

SOUTH WALES CAVING CLUB NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 44

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JUNE 1963

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1. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Held at H.Q. Penwyllt, Easter Sunday 1963

ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE FOR 1963

- President. Brig. E.A. Glennie, C.I.E., D.S.O.
- Vice Presidents. Mr. A.H. Hill. Mr. D.W. Jenkins.
Dr. D.A. Bassett, B.Sc., Ph.D., F.G.S. Mr. C.L. Railton.
- Chairman. Dr. E. Aslett.
- Hon. Members. T. Ashwell Morgan, Dr. A.J.R. Hudson, C. Powell,
Mr. & Mrs. J. Barrows, Mrs. G. Price, G. Platten
Dr. Dorothy Nichols, Mr. & Mrs. P.I.W. Harvey, C. Freeman.
- Hon. Secretary. Gwyn Thomas
- Hon. Assistant Secretary. Charles Owen George.

Hon. Treasurer.	L.A. Hawes.
Hon. Editor.	Brian de Graaf.
Hon. Records Officer.	Derrick Webley.
Hon. C.R.O.	Gordon Clissold.
Hon. Tackle Manager.	Terry Lloyd.
Hon. Warden.	W. Birchenough.
Hon. Auditor.	J.M. Davies.
Committee.	Clive Jones, John Barrows and Rob. Williams.
	Brian Fenn was co-opted by the new committee.

PROPOSED ADDITIONS AND AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION MADE AT THE 1963 A.G.M.

It was agreed that instead of considering the notices of motion put forward to the meeting, a sub-committee should be set up to go into the matter of the revision of the Constitution as a whole. Their findings would be put to an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Club at a future date. The following members were elected to this sub-committee:-

W. Clarke. C. George. L. Hawes B. Woods. Noel Dilly.

HON. SECRETARY'S REPORT.

Mr. President, Mr. Vice-President, Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen, welcome to another Annual General Meeting of Clwb Ogofeydd Deheudir Cymru and a special welcome to those of you who are usually in bed at this time on a Sunday morning.

For the next few minutes you are bound by our constitution to sit back and receive the Secretary's annual report, but knowing you, I am confident that you will soon amend this state of affairs and then our A.G.M.'s can be entirely devoted to our usual standard of witty, intelligent and unbiased debate.

What have club members been doing since the last A.G.M. (i.e. other than planning for this A.G.M.) and what success have we had in the projects undertaken. The answer to the first question is as always "not enough" but to the second question the answer is, I'm pleased to report, very encouraging. The projects we have undertaken have met with considerable success, not always measured by the finds made, but by the effort put into them. The Tunnel Cave shaft is a first class example of what the Club can do when it has the means and an objective. To continue to dig on this scale it is necessary to have the equipment and having obtained a drill and rods we now only require a compressor capable of providing 60 ft.³/min of air at 100 lbs/sq.in. and costing about £60 or less. The search for a suitable machine has brought us into contact with practically every plant hire contractor in S. Wales, the War Office, the Post Office, the Gas Board and numerous night-watchmen. Despite our efforts we are still without a compressor, but if this cash is kept in reserve I am sure that we will eventually get the type of machine we require.

The major discovery of the year was by Mel Davies who although he is

a member of this club is better known as Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer etc. of the B.N.S. caving section. His discovery of Ogof Cil-yr-Uchen ia a lesson to all of us to look beyond the immediate vicinity of Penwyllt.

The shuttering of the Cwm Dwr shaft in the early part of the year was a feat of speleo engineering. Enthusiasm for digging in Cwm Dwr has been spasmodic during the past twelve months, but the dig has progressed and although it cannot go on for much longer due to shortage of space for rubble, I have been instructed to inform you by our resident E.D.M. that there will be no redundancy and that places will be found for all at other sites.

Numerous other digs have been carried out by club members since last Easter but there is little to report from them. Talking about Little, I would like to draw your attention to the work he has done on tree planting. This should make a lot of little dachshunds very happy.

We are all pleased to see No.4. cottage being used for the purpose for which it was intended this weekend. We did have doubts at one time that members with children would not take full advantage of the place. However, I'm sure this will not be so in the future since a considerable amount of field-work has been done during the past twelve months.

This year instead of Club working week-ends to maintain our H.Q. we had a number of working parties and as this system appears to be the better one it will be continued. Whilst on the subject of the H.Q. it is worth while mentioning that the usual number of complaints has been received regarding the cleanliness of the establishment and an equal number of people have grumbled at the number of cottage rules. You can't please everybody all of the time and the number of rules we have is the optimum. If people keep the place reasonably tidy then there will be no need for further and thus unnecessary rules.

We were without water for 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ months this winter, but we have plans which might overcome this difficulty. However we were compensated for being unable to wash, by the ice and snow of the best winter for years. I would recomend members in future winters like this last one to take advantage of the lack of facilities at Penwyllt and try the skiing toboganing and climbing and short countrywalks in the night.

The last report contained a recommendation that we should tackle our projects on a bigger scale with better equipment. This we have done and are doing. This year's very mildest of suggestions concerns something we cannot buy with money, but which the Club really lacks. I refer to leaders, people who start and push projects and not just follow the crowd. If tools and materials have been preventing you then I am sure that if you can convince whoever is on the committee of the worthiness of what you are doing, then help, even cash, will be forthcoming.

This year has seen the start of the S.S.C. and you will hear more of this later from Jeff. The S.W.C.C. has contributed a considerable amount

to cave science in the past; the number of C.R.G. publications by club members bears witness to this fact and I hope that through our new S.S.C. we will in the future contribute even more.

Club members this year wrote a C.R.G. publication on caving equipment and, not wishing to blow our own trumpet too much, I think it is one of the best C.R.G. publications to date.

Our own Newsletter has continued its high standard thanks to our Editor and his staff, but remember that the standard of our Newsletter depends on the articles you, the members, provide. I would like to take this opportunity to extend a special vote of thanks to all those members who promised articles and never quite got around to writing them. Martin Gilbert and his Co workers have this year completed a grade IV survey of Ogof-y-Ci and we hope to publish this during the coming year. We now have a complete survey kit in the club tackle and I hope that we will next year find time to survey the numerous un-surveyed caves in the area.

On June 2nd last, we held our first annual dinner for a number of years. The evening was a great success thanks to the organisers, Brian Fenn and 'Blokes' and to the appearance of the gentlemen of Waun Fignen Felen.

We have tried to encourage members to get together on caving expeditions abroad and a note went into the Newsletter to this effect and much to my amazement the number of replies was only one short of what we had estimated in committee. I wrote to this member and am pleased to report he is joining an expedition with the U.B.S.S. with a number of other S.W.C.C. members to Spain this summer. A trip to Austria is also in hand for this summer and negotiations have started (one way) with our Yugoslav friends for 1964. If you are thinking of caving abroad in 1964 now is the time to do something about it and if any members are interested I suggest we have a get together after this meeting.

