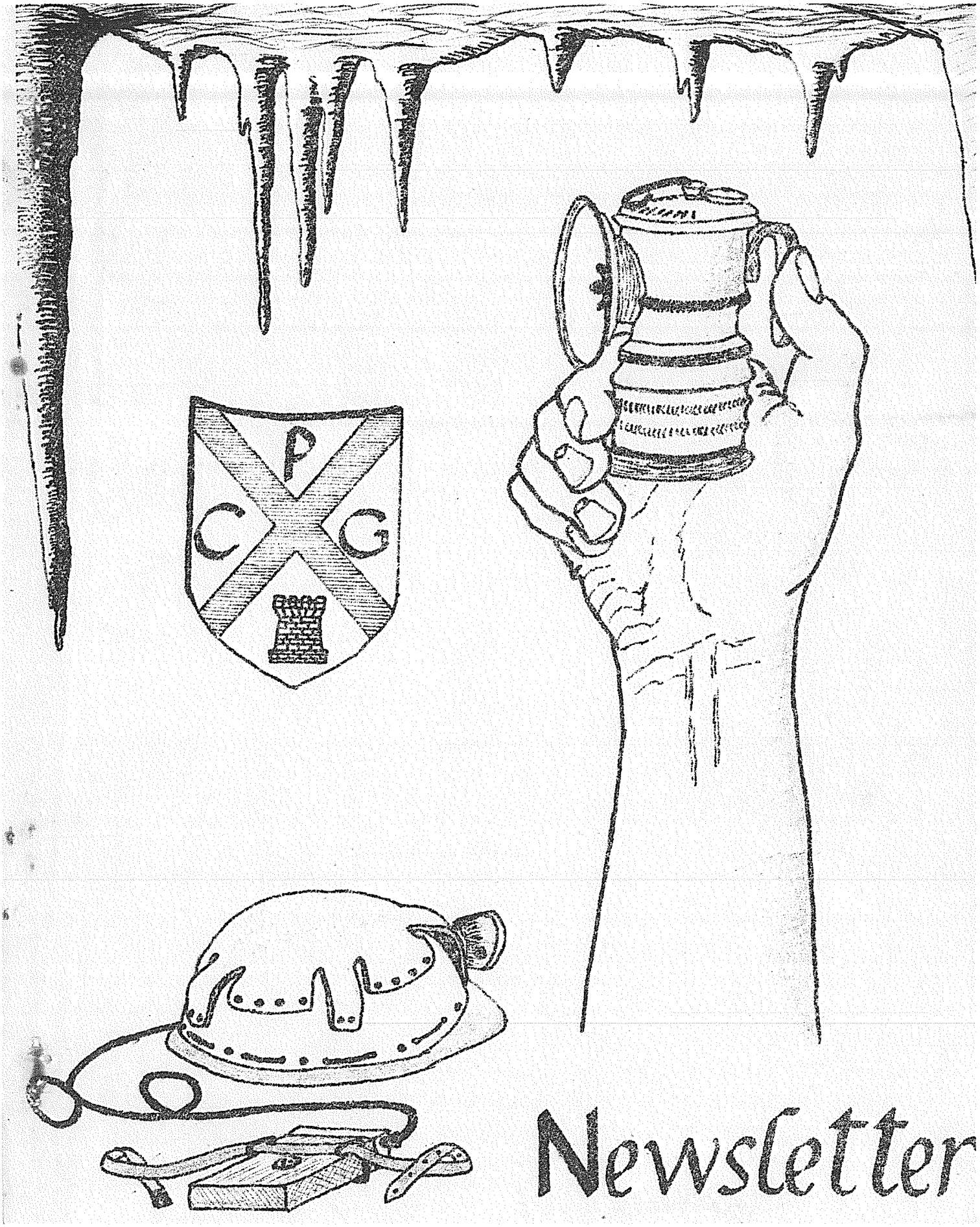


Newsletter

PLYMOUTH CAVING GROUP.

Newsletter & Bulletin. Number Fourteen.

November 1964.

Future Meets.

Saturday, November 21st.

Radford Cave.

No.7 bus leaving the Viaduct, Plymouth at 1.27 pm.
and arriving at Radford Dip at 1.50 pm.
Bus fare about 1/6d.

Leader. Steve Pool.

This meet has principally been arranged with new members in mind, but as always, anybody is welcome.

Saturday, November 28th.

Cave Rescue Practice at Baker's Pit Cave, Buckfastleigh.
For further details see the cave rescue article elsewhere in this bulletin.

Sunday, December 13th.

Clifford's Cave, Chudleigh.

No.129 Exeter bus leaving Bretonside at 10.30am.
and arriving at Chudleigh, about 12.15 pm.
Bus fare about 8/6d. Return.

Leader. Roger Hooper.

Saturday, 9th. January 1965.

Provisional date of trip to the working Cornish mine of:-

South Crofty, Cambourne.

Train leaving Plymouth Station at 5.25 am.
Cost uncertain but probably about 15/- to £1.
For further details see elsewhere in the Bulletin.

Leader. Louie Fletcher.

Sunday, January 10th.

Cattedown Caves.

Meet at Cattedown Corner at 10.0 am.

It is hoped that on this meet the boulders which are preventing the excavations at the Bone Rift from proceeding will be disposed of.There will also be surveying teams in action as well as some other ardent types discovering new caves and passages.

