



# Cave Diving Group Newsletter

CAVE DIVING, EXPLORING AND INNOVATING SINCE 1946

**No 238**

**January 2026**

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<http://www.cavedivinggroup.org.uk>

## Cave Diving Group officers

President	Geoff Yeadon	Chairman	Martin Grass
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Newsletter editor	Ian Lloyd	Digital manager	Jason Pepper
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National training officer	Mike Thomas	BCRC diving officer (elected by BCRC)	John Volanthen

## Section secretaries

Northern Section	Kevin Gannon	Derbyshire Section	Jack Dewison
Welsh Section	Peter Hall	Somerset Section	Jon Hauser

## Diary

20 January 2026	Central committee meeting, online from 7:30 pm
2 February 2026	Welsh Section meeting, online from 8 pm
25 April 2026	CDG AGM hosted by the Northern Section

## Editorial

As always, thank you to the contributors for submitting dive logs and articles to this Newsletter.

Barry Sudell was the Northern Section secretary when I first made my tentative steps towards membership in 1990. His passing is marked in two articles that bring out his humour and integrity, which I can only agree with.

The 2026 annual general meeting is taking shape in the Northern Section, this will celebrate the CDG's 80 years of existence and, as such, marks a significant milestone in our history. The timing of these Newsletters makes it difficult to provide details here so far ahead; please make sure to look out for further news of this important event closer to the day. I can reveal the events are planned to take place in and around Ingleton, so make your plans now for travel and accommodation.

Please continue to submit diving logs, articles, top tips, book reviews and changes to diving status via [newslettereditor@cavedivinggroup.org.uk](mailto:newslettereditor@cavedivinggroup.org.uk) or Section secretaries. The deadline for the April 2026 Newsletter is **1 March 2026**. Safe diving.

Ian Lloyd

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## Obituary



### BARRY SUDELL

20th July 1947 - 4th September 2025

Barry was my CDG sponsor and mentor when I joined in January 1985. In the same year we took part in a diving expedition to the Picos de Europa, the first by the Northern Pennine Club. Barry's grasp of the politics of caving in a national park whilst masquerading as holders of a permit was natural and instantaneous. Single-handedly, and with no knowledge of Spanish, Barry was able to deflect three heavily armed and highly suspicious Guardia Civil from arresting the whole expedition. They even drove off on their trail bikes, pulling wheelies in formation. Fortunately, they did not fall off; an event which would have required silencing of witnesses. The expedition was a storming success with sumps passed and cave discovered, thus setting up a mini golden age of pushing Picos caves.

Barry used his engineering skills to help further exploration. By the standards of the time, his 60 W diving lamp provided positively solar levels of illumination. On one occasion, its light revealed a roof tube some 20 m above the cavern floor. Unfortunately, we had no equipment available to scale such heights and so the lead was added to the list of objectives for the following year. Barry produced a bolting platform to facilitate the climb, although the valour of the explorers quailed when confronted by the reality of bolting across a vaulted roof using a modified anvil for support. The idea was sound; the execution required refinement.

Back home, Barry was a key member of the Notts Pot exploration team. He and Rick Stanton led the way in what was arguably the discovery of the decade, when in December 1985 they made the connection between Notts Pot and what was, to some, Ireby IV. The breakthrough came after months of gruelling work carrying cylinders in and out of Notts Pot to set up dive after dive in conditions often far from ideal. Mid-week dives after work were no uncommon and show the tenacity of the man, particularly risking the journey onto Leck Fell in winter in a Lada! More than once, a bump start was needed in the early hours before returning to another shift in the mill.

The Lada was also a stalwart of several later expeditions to Spain, including the occasion when Barry drove it, heavily laden with compressor and cylinders, onto the ferry in Ramsgate alone. Ceily had abandoned the passenger seat and squeezed into another car to raise the passenger number to five and quality for a free ticket. (We knew the value of economy!) Subsequently Barry was stopped on the French autoroutes twice and the car nearly stripped upon return to Ramsgate three weeks later. It was his honesty that was the catalyst; when asked by UK immigration where he was going, he replied "I don't know". This clearly made him a marked man.

It seemed Barry was as much at home on a blizzard-swept Pennine moor and on a baking rocky ledge over a Spanish chasm. A reliable friend in all adversity and a great companion when venturing into the unknown.

**Christopher Danilewicz**

I'm sat looking at this screen, frankly I don't quite know where to begin, still bewildered at losing Barry. I knew little of what may be described as Barry's private life, beyond the obvious fact he was devoted to Ceily, and she likewise. Following Nicolae Ceauşescu's execution, December 1989, civil order collapsed, thousands of Romanian orphans were abandoned to their fate. From Barry's casual enquiry, could I source some plumbing material, at a CDG central committee meeting, in the Pegasus Hut, I was sucked into the warmth of their empathy. Over pints, Barry talked, and something "clicked"; from that moment - living two hundred miles apart meant nothing, we became pals, and so, from the early 1990s, we often played together. His reputation as a tough, cool, reliable,

diver was entirely accurate; traits, which I regularly witnessed, added to which was his forthright approach, genuine nature and great integrity. The only time his senses failed him completely was choosing me as best man: the day after the celebrations, he thanked me for fulfilling all my duties – cautiously enquiring, it was a fantastic day..! Wasn't it..?

