

SOUTH WALES CAVING CLUB NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 33.

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I. CLUB NEWS

IN RESIDENCE AT PENWYLLT.

"By the fruits of thy labours....." says the text chalked on the Common Room door in the new H.Q. Perhaps we haven't come to the end of the labours yet, but since we've moved up the hill it has made things a good deal easier, for after a hard day it is most agreeable to be able to soothe away one's aches and pains under a hot shower from our most efficient plumbing system. Any male member of the Club who has tried to sleep in the same bunk-room as the hot water cylinder will realise the truth of that statement, though, I can see that in winter beds next to the tank will be at a premium.

For the benefit of prospective visitors who may not be aware of what the new H.Q. has to offer, the row of 10 cottages is divided into 4 and 5 by the cottage occupied by a tenant, and a public right of way through an entry which bisects the block. The block of 5 has been made into living accommodation, while the block of 4 has become

drying, changing (with a cold wash sink), tackle rooms and storage space. Each cottage has 4 rooms - 2 up and 2 down, so that the ground floor of the 'living' end forms a double kitchen (wash-up and cooking), double dining room, entrance hall and small common room (with boiler), one large common room formed from two of the original rooms (and once a mission room), and a fuel store and records room. Upstairs there are 3 ladies bunk rooms and 5 men's, each group having its own showers, hand basins and W.C.'s, providing a total of some 52 beds. Full h. & c. running water is laid on and drainage is to our much celebrated septic tank down the garden.

To aid you in your mad rush to visit this caver's vision of heaven, the approach road from the Swansea - Brecon main road (A4067), which you leave $\frac{1}{2}$ mile south of Craig-y-Nos Hospital where the signpost says 'PENWYLLT I', has been marked with direction arrows 'S.W.C.C.' at the awkward turnings, and later on in this issue a map is provided to give the general location.

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following new members to the Club:-

W. Backhouse, 9 Cateswell Road, Hall Green, Birmingham 28.
Miss O. Romano, 32 Swan Street, Swansea.

CONGRATULATIONS

To Gordon and Jean Clissold on the birth of a daughter, Michele.
To Bob Gregory on his engagement.
To David Hunt on his engagement
To Mr. and Mrs. Roger Smith on their recent marriage

- and to Bill Birchenough and Clive Jones on having successfully avoided any of the above pitfalls up to the present time!

O.F.D. LEADERS.

The following member has been elected to the O.F.D. Leaders list

Miss. M. Nutt .

The following members are not now on the above list.

A. Howells, F. Morgan & Miss M. Boughton.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

F./O. M.D. Earnshaw, Officer's Mess, R.A.F. Medmenham, Berks.

THANKS.

Our thanks are due to our Secretary for the most generous gift to the Club of his caravan, lately resting at the Gwyn Arms. The internals are being

used in the new H.Q. while there is some possibility of the chassis being turned in-to an equipment trailer for Club meets.

HON. SECRETARY'S HOLIDAY

David Jenkins will be away from home from August 2nd. to August 27th 1960. Any urgent correspondence should be addressed to the Hon. Assistant Sec. Mrs. V. de Graaf, Neuadd, Llangorse, Brecks.

EQUIPMENT IN THE OLD H.Q.

In vacating the old H.Q. at Penybont Llynfell, a considerable assortment of kit has come to light. Some of this has been removed by its owners but a large amount remains of which the ownership is not known. Any of this equipment which is not claimed by Sept. 30th. 1960 either in person or by a letter to the Hon. Sec. will be disposed of.

ASSISTANT COTTAGE WARDEN.

At the last committee meeting Bill Birchenough was elected unanimously to the above post.

2. CAVE NEWS

OGOF FFYNNON DDU.

This cave will be closed for the day on Saturday 6th. August, 1960 at the request of Mr. and Mrs. J. Barrows on the occasion of their daughter's wedding.

PANT MAWR.

An agreement has been reached with the owners of the land on which Pant Mawr lies, giving sthe S.W.C.C. sole right of access to the cave, which is to be fenced and gated. Members are reminded that friendly relationships of this nature can only be maintained if they co-operate by closing gates, avoiding damaging fencing, not letting dogs wander, etc. etc.

CWM DWR.

It was found recently that a rope ladder had been left for some days in the entrance to this cave after it had been visited by a party. Members are asked to make sure that temporary tackle of this kind is removed after use as accidents may occur through its unauthorised use by children etc., with the possibility of liability to the Club.

AGEN ALLWEDD

This cave is now gated and under the control of the Nature Conservancy, since its entrance lies within the Craig-y-Cilau National Nature Reserve. The official notice is reproduced below. One key has been allocated for the use of the S.W.C.C. (as a constituent member of the Cave Management Committee), and is available, to parties organised from the H.Q. from Mr. John Barrows, Y Grithig, Penycae. This key is to be returned personally, and if it is required during the week reasonable notice must be given to Mr. Barrows.

CRAIG Y CILAU NATIONAL NATURE RESERVE, BRECONSHIRE.

ACCESS TO AGEN ALLWEDD.

