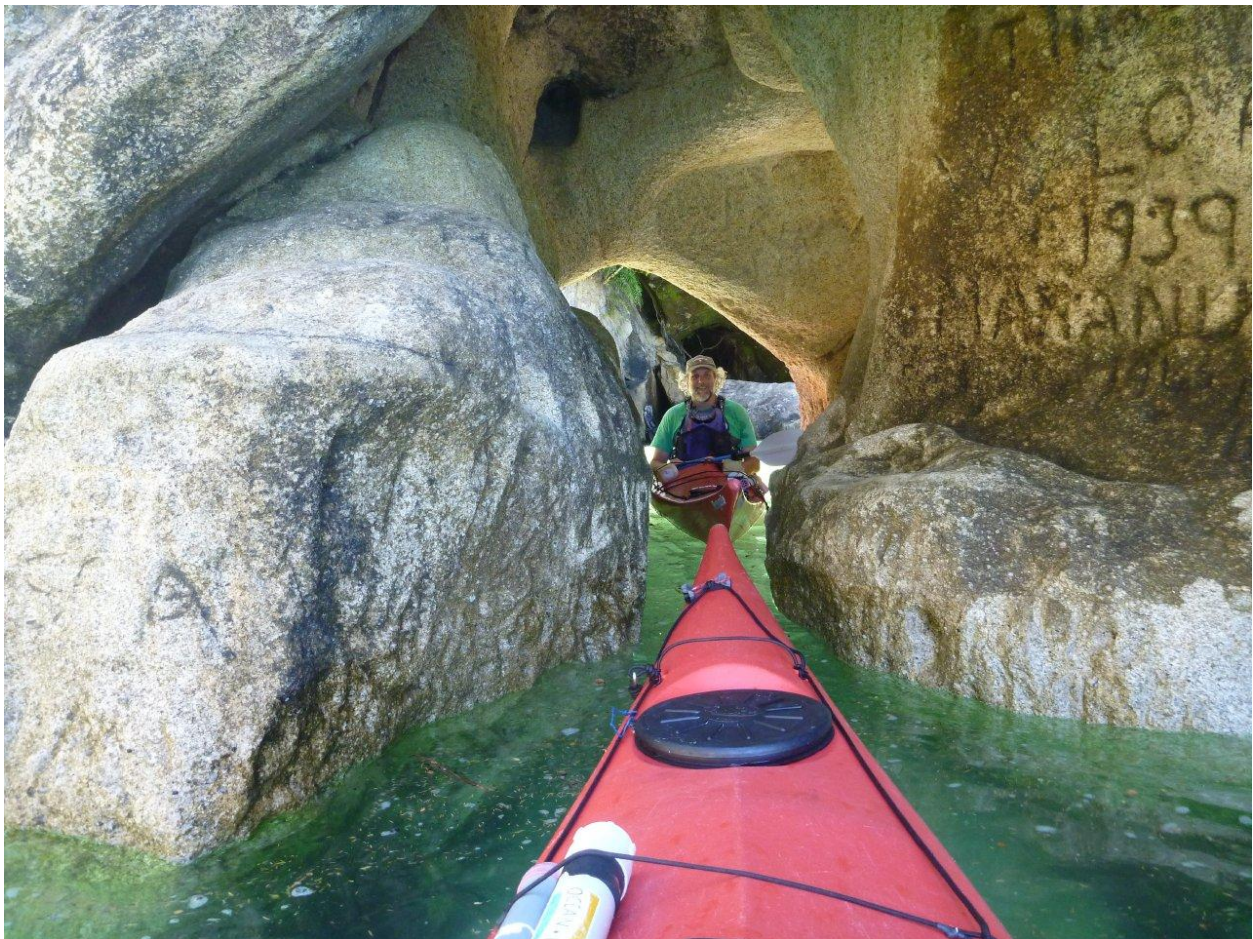




# Hampshire Scout Caving Club



## Summer 2011 Newsletter



Sea Cave in Abel Tasman National Park, New Zealand

Website: [www.scouts-hants.org.uk/hbcc](http://www.scouts-hants.org.uk/hbcc)  
Hampshire Scout Caving Club Newsletter produced by Sally White.  
Please send suggestions and articles to [sally\[at\]randomstuff.org.uk](mailto:sally[at]randomstuff.org.uk)

