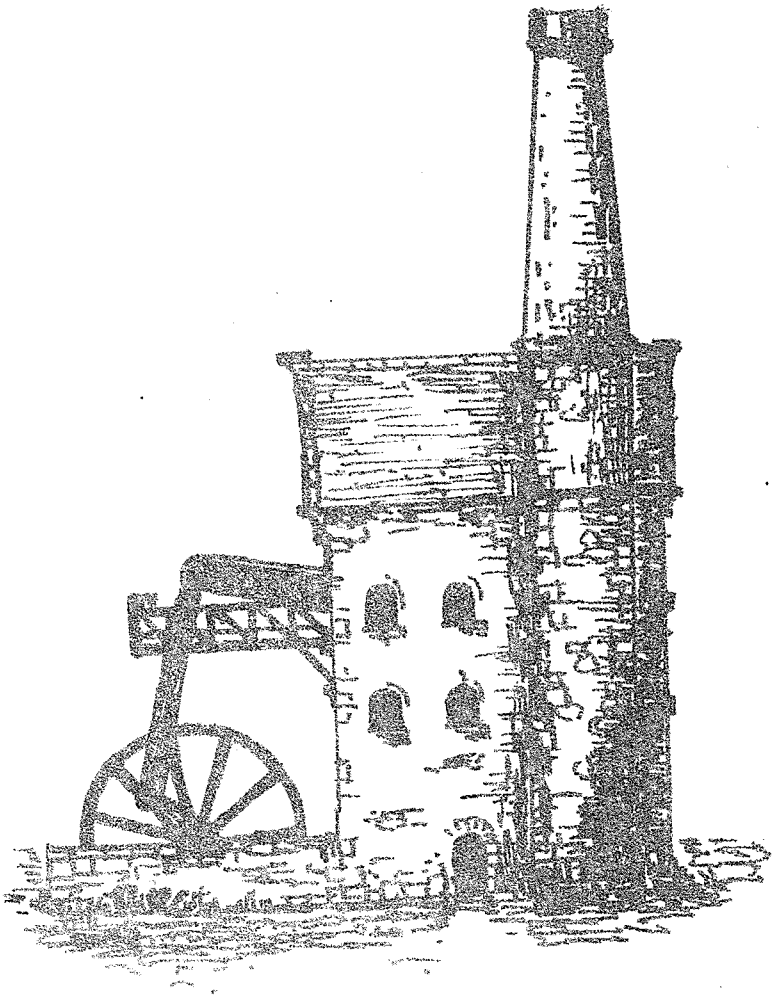
PLYMOUTH CAVING GROUP



NEWSLETTER & JOURNAL

PLYMOUTH CAVING GROUP

Newsletter and Journal

June, I97I — No. Thirty-eight

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Editorial

Concern is being felt this year by club officals about the state of membership of the club. As will be seen from the membership list following, we have only got twenty-nine paid-up members this year.

The reasons for this are obviously varied and numerous, but must include a lack of activities to hold the interest of prospective members, as well as a scarcity of advertisement of club activities to interest new people in the field of caving.

We all know and realise that speleology is a specialist hobby from which the majority of normal people (cabbages ?) recoil in disgust with cries of 'Oh no, I'd get stuck!', but it must also be remembered that the number of people throughout the country who are becoming interested in caving is on the increase and that most clubs are also increasing their membership.

It is obvious that the club must make a stand to do something about this problem, and several courses of action have been suggested. These include:

a) taking a party of youngsters from Plymouth Youth Clubs for a weekend at Buckfastleigh, hoping thus to arouse their interest so that they will join the club.

b) arranging for some kind of article to be published in one of the local papers, describing our activities and inviting new members to join.

c) publishing some kind of pamphlett, setting out the aims and activities of the club, to be given to people immediately they show any interest.

Obviously something must be done on these lines or on any other lines which members can suggest. Otherwise the club faces extinction. Are we each doing enough individually to encourage new members?

Membership List, 1971

Honorary Member

T. Marston	50, The Deans, Downlands, Portishead, Bristol.

Full Members

D. Badmin	Flat 9, 12, St. James Ter., Citadel Rd.
B. Baker	5¾, Scott Rd., Milehouse.
G. Beswetherick	115, St. Pancreas Ave., Manadon.
H. Browning	37, York Rd., Paignton.
R. Cawthorne	22, Devonport Rd., Stoke.
M. Cox	3, Hillside Cottages, Blackawton, nr. Totnes.
R. Cox	3, Hillside Cottages, Blackawton, nr. Totnes.
D. Curry	8, Cambridge Rd., Ford.
P. Evans	1, Erme Gdns., Efford.
D. Ford	161, Langley Cres., Southway.
N. Gay	441, Blandford Rd., Efford.
W. Gorman	23, Newman Cres., Dartington.
S. Harris	4¾, Langham Way, Pound Farm Estate, Ivybridge.
P. Hatherley	2, Furneaux Rd., Milehouse.
A. Henshaw	16, Wyndham St., North Hill.
E. Jeanmaire	12, Beaumont Place, Ebrington St.
M. Jeanmaire	12, Beaumont Place, Ebrington St.,
R. Jeffery	P.O.Box I 3¾21, Kitwe, Zambia.
R. Jones	28, Caltness Rd., Elburton.
J. Plimmer	47, Lake St., Dartmouth.
P. Plimmer	47, Lake St., Dartmouth.
S. Poole	5¾, Torrington Place, North Rd. East.
R. Shaw	c/o Staff Quarters, R.N.H., King St.
K. Tole	3¾4, Wycliffe Rd., Laira.
P. Tozer	8¾, Alexandra Rd., Mutley.
M. Ware	
G. Watson	3¾5, Avondale Ter., Keyham.
J. Wild	29¾, Bodmin Rd., Whitleigh.