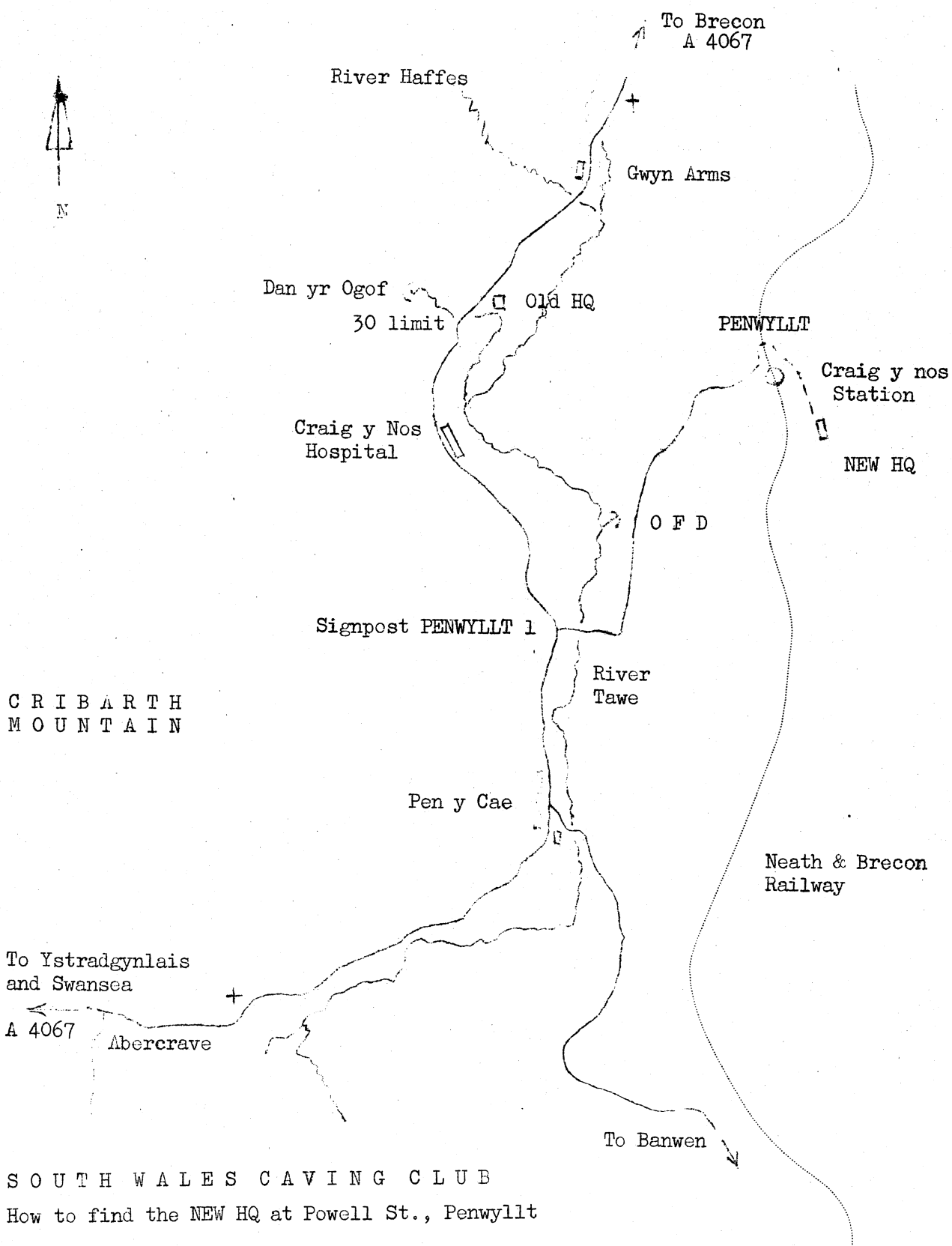
The Nature Conservancy has decided that in order to preserve features of scientific interest and prevent further vandalism the two entrances to Agen Allwedd shall be gated as from 9.0 p.m. on Friday, 29th July, 1960. It is not the Nature Conservancy's intention to withhold permits from responsible visitors provided the conditions of entry are observed. Applications for a permit to enter the cave should be made at least four weeks in advance to the Regional Officer for South Wales, The Nature Conservancy, c/o Department of Zoology, University College of Swansea, Singleton Park, Swansea, Glamorgan. On receipt of a signed Indemnity Chit from each visitor and a ONE POUND deposit (for the key) the Nature Conservancy will issue a key on loan. The deposit will be refunded on return of the key.

The Nature Conservancy, in consultation with the Cave Management Committee has decided that special permission will be required for camping and the use of explosives and dyes.

It is particularly desired that the Cave is kept free from litter of all kinds.

Cave Management Committee consists of:-

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|---|--|
| Mr. I. Homes | } | Hereford Caving Club. |
| Mr. D. Leitch | | |
| Mr. M. Davies | } | British Nylon Spinners
Speleological Section. |
| Mr. Furber | | |
| Mr. D.W. Jenkins | } | South Wales Caving Club. |
| Mr. B. de Graaf | | |
| Regional officer
South Wales. | | The Nature Conservancy. |



SOUTH WALES CAVING CLUB
 How to find the NEW HQ at Powell St., Penwyllt

Scale: 2 1/2" to 1 mile.

3. CAVE RESEARCH GROUP MEETING IN SWANSEA.

The Southern General Meeting of the Cave Research Group was held in the Lecture Hall in the Natural Sciences Building at the University College of Swansea on Saturday, 2nd July 1960. The Club, unfortunately, had very short notice of the details of the meeting but postcards were sent out to all 'local' members giving them the arrangements for the meeting. The result of this effort was most disappointing and I feel that some of the members who live in Swansea, Port Talbot, Ammanford and such places might have made the effort to attend. As a member club of C.R.G. members are welcome at the General Meetings and they should take the opportunity not to miss lectures on some of the interesting aspects of caving.

