

2006

2006

1<sup>st</sup> January Poulmagollum  
Solo

Few about, cold, bright morn. Pleasant amble down to the bottom of Poulelva and back out the streamway. Not a sinner about. Called to the Roadside for a new year pint.

2<sup>nd</sup> January Poulacapple Pot  
Conor McGrath, Paul McGrath

Excavated the silty base of the shaft, 600mm; indications suggest area similar to the alcove: a water worn dish. Here, lower walls narrow, suggest the way down may not be comfortably vertical. CMcG & PMcG continued along the U.B.S.S dig using Hilti caps.

4<sup>th</sup> January Poulacapple Pot  
Conor McGrath, Paul McGrath

CMcG & PMcG continued along the rift with Hilti caps to within two feet of the cross rift.

8<sup>th</sup> January Poulacapple Pot  
Cheg Chester, Conor McGrath

A beautiful sunny day; clear blue sky: air temperature well below zero: bitter cold. The aim, install the four-inch pipework conveying both streams into a single pipe down the shaft. CMcG capped his way along the UBSS rift. An inspection of the bottom of the main shaft suggests a "gap or space" beneath the soft silt probed by CC, poking with the crow bar. The stability of the boulder pile was assessed; various ideas discussed of possible shoring for excavating below. CMcG believes a view down the rift will be possible soon. Perhaps a few hours next Wednesday will repay the effort.

14<sup>th</sup> January Doolin River Cave:  
Cheg Chester

After very wet weather; settled for the past day and a half. Enjoyed a steady through trip. Even after the heavy rain a depth of only some six inches of water was noted in the entrance trench. An uneventful through trip; into McGann's for a few pints.

15<sup>th</sup> January Poulacapple Pot  
Cheg Chester, Nick Geh, Conor McGrath

Redirected the 4" pipework horizontally along rift in preparation of digging in bottom of main shaft. In medium rainfall conditions the area should be "dry"; alleviating some of the standing water in the "sump". The temporary clay seal around the eastern stream was washed away during the storm, which dropped some two inches, overnight. Unsuccessful attempts were made to remove the debris in the narrow cleft that conveys the stream further underground. This work would appear to be all the easier from a lower position; this could take place once the shaft is deepened. NG offered a 110vac submersible pump and generator to remove the water for the moment. CMcG continued capping his way long the rift, to find as it descends, becoming too tight to dig. Plan to remove the unstable boulders in the main shaft, lengthening the rift by some four feet; commence undermining the main boulder pile. Whilst "Poppet" CMcG capped along the rift the rest explored the area for adjacent sites. Several noted, overburden probed to limestone. The shakehole to the north, is of equal size to Poulacapple, but not as deep. Within it are at least two promising openings; one a partly silted bedding the other a rift. Two sites over the crest of the hill are also well worth another look.

21<sup>st</sup> January Pollcragreagh, aka Pollnamichael.

Cheg Chester

Noticed a section of wall collapsed near the entrance. Observing the grass beneath, the stones have only fallen there a day. As no hoof prints present believe cavers may be the culprits. CC last here over twenty-five years ago. The entrance is a pitch, in a deep rift passage. Ambling down the streamway took the obvious turn, to thrutch along the wrong passage. Retraced steps, exploring a variety of passages, low middle & high; ending in various locations up to thirty feet above the streamway. Rebuilt the wall on exit; land now owned by O'Donaghues, Fanore.

22<sup>nd</sup> January Poulacapple Pot

Cheg Chester, Paul McGrath, Conor McGrath

Directed the four-inch pipe along the rift excavated by CMcG, to discharge into the far rift. The eastern stream was high, so the front of the pipe was packed with clay to contain it, allowing the cement mortar to set to the surrounding rock, the mortar built up level with the edge of the channel in the bedding. CMcG & PMcG arrived, preparing to cap two loose boulders, some two metres up the shaft. Progress steady with the true size of the boulders becoming apparent as they were gradually reduced. CCs hauling net proved excellent, drawing the fractured pieces to surface using a two to one system. PMcG (with damaged hand) used some of the rocks to "pave" the sodden path to the depression. It became obvious as the two streams were now contained, the depth of the pool in the base of the main shaft fell. With the shaft clear of the dangerous boulders work begun by CC using his cheating sticks to clear the debris from the narrow rift conveying the stream; lowering the pool level further. PC managed to push some of the debris toward the inner rift, removing some small stones which allowed water to drain more freely. Encouraged by this CMcG, succeeded in exposing much more of the rift. This allowed restricted view of the far reaches of the rift that appeared to drop away some three metres beyond the main shaft; the darker area of the rift has the appearance of being wider: wishful thinking? The plan: return tomorrow, dig the rest of the north rift and perhaps take out two more boulders and continue deepening the main shaft. Worth noting significant surface water enters around the shaft depression from off the bog.

