



## Chairman's Annual Report 2005

This year has been especially trying for BCA. Our Treasurer, Jonathon Roberts, suffered a serious motor accident which has severely limited his participation, and our new secretary, Paula Grgich- Warke, has recently been handicapped by illness. This at a time when the future relationship of BCA with BCRA and its membership were to be resolved and the integration of the Treasurer's work with that of Constituent Body Treasurers needs to be refined. The difficulties inherent in administering BCA's membership subscription and Insurance Scheme, with its dependency on a tremendous workload over the New Year period, remains an important area for further work. The silver lining is the accrual to the BCA scheme of the participants in the now-terminated DCA Insurance Scheme, providing a greater constituency of participants for future years, and the continued success of the BCA scheme, whilst much remains to be polished and resolved, is the sheet anchor of future development of the "one-stop-shop" for British Cavers.

The gradual winding-up of NCA has been prolonged by the need to complete a set of accounts in parallel with presentation of those for BCA. Jon's difficulties were solved by Bob Mehew, who has stepped into the breach and rescued the entire process, in a manner made possible only by his deep familiarity with the politics and finances of the past years of NCA. BCA is deeply in his debt.

The relationship of BCA with other organs of society at large, and particularly with Government in the guise of various Sports Councils, has been particularly fraught. During all of 2005 and extending into 2006, UK Sport has been considering its relationship with Governing Bodies of Sport (yes, BCA is the recognized Governing Body of Caving) which have no competitive ethos. After prolonged discussion, with the participation of the CCPR, UKSport has held to its original policy decision, and is withdrawing from funding support of BCA and the BMC, and reducing funding to non-Olympic competitive activities such as Water Skiing and Hang Gliding. A final quarter grant of £5,500 has been awarded for 2006 to taper off the withdrawal symptoms. This grant, originally more than £30,000 pa, used to support our Expedition and Training programmes, with smaller sums for Access and Equipment Committee activities. This shrank to £5,000 for Expedition support with £15,000 towards our training administration in recent years, and £11,000 in 2005.

Recently, Sport England has provided £5,000 annual towards limited training activity within England. Now, however, it is reviewing its policies with a similar brief to that adopted by UK Sport. Since the process is not yet complete an interim grant of £2,500 has been awarded for the first half of 2006, with the possibility of cessation thereafter. It is becoming clear that support for the BCA activities which are not self-financing (and provide services to the population at large rather than to BCA's membership, such as the Training and Certification

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## News and BCA Updates

### BCA WEBSITE

[www.british-caving.org.uk](http://www.british-caving.org.uk)

The BCA website continues to grow and now has an extensive section on Equipment including details on bolting with P-hangers, care of equipment and ropes, rope testing, etc. Well worth checking out by both individual cavers and club tackle officers.

There are now a number of on-line forums you can join, including one on regional councils. All forums are moderated and you will need to register before you can make a posting. Don't forget that BCA is also offering web-hosting for caving clubs and individual cavers at special rates. For details of this service, contact the BCA webmaster: [webmaster@british-caving.org.uk](mailto:webmaster@british-caving.org.uk).

### UK CAVE CONSERVATION EMERGENCY FUND

The constitution of the UKCCF is currently being looked at with a view to updating it. The aim is to make the Fund more accountable and to encourage cavers to make use of it and also to donate money to it to help others. There is a new website giving details of how the fund works and what it has been used for in the past: [www.ukccf.org.uk](http://www.ukccf.org.uk).



## BCRA

### NEW RELEASES IN CAVE STUDIES SERIES

**Essential Sources in Cave Science: A Guide to the Literature of Cave Science.** Graham S Proudlove (ed) Great Hucklow: BCRA £4.50 plus postage (see page 14).



A reference book that gives a brief introduction to a number of cave science topics, together with a carefully-selected list of references where the reader may find further information.

For the purposes of this publication cave science is broken down into 13 areas and for each of these two lists are provided. Firstly a list a printed material found in books, chapters and articles. Secondly a list of internet based material and email resources. The editor cautions that web resources are rarely

peer-reviewed and that content must be regarded with caution.

The booklet aims to be of assistance both to novices with no prior knowledge of cave science and to the experienced scientist who needs to gain knowledge outside of their own expertise.

**UNDERGROUND BRITAIN: LEGAL AND INSURANCE ISSUES (2ND EDITION)** David Judson assisted by Robert Cockle and Linda Wilson. Great Hucklow:BCRA. £3.50 plus postage (see page 14).



This booklet has been reprinted with up-to-date information for 2006. The booklet is intended to be a short reference work describing the laws that are relevant to cavers and mine explorers.

For example, it sets out the principles of land ownership and of the access to and over land. Although primarily intended for the below ground 'explorer', the principles that affect access to land and insurance matters are of course applicable to a much wider field of interest, affecting all who visit land owned by others for their particular leisure pursuit.

### BCA Newsletter Editorial Address

BCA N/L Editor, Jim Cochrane, BCA N/L Editor, 148 Mackintosh Place, Cardiff, CF24 4RS  
E-mail: [newsletter@british-caving.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@british-caving.org.uk)

**Note: The views expressed in this newsletter are those of the contributors and do not necessarily represent the formal view of the British Caving Association.**

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schemes(must be sought in other areas of the public purse, reflecting the shift in emphasis which has occurred within Government. The UK Sp[orts] Council and CPR have pledged assistance in seeking new partnerships to re-establish support in those areas in which a sound case for support can be made. For example, the fallout from the Work at Height-controversy, in which Tom Redfern has played a major role, and following the concatenation of the AALA administration within the Health and Safety executive, will be a new recognition of Governing Body Schemes as the de facto authorities for training and technique in their respective areas of expertise, which will in turn enhance the claim for support.

