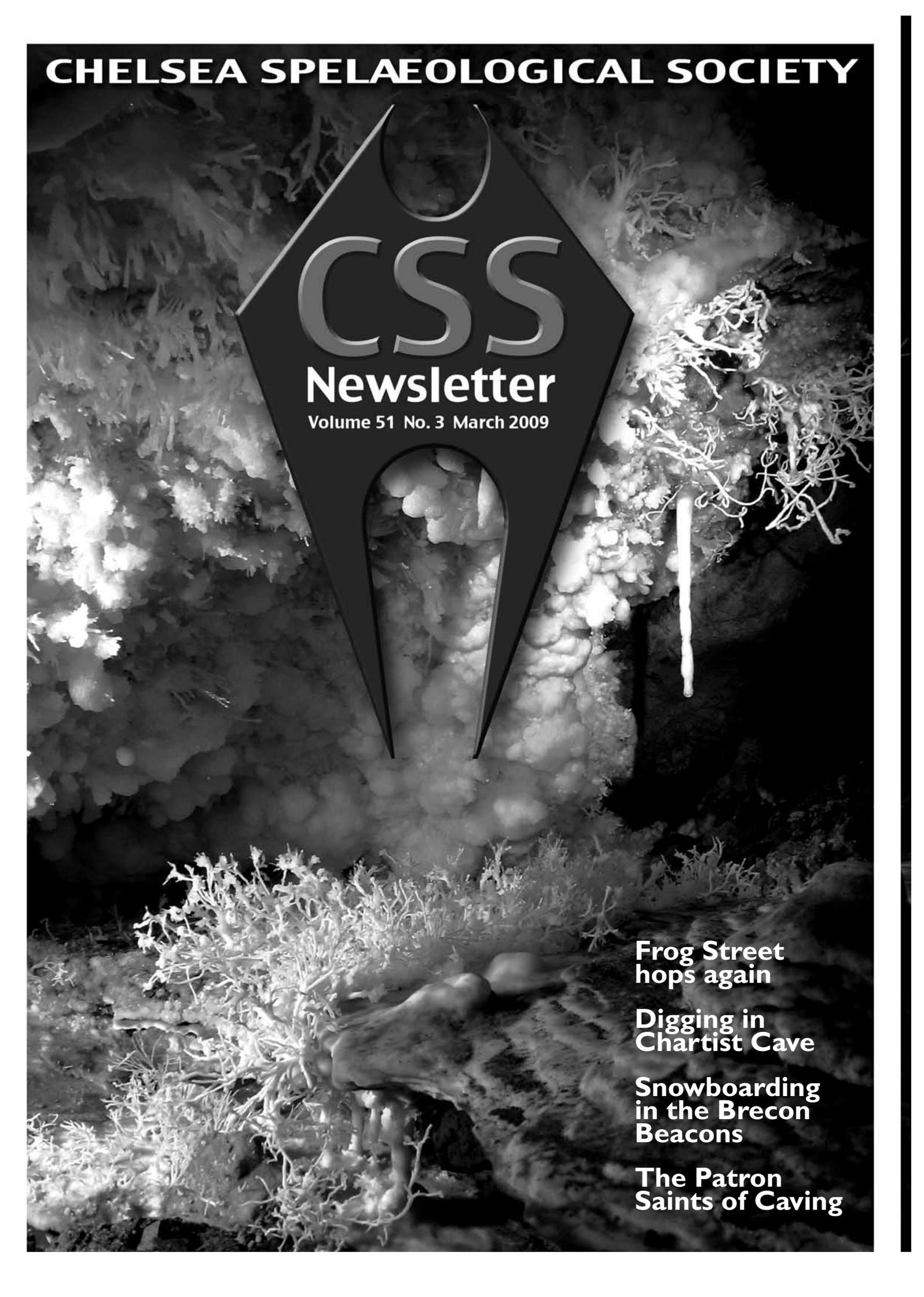


# CHELSEA SPELAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY



**CSS**

**Newsletter**

Volume 51 No. 3 March 2009

**Frog Street  
hops again**

**Digging in  
Chartist Cave**

**Snowboarding  
in the Brecon  
Beacons**

**The Patron  
Saints of Caving**

# Chelsea Spelæological Society NEWSLETTER

Volume 51 No 3 March 2009

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## ADDRESS LIST

Members are sent an address list each year. If you are shown as **Lapsed** then you will not receive further newsletters until the Treasurer informs me you have paid your subs.

Current rates are:

**Full** £30  
**Joint** £43  
**Associate** £20  
**Provisional** £20 (for six months).

Provisional members should renew when their previous subs expire or when promoted to Full membership.

Cover Photo:

Formations in **Helibeds**  
Frog Street, Daren Cilau  
By Gonzo

Photos in the Newsletter that are not credited have been taken by the Editor.



## CAVING INSURANCE

Whilst membership fees include non-caving public liability cover (unless already covered via another club in which case deduct £5 per person from the above) if you wish to increase this to **ACTIVE CAVER** level you need to send the treasurer a cheque for an additional £11.

# Editorial

Well you have to start somewhere!

This is my first attempt at editing the Chelsea Newsletter so bear with me - I hope to make it as interesting as possible and am only too aware that a club newsletter can only be as absorbing as the content that is sent in by the membership.

If you fancy doing a write up of an enjoyable (or otherwise!), recent caving trip please send it in.

Do you have any amusing anecdotes about club activities from years gone by?

How's the dig going? Let your clubmates know - you may get some informative feedback from retired members or spark up some enthusiasm within clubmates who fancy lending a hand.

Have you been on any interesting, ground-breaking expeditions or sporting trips down continental caves lately - all grist to the mill.

