



RED ROSE CAVE AND POTHOLE CLUB

# NEWSLETTER



Vol 61 No 1

Spring 2024



**Second Place - Giles Barker Award 2024**

*Photo: Devis Hole Mine by Bill Nix*

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## ***Editor's Note***

Welcome to the first Newsletter of 2024! This time, we have a collection of exciting articles ranging from recent club events, caving trips, and digging updates, to blasts from the past. This Newsletter also includes all winning photographs from the club's recent Photo Competition. Congratulations to all winners.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to this edition. I hope you all enjoy reading the articles as much as I did.

**Gwen Tawy**

***Newsletter Editor***

## **News**

### **RRCPC AGM**

The Red Rose A.G.M will be held on Sunday 24th March at 10:30am at Bull Pot Farm. This will coincide with our next working weekend. There will also be a curry and film night the evening before the A.G.M (Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> March).

### **New RRCPC Website**

The new RRCPC is now live: [Red Rose Cave & Pothole Club – at the gateway to the longest cave in Britain \(rrcpc.org.uk\)](http://rrcpc.org.uk)

Huge thank you to Hugh St Lawrence, Dinny Davies and all other members who have tirelessly worked on this over the last year.

### **Hit List for Ease Gill Survey SHEET 5**

In order for us to release the next sheet in the series there are a few less travelled places that need surveying. If you're willing to take on one of the following in the Hit List then please let Sam Lieberman ([sam@ermintrude.freeuk.com](mailto:sam@ermintrude.freeuk.com)) or Ray Duffy ([rayduffy4325@gmail.com](mailto:rayduffy4325@gmail.com)) know, so that we don't duplicate the effort. Thanks, if you do any of these bits:

1. The Frontier (can be found not far from the end of the crawl in Mistral by going straight on instead of left toward The Hobbit)
2. Zeppelin Aven (can be found on the right not far from the start of The Grind)
3. The passage on the left leads to Pit Pot, found almost opposite the oxbow to Red Rope Aven at the end of Canyon Streamway and just before Far Streamway starts.
4. The passage on the left near the very end of Far Streamway.
5. The aven at the end of The Dickeries could do with scaling up and surveying up into
6. The actual small streamway between the bottom of Tigers Inlet (in the Canyon) and The Ramp [only very small short people for this one]

**Ray Duffy**

## Club Events

### Boxing Day Walk 2023

26<sup>th</sup> December 2023

**Helen Blyth, Jim Davis, Andy Hall, Pete Hall, Sarah Hall, Eleanor Hall, Mathew Hall, Emma Key, Sam Lieberman, Carol Makin, Bill Nix, Dave Ottewell, Alasdair Ottewell, Hugh Penney, Steve Round, Helen Sergeant, Sandra Wilkinson, Mel Wilkinson, Bob and Roz**

The weather goddess answered my prayers and Boxing Day started off with a bright blue sky – thank you!



Boxing Day Walk

Photo Credit: Sam Lieberman

I still had a persistent cough, and my breathing was struggling – never mind, Helen and Dave Ottewell had brought six-year-old Alasdair today so I could be at the back with them. The start of the walk is the steep uphill up Moughton Nab – no joking, as I watched Alasdair disappear into the distance, his little legs sprinting away from me – no effort!

At the top of the climb the plateau of Moughton is a limestone pavement with lots of juniper and heather and as we weaved our way towards the trig point a slight drizzle met us. Alasdair was already stood on top of the trig point jumping

about full of energy when I finally arrived. Photographs taken we descended towards Crummack and found a sheltered spot for our butties and mince pies.

Our return route contoured above the valley walled lane with views of Austick Beck Head and the river meandering down towards the village of Wharfe. Over the stile to what Carol and I call the “Mini Malham Cove” just below Studrigg Scar where we had a steep descent to a rising at its base. I have never seen water coming over the cove, but geology tells a different story. Bill and Emma walked back up to get a closer look.



When we reached the walled lane, the plan changed, and it was decided to go back along the lane to look at the sheep dipping pool. The information board there explained its use and showed how the farmers in gabardine coats stood up to their waists in the pool manhandling their sheep. I bet it was chilly! Photos were taken standing on the slate bridge but no takers to try the water!

A grand day out

Photo Credit: Sam Lieberman

Then down the walled lane to Wharfe, such a lovely small hamlet and on to the road. Here there was a split in the group as some decided to take a slightly longer route through the fields instead of a short road walk to the lane to Bark Houses Farm and the Pennine Bridleway back to our cars.

Of course, the Helwith Bridge pub was warm and welcoming, and Jim and Helen joined us for our meal. Great food and good company – Hope to see you all next year?

**Sandra and Mel Wilkinson**



Food at the Helwith Inn

Photo Credit: Andy Hall

# **RRCPC Photographic Competition**

## **27<sup>th</sup> January 2024**

This year's photo competition was judged by Alice Shackley, who won last year's Giles Barker Award. Alice commended all entrants on the standard of the photos, which no doubt made it difficult for her to choose only 3 winners for each category. This year, all entries were eligible for the Giles Barker Award, which is awarded by public vote. Bill Nix won this year's Giles Barker Award for his photo titled 'Ret Dung Khur, Meghalaya'. Congratulations to Bill, and to all other category winners.

For a better view of the winning photos, please visit our new website.

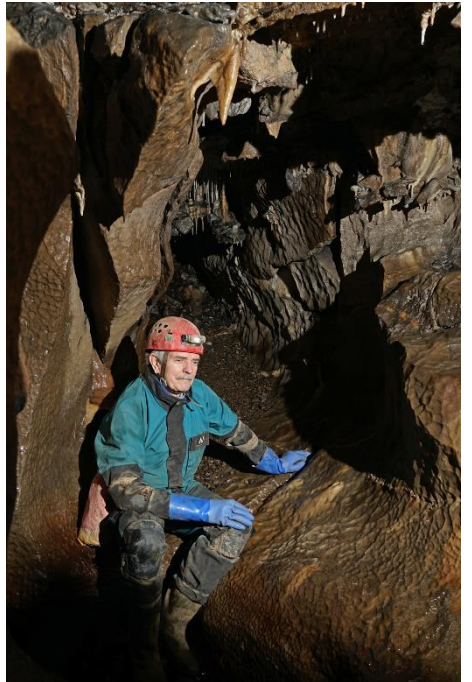
## **UK Below Ground**



**1<sup>st</sup>**  
Alum Pot by Rob Franklin



**2<sup>nd</sup>**  
Devis Hole Mine by Bill Nix



**3<sup>rd</sup>**  
Ray Duffy, Razor Passage by Sam Lieberman

**UK Above Ground**



**1<sup>st</sup>**  
Left: Sun, Star, Skye by Sam Lieberman



**2<sup>nd</sup>**  
Left: Loch Fyne by Bill Nix  
**3<sup>rd</sup>**  
Right: An Ruadh-stac by Gwen Tawy

## Abroad Underground



**1<sup>st</sup>**  
The Barren Lands, Krem Pynnah Um Sngad by Bill Nix  
**3<sup>rd</sup>**  
Right: Grotte de Millandre, Switzerland by Bill Nix



**2<sup>nd</sup> & Winner of Giles Barker Award**  
Left: Ret Dung Khur by Bill Nix

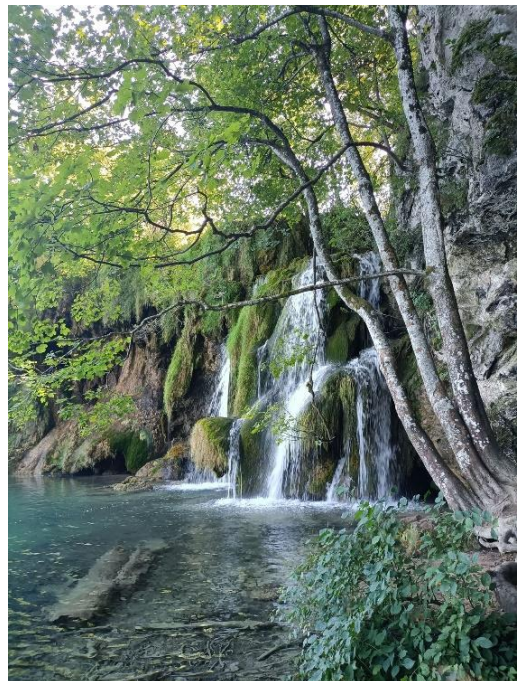
## Abroad Above Ground



**1<sup>st</sup>**  
Spring Sunset in Kalymnos by Gwen Tawy



**2<sup>nd</sup>**  
Above: Tropical Sunset by Andy Hall  
**3<sup>rd</sup>**  
Right: Plitvicka Jezera by Sandra Beattie



