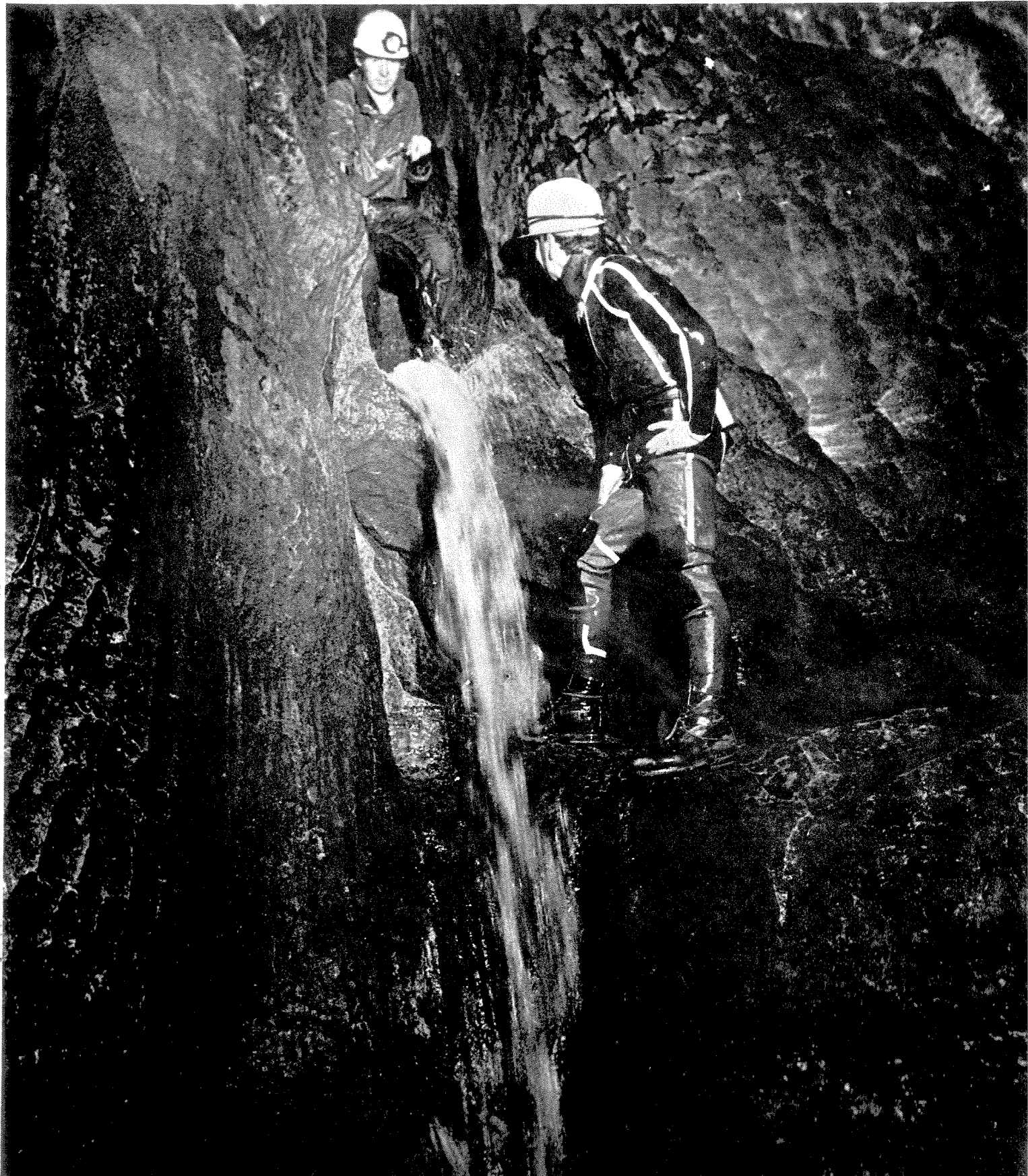


**SOUTH WALES
CAVING CLUB**

NEWSLETTER



SOUTH WALES CAVING CLUB

No.71

NEWSLETTER

April 1972

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Cover photograph - "Spout Hall, Giants Hole", by Clive Westlake

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CAVE CONSERVATION

At present, one of the only weapons available to fight for protection of caves is that of cave research. As a result we can only disregard it if we are prepared to accept the eventual destruction of cave systems as we know them. Bill Halliday of Seattle (Author of "Depths of the Earth") mentions another obstacle for the cave conservationist. I quote:

"the idea of the cavers supposedly spearheading the push for protection of (the caves) is to avoid telling anybody anything about them except that they need to be protected, and expecting everybody to rush to the rescue" (when the caves are threatened).

I sense a similar feeling when discussing ways and means with our members from time to time! There is, however, another weapon which is being forged under the auspices of the National Cavers Association.

For the last two years I have languished under the title of "Conservation Officer to the Cambrian Caving Council". The idea of a conservation officer cropped up at a Cambrian Caving Council meeting when I broached the Ogof Ffynon Ddu problem to it. As I remember, it was Bill Little who suggested the term. The purpose was to give me greater authority in correspondence with government departments. I have found that the title has served the purpose for which it was intended very well. Following my election to this office, other regional councils followed suit. At an N.C.A. meeting in 1971, the problem of cave conservation on a National Scale was discussed. It was agreed to set up a Conservation and Access Group to look into all aspects of cave conservation and access. Members of the group consist of conservation officers from the various regional caving councils and representatives from the Pengelly Cave Studies Trust, and C.R.G. As a first step it was decided to prepare a report on the state of conservation and access to those caves in England Wales deemed to be of importance to cavers. A comprehensive questionnaire was designed by John Wilmut of Pengelly and circulated to all regional councils. The completed questionnaires were duly returned to him and he prepared the first draft of the report. The group met in Stafford in January 1972 to discuss it, and following discussions on the second draft (nearly completed) it is hoped that the report will be published. Parts of it will be of interest to Planning Officers as it states the relative importance of cave systems throughout England and Wales, and represents a National Caving Opinion - and not just that of the local caving club! By the way, the term "importance" is divided into National, Regional and Local, e.g. a Nationally important cave is one which attracts cavers to visit it from all over Britain. It does not indicate the scientific importance of a cave. I believe that the information contained in this report will be invaluable to those concerned in cave conservation.

The Sandford Committee and the Brecon Beacons National Park

The club was invited to send a representative to meet the Sandford Committee (chairman Lord Sandford) at a private meeting in Brecon in February. Frank Baguley joined me in attending the meeting, and under Cambrian guise I put to the committee suggestions amongst which were (a) that caves in the National Park receive statutory protection, and (b) that all quarrying applications be accompanied by public notices in the Press and on site. I followed up my pleas with a report to the committee. One committee member

approached me afterwards to say how much he sympathized with our points of view as he himself had been a keen caver in his youth.

Ogof Ffynnon Ddu

The Wern land behind the Club premises remains the property of the Forestry Commission. The Club relationship with the Commission Executive Officers has been a friendly one and I have found them most helpful.

As mentioned elsewhere, I have a letter from the Welsh Office assuring me that "the Government is aware of the importance of Ogof Ffynnon Ddu".

Most of you will now be aware that the large triangular piece of land going behind the Club, and encompassing Cwm Dwr Quarry, now belongs to Hobbs Quarries, and has planning permission attached to it. However, at a meeting of objectors to the Twyn-y-Ffald quarrying application, Mr Munday - the area manager - said that he was prepared to enter into a local nature reserve agreement with the Nature Conservancy to preserve Cwm Dwr and not quarry near Ogof Ffynnon Ddu. I have at present received no indication that this agreement has been finalized. It is therefore with much regret that once again I am unable to give you a categorical statement to the effect that Ogof Ffynnon Ddu is safe from industrial development.