Leader. Pete Price.

Saturday, 23rd. January.

Whiteworks and Bachelors Hall Tin Mines.

No. 46 bus leaving Bretonside at 8.45 am. and arriving at Dousland at 9.32 am.

This meet is more in the nature of a moor walk, but assuming we find the adits, there will be wading in ice cold water if you fancy going underground.The only caving kit that you require will be helmet, lamp and something to keep the cold out when you are wading.
Cost about 3/6d. return.

Leader. Rod Bray.

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New Members.

We welcome to the Group the following new members.We hope that their membership will be long and full.

David Harris,
7, Park View,
Monkspark,
Wembley,
London.

Dave is at present studying at Exeter University.

James R. Pullen,
56, Westbourne Road,
Peverell,
Plymouth.

GROUP NEWS.

In recent weeks three of the Group's officers have had to resign due to business and other commitments.It seems only right that some mention of them should be made in the Bulletin to thank them for the work they have done for the Group.

John Collings.

John has been a committee member of the Group since the PCG.started and has held the posts of Treasurer, Editor and Cave Rescue Warden.He is leaving the district to take up an appoimt ment at a Technical College in London.

Pat Evans.

Pat was the first woman to sit on the committee and had a most restraining influence on Louie Fletcher and his jokes. She was treasurer during a very difficult period and the fact the Group is still solvent is a tribute to her.

She is now at Hereford Teachers Training College and hopes to do her caving in South Wales.

Jeff Percival.

When the Group was formed Jeff was the hardest worked officer of all, putting all his spare time into the job of being Secretary.His output of letters alone was fantastic.After his resignation as Secretary he stayed on the committee with the special job of making money and at this he was very successful, netting the Group some £15. through dances and draws.

He leaves to go to Teachers Training College at Manchester.

It is a sad but true fact that the majority of club members do not realise the debt that they owe the committee and the amount of work that is done by the committee.Every member should make the effort once in a while to attend a committee meeting all that they have to do is write in advance to the Secretary,

(R.L.Hooper,
12, Radnor Street,
Greenbank,
Plymouth.)

and he will let them know the date, time and place of the next meeting.

The present committee is:-
Hon. Sec. R.L.Hooper; Ass.Sec.P.Price; Chairman, T.Marston; Editor, R.C.Bray; Recorder & Librarian, R.Jeffery; Treasurer,R.Lake; Tackle & Meet Sec. L.Fletcher; also S.Harris.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

'An A.G.M. for the transaction of business and the election of officers shall be held in January each year, at a time, date, and place to be decided on by the committee.All club members shall receive at least fourteen days notice of the meeting, together with the agenda, in writing.Any member desiring any motion to be brought forward at the AGM., shall send the text of such a motion, together with the names of the proposer and seconder, to the Hon.Sec. before November 30th. preceeding the meeting, so that it may be included in the agenda.'

(Constitution; Art.8)

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SOUTH CROFTY MINE, CAMBOURNE.

As mentioned in the meets list, a trip to this mine is contemplated.The owners, South Crofty Ltd., have agreed to conduct a tour of this mine,one of the two mines still working in Cornwall, the only stipulation being on the size of the party.The maximum number that they will permit is eight and these will be the first eight to write to Louie Fletcher so as to get to him first post, Sat. 28th.Nov. His address is:-

88, Camden Street,
Greenbank,
Plymouth.

If the demand is sufficient,a second trip will probably be arranged. Will anyone who is contemplating going, please check the train times and fares for himself, Probably a cheap day return ticket is best.

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THE CAVES OF YEALMPTON, SOUTH DEVON.

This Special Publication is in the course of being prepared for publication and any information that you can let the Editor have will be appreciated.We are going to use half-tone blocks and best quality art paper for the photographs this time and if you have any suitable photographs that we may publish we will be most interested to hear from you.

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RADFORD CAVE.

If anybody knows who is responsible for the damage to the gate at this cave, the Hon.Sec. would like you to contact him.

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CAVE RESCUE

Since caving has become popular in Devon, there have been only two occasions upon which the rescue teams have been called out.These two rescues from Baker's Pit Cave were within ten days of eachother and could have had serious consequences if we had not been able to contact so many cavers so speedily.This rapid alerting and collecting of all the necessary manpower was only possible because the cavers themselves had filled in that year's Cave Rescue Questionaire so completely.Enclosed with this Bulletin is the current questionaire, so please complete it accurately and fully before returning it,the sooner the better, to me,

R.C.Bray,
Cave Rescue Warden (P.C.G.),
51, Dale Gardens,
Mutley,
Plymouth.

The Assistant Wardens are,

Terry Marston
Louie Fletcher,
Pete Price,
Phil Nottle,
Roger Hooper.

Please, in the event of an accident contact the Police never the Wardens; it wastes time as the Wardens have to contact the Police anyway.

Cave Rescue Practice.

There will be a rescue practice at Baker's Pit cave , Buckfastleigh on Saturday 28th. November.We will be catching the 8 am. Exeter to Buckfastleigh.On Friday 27th. November at 7.30 pm. at Virginia House, Plymouth, there will be the usual pre-practise meeting to finalise arrangements and what we will do. Please do your best to attend.

Rod Bray.

MENDIP - 25/27th. October.