In the coming year, BCA must concentrate its energies on revising its administration the better to reflect the needs and wishes of its membership. The special committees have a particular role to play in developing their traditional policy objectives to meet future needs and engage new blood to meet new challenges. The reports that the various officers have presented at this years AGM discuss BCA's future path, and the groundwork for a new, properly and realistically budgeted forward plan for which personnel capable of delivering results can be identified.

It is always a pleasure to thank those who have contributed during the year but for various reasons may be unable to continue. It is easy also to forget that those who from time to time step up to the national stage are simultaneously active as cavers, with clubs and within regional councils. Indeed, it is there that they develop expertise and derive their opinions.

M.C. Day  
March, 2006

**BCA / BCRA MEMBERSHIP OFFICER**  
c/o The old Methodist Chapel

Great Hucklow, Buxton, SK17 8RG.

Tel 01298 873810

[membership@bcra.org.uk](mailto:membership@bcra.org.uk)

## BCA OFFICERS 2005-06

### **Chairman:**

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### **Secretary:**

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2, St. Maurice Road, Plympton, Plymouth,  
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# Work At Height & CCPR Updates

## **Work At Height Progress** (15th February 2006)

### *Progress Report from Adventure Activity Industry Advisory Committee's (AAI- AC) Work at Height Working Group:*

On March 16th 2005 Jane Kennedy, as Minister for Work and Pensions, signed the Work at Height Regulations and in the process excluded 'the provision of instruction or leadership to one or more persons in connection with their engagement in caving or climbing by way of sport, recreation, team building or similar activities'. This was a temporary arrangement that would give HSE and the adventure activity sector sufficient time to find an appropriate way to comply with the E.U. Directive without undermining existing good practice in the sports of climbing, caving and related activities and the industry that supports them. AAIAC's Working Group believes that such a solution appears to be forthcoming and this note is to inform the sector on the progress made so far.

Firstly we should point out that the Work at Height Regulations 2005 has developed in the light of the consultation of December 04 (see <http://www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2005/20050735.htm>). Our comments relating to Fragile Surfaces have been incorporated and other elements such as working in adverse weather conditions have, in our view, been improved. Significantly the generic guidance that was

part of the consultation has been removed entirely and again from our point of view this was a helpful development. There are one or two outstanding questions over the Regulations and HSE are currently seeking further legal advice but we feel that they are likely to be resolved to our satisfaction.

During the autumn of 2005 we arranged a visit with HSE to Ullswater OB to discuss ropes courses and other 'peripheral' activities i.e. work that does not have obvious governing body good practice. HSE subsequently undertook a study titled 'Work at Height Regulations 2005: Report of Pilot Mapping Exercise Findings — December 2005' which as Anne Vowles says 'reassures me for the first time that HSE have an understanding of the safety measures used when adventure activity workers are 'working at height' and believe that these are satisfactory if carried out properly.' The report has been accepted by the Minister and we consider this report to be a clear endorsement by a group of senior HSE staff that following governing body good practice will ensure compliance with the Work at Height Regulations.

Work is now underway to produce a shared statement on the rationale for using single ropes in our activities and we also are considering the value of a generic risk assessment that HSE will feel able to endorse. We have a meeting scheduled for 9th March with the new Minister for Work and

Pensions, Lord Philip Hunt, at which we will discuss the progress made so far.

HSE believe that Regulations will need to be passed to bring adventure activities back in to the general Work at Height Regulations. While the Working Party have some outstanding issues to resolve we are pleased with the recent progress that has been made and can see that this may prove to be a satisfactory outcome if the associated guidance strongly endorses the adventure activity sector and governing body good practice. We aim to keep you informed of any developments and understand that HSE are bound to carry out a consultation exercise, which will allow everyone to comment in preparation for any such Regulation.

AAIAC's Work at Height Working Party comprises: Anne Vowles, Brian Lamb, Charlotte Edward, Doug Jones, John Cousins (mltuk), Jon Garside, Marcus Bailie, Simon Waring and Tom Redfern (ACI).

**Central Council of Physical  
Recreation (CCPR)  
Policy Update  
April 2006**

**2. COUNTRYSIDE AND  
WATER**

**2.1 Work at Height  
Regulations(WAHR)**

The Work at Height (WAH) Crisis Committee continues to work with the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), which has now completed a study exploring whether the sector could comply with the Work at Height Regulations. **The key findings of the report are:**

1)The sector can and does comply with a sensible interpretation of the regulations as currently drafted;

2)Following good practice in climbing and caving as set out in the NGB (National Governing Body) instructor training scheme is generally sufficient to comply with WAHR;

3) For activities at height where there is presently no NGB, using the good practices of climbing and/ or caving NGBs is generally sufficient to comply with WAHR.

A full copy of the HSE report is available at: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/falls/aapilot.htm>.

**Scope: England and Wales.**

**CCPR Objective:** CCPR will continue to work with the WAH Crisis Committee.

**Next Steps:** The HSE in conjunction with the Crisis Committee will produce adventure activities guidance, which will demonstrate how

the sector meets the Regulations. This guidance will be subject to public consultation.

