



CAVING LOGBOOK 2008 - 2009

Acq. No. 05415

For future reference and also possible inclusion in the Wessex Cave Club Journal it is helpful if the following information is provided for all Logbook entries:

- Date of trip and destination
- Names of all the people in the party
- A resume of the trip
- Name of the author

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2/1/2008 Shatter Passage Swildons. Wayne S.

Planned solo visit to Shatter Passage, inspired by Swildon's Book. However thwarted by Mud Sump. Only about one inch of air space. Spent an hour bailing and opened up enough of a space to feel comfortable (about 5 inches). Unfortunately felt too knocked to continue rest of trip and "discretion being the better part of valour" I bent a retreat.

Wayne S.

Swildons Round trip + Blue pencil - 1-Jan 2008.

Had an excellent trip this New Years day. Got to Mud Sump and did 1 hour bailing still the water would not go down. Lucky Pete Allie Rich Nigle & Pete came across us and very kindly staid helping bailing for a further hour. Finally we got it down to a tiny Air Space very gently went through then Jay followed. It was so nice to get to the other side after all that bailing. Continued on the Round trip down the chain. Visited Sump 3 & 4. First trouble needed 20 mins bailing. Emerged out of Swildons after a really cool trip.

Mad Fi° & Jay

JAN 2nd. Swildons Round trip + Blue pencil.

Had such a good trip yesterday we just had to do it all over again. No bailing needed today as another group had just come back so it was just empty. Blue pencil nice as ever. I never seem to get bored on this trip. Make an excellent workout for those dark evenings. Miles better than any gym.

Jay, Andy, Mad Fi°

1-1-08 SWILDONS, ST PAULS - AUBREY N, ADE VDP, NIK NAK.

FOLLOWING THE DIRECTION OF WATER INTO LOUGBOU WE TOOK A TRIP TO ST PAULS TO SEE IF ANY OF THE WATER WAS EMERGING THERE - THERE WAS NO CHANGE IN THE FLOW. THE EXTRA WATER POURING OUT OF THE HEAVY DRIP AND FROM THE ROOF AROUND THE NEXT CORNER IS IMPRESSIVE. AUBREY COMMENTED THAT HE SEEMS TO HAVE FORGOTTEN WHERE ALL THE FOOTHOLDS AND HANDHOLDS ARE BELOW THE 20!

NIK NAK.

6/1/08 North Hill Swallet, Clarie, Charlotte, Andy, Jay

Finally made it underground with the excitement of an 'easy' trip from Andy. Easy would be a fair description if I was in any way approaching it, which I'm not. As it was I struggled up Rumble Plank & was exhausted by the exit. Thankfully everyone else ~~fare~~ fared better. Clarie.

Daren Hard Rock Cafe 5-JAN 08 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ Hrs

Had an excellent trip into Daren today took in 2 daren drums Full of Kit to the Camp Ready for the Camp on the 18th & 19th Jan. This will be my first Camp in the Cave. It sure was cold coming out of the entrance last night

Mad F & Adrian F.

Bath Swallet

6-1-08.

Aubrey & Adrian.

Down to the dig to see if "blacks" were a more efficient way of dealing with the larger boulders that are hampering progress. Sadly they were not the rock appears to be quite a hard almost crystalline limestone. So in the end we resulted in using more traditional methods. Lots of noise and hopefully lots of broken Rock. Both then retired to the Barrington Inn, only to

find that Bear had shut Shop earlier, No refreshments for us 😞

The Mud Escalator EASTWATER 9-JAN-08

had a good trip down eastwater NOT my most favorite OF trips as there are some drops to navigate & the bold step but it was grate as we found the mud escalator had been taken there once before. came out the Alternative way to 13 pots.

Guy, Andy, Jay, Mac, Fi

Tuesday 1st January 2008 – Swildon's Hole

Ali and Pete Moody, Pete Hann, Nigel Graham, Richard Carey

The water piped into Lowbow on the 31st December 2007 using the forty "plumbing" had been left flowing overnight and the aim of this trip was to:

- 1) Investigate the effect of this water on Lowbow and to see if we had permanently sumped the final rift in Lower Lowbow.
- 2) Check Water Chamber Dig to see how much that this had backed up.
- 3) Investigate the new inlet below the Forty, on the right 15m downstream of the folded strata bend, which had been observed by Stu Waldren and Mark Helmore while exiting from the cave yesterday evening.
- 4) Check out the streamway as far as Trat's and also St. Paul's Series for any new inlets.

Observations

- 1) The water flowing down Lower Lowbow splits part way down with about a third of it disappearing down a small passage on the right in the dogleg just after the first cross-rift. This would appear to be the same quantity that is seen in Water Chamber Dig. The majority of the water continues to the final cross-rift and since yesterday this has washed out the blockage at the downstream end and is flowing away at the bottom of the pot.
- 2) At the end of Water Chamber Dig there is now a 2m long pool, but the water level does not appear to be rising above this point. The water flowing into Water Chamber Dig appears to be disappearing into the right-hand wall near the start of the pool.
- 3) The inlet below the folded strata bend is entering at high level on the right then cascades down the flowstone wall of the main stream passage. A maypole will be needed to check this site out. We believe that this quantity of water plus that entering from the drippy stal. (just before the bend) account for all the water that we have piped down Lowbow.
- 4) The streamway to Trat's, and St. Pauls Series were also checked but no new or increased volume inlets were noted. Ali

Wednesday 2nd January 2008 - Swildon's Hole

Pete Hann, Pete and Ali Moody, Aubrey Newport, Colin Shapter

Several 1.5m sections of maypole were carried in - giving a total height of 6m - with the aim of having a look at the inlet below the folded strata bend. The maypole was erected on top of the staled boulders about 3m upstream of the inlet. We had hoped that what appeared to be a high-level ledge above this point might give access to the inlet but found that from the at the top of the maypole the only route involves a very exposed traverse on sloping mud covered stal with no hand holds. From this point a bulge in the passage obstructs a view of the inlet and to gain a clear view or access to this passage it will be necessary to move the maypole several metres downstream and position it where the stream cascades down. A further 4m section of pole will be needed to achieve this. The water level in Water Chamber Dig was rechecked and the end pool was found to be about 15cm deeper than yesterday. The "plumbing" was removed from Lowbow for the time being in order to avoid drawing attention to our new inlet. We hope to return with more maypole to finishing assessing the inlet asap.

Ali

Saturday 5th January 2008 - Charterhouse Cave

Ali Moody, Pete Hann, Nigel Graham.

Good and well needed cementing session with Pete H stabilising a large keystone above the next 2m deep drop and Ali finishing off the lower section of the shaft. Nigel as usual was on cement mixing duties in the Ice Box - five buckets of cement used and in the end we ran out of sand. Good draught blowing up the shaft today. A couple of bats were in residence in Singing Stal. First Charterhouse digging trip of 2008!

Ali

12-JAN-08 Daren Hard Rock 8.30h

Had an excellent trip to Hard Rock to drop kit off for camp next week. The final bits were put in place. This cave was nice as even not so cold as last week.

Andy's & Mad Ff

13/01/08 HUNTERS HOLE - DAVE ELPHICK, CHAINE CORNW, JON BEAR, Mike THOMAS, LEO HILTON.

WE THOUGHT WE'D HAVE A BIT OF A PARTY DOWN HUNTERS HOLE AS THERE WAS FIVE OF US!. DAVE'S FIRST SNT TRIP,

CHAIKE'S FIRST RIGGING TRIP, FUN HAD BY ALL ~~EVER~~
ESPECIALLY KEVIN WHO ENJOYED SPINNING ON THE
ROPE TRYING TO MAKE HIMSELF ~~WALK~~ SICK.... KEVIN,
WILL YOU NEVER LEARN!!
CHAIKE COHEN.

12-JAN 46 hours in a Cave 2 night Stay Hard Rock Daren

Had an excellent trip to camp in daren
We Rolled up on Friday night at White Walls and
drank tea then kitted up to leave the surface for
underground bags heavy loaded with Pitts tins and
other tasty delights. did the walk up the hill with wind
nearly taking us down got to that lovely inviting
entrance o what a place its always waiting ready
to greet you with its little trickle of water, an hour
later bags and us arrived the other side of the crawl,
then off went us through time machine bonzi streamway
and on arrived at Hard Rock the camp was well
underway tily lamps burning and dinner ready o its nice
a plate of hot food. then for the drinkers the cottage
game began there is a very well stocked bar. this

Continued till 4am excellent fun to watch. Found my
spot to lay my head to the tune of a lovely little stream slept
like a log. Woke up and its still dark i thought wares the
daylight felt around and light on and its 10am to my
surprise. Next a bacon breakfast before the days caving
got underway o the fun of wet caving gear on it
slides the shiver up your back but not for long.

or we go towards the restaurant really nice cave passage
through the micron to Ankle grinder wow thats some
really nice cave A 20 min photo shoot and
then some more exploring ^{roaden 11.15} then we helped dg
PTD

Some digging. Then headed back to camp helped
Cook up the eve Supper excellent chicken and Rice
Then the cocktail games began it was good there was
Adrian, Steve, Henry, Andy Snook, Andy gonzo, and
Mad Fi on this camp. We went to bed a little
Sooner than I am a more respectable 1.30 am
for a good nights kip. under the stars.
had a good sleep and up at 7.30 am time
seems strange when there is no sunlight had
breakfast then camp broke up at 12 noon
had an excellent trip out apart from my bag
full of the camp rubbish turned into a dead
weight gave me some very good entertainment
through the entrance. Then I saw daylight
a man that was some trip. Looking
forward to the next camp the love of the first
hot shower after Mad Fi, Andy Snook

Saturday 12th January 2008 - A day out cave-bagging on Eastern Mendip

Phil Hendy, Jacky Ankerman, Ali and Pete Moody

1) White Woman's Hole (Asham Wood)

This cave which was once a Romano-British counterfeiter's den has two entrances and provides a 20m long through trip of mainly hands-and-knees crawling. Ali was the only taker for this epic undertaking.

2) Tom Tivey's Hole

A 3m long rock shelter in Asham Wood, which was thoroughly explored by the team.

3) Seven Springs and Yogi Pot

As a result of the recent extremely heavy rain this series of resurgences in Asham Wood were discharging a considerable amount of water. Yogi Pot was an impressive sight with water welling out from below the corrugated sheet covering the entrance. Several other risings were noted around the quarry including one where the water was bubbling up in a dome from the quarry floor.

4) Holwell Rising

Following a leisurely pub lunch (after these hard trips) we attempted to find Holwell Rising but could find no sign of this resurgence. Also, the well in the car park (by the Bear Inn) that we assumed might be associated with the old holy well was bone dry, which was very surprising considering the recent rainfall.

5) Tom Tivey's Other Hole

The entrance of this cave is a hole in the left-hand verge by the side of the A361 as you approach the Nunney Catch roundabout from the Holwell direction. Unfortunately at some stage either the Highways Authority or the council have placed a large boulder in the entrance. However, after clearing the brambles Ali was able to squeeze past this and drop down into a small chamber. This is well decorated with white flowstone and is surprisingly pretty and clean and I doubt if the cave sees many visitors. A metal rim (possibly of an old cartwheel) rests against one wall. From the chamber a decorated alcove can be entered to the right and a descending passage in the floor chokes after 3m. Looking back towards the entrance it appears that there might be a lower entrance to this cave but this is completely choked and probably comes up under the road!

6) Vallis Vale Cave

In Complete Caves this is reported to be Mendip's most easterly cave. It was a wise decision to do the day's trips in this order as this little gem could perhaps be described as a shit hole. The cave starts as a short crawl after which a wriggle up through boulders gives access to the first chamber where it is possible to drop down again to a few metres of horizontal dug passage. From the chamber a flat-out crawl in sticky mud leads to a bedding chamber. The exit from this second chamber is a downward sloping crawl in extremely sticky bright yellow mud. Phil and Jackie guarded the entrance to the cave while Pete explored the entrance crawl leaving Ali to explore getting plastered in yellow mud in the process. In retrospect it was definitely a mistake not bothering with an oversuit! The cave appears to still be inhabited by foxes and contains an excellent collection of animal skeletons in all shapes and sizes. After scraping off the worst of the mud a retreat was made to Upper Pitts for tea and cake – an excellent day out. Ali

Wednesday 16th January 2008 – Swildon's Hole

Pete and Ali Moody, Pete Hann, Aubrey Newport, Richard Carey, Colin Shapter and Russ Brooks

A return trip to the inlet below the Forty. An additional 3m length of maypole was taken down giving us a total height of about 9m. This was manoeuvred into place directly in line where the inlet flows down the right-hand wall. From the top of the maypole two holes can be seen towards the back of a ledge. Unfortunately the maypole was not quite high enough to get a clear view. The rock at this point is very shaley making it impossible to put in a bolt and the ledge itself is covered in loose debris (sorry Richard – but I did miss you). The left-hand hole appears to be a small slot a few centimetres high while the right-hand hole looks circular and is probably

football sized and shaped. The passages in Water Chamber Dig and Lowbow are quite well developed and therefore we now believe that these two holes must be a later draw-down from an old fossil passage. The roof above the drippy stal before the folded strata bend will be investigated later this year. Before exiting the pipe was put back down Lowbow, re-plumbing the inlet with the triple aim of:

- 1) Allowing Lowbow to dig itself.
- 2) Hopefully continue to wash open the drainhole in Water Chamber Dig
- 3) Possibly wash some of the debris off the ledge by the inlet.

Ali

Saturday 19th January 2008 – Charterhouse Cave

Team 1 – Pete Hann, Pete and Ali Moody

Team 2 – Richard Carey, John Biffin (Bif) and Clive Westlake

Unfortunately for them the Team 2 trip to Upper Flood had been rained off – but fortunately for us they offered to do a “sand carry” to the end of Chill Out Choke before giving Bif a tourist trip around Charterhouse.

Team 1 continued work at the end of the boulder ruckle. Pete H played with boulders while Ali finished some cement work and Pete M was on cement mixing duties. Good draught blowing from the dig and some careful thought will be required to remove the next keystone without collapsing the whole ruckle around us! Ali

Sat 25th Jan Time Machine Daren

Had an excellent trip into daren today went with Lucy & Gary from CSS to this was there second trip into daren they really enjoyed themselves. I pushed another bag destined for hard rock through the entrance and deposited it at the top of the ladder pitch for its onward travels later. An excellent day for all

Lucy, Gary, Mad Fi

30-Jan 08 Wigmore Swallett

Had an excellent trip down Wigmore tonight enjoyed showing Andy & Jay the delights of this wonderful place and its beautiful passages with its wonderful slithers & slides Andy & Jay had the best trip ever looking forward to next visit with them.

Andy Jay Mad Fi

30 JAN 08 - WIGMORE SWALLOW

DONT LISTEN TO FI, ITS THE WORST PLACE I'VE EVER BEEN.

ANDY SNOOK

very sporting cave cant wait to go back next time maybe with lots of kit

Jay Woods. 😊

1st Feb

Burrington walk - Archers, Gortchurh, plus sandy & the entrances. Good walking weather, sunny and cold

Phil H

2nd Feb

Went for a stiff tramp in the woods - but he had been stiff for a little too long. Instead, walked round Elbow Gorge - located Gully Cave - path obscured by branches. Concrete, wooden steps etc. to a fenced platform and all the gear thrown down the hillside. Rocky shelter full of barren thermoclastic rocks. I don't know who the archaeologists are trying to find, but I doubt they will find much. It could however be a good cave dig. Bridget Pot Shelter, Square Entrance Cave, Rocky Shelter and back to car park. The final hand up the path gets the engine going!

Phil H

2nd - Feb Wigmore Swallow

Had an excellent trip into Wigmore today helped Chris and Hillary and John with the kit down to the Sump. Kattie also helped with the kit to. Watched them all kit up at the Sump; Hillary, John, Chris dived through 7 Sumps and continued to do there climb up an aven that they found on a previous visit. Really enjoyed trip.

Hillary, Chriss J, John M, Kattie, Mad Fi°

2nd Feb 2008 - Swildons - OOPS Novice Trip

Wet, cold, dark but great fun! 25
Excellent Trip! (11) ~~Beery~~ It was
definitely a life-changing experience! :)
All the novices seemed to have a great time. Just about met enough to
want a snooker with you. Superb hole. OK

3rd Feb 08 Swildons 6

Had an excellent trip to Swildons 6 today the Water
Levels Were Fairly High Sump Conditions Were
excellent Hillary had a great time.

John M, Hillary, Mad Fi

30th Jan 08 Batl Swallett

Removing lots of Rock from dig in the roof
The pass is like a motorway (2 lanes wide) Still
Aubrey's belly will fit - and mine. And ~~Peter too!~~
Pete Head - Aubrey Newport.

6-Feb Atborough Swallett

Had An excellent trip down Atborough Swallett.
This is Just like Wigmore but much easier
Really Love this type of cave Very different to
the regular Mendip caves. Very Red Color
With a Little Stream passage running down
through it. The mud is exceptional Very
good quality mud.

Jay W, Andy S, Charlott, Richard,
Jude, Mad Fi

Sunday 27th January 2008 – Agen Allwedd

Ali Moody, Tom Stearn, Norman Wright and Graham Speed

The first time in Aggy for all except Ali so a general tourist trip to Northwest Junction and then up the Turkey Streamway. The recent heavy rainfall had left an impressive foam line about 1m above the normal water level and we came to the conclusion that the Turkey Streamway would be extremely interesting to negotiate under these conditions! Ali

Saturday 2nd February 2008 – Charterhouse Cave

Pete Hann, Ali Moody and Nigel Graham

More boulder-wrestling by Pete at the bottom of the shaft while Ali continued with finishing off some cement work above him. Nigel making his excellent "glue" as usual. Progress now involves trying to remove some of the keyed in boulders mentioned on the previous trip (19th January). These boulders are bridged across what we thought was a 2m drop and Mr Hann in his enthusiasm had to be reminded on at least two occasions that perhaps it is not a good idea to pull out the main chockstone while standing on these boulders. Also by the end of the trip with stones rattling off into the depths we had revised our estimation of the drop beneath our feet to be at least 3 to 4m (if not more). The quote of the trip came from Pete who remarked that the only thing holding up the boulder ruckle at this point is the draught! Five buckets of cement used. The next trip planned for a fortnight – to allow time to calm our nerves, the cement to harden and for Mr Hann to "mend" as he complained that I had broken him (again)! Ali

Tuesday 5th February 2008 – Charterhouse Cave

Ali Moody, Andrew Moon, Tom Stearn and Norman Wright

I just can't get enough of this place! As we had depleted our store of sand at the Ice Box on Saturday and it seemed too good an opportunity to miss when the "Tuesday Nighters" kindly offered to do a carry in return for a tourist trip. A pleasant two hour bimbly (if you exclude the sand carrying part) to Singing Stal. Two rocket tubes of gravel were also sieved from the streamway and transported to the ruckle. Ali

Swildens Hole Tumble down, 2/2/2008.
N.E. Nak and Auld p.
Digging at the end had been hampered recently,
1, by the awkward corner at the bottom of
King Edward Pot and 2, by a rock false
floor near the end of the dig.
With this in mind, a Bach drill was transported
down to the dig and as mentioned

obstacles were "hilted" into submission
 All the sumps I II III & IV were comfortably
 large due to the high volumes of water
 that have been down the cave.
 5 hours. of which 2 hours digging.

SAT 9th Feb Aggy Inner/Outer Circle

Had an excellent trip into Aggy very nice Cave did
 inner/outer Circle Visited Cole Cellar passage this is
 a very nice piece of passage really an excellent Weekend
 Must Con Someone into doing Trydent Passage with me Soon 😊
 Gary, Adrian, Mad Fi

11th Feb Wigmore Swallett

Had an excellent trip down Wigmore tonight
 box down my Scaffold Barz and placed it in
 Piss Pot perfect fit

Jay Woods & Mad Fi

13th Feb 2008 Bath Swallett Through trip

had an excellent trip with Jude Rich, Clary,
 Jay, Charlotte Nice Cave.

Mad Fi

9th Feb Templar

Phil Hardy, John Hall, Jonathan Liley purged the bottom dig. They removed
 lights and cameras. After a pleasant picnic lunch, Tim Young helped
 remove the wooden platform after Olive North stenciled 17 shot holes with
 carbonate Coater charges. The earth moved.

