

1971

1st January Swildons Hole

Solo

After listening to the descriptions of Swildons four lofty streamway decided to go and have a look. Found the mud sump full. Couldn't find a bucket so used helmet. Three hours of work with very little effect on water level.

2nd January Minneries Pool

Alan Mills, Ken James

Training dive, no lead available so AM filled my borrowed wetsuit with stones, broke ice from the pool side to flounder about in silt for twenty minutes until blue with the cold.

3rd January Swildons Hole

Solo

Returned to the mud sump with a plastic bucket; speed of bailing much improved. Managed to lower the level by two inches over three hours; seems a lot more to go

9th January Swildons Hole

Solo

Returned to the mud sump found water level higher than left before and the bucket left in a different place? How quickly does this place respond to rainfall? Asked Alan Mills about the place: it may be the wrong Mud Sump I've been bailing

10th January Sandford Dig

Ted Meek, Stu Reid, Nigel Burns

The quarry has had planning permission to expand operations to the trig point, dug for three hours before SR mutinied.

16th January Read's Cavern, Burrington

Nigel Burns

Set up camp near Read's Cavern. Others have said there should be much more passage to Read's than there is. After two hours of wriggling surfaced: no luck. Though weather unsettled walked up to Blackdown looking for more mineshafts

17th January Goatchurch Cavern, Blackdown

Nigel Burns

Arrived Friday night and set up camp on Blackdown summit to test both new tents, NB's Blacks Mountain and my Good Companions Minor, (with "A" frame). Both superb, the heavy rain did not penetrate: warm and dry, had a great evening followed by a good kip. In the day did a tourist trip around Goatchurch Cavern.

23rd January Minneries Pool

Ken James, Alan Mills

Thirty one minutes of diving using KJ's Tadpole, (26Cb/ft), and AM's Deepstar. With lead found the exercise completely different; able to take note of surroundings. Managed, though cold, to lessen breathing rate. The silt is over an arms depth, so found nowhere to secure the line. Water bitter cold; on surfacing found a fishing hook through the little finger on the right hand.

24th January Sandford Dig

Ted Meek, Jim Smart, Martin Waller, Sue Howard, Nigel Burns

A good afternoon's effort moved a lot of spoil to surface, though hampered by the sore finger gained yesterday.

24th January Swildons Hole,

Ted Meek,

Dropped Jim Smart off at the Belfry to find a callout in progress, asked to report to the Surface Controller on the Green. PC was sent down with a party of six, carrying bags of equipment. On arrival placed in a hauling team and stood ready for instructions. It appeared as the tension was applied to the rope the guy, Dudley?, tensed, jamming himself further. After about two hours replaced by another team and told to get some soup and a rest. Concerns expressed as to successful outcome. Had a doze in the Barn and woken at midnight with the news he had been extracted and on his way out. TM had gone back to Bristol as he had work next day. Spent the night in the belfry; hitched to Keynsham to attend work arriving just after noon. Whereupon received a monumental bollocking from the Boss who stopped the days pay because of my absence.

30th January Tooth Cave

Mike Davies, Jim Smart, Nigel Burns

A weekend on the Gower, prospecting trip looking for possible leads, small tube the only area of interest; spoil dumping would be a problem. Got the key from a local; Mr Lloyd.

31st January Llethrid Swallet

Mike Davies, Jim Smart, Nigel Burns

Am early start as there's a serious party planned at 51 Theresa Avenue tonight; swift look about little available to push other than a possible sump. Key also from Mr Lloyd

6th February Silica Mines, Glyn Neath

Nigel Burns

In poor weather confidently set up our new tents near the shop; had a superb walk over to and around the Silica Mines got up to the upper entrances. Got a lift to the New Inn; dropped off after a cracking night right by the tents.

7th February Swildons Hole

Martin Waller Stu Reid, Nigel Burns

NB's birthday: a very wet trip. Falling off the small climb at the bottom of the 40 foot SR screamed. Abandoned trip; the slow exit later found due to a broken leg.

13th February Port-yr-Ogof Paul Esser RESCUE

Host of cavers

Chris Hanham, Ted Meek, Roger Marsh etc. Whilst in the Hunters called to South Wales to search for Paul Esser. The situation required divers so later on returned to Bristol.

