

U.B.S.S.

University of Bristol Speleological Society



Newsletter *Vol.5*
no.3

EDITORIAL



Gravel

Welcome to this bumper edition of Newsletter. One of the reasons for this, is that a large number of club members went away on Holiday expeditions to exotic places. Thanks to all those who bothered to put pen to paper. Any articles will be gratefully received, along with any decent photos.

Such was the overwhelming number of articles, some have been left out, and will be included in the next newsletter. Apologies to Linda, in this respect.

Also, welcome to all the new club members, (especially those with cars!) If anyone wants to come along, we now meet in the upper bar of Crockers pub at 9.30 on Tuesday evenings - NOT the Mandela bar (see back cover)

Interest in the G.B. Bat Passage dig has risen, due to the dry weather, so if anyone wants to help, contact me, or Tony Boycott, or Steve Cottle. Be warned however, it's a definite wetsuit job.

Andy Farrant

CONTENTS

- 1 Gravel
- 3 Hon Sec's Bits
- 4 1989-90 Programme
- 5 Austria Exped. Report - P. Drewery
- 9 C.W.F.S field system - Bob Williams
- 10 Co Clare 1989 G. Mullan.
- 12 Wessex Challenge - A. Farrant
- 14 Discovery of GB - T.R. Shaw
- 16 Speleology Congress report C. Self
- 19 Cave Dinosaur! - Arbuthnott
- 20 NCA Questionnaire - L. Wilson .
- 21 BCRA Conference - C. Bennett.
- 22 Pseudokarst symposium - C. Self.
- 23 1989 NSS Conference - Steve Hobbs
- 24 Pseudokarst again, Troglobite
- 25 Savorys Camera - C. Howes
- 27 Letters to the Editor
- 28 Yorkshire Weekend - H. Bartholomew

In response to Charlie Self's poison-pen attack (in Newsletter) on recent cave history papers (in Proceedings), the author of some of these papers has attempted a subtle revenge. He has named his new kittens Phoebe, Morgan, Charlie and Self.

Beware, o residents of Mendip! Dave Irwin obviously doesn't realise that the name Self derives from the Viking sea-wolf. Kitten number four may look sweet and innocent, but it can't be long before the piratical family tradition asserts itself.

We all said it would happen. Joe Oates goes to work as an engineer on the Severn Bridge and within a few weeks major cracks are found in the supporting pylons.

Signs of a simian social structure developing in Cotham Vale. Paul Harvey, the alpha male, lives on the top floor with three females. Dan Harries and another subordinate male live on the floor below.

Alpha males are usually displaced by fighting. I wonder if Dan's current enthusiasm for caving is due to genuine speleological curiosity, or whether he is just doing it to build up his muscles.

Earlier this year, false hopes were raised of "accidentally" losing Charlie Self down a grot hole in Wiltshire. Both his lights failed during a solo surveying trip. Sabotage? Two out of ten, must try harder. The old b----- mended one of his lights and continued with the work. Try rolling a boulder into the entrance next time.

COVER PHOTO : CHRIS BENNETT IN CROSS

RIFT, OGOF FFYNNEN DDU, PHOTO. ANDY FARRANT

A false rumour is being spread by the Cambridge University Caving Club that the UBSS, on expedition in Austria last summer, refused to help in the cave rescue of a CUCC student.

The truth is that the UBSS did not know who was injured or where, or even whether it was a mountain or cave rescue. They did offer to help when visited by the mountain rescue helicopter, which landed beside the UBSS by mistake, but were told that the situation was all under control and no extra assistance was needed. If we had known it was CUCC we would have insisted on helping, just to be able to rub their collective noses in it.

During the freshers Yorkshire weekend, Paul Drewery has invented a new caving technique-called N.R.T, ie no rope technique. This was developed shortly after it was discovered that certain members forgot to bring the tackle. However, the editor has been known to name drop, especially after a few (free) beers.

At last, a new UBSS 'super caver'. Chris Bennett has finally succeeded in getting his name splashed about in Descent, not just once, but twice. Maybe this is why he is doing a PhD, so he can stick around to soak up all the glory.

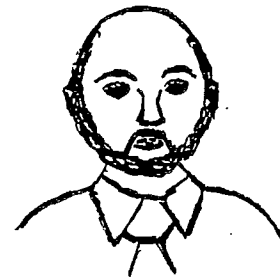
Kathy Sykes has done it again. First caving, and now diving. I wonder why she hasn't tried jumping off the suspension bridge-or maybe she should take up cave diving.

A sweepstake is being organised, "Where will Kathy be rescued from next?" at £1 per entry. Prizes will be announced at the coroners inquest.

Regular readers may have been puzzled by the Troglobite cartoon in the last issue of Newsletter, and wondered at its significance. Puzzle no more. The cartoon was ghosted by an enthusiastic fan who hadn't realised that everything in Troglobite (as in the now defunct scandal sheet Privateer) had to be absolutely true.

A wonderful photograph in the latest Proceedings of Linda Wilson examining spongework on a sandstone wall in Northumberland. Spongework is a decorators term for "artistic" paintwork applied with a sponge or ball of cloth rags. The small dog, also in the photo, would do the job nicely. I wonder.....?

GLASNOST



A. B. DOCTOR WRITES

Medical authorities do not regard an attack of glasnost, however severe, as invariably fatal. Perestroika, alas, is quite another matter. Symptoms vary but one common factor is the constant need to refer to a Russian dictionary and a pronounced tendency to prefer a night alone with the cyrillic alphabet to an evening in the pub. If symptoms persist, don't be embarrassed, consult your G. P.

Congratulations to Andy Farrant-the first UBSS professional caver. Question is, will he follow that other Andy's footsteps. Rumour has it that he is, as he is already thinking of joining the BEC. Freshers trips next year will now cost three pints of Butcombe per hr.

Hon. Sec's Bits

Welcome!

It is very good to see so many keen novices in the club again. All of the trips so far have been very well subscribed and have been very successful. The first weekend saw over 30 people at the hut, with at least 20 novices. The day trip on the next Saturday was also very popular, with trips down Swildons and G.B. As I write this, we have just come back from Yorkshire where we had 21 people who really enjoyed themselves despite the attempts of the rain to dampen spirits and the almost total lack of tackle (brought about by a communication breakdown between the secretaries.) The next planned event is the bonfire meeting on the 4th and 5th of November (*it was probably last weekend when you get this -ed.*) details will be put up on the notice board. Looking at the calendar, you will notice that the number of organised novice trips fall off towards the end of the term. This is intentional, firstly to give the secretaries a rest from organising trips (joke - we enjoy it really) but more importantly to get the newer members caving in smaller groups and therefore doing harder caves and learning more. This raises the problem of how to get on a trip this is how:-

- i) Find a bearded or elderly member in the bar on a Tuesday evening.
- ii) Use the phrase "Let me buy you a drink, will you take me caving on(enter convenient day)".

This is almost guaranteed to get you down a cave, omitting the first six words may still get results but not every time. Those of you who joined at faffy and we haven't seen yet, come along, we will be glad to see you and it is still not too late to start caving, come along to the bonfire weekend, or to *CROCKERS PUB* on Tuesdays to arrange an evening trip.

We have also had the first sessional meeting of the year, a very interesting talk by Guy Cox of Sydney University on an Australian expedition to Christmas Island. If the rest of the years sessional meets are of the same standard, then we are in for a great year.

Over the summer people have been going all round Europe and even further afield. Several members went to the Totes Gebirge in Austria, both on our own expedition and on the Lancaster University expedition. Charlie Self went to the international congress in Budapest whilst Graham and Linda went show-caving in Yugoslavia. Closer to home, the dry weather has allowed the dig in G.B. to be re-opened, progress is being made with two doses of Nobel's linctus being administered.

Towards the end of term, I hope to organise some training sessions in ladder and lifeline techniques on a climbing wall somewhere, watch the noticeboard for details.

Finally, my new address is 35 Aberdeen Road, Redland (Just off Cotham Hill) Tel. 738521.



CALENDAR FOR 1989 - 1990

- 1 Nov. (Wed) Sess. Meet by Chris Howes "The History of Cave Photography" - Chris is one of the countries leading cave photographers so this one should be good.
- 4,5 Nov. (Sat,Sun) Bonfire Weekend - Caving on Mendip followed by a bonfire and fireworks at the Hut. Watch the Notice board for details.
- 12 Nov. (Sun) Dale Head permit - The big boys go to Yorkshire again.
- 15 Nov. "China Caves Project" - Lecture in the Chemistry Building. 7.30pm.
- 19 Nov. (Sun) Freshers S. Wales Trip - Details to follow.
- 26 Nov. (Sun) Pen-y-Ghent permit - Yorkshire four times in one term! My overdraft will never stand it.
- 2 Dec. Jim's Party - Bring a bottle to 51 Maywood Road, Fishponds.
- 6 Dec. (Wed) Sess. Meet. "Black Holes of Mexico" by Mark Lumley - Mexico has some of the worlds most spectacular caves. *Don't Miss It!* 8pm Spelaeo Rooms.
- 9 Dec. (Sat) Christmas Dinner - Tickets from the Secretaries.
- 14 Feb (Wed) Sess. Meet. "Caving in Australasia" by Dick Willis. - Rescheduled from earlier in the year, a talk on how not to get eaten by cannibals in Irian Jaya. 8pm Spelaeo Rooms.
- 28 Feb. "Caving Abroad" Lecture by Gerry Wooldridge Chemistry Lecture Theatre 7.30pm
- 10 Mar. (Sat) A.G.M. With talk by Paul Drewery and Joe Oates "1989 U.B.S.S. Austria Expedition" - or how 6 cavers went to one of the most cave ridden areas of the world and found none. This is followed by...
- Annual Dinner - Tickets from the Secretaries
- 9 May (Wed) Sess. Meet. by Chris Richards "Calamine Extraction on Mendip" - A talk on early metal mining on Mendip.
-

USEFUL ADDRESSES & PHONE NUMBERS

Steve Cottle	77 North Rd, St Andrews
Andy Farrant	Flat 5, University Hall, Parrys Lane,
Charlie Self	4 Tyne St, Tel 541728
Paul Harvey	31 Cotham Vale, 738713
Tony Boycott	663587(W) 507869(H)
Graham Mullen	38 Delvin rd, W-o-T, Bristol 502556
Dan Harries	31 Cotham Vale
Paul Drewery	35 Aberdeen rd Redland 738521.