Commons Registration

Following the 1965 Commons Registration Act, the Club registered common rights over a vast area of the old "Great Forest of Brecknock". After much research I have been able to form the conclusion that our claim was invalid. However, due to the position of the Club premises, we are able to retain common rights within certain limestone quarries delineated in the "Great Forest of Brecon Act" of 1819. Discussions with the solicitors for the Commoners Association at Brecon confirm that our modified claim is a legitimate one, and acceptable to them.

Water Problem

Over the past year the Club has sought legal advice on the supply of water to Penwyllt. Unfortunately the problem is a complicated one, and our problem is still unsolved.

History of Penwyllt

In my researches I have developed a keen interest in the history of Breconshire. I would be most grateful to anyone who can give me any information concerning the history of the Great Forest - (however small), Penwyllt and the surrounding area in particular - also the availability for purchase of the History of the County of Brecknock by Theophilus Jones - the Glanusk edition, 1909-1930.

Acknowledgement

I am indebted to all those members who have helped on the Conservation Front in one way or another during the last year. Help has come by way of information sent, advice given and by participation in discussions. Help has come from members old and new, active and inactive. On behalf of the Club I would like to say "Thank you" - all of you.

Footnote - Ogof Pwll Swnd

Since Hereford Caving Club discovered extensions in this cave and installed a gate, somebody has used explosives to remove the gate. In addition, acts of vandalism involving scrawl on passage walls has taken place. It is very sad to see further acts of vandalism in this much vandalized cave. In this case some antisocial caver has been at work. Members are asked to keep a lookout for him lest he sets his sights on something closer to our Club!

Roger Smith

March 1972.

DIVERS BEWARE!

DECOMPRESSION - A FUTURE HAZARD OF CAVE DIVING

This article is an attempt to bring more light to an old problem which has always been present in diving. Many new cave divers, like myself, may be unfamiliar with decompression with regard to combining times with dives.

Decompression should not normally be encountered in a caving dive, the main object of which is to reach a cave extension for further speleological exploration. However, with modern diving equipment and reasonably easy access to several bottles and compressors, cave divers are going further and deeper, although only for short periods.

DECOMPRESSION SICKNESS - Bends as it is commonly called.

At depth nitrogen is absorbed into the bloodstream, as in normal respiration, but in greater quantities depending upon depth and duration. Liquids which are partly or completely saturated with gas at raised pressure tends to form bubbles when the pressure is reduced. If an ascent is made too rapidly from depth, then the excess gas is not allowed enough time to be expelled from the bloodstream. The remaining gas travelling around the body in bubble form reduces the rate of flow of blood, and tends to get lodged in the joints. This results in bends of which there are several forms:- chokes, spinal, brain and niggles, which can be studied in any manual of diving. It is worthwhile to note that the only cure for bends is recompression, and the only safeguard against it is Stops. A stop being a calculated pause at depth to allow the excess nitrogen (gas) to be dispelled from the body.

COMBINED TIME DIVES

Any two or more dives below thirty feet within a six hour period are combined time dives and should be dealt with as such. If a diver dives to fifty feet for twenty minutes and then surfaces there is no requirement for a stop. If, however, he dives to ninety feet an hour later for a ten minute period he will require a stop, because these are combined time dives. Although normally you would not need a stop for a ten minute period at ninety feet, or for twenty minutes at fifty feet, but because it is a combined time dive you have to add the times together and give a stop for the greatest depth reached. In the example $20 + 10 = 30$ mins. at 90 feet, giving the required stop of five minutes at ten feet. The chances of a cave diver encountering a similar situation are now present, especially where diving in mines is concerned.

One situation in which a cave diver may encounter the combined time rule is on a cave diving rescue, where one or more divers are searching for a lost companion. They may have to go down for a full endurance, surface, recharge again until completion of the rescue. Repetitive dives such as these in comparatively shallow waters (40 to 50 feet) could prove dangerous if decompression in some form was not considered. The problem of decompression in cave diving is only lately with us; I think it is as well for everyone who participates in the sport to be aware of its existence and to be able to recognise the symptoms of decompression sickness should they arise. In the unlikely event of a bends case and the probable lack of facilities to enable the diver to recompress, it is advisable for all cave divers to know the whereabouts of the nearest recompression chamber.

On your next dive, WILL YOU KNOW WHERE YOURS IS ????

M. Ware R.N.

PRELIMINARY REPORT ON NEW CAVES IN THE SOUTH PEMBROKESHIRE

COASTAL CLIFFS

Melvyn Davies - 29 July 1971

Following the discovery of the Neolithic cave OGOF GOFAN in 1967 other caves were sought by climbing out on to headlands and scouring adjacent sea cliffs with binoculars. OGOF MORFRAN, a Romano-British site, and OGOF PEN CYFRWY in which hyena bones were discovered, were located by this method. It then became obvious that other finds would only be made by traversing around the cliffs with a boat.

Accordingly John Parker (Cave Diving Group and Cwmbrân Caving Club) took his sailing boat from little Newquay near Broadhaven as far as Bullslaughter Bay, and did his best to examine the cliffs on the way. Unfortunately, although he was an experienced sailor, he found it too dangerous to sail close enough to the cliffs to be able to get a good view. I approached organisations such as a Milford Haven Sea Scout Troop and the Atlantic College Sea Rescue group to get help in providing a power boat, but the general opinion seemed to be that the project was too dangerous.

Meanwhile I was able to find a set of aerial photographs on a 6" scale of the South Pembrokeshire area which, with a 6" to 1 mile map, enabled me to locate one further new cave. As it happens this one turned out to be filled with TRIASSIC material which is much older than the Pleistocene, or Holocene deposits we were hunting for. Archaeologically Triassic Age red and yellow sandstones in the Pembrokeshire area are considered to be sterile.

Eventually the St. Govans Coastguard Station Officer, Mr Dave Johns, offered to do the trip provided weather and tides were suitable. He had a 14 seater boat equipped with a petrol engine, and a rubber dinghy in tow. We set off at high tide on 17 July from Newquay, keeping close to the cliffs - often within 5 yards - and returned at low tide, having pinpointed 11 new caves in 6 hours. These are all at least 20 feet, and usually 40 feet above high water mark, which seems to be the correct height for a cave archaeological site in both Pembrokeshire and Gower.

Next day we returned to the cliff tops in order to ladder down to some of the new caves. Peter Wilkins descended 60 feet to cave No.1 by ladder and reported a fine, tubular cave running inland for several yards before it ended abruptly in a shaft down to the sea. The cave floor was bare rock, and it contained nothing of immediate interest although its mode of formation was puzzling.

Cave No.2, was situated 40 feet above high water mark under an overhang jutting outwards for 15 feet. An approach from vertically above was out of the question, but we managed to rope down in a gulley west of the cave. A ladder pitch of 30 feet on a sheer face then dropped us on a ledge just big enough for 2, but 10 yards west of and lower than the cave. The traverse across was sheer and possible only for 3 yards without pitons to hold a running belay. Guillemots nested in an entrance 10 feet wide and 5 feet high, but more we could not see. The cave will now be tackled again when the guillemots have left their nesting sites in the Autumn.

The other 9 caves were left for the next visit also. Permission to visit this area has to be obtained from the Commandant of the Army Range, which contains all the caves within its boundaries. In view of their archaeological potential, the Commandant acts only after consultation with the Curator of the County Museum.

