



Hampshire Scout Caving Club



Newsletter January 2005

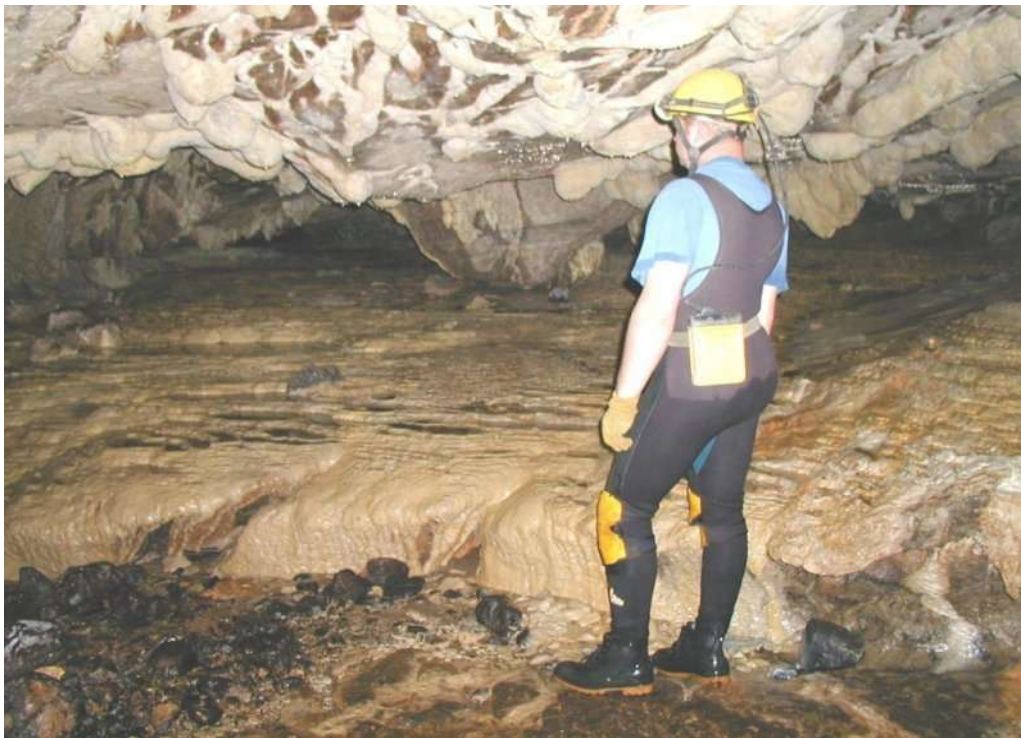


Photo - David Chadwick

St Augustine's Cave, Ireland

HSCC Officials

Chairman

David Chadwick 26, Buckingham Walk, New Milton BH25 5XL

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Administrator

Sue Chase 10, Drake Road, Bishopstoke, SO50 6EU

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Equipment Warden

Phil Candy 10, Drake Road Bishopstoke SO50 6EU

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Programme 2005

Date	Time	Activity	Venue	Contact
2 Feb 05	20:00	Annual General Meeting	12th Eastleigh	Sue
26/27 Feb 05		Mendip - Training	MNRC	Phil
2 Mar 05	20:00	First Aid	Basingstoke	Dave
19/20 Mar 05		Caving Only Days	Mendip	Dave
24-34 Mar 05		France Trip	Ardeche	Dave
6 Apr 05	20:00	Skittles		Sue
4 May 05	19:00	SRT Practice	Lyons Copse	Phil
7/8 May 05		Caving and Climbing Days	Mendip	Dave
27-30 May 05		South Wales Trip	Dave	
1 June 05		Treasure Hunt		
6 July 05		BBQ		
26 -31 Aug 05		Yorkshire Trip	YSS	Phil
24/25 Sept 05		Caving & Climbing Days	Mendip	Dave
22/23 Oct 05		Caving Only Days	Mendip	Dave



Photos in Shatter - David Chadwick

Caption Competition

Prize for best caption received by the March meeting. Entries to Ros.



Photo - Dave Cushing

HSCC Members:

Gavin Bancroft	H 02380 614301	M 07717 177744
Ralph Candy	H 02380 696156	M 07986 701790
Chris Carter	H 02380 615899	M 07788 963757
Dan Carter		M 07788 671545
Michael Chase	H 01425 654161	M 07837 828695
Gavin Clark	H 01256 468240	M 07831 733805
Paul Darlow	H 02392 240257	
John Dawe	H 01264 362761	M 07979 012957
Lewis Goodfellow	H 02380 693962	M 07796 932635
Richard Gulvin		M 07813 941946
Tony Harris	H 01425 470438	M 07771 806161
Darrel Instrell	H 02380 692778	M 07766 654167
Susan Lynch	H 02380 641736	M 07773 912050
Anne Parker	H 02380 652388	
David Sutherland	H 01252 628075	
Graham Sutherland	H 01252 628075	M 07774 189245
Kirsty Sutherland	H 01252 628075	M 07789 983191
Andrew Watson		M 07781 420048
Ros White	H 01425 654025	
Sally White	H 01425 654025	M 07929 422285

Wales November 2004

It being that time of year again a select few from HSCC donned their oversuits and prepared for the demi-annual quest into that strange foreign land.