## Contents

HSCC Contact Details of Officials and Programme	1
HSCC News	2
A Few Caves Near Arbroath, Eastern Scotland	3
Mystery Cave	4
A Holiday in New Zealand	5
Four days on Lundy Island, owned by the National Trust	7
Caption Competition	8
Greenland: Geology and a Lot of Icebergs	9
Digging in Ireby Fell Cavern	11
Foreign Caves Quiz and Answers to the Quiz From the Spring 2011 Newsletter	11

## HSCC Officials

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## HSCC Programme 2011 - 2012

Date	Time	Activity	Venue	Contact
29-30 Oct		Scout Days	MNRC	Andy W.
2 Nov	20:00	AGM	12 <sup>th</sup> Eastleigh	Dave
12 <sup>th</sup> Nov	09:00	First Response Course	1 <sup>st</sup> Sandleheath	Ros
26-27 <sup>th</sup> Nov		Wales Weekend	Ystradgwynlais (hopefully)	Dave
7 <sup>th</sup> Dec	20:00	Quiz	12th Eastleigh Scout Hut	Anne
17 <sup>th</sup> Dec		Caving & party	Mendip & Andy's (Shrewton)	Dave/Andy W.
11 <sup>th</sup> Jan 2012	20-00	Talk	12th Eastleigh Scout Hut	Phil / Sue C.
21/22 <sup>nd</sup> Jan		Training weekend	MNRS / Mendip	Dave
1 <sup>st</sup> Feb	20-00	SRT training	1 <sup>st</sup> Sandleheath	Ros/Dave
7 <sup>th</sup> March	20-00	Equipment demonstrations	12th Eastleigh Scout Hut	Phil
17-18 <sup>th</sup> Mar		Scout Days	MNRS /Mendip	Andy
4 <sup>th</sup> Apr	20:00	Climbing	To be decided	Andy
2 <sup>nd</sup> May	19-30	Cycle / Walk	New Forest	Dave/Ros

## **HSCC NEWS**

**Research papers** - HSCC is a member of BCRA (British Cave Research Association). They have a comprehensive selection of research papers online at: <http://www.bcra.org.uk>  
Some of the papers require a username and password to access them. Contact Ros or Dave for this information.

**Permits** - there are a number of cave systems that also include an element of use of mine systems. To avoid the need to have mine exploration and caving permits for these systems when the mine system use is minimal, a number of these systems have been defined as caves, so mine exploration permits, mine inspection reports etc are not required. The full list is included in the caving factsheet FS120451

Caving doesn't include man made underground passages except for the following which are classed as caves:

- Bagshaw Cavern
- Carlswark Caverns
- Layby Pot
- Oxlow Caverns
- Suicide Cave
- Christmas Cave Ogof Nadolic
- Poachers Cave Dyers Adit

All mines used for mine exploration must have a current inspection report covering the sections. This must have been read by the permit holder.

Mine Inspection Reports: The Scout Association has access to a number of mine inspection reports for the use of members in running mine exploration activities. If you wish to make use of any, then please contact us at [activities\[at\]scouts.org.uk](mailto:activities[at]scouts.org.uk). These reports are not available to view online due to their commercial value.

