

1973

6th January Vobster quarry
Martin Waller, Dave Edwards

Performed a sequence of deepening dives to test the left ear following burst drum; first dive since 11th October, all OK. Cracking evening with Cobbett et al.

13th January Swildons Hole
John Reece-Evans,

Alan Mills suggested searching the roof of sump IX for a route that might offer a bypass to this 110ft sump. JRE dived first, not far in he found a small airbell. PC dived and found an air bell closer to the IX pool, an air space with a very small ascending tube.

14th January Swildons Hole
Martin Waller

To IV via Paradise Regained, free dived through Sump III; bit of a stretch for the lungs.

19th January Swildons Hole
Ken James

Climbing in the streamway below Barnes Loop; reached a choked passage or it might be an alcove, at +20ft, this could respond to digging.

20th January Rookery Farm
Solo

Spent the afternoon looking at dig sites, each require a team effort; no solo stuff.

21st January Swildons Hole RESCUE STANDBY
Martin Waller

Placed on standby following alert; waited at the entrance for deployment, casualty emerged limping, helped to the ambulance. Stood down; sped off on the planned round trip: from sump I, climbed the streamway, achieving a superb high level traverse.

27th January Stoke Lane Slocker
Solo

Aim: to push along terminal rift dug by Alan Mills; found the exit from sump II slightly blocked. Found the entry to sump IV partly choked with stiff, thick silt, the line buried. Arrived sump VI, constricted accurately described by AM, visibility zero; creeping ahead hand ran off the end of the broken line; remained still, slowly reached about for the lost line; found it resting over bottle tap, held on tight, backed out. Suggested to AM the need for a heavier line as a replacement; asked how best to approach the squeeze in sump VI.

28th January Box Stone Mines
Ted Meek, Sue Howard, Martin Waller, Roger Marsh

A long, productive photographic trip: in through Back Door to the Working face, Wind Tunnel and the Admiralty.

3rd February Longwood – August
Andy Nichols + 2 Southampton

The idea was for PC to clear spoil from the terminal rift; but high water and a wetsuit now in tatters decided otherwise, to maintain warmth had a swift, superb trip around most of the cave, the high water conditions causing AN's friends minor issues.

4th February Swildons Hole

Pete Clapham plus 2 x Eldon, = the West Brothers?

Short round trip, no issues passing two very full Troubles, other than the cold.

10th February Stoke Lane

Solo

Early start, armed with new line, Sulo's 22ft and Bishop's Seba, reached VI and began to dig out the squeeze, which was not a short task; the choke consisting of thick silt and a few small rocks. Took longer than expected; got low on air. In zero visibility could only feel the space; it does feel larger than when started. Left the full Seba; headed into Bristol to refill both the 22c/ft.

11th February Stoke Lane

Solo

Another early start: high water conditions. Underground by 9am. Carefully through IV avoiding disturbing too much silt; reached VI and dived immediately. In failing visibility glimpsed the squeeze, and where, and what else needed removal to get through. A lot of time spent securely stacking the unstable chunks of stiff silt spoil. Exited to check contents; 10ats; oops. Switched bottles re-entered and continued to dig; cold began to penetrate; abandoned task realizing couldn't think straight; left Seba in situ; slow exit.

17th February Swildons Hole – Wookey Hole

John Reece-Evans, Sulo Sulonen, Pete Moody, Jarratt

Aim: XII; abandoned project when SS's light packed in near the entrance. PC and JRE to VII; viewing the choke JRE decided to follow the others to Wookey. Returning through sump V noted no usable airspaces; JRE had minor line issues in III. At Wookey PC lent SS his spare lamp, a Nife NC10: a recent, superb £5 buy from Pete Eckford, should buy another, PC's ex miner's Oldham bought from Bryants has become unreliable.

18th February Swildons Hole

John Reece-Evans,

Aim Desolation Row. Sulo and other Pegasus departed for Nottingham, so climbing gear shared out between the two divers; a slow trip in. JRE made a climb up awful rock to where it finally narrowed to nothing, the imagined high level passage just a shadow. PC tried the next rift on the same sort of rock; nothing of note found.

25th February Bishopston Valley, Gower

Jim Smart, Stuart & Marilyn MacManus, Gary, (Bazza), Clarke, Ian Carpenter, Martin Waller, Sue Howard, Nigel Burns, Ed Walcroft, Ted Meek, Keith Oliver.

Digging: Walking: Prospecting. One of the digs has been dug by locals, and left in an untidy state; the team moved on to another; a very fine PU in camp.

3rd March Swildons Hole

Bob Eleanor, Jim Durston

To VII to clear out the increasing snug section where fine debris has built up, dragged in by divers, bumped into Martin Webster and Ken James returning from XII.

4th March Wookey Hole

Martin Bishop

Dived from the resurgence to Chamber 1; then to Chamber 3, using bottles borrowed from Alan Mills and Pete Eckford. Ken James line reel acted up; needs better loading.