The party consisted of:-

Bob Lake, Phil Nottle, Louie Fletcher, John Collings, Rod Bray and Rog Hooper.

We left Plymouth - all six of us - in John's car about 6pm. and arrived at the Hunter's about 9.30 after leaving all our gear at Hillgrove, the Wessex hut. On our return to Hillgrove, Jim Giles, with mine and Rod's sleeping bag,was nowhere to be found.I (we Ed.) didn't sleep too well that night.

Saturday morning was spent touring Wells, including a thorough look around the local museum, which proved most worthwhile. After Louie had bought an enormous bunch of celery, which was to last all the week-end, we returned to Hillgrove and lunch.

In the afternoon we at last got underground, that is with the exception of Louie who had forgotten his helmet, when we descended 'G.B' near Tynings Farm at Charterhouse.We entered the cave about one o'clock and were surprised to find the entrance, not only with a man-hole type cover, but also surrounded by a substantial concrete block house with a second locked door.From the entrance we made our way downwards along the easy 'Mud Passage' route and into the first large chamber - 'The Gorge', at the top of which entered a small stream.At the lower end this chamber narrowed and led on into the 'Main Chamber', which is the largest chamber on Mendip,(500 ft. long, 75ft.high, and 50ft. wide).

At the deepest part of Main Chamber, whose massiveness was somewhat lost in the darkness, the sump dig extension, which we did not enter , carried on even deeper.At this point most of us were probably deeper than we had ever been before, at 420 feet below the entrance. From this point we began to make our way back up the Mnin Chamber , visiting the side passages of the Ladder Dig and White Passage on the way. To get to the White Passage we had to croos the natural stal-boulder bridge up into the Gallery from where we could look out into Main Chamber and appreciate some of its size.From this vantage point a few stalactites in the roof could be seen, but the best (and practically the only other) formations were found in White Passage itself.These speleothems were mainly helictites - and far more numerous - remains of helictites.

From the end of White Passage we returned,via the Main Chamber, to the top of the Gorge where Jim Giles, our Wessex leader, had a look at an alternative way out.This other route was was through the Devil's Elbow, but we did not go this way, unfotunately, as Jim was unsure of it.

We came out by the same route as we had entered, meeting two other parties on the way.In the blockhouse we saw our first - and only - Mendip bat.We returned to the barn, at which we had changed, to find Louie,exhausted after his walk to Burrington Combe, - sleeping.The weather was so hot and sunny that we changed on the grass and I collected mushrooms for my breakfast the next day.

When we arrived back at Hillgrove about 5 o'clock we found the hut in chaos, with masses of 'Wessexites' hard at work painting the inside and tarring the outside.

After we had eaten, we made our way by car to the Globe Inn in Wells, where John Hooper had been invited to speak on bats and underground cine-photography.He included in his programme several films including that old faithful, yet still funny film,'The Squire of Penn Recca' starring Squeak Joint from Buckfastleigh.John's main subject matter on bats was the latest methods of bat field detection equipment, which was a transistor radio converted to receive the high frequency emissions of a bat.He explained how different species of bat could be identified by their different emmision characteristic This point he demonstrated quite clearly on a recording he played. This equipment should prove a very valuable tool in the field of study.

After the meeting we had a pleasent hour or so listening to various people rendering their various songs, folk a d otherwise. This singing continued back at Hillgrove until well into the morning.

We arose next morning at eight o'clock, much to the disgust of our W.C.C. hosts, but once again we did go caving until late into the morning when we went to Lamb Leer.Once more we descended in brilliant sunlight with Bob Gannicott, fresh from Goffre Berger, as our guide. The entrance pitch was a 60 ft. mined shaft with fixed ladders, at the bottom of which we quickly made our way to the 'Beehive Chamber'. The famous Beehive boss was a bit of a disappointment, looking far better in a photograph.Between this chamber and the Main Chamber we went through a passage which had been dug out under a fine aragonite floor.The ladders were rigged on the 65 ft. pitch into the Main Chamber and down we went, surprising ourselves how poor we were at ladder climbing.

The Main Chamber was very impressive, 100 feet in every direction, with a very muddy floor strewn with rocks,from the roof presumably.Here we found some pieces of the very aragonite floor we had gone under previously.From here we explored St. Valentines Landing for some distance before returning to the Main Chamber and climbing up some dangerous looking scaffolding to the 'Cave of Falling Waters', where we went down a rope to the bottom to see the famous 'T.W. 1894 inscription.

From the Main Chamber our ascent of the main pitch was aid somewhat by a winch.It was during this ascent that Louie and Bob L. were caught by a sudden downpour of water from above, very unfortunate (?).

Well, that was our Mendip week-end over,bar the packing and dicing with death on the way home.NO! I'm not refering to John's driving but to the disasterous effects that celery had on Louie, and the effect Louie had on everybody else.

Finally, I would like to thank Jim Giles, Bob Gannicott and the Wessex Cave Club for having us at their hut over the week-end; without such accomodation, these trips would be impractical if not impossible.

Roger Hooper.

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SOME RECENT PUBLICATIONS. reviewed by 'Revac'.

i) Studies in Speleology

(Vol.1 Part 1; 1964 for 1963.)
The Association of the Pengelly Cave Research Centre.
Price: free to members of association; 25/- to others.

