

WESSEX CAVE CLUB

Journal No. 109, Vol. 9.

November 1966

CLUB NEWS

OFFICERS & COMMITTEE FOR 1966-67

President: F.W. Frost
Vice Presidents: M. Norbert Casteret, Rev. C.H.D. Cullingford, Mrs. D.P. Dobson-Hinton,
Dr. E.K. Tratman, Dr. F.S. Wallis, C.W. Harris, Com. P.B. Lawder
Chairman: L.M. Teasdale
Hon. Sec: J.D. Hanwell
Asst. Sec: R.M. West
Hon. Treas: Mrs.B. Surrall
Gear Curator: P.M. Giles
Committee: J. Cornwell, P.R. Cousins, P. Duck, C.J. Hawkes, G. Moore, G. Pointing
T.E. Reynolds, R.J. Staynings, A.J. Surrall
Auditor: C.H. Kenney
Trustees: F. W. Frost, C.H. Kenney, P. Davies, J.D. Hanwell

APPOINTMENTS AND DUTIES FOR 1966-67

Members are strongly urged to direct any specific queries to the appropriate person in the following list of appointments for the current Club year:-

Hon. Secretary: J.D. Hanwell

"Chaumbey", 50 Wells Road, Wookey Hole, Wells, Somerset.
Internal Club Policy. Liaison with other clubs and outside organisations

Asst. Secretary: R.M. West

Elm Tree Cottage, Hallatrow, Nr. Bristol
Access to controlled Mendip Caves; keys and C.C.C. Permits

Hon. Treasurer: Mrs.B. Surrall,

216 Evesham Road, Headless Cross, Redditch, Worcs.
Overall finances of the club

Subscription Treasurer: G. Moore

4 Hazelwood Road, Sneyd Park, Bristol 9.
Payment of Annual Subscriptions

New HQ Development Organiser: P. Davies

"Morley", Silver Street, Nailsea, Bristol, Phone Nailsea 2009.
Authorising expenditure on development and controller of works as directed by the sub-committee

Gear Curator & Hut Warden: P.M. Giles

C.P.O.'s Mess, R.N.A.S. Yeovilton, Yeovil, Somerset

Control of hut accommodation and bookings, facilities and maintenance,
including use of tackle

Deputy Hut Wardens: R. West, J. Cornwell, P. Cousins, T.E. Reynolds, T. Atkinson.

Librarian: Dr. D.M.M. Thomson

Pinkacre, Leigh-on-Mendip, Nr. Bath, Somerset.

Organisation of Hillgrove Reference Library

Holder of publications in Lending Library

Journal Editor: T.E. Reynolds

Yew Court, Pangbourne, Berks.

Articles for publication, Surveys and Journal Sales

All matters pertaining to Journal

Journal Production: P.R. Cousins

3 Kinver Road, Sydenham, London S.E.26.

Organisation of publication and distribution of Journals

Caving Secretary: R.J. Staynings

8 Fanshawe Road, Hengrove, Bristol 4. Phone: Whitchurch 3689.

Arrangements for official Club Caving Programme

Rescue Practices; Social functions and Lectures;

Applications for membership

Technical Projects Organiser: A. J. Surrall

216 Evesham Road, Headless Cross, Redditch, Worcs.

Club Digs, research projects, etc.

Sales Services: G. Pointing

10 Green Lane, Avonmouth, Bristol.

Organisation of sales of Club stocks, ties, badges, carbide, supplies of neoprene, etc.

New HQ Sub-Committee: The Following sub-committee, under the Chairmanship of C.H. Kenney, has been empowered by the full committee to take action on all matters of detail concerning the development and erection of the New Headquarters at Eastwater Farm:- P. Davies, P. Duck, S. Causer, P.M. Giles, J.D. Hanwell and R.J. Staynings.

The sub-committee may co-opt members if deemed necessary.

Club Administration

The previous two pages have been devoted to a list of the Officers and Committee of the Club, and include a summary of the particular jobs each will be doing during the coming year. It will be appreciated that many duties have been widely delegated, and members will be aware that the whole object of such an exercise will be defeated unless they direct queries to the appropriate source. To this end an additional sheet has been inserted so that all members can have immediately to hand the information needed to expedite their correspondence and to make club administration less time-consuming. You are encouraged to enclose a stamped, addressed envelope should any matter require urgent attention as this helps enormously and saves us a great deal of expenditure on internal postages.

Members are urged to notify any committee member of changes in their address as soon as possible, in writing please and not casually during general conversation. Furthermore, in accordance with our Rules, we trust that everyone will pay their subscriptions before the beginning of the New Year to save us the thankless and costly task of issuing reminders.

Finally, please give the club your full support in all the activities which are arranged on your behalf. Every member should make a point of studying the Programme of Events and Club News in each Journal, not just to see what we are offering, but in order to take an active share in helping us in the tasks we have set ourselves.

New H.Q. Project

A full progress report was circulated in October in the Hon. Sec's Review of the last Club Year, and those who attended our AGM on October 22nd had the opportunity of hearing detailed comments by many other officers and members. The substance of these discussions will appear subsequently in the Minutes and Reports of the Meeting. It is a great pity that so many members did not attend this important function, and so failed to gain a first-hand appreciation of both the feasibility and importance of the project to which we are now committed.

Briefly, there are two aspects which require our immediate attention; first to donate as much money as we can, and second to offer help in preparing the site. Both aspects are equally important at the moment, but in the long run one might say that the more money which is received now the less will be the demand for volunteer labour for the ultimate building. Obviously, therefore, the boosting of the Hut Fund must be every member's first concern, and I would urge all those who have not donated to do so now!

It has been resolved that any members who wish to work on the site may camp there for the period of their stay. However, it will be appreciated that this can only apply to tents, and not caravans. The latter take up too much room and a rash of such temporary buildings could prejudice our current negotiations with the Local Planning Authorities. It may be necessary to place one caravan on the site to function as a focus for encouraging help until such time as adequate alternative buildings have been officially erected.

Access to Caves

We are all aware that many landowners and tenants now require certain conditions and assurances for getting into the caves on their land. This situation is bound to get more complex as other caves become more popular. Naturally different owners require different arrangements to meet their individual circumstances in various districts. The one thing which is common to all is that the access agreements have often taken a lengthy time to secure, but can be destroyed in a moment by cavers who neglect, or do not care, to find out the correct access procedures. The recent removal of the lock from Lamb Leer by an unknown group is a case in point, which could easily have led to closure of the cave.

The Cave Rescue Organisation and Council of Southern Caving Clubs have now published pamphlets, which are now on sale and give up-to-date information which should be adhered to by all of us. All cavers are advised to acquire copies of the following handbooks:-

- a) Council of Southern Caving Clubs Handbook Price 2/- plus 6d. postage, from the Assistant Hon. Sec. C.S.C.C., I.J. Standing, 4 Springhill Lodge, Spring Hill, Nailsworth, Glos.
- b) Permission to Explore Northern Caves and Potholes Price 2/- inc. postage, from the Hon. Sec. the Cave Rescue Organisation, B. Boardman, 29 Norfolk Avenue, Burnley, Lancs.

