

Newsletter Statistics

Up to now MSG newsletters have appeared at an average rate of 1 a year. This second issue in 1972 brings us one closer to that record year 1970 when 3 issues appeared! Of course the cynics would say that the number of issues reflects the time spent writing instead of caving and is thus a measure of decadence.

Comments and Pleas

The SUBSCRIPTION REMINDER in the June newsletter produced little response and many adherents had yet another free year. Adherents are members that aren't really since they haven't paid subs. A proposal is to be made to our AGM to alter the benefits accruing to full members and associate members. It is proposed that full members receive a free copy of the journal, be eligible to vote and to receive any other perks that come up from time to time e.g. cheap equipment. Associate members would receive newsletters (and journal adverts!) and would pay an appropriately reduced subscription (just to cover costs). All would be eligible to go on meets and slave away for the greater glory of MSG. The latter category of membership is especially to be commended to those Moldys who by the cruel hand of fate have been temporarily snatched away from the Elysian Dales. (i.e. most of the group!).

Group News

1972 will go down in the annals of British Speleology as the year MSG won the £5 prize for the best exhibit at the National Speleological Conference. We must here record acknowledgement to A.H., PFR., and R.D.E. who not only designed, set up and manned the exhibit but also managed to sell some £15 worth of MSG publications. (A most lucrative weekend).

R.D.E. also obtained for MSG some surplus equipment, most of which was sold to members. The following remains :- (prices in brackets are those for members who have paid a 1972 subs.)

1 large haversack @ 30p. (25p.)	3 lump hammers @ 30p. (25p.)
2 small haversacks @ 20p. (15p.)	2 chisels @ 10p. (8p.)
1 x 20' wire lashing @ 20p. (15p.)	2 enamelled water bottles @ 10p. (8p.)

Orders to G.S. Delivery by arrangement.

Whilst on the subject of goods for sale, a further supply of Ayleburn Surveys has been produced and these are available @ 25p. Smeltnill Beck surveys are now available at 20p. and spare copies of Windegg Mine Caverns survey are 12½p. I take it for granted that you all have copies of the best-selling Journal 5; this includes a Windegg survey in its bargain price of 40p. (+ 7p. postage). All from G.S.

Journal 5 is proving very popular and No.6 is now being planned. Contributors get your pens filled and start writing now.

A hoard of MSG Newsletter No. 1's has been unearthed and prior to its being auctioned at Sotheby's (or otherwise disposed of!) paid-up members may request a free copy from the secretary.

There is no progress to report on our access problems, partly due to lack of secretarial action and partly because present levels of Moldy manpower can scarcely take on new projects when the current list of unfinished ones is so long.

The Chairman fulfilled his traditional obligation and organised the MSG dinner at a hostelry in Bainbridge. Attendance was some 25 in all with guests from YURT, ULSA and KCC. Entertainment included a rendering of Holmes' Water Music (being a recording of AH's feet in the water of Sir Francis Level!) and a few slides. The finale took place on the edge of Semerwater with festive Scottish Country Dancing. Insufficient incentive was offered to the Chairman for him to indulge in a midnight swim - why not make this another ex-officio tradition of the Chairman?

A further bargain offer comes in the form of poly-bags. These are 36" x 22", in transparent polythene and weigh 30zs. Price to subs. payers is 4p. each and to others 5p. Postage extra. Orders to G.S.

## CAVING NEWS

### A. MSG News

Fossdale Beck Cave has been revisited but despite visual confirmation of the point of connection of upper and lower caves a passable link was not achieved and more digging is needed. Another aven has been found with a seemingly large adjacent one (as yet unentered) guarded by 2 miniscule portals. A few minor prospects remain here.

West Scrafton Pot was the scene of two extensions together amounting to some 120'. On a further trip little progress was made but further scope for extensions was noted.

A weekend was spent in Lancaster/Easegill with the intention of digging in one place, surveying in another and revisiting a possibly undocumented part of the system. We discovered that such marathons require fit parties and we retired with half a dig done, no surveying and a visit to the threshold of the unknown!

