RED ROSE CAVE AND POTHOLE CLUB

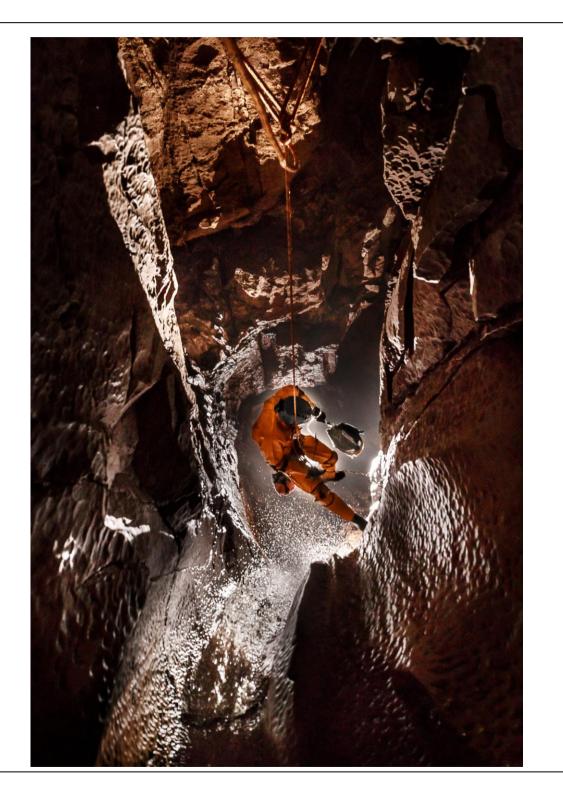


NEWSLETTER



Vol 59 No 1

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Winner of Giles Barker Award 2022

Photo: 'Descending Tatty Wife' by Bill Nix

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Editor's Note

I am pleased to be able to share this Newsletter with you all, at last. Recent months have been very busy for a lot of us, so I really appreciate the time that many Members have committed to sit down and write something for this issue.

It may seem onerous at the start, but I have found in recent years that having a log of my underground trips and explorations is an excellent way to keep track of where I have been and with whom. I also find that my logbook entries double as useful additions to my trusty guidebooks, by jogging my memory about the route finding in caves I am visiting for a second or third time. Most importantly however, my logbooks are filled with the silly and funny things that happened underground; many of these are wonderful memories I would otherwise have forgotten (my brain must make room for upcoming work deadlines, after all!). So yes, while finding the time to sit down and write up my trips is hard, I know that in one, five-, ten-, or fifty-years' time, I will be able to look back on these logbooks and smile at the ridiculous things I had been up to.

If you have any trip reports to share with us, please send them my way for future publications. Remember, the club also has a logbook that you can use after your caving trips!

Gwen Tawy
Newsletter Editor

News

Victoria Cave – 4-5th June 2022

The BCRA CA SIG Field Meeting postponed at the onset of the coronavirus pandemic has been re-arranged. The meeting at Lower Winskill Farm, Settle in the Yorkshire Dales will take place over the weekend 4th/5th June 2022 and involves both theory and practical sessions regarding the recognition and recording of the various historic markings and graffiti that can be found in caves. Open to non-members

Working Week

Thank you to everyone who took part in the recent Working Week. The Farm is looking fabulous!

Geryon's Lair

16th December 2021 Josh Bratchley, Kristian Brook, Gwen Tawy, Tarquin Wilton-Jones

Having failed to find a weekend that suited everyone in the run-up to Christmas, we decided it was necessary to take Thursday and Friday off work. Caving always takes priority. A few days before we were due to meet, Targuin sent me a comprehensive list of trips that were worth doing in the area. Kristian and I settled on Draenen for Thursday. After work on Wednesday, we threw our bags into the car and made our way down to Whitewalls. We arrived at a respectable time and spent the evening looking at the survey wondering what we'd gotten ourselves into. It took us a long time to locate our end destination on the survey (Geryon's Lair), and even longer to locate the entrance. After spending some time trying to guess the route, we gave up and went to bed.

We met Tarquin and Josh bright and early the following morning. The entrance crawl was wet and miserable for a while, but it quickly opened up into a series of climbs. After roughly half an hour of caving we reached Cairn Junction, where we signed ourselves into the cave. From here we followed Targuin through a number of boulder-strewn passages, eventually reaching Lamb and Fox chamber; named after the pub that used to sit directly above the chamber. We were told that the landlord was once taken into this chamber and served a pint underneath his own pub.

From here we climbed up some steps into Indiana

Highway, where we traversed along some ledges. Some more boulder-hopping then led us into Megadrive, named due to the fact that it is big enough to fit three double-deckers inside it. Here we started seeing bats; it was important for us to concentrate now so as not to disturb their hibernation. Even more boulder-hopping and bat-dodging eventually led us to Gone with the Wind. Suddenly everything was glittery from the gypsum crystals. The mid-winter chambers were especially spectacular. Eventually we reached the famous 'Snowball'. We spent some time here enjoying its beauty and discussing how it might have formed.

Shortly after this high, we had to accept the low of The Last Sandwich – a long hands and knees crawl into MS&D (More Singing and Dancing – named in memory of Nicola Dollimore). After stomping in this passage for a while we reached Luck of the Draw, which had many pretty formations. This led us to Medusa's Children, a jaw dropping passage covered from floor to ceiling in gypsum formation and helictites. This was one of (if not the) the highlights of the trip. While taking photos here, Targuin explained how the



Josh traversing over Lost Crusade pitch in Indiana Highway

Photo Credit: Tarquin Wilton-Jones



Gwen with Medusa's Children

Photo Credit: Tarquin Wilton-Jones

formations were made from aragonite. Once we'd had enough time to enjoy the view, we continued our journey to Gervon's Lair via the Cantankerous Surveyor Series. The lair was well worth visiting - the helictite formations and straw needles here were simply stunning. We took another break here for some more photos - one of which required me to carefully stand while on Tarquin Josh photographed my face near the straw needles. We also found a notebook in the Lair for visitors and left a note saying 'We could have this in Yorkshire if we wanted it',

because Kristian and I were often having to find ourselves defending caving up North - 'There are no pretty formations in Yorkshire caves', apparently.



The first part of Nicola's Grotto

Photo Credit: Tarquin Wilton-Jones

On our return we took a number of detours. One of which was to visit Nicola's Grotto – yet another place with beautiful aragonite formations and helictites. We then retraced our steps back to the entrance series. This time I was relieved by the cold water because I'd worked up quite a sweat over the last 14 hours. We emerged from the cave at 12:30am tired, but happy. Whoever calls Draenen boring has obviously never been to the right places.

Gwen Tawy

Ogof Ffynnon Ddu

17th December 2021

Josh Bratchley, Kristian Brook, Gwen Tawy, Rob Watson, Tarquin Wilton-Jones Having only returned to the hut at 1am the previous night, we agreed to have a later start than usual. After emerging from our pits we wolfed down some porridge and drove over to Penwyllt, where we were meeting Tarquin. After arriving we faffed around for a bit (must have another cup of tea before setting off) and when 12 o'clock rolled around we decided it was time to do something.