Emergencies at Spenbrook Mill, where Barry was senior engineer, demanded immediate attendance, such spoilers created havoc planning our trips - always occurring at a moment's notice. Eventually, one afternoon, he appeared at the Pendle Inn, after a lengthy overnight incident, so I presented him with a pint. Reflecting ruefully the lost trip, from the blazing fireside, I expounding tales of great daring do; of forepoling through dodgy collapses - scaling loose shafts - to reach once inaccessible parts of the many superb 18th century metalliferous mine systems hidden beneath those sweeping Northern Pennines... Their interest piqued, Barry and Ceily joined The Pegasus Club Nottingham, exploring dozens of mines surrounding the village of Overwater, Cumbria – long, long before the area, and pastime, became overtly popular.

Barry's introduction to mine exploration inadvertently happened at 02:00, just after Keith, owner of The Crown, pleaded that we all bugger off to bed. Upon ejection, attempting negotiate the ten metres between the front door of the bar, and the door of the rented cottage, among the team of eight a slurred voice suggested, would it not be a grand idea to do the Round Trip, now - three managed to agreed. The trip requires entering Cappleclough Level, climb up to Smallclough mine, circumnavigate the numerous passages beneath the mountain slopes either side of the valley, descend two shafts, via Carr's level, to exit finally from Rampgill: this adit's portal being directly opposite the main entrance to Cappleclough. After six hours of inebriated wanderings, through parts of this captivating realm, often waist deep in water, Barry's delight was obvious from the many ooh's and ahhh's when encountering each of the many engineering solutions accomplished in such difficult circumstances. The pièce de résistance for Barry was being greeted by the dawn upon surfacing: Barry was - to say the least - well and truly hooked.

Parallel to all these goings on were individual projects - in the north Barry introduced me to such sites as Joint Hole, Hurtle Pot and Notts, in exchange I'm guilty of exposing him to the Celtic way of life, (digging, music, dance and bars), in addition to the delights of diving in Wales, Ireland and Egypt.

Barry soon bought a place in Knockalough, a seething metropolis – half an hour west of Ennis, Ireland. As we renovated the place he soon came to know the scattered rural population; fitting in so well, you couldn't see a join – obtaining a level of respect most can only dream of. His reputation as an engineer spread swiftly; those needing precision, fine quality work sought out his skills. And so began the next chapter of Barry's life; great music, a grand local bar, as much work as he desired, and endless projects among the rivers, caves and mines of the West of Ireland. But, the beguiling life of unfettered fun was savagely cut short. His life changing ankle injury, from a fall sustained at the mill, the direct result of a couple of twats acting the bollox, impacted his ability to walk – diving ceased forthwith: in constant pain, exacerbated by botched surgeries, I watched him bear ever present, excruciating pain in his quiet, stolid manner - pain killers were of little use: yet, I never heard him complain. Even when he, surprisingly, requested a round trip in Cullaun II - taking in the constricted high level route, returning the main streamway. Later, in the bar, reflecting how my ankles ached from being regularly jammed in the narrow crevices, I looked over the table to Barry, wondering how the hell he'd managed that trip, without uttering a murmur. But, that was our Barry... Barry Sudell – one d, two lls.

I will be eternally grateful for having entered Barry's orbit, he was a decent man, a pure delight on trips or in a bar, he was a dear pal, and I miss him.

Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam,

**Pat Cronin**

## United Kingdom dive reports



### NORTHERN ENGLAND

**AQUAMOLE POT, Kingsdale, North Yorkshire**

**SD 698774**

**18 October 2025**

**DIVER: G LINNANE**

**Support: J Hartford, D McDonough**

The plan was to breathe a single 7 litre aluminium stage cylinder, half on the way in and half on the way out, with other cylinders carried as bailout gas. The diver returned as swiftly as possible to the turn point of the previous dive (NL237:1) and continued digging it out of sand/gravel/silt as required.

Two lines up into blind rifts were passed and the diver believes he was over 400 m from dive base when he turned. Body temperature much more acceptable in the 7 mm full wetsuit with integrated hood, along with a 1 mm shorty underneath and 5 mm shorty over the top. One 7 litre stage cylinder extracted for refilling.

Circa 3 kg of lead has been added to the inventory near dive base. Dive time 51 minutes. Trip time circa 5.5 hours car to car.

**COWSIDE BECK RISING, Cowside Beck, Darnbrook, N. Yorks**

**SD 88887 69236**

**08 November 2025**

**DIVER: J N CORDINGLEY**

**Surface team; D Milner, D Smith**

Several rocks were extracted after fixing throughbolts and with stout hauling from the surface. An interesting hole was revealed at 1.5 m depth with a lot of gin clear water welling up.

**DALE BARN CAVE, Kingsdale, North Yorkshire**

**SD 70007625**

### Boot Trapper Sump

**24 April 2025**

**DIVER: A D SEDDON**

**Support: W Booth, D McDonough, D Monk, T Pickering**

[These dives follow on from a previous report in NL233:4-5 - Ed]

The aim of the dive was to investigate above-water leads in the 540 m airbell in the flood-overflow Boot Trapper Sump. Kit used was two 10 litre steel cylinders of air, a semi drysuit was worn and aid-climbing kit was carried.

The diver made easy (if laden) progress to the airbell, where two lines of 8 mm rope were installed using a combination of natural and bolt belays, to facilitate dekitting. The rift itself is approximately 8 m long, of moderate height and with some bridged, large boulders perhaps three metres up. There is no dry land. On this trip four spits were placed by hand until the tip of the bolt driver broke. Cylinders and other kit were left in the cave.

