

2014



Pat Cronin

Following the coastal devastation TB and PC visited the dig; surprisingly no damage to the rail system, just debris strewn along the length of the passage from the terminus to the face.

2nd January Fraggie Rock

Tony Boycott, Cheg Chester

HW 17:42. The weather pattern was preparing to deliver yet another storm from the southwest; with the accompanying danger of further debris deposit into the cave. The aim today was to continue to remove debris from behind the sandbag dam and attempt to make progress into the face. As it was forty four skids of debris were removed from the dam. With increasing wind speed and a decreasing temperature the team ascended the hill to the truck for a quick change and a swift run to the Roadside. (40)

5th January Fraggie Rock

Tony Boycott, Cheg Chester

HW 07:36: an increasingly windy day with the prediction of storms once again tonight. The aim was to visit and assess any damage to the dig. The sea was running with a two metre swell, occasionally breaking over the bench. Inside there were several rocks blown in from the spoil used to block of the bedding at the skid storage; the seat at the terminus was blown along the passage, with a further boulder blown in from the surface! PC took photos and continued up to the face, the truck was blown off the rails and the hauling ropes, and containers, were found way beyond Boars Head. Cheg's seat was located ahead, in the position where the team believe the way on to be beyond the mud bank. The blue rope skid was blown along the right hand side passage. A lot of debris is along the floor. The pair removed the boulders ahead of the promised storm and secured the truck to the rail. Then

the pair walked south along the coast to witness substantial movement of large and small boulders, and damage to the bedding surface. They then scampered off through the rain to the Roadside for a nice cold beer.

8th January Fraggie Rock and area

Tony Boycott, Cheg Chester

HW 22:52: the weather cold with a breeze. The team decided to check the area to see the state after the storm of the previous Sunday night. A large boulder had been forced in to the dig and a great deal of other debris is strewn throughout. Exiting the dig the team saw that the huge arch of Lackglass sea cave had collapsed: see page three. The team then surveyed the upper areas of the storm beach which showed much devastation.

12th January Fraggie Rock

Tony Boycott, Cheg Chester

HW 14:47: The team was to divide PC was to enter Fraggie Rock with TB and CC visiting Cave of Lost Sole and Lackglass sea cave. PC found destroying the boulder quite difficult; it was a hard limestone from the surface, evidenced by urchin activity on its surface. The other pair had note the absence of any remaining kit ion Lost Sole and a banking up of debris, though not too much. They visited the sea cave to find it now quite dark inside since the massive collapse of its arch. Meanwhile PC tipped away. Reducing the boulder by some 20%; PC then ran out of black caps so with the remaining battery life he drilled two more holes for anchors to secure the skids. The others returned and sorted out the mess beyond; TB removed the seaweed while CC checked the rail system and secured the loose sections. The plan is to now follow the right wall and cut a gap through the deposit of the left aiming for capturing the stream to assist with the washing out of the sand debris.



Lackglass Sea Cave: 2013.

Photo Nigel Burns



Lackglass Sea Cave: 8th January 2014.

Photo Cheg Chester

15th January Fraggie Rock

Jim Warny, Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott

HW 16:57: The aim was to remove the debris up the passage from the terminus to the Boars Head. CC digging, TB loading, PC dragging and JW dragging from terminus to the hauling point. The team made swift progress finishing the night half way between Bison Bend and the Boars Head. Forty five skids were removed with some more seaweed; then to the Roadside for drink: a late night. (85)

19th January Fraggie Rock

Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott

LW 13:00. The aim today was to remove the boulder remaining after the previous attempt to cap it, and to check the rail system. On arrival the team found a large stream issuing from the entrance as well as the springs. The opportunity was taken to shift the loose sand within the considerable flow using the broom; while TB dug to lower the face level to improve the water flow over it. CC used the gads to complete the reduction of the boulder. PC swept an estimated volume of some 1/2 tonne of sand to the surface (35 skids worth), plus the boulder fragments. TB arrived wet and cold after lying in the water at the face. PC suggested to aid moral the team dig alternately the face and the deposit, which will only take a few sessions, to remove all reinstate the face and capture the stream. The increased water flow will increase the removal of smaller deposits from the passage. All the team were thoroughly shagged out, so a slow plod to the truck; then to the Roadside for a couple of pints. (130)

22nd January Fraggle Rock

Jim Warny, Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott, "Tomic" a Polish diver

HW 21:08: The aim was to press on with the face and also move some more sand out; in the end PC knackered himself trying to drag the skids through the deep sand, so all the team moved back to remove the sand from the entrance to the first bend where some sand bags had been placed to stop more sand becoming deposited. A total of twenty skids of sand were removed. The area was cleaned; the team packed up and headed for the Roadside. (150)

24th January Fraggle Rock

Tony Boycott

The plan was to complete the survey of the enclosure at Glasha Beg; after the flooding the pair walked to Fraggle Rock for a look around, a lot of water had resurged and a good sized stream was still issuing, the top sand bags had been washed over, these were replaced. PC's back was sore so they went no further than the terminus. PC had a look at the massive collapse at Lackglass Cave then a slow walk back. Too late to do the survey with bad weather closing in.

29th January Fraggle Rock

Jim Warny, Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott

HW 15:55; going to springs. A cold night with a restless sea, the plan was to dig the face area and remove the pile of clay on which stood the stal boss, CC and TB up front with JW and PC hauling. A steady speed brought out thirty six. Not bad for a difficult start. (186)

2nd February Fraggle Rock

Cheg Chester

LW 12:36; neaps. Once again storms assailed the coast, and again the waves penetrated to the face, blowing the truck off the rails, again. Meanwhile following significant rainfall, the stream has caused more erosion to the face area; this means additional deposit in the passage, but it reduces the hard digging. The stream was running very well. Sand is now up to support height between the face and the Boars Head, closer the terminus its depth reduces. A lot of rain has fallen; even so very little water is emerging from the surface springs; though a lot is resurging from the entrance of Fraggle Rock. While PC collected up seaweed, starfish took a few photos; CC had a prod about to assess the deposit depth above the step found on Wednesday. While CC had a go at creating channels among the sand bars, PC filled the ten sand bags he brought down and set them in place at the terminal, the previous six being blown up the passage some five metres. With the others to add weight PC set the sand bags as a wedge perhaps further sea ingress will pass over this slope. Storms are predicted for the next week so further sand and debris deposits are expected; the bedding at the terminus appears to be empty, now.

Later in the Roadside a plan emerged that digging the face will continue with the addition of a short section of temporary rail up to the step, with a pulley system to reduce effort for the digger; leaving the sand deposits in place along the passage, for the midterm.

16th February Fraggle Rock

Cheg Chester

LW 12:03, springs. A bright day with very little wind about: the sea much calmer. At bloody last the weather is settling; the wind and rain has slowly become a drain on a person's resolve, many locals are fed up to the back teeth with these awful persistent cold wet windy days. The aim of this trip was to see what devastation had occurred after the recent hurricane storm of last Wednesday. No sand was found in the entrance and very little debris at the terminus; the sand bag dam had been pounded but remained fairly intact, beyond the sand was now an average of 8 inches (200mm) deep all the way to the loading ramp which was still buried. Now the pleasant shock; the area beyond the face was opened even further to the point where it was "easy" ish to get to within a metre of where the roof seemed to rise beyond

the low point. Digging commenced; the plan to go for a breakthrough today: the spring was running well at Quasimodo's, still suggesting that there must be a reservoir beyond the stal blockage with the eruption of water when it was previously opened up. For about two hours the pair dug pushing the spoil to either side of the passage, gradually smashing the stal floor, creeping forward. At last CC was able to squeeze up through into the roof area, over the stal floor and move forward for two metres, a wide deep pool of water filled the passage. The water is about 0.3m deep. Beyond what appears to be cobble debris and a larger boulder obscures the ability to see further. The squeeze needs enlarging with a hammer to improve the whole approach, and even to remove the stall floor and allow the pool beyond to drain away. Two shagged out cavers then made their way out to the Roadside for a Black and Gold. CC away for a week.

19th February Fraggle Rock, New Find

PC; joined later by Jim Warny and Matt Randall

HW; 19:27; going to neaps. The plan was that PC would continue to burrow through the stal blockage to offer access in for him and also to drop the water level of the pool beyond; allowing JW and MR to push on. So PC went in earlier at 16:30 and commenced digging with the hoe and a lump hammer; only to realise that he'd forgotten his camera. Progress was steady but slow; around 18:15 the others arrived. At this point PC dragged away the accumulated spoil to allow the others to pass, suggesting that as MR had never experienced the thrill of being the first into new cave he should go first. As MR disappeared, JW squeezed through turning around to assist PC to excavate the trench to drain the pool. After a few minutes PC suggested JW accompany MR. The squeeze, now a little larger, allowed the lump hammer to be fully employed and therefore digging speed increased; the area beneath the stal is of a fine, to coarse gravel, with assorted sizes of cobble from egg to 200mm in diameter, mostly rounded, though with some angular ones, among which several examples of erratics were found: TB will be chuffed. MR returned to PC at the squeeze, helping to remove the remaining stal and enlarging the trench to cause the pool to drain for much of its depth; the suggestion was now made that further excavation of the trench was left to the power of the stream, which following the blocking of the pool's outlets, approaching the squeeze, "The Burrow", could now significantly increase the streams flow rate causing swifter erosion of the blockage. The lads now exited and PC went in for a look.

The nature of the passage suddenly changes just beyond the loading ramp toward the "Spring"; this floor level appears remain constant, though unclear beneath the area of "The Burrow". The passage beyond "The Burrow" meanders very slightly and after some twelve metres comes to a low bedding, partially blocked by a lump of bedrock; it is from here the stream issues. Ahead a further three metres the passage turns left resuming the familiar shape of "Snake Hips"; a flat floor with a semi-circular passage above: cave-able with the shallow amount of floor debris removed. A distance of some six – eight metres could be seen along this slightly meandering passage. Returning to the bedding; this also seems to leave the passage at right angles: its nature is a "rougher around the edges" passage suggestive of fast water carrying debris. There is no debris on the floor, BUT, the height is not great. The removal of the top of the lump will allow entry for closer scrutiny. A distance of some nine metres could be seen: there is a minor hollow in the roof, the floor is uncertain but does not appear to be dead flat! Wriggle-able? This bedding is familiar to Rhyd Sych, South Wales; beyond that protracted squeeze-able bedding the cave significantly enlarges, so hope springs eternal! The tram way may now have served its purpose, depending upon what is decided for the further most passage. The amount of debris from the furthest passage will be vastly less than hitherto experienced by the team. PC returned to the team noting the volume issuing from the "Spring" had reduced, and explaining the possibilities of the find, and estimating length; cave-able passage at seventeen metres, with a possible extra fifteen following pushing them. The team then exited into a dark rainy night; JW carried up the tram, (effortlessly): then a swift change and off to the Roadside for drinks and tales of yore.