11th Feb 16/17 charges successful. Dig is now 5' less deep but
 2' wider. Replacing infrastructure and removing loose rock before
 we can get the bang debris out and weld in new lengths of rail +
 Phil H

SAT 16 Feb

Blue pencil & Sheet Round Trip with Barry & Helen
a excellent trip

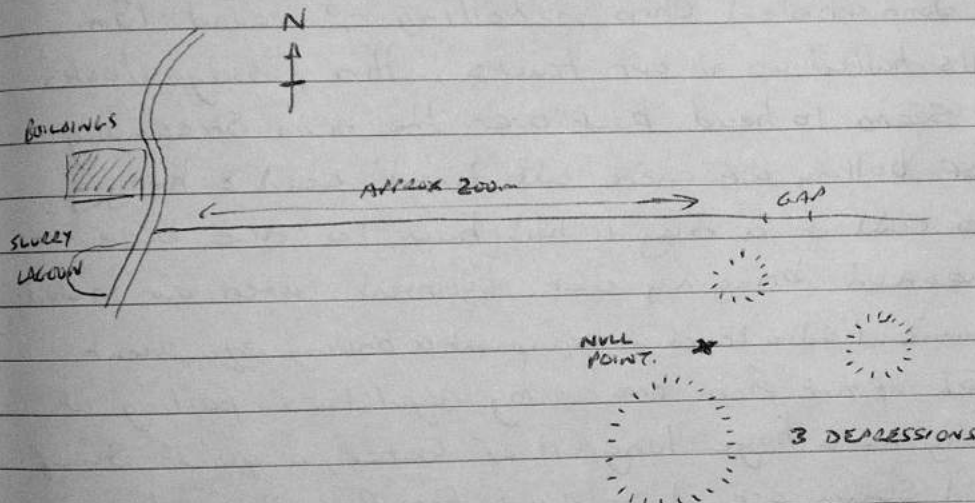
Mad Fi

Sat 23-2-08

Prew and Phil H. + Jim Riky + Charlotte, radio locating for Wigmore Swallow divers
(Stu Gardner, John Manely + Chris Jewel). We hoped the location was not in a ploughed
field. It was not - it was in a field freshly spread with slurry!

Transmitter was set up in the new area, found along Sump 78 (?). Signal was
intermittent, but we eventually got a good null, and voice contact. We then left -
the divers made the pub at closing time!

Phil H.



23/02/08 - WIGMORE RADIO LOCATING (DIVERS TRIP REPORT)

Stu Gardner, John Manely, Chris Jewel

After a terrible nights Sleep due to noisy Students we eventually got
underground with various large tackle bags including the radio location equipment,
assisting myself, John & Chris was Matt (Kent uni) & Duncan Price.

We made good time reaching dive ^{base} at 12:45, our agreed time to start
transmitting was 13:30 so I nominated myself to dive on through to the
New Inlet to setup the loop & try and find/make a flat surface. Diving the
radio location equipment through the Sumps was fairly awkward due to the
weight & lack of buoyancy meaning a drag rather than a carry was needed.
Upon Surfacing in "Young Bloods" I debitted & headed on towards the end of the

P.T.O

Passage, the time now was 13:30 so I quickly found a Fluvial Spot around 12m from the aven, I made the loop more horizontal by Shaking rocks up. The equipment was finally turned on at 13:35 & by 14:15(?) we had made contact with Brian & Phil on the Surface.

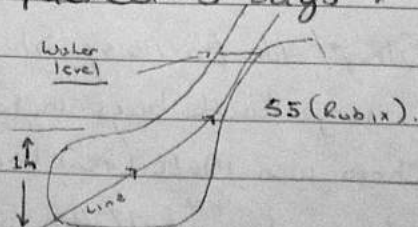
Our Second objective was to carry equipment up to a recently discovered Sump in the low level active inlet, this was aborted after around 60m of Carrying as one of the first stage regulators was playing up & we did not want to loose air for the dive home.

Our third objective was to Investigate some high level passages leading off in the large mud chamber near the Sump 7 dive base. Here myself & John assisted Chris in bolting up around 15m before a lack of bolts halted us in our tracks, this passage looks very promising as it seems to head back over the main Streamway. So after 4 hours of bolting we were all tired, cold & hungry so we decided to call it a day & head back to dive base to sort kit that needed bringing out. Equipment taken out included Drill, SRT kit, 50m dynamic, Radio location equipment & bolting equipment.

No issues back to S1 apart from one of my regulators failing at the elbow in S7 giving me a huge lungfull of water, a quick Swap was carried out & I Swam out, I Stripped the 2nd Stage between S7 & S6 & found a piece of gravel stuck under the diaphragm, this was removed & tested ok.

Back at dive base (S1) we packed 3 bags & carried them to the Surface.

Time underground: 12 hours.



A big thanks to Brian, Phil, Jon & Charlotte for their help with the radio location.

Stu

24/02/08 - Wilmore - Bringing In Out

Sto Gardiner, Chris Jewel, Fiona Crozier & Rich Smith. Underground @ 13:00, bagged up my diving kit & Chris along with the drill, dynamic rope & 1x 3ltr & 1x 4ltr cylinder - total 4x bags. Transported them all back to the surface by 15:25.

Sto

23rd SAT 08 Swildons Round & blue pencil

Had a cracking trip today Short Round & blue pencil
Mad Fi & Stuart France,

27-Feb Drunkards Hole

had a good time down here Very nice Cave Lowley
Rift to the Bottom Jude, Andy, Richard, Jane, Mad Fi

9-3-08 Templeton

Phil H + Aubrey N - drilled and banged the shoulder of rock preventing the rails from being extended. Broke a CCTV camera trying to get it out of the way of the blast. There is a big boulder in the floor which will need attention.

Phil H

48 hours Daren Camp Hard Rock 7th March 08

had an excellent camp at hard Rock caved in Friday Night. Gourmet dinner was served around 11pm excellent Cuisine. next morning after a good night's sleep cooked up the bacon for breakfast the boys prepared the pitlars for lunch. 3 different trips went out from Hard Rock. I went with Adrian up Fray Street along perserverance passage to look for Remote Chambers - the passages were shagging hairs at very low crawling or flat out then into flat out vertical


→

Rifts, up this climb that led to a maze of small vertical passages. Remote chambers proved to be too remote as after several hours we had not stumbled across it yet. So sat down and ate lunch had a bit of a dig then went back to have a look at Kip's dig. headed back to camp and started on the dinner chicken & Rice it was very good then he laid went for the details. Turned into bed around 1am and sleep came quickly came to my eyes awake and wondered what time it was it's funny your sense of time is distorted. You know its either end of the day ~~as~~ but one can be several hours adrift. cleaned up then headed out for daylight had an excellent trip out making very good time. O the Shaver at WW was excellent, now I have a head of hair I think all the cave mud came back with it as it took a couple of really good shampoos to wash it. An excellent camp look forward to the next one.

Mud Fi°

10.3.08.

Swildons round trip with blue pencil passage excursion thrown in, very enjoyable.

JAY WOODS. ANDY SNOOK. 

Saturday 16 February 2008 – Charterhouse Cave

Pete Hann, Nigel Graham, Ali and Pete Moody

For the last month we have been able to look down into what appeared to be an open route between staled up boulders, leading led off to the left below the boulder bridge. During the previous trips we had removed as many boulders as possible without causing the whole floor to drop at least 2m. The first aim of this trip was to despatch a large keystone from a safe distance. With the boulder gone we were able to drop down into a void 2m long by 1.5m wide. One wall is solid and covered in flowstone while the other wall and roof is the usual clutch and precariously supported boulders. Inviting black spaces could be seen though the floor of staled up boulders. After a short gardening session a route was opened up at the end of the void and a very careful wriggle under a chockstone of extremely dubious stability allowed us to drop down into the open area below. The sound of water falling had been noted on previous trips and an inlet splashes down a rifted aven at this point. Moving across to the right gave access to a large rifted void where it was possible to look down about 4m to a boulder floor. There are several large and precariously perched slabs at the head of this climb and below them is a 3m high vertical wall of mud and clutch, held in place only by a thin coating of cracked flowstone, and freeclimbable with extreme caution. **This area and everything below this point is HIGHLY UNSTABLE** and Nigel stayed on the exit side of the breakthrough to guard the route out and also to be able call out a rescue if necessary. At the base of the climb a route between some loose looking hanging deaths allowed us to descend a further 6m vertically to where we dropped out of the boulder choke! Ahead a well-decorated passage in SOLID ROCK gave access to the continuation of the Charterhouse streamway. This was explored for about 50m to where it could be seen continuing

Of particular note in the streamway are the huge blocks of aragonite, and two large flowstone covered boulders, which have obviously fallen from original position as the stalactites are now horizontal. Also at the point where we stopped the last few inches of many of the stalactites at stream level had been broken off. A horizontal inlet passage enters on the right just before the point where we stopped.

On the way out through the choke the inlet aven was climbed. This is 5m high and at the top the water enters from a small horizontal passage. This could be entered with a bit of work with a lump hammer.

On the exit through the choke the clutch pile directly below the wriggle under the chockstone started collapsing on the way out causing a few heart stopping **** moments for Ali who was last out. Five buckets of cement were used to stabilise the breakthrough point before exiting.

An excellent 6 hour trip – watch this space! Ali

Saturday 23rd February 2008 – Charterhouse Cave

Ali and Pete Moody, Pete Hann and Nigel Graham

A working trip to attempt to see what could be done about the lower part of the boulder ruckle. While exiting last week it had been found that it is very easy to miss the way back near the breakthrough point and end up squeezing up between boulders (probably directly below the Ice Box) – not a healthy place to be! Pete M laid a tagged line through the new part of ruckle to mark the route and to prevent this

happening again. Nigel mixed cement for Ali who used six buckets to stabilise the breakthrough area while Pete x 2 gardened the lower section of the ruckle in an attempt to make it marginally safer. Pete H and Ali continued downstream to take a few photos in the section of streamway explored last week and taped off some of the formations.

Trip time 5½ hours. Ali

Saturday 1 March 2008 – Charterhouse Cave

Nigel Graham, Pete and Ali Moody, Pete Hann

The aim of this trip was to push on downstream beyond the point reached on the 16th of February. A ladder was used to avoid the 3m calcited mud climb and once in the streamway Nigel led beyond the point reached on 16 February but after about 20m the passage narrowed to a tight rift with the only option, a wet silted up crawl at stream level. A quick dig by Mr Hann allowed him to squeeze through to where it was possible to stand up again. Working from both sides it was possible to enlarge the crawl and also to drain the pool. Ahead, the passage continued as a tight gently descending rift (very reminiscent of Renold's Passage in Longwood). Ali passed two squeezes, reaching a point where the passage changed shape to a descending section of phreatic stream passage and was soon joined by Pete x 2, but regrettably Nigel decided not to continue past the point where the passage had narrowed. The phreatic passage descended steadily and after dropping down a small cascade we found that we were looking across the top of a chamber with a 6m pitch down the wall to the floor. Pete H and Ali explored a high level passage in the roof immediately before the pitch while Pete M returned to the boulder choke for the ladder. The Charterhouse stream flows across the chamber, dropping down over boulders and then rounds a corner where it is joined by a large inlet stream, entering from the right at the base of a boulder choke – the GB water? Taking turns to lead a roomy passage was followed downstream for over 150m passing some stunning formations in places. At the end of this section there is a large frozen cascade on the left with a passage visible at the top. For the next 40m the stream passage gradually narrowed and then lowered to a low crawl and we were eventually stopped where the stream disappears down a narrow slot. To the right at this point a mud bank blocked the entry to what appeared to be a passage. A few seeds had germinated on this bank and at times the water must back up from the constriction ahead and flow off over the mud bank. A quick rabbit by Mr Hann revealed that the ongoing passage is probably about 2m high by 1.5m wide. On the exit Nigel pushed the inlet passage (noted on 16 February) before the narrow section but this ended in boulders after 12m.

Five and a half hour trip and a further 250m of stream way explored making a total of about 300m – YOHHHH Ali

Saturday 8 March 2008 – Charterhouse Cave

Pete and Ali Moody, Pete Hann

The three aims for this trip were threefold:

- 1) Attempt a dye test with GB.
- 2) Try to get a few photos of the new extension.
- 3) Dig a route past the mud bank at the end of the streamway

The dye test was extremely successful with the large inlet stream in Charterhouse trying bright green 35mins after the fluorescein was placed at the bottom of the Gorge in GB by the UBSS. While Ali was waited by the inlet for the dye to come through Pete Hann starting taking a few photos further downstream but unfortunately this exercise was cut short when the tripod fell over depositing the camera in the stream. The mud bank at the end was quickly excavated giving access to a further 40m of walking sized streamway and a sump. On the route out Pete Hann checked out the start of the passage above the "frozen cascade" and this can be seen continuing in an easterly direction but a change of clothes will be required to protect the flowstone while pushing in further. Another possible high level passage was noted immediately upstream of the Blades and will be looked at with clean gear on the next trip. Ali

Saturday 15 March 2008 – Charterhouse Cave

Pete Hann, Pete and Ali Moody

The aim of this trip was to try to push any potential side passages on the "eastern" side of the streamway. Pete Hann had dried out his camera during the week and also wanted to try to take a few more photos. On the way down through the choke a couple of large boulders in the choke moved near Pete H for no apparent reason – SCARY. The first passage involves a chimney up a flowstone coated rift in the roof of the streamway just upstream of the Blades and from below it looks as though there could be a flat roofed passage leading off to the left at this point. Unfortunately the flowstone leads steeply up for 5m to roof level and there is no evidence of any passage.

The second site – the passage that leads off from the top of the frozen cascade and looked at by Pete H last week proved to be much more successful. This passage starts as a 3m wide bedding but after a few metres lowers to a flat out squeeze about 2m long over frosted cornflake-like crystals – which proved to be Ali-only-sized. Beyond the squeeze the passage enlarged to a comfortable hands-and-knees crawl (very phreatic looking), with a few cobbles on the floor. After a few metres it swings hard right (bearing 55 degrees), where a small passage enters on the left and changes shape to a decorated rift 2m high by about 1.5 metres wide. Ali stopped a few metres further, at the start of a crystal pool but was unable to get a good look onwards as the passage snakes out of sight. The potential is very good as we are so deep and the air is fresh in this passage but there is a high risk that it could just stal up. On the next trip we should be with a hammer and chisel and crowbar we should be able to make the squeeze "Pete-sized".

We then all continued downstream to inspect the sump again. It had obviously been raining hard all afternoon, as water levels downstream of the confluence were much higher on the exit. Also the small amount of water that had been noted falling from the centre of the roof of the pitch chamber on the way down was now a good waterfall. Excellent trip – 5 hours, and we now have a few good photos of the extension if the choke collapses! Ali

1st MARCH "...regrettably Nigel decided not to continue..." The cave decided for me. I ^{year} ~~thought~~ ^{thought} the others don't think I can get through the squeezes either. ~~the others don't think I can get through the squeezes either. the others don't think I can get through the squeezes either. the others don't think I can get through the squeezes either.~~ Another series on my "Black List".
Nigel Graham 21/3/8

21-03-08 WITHTYBROOK SLOCHER (Surface work)

Graham & Chrissie Price, Nigel Graham ...
 'Things are never that simple!' In the combined Price / Somerses
 County Council Adopt-a-Culvert project, the stream was found to
 be finding an alternative way from a fracture in the culvert.
 A large sink to one side of the cave entrance has been opened up,
 walled round, leaving the strike face exposed. It's well-sculptured
 limestone but very shattered, & we spent some 7 hours clearing
 a lot of clay to try to establish what's what before the
 boulders can be stabilised. Once the stream's diverted, they will
 be under a 10' artificial waterfall.

- Nj

23-03-08 CHARTERHOUSE CAVE

Ali M., Nigel G. MARK OLLIS (CPC)

CPC Mendip Meet - In the event only Mark among the visiting
 Craven members took up the invitation ... though Ng is a CPC
 as well as WCC member.

Tourist + Sand-hauling. Midsummer Chamber first while
 we were all dry, then while Ali showed Mark around The
 Citadel & Chiaroscuro, Ng ferried the 3 BDH down to the
 Aragonite Crawl. All 3 helped drag the sand into St Singing
 Stal Ch., where we cached the sand before exiting.

Nj

23-03-08 THE WESSEX C.C. SQUEEZE MACHINE

With Ali Moody's 5 $\frac{3}{4}$ " RECORD still intact after many
 years, the Craven Pot-hole Club rose to the Challenge,
 with Simon Monk as finalist, Equalling but NOT
 breaking the magic 5.750". Big Stu (Setter and Adjudicator)
 carefully reduced the gap to 5.687" but Simon had to
 admit defeat. Thus the Record stands equatted!

(Who managed about 7.74")

Nigel

Sun 23rd March Pwll DWFN

Had excellent SRT Trip into Pwll DWFN today
Really enjoyed this cave as need to do more SRT
This was an excellent start

Mad Fi°, Stuart France

Mon 24th March Hard Rock Cafe (Daren)

Had a good trip to hard rock today to deliver some more
kit to camp I took in Lucy, Issac and Tim from Ccs
It was there first time to Hard Rock. They
had an excellent time excellent days caving

Mad Fi°

19-25/03/08 CPC Easter meet

34 members of the Craven descended on the Wessex hut. The dribble began on the Wednesday and there were members caving on the Thursday, Goatchurch and Sidcot Swallet. That evening saw the masses arrive and the Hunters was attended and much ale drunk. With the leader, Ric, missing due to bad health, a replacement was found in the capable hands of Gordon Cordwell, who with the help of Brian & Brenda Prewer and Ali Moody soon had things planned and trips in place. Swildons was the centre of attention on the Friday with various trips done to Sump One, the Short Round, and Priddy Green Sink. Saturday evening was spent playing skittles in the New inn. CPC vs Wessex & others - final score - a draw! Sunday saw St Cuthberts and GB trips, In the evening a Reservoir Hole trip took place. On Monday folk started leaving but some folk did a Manor Farm trip. Others walked. several visits were made by the diggers to admire the Templeton dig. Monday night the final trip to the Hunters was made by the dwindling remains and a clean up done on Tuesday morning. A great weekend was had by all. Thank you

Pete Jones (CPC)

Saturday 22 March 2008 - St. Cuthbert's

Pete Jones (Mole), Mark Ollis, Jim Cook, Geoff Whittaker, and Jonathan Damrel JD)
- all CPC plus Ali Moody

A good run St. Cuthberts for the Craven. Usual tourist Boulder Chamber, Curtain Chamber, Fingers, Cerberus Hall etc. The bucket had been left in at the end of Gour Rift and the water progressed from knee to neck deep (for Ali) by the time we had reached the dam. The bucket was removed (with some difficulty) and we continued to inspect Sump I. Unfortunately by the time we returned to Gour Rift the water level had only dropped a few centimetres - so we all enjoyed another chilly wade! Out via Rabbit Warren, Railway Tunnel and Harem Passage. A detour was made into the start of Maypole Series before continuing down Sentry Passage. Out via Traverse Chamber and the Water Chute. Ali

Over the Easter weekend I overheard a conversation when cavers were discussing their best trips ever and arguing the merits of various cave systems. It is out of vogue to pick a popular or well worn trip but my favourite was always the round trip in Swindon's Hole. When asked why? I would make noises about the perfect combination of fossil passage and stream way, sporting problems [especially if you include Blue Pencil] and underwater obstacles. This weekend I realised that it was not the quality of the cave that made the trip but the excellent company that provided the perfect experience.

Rik had laid the best foundations calling in the expertise of Wessex members and then passed the gauntlet onto Gordon. He became the cement matrix binding together the different clasts and particle sizes to create a coherent deposit. On the ground Alison Moody, in particular, along with Brian Prewer and Richard Carey [for me] provided the best welcome and made this far more than a perfect trip; it became the perfect weekend.

I ended up in Swildon's Hole again, St Cuthberts, Templeton, Charterhouse and Manor Farm Swallet.