To conclude, I wish to thank the committee members for the work they have done on your behalf and for all their assistance to me in my job - God Bless them.

Clive Jones.

HON. TREASURER'S REPORT (Read by Brian Fenn in the absence of Les Hawes)

Mr. President, Mr. Chairman, Blokes; may I first of all apologise for my absence. A missing Treasurer often provides cause for alarm but you may be assured in this case that the year's profits just failed to measure up to the cost of two air tickests to South America. Your Committee has acted in its usual friendly way by sending Agent 001 Birchenough to Fleet last week-end to see that we were still at home.

SOUTH WALES CAVING CLUB

Statement of Income and Expenditure for
the Year ended 28th February, 1963.

<u>EXPENDITURE</u>	£. s. d.	<u>INCOME</u>	£. s. d.
<u>HQ Expenses:</u>			
Electricity	17.19. 6.		
Coal	29.14. 0.		
Paraffin	3. 2. 8.		
Calor Gas	19. 5. 0.		
Cleaning &c. Materials	4. 5. 7.		
Paint, Cement, Timber &c.	11.10. 9.		
Fencing Wire.&c.	4.18. 9.		
Oil Heater	11.19. 6.		
Rates & Water Rates	34. 9. 1.		
Fire & Burglary Insurance	15. 3. 8.		
Sundry Expenses	<u>6. 0. 1.</u>	HQ Fees	218. 13. 0
	158. 8. 7.	Rent: 5 Powell Street	9. 16. 0
<u>General Expenses:</u>			
Club Tackle	14. 6. 1.	Annual Subscriptions	112. 5. 0
Survey Equipment	28. 6. 6.	General Donations	13. 16. 0
Work on Cave Entrances	18.15. 9.	Annual Donation - Dr. Nicholls	50. 0. 0
Maps, Publications &c.	4.11. 0.	B.B.C. Fees	5. 5. 0
Telephone Rental & Charges	28.18. 9.	Filming Unit Fees	10. 0. 0
Newsletters & Circulars	32. 4. 8.	Sale of Song Books	4. 10. 0
Printing, Stationery &c.	2. 5. 0.	Club Dinner Ticket Sales	51. 0. 0
General Postages	19.11. 8.	Telephone Calls	8. 16. 0
Public Liability Insurance	8.12. 6.	Interest on Deposit Account	8. 3. 0
Club Song Books	3. 0. 0.		
Club Dinner	58. 6. 9.		
C.R.G. Sub. 1963.	1. 5. 0.		
Glam. Naturalist Trust Sub. 1963.	1. 1. 0.		
Donation: Nat. Museum of Wales	3. 3. 0.		
Sundry Expenses	<u>1. 9. 0.</u>		
	225. 16. 8.		
	384. 5. 3.		
Gross Surplus for the Year	<u>107. 19. 5.</u>		
	<u>£492. 4. 8.</u>		<u>£492. 4. 0.</u>

Net Revenue and Appropriation Account

	£. s. d.		£. s. d.
HQ Repairs Fund	100. 0. 0.	Gross Surplus brought down	107. 19. 0
Scientific Sub-Committee	10. 0. 0.	Net Loss for the Year	2. 0. 0
	<u>£110. 0. 0.</u>		<u>£110. 0. 0.</u>
Net Loss brought down	2. 0. 7.	Balance at 1st March, 1962.	296. 11. 1
Balance carried forward	294. 11. 3.		<u>£296. 11. 1</u>
	<u>£296. 11. 10.</u>		

SOUTH WALES CAVING CLUB

Scientific Sub-Committee Account

	£. s. d.		£. s. d.
Postages, Stationery &c.	10. 6.	Grant from Club Funds	10. 0. 0.
Balance carried forward	<u>9. 9. 6.</u>		
	<u>£10. 0. 0.</u>		<u>£10. 0. 0.</u>

Note: There is a contingent liability of approx. £4 in respect of Aerial Survey Photographs the purchase of which has been authorised in 1962/63.

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 28th FEBRUARY, 1963.

<u>Liabilities & Credit Balances.</u>	£. s. d.	<u>Assets & Debit Balances.</u>	£. s. d.
Capital Balances	312. 7. 2.	1-10 Powell Street (at cost)	200. 0. 0.
HQ Repairs Fund	200. 0. 0.	Roneo Duplicator w/d value	13. 4. 0.
Scientific Sub-Committee Account	9. 9. 6.	Club Equipment and Rescue Tackle w/d	88. 9. 0.
Revenue Balances	294. 11. 3.	Plant, Loose Tools &c. w/d value	10. 14. 2.
Subscriptions in Advance	6. 15. 0.	HQ Fees Outstanding	33. 7. 6.
		<u>Cash at Bank:</u>	
		Current A/C Lloyds Bank	138. 11. 0.
		Deposit A/C S.Wales	
		Trustee Savings Bank	334. 6. 5.
		Cash in hands of Hon. Treasurer	<u>4. 10. 0.</u>
	<u>£823. 2. 11.</u>		<u>£823. 2. 11.</u>

L.A.Hawes.

Hon. Treasurer.
25th March, 1963.

J.M.Davies.

Hon. Auditor.
10th April, 1963.

The Accounts before you show surprisingly little change from those your were trying to understand last year. First of all our expenses of running the Headquarters show an increase of £48. Of this sum, coal and paraffin purchases account for £12; rates £2; paint, cement and timber £12 and an oil heater another £12. Insurance premiums for fire and burglary are responsible for another £10 of which £4 relates to part of the previous year. Before, the only cover we had been able to obtain was limited to the value of the materials for demolition purposes. This was clearly unsatisfactory and lengthy negotiations have now secured protection which will cover the cost of replacing the entire Headquarters in the event of destruction or serious damage by fire or other causes. The premiums at present are unfavourably weighted because of the isolated location of the premises but it is hoped that a year or two's claims experience will prove the real extent of risk and bring us lower premiums. On the other side of the Statement, our income from H.Q. Fees is shown to have gone up by £33 to the remarkable figure of £218. This unexpectedly large increase is mainly due to the increased number of visiting clubs during the year.

General Expenses show a reduction of £42. Last year we spent a considerable sum on ladder and there is no comparable item this year. The Club now possesses two excellent sets of Survey Gear and the item Work on Cave Entrances includes the new shaft designed for oval cavers at cwm Dwr and the drilling operation into the top of Cascade Aven. From its earliest days, the Club has enjoyed a privileged position in regard to the National Museum of Wales and an opportunity presented itself this year for the Club to recognise the facilities and advice always open to us by making a donation to the Museum's Building Fund which is designed to further extend general facilities.

