

2008

2008

1<sup>st</sup> January Kilcorney Cave of the Wild Horses  
Solo

First of the Year. To K1, stopped in at the Davoren's to say hello, enjoyed tea and caca. Felt like a time warp. Michael related how wet it had been but though the Turlough outside his place was full, he'd seen no outflow from K1. Parked and changed by the gate. Ground very wet. Noted small puddles in entrance passage. At the pitch found water some four metres below the top. Passing Lisdoonvarna invited to the Ritz for a New Year pint by John Burke, a pleasant hour.

2<sup>nd</sup> January Pouldubh North to Pouldubh South – Figg-Brigg extensions  
Ray Murphy, Cheg Chester, Conor McGrath

Wanted to check the Figg-Brigg extensions after winter storms. Found evidence of flood water erosion to the mud banks beyond the breakthrough point. At the passage above the sink chamber the passage previously wet was found dry, with a very strong draught, plan to return and push this with attention on the dig, Poulbeagnacoillte.

Resumed building work, slowly getting there.

February (8<sup>th</sup>?) Poulmagollum  
Ken James

21:00. Picked up KJ, Shannon Aerfort, straight to the cave, arrived 22:30. Down to Branch Passage cascade and out to a cold night; cracking late pints in the Roadside.

February (9<sup>th</sup>?) Cullaun V  
Ken James

A really pleasant trip, walked over the fence entrance, meandering down main passage, stopped by the beddings being flooded. Sat, as ever, and caught up on so many things, as ever. KJ is a really nice pal. Exited via the roadside entrance. Into the Roadside, then onto McGann's.

Building the home continues

13<sup>th</sup> February Balch Cave  
Rob Taviner, Dave, King, Richard Witcombe Matt and Mandy Voysey, Duncan Price, Mark Lumley

To the digging face with MV, while ML, Mandy V, RW DP and RT hauling: 76 bags removed, a possible record? Really miss playing with this decent bunch of humans.

21<sup>st</sup> February Poulmagollum  
Solo

Through Muddy Links, turning upstream, steady progress to junction of E2 and E3 inlets. Good stream flowing. Deep canal caused issues using dry kit. Exited to heavy rain.

23<sup>rd</sup> March Sliabh Eilbh  
Solo

Prospecting between Caherbullog Farm - Home; twelve miles over seven hours; much poking in soggy depressions. The forestry warrants a good investigation. Chatted with Christy O'Brien, asking of Poultaloon on his land.

24<sup>th</sup> March Cullaun 5

Cheg Chester,

Entered C5b, at the fence of the forestry, moved upstream to explore toward the upper entrances. Took loop passage at the junction; very pretty formations. Eventually arrived at C5c; the entrance well within the forestry. The recent northerly storm has wrecked the west facing tree line, producing an impossible tangle of trunks and branches to traverse. Re-entered, to exit from C5 (Poll-y-Coe), on the Ballyvaghan Rd.

30<sup>th</sup> March Gragen West Cave

Solo

Tried locate the depression had previously exited, (2005?); could not find the obvious red deposit of limonite. Eventually found the hole entered; deployed a ladder, just in case. As before headed downstream to the previous limit; Card Pack Chamber. Headed back encountered a decent sized stream entering from a crawling passage, previously unnoticed. Followed it for fifty metres to an entrance. Unsure of location, followed the shale boundary, heading north. Found tree close to laddered entrance; recovered kit.

1<sup>st</sup> April Poulnagollum

Solo

Free climbed the entrance. No stream at gate. Little stream. Steady trip down main passage to Poulelva and back.



Poulbeagnacoillte with obstructing flag removed

Photo Cheg Chester

3<sup>rd</sup> April B4 & After, Blakes Mountain

Cheg Chester, Conor McGrath

Started digging before CMcG arrived. PC had the good fortune, lifting a flag that had cracked; CC, took over and continued down. Pulled up the remaining fragments of flags, exposing a muddy, diggable, bedding plane. Almost dark, retrieved tools from the other digs; will focus here. Cleared the bottom of the rift to make a body sized hole at the beginning of the bedding, so the digger can lay flat and dig along the bedding a little easier, with a better view. CMcG managed to obtain a fix with his GPS so this will make life easier to work out the relative positions and survey.



