

**SOUTH WALES  
CAVING CLUB**

# **NEWSLETTER**



SOUTH WALES CAVING CLUB NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 65

FEBRUARY 1970

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Cover photo - "The Columns" O. F. D. by P M O'Reilly.

Editor R.J.Arculus, 9 Elwyn Road ,Sutton Coldfield,Warks.



### FROM THE LOGBOOK

The last few months of last year produced no notable additions to the club log. Activity seemed to be limited to tourist-type trips in Ogof Ffynnon Ddu. Access to Dan-yr-Ogof has been difficult with uncertain weather and early snowfalls causing some very wet weekends.

Appropriately enough on the first weekend of 1970 a journey was made from Dan-yr-Ogof 2 to Dan-yr-Ogof 1 without going through the Long Crawl. The discovery of this interesting route dates from a few weeks before Christmas when a passage (initially a squeeze past straws) was found off Monk Hall. There were several possibilities there and one was an easy dig in loose angular boulders well lubricated with mud. The main route was through a low muddy pool to a calcite flow that almost completely blocked the passage. It clearly continued, and a very strong draught was encouraging. Both of these were examined later and the stalagmite constriction banded to give way to an extensive series of tubes, passages, rifts and occasional pots, all generally small, often constricted and very windy. The whole route contained some very fine formations.

The draught, stronger than the one in the Long Crawl, was followed until eventually a high rift-aven was entered and climbed. A further aven was descended to a small sandy chamber where a set of initials and two old batteries were found: the initials were P.W., D.L., 24.10.37. It was obvious that an alternative to the Long Crawl had been found and it was tentatively christened the Exceptionally Long Crawl ( amongst other things !)

Alan Coase recalls a description of the chamber in old records- exit from it via a tight crawl leads to Shower Aven and it had been investigated both before the passing of the Long Crawl and afterwards. Although it has lots of potential there is nothing to recommend the route as an alternative in the case of rescue.

A radio test at the farthest point of Monk Hall has proved it to be vertically below 'the Crater', the huge depression near Pwll y Wydden. The test indicated a depth of 80 to 100 feet and is not very encouraging as it was in a big boulder choke. Further tests are planned for Monk Hall and some places on the new route.

Apart from an abortive attempt to discover extensions in Ogof Ffynnon Ddu lll by maypoling, there has been little activity here. Further maypoling projects are planned near Smith's Armoury for the future. The grit chokes at high level have been thoroughly investigated and apart from 250 feet of small side passage heading due south, and some interesting but unlikely avens, the area seems to be without promise. Snail shells indicating proximity to the surface were noted.

A recent practice rescue was held and stretcher handling between the Trident and Gnome Passage was tested. Unfortunately the practice nearly became the real thing when the stretcher was being lowered down a 15 feet drop-the carrying handles, to which ropes had been tied, gave way, and Peter Harvey, who was the 'victim', was pitched forward onto his face. His fall of 8 feet or so, did not produce great injury but his face was badly bruised.

Hobb's quarry has been trending eastwards of recent weeks and two interesting holes opened up by blasting have been investigated. The lower one was completely sand filled, but the other, some 50 feet up the face, was open. It led vertically upwards towards the surface and it looks as if an 'aven' type feature has been almost cut in half. The surface immediately above is interesting and has no shakehole features. The bulldozers have stripped the soil cover from the limestone and much of the newly exposed surface exhibits no karst features but glacial striae are clearly visible.

It will be valuable to keep a close watch on the quarry faces in the future since rumours indicate that Hobb's have acquired more land and will be quarrying eastwards in the future towards Ogof Ffynnon Ddu.

## SURFACE LOCATION OF WOKEY HOLE EXTENSION

It is now well known how John Parker of the Cave Diving Group and Cwmbran Caving Club was the first to get through and explore 'dry' Wookey beyond the sumps on 3rd. January 1970. And he walked through it all again to show around Brian Woodward who had swum through to look for him in the extension.

Parker then asked me to locate the new series from the surface with the inductorphone, and we went over 3 weeks later on the 24th. January. A large diving team consisting of Parker, Woodward, T. Reynolds, J. Cobbett, P. Collett and M. Urwin swam in single file from base in River Chamber 3 at 5.19 p.m. (Reports of the actual dive will be published by CDG). Leaving Oliver Lloyd to keep watch at base I went out of the cave with Mrs. Woodward and Jim Hanwell of Wessex C.C., the local topography expert without whose help I would not have been able to locate the divers. The agreed transmitting time was 6.15 p.m., but nothing was heard for 30 long minutes. There was a driving Mendip drizzle, patches of fog and, of course, it became pitch dark. Still conditions were worse down in the cave, so we kept tuned in, huddled under some creaking trees with silent, watchful cows whose eyes glistened greenly in our lamp beams.

