

# CHELSEA SPELAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Volume 57 Nos. 10, 11 & 12 October, November & December 2015

*CSS Bonfire Party 2015*

*Best caving trips in South Wales*

*Skeleton 2 - Charterhouse Cave*

*The Caves of Nagaland*

*More climbing in Agen Allwedd*

*Namibia 2015*

*Derbyshire Weekend*

*Cwmystwyth Lead and Copper Mine*



*Merry*

CHRISTMAS

# Chelsea Spelaeological Society Newsletter

Volume 57  
Nos 10/11/12  
Oct/Nov/Dec  
2015



Matt Voysey in Speedwell Cavern - Photo by Adrian Feroceff

## CONTENTS

ISSN 0045-6381

*CSS Bonfire Party - 84-85*  
*Best caving trips in South Wales 86-87*  
*Skeleton 2 - Charterhouse Cave 88-90*  
*Return to Reservoir Hole 91*  
*The Caves of Nagaland 92-96*  
*More climbing in Agen Allwedd 97-98*

*Golden Oldies Meet 102-103*  
*Namibia 2015 104-110*  
*Vurley Swallet Dig 111*  
*Derbyshire weekend 112-113*  
*Cwmystwth Lead and Copper mine 114-116*  
*Index to volume 57 - 117-118*

The views expressed in the Newsletter are those of the author of the article and do not necessarily represent the views of the Society. Photos and illustrations not accredited are by the editor.

## Membership

If you haven't already paid then your subs are overdue

Please send all subscriptions to:

Gary Jones, 29 Canney Close,  
Chiseldon  
Swindon  
SN4 0PG

Current rates are:

**Full £30**  
**Joint £40**

**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 £24** (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 Spelaeological 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.



**Cover Photo - Daren Cilau**

Photo by Mark Lumley

**NEW  
Chelsea T-Shirt**  
£7 each or £12 for two of the same size & colour.  
Available in S, M, L, XL, XXL  
Printed in White on a variety of colours:  
Black, Green, Navy Blue, Orange, Red, Royal Blue, Grey  
To help the CSS committee determine how many to order  
and to make sure that you don't miss out  
please send your size, colour and number required  
To Mel: [melrei@hotmail.com](mailto:melrei@hotmail.com)

## Editorial

I have been overwhelmed with material for the Christmas edition of the journal.

A big thankyou to all contributors

A extra big thanks to John Cooper for proof reading the journal.

Please keep sending in your material for 2016  
Have a good Christmas and a happy New Year

Please send in your photos and trip reports etc  
Please send all material to:

[Steve-Sharp-Photography@virginmedia.com](mailto: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 Word format or email.

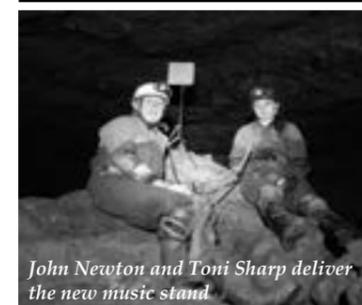
Convert photos, surveys and other images to decent sized .jpeg, .tif, .psd files

*Steve Sharp*

## CSS Annual Dinner Saturday 30/1/16 Old Rectory, Llangattock

The club will be holding the annual dinner in the Old Rectory at Llangattock. The club has successfully held dinners there in previous years. There is a flyer with this newsletter indicating the menu choices. Please complete this and return it ASAP, together with your cheque (or make separate arrangements with Gary Jones the treasurer to make a bank transfer to the club) to Paul Tarrant the Meets Secretary no later than Monday 18th January. Two different Ales will be available to us (Doombar and hopefully Wadworths 6X). We will be showing a short caving film by way of entertainment. Whilst the Old Rectory is within closer walking distance of Whitewalls we will be laying on taxi transport for those requesting it.

Note that the Old Rectory offers hotel accommodation and members wishing to live it up, rather than stay at Whitewalls, should contact the Old Rectory directly to make bookings. Note that the Britannia Inn, our old drinking haunt from long ago in Crickhowell, offers bunkhouse accommodation at competitive rates.



John Newton and Toni Sharp deliver the new music stand



John Stevens admires the new stand

After 50 long years, the music stand has been replaced in the Music room in Agen Allwedd.

# CSS Bonfire Party 7th November 2015

By Paul Tarrant

The bonfire party turned out really good this year with 33 people attending. I was fearful the event would be washed out as we had a brilliant sunny start to the week which very quickly descended into a wet maelstrom by Wednesday and which carried on in that vein until Saturday mid day when, fortuitously, a window of improving weather showed up just in time. There was a good bonfire which burned well and a lot of fireworks which went bang, fizz or phut at the appropriate time.

Jacky Ankerman was our excellent chef who provided chillis of various strengths to go with our baked potatoes. There was a good mix of home cooked fruit crumbles and rich chocolate cakes to complete the meal. Jacky really does spoil us with the food she cooks and she also teased us with her chocolate bats which suicidely dived from the ceiling of the lounge. It seemed the quantity of garlic bats was slightly up this year judging by the grimaces on people's faces! We had one barrel of Wadworths in and this was just right for the numbers we had as it ran dry about 10:30pm.

There were Saturday trips into Daren Cilau's slightly damper than usual Bonsai Streamway and another in Aggie's Sandstone Passage. Some ventured into Angel's Roost in Aggie and also Eglwys Faen on the Sunday. Hopefully there is an article or two for the newsletter in some of those trips.

A great weekend enjoyed by all.



Sparkelers



Chris and Barley



Lucy eats a delicious chocolate Bat



Toni Sharp celebrates her 15th Birthday



Photography - Paul Tarrant

# Best Caving Trips in South Wales?

By Adrian Fawcett

What makes a great caving trip? I am sure that nearly everyone has a different idea about the key features of a really good trip underground, and what is fun for one person could be either trivial or traumatic for others. Everyone has a different threshold for where the mundane becomes exciting; for where sporting goes beyond the comfort zone. Sometimes a trip is only brilliant retrospectively – when contemplating it afterwards in a cosy pub.

So, what are the ingredients of my favourite trips?

1. There is varied caving. By “caving” I mean the physical process of moving through the cave. There is something immensely satisfying about the combination of climbing, wedging, sliding, thrutching, crawling, and all the other techniques that cavers do almost without thinking. The dynamic balancing act when moving over boulders; the use of friction and sideways forces when traversing and climbing.

2. Water – within reason. Preferably flowing. An underground stream brings a cave alive. After all, it is water that has created most of the cave passages and formations. From the sound of a small stream trickling between boulders to foaming cascades and ominous deep peaty brown lakes, underground water has the power to enchant and to exhilarate. But water can be cold and deep, and if not dressed for the occasion, downright unpleasant.

3. Minimal squalor. In particular, crawling in wet sloppy mud. Also, no loose boulder slopes and “hanging death” boulder chokes. I’m not overly keen on washing caving gear – unless there’s a specially provided bath and hosepipe on the way back from the cave. Sometimes these things are unavoidable, but my ideal cave passage is, within reason, stable and clean!

4. Interesting passage shapes and sizes. Small phreatic tubes with their sudden and unexpected twists and turns and ups and downs are fun, tall vadose canyons and rifts are interesting, too. Sometimes the varied shapes colours and textures are worthy of a sculpture, albeit a natural one. The formations – flowstone, straws, crystals, and so on – are added decoration, but there is beauty in cave passages even without these.

5. Complexity. Junctions, route-finding, and the choice between alternative ways adds variety and spontaneity to a trip. A through trip or round trip gives more of a sense of completing a journey than just going there and back.

6. Not too short; not too long – which depends on the occasion, of course. However it is unlikely to be less than 3 hours or more than 10 hours.

So, having stated the criteria, here are eight of my favourite trips in South Wales.

OFD1 to Top Entrance via the streamway. This trip is very different after a few wet days compared with drought conditions – the degree of effort and care required increase substantially when the streamway is flowing well, and a brilliant trip can easily turn into a nightmare. But it is a fantastic and exhilarating streamway. Beautiful black limestone inlaid with white quartzite veins, twists and turns, cascades and deep pools to negotiate. The choice between clinging to the walls or strenuous bridging and immersion in the foaming water. The struggle up Maypole Inlet, leaving the roaring streamway behind, followed by the tall labyrinthine passages of OFD2. Finally, to emerge onto the hillside far above the OFD1 entrance in the valley below. It’s not a long trip – maybe 3 to 4 hours – but one I never tire of.

Little Neath River Cave – down to sump 2 via the canal and back via canal bypass. This trip should be done, of course, at the end of a summer heatwave when the water is nice and warm. Cold water is something that can make caving really miserable, but when it’s the temperature of a swimming pool it’s just great! The big stal banks and the curtains and gour pools in the canal bypass are impressive, as is the spaciousness of the cavern beyond – if you can see anything through the mist generated where the cold cave air meets warm water.



Little Neath River Cave

Photo - Steve Sharp

Daren Cilau beyond the Time Machine. When you are this far into the cave, the entrance series is just a distant memory, and you are somewhere remote and special. But not somewhere alien and hostile, and I don’t think that’s just because we know there are two camps down there. There are big passages with clean-washed walls and sandy floors. Grottoes with exquisite helictites – no photographs can really prepare you for the Blue Greenies or Helibeds. And the huge phreatic passages of Psychotronic Strangeways and their much smaller cousins at Leone Jayne’s Playpen and heading towards Friday 13th cannot fail to impress. Visiting these places feels like being part of a very exclusive club, and the sign you pass on the way to the Restaurant “Why be normal?” somehow seems to sum it up.



Psychotronic Strangeways - Daren Cilau

Photo - Mark Lumley

Dan-yr-Ogof round trip (preferably with a detour to the the Risings). This trip really does have everything and there is nothing squalid anywhere. Flabbergasm Oxbow and Cloud Chamber with their long straws are pretty impressive, but it is the Green Canal and Lower Series which are the highlights to me. Assuming you are wearing a wetsuit, paddling yourself along the Green Canal is a fun experience in a surreal kind of way – for a non-diver, anyway. The Lower Series makes me think of as being inside a sculpture-cum-water feature, and I’ve always been impressed by the turbulent “washing machine”.

Aggy Inner Circle – maybe not on everyone’s list, but I like it because there’s no messing around. You just get on and do some proper caving with plenty of variety. Right from the start, Aggy keeps you busy – jammed boulders and narrow rifts to negotiate, short crawls and climbs, but never anything difficult or unpleasant. Aggy – to the Music Room – was my first ever caving trip, and I’ve never looked back. Why not the Grand Circle? Lower Main Stream is as slippery as Teflon, and impressive though it is, you hardly get a chance to concentrate on anything apart from not falling over. Turkey Streamway, by comparison, is much more friendly and contains the elegant Beehive formation and beautiful phreatic section starting

at Turkey Pool where the cave challenges you to avoid a ducking! Inner Circle itself is a satisfying loop, containing some attractive big passages and a detour to the bizarre Swiss Village. While little cones of mud may not fit the term “beautiful” it is sometimes the uniqueness of cave formations that makes them special.

Craig a Ffynnon – to Helictite Passage. Almost from the entrance, Craig a Ffynnon is adorned with calcite, with straws in the roof and stal banks on the floor. After that there is plenty more to see, including the big rimstone dams and long straws in Travertine Passage, the massive stal flows in Hall of the Mountain King, and eventually the exquisite formations in Helictite Passage. But the cave makes you work for it, with long crawls, boulder chokes and some pretty squalid mud. But there would be so much less satisfaction in a caving trip if it was just a stroll in the park.

Ogof Rhyd Sych – This starts with a superb entrance – especially when the sunlight is streaming in – big, clean-washed, and sculpted by the water. The character of the cave then changes dramatically, and after a duck there is a complex area of channels and bedding planes to negotiate before the streamway proper is rejoined. It’s a cross between a maze and an obstacle course, and there’s a real psychological element to this cave. Further upstream there is an uncomfortable knobly bedding plane that again is a challenge to those who venture that far. But suddenly you arrive at some rather fine formations and the big cave beyond, and the journey has been worth it.

Ogof Draenen Dollimore Series – Sometimes the long journey getting there makes the destination extra special. The entry from The Last Sandwich into the huge MS&D passage is all the more impressive given the preceding lengthy hands-and-knees crawl and constricted U-bend. It’s like entering a different major cave system. Circus Maximus, the Geryon, Out of the Blue – all magnificent stuff, and its remoteness makes it feel so exclusive. The Geryon has its own log book, after all.