Our General Income is practically the same as last year with Subscriptions accounting for only an extra £4. This brings us to the Gross Profit for the year which amounts to £108 compared with £91 last year. When carried down into the Appropriation Account and set against provisions for the H.Q. Repairs Fund and the Scientific Sub-Committee the profit becomes a small loss leaving our Revenue Balances still at the high level of £294.

Overleaf, the separate Account heading the Sheet shows the First year's financial working of the Scientific Sub-Committee.

Only one or two items in the Balance Sheet call for special mention. As is customary, our property is shown at cost and the value of equipment shown is after allowing the appropriate high rate of depreciation. H.Q. Fees Outstanding have increased by £13. As a sign of the times, fewer members now pay cash and rely on getting bills even for a stay of once or twice a year. This has resulted in a much greater number of smaller amounts unpaid at the end of the year. It is unfortunately apparent that members have not maintained the same high standards of responsibility for collecting their guests' Fees as in previous years and this has created extra work for me in addition to the loss of a certain amount of income because I have been unable to trace who's guests certain people were. Clearly, some improvement in co-operation from members is desirable.

The H.Q. Fund has reached £200 in two years and this is still inadequate when one considers the balance as representing only £20 per cottage. I think we must bear in mind that we may not always have so many members willing to give up so much time from caving to do our repairs and painting and it is possible that the future may see us having to put one or two of the larger jobs out to contract.

On the question of policy, recent events have shown quite clearly that what S.W.C.C. did yesterday, the Exchequer does today. We started out the year with a programme of expansionist spending which was designed to convert about £150 of our Revenue Balance of £296 from cash to assets by the purchase of more advanced caving equipment and the provision of improved facilities at the Headquarters. The experience gained in running the Club from its Penwyllt H.Q. has been sufficient for me to advise the Committee that there was no longer the necessity to keep large cash balances, particularly when members could derive so much more benefit from them if they were expended to provide improved aids to caving. However, events decreed that we were not to achieve our target. The compressor and drill we hoped to acquire did not materialise and our plans for bigger and better bogs were delayed by siting (or is it "sitting") trouble. The improved heating arrangements we planned to provide at the H.Q. have also been delayed and the reliability of the mains water supply has caused us to have second thoughts about the system to be used. Still, we have the cash in hand and I hope that next year's Committee will continue with the policy of spending more on both the scientific and recreational aspects of caving. Our overall financial position remains very sound and for yet a further year both the Subscription Rate and the H.Q. Fees remain unchanged. (Thunderous applause and cries of Fenn for Pope).

As in previous years, I have been greatly encouraged in my job as Treasurer by the support and help so readily given by my fellow Club Officers and Committee Members, not to mention (and you'll agree it's sometimes better not to mention him) our Chairman - Edward. My particular thanks are due to Brian Fenn for presenting this Report on my behalf and I have done the least I possibly could for him by asking Edward, in his best democratic manner, to rule out of order any questions on the Accounts that might be asked.

Les Hawes.

HON. CAVE RESCUE ORGANISER'S REPORT.

Rescue Personnel.

During the past year it became necessary to prepare a new list of rescuers. On perusal of the information held it was apparent that many of the old rescue forms were out of date. A temporary list was issued and new rescue forms circulated and a request to return at once, made. The response

was poor and led to several months passing before sufficient numbers became available to enable a new list to be printed. This has now been circulated to the four County Police H.Q.s and Wardens concerned.

The statistics of the new lists are as follows:-

Swansea Area.

1 Medical Warden: 3 Wardens: 14 Members (Many Swansea University Students).

Cardiff Area.

1 Medical Warden: 1 Diving Warden: 3 Wardens: 18 Members.

Brecon, Glyn Neath, Aberdare Areas etc.

1 Medical Warden: 1 Diving Warden: 3 Wardens: 12 Members.

Birmingham Area.

1 Warden: 17 Members.

Outside Areas.

2 Wardens: 17 Members.

As will be seen, the number of rescuers in each area appears fairly evenly spread, but during an actual rescue of any severity at least 12 Members would be required. It is highly unlikely that 60% of any team could be gathered quickly enough to effect a rescue, so at present the teams cannot be strictly confined to specific areas for call out. Obviously one would call out the nearest members first.

Rescues and Incidents.

I am pleased to say that good fortune has smiled on South Wales cavers during the past year and there have been no rescues to report.

There was one incident in Agen Allwedd - a rise in the stream level forcibly curtailed the activities of 7 Hereford cavers for 4 hours. A stand-by call-out was made but fortunately was cancelled before the team left. This incident led to the necessity of new information being required for the rescue lists.

Rescue Practices and Lectures.

A rescue practice was held at Pant Mawr by approx. 40 members of the London C.R.O. This meet was very successful, especially as it required the co-ordination of 3 Clubs. Little difficulties were encountered but it appears that quite a large team simplifies matters. A more detailed account of the practice will appear in a future newsletter. A donation towards the

upkeep of rescue equipment was donated by the London C.R.O.

The Swansea team under the instigation of Mr. W.E. Clarke have had two meetings and talks by Dr. Hudson; unfortunately the inclement weather in February put an end to an arranged rescue practice.

Many Members listed have obviously had little or no rescue practice; it is hoped that Wardens will help to rectify this position by instruction to the members in their area.

Equipment.

No additional equipment has been purchased during the past year. A Tilley flood lamp is being obtained.

Various items of food are due for replacement and the old stock i.e. tins of beans etc., is offered for sale to members, the object being to cut down the additional expenditure.

The Medical equipment has been inspected by Dr. R. Williams and found to be in good condition and sufficient in quantity.

A rescue depot is to be set up in the Hereford Caving Club hut at Llangattock. The cost of the depot is being shared by the Nature Conservancy (50%) and 50% between member clubs of the Cave Management Committee. (S.W.C.C. Hereford C.C. and B.N.S.)

Third Conference of C.R.O.'s

It is proposed to hold the 3rd Conference of C.R.O.'s in South Wales, the hosts being the S.W.C.C. Action on this proposal is now being taken and it is hoped to hold the conference in the Autumn.

Little progress appears to have been made during the previous year. This, I feel, is due to the excellent array of equipment in the rescue room previously obtained and to the good fortune, in one respect, of having no accidents during the past year to shake us out of our complacency.

More effort must be made to instruct members on rescue practice and First Aid similar to what occurred during the previous year. It is hoped that by holding the 3rd. C.R.O. conference in Wales a new awakening on the needs of efficient rescue teams will instill itself upon members.