Photos - the more the merrier, diving reports, information on forthcoming caving conferences, bat recipes, club meets, caving songs, equipment reports, social events, information about useful, cave-related links and articles, compromising photos of repellent neighbours - all are welcome!

Without your help this could become the delusional rantings and ramblings of an uncouth, threadbare, middle-aged Daren-obsessive digger and artist, so be warned . . .

**Please send all material (ideally in blocks of less than 10 megabyte) to:**

**mark@creativeedge.me.uk**

**or put on CD (readable on all platforms as I'll be working on a Mac) and post to:**

**Mark Lumley**

**The Creative Edge**

**7 Langleys Lane**

**Clapton**

**Radstock**

**Somerset BA3 4DX**

**Send text for your article as .doc or similar, or simply send it as an email.**

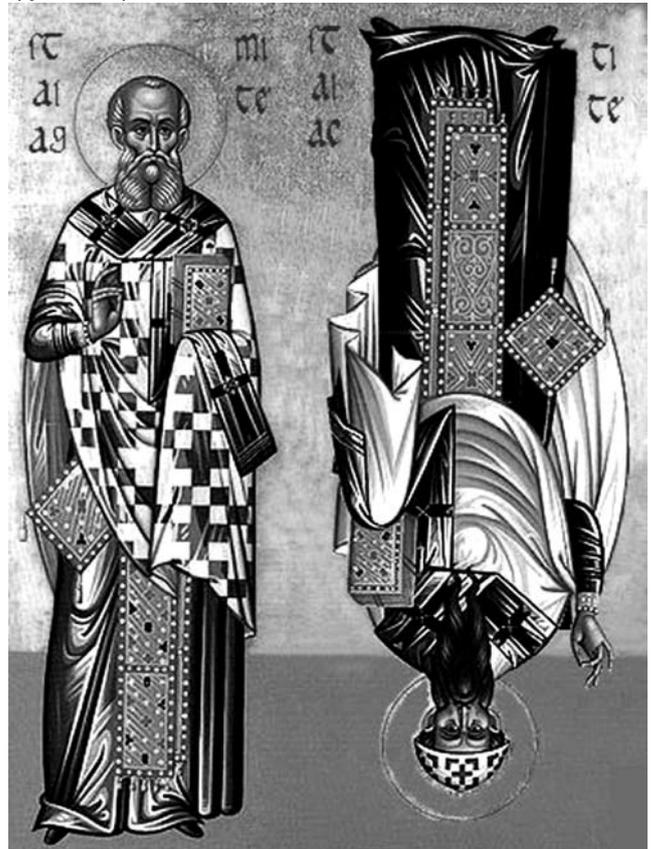
**Convert photos, surveys and other images to decent-sized .jpeg, .tif, .psd or .eps files.**



*Gonzo*

## St. Alagmite & St. Alactite The Patron Saints of Caving

by Joe Duxbury



# Library Additions February 2009

## Rock Steady Crew camp logbooks

Aug 1986 - May 1991

First breakthrough into the Hard Rock Extensions up to the discovery of Dweebland.

Logbooks from Hard Rock Cafe and The Restaurant at the End of the Universe PDF on DVD.

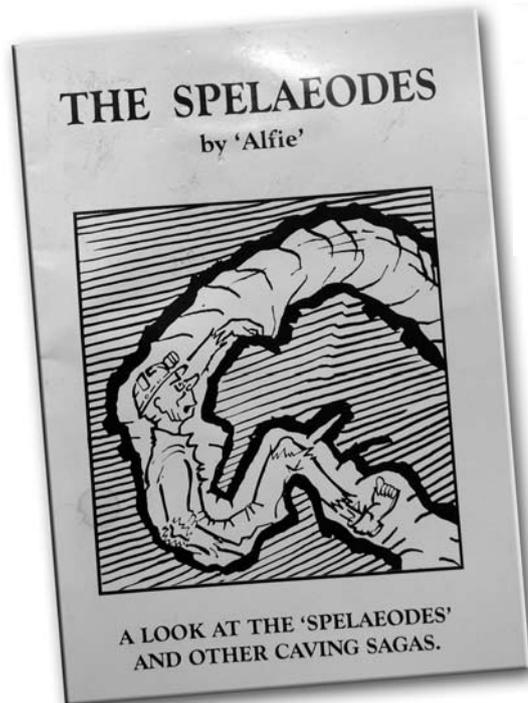
## Spelaeodes

by Alfie Collins

Illustrated by Richard 'Jok' Orre

© Mendip Publishing 1993

ISBN 0 905903 32 3



We had a superb lunch - pitta bread, various side salads and fresh cheese, with pickle of course. The lunch had a magical effect on the hole in the floor, the 3" wide rift turned into a 6" → 12" rift and passable. Andy, the skinny one was first, then Steve M. who only just made the gaps - 25' very tight traverse then 15' vertical descent to the steamway. Sadly there ~~is~~ is no way of enlarging "The Micon" without ridiculous amounts of bang, and its place in history is assured.... many will be disappointed, climbing up again could provide a ghastly experience for the exhausted caver; some sort of aid to get up the first few feet would be a nice idea. Those of larger build will doubtless be searching for the expressway. Please - 'The Micon' emerges <sup>right</sup> at the ~~spot~~ downstream end of Ankle Grinder bypass. Steve M. and I headed up ~~it~~ for a good half hour. We'd heard that it was 'nasty'. It is. We turned back at what looked like



Illustration by Jok Orre

Emerging finally from Stoke, A fully dehydrated bloke.