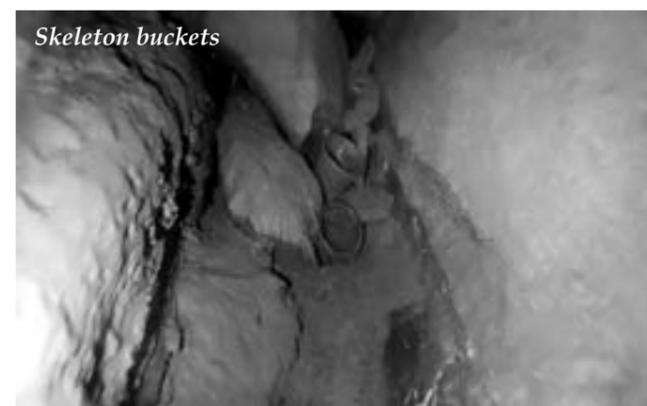


Aggen Allwedd

Photo - Steve Sharp

# Skeleton 2 – Charterhouse Cave

*In 2011 I made a couple of dives in Hippo's Delight – the sump at the bottom of Charterhouse Cave - and reached the deepest point (219 metres) of the deepest cave beneath the Mendips. Sadly the underwater passage was found to narrow down to an impenetrable mud choked slot 30 metres in at a depth of 9 metres and, having lots of air left in my diving cylinders, these were cached in the cave near to Diesel Duck in order to have a go at the end of Skeleton Passage (CSS N/L 53 (7-8) p. 63). Skeleton Passage (named because the remains of a Bullfrog was found there) can either be accessed by an awkwardly tight route which opens out into the top of a pitch down into the passage or via a short sump (which can dry out in the summer) from Quicksand Chamber. At the other end of the passage is another sump that looked "shallow & short" according to J.C. I was quite happy to let someone else have a go at this but in the end my cylinders were brought out and it wasn't until this year that this site was pushed.*



Skeleton buckets

*As described in the last newsletter, I had recently been doing a lot of cave diving and survey work with Andrew Atkinson and Connor Roe at Wookey Hole. I often refer to the two of them being as my "most useless" and "least useless" trainees – titles being awarded to either Andrew or Connor depending on who had forgotten their gear or something. Andrew had started cave diving as a student at Bristol University many years ago and had pushed some sumps in Ireland – like me he was largely self-taught but didn't actually have much kit so was always borrowing mine. Connor had started cave diving more recently and I had only agreed to take him on once he had asked his mother's permission since his father (the late Ian Rolland) had been my mentor when I started out. Connor's training largely consisted of the advice not to copy any of my bad habits.*

*by Duncan Price*



Skeleton side

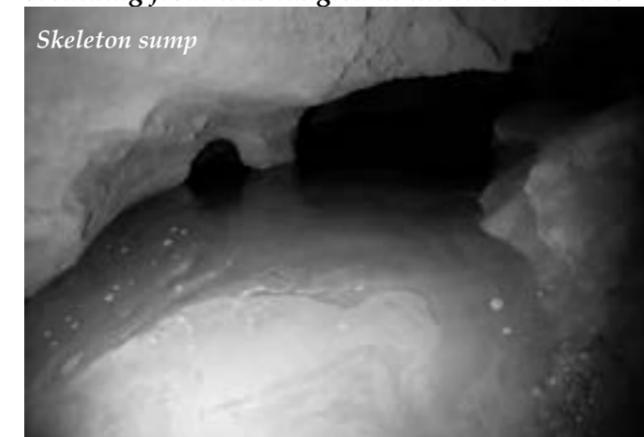
*By the beginning of June 2015, Andrew had arranged for a pair of 3 litre and a pair of 2.5 litre cylinders to be delivered to Quicksand Chamber so as to make an attempt on the sump. The plan was for Andrew & Connor to have a go while I would help with the kit. En route to meet up at Charterhouse Farm on 6 June, I received a message from Andrew to say that he would be a little late as he had to go back to Bristol to get the key. I parked up and started fettling gear as I expected Connor to show up at any time. Andrew rocked up, slightly apologetic at being late and we wondered where Connor was. Eventually I walked up the lane to get a mobile phone signal and called Connor's phone. There was no answer so I rang Upper Pitts to be told he wasn't there. After waiting a little longer, I left a message for Connor that we were going without him and hoped that he was OK. At 10:30 the two of us set off with the rest of the gear for one diver rather than two.*

*A couple of hours later we arrived at dive base to discover that one of the three litre cylinders had lost a lot of air during the trip into the cave so Andrew kitted up with the other full one and one of the smaller cylinders. My line reel from 2011 had been brought back from Zebra Junction along with some blocks of lead to add to the kit dump. After telling Andrew that I'd give him an hour and a half and then head out I watched him disappear into Quicksand Chamber Sump and waited for the glooping noises to die down before going walkabout towards the Hall of Time to keep warm. Forty-five minutes later I returned to check up on him and had just made myself comfortable when Andrew reappeared through the sump. He had dived through Quicksand Chamber Sump (which turned out to be 5 metres long with a constriction at a left turn at the elbow of the sump leading to a muddy slope in Skeleton passage) and*

*followed the dry cobble floored passage to the next (static) sump. This started off with a low section, before gaining more room at about 3 metres depth, a squeeze to the left ascended rapidly to less than 0.5 metres depth and seemed to dip back down again. Since Andrew had enough room to turn around, he left the reel jammed to one side and exited in zero visibility owing to the floor of the sump being extremely muddy. Despite wearing a thin wetsuit, I had already informed Andrew that I wasn't going to dive so we took out the pair of 3 litre cylinders for refilling. It transpired that Connor had been waylaid at the Belfry the night before and had overslept after his mobile phone battery had gone flat during the night.*

*With the sump still going, Andrew felt that he was at his limit regarding how far he was prepared to push it so I was offered a go. The 3 litre cylinders were refilled and left for us at the Ireby Pump. As time was at a premium, I took a day off work and the pair of us made an early start on Friday 19 June to continue the exploration. Having collected the fresh cylinders en route to dive base I set off through the first sump finding it as awkward as Andrew had described. I tried to fix the line more securely on the other side of the sump before crawling up into Skeleton Passage. The air here seemed high in carbon dioxide and consequently I took my time to crawl on my hands and knees with my gear to the sump at the far end. Loose line in the sump pool was evidence of Andrew's difficult exit on his dive here so I took in the slack by winding it around a silt screw until it was reasonably taught. I looked at the distance tag to find it was labelled "13" and wondered if this was an omen of what was to come.*

*A short way into the sump, the regulator that I was breathing from began to free-flow so I switched to the other set and turned off the cylinder of the malfunctioning valve. I tried to back out but found that the second stage I was breathing from was tangled in the line. I had to*



Skeleton sump

*hold my breath and take the mouthpiece out to untangle it before arriving back at the start of the sump. Here I tried to clear the mud which was stopping the errant regulator from working and I set off once more breathing from the original set. Again the same problem occurred so I swapped over to the good valve and resolved to continue into the sump as far as I felt comfortable in the knowledge that I could probably manage to get out on a free-flowing regulator if I had to (there being plenty of air in the tank). I thought that I might at least be able to tidy the line as I went.*

*It wasn't long before the underwater passage started to rise and I could clearly see the line reel ahead of me, through a tight squeeze, apparently floating in mid-water. I forced myself over a mudbank and pressed on in an effort to at least secure it for a future push. A glimmering air surface was spotted to the right (this had been seen by Andrew on his previous dive) and so I headed for this "airbell" to try to sort things out. Surfacing in a dry passage 1-1.5 metres wide and 3-4 metres high I realised that I had in fact passed*



Skeleton sump 1

*the sump after a 25 metre dive so I de-kitted and set off for a recce. After 50 metres or so of walking, a potential high-level climb up a boulder fall on the left was passed and the passage developed into a key-hole section with a large roof tube and tight slot descent to its base. The roof tube looked potentially slippery to traverse unprotected and I did not fancy a descent of the slot. A couple of buckets had been washed into the passage (another was in the section between the sumps) indicating the force of water that must flow through this area in flood.*

*The excitement of discovering an ongoing lead was tempered by the fact that half of my diving gear didn't work. In retrospect, worrying about it wasn't going to fix it, but I didn't want to make things worse by going any further along what looked like difficult terrain as I needed no reminding that there was little chance of a swift*

rescue should I have an accident. I returned to my gear and psyched myself up for the exit - the mud squeeze at the downstream end of the sump proved particularly interesting as my remaining working cylinder kept trying to turn itself off, but at least Skeleton Passage seemed to be easier on the return journey than it had been on the way in. I arrived back in Quicksand Chamber ahead of Andrew who turned up while I was dekitting - he had had found 20 metres of passage up an aven while I had been away. There was sufficient air in the cylinders that I had used to warrant leaving them in place, and we exited relatively lightly laden in about 3 hours.

We were keen to go back and very much aware of the need to have good weather conditions for a follow-up trip. Our first attempt took place on 4 July where we both reached Quicksand Chamber without incident and got ready to dive. Andrew wriggled into the sump first but couldn't get through the tight squeeze at the elbow. Rather than dive, I was happy to abort the trip as I felt I would achieve little on my own. A second visit on 8 August found Portal Pool to be sumped - this was drained using the Ireby pump - then Andrew's main light gave up on the other side. We decided to leave some of the gear in the cave and head out as we felt that Diesel Duck would probably be flooded as well. With the weather window for trips into the cave rapidly closing I thought that I may have jinxed our chances with my rash claim in the pub that "I would be disappointed if we didn't find a kilometre of passage beyond the sump." Keeping my gob shut about prospects, another trip was scheduled for 15 August but then pushed back a week to the 22 August due to rain. Diesel Duck was found to be knee deep in water and Quicksand Chamber Sump 1.5 metres higher than previous visits. This made the dive twice as long and the tightness of the elbow required us to turn our heads to one side and breathe out to pass. Andrew and I both experienced difficulties in maintaining an air supply through the squeeze - Andrew had a free-flow whereas I couldn't get any air at all!

Skeleton Sump was reached without incident although the air in the approach was again high in carbon dioxide. Andrew dived first with a compass and depth gauge in his hands to attempt a survey. This proved impossible, although he told me that the formerly constricted downstream end now had Duncan-sized channel gouged through the silt bank. I couldn't actually see anything during the dive through and had to feel my way along the line, trying to stay in the

roomiest part of the passage. Once regrouped in Skeleton 2, we surveyed our way into the cave using a DistoX and PDA. Reaching my previous terminus, Andrew commenced traversing along the muddy roof tube above a 4 metre deep rift. He had just passed the crucial move across the chasm when he slipped and knocked the PDA causing it to stop working. Fortunately I had the foresight to bring a waterproof notebook and pencil, thus we could continue surveying using this to record the centreline data (which was also stored on the DistoX with various splay shots) - fortunately the PDA data was recovered later. The passage gradually descended and the slot in the floor diminished until it was possible to make easier progress to reach another sump 110 metres from the end of the previous one. I took out my GoPro to film Andrew surveying and recorded a commentary for posterity. On our way back we explored an ascending side passage on stream left about 30 metres from the sump and pushed this for 25 metres until it dropped into a tight deep flooded rift (another sump perhaps?).

Returning along the muddy traverses proved tricky and a "lunge of faith" manoeuvre was required to execute the final move. Combined tactics were used to put Andrew at the top of a short climb on a corner which looked promising but closed down after 15 metres. A further climb into a potential high-level passage was not attempted due to the slippery nature of the place. Satisfied that we had done enough for one trip we put our diving gear back on and left. The cylinders were taken as far as the "out" side of Diesel Duck so they could be recovered later and we exited with the rest of the kit after spending 9 hours underground (4 beyond the sump).

That was it for 2015 as there was no time to make another trip before the lower reaches of the cave became inaccessible. It is obvious that Skeleton Passage takes a considerable flow of water in the winter. Unlike Hippo's Delight (which lies at the same level as the resurgence) there is around 20 metres of depth potential to go before the base level is reached. The sump at the end looks a good prospect but the carry should not be underestimated due to the treacherous nature of the approach. I'm keen to go back but it will have to wait until next year due to the flood-prone nature of the area.

## Return to Reservoir Hole By Nick Chipchase

Well I guess I had been putting it off. Almost a year to the day since the accident I made my way back into Reservoir accompanied by two lovely ladies Nicola Richens and Christine Grosart. Well Chris is a paramedic so I had that bit covered. I remember Pete my doctor friend at the time saying he couldn't fit a sling. "Oh the practice nurse does all of that". No, you are far better off with a paramedic. My efforts to impress the ladies failed miserably at the pitch platform when I mistakenly threw the second ladder down the pitch." You silly man " said Chris. ( or something like that ). Good job I hadn't done the same with the rope. All sorted eventually and a great trip was had by all. I even managed to bang off a few photos.

Reservoir Hole is now closed for the winter season and will reopen to trips in April next year. The drone project is still on hold and the digs at Skyfall and Magic Smoke mothballed for the foreseeable future. The closeness of the main aven and the pretty nature of Trapdoor Chamber ( which I have yet to



Nicola and Christine Grosart on the TFD pitch platform.

see ) means that Skyfall is best left for the moment. MSD continues downwards adjacent to the wall of The Frozen Deep still ploughing through dry compact sediments below the chamber floor.