23<sup>rd</sup> January Poulacapple Pot

Cheg Chester, Conor McGrath

Cold but dry. The cement mortar had partially set, but not hardened sufficiently to PC's satisfaction. CMcG cleared the debris from the water rift, managing to open yet another hole. This debris is stone and mud/silt all light enough to have been washed in. As the shaft depth increased this mud/silt became a glutinous oily mess. Prior to digging the base of the shaft one of the two hanging boulders was removed from the wall. CC fitted a large piece of galvanized angle iron to support the large boulder partly reduced by CMcG. CC identified the tip of a boulder blocking the shaft and began to use the bar to probe around it. His impression; the west wall was narrowing whilst the east wall undercut. Mickey Vaughan appeared bemused and disbelieving; the idea that digging was fun, and not looking for gold. PC took the next shift, excavating around the boulder, which turned out to be some fifty kilos. Cleared of surrounding mud it was manhandled into a sling as it would not fit in the net. Hauling the boulder, the spar bent a little under the weight. At some 1.5metres up the shaft the sling slipped and the boulder fell back down, PC had wisely climbed out earlier as CC & CMcG held it steady. CMcG remained after the others continuing to remove debris from the water rift; another lodged rock is to be popped.



A section of the pipework to combine and divert the two streams

Conor sat in the old side passage, (UBSS dig)

Photo Cheg Chester

26<sup>th</sup> January Poulacapple Pot

Cheg Chester, Conor McGrath

The previous fallen rock was popped and reduced in size and lifted out along with the other below it, it too weighs fifty kilos. The four-inch galvanized angle iron was cut and fitted to support the boulder in the shaft and back packed with stones. Spoil beneath, was

removed to a point where a further large stone flag, the size of a dustbin lid lay perfectly jammed across the 0.6 metre wide main shaft. It pivots: it seems loose enough to lift straight out. Below this point a pitch exists. At the very least three metres deep.

27<sup>th</sup> January Poulacapple Pot (New Find)  
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's 250th birthday.  
Cheg Chester, Conor McGrath

Delighted at the prospect of a breakthrough, after such little vertical digging. All the team descended to assess the awkward lift, AKA Mozart's Dustbin Lid? CC took photographs for the record. The present depth shaft recorded at ten metres. The measurement taken from a position on the overhang which will be a permanent survey point: a brass screw. This is some five metres below the moorland. CC suggests surveying from the Drover's Road using his miners dial to ascertain accuracy of the depths given in Charlie's, Caves of County Clare; depths given, seven metres of the depression and three metres of boulder slope. CMcG descended on SRT, tying up the rock. Meanwhile PC re-strung the hauling system, 4:1. With a special SRT wire coat hanger CMcG fished the rope around the rock securing it to the hauling rope. Though the rock could be pivoted, it would not lift. Only moving when CMcG heaved on it. Now suspended, CMcG ascended above it, guiding it to surface, past temporary shoring. Weighing some seventy kilos: photos by CC. As CMcG had never had the privilege of entering new cave, was offered the delight of being first man down. An eight-metre ladder was rigged off the large flake, through the narrow section. At bottom the area increased; one metre wide by 1.75 high by four metres long; no obvious way on, and most mysterious of all, little evidence of stream flow activity; the mud on the walls indicating long standing water. Considering the clogging effect of the mud in the upper area of the dig this should not be a surprise, when the only stream route was the UBSS crevice. CMcG squeezed along the upper part of the tapering north rift. Managing to reach a point beneath the end of the discharging pipe. This area warrants further investigation in dry conditions, but it is not the way on; too immature. Back at the pitch CMcG checked the South side of the main shaft which is a large block with a narrow gap each side. During exploration the kibble was lowered and raised through the narrow breakthrough point to ensure sufficient room to haul. Only minor repositioning of the pulley was needed. One or two projecting points caught the kibble, these will be removed as the slope is gardened and supported. CMcG surfaced, CC descended for a quick look at the chamber, returning to the breakthrough point to assess its stability. Several kibbles of awful glutinous mud were removed. A discussion followed, exploring various options of supporting the entire, loose muddy slope. One method may be the use of a vertical railway sleeper secured by horizontal metals bars. PC favours installing concrete blocks, in effect ginging. Prior to leaving the site the pipe was blocked allowing the stream cascade over the dam to wash the oily mud off the walls.

