

CHELSEA SPELAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

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LUNDY

Editorial

Many thanks to Andy Watson for this interesting and informative write-up.

I have a particular interest in Lundy as my uncle and my grandfather lived there, in the Old Lighthouse and Tibbett's, the Admiralty Lookout, in the 1960s, my uncle as an engineer for the steam ships and my grandfather as a 'refined gentleman of leisure' as described on a memorial rock on the island.

While sorting out a few loose ends for this article Martin Mills (Milche) from Shepton Mallet caving club sent me a few extracts from *My Life on Lundy* by Felix Gade ISBN 0 9506177 0 9 in which he describes my grandfather, Jack Spink as "a stocky extrovert who loved a party" so some things clearly run in the family!



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Above: Mike and Jack Spink, Admiralty Lookout (Tibbett's), 1960s



Right: Jack Spink welcomes the Queen Mother to Lundy, 1960s

The views expressed in the Newsletter are those of the author of the article and do not necessarily represent the views of the Society.

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

New members wishing to join should send a cheque payable to **Chelsea Spelæological Society** along with their membership application form to the Secretary. Members who are renewing a subscription should send the payment to the Treasurer. The committee will normally consider voting provisional members up to full membership after 6 months by which time they should have become known.

Provisional membership can be extended for another 6 months, but only once, if a Provisional Member has been unable to become known socially and as an active caver within the club. Please contact the Treasurer with any queries.

An update on the caves, mines and other underground items of interest on Lundy Island

July 2012

by A Watson MNRC/CSS/HSCC

The island is 93% granite so don't expect 'caverns measureless to man' but having visited the island in 2010 and again in 2012 I thought it was a good opportunity to write up some of the sea caves and other items of underground interest on the island. It is important to note that caves used by seals (Marked 'Known SC') must not be entered between August and November and many caves are in or around the sea bird protected breeding areas, as identified in Lundy's Climbing and Scrambling restrictions, and must not be approached between 1st April and 31st July. If in doubt or you are unsure always check with the Island Warden. In addition tides need to be closely monitored for accessing some of the coastal sea caves as the tide height changes are very significant (4m+).

I have described the caves in an anti-clockwise rotation; starting from the Landing Jetty and working up northwards on the East coast round the North West Point and back down the West coast back round Rat and Mouse islands to the Landing Jetty. I have endeavoured to pull together all the information from the Lundy Field Society magazines, two issues (see bibliography) and Shepton Mallet Caving Club

our two island visits (HSCC) in April 2010 and June 2012, but there is more work to do and more areas still to explore; my hope to do this on a visit in 2014. This article has been put together from the documents listed in the bibliography and my grateful thanks goes to all those who contributed, especially the island wardens and early explorers and from our groups observations and explorations during our two superb vacations on this wonderful island. Locations on the map are very approximate and in [] brackets.

From the Landing Jetty walk up the track a short distance to Old Man's Cave / Sentinel's Cave ([1] Grid Reference {GR} SS1438:4375) on your left which is almost directly below the South lighthouse. This cave was once obliterated by a rock fall and in April 2010 this cave was not accessible or was hidden out of site behind equipment, but it is now open and its full length is 38 m. The cave is in shale and the obvious low sloping entrance (2m x 2m) leads into two reasonably sized natural chambers and on to a further crawl of sharp sand and shingle along the fault line for another 11 metres that eventually closes down (see survey). In 1867 The Colomba ran aground near here and the cave was used for storing



Old Man's Cave / Sentinel's Cave below the South Light

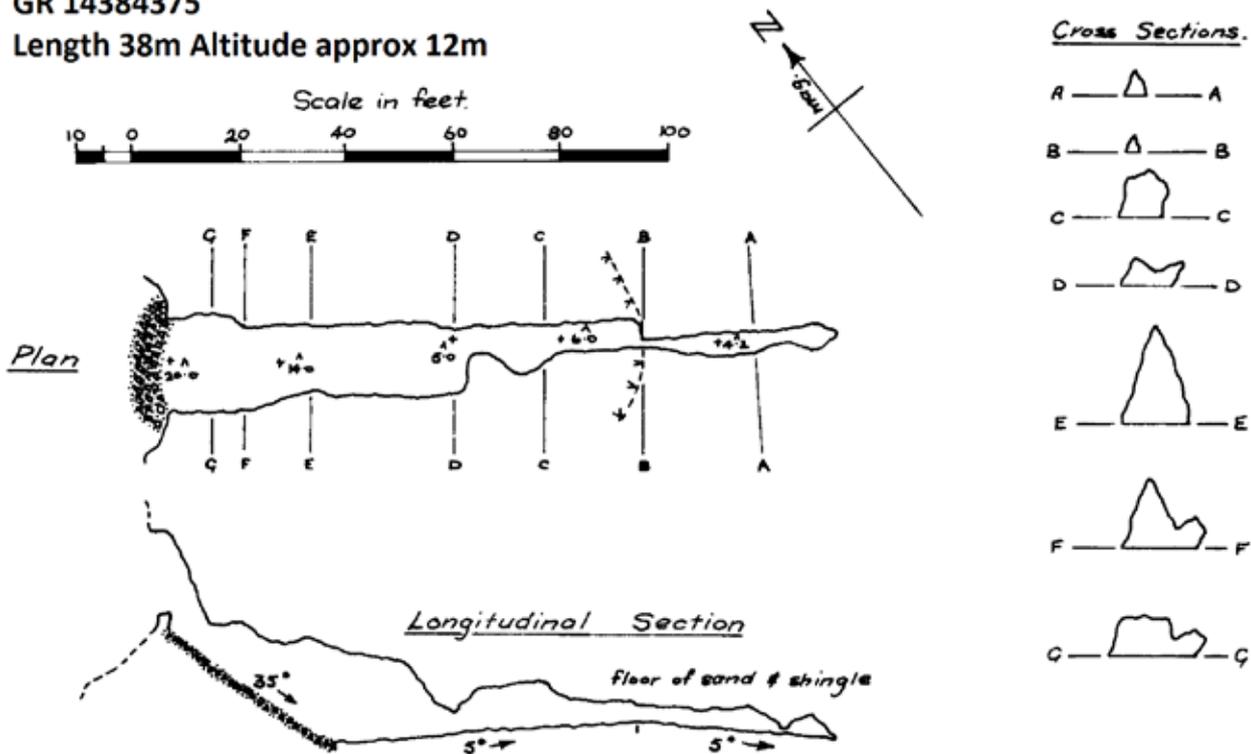


The Landing Quay Cave

Old Man's Cave (Sentinel's Cave)

GR 14384375

Length 38m Altitude approx 12m



C.R.G. Grade 3.

M.T. Mills & W.N. Tolfree. June 1966.

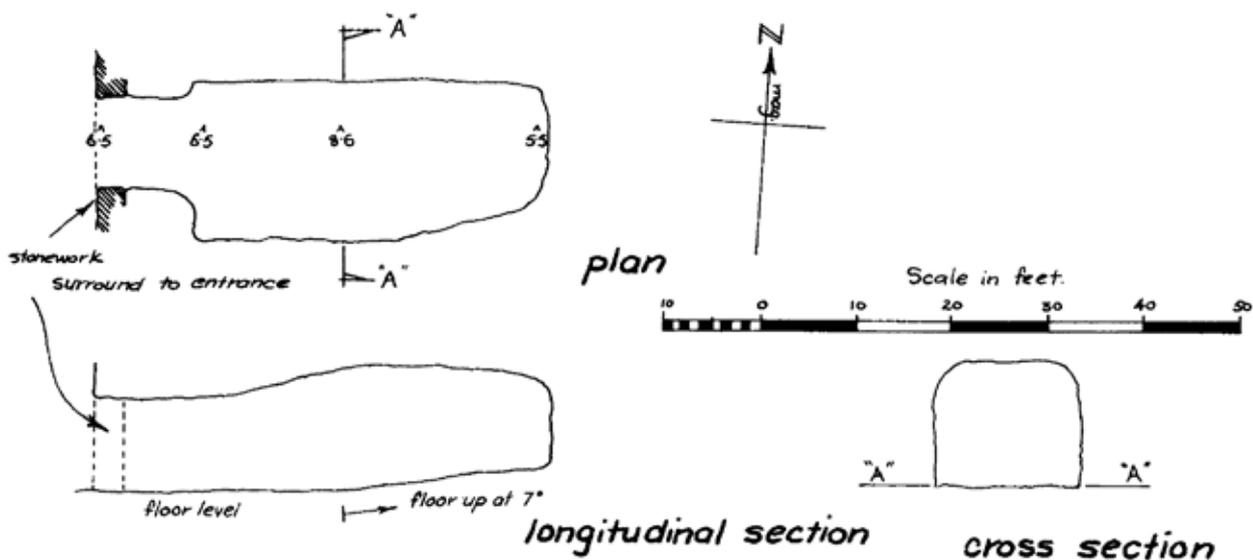
Slightly further up the track is the more obvious Landing Quay Cave ([2]GR142439) by the 1819 sign and it is probably man made. It is 9.5 m deep and about 2 m square in cross-section and it is used for storing canoes. In 1968 a yacht called The Elan from

Minehead anchored in the Bay broke its moorings and was smashed on the rocks. Fortunately the owner and mate had left it earlier and managed to spend the night sheltering in this cave.

Landing Quay Cave

GR 142439

Length 9.5m Altitude about 7.5m



CRG, Grade 3.

