

CHELSEA SPELAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Volume 52 Nos. 8 & 9 August/September 2010



**New finds in
Charterhouse**

**Digging in
the Burren**

Chelsea Spelæological Society NEWSLETTER

Volume 52

Nos 8 & 9

August/September
2010

ISSN 0045-6381

Clive North drilling beneath Bone Aven, Thrupe Lane Swallet. Photo: Mark 'Gonzo' Lumley

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Editorial

Apologies for the delay with this issue. The reason for this has now been resolved and will be discussed further at the AGM.



Mark Lumley

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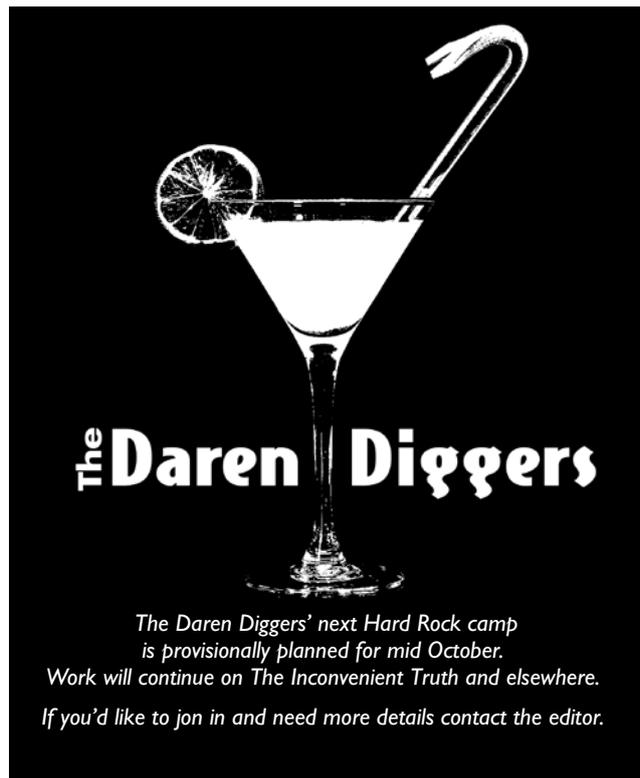
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Send text for your article as .doc or similar, or simply send it as an email.

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The Daren Diggers

The Daren Diggers' next Hard Rock camp is provisionally planned for mid October. Work will continue on The Inconvenient Truth and elsewhere. If you'd like to join in and need more details contact the editor.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Welcome to new prospective members

Richard and Rachel Dearden.

13 St Helena Road, Polesworth,
Tamworth, B78 1NN.

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and 07980 154182 (mobile)

and **rachaeldearden339@gmail.com**

Nude Caving?

An exposé by Joe Duxbury

Regarding nude caving, in the USA (where else!) there has long been a tradition of visiting a cave called the Sinks of Gandy, in WV, starters. The cave is a bit like Porth-yr-Ogof, a stream passage that cuts right through a hill. It also has a deep pool at the end, but this can be by-passed (or, if you are Ian Chandler, swum into in an attempt to drown!), and the cave can be walked through. The nude trip is called the Randy Gandy Run, and is traditionally done during the Old Timers' Reunion (OTR).

A place in the country?

Looking for that dream home tucked away on a hillside in the Brecon Beacons, with far reaching views towards the Sugarloaf, challenging caves on your doorstep, an easy tramroad for lazy cycling to Brynmawr for the Sunday papers, quiet, well behaved, angelic, affable neighbours?

Look no further!

<http://www.rightmove.co.uk/property-for-sale/property-16087635.html>

Pottering About on Mendip

by
John Cooper

Charterhouse Cave

Saturday 26th June 2010

Andrew Atkinson (UBSS), Simon Flower (UBSS), Pete Hann (WCC), Ali Moody (WCC) and myself into the 2009 extension to survey side passages found during 2009 & 2010. Also carried in another 3 ladders. As we had two sets of survey gear Ali and Simon were to do Pipe Dream (a small inlet passage near the start of Route 66, 2009 find) whilst the rest of us did Skeleton Passage (2010 find). The Pipe Dream party went to the end and surveyed out. Unfortunately their Disto-X stopped working half way out so, rather than leave a hanging survey, on our way out Andrew and I were sent up to finish it off. We started at the entrance and surveyed in to link up with their final survey station. The Skeleton Passage party could not locate the nearest survey station in the main passage so had to use the previous one about 8m up the passage so that will be deducted from the total surveyed length. We had just about reached the pitch down when the Pipe Dream party caught us up. We finished off the passage at the bottom of the pot, with nice static sumps both West and East. The Western sump was about a metre lower than last time giving easy, but wet, access to several more metres of passage. Over 150m surveyed today. Time underground 7¼ hours.

Saturday 3rd July 2010

Richard Carey (MCG leader), Pete Hann, Ali Moody, Jude Vanderplank (WCC & guest leader) and myself into the 2010 extension to start the photographic record and get pictures for Hidden Earth and also to introduce 2 more people to the further reaches of the cave. Pete first photographed the start of the Flyover and then the ladder down at the far end followed by a forward shot from the bottom of the ladder. Then we all went through the boulder squeeze up into High Time. We started with the aven at the upper end of High Time and worked our way back to the choke before moving onwards into the cave until we reached Zebra Junction. Here we had drinks and food before coming out. 8 hours.

Saturday 10th July 2010

Andrew Atkinson, Pete Hann and myself. A reduced team today owing to illness so we took the opportunity to resurvey the old cave to pick up the details necessary for a proper plan and elevation. Still a couple of the side passages to do but we did manage The Citadel. 5½ hours.

Saturday 17th July 2010

Andrew Atkinson, Pete Hann, Ali Moody, Pete Moody and myself. Another pushing trip in the 2010 passages. The intention today was to push the high level lead spotted on the 19th June trip. First drop off point was the Frozen Cascade near the end of the 2008 extension