How you can help: Please feed into CCPR's response to the consultation on adventure activities guidance.  
[www.ccpr.org.uk](http://www.ccpr.org.uk)

**2.2 Best of Both Worlds**

CCPR has worked with the Countryside Agency and English Nature to create a resource that will help increase opportunities for outdoor sports and recreation, whilst enhancing the enjoyment, appreciation and protection of the sensitive environments in which they take place. The Best of Both Worlds (BOBW) website [www.bobw.co.uk](http://www.bobw.co.uk) was successfully launched at the Outdoor Show on 17 March.

**Scope: England and Wales.**

**CCPR objective:** To work to ensure access to the countryside for sport and recreation- whilst highlighting environmental responsibility.

**Next Steps:** To maintain the website and continue partnership working with key agencies such as Countryside Agency and English Nature.

How you can help: CCPR members organisations are encouraged to sign up to the guiding principles of BOBW. (See article overleaf)



**Membership**

c/o The old Methodist Chapel,  
Great Hucklow, Buxton, SK17 8RG.

Tel 01298 873810

[membership@british-caving.org.uk](mailto:membership@british-caving.org.uk)



## 'Best of Both Worlds' Initiative

When it comes to preventing impact on our environment and wildlife, a new initiative: "The Best of Both Worlds: outdoor pursuits and nature conservation", is another positive step. It has been launched by the Countryside Agency working collectively with English Nature, and the Central Council for Physical Recreation (CCPR). The project is aimed at outdoor activity providers and land managers, with the emphasis on encouraging people to enjoy their pursuits whilst allowing land managers to make decisions to benefit the land they look after.

The initiative promotes best practice on planning outdoor pursuits in areas where nature conservation sensitivities exist, including for example where SSSI consents may be required. It shows the potential to increase opportunities for recreation of all kinds, but in a well managed way.

On the website, case studies from a range of activities and habitats demonstrate how agreement can result in recreation and conservation being brought together for mutual benefit. This may involve situations where a local club is trying to gain access to a prohibited site or resisting attempts to have existing access restricted. An increased understanding in a site's importance to others has a lot to do with reaching a successful outcome. For example an instance of a canoe company getting involved in bird surveys is just one way of outdoor enthusiasts and conservationists coming together to protect and improve what they both enjoy.

The web provides guidance on designated sites, event planning, codes of practice, types of access, and simple steps to consensus building. Plus there are extensive links and references. A Contact Us page for those who have tried all reasonable avenues to reach agreement on their outdoor activity aims, but require some further specific advice, has also been facilitated through the web.

For more information see <[www.bobw.co.uk](http://www.bobw.co.uk)>.



***Hidden Earth***  
*The National Caving Conference*

**22 - 24 September 2006**  
**Leek High School**  
**Staffordshire**

**PETZL**

photo:-  
Dave Ryall

## Notices

### **MENDIP OUTDOOR PURSUITS**

(New mailing Address)

c/o 12 Yadley Close  
Winscombe  
North-Somerset  
BS25 1AU

tel / fax. 01934 820518  
tel. 01934 823666

[www.mendipoutdoorpursuits.co.uk](http://www.mendipoutdoorpursuits.co.uk)

Future Publication Dates  
Issue 7 - Late September  
Issue 8 - Mid December

All previous Issues of  
BCA Newsletter  
Available for download at:

[www.british-caving.org.uk](http://www.british-caving.org.uk)

### **GLOUCESTER SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY**

This year, the GSS is celebrating its  
50th Anniversary.

To commemorate the achievements of the club  
it is holding a dinner on the evening of  
Saturday, 2nd September.

Past members are cordially invited to attend.

If you are interested, please contact the  
secretary on 01242 237378, or at  
[secretary@gloucester-speleo.org](mailto:secretary@gloucester-speleo.org)

### **LOSTKIT - lost property website**

A website has been created with the aim of  
helping people in sports and leisure activities  
find their lost property; the website is:

[www.lostkit.co.uk](http://www.lostkit.co.uk)

Report any property you have lost at any event,  
weekend activity or meeting across the UK  
and we will try to track it down, or if you find  
something, report it and we will hopefully trace  
the owner. This service is free, please use it.



# **Belfry Barbecue**

## **August 19th**

**Bristol Exploration Club  
Priddy, Nr Wells, Somerset**

**In association with CHECC  
and the Dachstein Expedition**

## Regional News & Access

### Mendip

#### Regional Council - COUNCIL OF SOUTHERN CAVING CLUBS

For information on CSCC, send S.A.E to: Hon. Secretary: Steve King, 33 Ottery Way, Didcot, Oxon. OX11 7UG.

E-m: [secretary@cscc.org.uk](mailto:secretary@cscc.org.uk)

Website: [www.cscc.org.uk](http://www.cscc.org.uk)

#### Cuckoo Cleeves

The new owner of this site, Wayne Starsmore, has secured access on behalf of cavers - thanks to him for his selfless generosity. Despite requiring some remedial maintenance work on the entrance lid (care required) the cave remains accessible via the standard CSCC padlock, keys to which are held by Mendip clubs (and some further afield). Due to the fence being down for a while, livestock has been able to gather in the depression and mud has been known to obstruct the easy opening of the lid - please keep the lid closed when inside but be aware it is heavy so it helps to have someone strong enough to open it on the return up the ladder pitch.

#### CSCC KEYS

For a combination of reasons, but including conservation, stewardship and economics, the CSCC has decided that later this year it will CHANGE all the padlocks on CSCC-controlled caves/mines. NEW KEYS will then be required to gain entry to these sites.

