



# Hampshire Scout Caving Club



Newsletter Autumn 2008



Sell Gill

HSCC web site URL : [www.scouts-hants.org.uk/hsc](http://www.scouts-hants.org.uk/hsc)

## Notes on Cave Access etc.

### Goatchurch

Can those of you likely to be involved in leading trips look at the following part of the UK caving forum about Goatchurch and some recent work to make areas more stable following some movement. Of note, the point in the last post about avoiding the drainpipe until further notice.

<http://ukcaving.com/board/index.php/topic,6676.0/topicseen.html>

### Hillgrove Swallet is dead; Long live Hillgrove - Andy Watson

Someone out there might be interested in an update on Hillgrove Swallet. It is down to the Ploughboy turn left then down the track opposite the Priddy Road turn left at the end of the track park before the gate on the left, taking care not to block the farm track, go through the gate down the field to the diagonally opposite corner where you will find a stile, over both fences and the zag the other way slightly across the the bushes and trees and you will find a broken stile and a bit of white pipe on the fence. This is the Swallet hole, battle your way through the undergrowth and in the bottom you will find a hole in the rock at the base of the cliff you can wriggle in to. Here are millions of mossies and old ropes and older digging tools and spoil bags etc etc. The bottom of the swallet is now very silted up (some 100ft down (all free climbable with care). Having tried to break through in a couple of areas over the last two years it is now off my digging list. I went down last night and decided I don't dig this cave very much at all now. Crossed it off. A shame as it is about 100 years old.

## Pictures of your Chairman !!



Yes he did walk round London like this! No shoes, wonderful socks and the frown!

## HSCC Officials

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## HSCC Programme

| Date           | Time  | Activity                | Venue                          | Contact         |
|----------------|-------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| 5.11.08        | 20.00 | Meeting - skittles      |                                | Sue Chase       |
| 15.11.08       |       | J rat memorial day      | Mendip                         |                 |
| 22-23.11.08    |       | Wales - caving          | Brecon Scout Hut               | David Chadwick  |
| 3.12.08        | 20.00 | Meeting - quiz          | 12th Eastleigh, HQ Bishopstoke | Darrel Instrell |
| 21.12.08       |       | Thrupe Lane Swallet SRT |                                |                 |
| 29.12 - 1.1.09 |       | New Year away           | South Wales                    | David Chadwick  |
| 7.1.08         | 20.00 | SRT training            | Sandleheath Scout Centre       | Ros White       |
| 31.1.09/12.09  |       | Caving                  | Mendip - MNRC                  | Phil Candy      |
| 4.2.09         | 20.00 | AGM                     | 12th Eastleigh, HQ Bishopstoke | David Chadwick  |
| 4.3.09         | 20.00 | Rigging Practice        | 12th Eastleigh, HQ Bishopstoke |                 |
| 14/15.3.09     |       | Scout days              | Mendip MNRC                    | Andy Watson     |
| 1.4.09         |       | Treasure Hunt           |                                |                 |

## HSCC News

**HSCC trips 2008:** These include : SRT practice at Sandleheath Scout Centre, Afton Red Rift, Aveline's Hole, Bakers Pit, Bath Swallet, Boxhead Pot, Bridge Cave, Bull Pot, County Pot, Craig y Ffynnon, Cwm Dwr, Dart River Caves, Eastwater Cavern, Eldon Hole, GB, Goatchurch Cavern, Giants Hole, Goyden Pot, Hilliers, Hillocks, Honeymead, Hunters Hole, JH, Jinglyng, Knotlow, Lancaster Hole, Little Crapnell Swallet, Little Neath, Manchester Hole, Manor Farm, Marble Steps, New Goyden, Notts Pot, Notts II, OFD II, Otter Hole, Pierre's Pot, Pwll Dyfn, Radford Cave, Rhino Rift, Rods Pot, Rumbling Hole, Sidcot Swallet, Singing River Mine, Slaughter Stream (Big Sink & Wet Sink), Swildons Hole, Symonds Yat Caves, Titan, Town Drain, White Lady,

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Bill - recalled from Mendip weekend because of a car in the kitchen - better ask Bill about it!

