

1999

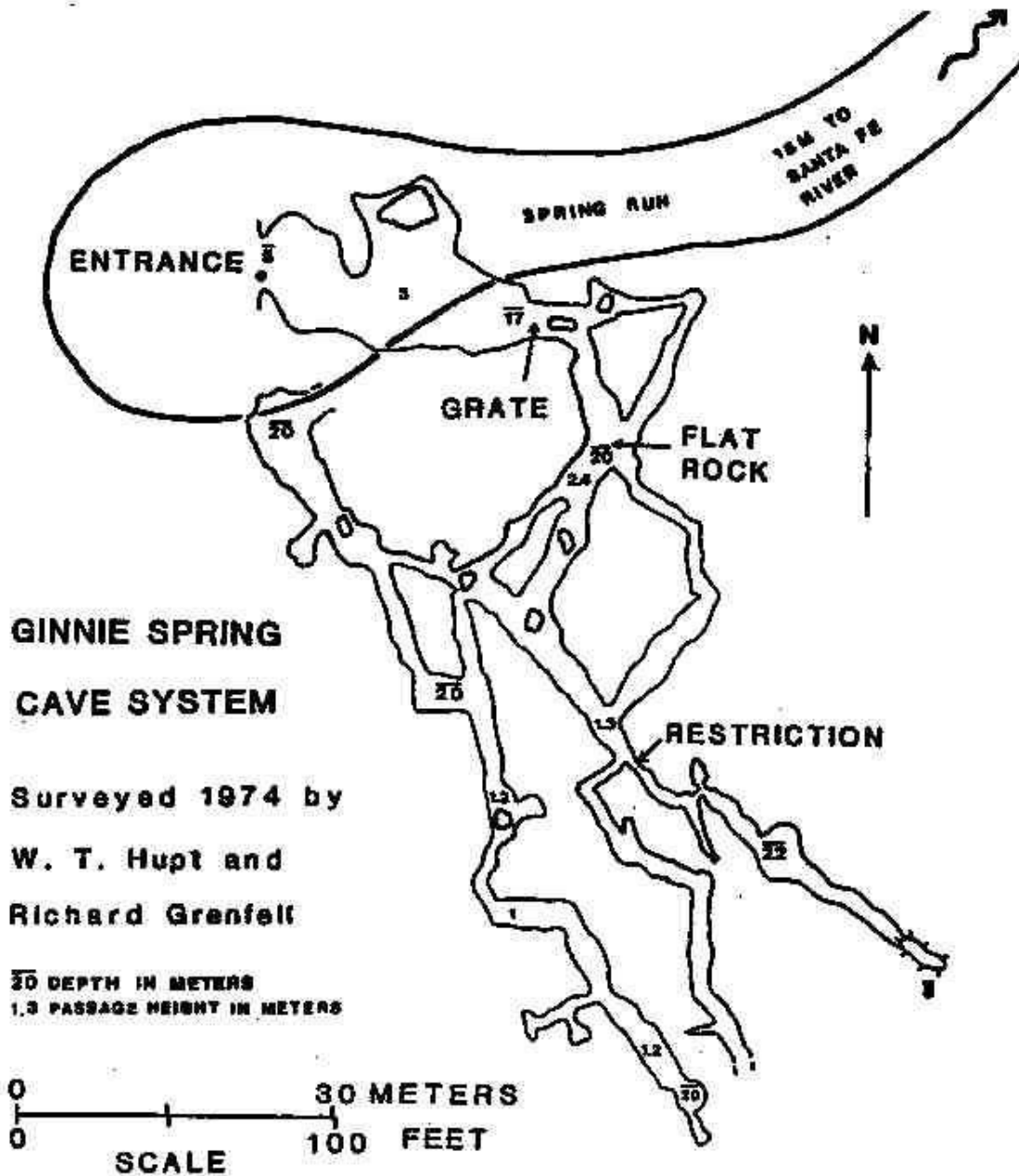
1999

January, (16th?) Pete Fowler's Funeral, South Wales
Many in attendance.

