

CREWE CLIMBING AND POTHOLING CLUB

NEWSLETTER - JULY 1983.

No. 1.

No doubt everybody will know, Crewe climbing and Potholing club is 26 years old this month, and for this reason we have included in this issue, what we might term a 'blast from the past'; an historical entry dated 21st. July 1973 taken from the old club log. The log entry features Pipikin Pot, which is also mentioned elsewhere in this Newsletter.

I have been slightly dissappointed with the lack of material submitted for this issue, but I hope that once you have read it and hopefully enjoyed it, and you consider it worthwhile producing a quarterly Newsletter, you will be kind enough to get out your PENIS (typist error-should be PEN'S) and let me have something to print.

We have been able to reproduce this Newsletter at no financial cost and so this issue is given free, but in future it may be necessary for a cover charge to be made, as the services we have 'borrowed' may not be available for further issues. I welcome any comments on this, and anything else you think may be helpful, will be appreciated.

Read on - I hope you enjoy it.

C. Jones.

I'm sure that by now most of you will have learned that, after a lot of heart-searching Alan Walker has resigned as club chairman. Alan joined the club in November 1973 and became chairman 13 months later in January 1975, (how's that for a meteoric rise to fame).

Having worked closely with Alan since his election I can categorically state with-out reservation that we have never had a more conscientious and dedicated club chairman. Not only did Alan spend many hours working behind the scenes doing those unpopular jobs like organising club 'do's) and beginners trips (he is reputed to hold the world record for P8!) but he was an expert at getting the best out of the other members. I'm sure many of you will recall those happy(?) hours spent dragging loads of youngsters down some grottyhole, or turning up on a rescue practise (against your better judgment and intuition) in the middle of Winter thanks to Alan's persuasive manner.

Perhaps it was during heated meetings that he really excelled, possessing the ability to allow both sides an opportunity to speak and yet remaining truly neutral.

Although giving up the post of chairman, Alan intends to maintain his contact with the club, and just to make sure he doesn't change his mind it was unanimously decided to make him an honorary life member.

Ralph Johnson.

OTTER-HOLE 18th. SEPTEMBER 1983.

This trip is now fully booked, and the members going are:- Cliff Jones, Melvyn Bratt, Zig Wezasek, Mick Farnell, Kevin Mountford and Phil Marsden. Exact details details will be arranged nearer the time.



This was yet another of our 'Berger' training meets with John G. having devised yet another logistical nightmare for us to solve, with 'N' people going down 'N' hole at various times. ('N' being large number).

Paul, Brian, Phil, Kev, and I were to enter Pipikin and it was almost 10 years exactly since my last visit when the trip was followed by a rescue down LOST JOHN'S due to flooding, trapping a party on Battle Axe pitch.

This time we didn't even get underground, before the rescue began. As we approached the hole cries for help were heard coming from Pipikin itself. Paul was despatched to assess the situation.

After a few minutes a call came up for a rope and some means of manufacturing a rescue harness, -in error I sent down my tackle bag.. The victim was unceremoniously bundled up and hauled to the surface, where he was extracted from his bonds by Phil (after posing for photographs.) After an expert examination we diagnosed a broken leg, despite the lack of complaints on the journey to the surface. Unable to render any further assistance we continued on our trip-but thats another story.

P.s. The only thanks we got was a tackle bag full of sheep urine.

Cavers trapped for six hours

FIVE CAVERS from the city and South Cheshire were trapped for more than six hours in a Derbyshire cavern during the weekend.

Derbyshire Cave Rescue Organisation were alerted by Derbyshire police after the five, all members of Crewe Caving Club, failed to surface from Giant's Hole, Castleton, at an appointed time.

Exit blocked

Police said today the men had been trapped by two pools of water which blocked their intended exit.

They were also hampered because they were using ropes instead of ladders, said the police.

The cavers surfaced unhurt at 3.15 a.m. yesterday.

They were Mr. Tony Reynolds, aged 31, of 2, Bellerton-lane, Milton, Mr. Gregory Burns, aged 18, and brother Mr. Alan Burns, aged 17, both of 31, Beechwood-drive, Congleton, Mr. Simon Leach, aged 18, of 27, Birch-road, Congleton and Mr. Robert Heath, aged 17, of 116, Mow Cop-road, Mow Cop.

THIS SENTINEL CUTTING OF JULY 1974
MAY BE OF SOME INTEREST. NOTICE
THE AGES OF THOSE MENTIONED. HOW
OLD IS TONY REYNOLDS?