Then at 6.45 I heard it- a very faint hum only just detectable against a high level of background noise. (This may be coming from the transmitter on top of the Downs nearby). Within 5 minutes I had Mrs. Woodward and Jim plodding through the mud on the dripping hillside sticking stakes in the ground, here, there, and everywhere, then...silence! The divers had switched off.

An approximate location was marked with a stake and from there we ploughed for 1000 feet NW up the hillside as Parker, with his uncanny sense of direction in caves, had said station 2 would be just there. We waited 20 minutes, shivering in the darkness as the drizzle died away. Jim assured me that one of the lights twinkling in the distance was Porthcawl lighthouse, and I immediately felt more at home in this foreign land.

Then, bang, they came on again. This time much louder and I realised Parker must have done some climbing in the cave. He had proceeded almost to the end of the new passage, but could still have climbed about 100 feet in altitude. I located this station to within a circle of 20 feet diameter. Greater accuracy was impossible and the depth seemed to be less than 200 feet. A cairn was erected and Jim was positive he could find it again for use in surveying the cave.

Allowing for the extra 100 ft. altitude possible and odd avens, it could well be possible to sink a shaft less than 50 ft. deep to enter the new series. A job of equivalent magnitude was carried out over

Tunnel Cave in South Wales, and the Wookey site is easy to get to with drilling rig hauled by a Landrover. Another fix is now required in the vicinity of my station 2 underneath a convenient aven.

Our work completed we rushed down to the cave but had to wait from 8.30 to 10.18 p.m. before the first diver returned to River Chamber 3. He was blinded by the glare of flashbulbs and confused by questions from 2 news reporters. Then somebody thrust a double whisky into his hand, and each diver was given the same treatment, the last emerging at 10.30 p.m. The atmosphere became decidedly merry within 20 minutes and soon, laughing group photographs were being taken. Surely Wookey had never seen such scenes since the rituals of Roman times. But it all served to break the tension built up while waiting for the divers to return.

The owner of the cave had arranged for the press to meet the divers, and also showed extreme kindness in providing the celebration fluids. Thanks are also due to her for permission to dive.

This is probably only the beginning of the story for inner Wookey and the reader is referred to CDG publications for details of this dive and future work.

Acknowledgement : To Russell Pope of Cwmbran Caving Club for designing and building the inductorphone.

MELVYN DAVIES  
25th January 1970

OGOF AFON HEPSTE

On the 3rd September 1969, John Parker of the Cave Diving Group and Cwmbran Caving Club, located and explored a cave system, which, I believe, contains the underground Hepste river.

He was traversing the dry river bed about  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile above the Hepste resurgence with Dave Lloyd (C.C.C.) when he noticed a hole which had been dug out in the Millstone Grit about 4 feet above the river bed in the north bank. He entered alone and went through 800 feet of passages, including a streamway. About 50 feet inside the cave there was a plastic pipe with signs of digging above but not beyond it. Three days later he went back with Oliver Lloyd and air bottles to attempt the sump he had discovered. Unfortunately Oliver was unable to pass a tight squeeze some 40 feet inside the cave, so John dived alone. He went through about 400 feet of more passage ending in another sump.

Next day, 7th September, after some work in the Mellte valley, he returned to the spot once again, accompanied by me. We widened the squeeze with a few hammer blows and pressed on to examine the plastic pipe. This was about 100 feet long and laid out so as to pump out a sump, now bone dry. The sump must appear after moderate rain, and may persist for a considerable time afterwards. There were no footprints except John's beyond this point. I have contacted clubs in South Wales, Mendips and London to determine who first spotted the entrance, and later abandoned it, but without success. Because of recent prolonged dry weather, the sump must have been dry for weeks.

John then led the way around his 800 feet of passage. We could then explore about 400 feet more dry stuff but were unable to bypass Sump 2. There is a bypass to Sump 1, and John reports possible bypasses to Sump 3. Generally the cave is on three levels with the lowest one containing the Hepste River. This lowest passage is on average only 10 feet wide and 3 feet high, and is incapable of taking the river except in dry weather. Moderate floods find their way into passages about 6 feet higher up, which usually follow the course of the lowest bed. In heavy flood the water backs up and enters the upper passages which are muddy, but contain a few stalactites in places. The river obviously rises 20 feet at least near the downstream sump, and the active part of the system can, and only should be entered in settled weather. The entrance is really a pot through the Millstone Grit, and Grit can be seen again in the rooves of some avens. The known system is quite complex and a little confusing - the river is seen three times between different sumps, so a description without survey would be meaningless

MELVYN DAVIES  
9th September 1969



## OGOF GARREG FAWR

On the 17th August, Ogof Garreg Fawr was extended for a distance of 1500 feet from the original 100 feet.