where some drinks were left for the trip out. Then on through Portal Pool, no higher today, and on to Diesel Duck. There was about 15cm of water in this today, dry last time, and a small stream flowing into it. However the consensus was we would be OK going through. On to the Flyover, the end of the 2009 passages, where the traverse line and short ladder down at the far end got us across. Then the grovel and squeeze up through boulders into High Time. Here we headed down passage (South) to Zebra Junction where the rest of the food and drink was left. However the drill and climbing gear were picked up and taken on. Down the pot into the lower passages until the first sharp left turn was taken into an oxbow leading back and upwards. Followed this to the foot of the ladder left on 19th June, ascended it and continued to the T-junction where today's climb started. Andrew took about 30 minutes to climb and bolt before the ladder was ready for the rest of us to ascend. A reasonable but muddy passage lead onwards and upwards until we reached the lip of a 2m diameter, 2m deep pot which was an easy climb down. However the same could not be said of the ascending rift which formed the opposite wall! Squeezing up hindered by nobbly stal was a real effort! However once up a horizontal rift continued, becoming tight at the end. However it could be seen to enlarge and drop down beyond. The drill, ladder and rope were removed from the previous climb and Andrew squeezed through and the drill passed through to him! Whilst he remained bridged at the top he placed a bolt and then hung a ladder and descended. However when Pete Moody fed himself through feet first he was unable to reach far enough out with his feet to reach the ladder so returned with a few tugs from above. Andrew then came back up and drilled another bolt closer to the lip; quite a tricky operation changing the ladder over whilst wedged 6m up! All were then able to get through, some with more difficulty than others! A short muddy passage lead down to a pool (sump?) on the right where we turned left and followed an ascending passage to a junction where it was possible to look down a 15m aven to see the top of the ladder left by Andrew when he was bolting the muddy aven on 19th June. Keeping to the right it was possible to follow another short passage which lead to the far side of the aven where an easier descent was possible (BUT NOT A FREE CLIMB). Andrew, Ali and I then started surveying out. By the time the survey team reached the pool Pete Moody had managed to ascend the ladder and get back through the tight bit, but Pete Hann decreed it impossible for him. So, leaving Pete Hann at the bottom, we surveyed up the pitch and through the tight bit. Then with Andrew wedged at the top he was able to remove the ladder and pass it through to us, we needed it for our exit! We then fed the drill, hanger and rope down to Pete Hann so he could rig the descent of the muddy aven instead. Continued the survey down the nobbly stal squeeze and along to the top of the ladder which Pete Moody had re-rigged. Descended and tied into a previous survey station. Collected all the gear and back

to the next drop, climbed the ladder down then followed the downward sloping passage back to the main passage. Sharp right and followed it back up to the bottom of the next pot. Up the ladder then along to Zebra Junction to find the 2 Pete's already there. Food and drink, then sorted out what needed to come out. A steady exit. 8½ hours total with over 100m found and surveyed in yet another oxbow, provisionally named Hyaena Passage (it certainly laughed fiendishly at our exertions!).

Saturday 31st July 2010

Stu Gardiner (BEC leader), Pete Hann, Dave King (MNRC leader), Ali Moody and myself. The intention today was more photographs in the 2010 passages in preparation for a lecture at Hidden Earth and to introduce another couple of leaders into the newer passages. A drag tray was taken along, together with some thick diving line which could also be used as a hauling rope with the digging tray. We intended to work inwards but at the Flyover realised the tripod was in High Time so had to start there. Redid the passage leading to the Al(l)igator, then Zebra Junction. From there proceeded onwards, omitting the pitch photo as the photographer needed to be on the far side, until we finally arrived at the Terminal Sump. This was about 5cm lower and by ducking down to water level it was possible to see through the arch to an airbell the other side. However the water was lapping against the far wall. It was not possible to look to the right of the airbell where the airspace seemed higher, but the water looked a lovely blue/green colour and deep! Back to Zebra Junction for food and drink then headed out to re-photograph the Flyover. On the way out Ali took Stu and Dave to see the Hall of Time whilst Pete and I made a slow journey out. On the way we detoured into Quicksand Chamber (we thought Ali was also intending to include that but she omitted it so overtook us) to discover the water much lower and a 7cm airspace leading onwards, probably to Skeleton Passage. Lying in the water and kicking my feet up the far side seemed to indicate at least 30cm airspace the far side. Need to double check the Skeleton Passage sump again whilst water levels are so low. Out after a productive 8 hour trip.

Saturday 7th August 2010

Michael Butcher (BEC), Pete Hann, Ali Moody and myself. More photography in the 2010 passages. Today we started into Lower High Time from Zebra Junction. After that a couple of shots of pools on the way to the pitch. I then went down the pitch and up the first oxbow to the opposite side of the pitch with a flash gun and Pete took a photo of the top of the pitch. All then came round into the oxbow and photos taken of the next pitch up and then the one up into Hyaena Passage. More photos in Hyaena Passage as far as the 2m pot down. Back down the two ladder pitches then leaving Pete on the inner side the rest of us exited the oxbow and went back to the main pot where more photos were taken. Finally back to Zebra Junction for food and drink. Showed Michael the top aven in High Time whilst Ali took some photos of roof fossils and the plastic debris (a small piece about 4mm diameter that seems to have been washed in from somewhere). Then Ali showed Michael the Hall of Time whilst Pete and I started out. As last week we detoured into Quicksand Chamber, this time with Ali. Water level had gone down another 7cm so easily through and as

expected ended up in Lower Skeleton Passage. More photos taken in here as far as the eastern sump, which had hardly dropped at all. Finally exited the cave after 8¾ hours.

Saturday 14th August 2010

Ali Moody, Pete Hann, Tom Chapman (WCC) and myself. Today the intention was to continue the climbing of the High Time Aven started by Pete Hann on 5th June 2010. Tom climbed the existing rope and ladder and put a runner on the top (about 10m up). From here he free climbed about the same distance before putting in a thread runner. He continued upwards until he thought it prudent to call for the drill and bolts. Once firmly established he pulled up a couple of ladders and Pete ascended to belay him as he continued the climb. Finally the battery on the drill ran out with Tom some 30-35m above the floor. Ali and John got cold, should have gone and dug elsewhere rather than waited at the bottom of the draughty aven! Out after 8 hours. There should now be a short rest from Charterhouse whilst people go off to France, Italy and Greece.

Saturday 11th September 2010

Andrew Atkinson, Tom Chapman, Pete Hann, Ali Moody, Pete Moody and myself. Today there were several objectives. As well as carrying in another couple of ladders and an SRT rope we hoped to complete the closure on a couple of loops and push onwards in the 2010 passages. Although Portal Pool had not risen at all, when we reached Diesel Duck there was about 30cm of water in it, airspace about the same. At the bend leading to Quicksand Chamber was a pool and when the chamber itself was checked it was a pool and the link to Skeleton Passage was well and truly sumped. First closure failed! There was also another pool about 30cm deep as we progressed along Route 66 that has never been there before! On into the 2010 passages and whilst Tom and Pete Hann went to continue the climb the rest of us went to Zebra Junction to leave our food and drinks before continuing onwards to Hyaena Aven, the one Pete Hann used as his escape route on 17th July. Using the ladder then Pete's rope Andrew climbed to the top whilst I went to the top of the ladder. Andrew was then able to get a leg from our old survey in Hyaena passage itself down to me and then onwards to the floor and eventually tied into our survey. Loop closed so now we'll just have to see how good the closure is! Whilst Andrew and I had been surveying Pete and Ali Moody had been digging an onwards going passage, Sandworm Passage, at the foot of the aven. Andrew went off to join the climbers (although I think he just got as cold as Ali and I had last week) whilst I joined the Moodys. With Ali at the front digging out the muddy sand, Pete filling the drag tray and me dragging it out and stacking the spoil we continued making good progress. Ali reported "It looks big" about 30 minutes before she actually got through. Once she was through Pete and I removed another couple of trays before Ali came back to report it was ongoing and it was big passage. I went off to fetch the climbing party. We had agreed that if one of the digs went we would fetch the other party and explore as a single group. Andrew went off with the surveying gear whilst I waited for the climbing party to tidy up and descend. He was instructed to survey inwards so they couldn't progress too far before we were

