

1972

8th January P8

Jim Smart, Stuart MacManus

A swift trip in very cold water, JS's enthusiasm evaporated as the freezing cascade submerged PC descending the laddered pitch. Yet another Cobbett farewell party; a lengthy affair in a lot of bars finishing in the Stags

9th January Peak Cavern

Sulo Sulonen, Pete, (RatArse), Webb, Vic Holland, Jim Smart, Stuart MacManus

Survivors underground by midday; lengthy trip but managed a pint in the Stags before driving to Bristol via the Crown in Nottingham; Mac's mini is falling apart; braking hard the headlamps fall out.

14th January Jim's Dig, AKA Shelter Cave, Pendine

Jim Smart, Nigel Burns, Tony Oldham, Anne Oldham,

Arrived late, even so moved a lot of sand, exposed a stall floor rear right of entrance chamber, JS chose a spot break down though it.

15th January Shelter Cave, Pendine

Jim Smart, NB, Tony Oldham, Anne Oldham, PC

Enlarged the hole through the stall floor, began to excavate the compacted sand beneath, large enough to move forward and turn around.

16th January Shelter Cave, Pendine

Jim Smart, Nigel Burns,

Continued to tunnel beneath the stal floor

23rd January Sandford Dig, Sandford Hill

Dave Edwards, Sue Howard, Martin Waller, Jim Smart, Ted, Roger, Nigel Burns,

Rebuilt the vandalized tripod; removed all boulders and debris cast down the shaft.

29th January Cuckoo Cleeves

Greg Pickford, Julian? Titch?

A slow trip to the terminal rift: Titch talked throughout, non-stop; good grief.

30th January Lamb Leer

John Widley, Chris Batstone, Martin Bishop

Tagged onto a Bath Caving Group trip to look at a dig mentioned by Pete Eckford, above Agony Crawl; it is a long way from anywhere; its development appears a small inlet.

5th February Imperial Hotel Exeter Dinner – Roman Sewers

An excellent dinner; a lot of very pissed people arrived at the hotel after an afternoon lock in at The Mitre; nice one Jock, the Sunday trip to the Roman sewers abandoned, no key available.

12th February Shelter Cave, Pendine

Jim Smart, Nigel Burns

Climbed up to the dig at 07:30, joined later by JS and NB; a lot more sand removed.

13th February Hoyle Mouth Cave, Pembrokeshire
Jim Smart, Nigel Burns, Tony Oldham, Anne Oldham
An important Palaeolithic site: TO taking photographs for his forthcoming guide book.

18th February Ravens Well, Bristol
Jim Smart, Terry Edwards, Tony Oldham, Anne Oldham, Ken James, Nigel Burns
An evening photographic trip around this monastic, (Cistercian?), site consisting of tunnels dug through red and green Marl to develop and improve the natural spring flow.

19th February Lamb Leer
Solo
Abandoned by the others; each suffering a hangover, had an uneventful trip to the Cave of Falling Waters; light trouble with the Oldham, main bulb failed on pitch, out on pilot.

20th February Cuckoo Cleaves – Dive training, Minneries
Alan Mills
Morning; early start 08:00. Assisted AM digging the terminal rift, one charge fired.
Afternoon;
Ken James, Ed Walcroft, Stuart McManus, Martin Waller, Sue Howard
To the Minneries for dive training; loaned AM's dive kit; bitter cold conditions; no lead available, stuffed rocks down wetsuit; ripped zip; broke ice to enter the water.

26th February Giants
Martin Bishop, Charlie Watkins
Arrived late Saturday morning so had a swift round trip in high water conditions. In the Eagle, Bob Toogood, Mouse and other Eldon asked if any of us were interested in a Berger trip. There are places available as several had cancelled. It will be a multi club trip, possibly even international as a personnel issue exists and more important, permit date allocations; the UK application was late arriving at the mayor's office; the final date is somewhat vague, for the moment; cost estimated around forty quid, all in including food and equipment. A non refundable deposit of twenty quid required, this is due to the previous messing about, very likely the cause of the delays: ended the crawl in the Stags.

27th February Carlsark Cavern
Martin Bishop, Charlie Watkins
Had the usual, superb breakfast at the "Lovers Leap"; Stoney Middleton. Found the "Dark Angels" ensconced in their usual seats. CW desperately ill; to sober him up took the opportunity to wander around Carlsark; first time for CW. Really fancy the Berger, spoke to MB, who is also up for it: PC is unsure of his ability to raise the deposit by the cut off date, 10th May: even then, how to raise the rest, plus some spending money?

4th March Agen Allwedd
Mike Davies, Ron Biggs, Pete Clements
What should have been a cracking Southern stream trip was unfortunately made in the presence of RB: a thoroughly unpleasant person who exudes trouble. Once out left MD with RB in the Beaufort, to drink at the Bridge in the company of nice human beings.

5th March Eglwys Faen, Crickhowell
Mike Davies, Pete Clements
In the café, following repeated barbed, smart remarks from RB, over the last twenty four hours, drove a dining fork into his left hand giving RB something to bitch about. Whilst

RB departed seeking medical attention breakfast was finished in peace; after obtaining a replacement fork. MD admits RB is only an associate, tolerated to reduce the fuel costs. Today's trip was planned as MD had found a squeeze above an awkward climb in the series of rifts above main passage. Spent a very pleasant afternoon scrambling about: no evidence found of previous visitors: very likely MD has found a new bit. No sign of RB at departure time: fuck 'im.

11th March Sand Caverns, Agen Allwedd

Mike Davies, Ted Meek, Stuart MacManus, 5 of MDs friends

A painfully slow, frustrating trip with too many of MD's college associates in tow.

18th March Dave's Dig, Pant Mawr Moor

Ted Meek, Jim Smart, Nigel Burns, Stuart MacManus, Dave Edwards

Another days digging; good progress

19th March Dave's Dig, Pant Mawr Moor

Stuart MacManus, Jim Smart, Dave Edwards, Nigel Burns

Broke into passage with a small chamber at each end; 30ft total length to a choke.

