



RED ROSE CAVE AND POTHOLE CLUB

NEWSLETTER



Vol 61 No 3

Winter 2024

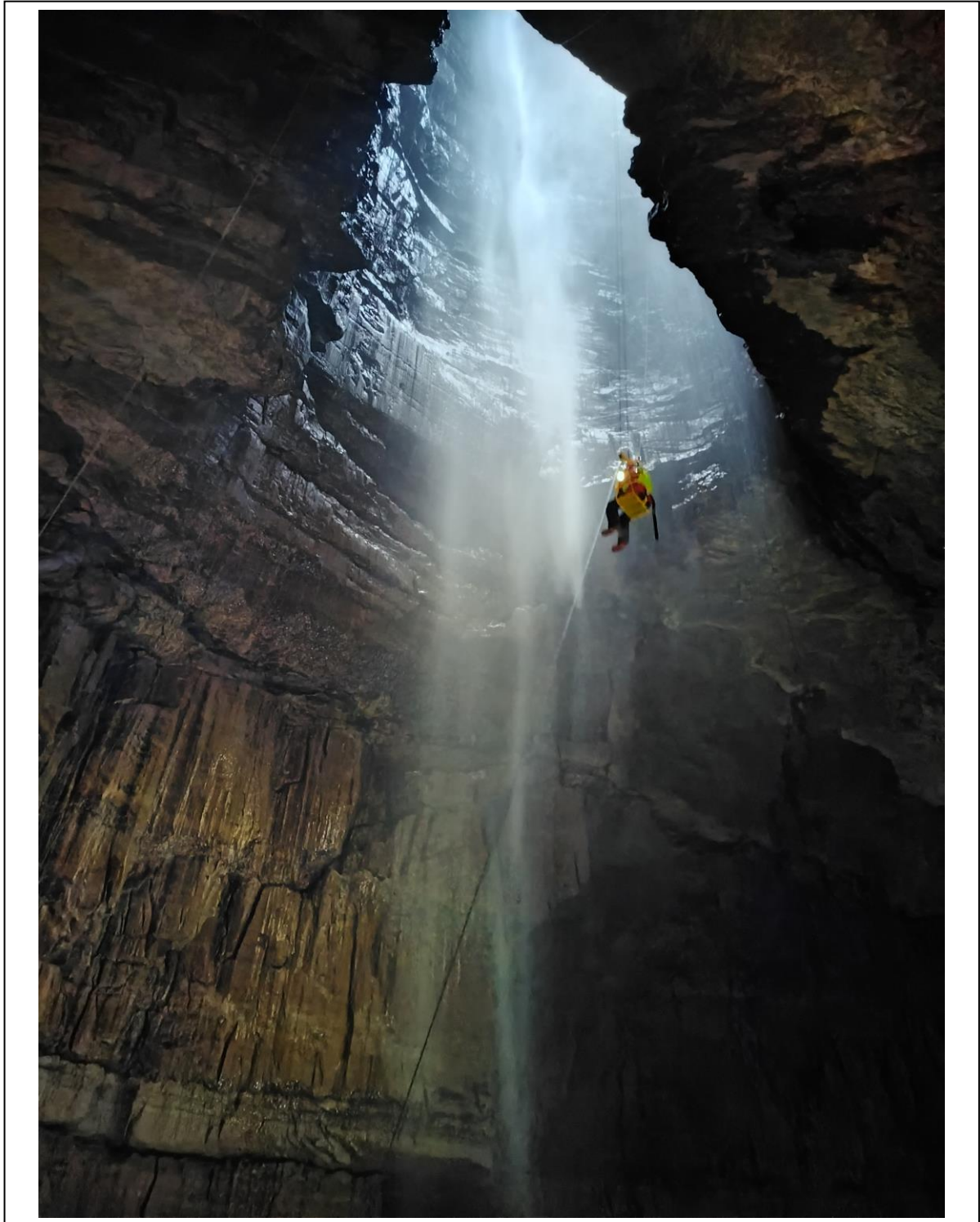


Photo: Gaping Gill Main Chamber by Steve White

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Editor's Note

It's hard to believe that three months have passed since the last Newsletter. This edition includes several reports from club trips and updates on recent work at the Farm and underground. There are also some rescue-themed blasts from the past from Dalek, including one where he was the casualty. Also included is an article by Peter Llewellyn from 1969. Peter, our former Club President and long-standing member, sadly passed away in early November. He was in earlier times a real stalwart of the Red Rose, who together with the then President Tony Tanner co-ordinated much of the tasks undertaken to secure our tenancy at Bullpot Farm through the courts. Our thoughts are with Gillian and family at this difficult time.

Gwen Tawy
Newsletter Editor

Club News

Giles Barker Award 2024

The Giles Barker Award is presented to any person connected with any aspect of cave photography in recognition of excellence or contributions to the field; it has a wide remit to allow consideration of many areas of image creation. The award has been running since 1993 in memory of Giles, a keen cave photographer who died while caving in Spain in 1992. Giles was a member of the Red Rose CPC and Morgannwg CC, which together fund the special trophy which beautifully crafted annually by Ceris Jones.

For 2024, the winner is **Richard 'Roo' Walters** for his outstanding work in 3D laser scanning, with which he has generated superb visual representations of caves from around the world as well as in the UK. The results of his fastidious and time-consuming computer processing have included virtual flythroughs and even models constructed from the data, along with stunningly realistic 2D 'photographs' – these lack colour, but this can be added artificially by the program or by using accurate tones from traditional photos. They are so detailed that it can be impossible to tell the difference between the image and a real photograph of the same scene. Having amassed a huge body of quality work, Roo is truly at the top of his field and thoroughly deserves this recognition.

Congratulations go to Roo for this 29th award in the series. Previous award winners and further information can be found at:
<https://tinyurl.com/GilesBarker>.

Thank you!

Chris Howes



The Giles Barker Award by Ceris Jones
Photo Credit: Bartek Biela

Fun at the Farm

August Working Week 2024

A few weekdays were set apart for a select few 'competent' (maybe) members to complete some urgent works without interrupting weekend trips. Alan (the drill) Martin, Toby (the mix) Speight, George (the boz) Boznyak, Andy (the fix) Hall and Ray (the gofer) Duffy were all in attendance on Monday morning, joined by Sam (the brain) Lieberman on Tuesday. So, who did what? Well Alan (Starkers for those who didn't know his real name) drilled holes everywhere, he likes drilling and hung a new radiator in the dining/lounge. Toby was kept out of our way mixing mortar outside where his emissions didn't assail our nostrils. The Boz was on top of the tackle-stores rendering the wall above to make it waterproof and kept appearing over the top like one of the old men in the Muppet Show. Andy and Ray were drilling and knocking bits of wall out of the digging store, one inside and one outside, to lower the flue to let water from the boiler run downhill for a change instead of soaking the store, both drilling and hammering toward each other, what could possibly go wrong? Sam spent ages tearing his hair out while trying to fathom out how the underfloor heating was controlled by the thermostat on the hot water heating, writing copious notes, labelling wires and generally looking frustrated.

Ray and Boz were sitting in the lounge/dining room when Boz commented on how Starkers' new radiator was not level, he got up and used a spirit level on it only to find it was level, humph! It wasn't the radiator but the coat hook rack above it that was askew. Later, during a tea break, Starkers leapt to his feet, grabbed his screwdriver and wrenched the offending rack off the wall to re-site it level by drilling more holes in the wall. It turns out the frame holding the chain above the rack and the radiator is the thing that isn't level after all. There was lots of 'non-politically correct' banter at each other's poor performances but we all had a great laugh.



Hard at work
Photo Credit: Andy Hall

Ray Duffy

It's a dirty job but someone's got to do it!

September 2024

When having a cuppa at the farm or a nice warm shower after a hard caving trip, have you ever wondered where our water comes from? There are adverts on TV showing little children lugging water across endless deserts having scooped it out of a dirty hole, well that's not our water source but it's not far short of its description.



