

# CHELSEA SPELAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Volume 52 No. 4 April 2010



**Great Tits**

**Cave Rescue  
Training**

**Withyhill  
Resurveyed**

**Bats in  
Fairy Cave  
Quarry**

# Chelsea Spelæological Society NEWSLETTER

Volume 52

No 4

April 2010

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Formations, Where the Sun Don't Shine, Daren Cilau

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Cover Photo:  
Lesser Horseshoe bat  
**Fairy Cave Quarry**  
Photo by Martin Grass

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

## Membership

Please send all subscriptions to:  
Peter Ward, 33 Gertrude Street, Abercynon,  
Mountain Ash CF45 4RL

Current rates are:

<b>Full</b>	<b>£30</b>
<b>Joint</b>	<b>£43</b>
<b>Associate</b>	<b>£20</b>
<b>Provisional</b>	<b>£20</b> (for six months).

Provisional members made into Full members  
this year have to pay the Full member rate.

These rates include non-caving insurance.

Any member that has **BCA Insurance** via  
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rates but please let Peter Ward know their **BCA**  
**Insurance Number** and **Club**

**Caving Insurance for 2010      £11**

## Membership Cards

If you wish to have your photo on your Membership  
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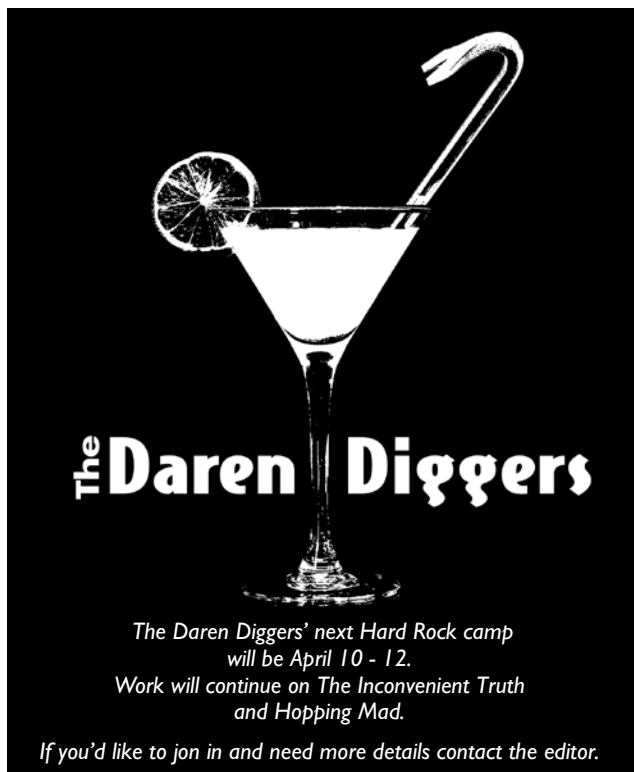
# Editorial

Thanks for all the contributions, please keep them coming.

As I mentioned in the last Newsletter it has been my intention to make this a non-political read that can be enjoyed by all. If there is anything submitted that is in any way contentious it may well, if topical, get printed (as I'm an editor, not a censor), but I will gladly put in any alternative views that are presented by other club members (and occasionally from those outside the club) to give a sense of balance to any issue raised.



**Mark Lumley**



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.

## Working Weekend

This is planned for 10-11 April.

For working on the cottage and library.

For more information contact John Stevens.

## New Photo Area for Chelsea Website

Stephen Newton has created a photo section and welcomes new material

## MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Welcome to new provisional member

**Helen Susan Rider,**

5 Marsh Barns, Marsh Lane, Runcton,  
Chichester PO20 1LG.

Home 01243 536383,

Mobile 07702 608280.

email **hen@clara.co.uk**



**Dewi Lloyd, Susan Watson and Katrina Hawkins**

have been proposed by the Committee as full members. Any comments to the secretary.

## Change of Address:

**Eleanor Stenhouse**

Flat 4, 127 Beaufort street, London, SW3 6BS

**Philip Rowsell**

5 Banbury Avenue, Beeston, Notts, NG9 6JT



# Pottering About on Mendip

by  
John Cooper

## Box's Cave

**Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2010.**

Joined a party of 3 UBSS (including Ruth ? who was collecting rock samples) and 2 others (Lee Baker, quarry employee, and his girlfriend) lead by Mark Lumley. Avoided the entrance pitch from up the quarry face by going in at quarry floor level. An interesting cave with several potential dig sites. Surprisingly well decorated. There was a report and photographs of the Chelm's Coomb Quarry caves in the October 2008 newsletter.

## Charterhouse Cave

**Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> February 2010.**

Digging Sand bypass again with Pete Hann, Alison Moody and Simon Richards (Nik Nak). Over a metre gained. 4 ½ hours as people had to be out early.

**Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2010.**

Digging Sand bypass again with Pete Hann, Kevin Hilton and Alison Moody. Over a metre gained. 5 hours as AM had to be out early.

**Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> March 2010.**

Digging Sand bypass again with Pete Hann, Richard Marlow, Alison and Pete Moody. Another metre gained. Started digging whilst AM and PH visited the Timeline passage and they clearly heard us digging. We heard them tapping a couple of times but only through solid rock. During a break in digging we ran a survey line up the dig to see if it was going anywhere near where we wanted it, result awaited. Portal Pool still sumped with streams still feeding it so cannot get into 2009 stuff yet. 5½ hours.

**Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2010.**

Digging Sand bypass again with Matt Davies, Pete Hann, Alison and Pete Moody and Andy Snook. Another metre gained. Today the air was lacking in oomph – too much puffing, blowing and gasping. It appeared that once below The Confluence, where the water from GB enters,

the air deteriorated and it was noticed that much brown froth was in the streamway. Perhaps somewhere above they have been spreading muck and this is using up the oxygen? Only 4 hours tolerated!

## Chelm's Coombe Quarry Cave

**Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2010.**

The remnant of the Box's Cave party consisting of 1 UBSS, Mark Lumley and myself had an look at this. Another very interesting site with quite an interesting route to reach it. Not for large people. Quite a lot of digging seems to have been done in the cave.

## Swildon's Hole

**Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> February.**

JC & Barry Weaver continued their Sunday strolls. A short trip to Sump 2 in nice wet winter conditions. In the Dry Way and out the Wet Way. First time I've seen a ladder and lifeline on the drop just inside the entrance.

