



RED ROSE CAVE AND POTHOLE CLUB

NEWSLETTER



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Autumn 2023



Photo: Grotte de Millandre Streamway Formations by Bill Nix

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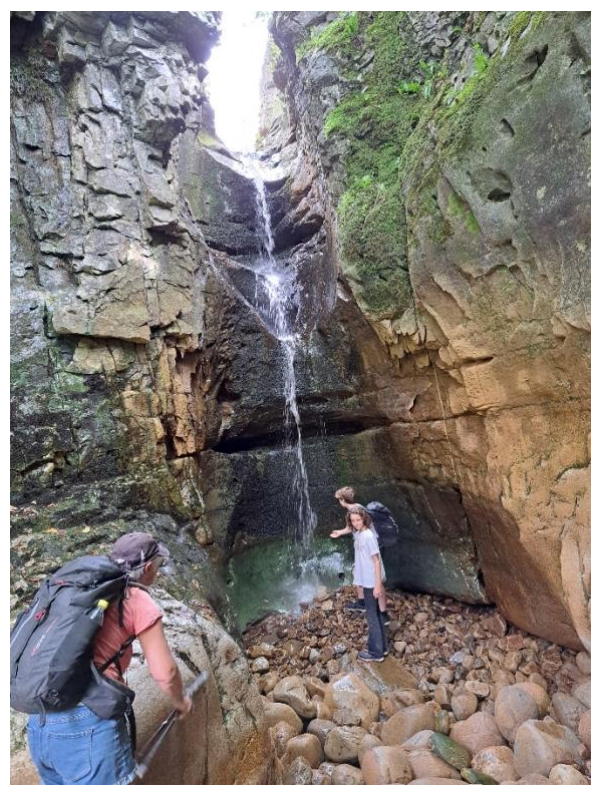
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Editor's Note

Welcome to your Autumn Newsletter. In this Newsletter you will find reports from recent trips to local and foreign caves, and some entertaining blasts from the past. This Newsletter also includes a thorough report on the work that has gone on at Wretched Rabbit to stabilise the entrance. Thank you to everyone who has helped with this effort. I am sure that I am one of many cavers who is looking forward to using the new entrance and visiting Wretched Rabbit once more.

Gwen Tawy
Newsletter Editor



Dry in Cow Dubs
Photo Credit: Mel Wilkinson

Coniston Copper Mines

6th May 2023

Anne Barton (ULSA), Mike Butcher (ULSA), Nat Dalton, Dinny Davies, Rachel McLaughlin (ULSA), Sarah Parker (ULSA), Ian Peachey, Alice Shackley, Luke Stangroom (ULSA), Gwenllian Tawy, Philip Withnall

The Coniston Copper Mines had been on my list of places to visit for a long time, so I was excited when the opportunity came about. We travelled to the Lake District on Friday night and stayed at Luke's house, which is not too far from Coniston. Although we hadn't stayed up too late, we were slow to breakfast on Saturday morning. It wasn't until Luke admitted that he'd agreed with Anne and Phil that we would meet them at the parking area at 10am that we realised we needed to hurry up. Who plans a meet for 10am on a Saturday morning and doesn't tell anyone else about it until 9:50am?? As we drove to Coniston, I imagined Anne and Phil rolling their eyes at our tardiness, although everyone else was confident they knew us well enough to know there was no way in hell we'd all be there by the arranged time.

When we arrived, we were pleased to find enough room for us to park. We found Phil and Anne, and quickly got changed to head underground. Unbeknownst to Phil, he had been volunteered by Dinny as trip leader, as he was the only one who had been to the copper mines before. Phil had also spent the previous day sharing links with Dinny to websites about the trip, which was enough to make him 'The Expert'. So, in addition to making him wait for us at the parking area, we landed him with the responsibility of leading us all underground. Phil made it abundantly clear as we slogged up to the entrance that he had no idea where he was going, and we should not trust his route finding. We chose to ignore his pleas.

We had heard a rumour that the trip was hard-rigged, so we decided not to carry much gear with us to the entrance. We must have looked odd walking up the fell, as most of us were dressed in our brightly coloured oversuits, and Nat was wearing Peachey's high-vis gear, having forgotten his own oversuit.

After cooling down for a moment at Levers Water, we ventured underground. There were many colourful features to look at, which distracted us quite nicely from the rotting beams above. After a couple pitches and traverses, we found



A Colourful Bunch
Photo Credit: Mike Butcher



Alice enjoying the view
Photo Credit: Mike Butcher

some passages to explore. Some of these passages ended abruptly, overlooking what could only be described as an abyss. This was entertaining until you realised that what you were standing on was probably a thin layer of something that could easily become part of the abyss.

Although most of the route-finding was straight forward, there were a couple of places where we had to think about which way to follow. The easiest way to find the way on was to choose the route that looked least likely to result in death. Sometimes it was obvious which routes should be ruled out. Our

favourite no-go route was one that started with a lonely rope that hung from a bolt on the opposite side of a deep shaft to the passage we were in. The only possible way we could imagine getting across to it was by taking a running jump from the passage and praying you'd catch the rope. Even more strangely, the rope was only a few meters long, leaving tens of meters of nothing below. We had so many questions...How did it get there? Why?? After ruling that route out, we decided the dodgy loose slope was the most likely way on. This turned out to be the right way, albeit a bit awkward – particularly when we reached the pitch head. Below the final pitch, the passages were thankfully more pleasant. We explored all corners of this level, then exited the mine. As we were out early, we had plenty of time for an ice-cream and a swim in Coniston.

Gwen Tawy

Hunt to Shrapnel Exchange

13th May 2023

Dinny Davies, Dave Ottewell, Gwenllian Tawy

The club trip to Little Hull was a bit oversubscribed so Dinny, Dave and I decided to head somewhere different to ensure we could all get back to YSS in time for the annual dinner. It was a warm and sunny day, and Dinny taunted Dave and I as we walked up the hill in our oversuits. The heat soon got to me, but determined to prove Dinny wrong, I carried on in my oversuit and pretended I was operating at optimum temperature. I suspect my ruse failed when we arrived at Hunt Pot and I rushed to the running stream to drink like a parched dog. While I was rehydrating, Dinny decided he would rig Shrapnel while Dave and I would head down Hunt. I peered over the edge and decided Dave would probably do a better job at rigging than I. Seconds later I heard some squeals below the lip of the open pot. Apparently, the new rope we'd decided to use that day was 'very fast'. I soon found out that Dave wasn't wrong about the rope! The slippery rope and awkwardly placed bolts made rigging difficult, so I spent some time sitting in my harness enjoying a rainbow that

was visible in the waterfall's spray. After some faffing and praying, we both made it to the bottom safely; just in time to see Dinny rigging the way on. To get to the bottom of Shrapnel, you first ascend out of Hunt and then descend another two pitches. Unfortunately, we couldn't get to the very bottom on this day, as the route looked far too loose. We somehow ended up making convoluted derigging plans which involved me staying in the spray near the bottom of Shrapnel while Dave derigged the pitch into the bottom of Hunt. I then derigged the rest behind Dave. It was wetter than expected in Shrapnel, so one of the pitches was particularly unpleasant. The top pitch was surprisingly narrow, but roomy enough to prusik and derig safely. A quick but pleasant trip.