The aims of the Pengelly are to promote interest in the scientific aspects of caves and to encourage a much needed conservation policy; these aims are amply illustrated by this lush publication.The presentation of the u erous subjects is of the quality that every caving group should aim at: excellant printing, clear, clean photographs and illustrations, and a background of professional editing.

The papers that are presented cover a varied field ranging from cave archaeology in Borneo, Cave Conservation through to Bats and the Glow Worms of the Waitomo Caves in New Zealand.There is only one paper which is of questional merit.This is 'Cave Studies as an Introduction to Field Studies for Secondary School Children', a totally misleading title to fifty lines of badly written, themeless irrelevancies.

Of course, all these subjects won't be to everybody's taste, but every caver should be able to find at least one paper which arouses more than mild interest.The paper on Cave Conservation by Dr. George Black of the Nature Conservancy is a 'must' for all cavers, who should pay special attention to his request for information on new caves and extensions to the older ones such as Baker's and Prid. which are already recorded as Sites of Special Scientific Interest.

As always, John Hooper's paper on bats is the epitome of accuracy and readability we now come to expect from him. He deals with the difficulties of studying bats without introducing a degree of artificiality, the value of observations made by the amateur, ringing, checking of haunts and the latest developments in the field of electronic bat detectors.

This first edition of Studies in Speleology

shows great promise for the future and in future editions we are assured of much useful and varied reading.

There is a copy in the Group Library for any member to borrow and read at leisure.

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ii) Speleological Abstracts 1962.

British Speleological Association.

Price: free to members of Assoc. ; others 4/6d.

This, the first in a series of volumes, attempt to present a list of British Caving Literature for 1962.As well as dealing with the caving districts, it cites a number of references to the cornish mining industry, a list too short to be useful.

However, the greatest flaw in this otherwise excellant publication, which has been needed for many years, is in the form of presentation.The references are dealt with in sections based on the area of publication, not the location of the subject matter.This results in total confusion, with references of, say, Afton Red Rift appearing under a section headed North Wales.I cannot see the reasoning behind this illogical arrangement, why not classify the references with regard to the subject matter, that is the importan thing, not which region publishes the greatest volume of work.

A further criticism of the presentation can be levelled at the printing on both sides of the page.This prevents on cutting out the references and sticking them on card for enclosure in a card index system.Good salemanship as one has to buy two copies if one uses this method of filing.

Apart from the form of presentation, this is a valuable and could be useful, publication, and should find its place in every club library and in its records.Let us hope that next year the B.S.A. will change the presentation and instead of a list of caving literature we will have a readily accessible index of information availible in the literature of many clubs, up to now a hidden field for most.

Revac.

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Some Tunnels near Shaugh.

by Steve Harris.

One Sunday in September a group of P.C.G. members (Pam and Steve Harris, Bob Jeffery and Bob Cawthorne) went by car to Shaugh Bridge and walked the half mile or so up the River Meavy valley to where a disused water course entered a tunnel on the north side of the hill to the west of the Dewerstone.

The tunnel was between 6 ft. and 4' 6" high, about 5 feet wide and over 300 feet long.About sixty feet of its length at the northern end was dry sand and gravel, the other 250 ft. or so was covered by a few inches of muddy water.At the southern end, (about 30 ft. from the Shaugh Bridge to Clearbrook road) the water petered out into thick mud.Two or three Greater Horseshoe Bats were distrubed at this end of the tunnel.Bob Jeffery noticed a small mineral lode, probably tin, in the crumbling granite of this tunnel.

Crossing the road, we continued to follow the leat to where it was carried over the disused Plymouth/Tavistock railway line by an aqueduct.On the far side , Bob J. discovered an adit commencing in loose slate about 10 feet above the railway and 40 feet from it.The main tunnel is in a WNW/ESE direction and after some forty feet courses to the right.As the tunnel is flooded and used as a water supply (there is pipe drawing the water away) further exploration, although practically possible, cannot be contemplated.

Two other nearby adits we both short, one ended abruptly while the other was flooded to the roof.

It is most probable that the water course is the filled-in Wheal Lopez Leat, supplying the mine of the same name further down the valley.The mine workings cannot be identified with any certainty and could have belonged to either Yeoland Consuls, (unlikely) Roborough Down or Wheal Lopez mines.Then again, they may be unconnected with any of these mines and may have been merely a small, unprofitable trial.

National Grid References.

Leat Tunnel.

SX(20) 53156402

Mine Adits.

SX(20) 53006400

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Books on Caving held by Plymouth Central Library.

To enable members to know what the library can offer in the way of books on caving, and to supplement the club library we print the following list.

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551.44	ADAMS.	Famous Caverns and Grottoes (1886)
	CASTERET.	Darkness under the Earth. My Caves.
	CHEVALIER.	Subterranean Climbers:Twelve Years in the Worlds Deepest Chasm.
	DOUGLASS.	Caves of Mystery. The Story of Cave Exploration.
	LOVELOCK.	Life and Death Underground.
	LÜBKE.	The World of Caves.
	GREENBANK and ROBINSON.	Caving and Potholing.
551.44094	FRANK.	Wilderness under the Earth.
	CULLINGFORD	Exploring Caves.
551.44094427	THORNBER	Pennine Underground.
551.44094274	HEAP	Potholing Beneath Northern Pennines.
551.440944	CADOUX	One Thousand Metres Down.
	CASTERET	Cavemen Old and New. Descent of Pierre St.Martin. More Years under the Earth.
	TAZIEFF	Caves of Adventure.
551.44094479	ATTOUT	Men Of Pierre St. Martin

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571.	CASTERET	Ten Years under the Earth.
571.12095	COON	Seven Caves (archaelogical expedition to Middle East).