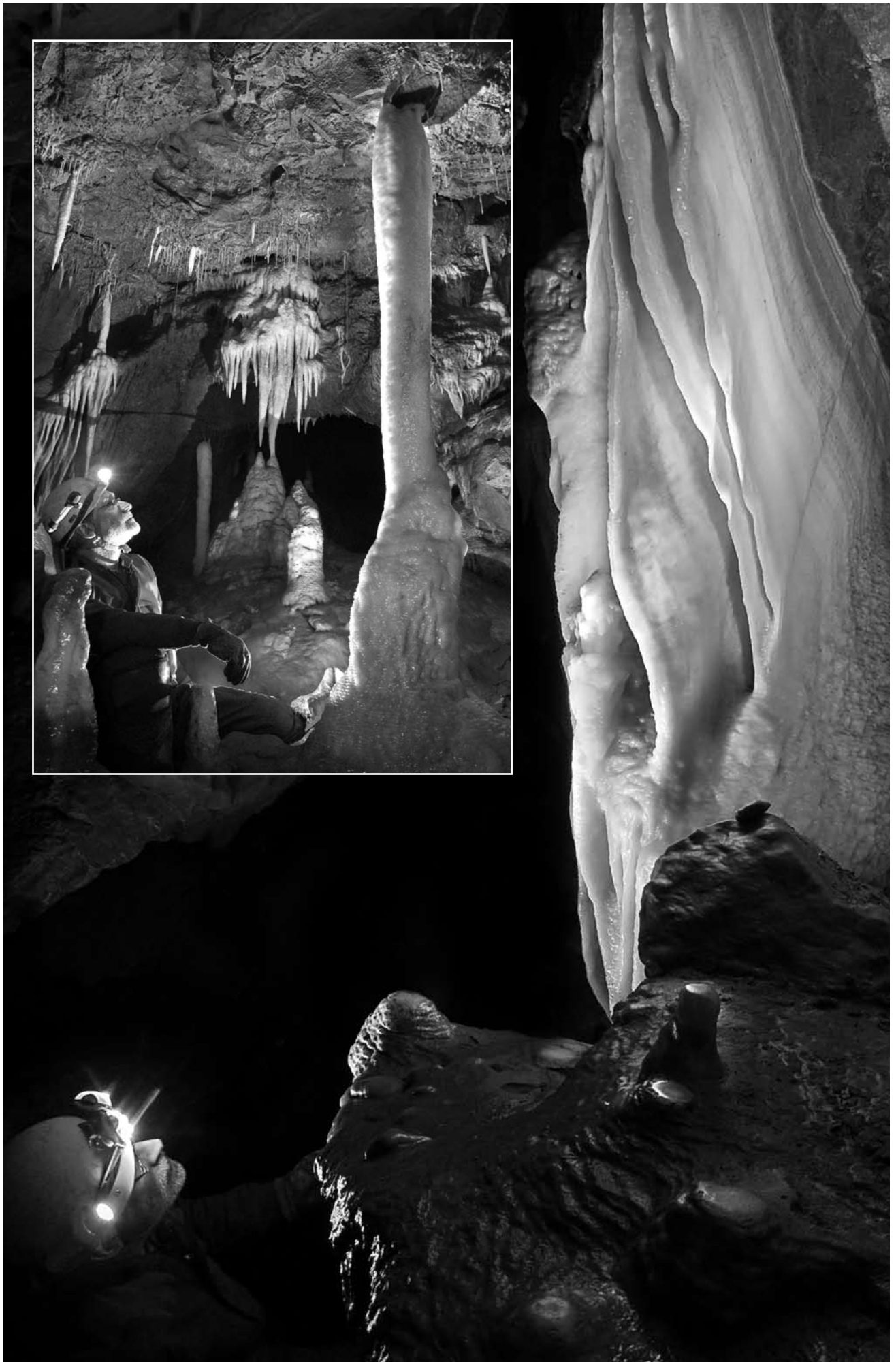
## City Arms, Wells

Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> March. The venue for the 36<sup>th</sup> Annual dinner of the CSS Western Section with Roger and Jackie Dors as guests. Attended by Bruce Bedford & Lesley Hide, Jen Bedford & Phil Eacott, Jane Bonner, Jan Butterley, Clive & Beryl Calder, Nige & Cath Clarke, John Cooper, Paul & Pat Cornelius, Mary Drake, Bob Fish, Trev & Wendy Knief, Dick Laurence, Roy & Jean Musgrove, Carol & Wendy Payne and Barry Weaver. Many thanks to Roy for the organisation.

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## WHITEWALLS FRONT DOOR LOCK

A reminder. This has been changed recently for the benefit of the new cave rescue team. But it should be backwards compatible with the existing member keys that are in circulation. If you have any problem please contact John Stevens or Stuart France.



*Formations in Witherhill. Photos by Steve Sharp*



# BATS IN FAIRY

by Martin Grass



*Greater Horseshoe bats in a cave in Fairy Cave Quarry.*

*Photos: Martin Grass*

Some of the caves in the quarry are home to both Lesser and Greater Horseshoe bats particularly in the winter when their numbers dramatically increase as they seek a safe, undisturbed roost to hibernate in.

All bats are protected by law and both species of horseshoe like to hibernate in caves in Southern England and South Wales. This makes the Mendip Hills particularly vital to their continued survival. Although both are nationally scarce the Greater is the rarer of the two and is also Britain's largest bat being approximately three times the weight and size of the Lesser. Most winters Fairy Cave Quarry is host to around a third of all Greater Horseshoe bats that are resident in Eastern Mendip. Although they regularly hibernate in ones or twos they do like to huddle together to maintain body warmth. The "clump" in the photograph on the right contains around 80 bats. Greater's can live up to 30 years and Lesser's to around 20 years.

During the hibernation period access to the sites is restricted. For further information please contact the Fairy Cave Quarry Management Committee.



# CAVE QUARRY





# Withyhill Resurveyed

by Duncan Price

The last six months or so of my caving activities have been dominated by one major project – that of completely re-surveying Withyhill Cave in Fairy Cave Quarry. Withyhill is probably one of the best decorated caves on Mendip and access is carefully controlled by a management committee who operate a leader system for this cave (and other caves in the quarry). Withyhill was discovered as a result of quarrying operations in April 1972 and subsequently surveyed by Dave Irwin and helpers. The primary reason behind my work was to provide information for a 3D model of the Fairy Cave Quarry caves (see CSS NL 51(8)) but soon the need to survey Withyhill became more urgent due to proposed modifications to the entrance chamber so as to afford improved drainage of flood water from the cave and lessen consequential damage to its delicate formations. At the invitation of the management committee I was allowed unfettered access to the cave for the purpose of surveying even though I am not “officially” a leader for the cave. I guess having measured every nook and cranny I now probably know the cave better than most. I am very grateful to the management committee for their support and also to my assistants for their help.

My first trip into the cave was in 2007 when Mark “Gonzo”

Lumley and Dave King took Geoff Dawson and me into the cave on a tourist/photographic trip. We covered the main drag of the cave up to Green Lake Grotto and to the second boulder choke, but did not take in the eastern branch which leads up through Pearl Chamber and Column Chamber. Geoff’s camera had a facility to record a sound bite along with the photo so after every shot he’d make some remark about where the picture was taken. In 2009 Gonzo resurrected digging activities beyond Jonathan’s Chamber (which lies off Pearl Chamber) yielding a modest, but controversially-named extension (more of which later). Before I started the survey in earnest, Martin Grass took Antoinette Bennett and me on a familiarisation trip to the parts of the cave I had not seen – Pearl Chamber and Column Chamber.

My first surveying trip was supposed to take place on Wednesday 26 August 2009. Gonzo and gang were already digging in the cave and my request that the key was to be left out for me by the gate was not passed on – Brian Prewer had showed up to inspect the site but he didn’t have his key with him either. So I was locked out! This left me only able to survey the quarry floor outside the entrance to see where the water might go to once it was on the surface. In my absence the diggers discovered a small, but well-decorated, chamber which

they called “Priceless Grotto” – I was chuffed that they had named it in my honour (or so I thought)...