**29 April 2025**

**Support: D Monk, T Pickering, A D Seddon**

Most kit, except cylinders, were removed from the cave.

**6 May 2025**

**DIVER: A D SEDDON**

A couple of self carries set up for a further bolt climbing trip. A second dive was carried out comfortably, using the 10 litre cylinders left over from the April dive. Transit time was around twenty six minutes on each leg of the journey.

A further three metres of climbing progress was made, all by hand drilling spits, until the diver ran out of hardware. The climb was left about 5 m above the sump pool, level with a large jammed block, and with a flat roof visible overhead a few metres away.

**7 May 2025**

**Support: D Monk, T Pickering**

No diver, so two stalwart Sherpas removed the brace of 10 litre cylinders to the surface. A massive help!

**20 August 2025**

**DIVER: A D SEDDON**

A couple of setup carries were made easier by reducing the gas supply to a pair of 5 litre cylinders, and a caving wetsuit was used for caving to dive base and also the dive itself (with the addition of a neoprene vest and hood).

The aim of the dive was to continue with the bolt climb out of the 540m airbell in Boot Trapper sump. The usual commute to the climb passed in twenty five minutes of steady flipping, no kit was dropped into the sump pool and the previous limit of exploration reached easily. A further four hand bolts were placed to gain access to a reasonable ledge, where a bolt plus natural belay created a sensible means of abseil retreat.

The obvious way on was a slither over a flat topped boulder at head height; other options seemed less solid, and although the sound of water falling down the rift was heard several metres to the right (true left if facing downstream) it could not be reached from this point.

A wriggle down a slot into a narrow duck was passed, into the ongoing crawl. Perhaps ten metres ahead a sitting height chamber was reached. A low muddy inlet on the left was not investigated, the right hand option of low cobbly streamway being preferred. This was followed for several tens of metres of depressingly straw stalactite bedecked crawling. Passage was of low, to hands-and-knees height, between two and three metres wide, and generally in the shallow stream. The passage was left just beyond a more aqueous section, with a noticeable draught and still going. Distance covered, an intentionally conservative 50 metres from the head of the climb.

The pitch to the water surface was left rigged on 8 mm SRT rope, with good belays. It is approximately 6 metres in height, on good rock, and is probably best tackled with at least a minimal SRT kit unless the climber is (unlike the current diver) both skilled and bold.

All diving kit was stripped and removed from the site for use elsewhere, and all kit except fins, cylinders and harness removed from the cave. A return is planned to survey and explore further, as far as work and water levels allow. It is clear that this site can become alarmingly wet in the right (wrong) conditions.

**2 October 2025**

**Support: A D Seddon, A Tharratt**

No dive today, two cylinders were removed and it was noted that the water levels had recently been about a metre below the level of the traverse line over Brunel Rift. Sobering!

**DOUK GILL CAVE, Horton in Ribblesdale, North Yorkshire**

**SD 816725**

**May - October 2025**

**DIVER : RP SKORUPKA**

An update on progress since the last report (NL 236:12-13).

It was intended to continue working on the left hand (northern) branch of the sump pool, inside the east entrance. The next visit was after a big flood event. The water had returned to normal levels, but upon submerging in the pool, a large bank of heavy sand was found to have been washed in from somewhere, almost blocking the way on. This made digging much more difficult, previously it was just a case of shifting clean washed rocks.

The diver decided to wait for a flood to see if it was possible to dive during high water, to get an impression of where the flow was coming from.

During the dry part of the summer, much more rock was winched back from the sump area to make the dig area as large as possible. Many larger boulders were conveniently dumped down the step at the entrance.

September saw more wet weather, and a dive was made during a moderate flood. Water was entering the sump pool from under the boulder choke to the north, not from the bedding sump at all. This confirms the conclusions of Arthur Gemmell, ie that the main flow is under the boulder choke to the left of the main entrance.

Another visit was made right after 62 mm of rain was registered at Selside, this was a very impressive spectacle, a vast amount of water was roaring down the beck, issuing from both entrances. At the main entrance, it would have been suicidal to try and cross the stream ( so the diver couldn't reach his gear stash), but it was still possible to reach the sump pool with just wellies. Water was now welling up from the bedding sump and flowing away through the choked floor, ie the opposite direction to what it was on the previous visit, after the moderate flood. This is clearly a complicated situation, with different flow routes depending on the level of flood.

The next step will be to dive in conditions of good vis, to see what effect the flood has had on the dig area, and if there are any clues which route to pursue. As of November, these conditions had not yet materialised.

In conclusion, any progress will be made by pushing through to the main river course somewhere nearby to the north. This may be choked, but is not beyond being excavated as a long term dig. It may still be possible to bypass the choked area via the "spiky flake" bedding. The known sump and cave to the east is a red herring, bringing in a small inlet from some other cave at the back of the scar.

**20 November 2025**

**Non-diver: R P Skorupka**

Carried a drill and equipment to place a couple of 10 mm through bolts to allow the winching out of a particularly large block, that was threatening to slide into the sump pool. At the entrance, there had been a large collapse from the shattered rock face (after the first really cold night of the year, maybe freeze-thaw action?) The block was duly removed to a place of safety.