MUST I GO UP THAT MOUNTAIN AGAIN?

The 1989 UBSS Austria Expedition.

This summer, a group of UBSS cavers visited the Totes Gebirge, an area of the Austrian Alps, about 35 miles east of Salzburg, this is the story of their expedition:-

We had been planning the expedition for many months, a generous grant from the Tratman Fund had enabled us to buy about $\frac{1}{3}$ mile of rope and lots of shiny new krabs. The only slight problem was the whereabouts of Simon Shaw. The last time that anyone had seen him was about 3 months before when he left to go to Europe. Six hours before we were due to leave, he phoned up, having just got back from Belgium. He was instructed to catch the next ferry back to Belgium and so we set off. We met Simon on the ferry and eventually got abroad. Down the Belgian autoroutes until we pulled in for some petrol, filled up and went to pay with your "flexible friend". "Non" was the reply from the cashier, this caused some problems since we had very little Belgian money. Just managed to scrape enough Francs together to avoid being arrested and set off towards Germany. Did the same credit card trick on the German autobahn and spent the night in a wood outside Frankfurt.

Sunday and we headed off for Austria, after taking a detour via Yugoslavia, we arrived at Altausee at about 18.00. Found Dan, Mike and Paul Ibberson in the carpark and set off to the bar. Left very late at night and crashed out in the woods.

Monday morning everyone awoke feeling somewhat groggy after our 1000 Schilling piss-up the previous night. Bodies were scattered liberally in the verges around the ale house, cocooned in Gore-Tex or polythene. The six of us along with Mr. Ibberson piled into our cars and headed for a luxurious car park in Bad Ischl. We arrived with the intention of eating, but strangely for the UBSS we arrived before the cafe opened! So, as a second best, we spent an hour racing round the supermarket grabbing food of any description. The bill caused much holding of foreheads, wailing and fainting, we'd spent £80 on three days food!

The cafe opened conveniently after we'd dumped all the gear, and we stuffed ourselves silly on Bernerwurst, sausages stuffed with cheese and wrapped in bacon. Then back to the car park for some serious festering. Young Shaw gave an excellent demonstration of how to swim (or not) in the milky white melt water of the local river. He swore it was warm. More festering followed but this was overshadowed by the preparation of some CAVING KIT! Dan continued with his mind numbing tales of pain, sweat and walk-ins, but despite all this, we found ourselves at 4pm in the Offensee car park, parked and ready to go, or stay and go tomorrow. No, I want to go now. It's really steep. Oh alright lets stay. No, lets get it over with... the underlying knowledge that we had to go sometime gnawed at everyone until finally we left.

I wish we'd stayed, five hours of pain, sweat, steep bits, slipping on moving scree and Bunde, covering ankle breaking grykes followed. after 5 hours, we arrived at the bivi site (I've been banned by SS from using the term CAVE oops!), completely f....d, drained, shagged and b.....d. Copious amounts of very sweet Benco whilst our pasta slop 'meal' was prepared. After shovelling this into our scrawny, famished frames, we crashed, sweet oblivion, horizontal motionless bliss.

The next day, the weather was good so we all ambled, chucking rocks down holes, up to the col between Rauchfang and Hones Augst Ecke. We found nothing in particular but did glimpse our first Chamois against the snow. We then moved into the valley bounded by three 1950m peaks and found within 3/4 hour, BS1-BS6. After some ladder exploration, we still had BS1,2 & 6 which warranted further exploration.

On the way back to the bivi ~~cave~~ site, we found 3 off 20m deep shafts along the S side of Rauchfang but as these fell in the LUSS area we have not recorded them. Food and festering followed and we crawled into our pits fairly early.

The original plan for Wednesday was to go and descend the going holes from yesterday. However, upon emerging from our pits, horrible grey murk was everywhere - the plan was changed and all descended to the valley for Bernerwurst, shopping, beer etc. Left bivi 11am and were all at the bottom for 13.30. Leapt into the motors and off for some nosh. The lass in the theatre cafe did the grub again and during the meal, we were amused by mad Austrians eating Ice Cream in the rain. The rain persisted and the shopping was done, a few post cards written and then it was time to head for the mountains again. Arrived at Offensee about 4pm, stuffed personal kit and more rope into the sacks and set off up that bleedin hill. To keep us entertained, it started pissing down at about 5pm. e got to the first rest point (Iron steps), it was pissing down, up the scree- it pished down, on the flat bit, it eased off, but on the next bit- it was pissing down. Remarkably, for the final climb off the path, there was no rain. Reached cave about 8.15pm (Ascent time 3hrs 40mins). Several hot drinks later some food was contemplated, constructed and promptly thrown on the floor before it got to the bowls - not a good move!! - And so to Bed.

In the morning we got up to find glorious sunshine, so like a load of prize wallys, we stripped off and laid in it till about 2pm. As a result, several people could be heard moaning to themselves throughout the next night.

Whilst teaching the Welsh to cut bread, he was heard to scream "AAArgh!" Mike added "You've cut yourself three times" To which welsh responds "No, I've cut myself once, it's bleeding out of the other bits!"

Eventually, we decided that maybe we should go caving, so it was decided that MG, DH & SS should go and look at 1,2 & 6 whilst PD, GP & JO would prospect the area around the S. slopes of Scheibling. DH & SS descended BS1 only to find that it ended in a boulder choke at about -35m. The lower slopes of Scheibling didn't produce much, a few holes which we may go back and look at if nothing else turns up. Cooked meal outside, meal contained no c and no pasta. Watched stars until clouds came over then went to bed, cursing the sun!

Once again the weather dawned fine and we got off to an early start (11am from camp). Paul and Graham set off prospecting. Paul followed the fault line that BS1 was on, towards Greiss Kogel and found BS8 a horizontal vadose cave with decayed stal. Graham was cc less active due to a very severe dose of all over sunburn.

Mike and Dan dropped BS2, a 35m pitch to a snowplug. Dan managed to rig the snowplug via various slopes, holes etc. for a further 50m rope length although he couldn't confirm that it was finished.

Joe and Simon went over to look at BS6, it bottomed out after a 50' ladder pitch. During much indecisive ambling about, Simon found BS9, a hole which sounded deep but had a horrendously loose shakehole funnelling into it. They kicked a couple of cubic meters of rock down before Joe rigged a 30' pitch into a chamber followed by 60' of an 80' shaft before running out of rope. Simon rigged the second pitch to land on a snow/rock plug at 80'.

On the walk back, we discovered BS10, a cave with a 5 second drop and BS11, a large rift right on the summit of Rauchfang which we named Gaping Gill.

Saturday saw a late start, nice weather, sunny and all that. On the hill by 2pm. Mike remained in camp with a swollen.. but I'll leave that to him. Joe and Dan de-rigged BS9 and Headed back to BS2. Dan re-rigged a couple of parts within the snowplug whilst Joe re-rigged the pitch 1 redirection with a jammed tape knot! They arrived at the bottom of the pitch with no incidents. Joe dropped into one of the continuations to find it choked in ice and rock 4' further down. Dan dropped the second way on and found similar. They conferred Joe expressed worry about the 90' of hollow, melting ice above his head. So they left, seeing no other obvious or even un-obvious ways on. Final depth c. 70-80m.

Meanwhile, Simon and Paul were looking at the 5 second drop that they had found the previous evening, BS10. After many problems inserting bolts into the very hard rock, the shaft was rigged, The shaft turned out to be about 70m with a rebelay 10m down. At the bottom, it split into two, both shafts being choked with snow and rocks.

Sunday - Today's aim:- To the valley, get pissed.

Wandered down via Wildensee where we noshed c and caught fish. Joe guarded the rucksacks whilst SS, PD & DH went looking for holes above Wildensee. GP & MG ambled down to the valley and had a wash/swim in Offensee. On the way down, JSO asks "Where are the car keys Dan?" DH:-"I thought you had them" JSO:-"No, you had them last" DH:-"S..t". Dan had loft them in the bivi cave and had to go back for them. Eventually, all drove to the roadside eater and had a pint and some grilled meat type things, then to Bad Ischl and cars everywhere - something was obviously happening. Having got parked in a 20 Sch field, we mosied into town to find the tail end of the Stadt Fest going on. Watched the fireworks, found a beer tent... and got pissed, accosted by various Krauts, waxed lyrical on the finer points of sheep and agreed to buy one bloke's sister for \$200. Left at about 02.30 after helping to stack benches. All crashed in a field.

Monday - awoke with huge Overhangs. Festered by the river all morning. Then did some shopping and drove to Offensee to get up that bleedin hill again. Welsh decided to stay and come up the following morning. PDD started but returned to go up the next day due to a knackered knee.

Joe, Mike, Graham and Simon got to the bivi cave (ascent 4hrs.) noshed and kipped well.

Tuesday - Dan and Paul joined us on the hill, Dan @ 9.30 after 2.5 hrs, Paul a little later. Graham explored BS11 with Dan, crapped out at 50ft - Not quite GG.

Joe had got the shits from river water and followed Simon, winging to BS7. JSO descended in shorts with Petzl, cut legs to ribbons, caught hooks of boots on ladder, shat and retreated. Simon ascended in shorts, cut legs, reached end of a 50' ladder, dangled and returned. After extending the ladder and donning an oversuit, SS redescended and found a small slot in the floor with a bouncing drop of 5 - 10 secs. Small, tight but hammerable.

Mike prospected between Schiebling & Schonberg in the big dip. He found nothing which didn't end in rocks/snow v. soon.

Wednesday, Mike and Joe went to BS10, abbed in and took lots of piccys, Paul was still incapacitated by his Knee, they de-rigged before a careful trip back to the bivi with very heavy sacks.

Simon and Dan descended 7, pushed 1st squeeze to 7m pitch, bashed 2nd squeeze, descended 25m pitch, stopped at 3rd squeeze. Graham ran all over the mountain collecting kit from 1, 11 & 7.

Paul sat at home and was paid a visit by a helicopter. Very concerned that he might be being arrested, the others all hid underground. Paul continues:- " I was laying out on the sun terrace above the bivi cave, when a helicopter flew overhead, it made a couple of passes before landing on the ridge behind the bivi. An Austrian leapt out and came running down the hill. He asked me if I was hurt, and told me that he was looking for an injured person. As I wasn't injured, he started back to the helicopter. I asked if he needed any help in his search, he said maybe and flew off."