There were two lectures and a film. The lectures, both illustrated by slides, dealt with the excavation of some bone caves in Devon and the structure of the coastal scenery in Gower. The latter was of great interest to members who often make trips to the area. Many of the points made by Miss Groom could well apply to our own investigations into the structure of limestone scenery not only on the coast but also inland.

The film which followed was one which I hope that I shall have the chance of seeing again. It showed the work of specialists in the underground laboratory in the Grotte Moulis near St. Girons in the Pyrenees. All being well Jefferson and I hope to visit these laboratories during our visit to the area in August. The colour of the film was good, while the close-up shots of the various forms of cave life were magnificent. Those who missed it missed a treat.

On Sunday the Hon. Secretary went hunting for some of the famous bone caves near Pennard. This turned out to be a most interesting trip not only from the cave point of view, but from the flora, while shots of the coastal scenery kept the camera busy. Fauna was encountered in the shape of an adder on the cliff path. I am not quite sure which moved the faster the adder or the Hon. Sec!!! While this was going on a party had gone into Llethrid and this is described by G.T. Jefferson.

D.W. Jenkins.

The main caving trip on the Sunday after the C.R.G. meeting was to Llethrid. A party some eight strong, having foregathered in hot sunshine, eventually entered that cave at about 11.30 under the leadership of Lewis Railton and Bill Little. Those members of the party possessing anything like reasonable dimensions found parts of the entrance series tight enough, but not impossibly so, and in due course the great chambers were reached and the fine array of curtains, columns and bosses admired. Unfortunately a certain amount of wilful damage seems to have been done to some formations while far too many others have been soiled, presumably unintentionally, with smears of clay. Muddy hands cannot be avoided in Llethrid, but they should be kept off the formations.

The stream passage, apart from one small pool, was completely dry as far as the sump. This was entered by some of the hardier elements, but in spite of powerful verbal support from the rear, was not forced. This is presumably the sump which Hugh Clarke was able to get through in 1955. On the way back along the stream passage the party climbed up to the left into a series of clay floored chambers and spent some time in a rather dilettante attempt to work out the relationship between these chambers and the sump at a lower level. The return to stream passage by means of a glorious mud glissade must rank as one of the minor delights of a visit to Llethrid.

In due course after a leisurely and very enjoyable four hour trip which must have been one of the driest ever made in Llethrid, the party emerged from the cave into bright sunshine and the unwelcome attentions of some particularly vicious horse flies. The visiting cavers were surprised and impressed by this remarkable cave with its fine formations and great chambers. Llethrid, after all, is a region of no very great relief, and nobody could expect there to be so much cave under that particular bit of countryside.

G.T. Jefferson.

4. FIRE HYDRANT PASSAGE, PANT MAWR.

In writing this article I am looking for someone who can satisfy my curiosity about the Fire Hydrant Passage.

From my own experience I can only pass on a word of warning. In South Wales the amount of foul air trouble we get is negligible and that limited to narrow, dead-end passages, or the neighbourhood of excessive rotting vegetation and it seems improbable that either of these excuses can be applied to the Fire Hydrant Passage. The fairly wide passage has a regular upward slope, and through it runs an appreciable stream - a text-book example of the sort of passage where one doesn't find foul air.

For those who haven't been to Pant Mawr the Fire Hydrant is to be found at the far end of the Great Hall, the last very large, mud covered chamber before the sump, and consists of a large quantity of water gushing out of the right hand wall (looking down stream).

It is undoubtedly the most important tributary stream in Pant Mawr, contributing a considerable amount of water to the sump. In dry weather, in fact, this contribution is over half. It is impossible to enter the passage where the water surges, but climbing into a small hole, near the roof, a little to the right of the Fire Hydrant, brings one to the stream.

I have been to the Fire Hydrant on three occasions, the last being on

30th August 1959 with Laurie Galpin, and each time I had lighting trouble.

I led using a carbide lamp, and Laurie followed using an electric one. Before much progress had been made I noticed my light losing power. It was burning with a small, smokey, yellow flame as if the jet was blocked, but cleaning made no improvement.

Further progress only resulted in more difficulty and eventually the flame died out completely. It was impossible to relight my lamp with flint or matches, the latter just fizzling out, as if damp. By now, we had progressed to a passage approximately 3'x 3', having passed a couple of uninteresting looking side turnings on the way.

Laurie pushed on about 15' to an aven about 18' high, to find that the passage continued, keeping similar dimensions. Further progress was futile, so it was decided to return to the entrance. After going back a little way, I was able to light my lamp and as the distance to the entrance grew less so the flame grew larger, until it was once more normal. The matches that had been useless inside the passage, proved to be alright once outside.

As humidity was about cave-normal, this would not seem a reasonable answer to our lighting problem. It does not seem that oxygen lack and excess of CO₂ was our difficulty, for we at no time experienced any particular breathing difficulty and as I have previously stated, an ample stream flowed down the passage, and this coupled with the slope, should have been enough to get rid of any excessive CO₂. I think it extremely unlikely that any chemicals like pyrogallol would be present that would rid the air of its O₂ content.

I am interested in explanations! The only thing I can think of is that the constant uphill slope I spoke of, is in fact, an illusion. It could be that the passage passes over a hump and that the stream can be considered to be flowing through a tube, three walls being the bed of the stream and the fourth, the interface between the water and the air above, under a syphon-type action. This would explain an excess of CO₂ remaining upstream.