For our part as cavers we are resolved not even to proceed into an archaeological cave once finds are made. Even footprints on the surface of the cave floor could destroy irreplaceable deposits. Conservation of these ancient living sites is uppermost in our minds for only a few such sites are left. The County Curator will be informed immediately finds are made so that progress can be recorded photographically.

DIVING - the only answer in Dan yr Ogof

The greatest development in caving has undoubtedly been that of diving. Its adoption has been widespread and invaluable. In S. Wales alone Ogof Ffynnon Ddu and Ogof Ned Fechan typify extensions that have been made in this field and indeed, few caves have missed the diver's probing eye. Sumps invariably 'go' (apart from the ones in Dan yr Ogof) and the potential rewards are nearly always worth the effort.

Dan yr Ogof is a strange and forbidding place, its secrets locked and guarded better than any hidden dwarves' treasure. The defences that have been erected here have been immense and far superior to any thought of in Ogof Ffynnon Ddu. Is it that Smith, now older, wiser and more experienced, has slunk across the valley and is making doubly sure of his new domain, or is it, as seems far more likely, that Dan yr Ogof has a wizard guardian far in advance of any yet encountered by mortal cavers. To ponder or to push that is the question!

From the beginning it was obvious that quite a system lay at the head of the River Llynfell, and it was comparatively early when the Morgan brothers first defied superstition and entered the cave in 1912. Passages, blocked by water was to be their reward, but curiosity had been stimulated and the titbit thrown out served to harden the determination of those who followed.

1937 dawned and caving was maturing. The lakes were crossed and further larger extensions found. But where was the main river? - lost beneath the rock yet again. The deeds of '37 served to quell the appetite for some years but by the 60s it was realized that far more remained to be discovered. The river would seem the most obvious place and following the discovery of Siphon Series in '64 and the main stream (Lake 6) in '65, a diving plan was formulated to seek out Dan yr Ogof II.

Charles George dived upstream Lake 6 for some 70 ft. reached Lake 7, and yet another sump. This was tackled some time later but shortage of line enabled little progress to be made.

The battle for Ogof Ffynnon Ddu was now hotting up and drew much attention from Dan yr Ogof. However as the story goes the crawl was pushed in '66 and the majority of II and III soon found. It soon became evident that the main system still remained to be discovered. No passable dry route could be found so again the areas where the stream periodically showed itself were examined. Early in 1967 T. Moon discovered 'Mazeways' a series of interconnecting sizeable passages ending in two sumps (the apparent flood route of the stream). Later in the year following a cooling of effort in Ogof Ffynnon Ddu a diving attack was planned:-

- 10th June 1967 - T.M. and M.C. diving from the Right Hand Sump completed the loop after a dive of 250' along the left hand wall.
- Easter 1968 - T.M. diving from Right Hand Sump followed roof and right hand wall for 150'.
- 2nd June 1968 - T.M. and C.F. diving again from the "Right" reached the 'Chamber' and found a passage approximately 15' in diameter heading N. - this was followed for 250' until a leaking valve called a return.

23rd August 1968 - T.M., C.F. and R.A. diving from the "Right" reached the Chamber and found a steeply ascending passage leading off. This was followed for 150' to an airbell. The passage dipped again and was at this point 3-4' in diameter. Returning to the Chamber the northward trending passage was followed for about 400' to a large chamber 50' in diameter and at a depth of about 35'. There appeared no obvious way on so the line was tied off.

Some time later the Rising (near Bat Chamber) was dived by R.A., C.F. and R.S. but apart from an airbell at 90' nothing else was found. Tim Reynolds C.D.G. repeated this dive soon after, but got no further. R.A. apparently made another dive in Mazeways Right, but owing to difficulties with the line got little further than the Chamber.

Following these dives caving generally went into a depression. Diving was put to one side and enthusiasm fell to a low ebb. Several people persisted with hopes of a dry route into Dan yr Ogof IV - mainly in Hangar Passage and Dali's Delight, but by 1971 these too were frizzling out.

Assuming therefore that dry routes through were beyond hope, it was decided on diving again and by August a new generation of divers felt competent to tackle whatever the sumps of Dan yr Ogof might hold in store.

- 21st August - Dive in Mazeways Left Hand Sump by M.F. but valve failure resulted in a speedy return to base. (Left hand wall covered for 90')
- 28th August - Lake 10 dived for about 60' by T.M. Bakerloo Sump then examined by T.M. and an air space found after 25' of smallish passage.
- 5th September - Lake 10 dived by T.M. and M.F. but visibility being virtually nil - no progress. Bakerloo Sump dived again - T.M. diving a second sump which however ended in bedding planes after a few feet.
- 11th September - Both upstream and downstream sumps in Dali's Delight dived by M.F. Upstream became too tight after 5-6'. Downstream descended rapidly in a spacious passage to a depth of about 40' from where a horizontal tube about 4-5' in diameter led off. This tube only examined for 30'.
- 12th September - Lake 10 passed by M.F.
- October - Lake 10 dived again this time both walls being covered to look for the mainstream rising. However nothing was found apart from a small tube going downstream.
- Diving again from the Mazeways end of the entrance pool, the stream rising was found in the south wall. A pot descended steeply for over 20' and was constricted at the bottom.
- November - The sump below Highway dived for 35' until it became too tight.
- Following this the 'Rising' Sump was dived for 90' to the airbells, along the left hand wall. Nothing was found.

- 30th December - Mazeways entrance pool dived. A pot 5-6' in diameter descended about 15' to boulders. A tube 2' in diameter led off upstream - but unfortunately to Lake 10 sump.
- Mazeways Left Hand Sump was then dived for 100' to a chamber with a steeply ascending passage leading off.
- The 'Right' sump was dived to find out where the lines went. The second line, tied off in the Chamber was removed.
- 22nd January - Mazeways Left Hand Sump dived for 300' to a point which nearly broke surface. The line was tied off. The 150' sump from Bakerloo to Lake 10 was dived but nothing was found off either wall.
- 26th February - Mazeways Left dived, but confusion over the lines resulted in no progress.
- Corbel's Chamber Sump Dan yr Ogof I was dived for about 30'. Airbells were found at 6' and 26'. Whole sump is very shallow and tight.

Mazeways Left Hand Sump was dived first because it was thought that there might be a direct connection with the mainstream - due to similarity between the mirky water in 'the Loop' and that of the main river. This now seems very unlikely and that the water colouration in the loop is merely due to peat staining.

Lake 10's importance stemmed from the fact that it definitely connected with the minstream, was spacious and because it headed virtually North, i.e. up dip.

Dali's Delight downstream sump might have provided a good 'backdoor' to the sumps (as might Highway Saump), but this now seems unlikely, and that this probably links with the Mazeways sump, at some point.