To finish the day off, our water supply finally dried up.

Thursday was to be our final day on the hill, Simon and Dan went to 7 again for a final bash at squeeze 3 but didn't get through although they enlarged it considerably. Graham and Paul set off down the hill with enormous sacks, Mike and Joe waited for Simon and Dan to Return before setting off. Thunder, Lightning and lots of rain turned the descent into four hours of knee wrecking hell with a big chance of being frazzled on the open bits, but after a tea of cheese and bread, the six of us visited the bar at Offensee and spent the night in an Ice Cream Stall.

After festering for a while, we packed the cars and headed for home. the first night was spent in Germany at Simon's aunt's house. We smelled so bad that she made us sleep in the garden! That evening, we headed off into the nearest town in search of beer. The place seemed dead so we asked some local lasses where we could find young people and beer". They answered rather incredulously "In Kaufsbauren?" Unperturbed, we eventually found a bar and got very drunk again. The next morning, we set off for England, only stopping briefly for a lunch of Caviar at the Belgian boarder (It was cheaper then the smoked salmon!) and so back to England, arriving at about 8am.

That's about it for this issue, watch the next issue for the surveys and things.

finally, we would like to thank the Tratman Fund for the money, Up and Under of Cardiff for a very generous discount on the tackle and Paul Ibberson for his advice.

The A Team.

MORE ON THE FIELD SYSTEM NEAR CHARTERHOUSE WARREN FARM SWALLET

I was intrigued by the observations of Arthur ApSimon in the last Newsletter on some early field boundaries and their possible association with the Bronze Age discoveries in CWFS. In October 1985 I noticed similar stony banks which showed up during ploughing about 1KM SE of CWF at ST 50355430. I had wondered whether these were prehistoric fields but I was not so sure when I studied the mediaeval and later history of the area. The land around CWF was part of the estate of the Witham Carthusians at Charterhouse on Mendip which had been defined in some detail by a perambulation of circa 1181 (reproduced by Gough, 1928, pp. 87-8). This record in mediaeval Latin contains many unusual place-names which in recent years have been located on the ground by the careful fieldwork of Vince Russett of Cheddar. As a result several meadows (pratium) have been identified to the SE, S and SW of CWF which suggests that this part of the monastic estate was under some kind of cultivation in the 12th century.

A clue about later activity in this area comes indirectly from Gough (1930, p.81) who quoting from the Jefferies Mss in the Bristol Reference Library records that a certain John Prickman had in about 1660 erected several 'free warrens' on Mendip including one called 'ROWBORROW MEADE'. Gough does not locate this warren but the name does suggest that it might be in the parish of Rowberrow. In fact my research (Williams, 1986 & 1987) shows that it was in a detached part of this parish in the area around CWFS !! and remained so until boundary amalgamations in about 1880. This enclosed area is clearly depicted on map circa 1800 in the Somerset Record Office (DD/STL,4) which also shows several features of the warren including the site of "The ruins of Roughborough Meade Lodge". By relocating this site onto the local OS plan I found that it was on a promontary 80 metres to the NE of CWFS. Here at ST 49395466 I found a raised platform measuring 25m by 20m which comprised many rough stones and a few eroded house bricks. When I spoke to the farmer Mr Small he said that about 20 years ago when making an unsuccessful attempt to level the site he knocked down an old brick fireplace.

Vince Russett (1987) has noted other features of the warren and he has deposited a survey of these in the Somerset Sites and Monuments Record at Taunton. Russett (pers comm, 1989) says that his fuller account of the warren will be published in a forthcoming issue of Notes and Queries for Somerset and Dorset.

None of this later activity need necessarily account for the parallel banks in this area and I fully support the need for an archaeological survey as mooted by Arthur ApSimon. There cannot be much doubt that a Bronze Age settlement site in this area awaits discovery.

Bob Williams.

References

- Gough, J.W. 1928. The Witham Carthusians on Mendip. PSANHS, 74, 87-101.
Gough, J.W. 1930. The Mines of Mendip. Newton Abbott, David and Charles.
Russett, V. 1987. In E. Dennison (ed), Somerset Archaeology, 1986. PSANHS, 130, 158.
Williams, R.G.J. 1986. The Warreners Lodge at Rowberrow Meade. Axbridge ALHS, Newsletter, 94, 4-5.
Williams, R.G.J. 1987. In E. Dennison (ed). Somerset Archaeology, 1984-1985. PSANHS, 129, 26-7

On the 22nd. of April last, a party of three arrived at Fisherstreet to herald the forty first continuous year of Society explorations in County Clare. No new mega-miles of passage were discovered, but various loose ends were tidied up leaving numerous more 'for next year'. This is a summary of what we learnt, both ourselves and from others.

The Doolin Cave System

We finally sorted out Oliver Lloyd's survey data of the Smithy Sink area and have correlated the underground and surface surveys of this complicated sink. A report on this appears in the latest 'Proceedings'. The connection between the Smithy aven and the streamway discovered by Steve McArdle and Co. in 1978 has collapsed and is no longer passable.

The S.U.I. have organised a clean-up of Aran View swallet. Enormous amounts of rubbish were removed, and the place now resembles a nice cave entrance rather than a cess-pit.

Jacko's Hole ?

Another long day was spent looking for this most elusive cave. Despite having been given a map of where it might be by Dave Drew, we were again unsuccessful. However, after coming down off the hill we were shown a cave recently found by Adam Johnson: a phreatic tube, about 1.5M in diameter and about 5M long, situated at a height of about 200M on Allwee mountain, but south of Allwee cave and about 2km from the recorded position of Jacko's. There is an inscription on a small shelf just inside the entrance, which is reproduced below. However, Jacko McGann's Christian name did not begin with an M, so for the present, the mystery remains. Watch this space for further developments.

* MMcGANN 1948
+

North Western Slieve Elva

The surface survey of the numerous small sinks in this area has been completed and should appear in the next 'Cave Notes'. None of them look very promising digs.

South Eastern Slieve Elva

Some of the minor sinks on the shale/limestone boundary south of Poll Caher Cloggaun west-one were looked at. Most are too small or too heavily choked, but one will be re-visited with a crow bar this coming year. Watch this space.

Gleninagh South Cave

This large entrance was visited. Although in an impressive location, high on the northern edge of the hill, it is unlikely to prove a worthwhile dig as, contrary to Caves of Co. Clare, it is not choked with cobbles but with frost shattered angular limestone fragments. Someone has been digging here, and I wish them luck. Does anyone remember who first discovered this cave?

Poll na gCéim

Brian Judd has finally passed sump 5 to discover 250M of stream passage ending in boulder breakdown. However, whilst he was exploring, a storm hit and re-filled the syphoned sump 4 trapping the non-diving Colin Bunce on the far side. We were dragged away from our Guinness to help out; but when Tony went underground with the Little Dragon reviver he met the 'victim' coming the other way after Brian had successfully re-started the syphon. No need to panic.

Doolin Harbour

Brute strength and a three metre crow bar enabled us to just enter a small hole at the base of one of the low cliffs towards the Point. Progress was halted after a mere couple of metres, but it was interesting none the less; especially the sediment, a stream-lain mixture of clay and pebbles.

Pouldaff/Poulnavalley

A new diving site was discovered in East Clare, by perusal of the geological map. A small limestone hillock has a stream sinking on its north side and rising on the south. The rising especially looks a good dive and will be done next year. The whole thing is a bit like the Tomeens only smaller and all flooded.

Allwee Cave

With Brian Judd's departure for Kerry, work has ceased on the St. Bridget's series. Carl Wright (ex Wookey Hole) is now head guide. The previous end of the show-cave, The Highway has been further extended by new concrete paths on either side of the passage and a commendably low level of lighting. There is also a fascinating waterfall, which for some strange reason ceases to flow at night! In all, the new extensions have been well handled with the minimum damage to the cave.

Ireland seems to be suffering from show cave fever at the moment; in addition to Brian's opening up of Crag Cave there is a new one opening near Mallow, Co. Cork, and others may be developed at Doneraile Co. Cork and Poliskeheenarinky Co. Tipperary.

Other highlights of the trip include taking Bryan Ellis (B.C.R.A.) on a trip into Urchins Cave, a rare event for this noted caving 'politician'; and my realisation that horses do not have very efficient accelerators or brakes. On the return journey we visited Dunmore Cave. Short, but well worth the detour. The displays in the entrance building are particularly well laid out, but there is too much greenery in the cave, as the lights are left on all day.

We are grateful to the Tratman Fund for its continued support of our work in Co. Clare.

WESSEX CHALLENGE 1989 - or the battle of Swildons Hole

This years Wessex Challenge, was a 'Batmobile' race, from Priddy church to Swildons hole and back, via several obstacles, followed by a game of Sofa rugby, jousting, a stomp and various other events.

Starring Paul 'its all mine' Drewery
Nigel 'go get'em' Lester
Andy 'Mendip man' Farrant
Steve 'Jouster' Cottle
Sarah as 'the Damsel in distress'
Joe-his 'normal' self
Trevor 'Muscles' Mosedale
Charlie - The Hero.

and the 'Tratmobile'

Twas a night to remember- our band of intrepid, stupid, gullible heroes set out to fight for God, country and club- in other words, have a bloody good time. It must be iterated that under no circumstances, must we come first, after all, who wants to organise it next year.

ROUND 1 The Challenge- or the U.B.S.S. vs BEC

The first obstacle was the shit crawl, with Joe heading the field with about thirty BEC members following. The UBSS had a flying start, but not for long- the BEC spoilers were lying in wait. The Tratmobile didnt stand a chance, and nor did Charlie against Trevor Hughes- so Charlie did the honourable thing, and found a smaller member of the BEC and then tied him up.

Dodging the Tractor tyres being thrown at us- except Nigel, who was sent flying- and the firecrackers and smoke bombs, Swildons was finally reached. After pausing to get soaked, and to pick up the odd milk churn or two, we continued the race. Stopping only to wrestle with the odd BEC member and to avoid the flying cowsh.., we approached the final obstacle. Now only yards behind the BEC, and about a mile ahead of the Wessex, (the Axbridge were obviously lost, even though they organised the event) we lifted the rather battered Tratmobile over the netting, and staggered over the finish.

The UBSS had 'won' a famous victory, by coming second. After all the BEC only crossed the line first because of their 'friendly hands on policy towards the opposition'.