Miscellanea

The copy-date for the next newsletter will be July 22nd. The response to this edition was better than last time - thankyou, but please try to make it better again.

You will find, at the end of this newsletter, a copy of the new constitution, dated January, 1971. As the response to the E.G.M. which was called to discuss this constitution, was so small, the new constitution is considered ratified with no objections.

No meets list has been arranged for the coming months. It has been left up to individual members to arrange their own trips and notify these within the club as appropriate.

Mendip Rescue Organization

Letter to Supporting Clubs, C.R.O.s and Police

Dear friends and colleagues,

I am enclosing the Hon. Secretary's Annual Report for the year ended 1.1.71.

We held our annual meeting of committee on 17.3.71, of which I can give you the following account.

Luke Devenish has resigned his Wardenship. He has been at the head of the Wardens' List for nearly twenty years and during all that time, he has borne the brunt of most of the call-outs. He has also looked after M.R.O.'s Rescue Tackle, and it has lasted as well as it has because of the trouble he takes with it after each rescue. We owe him a great deal of thanks.

The following new wardens have been appointed: Peter Franklin, Roy Bennett and Tim Reynolds. The new order of call-out would now be: 1. Howard Kenney, 2. Willie Stanton, 3. Bob Craig, 4. Roy Bennett, 5. Oliver Lloyd, 6. Phil ...

Davies, 7. Jim Hanwell, 8. Tim Reynolds, 9. Fred Davies, IO. Paul Allen, II. Dave Irwin, I2. Peter Franklin, I . Brian Prewer, I4. John Chapman, I5. Frank Frost, I6. Harry Stanbury. The order of medical wardens would remain unchanged. A new call-out list will be published.

The response to my last letter, asking if member clubs would like to have a General Meeting of M.R.O. was so small that we didn't have one. The last was in I966. We will definitely be having one this year in November. This will be to introduce the Wardens, Team Leaders and Police to the general membership, which means everyone who caves on Mendip.

Rescue Depot on Mendip

It has been decided to have a rescue depot at the Belfry, the room on the right of the old stone building. We have negotiated this with the B.E.C. who will let us have it rent-free as a permanent home. The B.E.C. will be getting a coin-box telephone, so that we can disturb them in the middle of the night. We will pay the installation cost and two thirds of the annual rental. We have appointed a Store Committee consisting of Mr. Kenney (convenor), Dr. Lloyd, Mr. Prewer, Mr. Alan Thomas and Dr. Thomson. Their job will be to see that the store is established, fitted and equipped and to run it. It is proposed to ask 26 of the members of M.R.O. Committee to spend a fortnight each during each year in charge of the depot under the Store Committee. In this way all will become acquainted with what there is, how it works and what needs doing to it. We are very grateful to the B.E.C. and hope that we won't be too much of a nuisnace.

Dr. Lloyd was re-elected Hon. Secretary and Treasurer, but although he accepted, he gave a year's notice saying that as he would be sixty in August he would not re-accept re-election in I972, since it was fitting that the man who ran M.R.O. should be a young caver fully in touch with Mendip caving.

And this leads me to my last point. I shall be

hill rises very steeply behind it and there are several places which can be seen as potentially worth-while digging sites, particularly in view of the close proximity of the Western Torrs Quarry caves complex.

S. Poole

Litton Dig, M.U.S.S., I97I.

Littondale in Yorkshire is a large, deep, straight valley with a dry stream bed in the botton, which is a raging torrent in wet weather. Opposite the small hamlet is a dry valley reaching up the hill, ending in a collapsed cliff face. At the base of the cliff, again in wet weather, a raging torrent spurts out clear of the rock.

At the top, some ~00ft. above, M.U.S.S. have excavated a pot, near to 'Litton Pot I', a blind choked pothole. Litton Pot II (for want of a better name) has been dug vertically for forty feet, where a tight rift is entered. This drops vertically and is fairly tight (tighter than St. Cuthbert's on Mendip), as, at a depth of twenty feet, my ribs said 'No, stop it, I want to go out'. However, it continues below, through a crawl to the head of a ..... PITCH. This is sixty feet deep, and at the botton is a chamber, and from this a rift continues down, back underneath.

This drops down an even tighter bit and enters a downward dropping passage. This closes, blocked with rocks and gravel, but is still going at a depth of I40 feet. With active streams sinking nearby and other shakeholes nearby, the potential is grand.

Bob Cawthorne

Traditional Caving Songs - No. 2.

The Wessex Cave Club

1. We are the Wessex Cave Club, no bloody use are we,
   We have our half of shandy and then we have to pee,
   And when we are down Swildons, and have not got a light,
   We sit above the forty, besides ourselves with fright.

2. The B.E.C., they help us through every pitch and squeeze,
   We love the way they do it, with such consummate ease,
   And when we are much better at caving, we agree,
   It is our vowed ambition to join the B.E.C.

2. We are the Cerebus Cave Club, we are not worth our salt,
   Max Unwin was our leader, but that was not our fault.
   He lectured us on caving, his knowledge was profound,
   He told us that all caves are located underground.

4. We are the clockwork Cave Club, and South Wales is our home,
   And from our native valleys we do not dare to roam,
   And when we go a-caving, it is a certain bet,
   We'll take along, right with us, a giant mecanno-set.