20th March Dave's Dig 2, Pant Mawr Moor – Resurgence near White Lady

Stuart MacManus, Jim Smart, Dave Edwards, Nigel Burns

Located at the convergence of two lines of shallow depressions, following a short dig entered a small chamber; apparently a text book site to find cave. Later, down stream of White Lady broke off a flake obstructing a small resurgence, DE squeezed along the bedding to a duck; PC took a turn, passing the duck to a cobble choke; needs digging.

The eagerly anticipated trip to cave on the Isle of Skye over Easter tide was abandoned; John Widley and John Dukes cancelled at the last moment citing various reasons: once again disappointed. Having had difficulty booking time off turned the issue to a positive; will camp on Pant Mawr and continue with Dave Edwards project prospecting the wider area; some caving too, it makes sense as the boys intend to return the following weekend to press on with the various projects.

26th March Maes-y-Gawnen Pot, (Dave's Dig 2), (NGR 906141)

Ted Meek, Jim, Nigel Burns, Stuart MacManus, Dave Edwards

Pushed on another six feet, seems its getting smaller. Farmer Lewis visited to inform of a hole near Ywern; PC went to look, it's a small, (2 foot diameter), pot some ten feet deep to a mud and boulder choke. Returned to the dig, informed others.

27th March Little Neath River Cave – White Lady Cave

Solo

In through flood entrance, a wet trip around the loop into sand chamber to see the lower end of Bridge Cave sump, dive line secure: emerging from the entrance found that the light rain had increased, raising the river level; exit a little desperate. Later went to White Lady to have a look at the sump to Cwm Pwll-y-Rhyd.

28th March Port-yr-Ogof

Solo

Cracking trip: descended the pot near the path into main streamway, spent a couple of hours exploring the many well worn passages. Found a log, used it to float out through the resurgence; an ability to swim would be useful. Outside met two northerners, Dave Collins, Eric Thompson, who invited PC on their trip to Dan-yr-Ogof next Friday.

29th March Resurgence (NGR 911132)

Solo

Raining: following information from Jim Llewellyn, farmer; PC searched down river after previously discussing this possible site with Dave Edwards. The resurgence was found issuing some three hundred yards or so below White Lady on the east bank. A good flow issuing from low bedding, no airspace present visible; river levels high after three days of rain. Will pass observations on to DE

30th March Pant Mawr Pot - Little Neath River Valley

Solo

Heavy rain throughout night; still raining this morning: river in high flood. Squelched over to Pant Mawr Pot to see effect; heard a thunderous roar from the depths. Secured ladder and rope to the metal stake, abseiled into the chamber where water entered from everywhere; the noise deafening, headed upstream to the waterfall which was huge. Downstream to the first boulder choke; by then soaked, and chilled. The air filled with heavy mist, everywhere: getting very cold: on surface couldn't use fingers to roll ladder so ran back and forth to warm up; ran back to camp in torrential rain. Stripped off wrung out clothes and into sleeping bag; fired up the stove inside the tent; an hour drinking tea had warmed through. Watched the rain continue, dressed and walked to the River Neath; at Pwll-y-Rhyd the entire flood crashed into the depths; a crazy level of noise. Carried on to the climb above White Lady where the river resurged, submerging the immediate area; couldn't see the entrance to Town Drain.

31st March Dan-yr-Ogof

Dave Collins, Eric Thompson

Up early, (5am), raining, walked to the Ystradfellte - Glyn Neath road, got a lift toward Neath; another to Dan-yr-Ogof; arrived 08:45. Invited earlier in the week, met DC and ET at 10:00 in the car park; both impressed at the hitching, though frowned at PC minus wet suit; pointing out both buoyancy and warmth were needed. Told the lake levels were high, and can often sump. A superb cold, wet seven hour trip followed with two really nice blokes. After a mug of tea DC kindly offered to drive PC back to Ystradfellte, which was gladly accepted, as the rain continued. A cracking evening at the New Inn despite Owen being his normal self, blaming the boy's northern accents for him pulling the wrong pints. Some of the Bristol boys arrived late, which also pissed Owen off: never, ever the happy man. Introduced DC and ET to the boys, both later passed out in the car park. No Viet-Taff activity about to spoil the impending weekend's fun.

1st April Bridge Cave, Ystradfellte

Mike Davies, Ted Meek, Pete Cummings, Pete Clements

Introduced Dave Collins and Eric Thompson to the late arrivals from Bristol, some of whom had returned specifically to transport PC back to there: doubting the weather would allow digging. TM acted the twat with his "I'm smarter than you" attitude to DC and ET, who were still suffering after last night's PU. Ignoring TM they said their farewells and staggered off to join their club meet at Penwylt. Rain continued so most caves considered inaccessible. Some of the group left for the Gower, others for Hereford. Those remaining explored a very wet Bridge Cave witnessing main passage in flood; the noise and vibrating air stunning. DC & ET invited PC to cave with them in Yorkshire.

2nd April Agen Allwedd - Silica Mines

Mike Davies, Ted Meek, Pete Cummings

Unable to access Aggy; the problem being the N.A.Z.I who wouldn't issue the previously booked key; with nothing to loose TM gave him a dressing down in front of his pals, which they seemed to enjoy immensely. Rather than loose the day drove to Glyn Neath to explore the Silica mines. MD took photos including a nice dram above the flooded section. Meanwhile TM sat inside the entrance delighted to be avoiding the deluge.

3rd April OFD

Mike Davies, Ted Meek, Pete Cummings John?

MD arranged a guide from the S.W.C.C; when underground the guy, John?, became challenged; fortunately MD knew the route which made for a cracking trip. TM made every effort to complain; at the rear he was fortunately out of earshot, most of the trip.

9th April Triple Hole Mine, Sandford

Stuart MacManus, Dave Edwards

After belting it with a sledge hammer DE's 5 foot digging bar all but disappeared into the compacted debris choking the recently exposed hand picked shaft; noise of falling rocks were clearly audible with an occasional accompanying boom; bar removed. Decided a lifeline is needed to dig further offering some form of safety; prospects looking good.