Members may also care to note the following special access arrangements for caves not included in the above handbooks:-

- i. Agen Allwedd (South Wales). All applications should be made to Bill Maxwell, 12 Heybridge Drive, Barkingside, Ilford, Essex. Indemnity chits are no longer needed but applications should be made with a full month's notice, a list of those on the party and a deposit of £1.0.0. for the key. Stamped and addressed envelopes ensure speedy replies.
- ii. Tunnel Cave and Dan-yr-Ogof (South Wales). Apply to the Hon. Sec., South Wales Caving Club, 1-10 Powell St., Penwyllt, Pen-y-Cae, Brecon. (NOTE: The Wessex have their own leaders for Ogof Ffynnon Ddu, and members interested in this cave should contact R.J. Staynings, 8 Fanshawe Road, Hengrove, Bristol 4.).
- iii. Ogof Dydd Byraf (North Wales). Apply to V. Swain, 71 Ellesmere Road, Shrewsbury, Shropshire.
- iv. Ecton Mines (Derbyshire). Apply to Hon. Treas., Derbyshire Caving Assoc., E.A. Briggs, 47 Milldale Avenue, Buxton, Derbyshire.

Council of Southern Caving Clubs, Annual Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of the Council will be held on Saturday 7th January 1967, in the Geography Lecture Theatre in the University of Bristol, University Road, Bristol S, at 2.15 p.m. All cavers are invited to attend.

Cave Research Group Meetings

The following dates and places have been fixed for general meetings during 1967:-

Southern: May 6th and 7th at Buckfastleigh, Devon.

Arrangements by Pengelly Cave Research Centre.

Northern: June 24th and 25th at Settle, West Yorkshire.

Arrangements by Northern Cavern and Mine Research Society.

New Members

We welcome the following new Joint Member elected on 3rd October 1966:-

Mrs. J. Lloyd, 31 Boston Road, Hanwell, London W.7.

Also the following, elected on 6th November 1966:-

R. Jones, 64a Eastfield Road, Burnham, Bucks.

R.A. Spurdens, 45 Brighton Road, Hooley, Nr. Coulsdon, Surrey.

D.J. Irwin, 9 Campden Hill Gardens, London W.8.

Pine Tree Pot Key

The club now holds a key to Pine Tree Pot which is available from the Assistant Secretary on request.

'UMPTTEENTH NIGHT' PARTY

The Wessex 'Umpteenth' Night Party will be held this year at The Red Lion Hotel, Wells, on January 28th. Tickets 7/6d. each from Roy Staynings, 8 Fanshawe Road, Hengrove, Bristol 4.

CLUB MEETS

Please give the Leader previous notice of your intention to join any trip. This ensures that sufficient leaders are available and is useful if any last-minute changes have to be made.

Saturday November 26th 3 p.m. Stoke Lane

Leader: Hugh Pearson, 111 Hampton Road, Redland, Bristol 6.

Saturday December 10th 3 p.m. G.B.

Leader: Alan Trickey, "Stanleaze", Brockley Way, Brockley, Backwell, Bristol.

7 p.m. Film "The Mountains of Glass" together with short talk by John Earle (BBC) at the Mermaid Hotel, Wells. (Skittle Alley also booked). A collection will be taken to help defray costs.

Saturday December 17th 2.30 p.m. Lamb Leer

Leader: Dave Westlake, 41 Tristan Drive, Creech St. Michael, Taunton, Somerset.

7 p.m. Diggers Evening (Illustrated) Wookey Hole Inn, Wookey Hole.

Saturday January 7th 2.30 p.m. Eastwater

Leader: Will Edwards, 91 Rookery B.oad, Knowle, Bristol 4.

Sunday January 15th 11 a.m. Longwood/August Series.

Leader: Hugh Pearson, 111 Hampton Road, Redland, Bristol 6.

Saturday January 28th 2.30 p.m. Stone Mines (Meet Bath Bus Station)

Leader: Will Edwards (address above).

Also Umpteenth Night Party - see Club News.

Saturday February 4th 2.0 p.m. Hunters Hole.

Leader: Tony Dingle, 107 Waverley Road, Stoneleigh, Epsom, Surrey.

Saturday February 18th 3.0 p.m. G.B.

Leader: Hugh Pearson (address above)

Weekend March 11th/12th South Wales: Dan-yr-Ogof, Ogof Ffynnon Ddu, Pant Mawr, etc.

Leader: Tim Atkinson, Bottom Flat, 25 Richmond Terrace, Clifton, Bristol 8.

Saturday March 18th 2.30 p.m. Burrington Combe (Beginners welcome)

Leader: Will Edwards, 91 Rookery Road, Knowle, Bristol 4.

Easter March 24th-27th Yorkshire (details later).

Weekend April 15th/16th Agen Allwedd

Leader: T. C. Bryant, Glyncoed, Victoria Road, Maesycwmmer, Hengoed, Glam.

Weekend May 27th/28th Derbyshire

Leader: Dave Westlake (address above).

WESSEX ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the Wessex Cave Club was held at Priddy Village Hall on the 22nd October 1966. About 60 members were present. The President took the chair at 3.15 and after reading apologies for absence welcomed members to the meeting. He then went on to say that this A.G.M. was a very important one for the club since the actions of this meeting would have a long term effect on the club and he hoped that the members would ask questions and give the Committee as much guidance as possible.

The Minutes of the 1965 A.G.M. had already been circulated and they were signed as correct. Jim Hanwell then mentioned the items which last year's Committee had been instructed to attend to by the 1965 A.G.M. and reported that these had been done by the Committee during the year.

The Secretary's Report for 1965/66 had already been circulated and was taken as read. Jim Hanwell then opened the discussion by referring to the problem of the growth of the club. He mentioned Hywel Murrell's comments to a previous A.G.M. to the effect that when the numbers of a club were between 200 and 500 this was the most critical time for the club owing to the difficulties of administration. He hoped that the club would continue to grow, since if the growth of the club was curbed it would start to decline. In addition, by going ahead with the building of a new H.Q. the club was, to some extent, committed to a programme of growth. In the discussion that followed it was pointed out that the load sharing of the Secretary's job which had taken place some years ago had been satisfactory as far as the Secretary was concerned, but now it was the Treasurer who had too much work to do. Jim Giles pointed out that a lot of the trouble would be avoided if people, instead of joining the club for what they could get out of it, did something for the running of the club instead. Finally, in order to assist the Treasurer, it was proposed by C.W. Harris, and seconded by Howard Kenney, that's 'The Committee be empowered to appoint assistants to any of the Officers where necessary'.

Jim Hanwell then went on to mention another problem caused by the size of the club, that of Journal Production. He mentioned that in this connection he would like to thank Dave Savage and all the members of the Journal Production Team for the work which they had done during the year. Then Tim Reynolds, the Editor, mentioned the problems of producing the Journal and that at the moment it was becoming almost too large a job for the club to handle and that we would soon be faced with a breakdown of Journal Production. One way out of this would be to have the Journal produced professionally four times a year. A newsletter which we would produce ourselves would also be issued if this was done. This would double the cost of the Journal, and at the present we would have to increase the subscription to £2. to cover our costs - how did members feel about this? There then followed a general discussion during which Nick Hart, a previous Journal Production Manager, explained the difficulties of lack of interest amongst members, and the sheer size of the problem which he had encountered when he had done the Journal Production. At the end of the discussion no firm decision had been reached.