A full list of the reports currently available is as follows:

### **Peak District**

- Devonshire Cavern
- Hillocks Mine
- Holme Bank Chert Mine
- Jug Holes
- Merlins Mine
- Mouldridge Mine
- Nicker Grove
- Rookery Black Marble Mine (Ashford)
- Knotlow Cavern - Awaiting work and re-inspection
- Longtor Top - Inspected but found not fit for use by groups
- Mandale Rake - Inspected but found not fit for use by groups
- Moor Furlong - Inspected but found not fit for use by groups
- Spinney Level - Inspected but found not fit for use by groups

### **South Wales**

- Black Hole Mine
- Blue Stal Mine
- South Wales Tunnels and Calverts

If there are other mine reports that you would like The Scout Association to get access to then please let us know at [activities\[at\]scouts.org.uk](mailto:activities[at]scouts.org.uk)

# A Few Caves Near Arbroath, Eastern Scotland

By Andy Watson

With one of Sue Watson's daughters getting married at Guthrie Castle near Carnoustie in eastern Scotland, I took the opportunity to go and visit some sea caves slightly north of Arbroath. Some steep steps led down to the old harbour and a pebble beach overlooked by some high sandstone cliffs. South along the coast the tide was in, but north the curving bay showed some promise without getting too cut off by the tide. I only had a couple of hours and being solo, with zero mobile phone signal, I could not take any serious risks, especially as I had to be back for a family evening meal! North it was.

The first thing I reached was a large, but vague rock shelter (see image below) at NGR NO 682 443, some 200 metres north of the harbour. According to 'The New Caves of Scotland' by Tony Oldham, this was possibly a habitation site. I have to say if it was, it was pretty draughty and not somewhere I would want to live.



Onward and round a slight corner at the base of the high and impressive cliffs I met a family on the beach rock pooling. They looked at me rather oddly and seemed to back away from me like I would eat the children, although I suppose I was a slightly crazy man, rushing and wearing a head torch and gloves carrying

a small tackle sack and yellow camera box. After observing me from a distance and without a word they went the other way and left me to investigate the cliffs and holes in peace.

The next hole another 25m north of the other was much more interesting, a quite impressive entrance 6 metres wide and 1 metre high and some 9 metres deep.



200 metres further on an even bigger entrance (see photo above) at NGR NO 682 445 at 18 metres wide and circa 3 metres high but only 6 metres deep.

25 metres further on was a deeper cave with a clean dry wide entrance 18 metres wide, 9 metres high and some 12 metres deep.

On another 25 metres was another impressive low dry entrance (see photo below), about 18m wide, 6m high but quickly lowering to 1m high and 12m wide. It was wider inside and the roof rose to standing height, at about 2 metres. Overall it was about 30 metres deep with a fresh water source at the back percolating through the rocks.



Further on again was another entrance (see photo to right) mostly surrounded by hanging plants (NGR NO 486 449 – not sure about this NGR) where a large entrance about 12 metres square quickly closed down to a small passage hidden behind some vegetation about 3m by 2.5m high. This seemed to go into a natural fault line for about 10 metres on a very slippery pebbly floor with no way on.



There are plenty of sea caves along this area of coastline and some need a boat to access; I shall be back one day to 'bag' them all.

## Mystery Cave

Below is a nostalgic photo of Andy Watson looking rather youthful! Andy said the following:

Please publish this photo of me from 1979 with a carbide, although the picture quality is rough (it came from a cine film). I am interested in identifying the quarry / cave I have just come out of, it's certainly in Devon. I thought it might be Holwell Cave, but it could be Napps Cave or perhaps one of the caves around Buckfastleigh. I would love to know if anyone recognises the quarry location, neither my mum or myself can remember.

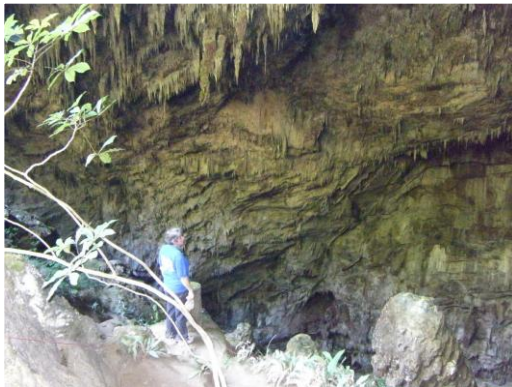


# A Holiday in New Zealand

By Ros White

We went to NZ with two main activities planned, sea kayaking along the coast of the Abel Tasman National Park and backpacking the Routeburn and Greenstone tracks. Inevitably we went in a few caves too.