15th April Swildons Hole

Ken James, Martin Waller, Stu Reid, Wally?

MW, KJ and PC through to II, here MW & KJ dived on to IV. When PC returned through sump I the others had gone. Guessing they had gone out sped after them. Found no one at the barn so returned to the Twenty as they climbed up. They had decided to go see the Mud Sump. A great evening at the A.C.G. dinner, Cheddar: met Mac who said that the dig had gone; at least two pitches!

15th April Triple Hole Mine, Sandford; NEW FIND. From Club Log

Stuart MacManus, Dave Edwards, Nigel Burns, Jim Smart, Ted Meek

PC had promised to carry for Ken James and Martin Waller to Swildons II. Meanwhile, the boys were to dig the choked shaft; it was prodded, once again, causing a keystone to move allowing the remaining compacted fill to cascade away. An eight metre shaft opened into a large rift. On a small ledge at the top of ginged shaft a clay pipe was found. A small hole leads off to another rift. The ginged shaft led vertically down to a small horizontal chamber some two feet high and maybe twenty in diameter, the roof covered with wonderful smoked tallies of ore loads. Ten feet below the shaft is choked.

16th April Swildons Hole

Ken James Martin Webster, Charlie Watkins, Tony Tucker + 4.

Evening trip: KJ, MW and PC free dived through to four, while CW and TT went to check on the status of the Mud Sump, in preparation for their forthcoming long round trip, and leave a new bucket. TT took his party to sump one.

22nd April Swildons Hole

Ken James, Martin Webster, Stu Reid,

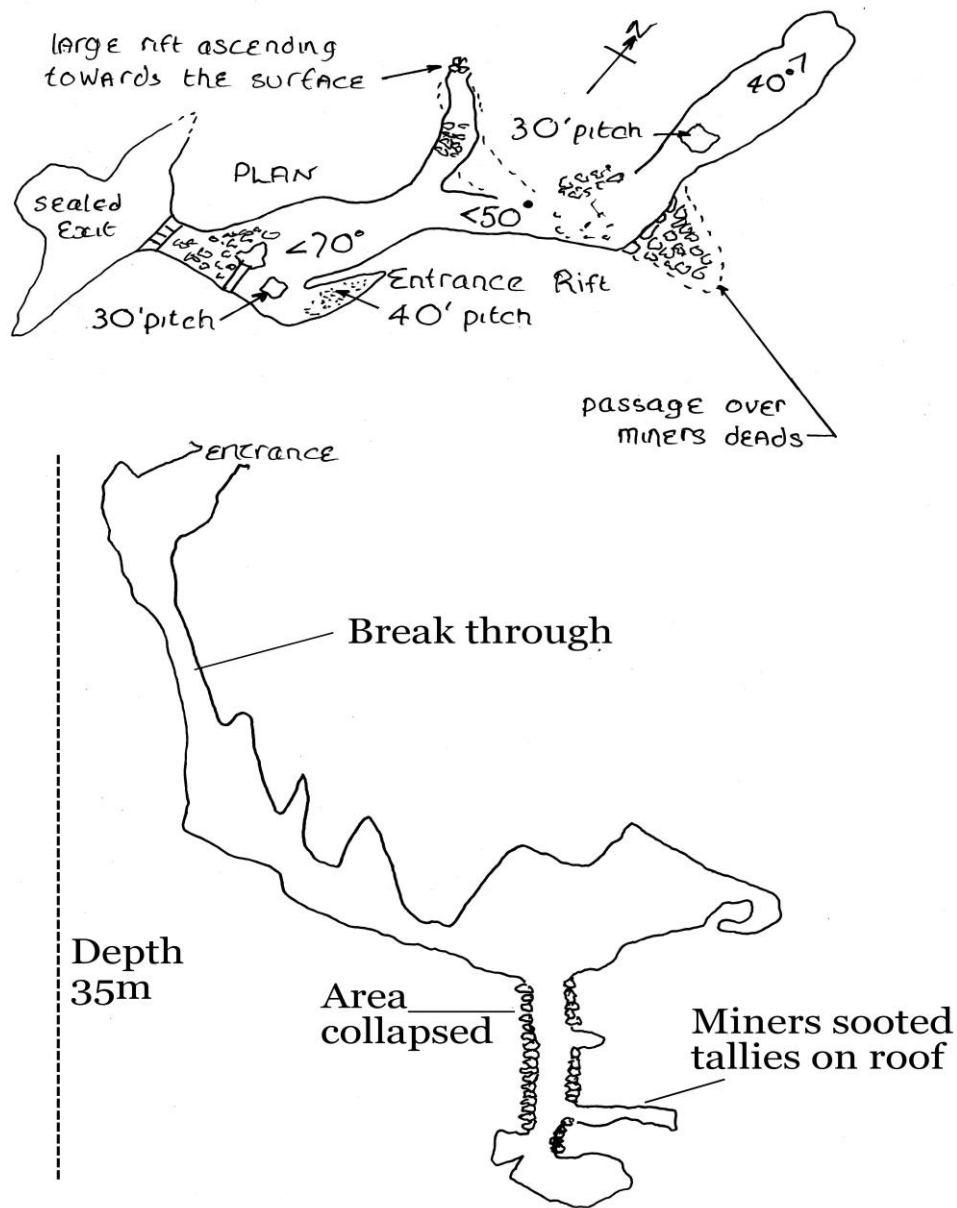
Carried dive kit to II for KJ and MW; SR and PC then reversed the Round Trip.

23rd April Swildons Hole

Ken James, Alan Mills, + 4 novices

Conducted AM's novices to sump I and out; all enjoyed the trip.

Triple Hole



Triple Hole
 Sandford
 Mendip
 Alt 405 feet
 Length 150m
 NGR ST 4268/5905
 CRG grade 4
 Survey Dave James Edwards, April 1972 CCG

28th April Swildons Hole & Goatchurch – Waterworks adit
Solo

Up early to avoid the crowds; scaled two climbs along the streamway without success. Enroute home, for the hell of it, did Goatchurch to beyond the Drainpipe; then scampered up the waterworks adit noting the door had been bust open: not by me.

