflect the latest developments, and features an all-new foreword by renowned cave diver and explorer Bill Stone together with over 250 digitally remastered photographs and more than 100 hand-drawn diagrams. I have attached an information sheet which provides full details about the book.

We are publishing 500 limited-edition hardback copies of *The Darkness Beckons*, which will be signed by Martyn and sold on a first-come-first-served basis for £40.

If the book sounds like it might be of interest to your newsletter subscribers, I wondered whether you wouldn’t mind sharing this news with them.”.....

So here it is!



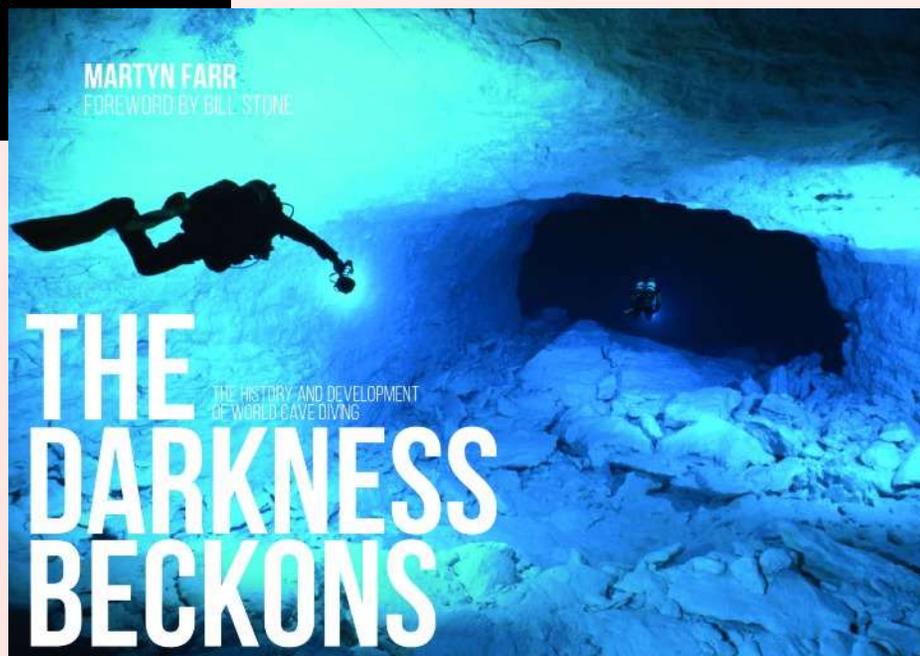
‘A CAPTIVATING BOOK FILLED WITH INCREDIBLE STORIES, AWE-INSPIRING IMAGES AND DETAILING THE MYSTERIOUS, ENCHANTING AND OFTEN DANGEROUS WORLD OF CAVE DIVING.’

Martyn Farr is a world-renowned caver, cave diver and instructor and is responsible for discovering many miles of cave passages around the globe. He has won much international acclaim for his prolific writing and stunning photography. Martyn has written numerous books and magazine articles and his exceptional images can be seen in many literary and photographic publications, but *The Darkness Beckons* is by far his greatest contribution to the history of cave diving.

This much-anticipated, entirely new edition of *The Darkness Beckons* will be published in spring 2017.

There will be only 500 limited edition signed hardback copies of Martyn’s book available prior to a general paperback release. Reserve your copy now (£40 inc. UK postage) at WWW.V-PUBLISHING.CO.UK

Visit WWW.FARRWORLD.CO.UK for further information about Martyn.

 inspiring adventure



Editor: With this section starting on 12 November 2016, it's obvious that I am still playing catch-up with these. With no major feature articles in this edition of the journal, however, I should be able to bring the extracts far more up to date.

Saturday November 12 2016 LVS John Cooper, Ali Moody, Mike K, John Hall, Pete Buckley

2 weeks worth of lovely spoil shifted from storage to outside. A few rocks first, and some mud found. New hauling system works well - 84 loads. Half a hole drilled (only) rock is so hard. Puddle left to drain. The way on looks.....
Pete

Sunday November 13 2016 Swildons John Cooper, Lee Hawkswell

Trip to Sump 1, about 1 cm of water going in bottom of pipe. Still an airspace through Sump 1. 1 1/2 hrs. **John**

Sunday November 13 2016 Swildons Bean, Lara, Iona

Took Lara and Iona for their first Sump 1 trip. Through to Sump 2 and back. Far too keen!
Bean