All CSCC Member Clubs are therefore now invited to apply for a new CSCC key. Please provide the CSCC C&A Officer with the name, address AND TELEPHONE NUMBER of your Club Keyholder (email: [canda@cscc.org.uk](mailto:canda@cscc.org.uk); address: Mr C Binding, CSCC C&A Officer, Ty Bach, Cheddar, Somerset, BS27 3BN).

The changeover of padlocks will take place on one day, yet to be decided, chosen so as to minimise disruption to trips. The date will be announced in good time. Our current thought is for it to take place in July/August when most

people, and Clubs, are on their holidays.

The CSCC would also like to take this opportunity to discourage the use of aerosol-type lubricants (like WD40) on its locks. The lubrication offered by these products is very short-lived. A light machine oil (such as 3-in-1 penetrating oil) is much better. Difficult-to-open, seized, or faulty, locks can always be reported to the CSCC C&A Officer. In most instances they can be changed in 48 hours.

*Steve King*

*Hon. Secretary*

*Council of Southern Caving Clubs*

### Derbyshire

#### Regional Council - DERBYSHIRE CAVING ASSOCIATION

For information on DCA, send S.A.E to:

Hon. Secretary, Jenny Potts, 3 Greenway,

Hulland Ward, Ashbourne, Derbys. DE6 3FE.

Tel: 01335-370629, E-m: [dca@theDCA.org.uk](mailto:dca@theDCA.org.uk)

Website: [www.theDCA.org.uk](http://www.theDCA.org.uk)

#### CAVES OF THE PEAK DISTRICT in the pipeline (it's a long pipe).

Iain Barker, Bob Dearman and John Beck of the DCA have started work on bringing out a new edition of Caves of the Peak District. It's 14 years since the last one and several new discoveries have been made in that period. In order for the new book to be as up-to-date as possible, we need as much information as we can get from every individual and club who has worked in the area since 1991. Everything from a one metre extension to a known cave, to a brand new hole; to maintain the information available to cavers of the future, as well as the present, it all needs to go into print or much will be forgotten. If your club, or any individual cavers you know of have made even the smallest dig or advance please can we have the details? Even abortive digs need to be recorded to maintain the record.

The way to report your activities/discoveries is simple; just write it up in the same format as an entry in the current Caves of the Peak



District and email or post it to;

*DCA Access Officer*

*Iain Barker*

*56 Thornbridge Crescent, Birley, Sheffield,  
South Yorkshire S12 3AE*

*Email: [iainbarker@peakland.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:iainbarker@peakland.freeserve.co.uk)*

*Tel: 0114-2530112*

However insignificant your contribution may be, please submit it all the same, who knows what a future caver may make of it.

## WANTED

Photos for the forthcoming edition of  
'Caves of the Peak District'

Please send possible inclusions for the new  
guide, (preferably electronically, or by post)  
to Iain Barker at the above address.

## MANIFOLD VALLEY CAVES ACCESS UPDATE

**Darfar Ridge Cave** now has a locked lid to protect delicate formations, which have recently been cleaned and taped. For access, please contact the South Peak Office of the National Trust for permission: either phone 01335-350503 during working hours or email [ilampark@nationaltrust.org.uk](mailto:ilampark@nationaltrust.org.uk) to arrange to collect a key.

If farmland needs to be crossed to access caves in the main sink area, such as **Darfar Pot**, ask permission at Dale Farm; though access can be gained along the dry river bed in summer.

Some caves already, or will shortly, require a **"Derbyshire key"**: a large adjustable spanner to undo the bolts holding a grille in place. Don't forget to replace any bolts after your visit and please ensure that they are done up tightly so that they cannot be undone by fingers alone. Sites in this category include **Darfar Crag Swallet**, **Mill Cave and Pot**, **Hoo Valley Mine**, **Redhurst Swallet**.

## WATERWAYS SWALLET

Bolts will shortly be installed on the lid of Waterways Swallet, which in future will require a **"Derbyshire key"** to obtain access - usual system, please replace and tighten the bolts

after your visit. This is being done at the request of the landowner to ensure that there is no danger to the public. Advance permission is not required to visit the cave.

## North

### Regional Council - COUNCIL OF NORTHERN CAVING CLUBS

For information on CNCC, send S.A.E to:

Hon. Secretary, Les Sykes, 49 Manfield,  
Ashurst, Skelmersdale, Lancs. WN8 6SU

Tel/Fax. 01695-728673

E-m: [les@speleoadventure.wanadoo.co.uk](mailto:les@speleoadventure.wanadoo.co.uk)

### New CNCC Permit Secretary for Fountains Fell & Penyghent, including Washfold Pot

Malcolm Hughes has taken over as Access Officer for the area and requests for permits should be made to him at 26 Wellcroft, Otley, LS21 1JJ – don't forget to include SAE with your request. Email first to check dates available: [malcolm@hughesls10.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:malcolm@hughesls10.fsnet.co.uk).

## Wales

### Regional Council - CAMBRIAN CAVING COUNCIL

For Information on CCC send S.A.E to:

Hon. Chairman, Sue Mabbett, 2 Garth Close,  
Morganstown, Cardiff, CF15 8LF.