all together. The climbing party hadn't had a good day as the drill had failed and although Tom had made another 5m or so of progress he was being forced out into a wider part of the aven by a bulge and really needed some good protection before committing himself to more upwards moves. Once they were down Tom wanted to stop and tidy everything away so Pete and I went to see how the survey was progressing. We soon caught them up at a 2m climb down into water with squelchy mud beneath it. That didn't last long and we were soon clambering over rocks in a passage heading eastwards that enlarged to over 10m wide (my guesstimate). There were lots of small passages going off all over the place. Eventually Tom arrived and shortly after that we hit a choke of massive boulders with lots of spaces between them. Here we decided to call it a day. We'd got the 45m we needed to reach the 1km for the year, in fact we've probably reached 1.1km! Back to Zebra Junction for refreshments before starting the long haul out. More snacks at Frozen Cascade before the final bit which is all uphill! Out after 8¼ hours.

Thursday 16th September 2010

Andrew Atkinson, Ali Moody and myself. Intention today was surveying side passages in the old cave. We started with Midsummer Passage but stopped without doing Forbidden Passage. Then moved on to the main objective, Chiaroscuro Passage. In this passage Andrew climbed into the First Inlet and hung a ladder for Ali and I to ascend so we were able to survey it. However the traverse into the second required a bit more climbing gear than we had with us so still to be done, which was a shame as it's by far the longer one. On the way out we surveyed the wee small inlet where the Read's Grotto water enters, nice straws once past the first bit! 4½ hours.

Saturday 18th September 2010

Andrew Atkinson, Pete Hann, Ali Moody, Pete Moody and myself. More work preparing for Hidden Earth. On the way in Andrew and Pete M surveyed the inlet stream passage that feeds Diesel Duck (it was wetter than last week with about 20cm of airspace even though Portal Pool was unchanged), whilst Ali, Pete H and I took photographs in the start of Skeleton Passage and then at the (W)hole of Time. Finally, after collecting ladders etc from the High Time aven we progressed into last weeks discovery. Here we started the photos at Sandworm Dig and progressed as far as the trickle inlet at the pool before the survey team caught us up and became the climbing team. Andrew was soon into the inlet but it didn't go. The photographic team continued onwards finally reacing the end choke. The climbing team reverted to the surveying team and did a few small side bits. Although Andrew was able to progress quite a way into the end choke along the right hand wall he wasn't able to beat it. Pete Hann also disappeared into the choke at high level for some time but again couldn't find a route through. Came out to Zebra Junction for sustenance. Finally Andrew and I surveyed up the Zebra Inlet. Quite a muddy passage(!) but the end is very promising. Think Diesel Duck was 5cm deeper on the way out but not everyone agreed. Finally out after 8¼ hours.

Eastwater Cavern

Saturday 28th August 2010

A short trip in the upper series with WCC members Mark (Bean) Easterling, Carol Laurence and Jude Vanderplank. Followed the guide line down through the entrance boulder ruckle to the 380ft way. Followed the Upper Traverse and then turned right to Hallelujah Hole and then down Primrose Path. Before reaching Primrose Pot we took a left into the Lower Traverse and on into the Rift Chambers. Then climbed up then down to Unlucky Strike which has lots of flowstone curtains. We went as far as the top of the pitch where we stopped as we didn't have a ladder with us. Back out into Rift Chambers then past the Cross Roads and up the Canyon. Through the Woggle Press to reach the bottom of the Boulder Ruckle and out.

G. B. Cave

Saturday 24th July 2010

This weekend was the CSS visit to Mendip. Whilst two parties went down Longwood Swallet John Cooper, Jason McCorriston, Barley Turner & Chris Seal visited GB Cave. We went into The Gorge via the Devil's Elbow route then over the Bridge into White Passage and back into Main Chamber via the Loop. Whilst Jason waited the rest went up into Ladder Dig and failing to identify the climb into Great Chamber visited Bat Passage instead. Out the direct route. In the evening an excellent BBQ was organised by Jacky Ankerman, many thanks from everyone.

Spider Hole

Saturday 28th August 2010

A short trip with Adrian and Jude Vanderplank to look at this interesting hole near the top of Cheddar Gorge. Lots of moths and spiders, and a nice draught.

Stoke Lane Slocker

Saturday 4th September 2010

Joined a Wessex CC trip consisting of Tom Chapman, Rosie Freeman, Charlotte Hilton, Sarah Payne, Adrian & Jude Vanderplank. This is one of the many caves I'd never been down before and always meant to get round to one day. We parked in Stoke St Michael and carried our gear to the entrance, changing there and leaving our dry clothes a few metres into the cave for safety. There was quite a lot of crawling but nothing tight and there was quite a good stream running through the cave which surprised me as it's been so dry recently and Swildon's is still very dry. I was pleasantly surprised at how clean the cave appeared. Although there was flood debris there was none of the pollution that is so often mentioned in conjunction with this cave. As I squeezed along the approach rift nearing Sump 1 I removed my helmet which allowed me to keep my head above water, but it went back on at the sump. Tom went through first and the rest of us followed. There was a dive line through (2 actually) to act as a guide but standing in the rift facing the left wall it was possible to put the legs through first which Tom then grabbed and a quick duck down and along horizontally and the other side was reached. The passage height in the sump was too low to just duck down and up,

you had to feed your body along horizontally feet first to reach the far side. The guide line was fixed several metres downstream on the right at a junction with another stream passage going back up to the right. Followed the stream down for a short distance to where it was possible to stand up. Here a diving cylinder was noted, with a hole up through calcited boulders which we ignored. I wonder if it's one of Duncan's cylinders and whether it's on its way in or out? We continued downstream, through The Sewer, before going into the Changing Room and then up into Main Chamber and C.B. Chamber. From somewhere in here it was possible to look down on the diving cylinder noted earlier. We descended back into the stream a bit further along and were surprised when the dive line was passed again, on our left this time, as we headed downstream. This time we followed the stream and only left it to pass through a boulder ruckle just short of Sump 2. Having inspected the sump we headed off up the large boulder slope eventually entering the Throne Room with the "statues" of the King and Queen. All this high level cave seemed very well decorated. Back down to the streamway and along to Sump 1. Again Tom went through first and each of us in turn reached through and was guided up into the narrow rift on the upstream side. From here on out I'm not at all sure that we followed exactly the route we had followed on our way in. However it got us to the entrance which is what matters most. A very pleasant trip.

