

MSG

NEWSLETTER AUGUST 70

This newsletter - an 'occasional' MSG publication - is produced in the middle of the usual 'summer vacation' period of Moldywarp activity, to inform all on the Group's activities, proposed activities, suggested activities, etc. The JOURNAL III is at last ready - an exciting volume bound in a psychedelic cover (as per usual), five unfolding surveys, etc. etc. - at 5/- a copy (if you have not already got one, but two now). Also non-partakers in the surveying of Ayleburn may purchase large prints of the AYLEBURN CAVES SURVEY for a mere 4/-.

The past two or three months have seen a fruitful period as regards new MSG explorations (we have at last succeeded in finding a cave - even two caves - between 270' and 2800' long).

It was the 30th May that Jan and PFR returned to ELLER BECK HEAD - abandoned two years previously by MSG, as an 80' long wet grot ("I'll eat me helmet if that hole goes any further": C. Carson, esq., Spring 1970). As often, what had been too tight was no longer too tight (or even really tight), and beyond low wet rifts went on (doubtless sumped before our water-lowering activities). A week later we were back, Graham S., Phil R and PFR being the underground party - and what had been an 80' wet grot became an 800' (or perhaps 750'?) wet grot - instantly voted the most unpleasant cave in the Northern Dales - S.S.C.

The survey (be loyal friends) of course needs completing (although it has been started) - and the cave will certainly push further (the survey trip saw 70' more). Also, the cave stream is a good three times the size of that from Hazel Bush Hill Hole, the only obvious sink..... and that could well mean a sink a long way away - and miles more cave (although if it's all like Eller Beck Head so far I'm not sure I want to have anything to do with finding it).

A week after the Eller Beck breakthrough PFR inspected New Level, Faggergill, to examine a natural rift in the floor said to be 'too tight' - again, it wasn't, and below was NEW LEVEL MINE CAVE - the exploration of which was completed by Pete Stepherson (MSG/BACC) and Derek Taylor (BACC) the day after. The new cave - a stream passage - is 300' long (surveyed), and ends downstream, Roughton Keldwards, in a muddy sump. The total length of the system, including dry upper passages previously known, is 435'.

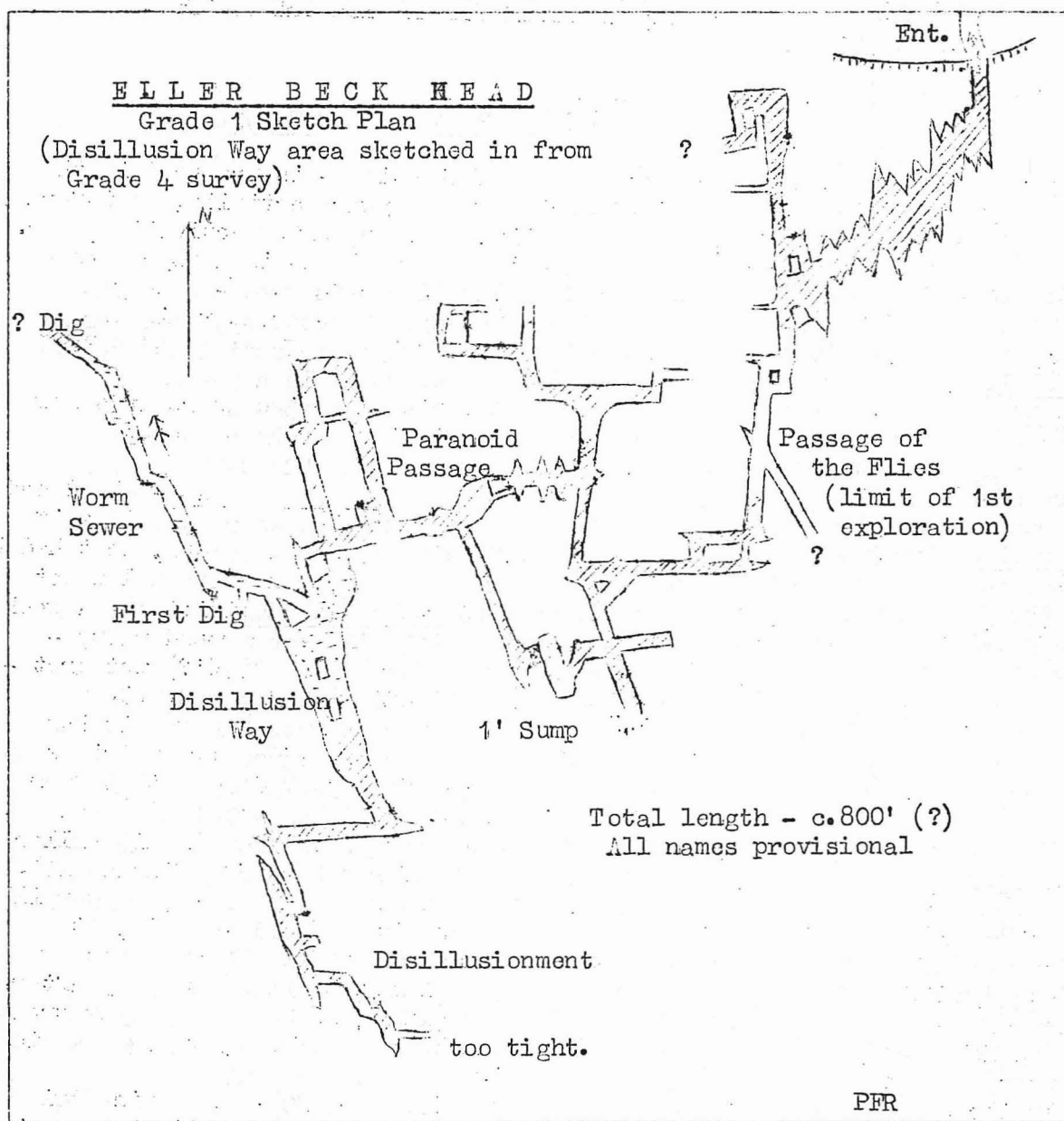
Only three more days elapsed until - on the 17 - 6 - 70 - an evening trip by Graham and PFR to Moking Pot saw the system pushed to its limit both upstream and downstream - upstream for 100' to an impassable choked rift, downstream for 50' of evil very tight very wet crawl, emerging into Moking Hurth, thus making the first 'through trip', and linking the two systems, 1800' cave in all.

