

1989

8th January Wookey Hole – Barrow Tanks, Bristol

Morning: Controllers PC, assisted by Dave Pike, Steve Roberts, Dave Horsley, Sebastian Prince, Phil G Churches, Pat Cronin; 9:2 to 20.

Chris Smart, Mike McDonald chamber 3 to 9:1.

Afternoon: Barrow Tanks

Murray Knapp, Dave Pike, Mike McDonald.

Performing line drills, and adjusting kit.

14th January Talybont, Usk

Dave Pike, Mike McDonald

Spirited DP away, to enjoy a day out from having to endure unending attempts at gallows humour, regarding his incident at Wookey. Two Somerset CDG are real twats, having no notion of what DP went through before he passed out. Tried explaining he experienced something like a failed parachute deployment; then faced to await an inevitable death. Their comments showed they have no empathy; what little respect once held for these posturing, bullshitting fools has gone; these “divers”, who consider DP, the lesser man, actually contribute little toward the CDG or in fact any, actual, original exploration.

15th January Wookey Hole

Controller Dave Pike

Danny Bradshaw, David Horsley; Chamber 2 to 22,

Steve Roberts 9:2 to 23

Sebastian Prince to 9:2 to 22, shallow route

Nick Geh 9:2 to 22.

Dig Hastilow, Chris Smart, and Phil G Churches Resurgence to 1; PC instructing trainees laying line.

Murray Knapp and Malcolm Foyle both experienced equipment issues.

29th January Wookey Hole

K Wills, Martin Bishop

Trip to visit 20; test a new light container; MB to look at Rich Websell’s climb and KW testing different flash guns. While changing, two car loads of Somerset section arrived. Approaching, they asked what training tasks should they conduct. Explained, this in fact a private trip. So, unavailable to watch over this unscheduled training session. Politely pointed out, as there was a qualified diver among them, he could oversee their training, by shouldering the responsibility for the group operating in Wookey. Terror, on said diver’s face was priceless. Its time he stepped up, having endlessly talked of his extensive prowess, extracting himself from so many desperate, underwater “Epics”. Left swiftly to enjoy the day: all to 20. Explored the chamber; twenty is a beautiful place; the vertical fluting entrancing, so similar to that in Kilcorney Cave, Co. Clare. MB confirmed Rich Websell’s climb is what he’d previously looked at: RW has gotten higher than MB. Dived to 22; visibility superb. KW’s ability to multitask is increasing, as are confidence levels. Dived back into zero visibility. Encountering a clusterfuck of trainees at the Slot, (-16m), met others bugging about up the slope to and in the 9:2 pool. Found their controller absent; the mud bank appeared a bomb site, kit strewn about; no equipment discipline at all. Exited: found the “controller” in his van; engine running, heater on. Pointed out his responsibility as a trainer; excuses forthcoming aplenty. Asked to see the list of divers; answer “I don’t need one”. Asked him name all divers so as to produce a list, right now; managing four of the seven. Robustly urged him, return fucking sharpish and take some

form of control over their training. His discomfiture increased all the more by MB and KW laughing hysterically at this fucking twat's complete lack of safety and responsibility toward his group of trainees, the CDG and the cave owners. Phone call later from Bob Drake, relating how said diver had rung BD bitterly complaining of the criticism. BD replied if he had issue with inaccuracies of the comments then best take it up directly; but before doing so, perhaps familiarize himself with responsibilities required of a qualified diver accompanying trainees into Wookey Hole. Otherwise, BD would take issue with the complainant's many fairy stories of astounding diving prowess, that none had actually, ever witnessed.

1st February Wookey Hole

Mike McDonald, Dave Pike

Asked to assist electricians install new lights, cables and clean existing. The task took a long time; no matter. An excellent opportunity to task load the boys; both did well. CDG receives lot of good will from the management. Completed this simple, but enormously appreciated task; dived Coases Loop, returning Loop extension; good visibility.

4th February Wookey Hole

Mike McDonald,

Superb visibility, Chamber 3 to 22; exiting Coases Loops extension. Progressing well.

5th February Wookey Hole

Controller:

Monthly training meet; numerous bodies; fortunately, almost all qualified. Several to Chamber 20, the others operated between 3 and 9:1, sorting kit.

9th February Wookey Hole

Mike McDonald

Training for MM, (and his camera), 9:2 to 22, exited chamber 3, uneventful trip.

15th February Wookey Hole

Controller:

Mike McDonald and Chris Smart; training to 20. CS had issues using a Somerset Section Poseidon; experiencing excessive inhalation resistance.

18th February Alston, Cumbria

Nigel Burns, K Wills.