It had been quite wet, there were maybe 100 litres/sec emerging, but the vis was surprisingly good. It was hoped to dive at the weekend to observe the effect of recent flooding, but then it rained heavily again. An old drysuit that had been left on site was checked, to find a mouse (or similar pesky rodent) had eaten most of the neck seal.

Work continues, a return is planned next week.

**MARBLE STEPS POT, Masongill, North Yorkshire**

**SD 6799 7707**

**Picnicking Party's Paddling Pool**

**11 October 2025**

**DIVER: J A ALDERSON**

**Support: G North, P Hall, A Richardson, D Ottewell**

An efficient carry to the newly discovered sump at the bottom of the "Misty Mountain Mud Mining Corporation" dig situated off the Intestines Route. This sump has been named by the discoverers to differentiate it from the previously explored terminal sump.

Today's dive was an initial underwater inspection with a semidry suit and single 5 litre cylinder. The diver descended the comfortable sized rift for around 3 m to where the way on was straight ahead on a bearing of 167 degrees. Around 5 m of line was laid in this general direction with no floor in sight to where the passage enlarged and the clean washed scalloped walls dropped away out of sight. The diver reeled back in, carefully inspecting the initial rift decent and checking that the way back remained navigable.

A return is planned with two cylinders and some bouyancy as the sump appears to continue descending. Thanks to the digging team for the invite to dive in a very promising location.

**21 November 2025**

**DIVER: J A ALDERSON**

**Support: G North, B Lawson, D Williams, A Pedley, D Ottewell**

An efficient carrying team saw the diver at the sump armed with a drysuit and a pair of 5 litre cylinders. In 30 cm vis the diver slowly laid line 15 m of down the rift to a depth of 9 m before diving by braille and some uncertainty that the line was following the best route and not pulling into unseen line traps, prompted tying off to a large cobble wedged into a ledge and returning to base. An uneventful return back up the rift was made and the diver happy that the line follows an easily navigable route for next time.

Some further capping has subsequently taken place to remove a portion of the large flake overhanging the sump pool to make entry to the water slightly less awkward.

**SOUTHERSCALES POT, Chapel-le-Dale, North Yorkshire**

**SD 749768**

**8 July 2025**

**DIVER: S DEVEY**

**Support: T Rye**

The diver took the remaining measurements for the survey. The sump was measured to be 7.1 m long with a consistent depth of 0.6 m. The passage is a consistent 0.4 m high throughout, and approximately 3.5 m wide. TR plans to publish the full survey data on completion.



## DERBYSHIRE

**SPEEDWELL CAVERN, Castleton, Derbyshire**

**SK 13930**

### WHIRLPOOL RISING - MAIN UPSTREAM SUMP

[These dives follow on from previous dives recorded in NL233:10-12 – Ed]

**7 October 2024**

**DIVER: A D SEDDON**

**Support: W Burn, O Doyle, B Marks, D Shearsmith**

ADS to head of Kraken to drop a pair of Ali 7 litre cylinders of trimix to set up a dive to the base of the underwater shaft.

**21 October 2024**

**DIVER: A D SEDDON**

**Support: W Emmerson, D Shearsmith**

The aim of ADS' dive was to take a new dive reel to the base of the Kraken and to attempt to find a way on, hoping for improved visibility.

The diver used a drysuit and several cylinders: two Ali 7 litre of 18/45 trimix, and three steel 7 litre of various nitrox, all on open circuit. One transit cylinder was left at the start of the Brig, all other cylinders moved through the narrow section in two goes without a problem. The diver switched gas at the head of the Kraken but opted to carry on with all four cylinders.

At about 54 m depth a new reel was tied off at RM's drop weight. With about 2 metres of visibility a better direction was seen and around 12 m of line was laid out, over and then down the side of other large boulders. The area remains several tens of centimetres deep in silt, which was disturbed by the line being laid over the boulders.

At 59 m depth, a slot was observed; this is an arch at roof level in the ongoing rift, over the top of a boulder. Gas reserves, plus the relative bulk and weight of four cylinders, prompted the diver to belay and turn at this point. The passage appears to continue down, diagonally; the diver believes that "maybe" the area of boulder collapse has been passed although the lack of a clear view (visibility of around 1 metre at the end point) makes this uncertain. The slot itself appears large enough, but not spacious.

Total dive time 113 minutes, eighteen minutes of decompression. Especial thanks are due to Rob Middleton for getting cylinders out of the way at the Brig, and for company while decompressing. [RM was on his way back from the Mary Rose Left Hand Inlet Sump; see his log below, page 10.]

**18 November 2024**

**DIVER: A D SEDDON**

**Support: F Ehlers, R Middleton, D Shearsmith**

The aim of the dive was to check if the KISS Sidekick rebreather would dismount and move through the Brig, and to check that it would remount easily beyond. Also to confirm that if kept pressurised by an off board cylinder on descent, and managed by an OPV on ascent, that it would not flood.

The diver used a 10 litre nitrox cylinder to service the rebreather and to pass the Brig, with a light 9 litre of air for the commute through the shallow section. A semi drysuit was used to reduce task loading.

All functioned as planned and on post dive inspection the rebreather was acceptably dry. Visibility was good; the diver, chilly.

