

# SOUTH WALES CAVING CLUB

## NEWSLETTER

NEWSLETTER NO.14. MARCH 1956.

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We welcome the following new members:-

Miss M.M. Boughton. 21, Coniston Av., Sheldon, Birmingham 26.  
M.D. Cox. 25, Courtway Drive, Sneyd Green, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent.  
A.C. Hazzard, Dyfed, 23, Avondale Rd., Belli, Pentre, Rhondda  
A. Howells, Iscoed, Lando Terrace, Pembrey, Carmarthen.  
G.T. Jefferson, 6, Rhwbina Hill, Rhwbina, Cardiff.  
R.E. Lawder, 94, Endhill Rd., Birmingham, 22c.  
D.T. Lloyd, Pen-y-Graig, Parish Rd., Cwmgrach, Nr. Neath, Glam.  
J.K. Platt. 25 Bryn-y-Mor, Burry Port, Carmarthen.

Junior Members.

W.G. Harris, 18, Greenfield Terrace, Glynneath, Glam.  
R.A. Jones, 68, Pine Grove, Cimla, Neath, Glam.  
E.G. Stephens, 7, Leonard St., Neath, Glam.

Change of address.

D. Kemp. 17, Beemead Av., London. S.W. 16.  
D.A. Willis. 23, Chamberlain St., Wells, Soms.

Congratulations.

We offer our congratulations to John Truman on his recent marriage to Miss. Betty Smith.

Publications.

The following publications have been received:-

Wessex Cave Club. Nos. 8, 9, 10.  
Cave and Crag Club. Vol. 5. No. 1.  
Bolfry Bulletin. Nos. 98 - 100.

Headquarters' Books.

New books have now been placed in the cottage dealing with cottage fees, records, and caving trips. It will greatly assist the treasurer, cottage warden and records officer if all members will see that these books are kept in good order and up to date.

Cave Rescue Organisation.

Will members who have not done so please return their C.R.O. forms to me. Any changes of address or telephone numbers should also be noted on the C.R.O. form.

W.E. Clarke.

## O.F.D. Leaders.

The following have been added to the list of leaders for O.F.D.:-

Noel Dilly.  
John Hartwell.  
Roger Smith.

## Auditor.

J.M. Davies has been elected club auditor.

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting will be held at the Gwyn Arms on Easter Sunday, April 1st, at 7.30 p.m. All members are requested to make an effort to attend this meeting.

## An extension of stream passage in Lethrid Swallet.

For those who have not visited the swallet a general description of the whole cave may be useful.

The entrance takes a fair amount of water and the stream is followed underground for about 500 feet. The stream passage is tortuous and generally very narrow. About 400 feet in there are two vertical rift passages which usually contain about 3 feet of still but not stagnant water. The stream is lost in either the first or second of these two passages. A short distance further on one enters a large chamber, the floor of which consists of a number of large boulders perched one on top of the other. The whole, including the walls, is covered with a liberal layer of mud.

On a level above this chamber are two larger ones. One of these is a vast hall, plentifully bestowed with helictites and with some 8 - 10 ft. columns.

By climbing downwards amongst the boulders of the first chamber one enters a dry waterworn passage. The passage rises and gives way to a series of small dry mud chambers. The way lies through these chambers until one climbs up through the bottom of a large funnel shaped depression into a large chamber, the axis of which runs N - S. At the southern end of this a climb down of about 8ft. leads to a short passage at the end of which is a 12ft. pot. This can be climbed but a rope is useful.

