

Burnley Caving Club

Editor, Jack Nadin



Newsletter, September/October 2007.

Details and booking form for this year's annual dinner at Clapham in this issue.

THE DIG NEAR DALE HEAD

FARM

This dig has now been postponed until the year 2010 or until Keith Taylor can convince the gamekeeper that he was only trying to retrieve his beef burger which he had dropped down a hole and that he was not on an illegal dig.

THE SUMMER CAMP AT DERBYSHIRE

This was a great success and enjoyed by all who attended. Groups went climbing, others went and did Titan Shaft (some just part of the way) and others went and did Ashford Marble Mines. More of these social meets should be planned for the future.

TRIP REPORTS

Please note that the Editor's health is not as good as it was, and that I am now unable to undertake any serious caving—although I can potter around at digs. Consequently there will be no newsletter reports on the active caving aspects of the club, unless YOU the active cavers provide them.

REMEMBER, this is your newsletter, and I am only the editor and can only edit articles if given them. The newsletter therefore is only as interesting as you care to make it. PLEASE let me have some trip reports.

THE PROPOSED CAVE NEAR DRY LAITHE BARN, BIRKWITH.

Britain was awash, with parts of Gloucestershire under metres of water. Under these unfavourable conditions John Jones decided to take Ron and Patsy on a trip down Calf Holes. I had injured my back and so took a walk along the track towards Ling Ghyll.

oooOooo

At Dry Laithe Barn I could hear the sound of running water over to the right, and went to investigate. A sink here about fifty yards away was taking a great deal of water. The spot was noted, and the following week a team consisting of 'Garth' John Jones, Dee and myself went to see if it was worth digging.

The area appeared to have been dug before—but by who? And why did they stop? More questions than answers here. We stopped, turned and looked at 'Garth' the clubs 'Cave Digging God' who had taken up a position near the stream sink was uttering strange incantations and waving his arms aloft.

"If I was a stream" he uttered, "Then I would take this route" He then pointed out his hypothetical route which would be taken by the stream in times of flood, or even perhaps its original course.

"Well" said I, "If Garth wants to be a stream, then I want to be a tree. Perhaps an apple tree, then all the girls could nibble my apples, or even a nut tree, then all the girls could..."

Eventually it was decided that the place had potential as a dig, unfortunately, the following weekend was a Bank Holiday so nothing was done that week. On Sunday 2 September, Garth, Dee, Stuart, and Nicholas Crossley and myself met at Penyghent Café as the rain swept down over the fells. A quick brew did nothing to raise my spirits and I developed severe hypothermia at a rain lashed High Birkwith Farm, and went for a drive up to Hawes. I did return though about an hour later.

At the end of the day good progress had been made and we were down about eight or nine feet. Other spectators and advisers that day included Alex Peacock and Ron and Patsy. The following week, 9 September a similar team excavated down to reveal a cavity, but the problem was running debris from the sides. Each time we took a bucket load out, two would run in. A huge boulder also slowed us down.

17 September, more excavations were aided with some tin sheeting used as shoring, which gave way just as the heavens opened and the rain lashed down.

Garth and Nick were at the bottom of the shaft when the sides gave way and had a lucky escape. It was clear that we would need to do something to secure the sides of the shaft if we were to make any progress downwards. We were all wet through and disappointed that all the work that day had effectively been a waste of time. We made the hole safe against farm stock and left.

The next two weekends were spent in making good the collapse and trying to make downwards progress again. A great deal of work was done, and now we are back on course. Unfortunately you will now have to wait until the next newsletter because I have to get details out of the annual dinner in this newsletter. You can of course look out for wide grins or chins on the floor on Thursday nights—which will give you a rough idea of how things are progressing.



The Duck in Valley Entrance

Congratulations

To Keith Taylor on his recent 50th birthday. His partner, Barbara got Keith an unusual present, a Ray Meer's survival weekend. Of course there is always method behind every woman's madness. Barbara was heard to say later "Well, at least he won't starve next time I throw him out of the house"

NEW SPECIES OF ANIMAL LIFE DISCOVERED

Scientists at Darwin University are excited about a new species of animal life discovered in Britain. The new species as of yet, only appears to live the limestone districts of the Yorkshire Dales. Observations made up to the present time indicate that the new species is in the main nocturnal, although examples have been seen occasionally on the surface.

Although gifted with arms and legs, the new species of animal appears to be most at home when flat out in mud and/or water filled passages in its nocturnal home. Not unlike the glow worm it also emits a light, sometimes very bright from one end. The scientists have not yet determined whether this end is the reproductive end of the species or not. It may however have something to do with mating, for when they do show the light it appears to attract others of the same species underground to come together in small groups. Early experiments show that the new species also has a liking to alcohol in a number of different forms, especially those types of real ales which are brewed in the locality. This may be due to seepage into their underground passages near to the breweries. Their sense of smell of strong, and they can smell alcohol at a great distance. When the scent is located they begin to slaver and drool at the mouth—they can also consume vast quantities of alcohol at any given time. They do however take an aggressive stance when shown spirits such as whisky, vodka and gin, curling up and hissing in a most alarming and aggressive manner. Several of the species have facial hair—whilst others have none. The discovery is causing great excitement in the scientific world. The new species will be known provisionally as the 'Speleogist'. More information as and when it becomes available.

The blackberries near Ling Ghyll are HUGE, and taste very nice according to Dee!

NEW MEMBERS

The club would like to welcome new members Ron and Patsy Price and Adele Galvin. May they have many happy years with Burnley Caving Club. A word of caution to the new members—Ignore the little chap near the computer under the clouds of smoke, the Editor and his sarcastic under the breath remarks, Duncan's hilarious bouts of laughter, Nick's bruised face, and his dad's rampant overgrown beard. It's all part of a strange new world you have just paid to enter.