Is the use of independent breathing apparatus going to be our method of solving the problem? Cave Diving Group?

Bill Harris.

5. TWO DIVES IN SOUTH WALES.WHITE LADY GOES TO CWM PWLL-Y-RHYD!

After the disappointing operation in O.F.D. at Easter when a promising dive had to be called off owing to an unexpected shower of boulders falling on the divers from the roof of Hush Passage, it is a pleasure to be able to report a successful operation at White Lady Cave on 26th June last with two divers.

It has long been known that water from Cwm Pwll-y-Rhyd emerged in flood time from White Lady Cave, but it was suspected that less came out than went in, so leading to speculation that there might be a 'master cave' somewhere in the vicinity. However, this dive makes it almost certain that the only way out of Cwm Pwll-y-Rhyd is via White Lady since no other exit was discovered.

The divers' luggage reached the entrance to White Lady Cave from above by means of Land-Rover and line, and by reason of repeated attacks from the notorious Cwm Pwll horse-fly force, the party was changed and in the cave in record time.

The dive began with a solo reconnaissance on lifeline, the diver laying a wire behind from his 'aflo' which he cut and tied to a lead weight at the furthest extent of his travel. From the terminal sump it was found that a pebble slope led down under a low arch until at a depth of 15 ft. an underwater passage very similar to the dry part of the cave continued. The left hand wall of this passage was followed for a distance of about 100 ft. until at a point marked by a mud slope the diver dropped his weight and returned to base.

Both divers then returned along the wire, 'free' diving, until the terminal weight was reached, when one tied on again and the exploration continued. It was soon evident that the main passage turned right at this point, and after following it for about another 100ft. another pebble slope was seen rising into a rift containing an air surface. The divers came ashore in a wet bedding plane and were just about to congratulate one another on having found the 'master cave' (even though it smelt somewhat) when voices were heard coming through a half flooded tunnel filled with brushwood, which proved to be a part of Cwm Pwll-y-Rhyd.

After tying the wire to a convenient snag in the roof, the divers returned to base to report, and then made a further sortie to explore the mud slope at the bend in the passage. This rose into a submerged muddy tube too tight for much progress to be made, so that after looking at a similar and lower tube which also proved to be filled with mud it was decided to adjourn to Cwm Pwll-y-Rhyd, and see what was to be discovered there.

The divers changed places for the preliminary solo reconnaissance, but although a side passage was explored the only way on proved to be via the passage that the divers had come out of previously. A low passage under the northern side of the open pool was found to be too tight.

Several pale fish thought to be trout were seen during the operation which although with apparently normal eyes seemed to take no notice of the divers' lights. However, they swam off rapidly on the approach of the divers hand!

Many thanks from the divers to their helpers: we're sorry we couldn't find you a short 'duck' with a vast dry system beyond, but hope that you'll go on hoping with enough energy and enthusiasm to push us into another sump at some date in the near future.

Brian de Graaf.
Charles Owen George.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS - 1960/61.

DON'T FORGET..... Subscriptions for the current year are NOW OVER DUE. The rate of Subscription remains unchanged, viz.,