Over the August bank holiday weekend I was entrusted with a key to the cave which I collected from Brian Prewer at his house in Priddy (one of several visits to pick up or drop off the key en route to and from work). On 30th August, Antoinette Bennett and I surveyed from the entrance to The Dam (a gour pool just beyond Broken Curtain Chamber) on a 3 hour trip. There is a blocked outlet passage at the junction just before the climb up to Broken Curtain Chamber which is the lowest point of the cave, some 5 m below the entrance. I used a digital compass/clinometer combination (Shetland Attack Pony – on loan from the ACG) for bearing and gradient measurement and a laser rangefinder (“Disto” – initially Alan Gray’s but later my own Leica unit) for distances with Antoinette acting as scribe to transfer the data manually to the survey notebook. Whilst not as elaborate as the paper-free methods described by John Stevens in CSS NL 51(12) – surveying is speeded-up no end and it is possible to do 20 stations an hour (or more) depending on how complicated the cave is.

On 2nd September Mandy Voysey showed me the way to Priceless Grotto and I surveyed out from here to Jonathan’s Chamber with the temporary assistance of Mandy who soon defected to



join the ranks of Gonzo and Mike Richardson (MCG) to dig. The following week I solo-surveyed from Jonathan's Chamber back to Pearl Chamber and some of the side passages in the area. This was all well and good but it meant that I had a bit of "hanging" survey data unconnected with the progress I had made surveying into the cave.

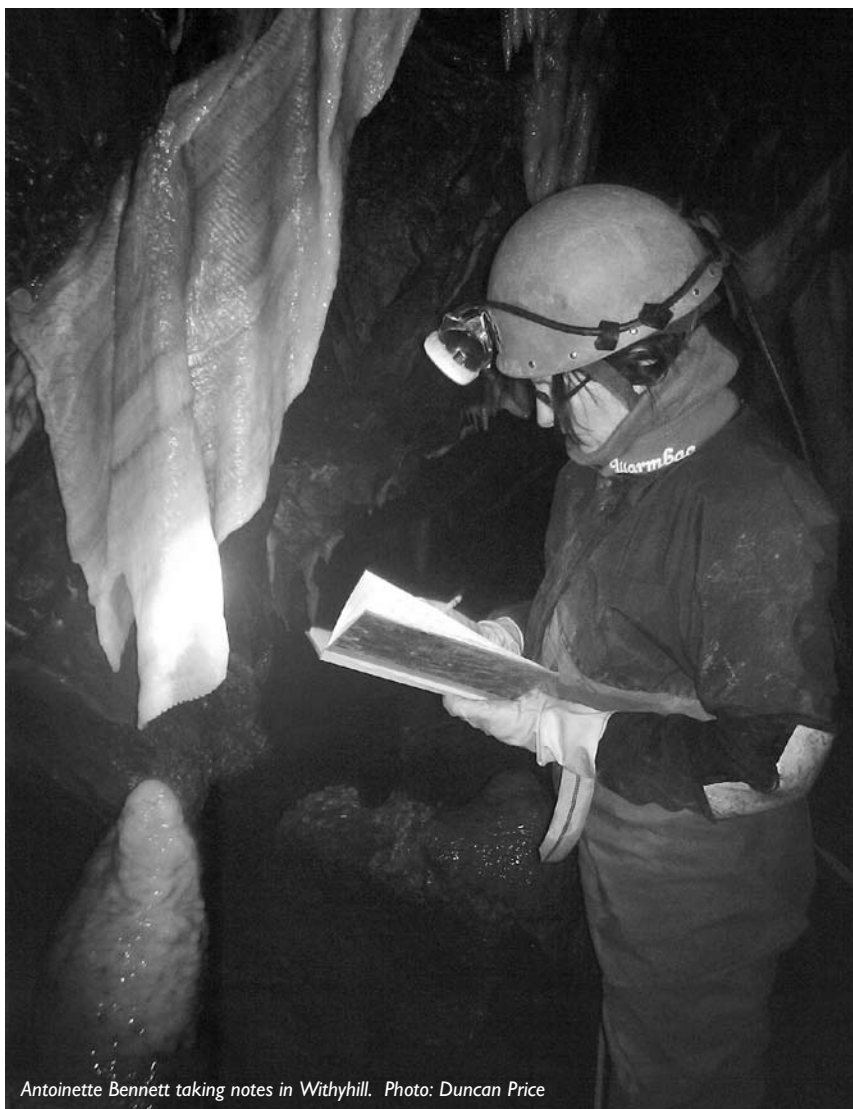
A couple more Wednesday nights were spent surveying in on my own as far as Bypass Chamber (above Barabobath's Bath) but when I came to enter the data into the computer I discovered that I had forgotten to commit some of the readings to paper so the work was almost useless. This was remedied on 7 October by employing my trusty assistant, Antoinette, to take decent notes and keep me on track.

Most of the work was to fill in omissions in my two previous sessions but we added a little bit to the end and managed to get a sight through Barabobath's Bath to the same point from both ends so we created another loop. One of the benefits of laser surveying is that you don't have to physically enter a passage to measure it – this has come in very useful in Withyhill due to the profuse and vulnerable formations there. From the far point of the survey it took about 15 minutes to rejoin the diggers at the entrance who were moving rocks around – it had taken 8 hours to survey that distance!

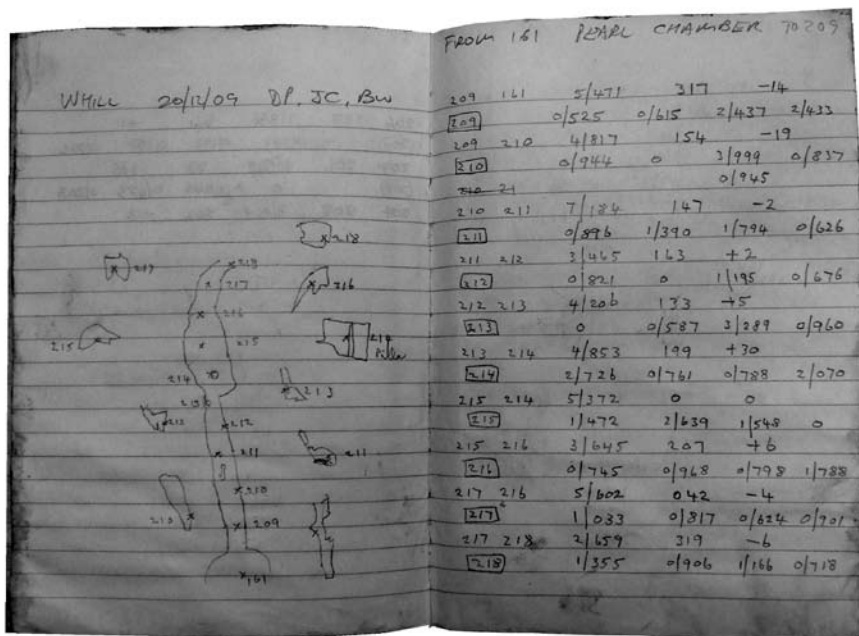
On 14 October I surveyed from just upstream of Barabobath's Bath to the sharp right-hand bend after Elephant's Trunk Chamber before joining the

diggers (including Gonzo's dog Dylan) who were excavating the Panama Canal, Withyhill Extension. They had now seriously altered the dimensions of the entrance chamber and it might warrant resurveying this. A week later I continued work as far as GP junction, leaving small postage stamp sized bits of waterproof paper with "110" and "130" marking the ends of this survey section with the hope that the cave wouldn't flood and wash them away. Following Dick Laurence's birthday bash in Draycott, Antoinette, John Cooper and Paul Tarrant joined me for a leisurely Sunday surveying trip on 25 October where we got as far as Green Lake Grotto – here the benefit of non-invasive surveying again showed its worth as we were able to measure the well-decorated chamber without crossing the conservation tapes. On exit we wandered over to Fernhill Cave where we found the entrance open and a ladder in place. John, Paul and I descended leaving Antoinette topside. We took in the sites and chatted to the diggers. One frog was rescued from the bottom of the entrance pipes and a stray, thin, but very friendly Burmese cat temporarily re-homed from the car park to Antoinette's garage before being found a place at a pet rescue centre.

