

CCPC



Newsletter No.29

August 1991

GOUFFRE BERGER TRIP

Everyone had a brilliant time with loads of people getting to the bottom. The Belgians sustained two minor injuries but otherwise everything went reasonably smoothly. Thanks must be given to Ade for all his efforts in planning and arranging and to George and Kev who did a marathon rigging trip to the bottom. Hopefully, someone will write something up for a future Newsletter!

RADON IN GIANTS HOLE

Manchester Polytechnical College are doing a project which involves monitoring radon in Giants Hole. They want volunteers to assist them by installing and retrieving detectors at various sites in the cave over the

next twelve months. The trial will involve about six trips into the cave, presumably at pre-arranged times. I'm not sure who pays the 'good-will' fee. Anyone interested contact Ralph.

BOSCH DRILL

By the time you read this we should be the proud owners of a new rechargeable drill. This will bring all you reluctant diggers out of the woodwork!

XMAS DO

This was held late as usual (or was it early?) at the Rifleman at Kidsgrove and thanks must go out to Nigel Cooper for arranging the do which proved to be very successful. This must be one of the least enviable jobs in the club - once again Nigel, many thanks.

Incidentally, Ross won the photographic competition which attracted a number of entries of a very high standard and Ralph won the 'Wally of the Year' award but suspects that the competition was fixed.

CONGRATULATIONS TO KEV MOUNTFORD for being the second person in CCPC (and the only one this century) to obtain his "LOCAL CAVE LEADERSHIP CERTIFICATE". He also completed his "NORTH SEA SURVIVAL COURSE" in the same week!

* CONGRATULATIONS *
* to *
* PHILIP MARSDEN and MICHAELA BENTLEY *
* on the occasion of their wedding *
* on 13th July 1991. *

NEW ARRIVALS

'BCRA Current Titles in Speleology' - if you want it, it's in.

'Garma Revista de Estudios Espeleoglogicos'. Unfortunately it's in Spanish but it contains some surveys.

Well, thats all the news for this issue, now for the rest of the crap:-

OXLOW CAVERN REPAIR PROJECT

OXLOW CAVERN now has an interim pitch which requires ten feet of rope!

Half way down the slope between the entrance pitch and the head of the second pitch is a drop into a mobile quagmire which is difficult to negotiate without a ladder and appears to be getting bigger by the week. No wonder that this place was originally known as Rickety Mine!

The problem is a lot more serious than it first appeared. The top end of the chamber (and parts of the entrance shaft) comprises of a boulder choke of dubious stability (just look above your head next time you are at the bottom of the first pitch!) This choke, in turn, is supported by the boulder slope.

Until a few weeks ago, the slope looked reasonably stable, having reached its angle of rest with the help of a few stemples and supports. However, the slope carries a small subterranean stream in wet weather which has undermined its foundations.