5. We do not help cave-divers, they are a bloody bore,
   They burn up heaps of bat-shit and sleep outside the door,
   And when there's talk of diving, we shout with all our might,
   'Per ardua sub-aqua, blow-you-Jack, we're alright.'

Ammo-cans

Fish has a number of small ammo cans for sale at 40 pence each. These are really a necessity for all cavers as they provide the only foolproof way of carrying gear(food, tackle, spares) down a cave protected from water and knocks.

Stoneycombe Swallet

A few weeks ago Dave Ford, Paul Hatheley and I walked into the D.S.S. dig at Dainton. The site is very interesting and is a fine example of a swallet entrance that is unique to Devon. However the dig is now dry; for some way upstream the E.C.C. Quarry Company have tapped the brook , which is quite considerable in volume, and the water is piped down the valley to two colossal quarries where it is used for various purposes. Although an inspection of the quarries shows very little cave developement, it is a pity that the workings are so extensive, for local knowledge states that the disappearing stream originally rose some 600 yards away. There can now be barely I00 yards of rock left, and, unless the cave lies very deep, much of it will have been lost. The presence of good polythene gear seened to indicate that the D.S.S. gnones are still at work so we left the site alone.

Mike Bond referred to the dig in his report at the D.S.S. A.G.M. of April, I969, saying it had only just been started. (See D.S.S. NL.I06, Page -) The following is an extract fron 'Panorama of Torquay' by Octavia Blewitt, held in the Local History Library:

P.I75 "Ipplepen .... This parish has some romantic scenery, abounding in rocks and tors, particularly a small valley called Stoney Combes. There are several subterranean rivulets; one of these, beneath the place of its emerging, fertilizes a meadow to such a degree that, without any other manure, it produces three crops of grass between March and September."

The Lost Passage at Pixies Hole

In his 'History of Devonshire', the Rev. Polwhele wrote: footnote to Page 50 .... "there is a tradition current in the neighbourhood that a dog was once put into the hole and came out again without any hair on his back at Botter

rock in the parish of Hennock, which is at the distance of above three miles from where it went in."

It is unfortunate that he did noy state what breed off dog it was, since such a super-speleo-dog would be very handy these days. For not only did our Canine Casteret hold his breath whilst free-diving beneath the river Teign, but he also chimneyed and climbed to emerge at an altitude of 825 feet, after having passed through all manner of slates, volcanics and even solid granite!

Score; P.C.G. one, Local Legends nil.

West Hoe Park Show Cave

"On the west side of the Hoe at Plymouth, and looking into Millbay, some quarrymen in I776, worked into a cavern in the marble rock, which afforded a tolerable room within. It was of no great size - something of an oval form, and perhaps twenty feet deep from the hole by which you entered, and about ten feet high in the most roomy part. It was curiously ornamented with a vaste variety of stalactite, in all sorts of shapes; out of which the fancy of people, aided by the imperfect light of a candle, had formed a number of strange resemblances of men and women, household utensils, etc. The owner of the quarry made a great deal of money by shutting it up with a little door and showing it for sixpence each."

footnote - "The cavern at Millbay was of no great extent and, as I believe, now entirely worked and dug away. It was discovered in working the marble or limestone rock, which is the substance of all that hill to the west of Plymouth garrison and on which it is built. This cavern which was not, I believe, of a greater extent of thirty or forty feet from the mouth, was filled and adorned, like most other caverns, of the same substance, with various shapes of selenitic petritactions occasionned by the dripping of the water through the different crannies of the

rock, and taking up the soluble parts of the stone in its progress, which, when again consolidated and fixed, were imagined to represent a number of curious shapes; and fertile imaginations made out many resemblances."

Taken from the Rev. Polwhele's "History of Devonshire", Page 52.

Steve Poole

Meet Report

Easter Weekend, 9th. to 12th. April

South Wales

Members Present:

Liz, Fish, Alan Henshaw, Paul Hatherley

We had decided to leave early on the Friday morning, (we all agreed that 9a.m. was early!) Consequently we left Plymouth at about 10a.m. The reasons for the delay were varied but included Fish's appetite at breakfast, the need to visit various Probation Officers to collect articles of camping gear (we had more borrowed stuff with us than owned, as usual) and the delicate and time-consuming task of fitting four people, diving gear, caving gear, camping gear and food into 'Orrible 'Orace, the Morris - this could not have been done without the kind co-operation of Norman who lent us a roofrack. We had everything, including the kitchen sink - that was on the roof! Of course, one mustn't forget Fish's first load of legal bang - not that he let us forget it all weekend (as Cobbett, 'The Lung', commented "My strategy would be to find a dig that needed banging and then apply for a licence, but Fish applies for a licence and then goes around begging to be provided with something to bang!")

At last we were on the road: the journey was roughly uneventful, except for straying water carriers, millions of cabbages and a break at the Hunters. With our late departure from Plymouth and our enormous weight (no rude comments, thankyou!) keeping down 'Orace's top speed, we were a little worried that the Hunters would not remember to stay open for us, but we need have had no fears.

Much to everyone's relief we agreed that we were only passing through and, after a quick lunch, we regained the road again. Fish said that he could navigate us through Bristol and, much to everyone's surprise, he managed to do so, getting us grabbed by only two traffic jams in the process.

The same cannot be said for Liz's navigation from the end of the motorway to the Heads of the Valleys Road - she said that she took us that way to show us the beauties of Wales and to find the road to Aggie for future reference, but we did not believe her.