Sub zero conditions, deep snowfall from the motorway, through to Alston, to Overwater. Eventually got through after a lot of pushing; midnight, missed the bar.

19th February Cappleclough - Smallclough Nenthead, Cumbria

Dave Gough, Cheg Chester, Nigel Burns, K Wills, Big John Cooper, Darren Hines.

Others arrived late morning. Decided to do Cappleclough and exit via Smallclough, en-route conduct further exploration. A late start meant the team emerged well after dark; clothes froze solid retreating down the mountain. An excellent night of pool and drink.

5th March Wookey Hole

Martin Bishop

Plan to deposit kit for the trip to 25: all gear through 23; stowed in 24. MB's new harness needs a simpler method to adjust the shoulder straps; MB needed help adjusting them.

10th March Wookey Hole

Martin Bishop

Took more kit to 24; 2 x 4 litre bottles of oxygen; to assist decompression.

12th March Wookey Hole

Martin Bishop

Took shallow route to Chamber 20 for a change; normal struggle through 23. Had a break in 24. MB produced a small thermos of real coffee from a rocket tube, just like a magician. And, two sandwiches; luxury. Using eighties, reached 25; good visibility. Decided to dive five metres apart; in fair visibility dropped slowly to -40m; a leaking inflator caused slight over inflation of Rob Palmers stab jacket; nothing of concern. Noted MB descend to -45m; not part of the plan: concern for the marks: saw descent checked. Stayed at -40m, MB arrived, signalled return to base. Curiously, felt narcosis en-route to 24, beyond the elbow. Over more coffee excellent MB explained his descent to -45m was due to misjudging the rate of descent, inflating the jacket a little later than actually needed. Left some kit in Chamber 24: out far too late for the bar.

19th March Wookey Hole

Martin Bishop

Inspected the faulty inflator valve; found tiny pieces of what looks like salt particles on the valve seating. MB repaired his drysuit intending to test it this trip. Close to 22 MB disappeared in a cloud of bubbles; a HP hose ruptured. MB shut down, heading on to 22. Replaced the hose with a spare. The hose had ruptured at the ferrule, being severely bent under MB's arm. MB also related his suit leaked; so unable to carry any of the kit bags: no buoyancy. While MB checked for the leak, repacked the tackle bags. Had difficulty controlling the loads. Followed MB to 20; his drysuit full of water: cold and with negative buoyancy. Followed MB toward 9:2. Difficulty manoeuvring; suffered headlong rush down slope to the Slot; secured two of the bags at the slot. Continued on to 9:2. Whilst MB stripped, returned to fetch the tackle bags. A superb trip: far too late for the bar.

25th March Ravens Well, Bristol

Cheg Chester, Mike McDonald

Introduced CC and MM to Ravens Well: a circa 15th century excavation to improve the water source for the ecclesiastical community once near Temple meads Railway Station.

26th March St. Cuthbert's Swallet

Alan Butcher, Stuart McManus, Mike McDonald

Commenced constructing the Aswan Dam, first concrete mixed for the foundations; AB and PC thoroughly shagged out, having carried in most of the weight.

27th March Bowery Corner Swallet

Jarratt, Gary & Alan Taylor,

A hilarious trip, so much went wrong, the farce ending with a loud bang; the way on, though constricted is open and draughting strongly.

1st April Wookey Hole

Pete Brooke, Ross White, Mike McDonald

Early start to resurvey 20, to reconcile locations in 22; Attempted to dive having forgot mask, at the slot, chilled sinuous pain, too great to bear; returned to base.

2nd April Wookey Hole - Bowery Corner

Section training meet

Nick Geh, Pete Brookes, Phil G Churches.

Fortunately, the qualified could look after themselves. Took trainees through lost line procedure; some, afterwards, to 20, via the shallow route; visibility grim.

Afternoon: Bowery Corner

Ross White, Ted Humphries, Mike McDonald. Steady digging in wet conditions for MM, others hauling the spoil.

8th April Singing River Mine –GB Rescue

Ken James,

Singing River, Mine

Morning: a very nice trip, a delight to study the features again; tool marks abound, GB Rescue

Stuart MacManus, Ken James, Brian Prewer, Rich West, Trevor Hughes, Alan Butcher, Tony Boycott, et al.

Afternoon: KJ and PC encountered Brian Prewer reporting a rescue in GB; a male had fallen from Ladder Dig. Sent below with Ken James to carry in further first aid kit.

Considering his suspected injuries, he remained in good spirits. Once again, a little dodgy maintaining unprotected balance on the climb during hauling, but with another hanging onto the arse of those guiding the casualty, passing projections, all went well. Afterwards, to the Hunters, a cracking evening; several barrels at the BEC.

