

CHELSEA SPELAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

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Reservoir Hole

The Caves of South Wales

LED Lights

New Holes!



CSS
Newsletter

Chelsea Spelæological Society Newsletter

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Cover photo and above:
Gary Kiely - Ogof Dranen
Photos by Steve Sharp

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

Membership

Welcome to new provisional members:
Rebecca Heale and Stan Griffiths

Please send all subscriptions to:
Gary Jones, 6 West Down, Bookham,
Leatherhead,
Surrey KT23 4LJ

Current rates are:

Full £25

Joint £33

PLUS your BCA subscription per person of £6
for non cavers and £17 for cavers.

Members who have BCA membership via another
club need not pay twice but should include their
BCA number and membership club with their
payment.

Associate £21 (BCA Non Caver already included)

Provisional £20

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.

Editorial

Where do I start!

I have just taken over as journal editor while Mark takes a well earned break,

Mark has produced a fantastic quality journal over the years and I would like to continue in his footsteps with your help.

Please send in your:

Trip reports

What you have been up to, with so many active cavers in the club there's always a good trip report with a few comical moments.

Photos

Please send in your photos. Pictures make up a big part of the journal, cover shots, pictures of the dig, fellow caver mug shots.

Caving related information

Information you may have read or seen on your travels

Interesting stories

We've all got a story to tell!

Active Digs

Please share you're digging information, what progress have you made, what's your objective?

Rescues

Have you taken part in any rescues, perhaps even a solo rescue!

Surveys

Send in your survey information with a trip report.

Diving

Trip reports, gear reviews, photos please share your experiences.

Any other information

Bat info
Cave collapses
Access restrictions
Gear reviews
Book reviews
Etc

Please send all material to:

Steve-Sharp-Photography@virginmedia.com

Or put on a CD and send to:

*Steve Sharp
43 The Crescent
Sea Mills
Bristol
BS9 2JT*

Send your text for your article in Microsoft and word format or email.

Covert photos, surveys and other images to decent sized .jpeg, .tif, .psd files

You could alternatively zip your work and send in as a .rar file using www.mailbigfile.com (Free version) (use the classic uploader)



Steve Sharp

The Time Machine

Daren Cilau

On behalf of the club I'd like to congratulate Mark on putting together a fantastic journal over the past few years.