Swildon's Hole

Sunday 18th July 2010

John Cooper, Lee Hawkswell and Barry Weaver. A leisurely trip to Sump 2. In the Wet Way and as there was no one else in the cave had to ladder the Twenty. Able to talk through Sump 1 as there was about 5cm of airspace. Checked just downstream and it appears the stream has cut under a boulder and lowered the water level. Lee built a small dam and by the time we had visited Sump 2 and returned Sump 1 was sumped again. Removed the dam and the level reverted to airspace again. Lee and John came out the Long Dry Way and the Zig Zags, meeting a novice party of 2 on their way in.

Sunday 25th July 2010

This weekend was the CSS visit to Mendip. Whilst one party had a leisurely trip to Sump 1 John Cooper, Adrian Fawcett, Lee Hawkswell, Hugo Ledo (a visitor from Portugal over in the UK studying) and Mike Read visited Swildon's Hole. In the Dry Way, up at Tratman's Temple and along to the Mud Sump. Continued along Paradise Regained and took a left up a boulder jammed gully into a muddy passage leading to Keith's Chamber. Here a short climb on the right lead to the base of the Swine-Puke rift. Instead of the rift we took the flat out crawl leading to the Sidcot U-tube. With about 10cm of airspace this was passed and we went into Renascence and through The Stoopes which everyone thought misnamed as they were flat out squeezes. Came back from the end but did not do New Renascence. Back in Paradise Regained we continued the Short Round Trip. Didn't have to do any work to pass The Troubles. Still about 5cm of airspace through Sump 1. Came out the Wet Way. 3½ hours. I think Hugo did very well for his first ever caving trip!

Sunday 1st August 2010

John Cooper and Barry Weaver. A leisurely trip to peer down Shatter Pot. Extremely dry.

Saturday 21st August 2010

John Cooper tagged onto an OUCC party lead by Oliver Kreitman with two relative novices James Hooper and Hugh Tierney. We went in the Wet Way, although there was no water flowing into the entrance at all. Still an airspace through Sump 1 so the novices were easily talked through. At the bottom of the Landing we met another party just descending from the Short Round trip. After we had visited Sump 2 Oliver decided the novices were fit enough to ascend into Vicarage Passage so up we went. Once there a chocolate bar each was sufficient to persuade them to continue with a reverse Short Round trip. Out after 3¼ hours.

Sunday 22nd August 2010

John Cooper and Barry Weaver. As Barry forgot his furry suit today we limited our trip to a visit as far as the Landing. The rain last night meant there was a very small trickle in the surface stream today.

Sunday 29th August 2010

John Cooper and Barry Weaver. Today we went to Sump 2. Water levels still dry even though there were some pockets of foam in the entrance passages. Had to install and remove our own ladder. Sump 1 still had airspace and strong inwards draught. At The Landing noticed a faint smell. Initially I said diesel and Barry said sewage. I quickly changed my opinion to a perfume smell. At Sump 2 there was a brown film on the surface and some foam. Coming back up from Sump 2 I realised the smell was that of Elsan Blue (used in chemical toilets) and Barry immediately agreed. It's not strong but it's definite.

Sunday 5th September 2010

John Cooper and Barry Weaver. Today we went to check if the rope had been removed from the 10ft overhang (en route to the Black Hole). It has. Still bone dry and we didn't meet any other party until we got back to the entrance.

Sunday 12th September 2010

John Cooper and Barry Weaver. Even drier than last week. No water at all in the entrance stream. Met a party coming out in the entrance but otherwise no one else in the cave. Went to the Mud Sump, still dry.

Bonfire Weekend

6th/7th November

General caving or apathy on Saturday followed by bonfire and fireworks (please bring along a couple of rock shattering specimens). Jacky will be providing chilli of varying strengths including veggie, jacket spuds and puddings for a nominal charge.

There may also be evening entertainment for the brave-hearted. Headache tablets will be available on Sunday morning.

A week's digging in the Burren

By Mark 'Gonzo' Lumley

The Burren in County Clare, Ireland is always a delight to visit.

The barren limestone pavements and stark, windswept, flower-swathed hills overlooking the Arran Islands and Galway Bay are stunning, the bars are full of charm, colourful characters and good music; even the fishing is good. Most of all the wet, sporting caves are impressive, fun and challenging, while there is plenty of untapped potential to enthuse the would-be cave digger.

In the 1980s I spent many a happy trip digging in the Burren with the LADS* before taking a couple of decades off for good behaviour, procreation and self-employment, so when my good friend Pat Cronin (Pegasus, ICRO Warden & Irish Coast Guard Training Officer) invited me over to his place in the hills above Doolin I accepted the invitation with glee.

At £2 plus taxes each way, even the 50 minute flight from Bristol to Knock was a pleasure. A drive down to Doolin, a prolonged quality check on the local stout, a night's sleep and we began to dig.

The first location we visited was **L86** Poulnafearbui,**
Cave of the Yellow Men***

R 07404/99591

This site is in a well-concealed dry gully close to the coast near Doolin.

A narrow, animal-scented rift has previously been dug by Pat, Cheg Chester (Pegasus), Barry Suddell (Pegasus), and Conor McGrath (ICRO and the Irish Coast Guard).

While Pat was preparing the tools I clambered through some dense sloe bushes to a nearby, enticing low wall at the head of the gully and was rewarded with a constricted view into a second, hitherto unnoticed low entrance.

2 days and 5 tons of spoil later we had worked our way down through a small chamber, along a narrow, gravel-filled rift, over some dry gours and down into a low, stal-hung streamway **The Stream of Abuse**. Exhausted, we explored downstream for 6m to a gravel bank and upstream towards the East for 30m to an intimidating roof collapse.

On the third day the two of us returned along with Cheg who dug through the



Pat Cronin heading upstream in the Stream of Abuse, Poulnafearbui

Mark 'Gonzo' Lumley and Pat Cronin
Poulnafearbui



Pat Cronin emerges from the dig,
Poulnafearbui





Pat Cronin surveying the approach to the Stream of Abuse, Poulnafearbui

downstream gravel bank before being held up at a wet constriction. The upstream collapse was then prepared by hand for future work with Cheg's 'cheating sticks' – sections of water pipe with digging tools attached which are perfect for the enthusiastic digger who values his life and prefers to watch gravity take its course from a safe distance! Needless to say both sites will be pushed and a dye test is being planned, with an aerial search for the dye off the coast, as a previously unknown offshore resurgence is the most likely place for the stream to emerge.

The cave is now between 50 & 70 m in length and is of interest because there are no known caves in the area, no stream passages and no surface streams this side of the Aillee river at the time of discovery.