29th April Swildons Hole
Ken James

6:20am, to avoid crowds. Climbed to Acid Squeeze and used more acid provided by Alan Mills. No real signs of any dissolving of the surface. Managed several climbs, one with a minor squeeze near its summit; nothing promising.

1st May Triple Hole, Sandford
Dave Edwards

Evening trip; DE wanted to carry up more materials to block up the opening to avoid local kids falling down the, now, very deep hole. Descended the second shaft to find the third shaft had run in. En-route home, after the bar shut, DE's minivan ran of fuel, woke up the owner of the Churchill petrol station; not impressed at 01:00; told to fuck off! Hitched into Bristol leaving DE's minivan on the forecourt until tomorrow

5th May Impending Berger trip

Managed to sell some books to Tony Oldham; also got extra, evening, work preparing surfaces for a gang of painters on a building site near Radstock; thanks to Martin Bishop Berger deposit obtained; gave cash to Liz Bishop who has kindly posted off the cheque.

6th May Swildons Hole
Ken James

Entered cave at 6:00am to avoid crowds. Downstream right, of Barnes loop, KJ fancied he could see another high level passage. Using pitons climbed twenty odd feet up a thin crack on a smooth surface, to within ten feet of the shadow, changing places PC put in another piton, sounding odd tested it with a sharp tug, pulling it out along with a lump of rock, landing in the shallow stream next to KJ, will return.

7th May Hunters Hole
Martin Bishop, Ken James

Swift trip to a dig MB really fancies; it has potential, though the air's a bit thin.

13th May Ogof Rhyd Sych
Mike Davies, Pete Clements

Visited this cracking cave prior to the CDG dinner, the free dive straightforward enough, the bedding plane beyond an absolute sod, the evening a delight; Mrs Dennis, landlady of the Bear Crickhowell is a wonderful, hilarious hostess.

14th May Lamb Leer

Mike Davies, Ken James, 6 x Bristol Poly.

Evening trip; MD pleaded for assistance with yet another Bristol Poly trip. First down KJ & PC went to the Speleo Rhal dig up Valentines, then back to the Cave of Falling Waters. Sat on the slope watching the Poly members' attempts to climb a ladder; found later the trip was meant to be ladder practise: a total disaster as MD was unable to offer sensible guidance screaming instructions perched on the scaffolding 60 foot above. Not a great place to teach ladder work; assisted those at the bottom with constructive instruction.

17th May Triple Hole, Sandford
Dave Edwards, Jim Smart, Nigel Burns,
Completed the concrete block wall sealing the rift entrance to ensure local kids couldn't fall down the adjacent second pitch.

21st May Stoke Lane Slocker and Lamb Leer
Ken James, John Ham and 2 others,
Morning; assisted JH to show his friends around the place, put them on tight ropes for the slippery climbs to the upper chambers.
Afternoon; Greg Pickford, Ken James, Mike Davies, 6 x Bristol Poly
Another trip to offer experience to more members of the Bristol Poly CC, while MD conducted events KJ, PC and GP dug at Valentine's Landing. Returning all had surfaced

23rd May Berger trip
Got postcard confirming a place.

27th May Swildons Hole
Mike Lewis, Eric Blake
In through Paradise Regained and Blue Pencil out up the streamway

28th May Rhino Rift
Paul Hyton, Mike Lewis, Jim McKay,
Laddered the pitches, all to the bottom; the looseness of the place unsettled PH.

29th May Eastwater Cavern: Primrose Pot
Paul Hyton, Mike Davies, Pete Clements
The approach to the top of the first pitch made more awkward by MD deploying a ladder; removed it and slid through on a tight line. Ladder then passed through. MD opted out so forced to abandon trip; too few to reach the bottom. A line with a foot loop greatly assisted PC's return back up through Primrose Path; nice one Pete.

4th June Ogof Rhyd Sych
Mike Davies, + 4 Hereford CC
Found the route to the larger passage beyond the tight bedding, reached the waterfall: a cracking trip. To Ogof-Y-Ci but told by local caver stream too high to safely enter?

11th June Charterhouse Mineshafts
Ian Carpenter, Charlie Watkins, Linda?
Wanted another search of the extensive gruffy ground landscape, located another four mine shafts all open, average thirty feet deep to short choked horizontal passages.

17th June Manor Farm Swallet
Alan Mills,
Cleared previous debris, AM applied yet another chemical argument

18th June Ubley Warren Pot, Pikes Chamber
Alan Mills, Greg Pickford, Pete Moody, Jarratt,
Cleared spoil from previous charge, AM set another; the rift requires such repeated enlarging along its visible length; it can be seen to continue.

24th June Swildons Four

Solo

Returned to the dig; dug into a more compacted fill; another two hour shift.

25th June Longwood - August

Solo

Very early start: no takers, pleasant trip to Alan Mill's dig in terminal rift, removed the obvious results of a recent bang, (yesterday?); the scent of fumes still lingering.

28th June Swildons Hole

Ted Meek, Bazza, Stuart MacManus, Terry Edwards, Ian Carpenter, Dave Edwards,
Evening trip: swiftly to the flooded mud sump, bugger; swiftly to the Hunters.

2nd July Garrowpipe Rising

Ken James, Mike Hogg

KJ really likes this site, its superb; dug for two hours; progress in a high flow rate, this spring issues at quite an altitude.

8th July Bar Pot

Mike Davies, Charlie Watkins, Pete Clements, Gary, (Bazza), Clarke, 6 x Bristol Poly.
Slow trip down: the Poly people, (and MD), vastly over estimating their skill - fitness levels. Into main chamber and out which took a long time. Issues began when a young female, twenty feet up the main pitch, had problems, got her back down, and sent her up after the next one; her panic likely to infect the others; calmed them and sent them up swiftly to GC who was lifelining. Stopped at the Craven; bumped into Vic Holland; the entertainment provided by VH picking a fight with the Craven Pothole Club folk singers.