Friday 21st March 2008 Short round trip - Swildon's Hole
Alison Moody, John Cooper, Richard Carey, (all Wessex) Dick Orlando + Mark Ollis

Hot Cross Buns

Good Friday began with a drive from Bath and bad news that Ric would not be joining us. Gordon was co-ordinating a trip to the Priddy Green Sink but this was full. Alison Moody had kindly offered to lead the Short Round Trip later that morning. I had never met her but tales of 'grand tours' and her contribution to an excellent book (in Descent) left me in no doubt that I wanted to join one of her trips.

It had been some time since I had been on Mendip with any seriousness. My school in Bath offered caving as a major games option and from 1979 until 1982 BCSS did little else but tick off as many caves of the area as we could. I had been back once or twice to introduce interested parties to the upstream end of the sump or propose to my wife - she had a twisted ankle and was therefore unable to climb up the selected mountain - in Barnes Loop.

We changed into wetsuits at the Wessex and collected hoods and gloves. A quick briefing on ducks and sunrups and one potential Craven caver dropped out as he had not dived the sump before. A pound in the yellow tin and we made our way across the fields to the blockhouse at the entrance to Swindon's Hole. Things had changed, the gnarly tree had huge holes down through the roots into the entrance series and the difficult block was now a straightforward climb due to the movements above the Showerbath. Soon we were heading down the short dry way and Alison was calling out names, dates and I realised that a trip that I thought I knew well still had so much more to offer. Jacob's ladder made my mind shift to home [I must bring my son here] and very quickly we landed in the Water Chamber, the meeting point for all of the different routes into the Forty Foot Pot.

Following the 1968 flood the pitch had been bypassed but prior to that time the Forty Foot Pot was the major obstacle to exploration. Indeed, it took from 1901 until 1913 to pass the drop and then it was a difficult climb even with the water diverted away from the pitch. Today it is a straightforward lower from the Water Rift into the stream way below - the Eight Foot Drop.

The Twenty Foot Pot was rigged with ladder and lifeline for the return and part way down the splash of water carefully entered the collar of my oversuit, Déjà vu. The sequence of moves through the Double Pots were remembered well although a little slower, but I watched Dick, expecting the inevitable baptism as a 'son of Mendip'. He, of course was watching Alison who was well practised.

Barnes loop was taken in next and then very soon we arrived at Tratman's temple, pausing for a moment to consider the photographs in the new book recently published by the Wessex Cave Club.

The Forbidden Grotto was not passed until 1953 with the blasting of the boss and then most of the efforts were concentrated at the First Mud Sump - this was not the key to the round trip. Today, at the Second Mud Sump a sophisticated series of dams and pipework drains the water back upstream so that

it is able to soak away by a different course. Bailing took forty minutes but both Richard and I could only manage a short period at the well head. Lifting the buckets up into a funnel that supplied the return pipe was really hard work. John took over, lifting bucket after bucket to head level and gradually the level of the Mud Sump was lowered.

Eventually a suitable air space was achieved and then 'quick as a flash' hoods were donned and bodies started disappearing. No time for anticipation or second thoughts, helmet in one hand above your head, the other clutching your bag and trailed below your feet. Worked slowly on your back, relax, breathe and suddenly the realisation that this is quite straightforward. It felt very different from previously and then the realisation dawned that this was the first time I had used a hood whilst in a duck; thoroughly recommended.

Soon afterwards the impressive void that is Shatter Pot appears [see the photograph on page 175 in Swildon's Hole - 100 years of exploration published by the Wessex Cave Club]. This is the return of the Long Round Trip although the photograph shows the descent from Swynne-Puke. The next point of interest is Fault Aven a chamber with angular white crystalline material everywhere and three avens above connected by a precarious traverse – the Churchill Traverse.

The Greasy Chimney provides the next obstacle, passed slowly but not too difficult and then on past an obvious mud eroded formation to the diagonal slab topped rift of Blue Pencil. Initially the siphon for the first of the Double Troubles needs to be started but as this can take a while you have time to descend the Blue Pencil passage to the Swildon's Four streamway. This tight passage drops quickly before making a sharp right handed bend. I had realised that Alison gives advice when the going gets awkward and here we were Dick behind me spent more time getting it right. Grab the chain and then drop to the stream below.

The streamway has a character similar to Swildon's Two but with the Cowsh Aven inlet high above. Down to Sump IV and then I was pushed to the front to lead up to Sump III. The view is better but the thoughts of return up the chain and back around the Blue Pencil bend began to return. The uphill journey was not as bad and quickly we were up and inspecting the troubles. Although they are 'double' there are actually four ducks all short but with a back down approach. Hoods on.

Both Double Troubles and Bang Squeeze and duck were passed and on to the final real squeeze, mistakenly called the Birthday Squeeze. More instructions, "keep left and high before moving down to the right once you are through." Dick was in front but then came to a halt. Legs flailed and I jumped back rather than greet his wellies with my teeth. After offering some encouragement I backed up to provide a solid platform for him to press against. He moved slowly and gradually before suddenly he was in the Birthday Squeeze Duck and out onto the landing.

The return back up the stream and through Sump I was straightforward taking the inclined rift until we met fairies at the Twenty Foot Pot. Alison had experienced this before, sneaking confidently between the lifelined party as the rope returned and soon we were heading back up the wet way out into a much colder day.

I purchased the new book Swildon's Hole - 100 years of exploration whilst we were at the Wessex and guided by Alison Moody understood far more about the system than I have in any other cave. I have now read the first chapter, sadly the author Dave Irwin is no longer with us but on Saturday we were fortunate to visit his memorial plaque in St Cuthbert's. Sat at home afterwards and reading the second chapter – A description of the cave – I am encouraged to return far sooner than the time before. I asked Alison Moody to sign my book, she summed up the day nicely with the comment 'Happy Caving' this truly was a happy Good Friday.

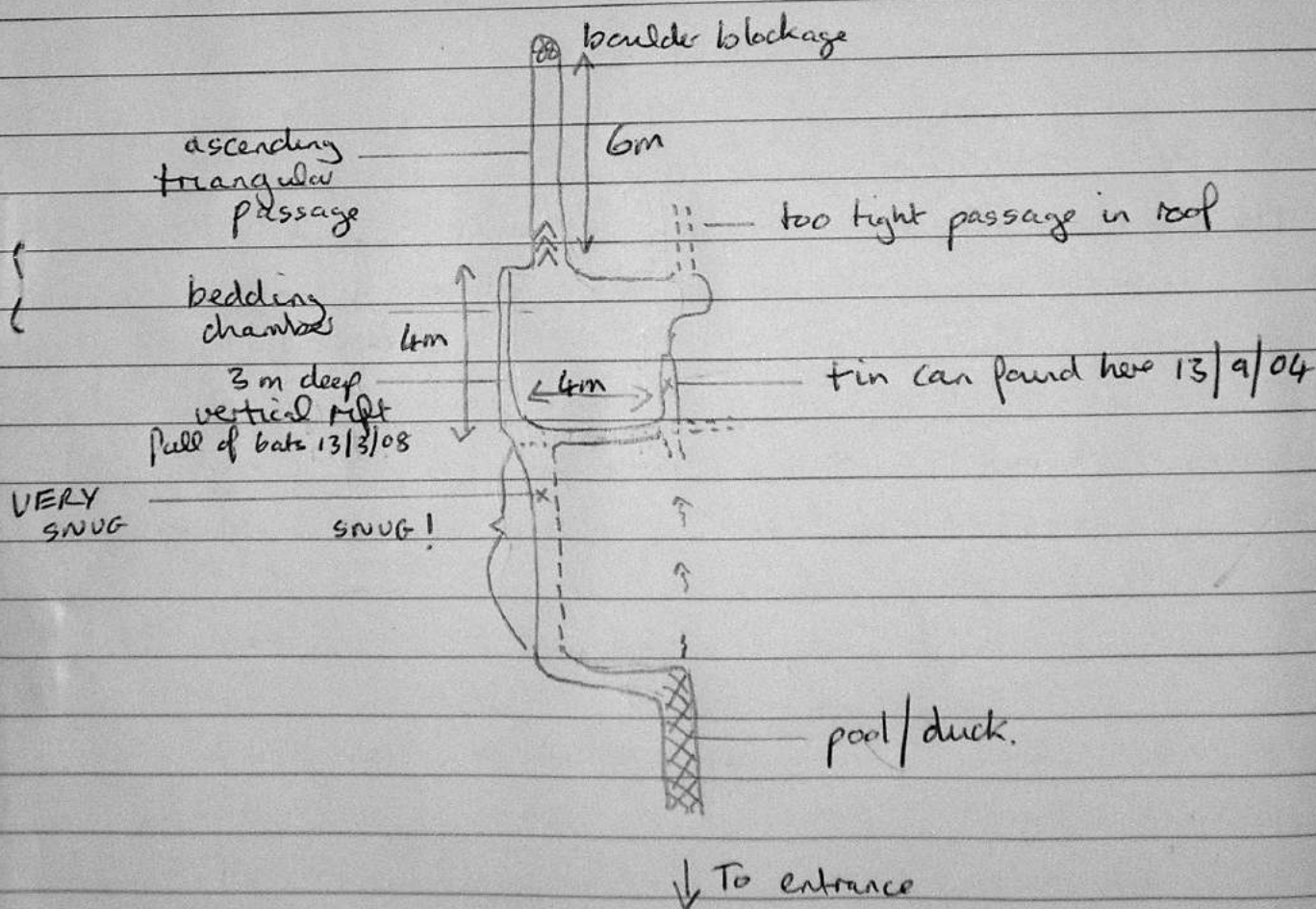
Mark Ollis (CPC) 1/4/08

After thought – What we always referred to as the round trip is now termed by most as the *Short Round Trip*. Two other major round trips also exist and one through trip. *The Long Round Trip* follows the Damp Link from Swildon's Six and Shatter Series to emerge in Shatter Pot. Watagate comes into Paradise Regained at Fault Chamber Junction near Fault Chamber beginning in Swildon's four. Priddy Green Sink provides a through trip from the green into the Swildon's Four streamway and out via Blue Pencil usually.

Monday 17 March 2008 – Goon's Hole

Ali & Pete Moody

On 13th September 2004 Ali pushed a savage 2m squeeze at the end of our dig in Goon's ~~Cave~~ to discover a small chamber. Today was the follow-up trip, this time with me accompanying her into the extension. Over the last four years I made a number of solo trips attempting to open up the squeeze. The use of commercial explosives is prohibited so, esoteric, and not too successful, alternative methods were employed – the squeeze remains, in Swildon's book parlance, extremely snug. Unfortunately a thorough exploration of the chamber is still going to have to wait – a colony of about a dozen lesser horseshoe bats are in winter residence, many hanging in the narrow rift we particularly want to check. Pete



Sat 29th March LLanelli Quarry Pot

Had an excellent trip in to LL Quarry pot. This Cave is a real good fun place to play. Very Riffy quite narrow in places explored top and bottom sections. definitely Would go back for another visit.

Mad Fi° & C.S.S. Members X6

SAT 2nd APR Hard Rock Cafe

Had an excellent time in cavern today with Andy S, Claire, Gary K, John M. It was the first time for Gary to Hard Rock he had an excellent time, worked hard in the entrance and did it out with bag in 32 mins. O I must work harder next time 😊 Wicked.

Mad Fi°

Swidow, Sat 12th April. Thanks to Jonathan, Patsie, James, Matt, Tony, Kettle, Jaguar, Anterm, and Sean, Tom, Sarah and Simon.

Fifty years and its over half my life away. I came to menting with a group from a youth club. Among those youngsters was John Thomas. That weekend I discovered the fellowship of caving and was shown the wonders of the Swildons stream way.

Today John and I were fortunate enough to be able to revisit Swildons in the company of old friends from Hillgrove days, Paul Weston and John Alder. It was good to be supported by younger and fitter friends to cover my hip! In 1960-68 John and I had made an 8 mm film in Swildons and with ~~some~~ ^{the} advance in equipment we were able to show this 48 year ~~old~~ ^{old} ~~footage~~ ^{footage} on a portable

DVD player, in the place it was taken. It was good to find the formation in the streamway ~~was~~ ^{was} largely unchanged over half a century and to realise that that the experience of caving with my friends in the wilderness is as enjoyable as ever. Down there to day

I did not feel I was 70: - I was a lad again.

maurice Hew

13.04.08

Great Weekend: many thanks to Jody & Maurice
for Food & Beer. Wonderful to see so many old
& dear friends, on Mendip.

May it continue
THANK AGAIN to All.
BRIAN POTMAN

Sat 12th April Box Mines

My inaugural trip as a WCC member was a very enjoyable trip
to Box Freestone Quarry on the "2nd Saturday of the Month"
organised event. Les Williams ably led our group around,
assisted by Gnome on occasions plus one or two quick glances
at the surveys. Our route encompassed entering ~~the~~ via Jack's
Workings, Slack Horse Road & Southern Gries, Corporation cut,
312 route, MoS area in Grandstone Quarry, Delta-Rectangle
Shafts, W0 Route and Aftworks passage to the area of Cranes.
A few photos taken. We met the 2nd WCC group here, led by
Chris Jones. Then out via the Water Tank & AO route plus
a brief detour to the Cathedral. Drinks afterwards at the
Quarrymans.

TU 3½ hrs.

Groups: Les Williams & Chris Williams, Mark Helmore & sons, Gnome
& Tim Ball.

Tim Ball

Back at the hut, Maurice's 70th birthday celebrations provided an
excellent opportunity to meet club members. A most enjoyable
evening.

Sat 12 April 2008

Tomtit (!?) Sarah & Simon

Trip into Swildons to climb the aven beyond Mud Sump.
According to Ali Moody this is the source of the water that
backfills ~~the Mud Sump~~ into the sump.

Approx 15/20 ft up and it closes down with a small
trickle emerging from Stall. Rope left in situ so Ali can
have a look.

Carried Tom's bag (Training!) and treated it really
carefully until it threw me off a small drop. Bastard!
Back to Water Chamber in time for Mars Bars with
Maurice to celebrate his 70th.



SAT 12 APRIL - Very Many Thanks to The Hewins
for their celebration. Excellent Club weekend with a lot
of people on a good range of caving trips - and a great party
NG.

SAT 12 Aggy Grand Circle 6.15min

Had an excellent trip into Aggy this cave has grown
on me. This trip was just excellent with all
different types of cave all rolled into one from swimming
to climbs, crawls and stamping passage. Really
excellent. Would love to do it again soon.

Andy S, Adrian F, Steven N, Gary W, Skaggy, Mac Fi

Tues 15-4-08 Shatter Cave

Sdg trip to repair the broken first saw-tooth curtain in Erratic left.
2 broken pieces became 3, but all successfully glued back. Eventually.
Hint - don't use Bond Shop superglue.

Pipes in Fernhill Cave entrance left - why put them at an angle,
it makes spit removal difficult?

Phil H.

16/4/08. EASTWATER CAVERN.

JAY + GUY. HAD LOTS OF FUN EXPLORING. THIS GORGEOUS
CAVE HAD A LOOK DOWN ^{380FT WAY THEN} A PRIMROSE POT LOOKED AT THE
LOWER TRAVERSE AND THEN HALLELUJAH HOLE ~~AND~~ IT THEN
CAME OUT AFTER MUCH ENERGY EXHAUSTION.

19th APR Short Round + Blue pencil

Had an excellent trip today always love this place
Went with Fay & Stephan they really enjoyed themselves
MAD FI

Swildens Hole,
Nik Nak & Adair.

19-4-08

Down through I II III IV to Tumble down with
Nik Nak freediving III for the first time

Two previous trips this year had concentrated
on reducing a rock plate in the floor which
had been restricting access to the dig face.
The stratification of mud and gravel is proving
interesting. The banding is diagonal rather
than horizontal possibly meaning that we are
about to go around a corner to the right
also possibly upwards? After two hours
we had extended the passage by 2' and found
a small air pocket in the roof
Whether we ~~have~~ now have a draught

or a CO₂ induced delusion, leaves
to be proved..... next time!
Adrian Velp.

Monday 7 April 2008 – Charterhouse Cave

Ali and Pete Moody and John Cooper

A trip to start the survey of the new extensions. The previous final station point from the 1983 survey was in Grotto of the Singing Stal and unfortunately since then none of the boulder choke had been surveyed. Starting at Singing Stal it took us about 2½ hours to survey through Chill Out Choke. This was John's first time through the choke and he appeared to be suitably impressed by the "hanging deaths". Pete Hann's Disto proved invaluable for this type of surveying (large voids between boulders) where it is not desirable to wander around too much or to touch anything. We were all relieved once we were out of the choke and much faster progress was made in the streamway. The survey was taken to the start of the Narrows - 6½ hour trip.

The data shows that 150m of passage was surveyed between Singing Stal and the Narrows. We have dropped 35m vertically in the boulder choke and the depth of the cave at the Narrows is 140m or 1150D. Ali

Wednesday 9 April 2008 – Heale Farm Cave

Ali Moody, Andy Snook, Charlotte Kemp, Jude Vanderplank & Richard Carey

We decided to include this out of the way cave as part of our A to Z on Mendip caves and despite the loose entrance we managed to get down as far as the Alimentary Canal. There were quite a few furry moths around so some care was needed to get past them. A very interesting and different cave. Fortunately we had asked permission from the landowner as we were interrogated by a lady from the neighbourhood watch. She did calm down a bit once we had managed to explain that we did in fact have permission. Apparently there have been a lot of burglaries. So despite the fact that we were parked in plain site appear to have caused a ruckus. (Note: we had to provide our caving insurance numbers in order to get permission for this cave). Richard

Saturday 12 April 2008 – Charterhouse Cave

Pete Hann, Ali and Pete Moody and Nigel Graham

The aim of this trip was to stabilise some more of the boulder choke. Nigel on cement mixing duties as usual with Ali working near the inlet just below the breakthrough point to support a large boulder. The two Pete's assessed the possibility of bypassing the ladder pitch in the ruckle but decided that this will not be very easy to achieve. Pete Hann did some work on the bypass to the traverse at the start of the streamway. A cementing session will now be needed to make this route safe. Mr Hann then returned declaring that he had felt a bit lonely and was missing the usual digging banter and grief that we normally give him! Ten mixes of cement used and we have run out of sand again – we still have a lot of work to do. Any volunteers for carrying some sand in for us please? Ali

Wednesday 16 April 2008 – Ife Hole (Willets Lane Hole)

Ali Moody, Andy Snook, Charlotte Kemp, Jude Vanderplank and Richard Carey.

As part of our A-Z we were lucky to find a real Cave that begins with I. It is also known as Willets Lane Hole. And it turned out to be a lot more interesting than we had anticipated. We entered the lowest of two entrances and dropped into ~~the first~~ chamber. Following downslope a shored up crawl to a second chamber, "The Bargain Basement" was found.

This is a steep chamber with a possible way on in the floor. The scaffolding is quite rusty so probably hasn't been dug for a while. On the way back out just after the lower entrance a low crawl was encountered. We pushed on through to reveal another larger passage descending to a choked rift. On the right there was a low squeeze through to another small chamber complete with some stal and crystals. Truly remarkable. To complete the trip we exited the higher entrance. So another through trip bagged.