Tuesday November 15 2016 Swildons Derek Sanderson, Terry Waller

To Sump 1, pleasant trip. Still 2 inches of airspace in sump. 1 hr 25. **Derek**

Friday November 18 2016 LVS John Cooper

Traipsed through snow with drill, only to find Main Sink full to overflowing. Stream flowing into LVS - too much to make entry safe. **John**

Friday November 18 2016 Sludge Pit Mike K, Duncan Simey

Surveying the rest of Aragonite Rift. 4 hrs. **Mike**

Friday November 18 2016 His Lordship's Hole Geoff Newton, Mike K

The cave was very sporting today with a good sized stream making things interesting. Just taking more spoil out to the chamber. Decent draught. Ahead a constriction means some rock needs removal, but way on looks possible after this is done. **Geoff**

Saturday November 19 2016 LVS / Brimble Pit John Cooper, Pete Buckley

Quick trudge through the snow, to see LVS taking water. With the help of John (the dam) I managed to get in and out without getting too wet. Looked at dig face.... no change. **Pete**

Brimble Pit, retrieved the wire and had a look-see at the end. Lots of debris needs removing. Air not so good, came out slowly, but panting quickly! **Pete**

Saturday November 19 2016 Sludge Pit Ali Moody, Mike K, Lee Venning, Wayne Starsmore, Geoff Newton

Ali and Kushy banged the Mud Tube dig. The rest of us played with a hoe in the Boulder Chamber dig, then went to the new end of Back Passage. **Geoff**

Saturday November 19 2016 Swildons Bean, Jacob, Lara, Rich

Swildons Upper trip. Went in through the Zig Zags, Butcombe Chamber, Oxbows, old 40, Swildons 2, then out through Long Dry. 2 hrs. **Bean**

Saturday November 19 2016 Swildons Mike K, Wayne Starsmore

To the first duck. Bad air through St.Pauls. After Shatter it got worse again. Really clear oil smell coming from Fault Chamber. This was where the air got the worst. The first duck had low water, could have been passed without bailing. **Mike**

Sunday November 20 2016 Swildons John Cooper, Lee Hawkswell, Barry Weaver.

Following heavy overnight rain the bottom pipe was completely underwater (when we came out, we removed the log that was blocking it, and it dropped rapidly to give an airspace). Nice wet trip down to Sump 1, lots of froth. 1 1/4 hrs. **John**

Sunday November 20 2016 Sludge Pit Geoff Newton, Mike K

Clearing spoil from yesterday's bang. **Geoff**

Wednesday November 23 2016 Lime Kiln Aubrey

Bottom is draining OK. There has been a lot of water, due to recent rain. **Aubrey**

Saturday November 26 2016 **LVS** Pete Buckley, John Cooper, Tony Boycott, Linda Wilson, Mike K, Ali Moody.

A surface clearance session to tidy up the mess made by last week's floods. Ali and Pete made a wet descent of the cave. In Main Rift, which was taking the majority of the stream, the water was backed-up to the top of Rich Witcombe's wall. Triassic Tunnel was washed clean and a considerable amount of water was descending the PPS Rift. **Ali**

Saturday November 26 2016 **Swildons** Not more than usual water going in, but signs of major flooding all down the Short Dry (and lots of water flowing down it, with much more coming from the Long Dry at the Old Grotto). Went to 20 to sort out lengths for a new custom rig. Did not go on down to Sump 1 because old age has infected my left hip. Damn! Met various bodies en-route, some Hungarian, and a pair doing SRT down the 40. Walked back in beautiful clear evening boding well for a freezing night. Changing room full of Hungarians: seems a pity that they were not spending the night at UP. **Noel**

Tuesday November 29 2016 **Sludge Pit** Derek Sanderson, Terry Waller

In honour of the Goons, we did it backwards... down via Shale Series and across to look at the dig in 4 Pots Passage. Down to the Sump and out via Aragonite Rift. (Previous Thursday, an excellent trip into Shatter Cave with Martin Grass). **Derek**

Monday November 28 2016 **Spider Hole** John Cooper, Tony Seddon, Ade VdP

Deviation pulley removed from 4 Ton Shaft so Nigel can make a replacement. 3 X 8mm by 400mm holes drilled and banged at bottom. 1 3/4 hrs. **John**

Friday December 2 2016 **LVS** John Cooper

Went down to drill holes ready for tomorrow. Found Rich Witcombe repairing bits of wall and stream bed that had been damaged by the floods. Drilled 4 holes (22mm by 400mm) in a row along the roof. There was some flood debris, leaves, mud, on the floor near the end. A couple of loads should clear it. 1 1/2 hrs. PS Water about 30 cms down in Main Sink, so no danger of overflowing. **John**

Friday December 2 2016 **His Lordship's Hole** Geoff Newton.