The Secretary then made a plea for more non-members of the Committee to come forward and lead club trips, since the Committee had led nearly all the Club Trips in the past year. He then called on Oliver Lloyd, the Hon. Sec. of the M.R.O., who wished to address the Wessex. Oliver Lloyd then said that whilst the Wessex had a Rescue Team based on Bristol which did very good work in mid-week rescues, the Wessex could assist the M.R.O. even further by holding practice rescues so that the bulk of the club membership got practical experience of rescue techniques which were invaluable on rescues. Oliver then went on to explain how to arrange a practice rescue (obtain rescuers, victim, cave and date and then notify the Hon. Sec. of M.R.O, who will then provide warden and rescue equipment), and he concluded by hoping that the Wessex would arrange a practice rescue. Roy Staynings then said that this had just been done.

The Secretary then finished his comments on his report by proposing a vote of thanks to the retiring committee members: Nick Hart, Bob Gannicott, Rod Hobbs and Carl Pickstone. He also proposed a special vote of thanks to Phil Davies who, first as Secretary and then as a Committee Member, had done a lot to make the club what it is today. Finally he thanked Howard Kenney for his work as chairman and dogsbody. Luke Devenish proposed a vote of thanks to the Secretary for his report.

Howard Kenney gave the Treasurer's Report to the meeting. He said that the accounts showed a very successful year for the club, the main cause in the increase in the surplus over last year being the increase in the surplus from goods sold to members. The club owed a lot to the people who had made this possible, especially Roy Staynings for his work in selling Nife Sets. However, the club should be cautious about the amount of surplus shown by these accounts, since most of this is due to items which may never occur again. In fact, if the makeup of the surplus was split down, it revealed that the income from subscriptions only just covered our general administrative expenses, and that if we had not raised the subscriptions then the subscription income would not have covered these expenses. But, since the club had ample funds just at present, Howard Kenney recommended that we transfer the whole of the surplus of £400. to the Hut Fund and as much as possible of the cash in the bank to the Building Society. He also pointed out that the prosperous picture shown by the accounts should not stop members from donating to the Hut Fund since the grant we were hoping to get was a 50% one, i.e. we would be matched pound for pound for whatever we could raise, so we wanted as many donations as possible now. Finally, the club owed a great deal of thanks to Barbara, the Treasurer, for the amount of work which she had done during the year. By way of comparison, the total volume of the club's transactions ten years ago had been £340., this year they were £2,114. This showed the increase in the amount of work done by the Treasurer, and quite obviously an assistant was needed. Mr. Beauchamp then proposed that we should transfer £400. of our surplus to the Hut Fund and £450 of the cash at bank to the Building Society. This was seconded by Alan Surrall and passed. A vote of thanks was then passed by the meeting for the work done by Barbara Surrall as Treasurer.

Howard Kenney then outlined the plans for the new H.Q. from the financial angle. He said that the Committee had made a rough estimate of the cost, assuming a considerable amount of voluntary help, which was in the region of £2,750. In order to get a grant we would have to show that we were capable of raising half of this sum, the grant would be the other half. The present economic freeze would not make any difference to the awarding of the grant, it would only mean that payment of the grant would be postponed until the economic position of the country had improved. However, this was no hardship, because we could then, when we knew that we had been awarded the grant, start work using the money which we had raised, and finish off using the money from the grant. The application for the grant was making satisfactory progress. The application had been originally referred to the Somerset County Playing Fields Association, who had inspected the site and given the application their blessing. From there, the application had gone on to the local Education Authority who were considering it now. Jim Hanwell then pointed out to those members who felt pessimistic about the capabilities of the club to produce a building of the required standard by voluntary labour, that the answer to this problem was to donate more money so that we can have the job done professionally. So the more money which we received in donations the less work we had to do ourselves. The reason why very little work had been done to date was that one of the conditions for giving a grant was that we should not have started work on the proposed building until the grant was given. So until we heard that we had got the grant we could not start work on the building, but, since the grant was for the building only, it was quite all right for us to go ahead with the site works and if as many members as possible could lend a hand with laying the hard core, etc., it would be a great help and the job would be done far more quickly and easily than otherwise. Replying to a question as to whether there were any strings attached to the grant, Jim Hanwell said that the only restriction was that our membership should be open to the public. Our membership, unlike that of a university or school club, is open to the public because anyone can apply. The government recognised our right to safeguard ourselves by refusing people membership. The matter had been discussed with people in local government and education, and they had all said that there were no strings attached to a grant of this nature.

Jim Hanwell then read out the names of the Officers and Committee for 1966-67, these were:-
President: F.W. Frost. Vice Presidents: M. N. Casteret, Rev .C.H.D. Cullingford, Mrs. D.P. Dobson-Hinton, Dr. E.K. Tratman, Dr. F.S. Wallis, C.W. Harris, Com. P.B. Lawder. Chairman: L.M. Teasdale. Hon. Secretary: J.D. Hanwell. Asst. Secretary: R. West. Hon. Treasurer: Mrs.B. Surrall. Gear Curator: P.M. Giles. Committee: J. Cornwell, P.R. Cousins, P. Duck, C.J. Hawkes, G. Moore, G. Pointing, T.E. Reynolds, R. Staynings, A.J. Surrall. Jim Hanwell drew the attention of members to the change of the Assistant Secretary from Les Teasdale to Rich West. It had not been necessary to have an election again this year, which was perhaps a bad thing, but on the other hand there had been a large number of changes this year. The next item on the agenda was election of the auditor, and it was proposed by Frank Frost, and seconded by Luke Devenish that Howard Kenney be appointed auditor; this was passed by the meeting.

Luke Devenish then proposed a vote of thanks to the outgoing Officers and Committee for the immense amount of work which they had done. This was seconded by D. Warburton and passed. Phil Davies then made an appeal for tools, etc., for the new H.Q. site. In particular he would be very grateful if he could hear from any member who could lend either a cement mixer or a wheel barrow. In addition, spades, etc., were always useful. A full list of what would be required would be published in the Journal. Jim Giles also put in a plea for members to save Green Shield Stamps to go towards the new H.Q.

The meeting was declared closed at 4.50 p.m.

CAVE RESEARCH GROUP SOUTHERN MEETING AT WELLS,

18th June 1966

Der Fiedermausfänger

The Wessex Cave Club acted as Hosts to the recent C.R.G. Meeting at Kennion Road School, Wells. Before the meeting the participants were sustained with tea and biscuits, a thoughtful service which was very much appreciated, as the papers lasted for a solid three hours!

A display of surveys, Wessex Journals and the club albums with photographs of the Wessex trip to the Pyrenees, the recent discoveries in G.B. and the C.R.G. stand were on view. The C.R.G. stand is mainly of a biological nature, illustrating some of the work the C.R.G. carry out in this field. Photographs, diagrams and animals embalmed in clear plastic were shown, together with some recent publications.

The meeting opened with a pep talk by Dr. Trevor Ford on the subject of subscriptions. Because these were nearly tripled at the last A.G.M. only two thirds of the membership have renewed them. Dr. Ford preached fire and brimstone on the non payers and even though I had paid mine I still felt jolly uncomfortable and hot under the collar.

The first paper was by Dr. W.I. Stanton on "The Impact of Quarrying on Mendip". Since Willie has returned to Portugal the paper was read by Dr. E.K. Tratman. So profuse were Tratty's remarks that the paper was not written by him and it did not necessarily reflect his views, that we were beginning to wonder what Dr .W.I. Stanton had written. As it turned out it was a most interesting paper interrupted only by comments from Mary Hazelton's dog.

It appears that limestone quarrying is increasing on Mendip to an undesirable extent from 1.2 million tons in 1947 to 3 million tons in 1965. At this rate of quarrying this figure will rise to 5 million tons in 1970 and it is estimated that if this increase continued there would be no limestone left on Mendip in 8,000 years. Various alternatives were suggested i.e. using other materials instead of limestone and making quarries deeper thereby obviating the need for unsightly scars on the landscape.