9th April Wookey Hole

Nick Geh, John Adams, Mike McDonald, Robin Brown and Carol Tapley

Arrived in 20 to find the borrowed Suunto gear too misty to read; abandoned project.

JA's camera and associated kit found too buoyant; returned to 9:2: RB dived to -15m in 20, to a lead weight? JA, NG, PC, MM and two MCG, met in the Wookey Café to finalize details of the forthcoming French dive trip.

16th April Wookey Hole

Chris Smart, Mike McDonald

Planned to continue survey of 20; surfacing in 20, CS's back was painful, (an old injury), so, rather than climb out, CS and PC continued on to 22; MM returned to Chamber 9:2.

23rd April Ogof Afon Hepste, Ystradfellte

Nick Geh, John Adams, Pete Brooke

Photographic trip into III; sump I all but a duck: an easy free dive. Unfortunately, NG dropped JA's flash slave unit in sump II; swiftly swept away. Heading out found the line broken in sump II; remembered search reel was safe in the van. Swam, with loose end searching for the other bit of the line, located same, secured both, exited pool, positioned torch as guide light, waited for others.

1st May Bat Products

Jane Jarratt, Jarratt, Pauline M Cronin

Celebrated Jarratt's dream come true; PMC presented Jarratt and JJ with a cake, in the shape of their shop front. Ceremony performed on the pavement, admiring their project, toasting their success with a lot of champagne. Toe beside himself with delight.

6th May Hurtle Pot, Yorkshire
Parrott? Martin Grass, Mike McDonald, Chris Smart,
MM and MG to -26m: Parrot and PC to Bistro Junction. Parrot soon signalled, returning to surface; PC to -28m. From base PC dived to slot at -16m; thirds restricted further play. A fair CDG dinner.

7th May Runscar Hole No. 3,
Martin Grass and his Dog
Walking, encountered an active sink, MG said it resurged a short distance away; in normal clothing, without lights; both and dog entered and managed to exit, not too wet.

14th May Wookey Hole
Keith Savoury
Conducted KS for his Part II test; KS awarded a pass.

20th May Wookey Hole
Mike McDonald, Pete Brookes, Phil G Churches
Sorting survey prior to surveying the find in 24; unhappy about readings, the sketch has to be incorrect. Shed all metalwork a metre from compass. Still unhappy with accuracy.

21st May Wookey Hole
Mike McDonald, Pete Brookes, John Adams, Nick Geh
Recommended surveying, using two compasses: repeated requests to confirm unstable bearings led to realization that PC's new torch had a magnetic reed switch, hence erratic reciprocal bearings. Photos taken, none developed: camera also knackered.

27th May Wookey Hole
Mike McDonald, Phil G Churches
Completed survey; MM to draw up data. NB. Darren drums cannot exist below -8m.

29th May Port-yr-Ogof, Wales
Mike McDonald, Phil G Churches
Training for PGC; low flow, poor visibility PGC dived between Tradesman's and the Rawlbolt. MM exited from Tradesman's. Self, exited Cwmbran.

1st June Swildons Hole, RESCUE
Bristol; received a phone call around 9.45pm, to attend a rescue; a male had fallen down Black Hole with suspected back injury. Jim Hanwell requested form up with Martin Bishop, Steve Redwood and Chris Batstone + 7 more to carry down the sump rescue kit to transport the guy through sump one. The bottle, obtained by MRO as part of the New Sump Rescue kit, is a single 10 litre; far too big for this type of deployment. A four or seven litre, was recommended to OCL for such short sumps, being far easier and swifter to transport. Reached sump I to find the guy already through; handed over the sump kit to the others returning to surface. Remained as part of the hauling team with MB and CB; a long carry out, which finished with Clive North filming the team surfacing, just as dawn arrived. Throughout the rescue Douglas remained in good form, though in obvious pain. At one point, while resting the stretcher on the team's knees; found self at his head, engaging him in idle chit chat. Found Douglas was considering purchasing a house. Out of the boiler suit chest pocket, flourished a business card offering plumbing services. A golden opportunity to introduce humour among the small, weary group; resultant piss

taking by MB and laughter, around four in the morning lifted the spirits of all present; emerged to sunlight 6am; raced off to work in Bristol.