# THE QUEST FOR THE MYNYDD LLANGYNIDR MASTER CAVE

by Andy Heath



One dark winter's evening whilst idly flipping through 'Caves of South Wales', my attention was drawn to the words 'A small but interesting cave beyond which there must be considerable passage still to be discovered'. The cave in question is Chartist Cave on Mynydd Llangynidr. Since I'd not been down there before, I felt it had to be worth a look.

And so it was that on a bright Sunday morning, Matt & Mandy Voysey, Sarah Percy (my non-caving better half) and I, armed with shovel, jemmy and GPS set off from the Trefil quarry road across the moor. On this particular occasion we took a somewhat devious route, inspecting the myriad of gullies and depressions that abound. A couple of hours later, we arrived at the wide arched entrance to Chartist Cave.

Basically, the cave consists of two levels. The upper level is immediately beneath the gritstone. In fact, the roof of the entrance chamber is actually built of the stuff, only the walls and floor being limestone. A second chamber leads to a small descending passage and a squeeze down to a lower level. It's this lower level that is of especial interest. Simplified, it's a short section (around 50m) of a quite large north-south trending passage that just ends in areas of breakdown. At the southern end, as well as the main boulder choke, there are several parallel rifts. There is considerable evidence of digging in most of these passages; nearly all the digs seemingly ending in nasty-looking boulder chokes. Clearly to try to push any of these areas would require blasting and much shoring.

The northern end terminates in a similar fashion with nasty-looking chokes. However, one small feature caught our eye that we felt would be worth more than just a casual scratch at. In one corner of the main passage, around 5m back from the choke a low arch at floor level possibly indicated another passage.

Conscious that Sarah had been sitting around on the surface for a couple of hours by now, we didn't spend too much time at the site, but an hour's easy digging in dry sand was enough to convince us that a return visit would be on the cards in the not-too-distant future.

To cut a long story short, since that Sunday in January 2008, Matt, Mandy and I, with the assistance of a few 'guest' diggers (Rob 'Tav' Taviner, Derrick Guy, Geoff Dawson, Adrian Fawcett and Mark 'Gonzo' Lumley) have returned to the site on nine more occasions. The low arch has become a narrow stooping phreatic rift around 9-10 metres long. What started as an easily diggable sand fill has become a mixture of dry laminated sand on top of dense clay overlying hard, dry mud. A narrow section of the passage necessitates putting the spoil into very small 'skipettes' (much to the mirth of those who've spotted them at Whitewalls) for its initial journey, before decanting it into a 'man-size' skip for the final pull.

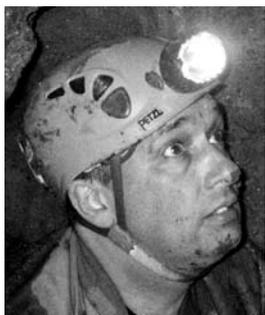
So is it worth continuing? Well, as with all digs, it's probably a case of 'I've started so I'll finish'. On the down side, there's no open airspace and therefore no draught, but so far we've not found air quality to be much of an issue. It's also a shame that it's no longer nice loose sand. The narrow bit makes spoil removal a bit slow, and the twisting nature of the passage means that a team of at least four is now required for a visit to be worthwhile.

Furthermore, I'm not too sure about the potential of almost horizontal caves on the tops of mountains; it doesn't require too much imagination to envisage it popping out the side of the hill! I was rather hoping that the dig would descend more than it does. We certainly need to survey it properly to get a better idea of the place.

As to where it's going; well, you can hypothesize about any dig for hours and convince yourself that it's the next big thing. I'd be happier if the dig was at the other end of the cave, but as we all know, it's not always the obvious passage that leads to greater things, so I'm sure we haven't finished yet.

# Membership

Welcome to new provisional member



## Andy Watson

11 The Limes, High Street,  
Shrewton,  
Salisbury SP3 4BW.  
Tel 07881 420048 (H),  
07787 790935 (W).  
lemoncandy@btinternet.com

**Have YOU paid YOUR subs for 2009? If you are marked as LAPSED on the 2009 Address List then this could be your last Newsletter ...**

## CSS WEB Forum

The web-based message board seems to be working well, with regular postings on a range of different topics, and the membership continues to increase, there are now 40 members. However there are a lot of people not yet using the message board who may be missing out on useful information and discussions, including trips that get organised at short notice.

Remember, the message board doesn't intrude on you by sending you emails - you just log on when you want to find out what's going on, or what everyone's talking about.

If you've not yet got around to signing up, why not visit <http://cssmembers.proboards85.com> today?

# Ogof Craig-A-Ffynnon

Fri 30 Jan by Steve Sharp

Duncan Price, Antoinette Bennett, Steve Sharp

I arrived early on the Friday morning at Whitewalls to find it cold lonely and deserted – after a short while I was joined by Mike Kelley and we spent a couple of hours talking.

Mid afternoon Duncan Price and Antoinette Bennett arrived, after a few cups of tea we set off for Ogof Craig-A-Ffynnon. This was to be my first trip in this cave; we parked up by the now abandoned pub and provided a strip show for anyone who happened to be driving past.

A short walk up the lane and we arrived; I was filled with trepidation and wonder, Duncan was the key master, soon we were in. If you have never been in this cave it's spectacular, almost as soon as we were through the entrance passage we were met by glistening straws that looked like hanging stars from the roof of the cave. The cave is a photographer's paradise. We strolled along the passage until we reached a low stream passage. Here we had to stoop low and crawl through the cold, fresh flowing water. I had my large tackle bag on my back so I was swimming. Our next obstacle was a climb into the upper reaches of the cave. A short fixed ladder up to the rope climbs, Duncan made it look easy, Antoinette took a little longer but relished in her achievement at the top of the climb, I cheated and tied my bag to the rope for Duncan to haul up – The climb is a little tricky you have to wedge yourself in-between the rocks and thrutch yourself up!