I had never been at the SWCC before, so I was surprised by the novelty of a female only changing room. The excitement soon passed when I realised I was missing out on prime banter in the males' changing room.

We arrived at OFD1 at around 1pm. When we reached the bottom of the entrance ladder there was even more faff as Kristian realised he didn't have a battery for his lamp. Thankfully, Tarquin had a spare, so the trip was saved.

Once we were all suitably equipped, we dropped into Flood Passage; the contrast between this cave and the previous day's trip was already stark. As we walked through the streamway, I tried my best to avoid the deep pools of water. Some of the pools had been covered by scaffolding bars to assist with the crossings — I was very grateful for these. When we reached the first sump Josh told us about their history and explained to us where the sump links into.

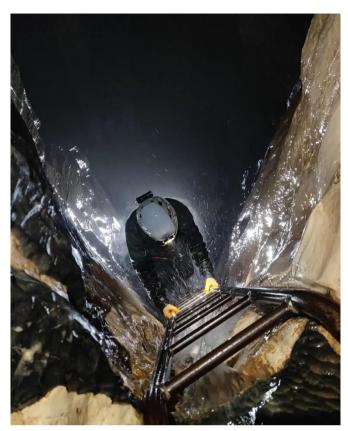
To avoid the sump we climbed into Upper Flood Passage into OFD 1.5. This eventually connected into OFD2 via the Letterbox. This was a fun climb into a slot that you had to post yourself into feet first. I was relieved I wasn't doing this trip in the other direction as my head dangled over the edge. A crawl then led us to Piccadilly, where we had been told to keep an eye out for flood bypass routes. Rob and Josh raced ahead while I struggled. Tarquin patiently walked in front of me pointing out where the deepest holes were. Occasionally I had to give in and swim across the pools. I must remember to bring my longer legs next time.



In the Cascades - OFD1

Photo Credit: Tarquin Wilton-Jones

Despite how much I hated the deep pools, I was actually having a good time. I loved the dark colour scheme of the streamway; the marbled effect of the white on black was very distinctive. After a long time dodging holes in the streamway we reached Great Oxbow, at which point I knew we were getting close to the end of this part of the trip. Eventually we reached the climb in Maypole Inlet. Although I was already drenched, I was not impressed



when Josh asked me to pose for a photo near the top of the ladder where water was pouring onto my head. This led to an awkward protected climb down into the next passage. From here we went to visit Shattered Pillar, The Trident and Fairy Castle. We then retraced our steps and walked up Salubrious Passage to the upward battle known as the Corkscrew. Eventually we reached Gnome Passage, where we detoured to have a look at Big Chamber Near the Entrance. When we reached the surface the sun had set and a cold wind was blowing, so we guickly marched back down to the hut to find our warm clothes and have a cup of tea.

Gwen Tawy

Shivering on the ladder

Photo Credit: Josh Bratchley

Broken Ladder Passage - County Pot

8th January 2022 Kristian Brook, Dinny Davies, Gwen Tawy, Rachel Turnbull, Rob Watson

With wet weather forecast we decided that our initial Friday evening plan to visit Cow Pot was a no-goer. When we woke up on Saturday morning, we realised that almost everywhere would be off limits because of how much rain had fallen overnight. Over breakfast we settled on the usual...County Pot.

We decided to start by taking the Snake to Oxford Chamber. I had been this way before, but I didn't remember it to be wet. It was certainly wet today! After a quick look at the chamber we returned to the Snake, following it to Confusion Corner, where the water levels were noticeably high.

We turned off towards Battle of Britain, but instead of going into it, we continued along into a crawl that led us to Upper Pierce's Passage. Toby, Dalek and I had tried to find this passage on the previous weekend – turns out we had been in the right place...If only we had committed! This bypassed the climb into Poetic Justice and led to a way into Ignorance is Bliss (I still do not know how because it's not the way I've been before – this place is a maze in my mind). We continued along the passage for a while. At a fork we turned right. This led to a chamber with a false floor and stal boss in it. Initially I thought this might be Paperfloor Passage, but after looking at the survey later I found out I was wrong (as usual). We then returned to the streamway. At confusion corner we got aptly confused while we

waited for Dinny to catch up with us. Turns out he was waiting for us somewhere else to join him for the main event of the trip, which the rest of us had forgotten about; much to his dismay.

Reunited, we entered the Trident Series via Battle of Britain. Finally, we would see where Broken Ladder Passage led to. Dinny rigged a rope to further investigate. After this short visit we quickly glanced into the very wet Splash Chamber before making a speedy exit to warm up.

Gwen Tawy

Mayday Hole

9th January 2022 Dinny Davies, Gwen Tawy, Rachel Turnbull

Rachel was looking for a stringy trip, but with the weather being miserable we had to choose carefully. Dinny suggested a visit to Mayday Hole. Neither Rachel nor I had been there before, so we agreed that this was a good plan.

For some reason we decided to be extremely organised by packing the bags on Saturday night, leaving no room for faffing on Sunday morning (my favourite Sunday activity!). We got changed in the bitter cold. I was enviously eying up Dinny's yoga mat that he was using to get changed on; I have since sourced one of my own, thanks to the club auction. Thankfully we warmed up quickly on the long uphill walk to the entrance.

Upon arrival I was devastated to find that I had forgotten my chest tape at the car. I didn't really fancy doing the walk up the hill a second time so was forced to fashion something resembling a chest tape from some extra slings that we had with us. The first pitch starts as a thrutchy rift that I struggled to get across while Dinny helpfully shouted 'THERE ARE LOADS OF FOOTHOLDS' at me from below. The pitches were narrower than expected, but not technically challenging. There was very little water too, which made it pleasant in such wet weather. Towards the bottom of the cave there was even some flowstone to enjoy. On the way out my chest-sling contraption was put to the test. It wasn't the most comfortable, and I definitely grumbled more than usual on the ascent, but I made it to the surface eventually!

Gwen Tawy

Dan yr Ogof

22nd January 2022 Jules Carter, Josh Henry, Gwen Tawy, Tarquin Wilton-Jones

After sourcing a key for the entrance, Tarquin, Jules and I rushed to Dan yr Ogof to meet Josh, only to find he was stuck in traffic and running over an hour late. Many of you know that I hate it when a plan doesn't go as I had expected, so I spent the next hour pretending everything was fine. When Josh eventually arrived, I tried my best to accept his apology and not scream "Stop *insert swear word here* chatting and put your *insert another swear word here* caving gear on!". Weeks later Tarquin told me I did not hide my true emotions very well and it was clear to everyone I was agitated. I was pleased to hear I'd made a good first impression on Josh and Jules.