Storage tank with old posts
Photo Credit: Ray Duffy

Our water is sourced from a tiny spring high on the flanks of Barbon Low Fell in an area called Hoggs Hills. Many moons ago an intrepid team clawed their way up the hillside and created an enclosure about the area of a small room using strong fence posts, fencing and barbed wire. That at least prevented the sheep crapping in the water, but then a large ditch had to be dug around the outside of the pen to make sure no surface water, including sheep stuff, entered the enclosure. This was augmented by an internal ditch surrounding the spring itself into which a small water collecting tub was sunk with holes punctuating its base to allow the water to flow up into the floor. The tub only

ever gets a couple of inches deep before it flows out through a filter down to the big storage tank next to the road from the farm. The pipe to the storage tank was laid by some of the original Red Rosers down the fell and that must have involved an enormous effort as the whole slope is steep and boulder strewn, they were 'ard back then.

The water coming into the little tank, Spring Box, can dry up to almost nothing during dry summers, we wish, or even during cold winters, but fortunately over the space of a week it slowly leaks down to the storage tank and tops it up. When there's a group staying over the whole week this can lead to the storage tank getting dangerously low, especially if everyone showers every morning and night, why would you?



The Spring Box
Photo Credit: Ray Duffy

The Spring Box and Storage Tank need cleaning twice a year and the grass inside the enclosure keeps bloody growing so that needs cutting and weeding. Strangely, the ditches fill up with all sorts of crap and need digging out. A trip to do this work involves buckets, pump, cable ties, knife, mattock, trowel, shears, chlorination liquid etc. that all have to be carried up the steep slope. There are only a few days in the year when the weather is clement enough to trudge all the way up there and complete the necessary refurbishment so caving gear is best worn for the trip as it's generally wild up there.

Our Storage Tank is an easier, though no less arduous and time-consuming, cleaning drag. It's best to drive up the farm lane and drop all the heavy gear off at the wall where the tank is situated and then park up beside the passing place near the gate at the top of the hill. Our tank holds about one cubic metre of water, yes, that small an amount for all the washing, showering, teeth brushing, brews, cooking and washing-up (you know what that is?). Cleaning this involves one of the team getting their clean feet very wet as they have to get in to bail out the water after they've siphoned as much as possible. We've used lots of limestone chippings to try and lower the acidity of the water as it has to pass various tests for all sort of possible contaminants, even radioactivity! (So, our water is probably better than Perrier as it definitely doesn't have antifreeze). The tank gets a thorough cleaning, new chippings and is chlorinated before the water drains down the pipe to the farm to be filtered and UV'd to kill any possible bugs. The pipe from the tank to the farm was replaced a few years ago at great effort by the present members as it had to be half a metre deep and goes through two fields before reaching the farm.



The new pipe
Photo Credit: Ray Duffy

Next time you turn on the tap, have a think of all the work that goes into keeping it flowing, passing the regulatory requirements and general upkeep. Please respectfully remind visitors that we're not on Mains Water and that they need to be a bit more careful with the water or it can dry up completely.

Ray Duffy

Many Hands Make Light Work

26-27th October 2024



That phrase does not mean a lot of people holding hands to get the lightbulb to light up, but in our case, it means we get a lot of the stuff that needs doing to keep the farm running smoothly. The last working weekend was a case in point, trees felled, logs split, wood store refilled, roof mended, gutters cleaned, drains unblocked, kitchens cleaned, floors vacuumed, wheelbarrows serviced, lawnmower refurbished, and a load of other bits mended, cleaned or binned. Believe it or not, we all had a load of fun and managed to catch up on all the caving people are up to and of course gossip.

Thanks to Anne Jones, the team were well fed and watered as well as being amply supplied with brews to keep everyone going. It really was a well-attended and productive session, so next time why not join in the fun? We need to keep the place running smoothly as guests provide by far the most revenue, and their comfort is for our benefit, financially.



Autumn Working Weekend
Photo Credit: Colin Jones

Ray Duffy

Trip Reports

Aardvark Country

7th July 2024

Sam Allshorn (ULSA) & Philip Withnall

With a good weather forecast, Sam planned to go and do some re-bolting in Wharfedale, and allowed me to come along and help / heckle. Unfortunately, overnight on Friday the forecast changed to be a little wetter, which resulted in an 06:45 call to me at the Farm with a change of plans. We'd re-bolt Aardvark Country in Cow Pot instead, as it was also on the list for re-bolting, but wasn't going to drown us.

After a bit of faff including a forgotten SRT kit, and pre-rigging Lancaster Hole for our cunning exit, we descended Cow Pot and headed towards Aardvark Country. Before starting down the scaffolded climb, we took a bit of a look at some kind of animal nest in Shale Cavern, above the climb. Lots of moss in a pile. Mice maybe? There were no feathers in it, and it was a bit small for rats. Not sure though.

Down the scaffolding, down three knots of a descending in-situ handline below, and a short climb down led us to a narrow rift which needed to be tackled at several different heights to keep to the widest part of it. We did this with SRT kits off.

There's a small belling out of the rift just before the squeeze onto the first pitch head, which handily was enough room for Sam to lie out in and drill and resin the new Y-hang for the start of the pitch. I sat in a previous bowl in the rift and provided helpful commentary. (He may disagree.)

With the first Y-hang done, Sam moved out onto the pitch's traverse and started replacing the third and fourth bolts, while I moved forward to his previous stance and re-filled the water bottles for washing out drill holes. As he took an interlude down the pitch to retrieve a previously lost jammer, I washed out the new holes, then he came back up and bolted them.

Next was a crawl through Keyhole Passage to the third pitch. This started flat-out, without SRT kit or helmet, but then turned into a body-sized tube with a few tightish bends in, and one small blind pot which tried to eat our tackle bags. I don't think Sam had fun moving the drill bag through this. I'm not trusted with the drill bag, so was not allowed to help. He helped quite a bit with my bag though. (Doesn't quite seem fair.)

The crawl emerged into a stooping passage and then quickly to the second pitch, which also needed re-bolting. This was much easier, with loads of room, a nice pitch head, and mostly readily available water for washing out the drill holes. It was done in no time at all, then we were down the pitch and along Burgess' Passage to pop out in the Main Drain just downstream of Fall Pot.

After that it was a relatively simple trip back out of Lancaster Hole, quick nip across to Cow Pot to derig that, then back to the Farm in the afternoon sun to greet the midges by the gear pool.

Philip Withnall

Dalek & Jack Down Wades & Out Stream Passage Pot: GG

10th August 2024

Dalek & Jack Overhill

Once we'd established who was doing what on Craven's Winch weekend, we (10 of us) all sweated our way up to GG by 12 am.

Gwen Tawy, Amy Priess & Rachael Pajak (MUSC) were to do a Bar-Bar trip.

Ian & Hannah Walker a Flood – Flood trip.

Jack & I a Disappointment – Stream trip, but found it not rigged!?

Paul Savage, Neil Carter & Steve White, a Wades to Stream trip.

All of us would rendezvous at some point in The Main Chamber for a wander round to marvel at the spectacle of it all.

So it was that Jack Overhill and I got our entry details changed at the Control Tent, and we were on our way down after 1pm; the last ones to descend! All didn't bode well as we'd forgotten where the entrances were! Found Flood, and soon after Wades. No one was in sight, so we had the whole of it all to ourselves. I wasn't too happy about the low crawly bits, but it didn't last, and we made it to The Big One without mishap.

Passing the deviations and a pendulum to reach the ledge we came across 'The Many' in what seemed a disarray! Groups were going both ways, but one group of 6 stuck with us to follow my lead to grovel through the crawls and reach the major junction to go right onto the Main Chamber. I wasn't sure when we climbed up the slope, and after much dithering, I decided that we'd gone wrong! So, like lemmings being led to their slaughter, they all followed me back towards SE Pot (Where Flood comes in)! Here, after much deliberation, and realising my huge error, we crawled back through yet again, and this time followed the correct way to the Main Chamber.

It was nice to see the place lit up after so many years of absence on my part. Families with kids with torches marvelled at the sight of all of us cavers passing through as if it were just a walk in a park! Got a cool and welcome drenching and felt better after my sweaty ordeal!

Turned back and then we met Gwen's team and exchanged our pleasantries. No problem with the route now as when we got up the climb from Sand Caverns (thanks Jack) to gain the short crawl and muddy walking bit to climb up by Mud Pot, I knew we had it in the bag. I was mildly worried that due to being late, that we would miss our call out time which was now an hour earlier.