23rd February Fraggle Rock
Solo.

HW 10:48: neaps: with CC still away in the UK, PC decided to go and tidy up the place, moving the sand bags at the terminus and perhaps digging out the loading ramp. As a plan "B" maybe take some photographs of the new extensions. The previous night had made heavy showers. On arrival at the coast there was a high sea running; wind from the south, with the three metre waves from the southwest, so occasional waves covered the bench. A good sized stream was issuing from the entrance, but nothing from the springs. Once inside PC made his way in taking photos. At the terminus nothing had moved since last inspected; the sand bags were still awry. At the loading ramp the stream was the width of the passage, the spring was "erupting" similar to when dug open, suggesting a good depth of water in the pool beyond the Burrow. The approach to the Burrow was very wet two inches of stream cascaded down the passage from the Burrow opening. Once in the Burrow PC found the water swift built up in front of him, making for a swift trip through into the upper passage. So far the photos were steamy! Once through PC went to the end to have a real look see at the prospects. Each passage issued a stream the further passage being much smaller, than the one from the bedding. Both passages seem much smaller, now, bugger, but may be passable with work; the bedding will be a wriggle though. The further passage is similar to "Snake Hips" with the flat floor and arched passage above it. It has some spoil on the floor but not too much to remove. Turned about better photos were taken en-route out. With a stream present passing through the Burrow is quite an experience. Thoroughly soaked, a trip to the Roadside was in order.

16th March Fraggle Rock
Cheg Chester

LW 11:05: springs: The aim was for CC to have a look see and for PC to confirm his previous observations. With CC recovering from flu and PC nursing a strained muscle a gentle trip was planned. Passing quickly up the passage, through the "Burrow", the pair arrived to find a minor stream issuing from the bedding. A significant amount of debris had been washed through since PCs' previous visit, exposing the floor of the bedding much more clearly; the bedding turned out to be a large piece of flag, which should be movable. The area beyond is not a solid floor and ceiling, and there is a "hollow" in the roof. The floor is mixtures of loose debris, large and small, which can be throw left and right as the team progress along the bedding. The shadow in the distance could clearly be seen today and is as previously estimated at some nine metres, and almost dead straight. TB arrives tomorrow. The team then out to a lively Roadside for a Black and Gold.

19th March Fraggle Rock
Cheg Chester

LW 12:35: A very blustery day. The aim was to have a go at removing the piece of stone in the front of the bedding. To this end a big crow bar, a lump hammer and a piece of timber were taken along. PC nursing a strained elbow muscle. The pair arrived at the bedding and quickly got it to move, the problem was moving it out of the way; the area is constricted so most effort was done at arms length. After much heaving and straining the stone was removed into the passage; it has to go, capping is required. A reasonable amount of stream was issuing from the bedding and was ponding where the stone once lay, so while CC squeezed in to assess what appears to be easy gravel and clay digging material, PC deepened the stream way in the main passage back to the pool near the "burrow". What was noticeable debris has migrated from the bedding and area to below the "burrow" making the approach crawl significantly lower. Even so looking at a photo of the bedding from the 25th February PC noted that a piece of the stone is missing altogether, as is a good amount of gravel debris. PC kept quiet regarding the arrangement of stones in the distance, as they appear to have the look about them of having fallen, CC noted them without prompting and considered the suggestion a possibility. Progress today was excellent, the stone removed and two metres of

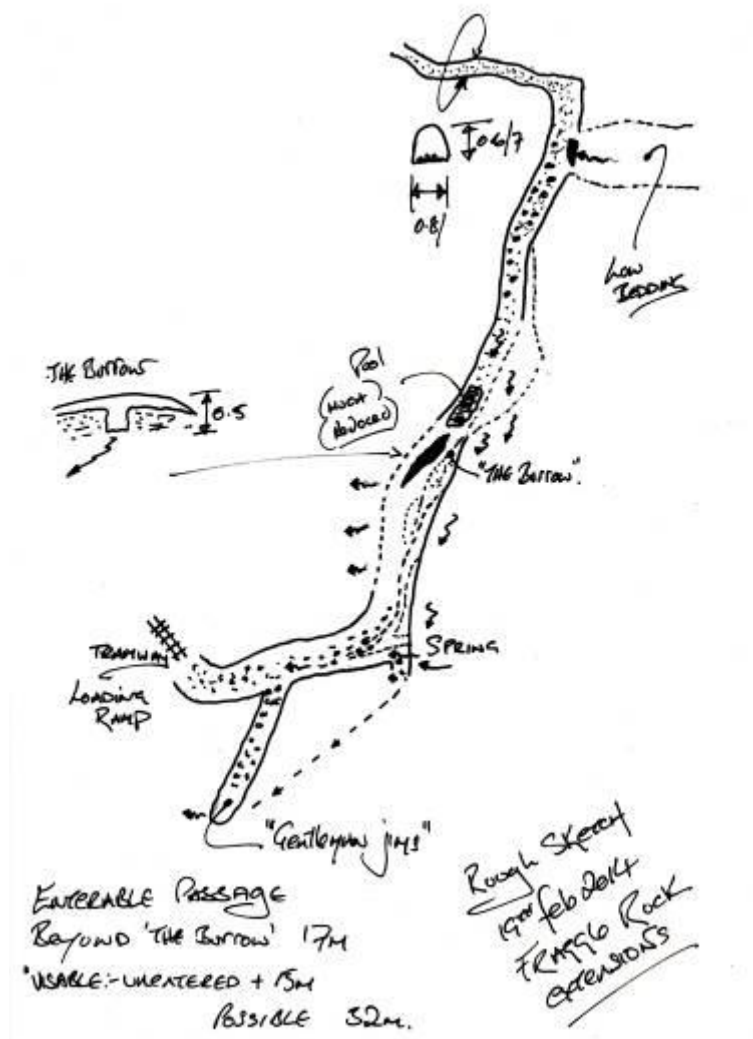
passage entered. The assessment is that the way is dig-able though may be snug in parts. To the roadside for a well earned pint.

24th March Fraggle Rock

Cheg Chester

HW 23:06: neaps; a filthy night, very strong wind, very cold, with a threat of rain.

The aim was to take further advantage of the stream to remove the sand and debris. While CC worked in the area of the terminus PC went up to the loading ramp and excavated a trench in the silt, to accommodate the expected lower flow rates. This was dug back to the Boars Head, from where the entire width of the passage was cleared back toward the entrance. The average depth of debris here was again some four inches (100mm). The flow was significant considering there had been little rain the previous day. The debris was dragged back to, and through, the terminus around the double bends to some three metres or so downstream of the narrows, whereupon the knackered pair had been fully active for over two hours of moving the crap in water backed up to in excess of a foot; both thoroughly soaked they braved the storm lashed bench and headed to the truck: the Roadside was warm and welcoming, even before the drink. TB should be back the end of the week, JW unavailable until possible Sunday; definitely Wednesday.





Pat Cronin

Looking through the “Burrow”, this section of passage is 0.3m high (12 inches).



Pat Cronin

The bedding 25th February; the gap is maybe 200mm, yet something has happened since this photo was taken, the piece of stone to the fore right appears to be missing on 19th March, as is the stone radius in mid picture, with adjacent associated minor stones.

26th March Fraggle Rock
Cheg Chester

LW 19:91: neaps; earlier in the day PC had cleaned the axles of the tram and bearings using wet and dry, lubricating all with marine grease. There was a small amount of stream from the entrance but nothing like the Friday torrent or Monday's good flow. The aim was to return the tram and, without any others present, perhaps move some more sand out, preparing for the imminent arrival of the Good Doctor Boycott. The tram was carried in, installed, and the hauling ropes secured to either end. While CC used the hoe from the terminus out PC dug and filled the remaining twenty two skids at the Boars Head; another ten or so will clear the area, another thirty should easily clear back to the loading ramp. That's been three trips in the week, no wonder the pair are shagged out.

If TB manages to return by Sunday the place may be cleared to the ramp, which will be brilliant, allowing the team to progress along the bedding at to excavate the area of the loading ramp. The wind having dropped from its previous bone chilling force eight to around force three meant a much more comfortable walk back up the hill, though it was still very cold; into the Roadside for a Black and Red.

30th March Fraggle Rock
Tony Boycott, Cheg Chester

LW 11:30; springs. Following the rain (3/4" of rain last night) a good size flow issued from the entrance. The day was both become warm and very bright, but a little cold. With the arrival yesterday of TB the team intended to drag as much of the sand out the main passage as possible from the terminus with the possibility of taking out the twenty two skids filled by PC; left at the Boars Head. PC installed a sand bag at the terminus to check the migration of any debris and returned to the outside to haul. TB went in to the bedding to have a look around while CC and PC began to remove the sand. After a good half hour TB returned and with CC continued to dig out the sand while PC dragged it to surface. After a lot of digging and brushing the main passage almost sparkled. The team then trudged back to the truck and into the Roadside where an obvious increase in summer visitors is appearing. Some seventy skids were removed today, equating this with that removed previously by CC and PC, PC conservatively estimates that a total so far of redeposited sand and debris amounts to some 80 skids. PC suggests a present total at 150 skids, plus those removed; 336.

2nd April Fraggle Rock
Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott

HW 19:49: sea state slight; a clear sky and warm. The aim tonight was to remove the twenty two skids previously filled and stacked at the Boars Head on the 26th March and, all personal injuries allowing, removing a normal shift of thirty skids hopefully clearing the chamber at the Boars Head. There was a surprising amount of flow from the entrance, much more than the team expected after the short dry spell. At the terminus a quantity of sand had accumulated from upstream; this will be used to fill sand bags for the dam planned to create a debris catchment area at the loading ramp, collecting any debris from upstream preventing it from migrating further down the main passage. Here debris can be caught, dug and trammed out with a significantly reduced amount of effort. So with CC filling skids TB tramping and PC dragging back to the hauling point the twenty two skids were swiftly moved. The next twenty seven skids were also swiftly removed though the task did take its toll. Progress tonight meant that the Boars Heads is now clear of the sediments, (blasted in from the storms of January via the beddings which are open to the sea), with two heavy sand bags placed to contain any further migration from upstream. It has been many moral sapping months since this area was clear of sand or other flood debris; the shape of the passage is now clearly appreciable, and all the more beautiful with its stream. The team then tidied up and exited, trudging up to the truck, and driving swiftly to the Roadside for refreshments.