A real gem. Richard

17 April 2008 – Swildon's Hole

Pete and Ali Moody, Andrew Moon, Tom Stearn and Norman Wright

The aim of this trip was to move the flexi pipe from its present position feeding water down Lowbow and move it to Water Chamber Dig. An extra section of pipe was required to achieve this and the length reserved for the Mud Sump was taken underground. The end of the original pipe was removed from Lowbow and the new section attached. Andrew, Tom and Norman then did a brilliant job with tent pegs, metal pipe and pieces of rope supporting the flexi pipe so that it runs at the top of the left hand wall of the Water Chamber and then into Water Chamber Dig. In order to increase the flow of water Pete also re plumbed in the section of pipe, which feeds extra water into The Oxbows from the entrance chamber. An inspection was then made of the drippy stal, but there was no obvious change to the amount of water entering here. Also the cascade down the right hand wall of the streamway a short distance downstream of the folded strata bend, which had been noted in the earlier experiments was still dry. However, an hour later when a party led by Les Williams exited, they noted that the cascade had started flowing. Ali

19 April 2008 – Charterhouse Cave

Pete Hann Pete and Ali Moody

The initial aim of this trip was to enlarge the letter box squeeze at the start of the passage above the Frozen Cascade so that Pete x 2 could get through it. A large tarpaulin was taken in to protect the flowstone of the Frozen Cascade but a second one will be required to cover the bottom section. The squeeze was attacked from both sides and fortunately it proved relatively easy to break up the crystal floor and after about an hour Pete x 2 were able to join Ali on the far side by the bend where the passage swings right and enlarges. Muddy oversuits were removed but the crystal pool that Ali had stopped at on 15 March had drained. The first part of this passage is reminiscent to St Paul's Series in Swildon's. It heads in a south-easterly direction and

then breaks out into a larger higher level passage entered by climbing up between a few boulders. At this point it became very clear that we weren't in an inlet passage but in an old fossil downstream route. This passage is square shaped just like some of the active streamway. In an upstream direction it almost immediately ended in a stal and mud choke while downstream the 2m x 2m passage with a gour floor slopes downwards heading on a bearing of 135 degrees. It then changes shape to a phreatic tube 1.5m in diameter (bearing 120 degrees), still descending and becomes increasingly muddy until it ends in a stal encrusted duck (very similar to Gour Pool Duck in Shatter Series with a 1.5 cm airspace. This appeared to be short and after sticking his feet through to determine its length Pete M (also the only person with a wet suit on) very bravely pushed it and with much spluttering emerged in an airbell about 45cm high and 1.5m wide. Unfortunately we seem to be in Charterhouse's version of Sump V Swildon's and looking ahead a further airbell could be seen on both the left and the right hand side of the passage and it is thought that these are probably joined. These airbells have about 10cm of airspace and beyond it the passage sumps. Length of passage from the right hand bend to the ducks was estimated to be about 70m and the new passage appears to be running parallel to the active streamway. We now have two downstream sumps to dive! Ali

19th APRIL 2008. DARREN CILAV.

JAY WOODS, ANDY SNOOK, STEVE,

This was my first trip into this cave after lots of encouragement over the last few months by fi. I had to be up at 5 in the morning to meet Andy and Steve in Bristol for seven. We arrived at White Wall and changed outside in the cold rain threatening Welsh weather. It took an hour to negotiate the entrance series as Steve was doing a lot of filming. My lungs were thanking me dearly for giving up smoking and I was loving the added oxygen. We negotiated the wriggle and then checked in our names in the log book in the big chamber nowhere near the entrance next onto white company for more photos + videos the formations here were splendid they blew me away. On next to the antlers - then onto the kitchen and much debate was had as to where the rope and plastic pipe ladder went? Next we headed down a side passage and examined

Some red fine crystal formations. We then headed back to the log book and decided to check out the ladder. A quick check on the frame we turned about and made our way back through the entrance series. Back at the hut changed ~~in~~ in fine ^{welsh} rain only seven hours after "setting off". Wow I shall definitely be doing a lot more exploration of this cave system in the future. Author? Please!

Fri 25th April Templeton

Phil and John Hall baked the bottom pit and reamed the shot holes. Aubrey arrived, suggested a different pattern, and we drilled another 14mm x 1m hole. Charging with 100g cord, we protected lights and cameras, and exited to meet Steve and Jonathan Riley. After a satisfying bang we were pleased to see the cameras had survived, but we could see nothing but swirling smoke. Debrief at the Huntley's. Phil H.

FRIDAY 25th APRIL 2008. Swildons round trip blue pencil passage to Swamp Four.

JAY WOODS ANDY SNOOK.

Dropped into the entrance with a distinct lack of water flowing through the stream as to it being redirected down a pipe. Andy did some mighty fine rigging at the top of the twenty we allowed a party to pass us, onwards and upwards into tratmans temple and through to the ~~first~~ ^{second} mud swamp the water level was low enough to go through without bailing we shot down blue pencil passage and down to Swamp Four having first wriggled into the start of watergate amazed at the clarity of the water flowing down the main stream. Next we climbed back up the chain and shot back up blue pencil. the first trouble was a bit epic

but the rest were fun the water temp has risen a few degrees since the winter which made the trip very enjoyable down the rope slide through ~~the~~ Sump 1 and back ^{up and} out in 2hrs 55 mins. always a good workout the canal trip. On the way back to the hut we noticed lots of worms that shot back into the ground as soon as our lights hit them. Had a really bad night's sleep due to a very noisy party coming in late from the pub then ^{again} making loads of noise again in the morning. early. totally disregarding the quiet between 10-8 rule. Please say who wrote up the trip!

SAT 26th APRIL THE GREAT NORTH ROAD DYO

Had an excellent trip in DYO this weekend. Really enjoyed the Green Canal it's always a pleasure to go through it. I got to do it twice this time. We took all our SRT kit in Darren Drums for the pitches ahead. Really pleased these climbs were roped. Looking forward to a return trip to get to the bitter end. Really enjoyed the trip but it was not so good for poor Stuart F. he sadly landed rather hard on his hand and broke his radius and by Sun morning he had his arm in plaster.

Adrian F, Stuart France, Madfi°

Sat 3rd May Swildon's Hole Shortland Trip

Madfi & Faye Litherland (Sec) intended to go round the loop twice, but I opted for just one circuit. Low water levels in the cave, with only minimal hailing at the first trouble. Fiera set a fast pace, with us reaching the 20 foot pitch after 12 minutes of getting underground, and 23 minutes to Tatham's Temple. Due to not

being at full fitness the overall progress slowed to a more sustainable pace, otherwise I would have got left behind. I said goodbye to them at Watmans Temple as they started lap #2, and solo-rived. My time under was 3 hrs.

Tim Ball. WCC New Member.

6-5-08 Phil H + Kay + Rich (productive members) to Loston Quarry Cave + Nicky after beating the lock into submission. When Adrian + Jude arrived, we went into Loston Cavern - good trip, exploring most of the cave, Rich went to the bottom (and just got out!) Photos taken, and Helmet in the White Hall, Cross - good all.

Phil H.

7th May Templeton

The usual diggers (self, John Hill, Eric Dufford, Dave and Tom Turner) were joined by President Donald Thomson on his annual tour of inspection. Dan did sterling service hauling spoil, and 3 ships were taken to the surface.

Phil H.

11th May 08

Silica Mines, S. Wales
Chris Gornst, Helen Rider

Our trip to sort out some loose line in the roof of the 1 metre passage through the 'window'. Loose climbing rope removed & floating line in ceiling re-belayed properly. This 'pink' line connects with 3 others (?!) @ 14.5m (?) and not the 12m level as expected. Need to go back & see where they all go....

13th May Waterhead Swallet

Phil Hardy, Andy Chamberlain, Nicky, plus Kay and Rich (prospective new members).
A short but interesting trip, the canals being full of water and limited headroom - very cold! Did not go down the pit as Andy had to get back to 'er indoors, and the new resin bolts for the ladder are in a silly place (we suspect we know who to blame!!)

Out into the sunshine, and a good session in the Queen Vic

Phil H

9-11th ^{May} Daren Camp

Had an excellent daren Camp there was 5 of us this time. I arrived quite late nearly 2am and there was still dinner ready for me too.

Sat we packed our Lunies and headed off to Restrand we visited the blue grommes and Leona-Jaynes play pen then we visited the Western and Eastern Flyers and took a look at the Camps then we went to have a dig at

KP's dig. This is a lovely dig near to Fray Street Really nice passage. It was really nice to visit the Restrand I thought it would of been much bigger but its a cracking Camp very nice location. The caving from Hard Rock to Restrand is some of the best passages you could ever want. Headed back to Camp for Supper.

In the morning we had Cooked Breakfast and packed up Camp then headed out we went via Croyde Oxbow and the meeting room an excellent weekend

Gary, Steve, Adrian F, Andy, Mad F.^o

Phil H

Saturday 26 April 2008 – Charterhouse Cave

Ali and Pete Moody and John Cooper

A trip to continue the survey from the start of the Narrows and hopefully to get as far as the active streamway sump. The Narrows proved very slow to survey and was also extremely cold thanks to the howling gale blowing up this section of passage. It was a relief to get to the pitch and once below the Confluence progress was quite fast. We eventually reached the sump at 5pm after surveying for about 4 hours. Trip time 7 hours. NB it takes about 1½ hours from the sump to the entrance.

The preliminary results of the survey (until we tie the survey station in Singing Stal with the original 1983 survey)

Length of surveyed passage from Singing Stal to the sump = 460m (which includes about 60m through the boulder choke).

Vertical drop from Singing Stal to the Confluence = 93m which gives a depth at this point of 160m and an OD of 95.

Vertical drop between Singing Stal and the sump pool = 112m which gives Charterhouse a depth of 180m (590ft) and an OD of 75.

This makes Charterhouse deeper than both Longwood (175m) and Swildon's Hole (167m).

Wookey Hole is Mendip's deepest cave at 182m (597ft) but we should beat this once the sump is dived. YOHHHH.... Ali

Saturday 3 May 2008 – Charterhouse Cave

Pete Hann, Ali & Pete Moody, Clive Westlake and Richard Carey

The main aim of this trip was to start photographing the new extensions starting at the streamway sump. Pete M also wanted to dive the static sump at the end of the Frozen Cascade passage. It was also a very noteworthy occasion as it was also the 1000th (recorded) caving trip for Mr Carey – congratulations Rich and you will soon have as much Radon poisoning as the rest of us! A fairly successful trip with Pete H and Clive photographing from the sump back to the pitch near the confluence. Pete M dived 4-5m into the static sump but unfortunately was unable to find a way on as everything appears to be blocked by stal. Another attempt will be made at a later date when water levels have dropped. Ali

Tuesday 20 May 2008 – Wookey Hole

Ali & Pete Moody, Martin Grass, Jacky Ankerman, Lee Hawkswell and Nigel Taylor

This was a great opportunity to have a poke around all the side passages off the show cave, including Charon's Chamber, the entrance rifts around Goatsherd Chamber, and also the bedding plane beyond the stalagmite grille, off the First Chamber. Some very interesting paw marks were found in the mud by the lake in the First Chamber and it

is thought that they may be otter. Many thanks to Martin for arranging a wonderful womble down Wookey. Ali

27/05/08 Charterhouse Cave - Mark H & Brian

After a Suggestion from Ali, Moody, Brian & myself found ourselves carrying 4 BDHs full of Sand to the old gate just past Singing Stal - Well its good training she said!

SAT 25th May PWLL D.WFN

Really nice little Cave Louley pitches Really enjoyed A second visit to this place

Adrian F, Gary, Mad Fi^o

SAT 25 May Tunnel Cave

These caves are close to each other So doing them Both provided an excellent days Fun. This Cave is quite Rifty AN interesting place not done this place before. Quite a few large Holes in the floor

Adrian F, Gary K, Jo, Mad Fi^o, Steven,

SAT 31 MAY Scrubbers - Emsey, John Maneely, Adrian Vdp, Nik Nak

Em & John had Damp Link & free-diving the sumps as an objective, Adrian & Nik were to have a dig at Tumbledown. All down to sump 2 together Em & John dived 2, 3 & 4 uneventfully & started up the siphon for Damp Link On to 9. Unfortunately the siphon hadn't worked its magic so we opted to head home via Blue Penial, but not before dropping in on the Tumbledowners - who were very giddy & jovial (must have been the special air they were breathing!) Em & John completed half a round-trip & met up with Adrian & Nik Nak at the Landing & all headed out together.

Very enjoyable trip & a first go at free-diving 2 & 3 for me.

Emsey.

[Signature]

01/06/08 Charterhouse Cave Mark H & Mak
Another 4 BDHs & Sand delivered to the Old Gate,
Cave very wet this time!

9th June Carno South Wales

Had an excellent trip into Carno this Cave is
Quite a different Cave to any other its a Cave
Lots of different types of Cave all in one it
keeps you very busy the whole time, climbing
crawling, chocks, its all there. Not a difficult
Cave but just Relentless very compact but long
as well, Very muddy in places Southern discomfort
Very Sticky Quite Some Careful Caving needed as
it was just so Slippery trying to suck you into
the deep Riffs awaiting your distraction.
The entrance is a 1 mile Addit to Walk down
Quite impressive as you can see the light from
one end to the other, definitely a place to Re Visit.

Mod Fr, Adrian, Andy.

05/06/08 Charterhouse Cave Mark H, Bean, Mak, Biff
5BDHs of Sand & 1 Container of Cement delivered to the
old gate. Pleased to see the Cave dry & the Wet Crawl to
Singing Stal Wasnt!

11/06/08 Charterhouse Cave Mark H & Bean.

Trip to do Some preparatory rigging of ladder for
photo trip by Ali. - Bean was pushed to the front
& made good work of the 50' free climb up, and soon
had the ladder in place for me to inspect his handywork!
Done done.

12/06/08 Charterhouse Cave - Mark H, Bean, Mark & Biff
Bored yet? Another 6 Container loads of Sand delivered
to the old gate. Cave lovely & dry. It's certainly a
gear wrecker though!

15/6/08 Mr Tom Chapman (41) Ms Sarah Payne (41++)
Mr Simon Richardson (28) Mr Big Stu ~~(41)~~ (42 inch chest)
Mr Young Boy (14). Moly Dog (6)

Swildons. Bat Dig

A point-less Trip down to some shitey dig with no obvious
potential. Tom got rather excited by it however and tried
drinking the place dry. Nutter! One rock removed and
maybe 1cm of progress made.

Big Stu had to wait at the bottom of the Pie Shop
Shatter Pot as he's too big for the squeezes. Shame, as
he missed out on the ice creams and naked dancing girls.
Great fun.



Thursday 19th June 2008 Swildons - Blue Pencil & SR Trip.
Hatsiang & Bert.

TOP TRIP! Have been meaning to get to Swildons 4 ever since Leo & I
changed the Blue Pencil Chain. Well I suppose my feet had spent a good half
hour in 4 on that night, but I had never actually been and had a
look. Bert had never been either so off we went. (Note for
Noel, that last word was W-E-N-T-E-D*) Mtd. Soup (and indeed

*my writing knows a lot to be desired! (I agree - but so does mine - Noel!)

~~Went to the water with the boat and the motor~~
 all the ducks later) had plenty of airspace, with no building required
 "I was quite tired already being really out of shape - only one
 quick trip to the scump since Easter! Blue Pencil was great Jun,
 a superb bit of passage, and we were at the awkward corner
 much sooner than I expected. But then my memory is pretty rubbish!
 Bert nearly popped out into thin air such was his enthusiasm
 but a quick & cry of "STOP! GRAB THE CHAIN!" seemed to do the
 trick. A lemmurely (I have no idea how to spell that) moosh
 around 4 and we were on our way back. A quick pitstop
 at the first trouble saw us debating the options - for some
 reason I didn't fancy the SK trip as an exit - Fortunately,
 Bert did, and soon convinced me it was a good idea. It
 was great! Even scump I was like a sheet of glass - so
 clear. Straight out with a second wind going in my sails
 and Bert trying to warm up and we were soon back
 in daylight. Fantastic!! "

Hatstand

Hurtle pot x 4 dives 12th - 17th June 2003

Had 4 Louley dives into Hurtle this week. Went up
 for the CCR training camp and the weather was dry
 & sunny all week long this vis in Hurtle was the
 best I have ever seen over my 4 dives I swam down
 the wall and up the other side and onwards towards
 Jungle jungle Junctions every thing was just so clear
 it was a real pleasure to be there even the usually
 very muddy slope was dry and easy to get kit up and
 down. One of the days I had a Louley swim into
 Joint. It was great to meet all the other divers
 at the training camp and spend some quality time
 diving with Elaine on Friday we had a fab day
 in Caperry excellent vis. Then we went for a

paddle in the River at Kirby Lonsdale - Vis not so good
in there rather like pee soup a cracking week
we had.

Mad Fi Elaine H

Sunday 22/7 June

Swildons Bat Dig
Tom, Sarah, Ali & Har.

Despite being a day of rest set off before the crack of noon! The
pace was slowed rather by the ~~presence~~ large very heavy bags
everyone was carrying - except me who seemed to get off lightly
with just a crowbar. However I even managed to forget it
when passing mud sump having been distracted by lying in the
water passing the bags through! I'd never been to shatter pot - really
must spend some time exploring this bit somewhere. Tom keen to
check out the roof with the mighty SverreTM. ~~It~~ Eventually after
some wriggling and swearing at bags we got to the dig.

Simon was right! Wait what am I thinking? ^{NUM} Tom and I
had mild headaches on arrival and some discussion was had on
whether the air was bad or we were unfit and hungover! Ali & I
then caved out leaving Tom banging away with Sarah... As I
write this they have yet to emerge...

Hatstand

As Above.

SPENT QUITE SOME TIME HILTI CAPPING UP THE CALLITED
TUBE - SLOW WORK AND NOT VERY EFFECTIVE AS IT SEEMS
TO BE TOO SOFT TO FIRE THE CAPS, THEY JUST GET PUSHED
IN AND ARE HARD TO FIRE. STILL GOOD PROGRESS MADE
WITH HAMMER + CHISEL REMOVING OLD (15 YEARS) BANG DEBRIS.
GOOD FRESH AIR AT DIG FACE - ELSEWHERE IN SHATTER
SERIES THE AIR QUALITY IS VERY POOR.

Tom.

i
(

Anne ✓

18th June. G.B. Cave. Phil H. and Kay, plus Rich and Darren.
Pleasant trundle down to bottom of Main Chamber via upper narrows
Very little water, no bats. Rich went up to the car park. Phil H

MISSING — BOTH LARGE TEAPOTS AND 2 SHOWER MATS!!
THIS IS THOUGHTLESS AND INCONSIDERATE, ESPECIALLY AS IT IS NOW
DIFFICULT TO MAKE THOSE LARGE APRES-CAVE BREL-UPS!

Saturday 24 May 2008 – Charterhouse Cave

Pete Hann, Nigel Graham, Ali and Pete Moody

Pete M did a sand carry in and then exited for the surface (wise man). Pete H worked on the bypass to the traverse below the ruckle. Ali started stabilising the bottom section of the ruckle while Nigel mixed cement non-stop until we ran out of sand. We then continued downstream so that Mr H could resume work on a dig off the Right-hand Inlet passage before the Narrows. Leaving Pete to this Nigel and Ali went off to check another passage, returning to find that not only had Pete managed to get into open passage but in the process had achieved a good job of sealing himself in when the entrance boulders slid down to join him. We did eventually agree to dig him out after a little persuasion! The new passage runs parallel to the inlet in a downstream direction and after making the entrance safer Ali was able to push it for 9m to where it became too tight. Ali

Saturday 31 May 2008 – Charterhouse Cave

Ali Moody, Pete Hann, Nigel Graham and John Biffin (Bif)

Photo trip to the Aragonite Streamway to start getting some pics for Hidden Earth. After a few problems with flash-guns Pete photographed from just below the traverse to just before the Right-hand inlet. The cave was very wet and we also took the opportunity of photographing the Confluence under these conditions. Ali and Bif then continued downstream to the sump. There had clearly been a considerable amount of water down the cave following the heavy rain last Thursday, many of the foot marks had been washed away and a considerable amount of foam in the roof of the final 10m of crawling before the gravel bank – quite sobering. At the sump there was foam in the roof (like Swildon's, Sump I after heavy rain) but no evidence of the water backing up, which is a very promising sign. Ali

Thursday 5 June 2008 – Charterhouse Cave

John Cooper and Pete and Ali Moody

Having spent the last few weeks trying to sort out the quires arising from the 1983 survey figures we decided that the only way to resolve them was to run another line survey from the entrance to the first station of the new survey in Singing Stal. The last four summers spent on the Swildon's book and this one down Charterhouse! Ali

Saturday 7 June 2008 – Charterhouse Cave

Pete Hann, Ali Moody, Jon Williams, Russ Brooks (who was trying the cave for size) and Pete Moody (cement carry).

NB Nigel was excused Charterhouse and his usual cementing mixing duties as he had cut his hand during the week, resulting in 9 stitches and had produced a satisfactory sick note.