Nicola taking photos in upper TFD



Nicola Richens on the TFD pitch

# THE CAVES OF NAGALAND

By Andy Tyler

A reconnaissance of Nagaland state in India

The Indian state of Nagaland lies in the North-East of India, it is bordered by the states of Arunachal Pradesh to the North, Manipur to the South and Assam in the West from which it was formerly part. The Eastern border forms the international border with Burma (Myanmar); the border is formed by the Patkai Range which is part of the Arakan system, a continuation of the Himalayas but to the South. Like most of the North-East, Nagaland is a hilly state.



Drums for communicating across the valleys

There are 16 tribes in Nagaland with their own languages but ethnically related and similar cultures. The word Naga was a British invention, the Nagas were previously known as head hunters and are famous as warrior people. The population is small with 2 cities. Kohima, a hill station, is the capital, famous for the Commonwealth War Cemetery and the very British named Battle of the Tennis Court, which was part of the greater Battle of Kohima fought during April to June 1944, marking the furthest advance of Japanese forces during the Second World War. The city of Dimapur is the commercial centre of Nagaland; it is a larger



Cave camp in Dzukou Valley

city lying next to Assam on the plain of the Brahmaputra River; here is the airport, railway and the industry. In the Naga Hills there is primarily hunting, fishing, farming and forestry; there is very little known of the minerals, mainly coal mining and some limestone with cement factories. Nagaland has great mineral potential but until recently the state has been wracked by insurgency. Recently, with a more peaceful situation, certain aspects have improved mainly in tourism and conservation. Due to peace in Nagaland permits are no longer required to enter the hill areas. The Hornbill Festival in December was created to showcase the Naga tribes, food and culture in one place, also there are seasonal bans on hunting and fishing. Going to Nagaland was decided by fate and déjà-vu due to my nephew Matthew having met a Naga girl, Kavili, in Dimapur through on-line gaming and deciding to marry her! Being in Nagaland I decided to prospect for caves there. Before going I spent some time online listing caves, potential caves, areas of limestone and cement factories. I soon realized that either the knowledge was

limited or the speleological potential is limited; anyway I had a shortlist of caves, mostly in 2 areas. So on the 5th of November I reached Guwahati via Delhi. This is the capital of Assam and the principal



Dzukou Valley

city of the North-East. The next day I took the train (5½ hours) to Dimapur. Arriving in the evening I was picked up by my niece-in-law to be, Kavili, who checked me in to a hotel and then took me out to a cousin's wedding until 3 in the morning! My brother Robert and Mathew arrived a few days later and the wedding was held in the evening, as daytime is up to 30°C. In Nagaland, as in Meghalaya, the majority of people are Christian; this was a Baptist wedding with the ceremony, drinking, eating and dancing at the same outdoor venue.

After the wedding I could think



Granite pavement

about getting up into the hills but I had to spend time with Robert for a few days until he left. The days before and

there before but apparently not! So 4 guides met us; nine of us managed to squeeze with our equipment into the SUV for



Meziphema Cave

the wedding itself I met a lot of people so for both areas I had contacts; one person we met, Inoto Sema, suggested we go to the jungle. After some discussion we decided to visit the Dzukou (zoo koo) Valley, this is a major tourist area and is to the South of Kohima on the Manipur border. It consists of 2 main valleys South and West. So one afternoon we left Dimapur in his SUV with his driver and friend Inoko. The drive to Kohima is 70 km and takes about 2½ hours. We checked in to a hotel there and the next morning we drove to Viswema village about 30 km away. Inoto having arranged the trip we assumed he had been

the 5km track. We then set off on what was initially a 1 hour climb up, which took us to the highest point of the trip at 2700 metres, which is the head of a valley. This was essentially the



LongKhum caves with fit features

hard part out the way. After resting and admiring the views we set off through the valley which could not have been easier, it was just walking on a footpath following the contour for about 10 Kilometres. The Dzukou Valley is a national park and is known as the Valley of Flowers but this was not the season. The landscape is one of dense bamboo shrub only 1 metre high and pine trees higher up, with streams meandering through. After about 2 hours we came to a hut which is used for camping maintained by two caretakers. From here we descended down into the West Valley which is 6 or 7 Kilometres across. In the bottom of the valley a stream has cut up to 10 metres through the rock making a small gorge we entered from the lower end. Mostly on the West side we came to the



View from above Salumi Cave

highlight of the trip-caves!, but these are just rock shelters cut by the down cutting stream, but for the locals they are real caves. When you live in an area of little or no caves even small rock shelters become large caves because they have no standard of comparison.

We decided to camp in the cave although we had tents; the caves had been used by hunters for camping for many years as the floors had been levelled. After pitching our tents we set about collecting firewood and preparing dinner but more importantly the serious business of a bottle of Johnny Walker Red Label (at £40.00 a bottle!). Good food and whisky was drunk, I retired and left Inoto, Inoko and Robert getting stuck into a bottle of vodka. I woke up at dawn and started surveying the caves; at that time and altitude, 2438 metres, everything was frost covered. Sunrise came late due to the valley walls, everyone began to wake and the fire was lit. I went with one of the guides into the sunlit valley taking photos; back at the cave everyone was getting ready to leave. When we left we carried on up the gorge until we picked up our original path, on the way we were attacked by a swarm of bees I got stung twice and Inoto five times, apart from that we saw very little wildlife. I decided to get dropped off in Kohima, the others went back to

Dimapur. I spent 2 nights there. I had decided that the place to go was Kiphire Town which was further West near the Burma border. I was told the bus left at 06.30 so I was duly there at that time - to be told that the buses wouldn't be running that day, so I decided to go to Meluri which is about 90 kms before Kiphire. The bus arrived mid-afternoon and as there was no means of progressing I looked for a hotel. On the way I met a local policeman so I ended up

staying in his house and he showed me around the town (10 minutes!). The next day I waited all afternoon for a vehicle to Kiphire; eventually I got a SUV taxi and arrived at 20.00 The problem here is that after dark most businesses close down. As I reached Kiphire I was able to call ahead to Akilla who was related to Kavili's uncle Kehovi. She sent her nephew Hori and his friend Sejongmong to pick me up. They took me to the local Baptist Church accommodation and brought me dinner and a plan was

made.

The next morning the lads came with a car and driver and we drove via Pungro Town to Salumi Village, about 3 hours from Kiphire. The village is very traditional with wooden buildings, some very ornate. We met the local teacher who took us to the Headman who gave us permission to go to the nearby cave. We set off contouring the West side of a broad farmed valley. The local teacher Athri who accompanied

junction is reached, left is a little narrower and goes to the exit, ahead the passage ends with a pitch on the left, on the right the passage also ends at a pitch, ahead is a talus cone that slopes down. Looking over the pitches they appear to be the same passage below running at right angles to the upper passage, the passage would appear to have been truncated by the talus cone run in. The pitches are 10m down and the passage below

mass, the passage appears to truncate the bluff, which means it is the remnant of a larger system or possibly it took the original river before its down cutting bypassed and fossilized it, but that would not explain the entrances which must have been sinks before downcutting. The local legend says that a dog went in and came out at the bottom(!) - sounds familiar, the potential depth is more than 800 metres, over 400 metres to the river! The cave needs a small

team to explore it. In the area there are archaeological caves in Mimi village and also Mount Saramati. This is at 3826m with a prominence of 2885 metres, which makes it the highest mountain in India (outside the Himalayas) but also one of the world's most prominent mountains. Back outside the cave we climbed along the arête ridge of white quartz back to the village, one side giving a sheer drop of up to 300m down with spectacular views, the other side a mere 10m, we had lunch in the

Salumi Cave entrance



stoop in very sandy rock only 6 metres long ending in a choke; apparently it used to be longer; it appears to be solutionly formed. On the other side of the river is a slope down to the river Patkai. A plaque on the cave reads 'Art may err, but nature cannot miss, Speak to the nature and it will teach thee Now and forever.'

I left by bus to Mokochung, this is the third biggest town in Nagaland and lies to the North. The quickest way to reach it is to drive through Assam state which is flat with straight roads and avoiding the twisting roads of the hills. Here I was met by Lena and her friend Lanu; Lena is Kavali's aunt and was at the wedding. They put me up in a hotel and we made a programme for the next day.

We left for Long Kumer village, which is only about 15 km away; here we met up with some local boys, Sako and Chempony, who would guide us. From the South West of the village we followed a broad pavement of clints and grikes set in the slope of a hill; the only problem with the pavement - it was quartz not limestone, but it had a beautiful setting with trees and cacti. After 500 metres we came to a



Old people at home

us managed to get us to the cave eventually, which is obviously not on the tourist map! The Salumi valley opens out on to the Likimro valley which feeds Likimro Hydro Electric Project. At the junction is a bluff of limestone, a snout sticking out into the Likimro valley, overlooking the valley where the bottom is 480 metres down. A short scramble down leads to a small entrance with a drop (1.5x1.5m), this is the exit. The entrance is a little further down; this is a much larger walk in entrance (1x1.5m) at 1860 metre altitude. Inside it opens out to (4x3m) with a dry mud floor, after 10m a

is 8 metres across - it appears to be a straight clean washed trunk passage. We left via the exit, which involved a 10 metre climb. The cave we explored was fossil passage, the lower unexplored; it appears to be in an isolated block of limestone, was the rest eroded away by the down cutting of a stream? It would appear the cave predates the valley. The position and size of the lower passage is certainly a misfit of the known limestone

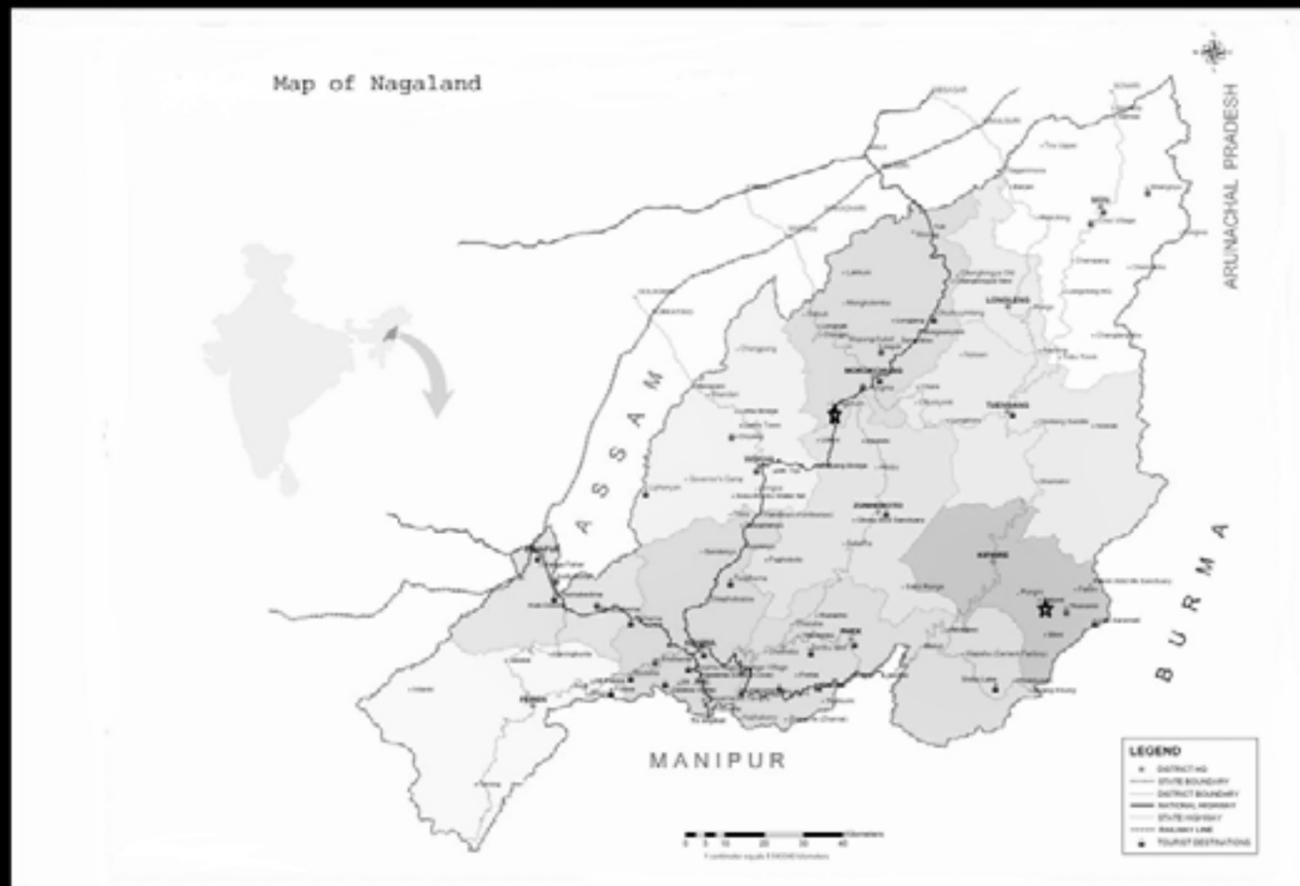
village before driving back to Kiphire. The next day was spent in Kiphire. Early the next morning I left for Dimapur by bus which takes 15 hours. I spent several days in Dimapur, which included a short visit to a Meziphema cave (village name) with Kavili's father. This lies on the Dimapur to Kohima highway, it is just as the hills begin on the North side of the highway, 3 steps lead to the cave which is a low