### Pocket Camera



**1<sup>st</sup>**  
Top Left: Pollnagollum, Coolarkin Waterfall by Emma Key  
**2<sup>nd</sup>**  
Above: Croatian Cave Life by Johnny Baker  
**3<sup>rd</sup>**  
Bottom Left: Colin Jones in Wretched Rabbit Entrance by Sam Liberman

### Humorous



**1<sup>st</sup>**  
Left: "This is not going in the F\*\$\$#ing Newsheet..." by Dinny Davies  
**2<sup>nd</sup>**  
Centre: Dalek needs a risk assessment by Andy Hall  
**3<sup>rd</sup>**  
Right: Moo! By Sam Lieberman

## ***The Farm and Sherlock Holmes***

So, there's no drinking or showering water, why-ever not? Removing his trusty Meerscham pipe from his mouth and using it to scratch his head just below the deer-stalker hat, he pauses in thought. Hmm, what could cause that problem? So begins the combing through the memory banks of things that have caused this before:

1. The filter at the Spring Box is blocked with silt and stopping water flowing down to the Storage Tank near the road, possible!
2. A sheep has jumped over the fence around the Storage Tank and thrown itself into the tank committing sheepicide and clogged the pipe, unlikely but strange things have happened before.
3. Someone has turned off the inlet or outlet taps in the member's lounge, even though they're not supposed to.
4. The main filters might be clogged in the cupboard in the member's lounge but that's why we're supposed to clean them every month, unlikely.
5. Has there been a drought and the spring has eventually dried up, it does happen in hot summers but when have we had one of them?

Well, I've no other ideas if those don't solve the mystery.

Ahha! Now the bogs won't flush, he picks up the violin and scratches across the strings in the hope of receiving inspiration. I suppose it could be:

- a. The very small filter in the pump on the stairs to the Reading Room could be blocked.
- b. As the filter was blocked and people couldn't hear the pump running, they've just kept flushing and draining the pipe to cause an airlock, oops!
- c. The tank on the stairs is empty because people kept flushing and the pump down at the back garden door isn't pumping because its filter is blocked as well.
- d. The IBC's (4 big water tanks) are empty because there's been excessive flushing and no rain or the float valve which runs the pump from the stream is not operating properly, maybe but unlikely!
- e. One of the RCDs has tripped on the electrical circuitry and switched off the pumps.

It's all very confusing and takes ages to sort out but Sherlock manages to solve both problems from the flimsy information delivered down the crackling phone line from the farm to his abode in Ingleton, what a star detective!!!!

Next story should be written by Poirot (aka Steve Round) about electrical mysteries at the farm, including the 'Tale of the water-filled emergency ceiling light'.

***Ray Duffy***

## ***Trip Reports***

### ***Ogof Ffynnon Ddu – Great Oxbow Series***

**12<sup>th</sup> November 2023**

**Steph Andrews (MCC), Dinny Davies, Gwen Tawy, Tarquin Wilton-Jones (MCC)**

Over the last couple of years, I have slowly been exploring OFD. Although I have now ticked off some classic trips, large areas of the survey are still a mystery to me. One place I was yet to visit was the Great Oxbow Series. Tarquin and Steph had been recently, and were more than happy to return to show us the sights.

After a leisurely breakfast, we walked up to the Top entrance and made our way to Midnight Chamber via the Corkscrew, Salubrious Passage, and Cross Rift. So far, I was familiar with the route and felt a little smug that I recognised some junctions!

From Midnight Chamber we turned off into unfamiliar territory. We scrambled down Midnight Passage, where the fun began. We negotiated a number of climbs to reach the start of the traverses, which mark the beginning of the round trip. As the route begins high up in the roof of the Great Oxbow, this trip is often referred to as the 'Upper Great Oxbow'. The traverses are tedious, as they are awkward enough to require protection. Using a travelling line, we belayed Tarquin to the end of the first section. Tarquin set up the traverse line as he went, providing a safe way for us to follow. We then repeating this process a second time to complete the traverse. I am sure that some people do this trip without using a travelling line, but the traverse often involves stepping over the streamway to reach a ledge that's big or stable enough. With the streamway being 25m or so below, protection is recommended.

Eventually, the traverse reached a point where we were required to climb around 6m down a rift. I was the unfortunate one who was directly behind Tarquin. He secured himself to a bolt above the climb, and I joined him to be belayed down. Looking at the climb from afar, it looked easy enough. As I got closer, I realised that one wall was covered in flowstone and formations, so I couldn't bridge my way down the rift. After a number of attempts, I decided the safest way down was to rig the climb as a one-bolt-wonder pull-through. This worked well, and we soon found ourselves huddled on a block of calcite boulders. From here we climbed up an in-situ ladder called Brigadier Glennie's Ladder. We were now in the upper passages, which were well decorated. After an awkward step 25m above the streamway, we entered the Great Oxbow Series proper, which was beautiful, and well worth the effort. A short crawl then reached the bottom of a strenuous 6m climb. Beyond this are even more pretty sections, featuring cordoned off formations and dried crystal pools. We spent some time exploring the different passages. The final one we explored ended up at the Skyhook, an 11m pitch that drops into a passage that leads into Midnight Chamber. This marked the end of the round trip. We then retraced our steps back to the entrance. What a great trip!

***Gwen Tawy***

## **Peterson Pot**

**10<sup>th</sup> December 2023**

**Nadia Raeburn-Cherradi (ULSA), Gwen Tawy**

"What about Peterson Pot?", asked Nadia one Saturday morning. I thought about this for a minute, then tentatively agreed. I was confident that Nadia would soon change her mind when she realised it was a rather unsociable trip for the Christmas Meet. My gamble worked, and we soon changed our plans to join Alice Shackley, Hannah Walker, and Ian Walker on a leisurely trip down Cow Pot.

Feeling smug on Sunday morning, I was soon disappointed to find that Nadia was still asking me about Peterson Pot. It was true that the trip was on my to-do list, but I still couldn't really imagine actually ticking it off that list. The only issue was that we'd talked so much about it at the Farm that I couldn't really back out now; I had run out of excuses. I reluctantly slunk off to pack the tackle sack, with the mantra "If Sam Allshorn's long legs get round the bends, mine will too!" echoing in my head.

It was a pleasant walk to the entrance, which looked surprisingly welcoming. As I made my way down the first climb, I was surprised to find a large barrel full of water at my feet. I was very glad Nadia had suggested I step back to avoid going for a swim. The bottom of the first pitch led almost immediately to the second pitch, which Nadia rigged. I started to think that this trip wasn't so bad. This thought quickly left my mind when Nadia pointed at the small tube we'd soon be entering.

Nadia shot into the tube at an ungodly speed, and I reluctantly followed. Soon, I could hear that she was sitting up in a chamber. "Is this it?" I wondered, just as I realised my legs weren't following the rest of my body around the corner. After some pushing and pulling, I found the only way round was to lift my hips high up in the passage and pull my bottom leg around the corner, praying it wouldn't jam as my knee crossed the dogleg. Any confidence I had about the trip slipped away, but I eventually made it round with some encouragement from Nadia. Even now, I am stunned that people who are significantly taller than me manage to do this trip. I asked Nat Dalton about his technique, and he told me that tall people have to negotiate this corner by 'doing a disgusting squatting move', which I can't visualise at all, so I can only imagine he was having me on.