Gwen Tawy

Parys Mountain

20th May 2023

Mike Butcher (ULSA), Dinny Davies, Nadia Raeburn-Cherradi (ULSA), Alice Shackley, Rob Watson

I'd wanted to visit Parys Mountain on Anglesey ever since I saw some photos of it, about fifteen years ago. It was the largest copper mine in Europe during the 1780s and was first worked in the early Bronze Age, about 4000 years ago. Much of the mining in the 1780s was at or near the surface, and the huge open cast crater that remains, provides a unique landscape. Especially as the high mineral content and acidic water draining from the mine mean that there is still very little vegetation on the site. Historically there were two main mining companies, operating in the Parys Mine and the Mona mine respectively, which were both later connected underground, although the majority of the mining on the site was over by 1904.

I had known for some years that it was possible to arrange for a guided underground trip with the local mining enthusiasts, but it was only after Adele Ward visited last year, with the North York Moors Caving Club, that I actually tried to get in touch with someone to arrange a trip.



Overlooking the open cast crater
Photo Credit: Mike Butcher

After a few emails I finally arranged a guide for a trip on Saturday 20th May. So it was that Rob, Nadia, Alice, Mike, Rachel Turnbull, Keiran Appadoo (Kent UCC) & Gwen all met at my house for tea on the evening of 19th May. The evening progressed in normal fashion, with one of the guests becoming trapped in my "antique" table for 40 minutes, only being

released when Mr Butcher persuaded me to (reluctantly) go and get my car jack. The next morning, all bar Rachel and Keiran, made it to Anglesey, in time to meet our guide Tim at 11 o' clock.



Ready to head underground
Photo Credit: Mike Butcher

None of us had too much idea of what to expect underground, all we knew was that SRT gear would not be needed. This was good news, as the water in the mine is so acidic that it can easily damage caving gear. Tim unlocked the barrier to the site, and we all drove up and parked near the entrance to Parys mine. Prior to changing we had a quick detour to see the large open cast area and Tim told us a little about the history of the mine. Tim's plan was to go down Mona mine, then through the connecting drainage adit, and then to exit via Parys mine. We got changed by the cars, left our

keys in the small brick building that covers the entrance to Parys mine, and then wandered up and across the rocky landscape to Mona mine, which had an impressive concrete gate, hidden by a few pieces of rusty metal sheet.

Once the gate was unlocked, we scrambled down a short slope, and before long, we got to a large chamber with quite a few iron oxide stals. There were some impressively stacked walls of deads, many supported (or not?) by rotting timbers. We carried on through the mine via a varied selection of passages, climbs up, climbs down, crawls, chokes, skirting round deep shafts, handlines and wading. Tim was extremely knowledgeable and pointed out various interesting things along the route. He also told us more about how the mines used to be run, and how the miners often worked in pairs, having been granted the rights to work a particular section of the mine, called a "bargain".

The mine was covered in snottites, which I had heard about, but had never actually seen before. They were often in stalactite form, dripping from the ceiling, but there were also whole curtains of them over the passage walls. Apparently



Alice underneath some snottites
Photo Credit: Mike Butcher

snottites are a “microbial mat of single-celled extremophilic bacteria, which have the consistency of nasal mucus”. We also passed a few karabiners and iron bolts that had been deliberately left in pools on the floor, to show just how acidic the water in the mine was. We were all pretty happy that we had worn old kit, and did not have SRT gear with us!



Nadia in one of the drained passages
Photo Credit: Rob Watson

Many of the passages that we passed through had been completely underwater until 2003. This was because after most mining stopped, precipitation pits were still used to extract copper until the 1940s. They used to dam the mine, allowing copper compounds from the mine passages to dissolve in the water for several months, then once a year, the copper rich water was drained out through valves, into precipitation pits on the surface. Once this work stopped, the valves eventually corroded and gradually a large amount of water built up in the mine. In 2003 it was decided that the water needed to be pumped

out in a controlled manner, to avoid the dam eventually failing and all the water flooding out in one go. This de-watering work opened up many of the old passages for exploration, including the drainage adit between the Mona and Parys mines.

Once we got though into the Parys mine Tim showed us several passages that had really impressive blue crystals on the walls. He also took us to an area where bronze age miners had worked, about 30m below the surface. It is thought that they lit wood fires on the rock to heat it up, then poured cold water over it, causing it to crack. There was a fair selection of rounded rocks in the chamber that these early miners used to use as hand hammers. Eventually (after a trip of three or four hours) we emerged in the small brick building where we had left our car keys a few hours earlier. We wandered back to the cars, thanked Tim for the trip and got changed. We then parked in the main car park and had a walk around the whole area, then drove to a nearby beach to thoroughly wash all our kit.

It was a great day out, I'd definitely recommend it. Further details can be found here:
<https://www.parysmountain.co.uk/>

Dinny Davies



Mike admiring the hand hammers
Photo Credit: Rob Watson

Mendip Excursions

3rd – 4th June 2023

Speleosisters+ Weekend

It was a smaller gathering than usual, due to it being exam season for the students, but there was still plenty of enthusiasm for caving. We arrived at the Shepton Mallet in dribs and drabs on Friday night and tried to arrange ourselves into trips before bed. I ended up on the Upper Flood trip with Alice Shackley, and Sarah Parker (ULSA). As this is a trip that requires a leader, we were up early and at the Mendip Caving Group's hut by 10am to meet Bill. The walk to the entrance was pleasant and sunny.

The concreted entrance led to a climb down into the cave, where the long crawl soon began. Just when I was getting bored of crawling, we emerged at a junction where we joined the streamway. It was a relief to be walking again.



Neverland
Photo Credit: Alice Shackley

Soon enough, we reached a large boulder choke. Bill took over Alice, who was at the front, to lead us through the complex maze. We thrutched and clambered up and over boulders, eventually squeezing through a wet wallow, and emerging on the other side. From here, we largely followed our noses until we reached the rear entrance of Neverland. Bill had been involved in the discovery of Neverland, and it was great to hear about its history from him. Around the corner, we were instructed to remove our oversuits and clean our boots before entering Neverland. Quickly we were met by stunning white flowstone that glittered as our lights shone around the passage. At the end of the passage were the famous pork pie formations, named after their unusual shape. Alice took some photos before returning to the washing pool. At the pool, instead of returning the way we came, we crossed the pool to look at even more formations. By the time we had finished here I was pleased to return to my oversuit, as I was getting rather cold. We made good time on the return, so Bill showed us a

couple extra passages on the way out. A quick cup of tea at MCG and we were soon back at the Shepton.

We were up early again, and after some to-ing and fro-ing, Alice, Sarah and Nadia Raeburn-Cherradi (ULSA) and I settled on a through trip from Rod's Cave to Bath Cave. Sarah and Alice rigged the ladder out of Bath while Nadia and I sat at the entrance chatting. Once reunited we walked the short distance to Rod's. I happened to be underground first. Having

not read the description, I was following my nose and the polish. Sarah instructed me to cross a couple of deep pits and carry on in the passage towards the main chamber. Once in the chamber, Alice and Sarah dropped down towards the bottom, while Nadia and I traversed across, along the steep slope. The character of the cave reminded me of Eastwater. After going as far as we could, we returned to Alice and Sarah. At the very bottom, is a pit called the 'Bear Pit'. Alice and Sarah had wisely stayed away from here, but Nadia and I decided it didn't look as bad as they thought. We were wrong. Having made our way into the pit easily, getting out was another matter. After some huffing and puffing and assistance from Nadia, I finally made it out. Nadia quickly followed, but admitted she had at one point reached back for a non-existent chalk-bag! Finally, we climbed back into the Main Chamber, where we met Alice and Sarah.