Salumi Cave main chamber

jungle clad steep valley called Fusen Kei at 1500 metres altitude. After lunch I went with the boys to explore the caves below. We explored 3 caves all similar, short ~20 metres mostly walking and multiple entrances. The nature of the Fusen Kei caves (cave of Porcupine family) was soon apparent they are all in the same quartz granite and they are formed by landslip the slip features in some places are very apparent. The valley drops 500 metres over a 800 metre distance, in one cave the boys told me villagers used to collect bats to eat during the summer, the roost is a low chamber with guano on the floor. We exited the caves and the girls decided they needed to go back to Mokochung. I stayed with the boys and we continued exploring and taking photos, apparently there are more caves but they couldn't find them in the jungle. We proceeded down the valley; where it enters a broad valley, three small holes can be seen high on the valley junction Monzu Kei (Eagle Cave) but to enter would need ropes as they are high up on a cliff. Proceeding down the valley a small cliff is passed, this is a spring Tangken Maroi (cup) - but it was dry. We returned to the village where I went to a guest house. In the evening I went with one of the local boys to a house of a couple in their 80's who had 18 children but didn't know how many grandchildren! We drank rice beer and they sang

love songs in their ancient Ao language. The next day I took the local bus back to Mokochung. I met up with Lena and we took a drive North, this road is an alternative road that leads back into Assam. We reached the village of Chuchuyimlang, known as the festival village for the Ao people This was about an hour from Mokochung; ahead on the same road I had references to several other caves but there was no time to visit. We turned back and that night I took the night bus back to Dimapur. Although what I found was quite limited I consider I completed my objectives, there is definite potential but it will never be a major area of cave exploration, I didn't target limestone areas they are there but limited these lie primarily to the West of Meleuri and Kiphire towards the Burma border in the area of Salumi cave. There is a defunct cement factory at Wazeho, I was told it was because of the limestone quality. Nagaland's appeal is the people, the culture, food and it is still pristine, finding caves are just a bonus. Many thanks and gratitude to Kavili's family, friends and the many people for their help, all caving references came from many sources all through the internet, soon even the caving can be done online!



# More Climbing In Agen Allwedd

By John Stevens

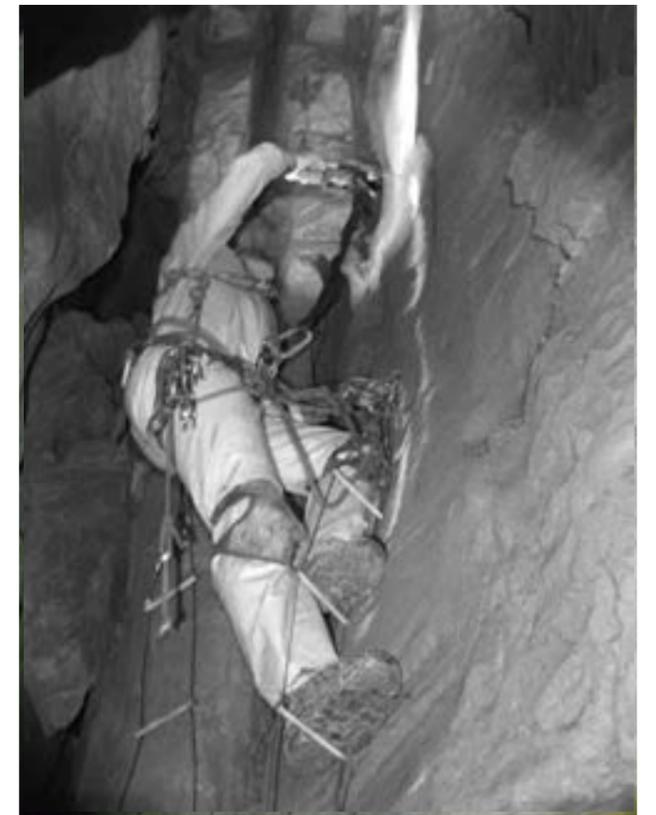
The surveying in Summertime has been ongoing for some time now. With the discovery of Recharge Passage back in January 2014 it became obvious that an upper series of passages had developed in the Midsummer Area. As we completed the survey of the main Midsummer Passage, we passed under several avens.

The first was 9m high and seems to have been climbed at the south end. This seems to line up with a too tight side passage in Recharge, so as yet we have not re-climbed it. The next was a more impressive 12m aven with a ledge/passage part way up. This showed no signs of ascent. The third aven was also 9m but high level development was not obvious.

Mike Read and I have had the second aven on our hit list for some time but the equipment required to tackle it would need three people. As one stage we had David lined up with climbing equipment to tackle it but on the weekend we had set, the cave was in flood. Eventually Mike R and I went there on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> July 2015.

After complaints from Mike R and Mike G carrying my 24V Bosch drill in Flood Passage, I began to look around for a light weight drill for bolt climbing. I decided it still had to be an SDS drill and be compact. There were several 18V options around and even 12V ones. After some thought I bought a Milwaukee M12 CH drill, which is a 12V lion system. The Midsummer Passage climbing trip would be its first underground test.

So with Mike R carrying the SRT kit, rope and ladder, leaving the drill and survey stuff for me, we set off to Midsummer via Turkey Pool. We picked up another rope and crowbar on route. Once we arrived at the 12m aven, I was able to climb up a bit with Mike holding my foot on a muddy ledge to place the first bolt. Mike then placed the next few until he could access a ledge at the East side of the aven. Quite a bit of gardening and a couple of bolts were required to enter it. He found that it was blind and the route upwards from it was too tight.



Mike approaching the ledge.

I then took over and continued up the main climb. I was one bolt short when the battery needed changing after its ten holes. It was then up to Mike to place the last bolt and a further one as back up to complete the climb. And guess how many through bolts we had brought with us? just twelve ! Cutting it too close again!

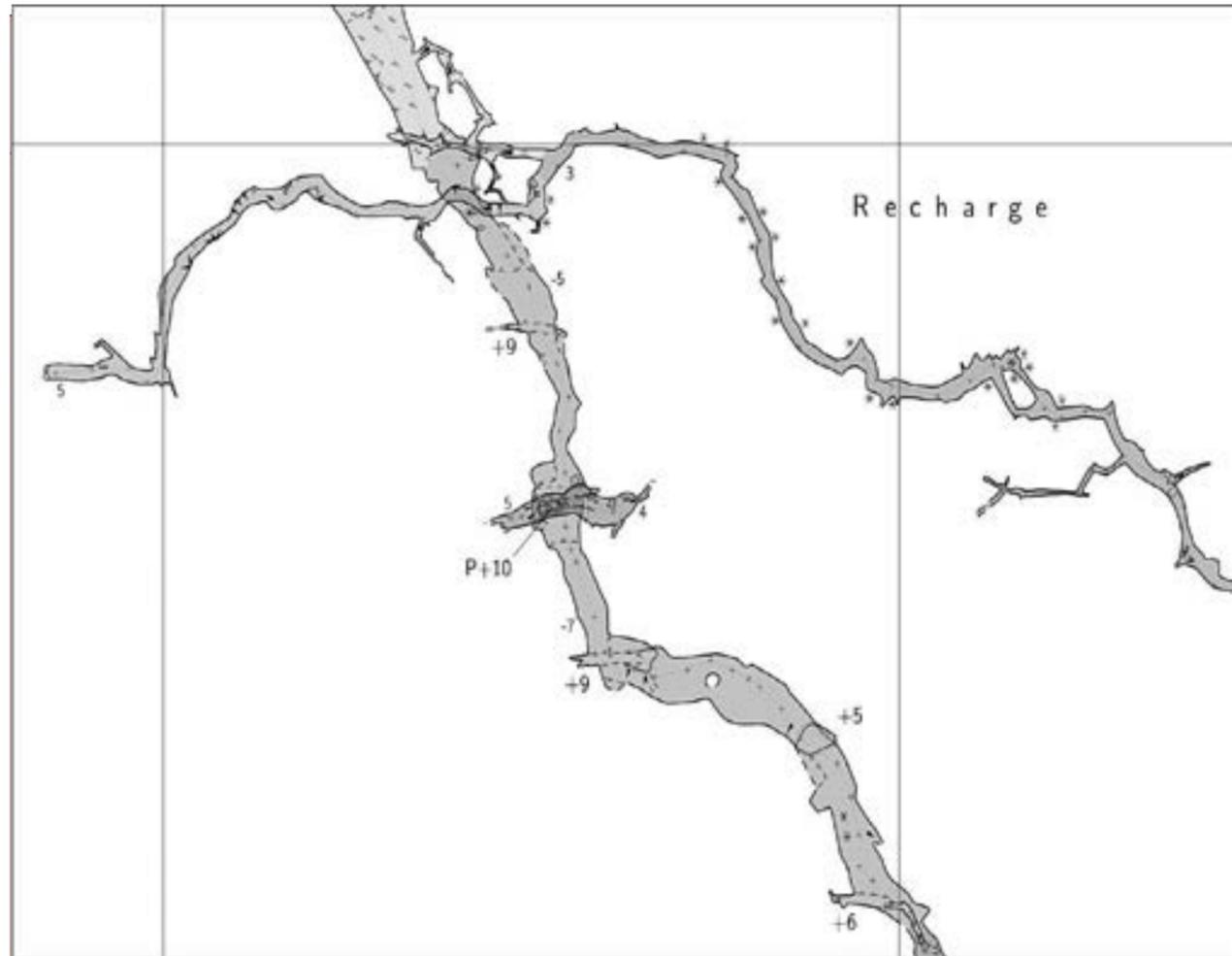


Mike directly above the route up looking West

To the west the passage had a run in of mud and boulders on its left and ahead was too low. While to the east the passage passed under a small collapse dome and then slopes down a small hole. This was dug out to see ahead. It continues small but easily diggable for the next couple of metres that were visible. It seems to have some draught and would definitely be dug if it was closer to the entrance.

We have left the pitch rigged off two stainless hangers, so an easy return can be made. We even left the crowbar at the top of the pitch (OK, that was an accident, but it's the second time we have done that!).

The trip out via Coal Cellar Passage was exhausting, and Mike ended up with a lot of the gear in this passage. So not a huge amount found from a 13 hour trip but another lead examined and a dig to go back too.



The 10m climb in Midsummer Passage, yielded some 25m of horizontal passage at a similar altitude to Recharge Passage. The general width of the passage is larger than that in Recharge, so it may not be associated with it.

## Gear Reviews

by John Stevens

### Drills

I mentioned in my article on climbing in Misummer Passage that I had brought a new drill, Milwaukee M12 CH. So how does this new drill compare with my old Bosch GBH 24VRE which I have used for 15 years.

When I bought my Bosch it was £300. The Milwaukee has various battery options from 4Ah to the bare drill without case or charger. So it can vary from £150 to £300 but the option I chose was about £250 with 2 x 3Ah, charger and carry case.



Tsumani 272012 with Milwaukee M12 and Underwater Kinetics 613 with Bosch 24VRE

Weights of cases with drills& bits. 4.45kg (Milwaukee, 2 batteries), 6.26kg(Bosch), 4.28kg(Bosch without battery)

	Battery Voltage	Battery Capacity Ah	Joules/hit	No Load Speed	Impact Rate	Weight kg
Bosch GBH 24VRE	24	3	1.3	1000	4400	4.2
Milwaukee M12 CH	12	3	1.1	900	6500	1.8

Below is a table of several different companies' waterproof boxes. Those with an asterisk are ones I have. I have included other sizes that people may find useful but this is not a comprehensive list.

#### Waterproof Box Sizes

	Internal Dimensions			External Dimensions			IS
	Length	Width	Depth	Length	Width	Depth	
<b>Peli Cases</b>							
1050	161	95	67	190	128	79	
1150	215	150	95	232	192	111	
1200	241	185	105	270	246	123	*
1300	240	185	153	270	246	174	
1400	306	234	130	340	295	152	
IM2050	241	190	108	300	249	119	
IM2075	241	190	184	300	249	196	
IM2100	330	234	130	361	289	165	
<b>Explorer Cases</b>							
1908	190	125	85	216	180	102	
1913	190	125	135	216	180	152	
2209	220	160	95	246	215	112	
2214	220	160	145	246	215	162	*
2712	276	200	120	305	270	144	
<b>Underwater Kinetics Cases</b>							
408	120	200	100	231	150	108	*
409	216	152	94	229	183	104	
609	216	152	145	241	188	163	
613	340	226	142	356	272	157	*
416	432	254	114	445	292	132	
<b>Tsunami Cases</b>							
191213	193	127	135	219	183	154	
221614	224	160	145	255	173	206	
272012	280	200	122	308	269	150	*
312413	310	240	130	330	300	160	

The figures above show that this drill does pack a reasonable punch and at 1.8kg it is lighter than just the battery pack of the Bosch 24V. So both Mike and I found it easy to drill right or left handed, at a good reach when we were bolting. It also has an illuminating led, just in case we didn't have enough light.