UBSS 1 BEC 0

ROUND 2 The Jousting.

Our merry (in fact very merry) band took on everyone, and quite convincingly lost, much to the amusement of the audience. It turned out that Steve 'Jouster' Cottle has not got a head for heights, nor for that matter, Butcombe, as he seemed to spend most of the time, not on Nigels shoulder, smashing the hell out of the opposition with a pole, but in a giggling heap on the floor. Meanwhile Andy and Snablet (BEC) were having races up and down an inclined scaffold pole, seeing who could castrate themselves first.

A minor hiccup occurred when Carole White (ACG/BEC), knocked Gwyn (BEC) off her mount, and in the process, breaking her collar bone. Rumour has it that Carole was trying to reserve herself a bunk in the BEC hut! Just goes to show how dangerous being a caver can be. This turned out to be the only hospital case of the event, which was quite surprising really!

UBSS 1 BEC 1

ROUND 3 The Sofa Rugby- or how we won ,thanks to Charlie.

This was to be the showpiece of the event-a game of Rugby played with the Wessex sofa.The aim of the game is to get the sofa over the oppositions line by any means available.The game usually ends when someone sets light to the sofa.Unfortunatly(or fortunatly-depends on your point of view)the opposition never showed,probably because someone opened a free barrel of Butcombe.So Charlie,obviously frustrated at not being able to bash the BEC about,decided to hide the sofa,along with the BEC charriot on top of the Swildons blockhouse.It was a rather drunken load of cavers who retreated back to the bar for refreshment.Some members then joined in the stomp-its surprisingly difficult to dance wearing a pair of walking boots.

UBSS 2 BEC 1

The 'victorious' team eventually crashed out ,under the stars,on Priddy green.

This was the first time that we entered this event,and suffice to say that it was one of the best events of the year,almost surpassing the annual dinner.We shall be going next year,hopefully with most of the First 15 Rugby team.

R.I.P BEC, ACG ,WCC ...



PAUL 'ITS ALL MINE' DREWERY ,AT THU YEARS WESSEX CHALLENGE

PHOTO - ANDY FARRANT.

THE DISCOVERY OF G.B. CAVE

The Society's log book for the period November 1939 to June 1943, previously thought to have been destroyed in the 1940 air raid, has recently been found. It is in private hands but a photocopy is now held in the library. It throws a little more light on the discovery of G.B. Cave and certainly brings it more vividly to life.

This volume of the log book commences on 4 November 1939, so it is in time to record the first entry into G.B. Cave on Sunday 19 November. Seven were present, with Francis Goddard noted as the leader:

Excavations in Tynings F.^m dry swallet. A large piece of rock removed
Entered a cave Unique formations found. In the first chamber at the
end there is a 12 ft drop. this was negotiated & Passage was explored
for 100 yards.

Thus on the first day they entered the First Grotto and crawled through the Coze, almost to the end of the passage.

On the following Friday, 24 November, Goddard and one other (the individual members of a party are usually not named in this log) did:

Photography of formations
(1) main chamber.
(2) Grotto in first chamber

The Devil's Elbow was reached later in the same weekend; Boulder Chamber was seen but not entered. The log entry for a party of seven on 25 November reads:

Photography of main chamber [presumably the First Grotto] & grotto beyond through hole in wall.
Exploration. passage from grotto leads to a water-fall some 10 feet high in the floor of a passage. Lower passage followed becomes very small & blocked by a deep pool. The roar of water can be plainly heard

On the Sunday (26th) Dr B.A.Crook, with three others, noted:

Beyond waterfall a tortuous wet passage was followed length about 20 feet, widening out to a ridge in a large chamber, and disappearing from view under the lip about 20 feet below.

The Upper Grotto was first explored on 11 February 1940 by four people including Dr Crook:

Exploration of side passages in Geebee Cave. A small tunnel from the top of the upper grotto in the main chamber was explored and ended in a grotto & a smooth stalactite floor.
Some Pebbles & ?Aragonite were brought for examination

To print all the log book entries as the cave was explored, stage by stage, would be tedious and unnecessary. The discovery of the Gorge, however, is such a historic event that it is included here at some length. The party on 10 March 1940 consisted of Charles Barker, Bertie Crook, Molly Hall and Rodney Pearce (who wrote the account in the log). Goddard was prevented from being there by German measles.

Party left camp about 2.30 p.m. ... and the cave was entered about 30 min later in fine weather. A rope ladder, a safety rope, and a short tying line & a piton were taken. The lip into the First Stream Chamber was reached (there was less water in the crawl to this than usual) and the ladder belayed to a column of stalactite and descended. It is possible to climb to this lip if necessary from below. Besides the entrance used there were two rifts leading from this chamber, & the downward exit rift was explored. There was no water going down the first part of this. A series of 10' pots were climbed and the rift wound down to a final large pot from which led two small rifts: these led, one about 40' above the other, into a large chamber. This led to the left up a very high slope of loose boulders, not yet fully explored, and down to the right into the main cave system. A candle was left at the rift by which the chamber was entered, and the ... party led down the boulder slope to the right!

A series of chambers were now entered of a loftiness and size rivalling that of the Great Chamber in Lamb's Lair. The floor was covered with loose boulders and inclined at an angle of about 45° , with drops at intervals.

We were now in a huge rift, or roofed gorge, of dimension unprecedented in Mendip.

The series of caverns continues for a distance of approximately (very) $\frac{1}{4}$ mile with a vertical descent of approximately 400'. One drop necessitated a roped descent owing to the loose and difficult nature of the surface; the height of the base of this to the roof must be close on 150'. The going throughout this system was easy, and at the end of the final chamber the rift narrowed to a small grotto. Out of this led three passages, two choked and the third a vertical rift, very tight. C.B. & R.P. entered & found that it ended in a deep sump, with a small rift leading to the left, down which water flowed.

The main rift had numerous streams entering it, and the main passages led up from the left. These were not explored.

Stalactite formations were very beautiful in all chambers: notably long stalactite falls on the walls, curtains coating the sides, a peculiar formation about 7' long from roof ending in a unique quadruple boss, christened 'The Elephant's Tail', and a large number of enormous stalactite bosses which had crashed from the roof.

At one point near the end of the rift the lamination of the limestone shales with the Mountain Limestone was clearly visible.

The whole floor was strewn with boulders, and broken by huge falls from the roof. The stream was with us to the end, but did not increase much in volume in spite of the numerous subsidiary streams joining it. The first rift chamber was re-entered only about 1 hr. after leaving it, and the entrance of the cave regained before nightfall. A rope ladder was left above the Lip.

Camp was regained by 9 p.m. and the party celebrated the occasion in appropriate manner.

Later Discoveries

Subsequent discoveries are not described here because they are adequately documented already. In addition to published sources, particularly in Proceedings, the explorations are written up in the Society's log books, photocopies of which are now held elsewhere for safety. For the period up to 1968 the sequence of discovery is traced in detail in the unpublished fuller version of the Society's jubilee history held in the library, where minor errors in Johnson's History of Mendip Caving are pointed out.

F.R.S.

The 10th International Congress of Spelaeology.

The ICS is held every four years and this time around the venue was Budapest in Hungary. I travelled alone, but took my car because I wanted to spend a week climbing Via Ferrata (mountain climbs with fixed aids) in southern Bavaria. After one further diversion, to a mountain summit in the Kaiser Gebirge, I was ready for academia and started driving east.

Hungary is a very pleasant country with friendly people, many of whom drive a horrid little two-stroke car called the Travant. The Travant exhaust gas is blue, bus and lorry exhausts are black, and so Budapest - a grand and beautiful city of classic Central European architecture - has a serious air pollution problem. The Hungarians are also a hard-working people so the traffic noise (and smell) begins at about 4am.

By good fortune, I was not staying in one of the hostels or hotels in Budapest but on a campsite about 10kms out of town. The campsite was excellent - cheap, not crowded, good clean facilities, a bar, a supermarket and a bus service (cost 6p) every ten minutes into the city. There was also a free coach to the congress centre every morning at 7am.

Almost half the British contingent were staying on the campsite with many other nationalities being well represented, including Swedes and Canadians. Ruling the campsite Canadians (all young men) with iron discipline was Joyce Lundberg, who used to be such a nice quiet girl when she lived in Bristol. Add a hard-drinking East German (who speaks better English than Joe Oates), a Czech who had driven across the border with a car loaded with Slovakian beer, congress refugees escaping the city smog for a drunken night under the stars, a few shy Russians, a garrulous South African, the entire Icelandic caving club (two young couples, but there should be a 50% increase in membership next year as both girls were pregnant), a guitar, a mandolin, a flute and a series of warm dry evenings. Yes, it was party night every night at Campsite Flora.

The best party was on Wednesday 16th August. The day had started well with a "jolly" - the entire congress of about 1000 people had been taken for a cruise on the Danube, and yes there was a bar on each of the boats. That evening we saw naked-eye-visible sun-spots in the last few minutes as the sun dropped below the horizon. And that night there was due to be a total eclipse of the moon. The night was warm, the sky was clear, the moon was full and hung like a spotlight above us. The singing was good and there was plenty to drink. So we all started picking on the Dutchman who didn't know any songs. Another song from a German and the cry would go up: German, eight, Holland nil. Three Hungarian schoolgirls sitting slyly in a corner would pluck up courage and (between giggles) sing a nursery song: Hungary one, Holland nil. There were no Russians that evening, but we sang Kalinka anyway: Russia one, Holland nil. Eventually he said, "Why do we Dutchmen need to sing? We have got Phillips." That earned him a round of applause.

And still the moon shone down on us, with no sign of the eclipse. So the leader of the Swedes taught us a Viking dance (or perhaps, the one and only Viking dance) and we all linked arms in a huge circle, singing the chorus of a dirge in Swedish while he chanted all 37 (48?) verses of the ballad of Holgar Dansk. 4am came and went and still the moon shone. People then staggered off to their tents, except for a hard core who were determined to wait till dawn and then stuff a certain C.A. (as in Charlatan Astronomer) Self head first into the rubbish bin. At 4.20 the eclipse began, so we had to go round waking everyone up again. Totality came and the moon was just a pale ghostly disk (from refraction of light through the Earth's atmosphere), then suddenly it went out and couldn't be found even with binoculars. By then there was a hint of light in the sky from the rising sun, so we all went to bed. Some even made the first lecture of the morning at 8.30am.