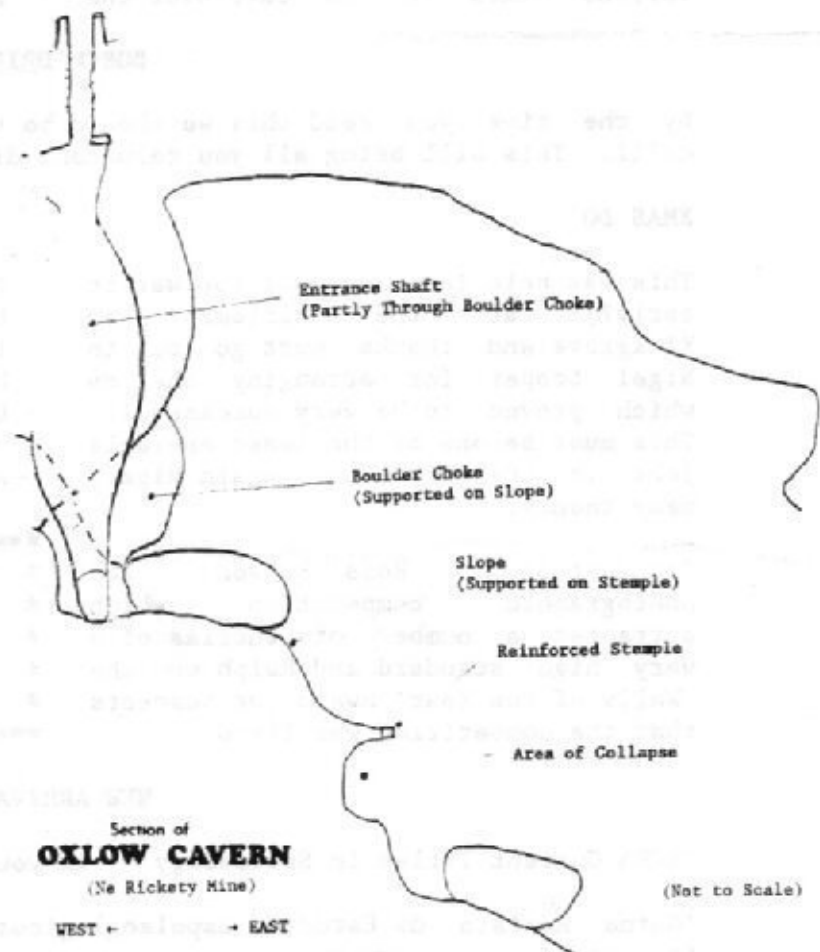
Some time in Spring, the true state was revealed when a large chunk of the slope collapsed leaving the top end of the cavern held up by a wing, a prayer and four 8mm bolts. Had it not been for the reinforced stemple half way down the pitch, it is possible that the whole lot would have gone and what was the first pitch would have been a blockage in the second pitch.

Two DCC members claim to have heard the actual collapse take place and as a result have turned to drink, narrowly missing turning to religion!

At present it seems only a matter of time before more of the slope slips out from underneath the stemple causing the structure of the slope to collapse and then the whole lot will come down.

Various people have inspected the site and the plan is to build some sort of structure (depending upon materials/manpower available) to arrest the collapse. Final details will be decided when resources are known.

Ralph has volunteered our services to DCA and a plan has been developed to prevent further deterioration. Mr Rowlands seems quite willing to allow us free access to do the work (at least he did last time I saw him). DCA will fund materials. All that is missing now is volunteers.



If you can help, please contact Mark on (0625) 426946 or (day) 513120.

LE GROTTES D'ALIOU

I remember this cave being the suggestion of Tipple yet again. After reading a description I thought it wise to take my diving gear for this trip. A 6mm wetsuit gave me all the buoyancy required, thus I loaned my life jacket to Paul Shenton. I was thus at an advantage over the rest of the party, all except Spud. What a man, hard as nails and swimming in wellies.

Everyone quickly disappeared into the cool gloom of the cave, leaving Paul and myself bringing up the rear. There were little screams and loud splashes echoing back down the tunnel. The water was cold and black and not inviting. Paul hesitated as the water reached his balls, memories of small wet Yorkshire caves were in his mind. No time to think about it, time to go. I put on my fins, pulled on my hood and dived in, into total blackness. The cold water caused a sudden pressure drop in my carbide lamp, an ominous start. The only curer was to hand hold the generator - at least my hands would be warm!

I cruised around two bends soon to catch up with the rest of the group, and as my eyes accommodated to the dark I became aware of the black mass above our heads. The roof was moving. Thousands of bats swirling back and forth indignant at our intrusion into their normally quiet world. The water was grey with their droppings and decaying dead. I strained my neck and head a little higher out of the water and began to spit at regular intervals, not wishing to spend the next few days vomiting and worse. We soon gathered at a narrowing in the passage and realised that this was going to be a long swim. Spud and I took the lead.

I'm sorry to say Jane, you had only gone a third of the distance down the canal, however your description is valid for the entire length. The water continued cold and full of bat shit, but the number of bats flying decreased.

Spud had to abandon his wellies half way down - even he found it hard work! The passage was essentially a straight rift with water of unknown depth and the roof soaring to 100 - 150'. Huge curtains of stal flowed down to water level, narrowing the canal down to two feet in places. The best way to observe all this was to swim on your back, looking up. Eventually the floor was met and the huge rift came to an abrupt end. Water flowed into it from a small stream on the left. We followed this up some small waterfalls to a sump with a line in it. The water was crystal clear. I could see the gleam in Spud's eyes. He was wishing that sumps back in England could be like this!