I was very relieved to hear that the corner I had just negotiated was the crux, but I was still anxious for the rest of the trip. We decided to take it in turns to carry the tackle sack through the next and longest section. This involved a lot of swearing, as the passage was now awkwardly T-shaped as well as small. Looking down through the gap between my knees, I could see lots of booty that previous cavers had dropped. This kept me entertained as I slowly made my way through. Despite being passed the crux, I was still nervous on some of the corners, but Nadia was great at talking me through the worst ones.

Finally, we reached the Skydive. As I made my way towards it, I tried to work out how Nadia had changed her body position from horizontal to vertical without falling down the climb headfirst. I had visions of slipping and squashing Nadia in a place where rescue would

be difficult. Thankfully, nobody was squashed, and we continued down the final pitch, grateful that it was plain sailing from here on out.

At the bottom, I was surprised to find that the way on to Hall of the Mountain King wasn't intuitive, and I was thankful we'd brought a description with us. I felt rather disoriented when we finally emerged into Hall of the Mountain King, as I hadn't come in from that direction before, but we soon found our bearings. We decided to take the easy way out of Mistral. I couldn't face going out Pippikin!

**Gwen Tawy**

## **Quaking Pot**

**31<sup>st</sup> December 2023**

**Chris Curry, Mark Sims (YCC), Sandy Wright**

Like a lot of people I'd long had a vague ambition to do Quaking Pot. I'd actually had two trips there in the past. Once just intending to look at the crux, not even taking ropes for the lower half of the cave, and one proper attempt. That time we had been a party of six and, as I learned, unless you are all very confident and stagger your start, that is way too many. This time we were going to go fast and light. Three is probably the optimum number, enough to carry the tackle but more than that and time spent waiting at squeezes and tight pitch heads starts to sap the warmth from your body as fast as it does your enthusiasm. It means that by the bottom of the second pitch there is room for everyone's SRT kits to go in a tackle bag, but also that everyone has to carry a bag for most of the trip, there's no freeloading in Quaking.

We met at my house in Cold Cotes on New Years Eve morning, Chris and I had been surveying some shonky mine passage on The Stang the day before, but with hindsight, I'm not sure a warm-up trip was really necessary. Mark arrived at 9:30, by which time I had convinced myself that Quaking was a bad idea for today. I had it on good authority that Quaking was a safe wet weather option, but it had been raining every day for weeks and everything was sodden, while it was dry this morning the forecast was for heavy showers in the afternoon. I also knew that we would be crawling in the streamway after the crux and there would be stress enough without having to worry about the water rising on the way out. Better to leave it for another day, stay safe, do Bar Pot instead. Mark and Chris weren't for having any of this though, it was my idea after all, I was reluctantly persuaded. Jess was going to do job applications from my house for the day and would be our call out, 8 o'clock suggested Chris, am or pm?

After breakfast we packed bags and set off in Chris' Landrover to park at Skirwith, where there was a healthy stream already flowing out of the old show cave. Anxiety building on the walk up, by the time we had found the entrance I was feeling physically sick. Surprisingly, little water was falling down the sheer cliff that forms the back of the shakehole, the dry entrance being a short horizontal wiggle about halfway down the near side. Mark set off rigging, the first pitch is short and spacious, probably the easiest part of the cave. At the bottom though you are straight into it, a narrow thrutch to an awkward take-off for the second pitch and the cave has announced how it means to carry-on. From the second to third pitches is an abandoned stream passage with an awkward narrow section at the end that forces you to put

your SRT kit back on under a shower that lands right at the pitch head. Once you get on it however, the third pitch is excellent, spacious and scenic. We had opted to bring a 55m 8mm rope that allowed us to use the new P bolts to traverse further away from the water to a nice dry hang on the far side of the chamber. On the way down this almost seemed like an excess of caution as the direct route would have been fine, on the way out though we would be glad we had.

There's a fairly steady section of crawl traversing to the fourth pitch, which is narrow at the top and definitely one of those descender on the end of your short cows tail jobs. As I was the only one to have been this far before I was volunteered to go first through the Thin Stream Passage. Chris didn't know this though, so he had already set off but was having trouble finding the skydive. The skydive is relatively straightforward, but on looking round Coitus Corner I was momentarily confused, this can't be right, this is supposed to be the Crux, but that's far too narrow for anyone to fit through, isn't it? Oh bollocks, yeah, I remember.... this was a stupid idea. It isn't as bad as it looks, on the way in at least, gently upward trending thrutch to the corner, bend your knees and squat around then thrutch along lying horizontally about 2m above the floor, but for how long? None of this looks big enough to fit through? Just keep going. Turns out you can't go too far as the formations on the roof come down to meet you. When you've no other choice, swing your legs vertically and force yourself down through the virtually too small gap, phew! Surely that's going to be awful on the way back, don't worry, shove that thought out of your head for later. Crawling back upstream in the water you can get to within handshaking distance of someone on the other side, and you can at least pass the bags through, but the last bit is frustratingly too narrow for everyone but the very thinnest of thin stream cavers.

Downstream of the crux is crawling in the stream round sharp corners, with at least one unexpected squeeze. This doesn't let up until the floor starts to cut down narrowly and you are forced to crawl traverse at roof level along the well decorated and appropriately named Explorers Prerogative. The fifth pitch is a straightforward handline climb but in the short section of tall narrow streamway before the sixth pitch are two tight vertical squeezes that get relatively little press but are pretty strenuous on the way up. This is a theme of the trip really, there are awkward narrow thrutches everywhere, I kept thinking to myself 'in most other caves this squeeze I'm stuck in would at least have a name'. At the bottom of the seventh pitch, you are forced into a proper dunking in the wet w-bends followed shortly by another mid-way along Fly crawl. From this point on the main difficulties are behind you, well, and in front of you, but it's a clear run to the bottom of the cave and back to this point at least.

Bridge Hall and Gormenghast were impressive chambers, and not dull or grim as I had read in some trip reports. We didn't feel like hanging about though, and after a quick look around the boulder pile, we started back out. The water seemed noisier on the sixth and seventh pitches and was brown and muddy in the crawl back towards the crux. We guessed it was raining on the surface, but levels hadn't risen enough to cause us a problem. I was following Chris out and we both crawled straight past the start of the crux and into the bypass. While we were shuffling the bags through, Mark went straight up and through the crux without trouble. Excellent, I thought, he made that look easy. My turn though and I had made it almost to the corner when I thought I could let my legs down to ease myself around. On the way in you can do this, but not on the way back. Too late, I was stuck. I had let myself get too low and tiredness and gravity were pulling me inexorably into the funnel. I was properly stuck too,

it felt like there was a clamp round my waist and I couldn't go forward or back. I was probably only there for 5 minutes or so, but it felt so much longer. Having tensed up, on the verge of panic, I had to get myself to calm down and to relax, then push back like buggery, out the way you came in, come on, pull yourself together! It was only a millimetre, but I had definitely moved, that was good, do that again. Urrarghhh, maybe 5mm this time, thank f\*\*k for that! My relief at being free was tempered somewhat by still being on the wrong side of the crux. A 5-minute rest and I would have another go, but I was not doing that again, stay as high as you possibly can until well round the corner, you can rest later!

The rest of the trip out was a standard tired slog. We really noticed the difference in water at the third pitch, the direct route would have been do-able, but unpleasantly wet and we were glad of the extra traverse. Back at the surface and the wind was blowing light rain in our faces as we walked down, but there were small streamlets running everywhere that hadn't been there in the morning, there had definitely been some heavy rain while we were underground. We were soaked, freezing and knackered. Eight and a half hours of mainly struggle, but it was a satisfying tick and, what's more, we don't have to go back.

***Sandy Wright***

## ***Digging and Surveying Reports***

### ***Far Streamway***



The Nicer Bit  
Photo Credit: Ray Duffy

There'd been a few things added to my original drawing for Sheet 5 of the Ease Gill Survey, three of which were down Far Streamway, a rarely visited area with real potential for pushing. Sam and I decided to visit again to see if we could tick off some of the loose ends, maybe! Strange how time makes you either forget misery or increase its nastiness, in this case it was definitely the former. This also wasn't helped by me having broken a rib a few weeks before and still not wanting to lean on my right side so crawling was obviously not what I was after but that's definitely on the cards in this bit of cave.