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Sally - moved again - but still in Bristol.

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Sue (Chase) is now "Granny Sue". Tom & Jo -had a girl, Lauren, born in May.

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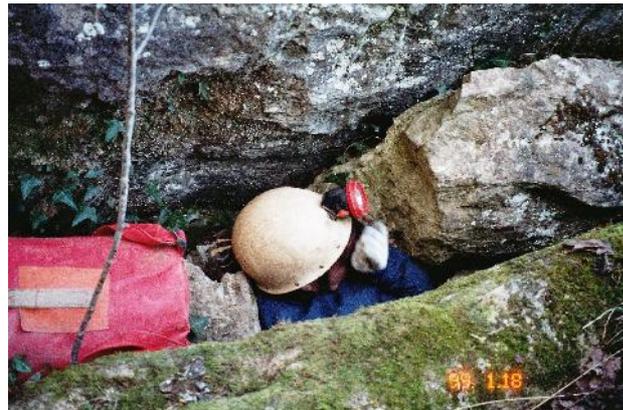
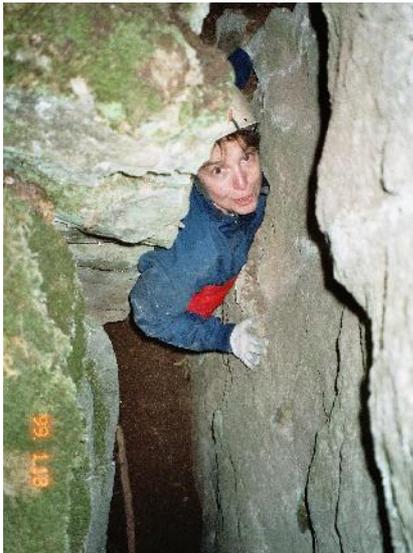
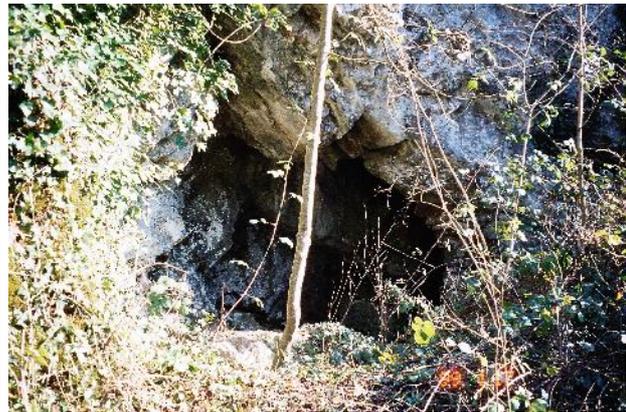
Ros went to Buck Palace to get an MBE from Prince Charles

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Chris is expecting!

## Andy Watson's Scribblings

More dynamite hole discoveries by Andy Watson intrepid explorer of Mendips on behalf of HSCC. The latest Ventures are Tom Tivey's hole circa 30feet of passage that Sue and Andy, Philip and Sue, Sally, Anne and Susan explored one evening in March 2008 and managed to get muddy knees. I have now realised that this is in fact Asham Wood Cave. It got rather dark trying to find a place called White Woman's Hole but we (Sue & Andy) found this later (see pictures of Sue on the through trip of 6feet!). However, the big group did find a rock shelter that a witch was supposed to have been lived in once (hardly big enough) which I realised later was in fact Tom Tivey's hole.



Photos of Asham Wood Cave entrance, the Tom Tivey's Hole rock shelter and Sue in White Woman's hole.