14th June Windsor Cave, Cockpit Country, Jamaica
Mike McDonald, Pauline Cronin

Hired what passed for a car and drove into Cockpit country for a tourist trip. Parked the car; followed the track through the jungle walking through extensive fields of Marijuana. Just beyond, in a small shack, was "Winston" possible cave owner and guide. Used Petzl lights, while he used a piece of Bamboo with a rag in the end; periodic "Glooping" noises, was him upending the bamboo tube, allowing the paraffin to soak the old sacking, used as the wick. Blackened walls testify to regular use. A superb hour spent exploring this cave ended with enjoying cheap, hot, soft drinks from his busted fridge. Returning to Negril, Police at a road block stopped and began to search the hire car. Noted the curious way a plain clothes Fed had fingers curled into his palm, approached him engaging in conversation, commenting, sympathetically how terrible the global drug menace had become, asking how were Jamaican police managing? As the Fed, with something definitely hidden in his palm stretched across the driver's seat, reaching to open the glove compartment, hopped into the passenger seat. Still lamenting the Policeman's lot, dealing with increasing crime levels and the many naughty people giving Jamaica a bad name. Began to assist the Fed, removing the crap from the glove compartment. Not allowing the Fed a moment to plant the small item in his palm. Unceasingly engaged them in cheerful, upbeat chatter, finally wore down these bent Fed's resolve. Consisting, two thin plain clothes and one large, circular uniform. The way they rolled their eyes to one another, and shrugging shoulders was a sign of success: most heartening. Showed them no urgency to leave, continuing to enquire what other wonders Jamaica had to offer the visitor. Finally told that they would love to continue the chat, but were very busy trying to catch naughty people; their parting comment was to be sure to have a nice day, and by the way theres no road tax on the car. Later information from the car hire man, after giving him a severe bollocking, explained Feds are poorly paid; in order to improve their income, they sting tourists. A Fed with two years of service can then apply for employment in the lucrative private security market.

15th June Roaring Rive Cave – Ipswich Cave, Jamaica
Mike McDonald, Pauline Cronin

Picked up another motor, with valid road tax and tread on the tyres. Set off, eventually found the village near Savannah la Mar; here some twenty odd kids offered their services as guides. The mostly, well compacted, flat floored passages are part fossil, part active; suggesting a significant system. Kids in the cave grew to 50+, inhibiting any exploration; abandoned the idea. Nearby, a huge resurgence issued a gigantic volume of milky water; zero visibility. Two hundred metres further south, noted a one metre diameter hole in the two-metre-deep river, producing a large surface mushroom; here, the water is crystal clear. The base of the river, bedrock. Obviously, two separate sources; but so close?

16th June God's Hole, Hedonism II Hotel, Jamaica.
Mike McDonald

The site is on the beach lawn of Hedonism II Hotel, some hundred metres from the sea. An unassuming pond, ten metres by four, choked with lilies to a depth of 0.5m: a haunt of edible crabs. Martin Grass mentioned its presence but had no other knowledge. Having spoken to the hotel manager MG requested gardeners remove an area of lilies. This resulted with employees chasing the enormous crabs, making a dash for freedom. No form of line reel available, opted for MM to deploy a base fed line. Lashed together

two 10 litre aluminium bottles with nylon cord; an unsuitable sidemount arrangement. Borrowed a hand lamp. Entered water, more crabs exited; initial descent made in zero visibility. Touched the floor at -4m; moved inland, after some six metres of rift, a shaft is encountered. Assessing depth, greater than five metres, visibility decreased, from crap falling from above. Unbeknown to the diver gardeners continued clear away more lilies, hence the debris. Descending quickly, at -10 m, the shaft assumes two metres by four; seen to continue to at least -17m. Poor visibility, base fed line and the unstable bottles created difficulty with trim. Returned to surface, to a crowd of applauding spectators.

24th June Eastwater Rescue practice.
MRO et al

Appointed as one of the two underground wardens. The casualty Union were invited and deployed. The incident arranged to take place in the rift chambers; beyond the “S” bends. After three hours waiting in the approach gulley, listening to the screams etc. Informed surface, was calling off this group’s participation. As the twenty odd cavers, yet awaiting instruction and constructive involvement were now bitterly cold and thoroughly pissed off. At the debrief, in the Hunters, strongly suggested events conducted in such locations, do not benefit the larger proportion of volunteers present. Clear, concise communication play a big part; regular updates provide surface of both casualty and the underground team’s ongoing status. Only when underground control offers a time when the casualty will be ready for transportation should carrying teams be deployed; allowing for the travel time to reach the incident site. Reducing such time waiting, ensures they are fresh for the task. Also, that smaller, specific training events be considered in something like GB cave. These specific “incidents” could be set up as workshops down the passage. To expose small teams to multiple incidents, improving personal skills and collective working among a team, with a maximum of six. This would benefit the individual more so. As each in a small team could better see the skill or technique being demonstrated. Today’s exercise was unfortunately, frustrating to those sat awaiting instruction or some guidance. Only those dealing with the casualty, out of sight, far beyond the “S” bends, benefited from this exercise.