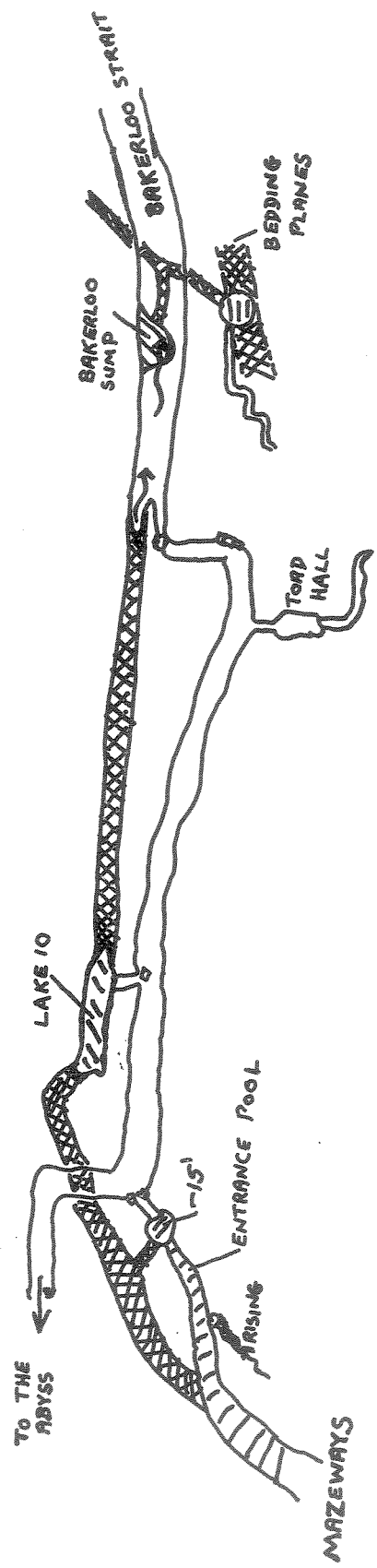
The mainstream rising in Mazeways entrance pool could well provide a route, but due to extremely bad visibility at times and its rather constricted nature it has meant that it has not been fully examined as yet.

These have been the main points of activity so far, but much optimism remains, especially with regard to the long dives in Mazeways.

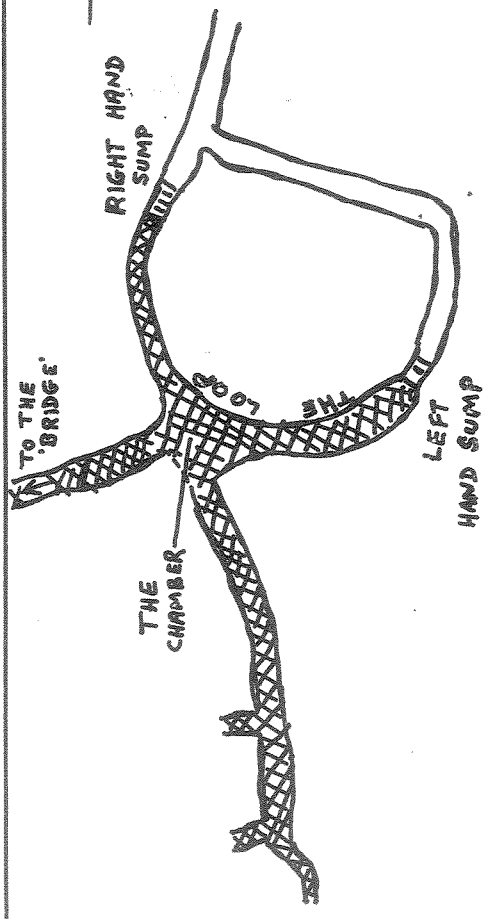
A dry route through instead? This seems very doubtful indeed unless someone takes up the challenge at Sink-y-Giedd. As activity here depends on favourable weather, a stout pair of legs and a determined 'hwyl' little looks like being achieved in the near future. In Dan yr Ogof itself the 'Guardian' can sit back and smile for with all routes apparently inviolable he has nothing to fear? But if anyone is to get through it must surely be the diver.

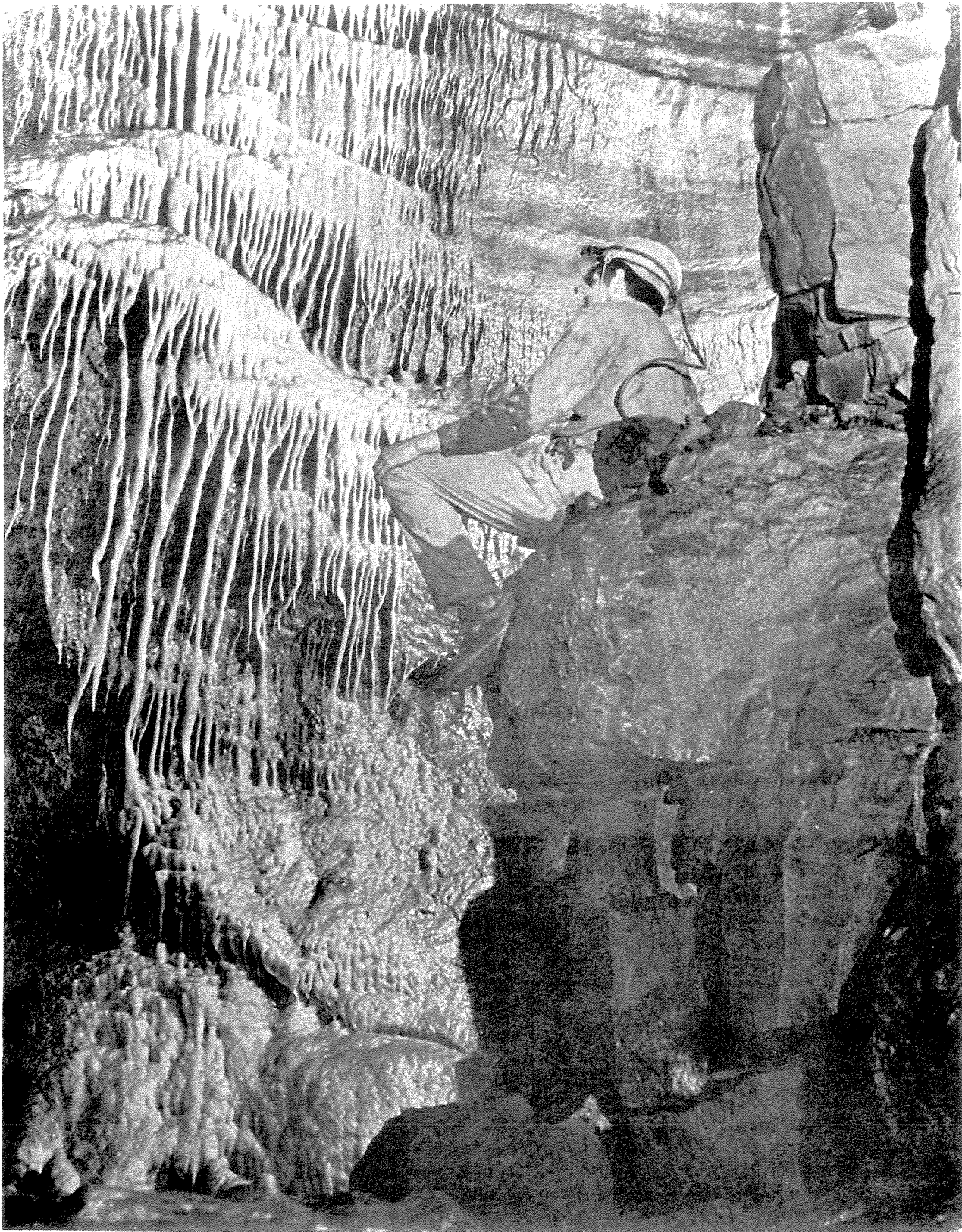
Martyn Farr.

SKETCH OF LOWER SERIES SUMPS D.Y.O. II



SKETCH OF MAZEWAYS SUMPS.





THE NAVE, OGOF FFYNNON DDU II - Clive Westlake.