After one million years we eventually made it underground. We stomped through the show cave and hopped over the fence to skirt around Lakes 1-4. These lakes were quite deep, so I was glad that I was wearing a wetsuit. After some crawling we reached Boulder Chamber which led to the aptly named Straw Chamber. After a quick stop here, our next stop was at the Crystal Pool which Tarquin and I carefully traversed around to take photos in Flabbergasm Oxbow. The straws in here were well worth the detour. We then returned to Josh and Jules and continued along the main route via the Grand Canyon, Monk Hall and Cloud Chamber — each famous for their own formations.

At the Green Canal I was exceptionally glad to be in a wetsuit. Josh, Jules and I donned our rubber rings and set off, meeting Tarquin at the other end. We warmed up in Go Faster and Go Slower. We were then met with some hand line climbs and a ladder towards the Far North. We had also lugged our SRT gear with us to do the pitches required to get to the Far North Choke



Flabbergasm Oxbow

Photo Credit: Tarquin Wilton-Jones

– our final destination. At this point, Jules was clock-watching as he needed to be somewhere else that evening. We had a short break at the choke then made our way back. The return route was largely similar, but at Go Faster we turned off to visit the Abyss and Hangar Passage. We also visited Bakerloo; one of the more famous passages in Dan yr Ogof. On our way out we did a quick circuit of the show cave to see the bits we hadn't seen on the way in. This included the signatures of the original explorers.

Gwen Tawy

Haggs Gill Pot

5th February 2022 Bill Nix, Dalek, Steve White

A very wet day in Langstroth Dale. 10am meet. Visit to White Rose Chamber and down to sump. Steve headed out first, then Dalek, and Bill de-rigged. Rivers that were high were even higher on the return. Quick brew in Inglesport before arriving at Bullpot Farm for Jim's 90^{th} birthday do.

Bill Nix

County Pot to Lancaster Hole

12th February 2022 Jack Overhill, Colin Jones, Gwen Tawy

Originally the trip was going to be myself and Colin. Then Gwen turned up, so we invited her. She made sure it was the hardest caving trip going that day before agreeing. Once we got to Lancaster Hole Gwen rigged under the watchful eye of some DCC members. Once we got to County we made our way to Battle of Britain and then on to Brown and Smelly Chamber (after I decided to go down the same dead end floor again!). Colin then got a taste of 'Fat Arse Squeeze'. After this, it was fairly plain sailing. Once we got to Mainline Terminus we took a detour to Stop Pot. On the way back, Gwen enjoyed the struggles of being slightly too short for it to be easy. After making her struggle, nice wide passage awaited! Once back at Fall Pot Colin brought out a bin liner to take an old battery out of the cave. Then we had to face the awkward slot followed by the slippery rope climb out of Fall Pot. We then came to the bottom of Lancaster Hole, where I realized I had forgotten my pantin. The climb was long and cold, so I was thankful for a warm shower back at the Farm.





Jack at the Painter's Palette

Photo Credit: Colin Jones

Alum Pot - Club Trip

3rd March 2022 Bill Nix, Jack Overhill, Gwen Tawy, Paul Thomas

When I heard the club trip was to Alum Pot I was quite excited, as it had been a long time since I had been. The plan was very vague, so I spent a lot of the morning faffing. Kristian and Marianne (Kristian's sister) met us at the Farm and packed a bag for Dolly Tubs.

When we arrived, we saw that Jack had already left. I hoped I wasn't too late for the club trip. By the time we reached Alum Pot, we could see Jack and Paul at the South East route. Lancaster University had gone down Dollytubs, so Bill had decided to rig the main pot instead.

I had never done this route before, and I was in awe of the pot's beauty as I descended. Once we had all reached the bottom we went down to the sump. In a moment of pure comedy, Bill pointed out the dive weights to me and made a comment about how heavy they are. He then proceeded to drop one on my foot (thankfully it didn't do any damage!).

After visiting the sump, I agreed to derig. To make my life easier, Jack offered to haul the bags from the top of the pitch. Half-way up the big pitch I heard Kristian shouting at me from the window with Marianne and Dalek. I stopped prusiking to give them a wave (I was thankful for the break!). Yet another good club trip!

Gwen Tawy

Link Pot

6th March 2022 Toby Speight, Gwen Tawy

I had been hoping to visit Link Pot for a long time; I had often peered into the entrance on my way to Mistral Hole but never ventured any further. Finally, a suitable day came along. After the tight entrance pitch, I was surprised to find the entrance hall to be very spacious. I enjoyed the fact that someone had piled stones from floor to ceiling to give the impression that they were holding the roof up.

After whipping our SRT kits off, we made our way to Hylton Hall. We then slithered between rocks and down a narrow passage to what we believe to have been Echo Echo Pot Pot. We retraced our steps to Bypus Pybass. From this point onwards, we were following our noses, exploring all passages we stumbled upon. The only passage we were selective about was the one that leads to the Wet Wallows. Instead, we went towards Night Shift Series. After seeing some pretty formations in China Dog Series we were met with my first obstacle – the traverse into Tiger Inlet. Toby spent a lot of time showing me how best to make it into the Inlet. The only thing that worked was a warning that 'this is the way on, so you better hurry up...'.

This denoted the start of the Serendipity Series. I was glad to have found the courage to traverse into the inlet because Toby was right – it was the way on. We explored every passage, ending at Serendipity Pitch. After a sit down, we made our way back to the entrance. I was really impressed by our route finding on the way out; my skills in that department are rather lacking, but we made very few errors. Maybe I'm finally learning how to do this 'caving' business.

Gwen Tawy

Carlswark Cavern - Merlin Mine Exchange

6th March 2022 Kristian Brook, Emma Key, Bill Nix, Hallam O'Shea, Jack Overhill, Gwen Tawy, Lisa Wooton

Bill was on a mission for photographs in Merlin Mine, giving Kristian and I the perfect opportunity to do some caving near home. As there were so many of us, we decided an exchange with Carlswark would work well.

Hal had done a number of trips into Carlswark, so he agreed to take the lead. Things looked good for the initial 5 minutes until we realised he had led us in a circle that took us immediately back to the entrance. After chastising him for this, we took the low wet passage (Eyam Passage) in the correct direction. Hal's sense of direction soon returned and he pointed us in the right direction towards North West Passage, which was drier. He had also found the survey on his phone, which helped us see where we needed to go for the connection.

The first place we head to was Big Dig, which appeared to connect on the survey. Big Dig is a long miserable duck that Kristian and I pushed while Hal and Jack sensibly waited for us in drier passage. When I got to a point where I would have to get my head wet I decided it was too much and returned the way I came. Kristian went a bit further, but soon joined me. Jack and Hal looked annoyingly smug when we returned shivering and miserable. At this point we decided it was not the best way through to Merlin Mine, so we took a break to look at the survey. It looked like there may be a way through via Eyam Dale Shaft.

When we arrived, we sent Kristian in to look at a dig at one end of the shaft. We really weren't sure if this was the way on because it was very small. After some to-ing and froing, we eventually decided we had to push it. At the very least it would rule it out as an option. We all squeezed through, and just as we started to wonder if we were in the correct place we heard voices ahead. We had made it to Gimli's Dream and were briefly united with the other team. We were assured the route finding from here on was easy.