14th February Hades Hole, Avon Gorge

Nigel Burns

Climbed up the slab to the obscured entrance; assisting two others en-route. Inside one slipped and panicked, the other seemed incapable of assisting his friend. Both wanted out so assisted them back to the surface. The second caver Mike Collins, M.N.R.C and Cerberus, upon finding his saviours were Cotham members became quite unhinged.

20th February Swildons Four

Solo

Alan Mills described how to locate Blue Pencil passage. This time bailed the correct mud sump though actually found the water level almost perfect. The Greasy Chimney is aptly named. Reached the rift; a little apprehensive went in feet first. Also warned of a sharp bend, managed that but could not see at all where or what to do when feet found fresh air. Went back out and came back in head first. A little concerned swung out and down the chain. The descriptions of this streamway fall short of the beauty; its superb.

21st February Swildons Four

Solo

Decided to return to this fascinating streamway went upstream to sump three; a dark looking place. Working downstream climbed some of the rift walls without much success. Carbide lamp gave some problems. Noticed a ledge downstream from Blue Pencil; requiring a three metre climb to reach it. The ledge obscures a passage choked with a soft-ish fill. Dug the site for an hour; made a foot of progress in a passage a yard diameter.

27th February Exeter Dinner

A dam seriously fine dinner; drinking started at 9 in the morning until the next day; many casualties across the city, assisted AM retrieving dive line from roadwork's excavations.

28th February Pixies Hole, Devon

Sam Davies, Brian Collins, Tony Oldham, Martin Waller, Jim Smart, Ted Meek, Roger Marsh, Mike Jay. Nigel Burns.

A sober up trip at TO's suggestion to a little cave near Chudliegh

7th March Swildons Four

Solo

Early start 07:00. High water levels: slow going, delayed bailing the mud sump. Only two hours digging.

12th March Mac's Stag Party

Yet another serious liver crippling affair which went on, and on, and on

14th March Swildons Four

Solo

Continued digging: a foot of progress

21st March Swildons Four

Solo

Continued with dig, another foot of progress; large stones among the spoil. Heard a shout from below; spoil had landed on AM en-route to twelve. That night in the Hunters AM asked what the project was, suggesting it best to free dive down the streamway rather than the long commute through the dry way. Can't swim said PC, neither can I said AM, nor can many of the active cave divers.

27th March Swildons Hole

Alan Mills

Training dive through to three, some minor issues with buoyancy and bottle harness.

28th March Swildons Hole

Training dive; AM sent PC first into sump nine who enjoyed the fantastic green/blue hue of the water, the hundred and ten foot dive seeming to pass so swiftly. However the return felt an awful long way in the zero visibility; some nerves but not actually scared.

9th April Agen Allwedd

Mike Davies, Martin Waller, Sue Howard Stu Reid, Nigel Burns + 4 of MW's mates.
Turkey pool trip, MW's pals not quite prepared for the trip finding the going tough?

10th April Chartist Cave

Jim Smart, Nigel Burns

A nice walk to a fascinating place: a remote hideout for the persecuted.

11th April Port-yr-Ogof

Mike Davies, Martin Waller

Around most of the dry passages and out the resurgence: very convenient to climb out the meadow pool and straight into camp site.

12th April Town Drain, NEW FIND

Martin Waller, Nigel Burns, Jim Smart

Using a small methane cylinder full of sodium chlorate and sugar blew the rock blocking the way on. The thick fumes were awful, sickly sweet and took a long time to clear. Left it clear for an hour and entered another thirty foot of similar passage to another blockage.

24th April Axbridge Dinner, Cliff Hotel Cheddar, Swildons Hole

Martin Waller, Stu Reid, Bob Knott, Jim Smart, Jarratt, Ken James et al.

Arrived for the after dinner PU; great fun; casualties during after PU trip to sump one.

25th April Swildons Four

Martin Waller, Stu Reid

The plan was to show off the dig, at Blue Pencil, Stu's previously dislocated shoulder kept gave him problems so he waited while MW and PC went through into four. Tried to convince SR it was shorter and easier to complete the Round Trip but he wanted to retrace the original route.

1st May Little Neath River Cave

Nigel Burns, Jim Smart, Stuart MacManus

In to Sand Chamber and out via the loop, a very wet trip, the entrance passage all but sumped

2nd May Agen Allwedd

Smelly Alan, Bob Lewis, Doug McFarlane, Stuart MacManus, Jim Smart, Ted Meek

Grand tourist trip to Southern Stream and Turkey Sump

15th May Swildon's Hole, Pirate Chamber

Solo

Told the potential of this chamber was significant. Went for a look, explained the route, got to the bottom of Shatter Pot but couldn't see a way on, just a small pool, spent a long while looking about no luck; abandoned the trip.

