

# 1993

1<sup>st</sup> January Rhino Rift

Martin Bishop,

First of the year; of those who thought it a great idea last night, as ever only MB game enough to play. Issues getting a key; soon resolved. MB to the third pitch, announcing the place was loose, some gardening required. Reached the bottom of the fourth. Slow trip out; the SRT skills rusty. Dinner with MB and Sue; Bristol late.

6<sup>th</sup> January Roman Baths, Bath

Martin Bishop

Maintenance work scheduled, overseen by Steven Osbourne, a pal of MB's father. So offered MB a look at the culverts supplying the thermal baths. Met up with MB at his parent's place; Bridge St, Bath. Met SO at 2pm. Cracking to be shown around the place; had no idea of the number of stream culverts supplying the baths, SO relates at least three springs are captured. Of differing temperatures? Seemingly blended to avoid excess temperature in any one bath; real plumbing skills. One culvert had water similar to body temp, another much hotter. A wonderful example of Roman plumbing. Taken by SO to a "workshop", drank tea; discussed the engineering and desire to explore a culvert. Present situation forbids such trips; however, he thought to try the angle where the team offers to check the culvert roofs to assess their integrity. A superb ploy.

15<sup>th</sup> January Roman Baths, Bath

Martin Bishop, Steven Osbourne

SO called MB, found as long as he was present and public liability insurance too, then the society had no issues. On health concerns, a bath was closed. Any visit therefore entirely at the team's own risk.

20<sup>th</sup> January Roman Baths, Bath

Martin Bishop, Steven Osbourne

Trip arranged for 6pm; met SO at the baths. Taken to several places within the building complex and shown areas of floor, believed covering various potential access points; of two opened, the small shafts must have been designed for children. The culvert finally entered was the one conveying the body temp stream. Big mistake; after crawling along the arched stonework drain, only twenty metres, could not bear the heat any longer; overheating becoming a real issue. Backed up to the entrance escaping the heat and smell. MB had a go, commenting he thought the water much hotter than at the point of entry? Well worth doing; a once in a lifetime trip.

Business manic.

13<sup>th</sup> February Rampgill, Nenthead

Cheg Chester, Dave Gough, Nigel Burns, Big John Cooper, Darren Hines

Returned to Bogg shaft spillway area; DG again climbing the dodgy shaft walls, to let down a ladder for the rest. All up into the spillway passage. Slowly cleared the collapsed debris, eventually exposing the edge of the ore bin; CC estimates the bin could be some twelve feet wide. So, need this distance forepoled. Need a lot of timber and carry it here. Visited the Horse Whimsey, again; it is deteriorating, clog and horse shoe prints in mud still amaze, as does other numerous artefacts and features. Cracking night in the Crown.

14<sup>th</sup> February Firestone Level.

Cheg Chester, Dave Gough, Nigel Burns, Big John Cooper, Darren Hines  
CC had previously dug here, opening several blockages. However, the place has bad air. A faint hint of rotten eggs, so Hydrogen Sulphide present. Suggested using dive bottles to penetrate the area of low oxygen - elevated noxious gases. Approaching the safe limit, all the Team were panting. Suggested they retreat fifty metres, at least. CC and PC donned a four-litre bottle each and set off, minimum available free air calculated as 900 litres. Minimum time available estimated at twenty minutes. Maximum, perhaps forty minutes; dependent on physical effort expended. Passed one choke, previously dug through by CC; reached another, the present limit, assessed dig, removed some spoil but life support kit a hinderance. Returned to safety; each of the team experienced some level of thick head. Minor, irritating rash, around both wrists experienced later on that evening.

February undated (19<sup>th</sup>?) Wood Mine - Box Stone Mines

Nigel Burns, Chris Batstone, Martin Bishop, Paul Thompson  
MB as guide, a cracking wander around Wood Mine, seemingly an engineering factory in WWII. On to Box, for an extensive visit taking in Admiralty, Cliff etc. Superb evening in multiple Bristol bars.