9th July Birks Fell Cave

Mike Davies, Charlie Watkins, Pete Clements

Poly people too ill/tired/idle to rise: stole away in their minibus to do Birks Fell. Only basic kit needed for a decent trip, wet in the canal above the first pitch. Poly grumpy on our late return; when challenged found most had only risen from bed mid afternoon.

15th July Eastwater, Primrose Pot

Paul Christy, Ken James, Charlie Watkins, Mike Davies, Martin Waller, Stu Reid, Tony Tucker, Mike Dors,

Somehow the original group of four became nine; how did that happen? Far too large a party; some managed the trip whilst the bored went off to visit other areas. Descended the pot at last; a majestic place, with a sense of the remote.

16th July Minneries pool

Martin Waller

An hour's dive training for both, PC used AM's kit again, he's a grand bloke: buoyancy an issue, need own kit; bad visibility doesn't present problems; abandoned fish hooks do.

22nd July Swildons Hole

Ed Walcroft, Stu Reid

10:00; down to sump II to drop off dive kit for Ken James; then out for a Hunters lunch.
20:30; Stu Reid and PC fancied a swift trip down Swildons again. A fine evening followed drinking the Tony Tucker and Wessex barrels.

30th July Split Rock Quarry
Martin Waller, Sue Howard, Stuart Reid
Climbing and SRT practise

1st August

Lost Pete Clements

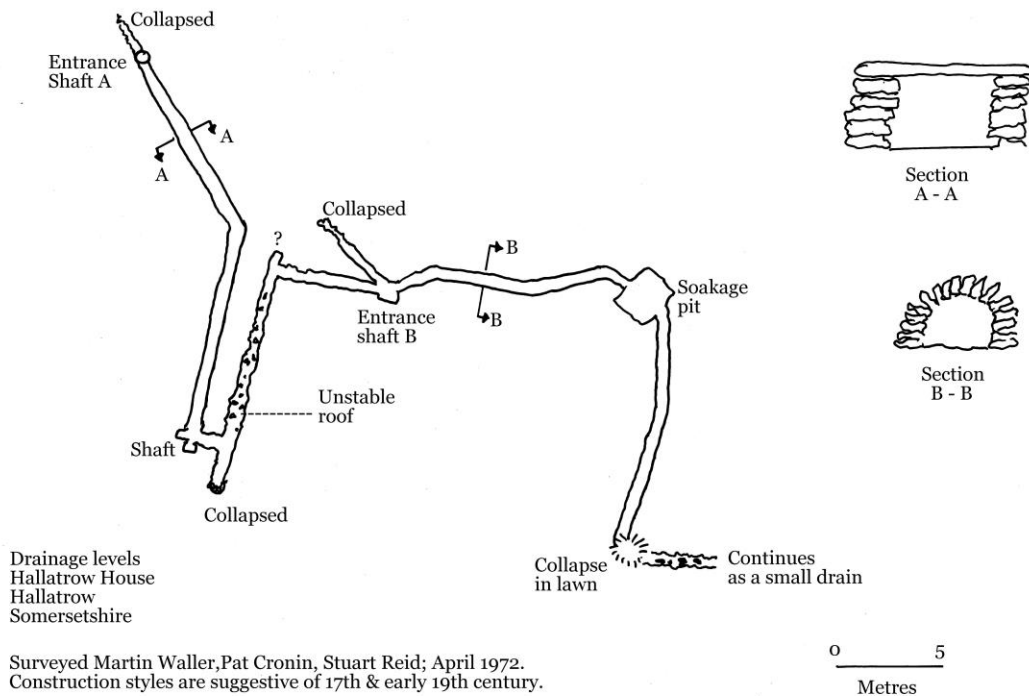
1st August Firehouse Cave, Scotland RECOVERY

Informed by Ken James we'd lost Pete Clements; KJ exiting the cave was told by Ron Biggs that Pete had fallen into the pool from the entrance; KJ immediately dived in finding him held down by the turbulence of the surface waterfall. Devastated; KJ is quite shook; need keep an eye on him.

3rd August Sandford Dig - Hallatrow House

Ian Carpenter, Keith Oliver, Martin Waller, Stu Reid, Sue Howard

Trip into the new bits of the Dig; those not collapsed; disappointing. En-route to Bristol had arranged to visit Hallatrow House, whilst working there PC discovered hole in the huge garden lawn, from which two passages led away just below the surface. Arranged for a return to explore and survey the site.



Surveyed Martin Waller, Pat Cronin, Stuart Reid; April 1972.
Construction styles are suggestive of 17th & early 19th century.

NB. No north taken by surface recorder

The passages are believed to have been constructed during development of the Monastery blacksmithy and granary.

5th August Swildons Hole

Jojo, (Czech hitchhiker abducted by Phil), Phil Collett, Jarratt, Pete Moody, Greg Pickford, Charlie Watkins, Andy Nichols

Phil Collett arrived with a hijacked hitch hiker, Jojo. After the lunch session, a crazy trip to Swildons to introduce Jojo to caving, in his normal clothes; great night in the Hunters

12th August Vobster quarry

Pete Eckford, Ken James, Pete Moody, Alan Mills, Stuart MacManus, Jarratt, Gary, (Bazza), Clarke and lots more.

Assisted carrying dive kit down the incline; offered use of AM's kit again, clambered down the face from the broad ledge, finished kitting up and dived away. The place is big and deep, far larger than PC had previously dived; some concern. Buoyancy a serious issue; far too heavy; plummeted, landing on the slope. Crawled back to the surface removed most of the lead, fitted by well wishers; much better. Swam down the slope to a metal frame, at (-20ft). Swam back to the surface, ears clearing well, swam back to the frame, secured dive line; practised laying line along the edge of the vertical quarry face; visibility very good: de-kitting approached by O.C.L. asking who was I? Explaining that AM and John Parker were my trainers. The reply was a loud snort and silent stare; twat!