Sitting in the Sun
Photo Credit: Alice Shackley

The route on was through a gravelly crawl to a classic Mendip-engineered climb. We popped out in a large rift near our ladder. Before exiting, we continued along the rift towards a dig called Colostomy. There was some faffing with the ladder on the way out, but we were soon out in the sunshine once more.

Gwen Tawy

RRCPC Doubs Trip

27th July to 5th August 2023

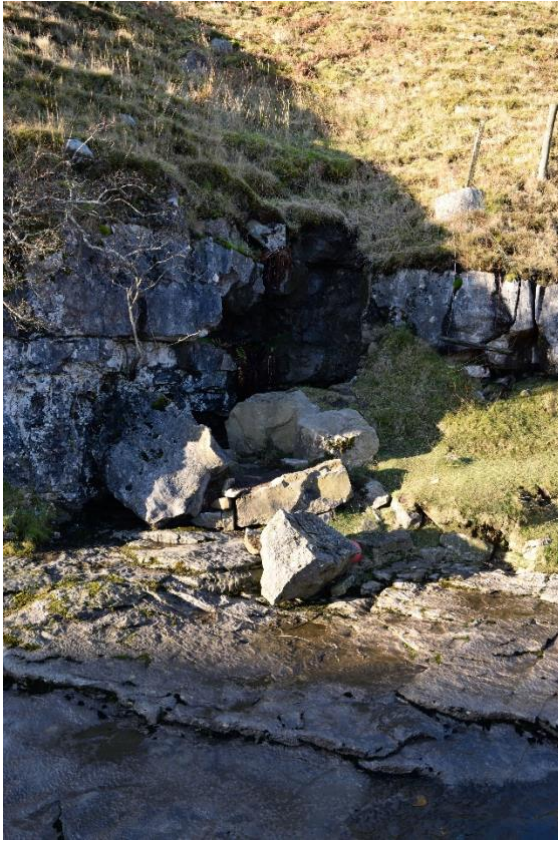
Paul Fox, Emma Key, the Lawton Family, David Loeffler, Bill Nix, Hannah Walker & Ian Walker

Eight Red Rose members (plus 2 kids) have just returned from a fantastic week caving in the Doubs region of France. We camped at a lovely campsite beside the river in Villersexel and enjoyed a number of trips in the area. For most of us the highlight of the week was a visit to Grotte de Milandre, just over the border in Switzerland. We met up with members of the Spéléo Club Jura who guided us on an excellent through trip and extended their hospitality with beers and a BBQ at their hut in the evening. A full report of our adventures should feature in the next Newsletter.

Many thanks to Bill Nix for organising a wonderful trip.

Emma Key

Wretched Rabbit



Wretched Rabbit after Collapse
Photo Credit: Ray Duffy

When Sam and I found a huge boulder blocking the entrance to Wretched Rabbit in March 2018, we set to and moved it out of the way. This rock became useful as an anchoring point for pinning the walls of the unstable cliff above the hole. We knew in 2018 that the whole entrance was a bit iffy and would require much more work than just the two of us could achieve.

Rolling onto 2023 and that work was programmed to start on 22nd April, and of course the weather decided to turn Ease Gill, bloody cold, rain and wind, hey ho! Andy Hall had arranged, with the extremely helpful farmer, Alan Middleton at Leck Fell House, to drop off our supplies on the other side of the gill so we could carry them over to Wretched's entrance. The team set off from Bull Pot Farm loaded down with digging implements, bags of sand and various vittles for the trudge over the fell, some faster than others.

On arrival at the cave there was a flurry of activity, some ferrying the raw materials across the extremely slippery streambed, others started the trench dig for the enormous pipe to sit in, and others just loafing – sorry, wall building.

There was a little holdup when we discovered the drill bits were the wrong size for the rebar, someone kindly went back to the farm for thinner bars. The scaffold and rebar was fitted to prop up the dodgy cliff that overhangs the cave. Meanwhile people were carrying large rocks for wall building to prevent the stream washing away the embankment we were constructing.

A tarpaulin was strung up on the opposite bank to give shelter for us and the tools, but by afternoon the weather had taken a turn for the better, a rare occasion at Ease Gill. In the meantime, a very substantial wall had appeared and the trench was moving forward, though without capping gear, it was left to the Sunday team to remove some of them and also carry the 5 metre length of tube from Leck Fell House to the stream.



Before and after the boulder moved
Photo Credit: Ray Duffy

On Tuesday, Ray did a solo trip over to remove the remaining rocks in the trench as the Sunday team had run out of battery power.



Hugh, Colin and Andy
Photo Credit: Ray Duffy

Saturday 30th April, a heavy team of Colin, Hugh, Andy, Sam and Ray enjoyed an unpleasant stroll over to Wretched Rabbit in pouring rain. Ray spent a while moving the shelter over to the dig and the others set about collecting gravel and digging the entrance slope to give the pipe a gentle gradient. The rain did not, as predicted relent, so by 3 p.m. we'd all had enough but had still made significant progress. It could have been helped had I remembered to pack the capping rods, doh!

Sam and I strode, well he did as I bimbled, over to Wretched Rabbit on a surprisingly dry day. Our objective was to widen the trench to pipe width and grade the slope to an even drop. With a little capping of the edges the first aim was achieved. Next, we started to prop up the roof with Sam building and me gofering with much mortar being delivered to a fast-walling Sam. There was still a lot to do on the left side of the entrance and we hadn't started on the right that looks more complex.



On the following Saturday, many of us were hiding from the Coronation fever and arrived at the entrance without any bunting whatsoever. While Ian, Hannah, Colin, and Andy sieved the pebbles to get lots of gravel to put around the tube, Sam got into the entrance and passed buckets of shit to me and Alan. After a lot of digging Sam managed to get a solid enough base to start on the right wall and most difficult side of the hole. There then followed lots of mortar mixing that was used to build a nice platform for the supporting wall on the right, excellent effort. Just before we broke for lunch the tube was offered up to the hole, measured and cut to the correct length in readiness for placing once the walling was finished. A good day of work by all involved and the entrance now looks as if it's getting safer. The off-cut from the tube may even come in handy for other entrances in the future, bargain!

Hannah "The Strong" Walker
Photo Credit: Ray Duffy

Back at the farm it was celebratory teas and coffees for all as the project seems to be coming together quite well.

Club Dinner day, 13th May, saw me, Sam and Toby set to with more wall building. Me, as 'the mortar man', Toby acting as general 'gofer' and Sam as 'director of works'. Sam was just pushing a large boulder in to wedge the roof slab up when a large flake fell off the slab, oops! Further pushing saw the left end of the roof drop a little so it could all end in disaster. Much stabilising walling was done but there's still a fair bit to complete before the tube can be put in place. We used the short piece of pipe to check clearances and left it in place when we departed for the festivities. Glorious day in the gill with sun and warmth for a change and very little wind, bargain!