This large resurgence is situated  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile NE of Ystradfellte church at 22/ 938,138, and it was first entered by somebody from the South Wales Caving Club in 1955. The date is still just decipherable on the cave wall before a squeeze which was passed by two of us from ICI Fibres Club in August '65. A sump was reached immediately and it was this that drew 4 cavers back to the site on 17th August.

The motley crowd involved were John Parker ( Cwmbran C.C. and Cave Diving Group ), Russell Pope ( Cwmbran C.C. and ICI ), Peter Wilkins ( Cwmbran C.C. ) and myself. I am in a variety of clubs as well, so to avoid strife, we are saying the cave was discovered and extended by the Piano Tuners' League. The first sump was discovered to be bypassed by a squeeze, but a second sump followed immediately. Fortunately this was at the end of a roomy chamber and we could all watch John Parker showing us how to enlarge caves. But the sump had heard how Parker had beaten its brother down the valley at Porthyr-Ogof, and it closed its jaws down to a few inches. Pope then tried to dismantle the sump by removing boulders in its roof. A collapsed upper passage was evidently present, and gaps could be seen leading into another chamber. One boulder was far too big to lift out or break up, but I had brought four sticks of Porthcawl rock with me which the shopkeeper had assured me was powerful stuff.

It certainly was! We were soon clearing 4 cwts. of rugby-ball sized chunks of limestone. The draught from the cave by the way was emerging at about 60 feet per minute, and it was a warm day. The rugby game over, Parker led the way, but immediately entered a squeeze. This was so tight that I had to hold my head on its side and my helmet was then simultaneously scraping roof and floor. A chamber followed, only 4 feet high, but about 12 feet wide. It increased in height at the far end, but both roof and floor were dipping and the stream in which we were now wading came to within inches of a muddy ceiling. Luckily I could excuse myself on the grounds of having no wet suit, and I turned back. Nobody volunteered to see me to the entrance because they all had wet suits and were watching each other like steely-eyed hawks. Two more sumps followed within 200 feet but both could be bypassed. Then came a chamber which Pete thought looked very comfortable. He announced that he was running out of carbide. This was very neat because the others were on electric and could offer no refill. So in pitch darkness, Pete waited for about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hours with his feet just out of the water.

Pope followed Parker for some hundreds of feet passing through two more enervating ducks. Another sump loomed ahead and the roof showed no signs of lifting. Pope gave up the ghost and promised to wait where he was under Parker's contemptuous smile. A route round the sump was found and Parker disappeared from mortal ken. Within 30 minutes he was back with Pope and described an inlet passage which was not explored (coward), a boulder choke, another duck and finally a terminal sump. The draught was not located in these inner reaches.

The whole cave gives the impression of being very young and nowhere do the never-ending, water-logged bedding planes give way to dry chambers. There are small 'chambers' formed by cavern collapse, and these would be the only refuge in a storm. From flood marks the whole system sumps extensively after rain, and it may be that most of it is only open in dry weather. Nevertheless the length of passage we have seen could not give rise to a draught of 60 feet per minute. It is possible that the inlet passage could lead to something big. The resurgence is probably draining about half a square mile of limestone partly capped with Grit, and the maximum thickness of limestone above the cave is 450 feet. It is unusual in South Wales for an effluent cave of this length not to have allowed access to a superincumbent, dry, fossil system.

#### References

- 1 SWCC Newsletter No.13, September 1955
- 2 Signpost reports No. 327 and 330 pub. by ICI Fibres
- 3 British Caver Vol. 43, March 1966
- 4 SWCC Newsletter No.52, January 1966
- 5 Cave Sump Index: South Wales by M.Davies, November 1966

MELVYN DAVIES  
9th September 1969

## CAVES AND NATURE RESERVES IN WALES

Wales is fortunate in having Carboniferous Limestone outcrops within the boundaries of many of its National Nature Reserves. Any caves in these outcrops are thus preserved for all time, and, although access may be restricted occasionally, the caves are usually open for routine exploration, and can be made available for research purposes.

