

ROYAL FOREST OF DEAN CAVING CLUB

NEWSLETTER No 3

JULY 1965

We apologise for the delay in this issue of the newsletter, caused by our waiting to include another major breakthrough which as yet is still in progress, with high hopes for the future.

Members were very pleased when Rex Keane was granted an explosives licence, and Rex has been able to demonstrate the art of gentle persuasion for us in some natural passages near Coleford. These are not expected to lead to anything big. However members are finding it a pleasant change to follow something natural instead of man-made.

The Jelly-Hole Mayhill :- After reaching a depth of twenty nine feet and a little explosive treatment at the bottom failed to show promise so a concerted effort is being made to fill it in. We are extremely grateful to Mr Watkins for the help and consideration he has shown to members during the excavation.

Rex and myself called on Mr Watkins the ex-manger of New Dunn and we spent a very enjoyable evening listening to first hand accounts of the "Good Old Days". Following his advice we have started to re-open an entrance to the Lambsquay Mine and work is proceeding slowly. The exact position of the entrance is not known so we may need to move several more tons of debris and clay before we find a draught.

Seventeen members enjoyed an evening trip in Wigpool recently, and we were pleased to welcome Les Sharratt, chairman of the G.S.S. Going down in two parties we discovered later that half of the second party were overcome with a dehydration problem so cutting short the trip they managed to get frothy first-aid at the White Horse". Some reasonable transparencies were secured of the formations, however we were very upset to find that someone had been trying to smash the winch. It may only be old iron but it is also a very interesting piece of history and here we appeal to all members and would-be members to leave everything exactly as they find it. Perhaps we should repeat the maxim; "take nothing but photographs and leave nothing but footprints.

An excellent trip was held some months ago to Agen Allwedd as guests of the B.N.S. Speleological Section. The trip lasted about nine hours through the Turkey series etc' some members arriving home around midnight. Also several members enjoyed a dinner and social organised by the B.N.S.S.S. to mark the occasion of their tenth anniversary. Dr. Oliver Lloyd brought a bottle of most excellent brandy in honour of the occasion and later entertained the party with traditional caving songs of the Mendips, sung in a pleasing tenor to his own guitar accompaniment. We particularly enjoyed his rendition of "Blow You Jack". Adequate lubrication was provided and the evening rounded off with colour slides of beauty spots in South Wales Caves and the Wigpool Iron Mine. Our grateful thanks to Mel Davies for inviting us to both events.

We intended to organise a trip to South Wales in September and possibly another trip to "Aggie" so would all members please bear this in mind.

Great interest was shown at Cinderford Technical College when together with the Enghard Caving Club an historical exhibition was arranged. Many objects of interest were on view, ranging from lumps of iron ore and crystals to broken pipes thrown away by the miners.

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Ladies were particularly interested in a wedding ring found underground. The committee would like to thank all those who helped to make the caving exhibits such a success.

The Cave Rescue Organisation is proceeding with great gusto and members will be interested to hear of the latest developments. At the annual general meeting held in May a committee was formed consisting of seven members, namely, Messrs D. Appling, L. Sherratt, A. C. Day, R. Stewart, T. Lewis and R. Bailey. In the event of a call out the Gloucester Police have a list of six phone numbers which they will try in turn until they find a C.R.O. member at home. The contacted member will then notify the first member he finds at home on a list of four phone numbers in the Forest of Dean area and will then start a snowball rolling in the Glos' area. The Forest of Dean member will then contact as many members as possible on a list laid down for him and with the number of members in the organisation the system should guarantee a maximum of at least a dozen turning up for a rescue with the possibility of reinforcements later. D. Appling has said that he like us to carry out our own training programme, however this will need more committee work before reaching the practical stage.

On the 4th and 11th of July members were very fortunate in being able to tour the Northern Colliery. With the stoppage of the pumps at Cannop of course the water levels are rising preventing the Northern from working its lower levels so activity is now confined chiefly between 300 and 350 feet. Three faces are being worked and the output is 19 cwt per man per shift at the moment. Members had a very informative and enjoyable tour and we are extremely grateful to Mr A. Giles the Deputy who so cheerfully conducted us around the workings explaining points of interest and answering all questions. We also would like to thank Mr Arnold the manager for his permission for the tour. More on this in the journal.

Wigpool has now been gated purely for safety reasons and other Clubs wishing to go down should contact the Club Secretary - R. Bailey, Rose Cottage, Aston Crewe, for guides. No chalk arrows on the walls please.

Seeing that the Club was founded by employees of the Rank Organisation and that some fourteen members of the Club are employed by Ranks of Micheldean your committee has formally applied to the Rank sports and Social Club for affiliation. This is still in the negotiation stage and the results will be made known as soon as possible.

A certain amount of the equipment is held by the Clubs Chandler - J. Hay and members can obtain any item

(subject to availability) FREE, provided the appropriate donation is made to the Club funds :-

Carbide Cap Lamps	5/-	each
Spare Jets	1/-	-
Prickers	1/6d	-
15ft Nylon Life Lines 1800 lb	1/6d	-
These have been used successfully for towing cars.		
Carbide	1/6d	per lb
Carbide Hand Lamp Jets	2/6d	-
Boiler Suits (second-hand but in good condition)	6/-	-
Plastic 1 Gallon Water Carriers	5/-	-
Snap Link Karabiners	2/6d	-