

2015



Pat Cronin

Removal of the first large slab in the bedding

1st January Fraggie Rock
Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott

HW 14:12; going to springs. Sea conditions rough with accompanying gale force winds from the south-west; gusting force eight. The first trip of the year: with an eye on the predicted heavy rainfall the plan was altered to dig in the early afternoon, (13:00), to avoid the worst of the rainfall promised for later. On arrival a large stream was resurging with a depth of forty five millimetres measured at the stream overflow reference point downstream of the entrance: "Fraggle Falls" created an impressive cascade. While TB reinstalled the seat at the Terminus CC moved to the Loading Bay, reporting back that the water there was over 6" inches, (150mm), deep, reducing the available head room, or air space, to an awkward 750mm, (2' 6"). TB moved up to the Loading Bay to receive the empty skids from PC, and then moved on to Anvil Chamber to support CC; PC took up station at the Loading Bay. CC, clothed for the wet task, moved up to the first bend of the bedding, now named "Bend for a Friend", managing to clear the entire radius of the bend; this will significantly improve stream acceleration at the bend to keep the lower bedding clear of lighter washed debris. In these difficult circumstances CC was ably supported by TB, who repeatedly crawled back and forth across a well flooded Anvil Chamber dragging skids from CC to send them on to PC. The noise of the stream was such that communications were only achieved by screaming instructions to one another. Gradually between fourteen and eighteen skids were stacked ready at the loading bay; precise number unknown as the water level in the Loading Bay covered many of the skids. The drilled survey hole on the step, in the loading bay, was a useful datum to monitor the flood water; the depth being a consistent fifteen millimetres, (1/2"). All the equipment was quickly secured and the team made its drenched way to the truck and a warm Roadside Bar for drinkies and to allow various pieces of frozen anatomy to thaw out. 6341

4th January Fraggle Rock
Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott

LW 10:23, springs; sea state rough, low wind speed, cold and bright: The plan was to remove the skids stacked at the Loading Bay; to also check Anvil Chamber for flood debris. A good sized stream was issuing. CC moved to Anvil Chamber, with TB at the Loading Bay and PC at the Terminus. A difficulty arose; the tipping bearing on the truck has seized causing difficulties for the truck to negotiate the inclines at each end of the railway; this necessitates workshop maintenance. PC had successfully used two thin wedges to support, by trial and error, the loose rail support at the Terminus, this now requires securing. Meanwhile CC cleared the lower part of the bedding brushing accumulated debris from the Anvil to the Loading Bay, through the Burrow. In all twenty eight skids were removed. To the Roadside, in bright sunshine, for just rewards: TB departs for the UK tomorrow: Thursday 18:00 is the next session. Two more sessions will bring the face up to the large slab. **28, 6369**

8th January Fraggle Rock
Cheg Chester

HW 19:18, going to neaps: Severe gale force south-westerly winds, cold with a heavy sea mounting the coastline. The plan was adjusted to abandon the digging session in response to the predicted bad weather and heavy rainfall but, to enter at 15:00 to affect maintenance repair to the jammed tilting mechanism of the bogey; this is the likely cause of the increasing derailments. There was a high stream flow issuing, measured level with the overflow point. While CC began to strip down the truck bogey PC scampered to the bedding noting en-route that there was no debris among the Burrow or in Anvil Chamber, following 2.5 inches of rainfall the previous twenty four hours; CC suggests this is likely due to the large slab retaining the debris in place. Returning to the truck the team completed greasing the bearings: at this time the normal booming sound from the waves increased suddenly accompanied by a rushing sound, then a loud hissing noise; the result of a wave penetrating the cave, coursing up the passage to the Terminus. So the team decided to secure the truck, pack the kit and make their way out; en-route CC trialled his new video camera, a tiny thing, the low level of light available will be an interesting measure of what light it will function in. On exit the sea was regularly mounting the terrace, with another three hours to go to high water. Looking south the coast was awash with wave action reaching in excess of fifty feet high: Great fun. **28 6369**

11th January Fraggle Rock
Cheg Chester

HW, 08:45, neaps: Wind force 9 gusting 10, sea state very rough. The Fraggle stream level measured some one inch, (25mm), below the reference point, though with a good flow still issuing. After observing the set of the waves for several minutes the pair finally decided to enter; soon all the skids were at the Loading Bay, the majority at Anvil Chamber. As CC began digging from "Bend for a Friend" PC set up the return pulley system; this relieves the digger the task of drawing the empties to him, and also assists the hauler. Even though the heavy clay deposit was encountered by CC forward progress of one metre was achieved. Eighteen skids were filled, a further four filled from the pair scrapping the loose debris along the bedding. It was noted that the effect of 4.5 inches, (110mm), of rainfall, during the previous week, had carved a channel to the right of the large slab; also the floor has risen, just past the bend by some four inches (100mm), this means less room to work but also less debris to remove. The exit by was into the teeth of a gale, which assisted in their ascent. In the warmth of the Roadside explanations surrounding the desire to dig were made to Peter over a Black and Gold. There is sever weather predicted for next Wednesday, the chances are digging will be cancelled. **28 6369**

18th January Fraggie Rock
CC and PC

LW 09:12: going to springs; a beautiful cold bright day with a bitter wind from the north-west. The plan was to remove the skids stacked at the loading bay and to see what damage was caused by the tempestuous seas of the last week. The stream issuing was what can be called normal. The terrace had been scoured clear of any remaining tipping debris. Inside, the passage up to Bison Bend was clean; one piece of seaweed was perched up on the railway at the terminus, the spare rope coiled on the rails was displaced, (the knot being undone!), the two ropes were moved along their plank. Further on a sandbag from the pile at Boars Head was washed halfway to the loading bay. The truck was still on the rails. Before the loading bay a quantity of sand was deposited. At the loading bay scouring of the floor surface upstream of the 4 inch pipe outlet had taken place leaving a sizeable hollow. During the week a heavy shower had occurred which would have caused a flood pulse, this may have been the cause for the clay and gravel deposit in the Burrow to become washed out. It was noted last session that a section of the deposit, one metre long by a half metre deep had slumped the result perhaps of being undermined by the previous weeks heavy rainfall; today more erosion had taken place, whether as a result of the sea or the recent flood pulse we cannot be certain, either way the debris near the loading bay and in the Burrow will need removal. CC to the loading bay, PC at the terminus; the twenty two skids were swiftly removed with CC filling another six with flood debris. In total twenty eight were removed; the empties stacked at the terminus; no skids elsewhere. To the Roadside for a well earned warm up, and drink. 56 **6369**

22nd January Fraggie Rock
Cheg Chester, Matt Randall, Jim Warny

HW 18:31 springs: a cold evening, little wind, sea state rough. The plan was for CC and PC to clear the remaining sea washed debris from the passage while JW and MR removed the boulder obstructing the bedding. The stream size was normal. The spring tides were 5.35 metres and produced a lot of noise that echoed inside. CC and PC filled and stacked twenty eight skids at the hauling point; a significant amount of the deposits near the "spring" were disturbed by recent flooding so the opportunity was seized to clear it. JW and MR were successful removing the obstructing boulder that was fortunately already split lengthwise, plus another; these were demolished with the sledge hammer and piled in Anvil Chamber. With the four to haul to surface the task was swift, an excellent effort. The team exited the cave beneath a clear night sky; very nice. To the Roadside for drink at 3 Euro a pint; until St. Brigid's Day; (1st February) 84 **6397**

25th January Fraggie Rock
Cheg Chester

HW 08:23, springs; foggy with blustery wind, sea state rough. The stream size was normal. The plan was to remove the spoil created by JW and MR on Thursday. After swiftly sending up all the skids CC went to Anvil Chamber with PC at the Loading Bay, as CC sent back the pieces of the demolished boulders PC topped up these skids with diggings from the loading bay floor. Eventually the whole of Anvil Chamber was cleared leaving only the brutal looking two cubic foot boulder remaining; to have removed this boulder the ten metres from the confined end of the bedding was indeed a Herculean task, superbly carried out by JW and MR. Rather than cap it where it lay PC suggested he attempt to drag it to the Loading Bay, (where it could await the attentions of The Boycott!): CC got it into the net, with the plastic scoop positioned on its leading edge, CC pushed it several times to get it going before it finally arrived at the Loading Bay where it was set on top of the dam to await the next Truck. CC then cleared the debris along the Burrow while PC went to see the progress the boys had achieved. From "Bend for a Friend" the floor rises some six inches, and

then has the normal gravel cover for some five metres to another long slab, and this can be passed for another two metres to where huge slab obstructs the way on. At this point the roof is quite level, the subtle roof arch no longer present, however just beyond the huge slab the arch can be seen to resume for a distance of at least seven metres. This passage forms a slow bend but with a possible crawl-able space above the boulder floor once the front of the large boulder is passed. Curiously the passage here appears to be developed only below the bed of calcite, the level roof just above it. This huge slab, (the Coffin Lid?), is estimated as some two and a half metres long, some one metre wide and some quarter metre thick; a seemingly formidable obstacle, estimated as weighing one and a half metric tonnes. The proposed plan is to remove the loose gravel and the smaller boulder clearing the way up to the "Coffin Lid"; to then undermine it for as far as possible and to also remove the gravel to its right; this will allow it to fall into the space! To then use a Turfor winch on the end of a prepared length of steel cable to drag it forward to "Bend for a Friend" and perhaps even drag it back to Anvil Chamber where there is much more room to reduce it to its component parts. To the Roadside to enjoy more drink still at 3 Euro a pint. 84 **6397**

29th January Fraggle Rock / Poulnafearbui

Jim Warny, Cheg Chester

LW 18:52 neaps: very cold with gale force wind; greater than fifty knots; sea state very rough. A larger than normal stream issuing, possibly from rainfall, though could be the result of wave action. The plan was to remove the accumulated skids from the Loading Bay. In the teeth of the gale the trio descended the coast, observing the mountainous seas coming from the south-west; bad news. At the terrace PC descended to check the situation, there was evidence of the sea having washed over the terrace, whilst the wind was bouncing off the small cliff behind and blowing back; this would endanger the "tipper" being blown off the cliff: trip abandoned. A suggestion then was made to visit Poulnafearbui. A good stream was present inside; there was evidence of the fine sand a gravel stream bed being scoured since its discovery. A cursory look around the boulder choke indicated nothing had moved since installing the supports. We should have a look beyond the dodgy bit following what rainfall has passed since our work there; to the Roadside for a warm up.

1st February Fraggle Rock

Cheg Chester

LW 09:33; going to springs. A fabulous day clear, bright, without a breath of wind: uncanny! The plan to remove the skids at the Loading Bay stacked there since the 25th January. A swift trip in with a little difficulty with the truck lock, which needs replacement; truck presently stored in the Loading Bay. With CC loading and PC stacking the pair swiftly got the twenty two skids out: in the Roadside before 13:00.

106 **6419**

12th February Fraggle Rock

Jim Warny, Cheg Chester

LW15:35, very cold and overcast, with a chilling breeze: sea state slight. Following an out break of flu type symptoms CC had recovered sufficiently for digging to recommence; the plan, to continue clearing the passage of debris up to the "Coffin Lid". JW had previously tested the gap here and found it just about possible to pass. On arrival there was very little stream issuing this reflects the previous fortnight or so of dry cold weather. Evidence of sand/silt migration deposited from the cave was noted along the main passage particularly at the Terminus and the Boars Head. CC went forward to dig, while JW set up at the Anvil and PC in the Loading Bay. A wide mixture of debris was removed in the twenty eight skids, ranging from fine/course sand to angular flakes of limestone. The small stream meant that digging conditions were somewhat drier. CC managed to clear the passage to almost two metres beyond "Bend for a Friend"; the obvious boulder ahead, some two metres in front of the

“Coffin Lid”, has suffered fracture an obvious crack may allow it to be split in two. The slit and debris bank adjacent to the spring has suffered more erosion, exposing a dome of sand, this needs photographing to compare it with the photos taken a year or so ago. After packing the kit away the team exited into an increased chill wind with accompanying heavy rain drops. Tucked up in the Roadside the discussion turned to PC departing for Panama: depending on when TB can manage to return from his UK commitments an effort may be made by CC & JW to attempt to push the “Coffin Lid” squeeze into what appears to be a slightly roomier crawlable passage; this passage can be seen to “go” for some seven metres as a slow bend as a slow bend bearing to the right, , (see log of 25th January). Discussions also arose how best to tackle the Coffin Lid; snappers were one suggestion, inserted between it and the clay it rests upon. Twenty eight skids await removal from the Loading Bay, likely on next Sunday.

106 **6419**

15th February Fraggle Rock
Cheg Chester

HW 14:13 going to springs: light wind, cold, sea state slight: the plan to remove the stacked skids. Rainfall during the night had increased the stream flow, with the inlets along the main passage becoming active. The absence of sand debris inside the entrance showed the sea had entered cleaning the area, the debris on the cliff edge was also washed away. CC sped on to the Loading Bay with PC at the Terminus. The twenty eight skids were swiftly removed and emptied, the empties secured at the Terminus. NB the truck requires greasing; the pulley used outside requires repair or replacement. Ascending the coastline PC considered the time, (two and a half hours), spent removing skids following the Thursday night session; he further mused that two men could equally remove these on a Monday evening leaving the Sunday entirely free to pursue other interests..... To the warm embrace of the Roadside, where pints remain at 3 Euro each!

NB. Its worth bearing in mind to take photos of the present progress, none presently exist of the bedding and beyond “Bend for a Friend”; this is really needed for recording. Also please record the work while PC is away.

134 **6447**

February – March Panama 2015
James Cobbett, Roger Day.
See report.