#### Review:

The general feeling is to return after a week, allowing the exposed area settle. Begin to support the shaft, and excavate straight on down through the mud floor of the shaft. Possibly use part of the lower northern rift as a spoil area, packed on top of a drain pipe. Construct a retaining drystone wall in the upper, south end of the depression to contain the slurry form of spoil. Whatever method decided, more urgent are the hollows in the track needing filled to allow unhindered access for the Landrover laden with materials.

28<sup>th</sup> January

Lost John Cornwall





Conor & Pat, with Mozart's Dustbin lid

Photo Cheg Chester

12<sup>th</sup> February Poulacapple Pot

Cheg Chester, Conor McGrath

Overcast and dry, rainfall the previous night recorded  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an inch. The first rain of consequence for fourteen days. PC carried over ten concrete blocks. CC cut and fitted expanded steel mesh as a non-slip surface to the platform pallet.

The washing of the shaft was successful, cleaning mud from around the jammed boulders in the shaft, and a joint: along this joint the development of the shaft appears formed.

The volume of surface run off made CMcG's descent to the lower chamber wet. Whilst there, witnessing the streams discharge from the pipe, noting no flow back to the base of the main shaft. Mickey Vaughan appeared to see how things were progressing, amazed at the depth of the shaft, created for fun: not in pursuit of Gold. Packing up, outstanding tasks were discussed.

- 1) Temporarily divert the water from the pipe to accurately assess the rifts prospects.
- 2) Continue digging the main shaft; utilizing the hydraulic power of falling water via an extended four-inch pipe. The available head of water will be in excess of one bar; the volume obviously rainfall dependent. In theory the water could wash away the silt.
- 3) The rift in the lower chamber could have a 4" pipe installed at its lowest level allowing the rift to be backfilled with spoil, thereby reducing the volume lifted to surface. The top section will be left open for the time being just in case it's a route worth pursuing.
- 4) It was decided to probe the chamber floor to assess the structure of the area beneath.

In the meantime, PC would obtain more material to shore up the entrance southern shaft wall. Lengths required for supports; 28" - 36" and 39" - 46", dependent on the thickness of lintels.

19<sup>th</sup> February Poulacapple Pot

Cheg Chester, Paul McGrath, Conor McGrath

Very cold; CC & PC arrived after a delayed start; PC left early to pick Pauline up from Limerick. PC prepared the new section of pipe purchased Monday. This was lowered into position. The existing pipework was cut, amidst the water fountain the six-metre length of pipe was put down the shaft. This length is held in place with a short length threaded with six mm dive line, secured at the lower end of the six-metre length. It will allow drier investigation of the further reaches of the rift, to see if the "edge" of the rock is the passage actually enlarging. CC began to assess the requirements of shoring the loose fill in the main shaft. CMcG pushed to the end of the rift, now free of falling water from the pipe above, finding the area beyond a tight bit, did indeed widen and deepen. Some 1.5m lower, a flake of rock prevented immediate access of a vertical continuation of the rift. PMcG followed and managed to squeeze a little way around the flake and look down some five metres to a possible rubble floor after much thrutching both returned. CMcG needs to Hilti the flake to pass it comfortably.

21<sup>st</sup> February Poulacapple Pot

Cheg Chester

Arrived at dusk; another load of blocks carried to the site. Both changed quickly, the now common, bitter cold breeze cut the bare body. The plan was to press on with the shoring while nobody was below, in case the porridge fell out of the rift, blocking the narrow part of the shaft. CC spragged across the shaft, installed the dry fitted concrete blockwork, shaped and prepared by PC at surface. A productive night to Kilshanny House for pints.