Photo-Mark "Gonzo" Lumley

Reservoir Hole

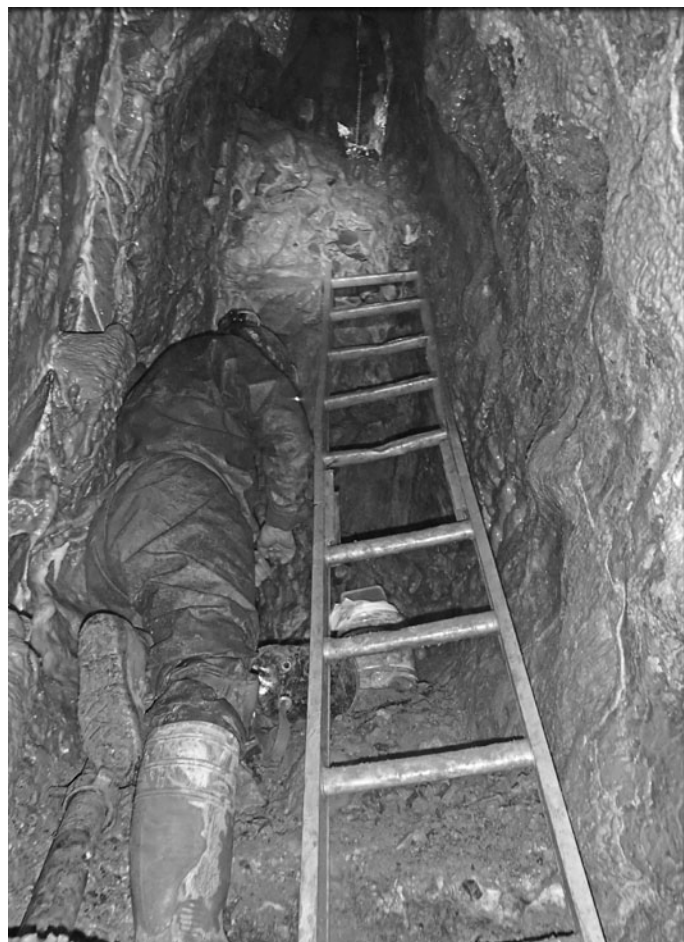
by Nick Chipchase

After two years of discovery the “Tuesday Diggers” (of which I am one) have settled down for a long siege at Reservoir Hole. The Holy Grail of Mendip Caving (The Cheddar Master Cave) still awaits discovery and the fact that we must be as close as 200 metres to it drives us on. Winter is the closed season for Reservoir Hole trips though one digging trip per week is acceptable. February 2014 will bring my 150th trip and I am keen to carry on as long as I can. Three digs are currently active two of which have been long term. Magic Smoke Dig (MSD) is the latest dig and this is following the south wall of The Frozen Deep ever downward. We are currently about 20m above sump level and have entered a region of hard dry silt. The dig name comes from the smoke canister tests we have done. The MSD area seemingly particularly draughty. If you drew a straight line from the final river section in Goughs we would be right over the top of it. (The Cheddar Catchment surveys can be seen on the UBSS website).

Reservoir Hole has undergone multi phase development relating to a decreasing base level and



MSD base camp at lunch time



Skyfall choke. Drilling taking place at the top

down cutting in the adjacent gorge. The Frozen Deep forms a confluence for several relict steamways. The silt we are in is likely to be ancient and predate subsequent collapse that we see in the more recent phase of the chambers development. If the chamber is a collapse feature along the line of the river MSD is our best chance of finding it.

The longer term digs are at The Silo and Skyfall. The former is where I came in. We put in 50 trips or so here trying to push the Grand Gallery conduit northward beyond the road. The Silo is a truncated aven blocked by debris from the surface. An enormous amount of boulders and gravel was removed to create the 15m high aven we see today. Sandstone pebbles suggest a breach here sometime in the past. It all ends bang in the middle of the road. Digging progresses downward in an attempt to locate the hypothetical northward conduit should it exist?

Skyfall has been worked on and off since High Country was explored. It exists on the fault that determines the western edge of The Frozen Deep. The same fault also determines possibly the most

ancient conduit in the cave. This is High Country a superb heavily scalloped relict stream passage that takes one all the way back to the gorge. To my mind High Country is one of the best passages on Mendip. It has countless botryoidal stalagmites throughout its length and is in places 15 metres high. Its fragile nature means that it remains seldom visited. High Country is accessed by Ascension (to continue the Golgotha and Resurrection theme). I was lucky enough to be in the small party that first climbed up there. High Country leads via Heaven's Landing to a remarkable fossil stream system that continues right across the roof of The Frozen Deep. (Ceiling Around). Clearly all of this was active before the chamber came into existence. We now believe that water originally continued southward along the fault to form Skyfall. This too is heavily scalloped and was blocked by a large boulder choke that occasionally fell on one's head. Hence Skyfall. It was also being dug when the latest James Bond film came out. We like to be topical and relate cave names to actual events. The Dickens' references came in the 200th anniversary of his birth. Great Expectations, Hard Times, Pickwick, Dingly Dell and The Frozen Deep itself though I never got the chance to use Mugby Junction and The Old Curiosity Shop is in another



Skyfall choke. Drilling taking place at the top.



Hauling boulders at MSD.

Mendip Cave.

Skyfall has proved to be a very high rift which is choked right down the southern extremity. Recent climbing could find no way over the top of this choke so a start has been made to go through the lower part of it. The dig is at the same base level as the High Country development though heavily stalagmited boulders will make this slow work. Again this section of cave has the possibility of crossing the hypothetical master cave so hopes are high. So work continues week by week on a Tuesday. We expect nothing exciting soon so the Mendip J'Rat award is wide open this year. Perhaps the answer to the master cave will lie with Bone Hole or Spider Hole as both are on another fault extending back to Charterhouse Cave. Both have dedicated digging teams that are progressing well. I guess time will tell.