To have a cave scheduled as a site of special scientific interest ( SSSI ), eg. Ogof Ffynnon Ddu, Ogof-y-Ci, is legally no protection, but once a cave finds itself in a Nature Reserve, it becomes as much a subject of conservation as a species of rare tree, a bird sanctuary, or an archaeological site. National Nature Reserves and Forest Nature Reserves are managed by the Nature Conservancy, and the Reserves of speleological interest in Wales are as follows:

1. WHITEFORD BURROWS N.N.R., Gower.

This Reserve contains only a small Carboniferous Limestone outcrop and no caves are known in it. ( The Cwm Ivy Tor archaeological cave is only a few yards south of the Reserve and the local Conservancy Warden keeps an eye on the cave ).

2. OXWICH N.N.R., Gower.

Crawley Wood within the Reserve contains a Carboniferous Limestone outcrop, and an archaeological cave in Crawley Rocks was known before it was quarried away. Investigations are proceeding on this Reserve under the guidance of the resident Warden.

3. GOWER COAST N.N.R.

A Reserve containing a remarkably fine series of Carboniferous Limestone sea cliffs and many small caves.

4. PENMOELALLT F.N.R., Breconshire.

This Reserve is traversed by a high Carboniferous Limestone escarpment in which there are three resurgences issuing considerable volumes of water in wet weather. One is known to exceed a flow rate of 1 m.g.p.d. after heavy rain, but the entrance is constricted. Below the escarpment is a scree slope containing another large resurgence blocked by glacial debris.

5. CRAIG-Y-CILIAU N.N.R., Breconshire

A Reserve containing Namurian and Avonian outcrops with Devonian rocks buried under scree slopes. The most well-known cave is Agen Allwedd, for 10 years the longest cave in Britain and hence very popular with sporting cavers.

Research carried out so far includes bat-ringing, stream erosion measurement and pollen analysis in clay. Access is by permit from an advisory Management Committee consisting of representatives from four locally based caving clubs. Also on the Reserve is Eglwys Faen cave, some 1,600 feet long, which was described in the early 19th. century, and is an important bat haunt. At the western end of the Reserve are some smaller caves, one of which was once a badger's lair.

Hydrologically the Reserve is unique as most of its rainfall disappears immediately into well-defined swallow-holes, only some of which display collapse features. A small proportion of the water re-appears in the known caves and drainage is presumed to be entirely underground southeastwards to resurgences in another exposure of Carboniferous Limestone at a lower altitude 2 miles away. In wet weather direct precipitation is augmented ten-fold, and more, by run-off from the Basal Grit moor outside the Reserve, which results in a corresponding increase, sometimes to dangerous proportions, in the water levels in the Cave Systems.

6. CWM CLYDACH N.N.R., Breconshire.

Geologically similar to Craig-y-Ciliau, and containing two interesting, effluent-type caves. The longest, Shakespeare's Cave, is some 1600 feet in length and contains short sumps and ducks only accessible to the experienced speleologist, but the other cave, Ogof Clogwyn, 350 feet long is open to all, and displays remarkable shelving which deserves further study in relation to water levels in the River Clydach outside.

7. BLACKCLIFF AND WYNDCLIFF F.N.R., Monmouthshire.

There are several short, rift-type caves on this Reserve, one of them being a possible archaeological site under investigation at the moment. Nearby are several small iron mines with shafts up to 60 feet deep which were sunk to win ore from the Crease Limestone. Some of the caves have a strong thermal air current, and their shape may be connected with the rapid down-cutting of the River Wye resulting from land uplift.

MELVYN DAVIES

Chairman, Cambrian Caving Council;  
Part-time Warden, Craig-y-Ciliau N.N.R.

Prepared for the National Caving Association on behalf of the  
Cambrian Caving Council.

3rd February 1970

CAVE DIVING LOG

Sunday 4th January 1970

Ogof Ffynnon Ddu 1

Diver: John Parker

Assistants: Oliver Lloyd, Marianne Last, Paul Esser.