The unequal size of the bottles meant diving was significantly unbalanced. In Chamber 3, during repositioning the lead on the belt to compensate for the different size bottles, O.C.L approached demanding what was PC doing there as he was not booked in to dive and where was his trainer? Fortunately Alan Mills surfaced stating PC was his trainee and that O.C.L should leave divers alone to get on with exploration. An upset O.C.L then pointed out to PC that associating with the “likes of AM” and “those of his ilk” would ensure PC would never qualify as long as he managed the group: shocked, PC thought this sort of crap was left far behind in school. Following kit adjustment PC dived to Chamber 9:1 and back, the repositioning of the lead improving the overall balance enormously. Changing in the car park PC was approached again by O.C.L emphasising his earlier point: why does O.C.L. dislike Alan so much?

10th March Stoke Lane
Solo

Took in the 2 x 22's; at IV found a surprising accumulation of silt over the line and in the sump pool. Reached VI in zero visibility dived with both 22's, one held in front. Reached the squeeze approach and inched through; slid along the silt and through the squeeze; surfaced in VII, laughing with relief. Left the used 22 there and headed for sump VII. AM had not described, in detail, the difficulties of this next section of streamway; awkward to say the least. Reached VII; surfaced in the air bell described by AM, as just before a squeeze to check air reserves. Dived to locate the next section; felt the area covered with silt, also snug. Attempted squeeze slowly feeling for size; passed - slid through, easily; VI and VII feel similar in length, though VI feels the more committing; (it's reputation?). Crept through the initial area of VI streamway, AM described it as loose; an under estimation. Followed the low streamway to where it enters a rift with many chert projections; this is AM's previous limit: quite the achievement to dig here; impressed. Kitting up at sump VII suddenly had the feeling of being very remote; shook it off. Encountered minor issue returning through sump VI, a small boulder had moved partly blocking the squeeze. Dragged it back into VII streamway; dived again, reached squeeze could feel other spoil had moved. Closed eyes, maintained composure, moved slowly, passed squeeze. An uneventful, tiring exit removing all kit; lead left at sump VI.

11th March St. Cuthbert's – Split Rock Quarry
Martin Bishop, Ken James,

Waited at the BEC hut where eventually the leader was a “no show”. Graham, (?), however was going in and offered places on a working trip; asking we carry in four bags of material; deposited same near sump I, a pleasant tourist trip followed. Out by half one; made for the Hunters; after a few pints decided to enjoy the sunny afternoon climbing at Split Rock: great fun. To Bishop's place for a bite to eat then over to The Plume of Feathers at Rickford, returning to the Hunters via The Star, Shipham and The Victoria arrived at the Hunters quite late, a superb day.

17th March Cuckoo Cleaves

Charlie Watkins + 2 female novices

An early trip, 9am, to assist CW with his two friends from work: afterwards, headed back to Bristol for the trip to Ystradfellte.

18th March Pwll Ddu, Ystradfellte

David (Dave Edwards) James, Martin Waller

After sometime searching this large underwater cavity a crevice, where the current was found issuing was focused upon, material was removed but progress stopped by a large

boulder. One of MW's methane cylinders filled with Sodium Chlorate and sugar was inserted and fired with little effect, other than killing several pounds of trout; very tasty.

22nd March Swildons Four

Solo

Evening trip to the dig; two hours of digging; an easy exit via the streamway.

24th March Vobster

Bob Eleanor, Dave Edwards, Marilyn, Stuart McManus, Martin Waller, Sue Howard, Veronica? Ian Carpenter, Ann? Gary, (Bazza), Clarke, Terry, Sylvia, and Sean Edwards and his four sisters

Diving, and swimming in very cold water: SE swimming in a wet suit top and trunks.

25th March Stoke Lane Slocker

Alan Mills

Sump VI; assisted AM dig out the area of the squeeze made quite an impact; awkward and heavy going. AM's done a terrific job digging solo, but he doesn't quite seem himself.

31st March Stoke Lane Slocker

Martin Waller, Geoff Marshall

Trip into II for a look around the chambers, and to search for a bypass to sump II

1st April Swildons Hole

Alan Mills

Climbed up to Acid Squeeze to continue dissolving the stal boss; no discernable change has occurred; AM is not that happy; depressed? Will take him out for a few walks

5th April Swildons Hole

Stuart McManus, Jim Smart, Nigel Burns, Gary, (Bazza), Clarke

An evening trip; while SM and PC went to II, the others went to a dig in Damascus.

Installed the Wookey Hole sign in II; borrowed from the bottom of Milton Lane.

Undated April (7/8th) Swildons Hole

Pete Moody, Rich Gordon, Rob Harper

Abandon Hope, Hairy Passage and Vicarage, looking at various dig sites; a small side passage requires bang.

14th April Swildons Hole

Pete Moody

PC could not clear sinuses through VI, abandoning XII in favour of digging Thrutch tube, PM managed to pass the squeeze, he'd previously banged, PC could not; contributed to the trip by disposing of bang spoil.