While we found the sumps easily, it was tricky to find the correct level for the mine, triggering a lot of bickering..."Are you **sure** it's not that way? Maybe I should check" shortly followed by



Squeezing through the connection

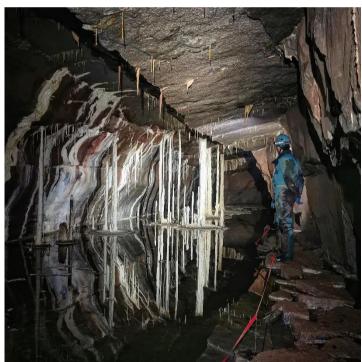
Photo Credit: Jack Overhill

"OK, you were right...it's not that way". The usual. Eventually we found our way into the mine, but even having the survey here didn't help us. We frequently took wrong turns and were finding ourselves checking the survey at every junction (sometimes between junctions!). After some time we saw some rope dangling part way down a shaft. We climbed up to the end of the rope and ascended it, assuming we were going the right way. After walking for a short period we found the entrance. This took us by surprise because we had all thought the pitch was **at** the entrance and not **near** the entrance, so we were still expecting to use our SRT gear again!

On the walk back we bumped into the other group who appeared to have had a good time too.

Gwen Tawy





Left: Marble Showers - OFD

Photo Credit: Bill Nix

Right: Column Hall, Ogof Ffynnon Ddu

Photo Credit: Jack Overhill

Doing Scanty

26th March 2022 Andy Hall, Colin Jones, Hugh St.Lawrence (+ Anne Jones and Dalek on surface)

What a wonderful name!...Scanty Lardos Pot. It conjures images of minimally clad buffoonery on the digging and exploration front. Or, good heavens, something even more scandalous on the innuendo scale. The name is simply irresistible, with its whiff of humourous impropriety demanding further enquiry and investigation. So I could hardly refuse the opportunity when Andy sent out a circular saying he and Colin were doing Scanty on the forthcoming Saturday, and all were welcome. Other than the Lancaster Hole anniversary trip last year, I hadn't done a pure tourist trip for a decade or more. Time to break the chain.

The day dawned fine and sunny, the weather set fair. I picked Andy up outside Settle and we drove to Stainforth and up towards Fountains Fell, narrowly avoiding a head-on with Mrs.Farmer who was careening, blissfully unperturbed, down a 14% hill in pickup and trailer. Surviving the moment we pressed on past a gaggle of cavers bound for Dalehead Pot and soon found ourselves meeting Colin and Anne at the cattle-grid above Penyghent Gill.

The entrance is right beside the road – I mean 'right beside' the road! To my knowledge only Starting Handle Hole on Leck Fell is closer to the tarmac, even Bean Pot in Ingleton



Andy at entrance corner

Photo Credit: Colin Jones

may be fractionally more distant from the blacktop. So it's perfect for a bunch of old farts who want an easy time of it. We changed and steeled ourselves for the approach march!

The little reading I'd done promised me an adventure of some 400 metres interspersed with a trio of moderate pitches, which sounded ideal for a comeback trip. Colin was already out of sight with the rigging gear as I dropped the short climb down the metal lidded entrance into a gnarly narrow rift and right angle wriggle to the first bolt. Perhaps the aid isn't required this early as it's really only a short climb into a small chamber. But then I remembered that this is a stream sink and in wet weather might be a different proposition!

'Misery Pitch' follows the small chamber and is well named. Even without a stream to contend with there's an awkward slide down to the bolts in a constricted rift which doesn't get much wider on it's 12m drop. The whole of this upper part of the cave is in a dark, noduled limestone which plucks and snags at your suit and bits of string.

On this day the stream entered at the bottom of the pitch with a step downstream into a comfortably wider passage. Andy soon followed and all aboard we set off following the water.



Andy in Ann Summers Passage

Photo Credit: Colin Jones

Changes with much smoother, brighter limestone walls making for attractive going through a joint-controlled passage of variable dimensions — occasional walking, plenty of stooping, and a measure of wet crawling with one or two brief canal sections. Pleasant going on the whole, and marginally damp but not drenched we quickly arrived at the next set of bolts.

Somehow I'd got to the front and decided to dispense with rigging down a short cascade onto a big platform above the 15m 'Joe's Pitch'. Rigging this gets a bit interesting as there is a profusion of bolts and P-hangers, some old some new, and it's hard to know which are the best hang. Colin took over and made the short traverse out to a Y-hang from bolts which took a little while to sort (this was only his third rigging trip!) But he was finally on his way and soon calling me down.

I shuffled out along the traverse discovering that there were P-hangers which Colin hadn't noticed. I spent some time trying to re-arrange the rope onto these P-hangers but their location required a very awkward jamming in the rift which made it hard to turn and arrange the Y-hang loops. Cutting my losses I decided to rig off just the one P-hanger, safe (?) in the knowledge that there were several backups on the traverse. Eventually I sorted myself, but it was evident that my struggles hadn't done a good job of selling it to Andy, who announced that he'd give it a miss and wait for us where he was. Sorry, mate!

Once on the way, it's a very pleasant pitch, the stream twisting just beneath you and then shooting off a ledge to make the final 5 meters a bit damper – though it's possible to kick yourself out the way and stay mostly dry. But even after a week without rain it was still a splashy little affair and would certainly be quite tasty in wet conditions.

The stream goes off down a narrow rift, but we climbed up into a wide bedding and crawled over the narrow part to more roomy rift and bolts at the head of the final 10m pitch. Sadly we hadn't brought rope for this – thinking there'd only be two of them Andy & Colin had merely planned for a two pitch rigging lesson. A bit of shame to be so close to the bottom, and the pitch looked dry and easy. But no big deal, we'd come for the fun, not for ambition;



Colin in Ann Summers Passage

Photo Credit: Colin Jones

and the cave ends literally at the bottom of the pitch, a dangerous choke 'The Office' which is occasionally being pushed by the original explorers.

Up and away, back up the splashy pitch and the wee struggle off the rope at the top. We stopped occasionally for some photos in the eponymously named Anne Summers Passage, but were soon back at the Misery Pitch and a thrash out the black limestone of the entrance series. To be met by.....Dalek! — who had cycled from Halifax for a chat. Top man! Anne made us all a cuppa and we sat in the sun and listened to Dalek.

It was a great day out, reminding me of the pure fun of caving which you can sometimes lose sight of in the obsessive quest for new caves and connections. I think I'll try one or two more of these outings. And I'll probably have to come back and Do Scanty...to the bottom! Perhaps I'll even find out how the name originated!





Hugh at top of misery pitch

Photo Credit: Colin Jones



Group photo

Photo Credit: Andy Hall

Bullpot of the Witches: The Downstream Sump

16th April 2022

Easter weekend and my 60th birthday on Good Friday. Due to unforeseen circumstances, we couldn't go too far from home. And we'd cancelled our holiday to Orkney so were at a bit of a loose end. I'd decided that we could drive up to the farm, do a few jobs that needed sorting out. Then have a few hours underground. I'd forewarned Andy Hall that I would like to either go to the downstream sump in Bullpot of the Witches or as Andy had suggested Pegleg Pot.