On 4 November I was joined by Robin "Tav" Taviner to survey up the Eastern branch of the cave from GP junction to Pearl Chamber. The cave was quite wet which made the trip more enjoyable. Tav spotted an inlet in Bypass Grotto from which a streamlet flowed – unfortunately the passage was too delicate to enter. The survey had now progressed to the point where the Jonathan's Chamber data could be tied in. The surveying effort for the rest of November was



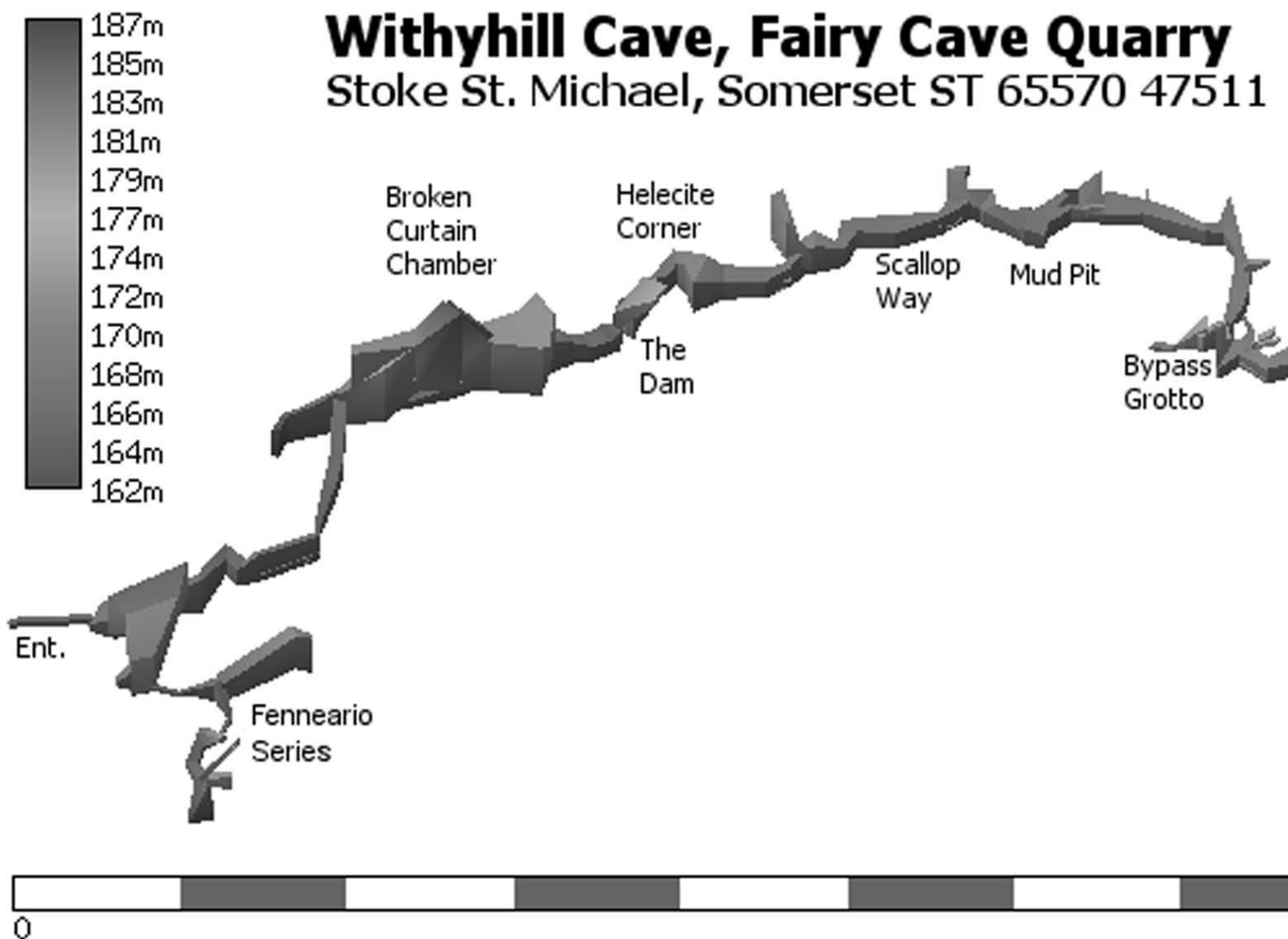
Antoinette Bennett taking notes in Withyhill. Photo: Duncan Price



John Cooper's survey notes.

spent doing surface work around the quarry (in the dark where the lasers worked best) to tie in all the entrances.

On 2 December I started surveying in from the junction at Green Lake Grotto. Tav turned up unexpectedly to speed up the process and we stopped at the base of the ascending choke of doom close to Parfitt's Cave (station 197). There was a bit of controversy at this point owing to unfortunate events which I won't go into, but on the following Wednesday I was joined by Mike Richardson, when we surveyed the area of the 2nd Boulder Choke, the top of which is 10 m below the surface at ST 65571 47202. This is 2 m to the north east of the field





boundary with the parcel of land containing Withybrook Slocker/Parfitt's Cave. The bottom of the choke is at the same level as the base level in Withybrook Slocker some 35 m away. This fraction of the cave is only shown dotted on Dave Irwin's survey and represents the only "original" mapping in the whole cave.