#### **10 February 2025**

**DIVER: A D SEDDON**

**Support: D Shearsmith**

ADS dived in a caving wetsuit plus vest, and two 5 litre cylinders of air were used. The aim was a resurvey of the “old” sump carried out for Rob Middleton. Surveying used a Shearwater Petrel 2 dive computer for depth and bearings, together with RM’s tape measure and associated clothes pegs for measuring distance along the line. The survey was completed to the first airbell and part way to the second airbell. A side passage was noted on the true left.

#### **24 February 2025**

**DIVER: A D SEDDON**

**Support: D Shearsmith**

Diver was again using a pair of 5 litre cylinders. The survey was continued to the line belay in the final airbell, the “Mary Rose”, with the same instruments.

#### **24 March 2025**

**DIVER: A D SEDDON**

**Support: W Emmerson, D Shearsmith, O Oddie, A Welburn**

The survey was completed from the line belay where the line down to the Brig departs the main line, and tied in to the line belay immediately preceding the Brig.

The diver, using the same kit, investigated the side passage noted on the dive of 10 February. It was investigated to an end in a blind, muddy rift airbell of small dimensions.

The first airbell was bypassed by a drop down behind a boulder at 1 m depth just before the final ascent to airspace, a slight feet-first wiggle led to a backwards shimmy in a rift to where the line is rejoined at about 3 m. The second airbell was also bypassed via a low bedding on the left before the ascent begins. This was more grim than the previous bypass, but neither is easier than the traditional route through the sump.

#### **21 July 2025**

**DIVER: A D SEDDON**

**Support: W Emmerson, D Shearsmith, K Trusson**

The aim of this dive was to move cylinders into position for the next pushing dive at the base of the Kraken.

In very low water levels – maybe three metres below the usual diving level – the diver set off with four cylinders in good visibility. Upon reaching the first airbell, the diver was surprisingly surprised at the discovery that the kicking water airbell was now 2.5 m up in the air, and that the rift passage above the jammed block was now a rift climb not overly garnished with holds.

The diver dekkitted carefully and checked that the dry cave was not passable with diving kit, without significant extra rigging of hand lines and washing lines.

The airbell bypass noted earlier in the year was used with only two cylinders, and the diver progressed a little further to confirm that the second airbell presented a similar obstacle. The diver returned to base and the decision was made not to return until the water level had risen significantly.

### **3 November 2025**

**DIVER: A D SEDDON**

**Support: T Batten, H Griffin, I Neale, R Middleton, D Shearsmith, T Wheatcroft**

A non diving trip up the Assault Course a couple of weeks previous to this dive had established that water levels were good for diving once more.

The aim of the dive was to refamiliarise with the sump after a long lay off; to check the state of the line; to check the passage of the rebreather through the Brig with an onboard cylinder, and check its performance in the rift beyond; and to install better gear-clipping loops at the head of the Kraken, where the major gas change is planned.

The diver used the following cylinders: 7 litre of 50% nitrox as diluent; 4 litre of oxygen; onboard 3 litre of 32% nitrox plus a KISS Sidekick rebreather in SCR mode.

The oxygen was used to 3 m depth, as this has a convenient ledge on which cylinders can be cached; and then the diver switched to the onboard nitrox as far as the Brig. The narrow section was passed open circuit, with the rebreather dragged through and kept pressurised through the depth changes by the onboard 3 litre cylinder.

Having rekitted, the line in the rattly rift towards the head of the Kraken was found displaced. The diver also noted – as expected – that the rebreather ADV tended to free flow as the rift necessitated several changes of angle. This was manageable by turning off the onboard cylinder; but this task loading combined with the out-of-reach line plus a gently leaking mask caused the diver to think about life choices and run away at a genteel pace.

The exit was trouble free, to the soundtrack of “Non, je ne regrette rien”.

### **18 November 2025**

**DIVER A D SEDDON**

**Support: J Mieras, D Shearsmith, K Trusson**

A follow up dive to set up for future pushing dives.

The diver used two 10 litre cylinders of air, with a 7 litre cylinder of 80% nitrox as a reserve for the shallow section. Open circuit was used this dive.

High water after the first “high water event” of the winter was very manageable, but visibility was reduced to less than 2 metres in the usually very pleasant shallow section.

The Brig was passed easily, and the line to the head of the Kraken amended sufficiently to make it as relaxing as ever. Visibility was around 0.5 m, so as usual this section was done mainly by memory. Two steel rings were installed on the line belay at the head of the Kraken to facilitate gear clipping (anything dropped here is invariably lost).

A decompression station was installed at -6 metres, using a solid natural belay to which is attached a 6 mm cord supporting a few kilos of scrap iron. This should make kit stashing of oxygen more easy, as well as supplying extra weight to make deco stops warmer.

## WHIRLPOOL RISING - MARY ROSE LEFT HAND INLET SUMP

**7 October 2024**

**DIVER: R MIDDLETON**

**Support: W Burn, O Doyle, B Marks, D Shearsmith**

RM dived to the Mary Rose airbell on a 9 litre carbon stage before continuing into the sump using a pair of 300 bar 3 litre cylinders and after removing fins. RM again passed the underwater squeeze with one cylinder removed to surface in the tight rift previously located. RM dekkitted and began climbing out of the water, but quickly became aware of the need to climb directly over his delicate dive kit, and instead decided to return later with a better plan.