*19th February Fraggle Rock from PCN log
Cheg Chester, Jim Warny, Matt Randall*

High seas made for a hesitated start but we manned up and went for it. cc proceeded to grease the truck at the Loading ramp. MR and JW went for the end of the bedding. MR attempted to make some video of the bedding. JW squeezed past the coffin lid. JW noted that the coffin lid is actually in two pieces with a cracking running across half of it. JW managed to get 2m past the coffin lid and see the passage ahead for another 15m with a 300mm height and rock covered floor (no large boulders visible. After this Mr and JW loosened and dragged back the boulder in front of the coffin lid. CC joined them in anvil chamber and broke up the boulder in skip size pieces. Return to the roadside for pints after that. Love light peace Jim

*22nd Feb Fraggle Torrent
Tony Boycott, Cheg Chester*

2 .5 ins of rain the previous night, water overtopping the dam at the Loading Bay, so decided not to attempt the bedding. Swept 2 tons of sand out of the cave, which may have been returned on Monday night Cheers Tony

26th Feb Fraggle Rock

Jim Warny, Matt Randall, Tony Boycott

1 hour after low tide, westerly force 7-8, waves breaking on the platform so decided 2 hours at the end was a bad idea. Sea has been in at least to the loading bay, truck rope a mess & a couple of skips moved, lots of sand back between terminus & loading bay, plus some rocks from the entrance (slickensides calcite with algal growth), but entrance passage clear. Early exit to the pub.

Next Thursday high at 17.20 so digging will be very weather dependant.

Cheg - OK for Sunday if you're well, low is 08.30 so should be OK for another clear up! Jim/Matt - my house phone number is 065-7075596 Cheers Tony

5th March Fraggle Rock

Jim Warny, Matt Randall, Tony Boycott

1hr after High tide: strong sea. A hesitated start due to sea conditions. MR proceeded to the end of the bedding to dig/clear up to the bedding while the other two supported with the supply and removal of skips. JW manned anvil chamber and TB the Loading Bay. 29 skips where filled and stacked in the Loading Bay. The bedding leading up to the coffin lid is now clear enough to start working on removing it. Pints in the roadside afterwards. Love light peace Jim

12th March Fraggle Rock

Jim Warny, Matt Randall, Tony Boycott, Cathal Mullane, Cheg Chester

CC started with getting the skips from the loading bay to the terminus while TB attempted another go on the coffin lid with snappers. TB was unsuccessful so MR went to the coffin lid to try and move out with the hydraulic jaws. He was joined later by Cathal Mullane. Meanwhile the others emptied the skips. MR and CM managed to move the first section of the coffin lid and propped it up on some boulders ready for extraction. 28 skips where removed. Roadside for pints afterwards Love light peace Jim

15th March Fraggle Rock

Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott

Delayed the descent by clearing silage from the parking space & feeding it to the grateful ladies behind the gate Took half the skips up to The Anvil, Cheg took photos of the boulder in its upturned state. Spent 2 hrs attacking the boulder with plug & feathers and gads, small effect now 10kg lighter. Decided there was no chance of pulling it out; although there is room, far too heavy. TB drilled holes for more violent effort later in the week, while CC filled 5 or 6 skips with debris from the bedding. There is still plenty to clear even if the boulder doesn't disintegrate as planned. To Roadside where the black is back on! I hope to be there on Thursday depending on the timing of Pat & Pauline's return but please start without me. Total since Pat left 162 6475 TB

22nd March Watergate - Fraggle Rock

Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott

LW 12:11: Sea state slight, light wind. The plan was to attempt to enter Watergate via the Seaside entrance; Oubliette is now securely blocked with sea debris. CC had gone ahead to drill and secure a ladder down from the upper bench, therefore avoiding the increasing swath of greasy green algae etc that now covers much of the lower bench to the sea. TB and PC descended the ladder to join CC only to find a one metre swell causing the entrance to remain impassable. Retracing their steps the team then went to Fraggle Rock to attempt moving the "Coffin Lid". A surprising amount of stream was issuing from the entrance. While TB drilled the lid PC and CC set up the hauling system. Several attempts did not move the boulder at all, so the plan is to use a Turfor winch on Thursday. TB also drilled several 8mm holes along the bedding for JW's

return rope supports. PC dragged back the loose debris from just beyond "Bend for a Friend" to the Anvil where CC loaded it into skips, which were sent on to the Loading Bay. The idea is that Thursday the focus is the boulder, and ideally the skids removed to surface; to the Roadside for pints. 162 **6475**

24th March from PCN log

TB solo. Failed to crack the boulder at the neck as was the plan, so installed 2 ring bolts in the nose for attempt to move it with the Turfor on Thursday, failing that will attack with plug & feathers again. Cheers Tony

26th March Fraggle Rock

Cathal Mullane Tony Boycott, Cheg Chester, Jim Warny, Michal Marek (CM = *Cathal Mullane*)

HW 21:43. Sea state slight, slight breeze from the north-west; a fair sized stream was issuing from the entrance; several days previous an inch and a half of rain had fallen: evidence of a high flow in the streamway particularly around "Bend for a Friend" where small debris had graded itself across the floor. The plan was to attempt to move the "Coffin Lid"; TB, PC and CC assembled there while CM, MM and JW focused on removed the twenty eight skids. PC dragged in the steel cable and set up a large pulley on the rawlbolt in the boulder; the cable then secured some three metres back to another rawlbolt installed by TB and his drill. With CC using the Turfor winch various occurrences followed, the cable clamps required tightening, the rawlbolt in Anvil Chamber uncurled itself, and the boulder moved.....a little. Further attempts saw the boulder rawlbolt pop out, and the Anvil Chamber rawlbolt uncurl further. CC came up with the idea of drilling the floor and inserting a hardened steel bar to act as secure belays; this will be done, likely Sunday. Meanwhile the skids were swiftly sent to surface; the whole team then assembling in Anvil Chamber; very cosy indeed! The team had been in the cave for around two and a half hours. A swift trip to the Roadside for well earned pints. 190 **6503**

29th March Fraggle Rock

Tony Boycott

HW14:13 neaps. Force three south westerly winds, building within three hours to force eight westerly, with deteriorating sea conditions. A large stream was issuing; measured as thirty five millimetres at the "overflow", Fraggle Falls were an impressive cascade. The plan was to install the new belays to secure the steel cable and the winch and attempt to move the "Coffin Lid". Listening to the rain in the small hours PC opted to bring along a cargo strap; to attempt to wrap it around the arse of the "Coffin Lid" rather than have TB expose his drill to the wrath of the stream. A swift trip in confirmed the elevated water level, particularly deep in the "Burrow". While TB set up the winch PC went up to the "Coffin lid", using a long piece of plastic pipe successfully arranging the strap around its rear and positioned just beneath the leading edge; with three steel krabs the pulley was attached and the new belay bar installed in the hole in the stream; this hole is set to the right-hand side in order to draw the boulder more centrally in its progress along the passage, away from the walls. TB attached the extra cable clamps and the length of cable adjusted. Winching commenced. Among the creaking and occasional twang, (*this may of course been from the bodies of the team*), the pair imagined there may have some movement. Problems occurred with the winch experiencing such high stress/load levels, a minor amount of deformation appearing the issue. PC ventured back up to the lid and confirmed movement; setting up a tell tale he retreated to Anvil Chamber: winching recommenced. Unsure of the amount of stretch in the cargo strap PC returned again to the boulder; movement had definitely occurred, progress was marked with calcite scratch on the left wall. When the strap was originally fitted it was as one long loop it was now shortened and positioned, again, around the rear of the lid now allowing for

an increased distance of some three metres before the pulley encounters the belay bar: winching continued. The team has accomplished moving the "Coffin Lid" 18 inches (450mm), thanks to both the belays and the cargo strap. The process is slow, and cold, as the water depth downstream of the "Coffin Lid" today was around five inches, (125mm), making work a submerged, cold affair. TB estimates that in another metre or so he'll be able to plug and feather it, if we can tip it to one side. After two and a half hours in the water the pair tidied up the area leaving in situ, the drill, the hauling set up, the plug and feathers and the Darren drum. The team finally exited into a force eight westerly gale and high seas' making the uphill struggle a bitter cold experience, hiding behind the truck a swift change was managed just as a rain storm hit. Later in the Roadside the feeling came back to most of their extremities, except the knees hopefully this should arrive by next Wednesday; a fine trip. NB I respectfully suggest that only a small team attend next Thursday as the process requires say three; however that's not to say that digging could commence in "Jim's Passage". Otherwise sitting around could be a boring and cold affair. 190 6503

2nd April Fraggle Rock

Cathal Mullane Tony Boycott, Cheg Chester, Jim Warny,

HW 17:21, going to springs; misty rain with a strong breeze, sea state rough. The plan was for PC, CC and TB to investigate why the "Coffin Lid" became increasingly difficult to move with the winch, and to continue its removal; while JW and CM dug out the accumulated debris on the floor of the loading bay and to commence digging "Jim's Passage". A good sized stream was issuing; though nothing like what was resurging on Sunday. PC went to investigate the problem while TB and CC set up shop in Anvil Chamber. Using the crow bar PC could not move the "Coffin Lid" too far from the left wall, on digging out debris from the right hand side a two foot, wedge shaped, piece of limestone was uncovered superbly jamming the "Coffin Lid" tight against the passage wall. Once removed the elongated fragment was dragged back to Anvil Chamber; CC then went forward to observe progress, it was decided winching would recommence while CC wroggled the "Coffin Lid" to assist movement; as well as digging out remaining sections of fill from the walls. Without the jamming stone the effect was immediate, the excess pressure on the winch had completely disappeared. Moving the "Coffin Lid" now became a remarkably swift procedure with repeated swift resetting of the cable length and securing the cable clamps. Having quickly filled all the skids JW and CM joined the team at Anvil Chamber; CM going forward to assist CC with JW assisting with the resetting of the winching system. At one point TB's Turfor winch failed, a securing clip fell off releasing the 2-1 pulley and distorting its yolk, PC set about it with the lump hammer and bent it back into shape but the pin was found to be useless to secure it, fortunately CC had brought another larger pulley, which was quickly fitted allowing winching to progress a further metre. A grand total of seven resetting's took place dragging the "Coffin Lid" forward two metres this evening, terminating within a foot or so of the temporary belay, located just beyond "Bend for a Friend". The team were obviously thrilled with the result of their combined efforts. The plan for Sunday is for TB to install another 18mm hole this time on the right side of "Bend for a Friend" to divert, and allow the "Coffin Lid" to creep centrally around the bend to align itself with the Anvil; once at the Anvil its total destruction can take place in relative comfort either by sledge hammer, caps, gads, snapper, or plug and feathers. During operations it was noticed that water levels were steadily increasing, a good sized flow was now exiting 3T's; on the way out PC noted that the pipe in the dam was now half full indicating an increase of stream volume of about a third in the two hours underground. It was also noted that a significant amount of debris had migrated downstream following work and rain fall since Sunday. The team exited to an evening of soft twilight: nice. A swift trip up the hill to the trucks in shite weather, and an even faster one to the Roadside: no Black but lots'a Gold, hooray! 190 6503

5th April Fraggle Rock
Tony Boycott, Cheg Chester,

LW 12:39; a bright sunny day, gentle breeze, sea state slight. The stream level issuing was normal. The plan was to continue dragging the "Coffin Lid" toward Anvil Chamber. The winching equipment had been left set up for a quick start. After some two hours of painstaking progress, significant wroggling and repeated resetting of the cable length, the leading edge of the "Coffin Lid" finally appeared around the curve at "Bend for a Friend"; the transit of these four metres was slow and sure. To avoid it jamming at the low area of the slip off slope, at "Bend for a Friend" an extra belay was drilled to divert the "Coffin Lid" across to the right hand side so as to be positioned as central as possible for its journey to Anvil Chamber. As it approached the "Porch" the cables, and one of the pulleys, were reset again to be secured adjacent to the original winch position; to allow part of the "Coffin lid" to project from the bedding. Just before its arrival a section of the remaining debris in the bedding was removed, among this clay was two large pieces of stone. Inch by inch the "Coffin Lid" finally arrived at the "Porch", this was finally managed by a further belay hole drilled near the weir achieving an offset/deviation. The "Coffin Lid" was measured as five feet by two and a quarter feet by one foot; these lengths were closely averaged: this volume of limestone equates to between 1600 and 2000 pounds, (or, 720 to 900 kilograms). After a tough four hour shift a rather proud trio staggered up the hill.....and into the Roadside: a grand day out! The plan for next Thursday is to remove the accumulated debris and skids stored at the "Loading Bay", clean the place before the loose debris migrates throughout the cave, destroy the "Coffin Lid" and explore open passage.

190 **6503**

9th April
Fraggle Rock
MM, TB, CC, MR, JW, CM and PC

HW 08:47 going to neaps: Wind force three, sea state rough: a large stream issuing. The plan, to draw the "Coffin Lid" completely into Anvil Chamber to reduce it to its component parts: to prepare the next boulder beyond the original position of the "Coffin Lid" and to remove the stored skids. PC and CC to Anvil chamber with TB going forward along the bedding to prepare the next boulder; JW, CM, MM and MR bent themselves to drawing the skids swiftly to surface. PC attended the hauling system assisted a later by JW; the "Coffin Lid" was finally positioned for its destruction. CC set the system; the results were good. TB drilled and prepared the Lid ready for the Thursday session. Much of the lumps of stone from the hauling were transported away by the healing team leaving Anvil chamber infinitely roomier! To the Roadside for pints and fun

223 **6533**

11th April Clooncoose Cave
Solo

14:05 Met James Marrinan who granted PC permission to do a survey of Clooncoose Cave and to roam freely about his land

12th April Fraggle Rock
Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott

HW 11:49 neaps: A very large stream issuing, measured at 50mm at the reference point; the previous nights 1.75 inches of rain ensured a very wet session. At the dam the water was just below the top therefore loading bay was a lake some ten inches deep, the outlet pipe was full for its entire diameter; the "Burrow" was several inches deep, the step was 50mm deep across its width of almost three metres. The plan was to continue the process of destroying the "Coffin Lid" and to clean the place. Taking advantage of the huge flow rate PC cleaned the passage from the dam out, while TB and CC set up the system, the first attempt was successful the second not so. During

shovelling operations PC formed a venturi with the sand bags at the “Boars Head” to narrow, and accelerate the flow to reduce settlement of debris there. After two hours PC was joined by CC who assisted with the final clearance of the accumulated sand. A further attempt on the “Coffin Lid” is planned for next Thursday. To the Roadside for refreshments, where else?

