

1984

Chairman: - <i>JAshton -Jones</i> Secretary: - <i>APrice & PHartwright</i> Treasurer: - <i>WNeesham</i>

AGM 12th January 1984

The Annual General Meeting was held at the General Hospital, Hereford on 12th January 1984. 28 members present.

Matters Arising – Chairman reported that there were no leadership arrangements available for Craig -a–Ffynnon.

Mr Hartwright reported that the club's supply of explosives was adequate for the time being.

The Chairman reported that a bat licence was not necessary for purpose of carrying out bat counts.

Mr Hartwright reported that no permission was available for digging in the Llygad Llchwyr area.

Officers Reports – The Chairman reported that a successful year of caving and digging had taken place although we were still hoping for a major find. The change of venue for meetings had proved very successful with thanks to Mr J Ashton-Jones for arranging it. The membership appeared quite stable and it was encouraging to see a number of new members present at the meeting. The Club dinner and talk had been very enjoyable and Arthur Price was to be congratulated for once again winning the photographic competition. He was pleased to report that there had been no cave rescue call out during the year. He concluded by reporting that he had attended meetings of the Cambrian Caving Council and the Agen Allwedd Cave Management Committee throughout the year and by thanking fellow officers and members for their support.

The Minutes Secretary reported that three committee meetings had been held during the year at the home of John Ashton-Jones and thanked him for his hospitality.

The Circular Secretary reported that Mr John Ashton-Jones had taken on the task of writing out the circulars but that distribution had been as before. Membership now stood at 39 full and 9 provisional then new members proving both active and enthusiastic.

The Treasurer produced an Income and Expenditure Account which was duly adopted. He added that he had plenty of club badges available at 60p.

The Librarian reported a number of sales and purchases during the year and that 68 books and publications had been lent out, 40 of which had been returned. He mentioned that Mr D Legg, Mr P Hartwright, Ms C Lambert and Me N E had books out.

The Equipment Officer reported that he was holding 15 ladders, 2 tethers, 3 ropes, 1 SRT rope, 12 helmets, surveying equipment, the Agen Allwedd key and 2 awards. He mentioned that 2 ladders, 3 tethers and 2 ropes were out. He requested that equipment be returned promptly and that the new ladders be rolled. One rope had been condemned and replaced. 1 ladder had been condemned and 2 purchased. He mentioned that the club now had no lamps. He concluded by mentioning that there had been no rescue call outs but that he had attended 2 rescue practices.

The Newsletter Editor reported that the current newsletter was now available and that the cost of producing it had been about £30. She thanked Colin Legg and Malcolm

Evans for helping her with the duplicating and stapling.

The Training Officer reported that schedules had been handed out to new members and one had been completed and returned by Arthur Price. His certificate was being prepared. Here recommended that rescue practices should be attended as often as possible.

The Cottage Warden reported a disappointing year with attendance and income down. He produced an income and expenditure account which showed a small profit of £36 but quarterly rent remained to be paid out of this. He thanked all who had helped to keep the cottage tidy and to cut firewood.

After Election of Officers – The President proposed a vote of thanks to the retiring Chairman for his invaluable work for the club over many years and that he hoped he would continue to serve the club in some other position.

Special Items for Discussion – It was agreed that the subscriptions should remain unaltered.

It was agreed to continue with the Eglwys Faen Dig subject to the bat hibernation period.

Reported that Northern Stream passage was 2500 feet and heading towards North Wing.

Committee Meeting 26th January 1984

Digging in Eglwys Faen – Conditions of access were read out at the meeting. Roy Machintob contacted and asked to clarify present position concerning the club.

Training Scheme – The committee discussed a more practical approach to the scheme. Committee members to approach novices concerning training rather than leave it to the novice concerned.

Caving Leader – The committee received an application from Tim Allen concerning a reference from the club to SWCC to enable him to become a leader in OFD for a Yorkshire club. It was left to the Hon. Chairman to make a suitable reply.

Mrs J Ashton - Jones – Authority was given by the committee for the purchase of a pair of walking gaiters to act as a present from the club to Mrs Ashton - Jones, in respect of using 87 Lichfield Avenue as a meeting place.

Committee Meeting 26th April 1984

Our Annual OFD permit is residing at SWCC HQ.

Eglwys Faen Dig – Negotiations on digging permission were still going on. In the event of a yes the committee discussed the use of a generator at the site on a suitable weekend. Hon. Secretary asked to contact G Price for more details, concerning generator hire.

Yorkshire Trip – Thanks were given to Liam Kealy for his efforts in arranging the Yorkshire weekend, i.e. information on caves and camp sites, the cave to be visited probably Gaping Gill.

Battery – Authorisation was given by the committee to buy a new caving light to be kept by the training officer and loaned out to prospective members and guests for £1 a time.

Finally – The Hon. Secretary was very pleased to present to Mrs Ashton - Jones, on behalf of HCC, a pair of walking gaiters. (£11.05)

Committee Meeting 28th September 1984

A caving battery had not been bought, but it was hoped to within the next few weeks.