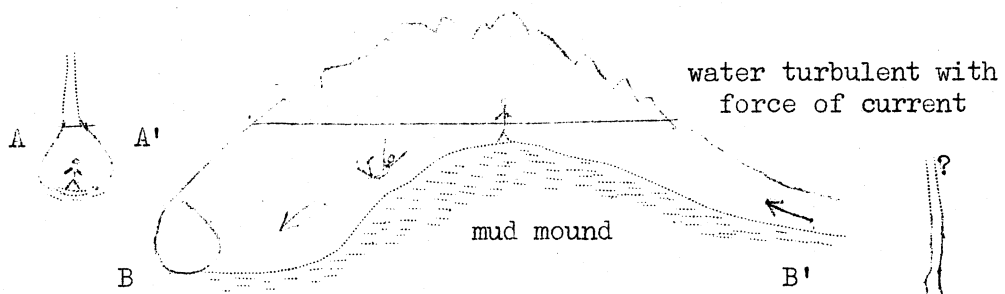
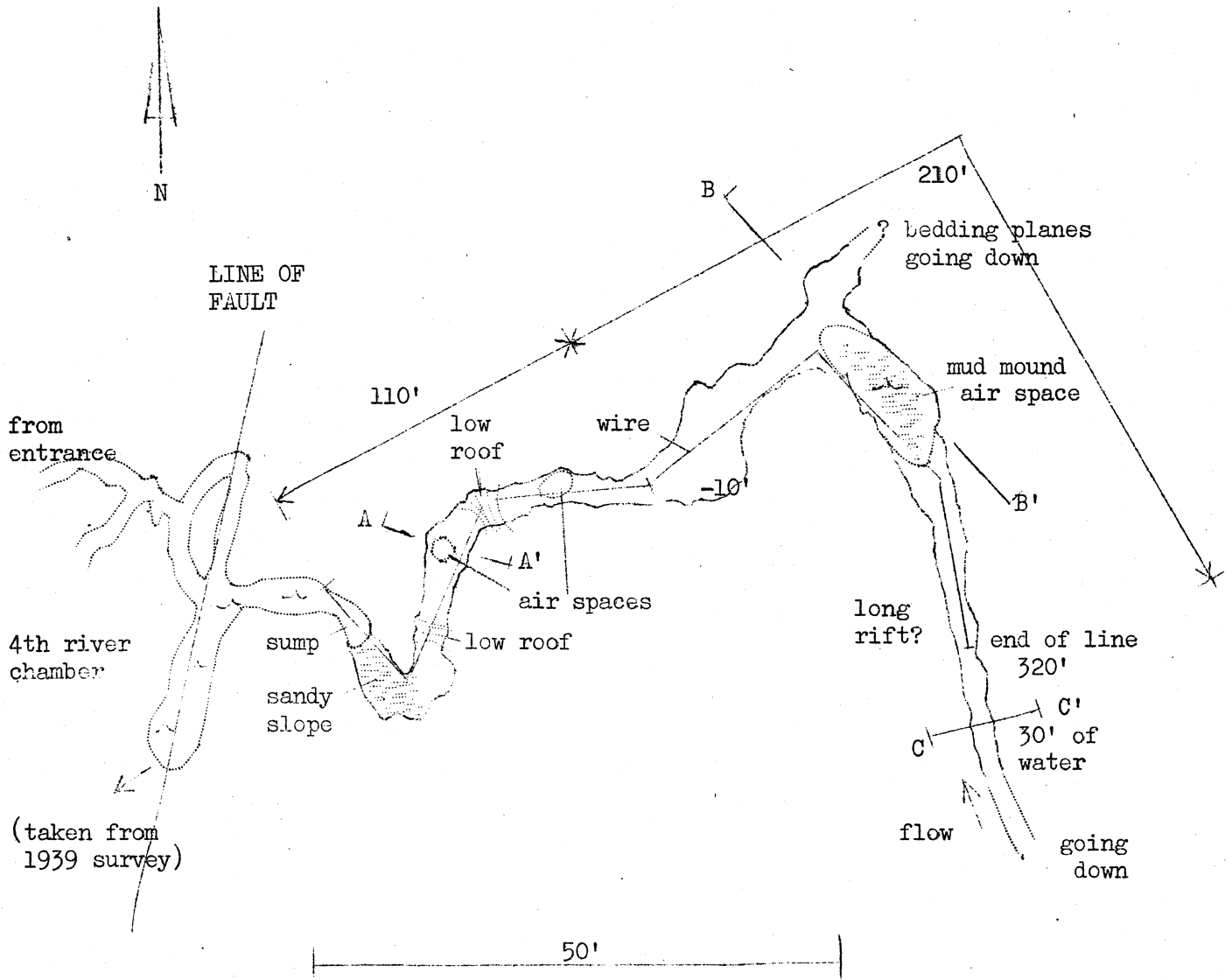
- Full Members 15/-
- Joint Members 20/-
- Junior Members 7/6d.

DON'T FORGET ALSO that the proposal to raise 5/- per head on Club Membership to provide the final amount required to pay for the conversion of the New Headquarters was approved at the Annual General Meeting.

THIS MEANS that Members, when sending their Subs. to the Hon Treasurer, should ADD FIVE SHILLINGS. It would be most helpful if those Members who pay their Subs. by Standing Bankers Order would send the five bob direct to the Treasurer to save altering their Order for this one year.

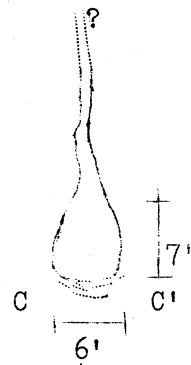
FINALLY, DON'T FORGET, that the New Headquarters Development Fund is still open to receive donations from those Members who failed to respond to the Chairmans Appeal last year.

L.A. Hawes.



A WELL KNOWN CAVE
 IN CARMARTHENSHIRE
 Dived on 10th. July 1960.

C.R.G. grade 2.



A WELL KNOWN CAVE IN C. MARTHENSHIRE

A week of thunder storms and a night of heavy rain made even the most optimistic of us feel that the expedition we were embarking on would be 'washed out'. Clive Jones, cheerfully pointing out flooded rivers, did not improve our hopes of finding the stream in a fit state to dive in. An earlier attempt to wrest the secrets of the 4th. sump by Balcombe and others in the 1940's, was also afflicted by wet weather. In their case flood water prevented any constructive diving being done. However we were fortunate in finding the water level normal, despite the rain.

Although an attempt was made to cut the amount of gear needed to a minimum, the heap that remained to be carried in was still formidable. After much effort on everyone's behalf the 4th sump was reached. At this point 'Goon Suits' were a doubtful advantage; they hold the heat in too well!

To see us off, the supporting party waded to the extreme limit of the known cave. After the hot trip in, it was delightful to sink beneath the surface. The water was refreshingly cold and the visibility good. Fears that the current would prove too strong were found to be groundless; my nightmares (endless struggles in raging whirlpools) proved to be quite false.

Below the surface we went down a sand slope into a submerged river chamber of no great size. A turning to the Left through a bedding-plane, led to a low arch on the other side of which was a small air space. This air space was merely a small tube that appeared to peter out. Another arch followed, succeeded by a further air space which again did not lead anywhere. After a short length of passage we entered the mouth of what appeared to be a large chamber. The floor sloped away and our 'Aflo' lights revealed an exciting mass of water. Our hopes raised, we wondered whether we had discovered the beginning of a new and vast series? However, at this juncture the 120 ft. lifeline reached its end. We were forced to leave a weight at the end of a length of wire, and to retrace our steps. The fact that we had found a feasible passage was well received by the shore party who promptly retreated to a drier stance.