223 **6533**



Cheg Chester

The “Coffin Lid” at 900kilos manoeuvring around the 90°corner “Bend for a Friend”

16th April Fraggie Rock

Matt Randall, Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott Jim Warny

HW 16:22, going to springs. A superb bright, clear evening, sea state slight, no wind: the original plan was slightly altered so that CC, TB and PC arrived an hour before normal starting time to achieve the final destruction of the “Coffin Lid” and also the next obstruction, as JW called it “Son of Boris”. {“Boris” being the largest free hanging boulder ever seen, located in Glendalough Lead Mine, No 1 level, Wicklow.....}. The final smashing process, or “Nudging”, was completed swiftly and successfully. Almost on queue MR and JW arrived so the five took up positions throughout hauling the accumulated debris to surface; JW and MR in and beyond Anvil Chamber, TB at the Loading Bay, CC at the Terminus and PC enjoying the beautiful evening scampering back and forth outside. Assorted stream and boulder debris from as far forward as “Son of Boris” was cleared to surface; no full skids were left in situ: all skids stacked ready for use at the Terminus. A total of thirty were removed. The team reflected on the excellent evenings work while enjoying the pleasant stagger up the hillside: to the Roadside for pints and talk of caverns measureless to man and the “Hole in the Woods”.

253 **6583**

20th April Fraggie Rock

Cheg Chester

Start of new digging regime, Monday evenings rather than Sundays.

Arrived to find CC had left some gear at home, decided to go to the Roadside.

23rd April Fraggle Rock

Matt Randall, Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott, Cathal Mullane

HW 21:23. A fabulous clear bright evening; with a small stream issuing. The plan was to clear the bedding of accumulated debris following removal of the "Coffin Lid". CC went forward to assess the previous work on "Son of Boris" while PC prepared to remove the debris from the Anvil inbye. Positions were taken with CC hauling back from PC, CM dragging the skids to the "weir" with MR hauling them back to the "Loading Bay". While removing the loose gravels, PC decided to also remove the small mud bank, remaining, on the right just beyond "Bend for a Friend", the beginning of this sand/mud and cobble deposit was the thickest point; some two linear feet was removed before the skids were all filled. CM then went forward to view the progress since the removal of the "Coffin Lid". All the skids are stacked ready for transit outside next Monday evening. The team then headed for the Roadside for drink. 253 6583

27th April Fraggle Rock

CC and PC

LW 19:36; going to neaps. A very cold westerly gale force wind, state sea very rough. A small stream was issuing from the cave even though some one inch of rain fell in the last two days; it suggests the showers missed the catchment area. The plan was to remove the twenty seven skids stacked at the "Loading Bay". PC went in while CC set up shop at the "Terminus". All were swiftly removed to surface, where the severe wind conditions again meant the tipper had to stand in the empties. A minor amount of sand was noted to have migrated from inbye. CC completed the evenings work with a brush through to the entrance. To the Roadside where the absence of a fire was a disappointment to the two frozen drinkers. 280 6610

30th April Fraggle Rock

Cathal Mullane, Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott Jim Warny

HW 16:09; going to springs: sea state rough, winds force four; a small stream issuing. The plan was to continue clearing the "Bedding" up to the remains of "Son of Boris"; after whizzing the skids in from the terminus CM took up position, again, in the Loading Bay, JW in Anvil Chamber, CC doing the first shift digging and PC drawing the skids from the Anvil to just beyond the "Weir" to reduce the effort on CM. This system does work well, though four men is the minimum for a comfortable shift. With around half the skids filled JW changed with CC; soon twenty eight skids were filled and stacked at the loading bay. The bedding is now cleared of any original compacted fill to a point some one metre beyond where the original front edge of the "Coffin Lid" once sat. Among the spoil JW sent back pieces of "Son of Boris". The next Thursday session should see progress on the remains of "S.O.B"; perhaps CM and MR should have a change around in their work positions. Several skids really do need replacement now, if PC gets the chance he'll sort out half a dozen for Monday evening session, and bring up the number to thirty once again. The Good Doctor Boycott should return to the fold sometime after the 9th May. To the Roadside where the overseas visitors are beginning to increasing in numbers: a very fine evening drinking very fine beer, very fine company. 280 6610

10th May Waite's Pot

Kinvarra

Matt Randall

A visit to the hole that has appeared on the karst of Mr Waite's land; now some 11 metres deep below surrounding ground level: it is a significant pre glacial pothole with later development. The plan is to secure it by a fence; Mr John Waite has given his permission.

11th May Fraggle Rock
Matt Randall, Cheg Chester

LW 17:28. Winds force six, gusting force eight; sea state rough; occasional waves breaking over the platform. Some evidence of sand found within the entrance area. A large stream issuing; at the reference the flow was measured fifteen millimetres deep; this follows the heavy rainfall the previous day. CC noted the stream flowing across the entire width of the step, with the remaining mud bank at the spring continuing to disappear. Owing to PC's leg injury the previous weeks digging had been disrupted; full skids remained at the loading bay. CC at the loading bay, MR tramping and PC dragging to the area some four metres beyond old hauling point: MR and PC soon relocated outside into the teeth of the gale, standing in the skids was again required to avoid loosing them. The clay contents of some skids had compacted so well it was difficult to empty them without bashing them against the edge. Approximately ten skids desperately need replacement. A swift tidy up and off to the Roadside, where surrounded by German visitors, the talk turned to the practicalities of engineering should digging commence at the new pothole in Kinvarra. **308 6638**

13th May Poulbeagnacoillte
Cheg Chester

The plan: to ascertain the status of the entrance and its squeeze following a gap of some five years; CC entered and found the bedding to be clear and open. The route from the access road to the cave is destroyed by using the drains among the freshly planted trees PC forged a route avoiding the worst of the ankle wrecking debris.

14th May Fraggle Rock

Cathal Mullane, Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott Jim Warny

HW 15:01, going to springs; a light breeze, sea state slight. A fair stream was issuing, evidence of sand ingress in entrance. The plan: to reach and remove the remains of "Son of Boris": CM to the face, with JW set up in Anvil Chamber, PC dragging to "R.T.B.", (*Round the Bend*), and CC at the Loading Bay. This method of sending the skids outbye from "RTB" assists the haulier enormously by removing the effort required to manoeuvre them past the two pronounced bends just downstream of the "Weir". Having said that, PC inadvertently clipped two skids together, below the water level, causing CC to expel great deal of unnecessary effort; oops! Meanwhile, CM dug away producing skids at a steady pace; twenty six were filled and stacked: two being retired. A good amount of angular stone came out, so too some gravel and a little clay; this meant that progress was up to the first large lump of "Son of Boris". PC wriggled up to CM to see progress, (the first visit there since the removal of the "Coffin Lid"); with the removal of the deposits on each side of the passage there is far more room to work in: peering over CM's crutch? PC could see wondrous sights????????? OOO errr. "S.O.B." had been significantly fractured. As CM worked the crow bar to enlarge the gaps for water to wash away any sediment, PC dragged back the first, loosened, large lump; CM followed with the second, both left in Anvil Chamber. The team then exited to a lovely evening; a swift amble up to the truck then to the Roadside for Drinkies and man's talk; about caves oddly enough. **334 6664**

16th May Clooncoose Cave CL010-100003
Solo

Following permission granted by James Marrinan PC returned to the cave to assess how to construct the survey. After removing a very dead fox from some three metres inside the entrance the survey was commenced at the entrance, level with the top of the tumble level, to just beyond the souterrain wall, a distance of six and a half metres to a fixed point at roof level on the right side of the passage. Working outward the echo of footfall heralded the arrival of a large group of Burrenbeo walkers lead by Dave Drew. Having emerged to provide them with an idea of the site as a souterrain

PC returned to work. After leaving the GPSR to stabilize for 20 minutes, beneath light undergrowth, the reading was recorded as ITM 527819 x 695219, the grid in the National database is given as ITM 527772 695820 (PC's reading is too far to the south!); from the aerial photograph this significant difference of some concern; its needs re-checking.

18th May Fraggie Rock

Matt Randall, Cheg Chester

HW 18:08; springs. A bright but overcast evening; though windy, likely force seven gusting force eight: very rough sea conditions occasionally spraying the platform. A good sized stream was issuing, some seventy millimetres below the reference; plenty of rain since the Thursday session. The plan; to remove the skids and send them back in to the Loading Bay. With MR to the loading bay, CC at the terminus and PC dragging to the new location some five metres closer to the entrance; where it's flatter and a little wider. MR assisted PC outside in the gale, swiftly removing twenty seven skids in all. The truck requires maintenance so likely PC will carry this out early next Thursday accompanied by TB; who returns this weekend; digging perhaps focus on loosening the long slab and removing the rest of "Son of Boris"? With MR seemingly more available for Mondays sessions, which is an enormous help; and the fact that a Thursday session with four men gets skids to the Loading Bay quickly, perhaps increase the number of skids to at least thirty maybe more, 40?, to take advantage of this situation? With the thinly covered bedrock in the bedding this would increase progress without much more effort. Changing became manic between heavy showers; to the Roadside for refreshments.

361 **6691**

21st May Fraggie Rock

Jim Warny, Matt Randall

HW 20:19, going to neaps: A foggy day, (visibility some three hundred metres), no wind, sea state slight. A small stream was issuing. With CC away the plan was that PC arrived early to carry out necessary maintenance to the truck. Once completed he located the return rope stemple some two metres forward: removing the remaining pieces of "Son of Boris". JW and MR arrived and set about bringing up the skids from the Loading Bay. Meanwhile PC continued to expose the elongated boulder, (The Bishop's Finger), situated obliquely across the passage just behind "S.O.B.". After filling twenty ~~six~~, (actually five), skids over half of the "Bishop's Finger" was visible, after sending the last skids to MR PC applied the long bar managing to raise it some four inches off the clay, the stream is now running beneath it; its estimated dimensions are five feet by one foot by one foot; suggesting a weight of some three hundred and fifty kilograms. A tough but excellent evening's progress with just three men; JW situated at the Loading Bay accomplished great work dragging back the skids from Anvil Chamber. Before the "Bishops Finger" was raised PC had a restricted view ahead; the passage definitely widens to in excess of three metres as a wide shallow arch, with the normal debris fill across the floor, it appears that there may be "room" to wriggle along..... Just before "S.O.B" a significant meander has under cut the left wall, this has likely been the source of these large boulders, the flow has come across from the right side, at the point where the "Bishop's Finger" presently sits; it will require removing to allow exploration beyond, the estimated distance beyond is some ten to fifteen....even possibly..... twenty metres. A fairly shagged team exited into the fog; a swift trip up and into a crowded Roadside.

361 **6691**

25th May Fraggie Rock

Matt Randall Tony Boycott

LW 17:19; neaps. A light breeze: sea state slight. A very small stream issuing; there was evidence of minute particles of clay silt in the passage pools; likely from the

stream passing beneath the “Bishops Finger”; the plan to remove the twenty five skids from the Loading Bay and return them to the Loading Bay ready for Thursday’s session: previous log entry error; actually only twenty five were filled. The normal procedure followed; MR to the Loading Bay, TB at the Terminus and PC dragging: MR and PC to outside hauling and tipping. If PC’s observation is correct, and the passage is indeed becoming much wider beyond the “Bishops Finger”, the possibility of pushing a metre wide channel through the debris field, by packing the spoil left and right, and lining the edges with stone, to reduce erosion, may present itself. The “Bishops Finger” should be attended to next Thursday as it is now hinders visibility and all forward progress. The trio then sped off to the Roadside: hooray. 386 6716

28th May Fraggles Rock

Tony Boycott

LW 20:42; going to springs: a light but cold wind, sea state slight. A small stream issuing; though evidence present of a pulse among the sand and silt deposits. The plan to focus on removing the “Bishops Finger”; the pair swiftly arrived at Anvil Chamber and unpacked; then both moved up to the face. The draught was strong enough to suck the dust into the bedding as fast as it was created! Following the procedure the “Bishops Finger” was reduced, its remains rolled back to the Anvil and neatly stacked. The “Bishops Finger” was closely followed by a further elongated item...the “Doctors Digit”; this too was also drilled, and the process repeated. TB observed there another small inlet, similar to the one at the “Terminus”, some three metres distant. There is now a quantity of loose debris waiting to be removed. During the session the chill factor from the draught was enormously debilitating, both diggers becoming very cold. Once out they made for the warm embrace of the radiators in the Roadside. 386 6716

1st June

Bob Drake; lost, 25 years ago today.