*6th April Fraggle Rock; supplemental from PCN log
CC and TB went in and continued to dig out the remaining debris, filling twenty six skids
and stacking them near the Boars Head.*

*8th April Fraggle Rock; supplemental
Jim Warny, Matt Randall, Tony Boycott Owing to difficulties in meeting all together on a
Wednesday night part of the team went in on the Tuesday to remove the previously filled
skids by TB and CC, then refilled the same and stacked these ready for Wednesday session;
filling another twenty six, these were also stacked ready to remove.*

9th April Fraggle Rock

Tony Boycott, Cheg Chester

HW 14:22; neaps: The aim was to remove the skids previously filled by MR and JW and refill ready for the invasion of the UK boys this coming Saturday. A reasonable flow was issuing. The trio swiftly set up the hauling lines and removed the twenty six skids; they then returned to the Boars Head to clear away the remaining debris on the floor, which was considerable. The plan then altered, it was decided to move the sand bags up to the loading bay dam and installed them. The area, downstream from the dam, was cleaned back to the Boars Head, so the area is well prepared for Sunday. The main passage is now cleared of the sand blown in during January; a long slog. There are several more skids needed to make up the numbers again to thirty, this number means that one shift of thirty from so far in means the most efficient use of the teams efforts. The team then left for the Roadside pleased with the status of the dig. (425).

13th April Fraggle Rock

Pete Glanville, Martin Grass, Martal Baines, Basher Baines, Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott, Nigel Cox

LW 10:49: springs: With a cast of thousands the aim was to clear the catch-pit area planned behind the dam at the loading ramp/bay, to expose and clear the area up to the step in the bedding. TB had told the others that the normal team would go ahead and prepare the hauling systems and clear the twenty skids waiting at the Boars Head; this swiftly completed, the trio then commenced digging at the loading ramp: soon after the others arrived and output increased enormously, various bodies at various places, switching around so each had a breather and a look see around the dig and the tramway. Meanwhile PC continued to haul away outside with the help of Basher; enjoying the suns arrival. The catch-pit was virtually cleared at end of play, with a total of 114 being removed, inclusive of the twenty skids previously filled. The tram was said to be giving trouble so this was carried back for maintenance. The area is now prepared for digging to recommence in the bedding, and perhaps to dig out "Gentleman Jim's" passage too, in-between freshwater inundations. The team then set off in beautiful sunshine for a trip to the Roadside. A fine trip with excellent results; BB had taken some photos which were displayed at TB's that evening, PG too had taken photos and videos. All seemed very pleased at the progress our team had made in the previous year since their last visit. (539).

16th April Fraggle Rock

Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott, Martin Grass, Martal Baines, Basher Baines, Nigel Cox, Pete Glanville

LW12:29: Springs. The aim today was to carry out a radio location of the area of "gentleman Jim's" and to do some digging if time permitted. The BEC and Bradford boys were delayed during the morning so CC, TB and PC went on ahead to carry down the fully serviced truck and radio location gear, (kindly loaned by Brian Prewer, UK). While the team set up the underground coil some skids were also sent up to the loading area, so while TB and PC searched for the signal null, CC could work away filling some skids. Assessing the now cleared area of the loading ramp and the emerging step in the floor now changes the team's whole understanding of the development of the cave. The step is in fact the radius of the

passage, which proves that “Gentleman Jim’s” passage is in fact the original passage and the upstream continuation. The blocking of this route must have caused the stream to punch its way through the bedding further in the cave, beyond the burrow, to find its way to surface. Out on the surface TB managed to locate an area with the quietest null, the problem being that the depth to the cave must only be some five metres or so, very little indeed, the system seemingly is best suited to a great thickness of rock. Eventually the others arrived, some of whom went underground, MB, MG, PG and TB while PC hauled, assisted by NC and MB2 emptying the skids. PG took more photos while CC and MB beavered away filling skids, and lifting them onto the truck, the ramp being absent during this operation; thirty were finally removed, eventually, between photographs and confusion. The team then staggered uphill to the Roadside, all thoroughly shagged out. (569).

20th April Fraggie Rock
Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott

HW 09:21; neaps: The aim to continue to clear the loading area while TB had a go at the bedding. TB removed several large rocks, and being barmy managed to drag a huge limestone block back through the burrow to the loading area; that is some feat! Meanwhile CC and PC filled and hauled twenty one skids back to the terminus a swift drag out completed the task, to the Roadside for rewards. (590): 5590.

21st April Orchid Hole?
Cahermaclanchy
Tony Boycott

The idea was to look at the ringfort – cashel of Cahermaclanchy and to investigate the report by Westropp of a souterrain that descended to water, alas none visible on a site levelled with time. Walking to the valley PC stumbled on a blocked entrance; Orchid Hole? To be revisited.

23rd April Fraggie Rock
Cheg Chester

HW13:03; neaps: The aim was to attack the large boulder dragged out by CC and PC from the beginning of the bedding. TB has gone to the UK so it’s a two man team until around the first week of May. A small stream was issuing from the entrance; last night 0.6 inches of rain. PC took in the drill and CC brought the Gads. While PC went ahead to drill the boulder CC set up the plank on which the rope containers will be secured. After a half hour or so CC joined PC among the stream. After a lot of effort and hard work the rock was fractured into pieces and deposited beyond the bedding to clear the immediate area. CC squeezed into, had a prod among the bedding fill while PC dredged the streamway back to the loading area to clear out the stream route. The sand bags were then removed at the Boars Head, and at the terminus; sufficient rain is expected to clean the place hence the sand bag removal, in the event of increased rain reports a quick visit to reinstate them will take place. The next task, depending on the stream size, is to pursue the bedding or clear part of Jim’s Passage to accept the storage of skids. Then to the Roadside for a couple of well earned pints: very nice

27th April Fraggie Rock
Cheg Chester

LW 10:30, going to springs; the aim was to dig a section of Jim’s passage out to install a dry stone wall so as to reduce the effects of flooding washing out the passage fill, and to dig out the fill in the bedding to the Burrow to facilitate movement of bodies and skids. A good amount of stream present; while PC lay in this removing the debris to the bedrock CC dug away at Jim’s Passage and set in place what stones were available. The effort required digging toward the burrow was significant. Twenty nine skids were filled, but owing to fatigue and injury they were left at the hauling point ready for the next visit. The pair then staggered back to the truck and the Roadside; thoroughly shagged out: but preparations are well under way and another few sessions will have the team well into the far bedding.

30th April Fraggle Rock
Jim Warny, Cheg Chester

HW18:48: springs. The plan was to remove the waiting twenty nine skids and to install the baulk of timber to complete the tramway at the loading bay. While JW dug away towards the burrow, CC and PC installed the timber and measured up for the next piece of rail, (750mm). The debris produced by JW and CC was dragged back and hauled to surface, eight skids, making a total of thirty seven. To the increasingly busy Roadside for a couple of pints and excellent music
627 (5627)

4th May Fraggle Rock
Cheg Chester

LW 09:09; neaps: Overcast, mild, with a running sea of two metre waves, a small stream was issuing from the entrance. The aim was to take down three wooden boards, cut by PC to keep the digger just out of the water, to some degree. To drill several 12mm holes facilitating other jobs such as suspending the ramp by a chain above any flood debris that may accumulate behind the dam. To set up at Jim's Passage and near the terminus two "washing lines", to secure skids and keep equipment above water level. To fix a 12mm survey point in the floor on the edge of the step at the centre of Jim's Passage aligned with the way on toward the burrow. To drill and install a heavy duty ring bolt opposite the entrance of the bedding plane to facilitate any hauling out from it. To reconfigure the breaking pulley system at the terminus to reduce the number of times the tram has been inadvertently derailed. To also clear the remaining debris from the corner near Jim's passage and dry stone wall the remainder to protect against future flood erosion. To complete the installation of the final section of rail that passes through the dam. To install two metal braces to the top of the timbers of the dam. Though heavily laden, the pair made a swift trip down and commenced work. Once the rails were sorted PC went upstream to start at the wet bedding working his way back toward the loading ramp; meanwhile CC worked away clearing the corner area between Jim's passage and the dam, installing the broken large pieces of stone of the two large boulders left at the Boars Head. On PC's return PC went to the Boars Head to send back the remaining pieces of rock broken by CC before moving the tools, rucksacks, sledge and rake back to the terminus. CC then sent back the debris created from the tidying up, which amounted to six skids; these were drawn to surface with the come-hithers. The plan next Wednesday is to enlarge the approach to the burrow and carry on along the bedding. A water worn channel is beginning to appear from beneath the debris in the low passage toward the bedding; curious. The depth gained with the removal of the debris from the burrow is some 150mm (6 inches). TB returns late on the 9th, Friday. Thoroughly knackered they made it to the Roadside for Skippy's anniversary.
633, (5633)

11th May Fraggle Rock
Matt Randall, Tony Boycott, Cheg Chester

LW 90:33; neaps. A blustery day, with very rough sea conditions with heavy rain showers during the previous week. The plan was to either continue enlarging the Burrow, or to work in the bedding. There was a large flow issuing so CC went to work at the Burrow with PC in support after he had secured the last section of rail and timber support in position; with TB at the terminus and MR at the loading ramp. There was some evidence of a flood pulse, likely from the previous night when a heavy rain storm occurred between 02:30 and 07:00. The confines of the burrow focused the stream flow creating quite a depth to it, 2 inches; this inconvenience was reduced by the diggers lying on sections of boards gaining some little height above the water level. TB had light problems so once PC had set up the pulley to drag a skid from CC, he then relieved TB who moved up to assist at the loading ramp. A steady rate of progress soon had CC past the burrow gaining the easier digging space of the higher passage beyond. CC used his "Fork Lift" a tool he created that soon proved its worth, easily levering the heavy clay deposit from the bedrock. The stream flow continued during the digging session, without any visual reduction. The quantity of skids dug from the burrow amounted to twenty three with the two dug out the catch pit made a grand total of twenty

five. As PC was still nursing a bad back following last Sunday, (hence last Wednesday session being missed), the others dragged out the skids using the come-hithers, which shagged them out. MR had to get home directly so the remaining trio headed for the Roadside, where it was optimistically suggested that perhaps only some four good sessions were needed to clear the passage beyond up to the bedding, which would provide the team with much more room to manoeuvre to remove spoil. 658 (5658)

14th May Fraggie Rock
Cheg Chester Tony Boycott

HW 17:49; springs: A nice warm evening; with very dense cloud cover. The previous weeks intermittent rain showers had had little affect on the stream in fact it had fallen some 25mm at the entrance since Sunday. The aim was to continue to dig the passage from the burrow onward and see how soon the suspected wall of a “trench” could be located, if at all. CC dug while TB was at the loading ramp and PC at the terminus. A slow start soon swelled to a total of twenty four skids arriving at the hauling point. PC’s lower back was still suspect so hauling these to surface was left until next Monday evening for removal. As CC advanced a trench indeed became exposed, some 250mm deep and 650mm wide; its base being level with the burrow floor bedding. This meandering trench will allow the use of a skid controlled from the loading ramp area via remote pulleys freeing the digger from any rope work. It also means an important gain in passage height. The plan is therefore to drill a series of bolt holes along the passage to facilitate the deployment of the skid; then the team sped off to the Roadside for drinks and swapping tales of caving prowess. Further comment was to move digging to a Thursday evening to accommodate Jim. 658 (5658)

16th May Poolagoona, Mountshannon
Tony Boycott

Following the previous trip to locate this cave, guided by Gerard Madden, TB found another site “Fox Holes” on the 6” map some 300 metre to the northwest of the original site. Taking a GPS fix from the 6” the team walked straight to it. The site is a sandstone/gritstone outcrop with a wide, low weathered bedding containing evidence of mammals.