For those who are uninitiated, Far Streamway begins as Canyon Streamway running off from the Hobbit, just after the entrance crawls of Mistral have been negotiated. Our memories had faded, and we were soon crawling in the stream rather than bypassing the squalor by the drier and easier oxbow that arrives at Stal Junction, silly us. Once back on track the stream passage is wide and walking for a while until the roof lowers and stooping gets one through to a taller and drier set of passages to a boulder area and some tight connections. There's quite a bit of deep sloppy mud in the water that can luckily be washed off at the several high avens that dribble in this section.



Awkward Boulders  
Photo Credit: Ray Duffy

Eventually the large boulder-strewn final passage is reached and even more mud, reminiscent of Hall of the Mountain King. At this point there's a dig on the left of the passage that head steeply down to a gravel-floored end, with a stream visible at its end. Beyond the dig the main

passage soon closes down and here a tight drop is possible under the edge of a muddy stal sheet. Over on the left of the stal is a crawl through a tight bedding into a small passage to an aven, though only Sam fitted into this with some difficulty. I didn't even bother realising that if Sam's front and back were touching the bedding there was no way I'd fit.

We surveyed the dig and retreated without getting lost and exited into the Hobbit via the alternative route that brings you out just behind the perched pool in the chamber, bargain, well not quite as Bargain Passage is almost opposite at this point.



Gloopy Mud  
Photo Credit: Ray Duffy

**Ray Duffy**

## ***Torearse Hole***

In 2021 I started looking in Casterton Pot at various leads. In early 2022 I enlarged a slot in the low ceiling just before the Fourth Chamber, and wriggled up into a small void, big enough to stand up in but only a metre long. There was an anvil shaped rock on the floor which prompted the name "The Forge" for this apparently insignificant find. The way on was a very narrow inlet but the curvature of the walls meant that no clear view ahead was possible. I decided that there were better leads elsewhere.

On a wet day in March 2023, I was going to one of my other leads in Casterton Pot when I was surprised to hear, then see, a raging torrent gushing from The Forge. Maybe it was worth another look after all.

I returned on a dry day and started capping The Forge. This was quite awkward, and involved getting showered in flying debris as I capped uphill, but eventually I could tell that there was a hint of a passage at roof level. It took several capping trips before I could get my head in place to see what was going on. A just-too-small inlet, about five metres long to what looked like a possible enlargement in front of a solid wall. Half a dozen trips later, in October 2023, I wriggled through to the 'wall' but was most surprised when I looked up to see the ceiling way up above me. Standing up I realised that the 'wall' was in fact just a block on the floor of a 5m long, 2m wide, 8m tall chamber.

Once the initial surprise, and delight, of my breakthrough wore off, I thought how similar it was to Guillotine Pot. Indeed, it could be its twin, so "Gemini" seemed an appropriate name.

On the next trip I set off to bolt up the chamber, but somehow managed to forget to take a rope! I managed with the few slings I had with me and got to a 1 metre square platform overlooking Gemini. Traversing across (with slings on bolts) I got to an inlet climb above the south end. Next trip I returned with rope. I rigged a handline for the initial climb up, and a traverse line. I then climbed up the inlet, finding an ancient bread wrapper. This inlet was probably from the open upper cave of Casterton Pot, and on a subsequent trip to the upper cave Hugh found another bread wrapper, albeit a different variety, hence "Bakers Inlet" was named. The connection here hasn't been forced all the way yet despite it being only a few metres apart. On both the climbs up and down, several footholds came off the wall, so I was glad of the rope.

From the platform above the north end of Gemini, and opposite the traverse, a wriggle up led to a slot that needed capping to enable a thrutch up into what is in my opinion the nicest cave passage in the whole of Casterton Pot. Unfortunately, the standing size meandering streamway, all 2 metres of it, stops around the first corner! There I found an ascending choked slot, but by carefully dragging the cobbles down onto myself I was able to clear enough to wriggle up and then stand at the base of a low hading rift.

This rift needed enlarging to get into, and on that capping trip I was stationed under a constant drip. After an hour or two I was thoroughly miserable, my glasses steamed up and covered with mud, and my holey oversuit barely kept any of the water out. I was ready to call it a day when Hugh arrived for a look. With renewed vigour I got up the rift a few metres until I could stand up with the continuing hading rift choked above me. On exiting, we got to the Gemini platform to find a thundering waterfall issuing from the previously dry Bakers Inlet, and a rather damp exit was made out of The Forge and up Guillotine.

A few digging trips up the choked rift and I got to a void, almost a metre cube, with clay walls and roots dangling down. Upon surveying the extension, it was apparent that digging down from the surface would indeed be the easier (and safer) option.

I marked out the "X" of where to dig, in the 'other' Casterton Pot shakehole and a couple of days later had a 2.5m deep hole with limestone partway down. The survey suggested this was the right level, but the possible survey inaccuracy meant that I could still be a few metres away from my void. I pushed 2m long rods into each corner of my now scantily-scaffolded shaft. There was a hint of voids in two corners, so I left the bars in situ. Going in for a look from below, I could see a tiny daylight hole lighting up an iron bar. I went out and back down the hole for a very careful dig, not wishing to cause a collapse before getting any proper shoring in place. And so, on 5th January 2024, I got in to my void. I knew I couldn't do a through trip there and then because of the Guillotine Pot pitch, but I returned the next day to become the first person to go in Casterton Pot and not come out of it.

I had pondered various names for the new entrance, and had decided upon Taurus, as it leads to Gemini. However, when I discussed it with Ray, he replied that he'd seen the state of my oversuit and it should be "Torearse Hole"... and the name stuck! Work continues on stabilizing the entrance, the Forge extensions are approx 30m long. Special thanks go to Hugh St Lawrence and Ray Duffy, not least for encouragement and the original tip.

**Johnny "Braindead" Baker**

## ***Loose Ends in Lower Ease Gill***

### **Lower Ease Gill Cavern (Pegleg Pot)**

The entrance was excavated in October 1958 by the NPC and the original survey by Jack Myers was entitled "Lower Ease Gill Cavern." In February 1962, Barry Greenwood and Alan Fincham were trapped by floods and awaited rescue below the short climb in the second chamber. After the rescue all legitimate caving access to the Fell was terminated. Tom Sykes initiated negotiations with the landowner on behalf of the RRCPC. Other clubs lent their support and in June 1963 the Council of Northern Caving Clubs was formed. Hard work by the new organisation led to an access agreement and reopening of the Fell in July 1963. By that time, interest in Pegleg had waned and the entrance became blocked as the result of subsequent floods.

In August 1968, the RRCPC decided to reopen the cave. The attempt was ill fated. Ian Carruthers (Eccles) received a serious leg injury. The Pot remained closed. However, in May 1970, Jim Newton and fellow stalwarts successfully gained entry and attempts were made to bale and dig through the sumped choke at the southern end of the Pennine Way. In September of the same year, a survey was started with the aim of providing a framework to guide further digging and exploration. The now antiquated equipment comprised a Suunto compass and a brass chain with 0.2 metre calibrations. Levelling was accomplished by painstaking step measurements, no clinometer being available at the time. Dave Creedy called on numerous assistants, most of whom felt that one surveying trip in a lifetime was enough. Hugh was particularly helpful, but he balked at being lowered down a deep, very narrow rift into water of unknown depth and roof height.

