

Cambrian Caving Council

NEWSLETTER
DEC/JAN 2001/2

NO. 5/ 2001-5

A SECOND LECTURE FOR CAVERS AND LOCAL COMMUNITY: -

CAVERNS AND CAVES IN THE EASTERN BEACONS

Location - Britannia Inn, Crickhowell

Date – Saturday 9th February 2001

Time – 8.00pm

Two presentations: -

The Underground World of Llangatwg – By Martyn Farr

Second Presentation to be arranged.

This second lecture follows the successful lecture at the Copper Beech Inn in Abercraf where approximately 50 cavers and members of the local community attended the event. Again there is no entry fee for this lecture. The costs will be covered by CCC funds including funding from Sports Council of Wales as part of CCC and SCW objective to increase awareness in the sport of caving to local communities.

OVERSEAS EXPEDITIONS PRESENTATION EVENINGS

Two Presentations organised by Sports Council for Wales :-

- **Welsh Institute for Sport, Cardiff, 6.30pm, 24th January 2002**

And also at

- **Plas Menai National Watersports Centre Caernarfon, 6.30pm, 21st Feb 2002**

The presentations feature a selection of talks including; a kayaking circumnavigation of Iceland; ascent of the unclimbed peak of Fitzroy, Patagonia and cave diving in Daschsteingruppe, Austria & Burren 2001.

If any Cambrian Caving Clubs or it's members are planning foreign expeditions next year and wish to apply for funding from the Welsh Sports Council then these presentations provide you with an opportunity to meet representatives from the Welsh Sports Association and the Welsh Sports Council; and to see for yourself the type of expedition gaining funding with reports from previous expeditions.

If your Club is interested in sending a representative to one of these presentations then please contact Barbara Cooper at the Sports Council Wales directly on 029 20300500 ext 430.

A Temporary Change To Access Procedure For Ogof Ffynnon Ddu

South Wales Caving Club who manage access to Ogof Ffynnon Ddu on behalf of Countryside Council for Wales are introducing a time limit for obtaining keys at weekends (Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holiday Mondays). This change is a temporary one.

- **Keys for entry to the Ogof Ffynnon Ddu system will only be available until 11.00am unless alternative arrangements are made prior to the weekend.**

This change is being introduced to enable the volunteers who give up their weekends to issue keys a chance to go caving or walking themselves. It does not mean you have to go underground by 11.00am but you have to collect your key by this time. As currently the changing facilities will be available all day at weekends as will access to the phone in event of an emergency.

- Please note on Columns Open Days you must report to the Duty Warden before 10.00am to arrange your trip to see the columns. The next columns open day is New Years day, then on the Sundays before Bank Holiday Mondays.
- Please may I also use this opportunity to remind those CCC Caving Clubs with Annual Permits to OFD that requests for their 2002 Annual Permit are now due, e-mail application is acceptable for annual permits. For those clubs requesting weekend permits snail mail and sae are required, as I need to issue a CCW official permit.

Update to the Caves Requiring Keys Information Sheet

Paul Matthew from Brynmawr has kindly pointed out that my information for Carno Adit is a bit out of date. So please amend your table issued in the last Newsletter with the following: -

For Carno Adit - Dave Crompton, Brent Durban and Huw Jones no longer have keys (at present) while Barry Burn Tel 01495 310722 does have a key.

For Agen Allwedd, Lynne Bailey's e mail is now cpb@exel.co.uk

Protection of Children in Caving Activities

Following the article in the last CCC newsletter, I have only received one completed questionnaire. Please may I have a copy of questionnaire relating to children in caving clubs for Cambrian Caving Council records. Thanks Sue.

The reason I ask is that it becoming an important issue for the Sports Council of Wales. They have information packs available for those clubs who have members under the age of 18. To obtain these packs I need to know which Cambrian Caving Council Caving Clubs allow young members.

As stated in the last Newsletter: -

The CCC committee would also be very grateful if you could as CCC members return a copy of your completed questionnaire to Sue Mabbett, address at the end. This will enable us to provide accurate information to SCW as part of future applications for grant funding. We believe for liability and insurance reasons most Clubs do not allow those under 18 to be members, we would be grateful if we could verify this fact by having completed questionnaires from it's member Clubs.

PS If you have lost your copy of the questionnaire relating young cavers then please contact me as I have spare copies.

News from the Forest of Dean

The Forest of Dean Cave Conservation and Access Group have recently issued a news letter.