571.19	DANIEL	The Hungry Archaeologist in France.
		(A travelling guide to the caves of the Dordogne and Brittany.)
		Lascaux and Garnac.
	SIEVEKING	The caves of France and Northern Spain.
	NOUGIER	The Cave of Rouffignac.
571.7	BROWN	The Art of the Cave Dweller.
571.72	BRODRICH	Lascaux; a Commentary.
	CUVAY	Prehistoric Cave Painting.
	LAMING	Lascaux.
	WINDELS	The Lascaux Cave Paintings.
	BALCH	The Mendip Caves.

In Reference Library

551.44094238

BALCH	Wookey Hole; Its Caves and Cave Dwellers.
CULLINGFORD	British Caving.

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The numbers are the Dewey Decimal System reference numbers. The general numbers which affect caving books are

551.44	.....	Caves and Caving.
571.	.....	Archaeology.

I hope this list will be of use and save members time when they want to refer to some subject.

Bob Jeffery,
(Hon. Librarian & Recorder)

THE BUCKFASTLEIGH CAVES.

by Rod Bray.

All members of the Group have caved in the system of passages underlying Buckfastleigh Parish Church, but how many of them appreciate the complex history of their development and formation?All the caves:-

Reed's Cave - Baker's Pit Cave ,
Partition Cave,
Disappointment Cave,
Rift Cave,
Joint Mitnor Cave,
Spiders Hole and
John's Folly,

may be regarded as all part of the same system, all being developed in a similar way and at a similar time.

The Geomorphology of the area.

The land around Church Hill is dominated by river valleys; the hill itself being on a spur above two tributaries of the Dart, a river rising high on Dartmoor and carrying numerous pebbles originating on that great upland area.

On the higher ground about the caves there are several well- defined river terraces which betray a former course of the Dart at a much higher level than at present. The highest terrace,which has been regarded as of Upper Ambersham age is that upon which the church is situated , and lies at 270 ft. O.D.. The river pebbles which would supply the main surface evidence that the River Dart once flowed here before veering east to Ashburton and the sea at Teignmouth, are very few in number.(Today the Dart flows through Totnes to the sea at Dartmouth.)However, in the caves, these pebbles are found in abundance in the talus cones of Joint Mitnor and Whitsun Chamber, Baker's Pit.

A second terrace is detectable at 180 ft. O.D. and can be regarded as of Boyn Hill age.Buckfast Abbey stands on the third and lowest terrace, the Taplow terrace at 130 ft. O.D.

The Formation of the Caves.

These caves are recognised by many as the best examples of a phreatic system anywhere in Britain. When one remembers that the Dart once flowed above them, it is not surprising that these caves are considered to have been formed deep under the water table before and up to Upper Ambersham times.There are numerous examples of the type quoted as being criteria for

considering caves as being of a phreatic origin; networks of passages, tubes and cut tubes, continuous rock spans, solution tunnels and solutional roof and wall pockets. Later a vadose phase began in the Lower Stream Series but it had only a very local effect.

As the river eroded down to 270 ft. terrace, the debris, now identified as the Sterile Water-laid Deposits, could have been deposited. This is the view that was held by Reynolds in 1961. It seems more likely however , that they are younger than this, being laid down during a still-stand between Upper Ambersham times and Boyn Hill times. The deposits themselves , are of finely laminated silts and clays, covering large areas of the caves and having a maximum altitude of 210 ft. O.D. This seems to confirm the view that they were deposited slowly into a lake-like expanse of water. The height of the water at this time is probably shown by the two notable water marks in the entrance of Joint Mitnor Cave; I have levelled these in at about 217 ft. O.D. and 217.5 ft. O.D. i.e. about 7 feet above the highest sterile water-laid deposits. This water mark is also noticable in the First Chamber of Baker's Pit Cave and over formations near the Little Man in Reed's Cave. This dates these formations, and probably all the more massive formations in all the caves, as being older than the water-laid silts but younger than the 270 ft. terrace, (since there would have to have been an air space above the water for the formations to 'grow').

As we approach Boyn Hill times , the river has been going through a period of high activity lowering its bed some 90 ft. and changing its course. This is attributal to a rejuvenation due to sea-level changes. Thus the caves were drained quite quickly and as hinted above, probably in fits and starts, a period of activity followed by a still-stand. Since the caves lie between 200 and 240 ft. O.D. any water-laid sediments can be considered as pre-Boyn Hill age and any sediments not water-laid, as post-Ambersham age.

Sometime about then, fissures openned in the roof of the caves and the talus cones of debris began to form beneath them. In Joint Mitnor Cave, whose talus cone is the only one so far examined scientifically, a sequence of deposits has been determined.

i) Bat Stratum; mainly earth and recent debris,
ii) Stalagmite Floor,
iii) Angular Boulders,
iv) Earth, Stones and Bones,
v) Heavily Eroded Boulders, few bones,
vi) Transition Zone between sterile water-laid silts and v).