On diving for the second time we returned to the weight we had left and attached a further length of wire. Our earlier hopes of a chamber were proved wrong for we merely found a wider length of passage. The silt we stirred up in our passing drifted rapidly behind us and thus assured us that we were in fact, still with the main flow. Going forward an air space appeared above us, so with renewed hope we scabbled up a greasy mud slope. At the top of the slope we both broke surface, only to see a rather featureless roof. As far as we could see there were no passages off the air space, which was roughly triangular in shape. The river flowed over the mud slope, this slope was about half-way along the length of the chamber and rose to a peak half-way up the wall. The descent on the far side was equally steep and led into a narrow rift which widened out near the floor.

We entered the rift which continued to drop away steeply. Pressing

on, we found the pressure squeeze tightening up on our lower portions, while Brian was hearing strange whistling noises. At 30 ft. we called a halt as we were breathing 100% Oxygen, which becomes toxic beyond this depth. As far as could be seen the passage continued to go on in a downwards direction. After attaching the end of our line to a convenient rocky projection we wended our way back. The return journey was made completely blind; the silt having risen in clouds, completely destroying all visibility.

Only on surfacing did we realise how cold the water really was. I think that everyone was glad to return to the warm and rainy conditions outside.

Many thanks must go to those who carried the gear. It must be small consolation to know that the over-land route really does end at the 4th. sump, yet without their help such a trip is impossible.

Now it remains to return with mixture breathing apparatus and to attempt to probe still further. It is still possible that a dry system lies further in which could be reached by digging, once its existence is proved and plotted. Those who see a wire leading into 4th. sump are warned against attempting a short duck!

Charles Owen George.
Brian de Graaf.

10th July 1960.

6. FRANCE 1958 (Part 3)

Back down into Les Eyzies. This time we had a stop to inspect the 'museum of prehistory'. Les Eyzies is called the Capitol of Prehistory and the museum is one of the most striking features of the place. It is built on the cliff face high above the town, and incorporates the remains of what was once the chateau, a terrace extends along the cliff from the main building, ending under an overhanging promontory where a 10ft. high statue of a Neanderthal man stands and surveys the valley below. Above the buildings are holes in the cliff which are remains of actual pre-historic dwellings.

When we reached the museum it had just closed, but, since we had come 'all the way from England specially to see it', we were allowed in for half an hour. Inside it was very well laid out - prehistory became easy to follow and understand, even in French, but we did not really have time to absorb much of what we saw.

WEDNESDAY (July 30th.)

We had decided that now it was about time we had a look at a proper

cave - a cave in which we could do what we liked without being bound by guides and concrete paths and photography restrictions. The S.C.P. had marked for us on our map the position of a certain Grottes de Douyme and from their description, it sounded worth a visit. They had described several caves to us, so we were not quite sure which description applied to this one, but we hoped it was going to be the one with a walk along a slippery slope above a river of mud, chest deep (tres amusant). We were all for a tres amusant cave.

This time we took the car and the bike, so that if necessary, if some of us got fed up, we could come back in two groups. We managed to get away in reasonable time, and made, first of all, for Thenon again. Four miles out of Thenon on the Brive road we reached Azerat where we turned off to the left to look for the Grottes. A narrow road took us up the side of the valley in which we were to follow the stream (the Ser) to its source. We climbed as far as a track shown on the map which we hoped would take us back down to stream level, and luckily we were able to get the car down here through a farmyard and as far as the end of the road which was just by the stream.

The heat was the chief thing to be remembered about this place. It was now a scorching airless day, and the stream was far too small to swim in. We had intended changing into caving clothes here, but, as it was some way to walk, we realised that we should have to wear very little and carry most of our stuff. By the time we had reached the cave, we were wearing even less.

The cave turned out to be a mile and a half away, but we were able to find it easily enough merely by following the stream to its source. We thought several times that we were never going to get there as the valley showed no signs of closing in and there were no signs of cliff faces or any limestone features at all. When we did find it, it was in a low cliff face, but amongst a dense growth of trees and brambles quite impossible to find without a stream to follow.

We changed amongst the ruins of an old watermill, and four of us entered the cave. Agnes stayed outside hoping to find enough shade and breeze to keep cool in and we promised to be out in 4 hours.

The entrance was a low arch, but, just inside, it was high enough to stand up and we were able to walk up the stream. The passage soon became about 20ft. wide and 15 ft. high and we had to climb up on to a sloping mudbank in order to keep out of deep water in the stream. While traversing this slope we thought of the description of the river of chest-deep mud, so did our best to avoid slipping down. In actual fact we soon realised that apart from a few deep pools, the stream was perfectly easy to walk in, and learnt afterwards that the description applied to quite another cave. The stream could be followed for some 1000 ft. until it emerged from a sump. To the left a boulder climb led up under a steeply sloping roof, roof and boulders nearly joined about 20ft. up, but we could easily climb through and found ourselves on the floor of a large chamber. The boulder slope was really the continuation of an immense boulder choke filling the whole of one end of the chamber and disappearing way up into the roof. The rest of the floor was a steep mud slope, and the whole thing was some 100ft. long and 50ft. high. We climbed the boulders in the hope of being

able to find a way on, but it was a complete choke. The view from the top looking back at the lights of people on the floor of the chamber was most impressive; the height of this end of the chamber must be about 80 ft. I tried to take a photograph from the bottom looking up, but it was only possible to get half the height of the choke. Nevertheless, I think it was worth the three flashbulbs I had to use.