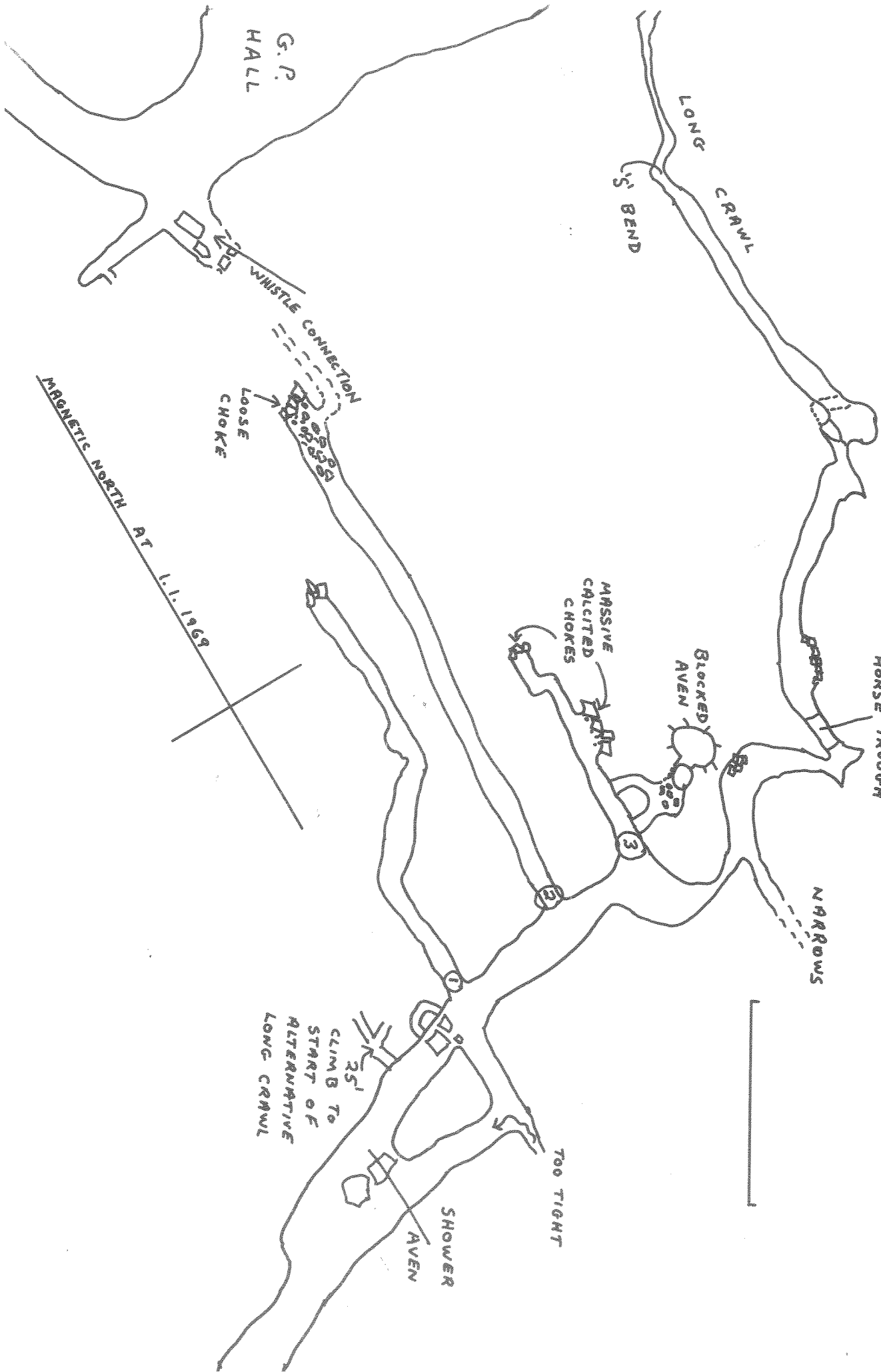
AROUND AND ABOUT THE LONG CRAWL - DAN YR OGOF

The Long Crawl still poses problems with regard to the further exploration of Dan yr Ogof. Although considerably modified since its first penetration it still inhibits exploration - bulky tackle is a problem, major dives become difficult logistical exercises and maypoles of worthwhile dimensions cannot be introduced to Dan yr Ogof 2 or 3. The safety angle is also one of very considerable significance.

The absurdity of crawling approximately a hundred metres through the crawl becomes more apparent when the relationship between it and the end of Platten Hall (shown as G P Hall) are viewed in plan. First surveys showed that the tightest (and furthest) parts of the crawl are in fact in the roof of Platten Hall, while Judson's definitive one shows that the end of the latter curls round appreciably towards the beginning of the crawl and Shower Aven. With these facts in mind and spurred by the discovery of the Alternative Long Crawl (or the 'Even Longer B --- y Crawl' to those familiar with it) I had a closer look at the potential connections. Surprisingly these are quite numerous and one or two were distinctly promising. They are shown in the accompanying survey which is based on Judson's Grade 6 survey with the side passages and annotations being my own at Grade 4.

The most obvious choice was the quite high rift passage numbered here as No.2. Its attractions lay in its size, length and the fact that the survey showed the very loose final choke to lie approximately 7 metres from a comparable one in Gerrard Platten Hall. Efforts to clear a route started early in 1971 when with the aid of the Leicester Ron's (Jones and Egan) a small side passage was uncovered running directly towards Gerrard Platten Hall. A quick follow up provided further encouragement as for the first time we were able to make direct communication (by whistles) through the choke. Unfortunately vocal communication was not established and the passage, although extending for approximately 5 metres, was extremely tight. David Judson was encouraged to begin blasting this out at Easter with the result as most members will recall, that the very loose and unstable choke above came down behind him. Fortunately, there were no injuries and David was quickly recovered. There have, however, been a number of subsequent falls and all trace of the small chamber from which the side passage began has now disappeared. Significantly however it was the choke filling the end of the main passage that collapsed and the small passage has been buried but not filled. This choke, like the very much more stabilised ones in passage 3, consist of a miscellany of boulders, pebbles, sand and grit - limestone is comparatively rare.

Another effort has been taking place in the blocked aven to the right at the beginning of passage 3. The pile of debris at the start of the crawl and the recent partial re-filling of the Horse Trough has resulted from the "dig" (or more appropriately pull). Boulders, grit and sand have been pulled from the slot at the bottom of this aven until it was sufficiently clear to enter. It is now possible to look up through very suspect ribs of oolitic limestone from 5-10 metres to large suspended sandstone and grit boulders. The area is quite wet and although the initial effect of a bang at this point would be to fill the chamber just cleared the long term effects could be very significant. This is because this whole area underlies the "Crater" in which there has been considerable recent subsidence. Whether



this is co-incidence or the result of our efforts in passages 2 and 3 cannot be proven as yet, though I suspect the latter have contributed.

The passage marked as number 1 has received little attention because it is nearly as tight as the Crawl itself and the choke at the end is very constricted. However I feel this will repay considerable effort for the choke is almost entirely of sizeable limestone blocks, the passage (joint influenced) can be seen to be continuing beyond the constrictions, it is lower than the other alternatives (which are probably a little above the choke in Gerrard Platten Hall) and it is the only one to take a draught. On the other hand no whistle connection was achieved with Gerrard Platten Hall although vocal contact with the end of passage 2 was possible, and the distance is further.

I hope to start efforts in this passage at Easter and would welcome assistance from the banger experts. If members question the value of such efforts (- after all the Crawl isn't so bad! -) I think it worth considering the potential of this system. Quite apart from the safety and other factors outlined earlier, the effective exploration of Dan yr Ogof - the realisation of the massive chambers and passages that still remain undiscovered - may well depend upon easier means of access, the introduction of mechanical aids (for digging as well as climbing) and to an elimination of the inhibitions created consciously or sub-consciously by the crawl; if at the same time a direct surface connection can be established, via the 'Crater', so much the better, although obviously this has serious implications with regard to access and conservation.