Entrance bedding crawl 250mm high x 4 metres long Photo Cheg Chester

5<sup>th</sup> April Doughbranneen – Gleninagh Mountain

Solo

Walked over Black Head to Gleninagh Mountain. Aim prospecting. Descending from the cairn located, near a small sunken field, a perfect pothole entrance blocked at a depth of only a metre. Will probe with length of re-bar to ascertain possible form and maybe depth of blockage. During the walk also located a spring and sink, on a wide bench of limestone above a large collapse on the Black Head side of the Aghaglinny depression. Circumnavigated the depression but could see no obvious cave entrances other than the small rift, previously noted and failed to enter. Logic being if Coskeam cave can exist in Oughtdarra then why not here? Gleninagh South Cave, M1941.0932 located on Cappanawalla further to the east. There are several cliff faces around Black Head and also on Gleninagh, off to the southwest. Interestingly enough Aghaglinny, the area within the saddle between the two mountains, seems most certain to be above the intermittent cascades opposite Gleninagh Castle. Looking from the north eastern edge of Black Head to Kinvarra there are several cliff faces that are exposed, again need prospect the chances of caves here.





Photo Pat Cronin

Poulbeagnacoillte (central near stump) with the Coolagh Stream in background; deforested  
Downstream feeds Coolagh River Cave sinking at Polldonough

6<sup>th</sup> April Pollcragreagh

Cheg Chester,

Cold day with a north wind, aim to bottom the cave. Pleasant trip, with minor route finding issues in the high rift. At pitch, possibly free-climbable, but had no tackle.

13<sup>th</sup> April Cheg's Crevice

Cheg Chester,

New dig site below Carrick na Leagabui

Years ago had followed a shallow dry stream bed to a small cliff face. A burrow is present but no sign of life. The area to the left of the burrow was cleared a little to be able to see into the burrow area next time. The site appears to be a pre-glacial resurgence, facing or draining to the southwest, facing away from the march of a Glacier. With luck should not be too much crap to dig out.

16<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> April Donegal

Pauline Cronin

Cracking trip, took in several "sea caves"; all of which are more like Rock shelters.

26<sup>th</sup> April Doughbranneen, Black Head  
Solo

Walked again to the summit, the aim, investigate another area. Circumnavigated the first escarpment. Commenced on a bearing of 134° magnetic, searched clockwise to 000°. Nothing of note located. Chose an area out on the karst, found a fault that developed into a gully, that spilt going off south and east. Didn't follow as the development was outside the plotted search area. Will go back later.

26<sup>th</sup> April Poulelva Rescue

Rescue (Conducted by Coast Guard, organized by its own ICRO members)

19:45: Called to Poulelva, six novices, aged 30 to 40: all descended on one set of SRT kit. Once all at the bottom, the females did not want to enter the visibly, very wet beddings to complete the planned through trip. The leader ascended, raising the alarm; all lifted out using the hauling system provided by the Doolin Unit, rescue concluded 01:00. Farmer threatens to close access; will chat to him.

27<sup>th</sup> April Poulbeagnacoillte

Cheg Chester,

The aim was to dig out the floor of the entrance rift. CC continued with PC hauling when needed. PC also commenced digging the northern hole. After a short period, a small gap was opened and enlarged, to a point where the bedding was accessed but found too small to enter. CC cleared the base of the rift and continued removing two inches of compact silt and sand covering the bedrock. Could now see the bedding is up to three metres wide and five metres long, in the far-left corner a passage between silt banks can be seen going off at about some 45 degrees toward the surface depressions.

27<sup>th</sup> April Cullaun II

I.C.R.O. alert for an overdue party; arrived at cave entrance as they exited; all well.

1<sup>st</sup> May Poulbeagnacoillte

Cheg Chester, Conor McGrath

CC went back down the main opening while PC probed CC's dig. Within several minutes had managed to lift the large flag and boulder blocking the base of the hole. For the rest of the evening the floor was dug down to solid rock to a too narrow rift, the very bottom of which was the adjacent bedding. CC continued to dig the silt, floor coating which was becoming thicker. A draught present as the pair became cold in a surprisingly short time. CMcG arrived as the other pair were considering packing up, he went down both and was surprised at the bedding and how it becomes larger as it goes back! The team intend return, Sunday 4<sup>th</sup>.