22nd January Ginnie Springs, Florida, USA

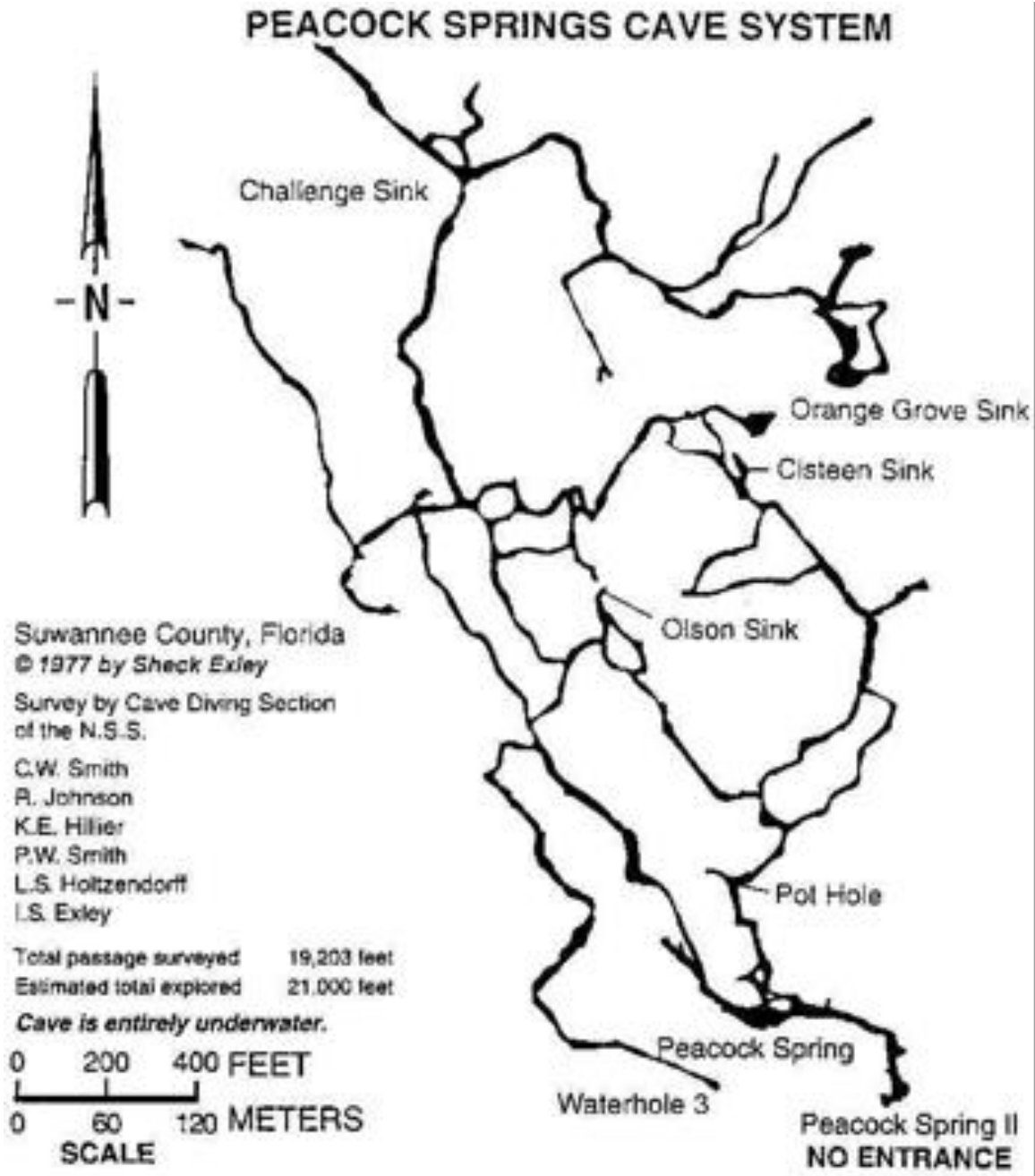
Jim Fishback, Martyn Farr

Lamar Hires of Dive Rite loaned each a Transpac harnesses with selection of bladders, for trial before purchase. In the huge entrance chamber of Ginnie Springs, played with the unit in both side and back mounted configurations. Swift to change between each system. Spent an hour at -16m.