We arrived at Porth-yr-ogof at about 5.-Op.m. to join John Evans (ex-E.U.S.S. and Africa) in a search for the campsite - as there should have been about a dozen tents pitched, we were just wondering if someone had done a magnificent con on us, when Alan Mills (Mendip and Severn Valley C.C.) arrived with the welcome news that Cobbett (who else?) had decided that it would be a far better idea to camp opposite the pub in Ystradfellte.

There we found a load of tents containing an assortement of varied cavers. We quickly pitched ours and cooked a meal while more cavers arrived from various parts of the country. We all gathered in the pub that night to commence the first skirmish of a continuing battle with the landlord - for some reason he and his regulars did not approve of our singing - earholes, all round!

Despite varied suggestions when we left the pub for entering Ogof Y, banging Ogof X or letting down the Coshan

C.C. tents, we all quickly went to sleep - at least, Cobbett went to sleep and the rest of us lay in our tents listening to his snores!

Next morning we were woken by the sun and the chickens - they seemed to be suffering from the after-effects of consuming a large portion of Nottingham curry the night before! As was to be expected, plans for the day's activities were vague and a good deal of time was spent in deciding to go up to the P.Y.O. car-park to continue the discussion.

Chap. II

We left the village of Ystradfellte at II.00 a.m. in lovely sunshine and drove over to Porth-yr-ogof. An hour was spent watching fellow speleos prussicking and abseiling down the rock face. After this, it was our turn. Prussiking seems to be becoming popular for ascending big pitches. Although it gets a lot easier with practice, we found it difficult and I think I'll stick to ladders.

Enough of this doobery furckering, we decided, and it was off to Little Neath River Cave. L.N.R.C. was discovered after the terminal sump in Bridge Cave had been passed. The divers followed the stream up and discovered it reached the surface in a river bank, level with the River Neath. It had been passed by, un-noticed, for years - who would have thought a cave of such size existed below a river which had, until the discovery, been regarded as the level of the water table? Earholes to that!

We went underground at mid-afternoon with various other cavers who seemed to come from all over England. The party of twelve soon spread out as we negotiated the spiky rifts and crawls at the entrance. This part of the cave sumps in wet weather as there is only about twelve inches of air-space in some places. The passage enlarged to better proportions after a small but noisy waterfall. After slowing down to admire the formations, we checked the

position of the Cnnal By-pass and then continued along the silted up passages. Suddenly Mud Hall looned up above us as we entered from underneath. The size is really large and I think there is room for a Jumbo Jet or two.

Mud Hall led down to Bridge Cave Sump Junction where the Little Neath River greets us with all the glory lots of water normally does.

After a few minutes rest and an inspection of the sump, we followed the stream back up to the canal by-pass to miss out the canal section for the sake of non-wet-suiters. After a thousand feet of this passage, which is something like the crawl in Southern Stream, we regained the Master Cave. The Master Cave is big. Well, you would expect it to be with a river running through it. After half-a-mile though, it gets a bit tedious, especially when your light beam does not reach the roof and walls!

By now the party was quite split up and I went on down to L.N.R.C. Sump II with Mike, passing Alan coning back, on the way. This sump is about 200feet long. (Welsh caves are inconsiderate - all the sumps are too long to free-dive - earholes!)

The Canal was soon readhed with nosy of the party together again. The Canal is dead straight for 400ft. and has to be swum all the way. Although it is only 2foot deep air-space above the water is only 2 feet. It's too low to stoop and the water is too high to go up on hands and kneew. By now, the non-wet-suit-clad cavers were getting cold so we nade a hasty retreat to the surface after 4 hours underground. Changing was done without any moans due to the sun and we were soon back at the tents eating the food Liz had prepared for us. After this it was pub time and the evening was spent drinking and singing in the New Inn across the road (a well-chosen camp-site.)

Chap. III

The beer and singing had taken its toll in the morning and so everyone decided to be as repulsive as possible. To achieve this state of being is second-nature to cavers, as we know, so we crashed in a heap and went through our repetoire of songs, for the entertainment of the cabbages in their 'caravan life support systems' across the other side. They didn't seem to appreciate our elegant repetoire. We reached this conclusion by noting their fervent attempts to get their Sprouts inside. Someone suggested caving -a pint was needed urgently'.

Upon reaching Porth we changed into our wet-suits and went to pay homage to the Esseb Memorial Plaque. We then made our way over to the main entrance, the party consisting of Fish, Paul and myself. We swam in a little, watched by curious tourists, and after pausing for a while to entertain them by floating on our backs, diving, swearing, we disappeared down the stream passage, one at a time, receiving a standing ovation as we each departed. While swimming down the main stream, J, Cobbett caught us up and joined the party. After swimming down a huge tube-shaped passage for 500ft. the river shallowed and we found our-seves walking through a vast bedding plane. After another 700ft. of walking the river gave way to a lake and, after passing this, the cave tapered into a narrow stream passage about 50ft. long, which came to light at the resurgence.

We decided to walk down the river and explore the banks for caves. A caver from E.U.S.S. found an entrance and so I dived in. After following a small stream along a very narrow rift for three hundred feet, I was brought to a halt by a stal flow blocking the passage. I retraced my steps back to the entrance and told everyone what I had found. On receiving the information Fish decided to bang it, etc., etc., etc., We decided to return later with some bang but first J. Cobbett was going to entertain us with a demonstration of how to prussik up a 80ft. waterfall.

After the J. Cobbett show we returned to collect some bang. Paul and myself swam into the resurgence of Porth and followed the river upstream back to the main entrance. We then went up to the carpark to await the arrival of Fish and bang.

Chap. IV

We assembled the ammocans, cable and tools and started off down the valley, pursued by a few bold but nervous cabbages.