Finished clearing out mud and gravel from the small chamber. The way on is too tight for my shoulders and some rock removal is required. **Geoff**

Saturday December 3 2016 **GB** Bean, Lara

Lara's first GB trip, and up Ladder Dig, which was sumped. I talked Lara out of diving through! Out via the Devil's Elbow, which is a good climb. **Bean**

Saturday December 3 2016 **LVS / Brimble Pit** Pete Buckley, Ali Moody, Geoff Newton
Brimble Pit, quick trip to assess the results of the last bang.

LVS First trip down PSS Rift since we stopped digging at this point. In the recent floods it has taken a large amount of water - no sign of any backing up and the water has washed open the Southern end of the base of the rift. All extremely narrow, but an intriguing distant low rumble and the occasional gloop could be heard. Banged the end of Triassic Tunnel before leaving. **Ali**

Saturday December 3 2016 **Mitchell's Dig** Pete Hann, Nigel Graham, Barry Wilkinson, John Cooper, Ade & Jude VdP

First part of the session was devoted to removing the mud and small stones that had been washed in during the recent floods. Looking down, the way on was blocked by a half-metre by half-metre block of conglomerate. After about 10 caps the size of the boulder had been significantly reduced, upon which it dropped a further metre down the hole and jammed again! It would have been nice to have gone down further and capped the rest of the rock, but discretion got the better of me and we decided to leave it to next week, and probably use a det. Conditions down the cave drippy and a strong, but pulsing draught, but quite probably high on CO₂ (PS I forgot to mention more stabilising and cementing done by Mr. Hann, and sterling work bucket hauling by Jude, Barry, John and Nigel. **Ade**

Saturday December 3 2016 **Swildons** John Cooper, Barry Weaver.

Down to Sump 1. Party ahead doing Short Round Trip gave up bailing the Mud Sump (as had a BEC party yesterday). 1 1/4 hrs. **John**

Monday December 5 2016 Spider Hole James Collings, John Cooper, NikNak, Ade & Jude VdP.

Moving spoil from the bottom to the bottom of 4 Tonne Shaft. 2 1/4 hrs. **John**

Thursday December 8 2016 Swildons Terry Waller, Derek Sanderson

An enjoyable trip to the New Upper Grottoes, then a climb up to the right and back to a narrow passage with a small chamber with formations. Then down to the 20. On the way back into the Oxbows, via LowBow, Butcombe Chamber and others. **Derek**

Friday December 9 2016 Sludge Pit Geoff Newton

First recovered some gear left inadvertently at the Mud Tube Dig. Then to 4 Pots Rift Dig where I took out some cobbles and hammered a few shelves. Having made the 4 Pots stream good and muddy, I went back to Main Rift and thence to the terminal sump, looking at all the inlets for muddy water. All the inlets were running clear, or not running at all. So there is an incentive to carry on with the 4 Pots Dig. **Geoff**

Saturday December 10 2016 Brimble Pit Pete Buckley, John Cooper, John Gisborne, Mike K, Ali Moody, Geoff Newton.

Clearance session moving debris back to Station 14, ready for walling. Descended the new 3 metre drop to find a narrow steeply sloping passage continuing for the next 5 metres. This is not passable at present and the top of the new pot will need to be enlarged so that we can pull spoil out. **Ali**

Saturday December 10 2016 Swildons 2 Groups. Bean, Jacob, Iona, Lara and Daren taking the lead, then Wayne, James, Rich, Damien, and Liam overtook us on Barnes Loop.

We all arrived at the Black Hole and all safely across, apart from Jacob and Bean who departed for Sump 2. Jacob's first trip to Sumps 1 and 2. **Bean**

Sunday December 11 2016 Swildons John Cooper, Lee Hawkswell, Barry Weaver.

Went and bailed the Mud Sump. After 40 minutes a nice triangle about 10 - 15 cms sides.... needs another good session. 2 hrs. **John**

Sunday December 11 2016 His Lordship's Hole Geoff Newton, Mike K, Wayne Starsbridge.