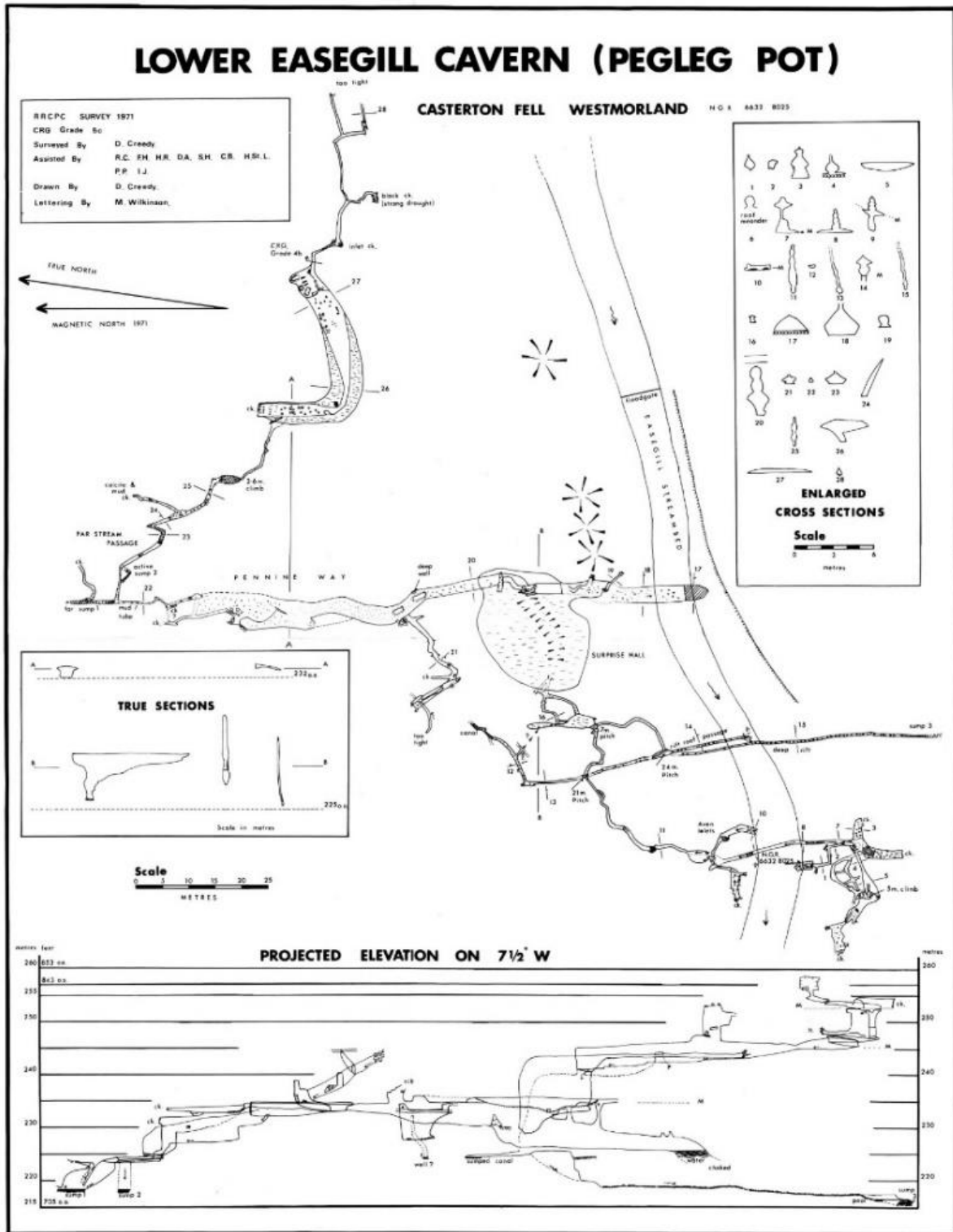
No major finds were made at the time and Club exploration effort was distracted by fruitful digging and exploration elsewhere. Apparently, the draughting choke shown on the survey was pushed in the 80s into 200m of passage heading towards Pippikin (Andy) – a report in Caves & Caving is being sought. If you know more, please inform me or Hugh.

The survey revealed a selection of loose ends including the tantalising prospect of a connection with Lancaster Hole. If anybody is looking for a project with promises of caverns measureless to man, look no further.

### **References:**

N.P.C. Journal vol.2 No.2.  
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***Dave Creedy***



## ***Blasts from the Past***

### ***Typical Camping Days Down Darren Cilau With The Rock Steady Crew***

#### **1989/1990**

Of the number of times that I had gone down and spent time in Darren Cilau a few stand out above the rest. Each digging trip required 4 days away and that meant a couple of weekdays of holiday. So it was that on a Thursday was the drive down and entry to the camp and The Sunday was the exit and return drive back home. Camp 3 was the longest time away, of 10 days and required 9 days underground! We all got to The Camp area at 'The Restaurant at The End of The Universe' or REU, taken from The Book and TV Series, of 'The Hitch Hiker's Guide To The Galaxy'. The Six main participants were Mark 'Gonzo' Lumley, Pete 'Snablet' McNab, Andy Cave, Graham Johnson, Pete Bolt and Nick Wall.

Each of us endeavoured to bring down some alcoholic refreshments to sustain us in the evenings/late hours! The food mainly consisted of cheese and pickle pitta breads which we took along to the digs with Birds Apeel Orange powder diluted with water. In the evenings on return to REU we had macaroni/veggie burger mix that made us all fart at night! I'd brought in a small bottle (500ml) of Kahlua (very popular), as well as a Wysniowka bottle (i.e. Polish for 100% Proof Cherry Vodka) and a litre of Southern Comfort to go with some Ginger ale, as a mixer! Snablet preferred his Passionate Juice. These and others got passed around several times until we either dropped or flopped where we sat or managed to crawl away to our pits!!

At 5am my pit was now too far away so I slunk off to Pete Bolt's Pad as he wasn't here on this occasion. This was a typical end to a hard-earned day at a dig site.

On one day, I made up the pittas for the 6 of us, taking a long time to do. We got away at 3.33pm (time didn't seem to matter down here anyway) and would return at 10.45pm. Myself and Snablet were supposed to go down to 'Shit Rift' and get the spade back for 'Spaderunner' It took us nearly 2 hours, mainly as I got in a mess at Snablet's 2<sup>nd</sup> deterrent squeeze. Only 3 people had ever got through at this point! A small entry tube was the 1<sup>st</sup> long horizontal squeeze. No sweat, so far. This led to a downhill, head-first drop and 2 sharp bends to another double bend. I had to "twist onto my back and then twist back round again", said Snablet. One leg came round leaving the other one partially through. Agonisingly trying to twist round to my side as my pelvic bones were too large, as the flake of rock dug in. As I was now severely hampered (some 15 mins like this) – it was with the full realisation that hit me, - that I couldn't get in, nor could I get back out. Snablet was in front (i.e. now behind me), so I had no aid from him. It was a painful experience to get my legs back into the correct attitude for The Reversal Moves uphill! An extremely strenuous time doing handstands to reverse uphill and taking quite a long time to stop 'panting' and get my breath and heart rate back down! Thank God that I could turn around and face the other way up a 60 degree climb when a small bulge in the passage came up. I'd gotten to the point of near exhaustion and flopped down on my exit! I also felt quite delicate from this forced effort and realised how bad I was when we progressed to the next dig. I lapsed into a restless sleep whenever we stopped

moving for a moment and succumbed to it when we reached Spaderunner. Graham made us look into his dig, in which he struggled to reverse by thrutching a lot. Snablet and I alternated between trying to dig this one and another nearby dig of Andy Cave's. It was now obvious that, going back to REU would be slow and painful.

Once back it was a team effort to get down to the sump and fill up the 2 large water bags. Snablet and I made up some orange flavoured punch when 2 BEC lads arrived at 1am. Vince and Steve Allen (Alien). This is typical of cavers arriving in the late hours. Again, bed at around 5am!

### **Darren Camp VI 30th Nov. 1989 For Xmas Party**

This one involved catching a train to Abergavenny from Bradford, then a bus to Crickhowell. Arthur Millet was not at home. Browsed the shops and had numerous cups of tea. Back at Arthur's, now at 5.30, and it was freezing outside. Repacked one of my tackle bags and got up to Whitewalls for 6.40. Searched for the key that Pete kindly left under the gutter by the roof. Arthur turned on the gas and electric, but no one materialised for an hour or so. 4 arrived and 2 went down with me at 8.30. Not bad going through the entrance crawl in 1h 20 with 2 tackle bags! Reached The 'Dodgy' Pitch by 11.10. Unable to find the ever-elusive SRT kit. So, I lined up the 2 lads and my kit. Left 'em at midnight as I wanted to make faster progress but, found myself falling asleep after The Hard Rock Cafe! Ankleginder was still a 'Grind'. Arrived at 4.20 to see Andy and Pete already there. Hugh Penney and Dave arrived after 06.30. I cooked up the stew that Andy had made and went to bed at 08.00.