23rd January Peacock Springs
 John Jones, Jim Fishback, Martyn Farr

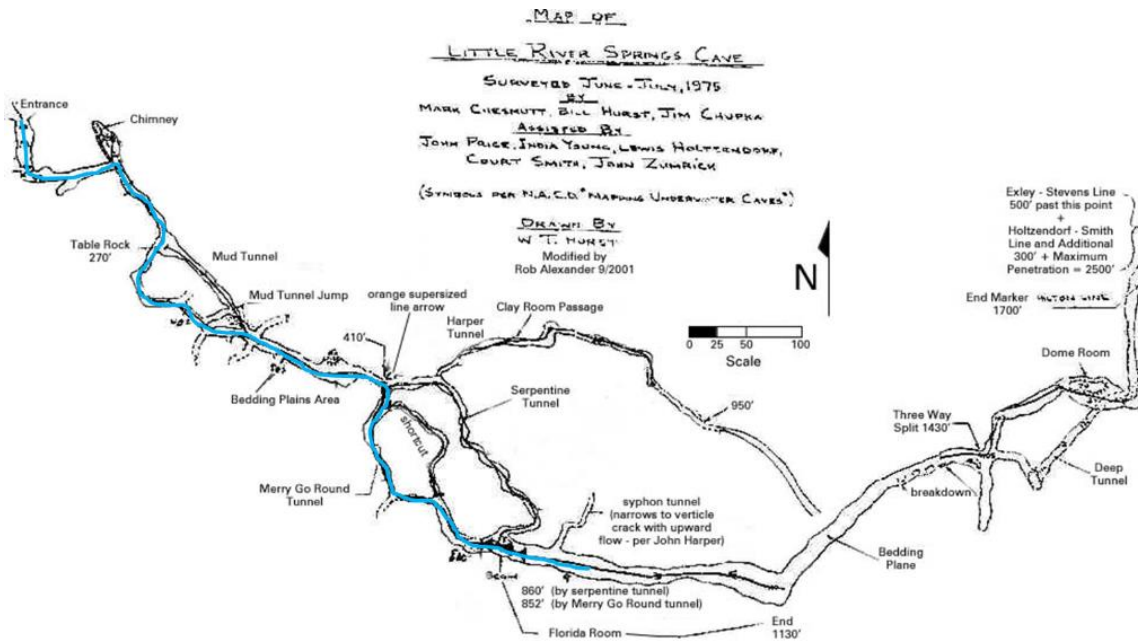
A long dive, making further adjustments to the equipment layout, the large battery pack is no longer a cumbersome issue, length of its securings made shorter. Delayed by a large brown snake, enjoying a morning swim around the entry steps, PC entered the water, to shoo it into the reeds. Route in along Peanut Passage, total circuit 1400 metres: deco of fifty-two minutes required. JF strongly suggested using Dive Rite junior wings; found buoyancy disastrously insufficient at -40m, when wearing the steel 110s.



24th January Little River Cave

John Jones, Jim Fishback, Martyn Farr

Descended the narrow entrance shaft to around -25 m. Travelled to the main junction at -30 m; 48 minutes, + deco. Once again, recommended use the junior wings. Foolishly believed them; experienced massive buoyancy issues at -30m. Centre of gravity was also off, shoulder straps needed unequal adjustment to correct, even then a disaster. Exiting, blown up the shaft by the powerful current; managed to veer off into an alcove at -12m? Joined by two others; all squeezing into the tiny space to decompress. Ridiculous. Can't afford listen to further advice on buoyancy.



25th January Ginie Springs

Martyn Farr

Morning: photo trip around the huge chamber to -16 m. 76 minutes, + deco.

Afternoon: continued photo shoot to -16 m, 54 minutes, + deco.

26th January Devil's Eye Springs

Martyn Farr

Morning: tourist trip and photo shoot.