After crawling around a pile of boulders on the left bank, half-a-mile downstream from P.Y.O., Alan located the cave he had found earlier. Alan, myself, Paul and the 'Admiral' (N.U.S.S.) set off following a small stream up a series of little rifts. After 150ft. our progress was halted by the stal block which, as Al reported, blocked the way on.

The block was about 2 metres cubed with a convenient gully six inches wide on one side, with the stream bubbling out from underneath. It rose to within 6in. of the roof.

I decided to take two shots at it. Paul and the Admiral started laying the cable while assisted me in placing a 2lb. charge in the little gully on top of the block. After tamping the charge, we retired to the entrance. We quickly connected our nife-cells in series and fired; a soft thupp and a sigh of warm air informed us that we had made a pretty good shot.

Our second shot, of half the size, was not so good, but the cabbages were delighted at the noise that assaulted their 'earholes'. I made a quick trip in to retrieve the cable but could not make out the effectiveness of our work due to the fumes of the second shot, but with luck it should have brought the block away from the side of the passage. Anyone interested in continuing the job will probably need to put a few small charges to break up the

block into manhandable-sized lumps.

we changed and returned to the, you guessed, pub to pondersuch things as "why do divers carry such large knives?", "why the local chapter of Hells Angels chose to drink outside the pub when cavers were drinking inside?", "why the locals disapprove of us singing 'Lloyd George knew my father' but were appeased when we sang 'Lloyd George had an arrange ment with my father', and to ponder on cabbages and kings.

Chap V

The Monday morning heralding our return trip on the cabbage conveyor belt to sunny Plymouth dawned bright and warm. Within the camp there were obvious signs of departure as the tents fell like ninpins (not always purposefully) and the chickens enjoyed an unexpected bonus.

After the normal delays (such as Fish going for a s..t, and Alan deciding to send a postcard to his parents) we again decided to load the car - this turned out to be no less difficult than on the way up. In fact we had an additional load of 8 ammo-cans to fit in!

Eventually we left, our next port of call being, yes, you guessed, the Hunters. Unfortunately we ran into a cabbage jam off to the races and a queue of earholes across the Severn bridge. We have to admit it - we missed the Hunters by 20 minutes and even our panting tongues would not persuade Roger to draw us a pint. We were sorely tempted by an invitation to go adder-baiting and triffid-hunting with the B.E.C. (have they, at last, grown tired of Cuthberts?) but Liz, in her usual fashion, was muttering about washing and other domesticated tasks at home, so, the car being hers, we had no option but to push on.

The universal nectar being denied to us, we partook of expensive dishwater and best Lyons 'homemade cakes' in a Sewer-side cafe, and returned to Plymouth after a thoroughly enjoyable weekend.

Meet Report

28th. March, 1971

Pridhansleigh Cavern

Members Present

Fish, Alan Henshaw

Prid, v. Divers
Div: Lamps
Score: Prid. I, Divers 0.

I met Eric Grey, D.S.S., at the E.U.S.S. dinner and arranged for a Prid. dive to be led by Eric and that A. Moll And J. Evemns (E.U.S.S.) would accompany us. Andy and John were drunk at the time.

Crest Hill - Noon, 28th. March, 1971.

As of tradition, we arrived 20 minutes late to find that Eric was not alone. The other D.S.S. divers, Mike Bond, Jerry ? and ?? had come too.

Moll was persuaded that polishing gear is a pleasant past-time but diving with it is even better. He was dissuaded from taking a harpoon gun; a knife would be far more useful.

The next obstacle was equipment. Between us we had: 7 ammo cans, 7 bottles, three weight belts, 6 bags of assorted gronnage and I packet of W.D. and H.O. Wills .... and, alas, I sherper. The P.C.G. were out in force that day.

Alan Henshaw disappeared under a fair-sized load, bearing in mind that well-known sherper's saying "Humping is happiness; happiness is compulsory".

For those who do not know the cave, the carry in, although not long, is purgatorial. The gear and the divers have to be propelled along a series of mud slides, going both uphill and downdale. On reaching the top of the uphill

list, there is usually a race between the baggage and the porter back to whence they started and then both begin again the labours of Bruce until the bottle, or whatever, is kicked into a hole and left, or the porter wins.

Moll found this a bit more than tiresome as it was his lot to be saddled with an M.D.E. 50. Moll is a small person: an M.D.E. 50 is probably the largest bottle on the market. We arrived at the Lake in due course. By the time we got there, the D.S.S. were kitted up. Their equipment and techniques have evolved around the lake dive. Bottles range in capacity from 40 to 60. They use single-bottled sets to avoid decompression as the vertical range of the dive is 120ft. plus. Longer air reserves could tempt the diver, wittingly or unwittingly, to stray into decompression zones, which would prove to be a hazardous complication. Bottles are worn high on the chest as opposed to the usual six-gun style favoured by C.D.G. Pressure and depth gauges are the only instruments used on the dive and on one set the pressure gauge was mounted rigidly in such a way that the diver could read it by slightly turning his head. This is a useful adoption as the diver may have to sit about at depth controlling the push-diver's sweep-line.

The method of sweeping at various depths with 2 divers down the shot line seems archaic by C.D.G. standards but at Prid the practice is a good one, especially when one considers that C.D.G. methods failed to find Prid II as they are unsuitable to deep open diving. The valves used were tilt-valved models, modified with purge-button guards. Apparently purge-buttons are inadvertently pushed in at depth and remain pushed in. An other piece of equipment of interest was the resurrected Aflo. This consisted of a sealed car headlight, mounted on a frame of copper tube, which also served as a handle. The power is supplied by three nife-cells wired in series and tied around the diver's waist.