Photos-Nick Chipchase

OUT NOW

A BRIEF HISTORY OF MENDIP CAVING

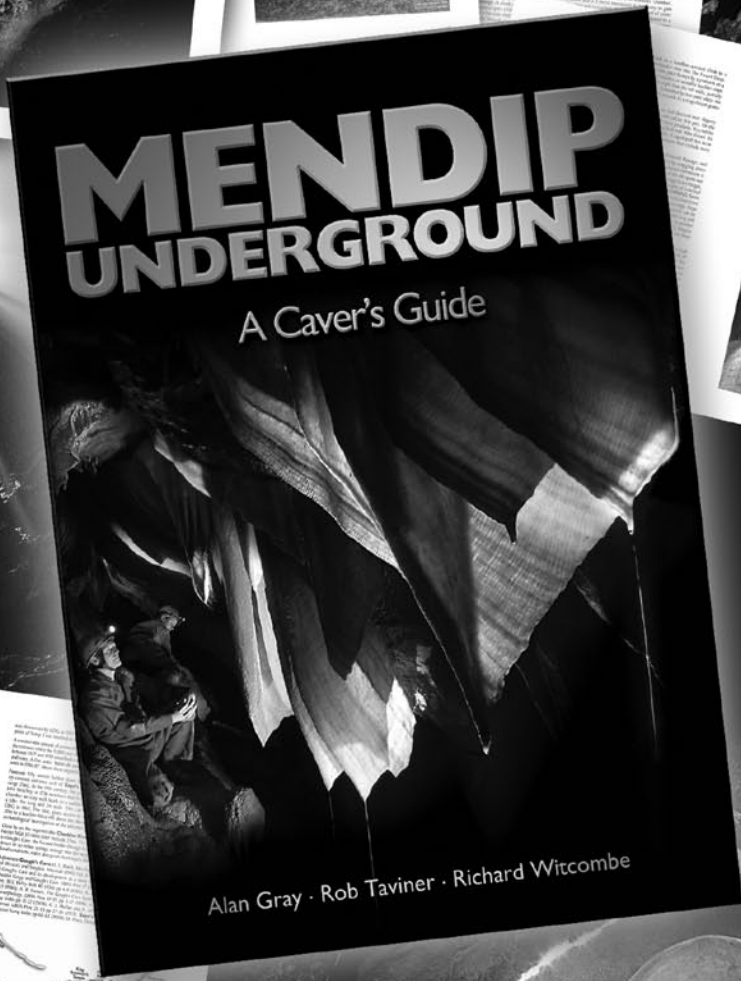
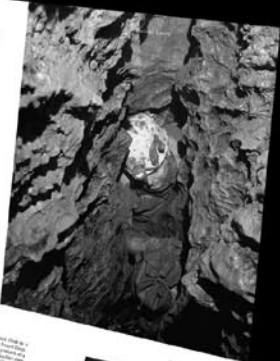
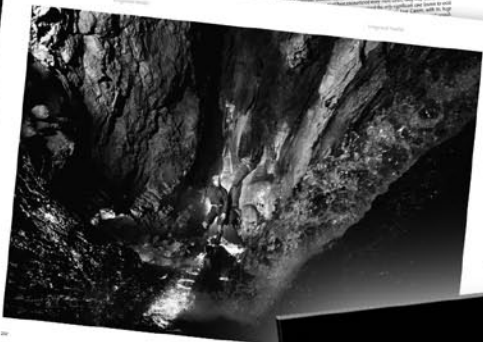


Photo by Stu Gardiner

Alan Gray · Rob Taviner · Richard Witcombe

Full colour
34 New entries
485 pages
Hardback

Photo by Paul Dold

For more information and to order **YOUR** copy visit

mendipunderground.co.uk

Mendip Underground Reviews

Congratulations to everyone involved in the birth of a classic caving book. Mendip Underground is an example of what can be achieved by a group of dedicated perfectionists. What I wouldn't give to pop my head round the door at Townsend Cottage & watch Wig frantically searching, in vain, for a comma out of place or a spelling mistake - but deep down he would be delighted at this latest Mendip tome. Meanwhile - down in Pelting Drove, Tony would be sat with his knees nearly in the fire, with a suitably large glass of tippie in his hand grinning like a Cheshire cat muttering "bloody marvellous" and planning how to make the book out of date as early as possible. Well done - great job - thanks for the best Christmas present for ages.

Rich West

I spent last night in front of the fire with a nice beer and a good book - in this case 'MU5'. I can only say that my suspicions were correct - it is a magnificent achievement by the MCRA team.....

The introductory chapters dealing with the geology, hydrology, archaeology, care training, rescue, digging etc were pitched at just the right level - not unduly watered down but not off-putting to the uninitiated either. The cave descriptions themselves are easily understood (I'm only a short way in but I'm determined to read as much as I can of the total) and written in a pleasant style. The surveys and photographs are well selected and add much to the descriptions. MCRA should feel justly proud of their achievement!