16th May Swildons Hole, Pirate Chamber

Solo

Spoke to Pete Moody who explained the route is to dive through the pool which is the “U” tube; he described how to approach this free dive so as to arrive sitting up in the U tube with your head just above water level also pointing out a bucket or such would be very useful for future exploration left on the far side. Took along an empty gallon paint tin scrounged from Bens Dors, tied a rope to the handle and coiled the remainder inside the tin to feed out without catching while holding the other end. Prepared with a deep breath and slid in, as suggested by PM. Pushing hard with heels brought the head above water level in the small confined tube. For a moment felt a little remote. Carried on and found the squeeze into the base of the chamber. It’s a stack of loose boulders. Climbed up the left side to look for an opening, saw nothing obvious: moved horizontally across the slope, during which dislodged several large loose rocks creating a lot of noise. On the other side of the slope found little to inspire. At roof level it too is horrendously loose and not a good idea to be underneath. Committing, but uneventful trip back through “U” tube. An easy exit achieved. Rolling up the two ladders the borrowed cap lamp began to dim. Before total loss of light noted way out. Sat down considering available options, the callout on the BEC board gave a pessimistic ETO of 22:00. After a while faced the direction of the way out, turned the light on which shone briefly then faded to a bare glow; turned it off and began to feel the way out; a painfully slow process. Unsure of the time decided the only option was to continue to creep forward, collecting any small stones to use like a R.A.D.A.R; thrown ahead to gauge the passage floor and location of any drops. Eventually reached the surface and drove the motorbike to the BEC, where a PU was in full swing. Several pals warmly greeted my arrival; checking the time it was 01:35, I was underground for sixteen hours and overdue by eight. Outraged I pointed at my callout written clearly on the board, demanding why hadn’t anyone come looking for me? The reply was, “Oh, we knew you’d be alright”. As to the loss of light later Alan Mills explained that the effort of caving heats up the battery pack, so that when its immersed the pack cools and sucks water through the vents diluting the electrolyte and bugging the light. Lesson; plugs the holes on an Oldham cell, or use a Nife and have a spare light.

29th May Sleets Gill

Martin Bishop, Ken James

Of the group of eight only three fancied a trip after the serious PU last night, MB had been down before so hence the suggestion to take advantage of dry weather. Main passage superb, the long crawl and ducks really cold and wet: great fun.

30th May Penyghent Pot

Martin Bishop, Greg Pickford, Bob Toogood, Gordon Parkin, George Cooper, John?

Weather still good so Penyghent pirated: no issues with the much reduced stream volume. Swiftly to the bottom and out: BT, GC and GP great fun and immensely fit.

31st May Black Shiver

Martin Bishop, Greg Pickford, George Cooper, Gordon Parkin, John? (NPC)

An unexpected trip, a second chance: Friday night in the bar Greg had offered the NPC to detackle the cave after their trip, so got a chance to squeeze in another fine cave the weekend. Without doubt a superb cave. With it already tackled all got to the sump swiftly, Pete remaining at the top of the main pitch to lifeline; a fine bloke. Detackling was a pain but worth it; ideally another two would have made carrying a bit easier.

5th June Pant Mawr Pot

Mike Davies, Jim Smart, Nigel Burns

Early start; as plan to do LNRC this afternoon; had located precise position of Pant Mawr the previous evening. Straight to the pot and an excellent trip around, JS climbed a waterfall to reach what appeared to be a passage; though flow too great to see clearly ahead. In to Christmas Grotto and out for lunch.

5th June Little Neath River Cave

Mike Davies, Jim Smart, Nigel Burns

After lunch had a swift trip via Sand Chamber, Canal and Canal Bypass

6th June White Lady Cave / Town Drain

Mike Davies, Jim Smart, Nigel Burns

A short trip into the dry bit of WLC then across the river to Town Drain, dug for a couple of hours moving gravels and rock. Back to Bristol for a PU in "Aunties"

9th June Swildons Hole

Solo

Midweek training dive through to four, felt strange to take off the dive kit, almost isolating oneself from the way out in the process: Tadpole and Deepstar.