25th June Wookey Hole
John Breakspear

Had previously proposed CDG sections use another sections examiner to test examinees. Thus, avoiding peer pressure, increasing the value of the tests and raising the standard of the Group. Received such a request from Andy Ward, Welsh Section to take JB for his Part Two test. JB truly believes his skills are of a level greater than they actually are. JB upset when sympathetically explained he needs more practise in several areas; notified a relieved Andy Ward of the unfortunate result.

1st July Porth-yr-Ogof
Phil G Churches, Kevin Wills, Dig Hastilow
Training for PGC and KW, to rawbolt and upstream; an uneventful trip.

2nd July Afon Hepste, Wales
K Wills, Phil G Churches, Rob Wallington
All through sump II; suggested the boys increase their experience divesting their kit to cave beyond a sump. Left them wander along East Passage. None had noticeable issues kitting up; concentration absolute; followed PGC, as last man.

8th July Ogof Capel

Phil G Churches, Rob Wallington, K Wills,

Photographic trip arranged by KW; the place quite beautiful: PGC had minor issues with kit: a pleasant trip.

14th July Wookey Hole

James Cobbett, Mike McDonald

A return to Chamber 20 for JC; his first dive in a while. JC shot away from 9:2, in a cloud of silt. Caught him up in 20. Quick check on gas reserves, then to 22. First time in 22 for a delighted JC, thrilled at the visibility. His delight manifesting as a very fine pissup.

15th July Wookey Hole

James Cobbett, Martin Bishop

Delighted with his dive to 22, JC wanted another; before departing the UK. Arrived early to fill the bottles, carried them to 9:2; JC appeared 9:30am. MB dived first, followed by JC, PC last. No sign of either until chamber 22. JC had caught up with MB, fascinated at modern techniques to reduce silt disturbance. Arranged met in 20, JC dived first, MB next, no sign of either until chamber 3. JC absolutely thrilled with the trip.

Somerset Dive Camp:

To expand Somerset section experience arranged a Dive Camp in Yorkshire; asked Geoff Crossley, Brian Scofield and Jim Abbott to kindly sort access to Keld Head, Boreham and Ireby Fell. The aim, for small groups to conduct explorations in their own time and with whom they felt comfortable. Unfortunately, the van laden with most of the sections dive kit broke down, near Wells. Had a manic morning loaning out personal kit, then begging and borrowing some from the Northern section boys, most of whom were very obliging; dives were successfully conducted throughout Saturday, awaiting on the van.

22nd July Joint Hole, Yorkshire

Kevin Wills, Rob Wallington, James Cobbett

After organizing kit for those who had; a) empty bottles, b) forgot items or c) turned up without researching a suitable dive. Decided to have a dive through sump one with JC, before loaning kit to others. KW and RB took photos. Rest of day spent assisting others with kit and transporting them to various sites.

23rd July Joint Hole - Hurtle Pot, Yorkshire

Kevin Wills, Phil G Churches, Rob Wallington, Howard Price, Mike McDonald, James Cobbett, Pete Brookes

Like herding Cats: one group eventually went to upstream Hurtle, some downstream, while others went to Joint. Decided it would be best to remain as coordinator, realizing some divers, when asked to explain their own dive plan were unable to do so. Not good enough, when they are diving a new area. Assembled them, administered a bollocking. This appeared to stem a pervading carefree attitude. Focusing their attention on their chosen dive site and what exactly was their specific dive plan, gas required, gas reserves, the chosen point of turning the dive; all received in an embarrassed silence; much feet shuffling. After all, had safely returned, donned depleted bottles to dive with JC to the base of the Hindenburg Wall, -28m. Significant narcosis experienced, no doubt due to the volume of drink taken last night at the Hill Inn. It is increasingly obvious that several trainees are not all that good at dry caving; needing encouragement to do so; yet these same, have much to say on how training and indeed the section should be run. Back in Bristol, briefed Bob Drake on the positive weekend; suggesting organize another.

5th August Waterlip Quarry

Mike McDonald, Dave Pike and many other Somerset CDG.