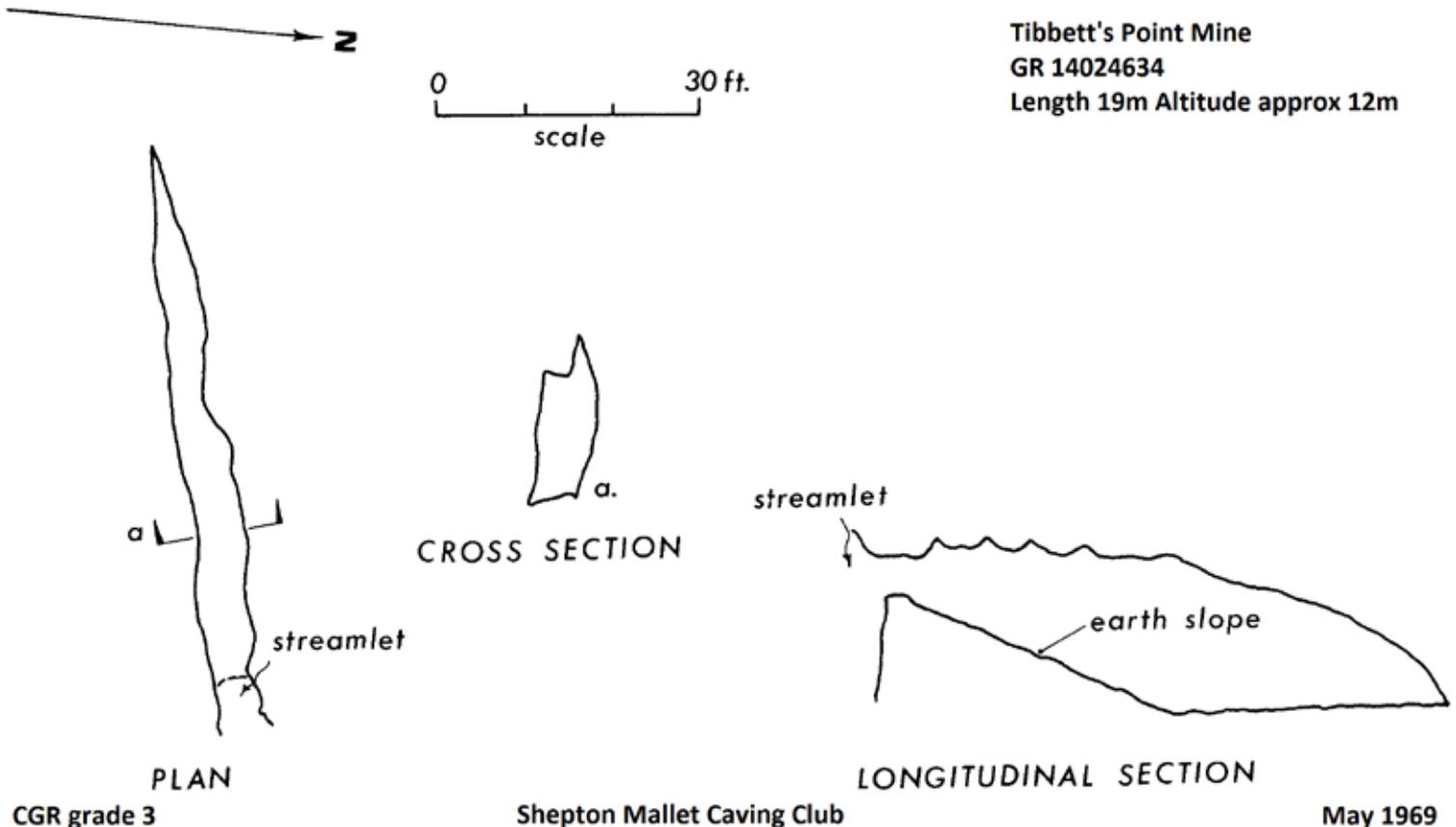
Shepton Mallet Caving Club.

June 1967.

Going up the east coast by boat there is nothing of significance until Quarry Beach which can be accessed down a steep path from near the Bird Trap and the quarry terraces via an obvious path that gets quite steep near the beach. At the north end of Quarry Beach there is a 1m wide fissure on a fault line at approximately ([3]GR139452) and it is a few metres deep and mostly open topped. The next small bay has a similar but smaller feature (GR140454) along the same vertical fault line. With a vertical tide range of

4 metres we decided to retreat from the advancing tide in this smaller bay, there were no other notable features of interest in this area.

The next area of interest is Halfway Wall bay where there are two parallel rift caves and these are at approximately ([4]GR140460) and the southern one is about 5m high, 3m wide and 40m long. The northern one is similar but shorter at about 20m long. Neither of these caves has been surveyed.



There are three rift caves in the bay [5] south of Gull Rock only approachable on the sea by canoe or inflatable and even at low tide they still have 0.5-1m of water in them. The most southerly is 15 m long and apparently a rope is useful for access and the other two are 9-10 m long and these caves have not been surveyed (Ref:SMCC).

North of Gull Rock in the next small bay [6] is a cave only approachable from the sea. However, M&T mention a mine adit here (Tibbett's Point Mine) between Tibbett's and Gull Rock some 12 m above a rock platform in the apex of the zawn (gully). To access laddering down from above was required. The opening is about 4 ½ ft. square in a dyke of matrix infill, covered in grass and moss. Inside the entrance on the right are a few boulders, the earth floor slopes

downwards steeply to a point half way along the total length of the adit, which is 61 ft. long. At this point the roof height has increased to 18 ft.; beyond the floor is virtually level and roof height drops gradually until the adit peters out in a fissure rather than in a face as in the other mine adits.

North of Tibbett's Point in the next small bay [7] there are two rift caves (GR140464) only approachable from the sea. These have not been surveyed.

At the south end of Three-Quarter Wall bay in the south side of a promontory is an arch [8] and this probably has a cave behind it, it is approachable only from the sea (approx GR139465). This has not been surveyed.

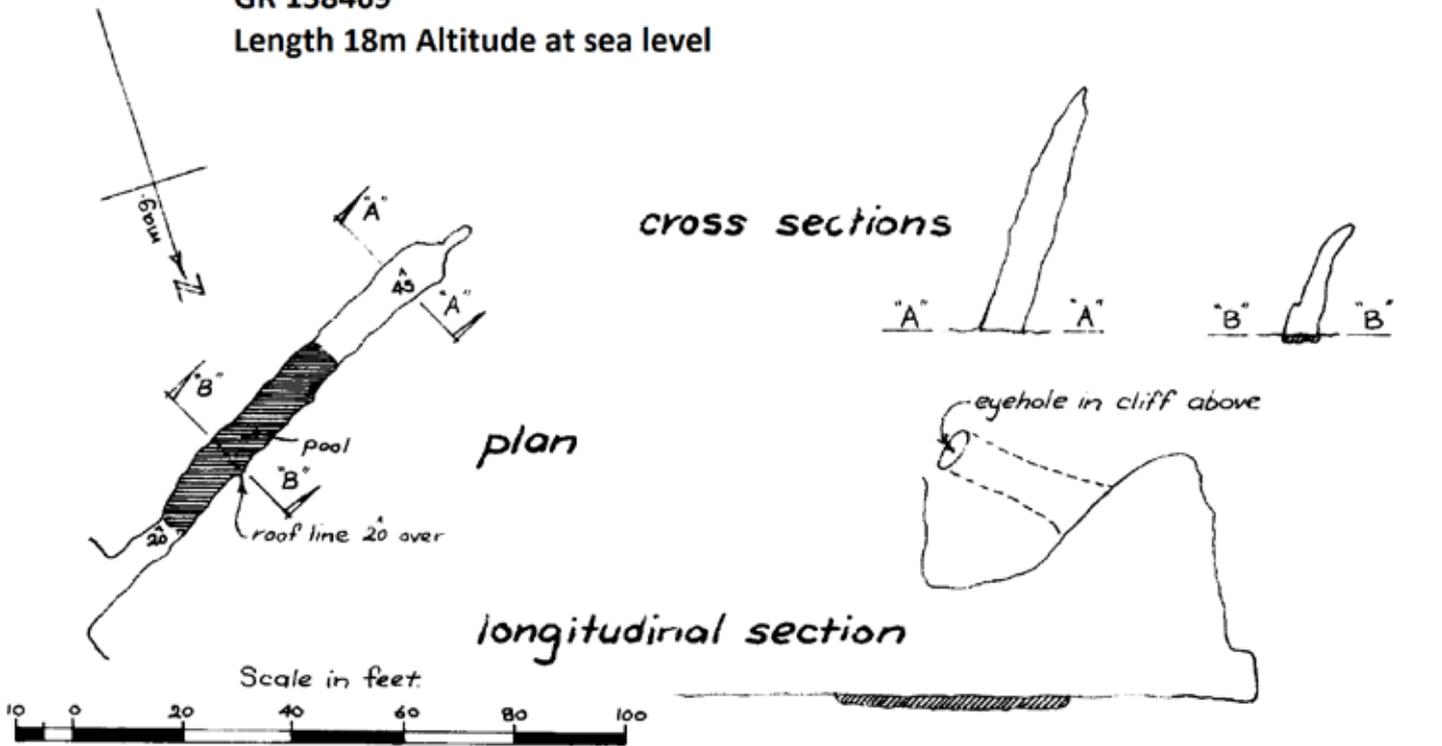
North of Brazen Ward but in the bay south [9] of Frenchman's Landing there are two rift caves that are used by seals. These are accessible by following the path down to Frenchman's Landing and going south along the rock platforms. The most southerly

one (mentioned in the M&T - a rift cave south east of Queen Mab's Grotto at GR13846) is 18 m long. The second rift cave is nearer to Frenchman's Landing and it has a log wedged into the entrance. Seals sometimes use these (SC).



Two rift sea caves south of Frenchman's Landing (longer one has survey below Ref:SMCC)

**Rift Cave South East of Queen Mab's Grotto (South of Frenchman's Landing)
GR 138469
Length 18m Altitude at sea level**



CRG. Grade 3.

Shepton Mallet Caving Club.

June 1967.