With nowhere to go we headed back down greasy moonmilk flowstone in wetsuit booties for the canal and headed for the long swim out. Spud retrieved his wellies and we soon joined our friends at the entrance. We were in a dilemma now. No transport for hours (the trip had taken much less time than we had anticipated), very little money, what were we to do?

We packed up and set out walking yet again in the baking sun. Half a mile down the farm track and yet another half a mile down the road we found a small village. There appeared to be no cafe or anything!! Tipple in his excellent French found a small farm/cafe/pub/wine bar.

The first beers were ice cold and didn't touch the sides so to speak. The second beers were warm and followed in similar style. They only had six beers in the fridge; they were not expecting customers, certainly not beer swilling English cavers!

Only one solution, out with the wine direct from two huge barrels in the cellar. The trapdoor was in the main room and had to be heaved up each time a refill was required. I took some photos of this priceless place. We all got totally stoned. Not much more to say.

(Continued)

CCPC ARCHIVES : KNOTLOW (Part 2)

The article extracted from the club log caused quite a few comments. The possibility of a safe way into the Knotlow series beyond Crimbo Pipe would amongst other things be a boon for cave rescue, but it may be a while (if ever) before the farmer can be approached. Sifting through the log I came upon the following further information about the Knotlow area.

"It (?) lies about 2/3 way from the bung to Great Rift at the second cross rift in the floor. A passage - not at all obvious goes off to the right with a couple of small climbs. Eventually progress is blocked by a suspended boulder. A couple of half-hearted attempts have been made to remove this." Ralph
(undated)

"This has now been banged by persons unknown. Now possible to pass boulder to a choke." Ralph 10.11.78

"Steve Knox and I were doing an elementary survey in this area, getting involved in conversation with an old farmer. At one time, this farmer drew water up 'Fourways' using chain and bucket until it became too shallow (presumably due to rubble falling down the shaft).

"They then started drawing water up a shaft to the West of 'Fourways'. This can be seen in a small copse capped with concrete in about 1917. Further to the West a shaft can be seen now filled with farm refuse. This shaft used to be about 40' deep and was presumably the climbing shaft for this engine shaft." Ralph 06.04.78

LE GROTTÉ D'ALIQU
(Continued)

During this time a young local lad came in and joined us with Tipple translating for us. He told us of some more local caves and left us with two large jars of his own honey. Simple, kind hospitality which made this afternoon one which will live long in my memory.

Luckily the bus arrived before we had to pay for the booze. Again total shock at the bill, less than £1 each for getting smashed. Great end to a caving trip with a difference.

Much to my surprise, none of our party suffered from stomach upsets (the polite phrase). There are two possible reasons for this, the first is that we were all of cast iron constitution. The second could be that the excess alcohol consumed immediately after the trip killed not only half our brain cells but also the invading bacteria. I much favour the second explanation and see it as a valid excuse for a good piss-up after all caving trips.

Bomber

-----0000-----

Mr Rowlands of Oxlow Farm is gently simmering again after DCRO drove a Landrover over his fields during a rescue practice against his wishes and a caver tried to give him some advice about farming! It is in everyone's interest to tread very cautiously around this particular part of Derbyshire at the moment.

MEETS 1991

We have the following meets organised for the remainder of the year:

August	11	Eldon
September	14	Lost Johns
	14/15	*GG/Bar Pot/Stream Passage
October	5	Otter Hole
	12	Juniper Gulf
November	24	Peak Cavern

* Subject to confirmation

The permit for Otter now covers only 4 people + guide.

If you have any requests for 1992, see Lionel. He's not had many requests so far and some take 12 months to book so don't complain if there's no trips next year!

OVERSEAS NEWS

Keith ("Ben") Bentham is searching for volunteers/heroes who wish to become internationally famous by helping him push Critchlow Cave (Lathkill Dale).

He describes the place as "the hardest cave in Derbyshire - makes the connection look like the Mersey Tunnel". Most of the digging/blasting is been done mid-week during the day. The ideal applicant should be undernourished, unemployed, have their

own transport, have no dependants and be at least a couple of cans short of a six-pack. Ben can be contacted on Buxton (0298) 70202.