On a beautiful May 20th the boys, me, Sam and Andy wound our way over to Wretched Rabbit to continue the walling continuum. I'd managed to con the Cambridge lot who were staying at the farm to carry some bags of cement over on their way to Pool Sink. It was decided that the hanging slab in the roof needed splitting and dropping, so I drilled several small holes vertically into the slab and then used a bigger drill to go into it horizontally. Hitting the slab with a lump hammer did not crack it. There then was a lot of drilling at different angles to weaken it even more and eventually with the help of hammer and chisel it dropped, perfect! Then with me mixing mortar, Andy 'gofering' and Sam cementing the retaining/supporting



Sam hard at work stabilising
Photo Credit: Ray Duffy

wall the team gradually progressed. The right-hand wall finally reached the height to support the large slab above, making the project a little nearer to completion, all that's left now is to do the same on the left and we'd be ready to fix the tube in place.



Sam supporting the roof on the right

Photo Credit: Ray Duffy

As we'd run out of ready-mix mortar, I bagged up lots of cement and left them outside the farm, with a note asking for people to carry them over to the cave, in hope that they would.

I managed to get two cavers to carry a couple of bags, but everyone is giving Ease Gill a wide birth as is usual when work needs doing. On Saturday 27th we finished up having to carry almost all the bags ourselves. Colin and Hugh dropped off their bags and then headed over to Aygill for a jolly. Sam, Andy, Alan and I were left to get on with the walling effort, Sam cementing the wall, Alan, Andy and me taking turns mixing mortar and generally labouring. Many rocks were delivered to the front for Sam to use as he asked for different sizes and shapes. There were heavy sandbag carries from the store place further up the gill but we eventually did break for lunch at 1 p.m. and sat in the sun sorting out the problems of the world from bent politicians to overpopulation and everything in between. By the end of play the right-hand wall was finished and the final section on the left was started, then we ran out of cement so it was time to clean up and pack.

Another Saturday and the three of us carried the remaining bags of cement over, Johnny had kindly delivered several bags on Thursday, what a star! So began the mixing, carrying, rock choosing and of course Sam walling. After the lunch break where the discussion ran from horse race protesters to pathetic football fans, it was back to the grind. Again, we ran out of cement but fortunately we also virtually ran out of sand and really didn't need any more, well maybe a little for the lintels. Having checked with the small tube it seemed we would have to trim a little off some bits of rock for the finished article to fit into the entrance but that would be no-biggy. The weather gods played ball again with a beautiful hot sunny day and just enough breeze to keep pesky insects at bay but we're going to have next week off as we're all buggered and sick of the walk, even if it's in a stunning area.



Sam propping up left side of entrance
Photo Credit: Ray Duffy

The team were having a weekend off, but I went over to do some drilling and chiselling to knock off some of the bits that were stopping the tube getting under the roof. An hour and a half later I had the small tube fitted under the first overhang, result! Some of the large boulder will have to be removed to get the big tube in place but that looked doable. Still the weather held, hot and windy so no bugs and a dry walk on parched bog.



New entrance tube
Photo Credit: Ray Duffy

A large team set off for Wretched on 17th June. Sam was a late arrival but others present were Andy, Johnny, Hugh (both shot off for a dig somewhere), Colin, James, Sandra, Pete, and Toby. After a couple of sizing tries with the big pipe and a lot of drilling, hammering and swearing, we eventually got the big pipe situated well enough to start putting gravel around it. Sam did his usual walling trick to support the big boulder and also the right-hand side. A couple of lintels were placed over the cave end of the pipe and then lots of filling and gravel was in-filled. By the time the committee meeting was approaching we'd got a fairly good coating around the tube and quite a bit of back-filling completed.

Unfortunately, the boys did a bad job at the cave end of the tube and Sam had to dig out their mess, including the piece of wood, to start again with proper lintels bedded into solid stuff. What a waste of all our time, too much rushing.

I managed to get two lintels placed and some of the gravel in between, with a bit of help from two passing cavers who did some riddling to make more gravel for us. Andy did a lot of rock retrieval to help build the wall on the right side of the tube, while I was supplying Sam with mortar. By the end of play we had pretty much lintel-ed over the tube and were starting to fill in the gaps between them. There's still a bit of filling around the tube inside to do but we ran out of cement. We should be able to wall up around the tube entrance and finish off gravel-ing the tube, then it's time to start building the buttress up to the dangerous cliff face to make the entrance feel safer, hopefully!

On Sunday 2nd July a fairly large team of Hannah, Ian, Chris, Sam, Andy and myself made our way over a windswept and showery fell to the entrance. I managed to get enough support for the last cross-piece lintels, while Sam excavated the lintels further in to build a supporting cliff wall. In the meantime the team were providing masses of gravel and rocks for filling in around the tube and wall building. By early afternoon we'd reached a point where the scaffold poles could be removed so Andy weighed in with the angle-grinder. Suddenly the whole affair looked a lot less like a building site and more like a



The Sunday Team
Photo Credit: Ray Duffy

cave entrance. With a buttress wall on the right and the start made on the terracing above as well as all the lintels covered with large rocks it's looking good. We'd been battered by strong wind and a few very heavy showers but at least it stayed dry during our lunch break. Some of the now unnecessary bars and clamps were returned to the farm but we're going to need a bigger team to cart all the stuff back once we've completed the work.



Sam and Ian discuss the finer points
Photo Credit: Ray Duffy

With a showery forecast for Saturday 8th July, only I made the effort to walk back over to Wretched. I got there and levelled out the top of the wall. Fortunately, Andy arrived later and we started filling in the space behind the wall with gravel and small rocks. We were trying to level up to the wall height so that another layer of wall could be added next weekend. Sure enough at about 2 p.m. the rain arrived and with the already humid conditions it became really unpleasant so we decided to leave before getting soaked again. However, we were just as wet inside our suits as outside, sauna!

Hopefully, with the BBQ next weekend we might have a few more volunteers to haul rocks and gravel up to the pile.

Far too soon after Saturday's effort I was back with Sam to do it all again. Disappointingly, I'd given the cavers staying at the farm some poor instructions. Instead of carrying back items from the entrance we didn't need, they'd brought back all the tools we did need, leaving the scaffold bars we didn't. Oh well that's life, they did have good intentions. Two of the other lads decided to give us a hand and carried most of the tools back over and then helped humping boulders for Sam to use on his new design. Thankfully the same two valiantly returned to the farm with a big scaffold pole each, well done lads!

It was hot work providing Sam with all the rocks, gravel and assorted fill for his walling effort, but it progressed well until we both ran out of steam, which was just as well with thunderstorms predicted to arrive later in the afternoon. I just made it back to Ingleton before the lightening started striking and the floods began. As an aside, we'd got a nice pile of gravel at the downstream end of the pool outside the



Sam at the ever-increasing wall
Photo Credit: Ray Duffy

cave but the Saturday thunderstorm had managed to wash it all away, some flood. Let's hope the Sunday storm doesn't undo our sterling effort, or we'll be back to square one. From a dry fell walk to the cave it is now full of pools and streams running full pelt, what a difference a day makes.

'The Big Push', was to start on Saturday and of course the weather took a turn for the worse, with thunderstorms. I set off earlier than most in the hope of getting some building material ready for Sam to get going on his walling-fest. However, Sam was a late arrival so as more of the team deposited fill and rocks I had to start walling by myself to keep from being deluged by the quantity of stuff arriving. Ian got into Sam's 'polo-mint' designed walling and started helping and then the maestro arrived, phew!