More recently we have been surveying at Faggergill, looking at more mine levels there, and engaging in water-testing - only result so far is that Faggergill Main Sink (BACC dig) goes to Roughton Keld, as we thought it would.

Other recent efforts include another entrance to the threatened JACOB'S WELL, surveying and other work in KISDON CAVE - which may bear fruit soon - a look at ASHBERRY WINDYPIT (which proved longer and more complex than existing descriptions suggest, a tight new cave of 70' at SMARBER BECK HEAD, and a couple of rather fruitless days in Littondale

News of members - Again, in Glin's phrase, "August found MSG members scattered over the globe". In fact, C. is now looking for new holes in Spain, Dave Atkings in India for a couple of months, and Phil R. on the verge of vanishing to Australia for a couple of years. Total membership is still no more than around a dozen, only one new active member, Graham Stevens (4 Kingston Ave., Acklam, Middlesboro' Tel. M'bro 83052), now librarian.

Winterings is still extant - though some work urgently needs doing, i.e. the front garden cultivating, repairs repairing etc. etc. Fees - 2s6d a night - must still be paid. Jan holds the key (6 Swinburne Road, Darlington, top flat), and fees must be paid to her or Dave A (when he returns from the Orient):



The purpose of this rough plan (and it is rough - different peoples sketch maps produced after being in the Cave vary wildly) is to show what work must needs be done. The completion of the survey, and the forcing of Worm Sewer are the two most urgent tasks - neither will be pleasant, but both are essential. Eller Beck head may go a lot further yet.

M E E T S L I S T

Some clubs produce a regular list of meets - MSG has never done this, preferring to await weather conditions and turnout of interested members before arranging where to go. However, at the moment several venues for meets in the near future suggest themselves, and a list of these - without affixed dates, follows:-

Eller Beck Head - see above. Dry weather (DW) and wet-suits (WS) nec.

Kisdon Cave - Any weather, small cavers essential.

Cross Pot. DW, WS & SC (small cavers)

Hard Level Gill. SC.

Ayleburn - SC (+ cameras - we need some slides of it for the dinner)

Flushiemere - WS

Windmore End Cave.

Great Sleddale - DW, WS

Faggergill.

Swinnegill (to re-survey the Cave etc.)

Smeltmill - the far end of 'Handwrecker' still needs attention.

Tynehead (where a local shepherd directed us to a cave)

Mines - see overpage, article by Alan H. Many days when wet weather makes caving in the sort of caves moldywarps tend to frequent impossible, inadvisable or suicidal, interesting and useful trips can be had into old mine workings, which are rarely affected by surface water.

MINE EXPLORATION GROUP - SWALEDALE MINES. - from Alan H.

This hypothetical, defunct and totally meet-less section of MSG could just fulfill a useful task in future days.

So many people, students and others, are professing so much knowledge on Swaledale lead mines, writing M.Sc's etc., that no one knows that the same are gradually disappearing.

The yearly pillages of "The Yob", farmerw, trippers etc. are doing nothing to preserve sites of the plumbiferous industry (in the last year, at least 50% of the surface works, houses etc. around Sir Francis Level have been reduced to heaps of rubble).

It is proposed that an attempt be made to explore and survey all accessible mines and workings, and correlate an up-to-date assessment of their condition, with the vast quanta of material available from divers sources. This would take the form of both a written account, with surveys, and a fairly complete photographic record of location and condition, both on the surface and underground.

A card index of mine levels, buildings etc. ought to be started (this could include mines throughout the Northern Pennine Orefield), similar to that already compiled on the natural caves of the area.