It had been found that a generator was not needed for the dig in Eglwys Faen, and that the dig was now progressing well.

Cottage – It was decided by the committee that if possible more outside groups should be encouraged to use the cottage. A suggestion that the cottage financial year should start at the same date as the clubs was put forward. This idea to be included on the agenda for the next AGM.

Bat Licences – It was agreed that the licences obtained last year should be allowed to expire now that the excitement over the new bat law has died down.

DYO – Phil Checketts name to be put forward as a new leader for the club. The Chairman to write to SWCC.

Club Dinner – Committee members agreed that the annual dinner be held at the usual venue, the Bird Cage, Leominster. Details to be arranged by W Neesham. KHAKins agreed to purchase the book “Great Caving Adventurers” by M Farr for use in the draw. P Lambert to ask N Eve if he could give a talk on his recent trip down the Grand Canyon, USA. w-

HCC Newsletter No 38

Digging in Eglwys Faen

10th January 1981

Eleven cavers turned up to have a prod at the main choke. While waiting for the rock to settle three of us went into the Rabbit Warren to look at the miner passages leading off into the mountain. All of them are blocked with boulders after a few feet.

On the way out we looked into one which had been dug a few yards further by HCC last year, this one taking a slight draught. It ended in a minute chamber surrounded by rocks. We decided to come back and take another closer look, working on the theory that a small passage would produce a more easily passed choke than a large one.

7th February 1981

George and I arrived early, taking in a spade, hammer and a plastic box with rope attached. By the time the rest had arrived we had removed the more unhealthy looking rocks and exposed a clay fill. With Malcolm's help twenty loads were pulled out and stacked away.

18th February 1981

Coming back from elsewhere Ashley and I moved three loads.

29th March 1981

During 4 ½ hours underground George and I pulled out a further 18 loads. Brought in some more rope as the distance from the working face to the stacking area had been increased. The draught was coming from an unstable area to our left, but digging out the clay straight ahead was much easier, so we filled it in with 15 loads, reasoning that the n-

true line of the passage was the clay fill. We progressed 2 ½ feet along and 2 feet down. While waiting for George to fill the box Itunnelled into another passage to the left of the stacking area. It turned out to be the same length and shape as the other one, with an unenterable passage leading back to the main one. The clay fill seemed to be either giving out or dipping down. Clay gave way to loose rock plus a stronger draught coming from the floor.

28th November 1981

Saturday night digging trip. Brought out six loads. The rest looked at the draughting rift previously blasted by Martyn Farr. He could not get the explosive positioned properly because of the cramped space. Our idea was to push an inner tube down the crack, blow it up, and pour on cement leaving a hole to put in explosive, let it set, then cover the top with mud. On coming out we met Martyn on his way to the Hereford dig. We were able to weave a fine story about our pneumatic explosive method which left him very confused. We didn't want to reveal the exact nature of the experiment in case it failed. (It did!)

7th February 1982

Two larger rocks getting in the way were blasted, one at the entrance to the chamber, the other in the floor.

13th February 1982

Went with Hywel and Gareth. We were not amused to see Gareth walking along with ease while we had to crawl. Removed one large stone from the dig. Hywel agreed it now looked a lot safer.

12th December 1982

Arrived in a snow storm which soon stopped, but made walking around the cliffs treacherous. A fine draught at the dig. Chiselled some of the merest stubborn rocks and removed three loads.

18th February 1983

Called in at Eglwys Faen before going on to the cottage. George, Jane and I joined Jeremy and later Paul. George and Jeremy began to make fast progress. Stacking sites near the dig were now full so we used a second box to drag the rubble back even further. We made the entrance tunnel much larger to enable some very large rocks to be brought out, one person pushing, the other person pulling. 37 loads were removed – a record! Some much more substantial rocks were unearthed with many gaps in between. We could see in a further 6 feet and feel the draught which gave us more encouragement. We decided to make the area safer before blasting further.

5th March 1983

George, Paul and Jeremy intended to go into Agen Allwedd but ended up at Eglwys Faen. Built a dry stone wall on the left side and put up some props.

23rd April 1983

11 members turned up to dig at three different locations. The main choke having got the better of us again, a new one was started in the Eastern series, moving clay and rock in a wide passage with an air space. Colindugou his sandy dig again. George and I, u

ing hammer and chisel continued digging, using all the rock for shoring. Put in some more timber (I had bought some scaffolding clips, but not yet brought them to the cave).

Paul came in and used his 'black stuff' to reduce a 10ft by 2 ½ft rock to rubble. It filled up a hole 6ft deep – another case of overkill.

14th May 1983

Three of us removed remains of large boulder. 11 loads taken right out and a further 10 used for shoring. Another boulder underneath and the same size was also extensively cracked. Using the lump hammer we soon got rid of it, to reveal some more clay. It, together with another rock, was easily dug out. To cap it all Jeremy ceremoniously flung the chisel down a crack and was unable to retrieve it.