### **Friday 1st December**

Woke at 4pm. The Big event of the day was, I think, the fact that, between the 5 of us we got the heaviest and largest water bag up the climbs and to the camp, without losing a drop (or puncture)!! I was served breakfast at 6pm. Then I tried taking photos of camp life, but my bulb gun was a failure using my photo – electric slave as sensor. Used up the film on Cordillera Blanca and returned with Dave for 9pm. Spent 2 hours filling up depressions with 'low-flying' boulders and tacky mud. Phew, some sweat was lost here! Gonzo came in at 12.15, leaving others behind at



L to R: Stevey, Hugh Penney, Andy Cave  
Photo Credit: Robert Bialek

'The Pitch'. No Graham, as he'd had a session at Whitewalls! The 3 Wessex cavers didn't bother to come any further than the pitch as it took them 7 hours to reach it! Got pissed on the cherry vodka and Coke, this time using a Sparkler Soda Syphon. Bed at 3am.

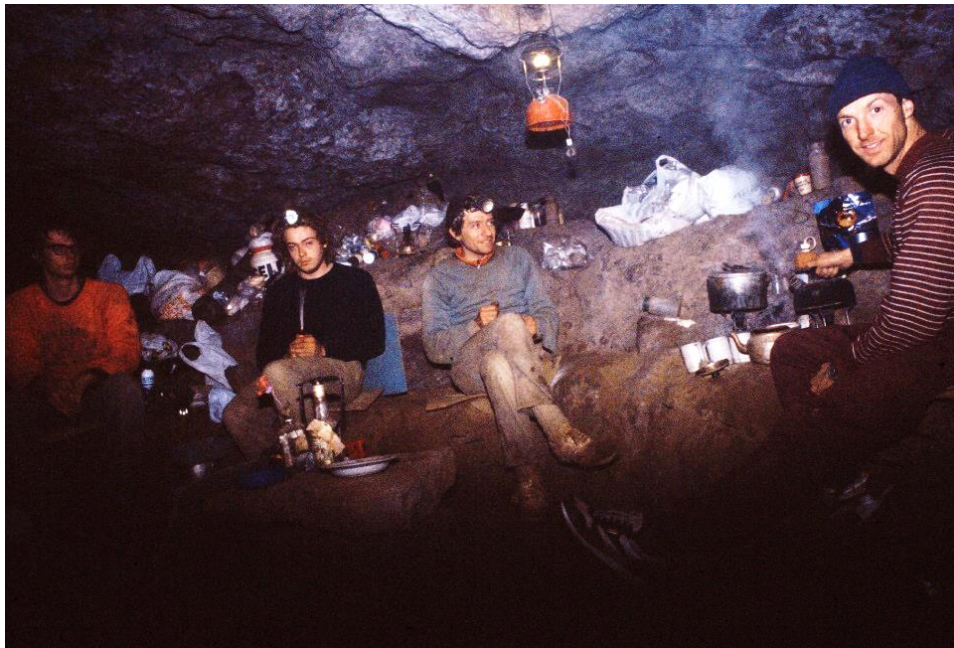
### Saturday 2nd December

Pete, Gonzo and Andy stayed up to wait for the expected hordes. It didn't really happen. Only 3 Mendip lads came in at 4am. They were Davey Holder, Andy Medhurst and Stevey. Also at 9.10, Henry Bennet and Sarah arrived. I made up the pitta sarnies for 5 expected on the trip. Dave Wyatt, Paul, and Steve were the only ones going down to Spaderunner with me. Clive Gardener showed up at 2.30. Left REU at 3pm. It took the 4 of us 2.5 hrs to reach Spaderunner.

The lads were shattered. Hugh brought the rope to The Big Pitch and then took it off again for the expected hordes using 'Jacob's Ladder'. Set up the stereo. Looked at the result of 'The Blast'. It was a damp squib as, only one rock had come out and it wasn't even a big one at that! Paul had a look-in. The other parallel passage dig also looked ill-fated. The sausage had blown up alright, but had only got spattered around a bit. Departed at 6pm and at REU by 8.30. Met Clive along the way, coming in at 'Another Bloody Valentine' choke. I convinced him to stay using a damp S-bag I'd left by my airbed/pit in the sandy passage crawl.

3 lads from Peterborough had set off with Snablet and Richard Blake and arrived at 8.30, as we did. Tony Williams then arrived with Stewpot; but as his furry suit was wet through, I lent him my Damart Long Johns for the night. He'd brought in a lemonade bottle of Whiskey. Snablet, had a bottle of Cointreau, which he'd supped on the way in...again!!!

Andy, Gonzo and Pete Bolt had gotten camp ready for us. The Big Xmas Party included veg sticks served up with hummus, as a starter. Then Gonzo served drinks along with his favourite concoctions of my Ribena/cherry vodka and his blasted Gin n' Tonic Water – Yuk! Better ones were Southern Comfort/Coke when served up using his Soda Sparkler Syphon.



L to R: Stevey, Hugh Penney, Andy Cave, Pete Bolt  
Photo Credit: Robert Bialek

Took pictures of camp in the morning and used up my roll of 200 ASA Kodak Ektra Chrome film. The 100 ASA was now ready for the 'Blue Greeny's' or 'Leoni Jane's Playpens'. I found that I was getting drunk far too quickly and along with the multitudes got involved in a mega photographic trip. Davey helped me get there. Pete Bolt took his shots and then helped me with mine. Fell asleep at one point and woke to find the others had abandoned me! Chased after them in the wrong direction. It was about 3am when I got to bed but I couldn't remember getting back to it. Woken up at 10am by Gonzo. He was one of the first to crash out last night.

The 19 People Partaking at 'The Party At The End of The Universe' were Pete Bolt, Andy Cave, Myself, Hugh Penney, Davey, Gonzo, Henry Bennet, Sarah, Dave Wyatt, Paul and Steve Allen, Snablet, Richard Blake, 3 from Peterborough, Tony Williams, Stewpot and Clive Gardener.

### **Sunday 3rd December**

Still felt drunk and had difficulty in walking upright. It seemed to take ages to pack up all my gear and take the waste batteries, bottles, and packaging back in bin bags. I lost my flashgun down a hole. I could see it but couldn't retrieve it. Snatched a cuppa or two along with a sausage and pitta. Pete took a last take of me in my caving clobber. I felt and looked bedraggled as my yellow TSA suit was dropping to bits. Anyway, it was 12.20 when I departed and left my fellow explorers to their own devices. I had a train to catch that would be leaving Abergavenny at 5pm. So, I had to get A MOVE ON.

Met Clive at Hard Rock Café, then 3 wetsuited cavers going down Bonsai Streamway, and then 3 Mendip lads at The Pitches. Later, the 3 Peterborough lads (they'd departed at 7.30am) at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Inlet in the entrance crawl. They'd gone about it in the wrong way, and I'd met them in the wettest bit of all, and the lowest and longest bit before the 'S' Bend! It was 4.10 on my exit and I dashed off down to the hut to make sure I got away for 4.35. As pre-arranged beforehand, I had Trevor Pritchard take me to the railway station in his car, the long way around the hill! I arrived at 5pm! The train was just coming in. Got home for 10pm.

### ***Dalek***

## ***Guinness, More Women & Caves in County Clare '83***

### **January 1983**

#### **Thursday 27th January**

The day began for me by having to collect an Oldham battery from a friend in Idle. An hour's run to Biffo's house and then another hour back home! Phew, knackered! Immediately collected my rucksack and s-bag and left for The Black Swan for 6.40.