8th June Fraggles Rock

Matt Randall, Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott

LW 16:03; going to neaps; a nice evening; the plan to take in ten replacement skids and to carry forward to expose the “Doctors Digit”. A small stream was present. CC went ahead to the face, with TB at the Anvil, PC dragging to the bend to send to MR at the Loading Bay. TB had trouble hauling so exchanged places with PC. The arrangement of the return rope etc. requires attention. MR completed the session digging up to the “Doctors Digit”. All the skids were filled and most of the pieces of “Son of Boris” were sent out from Anvil Chamber. After a long session around thirty seven skids were filled and stacked alongside the separate pieces of “Son of Boris”; the skids need counting. The team emerged at 21:00 to a lovely evening, then to the Roadside for drink 386 6716

11th June Fraggles Rock

Cheg Chester, Jim Warny, David Doran

LW 19:36; no wind, no swell, sea state smooth, an almost uncanny occurrence. The team was joined by David, an acquaintance of PC; the plan to remove the spoil from the Loading Bay. So, CC to the Loading Bay with DD tramping, JW dragging and PC hauling outside. The thirty seven skids were removed swiftly; the effort of tramping exhausted DD, this was a) his first ever cave and b) his first ever dig.....DD left to recover while the remaining three headed to the bar for drinks and to discuss the future of the digging procedure.

Discussion: if the gravel floor beyond the “Doctors Digit” continues then it may be practicable to press forward stacking the spoil in the bedding immediately it’s produced thereby reducing the quantity of man hours involved transporting it to surface; lining the edges of the “trench” with stone will reduce the chance of flood

eroding the spoil, one suggestion is to follow the stream route further reducing stream erosion. This hangs on several factors, not least, the volume of space, and the depth of the gravel and clay floor. It will mean that for the first time the spoil will not need handling more than once. It presently requires some twelve man hours to fill and remove thirty skids to surface. The plan is to remove the "Doctors Digit" next Monday and assess the area beyond.

423 6753

12th June Fraggles Rock

Matt Randall, Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott, David Doran.

HW 17:06; springs. Light wind with sea state slight. A slight stream was issuing from the entrance; the plan, to remove the "Doctors Digit" and assess the area beyond. So, DD and TB set up at the Loading Bay, CC went to the face while PC and MR settled in Anvil Chamber. A pulley was installed on the rope system along the bedding prior to digging, which proved a vast improvement. After clearing debris the end of the boulder was reached, on closer inspection it is far larger than previously estimated, being some four foot long two wide and about one thick; therefore some 560 kilos in weight. It is end on so drilling will be straightforward. PC went forward to assist CC in levering the boulder out of the clay; once lifted PC dug beneath it for some two feet, at which point the stream, as it was, began to flow beneath it. As CC dug he found the trench began to deepen, increasing the passage height by some four/five inches! Beyond the boulder the passage is low, perhaps some ten inches high, but some five metres wide, ample enough to stack spoil as the existing trench is followed; peering over the boulder PC is convinced he could see forward for some twenty metres, the roof having many stalactite; later, TB used his digital measuring device and recorded ten metres. On the right hand side, some six metres in front is a curious cavity in the floor; a trench? If so, it is pronounced; others in the team also noted a possible inlet on the left. The floor beyond is of a similar nature as has been experienced before, cobbles, gravel and clays, only wider.....the impending effort to dig along the present buried stream trench will require no where near the normal level of work. To the Roadside for drinks, a cracking evening

423 6753

21st June Fraggles Rock from PCN log

Tony Boycott, Cheg Chester

Midsummer, rainy & cold so no climbers or walkers around!

Nudged the Doctors Digit twice; now in 40+ pieces, one of which is large but manageable. We think it was nearly as big as Boris. Crawled ahead for a couple of metres, the trench on the right is a pool with the roof reflected in it; ahead the passage bends left after about 10m, should be passable by moving spoil to the side to create a trench, but stream is now on the fill surface, so we may need a wet weather alternative. The remaining skips should cope with the remains of The Digit. Tony B

25th June Fraggles Rock

Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott

LW 18:38, neaps; a warm light breeze sea state slight; a very small stream issuing. The plan was to remove the remains of the "Doctors Digit". While PC received the skids from TB at the Loading Bay, CC went ahead to the face. PC installed a further pulley along the bedding, which avoided the two ropes rubbing together in their alternate directions. The previous work meant the pieces were mostly manageable; the exception being some three feet long and ten inches in diameter. The remains of the "Doctors Digit" filled some fourteen skids plus two separate lumps. TB and PC took turns hauling; soon the route to the burrow was all but blocked with skids, making operating difficult. All skids are now back at the Loading Bay; some thirty five. PC used a bright light to see along the bedding for some fifteen metres the passage bends slightly left then to the right, the width is up to five metres in places, there appear to be some boulders protruding from the surface around eight to ten

metres distant. The trench is becoming more pronounced, increasing the passage height. The provisional plan is to press forward packing the spoil into every available nook and cranny. The weir will remain in place as there is an increased chance of spoil migration from digging now the three obstructing boulders have been removed. Also, as there is much more room at the face the return rope system will be replaced with the normal two rope method. The team then headed to the Roadside, where after a couple of pints the trio were hijacked into the new extension to try even more pints from the new shiny pumps. 423 **6753**

29th June Fraggle Rock

Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott

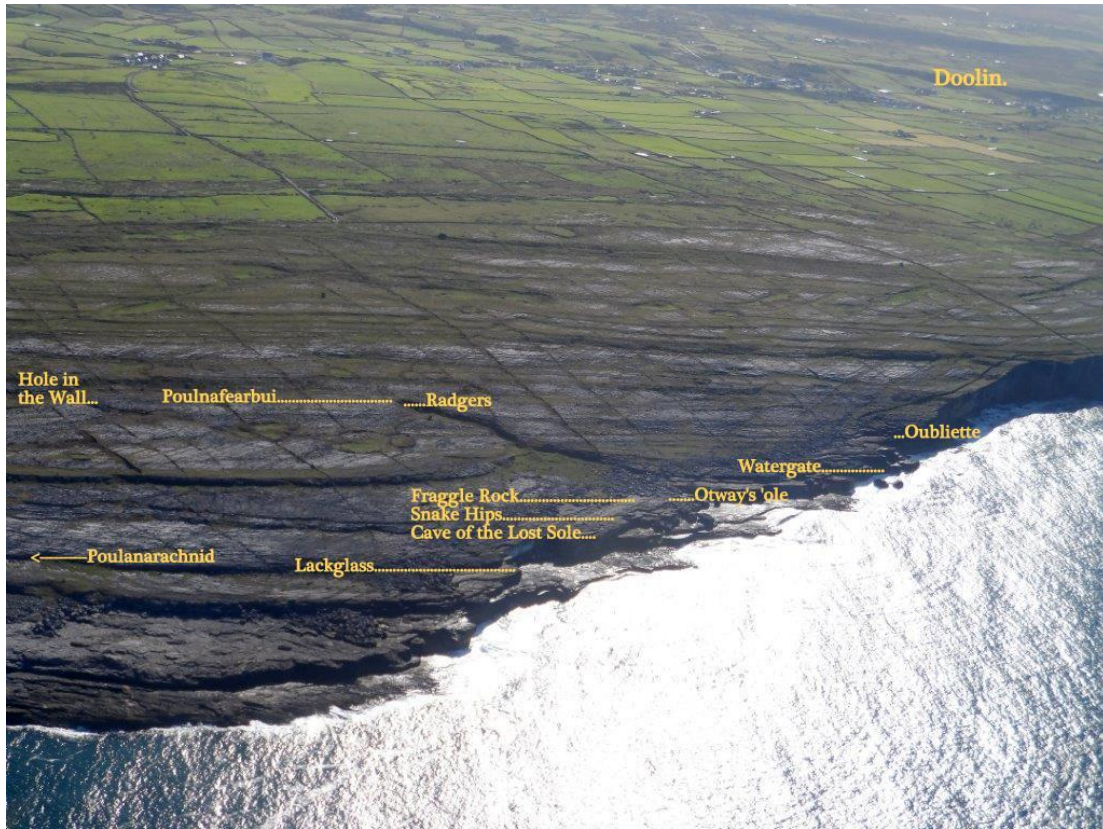
HW 16:14 going to springs; light breeze, humid, sea state smooth; a very small stream issuing; following no real rainfall of late. The plan: to remove the stacked skids from the "Loading Bay". The team assembled, nursing their various infirmities and injuries, and sorted their most efficient positions, TB to the loading bay, PC tramping with CC dragging the skids to beyond the original hauling point; thus arranged the task passed swiftly. The place where the three boulders once sat is also the area where the trench resumes, and where the bedding widens significantly providing stacking space for spoil; such spoil will require careful husbanding of the space available so CC has built a tool with which to ram the debris into place. The total removed was forty skids plus two large lumps of rock, the last rolled out by TB. Four skids were retired, thirty three remain.

Over pints alternate plans were discussed how to proceed; two options came to the fore; 1) to excavate the trench, this means much more room to dig, and that the digger is mostly out of the stream flow: winter is approaching! 2) To go "over the top", removing enough spoil to comfortably advance; perhaps two diggers in train, one loosening the spoil the one behind packing it into every space. Whatever the choice experimentation will decide the final outcome. Should there be more than two diggers then rotation of personnel will reduce the effects of the cold. What does require attention is the removal of accumulated silt across the floor of the loading bay this could be achieved during the next session. 463 **6793**

2nd July Fraggle Rock

Cathal Mullane, Jim Warny, Cheg Chester and LR = Luke Randall (aged 10) = LR = (Loose Rivet), = (Little Rascal).

HW 18:15, springs; a small stream issuing; sea state smooth, no wind. The plan: with no skids to empty, to dig the face to evaluate the most appropriate digging method. JW and CM to the working face, with MR and LR to Anvil Chamber, CC in the Loading Bay, and PC at the Terminus. PC sent in the skids while CC began to shave the loading bay floor of compacted silt to gain head room, JW and CM attempted going "Over the Top"; the significant distance achieved of some five to six metres was the result of a lot of effort, it seems the best method is to resume our normal procedure, clear the passage. The area available for packing spoil is still a little distance ahead, so the removal of more skids to surface will be required to reach this facility, perhaps two or three sessions. With personnel swapping around, LR hauled in the empties to Anvil, and also assisted CC tramping to the loading bay; twenty six skids were sent back to PC, as their arrival was slow and steady this allowed him who use the "Gus and Crook" to drag them to surface, later assisted by CC; in all seventeen of these were from the working face now over 100 metres distant, that's quite a good result! In the Roadside the talk was of caving and digging, and being eyed up by strapping German women. Ooo errr, with big biceps! 489 **6819**



Nick Geh

Image used for SUI talk October 2015 illustrating locations of sites.

4th July

ICRO rescue practise
CMcG, PC et al..

A surface display of various skills; a Tyrolean with stretcher, bolting and PC showing capping on a 2 x 1 basis

6th July Fraggie Rock, Cheg's 70th:

Josh? Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott

09:30 HW 08:58; going to neaps. A good sized stream was issuing; the evening rain had previously caused the stream to cover the overflow reference point, downstream of the entrance: the plan, to do some housekeeping and maybe some digging. While PC replaced the tram red rope, the others carried on. CC went up to the face, Josh settled at The Anvil, TB at the Loading Bay. The stream flow was sufficient to cover the step at the loading bay. PC was the called forward by CC to assess the face while there he assisted CC. The volume and progress achieved by JW and CM was a welcome surprise, terminating just beyond the large boulder on the left. PC followed the edge of the trench from where the "Doctor Digit" once lay; progressing about a metre clearing the remaining six inches of spoil top expose the floor of the trench. The area was left with the right side clean, the left side an edge of clay matrix spoil; the width is about 700mm. CC suggested the installation of sandbags near the face to catch the dissolving gravels. The site was left with two sandbags in place; with the clay step dissolving almost immediately. Some dozen skids were sent back and stacked at the Loading Bay. Once out the team sped to the Roadside for the next chapter of Cheg's birthday celebrations.

489 **6819**

13th July Fraggle Rock

Cheg Chester, Matt Randall, Fionn Randall (8 years old)

18:00: HW 16:05, going to springs, light breeze sea state slight, a large stream issuing, level with the reference point, there was evidence of a high flow of water throughout the cave; it was washed clean. The plan was to remove the stacked skids. In the high flow rate CC went forward to the face to observe and investigate the effect of the sandbag "dam" previously installed by PC; PC set up at the Anvil, with FR and MR in the Loading Bay. The predicted washed debris all but filled the area behind the sandbags this was swiftly removed; CC also took advantage to dig forward level with the long boulder on the left. The spoil was sent back adding to the existing skids in the loading bay; now a total of thirty two. During the session FR decided to have a look about, arriving at the Anvil via the elevated stream level in the "Burrow" only to then scamper off along the bedding to surprize CC joining him in the long pool created by the sandbags; whilst there FR assisted CC with hauling the return rope. The team then packed up to head for the Roadside, an idea suggested by FR before the trip began.....

489 **6819**

16th July Fraggle Rock

Cathal Mullane, Cheg Chester

18:00: HW18:18; springs, no wind, sea state smooth; a small stream issuing. The plan: to remove the accumulated skids. CM to the loading bay, PC tramping and CC dragging to the half way point along the entrance passage. The session was quickly accomplished with thirty two skids removed and stacked at the Terminus. The tram was noted as requiring re greasing. In a heavy humid atmosphere, surrounded by leaden clouds the team headed to the Roadside for pints and talk of caving stuff.

522 **6851**

20th July Fraggle Rock

Matt Randall, Cheg Chester

HW20:57 going to neaps; very windy, sea state rough. A reasonable size stream issuing; during the week heavy showers were sporadic. There was evidence of a recent good sized flood along the entrance passage. The plan; to dig at the face and to replace the rope from the face to Anvil Chamber: CC to the face while PC sent skids up to MR at the Loading Bay, MR then forward to assist CC with PC in position at the Anvil. CC found that the recent heavy rain had blown away the two sandbags installed by PC scoured a channel some six feet long and two feet wide, virtually exposing the elongated boulder on the left, the flow had exposed another elongated boulder, (the Rhino? it has a horn!), almost immediately beyond. The type of matrix holding the boulders is predominantly the soft clay and fine gravel that almost immediately dissolves. This erosion will ultimately cause the boulder on the left to collapse into the passage; nudging will take care of each. What appears to be an inlet is some five metres on the left beyond the "Rhino" a small channel exhibits evidence of regular flow. Three skids of sand were removed from Anvil Chamber; the remaining twenty nine were all from the face. The skids were temporarily stacked at the weir then in turn sent to the Loading Bay. The team exited late into a warm but windy evening; to the Roadside for pints. The sand bag at the Weir is to be removed to allow the finer sediments to pass on downstream to accumulate at the Dam. It is likely that after other two or three sessions it will be possible to pack spoil into the open areas of the bedding ahead.