Queen Mab's Grotto is an old coastal sea cave formed under a curved (buckled bedding plane) rock formation ([10] GR138469) at an elevation of 18 m can be seen from Frenchman's Landing (looking north) and this can be accessed with great care from the coastal path nearest the sea just north of Frenchman's Landing and on the north side of the gully (this is a fairly vertical access route!) or more safely by going down a grassy slope adjacent (on the south side) of the Mouse Hole outcrop and continue

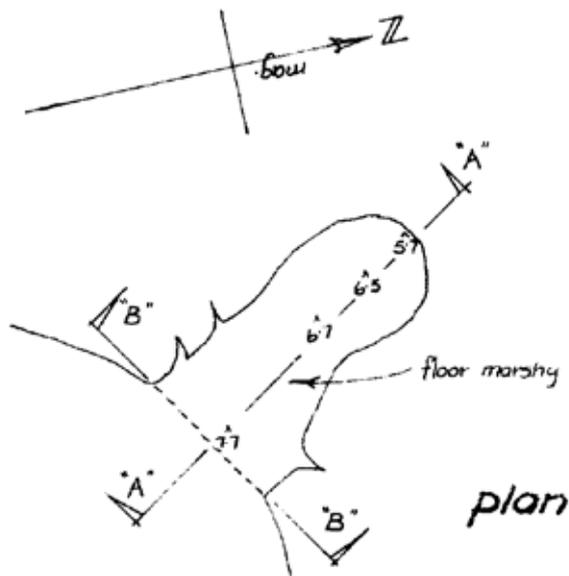
down to the flat rocks near sea level, go south to the gully and then climb up two levels on the shelves and progress up the north face of the gully to the cave that is located on the right. It is about 2m in round cross-section and is 7.5m long and is an interesting and rather pretty feature. Supposedly, it was used as an ammunition store for the Brazen Ward battery; I was not convinced as access is very difficult unless they built the platform and steps across the adjacent gully.



Queen Mab's Grotto Entrance

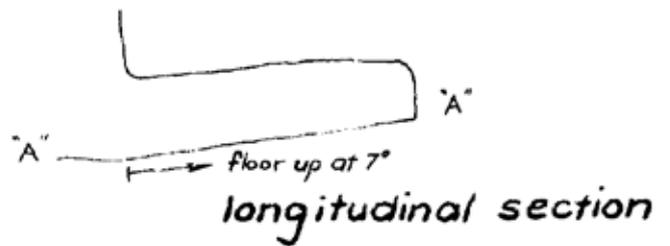


Looking out to Frenchman's Landing from the Grotto



plan

Queen Mab's Grotto
GR 138469
Length 7.5m Altitude approx 18m

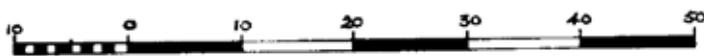


longitudinal section



cross section

Scale in feet.



CRG Grade 3.

Shepton Mallet Caving Club.

June 1967.

The **Mousehole** and **Mousetrap** ([11] GR138470) is a clearly visible feature in granite with a natural eye hole through the rock promontory of about 1 m thick and a 'trap' slab resting on a smaller rock. Access is from the cliff path and down either side of the rock promontory. A couple of metres to the north side of this feature there is a 9-10m small tunnel cave (GR138470) with an entrance of about 0.8m square

that can be passed through by crawling through a water worn passage with an earth floor which flattens out after 7m where the roof lowers and the passage widens to pop out onto an accessible rock shelf with rabbit droppings that is directly under the cliff line above. This is probably an old small sea cave from times when the sea level was 20m higher than at present.



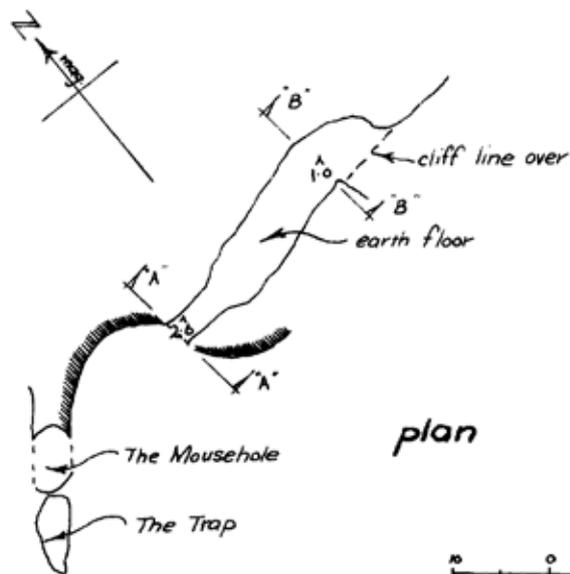
The Mousehole



The Mousetrap



Near Mousehole the small tunnel cave entrance and low through passage (old sea cave)



Cave adjacent to Mousehole and Trap
GR 138470
Length 9.2m Altitude approx 20m



cross sections



plan

Scale in feet.





I photographed an adjacent hole in the next adjacent gully but it looks fairly shallow and hard to access but it appears to be on the same contour height as Queen Mab's Grotto.

Hole in adjacent gully to Mousehole

Slightly north of Mousehole and Mousetrap is another rift sea cave ([12] GR137470) with an entrance at the high tide level and it is accessible at low tide. It is 2-3 m wide and 5-6 m high and is about 38-40 m long with a large cube like rock in the eroded dyke entrance (Mentioned by B&C). There is a northward bend and the westward bend some 6 m before the end. There are several shallow pools towards the back of the cave (Ref:SMCC).



A Rift Cave (GR138471 in B&C) it is 1 m wide, 6 m high and 5 m long.

A Circular Cave (GR137471 in B&C) it is 3 m in diameter and 5 m long with its entrance below the high tide mark.

Underground Rooms (in AFL); there are apparently two underground rooms along at low level somewhere around the North East Point area. We have yet to locate these.



Bridged gully on the right of the photo

There is a natural bridge over a gully ([13] GR136476 in B&C) similar to the Devils Limekiln formation. The gully is 24m long and 6m wide and opens out to form a square open-air 'chamber'. The Bridge covers about 12 m of the gully and there is also a rock wedged into the gully. The feature is formed by the erosion of the dyke.

West of North East Point and in from Seal's Rock ([14] GR135481 in B&C) there is a cave with a small entrance at high tide and it is about 36.5m east of Puffin Gully. It is just over 1 m wide and represents a thin triangle. At low tide a cavern can be seen that is about 8 m high and 4 m wide. At the end it turns inland and by the sounds of the waves B&C estimated that it might be as long again. They also noticed that there appeared to be less water coming out than going in, this could indicate a possible second entrance. This has not been explored.

Puffin Gully Cave ([14] GR134481) is a significant cave and is very hard to access. The entrance is only accessible from the sea and it is about 4.5m wide, over 9m high and some 70m long. This cave is occupied by a lot of seals (Known SC). The roof rises in height inside and the width varies between 4.5m and 9m.

There is a cave 32m east of Kittiwake Gully (GR 133481 B&C) that has a dry floor of boulders at low tide, it is 3.5m wide, 8m high and 18m long formed in an eroded dyke.



From left to right; Small Cave, Puffin Gully Cave, Kittiwake Gully cave, Virgin's Spring one entrance.

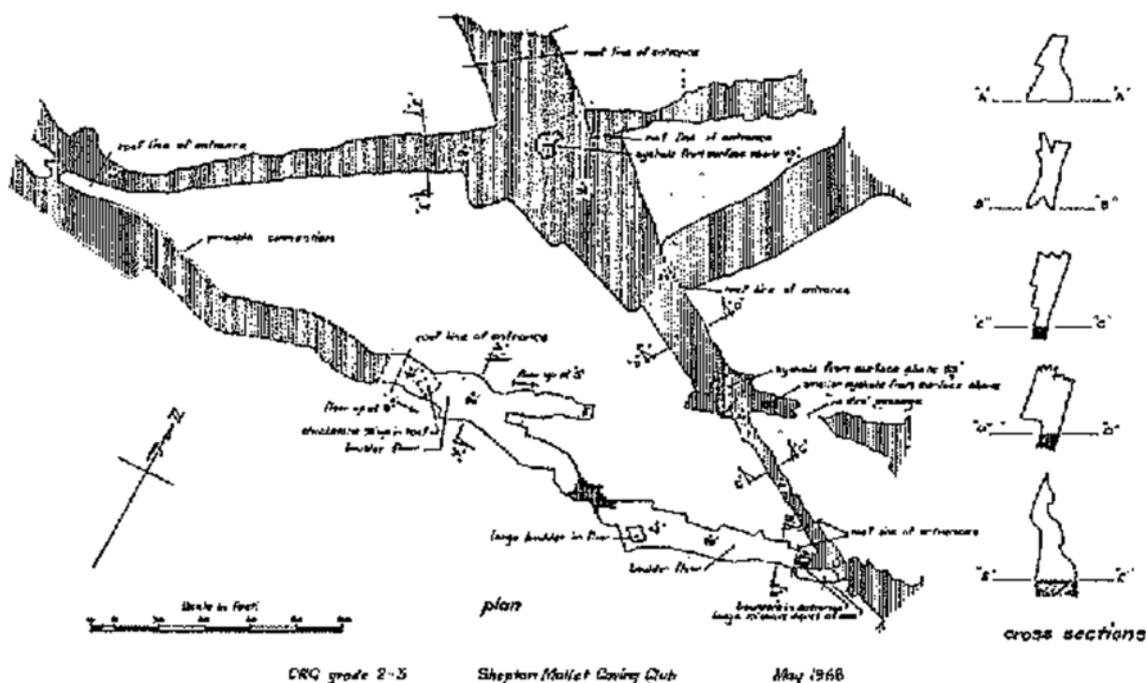
Virgin's Spring and Subterranean passages ([15] GR130482 M&T); the length of the passage here are overall is 225m. The challenging access is from the sea but there are two eyeholes that have been

laddered at 14m and 17m. Low tide allows short laddered access from the rocks adjacent to one entrance (see the survey Ref SMCC).



The coast line north of the North Light House showing the caves, Virgin's Spring & passages.