Once at the top we made our way through the tight contorted

twisting boulder chokes until we reached the large passages beyond, our destination for the trip was the "Hall of the Mountain King",



Duncan and Antoinette in Hall of the Mountain King  
Photo: Steve Sharp

I have seen many a picture of this spectacular chamber. Anyway onwards and upward to "The Hall of the muddy floor", well that's what it felt like, Duncan was way ahead in the distance, myself and Antoinette were getting stuck in the gloom. We carried on through the large passage until we arrived, the chamber did not disappoint, it was spectacular, we circled round marveling at the grand formations, I set myself in position for a photo of Duncan and Antoinette, their hands were locked tightly together as they gazed at the hanging garden of stal, this was also Antoinette's first trip,

We then made the return journey a little cold and wet back to the entrance, an excellent trip and soon to be repeated.

# More 'Wigsey'!

03/01/2009

by Gary Kiely



Photo:  
Steve Sharp

A little coordination of plans ended up with a Wigmore trip cropping up.

Most of the idea for this trip was from Duncan Price. He needed to get 2 cylinders down there. Rumour spread and we had a total of 4 cylinders to go. So I rounded up the least sane people that I could get my hands on.

Alan Brady, Mad Fi and myself and of course Duncan... or so you would think. Over a preliminary cuppa at the Wessex, Duncan sheepishly bottled out, but still fancied having his cylinders taken down. After plenty of ribbing and threats of publicising his wimp out, we agreed. It was probably for the best, because it had looked like the pies had attacked Duncan a bit over the Christmas. Duncan carefully packed both his cylinders into 1 tackle sack.

These Cylinders were unusual in true Duncan style. The tap on the valve was not a standard type. One little delicate tap and it was open. Great when in the water I suppose. Not going into Wigmore! The weather was icy again, and we had trouble getting the grill up as the mud had frozen around it.

We persevered and I descended first to stack the cylinders at the base of the ladder. By the time Alan and Fi were down, I had started off with the big bag with 2 cylinders. Fi had been going on about the big bag that it would

need a donkey's tail. I was doing OK with the bag so I said it was fine. Sometimes I wish I would listen more! We used teamwork to pass the bags down the various climbs, but the big bag was really awkward. So we added a sling. And I swallowed my words! I shall spare you all the whole trip description and fast forward to .... The Butchers Arse! Alan Butcher (Butch) said that "*Wigmore will never go so long as there is a hole in my arse*" hence the name. For any of those at the back, who were not listening last month. Butchers Arse (not Alan Butchers!) is about 8 meters long, snug to start with about 600 to 700mm diameter for 2 meters, and pretty much circular in shape. A 1-meter long U tube follows this into a space, which is enough to curl up in and turn around if you're flexible enough. Now the fun begins with 5 meters of a rectangular jagged tube slightly undulating, again about 600 to 700mm high and 300mm wide. I dragged my bag to just beyond the U tube. Here I clipped the bag onto a drag rope and my cow's tail into the traverse line just above my head. Thinking I could do the whole job myself, I headed to the pitch head of Black Pudding Pot trying not to scrape off the bezel of my light against the left hand wall. I shuffled along the abrasive tube, drag rope in hand and did a hand stand as usual to exit. On recovering into a vertical and semi safe position I pulled more of the rope. It was really easy, mainly because I pulled the wrong end of the rope and it was not in a loop. Fiona had to save the day by following the bag feet first and un snagging it each time the rock ate it and then dragging the rope back for the next bag and

so on. The drag rope was a great system until I messed it up. So at the end of this logistical marvel, I was at the top of the ladder with 1 cylinder on 1 end of my cow's tail and the other 3 clipped on my belt. It's amazing how that amount of dangle-ness can concentrate the mind when dangling on a ladder. I quickly lowered 2 cylinders to the bottom of the pot and climbed down with the last couple. Fiona and Alan quickly followed, and I apologised for my incompetence.

We had reached our goal. This is where our cargo was to live for a while so we had a rest and a chat for a few minutes. I headed out first, because hanging around I had started to get a bit chilly. It seemed a breeze as we had become accustomed to the snugness and struggle on the way in. It almost felt like cheating a necessity. Almost as unthinkable as Daren entrance crawl without a bag! I lost Fiona and Alan for a while, but when I was sufficiently warm. I stopped and waited for them to catch up. We kept together after that.

As you get closer to the entrance shaft you realise just how warm it is in the cave. It was bitterly cold now. We de-rigged and de-kitted really quickly. Then back into Alan's car for the trip back to the Wessex. I found a HUGE bar of Toblerone stashed in the boot of Alan's car that got obliterated on the drive back. It was good! Thanks to Duncan for.... Supplying the idea and part of the cargo! to Fiona for sorting out my stupidity, and to Alan for the Toblerone. Another superb trip with teeth on! Laced with banter and fun, just as it should be.

# SNIPPETS FROM THE LOG

Are members happy for their log entries to be reproduced in this manner in future?

My own assumption is that if someone is happy to write up a trip in the CSS log book then they will be happy for it to appear in the Newsletter.

If anybody has issues with this let me know [mark@creativeedge.me.uk](mailto:mark@creativeedge.me.uk) and I'll type out the more interesting ones after going through the laborious process of gaining consent from the author of the log entry, and exclude entries from those who do not wish their entries to appear.