Oliver North

I just got my copy of the new Mendip Underground. What a terrific effort. So much info, clear surveys, inspiring photos. It simply sets a new standard: the best caving guidebook ever produced, for anywhere in the world. Hearty congratulations to all involved. It's worth every penny.

David Rose

I've now got a copy of Mendip Underground - it was collected from the Hunters before Christmas and it turned into a Christmas present! I am very impressed with the book - well done to all involved in the project. It looks like the book is leading the standard for the rest of the country.

Derick Cousins

Got my copy at last night's book launch = Excellent production and a real bargain. Well done MCRA!

Aubrey Newport

All I can say is awesome book - every caver should own a copy!

Estelle Sandford

I couldn't imagine why there was so much fuss about how good it was. It's just a guidebook after all. What could make it so much better? Well, I got my copy today. It is amazing! The surveys are really clear, the descriptions have already made a couple of bits of caves finally make sense for me. I also like the change to bring grading more in line with South Wales and the Dales.

Glyders

I would like to thank all the team involved in providing a most effective and efficient service in publishing and supplying the new Mendip Underground book. I've received mine (thanks again!) and it's stunning!

Steve Conquest

Just emailing you to say the book has arrived and looks fantastic! I especially like the tackle list bit at the end of each cave.

Duncan Hornby

This book is fantastic! Couldn't slip it inside ones wetsuit though!

Domestos Bend

Simon Moth in Goatchurch Cavern - Photo Steve Sharp



*Stuart France
Dan Yr Ogof
Photo-Steve Sharp*

LED Lights by-Stuart France

I've built myself a new caving lamp head. It has 4x3W cree surface mount LEDs with something like 25deg lenses glued on top with silicone sealant. The power supply is a Boostpuck:

<http://www.luxdrive.com/content/4015-BoostPuck.pdf>

My battery pack is still the same type, 2x18650 Li-ion cells in series, so 7-8 volts nominal while the LED array is at approx 13 volts. But the cells are new, and rated at 4.3AH each. The idea is not to run it too hot (say 1W max per LED) but it is still impressively bright when full on. All fits into a standard CEAG miners headpiece with toughened glass on the front and a proper nitrile rubber o-ring seal under that. There is still the analog "volume knob" to control brightness which if set to min turns it off completely, so acts as an on/off switch as well as brightness.

Also a new mountain bike light. This is an array of 10mm through-hole white LEDs on the front, and similar in red on the back. These are automotive LEDs and solve all the problems of heat dissipation - you just use several dozen of them at once so the heat is not concentrated anywhere. The white LEDs are now rated up to 300mA each with NO heatsink needed, so at 3.3v drive that's a 1 watt device. I'm not driving them anywhere near that level. They are linked in pairs, then paralleled up. I have put 48 such LEDs into one cave photo light and have plenty of parts to make more.

http://www.ebay.co.uk/itm/10-PCS-10mm-40-1W-Watt-White-LED-300mA-390-000mcd-NEW-/370399364152?pt=LH_DefaultDomain_0&hash=item563d85c438

The leds I've been playing with for cave lighting so far are "only" 150,000mcd at 100mA with 10 degree beam angle, so a 1/3 watt device. The power supply is a buckpuck. The array runs at about 7 volts and the battery pack is 14-16 volts.

<http://www.luxdrive.com/content/3021-BuckPuck.pdf>

as the battery is 4x18650 li-ion cells. I've seen these 18650 cells for sale now on Ebay at 5.3AH and I have just ordered 10 for £10 from China.

http://www.ebay.co.uk/itm/10pcs-18650-GTL-Li-ion-5300mAh-3-7V-Rechargeable-Battery-for-Torch-Flashlight-T5-/400631321823?pt=UK_ConsumerElectronics_Batteries_SM&hash=item5d477cd4df

I've built the bike lights into small clear fronted ABS boxes with an IP65 gasket. The battery pack bolts on to my bike behind the saddle, and has the volume knob control, and they are linked with a bit of lamp flex, and held on to the bike frame with big spring clips, so secure but quick to remove. The other night I was cycling on some old coal tips, great downhill runs, in the dark, and these other bikers saw me coming from a distance and thought I was a motorbike until we got close.