19th August Tooth Cave, Gower

Stu Reid, Sue Howard, Martin Waller

Left SR's place, picked up MW and SH at Winterbourne then to Wales. An excellent start to the week, a good size stream made for a sporting three hour trip: camped in the valley.

20th August Swaledale

Stu Reid, Sue Howard, Martin Waller

Gunnerside Gill, in the bar until late, slept on the sandy banks of the Swale.

21st August Arkengarthdale

Stu Reid, Sue Howard, Martin Waller

Old gang and Surrender smelt mills, fantastic remains.

22nd August Richmond Copper Mine, Richmond

Martin Waller, Stu Reid,

Located low on the river bank below the bridge into town, this mine is in a superb state of repair; an adjacent adit appears used a source of building stone; deep green water is throughout the workings, superb.

23rd August Sir Francis Lead Level, Gunnerside Gill

Stu Reid, Martin Waller

A cracking trip: the fully tooled underground workshop remains intact, adjacent is the engine shaft, it's entirely kitted out ready for work; few appear to have found this place; those who have, left everything in situ, as it should be; it is a wonderful time capsule. The Moldywarps have a cottage just down valley; invited by Alan Holmes to use it should we need to. Visited several other nearby open mine trial/levels, Priscilla Level, Bunton Level, St George Level: to name but three of the many.

24th August Cotham Pot, Oxnop Scar, Muker, Swaledale
Stu Reid, Martin Waller, Sue Howard

More prospecting around the pass into Swaledale, found more karst and an opening, cleared away loose rock and dropped 40 feet into a choked cross joint at a shale bed. Noted several mine shafts in the area, all blocked. Sped off to Monyash, arrived 9pm, the Bull packed with cavers; this is the second attempt to drain the workings, by the Technical Projects Unit of the B.S.A, their many friends and associates.

25th August 2nd Knotlow Pumping

Truly a cast of thousands; Stu Reid, Martin Waller, Paul Deakin, Jarratt, Ray Mansfield, Pete Eckford, Paul Deakin, PB Smith, Bob Toogood, Pete Livesey, George Cooper, Gerry Wooldridge; Ray Mansfield Eldon PC, Pegasus CN, Orpheus CC, Buxton SG, and many, many more clubs; well over a hundred cavers present. Arrived midday asked to have a look, with dive kit, along the flooded level at base of main shaft above the shaft sump: horribly loose and unstable; overhead rotten timber supported an unknown amount of deads. Meanwhile, the huge generator in the Landrover burst into flames causing a temporary halt to operations. All those interested were arranged into shifts for the task ahead; as the weekend continued interest waned with some as the workload significantly increased. Enjoyed the most superb pissup in The Bull; great beer, excellent company.

26th August 2nd Knotlow Pumping

Stuart MacManus, Gary, (Bazza), Clarke, Jarratt, Mick Durdy, Martin Waller, Stu Reid, Given the midday shift; much work dragging the two huge pumps about; viewing the shoring in the approach passage PC was pleased he didn't push on through this dodgy area in poor visibility. Meanwhile, outside, Paul Deakin had returned from the chipper with 34 pie and chips and 57 fish and chips. In the Bull Pete Eckford hid sixteen pint glasses in his poachers coat before the Landlord copped on, leaping over the bar, he gave chase to PE up the lane, both disappeared into the night to the sound of smashing glass, cries of stop you bastard and hysterical laughter.

27th August 2nd Knotlow Pumping

Dave Draper, Martin Waller, Pete Eckford, Jarratt, Gerry Wooldridge, Paul Deakin. Late shift; a tough session dragging about the huge water pumps on the end of massive hoses; rewarded with two wooden drams tantalizingly emerging as the water level fell in the low chamber. Bonus, a superb section of Rag and Chain pump piping, and all other manner of tools and material appearing: Bonanza! Surfacing supplied with drink, and cold pie and chips, absolutely delighted, sheer bliss, a superb trip in brilliant company!

30th August GB

Gary, (Bazza), Clarke, Stuart MacManus, Pete Eckford

A tourist trip; while PE and Bazza went to Great Chamber, SM and PC sat admiring the waterfall and enjoying the view, exiting explored the Devil's Elbow; nice.

4th September Gouffre Berger

Multi UK Club - International Trip

Earlier in the year, some of the Eldon related how there was an issue with man power for the forthcoming trip; many unable to go. Ken James is unable to go due to lack of leave, but Martin Bishop is still on, though only just; the multi club team numbers thirty so far. Told the booked period is somewhat fractured, what does that mean? Owing to issues with delays, permissions and overlapping dates? So arrangements have been made with the other booked teams; our group is told to depart almost two weeks later; confusion

reigns. Eventually picked up by Tony Dulsondo and Eric Howell from Bristol; arrived two days later at base camp. Those already there reported heated issues with the Mayor, permissions etc, and demands for more payment! Put to work conveying equipment down to the teams below; the following days spent hauling kit, often separated from MB who was operating in another group. Worked solid for almost a week fetching and carrying equipment from surface into the cave; demonstrating commitment PC was offered the chance to try and bottom the cave as some of the team had fallen ill. Alan Phillips, Gordon Fleming and John Hamble made up the UK part the team, the others were Gomez, and Alvaro (Spain) with Anton and Philippe, (France). Being honest, much of the trip became a blur, accumulating fatigue being the greatest enemy; to save effort and time abseiled the lifelines; Jill Macalister provided pills to offset fatigue though prolonged use often resulted with bouts of nausea. JH had a small hip flask of brandy which was drank at the sump, whereupon GF and PC immediately vomited; Philippe became very lethargic, so found dry ground, warmed and fed him, leaving him to sleep; after which he was much better, though not that great. The shortage of manpower meant the second bottoming team were pressed to derig as few others were able to function deeper than they had already managed; found later that a significant amount of gear was left in, as no manpower was available to retrieve it. PC found it a seriously hard trip, very tiring, exhausting, but a superb experience. The number falling out due to fatigue and illness, (and drink?) was quite surprizing. Those remaining active had a tough enough time retrieving the equipment: difficulties endured reinforced existing friendships and made many new ones. A second trip, with a little more time, would allow a caver to enjoy the cave that much more; and maybe allow a better look around off route. What was never fully explained was why our group was instructed to arrive after the original start date, and how we had Spanish and French cavers among the Team; likely politics were at the very heart of the issue, which the organizers had to deal with; an unenviable task. Working together, four nationalities, French, Spanish British and Irish all got on really well, had a lot of fun, helping each other to and from the sump; brilliant.