Alan Coase

OFFICERS' REPORTS FOR 1971 - 72

HONORARY SECRETARY'S REPORT

Our Club was not many months older than twenty-five when, at long last, a dry connection was made between Ogof Ffynnon Ddu I and II. All those digging in that area are to be congratulated on making this connection but in particular Bob Radcliffe for his perseverance. This was indeed a fitting way to celebrate our 25th anniversary.

Digging has continued in many and varied places in Ogof Ffynnon Ddu. Several short lengths of passages, some very well decorated, have been found. Only a few weeks ago finds of several hundred yards were reported.

In Dan yr Ogof the main emphasis has been on diving. Our divers have been very active there. They have also been active in Tunnel Cave and Agen Allwedd. Dry passages of some 650 yards length have been found in Dan yr Ogof.

The boulder choke between Cwm Dwr Jama and Ogof Ffynnon Ddu II appears to have become more unsafe. Also there has apparently been some movement of the large boulders in Cwm Dwr Jama. At present the Committee is discouraging cavers from using the connection.

This year was saddened for us by the death of our President, Lewis Railton. He will long be remembered by us and sadly missed.

We were saddened too at the news of the death of Arthur Hill, an Honorary Member, and at the death of Brian de Graaf, a former member.

Membership numbers have just managed to increase. At March 5th there were 217 members, there having been 28 new members and resignations, in some cases presumed, from 21 members. The number of resignations and lapsed members is not unduly high considering the increase in subscription two years ago.

Pete Cardy has continued to be my assistant secretary and he has been very helpful in arranging leaders for Ogof Ffynnon Ddu I and for guest leaders for Dan yr Ogof. He has also helped me occasionally in replying to letters from non-caving bodies. Roger Smith has again been of considerable help to me over any conservation problems that have arisen. The duty officer system is still in operation and generally working well. We do however occasionally get let down by the designated duty officer not arriving. When this happens I am very grateful to those members who stand in. Thanks are due to all who have acted as duty officer this year, and I hope we may continue to have your support. New members in particular are urged to volunteer their services.

We were invited to send representatives to dinners held by three other clubs and, at the time of writing, arrangements are going ahead for our own Club dinner.

The Committee has met eight times during the year with an average attendance of 9 members out of a possible 11.

We have again supported the Cambrian Caving Council, which is the Welsh Regional Caving Council and a constituent body of the National Caving Association. In matters of public enquiries we may well find that National Caving Association is able to help considerably.

This, members, is my report for 1971-72.

Mary Galpin
Honorary Secretary.

WARDEN'S REPORT (February 1972)

As my year of office ends I would like to thank all the members and non members who have, for the sake of the Club kept on doing necessary chores. Many thanks.

Cottage No.1. Upstairs front room has been painted.
Cottage No.2. The attic floor has now been completed and all the tackle is in position.
Cottage No.3. Front - new floor and new ceiling.
Back - new ceiling.
Cottage No.4. Both front and back have new ceilings.
Cottage No.5. Front - new cold water supply pipes.
Back - new coal grate.
Cottages Nos. 6, 7, 8. No change.
Cottage No.9. New ceiling.
Cottage No.10. 2/3rds only on pointing on pine end completed.

Pipes at the reservoir have been renewed, but the main supply pipes still need constant attention.

There still has to be a vast amount of time spent on the cottages to get them up to the required standard.

Thank you.

Glyn Jones

TACKLE OFFICER'S REPORT

The past year has been another year of relative inactivity. There has been no big Club project at home or expedition abroad. However, there has been plenty of activity about the Club and the Equipment and Tackle has been in regular use.

Wire rope ladder

I was asked last year to include an inventory of the ladders available in Club and this is as follows:

- 100 feet of old type ladder with wooden plugs in the rungs kept in Rescue, and painted red. This should now be destroyed as it is ten years old.
- 1000 feet of old type ladder kept in the expedition stores. This is treated in lanoline and white spirit occasionally and is still in reasonable condition.
- 50 feet of the same type but thicker wire, in the tackle store.
- 400 feet of New type ladder without wooden plugs in the rungs. This is still serviceable although coming to the end of its useful life. Most lengths are shortened by a rung or so due to repairs to the ends. About 100 ft of this ladder is kept on the rescue trailer.

TACKLE OFFICER'S REPORT (continued)

200 feet completed } of a new ladder using thicker wire and larger
+ 200 feet not made up } rungs. This has not yet been issued for use.

Fixed tackle in Ogof Ffynnon Ddu I.

The fixed aids in Ogof Ffynnon Ddu I have been examined and are found to be in a safe condition. The Waterfall traverse wire was tightened up during the year. The Maypole traverse wire although still safe needs replacing with a thicker wire at some convenient time, laid a bit tighter around the traverse.

The poles across the pots have been there a long time now. The ones on the 1st and 4th pots have been removed as the poles and the chains have worn out. I do not regard these as essential aids and have not arranged for their replacement. However, if anybody would like to replace them themselves they are at liberty to do so.

Fixed aids in Ogof Ffynnon Ddu II.

I have inspected most of the aids in Ogof Ffynnon Ddu II, but there are some such as the two knotted ropes in the Fault Aven Series which I have not visited.

A chain ladder has been installed at the Maypole inlet. This ladder is hanging in a spray of falling water and though the chains are heavily galvanised I don't suppose it will last for more than two or three years.

There was a fixed rope on the poached egg traverse. I removed this because the belay was not safe.

New Equipment.

During the year we purchased a Suunto Compass and level for Cave Survey, these are at present on loan to P. O'Reilly.

I would like to thank all those members, too numerous to mention here, who helped me during the year.

P. Harvey

EDITOR'S REPORT

During the past three years, members have been used to seeing a photograph on the cover of the Newsletter. It was probably no surprise when photographs appeared inside the Newsletter this year, as this was the next logical step. I think this is a good idea and has proved quite successful. (So far, the photographs have been included at no extra cost.)

I have done my best to maintain a high standard of presentation. I leave it to you to decide whether or not this has been achieved. The work with the exception of the typing has been done entirely within the Club. I am indebted to Mike and Viv Coburn who have spent many hours printing and collating these Newsletters. I feel that it is a real problem when a Club like ours buys a printer and only one member has any idea how to use it.

In spite of offers of help with the typing I have for the last two issues had the Newsletters typed professionally (at a reduced rate). This

is because I have found from experience that it is essential for the Editor and the typist to be in close communication during the time the Newsletter is being typed.

I feel that the Newsletters this year have had a good appearance. I take no credit for this, because the final appearance depends entirely on whether or not the typist and printer have taken the time and trouble to do a good job. I think they have done this.

Articles and photographs have been hard to come by. It is essential that the active members make more effort to help the Newsletter.

Newsletter costs have been kept to an absolute minimum in spite of increased postal charges (it costs nearly ten pounds in postages to send out one issue of Newsletters).

I apologise for the late issue of the last Newsletter. I also thank all those who have helped with and contributed to the Newsletters this year.

Finally, I would like to comment on the fact that I have received no criticisms nor suggestions from members. I think it would be helpful if members would write in to the Editor to say what they think about the Newsletter and suggest improvements.

Thank you all,

R.M. Radcliffe

RECORDS OFFICER'S REPORT

This has been my second year as Records Officer, and during it I have achieved very little. There are two main reasons for this: firstly there is so much work needed to fully take advantage of the Club's fine collection of literature that the time available to one person in which to do the job is insufficient to really make a mark. Secondly, realising this, one's enthusiasm for the job is substantially diminished.