(Listed as they lay, youngest upper-most.)

Little can be said of these deposits as yet since work on them is not complete, but a few points can be made:-

a) The heavily eroded boulders can be interpreted as being either deposited before the water level had finally dropped, or were

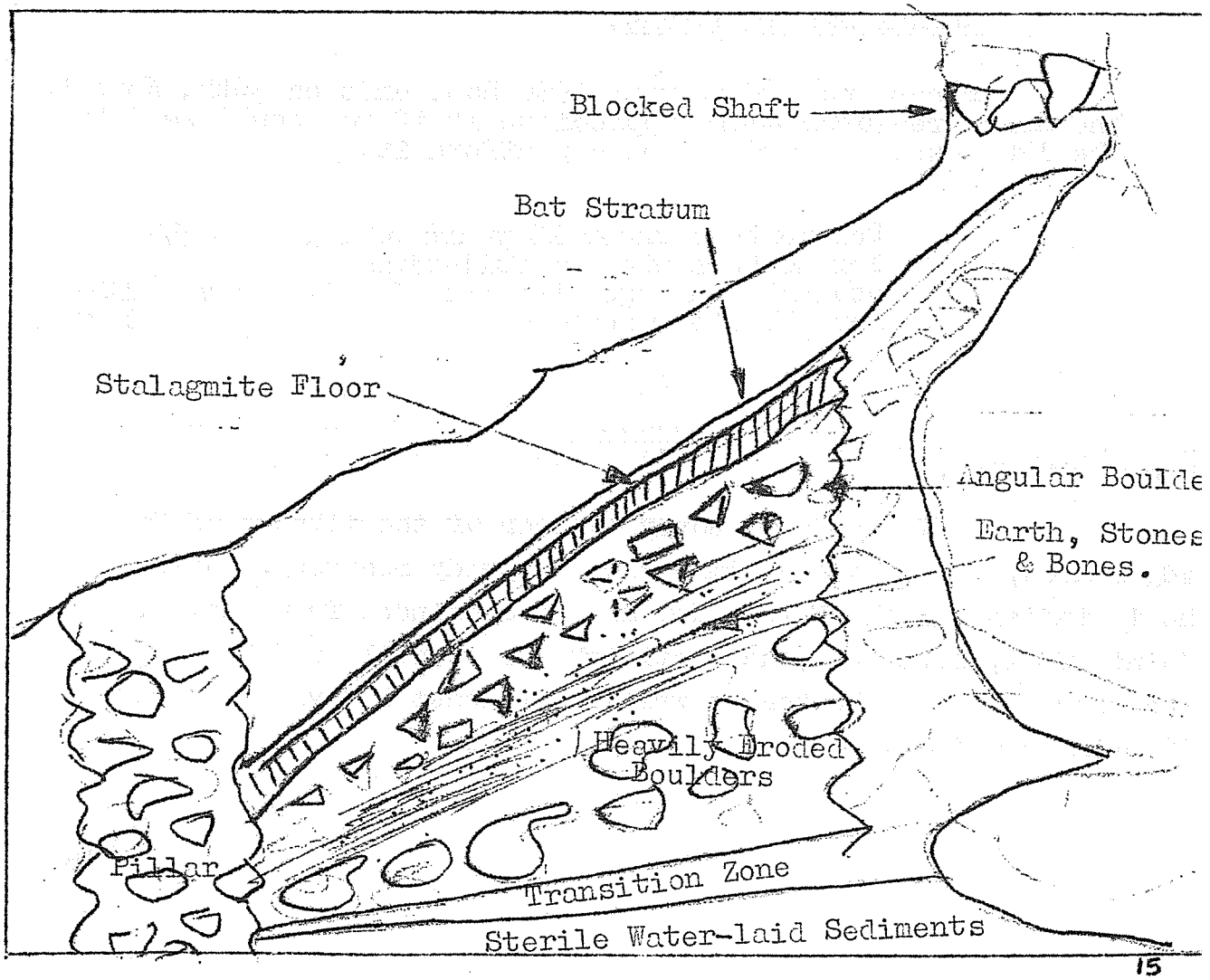
deposited during a pluvial period preceding a warm interglacial.

b) The bones have been identified as a typical mammalian assemblage dating from the warmest part of the Last (or Eemian) Interglacial.They comprise of Bison, Hippo., Rhino.,Straight-tusked Elephant, Deer (both Red & Fallow),Hyaena and numerous others, some living today, many not.There is no doubt that all these animals had fallen down a open shaft and none had ever lived , least ways of its own free will , in the cave or treated it as a den.

c) The angular boulders represent the onset of a glacial period.Frost wedging broke off boulders around the sides of the shaf covering the bone beds.Further frost wedging of boulders caused the shaft to be jammed closed by large rocks.

d) The stalagmite floor firmly sealed the talus cone after the shaft was closed.

e) The Bat Stratum is very recent and dates from the time the cave was first opened by quarrying.



The talus cone in Baker's Pit Cave has never been properly examined but the bones of a Pleistocene Ox have been found there.

All the caves on the hill were unknown until they were revealed quarrying about 110 years ago,(Baker's Pit Cave was opened in 1847).