The Jones Lighting system started life quite coincidentally one day while I was trying to think of a way I could get myself a conventional type Carbide Lamp. These lamps have sprung up like mushrooms in the Caving Club and I was beginning to feel left out. Ideas for raising the money to buy one amounted to 2. Plan A. Pawning the new stereo unit. Plan B. Putting the Wife on the streets. Plan A got me nowhere as there are no pawn shops (Porn-Yes; Pawn-No) in Stoke-on-Trent. Plan B. got me a thick lip.

It was obvious that I couldn't buy a Carbide Lighting system with the funds in my pocket, so as someone once said 'Necessity is The Mother of Invention' and as a good, portable, reliable, easily rechargeable lighting system is necessary for the G.B. trip I thought I'd invent one.

The Candle in a Jam Jar idea was quickly dismissed, as the jam jar was still full (The cut priced, special offer, family sized jar of coconut and Passionfruit flavour was proving not very popular in the Jones Household).

My thoughts then turned to Methane gas lighting, but again quickly dismissed, due mainly to the discomfort caused by the plastic pipe, and the fact that BASS SPECIAL PALE ALE might not be readily available in South East France.

Hydro-Electric power was tested, but abandoned. The waterwheel was difficult to mount, and the supply of water spasmodic but at last I was getting closer.

Two hours in the garage and I finally came up trumps (no, not Methane gas again). The basic principle was for 2 slightly magnetized metal plates, one mounted on the inside of each knee, connected to a small belt mounted accumulator. (I can't disclose too many details at this stage as the patent is presently pending). When walking these two metal plates brush together and pass an electric current via the accumulator, to the headset, and the whole apparatus is earthed through the wearer's body.

Initial tests proved the theory and a dull glow at first brightened to an acceptable beam of light.

Success !! I mentally pictured the cash rolling in once the device was marketed, and the envious looks I would get from cavers with inferior lighting systems.

My joy was cut short abruptly, due to the earthing system, the apparatus had to be mounted on the skin, so to speak, and wouldn't work if the operator was wearing trousers!

I decided that this was a minor setback, and set to work, cutting, snipping and gluing. until I was ready once more, resplendent in matching wet suit jacket and **SKIRT**! I was more than satisfied, especially with the hem of the skirt a modest 3'' below the knee, the generating plates could not be seen.

It was a little later that evening when the doubts began to filter through. Would my mates go caving with me dressed so strangely? Do Butch cavers wear skirts? No, my nerve was weak I had to come up with something more acceptable. In desperation I took to the bottle (or rather the hand-pump) and consoled myself, I had just downed my eighth pint of Tartan when the idea struck 'EUREKA' I shouted 'TARTAN BITTER' I dashed home as fast as hands and knees could go.

Ferretting round in the garage, I soon found what I was after several half finished tins of paint of assorted colours. Before long I sat back and admired my neoprene KILT. (of somewhat dubious Tartan).

Who could deny my Scottish heritage (I was born in Stirling) and as long as T. Reynolds didn't follow me in any tight crawls or up a ladder, I was home and dry.

The next step was to test my invention in conditions, I was likely to meet underground, so donning my apparatus I entered the darkened bathroom. I filled the bath with cold water and added a few ice-cubes for good measure. Stepping in at first was uncomfortable, until the water entered my tartan wet socks and warmed up (I had painted the socks to match the kilt).

Rubbing my knees together brought the faint initial glow to the head piece, but before the beam had penetrated the darkness the icy water reached the parts, icy water normally would, if one is wearing a kilt in the true Scottish tradition 'with' nowt underneath. I lept out of the bath, howling in agony, clutching what was left of the 'wedding tackle' and only after several hour of ministering with warm towels could I persuade anything to show again. I went to bed a disconsolate man.

Not feeling much like sleep I reached for something to read. Laying aside 'Arm chair Gardening' and 'The Water Deviners Weekly' I picked up an old copy of Playboy and thumbed through the adverts.

'EUREKA' (again) The gods had smiled on me again, for there right between 'Naughty Nora' and 'Buxam Betty' (inflatable Chess tutors) was just what I needed.

It's normal(?) use was difficult to understand (at first) but suffices to say it looked like a cylindrical sponge, about 8" long with a hole running through the middle, and was battery powered. £11.95p. was cheap at the price especially as it could be 'returned if not fully satisfied' (I've since learned that this means, it can be returned if its not fully satisfied.)