**Virgin's Spring and Subterranean Passages GR130482 Length over 225m
Altitude at sea level**



Two caves are located under the North Lighthouse on the south side ([16] GR130481).

There are a number of potential caves in the Long Roost area yet to be identified.

There are old Copper mines at Long Ruse [Long Roost] ([17] GR13064776 M&T) to be found at the rear of a small bay which has a floor of granite

boulders some 365m south of the North Lighthouse on the West Coast. They are situated just above the high water mark and consist of three parallel entrances driven into the granite cliff. The three sample mines were 3.6m, 12m and 15m long and the copper samples obtained were poor and the mines abandoned. (Ref:SMCC).



South of North Light



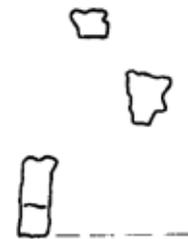
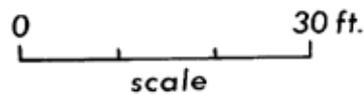
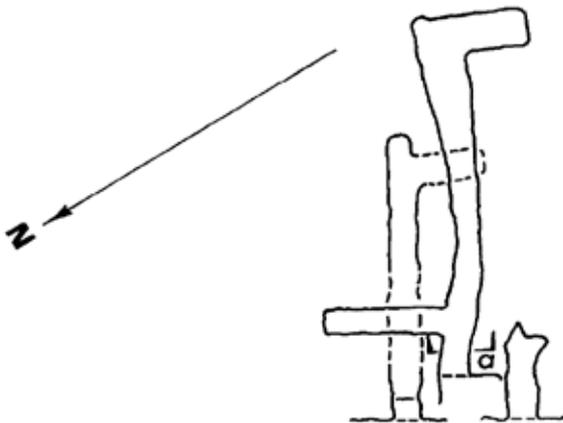
The Long Roost cliffs area

CROSS SECTION

Old Copper Mines at Long Ruse (Long Roost)

GR 13064776

Lengths 12m, 3.6m and 15m Altitude above high water mark



CRG grade 3

PLAN
Shepton Mallet Caving Club

LAYOUT OF ENTRANCES
June 1967 and May 1969



The large cave north of Double Decker Cave (not accessed)



Double Decker Cave (centre)

Caves beneath Devil's Chimney ([18] GR132457 M&T) south of Jenny's Cove; Access is rather challenging to this area and the cove. On the chimney side there are sea birds nesting so restricted dates apply. Access also looks very steep from the south side. Access from the north side of Jenny's Cove down the 'pyramid' is probably feasible and a

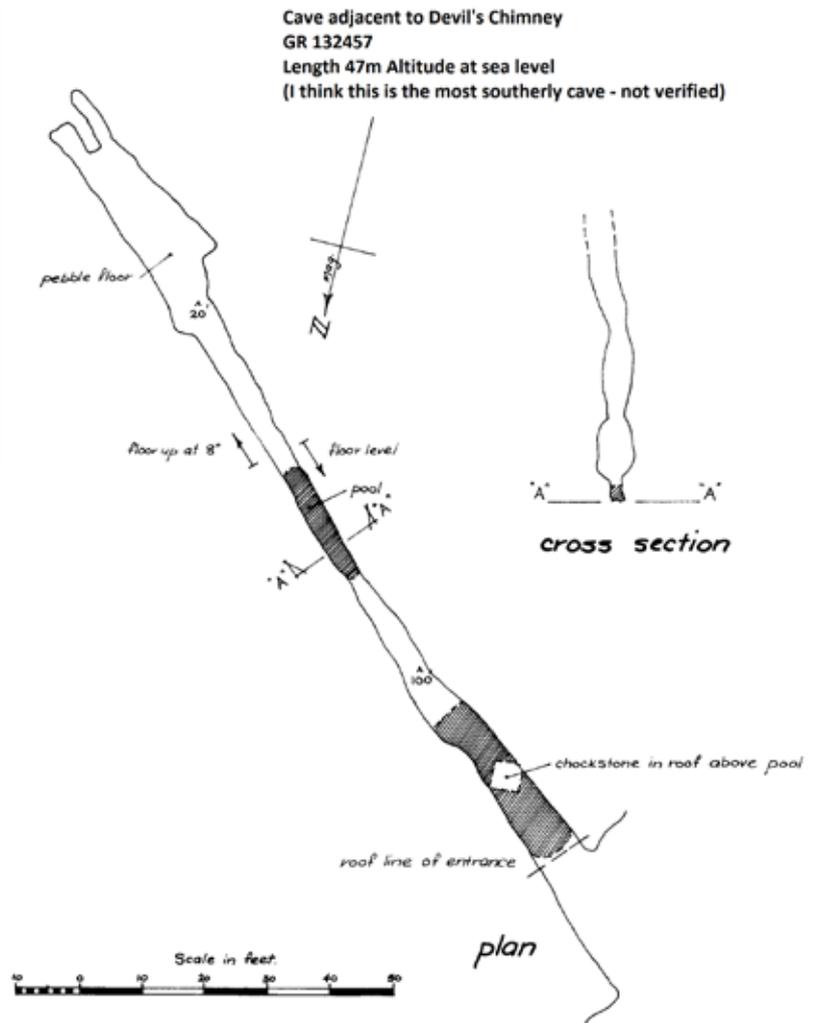
far better route. I believe that access to the cove and the various caves in them is probably possible from this end around low tide. There are two caves, one 47 m long to the east of Devil's Chimney and the 'cross' cave almost directly below the Chimney is 18m long (Ref:SMCC).



Caves in Jenny's Cove below the Devil's Chimney



The adjacent 'pyramid' feature



CRG grade 3

Shepton Mallet Caving Club

May 1968



I think there are some other small caves north of the 'pyramid' at sea level too, probably accessible at low tide.



Potential cave sites north of the 'pyramid' feature



The Earthquake Zone (Around [19]GR131452); This area is of interest to cavers and is an interesting geological feature that extends along the west coast cliff top northwards from Quarter Wall. It is a rock landslip which due to the vertical nature of the faults has resulted in high rifts, and pits with a good depth

of 6 to about 15 metres deep. There is one big rift feature, seawards, which is about 30 metres from top to bottom. Many of these can be free climbed but a rope was useful of some of them, a helmet and light is also useful. Do not disturb any breeding sea birds to either side of this main Earthquake area.

Caves by Battery Point; [20] there are two caves here, one cave adjacent to the flying buttress below the battery guns and access to this is down via the southern gully from high behind the old battery living quarters. This is a seabird nesting area so avoid the restricted access dates. You also need to access this within about two hours at low tide. From the base of the gully, traverse round the base

of the mainland cliffs underneath the buttress to get to the north face where you will find the large 14m high entrance. The second cave is parallel with the first and also in basalt and another small one looks accessible across the cove and a larger cave can also be seen going through the opposite headland that is not obviously accessible, except perhaps by canoe



The buttress under Battery Point and visible cave across the northern bay going through promontory



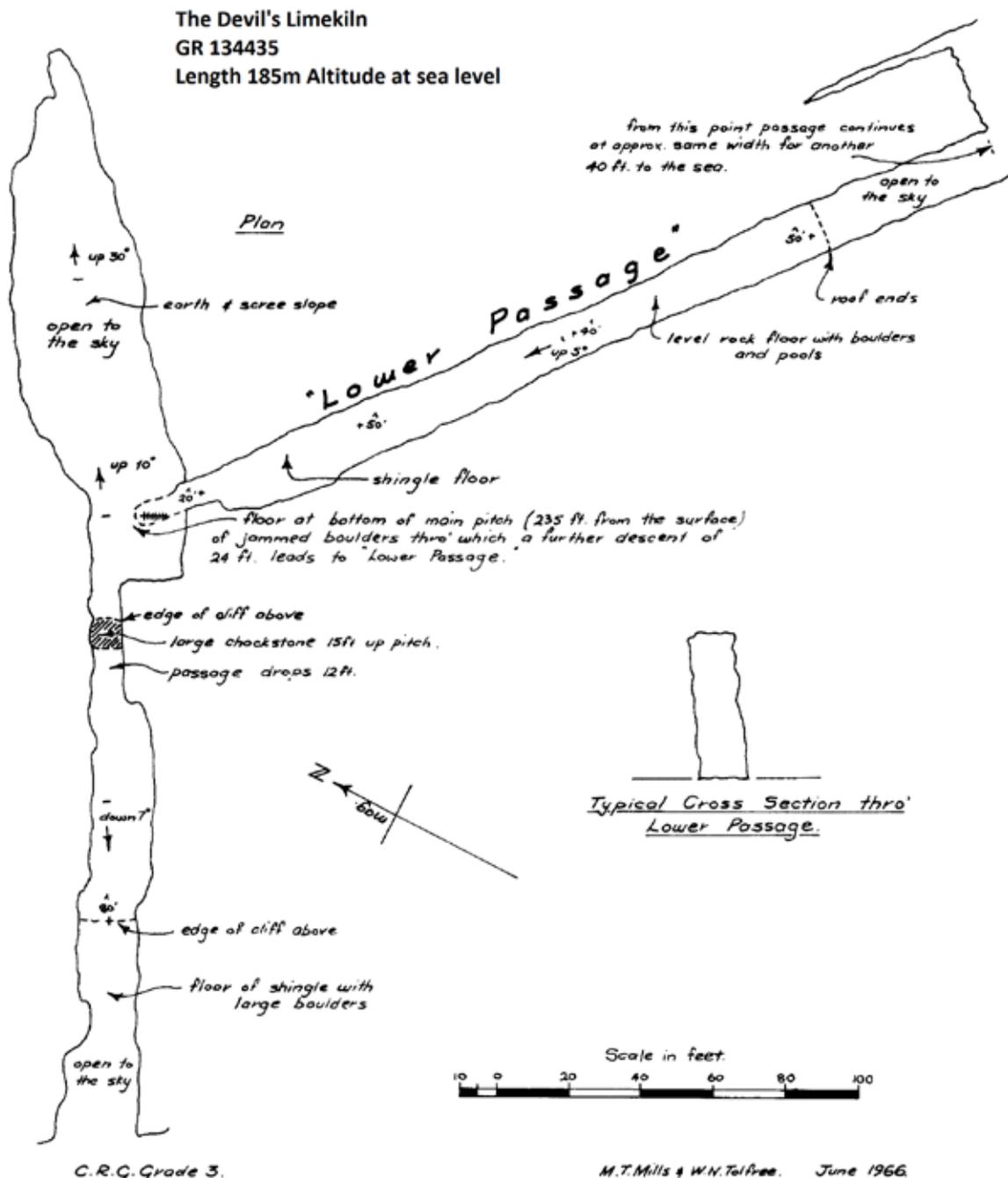
A cave north of Montague Steps (I think) [21]. This looks very shallow with a sandy floor and looks volcanic in origin probably. It looks very difficult to access, perhaps possible by canoe.