15th April Stoke Lane

Colin Sage, Jeff Marshall, Bob Ellinor, Martin Waller, Ed Walcroft and four others?

At last nights PU agreed caving this morning; many suffering, lots of excuses; eventually got some going for a good trip into Stoke II.

20th April Eastwater

Geoff Marshall, Bob Eleanor

Planned to dive Mangle Hole but Pete Moody was ill. Rather than loose the day did an upper round trip. No sign of the Pegasus arriving so headed to Wales.

21st April Bridge Cave & Little Neath

Bob Ellinor, Geoff Marshall

Through sump I into LNRC, did the round trip; canal water level quite high. In the new Inn bumped into Colin Sage, Tim Lyons et al.

22nd April Dinas Rock, Glyn Neath

Bob Ellinor, Geoff Marshall, Ed Walcroft

Focused on climbing the huge overhang, only EW made a successful traverse.

23rd April Ogof Bishopston

Martin Waller, Bob Ellinor, Geoff Marshall, 3 x Chelsea Speleological Society,

Aim; to dive sump II found October 1972, sump I was bypassed by PC scaling a short climb over it. PC dived first with MW's small bottle; single kit. A four inch air space was used for the first fifteen feet to where the sump begins. It is twelve/fifteen feet long and very tight. Beyond a small and low cobble strewn chamber was reached. The return trip made difficult as the strong flow had washed the excavated gravel back into the trench. Digging back through the accumulated debris was, as AM would say, character building. The way on is an inaccessibly tight bedding. Thanks to the CSS for carrying the dive gear.

24th April All Slade Lead Mine

Andrew?

Surveyed this lead mine with the assistance of a local youth; a pal of Martin Waller.

28th April Ludwell Cave

Ken James,

Dived to continue search for this mythical extension; still no joy.

29th April Swildons Hole, Figure of eight trip

Peter Eckford

An eventful trip trying to remember the land marks for efficient route finding on a potential exchange trip; elevated levels of CO₂: out late; missed the Hunters.

12th May Dow – Providence

Mike Lewis, Gill Thompson, Mike Davies

Difficulties route finding; route involved hurling self across a bold step, far too wide for the legs to span; good trip and a cracking CDG dinner; excellent.

13th May Hardrawkin Pot

Gordon Parkin, Mike Lewis

Only three survivors from last night's PU: Sulo Sulonen asked PC to assess the carry to the sump with a view of arranging a future dive. Hauling kit in and out won't be much of an issue with a small party, even if using ladder; the pitches do get quite wet.

19th May Swildons Hole

Bob Eleanor

An introduction free diving to IV for BE; no issues.

20th May Swildons Hole
Solo

Free dived to IV to review the potential of the old dig; it will continue to consume a lot of time as a solo project. Alison, (Hooper), went off caving with her club, Chelsea SS.

26th May Cherry Tree Hole
Mike Davies, Eric Thompson

ET wanted photographs of Blackstone Chamber. Made an early start as the cave is also reputed strenuous so might require a bit of time. Entered at 9am, main junction was impressive. Made good time to the crawl into Aurora Chamber; air space limited, caused MD some concern. ET spent some two hours photographing the stunning formations. Exiting the duck had become a little desperate; MD experiencing difficulty. This was one, if not the finest northern trip experienced.

27th May Disappointment Pot
Mike Davies, Eric Thompson

A very early trip, spent a lot of effort wriggling through into GG; a busy place below with some two dozen encountered, bumped into Jim Brocklebank and Des Simmons, (Berger "72"). Exiting midday departed as "Chicoga" is playing in the Crown, Bristol tonight.

28th May Split Rock Quarry

Glyn Bolt, Barry Wilkinson, Bob Eleanor, Charlie Watkins.

Left copies of the Box mines report with Roger Dors on "Sale or Return" joined in the climbing at the quarry; GB and BW are dam good climbers.

2nd June Odin Mine
Geoff Pickering

Having sorting out the assortment of Jarratt's Landrover issues, GP wanted company to take photos of the Odin Mine, its crushing circle, and other features. Landrover fixed, headed for the mine; most of the time spent on the surface with only an hour or so underground; some fine examples of early mining techniques about. Later in the Stags PC related the dilemma presented by OCL; asking the lads their take on his ultimatum. "Fuck 'im" was the unanimous reply; Jarratt suggested PC transfer to the Derbyshire Section, circumventing such bollocks; explaining there won't be an issue as he's the secretary, and fuck all idle, armchair cavers. A cracking night in the Stags enjoyed all the more with the unexpected return of Sulo, Aileen, and Mick from bonny Scotland.

3rd June Windy Knoll & Bradwell Caves

Greg Pickford, Jarratt, Brian Woodward, et al:

Jarratt led a trip to this exposed location to assess these sites. They have potential. Gordon Parkin announced he'd arranged to explore a cave recently uncovered in Hoveringhams quarry, in imminent danger of being quarried away.

10th June Stoke Lane Slocker
Geoff Marshall. Bob Eleanor

Into II for GM & BE to visit the chambers; while they enjoyed the formations PC continued the search for a bypass to sump II.