After completing the few jobs and having a brew it was decided to venture into BPOTW and just see how far we got. I've got a bit of a liking for BPOTW with it having been my first proper foray underground two years previous (Jan 2019) when I had found it so intimidating and yet quite awesome.

The entry into BPOTW was via the chimney rather than use SRT from the tree. From there it was via the usual SRT descent down towards Burnetts Passage and follow the stream towards Hidden Pot and the next two SRT pitches (1st a bit tight and awkward to rig, short on headspace). At the bottom of Hidden Pot it is possible to wriggle down to the streamway. However, the way on is a climb up through an awkward hole in the ceiling. This gives access to the Long Gallery a superb slanting passage. Upstream of which is a hands and knees crawl to the Trap and the emerging stream system. Heading downstream from the access hole you head into a tightish hands and knees crawl and almost but not quite flat out. This section is not just muddy, it is shitty clag which adheres to your wellies like shit to a blanket. This bit is reasonably short as the passage opens up and allows you to walk. A narrow rift in the floor is evident on the right side. The passage ends with a choke, but there are a couple of opportunities to either climb up into a passage on the left-hand side near to the choke (15-20ft scramble). Or on the right-hand side there is a fixed etrier for climbing down. We had taken an electron ladder for this section as the climb down to the canal is a two-stage affair.

The fixed etrier in BPOTW

Photo Credit: Colin Jones





A reasonably easy climb down deposits you into the canal and a roughly 3ft ceiling. A short wallow through the stream puts you onto a gravel bank and a hands and knees crawl which slowly opens up to a stoop then a walkable passage. It had been a good few years since Andy had been into that bit of the system, but with much perseverance and probably good fortune we found the downstream sump.

A visit to BPOTW

Photo Credit: Colin Jones

After much discussion about whether we had found the downstream sump or discovered something that resembled the sump? We decided to explore some of the passages and openings we had passed en-route. Fun and games as we seemed to go around in circles until we decided to retrace our path back to the canal and the ladder and our route back to the surface.

It was quite a strenuous wee trip but well worth it. And it was a nice trip out for my 60th in good company. It was Andy who took me down BPOTW on my first trip underground.



Colin Jones

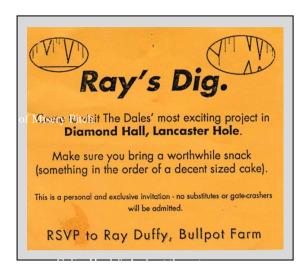


Underground with Andy

Photo Credit: Colin Jones

Rollerball Rolls On

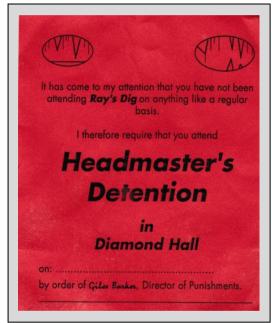
Press-ganging people into digging in awful places is not a new thing as I've been doing it for years. Originally it started with *Diamond Hall*, where various dubious methods were applied by me and my director of Punishments Giles Barker.



However, the punishment thingy didn't work with the Red Rose as they actually liked being harassed, so the *Ray's Dig* Notice only garnered a few helpers, whereas the *Headmaster's Detention* Notice gathered lots of diggers. It seems the harsher the punishment the more people like it. I guess I should have realised that anybody who chooses to go caving in the first place is obviously drawn to misery.

whereas the *Headmaster's Detention* Notice gathered lots of diggers. It seems the harsher the punishment the more people like it. I guess I should have realised that anybody who chooses to go caving in the first place is obviously drawn to misery.





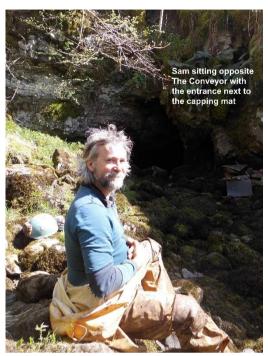
So, in light of this, the *Rollerball Loyalty Card* will in the future have to be superseded by a more painful form of abuse, be warned!

Update – May 2022

For those following the Rollerball saga it looks like the Lower Birth Canal may be nearing gestation. A few more capping trip should see us at the next drop and hopefully easier progress.

Ray Duffy (The Red Rose Party Whip)

The Conveyor



There's only one place to be on an Easter Monday, when the Dales are teeming with tourists relaxing after Covid restrictions, that's down at Leck Beck Head. Not a soul in sight and only the sounds of the resurgence and the bird song to disturb the silence and of course, no midges. It's a year since Sam and I visited this rare dig, I say rare because it's not often a dig goes upward at the start, they usually go down. As it's our escape dig we don't visit it often and the conditions have to be just right. A long dry spell or the resurgence caves will be disgorging their contents past the entrance; early enough in the year or the midges are hell; warm enough not to freeze the person sitting outside for spoil removal, hence the limited number of visits to the cave for work. Unfortunately, Sam's old drill batteries only produced 3 holes for capping but this was enough to remove the worst bit of the lip at the top of the climb so mud excavation could start to take place. We probably only

progressed 1m but there's more to come. This is a draughting dig heading down towards the sump level in between Witches, Leck Beck Head and the Resurgence caves so why the draught? Exactly our question!

Ray Duffy

Digging in Scotland

Steve and Sam came to visit me in Lochcarron. They really haven't learnt! I put them to work on the first day in the Slot Dig in Applecross. As its name suggests, this is pushing downwards in a rift. It needs three people to manhandle the buckets out, so hadn't been worked since before Covid, but we found the dig much as I'd left it. A day's excavation got us a metre or so further down (and a cracking surface hauler's shelter built up top by Steve), but we'll need some shoring and stabilisation before pushing further.

We had a couple of days exploring bits of coastline, with no significant cave finds, then returned to Applecross to visit Brindle's Rift, a quarter mile from the other caves, but recently discovered to be sharing a geological fault that passes through three others. Steve backed out after looking at the rift descent, whilst Sam and I spent a happy hour or two digging at the end. Perhaps a metre of progress (and a well-constructed spoil heap). We exited around the time Steve returned from a productive wander around the felled forestry area.

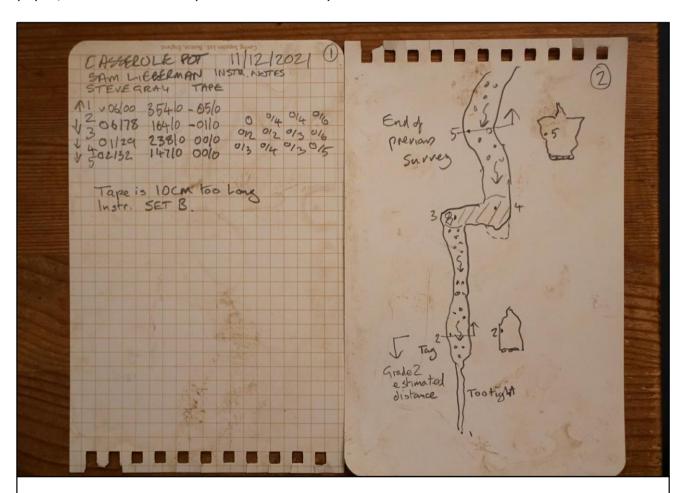
There's still plenty of questions to be answered in Applecross – contact me if you're interested in visiting the area.