See drill bit section to see how the drill performed.

### Cases

As I would be transporting my drills underground, I have always tried to get a rigid waterproof case for them. With the new drill I looked at makes I have used before but found the best fit for the new drill was a case made by Tsumani Cases.

Over the years I have brought various makes of cases for my items - Drills, Cameras, survey gear and general caving odds and sods.

I have mainly opted for a box just larger than the item I was looking to carry. So for my new drill, I chose Tsunami Case 272012. This is more rugged than my previous UK Case for my Bosch drill. It is probably on a par with the Peli Storm cases (M series). The UK case 613 is too large for most tackle sacks and a large opening sack needs to be used, while the Tsunami case can be carried in a normal bag or even carried by its handle. It is a bit larger than the Peli 1200 and a lot smaller than the 1400. The seals look good and have performed perfectly so far.



My old yellow Peli 1200 with it's corners padded with No Nail (equivalent) as protection, and the new black Tsunami 272012.

### Drill Bits

To see how effective the new drill was I thought I would time it drilling 8mm diameter, 70mm deep holes. This is the size required for the stainless steel through bolts we use.

After the Midsummer trip, Mike R suggested it would have been better to have a short 160mm long bit instead of the 210mm we had used. On the internet I found various types of 8mm bits, and as they were not too costly, I bought a selection to see how they faired.

There were three main types, each with a different number of cutting faces, 2, 3 and 4.



Yato X head, Heller Trijet, Milwaukee

With Mike Green on stop watch, I set about drilling some holes in a lump of stone behind Whitewalls. In hindsight, this may have been softer than the limestone we normally drill in.

We drilled two holes with each bit and took the average. The results made both of us think !

Type of Bit	No of cutting edges	Average Time, sec	Drill Used
Milwaukee	2	15	Milwaukee M12 CH
Heller Trijet	3	30	Milwaukee M12 CH
YATO heavy duty X head	4	70	Milwaukee M12 CH
	2	23	Bosch GBH 24VRE (battery low)

I postulated that the extra edges were causing the impact to be more dissipated, so not as effective. More tests and holes would be required.

The following week I set about finding a nice lump of limestone and a variety of drills and bits (new and old).



Bosch GBH 4 DFE (mains), Milwaukee M12, 2 x Bosch GBH 24VRE

This time we measured the time taken and the actual depth of the hole. This I have converted into the time required for a 70mm hole, even though the holes varied +/- 5mm.

#### Drill Bit Drilling Times (2nd Test)

Type of bit	No of Cutting edges	Drill Used	Time sec	Depth mm	Time 70mm
Milwaukee	2	Milwaukee M12 CH	28.9	69	29.3
Heller Trijet	3	Milwaukee M12 CH	41.8	74	39.5
YATO X head	4	Milwaukee M12 CH	39.8	73	38.2
Milwaukee	2	Bosch GBH 24VRE No2	41.6	72	40.5
Heller Trijet	3	Bosch GBH 24VRE No2	43.3	75	40.4
YATO X head	4	Bosch GBH 24VRE No2	39.6	72	38.5
Bosch (older)	2	Bosch GBH 24VRE No2	47.3	71	46.6
Milwaukee	2	Bosch GBH 24VRE No1	28.2	71	27.8
Heller Trijet	3	Bosch GBH 24VRE No1	34.4	74	32.6
YATO X head	4	Bosch GBH 24VRE No1	36.4	72	35.4
Milwaukee	2	Bosch 4DFE (mains)	16.8	71	16.5
Heller Trijet	3	Bosch 4DFE (mains)	16.6	77	15.1
YATO X head	4	Bosch 4DFE (mains)	18.9	73	18.1
Bosch	2	Bosch 4DFE (mains)	14.5	72	14.1
Bosch (older)	2	Bosch 4DFE (mains)	15.8	69	16.1

The Bosch 4DFE has a joule/hit rate of 3.5, speed 650, rate of hit 3900. As this is a mains drill, it was expected to out perform the battery drills, which it has. The figures on the two Bosch 24VRE show that one is a lot better than the other. No2 was bought as a bare unit off ebay and may need some maintenance. My new Milwaukee is somewhere between the two Bosch 24VRE.

	Average time for the 3 main bits
Milwaukee M12 CH	35.7
Bosch GBH 24VRE No2	41.8
Bosch GBH 24VRE No1	31.9
Bosch 4DFE (mains)	16.6

So even though the Milwaukee M12 is smaller and much lighter than the Bosch 24VRE, its performance is almost comparable to it. But it has the advantage of being light enough to use at reach, with one hand. So it will be this new drill that we will be using on the remote climbing trips.

With the drill bits, the table shows that a sharp bit is important. For these battery drills with low joule rating, it seems best to stick with 2 edge bits for 8mm holes.

Bit	No of Cutting edges	Time 70mm
Milwaukee	2	28.5
Heller Trijet	3	31.9
YATO X head	4	32.5

#### Average time of each bit on the 4 drills

Matching the bit that best suits your drill and the rock you are drilling is important. For larger holes, multi edge bits may be more efficient on the battery. I don't have any of a different diameter to test, but I am sure someone will take this information as a starting point.



## Chelsea Spelaeological Society

### Golden Oldies Meet

11<sup>th</sup> 12<sup>th</sup> 13<sup>th</sup> September 2015

*The CSS Golden Oldies are comprised mostly of those who were instrumental in obtaining and renovating WHITE WALLS in the 1960's and ever since the "CSS 50th Anniversary Year" celebration have met up every year over the September weekend in Crickhowell for an over dose of friendship and reminiscing.*

*Members travelled from far and wide this year, even from Germany and Australia to be with us as we gathered and met up at various venues around Crickhowell on the Friday, like the Dragon Inn, the Britannia Inn and finally the Bear, to begin our weekend of tales of caving exploits and the development of White Walls.*



*Saturday dawned bright despite the forecast Atlantic storms. This was a day of "do your own thing." Eight of us met up with Roy Musgrove who led us on an unusual walk up onto the Sugar Loaf along the western ridge. We got caught at the top in strong winds and sleet but hardy folk as we are we managed to have our lunch, much of it as usual, was supplied by Jan Butterley; thanks Jan. Our journey down was by another route in glorious sunshine and Roy showed us a thousand year old Sweet Chestnut tree, wow! Very Lord of the Rings.*

*Jane and Ray were going to do the Big Pit but in the end they too climbed the Sugar Loaf and arrive at the top at a similar time but we missed each other in the thick mist. Others did more leisurely pursuits like sampling and testing the local ales to check that the high quality was being maintained and Brian even visited a golf course to tell them he wasn't fit enough to play there.*



*On the Saturday evening (12th September) others joined us from far and wide and 24 Golden Oldies sat down to enjoyed a meal together in The Dragon Inn in Crickhowell. At the end of the meal Geo gave notice of those who could not be with us at this year's event for various reason but had wished us all well and we remembered those who we have great affection for who can no longer be with us and we toasted "absent friends."*

*Bruce Bedford, who had enjoyed the beginning of that day having four hours of dialysis, amused us by reading an official form full of absolute gobbledygook!! Where do they get the writers from and who approves them. Answers only on a post card please.*



*A brilliant evening was had by all, full of tales and reminiscences to fill a book. (How about it Bruce!)*

*On Sunday 13th September 20 of us managed to visit White Walls for a trip down memory lane and to see the wonderful development that has been done in recent years by John Stevens and his team to the old shell we knew so well. In fine weather we all wandered along the tram road stopping at Eglwys Faen and had a look in Main Chamber, then it was an Agen Allwedd gate inspection and more tales of "tin trays" in Ogof Gam and the old Aggie entrance.*

*Some then hoofed it all the way back to Crickhowell and the rest enjoyed a casual walk back for a good old cuppa in White Walls. Goodbye hugs were had all round and hopes expressed to see you next year. Ten of us stayed on in Crickhowell and enjoyed a meal together in the Bear that evening.*

*A great weekend was had by all and I hope we can all meet together at the same time next year to keep the spirit of the CSS golden oldies alive.*

*By Geo Fletcher*

### CSS pose for a photo before a trip into Agen Allwed during the Bonfire weekend



## Namibia 2015

Mark Tringham (Gloucester SS) had been asked to put together a team of cavers to look for new caves in the northwest of Namibia, between the towns of Opuwo and Sesfontein (the shaded area on the maps below). The primary purpose was to explore any such caves and determine if they had any environmental value, and what protection measures they would need. It was also intended to determine what wildlife (principally bats) was present in any caves discovered. Only a little previous cave exploration had been done in this area, mostly in the 1990s, by cavers from S Africa. They had found several caves by using aerial photographs, and Mark had used the modern equivalent, satellite photography, to identify some features that were potential cave sites.



To join him, Mark recruited four cavers from Britain: Dave Appleing, Henry Dawson, Robin Weare, and myself. Also in the team were two French friends of Robin's, Antoine Aigueperse and Patricia 'Patou' Gentil.

The British contingent flew from Heathrow to Johannesburg on 5 September, and we met Antoine and Patou at Jo'burg Airport the next morning. The two groups had separate flights to Windhoek, the capital of Namibia, and we regrouped there a couple of hours later. We were met by our hosts from the IRDNC (Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation) organisation: Roger Collinson and his son William (a film-maker, who would be making a documentary film about our expedition); Agnes, who would be cooking for us; and Dave and Titus, who would be driving and arranging local guides.

We headed off on our way north to Opuwo, and stopped for the night at the Sylvanette Guesthouse in Okahandja.

We made an early start the next morning, travelling via Otjiwarongo and Outjo, where we had lunch. In Kamanjab, where we stopped for fuel, I was told there were two Himba women in the shop. My response was, how do you know they are Himba women? What I didn't

realise was they were in full tribal costume, with loin cloths, braided hair and gold-painted nipples!

Eventually we arrived at camp in Opuwo at 6 pm. A small, dry, dusty town. Our camp site was the Kunene Village Rest Camp on the edge of the town, and our tents, one each, had already been put up.

After breakfast the next day we were led to **Orumana Sinkhole**.



Orumana Sinkhole – main entrance

Photo: DA



Orumana Sinkhole from inside

Photo: MT

The main entrance to this is a large open hole, that had been descended by the S Africans. Dave rigged this, and Antoine rigged entrance 3 (one of two smaller holes), a 55 m drop. The open chamber at the bottom was a spacious 50 m by 60 m, and 130 m at its highest. A passage to one side of the rubble cone led to a chamber at the base of the second (undescended) entrance shaft. There were several animal bones on the dusty floor: birds, snake, lizard. Although there were lots of stalactites, and a fine column in the side chamber, everything was dry. The high level holes in the walls, that had been hoped to have potential for more cave, were seen to be nothing more than balconies.

We derigged and returned to the cars for lunch, and then drove to one of Mark's features, an isolated clump of trees. But there was no cave whatsoever.

Our first day out in the bush introduced us to mpani bees: tiny bees without a sting which try to fly up your nose and into your eyes, and see the ear wax of Europeans as a delicacy every one of them must sample.

On 9 September I was taken with Mark, Antoine, and Titus, by two local guides to a couple of small holes. The first was called **Omundu Pot 1**, after the tree just above it, which we used to fix the rope. This cave was just a single pitch of about 14 m. The second cave, close by, **Omundu Pot 2**, had 2 pitches, to a depth of 21 m. This one had 3 bats inside. Mark and I surveyed both caves. They had signs that they were extensively used by baboons - polished walls and lots of shit.



Antoine in Omundu Pot 1

Photo: MT



Omundu Pot 2

Photo: JD

On the way back to camp, there was an area of limestone by the gravel road, and I thought it would be worth a look. We found several small holes, but only one was interesting enough to enter. Antoine explored it and drew a survey sketch.

Back at camp we had another superb meal prepared by Agnes and her team of helpers.

We started 10 September with hand-made doughnuts (courtesy of Agnes) for breakfast! I went with Henry, Antoine and Patou to search for "Irish's Lost Pot". In 1977, John Irish had found a "very small sinkhole", but not explored it, and had only located it as "about one third of the way along a straight line between Blister Pot and Orumana Sinkhole". Mark had calculated a waypoint for this, so we set off to find it. We first located **Blister Pot**, which was another large, open hole, but had no passages leading off, as Henry confirmed when he climbed down into it.

After 2 more hours of walking, we got to the waypoint, but it was on a flat valley bottom with no possibility of any cave. We ate some more doughnuts that we had brought for lunch, then split up and wandered around the nearest slopes looking for the hole. After an hour or so, without finding anything, we regrouped and continued on our way to look for Mark's Feature 8, a dark patch on a hillside. We got to this point about an hour and a half later, and there was absolutely nothing of interest. A large patch of rock with termite mounds could have been what had showed up on the satellite photo.