16th June Ludwell Cave
Ken James

Assisted KJ dragging boulders from the left of the sump pool, (looking out the resurgence); stacking them to make more room to dig the area of possible collapse.

17th June Ludwell Cave

Ken James, Martin Bishop

Another session without any way on or area of collapse; it is increasingly apparent that Fish is a bullshitter; there is no sign as yet of the big passage discovered/entered by him.

21st June Garrowpipe Rising

Ken James

KJ's interest in this obscure rising, not far from Lamb Leer is well founded. It is a large spring for such an altitude. Searched among the boulders above before returning to dig the rising. No evidence of anything solid to burrow through as yet, its likely to be a long term dig; no problem digging up stream, its a nice setting.

23rd June Stoke Lane Slocker RESCUE

Paul Hadfield, Geoff Marshall

Returning from Stoke II met with some Wessex boys before the Nutmeg Grater. Exiting found getting up the entrance tube heavy going as the stream volume had significantly increased. Outside a biblical rain storm was flooding the area, the stream rapidly rising. PH and PC suggested going back in to alert the others, while sending GM to alert the M.R.O. : their plan, to inform the Wessex boys of the state of the weather and to offer assistance to get to high ground in Stoke II and sit out this temporary flood rather than become caught in the low sections. Re-entry was swift washed along by the increasing stream; several places were all but ducks. Found the Wessex had just returned through the grater and moving well; concerned, but without any panic. With the entrance some seventy metres away, the Wessex considered this was closer than running for Stoke II, collectively deciding to aim for the entrance; PH and PC followed behind the group. Most low parts of the streamway were now formidable ducks, at the entrance PH and PC managed to shove the others up against the torrent of an almost sumped entrance tube, PC was last to exit the cave assisted by a rope deployed from the surface team. As the team congratulated itself the entrance filled and disappeared

24th June Stoke Lane Slocker

Alan Mills

An eventful digging trip to VIII; AM dived sump IV first, after three minutes PC followed finding the line broken just upstream of the elbow; phuffed about in zero visibility trying to repair the break, without success: returned to the IV pool, salvaged a length of dive line, returned to the break and tied on the new bit, swam on and delightedly found the other end only some ten feet further on; secured ends together and continued. Met an upset AM in V; having reached VII he'd grown increasingly concerned, having waited thirty minutes returned to search for an overdue/dead PC. A very unhappy AM demanding "where the fuck have you been"? When the line issue was explained, a visibly relieved AM remarked he was pleased to have PC along. Both had used a lot of air so returned to the surface. AM has something melancholy about him.

25th June Swildons Hole

Geoff Marshall

Dive training for GM to VII; a nice, uneventful evening trip

30th June Goatchurch Cavern RESCUE

Called to assist a casualty with suspected dislocated arm, not really needed as many had already arrived; waited at entrance until stood down.

30th June Longwood August RESCUE

Called to assist a casualty apparently suffering from facial injuries; lots of people waiting about at the entrance for deployment, eventually used in hauling party

30th June Stoke Lane Slocker

Ken James

The plan to replace the repaired line in IV, however the trip was cut short owing to being overtaken by a spillage of diesel fuel enveloping the pair near sump I; serious breathing difficulties, assembled dive kit and used it to exit the cave. Cracking Pegasus PU!

7th July Durdle Door PU

Severn Valley, Cotham, etc

A weekend of drink, diving, swimming, 5 a side football and lots of other seaside fun.

14th July Swildons Hole

Alan Mills

In the Hunters AM persuaded PC to support him investigating a dig/rift that may bypass XII. In zero visibility descended a narrow rift to around twenty feet, moved along a constricted rift; the many projections creating issues. Increasing concern prompted a cautious exit; made difficult as the loosely laid line had pulled along the rift, among the nodules, above the diver; only by sheer luck, and patience did the diver retrace his route back to surface. After explaining what had taken so long AM explained this was a significant learning curve, where constant attention need be paid belaying the line at any change of direction and at regular intervals, as being fully aware of the surroundings.

16th July Swildons Hole

Stuart MacManus, Gary, (Bazza), Clarke. Martin Waller

The plan was to bang the dig in Damascus; unfortunately SM couldn't get his dets from his Mothers freezer as they were frozen solid to its wall; all went to II as consolation.

18th July Swildons Hole

Martin Waller, Dave Howard, Bob Eleanor, Geoff Marshal

A swift evening trip to IV, managed to reach the Hunters for a late one.

21st July Hunters Hole

Pete Moody

Down to the communal dig for an assessment; looks good; but the oxygen is still thin.

25th July Lamb Leer

Solo

Arranged with Ed Walcroft, Martin Waller, Sue Howard, Dave Howard, Bob Eleanor, Geoff Marshall to meet up at 2pm; they finally appeared at 7pm, complaining it was too late for a trip, heading to the Hunters. Incensed at being kept waiting, PC took the kit, heading to the Cave of Falling Waters. Met up with the others some three hours later with the comment "you shouldn't got caving on your own"; left the bar to drink in the Victoria. For what actual caving EW does, he is far too fond advising others how to do it.