When we were ready, we ran through the plan. Mike, Jerry and ? were to go first as they were going to look at

a side passage at the 80ft. level. Eric was to lead John through to II, while Moll and I brought up the rear a few seconds later. We swam across the lake some 50ft. to the Moles. Here the I shot-line is suspended over the lake by a spanning line secured each side by rawlbolts in a 'Y'. Giving Eric and John a minute, Moll and I started. We went down fairly slowly, clearing our stubborn ears. Visibility was a grey-brown zero to 2 feet. We stopped at thirty feet where we groped to say that each was O.K. The discomfort level was high as it often is under these conditions: the roar of bubbles from the divers below coupled with our own exhausts was appalling, and being buffetted by the exploding gas is uncomfortable, coupled with poor visibility. At 60ft. the divers below had gone into II and we found ourselves sinking silently in a brown nullity, the slight uneasiness of the first thirty feet caused by unpractised ears, having passed. At 75ft. we did a routine check, and then continued down. 5ft. later we hit the junntion. I lowered myself below it, grasped the other line and reached off sideways.

I found myself in clear, blue water. I turned my beam gun and looked around. The line sloped upwards through the blue haze until it disappeared in the aquamarine shadows. Ahead was a line attached to the II shot-line, snaking off into the unknown below. My lighting had a range of thirty feet, in which there was no feature other than the lines visible. On turning about I could see the Arch and passage which I had just swun through, and the line disappearing back into the mouth of I. I could see no Moll.

At the moment I was quite happy drifting on the line, but this gave way, after a couple of minutes, to anxiety. I decided I'd better go lookefor him. On approaching the I line I was relieved to see Moll blundering like a bling man through the murk that hangs like a curtain across the threshold of II. We swiftly made our way up the line through the continuous silver rain of silt particles. When we eventually broke surface in the II chamber, the others were waiting at the other side.

The chamber is of about 40ft. diameter and 40ft. high. We swam across and were able to sit in a niche at water level. A 20ft. ladder gave access to a balcony and grotto complete with soup kitchen. Everything had an air of competence about it, in which the D.S.S. must be congratulated. There is a distinct lack of loose lines which festoon the majority of other dives in the country. If anything is not required on the site, it is removed. The shot-lines are of heavy nylon or courlene rope. If anything of interest is found, it's relative position is marked by tape on the main line and the position and depth is marked on a survey for future reference. If a repeat visit is needed, the divers merely go to the tape in question, clip on a line and resume exploration, removing the line immediately after use.

On arriving at II the D.S.S. divers found that they had not got enough gas to do what they wanted. I was invited to help myself, and was told that if there was anything in particular which I wanted to see, I was to go ahead. I had to decline the offer as the Moll hunt had cost me two-thirds of my gas supply.

On talking to Mike Bond, I learnt that some of the divers are susceptible to attacks of nitrogen narcosis. the depths in II are in excess of 120ft. apparently. The divers were attacked especially if working hard. Personally I find that narcosis begins it's onslaught in poor vis. at about that depth, and that using a downstream valve tended to delay the symptons somewhat. I suggested that they might find their task a little easier if they changed to the downstream type valve. One wonders if CO_2 buildup does trigger narcosis? There is little doubt in my mind. The tilt valve at depth produces drag to such a degree that the diver feels that he is breathing through a straw and soon slips into the muddleness of narcosis.

The D.S.S. decided that they would return to I to fetch supplies for the kitchen. We waited for them to return while Eric related to us their excitement when they first

broke into II. After a while the others rejoined us and we were free to leave. I decided to go first, a little ahead, so as not to be held up. I made my way quickly down to the wide arch of I. After consulting my pressure gauge, I decided that I had enough air to slip down to the botton of the I shot-line, which consists of a wire-basket full of rocks. Having paid my respects to the bottom of I, I made a fairly fast ascent, slowing down at the thirty feet mark for the last few feet to the surface.

I was soon joined by the rest who had had an uneventful trip. At the edge of the lake is a wooden jetty to make dressing easier and to help keep the mud from flowing in. I made the mistake of emptying the water from my nife-head whilst balanced on the edge of 20 feet of water, needless to say, I dropped the glass, bezzle, etc.

Our faithful P.C.G. sherper, Alan, decided to sherper for the D.S.S. - a piece of cunning which we cannot work out to whom to attribute! He left us with an even bigger heap of gear to carry out.

So ends a day in Prid. My thanks to D.S.S. and I wish them the best of luck in their continuing venture.

Fish

Meet Report

North Wales, World's End

Member Present - Alan Henshaw

The P.C.G. being fully occupied with silly things they call work, left me to explore Minera in North Wales. After conning my brother into running me out to World's End, I changed and had a look around for signs of any cavers. I finally came across a caving vehicle, complete with honk stains, broken windows, rusted body, soiled paintwork, ladders, ropes, etc. After asking it where the cavers had gone, I