27<sup>th</sup> February CDG Training review sub-committee, NPC Hut

Mark Doherty, Clive Westlake, Jonny Shaw, Barry Sudell, Neil Harman, Malcolm Foyle and Andy Ward.

7<sup>th</sup> March

Lost Bob Davies

14<sup>th</sup> March Dan-Yr-Ogof

Dig Hastilow, Nick Geh

Pressed on at Phylosan Drive dig, above the sump pool; reached the top of the vertical pot. Unfortunately, with three diggers, the digging frenzy caused spoil to be deposited behind the last man, sealing the passage; each felt the effects of elevated CO<sub>2</sub>. A close call; potential of this passage is diminishing.

21<sup>st</sup> March Dan-yr-Ogof

Nick Geh

Continued the dig, with an eye on air quality and accumulating spoil. Cleared a pile, then moved this back to the main cave, dropping it into the river.

28<sup>th</sup> March Dan-yr-Ogof

Nick Geh

More progress, the sand fill remains easy to dig. Much more time spent dragging it back than actual digging the face.

9<sup>th</sup> April Smallcleugh

Cheg Chester, Dave Gough, Nigel Burns, Paul?

Darren had obtained timber for the forepoling. Waiting on CC, the midday session went well. CC arrived from Holyhead, dragging the team out, for the carry in. All very pissed. Shouldered the loads, staggered in. Few have memory of the trip in, or out. Returned to the bar to finish off the session; crazy night.

10<sup>th</sup> April Smallcleugh

Cheg Chester, Dave Gough, Nigel Burns, Paul?

Second trip to move the timber the last section up into Bogg Shaft spillway. All timber to the small chamber, then hauled up the short pitch into the spillway. Retired to the Crown for a superb night of fun. Everything ready.

11<sup>th</sup> April Smallclough

Cheg Chester, Dave Gough, Nigel Burns

Swift trip to the spillway. Commenced forepoling; slow, steady, cautious work. Progress very good, faster than imagined. More celebrations in the Crown, and the Miner's, then back to the Crown.

12<sup>th</sup> April Smallclough

Cheg Chester, Dave Gough, Nigel Burns

Broke through the collapse; as imagined, found a concrete weir just beyond the end of the large diameter pipe. This would pond and slow the discharge, reducing its power to that of overspill, similar to the momentum of a three-foot-high water fall. DG broke through, entering first; exiting, CC was next, then PC. None remained long, to avoid buildup of condensation, knacker photos. NB entered and was abruptly sealed in as the unsupported front forepoles bent enough to allow wet spoil from the ore bin above to flow down, sealing the point of entry. Swift work, (an hour), installed supports under the bent section. Swiftly cleared the collapsed debris, managing to create a much smaller exit. During digging the far side of the collapse was regularly illuminated as NB made his photographic record. Entered the Crown, for a serious celebratory pissup. Project all but concluded.

May undated (1<sup>st</sup>?) Minera Mine North Wales

Pete Forster, Darren Hines, Cheg Chester, Dave Gough, Nigel Burns

Guided by PF through this extensive system, the place is vast; many superb artefacts and features remain intact. Yet another cracking trip. DH loves the White Lightning.

15<sup>th</sup> May CDG AGM New Inn, Clapham

Food, the usual poor fare, the fun superb.

May undated (29<sup>th</sup>?) Beaufort Reservoir, Merthyr Tydfil

Nick Geh, Martyn Farr

Trying out larger dive bottles and kit configuration. Not happy with the spare valves kindly loaned by Rob Parker; will service each prior to the trip.

2<sup>nd</sup> June CDG Northern Section.

Phone call from Barry Sudell, kindly extending an invite, on behalf the Northern Section, to transfer section membership: humbled by this show of support and solidarity.

Seemingly the section appreciate the issues fought on the group's behalf. Now have the dubious honour of having been a member of all four sections. Will leave the orchestrated discord, driven by the inactive and voluble who spread their bile among the weak minded of the Somerset Section. Spoke to Bishop of the invite; MB immediately called BS, who also extended the invite to transfer.