4th August Ludwell Cavern

Ken James, Martin Bishop

Continued digging the rift; obsessed with digging in failing visibility PC disregarded regular monitoring of his air supply; a tight breathe galvanized the diver's attention.

Earlier in the dive, to dig effectively he had inserted himself lengthwise beneath an overhang. In the poor visibility, he had pushed rock spoil off to his right inadvertently creating a barrier between himself and the sump exit. In the split second that followed the initial tight breath he erupted from the rock pile, flying past a surprised MB, swiftly emerging from the tight resurgence tube into bright sunshine. Lesson learnt, and rightly bollocked by KJ, who was sitting in the sun enjoying the sounds from the radio.

5th August Longwood August

Alan Mills, Mick Durdy, Alan Steans, Dave Blyth,

A steady tourist trip for the boys involving a superb circular sight seeing tour: DB spoke of motor issues hindering some Buxton Speleo's attending the forthcoming PSM trip.

8th August Eastwater

Ted Meek, Richard? + 4 novices

A slow upper round trip; TM enjoyed himself immensely, he loves the place.

9th August PSM

Tony Jennings, Dave Benson, Geoff Pickering, Mike Davies

Decided to join the Eldon and other Derbyshire clubs for a trip to the Pyrenees, even though desperately short of holiday, and cash. PC pleaded for unpaid leave; the boss really is a greedy sod the harder PC works the more he expects. The initial plan was to use MD's van, which broke down outside Hereford; he abandoned it and reached Buxton where he got a lift with some of the Orpheus. TJ and GP also wanted to go but there was no room left among the vehicles leaving Derbyshire. TJ rang PC, who asked his brother Kevin, to borrow his Landrover for the duration, (ten days?), he agreed. There followed a wonderful, hilarious trip; so much fun. Arrived in camp amid news of heated exchanges, a rescue search, and eventual location of some lost Polish lads; (underground without permits). Frowning Frenchmen impeded cavers descending the many rigged and unrigged holes high on the plateau. Being Irish, speaking pigeon French, making the officials laugh and enjoying lots of drink, sorted out our group's access permission. Following a superb through trip, while driving to another cave, snapped a rear half shaft; lost days locating a spare. The Mayor of the village was very helpful but returned saying that obtaining a spare half shaft would take some time. PC suggested the others hitched back to camp to enjoy the remainder of the trip, and get a lift back to the UK. DB said he'd stop with PC and do some walks and maybe some climbing in the area. Three days later a second hand shaft arrived, showing serious signs of wear. Once fitted, decided not to risk driving back to base camp so limped home at 40mph in a very noisy Landrover.

13th August PSM through trip

Tony Jennings, Dave Benson, Mike Davies, Geoff Pickering, Eric Blake

Having spoken respectfully to the French, shown them his credentials and persuaded them the group was entirely Irish, the authorities agreed the party could descend the rigged route on the understanding that it was being derigged within the next few days; so better get a move on. GP took the lead and a swift exhilarating trip followed; lights could have been better, but the sense of entering such an immense place was awe inspiring. Nothing prepares the caver for the Salle Verna; sat on a huge boulder for a drink and mars bar, watched the lights of another group as pin pricks in the vast chamber. On the climb out recognized the ladder as UK tackle. So the team enjoyed the pleasure of doing the through trip without the need to carry kit, rig and/or de-rig the cave, superb.

16th August Grotte de Chauveroché

Dave Benson

With a dodgy half shaft fitted, DB suggested we might divert to here enroute to the UK. A very big, wet place requiring a lot of wading and a lot of swimming; previously visited by DB, he'd not reached the end. With only one wetsuit shared out the top and bottom between the two. The trip involves a lot of swimming, something PC can't; fortunately DB had thought to bring empty gallon wine containers as buoyancy aids; nice one Dave. The decorations, the gours are truly wonderful. After a couple of miles of superb stream passage a sump is reached; the end for now? Emerged in the early hours; enjoyed a steaming mug of tea watching the sun rise; absolute bliss, a superb, unexpected trip.

1st September Swildons Hole

Julian Penge, Geoff Marshall

Pirate Chamber, no water at all in the U tube, a bonus; GM and JP had light problems.

9th September Llygad Llwhwr

Ted Meek, Roger Marsh, +3

A pleasant wander around this favourite of TM: who does not "do" long, strenuous trips.

15th September Penyghent Pot

Mick Durdy, Andrew Sutton, Victor Holland, Dave Blyth

The issue of carrying kit remains, too few to carry the kit, which means not all reach the bottom; it's frustrating. A very fine PU at the B.S.A. conference

21st September Yordas Cave

Mike Lewis, Rob Stallard

A sober up trip; eventually out to sunshine; ML desperately needing sunglasses.