Unfortunately Russ didn't fit through the gate squeeze and made an early exit to enjoy the sun. We transported 3 x 4ft lengths of metal ladder down the cave plus 2 containers of cement. Taking advantage of the rigid ladder Pete H and Ali stopped to recheck out the high-level passage on the bend just before the lower passage opens out below the Citadel, but this passage quickly closes up to a choked rift about 10cm wide and is not a digging prospect. Mark Helmore and Bean as part of their fitness training for the summer (assisted by Bif and Mak on occasion) had very kindly agreed to deliver sand to the boulder ruckle gate and this sand was moved on through the ruckle. The fixed ladder was installed and work started on pushing through the bypass to the boulder ruckle pitch, which would avoid an extremely dangerous section of "hanging deaths" above the 4m climb. By the end of the session the bypass was opened but at least another couple of sessions will be required to stabilise this route and also to enlarge it slightly. Tourist trip for Jon to the start of the Narrows before exiting. Ali

Sunday 8 June 2008 – Charterhouse Cave

Pete and Ali Moody and John Biffin (Bif)

The survey completed on 5 July pulled up a major discrepancy with the 1983 survey and a concern had arisen following the previous trip that the two Wessex clinos give readings of between 1-1.5 degrees difference. Fortunately after some careful checking we determined had been the one that we had been using for all the recent survey work was correct. With a different person taking the readings the intention of this trip was to resurvey the resurvey to double-check on the readings particularly the depth. This survey confirmed Thursday's readings (with only a 4cm difference in depth between them) and means that the 1983 version had an error.

The revised figures show an OD at the sump of 69m, giving a depth of 186m (610ft) – which makes Charterhouse 4m deeper than Wookey Hole and hence Mendip's deepest cave. Ali

Saturday 14 June 2008 – Charterhouse Cave

Ali Moody, Tony Boycott, Andy Farrant and Jon Tulling

A geological trip to get Andy's opinion on the new extension. Unfortunately Tony didn't make it through the Narrows, getting beaten by the second pinch point. Andy became very excited with the fossil passage beyond the Frozen Cascade believing it to probably be formed on the 70-75m water table, which is the same level as the phreatic passages at the bottom of Rhino. PTO

We wait in anticipation for Andy's thoughts on Charterhouse, but in the meantime I received the following email! Ali

"Thanks for a cracking trip down Charterhouse; it's proved a few things;

1. I'm thinner than Tony, and 2. I'm not very fit!

The bruises are subsiding and I no longer ache".

Thursday 19 June 2008 - Charterhouse Cave

Ali and Pete Moody, John Cooper and Pete Hann

Trip to survey and tie in various odds and sods and also to survey the passage beyond the Frozen Cascade. Line survey is now completed - yet another six hour trip. Ali

Saturday 21 June 2008 - Charterhouse Cave

Pete Hann, Nigel Graham, John Biffin and Ali Moody

Photo trip into the old cave to get some pics for Hidden Earth. Mark and Bean had recently re climbed up to the balcony 50ft above the Citadel and left a ladder in place for us, which allowed Mr Hann to retake his excellent shot across the Citadel using a digital camera. Particular thanks to Bean who led the climb - it is a very long way down from up there! The balcony is definitely just an alcove sloping up to boulders and there is no obvious way on from this point. Ali

Thurs 26th June. Bone Hole

Phil H, Chris Castle, Rich Hobbs. Good to explore a cave for the first time without the benefit of a survey. All holes examined, and we found our way down Skull Slope and into West Lift, exploring various holes in the floor.

A very pretty cave - the roof of Skull Slope is packed with stalactites and there are plenty of curtains. A pity that so much has been marred by ruddy hands (totally unnecessary) and no sign of any attempt at taping. So much for controlled access and a leader system!

Phil H.

5/7/08 Mail Hatters Tea Party (water chamber Upper Smildons)

A large group of assorted ages (from 3yrs to 70+) assembled in the water chamber to celebrate the 40th anniversary of The Great Flood of Mendips, courtesy of Ah M's catering group. Here we had cut sandwiches, tarts, cakes, freshly brewed tea ect. Mr Weston played his violin. Strange waitresses with deep voices and long frocks assisted a scantily attired Miss Moody.

Mirth and good humour were in abundance.

In one fell swoop everything was removed to 'tenga firma' where further hot food was available at Upper Pitts (plus Marion's birthday barrel.) Old Grey Wolf.

13th July 2008 ~~Tynings Barrow Summit~~ CANCELLED!

GB, HUNDREDS MORE

Who? Wayne & HARBAND?

Planned trip to Tynings cancelled due to lack of key due to nobody in at the farm. Oh well, bad air, diesel and crawling will all be there next time I guess! PLANB - GB, in Devil's Elbow cause Wayne not been there before. I really like the route but Wayne underwhelmed by it. Then on to Great Chamber! Hooray at last! Oh bigger, ladder dig is sumped. Arse. Back to the hut for tea, then off to Thinters' Hole for SRT practice. I still hate heights, and Wayne couldn't remember how to tie a bowline on the bight. All JGF. Despite disappointments, a grand day!

21/7/08

Bath Swallet

Jude Aubrey Matt & Myself.

Directly ahead of the dig face has closed down to 75cm horizontal crack, the floor still consists of really large boulders in mud but there is a very enticing aven full of sandstone cobbles just to the right at the end.

Any way self digging digs are far more fun, poke the crowbar in and up, give it a quick wiggle, remove hand and arm (quickly) and watch what comes down. eventually we'll need a longer bar.

Adrian - Vdp.

July 08. Three trips to Mine
Tenansent. Conbe Martin. V. interesting
Greywolf

July 08. Ridge Mine. Took MCG members
+ neighbour. Weston brothers.

July 08. Acting on 'information received' went to Park Lane Mine (Neston). This ~~has~~ has roughly been "reopened" - probably for geologists etc. to assess stone worth. Unfortunately

a heavy, well secured steel door
bars entry!

Also checked Monks Park Mine,
now abandoned. (Poor quality stone)
slope shaft again secured
by steel door. Has anyone
looked at the old (? still blocked)
way in from Ridge.

Wesley brothers.
Have also been on adventures
with the melodium playing Mrs Scammell.

18-20th July My 36th Birthday AT HARD ROCK

Had an excellent Camp at hard Rock Was what a
party went in on Fri we had chicken Curry

Boy it was good. Sat morning we set off
we went to borrowed boots then off to the
Flyovers to take photos to finish of the DVD. Then
we headed to time machine for more pictures.

Then we headed back for dinner and then cake

Gary Caved in an amazing Chocolate Birthday Cake

it made it in all in one piece it then was iced
at camp we all just gorged on it all ~~for~~ ^{for} all
of ⁴ us it was the best cake ever.

So we all headed out.

Garry, Andy, Steve, Mad Fi°

FRANCE - LOT/DORDOGNE 2008

18th June - 17th July.

A month of Cave Diving, exploration & caving.

Participants: Chris Gossett, Clive Westlake, Helen Ruder, Pete Mulholland, John Meneely (& WCC) Rich Stanton, John Volanthen, Tim Morgan, Gary Jones, Lucy, Phil, Liz, Steve McCabe, Trish, Nader Larsson, Cedric Verdier, Dave, Urs Benz (DIR), Andrew Ward, Colin Hayward, Marcus & Kathy Cribbe, Sue Ward.

The team participated in pushing the Marche Pied - a stunning 'new' site with some of the best & clearest underwater scenery a lot of us had seen in the Lot. An attempt was also made on the 'Carrière' or 'le canyoning'. Caving trips included:

- Gouffre du Branc
- Perte de la Courbe
- La Carrière

Diving included:

- Marche Pied
- La Dragonnière
- Gouffre de Saint Savaeur
- Fontaine de Truffe
- Gouffre de Cabony
- Bessel
- Landenouse
- Cregols
- Trou Madame
- Doux de Coly
- Saint Georges

Chris G conducted 26 cave dives, 4 caving trips and a days canoeing. Everyone else dived and caved until they were sick as well! A fantastic month in a fantastic place with nothing but glorious, sunny 38° weather and only one thunderstorm. Scooters got a good thrashing & plenty to go back for next year.

26/7/08 WIGMORE SWALLET.

JOHN MANEELY, CLAIRE COHEN, RICHARD COHEN.

Claire and Rich helped carry my diving gear to the syms. RICHARD being on one of his fairly early caving trips. I geared up and made my way to Wigmore 10 whilst the other exited the cave.

I dived to ~~young~~ young bloods inlet and left my diving gear there. Using the generation game to get to Wigmore 10. Sline rift was carefully rigged and carefully descended. Not a place to have an accident.

I placed a previously popped boulder restriction in the terminal choke and looked for a way on. A boulder was dug out at low level in the now ~~excessive~~ excessable choke void. With the boulder removed a drop down within the choke was visible with ~~some~~ a section just large enough to stand up in. To gain excess to it a pinch between boulders needed opening up. A sapper was used for this successfully. A bolt was also placed for a handline as I thought it might be tricky to get back up this tight vertical section. With no rope available at the dig I exited the cave. JM's trip time 9hrs. Cheers for the carry C+R.

JOHN MANEELY.

22/8/08 WIGMORE SWALLET.

JOHN MANEELY DUNCAN PRICE.

Both divers made good time to the syms. We geared up and dived to young bloods inlet then dumped the diving gear.

Youngs blood inlet this time had a lot of cowsh in it due to speeding on the fields above. A thick layer of black foam on surfacing in the snap pool, nice..

The terminal choke was reached and the previously opened up vertical squeeze was descended with a handline. A dig site within this choke void was selected and dug for an hour or so. A boulder was drilled and bolted, to enable it to be removed. Progress was ~~had~~ heading downwards in a very awkward manner. The stream can be heard through the gap created between the boulders but is too tight to pass. With a flat drill battery no more progress could be made. JM had exhausted himself digging and had a minor whinger trying to extract himself from the vertical squeeze. An otherwise uneventful trip was made to surface. Trip time 8.5 hrs

JOHN MANEELY

Bath Swallet

26-8-08.

Jude Adrian Aubrey

"We need a longer bar!!"

* See last Bath entry. 21-7-08.

Adrian.

Bath Swallet

Jude, Adrian, Aubrey 8.9.08

Another Regular digging trip - applied some cord to help the rocks fall out of the roof!

St Colthberts Swallet.

Pete Colanville, Stop60, Ross, Scally, Pirate Pete, Y-Dane.
Somewhere near 4½ hrs.

Don't remember where, don't recall how must of been
a good one. A bit of everything, no need for 2nd helpings.

FRIDAY 12 SEPT. NOEL CHERRY, PAUL ALLEN, KEITH GLOSSOP, KERRIN MALONE -
RIGGED TOWER FOR SAT TRAINING & PRACTICE. MANY BODIES AROUND
IN NON-CLIMING ATIRK - like SUITS! (FOR THIRATTS FUNERAL).

SATURDAY 13 SEPT. NOEL CHERRY (69TH BIRTHDAY) KEITH & KERRIN.
NOEL TOWER SAT Then to RHINO to view and enjoy Mr.

BINDING'S KNITWEAR EMPORIUM. MIND Boggling. Didn't know
you could rig RHINO in so many ways!! Met Chris and
Lorna on meet, but did not stop to watch them showing off!

Sunday 14. Kerrin & Noel, pleasant walk on drove road
to Terington. met Stu, Andy & Lorna en-route. Noel.

23-9-08

Gough's Crag.

Clive Westlake, Christine Grosart, Phil Hendy, Richard Hobbs

Carried dining gear to Lloyd Hall in quick & efficient
style & with thanks to two keen sheeps who had never
been down to the dine platform.

By Chris Grosart.

24-9-08

Gough's Crag - Bishop's Palace

Clive Westlake, Christine Grosart

Clive dived first downstream & tied up some line. Chris
had a malfunctioning valve - AGAIN - the gremlins appeared to
have followed her home from France! Clive donated one of his
valves & Chris set off upstream in excellent visibility to
Bishop's Palace. De-bitted & had a good look around to sump 2.
Returned on a pleasant drive home. Both packed up gear &
self came out in 45 minutes for a Cheddar cream tea!

by Chris Grosart

4/10/2008 Rads - Bath Swallet
Mike Thomas Robert Thomas Male Foyle
Mad Fi,

Fans trip for the boy aged 8½ with a bit of
help from the grown ups! Including help in
getting lost.

4/10/2008

Grand Opening of Mr Sparrow's New
Cave and Climb Shop.

Very smart

Very Upmarket

Very Well attended

Loads of Food

Loads of Gear - Especially Warmbac

In fact he's ~~prob~~ probably got more Warmbac
gear in stock than Warmbac have 'o'o

Excellent do - I hope he is successful in the future!

Simon

Please See Over the page
for other activities this weeked

Sun 5 Oct 2008

9am Came downstairs on the morning after the BEC Dinner to find kettles missing and the following note in the kitchen ...

WE HAVE YOUR KETTLES

LEAVE £10 IN THE BEC
BANG BOX AND THEY WILL
BE RETURNED UNHARMED

FOR EVERY DAY'S DELAY A PLUG
WILL BE POSTED BACK TO YOU
AS EVIDENCE OF HOW SERIOUS
WE ARE.

DO NOT CALL THE POLICE OR
THEY WILL BE MELTED!!

BEC

EVERYTHING TO EXCESS

Sun 5 Oct (11am) Delivered following note to BEC hut....

Sun 5 Oct (Couple of hours later) Kettles returned with much laughter on both sides. Excellent !!

LOST

Simon



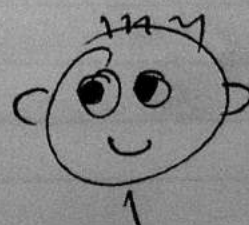
THREE SUICIDE KETTLES

1. ONE TESCO CORDLESS JUG KETTLE
ANSWERS TO THE NAME "OSAMA"
2. ONE 1.5L MORPHY RICHARDS KETTLE
ANSWERS TO THE NAME "SADDAM"
3. ONE RUSSELL HOBBS 2.2 KILLER WHATS. ANSWERS TO NOBODY !

EVERY DAYS DELAY IN THEIR RETURN
IS ANOTHER DAY'S LESS TORTURE FOR
US WAITING FOR THE FUCKING THINGS
TO BOIL — HORRAH !!

WE WILL ACCEPT NOTHING LESS THAN A £10 DONATION
TO MRO IF YOU WANT US TO TAKE THEM BACK

WCC



5 Oct 2008 Bath Swallet

Jude Adrian & Aubrey
Usual Sunday night digging trip - its
fun digging upwards through mud, rocks &
sand. If you get high enough or close to
the roof the rocks do not fall so far
before they hit you! There was a band of large
water washed cobbles which we thought might
be the top. Alas - more mud, stones & sand on
top.

Tuesday 7 Oct 08 Bath Swallet (again) Jude, Adrian
& Aubrey.
Took down some fixed ladder sections, provided
by Mr Fielder. Makes getting up the dig
a lot easier. Moved lots of mud, rocks etc
Still going up!

Late September 08. Portland: Geological.

Collected several samples of flintstone from quarried-
out rifts, for Dr Phil Murphy (Leeds Uni) - isotopic
dating analysis as comparison ^{part of} with his work on the
Windypits (similar mass-movement caves) of N. Yorkshire

Friday 10th Oct. Annual Inspection ^{Nigel} St. Bronn's fully
by the cleaning Committee.
Very little new graffiti since last
report. All removed and looking
fine. Perhaps were having some
effect. Signed The Crew.

W1 W11 & BB

Bath Svallet

(Pm). 12-10-08

Jade, Aubrey & Adrian

Still going up, ... until we met a rock.
Wiggling with a crowbar didn't have the
desired effect, so we will have to revert to
plan B

Upper Canada Cave.

(am). 12-10-08.

Aubrey Nick Richards & Adrian.

Aubrey & Adrian, Sub contractors to the
B.E.C.

Our second attempt to remove a
boulder blockage in the roof of this cave.
The two Nicks believe that there is a maj
or upper series that may link some more
of these mines/caves, together, or even
lead to the Lost Cave of Hutton. A satisfy
ing thud was heard but we were unable
to retrieve ~~the~~ Aubreys wire due to the
amount of boulders in the cave,

Apologies - backlog of Log reports - Ali. - not enough hours in
the day!

Saturday 28 June 2008 - Charterhouse Cave

Ali Moody, Pete Hann, John Biffin, Jon Williams and Pete Moody (diving)

The main aim of this trip was a photo trip, but Pete M accompanied us in order to
have a dive in the downstream sump. The sump appears to be descending down dip
and is very silted and pretty tight and Pete was only able to make about 4m of
progress. Ali

Saturday 12 July 2008 - Charterhouse Cave

Ali Moody, Pete Hann, Nigel Graham, John Biffin, and Jon Williams

Photo trip down old Charterhouse, including retaking the Citadel photo from the
Balcony. Ali

Saturday 26 July – Black Rock Rift

Pete & Ali Moody

We had last worked this site circa the early 1990's and bang debris remained from this period. Dig restarted and 24 bags of spoil removed. Ali

Saturday 2 August 2008 – Charterhouse Cave

Pete & Ali Moody and Tony Boycott (UBSS)

Trip to sketch on passage detail. On the previous trip Tony was unable to pass the Narrows, but this time he took the precaution of wearing a 3ml wetsuit and passed the pinch points without any problems. Ali

Saturday 16 August 2008 – Charterhouse Cave

With Carmen Smith, Chris Binding and Ben Morley (UBSS)

Photo trip to the bottom and also some sketching of passage detail. Cave pretty wet. The tarpaulin had been washed off the Frozen Cascade and was about 5m down the passage. A small stream was noted flowing down the Frozen Cascade and the squeeze at the top was a duck with the tapes through this passage at least 10cm under water. In The Timeline another stream was noted entering from under the boulders along the left-hand wall, about 7m from the breakthrough point. These boulders are pretty unstable and while investigating the source of the water Ali had a lucky escape when the floor collapsed. The tapes were moved to avoid this area in future. Continuing downstream to the streamway sump, the gravel bank into 100 Fathom Passage had been washed clean again. Ali

Thursday 21 August 2008 – Charterhouse Cave

With Pete Moody, Pete Hann, Phill Short and Jon Williams

Trip for Phill to dive sump. Phill had 3 dives but the sump proved to be very shallow but after 9m closed down to a tight bedding about 1m wide by 20cm high, with solid roof and floor. Unfortunately Phill managed to get Malc Foyle's line reel completely wedged at the end. The stream had flowed over the gravel bank into 100 Fathom since last Saturday. Ali

Saturday 23 August 2008 – Charterhouse Cave

Pete Hann, Ali Moody, Dave Walker and Duncan Price.

Another photo/survey sketching trip. Photos taken in Chill Out Choke and the Narrows, also around the Frozen Cascade. Duncan, Dave and Ali continued to the streamway sump for a tourist. Using brute force Duncan managed to pull Malc's line reel out of the sump. We had been concerned that if this was not removed asap, debris would build up behind it, permanently blocking the way on. Ali

Monday 25 August 2008 – Black Rock Rift

Pete & Ali Moody

Most of the old bang debris has now been cleared from the bottom and the "upcave" end of the final rift appears to have pinched down to a 6cm wide crack – not very promising. Ali

Wednesday 27 August 2008 – Swildon's Hole

Pete Hann, Aubrey Newport, Colin Shapter and Ali Moody

Trip to Swildon's One and St. Paul's Series to take the final photos needed for the new Swildon's Hole colour survey. Ali

Saturday 30 August 2008 – Charterhouse Cave

Ali Moody, Pete Hann, Mark (Mak) Kellaway, John Cooper

FINAL photo trip – 6 hours! Ali

Thursday 11 September 2008 – Black Rock Rift

Pete & Ali Moody

All the bang debris has been removed and the bottom of the rift has been cleared out, but unfortunately there doesn't appear to be an obvious way on. The site will be rechecked once the weather gets colder and the draught starts blowing again. Ali

Saturday 13 September 2008 – Charterhouse Cave

Pete Hann, Nigel Graham and Ali Moody

Cementing trip with the aim of completing the ladder pitch bypass in Chill Out Choke. Nigel mixed while Ali built a retaining wall to stop clatch falling down the bypass and Pete H enlarged and cemented the bypass. Unfortunately things didn't go quite to plan when at the end of the session Mr H assisted the choke in rearranging a couple of large boulders in the bypass. Ali was down a small hole directly below it the time – you missed a good opportunity Pete – better luck next time! A further cementing session will be required to complete the bypass. Ali

Saturday 20 September 2008 – Charterhouse Cave

Pete & Ali Moody, Andrew Atkinson (UBSS), Mark Easterling (Bean) and John Maneely.