Whilst on the subject of Ben's digs, his (in)famous dig in P8 is now in a dangerous state (if you pull on the rope, a load of rocks drop out of the roof) and should be treated with extreme caution!

FX4 BATTERY

You will need

An old Oldham Caplamp
 4 f type nicad cells
 3 male Lucar tabs (screw down type)
 4ba brass screws and nuts
 4ba tinned brass ring crimp terminal
 2m of 0.5mm² insulated multistrand wire
 2 female lucar crimp tags + boots
 1 x 1" brass 2ba screw
 1 x 2ba wing nut
 0.5 Litre fibre glass resin

```

=====
&                                     &
&   USEFUL TIPS FOR CAVERS No 7   &
&                               (Marken) &
& To obtain the best results when &
& taking photographs down the &
& Gouffre Berger it is necessary &
& to put a film in your camera. &
&                                     &
=====
  
```

1) Measure and cut the battery case with a hacksaw about 5" from the top; beware of acid. Undo the nuts from the top of the case and remove the old cells. Wash out the case with bicarbonate of soda solution and then water. Dry, then cut out the centre cell separator until all the four new cells will fit inside the case. Drill 3 holes to take 4ba brass screws in the top.

2) Wire the 4 cells as in fig II leaving long enough leads to reach the top of the case. Crimp and solder the ring crimp terminals onto the three long wires +B, -A and +A and assemble the nut and lucar tabs as in fig III. Solder the ring

FX4 BATTERY (Continued)

3) Check all the wiring, observing polarities and solder joints. Push the cells into place.

4) Snap off the screw holder on the battery lid retainer (fig IV). This is quite tricky and requires a little muscle. If you can't do this, ask your big brother or daddy to help). Screw the 2ba brass screws into the battery lid from the inside.

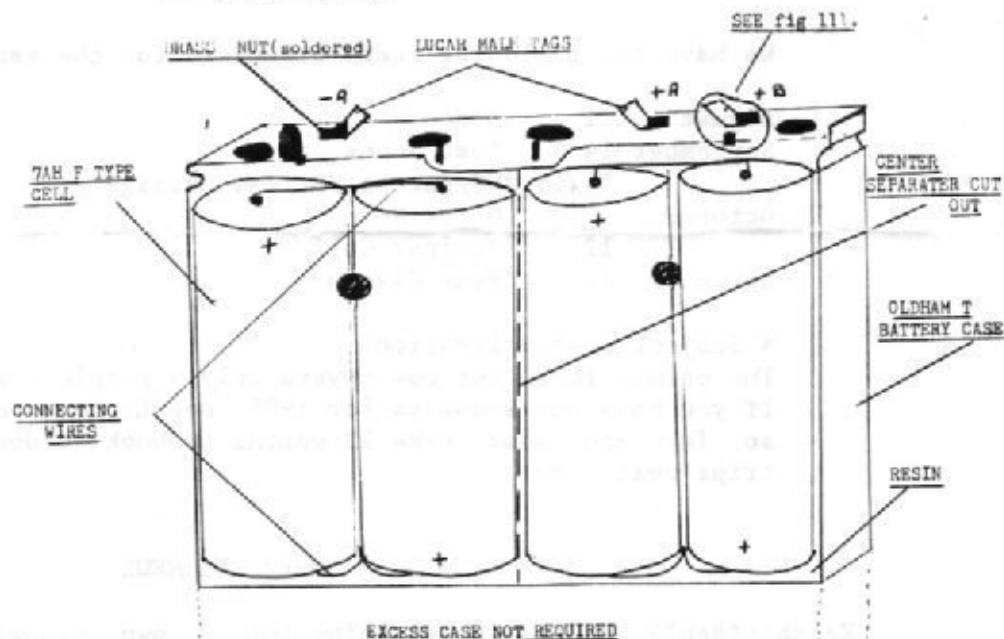


Fig I (Battery Case)

5) Crimp and solder the female crimp tags onto the wire (not forgetting the insulating boots).