22nd September Simpson's Pot

Mike Lewis, Rob Stallard

A pleasant, swift through trip, a bit wet but great fun; out via valley entrance. A lot of people about. A serious singing contest in the Craven Heifer: Jim Eyre in good form.

29th September Eldon Hole, Sulo Sulonen, RECOVERY

Ken James

Issues with KJ's motor delayed arrival at Peak Forest; at the Hut found people in shock: we'd lost Sulo down Eldon that afternoon.

29th September

Lost Sulo, devastated.

6th October St. Cuthbert's

Mick Durdy, Victor Holland, Tim Large

TL offered the team a tourist trip down to the sump; BEC dinner later on, a decent PU at the BEC; celebrated Sulo, until it hurt.

7th October Swildons Hole

Mick Durdy, Andrew Sutton, Victor Holland

Tourist trip, the round trip, VH didn't like the Troubles, any of the ducks or sump I; other than that he thoroughly enjoyed the trip.

8th October Bristol

Kevin Cronin suggested swapping his series IIA, 88 Landrover, for PC's recently purchased Ford Anglia; deep joy. KC wants to reduce costs, PC wants a Landrover.

11th October Sulo's Funeral, Peak Forest

Assembled in Bristol; Mr. Nigel, Bob Cross, Martin Bishop, Stuart MacManus, Gary, (Bazza), Clarke, Ken James and others. The well dressed group congregated in the Bar to plant Sulo at the church in Peak Forest: a superb P.U. in the Devonshire; before and after; once the bar closed the party raced to the Stags, and after the Hut; cracking PU.

12th October

The morning mood was a little sombre, which swiftly evaporated as the pub crawl around Buxton took off. Hard core of two dozen plus, staggering about the town. Late afternoon several went for a walk to pace the pints. Returning from Castleton RA, Mac, Bazza, and Pat observed a car, caravan, and Elsan toilet tent, pitched for the night in a field above Winnat's; plans formed and more pints flowed in the Dev, then a clandestine return to the Winnat's settlement. Whilst hiding behind the wall, preparing to steal the prizes namely, 1 x Elsan and 1 x Elsan tent, the well pissed raiders heard the male occupants begin singing "The Red Flag"? Undercover of the din the attack began, however during manoeuvring the goods over the wall the caravan door suddenly opened bathing the area in light followed with a high pitched scream " Eeeeee somebody's stealing our bog".... tossing both Elsan and tent back over the wall, laughing hysterically, the group ran off in different directions disappearing into the now freezing darkness. Back at the car the hysterics lasted back to the Hut. Many more pints, Sulo stories and frolics around the stove: only minor injuries received by Andrew and Zeek.

13th October Giants Hole

All late arising, some just dead, barely made the Dev; resurrection followed with pints and the suggestion of a trip. Water high so all enjoyed a wet cold trip, many in destroyed dry grots found in the tackle store, along with dodgy lamps; all exited a bonus! To the Lover's Leap for welcome hot food and gallons of tea; raced back to the hut to assemble and on to the Stags where the funeral party began again: superb time.

14th October

Many suffering crippled livers, several members, and guests missing, possibly lost en-route from the Stags when the meandering convoy sped along various lanes eluding the Fed's. Found they'd caught Italian Tony when he left the road and hit a wall. Only minor bruises no other casualties. Good byes made, left for Bristol midday, to recover.

20th October Swinsto – Valley Entrance

Andrew Sutton, Vic Holland, Alan Steans

Departed early for Yorkshire; breakfast in Ingleton. PC volunteered to rig VE pitch; found two ladders stacked above the climb, which was already rigged, left ours. Another pleasant trip down some wet pitches; met a group from the Red Rose who were going further; agreed to rig their ladder upon our exit; they intend a long trip.

3rd November Giants – Stomp

Ken James, Martin Bishop

Still reeling from the loss of Sulo headed for Giants to shake ourselves down, a swift round trip in high water; the soaking and cold offering temporary escape. Pegasus and others congregated at the hut so decided on a Chinese prior to the Midland Stomp.

Andrew Sutton, dressed in frock, makeup and Moon Boots meant the group was refused service, so went for a curry. Met George Cooper and others in the Eagle, the scene set, to the Swan, the Sun, the Eagle, the Ashwood, finishing at the Midland. Emotions running high: an intense evening, a much needed release; a wonderful celebration of friendship.

4th November Oxlow

Ken James, Martin Bishop

A hilarious experience: the underground firework display superb until visibility was lost from the exhaust of fireworks. Things got awkward when breathing became an issue; climbing ladders became an effort breathing gunpowder fumes. Surfacing found that the waiting Police left their cars to give chase, the team running off in all directions of the compass; none caught. From the hillside scattered groups sat, cheered and watched in awe as rockets repeatedly appeared, launched up the entrance shaft producing a wonderful display in the darkening sky; really good fun.

10th November Water Icicle Mine

Mick Durdy, Paul Thompson, Alan (Big AL) Harrison, Young Steve Watson

Heavy rain and high winds. YSW and PC went for a look about while MD, AH and PT began to dig, rejoined the group and dug for another hour, making about two foot of progress. Frozen, went to the cafe at Newhaven to down pints of hot tea, then a quiet evening in the Quiet Woman.