**21 October 2024**

**DIVER: R MIDDLETON**

**Support: W Emmerson, D Shearsmith**

RM dived again to Mary Rose Airbell on a 9 litre carbon stage. He ditched fins here and continued into the sump again passing the underwater squeeze with one cylinder removed. Upon surfacing in the rift airbell RM installed a sling round a thread at water level allowing a safe place to ditch kit without having to potentially damage it while climbing over it. RM dekkitted and exited the water to find a small aven and Sump 2. A survey was completed of the dry passage and both branches of the inlet sump. 68 m of passages were surveyed in total, of which 30 m is thought to be new. RM then exited, picking up a pair of 7s at the Brig for ADS following his deep push dive [see ADS' log above, page 7].

**26 January 2025**

**DIVER: R MIDDLETON**

**Support: A D Seddon, D Shearsmith**

RM dived to the Mary Rose airbell with one 9 litre carbon stage and three 300 bar 3 litre cylinders. Two of these were rafted into a sledge to allow for passing through the squeeze. Unfortunately on reaching the airbell it was found that one of the HP hoses was leaking and so the dive was aborted, though a quick test was made of the sledge idea. This worked OK but was a bit heavy and could be improved with floats.

**10 February 2025**

**DIVER: R MIDDLETON**

**Support: D Shearsmith**

RM dived to the Mary Rose airbell on a 9 litre carbon and three 300 bar 3 litre cylinders. Two of these were rafted into a sledge (with float) to allow for passing through the squeeze. RM passed Sump 1 to the rift airbell then dekkitted, before passing the sledge of two cylinders, and dive gear through the tight rift to Sump 2. RM rekkitted and dived the sump finding it fairly spacious, only 5 m long with a depth of 1 m. In future this could probably be passed by free diving with care.

This lead to a further 5 m aven with calcited boulders in the roof. Beyond this 10 m more passage lead to a further rift with a sump in the floor and another boulder filled aven in the roof. Sump 3 is located down a tight vertical rift climb and could not be tacked without a handline and/or a friend for assistance kitting up. This is very unlikely to be achieved due to the seriousness of Sump 1. RM surveyed out, repeating the process of dekkitting and rekkitting through the rift before making a safe exit.



## WALES

**CWM DWR 2, Powys**

**SN 857156**

**21-11-25**

**DIVER: J O HIGGINS**

After an earlier tourist trip into the cave, the diver was interested in looking at the small upstream sump that feeds the lower streamway. The water is thought to come from Twll Gwynt Oer, and this flows via Cwm Dwr 2 into the streamway in Cwm Dwr Jama.

The diver entered the water head first with two 3 litre cylinders in the American side mount configuration. No fins were used. The underwater passage is a juvenile fault-guided rift with a gravel floor (reminiscent of the Main Stream Sump in OFD). The first body length was passed sideways before widening after 3 m at 1 m depth. The route on was up a small tube to a small airbell where the diver could get his head out of the water. To get to this point the diver detached one of his cylinders and passed it in front of him. The passage continued due north underwater to more gravel floored passage. The way on looked open but continued in similar limited proportions. The diver reversed out after a penetration 10 m from base as there was not enough room to turn around in. Encouragingly, the sump takes a modest flow and the visibility recovers quickly.

A return is planned with a no-mount "suitcase" and a Derbyshire tube rather than a traditional line reel.

**LLYGAD LLWCHWR, Carmarthenshire**

**SN 67094 17748**

**19 September 2025**

**DIVERS: K. NOIRI, A. FINCH**

Post-heavy rain conditions, with the water level at Forge Bridge recorded at 0.36 metres. Both divers carried 3 litre and 7 litre cylinders. Confirmed that the permanent line in Sump 1 was secure and in good condition. However, the current was strong and created a vortex effect at the bottleneck area, this created a challenge in inward travel. At the bottom of the restriction, KN observed an accumulation of gravel and rocks that made the passage impassable, which AF also confirmed. The divers spent proximately 1.5 hours digging through the debris, however only one diver could pass the restriction. The dive was called off for the day, and both divers planned to return.

**20 September 2025**

The rain resumed overnight, raising the water level to 0.55 metres at Forge Bridge. After assessing the resurgence on the following day, both divers agreed that the site was too risky to dive and decided not to proceed. Cave scouting was held instead.

**21 September 2025**

The rain had stopped and the forecast predicted dry conditions throughout the day. The water level dropped to 0.4 metres and was expected to continue declining, prompting the divers to proceed with the dive. Despite stronger flow than on the first day, both divers used 12 litre and 3 litre cylinders for the digging phase and, after approximately one hour, successfully opened up the restriction to penetrate through. They then swapped the cylinders to 3 litre and 7 litre and continued the dive.

Although swimming against the current posed challenges, both divers reached the Sump 3 airbell and turned around. KN exited first, followed by AF downstream, with both divers signalling at each belay to confirm safety. They exited Sump 1 feet first for clearance. KN exited the cave but noticed a delay of approximately 30 seconds in AF's surfacing, prompting an immediate re-entry. KN found AF's wing snagged in the restriction and, after some manipulation, freed AF. AF remained calm throughout the process, and both divers exited safely.

**OGOF FFYNNON DDU, Ystradgynlais Uchaf, Powys**

**SN 848153**

### **Gothic Sump**

**7 September 2025**

**DIVER: J O HIGGINS**

The conclusion of the relining project. With heavy rain forecast the diver was keen to get back to the sump while conditions allowed. Equipped with two 7 litre cylinders and a 7 mm semi-dry, rapid progress was made to where the reel was left at 16 m. Picking up the reel the last 25 m was laid into the bedding area at 14 m depth, approximately 150 metres from dive base. This route forms the main tourist dive in the sump, before the going gets more awkward. The old line is still in place through the terminal bedding passages and to the Sheddragger extension; the diver has no immediate plans to replace this.