thanked it and had a look around for the entrances it mentionned. While looking around, I noticed a stream twice the size of Swildons appearing out of the ground. Just above this resurgence I found an entrance with the sounds of a stream gushing down. I followed the passage in until I finally reached the stream. I followed the stream up a very tight passage for thirty feet and was finally brought to a halt by a tight, flooded passage. Retreating back out to the entrance, I decided to have a look around for other entrances. In all I found four which, sadly, did not lead anywhere. After about an hour of climbing around, I found an entrance down a small vertical shaft about thirty feet deep. This gave way to a flooded level. After following the level for about forty feet, it gave way to a passage with a rail track running down it. After walking along the rail track for 200 feet, I met up with some other cavers. After the usual cliches of introduction. they told me I was in an old lead mine. After letching a fag I left them and proceeded along the level. After walking along for another 500 feet, I came across two more cavers crashed in a heap. They told me that the area of Minera had great potential for caves but they had not had much success in breaking into the systems. They said that since the Wrexham Caving Club disbanded two years ago, no-one has bothered to do a systematic search for systems. Surface tests have been carried out and the limestone is hollow. The lead mines have broken into natural caves. One mine, called O.D.B. enters two vast chambers; one is called Churchill, which is 150 feet long and 60 feet high. Churchill Chamber has a boulder choke restricting the passage on and they do not seem to have bothered to dig it. A lot of entrances have been found but have not been pushed. After a lot of chat and a letch of yet another fag, I followed the level on until a roof-fall. After a two hour trip, I surfaced.

I managed to get a name and address if we ever wanted a trip down O.D.B. which has a very nice pitch of three hundred feet to add to the sport.

C. Davis,
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Wrexham.
North Wales.

Apart from the potential for caves, there is also a lot of climbing areas around Llangollen and World's End. So by combining the two, it would make a worth-while trip.

Alan Henshaw

Norway, 1970 (continued)

Having returned to the campsite at Konsberg, we packed up our gear and drove to Oslo. Unfortunately I took a wrong turning and we spent about twenty minutes looking for the road to the campsite. We just avoided being hit from the right by an evil, foreign car, as she never quite knew who or what held right of way. However, we eventually found the campsite (or was it Butlin's Holiday Camp?). There were more people than blades of grass and one had to walk about two miles to the toilets, by which time one forgot where on was going.

On the Monday we drove into Oslo and made our way to the Museum, only to find to our dismay that it was closed. We wandered around the town, but it was so hot and sultry that I returned to the vehicle whilst Hugh and Phil went in search of naps and a gaz cylinder.

The following day, which did not come too quickly, we left the crowded campsite and stayed near Dovre. On the way we had the misfortune to have another puncture and Hugh spent a good while coaxing the jack to work again.

On the thursday we arrived at Mo-i-rane and camped near the steel works amidst clanging thuds and orange smoke.

Whilst pitching the tent we met some friendly Swedish chaps, who, for most of the time, seemed to be in a state of complete stupor. We exchanged a packet of Cornflakes for a tin of meat balls which we found quite tasty.

The following day we drove into town to get the inner tube replaced. Whilst Hugh and Phil were attending to the tyre, I went shopping and bought some poisonous-looking cheese, which even Hugh did not enjoy. Phil refused to try any, which wasn't surprising as the pong was rather overpowering. It was so distasteful that I ended up throwing it into a nearby hedge.

We then proceeded to the Svartisen Glacier at about I o'clock in the afternoon. We changed into suitable gear and Phil got out his climbing rope and ice axe. We had some coffee in a little cafe before we began our trog. I found the coffee rather strong that it made me feel quite sick. This gave Hugh and Phil an opportunity to mock:

Hugh - 'The best thing is to stick your fingers down your throat'.
Me - 'Groan'.
Phil - 'Yes, that's the best way, puke it all up'.
Me - 'Groan'.

Men just have no sympathy.

We had a walk of about I½ miles through jungle before we came to an area not unlike that of a mine dump.

We noticed the melt water from the glacier flowing out from a hole with such tremendous force that anyone falling into the water would have had no chance of survival. Nearby was a climbing club hut which was stocked with food, skis and rescue equipment.

About a mile further on we came to the tongue of the glacier Osterdalsisen. The scenery was magnificent and I felt rather guilty of intruding onto the scenery. The edge

of the ice was pale blue and between the underside of the ice and the ground were spaces that one could crawl in under. Beneath the great mass of frozen ice it was strangely eerie and the blueness was reflected everywhere.

We skirted around the edge of the ice until we managed to climb up onto it. We spent some time eating chocolate and then roped up in preparation to cross the glacier tongue. Phil, looking quite competent with his ice axe, led off, followed by myself and Hugh bringing up the rear. We then proceeded to make our way across the ice. We noticed rather a lot of small dead furry creatures lying on the ice, and upon further investigation, found them to be the remains of lemmings which had obviously come to grief on the icy waste.

As we progressed towards the other side of the valley, the crevasses became more frequent and meant that we had to zig-zag quite a lot to get around them. Some of the crevasses were quite deep and we trod very carefully around them as we did not relish the idea of falling into the icy water which lay at the bottom of the crevasses. We found some of the ridges rather steep to climb without crampons and so Phil had to cut steps so that we could walk safely. There came one or two dodgy places where I'm sure that, had Hugh or Phil slipped, I would have gone with them.

It was a wonderful feeling, our first taste of glacier crossing. We were alone on the ice and felt like three pioneers crossing the Arctic wastes. By the time we had reached the other side, we had been on the ice for about 2½ hours.

The Main glacier was higher up in the valley and Hugh was eager to see as much of it as he could. He bombed on rather quickly and the two of us followed him at a slower pace, as we scrambled over boulders left by the glacier. By now it had turned to dusk.

Sometine later Hugh re-appearedonly to say that he could not see the main glacier as it was still too high. The walk right onto the lgacier would probably have taken several hours.

Many times we heard terrific cracks like cannon shots and realized that it was the ice breaking off.

Reluctantly we decided our return route. It was decided that we should skirt around the edge of the lake which lay at the terminus of the glacier.