I take this opportunity to thank members for their support during the past year, especially those in the Swansea area for their efforts.

Gordon Clissold.

REPORT OF CAVE SCIENCE SUB-COMMITTEE.

As foreshadowed in the report of the Hon. Secretary last year, the Club Committee has set up a Sub-Committee to deal with the scientific aspects of caving. The members of this Sub-Committee during the past year have been David Cons, Les Hawes, David Jenkins, Bill Little, Lewis Railton, Derrick Webley and myself in the chair. David Jenkins has acted as Recorder and Les Hawes has been keeping a financial eye on us.

We got off to a rather slow start as I, whose job it was to convene meetings, was busy with preparations for an expedition to Arctic Lapland. However, after my return we held our first meeting in early September and have met several times since. Our first task was to try to find out what work of a scientific nature was being carried out by members and who would be prepared to assist in such work. Various appeals in the Newsletter met with a somewhat meagre response, but I see no reason to be disheartened and several projects are going ahead.

A considerable programme of water-tracing is planned and labour for this is being arranged through the Sub-Committee. John Hartwell has agreed to co-ordinate water-tracing activities in the Club and he plans to correlate hydrology with a study of surface features such as shake-holes; aerial photographs will be used extensively in this work and we hope eventually to acquire a set covering the whole of our caving area.

Archaeological and biological work and studies on the growth of stalactites, are continuing with the support of the Sub-Committee, but we have felt it particularly desirable to try to stimulate work which might, however remotely, assist in the discovery of new caves. The water-tracing and allied projects already mentioned are clearly important here, but we have also been trying to organise some geophysical work. This has not proved easy since the equipment used is expensive and the results need expert interpretation. However we have now had an offer by the Geology Department of University College, Cardiff, to carry out some geophysical surveys, first above known caves and then above, we hope, Ogof Ffynnon Ddu II. Gravimetric, seismic and resistivity methods will probably be used, but the work cannot be undertaken until later in the year. When it is carried out, a certain amount of slave-labour will be required and those members who have volunteered to assist in such work will be called upon. I must at this point thank those who, in response to the Newsletter appeal, have volunteered to help in scientific work; as and when various projects get under way we hope to call on their services.

In addition to conventional geophysical survey other methods are being considered. Some members are experimenting with a radio system for detecting subterranean discontinuities. This looks reasonably promising and may turn out to be of great value. Other more far-fetched schemes are also under consideration, including a method, which is theoretically possible, of tracing on the surface, the course of underground streams (this is only an idea at the moment).

On the biological side, some collecting packs have been prepared. These are available for use by members (please treat them kindly) and more will be prepared if required. Material collected should be dealt with through C.R.G. i.e. should be sent to Mary Hazelton.

Other schemes which we have in hand include the building up of a collection of prints of photographs people may have taken of cave "finds" (e.g. bones) before they were disturbed. Derrick Webley is handling this and he would welcome the loan of negatives or transparencies. We are also compiling a list of experts who can be called upon for specialist help when something of interest turns up. This hasn't progressed very far yet, but anyone finding anything which might prove of scientific interest, e.g. bones or unusual formations, should avoid disturbing them if possible and contact the Sub-Committee.

The Sub-Committee has under consideration a number of other Schemes, but these are all very tentative at present, and I think I have said enough to indicate the lines along which we are working.

G.T. Jefferson.

2. CWM DWR JAMA

(Or a Report to the Share-holders of the Cwm Dwr Mining Co.)

As is well known the last two years have been spent in driving Level Fawr from pit bottom, in Dwm Dwr, along strike.

At last after many difficulties, both natural and unnatural, a small stream was met with. Following a bad roof fall this was entered during the Easter weekend. After several further weekends of fairly rapid progress (i.e. 10ft per shift) a sump was met with. At this point a certain amount of despair set in and Bill Little said he wanted to go out; anyway, while eating some chocolate, a rabbit hole was noticed taking a slight wind. To investigate this a rock had to be blown. However, the hole was no go, but the roof appeared to have some blackness in it. After the next bang a hole appeared; this was filled with nothing.

We climbed up a loose climb and found a very rich lode of 100% nothing about 100yds long, 6ft. to 10ft. wide and 40ft. to 60ft. high. At one end is a fine choke, at the other a cross passage with a stream in it, which enters a sump. The main passage continues on until the water is again met. After another 80 yds. the way is choked.

At a rough count there is about 1,500 ft. of walk passage plus several others we did not enter.

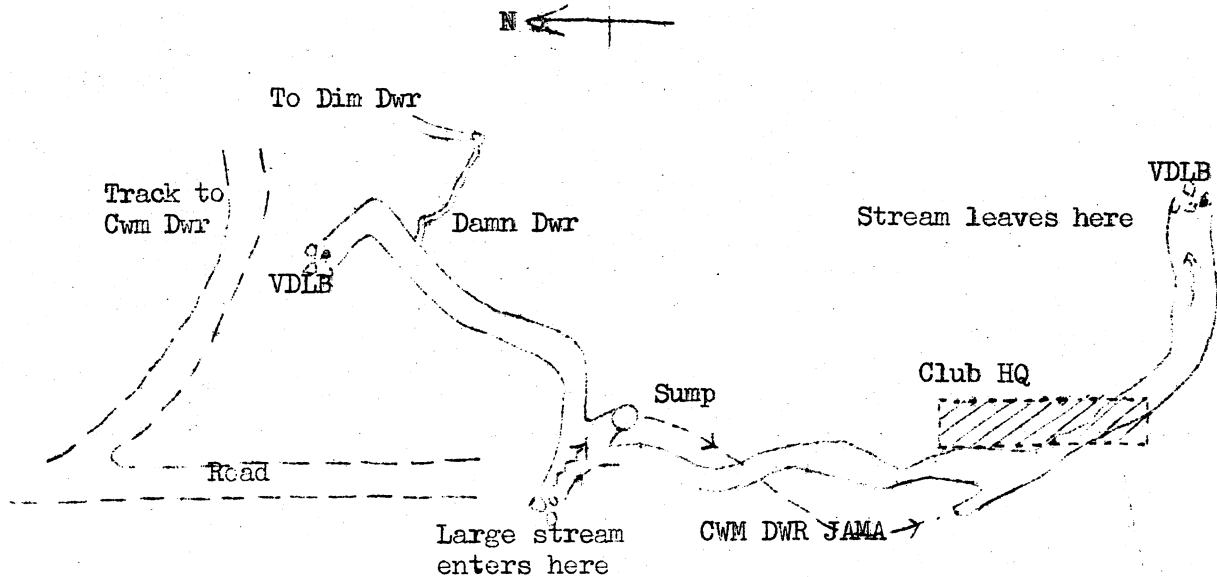
Bill Birchenough.