Sump rescue training; based on the section members progress and citing Dave Pike's incident. Insisted conducting sump rescue manoeuvres with the casualty represented as tackle sacks with a combined weight of 80-90 kilograms. Chest area being the slightly heavier area. And, only two divers deployed at any time conveying the casualty face down. Facilitating egress of any water entering the KMB. By deploying two divers at any one time a greater level of experience, in a shorter period, handling the stretcher, will be obtained by the divers, although, perhaps for some a steep learning curve. Specifically, monitoring the casualty, manoeuvring and communicating. It is important for both divers to understand precisely what is required of each, at either end. Most important, developing – agreeing on simple communications, after the pre-dive briefing, is less likely to deteriorate into confusion.

12th August Waterlip Quarry

Nick Geh,

Sponsorship equipment arrived for the French trip. Arrived 10:00. For most of the day experimented with various bottle configurations and necessary weight distribution for differing bottle sizes. Dives expected, long and deep. NG dismayed at Mike McDonald going caving, believing that no preparation is necessary. Deployed the new stab jackets, discovered the short sections of straps do not allow easy positioning of weights to adjust for the differing bottles. Found that, to adjust trim, more karabiners will be required to hang weights from than available today. Noted care required to balance out the weights as back strain was experienced after an hour of diving with 10s. Need to update MM of these important issues. Phil G Churches kindly provided support and assistance.

14th August S4, Doolin

Solo

Left Pauline in Dublin; arrived mid-afternoon. Yet again the place appears a bomb site, storm tossed boulders strewn about. If ever manage to open an entrance, it'll be difficult to keep it so. Cleared the area previously dug; encountered a large boulder, occupying the previous cavity. Spent three hours digging around the monster, without any progress.

15th August Cregg Lodge Swallet, Doolin

Solo

Called to Myles Arkins for permission; no problem. Long chat over tea and cake, catching up. Thrashed through the increasingly dense thicket. Nothing changed in the low, stream bedding. Other than being drier than previous. Pulled back cobbles but, no decent area to stack out the stream, when in flood. A team is needed to dig this place.

31st August Dordogne, France

Dig Hastilow, Mike McDonald, John Adams, Sarah Adams, Nick Geh, Pauline Cronin.

Two weeks diving in the Dordogne, pursuing fun, exploration and photography; made all the easier with the information file received from by Russell Carter, Derbyshire CDG.

1st September Fontaine Saint George

Dig Hastilow, Mike McDonald, John Adams, Nick Geh,

Familiarization with the first site, a roomy elbow at -30m, then a long slow ascending, huge, railway tunnel; novel, eventually somewhat boring: thirds reached at 400m.

2nd September St. George - Emergence de la Finou
Veronique Leguen, Francis Leguen, John and Sarah Adams, Pauline Cronin
After the others had dived into St. George, VL approached, inviting the team visit their project, a little further along the track; all met at the site: a fine evening where FL offered an enormous amount of information on the area.

3rd September Fontaine de Truffe
Dig Hastilow, Mike McDonald, John Adams, Nick Geh,
In sump II, JA signalled NG, who thought JA meant exit; confusion. NG and PC passed sump II. JA had completed some photography in sump one, now needing PC as a model; a cracking place, the limestone almost pure white. Dinner with the Le Guen's; there is a melancholy air about Veronica: FL kindly presented his book to each of the Team, nice.

5th September Emergence du Ressel
Dig Hastilow, Mike McDonald, John Adams, Nick Geh,
The plan; photographic trip to the top of the pot; persuaded to swim off line, acting as model, directing forward flash. Instructed to exhaust lots of gas bubbles, for visual affect; therefore, far more air consumed than normal. Hit thirds near the pot, signalled same to JA; heading out in decreased visibility. Some difficulty relocating the thin line; after sixty metres found the line ran through a gap a foot high; somehow pulled into it; not noted by the others. In the murk felt right, found rock. Felt left, pulling line, felt size of gap increase. Sloping up, found another boulder. Deployed search reel, planning swim to the far side of the passage, believing the area had better visibility; after eight metres visibility improved. Saw the two-millimetre white paracord line in the distance, far to the right. Happy: a little low on gas, began to skip breath; computer showed a thirty-minute deco penalty. Sat on the tree trunk in the entrance for twenty minutes, during which others had not appeared. Swam back at roof depth, mentally calculating reserves to reach the line trap; the idea to act as a lighthouse; for as long as practicable. At one hundred fifty metres saw JA. Asked where are the others? reply, just behind. Bottles emptied, fulfilling required deco penalty. Apart from concern over pals, a productive trip.

6th September Gouffre du Purcell
John Adams
Photographic trip for JA: big streamway, involving a lot of swimming and climbing. The place, huge; more so beyond the point reached by the team on this trip. Such a trip much more interesting; involving lots of interesting dry stuff; immensely enjoyable.