Tel: 02920 -844558,

E-m: [chair@cambridriancavingcouncil.org.uk](mailto:chair@cambridriancavingcouncil.org.uk)

## Forest Of Dean

### Regional Contact - FOREST OF DEAN CAVE CONSERVATION AND ACCESS GROUP

Hon. Secretary, John W Hine, The Grottage,  
2 Cullis Lane, Mile End, Coleford, Glos, GL16  
7QF. Tel: 01594 833217

E-m: [mole@grottage.fsworld.co.uk](mailto:mole@grottage.fsworld.co.uk)

# Training Courses

## LCMLA LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT REVALIDATION WORKSHOPS

LCMLA holders are advised to contact their Area Liaison Officer for other Revalidation Workshops. Names and contact details may be found on the Training Pages on BCA's web site [www.british-caving.org.uk](http://www.british-caving.org.uk)

REGION	DATE	CONTACT
Northern England	24th July	<b>Tom Redfern</b> Email: <a href="mailto:tom@ingleboro.co.uk">tom@ingleboro.co.uk</a> Tel: 015242 51651 or 015242 512651 Old Road, Clapham, North Yorkshire LA2 8JH
Northern England	4th Oct	<b>Paul Rafferty</b> Email: <a href="mailto:simplesolution1@aol.com">simplesolution1@aol.com</a> Tel: 07889 75178122 Herriot Way, Thirsk, North Yorkshire YO7 1FL
North Wales	10th December	<b>Dena Proctor</b> Email: <a href="mailto:dena.p@tiscali.co.uk">dena.p@tiscali.co.uk</a> Tel: 01490 440208 Ty Isaf Dinam, Llandrillo, Corwen, Denbighshire LL21 0TB

## CIC REVALIDATION WORKSHOPS

(Contact the Training Adminsitration Service Provider for an application form)

Date	Course Director	Contact Details
Sat/Sun 16/17 September	Nigel Ball	Email: <a href="mailto:nbt@blueyonder.co.uk">nbt@blueyonder.co.uk</a> 23 Farfield Road, Shipley, Bradford, BD18 4QP Tel: 01274 588497 Mobile: 07973 886861
Sat/Sun 4/5 November	Dave Elliot	Email: <a href="mailto:speleo@ukonline.co.uk">speleo@ukonline.co.uk</a> Stocks Tree Cottage, The Green, Langcliffe, Settle, North Yorkshire, BD24 9NN Tel: 01729 823984

## CIC TRAINING COURSES

10 – 13 October	Northern England	Tony Flanagan
5 - 8 December	Northern England	Tony Flanagan Email: <a href="mailto:tony@flanagans.fsnet.co.uk">tony@flanagans.fsnet.co.uk</a> Tel: 015242 41210 Ffrancon, Thornton-in-Lonsdale, Ingleton, via Carnforth, Lancs LA6 3PB

# Training Courses

## LCMLA Level 1 & 2 Training Courses 2006

**LCMLA Level 1 and Level 2 training courses can be found on the BCA website Training pages and the list is updated regularly.**

## TRAINER ASSESSOR WORKSHOPS

**18th November 2006**

**Northern England**

**Tony Boyle**

Email: [tony@boyle.org.uk](mailto:tony@boyle.org.uk)

Tel: 01765 650034

High Stile, Grewelthorpe, Ripon,  
North Yorkshire HG4 3BS

**All the workshops and courses set out here are also on the BCA website Training pages and are updated when new dates are available.**

**For any other enquiries** contact the **Training Administration Provider at BCA Training Administration**, C/o RAM Business Services, Sun Lea, Joss Lane, Sedburgh, Cumbria, LA10 5AS, Fax/Tel: 015396 22040, Email: [trainadmin@british-caving.org.uk](mailto:trainadmin@british-caving.org.uk).

### Annual Report - Rope Test Officer

#### Rope Test Rig Service in 2005

During 2005, 32 samples were tested for 12 persons or clubs. Whilst this may seem impressive, I am forced to admit that 1 person had been waiting for well over 1 year and 3 for around 5 months, totalling 21 of these samples. However the rig was taken to the Forest of Dean weekend in June 2005 where under a blazing sun, 7 samples were tested. The rig was also taken to Hidden Earth in October where only one sample was offered for testing.

Of some concern is that nearly 30 percent of the tested ropes only managed to survive 2 drops. Clearly some cavers are taking their ropes to near their limit of performance.

Following the construction of the new BCA web site in 2005, a page was placed on the site providing the form to accompany the submission of samples. Another page was also placed on the site giving the early results from one sample rope in the Long Term Rope Test. (Further results will appear in future - ed) Looking forward, I hold 3 other Long Term Rope Test rope lengths which have been returned. I regret to state that the other 2 rope lengths have not been retrieved despite a range of endeavours to track them down. Whilst these are the priority work on testing in front of me, I am forced to admit that other aspects of caving do intrude on my retirement, so it will take some time for these to be tested. I have still got a range of new ropes totalling some 450 metre purchased some years ago. My intention remains to undertake a number of basic tests on these ropes to obtain some relationship between the rope test rig's method of testing and that used in the British Standard. I have also been given a number of well used ropes to carry out some work to determine the variability of strength of a used rope along its length. I thank the Morley Pothole Club for their donation of these ropes. Given these 8 ropes amount to over 250 metre, I foresee I shall be testing ropes for some while to come.

*Report: Robert Mehew*



2006

Leek - 'the Queen of the Moorlands' - is a market town of around 20,000 people, situated in the shadow of Ramshaw Rocks and The Roaches (both well-known climbing sites). Recent Hidden Earth venues have tended towards more rural settings, which is fairly logical for what is a countryside pursuit. Getting out of town is pleasant and avoids urban problems such as crime, car parking, and finding reasonably priced accommodation. Leek represents an ideal compromise between urban and rural, being a small town full of restaurants, shops and places for non-cavers to visit, whilst not being a big city. The venue is Leek High School, which offers all the facilities we need in a pleasant, modern setting.