26th January Ginie Springs

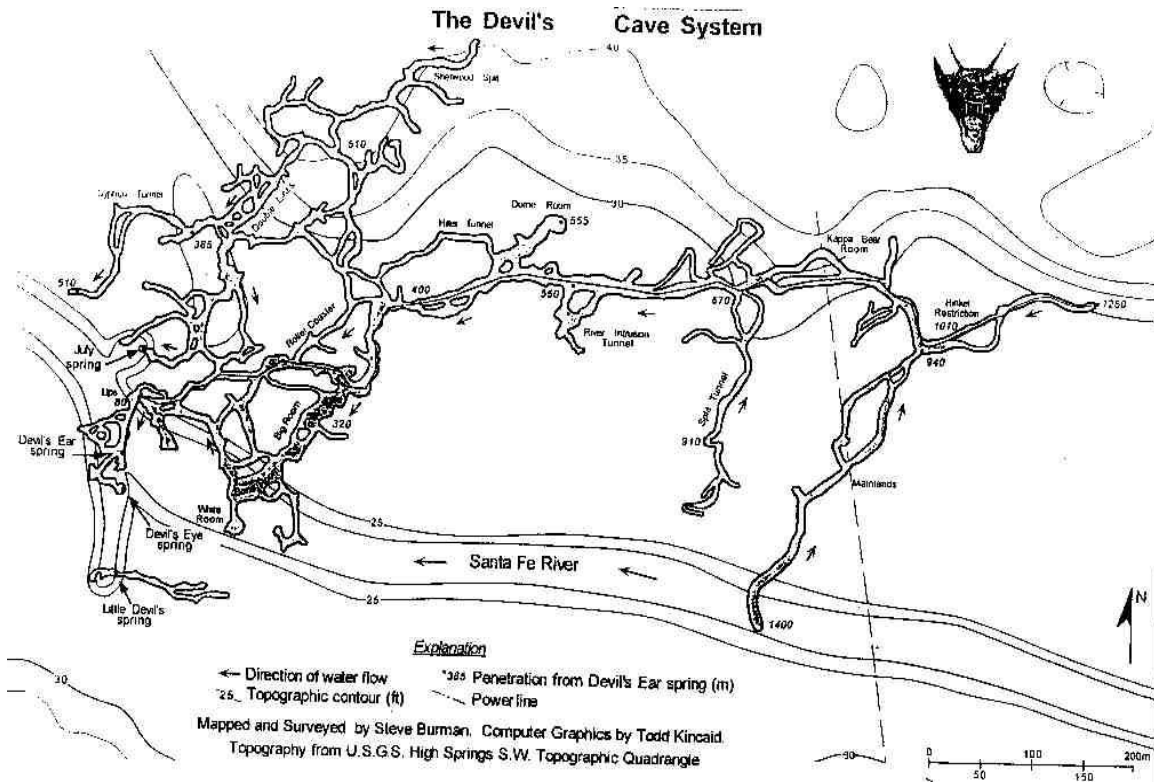
Martyn Farr

Afternoon: photo trip around the huge chamber to -16 m. 60 minutes, + deco.

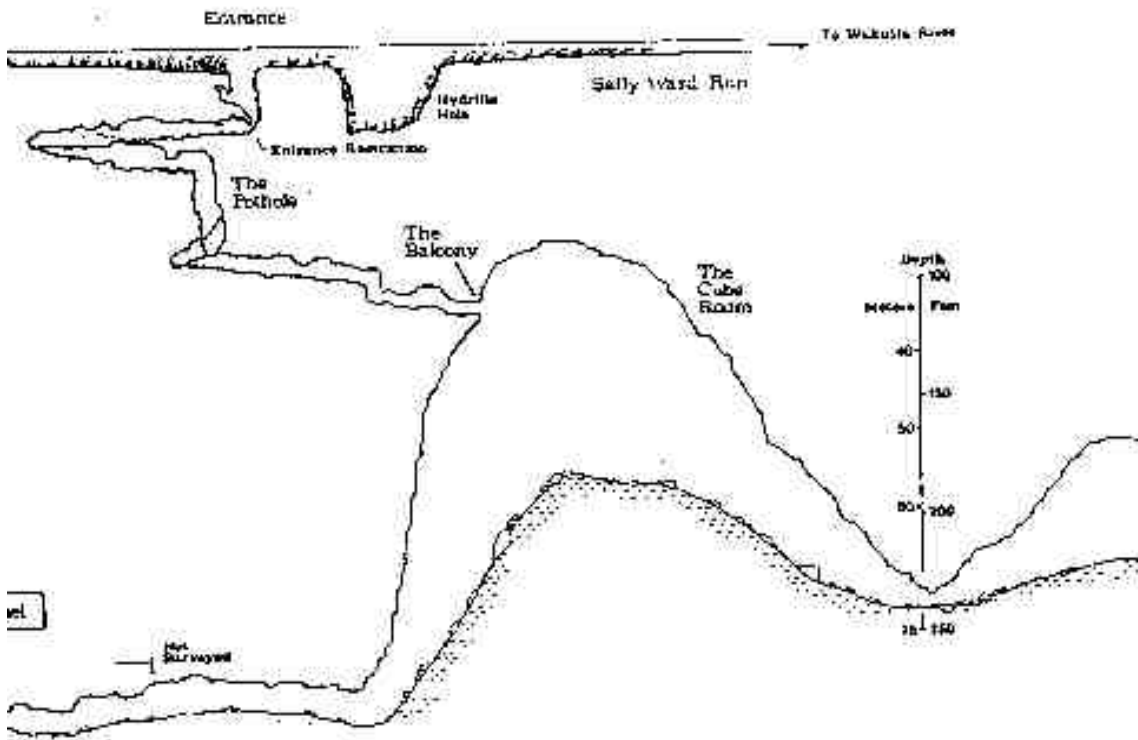
27th January Sally Ward Springs

Patty Mortara, Martyn Farr, Jill Heinerth

Tourist trip into the big chamber, an awe-inspiring circuit about the dome of the Cube Room at around -40 m. Watched others at -50m illuminate the heaped floor, far below.