It was a long way back to Orumana, even by the shortest route via Blister Pot. I'm afraid I got stricken by severe leg cramp a couple of times. Our appearance by the Orumana school playground gave the children some entertainment. We had some beers at the Orumana shop - most welcome.

The next day we moved to Camp Aussicht, further south, near the road to Sesfontein. I went with Henry, Patou, William and Roger first to the camp to meet the owner, Marius Steiner. His camp was very idiosyncratic; the signs on the track in kept us all amused, and the showers and toilets had entertaining aspects. Our next intention was to visit Feature 28, but the usual approach by Joubert Pass was not possible because the pass was being widened and was closed. So we followed the new road that had been put in as a bypass and after a few km went off down a track, which we followed until we got to the closest we could get to Feature 28 in a vehicle, about 4.5 km. We continued down the track to see where it went, and by a cowherd's hut met a man who Marius had told us to look for. He told us he could arrange a



Blister Pot

Photo: PG

meeting with someone who knew of a nearby cave. On the way back to Camp Aussicht we stopped for beers at the village of Otjimatemba, where the road diversion was, and were told of more people who could take us to some caves.

That evening we were joined by Duncan Gilchrist, a colleague of Roger's: a real Great White Hunter type, very knowledgeable about the bush, its plants, and bird and animal life.

So the next morning I went with Titus and the 2 local guides from Otjimatemba, with Roger and Duncan, to us, and Roger and Duncan following, to 2 small holes, almost directly W of Joubert Pass. The first hole to be descended was **Mundumithe Cave**. This started with a 3 m drop into large chamber with a klipspringer skeleton on the floor. Up over a rubble pile at the end led to a wide, descending chamber with stalactites and a few bats. The dry slope was littered with moth wings. At the bottom a slot, ringed with stal, opened into another chamber with a steep calcite slope up to the left, and yet more bats (maybe 2 dozen). A squeeze round the right hand side of the rubble pile in the centre led to a last, small chamber with a flat dirt floor and a ribcage visible on it.



Omutungi Pot

Photo: JD



Patou in Mundumithe Cave

Photo: MT

The smaller hole, **Omutungi Pot**, named after the twisted, red-barked tree over the entrance, was a simple straight drop of about 15 m to a dirt floor with bones. There were rifts at both ends, and avens upwards, but all too small to enter.

Roger and Duncan had gone off to look at another feature, and Titus and I caught up with them at the shop in Otjimatemba village, and we went with them to look at access to Features 2 & 3. We got as close as 3 and 4 km respectively, on different tracks. Then we went to Okarumba village, which has a solar-powered water pump supplying a tank for livestock. At about 5:30 pm a herd of elephants, over 20 of them, came to drink. We watched while they all drank and jostled: fantastic! Then we returned to Camp Aussicht.

Because Mundumithe Cave needed surveying, I returned there on 13th September with Mark and Patou. Will joined us to do some filming. From the last chamber I'd got to, a crawl up to the left got us into yet another chamber, this time really the last one. There were more bats in there, and even flying out of a 'rabbit hole' near the floor. Patou and Mark took it in turns to back into it and feel around with their feet, but it was too small. Will climbed down into the cave and did his first underground filming.

We returned to the cars and had some lunch, then Roger took us to look at an oasis pool below some cliffs covered in tufa; a possible place to build a tourist camp. After some stops at various grog shops, we went for another look at the water tank at Okarumba, but only one large bull elephant came to drink.

On Monday 14th driver Dave took an elite GSS team (Dave, Mark and myself) and picked up three local guides who took us to **Okavua Pot**. But no-one had thought to bring any rope! So Dave went all the way back to the camp with driver Dave to get some: 2.5km each way there in the hot sun. Dave rigged the entrance pitch, then did a bit of gardening at the top and threw a big rock down the shaft. By a stroke of remarkably bad luck, the rope had got draped on an overhang where the rock hit it and almost cut it in two! Dave went down the rope and found the split section of rope. He actually shouted a few expletives as he did a mid-rope changeover and climbed back up! We re-rigged the pitch with a new rope.

The pitch was a 26 m drop into a blind pot. The descent was like Jack and the Beanstalk, alongside 26 m-long tree roots reaching the floor, free-hanging from the roof of the chamber.



Joe with the oryx horns

Photo: MT

We found an oryx skull with horns on the floor. This tied in with a local legend in which the best hunter in the area had been chasing an oryx with his hunting dogs. When the oryx jumped down the pitch, the dogs followed it! So not only did he not have any food to take home but he also lost his dogs. We found no dog remains, but only some deer and porcupine skulls.

At the lowest part of the pot, Dave bent down to look at a bat hanging close to the floor, and the O<sub>2</sub> meter he was wearing went off, showing a level of 16.8%.

After derigging the cave, we were taken to look at a vertical hole we called **Bat Pipe Hole**, due to the bats we saw flying in and out of it.

We took the guides back to Okarumba Village, and on the way back saw some elephants going west towards the well. We stopped and took some photos, then drove on. A bit further we came round a corner and there was a herd right by the road! One of the young bulls chased us for a while – perhaps he was just showing how macho he was.



Mark descending Okavua Pot

Photo: JD



Joe by the tree root

Photo: MT

On what was the last day of caving, Titus took Antoine, Patou, Robin and me to meet a local man called Uahana, and he showed us a cave with a substantial entrance in a small cliff face; we called it **Uahana Cave** after our guide. There was a short upper level, with impenetrable gaps in the floor. The main part of the cave was an 8 m drop, which Antoine rigged by putting in a couple of bolts. But there were only a couple of small cross rifts at the bottom, occupied by several bats. After Robin surveyed it, we gave Titus his first descent and re-ascent of a cave using SRT equipment.



Antoine descending Uahana Pot

Photo: PG

We took Uahana back to his house and went back to the main road. By chance, we met the very man Titus was looking for, and he and some of his friends took us to a hole in the middle of a rocky area the other side of the dry Okuapa River. We called it **Okuapa Cave**. A slot between rocks led into a wide sloping chamber. There were three ways between the floor and the ceiling leading to a lower chamber with a low, water-carved tunnel between a mud bank and the back wall. None of us had decent caving gear, particularly no knee pads, so none of us ventured into this.

Robin surveyed the cave, and Antoine and Patou took some photos, then we took the guides back home. On the way back we visited the Himba ochre mine. This is the source of the red ochre that the Himba women mix with animal fat or water and spread over their skin as a kind of natural sunblock and protection against insects. We only looked at the undercuts at the base of the hill – the rest of the team looked at more excavations at the top.

On 16 September we put away our caving gear and headed back to Opuwo. When we got there we found we were to be camping at the Opuwo Country Lodge. This was a very swish hotel, up on a hill above the town, with an outside swimming pool and superb panoramas in all directions. The following evening Mark gave a presentation in the hotel on our expedition to IRDNC staff and people from other funding bodies, such as the WWF. This was well-received and suggested there was a strong chance for further exploration.

Before Mark's talk we had spent the day on a long trip up to the Epupa Falls on the Kunene River. The 180 km journey was on gravel roads, which we took at high speed: Henry was driving and described it as like driving on marbles! The falls were impressive, even in low water. We had lunch in the lodge overlooking the falls and on the way back we visited a couple of Himba villages. These were typical affairs with mud and stick houses, shaped like beehives. At the first (a village of goat herders) some local girls showed us a few dances in exchange for some food and a few dollars and we were invited into one of the houses where Henry and Mark quizzed the (elderly?) occupant and she in turn quizzed us. The villagers set out loads of hand-carved souvenirs for us, so we felt obliged to buy some gifts. We went on to stop at a second Himba village with lots of cattle, and an awful lot of dung, right among the huts. The smell was much worse compared to the village of the goat herders.

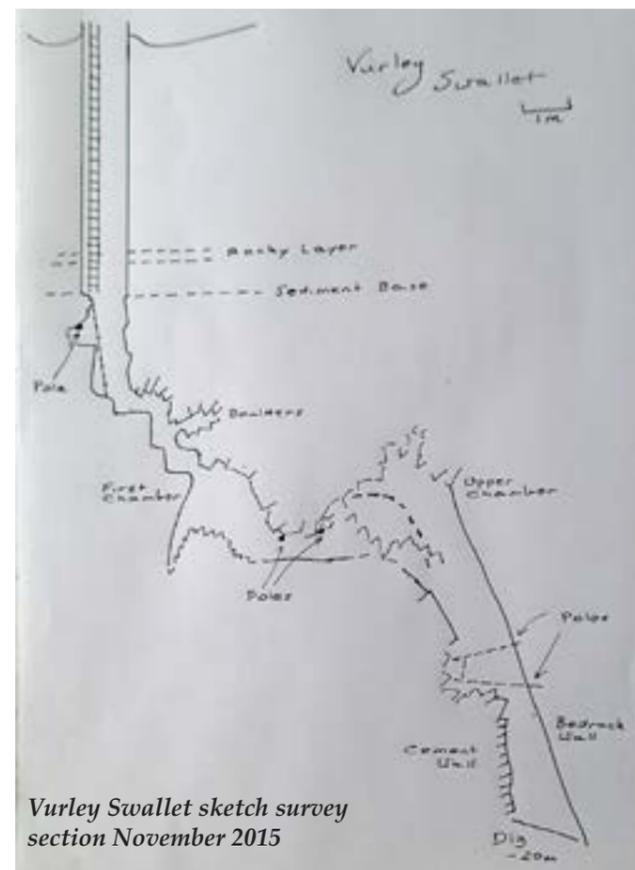
The next 3 days we were rewarded with a trip through the Etosha National Park. We camped each night, at Olifantsrus, Halali Lodge, and Namutoni Lodge. Each day we drove from watering-hole to watering-hole, in the hope of seeing wildlife. The number of animals we saw was terrific: elephants, rhinos, lions, a cheetah, kudu, oryx, giraffes, steenbok, and large numbers of springbok and zebra.

At the Olifantsrus campsite, an artificial waterhole with a building beside it (reached by a walkway) has been built, from which we could watch, at close range, the wild animals coming to drink. Just before dinner, several elephants, including young ones, and a rhino appeared. At Namutoni, some elephants had got through the perimeter fence of the lodge during the night, and one had been crashing about in the bushes close to our camp site. It was still there in the morning – very close.

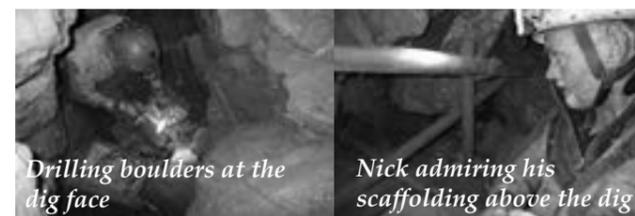
Henry, Patou and Antoine had left the park on the 19th because their homeward flights were earlier, and the rest of us left on 21 September, for the long drive to Windhoek, arriving in the rush hour – exactly what we had hoped to avoid! We were put up in 2 hotels as there wasn't room for all of us at the same one. In the evening, Will organised a meal at a well-known venue, 'Joe's Beerhouse', where we enjoyed a good meal, with beer, for less than £10 each. We spent a couple of hours the next morning sightseeing round Windhoek: the Alte Fest, Christ Church cathedral, the Independence Museum. Driver Dave took us to the airport, where we met Will, waiting for a different flight. There were no problems with the extra baggage, and our flights via Johannesburg were uneventful.

All in all, a fantastic experience; a chance to visit some of the less well-travelled parts of the country, explore some different caves, and hopefully help develop the local economy.