For the third year running, we are very grateful to Petzl for sponsoring the event, which will feature the usual mix of lectures, competitions and workshops, plus some new attractions, with something for all.

The weekend will open with a new audio-visual spectacular from Glenn Jones, already a conference favourite, followed by regional roundups, expedition reports, and the UK's most prestigious under-ground film and photography competitions. Jack Pickup will be hosting a cave rescue session, including a practical workshop, accompanied, no doubt, by some of his limitless supply of side-splitting anecdotes gained over a lifetime at the sharp end of cave rescue. Sid Perou has promised the premier of a new film, and in conjunction with Martin 'Basher' Baines, a 'humorous' follow-up to the hit 'You Bet', which won first prize in the 2004 Hidden Earth video competition. Jim Eyre will be our guest speaker at the Saturday evening dinner; again a guarantee of outrageous tall tales of ridiculous caving situations.

The MNRC centenary award (£100) is a special category of the 2006 BCRA Photo Salon, to take place at Hidden Earth 2006. The Award celebrates 100 years of speleology by the Mendip Nature Research Committee. It will be awarded to the photograph (in any photo salon category) which best captures the theme of 'Caving History'. The theme is deliberately open to wide interpretation - entries could be of historic locations, taken with historic equipment, of very old cavers, or anything else which has a relevance to caving and history. In short, MNRC wants to celebrate its centenary by encouraging entrants to look backwards with imagination. Although presented at Hidden Earth 2006, this is an independent award and will be judged by representatives of the MNRC. In addition to considering photo salon entries, photos displayed on club stands will also be eligible, provided they are 'drawn to the attention of the judges'. The means of doing this, and further details about the photo salon will be on the Hidden Earth web site later in the Spring.

## INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

### **NSS Convention August 7-11, 2006 Bellingham, Washington.**

The 2006 convention will be hosted at beautiful Western Washington University. The university is located between Puget Sound and the Cascade Mountains, just outside of downtown Bellingham. Built with nature and beauty in mind this will be a stunning backdrop for the 2006 NSS Convention. Situated between Seattle, Washington and Vancouver, British Columbia, the spectacular natural environment of this region stretches from the San Juan Islands to Mt. Baker. Bellingham area and community offers recreational experiences from the relaxing to the exhilarating. Please visit our new website at [www.nss2006.org](http://www.nss2006.org)

Chairman: Michael McCormack, Cascade Grotto, [michmcco@exchange.microsoft.com](mailto:michmcco@exchange.microsoft.com)

### **8th Conference on Limestone Hydrogeology Neuchâtel, Switzerland 21-23 September 2006 Centre of Hydrogeology**

# TRAINING & EVENTS

## University of Neuchâtel (CHYN)

The conference will focus on the following topics:

1. Flow and transport in the saturated and unsaturated zone.
2. Modern investigation and measurement techniques.
3. Contamination and microbiology of karst aquifers.
4. Water resources and climate change.

The conference will include two full day indoor oral presentations and poster sessions (21st and 22nd), and a one-day excursion on 23rd. The 24th and 25th september a post conference excursion will be organized in Swiss Alps (Ho"lloch and Sieben Hengste).

Contact: Conference secretariat  
Rue Emile-Argand 11  
CH - 2007 Neuchâtel - Switzerland  
Tel: +41 (32) 718 26 02  
Fax: +41 (32) 718 26 03  
Email: [conference2006@hydrokarst.org](mailto:conference2006@hydrokarst.org)  
Web: <http://www.hydrokarst.org>

## SUICRO 2006 27th-30th October Ballina, north County Mayo

The town is set within the limestone lowlands between Killala Bay and Lough Conn with the mountains of Nephin Beg to the west and the Ox Mountains to the east. The symposium will be held at the Ridge Pool Hotel, on the banks of the River Moy.

A package deal has been made available by the hotel. Cost: ~150 per person for 3 night B&B (based on 2 people sharing) Ridge Pool Hotel Tel: +353 (0)96 24600

A number of caves are found in the region including the Aille River Cave (nr Westport) one of Irelands largest river caves and the Kesh caves (nr Ballymote).

## BRITISH CAVING ASSOCIATION WEB SERVICES

The British Caving Association can now offer cut price web hosting solutions for its members. **Basic Webhosting** (Windows 2003 servers) £25 Per year (includes unlimited POP3 mail boxes, unlimited Email forwarding, personal control panel, Perl, PHP, compiled CGI support)

**Linux Webhosting** (latest Redhat Linux servers, Apache,) £40 per year (includes unlimited POP3 mail boxes, unlimited Email forwarding, personal control panel, Perl, PHP, compiled CGI support). Other features available:

**Domain registration and renewal, Password Protection, Spam Filtering, Virus Scanning, Web Stats plus ASP, .NET Framework, FrontPage Extensions, ODBC, Databases.**

**Contact** the webmaster for details and prices:  
[webmaster@british-caving.org.uk](mailto:webmaster@british-caving.org.uk)

## FUTURE MEETINGS OF BCA/NCA TRAINING COMMITTEE, 2005/6

28th September 2006

Items for consideration by the committee should be raised through your constituent body representative or sent to the Training Officer.