Pat Cronin returning from the upstream boulder choke, Poulnafearbui



Cheg Chester surveying in the Stream of Abuse, Poulnafearbui

* Formed in the 1980s, the LADS are a group of mostly Bristol-based cavers who have a common interest in caves and cave digging, a total disrespect for the unwarranted, officious pomposity that is occasionally found around the periphery of our sport, and a discerning eye for fine ale houses. The surviving members have insinuated themselves into caving bodies around the world and still pursue their interests with gusto.

**The prefix 'L' has been given to all sites of speleological interest in County Clare that have been discovered by the LADS. This is not to be confused with the method used by the UBSS in their publications *Caves of North West Clare*, *Caves of County Clare*, and *Caves of County Clare and South Galway*, where the prefix letter refers to the area where the site is located.

*** The name refers to the nearby glacial erratic Carrig Na Longa Bui, the Rock of the Yellow Ship, named after the ship of the Spanish Armada which, in 1588, sank in the bay below. The 'yellow men' were the dark-skinned survivors of the shipwreck who were duly marched up the hill above Doolin and hanged on the instruction of the local chieftain to gain the approval of his English oppressors. Ref T.D. Robinson on *The Burren Map*.



Pat Cronin at Poulfaicaislean

Day 4.

Pat and I visited another new site, spotted by Conor McGrath and investigated by Pat, **L90, Poulfaicaislean** The Cave Below the Castle.

R1007 0045.

This damp, muddy depression is situated right next to the road on the junction 250 m below Ballinalackan Castle, a few hundred metres east of Pol-an-Ionain (Doolin Cave, which is now a show cave), famous for its huge stalactite dubbed 'the soggy dishcloth' by the undiscerning, which is claimed to be the largest free-hanging stal in Europe.

The dig is of interest as it lies on the presumed drainage route for Coolagh River cave close to Cregg Lodge Swallet and on to its resurgence at S3. A small stream disappears beneath a scalloped limestone wall. The owner of the land, Joe Garner, granted us permission to dig and an afternoon of fly-plagued, gritty, muddy squalor ensued until progress was held up by a large rock.

At low tide in the evening we visited **Urchin Cave**, an inter-tidal cave near Doolin. Having laddered down the cliff onto the rocks and entered the wide, barnacle and anemone-covered bedding we quickly decided that the cave was not safe to explore due to a heavy swell and a neap tide - an atmospheric place to be as the waves roar up the booming passage towards you!

Day 5.

After a morning spent with Cheg depleting the Atlantic's fish stocks from



Urchin Cave

Fisherman's ledge, Pat and I returned to the dig armed with a bucket of turf to smoke out the flies, a set of 3 pulleys and a 1 ton dumpy bag.

The offending rock was removed, together with more spoil before we prudently decided to let the site settle and determine whether the overhanging wall is solid rock or a huge boulder.

Day 6.

After 5 days of digging our middle aged bodies were telling us that enough was enough so we drove up the green lane from Faunarooska Cross onto the East end of Slieve Elva and spent a tortuous few hours prospecting a few kilometres of ankle-grabbing limestone pavement to no avail.

We then paid a quick visit to **Pollapooka 3**, the most easterly site on the limestone-shale boundary around Slieve Elva.

Afterwards we headed off for some more prospecting on Slieve Elva and spotted a new site:

L91

This boggy depression is well away from the shale-limestone boundary where most of the viable caves develop but it looks like an enticing prospect.



Mark 'Gonzo' Lumley in L91

A slight draught issues from what appears to be a solid limestone corner. Permission to dig is now being sought as any development that heads beneath the uncovered, bare limestone in this area is of interest.

All in all it was a fantastic week.

Thanks to Pat and Pauline for their hospitality and to Cheg for the fishing trip.

Hopefully my aching body will recover if I lie in a darkened room for a few more days ...

Further reading:

Caves of County Clare and South Galway

Published by UBSS 2003

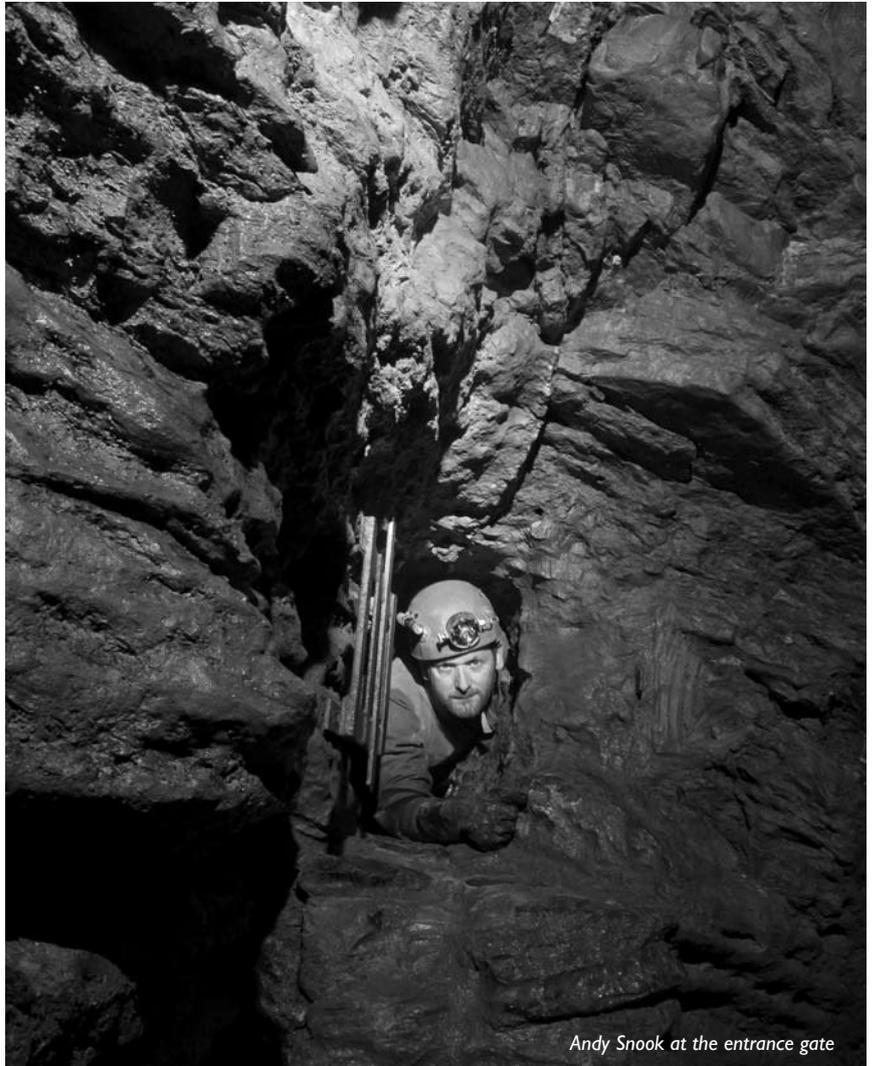
Compiled and edited by Graham Mullan

ISBN 0-9545850-0-3

Charterhouse Cave photos

Steve Sharp has now become a leader for Charterhouse Cave and is working on a set of photos to document the cave.