04/01/09 AF, JS, DS, MR Ager Allwedd 3hrs  
To Keyhole Chamber area, 150 LH to 1\* (choke + 1GH + 2 W/B. without really any sides  
1 LH in Keyhole + 1 in crystal gallery.  
03/01/09 AF, JS, DS, AS, S Sharp, James?, Tom F, Martin B - Biomans (Sho)  
Surveying, digging, photographic trip.  
8 LH to breakthrough point + 9 beyond, only in direction of digs, not counted other direction in Biomans. + 1 W/B near logbook, with 1 m of 16icles! ~ 270m surveyed

10-11/01/09 AF, ML, MV, MV, AH Daren Cilar - HRC  
Dug end of Frog Street. 2 more breakthroughs added  
approx. 80m of passage.  
17/01/09 ~~Back to F~~ Daren Cilar AF 8hrs  
Back to Frog Street with a compass to check which way it's  
actually going. Also spent 1hr at the bitter end beyond the area  
to see whether there are any prospects here - difficult to be sure  
what's going on, but probably not.  
Frog Street was draughting well (towards Frog Street) so checked out  
end of Half Mile - also draughting away from choke - presumably  
air to both has the same source.

24/1/09 TF, AB, ML : Dug Biomans SW. Walls pinch in to a narrow crack at  
the end, so we may have lost the way on.

# Daren Cilau

a Film by Steve Sharp



Buy your DVD of this excellent 'fly-on-the-wall' film of 2008 exploration in Daren Cilau direct from Steve for just £6. Contact details are available in the Chelsea SS address list.

The £6 just goes to cover costs with £5 going towards the cost of the DVD plus p&p.

The additional £1 will be donated to Gwent CRO.

For a review of the film see Descent No. 205.

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## Have you ever wondered what is above you when you're crawling beneath Llangattock Mountain?

Henry Bennett has overlaid a copy of the Llangattock cave survey onto an aerial photograph of the mountain. The results are quite intriguing with some surface features tantalizingly suggesting what may lie beneath - large depressions predictably corresponding with boulder-choked terminations of

some of the bigger fossil passages, an unblemished surface over the length of the Time Machine and, intriguingly, the huge depression at Waun Cym between the Time Machine and Epocalypse Way to name but a few.

The results can be viewed at  
<http://www.bec-cave.org.uk/maps/wales.html>

Could anyone tell me what happened to the last few hours after the Chelsea dinner? I seem to have mislaid them but vaguely recall the inclusion of a Cheese board, a Chess board and a bottle of Scotch ...

# Further breakthroughs in Frog Street 6-8/2/2009

by Adrian Fawcett



Heavy snowfall didn't deter Adrian Fawcett, Charles Bailey and Andy Watson from heading to Whitewalls on Friday afternoon. Andy Snook fared less well, and the final straw was the closure of both Severn Bridges due to falling ice.

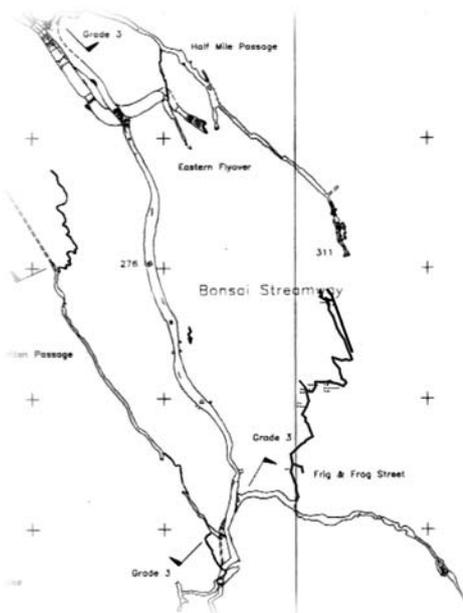
At the end of last camp we were faced with an aven climb with some mobile rocks at the top which were described as "liable to pin you by your head" if you tried to squeeze up past them. So it was with a little trepidation that we returned to the aven. Andy Watson was first up, and he managed to push the two loose rocks up and park them on the side. Adrian decided the gap was still too narrow to get through safely, and managed to relocate the rocks to the bottom of the shaft. Safely up above, he re-arranged the remaining rocks to make the area safe.

The next obstacle was a narrow squeeze to a void that could be seen beyond. A lump hammer and chisel failed to make a significant impression, and chemical means were engaged. Although the drill worked faultlessly the wire back down the aven did not, and a replacement was retrieved from the far end of Crystal Inlet!

Andy and Adrian surveyed back from the aven to the previous limit of the G5 survey.

On Sunday, Charles and Adrian returned to the top of the aven to inspect the damage, and were soon through into a rather friable 2m by 3m chamber beyond. Initially it looked disappointing until Charles went up a slope back to the right of the way in and after a few moments announced he was now sitting in a substantial passage.

We didn't have any tools with us, and had a fairly brief look around. The passage is aligned on the 340-160 degree line, and we followed it south for a little over 40 metres – walking, stooping and crawling – to a point where the silted floor almost reached the roof. The passage is clearly in the same beds as Half Mile Passage, with the green shale band visible in a few places. There are a number of good leads, and the prospects for further extensions seem good.



**Bonsai Streamway**

**Frog Street**

**Frog Street**

Surveyed to various grades  
by AF / AS / AW  
Nov 2008 and Feb 2009

0 metres 50 100

# Minutes of the Annual General Meeting

Held at Tretower Village Hall Sunday 1st February 2009 at 11am

## 1. ATTENDEES

Present: John Cooper, Joe Duxbury, Adrian Fawcett, Stuart France, Clive Gardener, Gary Jones, Gary Kiely, Jason McCorrison, Judith Mullington, John Newton, Stephen Newton, Anna Northover, Lucy Northover, Mike Read, Chris Seal, Clare Sharp, Steve Sharp, Mike Shelley, John Stevens, Chris Tomlin, Paul Tarrant, Peter Ward.