On 9<sup>th</sup> March Andy was to be found in Daren Cilau again; this time doing an exploration trip into a bedding plane called Perseverance Passage (correctly named) a long flat out low, squeezey passage which seemed to go on forever, no one had visited this passage for over 10 years! I know why, I am extremely unlikely to ever venture down it again. We only did about one third of the passage when we examined the survey, as we ended up in a sleepy, but pretty and small old stream passage which just closed down. We assume the way on must be at a higher level in a knobbly tight rift but we failed to find the way after finding the dead end. My knees were very sore for several days after this venture. I must have a brain test, caving with Adrian looking for new dig sites is quite challenging, his chest is a few inches less than mine



*Andy happy at the underground camp, trying to get an old paraffin stove going.*

Photos from Titan



*Phil at Top of Titan*



*Titan Entrance 'dig'*



*Ros descending the entrance pitch*



*Everything clipped on at top of Main Pitch*

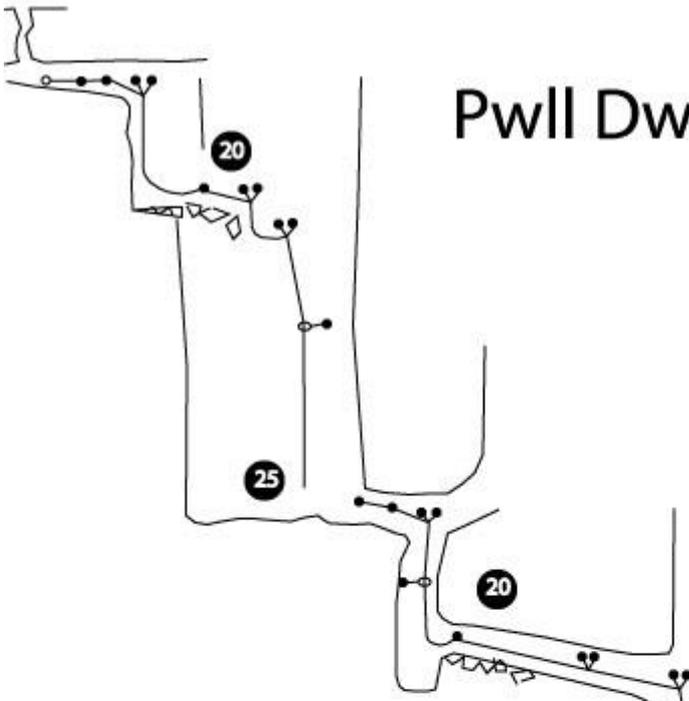


*Time for bed!*



*Knit one - pearl one !*

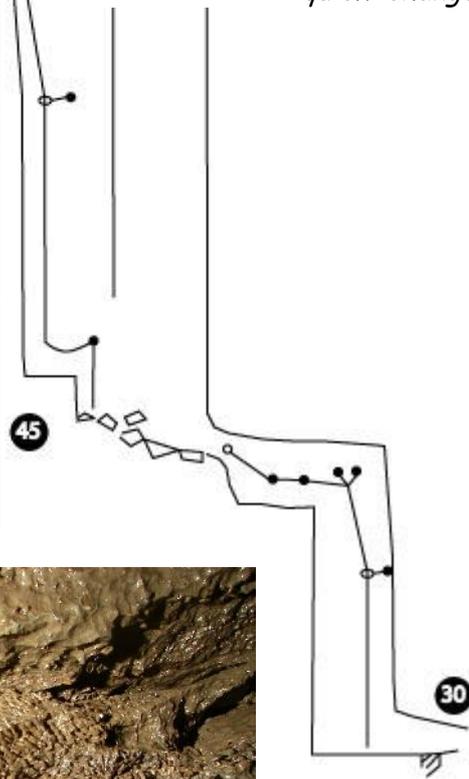
# Pwll Dwfn



*A quick change over ?*



*David off down the pitch*



*Sponge Formations*

## Caving Days



*Lunch time for Sally*



*More Tea?*



*Scouts in Goatchurch*



*Goatchurch*



*The Coffin Lid, Goatchurch*



*Bear Pit, Rods Pot*

## Cave Photography by Sally White

I have been getting quite interested in cave photography and whilst I am certainly nowhere near the standard of a professional, I have picked up a few techniques or “tricks” for underground photography. Cave photography is a particularly difficult form of photography, mainly due to all the steam and lack of natural lighting, things I'm sure you're already well aware of!