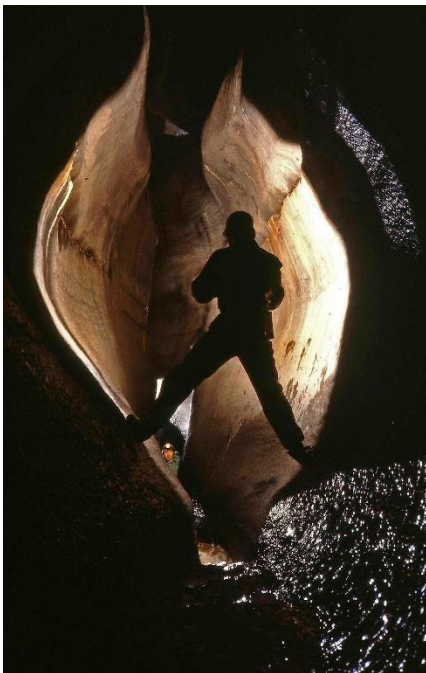
A pint with Chris (now in his new van), Adrian and Colin. Gwyn took Snake, Duds and new boy, Gary Sparks in his motor car. All 8 of us arrived at Birkenhead Docks for 8.45. 2 pints in The Trafalgar and another 3 pints on board the Ferry. The fish and chips this time were £2.20. I think Snake looked a bit odd taking his sack of potatoes onto the ferry!

### Friday 28th January

Early to rise at 5.30 due to being woken up from sleeping on the canteen seats. At The Bolands hire place we got a blue Toyota 8-seater this time. Departed at 8.30, and at Naas for 11.00. Changed more £ to punts, and had a meal in a cafe of sausage, chips and peas for €1.55. Had a pint at Durty Nellys in Bunratty, and away after 1pm. The memory of 8 pints pulled, awaiting settlement of froth before the second 'pulling', as the 'The Black Gold', glistened in the dim pub light, stays with me forever! Arrived in County Clare, and The Atlantic View Cottage by 8pm. Immediately made our way to The McCanns Bar and 3 pints later we left for O'Connors for our last pint of Guinness. I think we got back by 12.30, as I was a little pissed by now.

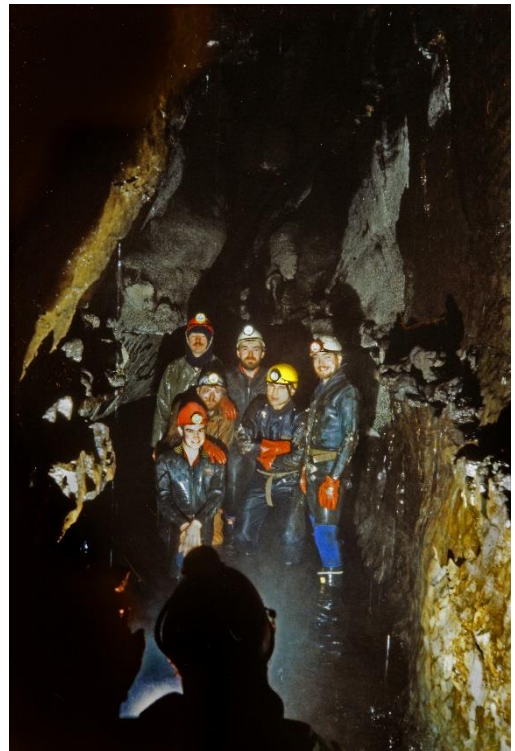
### Saturday 29th January

After a late breakfast we decided to make for the Coolagh River Cave, in the afternoon. The entrance was a wet crawl with a mud linked crawl to some narrow traversing and down a 20' handline to the streamway. A pleasant downstream passage to cascades, wallowing and climbing over large blocks to finally reach a sump. Duds took 2 photos and then we retraced back out. All in all, a 2-hour trip.



Doolin Cave  
Photo Credit: Steven Dudley

We circled round the coast and wound up at Faunarooska Cave. A short side passage and rift to the main streamway, followed by an interminably long and winding rift to a larger and muddier phreatic section. Gwyn went down to look at the pitch, while Smithy and I went onto a large rift requiring traversing. We ended up in a small and well-decorated grotto. Duds, as usual was taking more extra photos before we exited after about 3.5 hours below ground. Got back and had a bath at about 6.30ish. Snake cooked his potatoes and corned beef with my minced steak, beef and curry powder for all of us. My chicken soup also went down well.



Faunarooska  
Photo Credit: Steven Dudley

It was The O'Connors Pub again at 9.00 and I got into 2 rounds with Gimms (Adrian) and Gary. Six women then appeared before us!!! They were Carmel's mates from Dublin. Chubby Kathryn, Pointy-Chin Aideen, Moping Pauleen, Tallish Patricia, and Big Lass Geraldine. This one was very talkative but also had flu and couldn't make it to Atlantic View! Got a 6-pack to take back and sometime later we all ended up drinking tea and eating toast in the kitchen. It

was 4am when we retired to bed. As there wasn't any extra bed space, us lads had to squeeze into the various beds available at 3-1; i.e. like; Chris, Duds and I in one, and others in their turn!

**Sunday 30th January**

9.00 and amazingly, we were all up by this time. There was a power cut due to the power lines going down in the high winds last night. Breakfast was sausage, eggs and spaghetti Bolognese, cooked on the gas stove. Called at the girls' Atlantic Cottage at 12.30. Down by the pier there were high seas and waves breaking onto the shore, and the rain was coming down heavily. So, it was over to Lisdoonvarna for 3 pints at The Traveller's Rest. Here, a party of 14 cavers from 'Dublin First Scout Group' came over and talked to us about caves in this area. We had to leave for Juddy's house in Kilmoon East as he had decided to live over here near to his beloved caves! He was currently digging for more cave in his back yard! His brother, Andy Judd, kindly made us tea and toast while we supped the rest of our 16 bottles of Guinness and Smithwicks. It must have been well after 5pm when we left, and on our return we found that we had yet another power cut. It was restored in only 10 mins. Stayed in till 9pm and then it was Kenny's Bar (in Lahinche) again for 3 more pints. The girls were already in there, and since it was now after midnight, we decided to try out a nightclub, but nearly missed the entry deadline! So here, in the Clairmount, we met Brian Judd again. Left after 3, when the 6 girls followed in their blue Panda to our place again. Pat wanted to make chips for us all and so got us all in the happiest of moods for it was Snake and Gimms who began a sing along with Pat and Pauline. Again, it came round to 6am and it was time for all of them to leave us.



Gimmer, Aideen, Dalek & Pauline  
Photo Credit: Kathryn



Snake Carmel & Dalek  
Photo Credit: Kathryn

**Monday 31st January**

Bed until 12 and it was the time to pack up and go home. After a snack of malt loaf and milk we went over to O'Connors Bar for the last time for the last pint. Kathryn took pictures with my camera and flashgun, and I took a pic of her using her 35 -70 mm zoom lens. Pity that too many of us blocked the view (see photo, left).

Left at 3.30 and passed through Ennistymon and Limerick, to arrive in Dublin by 8.30. The severe storm damage over here was quite evident as twisted hotel signs hung crazily across their fronts, and there were many stretches of flooded roads that we had to negotiate. While waiting in the ferry port canteen a bloke with metal type of detector sniffed our bags. With no more hassle we sailed at 11pm. The ferry had to cross directly over to the Welsh coast and travel up that way to the UK, as the seas were too rough to continue on the normal route to Liverpool Docks. Ran out of money, so had to borrow some cash from Gary, our 'money lender'! Now I could get my meat pie and tea.

I thought a bloke, who sat by the next table to us was from 'The Press' as, he was busy scribbling down his notes as we talked, and was so attentive to be summing up our thoughts and digressions into absurdity! Duds suggested that he was a poet and made up some silly lines that made it quite apt at the time. I noticed that beer glasses and bottles were still left untouched, in the adjoining bar, later, that morning. Also, just when the bar was about to close, that 2 blokes had got a final round in of 8 pints of Guinness! Good stuff that Black Gold, I thought; as it was the last time we'd be supping it over here. Well for a long while, at least for me. I slept on the floor by the red bar area, but the carpet proved to be irritable for comfort.