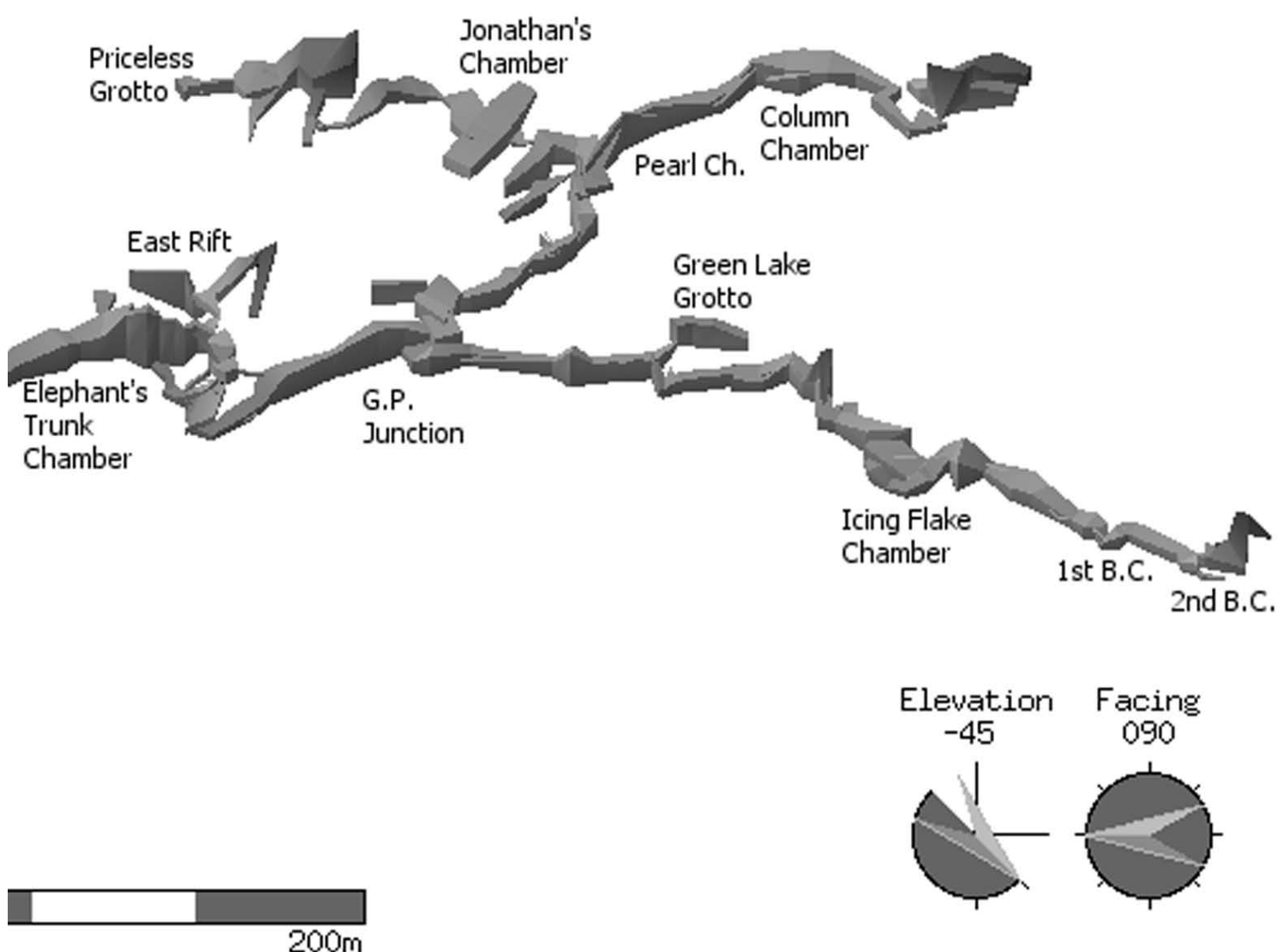
With not much left to do except complete the eastern branch from Pearl Chamber inwards, John Cooper, Barry Weaver and I surveyed to the "end" of the cave just past Column Chamber on 20 December. No cats were rescued this time – however looking at the paper survey afterwards it was apparent that we'd missed the terminal chamber. A return match

on 23 December with Rick Stanton and latterly Dave King passed a viciously tight squeeze into this region. This is well beyond the normal tourist route (Dave, a leader, had never been there) and it is undoubtedly the best chamber in the cave. The constricted entry caused considerable gonad trauma on exit by giving us all a severe "wedgie". Rick's first ever caving trip was to Withybrook Slocker in 1979 but we didn't have time to see the "other end".

The final part of the cave left unvisited was the area around East Rift (near to Elephant's Trunk Chamber). Antoinette and I did some work here on 30 December with many of the notes dictated to my scribe at some distance in

this complex area. Gonzo and Gary Keily passed by en route to Priceless Grotto to recover some kit after visiting Fernhill Cave. Another "final" trip to this area was made on 2 January (with Pete Bolt – on a visit from Columbia – and Gonzo in the cave also) to link in some circuits discovered during survey work here.

Colds and snow left me time to mull over the data and decide that another trip (solo) was needed to pick up a few bits in the area of East Rift. On 20 January 2010, I re-surveyed this and also back through Bypass Grotto and to Helectite Corner where there is a view into 5m+ of open passage beyond some calcited blocks. This probably connects with the same



passage that Tav looked at above Bypass Grotto. The re-survey has identified several leads, but all would compromise formations if pushed. I exited the cave at 10 pm to find Gonzo walking across the quarry to see if I was OK. Dave King kindly took my drink order in the pub as I regained the car park. Now there's service!

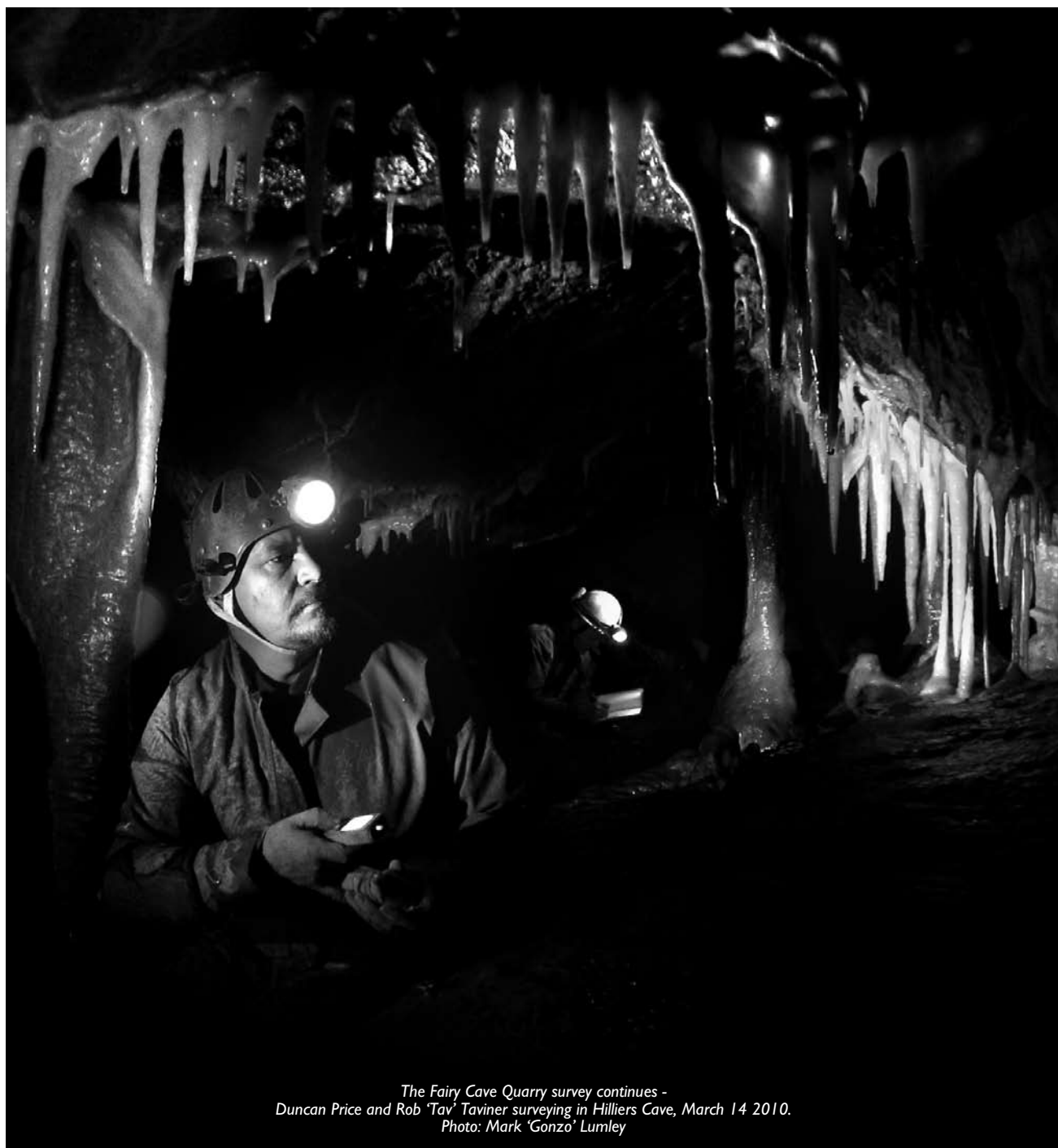
In a period of little under six months, about 1.2 km of cave was surveyed in 16 trips (it is difficult to be overly precise as there are some duplicate legs). These