12th June Swildons Hole

Mike Davies, Phil Brown, Nigel Burns, Stu Reid,

A trip into Shatter Series; continued on around the short round trip, diverting down to Sump II, out sump I.

13th June Nightingale Valley, Leigh Woods, Bristol

Solo

Found a reference to an old lead mine in the Nature reserve booklet, located same and searched for further evidence, The shaft appears filled, though its collar is elevated above the surrounding area it could be just covered.

19th June Bridge Cave

Solo

Friday night in the Hunters met up with Chris Hanham, Bishop et al. MB spoke of how he had recently free dived Bridge Cave sump into LNRC, (a sixty foot dive, minimum). Early Saturday morning got on the bike and drove over to Bridge Cave, en-route called on Roger Marsh, Southmead, Bristol, to borrow his Nife cell. Found the streamway in a medium state of flow, not as high as previously experienced. At the sump eventually found the dive line some way under water and set off, the floor dropped away whilst bumping along the roof; very heavy going. As lungs were fit to burst broke into air space. The experience created the desire to exit via the L.N.R.C flood entrance. Unfortunately found the entrance passage sumped. Returned to the sump calmed down and dived back pulling hard on the line. Lay in Bridge streamway gasping as star bursts behind the eye lids subsided and breathing approached normal: immensely impressed at MB's achievement. Got back to the Hunters at around nine Saturday and found the boys in the bar; when asked of my absence informed them of the trip. Several of those assembled choked on their beer, explaining that when MB said he had actually free dived Bridge Cave sump he was wearing full dive kit at the time just in case he needed it. Lesson; don't believe everything you hear.

20th June Stoke Lane

Alan Mills

Stopped at the Axbridge hut so as to rise early to assist Alan carrying into Stoke Jim Smart and Nigel Burns wanted to walk over Blackdown to look for more lead mine shafts. Uneventful trip carrying dive kit and bang to sump II. Took a woolly hat and a scarf to help with keep warm; though wet they worked well. Met up with the others in the Hunters later for a lift back to Bristol

26th June OFD I to Cwm Dwr

Alan Mills, Martin Bishop, Ken James

An amazing system with superb scalloping throughout: the streamway a delight. MB had his new camera so spent a lot of time being artistic

27th June Gothic sump, OFD

Martin Bishop, Alan Mills

Carried in their dive kit; waiting for their return wandered off to find some notable gours. Cheerfully encountered others entering along the same route one of whom aggressively pointed out that solo caving is banned in OFD and that he would escort me out immediately, forcibly if needed; that my name would be taken and that my club and I would be banned forthwith and would need to reapply for permission to enter OFD again. Listened politely, then told him to fuck off and get a life: returned to dive base with him following. Fortunately the boys had returned owing to a blown O ring on MB's bottle clamp; on being harangued AM asked what the fuck did a Londoner think trying to ruin other caver's fun; MB adding "don't be such a prick".

3rd July Langstroth Pot

John Thorpe, Martin Bishop, John Reece Evans.

JT had informed MB that a possible lead existed above the penultimate pitch, a shadow beckoned. JT did comment on the larger stream but didn't think it too much of a problem climbing. Arrived to find the stream causing a lot of spray; took turns keeping dry while each also took a turn climbing, MB with his better reach did most of the climb. On his third turn reached said shadow and found it a small ledge, an alcove.

4th July Kingsdale master Cave

Martin Bishop

Two survivors of last night's PU in the Marton Arms; left the dead and dying to squeeze in a trip before departing; MB is always game. In valley entrance and swiftly upstream to the Rowten sumps; MB believes it possible to free dive these series of sumps hence the Seba bottle and valve. Though the stream had a good flow the lines were suspect. MB disappeared for about twenty minutes appearing from the sump like a bullet. He had managed to free dive back, but the flow was what assisted him in the task. Plan to attempt a through trip in the near future. MB noted pieces of old fencing in the sumps.

17th July Ireby Fell

Pete Clements, Mike Davies, Martin Bishop, John Thorpe

A superb trip; wholly SRT, using Pete's Heibler prussikers was a bit of a nightmare as they kept coming off the rope; JT found it hilarious showing off how his Clog jammers stayed put and didn't twist off. After coming to expect them to come off the rest of the trip wasn't so bad. Noticed the Clog figure of eight really twists the rope into severe knots on a long-ish abseil

18th July Marble Steps

Pete Clements, Mike Davies, Martin Bishop, John Thorpe

Managed to borrow some Clogs off the boys in the NPC this made for a much more enjoyable trip. SRT really reduces the number of men needed to bottom a cave.