The Devil's Limekiln ([22] GR134435); This is an impressive rock feature, a giant blow hole inland at the Southwest corner of the island with a sea cave connection to the sea, access from the top or the bottom looks fairly hazardous – we just looked due to having little equipment with us to tackle a

80m deep hole (seaward side). Out of the sea bird breeding season it may be possible to carefully access from sea level if the low tide allows access. The two passages and the blow hole give a combined length of about 185 metres, some of which is open to the sky at high level.



The Devil's Limekiln two views from the top edges



Seal's Hole ([23] GR136435); A large but very difficult to access cave not far from the Devil's Limekiln to the south. The 1960's access route

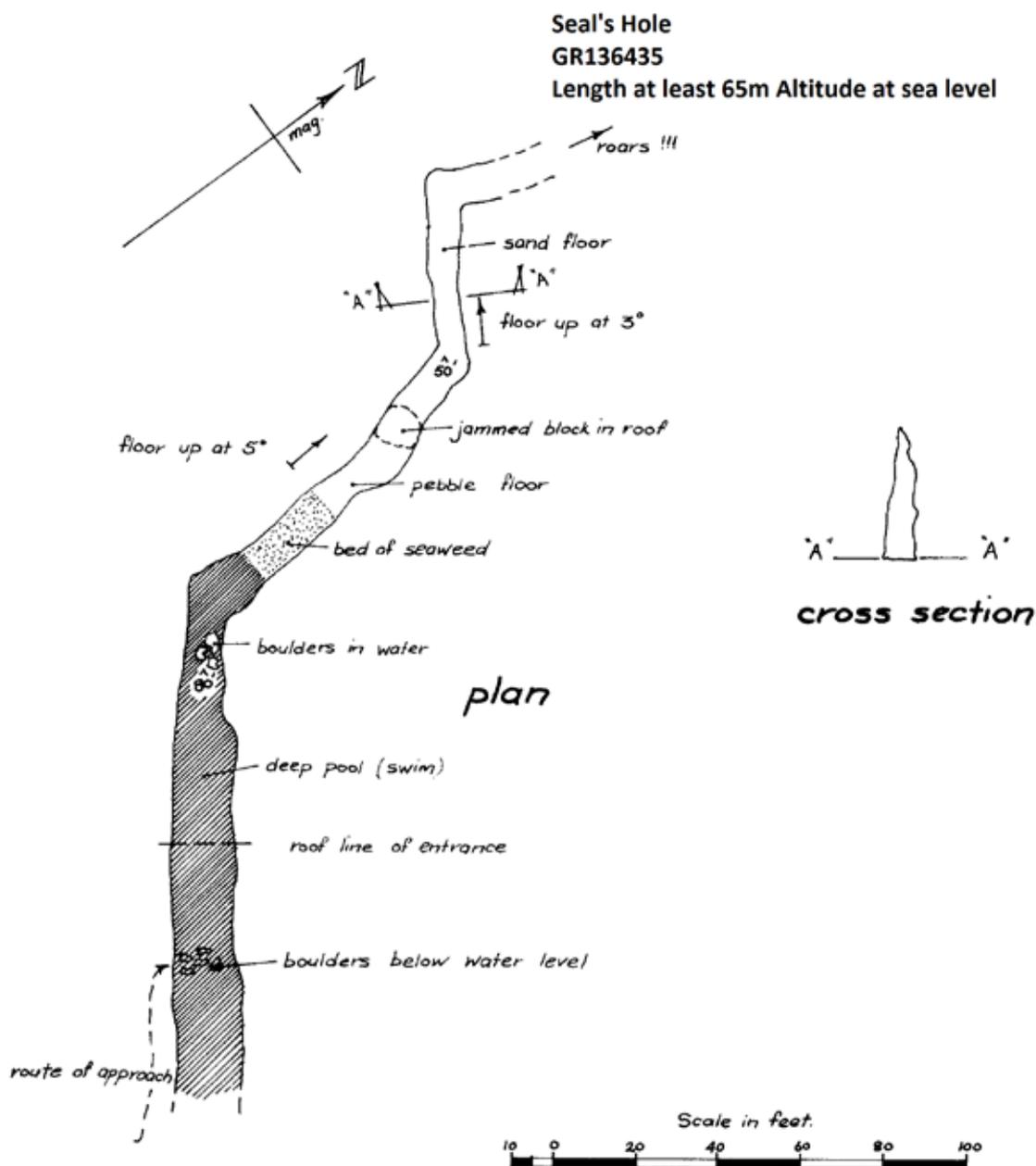
down the cliffs looks very hairy. See the survey as I am sure I will not try accessing this cave and read the 1966 warning about seals (SC)! Ref:SMCC.



Seal's Hole in the centre



The bottom entrance to Devil's Limekiln

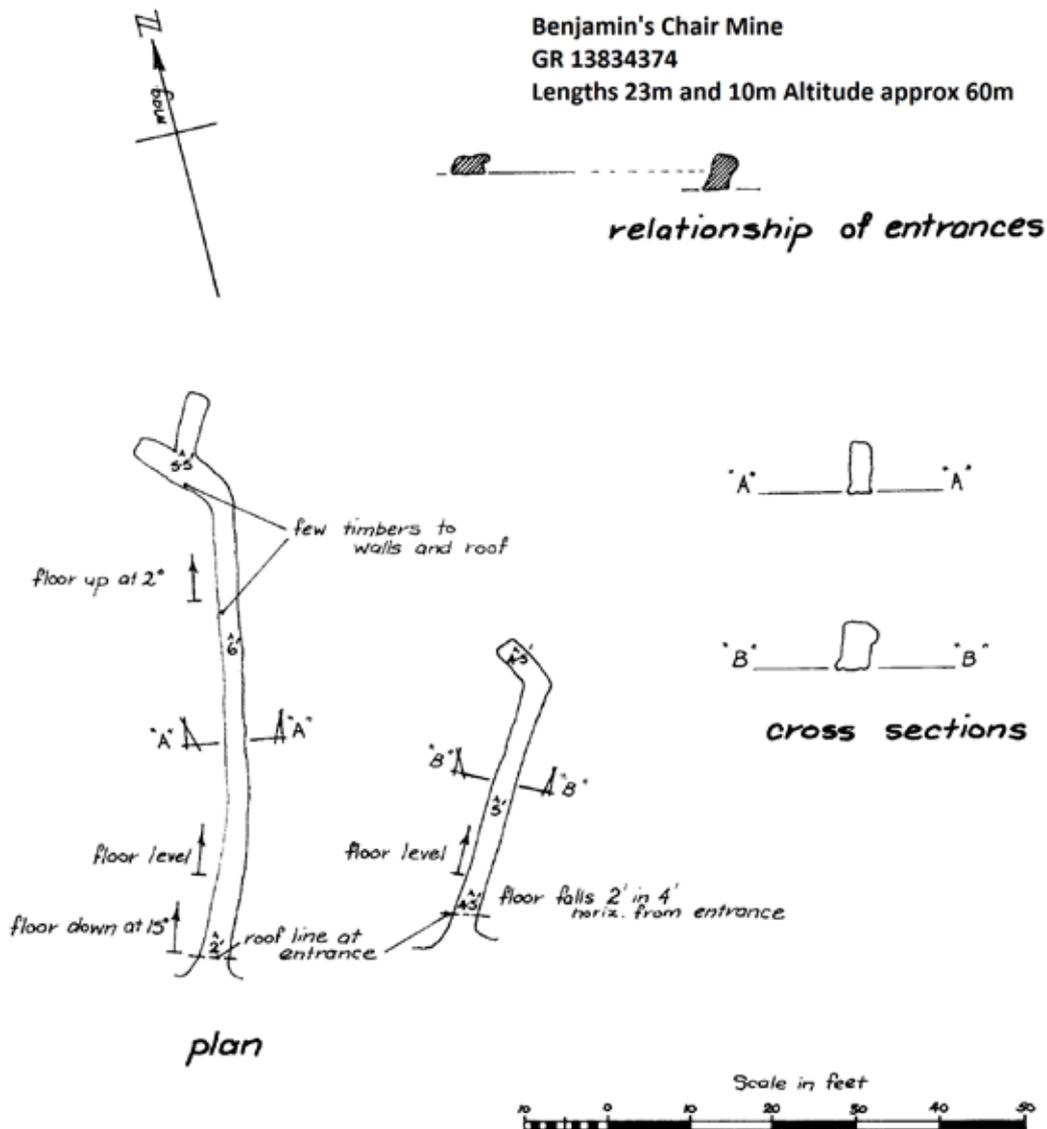


Benjamin's Chair Mine ([24] GR 13834374); a careful descent from Benjamin's Chair allows access down some 15 to 20m and two small entrances can be clearly seen across the far side of a shale gully, this can be descended and ascended with great care to get to the entrances of the two adits on the far side. The first mine is 23m long and the second is 10m long and is slightly lower. The floor is very wet

and there are some supporting timbers still in place. About 12m above these is a larger entrance; that was home for two goats when I visited. This is only accessible by carefully descending the shallow gully to the east of Benjamin's Chair over the stile and by not going down the first steep gully! This is a larger mine entrance 1 m wide by 2 m high with a dry walking passage that is about 6m long.