Toby Speight

Surveying

Things you need to know (if you're stupid enough to do it, like Ray Duffy)

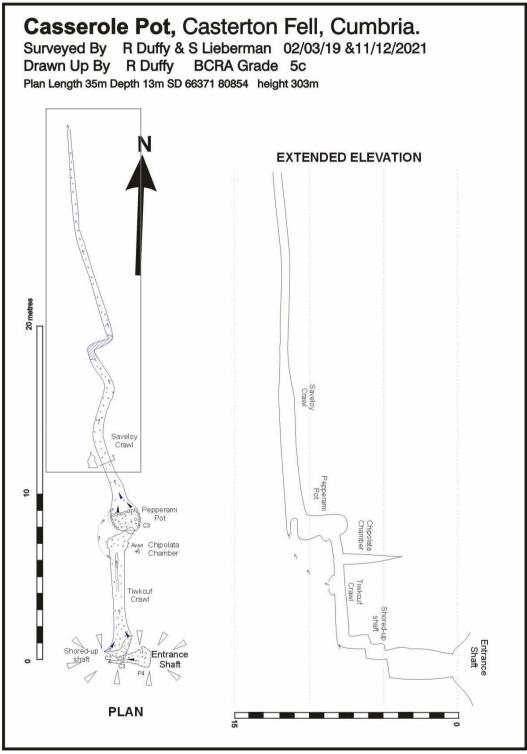
1st Think about drawing the survey up, either in a survey drawing package, a drawing programme or just on paper, as that's the whole point of the exercise after all. What are you going to need? A logical set of numbers showing DISTANCE, COMPASS bearing, CLINO angle plus a height and width measurement, usually expresses as UP, DOWN, LEFT and RIGHT from the survey station (P.S. Decimal points get rubbed off, use a slash instead). A really good drawing of the passage is good but also the stuff in it is essential (mud, cobbles, boulders, stals, pools, slopes, avens, pits, drops or climbs) all help in the final drawing. It doesn't matter whether you use a PDA (whatever that is?); a mobile phone or simply waterproof survey paper, a set of clear and precise notes always wins.



The heading is important, showing Cave/section, Surveyors and who did what, the instruments used and date. The direction the legs of the survey were taken is shown by arrows. Up, down, left and right distances are really important. The station position is shown in the drawing as are the details of what's in the passage, words are vital but must be readable not scrawled.

2nd No matter how fine your notes were at the time, it's always best to draw them up as soon afterwards as possible. With survey notes coming in thick and fast, I was unable to draw up some of the survey until I'd finished another section and by the time I got round to them, the

mud had dried brick hard making them almost undecipherable. (Some had to be soaked and then wiped ever so gently with a J-cloth and dried with a hair dryer.) SO, WASH and DRY THEM GENTLY IMMEDIATELY AFTER SURVEYING! That goes for the instruments as well obviously as nobody wants a dirty or unreadable tape measure, do they?



3rd Losing notes is a NIGHTMARE. I spent a lot of time photocopying mud-splattered notes on cheap machines that produced poor reproductions but now we can use a phone to make a decent jpg, camera or all-in-one printer to copy them to a file.

4th Storing the notes, at least in our club, involves the original notes and Survex file print and 3d file drawing all stapled and logged into the folders in the Reading Room. A set of duplicates is given to the person in charge of the survey data, (Sam Lieberman at the moment). His set are loaded onto the computer and then physically filed into the relevant folders for safe storage and handling by those drawing up the final survey.

5th The final drawing-up of the notes taken doesn't always look exactly like the drawings on the survey notepad as there's the difference in scale, so nice big drawings sometimes get shrunk as the scale of the final draw-up alters the size and shape of the passages, the notes above can be seen to be reduced significantly in the final production of the overall survey (see over the page).

6th There is a definitive set of symbols for each type of passage feature, though the use of contours in caves is only really of use in large and maybe archaeological digs as they'd obliterate detail in a normal cave passage of the Yorkshire cave.

7^{th and finally} There is a certain satisfaction in seeing the fruits of your labour in print so get out there and "do it for Yorkshire"!

Ray Duffy

Ratbag Inlet Survey - Update

I'm still not quite sure what possessed me to agree to survey Ratbag Inlet; but having promised some data to Ray and Sam I felt the pressure to do something about it. Before doing any serious work, I wanted to do a reconnaissance of the inlet. Was it really that wet and small?

On 5th February I managed to convince Kristian Brook, Rob Watson, Dinny Davies and Ian Peachey to join me for a visit. Our first mission was to find the inlet. We did this with ease. I was surprised to find how beautifully decorated it is down there (well worth a visit, truly!). The second mission was to find the squeeze that marked the last survey station. We were fairly confident we found this. We all made it through the constriction and continued until an even smaller squeeze which appeared to go up into Golden Wonder Aven. Dinny wasn't so sure, but after doing some research Kristian and I convinced ourselves that we were correct.

Kristian and I returned on 24th March to survey. We arrived at the farm rather late, but we were excited to see Golder Wonder Aven in all its glory. I was clearly more excited than Kristian as I raced ahead of him. After passing Dusty Junction I realised I could no longer hear him. Where had he gone? I stopped for a moment, then decided to head back to look for him. No sign of him. I spent the next 30-60 minutes going back and forth between Mistral's entrance and the Hall of Ten. I then decided to head to Ratbag Inlet. I shouted down the inlet but couldn't hear anything. Where had he gone? I had the survey gear with me, so I left 3-4 handwritten notes on the way out with 'GONE TO SURFACE' and my name and date written on them. Ten to twenty minutes after reaching the surface Kristian emerged with the notes. He had been to the end of the inlet. But how? Somehow, he leapfrogged me near Dusty

Junction. We still haven't worked out how this happened...perhaps another Bermuda Triangle? Anyway, we learned a valuable lesson on this day...never leave your surveying partner behind!

Once reunited we considered going back to the farm and calling it a day, but we knew this was quite pathetic so back we went for round 10 of Mistral Hole. We surveyed a number of legs, but when we got to the climb into the aven decided to leave it for another day.

We returned on 23rd April. As it was the working week, we didn't want to run off to survey as soon as we had arrived at the farm. We also had a committee meeting to attend. This meant that we didn't make it to Mistral until 7pm or so. However, we knew it wouldn't be a long trip, so it was OK. I was rather nervous about the squeeze into the aven because it had looked very small the last time we were there. When we arrived, I took a deep breath (out, obviously) and pushed myself in. I was pleased to find there was enough depth, but it is very awkward because of the angle and the formations you need to avoid. On the other side I was greeted by a lovely deep pool...but where was Golden Wonder Aven? When Kristian joined me, we continued surveying passed the pool. It was dawning on us that we were nowhere near the aven and that this trip would take longer than expected. Dinny had been right!