*A photo ruined by steam*

The misty photos that frequently happen in caves are caused by the flash light on the camera being reflected off the steam and directly back to the camera where it captures this light. A separate flash gun means that the flash can be fired from a different angle and does not reflect directly back to the camera, so the steam is not seen in the photos.



*A photo using a flash gun*

For those that don't have flash guns, don't want to carry a flash gun around a cave or just don't want the messing about involved with them, then there is another technique to avoid the mist. This is limited as it doesn't work for pictures of people or for distances of over a couple of meters away.



*The same photo but using this technique*

Turn off the flash on the camera and set the camera to have a longer shutter speed (note: for those that have a digital Pentax Optio then selecting the fireworks mode does this). Because the shutter will be open for longer, any movement of the camera will lead to blurring, so put it down on a rock or use a tripod. Press the shutter release button then “paint” the photo in by shining your caving light all round the area being photographed. Keep it moving steadily to keep the lighting even and spend less time shining it on water as this reflects more light back. As it captures the water over several seconds, it gives water a slightly mysterious appearance.

***The photos were chosen for showing the techniques well rather than for being good photos.***

## Andy's Scribblings June 2008

After a long day in Devon visiting my elderly parents Sue and I came back via MNRC on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> June (The Mendip Cavers Weekend) with a plan to 'bag' Welsh's Green Swallet which is not too far from the Hunters. I followed the telephone instructions I had obtained from Dave Chadwick (HSCC) with Ros commenting in the background while both of us were looking at OS Maps. I succeeded in getting the location about 1000 metres from the actual location but followed the books instructions (Mendip Underground) and using good logic we eventually found the hole.

We parked up at about 18:30, we had set ETO at 22:00 and call out (or come and find us) at 23:00 back with a couple of people who were lodging at MNRC. After a good hot walk up hill on the road in the sunshine from the lay-by on the left opposite the right hand turning, we turned and looked back at a fantastic view out over the flat lands as far as Glastonbury Tor. On the right as you walk up the road is a really nice elongated thatched cottage, you walk up the track on the right just in front of it, past their gate and two 'woofy' dogs into the woods and past the 'Trespassers will be prosecuted' sign on the gate which is on your left. Follow the path to the right downhill into the woods. This path is almost a little stream bed. Keep to the main path and after 400 metres or so you come across a wide muddy depression on the right. Just a couple of metres past this is a covered 'wishing well' type hole with a couple of scaffolding poles sticking up and a rusty corrugated metal cover. This is it, Welsh's Green Swallet, it is not the hole at the back of the depression that I went down at first.

We were now a bit late getting into the cave. One ladder for the initial 'well' type pitch with a scaffold tripod to rig from.

The cave was once called Kangaroo Swallet and was dug by a person unknown before 1939 apparently. It was dug further in 1951 and 1961 by WCC and then it went away for a bit until 1979. 1985 & 1989 for various digs and opened to it's current length in about 1992. Along a smallish crawl to the top of the second pitch where another scaffold bar can be used rigging your second ladder into a clean natural aven. At the bottom a crawl leads off to a short climb down into a large bedding plane full of lovely blue lias grey mud.



Some pretties are seen near the top and you can climb up to the right using an old digging rope.

The stream meanders through this and on the left is access to the bottom of a tall aven called 'March of the Gherkins'.



We carried on for another 150 metres in the meandering stream in the bedding plane but ran out of time and had to turn round. The cave and mud and pretties are interesting, it is a bit muddy but interesting and worth a visit, Sue and I will return when we have more time. Allow at least 30 minutes from parking and circa 3 hours in the cave.