data have been combined with Dave Irwin's original centreline data (done in 5 trips) and the West Chamber/Fenneario<sup>1</sup> Series extension survey supplied by Tony Boycott to produce a 3D model of the cave. An isometric 2D screen dump is provided here – it cannot do justice to this work but demonstrates what has been done. The raw survey data and a current state-of-play of the whole Fairy Cave Quarry surveying effort can be obtained from my website:

**[www.sump4.com/downloads](http://www.sump4.com/downloads)**



<sup>1</sup>In 2000, much to Tony Boycott's discomfort, the other two diggers, Gonzo and Pat Cronin were discordantly singing 'I've been around this whole country but I ain't never yet found Fenneario' from Bob Dylan's 'Pretty Peggy O' as they broke through.



*The Fairy Cave Quarry survey continues -  
Duncan Price and Rob 'Tav' Tavinor surveying in Hilliers Cave, March 14 2010.  
Photo: Mark 'Gonzo' Lumley*



# Daren Cilau Digging Trip February 2010

by Andy 'Vogon'  
Watson

Some of the team went in early on the Friday, 26th February to work on the Inconvenient Truth and Hopping Mad.

The full weekend team, after various cancellations and non-arrivals consisted of Steve Sharp, Andy Watson, Mark Lumley, Andy Snook and Charles Bailey.

After an early rise on Saturday Mark left to look at the Inconvenient Truth while the others went to work Hopping Mad.

The new mini-drag tray, now suitably modified to be a good size and shape for the Inconvenient Truth's awkward access passage, worked very well. The dry stone walling continued to rise above the access hole and it is now a significant climb over this to get to Cheese Aven and to the far extensions of Frog Street.

On Saturday evening we returned in phases to Hard Rock Cafe to find Charles offering to cook; and what a creation; an interesting salmon pasta mix with spicy tomato relish which we all rather relished eating. It was entertaining watching Charles cook in his long Egyptian dress and headwear *[unfortunately the rest of us didn't realise that it was a fancy dress party!]* and I must confess I was rather waiting for this to catch fire. It was my 50th birthday in January and Charles's 51st birthday also in January and we celebrated by having a Christmas



Charles Bailey with a new style of head-warmer, Hard Rock Cafe, February 2010.  
Photo: Andy Watson

cake complete with candles for our desert on Saturday evening. I was even allowed to sing for a very short time!

On Sunday morning we left camp taking out some empty paraffin and water containers as required. The entrance series was extremely chilly and the weather outside was very windy and cloudy with patches of snow still on the high parts of the Brecon Beacons.

Overall a great weekend.

## Available from 23 April 2010

For the last 75 years, tourists at Wookey Hole have been joined by an adventurous band of cave divers whose aim has been to explore the subterranean Axe and follow the river ever deeper into the Mendip Hills towards the feeder swallets on the plateau above.

This lavishly illustrated, 368 page book chronicles the saga of exploration from the hard hat, lead-booted pioneers of the 1930s through the post-War "frogman" era to the high-tech, deep divers of the present generation.

A story of triumph and occasional tragedy, it is told by the divers themselves and those who knew them well.

# £25

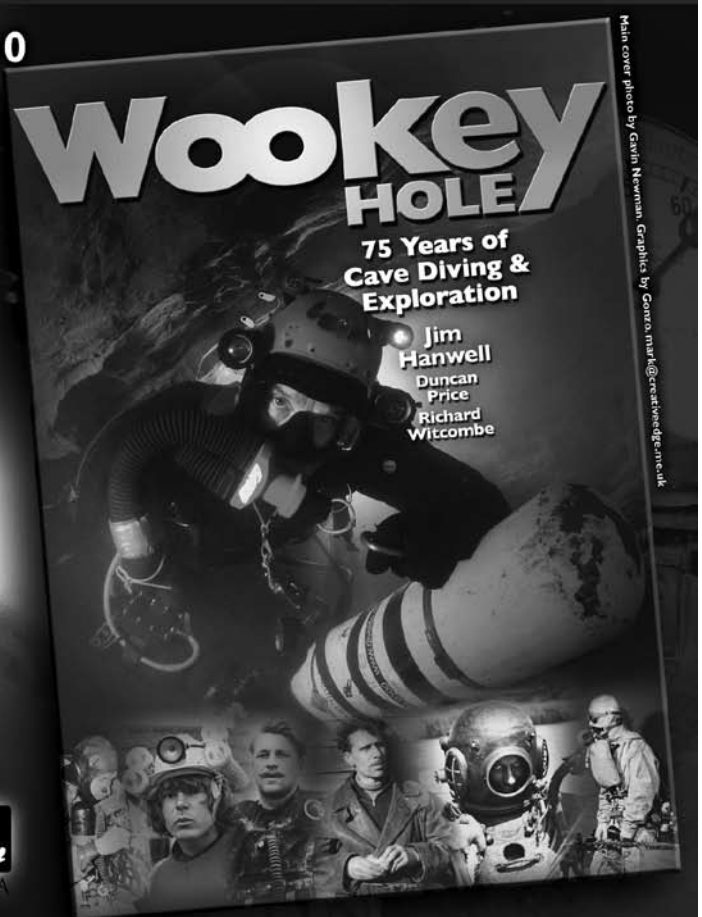
On sale at Wookey Hole Caves and direct from the CDG

£31 inc p&p in the UK

£34 inc p&p overseas

Order your copy of the book by visiting

**wookeybook.com**



Main cover photo by Gavin Newman. Graphics by Gonna, nana@creativegenie.co.uk

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Open letter to the committee : CSS and PDCMG.

Date : 7<sup>th</sup> March 2010

Dear Mr Editor,

It is with concern that I note recent activity from some CSS members, with respect to Ogof Draenen and the Pwll Du Cave Management Group ( PDCMG ).

The behaviour of CSS at the PDCMG meeting on the 12<sup>th</sup> December was a disgrace, with filibustering and disrespect for elected members of the committee. This has been followed up by political articles in the CSS newsletter, clearly using your otherwise impressive shop-front for the expressed purpose of undermining PDCMG.