## Joe Duxbury

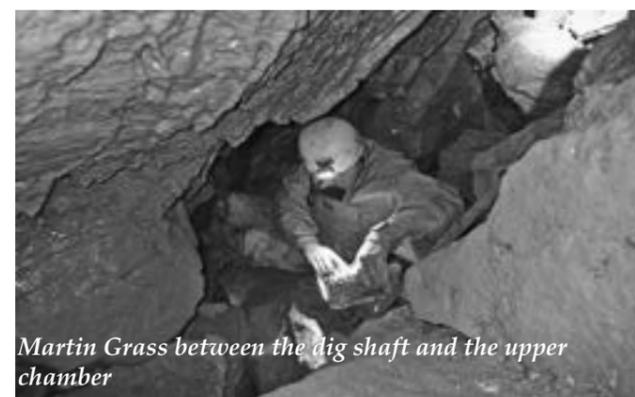


Vurley Swallet sketch survey section November 2015

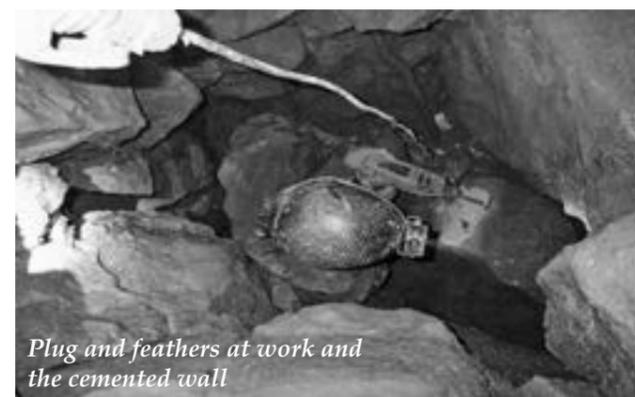


Drilling boulders at the dig face

Nick admiring his scaffolding above the dig



Martin Grass between the dig shaft and the upper chamber



Plug and feathers at work and the cemented wall

## Vurley Swallet Dig

Since the concrete pipes were placed the dig has progressed steadily downwards to a depth of 20 metres. Most weeks there have been two teams at work. The Tuesday Diggers (aka The Old Farts) dig all day Tuesdays backed up by the younger folk on Thursday nights. The Tuesday Diggers dig and use plug and feathers whilst the Thursday gang prefer capping and a bit of wall building. Initially a tiny hole emitting a strong draught was followed. This in turn led to a small descending rift which to everyone's surprised dropped into a roomy chamber (The 1st Chamber). Well its roomy by Mendip dig standards. A passage leading onward was opened up and scaffolded and another roomy chamber was entered at high level. (The Upper Chamber). A bouldery crawl connected this to a smaller, well decorated chamber. (Kate's Aven). Below these points there is a solid bedrock wall and the current dig is following this vertically downwards. We are now some three metres down in this dig taking out mud and boulders. It is a great relief to all that all the dug spoil can be hauled to the upper chamber rather than taken out of the cave. We have enough room up there to last a good many months of digging. Ideally I would like to see a bit of engineering catch up (our engineer is off sick). We need a better system of getting the spoil up the six metres from the dig base to the upper chamber. Just enlarging the route would be of help as a minimum of four is needed to move stuff that short distance. This could be achieved by two people so whilst we have a full team the hauling continues. It's getting too cold and wet to wait on the surface now. Though the whole project was taken on as a summer dig it looks likely that we shall carry on through the winter months. It's a bit of a walk from the road to the cave so I am thinking Vurley must be one of the farthest Mendip Caves from a road.

By Nick Chipchase

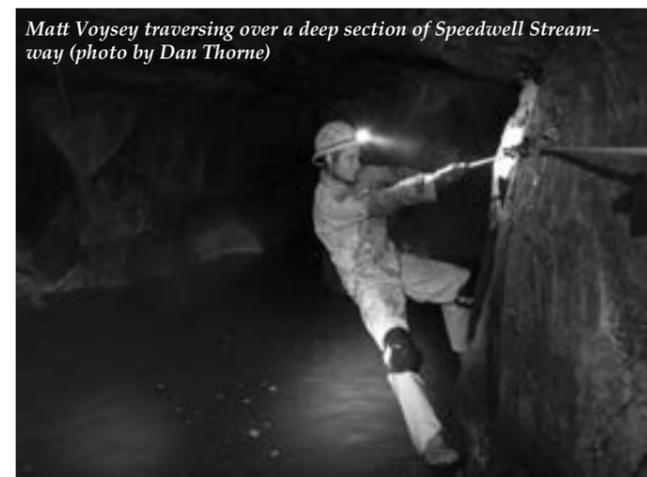
# Derbyshire Weekend

9th to 11th October 2015

A total of nine Chelsea members (Mandy and Matt Voysey, Adrian Fawcett, Dan Thorne, Lisa Boore, John Newton, John Stevens, Jann Padley, Mike Read) gathered at the Orpheus Caving Club hut for a weekend's caving in the Peak District. I'd not stayed there for about 20 years - the toilets are still outside, but at least they are now part of a proper washroom.

Four people – Matt, Mandy, Mike and myself – headed up to Derbyshire a day early in order to do a trip on Friday to Rowter Hole. The objective was to reach Hourglass Aven – beyond the tight and awkward "Ice Cream Trail" (which was the limit of Adrian and Chris's trip earlier in the year). Following a leisurely start, shopping for gear at Caving Supplies in Buxton, and taking a number of wrong turns we finally got underground around 12:30. Fortunately everything beyond the entrance shaft is still rigged with the Buttered Badgers' ropes otherwise we wouldn't have had enough time to complete the trip. It's a long way down, and there are many rebelay and deviations along the way.

All was relatively trouble-free until we reached the end of the Ice Cream Trail and encountered the big loop of rope we had



Matt Voysey traversing over a deep section of Speedwell Streamway (photo by Dan Thorne)



John Stevens making a close inspection of Main Rising, Speedwell Streamway (photo by Dan Thorne)

been told to expect. The rope is tied off at both ends, which are at similar heights about 30 metres apart, and the rope hangs down maybe 15 metres in the middle. The idea is simple enough: you abseil down as far as you can, then change over to ascent, remove your descender, and up the other side you go. Except the rope is tight and at a bad angle, and a changeover in these conditions (and with a big black hole below!) is something of a nightmare. And to make matters even worse, Mike had a mishap when part of his gear caught in the handle of his chest jammer and pulled it open!

Mike decided to return to the relative safety of the Ice Cream Trail, while the remaining three of us headed up rope after rope in Hourglass Aven. At several points plastic netting has been installed to stop loose rock falling down the shaft but this doesn't remove the need to be very careful. The ropes end abruptly at the top of the aven – a small chamber with no way on. A boulder slope lower down leads via more ropes to an attractive calcified passage and a choke.

The journey out was uneventful, although the Ice Cream Trail is a bit more of a struggle going back – especially at the place where it is necessary to get off an electron ladder and get your upper body into a small hole a couple of metres away horizontally. Why didn't they hang the ladder closer?



Dan Thorne in Hillocks Mine Engine Shaft (photo by John)

After a relatively early start to allow us to get to the TSG by the appointed hour, Saturday saw eight of us in Peak Cavern. Colostomy Crawl was just as long and as squalid as we remembered from last year, but at least this time we weren't carrying SRT gear and rope. Our destination this time was the Speedwell Streamway and we followed it to an abrupt conclusion where the stream rises from a deep sump. There are several other passages leading off Speedwell Streamway which we also explored, one leading to a deep blue sump called the Bathing Pool. And one to a huge aven with a waterfall cascading down.

With time to spare after returning through Colostomy Crawl we detoured to the main Peak Streamway, first to the downstream sump then upstream. This washed off some of the mud, the rest we subsequently scrubbed off before returning through the showcave.

As is often the case, options had been left open for Sunday's trip, but this eventually crystallised as a trip to Hillocks Mine with all three entrance routes rigged. However we didn't have a suitable spanner to open the lids on the two entrance shafts. There was some doubt as to what size was required for Peak District entrances – as it turned out two different sizes were required for Hillocks alone. John Stevens discovered a random spanner in a cupboard, but fortunately Boyd Potts then arrived at the hut and was able to lend us an adjustable one.

Before getting changed we decided we should locate all the entrances and make sure we could open them. There we met a pair of elderly former cavers who were visiting the mine entrances in the area, presumably for old times' sake.

With the three routes rigged we all met up in the mine workings at the bottom which didn't take too long to explore. Although it's not easy to find, John Stevens located the start of Meccano Passage – the constricted and damp connection with Knotlow – but that was never part of today's plan! Everybody went out again and back in using different entrances. All three routes are very different, and some of the shafts are quite narrow in places. A combination of mined passage and natural caverns, there is a lot of variety in a small area.

For a while we lost track of where everyone was, but ultimately the mine was derigged with nobody accidentally left underground.

A good weekend, and perhaps an October trip to the Peak District will become a regular feature of the club programme.

Story and photos by Adrian Fawcett

# Cwmystwyth Lead and Copper Mine

Sat 29/8/15 - By Paul Tarrant

A large group of nine CSS members attended this trip on the August bank holiday Saturday. Last year we visited Bonsall's Level Fawr and Taylor's level and our intention this time was to visit Herbert's and Alderson's levels and if time permitted the lower levels of Bonsall's Level Fawr which would require us dropping a 22 m pitch. We chanced to meet with Roy Fellows, the new owner of the mineral rights and hence all the mines in Cwmystwyth. We exchanged pleasantries with Roy and thanked him for his great work in conjunction with Stuart France in securing access to some of Wales' major mine complexes.

We first visited Herbert's Level, which involved a walk up the Nant yr Onnen stream. This stream has cut a very deep course through the hill and was steep to ascend, although an old tramway going on the eastern bank from Taylor's adit was the obvious, easier way to have followed than the course we had taken. We found the adit entrance of Herbert's right by the stream and this gave access to a cross cut passage (an exploratory passage driven in the hope it would intersect commercially exploitable ore bodies). The cross cut was originally driven around 1670 with the intention of cutting into the Kingside lode, which it did after about 100 m.

Going left required us to traverse around the top of a flooded stope with massive timbers holding up the floor we were walking on. The water looked very deep and clear. The passage soon ended after about 40 m. The main way on was back at the junction with the cross cut passage. We followed this and then soon encountered a very high timber stemped stope soaring up into the roof. This soon led us to a large mined out area with a shaft ascending on the left hand side with water tumbling

down from daylight above. We then encountered a small shaft in the floor which was taking a reasonable flow of water. A quick look down the shaft showed it to be of some depth so we moved away from this (it drains the waters from Herbert's via Alderson's level about 30 m deeper).

We ended up at a mined out chamber with a large wooden ore shoot, rising up out of waist deep water. I'd read previously that progression beyond this point is not only very wet but also dangerous so we did nothing to disprove this warning. This whole area was very impressive as there was another rising shaft revealing daylight filtering in from the surface. With water tumbling down the shaft you could be forgiven for thinking you were at the bottom of a deep Yorkshire pot like Alum. We could hear Joe Duxbury shouting at us from the surface. He had declined to descend the mine due to a gammy leg. Looking back along the passage we had come along, we



Herberts 1



Herberts 2

could see sockets cut in to the wall of the passage which would have taken the timbers necessary to support the floors enabling the miners to cut into the mineral vein.

After taking some photographs, we traced our steps to the entrance and went further upstream to see the fenced off area of Herbert's stope which we had just been looking at from below. A sizeable waterfall was tumbling down the shaft which sported a false floor at one end of the shaft with massive timbers holding up the grass covered rock floor. We saw some evidence of mineral vein at the surface around here.

Finding Joe, we then descended to Alderson's level which was driven in 1825 under Herbert's level with the intention of draining it. We followed the cross cut which again had a passage going off on the right following the same ore body that Herbert's had exploited. This passage we followed which started getting higher until the stoped passage revealed further jammed timbers high above us. We had to

pass through a veritable waterfall to get to the end of the passage which ended when the lode was exhausted or lost. After many 'Oohs' & 'Aahs', we returned to the surface to find Joe had left us for Whitewalls.

After a brief lunch back at the cars we made for Level Fawr. We had explored most of the upper reaches of the impressive Jeremiah's Stope that we'd seen last year. This time we followed the main cross cut until we came to the collapse with a crawl through a plastic pipe, safely leading us to the shaft down to the Kingside lode and Level y Ffordd. Two bolts in the footwall in the main passage provided a belay point for our rope but we took the precaution of using a rope protector where the rope went over the top of the shaft collar. The two rails of the skip way (it continued going up above us but a section has been cut out and removed) were awkward to abseil down - the pitch is inclined at an angle of 75° so you have to walk down the incline until you reach the shaft bottom in an adit. What looked like a solid floor turned out not to be for Chris, who presumably



Aldersonwetstope

did not hear my warning about the debris floating on top of the continuation of the skip way down to the foot of the further flooded sections! He stepped right into it!

The passage continued more or less running parallel with the passage we had descended from. We came upon a well-built pack wall of deads which it was possible to climb up over to give access to a very large black chamber containing masses of spoil that had fallen in from the collapse at the far end. Getting back to the main adit we exploited the better part of about half a kilometre of passages that were part of Level y Ffordd and which, in the past, connected with Taylor's level. We came to the collapse which we thought might connect to the surface but there was no draft, flies or moths to indicate if this was the case. People started investigating a side passage nearby which had been partially walled off. There was a reason for this and it was hydrogen sulphide with its characteristic rotten egg smell! We quickly evacuated that passage! A word of warning, if you ever smell rotten eggs in a mine, remove yourself immediately from the area as if you continue you will become immune to the smell, leading you to think you have returned to fresher air when this will probably not be the case.

There were some old artefacts in the lower levels with old shovel blades, drillbits, boxes and cans which made this an interesting place to explore. I had to leave early and made for the surface, leaving the rest of the party to bumble around a few more of the explorable passages. This was a smashing day's excursion to this fascinating mine complex. Hopefully we will revisit it in the years to come.

Participants: Tim Gibbs, Matt and Mandy Voysey, Adrian Fawcett, Chris Tomlin, Jason McCorrison, Joe Duxbury, John Stevens and Paul Tarrant, the Scribe.