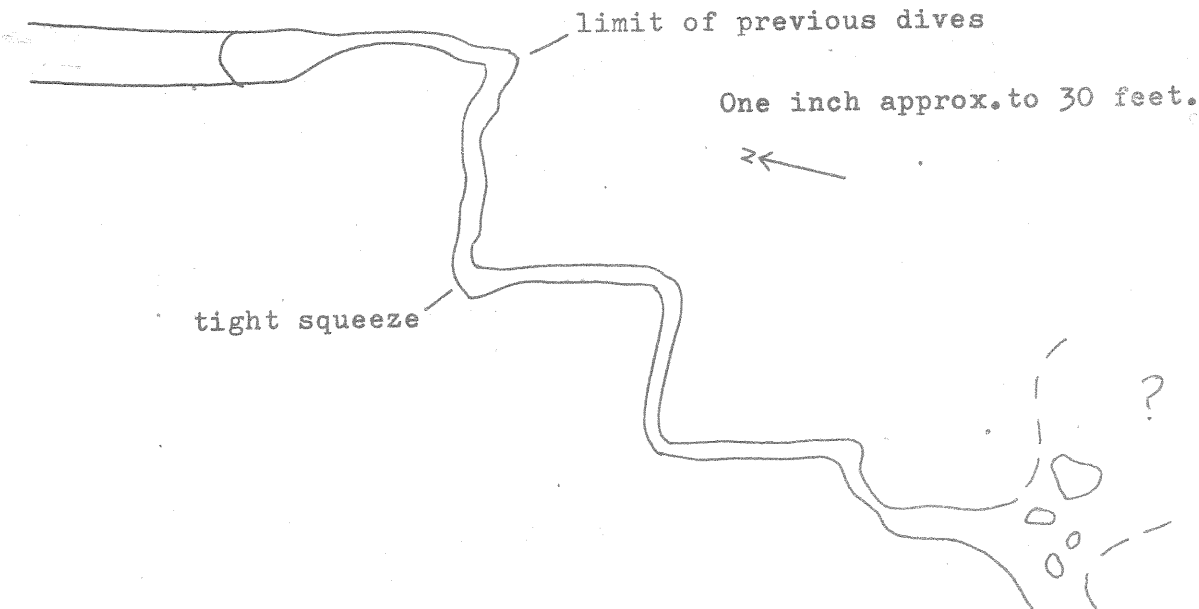
Object : To dive the Main Stream Sump. This was originally dived by Weaver, Balcombe and Coase in 1946 who found it became too narrow at 40 feet. This was confirmed by de Graaf in 1959. It was thought that a smaller diver using compressed air might do better.

Kit : 40' Subaqua V, Orca no. O.C.L. 6., 250 feet line reel tagged at 10 feet intervals.

The Dive : 2.35 p.m. J.P. entered the sump and came back again at 2.50 p.m. He had gone to the limit of his line. The passage is mostly rather narrow and awkward ( about 4 feet high by 1 to 2 feet wide ) and is strongly joint controlled. The narrowest bit is at the second right angled bend to the left, where he had to dekit to get through. The passage descends for an estimated 30 feet depth. Towards the end it gets wider and there are boulders on the floor, which suggests old roof falls, and air space above. This might correspond with the boulder ruckle at the South end of Low's Passage.

O.C.LLOYD

O.F.D. 1 Main Stream Sump  
Sketch Plan by John Parker, 4-1-70. Copyright of Cave Diving Group.



## CURIOUS DEPOSITS IN OFD 11

Many will know of the unusual white deposit found in several parts of OFD 11 which is soft and slippery like clay when wet, but is hard enough to climb on when dry. It occurs, for example, in the streamway of Salubrious Passage, and also in parts of the maze of high passages near the entrance. Never having seen anything quite like it before, I was curious enough to remove a small sample from the streamway of Salubrious Passage, choosing a wet patch was easily gouged with the fingers. This was wrapped in foil from a bar of chocolate and put in a pocket of my boiler suit, where it remained until I remembered it two days later.

I was surprised to find that in this time it had completely changed in appearance. The water had drained off to leave a pebble which was rather hard to break, somewhat resembling Plaster of Paris. It was, however, extremely light. The measured specific gravity was about 0.3, which is very near to that of balsa wood or cork. So this deposit must be one of the lightest of minerals - or would be if it were found naturally in a dry condition! It is in fact extremely porous with very fine pores, and it is light because it is nine-tenths air.

The next step was to find what it was made of, and a drop of dilute hydrochloric acid soon answered that, Violent bubbling established that it was a carbonate, and other tests soon confirmed that the sample was 90 % pure calcium carbonate, the same stuff as limestone.

The appearance of the material in the cave makes it fairly certain that it was deposited from water. What makes the limestone come out of solution in this form, instead of the usual hard, dense crystals or flowstone? Here I was lucky in that I was suddenly struck by the resemblance between moon-milk and this deposit in its wet form. The appearance of solidity, the almost liquid-like yielding when pressed, and the very high content of calcium carbonate are all common to both. Ann Mañon Williams had found bacteria in moon-milk from South Wales and had surmised that they were responsible for the peculiarities of the substance; it occurred to me that bacteria might be responsible for the OFD 11 deposit. A colleague of mine, Peter Watts, had the right contacts, tests were made, and sure enough, back came the reply that the specimen was riddled with bacteria. A second sample was taken in a more scientific manner and confirmed the finding, that we now know parts of OFD 11 are swarming with bacteria!