18th May Rock breaking and Capping Demonstration
Doolin ICRO store
Tony Boycott

PC had written a guide for the demo and had had Dave Murtagh circulate it as prior reading material. During the time the team of five were split into two groups to see and take part in a plug and feather operation and also a capping procedure. All went well.

18th May Fraggie Rock
Tony Boycott

LW 14:18, springs: The plan was that the pair had the afternoon available to nip down and remove the skids previously left in situ. On arrival clear evidence of a good flood was noted in the dam and along the burrow; while TB went to the bedding PC cleared away debris that had accumulated along the burrow. The stream was such that the debris caused a deep pool to form from the lower burrow area back to the burrow itself; once the mound of debris was cleared and drained TB followed dragging even more debris. 682 5683

19th May Fraggie Rock
Tony Boycott, Cheg Chester

LW 15:11; neaps: A good sized stream issuing. The plan was to carry on digging the trench beyond the burrow. CC went to the face while TB set up at the loading ramp and PC settled at the terminus. As digging commenced the speed the skids arrived at the terminus allowed PC top drag them to surface using a “Gus and Crook” method, this worked well until the rate surprisingly increased leaving PC gasping trying to keep pace: the increase was due to TB taking the opportunity to also dig out flood debris that had accumulated behind the dam.

Once TB had completed this task the rate of skids reduced to a more leisurely rate where their extraction to the surface which could be maintained without the operative collapsing. CC managed to advance the face some two metres, producing around thirty three skids, while TB produced about five from the dam area, the total removed was thirty eight. All thoroughly shagged out the team then waddled into the Roadside, where the place was full of the national An Post cyclists support teams; getting pissed. PC spoke to JW and MR about rescheduling digging sessions from Wednesday nights to Thursdays, and for the next, while as PC is unavailable on a Sunday, moving the session to a Monday. 720 (5720)

22nd May Fraggie Rock

CC, JW, TB and PC

LW18:41; neaps: A slightly higher stream seen issuing than on the 19th May. Some evidence of flood debris present though not too much, which was swiftly cleared. With the size of the stream issuing from the bedding the plan reverted to continuing the dig where CC left off. This has uncovered a narrow-ish trench; much of the debris is associated with that which covers the adjacent bedding, threatening to fall into the trench, so CC has removed sufficient to reduce this occurring. All bar PC moved to the "Loading Bay" to have a look see at any flood evidence. Once the viewing was completed, CC resumed digging, TB settled in at the loading bay and JW and PC set up at the terminus. The significant stream flowing over the "step" at the loading bay caused TB communication problems, unable to hear instructions from either end. What followed was a steady rate of skids arriving at the terminus where between PC and JW they were taken to surface using the "Gus and Crook" system; CC filled some thirty eight skids while about six skids came from the Loading Bay. A loading board is to be installed to allow skids to be slid from the upper part of the "step" from the "Burrow" straight onto the truck reducing the effort to load the tram. The effort expended by the hauliers reduces the work needed after such a digging session by the others. The next few Sunday sessions are to be moved to Mondays as PC is committed to ferrying Pauline about. A total of forty four skids removed; then swiftly to the Roadside for a rest, pints and tales.

764 (5764)

26th May Fraggie Rock

Tony Boycott, Cheg Chester

18:00 HW 16:32, going to springs: A minor amount of flow was issuing from the entrance, though still enough for a thorough soaking inside. The plan was to install the timber slide suggested by TB at the loading ramp and the seat made by PC for the terminus operator. TB offered PC a change of view so PC took up station at the loading ramp, CC to beyond the burrow and TB at the terminus. After a minor delay, while PC hammered away at the calcite and limestone to fit the timber slide, digging resumed its regular pace. CC at first removed the large overhanging water worn flake, once out the way the area ahead of the bend was clear to dig, the resultant six large pieces of stone were dressed and fitted into the protective dry stone wall at "Jim's passage" leaving only the twenty three skids excavated from within the burrow to be sent back; as the pace was steady TB used a come hither to drag them to surface. CC noted that the debris cover of the shelf is increasing in depth particularly on the left bend, suggesting there may be considerably more debris to chaffer, than initially assessed, to make the deposit edge stable. CC also used his body length to estimate the distance from the bedding to the present position of the face, which appears to be only some five to six metres; the distance from the roof height change in the burrow to the face is about the same distance. After cessation of digging PC went forward to view progress, which was stunning, the depth and shape of the trough in the floor is truly superb: between hauling episodes PC studied the passage shape above the step toward the burrow; this section appears an excellent example of how cave passage hereabouts has developed above the calcite bed. Of particular note is that each of the operating positions now demands considerable effort from the digger; this should only be until the bedding is met, when the length of the trough will be cleared to allow water to drain from the forward area of the bedding. More photos of the burrow route are needed; before and after shots: to the Roadside to scull some pints.

787 (5787)

29th May Fraggle Rock

Jim Warny

HW 18:29: a sunny evening, no wind, a small stream issuing. CC had warning signs from his back so opted out of a session to give it rest. TB recently returned to the UK until mid June. The plan therefore was that PC would drill a series of holes in preparation for the installation of pulleys for a return rope system to the loading bay, while JW had a go along the bedding. Even without rain this last week the small stream meant the pair were swiftly soaked. PC managed to accomplish the drilling in Braille; on a part time light source. Meanwhile JW managed to remove another large rock, and using the rake, pushed the face further forward for some two metres, to within about a metre and a half of the beginning of a bend to the left. PC dragged the rock back to Jim's passage for the dry stone wall to keep the entry to the bedding clear. Several photos were taken of the overall progress through the burrow to complete the before and after images; outside the pair encountered climbers, the sun brings them out: away then to the Roadside for pints. 787 (5787)

17th June Fraggle Rock

Matt Randall, Jim Warny, Cheg Chester

The water level was very low after a dry period since last session. The plan was to dig further towards the bedding; before starting to dig the truck wheels were cleaned and greased. CC started digging with MR at the terminus loading. JW was unloading. In total 24 skips were taken out. Most of these skips were where debris between the terminus and the sandbags. This debris was washed out after the rain storm. The way is clear again up to the sandbags; quick pint in the roadside after. Beer, Cave and Girls 823 (5823)

9th June GB

Tony Boycott

To assist TB to replace the chain on ladder dig, and install locks to mine shafts. Further trip to drill out vandalized, misaligned bracket to accept padlock

26th June Fraggle Rock

Cheg Chester

HW 18:35 going to springs; weather warm and overcast:

There was a reasonable size flow from the entrance. Following PC's absence in the UK and on Holiday with PMC, the aim was to begin a line survey to establish the relationship of the "bedding" and "Jim's Passage" and to provide an overall idea as to the actual direction of the system now there are several changes of direction to be considered. The trip begun well but the battery of the lamp to light the compass failed, unfortunately the LCD standby light was too magnetic and influenced the compass too much so the trip was aborted.

30th June Fraggle Rock

Cheg Chester Tony Boycott

LW 08:20: Warm and overcast; the aim to continue the excavation of the trench beyond the burrow toward the bedding. CC at the face, TB at the loading ramp and PC at the terminus. A steady session produced thirty skids; the slower pace allowed PC time to drag them to surface, avoiding any temporary stacking of them. The present appearance of the trench beyond the burrow suggests it is directly aligned with the bedding; if this proves the case then removal of the mud bank to the right side of the approach to the burrow would allow a second railway to be installed from the face back to the loading ramp, significantly reducing the effort involved, this could mean that stacking skids at the loading ramp one session and their removal to surface the next. It would be possible for a team of two could work this system. We are 147 skids from the 600th: to the Roadside for Blacks and Gold's. 853 (5853)



The Burrow now cleared showing a smaller version of the entrance passage formation.

3rd July Fraggie Rock

Matt Randall, Tony Boycott, Cheg Chester

LW 15:39; neaps: overcast, though warm, some misty rain: The plan was to continue digging the trench to provide working space and an easy hauling route back to the loading ramp. CC to the face, TB at the loading ramp, MR at the terminus with PC outside hauling. The previously drilled 10mm holes at “Jim’s passage” had bolts installed for “washing lines” to secure items from being washed out during floods; the ones at the terminus are for hanging the tackle sacs rather than them being left outside in inclement weather. All the team worked constantly without a break; the only dig PC has ever witnessed it being so: TB and CC were constantly frustrated with the empty skids catching on an obstruction while returning to the face. However thirty skids were removed, which meant the face progressed a metre: there are now two metres of gravel fill remaining to reach the entrance to the bedding. The face hauling rope has been supplemented with another to accommodate the increased distance. CC noted the height of the trench on the left hand side, beyond the run off slope, has increased to some 18 inches; the right side is a little lower. If this depth of trench remains constant into the bedding it will provide a very welcome increase in working height. PC suspects that it may decrease in size at the confluence with the other left passage development. Whatever the trench depth, swift progress along the bedding will be made by casting the loose gravel to the side, and only removing any stones via a skid; the larger fragments to be used to build dry stone walling around the loading ramp area and also along part of the side of the approach to the burrow to reduce erosion, the smaller cobbles taken to surface. This will mean a significant reduction in effort through the bedding. The team then staggered back up the hill to the truck and to the Roadside for refreshments, where Peter announced to the team his problems with neighbours regarding the fire exit to his venue venture. 883 (5883)

6th July Clonbur, Co. Mayo

Tony Boycott

PC had received from Sean Queally further info on a cave entrance about a mile from Queallys Cave, Clonbur. The description was followed and with some re-interpretation of the

map etc the pair found in after some fighting with undergrowth. A beautifully shaped passage lead to bedding, almost at a right angle the passage returned via another route to the low line of limestone. The area is subject winter water levels that obviously drain down through these innumerable beddings and sinks around the Loughs. The pair then walked along to locate the souterrain near the castle, which was found & photographed, it has a re-bar grill, through which a natural passage can be seen clearly. From here the pair then went to locate a third site but foliage was too dense, will return.