PDCMG can rightly be criticised for sitting back on its laurels over the past few years, with meeting not taking place as frequently as should have been. This has changed during the last year with the appointment of a new secretary, and a much increased level of activity. Of course, the group is not perfect (name a caving body that is, year on year – including CSS), but is making full attempts to engage all opinions in caving, and keep on the right side of the landowners.

The landowners themselves have seen little of the aforementioned activity in meetings and the newsletter. However, they have seen balaclava clad figures furtively moving around their land, and have felt threatened in the process. PMCMG is doing its best to maintain access to the cave, but this is increasingly difficult in the current climate.

I have written a letter to Tim Morgan asking him to clarify whether the approach taken the CSS delegation to the PDCMG meeting in December, the newsletter articles to discredit the group and other less visible but nevertheless disreputable activities, are sanctioned by the CSS committee. Specific questions have been laid out, which I hope will be answered promptly but fully. I hope the committee sees fit to publish these via the newsletter.

A few years ago, many of us will remember the ‘Surveyors versus Morgannwg’ bitter arguments within CSS and the poisonous atmosphere that resulted, which lead to a number of members parting company with CSS. It would be a great shame to see history repeat itself.

Kind regards

Charles Bailey  
( CSS member and PDCMG trustee )

*The Committee will respond to Charles' letter in the next CSS Newsletter*



# Great Tits!

## A new menace to our little friends

by Peter Ward

A particular concern with Chelsea Spelaeological Society other than caves are the bats, our little naked friends. However, according to a recent article in Fortean Times (pg8, FT259, March 2010), originally reported in Dublin Herald 9 September 2009, there is a new threat to our bug munching relatives. Tits. Ornithologists observed a startling scene of Great Tits killing and eating pipistrelle bats in a Hungarian cave. They watched them over three winters and found that Great Tits foraged for bats far less when given extra food. This indicates that Great Tits hunted bats when there was a food shortage. This outrageous behaviour cannot be allowed to be imported to our fair lands and to affect those loveable nose twitchers. Therefore, when you're out and about and you see Great Tits, get hold of them and squeeze the life out of them.



Mandy Voysey in  
Honeymead Hole, East Mendip.  
Photo: Matt Voysey

# Volunteers Your Cave Rescue Team needs you!

by Paul Tarrant

*It's 9:00pm on a Saturday evening. A day's walking in the mountains, a hot meal and a glass of wine have all helped to bring on a certain feeling of lethargy suggesting that keeping awake to watch 'Match of the Day' later on TV will be a bit of a challenge. The 'phone rings. "Hi. It's Brian the call out warden from the West Brecon Cave Rescue Team. We have an overdue party of four doing a through trip from OFD 1 to Top Entrance. They are an hour overdue. Can you turn out?" The answer given is positive and caving gear, as well as sleeping bag, food and spare clothing are quickly gathered together, placed in the car which is then driven up to Penwyllt.*

This is how the majority of callouts are instigated, especially if you are a local member of the WBCRT. More often than not, you receive a further phone call telling you to stand down as the missing party has been safely located. If you are on the road, you turn for home to get back to the remaining wine and to watch MOTD, since the call out for assistance will have dispelled that feeling of lethargy you had earlier. Other times your services are

needed and you will be involved in a late night search and find exercise to locate a missing group or there is an injury that requires the evacuation of a casualty, a fellow caver.

So, how does cave rescue get the necessary personnel together to mount such an operation? In the good old days of the 70s and 80s, it was possible to get the ball rolling to mount a call out by going to the Britannia Inn in Crickhowell or the Ancient Briton in Penycae as these were then the main drinking haunts of cavers. A reasonable sized team could soon be assembled at Whitewalls or Penwyllt through word of mouth spread in the pubs. In the Brit for example it was not unusual to have club members from Cwmbran, Brynmawr, Llangattock caving group as well as the John Parkers/Farrs & friends and CSS all drinking on the same evening, with Croydon and Westminster also putting in appearances. If there was a call out and all cavers had left the pub to assist, then the landlords could be relied on to pass on the message to other cavers who'd happen along. Those days are long passed and now CSS and SWCC tend to drink on their club premises. It is therefore vital that the cave rescue team have accurate information recorded on cavers prepared and willing to turn out in the event of a rescue incident.

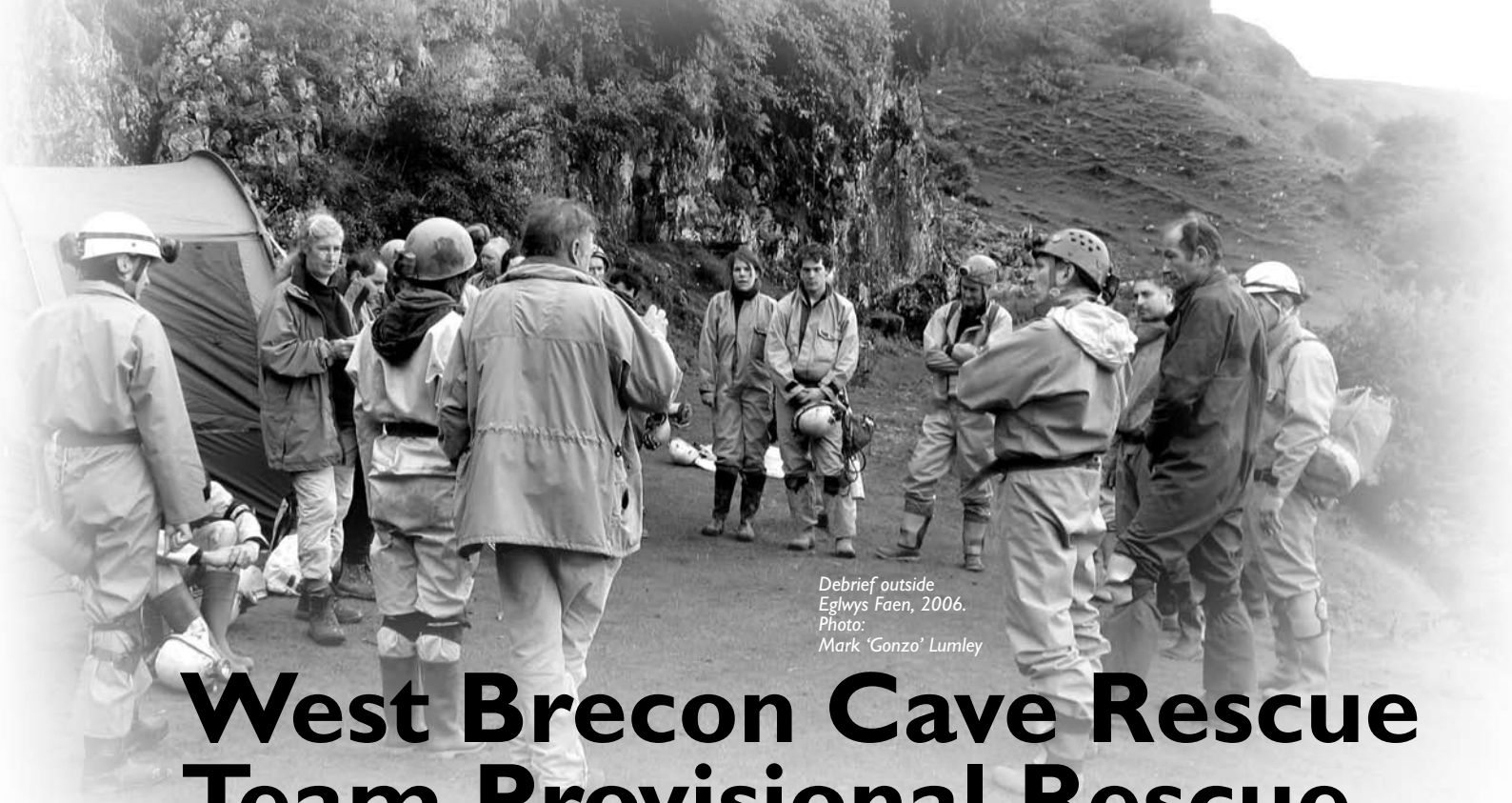
There appears to be an increasing frequency of cave rescue call outs in southern Wales over the last few years with lost parties, caves flooding [DYO, Hospital Cave, OCAF, OFD2] etc. Fortunately, there have been few recent severe injuries requiring casualty evacuation by stretcher apart from two knee dislocations in Porth yr Ogof and Llygad Llwychr and the 26hr mega rescue in 2005 when 150+ cavers assisted in the evacuation of a severely injured person from OFD. There will be some serious incident one day, like the Flannagan rescue from Aggies' Southern Stream Passage in the 80s or the Laura Trowbridge rescue from Otter Hole a few years back. Incidents like these require lots and lots of manpower over an extended time period. Being prepared to assist in such an eventuality is of paramount importance, and is a responsibility each caver should personally take on.