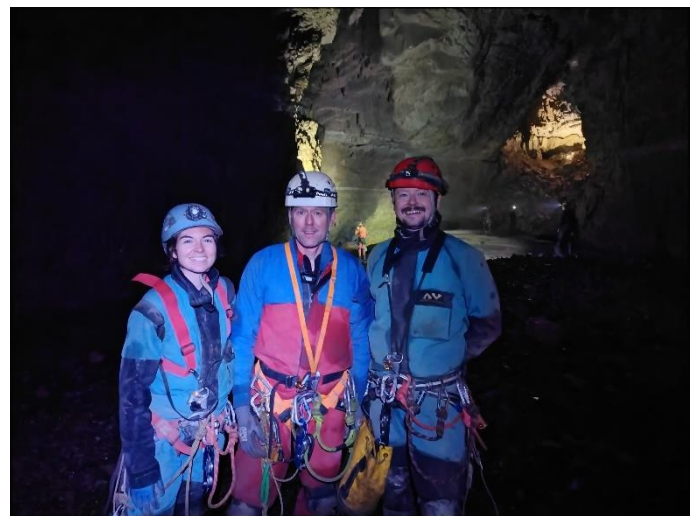
The stream chamber and passage was quickly gained, and asking Jack to go through the stoop/climb to check out if the pitch was there then things seemed to go in slow motion! I hadn't prussiked for a couple of years and I wasn't surprised that I would be so slow. The number of deviations didn't help matters along as the rope always pulled away from me when I tried to trap it with my feet! Bless Jack; He was always so patient and calm while waiting, yet made up for it in speed with zeal, that even while I endeavoured to get off at the traverse lines he would be there, in those few moments I fumbled!

Bodies appeared below. It was Paul's lot. How did they get behind us? That's their tale to tell! Going to the bottom of the 2nd Big Pitch (3rd one up), then 3 more were met coming down! One big deviation had to be passed and as I neared the top, another appeared. Yes, it was John Worden, of ex Rubber Duck Club! He was on his own and was staying in a tent by the Winch.

Some nice long meandering passage and I reached the last (or 1st) pitch. I thought that our troubles (what troubles?) would now be over. Wrong! The first one was negotiating the perched low crawl, that soon came after getting off the pitch. I thought the left passage crawl was the way out. It went into a very loosely held and choked up area. Reversing back, I required the help of Jack to guide and lift my legs up so that I could get going to crawl round the corner, where the pitch rope had been tied off! Now came the hard bit! Since the entrance plastic drum was of slim design, then it necessitated (still with your kit on) a 3-inch prusik step to gain the 12 foot or so of climb to the surface; and that wasn't all! After much faffing and squirming I realised that the only way to get out wasn't to use the dangly foot loop that hung too high to reach; but to pull up on the sides of the drum and 'muscle up' the best way one can. Then one just rolled over backwards to get your feet out once you'd unclipped (rope now trying to pull you down) and Bingo, you were out!!!

It was all fun and antics for Jack too, as I photo sequenced him coming up. The only other item of note was that everything in Wades & Stream was deviated with no rebelayes. It would've been better to use rebelayes, if only to facilitate the more efficient movement of bodies on each pitch, without undue waiting around. Time underground: About 4 hours.

Dalek



Gwen, Neil and Paul in the Main Chamber
Photo Credit: Steve White

Gingling Hole: Fools Paradise

7th September 2024

Dalek, Allan Rhodes, Tony Rooke, Toby Speight, Gwen Tawy, Hannah Walker & Ian Walker

The weather turned out fine. Leaving The Farm in Toby and Tony's cars we duly arrived at Dalehead, where we met Ian and Hannah. Walking over in sunshine, Gwen realised about halfway to the entrance that she had forgotten a battery for her light, so had to run back to get it.

The entrance still had the metal bar which was used to share a belay with a P hanger just below it. A tape sling was seen and used as a deviation for the hang. As I'd not rigged for a very long time, I now fumbled with adjusting the butterfly to give a good hang. Landing down on a large slope of boulders we had to descend to reach an opening which dropped down a letterbox slot of several metres then slide down to the ground below. Now with lots of stooping and some crawling in narrow trench like passages, which dropped into a pool and chamber, we reached the second pitch. As I was too low and found it awkward to reach the pitch head, I asked Ian to wriggle out and rig it. Grateful for his quick rigging we continued to the 3rd pitch. This required a hidden climb up, after crossing a low chamber and wriggling along the top of the passage. Again, Ian was better able than I was and a lot more efficient in rigging this pitch. There was an abundance of ropes left on these pitches due, I'm told, to allow rapid progress for a diving team to enter in the future. An awkward take-off which proved more difficult on the return for me and Allan.

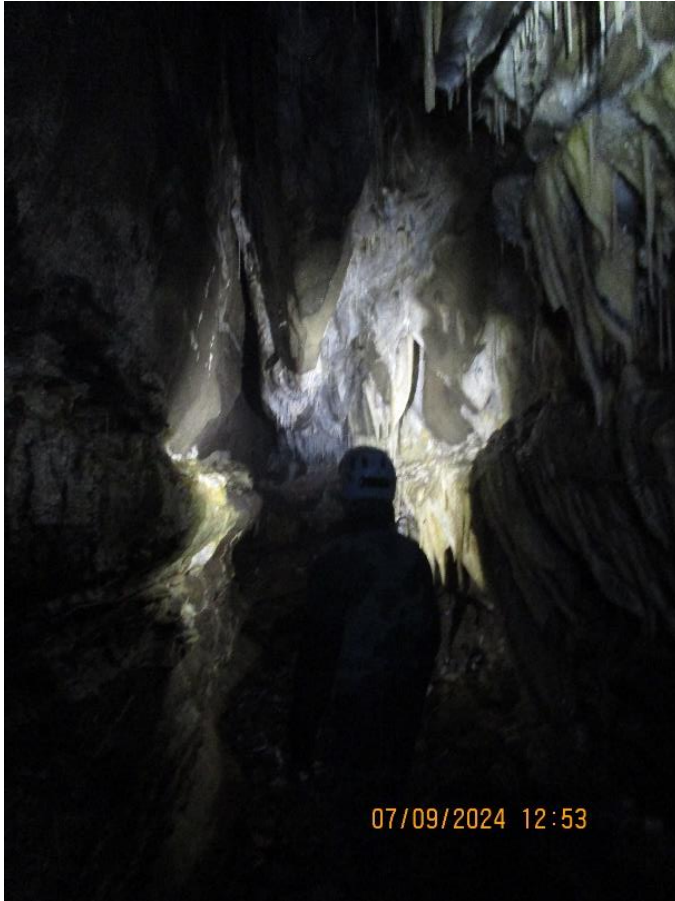


Toby and Ian in Gingling
Photo Credit: Dalek



Viewing formations in Fools Paradise
Photo Credit: Dalek

Now the passage dropped down a slanted chute, which caused no end of problems for us 'oldies'. This I attributed mainly to wearing our full SRT gear which made us all that bit larger around our girth and more awkward to pass these narrow obstacles. Stooping over the low wide passage we reached the trench to drop to the 4th pitch. Ian wanted to rig it, and everyone used this pitch except for me. I wanted to see how safe and quick the traverse over on the ledge to the top of Stalactite Chamber was. The 'Divers' rope was in place anyway. No problems, but the steep but slippery (and muddy in places) slope required care



Gwen in Fools Paradise
Photo Credit: Dalek

to reach the bottom of the pitch. Everyone removed their kit to make the next 3m slot down a lot more negotiable. A low bedding led off in between hanging calcite. This got slightly higher until one could suddenly stand up on a bend. Walking now in a tall passage the formations grew in size on both walls to make it now into a pleasant stroll for some distance. Taking photos of most people on the trip (I was the only one with a camera) I realised that most of my photos were a bit blurry or misty, when checking them!

On my return I was told that Allan had got into some tight bother at the bottom of the slot after trying to go the wrong way. The slot itself was difficult for me to progress upwards, as was the final letterbox slot. Now realising that I could go back along the traverse without kitting up I could face the challenge of the slanting chute with less detriment to myself. I still had bruises to show for it later on!

As we got closer to the entrance and letterbox climb I was only too aware of how unfit I had become, and with all the thrutching with my harness and kit on I knew that I would ache a lot over the coming days! It seemed an age but getting up 6' or so on the letterbox climb to reach the chockstone there, was a long-sustained effort. I was glad to see the daylight coming down the entrance pitch and to get out soon after. Still, it was a really good trip to do again after all these years (since 1998, I think). I'm glad that members turned up to actually do this trip without any persuasion from me.