Carrying on the dig in the side passage. Trying to enlarge the way on with hammers, chisels and a crowbar. Some progress was made so that Mike could go 12 metres ahead, but the rest of us were too big to go further. We will be back. Also some more mud removed back to the main chamber. **Geoff**

Monday December 12 2016 Swildons Colin & Fliss Shapter.

Went down to Barnes Loop and back. Water at a good level. My first trip with Fliss since 2002 in Turkey, also the first trip for Fliss beyond the 20! Turned back at Barnes due to lack of time. Fliss did better than her aged Dad! **Colin**

Monday December 12 2016 Spider Hole John Cooper, Ade & Jude VdP.

Reduced team tonight so with Ade at the bottom, loading, John hauling and Jude stacking at the bottom of 4 Tonne Shaft, about 15 - 20 loads were hauled out. 2 hrs. **John**

Tuesday December 13 2016 GB Terry Waller, Derek Sanderson.

Went in mud route, then White Passage and West Extensions. Up the end of Rhumba Alley and to the dig in Bertie's Pot. Came out via the Gallery Traverse. **Derek**.

Saturday December 17 2016 Brimble Pit Ali Moody, John Cooper, John Gisborne, Pete Buckley.

Cementing session on the ladder wall, and clearance at the top of the new pot. Some large rocks dislodged. Charge set off at the top of this pot to remove the constriction and allow spoil to be removed more easily. Puffing a bit at times. Pete.

Saturday December 17 2016 Swildons Bean, Jo, Lucy, Benner, Tisha, Seb, Lara.

Taking Jo's friends around the top series of Swildons. Down Long Dry, top of 20 foot pot, and out of the Short Dry. **Bean**

Sunday December 18 2016 Swildons John Cooper, Lee Hawkswell, Chris Seal.

Went and spent a few hours bailing the Mud Sump. Now dry. 2 1/4 hrs. **John**

Sunday December 18 2016 Swildons Bean, Mark, Sue and Martin Bonner.

Taking some Aussies down to Sump 1. Sue jumped in Double Pots.... a little warm apparently! Very enjoyable trip. **Bean**

Monday December 19 2016 Swildons Derek Sanderson, Terry Waller.

To Sump 1 and back, noting the changes due to the recent rain. Climbed up a few places!
1 hr 40. **Derek**

Monday December 19 2016 Spider Hole James Collings, John Cooper, Ade & Jude VdP.

More spoil moved up to the bottom of Four Tonne Shaft - getting rather full now. Adrian took his magic smoke to the bottom. Draught is coming from a crack at North side of rift - coming upwards. Needs something stronger than a club hammer to make more progress - however we need to clear the bottom of Four Tonne Shaft now. 2 hrs. **John**

Tuesday December 20 2016 Upper Flood Swallet Mike K, Simon Flower, Matt Jones.

Overtime at Upper Flood, clearing bang spoil from the previous bang at Andrew's Deep Dig. Obtrusive, huge slab of rock persuaded further back up the cave. Looking Good! A Neo-Fleece in Upper Flood is a pain. Grit that gets caught inside is a bugger to get back out!
3 hrs. **Kushy**

Thursday December 22 2016 Swildons Pete Hall

Not managed to get underground for a few weeks with one thing and another, so decided on a Swildons trip for the Thursday night. Free-Dived to Sump 9. Lovely clear water but air pretty thin in Sump 6 by-pass. Air still thin on the way out and water had already cleared, so nice dives out too. 2 ½ hrs. **Pete**

Friday December 23 2016 Sludge Pit Geoff Newton.

To 4 Pots Dig. A bit of hammering and raking back of cobbles. Needs something stronger. After that, digging at bottom of 2nd. Pot. I looked at what Mike had been up to at the bottom of the 1st. Pot. I think we'll stick with the 2nd. Pot. **Geoff**.

Saturday December 24 2016 Mitchell's Dig Ade & Jude VdP, Barry Wilkinson, Nigel Graham, Pete Hann.

2 buckets of cement used to get ready for more capping next Saturday. **Pete**

Saturday December 24 2016 Brimble Pit Ali Moody, Mike K, John Cooper, Geoff Newton

Last Saturday's charge had opened out the top of the second pot. Spoil moved up the cave from the bottom of the first pot (Lobster Pot) to allow JC to start building a retaining wall at this point. This wall will also make exiting from this feature much easier! Six mixes of cement used. Air nice and fresh in the cave. **Ali**

Sunday December 25 2016 Swildons John Cooper.