I'm interested in developing the "massive LED array" approach for cave photos, though I realise this is not what Scurion want to hear. My eventual "de luxe" model will have radio control from a central "lighting desk" (e.g. a vantage point in Time Machine) where you just twiddle the knobs, push the buttons and the lights go up and down all over the place on command. My experience so far is that care is needed with light placement/intensity so as not to burn out parts of the image. What I'm trying to avoid is tripods where possible.

New Holes! *by Paul Tarrent*

There have been a number of reports in the news recently about holes opening up in the ground all over the place with a shaft big enough to swallow a family car opening up in High Wycombe in January and a report in BBC News on 10/2/14 of a 15m shaft appearing in the central reservation of the M2 at Sittingbourne. These are not isolated occurrences, and a search of the excellent Aditnow, mine exploration site has cited old shafts in Devon and Cornwall opening up in supermarket car parks and under private houses.

What is going on? Well, we have the wettest winter for over 250 years to thank for these strange events. It seems that a lot of old shafts, when abandoned,

are capped with railway sleepers and then overlain with rubble. Last summer was good with a very long dry period extending into October. Then it all went wrong with excessive rainfall since November. This has resulted in the wet ground putting pressure on the old timbers used for the shaft caps with the result they can't bear the weight of the wet ground and break and collapse into the shafts.

So what is happening in the caving regions? Are old shake holes collapsing, or are existing caves being blocked by flood debris washed in from the surface by the incredible floods we are seeing? We need to get out there on the hills and start looking to see if things have changed. If only it would stop raining for a moment to do this!

Recent Trip Reports *by Paul Tarrent*

The Curry Weekend 6/12/13

The weekend was well attended with about 16 people turning up for the evening. There were several different curry types on offer from spicy Chicken Tikka Marsala, to Vegetable Curry, Lamb Rhogan Gosht, Mince Beef and Peas, Dhals, and too many other types to remember. Duncan, true to his word provided some scrummy Pakistani sweets and deserts as well as some excellent mulled cider which went down a treat. Joe gave an illustrated resume of the Czecho International Congress he attended in the summer.

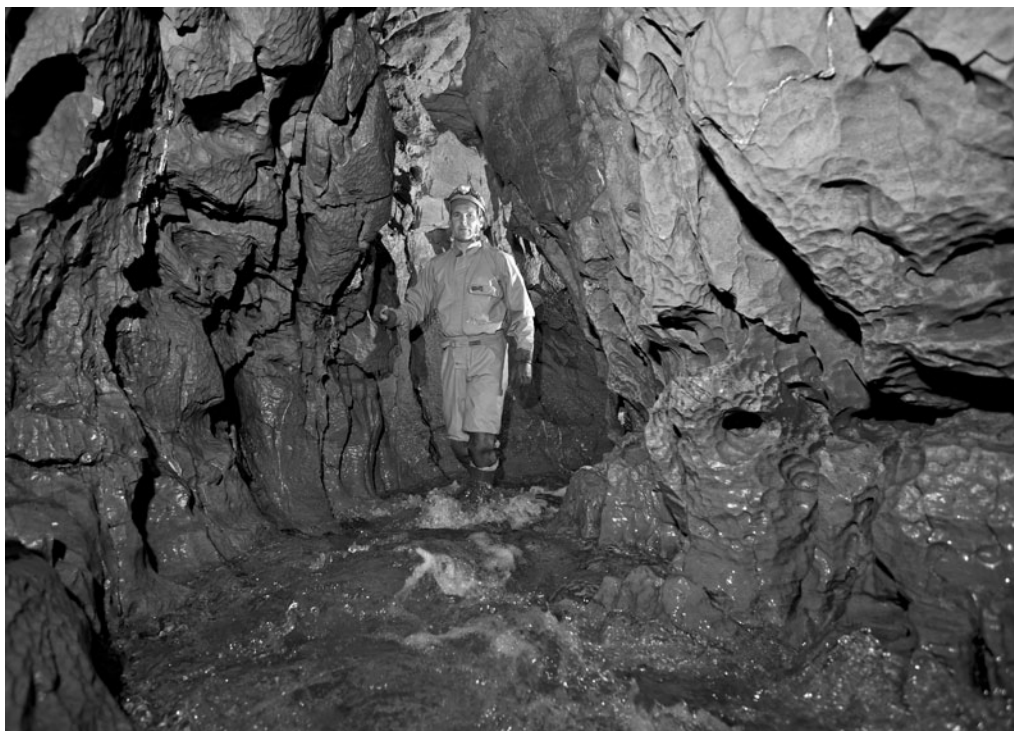
Caving wise there was a surveying trip to Flood Passage in Aggie, plus a through trip done in Ogof Pont Gam to Nant Rhin in the Clydach Gorge. There was no snow this year, for a change!