522 **6851**

23rd July Fraggle Rock

Cheg Chester, Jim Warny, Cathal Mullane, Matt Randall

LW 16:39 neaps: sea state slight, light wind, bright evening; a small stream issuing. The plan, with a team of five, was to swiftly remove the skids to the terminus to allow JW and CM to dig at the face supported by MR so CC and PC could drag the skids to outside. All went well with CC later sending the accumulated empties up to PC who

relocated to the loading bay, sending the empties on again to MR who stacked them in the entrance to 3T's. There followed, in rapid succession, sixteen skids from the face stacked ready for dispatch at the Loading Bay. The lads dug to the left of the "Rhino" and forward almost two metres. This allows the "Rhino" to be nudged next Monday. The Loading Bay floor has accumulated a good deal of sand and sediment, as was its planned use, to accommodate the possibility of an increase of sand etc. from the face the plan is to dig out the floor area to provide room for future deposits. Out to a nice evening; and lots of flies: to the Roadside and rub shoulders with the latest German visitors. 554 **6883**

83 skids to 7000; between 140/145 tonnes!

25th July Aille River Cave

Martyn Farr, Dave Watts, Una Donahue

Met up with the team at the café in Cong; then travelled to Ballinrobe to leave PC's truck at the B&B. Then on to Aille River area, after going to the most obvious location PC found the actual entrance in the collapse above the main cliff adjacent to the Pilgrims Way Walk. A steep descent down the edge of the collapse leads into the area where the water enters from the main sink; downstream a climb up to the left gives access to the network of streamways, beautifully carved passages echo to the river which attain the dimensions of three metres by seven metres: here, on a bend MF was caught by a rolling boulder which slashed his left upper leg, the trip continued until the pain became too great, PC accompanied MF out while UD and DW had a further look about. A spell of three hours getting stitched in Castlebar Hospital completed the afternoon. Carneys Bar later supplied the drink and food.

26th July Fraggie Rock

Cheg Chester

HW 14:49, going to springs: cool breeze, sea state slight. A small stream was issuing; the plan was to nudge the "Rhino" out of the way. PC went ahead and drilled obliquely into its side; CC swiftly followed and the majority of the "Rhino" was fractured. The remaining section required drilling from water level, which would make CC's task all the more difficult, the final result was that the "Rhino" was removed its remains are packed along the passage ready for extraction; one elongated piece was rolled back to the Anvil. Both became very cold from prolonged immersion. The net skid will be required to transport the bits. Sixteen skids are spread about the place. The survey could now be brought up to date from the Anvil as the distance beyond is now some 15 metres plus. After staggering up the hill, with the kit, the pair settled into the warmth of the Roadside for some very welcome pints. 554 **6883**

30th July Fraggie Rock

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

HW17:13; springs; cool evening, breezy, sea state slight; a small stream issuing. The plan was that CC and PC would remove the skids from the Loading Bay to outside while the others went ahead to remove the remains of the "Rhino", and fill the remaining sixteen skids to stack at the Loading Bay for later removal. The trio swiftly set themselves up with MR at the face, MM at the Anvil and JW at the Loading Bay; their feverish pace soon overran the capabilities of CC and PC: who on returning from their task outside set to removing another eighteen skids, many laden with the "Rhino's very large and very heavy chunks. As drink time was beckoning, (screaming, actually), it was decided to leave the remaining lumps of the "Rhino", and the other fourteen skids, at the Loading Bay for the Monday session and make a break for the Roadside before various team members body parts seized up or failed entirely. MF's leg injury from the Aille River Cave trip prevented him from attending, so met up with Helen and himself in the Roadside; where else? The drink and music

added to a very nice session. The Good Doctor Boycott should return shortly from his trip to Iceland; his lunacy is missed, enormously. 584 6917

3rd August Fraggie Rock

Cheg Chester

HW 20:11; springs: force seven to eight winds; sea state force six mountainous along the coastline; a good sized stream issuing. The plan: to send up the empty skids from the Terminus, to inspect the face and dig. Upon arrival at the entrance the sea was breaking nosily against the foreshore, quite usual in these conditions, the pair monitored the wave sequence for some five minutes and decided to reduce the length of the plan to a swift look at the face and to send in the empty skids. CC moved up to the Loading Bay while PC sorted the skids out at the Terminus. PC sent up two pairs of skids and had just received a large rock by return when at which point a loud hissing sound was immediately followed by sea water surrounding PC to above his waist as he sat on the wooden cross member; pushing the loose skids up the passage toward CC. PC calmly informed CC of this ingress by the sea suggesting they vacate the dig as soon as items were secured. The swift arrival of a second inundation emphasised this proposal. The truck and lines were secured as were all bar four of the skids. As the pair exited and stood either side of the stream trough, to calculate the situation, the sea breasted the bench to a depth of about 12" (300mm), bracing themselves against the cliff the wave swirled tugging at their legs as it ebbed; as the pair stood up a second wave immediately mounted the ebbing tide and flooded the bench to a depth above knee height, (easily some two feet). PC was washed away into the entrance, whilst submerged receiving a blow to the rear of his caving helmet; seizing the rock surface, as he passed it by, he maintained his underwater location despite the powerful suction of the ebb: on being washed away PC had collided with CC knocking him over in turn, fortunately CC, closer to the cliff edge, managed to hold his position by jammed his fingers into a vertical crack in the cliff face. Within 10 -15 seconds PC had resurfaced and together they stood watching the sea once again to time their escape across the open bench. In a busy Roadside, with MF and HF, they enjoyed their pints, despite the crowds of visitors. The tangle of skids will need tidying and the rock PC put up onto the skid shelf will want removal as soon as possible. 584 6917

6th August Fraggie Rock

Cheg Chester, Jim Warny, Cathal Mullane

LW 16:16 neaps: sea state slight, light breeze with a small stream issuing. The plan; to see what damage had been done since the episode on Monday the 3rd and to remove the existing skids at the Loading Bay and to press the working face forward to where the spoil could begin being packed into the space along bedding above the existing fill. JW and CM moved to the face while CC and PC drew and stacked the skids on the shelf at the Terminus. CC then went to the Anvil and sent skids back to PC. At the moment there are some nineteen???? skids, and large lumps of stone at the Loading Bay and twelve skids, and rocks, at the Terminus. The working face was pressed forward some two metres over a floor layer of some 120mm depth of spoil, a fair amount was packed into the bedding; the plan is to remove this floor layer next Thursday to increase working height. Monday should see all the skids emptied. The truck requires maintenance as it has become very heavy to pull; the survey should also be extended as the estimated distance from the Anvil is now in excess of twenty metres. The team then retired to the Roadside for pints and talk. During the evening PC suggested Poulbanbeag be reinvestigated/nudged. Likewise the team should revisit Poulacapple digging straight down the main rift area, the facility to un-water the bottom of the shaft is already partly in place, though the wooden hauling staging requires immediate replacement; the site adjacent to Poulcaherrua near Bell Harbour should also be revisited; the latter arranged via Nick Geh. 584 6917

10th August Fraggle Rock
Matt Randall, Cheg Chester

HW 14:58, going to springs: sea state slight, light breeze; a good sized stream issuing. The plan was to remove the skids from the Terminus shelf and the Loading Bay. CC went in to the Loading Bay greasing the truck en-route, PC set up at the Terminus and dragged the skids to the hauling point from where MR drew them outside; soon CC was sending his skids back so life was frantic at the Terminus; however the effort spent made for an early finish so CC could have a drink before departing for Dublin. Thirty one skids were removed and also two large pieces of the "Doctors Digit": swiftly to the Roadside for pints, and discussing the potential of Poulacapple Pot.

615 6948

13th August Fraggle Rock
Cathal Mullane, Cheg Chester

HW17:23; springs; clear evening, light breeze sea state slight: a small stream issuing. The plan was for CC and PC to go to the face and remove the lower spoil, advanced over by CM and JW, to expose the smooth bedrock for hauling purposes and increased working height. CM at the Anvil dragged the skids back and stacked them ready for hauling to the Loading Bay. The distance progressed by JW and CM brought the working face to within around two/three metres of the exposed lumps of rock clearly seen protruding from the gravels. CC worked away swiftly exposing the bedrock and creating a working width of some 0.6m (2 feet), though an unexpected deep pool appeared during excavations. Nineteen skids were sent back; PC then went to assist CM moving them to the Loading Bay. Meanwhile CC poked around the far side of the pool exposing rising bedrock scrapping further he advanced through the distant heaped pile of flood debris up to the edge of the aforesaid rocks; these appear to lay in such a way that progress should be made between them: moreover the area for stacking spoil is much larger than first imagined; it is likely that this area will take some two hundred or so skids. Meaning progress across this wide area will be/should be swift indeed. The plan for this section is that the one in front exposes the bedrock to a width of some 0.6 metre, the next widens the path to one metre and arranges the top of the trough so it is clear for around 0.150m (6 inches) of any spoil, this should reduce stream erosion. The old spade needs locating for use of the second digger, its somewhere at PC's place. The Loading Bay has filled a little more, its increased floor level a ball ache reducing headroom during hauling. The passage entering the next area has a significant bend, this is the second from "Bend for a Friend" these two are where the three boulders were encountered, the "Coffin Lid", "Bishops Finger" and the "Doctors Digit", perhaps reference this point Coffin Corner and the larger area beyond the Barn? These two bends appear to alter the direction of the passage by perhaps as much as ninety degrees, which PC believes will trend east – to south-east. Over all a superb evenings work, the idea that we can now advance on an hourly basis without recourse for up to ten hours removing spoil. To the Roadside where seats were available for the elderly!

615 6948

15th August Clooncoose Cave, CLO10 100003
Solo

The second trip to continue the survey of the souterrain remains within.

17th August Fraggle Rock
Cheg Chester

HW 19:51 springs: a light breeze; sea state smooth; a small stream issuing. The plan: for PC to progress forward, beyond CC's limit, while CC removed the accumulated debris throughout the bedding, from Anvil Chamber to Coffin Corner, thereby making hauling the skids an easier task. As PC dug forward the space between the emerging boulder and the wall narrowed for the first metre then increased over the second; progress was however quite swift, with only small amounts on the spade

throwing or flicking the spoil over the right hand boulder was easily accomplished, though larger lumps were not so successfully packed. This boulder sits on the bedrock, not in a trench; there is a hollow in the floor along the digging route. The distance achieved was some two metres, almost to the end of the boulder; at this point the long pool along the left wall was partly breached thoroughly soaking the digger; much more water remains in this elongated pool, another pool is over to the right of the passage. At this point a mound of flood debris obscured further deposition of spoil and restricted the forward view. Also the floor developed a deep pool, of some 4 inches (100mm), though this increases the height there is no apparent way for it to drain of water. At this point the debris requires removal to outside to regain the ability to stack spoil as we dug, the amount required to achieve this is likely, maybe at least ten skids worth. Meanwhile CC had scrapped the entire bedding free of hardening silt and the accumulation of loose debris thus allowing for an easier hauling of skids; in turn he filled thirteen skids which were man handled back to the Anvil and then to the Loading bay ready for Thursday. Thoroughly shagged out the pair made for the Roadside, with room to sit! In the last two sessions four metres of forward progress have been achieved. It does seem likely that the occasional skid session will be required as we cross this wide bedding area. There are a total of thirty three skids at the Loading Bay 615 **6948**

*20th August Fraggle Rock from PCN logs
Cheg Chester, Cathal Mullane, Jim Warny, Matt Randall, Tony Boycott
CC to loading bay, TB trammimg, JW inside & others outside quickly removed 34
skips full to the sea. 1 skip used twice & 3 retired, so we now have 30, all returned to
the Loading Bay. The youngest 3 decided it was too early to go to the bar, so visited
Yellow men on the way back. Sorry Pat, I've lost the latest log from you so can't
complete the totals. Cheers Tony 649 **6882***

*23rd August Fraggle Rock Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott
Rare daytime trip to beat the rumoured flood coming tonight & tomorrow
13 skips to the Anvil, then CC dug & filled 11 from the face, a stray boulder made 12
now stacked at the Loading Bay. CC has progressed another metre, exposing the
nose of another boulder in the face, but it can probably be dug past, if it is the front
end of the one visible in the middle of the passage it is 2m long. CC then squeezed
over the top for another 2m, looks a bit more open for a couple of metres, then
appears to bend left again, with another pool on the right, plenty of stacking space
now. TB used a Disto - 25m from the Anvil to the face at the start of digging, 7m
longest shot over the top, so total length 33m visible. Negotiated the traffic jam in
the parking place to the Roadside for single pint only Tony*

*27th August Fraggle Rock
Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott, Jim Warny, Cathal Mullane, Matt Randall
HW 16:06, going to springs; wind force three, sea state rough, a reasonable stream
issuing. The plan; for CM, JW and MR to dig at the face with CC, TB and PC hauling
out the dozen skids stacked at the Loading Bay. Progress at the face was slow the
restricted room between the emerging elongated boulders being the problem, even so
a good amount of debris was thrown to the side. Despite the difficulties eight skids
were sent outside; this increased the total number of skids removed to twenty seven,
plus a largish rock plus a very large lump which has resided at the Terminus for some
time; the Terminus is now clear of all loose debris: there are two skids here. The team
then made for a surprisingly quiet Roadside where sitting room was available: the
Matchmaking season commences tomorrow..... 642 **6985***

Fifteen to 7000 = at least 140 tonnes.