Arriving late Friday (it was good to find the key this year) unloading and settling in were achieved in short order.

Saturday dawned to snow, not enough for a snowman (or even a snowball) but snow none-the-less. Dave and Ros set off for an epic in Agen Allwedd while the rest of the cavers went to try their luck with the through trip from Cwm Dwr to OFD2.

The Agen Allwedd trip started well, finding a previously undiscovered (by us anyway) passage from the main drag towards the lower streamway, then it went wrong with a survey reading error and David thrashing along a passage which was only just wide enough. Fortunately this came to an abrupt halt at the bit of passage that wasn't just wide enough and a return to things more pleasant was forced. (Ed - it was all plenty wide enough to stroll down - but David was having a "fat" day!). Correcting the error

we made good progress towards the lower stream junction, but there was no way we were going to complete the trip before our call out, so the enterprise was abandoned.

Phoning the other crowd Dave was surprised that they had yet to leave South Wales Caving Club, their trip had taken longer than planned, not due to any navigation problems, it was just slow.

Returning to Brecon Scout Hut we had a quick chilli and a fairly early night.

Sunday dawned a much more pleasant day, all parties thought South Wales was the place to be Dave & Ros were joined by David in Cwm Dwr while the remainder went for a rummage in OFD2. Navigation in Cwm Dwr was up to its normal standard taking 4 hours to get to the Smithy and back - this could be a new record. No such problems for Phil in OFD2, the only incident being a refusal on a traverse and some adverse comments about the sanity of Edward.

Returning to civilisation it was felt by all to be a good set of trips.

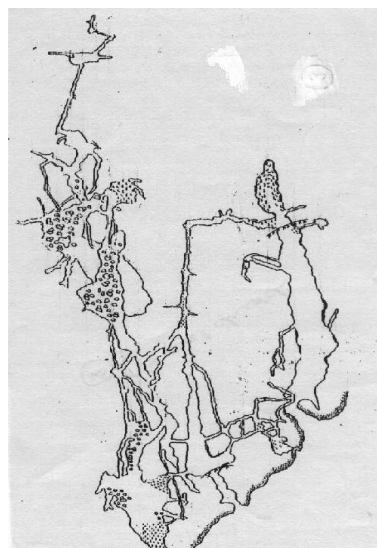
David Chadwick

Quiz - Identify the Caves (Answers can be extracted from Ros by brute force or bribery.)

Cave A



Cave B



Ros's Caving Report - December and January (ish)

Some time towards the end of November David decided it was essential to see Sidcot U-tube. Quite why I am not sure, but you have to humour him - so after persuading son number 2 that this would be good exercise for him we set off for Mendip and Swildons. Across the fields and down the hole, but it soon became apparent that Geoffrey (21 and 6'4") was not up to carrying a large bag in a cave, so Mum (53 and 5'4") had to take it off him! We had an uneventful trip until we found Mud Sump - very wet - and so spent the next 50 minutes bailing it. Turing left after Mud Sump we were in new territory, and very muddy, slimy and grimy new territory it was too! We found various interesting climbs and less inviting wet crawls. At this point Geoffrey slumped to the floor, gave a large sigh and declared he would wait there for us. We went on and spent 10 minutes or so wriggling and grovelling about in mud then decided we should retrieve my exhausted son and make our way out.

David was not satisfied by this, so a few weeks later we descended on Bristol, grabbed Sally and caving kit and went back to Swildons. Back to Mud Sump, bail for only 45 minutes this time, and left turn after the sump again. This time we did an interesting climb, a bit of traversing, grovelled in lots of mud, weren't at all sure which way to go (the survey did not seem to make sense!) and got very cold. Sally (party the night before and less than 3 hours sleep) was not feeling at all well, so once again we retreated. (We'll have to try again, but obviously have to take Stephen next time).