After a quick tour of Christchurch, we went on to the very scenic Kaikura Peninsula and a brief visit to the Takaka area to see a few caves. Ngarua Show Caves on Takaka Hill had lots of formations, but minimal lighting and walkways. It was relatively unspoilt and the guide was interesting.



We looked at an impressive resurgence cave then drove towards Golden Bay. After a hike through dense woodland we found Rawhiti Cave and spent 45 mins in the cave – a huge entrance with a steep slope inside. Impossible to photograph well!

Next stop was the north coast of South Island and the Abel Tasman National Park. We spent 3 days sea kayaking there and investigated the sea caves we saw on the trip. Fabulous scenery and lots of seals.



On to Murcheson, then north, up the west coast to Karamea to a limestone area. We just visited some caves which are open to the public. To get there we had 14km on gravel

tracks to the Opharara Basin Arches. There are lots of limestone formations - caves, arches and tunnels there. It was raining, but the walks



were in forest so did not really matter. Great scenery (tree ferns etc) and formations were interesting. We wandered around Box Canyon & Crazy Paving Caves, where we found cave-spiders and glowworms.



We then had a long drive to Franz Josef, followed by a day on the Fox Glacier, where we had the opportunity to slither down some ice caves!

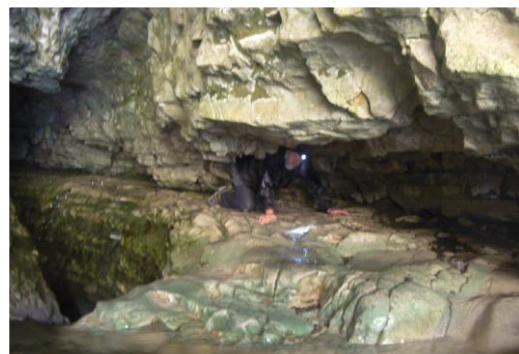


We drove southwards, stopping at Clifden, where there is a cave which is used a lot by novice cavers. The way through is indicated by a series of coloured reflectors and arrows mounted on the walls. Impossible to get lost! More glowworms.

We drove further south to the Catlins and visited a huge sea cave, Cathedral Cave. It is only accessible 2 hours either side of low tide. We were warned that because of the wind and neap tides, we would probably have to wade to the cave. It was a pleasant walk down to a beautiful deserted beach. We abandoned our shoes on a rocky ledge and waded into the cave. The cave entrance is huge and links to a second entrance. When we emerged from this we could see the waves lapping over the ledge with our shoes. My trainers were being picked up by a wave, floating about and then dropping back on the ledge as the wave receded. We were surprised on return to find both pairs of shoes still there and dry!!



We went to Arthurs Pass to visit Cave Stream Scenic Reserve where there are lots of interesting limestone formations and a cave. It is a streamway running through the mountain. It was sunny and warm, so despite the fact we knew we would be wading in (very cold) stream water, we gave it a go. As soon as we were in the cave we got wet up to our knees and soon came across pools which were deeper! The water was not too cold, but was flowing quite fast. Going up the main streamway involved climbing up small waterfalls, so we got a bit damp! As we approached the exit, there was a very deep pool which we could not get round. There was then fixed ladder steps in the side of the passage to climb up away from the main flow of water, then a chain to hold on to as you crawled along a ledge to get out.



# Four days on Lundy Island, owned by the National Trust

By Andy Watson

Visiting the caves on Lundy Island was a trip that we, Andy & Sue Watson, Sue Chase & Phil Candy, had planned for some time (well Sue Chase did all the planning actually, thanks Sue). Unfortunately some four weeks before our planned visit the island warden, whom I had contacted said there were restrictions on rock climbing on the island due to the nesting birds and in fact probably none of the caves would be accessible due to the seals which are also protected. However, undaunted, we went for the walking holiday anyway.