23rd September Caravan Encampment near Hunters

Gary, (Bazza), Clarke, Stuart MacManus

Driving to the Hunters noticed the Caravan Club had established camp containing over a hundred of the things. Noticed their flag: just after dark left the bar walked through their encampment obtained the flag returned to the bar; a productive evening.

24th September Swildons Hole

Pete Moody

To carry equipment to XII for forthcoming Desolation Row trip; intended measuring sumps returning to surface. PC lost tape measure somewhere upstream of IX: twat! In the Hunters, Brian Prewer demanded of PC "return Flag, or else"? "We know it was you". The owners had visited the Hunters demanding its return or they'd involve the police.

27th September Swildons Four

Solo

To the dig via Paradise Regained: dug two hours, found small gap in roof of tube. Later in the bar told by a grinning Roger Dors, the owner's threats had softened becoming an offer of reward for the safe return of the Flag; no questions asked.

30th September Swildons Four

Solo

Delayed bailing the Mud Sump: the small gap in the dig roof continues. Serious attitude change in those who had previously demanded the Flags return; they now actually enjoy the naughty event; all but claiming to have been involved.

1st October Eglwys Faen

Mike Davies + 12

A wander around this place for the new members of the Bristol Poly Caving Club

4th October Swildons Four

Solo

Birthday trip; air gap has ended; bugger, continued digging, large cobble found. Finished off the day by reversing the Round Trip; birthday party in Keynsham, of all places?

8th October Ogof Bishopston, Gower

Martin Waller, Keith Oliver, Stu Reid,

Returned to push this find; tight entrance pitch, small, tight duck, nice stream way to a sump, found bypass to sump I directly above and straight back down. Following the stream eventually encountered a low area with sump II off to the right; needs diving.

11th October Bristol

Impact of car broke right wrist, and bent the Norton forks.

14th October North Hill Swallet, Mendip

Alan Mills,

Assisted with banging the terminal rift, as much as practicable with a busted wrist; an almost entirely man made cave; Warned of CO₂ build up below Rumble-Plonk pitch.

15th October Swildons Hole

Ken James Martin Webster, Keith Oliver Charlie Watkins

KJ, MW and PC free dived to four, while KO and CW checked the status of the Mud Sump in preparation for their forthcoming trip. Took KJ and MW to dig in IV, only KJ impressed; surfacing plaster cast had all but dissolved; needs urgent replacement; wrapped it up with the waist length.

21st October Swildons Twelve

Greg Pickford

Training dive for GP, also took more kit in for Desolation Row. Wrapped new plaster cast in poly bag and insulation tape; used Alan Mills's wetsuit with its larger arm size to squeeze the plaster cast through; easy enough when covered with a plastic bag. Minor issue arose, GP's Ceag lamp failed in sump VI; exited on PC's Oldham.

28th October Agen Allwedd

Mike Davies, 6 x Bristol Poly, Ken James

While KJ and PC went to Turkey streamway the Poly went for a wander, unwittingly surfacing less one of their group. Exiting KJ & PC encountered the overlooked, relieved individual in total darkness, cold and upset. Returning the distraught Simon to the care of his chums they believed it all a prank: not one had noticed his absence; some friends.

4th November Oxlow Caverns – Pegasus PU, Midland Hotel

Stuart MacManus, Gary, (Bazza), Clarke, Ian Carpenter

East chamber reached; had reinforcing plaster cast with duct tape, but decided enough was enough. Enjoyed a massive PU in the Midland, “Eric and the Frantics” in great form until, Teapot, (Derek Stables) threw beer into their amplifier; loud bang, fireworks and total power outage. A night of entertainment; a fine Band and a real Comedian.

5th November Nettle Pot

Stuart MacManus, Gary, (Bazza), Clarke, Ian Carpenter

Early start; IC descended to the Sentry Box, but could not handle the unfortunate speed the ladder was fed down to him; massive pile up occurred, lost a lot of time pulling it back up to help out the situation below. Eventually all down and back out: wrist aching, really sore. Stopped at the Stags for a swift one, another in the Eyre Arms: a swift change at the Hut then to the Midland; a fine stomp; left late for Pindale Quarry and the superb BSA - TPU firework display

6th November Giants Hole

Stuart MacManus, Gary, (Bazza), Clarke, Ian Carpenter

A sober up round trip for the walking dead; met George Cooper, headed to his place for tea, along with twenty others; Jarratt and Peggy headed to Liverpool, while we headed to Sulo’s place, Nottingham; Aileen fed us. On to the Bull met up with Dave Lucas, Dave Gough, Paul Thompson, Andrew Sutton and lots more: long after closing time left to drive back to Bristol. Mac only fell asleep at the wheel near Birmingham and just south of Gloucester, afterwards he was closely monitored by those asleep around him.

10th November Pant Mawr Pot

Mike Davies, 4 x Bristol Poly, Ian Carpenter, Dave Edwards, Stuart MacManus, Gary, (Bazza), Clarke

The first trip involving a three area weekend: down to the third choke in Pant Mawr. Replacement plaster cast held up well, sealed by duct taped inside a plastic bag.

11th November Buxton - Derbyshire Drinking Session

Preparing to cave the Poly group found that a large ammo tin was missing; the one with their Oldham cells. The day was therefore spent introducing the students to the delights of drinking throughout the Peak District visiting The Wanted: The Sun: The Bull in Thorn: The Quiet Woman: The Flying Childers, eventually The Stags: stopping to visit the finest UK Fish and Chip shop at Chapel-en-le-Frith: an unexpected, daylong event. Leaving the Stags the Bristol Polytechnic minibus wouldn’t start; bump starting didn’t work either, so Sulo kindly offered to “gently” push it along the road using his Landrover. Having pushed it as far as Peak Forest the rear of the minibus was completely destroyed, seriously compressing the rear luggage area and crushing both rear doors, (on return to Bristol Poly MD parked it tight up against the car park wall to obscure the damage).