The aim of this trip was for Ali to take a couple of photos for HE and Pete wanted to have a second look at the static sump at the end of The Timeline. Pete dived on a base fed line, finding yet another airbell but no way on. The sump just appears to stal up. John was obviously itching to have a go and although only in a neofleece borrowed Pete's diving equipment. He confirmed Pete's findings but believes that it would be worth rebelaying the line and checking the right hand side of the sump. All except

Pete continued to the downstream sump and John was given a quick tourist of the old cave on the way out. Ali

Saturday 4 October 2008 - St. Cuthbert's

Ali Moody, Natalie Field, Andy Brander, Begonia Chamorro, Russell Porter, Giles Martin

Tourist trip for the MCG. The upper surface dam had been left in by a previous party and the buckets (to plug) the dams were missing on Gour Rift and Sump I. Very pleasant bimble. Ali

Saturday 11 October 2008 - Charterhouse Cave

Nigel Graham, Pete Hann and Ali Moody

What else is there to do on a Saturday? We finished the bypass route in Chill Out Choke which now means that the climb down the "hanging deaths" is out of bounds and will be taped off - thank goodness. Not a moment too soon as this would have killed someone sooner or later. The mixing station was then moved to the base of the choke and Pete H continued cementing the traverse bypass while Ali continued work on the section of the choke above the Sugar Lump. We have run out of sand again but one more session should see the cementing work completed for the time being. Ali

~~Sunday~~

Saturday 25th Oct.

Bob Pyke, Ken Dawe, Stuart Genders, Alan Alsop (Tigger),
Alistair Gordon.

Swildon's

A gentle trip down the streamway. Bob & Ken went as far as Sump 2, the others rested at Sump 1 until we returned. Came out via Dry Way for old time's sake.

We were fleetingly visited in the cave by Noel Cleave, Keith Gloster & Paul (Smelly) Allen.

Saturday 1st November 2008. Brown's Folly Mine with Paul Deakin + 2 others taking fancy coloured photos for 6½ hrs. While walking up the road at Farleigh Rise we were accosted by police officers in a 4x4 who asked where we had been or where going. I told them and was not

totally surprised by a "If you attempt to enter those mine workings, we will have to arrest you" I think he said for "conspiracy to trespass". Well anyway, I explained that the mine entrance gate is unlocked and there are no signs outside to say anyone will be accosted by the police or anyone else, and I had been going in there for over 50 years without the slightest hassle before, and my grandfather worked there and he'd had no hassle; it fell on deaf ears.

The main reason given is that the police have been asked to patrol and if possible apprehend cavers + us others so that civil action can be brought owing to silly people breaking into the ammo dump, which is a secure warehousing facility, and then ideotically putting their prowess on the internet. ~~Wankers~~

We had a stroll through the woods instead but a dark hole beckoned. BS. (Anon)

8 Nov Slaughter Stream Cave (2nd set).

Carmen, Tom, Sarah, Mark, Matt, Cookie ← A Team.

Once Carmen had been there before - and we know what her memories like!! - so with survey in hand off we set.

Turns at that rate finding is dead easy - just go left... So after lots left turns and a few other left turns we found ourselves back at the entrance ladder. Top trip. Nice streamway.

loud splash as Rich went into the water. We found that one of the rock anchor plates had snapped – luckily, Rich's reflexes are good, and he only went in to his knees (the water here is about 10 metres deep!). Rich tied the rope off to a rock, and we fixed the other end to a Maillon at the back of the platform. Further work is needed to make access to the platform safe.

Rich Hobbs, Phil Hendy, Kay Chambers, Chris Castle and Nicky Dennis (Cheddar CC)

20th January. Withyhill Cave. Supposed to be W/L Cave, but due to a senior moment, the wrong key was picked up. The cave has flooded recently, enough to soften or obliterate most of the footprints, and leave everything covered with greasy mud. The water in the pools was higher than usual, which made some of them more difficult than usual to cross. We went up to the end of GP Series, and to Green Lake Chamber.

Phil Hendy, Rich Hobbs, Kay Chambers, Nicky Dennis (Cheddar CC), Darren Whiley (Cheddar Caves)

27th January Swildon's Hole Low water, straightforward trip to Mud Sump, to find 3" airspace. Rich baled a bit then floated through – the rest of us declined. The stream in Water Chamber now sinks to the right, to emerge at the end of the Dry Ways. So no water cascades around the back of the large block above the start of the Water Rift.

Phil Hendy, Rich Hobbs, Kay Chambers, and Nicky Dennis (Cheddar CC)

13th December. Kingdown Mine. After lunch in the Swan Inn, a cast of ~~thousands~~ dozens went into the mine to celebrate Christmas with sherry, mince pies and sausage rolls, organized by Ali Moody. A full exploration of the mine's passages was first undertaken, including a visit to the intact crane, which was well photographed. The end chamber of one of the mine's branches was lit with tea lights, miniature Christmas trees and Santas. Most of the visitors were suitably attired, as fairies, elves, reindeer and enough Santas to confuse any child. We departed, litter-picking as we went, and enjoyed the evening back at Upper Pitts with an indoor barbecue.

6th January 2009 Rod's Pot / Bath Swallet. A freezing night. Phil entered Bath Swallet, finding an icy inwards draught and ice well into the cave. He laddered the pitches and waited at the bottom, finding four bats. The others explored Rod's, and roped down Purple Pot to make the connection. The ascent was straightforward, and it was a pleasure to return to Upper Pitts to shower and change in the warm.

Phil Hendy, Rich Hobbs, Kay Chambers, Chris Castle and Nicky Dennis (Cheddar CC) and Darren Whiley (Cheddar Caves).

8th January Gough's Cave. A trip to Lloyd Hall, quite straightforward. Although we had not had rain recently, the Hall was very drippy though water levels were low. All went down the rift and traverse, apart from Chris, who used SRT to get in and out. We intended to replace the frayed rope on the water-level traverse around the projecting rock leading to the divers' platform. We all made it to the platform, then Rich returned to the base of the ladder to start replacing the rope. It all looked very iffy – the rope was frayed almost through and the Maillons were extremely rusty. Even so, we were surprised by a

P.S. What is nice is that people are starting to use natural things to use as markers: pieces of stone, old wooden props, etc. + a few dotted markers on floor, but none on walls.

J-Rat memorial diggings Jan 15/11/08 Fester Hole. Returned to dig but visited with Jim Bonds many years ago. Still mud as we remembered it, with some muddy patches. There are several places to remove loose fill, but the presence of 3 winter inhabitants limited us to the two chunks. Removed 6 buckets of spoil as tribute to our departed friend Mamma & Jack and Paul Weston

Swildon's Hole

Saturday 15th November

Adrian Vanderplank, Nik-Nak and Clive Westlake went down the streamway and met Cookie, Rich Carey and Andy Snook (who'd come overland) in Swildon's IV. All dived Sump 4 and eventually Sump 5 - the Tumbltdown spoil retaining wall had tumbled down and the spoil had washed into the channel downstream of the sump; it took most of an hour's digging to create a workable airspace. Three dived Sump 6 and three went through the by-pass. Cookie, Rich and Andy went to Sump 9, whilst Nik-Nak awaited some boulders in Lengra with a crowbar. The dig now looked so cave-hostile that Adrian deployed a bomb which detonated with a rather loud bang. We returned by our different routes to Swildon's VI where we met the CA6 Welsh Section. They dived Sump 6 in zero visibility and sound found even worse beyond - bang smoke/fumes - so soon caught up. Much inter-sectional abuse enlivened the trip out. Safely on the surface we became lost in the mist and couldn't find the hut. When we did we found the water was off - no showers in prospect but suddenly the water was on. And so to the Ratfest celebrations at the Village Hall. Thous

Clive Westlake

Thurs 20th Nov - Cuckoo Caves

Phil H, Rich Hobbs, Kay Chambers, Nicky Dennis (Chelle Co.)
Negotiated access with the gnomes at the entrance, and a straightforward trip taking in the upper grotto. Suspensions of bad air here were confined at the bottom. Only a half-hearted attempt by Rich or Kay Chambers. Puffed and wheezed out, it got better above the Canyon.

Phil H

Thurs 13th Nov - Reed's Cavern

Phil H, Rich Hobbs, Nicky Dennis.
A nice stream flowing all routes investigated, several black roths around the water chamber. Certain parts still have an aura of impending doom.

Phil H

Thursday 27th November 2008: Swan Mine, Kingsdown. Steve, Paula, & Bob S. We were a bit late starting, after huge fish & chips from Batheaston. The mine is still in very good order, and someone has made a concerted effort in creating a heavy duty protective entrance tunnel, as the stone above and around the entrance is in a very poor state and very loose. Since Carmen and I cleaned off the stupidly sprayed dashes and dots throughout the mine in July 2004 thankfully nothing more has been added and the place is pleasantly original, and even the cart tracks still have sharp sides where visitors are obviously taking care where they walk. Even the Weston Brothers "visitors log" is still there, though the pages are damp and falling apart and the pens no longer work. The horse shoe prints and hob-nailed boot prints have been surrounded by further stones to save people stepping on them, and the crane is still standing at the end working, albeit the wooden top bearing is well and truly rotted now as also the jib, and fine radiating cracks in the ceiling from the crane socket tell of a future possible large collapse when the crane finally comes down. The small notice I placed on the crane in 2004 advising people to look at the top bearing before attempting to move it is still there and appears to have been adhered to. Out at 22.50 after a good look round and photo's. B.S.

P.S. Weston Bros didn't put the visitors log there, they just thought it was a nice idea, maybe one in Swilder's might also be a nice touch, and some fairy light near Christmas.

THURS 27th Nov 2008.

Swallows. D. APPY + P. KICK.

First trip in 3 months due to paternity leave. Was nice to get back under, especially nice as early in the day so ~~quite~~ ~~quite~~ quiet with no waiting at the 20.

Saturday 6th December.

CHARTERHOUSE CAVE.

Ali M. & Nigel G. Cleaning stal and installing tapes below the breakthrough point, but still on the slopes of Chill-Out Choke.

"Found we've still more cementing. A large boulder decided it would like to get up close & personal with Ali, who in his work, "squeaked" and moved very cautiously up past it. Otherwise a very useful conversation trip.

[Signature]

Saturday 22nd November 2008

Swildons 7 JENEA RIFT Adnan VDP + Nik Nak.

Return trip to check on the results of our chemical experiment carried out during Ratfoot. The results were magic, quite literally - several unstable boulders had completely disappeared. We were able to climb up into a void 10ft long 7ft high, one solid wall with flintstone, hanging death on all other sides. The entry up into the void is restricted, using a crowbar in there would be suicide so another bang is required. Will return soon.

Saturday 20th December 2008

Swildons 5 Tumbledown Adnan VDP + Nik Nak

First time back in a while, a little time digging at the face - the passage appears to be climbing up on the left, a section or two and we should find out if this is the major way on or a small inlet. Hilted the floor to increase overall passage size for digging convenience.

7th November 2008 Kingdown Mine. A reconnaissance trip prior to the Christmas Mince Pie and Sherry party. We checked the passages, finding a suitable chamber for the festivities, and organizing lunch at the Swan Mine, where we intended to leave the cars.

Phil Hendy, Ali Moody.

13th November Read's Cavern. Large stream, but easy entry. Investigated part of Browne-Stewart Series, and part of Z Alley. Quite a few bats in the western end.

Phil Hendy, Rich Hobbs, and Nicky Dennis (Cheddar CC)

(On a trip in January, Rich reported that he could not get as far into Z Alley as last time; there was an odour of crushed limestone!)

20th November Cuckoo Cleeves. We thought we detected bad air at Flat Roof Chamber; this was confirmed by the time we reached the end of the Canyon. It was decided not to try to go further, so we retreated.

Rich Hobbs, Phil Hendy, Kay Chambers, Nicky Dennis (Cheddar CC) and Mike (Cheddar Caves)

25th November. Waterwheel Swallet. A cold night, with colder water! We decided against pulling the bungs from the canals. Laddering the pitch, Phil lifelined, while Rich went down first, landing in chest-deep water. The others followed, but did not go beyond the dam.

Phil Hendy, Rich Hobbs, Kay Chambers, Chris Castle and Nicky Dennis (Cheddar CC)

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2nd Saturday Trip: Livers Hole.

14/2/9.

Rich Carey, Graham Cardy, Tim Ball, Faye Limerland (BEC), Pete B (OSS)

An excellent Mo har run trip, last done by myself 16 years ago, and much better this time around. Ably led by Rich Carey, we slipped and squeezed on the route. For some unknown reason I decided to explore Horrific I and missed the way out of the stream therefore continuing on into a smaller and smaller wet space until it sank into rocks. Somehow I managed to turn around. I was most unhappy! Fortunately Rich returned to rescue me and I headed towards his light. For this reason I declined to visit Horrific II. We returned in good time, but did spend some time finding the way on from Junction Chamber. Fortunately no other major route finding difficulties.

2hr Trip. Tim Ball

14/2/09 - Eastwater - Primrose Pot - still there! Emsy, Madphil

Don't you mean 22nd? *Rich*

27-2-09

Swildons Hole

Jude, Adrian Vulp, Andy Snook, Rich Carey, Geoff Ballard

Short Round trip.

Still There

Still Wet.

Still Good

Still Fit!

GO.

22/2/9: Cairns Hill shaft (Apologies if not quite correct - if not, someone please do so.)

Aubrey Newport & Nigel Graham helped Mark Fi move more spoil to bag stack. Were impressed by Trevor Hughes (BEC) demonstration of rock-splitting by plugs & feathers. Helped Tony Audley load his Land Rover with bags of spoil for disposal. Interesting site, &

18.3.09 Bos Swallet

Rich Carey, Sarah Payne + Jude Vdp
Rich agreed to share this little gem
with us. It's a typical Burrington
steeply sloping rift, that includes a
couple of wriggles - and much more
mud than expected!

Jude.

21/3/09 Maria Judy and John Thomas resumed attack on
(old Fort) Fester Hole. Sunny day on the ledge. Removed 38
boats by lowering floor in 2nd chamber, and began following right hand
wall downwards. Easy digging but ~~rather~~ muckering for geologists

4/4/09 Maria Judy, John Thomas and Prew. Old Fort Festered again
- 40 boats.

4/4/9. Swildon's Shatter Series Jude Vanderplank, Matt Faulkner, Tim Sell

A speedy trip to Shatter Chamber for the purposes of "scientific research", i.e.
to determine whether we could hear explosives being set off by Adrian Vdp &
Clive Westlake in Swildons VII. We arrived 10 minutes before the agreed
time of 1315 hours and waited until 1330 hours, but no "bang" was heard so
we exited. We later found out that unfortunately Adrian & Clive had taken
longer to reach their destination than expected, and the explosives had not been
set off until 1430 hours.

The ducks in Shatter Series smelt very bad - yuk! Upon returning to the
1st duck we met Richard Carey and a couple of chaps from the MCA. At the
base of Shatter A4 we met Jeff Wade (SUSS) and three others, all looking
very clean... this would not be lasting long!

Time under \approx 4 hours.

Tim Sell

11-04-09

PORTLAND

Visited the newly-refurbished PORTLAND MUSEUM to present it with last copy of "The Caves of the Isle of Portland" that I purchased for it a month or so ago.

The Museum is in a pair of cottages bequeathed by Marie Stopes, and in a display of her history, is an intriguing paper - Page One only visible - by her on human bones found in a "fissure" in a local quarry. The description of the cave suggest it was a lair rather than mass-movement cavity - the diagram is on a page not displayed. Worth investigating!

Marie Stopes is regarded as a pioneer in birth-control & women's sexual & marital health, but her scientific field was Palaeobotany.

Nigel Graham

14/4/09 SWILDON'S ONE.

Hugh Dowling (CPC), Ric Halliwell, Nigel Graham - Gentle trip to Sump One to introduce Hugh to Mendip carving. Met Chris Binding at head of the Twenty off on our way out, leading 2 young ladies (on their 1st or near-1st?) trip. He remarked to them approvingly on our use of hiphins etc. - NG

11-4-09 SWILDON - JENGA AND TUMBLEDOWN

ADRIAN VDP & NIK NAK.

A TRIP TO SWILDON'S DESIGNED TO EXAMINE THE RESULTS OF THE PREVIOUS SESSION AND ADD SOME MORE CHEMICAL PERSUASION. THE BOULDERS ARE GETTING SMALLER AS A RESULT OF OUR EFFORTS BUT THERE ARE PLENTY OF LARGER ONES HANGING IN THE ROCK - PERHAPS READY TO COME DOWN, MAYBE STABLE, THIS IS OUR PROBLEM? THE GAME OF JENGA DOES ON!

STOPPED INTO TUMBLEDOWN ON THE WAY BACK AND SPENT AN HOUR REMOVING 3 LARGE BICKETS FROM THE END - LUCKY BUT HELPS.

NIK NAK.

5th April

4am finish in Helwith Bridge & after 4hrs sleep - quick trip in Simpsons before the long drive home.

3 DAYS BACK AT WORK THEN...

9th - 14th April =

9th Kingsdale → Rowden exchange. Me & Jason M + Chris Tate (YSS) (who come along as far as the canal/road in via Kingsdale Met Claire Cohen, Mike Thomas & Mike Bottomley (RRC) just as they were coming down the final pitch of Rowden. The free dives are lovely, nice smooth non-snaggy rock & you can see a bit; Not like Swildons then?

10th Nice run on the allotment in the morning then a dive in Malham Cove in the afternoon. Tricky job trying to get changed subtly with loads of climbers & tourists milling around. Note to self - get changed at the car next time! Same group as above I had nice dive to 1st airbell.

11th Same groups as above - Large Pot to Rift exchange. Me & Jason in Large & met the others ~~just after~~ just ~~after~~ around the connection 'duck'. Claire & Mike B continued out of Large. Jason, Mike T & I exited Rift (I de-rigged & lost my spool). I'm sure Mike T might have a comment on the enjoyability of this trip :-

12th Claire, Mike T & Mike B washed their kit off in Swinsto in the morning. Then I met them at Joint in the afternoon for a dive, Claire, Mike & Mike to 2nd airbell. I exited after 1st airbell.

13th Claire & Mike T went to Hardrawkin (?) before their long drive home :- Me, Mike B & Sam Allshorn (ULSA) carried for Jason to the sump in Dale Head. He dived 3 times described it as 'tight & gnarly' & no vis but still going. Swift exit after shot.

14th Spent lots & money in Ingleport on a gorgeous meander undersuit than home. EXCELLENT FEW DAYS IN A FANTASTIC CAVING REGION.

Emmy.

25/4/09. Swildon's - Ade, Jude Vdp. Rich Carey. Ade wanted to return to VII to deal with another ~~bigger~~ boulder, he headed down the stream while Rich and I went via blue pencil we met up at sump IV. Whilst Ade set up his persuading position

Ben & I had a quick look at IX. Then got back to VII in time to hear "Jenga" go boom!"
Gude.

27-4-09 ADS - short round trip. Minimum respectable trip to do while passing through. Only thing of note - Muel Sump entirely gone except a 1" deep puddle... Troubles were low (one wet ear only) but not annihilated on the M.S. has been V. Odd...

2-5-09 ADE & JUDE UDP, GORDON KAYE, NIK NAK.

SUILDONS - SWYNE FLOO.

ADE & NIK NAK ON A MISSION TO CONNECT THE TOP OF MAYPOLE AVENUE WITH TERMINUS CHAMBER FROM THE TERMINUS CHAMBER END - ARMED WITH DRILL, 2 x BATTERIES AND AN ENDLESS SUPPLY OF BLACKS. DIDN'T RUN OUT OF BLACKS OR DRILL BATTERY BUT OUT OF TIME. IT WILL TAKE AT LEAST ONE MORE SESSION IF NOT TWO TO PRODUCE THE CONNECTION. THE DIFFICULTY IS IN DECIDING FROM WHICH END TO 'MINE'. TERMINUS CHAMBER IS PLEASANT WHEN YOU GET THERE AND IDEAL FOR BLACKS, BUT A LONG CARRY. THE TOP OF MAYPOLE QUICKER TO ARRIVE AT THE END BUT MORE SUITED TO DR NOBEL'S MEDICINE. GORDON & JUDE ENJOYED THE PLEASANT WAY DOWN VIA SHATTER AFTER HELPING GET THE DRILL KIT TO TERMINUS. AN ENJOYABLE BUT TIRING AFTERNOON OUT!