Many other interesting snippets of information came to light in the course of the paper i.e. that the total length of Mendip Caves is 15 miles, which are some of the most congested in the country.

In the discussion which followed Dr. T. Ford mentioned that quarry regulations did not allow steps deeper than 60ft. to be worked and that in Derbyshire one company had been forced to mine stone underground. The latter practice appears quite widespread in America and the space left is consequently sold as cold storage areas!

The second paper was entitled "The Wall Fungus found in Many South Wales Caves" and was given by Mrs Ann Mason Williams. In her introduction she implied that she had forgotten all about the paper and had hastily written it within the past week. She had a variety of slides of caves and fungus. The former included some of the new series in Dan yr Ogof. It appears that to date all the fungus found in caves has contemporary examples on the surface or in the soil and unlike certain cave animals there does not appear to be any particular species which is only found in caves. A most interesting paper.

The third and final paper was by M.J. Walker on "Speleogenesis in the Cantabro-Asturic Mountains (Spain). This was by far the most humorous paper and caused a considerable amount of amusement. Our secretary, Jim Hanwell was working the slide projector. He was pushing through slides at a great rate of knots, only to be encouraged by the speaker to put them through even faster! Then when he finally caught up he had to go back one. This slide then was held for ten minutes and then once more the rush would occur, much to the amusement of all, except Jim! The slides were mostly overexposed and every other one was greeted with "This is not a very good slide but it shows what I mean". Like the previous paper I do not think that enough time had been spent on preparation. The talk was more descriptive than spelaeo-genetic, and it will be most interesting to see how it turns out in print.

Although about 40 members and members of member clubs attended the meeting, the papers covered a sufficiently wide field for the speakers to have deserved an even larger audience.

MCMASTER UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY
DEPARTMENT OF GEOLOGY

Limestone cavern research project

Applications are invited for Graduate Studies proceeding to the Master's or Doctorate degrees, specializing in cave research. Subjects may include the genesis of erosional forms, the nature of carbonate and non-carbonate deposits, rates of carbonate solution, regional studies. Fieldwork is considered essential. Field areas are: Ontario and the Appalachian region of the United States; parts of the Rockies; Jamaica. McMaster University possesses special facilities for appropriate laboratory analysis and simulation.

Scholarship and assistantship funds are available, generally totalling around \$2,800 per student per year. There are also travel monies to aid foreign students in the passage to Canada and certain allowances for personal field equipment.

University regulations require that all candidates for advanced degrees possess a Bachelor's degree of the First or upper Second Class when they take up residence at the commencement of the academic year, (September or October).

For further details please write, before February 1st 1967, to;

Professor D.C. Ford, B.A., D.Phil.,
Department of Geography,
McMaster University,
Hamilton, Ontario, Canada.

“A NEW C.R.G.”

You are a Member of C.R.G.

You may not know it but you are, by virtue of being a Member of a Member Club.

Now we have your bonafides straight....

What do you know of C.R.G.

Ever been to a meeting?

Obviously you know who C.R.G. is: The Cave Research Group.

A lot of mad scientists!

That's one thing people call us. Others are less polite!

If you think that C.R.G. is rather out of touch, not for cavers, 'with it', or whatever else you choose to call it, read on

Things are changing.

C.R.G. is looking ahead. We know that in the next few years there is going to be a rapid development in caving and it will be a much bigger and far reaching development than most imagine. C.R.G. wants to be ready to meet such challenges as may present and to do this the whole organisation must be upgraded. We are starting this now in simple straightforward ways but our eyes are upon the future - say ten years ahead.

Obviously our long-term plans are not clear because the future itself is wreathed by mists of uncertainty

But we do know that, by then, C.R.G. must be the sort of body to which all cavers want to belong. So what do you, because you are a Member, need to know about this new C.R.G.?

To start with the programme....

A Committee has been set up to organise the following:-

1. Further weekend courses like that held at Keele but more of them, both introductory and advanced and held in all caving regions.
2. Symposia both national and regional on topics of general interest, individual caves and local problems.

3. Field courses will feature: some in individual caves, others on the surface but all led by experts. We also hope to arrange summer camps at which research may be undertaken and tuition in speleology given.
4. An annual lecture at the A.G.M. given by a leading speleologist as an honour by the Group.

We are launching a campaign to preserve the caves themselves.

Not more gates and restrictions

But to engender a more responsible attitude among cavers so that less damage is done to our caves.

This is something YOU can do now by simply observing the Caving Code and by urging others to do likewise.

We are investigating the possibility of co-operating with other bodies who, like C.R.G., are working for the furtherance of speleology and where links do not already exist we are trying to establish them. Amongst those involved are B.S.A., A.W.P.C.R.C., and the Regional Councils.

Hand in hand with this, our publications are being rationalized and the process of getting them out is being speeded up. We expect as a result of our new policy to have more to publish and mean to be ready. If you do not read our Transactions, Newsletters and other publications, you are missing something. Get them out of your Club Library.

Lastly, because in these days publicity is all important, we are grasping that nettle firmly to project C.R.G. both in the caving world and nationally. You will be hearing much more from us than formerly so watch this space

All this is, of course, in addition to that which we already do in the interests of speleology. Our services which include access, a library, information, international contacts, advice and much else besides, will continue and be improved as the opportunity arises.

What we do will be so topical, important and stimulating that you will not be able to ignore it so make use of your membership of C.R.G.

Let us know what you want, preferably through your Committee and Officers, and we will do what we can.

It may take a little time to get the new C.R.G. going, but it is already under way. We hope to see more of you in future.

DAVID CONS - C.R.G.

MENDIP NOTES

by

Cheramodytes

The Dolphin Route reopened

The only caving news of importance this autumn seems to be the re-opening of the best route in East water Cavern by Phil Davies and Denis Warburton. For a long time Phil has felt that the boulder pile at the foot of the ladder pitch was not as thick as some people thought. Cavers may remember that on about 28.10.59. a sofa-sized rock fell out of the roof and split the taking-off place for the ladder pitch, causing the route to Harris' Passage at its foot to become blocked. At that time it was reckoned (Lloyd, 1959, Wessex C.C. Jour., Vol.6, No.76, P.7) that the very bottom of the boulder pile was intact, but that the route to Harris' Passage was covered by about 15ft. of new debris.

On the 1st October 1966, Phil Davies, Denis Warburton and Richard West went down there with some banger. They confirmed the previous findings and set to work on the original floor at the extreme left, which seemed only about 6ft. from the roof of Harris' Passage. The boulders were big with large spaces between them. Some boulders were sent down, but progress was not very good.

Meanwhile Denis in an idle moment, scrabbling over the very top of the pile, found the new route, almost by accident (if such a word can be used about someone who has surveyed the cave in such detail). It was only necessary to remove a smallish boulder choke before they found themselves in a bedding plane extension of Harris' Passage. Reference to the survey shows this to be at section 41-41a. On the following day they did a round trip of the cave. Tackle needed is 32ft. of ladder, 5ft. wire belay, 50ft. life line. The new passage is impossible to find from below, unless you know where to look.

Eastwater is getting so terribly crowded now. Your Scribe went and had a look at the new route himself the other day. It is the only part of the cave not obstructed by cavers. It was a pleasure to go down the Dolphin Pot again after so many years. All my favourite footholds are still in their usual places.