Congratulations to Steve for being invited to put together the film for the opening ceremony at this year's Hidden Earth on Saturday 25th September.



Andy Heath

*failing to complete the through trip in Eglwys Faen
- 'equipment failure' or 'operator error' I wonder . . .*



Mendip Meet

Longwood August 24th July 2010

by Adrian Fawcett

As we got ourselves organised to go caving, John Cooper mentioned that Longwood Swallet is all very pleasant apart from Renolds passage. So where did we decide to go? To be fair, four of the party (Duncan, Antoinette, Lee and Andy Farrant) had more sense and opted for the standard Longwood – August round trip, but I joined Matt and Mandy Voysey on a passage-collecting trip to Renolds.

Water levels were very low, and the Entrance Series, Showerbath and Longwood Streamway were all perfectly nice. Renold's Passage doesn't start off too bad, but it gradually narrows until it becomes mainly thrutching between somewhat rough walls. Then comes Fanny's Rift, which is tight and vertical without decent ledges for about 5 metres. But worse is still to come.

Usually I have the comfort that someone else in my party is larger than me. Thus, if they can get through, I should have no problem. However, when it's Matt and Mandy who are in front of me, I can't be so sure. Mandy got momentarily stuck – mainly because she

was going backwards and couldn't see what height she needed to be in the rift – then Matt reached the infamous desperately tight duck. He was very doubtful whether he could fit through, and at the time we all thought it might actually be the end of the cave. Still, there was no way Mandy or I could get past Matt to have a look. And, to tell the truth, I was a little concerned about my cave fitness after 11 months in China and was feeling quite ready to get back the other side of Fanny's Rift!

Back in the main part of the cave, we returned via August Streamway, which is quite sporting even in very low water conditions.

That evening it became clear later that we had still nearly 30 metres to go to reach the end end. Immediately after the duck the passage gets bigger again and the Longwood Streamway emerges before the sump is reached. Alison Moody acknowledged that the duck is as bad as the description says, however Matt and Mandy were already talking about a second assault. Sadly, I will shortly be going back to China and unable to join them!

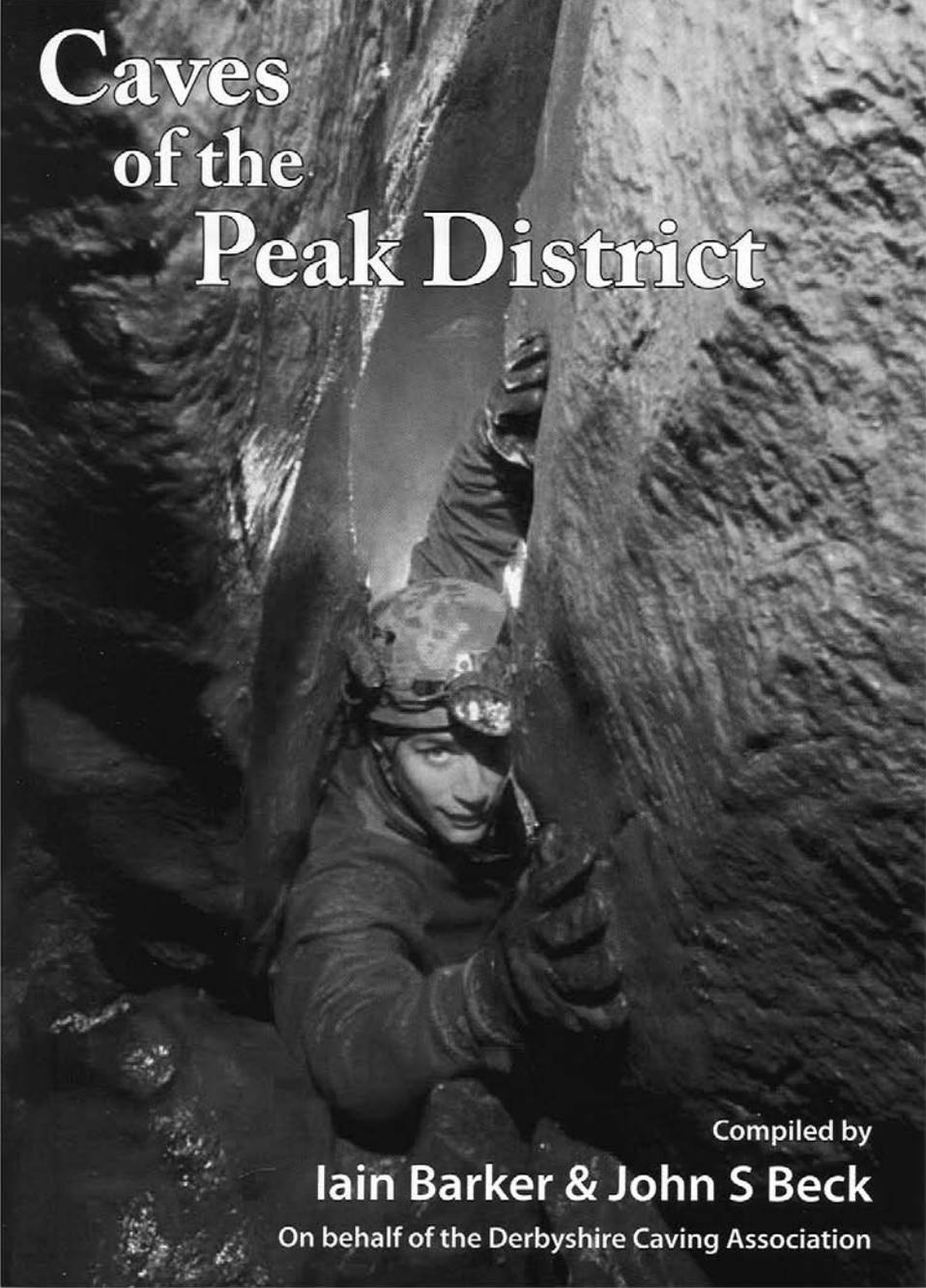
Montenegro 2010 expedition

by Joe Duxbury

The principal objective of the expedition, PT4, was deepened to a preliminary survey depth of 435m, where progress was halted by a sump. As there is still about 2-300m to go to sea level, this could well be merely a perched sump.

Several other caves were descended, but despite the fact that most of them produce strong draughts of cold air, none of them went to any great depth.

Many other entrances were located and remain to be investigated more thoroughly. All the members got home safely, and no-one had any significant injuries.