Solo trip to Sump 1. Didn't see anyone else in the cave although I believe that Bean and Jo were in the Upper Series, as were Mak and Jo. 1 hr. **John**

Sunday December 25 2016 His Lordship's Hole Geoff Newton, Mike K

Hammering away, and inching forwards. **Geoff**

Monday December 26 2016 His Lordship's Hole Geoff Newton

More hammering and chiselling got me to where Mike go to yesterday. Way on is a tight crawl with gours and thin flowstone. **Geoff**

Wednesday December 28 2016 Eastwater Damon & Liam Fentham

Afternoon trip to 13 Pots. Decided to use SRT for 35' pitch instead of a ladder, just for some extra practice. It was a very enjoyable afternoon of caving. **Damon**

Thursday December 29 2016 Sludge Pit Damon & Liam Fentham

It was our first trip to Sludge, so we rigged our ladder and down we went. We attempted to follow a survey that we had taken with us, but as this was on a piece of unlaminated paper it didn't prove very successful. So we decided to follow the red dots, which I presume were left over from Eurospeleo. This took us around a maze of small passages and small round-trips. It was a really enjoyable cave. **Damon**

Thursday December 29 2016 Spider Hole Nick Butler, Pete Hann, John Cooper, Mike K, Ade & Jude VdP.

Whilst Pete built the wall up, the rest of us hauled 42 loads up 4 Tonne Shaft. 2 ½ hrs. **John**



Photo Showcase
Grotte Estevan
Photo:
Clive Westlake

Friday December 30 2016 Swildons Nick Butler, Mike K.

Down Blue Pencil Passage. Visited the Birthday Pool, which smelt strongly of engine oil. Out the way we came in. 2 ½ hrs. **Nick**

Friday December 30 2016 Sludge Pit Mike K.

Hammer and chisel work at the Mud Tube. Bountiful session as I reckon I took off nearly 3/4 worth of a normal bang session. Went to the sharp end head-first and got a great view of the way on. Cold draught at the bitter end. **Mike**

Saturday December 31 2016 Brimble Pit Ali Moody, Pete Buckley, Geoff Newton, John Cooper, Mike K, Lee Venning.

Spoil moved up the cave to the fixed ladder. Bottom of second pot cleared and some forward progress made. 6 mixes of cement used to build up the spoil-retaining wall in the Lobster Pot. **Ali**

Saturday December 31 2016 Mitchell's Dig Ade & Jude VdeP, Nigel Graham, Pete Hann.

Last dig of the year. 2 mixes of cement, capping, one foot deeper. **Pete**

Saturday December 31 2016 Swildons Bean, Jo, Alice, Katie, George, Jacob.

Family trip via the Long Dry Way, and abseil down the old 40' Pot. Down to the 20 and out up the Wet Way. **Bean.**

Sunday January 1 2017 His Lordship's Hole Geoff Newton, Mike K.

More hammering got Mike two metres further in and me to where Mike got last week. There seems to be a drop, about a metre or two further ahead past the next squeeze. **Geoff.**

Monday January 2 2017 Spider Hole James Collings, Aubrey Newport, John Cooper, NikNak, Ade and Jude VdeP, John Cooper.

Tuesday January 3 2017 Swildons Bean, Jo, George (Son-in-Law in waiting).

Quick trip to Sump 1. George free-climbed the 20 with wobbly legs. **Bean**

Wednesday January 4 2017 Sludge Pit Terry Waller, Derek Sanderson

Pleasant wobble to celebrate my Brother-in-Law's 70th. Birthday. Shame he was at home, in Japan, at the time! 1hr 20. **Terry**

Friday January 6 2017 His Lordship's Hole Geoff Newton.

More hammering. Dig seems to be getting colder and wetter. **Geoff**

Saturday January 7 2017 Brimble Pit Pete Buckley, Ali Moody, Lee Venning.

Removed one large boulder from the bottom of the new pot. Triple charge put in to enlarge this area. **Ali**

Saturday January 7 2017 LVS John Cooper, John Gisborne, Mike K, Geoff Newton. Ali Moody, Pete Buckley, Lee Venning.

Whilst John Gisborne fixed 3 anchors in the floor of PPS Rift, the rest hauled 56 loads of flood debris up the rift. Then joined by Ali, Pete and Lee and another 66 loads hauled out, making 122 for the day. 3 hrs. **John C**

Saturday January 7 2017 Mitchell's Dig Pete Hann, Ade & Jude VdeP, Nigel Graham, Barry Wilkinson.