## **Overseas dive reports**



### **GREECE**

#### **ARNA, Laconia**

**24 September 2025**

**DIVER: J VOLANTHEN**

**Support: a large Greek and British team**

Returning after an extended period of time, the diver returned to the air bell noted in 2012 (NL187:12-13). This was much smaller than remembered, and no way on could be seen or found. The underwater cave was then re-examined, with clear ripples in silt at the deepest point indicating flow, but no way on underwater could be found.

#### **NESTANI, Arcadia**

**26 September 2025**

**DIVER: J VOLANTHEN**

**Support: M Foyle and a Greek team**

The end of this sink is a large muddy and obstructed static sump during the dry season. Following significant pumping operations to lower the sump, a Greek diver attempted to verify if further pumping was worthwhile. He reached air space, but could not exit the water.

JV dived with two 3 litre cylinders and lined the 30 m long, 1 m deep sump. The exit was a constricted low slot; gear was removed whilst partially submerged before a muddy ascending squeeze reached larger airspace. 25 m of muddy unpleasant passage lead to a circular hole 1.5 m

up on the right wall. This continued and 75 m of clean washed stream was followed until the diver stopped in open passage, leaving further exploration to the Greek cavers. This point is 700 m above the resurgence.

**PORTO GATEAS CAVE, Mani**

**36.730700, 22.333947**

**25 September 2025**

**DIVERS: M B THOMAS, A CIESIELKA**

Thomas Theodosiadis from Speleo Club in Athens told the divers a story of a possible cave that was reported by divers thirty years ago, some place in the vicinity of Porto Gateas.

Thomas accompanied the divers and negotiated access from the very small port entry point. The proprietor of the local tavern confirmed the divers' story from a long time back. The divers using DPVs scootered north and located an entrance in a small bay around the corner. MBT laid line with AC following. The divers ascended up through the halocline into fresh water. 28 m of well decorated cave was explored up to a tight restriction. MBT decided a smaller diver was required. On exiting the cave MBT and AC continued north on DPVs locating three more cave entrances.

**26 September 2025**

**DIVERS: M B THOMAS, S LEE**

**Support: A Ciesielka**

Before diving SL piloted a DJI Mini drone to scout potential cave leads in the cliffs above Porto Gateas, as well as inlets along the coast. One promising lead, situated high up a cliff with no sign of previous human entry, was identified and given to Thomas Theodosiadis.

MBT and SL entered the water and scootered north along the coast to reach the entrance of the cave that MBT and AC had discovered the previous day. Clipping off their scooters at the entrance, located at a depth of 11 m, the divers proceeded into the cave and up a steep slope inhabited by several invasive lionfish. They encountered a halocline at approximately -4 m and reached the end of MBT's line at a depth of 2.8 m.

SL used an exploratory reel to begin searching for a way on and found three small squeezes all leading into what appeared to be a larger passage heading east. The diver attempted to pass through the largest and shortest of the squeezes (marked A on the accompanying survey, page 14) by removing one of her 11 litre aluminium cylinders before deciding the squeeze would best be passed with a different configuration than the diver had on. SL notes that the squeeze could likely be passed by a small diver in a wetsuit carrying 3 litre cylinders and/or a hammer to break the curtain of stals on the right side.

Whilst SL was trying the various points of the squeeze MBT fully explored the short cave and found no other continuation. The divers then proceeded to document the cave as they exited, with MBT taking photographs and SL surveying the line.

**SEA RESURGENCE, North Side Stoupa Point, Mani**

**36.505098 22.151821**

**23 September 2025**

**DIVERS: M B THOMAS, A CIESIELKA**

On the north side of Stoupa Bay a reef extends to seaward. On the north side of the reef a large fresh water boil on the surface can be seen from the shore. The divers departed Stoupa Bay on DPVs and headed around the reef on a compass bearing and found the large fresh water resurgence