I was to allow 28 days for delivery, but the plain brown package dropped through the letter box three weeks later, I started to work straight away, and threaded a lenght of heating element around and along the 'sponge' and conected it to my knee powered accumulator. (The heating element came from an old electric blanket).

The warmeth given off by the little gismo was more than was neccesary and enough to bring a rosy glow to my cheeks.

I should add at this point that I did not alter the original componets of the 'sponge' and wehn batteries are inserted it throbs, vibrates, and jiggles about just as it is meant to. The main advantage of this duel role may not be fully realized at first so I should explain. Imagine if you can, falling off a ladder and breaking your leg, obviously you're in trouble, as your light will go out as well. NOT TO Panic! insert the batteries, turn it on, and by the time the Rescue team arrives you'll be smiling from Ear to Ear. What ORGANISATION!

N.B. you will have noticed the lack if technical data when describing the above lighting system, and you will appreciate the reason being, that to divulge all now might prejudice the pending patent.

Negotiations are about to start with Phil Brown who I hope will Stock Neoprene Kilts at Caving Supplies in assorted tartans, but applications for the actual lighting system should be made direct to me.

For those people who have recently bought Contiental Carbide lamps, but who would prefer the JONES PATENT LIGHTING SYSTEM (and who cna blame them), there is a special introductory offer whereby I will accept a continental style lamp in part exchange.

21st. July 1973- PIPIKIN POT.

Rus, Byron and Jeff assembled at my place at 0700 and set off for Yorks. in 2 cars, collecting John P. at Congleton station on the way. We arrived at Bernies at about 9.15 for tea etc. Arriving at Leck fell we changed and set off for Pip accross a wet moor. A fantastic amount of gripping has been done here recently.

The trip into Pip was no less strenuous than last time, but we did manage a few photographs 'en route'. The water was fairly high at Ratbag inlet. We headed downstream then part way throught the boulders to the hole leading to the HALL OF THE TEN. After some discussion, photographs and food we set off sown the 1500' of passage to GOUR HALL. The passage is described as 'generally large and well decorated'. As it was neither we decided we had gone wrong so we decided to retrace our steps. In fact we were right.. (according to 'survey!'). On arrival at HALL OF THE TEN we decided to evacuate as we all felt shattered.

On arrival in the stream passage we found it 'Booming' and frothing. We ran like _____ to the junction with RATBAG inlet to find a fairly large stream entering, where originally there was only a trickle. I had visions of the entrance bedding plane filling up, as I had noticed its roof fairly well littered with flood debris on our way in.

None of us had much trouble on the 6' climb, but the 15' was taking one hell of a lot of water,- it looked impossible. Rus was repulsed, but Bryan just managed it with difficulty. The ladder was moved to a small flake on the R.H. wall making the pitch easy for the rest of us. Again little trouble was had with the awkward 18' rift although I had at least one unsuccessful attempt. A short ladder hung on the steple helps a bit.

Even John P. managed the entrance squeezes so we surfaced about 6.30pm. heading for the 3 HORSESHOES about 7-15. At about 7.30 a bloke dashed in saying 'Rescue at Lost John's

After some doubts and consultation, Rus, John and Bryan were despatched to the Cave leaving Jeff and I to contact homes. Pausing only to down another half and for Jeff to collect from the one-armed bandit, we set off in pursuit.

We were soon involved in dam building, hose laying and pump carring. A party of 5 (2 bugged + 3 companions) were stuck on Battle axe. A party of about 16 had gone down and we were asked to stand-by. At about 10-30 we downed spades and hoses and changed.

Bryan was to have gone down with a party of 2 carring a rope but some-how got left behind.

We hung around in wet suits for about an hour, consumed 'N' cups of tea (revolting) and soap(tomato I think) then found out that we weren't needed. At around midnight we set off for home. The only incident was when Rus fell asleep(.) missed 2 motorway turn offs and was last seen heading for Birmingham.

An eventful day.

R. Johnson.

Tony Gamble
Stan Kowalik
Ron Beckett
Andrew Beckett

Redacted

ADDITIONS TO MEMBERS LIST.

Cliff Jones
Melvyn Bratt

Zigmund Wczasek
Keith Walker
Mick Farnell

Redacted

STOP PRESS.

ALAN WALKER GOT MARRIED LAST WEEK.