This, then was the furthest point reached until, after a dry spell in early summer, John Cole-Morgan, Hugh Clarke and myself climbed down the pot and found ourselves in a stream passage the runs across the bottom of it. On following upstream

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it was found that the stream issues from the base of a boulder pile. Downstream and on immediately entering it the water becomes 3ft. deep and the roof lowers until at one point there is only one foot of air space. After this the roof and stream bed rises until a large stream passage is entered and on following this we found that the stream disappeared into fissures on the right-hand side of the passage. About 20 yards further on and on the same side of the stream a climb of about 50ft. up a 70 deg. mud slope led us to a series of wide low chambers. The floors are almost entirely composed of mud funnels, some greater than 20ft. from rim to rim. At the bottom of these conical shaped depressions there are narrow holes about one foot in diameter. On rolling large hard lumps of mud down these they were heard to fall some distance with great rumbling and fall into water. We found the mud further along the stream passage. On following the stream bed for about 50 yds. our progress was ended by a sump. We entered it, but after about 6ft. the roof lowered leaving an air gap 6 ins. wide and 2 ins. high.

We revisited the cave a week later with a larger party. Unfortunately it had rained in the meantime and we found the air gap to be only 8 ins. at the bottom of the 12ft. pot while that of the sump was under water.

This part of the cave has been visited several times since but nothing new has ever been found except in one case. Hugh Clarke was the leader of the party when he noticed the the water level in the sump had dropped and he was able to get through to a fairly large chamber. The way on was a difficult climb to a higher level and since no one else came through Clarke turned back. The forcing of the sump meant complete immersion. The sump is about 20ft. in length.

The total length of new passages is approximately 100 yards.

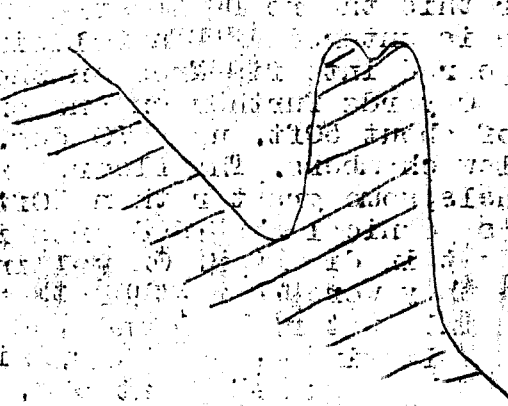
Keith Ball. 1955.

#### The origin of mud stalagmites in Lethrid Swallet.

These formations are plentiful in the cave. They occur in the lower parts but above flood level. The composition is of dry porous mud and each stalagmite is so weakly bound together that any flooding would destroy it. From these facts it would seem that the theory that mud stalagmites are built up by flood conditions (. British Caving Chapter 4.) cannot hold for Lethrid.

The probable cause of these formations is that drips (inanimate) collect mud in suspension on the roof and fall, thus building up the stalagmite. In general their heights range from 2 - 6 ins

4.  
Cross section of mid stalagmite in Lethrid.



Keith Ball, 1955.

Round-and-about.

O.F.D. ??????????

Members spent several days during the Christmas week on the Cwmdwr Quarry dig. Good progress was made in clearing boulders and mud from the end of the passage which appears to continue under the quarry floor. A lot more work will be necessary before it can be known whether or not the passage continues on anything like the scale of the one leading into the quarry face.

Pal-y-Cwrt again.

Better weather saw a welcome return visit to the Pal-y-Cwrt area. Bill Little and John Hartwel worked at one of the active swallets in the Pant Nant-y-Eforchog area and John Alexander, Mary Boughton and myself found a new way beyond the boulders in Pal-y-Cwrt adding about forty feet to the west leg of the cave. A steeply inclined bedding plane was followed through two levels and a small passage was found leading down into yet more boulders. Digging prospects at the end are good.

Les Hawes.

C.S.G. Annual General Meeting at Wells, Soms.

The S.W.C.C. was well represented at the above meeting, ten members being present. After the business of the Meeting had been completed Lewis Reilten gave an excellent show of stereoscopic slides using a projector that he had designed and built himself.

Les Hawes.

- Hon. Secretary. P.I.W. Harvey. 157, Commercial Rd. Newport, Mon.  
Hon. Treasurer. L.A. Hawes. Corner Cottage, Rounton Rd., Church C  
Church Crookham, Hants.  
Hon. Editor. D.W. Jenkins. Dinmore, Dyffryn Rd., Llandrindod Wells, Rads.