Dalek

Ingleborough Cave

14th September 2024

Lara Bartleet, Mike Butcher (ULSA), Nat Dalton, Alice Shackley, Gwen Tawy & Philip Withnall

I had heard good things about Ingleborough Cave from Bill Nix but had never managed to attend the club's annual Ingleborough trip. However, this year I was luckily free to attend.

Much to my dismay, we were up around 7am to make sure we would be ready in our wetsuits at the show cave entrance by 9:30am. At least the weather was decent! We trudged up the hill with our gear; most of us opting to carry our belongings in a rucksack, with some bravely opting for the Santa-esque over-the-shoulder method. On arrival, we walked slightly past the show cave entrance to change. We had been warned not to change in sight of any tourists, presumably as the owners thought that would put people off from paying good money for a show underground if there was a free one above ground? We were eager to go and ready at the gated entrance at 9:20am. We knocked on the door a couple times, but nobody answered. Did we have the correct date and time? After checking our emails, we were certain we were booked in for that date, and hoped someone would arrive shortly. Sure enough, a car soon arrived with a couple of staff members. They swiftly opened the gates, and we were hurriedly rushed through the show cave.

At the end of the road for tourists we hopped over a barrier into a sandy passage, then dropped down a steep slope into the streamway. We then found ourselves crawling in the water, slithering like seals over a row of planks that had been laid above the streamway. This kept us out of the water for a little while, but not for long. The ceiling rose and we reached a junction. Left was the way on and right took us towards Lake Avernus and Lake Pluto. Lake Avernus is a canal, which most of us swam down. At the end of the canal, we found that the entrance to Lake Pluto was sumped and only Mike was brave enough to venture further for a better look. The rest of us turned around to rejoin Alice, who had wisely decided her time was better spent taking photos.

Reunited at the junction, we began the long crawl onwards – the Far Eastern Bedding Cave. Bill had warned us about the monotony of this part of the trip; the seemingly endless crawl. We followed Phil through the dry undulating low passage, as he had been once before with Bill on a photography trip.

Having not had any time to prepare for the trip, I hadn't done much pre-reading. One downside of not being prepared is having no idea what to expect nor an appreciation of what may be lurking around the next corner. In my head, this trip was like White Scar – minimal crawling and lot of splashing down a walking sized passage. This is not the character of Ingleborough Cave.

Eventually, we met the water again. Phil confidently slid into the water on his front and Lara followed. I decided to stay back a little to survey the situation. I didn't like the look of the duck, but with Lara's light as a guide and some encouragement from her and Alice, I made it

through, keeping right and following a convenient line through the duck to avoid the shallowest parts with the least airspace. My ear got wet, but I didn't drown, so all good.

Once all through, we decided it was time to have a short break to bond over the torture we had just endured. "How could anyone enjoy this trip?" we cried! Unsure of what came next, we whipped out the description. We were pleased to read that the worst was over and that we'd soon be reaping the reward of the 'finest 100m passage in Gaping Gill'. Phew!

Spirits high again, we continued along the 'finest passage', but the passage quickly got suspiciously low and wet. Another duck, which this time featured the caver's favourite – scum! Were the authors of the description having a laugh or had we misread it? Either way, it was clear that the Wallows were not behind us. Slowly but surely, we made our way through, emerging in a passage that we could actually stand up in – yippee! Rereading the description at this end, it was clear that we had misinterpreted the description at the end of the first duck (Near Wallows). Although this was rather obvious by looking at Alice, who looked like she'd stepped out of a bubble bath due to the scum perched on her head.

To avoid getting too cold, we walked briskly through the 'finest passage', which was indeed rather fine! On the return we did some exploring, which included an exciting slip'n'slide adventure in (up) and out (down) of a dig that has potential to connect with Gandalf's Gallery in Gaping Gill. Teamwork was essential to safely get all members of the team up and back down. Mike acted as the top anchor, bracing himself against rock and holding onto a tatty bit of rope from the dig to help his teammates negotiate the deadly flowstone. His faithful teammates returned the favour by leaving him to do the treacherous downclimb by himself.

It was soon time to return, and I was most displeased when we failed to follow the line through the ducks, going straight through the scum in the Far Wallows and then going through a narrow point in the Near Wallows. I tried to imagine I was in a swimming pool to avoid getting too panicked. Surprisingly, this did help. The rest of the trip went smoothly, and we finished with ice cream from the show cave shop. Despite my dislike for the 'one ear in the water and the other ear scraping the ceiling' style of caving, it was a great day out with a fabulously entertaining team. Thanks to Bill for organising, especially as he was unable to attend this year.

Gwen Tawy

White Scar Cave

5th October 2024

Dalek, Rowan Cleet, Dinny Davies, Charlotte Hebditch, Dave Ottewell, Sarah Parker, Pete Talling, Hannah Walker, Ian Walker, Emma Wilson, Philip Withnall

It was a bright and sunny day, but a little on the cold side to be squeezing into wetsuits in a breezy car park. We changed as quickly as we could then signed ourselves in. We followed our noses through the show cave in a long conga line. There were 13 of us in total, including two of Pete's friends (apologies, I have forgotten their names, so they are not listed above). Soon after hopping over the barrier, we split into smaller groups. I had only been in White Scar once previously and my only memory was of the swim at the start. First time round I didn't have a wetsuit and my wellies were slightly too big (ah, student caving!), so it was much more pleasant this time.

At the end of the swim came the boulder choke, which I had forgotten about. It was demanding in places, but worth the hard work to reach the streamway. Part way along the boulder choke we met the new pipe, which had been installed in 2022 to provide a safe way through a previously unstable part of the choke. Once we emerged the other side, we followed the impressive and winding streamway for a long while. This was much more easy-going. We eventually climbed out of the streamway to head towards the main sump. This climb involved a pull up onto a scaff bar to reach a high ledge. I wished I had paid more attention to the Olympians on the balance beam earlier in the summer as I ended up hanging off the bottom of the pole like a sloth instead of on top of it like a graceful gymnast. With some brute strength and swearing, I made it onto the ledge.

We walked along the ledge into a passage which degenerated into a crawl and a series of ducks. As we neared the sumps I got flashbacks from Ingleborough Cave. Was my poor ear about to get wet again? Yes, yes it was. I removed my helmet for some of the ducks to give myself extra space above the water, and this helped my confidence. We eventually met the sump in a small and surprisingly roomy chamber. On the return we bumped into the rest of the party as they approached one of the ducks.

After returning to the streamway we followed a handline up a greasy climb to a chamber with some impressive straws. The rest of the trip went by quickly, although changing out of our wetsuits was a bit of a challenge.

We ended with several cups of tea in the café to warm ourselves up. Thanks to Emma for organising the trip.

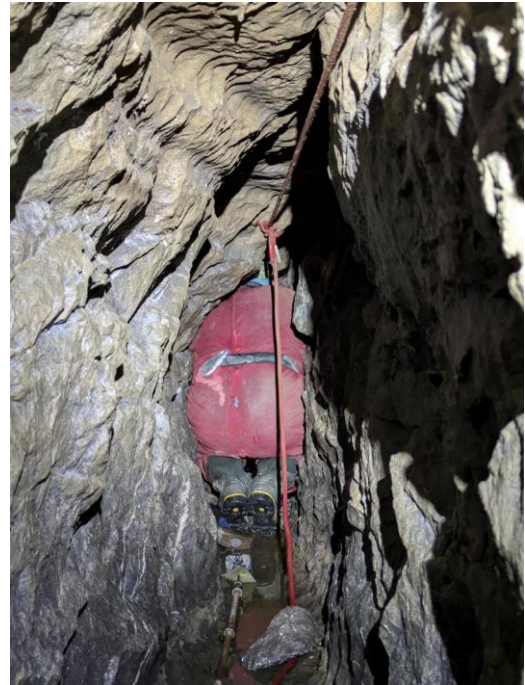
Gwen Tawy

Digging and Surveying Reports

Rollerball Update

Sam, Ray and Chris continue to make progress in the confines of Rollerball, a vertical zig zag now over 160m long which continues to surprise and irritate. The current activity is a combination of capping and playing twister to make progress along a low narrow streamway that has been dye traced coming in from Casterton Pot and which is expected to drop into 1 hour inlet in Aygill. We have a fairly well tuned system for 3 people to cap, haul and tip over a couple of sessions, but it gets no easier the further we advance from the available stacking space.