I started to get cold and frustrated, causing a petty argument about the scale of the cross-sections I was drawing...I maintain that I do not need to draw them to scale because I have measured their size. Kristian disagreed. After shouting obscenities at him I cooled off by walking ahead to see how much further we had to go. I soon got to the end of the passage. Confused, I wondered whether the aven was a big rumour. That's when I saw it...the small inlet coming in from above with a considerable amount of water flowing out of it. My heart sank as I looked into it. I returned to Kristian with the bad news and an apology, and we decided to leave it for another day. Third survey trip lucky?

Gwen Tawy



Jack admiring the formations in Curry Inlet

Photo Credit: Tarquin Wilton-Jones

The Karst and Caves of the Upper Dove Valley, Derbyshire

BCRA Field Trip: 19th March 2022

Due to COVID restrictions this event was postponed from November 2021, which proved to be a good decision as we were blessed with a bright sunny spring day. The event was lead by Dr Andy Farrant (British Geological Survey) and Prof. John Gunn (Univ. of Birmingham and Chair of BCRA). We assembled at 10:30 am the BCA Library in Glutton Bridge, near Buxton in Derbyshire. I arrived deliberately early giving me time to have a good look round the Library. This is a fantastic resource if you have an interest in caving, cave science and related areas. It is for you whether you are a member of BCRA or just a member of the public with a general interest in caves and caving. Note that the library is not permanently staffed, so it is important to make contact in advance of your visit (preferably by email) to ensure there is someone to welcome you. Details of the location and how to find us can be obtained from https://caving-library.org.uk/locations.shtml



Prof John Gunn demonstrating the use of a portable conductivity meter at Glutton Grange Farm lower spring

Photo Credit: Andy Hall

By 11:00 am around 25 of us had assembled at the Library and we were given a brief outline of the days events and an introduction to the Library resources, which are extensive. We were also given an excellent set of field notes, maps and diagrams about the geology and geomorphology of the Peak District and the specific area we were visiting. The 7 km excursion started from the door of the Library north up the road towards Glutton Farm and around the southern side of Parkhouse Hill. The first few location stops enabled us to see the main geological and geomorphological feature of the area. Parkhouse Hill represents the remains of a Carboniferous 'reef' with differential erosion picking out the hill from the surrounding Bowland Shales. We walked the southern slopes of the hill along an area of landslip material of the softer Bowland Shales. At the north west end we walked out into the narrow gap between Chrome Hill and Parkhouse Hill which opens up into the wide embayment of lower Dowel Dale. Here we had crossed the Chrome Hill Fault but we would see this much more clearly later on. John pointed out a number of springs and risings, some of them seasonal near Dowall Hall Farm.

Moving on the north-east side of Chrome Hill we walked along the Chrome Hill Fault, which is clearly seen in a number of locations along with galena mineralisation on the fault plane in one exposure. We then passed Sandholes Swallet a small cave on the east side of the fault dug by the Orpheus Caving Club in the 1950's. Moving further along the fault onto the northern edge of Chrome Hill we passed a rock shelter and two skylight caves in the ridge which lead to some speculation. The lunch spot provided us with an excellent viewpoint into the Swallow Brook valley with some interesting geomorphological features including a spring line and landslips.



Tor Rock Swallet looking South to Chrome Hill Photo Credit: Andy Hall

After lunch we moved on further north passing Chrome Hill Swallet where water running off the Bowland Shales sinks into a large doline in the Bee Low Limestone on the fault. The cave is some 28m long but the resurgence has not been traced. We then passed another impressive sink hole at Tor Rock Swallet and up past a small uncovered reservoir. Above that we found a fenced off crater formed in sandstone. This could be a cap rock doline or some sort of mining activity. The shale limestone boundary was followed near Tor Rock around to the north past a series of large dolines one of which is Bottle Pot. This was again dug by the Orpheus and goes down series of three pitches to a larger relic phreatic passage silted up at the end.

We then turned south eastwards towards Dowell Dale and passed Pikers Pit, a large stream sink with its disused pump house at the end of a blind valley. Discoloured water from here was found to come out at Dowel Resurgence, which more of later. On reaching the road we continued south east passing a number of sinks thought to drain to this resurgence as well, including the 22m deep Stoney Low Swallet. Our next objective was Owl Hole, an impressive collapse doline next to the road. It contains 250m of relic passages via two entrances including a large chamber. We continued down the now narrow dry valley of Dowel Dale past Dowel Dale Side Pot some 30m deep to a section of stream-way and dived upstream sump. The next site of interest was Dowel Cave high up on the west side of the valley. This is an important archeological site and a Scheduled Monument. It is an important Neolithic burial site with a number of skeletons found in the cave. The excavations and recent radiocarbon dating show that the use of the cave spans the Upper Palaeolithic right up to Roman-British periods.



Dr Andy Farrant explaining the geology at the second location looking across Dowel Dale

Photo Credit: Andy Hall

We then reached the main Dowel Dale resurgence next to the road, which does dry up in dry weather. It is known that the water comes from the Pikers Pit Stoney Low Swallet area but what is not know is if the water from the north of Chrome Hill drains here. More dye testing is needed. Continuing on to Glutton Grange Farm we examined two other resurgences. Here John demonstrated the use of a portable water conductivity meter. Both springs had a value of around 590 µs/cm, which demonstrates a high concentration of dissolved solids. As they are on the 'reef' limestones and relatively constant flow this tends to suggest a mainly percolation water origin. From here it was only a short walk down the road to our starting point. Thanks to John

and Andy for organising a well thought out and enjoyable day out. The pleasant sunny weather also helped.

Andy Hall

A Blast from the Past

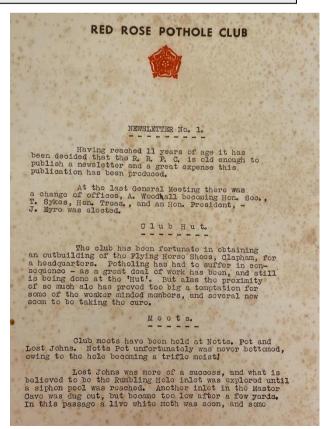
Hazel's trying to bring some semblance of order to my many stacks of Red Rose newsletters and came across the first ever produced in 1957. I also have No. 2, produced later that year, and No. 3 which took 2 more years to produce and starts with the following written by Jim Eyres:

We must apologies to our regular readers? for the slight delay between publications. (2 years)

To bring our newsletter up to date an attempt was made to delve into the records of 1958/ 9.

After months feverish searching several scraps of paper were unearthed, all covered in a semi-illegible scrawl. A few weeks later these were deciphered and the following conclusion drawn "That in Ye Year 1958 Ye Clube was very idle".