Caving? Yes, there are caves under the city of Budapest. None are

more than a few kilometres long, but they are geothermal in origin. Hence the very fine gypsum mineralisation in Josef-Hegi cave, opened specially for the congress delegates but normally kept locked for conservation reasons. And geothermal springs on the banks of the Danube, tapped to feed hot water swimming baths - lovely! The food is excellent and cheap, but watch out if you order fish. I ordered a pike and got one, 22 inches long! I pigged myself. Drinking and driving is illegal, so I earned a few hero points by drinking mineral water when eating out in the city with friends. No matter, there was always a party later at the campsite. And on the last evening of the conference proper there was a massive firework display to celebrate Hungarian Independence Day.

Taking a car enabled me to take spare caving equipment, which made me very popular with Joyce and the Canadians who had brought just clothes and academic materials (because they were giving lectures), not speleo kit. The Russians took a great interest in my Premier (stinkie) carbide lamps, so I swapped one for a titanium ice screw, a beautiful piece of engineering. I also was invited back to the Russians' hostel for a private slide show. This Russian group have been exploring geothermal caves in Turkmenistan (Soviet central Asia), which have some of the world's best cave mineralisation - stunningly beautiful. I am joining them on expedition next April. I have also accepted offers to go to the Canadian Rocky Mountains (in 1991) and to Czechoslovakia (pseudokarst symposium next September). And then there are the dozens of other, less formal invitations that I hope to be able to take up one day.

Climbing? Yes, there is a nice steep little limestone outcrop in the city, but you don't want to hear about that, do you? Post-congress excursions? Mine was the palaeokarst excursion and was excellent. Much of the Hungarian palaeokarst is of tropical tower karst with bauxite emplacement - very interesting. In one place we visited, sandstone had been deposited on the palaeokarst and (after lithification) rising geothermal waters dissolved away the top of the limestone. The cave, entered via a well shaft, is a series of crawlways around and between sandstone roof flakes that are the imprint of the original limestone karst surface.

Most of the post-congress delegates went on the hydrology excursion, which was so over-subscribed that they had to have two coaches. It was a zoo (no fault of the Hungarians) with more time spent getting on and off coaches than in looking at the science.

My excursion was shorter than the hydrology one, so I asked if I could join them for the last two days. "No problem, nice to have you," said the Hungarian organisers, wonderful easy-going people. And no charge!! The last few days of this excursion were in Aggtelek in the north-east of the country, about 200 kms east of Budapest. I saw two West European cars during the whole drive. My own car, a bright green Mk III Cortina, caused some excitement among local villagers who all wanted to pose beside it wherever it was parked. I even had people taking photographs from the back of their cars when driving along the road. As it turned out, I only had one full day at Aggtelek, but it was a good one. From talking with a Swiss on yet another post-congress excursion (pure sport caving), I found that the best local cave was called Beke, a 5½ kms streamway through trip which starts in an underground sanatorium (radon gas and cold damp air cures bronchitis, would you believe?). I approached the Hungarian organisers who said, "No problem," even though it wasn't on the schedule and, with some refugees from the Hydrology excursion, we did the cave in less than half guidebook time. Back on the surface, we had just got changed when a car drew up, out jumped a Hungarian organiser offering us another caving trip in the afternoon - 7kms through trip of big easy passages. OK, then he tells the guide he gives us to take us on a "special" and we end up exploring a beautifully decorated inlet series as well as the through trip. 14 kms of caving in one day!

Meanwhile, it was day seven of warfare (water pistols) between the Canadians and Russians, generalled by Joyce and Natasha respectively. When not fighting, they were usually playing "Ring a ring of roses" and "Tie everybody up with string" games. British technology, a water-filled Squeezy bottle, worked very effectively on the opposing generals but was

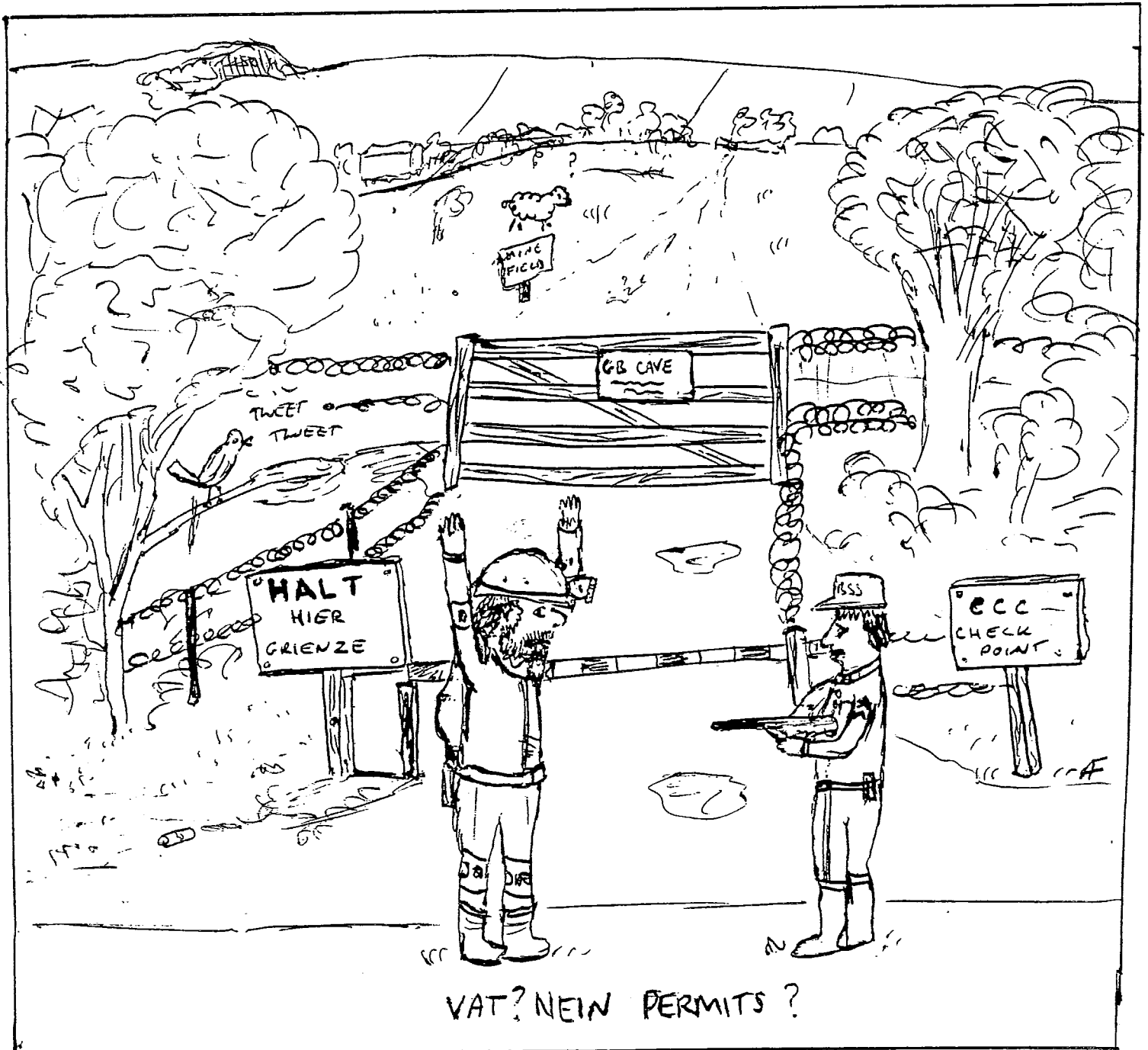
then outlawed by the Canadian number 2, Geri, who said she wouldn't help me finish my bottle of wine unless I behaved myself.

The following morning I started the drive home, dropping Chas from Calgary (Canada) at Vienna airport and Colin (Axbridge) at a London railway station. The drive took three days, single driver and no night driving.

The next ICS congress will be held in Beijing, China in 1993. The ordinary cavers, from east or west, will find it very expensive if they cannot get sponsorship so the congress is likely to be dominated by the academics. Despite having had such a super time in Hungary I don't plan to go there, even if I didn't have moral qualms about giving support to Beijing after their purge of the students (120,000 have been arrested since Tianenmen Square). With luck, the Chinese will foul up on their organisation, in which case Belgium will be invited to host a congress in 1994.

Charlie Self

GB ACCESS ENFORCEMENT



VAT? NEIN PERMITS ?

Cave Dinosaurs !

At the 10th ICS in Hungary the lectures were all held upstairs while there were slide shows and films running concurrently downstairs.

One of the slide shows, regrettably poorly attended, was of the discovery in a cave in Italy of the skeleton of a flying dinosaur. The cave is in Eocene limestone, which is extraordinary because the dinosaurs had officially been extinct for tens of millions of years - unless they were just keeping a low profile because of the bad press they had been receiving (brain the size of a garden pea, etc.). The skeleton is unusual in that the bone structure suggests this flying lizard had two sets of wings with independent musculature, and therefore could probably hover. Not being related to any known fossil, the creature has been named Helicopterix.

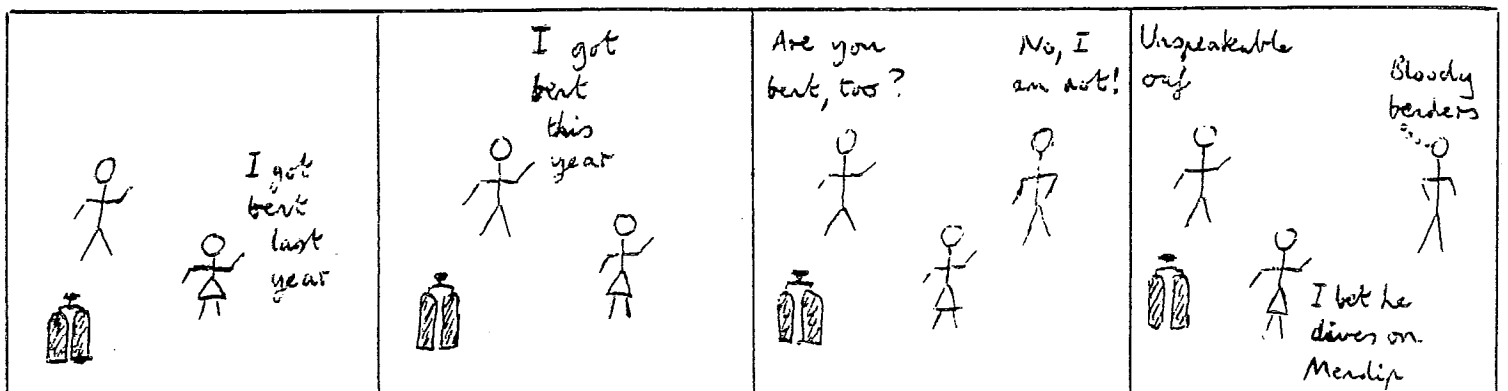
The cave is not very far from Rome, only a short bicycle ride, and the fossil protrudes out of the bedrock high in the roof of a dome-shaped chamber. Some Italians believe this skeleton could have been the inspiration for Leonardo da Vinci, the famous medieval upside-down painter who used to doodle pictures of helicopters several centuries before they were officially invented.