7th September Fontaine de Truffe
Dig Hastilow, Mike McDonald, John Adams, Nick Geh,
Another photographic trip; through sump II and up the climb. An excellent trip.

8th September Emergence du Ressel
John Adams,
Dived on 2 x 10s and 1 x 7. En-route installed a jump line around the line trap. At the shaft descended to the ledge, -40m, for a look at the ongoing passage, didn't delay; uneventful exit. Visibility not returned to that of the first day's dive. Had time to enjoy this passage without the pressing need to produce photographs or fret about pals.

10th September Emergence de la Finou
Dig Hastilow, Mike McDonald, John Adams, Nick Geh,
Sherpa'd equipment for Veronica and Frances Leguen for their dive in Emergence de la
Finou. During the very long dive FL lost a fin in the sump and ripped open his suit on the
climb. The dive out, a kilometre; both are exceptional individuals.

11th September Perch Merle, Cabrerets, Lot
Pauline Cronin
En-route home wanted to see this remarkable archaeological site; understated and very
well displayed.

Illegible entries

24th September CDG central committee meeting
Bob Drake, Jeff Price, Jim Abbott, Simon Brooks, John Cooper, Paul Whybro, Clive
Westlake, Barry Weaver, Fish.

Illegible entries

22nd October Wookey Hole
Phil G Churches
Training dive for PGC to the Slot, here, appearing to have buoyancy issues: watched PGC
crawl back to 9:2. PGC dived to chamber 3, emerging with an extra line reel, weight belt,
its lead weights and a screwdriver. All found in chamber 8. No previous reported loss.
Large eel encountered in the excellent visibility; repeatedly head butting the cap lamp.

28th October Cappleclough – Smallclough – Rampgill, Nenthead, Cumbria
Nigel Burns, Barry and Ceily Sudell, Dave Gough, Cheg Chester. Big John Cooper, Nott's
Climbers and many others.
Repeated, in part, the through trip made some months previous, even more excellent
remains and cracking features, superb fun; into the Crown for a serious PU.

29th October Smallclough Mine, Nenthead, Cumbria
Nigel Burns, Barry and Ceily Sudell, Dave & John Gough, Cheg Chester, Big John
Cooper,
A long trip around Smallclough: digging open collapsed, inaccessible workings; lots of
informative geological instruction from the, as always, patient Big John Cooper, Science
Teacher extraordinaire and seriously nice bloke.

5th November Backwell Well, Backwell
Dig Hastilow, Kay Wills, Phil G Churches
DH had been told of a well, found beneath the floor of a conservatory. DH descended the
80-foot shaft, to what appeared to be a floor. Through a hole in the ginging limestone is
visible. Pauline (Owner), offered the team the privilege of cleaning it out; no takers.

10th November Swildons
Ken James
Met at an empty BEC hut; discussed celebrating KJ's impending birthday; had a pleasant
trip to sump III; in the Hunters by 10pm; over the first pint, suggested another trip. How
about in Derbyshire? Good session.

11th November Carlswark

Ken James

Surfaced at 8am; breakfast in Farrington Gurney transport café. Arrived Peak Forest midday; no one at the Pegasus, to Carlswark for a couple of hours. To, The Eagle found many Eldon present, fun and drink, followed by a superb curry to finishing the night.

18th November CDG, EGM, Peak Forest – P8

CDG membership

The substantial increase of annual subscriptions and introduction of joining fees, pushed through by Rob Palmer and Fish, at the AGM, has created serious divisions. Northern Section threaten leaving CDG, as do many. PC openly requested an EGM, to discuss such proposals, as few had been present at the AGM. The short meeting concluded RP's and Fish's discussions be summarily thrown out; meeting closed 2pm.

Afternoon

Martin Bishop, John Kelly, John Compton

P8. Pleasant trip around this cracking place; BD delighted of the similarities to Swildons.

Illegible entries

2nd December Garth Iron Mine

Martin Bishop, Jonathon Burgess

Dropped kit outside the adit doors; parked far up the road, to reduce chance of discovery. Swiftly up the huge adit to this superb dive site; MB has wanted visit for some time; a massive, iron mine. Streaming daylight, down the massive shaft, made kitting up easy. This plan, to get to know the site. Used a 4mm vest beneath the 4mm wet suit, the others had 6mm suits; water bitter, crystal clear. Swam out twenty metres from the edge; began controlled descent. At -20m felt the cold penetrating the kidneys. JB, ten metres below, signed, returning to surface. Swam over to an assemblage of metalwork; the upper area of a big staircase; joined by MB. Using the 10w lamps could see below, maybe to -50m? The metal stairs seen to continue. Ascended to -10m; oddly uncomfortable in so large a place; found maintaining orientation surprizingly difficult. Depth watched closely with the US Monitor II. Uneventful exit: a mug of steaming tea would be wonderful. No issues outside with the parking. Arranged to stop at Geoff Lysacht's place, Cardiff: swiftly into town for a cracking session of Jazz, beer and a red-hot curry.