31st July Eldon Hole

Martin Bishop, Alan Mills, Victor Holland,

Stopped at the Pegasus Hut wanting to introduce MB to the lads; VH suggested an Eldon trip so took advantage of the kind offer of this pleasant guy to lifeline us. Watched as VH rigged the pitch enquiring as to what he was going to be secured to whilst lifelining, (sat down on the lower ledge with the line wrapped around himself?). A nice guy, but a little short of knowledge regarding shock loads. A good trip though a little concerned as to the security of the lifeliner in the event of a slip. Several lads in the hut on our return; invited for drinks to the Stags, via a superb bar in Peak Dale, The Midland; a cracking night. Returned to the Hut for more fun

1st August The Roaches, Buxton

Martin Bishop, Alan Mills,

A late start to the morning, no trip planned but decided to have a climb about among the Roaches en-route home during a glorious sunny spell. Birmingham and Manchester climbers present.

4th August Swildons, Old Grotto

Oliver Cromwell Lloyd's 60th Birthday

Spiked available drink with alcohol obtained from the chemistry lab at WD and HO Wills; thus began a merry affair.

7th August Swildons Hole

Solo

Training dive to IV with a different arrangement of bottle belt; feels much more secure. Tadpole and Deepstar, exiting bumped into a party carrying sections of maypole.

15th August Well Dive and Box Mines Annual Bar-B-Que

Ken James

Morning: A dive into the well which was some fourteen feet deep and full of rubbish.

Used KJ's Tadpole and Alan Mills Deepstar

Evening: Ken James, Stuart MacManus, Pandey, Jim Smart, Joss? Terry Edwards, Roger Marsh, Ted Meek, Martin Waller, Ed Walcroft, Sue Howard, and some others

Arranged to assemble in the Quarryman's Arms; as the numbers grew to a dozen the new landlord became grumpy and a real shit. Left the bar thinking of alternatives; headed first for the Lion in Box village. In this quiet bar the landlord welcomed us with open arms; the PU became a hilarious affair with many locals joining in the choruses. Back at camp conducted drunken trips to various parts of the mine system: no casualties.

21st August Swildons Hole

Solo

Training dive to X; couldn't find sump X, felt around for the arch but reluctant to waste air diving in the long pool, it might all be needed for a successful return.

22nd August Swildons Hole

Solo

Followed Alan Mills's directions and found sump X, followed by an awkward climb, but have reached sump XII.

23rd August Nightingale Valley, Avon Gorge, Bristol

Nigel Burns, Jims Smart, Stuart Reid

Took the boys to view the mine shaft, a wider search revealed no other obvious surface mining remains. Some hollows were noted but these don't look to be mine shaft collars.

28th August Green Bridge Cave, Pendine

Rick Edwards, Ed Walcroft

A fun trip looking for the cave's potential, explored the sump using Tadpole and Deepstar. A bedding plane was entered and followed for some four metres until boulders made the area too tight, moved the smaller boulders to one side, unwilling to linger removing the larger ones.

29th August Pendine Sands

Pandy? Stuart MacManus, Jim Smart, Rick Edwards, Ed Walcroft, Ted Meek, Nigel Burns,

Spilt into to teams of four, one to record the sea caves the other to head inland and look for dig sites. Returning late afternoon headed to Carmarthen for drinks, as Pembroke is a dry county.

30th August Pendine Sands

Pandy? Stuart MacManus, Jim Smart, Rick Edwards, Ed Walcroft, Ted Meek, Nigel Burns,

Climbed up to several holes, one of which became Jim's Dig, at the rear the passage had a sand choke which was dug. Bear tooth found; proposed name Shelter Cave?

5th September Sandford Dig – Sandford Levvy

Nigel Burns

Digging for two hours then a photo trip along the levvy

10th September BSA conference, Leeds

Ted Meek, Nigel Burns

The normal fun weekend reunion of pals and drinking

18th September Bridge Cave

Alan Mills

Training dive in high flow, found line some eight metres distant well underwater.