This is where the trouble started. The caver who discovered the fossil wants it named after him, which is the normal way of doing things: Helicopterix speleo italiano (or whatever his name is). Other members of his caving club attach greater significance to the historical record of Leonardo's drawings and want it named Helicopterix da vincii. An extraordinary amount of ill-feeling has developed in the club with several fatal stabbings and a four hour gun battle in the hills above the cave.

What luck that in the UBSS neither the Treasurer nor the Proceedings Editor are of Italian origin.

Arbutnot

University of Bristol Speleological Society
usually in the Bahamas Sub-aquan et



NATIONAL CAVING ASSOCIATION QUESTIONNAIRE.

By now, you've probably all noticed that the U.B.S.S. has gone into the junk mailing business in a big way. Out of this envelope has fallen your Newsletter, your copy of Proceedings, a slip of paper reminding you of the existence of the Oliver Lloyd Memorial Fund, three free samples of hand cream, an invitation to a seminar on the dangers of alcohol abuse and a folded piece of paper headed "THE STRUCTURE OF A FUTURE NATIONAL BODY FOR CAVING IN BRITAIN - A QUESTIONNAIRE".....What do you mean, you've thrown it in the bin already, go and get the bloody thing out again. It may not be terribly interesting but it might just prove to be fairly important, but only if enough people bother to reply.

At which point, majority of audience promptly falls into a deep slumber at the mere thought of caving politics or turns to the upside down pages at the back looking for Privateer. No such luck, folks, go on, read just a bit further.....

Like it or not, caving politics won't go away and occasionally it rears its head in a way that affects a lot of ordinary cavers e.g. the S.S.S.I. fiasco and the closing of Swildon's as a result. You might comment that without caving politics, the problem wouldn't have arisen in the first place, but I doubt that very much and the most likely scenario is that the N.C.C. would have caused just as much hassle, if not more, without any help at all from cavers. (And who spent a lot of time trying to sort the whole mess out again, certainly not the vast majority of 'ordinary cavers', most of whom were conspicuous by their absence for most of the time, but they were quick enough off the mark when it came to going down Swildon's again. So some politicians do have their uses occasionally, if only to give Joe Public something to moan about.) There are also a whole host of other quangos out in the big wide world who wouldn't be at all interested in dealing with loads of irate cavers but who might just listen to representations from an organised body.

Therefore to protect our own interests some sort of central organisation is necessary. The present structure has been in existence for about twenty years and has grown somewhat haphazardly over the years. Broadly speaking, its a federal structure, made up of the various regional councils, (Northern, Southern, Derbyshire, Wales, and Devon and Cornwall) together with specialist organisations such as the B.C.R.A., Pengelly, C.D.G., B.A.C.I., N.A.M.H.O., B.C.R.C. (and a prize of a free trip to the next N.C.A. meeting goes to anyone who can correctly decipher that load of algebra!) A brief explanation of the structure is given in the questionnaire itself. The present voting system is fairly chaotic and as it stands any of the regional councils can exercise an effective veto by a block vote. This has been used several time over the years (mainly by the Southern Council) and usually serves to preserve the status quo (or alternatively proves that we're mostly a load of bone-headed dinosaurs opposed to any change for the better, depending on your point of view).

It's obvious to most people, however, that some sort of changes are both inevitable and necessary, so a working party was set up a couple of years ago, to look into the matter and eventually to produce some sort of recommendations.

For instance one aspect of the matter that you might like to consider is the question of individual membership. Two of the regional councils (D.C.C. and D.C.U.C.) have provision for this, but non-club cavers in other areas have no means of input to other councils. It seems that the number of non-club cavers may be growing so should we make some provision for them to have their say or are we going to continue to regard caving clubs as central to the whole issue? If we would like individual membership, how, if at all should the voting be weighted?

The current form of questionnaire is the second and FINAL attempt to discover YOUR views. The first one elicited only a small response, mainly due to problems of distribution and presentation, but hopefully this one will be more successful. If you don't reply, that's your prerogative, but remember there's no point in moaning about it after the event, you've been given an opportunity to have your say, SO TAKE IT !

LINDA WILSON.

BCRA '89

Friday 15th September 1989, early evening. Two ubss student members were slowly making their way up the M5. Driving rain forced a speed limit of about 40mph. At this rate we should have been lucky to finish the journey before dawn. And what was the destination? The Dales? Derbyshire perhaps? Not exactly, we were going to Manchester.

It was the first time either of us had been to Manchester, so the first problem was not getting lost. At about midnight, after three-quarters of an hour driving round the city, we saw a tiny sign saying "UMIST". A car park appeared, the barriers up. There were people, or rather cavers, staggering around holding cans of beer. This *had* to be the right place.

For those new members who haven't yet worked out what all this is all about, we were going to the BCRA (British Cave Research Association) National Caving Conference. This is an annual piss-up which should not be missed by any self-respecting caver, though it is usually poorly attended by the student contingent of ubss. Why this should be I don't know, because it is just as worthwhile as the average trip to the Dales, and involves even *more* beer. Basically it consists of a series of lectures given by those people in the forefront of caving at home and abroad. All aspects of caving are covered from the grottiest Mendip dig to the largest caves in the world.

But in reality it's far more than just a series of lectures, and gives us mere mortals a chance to meet those demigods who go caving in more exotic locations than Mendip. More importantly, it makes you realise that if you get off your arse and organise, then you too could cave in such places as Thailand, Guizhou, Irian Jaya, or even Eire! (Sorry, that's an "in-joke".)

Obviously, cost is a major problem for expeditions such as these, so maybe sights should be set a little lower. Several University caving clubs gave impressive talks to the conference on their discoveries in Europe. (Let's hope that ubss will be doing just this next year!)

Major international expeditions, however, are not everything, and there were plenty of talks on more down-to-earth matters such as threats to caves, SSSIs, radon, photography, bats, the list is seemingly endless. One particularly thought provoking lecture was on SRT self rescue. While in no way a practical guide, since tuition and practical experience is the only way to learn, Dave Edwards stressed the *moral duty* of all those who use SRT to learn and practice effective rescue methods.

The extensions made to Penyghent Pot by ulsa over the last few years were presented in a fascinating talk, all the more amazing because the new passages were more or less "wide" open. It just goes to show what can be done if you take the trouble to look.

Don't get the wrong impression, though, the weekend is not all about being shut up in stuffy lecture theatres listening to yet another talk - attendance isn't compulsory! Saturday evening is often said to be the highlight of the weekend with the "Stomp" (basically a riot) or "Ceilidh" (actually a barn-dance), though the latter does require a partner of the opposite sex if you want to prevent unfounded rumours!

All in all, it's an excellent weekend which should not be missed by any caver.



IV. SYMPOZIUM
O PSEUDOKRASU
S MEZINÁRODNÍ ÚČASTÍ 1990

4th PSEUDOKARST SYMPOSIUM
WITH INTERNATIONAL
PARTICIPATION
1990



ČESKÁ SPELEOLOGICKÁ SPOLEČNOST
CZECH SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Term: 27th to 30th September 1990

Place: Moravian and Silesian Beskydy Mountains

We beg you to send the preliminary applications to the organizers' address:

ZO CSS 7-01 ORCUS
pošt. příhrádka 2A
735 81 Bohumín
C S S R

not later than 31st January 1990.

The participants going to read a paper are asked to send it to us (in English or German language) not later than 1st March 1990 so as to enable us to arrange the print of the Miscellany before the Symposium start.

A FEW WORDS

ABOUT THE BESKYDY MOUNTAINS

The Moravian and Silesian Beskydy Mountains form the outer part of the West Carpathians fkysh-ring the highest peak being the Lysa Hora (1.324 m above sea level). The best known beauty spots are Pustevny, Visalaje, Bumbalka, Javorovy, Karlovice. The historical centre is Rožnov pod Radhoštěm with its Walachian Architecture Open-Air museum. The Beskydy mountains are well know by many underground as well as surface pseudokarst phenomena. The longest pseudokarst cave is named Cyrilka (370 m) at the Pustevny mountain. The deepest one is the chasm of Kněhyně (-57.5 m). Both of them are gulf types which arose in flysh sandstone layers.

OK, so Cyrilka doesn't sound too exciting. Never mind. My friend George from Trebic (in Czechoslovakia) tells me that his gravity sliding cave is 390 metres long and is on nine levels. It was formed in a thick sequence of marl rocks (calcareous mudstones) by a process called subsrosion: solution of lime at the percolation/ groundwater junction leaves tiny water-filled voids. The water swells the clay minerals which become plastic and when (later) a river valley cuts through this plastic layer, gravity sliding takes place.

The symposium won't be entirely about skrot holes. Tectonic caves in American granite can run for over a mile (recent correspondence with Cato Holler), with such delightful names as Big Bat and Little Bat (connected via Gibb's Fingernail Traverse), Frigid Bat, Cracked Bat and even Amazing Bat Cave. Some have coloured stals made of opal. There are karstic caves in Venezuelan quartzite (solution of silica over millions of years) which could rival Mulu if more than a handful had ever been explored. Angel Falls (979m), the highest waterfall in the world, may once have been a wet pitch in a quartzite cave! Oh yes, there are also the glacier caves and miles and miles of volcanic lava tubes.

I plan to go to CZ in September and do a few caving trips. The symposium is near the Tatras in the north-east of the country - a prime caving region. OK, so good old George likes skrot holes, but a couple of weeks ago he soloed Poland's second deepest cave (-635m). We should get some decent caving done. Would anyone like to join us?

Charlie Sell 0272 54720

NEW YEARS DINNER.