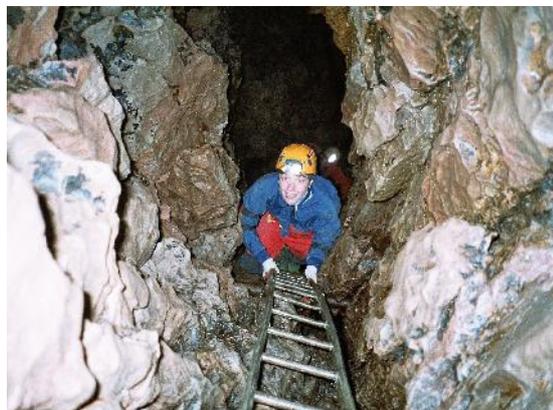
Andy Watson

## Andy's Scriblings - July (A Photo Story)

On the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> July 2007 HSCC had a weekend in the Forest of Dean (Where? I did not know there were any caves there; And where is it anyway?). We stayed in the Beaver Lodge with no men's shower so we negotiated occasional use of the ladies one.



*Graham & Philip outside Beaver Lodge Scout hut.*



*Sue on the longest fixed ladder.*

So off we went to Slaughter Stream Cave in a rather attractive sink hole and after opening the locked gate we went down the three initial fixed ladders for about 80 feet



*Gavin looking intently at the survey.*



*The impressive rectangular Chunnel passage.*

slightly off the main round trip. We then gave Gavin the survey when we were 'In the Chunnel' only we were not in the Chunnel really that's why he looks rather flummoxed in the photo.

Graham and I were diverted by Philip to go and look at the Sump 1 passage, as a detour

Then Philip actually found the Chunnel passage quite quickly after this. The picture shows Gavin at the front here but I am pretty sure that Philip arrived first!

Gavin then led the way on to some pretties past the second set of dogs bones.

On the way out Susie needed a hand up the short climb above the electron ladder pitch and stood on Philips injured collar bone at his invitation (ow!) a few seconds after I took this photo.



**Overall a really enjoyable trip.**

**Andy Watson**

## HSCC Devon Trip - September 2008

On the Saturday we went to Afton Red Rift, a sporting but uneventful trip.

In the afternoon we went to a new cave (for us) Radford Cave in Plymouth which I had obtained the key for (NGR SX 503.527). You drive through the housing estates South of Plymouth and find Hooe Lake in Plympton. The entrance is gated and high up (30 feet) off to the left of a foot path below some gardens and above a sewage works. I don't think this cave is visited very often but it is worth a visit. You can't quite do the round trip as the rocks on the left loop are pretty unstable near the entrance (on the left of the wire fence – yes there is a wire fence in a cave!) Follow the right hand passage and there is a climb up to the right (don't go up it) with a rough bit of polypropylene rope hanging down. Go straight on, forward and drop down a rift and this brings you out into a large and pretty canyon with lots of stalagmites on the slippery floor. At the bottom of this on the right is a climb up into the trumpet which is very exposed and committing. Through the puddle on the right is a solid stalagmite column to



*Washing off after Radford Cave*

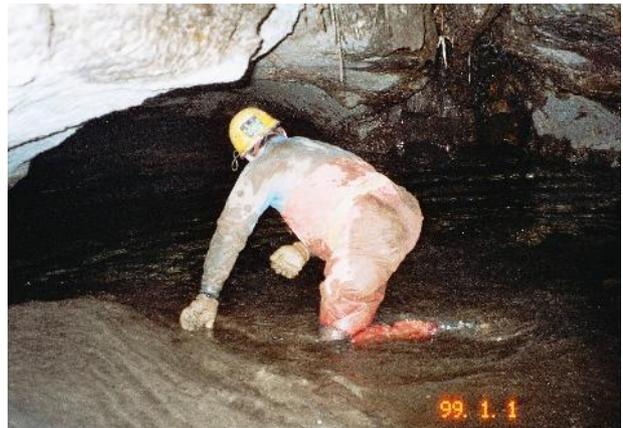
tie the rope to. The rest of the trip is straight forward and obvious. Going over or under the stile and going up slope for a bit make sure you don't miss the pretty grottoes on the right through the narrow climb down, very pretty (Rob's Grotto). This is the end of what was once a round trip but due to an unstable bit by the entrance you retrace your footsteps.

On Saturday evening we went to the local Pub for a meal by the river Dart. I knew there was a cave underneath and asked about possible access. The manager was very helpful and showed us where it was and said we could visit it on the following morning.