On the way out the others tried to persuade me to try the sump for length, but I managed to convince them it was not worth it, as we still had the so-called 'left hand cave' to do. This was a second entrance we had been told about but had not noticed on our way in.

After emerging into the warm outside air, we dispersed amongst the undergrowth over the banks round the cave entrance, and soon a shout from Ann announced that she had found the second entrance. It was only about 30 yards from the first one, but completely hidden in dense vegetation. It was another stream, the same size, but the entrance was higher than it was wide, and we could walk from the start.

A long fairly straight, stream passage roughly 8' wide, by 20' high. In the roof, we noticed numerous small avens or solution holes. These followed the joints in the rock which ran along the centre of the roof. We heard an odd high pitched squeaking noise, even above our own water-splashing noises, and, on looking up, we saw one of these avens full of bats - at least, 'full of bats' is rather an understatement; it was a solid, heaving mass of bats; the roof was invisible through them and there must have been too many for comfort, as, every now and then, one would fall out and fly off. We then saw several of these colonies, apart from hundreds scattered individually over the roof. We did not know what make of bats they were, except that they were not horse-shoes.

After 2000 ft. the passage became considerably smaller, and ended in a mud-and-boulder choke. This could be climbed and a very small boulder chamber entered through a squeeze at the top. Colin met a bat as he was crawling through which touched his face.

There was very little water in the cave, although one or two pools were knee deep. There was not one formation in either cave. So much for the Grottes de Douyme.

We emerged after having 'done' both caves in $3\frac{1}{2}$ hrs., undressed, and set out on the long, hot walk back to the car. Our feet, which had begun to get cold in the cave water, were too hot again within minutes of coming out. We could not help comparing this with coming out of Eglwys Faen on to the Llan-gattock Tram road in the middle of winter when clothes freeze solid in a matter of minutes. We came to the conclusion that Douyme suited us better.

Back at the car we lay in the stream to get clean and cool, and had a mid-afternoon lunch.

Seaton Phillips.

7. CWM DWR CAVE.REPORT OF THE 1938 EXPLORATION.

During the Ogof-yr-Esgyrn (bone Caves) Meet of August 1938, Arthur Hill and Bill Doyle reported that, in company with Mr. E.E. Roberts (Y.R.C.) and others, they had made an inspection of a 20 ft. deep rift, half way up the working face, of the northern Cwmdwr Quarry, above Craig-y-Nos Station, which had been broken into during quarrying operations. Owing to the fact that the floor, of loose boulders, appeared to be a false one, and liable to run in, Mr. Roberts decided that it was dangerous to work there, and exploration was abandoned.

Being interested in this report, a party consisting of Bill and Mrs. Weaver, Arthur Hill, Arthur Price and myself, decided to see if we could get through.

Bill, armed with a "borrowed" crowbar, and securely life-lined, in case the floor ran in, found that the floor under the boulders was solid, and that a small passage ran from one corner, at a steep angle, into what appeared to be a large chamber. Twenty feet of ladder was passed through this passage, and Bill descended, followed by the remainder of the party, except Mrs. Weaver, who remained, keeping an eye on the lashings.

The top end of this 40 ft. long "Master Chamber", as we called it, was some 31 ft. high, and about 6 ft. wide; the roof sloping sharply to 10 ft. high at the middle and rising to 15 ft. at the lower end. This chamber lies roughly at right angles to the entrance rift, and contains a number of fine orange-coloured stalactites, and a few "Straws". A fine calcite cascade flows down the left wall to the right of the ladder pitch, and there is a peculiar "cube" of sand, about 3 ft. high, standing against the opposite wall. The floor consists of loose boulders, which are banked up at one end.

The cave then turns to the left at a rough right-angle, and, passing over a barrier of rock, 6 ft. high, which half filled the passage, and beneath a very fine cluster of "straws" and stalactites, we entered a small aven, some 26 ft. high. At the time of the survey I had occasion to climb this aven, and found that there were 3 small passages, forming an old upper series, near the top, which followed the direction of those of the main cave. All were partly blocked by calcite deposits and were impassable.

Passing on from this aven I entered a constricted passage, about 8 ft. above the floor of the aven, which terminated in a small chamber with a beautiful white calcite floor, which flowed down a rift to the right, and which Arthur Price, who is used to such things, failed to get through. A small passage, guarded by a fine stalactite, runs back in the direction of the aven, and is probably part of the old upper series.

Returning to the aven I found that Arthur Hill had gone down a short passage to the right which terminated almost at once in a choked sink. He

had then taken a branch passage to the left, which continued for some distance and then terminated in a small chamber and another choked sink, some 37 ft. from the point of entry.

This last portion of the cave, though lacking anything of beauty, is of considerable interest, as the line taken by the water flows through the cave during rain, and is directly opposite to the direction of that in the nearby Cwmdwr (main) Quarry Cave. That underground water can do curious things can be seen in the Llangattock Cave, near Crickhowell, Brecon, but to find opposite lines of flow so close together is rather surprising.

As there was every possibility of the cave being destroyed by blasting in the near future, an early survey was necessary, and a party consisting of John Biden, as photographer, Norman Paddock and myself arrived at the cave the following Saturday evening at 11 p.m. Here we met Bill Boyle, who took the opportunity of inspecting the cave while we had it laddered.