29th August Clooncoose Cave, CLO10 100003

Solo

Continued survey from the 6.6m mark just beyond the large flag; dropped a plumb line from Station one to Station two to achieve a level line to Station 3; Station 0 is at the entrance below the rock face. At a point 3.5metres from Station two a plumb line was dropped from the roof to mark that distance; from here, (centre of the passage), the tumble from the man made obstacle finishes and a more level floor surface continues. This Station located in the roof will allow an accurate measurement of the roof up to, and beyond, the alcove.

30th August Watergate

Tony Boycott

LW 12:03 (0.25m) springs: the plan was as the high pressure in the north Atlantic was building to make an attempt to enter and survey Watergate, as "Oubliette" remains blocked by storm debris a very careful watch would be maintained on the sea level and its state. The plan also allowed for the pair to arrive at least an hour before LW. En-route PC could see some breaking sea on the south end of Inisheer; remaining optimistic the pair continued to the site via the slippery coastal route. On arrival at the coast the breakers were noted as being between 0.75m and 1 metre; they walked around to the entrance to confirm the suspected inaccessibility. A meandering return saw them look at the sinuous remnant noted by CC some three years ago; it has suffered severely from coastal erosion. Further discussion suspects that its location and elongated route makes it a likely candidate for Otway's 'ole.

31st August Fraggie Rock

Tony Boycott

HW 19:05 springs: a bright clear evening sky, no breeze, with sea state slight, a smallish stream issuing. The plan: to eradicate the elongated boulder noted by MR as being a partial obstruction en-route to the face; by either capping or nudging. Even though the stream was small the constricted conditions required respect for the battery drill. Both drilling options were maintained, either the 8.5mm holes or the 11mm; capping in such a narrow circumstance would however be problematic. PC moved to the face to inspect the rate of progress, which was very impressive, removing his helmet whilst trying to see over the debris he impaled himself on a stalactite, bugger. Returning to the boulder, previous shortened by MR, he found it just about moveable; after ensuring the route back to Coffin Corner was clear of debris he attached his belt, and TB's, around the arse of the boulder the rope was secured using the crowbar as a lever, TB had previously retrieved from Anvil Chamber, (now some twenty five metres away), the boulder dragged with some difficulty four metres; then hauling together for another eight metres it was eventually placed the wide downstream side of Coffin Corner, where it can receive appropriate attention. The boulder at the face, on the right, looks like it will be useful in reducing stream erosion; though TB believes knocking off the sharp pointy end will reduce injury to diggers. Regrettably the five skids from the last session were left in Anvil. Thoroughly shagged out, and still leaking, they exited: PC was examined by the Good Doctor Boycott on the sunlit coast who promptly prescribed visiting the Roadside for further observation, which was accompanied by Ooo's and Ahhh's from the staff, after a couple of Gold's the pain disappeared. 642 6985

5th September Clooncoose Cave

Christy Healy

The plan was for CH to video the site, and its environs, for inclusion in the forthcoming film on the route of the Fergus River. PC had suggested sites within the Fergus catchment to extend interest; survey string still in place.

7th September Fraggle Rock
Cheg Chester

LW 20:00 neaps: sea state smooth, (mirror like); no wind, (remarkably still air), visibility infinite: an almost uncanny feel to the evening; a small stream issuing, evidence of a flood pulse was present throughout to Anvil Chamber. The plan: to survey from the Anvil, (the present limit of the survey), to the working face: so no ironmongery was carried down for hauling purposes. En-route the team had a senior moment realizing the unfortunate absence of the tape measure: at this point Plan B kicked in: to go to the working face, look, assess and remove what could be removed. CC went up and was pleasantly shocked by the progress of the others, finding the last boulder on the right, (No 3), loose; the best digging direction was assessed as following the arch in the roof, offering a height gain of an extra three inches, which is heading off at thirty degrees, toward the pond, which was dry. PC wriggled past CC to assess the boulder, (No 3), the one previously considered an asset to reduce stream erosion: much of the scattered flood debris has come from along the length of this boulder, previously only the pointy bit was visible, it was now completely clear along its entire length of four feet (1.2 metres). It was deemed to be an obstacle and was rolled into the passage; the floor area was then dug down to bedrock in preparation for, A) increase the height for further progress and B) to drag out this boulder, (No. 3). The bedrock was cleared again in readiness back to Coffin Corner. A further large rock was dragged back by CC, deposited downstream of Coffin Corner: these now need capping to reduce them to useful sized lumps for revetting loose debris along the passage. On emerging the pair ran the gauntlet of thousands of midges, horrific. In the Roadside discussions turned to “nudging” No. 3; it will need reducing so why not there and then; some parts being used to revet the area where No. 1 once lay. The place needs a good flood to wash out the scattered gravels. The area of No. 3 has a lot of clay deposit both along and over the bedrock and as a mound on the right.

642 6985

11th September Fisherstreet Pot
Solo

00:35 following rainfall of 4.7 inches, PC was out on call with the Coast Guard. Among many places, a flood was present along the section of road past Fisherstreet Pot. The water was mushrooming from the depression to a height of a metre then cascading down slope to flood the field pass through, and over, the dry stone wall to flood the adjacent house and the fields toward the river. The river was up to above the arches of both bridges. The area driven was from Miltown Malbay to Doolin many roads awash from the run off from the fields. The south side of Knocknalarabana Mountain had a 300mm deep stream flowing down hill toward Lahinch driving downhill through the stream it regularly came over the bonnet of the Coast Guard Hilux. See report PCN website, SUI newsletter.

12th September Clooncoose Cave
Solo

PC surveyed the cave passage from Station three to Station four, (the pool); a distance of ten point seven metres; measured at half metre intervals. Two point seven metres from Station three the alcove was located to the line survey. This too was recorded. Following the heavy rainfall of the previous twenty four hours the water level was elevated but not as much as expected; it showed that the raised alcove floor was only calculated for normal rainfall, as the water level was three inches above the floor level.

14th September Fraggle Rock
Solo

LW 12:28 springs: raining; light wind, sea state slight; a large stream issuing. The plan to see what had occurred since the heavy rainfall on Friday. Two pieces of timber

from the working face close to the climb down onto the bench. At 15:28 the stream was measured at 85mm above the reference datum. More rain had fallen since the 4.7 inches recorded by CC on Friday. Obvious evidence of flood conditions, no debris within the main passage. At the Terminus the sound of water was heard coming from the Loading Bay above the sound of the rushing stream. Some clean washed gravel at the Boars Heads; one piece of timber used for lying upon at the working face on the top of the rails here. In front of the Dam there was more clean washed gravel; the stream was flowing over the dam at a depth of fifty millimetres, the outlet pipe unobstructed. The skids in "Jim's Passage" appeared undisturbed; TB's crate was gentle floating around the pool while tethered to an eye bolt. Upon the right hand side of the step a large mound of clean washed gravel has been deposited. The Burrow appeared clear with a stream of some one hundred and fifty millimetres deep; progress was on ones back. A large stone, the size of a small football, was found just beyond the Burrow followed by a small amount of clean washed gravel. At the Weir was another small quantity of clean washed gravel. The stream was pouring around the Weir very close to its top causing a very deep pool beyond. The pool caused difficulties entering the bedding so the Weir was partially opened to lower the water level. Debris is scattered along the bedding up to "Bend for a Friend", here too the rammer was found and another piece of timber, along with at least two medium flags washed out the walls, just beyond "Bend for a Friend" a large pile of clean washed gravel has been deposited; digging through this the water beyond was lowered some one hundred millimetres. Beyond another deep pool stretched almost to Coffin Corner; the two large boulders positioned by TB, CC and PC remained in situ. The sand bag lay askew and beneath two hundred and twenty five millimetres of stream. From Coffin Corner the boulder suspected of one day falling from the side into the passage has done just that. Beyond the floor of this narrow section is clear of debris; the clay and debris walls surprisingly intact. The next elongated boulder has also moved making the route narrower. At the point where PC impaled himself and removed a boulder another is beginning to become exposed; here too the radius of the passage has appeared from among the clay and gravel deposits as a clean ninety degree bend. Just here too is another boulder across the passage below the stream stopping further erosion of the floor, and also PC's progress. Removing the helmet, craning the head, one eye below the stream, the now seemingly larger way on is along the axis of what was the "Pond"; the depth of water is unknown but the airspace above it was similar to the previous airspace above the floor level, so perhaps the stream level hides a useful amount of crawl space. Those with a small chest may well slip through. The way on does seem large enough to admit a slim sod. Returning to the Anvil PC used his time to dig out the Dutch hoe to open a channel through the piles of debris and also reducing the large pile at "Bend for a Friend". It is quite possible that a crawlable route will emerge once the stream decreases in volume. At 00:30 the 12th of September 2015, Saturday morning, PC observed severe flood along the road in front of Fisherstreet Pot; the water was mushrooming out of Fisherstreet Pot, cascading down slope to flood the two fields, the road to a depth of seven hundred millimetres and the fields toward the river; even knocking two large holes through the walls the flood level remained constant until around 01:30 when it appeared to decrease slightly. The mushroom above the pot was observed via a mounted floodlight on the roof of the Coast Guard Hilux, and witnessed along with Andy Grindrod; the evening's events were almost biblical. The estimated debris will require, perhaps, some fifty to sixty skids.....beyond the working face the area to the left can be used to stack spoil, so its clean gravel that requires removal. **642 6985**

24th September Fraggie Rock
Cheg Chester

LW 21:07; neaps; light wind sea state rough. The stream issuing was six millimetres below the "overflow reference". Recovering from a severe sprained wrist PC's plan

was to look at the state of the place following the flood of 11/12th September. Enroute inbye small amounts of sediment was noticed; likely the evidence of the second inundation on 13th September. Up to the terminus small accumulations of gravel and sand noted here and there. Near the Dam an elongated deposit of gravel has occurred. At the Loading Bay there is no step visible the flood debris considerable; though a scoured cavity has formed near the outlet. Along the Burrow erosion has occurred on the west side; in the upper section there is washed gravel up to the Weir. From the Weir through to the Anvil and onward to Coffin Corner there is much washed gravel. From Coffin Corner onward the floor has seen severe cleansing and erosion. Without the elevated water level a clearer view around was available; the rock PC had got to were the passage turned right was now buried, a lot of the gravel has come from this point inbye. CC squeezed forward, bearing left, digging past a larger clay mound and through some of the clay and gravel mixture remaining achieving forward progress of four to five metres, here the depressing feeling of a rising floor become identified in actual fact a long thin boulder; left and right of it is gravel and clay. While CC was occupied up front PC levered out the small boulder and began to dig the floor forward toward the bend clearing about seven hundred and fifty millimetres; revetting the looser gravel with large stones. CC retraced his wriggle; PC went forward and confirmed CC assessment that beyond the end of this four metre, (twelve foot) long thin boulder, there is definitely an increase in passage height with what appears to be a reduction in passage width: this is great news; particularly when the visible passage can be seen to extend ahead for over ten metres. While PC was busy CC began to clean the floor back to Coffin Corner; PC joined in until the area was clear and the pair were well and truly shagged out; trudging back to the truck a swift change and a fast run to the Roadside for celebratory drinkies. The immediate way on is wet and constricted, though diggable; the plan is to push forward next Monday morning as PC has IRCG interviews next Monday evening.

642 6985

29th September Fraggie Rock
Cheg Chester

LW 12:24: a perigee tide of 0.09m; the result of the recent Lunar eclipse: A bright day with a light breeze, sea state slight; a very small stream issuing a one metre swell obstructed Watergate. The plan was for CC to push the squeeze and pass the large slab. The place looked quite desolate; the debris scattered around the Loading bay and all the way up to Coffin Corner. CC pushed ahead digging his way through having negotiated the squeeze. While PC waited he assessed the route from the end of the passage, up from Coffin Corner, and believes the best way to tackle this obstruction is to dissolve the immediate boulder, this gives access to the arse of the long slab; the left hand passage wall has a step which can be used to dig along the left edge of the long slab; a distance of four metres will see an improvement in room height and width. CC pressed on and reported the next obstacle is another boulder that also requires dissolving but immediately beyond the passage assumes a dizzy height of eighteen inches (450mm), wow crawl-able! From his position CC could see for a further six metres. Thursday; the plan is to Drill and Nudge the first boulder, an easy task, the next is for CC or JW, or someone with a substandard chest size, to wriggle up to drill and prep the next rock. The pair then retraced their sodden steps then cleared out the debris from the burrow through to the Anvil; some five skids of debris remain in Anvil, while the amount beyond is estimated around forty skids worth; all in all a positive outcome from the flood. There are presently twenty seven skids waiting at the Loading Bay. Out into sunshine, and into the Roadside. 642 6985

1st October Fraggie Rock
Jim Warny

HW 20:15; going to neaps; no wind, sea state slight; a very small stream issuing. The plan: for JW to pass the obstruction reached by CC on the 29th Sept, and for PC to

drill the large boulder the flood exposed and also the “Boulder with no name” that has eventually rolled into the passageway. JW wriggled ahead and using a large cobble knocked off the projection that had hampered CC, while PC drilled away JW progressed along the passage that was an average of a metre wide by 0.5m high, during which another squeeze over a boulder was negotiated. The passage then veered slightly right, the bedrock floor rising slowly, though the roof did rising a little too, a gravel floor is present along most the passage. Returning to where he knocked off the projection JW drilled the boulder. Once back with PC the pair moved to the “Boulder with no name” and drilled that. Having started at 17:30 they exited to a wonderful sunset; then exited sharpish to the Roadside to be surrounded by nice bald men visiting Lisdoonvarna for their annual “Outing! Ooo err. The description by JW doesn’t sound too promising but needs checking further so needs some amount of work doing to finally decide on this passage’s potential. "Jim's Passage" could be investigated to assess its potential and development; adjacent to the Loading Bay it would be a swift task to dig out. Meanwhile the site described to PC by a colleague in the Coast Guard sounds extremely promising. 642 6985

5th October Fraggle Rock
Cheg Chester

LW 17:57; neaps; a very small stream issuing, no wind, sea state slight. The plan; to Nudge the boulders drilled on the 1st Oct. While CC moved up into position PC tidied the accumulated flood debris between Anvil and Coffin Corner, to allow an easier crawling route and the pools to drain away. It was decided to leave the forward boulder until a larger route was cleared up to it; prepping the other the result was excellent, the top removed and its base fractured in several places; “the boulder with no name” also received attention; the results being a large half intact, the other half in pieces. Exited into darkness, then, into a much quieter Roadside for the drinks NB. The distance wriggled by JW, beyond the squeeze was sixteen metres, with the four opened by the flood making twenty to where it becomes low once more. 642 6985

15th October B14a **NEW FIND?** Pegasus Pot
Jim Warny

Acting on information from PC’s colleague in the Coast Guard the site was located on Jonathan’s land and explored after thrashing through thorny scrub. The site located as ITM 510837 x 700292; the INGR given in the caves of Clare is somewhat in error, placing it some two hundred metres of so east-south-east, the description too is somewhat different. Further data required.