Annual Dinner Weekend 24/1/14

This year's annual dinner went well with 29 attendees. This figure was down on the last two occasions when we had forty odd people turn up but some folk could not resist going on skiing holidays and the like. The meal provided by the Bear was good and a short caving film called 'Solo' was shown giving people enough time to natter and drink afterwards.

Caving wise people visited Agen Allwedd, Draenen and Prices Dig. It was good not to have to contend with snow this year!

The AGM met on Sunday and returned a committee to manage the affairs of the club for another year.



*Richard Dearden
Bridge Cave
Entrance Series
Photo-Brendan
Marris*

The Caves of South Wales

*Interactive Website
Brendan Marris
www.ogof.org.uk*

Brendan Marris has put together a fantastic interactive website listing many popular Welsh Caves,

He has been helped on many occasions by club members Richard and Rachel Dearden who appear in many of Brendan's photos, the site gives members the chance to check out information about the various caves including an overview, history and location. The site also includes surveys, maps and videos.

Brendan has a real passion for photography and has dedicated much of his time to produce the site.

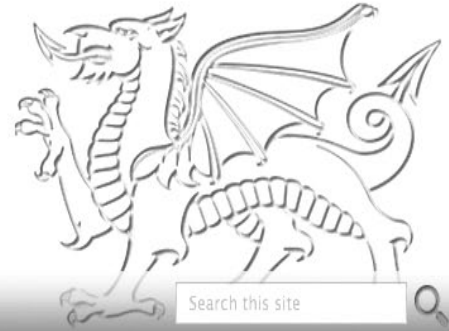
*Rachel Dearden
Ogof Draenen -
Medusa's Children
Dollimore Series
Photo-Brendan
Marris*



Caves of South Wales

Spread the word....

ogof.org.uk

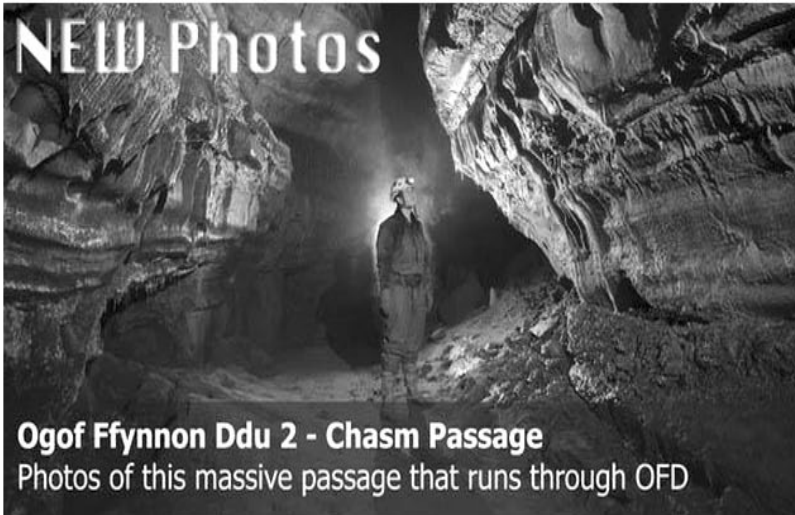


Search this site

Caves of South Wales Homepage

Like Share 54

NEW Photos



Ogof Ffynnon Ddu 2 - Chasm Passage

Photos of this massive passage that runs through OFD

Latest Photos

- Upper Smithy
- 28 photos added
- OFD1 Fault Series
- 8 photos added
- OFD2 Chasm Passage
- 11 photos added
- OFD2 Deja Rue
- 6 photos added
- Ogof Draenen
- 10 photos added
- Pwll Y Gwynt
- 5 photos added