26<sup>th</sup> February Poulacapple Pot

Cheg Chester, Conor McGrath

Another very cold day, gathering dark cloud. Another load of blocks brought to the dig. CC & PC arrived early, pressing on with the shoring hoping complete the installation by the time CMcG arrived to Hilti the flake. Prior to CMcG descending a survey point was chosen and drilled; it's located on the right-hand side of the pot almost on the same level as the pipe tee piece and the platform. This will be the primary datum for the survey. The depth of the shaft, from survey datum, to the water level, was 8.5 metres. The previous Caves of Clare depth of 10 metres appears measured from a much higher location. It was decided to delay excavating the final section of porridge, in the shaft, beneath the lower section of shoring, until next week, perhaps Wednesday night, just in case the whole lot fell out while CMcG was below along the rift. Once CMcG was along the rift, the lower end of the pipe was added to. An elbow was fitted and a short length of pipe diverting the stream away from Conor (North) under the "wedge" (South) the water ran away without backing up down along the right-hand side of the boulder. CMcG dissolved the flake. The water had been diverted for quite a while, when CMcG announced, he could hear falling water below him, where previously none was heard. CC probed the floor of the rift with crowbar and the three-metre pole, reaching various depths, between the vertical and angular positions. Depths ranged between 1.5m to three-metres. CMcG passed the flake descending the narrow rift some 1.5 to 2m. At this point a ladder was requested to ascend the slightly widening, greasy walled rift. Have managed to accomplish three of the four tasks. The idea of pipework in the base of the rift will be reviewed later as it may not be required. The extent of the northern rift may decide this.





Photo Cheg Chester

View up through the “Narrows” showing concrete block ginging, pipe and ladder system, left wall is the east side. (Brown water pipe with end looking down is spare)



2006

1<sup>st</sup> March Poulacapple Pot

Cheg Chester, Conor McGrath

Temperature still bitterly cold, no cloud in sight. The plan, for CMcG to use a ladder to descend the rift. CC followed as back up. The squeeze successfully capped by Conor; CC followed, pivoting almost 360° to successfully pass the squeeze. Once through, ladder was rigged. A soft formation of crusty mud/iron deposit has formed on the walls of the rift. CMcG intends return to dig this deposit and see the true width of the rift. Meanwhile PC began to dig at the bottom of the shaft. Probing the floor, the width of the shaft seems to continue down. A horizontal measurement of 7.5metres was made, from the far ladder to main shaft. The depth from the present base of the shaft to the bottom of the ladder is 5.5 metres. CMcG could see running water down the rift, which may well be the diverted water from the pipework. Weather reports suggest heavy rain may arrive in the week. Therefore, CC wants to complete the shaft shoring, a.s.a.p. Try to accomplish this on the 3rd March. PC has scrounged timber for the fixed ladder and some galvanized steel arms via the E.S.B. Team were met by a severe frost; temperature dropped to -5.5C that night.



Photo Cheg Chester

Poulacapple entrance from landing stage

4<sup>th</sup> March 2006 ICRO Rescue Practice; Ballyryan.

Helicopter training for Cave Rescue Wardens

6<sup>th</sup> March Irish Coast Guard, Doolin Unit.

Notified by Mattie Shannon, OiC, accepted into the voluntary service.



18<sup>th</sup> March Cullaun V

Cheg Chester

Clear and bright, with a chill easterly wind. Reached C5b swiftly. Swiftly down to the terminal pitch; then into the Red-Carpet series. This area is a superb example of the passage development when fractured bedding is encountered among good limestone. On the way out went via the un-surveyed loop passage.

25<sup>th</sup> March

Lost Dave (Figg) Briggs

25<sup>th</sup> March Poulacapple Pot

Cheg Chester, Conor McGrath

Worth noting this is the first “trip” to the extensions. CMcG had already been in and out several times being the principal pusher along this restricted rift. Reaching a point where it was prudent to be accompanied. CC had passed the initial squeeze to backup and await CMcG in the small gap at the top of the second pitch as CMcG, some five metres below at a point only 0.3m wide, used a long-handled spade to pound vertically, the soft false floor toward the sound of a stream. Meanwhile, PC managed to fit through the upper squeeze which is about the limit. Once through waited at the top of the second pitch until it was clear to descend to the top of the third pitch. On reaching the false floor, PC found the area too tight to pass. Discussion suggested lengthening the offset hole toward the base of the ladder in the hope PC might just pass the point directly below his position.

1<sup>st</sup> April Pouldubh

Cheg Chester, Conor McGrath

Overcast, light rain. Parking space for the cave obliterated due to installation of the new water system to Fanore. All enjoyed a pleasant trip to the terminal choke; here, open passage was found where PC had dug years ago. A crawl was followed for some hundred metres to where the stream reentered. Near a bend, an echo was heard through a four-inch bedding. Intend return and dig this gap, and survey the length of unrecorded passage, beyond the old terminal choke.