7th July Fraggie Rock

Cheg Chester Tony Boycott

LW 07:00, neaps; sunny spells: The team assembled and after installing another rope to extend the length of the one in use at the face, back to the loading ramp, work swiftly produced twenty-nine skids. CC at the face TB at the loading bay and PC hauling. The skids were temporarily stacked at the hauling point prior to their removal to surface, at the end of the session. CC was experiencing difficulties in filling the skids in the confines of this section of the passage so resorted to dragging back spoil to a slightly larger working area; distance to the entrance of the bedding, (the Porch?) is now only about a metre away; another session should see this section completely cleared. It was discussed removing the spoil in the passage just past the "Porch". The plan is to now press on with digging the bedding; then to the Roadside for drinks. 912 (5912)

10th July Fraggie Rock

Matt Randall, Cheg Chester, Jim Warny, Tony Boycott

HW 16:15, neaps: A pleasant evening, misty, some light drizzle. As the team consisted of five the spoil could be drawn directly to the surface without having to temporarily stack it enroute: CC at the face, TB at the loading ramp, MR at the terminus, JW drawing to the hauling place with PC outside hauling and tipping. What should have meant the team achieving some fifty skids on the evening, resulted in only thirty being removed; the problem being the difficult nature of the digging and the exposure of a large lump of rock, at least a metre long by 0.2m thick and some 0.6m wide tapering away beneath the spoil. The further, thinning, end is within the bedding and presently concealed by cave debris. The plan for Monday next is to expose this end and release the boulder to assess how to go about breaking it; it has to come out as it is in the way of future hauling of skids back to the loading ramp, after a swift pack up the team scampered off to the bar. 942 (5942)

12th July Cullaun II

Solo

PC had noticed his back becoming less flexible of late and believes this a result of several factors, dragging out the skids, studying at college and the reduced number of actual caving trips. So a visit to Cullaun II was made. From leaving the truck to returning to it was fifty nine minutes; this involved going down the high level dry route and exiting the streamway: the back was stiff, very stiff but improved. On emerging bumped into Eoin ? and Tim O'Connell with a paying party about to enter; surprised at the solo presence.

14th July Fraggie Rock

Tony Boycott, Cheg Chester

HW 07:08: overcast turning to heavy drizzle; a steady trickle issuing from the entrance. TB returns to the UK tomorrow. The plan was to expose the large rock and assess exactly how big it is; it is very BIG! With CC at the face, TB at the loading ramp & PC hauling digging was slow-ish with CC having to negotiate around the rock's confines to remove the debris. Twenty two skids were removed to surface, in stages, a difficult job with three. The rock now wobbles slightly yet still has some debris around it, mostly the section within the bedding. The plan is to arrive for the Thursday evening session with PC's capping kit, the gads and a big hammer, to commence the slow process of vaporizing it. CC and TB scampered off to the Roadside while PC returned home to run PMC to the airport. 964 (5964)

17th July Fraggle Rock
Cheg Chester

HW 21:51; neaps: Warm; possible heavy showers.

NB, PC had been using tide tables from both a locally printed publication and from the website of the ISA; neither correspond with the Harbour Masters tide Tables for Galway Dock, the times can differ by over an hour! The plan; to destroy the partially buried boulder exposed by CC. CC armed with a three kilo sledge hammer, PC with battery drill and capping kit. A trickle was still issuing from the entrance. PC led the slow trip in dragging the bulky equipment bags; once through the Burrow he was amazed at the effort and progress by CC. A fantastic shaped water worn trough now meandered from the Burrow to the huge boulder at the entrance to the bedding, (the "Porch"). Work quickly began with CC laying into the boulder with the sledge; the effect was immediate, the rock began to shatter into thin layers, illustrating its very thin bedding makeup. A large lump fell off first which was then reduced further in size. Using two pieces of timber the pair managed to juggle the remaining piece a little further out from the bedding for further attention from the sledge; this process was repeated until after some two hours of hard work the rock was stacked in its component pieces on the adjacent shelf. The boulder was 2 metres long, by one metre wide, by 0.2 metre thick; some 0.4 of a cubic metre of limestone: very heavy! Heavy rainfall is predicted over the next few days, so a small catch pit was built to partly contain some of the large quantity of loose gravel debris now visible beyond where the boulder once sat. The real floor of the bedding was exposed giving an initial height at the "Porch" of one spade height, around 0.8 metre; the floor was also noticed to be rising gently: no problem so as long as the roof does to! The size of passage in front of the team is some 1.6 square metres in cross section, (2m x 0.8m); that is quite a size. The pair plan to remove the debris, to surface, on Monday. Shagged out the pair waddled back up the hill to the truck, then to the Roadside where work on the function area has given it a roof and a stage. CC and PC then indulged in an orgy of celebratory drink.

964 (5964)

21st July Fraggle Rock
Cheg Chester

LW 10:27; going to springs: a slight breeze on a very warm overcast day, sea state rough.

As there were only a team of two the aim was to remove the accumulated debris of the boulder destroyed on the 17th July. At the entrance, and in various places up the streamway, there was evidence of debris from a recent flood pulse, very likely the ½ inch of rain that fell last night. Further in the streamway was found washed clean. CC moved up to the boulder debris, piled at the Porch, while PC got everything ready at the loading bay, a bit of effort dragged the boulder remains to the loading bay then moved back to the terminus to set things up once more. Once CC was installed at the loading bay the skids were drawn to the terminus and stacked once again at the hauling point. This session to fill fifteen skids required no digging as such, but with just the two diggers it took almost two and a half hours to bring it all to surface. To the Roadside where there was no "Burren Beer"; result misery.

979 (5979)

24th July Fraggle Rock
Cheg Chester

HW 16:35; going to springs: A warm, humid evening with the threat of thunder storms, earlier a very short heavy spotted shower fell. On arrival there was a surprisingly significant flow issuing from the entrance; indicating a wet session. The plan was to clear the area near the Porch, in particular the pile created from digging out the large boulder. After shunting skids up to the loading bay, CC move onto the Porch and PC moved to the loading bay, digging was difficult between another large slab that appeared from beneath the debris heap, it was judged that the pair would aim for fourteen skids; estimating that this number would take some two hours to dig and bring to surface. As the pile reduced CC was able to see water trickling from the small passage beyond, noted by JW, MR and PC, on the previous breakthrough, he also noticed that the debris that once covered the floor appeared much reduced, (washed away?), and it seemed quite possible to squeeze along it for some five

metres to a small pile of large stones; hampering access, however, are the fragments of another large boulder previous stacked opposite the entry point; the plan is therefore to continue clearing the entire area and gain access, in doing this it will expose the choked passage ahead. In the bar concern was raised about future debris migration following an even minor flood; since the last session a channel has been cut down into the loose fill which was behind the large boulder. Now the bedding in front has a much larger open area this will obviously allow a higher flow rate and associated velocity of stream thus carving its way along the bedding to deposit the suspending crap anywhere down stream. This is a significant problem when it's remembered the effect of the stream last July punching its way through the two inch high gaps over compacted fill in the smaller passage. With these obstructions now removed it will be interesting to see the effect of an inch of rain in the bedding. In an effort to reduce debris being deposited along the crawl to, and through, the Burrow another catch pit will be constructed where the present sandbag is, in the hope to reduce any migration of gravels. PC has experimented with compasses and found that mild deviation occurs where another compass, or other magnetic influence, is within twelve inches (300mm). So, taking bearings along the roof line of the passage, should provide quite an accurate survey of the upper meanderings of the bed above the calcite vein, which could be compared against the meanderings of the lower bed, that beneath the calcite vein. To the Roadside where decent drink was available again: bliss. 993 (5993)

27th July Fraggie Rock
Cheg Chester

HW 06:20, springs: a cooler, bright and breezy day. The plan was to reduce the two remaining large boulders and remove some of the debris heap. The flow from the entrance was much reduced since last Thursday. A swift trip in, which included sending fourteen skids up to the loading bay, once completed PC joined CC up at the Porch to destroy the boulders. Once completed PC went forward to reassess the state of the passage following the comments by CC on the 24th July. It was found that there were some three inches of sand and gravel missing from the floor of the passage; PC managed to squeeze along for some two metres, from where another two metres of passable passage could be clearly seen to where there was a minor roof pendant, similar to that formed at the Boars Head: PC backed out and cleared the area of the previously stacked stone to enlarge the opening further. CC then went in to have a look see; between them they both squeeze in together passing and dragged back some five skids worth of debris allowing CC to easily pass the pendant area and see the passage beyond becoming bigger for the next eight metres: some more debris remains to be removed, though not very much. Passage length entered today was six metres. Elated the pair left removing the debris heap for the next session and scampered off to the Roadside for Black's and Gold's. 993 (5993)

31st July Fraggie Rock
Jim Warny, Cheg Chester

HW 20:50, neaps: cooler evening, overcast. A swift trip down with an undecided plan of action; on arrival the plan became CC would go look see at the passage with JW. JW wriggled along passing the previous point at eight metres to twenty two metres, stopped by a fallen flagstone, beyond which the passage continues more or less the same dimensions; this will be a challenging route for people with real chests, and broad shoulders.....On his return the trio set up shop CC at the Porch, JW loading bay and PC at the terminus, and swiftly drew out the boulder fragments, achieving twenty one skids. Making a total to date of six thousand and fourteen skids at an average of fifteen kilos equals some ninety metric tonnes. Supporting the bar at the Roadside PC enjoyed a vintage Gold aged for one hour; bliss: talk included the urgent need to survey, more than ever with this new extension, and the fact this passage could possibly bypass the other passages, possibly. Distances are approximate but there is some thirty metres from entrance to terminus, some thirty metres from terminus to the loading bay, some eight metres along Jim's Passage, some sixteen metres to the Porch,

some four into the bedding, three to the entrance to the passage, and the twenty two tonight; means well over a hundred metres. 1014 (6014)