This years dinner, to be held, as ever, on New Years Eve at about 9pm in The Hut, will be the 70th dinner. The first was held in 1919 in the Burrington Parish Rooms and the party has continued each year, in unbroken succession. It is without doubt our oldest tradition.

If you've never been to one before, or if you haven't been for years, put this one in your diary now.

The catering arrangements are fairly simple; most things are pre-cooked away from the Hut and warmed up on arrival, with the exception of the turkey, which for the past three years has been brought along as the guest of honour by Chris and Elizabeth Hawkes. There has been some discussion this year about providing a special menu to mark the occasion, Chris has suggested a couple of geese instead of a turkey (of maybe even one of each!), and Charlie is considering producing a wine list. (Some of our members, notably Charlie and Mark Owen are following in Oliver's footsteps with regard to wine appreciation.) Other items which will hopefully arrive are the world-renowned pate stuffing, accompanied by Wanda and Clive, the roast potatoes, together with Dave Irwin (as yet unconfirmed, but still hoped for), and the Christmas pudding, already promised by Trevor and Jean Shaw (and if we're lucky, Trevor's lethal but excellent rum butter). I will take care of ordinary stuffing, sprouts and carrots.

Any volunteers for bread sauce, cranberry sauce, roast parsnips, mince pies, cream and any other goodies that I've forgotten? If there are, please let me know. It always helps, to enable us to estimate quantities, if you could let me know whether you will be able to come, but if anyone has a last minute gap in the appointments section of their filofax, turn up anyway, there's usually enough!

LINDA WILSON,

38, Delvin Road,
Westbury-on-Trym,
Bristol, BS10 5EJ.

Tel. 0272 502556.

P.S. To mark the occasion, word sheets of The Old Crows will be provided and we won't have to substitute "te tum te tum te tum" for the missing line for the first time since Oliver's death.

THE 1989 N.S.S. CONVENTION

by STEVE HOBBS

The National Speleological Society (the U.S. equivalent of the B.C.R.A.) convention was held in August, 1989 at the University of the South, Sewanee, Tennessee. This week long convention included five days of lectures and workshops on all aspects of caving; equipment, science and expeditions. There were also numerous caving trips to the local area which has over 3000 caves (two thirds of which are horizontal) within 100 miles of Sewanee. These trips were not arranged by the conference organisers, but by conference participants who wanted to go caving, thus access to a car was essential. Locating the caves was made possible using the convention guidebook which lists over 100 local caves including detailed directions of how to get to them. The 240 page guidebook also describes the local geology, hydrology and geomorphology and includes some history of caving in the area and interviews with well-known local cavers.

The whole convention was very well organised. Accomodation ranged from on site camping to University rooms and local hotels. For those who wanted it, a meal card could be purchased which allowed three meals per day, with a choice of hot or cold foods, including local specialities. This was served on an "eat as much as you want" basis. Evening entertainment included slide-shows and the welcoming "Howdy Party", which consisted of a buffet, band and as much beer as you could drink. An evening trip to a local showcave was also arranged (again you had to provide your own transport) which included a buffet and band, the latter two being held in a large chamber lit by a multi-coloured chandelier!

The scale of the convention was much larger than B.C.R.A. with an attendance of several thousands of people, however it is geared towards the car owner, with little provision for those without transport. Having said this it is still very easy to find people with space in their cars who will give you a lift. In all, the convention is great fun and a ideal way to start caving in the U.S. The 1990 convention will be held in July in California. More details concerning this can be found in N.S.S. News, which we have in the U.B.S.S. library.

INTERNATIONAL PSEUDOKARST SURVEY

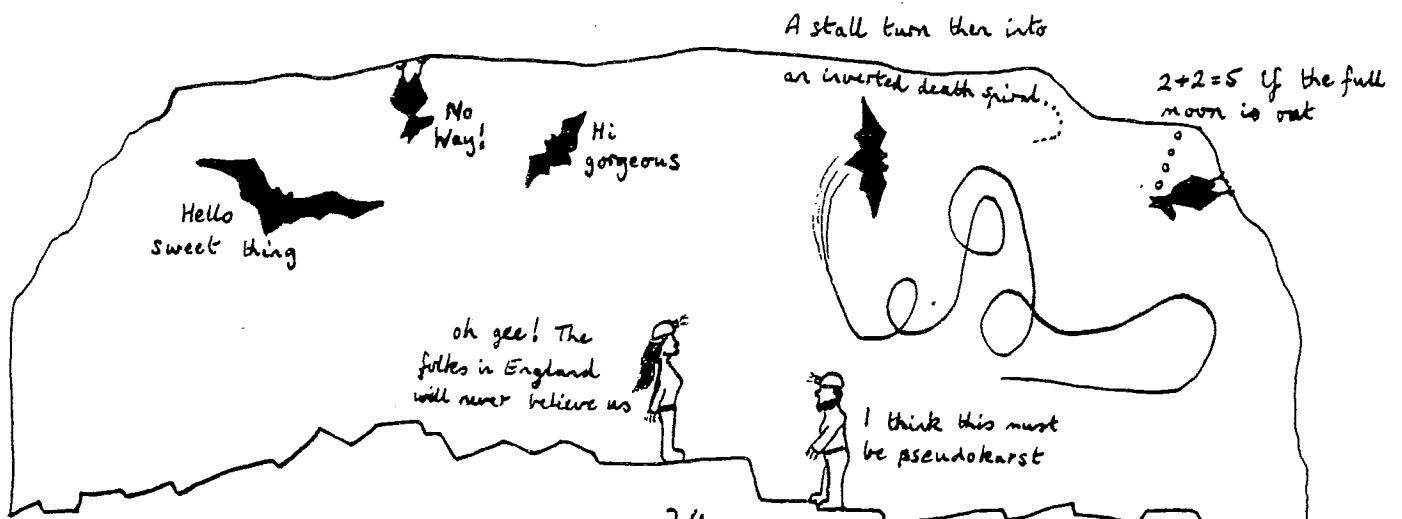
Claude Chabert, who compiled the Atlas of the longest and deepest caves in the world, is compiling another atlas on caves in non-calcareous rocks. Great Britain and Ireland are two of the very few countries that he has not been able to get data from, so he has asked my help. Claude wants to include sea caves in his survey. I think it would be helpful to include all pseudokarst caves, even those in limestone such as Sally's Rift. Please send any data to Charlie Self, 4 Tyne St, Bristol BS2 9UA or telephone 0272 541728.

A typical report would be: Cateran Hole near Alnwick, Northumberland. Length 38m, gravity sliding in sandstone.

Extra information, such as a grid reference (NU102236) and the age of the rock (Carboniferous) would be nice but is not essential.

Troglobite

in America (with apologies to Dr Cato Holler Jr. and to Peg Palmer)



Savory's Cameras

The Society holds as part of its collection a number of glass plate negative photographs taken by Harry Savory. These were taken between 1910 and 1928, the details surrounding their production having recently appeared in two books: *To Photograph Darkness* and *A Man Deep In Mendip*, both published by Alan Sutton of Gloucester.

Unfortunately, even Savory's diaries, extracts of which make up the latter volume, do not give many details of the equipment that he used for his historic pictures. Certainly, Savory owned and used Sanderson and Thornton Pickard cameras; both still belong to the family, although his second son John Savory has commented that they are in immaculate condition and it is unlikely they were ever used for underground work in the more arduous locations such as were found in Swildon's Hole.

It is the quarter plate camera used in Swildon's that is the tantalising one. Savory referred to this as a 'T.S.' camera in his diaries, but there has been no obvious contender for a camera with these initials. One possibility was that T.S. stood for 'Time Shutter', this item being useful for open flash techniques. However, lenses were not normally referred to in this way, and such a designation would have been unusual. Indeed, most lenses possessed a mechanism for holding the shutter open, which was contained within the lens itself. A time shutter would probably not be singled out as the means of identifying a lens.

John Savory, writing in *A Man Deep In Mendip*, suggested that the T.S. camera might be a privately made wooden model, but this also seems unlikely in the context of use by a photographer of Savory's standing. Either a custom-built camera would be cheap, and not up to standard, or a very expensive item which would probably not have been taken underground. However, another explanation for the 'T.S.' designation has now been found.

By 1907 both Thornton Pickard and Lancaster produced 'Two Shutter' cameras. The Thornton model was a Two Shutter Imperial, a field camera with both focal plane and diaphragm shutters. Lancaster made the Focal Plane Two Shutter camera and the Plano Reflex Twin Shutter camera. These models would fit the initials 'T.S.', but there would in fact be little point in taking a specialist, expensive, heavy camera such as these underground. A better solution lies with the Houghton company.

In the early years of this century there was a general move towards smaller and lighter cameras that would be more portable. One such camera, marketed in different versions from the turn of the century until the Second World War, was the Tropical Sanderson quarter plate camera, made by Houghton's Ltd. It was compact, robust, and resistant to damp, being manufactured for use in humid, tropical climates such as 'India and the Colonies'. The wooden parts were not covered with leather, as were many models, since a 'leather covering is sometimes liable to rot and peel when exposed to a damp atmosphere' (1907 advertisement). The leather bellows were mounted onto the camera with brass, rather than glue which might dissolve.

Although it is not possible to prove which camera Savory used, the Tropical Sanderson is a prime contender. Its specifications would seem ideal for the work he was undertaking, and it is the only viable camera that fits the 'T. S. quarter plate' description.

I am grateful to Roy C. Hungerford of the Royal Photographic Society Historical Group for his help in tracing information concerning the Tropical Sanderson camera.

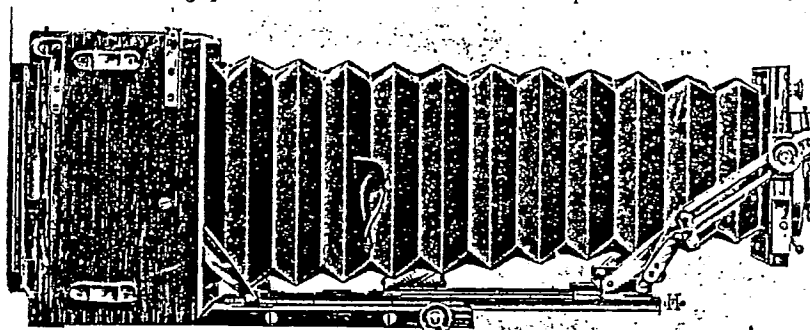
Chris Howes

HOUGHTONS, Ltd.