Tadpole and Titan II

27th September, Grotte de Nou Moulin, Belgium

Jim Smart

Separated from the river L'homme near the bridge by a dyke; carrying the road: much flood debris present. One site dug accessed a further section of cave which was followed by a further organic choke, evidence of old flooding, (pre dyke?). Unsuccessful search for Trou des Nutons, however located a quarry within which were several small caves and a mine adit, all recorded by JS.

27th September L'Agole Cave, Belgium

Martin Waller

Descended natural shaft for some 20 metres, enlarged by local cavers.

28th September Grotte de Nou Moulin, Belgium

Martin Waller

This trip succeeded digging through another organic choke into much more cave passage; unlikely virgin. Later visited the show cave Grotte de Rochefort, very nice. Later still did the Grotte de Fayt a stunningly pretty cave.

29th September Lead Mine, Trappist Monastery

Martin Waller, Jim Smart, Sue Howard

Thrashing about the woodland, encountered a Monk who directed us to the Lead mine, not large but of an interestingly early date. Taken back to the Monastery and given drink. Passed out woke up the next morning

30th September Trou des Hiboux and Trou des Reynard

Martin Waller

A rift cave dropping into a tight streamway; PC squeezed along the stream to a duck; past this to the sump, after five metres it becomes too tight. Later pushed Trou des Reynard got to the bottom of the 25' ladder into a small stream using a bottle pushed the sump, too tight and very muddy. Titan II and 20cb/ft fire extinguisher bottle.

1st October Grotte de Trou de Nou Moulin

Martin Waller

Located a kilometre, or so, along the railway line: 05:00; an early start; both inspected the sump finding it choked with organic flood debris. Changing in the entrance the duo discussed how "Cobbett" was now based in Holland" and would be interested diving here if the place was cleared of debris, an easy job with much more air. Whereupon a rustle of the undergrowth produced three Dutch cavers and one James Cobbett who was intent on diving the same sump as ourselves; all surprized at the chance encounter.

9th October Carreg Cennen Castle Cave

Ted Meek, Mike Davies

Below the castle in the face of the cliff is a constructed passage, part of the castle foundations set on the cliff edge. Of dressed stone with many windows overlooking the surrounding area the sloping passage terminates via a stair case in a chamber with a short passage continuing.

10th October Llygad Llwhwr

Ted Meek, Mike Davis

A tourist trip to fulfill MD wishes, high water and great fun, TM thoroughly loves this place.

16th October Swildons Hole

Mike Davies

MD fancied doing the long round trip; until his Bristol Poly Oldham cell decided otherwise.

17th October Sandford Dig

Rick Edwards, Ted Meek, Stu Reid, Martin Waller, Sue Howard

Found the dig vandalized, an iron sheet and many rocks thrown down the shaft and the scaffold frame bent.

23rd October Stoke Lane

Chris Hanham, Alan Mills

Carried kit to sump II; yet again searched about hoping to find a bypass to two.

24th October Longwood August

Mike Davies

Digging in the terminal rift, removing debris from previous charge; Alan Mills is convinced this passage will go and could make Longwood the deepest on Mendip.

7th November Sandford Dig

Ted Meek, Stu Reid, Martin Waller, Sue Howard, Stuart MacManus,

TM & PC arrived with tools and materials; no one about to help. PC set off carrying the hundred weight bag of cement, and began to construct a wall to seal off the area while TM mixed the mortar; eventually the others appeared enjoying watching the work.

13th November Dan-yr-Ogof

John Parker, Mike Davies, Nigel Burns, Roger Marsh, Stu Reid, Martin Waller, Ted Meek,

A tourist trip around this superb cave: TM had issues in the crawl but got over them. SR lost a welly in the canal. Outside over a mug of tea had an interesting chat with JP about dive training; informed that Alan Mills is my Trainer he offered to be the other.

14th November Agen Allwedd

Mike Davies, Nigel Burns, Roger Marsh, Stu Reid, Martin Waller, Ted Meek,

TM wanted to visit among other places “Deep water”? A long meandering trip on account of TM not quite knowing where “Deep Water” actually is: after six hours exited for MD’s place in Hereford, and party time in the Five Alls.

27th November Split Rock Quarry

Martin Bishop, Derek Tringham

A chill autumnal day; light rain creating slippery issues on all the pitches.

28th November St Cuthbert’s

Tim Large, Chris (Zot) Harvey, Jim Smart, Stu Reid, 6 EUSS.