3. A RADIO SURVEY OF CWM DWR JAMA

On the weekend of May 11th a radio survey was made of Cwm Dwr Jama to fix its general direction in relation to the surface. The transmitter was located at twelve prominent points in the cave and these were fixed on the surface. The results are shown in the sketch from which it can be seen that the dig under the fire-place in the main common room is still a possibility(?). The survey using two-way morse communication was carried out by Bill Birchenough, Neil Jones and Dave Edwards.

Three ounces of Fluorescein put in at the Horseless Carriage dig, which is approximately 200 yards North from the point where the stream is first encountered in Cwm Dwr Jama, was observed in both sections of the stream.

Club Members at Penyllt.
12th May 1963.



Sketch Map from Radio Survey 11.5.63
(side passages not shown)
Scale: 1" to 100'

Starlight:
390 yds.
approx.

4. DIGGING PROSPECTS.

The list of places worth digging is an exciting one and this article is an attempt at gathering facts on some of them, in the hope that this Summer the Club will find time to try a few. The facts are mainly historical and no attempt has been made to explain or develop the various "theories" associated with these digs, so perhaps the next Nesletter will contain a follow up by someone better qualified than myself, giving some concrete ideas as to why certain digs are better than others. Banger, although it is a great help on some projects, is by no means the "B-all and End-all" of digging and lack of the stuff should not deter anyone. Neither should the fact that it's been tried before and given up, be allowed to interfere with any new enthusiasm. Remember, Tunnel Cave was looked at in 1939 and it was 1952 before anyone got through.

One of the first digs undertaken seriously in S.Wales was Waen Fignen Felen . Paul Dolphin and Norman Paddock with the "Dragon Group" started work there at Easter, 1938. Their first report (1) was an enthusiastic one, even though most of the weekend had been spent in heavy, pouring rain. Paddock was sure that the 20ft. they had already dug was bringing them close to their objective, because of the appearance of a hole in the face of the cliff, in which it was possible to wave a crowbar at arms length and the swirl marks on the rock indicated this was the route taken by flood waters. They had their fair share of Flood waters that week and when Arthur Price returned with Norman Paddock on the Thursday to recover the tents and equipment, they found a stream running into the dig and in a matter of 10-20 minutes the stream suddenly rose and became a raging torrent, six foot wide and a foot deep all getting away freely into the dig.

The dig was continued on and off until 1947 when the following report (2) appeared in the British Caver.

"July 9th-11th. Wiggy-Wiggy deepened by 15ft.- got into what could have been a way on, but wasn't. Further digging seems almost impossible - dig abandoned at 45ft. Entrance shaft now rather shaky - boulder rolling antics from cliff. To let - Any offers?"

When Paul was back in Wales last Summer he visited the site and was as enthusiastic as ever. He was of the opinion that the blockage we can now see near the top of the shaft extends for about 5ft. and the shaft might be open below than. Their main problem had been shuttering, but if the shaft could be properly lined the way on at the bottom would look a lot better than 'almost impossible'.

The water connection between Waen Fignen Felen and Dan-yrOgof was proved by David Hunt who put Fluorescein into the sink in very wet weather and watched it emerge from the resurgence eight hours later.

Another sink for Dan-yr-Ogof is Sink-y-Giëdd. This was proved by Peter Harvey (3) in 1948 using 35 oz. of dye, which took 50 hours to travel from sink to resurgence. Harvey and Nixon worked at this sink during 1946-47

soon after their discovery of Ffynnon Ddu. The first find was a bedding plane which proved to be too tight, this was about 150ft. North of the sink. They then made plans for a full scale assault during the Easter meet of 1947 with a large party camping at the site. A considerable effort went into the project, with a number of weekends being spent carrying food and equipment up the mountain in typical South Wales weather. The weather was even worse for the Easter meet with high winds snow and rain. Although spirits were damped they continued and by mid-day on Easter Saturday they had discovered 500 ft. of negotiable passage, all in the form of thin rifts and bedding planes with a few round tunnels. There was also one pitch of 40 ft. They didn't find the vast system they had hoped for, but reported (4) that there was scope for further extensions possibly into something big.

The entrance to the cave has been blocked and re-opened a number of times since 1947 and all reports are of passages ending in rifts and bedding planes. There seems to be little enthusiasm for digging sinks in S. Wales as they are probably of recent origin and lead only to narrow bedding plane systems. This might be true, but Pant Mawr sink enters a bedding plane and then suddenly opens up.

There have been hundreds of digs in the region of the Dan-yr-Ogof sinks and the dry valley and although the only cave discovered was Pwll Dwfn, a number of them are worth revisiting and working. A dig typical of David Hunt is situated about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile N.E. of Sink-y-Giedd. He quarried into the face of a small sink and discovered the beginnings of a passage, but the quarry face joined him in his excavations and he then abandoned the project. The cave entrance worked by David Jenkins and Les Hawes about 100 yds from the wall in the dry valley should be pushed further. It's a passage about four foot in diameter and filled with clay. One of the other digs in the dry valley (about 150 yds from Pwll Dwfn) started by Arthur Price showed signs of draught during this last cold spell and here it is a matter of lifting stones out of what looks like a solid shaft. The only dig being actively pursued in this side of the Swansea Valley is in a swallow hole North of the new Tunnel Cave shaft. This was started by Edward Aslett who already calls it Ogof Haffes. The dig is an easy one and with support, should make considerable progress. Edward and his helpers are now about 15ft. down in a circular shaft and the way on is through small boulders in the floor.

As always, there is considerable activity on the other side of the Swansea Valley and hopes for Ffynnon Ddu two are once again high. (See previous articles. - Hon.Ed.) A dig started by David Hunt and John Trueman in 1954, East of the wall above the Byfre, has been restarted and at the time of writing is 'going great guns'. It was started because there was a draught and because the site was at the highest point on the limestone above the Byfre. They reasoned that if the dig went, it would yield the deepest pot, but they had to give up for lack of support. This winter the draught was observed to be a strong one and work started as soon as weather permitted. A galvanised iron tank 40" diameter and 10ft. long has been located in the top of the shaft to hold back the loose rocks and top soil, and 6 ft. of wooden shuttering has gone in below this. The dig will have to continue down through large, clean and

loose boulders with no sign, as yet, of a solid wall. The draught is a really strong one and plans are in hand to obtain shuttering to continue the dig. About 20 yds from this dig and on the other side of the wall is the Calcite shaft. This was started by Gordon Clissold and at one time received considerable attention. It was dug to a depth of 30 ft. through clay in a solid shaft about 3 ft. in diameter. The walls of the shaft were covered in a considerable thickness of calcite but the dig had to stop as it was getting too narrow at the bottom to work comfortably and there was no means of drilling to widen it by blasting.