At the Annual Dinner

There seemed to be an unusually large number of diners; an extra table was set in the bar. And what was our pleasure to see Mr. and Mrs Gibbons of Eastwater arrive and get squeezed in at the top table. Oliver Lloyd was the Toastmaster and gave us a new Latin grace, the gist of which was that we would be given our meat in due season (in tempore opportuno).

Dave Causer asked us to remember absent friends, some of whom have been absent for so long that we have forgotten their faces. Christopher Hawkes proposed the health of the guests, and neatly confused the Severn Valley with the Author of the Mendip Caver. It seems that this is likely to have been the last time that Bob Bagshaw will be eating for the Other Club, since he has now resigned from the secretaryship. He was given a big hand (literally) at the B.E.C. dinner earlier this month.

Bob Whittaker replied for the guests and proposed the health of the Club. His official work for the Avon River Board brought him in close contact with Mendip caving, first through the Cerberus Club and then in the project which Dave Drew has undertaken of water tracing in Eastern Mendip. He told us some of the details of this, and they may be found in the Proceedings of the B.S.A. Conference recently held in Bristol. They use lycopodium spores as tracers. These can be dyed different colours, so that several sources can be traced at once. Quite early on they found that the water from Hunting Lodge Swallet crossed over that from Stoke Lane without mixing to emerge at St. Dunstan's Well West. Several examples of the same phenomenon were subsequently noted. It appears that now they will turn their attention to the catchments draining towards St. Andrew's well, Wookey Hole and Cheddar. Perhaps at last we shall know the answer to the Swildon's riddle.

Our Principal Guest was Hywel Murrell, founder member and first Hon. Secretary. The Toastmaster introduced him and his wife, Pudge, with brief biographies and concluded by assuring everybody that the reprehensible practice of throwing bread at the Annual Dinner, allegedly started by Hywel and by Peter Harvey, had been altogether abandoned. The correctness or otherwise of his conjecture was shown immediately Hywel got up to speak. Amidst the hail of edible missiles he was heard to remark that he was unlikely to be hungry for a fortnight. He told us stories about the Club's earlier days, the most entertaining of which were some letters written to him as secretary by would-be cavers. One of them decided he didn't like caving and asked for his money back. Another had the idea that it was a good way of getting a husband and sent her vital statistics.

LADDERS

Carl Pickstone

Terminations of Wire Ropes

As it is impracticable to handle ladders in any great single length a number of short lengths capable of being joined together are usually used. W.C.C. employ 40, 20, 15 and 10 ft. sections, the sections being temporarily linked by various methods.

It is the intention of this section of the article to discuss the various means of effecting a secure joint which may be easily dismantled, the criterion being that the fastening should be at least as strong as the wire rope being joined. With this in mind the ladder constructor would naturally look towards the lifting gear section of the engineering industry, where considerable research has been conducted in this field.

Two terminations developed lend themselves to terminating wire rope ladders and tethers. Both involve forming the end of the rope into a loop, and fastening the tail to the main body of the rope, the tail being secured either by SPLICING, or by means of a ferrule (TALLURITE FERRULES). Both methods give a termination having a strength equal to that of the rope employed.

Splicing

The method of splicing thimbles is given in the Docks Regulation of the Factories Act 1934 Part III Regulation 20(d), which states:-

“A thimble made in any wire rope shall have at least three tucks with the whole strands of the rope and two tucks with half the wires cut out of the strands. The strands in all cases tucked against the lay of the rope.”

The actual method of splicing round strand ropes is given in detail in many publications on wire rope, there is also one by the Cave Research Group.

“Tallurite” Ferrules

With this type of fastening the wire rope is threaded through an aluminium alloy ferrule, around a thimble, and back through the ferrule. The ferrule is then compressed in a die, to force the soft metal into the interstices of the rope, thus forming the fastening.

The ferrules are of a hollow oval section, being designed for the passage of two ropes. The following table gives the sizes of ferrules for ropes having rope cores. Steel cored ropes require the next larger size of ferrule and the corresponding die.

Code No.	Suitable for Wire Ropes.	
	Diameter	Circumference
2.5	—	5/16"
3	1/8"	3/8"
3.5	—	7/16"
4	5/32"	1/2"
4.5	—	9/16"
5	3/16"	5/8"
6	1/4"	3/4"

Conclusion

Both these terminations can be done by specialists at reasonable cost, the Tallurite method being cheaper than splicing if a number of terminations have to be made.

If a large number of terminations is envisaged, splicing becomes expensive or laborious if done in the home workshop; the “Tallurite” method is quicker. As the “Tallurite” fastening is patented, the ferrules are obtained only from the manufacturers, provided the necessary equipment is available to perform the fastening correctly. Alternatively a die may be purchased from the manufacturer.

Joining Ladders and Tethers

The next problem is that of joining the ladders together to give a quickly detachable fastening, having a strength equal to that of the rope. Fastenings satisfying these requirements are as follows:-

Shackles

The smallest shackle suitable for this application would comply to B. S.3032, Higher Tensile Steel Shackles, being specified as:- “Small Dee” 6 cwt S.W.L. Preferably galvanised.

Karabiners

Most karabiners are suitable, with the exception of the Sack Hauling types. The screw gated karabiners give additional safety in the advent of sideways pressure on the gate.

“C” Links

These are links cut from a length of chain in such a way that they can be joined together by placing at 90° to each other. Once fastened they give a practically fool proof joint. The links should be threaded through the thimble BEFORE the rope termination is made. The links should be of such a size that a karabiner or rope tether may be threaded through for use as belays. The

minimum size of chain satisfying this requirement is short link chain. This size of chain, however, is available in 40, 60 and 80 grade. A tensile test was conducted to find out the grade of chain giving a “C” link strength equal to that of the wire rope being used. Grade 60 to B.S.1663, Higher Tensile Chain, proved to be strong enough, failure taking place at 1830 lbs.

The Complete Ladder

In the previous articles the components employed in wire ropes and ladders were discussed separately, assuming ideal conditions. The complete structure will now be discussed under cave conditions.

Stress

1) Dynamic Stress.

The structure is unlikely to be subject to any excessive dynamic loading if used correctly. However it will certainly have to withstand slight shock loadings, which can double the normal static stress considered previously. An example of this occurs if a ladder is caught up on a projection and suddenly slips off, or if a caver mounts the ladder suddenly. If the same conditions are assumed as before, i.e. the caver weighs 200 lbs, the 100 lbs loading on each support is doubled to 200 lbs.

2) Inherent Stress.

A structure may also have inherent stresses, incurred in design. Although undesirable it is sometimes unavoidable; fastening the rungs by the "Pinning" method induces severe bending stresses in the wire rope.

The equivalent loading of a wire rope bent around a radius is found approximately by:-

$$P = \frac{E.A.d.}{2R}$$

where P = Equivalent loading due to bending.

E = Young's Modulus for the wire rope.

A = Effective Cross-sectional area of wire rope.

d = Diameter of wires in rope.

R = Radius to which the rope is bent.

The modulus of Elasticity E. for the wire rope varies with conditions, being 12×10^6 lbs/in² for a (7 x 19) rope of average condition. Solving for the “Pinning” method using 10 cwt wire rope and ½ x 14swg rungs gives a theoretical equivalent loading of 500 lbs. Because the wire rope is distorted by the pin the actual loading will be less than this. It is, however, impossible to calculate the exact degree of preloading which exists, so the highest figure will be used, the error being on the safe side.