The start of the bedding is very tight but CMcG has no problem neither does CC. PC found it almost impossible, intend try again Sunday. The silt dug from the northern hole seems to be made of ground shale, a layer of greasy clay and ground limestone grit.

4<sup>th</sup> May Poulbeagnacoillte

Cheg Chester, Conor McGrath

Arrived "tooled" up for the push CC & CMcG were to dig and push beyond the mud squeeze. PC was to begin digging the hole below the pool of water in the forest. Within half an hour CC had dug out the mud and squeezed beyond the previous limit. Quickly followed by CMcG the pair pushed on, PC returned and could hear "it's going". More than a little pissed off, tried the entrance squeeze again, without luck. Exiting, grabbed a trowel and returned to dig on the righthand side, attempting find a little more space.

After thirty minutes was through the initial part, up to the stiff mud area; this was much tighter, recommenced digging. Hearing the cursing, CMcG came back from the boulder choke and helped dig PC free, while CC carried on digging the choke. CC had already probed two points and was in two minds where to prioritize. CMcG took a turn and focused on the right-hand side where a way on could be seen. It needs popping.

11<sup>th</sup> May Poulbeagnacoillte  
Cheg Chester, Conor McGrath

Straight to the boulder choke and immediately began to dig, while CMcG drilled and popped the boulder. Steady work. Gradually two ways were opened, one straight on and the other to the right. Judging the immediate area above the straight on squeeze, cleared the boulders in front of that opening. The way straight on is tight owing to a small lump in the way that will be popped next time. The right-hand squeeze leads into a small pocket with a possible way on. The way requires clearing etc. This can be best done via the straight on way and move around to the right so as to dig easier.

14<sup>th</sup> May Fitz's Cross, Doolin  
Rumor has it that there is a hole opened by a JCB at Fitz's corner, Doolin.

15<sup>th</sup> May Fitz's Cross Pot (L83 & L84) and swallet, Doolin  
Cheg Chester, Conor McGrath  
A surface inspection of a collapse occurring in the area adjacent the hillside behind the new construction, a line of shallow collapses from the sink in the field, the other side of the road, one hundred metres away, run toward the largest hole some six metres deep in very loose ground. Permission has been granted by John Declan-Flanagan to CMcG, but only after the County Archeologist has seen the site????

25<sup>th</sup> May Cullaun 5  
Cheg Chester,  
The aim was to do the section of passage from C5 to C5d. Several interesting points encountered, a number of very fine curtains, a further inlet and a point where water enters occasionally, here a further entrance will occur. Once at C5d, entered the low bedding, following it via a two-metre pot that dropped to a lower bedding that then became increasingly tighter and aquatic. This was followed for some seven metres to a point where it became too tight for further progress. This passage is not recorded or surveyed and definitely not displayed on the main survey.  
NB. Spoke with TB who understood UBSS members reported pushing a route through fluorescein link; yet the link is six inches high? He did not know of the bedding or pots.

26<sup>th</sup> May Doughbranneen  
Pauline M Cronin  
To the cairn on Doughbranneen 314m, dam she is fit. Meandered down prospecting the lower southwestern slopes; a few more seepages, little else.

31<sup>st</sup> May (L85) Aghaglinny depression  
Tony Boycott Jayne Stead & PC  
To the Aghaglinny depression, and the small rift on the east side some nine metres long, noted ages back too tight for a Plumbers chest. Thought of JS. PC got in 1m TB 1m and JS 6 metres, suggested name it Pollnabeaneag; Cave of the Small Woman.

7<sup>th</sup> June Poll Eile  
Solo

Lovely day, cool S/W wind and sun, with very good visibility. Arrived Aghaglinny after a meandering route, prospecting. Turned on the GPSR to give distance and bearing from the cairn. Took a compass bearing (132Mg) from the cairn, to estimate where Poul Eile is supposed to be. Estimating, it should be a hundred metres from Pollnabeanbeag, visited 31<sup>st</sup> May with TB. After much searching found it at M17222 x 09916. Adjacent one of the many small ruined stone enclosures surrounded by a very low wall of material dug by Graham Prowl, (Wessex?) et al? A small descending passage with a short shaft choked at its base. Returning to the Landrover, cut up across the limestone benches to walk around the mountain. An interesting pot located; well choked, needs digging.