Apologies: Mel Reid, Barry Weaver.

## 2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Stuart France proposed that the 2008 AGM minutes circulated in the calling notice for this AGM should be accepted. Gary Kiely seconded this. Passed.

## 3. MATTERS ARISING

Re item 4, Arthur Millett. It was asked what had happened in the past year. Stuart France had visited and collected a member key. Adrian Fawcett had written to confirm the termination of his membership and to set out the kind of terms under which he might sometime be re-admitted. Various members had encountered Arthur by chance but none had found him willing to talk.

Re item 8.5, survey data. Dave Ramsey will make data available to anyone interested. Mike Read will be reprinting copies.

## 4. OFFICERS REPORTS

These had been printed in the AGM calling notice.

**Chairman.** Adrian Fawcett added that it had been a good year for the club, the building project was nearly complete and he thanked Mike Read and John Stevens for their huge input to this.

**Secretary.** Stuart France explained more about the complaints procedure ideas he had floated in his report. Basically, this was to define a protocol for handling complaints that members had brought against others so as to ensure a careful examination, fair treatment, a definite outcome, and avoid collateral damage to the

club, particularly if outsiders were involved. Stuart simply wanted to know if the AGM thought the idea worth developing further by the new committee.

Gary Jones regretted that any club members should feel the need for a formal complaints procedure. Mike Shelley felt it might have helped with the Arthur Millett situation although the final outcome might have been the same. Chris Seal said that even if a complaint could be settled informally, the complaint itself must be set out clearly in writing and the outcome also documented. Gary Jones called for a vote on whether to progress this idea in committee: For 11, Against 3, Abstentions 3.

Mike Shelley asked about neighbour/community relations. Stuart France said he visited the Blakes from time to time, and that the BBNPA and police were well aware who to contact. The BBNPA had written to Adrian Fawcett saying that future complaints concerning Whitewalls would only be filed and not responded to. Mike Read said, in reply to a question from Clive Gardener, that we had fulfilled the planning conditions and only need inform the BBNPA when we had put the extension into use.

**Treasurer.** Joe Duxbury noted the escalating cost of the newsletter and that postal charges were rising again in April. John Cooper cited previous postal increases, the bulk purchase of 2 years supply of paper and envelopes, and colour print as the reasons for high expenditure in the past year. Mike Shelley said donations to the cottage project were not visible in the accounts: he agreed to discuss this further with Peter Ward outside the meeting.

**Cottage Warden.** John Stevens asked for guidance about what level of annual surplus to retain given the economic uncertainties and need to cover any contingencies. The committee had announced an increase in overnight fees to £2 for members and £4 for guests. John Cooper proposed that

these fees come into effect and that they be reviewed again in a year. Agreed. It was asked if members' children under the age of 18 and in the company of their parent/guardian could pay member rates rather than guest rates. This was also agreed.

**Meets Secretary.** Since the written report was printed, the curry night and annual dinner had both gone well. Gary Kiely thanked everyone who had helped and supported the club activities. Adrian Fawcett thanked Gary for his efforts over the past few years, and noted the success of the programmes in encouraging new members to participate.

**Librarian.** Clive Gardener outlined a handover procedure to the new librarian and the transfer of the library stock to Whitewalls.

**Editor.** John Cooper announced he had found a successor. Stuart France proposed a vote of thanks to John for being such a reliable and capable editor over the past 14 years in post.

**Records.** John Cooper was willing to continue in this role. There were some issues with printing documents from obsolete software, but ways around the difficulties had thus far been found.

**Tackle.** Some of the equipment is now at Whitewalls in the new store under the stairs.

**Webmaster.** The message board system has 38 members and about half of them are regular users. There is a lack of photos on the website. Stuart France said he had started some photo pages trying to make them artistic rather than like contact sheets, but at the moment had no time to take it further. Adrian Fawcett felt photos were good publicity and could reflect recent as well as upcoming events as well as display artistic work. John Newton said they would need to be changed regularly to encourage return visits to the website. Steve Sharp felt various others would

likely help and we ought to take this further.

John Cooper proposed, and Chris Seal seconded, these reports be accepted en bloc. Carried.

## CSS NEWSLETTER

Larger and slightly more expensive?  
Smaller and Cheaper? Monthly or only when there are sufficient articles of interest? Downloadable from the Website? Regulars to collect from Whitewalls to cut down on postage? What are YOUR thoughts?  
<http://cssmembers.proboard85.com>

### 5. ELECTIONS

POST	CANDIDATE	PROPOSER	SECONDER
<b>Chairman</b>	Adrian Fawcett	John Newton	Jason McCorrison
<b>Secretary</b>	Stuart France	Adrian Fawcett	Gary Kiely
<b>Treasurer</b>	Peter Ward	Adrian Fawcett	John Cooper
<b>Editor</b>	Mark Lumley	John Cooper	Chris Seal
<b>Meets Secretary</b>	John Newton	Adrian Fawcett	Jason McCorrison
<b>Hut Warden</b>	John Stevens	Stuart France	Mike Shelley
<b>Librarian</b>	Anna Northover	Adrian Fawcett	Lucy Northover
<b>Records Officer</b>	John Cooper	Adrian Fawcett	Gary Kiely
<b>Tacklemaster</b>	Gary Kiely	Jason McCorrison	Chris Tomlin
<b>Webmaster</b>	Stephen Newton	Adrian Fawcett	Joe Duxbury

All of the above were elected en bloc unopposed.