24th November Ludwell Cavern

Ken James

The rumoured passage entered by Fish has been searched for these many trips. Both divers did yet another search of the entire sump, returning to the narrow cleft heading in the wrong direction. Work on this has produced a short tight passage some fifteen feet long, named KP passage. Why K.P? You have you be nuts to squeeze along it. The likelihood of there ever being a big passage entered from this sump is increasingly zero; conclusion, Fish is a bullshitter.

7th December Maeshafn, North Wales

Solo

Drove the Landrover from Bristol to the Bath Driving Test Centre; examined by a Mr O'Hagan; passed test at 16:30. Asked where the driving Instructor was, PC explained he was undergoing his weekly kidney dialysis treatment; the stony look became a rye smile. Previous arrangements were made to meet Martin Bishop, Chris Batstone and Andy Sparrow at 6pm, that evening, (whether PC passed the test or not), at the junction to the M4, on the A4, then drive to the Pegasus meet. Parked up where agreed and dozed off; woke at 8pm freezing cold; none had turned up so drove to north Wales confident of locating Maeshafn without a map. Approaching Maeshafn encountered a snow storm. At around 2am parked up in a field gate; climbed into the back to sleep. Woke by Stuart MacManus and Peter (RatArse) Webb climbing in the Landrover; complaining there was no room in their car for the group of four to get any sleep.

8th December Maeshafn Quarry, North Wales

Mick Durdy, Steve Hampton, Tony Dulsondo, Dicky Dickenson, Andrew Sutton, Vic Holland, Jarratt, Peggy Faulknan, Batty McDermott.

A Pegasus – Eldon meet involving forty odd people. A wander about this working quarry looking for reported openings, after three hours found nothing except the route back to the bar: discussed forthcoming trip to Ireland. An excellent PU; after leaving the Miners

headed back to camp, at the Grovesnor Mine engine house. PU continued among the snow drifts: Hank (Eldon PC) the only casualty, suffering a massive asthma attack was driven off gasping into the freezing night, destination unknown.

16th December Ogof Darren Cilau

Mike Davis

MD convinced PC this is a superb trip; it's a long crawl to a chamber, and back, a classic sober up trip; you'd need be well pissed to do it a second time.

19th December Pegasus Hut

Arrived 10pm after driving through a snow encountered just north of Leek extending up into the Peak, found no tracks up to the farm lane so drove to the Stags, found AS, (Andrew Sutton), pissed. Loaded him into the Landrover and took him to the hut. Had to put on the snow chains; spent time digging through drifts to get up the lane and access the front door; carried AS in, put him to bed. Got a fire going; temperature well below freezing. Very little timber so burnt some of AS's porno library, rolled up and bound with wire. No water; melted snow for tea, bed around 3am.

20th December Pegasus Hut

Andrew Sutton

More snow last night; dug out Landrover and drove into Buxton to buy, a) coal, b) food, c) caving kit and d) find the others. Found them in the Eagle, where PC's IIA Landrover was chosen for the Irish trip over SH's, PC's being the larger. The impending fuel crisis meant PC had brought along his ration cards issued for the Norton Electra, and Landrover, just in case; also had five full jerry cans in reserve.

21st December Liverpool – Ireland

Steve Hampton, Andrew Sutton, Victor Holland, Mick Durdy

Found that SH had booked the wrong ferry, the original plan was to go via Holyhead, the ferry journey being some five hours shorter. The rough eleven hour crossing involved a long game of buzz resulting in many casualties.

22nd December Dublin - Doolin

Steve Hampton, Andrew Sutton, Vic Holland, Mick Durdy

Journeyed to Doolin; SH insisted on navigating, unfortunately via Ardnacrusha power station, which increased the journey time by two hours putting MD in a really good mood, which he shared about, after another three hours we're jammed in O'Connor's.

23rd December Pollballiny

Vic Holland, Andrew Sutton, Steve Hampton

A long crawl to a sump, knees sore, a superb cave, great potential. Stopping in Glasha farmhouse, the Shannon's old home; Lala Shannon regularly brings in cake, and turf.

24th December Poulmagollum – Poulelva

Mick Durdy, Victor Holland, Dave Gough, Andrew Sutton

Laddered Poulelva and made our way out the main streamway, high water conditions made the going difficult; a superb trip. A fine night in the bar with music and dance; much like Cousin kitty's wedding. Bought many crates of drink for tomorrow, once loaded Gus said if we fancied a pint tomorrow to call down after lunchtime, but come in around the back.

25th December Coastline – Bar - Glasha Farmhouse

Andrew Sutton, Vic Holland, Mick Durdy, Dave & Julie Gough

Mick ordered everyone out the kitchen, so dissolved into small groups, some heading off toward the coast; all coalesced in O'Connor's after three hours. A knock on the back door was answered by Terri O'Connor; the crowd within made for a snug session; stunning music and dance. MD had warned to be back for dinner by four; the well pissed revellers returned after six laden with more crates of drink, which made MD a happy, if very, pissed Chef. A bumper dinner followed with a superb pissup; many casualties.