## Dark Shamrock Expedition; Ireland

Realize, as the Gort lowland project develops, in size and scale, it may be described as an extensive aquifer system, rather than a single subterranean conduit. Appearing to be a network of conduits extending beneath and draining, some three hundred kilometres of landscape. The principal water source seems to originate from Sliabh Aughty Mountains. Unfortunately, the low elevation of the karst offers little or no chance of finding dry cave; the principle reason for taking up diving; to pass the sump, the obstacle.

During long distance dive exploration experienced emotions similar to those during the French trip. When finning along huge tunnels, something approaching disappointment. Particularly so, knowing there is little chance of finding dry cave.

Pursuit of this project, supporting Farr and Geh, will require expanding field research to locate other possible entrances among the karst landscape. Personal skills also need development of utilizing differing gas mixtures to overcome issues of extended dive time at depth and distance. Many once seemingly remote, lesser sites, begin to assume greater import when the extent of the aquifer is plotted. At first glance though some sites appear to be shallow pools and flooded depressions, initially offering little chance of cave, each needs investigating as a potential forward dive base site. Locating these remote sites takes time, which will, if not managed, erode an expeditions exploration time. Field work can easily be achieved prior to the expeditions visit. The principal river passage trending east/west; prospecting will concentrate either side of the averaged bearing, 270°/090°.

Emerging is immense personal satisfaction, solving logistical problems, servicing dive equipment and overcoming physiological issues of correct gas deployment, obviating accumulated decompression penalties. Have decided to seek professional dive training companies to enhance personal skills and increase knowledge. Discussed the matter with the team, who are delighted with the idea.

Rainfall throughout the week prior to arrival in Gort, conspired to hinder exploration. Increasing the water table height an additional four metres of dive depth, affecting gas consumption calculations of Plan A. An increase of 0.4bar affects all gas consumption calculations and gas mixed for calculated decompression penalty periods. June can be a wet month, have prepared Plan B; calculations which account for this likely event. If water table decreases, changes can be made accordingly. Either way, will take along "J" cylinders, so, will not be short of oxygen, or bottle sizes to deploy.

5<sup>th</sup> June Moran's Cave

ITM 538929 x 707662

Dig Hastilow, Nick Geh, Tony Donovan, Martyn Farr

Morning: a flood influenced cave, with huge, unsupported chamber; the description in 1980s Caves of Clare, is wildly incorrect. Poteen still, remains in place, as does the table etc. MF to the Bastille, some penetration; slow going.

5<sup>th</sup> June Pollhoish

ITM 538124 x 709867

Dig Hastilow, Nic Geh, Tony Donovan, Martyn Farr

Afternoon; this site is a natural pot, used as a local water supply. DH achieved -21m in a large cavity, some refuse scattered about.

7<sup>th</sup> June Silver Mine

ITM 540636 x 706418

Dig Hastilow, Nic Geh, Tony Donovan, Martyn Farr

At the end of the track, en-route to Pollnamona; an early working. Much destroyed by later reworking using heavy machinery. Other than a cavity, which may once have been a passage, there is little to see.

7<sup>th</sup> June Polldalagha

ITM540768 x 706196

Dig Hastilow, Nic Geh, Tony Donovan, Martyn Farr

Morning. DH given another opportunity to dive a virgin site, reached -11m. This place has the appearance of an old quarry, vertical limestone on almost all sides.

7<sup>th</sup> June Pollnamona

ITM 540649 x 706289

Dig Hastilow, Nic Geh, Tony Donovan, Martyn Farr

Afternoon. Uninspiring pool, used by cattle; but you never know in this area. A small hole at -6m. The bottom of the site -9m. Low potential, and enthusiasm called a retreat.

8<sup>th</sup> June Pollnamona

Dig Hastilow, Nic Geh, Tony Donovan, Martyn Farr

Morning. Further dive to assess potential; The hole was relocated, found to be a narrowing cleft; no potential, at all.