So many people have made trips to the cave, apparently without subsequent infection or illness, that it is reasonable to assume that the bacteria are harmless. But it is still not known how they act on the cave water to produce this unusual deposit. Here is a promising field for study : are any biologists interested ?

I am no expert in the subject, but it may well be that the OFD 11 deposits are a form of moon-milk. If so, they are certainly the most extensive that I know of.

BOB PICKNETT

### 3-D CAVE SURVEYING

A couple of years ago Dr. Bassett, keeper of geology at the National Museum of Wales mentioned casually that maps of caves were all very well, but that the layman had great difficulty in reading them. He suggested a 3-D map. I toyed with this idea for a long time, and devised a scheme which does give a useful 3-D representation.

I have pasted the OFD 1 survey onto a piece of chip board and varnished it to guard against damp and mould. ( The OFD 1 survey lends itself to this sort of exercise because of its accuracy and the numerous point altitudes which are shown ).

At all survey points with heights marked, I have drilled small holes and inserted stainless steel wires ( about 40/1000 " ) cut so that their length is proportional to the height stated. I have found that it is important to make the vertical scale the same as the horizontal scale to achieve the desired effect. Any other choice of scale tends to over-emphasise or under-emphasise the layout of the cave. I also added a constant 40 feet to all heights given, and this allows all passages to be above the plane of the board - you will remember that negative heights are given on the survey.

The next stage was to get some coloured wires ( single cored p.v.c. covered, and of the sort used in telephone wiring ), and form them to the shape of the passages on the plan. A slight error is likely to occur due to the angle of dip but this can be readily corrected by eye during the course of construction. The coloured wires are then stuck to the top of the steel wires with the aid of coloured sealing wax. The result is a 3-D line survey. Passage sections were obtained by tracing sections on the plan on to transparent film using a marker pen. The film sold in art shops for easy glazing of pictures is fine for this purpose being just stiff enough to support itself. The tracing is then cut out, and a hole jabbed through at an appropriate point with a hot needle. A small cut with scissors from the bottom of the cutout to the jabbed hole, enables the section to be readily secured on the wire framework, and a blob of clear nail varnish fixes this in position.

The resulting effect shows clearly the way passages follow dip and strike, and sighting along a particular passage gives a very good representation of its form and sometimes development. One very noticeable feature which emerges from my survey is that the ' Shale Crawl ' would appear to have been a low point in the Rawl which probably took considerable water at one period of time. This feature can be readily ascertained by examining the plan in detail, but it stands



out like a sore thumb on the 3-D survey. Another interesting point is that diver John Parker of Cwmbran has given us some further information on the sump in OFD 1 ( elsewhere in this N/L ). This information suggests that the present stream passage is beneath the Shale Crawl. The difference in height, about 130 feet, will deter all but the most dedicated of diggers.

3-D surveys of this type do, by their very nature, appear to be very fragile. However, I have no doubt that the complete understanding of a complicated cave system will be considerably helped by surveys of this type. It is essential however that the survey used should include as many details of altitudes and passage sections as possible.

Footnote.

There is a 3-D model at Llanhary iron ore mine which consists of sheets of glass mounted in a shop display case. All passages are suitably coloured, and the extent of the ore bodies at each level is recorded. Uniform lighting is provided from beneath with a frosted glass sheet. The overall result is impressive. I understand that 3-D models of metal mines are quite common in other countries and play an important part in deciding on mining development.

ROGER SMITH

## OGOF FFYNNON DDU SURVEY

The survey of Ogof Ffynnon Ddu is at last generally available. The survey shows that the cave is the longest and deepest in the British Isles with just over 20 miles of passage known, and a vertical separation of 870 feet between the highest and lowest point.

The survey has been drawn on two sheets each 10 feet by 5 feet and photographically reduced to a scale of 1:1250. It is sold on two sheets each 48 " by 24 ", litho printed so as to retain the quality of the original. Each sheet has the national grid superimposed, so it is a simple matter to relate the cave with the surface.

The survey is accompanied by a 66 page lithoprinted book that gives a detailed account of the cave and the area associated with it. The contents include a brief historical account of the exploration of the cave, a detailed account of the geological history of the area and its relation to the development of the cave. The book is illustrated with 9 diagrams and 18 photographs and includes a pull-out 6 inch area map with the cave marked on it in relation to the surface. There is also of course a comprehensive bibliography.