Jim Newton



The Caver's Worst Nightmare

No, it's not a very tight squeeze, terrifying drop, extreme climb, long duck/dive, no it's a rip in the precious over-suit. You've spent well over £100 on a PVC over-suit and now it leaks, usually in an inconvenient place, your backside. Fear not, as there is a fairly easy solution in the form of a bit of old over-suit (available at any Red Rose auction) and Bostik 3206E Adhesive. No, you don't just slap on some glue and a patch and expect it to stick forever, it doesn't work like that. Make sure you've thoroughly cleaned and dried the part of the suit to be patched and also the patch.

- 1. First cut a patch just large enough to cover the cut/hole.
- 2. Round off the edges of the patch and also any ragged bits on a hole. (Sharp edges are prone to peeling off or catching.)
- 3. Turn the over-suit inside out, as the patch should be on the inside to protect it
- 4. Get some sandpaper and remove the shiny surface coating from both the suit and the patch, this definitely gives a better surface for the glue to bond
- 5. Draw around the patch with a felt tip pen when it's in place, giving a bit of extra area, so that the place to have glue applied is obvious.
- 6. Get some plastic bags and put them over some blocks of wood just big enough to apply pressure above and below the patch and also some very heavy objects to squash the blocks and patch together. (I use an old car battery)
- 7. Place one of the blocks underneath the hole
- 8. Now quickly open the can of glue, spread it evenly over the marked area (put the lid back on the can quickly as the solvent evaporates fast) and place the patch. Then add the other block on top of the patch and weight the block with your heavy object. (Clamps are equally as good for squeezing the blocks.)
- 9. Leave the assembly for a day to bond fully before use.
- 10. For worn out areas it's best to cut out a section and apply a large patch, otherwise the area becomes so stiff it's like wearing a suit of armour.

The above also works for Tackle-sacks and if you've got an old pair of gloves you can cut a thumb end off and patch a holed glove the same way.

Happy dry caving!

Ray Duffy

Library Additions: January - May 2022

Journals:

BCRA - CREG: Journal: Issue. 116-117.

- Transactions: Vol. 48 No. 3

Cave Diving Group: - Newsletter: No. 222-223. (2022)

Chelsea Speleological Society: - Newsletter: Vol. 63 Nos. 7-9, 10-12,

Craven Pothole Club: - Record: Nos. 145-146.

Descent: - Nos. 284-285. (2022)

Grampian S. G: - Bulletin: Fifth Series Vol. 4 No. 3. (2022)

Moldywarps Speleological Group - Journal 13- 14 (2015-2021)

North Lonsdale Speleological Club - Reports: Vol. 1 Book 5-9, Vol. 3 Nos 1, 9 (NOLSPEC) - Furness Review No. 1 (FSG/NOLSPEC)

RRCPC: - News-sheet: Nos. 378 – 384.

- Newsletter: Vol. 58 No. 2.

Sheffield University Speleological Society - 60thAnniversary Journal (2021)

Speleologia: - No. 84.

ULSA: - Seshed Singers Songbook

University of Nottingham: Exploration '64

Wessex Cave Club: - Journal No. 357 *(2021)*

York CC. & North York Moors CC. - Journal No. 3 (2013-2020)

Other Publications:

Peter Ashmead Archive - Complete archive of Peter Ashmead's work in

and around Morecambe Bay and the Furness

Peninsular (1960's and 1970's)

Dave Stevenson Archive - Photographs and slides from 1960-70 including

Derbyshire & Easegill Caverns (1960's and70's)

Sheet Surveys:

Dunald Mill Hole (1960's)

Books:

Somerset Underground - Volume 1 R. M. Taviner

Swaledale, Above & Beneath Peter Ryder & John Longstaff

Hanging on a Thread – 30 Years as an Adventure Cameraman Sid Perou A Series of Short Passages – Reminiscences, Reflections and Ruminations from a caving life Graham S. Proudlove

Postojna – *Jovan Mesarovic (1965)*

Members wishing to use the library please contact any committee member who hold a key. The library is an excellent reference facility, please respect it - but above all please use it.

Sandra Wilkinson - Librarian: m.wilkinson@btinternet.com

New Caving Archives in our Club Library

The Club library has recently received some interesting additions in the form of personal caving archives from the estates of two former members.

Late last year we were contacted on behalf of Susan Kennedy, daughter of *Peter Ashmead*, who wished to place all her fathers papers and notes made in the 1960's and 70's into the Red Rose library. We already had received some of his original surveys produced for the CRG Transactions Vol 9 No2, but another of his passions whilst a member of the Lancaster Cavern & Mine Research Society was the geology, caves and mines of the Furness peninsular, North Lancashire and Westmorland.

This archive comprises of much of his work with the LCMRS, club minutes, research papers and notes, surveys and photographs of many of the caves of these areas. We were astounded at what caves there are in this area, many of which we had no records of.

A full list of this archive is available in the library. We must thank Susan for allowing us to be the custodian of his work.

More recently Sandra was contacted by the son of **Dave Stevenson** another member from the 1960's and 70's. Sadly he has just passed away and again Lee, his son, wished his caving material to be preserved in our library. His collection comprises of many hard back caving

books, a large collection of large format Black & White photographs, many depicting his time in the Easegill system, and many 35mm slides from Yorkshire, Derbyshire and South Wales..

These slides are of amazing quality, despite their age, and include a section on the 1967 Proventina expedition.

Again, a full list of the content of this archive is available in the library. Thanks are due to Emma Key for making the arrangements to collect this material from Walsall.

Mel Wilkinson

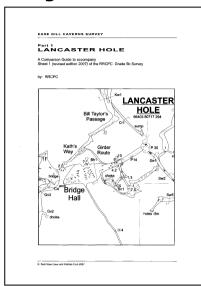
Digging in Rollerball

Photo Credit: Andy Hall



Publications for Sale

Easegill Caverns Survey



Sheet 1 – Lancaster Hole Area (2nd. Edition 2007)

with accompanying guide, covers the Lancaster Hole area and eastwards to Stake Pot.

Sheet 2 – Stake Pot to Snail Cavern Area (2nd. Edition 2011) with accompanying guide, covers most of the Stake Pot Inlet series (Earby Series) and the main drain and high level routes eastwards to Oxbow Corner

Sheet 3 - Snail Cavern Area to Holbeck Junction

with accompanying guide covering also County Pot, Wretched Rabbit and Snail Cavern to Holbeck Junction

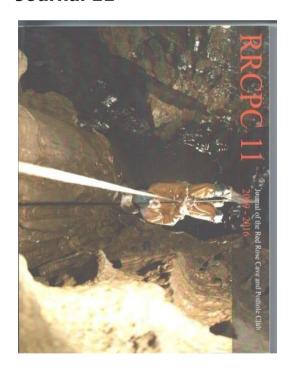
Sheet 4 - Top Sink to Holbeck Junction Area

with accompanying guide covering Far Series of Easegill Caverns, Boundary Pot and Pool Sink

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