3rd August Fraggie Rock

Cheg Chester

HW 10:38, neaps: a sunny and blustery day, gale force 5-6, sea state rough. The plan was to dig out the accumulated debris from behind the sandbag at the "Porch", once removed to then design another "catch pit area" to collect debris from the bedding following any flooding. On arrival at the entrance there was evidence of a recent flood pulse; with a stream issuing that was still level with the tiny indicator "pool" in the rock: the burrow was expected wet. CC went on ahead while PC set up the hauling kit and the terminus equipment; fifteen skids were then sent forward. The conditions at the "Loading Bay" were indeed very wet with water across the width of the "step" at the start of the crawl to the burrow. The skids were filled by CC swiftly clearing the area in front of the "Porch" down to the bedrock, this also exposed the "Anvil", which is, and precisely marks, the position of a confluence of the two troughs formed by the streamways, the larger heading straight into the bedding the other toward the passage entered by the team, now named by CC the "3T's", (Too Tight Tube). During the recent flood pulse a quantity of water had issued from "3T's" as evidenced from minor runnels cut into the spoil heap piled above the "Anvil". A design of the new removable weir to form a catch pit area was finally decided upon: the forthcoming winter will experience regular significant sized streams passing through this area, hence the urgent need to prepare for a similar level of flow that blew out the eleven metres of passage just downstream of the "Boars Head" last July; such a volume of debris would set work back many sessions. The cross section of the trough at the "Porch" can be clearly seen entering the bedding which will allow unimpeded passage of a skid to and from the working face; here the floor has unfortunately risen some six to eight inches reducing available working height, while the width of the trough at this point is some four feet, this may well narrow later on. The length of the left hand side of the bedding is a steeply inclined deposit of clay matrix this may stay in place as work progresses along the trough; the status of the right hand side is somewhat unclear and may require work to the debris deposit under the obvious slab to allow a skid to pass underneath this projection. Retreating in turn the equipment and spoil was removed swiftly to surface; whilst at the terminus PC experimented with a compass at various points along the rails; magnetic deviation begins within six inches of the rail up to a maximum of 64 degrees. Taking a series of very rough alignments along the passages the general direction appears to be northeast between 030 and 070 degrees; this requires checking; it has been decided to survey as soon as possible. To the Roadside where the drink was still as fine; TB is expected next Sunday evening. 1029 (6029)

6th August Poulmagollum

Phil Collett, BE? YE? Ivan H,

The Shepton Mallet C.C. boys wanted a guided tour in the afternoon so PC obliged; a trip through to Branch Passage waterfall and out: three hours.

7th August Fraggie Rock

Cheg Chester, Jim Warny, Matt Randall

HW14:58; neaps: Bright and blustery. A reasonable flow was issuing forth. The plan was for JW and MR to investigate the bedding, while CC and PC installed the new metal weir. No hauling was planned as PC had damaged his hand lifting flagstones while excavating at Caherconnell ringfort archaeological dig. JW managed to press a little further up the bedding in the very wet conditions. While the weir was being installed JW and MR also dragged out session's worth of debris from the bedding using the hoe, during which another large roof flagstone was exposed on the left of the trough. Of interest is the floor of the trough, which was ascending, appears to level off some metre or so just inside the entrance to the bedding, strongly suggesting a reasonable working height will be maintained: to the bar for drink where the team bumped into Cod Fillet. 1029 (6029)

10th August Fraggle Rock
Cheg Chester

LW 11:19; windy and bright. There was a sizable stream issuing, so the Burrow would be very wet. The plan was to remove the debris from the Porch to surface; CC went to the face after receiving and stacking skids at the loading bay from the terminus, PC followed and another fifteen skids were filled, effectively clearing the Porch area. The next part of the plan is to clear the area upslope toward 3T's as a working space to receive debris extracted from the bedding, (on occasions when two are digging this will allow debris to be temporarily stacked out of the line of the flood), when cleared to then progress along the actual bedding completely dependant upon water conditions. Following rain the previous day a good amount of debris had collected at the sandbag in front of the weir, which amounted to virtually the entire session spent removing it; the idea of the metal weir is to collect debris washed down during elevated levels of flooding expected and feared as the winter approaches. CC has designed the frame in such a way that the support bar remains in situ, while the "door" can be removed to allow the passage of skids beneath from the upstream working areas to the loading bay. The whole trip taking, once again, some two and a half hours in total; this seems the standard length of time to dig and remove this quantity of skids. The team exited to a sky darkening which came from the west, just as they were changing several thousand litres of rain was dumped upon them: a swift trip to the Roadside for drink, which soon filled with French people: later on, feeling rather crook PC took to the bed, remaining there for 72 hours, and losing five kilos in weight in the process; hence the delay in writing this log. 1044 (6044)

17th August Fraggle Rock
Tony Boycott, Cheg Chester

HW 10:48 neaps: Bright, cold and windy. A small amount of water was issuing. The plan was to continue removing the debris at the porch; with the return of TB the intention became to fill as many skids as possible beyond the normal fourteen or so. CC to the face, TB to the loading bay and PC at the terminus. Steady progress at the porch exposed a beautiful water worn assemblage of rock features, the Anvil now stands proud from the walls of the trough, as if a roundabout at the confluence of the passages. Twenty four skids were removed in the similar time a pair of diggers have previously dug and removed fourteen. Another session, possibly two, will see the area of the Porch completely clear as too the approach to 3T's. To the Roadside where no evidence was seen of the "Chase a Hobbit around Lisdoonvarna" event for the Tolkien week festivities: no black or gold! 1068 (6068)

18th August Cahermaclanchy
Tony Boycott

Took TB to area reported by Dave Egan to have a high level cave entrance; found site and found a further five other sites, one of which is a large shakehole with fence surrounding the obvious hole in the base. Land seemingly owned by Mr. Finucane.

*20th August Fraggle Rock, Supplemental
Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott*

Wheels on truck greased; three boulders removed to surface. Cheg 1047 (6047)

21st August Fraggle Rock
Tony Boycott, Jayne Stead, Jim Warny, Cheg Chester

LW 21:49, bright and cold. A small amount of stream issuing; the plan was to continue to remove the spoil near the Porch. CC and JS to the face with TB in the loading bay: JW and PC at the terminus. With JS installed the skids flew out testing the stamina of TB, twenty seven skids were removed, with the three removed by CC and TB while greasing the truck means thirty this week. To the Roadside for Blacks and Gold's 1074 6074

24th August Fraggle Rock

Tony Boycott, Cheg Chester later David Doran

LW 11:16: sea conditions very still, overcast with easterly wind; a minor amount of stream issuing. The plan was to clear the remaining debris from the Porch area, now called "Anvil Chamber", CC to the front TB at the loading bay; PC at the terminus. Digging was slow owing to the nature of the remaining spoil and rock, after several skids were moved DD arrived and moved up to TB. Once the spoil was shifted PC went up to have a look at the rock reported by JW as a possible obstruction, using a crowbar PC levered out the rock, likewise two others. Two large slabs are on the right, the closest one PC managed to lever up and break the vacuum of the mud; the confined nature means further effort to move this rock will be enormous, so the idea is to dig along side it and allow it to topple over down into the gap so it can be slid along the floor of the trough. This could also be done for the second slab. Both are some 1.6 metres long and 400mm wide and 200mm thick, quite large. Twenty three skids were removed. En-route to the bar the team went to see the state of tide at Watergate; at 12:48 the water was three feet deep at the entrance, with a half metre swell. To the Roadside bar; for drinkies

1097 6097

28th August Fraggle Rock

Cheg Chester Mike Marek, Matt Randall, Tony Boycott

HW 19:47; sea state very rough, two metre waves off shore, breaking regularly over the lower terrace, wind 35 gusting 38 knots. The team had a plan; with six men two could go to Anvil Chamber to set up a hauling system to try and pull out one of the two visible long rocks, another two to clear a way back down "Gentleman Jim's passage" to assess what has been happening down there, and to also complete the forthcoming survey, the other two to haul the skids to the surface. A significant stream was issuing; at the depth indicator it was 20mm deep. Inside the noise of the stream made communications difficult. So, with CC and PC to Anvil Chamber, MM and JW to Gentleman Jim's, with MR tramping and TB dragging the skids outside with a "come hither". While CC cleared the debris from the right he exposed a large water worn rock beneath the suspended slab, which adequately supports it, as there is room to pass it the decision was to leave it alone. Meanwhile PC set up a hauling system using two set of two pulleys. At the Loading Bay JW and MM began to clear the debris making swift progress back to where JW had reached previously, JW has made the route large enough for PC's chest to pass. JW noted that there were changes in the small end "chamber", in particular the air gap above the passage fill, this has been subject to stream flow and as a result become enlarged. MR tramped the steady supply of skids while TB hauled these out to the storm swept surface, tipping them as the sea erupted vertically past his ears whilst standing in the empty to avoid it being blown away. Once the hauling system was set up PC crawled up to the first slab and managed to lever it up enough to slide a piece of 9 x 2 timber underneath and the plastic skid prep'd by CC, moving further forward to dig around its arse to fit the wire strop, the stream flow appeared to be increasing and built up in front of him, after exiting to report there was difficulty exposing the slabs rear another attempt managed to install the wire barely under the near corner and only half way down the far side of the slab, as he exited the forward pulleys, attached to the wire, were placed on top of the slab to align it as best as possible with the other pulley in Anvil Chamber. PC then joined CC and together they hauled, at first nothing happened then the vacuum with the clay broke and the boulder moved. Several heaves more and it moved forward some two metres; at this point a warning arrived that the sea was entering the entrance, the team unhurriedly secured all kit and exited in an orderly fashion, meantime CC and PC finally managed to pull the boulder out to the Anvil, it became clear it was too long for the drag net, estimated to be almost 1.5 metres long 0.4 wide and 0.2 thick, they quickly installed the sandbag and refitted the weir following the rest of the team out to a storm lashed coastline and a boiling sea; PC checked the water level, which showed an increase in depth of 20mm during the evenings operations. Whilst in the bedding PC noted the uneven gravels had levelled out allowing him to see straight ahead for another six to eight metres; the gravel pile that previously suggested the passage was approaching a left hand bend has gone. As the team ascended the climb a

sequence of waves washed up over the cliff and ran toward the entrance. Seventeen skids were removed. After a swift change the team headed for the Roadside, to discuss a superb evening's work! 1114 (6114)