Some key snippets are:-

- Wet Sink, raw sewage has been seen in the streamway. The authorities have been informed but if any future cavers notice sewage or the outpipe flowing at Wet Sink then please inform Paul Taylor, 01452 505673.
- Noxon Park mine entrances have been fenced. Gates and padlocks to be fitted, but once complete local cavers will be able to obtain access.
- Westbury Brook Iron Mine has a permanent security padlocks fitted. GSS and RFoDCC have keys.
- Otter Hole pollution investigations are on going, after the winter more readings will be taken to determine oxygen and carbon dioxide levels.
- A management agreement with the Forestry Commission is now being drawn hope with the FoDCAG this will allow FoDCAG to administer the area for caver nationally.

Conservation and Access Issues

Elsie Little promised me some articles on a few conservation and access issues. These have not arrived but summaries of the issues are below. I will publish more details in the next Newsletter.

CRoW – Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000

Elsie will be issuing a summary article on how CRoW affects cavers, in the mean time I think an important one sentence summary is “CRoW legislation will NOT give cavers a right of access to caves.... it may give them rights to walk across some areas...which may contain potential cave passages...this in turn may open the way for access to caves to be negotiated” *Ref. Speleoscene no. 49, Nov/Dec 2001.*

Foot and Mouth

The Foot and Mouth Access restrictions of the last 9 months will have made a difference to caves and other sites of speleological interest above ground. For example, it has been noted that the bog above Dan Yr Ogof is actually showing signs of life with bog plants sprouting for the first time in some years.

Please will cavers to report any observed changes on re-entering a cave or area following F&M restrictions to Elsie Little as this has potential conservation implications in the future.

Pwll Ddu Conservation Plan

Congratulations go to Ben Lovett who is well on the way to producing a management plan for the Caves and Speleological sites of Pwll Ddu, mainly Ogof Draenen. This will be one of a few management plans for various caves/ systems or areas in the Cambrian region.

Military Activity in the Brecon Beacons

There were reports in the Western Mail in November, claiming caves in the Swansea valley were being used by the SAS for military practice. The stated claims for Ogof Ffynnon Ddu and Dan Yr Ogof were wrong. However Elsie Little is interested in anyone noting military activity around caves in South Wales. Elsie's address is at the end of the Newsletter.

A Change To Access Procedure For Ogof Draenen

At the last meeting of the Pwll Ddu Cave Management Group, it was agreed that e-mail requests for access to Ogof Draenen are acceptable. The key to Ogof Draenen is a number code and this can be e-mailed to Clubs requesting permission to enter Ogof Draenen. E-mail requests should be addressed to Sue Mabbett, see e-mail at the end.

New E-mail Address for CCC Secretary

From 31st December 01, my current e-mail address used by most to correspond with me will no longer be available. So please add suemabbett@hotmail.com to your address list and delete suemabbett@excite.co.uk.

Thanks Sue

CCC/NCA/BCRA Meetings and Events

12th Jan 2002 Meeting of NCA National Council

9th March 2002 BCRA Cave Science Symposium

10th March 2002 CCC AGM, Gwesty Bach, Brynmawr

5-8th July 2002 NAMHO 2002 Conference, University of Wales, Aberystwyth

CAMBRIAN CAVING COUNCIL CONTACT DETAILS

Chairman: -	Mr R O Clarke (Owen) Tel. 01495 773175 e-mail owen.clarke@welshcdg.org 11, Pentwyn Heights, Abersychan, Pontypool, Gwent, NP4 7TN
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Conservation & Access Officer	Mrs E Little (Elsie) Tel 01639 730331 e-mail elsie@abercrave.fsnet.co.uk Hennoyadd Villa, Hennoyadd Road, Abercraf, Swansea, SA9 1VR
Equipment Officer	Mr A Fawcett (Adrian) Tel. 01495 763130 e-mail adrianf@dial.pipex.com 5, Ambryn Road, New Inn, Pontypool, Torfaen, NP4 0NJ
Training Officer	Mr E Hoole (Eric) Tel. 01497 847400 e-mail c/o_Joyce@powys.gov.uk 3, Gwernyfed Ave, Three Cocks, Brecon, Powys, LD3 0RT

FINAL COMMENTS

I still have Martyn Farr's new book 'Underground Wales' for review, as I am finding my time limited, is there a volunteer to read the book and produce a review ? The book looks at many undergrounds caverns of Wales including caves, iron mines, coalmines, slate mines, etc. Any volunteers phone Sue.

Again I am circulating the Newsletter by both mail and e-mail so that the Newsletter can be circulated to Caving Club members, if your Club is not receiving the Newsletter by e-mail then I either have no e-mail address for your Club or an out of date e-mail address. Phone me if you are not receiving the e-mail version of the Newsletter and wish to do so.

Please note I am away in New Zealand from 24th Jan '02 to 23rd Feb ' inclusive. AGM agenda and reports will be issued before I go however the Feb/March Newsletter will be completed on my return.

Sue Mabbett, 28th December '01.