Chris Hunter



Sam capping in Dead Cat passage, Rollerball
Photo Credit: Chris Hunter

Gale Garth Update



New handline in Gale Garth
Photo Credit: Ray Duffy

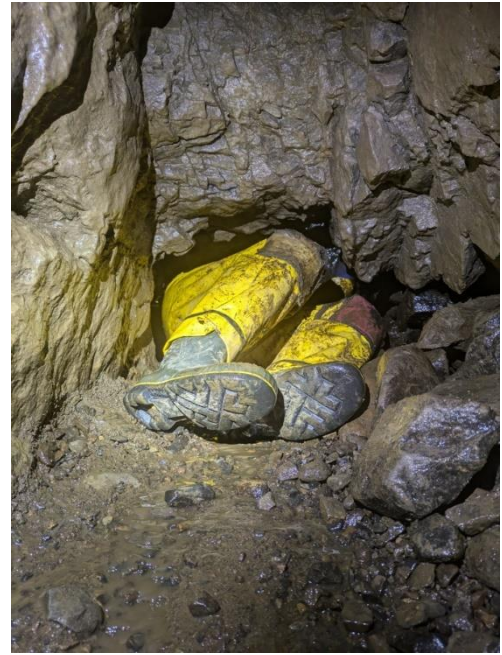
This rarely visited 'gem', though very near the farm, has recently seen more visits than in many years past. A team going in there a few weeks ago reported that the crawl had seen some rock movement in the dodgy bit just before Octopus Chamber. I went in to the climb-down, very old knotted rope and even dodgier hanger and added an SRT rope and bolt above the drop for safety.

A couple of weekends later Colin, Andy and myself went back down and surveyed the scene, true there'd been some rocks rolled into the passage but that, as I remembered from various visits, was par for the course, so nothing really unusual. Still, the cobble delivery hopper should really be prevented from doing so to save future blockage. I did a bit of cobble and gravel removal but the hopper, a rift full of said cobbles off to the left, needed serious walling.

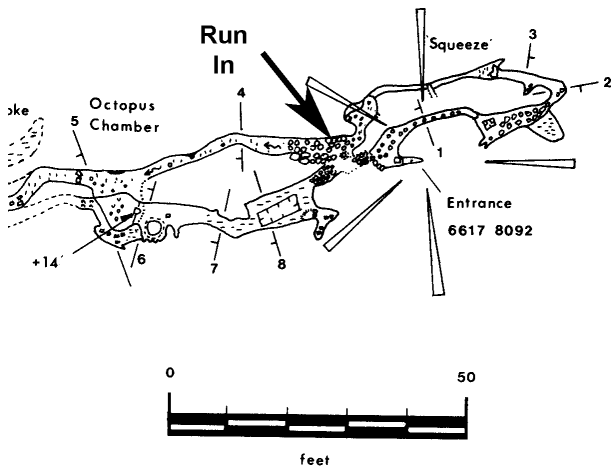
Chris and Sam ventured into the crawl with me left to dive head-first into it to retrieve surplus spoil and build a nice walled storage space. After a couple of hours, the lads had completed the walling up of the rift to prevent further collapses and we retreated happy with our efforts.

If you intend to visit Galegarth be careful when passing this section and don't thrash about in the crawl as that's what's caused the problem in the first place, gently does it! It is worth a visit so don't be put off by the weird entrance shoring as beyond this it's a mainly solid cave and quite pretty in places.

Ray Duffy



Sam in the crawl
Photo Credit: Ray Duffy



Walled up rift
Photo Credit: Ray Duffy

No Pasaran - Part 2: Bull Pot of the Witches, North Chamber Extensions

February 2024

Colin Jones, Hugh St. Lawrence, Chris Scaife

In the last newsletter (Summer/Autumn 2024) I described my failure to pass a squeeze that leads to The Frontier in Pippikin Pot, a destination that Ray had earmarked for resurveying for the next sheet of the great Ease Gill re-mapping project. We went, we saw, we did not conquer. It was some small comfort that I was accompanied by Dinny and Gwen, two younger and bendier cavers, so it wasn't just a case of knackered old fart. Or maybe they were just making me feel better....

But it worried me. Were the caves really getting smaller, were the walls closing in? I had to test myself against the encroaching years...and inches! And what better place than the North Chamber Extension in nearby Bull Pot. Twenty years ago, I helped force this passage with Sam Lieberman and Andy Whitney, a promising lead heading north towards Aygill, but in the end it failed to go to order (the full story is in Journal 10). But now Casterton Pot has been extended south by 80 metres, heading directly for the North Chamber area. The extension required a revisit, Colin Jones accompanied me.



Hugh in the first squeeze
Photo Credit: Colin Jones

A thrutch up into a sandy little tunnel soon meets the 1st squeeze, slightly downwards on a soft bend with an awkward shelf of rock kicking the body out of shape. I had in fact tried this squeeze a week earlier on my own but bottled it – I think I could have got through but without the certainty of getting back! Now Colin provided the support needed to commit myself through the vice-like walls into comfortable sitting and turning space. This allowed me to approach 'The Oval' headfirst.

In 2003 this 5" diameter hole issued a substantial draught that was all the encouragement we needed to lay siege to the walls. It took many trips working in a confined space, but eventually it was enlarged and passed to a micro-chamber and an apparent end, with only vague gaps above to the left from which issued the siren draught.

Boosted by my performance in the first squeeze I launched into The Oval, some lingering memories lending me confidence that I could do this. And indeed, I could, with only moderate hesitation and discomfort. It's still small and thrutchy, but it's doable, and isn't around a bend. Impressed with myself, I flopped into the micro-chamber.

Getting out of the micro-chamber brought me down to earth. The vague gaps of 2003 had at the time been enlarged to fashion the 3rd squeeze, a twisting thrutch upwards around a bend with various snags and protrusions. But a 20 year less flexible body now refused to comport

itself to the available dimensions. I flapped around like a landed fish for ten minutes before accepting defeat - this was going to require PM (passage modification).

With some difficulty (for a 6-footer) I turned round in the micro-chamber and headed back through The Oval. Somewhat to my surprise my support team had remained sunny side of the first squeeze, suggesting that this short section of passage still offers a sporting challenge for the neophyte caver and those of a certain build.

Over several solo trips I enlarged the 3rd squeeze, and also modified the 1st squeeze to accommodate the support team. In some ways it seemed a shame to be scaling back the challenge of these old squeezes. But if the goal was to allow proper inspection of the sharp end heading towards Casterton Pot, then I persuaded myself the end justified the means. And, it wasn't over quite yet...



The Oval
Photo Credit: Colin Jones

Beyond the 3rd squeeze is a drop down to standing space – yay! Only briefly, though. By the feet is a tricky connection to Roberts Inlet via a rather dodgy choke. Above lies a tight bedding and the 4th squeeze, an upward on-your-back squeeze out of the tight bedding. Truth be told, I couldn't even reach the squeeze itself! I dug out the bedding plane to size and eventually confronted the squeeze – but there was no way up for me.

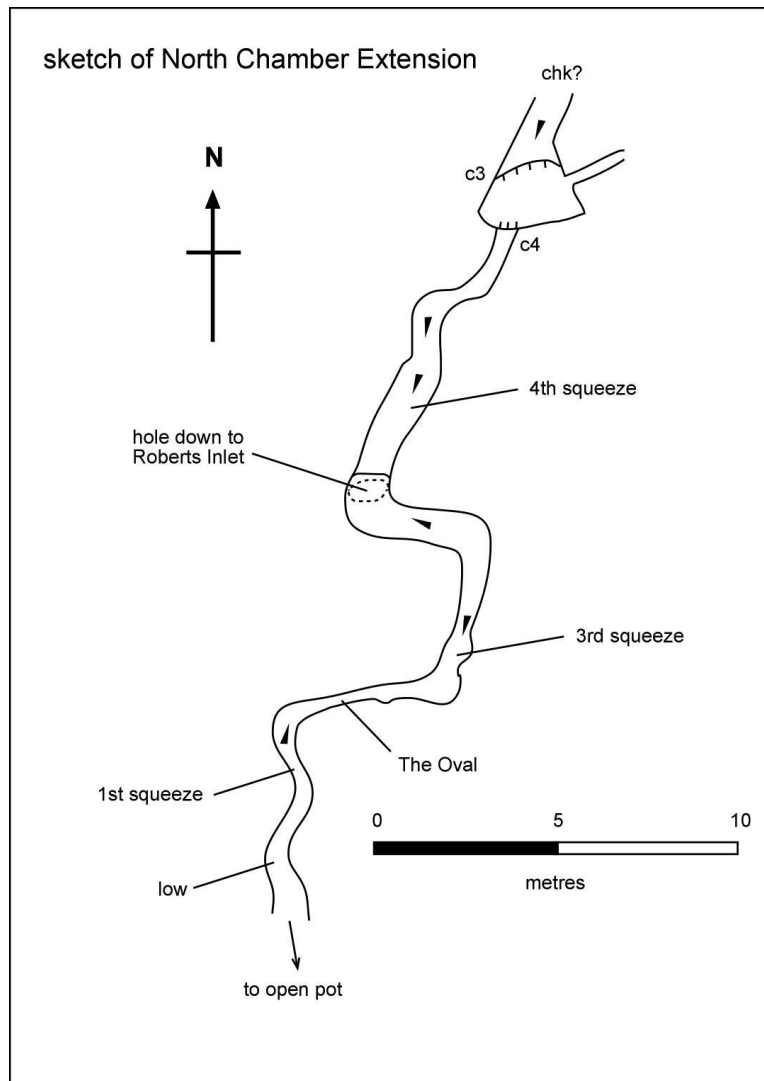
NO PASARAN!