At the moment the survey is available both in black and white and hand coloured to show the relation of passages to each other. Hand colouring is a long process and there is likely to be a delay of about 2 weeks before one can be processed. A full price list is detailed below. Maps are provided folded but if obtained at the club rolled copies are available. They will be posted only if a roller at least 2½ feet long and about 2½ inches in diameter is sent with the order.

### Prices

SWCC members	uncoloured	25/-
	coloured	45/-
non SWCC members	uncoloured	30/-
	coloured	50/-

All above prices are post free. For overseas orders an appropriate amount must be provided for postage for example to the U.S.A. 5 £ and 8 £ ( surface mail )  
7 £ and 10 £ ( air mail )

Orders must be accompanied by a remittance made payable to :-  
' OGOFF FFYNNON DDU SURVEY ' and sent to  
P.M.O'Reilly, 1 Le Mayals, Owls Lodge Lane, Mayals, Swansea.

## O B I T U A R Y

The South Wales Caving Club lost a very good friend when its Honorary Member, Mr Cyril Powell of Rhongyr Isaf died last September.

Mr Powell was a familiar figure to most of our members: there must be few who did not see him walking the fields and hills, always in company of his dog, around Penwylt; and many had the pleasure of talking to him and learning much.

Apart from his farming activities Mr Powell was deeply interested in limestone and indeed there were few small caves in the outcrops around his home into which he had not peered. He dug out the cave on the road to Penwylt - Powell's Cave, called after him - probably the first excavation in Ogof Ffynnon Ddu, even if only a remnant, and he was of the party that first dug in Pant Canol during the last war.

He was well-known to the pre-war cavers, but it was after hostilities ceased and the real search for an entrance to Ogof Ffynnon Ddu began that the newly formed South Wales Caving Club learned how fortunate it was to have such a staunch and helpful neighbour. Mr Powell pointed out many likely places and allowed digging and the upset it involved - which at times was considerable - on his property. He started himself to dig the 'New Entrance' to Ogof Ffynnon Ddu I, the only one younger members perhaps know, because the original way in was just on the 'wrong side' of the hedge, and with his son began to make a path inside round the corner of Lower Flood Passage and The Traverse. Also, we are all indebted to him for permitting access to the cave at all times.

Over the years I and many other members have had interesting and informative chats with our good friend; and walks when he pointed out details of interest which he had observed. He was always eager to hear of any progress in the work of the Club and read with keenness all the literature published about the caves.

It was a privilege to have known Mr Powell and on behalf of the Club I should like to express sympathy to his family; Mrs Powell, his son Cyril, Sylvia and John Barrows and their children.

Sutton Coldfield.

C. Lewis Railton

The following is the text of a letter sent to the secretary, a copy of which was also sent to the editor.

Dear Mary,

I have recently read with considerable alarm, the proposals put forward by a body calling itself the ' British Association of Caving Instructors ' ( with whose aims I know you are familiar).

I feel that these proposed certificates will be at best, brag-chits, and at worst a means of earning money from local authorities. Make no mistake, this passion for documents will, if allowed to flourish, affect all cavers; all active cavers, that is.

I have seen in other fields how the existence of such chits can lead to petty power-wielding, and how the sometimes tenuous thread of club spirit can be strained. What will be the next step ? 1st., 2nd., and 3rd. class cavers? Professional guides. ?

The caving world has long been an island of sanity, but it seems lately to be taking on some of the madness of the outside world. Let us have more of the spirit of the ' Clockwork Caving Club ' and less of the prepacked, deodourised and utterly disposable ideas of the British Association of Caving Instructors.

Yours Sincerely,

MIKE COBURN

REVIEWS

Cyngor Ogofeydd Cymreig      Cambrian Caving Council  
Handbook

2/6 or 12 np.

Edited, compiled and copies available from.

N.S.J. Christopher

Orial Lodge, Gentle Street, Frome, Somerset.

The handbook contains information on access to caves and mines, caving clubs and details of where to find further information about Wales and the Marches. It will provide a key to those who are interested in areas other than their own regular haunts, and hopefully a medium for exchange of information.