On Day One we landed and went to the Marisco Tavern. We looked at the island church with its rock collection then went to the cottage that we had rented, Stoneycroft. That evening, we went for a walk to the earthquake zone, a very interesting area of rifts in the rock caused by movement and collapse towards the sea. The deepest of these cracks was 100 feet deep and about 4 feet wide. We went back to the old lighthouse for 'singing at 18:00 hours' which was organised by some island holiday residents and was memorable, but probably not repeatable as we did a number of four-part harmonies and choruses not very well.

On Day Two we walked along the west side, past the earthquake zone and all the way to the North West point to visit the northern operating lighthouse. We came back along the east coast stopping to visit Gannet's Bay to watch seals. That evening Phil and Sue had a visitor at night, a pigmy shrew in the bedroom.



Day Three we took off to the south-west and visited Devil's Limekiln, an impressive rock hole some 250 feet deep. We continued along the coast to Benjamin's chair and I scrambled down to visit the two short copper mines. We

also visited the castle (now converted lodgings) and Benson's Cave (above), a man-made rock shelter/cave.

Later, we walked up the main island track to Tibbet's, the remotest dwelling on the island and met a lady author who was staying there with her artist husband and she had to write a paper on Neolithic burials. From Tibbet's we cut down a cliff coastal path to a place called Frenchman's Landing and watched lots of seals bobbing around in the sea. I tried to find a cave to the west but failed to climb around to it, with several grey seals groaning at me from the sea, I assumed I was in their territory so I retreated. On the opposite cliffs I could see Queen Mab's Grotto which was an old sea cave from a time when the sea level was much higher. To get access to this involved climbing some 100-150 feet towards the top of the island, going around an inlet and then climbing down the other side of the cliffs. This was worth a visit as it was very pretty and some 25-30 foot deep, however my camera (off the shelf point & shoot disposable) had run out of film/picture taking power.

Day Four, we went to the old battery where you cannot get to the caves underneath due to the sheer cliffs and in some areas, nesting birds. Later we went to the earthquake zone holes, which I played around in with Philip hanging on a piece of string. Sue and Susie watched some sea birds, among which were some puffins (still very rare but making a comeback). These were the only ones we saw among various seabirds. After lunch we went south west down to the jetty and to visit Rat Island to see if we could find a cave that goes right through this small island. First we found a small one that was too tight to continue, but you could see light through from the other side of the island. Then we walked through the main cave through the island. Philip and Sue swam back out round the far side to the jetty, I thought we had lost them! I also went to see Mermaid's Hole which was slightly north of Rat Island on the main island which looked like a suitable swimming spot. We watched more seals in this area between the islands.

On Day Five we packed up and left Stoneycroft. We all decided that it had been a loyal and faithful cottage, a very good place to stay. We went south west again, this time to



find the Montague Steps below some cliffs on the coast. This is where the battleship Montague, which was about three years old, had been wrecked on the rocks back in 1906. There was no loss of life but the ship cost £1 million to build and was sold for £4000 scrap. The Captain and the Navigation Officer had been court-martialled as they thought they had hit Hartland Point on the North Devon coast!

We walked around the coastal path past the rocket post, Benjamin's Chair, the castle and went for a swim, which was very, very cold, prior to getting back on the boat, the MS Oldenburg back to Ilfracombe.



## Caption Competition



# Greenland: Geology and a Lot of Icebergs

By Sally White

Although a holiday to Greenland is not entirely cave related, I thought there were enough people interested in geology (and pretty pictures) to warrant an article on it.

Most of Greenland is covered by a huge icesheet (Wikipedia.org says 81% is covered by the icesheet). The icesheet is smooth in the middle and interspersed with the occasional lake in summer. These lakes are a surprisingly vivid turquoise colour.



Icesheet near Kangerlussuaq

As you get further towards the coast, the icesheet has many more features, including rivers that carve stunning sculpted features in the ice.



Ros taking a photos of sculpted icesheet

There are, of course, underground rivers too and we saw many chasms descending down through the ice. We visited in summer when the rivers are active and rapidly creating ice caves. As this happens at a much quicker rate in ice than in limestone, it was not safe to descend into the caves.