It was amazing to think that 20 years ago we'd steadily worked our way through all this narrow going, creating barely passable squeezes which we came to accept as a mere commute to the front end, chasing the draught. I knew that a few metres ahead lay the final chamber, down a 4-metre drop. But now, in 2024, there was no way there for me. At least, not without more PM!

To assist in this endeavor I was joined by Chris Scaife, who was helping push the long south crawl in Casterton Pot. Moreover, he was the new editor of Descent, so caving and street cred rolled into one! To my chagrin, Chris passed the 4th squeeze at first attempt, confirming my status as a has-been lard arse. It still needed some chemical persuasion for me to join him in the sideways crawl to the final chamber, where we failed to climb into the best-looking lead which I can't remember if we pushed properly at the time. Cause for return.

Containing four interesting squeezes in a length of 10 metres, North Chamber Extension was

a severe test of my size and flexibility, a test I failed rather miserably. Despite the small amount of PM that was needed to get me around the bends, it still presents a good workout for the average caver. And who knows, one day it may become the route to Aygill Caverns!



Hugh St. Lawrence

Blasts from the Past**A Tribute to Pete Llewellyn – Bull Pot of the Witches****10th August 1969****Duncan Baldwin, Roger Calvert, Pete Llewellyn, Phillip Pearson***Originally published in Red Rose Cave and Pothole Club - Newsletter Vol 6 No 4 - August/September 1969*

Roger and Duncan during the course of their surveying had discovered near the canal above the sump a boulder choke which appeared to be the floor of a large chamber. Asking Duncan where it could lead, he said either Barbondale or Lancaster Hole! This was clarified by being told that it was one of (or should be one of) the original dry upper passages of the Aygill - Bull Pot stream. Apparently, Duncan could see into a chamber through a series of key stones which he thought would have to be moved before an entry could be made. Game for anything once I joined him Roger and Phillip armed with a pulley, a belay and two lengths of old rope. The rope was tied round a key stone the size of a football and then passed through the pulley and back down the passage enabling us to pull out the key stone without being in line of the proposed fall. Well back down the passage four of us took the strain and pulled, then anticlimax the rope came free. Duncan cautiously returned to the choke to find the key stone had only moved a short distance. The procedure was repeated and after many pulls the rope went slack and, concurrently, several boulders crashed down and four potholers dived back through the crawl to the chamber at the end of the canal, I have never seen lads move so quickly. Duncan didn't even mean to run back through the crawl but was carried by the rush and by the fact that the rope was caught round his leg.

I lit yet another cigarette and Duncan went back to investigate; apparently quite a large hole had been formed but some boulders were still held up by and another key stone still had to come out. The rope was again fixed and this time we pulled from the passage near the canal. This key stone came out a little easier (Duncan informed us that it was only the size of an orange). The rope went slack followed by a fantastic crash accompanied by a strong smell of limestone dust. As Duncan was discussing going back to have a look...'crash' even louder than the previous one and quickly followed by a further enormous noise - upsetting Duncan. We then decided on a quick trip down to the sump to let things quieten down. No sooner had we set off when the loudest crash of all came. Now the sound of falling boulders can disturb the calmest of temperaments but when one is close by in the same system the effect is quite dramatic.

No further large boulders fell but every five minutes, as the boulders were covered with wet mud, they were slowly, laboriously and noisily settling. We decided to leave the choke to settle down for a fortnight so the area was roped off and a suitable warning message left there. When Duncan retrieved the pulley which luckily wasn't damaged, he informed us that a hole approximately five feet square had been opened up and that he could make out a void beyond large enough to prevent him seeing the walls or the roof with a spot beam. The fascinating aspect of these exploits was a feeling of the rope which then went slack and was followed by a 'crash' and comparable to fishing in reverse.

Peter Llewellyn

Nine Hours County Pot/Easegill Big Rescue Operation

8th May 1988

This day was to be a very sad one, remembered by many, as the rescuees were all fatalities found in a location quite close to a 'well beaten route' taken by many.

Yesterday, Saturday, ended on a good footing for me as I'd done 3 in one day: Harddrawkin, Knackertrapper, and Roaring Hole with Mike Cooper! The usual thing that BPC trippers do on Saturdays is get well drunk either near to home (Horton) or go some way away like The Hill Inn! I'd been with them of course to enjoy the evening's entertainment of raucous buffoonery and antics (passing through a cartwheel hung on the wall) which seemed to be a regular occurrence. Anyway, getting back after midnight, it was a late night when I finally crashed out!

It was about 6:30 when all of us were woken by loud clamourings of "Rise & Shine, get up we need more bodies to help out on a rescue" from the likes of Dave Gallivan & co. So, 9 of us left 'The Dump', to go via Clapham CRO depot to BPF. Mick Marshall (known as MSFN), John Davies, Pete and Sara Spillet, Sharon (Shaz) Kelly, Scoff, Richard Laberdy, Jimmy (Ratbag) Rattray, and of course me! I'd just had time for a glass of milk on leaving.

I was given a lamp, and we hung around until 8:30. Scoff and Jimmy stayed on the surface manning the Molephones. Sharon, Pete, Sara, and I went down to The Assembly Hall area; it was after 9:10. Dave Galli, Gary, Maggy, Ric Halliwell, and Steve Pickersgill (all CPC) also went down with Kenny Taylor and Roy Martin (Earby), along with Pete Seed and a woman named Kate. There was also a 'Chalky' with the only diver, Mike Thomas, who went down the 1st County Pot Pitch and Trident route to the Stop Pot area. It was at this point when Kenny Taylor broke the news that Sharon had found bodies in a choke close by the passage adjoining Assembly Hall. She had apparently touched the boot of one of the victims and asked him/her to get a move on!

Dave and Ken went over to assess the damage. I was getting cold and went with Kenny Taylor and Mike Thomas and found that Frank Croll and Jim Newton were at the head of the team. First me, Ken and Roy tried putting down a 2nd Molephone but didn't succeed as J.Rat wasn't in position yet. Then two bodies in sleeping bags were passed back along the passage. Mike T and I rushed back to relay a message at Stop Pot for more wooden chocks, a saw, drill, and plugs and feathers (rock splitting equipment). Also, some 'bang' or explosive, to be ready on standby. One bloke, I'm told had got jammed under a 25 tonner. So, I ran back to The Assembly Hall area and was told by Jim Newton to see if a stretcher had arrived yet. I then met DG and Ken coming over with a NR Stretcher and helped to carry it to Assembly Hall.

One of the deceased was placed on the stretcher then dragged and carried back to the Stop Pot area. It was 12:30 now, and we alternated with dragging/lifting/hoisting from there on. We kept meeting others coming in with gear and food. At the 2nd pitch it was a shambles due to the indecisiveness of one of the controllers! More sandwiches and a drink once we got beyond PJ. Then as we helped hoist and direct the operations of lifting the stretchers above

the 1st pitch, I saw the hand of the deceased girl, and it nearly made me sick with the thought of all this, in stark reality in front of me, here and now.