3rd December Garth Iron Mine

Martin Bishop, Jonathon Burgess

JB had organized ten litre bottles from his sea diving mates. MB not looking too good this morning; regretting his mix of spirits. Last night, suggested using a shot line, to avoid disorientation, control potential, deeper buoyancy issues and assist deco. Kitted up and deployed shot line from a twenty-litre plastic container. While MB was violently sick, agreed with JB a limit of -45m; supposedly the floor is close to this. Descended; again, cold penetrating by -20m. Stopped to check equipment, all good. Continued to -30m; again, stopped to check gear. JB visible below; joined him at -40m. Checked gas reserve, valve function and Buddy Artic buoyancy device; all fine. JB began ascending the shot line. Continued descent, encountered a sloping floor of deep, soft silt -46m; arrested descent in a cloud of shite: began ascent. The US Divers Monitor II is a fine bit of kit; easy-to-read screen size provides clear data and confidence. Deco purgatory, bitterly cold: surfaced to a grey looking, MB. Need to research the effects of a slower, continuous ascent from depth. Perhaps enabling the deco penalty to be reduced at lesser stage depths? Bounced the idea off JB and MB; both unsure.

Illegible entries

27th December Poulballygoonaun, Ballygoonaun Td

Solo

Left Dublin early afternoon drove straight to the cave, arriving around 6pm. Hunted about to ask permission; found a farm, east of the cross. Tony Boycott mentioned this cave as worth visiting. Pleasant trip in a rift, ending at a pool and sump: noted several places worth digging. Arrived O'Connor's; the place busy, not enough to divert Doll's disgust at not letting her know of the caving trip; slept in the kitchen.

28th December Poulelva – Poulmagollum, Caherbullog Td

Solo

Checked water levels at the bridge; a foot beneath the bottom bar of the gate. Abseiled Poulelva; in the crawls encountered high flow conditions, in dry gear cold swiftly set in. A small air space present, but repeatedly pushed back by force of water; abandoned trip. Turning about lost tackle sac; torn away in the flow; recovered same. At Poulelva, ran about to get feeling back to extremities; assembling SRT kit discovered had somehow lost chest harness and jammer. Cut up the waist length, securing the hand jammer to the chest; made the rest of the waist length into a foot loop and prussik knot. A long climb out, prussik knots a ballache, but nice and toasty at the top. In O'Connor's, invited to go to O'Looney's disco; got as far as Joe McHugh's, stopped for a superb session.

29th December Hawthorn Resurgence, Knockaunmountain Townland

Solo

Jim Shannon described a stream which resurged in the Balliny depression, then soon sank. Arrived late morning, found the farmer; not interested, though gave permission, "work away". Other than pointing he wouldn't guide to the site. Eventually found the stream and sink, previously visited with the L.A.D.S. Headed upstream for twenty odd metres, found the resurgence, with a large stream issuing. A low crawl in the stream is hindered with nodules after about five metres. Returned to the van for a lump hammer and eighteen-inch chisel. Returning, met the farmer, who hadn't cheered up at all. Spent two hours chiseling off lumps; it's too confined a place, in which to swing a hammer. Out to heavy rain; found the Farmer, who gazed bemused at the shivering individual, asking if ok to return. Superb night in O'Conner's finished off in McDermott's; a pissed Martin Droney demanding, to come digging tomorrow; agreed ten o'clock start at the church.

30th December Hawthorn Resurgence, Knockaunmountain Townland

Solo

11:00, no sign of Martin Droney, called to his house, no sign of life; left note on door; headed off. Stream had lessened. Took selection of chisels and the lump hammer; spent another two hours chipping away: very slow work, very little progress: frozen.

31st December Hawthorn Resurgence – Faunarooska

Solo

Made a lot of heavy rain last; kitted up. Unable to enter resurgence, too high a flow rate, the passage almost full. Walked to Faunarooska; the large sinking stream producing amazing noises. An aquatic trip to the first pitch; exit an issue against the flow. Invited to Noel Walsh's for New Year, the cottage jam packed: great music and dance. Pestered by two circular American women; previously told was the guy to take them Spelunking. Unfortunately, both talked at you, rather than too you, fearful of involvement with either. The larger, later seen sucking the faces off locals like a supercharged vacuum cleaner.