Cave on the icesheet

Whilst some of the water escapes from the icesheet in these rivers, some of it leaves whilst still in the form of ice and remains as ice for many years. The coastal areas are not covered by the icesheet, and the ice from the icesheet gets channelled down large gulleys in the rock; they are now glaciers. These glaciers descend to the coast where they meet tidal rivers, usually just a few miles inland. Here the ice starts to break up. Sometimes there is an obvious front of the glacier and the pieces that break off are quite small.



Eqi glacier with a slab of ice about to break off

Sometimes the chunks that break off are so big and there is so many of them crammed in that there is no obvious front to the glacier.



A large piece of ice amongst smaller pieces in the icefjord at Ilulissat

These chunks all gradually move down to the sea, where they are released as massive icebergs. We visited the icefjord at Ilulissat in West Greenland which is an excellent example of this.



One of the icebergs soon after it had floated free near Ilulissat (taken close to midnight!)



Part of the town of Ilulissat

The icebergs slowly float away and can travel for many miles, some of them reaching America.



This iceberg had travelled at least 100km from Ilulissat to Disko Island

As the icebergs travel, they melt and their weight distribution changes, which often causes them to roll over. A rolled iceberg is easy to spot because the part that sticks up is not jagged, but smooth and sculpted.



Sculpted iceberg

# Digging in Ireby Fell Cavern

By Sally White

Since moving to Yorkshire I joined one of the digging projects in Ireby. The dig is in Duke Street, a large straight passage that is met after several pitches of varying length.

The dig follows a crawl of a hundred metres or so, which means that the mud dug out needs to be carried back much of this distance. It feels a bit like digs in Mendip. After several weeks of dragging mud down the passage, we finally could look into a small chamber. They sent me down and I wiggled through as much as possible to get a good look round. It was

small and at first I saw the pooled water indicating a sump. However it does swing round to the right so we remained hopeful.

A few digging trips later, we finally broke through into the little chamber. The water was indeed a sump, but round to the right it continued! It was a proper flat out crawl with a small amount of water, but it only went about 6 or 7 metres until we encountered a rock blocking our way. We will go back to survey and see if we get past the blockage.

# Foreign Caves Quiz

By Ros White

Can you identify the locations of these caves, none of which are in Great Britain?

1.



3.



2.



4.



5.



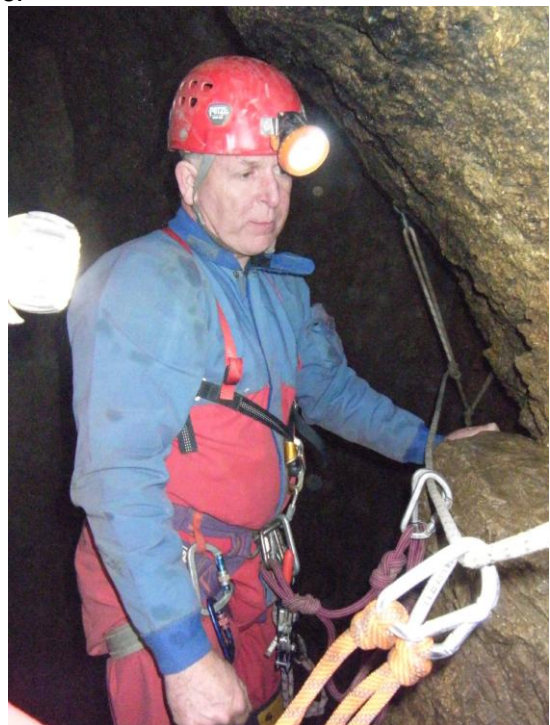
7.



6.



8.



Answers to Spring 2011 quiz:

1. Aveline's Hole
2. Eastwater Cavern
3. Box Mine
4. Tynings Barrow Swallet

5. Waterwheel Swallet
6. Hilliers
7. Sidcot Swallet
8. Singing River Mine

9. Swildons Hole
10. Goatchurch Cavern
11. East Twin Swallet
12. Rods Pot