

# CAMBRIAN CAVING COUNCIL NEWSLETTER October 2007

## **EDITORIAL**

Being editor means I can indulge myself from time to time and as part of that I've decided to start a "Summer Holidays" feature. In fact I was a bit inspired by all the lovely places reported on at Hidden Earth. What I hope is that our member clubs will let us all know where they went for their summer trip so that the rest of us get ideas for next year and - even better – know who to ask for up to the minute advice. We have made a start in this newsletter and I hope others will be encouraged to contribute.

Please share your experiences and send your reports (which don't have to be long) to [newslettereditor@CambrianCavingCouncil.org.uk](mailto:newslettereditor@CambrianCavingCouncil.org.uk)

Robin Weare

## **MEMBERSHIP NUMBERS NEEDED URGENTLY**

If you are one of the dozen or so Club Secretaries who have yet to provide our Treasurer with your membership details please, please do it straight away. He has to submit the information to Sports Council Wales within the week in support of our Grant application. He needs to know membership numbers split between Male and Female for both adults and juniors. Use this [link](#) to do it now.

The clubs that have provided both 2007 and 2006 figures show a net gain of 57 members on a 2006 base of 1137 - which is 5%. On the whole, the larger clubs seem to be doing better than the small ones.

The proportion of female cavers in the replies received so far is 22% and seems fairly consistent from club to club. Junior members account for less than 1%, with most clubs having none at all.

## **CAMBRIAN CAVING COUNCIL AGM**

The 2008 AGM will be held at Storey Arms Outdoor Education Centre, Libanus on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2008 starting at 10:30am. Lunch will be available afterwards.

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## **OGOF CRAIG A'R FFYNNON - Transfer of Access Administration**

It's taken longer than envisaged for CCW to get permission to take responsibility for access to Craig a'r Ffynnon, but at last we have the go-ahead for MLCMAC to issue permits and keys to the cave. Lynne Bailey has agreed to act as permit secretary, and the process of applying for access will be exactly the same as for Agen Allwedd. Most of the permit rules will be the same - BCA member clubs (or equivalent), maximum party size 8, no carbide, etc. A stamped addressed envelope and deposit for £10 should be enclosed with applications. Local clubs with an interest in the cave will be offered annual keys.

It is hoped that the transfer will take place at the end of October, but this is not definite. If you have a trip already booked during November or later, it would be a good idea to contact Lynne in case the transfer doesn't go quite as smoothly as we'd like.

Adrian Fawcett (Hon. Sec. MLCMAC)

## **LITTLE NEATH ACCESS**

Reports of access problems in the upper Neath Valley have recently appeared elsewhere. I am assured that there is no problem of access in the Neath Valley. The Lewis family of Blaen Nedd has agreed to indefinitely extend the access agreement with CCC.

## **FIXED AIDS IN DAN YR OGOF**

Fixed aids in the cave have been upgraded with the help of a £500 grant from the Brecon Beacons National Park. This has included the installation of a stainless steel fixed ladder on the Abyss which, it is hoped, will encourage more parties to do the Round Trip in the upward direction and ensure that flotation aids do not all end up at the far end of the Green Canal. The route up The Rising, the Birthday Passage traverses and the North Aven have now been fitted with fixed lines on stainless steel canyon anchors. Only the Great North Road pitch needs to be rigged in order to reach the Far North. The chain ladder at The Rising will shortly be replaced with a new stainless steel chain ladder.

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### SUMMER HOLIDAYS

A party of 8 from **Hades** visited the **Henne Morte** for two weeks in August, staying in a superb gite near Castelbiague. It was a first visit to the area so we had to do some entrance hunting and following a tip from some locals we found the blue formations. In a total of 20 caving trips we visited 13 different entrances, completing seven through trips. We enjoyed the area and will be returning.

Contact [Robin Weare](#) for more information about this area

During the last week of July and first week of August, some members of **Hereford Caving Club** explored the **Vercors** region of France. We stayed at a fabulous campsite at Villard de Lans at the top of the Bourne Gorge. The weather was so nice (back home Tewkesbury was cut off by flooding) more time was spent above ground looking for cave entrances in the lovely sunshine. We did venture below ground for a couple good trips. Hereford Caving Club have visited this area many times over the past couple of decades and will continue to carry on as it is a great place for caving and there are plenty of other activities for those non-cavers, including several show caves.

Contact [Barry Hill](#) for more information about this area

About 30 from the **YSS** went to the **PSM**, staying on a very nice camp site near St. Engrace. We did **SC3 to EDF tunnel**. An awesome trip with times from 18 - 33 hrs!! The Verna is being turned into a show chamber with big lights etc and the wooden door is now a wire gate free to let air through.

We also did **Couey Lodge** to the sump as part of the first week. A very nice cave indeed, well worth doing.

We then went to Cantabria in Spain and did the **Cueto – Coventosa** through trip; we didn't do it as pull through but rigged the 580m descent and de rigged at the end of the week. All accounts we had heard of pull through trips were of snagging and problems and having done it I can see why. Absolutely brilliant trip, better than the PSM. We stayed in very nice cheap apartments nearby with a nice bar and very good cheap food. Only 7km from Matienzo and lots of other big trips nearby.

Contact [Martin Jackson](#) for more information about this area

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## **TUNNEL CAVE**

Work on the airlock between Tunnel Cave and Cathedral Cave has been completed and a new “caver flap” will shortly be installed in the outer gate to Cathedral Cave. Once this has been done, access arrangements for through-trips will be published.

## **CAVE ECOSYSTEM PROJECT**

Andy Lewington’s cave ecosystem project is complete and will be online within a month. It will provide information to allow cavers to be able to identify many of the organisms that live in the Welsh caves and understand the relationships between them. There will be a link to it from the CCC website

## **EXPEDITION GRANTS**

Grants for expeditions are now to be administered by WSA (voluntary group for sports clubs) but applications will still have to initially be sent to SCW. Groups wishing to apply will have to be Welsh, have Welsh parentage or be resident in Wales for majority of expedition members to be eligible. Applications for next year must be in by 31<sup>st</sup> December 2007.