Arthur Price

HCC Newsletter No 38

Two Extensions Off Flood Passage

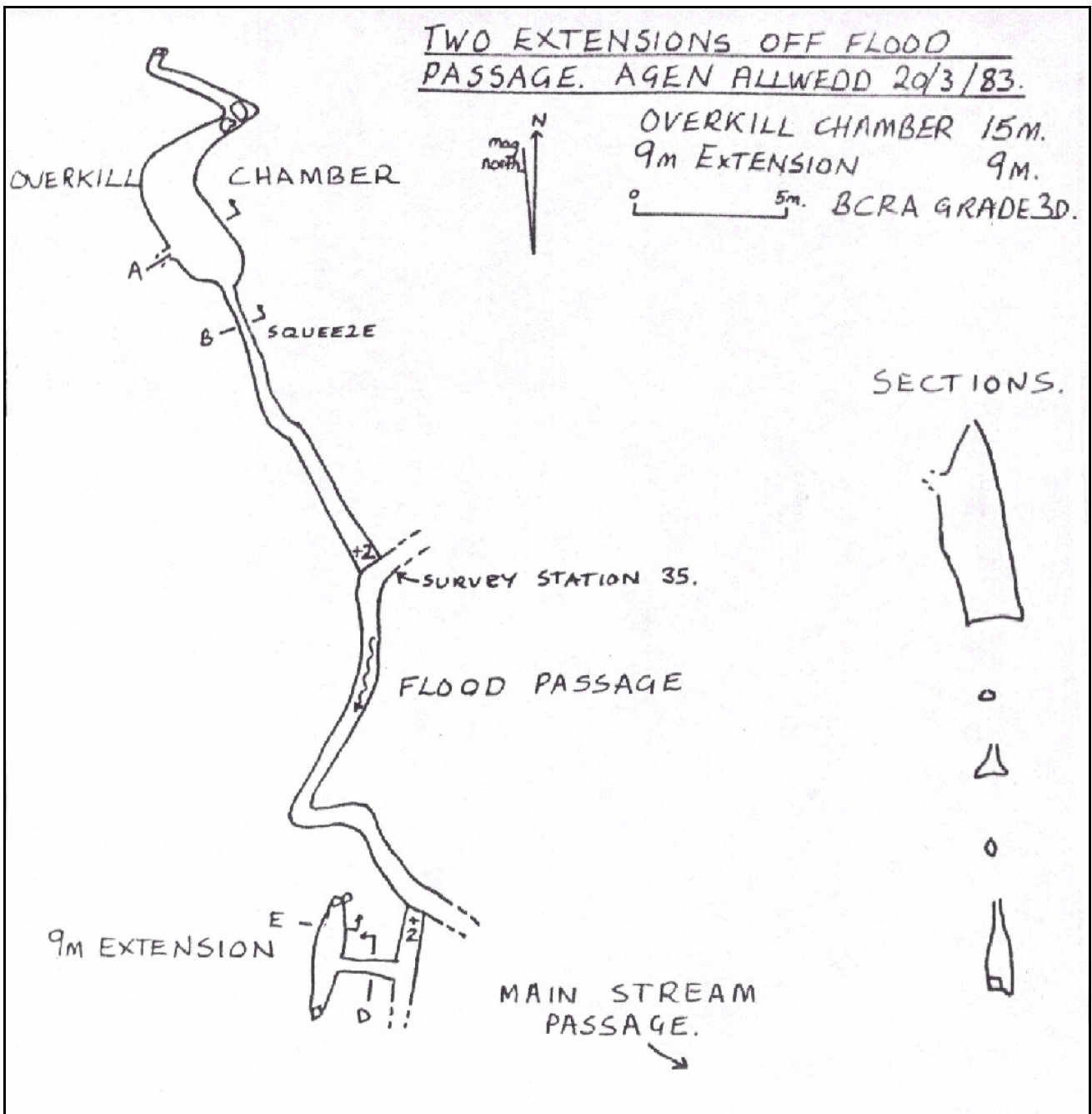
Paul Hartwright, Jeremy Phelps, Tony Firth, George Price and myself arrived at Llangattock half past four and were speedily into the cave by five. Objective: to look at two small passages leading off Flood Passage several hundred feet from the junction with Main Stream Passage.

Paul, using some of the 'black stuff' over-enthusiastically, removed a triangular flake hanging from the roof – so much so that another flake beyond was also demolished. We had some problems passing back the chippings, but eventually after the removal of some mud which had backed up behind the queue, we grunted and groaned our way in. Except, of course, the LARGE gentleman. He stayed behind to guard 'things'.

Inside the chamber, which we called 'Overkill', were some crystal pools on the muddy calcified floor. Ahead, over a climb, the passage became blocked with boulders. A suggestion of a draught seemed to come from a little passage in the ceiling, but we were unable to reach it because of the mud covering the walls.

We then surveyed back down to the other possible extension. A very small tube ascending at right angles from another needed combined effort to get into. One person sitting at the bottom pushed another into the tube, using the back of his shoulders. At the top a boulder was persuaded to move. Only I had the energy and the figure to get in. Unluckily it closed down almost immediately, with a vocal connection back to the stream on the right.

Arthur Price



Above - Survey of Two extensions off Flood Passage, Agen Allwedd