26th December Faunarooska

Pat Redmond, Vic Holland, Andrew Sutton

A superb trip, each of the two separate pitches dropped; a sump below each; a long trip. Dark outside missed the narrow exit, to grovel about in several alternate tiny fissures; so, so close to the surface, yet so far: another evening of great music.

27th December Aran View – Doolin River Cave

Mick Durdy, Jim Shannon, Andrew Sutton

A trip with a minor issue got lost. Reached the main drain to find a huge river rushing past; kept close to the right hand bank to avoid being swept away. Advice received was; look for daylight to locate the shaft. Being dark outside such advice was as useful as a cat flap in an Elephant house. The small air space made it difficult to navigate but by moving left, out across the current found a small crevice in the roof, which led to the pot, hooray! Swiftly detackled and made for the fireside of an all but empty O'Connor's? Around nine Jarratt arrived with a bunch of women, his girl friend Peggy's sister Pauline Faulknan, Batty McDermott, Mary Lang and Pauline McDermott. A dozen locals arrived too, the music began; and another wonderful evening took off; singing, music and dancing. The locals were delighted the few visitors about were actually fine looking women who could dance, and would dance given any excuse. Left around 4am for Jamesy Wood's place, Ivy Cottage: more drink, dance, music and laughter. Took a shine to Pauline McDermott, she reciprocated; PMD has a sparkling personality and deep, rich kindness; without doubt life has changed for the better: dam, can that woman dance.

28th December Cullaun Five

Vic Holland, Andrew Sutton

Survivors from last night managed to get into the Red Carpet series; VH's ever watchful eye believed the stream rising so began to exit; found the beddings all but sumped; well done Vic. No hot water so hurried down to the bar to find Jarratt, the Russell brothers Miko, Gussie and Pakie, Stevie Mac, Rory, Jamesy, Michael Sherlock, Bobby and the girls tucked up snug in the corner, tight up against the bar, well out of the draught. Walked in just as the music erupted; another cracking night. Couldn't understand where the drink kept coming from; after a long thoughtful pause Jarratt reckoned heaven.

29th December Poulmagrái

Victor Holland, Mick Durdy, Pat Redmond, Jim Shannon, Jarratt

Bed at six, up at ten, underground by one! Wet conditions; a superb streamway: great fun. At the sump slid in and felt around with the feet, the underwater passage does not mimic the approach passage for size and shape; worth a dive. Back at Glasha had a quick meal of stew, no hot water, again, walked briskly to the bar; Jarratt and the girls depart tomorrow for Dublin. Invited PMD to the Pegasus PU at the Wanted Inn, 27th January; she accepted; Jarratt suggests PMD get to Bangor then have a lift with him and Peggy.

30th December Poulcahercloggaun west-1

Martin Droney, Jim Shannon

A sinuous meandering stream cave; common enough hereabouts: a lot of effort getting in and much more so out. A place not to linger, or return to in a hurry: the pain faded with another late party at Jamesy's place. Spoke to Jack Garrihy, who owns the local garage, asked of available fuel; he suggests calling in to talk about it, filled up with ten gallons of petrol and seven bottles of poteen; stowed booze in tool box. Still have the five full jerry cans. The lack of hot water is strongly suspected due to the regularly clean and shiny Mick Dirty.

31st December North Wales, New Years Heave

Steve Hampton, Andrew Sutton, Vic Holland, Mick Durdy Jarratt, Aileen Casserly, Peggy Faulknan.

Early into O'Connor's for a farewell drink; big mistake after many pints and hot whiskeys Doll presented a crate of beer, "just in case you get thirsty". Stopped at a roadblock in Monrath; between Ennis and Limerick multiple witnesses rang the Gardai reporting the occupants of an English Landrover were drinking whilst driving. Looking through the driver's window the Guard noticed Andrew, (driving), holding a bottle down at his side, and the passenger foot well full of empties. The Guard advised the group choose the least pissed to drive to the Ferry, and don't consider stopping. Arrived Holyhead, on Pat Redmond's advice headed for the Goat Inn to meet up with a bunch of climber's etc. a crazy night/early morning. The promise of another party led the group into the night, well pissed. En-route Jarratt pulled in front of PC's overtaking Landrover to avoid it leaving the road, over the cliff at the oncoming sharp bend; PC braked ripping the rear offside wheel arch from Jarratt's Landrover: six lives saved. Next morning drove to Buxton to drop off the lads, Aileen Casserly picked up in Dublin, needed to get back to Nottingham so PC obliged, dropping her home; then Bristol to drop off Andrew Sutton at Barrow Tanks on the A38, who was hitching to Australia, then into work at Keynsham; got a bollocking being twenty minutes late from a selfish, ignorant Boss. It's been a wonderful year particularly the last fortnight; need more leave, and a bit more money.