We had quite a team with some unexpected visitors like Paul Thomas, and soon the rocks were flying into the wall, but it got a bit harder as we had to forage further afield to get the right sort for our finicky wall builders. Part way through the day I took off to find some vegetation to make the wall look a little more natural and this was made even easier when we used the stored turfs to plant on the wall. Maybe in a few months the grass, flowers and moss will look a little more normal and grow to hide the construction work.



Sam's 'polo-mint' design for the upper walling
Photo Credit: Ray Duffy



The retaining wall nearing completion
Photo Credit: Ray Duffy

We had to contend with some torrential downpours while trying to continue working but the team soldiered on regardless. Well, some did hide in the tubes in an attempt to stay a little drier. By the end of the session the job was almost finished, on the outside at least; now it's just a matter of tidying up the inside end of the tube. What an epic! Well done to all the people who turned up to heave rocks, carry buckets of fill, forage for boulders and generally have a bloody good time, especially Hannah for entertaining us with her 'wild swim' in the pool. Eventually, all the material not needed for the interior work was returned to the farm so there's very little left for us to lug back, yeah!

Saturday 22nd July, boy did it rain, that fine drizzle that soaks everything. We did, however, get to see the two Hen Harriers as we trudged across the fell and by the time Sam and I got over to the gill the stream was pounding. It got even deeper as the

day went on. Sam was ensconced at the bottom of the tube doing the filling around the inside and me outside supplying the mortar and rocks. The good thing was that the tube is at such a jaunty angle that it was possible to slide stuff to him with ease. We almost finished the job, well nearly, except for the fact that the entrance was so drippy that the mortar was washing out as fast as Sam was putting it in. We tried to find a place to eat our lunch, but every overhang was dripping, so we ended up laid out under a very low bedding to avoid most of the soaking rain. Not the best situation after weeks of glorious sunshine, but after all it is British Summertime. Back at the work-face, Sam eventually got to a point where, on a dry day, we could complete the tidying up and declare the cave officially 'Open'! At last, we would have our weekends to ourselves again, hurrah! On the long walk back I took all the used bags of sand and cement so all that remains are a spade, trowel and some mixing buckets to show for all the work that's been done. The place looks barren without all the regalia that used to surround it.



Sam outside the finished outside with water lapping nearby
Photo Credit: Ray Duffy

Ray Duffy

Blast from the Past: Javelin, 2004 Onwards

How could you miss Javelin shakehole? 20 foot deep, 20 foot wide, with a 30-foot tree growing out of it. Lionel Rice and I inspected it while looking along the Bull Pot Valley. The shakehole was full of rubbish, which was removed. Amongst the debris we found parts of a Jowett Javelin. This had been stripped down by the farmers lad, to make the vehicle much more mobile over the fields, in the old days, before the Red Rose took the farm over.

In 2006, Lionel and I, had seven trips down Javelin, introducing quite a few people to the "joys of muck shifting". During this time, Lionel discovered a crawl, into a man-sized rift. I was about to follow when "wham," a three-foot slab fell out of the wall, between the two of us. As we were under the tree roots at this time, we took some time stabilizing the entrance before squeezing our way down the rift. A rather awkward eight-foot drop came to the first blockage.

Work on this proved difficult, but luckily bits of the old metal, Lancaster Hole ladder were hanging about the farm, so they didn't miss a six-foot length.

In 2007, a keen member joined the "Javelin Dig," also a capper, Simon "Bling" Jobling. He liked what he saw and after his first cap cleared the blockage. The "red mist" descended on him, and April became a mad-capping month. Unfortunately, he had an unusual accident on another capping job when he stood on the reinforcing mat to hold the caps in as he hammered the firing pin. He crawled out of the cave with bruised feet.

This slowed up the dig somewhat, but the accident seemed to encourage cavers to call in for a chat on their way to the bigger holes further along the fell. We usually managed to enrol them to pull out a bucket or two while chatting. Apart from Ian "Eccles" Carruthers who called in as I was levering a large pile of boulders in the floor. He had just sat down for a chat as I gave the boulder a heave. The floor of the chamber dropped a foot!! Eccles went pale and galloped out of the shakehole. Lionel, who did not know of Eccles's escape from the collapse of Peg Leg Pot, wondered why he left so suddenly.

In 2008, a couple more cappers, Paul Windle and Johnny "Braindead" Baker, joined the throng as it was near the farm. We slowly worked our way down and eventually came to a 15-foot climbable pitch. At the bottom was a narrow five-foot streamway. Lionel and I squeezed through to where the passage was blocked by an eight-foot clay wall. Lionel tried to climb it, but it was too slippery. He then drove a crowbar in at head height and a hole appeared through which he could see into a small chamber. We said we'd return after our holidays. When we returned, the 15-foot pitch was filled with water and remained full at the time of writing, 14 June 2009. Is it still flooded?

Jim Newton (Edited by Dave Creedy from Jim's 2004 Diary)

Distinct Feelings of Déjà vu In Dracolaki with Dangerous Denis

12th September 2004

Dalek & Denis, Richard Bendal (WRPC), Phil Parker (WRPC), Jim Stevenson, & Roy

It all began with a good breakfast in Anapolis, in Crete. We were staying at 'Poppy's' Hotel for part of the duration of our expedition this year. Jim Stevenson had done the usual & organised this 2nd expedition with more cavers than before, from both RRCPC & WRPC clubs. So here we were. A motley assortment of bodies with one thing in mind. Find More Cave!

Right then, when the going gets tough, the tough gets going! We've heard it all before. This time we aimed to make it a positive result. We had scanned over The Heraklion Club's updated Dracolaki Survey last night at their Bunkhouse. Chrissy, Nicholas, Adonais and 2 others had shown their interest in us, and we weren't about to disappoint them. There'd be an Athens Symposium next year, i.e., in 2005. Seven of us set off to The Meadows in the 2 cars that we'd hired from 'Blue Sky'. Hil n' Lil were dropped off to go Gorge Walking. It was 11.40 when I set off with my Camelbac Sac and kit, and I arrived at the cave entrance by 12.30. We had 4 pitches to go up, which had previously been rigged by 'Heraklion'. Got down about 1pm.

Phil Parker got up first and when I got up I rigged it for Roy on a 30' ladder. The next 15m, and Denis got up to say it was 6mm string! Following on up into a rift but we were told that it was the wrong way. Got back to a chamber and Jim also returned from the narrow passage. I went in, got to traverse on ledges, chimney up and then crawl in a roof passage to another chamber and 3rd pitch rope. Richard was now up in the roof above me and Denis and I free-climbed up to bypass the 3rd. A narrow passage led to the 4th pitch and a holdless section. Denis got up but I nearly fell down on my 2nd attempt. A rope was tied off and I prussiked up. Then from here, we went on down to a free-climb and into a descending passage to a junction.

Right and up to a high passage. Saw a sump and dipped our feet in it. We came back and zig-zagged our way round to a duck. Across a lake and step up to reach big holes going down. The free-climbing was awkward, yet we had to free-climb more to go up/down and over gravelly bits to reach the last 'Huey' Sump. Retracing back to the duck, the time was now 4.15. We would try to be out in about 2 hours, as our lights wouldn't last much longer than that. Everyone else, i.e., Jim, Roy, Richard & Phil were going out. Denis and I opted to stay a bit longer! After a short time, we decided enough was enough. So, as we started free-climbing up a wide and horrible aven, realising that this wasn't the way out, we ended up going back and forth over this bad step to check the way on out.