A few years ago some excitement was caused by Bill Birchenough's discovery of the Hot Air Mine. At thirty feet down a small chamber gives access to a tight rift through which a strong draught blows. The rift was blasted for about 12ft. before the project was given up, but this, like all the others, is worth further effort. Three more digs between Penwyllt and the Byfre are worth mention. The first is the shaft started in 1947 by Arthur Hill (5) at the Byfre itself. This reached only twelve feet but they had difficulty with shuttering. The next is Weighbridge cave started by Glennie in 1938 and continued by David Jenkins and Les Hawes on and off over a period of years. It's a puzzling place, but a dig requiring little or no special equipment (apart from web feet and gills - Hon. Ed.) and ideal if you're using Penwyllt as a base. The third is another David Hunt monument N.E. of the Engine shed. Once again David is chasing the wind of chance and excavating on a large scale. This is another hole with a strong draught and a shuttering problem.

The History of Cwm Dwr has been very well described by Les Hawes (6) and it is sufficient here to say that the story starts in 1937 and looks like never ending. By now you will all know of the progress in Dim Dwr (see 'Cwm Dwr Jama' elsewhere in this issue.) but there are plenty of other places in the cave worthy of excavation. The drain is being tackled by the 'South of England Group' and Bill Birchenough and Terry Lloyd are digging again in the Aven. A small passage on the right of the stream passage about 20 feet from the entrance to the Aven has to my knowledge never been pushed and the sand choke on the left at the far end of blasted passage looks an easy dig. The water has been diverted from blasted passage and now flows down a vertical pit. This pit has some remarkable ripple markings indicating that a very large flow of water came out of it at some time. There is plenty of room for digging the pit, and bar, hammer and shovel are all that is required.

There are numerous places around Penwyllt which merit investigation and the local people have a wealth of information on the area and some tales taller than ours. In 1948 the following account appeared in British Caver (8);

'Worthy of note is the recent unfortunate happening at Penwyllt where a horse put his foot through the ground and fell head first into a big cavity. The unfortunate beast smothered to death before he could be extracted. Members have examined the hole which is situated some 20 ft. beyond the shed of the last row of cottages on turning left at the top of the Penwyllt hill

(by the Post Office). There is no sign of solid rock in the hole which is now being filled with rubble.'

There are many other stories like this one in the village, but the only one I have heard more than once without variation also concerns a horse. Mr. Morris of Penwyllt Quarries and some of his workmen told of the time when the quarry next to Cwm Dwr was being worked. They had a branch line to the main railway along which horses drew the trucks of limestone. One day a hole appeared in the tracks down which the horse almost disappeared, leaving them with the first horseless carriage! The hole was covered with a large boulder and the area has now been covered with debris. Three days were spent looking for the hole last summer as there was a considerable quantity of water sinking nearby. Nothing has been found but anyone with spare time on a weekend might do worse than continue to clear the area.

The possibilities of a route from the known parts of Ffynnon Ddu to the miles beyond hasn't been overlooked and although the digs in the cave aren't receiving much attention today, they are by no means write-offs. The dig at the end of Coronation Aven takes the strongest draught which can be traced to the floor of another boulder filled aven at the end of the series. This second aven was reached only after considerable effort and the soul destroying sight of another dig at the end put people off before they really tackled it. Two digs in Boulder Series seem worth while, but both require great care as they involve digging up through boulders. The first, in the passage before Pot Sump, had to be left some years ago after a number of boulder falls and the dig following the draught lost sight of any solid wall. The second is up through the roof of the Sand Passage and although there is little sign of draught it looks as if it should go. Bill Harris and Peter Harvey still have an occasional bang in the boulders.

Dennis Kemp worked a dig in Starlight Chamber, following a small stream and is now planning to restart operations this summer if he can get help.

What of Cribarth? Some twelve years ago, Arthur Hill had a dig on the mountain but I can find very little information on it. The hospital rising is a big one and there should be something in this lump of very disturbed limestone. Perhaps Arthur could provide some information in the next Newsletter?

One further rising in the Swansea Valley which has received no attention is the one in the hospital grounds. It's a fairly large rising and is best approached by continuing along the road to the Grithig until a scree slope is reached. The water issues from the bottom of the slope and its source is unknown. No practical ideas have ever been put forward for digging here, but a careful examination of the area might yield a worthwhile site.

The scope for digging in S. Wales is terrific and we have only considered the Swansea Valley. If you do any digging please either record what you've done in the club log-book or in the Newsletter. Work done and not recorded can lead to confusion and possibly waste of effort in the future.

Clive Jones.

'Digging Prospects'- References.

- (1) Journal of the Mendip Exploration Society 1938, p.75.
- (2) British Caver Volume 18 p.90.
- (3) " " " 18 p.50.
- (4) " " " 17 p.35.
- (5) " " " 17 p.75.
- (6) S.W.C.C. Newsletter No.21.
- (7) S.W.C.C. " No.20.
- (8) British Caver Volume 18 p.90.

5. S.W.C.C. CONTRIBUTION TO HIMALAYAN CLIMBING.

The Minapur (Karakoram) Expedition of 1958 has been written up in Mountaincraft and other climbers' journals, but one or two aspect of interest to cavers are now described.

Two of the members of the expedition were S.W.C.C. men: Walter Sharpley and Dennis Kemp.

Base camp was established in May, in a little valley at 12,000ft. and it was here that we first experimented with digging a snow cave. We chose a steep snow-slope against a moraine and dug in for some distance, then turned left and ran along the moraine. The depth of snow was 4 metres (12 ft.) and there were green shoots and plants at the bottom already growing in anticipation of the brief summer weeks to come.

At camp 1. we dug another, similar snow cave in deeper snow, used it for storing food and during a period of bad weather, enlarged the far end to a chamber used as a mess-hall.

Camp 2 was a snow cave, on 50° snow slopes at 17,000ft. Using the experience gained in digging the previous caves we drove in a level shaft for 12 ft and then excavated a domed living-room at the far end. There was absolutely no site at all for tents where we wanted our camp 2, and in any case we were warned about avalanche danger. In the cave we were safe from this danger. We were heartened as we dug the entrance passage, to see the packed layers of previous snowfalls in absolutely even strata, which showed that there had been no recent disturbance by avalanche.

The method of digging was fairly simple. Using a snow shovel of French manufacture (light but rather flimsy) and a British ex-G, small shovel (the sort we use in confined spaces in caves still) a 12" cube of snow was extracted.

Three cuts and the cube above could be prized out and passed back to the entrance by hand. It was tipped down the slope (2,500 ft to the bottom).