17th October **NEW FIND** Pegasus Pot
Cheg Chester

Took CC to show him the site; impressed. After taking photos of the area above the rift they turned their attention to the entrance rift. The plan evolved that the open area approaching the northern rift would be walled and a tasteful false floor created, just back from the two openings to maintain the beauty. The plan to dig from below the slope based on the fact if the debris ran and blocked the lower part there was sufficient room in the top of the entrance rift to wriggle out.

After removing around half a cubic metre PC could see a little better along the small crack opposite where the passage turns north-ish, (to be checked on surveying). As PC carefully removed the stone from the lower part of the entrance rift slope CC stacked and packed the stone; the result a very tidy and neat area. Further tentative removal, and a lot of loud rumbling and tinkling from the glass, ultimately provided a better view into a wider area beyond. At this point PC guided a large boulder toward CC when it careened away and rammed into his ankle: whimpering like a really big girl he continued as the fever increased. The removal of two very large rocks opened a gap at the base of the debris slope temptingly sufficient to enter. PC passed over a

large piece of limestone into an area some five metres wide developing swiftly into a rift suffused in cream and golden decoration that extended forward for fifteen metres over the top of two pitches. At the base of the forty degree seriously unstable debris slope a roomy oval pitch, estimated as six metres, is open to the loose debris behind and requires work: below the pitch opens onto what appears to be a large bedding, if shadows do not deceive PC perhaps the bedding is a metre high; its floor is of clean washed cobbles. The echo remains impressive. Returning through the dodgy area the team discussed the stabilizing the now very vertical and unstable entrance slope; this continued in the Roadside. The plan needs to make the slope safe sufficient enough to allow further exploration by the team; the appropriate works to maintain a safe entry can then be decided. TB will do cartwheels.....

Addendum: It was thrilling to see into the rift on Thursday; even more today slipping over the balanced lump of limestone into the big area beyond. To edge slowly down the unstable debris slope, with the golden rift above, to peer down the pitch and see it open; that was a superb moment.

19th October Pegasus Pot
Cheg Chester

PC rang Jonathan to inform of the evening trip; as normal no issue. The trip was to review the entrance slope stability and bottom the northern pitch: on arrival PC drilled and installed a bolt in the entrance rift to ladder down the remaining four metres to avoid the unstable slope and large precarious boulder; CC inspected the top of the slope and the boulder. Descending CC removed and sorted more rocks from the rift while PC hand drilled two bolts back from the edge of the pitch; the plan, if time allowed, for PC to traverse into the top of the pitch and install another bolt to hang the ladder in the wider area. During proceedings CC took photographs and also managed to mirror PC being injured by a falling rock. After an active evening CC opted to climb down into the narrow section of the pitch to see below prior to our departure. Below looks a small narrow floor trench; like the description in the book: no problem though, what does matter is the extension beneath the hanging boulders in the rift. On exiting another assessment of the slope and boulder was made. So the plan; to obtain timber to make temporary supports to enter the extension; if the passage at the bottom of the pitch does go then a more permanent support system can be installed. Either way the large boulder will be supported by a steel bar some two inches in diameter and secured with wedges; to the Roadside for refreshments.

22nd October Pegasus Pot

Tony Boycott, Jim Warny, Cheg Chester

Prepared with timber etc the team began to stabilize the very top of the step entrance slope. When partially completed JW went down to prepare the descent of the north rift to explore; the remaining team continued the shoring work. TB then moved to the rift to support JW while PC and CC installed the four foot long 45mm diameter bar to support the large boulder overhanging the opening into the new extensions; after much chiselling etc., and the bar installed, PC ventured through bringing with him the four lengths of telegraph pole, measuring between three and five foot. The very loose and greasy boulder forty five degree slope continued to be insecure when moving the pole length to the top of the pitch, (Beaver Pot?), referencing the log assemblage. Balancing them carefully PC slowly removed the boulders and stones one by one from the edge of the pitch to expose the vertical walls against which, with CC's assistance they were installed horizontally across the narrow opening onto the pot, and then quickly back filled: the area now much safer from careening down the open pot; though another three poles require installation across the top of the pot to capture the entire debris slope should a major collapse occur. Meanwhile JW had installed another bolt above the wide area of the North pot and descended; expecting from the description two narrow choked rifts: surprized, he entered a beautifully

decorated area with two large parallel rifts. Rejoining CC and PC they entered the new bit, (Beaver Hall?): as a precaution PC went out, just in case the bottom of the rift moved and blocked the opening. With the brighter lights the effect was fantastic; cream and golden hues were displayed along the top of the open rift. Once the precarious boulders had been dropped from the other side of the log jam JW installed two bolts ready for next Monday: the echoes were sonorous. The evenings work had achieved much more than had been expected. The team exited into light rain and darkness: in the Roadside the talk was of Caverns Measureless to Man! What else?



Cheg Chester

The top of Beaver Pot and high level continuation beyond, prior to descent

24th October SUI Conference Clonbur, Co, Mayo
Cats Hole
Martyn Farr, Tony Boycott carrying dive kit for MF

25th October Lough Mask
HF, MF, TB and PC
Morning: walkabout with Helen and Martyn Farr, and Tony Boycott.
Evening: gave talk; Five Years at Fraggie Rock; Engineering Solutions, a diggers Tale.
Well received.

26th October Cats Hole and Kittens Hole
Tony Boycott
10:00 En-route home recorded both locations to understand the maladjustment of
the surveyed passages.

26th October Pegasus Pot
Jim Warny, Matt Randall, Tony Boycott, Cheg Chester
18:00. The plan: to install the three extra telegraph pole sections across Beaver Pot to
prevent the expected forthcoming slippage of the entrance slope from crashing down
it. CC, JW and PC moved to the head of the pitch while TB and MR handed through
the poles; much crashing and collapsing of the slope occurred while the trio packed
and stabilized the rear of the timbers in very wet conditions. Once the work was
completed PC descended the pot relating observations of the jammed boulders in the
rift. Beaver Pot is some seven metres; at the bottom the passage descends down a pile
of stones to a mud filled pot, onward the metre wide rift narrows to 0.4m ascending
to where a large formation disappears to the roof some seven metres above. Here the
passage turns sharp right and a steep mud slope falls away, unable to see clearly,
suspecting a hidden pitch, PC threw lumps of mud and guessed a depth of six metres,
calling for tackle CC joined him followed by TB for a look see, JW joined them and
installed bolts a rope and traverse line; then descending to the bridge. Below, the
seven metre pitch lands in a rift going north and south; both ways gradually ascend to
areas worth closer investigation. Including the existing passages the estimated cave
length, counting too the upper traverse route of the rift, which passes another shaft,
the length is now some one hundred and twenty metres: in places very pretty. So a
rather chuffed, filthy and wet team then drank in the Roadside preparing a plan.

29th October Fraggie Rock
Jim Warny, Tony Boycott, Cheg Chester
HW 18:55: sea state-near gale. The plan: to remove the skids stacked at the Loading
Bay and to store the emptied skids at either the Loading Bay or Anvil Chamber; in
readiness to clear the remaining debris from "Bend for a Friend", and to ultimately
revet and clear the area at the face; beyond which JW had progressed sixteen metres.
To also remove the sand bag dam at the Loading Bay; the idea is that the seemingly
recent and regular, high seas will scour the passage rather than allow debris to
accumulate: a very deeply considered change of mind for the forthcoming winter
period. Descending the coastline, in the pitch dark, the easterly wind could not
obscure the noise of the sea. At the climb down the team watched as successive waves
of increasing size washed across the terrace and into Fraggie Rock. The spectacle was
observed for fifteen minutes as the sea increased in height. After a brief discussion
the team thought the Roadside was a better trip and one they had a better chance of
survival from. Next Monday the team will try again.

642 6985

2nd November Fraggle Rock

Tony Boycott, Cheg Chester

HW 21:36: neaps: very little breeze, sea state slight: a small stream issuing. The walk down was in pitch darkness, the half moon not having risen. The scouring of the area by last weeks sea was comprehensive; no debris present along the passage a small amount found at Bison Boulder Bend, and a little more just before the Dam. The Plan: to remove the skids stacked at the Loading Bay and tram the empties back in ready for the next shift. CC to the Loading Bay, TB tramping with PC hauling. The truck requires urgent maintenance following its recent, and regular, submersions by sea and stream: the resultant effort to move it caused TB to severely strain his shoulder; meanwhile the accompaniment of whimpering, creaks and groans of the other two added to his quiet screaming. Between backs, shoulders, wrists and knuckles twenty eight skids were finally removed, the empties sent back and stacked in the Loading Bay. A conservative total of skids removed at 7013, (140 tonnes). A weary team then waddled up to the truck and into a very empty Roadside where concentrated drinking was interrupted by the voices of the drama group rehearsing in the next room. It is estimated that two more sessions should adequately prepare Fraggle Rock for the forthcoming winter storms; next Thursday the Bedding will be cleared, the skids brought to the Loading Bay, to remove the sand bags and open the Dam; this should only leave the face area to use the broken boulder to revet the loose debris stacked behind it: PC is away from the 7th to the 14th of November. 670 **7013**

5th November Fraggle Rock

Tony Boycott, Cheg Chester Jim Warny

LW 19:52: Neaps: Light winds, sea state slight. A good sized stream issuing; 28mm deep at the overflow reference point. The plan: for JW and TB to go to the Loading Bay JW to dig the accumulated silt from the floor while TB removed the sand bags to open the Dam beneath the tramway to allow the predicted winter flood water flow to wash the finer debris through to the exit; likewise any associated ingress from the sea. CC to the terminus with PC hauling to the hauling point and later from outside; latterly joined by TB. The session commenced with skids moving swiftly by; a considerable amount was removed from the Loading Bay with some sand bags emptied too. The remaining nine sand bags were transported to the wider area of the "Boars Head" to install, next session, another venturi to direct any water flow across this area of rough floor onto the smooth rock floor downstream, and thus to the resurgence. PC is away to Donegal next session so it's possible that only TB and CC will be available. Twenty eight skids were removed and emptied over the edge into the pitch darkness: to the Roadside for lovely pints. Bad news received is that Helen Brown, (Poul Ionain owner), has been admitted to Cork Hospital with a bleed in the brain and placed in an induced coma. 698 **7041**

9th November Fraggle Rock from PCN log

Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott

Against our better judgement we braved force 9 gusting 10 south-westerlies after 1" of rain overnight. Low tide: lower bench awash. Too wet to get to Anvil usefully, so pulled skips up to The Loading Bay & continued clearing dam area. 4 skips filled & left, then left poddling & sweeping debris downstream to entrance & beyond (I hope no-one saw us!) Fist sized boulders were rolling without assistance. Found a buried Krab at the S-bend and retrieved Pat's pipe & screw cap. The weather forecast for Thursday is the same as today, high spring tide 17.30, so no point in attempting to dig then. Cheg & I will inspect & try to go to Anvil around 10.30 at low tide on Thursday and do what we can. Then to the Roadside, empty except for 2 Russian tourists after food, told by Billy not till next year, so they downed a pint of black faster than I've ever seen one drunk & left! No skips to surface but the stream was probably taking one skip full a minute. Tony

12th November Fraggle Rock

Cheg Chester, Tony Boycott

Another low tide trip in view of the current weather 5 skips filled from the dugout then CC filled 23 from Anvil Chamber to just before Bend for a friend, total 30 now stacked in The Loading Bay. Then investigated the face, dramatic amount of mud has been scoured out. TB dismantled the last nudged boulder and started stacking on the right but the remaining fragment although loose from the mud was too heavy to move horizontally - may need PC's muscles. Not sure if the rock underneath it is boulder or floor, but should self excavate now. Exit to water pouring in the cracks in the roof and the sea could be heard at the digging face, walk up the hill in horizontal almost hail. In view of the weather, CC & TB plan to go back on Monday around low tide (13.35) unless the storms abate considerably; don't fancy emptying skips in the dark at high tide! To the Roadside for a pint Tony

16th November Fraggle Rock

Tony Boycott, Cheg Chester

LW13:35: neaps: wind force four, sea state very rough; a good sized stream issuing, measuring forty millimetres below the overflow reference point. The plan: PC was voted to go to the Loading Bay to send out the skids then proceed to the face to complete the work of re-positioning the remains of the nudged boulder to the side of the passage. CC and TB trammed the skids back, and then dragged them to surface using the "Come Hithers" rather than the hauling rope. Once the Loading Bay was cleared PC moved up to the face taking a spade and the long crowbar. On arrival he probed the slab in the floor and found it lifted too easily, partially blocking the area. This slab needs moving to the right wall to progress forward and dig the debris below to heighten the passage. He moved the pieces of the nudged boulder to one side then worked on lifting the remaining large lump; TB had broken the vacuum, even so it was awkward. After digging away the clay bank the large lump was pushed into the space in the internal corner of the bend; once there the other pieces were stacked. The end of the long slab is now partially exposed, part below water and clay levels. Digging up the left of this slab showed it narrows, too much! So the end of the long slab needs nudging. The next session, Thursday, is at Pegasus Pot: to the Roadside for drinks and a much needed warm up.