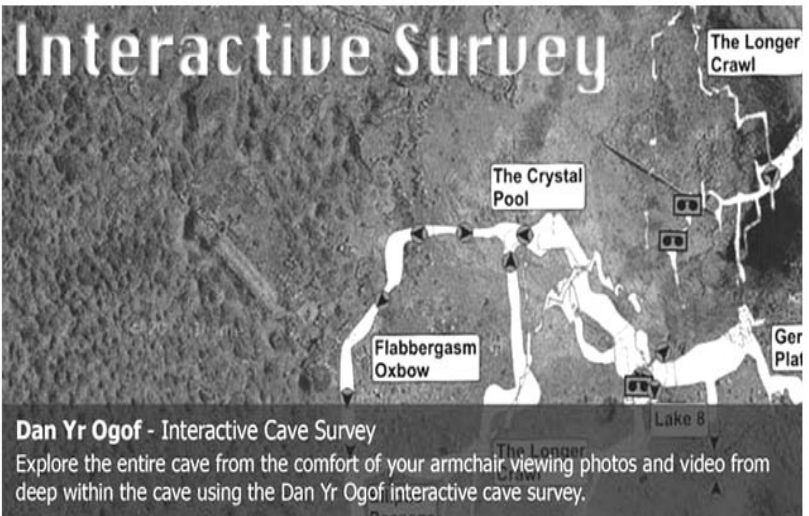


Latest Videos

- Pwll Y Gwynt
- Trip Highlights
- Shakespeare's Cave
- Trip Highlights
- Cwm Dwr
- Upper Piccadilly
- Cwm Dwr
- Fault Aven Series
- Ogof Ffynnon Ddu
- Prokofiev Series
- Dan Yr Ogof
- Trip Highlights



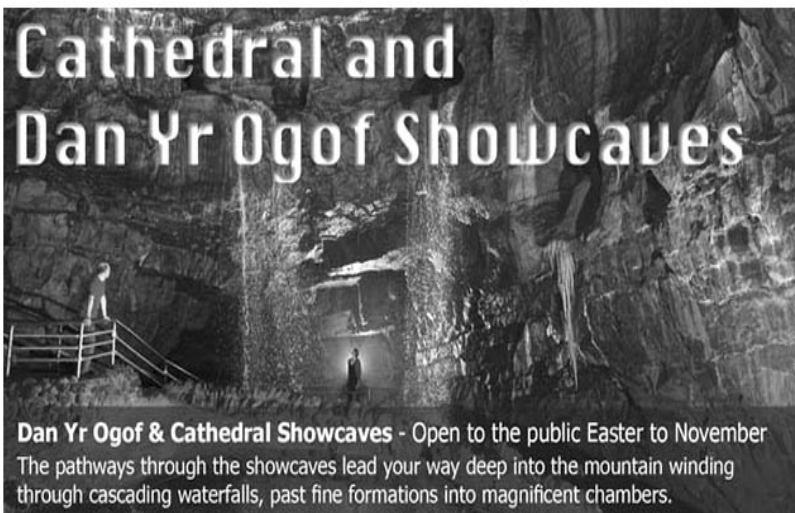
Interactive Survey



Dan Yr Ogof - Interactive Cave Survey

Explore the entire cave from the comfort of your armchair viewing photos and video from deep within the cave using the Dan Yr Ogof interactive cave survey.

Cathedral and Dan Yr Ogof Showcaves



Dan Yr Ogof & Cathedral Showcaves - Open to the public Easter to November

The pathways through the showcaves lead your way deep into the mountain winding through cascading waterfalls, past fine formations into magnificent chambers.

Longest Welsh Caves

1. Ogof Draenen
2. Ogof Ffynnon Ddu System
 - OFD 1
 - OFD 2
 - Cwm Dwr Cave
3. Agen Allwedd
4. Daren Cilau
5. Dan Yr Ogof
6. Ogof Carno
7. Little Neath River Cave
8. Ogof Craig A Ffynnon
9. Porth Yr Ogof
10. Tunnel Cave



Meets List 2014

The meets list will be in next month's newsletter.

Please visit the CSS message board for updates

<http://cssmembers.proboards.com/>

Alternatively contact the Meets Secretary



Paul Tarrent - The mini columns OFD

Corrections to Nov/Dec journal

Volume 55 Nos 11 & 12 - 2013

Cave Poltarica Jama is not in Croatia, as indexed, but in Slovenia.