The remainder of a boulder that we had been capping was finally demolished and removed. Pete then to bottom to start digging. A few buckets were removed before a medium-sized boulder decided to come out of the roof and rest on Pete's foot. Instead of the expected string of obscenities, Pete became quiet, which suggested that he was a bit concerned. So we lowered an empty bucket so that he could clear the rubbish around the boulder and then was able to free his foot from underneath it. The offending boulder was then hauled up with the help of a rope and eventually cemented into the wall.

Two buckets of cement were used with the majority being used to start supporting the boulder that Pete thought was going to move! A very good draught down the cave. A small amount of progress, but at least we can see what needs doing next time. **Nigel**

Sunday January 8 2017 Sludge Pit Mike K, Chris, Szilvia

Cleared debris back to intermediate, then a little hauled back to Strike Chamber. More spoil left, another session required. 5 holes drilled. **Mike.**

Monday January 9 2017 Swildons Tony Harris, Judy Bannister

Through Sump 1, to Vicarage Landing and as far as the Glistening Gallery squeeze. Noted the amount of scouring of the gravel in streambed all the way to Sump 2. Been a member of the Wessex for many years and thought it was about time I made an entry in the log-book. 2 3/4hrs.

Anon !!!..... and sometimes I despair.... Noel. (Almost certainly **Tony**)

Tuesday January 10 2017 Swildons Terry Waller, Derek Sanderson

A very cold trip to the top of Shatter. 2 hrs 05. **Terry**

Friday January 13 2017 Sludge Pit Geoff Newton

Hammering and taking out cobbles in the 4 Pots Rift Dig. The stream was higher and noisier than normal so I got a bit damp. **Geoff**

Saturday January 14 2017 Brimble Pit Ali, Mike K, Geoff Newton, John Cooper, Pete Buckley.

Cleared debris from last week's noise and shifted a few slabs out of the way. The rift going on looks fun, with wide open spaces clearly visible in the far distance. Mrs Moody delighted in showering me with muddy, sugary gravel - what joy was had! 6 mixes of cement used to build more retaining walls for stacking space. **Pete**

Saturday January 14 2017 LVS John Gisborne, Lee Venning

Engineering trip to LVS to resin-in another bridge support. Clearance and stacking of wood, which will be re-used. 2 ½ hrs. **John**

Saturday January 14 2017 Eastwater. "2nd. Saturday" invasion. 17 people in 4 groups. 1st team in rigged verticals, 2nd team rigged Dolphin for exchange. Details below:

Participants: Wayne, Monica, Rich (Carey) , Andy, Aidan, Damon, Liam, Simon, Darren, Duncan, Rich (Marlowe), Iona, Lara, NikNak, Gerik, Will, Floss.

Rigging Twin Verticals **Rigging Dolphin**

Rich Carey
Rich Marlowe
Gerik
Andy

Wayne
Simon
Monica
NikNak

Derigging Twin Verticals **Derigging Dolphin**

Duncan
Will
Floss
Liam

Aidan
Iona
Lara
Darren

Saturday January 14 2017 Sludge Pit Derek Sanderson, Terry Waller

Still trying to inspect the dig in 4 Pots Rift. Went down the first pot and admired the hanging death. On the way out, via Aragonite Rift, climbed up into the roof and "Found" passage that went back to Strike Chamber. 50 mins. **Derek**

Sunday January 15 2017 Sludge Pit Geoff Newton, Mike K.

Finished clearing spoil from Mud Tube back to Strike Chamber. **Geoff**

Monday January 16 2017 Spider Hole John Cooper, NikNak, Ade & Jude VdeP.

Whilst NikNak and Jude replaced the SRT ropes, Ade and John built walls at the top of the pit and 4 Tonne Shaft. 1 ½ hrs. **John**

Thursday January 19 2017 Swildons Pete Hall ??, José Ralenoza.??

Short Rond Trip. Coming from a volcanic island (Tenerife), being able to see all the geological formation has been unforgettable. My first time caving and my colleague Pete took me to an incredible journey through the Short Round Trip. Really enjoyed pushing myself through places I didn't think I'd fit. It won't be my last time caving and I definitely won't forget my first time. 3 ½ hrs. **José**

Friday January 20 2017 Sludge Pit Geoff Newton

Hammering and raking out cobbles at 4 Pots. **Geoff**

Saturday January 21 2017 Eastwater Bean, Jacob, Lara, Iona, Aidan

Trip to Unlucky Strike via the Woggle Press and Canyon. Jacob's first trip into Eastwater. Ladder on

Unlucky Strike was a few metres too short, which made getting back on interesting ! Out via Hallelujah Hole, which caused a few moans and groans! **Bean**

Saturday January 21 2017 LVS John Cooper, Geoff Newton, Lee Venning

55 loads of flood debris removed from bottom of entrance rift. Geoff Newton said that he was very warm when he came out of LVS but not quite so warm after he fell in the stream! **John**

Saturday January 21 2017 Mitchell's Dig Pete Hann, Ade & Jude VdeP, Barry Wilkinson, Charlotte Hilton.