Caves of the Peak District

Compiled by

Iain Barker & John S Beck

On behalf of the Derbyshire Caving Association

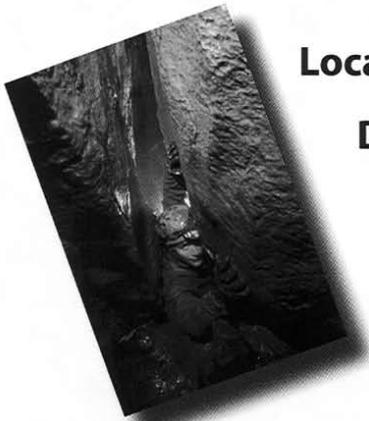
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TOURIST CAVI

by Adrian Fawcett

During my year in Wuhan I failed to make contact with any resident cavers, so had to content myself with visits to several of the Chinese showcaves. China is such a vast place that going away for a weekend's caving is only a possibility if you live in the right area. There is a small area of karst containing some caves a couple of hours south of Wuhan, but I've no idea whether there is any active exploration.

The most stunning cave I visited was TengLong Dong (Cave of the Soaring Dragon). The main fossil passage is claimed as the largest cave passage in the world. Not only is the entrance immense (they flew a helicopter around in the entrance for the publicity posters) but it carries on with similar dimensions for mile after

mile. After an hour's walk the end of the show cave is reached, but the huge tunnel carries on and on into the darkness.

For those who can't walk the distance, there's a road and electric vehicles to take tourists about a mile along the main passage. The whole place was tastefully illuminated, and it was possible to appreciate the cave in a way that wouldn't have been possible with caving lights. Not being full of lots of pretty stalactites, the Chinese had to do something to make it more visually stunning, so four times a day there is a dramatic sound and light show in the cave, including lasers, water, fire, holograms and dancing girls.

In addition to the awesome fossil series, the cave reputedly has a very fine streamway, and the view of the river roaring down a waterfall into the cave and away into the distance was pretty dramatic. The river resurges after a distance of more than 10 miles underground.

TengLong Dong is a little off the beaten track for most tourists. It is about 5 miles north of the small city of Lichuan in the far west of Hubei Province, midway between Chongqing and Yichang. Most Chinese tourists (and there are a lot of them in the newly affluent middle classes) travel around in tour groups. Anyone - such as myself - who visits out-of-town tourist attractions independently is considered to be very enterprising! Thus, tourist information centres as we know them do not exist - in China they are simply offices where they sell you tours. Tenglong was not in my copy of Lonely Planet, but Google let me find everything I needed to know.

The second cave I visited on that trip was LongLin Gong, just outside Enshi city, and easily reached on one of the city bus routes that went up an industrial valley past a cement works.

Although the entrance ticket does not include a guide, it soon became apparent that it was not possible to see the cave without one because the way into it cave was by boat, for the first 500 metres or so. I duly went back to the ticket office and told them that I did want a guide after all.



NG IN CHINA

There were no other tourists waiting to go in when I arrived, so I had a personal tour. All in Chinese, but the guide did her best to speak slowly and clearly, so I got some of it. Not that the commentary was very interesting, as most of it was about what animal each of the formations was supposed to resemble, when she wasn't telling me to be careful not to fall over or bang my head. There were some somewhat steep slippery staircases that would definitely get the H&SE people agitated if the cave was in Britain!

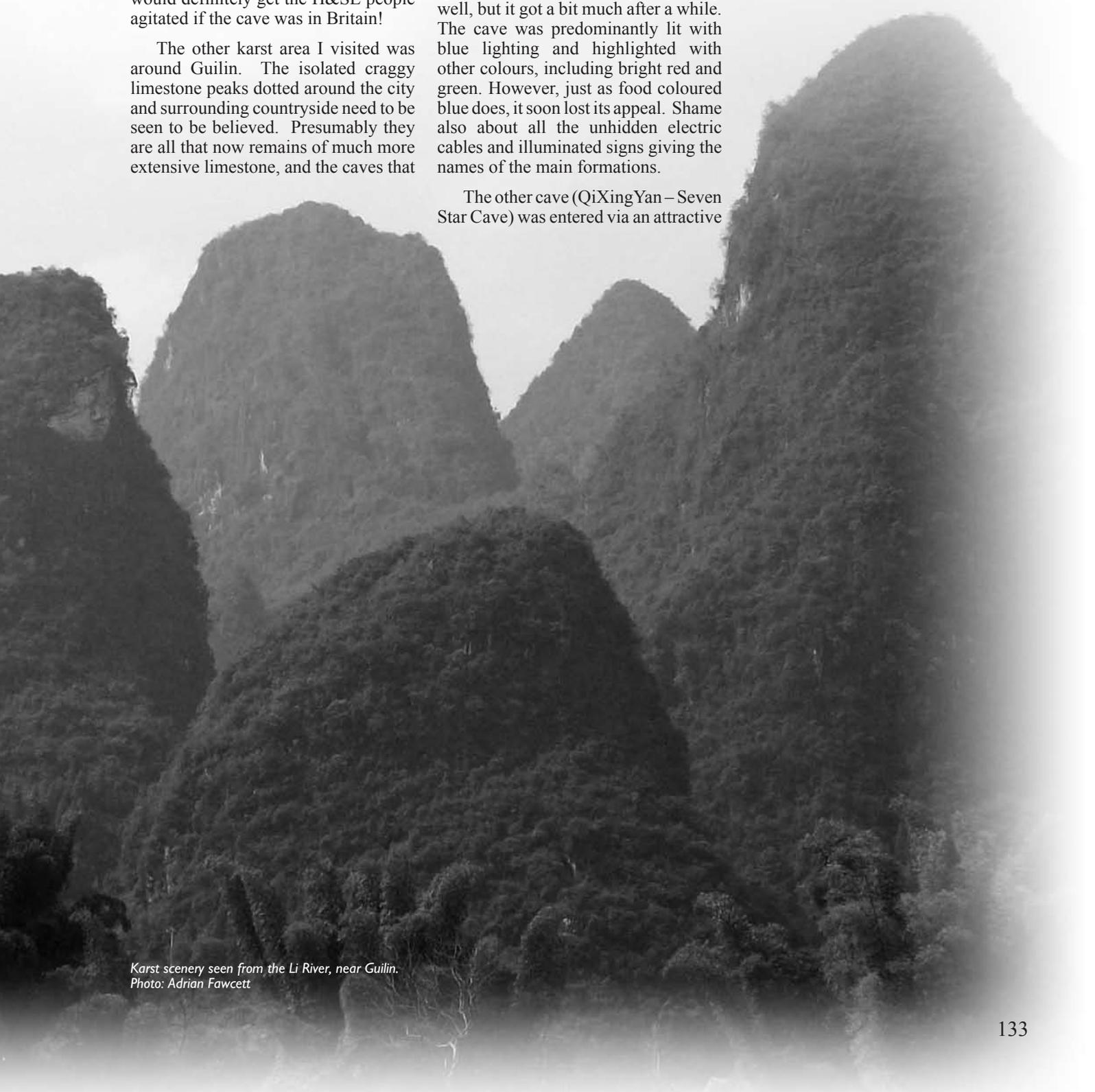
The other karst area I visited was around Guilin. The isolated craggy limestone peaks dotted around the city and surrounding countryside need to be seen to be believed. Presumably they are all that now remains of much more extensive limestone, and the caves that

remain were once part of much bigger systems.