31st August Fraggle Rock Tony Jarratt's sixth anniversary
Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott

LW 14:32 springs: a humid day, overcast with a light wind. The plan was to break up the boulder moved to the anvil on the 28th; and possibly move the next boulder. A small amount of flow was issuing from the entrance. PC entered with the aim of taking some pictures, unfortunately the humid conditions caused some mist to form and obscure some of the images taken. CC too had a camera and was more successful with a flash diffuser. While TB drew skids back to the loading bay CC and PC destroyed the boulder into skid sized pieces; each blow from the seven kilo sledge hammer causing the boulder to ring, demonstrating the stresses inherent within it from its formation. On completion PC entered the bedding to set up the next boulder for hauling, with the three pulling on the rope no movement occurred, so PC entered again to excavate further again, still no progress, meanwhile he found the missing top from his battery pack, made by JW. TB entered and had a go at digging along the length of the boulder but in such a low space progress was problematic. The plan is to use a Turfor winch and wire cable. As the three will be independently absent during the next two week the pulley system was recovered to avoid corrosion occurring. The remaining skids were moved to the loading bay, where depending on availability they may be removed next Thursday. To the Roadside which was full of a hen party, with no volume control. 1114 (6114)

3rd September Fraggle Rock
Tony Boycott

HW 12:01, light wind WNW, sea state slight. As TB, CC and PC are going to be absent in turn over the next week digging was delayed until the 18th September when CC and PC are back. In the meantime a plan evolved where it was felt that it would be better if the skids full of the boulder fragments were removed to surface so as to clear the site for the next session; meanwhile TB had the idea to apply his five foot crow bar to break the vacuum on the next bolder. The issuing stream was very low at the entrance. Going straight to the bedding PC went ahead with TB just behind to assist providing leverage. At first setting up a pivot was problematic, however after some confined acrobatics and plenty of heaving the vacuum broke. By degrees the pivot point was moved back and forth to allow the insertion of the 9 x 2 timber beneath as a slide. The team are confident it'll move, even though it is leaning to its side somewhat; before leaving PC repositioned the wire strop around the boulder so the pull is more in line and should apply force more evenly along the boulders axis. PC then moved off to the terminus and TB to the Loading bay, the fifteen skids were swiftly sent out; ultimately to the surface. The dig is cleared of dig debris and the boulder is set to be hauled out. No visit to the Roadside as prior appointment took precedent. 1129 (6129)

18th September Fraggle Rock
Cheg Chester

HW 14:04 neaps; light wind sea state smooth. The plan was to remove the elongated boulder prepared the previous trip, (3rd Sept), and to break it up ready to be hauled out when TB returns. A small amount of stream, 6mm, was issuing from the cave; this does strongly suggest its coming from some distance where there is a decent amount of peat covering the rock. CC set up the pulley system while PC crawled in to attach the hauling line; after several pulls, which produced no effect at all, the thing moved, so was dragged to the Porch, where its width caused it to jam on the passage wall, with CC heaving and PC levering it was finally manoeuvred past the jam and up onto the Anvil. It was 12 inches thick five feet long to its point and 18 inches wide; taking the averages, 12" x 12" x 48", equals 4 cubic feet of limestone at 160 pounds per cubic foot that gives a conservative weight of 640 pounds or almost six hundredweight, or 291 kilogram's. CC set about it with his big sledge hammer and

broke off some of it; in the confined space this activity is difficult so PC took over belting the hell out of it while CC went into the bedding to set up the wire strop on a smaller boulder. This rock too was swiftly removed; the extra room meant that PC went back in to see ahead: PC's previous assessment of the passage going straight ahead is wrong, the beginnings of a bend noted by JW become quite significant heading off to the left at some 30 -45 degrees from the bedding. At least a further eight to nine metres can be clearly seen, slightly narrowing on the bend then resuming the width of the previous bedding. The two large boulders removed appear to have been formed, undercut and fell off on or near this bend. The immediate area beyond the bend is slightly higher, but after some two metres the gravel surface is definitely lower. An idea is to remove the fill to a width of a metre in the bedding up to the bend to facilitate digging. PC managed to reduce the boulder to less than half its size and the shape of a football; it needs capping or plug and feathers. A late start was made owing to PC forgetting his wellies, and running back to get them meant a late-ish finish: to the bar for well earned drink avoiding the matchmaking. 1129 (6129)

*28th September Fraggle Rock from PCN log
Tony Boycott, Cheg Chester*

In absence of PC the others removed 22 skips from the loading bay to the sea, 17 the rock & 5 dredging the pool. 2 skips forcibly retired so we now have 25. Will dig Thursday evening if JW & MR available, if not CC & TB will clear the next rock in the afternoon - please let us know if you are coming? Tony B 1151 (6151)

*30th September Fraggle Rock supplemental
CC and TB removed pyramidal like boulder and 12 skids.*



31st August; showing Anvil chamber, anvil in front of blue skid, entrance to 3T's directly ahead behind rope, ranging rods show the boulder to be 1.35 metres long, weighing in at some 200 – 250 kilos. The image also shows the system for hauling, the twin pulley blocks and wire rope strop around the rear of the boulder. This area originally had a floor base that matched the clean wall mark on the stone above the grey skid, behind the hauling rope.

5th October Fraggle Rock

Tony Boycott

HW 15:20: Autumn has arrived; a cold and overcast day, rain later. The stream issuing was of a volume the team have come to accept as normal; it had fallen by about 40mm. The plan was to continue on from where CC had left the working face in the bedding and to reduce the size of the boulder previously removed to the Anvil. Skids were brought up and stacked at the Porch, PC set about the boulder managing to knock off the corners; and not much else, now smaller the resultant shrapnel was cleared, and the boulder rolled away ready for the pair to start inside the bedding. TB and CC had previously dug along the bedding for some four metres continuing to expose the left hand run off slope and also maintaining an edge of the debris on the right, forming a sort of trench. As PC dug, the flowing stream continually broke down the clay matrix creating, almost, clean washed debris. Progress gradually exposed a deepening area, a pool, where almost simultaneously the run off slope disappeared and became vertical, matching the left wall, to the right a lump of clay debris fell away to expose the floor rising quickly, perhaps to form the side of the trench. Total forward progress was about a metre and a half. The present depth of debris covering the bedrock is some 250mm (10 inches). This depth increases beyond where the boulders were dragged out from up ahead. With fifteen skids full TB moved to the loading bay where they were stacked, ready for next week. In a cold wind the pair made their way to the Roadside where the "Gay Weekend" was happening. CC arranged to meet up for a pint. TB and CC had removed during their two sessions thirty four, therefore

1163 (6163)

9th October Fraggle Rock

Tony Boycott, Jim Warny

HW18:24, springs, sea conditions rough, wind force four. A normal stream was issuing, relative to the recent intermittent heavy showers. TB and PC had decided on an early start, (17:30), to remove to surface as many of the fifteen skids previously stashed at the loading bay, prior to JW's arrival; as it was JW's early arrival meant the skids were removed to surface all the more swiftly. JW scampered in to join TB at the loading bay who was meanwhile drilling holes, and installing cord loops, in the kneeling timbers to secure against them being washed away in a flood. All the skids were then sent in as PC felt the present stream level should be taken advantage of to get a good run along the bedding before the expected increased winter flow rates inhibited digging. The digging along the bedding remains quite easy, gravels and clay deposits, if but a little confined, even so JW and TB swiftly filled the twenty seven skids, including the removal of a boulder that just barely fitted into a skid: wow, heavy man! PC stacked the skids at the loading bay. Sunday; the plan is to dig a little of the accumulating silt from the loading bay area to top up any skid with room in it, in doing so install a timber kerb to facilitate the stream flow toward the dam outlet. To the Roadside for drink: a good night's work, great fun.

1178 (6178)

Conservatively: $6178 \times 15 \text{ kilo's} / \text{per skid} = 93000 \text{ kilos or } 93 \text{ tonnes.}$

12th October Fraggle Rock

Tony Boycott

LW 14:12, sea state smooth, no wind; a glorious autumnal day, clear skies. There was a reasonable amount of stream flowing out the entrance. The plan was to remove the twenty seven skids to surface and to, if not shagged out, continue digging the along bedding, which is now appearing as a passage developed along the calcite jointing of the bedding. While TB scampered in to the loading bay PC set up the hauling system, (the outside rawlbolt has failing and requires urgent replacement). With all the skids at the terminus TB rejoined PC and the pair swiftly hauled to outside. As this task took only some seventy five minutes, feeling fresh-ish, the pair decided to go back in for a session; after packed up the hauling system TB went back to the loading bay while PC sent up sixteen skids. PC then moved to Anvil Chamber to receive incoming skids and began to dig supported by TB who dragged out, and replenished, the skids, no mean feat over the increasing distance. A bolt and pulley

needs installing to reduce effort for both digger and support, though the speed of forward progress may make this pointless or impracticable; perhaps a piece of vertically wedged timber for the pulley would be more appropriate. The digging continues easy enough. The right hand side of the floor is coming up beginning to form a trough, of sorts, with an angle of between 30/40 degrees; the left wall has become quite vertical. The face is therefore some three feet wide; passage height is some two feet. The stream continually erodes the central gravel section of the loosened face, which is great and exposes the occasional cobble and flake, the left side is heavy clay, which comes away from the wall reasonably easy when prised. On the right the increasingly lengthening limestone rock/flag continues. This rock is lying on a fine loose gravel matrix, some six inches thick, now exposed to the flow of the stream. In the event stream erosion collapses the rock, it may be possible to leave it in situ without constricting digging progress, or, perhaps drag it out, but it is big, very big. The floor is still slowly rising, estimated as about a foot gained from the Porch over twenty odd feet; the height at the face is now some two feet. The central point of the face is now in alignment with the centre line of the passage beyond the bend. The next session will see much of the bend clear. It is possible that the area of this bend is opposite and therefore supplies the intermittent spring at the loading bay. The digging position is now on a flat section floor just out of the stream, if low flow conditions: the planks do a great job positioning the digger out of the worst of the stream. PC then moved to the loading bay and stacked the skids ready for next Thursday while TB tidied the area and reset the weir. The pair then waddled up to the truck and headed to the Roadside: a cracking good day. 1205 (6205)

13th October Addendum: The twenty two skids removed by TB and CC the 28th September were not included in the running total, therefore the count stands as; 1227 (6227)