- 3) Practical Points.
- a) If the wire rope ladder or tether is bent over a sharp edge, such as the edge of a pitch, bending stresses will be set up in the wire rope.
Using the same expression as before assuming a lip on the edge of the pitch gives an equivalent loading of 200 lbs.
 - b) If the ladder was rigged unevenly and the dynamic condition existed as in (1), the loading on the higher stressed support could reach 300 lbs.

Conclusion

The ideal ladder hung correctly and used to perfection will never exist. The ladders will always be subjected to some kind of the stresses mentioned. However, by intelligent use and design they can be reduced to a minimum.

Of the rung fastenings examined previously, the "Pinning" method is a classic example of poor basic design. To compensate for the high degree of preloading which exists, a larger size of wire rope is required to restore the original factor of safety of the fastening.

With regard to intelligent use, no hard and fast rules can be laid down. It has been shown that the ladder passing over a 1/2" radiused edge effectively preloads the wire rope 200 lbs. This reduces the stress required to reach the yield point, with the result that the ladder is not capable of withstanding such loads as it would if the wire rope was straight. By careful rigging these bending stresses in the wire tethers and side supports of the ladders can be minimised. The design of the ladders is such that slight dynamic stresses are easily withstood, but large dynamic stresses are to be avoided as these can be very high. It is for this reason that it is considered to be dangerous practise to use rungs AS RUNNING BELAYS FOR LIFELINING the first man up, where a double lifeline should have been used.

Another practice to be condemned is using the same belay for both ladder and lifeline. Separate belays ensure maximum safety of the climber in the advent of ladder belay failure.

References

Below are given a list of references which may prove useful for the series of articles on Ladders.

- B.S.2763 - Steel for wire ropes.
- B.S.302/621 - Round Strand Wire Ropes.
- B.S.2763 - Galvanised coating for wire ropes.
- B.S. "W Series" - 6 W 2 Wire rope for aircraft use.
- B.S.1471 - Heat-treatable aluminium alloys.
- B.S.3032 - Higher tensile steel shackles.
- B.S.1663 - Higher tensile steel chain (Grade 60).

Docks Regulation of the Factories Act 1934 Part III Regulation 20(d).
Literature supplied by Cable Covers Ltd. (Tallurite Ferrules).

This is the third (and last) section of Carl Pickstone's article on ladders. The previous sections have appeared in the following journals:-

Wire Rope WCC Jnl., Vol. 8, No. 101, pp 256/9 (May 1965)

Ladder Construction WCC Jnl., Vol. 8, No. 103, pp 307/12 (Oct. 1965)

In addition, Letters to the Editor commenting on the article on Ladder Construction appeared in:-

WCC Jnl., Vol. 8, No. 104, 358/67 (Dec. 1965)

SAPPERTON CANAL TUNNEL

Canals are not the usual prerogative of the discerning caver. However, any hole in the ground is better than none and the fascination of something different is always a spur. It was with this attitude of mind that tempted us to venture into the rural peace of Gloucestershire.

Both entrances of the tunnel are near Sapperton village, the most impressive of which has a distance of twenty yards from a public house. This is the "Golden Valley" entrance.

The canal itself was constructed to connect the Severn and Thames rivers and the tunnel was a considerable undertaking. Tunnelling began in 1784 but the original contractor fell into debt and numerous other contractors finished the work. The first barge passed through the tunnel on 20th April 1709. Unfortunately not all the work was finished satisfactorily and a year after the opening of the tunnel it was closed for two and a half months for further work.

Twenty-six ventilation shafts were sunk, each eight feet in diameter, the deepest, Summit Pit achieved a depth of 244 ft. Bricks were baked on the spot for the shafts and work went on 7 days a week.

The hardest method of going through the tunnel is to walk, as we did. The mud and water in the tunnel is, on an average, only 3ft. deep but the mud is extremely glutinous and this makes a walk of 3,817 yards hard work. Occasionally it is possible to get out of the water for a rest. The water is very cold and indeed without a "goon" or wet suit ones legs and feet become almost frozen! Canoeing through the tunnel used to be the classic method although a small two-man dinghy could be very useful. Some sections of the tunnel are supported by brick arches, other sections have been just blasted and left in almost a square bore of 15 ft. high and 14 ft. wide.

Small fragile straws are to be found on the walls and in some places white flowstone occurs. For those attracted by "collectors pieces" Sapperton Canal Tunnel cannot be overlooked.

Paul Weston.

DAN YR OGOF I, II AND THE FIRST EXPLORATION OF III

Derek Tringham

Dan yr Ogof, which translated from the Welsh means "over the cave" was the name given to a farmhouse in the upper Swansea Valley. With typical Welsh wit, the cave beneath the farm was then named after the farm over it, giving rise to considerable confusion.

The first recorded exploration of the cave was by the Morgan brothers in 1912 when nearly all of Dan yr Ogof I was discovered. This part of the cave consists of the River Cave, which can be followed from the water exit for 400 yards before a sump is reached, and a high level passage with a now artificial entrance which joins the river again at the first lake. The first part of the main cave consists of this high level passage (now a show cave) with a few oxbows and chambers. To proceed further the Four Lakes and the rapids have to be crossed. This can be done by wading in normal conditions, but in wet weather the first part of the Fourth Lake sumps for long periods of time. Beyond the Fourth Lake there is a short climb to a passage leading to the main boulder chamber. From this chamber passages branch off, leading to some further chambers which are finely decorated.

From near the furthest of these chambers, Straw Chamber, the long crawl starts. This draughting crawl was known, but had not been passed until earlier this year. The rest of the cave is described up to the furthest point reached later in this article. Beyond the long crawl is now known as Dan yr Ogof II, and the passages beyond the hitherto final sump upstream are known as Dan yr Ogof III.

Wessex members played a part in the discovery of III on the weekend of September 25th, and Maire Urwin and myself were lucky enough to be on the first party down into High Way II and up to the furthest point reached to date. The upstream limit of Dan yr Ogof II had been at the upper end of High Way, where the water appeared from a sump on the left of the passage. Just before this sump an aven had been noticed, and also a possible passage parallel to the sump, but 25 ft. above it. The aven and this "passage" had been found to be inaccessible by free-climbing owing to a lack of holds and friction on the rock.