There are numerous showcaves in this area, including one in which you pay good money to flounder around in a big pool of liquid mud. No thanks! I contented myself with two dry pretty caves. One (LuDiYan – Reed Flute Cave) is lavishly decorated, with flowstone cascades and columns everywhere. The Chinese do spectacular coloured lighting very well, but it got a bit much after a while. The cave was predominantly lit with blue lighting and highlighted with other colours, including bright red and green. However, just as food coloured blue does, it soon lost its appeal. Shame also about all the unhidden electric cables and illuminated signs giving the names of the main formations.

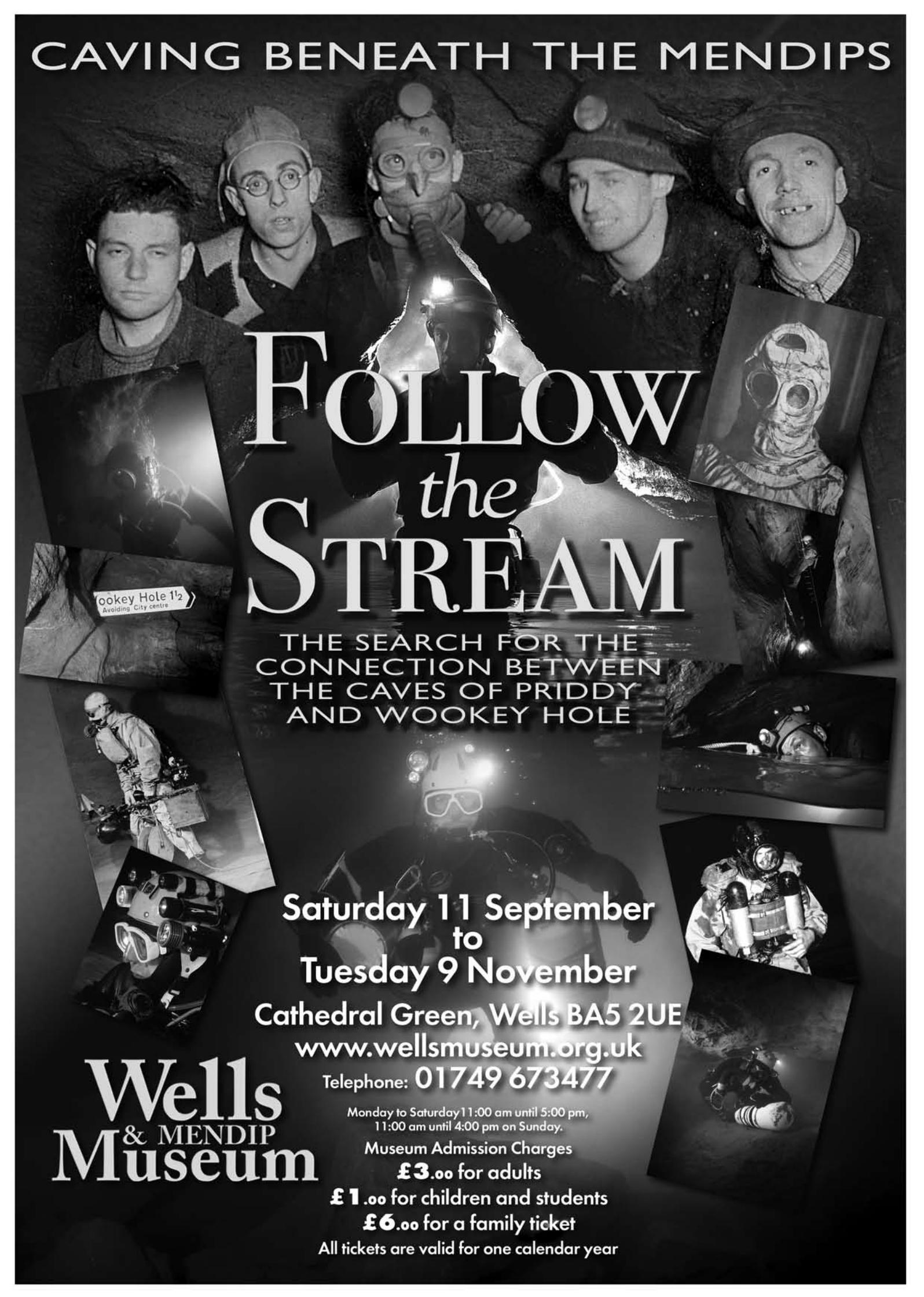
The other cave (QiXingYan – Seven Star Cave) was entered via an attractive

canyon passage, except that one of the walls had been defaced by a massive line of so-called calligraphy. Not much better than graffiti if you ask me. The Chinese do seem to have a rather different relationship with the natural world than we do in the west. Nature cannot be fully appreciated unless it has been enhanced in some way by mankind, described in a poem by an emperor, or its features likened in some way to the mythical or the spiritual.



*Karst scenery seen from the Li River, near Guilin.
Photo: Adrian Fawcett*

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Meets List 09/10

This is an outline of the meets for this year.

April 10th – 11th

South Wales

Working Weekend.

A lot of small jobs to be completed.

Also work in the Library.

May 1st – 2nd

South Wales

Saturday will be an OFD1 to 2 through trip
(Paul Tarrant)

May 27th – 31st

Yorkshire (YSS)

Booked for 5 nights for 10 people

No caves booked as yet

June 26th – 27th

South Wales

Saturday will have a trip into DY0 (Paul Tarrant)
BBQ and Barrel on Saturday night

July 24th – 25th

Mendip (Wessex)

Charterhouse & Longwood on Saturday

Swildons on Sunday

BBQ will be arranged for Saturday night

August 20th – 22nd

Yorkshire (YSS)

Booked for 3 nights for 10 people

September 25th – 26th

Hidden Earth

(Location to be confirmed)

November 6th – 7th

South Wales

Decide trips on Friday evening and then change them
Saturday morning.

Fireworks on Saturday night

December 4th – 5th

South Wales

Curry Extravaganza #6 on the 4th

Decide on your own trips

January 2011 | 29th – 30th

South Wales

Dinner and AGM

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Whitewalls

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Wookey Hole 1½
Avoiding City centre

*Beyond Sump 1. Swildon's Hole
Photo: Steve Sharp*

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