16th October Fraggle Rock
Jim Warny

LW 18:26 neaps: increasingly windy, mild, threatening rain, sea rough. A normal sized stream was issuing. The presence of CC and TB was sorely missed. The plan evolved that the pair would first haul the sixteen stacked skids to surface, secure the hauling kit away, and, move up to the face to fill more. This methodology, previously tried, seems to work well; drawing the skids to outside whilst relatively fresh: a new bolt was supplied for the external pulley. PC then moved up to the loading bay, then in turn to the Anvil, to receive and stack the incoming skids. JW arrived and began to dig the well washed deposits now crumbling easily before him. While retrieving the filled skids from JW PC began to imagine the volume of the stream increasing, this was confirmed later by the amount issuing from the terminus inlet. PC suggests the bedding should be re-named "Whores Drawers" as he was up and down twenty odd times tonight..... This method of getting the skids from the digger desperately needs a pulley system! Once again progress was very swift, the face being pushed forward over a metre. At one point, the elongated rock fell out the gravel of the right hand wall just as JW had dug past it; fortunately it was much thinner than feared and fell alongside JW. It was about 1/3rd the size of the previous boulders removed, therefore at about seventy kilos, just able to be dragged back to the Anvil, where it was destroyed. As suspected by CC large-ish stone fragments continue to appear intermittently among the stream gravel debris. As the face progressed, on the left, virtually on the inner apex of the bend, a large block (like a corner stone), some 500 x 500 mm, of unknown depth, has become exposed; the suggestion is to leave it well alone, as there seems plenty of room to pass it, though it may later inhibit the passage of a skid. Before retiring from the face, peering ahead an ancient skid could be seen; likely the result of February's storm surges. The increasing stream is cascading over the digging face a little more to the right than the left. A total of twenty two skids were filled and drawn to the loading bay, ready for Sunday; to the Roadside for men's talk of Caverns measureless to man, and stuff. 1243 (6243)

19th October Fraggle Rock
Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott

LW 09:03: going to springs, sea state very rough with wind force seven. Today is the third anniversary of the start of the dig. Following a period of heavy showers the size of the entrance stream was slightly higher than that seen Thursday evening. There was some minor evidence of a recent flood pulse with sand and gravel deposited long the surface stream course toward "Fraggle Falls". The plan was to remove the twenty two skids first, and then to press on at the face; while CC set up at the loading bay he found a significant amount of sand deposited he used this to top up the existing skids and to also fill two more: making a total of twenty four. CC then returned to TB and PC the terminus and the three swiftly fired the skids to surface, during which a very heavy shower from the southwest saturated those outside. After stowing away the hauling kit PC moved up to the Anvil where there was a significant amount of debris across the floor. While CC drew up the skids to the weir from TB, PC entered the bedding to assess the situation and found the minor flood pulse had scoured out the passage fill for a distance of some three metres and almost a metre wide, to a depth of 0.225m; this section has opened up the passage around the bend. During this assessment the passage beyond was seen to meander slightly; the furthest point is some eight metres distant. CC then sent in the hoe which PC used to drag back some of the flood debris that had become scattered along the bedding to the Porch, however the effort of doing this is too much for one man in the elevated stream flow experienced today the suggestion is to dig as normal and to supply and remove skids from the digger by a mobile, adjustable pulley system, CC will develop this to fit between roof and floor. A minor flow was issuing again from 3T's passage. A cold and soggy walk up to the truck was swiftly followed by drink at the Roadside.

1267 (6267)

26th October Fraggle Rock
Cheg Chester

LW 12:06: going to neaps. Sea state very rough, temperature quite mild, wind speed 45 knots with light rain. The expected volume of stream was issuing from the entrance; almost level with to the small pool in the adjacent rock surface used as a reference. Some evidence suggested a flood pulse occurred but not of significant size. The plan was to commence a base line survey from which to hang off the other features encountered in the cave, fixing each pronounced bend along the lower stream passage; during this task CC to the opportunity to fix the minor inlets all seemingly entering between 030 and 035 degrees Mg. The team will return to specific points to accurately reproduce the passage beautiful cross sections. As an aside, PC wants to study/survey the relationship of the offset calcite veins between the upper and lower beds and the obvious, visible, evidence of slickensides formed throughout the cave, as it seems to be an important, unique occurrence; particularly now since Lackglass cave with its prominent ledge, illustrating the significant horizontal movement, is lost to the January storms of 2014. The survey was started from the centre of the entrance, inline with the rock face above, and continued through to the 14mm drilled hole in the step at the loading bay; this was established as survey station twenty. It was decided to take the opportunity to also survey "Jim's Passage", back to Station 20. CC wriggled in first, however PC could not pass a squeeze some four metres or so in, so established station JP3 at the squeeze; the measured length of passage is 8.9metres, plus what could be seen to continue increases it to 12.9 metres. During operations it was noted that the source of stream previously observed by JW appears to be coming from the other end of the developed tube called "Quasi's 'ump", which is adjacent to the "spring" at the loading bay. From the entry of this water, via a blocked pool, the passage is seen to turn quite sharply to the right and continue for a further four metres to what appears a left turn; this four metre section is too small to enter. It was discussed that this passage does not seem to head toward the bedding, where digging operations are ongoing. The survey made use of 0.7 metre long wooden poles, a length sufficient to elevate the compass of enough distance from the magnetic influence of the steel conduit railway. An exit was eventually made almost four hours after starting the work; a swift trek up to the truck and then to the bar. One lump of

rock was removed! NB: Previous experiments demonstrated that a distance of six inches from the rail was the minimum proximity for a compass to function without incurring any form of deviation error.

30th October Fraggle Rock

Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott, Michal Marek, Jim Warny, Matt Randall

HW 21:49; neaps; with the hour difference changing is now in the dark: wind, force 3, sea state slight. A normal stream was issuing, with some evidence of a flood pulse, though difficult to assess exactly what the volume of flow had been, most of the streamway had been washed quite clean except for some meanders where small amounts of sand had been deposited. CC went in to the loading bay, followed by PC, who then went ahead to assess the suspected devastation following the recent 2.9 inches of rainfall; on arrival there was very little evidence of a flood having taken place; entering the bedding debris was found strewn its length back to the Anvil, but very little erosion had occurred ahead of the previous position of the face; some scouring of the bend had occurred where a clay deposit had been exposed on the outer edge, (the right hand side looking in), there was also some erosion to the clay matrix supporting the boulder at the Porch. Returning to Anvil Chamber the overall situation was reported back to the team: MR moved up to the bedding to clear away the flood debris, PC dragged the skids from MR in the bedding back to the weir, TB at the loading bay, CC at the terminus, ably assisted by JW, who later moved to outside with the fortuitous arrival of MM, this meant that the skids filled at the face were whizzed out to the surface without delay; a tough job all round as there was no time for any of the team to take a breather: it was all go. Twenty four skids were removed from the bedding which was cleared up to the bend; TB managed to fill two skids from the accumulated silts at the loading bay; bring the total to twenty six. Not bad at all. The Sunday session is planned as a surveying trip to finalize the legs upstream from the loading bay; hopefully to include 3T's and the bedding, water levels will dictate. The rope from the Loading bay to the Porch needs replacing to lengthen to utilize a pulley to facilitate the replenishment of the skids from the loading bay position, while the person at the Anvil serves the digger at the face; a pulley hung at the bolt, already installed, above the porch would significantly reduce the supporting diggers effort moving up and down the passage between the anvil and the weir. During removal two skids became virtually jammed, this appeared due to minor pieces of sharp gravel in the trough just downstream from the weir, removing these small pieces the skids resumed their normal frictional weight, perhaps we avoid heaping debris the skids which must be the source of this debris which caused the grief to TB: perhaps, too, its time to retire all the "Big White Skids" these are heavy, a sod to pull from the Anvil. Then to the Roadside for drink, a cleared cave passage; an excellent night all round. 1293 (6293)

16th November Fraggle Rock

Cheg Chester

HW 12:27; neaps: an easterly wind, a cold temperature, though a bright day; sea state slight. The aim was to investigate the state of the dig following an absence of two weeks digging by PC who attended a funeral in the UK. The normal stream was issuing; evidence indicated that the sea had scoured the bench and had entered the cave, possibly to the terminus. There was some debris in areas of the passage but not much, likely the result from the sea washing the loose debris scattered around the tipping place. At the terminus and loading bay there was fine and coarse sand present. While PC replaced the blue rope to the Anvil CC went ahead to check things, there was evidence of high flow, but without much debris accumulating at the Anvil or the Weir other than sand, what debris had moved was deposited along the bedding. The Anvil area was cleared of the debris but mostly the large pieces of stone that had accumulated from the slabs removed from the bedding, once completed CC entered the bedding up to the bend to check the damage, announcing that a section had indeed been washed away allowing a forward progress of some two metres, however at least one large slab was visible; this shows the efficacy of removing such large slabs allowing the stream to wash the clay from the debris and carry it away. CC then removed the large suspect

slab on the internal corner, which had finally slipped forward due to the action of the recent flood, once removed he then scraped some of the flood debris back to the anvil. PC went in and levered out the slab, also placing it in the purpose built skid, it too whizzed out the bedding with very little effort. Some more clearing of the loose gravels and another smaller slab was exposed, also removed, beyond a much larger slab is visible, with its arse in the clay and the front in the air. Several attempts were made to loosen it, even using TB's big bar, but the constricted area doesn't allow for much leverage to be applied; the area surrounding the slab was cleared of more debris to allow the stream to do its work on the clay. This slab is about a metre and a half from the jammed skid; from this point it is possible to see, to the left of the skid, some distance ahead, (approximately five metres beyond the skid), the area is one of boulders, seemingly the width of the passage, and all seem to have space around them, no gravel or debris fill: quite what this means is anyone's guess, but the passage appears to be higher and possible to crawl along, it bends away to the right. It may be that the way the passage floor is rising and the roof remaining, sort of level the depth of the debris isn't too much, it may be that the boulders indicate a constriction where the flows of water scours the area of any debris; the height of the passage may be key to this. The team then moved the filled skids to the loading bay leaving a clean and clear working area. Work in the bedding now requires the rope return system to be employed. The plan for Thursday is if there is a team of four or five, two could go forward and work in the bedding and two clear the debris in the main passage prior to hauling the skids to surface; a swift change then to the Roadside for a Black and Gold. 1293 (6293)

Cessation of Personal Log for 2014 owing to PC ripping ligaments from the knee, and developing Bronchial pneumonia the onset seemingly delayed due to brother's funeral etc. therefore out of action for the remainder of the year. The team continued sporadically.