Rescue Practice in Ager Allwedd, 2006.  
Organised by WBCRT and involving  
Gloucester CRO, Gwent CRO, MRO and others.  
Photo: Mark 'Gonzo' Lumley

How to prepare? In the first instance, if you have not already done so, contact the WBCRT [*soon to be renamed the South and Mid Wales Cave Rescue Team*] and offer them your contact details. If you live locally you will be extremely useful as someone who





Debrief outside  
Eglwys Faen, 2006.  
Photo:  
Mark 'Gonzo' Lumley

# West Brecon Cave Rescue Team Provisional Rescue Practices & Sessions 2010

## **May**

**Saturday 15th**

Ogof Daren Cilau/Price's

## **June**

**Sunday 13th**

Mid-Wales Joint Practice

## **September**

**Saturday 19th**

Ogof Draenen

## **November**

**Saturday 13th**

## **December**

**Sunday 12th**

These training exercises are open to all cavers who are active and interested in the area.

For more information contact the WBCRT Training Officer,

**Joel Corrigan**

[training@smwcrt.org](mailto:training@smwcrt.org)

[www.wbcrt.org](http://www.wbcrt.org)

## **Suggested Specialist Sessions:**

Cave diver resupply & stretcher carry in Dan Yr Ogof (Pot Sump)

Small team casualty extraction from Pwll Dwfn (SRT)

## **Suggested training sessions:**

Several Round-Robin evenings to include:

Basic rope work (including knots, rigging principles, hauling procedures).

Basic 1st Aid.

Stretcher packaging.

Communication refresher.

Surface Navigation.

Personal kit for rescues.

Rescue kit procedures.

Specific evenings to include:

Advanced rope work (including bolting, haul setups etc).

Winching etc...

Boulder choke shoring/extraction (part of Gloucester practice?).

Refresher/scenarios for 1st Aiders.

Underground Search Procedures (inc survey interpretation) (Ogof Draenen?).



will be called upon to assist in initial search and find exercises during the crucial early part of a call out when the rescue team has no idea whether it is dealing with a lost party, an injured person or a collapsed boulder choke. If you have good knowledge of the Llangatwg systems or Draenen, so much the better as your knowledge will be invaluable and will be recorded on the call out sheets. If you live outside the caving region, you should still offer your contact details to the cave rescue team. Whilst you won't be likely called upon to assist as a first responder, you will help provide part of a strategic reserve of cavers to be called upon in the event of an extended call out.

You might feel that your caving experience or level of fitness will preclude you from playing a helpful role on a cave rescue call out – Not so! There are always essential surface roles that need to be carried out and which free up personnel to go underground to assist. Such roles might include manning telephones, radios, assisting the surface co-ordinators, making food & drinks for rescue personnel, or marshalling equipment to be taken underground. All assistance is very much valued by the rescue team and the casualty.

The important thing to remember is that successful cave rescues do not just happen. It takes practice to make most things in life perfect and attendance at some of the arranged rescue practices should soon see people acquainted with the necessary underground techniques required to effect a casualty extraction. With the increasing frequency of callouts, especially in the eastern parts of Wales, it is vital that we are prepared for, and able to assist in the eventuality we are needed. Don't forget that Whitewalls will become a communication hub during rescues on Llangatwg. Rescue equipment is also stored there.

So, don't be shy. Come forward and register your details now with the WBCRT so that cave rescue can continue to be the effective organisation it absolutely must be. Regard it like an insurance policy in which you contribute to it but hope you never have to call upon using it personally. If you want to find out more talk to either Tom Foord [CSS Rescue Rep], Stuart France or Paul Tarrant. You will also find further information about the WBCRT on Facebook [just type in the name in its search engine], or log onto the website <http://www.smwcr.org/>

*A rescue practice took place on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> March in which dozens of new University caving club members swelled the ranks of the rescue team to assist in the evacuation of a casualty from OFD 2 Midnight Passage. The next rescue practice is to be held in Busman's Holiday on 15<sup>th</sup> May and Ogof Draenen on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> September*

# Meets List 09/10

This is an outline of the meets for this year.

**April 10<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup>**

**South Wales**

Working Weekend.

A lot of small jobs to be completed.

Also work in the Library.

**May 1<sup>st</sup> – 2<sup>nd</sup>**

**South Wales**

Saturday will be an OFD1 to 2 through trip

(Paul Tarrant)

**May 27<sup>th</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup>**

**Yorkshire (YSS)**

Booked for 5 nights for 10 people

No caves booked as yet

**June 26<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup>**

**South Wales**

Saturday will have a trip into DYO (Paul Tarrant)

BBQ and Barrel on Saturday night

**July 24<sup>th</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup>**

**Mendip (Wessex TBC)**

Swildons on Sunday

BBQ will be arranged for Saturday night

**August 20<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup>**

**Yorkshire (YSS)**

Booked for 3 nights for 10 people

**September 25<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup>**

**Hidden Earth**

(Location to be confirmed)

**November 6<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup>**

**South Wales**

Decide trips on Friday evening and then change them

Saturday morning.

Fireworks on Saturday night

**December 4<sup>th</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup>**

**South Wales**

Curry Extravaganza #6 on the 4<sup>th</sup>

Decide on your own trips

**January 2011 29<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</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**

**Please note that the lock on Ogof Draenen has changed.**

**A new key has been applied for and should be at Whitewalls soon. If you are planning a trip check beforehand.**

## Officers of the Society:

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### **Whitewalls**

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# Wealden Cave and Mine Society Reigate Cave Days 2010

Guided Tours of **Baron's Cave** at Reigate Castle,  
and the **Tunnel Road** silver sand mines.  
Saturdays, 10am-6pm

**May 8**

**June 12**

**July 10**

**Aug 14**

**Sept 11**

For more info go to

**wcms.org.uk**

Ledge Pitches,  
St. Cuthbert's Swallet  
Photo: Steve Sharp



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