#### EDITOR'S NOTE

During the past year, there has been a consistent shortage of material for the Newsletter. This publication costs the club a fair proportion of its annual income and I feel the members should receive something worthwhile each issue. The lack of material delays publication dates, and means that one of the major functions of the Newsletter, implied by the name, suffers from lack of topicality. I feel that it might be the time for a change with the issue of more frequent Newsheets, and perhaps a yearly, quality journal. We can certainly no longer afford the expenditure on the production of Newsletters of the reproduction standard of the last few years. I would welcome members' views on this.

R. J. ARCULUS

#### CHAIRMAN'S NOTE

Members will no doubt be very concerned to learn that Messrs Hobb's Quarries are drilling well outside their present planning permission. I have written to them and their Area Manager, Mr Munday, informs me that "The present bore holes being drilled are purely of an exploratory nature, and quite naturally any developments in the future would have to be the subject of planning application."

These holes are being drilled up in the region of O F D ? top entrance and as far South as in the the vicinity of the big shakehole behind the Club. The Committee are watching the situation closely, but at present are unable to give members any further information. It is hoped to make a report on the situation at the A.G.M.

In order that a full picture can be formed, any member who thinks he has information which may be of assistance to us should contact me as soon as possible.

It is imperative that members do not strain relations between the Quarry Management and the Club as their actions could make negotiation difficult.

Roger Smith

Tel.No. CARDIFF 44509

CLUB NEWS

1. The Annual General Meeting will be held in the Abercrave Welfare Hall, Abercrave at 5.00 p.m. on Easter SATURDAY, March 28th, 1970.
2. We welcome the following new members. They have been accepted since the last issue of the Newsletter.  
Gerry Eldridge, 91, Cissbury Ring South, London, N.12.  
Barry and Joan Mawson, 32, Glyn Llwyfen, Llanbradach, Caerphilly, Glam.  
Geogg Cope, 20, Mynors Street, Stafford.  
Peter Cardy, 111, Roedean Avenue, Enfield, Middlesex.
3. Colin Fairbairn has resigned from the Committee on his leaving the country. We wish him well in his new work in Libya.
4. Mick Day and Ken Maddox have been co-opted onto the Committee.
5. The club rules have been revised. A copy can be seen at the H.Q. or one can be supplied by the secretary on request.
6. We were invited to send representatives to various other clubs' dinners and the following members went - Eric Inson to the Mountain Club's dinner, Mick Day to the Westminster Speleological Group's dinner and Sybil Bowden-Lyle to the Wessex Cave Club's dinner.
7. A very pleasant and successful evening was held at the H.Q. early in December, organised by Peter Harvey with slides, plenty of food and, of course, beer.
8. Mike Coburn has been elected to the Ogof Ffynnon Ddu 1 leaders list.
9. Announcing the BRECON 25,000's walk ( not a race, more an endurance test ! )  
On April 18th, the 3rd weekend after the Easter meeting, all hard men ( and occasional softy ) of the club will assemble in Brecon and, boots suitably dubbed, rucksacks packed, compasses and maps at the ready, they will head towards the club-cross country points which must be visited are :-

CRIBIN 31,296  
PEN Y FAN 34,872  
CORN DDU 34,356  
FAN FAWR 28,908  
FAN LLIA 24,852  
FAN NEDD 26,040  
FAN GIHYRCH 28,572

All these peaks are on the  
O.S. 1" map 141 BRECON

All competitors must prepare themselves properly for this ramble and bivouacs are allowed. The prize will be a 36" x 36" aerial photograph of the caving area, suitably mounted like the one at the H.Q. .... The 25,000's what are they ? ... all the mountains over 25,000 inches between Brecon and Penwyllt.

See you there !

A letter from the Treasurer:

Dear Member,

The subscription to the South Wales Caving Club has remained at a low figure for many years, while costs have risen continuously. The Committee is of the opinion that the subscription should cover the administrative running of the Club (not the Headquarters) as well as paying for the newsletters. Last year the total subscription did not even cover the cost of the newsletters.

We are trying to reduce the cost of producing the newsletter by a substantial amount by producing it ourselves rather than paying a printer, but as well as measures like this we must increase the income of the Club.

The Headquarters fees were raised last year, and will be reviewed when decimal currency comes, and in any case it is unfair to make the regular users of the Headquarters subsidise the benefits of membership of the others, so the Committee propose that the annual subscription be raised to £2 for full members, other rates pro rata, starting with the coming year 1970/71.

As the amount of the subscription is written into the constitution the increase must be approved at the A.G.M. When the new rates have been agreed the Treasurer will ask members to complete banker's order forms for their subscriptions. Previous difficulties over banker's orders have now been overcome, and the Club's bank is to remain at its present address even though the Treasurer may change.

Yours sincerely,

Eric Inson