The Devil's Cave system

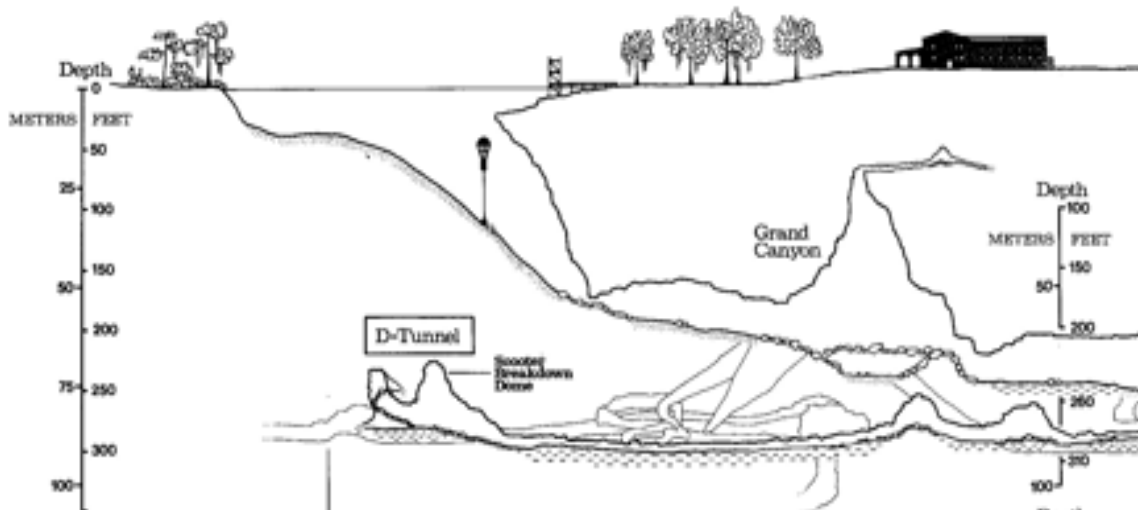


Sally Ward Springs.

29th January Wakulla Springs

Martyn Farr, Rick Stanton, Jason Mallinson

Opportunity to see Mastodon remains while staging equipment for pushing divers; using air, travelled to -58 metres; some narcosis noted, but controllable, returned to -40m to a visibly relieved MF. Had descended using the diving bell hauling line; a cracking trip. Archaeological remains stunning. Lengthy deco; 85 minutes. Twenty minutes out of the water experienced overwhelming fatigue. Sat in the motor, fell asleep before closing the door. Awoke two hours later with chest skin rash, and thousands of bites: experienced a skin bend. The source, had tightened all harness straps at -50m, to stabilize equipment on compressed body. Yet, forgot to release straps on ascent: far too involved admiring the surroundings and monitoring the deco penalty. Later on, assisted Jason Mallinson assemble his rebreather prior to a push; much to the consternation of the American's. Who were further confused observing PC also regularly assembling MF's dive kit prior to support dives. When asked by the Yanks, Rick Stanton mischievously explained, that PC was MF's manager with a superior knowledge of diving equipment.



Wakulla Springs

30th January Wakulla Springs

Martyn Farr, Jill Heinerth

Barbara am Ende wanted decent photos of the surveying missile for the expedition; PC suggested MF sit himself on the large projection PC had noted at -43m. This meant JH would had a specific point to pass, whilst doing circuits, allowing PC flexibility to swim above and below her as she approached, manoeuvring the flash to illuminate as wide a choice of shots as possible: 83 minutes, + deco. No further issues noted regarding bends.

20th February Wookey Hole

Martin Bishop, Andy Walchester

Training for AW; Chamber 3 to 9:2; AW remains, upbeat, methodical and cautious.