9<sup>th</sup> April University College Dublin; IRCO, REC Level 3, Standard First Aid

Twelve students

Offered a place on the course, took it as a refresher; excellent course.

April (15<sup>th</sup>?)

Flew to East Midlands, Figg’s funeral.

21<sup>st</sup> April Pouldubh

Cheg Chester

Friday night trip to check out CC’s passage below the terminal choke. Entered South entrance, swiftly to the gap. Later estimated to be thirty metres downstream from the old terminal choke. Three hours of digging produced seven metres of snug bedding to a solid roof and floor; larger, open passage visible beyond.

23<sup>rd</sup> April Pouldubh

Cheg Chester, Conor McGrath

A sunny day; rain promised later. The aim, CC to push through the squeeze with CMcG as backup. Soon apparent the squeeze was longer than was first imagined. PC could not pass the solid roof and floor squeeze; impatiently awaited the lads return. Meanwhile, some two hundred metres was explored. Will call it “Figg Brigg” Series, after Dave (Figg)

Briggs, killed in a dig at Astonhill Swallet that collapsed in Derbyshire earlier this year. Plan return next Wednesday to commence surveying.

1<sup>st</sup> May Doolin River Cave

Cheg Chester, Phil Collett, Andy? Ivan Hollis, Stuart McManus, Aubrey Newport

A hot day: rigged Fisherstreet; when the others arrived drove them up to St. Catherine's. No water in the entrance trench. His recent chest operation meant IH could not push the squeeze, so returned to surface. The rest of the team carried on with a pleasant trip at a steady speed, time two and a half hours.

15<sup>th</sup> May Rose Cottage Shaft

Jarratt, Tony Audsley, Rich Witcombe.

Called over to drop off and pick up kit from Jarratt; the boys doing fine work on this cracking site.

2<sup>nd</sup> June Upper Poulmagollum

Linda Wilson, Graham Mullin, Tony Boycott, Lorraine McCartan

Steady Trip on a glorious day, very low water conditions; few wanted to go beyond Pollbinn; returned to surface.



Conor; the first descent of the tight second pitch, Poulacapple Photo Cheg Chester

3<sup>rd</sup> June Pollismorahaun

Linda Wilson, Graham Mullin, Tony Boycott, Lorraine McCartan

Eventually relocated the entrance among the dense foliage. Brought up the rear with TB delayed taking many of photos of pretties.

11<sup>th</sup> June Pouldubh

Cheg Chester, Conor McGrath

Low water conditions. The plan, CMcG to Hilti cap the squeeze, to allow PC to pass. CC & PC commenced the survey, choosing a prominent “lump” in the roof, adjacent the old terminal choke, (Station One). This is now a junction of two passages; at the end of the main stream passage. From, Station One, progressed the survey to the breakthrough; here the survey continued into the “Figg-Brigg” Series. For this visit it was decided the survey would end at the entrance to “Pat’s Passage”; so named by CMcG & CC following PC’s frustration, being unable to pass the squeeze. A green survey datum is located close to “Pat’s Passage”; actually, two metres back from its entrance, to achieve a long survey leg. CMcG & CC instructed PC to, “Go forth and explore”. The passage continued for some twenty-five metres, 0.7m high x 0.9 wide with a gritty, muddy floor. It then turned sharp left into a short section of clean washed streamway with a small stream entering from the right. Just beyond this, a pool of water with stalagmite grill above, partially barred the path; named it “Figg’s Bar & Grill”. Checked beyond, it still went; called to the others to follow. PC invited CMcG take the lead. PC waited for CC then followed CMcG. Several metres beyond “Figg’s Bar & Grill” another streamway was entered at an oblique angle. Downstream the passage continued in much the same dimensions, upstream the passage is low, snug and possibly not negotiable too far. The streamway continued for eight-metres to where it turned sharp left again. Here progress was interrupted by a very tight squeeze. CMcG & CC both passed this by coming back up the bedding two metres to a slightly wider area. The passage is seen to continue for ten metres. The team returned to the main passage of the series. CMcG & PC went for a look at the collapsed chamber as CC started out with the survey kit. Cracking.

16<sup>th</sup> June Pouldubh

Cheg Chester

The plan, continue the survey to where the passage joins a stream, which is possibly (probably) the stream that enters the left-hand passage at the end of the main streamway junction. Continued the survey from the breakthrough survey point straight down the main passage. This crawl has sharp scalloping, so, uncomfortable progress to Station 11. Here a low bedding, 0.250m high, is seen enter at a sharp left-hand turn. From here the flood pulse has had an effect scouring the shingle and reducing the height of the bedding for some twenty-metres to where the passage turns left again to the stream. This section of the survey should be accomplished with, perhaps two survey stations.