So, remember next time you visit these caves they are not only for sporting cavers but are of the utmost value to the scientist and geomorphologist trying to unravel a few more problems that the majority of us don't know exist.In considering cave conservation, it isn't only the pretty formations that we must protect but all the cave and all the formations, mud, stal., the lot.

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Annual Subscriptions.

Please note that your 1964 Sub. ends on 30th. November; The Hon. Treasurer would appreciate it if you could send him the 1965 Sub. as soon as you can afford it.

For members under 15 years of age	5/-
For members who are full-time students and aged between 15 & 18 years	10/-
For all other members	12/6d.

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Bakers Pit Key.

We are very sorry to hear of the illness of Mr Edgar Reed,we all hope he will make a speady recovery. Whilst he is indisposed the Bakers Key may be obtainded from Mr. W. Joint of 11,Glebelands,Buckfastleigh BUT it will now be necessary to book the key,in writing,at least 2 days prior to it being required.

Rog. Hooper.

Meet Reports.

The Yealmpton Caves. Saturday 26th. Sept.

Leader. Dennis Horrell.

Party.

P. & S. Harris, B. Brailsford, W. Milling, C.Bryson, R.Cawthorne, C.J.Hogger, S.Poole, D.Skeldon, P.Martin, S.Opie, and B.Collister.

The party caught the 10.5 bus to Yealmpton and asked,Mr. Smith if we could change in the garage.The party split into three groups, with Colin Brysoi and Pam Harris as deputy leaders.All the groups explored the Show Cave more or less together and split up afterwards.

My group came out of the Show Cave and went straight way into Kitley Rift.From here we went up to Snail Cave to see the formations.

Meanwhile the other parties examined these caves in turn, before we all went and had some dinner.

After dinner we crossed the river and examined the two Yealmpton Caves which we found only after some through searching.After this brief interlude, everybody just pottered around or did a few jobsfor Mr. and Mrs. Smith, before catching the 5 pm. bus home.

D.J.Horrell

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Tavy Valley Mines. Saturday 17th.Oct.

Leader. Rod Bray.

Party.

Louie Fletcher, Bob Lake, Denni. Horrell, Roy Wilkes.

Like most meets this one started with everybody confident that we were going to have a good, despite the threat of rain. The previous week Phil.Nottle and I had located the Adit of Sortridge and Bedford Mine and also four shafts belonging to the William and Mary Mine.This last find was especially exciting as it could provide the answer to the puzzle of who was right in their recollections, the local inhabitants who said that it was possible

to enter the George and Chalotte Mine in the Tamer Valley and surface at this mine, or the records, as used by Dines, which show that there is 100 fathoms between the nearest workings of the two mines.

We changed at our usual spot near the Virtuous Lady Mine and prepared our 90 feet of ladder and discussed tactics. We decided that the shafts were first on the list and accordingly crossed the river here where it is fairly shallow.The walk upstream to William and Mary took about 20 mins and was fairly easy going while we kept to the tracks through the undergrowth.

The shafts could be devided into two groups,

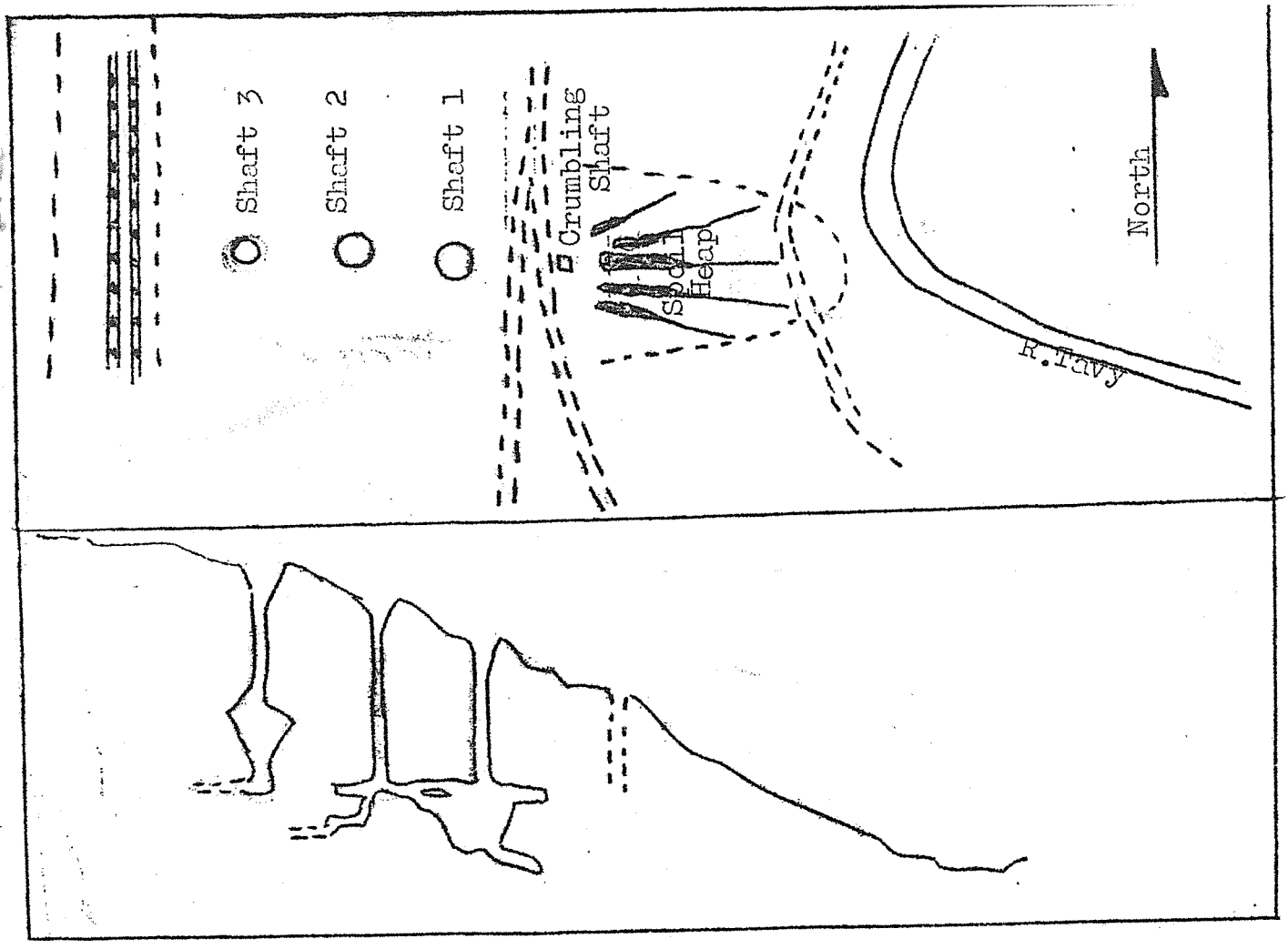
i) Three safe shafts in firm ground, lying to the west of a forestry track, and