The first task in attacking the library was to file all the material in such a way that any particular item could be located without a massive random search. This was done, with the aid of four filing cabinets which have been procured over the last two years. Following this, the cataloguing of library items had to be brought up to date - a massive task which I have hardly started, in spite of many hours work.

In order that the Club collection is really useful as a reference library it is essential that there should be a subject index to articles. This was begun by previous Records Officers and I have added about 2000 cards to it, but again the job has still hardly been started.

It has always been policy for certain journals, newsletters, etc. to be hard bound into volumes. I have continued this to an extent but before many more can be bound, an appeal for certain back numbers will have to be launched to the issuing clubs or to members, who may be prepared to donate their own copies.

In my view it is essential that the library be housed in its own room at Penwyllt as soon as possible. A number of persons would then be able to

assist the Records Officer in cataloguing and indexing and only then can the collection stand a chance of becoming the valuable asset that it could, and should, be.

I end by saying that I will not be standing for re-election to the post of Records Officer, because, at least until the Library is housed at Penwyllt, the job needs someone with more spare time and more space to house the collection than I have.

J.J. Rowland

March 1972.

CAVE RESCUE OFFICER'S REPORT

There were seven incidents of note affecting cavers and one concerning an animal this year, thus continuing the trend over the last few years for a steady moderately increasing level of call-outs. Gone are the days when a year passed without incident.

April 9th 1971 (Friday) Rescue of a well-known Club member who had been trapped in a boulder choke collapse in the by-pass to the Long Crawl in Dan-yr-Ogof.

The alarm was raised at 16.20 hours; by 17.00 hours the first rescuers had arrived bearing tools. A snow-ball call-out was attempted with little success on the Bank Holiday, but substantial help started to arrive by 19.00 hours onwards.

At 21.00 hours Dave was released none the worse for his experience.

2. July 15th 1971 (Thursday) A party of six (a schoolmaster and pupils) overdue from Tunnel Cave. Reported by a sole Westminster Member who had arrived at the Rhigos Club Hut mid-week to find that this party was overdue by 2½ hours according to the tag-board at 21.45 hours.

Local cavers checked for cars at Dan-yr-Ogof - none found.

At 23.00 hours the party returned to the Westminster Hut, having left Dan-yr-Ogof late and stopped in a pub on the way back.

On the face of it this seems to have been thoughtless action which resulted in considerable inconvenience (and expense) to others. A satisfactory explanation was however received and it is difficult to say that things would be otherwise if such circumstances arose again.

Difficulty was experienced in raising personnel that night but at least a warning was signalled which could have been life-saving if indeed the party had got into trouble.

3. August 14th 1971 (Sunday) Party overdue, Cwm Dwr to Top Entrance. Search instigated at 18.30 hours, after party 1½ hours overdue. Initial search negative 19.30 hours; 6 parties organised and entered; 21.10 hours, party found and returned to Head Quarters having got lost by the Maypole.

A happy conclusion to a possible situation that had worried us for some time - a search of Ogof Ffynnon Ddu 2.

4. August 19th 1971. (Thursday) Gwent team notified by Police that three lads were overdue by several hours after a trip to Eglwys Faen. No sign was found at Eglwys Faen or the entrance of Agen Allwedd.

On this evidence the search was called off and in fact the boys were later found camping a little distance away up the mountain from their original site below the Daren Sunday School.

They had originally informed the Police of their intention to go caving but the police were not informed of their safe exit as had been arranged.

The matter was taken up with their leader and local Scout authorities.

5. September 4th 1971 (Saturday) A party from U.B.S.S. overdue by two hours - returned just in time to prevent a search party setting out to Ogof Ffynnon Ddu 1, - Cwm Dwr.

6. December 12th 1971 (Sunday) Queen Mary College C. C. London - overdue on "Through trip - in Cwm Dwr - out Top Entrance - Maybe! - out 6.00 p.m.". No action was possible as they became overdue because of a lack of cavers present. At 19.50 hours the leader appeared, reporting two tired cavers at Maypole with poor lights. Within ten minutes a party set off and the Police and C.R.O. were notified of the standby situation.

22.05 hours party escorted back to the Club.

January 15th 1972 (Saturday) 19.00 hours call from Westminster S.G. alerting that 2 divers and one sherpa were stuck by flood waters three-quarters mile in Ogof Fechan. Standby was organised. All well by self help at 22.15 hours.

January 29th 1972 (Saturday) At 16.30 hours it was reported that Bill Little had fallen and broken his leg in Dip Sump Series near Coronation Aven. A call-out was initiated and a Doctor sent for by 17.00 hours.

First party entered one hour after and found Bill at about 19.00 hours - approximately the time the first aid team arrived at the entrance.

At about 20.00 hours the second party reached Bill. The injury was confirmed and the leg immobilised in a short Thomas Splint and Plaster of Paris.

By 22.00 hours Bill was making his own way out with help in carrying the weighty splint. He reached Boulder Chamber before midnight and was then carried like a Viking warrior in a blow-up long-boat down the stream arriving at the surface by 40 minutes after midnight, whence he was taken in an R.A.F. Mountain Rescue Ambulance to Morryston.

This was the severest injury of the year and few people would have been strong enough to help themselves as was done in this case. A less mobile victim would have been an almost impossible problem through the Boulders and would have been at very substantial risk of serious exposure.

The efficiency of space blankets, solid splinting and the water stretcher were amply illustrated. The telephones unfortunately played up considerably - perhaps because the person who knew the cable layout was the victim this time. The first aid knowledge of those present also helped greatly in the treatment.

In addition to these incidents there were also two Sunday evenings in January when parties were overdue and members waited on late. A Cardiff University party was one hour late out of Ogof Ffynnon Ddu II, having been lost in Gnome Passage and returned by 19.00 hours. An Aberystwyth University

party were similarly late the following weekend. On the same night a party from Swansea College of Art were also overdue from Pant Mawr for over an hour.

One (only) animal was rescued during the year - a foal from a collapse hole opposite the Club on Whit Saturday 1971. Engineering equipment was used in the recovery!

Comments.

Ogof Ffynnon Ddu II is claiming its share of victims, as one would expect, few serious but others of a possibly hazardous nature if help was not forthcoming. 'Getting lost' and 'Light Failures', are common causes of trouble in all caves. But searches need large numbers of experienced persons - not always available. An accident on a Saturday seems fairly easily dealt with but a mid-week one even with snow-ball call-out lists are at risk of long delays before help is available. Sunday nights are similarly embarrassing because most cavers are on the road travelling home and it has been the hard lot of a few responsible minded persons several times during the year to hang back at the H.Q. for late leavers.

One could hardly ban Sunday afternoon caving but I am sure sometimes a few people had wished this was the case as they sat and waited.

Regarding general aspects of the C.R.O. there has been little change. The Rescue Boxes are in the process of being refurbished but believe it or not one cannot now just buy one gross of bandages off the shelf. Assembling fresh materials is therefore taking some time.

The provision of First Aid kits, personal and in caves, are also delayed for the same reasons.

We have lost the services of an excellent Training Officer - Clive Jones. Our thanks are due to him for all his trouble and enthusiasm in the past. Any volunteers to replace him? We should not have to press gang for this.

Judy has taken over the catering stores providing excellent tea and soup.

Since originally setting out a new list of wardens a revised version is now due and is in course of preparation.

Other than organisations such as M.R.O. who are called out en-bloc via the Police, our internal call-out system is not perfect. I have only had two team snow-ball schemes given me so that I know they exist - Cardiff and Gwent. Wardens please pull your socks up.

The trailer hitch has been improved during the year and the equipment is back in its readiness state. The Land Rover, however, is still dented and unpainted and cannot be used yet as an Ambulance.