John Cooper did not want to be on the committee. It was suggested Mark Lumley might prefer caving to committee meetings. This would create two vacancies. Mel Reid and Jason McCorrison were then proposed as ordinary members to fill them and were elected unopposed.

### 6. NEW CONSTITUTION

The existing and new proposed constitutions had been circulated along with the AGM papers in December and this had given sufficient notice.

New 8(a). Mike Shelley advised that the word "members of" should be deleted since trustees acted for the society rather than some or all of its members. It was noted that this issue existed in the old constitution as well. His change was agreed.

New 3(e). It was confirmed that joint membership can be obtained at the point provisional members attain full membership, and the pro rata joint membership subscription would apply for the remainder of that fiscal year.

New 3(e) and 3(f). For the avoidance of any doubt, the club publications referred to here are the unpriced new publications appearing during the member's subscribed year, not the entire catalogue.

John Cooper proposed, and Mike Shelley seconded, that the new constitution be adopted. This was agreed unanimously. With 22 members present, the meeting was quorate to pass this motion.

### 7. AOB

GCRT. Their AGM had recently taken place. Malcolm Reid is to continue as training officer, but three of the other four posts are now filled by CSS members: Adrian Fawcett as chairman, John Stevens as treasurer, Stuart France as equipment officer. Eleanor Jones, Brynmawr CC, is the new secretary.

Mike Read said the building project store room could be used by GCRT once the downstairs toilet was finished in the spring.

Adrian Fawcett said insurance was GCRT's largest expense due to them insuring equipment in a building they did not own. Similarly, CSS which owns the building could not easily insure equipment in it that was owned by someone else. WBCRT and SWCC had solved this dilemma by renting their storage room and the lessor then donating the rent back to the lessee as a charitable gift. It was agreed that our committee should explore this option and decide on a suitable rent if such a scheme is to be set up. Our trustees would need to sign a formal lease with GCRT.

### Cottage Maintenance

**Weekend.** This will be on 4-5 April. No hut fees for those helping.

### Meets Programme 2009.

This will appear in the February newsletter.

### London contact.

Gary Kiely agreed to respond to inquiries from people in the south-east.

### 8. NEXT AGM

Sunday 31st January 2010.



### Thinks

by Joe Duxbury (with a little help from Rodin!)

# Snowboarding in the Brecon Beacons

## by Martin Beale

The recent snow has turned the Brecon Beacons into a winter wonderland. A particularly large dump of snow hit the Brecon Beacons on Thursday 5th and Friday 6th February. This brought two powder hounds (myself and Pete Darwood - who has also been digging at Broadside in Aggy - now there's an idea!) out to South Wales's premier snowboarding venue on the following Saturday.

There is no lift system at the Storey Arms. It might be fairly tempting to strap the boards on the back of one of the local wild ponies and employ it for the donkey work, but the only real option is to strap the board onto your back and get on with it. There is a good looking beginners slope on the east side of the main path up from the southern Storey Arms car park, but the hardcore action is to be found off the north face of Pen y Fan.

The north face of Pen y Fan was the business. We arrived there in low cloud, but this soon cleared to reveal a superb white vista down to Brecon and the hills beyond. Pete strapped his board on right on the summit and negotiated a diagonal line through the summit rocks while I started a little lower. The boarding from here totally surprised us: it was awesome. There were about 10 - 20 vertical filled in runnels / gulleys going down Pen y Fan. These were about 20m wide, 250m long and deep in snow (several feet). The snowboarding was simply exhilarating and the surrounding were absolutely superb. The walks back up to the top were a bit of a slog, but the snowboarding was oh so good.

The best line that we boarded was the gully between Corn Du and Pen y Fan. This looked fantastic from a distance. From the top it looked steep, hard packed and pretty worrying. We peered gingerly over the cornice gapping down at it. A little crowd gathered and asked us if we were going to go down it. Once one of us had unwisely said that we were going down, we were committed. I was the first down and after a few nervous turns, I was really enjoying it as the hard packed snow turned to beautiful powder. Pete styled down after me. What an awesome run. We smiled and laughed the whole day after that.

After 7 hours of boarding and 6 runs, we were totally spanked (that Broadside digger's feeling: now there's an idea!). But it's a good feeling. We smiled all the way home and haven't stopped talking about our amazing day's snowboarding since then.

There must surely be good boarding to be had around Whitewalls: the slope above Aggy stands out as a good potential venue (you can barely hang on to it in the summer). The incline down from the tramway (on the way to Aggy) might be adapted as a ski jump and it might be possible to convert the spoil heaps outside Darren into a half pipe. If only it would snow more often: the Brecon Beacons have great potential for snowsports fun.



Photos:  
Pete Darwood



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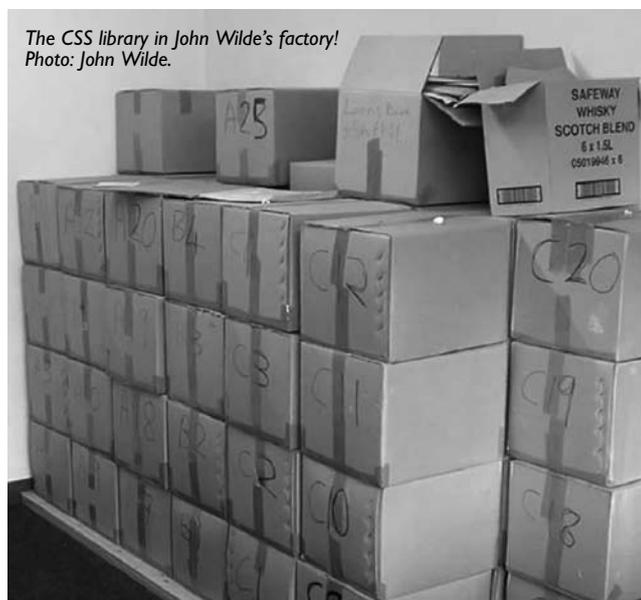
## COTTAGE BOOKINGS