We were all out and finished for 6pm. When I got back to the Farm, I realised that I'd not given my name to the police! A quick shower and back to Clapham to help make out the report for CRO. To the pub for a few pints and much later I drove back home for about 11:00. I was told that there were at least 90 cavers involved underground at the same time and possibly several hundred altogether, if you count all the surface helpers too.

Dalek

Dowbergill Rescue: Three Girls Lost Since Saturday

11th September 1988

When I first became involved with UWFRA, it was deemed that I should be called out as soon as anything happened underground. This is my funny story of this incident to rack your sides.

On this clear sunny Sunday, it was an early morning wakeup call at 7:00 from our resident CRO controller, Dave Gallivan at BPC's 'Dump'. He said that he had no transport today and asked if I would be interested in taking both of us to Dow Cave entrance at Park Rash. The trouble was my mini's petrol tank read very low and the petrol station in Settle was shut. Still, making our way out of town, we got to the bypass when my engine conked out! So, with a petrol can in hand I walked and hitched back in a pickup to Ribblesdale Motors. It was now open as it was after 8:00. Got back to the car for 8:30 and this time we got underway to Gargrave and hence to Threshfield & Grassington.

At the UWFRA depot we picked up a 'Little Dragon' and got to Kettlewell to find a rescue was underway. We were not the first on the scene today. Watto & co. had got down Providence Pot. We hung around until 10:30 and took an ammo box with a Goon Suit in it to Dow Cave entrance. Met Alan Peel and another (WRCPC), who went in with us and caught a tackling party at Gypsum Traverse. We dived in through the duck/dive to save time. I escorted the last girl, Melanie, over the top using ladders and line to drop down by 'The Buddhist's Temple'. The other two girls were Lynn and Sheryl, all LUSS cavers. It was their friends that had called us out. It had only taken an hour to accomplish this task and back at the entrance we were all given stew and soup with bread and a cup of tea. Now it was 2pm when we got underway again. As luck would have it, I was low again on petrol by the time we got over Halton Gill. Dave knew of The Bradley's at Blishmire Farmhouse and coaxed them into parting with a half Jerry can of petrol for my car. Got back without further ado and met others at Ivy Cottage in Horton for an entertaining afternoon.

Dalek

Sylvester Pot: My Downfall (Not for the Fainthearted Trip)

25th January 2004

When Mike called out to me with some instructions, I instinctively stepped onto a boulder bridge to quickly move out of the way of a cascade of water which marked the entry point to The Delicate Sound of Thunder. The whole floor moved and I with it! Mike had barely moved clear just seconds before. The whole thing happened so fast that it isn't clear as to exactly what happened to me, save for my shoulder and foot injuries. I'd instinctively reached out to momentarily grab hold of a wall projection (to arrest my fall) but was immediately wrenched out of my tenuous grasp. My shoulder was jolted out of its socket when I let go. The boulder collapse continued for some seconds yet. I became aware that I'd ridden the boulders down for about ten feet or so, and I was precariously perched. My right shoulder felt swollen, extremely painful and useless. I realised that I must've gotten off very luckily since I'd not been aware of any crush injuries. Mike climbed out into the chamber and away from this 'Rocky Horror Show'. I couldn't do the same but had to back and foot it up with the aid of my still good arm/hand. Even here the rock was loose.

We talked about the nature of my injuries and concluded that due to the weird angle my arm had assumed and the lump that seemed to have grown where my armpit was, that I'd dislocated it in my violent fall from grace! I was unable to move it without excruciating agony yet, I let Mike try twice, to grab a hold of it and try to pull it back into place. Then I had a go by holding onto a slab and used my body weight as a lever to try yet again. I thought of the pitches to go down and with only Mike to assist I probably would do more damage to my lower limbs. It was then that I decided to get the CRO out. You know the rest.

If you don't, then it went something like this.

It was now 3pm and Mike was adamant that we should go it alone down Clough's Passage and climb to pass through Dismal Junction's low bedding to regain the County Pot passages and get out without further ado! I felt that it would be so awkward and extremely painful doing this. I told him I'd sit it out with a choc bar, cheese and Pepperami and wait the 4hrs15mins until they came back to escort me out with aid. Unable to move my arm down even to look at my watch as my hand was swollen and fingers felt clumsy, I resigned myself to a long and cold wait. Kneeling, rather than sitting I felt very thirsty, weak, shivery and dizzy. Dozing off, I was rudely woken when my arm moved down from its angular position. Hearing sounds, like voices from time to time I knew that it was my imagination running riot, straining to hear, to believe that they were here!

First upon the scene were Mike, Rob Burke (with the gas) and Simon Mckenzie; carrying 5 bags of gear. He'd brought in equipment with 5 others and the first thing I was given were some pain-relieving tablets like Voltarol and Kapake from Pete Hall. Then The Little Dragon and warm Entonox gas was given to further numb down the pain. Now I could move, but I slithered and crawled in reverse, towards a drop of 12 foot or so into Clough's Passage. At the squeeze at the top, I stood on Simon's shoulder to get through. Here, they put in some bolts and made it into a roped pitch descent for me, then lowered me down slowly using my belay belt.

Next, and just a little further on in a clearing they'd erected a small tent and sat me down to inspect my injuries in more detail. A Doctor, John Burton, and a physio, Tim Hetherington, were here, and I was given a jab into my chest of a derivative of morphine to really turn down the pain to a level that I could now withstand for the journey out. Three others also came inside to provide extra warmth for me! I also had some cups of hot coffee and a hot choc drink. Ten mins later, the drug took effect.

Suitably bound but not gagged I was despatched in a drag stretcher with my arms outside of it and pulled and guided through the long bedding-like duck of Dismal Passage! Thinking that the worst was now over I cheered up somewhat and joked with my rescuers. They would all help to resolve that the way on out would now be made considerably easier for me by letting me stand on their heads, no, sorry; on their shoulders to get a leg up or so to reach the climb and pitch of County Pot. Dave Nuttall and Simon McCabe mainly helped here by pulling me up or pushing me up. Here, the loud and piercing voice of Ian Watson, known as 'Watto', was heard, barking out instructions to make the climb and pitch safe for me to be hoisted up in a 'baby bouncer' type of harness!!! I felt honoured that I was given this 'Royal' treatment in my present condition! Again, walking mainly sideways up and along the narrow constricted climbs, with aid from many hands and shoulders, I reached the entrance!

It was now dark as it was quite late in the evening, after 10pm. Here, I was plied with hot soup and scalding hot tea which nearly burnt my tongue off! Since no helicopters were available as one had broken down at base and the other was diverted to a more pressing emergency, I was escorted across the fell with 4 rescuers. They were the Doctor, Jim Davis, Andy Jackson (BPC), and Dave Gallivan (surface controller). It was freezing out here, and when we got to the lane downhill, a Land Rover took me all the way to Bullpot Farm.

Arriving at Bullpot Farm, and in the guests' common room, I was the object of a dozen or so watching me try to strip off my garments to be made ready for the off in a waiting ambulance to Royal Lancaster Infirmary. It was Jim Davis that pulled my oversuit off. Getting on for midnight now, I was given another jab in the van, and I think that was when my shoulder went 'back in'.

At the Hospital, Terry Regan was at the entrance. I was put in a small ward with another patient who was an ex Red Roser, Eric Holland, who was in hospital for bone marrow cancer. He had been in hospital for 3 weeks and would be going home that day. Unable to sleep well due to the weight of my arm/shoulder drooping off the pillow, I was aware of the passing of more time and many thoughts of my plight.

The following morning, it was Pete Hall who came to visit me from nearby, took me to the train station and gave me money for the train back to Leeds. Jim Newton had also phoned me. It was Mike Cooper who very kindly drove my car back to my house, so that I needn't have worried about getting it back.

Many thanks to all the 40 or so Rescuers (6 were Red Rosers) who came to my aid. I donated £1000 to The CRO for their unstinting help.

Dalek

60 Years in the Three Counties Cave System

1962-2024

Well, it is more than 60 years that I have been caving in the Three Counties System. I first went down County Pot in 1962 and most recently went on some trips to help open North by North End Pot (2024).

The trip down County was 3 school lads and a teacher. We got to the master cave - Eureka Junction. The teacher was elated, "Fantastic, a real Master Cave!". I was not gobsmacked, "It was pathetic; NOT AS GOOD AS DUNALD MILL HOLE" I said (true). As he was the school God, this did not go down well.