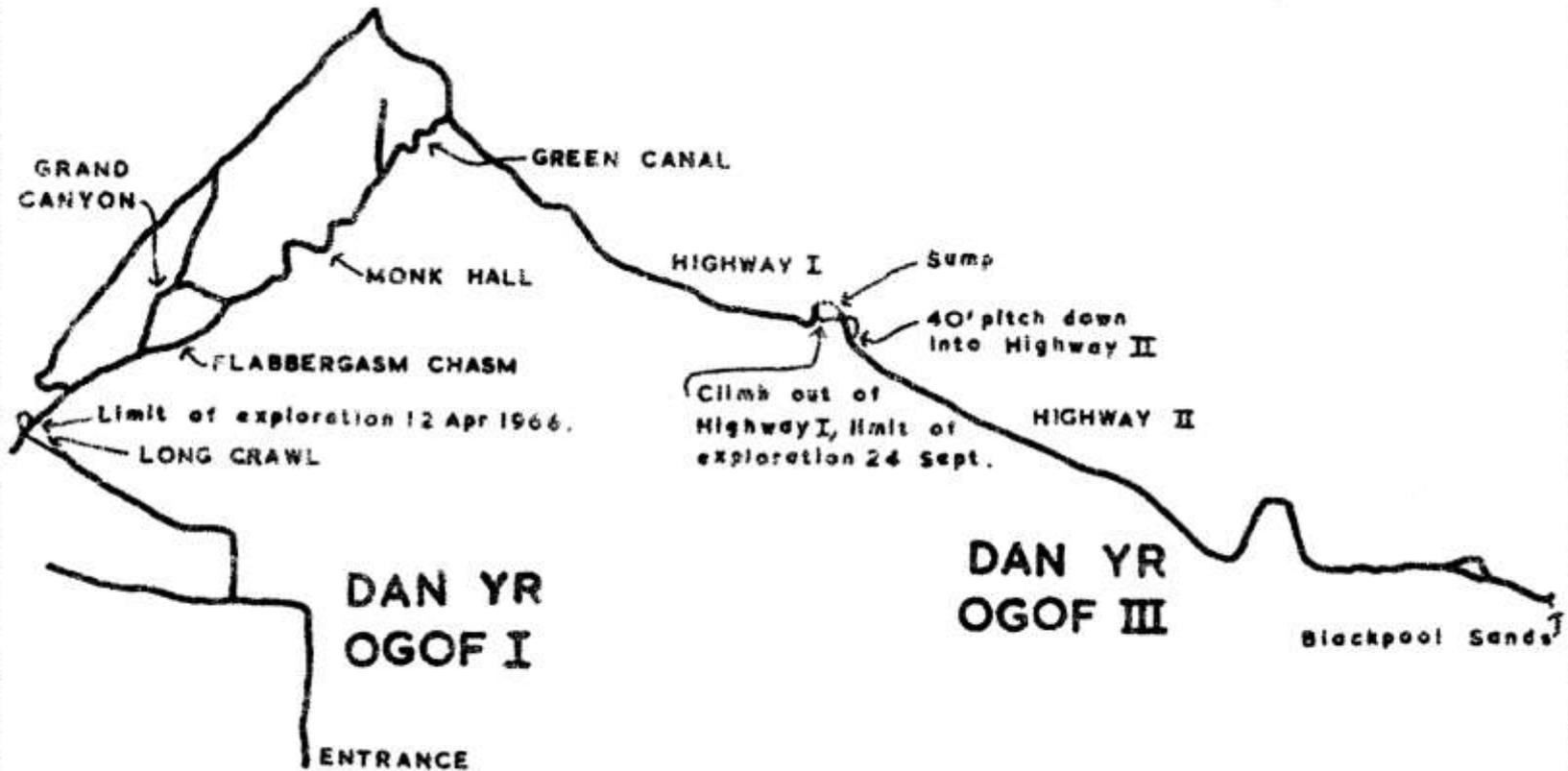
The weekend of September 24th/25th was the date of the Wessex Club Trip to South Wales, and as a result a large number of Wessex members were staying at the S.W.C.C. H.Q. at Penwyllt. So, after an early rise on the morning of Saturday, September 24th, parties were arranged for trips into Dan yr Ogof, Alan Coase leading three of the Wessex, Maire Urwin, Rod Hobbis and myself, whilst Terry Moon (S.W.C.C.) led Gareth Jones (S.W.C.C.) and three other Wessex members - Paul McDonald, Gerry Wand and Tony Philpott. These two parties were to be given a swift tourist trip through Dan yr Ogof II and then set to work trying to either drain the upstream sump or climb the wall at the end of II. Another leader also gave a tourist trip as far as the Green Canal, for those not wanting an excessive trip.

DAN YR OGOF

SKETCH PLAN

SCALE: 1" = ABOUT 1,200 ft.

DAN YR OGOF II



We started in at about 11 o'clock in the morning and after walking through the Dry Series that comprise the show cave, came to the lakes, of which there are four to cross. Conditions were dry and the water was only chest deep in one or two places. A dry passage part way on the right of the fourth lake led to Curtain Chamber, the start of the high level route. From here stooping, walking and crawling led via Boulder Chamber to near Straw Chamber and the start of the so-called "Long Crawl". This we found not as bad as expected, although it is indeed long; there are 311 ft. of it! It is mainly in the form of a meandering solution tube, but flat-out reptation was only required in two places. It is however a great obstacle and tackle carrying is extremely awkward. The dreaded squeeze has now been removed by chemical means, and the crawl takes from 20 minutes to half an hour.

At the far end of the crawl we climbed down a 15 ft. ladder into the first chamber of Dan yr Qgof II. A small stream runs from a boulder choke to the right and we followed it down the passage until it went down to a lower level. We kept at a high level and traversing round a 20 ft. long crystal pool entered the Grand Canyon. This passage takes you to Monk Hall past very long straws and spaghetti-type helictites and heligmites. At the end of Monk Hall we climbed an 8 ft. wall and were confronted by the "Green Canal" - it is now rather more a muddy colour. One of the dinghies was still operational so Maire and one of the South Wales members got in. The canal is just wide enough for a 2-man dinghy and is about 200 ft. long. It is an easy swim for a strong swimmer, but I found it the most tiring part of the cave.

From the other, side of the canal a short stretch of passage led to "the Abyss". This we looked at, then returned back to the Canal edge. From here Go-Faster Passage, a large dry passage, oval in shape, with a superb two foot deep vadose trench in the floor, led through some pools to Go-Slower Passage. This is a narrow rift above the vadose trench, and is about 2 feet wide. This led us to Streptomyces Passage, streptomyces being bacterial fungi (so I was informed). After exploring some oxbow passages here we waded on through static water until we reached Bat Chamber. From here we went along High Way to the sump. High Way is a huge passage, about 25 ft. wide and 60 ft. high at least; the sump is crystal clear and quite roomy. When we arrived we found Terry's party hard at work digging away a sand and clay bank to try to lower the sump. They had tried to climb into the higher passage without success. When we arrived we tried using a human pyramid to reach a ledge about 15 ft., up but this was hilariously unsuccessful. By using a pair of shoulders a piton was inserted by Gareth Jones in a vertical crack on the right. The ladder was then hung from this and by working in turns, after two more pitons, the top was reached. Alan Coase, Gareth, Terry and Tony went up to explore. The only way on was up, but after 35 ft. a horizontal tube with a howling draught was found - "the Windy Way". This led for about 100 ft. to twin avens going down. These were free-climbable and found to be 30 ft. deep. The passage at the bottom was much larger, being 2 ft. wide and 12 ft. high. A rift in the floor to the right (towards High Way) led down to a bell chamber with deep water. Only Alan chimneyed down, and he pronounced it no go. To the left at the bottom of the aven, however, the larger passage continued with fantastic helictites past a flake constriction to a red calcite pool with a rift descending down about 35 ft. to water. This section of the passage was called Birthday Passage as it was Alan

Coase's, that very day. This rift belled out and was quite impossible without ladder. The exploring party then returned to us who had been waiting, shivering, for at least two hours. We left the ladder in position and made our way out emerging at dusk after eight hours underground.