Pillar Chamber, Boulder Chamber, Kanchenjunga etc. Five of the team to beyond the dam, TL, 3x EUSS, PC: the others made their way out via other sights; five fine hours.

28th November Rowberrow Cavern, Read’s Cavern

Jim Smart, Stu Reid, Nigel Burns,

Walking to Rowberrow Cavern noticed a collapse at the base of the cliff face adjacent Read’s entrance, abandoned Rowberrow trip to have a look at what has happened here. Movement of boulders in the rift has caused this hole to appear and will likely continue to do so.

4th December Lost John's

Pete Livesey, Bob Toogood, Mike Davies, George Cooper

Met with PL in Bernie's; left his motor there to travel in MD's "borrowed" Bristol Poly minibus. A minor issue with equipment was sorted by PL borrowing more. The delay meant a shortened trip, no matter, another trip to look forward too, cracking.

5th December Bull Pot of the Witches

Mike Davies, George Cooper

A Fat Nazi Bastard complained of our parking near the hut; the rear wheels of the minibus on the grass? Twat! A grand tourist trip with Greg being the guide; SRT trip skills are developing; length of leg loops need fine tuning.

11th December Clarken Combe and Winford Iron Mines

Nigel Burns

NB had found a survey of Clarken Combe mine, located the open cast rift, near Long Ashton, and after a short search located an entrance. A three metre drop led to a short, ten metre, passage, the possible result of back filling the large opencast. Traveled on to Winford and found a mine entrance with two short passages both leading to collapses.

12th December Cuckoo Cleaves

Ken James

A tourist trip to shake down the lunch time beer intake; arriving back at the Hunters encountered "Crikey Mollins", (Mike Collins), leading a group of M.N.R.C, who pleaded for us to retrieve their equipment, which was at this moment stuck down Hunters Hole, they also explained that they had dropped their lifeline down the pitch. Alas, we couldn't help for laughing; advising they seek someone a little more sober, with a spare lifeline.

14th December Ivy Cottage, Ridgehill, Lulsgate, Bristol

Solo

Told by the bosses builder mate they had uncovered a well. Asked the builder, Tony Cook if it could be descended? Located in the garden, just outside the back door, secured a ladder to the scaffolding around the house. Kitted up and climbed down. No depth gauge or compass available. Sank down in clear water to land on a clean floor, one coffin level sized passage headed off west-ish, I think, for five metres to a forefield with some pick marks still visible. The owner intends to keep the well open. Sixteen feet to water level the water depth measured at twelve feet

18th December Shaft at Winford

Solo

A farmer near Winford mine spoke of a mine shaft recently uncovered by a JCB it had also revealed dressed stonework. Climbed down a ladder to the water level, 20 foot below, lowered a weight to a further depth in seventeen feet of water. The shaft is some three feet diameter. After half an hour the farmer arrived back with a slurry pump and sucked out the water. In the bottom were the remains of a .303 rifle, most of an iron cauldron and several anonymous rusty items. There are two short sections of horizontal passage about four feet high and three feet long, aligned NNW/SSE. The farmer intends to cover it with a manhole to maintain access as a possible future water source.

19th December Pinetree Pot

Alan Mills

Dug for two hours then set a charge, which failed, recovered and replaced the det; tried again, success. AM then placed the faulty det under a stone and stood me on top said stone, tried it again; bang. With ringing ears exited dig.

27th December Little Neath River Cave

Ken James

Training dive; in through Bridge Cave and on to sump II; KJ dived first PC following after three minutes. Surprized at the visibility; surfaced checked kit, all OK. KJ said for me to lead, that the sump was some seventy metres long and shallow. Surfaced and waited, no KJ. Waited another while and returned to III found KJ with a small HP leak from his contents gauge; headed out; Tadpole and Titan II.

28th December Little Neath River Cave

Ken James

Training dive; using a chesterfield each, which KJ had borrowed from the Somerset Section dived through to Sump five in much poorer visibility than experienced yesterday; became a little concerned as this series of dives amount to about one hundred and fifty metres, the longest completed so far. A fine trip to this interesting system; 1 Chesterfield, (40 cb/ft) and Titan II.

31st December Swildons Hole

Pete Moody

Managed to dive through the U tube; once through spent over half an hour bailing the sump into a small side passage. PM wanted to investigate Bat Dig, after a rummage about headed for the New Years Eve party at the Hunters.