7-8 March	<b>Orpheus CC</b>
14-15 March	<b>Cambridge CCC</b>
4-5 April	<b>CSS Cottage building</b>
18-19 April	<b>Lost World CC</b>
2-3 May	<b>Exeter Uni SS</b>
22-25 May	<b>CSS Whit BH</b>
27-28 June	<b>CSS BBQ</b>
4-5 Sept	<b>Lost World CC</b>
14-15 Nov	<b>Devon SS</b>

# Whitewalls Library

Many of you will have had a chance to inspect the smart new room at Whitewalls which is now ready to receive the club library. The library will probably be moved in in several stages during the next few months. A computer will be installed in the library to host the catalogue and any records held in electronic format.

Would members please note that, once the books have arrived, the library must not be used as an overflow dormitory. This is because of concerns about moisture damaging the books. A central heating pipe runs through the bottom of the cupboards to help keep the contents dry, but there are long periods when the heating will not be on, and condensation is an issue in other parts of the cottage.



The CSS library in John Wilde's factory!  
Photo: John Wilde.

## London Members Liaison

Gary Kiely has agreed to perform a liaison role for members who live in the London area. While Chelsea SS no longer has a London base as such, we still have members in London and the Home Counties, and every year get a number of enquiries from prospective new members in that area. Gary will become a local point of contact who they can be referred to.

It might also be possible to coordinate lifts for a number of people travelling down to South Wales and, who knows, to have the occasional social or caving-related event in the home counties? It is up to those members to decide, but I think it would be a pity if the club completely pulled up its London roots.

## Cottage Maintenance Weekend 4th/5th April

If you feel that heavy building work is beyond you, but nevertheless you would like to do something towards improving and maintaining Whitewalls, we have the perfect event for you! On 4th/5th April we have scheduled a maintenance weekend. Provided you are doing useful work, your accommodation for the weekend will be FREE!

The range of tasks for the weekend will depend largely on who comes and what sorts of jobs they want to do. Some tasks may take prior planning - so please get in touch by email or phone, or via the message board, if you are able to get involved. We can then start to draw up a list.

Possible tasks include: work in the garden, numerous painting jobs, improvements to the kitchen area, mending shutters, new cushions for the benches, splashbacks for the washbasins, and thorough cleaning of some areas.

**Adrian Fawcett**

## SOCIAL NETWORKING WEBSITES

Members are asked not to publish photos and text concerning other members on Facebook and similar websites. The problem with publishing on the web is the immediate loss of control of copying, viewing, and possibly digital asset ownership. The committee would expect anyone wishing to publish material (on the web or in print) in which others are identifiable to first obtain clearance from the people featured and to use common sense.

## CSS LIBRARY

The committee has closed the club library for new loans until further notice to enable its relocation and associated work to take place. Any members with books or periodicals from the library should send them to Anna Northover directly or leave them at Whitewalls in the new library room by 31st March.

## COMMITTEE MEETINGS 2009

The committee will meet on 29th March to deal with current issues, then again on 28th June for a full agenda. Further full meetings are planned during September and on 6th December.

**Stuart France**

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### Whitewalls

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## Meets List 09/10

This is an outline of the meets for this year.

### February 21<sup>st</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup>

#### South Wales.

Draenen Round Trip.

### March 28<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup>

#### South Wales.

Swansea Valley  
(DYO subject to weather).

### April 4<sup>th</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup>

#### South Wales.

Cottage building weekend.  
A lot of small jobs to be completed.

### April 25<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup>

#### Derbyshire (Orpheus).

Nettle Pot/Oxlow/Bagshaw.

### May 23<sup>rd</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup>

#### South Wales.

Otter Hole on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup>.

### June 27<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup>

#### South Wales. Decide your own trips.

BBQ and Barrel on Saturday night.

### July 25<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup>

#### Mendip (Wessex).

Banwell Bone/Stalactite Caves as an option on Saturday. Eastwater as another option on Saturday. Swildons on Sunday.

BBQ will be arranged for Saturday night.

### August 15<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup>

#### Yorkshire (YSS The Old School House).

Lost Johns/Birks Fell  
(Days will be confirmed when permits booked).

Please contact me for any other requests.

### September 26<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup>

#### Hidden Earth (Location to be confirmed).

### October 17<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup>

#### Mendip (Wessex).

Box Stone Mines on Saturday.

### November 7<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup>

#### South Wales.

Agen Allwedd obscure passages.

Fireworks on Saturday night.

### December 5<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup>

#### South Wales.

Curry Extravaganza #5 on the 5<sup>th</sup>

Decide on your own trips.

### January 2010 30<sup>th</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup>

#### South Wales. Dinner and AGM.

For all non Whitewall events except Hidden Earth, I need to know numbers to book beds etc, so please phone or email me to reserve a place. Also certain caves such as Otter Hole have number restrictions so it will be first come, first served.

**John Newton, Meets Secretary**

# Photos of the Month

Please send in your current, topical photos so that we can make this a regular feature



*Charles Bailey negotiating the formations in Helibeds, Frog Street, Daren Cilau Photo: Mark Lumley*



*Andy Snook in Barnes Loop, Swildon's Hole Photo: Steve Sharp*



*Andy Snook on the waterfall, Southern Streamway, Agen Allwedd Photo: Steve Sharp*



[www.chelseaspelaeo.org.uk](http://www.chelseaspelaeo.org.uk)