"Denis, haven't we been this way before?" I said. "I can't remember which way we came in!" We must have gone back and over this same spot several times without success! Denis even considered a very dangerous climb up, to go on. We had to get our act together as it was now 6.15 and it'd be getting dark outside soon. So back through a low bit and duck (the 1st of 2) and re-joined the two dividing passages. Up and up to gain the climb I recognised. Then a short scramble to the 4th pitch.

Got out by 7.30, and 10 minutes later got changed and were away. It was dark by 8pm in the meadow. By now I couldn't see owl, as my light had died and I had to totally rely on Denis's! A half hour later, I suggested to move along up right for 100m. This took us over scree and rocks for the next 1.5 hours. I did not recognise the route, so Denis continued this way. The walk to the entrance would have taken us about an hour and I knew that we were going to be very late, or not arrive at all, for our evening meal. Up more scree. Denis fell and twisted his ankle and I cut my right knee and right elbow. I also think I strained a tendon in my left knee!

Eventually there was a long slope downhill to the road. Followed this down and into a village or hamlet. We asked at a Tavern/Restaurant for a phone and a taxi. It was no good! We walked further to a house from where a black dog was barking by a fellow in a black Toyota Pickup. We got our lift and arrived back at our hotel for 9.40. Eva paid our €20 fare, and we ate and drank until 1.15am. Later that day Denis and I would go down to The Sweetwater Beach and enjoy a Siesta & Swim, as that was all that we were just about good for, due to our injuries!

Robert Bialek (Dalek)

Sharon's Quintessential Favourite

28th November 1987

Dalek & Sharon Kelly

Although I have been down this pot 8 times now and 5 to the bottom, I have one tale to tell that is particularly memorable. It concerns Sharon Kelly, who always showed an avid interest in just about all the hard pots that I was involved in. She'd been down ones like Gingling, Hammer, King, Langcliffe, Brown Hill, Spectacle, Crescent, Strans Gill, etc. Now this one was mentioned several times in the past and became a much talked about trip!

One day, at work, we decided to tame the beast! No one else dared to venture down on this day, and it was up to me to sort the tackle out. Up to this point I'd only bottomed it once with Mike Cooper in May of this year, so I knew exactly what obstacles were involved. My first two trips were only down to the 5th and 3rd pitches back in 1983 & 1984.

So, on Saturday of 28th November at 6 am, I had to wake Sharon up. Muesli cereal followed by sausage sandwiches and tea were the order of the day. We got away at 7.30. The gear was picked and packed yesterday. It was a beautiful clear but icy cold day. I'm glad we had our hoods and gloves on for the walk up from Skirfare parking spot, by the quarry.

Got down entrance for 9am. No problems save for 2nd pitch rigging. The piton at the pitch head had proved awkward to reach when trying to adjust the length of knot. I got most annoyed at this point to the point of losing my temper but for Sharon's sweet talking, that persuaded me to see things in a calmer frame of mind.

Got to the 4th pitch bypass and down a rope that was already there, by sliding down hand over hand. The Squeeze, a key shaped slot, proved most eager to hold me in its vice-like grip. My chest got stuck fast and only Sharon's leg pulling helped me out with difficulty. She showed me that it was easily possible by sliding through, right hand side down. I also had to use my Petzl Head Torch, it being too tight with battery and helmet on! Once we got down to floor level, we had to get past a calcite barrier, aptly named "The Skydiver", which brought us to a low bend "Coitus Corner". From here, began the lead up to "The Crux" moves of the pot. It is best accomplished by assuming a horizontal attitude and staying that way, about 6' off the floor, past a couple of bends. I got in difficulties when past the first bend (left hand side down), because I'd let my legs drop, for fear of kicking Sharon, who was close at hand! I tried thrutching through again, almost making myself sick through the effort.

Once at The Crux we had to drop down 8' to the floor where stal again, blocked the way forward. Once down we had to get passed the first bend to be able to turn around and face the way on. Alternating between crab-walking, stooping and crawling to where the passage lifted. Traversing was the only way forward, past more stal blockages. Eventually squeezing and crawling onto calcite ledges to the 5th pitch, we free-climbed or handlined our way down. The best way by far now, was to drop down as low as possible and follow the path of least resistance to the 6th pitch. Down past a small ledge and then a short ascending traverse, and over a chockstone got us to the fine 7th. Once down, "The Wet W Bends" was

best tackled by dropping left hand side down, headfirst, into the water, leaving us facing the correct way to get past the right bend. I found a watch in the pool at the far end. It was a waterproof one but had stopped working. The climb up the 15' rope provided, to gain the "Fly Crawl" was easy. The crawl wasn't so! Sharp grainy calcified dams and stal impeded what might otherwise have been an easy crawl. Soon a large ledge was reached that overlooked the splendour of Bridge Hall. Again, we used a rope already present as a handline down. Soon after a short 20' pitch over boulders (handline again) got us down to a muddy floored chamber. Climbing up over a col reached the head of the 40' "Fault Climb". This is muddy and really does require the use of a handline, also present, to cross the open bit in the middle! The last pitch (no. 11) brought us to the bottom of a bouldery slope in Ghormenghast Chamber.

When Sharon didn't insist on a quick retreat, I got quite interested in looking down the unstable hole in the floor! This went some way down, about 40' or more to where I'd be risking it if I pushed into a slot and tried to reach a fissure some distance away.

Departed at 3pm. Found the Crux to be reasonably negotiable if I squeezed upwards in 3 stages. That is getting off the floor, passing the mid-point, and a final effort to reach the top, by taking my time over it. Then it was horizontal effort. The tackle bags stayed by the floor as it was the easiest way to pull them along on our extended drag cords. Except, when I got too far beyond the last bend, I realised the bag wanted to stay put. I wished that the bags could have walked themselves round or that I could move mine by remote control. Sharon thought much the same and was glad when I came back into view again.

The Squeeze wasn't as bad on our return. Going through on our left-hand sides and so facing the same wall as on the way in. It was difficult to get the legs horizontal as they just waved around in the air, the roof ledges being out of reach! The last obstacle (in my view) in this pot, was the 6m rope climb out. Easy on the descent but as it was a wide and holdless section near the bottom, and a narrow trench like take-off at the top this made it all the more strenuous. As I handlined up to the narrow bit my lamp battery (an FX5) just didn't want to follow me. I was there 30' up and not wanting to back off, yet inches from the edge! So, I got down to a wide ledge and this time got myself at full stretch to jam my hand into a crack, while I faced lefthand side up. Having to let go of rope entirely now so as to lunge for the ledge above me and pull up entirely on my arms! I couldn't rerig the rope for Sharon. There were no naturals or bolts, so the next best thing was to hold the line fast, over the narrowing of the ledge. Sharon got up easily and in complete safety due to this action.

Derigged the 3rd, with Sharon following behind in "The Meanders". When I got out I started on the cheese, meat and pickle sarnies I was so glad I'd brought down. I could hear Sharon cussing and moaning about her tackle bag just as she was almost out of the awkward bit. She'd gotten into a huff over her helmet, then battery, and finally her bag snagging just once too many times. Both of us enjoyed our short snack. The draught down here, below the 2nd pitch was on the cold side and we were keen to get moving again. Sharon got up first and helped me pull the bags up once I'd got up.