8<sup>th</sup> June Cois Bothar? Dig near Ballynalacken Castle.  
Cheg Chester, Conor McGrath

The foliage is now enough to obscure the site from road users. Quickly dug down through old wall tiles and roof slates. The overhanging rock is well fluted and on the underneath side there are small scallops, pointing, at this moment, Northwest. The fill of the depression is clay around the edge of the hole, beneath the domestic debris are water channels among the boulders. A shale flatty was found by CMcG at about a metre depth. The impression is of more water than can be seen enters the sink. The narrow entrance requires shoring, or grading the surface back. This can be undertaken once permission obtained from the owner. An impressive site.

12<sup>th</sup> June Poulnafearbui (Radgers) (L86)  
Cheg Chester, Conor McGrath

Commenced in earnest another dig site previously visited April 13<sup>th</sup>. Situated at R07410 x 99610 near Carraig na Leagabui (Rock of the yellow ship). Evidence of habitation, probably badgers, outside the small hole. This was cleared down to the previous level and forward excavation was begun. There quickly appeared a sizable hole, similar to a coffin level. The passage became exposed as a solid roof with a solid north wall the southern wall being undercut somewhat. Ahead was an obvious path of a mammal with vegetation here and there, a distance of some three metres could be seen along this route to a possible cross rift. Returning to the Landrover an obvious joint could be seen stretching for some distance across the karst toward the dig it could be this rift that's seen at the end of the entrance passage.

15<sup>th</sup> June Poulbeagnacoillte (The Little Hole in the Woods) (L87)  
Cheg Chester, Conor McGrath, Paul McGrath

The aim of this trip was to dig the areas right hand side and straight on. Steady digging of the right hand side passage to a point where the flags were broken up and a passage could be seen beneath. CC managed to see into the continuation of what appears to be the entrance bedding passage. PC suggested digging back in the main passage to intercept the bedding below. Work began on the floor, CMcG made steady progress down the side of the block that had fallen from the ceiling eons ago. The plan; return next Sunday to dig the floor out and see what happens.

18<sup>th</sup> June Poulnafearbui (Radgers)  
Cheg Chester,

Dug down the approach to the entrance, evidence of recent habitation is not prominent.

3<sup>rd</sup> July Poulnafearbui (Radgers)

Cheg Chester, Barry Sudell

Delightful trip, as BS had managed to join us. Continued to dig the entry slope to a point where it will be manageable for sledges. Three very large boulders removed by sledge hammer and sweat. All ready for next week.

6<sup>th</sup> July Poulbeagnacoillte

Barry Sudell Cheg Chester, Conor McGrath

Cheg's 63<sup>rd</sup> birthday

To continue work in the boulder chamber; to dig around down around the huge block. After several attempts gradual progress was made at the far end of the block that seems to be some 100 – 150 mm thick. Intend undermine this and spilt off sections to gain the soft area beneath. The general feeling is we are very close to the lower bedding. The low chamber is unstable and will be pursued as a last resort. The area to the east of the entrance is being cropped by forestry contractors the plan is to cover the entrance for protection until work in the area has ceased. A lot of water in the bedding entrance and a veritable canal (3" deep) between the bend and the chamber

9<sup>th</sup> July Poulbeagnacoillte

Cheg Chester,

Forestry contractors have been noticed clearing the area to the south of the stream and almost up to where it bends to the south. In an effort to protect the entrance, decided to cover it and await events. In torrential rain the pair struggled with timber stumps from the cleared area across the stream to the dig. The small rift opening (B4?) was seen to be taking about one quarter of the swollen stream before it began to back up. (Is this the source from where the pine seeds came from that was found in the chamber in Pouldubh?) The entrance was successfully covered with timber and the flags originally removed.

12<sup>th</sup> July Doughbranneen

Solo

At the summit the weather deteriorated. Decided to cut the trip short and return to base.

13<sup>th</sup> July Poulnafearbui (Radgers)

Cheg Chester, Conor McGrath

Three feet of progress made. Further progress will benefit from a timber floor to remain above the soft earth base, and drag out the kibbles.

31<sup>st</sup> July Tony Boycott rang about Jarratt's illness, being terminal.