6) Change the main and pilot bulbs to 2.4V,1A and 2.5V,0.3A respectively. Clip on the female crimp to the male lucar, black (or blue) wire to -A and red (or brown) to +A and switch on. The lamp may light. If it does, leave it to discharge. If not (or when discharged) take the red wire to +B and repeat.

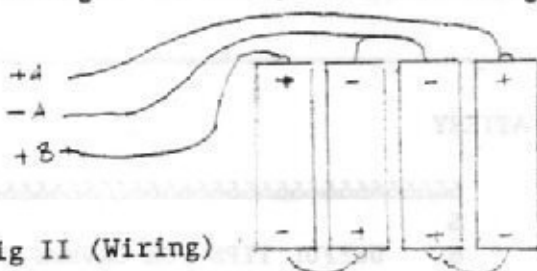


Fig II (Wiring)

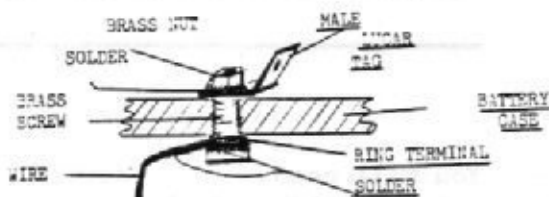


Fig III (Battery Terminals)

7) Charge both sets of batteries at 0.875A for 5 minutes and repeat step 6. Both sets should now light. If not, check the wiring and if you can't find a fault, seek advice. If all is well, charge each set of batteries for 12 hours and note the discharge time on main beam. It should be at least 7 hours.

8) Seal the base and holes in the front, mix and pour in the resin from the top.

By changing the bulbs, the following durations can be expected.

V	A	W	Hours
2.4	1.25	3.0	11
2.4	1.0	2.4	14
2.4	0.8	2.0	17
2.4	0.65	1.6	20
2.5	0.3	0.7	47

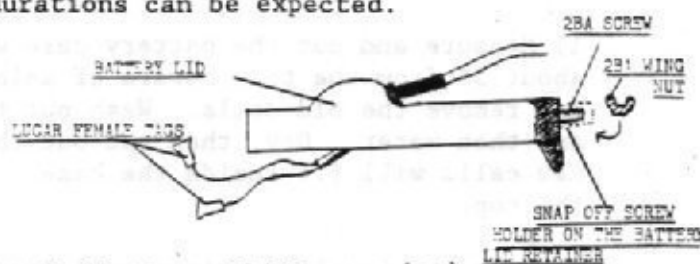


Fig IV (Battery Lid Conversion)

(Adapted from an article by D Brooks which first appeared in a 1987 Newsletter).

Current Members (August 1991)

Gill Argo

Alison Arnold

Rodney Beaumont

Antony Botham

Melvyn Bratt

Jane Brookes

Sarah Codling

Daren Conde

Tracy Conde

Neil Conde

Russel Copeland

George Crane & Carroll

Nigel Cooper

Kevin Dunleavy

Ian Dunleavy

Brian Edmonds

Ross Evans

Keith Falkner

Rob Falkner

Peter Forster

Ian Freeman

John Gillett

Liam Gilling

Adrian Hanson-Abbot

Paul Holdcroft

Lewis Holloway

Ian Housley

Lionel Howarth

Ralph and Margerite Johnson

John Kelsall

Steve Knox

Brian Kirkland

Redacted

Current Members (Cont)

Mark Lovatt
Kevin Mountford
Geoff Millington
Steve Mills
Colin Morris
Linda Northfield
Lionel Parkinson
Dean Potter
Tony Reynolds
Alan Scragg
Martin Soliman
John Shenton
John Smith
Peter Steadman
Mark Stephens
Alan Walker

Past Members

Dave Bailey
Jason Bailey
Ron Beckett
Michelle Fallon
Liam Kealy
Steve Lamb
Phil Marsden
S*** Rhodes
Mark Riva
Paul Shenton
Zig Wozasec

c/o

Redacted

Work

Home

If you have been demoted to Past Member and can't think why, it probably means that you haven't paid your subs! Shame on you! This can be remedied by sending a cheque to John Shenton for the appropriate amount, otherwise your name will be deleted from all records and your address sent to Bob Dearman! Mark Lovatt (0625) 426946 August 1991.