

CAMBRIAN CAVING COUNCIL NEWSLETTER January 2014 – issue 40

Editorial

Welcome to the latest issue of the Cambrian Caving Council Newsletter. I'm sure many digging and caving plans have been put on hold over the last few months due to the endless rain. Let's hope things improve shortly and we can get back to discovering the next master system.

The next newsletter edition is due out during the month of April 2014. Please send me any material for inclusion by 24th April - newslettereditor@cambridgocavingcouncil.org.uk .

Rhys Williams, Newsletter Editor, Cambrian CC

Cambrian CC AGM

The Cambrian CC AGM is at 10am on Sunday 9th March 2014 at Penderyn Community Hall. The Agenda and last minutes are about to be sent out to member clubs via e-mail.

General access update

I am sorry to start a new year with bad news but we have lost access to **Hospital Cave**. Despite several attempts to negotiate an access with the landowner, no agreement was possible. Please will cavers stay away from this site for now.

The negotiations with National Resources Wales for access to sites on **ex-forestry land** continue, albeit excruciatingly slowly. The initial draft agreement is being re-written due to the formation of the NRW. The Cambrian Caving Council is still awaiting sight of the new draft document from the NRW's solicitors.

The release date for the **Welsh Government's green paper** on recreation and access to the countryside has slipped again and is now expected in February. When it is finally released, please will you inform the Cambrian CC of your views on the consultation as well as letting the Welsh Government know what your opinions are.

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See

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/environmentcountryside/consmanagement/countrysidecoastalaccess/review-of-access-and-outdoor-recreation-legislation/?lang=en>

Bernie Woodley, Chair/Conservation Officer, Cambrian CC.

Training news

Some future training courses. Details to follow in the next edition.

- March 15th – **SRT workshop**. Llangorse climbing wall. Cost uncertain at present. Probably 12 places, contact Rich Hill trainingofficer@cambriancavingcouncil.org.uk to book.
- June 7th - **Photography workshop** led by Brendan Marris. Limited to 6 places – first come, first served. Contact Brendan registrar@cambriancavingcouncil.org.uk to book.
- Autumn sometime - **Cave survey workshop**, date TBC.

Rich Hill, Training officer, Cambrian CC

New Regional Caving Guide

The Committee of Cambrian Caving Council has agreed, in principle, to produce an updated regional caving guide and has set up a small sub committee to investigate the feasibility of the project and report back to the next committee meeting. The lead will be taken by our Cave Registrar, Brendan Marris.

If you are interested in contributing or helping in any other way please contact him registrar@cambriancavingcouncil.org.uk

NAMHO Conference

This will take place at Bangor University, Gwynedd - 25–27 July 2014. The title of the conference is “Mining Technology: technical innovation in the extractive industries”.

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Planning is underway for surface and underground field trips to mines and quarries in north-west Wales. The following talks are planned:

- Louise Barker -The Welsh Slate Industry: archaeological evidence for development and change
- Darran Cowd - Mechanisation on the Coal Face: a history
- Tim Coleman - Metalliferous Mineral Exploration in North Wales since 1964
- Andrew Davidson - Precipitation Pools on Mynydd Parys
- David Gwyn - Copper and Slate: technological and social change in the extractive industries of north-west Wales
- Graham Isherwood - Hunter's Machines
- David Jenkins - Mine Drainage on Mynydd Parys
- Mia McCabe - Raising Coals: improvements in extraction methods in the northern coalfields, 1795–1830
- Catherine Mills - Technological Innovation and Adaption: Tyndrum lead mine and the German managers, 1838–1865
- Tim Oulton - Electricity in the North Wales Slate Industry
- Gwynfor Pierce Jones - Slate Processing Machinery: an overview of technical developments
- Robert Protheroe Jones - Dating the Introduction of Gunpowder in the Central Wales Orefield
- Rick Stewart - Deep Mining in Early Eighteenth-century Devon and Cornwall
- Simon Timberlake - Prehistoric Mining Technology
- Rob Vernon - Boreholes: a brief history of an essential mineral exploration technique
- Christopher J. Williams - Lighting in the North Wales Metalliferous Mines

The conference web site is <http://www.namho.org/bangor2014/>

Online bookings will be accepted from 1st January 2014.