Exit made at 9.20pm, to a cloudy evening, yet a dry one! The night was warmer than the last time we were out here. Of course, both of us were elated at doing the trip. Me especially, since it was my 2nd time to the bottom.

Got back to the car for 10pm. Quickly guzzled the can of ice-cool Coke and later, the can of beer. Made it back to The Crown for 10.30ish. Sharon tripped over the door threshold, stumbling inside as if she was knackered (she was!), to the cheer of members already there! Got down 2 or 3 pints before closing time, then we had a can or two once we got back to The Dump. Parrot asked us if we could book him in for the night as their CPC hut was full of AGM remnants. He had no food, so we finished my sausages together and also toast with more tea. What a great finish to a grand day out!!



Sharon Kelly
Photo Credit: Dalek

Robert Bialek (Dalek)

Dalek Saves Doctor, Who Nearly Died

July 1986

Dalek & Bruce Pickering

It all began when I was asked by Bruce if I could show him the classic caves of Wales & take photos as well. So, we went down in his Landrover on the Friday and stayed in the cottage at Whitewalls. The first trip was:

Darren Cilau: 9 hours 5th July 1986

Down the entrance at about 11.30. It took us 1h 30m to negotiate the entrance series of 520m of passage involving tightish bits and going past 2 inlets on the right. It wasn't so easy when one had a large ammo box a piece and a long tripod to take through. At the start (60m in) was an awkward bit, "The Vice", a slot at waist level. Later, there were the Z & S bends and low down a section with boulders in the roof. Beyond the 2nd inlet the going got easier until the 5 squeezes: two high up, The T-Slot & Trickle in the Ear & final one out, near stream level.

Turning left to go up a hand press and oxbow to regain a boulder passage and slope where straight ahead at the top stood a tall block, hiding a passage that was low and parallel with the wall that led into the 1st choke, going downhill. Walked in the Main Passage (through taped off muddy pools) for 300m to "The Wriggle" and then another 320m to a Y Junction

with Misfit passage (starts out as a traverse, which we did by mistake). 30m left of this Y a boulder slope up left to a "Big Chamber Far From The Entrance" was met. Right up a scree slope and into a series of crawls, traverses and more sandy squeezes until we popped out into another boulder slope going downwards. Passed the 2nd choke in turn and got down a massive boulder slope into "Preliminary Passage" and to the 65' pitch, that led us up into the roof level passages. Walking, stooping and then a climb down a 15' drop that was awkward with only one decent hand hold to go for. Then immediately a traverse around The 70' Pit to a slope then a dug out crawl to a climb down to a sloping passage to where there was a rope climb down (knots on the rope). Another passage to the left and a 2nd rope climb down (12') to regain "White Passage". This being a very large passage where a dump of four Rocket Tubes were stored containing food and cooking equipment and a Karrimat. We left our boxes further on in "The Time Machine", supposedly 30m (100') wide at its widest entry point! Passing "Red River Passage" (going sharply upwards) on the right. It took us 5 hours to here, so decided to call it a day. It was just as well for it took 3 hours to get out. The entrance crawl was 1h 15m this time.

Darren Cilau II: 12h 40m 6th July 1986



Bruce by the Crown Jewels
Photo Credit: Dalek

An early start at 10.00 this time. Took a small ammo box for brewing up at "White Passage". Just over an hour in but still 3 hours to "White Passage". Brewed up over half hour, and then began our Photo Foray. Photos of Bonsai Streamway, The Crown Jewels (up in the roof), Crystal Inlet, The Bonsai Tree & a couple on the rope climbs. 4 hours to exit but entrance itself was 2 hours due to awkwardness of both ammo boxes, tripod, and knackered elbow and knee joints due to grit inside my wetsuit.

Exit made at 10.30pm to a lad waiting for us at entrance.

7th July 1986

Took a day off touring around Chepstow, got the entrance key and found our car park spot to camp overnight.

Otter Hole: 14 hours 8th July 1986

Up at 9.00. Breakfast and state of readiness by 11.30. Found and arrived at entrance by 12.00. Down for 12.15, and negotiated the muddy entrance series over 1h 15m.

Sump/eyehole was open and a walk through was possible. Another 3h 15m to reach the formations. Took straw chamber pictures and then moved to a small inlet further on where Bruce took some more pictures. Spent an hour at Straw Chamber. Two brewing sessions were taken, taking a chance using my Carricook Fuel Tablets. Photos of small grotto and straws were taken where each one crawled out from under a Drapery.

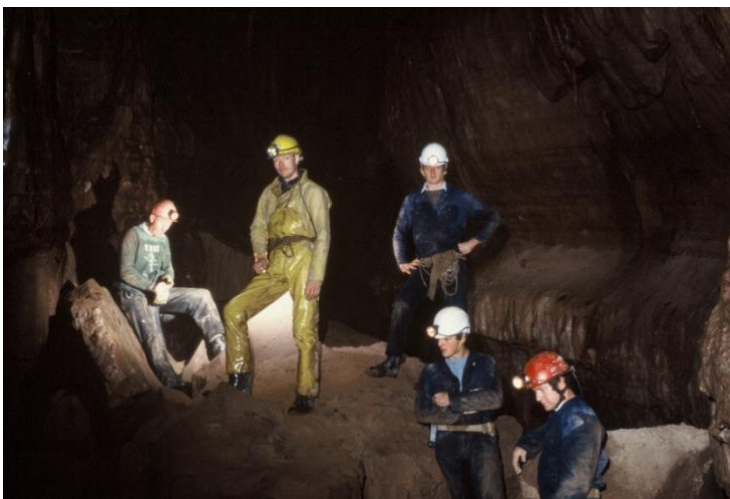


Bruce having a cuppa in Otter Hole
Photo Credit: Dalek

The sump opened again at 00.55 and we were there at 01.20. Exit made at 02.50.

9th July 1986

Another day of R & R so that we were ready for our South Wales Trip.

OFD: Cym Dwr to Top Entrance: 9hrs 10th July 1986

Bruce, Old Dr Rodney & 3 cavers from Devizes in Cwm
Dwr Jama, OFD
Photo Credit: Dalek

Again, we had permission and a key to gain entry from The Club. Trouble was I wasn't so sure of the whole way through since I hadn't done it for a while, and I'd only done it once before. So, when 4 others from Devizes turned up; 3 being young men and the other, presumably their leader, an old Doctor, wearing tattered looking woollies and boots, I assumed that he knew the way better than I did. He said he'd done it before, and since he was a member of SWCC I trusted his memory more than I did mine!

So, Rodney & Co, Bruce and I entered the system at 12.30. It took Rod 2 hours to get us into Cwm Dwr Jama Pasasage (I waited half hour for them). We took our photo boxes in yet took only the one photo of the group in here, in Cwm Dwr Jama.

The fun began when we took the wrong boulder choke and we all freaked out here as it was a VDLB (Very Dangerous Loose Boulders). So retraced and took the correct way on across the stream to another boulder choke. A loop route up and then back down again to gain the top of this boulder choke! Back again! This time in at bottom and a drop down to a streamway to take the obvious route. We were temporarily lost now in "The Big Shacks". Didn't go left to "Big Shacks II". Found "The Smithy". Dropped down the side of this big hole and took another climb down into the "Cwm Dwr" Streamway. Found a dead end at a junction, so we climbed up again to a dry bypass and round to "The Confluence" Area. It was now 5pm, so time was getting on and we still had some way to go.