28<sup>th</sup> June Pouldubh

Cheg Chester,

The aim of this trip was to complete the survey of the low section of the passage down to the streamway previously reached by CC & CMcG. Commencing from station 11, PC led off hoping to achieve a twenty-metre survey leg, estimated 16<sup>th</sup> June. Digging through the low section, reached nineteen metres, before CC lost line of sight. CC moved forward and established an intermediate station (12). Steady progress was made down the streamway. PC moved off downstream, surprised at the size of the passage, 1m x 3m, at eighteen metres the stream channel altered course some 30° west, then straightened up. Here, another twenty-metres of crawling streamway is visible. A quick look upstream in the low passage indicated substantial flooding has punched a channel through mud and gravel chokes. This streamway is no more than a low bedding of some eight inches high. The open part similar to the lower section of the streamway, edges are collapsing due to being undercut: it appears flooding has opened this route; just how far remains to be seen. Next trip will survey the streamway from main passage junction, following



downstream to the lower junction where station 14 was established, on the west side on the bare rock edge.

2<sup>nd</sup> July Pouldubh

Cheg Chester,

The plan, to continue the survey below Pat's Passage. In the end the pair surveyed across to the streamway and progressed downstream. The passage varied in height from 1.4m to 0.26m. Width varied between 1.5 to 3 metres. The process of surveying was not difficult beyond getting the written records damp. CCs washing bowl containing the survey kit floating along beside him, the passage air gap height gradually becoming lower than the height of the survey wand. Thirty-metres downstream from the junction the height of the streamway required flat-out crawling in fifty millimetres of stream. Downstream, the passage gains height, 0.75m, continuing to an area of breakdown with overflow passage on the left. Six metres into the breakdown area the floor level drops some 0.4m into a narrow pool, this constricted area leads to what maybe a diggable duck, presently with a 0.75m air space. The team intend survey upstream to this station, from the lower junction, Station 14; and investigate the chance of digging through.



Photo Pat Cronin

Cheg & Barry Surveying from the new extensions to Pouldubh main entrance

9<sup>th</sup> July Pouldubh

Cheg Chester, Conor McGrath

Both investigated the small passage left at the breakdown area in the existing streamway, it goes, but it's tight. All returned to station 15, pushing downstream, after quite some distance, arrived at Cheg's Chamber!

16<sup>th</sup> July The area of B4

Cheg Chester, later Conor McGrath

The area is heavily wooded. PC previously found several choked openings in the woods near the stream. CMcG appears to have found B4, but it's a sink? Believed it a rising? CCs idea, visit after heavy rain, also seems appropriate to identify other adjacent sites.

21<sup>st</sup> July Pouldubh

Cheg Chester

Continued the surveying, PC managing to negotiate "Conor's Crawl" to survey to the first station beyond the breakthrough point. The next morning CC rang to inform the closed loop from Station one to the station beyond the breakthrough has a 3D error of 1.1 feet. Considering the tightness of the dig, its approach passage and that Conor's crawl is only ten inches high, and that it's sixty metres from the survey point upstream from Station one. It's a grand result of surveying; all things considered.

NB. A hollow with water was noted, west of Conor's crawl, also a shadow, that may be another passage.

22<sup>nd</sup> July Pouldubh

Have requested via Tony Boycott, the original survey data and station to attach the new extension survey to.

24<sup>th</sup> July Pouldubh

TB spoke with Graham Mullan; there appears some difficulty providing the original survey data; it cannot be found. Spoke at length with CC; suggested survey out from the extensions on to a point on the surface which will be accurately fixed by GPSR.

6<sup>th</sup> August Teach Aille, Ellechrissaun Spring West,  
Solo

Martyn Farr was conducting a lecture with two students prior to immersion; so, went to Teach Aille, in the grounds of Ashford Castle to assess its potential. A boulder floored crawl ends at a small choke, beyond which is a pool. Dragged out a few boulders for a better view, the passage is confined but appears diveable. Walked to the Blacksmiths Forge, ITM 514390 x 755625; scaled the wall, and headed southwest to Ellechrissaun Spring. Approaching the rising encountered an area of wide grykes, several flooded, and a pool. Probed for depth with a branch: inconclusive. At one rising there appear several; found none accessible. Returned to Mill Rising, (Polltoofil), to continue dive instructing.

