

Hot on the heels of the last Moldywarp newsletter comes this latest missive. The more suspicious and miserly members might wonder what ulterior motive lies behind this wanton waste of paper. So I will start by revealing all (!) - this is a SUBSCRIPTION REMINDER in disguise. Moldywarps flourish (?) on informality but if we are to blossom forth in print to record for posterity the hypogean wonders of the Northern Dales we must get subscriptions in forthwith - i.e. NOW. Journal No.5 will soon be out and is a must for all true Moldywarps. Order now to avoid disappointment and high pressure salesmanship!

SURVEYING SCENE

A new surveying tape has now been purchased averting the threatened work to rule (1 m. of course) by Moldy surveyors. The Suunto compass is suffering and may have to be replaced. Because of this members should note that all future discoveries must consist of single straight passages so that underground bearings are not needed.

CAVING NEWS

First must come the main Easter discovery, Fossdale Beck Cave - probably about 1200' long, an intricate and interesting cave found by gentle pottering in a limestone gorge which had been briefly potted four years previously. The first entrance found - needing 5 minutes digging to open it - led to a large passage, which was joined by a stream, and continued past some fine stal. cascades, to lower to a choked bedding. A side passage, however, led to a 20' ladder pitch.

On the second visit a second entrance was found, wide open, leading to 80' of passage ending in a sizeable chamber, and a low side passage near the entrance connecting with the main cave at the head of the pitch. Below the pitch 70' of passage was explored including a narrow aven communicating with the cave above, a tight fissure joining the cave in the floor of the above-mentioned sizeable chamber, and a low draughting bedding needing digging.

On the third visit a tight tube in the cliff face downstream from the other entrances was enlarged and a complex and extensive series of passages entered, one of which led to the far side of the bedding plane dig mentioned above - it is hoped to open this out soon. A further section of stream passage was explored, which must come very near the choked bedding at the downstream end of the 'Upper Cave', and some high aven chambers, the largest 25' long, 15' wide and 50' high.

On the next visit the survey of the Lower Cave Series was completed but some passages have not been pushed to a definite conclusion.

Also found nearby was Wofell Scar Pot, an interesting little cave with a climbable but rather loose 21' entrance pitch. This cave still needs surveying and a surface traverse carrying out between it and Fossdale Beck Cave.

Elph Cleugh Cave - 150' of new passage was found here, Cake Inlet, a side passage 70' from the entrance. The remainder of the main stream passage needs surveying (and pushing?). A pleasant little system.

Maize Beck Caves, Teesdale - remote caves reached by walking over High Cup Nick, several caves, mostly crawling, and running near the surface. Longest caves 70' (dry) and 120' (wet).

Trough Scars Caves - The final bedding in Cave I was inspected and a heightening into a chamber of sorts perceived from both the bedding on the r. at the end of the main chamber, and the bedding at the end of the side passage dug out by MSG in 1968 - both these routes, however, would be awkward digs. Further upstream T.S. Cave III was dug out - 60' long and with a small stream, evidently part of Sleightholme Beck, flowing through it. However, the sink is nearby and the downstream end is thoroughly choked. The rising is probably very local as well.

Grange Gill Cave was the scene of some hard labour by an MSG party when boulder demolition and removal was thwarted by lack of time on a late evening trip. 15' of open passage can be seen beyond the blockage and this will bring the total length to about 100'. But there may be more round the corner! The cave is ideal as a 'kill or cure' centre for arachniphobics and provides a natural example of hydroponics.

The first cousin of the above cave, Whitfield Gill Cave, was found after much searching in the wrong strata. It has about 3 entrances and consists of about 200' of solution widened joints forming underground oxbows which take water when the Gill is in flood.

The dig at Devis Hole finally broke through into the mine level only to reach another major blockage a little way in. Further digging is in progress here.

The most recent news concerns a double venue trip to the Brough Area. One party went down Smeltnill Beck Cave whilst the other explored the Punch Bowl Hotel. The underground party reached a non-hammerable impasse about 100' up Shrimp Inlet where the passage can be seen continuing and possibly getting roomier. On return they were rewarded by a 140' extension up an inlet passage about 300' upstream from Cairn Chamber. The passage ended in a sump. The other party also discovered an extension which delayed departure until after midnight!

STOP PRESS!

YURT have discovered that persons unknown have discovered a $\frac{1}{2}$ mile extension to Thackthwaite Cave bringing the total length to over a mile. The new passage leads off from a boulder ruckle into a passage reputedly 40' square!