Sunday morning we parked in the hotel car park and walked along the side of the hotel restaurant, through the gate and down to the cave entrance by the edge of the river. The water coming out of the cave was pretty cold. The entrances to Dart River Cave are under the cliff where the river broke into the old cave system which, in turn, was probably part of an old cave system under Bully Cleaves Quarry and originally connected with Bakers Pit.



*Dart River Cave*



We drove onto Chudleigh and looked around the quarry (we paid the entrance fee at the Nursery and Tea Garden, this was worth it as the tea and cakes were good). We managed to pop our heads into Little Africa Cave and Cow Hole and intend to return with access permits for some others in this area. While we were there I was given a survey of Pixies Hole and have found out about the access process. More fun in the future.

Andy Watson

## Yorkshire - Autumn 2008

Following a successful excursion to Yorkshire in October 2007 a decision was made to try some more adventurous trips in the autumn of 2008. The same team descended on YSS for a few days at the end of October/beginning of November permits having been obtained for Boxhead Pot and Rumbling Hole.

On Friday we had a permit for Boxhead Pot, a vertical cave which connects via an unpleasant, damp link to the lower levels of Lost John's Pot. The entrance is a vertical drain pipe, rigged by use of two small holes drilled in same, the descent was easy (being gravity assisted), the exit was much more amusing in the slightly too narrow, slippery pipe. On the way down we



*Ros de-rigging Boxhead*

missed a re-belay and so descended the full 70m of the main pitch. The rest of the team admired the fluted pot and wondered what Dave was playing at! Having discovered his error Dave shouted up to Phil to try to find the correct route and rig that



*Dave at the top of Boxhead*

instead, but the echoing pitch prevented communication and the rest of the team arrived at the bottom of the pitch in quick succession. They each wandered to the point we were meant to arrive and to look at the tight-wet link to Lost John. Gavin had seen a hanger at the back of the rift to the side of the pitch so Dave set off back up the pitch to try to find the

missed re-belay while Phil was tasked with climbing the 'bit-of-tat' which someone had left on the last pitch of the other route. Having found and rigged the re-belay we met on the ledge and set off out of the cave. There was no further problems other than getting out of the drain pipe. This would make a good exchange trip in warm-dry weather.

On Saturday, following a lengthy session of what-about we went to try New Goyden Pot, Manchester Hole and Ibbeth Peril. On the way to Nidderdale we found that Ibbeth Peril was on Dentedale so we elected to do Goyden instead. Having found the farmer and asked permission (he did not care if we did his cave or not so long as we did not climb over the walls) we set off for the cave. The first entrance we found was a capped shaft in the side of the river, inside there was a lot of scaffolding which did not fit with New Goyden, the cave we were trying to find. A bit further up stream we found the cave. Sue rigged the two short pitches and we ended up in a large streamway which we followed to its two ends



*Sue attracting sheep!*



*Sue rigging New Goyden*

and then tried the side passage. This climbed over some loose blocks into a higher level which re-joined the stream lower down or meandered via 'wet-bollock' passage to a pit which we could not descend without a rope.

After a short lunch we decided to try to find Goyden Pot. We drove up to a layby at the corner of the road and set off down the track opposite which led straight to a large entrance. There was a muddy streamway with no side passages. After a few minutes Ros asked "Who thinks this is Manchester Hole?". Five hands went up - but we went on regardless. Some of the mud climbs were fun but no other real merit.

Finally we went to Goyden, we failed to make it agree with the description in the book, but clambered over the flood debris (which varied in size from

leaves to medium sized trees) and looked down some pitches. This cave could be worth another visit with more kit.

On Sunday we had a permit for Rumbling Hole. This was the best trip of the weekend with a lot short pitches all with interesting take-offs. The first being the most comical if you were allowed to rig the dangley re-belay. However this was vetoed by Uncle Philip, much to the relief of the rest of the team, who were freezing in a howling chilly wind on the surface, listening to an interesting conversation as David was persuaded to come back up and rig the sensible way! Gavin rigged most of the rest cave, which included an interesting tight 'window' between two of the pitches and a comical dangley re-belay.

**David Chadwick**