Manufacturers and Wholesalers.

The "Tropical Sanderson."

This is a model of the celebrated "Sanderson" Camera, which is constructed of selected Teak, a wood recognised for its great damp and heat resisting qualities. The outside woodwork is polished instead of



being leather covered, for leather covering is sometimes liable to rot and peel when exposed to a damp atmosphere. The cameras are brass bound in all vital parts, and the bellows are specially attached with brass plates to the body of the camera. The "Tropical Sanderson" can be confidently recommended for export to India and the Colonies. It is essentially the traveller's camera, for nothing is sacrificed to appearance, and every practical point has been considered.

No. 1. Tropical Model Sanderson Hand Camera, complete with Beck Double Aplanat Lens, F/7.7, Unicum or Automat Shutter, Brilliant View Finder, Level, three Special Teak Double Plate Holders	1/4-plate. 5 x 4 1/2-plate.			
		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
		7 18 0	9 0 0	12 0 0

Any lens or shutter can be fitted to the "Tropical Sanderson." See price list. Houghton Film Envelope Adapters are specially made in teak for this model.

BRITISH MADE.

Advertisement from the British Journal of Photography Almanac, 1907. p329.

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

With the publication this week of Volume 18 part 3 of the Proceedings, the Editor Dr. Trevor Shaw has rendered his resignation. Trevor has been editor for five years and the Society is greatly in his debt for an enormous amount of painstaking work over those years. He has gently nudged authors into producing manuscript, given great attention to detail all along the production line and attracted funding to help the journal pay its way. We thank him most warmly for his loyal and devoted services.

Recent numbers of this Newsletter have carried letters highly critical of editorial policy with regard to the Proceedings and further letters are at hand. I regard it as pointless to pursue these arguments in the light of the present situation. I do not believe that the issuing of such letters in the Newsletter is the right way to tackle the problems; they inevitably lead to counter-attacks, which grow more contentious and acrimonious with each contribution. I would much prefer that members express their views to me directly as Chairman of the Editorial Committee.

With the help of senior members of the Society, I am currently reviewing the whole structure and composition of the editorial committee and its place within the UBSS. The way ahead is far from clear; there are serious problems which must be resolved if the Proceedings is to continue. In due course I shall report to the UBSS Committee.

Bob Savage,
President, UBSS.

DEAR ~~ANDY~~ SIR,

Please could our members assist with a request for information, which came to me as part of a letter from Martin Joyce, who described himself to me as 'an ex-UBSS secretary from years back'. The letter was written in the context of our various Club songs and an extract from it reads :-

"Does anyone have the words of 'The Medical Student'? I once heard OCL "sing" it (he may well have written it, in fact).....As far as I can remember it went something like:

There once was a medical student,
No better nor worse than the rest,
Who thought it would not be imprudent,
To do the thing that he did best.

The rest of it is lost to me, but you can perhaps surmise that what he did best was SEX."

Well, can anyone provide the rest of the words. If so, how about a reply on these pages in the next issue? As a word of encouragement, my appeal for information in the issue before last concerning the words of "The Old Crows", certainly bore fruit, with Nigel Wallace (a student 1958-60) providing the lost line and Martin Joyce providing an interesting version that appears to have no connection with UBSS but which adds another variant to a tradition that stretches from here to America and is traceable in definite form as far back as the fifteenth century and in origin several hundreds of years further. I hope that an article will be ready in time for the next issue.

Just as a final note, however, I haven't been able to make much progress with the "Hish, hash, hosh" ritual. Please could you all rack your brains a final time on the subject and peer back into the mists of an alcohol sodden New Years Eve long ago, just in case.....

Best Wishes,

LINDA WILSON.

FRESHERS YORKSHIRE WEEKEND by Hannah Bartholomew

This years freshers trip to Yorkshire was, I am told, not typical of UBSS Yorkshire weekends. The main difference was that we actually did some caving-and didn't go into the Fountains cafe once!

We went under ground on Saturday and slightly less enthusiastically on Sunday, spending about four hours underground each day, and I think everyone had alot of fun. All the caves we went down were 'dry' caves, which as I discovered means that the water doesn't come higher than the top of your legs too often, but of course that didn't stop us all from getting soaked, because it was flowing so fast that if we weren't crawling through it, or climbing up a waterfall-the chances are we were being knocked over backwards by it. But that didn't matter-it was brilliant running down the streamways and sliding back downstream after battling up in the other direction-and Sarahs aerobics session kept everyone warm while they were waiting at the bottom of a ladder pitch!

Some aspects of the trip were the same as always:

It hardly stopped raining all weekend, but that didn't matter when you're in a cave (except when it floods-ed)-still it didn't make getting changed into a wet wetsuit in a lay-by half way up a mountain on a Sunday morning much fun!

Twenty-one of us were sleeping in two four berth caravans which wasn't very comfortable, but at least no one got cold.

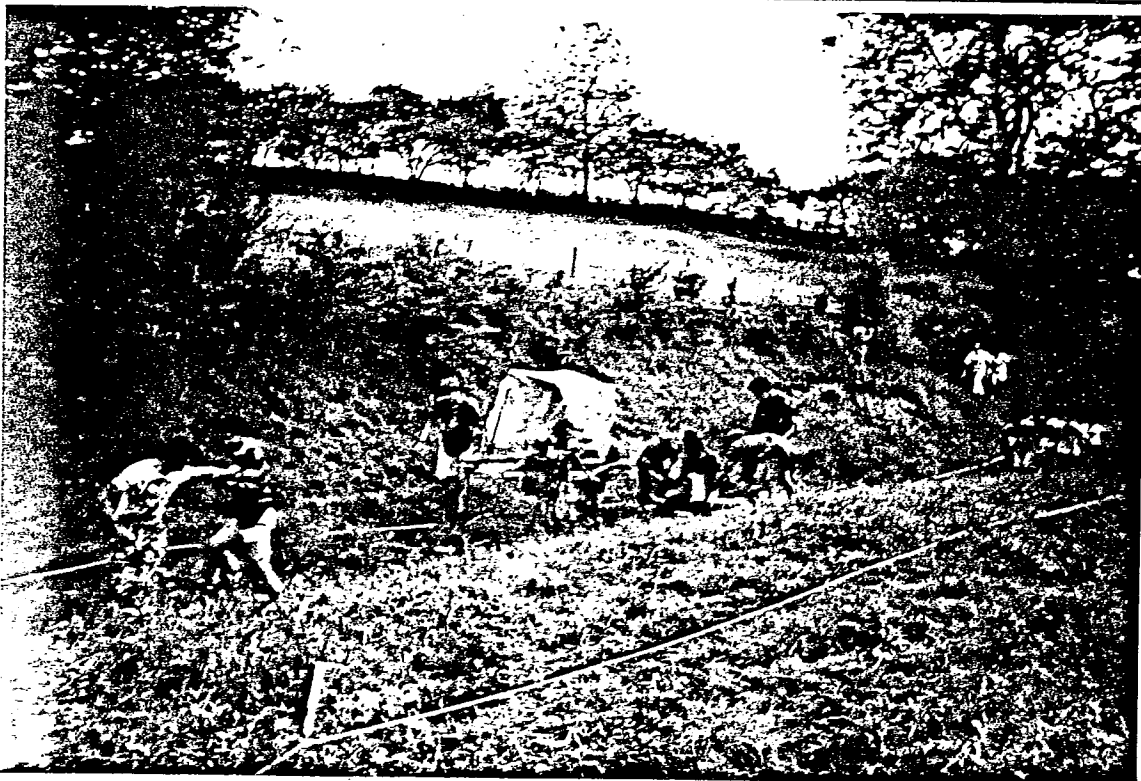
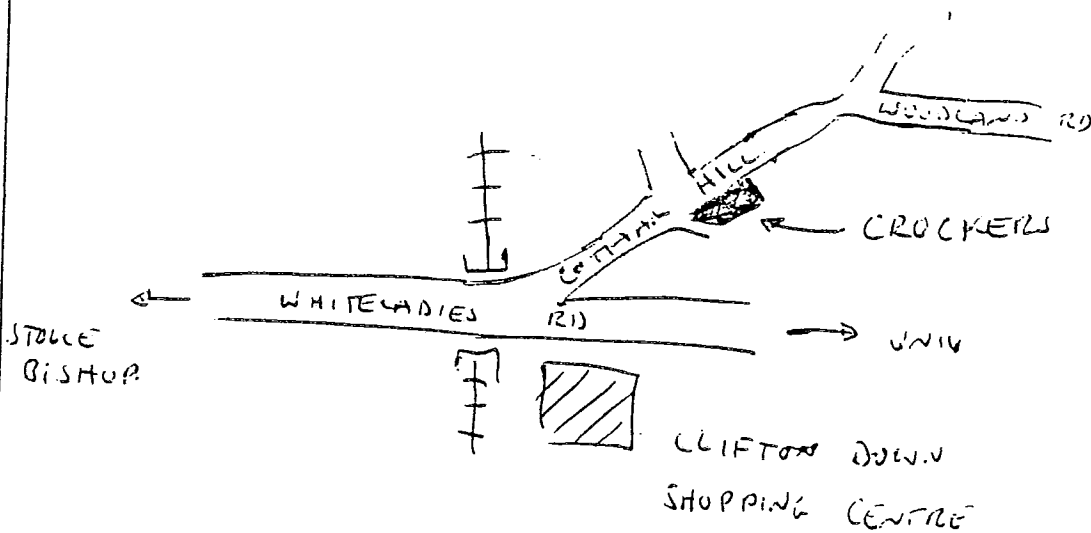
And, of course, the highlight of the weekend was the trip to the Marton Arms on Saturday evening, and as always everyone had a great time, drank far too much, and, eventually, got thrown out.

I thoroughly enjoyed the weekend, and am looking forward to returning before too long (if they will have us back at the caravan site) I have decided that Yorkshire caving can be great fun, and well worth the six and a half hours that it took us to get there on Friday evening.

PLEASE NOTE

WE NOW MEET IN
CROCKERS PUB (UPPER BAR)

EVERY TUES 9.30 p.m. ALL WELCOME.



THE WESSEX CHALLENGE 1984 - USSS VS BEC - NOTE CHARLIE ON THE FLOOR BEING DUFFED UP WHILE PAUL O LOOKS ON - PHOTO CAROLE WHITE (AG)