Forest of Dean Caving Symposium 2014

The date and venue of the symposium have been confirmed (June 27-29, The Dean Field Studies Centre, Parkend, Forest of Dean). Bookings are being taken and there is a website with all the details: <http://www.forest2014symposium.co.uk/>

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European Speleological Federation news

The Federation now has a Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/eurospeleo> and has updated its website: www.eurospeleo.eu

In case you didn't know, the 5th European Speleological Congress will be in the Yorkshire Dales in August 2016. The event is to be organised by BCA and the Hidden Earth team, so promises to be a great occasion. The congress website is here: <http://www.eurospeleo2016.eu/> - all the necessary information will no doubt appear when plans are developed and agreed

Finally, the EuroSpeleo Forum 2014 will be organised by the Romanian Federation of Speleology (FRS) in Baile Herculane in the Carpathian karst on the 22-24 August 2014. Provisional details seem to be here:

[http://www.vdhk.de/fileadmin/pdf/veranstaltung/ESF - RO2014 -
_Provisional_program.pdf](http://www.vdhk.de/fileadmin/pdf/veranstaltung/ESF_-_RO2014_-_Provisional_program.pdf)

Dan-yr-ogof water levels news

The showcave management have advised that the water levels of the Lakes are not following their usual response patterns at the moment. This is no doubt due to the vast amount of rain over recent weeks. Lake 1 has been sumping for periods of 3-4 days even after short spells of rain. Please be extra vigilant if planning a trip into the cave. Please also note that there are now two hydro electric plants operating from the outflow from the cave. Using the amount of water going over the dam as a gauge to water levels in the cave should not be relied upon due to the large amount of water that is now taken through the hydro plants.

Dan-yr-ogof Conservation Advisory Panel

As you may be aware, the Dan Yr Ogof Conservation Advisory Panel replaced the Cave Advisory Committee in November of last year to give the cave management a greater focus on conservation. The make-up of the panel has been announced:

Ashford Price, Co-Chairman

Mike McCombe, Co-Chairman

Brendan Marris, Secretary

Andy Freem, Treasurer & Conservation Officer

Jon Jones, Fixed Aids

Pete Cardy

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The group's website has been updated and contains all the material required to book and organise trips into the cave: www.dyo.org.uk .

Following last years moratorium on digging in the cave, a dig register has been created and lots of catch-up work done on surveying, removing rubbish, on conservation and checking fixed aids. This time has apparently been well-spent. The moratorium has now been lifted; potential explorers should check the new policies on the website and contact the Panel for permission to resume or start digging/climbing/diving activities.

Daren Cilau collapse update

It is reported on the Mynydd Llangatwg Cave Management Committee website (<http://www.mlcmac.talktalk.net/llangtwg.htm>) that a bypass has been dug to avoid the section of Acupuncture Passage where the roof collapsed, so it is again possible to undertake trips to The Micron and beyond. The section of passage where the collapse occurred was previously thought to be stable, so take extra care in this area in case other sections of roof are similarly fragile!

Welsh Mines Society

The Welsh Mines Society (<http://www.welshmines.org/>) have recently issued a statement making clear that it has no connection with the newly formed “Welsh Mines Access Group” (<http://www.welsh-mines.org.uk/>). This new group came into being at the end of December and it is thought that it currently only concerns itself access to the north Wales slate mines of Cwmorthin and Wrysgan.

Expedition Grants

A reminder that the closing date for applications for the next round of Welsh Sports Association grants is March 3rd 2014.

That is for expeditions leaving between 1st April 2014 and 31st March 2015.
For detailed information and to download the application forms go to <http://www.welshsports.org.uk/overseasexpeditiongrants.asp>

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Diary

2014

March 3	Expedition Grant closing date	
March 9	Cambrian CC AGM	Penderyn
March 15	Cambrian CC SRT workshop	Llangorse
April 24	Deadline for material for next newsletter	
June 7	Cambrian CC Photography course	
June 27-29	Forest of Dean Caving Symposium	Parkend
July 25-27	NAMHO Conference	Bangor
August 22-24	EuroSpeleo Forum	Romania
Autumn	Cambrian CC Cave Survey course	

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