It took the two cavers with willing assistance from the two climbers (Ted Warr, leader and Chris Heyte, doctor) a day's work to make a shelter big enough for four people. We wanted something a bit bigger than the minimum however, and so we returned to Camp 1 for the night and back again to the shelter next morning.

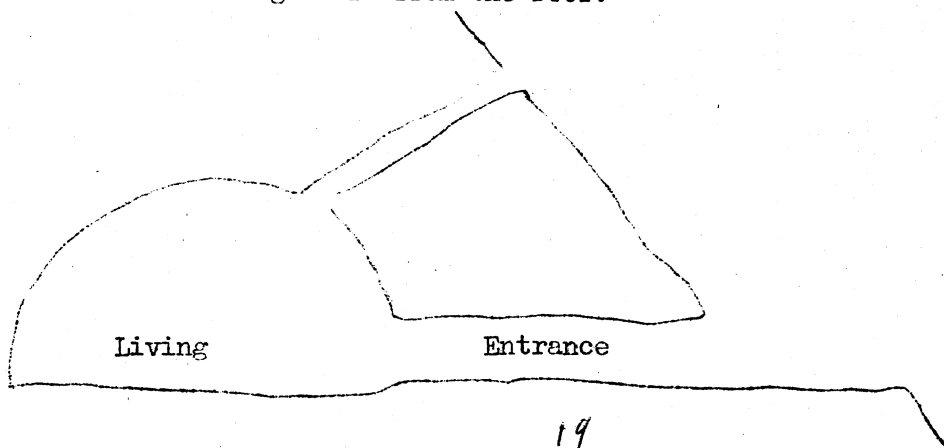
To climb the steep but not difficult snow slopes from Camp 1 to Camp 2 took I think, from four to five hours. To be able to do this and build a shelter for four and return to Camp 1 in a day, greatly heartened us: we felt more confident of being able to survive at any time without tents.

We were reconnoitring the higher slopes and on various occasions two people slept in the snow cave. The unoccupied temperature was -5°C , but when lived in this rose to 0°C . Water supply was snow obtained from the walls of the cave. Toilets were established (why do climbing tales avoid this necessary part of life?) in a crevasse some 20 yards from the cave. We built a small balcony at the entrance of the cave as we didn't want anyone to emerge half asleep in the middle of the night and finish up two thousand feet below.

We were snowbound at Camp 1 for some days at one stage and to our horror when we went back up to the snow cave it had vanished. Inside were stores and food for higher camps, but a day's digging failed to locate the entrance. This was discovered on the second day after a further hour of digging. A flag was left flying on a pole from then on to mark the location!

A few hundred feet above the snow cave was a large crevasse blocking upward progress. Two of the party made their way with considerable difficulty through ice cliffs at one side and gained the upper lip of the crevasse. A caving ladder was then stamped into the snow to anchor it (we had no other anchor) and thrown down to the lower slopes. It was then an easy and quick job for the party to climb up and over this crevasse. One morning it was discovered that one of the wires of the ladder was snapped, possibly because of the intense cold at night. Luckily this was at the lower end and the rest of the ladder was servicable.

With four of us in the snow cave during a blizzard it became stuffy so we drove a ventilating shaft from the roof.



Later on during the Expedition we spent a week at higher altitudes (in tents). When we returned to the snow cave much of the snow had ablated revealing a crevasse at our entrance door. The ventilating shaft had enlarged to a two foot window, but the cave was still perfectly useable.

The Camp 1 food store and shelter cave was very different. Snow had ablated to such an extent that the whole of one side of the cave had vanished.

Our underground experiences showed us the value of taking some digging tools high and the value of a caving ladder in overcoming crevasses that face one with a vertical upper wall.

Dennis Kemp.

6. RORRINGTON LEAD MINE - SHROPSHIRE

The lead mine near the village of Rorrington, off Stapeley Hill, South Shropshire, has been visited several times in the last year and a few more observations can now be made. (See previous article N/L No.38. Dec.1961.)

The mine is a level, leading in one case to a shaft rising to the surface which is in a very poor state. A second branch goes on for a considerable distance but there is a lot of mud with a tendency for gas to collect. This side has not yet been pushed to the end but it is rumoured that it cuts through the hill to another mine.

Above the shaft there are some further workings on the surface with several levels, now run in, and a few buildings. These higher workings were last used in 1930.

The main passage is used by several bats as a summer refuge. There were at least eight Lesser Horseshoe Bats seen on the last occasion. Only one was handled but this had a six inch wing span. It was interesting to see how sensitive the bats were to danger.

The mine is particularly interesting for its mud formations and these have been studied more closely. They are usually soft, orange stalagmites. All of them have a hole down the centre, usually water filled. We first noticed that there was no trace of stalactite above and then saw that water was flowing out of the active ones. The rate of flow was low, in fact it was scarcely perceptible. On the larger specimens the bottom of the hole could be seen and

small particles of grit were being agitated. We concluded that the mud stalagmites were formed round a miniature spring. This explains why they are all within two feet of the floor, have no corresponding stalactites and invariably have a hole down the centre. The size of the formations ranges between two and six inches and their shape has been described previously.

The white deposits found on the wall of the branch passage, are now seen to be even quicker forming than had previously been supposed. The deposit is formed over mud at the base and this had been damaged about five years ago. There is evidence that cracks are now being covered by fresh growth and in addition five small cave pearls have been formed in this time. Two have been removed for analysis, the largest being $\frac{1}{8}$ inch diameter. As mentioned before, this white deposit has vegetable matter bedded in it and had been identified as zinc carbonate by chemical analysis. This has now been confirmed.

John V. Osborne.

GLADYS FREEMAN

It is with great regret that we learn of the death following a motor accident of the wife of one of the oldest members of the Club, Charles Freeman. Charles has never before missed an A.G.M. and his friends wondered at his absence from the H.Q. last Easter Sunday, but it was not until afterwards that we learned of the tragic reason. We extend our deepest sympathies to Charles in his great loss.

7. CLUB NEWS.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS

Jill Upton, 55 Westville Road, Penylan, Cardiff.
Mr. & Mrs. T.B. Grohman, 15 Bourne Close, Kings Heath, Birmingham 14.
Mr. & Mrs. Charles George, Leys Cottage, Llanblethian, Cowbridge, Glam.
David Willis, 3 Derwent Lodge, St. Phillip's Avenue, Worcester Park, Surrey.
Michael Bateson Hon. Sec. Red Rose Cave & Pothole Club
10 Gardner Road, Skerton, Lancaster, Lancs.

MARRIAGES.

Congratulations to Mr. and Mrs. Charles George on their recent marriage, and also to Mr. and Mrs. Terry Grohman on theirs.

BIRTHS.