## Members of the Training Committee 2005/6

### Convenor & Training Officer:

Idris Williams, Glen Cottage, Holden Lane, Ruyton-XI-Towns, SALOP, SY4 1JD. Tel. 01939 260412, E-mail: [training.officer@british-caving.org.uk](mailto:training.officer@british-caving.org.uk)

### A Representative from each of BCA's constituent bodies:

These are currently:

The Regional Councils of Caving:

- Cambrian Caving Council
- Council of Northern Caving Clubs
- Council of Southern Caving Clubs
- Derbyshire Caving Association
- Devon & Cornwall Underground Council

### The other bodies which represent specialist interests:

- Association of Caving Instructors
- British Cave Research Association
- British Cave Rescue Council
- Cave Diving Group
- Council of Higher Education Caving Clubs
- National Assn. Mining Historical Organisations
- William Pengelly Cave Studies Trust

### Co-Opted Members are:

- John Cliffe, 4 Kensington Avenue, Lansdown, Cheltenham, Glos. GL50 2NQ. Tel. 01242-262505 E-mail: [jcliffe@gxn.co.uk](mailto:jcliffe@gxn.co.uk)
- A representative of the Forest of Dean Conservation & Access group.
- The Chairmen of the CIC Panel and the National Co-ordinating Panel.

# Publications

## CAVE STUDIES SERIES

The following Titles are now available:

**1** Caves and Karst of the Yorkshire Dales (1991) Tony Waltham/Martin Davies

\*

**3** Caves and Karst of the Peak District (1992) Trevor Ford/John Gunn

**4** An Introduction to Cave Photography (1994) Sheena Stoddard

**5** Introduction to British Karst Environments (1994) John Gunn

\*

**7** Caves and Karst of the Brecon Beacons National Park (1998) Mike Simms

**8** Walks Around the Caves and Karst of the Mendip Hills (1999) Andy Farrant

**9** Sediments in Caves (2001) Trevor Ford

**10** Dictionary of Karst & Caves (2002) David Lowe/Tony Waltham

**11** Cave Surveying (2002) Anthony Day (with J M Eyre, P R Deakin and D Judson)

**12** Underground Britain: Legal and Insurance Issues (2003) David Judson

**13** Exploring the Limestone Landscapes of Upper Wharfedale (2003) Phillip Murphy

**14** Swildon's 2 and 3 (2004) David Irwin

**15** Exploring the Limestone Landscapes of The Three Peaks & Malham (2005) Phillip Murphy

**16** Essential Sources in Cave Science: A Guide to the Literature of Cave Science (2006) Graham Proudlove (ed)

\* Numbers 2 and 6 are out of print, but have been updated by 11 and 10 respectively.

Offers and suggestions for further titles are always welcome:

**SERIES EDITOR: David Judson**

Hurst Barn, Castlemorton, Malvern, Worcs WR13 6LS

Tel: 01684-311057, E-mail: [landi@british-caving.org.uk](mailto:landi@british-caving.org.uk)

**PUBLICATIONS SALES (BCRA): Ernie Shield**

Village Farm, Great Thirkleby, Thirsk, N Yorks YO7 2AT

Tel: 01845-501424, E-mail: [publications-sales@bcra.org.uk](mailto:publications-sales@bcra.org.uk)



# BCRA

**ALL TITLES: currently £3.50 + 50p postage within UK.**

### THE REVISED CIC HANDBOOK

The final draft of the revised C.I.C Handbook is now on the BCA website from where it can be downloaded.

### LCMLA HANDBOOK 3rd EDITION

The new LCMLA Handbook is now ready. All revisions to the 1st and 2nd editions are available on the NCA website from where they can be downloaded.  
[www.british-caving.org.uk](http://www.british-caving.org.uk)

### BCA ONLINE

**BCA Website:**

<http://www.british-caving.org.uk>

With the advent of a newly revised BCA website, the old NCA website (<http://www.nca.org.uk>) has now ceased to operate and attempts to access this address are being redirected to the new BCA site. Please be patient as we continue to update and improve on the new site - some pages are still under construction. All details of insurance and training courses previously available through the NCA are now to be found at the above address as well as other downloads and info.



## Publications

### BCA/NCA PUBLICATIONS ON TRAINING / SAFETY, CONSERVATION, ETC.

From: BCA PUBLICATIONS, The Old Methodist Chapel, Great Hucklow, Buxton,  
Derbyshire. SK17 8RG. [www.british-caving.org.uk](http://www.british-caving.org.uk)

For queries, contact:- Tel. 01335-370629, E-mail:  
[publication.sales@british-caving.org.uk](mailto:publication.sales@british-caving.org.uk)

All cheques etc. should be made payable to B.C.A

For "free" items, please enclose a stamped addressed envelope as appropriate.  
(C5 envelope with 1st. or 2nd. class stamp for DL or A5 items.)