21st February Wookey Hole

Martin Bishop, Andy Walchester

Training for AW; Chamber 3 to 9:2; brief stop to assess AW's comfort levels, then to 20. No issues throughout; AW is sound, without arrogance or overconfidence.

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13th March Wookey Hole

Martin Bishop, Andy Walchester

Further training for AW Chamber 3 to 9:2 via Coases Loop: then on to 20. AW making excellent, steady progress.

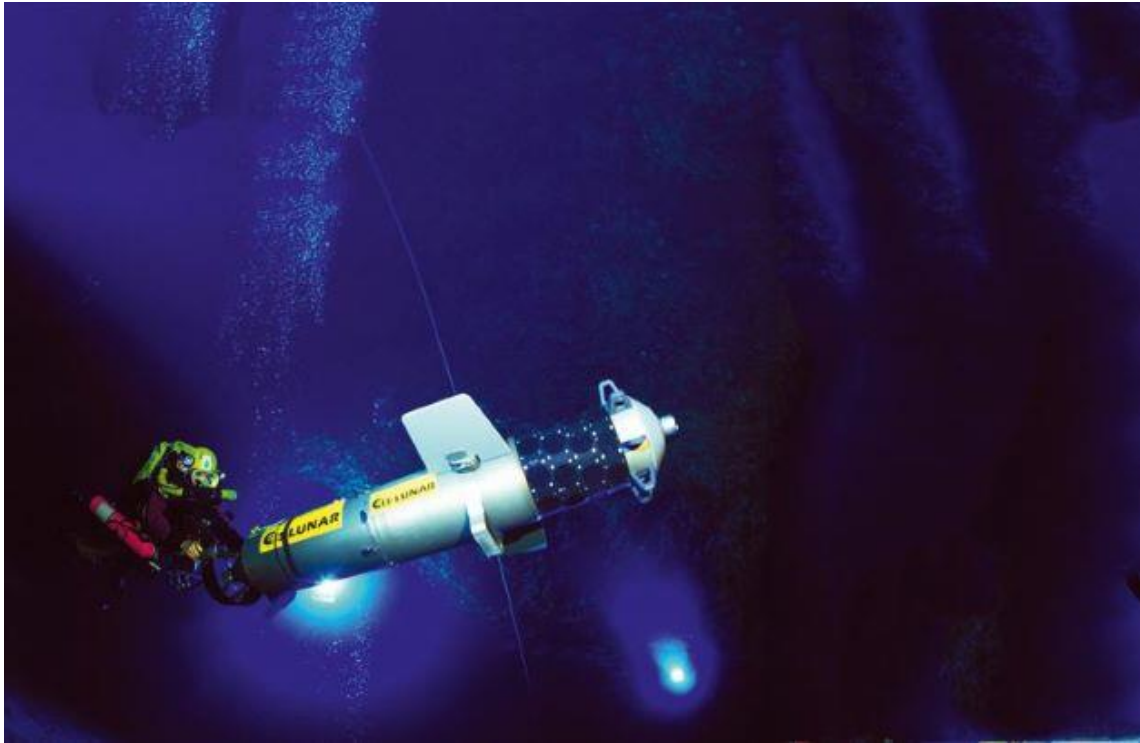


Photo Martyn Farr

Jill Heinerth -43m Wakulla Springs, Florida.

Business manic.

Illegible entries

3rd June – 13th June Ireland

Mark Lumley

A superb ten days of fair weather, drink, dance and music with a significant number of sites recorded and caving trips completed. To get a handle on the number of sites and caves found decided to emulate the UBSS and give them an alpha numeric ID. Chose L for L.A.D.S. (Let's 'ave a Drink Speleo's); UBSS seem unimpressed. Totalled up all sites found so far between ML and PC; arrived at 74.

4th June L75

Mark Lumley

INGR R2050x970

Eighty metres south of what is believed to be G7, (UBSS ref), is a partly unroofed canyon terminating in boulders, taking a small stream.

5th June Prospecting, South of the Kilcorney valley

Mark Lumley

Prospecting in the townlands of Kiltan, Lisnanroum, Cragnarooan, and Ballymurphy; located between Noughaval and Kilcorney. Exposed sections of pavement found within

murderous vegetation; hazel and blackthorn thicket. This area is the worst terrain ever traversed by either. Encountered a cracking souterrain in the townland of Lisnanroum, but maybe Cragnarooan Td, warrants a much closer, detailed survey.