The next morning at about 11.30, Alan Coase, Gareth Jones, Alan Murray and Sue (all S.W.C.C.), Maire Urwin and myself (W.C.C.) again entered the system, this time with an extra rope and about 70 ft. of ladder. About 2½ hours later we were at the pitch and all eagerly descended. The rift belled out, after about 10 ft. and we could see we were in a 50 ft. high, 25 ft. wide canyon-type passage with the stream meandering over sand below us. As soon as anyone was down, we rushed off to explore. Downstream sumped within 250 ft. but a small air space was noticed 6 inches high, 3 inches wide. Upstream the huge passage just went on and on and on. This main passage has been now named Highway II, being an obvious continuation of High Way in Dan yr Ogof II. Huge boulder piles and one choke were passed, and still it went on with the same dimensions. At last after an hour or so we reached a huge sand and mud avalanche that had blocked the passage. Water could be heard through the choke and several possible ways were noticed. We decided to turn back then as we were overdue as it was. Several passages and inlets were noted on the right hand side going upstream. All the inlets were fairly tight, commencing with cascades. Alan Murray investigated one by the first boulder choke which was passable for a way. I looked at one by the final choke (Blackpool Sands). A five foot waterfall was climbed to a constriction which I couldn't pass. The passage opens out immediately to 3 ft. wide and 6 ft. high beyond the constriction, very tantalising but five minutes with a hammer and chisel should render it passable.

On the way back to the ladder an oxbow was found, 15 ft. in diameter and about 250 ft. in length, filled with crystal pink pools and stal flows. The crystal pools were the most beautiful I have ever seen. On rejoining the main stream we decided to christen this the "Mostest Meander". Formations in the rest of the passage are not profuse, but towards Blackpool Sands the sand formations are very spectacular indeed, without compare in this country. At the bottom of the ladder pitch there is a group of streptomycetes and a twin mud stalagmite on a sand bank. The direction of the cave is more or less Northerly and is in a fairly straight line. On returning to the ladder we retrieved the box and took a couple of photos, despite an unco-operative flash gun. While this was going on Maire and I had a look at the downstream sump. Using a courelene line Maire dived about 7 ft. to a bell chamber which must have been the one Alan chimneyed down to the previous day. This bell was about 40 ft. long and the water was deep. There seems to be every indication that the sump system will be free divable, being in my estimation not more than 20 ft. long.

When we reached the top of the ladder we found another party eager to descend, so we left the ladders for them to bring out. Alan Murray stayed behind to help them while the rest of us hurried out as we were overdue. From Blackpool; Sands to the entrance took us about 3 hours. We emerged at about 7.30 p.m. to find Rodney Hobbis still waiting for us although we were 4 hours late.

Of the new cave my main impression was of hurrying round corners to see whether it was ending - and it didn't! The possibilities are endless and I think a trip from sink to rising is very likely in the near future, giving the British Isles its deepest system to date, around the 650 ft. mark!

Maire and I owe a great deal to Alan Coase, for leading us in the system, and to those who organised the weekend over in the Swansea valley. As we are now much nearer Wales on Mendip (owing to the Severn Bridge) let us hope we can cave more often over in that area, with more good results!

BOOK REVIEWS

CAVECRAFT by David Cons 184 pp. numerous photographs and line drawings. Published Harrap & Sons, London, at 18/-. January 1966.

The author, a leading British Speleologist and former Chairman of the Cave Research Group has written a book of considerable value to cave explorers.

Cavecraft is one of the most comprehensive manuals on the art of caving that has ever been published. Thoroughness and a good technical bias are its main assets. Not that this book is only for the expert, on the contrary, the well written text and numerous illustrations make it both easy and interesting to follow. Whilst books are no substitute for practical tuition underground, under the supervision of an experienced caver, it could quite truthfully be said that if every novice intent on taking up caving were to read this book, and practised its recommendations, there would be fewer accidents and bad publicity through rescues.

All aspects of caving are fully dealt with, from how to worm one's body through a squeeze to the correct type of clothes to wear, the equipment to take and how to use it.

The book is concluded with a useful glossary of technical terms and only lacks an index.

A.D.O.

The Painted Cave by Winifred Mantle 159 PP, Victor Gollancz Ltd., London at 16/-.

A shockingly expensive and rather nauseating novel for the junior teenager, where the word love is carelessly bandied about by children of fifteen. The story is mainly set in Southern France and concerns a Count who discovers a fabulous cave, filled with formations and cave paintings, but unfortunately it is beneath a neighbour's property. His schemes to buy the land through an agent are thwarted by a schoolgirl. However, the "baddie" wins in the end by flooding the cave to deprive the owners.

The frequent references to solo caving are to be deplored and one wonders just how many accidents might result if school children, after reading this book, are tempted to take a torch and explore the nearest cave.

A.D.O.

The three times yearly Journal of the S.S.S. has to serve a multilingual country. The articles are either in German with a slightly shortened account in French, or vice versa.

The leading article in this edition is entitled "The Accident under the Earth". It compares caving accidents with climbing accidents, describes how accidents are caused, and suggests ways of alleviating them.

The section on The Responsibilities of the Expedition Leader, discusses in detail the Penal and Civil Responsibilities of a trip leader, and the possible consequences of negligence.

The section "What the Doctor Says" details first aid precautions for caves.

The Journal is concluded with two reviews: The Caves of the Schaffhausen Canton (in German) and the Cave Dwelling Fauna of Switzerland (in French).

A.D.O.

Grotte Casteret Expedition 1961. Occasional Publication No.1. of the South West Essex Technical College Caving Club. 14 pp, maps and pull out cave survey. 1965 from D. St. Pierre, 14 Wellwood Road, Goodmays, Ilford, Essex at 3/6d. post free.

In September 1961, a party of nine members of the S.W.E.T.C. Caving Club visited the Pyrenees, and spent ten days exploring, surveying and photographing the Grotte Casteret.

Norbert Casteret discovered this ice cave in 1926 and in 1950 his daughter, Maude, discovered the ice-waterfall 'Niagra' and the Salle Maude, details of which most readers will be familiar with from reading 'The Darkness Under the Earth', and 'Ten Years Under the Earth'.

This is an excellent publication and a useful reminder to all other clubs to publish accounts of foreign explorations.

A.D.O.

Cornish and West Country Mining.

Messrs. D. Bradford Barton Ltd. of Frances Street, Turo, have for some years specialised in books on Cornish history, particularly mining history, publishing many new works and republishing some "classics" of the nineteenth century. Among those of possible interest to Wessex members holidaying in Cornwall are; "A Guide to the Mines of West Cornwall", by D.B. Barton, 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 7 $\frac{1}{4}$ ", card covers, 50 pp. with 9 illustrations and 10 sketch maps @ 6/6, which gives a brief introduction to the more noteworthy mines of Western Cornwall, together with accounts of their history and position.

"The Mines and Mineral Railways of East Cornwall and West Devon", by D.B. Barton. 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ ", card covers, 102 pp. 13 illustrations, and 10 maps @ 10/6. A similar, but larger, production to the previous book, giving more historical detail, of this less well known mining area, stretching from Truro to Tavistock.

"Mongst Mines and Miners", by J.C. Burrow and W. Thomas, 7" x 9 $\frac{1}{4}$ " card covers, 39 pp. 24 photographs @ 10/6. This book is a "classic", originally published in 1893. It consists of a series of underground photographs, illustrating and explaining Cornish mining methods of the period, together with an explanatory text. This latter book I found of particular interest, the photographs being remarkable for their clarity of detail, despite the clumsiness of the apparatus used, described in the first chapter.

These are only three of the many excellently produced books published by this small firm of enthusiasts. Among others are a series of guides giving detailed information on the smaller mines, in districts based on the larger towns, ranging from 7/6 - 9/6 each. All prices I quote are exclusive of postage. If any member is particularly interested in West Country mining, I would recommend writing for the full list of publications.

G.A. Roberts.