Looking towards Benjamin's Chair and the three copper mine adits & the entrance to the top one



Cave above the Rattles ([25] GR SS1406:4361); this feature is about 154 m Southwest of Benson's Cave on the cliffs and it is not actually a real cave. There is a zig-zag fault line caused by rock

movement and subsidence creating a rock trench with a very short covered section. There are several other deep cracks and odd fissures that are narrow but are several metres deep in places.



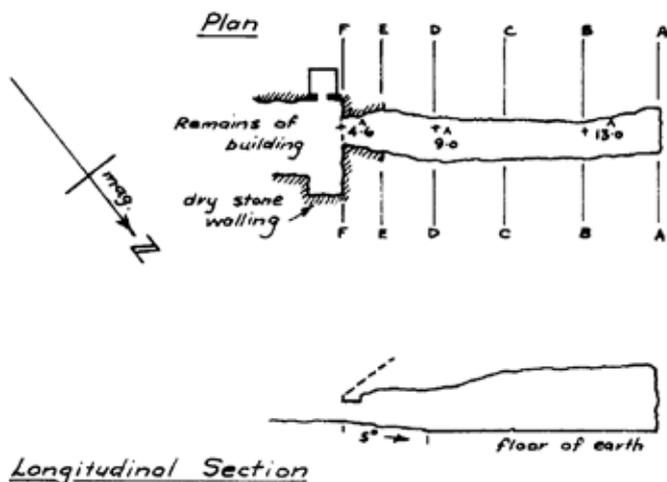
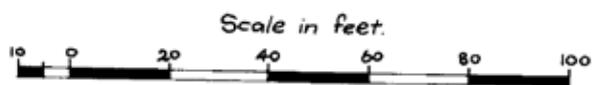
The 'cave' above the Rattles showing the zig-zag trench and one of the fissures



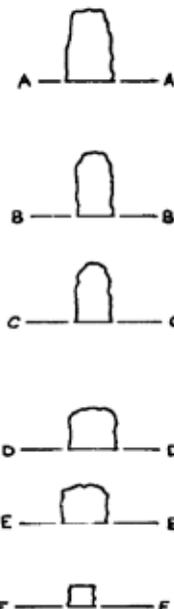
Benson's Cave ([26] GR142438); this is 300 feet above sea level and just below the castle. This is a man-made cave hewn out of the friable shale rock in about 1700 and it was thought to have been used for storage and for smugglers trade. It is uniform in cross-section and is 3.5m high and 2.5m wide and almost 20m long. It has a large stone lintel across the entrance and there is a small brick hut adjacent to the entrance built into the hillside.

Benson's Cave entrance showing the entrance lintel

Benson's Cave
GR 142438
Length 20m Altitude approx 92m



Cross Sections.



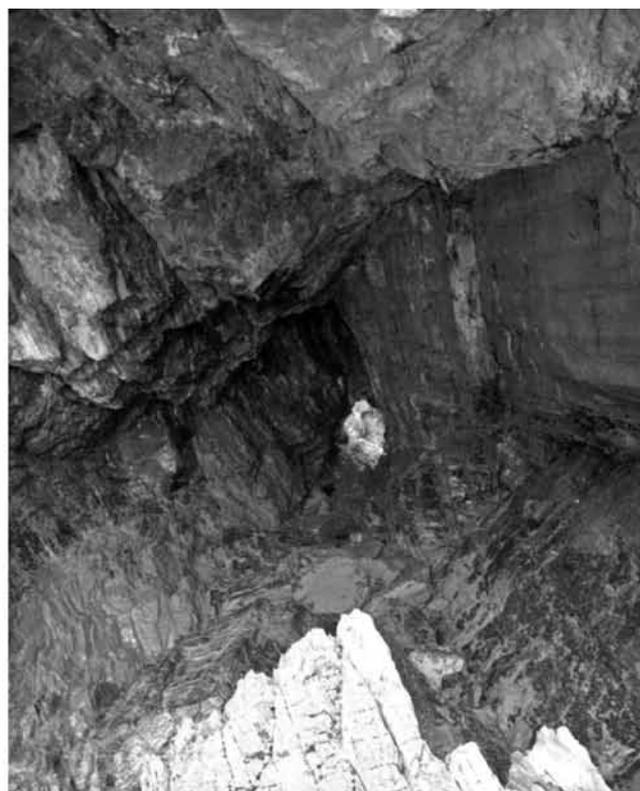
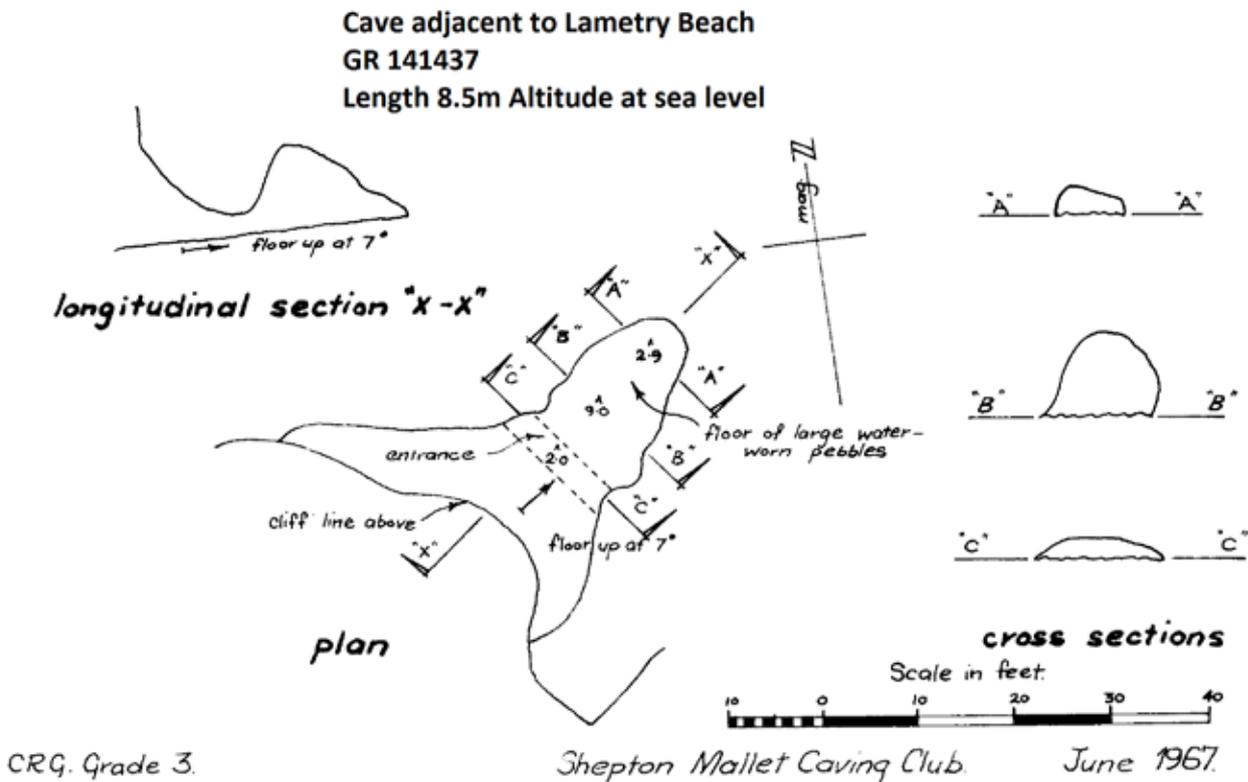
C.R.G. Grade 3.

M.T.Mills & W.N.Tolfree. June 1966.

Needle's Eye ([27] GR SS1453:4363) can be reached at low tide by climbing over the rocks past Mermaid's Hole (a natural swimming pool, not a cave). The impressive entrance is about 10m high and 8m wide and it narrows down to the far end after 53m to a 2m square hole where it drops down onto the sea weed covered pebble floor of two Lametry Bay inlets. There are another three caves in the

Lametry Bay with lengths of 49m, 40m and 24m at GR 144437 (see surveys below Needle's Eye). We have not explored these yet.

There is another cave adjoining Lametry Beach (GR141437 M&T:SMCC); A cave or perhaps caves beneath the South Lighthouse mentioned in M&T's report (also see survey immediately below).

