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SOUTH WALES CAVING CLUB

NEWSLETTER

C O N T E N T S

Newsletter No. 18.

December, 1956.

Speleo-Botany. Ann Mason.
Welsh River Names, David Davies.
New Passage in Agen Allwedd. C.S.S.
Club News.

List of Members for 1956.

2000-2001

2000-2001

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December, 1999

January, 2000

1. 2000-2001
2. 2000-2001
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4. 2000-2001
5. 2000-2001

List of members for 2000

PETROL RATIONING.

During the period of petrol rationing the committee has decided on the following measures:-

1. Visitors and visiting clubs may now use the headquarters at any time providing that two weeks notice is given to the Hon. Secretary.
2. The last weekend of the month shall be a "Club" weekend.

The committee also request that members help one another in any way possible with transport during this difficult period.

Speleo-Botany in South Wales.

The presence of a variety of animals in caves has been recognised for some years and a number of species are known to be peculiar to caves. Representatives of many other species are found from time to time in caves where they have arrived by accident but where they are managing to survive, more or less, successfully. These animals have been studied by a number of workers, as is shown by the reference list in "British Caving", 1953. Unfortunately the flora of caves has not attracted the same amount of attention, the only British reference found being to the work of Douglas, 1938. Nor has the bacterial flora of caves been investigated to any extent.

The subject of the flora of caves was discussed following a trip to Ogof Ffynnon Idu in June and it was decided by Miss Kathryn Benson-Evans and the author (both of the Botany Department, University College, Cardiff) that it was time some systematic investigation of the flora of caves and their thresh-hold areas was undertaken. During the summer a number of trips were made to caves on the Mellte and Neath Valleys. The caves visited included Pulpit Hole, Porth-yr-ogof, Bridge Cave, and a number of smaller caves in the Neath Valley. At each cave plant lists for the thresh-hold areas were made and readings of light intensities taken. Inside the caves soil and water samples were taken for bacteriological examination and for culturing for Diatoms, Algae or other plants. Search was made for fungi and other plants growing inside the caves.

It is too early yet for results to be published, though some interesting finds have been made. We thought however, that members of the Club might be interested to know that the investigation is being carried out. We also want to warn members that they may find odd

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contraptions in caves from time to time and to ask them not to disturb these contraptions or think that some untidy person has left litter about. We hope to put "traps" (or slides) on which sessile bacteria and algae can grow, in pools and streams in Porth-yr-ogof and in caves in the Neath Valley. They will be clearly marked and we would be grateful if cavers would avoid disturbance in the neighbourhood of the traps.

This botanical survey in addition to being interesting in its own right, and we hope, proving of scientific interest in the future, is providing us with work other than Botany or Bacteriology. In order to record the sites of finds and samples accurate maps of the caves visited are required, which has led to the development of surveying parties. Plans are now in hand for surveys of various caves starting with Porth-yr-ogof for comparison with and the completion of the survey reported by Braithwaite, 1938. Another development has been the addition of a photographer to the team for recording finds in situ. It may be a hard life being a cave photographer's model as reported in the Newsletter, July 1956 but being on a trip with a collecting botanist, a bacteriologist and a photographer is even more hazardous. The hazards are increased by the preference of our photographer for flash-powder, apparently measured out by the handful!

If all goes well, and we survive the activities of our photographer, we hope that there will be a continuation of this article containing some results of our work in a future Newsletter.

M. Ann Mason.

References:

Braithwaite, T. 1938 Caves and Caving Vol.1.
"Porth-yr-ogof and its Neighbours."

British Caving 1953. Ed. C.H.D. Cullingford.

Douglas E.S. 1938. Caves and Caving Vol.1. page.142.
"Speleobotany of Wockey Hole."

Editor's Note

This very important article is most welcome and it is hoped that all members will help by leaving any slides or "contraptions" alone. We are looking forward to future articles and lists of flora.

Welsh River Names.

The word "banu" (derived from the Latin) used to be the domestic word in Welsh for pig or porker (cf. Banba or Banbha in Ireland and Banff in Scotland). In the Arthurian legends there are accounts of

the hunting of the wild boar (Twrch, Trwyth). Twrch means "hog" or "boar" and the word is often obtained for a river. Legend has it that all place names which retain the word "pig" are connected with the hunting of the wild boar. In Montgomeryshire the word "gwys" is still in common use for "pig". In the Upper Swansea Valley the word "Twrch" for the name of a river still stands and it has the Afon Gwys as its tributary. The Afon Hwch (sow) is found near Llanberis and the Afon Beirw (plural for "hant" meaning porkers) in Dolwyddelan.

The boar is accomplished in rooting the ground for its food with its snout. The words Twrch, Banu, Gwys and Hwch are thus very suitable for the names of wild, fast-flowing rivers that furrow their way through earth and stones.

David Davies.

Editor's Note.

For the above article I am grateful to a colleague of mine Mr. David Davies whose home is in our caving area.