31<sup>st</sup> July Mermaids Hole – Doolin River Cave

Martin Groves, Tony Donovan

others portered

Afternoon: St Catherine's to Fisherstreet

Cheg Chester, Martin Groves, Tony Donovan

Tourist through trip for the visitors' low water; awful smell of sewage and waste water at the final approach to the pot

3<sup>rd</sup> August Cullaun 2

Martin Groves, Tony Donovan

To show the sump to MGs; a quick and pleasant trip



5<sup>th</sup> August Doolin - Priddy

Long phone call with Jarratt; resigned and philosophical about impending end. Asked if needing any bills paid or money for anything replied "I'm the richest man in the world".



PC at the site identified by Conor McGrath

Photo Ken James

7<sup>th</sup> August Poulnafearbui, and Jarratt's Joint??

16:00. Ken James to Poulnafearbui and area near sea; a small bedding was located in the lower stepped limestone. The next project is to take a compass bearing and walk it to search for any other sites.

18:30. Hole upstream of B4 area (L88) (Jarratt's Joint?)

Cheg Chester, Ken James, Barry Sudell, Conor McGrath, Paul McGrath

Mob handed, dug this rift opening in the shale. The midges awful. Within a short time limestone was exposed and the loose cover of stones and mud was removed almost all the way back to the river. A hole had opened at the entrance to the rift and was taking a good amount of stream. After a good bit of work a hole was excavated down where it was decided to flush the loose stuff away using the stream. Heavy rain predicted over the weekend so the area in front of the rift was dug to facilitate as good as flow as possible. A quick look downstream for the B4 entrance was conducted and a hole was found with the remaining stream sinking there, due to most going down the rift. Using a sledge the covering flags were destroyed to access the cavity beneath, alas the cavity appears full of debris, however once again the hole was enlarged sufficient to increase water flow in an effort to wash out the debris.....?

8<sup>th</sup> August Poulmagollum, Muddy links-Branch Passage Gallery-Main Junction  
Ken James

A clear dry day, little wind present. A very pleasant trip; KJ enjoying the refreshing feeling of abseiling into this cave entrance after the short absence of only thirty years! A steady trip through to BPG with only a minor delay at the squeeze; down to the pitch and another abseil, reached surface after four hours; KJ enjoyed himself.

9<sup>th</sup> August B4 area  
Ken James

Following very heavy rain, a trip to observe its effect on the recent dig was considered. A swift trip across the deforested area brought the pair to the swollen stream. Photos were taken. Approximately one quarter of the stream was sinking in the rift without any sign of backing up. Pressed on further downstream to the area of the other sink, a definite depression in the stream was noted and photographed (poorly).

10<sup>th</sup> August Lough Bunny  
Barry Sudell, Ceily Sudell, Ken James

An opportunity for BS and KJ to improve their equipment layout: PC to prepare his gear prior to assisting MF in Cong next week. Using PC's scooter BS had a fine time.

11<sup>th</sup> August Area north of Poulnafearbui  
Ken James

A walk along part of the coastline to prospect for other sites. A rift like that visited by ML & PC in 1997 was identified but will be approached via original route from the road.

12<sup>th</sup> August Lough Bunny  
Barry Sudell, Ceily Sudell, Ken James

First dive for CS in five years, she did very well, BS used the scooter and went to -12m. KJ continued to adjust and sort his new arrangement and conducted compass work. PC arranged his kit in preparation for the weekend. Some way out, on the second dive a current was noticed, an the effect of the wind? Or convection currents?

13<sup>th</sup> August Lough Bunny  
Ken James

Training for KJ in the intricacies of modern- subtly different diving equipment

16<sup>th</sup> August Abbey Rising, Corner Pool, Cong TRAINING (Paul, ?, Roger Viking  
Martyn Farr

Large rising pool off the main river; good flow apparent but no large opening

17<sup>th</sup> August Bunnaduber cave, Ballinrobe  
Martyn Farr

Aim. to -20m, good vis.

PM. Poll na Dia (Lost World, the pit)

MF PC to -25m good vis.

19<sup>th</sup> August Cullaun Two  
Cheg Chester, Alan Steans Graham Toffus

Pleasant trip for AS and GT; first trip since AS had the other hip operation. In through the high level route, down climb into the streamway to the pitch; a good bit of water.