The Daren Diggers

The Daren diggers next Hard Rock camp
will be 28th-29th March 2014

Work will continue on The Inconvenient Truth

If you'd like to join in and need more details please contact
Mark "Gonzo" Lumley

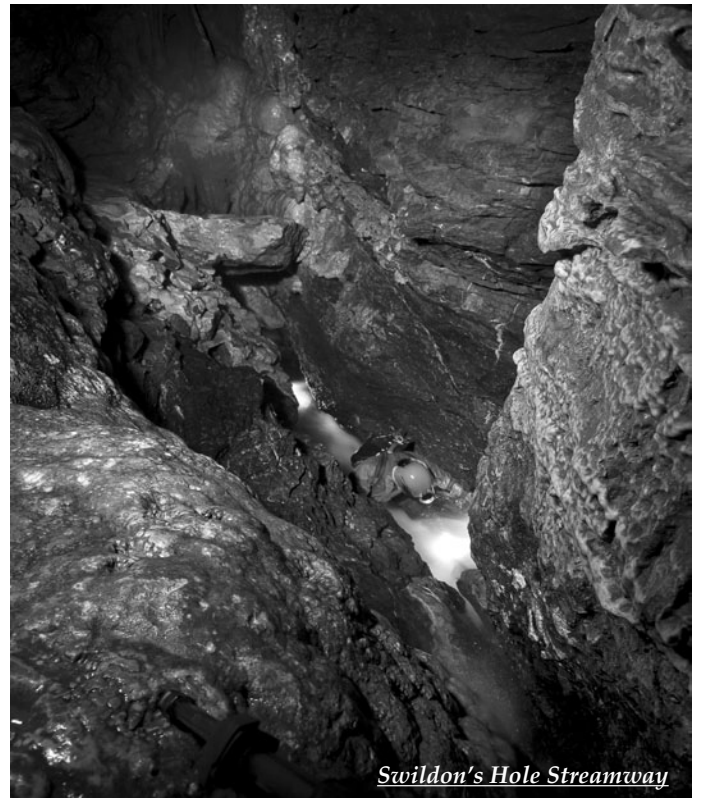
Swildon's Hole *By John Cooper*

Tuesday 4th February 2014.

John Cooper and Emma Gisborne. Short Round Trip. The first obstacle was the Mud Sump which had about 15cm airspace so we floated slowly through on our backs. Will need to go and do some bailing to get it down before it fills up completely. Next obstacle was the First Trouble. The syphon would not start so after a few attempts the tube was reversed and the syphon started straight away. Whilst the syphon was working we spent about 20 minutes bailing (I did 8 x 40 scoops and Emma did spells in my rest periods as well). Picked up a neoprene hood that had been left some weeks ago and went through with right ear under water. Second Trouble was also an ear under water job. Rather than bail the Third Trouble we did it as a helmet off, nose scraping the roof, job. Once the other side a pair of swimming goggles was collected (we left the bit of hose that someone had been using as a snorkel!). Sump I had a good current through (Emma through on her third attempt). In the pool at the foot of the Twenty Emma found a belay belt and steel karabiner. Out to find Duncan Price and Claire Cohen waiting to enter. Nice wet conditions. 2½ hours

Sunday 9th February 2-14.

John Cooper and Barry Weaver. Water about 20cm below the top pipe. BW found part of an SRT harness a little way into the Dry Way. Bailed 44 buckets of water out of the Mud Sump, allowing it to flow into the Moles' dig. Now possible to get through face down with ease. Came out the Wet Way as usual. 1¾ hours..



Swildon's Hole Streamway

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Whitewalls

The Hillside, Llangattock, Powys, NP8 1LG, UK

Whisky Tasting Night

Saturday 22nd February

This evening is an adult one, an after-dinner event at Whitewalls. So sort out your own food. If you can, bring along roughly the amount you intend to drink yourself, ideally as leftovers at the bottom of several bottles that you have set aside for this purpose during the past year so that we have a fair variety of tastes to share in modest amounts. Earlier in the day we will have some caving trips organised to places that the people attending wish to visit.

Cottage Bookings

21/02/2014 CSS Whisky
28/02/2014 Southampton Uni CC (10+ bunks)
07/03/2014 Exeter Uni CC (10 bunks)
14/03/2014 Cambridge Uni CC (5 bunks)
21/03/2014 CSS - JA/LH (Full)
28/03/2014 EECC (12 bunks)
09/05/2014 Orpheus CC (6 bunks)
05/09/2014 York CC (4 bunks)
17/10/2014 Bristol EC (10 bunks)



The Bold Step - Eastwater Cavern
Photo: Mark Lumley