2 steel bars placed in dig to support a slanting rock. Pete then cemented these in situ. Some of the larger rocks, further up, were capped into smaller rocks ready for more wall building in the near future. Next week there is some spoil to clear before we hit the next big rock in the floor. Whether it will cap easily.... or not... we will have to wait and see. **Adrian**

Saturday January 21 2017 Sludge Pit and Brimble Pit Mike K, Ali Moody.

Charges placed in the Mud Tube for Geoff and Mike, then we continued on to Brimble Pit and put three traditional charges in the final passage. **Ali**

Saturday January 21 2017 Swildons Noel Cleave

Met three guys above the 20 who wanted to go to Sump 1, but had no ladders. The 20 wasn't rigged to I rigged it with my ladder (no lifeline) and invited them to use it as well. Then normal nice trip down to Sump 1. 2" of airspace through sump. Met the 3 guys just below Trats as I returned and said that I would leave the ladder on the 20 and recover it tomorrow. They were blown away by the quality of the cave below the 20. 1 1/4 hrs. Slowing up, but still loving the cave. I'd made up a new tape rig for the 20 ladder. Need to shorten it a bit for convenience.

KUSS were in residence for the weekend, doing cave leadership training etc. and one of them kindly pulled my ladder out on Sunday. **Noel**

Saturday January 21 2017 and Sunday January 22 2017 **GB**

Two teams of 4 for Kent U's teaching and learning "How to be a cave leader" The waterfall was unnecessarily rigged, the Ladder Dig was longingly eyed (and subsequently left...), and the Devil's Elbow successfully navigated. Our Freshers described the experiences as "Brg", "Grond" and "Inauvitive". Our Freshers will not be winning the CHECC's literary prize! **Colin**

Friday February 3 2017 Sludge Pit Geoff Newton

Raking out mud from the floor at the end of the Mud Tube and hammering a bit as well. Reasonable amount shifted back to the lower chamber. **Geoff**

Saturday February 4 2017 Brimble Pit John Cooper, Mike K, Pete Buckley, Geoff Newton, Ali Moody.

Very drippy cave today. Hauled spoil and big rocks to fixed ladder, then cleared bang spoil out of the Lobster Pots to mid stacking point. 2 traditional and 4 X 20gm Cord hole drilled and set/fired. John built more wall at the fixed ladder. **Kushy**

Saturday February 4 2017 Mitchell's Dig Ade VdeP, Pete Hann, Nigel Graham.

2 mixes of mortar in. Ade and Pete reported that the dig was very wet and cold. **Nigel**

Sunday February 5 2017 Sludge Pit Mike K

5 1/2 holes drilled at 500mm. The 6th. hole needs finishing and all holes need boring out with a 10mm bit. The rock has changed on the right-hand side, looks like black limestone, a dream to drill. **Kushy**

Sunday February 5 2017 Shatter Cave Maurice Hewins, Jonathan Williams, Mike K

Did a leisurely videoing trip into first few pretty grottos, while the others went on to Pillar Chamber. I got some shots of John and Mike working their way out, only cock-up, dropped one of three filming lights down a hole in the floor, but it survived! 1 1/2 hrs. Enjoyable trip. **Maurice.**

Tuesday February 7 2017 Swildons Terry Waller, Derek Sanderson.