P.S. WE HAVE DECIDED ON A NAME FOR THE CONNECTION "SWYNE FLOO" NIK NAK.

09/05-09 - WIGNOME - CHRIS JEWELL & CLARE CORNEN
TRIP TO CHECK WHAT DAMAGE HAD BEEN DONE WITH
SNAPPER ON PREVIOUS TRIP TO TERMINUS CHAMBER. ALL WENT
WELL UNTIL ISSUES WITH CONNECTION LINES IN DRILL
BATONS. AKA FUN & LAUGHTER WHILE SQUATTING IN
CESS PIT BORDER CHAMBER SQUISHING BARE LINES INTO
LIVE CONNECTIONS - SPARKS FLYING EVERYWHERE! SNAPPER 2 UP
SNAPPER WENT OFF READY FOR FUTURE ADVENTURES. JEWELL
BACK TO ENTRANCE UNIDENTIFIED BUT TIRING... 10 TRIP.
CLARE

6-6-09
JUNE 14-6-09 47.04
+40

6, 38, 40, 45, 34, 40, 35, +56
235 TOTAL 291, 331

16/5/09 Depleted team to Festerhole - Maurice Judy and Tom.
Still got 34 boats out by cunning use of sliding of ~~stacked~~
scaffold planks. Found bed rock in one place we didn't want
it. Then Tom found a more promising area straight on.

29/5/09 HERBIE PLANT, CAMERON MASON (14), LEVI GOUGH (13), ANDY
BLISS, DANIEL BLISS.

SWILDONS. 1ST TRIP FOR CAMERON & 2ND FOR LEVI WHO
BOTH MADE ME START FEELING MY AGE AS THEY WERE
RIGHT BEHIND ME ALL THE WAY DOWN TO SWAMP I. CAMERON
DIDN'T FANCY THE SWAMP ON HIS 1ST TRIP SO I CAME BACK
THROUGH AND KEPT HIM COMPANY WHILST THE OTHERS WENT AND
HAD A LOOK AT SWAMP II. ANDY LED ON THE WAY BACK UP
AND THEY ALL HAD TO KEEP WAITING FOR ME TO CATCH UP!
YES I'M GETTING OLD! HERBIE PLANT.

25th April 09 Emma Heron, Jason Mawlinson - STOKES LANE SLOTTAGE
A trip to Stoke 8. ^{Swamp} Six needed ^{digging} dug out, as did those end of ^{Swamp} Seven. Bit of
route finding through boulders in Stoke 7. Easier to de-bit here & grass stuff through
line getting loose in swamp 7.

27/5/09 - UPPY, C. HALLS.

SWILDONS IX

WEDMONT TRIP, STARTED A BIT EARLIER THAN USUAL, CHASE
WAS ON VI BYPASS. UPPY WHILST I DID VI & VII, UP TO 9 NO
ISSUES HOWEVER STRONG SMELL OF FUEL COMING FROM
DIPPING AVEN BETWEEN I + II. SMELL CARRIED TO II.
HOWEVER NO OIL POLLUTION COULD BE SEEN ON WATER
AT ANY POINT... UPPY

6/6/09 Maurice Judy, Tom to Festerhole. Two weeks ago Tom &
Kevin Ste and Jed removed 40 boats from low down at end of
can. They hoped they were in a tunnel under a solid roof.
However the last boat hole was found to turn under, and become a

flow. The right hand wall was in solid fill after the disorientation we removed another 15 bats from lowest point, where Tom found a calcite flow, which had a small triangular hole in it. On investigation this turned out to be a 1" thick false flow with wet mud below. What now? Total for day 35 bats.

13/6/09 - ~~Emma~~ Emma Heron, Jason Mallinson - SWILDONS TWELVE.

Second ever time to this part of the cave for me and first time for Jason. Jason had short ~~free~~ dive into twelve but found it blocked after a short distance. Nice visibility in all the sumps owing to low water levels.

27/6/09 - Emma Heron - SWILDONS NINETEEN.

Free-diving solo trip to nine. Really enjoyable, especially the 'Boost' bar sitting on a rock by the nine sump pool... Actually that's a lie, the most enjoyable part of the trip was the actual freediving. I have never seen such good visibility in Swildons. I'd almost say it was gin clear; it made it actually quite a peaceful, relaxing experience.

THE ROPE IN SUMP TWO IS FRAGED TO THE CORE AT THE UPSTREAM END... PLEASE BEWARE! - SINCE BEEN REPLACED.

4/7/09 Maurice Judy, Tom ~~and~~ Paul and Prew back to Jester. Prew photographed the open crack at the end of the dig which had been found by Tom, Kevin Charlotte etc on 14/6. Tom continued to dig here, and found some interesting layered deposits. Prew took some more photos. We then removed 40 bats partly from end of the dig and the rest from the bank on the right. Notes point this draught from "Kevin's crack", which nearly swallowed Tom's 4ft bar.

4/7/09 Swildons one.

Robert Thomas, Claire Adams, Mike Thomas.

RT. First trip to sump 1 2½ Hours well caused my bag.

4/7/09 - SWILDONS TGN - Emma Heron, Chris Jewell (OEC),
Nice little diving trip and very nice to see sumps 6 & 9.

Ardeche 2009

29-6-09

Goul de Tannere

Martyn Farr, Helen Rater, Christine Grosart, Steve McCabe, Rupert Shorupka.

CG posed for Martyn's photos in the entrance series, then continued solo to -46.6 m with turnset & 2 stages. 20m+ visibility, met Rupert on the way out.

30-6-09

Grotte de la Coestiere

Martyn Farr, Helen Rater, Christine Grosart, Pauline Grosart, Steve McCabe, Trisha, Clive Westlake.

After a few detours finding the entrance, the cast of many cased just over a km down some fine, large & well decorated passage. Paused for Martyn to take some photos of a whopping phreatic 'ratway' tunnel which will be amazing if they do it justice.

1-7-09

Goul de Pont

Christine Grosart & Clive Westlake.

CG down the off-vertical, phreatic shaft in infinite visibility to -60m & Clive turned just short of this. 'Debates on slates' ensued as to whether or not this shaft was better than the Domes de Coly or Ressel - result was 'not', but a fine place anyway...

2-7-09

Fontaines de Montcuts

Christine Grosart, Clive Westlake

CDW had done a sneak recce the week before & was itching to explore the exurgence est (static) and exurgence Ouest Aral (active). CDW looked at the former first and concluded that two passages could be seen forking off & both were too tight and there was no line. CSG laid a line from base to have a closer look & opted for the 'cleaner' washed left passage. Thimble along on her side she laid about 25m of line before scraps of french knicker elastic could be seen in the floor buried under rocks. Once she met some half decent batt, she tied off her reel & continued shuffling sideways around some bends until reaching the head of a pot. The lines here took on the form of a cobweb & it was impossible to avoid being in close proximity to them & the divers concluded this was unsafe. She returned in zero viz, collected her reel & departed.

Both divers then took a look in exurgence Ouest Aral, which had a lovely flow of qm clear water pouring from it - and lots of pebbles in the floor making the entrance too small for any diver. CDW got digging but could make no progress. CG began digging until she felt she could get in a bit. There is a sharp zig-zag bend and then passage leading off which is tiny, but not choked. Both divers left puzzled as to how anyone made any progress here with large cylinders to get to - 60 odd metres beyond! A Derbyshire Section digging trip is planned here....

4-7-09

Fontaine de Champclos / Mont Blanc (entrée artificielle)

Pauline Grosart, Christine Grosart, Paul Gamble, Clive Westlake

Some fun & bush-busting to find the entrance naturel, Champclos. We had been told by Patrick Serrett (French cave diver) that the through trip was no longer

possible due to a blockage. So we crept some distance into this entrance until Paul met the blockage which was a huge sandbank which had slumped. Evidence of recent digging attempts were strewn around here. Nobody fancied going any further, so all cars left & went on up the hill to find the Mont Blanc (Carthiote) entrance. We rigged & dropped the short ladder pitch to enter a huge, well decorated passage & shortly the 'Mont Blanc' chamber which is massive, with a giant white dome stal, hence the name. CSG had wanted to see this for some time. They all continued across some easy roped traverses until the other side of the blockage was met, COW pointing out that we had done the through trip twice! Paul & CG explored 'upstream' via some more traverses until it got uninteresting & we went for beer & icecream in a thunderstorm!

5-709

Grent de Peyrejal

Clive Westlake, Christine Grosart, Paul Gamble

The original plan of going to the 'Neuf Gorges' turned into a typical epic & the miles of forestry track did not agree with my car at all, so we abandoned that idea & COW saved the day by suggesting the Peyrejal. On arrival, a group of German carers with rather dubious SKI & ripping skills invited us to use their ropes, thus saving us having to rig. We dropped the pitches & headed off down some fine, phreatic tubes - probably the best example I have ever seen, & we returned to go out for dinner with Rupert & Julie Skurupka.

6-7-09

Goul de Pont

Christine Grosart, Clive Westlake

CG was having HID problems again & so had a dull dive here previously. Rupert offered her the use of his torch so that she could have a more enjoyable dive - & she did, to 58m. Clive lowered above & commented that ~~her~~ torch lighting up the shaft, Rupert returning & lighting up the lower ardes, was the best underwater view he had ever seen...

8-7-09

Font Vire

Clive Westlake, Christine Grosart (surface support, Pantine Grosart)

CG dived with 3 cylinders as her larger ones were depleted & lifts getting harder to come by. So dived to the limit of her 7s & 5L, just over & beyond a big silt bank, to see entering, qm clear phreatic passage taking off into the distance. A return dive is planned here with bigger cylinders! Stunning cave.

9-7-09

Payron de Chadoillet

Christine Grosart, Steve McCabe

Dived the active, multiple sump route on John Volantier's recommendation & we were not disappointed. Excellent viz, mildly awkward but short carries between sumps. Dived through sump 5, patching up line along the way, and surfaced at the foot of a chasb.

Neither diver could be bothered with it as they were both close to 3rds, so turned back, recce done. In sump 2 on the way home, CG had a first stage go down making for a mind-concentrating dive home.

15-7-09

Smithons Hole II

Christine Gossart, Rich Walker (GUE).

Rich's first trip down Smithons & he 'loved every minute of it'. Went to Sump II (qin clear) & had a look at Troutmans Temple & in via Barnes loop, out via Water Rift. Rich managed well with ease & enjoyed it a lot & is now proficient in ladders & lifelines, having had plenty of practice before.

16-7-09

G.B.

Christine Gossart, Rich Walker (GUE)

Straightforward trip round the oxhows & up the gorge, Rich suitably impressed by the size of the place. Need to find more demanding trips for him as this is one D.I.R. cave diver who CAN care!

19-7-09

OFD - Top entrance

Clive Westlake, Christine Gossart, Paul Gamble

Rain stopped play in Portl yr Ogof - Mellt high and going at a terrifying speed - so opted instead for a trip into Top entrance in OFD, down to Maypole Inlet to sort out a climb CG has never liked - mainly because it is the wrong way! Opted for the 'normal' route and it was much more satisfactory! Caved upstream to 2nd oxbow & back out of Top via the Judge & Troutent, Swamp Creek & to the top of the 'Nave'. All had a rain-soaked journey home!

15/7/09

Bath Swallet

Aurey, Jader Ade VdP, Murray

Cleared the previous weeks haul; not as productive as we had hoped. More holes, more haul - BANG!!

22/7/09

White Spot. Murray, Aubrey, Colin.
Found Sump. may not be diveable.

25/7/09 SWILDANS - Mad Fi & Nigel.

First attempt for many (20+?) years by N on Blue Pencil Passage. ~~Sw~~ Unfortunately found I couldn't negotiate the first light S-head about 10 yards or so down the passage. - Nigel

31/7/09 Zester Hole. Maurice Judy, John and Jon William, and Graham Mullen. Recording session. Took samples from wall of sediment on right by dig. ~~Noticed~~ Noticed a small ~~fresh~~ fourth entrance on far ~~right~~ right. You can see daylight at end of the low flat chamber ~~from~~ to the right of the third (west) entrance.

1/8/09 Zester Hole. Maurice, Judy, Doro, John Thomas and Jon Williams. The recent heavy rain has turned the place very squashed. Did a survey of the dig chamber and the tube leading to the entrance with the iron ladder. Some very sticky mud was removed from the bottom of the dig and used to back fill part of the redundant survey tube.

12-8-09 SB Viv's first trip into SB. Great cone Richard getting too old for messing about on ladder dig pitch and too big for wet Saeze into bar passage. Viv got through though. Rich seeking retirement cottage!

5-8-09 Drinkards

Guy Briggs, Matt Faulkner, Colin Shapter, Aubrey
Long time since I had been in Drinkards -
We had to remove a tree from entrance which had apparently been there for weeks. The lower

Parts are really muddy from the Cheddar digging efforts.

12.8.09 Welshes Green revisited

Gary, Matt, Colin & Aubrey

Had a bit of trouble finding entrance - there are farm buildings which weren't there 30 years ago! Less mud than in the old days but it is surprising how all of the sharp edges have worn off the passages. One of Mendips classic collectors caves.

Andèche - Act 1 June 2009

21-VI-09 Goul du Pont

Mike Thomas, Claire Cohen, Clive Westlake, Phil Rowse (BEC)

Conditions were excellent (20m+ visibility) Mike went to -102m, Phil to -50m, Claire to -42m and Clive to -71m; some personal bests today.

22-VI-09 Source de la Marnade

Phil Rowse

Mike Thomas, Claire Cohen, Clive Westlake. All to 125 / -32m in only 2-3m visibility; back to the Gouls.

20-VI-09 Goul de la Tannerie

Mike Thomas, Claire Cohen, Clive Westlake, Phil Rowse. Mike and Claire could not fit their rebreathers through the restriction 100m in. Phil and Clive dived to the shaft at 700m and went down it to -27m.

23-VI-09 Goul du Pont

Mike Thomas, Claire Cohen, Phil Rowse. Using rebreathers Mike (-70m) and Claire (-67m) enjoyed the fine conditions and scenery, as did Phil (-4m) using Claire's cylinders for his first Trimix dive.

24-VI-09 Font Vive

Mike Thomas, Claire Cohen, Phil Rowse, Clive Westlake. The previous evening Phil was thrown in and told to dig out the grovels on the entrance slope - the sort of thing that happens to trainees. He made a good job of making the place passable with larger cylinders. This is a fine scenic dive; Clive and Phil went to 360m in Sump 1, Mike and Claire to 250m. Then we went for air and hospitality from Patrick Sennet, a local cave diving activist.

25-VI-09 Aven de la Buse

Claire Cohen, Phil Rowse, Clive Westlake. Some short pitches with fixed ropes and one slightly longer one we rigged and a few grovels lead to a large chamber. The best feature of this fairly interesting cave is the display of helictites; Clive took plenty of pictures. Back to the Font Vive in the evening - Mike dived all 380m of Sump 1, Phil and Claire to 250m. Clive played the seniority card and sat by the sump pool.

26-VI-09 Goul de la Tannerie

Mike Thomas, Claire Cohen, Phil Rowse, Clive Westlake. Mike and Phil went to the shaft 700m and went down it to -46m whilst Claire and Clive went to the head of the said shaft; excellent conditions again. We went back Orgnac L'Aven to celebrate Mike's birthday.

19.8.09

COCKCOO CREEVES.

CONN AUBREY PETE MURRAY.

TRIP TO CHECK AIR. FOUND ONLY 15% O_2 AT BOTTOM OF PIPE.

NOT SAFE TO CONTINUE. CAVE LOCKED WITH UNIQUE PADLOCK FOR SAFETY.

unacceptable CO_2 levels found at the base of the depression before even getting into the cave!!

More Ardèche.

28-VI-09 Goul de la Tannerie.

Helen Rider, Martyn Farr, Clive Westlake.

Helen dived to 250m. Martyn and Clive dived to and down the shaft - the numbers: 780m in, -46m, time 116 minutes, combined ages 121.

Some Wessex in the Lot and Corrèze.

25-VII-09 Event de Jonquilles.

Adrian and Jude Vanderplank, Leg, Gordon Kage, Clive Westlake. Leg rigged the 4m entrance pitch then Clive led everyone the wrong way along the dry passages. The right way eventually brought us to the excellent upstream passage which we followed for a km to Sumpf'. On the way back Clive took some pictures and we surfaced after 6 hours underground.

27-VII-09

Igue de Goudou.

85

Gordon Kaye, Adrian and Jude Vanderplank, Charlotte Kempf, Kevin Hilton. Jude had previously organized permission, so we showed the farmer the permit then went down the 40m entrance shaft. A steep rubble slope leads down to a huge tunnel but the way on is not here, but down a 4m pitch to the side. 200m of dry, undisturbed passage with some fixed lines round traverses lead to another short pitch down into the stream passage. This is very handsome for 650m leading to Sumpf 1. Everyone had been helping with Clive's diving gear and he now dived to check the line. The usual French string did not inspire confidence so he laid a ^{4mm line to} CAG standards. The sumpf is 70m long and 5m deep. We surfaced after 6 hours down.

29-VII-09

Gouffre du Saut de la Pucelle.

Adrian and Jude Vanderplank, Charlotte Kempf, Kevin Hilton, Clive Westlake followed an hour later by Paul Wakeling, Leg, Rosie Freeman and Gordon Kaye. The first five of us went ahead rigging ladders who and had just run out when the second team arrived with more. When we reached a stretch of dry passage, which is rare in this wet cave, Clive announced with all the authority of two previous visits that there were no more pitches. We therefore left the two remaining ladders and few hundred metres on arrived at the top of the last pitch. Paul deployed some slings for our descent, whilst Kevin chased back for a ladder for our ascent. Soon ~~was~~ all nine of us reached Sumpf 1 which is 2.8 km from and 160 m below the entrance. The trip out was fun especially climbing out of several neck deep and smooth-walled pools. Paul added to the entertainment by free climbing beside several of the ladders and performing acrobatic moves across the pitch head. We spent 7 1/4 hours during this well known, high quality and rather wet cave.

31-VII-09

Igue de Goudou.

Adrian Vanderplank, Kevin Hilton and Clive Westlake. We went down to

Sumpf 1, which we passed without incident. Downstream is a kilometre of totally superb and rather remote stream passage. We turned round at Sumpf² and Clive took photographs on way back upstream. One of Clive's valves failed at Sumpf¹ but Kevin went to collect one of Adriano's - he'd already dived back. Having sorted out this minor problem, we left the cave after a brilliant trip of 8 1/2 hrs.

2-VIII-09. Igue de Gondou.

Charlotte Kemp.

Leg, Rosie Freeman, Adrian and Jude Vanderplank, Kevin Hilton, Paul Wakeling, Gordon Kaye, Clive Westlake. The divers were pleased that people wanted to come down again and help carry the gear. Clive was also pleased that they helped him take pictures in the very photogenic streamway. The trip took 4 1/2 hours. We were then made welcome by at the hut of Terre et Eau: the club who manage access to the cave.

4-VIII-09. Gouffre du Briant.

Paul Wakeling, Venn Freeman, Charlotte Kemp, Adrian Vanderplank, Kevin Hilton, Clive Westlake.

A fair number of cavers from this and lesser clubs have been persuaded down this superb cave and not been disappointed. It begins with a 9 m pitch, then there's some muddy stumbling to a big, chest deep lake which is held behind a 5 m stal flow. This needs a handline of about 12 m. Varied caving with a few wet gravel leads on to some fantastical cave - long, long canals with stunning formations draped down the walls. About a kilometre in the cave seems to be closing in ^{when} suddenly there's this river junction with the combined Longquilles and Couze waters surging past. Four of the team had seen enough quality cave for a day so went out, but Clive had been here several times before and wanted to go downstream. So did Kevin. We went for 1.3 km in wet and exciting stream passage until Sumpf 6, which is about 700 m from the resurgence - most of the cave was discovered by divers and the dry entrances were found later. We took some pictures on the way out and surfaced after 6 hours aquatic and dramatic caving.