- |  |                              |
|--|------------------------------|
| <b>British Caving Association Handbook, 2005-2006</b>  | <b>(£6.00 incl. p&amp;p)</b> |
| <b>Report of Technical Advisors Seminar</b> (40pp)   | (£2.00 incl. p&p)            |
| NCA Training Committee Report  |                              |
| <b>Guidelines for University and College Caving Clubs.</b> (8pp)   | (£2.00 incl. p&p)            |
| (The 'Guidelines' includes the leaflet <b>Caving Notes for Beginners</b> which is NOT available separately)  |                              |
| <b>NCA Cave Conservation Handbook</b>  |                              |
| The definitive Cave Conservation Publication, supported by English Nature, Countryside Council for Wales, Scottish Natural Heritage and other conservation bodies. 174 pages, fully illustrated, with sections detailing threats, initiatives, policies, legal points, etc. plus regional sections and appendices. |                              |
| (Sold unbound - you provide your own file cover.)  | (£1 + £3.50 p&p)             |
| (Sold complete with file cover.)   | (£10 + £5.50 p&p)            |
| <b>Cave Conservation Policy</b> (32pp)   | (£3.00 incl. p&p)            |
| <b>Lost Caves of Britain</b> (Cave conservation video)   | (£10 + £1 p&p)               |
| <b>Radon Underground</b> (Radon Exposure During Underground Trips -<br>A Set of Guidelines for Caving and Mine Exploration.) (24pp)  | (£3.00 incl. p&p)            |
| <b>Underground Britain - Legal &amp; Insurance Issues</b> (2005 Edition)   | (£3.50 incl. p&p)            |
| <b>Free Conservation/Safety/Information Leaflets - just send us an S.A.E.:</b>   |                              |
| <b>Cave Conservation Policy - Summary</b> (DL)   |                              |
| <b>Protect Our Caves</b> (DL)  |                              |
| <b>Bats Underground - A Conservation Code</b> (A4)   |                              |
| <b>Weil's Disease leaflet</b> (DL)   |                              |
| <b>So, You Want To Go Caving</b> (information leaflet for beginners / non-cavers) (DL)   |                              |
| <b>Syllabuses for LCMLA and CIC</b> can be obtained from BCA Training Administration (see below) or downloaded from the BCA Training website at <a href="http://www.british-caving.org.uk">www.british-caving.org.uk</a>   |                              |
| <i>Almost all of these publications can be bought at a special discounted price from BCA stands at caving events such as Hidden Earth, Cavers Fairs, etc.</i>  |                              |

**Training publications** may also be obtained direct from: BCA Training Administration,  
RAM Business Services, Sun Lea, Joss Lane, Sedbergh, Cumbria, LA10 5AS.  
Tel/Fax: 015396-22040, E-mail: [trainadmin@british-caving.org.uk](mailto:trainadmin@british-caving.org.uk)

### DEADLINES FOR FUNDING APPLICATIONS

**Ghar Parau Expedition Grants:** 31 August. Contact the Secretary, Hurst Barn, Castlemorton, Malvern, Worcs, WR13 6LF. Tel/Fax 01684- 311057. E-mail: [d.judson@bcra.org.uk](mailto:d.judson@bcra.org.uk)

**BCRA Research Fund:** 1 April, 1 August, 1 December. E-mail: [research-fund@bcra.org.uk](mailto:research-fund@bcra.org.uk)

## Dates for your Diary

### COURSES, CONFERENCES, EVENTS, ETC.

2006

**August 19 CHECC BBQ, The Belfry, Priddy, Somerset**

**September 22-24 Hidden Earth 2006, Annual Caving Conference, Leek High School, Staffordshire. [www.hidden-earth.org.uk](http://www.hidden-earth.org.uk) (see page 12)**

**November 4-5 CHECC Training Weekend (location TBC)**

### MEETINGS 2006

Jul. 1 (Sat): DCA Council Meeting, 10am, Monyash Village Hall

Oct. 7 (Sat): BCA Council Meeting, 10.30am, Baptist Church Hall, Alvechurch

Nov. 4 (Sat): DCA Council Meeting, 10am, Monyash Village Hall

### MEETINGS 2007

Jan. 13 (Sat): BCA Council Meeting, 10.30am, Baptist Church Hall, Alvechurch

Feb. 24 (Sat): DCA AGM, 10am, Monyash Village Hall

**Mar. 24 (Sat): British Caving Association AGM, 10.30am, Baptist Church Hall, Alvechurch**

### INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

Check for details of these and other international events on the UIS Speleo Calendar at:

<http://www.uis-speleo.org/calendar/events.html> and [www.ijs.speleo.it](http://www.ijs.speleo.it)

2006

**August 7-11 - NSS Convention, Bellingham, Washington, USA. page 12**

**September 21-23 - 8th Conference on Limestone Hydrogeology Neuchâtel, Switzerland.**

**October 27-30 - SUICRO 23, Ireland. Field trips, Trade and Club stands, competitions, talks and entertainment!**

**Membership Officer:** c/o The old Methodist Chapel, Great Hucklow, Buxton, SK17 8RG.  
Tel 01298 873810

**Travel Insurance: RBPM General Ltd.**  
[enquiries@rbpm.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@rbpm.co.uk)  
Tel: 01722 336998

**Public Liability Insurance**  
[insurance@british-caving.org.uk](mailto:insurance@british-caving.org.uk)

**BCA Training Administration:**  
**RAM Business Services**  
[trainadmin@british-caving.org.uk](mailto:trainadmin@british-caving.org.uk)  
Tel/Fax: 015396-22040

**National Conference Enquiries:**  
[bookings@hidden-earth.org.uk](mailto:bookings@hidden-earth.org.uk)  
Tel: 01749 679839

**Publications Sales**  
[publication.sales@british-caving.org.uk](mailto:publication.sales@british-caving.org.uk)

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### EQUALITY STATEMENT

The BCA will make its services available to all sections of the sporting community, there will be no discrimination on the grounds of race, gender, sexual orientation, creed, colour, occupation, religion or political opinion.