SKYE

Plans are afoot for a visit to the Isle of Skye for the first week in September - more interested members, preferably with transport, are required for this-

Skye has three areas of Cambrian Limestone, only one of which, the Bheinn an Dubhaich lmst. has been looked at previously (and then only briefly) by cavers. In this area, where we hope to camp, are two main caves, Bheinn an Dubhaich Cave, c. 300' (?) long, and Camus Malag Cave, a 'through trip' of perhaps slightly greater length. There are several other ents. and pots, which have probably not been fully explored. The purpose of the camp meet would be to examine all the limestone areas in detail, and explore all caves, and survey and photograph them - the results of this meet may then be published in the form of a separate report.

Cost - Skye and back is probably c. 900 miles, with 3 in a car @ 35 mpg this would amount to c. £3, inc. ferry, with 2 to a car c. £4-10s. So the whole week could be done comfortably on under £10. The intended campsite is on the shore at Torrin, near Camus Malag Cave.

Would anyone interested please let me, PFR, know at once.

News of Recent Cave Discoveries

The increasing spate of new discoveries goes on and on, with no sign of abatement-

Langcliffe Pot - this unique pot, potentially probably the longest and deepest in the United Kingdom, is now 5 miles +, ULSA again.

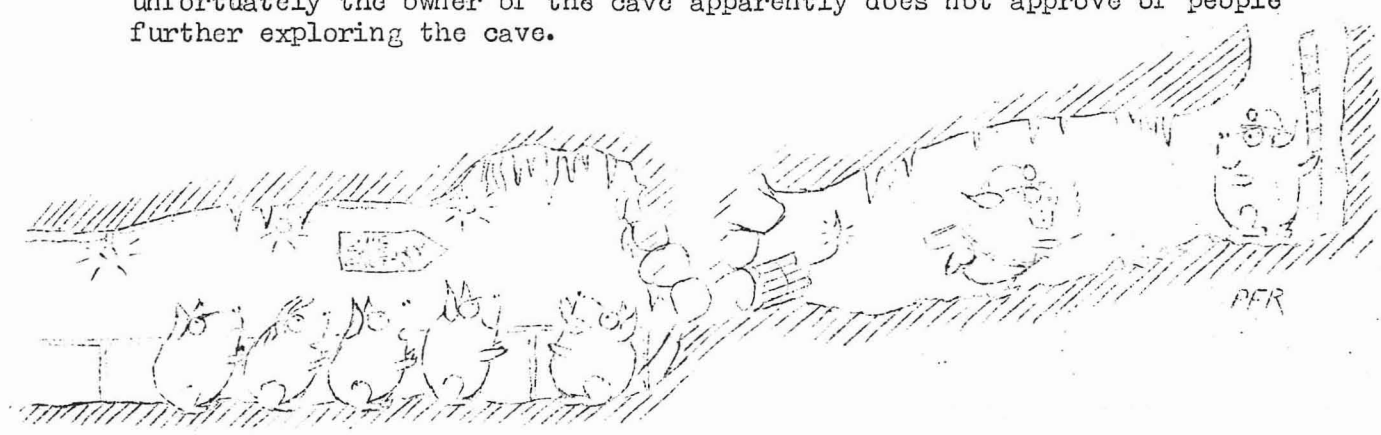
Dowkabottom - N.C.C., 1400' of large chambers and passage.

Stump Cross - YURT have broken through again, into a beautifully decorated cavern and further passages.

Pippikin Pot - HWCPC extension of 2½ miles +

Walden - YURT have been active in this dale, where there are several little known caves. Groove End Cave being 550' long.

White Scar Cave - one of Ingleborough's master caves, recently considerably extended by a "well-known northern university club" (to quote Descent) - unfortunately the owner of the cave apparently does not approve of people further exploring the cave.



A little instructive, edifying and educational dissertation essentially for the benefit of naughty moldywarps.

Moldywarps are PIGS! and they have a stonebuilt sty on Melbecks Moor.

We have been threatened by Mr X-beck (no relation of Mr J.Beck, and besides, they only had lutes when he was a village lad), who has gently (?) intimated that if we (i.e. me) don't do something about the state of you-know-where, we'll get (or rather our dear Warden will) get get you-know-whatted.

Whilst for the main part his grudges are directed in no particular direction, some moldies must bear the responsibility for the sty.

Utter filth, festering food, bug ridden bedding, Pete's perambulating pies, assorted mouldy warps etc. etc.

We used to have trouble with mice, but now they've moved (my pet book tells me they are really very clean and shun dirt).

Cave Note - At the last attempt at forcing the earth closet (now certainly a Super Severe Closet), several tons of earth and debris were removed from the main sink, exposing a tight 26' shaft to a choked bedding plane crawl, showing extensive phreatic modification. The 'Molehole', as it is now known, offers great opportunity to some of our members who are obviously bored with run-of-the-mill stuff.

We are not allowed to take wood etc. we find lying around (since we have already taken it all and Mr X-beck didn't like it)

Oh what's the use? The Warden has fled to Katmandu (true fact). Still, things might improve when the winter commune season comes along.

(for the benefit of non-warps, the above article is, of course, in a cunning code, and describes the aesthetic beauties of our latest cave discovery)

A.H.Nonny Mouse

(The Editor of this Newsletter takes no responsibility for this article whatsoever, and lawsuits should be directed to its writer, address unknown)