Congratulations to:

Yvonne and David Cons on the birth of Stephen David on 19th April, 1963.
Jan and Les Hawes on the birth of Sid Caroline Lesley on 27th April, 1963.
Victoria and Roger Smith on the birth of Fred a daughter, whose name we don't yet know, some time ago!
Maggie and Bill Harris on the birth of a son, and finally, one who must be pretty well toddling by now (and to whose parents we apologise)
Margaret and David Hunt, on the birth of a son.

BOOK REVIEW

The River Scenery at the Head of the Vale of Neath.

A new edition of this book, by Dr. F.J. North, is now available from the National Museum of Wales, price 7/6d. This publication is a must for anyone interested in caving in S. Wales as it is a detailed description of the geology of the Neath Valley, explained in simple language. It is well illustrated with maps, diagrams and photographs and for those who wish to delve deeper into the mysteries and scenery of this area, there is an excellent bibliography.

COMING EVENTS

Cave Research Group Weekend Meet to be held on Saturday and Sunday, June 29/30th 1963 in Brecon.

The meeting will begin at 5p.m. on Saturday, June 29th 1963 and is being held in the Hall at the rear of Church House, Lion Street, Brecon.

An informal dinner is being arranged at 8.30 p.m. the same evening in Perry's Restaurant, Hay Road, (Filling Station) Brecon. Anyone wishing to attend this function is asked to get in touch with the Hon. Sec. C.R.G., Alan Ashwell, Cuilcagh, Stanyeld Road, Church Stretton, Salop, enclosing cost of dinner (which will be 12/-) before Saturday, June 15th, 1963.

Cave Rescue Organisation Weekend Meet to be held on Saturday and Sunday, September 28/29th in Brecon.

The meeting will begin at 2.30 p.m. on Saturday September 28th 1963 and is being held in the Hall at the rear of Church House, Lion Street, Brecon. An informal dinner is being arranged afterwards (time not yet fixed) the same evening in Perry's Restaurant, Hay Road, Filling Station, Brecon. Anyone wishing to attend this function is asked to get in touch with the Hon. C.R.O. Gordon Clissold, Silhouette, Staunton, Coleford, Gloucestershire, enclosing cost of dinner (which will be 12/-) before Saturday, September 14th. 1963.

British Speleological Association Settle, Yorks.

A Speleological Conference and Exhibition will be held in the University of Sheffield from Saturday, 10th to Monday, 12th August 1963. The proceedings will include lectures, films, excursions to local caves, and a photo salon of prints and colour transparencies. All papers presented will be pre-printed in the proceedings so giving greater time for discussion. Accommodation will be arranged on application.

The fee for the Conference, which includes the proceedings is 15/- but this is reduced to 10/- for Delegates under 18 years of age. The exhibition is free and will be open to the general public. An advance programme, with further details, will be forwarded when available on application to the Conference Secretary, P.W.Crabtree, B.Sc., Dept. of Chemistry, The University, Sheffield.

CORRESPONDENCE.

From W.E. Clarke:

'The Accuracy of a Cave Survey, Denis Warburton, Wessex Cave Club Journal, No.89.'

A gentleman who had the misfortune to have to teach me something about surveying once devoted a long lecture to methods of correcting one's observations for the effects of temperature, refraction, altitude, humidity, gin and what not. Finally, he said, you tot up all the plus items and all the minus items, take out

the nett result and do the opposite. Judging by the conclusions of Denis Warburton's article he was not far wrong.

This useful article subjects the current notions of grading cave surveys to a detailed examination which leads to some very striking conclusions and recommendations. The first part of the article is devoted to a discussion of the degrees of accuracy to be expected of various instruments and goes into the question of determining the local magnetic anomaly, and calibrating the compass. This section should be taken to heart by all cave surveyors.

The burden of the next section seems to be that the C.R.G. system of grading surveys for accuracy is out of touch with the realities of cave surveying in practice and that a radically new approach is required. Warburton uses an ingenious argument based on theoretical grounds to demonstrate that the accuracy to be expected does not vary greatly as between the top three or four grades of the C.R.G. system when certain practical difficulties are taken into account. He then applies his argument to a number of surveys whose accuracy can be checked by considering the errors in closing loops, and draws some further morals. This detailed investigation has clearly involved a great deal of work and it would be unfair to try to summarise it here. The final section deals with standards of passage detail; one can scarcely quarrel with his remarks on this.

The moral, therefore, that one would draw from Warburton's work is that the present C.R.G. grading could well be scrapped. The three top grades should be amalgamated and surveys designated by a two-symbol grade, the first symbol indicating the Metrical Accuracy claimed and the second the amount of detail included. This may be going further than he intended but it seems a logical conclusion.

Ingenious though they are, these arguments do not carry conviction in the form in which they are presented. I found the calculations difficult to follow in their abbreviated presentation; perhaps it would be too much to expect a full treatment in a caving journal, but they could have been expanded a little. More serious are the arbitrary assumptions underlying part of the argument, particularly the figures in tables 1 & 2. An odd inconsistency occurs in the presentation of the figures in table 3: these figures provide an experimental verification of the argument; yet although the author has taken exception to the practice of downgrading surveys, table 3 includes one or two surveys which have been downgraded and may contain more than these.

The effect of this needs to be taken into account. The position is also confused by a re-definition for the purpose of the article of 'Grade 4'. It would have been better to have left that bit out. Finally one feels that some psychological factors have been overlooked. In particular, many good surveys may have been produced by people who originally had it in mind to produce a higher grade, but preferred not to claim too much. Perhaps the existence of grades 6 and 7 keeps up the overall quality of cave surveys.

The C.R.G. system of grading has been an excellent foundation stone

STOP PRESS

WARNING

Lightweight (Alloy) Karabiners

It has been reported to us that a batch of karabiners of a well known make advertised as being made of a special alloy stronger than steel is breaking at approximately one half of the figure claimed by the manufacturers, owing to faulty heat treatment. It is hoped that members will accordingly take due precautions if contemplating their use.

FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE FROM W.E. CLARKE.

Accuracy of Measurement in Cave Surveys.

One of my objections to the article by Denis Warburton rested on the absence of evidence to support the values he gave for Standard deviations of instrument readings. It might be interesting to set up an experiment to obtain reliable values for these.

What I have in mind is that a number of pairs of fixed points should be specified in various caves, in passages of varying difficulty and nature. The necessary measurements to connect these should then be made by several people independently, using their own instruments where available. All the instruments would be standardised by surface measurements, to eliminate their idiosyncracies, and precautions would be taken to eliminate sources of systematic error. The project would require the co-operation of 20-30 people at their own convenience over a period and might produce useful results. Anyone Interested?

3.6.63.