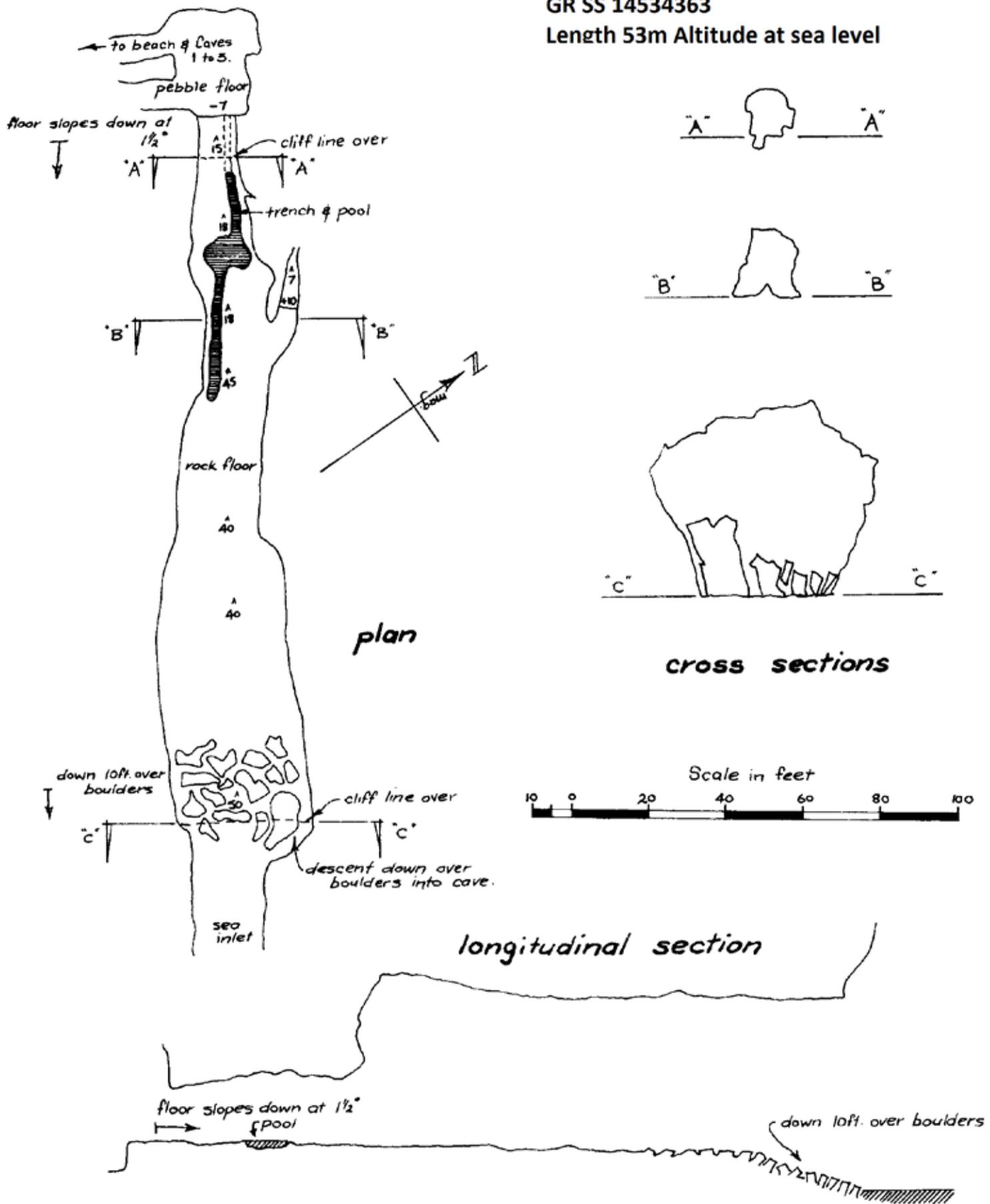


The entrance to the Needle's Eye and the inside view to the far 2x2m hole into the Lametry inlets

The Needle's Eye

GR SS 14534363

Length 53m Altitude at sea level

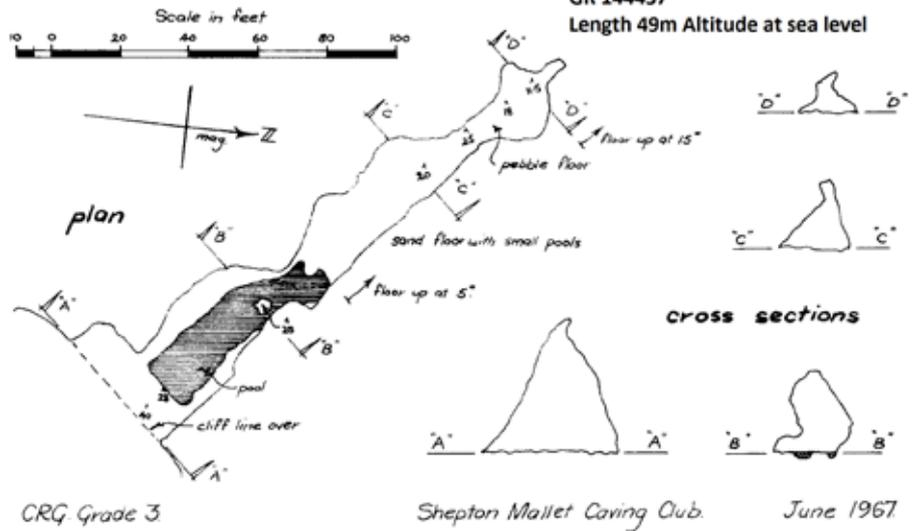


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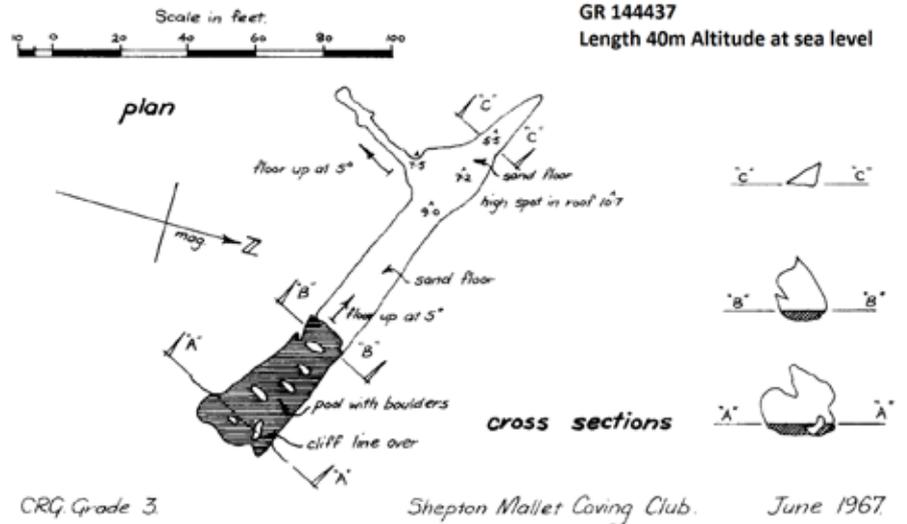
Shepton Mallet Caving Club.

June 1967.

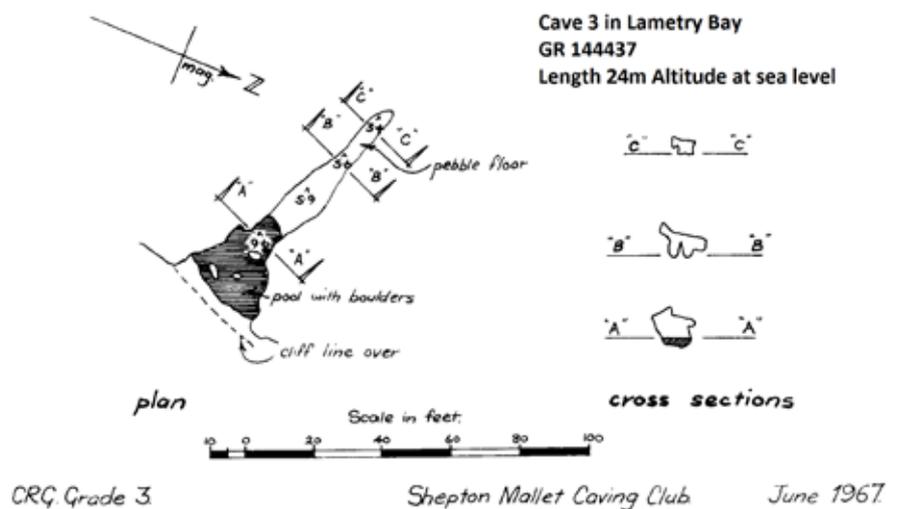
Cave 1 in Lametry Bay
GR 144437
Length 49m Altitude at sea level



Cave 2 in Lametry Bay
GR 144437
Length 40m Altitude at sea level



Cave 3 in Lametry Bay
GR 144437
Length 24m Altitude at sea level



Rat Island has a through island rift sea cave ([28] GR146438) on a fault line and at low tide you can walk right through from the south end, it is 35 m long. At the north end you can swim back round

to the landing jetty if you are a reasonable swimmer. There are a number of shorter sea caves around Rat Island at sea level none of which are very long.