By now it was as dark as it would get, and we were still able to define shapes. The trek around the mud flats bordering the lake seemed endless, and in several places we observed hoof prints of some large mammal, probably elk, which must have come down to drink.

There were several bergs floating around in the lake which frequently carve from the ice mass, and had I the chance I would truely have stayed here for as long as possible.

As we neared the end of the lake we noticed the water was pouring down a large hole like a vortex. We then realized that the hole we had observed earlier must connect with this, possibly as a means of outlet to prevent flooding at certain times of the year. When we reached the hut, we stopped for a bite to eat and to rest our weary limbs.Soon we were on our way once more and we met the early morning mist rising up from the valley. It was a cold, damp mistbut our thoughts were on other things. The trek through the jungle was very wearing as we found our legs ached as we lifted them over fallen branches which strewed along the muddy path. We eventually arrived back at at the vehicle at about 4 o'clock on Saturday morning, having been out for I2 hours, after a most memorable trip.

We drove back to the campsite and crashed out in the tent. We awoke sometime later in the afternoon and had some

food.

Phil spent the night out with the Swedish boys and was attacked by a bramble (or was it a girl?). Hugh and I strolled along by the steel Mill reminicing our glacier crossing.

When we awoke the following morning we found a note pinned on the landrover from the Eldon Pothole Club who thought us to be someone else.

We had intended going further north past the Arctic circle, so we left the large tent where it was and took the small one with us.

It was decided that we should visit the Eldon cavers on our way. With everything we needed in the Landrover, we set off to find the cavers, After a detour along muddy forest tracks, we found their camosite. Although there was no-one around, they had left a note saying that they had gone toFiskegrotten, which was on farm land. We drove to the farm but found it to be the wrong one. The farmer was very obliging and allowed us the use of his phone to speak to the cavers who were on the opposite side of thexvalley.

Hugh and Phil insisted that we should wait to see the cavers, and after what seemed an endless time, a landrover arrived with the cavers.

They showed us several small holes near where they were camping. They told us the forezt was riddled with small holes - which night prove promising for the future.

We finally set off to go north, stopping at Rognan at about 10.-0 that night.

On the Monday we went to Kristihola and contacted the farmer who owned the land on which the cave was situated. He was a very friendly character and he called two boys to show us where the cave entrance was as one was

liable to get lost.

The boys ran swiftly up the mountainside closely pursued by Hugh and Phil. I failed to keep up with them (as ladies are slower) and consequently got lost. I stood in a small clearing and shouted but there was no answer. I cursed silently to myself and plodded back to the Landrover in the pouring rain.

Sometime later Hugh and Phil returned and we ate some food before going underground. Hugh ate quite a lot of soapy cheese and a whole packet of biscuits. He felt rather full, so I nursed him back to health with a Rennie and he soon recovered.

Whilst we were changing an audience of four boys gathered around and Phil amused them with his Mickey Mouse shirt.

We then started the long haul up the mountainside in our wet-suits. We carried cameras, ropes and other necessities which cavers seem to carry. We felt like three little, sweaty bundles, stopping every three paces to cool off.

The Oksholelva stream sinks into the bed of the stream some 50 yards short of the entrance. The entracne, itself, is an impressive cliff about 80 feet high.

It appears that there are three entrances to the cave - Oksholelva entrance into which we went, and Kristihola, whose entrance is in a shakehole some 150 yards South. The third entrance was found in 1968 by members of the Kendal Caving Club. The whole length of the cave is about 4 miles and is the largest explored in Norway, and also one of the deepest being over 600 ft. in depth.

We took a few photographs and then disappeared into the cave. We had to climb over many large boulders and were eventually forced to crawl on our stomachs. We were quite relieved when we arrived in the Ice Hall where we saw many

ice formations. Phil took some photographs of the ice.

There were several arrows marked on the boulders but we manged to lose ourselves several times, and it was even more annoying when we heard the stream but could not find it. However, we ementually arrived at a large chamber and Hugh and Phil almost fell in with excitement. We were in the Main Streamway. At several places we stopped to view the dimensions of the passage. We then came to a place called the Slipway, where the stream seemed to flow down a slope and disappear, around a corner. We felt a bit apprehensive at what might be around the corner, so a line was fixed and Phil walked down to find that it was O.K.

From here on the stream gave way to a waterfall arounf which we had to battle. The stream then flowed into a deep pool and disappeared around another corner. As I could not swim properly I remained behind whilst Phil and Hugh bombed on together. About 20 minutes later they returned to say that it was still going.

After a little rest we started on the way back. We returned to the vehicle at about 2.30 Tuesday morning, changed and drove to a nearby campsite and went to sleep.

We awoke later that afternoon and had a meal. Hugh looked at the maps and decided our return route, after finding that we had 'lost' a day.

We drove back towards Mo stopping on the Arctic Moor to do some deer stalking, as Phil was anxious to take some photos. The deer, however, had other ideas and about 2 miles further on, an exhausted Phil was still trying to keep up with them. It was, then, that I noticed a being not unlike that of the Wild Man of Borneo leaping wildly in the air and waving a large handkerchief.

As I got closer I saw that it was indeed Hugh, chasing a poor little lemming. Then everyone joined in and we almost had one cornered until it ran between Hugh's legs.

The lemming is a member of the hamster family and is about five inches long from nose to tail. Although it looked a friendly little creature, its long, yellowed teeth showed that it could give quite a nasty bite.

From the droppings that we could see, there must have been quite a colony of these creatures living on the moor.

We also came across some multiberries, small red berries used by the local people in jam making.

However, as with everything, good things must come to an end and so we returned to the campsite at Mo.

To be continued

Pat Evans