Sally was feeling withdrawal symptoms as a heavy work load meant she had not caved for several weeks so the following day we had to go caving again. Darrell was at MNRC and offered to take us down the dig in the Hunters Car Park. Well it had to be done,

so we went along and got it over with. It was quite interesting and worth the effort, but not really enough caving for Sally. We had to find something else to do. A search of Mendip Underground, eliminating caves we had already done, those where there is no access, those where you have to apply for access, those which were likely to be flooded, those which were too far away and those which plainly were not worth doing left us with - not a lot! Coral Cave (near Loxton) got the vote for some reason which I can't quite remember. Amazingly we went straight to the cave, the key worked, the gate opened and we got in (quite a rare sequence). There was a reasonable ladder pitch from the gate, a few bats, some very muddy passage and a fairly large chamber - and that was it!

Next came the HSCC Christmas trips. We had planned to do Thrupe before Christmas, but a large pool outside the entrance put us off. There followed the usual search of Mendip Underground. Eliminating caves we had already done, those where there is no access, those where you have to apply for access, those which were likely to be flooded, those which were too far away and those which plainly were not worth doing left us with - not a lot! An intrepid trio (Darrel, David and me) went off in search of various Loxton Caves. The lock on Loxton Cave was ceased solid and the key slightly bent and we had no WD 40, so we gave up and went to Loxton Quarry Cave. There was evidence of lots of activity recently, the gate opened easily and inside were lots of digs, but not much cave. A pleasant resident took us to the entrance to the Lost Cave of Loxton, but it is also the locked cave of Loxton, so we could not get in.

So how should we fill the rest of the afternoon? We had run out of ideas of new caves, so we decided on Axbridge Ochre Mine to investigate the one bit of passage

we had not done on our previous visit. Although not a long trip it is very pretty and can be a little sporting (well someone has to brave the in situ rope to get up the rift). We emerged red and grubby and proceeded to plaster the vehicle with red ochre both inside and out!

The next scheduled trip was Rhino Rift, but in the meantime I had organised a leader for St Cuthbert's, so that took priority. Before the trip we visited the dig behind 'The Belfry' and heaved out some spoil, then Peter Glanvill gave us an excellent tour of St Cuthbert's to the Great Gour and back. (Darrel, David S, Richard, Sally, Mark(MNRC) and Ros).

Next was Eastwater. Stephen, doing his annual caving trip, chose to come with David C, David S, Sally and me to Eastwater. Everyone else went to GB. David was obviously having a "thin day " as he got through the Upper Traverse with very little grunting and swearing. We went on (with minor detours) to Bakers Chimney, Dolphin Pot, the bold step and the 13 pots. Yet again we all counted the pots, yet again we all got a different number and yet again no-one got 13! We came back up the muddy bypass by an interesting route, David being determined to make it as awkward as possible. On the return Sally had a good dither at the flake you climb round part way up Dolphin Chimney. At Bakers Chimney we explained to Stephen about the "thin man's hole" at the top (which is over a ledge and so not exposed). I think he must be chunkier than on his last visit as he got well wedged in. David gave "helpful" advice from a vantage point part way up which made Stephen laugh but did not aid progress. Eventually he got bored with scenery and extracted himself. It was the first time I have come out of Eastwater dry - even the entrance series was dry! Another very enjoyable trip

We then had our annual New Years Eve "lets try Longwood August" trip. The valley was

not flooded, the lock was not frozen, we had the right key, the key went in the lock and the lock opened! Only one hazard remained - would David get through the letterbox squeeze? Phil went in with Sue, and Andy, whilst Dave took me, Sally and Eddy Hill (UBSS). Dave's trip ended just before first pitch, when feeling fat he refused to fit through the squeeze. By this time I was soaked, having been laid flat out in the water just behind David to encourage him, with water running into my oversuit at the neck and out at the feet. David made many attempts to push through, but eventually retreated and Eddy took over leading. The Shower Bath power-washed our already wet oversuits. We had intended to go out the Wet Chimneys (OK stupid), but this proved impossible, so after a short, fast trip and Eddy's light failing we went out. (Eddy was driving, with Sally, down to SWCC for New Year so was happy to get out early). We met Dave at the top of entrance shaft where he was playing with the stream.

For my birthday treat I was to be allowed to rig Rhino Rift Right-Hand route. As there was only me and Dave, I had to carry a large bag of rope and even had it dangling under me as I rigged. The first traverse took ages - using the spanner at full stretch left-handed! On to the first pitch, get the deviation in and the fun started. Part way down the pitch, after locking off the descender, you have to push off the rocks at one side to swing into the rift at the other side. When I got it right and swung into the rift I threw myself out to wedge from feet to back across the rift. I then let a bit of rope through the descender and edged further in to the rift. Next look for spits. That's the bit I'm no good at. I found some and missed some (I'm sure there are far more than you need!). The next rift is easier as there are lumps of calcite you can grab having swung across, then you can pull yourself into the rift by fingertip holds! We ran out of time at the

y-hang at the end of this rift and so roles reversed David de-rigged and I admired the scenery. Rhino has lots of interesting features and some good pitches. A great birthday.