Things got worse when I could not get up PJ Pitch. I kept standing on my floppy trousers and my cycle lamp papier-mâché helmet were a pain. However, I got a grip and got up. Rest of trip ok (RRCPC in Trident system on that day). The sting in the tail was we again had to follow the wall (an extra mile walk) to keep off Bowering land due to a 1962 problem with cavers.

My older brother was in the Red Rose, and it was local and a good club so aged "15" I joined. We went everywhere. Trips were planned on a Friday evening in the Moorlands pub (Lancaster) in a room that had Christmas decorations all year. Lifts were provided on a Sunday via Jim Newton, Jim Eyres, Mel Wilkinson and others. We did most of Lancaster Hole and Easegill, and most in the book Pennine Underground, all using electron ladders.

The RRCPC were very active in non-sporting activities. For example, surveying all of Lancaster Hole and other places within Easegill with a full description of it all. Other work done included reopening Top Sink and connecting The Borehole and Slit Sinks to Easegill and surveying this (0.5m error).

By 1967 the Lancaster Hole Easegill survey and report was finished and published. All leads on Leck Fell and Notts Sump dived and written off. To the shock of all other clubs, we found:
The Earby system
Pippikin System
Ireby Fell 2
Agyll Hole
Lost Johns link to Pippikin by a long dive
Kingsdale Master cave
...and more!!!

The RRCPC with Chris Baxter (diver), the Elwood brothers and others had a good bash at linking systems (by draining the Border Sump) to make a two-county system to Pippikin. Despite a cheap radio and cooked food and lots of digging gear, this failed!!

The RRCPC now started to find a few miles of new stuff in Easegill and Lancaster Hole, AND STILL DO.

Around 1978 my wife made a suggestion to join an evening class "Ah", I said, "Gorden Batty (NPC) has a Thursday evening group digging into new caves, and they do very well!!" I started at Roaring Hole (Ingleborough); it was good. I did not have a lot of spare time (nor did they), but 2 hours in a cave and out by pub o'clock then bed by 11 pm – what's not to like?

I also found out about what was to be Link Pot!! I asked for a look by helping in a working trip. They were quite keen I found out why - Jim Newton had backed out cos it was horrible and a possible 30m long dig. However, a few days' work and we had made a dry link to Pippikin. On the first trip it was a flat-out tight crawl, almost impossible to move in the sticky mud.

This was followed by Lost Pot then Large Pot. However, when Gorden and co moved to Fountains Fell it broke me as it was too far AND TOO HARD.

I joined Colin Davies who was trying to get a dry way to the recently found (by divers) Notts 2. He had a second dig that looked a possible 8m dig but it seemed it had a good possibility of crushing him without shoring and care. I said foolishly I would supply ALL the shoring. Then when putting in a "make or break" bar with Ray Duffy - it held - we could breathe again!!

Ray then via RRCPC Newsletter got others to dig (we had also earlier got permission to dig). In 2000 this dig made a dry link to Notts 2. It took a few years to do a fair job on the shaft and all the exploration work in the cave.

Roll onto 2011 and after even more effort the 3 counties were all linked up later. Low Douk cave was linked via a fine dig, and most recently we linked North End Pot too. I enjoyed the good meals on site. However, it is not as safe or as easy a way in as hoped.

There is still more to do 60 years on, and there are a lot of tales of the past still to tell!!

Thanks to all the countless people involved from all over who made it happen.

Andy Walsh

Reports from Caving Events

The Grand Opening of the NPC's Greenclose Extension

31st August 2024

A few weeks ago, the NPC had sent out an invitation to other caving clubs to invite them to the opening of the newly finished extension to their cottage. As Bill is also a member of the NPC, we decided it would be nice to attend.

During the day the NPC had a trip down Lancaster Hole on ladders planned so we thought we would take advantage of their rigging and do a through trip to Wretched Rabbit. After a good breakfast in Inglesport we arrived at Greenclose only 10 minutes late for the 10 o'clock meeting time (must be a record for Bill!!) but the cavers had already left. Earlier in the week Bill had dropped off a barrel of Wensleydale Brewery's Butter Tubs Ale for the celebrations, so he quickly tapped that, and we headed off to the Farm.

When we arrived, the advance party had left to rig but others were still changing, we got ready and headed over to Lancaster Hole shortly after them. We got to the entrance to find that the rigging team were still finishing off and there were approximately ten people waiting to descend. It looked like it could take some time, so we decided to stroll over to Wretched Rabbit. It was a beautiful day for a wander up Ease Gill, on the way we had a chat with another NPC group about to enter County Pot.

We decided we would go in via Spiral Staircase, visit Gypsum Caverns and then return via Stop Pot and the traditional route. I mostly lead the way with a bit of steering from Bill when I was unsure. It had been a while since I had been to Gypsum Caverns, and I had forgotten how spectacular the whole area is. We stopped for a sandwich and a drink at the bottom of Stop Pot before we made our way back out into the sunshine. After a shower and a brew, we headed back to Clapham via a quick pint in the beer garden at the Marton Arms.

It was a lovely evening for a walk from Clapham to Greenclose and when we arrived the barbeque was in full swing with the table groaning under the weight of sausages, burgers and accompanying salads and so on. We chatted with folks, ate our fill and sampled a couple of pints of the Butter Tubs Ale. Soon everyone was called outside for photographs of the occasion, their President gave a speech and cut SRT rope (or unhooked it when he found the scissors weren't up to the job!) for the official opening, then the Chair thanked everyone who had worked on and funded the project.

We all moved inside for the evening entertainment, which was started by Clive Westlake giving a brief history of the NPC. This was followed by Jeremy Ashworth sharing his father's memories of being recruited in the very early days of the NPC by Burt Bradshaw and their underground and overground shenanigans in the post war period. Photos were passed around, and I think people could have listened to the stories all night! Chris Scaife then took to the stage to talk about digging projects which he had been involved in in the Dales over

the last few years including F'ing Hopeless, Lamb Trap and North by North End Pot. Again, really interesting stuff.

After the talks puddings and an extensive cheese board were brought out to fill up any gaps which may have been left in stomachs! The barrel was drained, and we made our way back to Clapham.

Thank you to the NPC for a very interesting and sociable evening.

Emma Key

Library Additions: March 2024 – November 2024

Journals:

- British Cave Research Association: CREG Journal: Issue 126-127 (*June, September 2024*)
Cave & Karst Science Vol 51 No. 2 (*August 2024*)
Review: (2023)
- Cave Diving Group: Newsletter: Nos. 2 (*1964*), 226-232 (*1964, Jan 2023 - Jan 2024*)
Letter to Members: Nos. 1, 3, 5-6, 8, 12-13, 15-16, 18-20, 25, 30-33 (*1946-1962*)
Index to Reports (*1948-49*) + Newsletter
Somerset Section Newssheet Nos. 1-4 (*1966*)
Welsh Sump Index 1991
Somerset Sump Index 1991
Ten Year Cumulative Index 1979-1988
Derbyshire Section Report – 2/49 (*1949*)
- Craven Pothole Club: Record: Nos. 155-156. (*July 2024 - October 2024*)
- Chelsea Speleological Society: Newsletter Vol. 66 nos. 1-3, 4-6 (*Jan-Jun 2024*)
- Derbyshire Caving Association: Newsletter No. 159 (*Autumn 2024*)
- Descent: Nos. 298-300. (*June 2024- September 2024*).
- Grampian Speleological Group: Bulletin: Fifth Series Vol 5 No 2 (*October 2024*)
- Mendip Caving Club: Occasional Publication No. 8 70th. Anniversary (*August 2024*)
News: Issue 389 (*June 2024*)
- RRCPC: Newssheet: Nos. 401-403. (*May 2024 – Nov 2024*)
Newsletter: Vol. 61 No. 2 (*Summer/Autumn 2024*)
- Shepton Mallet Caving Clug: Journal Series 14 No. 3 (*July 2024*)
- Speleologia: No. 89 Anno XLV (*Marzo 2024*)
- Wessex Cave Club: Journal: No. 362-364 (*May, November 2024*)

Other Publications:

- Dow Cave: The story of a cave in Wharfedale - Steve and Patrick Warren (*2024*)
- Water at a depth of -5ft. discovered by diving in Peak Cavern (*1950*)
Reprint – Nature Vol 166.
- Somerset Underground Vol. 4 – East Mendip, Bath and South Somerset (*2024*)

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

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