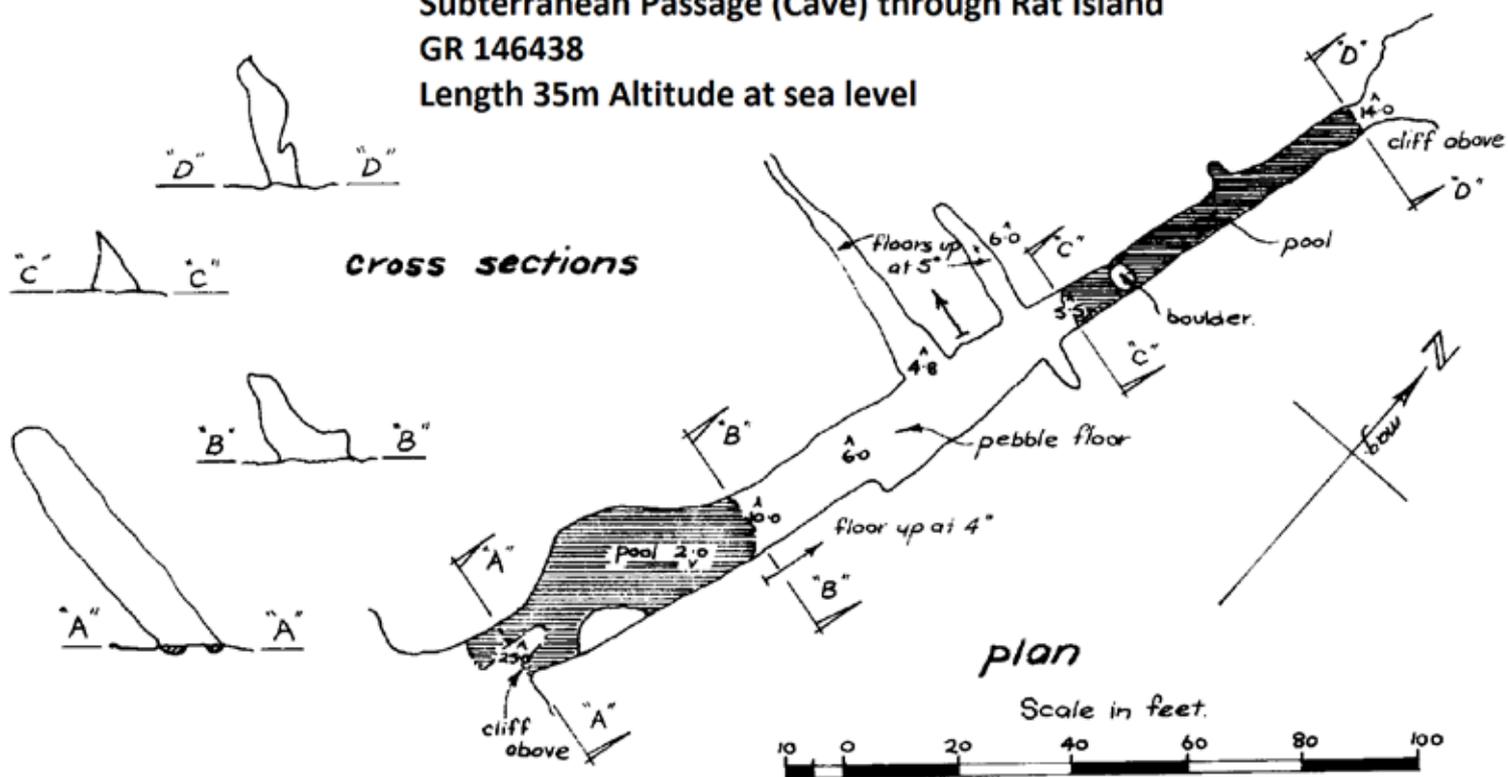


Lametry Bay area (3 caves)



Rat Island main through cave from the north

**Subterranean Passage (Cave) through Rat Island
GR 146438
Length 35m Altitude at sea level**



CRQ Grade 3.

Shepton Mallet Caving Club.

June 1967.

Bibliography and References

Shepton Mallet Caving Club articles written by MT Mills on the Lundy Caves from 1966 to 1968. See SMCC Journals Series 4 – No.2 Dec 1966, No.4 Dec 1967 and No.6 Dec 1968. All cave surveys shown are scanned from MT Mills originals some of which have appeared in SMCC Journals and some of which were provided for the LFS Journals.

These explorations were amalgamated into The Lundy Field Society Journal in 1968 pp. 10-30 and titled The Caves of Lundy by MT Mills with an update in the 23rd Annual Report, 1972, pp. 59-62 and titled The Copper Mines of Lundy.

The Lundy Field Society Journal of 1973 also contained some references to caves during some seal studies by CC Baillee and NA Clark (B&C) in an article titled 'Brief visits to the Sea-Level Caves on the East Side of Lundy'.

HSCC (Hampshire Scout Caving Club – Cave Leaders only) visited Lundy in April 2010 in June 2012 and we visited a number of the accessible caves and our trip reports appeared in the Mendip Nature Research Committee bulletins in those years.

In the descriptions which are now in 'round island' order as mentioned at the beginning are credited to Mills & Tolfree No.6 or Baillee & Clark No.12 as mentioned in their articles to provide a link as required for research purposes. Credit for these descriptions where visited goes to SMCC.

Some of the geological features are also mentioned in The Island of Lundy by AF Langham (AFL) published Alan Sutton Publishing, Stroud. 1994. ix + 246pp. The late Tony Langham, who was the Lundy Field Society Hon Secretary, also wrote 2 other books:

Langham, A & M. 1960 "Lundy, Bristol Channel" pub. Broadacre Books (Bradford) Ltd

Langham, A & M. 1970 "Lundy" pub. David & Charles. Newton Abbot. 216 pp. (Island Series)

Both contain many cave mentions and details.

The hand drawn map of the island showing approximate cave locations is by Andy Watson.

All photographs were taken by Andy Watson HSCC/MNRC/CSS.

Suggested cave access and cave conservation policy for Lundy

Cavers to be current members of a reputable caving club and to have BCA (British Caving Association) insurance, both proven by current dated cards.

Sea caves to only be accessed outside of the sea bird nesting season, April 1st to July 31st. Care to be taken out side these times to avoid disturbing the seabirds.

Sea caves must not be accessed during the seal breeding season, October 1st to January 31st, as they are accessed by both breeding and moulting seals.

Seals shown area ownership by noisy behaviour ?and if trying to access a sea cave don't if the seals are noisy or obviously disturbed.

Other caves and mines can be accessed by experienced cavers at any time providing reasonable care is taken.

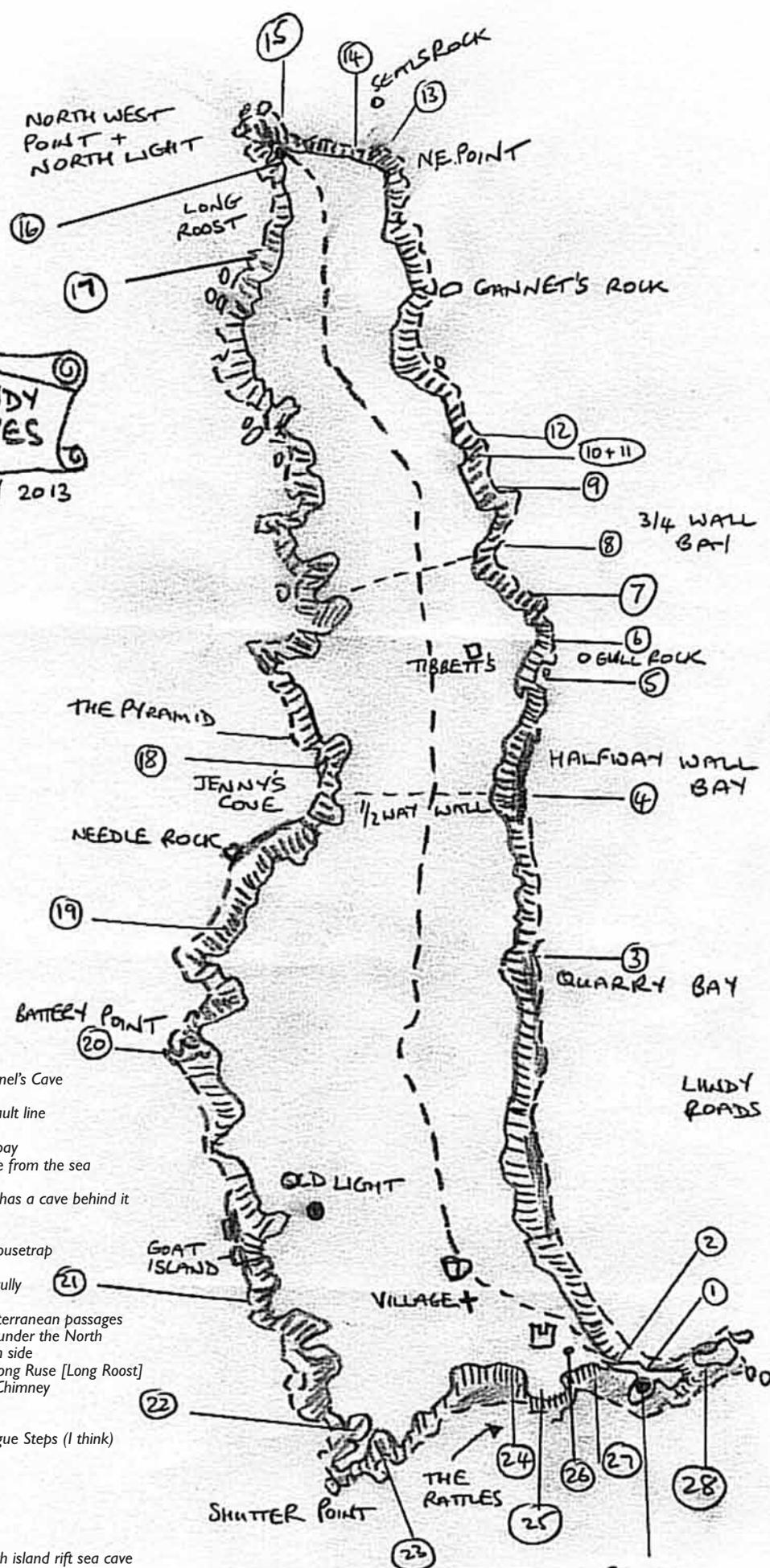
Please do not remove anything from the caves.

Note:This seal info is just from a website so may need correcting for Lundy.

We gratefully acknowledge Martin Mills, Bill Tolfree and Shepton Mallet Caving Club for their written consent to utilise their written accounts of Lundy Caves and reproduce their cave surveys. Also to Lundy Field Society (LFS) who published an article on "The Copper Mines of Lundy" covering Benjamin's Chair Mine, Long Ruse Mine and Tibbett's Point Mine



LUNDY
CAVES
AW 2013



1. Old Man's Cave / Sentinel's Cave
2. Landing Quay Cave
3. 1m wide fissure on a fault line
4. Two parallel rift caves
5. Three rift caves in the bay
6. Cave only approachable from the sea
7. Two rift caves
8. Arch and this probably has a cave behind it
9. Two rift caves
10. Queen Mab's Grotto
11. The Mousehole and Mousetrap
12. Rift sea cave
13. Natural bridge over a gully
14. Puffin Gully Cave
15. Virgin's Spring and Subterranean passages
16. Two caves are located under the North Lighthouse on the south side
17. Old Copper Mines at Long Ruse [Long Roost]
18. Caves beneath Devil's Chimney
19. The Earthquake Zone
20. Caves by Battery Point
21. A cave north of Montague Steps (I think)
22. The Devil's Limekiln
23. Seal's Hole
24. Benjamin's Chair Mine
25. Cave above the Rattles
26. Benson's Cave
27. Needle's Eye
28. Rat Island has a through island rift sea cave