6th June L76, Poulawack, Kilcorney

Mark Lumley

INGR R2300x9890

Among four depressions on high ground near rock in east corner of Kilcorney townland, is one that warrants further investigation.

6th June L77, Caherconnell Td.

Mark Lumley

INGR R2360x9880

On the opposite side of the road from L76, in Caherconnell townland, is a pothole filled with boulders in an area of karst pavement, surrounded by pasture.

8th June L78, Resurgence, Gortaclare Mountain

Mark Lumley

INGR M2940x0325

In the area of the Mass Rock on the northwest side of Gortaclare Mountain. A resurgence at an elevation between 400/500 feet is penetrable for a metre to a boulder choke. In the bluff immediately Southeast of the mass rock two small entrances warrant further attention.

9th June L79, Glen of Clab

Mark Lumley

M2980x0210

In the cliffs on the south side of the Glen of Clab, within a dense, ancient woodland. Collapsed section of canyon passage six metres high by one metre wide, adjacent to a tight two-metre-long rift and a second fissure.

10th June L80, Hole in the Wall, Doolin

Mark Lumley

Ro890x9980

In a collapsed feature trending southwest from Poll-an-Ionian: in the field fifty metres south of Josepha Van de Anker's cottage. An intermittent stream sinks in the depression. Blocked with clay and boulders dug to a depth of two metres.

11th June L81, Spring – Rising

Mark Lumley

Ro850x9980

Josepha van de Anker is adamant a large spring issues from among dense undergrowth at the base of the cliff adjacent their cottage. Nearby a stream sinks among boulders.

12th June L82, Eantymore

Mark Lumley

M2540x0050

Eantymore townland

A line of three depressions, the uppermost containing a site covered with boulders. The central depression is fifteen metres diameter taking a small stream which disappears into a narrow rift. The stream issuing from Tobar Dearg, (ITM 525298 x 700528),

amalgamates with water from adjacent limestone beds, fifty metres south, to fall over the twenty-metre cliff at the northeast end of the valley. After flowing for thirty metres the stream sinks among boulders.

13th June L83, Eanttybeg south

Mark Lumley

Eanttybeg north

Two hundred metres west of L82 is Poulawillin Cave; no longer an obvious opening, hidden by a curtain of foliage. Five hundred metres down gorge, three resurgences, the largest of which may be Loughaunaneanty Well, (ITM 524675 x 700068), amalgamate in a closed depression to sink through boulders at the base of a small cliff. The sink was taking an estimated 100,000 litres/hour. There is evidence this site floods regularly: dug until unstable.

13th June L84, Eanttybeg south

Mark Lumley

A second depression surrounded by low cliffs is situated five hundred metres south of L83. A large stream rises at the base of a cliff on the south side to sink two hundred metres west through boulders at the base of a cliff. The substantial stream can be heard through numerous fissures in the cliff. There is evidence this area floods regularly.

13th June L85, Eanttybeg south

Mark Lumley

Four hundred metres south of L84 a circular boggy area some eight metres wide shows evidence of two sinks through boulders. A low cliff on the east side, hidden within hazel contains a narrow rift leading to a wide bedding, two and a half metres long.

Illegible entries

11th August Bristol

Delighted to witness the spectacle of a partial, solar eclipse; made all the more special in the company of Father. Most noticeable, the sudden drop in temperature.

17th August Keld Head

Martin Bishop

Thanks to MB for arranging permission to camp nearby, and enter KH. Visibility quite good. Delayed with an HP leak on a six inch HP hose; replaced same. Meanwhile MB led off; followed him after five minutes. Agreed meet at Dead Man's Handshake. MB wanted this repeat trip as part of his bucket list?? Pleasant enough dive though somewhat boring in features; vis about two metres. MB managed to drop a ten litre bottle on PC's left hand loading the van; painful, don't think anything's broken. Cracking pints in the Hill Inn.

18th August Sunset Hole

Martin Bishop, Ian Pickering +2

IP kindly arranged the trip; left rigged since the weekend; a swift trip. Managed climb the first pitch, but hand sore. Descending the second pitch, hand very painful; returned to surface. Settled down in the Hill Inn, awaited the others: sleepless, restless night.

19th August Joint Hole
Martin Bishop

Hand painful, swollen. MB's plan, do some "distance", supported him, but only managed Sopwith Chamber before deciding pain threshold was reached. MB continued; arranged to meet back at surface. Slow trip, painful, took off neoprene glove to reduce the heat; MB returned after an hour. Hand swollen, badly, painful changing gear.