8<sup>th</sup> June Pollawadden

ITM540602 x 706358

Dig Hastilow, Nic Geh, Tony Donovan, Martyn Farr

Afternoon. Reached after much thrashing through dense undergrowth. Consisting a sheer sided pot; six by three metres, some three metres to the extant water level. A longer builder's ladder would be the best to access this sheer sided place.

8<sup>th</sup> June Pollnapasty

ITM 541198 x 706572

Dig Hastilow, Nic Geh, Tony Donovan, Martyn Farr

Afternoon, second site. Using a handline, got MF to water level. Wide array of domestic refuse causing health and injury concerns. At -10m a strong flow is encountered, passing into a boulder choke; MF believes open passage nearby. Digging through refuse required.

10<sup>th</sup> June Caines Well

ITM 537939 x 709836

Dig Hastilow, Nic Geh, Tony Donovan, Martyn Farr

Deployed the three-metre aluminium ladder, to reach water level. The three-metre-deep pool narrows to a cleft; no potential.

11<sup>th</sup> June Coole Cave

ITM 544905 x705622

Dig Hastilow, Nic Geh, Tony Donovan, Martyn Farr

Sump III pushed to thirty metres at -9m; no clear way one from the constricted area, it appears to close down. In Coole II low oxygen, elevated CO<sup>2</sup> experienced; some eight metres above the floor a high-level tube is visible. Potential bypass?

3<sup>rd</sup> July Minera Mine

Big John Cooper, Dave Gough, Liam Gough, Pete Forster, Darren Hines, Nigel Burns, Cheg Chester

A long trip into the farther parts of this vast complex. The place full of information from extensive remains and collapse of some areas. Fascinating methods of working the veins.

4<sup>th</sup> July Royles Shaft, Minera

Big John Cooper, Dave Gough, Liam Gough, Pete Forster, Darren Hines, Nigel Burns, Cheg Chester

Another superb wander around only a small part of this vast complex.

24<sup>th</sup> July Smallclough, Nenthead

Dave Gough, Big John Cooper, Paul Thompson, Nigel Burns, Cheg Chester

Long trip into the farther reaches of the mine system, an area hitherto not seen, took in Baron's chamber, the engine house superb, as is the timber floored, ore dressing area.

July undated (27<sup>th</sup>?) Back injured, Hotwells.

John Wells offered free use of his American back injury apparatus. After two weeks able to waddle upright without too much pain.

Eight trip to Swildons hole to loosen up the muscles of the lower, so as to improve ability to bend upper body left and right; am doing fairly well. Pain receding, significantly.

22<sup>nd</sup> August Ashknott Mine, Forest of Bowland

Barry and Ceily Sudell, Cheg Chester, Catherine Chester, Big John Cooper.

Accompanied the team to this obscure mine, but unable to venture underground due to recent back injury flaring up. Waited in the sun until they surfaced; seemingly a short but interesting working.

23<sup>rd</sup> September Moved to Lilymead Ave, Knowle, Bristol.

4<sup>th</sup> October Pouldubh

Host of thousands

Irish Cave Rescue Organization training meet, afterwards celebrated 50<sup>th</sup> birthday.

5<sup>th</sup> October Doolin River Cave

Conor McGrath, Ray Murphy, Lee Hollis

Uneventful through trip; water levels a little high.

6<sup>th</sup> October Coolagh River Cave

Lee Hollis

Enjoyable trip to the sump, flood foam high above extant water level, swimming required in the canal; the sump a huge mass of foam, over three metres high.

#### Dragon Caving Diving Expedition to Japan

Dig Hastilow, Nic Geh, Martyn Farr were invited by Shinji Sakuri to visit Japan to help push his project in Akiyoishi-do, to explore other sumps and train cave divers. Food poisoning on the morning of the team's arrival at the Karst Institute developed to where it eventually required hospitalization. All sites visited were pushed with superb results. The training successfully administered, following standard CDG protocols. Though some seem to think careful line laying and securing not that important.



Team with Directors of the Karst Institute.