The survey followed the usual cold and wet course, being relieved by the colourful remarks of the enraged photographer who had discovered a serious defect in his camera, not, unfortunately, before he had made the whole atmosphere thick with the fumes of flash-powder. We completed our work by 5 a.m. Sunday morning, and returned to the "Gwyn", where tea and other stimulants soon revived us.

It would seem that the survey was only partly completed with a short time to spare, for two weeks later the entrance was blocked by blasting. The cave is very small, as Welsh caves go, but it has some fine calcite formations, and presents an interesting problem, by reason of the unexpected direction taken by the water passing through it.

P. Raynes.

CWM DWR I, 1960.

At last it is possible to write a complete account of the digging operations which after about 6 years of effort, have enabled us to re-enter the cave Cwm Dwr I.

In newsletter 21, November 1957, Les Hawes reviews work done at that time. In this article he says that not until 1954 was any digging done in the Quarry presumably due to the time spent in O.F.D. Consultations with the Quarry-Master fixed a point for the dig to begin, although the successful shaft is at least twice as far from the face of the cliff as was the original dig.

It was always assumed that the main passage would run directly out under the floor of the Quarry i.e. West, and cross trenches were dug to try and find the top of this passage. These efforts were not successful.

During 1957 the size of the dig was steadily increasing - partly due to efforts to establish the extent of the fill and partly due to run-in of the scree slope on the North of the dig.

During 1958 and until July 1959 no serious digging was done except for one shaft about half way along the South side of the collapse. This got down to about 15 ft. and really looked quite promising - without the encouragement of a draught however - until a large grit boulder tried to make John Platt even longer and leaner than he is already! The collapse that followed the fall of this boulder put an end to this particular effort and despite much talk, little digging was done until the Summer of 1959. During a weeks holiday at the Club Tony Holroyde, John Platt and myself, decided that the only possible place to dig would be at the outer end of the collapsed section, so that we would have at least two, maybe three, solid walls to work to. We cleared the surface back and started an exploratory dig where the entrance shaft now is.

Having gone down about 8 ft. - trying to keep the sides sloping enough not to run in, it was obvious that we were not going to be immediately rewarded and that to go deeper, proper shuttering would be required.

Nothing more was done until February this year. There was suddenly great interest in this particular dig, probably due to its convenient location. Gordon Clissold, Brian Fenn, Olive Jones and many others all 'had a go'. Four telegraph poles were installed in the remains of last year's dig to try and shutter it and the depth was increased to some 15 ft., the added portion being properly shuttered. The tripod had been released from duty in the old H.Q. drying room and had now been erected over the dig. It is amazing how much quicker and easier digging is made by the use of a tripod and pulley block. At this stage there was a noticeable draught from a narrow rift on the South side of the dig. Melting snow caused a collapse and run-in of the scree slope and we lost about 6 ft. The next week-end 15 telegraph poles very conveniently fell into the top of the dig, and had not the name Cwm Dwr dig been so well established, no doubt the name Stockade Dig would have been coined.

When the top few feet of the dig had been securely shuttered, the square shafting which had been filled by the collapse the week before, was again dug and about 3 ft. depth was added. Two large boulders were removed and this gave a puffy draught and about 3 ft. extra depth visible. It was decided at this stage to remove a protruding boulder near the bottom of the shaft. Peter Harvey supervised this operation - Quote:-

Peter. "Heave!, Heave!."
 Me. "Careful, the rope will slip."
 Peter. "My slings never slip!" (Rope breaks)
 "The rope breaks!".

- and having successfully removed the block, we lost about 2 ft.!

Easter weekend saw more activity than ever before. The dig had become deeper than any of the previous efforts and we were even deeper than the pieces of red umbrella! On Easter Saturday we got down to a large slab of limestone on the South side of the dig at 23 ft. Another two large boulders were removed and in the (apparently inevitable) run-in which followed, we lost about 2 ft. A night trip produced two 13 ft. railway lines, one of which was later cut in half. Three people carried each line and from comments heard afterwards it seems that most of the time only one slave was on the ground - carrying the line and the other two people!

Progress on Sunday and Monday gave about another 4 ft. depth over quite a large area and in particular under the large limestone slab mentioned earlier. The way on was obvious. We could see 10 ft. or more down at about 45° and this space proved to be under the roof of a passage. Immediate progress was barred by two very large boulders and after much discussion it was decided to remove them by chemical means. This was done last thing on Easter Monday and was apparently successful although many loose pieces were left in the way.

Tuesday was spent by John Platt and myself propping the obviously loose boulders in place, using rotten wood and faith. Over the weekend everyone had concentrated on increasing the depth and collapse looked imminent.

The weekend after Easter, Bill Little, Bill Birchenough, and others removed the shattered rocks and were able to slip (or squeeze) into the cave. After exploration, they naturally wanted to come out again. This was a different story. A large boulder which had only slightly restricted entry, made the return journey difficult even for the slimmest and, unaided, impossible for the largest. Fortunately the tripod was still in position. A double purchase pulley block arrangement and two helpers below to push soon removed the obstruction!!! The entrance has now been made considerably larger and should not worry even a woolly mammoth.

Unfortunately I was not at the club the weekend that the exploration was carried out and I must therefore hand over the story to someone else. I know that I haven't mentioned everyone who helped to dig in CWM DWR, to say nothing of those who provided tea for the weary, but no doubt I will be forgiven.

Bernard Woods.

8. OGOF FFYNNON DDU LEADER'S LIST

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