6-VIII-09

Grotte de Montcler.

Gordon Kaye, Adrian and Jude Vanderplank, Clive Westlake.

The Shepton went here a couple of years ago and their report was very favourable. Having driven up a rough track at some peril to the Vanderplank car we found the entrance with practised (?) ease. The two off vertical pitches needed two ladders each and we soon reached the spacious final chamber. The ^{cave} must once have been very well decorated but all the floor formations are defiled with mud and only those out of reach are preserved. Nevertheless there are plenty of pretty helictites, which Clive photographed with the able help of everyone.

18-8-09

Swildons Hole

Chris Gossart, Rick Walker (GOC).

Trip to top of the 20" which Rick rigged, ready for the next days diving.

19-8-09

Chris Gossart, Rick Walker, Clive Westlake

Swildons VII.

All to & through Sump 6 on Rick's 4th casing trip!
Enjoyed by all, CO₂ at the bottom of the case made for some effort on the way home. Other cases currently have high CO₂ - caution required.

20/21/8/09

Rick Walker & Chris Gossart

Scoter, stage & practice for Florida. CSG resisting going, all Gooney & Derr but feeling miserably. Vibster is a dump!

22-8-09

Don Yr Ogsf
Chris Westlake, Chris Goss, Paul Gumble, Rick Walker

Water levels too high for a round trip, so the disappointed ones went to cloud. Chunks & took photos in Flabbergasm Oxbow - which made up for it. Rick is turning into a decent cover, day by day.

23-8-09

Port Yr Ogsf

Chris Goss, Rick Walker, Chris Westlake.

Water levels borderline desirable & CSG pleased with her judgement that it would be safe, but hard work what it was. CSG & RDW dived together to the railway line just beyond fourways & Chris did the same once they returned, admiring the fine handwork & trying to attack Cumbrian entrance before running away.

5/9/09 Fester Hole manna on July. Some got stuck in the traffic! Jonathan et al has back filled and called up a "alcove" on the left near the entrance with material from the bottom of the dig. The tunnel just inside the entrance on the right has been partly back filled. Today we managed to shove another 5 foot loads into the hole and pack it hard. We also collected stone and started a wall here as well. Left at 230 for club 75 at even at Pitts.

5/9/09 G.B. Andy Morse, Peter Jenkins

Early start, in cave by 10:00. Quick round trip and in ladder dig to Bat Passage. Out by midday.

6-9-09

Woolley 22

Chris Westlake, Chris Grosz, Madphil Rowell

CSG & CDW dived through to 22, taking a 121 of trim & 71 of 50% through to the static sump. In the afternoon, Phil & Chris dived another if CSG's 12s through to 22 whilst CSG dashed back home to get hold of another cylinder. Many thanks to Mum & John Volantien for the carry last night.

7-9-09

Woolley 24

Chris Westlake, Chris Grosz

Both dived 2 cylinders forward, through to 24 & the 25 sump pool. Very muddy, resulting in BCD failure on the way home. Both divers achieved and also got the back-ups 71 & other 121 through to the platform. Job well done in under 6 hours.

8-9-09

Woolley 24

Chris Grosz, Madphil Rowell (support Chris Westlake)

Both to 22 to take remaining 7 & 121 cylinders forward to 25 dive base. Alarmingly slick trip, in & out in under 3½ hours!

11/9/09 Carnage Caverns, Cornwall. Bob & Colly. Yep dead easy trip, though the steps can be a bit slippery when yer glasses are steamed up, but thankfully no accidents, 31 mins & it rained

SAT 12 SEP. SWILDON'S SHIRT ROUND. KEITH GLOSSOP NOEC CLEAVE

Sort of Pre-birthday outing for Noel and as much fun as always. Trip organised by organised 3 Yorkshire men festooned with SRT gear including a bank of riffs and crabs! Crabs dangling and clanking. "Wire from Yorkshire" and all our cones are verted as we do SRT "Yorkshire" says Noel, "Never been there". They asked the way to Sump 1 from the bottom of Barrow top. So Keith and I did the round trip and met them again at the foot of the 20!!! When they exhibited familiarity, handling incompetence at SRT.

Also Sat: Upper Flood. Rich Conry, Kerren Malton, Graham Andry, Daisy Macfarlane. UF proved to be one degree too hot for the Goretex, so a retreat was called after an hour of the intra-thermaling.

SUNDAY 13. NOEC, PAUL, DONG, GRAHAM, KEITH (swimmers as above) G.B. Great bimble around, the perfect gentle sunny morning trip for the W.G.C.

13-9-2009

Swildon's Sump one, Mike Thomas and Robert Thomas. Roberts First Free dive of Sump one. ☺ very Happy.

12-9-09

Bagshawe Resurgence (Derbyshire)
Chris Gossop, Rich Walker

Chris played the 'broken rip' card & left to get it fixed. Meanwhile, CSG & ROW dived through the resurgence & took the @ hand route to surface in the lower series. The crawling is quite uninspiring & CSG declared that it was humbler wanted to dive home! ROW had no such worries!

13-9-09

P8 (Jackpot) Derbyshire

Chris Westlake, Rick Walker, Chris Grosart

All three cavers to sump 1. ROW rigged both pitches without issue - CSG squashed a lot as the first pitch involved quite a bit of water! About 2 hours of good, fun, caving.

16-09-09

Wookey 25

Chris Westlake, Phil Rowell, Malcolm Stewart, Chris Grosart.

All divers to 24, carrying Christine's regulators, camera bag & Phil's diving gear. Phil into the elbow of the 24 in sump to pitch up line buried in gravel. Christine continued with 2x71 of 50% & 2x12L of trimix. Phil staged an oxygen bottle for her at 6m on the 'home' side of this sump. Chris staged her nitrox cylinders on route to the 'old' end & saw the way in wide open. Rick's line was broken, so she cut new line & dived to -63m before gas margins turned her around. A very uncomfortable dive home in complete zero visibility, following some of the worst line she has ever seen. All safely out in about 8 hours, Chris pleased to be met by Rick (xxx) & a bottle of champagne (thanks Phil!). Chris is now off to have her hair done...

25/9/09 Fester Hole. Maurice and Judy to inspect work by Jonathan and the Thursdays night slaves. Site very tidy and the tank on right of entrance has been completely back filled. Some spoil has been put in old "ladder shaft". The face has been pressed pressed forward a couple of feet - and the crack low on the left has been extended a couple of feet to the right. After the recent dry spell the cave has dried out beautifully. We removed a total 3 loads.

01/10/09

Porth yr Ogof

Chris Gossett, Malcolm Stewart (ss)

The dives spent over an hour surveying in superb conditions. They fettled the lines in the air bells to make them more user-friendly before having lunch & diving in Top entrance in the afternoon. Both dives round Cobble's loop & up to UWC Copper Cove Water chamber MS dried sump 8(?) which was ~~incredibly~~ ^{incredibly} clear. Superb, clean-washed passage in UWC - amazed it is not visited more.

19-1x-09

Irely Fell Cavern

Patrick Warren and Clive Westlake with John Almonby (CAC), Julian Todd (CVCC) Dave Wilson (NPC) and Dewi Lloyd (NPC).

Patrick alleges I said in the bar at Matengo that ~~Patrick~~ I'd like to revisit Duke and take some pictures; I have no recollection of this. Sometime later he emailed pointing out we were both attending the CVCC 60th birthday celebrations which would be an excellent opportunity and so it came to pass that half a dozen cavers assembled at Masongill one fine autumn morning. There wasn't much water around, but Irely still felt a lively place, very varied and scenic. We went through the Whirlpool Passage connection to Irely II, 135 m of hands and knees crawling. In Duke Street II Clive deployed his camera and numerous flashes then took half-a-dozen pictures with highly motivated help from everyone - this place is really worth seeing. Efficient caving and derigging brought us back to the surface after a 5 1/4 hour trip.

2-X-09

Wookley Hole.

Christine Grosant, Clive Westlake.

We dived in low, but not particularly clear water. Reaching the far end of Wookley 24, we collected two 12s and two 7. The trip out was not relaxing, but the 7s are in 22 and 12s are at the near end of 23. Not satisfied with this 5 1/2 hours of entertainment, Clive added a further half hour of farce by losing his keys - but the Wookley Hole staff were keeping them safe.

03/10/09

Wookley Hole

CLIVE COHEN, LAD PHIL, DUNCAN PRICE.

Busy Dive to 22. LAID LINE TO ONE, PHIL SURVEYED. PHIL LAID LINE FROM 1 TO 3. CLIVE SURVEYED. COINED THREE BAG WITH DRY CAVING KIT & SAT GEAR TO DO A CLIMB. UP AND AROUND IN 22. ALL WENT TO RAN + TOOK OUT A ALUMINIUM SALT SCREW BELAY WITH HAD CORRODED CONSIDERABLY IN THE 12 MONTHS IT HAD BEEN PLACED. CLIMBING WENT WELL UNTIL LOTS OF FOUL LANGUAGE COULD BE HEARD UP TOP FROM PHIL WHO APPEARED TO HAVE A ROTTED KARAB IN HIS HAND WHICH HE SHOULD HAVE BEEN HANGING FROM. ALL DECIDED TO CALL IT A DAY & HEADED FOR HOME REELING LINE BACK FROM 3 TO RESURGENCE. GOOD PRODUCTIVE DIVE. CLIVE COHEN.

16/10/09 Jester Hole Joms, Maurice and Judy did a couple of hours digging since the last entry the Thursday evening. ^{teary} have removed about 120 foot and started to back fill the ~~middle~~ middle entrance also some back fill on left hand ledge. We continued until they

and got about 25 loads and some extracted a couple of large slabs from the floor. The dig has now gone about 6 ft from the first crack and low down on the left the "hanging death" in the roof is in fact solid rock and there is a good roof as far as we have gone in for. Fortunately the cave has really dried out well - looking good!

28th October '09

SWILDONS

The floor below the slab in entrance has collapsed & the water now goes into chamber below! Nothing much is now holding up the small ^(supporting) boulder under the slab. T. Waller / D. Sanderson.

31/10/09

voices MAIL voices

CLARE / ERS / TAV / MANDY / ~~REBECCA~~?

O.G.O.F. DRAENEN - WAR OF THE WORLDS

Big Trip, Big Boulders, Big Picknicks.

LOTS OF FUN + BANTER EVEN THOUGH CAVERS ASSUMED THE "HEAD DOWN POSITION" FOR NEARLY THE WHOLE 9 1/2 HOURS OF THE CAVERING TRIP. UNUSUAL PASSAGE ~~EXPERIENCE~~ MADE THE BORDER HOPING NOT SO NUMEROUS BUT THE TRIP DEFINITELY GOT THE "HOW" FACTOR FROM CHAMBERS LIKE "THE REACTOR" + "SENDERO LUMINOSO". BEAUTIFUL FORMATIONS + A FEW PHOTOS HERE + THERE.... TRIP WELL WORTH THE EFFORT.

CLARE

15/11/09

OSAN + DRS HILL

SWILDONS

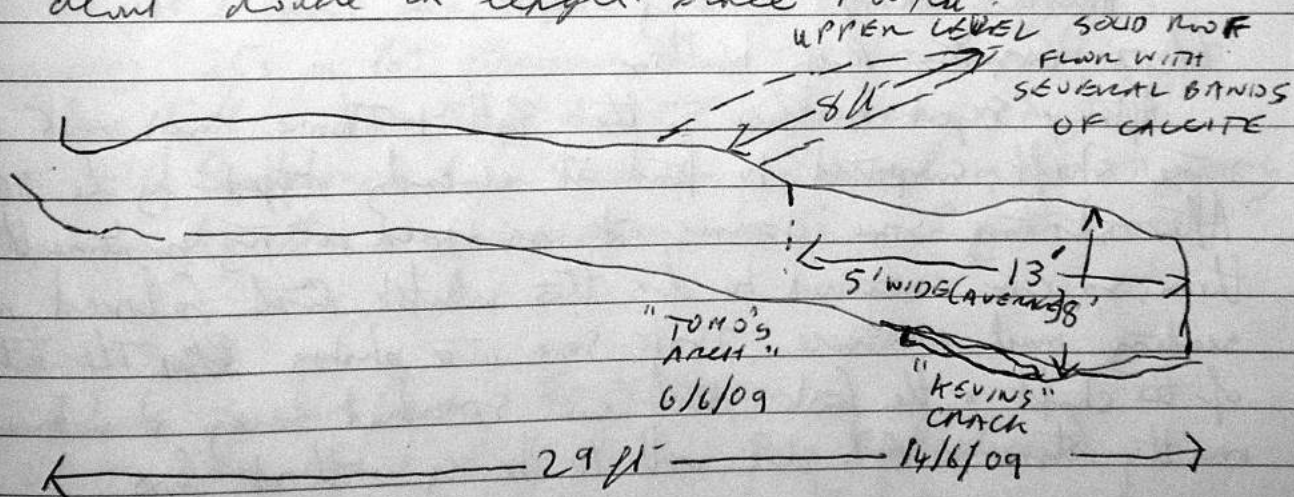
THE NOT SO SHORT ROUND TRIP..... BACKWARDS

OSAN AND I DECIDED TO DO A QUICK ROUND TRIP BEFORE THE PUP
BUT BEING LATE AND FINDING IT DIFFICULT TO ASSESS UP WITH OSAN I SAID
LOTS BUT GO DOWN THROUGH SLUMP I TO THE LANDING. WHEN WE GOT
THAT WE DECIDED LET GO UP AND FINISH THE ROUND BACKWARDS. LOTS OF CLIMBING
UPWARD + SLIPPING BROUGHT US TO DOUBLE TROUBLE WHICH WAS... HOW CAN I PUT THIS
UP! SO UP WE COULDN'T GET THROUGH HAD TO TURN AROUND AND GO BACK
THE WAY WE CAME. (SHORT ROUND WITH NIGHT SLUMPS)

Deliberately

21/11/09

maurice and Tom to Felt Hole. Raining hard and dig
very muddy. The measured length is now 29 ft and the
end of the dig is about 5 ft beyond and below the left
hand upper gully. This gives slightly uphill for 8 ft. ~~of~~ 9 ft is
a low passage with at least 2 ~~low~~ calcite floors. The
roof of the dig has now hit solid (calcite?) rock.
Only the left hand side is bed rock. The cave is
now about double in length since Ratket!



1/12/2009 SWILDONS

Further to my entry of 25th Oct. entrance chamber now
completely altered. The slab is no longer accessible
because the small boulder has gone so the roof has

collapsed. The boulders over which you climb to get to the
right have slumped a considerable distance to the left
The crawl to the left can now be seen from just inside
the cave. Parts of the roof and the right hand wall
could be unstable! We left. / Walker / D. Sanderson.

11/12/09

Eldon Hole, Peak District

Chris Grosart, John Taylor, Rich Walker

Not for doing things by halves, we threw Rich down Eldon Hole
for his first SRT trip - and he did very well indeed. Chrisne rigged
the West wall route & JT rigged the East wall route, to keep an
eye on Rich. Once at the bottom, all three squirmed through the
choke which contains biological matter in various phases of
decay - and rigged the pull-through pitch up into Mitters
Chamber, then up the fixed rope into Damoclese Rift. A
cracking trip, rounded off by a pint, long fire & excellent food. Rich
did a good job of de-rigging West Wall.

12/12/09

Hillocks Wharf Climbing Shaft

Chris Grosart, Rich Walker

After a superb breakfast in the 'Ball's + Thorne' we went to this
mine shaft, surprised to find it already rigged - by the B.E.C !!!
After shouting some comms, it was agreed to rig underneath
them, so CG continued to do this whilst Rich followed, not
needing much assistance. Took some nice photos. ~~the~~ The entrance
of the shaft & the first pitch are somewhat snug & awkward
on the return & Rich did well to de-rig without fuss.

13/12/09

Peck Caren - Buxton Water, Swine Hole & Main Streamway.
Chris Goss, Rich Walker

After some flapping trying to get in before 10am (showcase rule apparently - which has no logic, as cars are stream throughout the care all day long on the return from their trips...) we got into Swine Hole & dived through, eyeing up the route for a new line. We then came to Buxton Water & dived through this to Peck main stream. Both boulder chokes either side of the air bell are very snug indeed & need serious care. We cared to take snip & a bit beyond the turning, before heading out via Buxton Water, not surprisingly in zero viz.

18/12/09 Brown's Folly Mine - Grey Mutt Weston with Brov Garth, Bob S & Andy? Why on earth people need silver arrows painted on the walls along with red arrows, green & black arrows and white squiggly thing is just a waste of paint in a tiddly mine working, just to find a way round. Guess people rely too much on Sat Navs nowadays & can't use their -cking brains & eyes. Anyway, it's a lot clearer than the local public too on Box Hill. Nice trip xxx old dodderers p.s. just wait till Swildons has various coloured arrows every 20 paces for the -cking dim wits & I get cross!

18-12-09

Kingsdale Master Cave - Rafter Sumps

Dan Scott, Chris Goss, Rich Walker, Dave Rapp (sheep!)

Derbyshire section day out in T'Dales. Loads of snow around. All 3 divers surveyed downstream Rafter Sumps - ROW & CS & continued upstream, surveying to Frakes passage. All 3 divers chuffed to see Dave as they were packing up & he gave them a lift out.

Wednesday 12th November 2008: Brown's Folly Mine. Steve Watson & Bob S, armed with soft brushes and small holders for water/stone slurry we decided to have a go at the modern graffiti done in coloured spray and white gloss paints that so far have resisted removal by our £1 wire brushes (spray paint costs several pounds per colour, whereas a wire brush costs £1 and removes various colours). The intension is to show those who are small minded enough to want to spoil the mines for their own temporary needs that it isn't necessary and is a waste of their time. Allied to the Weston Brothers tidying team of many numerous occasions over the years, the area worked on this time was mostly the northern end of the front passage where it starts to connect with the old workings, and also a wall of obscene ("art" to the less informed) near the remains of the old crane. 3½ hours of solid work.

The mine is becoming a pleasure to walk around again now; it looks almost as it was in the pre-1970's caving guide books days, when very few people went in there. The best of the cave pearls disappeared in the 1970's as also many of the areas of the beautiful floor formations were trampled to dust underfoot by sporting cavers and others, who had very little interest in the actual workings or preservation of the old workings, and the few saws there were also vanished. Before the 1970's, no one needed spray painted arrows and filth to find their way around, and it is certainly a better place now when compared to the Box stone mines, which are throughout akin to very worst and smuttiest public toilets and slum area brick walls. My grandfather worked for the quarries as a carter from 1920 until 1938 when the conversion was made into the underground ammunition depot, and my father drove ammunition lorries from 1939 until the late 1960's for the then No.2 Monkton Farleigh Ammunition Depot and sister ammunition depots in the Corsham Chippenham and Gastard area.

I suggest, if anyone is interested, to take a meander in Box mines and have a good look at it, even if you have to follow Les, and see just how much is actually noticed, probably a bit every half hour when stopping for breath; but, try to see how much has been spoiled beneath the brightly coloured arrows and graffiti. Then, take a wander in Brown's Folly (without a spray can); much more of the surroundings (and even the current state of roofs) will be noticed when finding a way around without having a dozen or so petty navigational aids at every turn and junction and the spaces in between.

When my then next door neighbour and I were 13 and 14 years of age in the 1950's, we found our way into the mines and dug through several dry stone separating walls to find our ways around the old workings, using only torches made from stout hazel sticks wrapped with pieces of old shirt and wire, a bottle of paraffin and some matches, and later paraffin road lamps minus the red lenses; yes, we got lost, and no, we didn't wear the latest designer caving apparel, but we were always home at tea time and our parents never knew where we had been. Just look behind now and then, and recognise the way you've come; big boys and girls don't need to follow arrows, and they don't need to state "we've been here" in loud coloured paint.

Otherwise, try a bit of spray paint down Swildons, G.B., Eastwater or Shatter and then try to understand why people get upset and annoyed.