19:30 9<sup>th</sup> August; J'Rat's Joint in ravine above B4 (L88)

Photo Pat Cronin

29<sup>th</sup> August The tube by the sea

Cheg Chester, Barry Sudell, Conor McGrath

Visited the tube to the right of the one dug by CMcG & PMcG, while BS & CC cleared the entrance area of loose stones PC & CMcG dug through the sandy pebbly fill to a point where a substantial draught was exposed. Excited the team left to return.

31<sup>st</sup> August, 00:40.

Lost Tony Jarratt

31<sup>st</sup> August Pouldubh South

Cheg Chester, Barry Sudell,

Commenced the survey out to the entrance using tripods, the aim this trip to get beyond the wet zone and establish a survey datum for next section. Exactitude was slow process; BS ankle giving him hell throughout, though uttered not a murmur.

7<sup>th</sup> September Pouldubh South

Cheg Chester, Barry Sudell,

Continued with the survey from the last survey datum to the entrance; surveyed to the datum not far from the entrance crawl. BS did well making his own way down after us, arriving only five minutes after had erected the tripods.

12<sup>th</sup> September Poulmagollum - Jarratt's Funeral

Toe's funeral, 15:00 Hayford Crematorium, Bath, Wiltshire, UK

Mac rang, suggesting no point coming to the Funeral just for the couple of hours. Rather come over for a proposed "Ratfest" a little later in the year, maybe November! Sensible.

Solo

14:45; water conditions very high at the bridge gate, eight inches below the bottom of the gate; the stream from the rising flooding adjacent fields. Potentially unable to do the trip. Used a handline on the entrance; the cascade from Upper Poulmagollum reasonable. Water level in the cave beyond the waterfall, between shin and knee deep. The stream from branch passage similar in volume to main passage. A pleasant trip to celebrate a dear friend's life; whilst knowing others were at the ceremony: the memorial "RATFEST" do, the 15<sup>th</sup> November, on Mendip. Called into McGann's for the pints.

14<sup>th</sup> September Pouldubh South

Cheg Chester, Barry Sudell,

Continued with the survey from the last station out the entrance, which took some three and a half hours CMcG had previously obtained a GPS reading on the ground above the entrance. But among trees, suspect; so the survey was taken to a fence post driven in the soil in the clearing to the south for improved, accurate GPRS reception.

17<sup>th</sup> September Poulelva, Rescue

Cheg Chester, and several ICRO

Callout to assist a lad with a dislocated knee, on arrival the casualty emerged from the top of the pot; having got himself through the rifts and up the pitch; a happy ending.

25<sup>th</sup> September Pouldubh area

Cheg Chester, Barry Sudell, Ceily Sudell, Conor McGrath

Used three GPSR's to assess the sites; South and the lower dig.

Placed on standby for alert in Kilkee.

2<sup>nd</sup> October Pouldubh

Solo

Using a borrowed GPSR, returned to check the INGR and ascertain altitudes. Doubting the accuracy of the altitude reading, calibrated the GPSR at the road cross and Blakes Bridge, both set on the road surface. Thursday evening the altimeter was checked against Roadford Bridge Bench Mark +26m. The centre, road level, +23m; the western end road level was +22m.

Northern entrance	<i>M13764 x 03762</i>	<i>(Gps)</i>
	<i>M13764 x 03757</i>	<i>Alt 222</i>
Middle entrance	<i>M13549 x 03234</i>	<i>Alt 216</i>
Southern entrance		
(Survey Post)	<i>M13648 x 03244</i>	<i>Alt 219</i>
Poulbeagnacoillte	<i>M13346 x 02647</i>	<i>Alt 219</i>
Road cross	<i>M13335 x 03135</i>	<i>Alt 222</i>
Blakes Bridge	<i>M13555 x 03135</i>	
Rift on stream	<i>M13367 x 02624</i>	<i>Alt</i>
	<i>M13365 x 02621</i>	<i>(Gps)</i>
Pat's Dig	<i>M13375 x 02672</i>	



9<sup>th</sup> October

Lost Jim Eyre, dam.

12<sup>th</sup> October Doughbranneen

Solo

Weather sunny, cold: permitted to borrow a Coast Guard GPSR plotter to assess accuracy of personal GPSR. Delighted they match.