728 7071

19th November Pegasus Pot

Tony Boycott, Cheg Chester, Jim Warny

The plan was for JW and PC to attempt to climb the ascending rift that halted JW's previous exploration; the upper area of the third pitch, and for TB and CC to descend the original climb in the northern section to retrieve the fallen ladder. JW and PC installed a rope and traverse line on Beaver Pot and made their way quickly down to the balcony on the third pitch, (an extra bolt was installed by JW to facilitate the traverse manoeuvre). PC had a good look about the base of the climb gradually ascending to the right, noting various sizes of scallops and several straws over a metre in length! Climbing higher it became apparent that the mud slope was once higher, or thicker, evidenced from the stall floor remains clinging to the walls. There is some metre depth of mud gone from the entire slope. At the very top an immensely pretty grotto shows evidence of high flow through, very clean, recently broken, straws litter the mud floor; not too many thank fully, what is of particular delight are the myriad helictites, their pure whiteness is almost blinding. After another assessment JW began bolting up an alternate route from the area of the grotto, using two bolts he gained the upper area to find a beautiful white cascade but no way on. On the way out JW re-rigged the traverse rope on the third pitch, which was left rigged, this means now that a ladder can be used to reach the balcony then cowtails on the traverse rope to reach the area around the exposed corner. Covered in shite the pair ascended Beaver Pot to find the others gone on out. Beaver Pot was left rigged,

(13mm rope); out to a very cold evening. The other half of the team had located the lost ladder and reviewed the rigging of the pot for an easier access; in the short term two sets of ladders rigged from the top will allow the climber to negotiate the awkward section near the bottom. The hole previously noted by JW was reviewed by CC and a step ladder would be the only practical approach so likely next Thursday that will be sorted. All the tackle was recovered from the pot; a swift change and straight to the Roadside for a warm fire and cold pints.

23rd November Fraggle Rock
Tony Boycott, Cheg Chester

LW 20:51, mild wind, sea state rough; a good sized stream issuing, measured as twenty millimetres at the reference point. The plan: for PC to go to the face and continue to excavate the "Slab" and expose the end of the big elongated rock previously passed by CC and JW; while CC and TB moved to "Bend for a Friend" remixing the flood debris. The stream was high with sand deposits noted along the passage. On arrival at the face PC moved the "Slab" slightly though its arse was stuck in clay; lifting it and forcing it down quickly down the hydraulic effect broke it free. Digging along its left side the depth in the stream became a half shovel; the passage therefore could easily be a shovel high at this point. Most of the debris was packed into the right side of the area, (now some four foot diameter called the "Freezer"), allowing room to work on the big slab ahead. The "Slab" is some four feet long x two feet wide x five inches thick with a tapered "nose". It now needs "Nudging". The bottom of the Big Slab is now exposed and ready for drilling. NB. Even lying in part on the "Slab" the volume of flow meant that PC was lying in water, some four inches deep, as there is no other option at present as the loose debris collects at the narrow entry to the "Wallow" and elevated the water level; this stream size prohibits the use of drills for the moment as the threat of damage is significant; there is no "dry land" in the "Freezer" in these stream conditions. Returning PC cleared the debris from the "Wallow" back along the passage to "Coffin Corner" where he met up with a wet CC; now thoroughly frozen PC began his exit: though CC filled several more skids which TB stacked in Anvil Chamber for removal next Thursday. The mild wind conditions meant hypothermia was not an issue; this time. In the Roadside the talk turned to Caves.

728 7071

26th November Fraggle Rock
Cheg Chester, Jim Warny

HW 17:06; windy, sea state rough, though a full moon the overcast sky hid its light; a smaller stream flow was issuing some seventy millimetres below the reference. The plan: to remove the twenty four skids stacked in Anvil Chamber to surface. PC dragged the skids to CC, who was at end of the "Burrow". From where JW hauled them to the Loading Bay; moving outbye PC trammed and CC stacked the skids at the Hauling point. JW then joined PC outside as CC prepared them; the entire system worked swiftly in this condensed fashion. PC had forgotten his change of clothes so went ahead to the Roadside where Pauline had earlier left them. News of Helen Brown is good, she has improved enormously. In a warm, empty bar the drink tasted good.

752 7095

30th November Fraggle Rock

Abandoned the session for tonight; wind force 10, with 4 to 5 metres seas from the south- south-west, almost perfectly aligned to mount the bench and reach the end of the dig. Large waves breaking over the new pier giving an idea of what was happening further up the coast.

752 7095

3rd December Pegasus Pot

Cheg Chester, Jim Warny; (JW is now known as Twizzle).

The plan: to take a step ladder to reach the mud covered overhang in the northern end on the rift located in the known section. JW had his camera so intended to video anything that moved. CC & PC rigged the pitch; CC opted to lifeline PC's first descent. Looking down the narrow pitch offered a superb view of a sparkling stal encrusted rift. As described some two thirds down a move to the right allowed the climber to pass the narrowing section through into the adjacent and much larger pot. The rift extends north and south, from the south a long bolder slope ascends to the roof; likely, as suggested by CC originating from the once open entrance pothole. To the north a beautifully shaped passage goes for some ten metres to the mud climb. PC assembled the step ladder that reached the edge, some two metres above. This gave access to a step in the rift; a jam of fallen boulders covered with a floor of shattered mud seemingly from a flood event. To the right a low opening enters a small alcove, two metres by three quarters of a metre. In front a further muddy step ascends; here PC's attempt failed as a hand hold parted company with the surface. Bringing up the ladder the climb was scaled with a final scramble over the top of further muddy boulders into an enlargement of the rift some six metres high and some three/four metres wide. From here a view back along the rift shows many more decorations, including more helictites, though not as many as in the small grotto near the third pitch, in the southern area of the new extensions. With JW filming, and the pitch ascended the team emerged into a cold northern wind. After a swift change the team settled next to the fire in the Roadside: a fine and immensely enjoyable trip.

7th December Fraggie Rock

Abandoned: The residual effects of Storm Desmond on the sea were observed setting from the south – south west mounting much of Crab Island and covering Doolin Point. The decision to cancel was unavoidable.

752 7095

10th December Cullaun II

Solo

The plan to get some exercise down to pool chamber via the high level route and out the streamway; raining all day though eased off around 16:00. Arrived at car park 17:00 as massive cloud burst occurred. Decided the torrent would affect progress outbye; abandoned trip.

14th December Fraggie Rock

Cheg Chester

LW 12:40; going to neaps: mild, with a light breeze, sea state rough; a good sized stream issuing two millimetres at the reference point. Of late sustained high rainfall has flooded most of the route of the River Shannon along with numerous other areas. There was concern over the local effects. The plan was to bring back the truck for a major service and winter respite; to also inspect the place for damage. The stream had some small areas of sand but in fact actually very little. From the "Boars Head" upstream there are some ten skids or so of washed debris. The "Burrow" was clean as was much of "Anvil Chamber". Some debris was up the bedding toward "Bend for a Friend", again not too much; CC had wisely placed a sandbag at the end of the spoil heap prior to the last shift so stopped it migrating down the passage. Significant stream flow had been present evidenced at "Coffin Corner"; up to the "Wallow" it was clear. In the "Freezer" virtually no debris was present; ahead and to the right a channel has been cut; this is the source of the debris downstream. While CC inspected the place and prepared the truck PC went up to the "Freezer"; what little debris was present had collected on the arse of the "Slab". Scrapping around the "Slab" it was finally perched up onto the edge of the passage; it is now in a better, drier position for drilling and nudging. An inspection of the area ahead discovered

the elongated slab, previously squeezed over, has a fracture some three inches wide; PC also found the very bottom edge of this slab, exposed following the recent erosion. It appears that three holes will seriously fracture this boulder its remains will be accommodated to the right. Once completed the alignment of the route will coincide with the gap beyond, which can then be deepened at will. The pair plodded back and headed to the warmth of the Roadside. 752 7095

1). Pats pal, Jonathan, The land owner of Pegasus Pot, has elaborated on the adjacent "Hole"; it takes a far larger stream on a normal basis!

2). CC and PC are unavailable for digging on the 17th December; PC is back for the 21st with CC back on the 28th December. TB returns on the 19th December.

23rd December Clooncoose Cave

Tony Boycott, Nigel Burns

A trip to survey the end of the cave, the low crawl and to have NB carry out a photographic survey. The crawl was some six metres to a pocket, further digging would reveal something. Outside the team ambled along the small cliff some seventy metres east TB located a small unrecorded cave this was surveyed and position taken.

24th December Poulacapple Pot

Tony Boycott, Nigel Burns

The plan was to assess the damage accrued over the last nine years since the team had worked the dig. Once through the foliage the area was like a time capsule with the buckets and ropes hung with lichen and where they had been left. The water was cascading in a huge torrent down the upper shaft, with a significant amount flowing down the four inch pipes; these had be left connected to direct the flow along the UBSS rift; PC descended the aluminium ladder which was in good condition and separated the pipes to direct the flow straight down to wash the base of the shaft, whilst below he tested the state of the timber which were all in sound condition. The only suggested item to replace being the light weight pallet that forms the hauling platform. The concrete blocks were all sound and in their original locations, nothing has moved. TB then descended to observe the work. The slope down the depression does need a rope or a short timber ladder. The foliage requires cutting and clearing. The volume of falling water surprized all present. Once again in another hail storm the team change and departed. The track has been "repaired" with shale and gravel. The site is as exciting as ever.

25th December

Fraggle Rock

Tony Boycott, Nigel Burns

LW 10:37; springs; a light cold wind from the north-east; occasional gusts, some light rain. Following two inches of rain in the previous forty eight hours, and a further half inch this morning, the stream issuing was substantial, (60mm at the reference point). The plan was to nudge the "Slab". The stream was assessed and considered to be too great in the "Freezer" to use the drill without incurring water damage. TB wanted to recover his pulley and NB wanted to have a look at the team's progress since his last visit. The stream way was very clean, as was the area around the "Boars head". PC decided to check the status at the Freezer so carried on, swiftly followed by the others. Just before the "Wallow" a fragment of limestone had been washed along and had jammed accumulating sufficient debris to create a deep canal beyond. This was cleared and the "Freezer" reached; with the stream attempting to flow past the observer it quickly backed up threatening to overwhelm him. Prior to loss of vision was noted that the crawl to the right of the large boulder, passed by CC and JW, had deepened by erosion, indeed the likely source of the debris present at the "Wallow".

The significant flow allowed for easy clearing of the loose debris back to “Coffin Corner”; here PC made room for NB to pass and observe the progress to “Freezer”. Packing the collected debris behind the sandbag, PC joined TB clearing the remaining debris from “Bend for a Friend” back to “Anvil Chamber”, and then to the “Terminus”; all thoroughly chilled, and with no bar available..... the team retreated to their respective homes. 752 7095

NB. The high flow rate of the stream passing through the Terminus was noted as not rising above the level of the entrance into “Jims” Passage. With the present, and predicted, rainfall conditions perhaps we should commence digging “Jims”, which after all is the main passage that had formed, a task that would be relatively dry and straight forward. This would mean that regular trips would continue but having the option to dig where the more practicable on the day in respect of water conditions.

26th December Ballyhagline Mesolithic site.

Tony Boycott, Nigel Burns

PC completed the magnetic bearings of both profiles on trenches 3A and 3B. TB found other shale items and recorded same. NB enjoyed the geological panorama and seascape.

27th December Caherdoon

Nigel Burns

A walk to check the status of the souterrain at the Cashel of Caherdoon both recorded by Westropp. En-route showed NB the dig of the same name. The cashel is in fair condition, the souterrain is an open cutting off centre of the enclosure. It is an enlarged joint, some seven metres long with a small junction that appears to have been the point of entry; this short section is one metre in length. A large rectangular flagstone appears to have been dislodged so as to collapse into the area of the junction, ITM 0510686 x 0703328. Only the southern section of the main passage is actually underground. The area several square stone buildings within the cashel, which is located within an extensive field system. Its prominent position allows a significant view of the south, north and east, as the ground drops steeply away to the west only the islands are visible, none of the western approach slopes, (*souterrain survey records*). Returning to the truck PC located a feature similar to Poulcaherdoon at an elevation between 80 and 90 metres, some half the height of Poulcaherdoon, ITM 0510225 x 0703669 or M 10255 x 03637. Judging from the image the northing may be ten metres south.

31st December Cullaun II

Tony Boycott, Cheg Chester

The last trip of the year: with the recent high levels of rainfall there was significant amounts of standing water around the area; the Cullaun stream was therefore quite high. The team noted the presence of a good sized stream in the actual entrance rift likewise in the approach passage to the cascades. The plan was to go downstream to Pool Chamber then make the climb up to the high level route and swiftly out, to the Roadside. For the most part the stream level was only just below the knees. Upon ascent of the climb a stream was witnessed flowing along the lower section of the smaller passage! The water temperature was excruciating, the company enjoyable; all in all great fun!