12th / 13th November P8 - (GIANTS RESCUE)

Stuart MacManus, Tony Jarratt, Andrew Sutton, Paul Herrod, Eldon lads etc, etc.

A few went caving though most avoided the P8 trip which turned out to be a cold, wet affair: this soaking caused the plaster cast to begin falling apart again, even wrapped in the fertilizer bag. Back at the hut Tokyo Paul; (Paul Herrod) alerted the club that Al Steans and party were overdue from Giants: flooding possibly impeding their exit. Jarratt, Paul Thompson and Andrew Sutton entered first; other bods arrived but did appear up to the task; a great deal of bugging about on their part was witnessed.

Fortunately a party of Eldon arrived and without hesitation descended. During the effort PC was denied participation, declared unfit by Control due to the obvious busted wrist. Chuck Barnaby finally surfaced around 6am. Swift action by Jarratt and the Eldon boys avoided CB's untimely death.

18th November Rookham Wood Mine Shafts

Keith Oliver

Greg Pickford spoke of two mine shafts in Rookham Wood; 1 x 100 foot and 1 x 65 foot. Found and laddered both, each choked at the bottom, very nice stonework, both about three/four foot diameter. Sheltering afterwards from heavy rain in the adjacent barn, KO announced he could see people coiling rope at the shaft; ran over but no one about, anywhere? KO was sober. Wrist somewhat easier after yet another replacement cast, the fourth. Recognized and bollocked by the Nurse who had fitted the original cast.

25th November Rookery Farm Swallet

Ian Carpenter, Gary, (Bazza), Clarke, Stuart MacManus, Keith Oliver, Martin Waller, Dug from 11:45am until 5pm; moving a lot of material; SM set one charge.

26th November Rookery Farm Swallet

Ian Carpenter, Gary, (Bazza), Clarke, Stuart MacManus, Keith Oliver, Martin Waller, Continued with digging, SM set two more charges; much more debris removed.

2nd December Black Hole series, Swildons Hole

Pete Clapham, Dave Yeandle

Assisted with DY's dig; it appears a long term affair; dropped dive kit at sump II.

3rd December Swildons Hole

Phil Hendy, Mike Hogg, Keith Oliver, + 1

MH's friend wouldn't enter the cave as it was taking a lot of water. MH and KO cried off at the Lavatory Pan, returning to the lad waiting outside; PH and PC headed down to II.

6th December Swildons Hole, Desolation Row

Gordon Fleming

GF arrived late, so an afternoon start, picked up the gear previously stowed at Sump II: arrived XII without incident. Dug at the base of the second rift aven, its original potential fading as the fill was removed and the walls narrowed. Exiting, found streamway in a state of flood the noise deafening throughout the cave, an enjoyable experience.

9th December Swildons Hole

Stuart MacManus, Gary, (Bazza), Clarke, Young Steve Watson, Alan Steans, Vic Holland, James Cobbett, Sulo Sulonen, Pete Moody.

JC, SS & PM headed to XII, their kit delivered to sump II by members of P.C.N, (Pegasus Club Nottingham). Free of burdens the rest did the round trip, in reverse. Once out headed to Wells for the start of a superb PU.

10th December Eastwater

Charlie Watkins, Tony Tucker

A tourist trip wandering around to see as much of the place as possible without using any tackle; a rather good trip; testing climbing skills to the limit.

16th December Eldon Hole

Mike Davies, Ian Carpenter, Steve Watson, Mick Durdy, Gordon Parkin

Abseiled in, laddered out; the severe cold seriously affecting the wrist, (deep, dull ache), though the fibre glass covering offers a much better support over the plaster cast. Huge assembly of clubs at the Stags, a superb party late PU; evicted at 3am by a Fed's raid.

17th December Peak Cavern

Sulo Sulonen, Vic Holland, Mike Davies, Ian Carpenter, Gordon Parkin

Tourist trip, taken into many places, a superb place, fantastic passage shapes, shown Ben's dig; great potential; sumps look big.

18th December Cuckoo Cleeves

Keith Oliver

An evening trip, PC had promised AM to clear the debris from the rift; the air thin, KO suffered a headache, headed out, a result of Alan Mills chemical determination.

28th December Uamh an Tartair, Scotland

Mike Davies, Young Steve Watson, Keith Oliver, Ken James

In wet conditions explored this superb cave; suggested by Goon, (Alan Jefferies). Returning to the hut, YSW found a pot some six feet deep; a choked rift/pot.

29th December Firehose Cave, Scotland

Mike Davies, Keith Oliver

A sombre trip: the cascade falling into the pool where we lost Pete Clements in July. Ken James the only one to make repeated, valiant attempts to save, and revive him

30th December Smoo Cave, Scotland

Ken James,

A wander around this "big hole" with the potential for archaeological deposits; Goon et al arrived for the New Year, after a late bar were subjected to the G.S.S. "Weegie Run", without lights, down through a large road drain; minor injuries incurred after falling out the end of the 3ft diameter concrete pipe into the stream somewhere far below.

31st December Young Steve's Pot, Scotland

Solo

YSW had previously found a pot blocked by boulders, not far from the G.S.S. hut; about a half hour walk away. Without tools found it difficult to loosen said boulders, not helped by standing on them in the confined space. After an hour snow began to fall as large flakes; visibility swiftly dropping. Though an hour left until dark, began to head back, while some visibility remained. To the Inch for a fine session; took on Goon and other Grampians in a singing contest; decision a draw. Left the Inch and headed off with coal and whiskey to an adjacent farmhouse; after waking the occupants presented the gifts, after which the remaining night became a lively affair; a very pleasant session.