Illegible entries.

26th September Stone mine; NAMHO, Forest of Dean
Cheg Chester, Nigel Burns + four others

Guided trip through this superb stone mine its entrance all but on the roadside.

27th September Morse's Level; NAMHO, Forest of Dean
Cheg Chester, Nigel Burns + six others

Organized, guided trip in via the main entrance incline, out via the escape shaft

30th September S4
Solo

Three hours in poor weather; the previous digs, all levelled with storm blown boulders and cobbles. Collected a pile of driftwood for the stove.

1st October S4
Solo

Slow work clearing the previous, promising site.

2nd October S4
Solo

Finally reached the large boulder, on the south side of the "shaft" area: delighted.

3rd October Poulmagollum; E2 inlet
Solo

Steady trip to the junction of west and east passages. Slow task crawling up the cobble bedding; little or no stream present. Reached a point where progress made by moving the cobble fill to either side. Made some thirty metres before shagged out. Distance to E2 passage can't be too far.

4th October Doughbranneen, (Black Head) – Polldonough, (Coolagh River Cave)
Solo

Birthday. Up early; on the top of Doughbranneen by 10am. Bitter cold wind off the east. To McGann's for the breakfast. Called to Willie Scales to ask access; delayed for a chat with tea and cake: a nice man. In main entrance, steady trip to the sump; passing the climb to Polldonough South, noted an abandoned rope. Water levels allowed tip toeing along the side of the canal. Sat at the sump, a while to listen to the place; quite superb. Scampered up the tatty rope, exited into a burst of sunlight; nice. More tea at Willie's place. Cracking evening in O'Conner's, surprize birthday party long into the night.

Illegible entries

14th October Swildons Hole XII

Martin Bishop

MB's bucket list increasing; after taking Parker's ashes to XII, he wants to visit and pay his respects. Took a four litre each; very little lead at sump II; odd. Steady trip to XII, the vis in IX, stunning, if first through. Stopped at MB's place, lotsa drinks in the White Post.

21st October Wookey Hole

Martin Bishop

With business busy and crowding more of the weekends, intend arrange more trips midweek. To Twenty-Two in good visibility, an uneventful dive, pleasant and quiet.

19th November

Lost Pete B Smith

17th December Tom O'Dwyer's Dig

Solo

After heavy rain this sink was observed as a rising, causing a mushroom to form on the surface, estimated a metre deep. So too on the north side of the road over a distance of twenty metres water issued through the slightly submerged surface.

December

Lost Bryan Ellis

27th December Hole in the Shannon, Athlone

Discussing an FCA, (Irish Defence Force), amphibious operation, fording the Shannon, north of Athlone. Made aware of a favourite fishing spot, regularly used by local anglers. Prior to deployment the military were advised to avoid this area as adjacent to the deep water was deep silt. Interviewing "Billy" aged 60-ish, a local boatman and hirer of vessels, he explained that another 1/2 mile north was an even deeper area where the best fishing was to be had. The Admiralty Chart, shows what amounts to a pear-shaped depression, the upstream deep end, -34 metres, presents an almost a vertical face from -6m. The depth decreasing downstream from -34m to -6m, over four hundred metres. Whilst the Shannon conveys a large amount of silt each winter; the only reason this hollow exists is the presence of a significant resurgence at that depth.

28th December Green Holes

Solo

Cracking weather, sea like a mirror. Access via the exposed reef. Pleasant wander around the system in crystal clear visibility, as ferries stopped running end of October. Handy to find several lines in situ; someone has been busy here. Minor issues exiting up the rift of Hell, the boulders really slippery.

29th December Carnane

Serviced compressor; changed all oils and filters. Ran up to 300bar, safety beginning to lift at 295bar, readjusted to 320bar. Filled the four litre, emptied it and checked interior, all clear no oil film.

30th December Fisherstreet Pot

Barry Sudell

Abseiled in for a wander upstream, reached the "connection" about turned; headed to O'Connor's. Few about, cracking evening.

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31st December Pouldubh

Barry Sudell

Last of the year. High water conditions; large cascade pouring into Pouldubh South. Pleasant trip to the old terminal choke. Exiting Pouldubh middle entrance. In to the Roadside for a couple. In O'Connor's invited to the Millennium party at Susan Daly's place. Gus and Doll staying the pace; a great session, superb music and dance; left just before dawn. BS is a gentleman.