This report is therefore like the Curate's egg - good in parts, bad in others. I wish however to thank those who have helped support the organisation in work and donations and to wish whoever has the task of Organising in the future all the best.

Yours faithfully,

R. Williams

CLUB NEWS
* * * * *

1. We welcome the following new members:

Patricia Christopher, 30a Beechfield, Kings Langley, Herts.

Jane Foster, P.O. Box 85, Mzuzu, Malawi.

Brian and Marjorie Jopling, 4 Johnson Road, Erdington, Birmingham 23.

Keith Parrish, 34 Saffron Close, Temple Fortune, London N.W.11 OPY.

Penny Salt, 27 Millmead Lodge, 275 Wake Green Road, Hall Green, Birmingham
13.

Denise Samuel, 4 Brent Court, Church Road, Hanwell, London W.7 3BZ

Brian and Janice Smith, 13 Min y Rhos, Ystradgynlais, Swansea Valley.

Michael and Christine Smith, 60 Rainsborough Gardens, Market Harborough.

Jill Stevens, 65 Dan y Graig, Pantmawr, Cardiff, CF4 7HL.

2. Congratulations to:

Bruce and Jane Foster on the birth of a son, Dominic.

Joan and Barry Mawson on the birth of a son, Huw William, in February 1972.

3. Ogor Ffynnon Ddu survey. This is on sale to members at £1-25 and to non-members at £1-50. Orders should be sent to Pete Cardy, 111, Roedean Avenue, Enfield, Middlesex.

4. Ogor Ffynnon Ddu I leaders.

Ginny Brooks and Penny Salt have been elected onto the leaders list.

5. Dogs and other pets.

These are becoming an increasing nuisance and the rule concerning them has been amended so that they may not be brought into the kitchen or dining room.

6. Easter weekend.

Members are reminded that over the Easter weekend they may only bring visitors to stay at the headquarters, who are close family.

7. The entrance to Cwmdwr Quarry Cave will shortly be gated, the cave to be locked during the week and left open at weekends. (It will be possible to open the gate from the inside.) The Committee seriously advises cavers not to go through the Boulder Choke from Cwm Dwr Jama to Ffynnon Ddu II as it appears to be in a dangerous condition following major rock movements in the area.

8. There is no "From the Logbook" in this issue, since a mouse has eaten the Logbook!

OBITUARY

Arthur Hill.

I first met Arthur when he joined the Mendip Exploration Society in 1937 and we had many caving trips together on Mendip. Our first trip to Wales was to Dan yr Ogof in 1938 when we were invited with others to join Gerard Platten in the re-exploration of the cave. There we had our first meeting with Mr and Mrs Price of the Gwyn Arms and their young son Arthur who was to join us on many of our caving exploits, and after the bar closed, we slept on the benches. Shortly afterwards Arthur moved to Wales and formed the Welsh Branch of the Mendip Exploration Society as its Secretary. I moved to Wales in 1939 and eventually the branch became more active than the parent society, which folded up in the early war years. At this time the Welsh Branch began the long excavation of Ogof yr Esgyrn. Ashford Price was appointed foreman by the owners, Davey Price as the expert on rock removal and Bill Doyle as the navvy, while on the voluntary side, Arthur organised cavers to assist in survey and mopping up operations and did a great deal of the excavating himself, with Gwyn Tudor, (afterwards Mrs Hill) and later on with Edward Aslett.

The war years depleted our numbers, but during these years, the Gwyn Arms became a base for Arthur, Gwyn, Dorrien and myself, and of course Edward, where we went by bus and hoarded petrol ration on holidays and weekends to dig, cave and enjoy good fellowship. We spent many happy hours searching for caves (the only one of any size at that time was Dan yr Ogof) and digging swallets that never went. When we were not digging at Ogof yr Esgyrn, much of our time was spent at Pwll Byffre in the hope of finding a connection with Pwll Ddu, one of Arthur's particular favourites. Eventually we tried the other end and some success was achieved by breaking into Pant Canol, now part of the Ogof Ffynnon Ddu system. During these years, Arthur added a great deal to our friendship with his unruffled good humour, tenacity and modesty - he was never one to claim credit for himself.

After the war, the Mendip Exploration Society was formally dissolved and the branch became the South Wales Caving Club, with Arthur as its Secretary. It was the first Welsh based caving club to operate in the Principality and it was largely due to Arthur's efforts that the Club made such remarkable progress. It was anticipated that the introduction of a club, having a nearly complete English membership at that time, into Wales might be beset with difficulties, but there was no doubt in anyone's mind that Arthur was the right man for the job. He took a keen interest in Wales, the people and language and even produced a Welsh glossary for non-Welsh members. For many years, Arthur worked at the Minchin Hole excavations in Gower, an enterprise worked jointly between the S.W.C.C. and the Royal Institution of Swansea. This was in some ways a gruelling task, with rare finds, but Arthur never tired or slackened on a job once undertaken - he always saw that it was well done.

Arthur always took an interest in each new member and would never tolerate cliques within the Club. He never became involved in petty feuds and his natural tolerance and balanced good sense won the admiration of all who joined the club. He had no enemies to my knowledge and this is borne out by the fact that he retained his position as Secretary from year to year.

Arthur was a one club man in that from the moment he took an interest in Welsh caving activities, his entire efforts and allegiance were always with the same club. Long after he returned to England, after many years spent in Wales, he would always speak warmly of the Club he had helped to create.

Ted Mason.

Note by Edward Aslett

Ted and Dorrien Mason had, of course, been exploring underground with Arthur for some years before they introduced me to caving. Ted was the first Chairman of the S.W.C.C. as Arthur was the first Secretary.

I asked permission to add a few lines as I admired Arthur's qualities of leadership. We all know what caving discipline is nowadays, but in the early years, Arthur was a great influence in promoting this - he respected caves and wanted people to cave decently and nobody liked to offend because he was so well liked and sincere. He was thoughtful too, for the local folk into whose (then) quiet countryside we had intruded; he was anxious that we should consider their feelings and earn their confidence. Apart from being Secretary, Arthur was a dedicated club member and his example and powers of leadership must have influenced all of us in some degree.

One does not remember Arthur without thinking of Gwyn, his wife; there was always laughter around Gwyn. They were a great couple and a source of happiness in the club.

If we have built up any caving tradition in the club, then Arthur, long ago, was one of those most active in laying the foundation.

+ + + + + + + +

MEMBERS' ADDRESS LIST

** Honorary Members.

ALDRIDGE, John, Mr and Mrs, 20 Beech Hill, Northlands Wood Estate,
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ANDREWS, T. 186 Courtlands Avenue, London S.E.12.

ARCULUS, R.J. 9 Elwyn Road, Sutton Coldfield, Warcs.

ASHWELL, A.W. Mr and Mrs, Cuilcagh, Stanyeld Road, Trevor Hill,
Church Stretton, Salop.

** ASLETT, E. Dr, c/o Castle Hotel, Brecon.

BAGULEY, Frank, Mr and Mrs, 15 Elm Grove, Aberdare, Glam.

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BARR, Richard John, Trinity Cottage, Perton, Nr. Wolverhampton, Staffs.

** BARROWS, John, Mr and Mrs, Y Grithig, Penycae, Abercrave, Swansea.

BASSETT, D.A. Dr, National Museum of Wales, Cardiff.

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 OSBORNE, John, 34 Haygate Road, Wellington, Shropshire.
 or Protection Section, Electricity House,
 c/o The E.A.P.L. Co., P.O. Box 30177, Nairobi, Kenya.
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