ii) One crumbling, dangerous shaft, beside and to the east of the track.

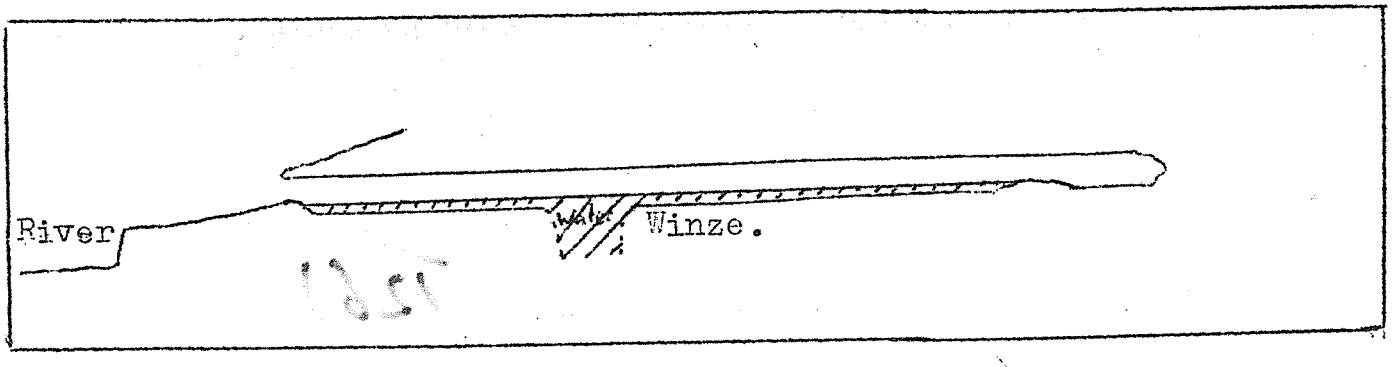
Group 2 was definitely out and as this was the one nearest the river, and hence furthest from the workings, we were not worried. The first shaft that we laddered was the one nearest the track and the one that was probably the shallowest.When Louie, Denni, and I were safely down, we found that towards the river, two levels,each some 20 feet long could be explored, the higher one involving a precarious climb up a bank of stacked deads.On the other side, we could see a level some 20 feet up, again over piles of loose deads. After a struggle, we all got up and pushed on to find another shaft above us.Beyond this there was few more feet of passage before the way was blocked completely by deads except for a drainage course under the deads some six inches high. We estimated the both shafts to be about 80 feet deep.

With two out of the three shafts eliminated, we next went up to the last shaft and Louie and Bob laddered it and climbed down.They reported that they could see a way on into the mine but before I could ask them to go on through, there was a rumble and Bob came streaking up the ladder closely followed by Louie, some deads had collapsed and the way on that they had seen, was under this pile. 'No Thank You', uttered Louie, or words to that effect as he coiled the ladders up.

We left these shafts still with our question unanswered, perhaps we should try and locate the Engine Shaft to the west of the railway and try there.From here we walked back to Double Waters and the Sortridge and Bedford Adit some 200 yards above the confluence of the two rivers.I led the way through water about knee deep and after a hundred feet or so, suddenly found myself out of my depth, I'd fallen down a water hidden winze.Past this point, the adit went on for another 100 feet or there abouts, before we reached the end, which was 2 or 3 feet deep in heavy red clay.This business of flooded winzes isn't really dangerous, you just get a bit wet; the time when they are dangerous is where they are covered by stones piled on rotten boards and are unrecognisable for what they are.



Plan and Section through shafts at William and Mary Mine.
(Not to Scale)



Section through the Sortridge and Bedford Adit showing flooded winze. (not to scale.)

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