Dovecote Cave in Garsdale is about 300' long in contrast to P.U. - 50'.

Swindale Head Cave had its prospects reduced by half when G.S. found the streamway closed down to an impenetrable bedding. The remaining prospect requires demolition of a slab.

Crackpot Cave was the scene of a dig championed by P. Stephenson. No progress was made so yourstruly laid on a cabaret by getting stuck in a small tube. Despite damage to my reputation I am now able to claim a genuine 5' extension - previously unentered!

Moking Hurth merits a little anecdote. Our story starts back on 17.6.70. when G.S. made the first (and only) through trip from Moking Pot. On this occasion the intrepid lone explorer entered the mud tube series whilst looking for the way out. The passage looked promising. Two years later (9.6.72.) a party set out to follow the footsteps and knee-prints of the 1955 party of UTCC who surveyed this passage and depicted it with an undefined end at a widening of the passage. The party, with the exception of G.S. (of course!), were defeated at a squeeze some 150' before the end of the survey! G.S. now on another solo epic found trog marks corresponding to about 1 visit by 2 persons. The end of the survey was a small breakdown chamber filled to a depth of about 6' with jumbled boulders. On the right a narrow virgin rift led off and boulder clearing left a "possible?" squeeze - deemed unwise to attempt solo.

24.10.72. was a special day in the log of MSG. Not only was M.H. pushed to its ultima thule but our Chairman was present (trying to boost his average to 1 trip per month). He excelled himself by passing the first squeeze and the entire party (i.e. both of us) reached the dig. After a rock session with a boulder we had made little impression on the squeeze but G.S. managed to get through anyway. The chief difficulty was that the squeeze emerged 6' above the floor of the rift and you had to do it head first (how do you get out?!). G.S. proceeded round a corner to a stal. blockage after a mere 30' of narrow passage. C.C. got stuck in the squeeze and was found imitating a bat (i.e. hanging upside down from the squeeze in the roof). After rendering assistance G.S. returned to hammer the squeeze and after a few anxious moments, squeezing before the hole was big enough, managed to extract a further miserable 25' of squeezes before the passage effectively fizzled out. The stal. squeeze had to be reversed exactly as per entry and the boulder squeeze was just possible with a little bone bending. Thus the secret of mud-tube inlet has been revealed - 55' of exceptionally tight and arduous squeezes.

Devotees of Windegg will be pleased to hear the level is still accessible. A recent trip suggested there is still scope for a bit of pottering, digging, squeezing, etc. The bypass to Creaking Boulder Cavern was opened up so there is now no excuse for not going down.

Kirkdale Cave was the scene of 2 hours abortive digging. Apart from one low priority prospect, exploration and survey are now complete and will be published in Journal 6.

Whilst in the N.Y.M. area, MSG have assisted Ampleforth College V.S.U. in surveying Ashberry Windypit - the latest estimate is that this is well over 1000' long and still going.

#### B. Other News

Ampleforth College V.S.U. cavers have found a new windypit Blood Windypit in Shallowdale estimated at over 60' deep and several hundred feet long.

Checking N.Y.M. sites in connection with the "Northern Caves" handbook led to a small extension to Motts Hole.

YURT have found several more small caves in Mallerstang in the area of their Summit Cave find. Two are over 100' long.

C.P.C. have found 500' of typical Yoredale cave - East Pasture Cave - the resurgence for Bishopdale Gavel Pots.

The press should never have been stopped! That is the stop press item in the last newsletter was all a mistake and Thackthwaite Cave has not been extended. Its length is probably around 3000' in all.

#### C. Foreign Caving News

ULSA have found a 2000' extension to Sleets Gill Cave, Littondale entitled Hypothermia passage it is very wet ending downstream in a sump and having a side passage almost connecting with the 'old' cave.

List of MSG members

Please remember to notify any changes of address to G.S. to ensure that newsletters, etc., don't go astray.

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