Disembarked at 7.30 but due to high winds the Tannoy said that they couldn't place the tunnel in place, so we had to use the narrow stairs to the car deck. Driving back, we could see what the wind damage had done to a lorry that had overturned onto its side on the M62. The tailback on the other side was a mile long. Arrived back in Bradford for 9.30 and after dropping the others off, Chris finally got to my flat for 10.00.

The Irish matchmaking custom paid off for Carmel! She married Snake (Tall Raymond Lee) in the following year.

Well, what an end to another caving adventure. I wasn't to go back until 1990 but the weather was abysmal for the whole of our stay, so no caving was done! But we supped quite a lot of The Black Gold while we dilly-dallied.

***Dalek***

## ***Digger's Tale***

**In the beginning there was 'Darkness.....'**

I found caving because I'd given a room to a homeless caver who arrived at a Mexborough to join the staff at the same school in which I was unfortunate enough to be teaching. His nickname was 'Pinky', due to his having used Fairy Liquid as a lubricant for his unlined wetsuit, as he'd forgotten the talcum powder. After hours in the suit with a caustic liquid he emerged without the top layer of skin, hence the pseudonym. After watching him disappear into the countryside and return refurbished and ready for another gruelling week of classroom battles, I was eventually cajoled into joining him caving, in Derbyshire of all places. The vibe was great, lots of like-minded idiots doing stupid things and of course a lot of amber fluid. After

several years with Didsbury College Caving Club I was lured away by the Climbing Club from the same college and spent the next twenty years reaching for the, well not quite the stars, but quite high.

Winters were always a problem for us climbers, ice climbing being fairly limited in this country, climbing walls can become boring after a while, gyms are eventually just mind-numbing, so Rick Scott and I used caving as a way of keeping rope-work and heads together. We'd worked our way through Dave Elliot's book and finally finished up at Bull Pot Farm, after sleeping under viaducts, on people's floors etc. Luckily for us Rick knew Giles Barker who had become a Red Rose member and we finally joined to save money and have somewhere 'warm' to stay in the Dales, it's his fault I've pestered you all.

At first it was just good fun caving and then exploring, well failed digging in Diamond Hall. Ages of pulling out mud and blasting but we did lead the way to some new cave. Then Old Holburn, a pissy little thing in the gill followed by Shorty Hole, just down valley from Lancaster Hole. Another abortive hole, even further down the same valley from Lancaster Hole, that commanded our attention for some weeks, though to no avail. A little bit of surveying got in the way of the real reason for caving, finding new passage.

After Boulder Cave there was a very dirty attempt to join in The Crumbles to the Dinner Time Series but that was just too awful that Sam and I concentrated on Avon Pot, the twin of Top Tip. By now Jim Newton and Lionel had thoroughly abandoned Owert Kilns so we decided to try and do it properly and soon had solid rock to work with. It's wet, even in dry weather, the dig face is at best dribbling, hence the need for somewhere better and so Rollerball was reborn. Hell, if we'd known at the start how much of our lives would be swallowed up with that one, would we have bothered, the answer is, of course we would.

There've been some fair amounts of away days such as Barbon Pot, Dog Holes, Notts II, Goesunder Pot, Sunset Hole, Bilberry Pot and Marble Steps but mainly the effort has been focused around the Ease Gill area; Upstream Waterfall Passage, beyond the Four Candles Pitches, Trailer Dig, Swindon Hole, Herbert's Hole, Our Lady's, Casterton Pot, Cow Pot extension, Bob's Pit, Redhead Chamber, The Conveyor, Paddling Pool, Casserole, Montagu West, Cambridge dig, Main Line Terminus, Hiroshima, Spiral Stairs, Cliff Cave, Kitchen Sink (upper and lower). Some of the digs I've been involved in have born a little fruit and some have been complete dead ducks but they've all been 'fun'!

Fellow cavers don't forget the aim of your sport is not just swinging around on bits of string, so go forth with your crowbar, lump hammer and chisel, and *'boldly go where no man/woman has been before, to seek out and explore new'* etc etc.

**Ray Duffy**

## ***Reports from Caving Events***

### ***Kendal Mountain Festival Petzl underground evening***

**17 November 2023**

Kendal Town Hall was packed, apparently the first event of the festival to be fully sold out, for an evening of action-packed caving talks. A number of RRCPC members were there and supported the all-important bar.

The first talk was by Imogen Furlong who demonstrated the developmental benefits to children who are exposed to the outdoor life and cave exploration. She presented a compelling argument for all caving clubs to include at least two family caving events a year. The benefits of having trained little people to inject into narrow spaces will not have escaped the diggers in the audience.

Tom McNally outlined the fascinating mining history of the Lake District and recounted some of his hair-raising trips underground in search of the ultimate photograph. Quite a few of the locations would be familiar to some Red Rose cavers.

A Frank Pearson and Matt Ewles double act combined an epic geological history of northern cave evolution with recent discoveries including Hazel Top by our own Hugh St Lawrence. The main takeaways are that limestones in the Yoredale series are capable of accessible cave development and there are still new caving areas in the north with extensive exploration potential.

The final presentation was by Kasia Biernacka, a Polish expedition caver and photographer, who was working with the US Deep Caving Team exploring the challenging Sistema Chevé (-1,520m) in Mexico, currently the second-deepest cave in the western hemisphere. The excitement and enthusiasm was palpable and reflected in the excellent photography. The logistics of supporting a large team with multiple underground camps and some tricky sections of tight cave were incredible.

The event delivered as advertised and was well worth attending. Special thanks are due to the sponsors, organisers and presenters for a thoroughly stimulating evening.

***Dave Creedy***

## **Library Additions: November 2023 – February 2024**

### **Journals:**

British Cave Research Association: Cave and Karst Science Vol. 50 No. 3. (*December 2023*)  
CREG Journal: Issue 122-124 (June-December 2023)  
Flyer: Minimal impact Caving Guidelines  
BCRA Newsletter: (*December 2023*)  
Council of Northern Caving Clubs: Newsletter Issue 14 (*December 2023*)  
Descent: Nos. 295. (December 2023-January 2024)  
Grampian Speleological Group: Bulletin: Fifth Series Vol 4 No 5 (*October 2023*)  
RRCPC: Newsheet: Nos. 396-397.  
Newsletter: Vol. 60 Nos. 4. (*Winter 2023*)  
Speleologia: No. 87 (*Marzo 2023*), No.88 (*Decembre 2023*)  
Wessex Cave Club: Journal: 360 (*December 2023*)

### **Other Publications:**

Borneo – Memory of the Caves: *Luc-Henri Fage & Jean-Michel Chazine (2010)*  
Cavernes: – Excursions dans les Grottes de Savoie: *Jil Ettorg (1996)*  
Inventaire Speleologique du Maroc: *J. Camus & C. Lamouroux (1981)*  
Weekend Explorers: *Harry Long (2023)*  
Hidden Inside the Highlands: *Alan L. Jeffries (2023)*  
Cave Diving: *Stratis Kas (2022-23)*  
Jim Newton Diaries: Caving extracts (*1957 – 2011*)  
Peter Ashmead Archive: Morecambe Bay area (*additional material*)

### **Sheet Surveys:**

Keer Wood Cave: 1:60 LCMRS (*1970*)  
Dog Holes, Warton: 1:144 J.W.J. (*1909*)  
Heathwaite Cave, Arnside: 1:120 (*1968*)

### **Film:**

Otter Hole: A Unique Cave controlled by the Moon & Tides. (*USB – 2023*)

### **Photographs:**

Giles Barker Slides: (12) - Various.

*Changes for easier access to the club library are now in place:*

*Members wishing access to the library room should contact the librarian direct, who will brief them on access arrangements, and then issue the member with a key. They will then be able to view on site, or log out any publication they either borrow or wish to browse in the Reading Room.*

*The library is an excellent reference facility, please respect it - but above all please use it.*

**Sandra Wilkinson - Librarian:** [m.wilkinson@btinternet.com](mailto:m.wilkinson@btinternet.com)

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