While on the subject of Welsh river names it is interesting to note that the streams Nant Lar and Nant Ceiliog unite to form the Nant Cyw. This in English would mean that the hen and the cock unite to form the chick. These streams are situated on the west side of Cribarth and form a tributary of the Giedd.

A new passage in Aren Allwedd.

The Chelsea Speleological Society report that they have found a new roof passage. This is 95 feet in length and it is a crawl. It is however interesting in that there are bat droppings inches thick and that it is the only passage which comes in from the left-hand side. "Guano Passage" is some 200ft. back from the terminal boulder choke.

The above has been reproduced by kind permission of the Chelsea Speleological Society. - Ed.

Club News.

Congratulations.

Congratulations to Bill Clarke and Denise on their recent marriage. We wish them every happiness and good fortune in the future.

New Members.

We welcome the following new members:

Mr and Mrs. B. de Graff, 5, Tai North, Pennorth, Brecon.
 Arnold Jones, Victoria House, High St, Glynneath, Glam.
 L. Williams, 4, North, Rd, Brecon.

Change of address.

D. Thompson, Bourne Mill Cottage, Guildford Rd., Farnham, Surrey.

O.F.D. Leaders.

Keith Ball is now added to the list of leaders for the above cave.

List of members.

Will members please let the Hon. Editor know if any of the addresses are incorrect in the list of members at the end of this Newsletter.

Survey Ogof Ffynnon Ddu.

While the special survey of parts of the above cave is in progress the leader of the survey, Gordon Glissoid, has the permission of the committee to control or restrict all movement of parties in the area in which he and his team are working. This is mainly due to the bulky and expensive equipment being used.

Resignations.

As the following have not paid their subscriptions their membership of the Club is now considered to be terminated.

R. H. Clarke,	D. T. Lloyd.
C. Hill.	Mr and Mrs. E. J. Mason.
M. Hourahan.	B. D. Price.
D. G. Jeffreys.	E. G. Stephens.
R. E. Lawder.	

Headquarters.

Our thanks are due to the party which put in so much hard work on the roof of the cottage.

Greetings.

The committee take this opportunity of wishing all members of the Club and all friends of the Club a Very Happy Christmas and a Prosperous New Year.

Hon. Secretary, P. I. W. Harvey, 157, Commercial Rd., Newport, Mon.
 Hon. Treasurer, L. A. Hawes, Corner Cottage, Rounton Rd., Church Crookham, Hants.
 Hon. Editor, D. W. Jenkins, Dinmore, Dyffryn Rd., Llandrindod Wells, Rads.

List of Members. 1956.

President.

Dr. F. J. North, O.B.E., D.Sc., F.G.S., F.S.A.
The National Museum of Wales, Cardiff.

Vice-Presidents.

Brigadier E. A. Glennie, C.I.E., D.S.O.
Seaton House, Shrublands Rd., Beekhamstead, Herts.
A. H. Hill, Esq.,
Hawley Manor, Hawley, Nr. Dartford, Kent.

Honary Members.

T. Ashwell Morgan, Westbrook, St. James' Gdns., Swansea.
Mr and Mrs. J. Barrows, Y Grithig, Penycae, Swansea Valley.
Dr. A. J. R. Hudson, Mackworth Villa, St. Thomas, Swansea.
C. Powell, Rhongyr Uchaf Farm, Penycae, Swansea Valley.
Mrs. G. Price, Gwyn Arms, Penycae, Swansea Valley.

Members.

Alexander, J. 96, Rhydypanau Rd., Cyncoed, Cardiff.
Andrews, T. 135, Danson Rd., Bexley, Kent.
Ashwell, A. W. 63, Stoughton Drive North, Evington Rd, Leicester.
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Ball, T. K. Bronderi, Peniel Green, Llansamlet, Swansea.
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Bradshaw, G. 7, Allsprings Dr., Gt. Harwood, Nr. Blackburn, Lancs.

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Clarke, D. Mrs. 23, Beechwood Rd., Uplands, Swansea.
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Clissold, J. Mrs. Caravan Park Farm, Cwmdare, Aberdare, Glam.
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Crock, B. A. Dr. The Laurels, Timsbury, Nr. Bath, Soms.
Cullingford, C. H. D. Rev., Rosemary Brae, Fairlight Cove, Hastings, Sussex.

de Graff, B. 5, Tai North, Penmorris, Brecon.
de Graff, V. Mrs. 5, Tai North, Penmorris, Brecon.
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Dolphin, P. Overhill Cottage, Eaton-in-Gordano, Soms.

Freeman, W. C. c/o Navigation Dept., Technical College, Cardiff.

Hardwidge, P. Miss. 15, Heol Wernias, Whitchurch, Nr. Cardiff.
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Harvey, P. E. Mrs. 157, Commercial Rd., Newport, Mon.
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Parke, A. Mrs. The Grange, Thornbury, Glos.
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Price, Ashford, W. Ynyswen, Penycae, Swansea Valley.

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