Phil's birthday weekend was brought forward to mid-January to avoid MNRC Burns Night celebrations. On Saturday there was a trip to Goatchurch and the top of Swildons and one down Manor Farm. David threw my drink bottle down September Rift and a crack in the bottle meant that we (David C, Gavin B, David S and me) had a very fragrant trip. A combination of grapefruit and manure pervaded the air throughout! Despite this we had a successful trip and 'big' David squeezed and oozed his way into into Stripe Chamber for the first time, whilst 'little' David had his first experience of the delights of 'Manure Farm'.

On Sunday Phil, Sue and Darrel went on a

Leader led trip to Withyhill. Graham led a trip down Singing River and the rest went to



Tynings Barrow Swallet taking our guest photographer, Dave Cushing(MNRC), with us. I rigged again and David C navigated. He negotiated the various obstacles with his usual assortment of grunts, swearing and cursing of rocks and of bits of kit! We went all over - the sump and to Mountbatten and Dragon Chambers. Once again a very enjoyable trip.



Photos in Tynings (courtesy of Dave Cushing)

Quiz - Identify the Cave

Cave C - The entrance resembles an enlarged rabbit burrow and leads immediately to a Z-bend, followed by a small inclined rift with muddy pools on the floor before a 'bold step' across a 3m deep rift into a small, flat-roofed chamber.

Cave D - then a further 2.5m drop reaches a passage which continues steeply down between boulders and bedrock wall. Levelling out the way on passes a short passage on the left to an ascending aven, and a narrow stretch leads on to an 18m descent through a well consolidated boulder choke. A brief scramble finally drops into a second section of steeply descending passage where care is needed in passing some rather vulnerable straw stalactites overhead. Skirting a most attractive sweep of black-stained gours on the right the character of the cave changes abruptly to a horizontal tube

Ardeche

About 12 members of HSCC plan to go to Ardeche from the 24th March to 3rd April. Ferries and accommodation are booked and we are now planning which caves to visit. On the list so far are Aven de Noel, Event de Perejal, Grotte de St Marcel, Aven de Vigne Close and Aven de Neuf Gorges. I expect we will be forced to do some grockelling as well! Photos below were taken on UBSS trip 2003/4 - I think Sally is in all of them!

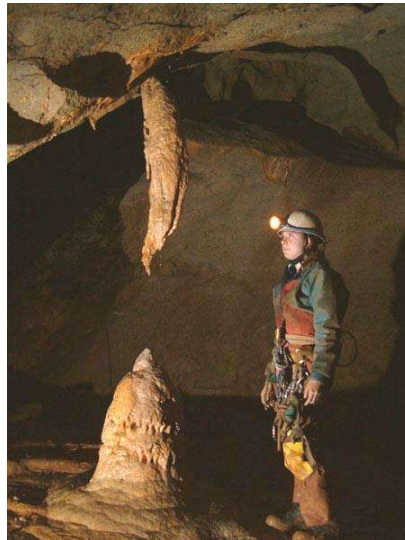
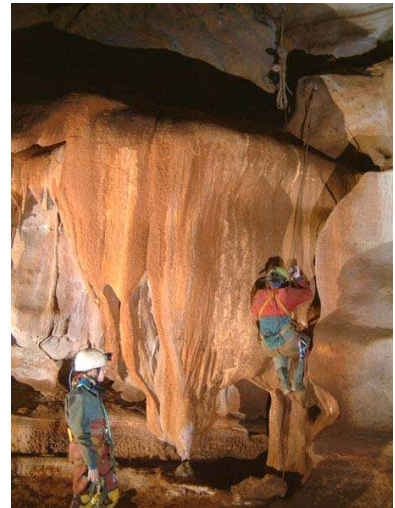
Neuf Gorges



Marcel



Aven de Noel



Photos - Andrew Atkinson - UBSS

HSCC Cave Leaders

Please note that all Caving Leaders with HSCC need to complete a **CRB form** (either with your own Group or, if you are not attached to a Group, Dave will help you sort it out) and also an **AA form** for Adult Leaders (you can download this from Scoutbase).

Cave Leader Training Dates :

Cave Leader 1 training - with John Crowsley 12/13 Feb 05

Cave Leader 2 training with John Crowsley April 05

Anyone interested contact Ros (and fill in a grant application form if you have not already done so please).

Articles, photos, news, gossip etc. for the next Newsletter to Ros White.

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