Along through "Marble Showers" and negotiating the deeply potholed floor it became evident that since Rod was falling in most of the time and getting very cold and slow in progress, that Bruce and I should get out to alert the rescue services. Found the climb out of the streamway due to a rope hanging down 100 yards further on. After passing 4 chockstones in the rift we then climbed up on tiny ledges on the right-hand wall to gain a boulder bridge. Left into the passage at the top, then immediate right to cross the rift passage again. This was Salubrious Passage, where we took the wrong right-hand turn and went left to gain a pitch that led back down to the streamway!! So retraced back and went to next junction which was a high and dry sandy passage to The Trident & Judge. Second retrace back to Salubrious Passage (same calcited floor) where we climbed up and over some boulders to gain a large passage. Now on the right and up through a steep boulder choke and right at the top was Gnome Passage. Here our lights grew really dim, (didn't charge 'em as we thought this'd be a nice and quick trip!) and we walked, then crawled round in an ever-desperate induced frenzy! Recognised the sound of a water drip and so found the correct way on and out by 9.30!

Called out The Rescue at 9.45, i.e., Toby in The Copper Beech in Abercraf as he had left a message for us. Can't remember what the message was but it had something to do with a practice Rescue, the following day!

SWCRO in OFD: 5hrs 11th July 1986

We decided to help when we were told that not enough people had arrived yet. Got changed and went back in a party of 3 to take hot drinks down to the stretcher hauling team at the 95' pitch above The Confluence. A tall lean lad, Les led us there at 2.46am!

Bruce stayed in the Landrover with Toby as an intermediate communications control link. That is Underground/Surface/HQ.

It was a 15 mins jaunt down to Maypole Passage. Then dry walking and a climb/traverse down past many junctions via Midnight Passage to Moonlight Chamber. Here we stopped, had a drink and helped hauling on the 3 ropes. The thin white was the Jockey rope – one person lining the ascending helper. The rest of us split up to pull on the thick red and thick white ropes attached to the stretcher. When level with the ledge we all changed to pull on

thick white to get bottom of stretcher up. We passed Roddy along very slowly due to narrow passages, boulders and climbs. The alternative was to climb over the helpers and pass stretcher to front again. I was feeling rather tired by 6am when we stopped to feed him in a large chamber. Slept for 20 mins when a girl who fed him also came over to me with a curry and a Mars bar. I was told that I should make for the exit, so I got out for 7.37am. Gwent CRO then took over, and I was told that 70 people were involved, and that 47 were down for most of the time. The exit was at 10.54am and took over 12 hours to complete. There were 3 TV crews ready to interview at each location, but I avoided them and went to bed! Apparently, Roddy recovered later but whether he went caving again, I don't know. The 3 younger lads no doubt, had this tale to tell their mates whenever they went caving again. I met the silver haired controller Paul Squill again, in the pub, many years later when I returned in 2003. 'Nuff Said

Robert Bialek (Dalek)



Bruce under a Drapery in Otter Hole
Photo Credit: Dalek

Round the World by Exercise Bike – To Infinity and Beyond

In the Summer 2022 RRCPC Newsletter I had got to New Zealand by a place quite like northern UK! By June I was at the top and ready for USA, doing 100m a week on the exercise bike in the hall, reading or enjoying TV/radio!

USA - Set off from San Francisco following the Trans Continental Railway and its tale via a book and YouTube through the Rocky Mountains. Passing the Donner Pass where the unfortunate Donner family ended up eating each other (no not Donner Kebabs, sorry had to slip that in). A very interesting part of the World for history etc.

August at the Great Salt Lake Desert; 100mile of mostly straight road, and by it, a railway line to Salt Lake City. Here, to avoid death I had an imaginary back up team for drinks refreshment and cooling off!

By August I had diverted to Denver, then on endless roads going to infinity passing Kansas City, St Louis down to Kentucky to visit the longest cave in the World (so far)-Mammoth /Flint Ridge system. An area of pleasant woodlands rolling hills and a cave system like Duncan Baldwin RRCPC 1960s said was just like big bits of Lancaster Hole i.e., a very good cave. Also has oddly some very tight links and hard long trips.

Onwards to the Appalachian Mountains; More and more caves. Moonshine to drink through Knoxville Richmond Washington to New York, the Big Apple. By 13 Jan 2023 I could have gone home (having done 17000 miles; the lower limit for cycling round the world) but carried on as still more latitude with good roads.

So, on Northeast up to Canada - on to Newfoundland (a very big place), to the most Easterly point - St Johns. Then, imaginary plane to Iceland!! Crossing Iceland is spectacular. Then another plane to most Westerly point of Ireland, then up to Larne near Belfast, then Scotland, and back home doing the last bit of +19000 miles by real bike by June 11 2023 - over 3 years.

By luck I did not get Deli Belly, heatstroke, the trots, food poisoning, flu, nor run over. Also, it only cost £5 for batteries and a bit of oil for the trip. Now I am off round Ireland and beyond. Although, my cycle trip was nothing compared to the achievements of an old, retired couple across the road from me, who built from the ground up a large two-storey house during covid and have been living there for over a year before I finished cycling!!!

Andy Walsh

Library Additions: February 2023 – August 2023

Journals:

British Caving Association: British Caving No. 36 (July 2019)
Cave Diving Group: Peak District Sump Index (1994)
Cave Rescue Organisation: Newsletter No. 6 (1984),
Rescue '23 (2022)
Council of Northern Caving Clubs: Newsletter Issue 13 (May 2023)
Craven Pothole Club: Record Nos. 149-150 (Jan, April 2023)
Derbyshire Caving Association. Newsletter - The Derbyshire Caver. No. 157 (Spring 2023)
Descent: Nos. 291 (April May 2023), 292 (June/July 2023), 293 (August/September 2023)
Grampian Speleological Group: Bulletin Fifth Series Vol. 4 No. 4. (March 2023)
Irish Caving Club: Newsletter Nos 2-3. (1967-70)
Irish Speleology Vol. 1 No. 1 (Sept. 1965)
National Caving Association: Speleoscene No. 12 (May/Aug 1994)
Northern Cavern and Mine Research Society: Transactions (1962-63)
Northern Pennine Club: Newsletter: Jan, Mar, May, Sept. 1966, Nos. 23-25.
RRCPC: Newsletter: Vol. 59 No. 3 (November 2022)
Vol. 60 Nos. 1-2 (Spring/Summer 2023)
Newssheet: No. 388-393.
University of Bristol Speleological Society: Proceedings: Vol. 18 No. 1, Vol. 22 Nos. 2-3,
Vol. 23 Nos. 1, 3, Vol. 24 Nos. 2-3.
Weald Cave and Mine Society: News of the Weald No. 47 (November 2002)
Wm. Pengelly Cave Studies Trust: Newsletter No. 88 (Spring 2003)
Yorkshire Ramblers Club: The Yorkshire Rambler Issue 14 (Winter 2000)

Other Publications:

Caves – Exploring New Zealand's Subterranean Wilderness. (2017) Marcus Thomas - et al

Sheet Surveys:

Manga Pot - India (1970)
Beterh Cave - Darla Ghat, H.P. India (1970)
Batal – H.P. India (1970)
Darla Ghat, H.P. India (1970) +2 Unknown caves

Changes for easier access to the 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 or log out any publication they either borrow or browse in situ.

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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