*Send in your trip report with pictures, the CSS Newsletter is a great place to tell your story. Old or new we'd love to read about it.*

### The Geology of Ogof Ffynnon Ddu

SWCC's Andy Freem has put together some extremely good caving films and posted them on YouTube. He has posted four excellent films on the geology of Ogof Ffynnon Ddu, where Dr. Keith Ball, describes the geology and the geomorphological factors that have shaped OFD. You can watch them through the following links.

[http://youtu.be/Wx\\_XtDLcWeU](http://youtu.be/Wx_XtDLcWeU)

<http://youtu.be/pOYLkt5Efw>

<http://youtu.be/nelqIcubxAw>

<http://youtu.be/ltTAdVgRo2Q>

## INDEX TO VOLUME 57

Index to the following Chelsea Spelæological Society Newsletters (ISSN 0045-6381), published in 2015:

Number	Publication Date	Number	Publication Date
1&2	January/February	7&8&9	July/August/September
3&4&5&6	March/April/May/June	10&11&12	October/November/December

The index uses n:p(PS) where n is the Newsletter Number (only 1<sup>st</sup>), p the Page Number(s), P indicates a photograph is included and S a survey. Volume number is not shown as it is all 57. The index is divided into sections as follows:

Section 1 – UK

Section 2 –

Section 3 –

Section 4 –

### SECTION 1 - UK

#### A

**Agen Allwedd**, 3:30(P)  
 Coal Cellar, 10:100  
 Crystal Gallery, 1:10, 1:17  
 Flood Passage, 1:10-11  
 Grand Circle, 10:87  
 Inner Circle, 10:87  
 Keyhole Chamber, 1:10-18(PS)  
 Lower Main Stream Passage, 10:87  
 Main Stream Passage, 1:17  
 Midsummer Passage, 10:99-100(PS)  
 Mud Rose Chamber, 1:17  
 Music Room, 10:83(P), 10:87  
 North West Junction, 1:17  
 Recharge, 10:99-100(PS)  
 Sand Caverns, 1:3  
 Sandstone Passage, 1:11  
 Swiss Village, 10:87  
 Turkey Pool, 10:87  
 Turkey Streamway, 10:87  
 Twin Avens, 1:17  
 Upper Keyhole Passage, 1:3, 1:10-18(PS)  
**Alum Pot**, 7:57(P), 7:58(P), 7:66-67(P)  
**Arial Hole**, 3:46(P)

#### B

**Banwell Caves**, 1:5  
 Bath Hot Springs, 1:4-5  
**Big Sink**, 3:36-37(P)  
**Black Shiver Pot**, 3:40-41  
**Bradshaw's Cave**, 7:60-71(PS)  
**Brimble Pit**, 3:38

#### C

**Charterhouse Cave**, 7:65, 10:90-92(P)  
**Cheddar Risings**, 1:20  
 CSS  
 Annual Dinner, Notice of 2016, 7:77, 10:83, 10:121  
 Annual General Meeting, Notice of 2016, 10:121  
 Golden Oldies, 10:104-105(P)  
 Meets List, 3:54, 7:78, 1:121  
 Meets Reports (Social), 1:3(P), 10:84-85(P)  
 Organisation, 1:27, 3:31, 3:55, 7:79, 10:121  
**Cross Swallet**, 3:38  
**Cwm Dwr**, see OFD  
**Cwmystwyth Mines**, 3:34-35, 10:116-8(P)

#### D

**Dan yr Ogof**, 10:87  
**Darren Cilau**, see Ogof-y-Darren-Cilau  
 Drills, Drill Bits and Cases, Review, 1:101-103(P)  
**Dog Hole**, 3&4:21  
**Dow Cave**, 3:40  
**Dowbergill Passage**, 3:40  
**Draethen Lead Mines**, 5&6:45

#### E

**Eglwys Faen**, 7:68

#### F

**Fell's Swoop**, 1:3, 1:27  
 Fracking, 1:4-5

#### G

**GB Cavern**, 3:53(P)  
**Goatchurch Cavern**, 1:9, 3:53

#### H

**Hillocks Mine**, 10:115

#### L

**Lametry Bay Caves, Lundy**, 1:24-25(P)  
**Little Neath River Cave**, 10:87  
**Llygad Lluchwr 2**,  
**Locke's Hole**, 3:38

#### M

**Manor Farm**, 1:8(P)  
**Middle Down Drove Pit**, 3:38  
**Mistral Hole**, 3:40  
**Montague Steps Cave, Lundy**, 1:24-5(P)

#### N

**Nant Rhin**, 7:61(P)  
**Needles Eye Cave**, 1:24  
**Nettle Pot**, 7:64-65

#### O

**Ogof Cnwc**, see under **Ogof-y-Darren-Cilau**  
**Ogof Craig a'r Fynnon**, 3:34-35(P), 10:87-88  
**Ogof Draenen**, 10:88  
**Ogof Fynnon Ddu**, 3:34, 10:86-87  
**Ogof Rhyd Sych**, 10:88  
**Ogof-y-Darren-Cilau**, 10:81(P)

5-Ways,  
Antler Passage, 1:1(P), 1:3, 1:19, 3:29(P), 7:69  
Blue Greenies, 10:87  
Bonsai Streamway, 7:69  
Busman's, 1:3, 1:19(P)  
Chain Ladders, 7:69(PS)  
Crown Jewels, 7:80 ("P")  
Crystal Oxbow, 7:69  
Eastern Flyover, 7:69  
Forgotten Passage, 7:69  
Frag Street, 7:69  
Friday 13<sup>th</sup>, 10:87  
Frog Street, 7:69  
Half Mile Passage, 7:69  
Hard Rock, 7:69  
Helibeds, 7:69, 10:87  
Leonie Jayne's Playpen, 10:87  
Meeting Room, 7:69  
Nameless Canyon, 7:69  
Ogof Cnwc, 1:3, 1:19  
Perseverance Passage, 7:69  
Price's Folly/Dig, see Ogof Cnwc  
Psychotronic Strangeways, 10:87  
Restaurant, 10:87  
Terminal Sump, 7:69  
Time Machine, The, 7:69, 10:87  
Western Flyover, 7:69  
**Otter Hole**, 3:42-45(P), 7:78(P)

## P

**Peak Cavern**, 7:64, 10:115  
**Pierre's Pot**, 3:53  
**Pippikin Pot**, 3:40  
**Price's Dig/Price's Old Dig**, see Ogof Cnwc  
**Providence Pot**, 3:40

## R

Rescue Practice, 3:34-35  
**Reservoir Hole**, 1:22(P), 3:41, 10:93(P), 10:122(P)

## NON UK

### SECTION 2 – India

**Fusem Kei Caves/Long Khum Caves**, 10:93-96(P)  
**Meziphema Cave**, 10:95(P)  
**Monzu Kei**, 10:96  
Nagaland State Reconnaissance, 10:94-98(PS)  
**Saluni Cave**, 10:95-97(P)  
**Tanken Maroi Spring**, 10:96

### SECTION 3 – Montenegro

**Sipun Cave**, 7:62-63(S)

### SECTION 4 – Namibia

**Bat Pipe Hole**, 10:110  
**Blister Pot**, 10:108-109(P)  
**Himba Oche Mine**, 10:111  
**Mundumithe Cave**, 10:109-110(P)  
**Okavua Pot**, 10:110-111(P)

**Rod's Pot**, 3:53  
**Rowter Hole**, 7:64, 10:114

## S

**St. Andrew's Well**, 1:20-21(P)  
**Sandy Hole**, 3:46-47(P)  
**Sell Gill Holes**, 7:67  
**Shatter Cave**, 1:4-5(P), 1:9(P), 3:52(PS)  
**Silica Mines**, 1:6  
**Simpsons Pot**, 3:41  
**Speedwell Cavern**, 10:82(P)  
**Stoke Lane Slocker**, 1:8  
**Swanage Mine**, 3:46-47  
**Swildon's Hole**, 1:4-5(P), 1:7(P), 1:9, 1:20, 1:22, 3:53(P)

## T

**Thrupe Lane Swallet**, 1:2(P), 1:8-9(P), 1:20  
**Tibbet's Point Mine, Lundy**, 1:24-25(P)  
**Totty Pot**, 3:38

## U

**Upper Flood Swallet**, 1:9(P), 1:28(P)

## V

**Vurley Swallet**, 3:38-39(P), 3:41, 10:113(PS)

## W

**Whitchurch Farm Rifts**, 3:32-33(P)  
**White Pit**, 3:38  
**Windsor Hill Sinks**, 1:20  
**WL Cave**, 3:56(P)  
**Wookey Hole**, 1:20, 7:72-76(P)

## Y

**Yordas Pot**, 7:66

**Okuapa Cave**, 10:111  
**Omundu Pot 1**, 10:107-108(P)  
**Omundu Pot 2**, 10:107-108(P)  
**Omutungi Pot**, 10:109-110(P)  
**Orumana Sinkhole**, 1:107(P)  
Reconnaissance, 10:106-112(PS)  
**Uahana Cave**, 10:111(P)

### SECTION 5 – Spain

**Cueva de la Hoyuca**, 3:48  
**Giant Panda Entrance**, 3:48-51(P)  
**Renada system**, 3:48-51(P)  
**Utheke**, 3:48(P)  
**Vaca system**, 3:49-51  
Via Ferrata, 3:50(P)  
**Villine System**, 3:49

## Officers of the Society:

### Chairman

Chris Seal  
Throckmorton House, New Road, Draycott,  
Cheddar, Somerset, BS27 3SG  
css@chrisseal.net

### Secretary

Adrian Fawcett  
5 Ambryn Rd  
New Inn  
Pontypool  
TORFAEN  
NP4 0NJ  
(01495 763130)  
(07973 815050)  
adrianfawcett@talktalk.net

### Treasurer

Gary Jones  
29 Canney Close, Chiseldon  
Swindon  
SN4 0PG  
(01372) 450958 (Home)  
07979 854059 (Mobile)  
garyrobertjones@hotmail.com

### Cottage Warden

John Stevens  
14 Kiln Close, Hermitage, Thatcham  
Newbury, Berks, RG18 9TQ  
(01635) 200879 (Home)  
john@k-stevens.co.uk

### Tacklemaster

Joe Duxbury  
16 Coombe Glen Lane  
Up Hatherley  
Cheltenham  
GL51 3LE  
01242 237378  
jduxbury@blueyonder.co.uk

### Newsletter Editor

Steve Sharp  
43 The Crescent, Sea Mills  
Bristol BS9 2JT  
07768 367060 (Mobile)  
(0117) 9040587 (Home)  
Steve-Sharp-Photography@virginmedia.com

### Librarian

Paul Tarrant  
10 Llwyn y Golomen, Parc Gwernfadog, Morriston  
Swansea, SA6 6SX  
(01792) 795600 (Home)  
07867 820507 (Work)  
ptpeaty@yahoo.co.uk

### Meets Secretary

Mandy Voysey  
23 Westbury Leigh  
Westbury  
Wilts  
BA13 3SE  
mandola76@gmail.com

### Records Officer

John Cooper  
31 Elm Close, Wells, Somerset, BA5 1LZ  
(01749) 670568 (Home)  
csspub@googlemail.com

### Web Master

Stuart France  
The Smithy, Crickhowell, Powys, NP8 1RD  
(01874) 730527 (Home)  
css@linetop.com

### Rescue Liaison

Paul Tarrant  
10 Llwyn y Golomen, Parc Gwernfadog, Morriston  
Swansea, SA6 6SX  
(01792) 795600 (Home)  
07867 820507 (Work)  
ptpeaty@yahoo.co.uk

### PDCMG Liaison

Chris Seal  
Throckmorton House, New Road, Draycott,  
Cheddar, Somerset, BS27 3SG  
css@chrisseal.net

### Committee Member

Mel Reid  
3 Bryntirion Terrace, Llangollen, LG20 8LP  
07711 943492 (Mobile)  
melrei@hotmail.com

### Committee Member

Jason McCorriston  
72 Christchurch Road, Penmaen Estate  
Oakdale, Blackwood, Gwent, NP12 0UX  
(01495) 221479 (Home)  
jason\_mccorriston@talktalk.net

### Committee Member

John Newton  
39 North Park Grove, Roundhay, Leeds, LS8 1EL  
(0113 2933807)(Home)  
07796 696916 (Mobile)  
johnnewton2@virginmedia.com

### Committee Member

Lucy Jones  
6 West Down, Bookham, Leatherhead,  
Surrey, KT23 4LJ  
01372 450958 (Home)  
07880 738790 (Mobile)  
lucy\_n@tiscall.co.uk

### Whitewalls

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

## CSS Meets List 2015 By Paul Tarrant

30/1/16 CSS Annual Dinner  
31/1/16 CSS AGM

**Nicola Richens in Reservoir Hole**  
**Photo - Nick Chipchase**