Rainfall for October recorded as seventeen inches at Cheg's place, Kilshanny. Therefore, very high water conditions throughout North Clare. Hence absence of trips.

Pushed on with second fix of the home.

1<sup>st</sup> November Doughbranneen

Cheg Chester

A glorious cold clear bright day parked at lighthouse, walked to the first escarpment following it to the south. Reached the first wall without any scent of cave whatsoever.

12<sup>th</sup> November Balch Cave

Matt Voysey, Mandy Voysey, Rob Taviner,

Team of four to the collapsed face steadily dug the soggy mud and moved the fifty bags to the bottom of the shaft. Once outside made a quick trip to the face of Fern Hill Cave. The boys had left the ladder; Richard awaited PC at the bottom. A difficult project with a lot of loose rock about the place; a very fine job.

15<sup>th</sup> November RATFEST, Tony Jarratt's Pissup

Attended the lunchtime, for an early start; drinking with Cobbett, Pegasus etc, realised the bar had emptied. Joined Zot et al. at Hunters Sink. Pressed on to the New Inn, found many Pegasus, more drink. Landlord pointed out that a big red Landrover was parked on the green with the engine running. Drove it to the Hall; more drink. Pure delight to meet Tony Audsley, Rich Witcombe and many, many more; Cobbett, Hanham, Pegasus etc. etc. A fine time, taken to Mac's to sleep it off. Picked up the Fluoresceine from KJ. Asked to go to Jarratt's cottage by Jane, who then presented an anemometer and a bar table to PC, bequeathed by Jarratt. Somewhat upset.

*16<sup>th</sup> November Doolin River Cave: Rescue. Taken from Irish Cave Rescue Log.*

*Sunday: The all night Fisherstreet rescue took place involving Robin Sheene, Brian Lillis and Brian Cotter; high tide and high water caused Fisherstreet beddings to sump. Pumps proved ineffective against the flood, as if they would.*

16<sup>th</sup> November Swildons Hole

Solo

In borrowed kit wandered down to sump One, reflecting on a dear uncompromizing pal, who, right or wrong, plowed his own furrow and maintain his integrity. I'll miss him.

29<sup>th</sup> November Oughtdarra

Solo

Very cold; bright, walked over to the south side of Oughtdarra from Poulsallagh toward Ballynalacken Castle. After some 300/400 metres a shallow North-South gully, bars the way; full of hazel thicket. Turned north followed the gully toward a meadow, to the east. Continued north through hazel thickets, until karst encountered at the lowest bench. From here moved northeast encountering another gully; followed up to a large Glacial erratic. From here a pronounced valley cuts up to the next limestone terrace, some five

hundred metres away. Remained on this second bench, examined for cave. Followed the edge of the valley to where the second bench morphs into the third bench. Several Gull forms noted and one “tube” which becomes too small. The Gull caves are merely gaps where the larger mass has left the bedrock massif. From here these cliffs were followed south, back to where the first glacial erratic was located.

Building work almost complete

13<sup>th</sup> December Cullaun II

Solo

Rainfall yesterday around an inch; expected high water. En-route along the path the obvious collapse is increasing. A gap in bedding can be seen beyond the earth fill. Water temperature bitter; just above freezing. Travelled along the streamway, painful, from the cold penetrating the dry kit. Water level, almost knee deep, along the rifts. Current meant a slower exit. A section of entrance passage has been labeled as dangerous owing to a section of rock bedding being loose?? No tale-tells secured across the offending gap; danger appears some ones opinion? Doesn't look serious.

21<sup>st</sup> December Poulmagollum

Cheg Chester,

The plan; reach the bottom of Poulelva. Stream very high; beddings wet; CC soaked, very cold in the dry gear. Managed reach the entrance to Craven Canyon. Returned to CC to report desperate conditions in the bedding; suggested another day. Nice four-hour trip; water horrendously cold. Into McGann's for a warm up.

31<sup>st</sup> December Pollapooka III

Solo

A late start, plan, investigate this site. Weather bright and very cold. Drove along the Drover's Road to the junction to Poulmagollum – Caherbullog Farm. Parked by the gate. Just changing when the pager went off; abandoned trip, ran to the rescue station. New Year in McGann's a cracking session.