Trip today to SE Inlets via the alternative route, but foiled by the Mud Sump containing gallons of water. After a token bail we left if for younger and better men. High water levels in cave. 1hr 50 mins. **Derek**



Photo Showcase. The Red Room in Hilliers. Photo: Mark Burkey



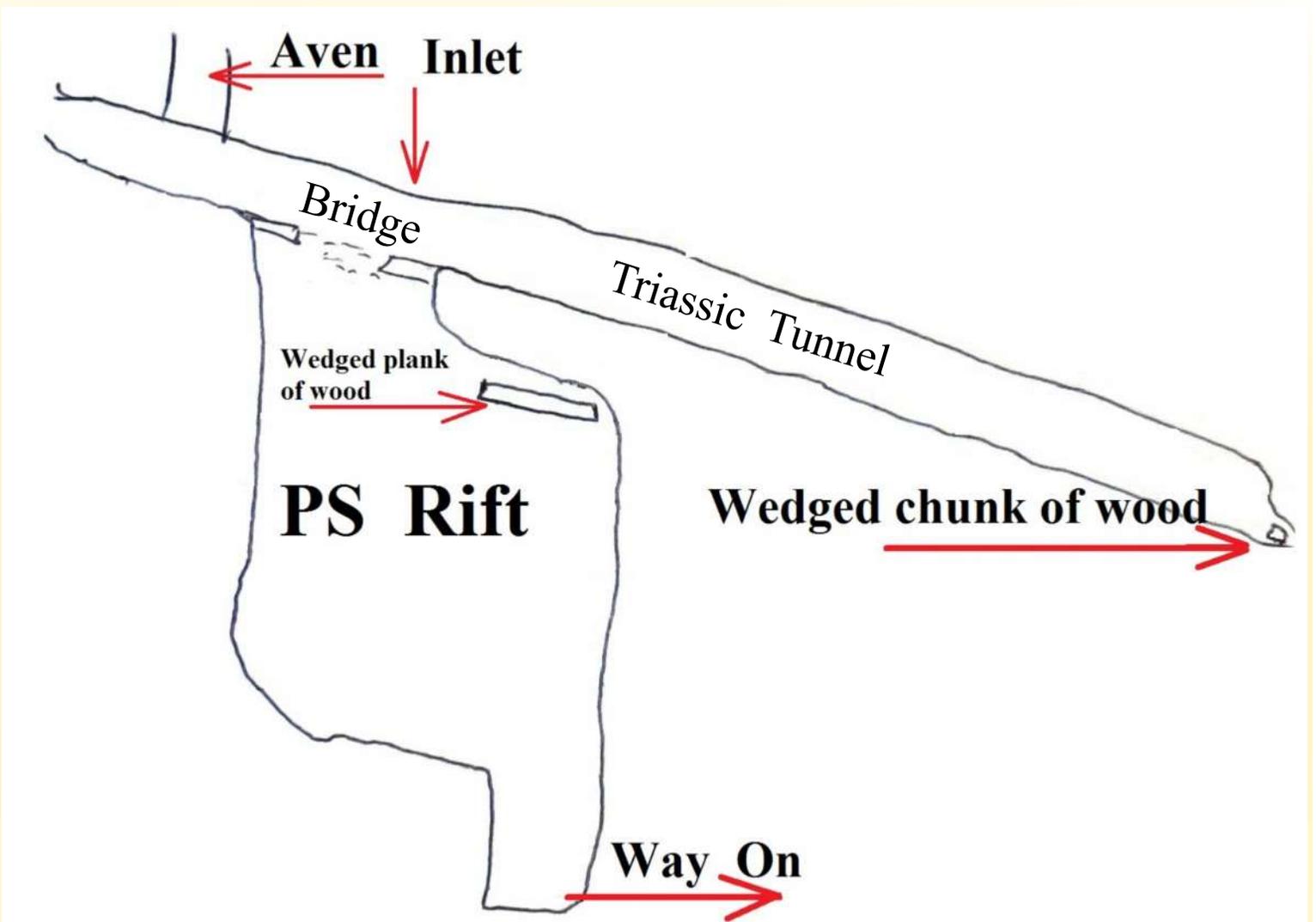
LAST MINUTE ADDITIONS



This log-book extract is out of chronological order, but given the dominant nature of the LVS dig it seems worth printing it out now at the start of this season's digging there, particularly as John has sketched out the current vertical plan of the cave. This is actually extremely helpful for those (many!) of us who have never visited it.

Wednesday May 24 2017 LVS John Cooper

Went to assess work required before we can start making progress again this season. PSS Rift has a floor of fine silt that has been washed in over the winter and will need clearing. It was too drippy to drill today. Admired the plank of wood left wedged in the roof by the floods. Proceeded to end of Triassic Tunnel, lots of spoil has been washed along to the end, as well as a chunk of timber. However, it was dry, and festooned by spiders' webs. Drilled 5 X 22mm X 400mm holes.



Before the spoil can be removed from the end of Triassic Tunnel, the bridge will need completing. **John**

Back Cover Photo. Whithyhill Cave

Photo: Christine Grosart