8<sup>th</sup> August Doolin River Cave

Pete Eckford, Ken James

Warm up trip; in St. Catherine's. Low water conditions. Very slow trip, on account of regular stops to chat; catching up on the doings and lesser doings of each, since last time. Into McGann's mid-afternoon. Dermot gave PC a lift to retrieve the Landrover; settled in the bar until early evening. Collected by Pauline; fed and returned by herself to the Bar. Retrieved once again in the early hours. Cracking time.

9<sup>th</sup> August Pollduagh

Pete Eckford, Ken James

Limited to wetsuits and sevens; all dived, in turn, to the obvious rock near -28m. Though summer, as warned, water temperature penetrated the soul. To the Irish Arms for hot a whiskey; collected, taken for feeding and returned to the bar by Pauline: an angel.

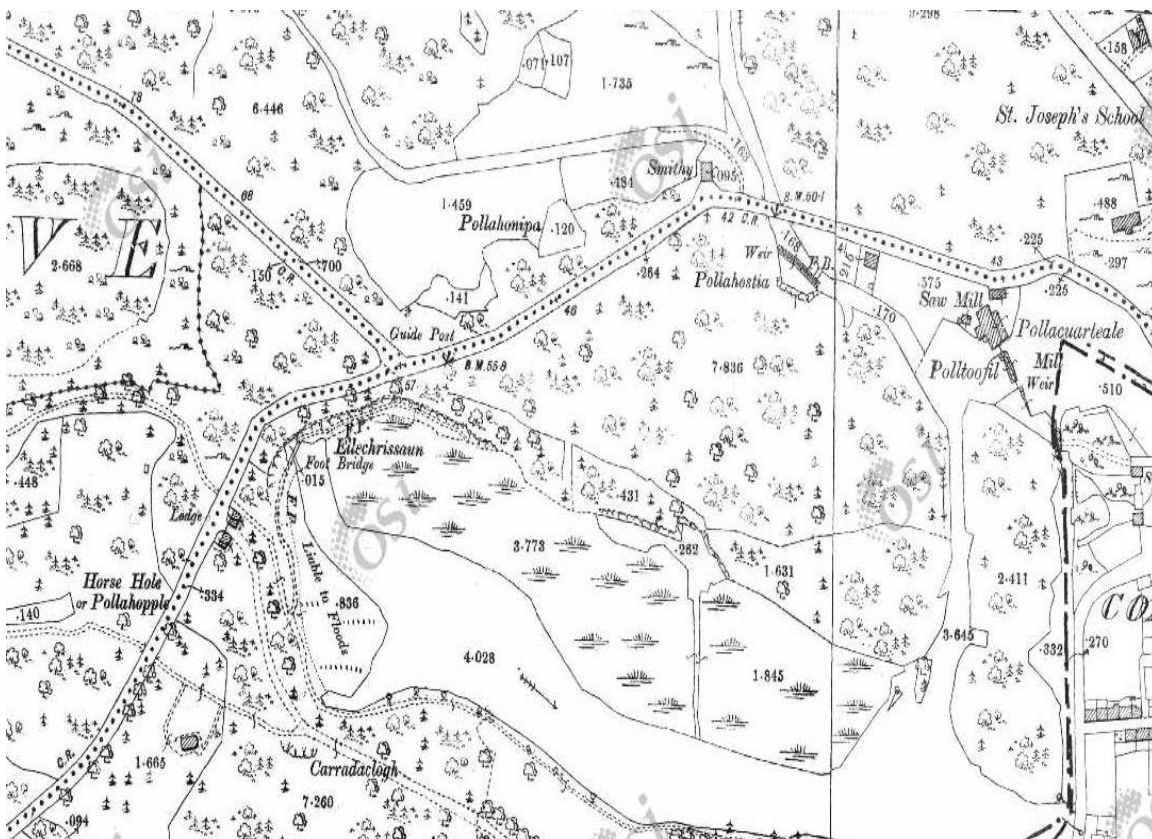


Image showing area of Ellechrisaun Spring/Rising, Cong, Co. Mayo

10<sup>th</sup> August Faunarooska

Pete Eckford, Ken James

Late start; aches and pains. Parked at the cross, walked in via the Drover's Road, and east over the field. A slow trip, but hilarious. Reached the first pitch; sat, and chatted more. Steady pace out. Into O'Donaghues, Fanore, for a few, then into the Roadside.