23 <sup>rd</sup> October	Shiramizu-no-ike-no-ana Cave
24 <sup>th</sup> October	Shiramizu-no-ike-no-ana Cave
25 <sup>th</sup> October	Hospitalized: PC treated for severe food poisoning.
26 <sup>th</sup> October	Oban-no-ike Cave
27 <sup>th</sup> October	Akiyoishi-do Cave, (Rimstone pool sump)
28 <sup>th</sup> October	Akiyoishi-do Cave
29 <sup>th</sup> October	Akiyoishi-do Cave
30 <sup>th</sup> October	Ryugen-do
31 <sup>st</sup> October	Kuroiwa-no-yusen-no-ana Cave
2 <sup>nd</sup> November	Iwatodo Cave, Kyushu
3 <sup>rd</sup> November	Iwatodo Cave, Kyushu
4 <sup>th</sup> November	Iwatodo Cave, Kyushu
6 <sup>th</sup> November	Inazumi Cave
7 <sup>th</sup> November	Inazumi Cave



Photo Farr

Hastilow, Geh and Cronin, Iwatodo Cave, Kyushu

13<sup>th</sup> November Smallclough – Rampgill: Nott's Climbers annual event  
Barry Sudell, Ceily Sudell, Big John Cooper, Dave Gough, Biffo Gough, Darren Hines, Nigel Burns, Cheg Chester, Doug Scott plus another seven climbers.  
Nott's Climbers Club meet, organized by Big John Cooper. Managed to arrange Terry Bolger to video the trip into the Bogg Shaft spillway passage dig. TB and others rightly impressed at the feat and climbing skills of DG, ascending the collapsing shale sides of the huge shaft. TB recorded many of the features, but didn't take the camera through the dig to where the predicted weir was found.

24<sup>th</sup> December Smallclough, Nenthead  
Cheg Chester, Dave Gough, Nigel Burns, Barry Sudell, Ceily Sudell,  
Warm up trip; in Cappleclough, up into Smallclough, down Proud's Sump and out Rampgill. Cracking. Hilarious pool tournament, helped along with the drink.

25<sup>th</sup> December Smallclough valley  
Cheg Chester, Dave Gough, Nigel Burns, Barry Sudell, Ceily Sudell,  
Prepared the Christmas dinner. Had a swift few with Keith and Hazel. Left for a nice, bitter cold wander up valley, taking in the numerous surface features. Back just after dark for fun and frolics.

26<sup>th</sup> December Clargill Level, Garrigill  
Cheg Chester, Dave Gough, Nigel Burns, Barry Sudell, Ceily Sudell,  
The area has a number of surviving surface features; buildings and a bridge. An excellent example of local mining; superb cobble floor just inside. Dug at a collapse to lower water the other side; the echo impressive. Walked to the George and Dragon for the lunch time



session, stayed a long time, walked back over the 2000ft ridge in sub-zero conditions. Used Darren as a sledge to coast downhill to Overwater.

27<sup>th</sup> December Smallclough

Cheg Chester, Dave Gough, Nigel Burns, Barry Sudell, Ceily Sudell, John Addison  
JA appeared, so straight into the Miner's for a session; headed to Smallclough; Wheel Flats, New Fan Flats etc. Completing the trip, close to the entrance, encountered a well pissed BS and NB bouncing along the walls and inwards. Into the Crown for food and drink, and pool. Departing, JA remarked, "I like it here"..... BS and NB appeared, wet and thirsty.

29<sup>th</sup> December Middleclough

Cheg Chester, Dave Gough, Nigel Burns, Barry Sudell, Ceily Sudell,  
The plan was to visit Middleclough, en-route looked at a walled passage, heading along Smallclough Horse Level, CC indicated the sealed passage. Dismantled the stonework revealing a winze down which fell a lot of water. Difficult to see up, falling water affecting vision; CC suggests it may connect to Longcleugh. Middleclough reached, explored part of the area, a significant working. An incline found by DG may descend to Cappleclough. Steady trip out to more superb food, drink and pool.