11<sup>th</sup> August Poulmagollum - Poulelva

Pete Eckford, Ken James

Late start; free climbed the entrance. In through Muddy Links to Branch Passage. Down to the pitch; abseiled, on to Main Junction. Pleasant amble to Poulelva, about turned, to exit main streamway, climbing up into Gunman's Cave. Cracking. Into the Irish Arms for an early evening session.

12<sup>th</sup> August Lug na Cumar

Pete Eckford, Ken James

In the bar, both asked if virgin diving was available, informed downstream Lug na Cumar awaits a further visit. Called to Brian Murray, BM suggested drive to the site. The volume of the resurgence, normal. Acted as the boy's support. Each dived in turn in the suggested southwesterly direction, between them achieving 120m at -24m. Finding a route through large boulders; sheer delight. Superb music in McGann's; the boy's leave for the UK, tomorrow.



20<sup>th</sup> August Poulacapple Pot  
Cheg Chester

Returned to the bottom of the main shaft, the only way to dig here, to dump spoil along the base of the rift, along which is the route to the new extensions. The four-inch pipe will facilitate the installation of a siphon tube, at the lowest possible point of the rift, if required, as this area ponds to ankle depth. For the moment deposited spoil along the rift to get a level surface throughout.

27<sup>th</sup> August Poulacapple Pot  
Cheg Chester

Installed a horizontal, four-inch pipe, along the base of the tight rift, toward the northern series. Along this could be deployed a syphon pipe, to unwater this hollow in the base of the shaft. Began to dig the floor, throwing spoil onto said pipe; swifter than hauling it all out. Into McGann's for a few.

3<sup>rd</sup> September Poulacapple Pot  
Cheg Chester

Steady progress, CC annoyed, being dripped on from the roof; digging slow, but steady. Lost drain hole in the floor, area began to fill up. Frantic efforts found it. Floor consists of compacted clay, with small cobbles.

10<sup>th</sup> September Poulacapple Pot  
Cheg Chester

The area showered from the drips; CC soaked in minutes, unhappy. Lowered the floor a foot. Made a wet exit onto the windswept summit. Straight into McGann's

17<sup>th</sup> September Poulacapple Pot  
Cheg Chester

A wet session; CC soaked in less than ten minutes. Dumping spoil is an effort; requiring digger climb up to throw spoil along the rift: hard work.

24<sup>th</sup> September Poulacapple Pot  
Cheg Chester

The dig has moved beneath a mini car sized boulder, well jammed in the rift. The west wall can be seen to continue, south, along a tiny gap. If its floor is constantly lowered it would drain the sump. The clay is stiff and sticky. Diverted the streams to fall the ten metres from the pipe onto this area: potential hydraulic digging?

October (1<sup>st</sup>?) Panamá.

Dig Hastilow, Ray Murphy, Phil Collett, Conor McGrath, James Cobbett.

See report. Three weeks in the Bocas Del Toro, close to Costa Rica. Made first cave dive in Panama. DH the second in Courtney Cenote Many new finds: Report, "Panama 2006" on the PCN website.

4<sup>th</sup> November Poulacapple Pot  
Cheg Chester,

Prepared a plastic bag cover to shelter the digger from trickles and drips. Continued to back fill the rift covering the four-inch pipe. The front of the upper entrance rift was further consolidated with concrete blocks. The present drain hole worked until the floor was excavated below it. Will need to instigate a siphon to remove the water from this low point, the pipe fed along the four inch pipe into the adjacent northern series.

2006

20<sup>th</sup> November Cullaun One

Cheg Chester

After several days of rain; showers. The wet trip got as far as the third vertical feature. CC got down the short climb in flood water while PC remained above to assist CC's return against the torrent. The next pitch, beyond, with this level of flow, requires a handline.

House building, phase one, continuing in earnest, to attempt head off winter storms.

31<sup>st</sup> December Pouldubh

Solo

Last of the year. Dry these last three days. In Pouldubh North entrance. Pleasant trip to the Figg-Brigg extensions. Had not intended enter, but low water levels decided. Slid in along Conor's Crawl, to see the status of the chamber floor adjacent "Gerry's junction". Ruminated on how are the significant erosion of the junction at the old terminal choke, and here connected? If so, due to what action? Surprized at the volume lost by stream erosion. A few more years might well see open passage. Sat there, fleetingly experienced these extensions are indeed quite remote, at the far end of a cave which, backs up from hereabouts under flood conditions. To McGann's for a pint.