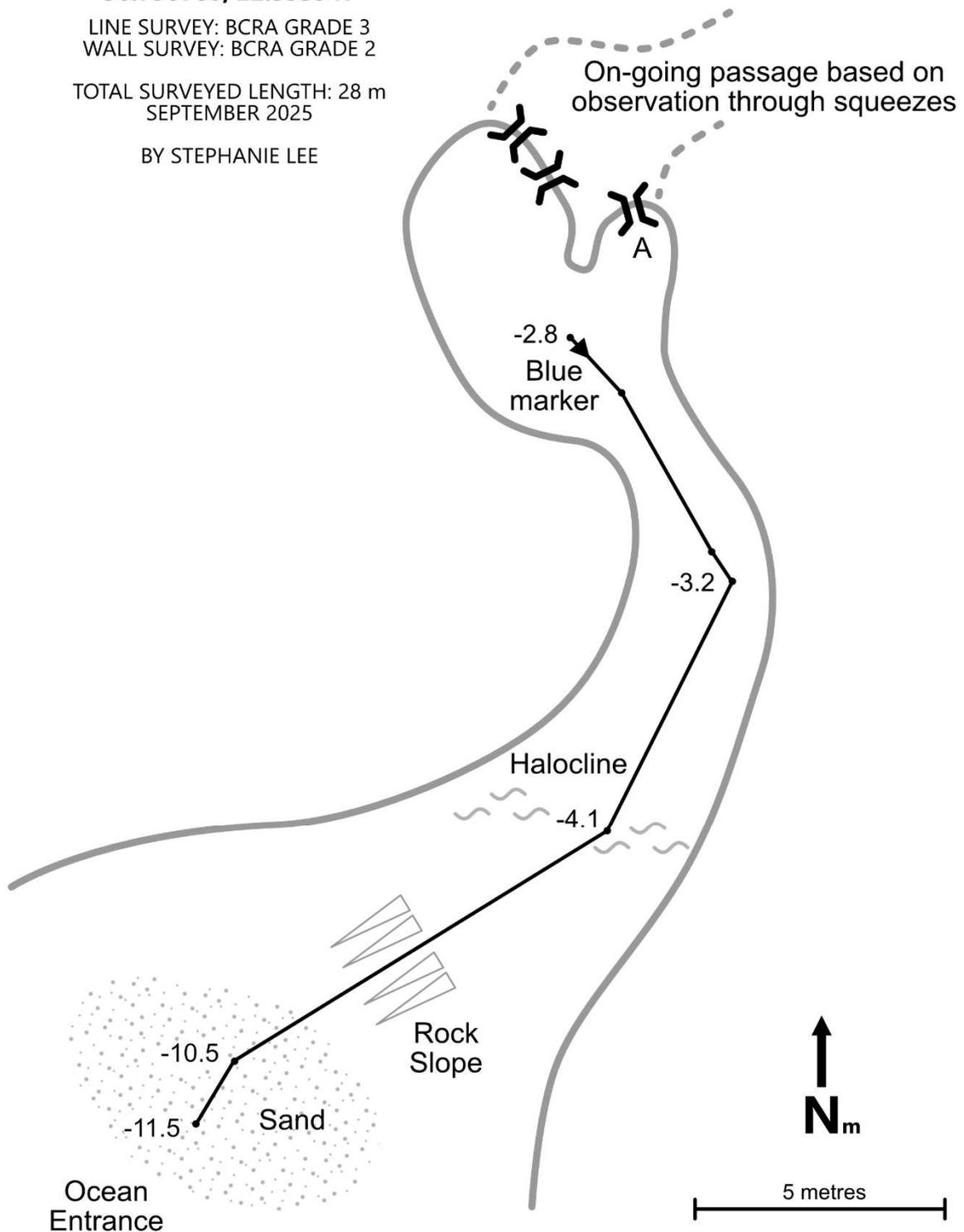
# PORTO GATEAS, GREECE

36.730700, 22.333947

LINE SURVEY: BCRA GRADE 3  
WALL SURVEY: BCRA GRADE 2

TOTAL SURVEYED LENGTH: 28 m  
SEPTEMBER 2025

BY STEPHANIE LEE



after around 17 minutes of searching. It's estimated to be about 150 m offshore. The divers were surprised at the size of the depression, the sea bed was at 12 m and deepest part reached 26 m. Huge volumes of fresh water appeared between boulders and buffeted the divers when they tried to approach. The divers felt like they had entered an industrial washing machine. With some cunning DPV use and underwater rock climbing the divers managed to investigate the point that water was emerging. Unfortunately no human size cave could be found. It would make an interesting digging project!

**SELINITZA CAVE, Selinitza, West Mani, Peloponnese**

**36.802864, 22.297560**

**28 September 2025**

**DIVER: S LEE**

**Support: A Ciesielka, M Foyle, C Holdstock, C Read Henry, M B Thomas, A Vanderplank, J Vanderplank, J Volanthen**

[Previous dives carried out by J Volanthen, with survey, are reported in NL 187:11-12.]

Selinitza, also now known as Katafigio Cave, requires approximately 0.8 kilometres of caving to reach the dive base. The path is relatively straightforward except for a T junction, at which divers and their support should turn right when facing into the cave. The dive base is located about 4 m – 5 m below the main passage and can be accessed via a chimney indicated by “H2O” written in pink spray paint on the cave wall. A handline and a ladder were used to get people and kit up and down.

Here SL did a 50 minute dive, noting multiple lines already in situ. A white line tied at the base of the chimney heads west, downstream. An orange line, tied to a small arch in the center of the pool, heads upstream, generally bearing east. SL went upstream in search of Point E in John Volanthen's survey. SL followed the passage as it gradually descended to an average depth of 9 metres, passing two junctions and a piece of tape on the orange line with “70 m” written on it, although the tape was loose, so its actual distance to dive base is questionable.

To confirm her continued progress upstream, SL looked for and followed ripples in the sediment in the passage floor. By holding extremely still and allowing the halocline to settle from her movement, then watching the ripples and eddies in its surface, SL noted that fresh water was flowing down from multiple different holes and passages in the ceiling. SL laid lines into three of these passages, each up to a depth of about 3 m – 4 m, before visibility, obstruction or the decreasing size of the passage caused her to turn around. Before turning each time, SL observed that the shallower sections of passage contained brown-coloured stals, in stark contrast to the main passage below, which consisted of white stone and was completely lacking in stal.

**STOUPA BAY, West Mani, Peloponnese**

**36.846833, 22.257806**

**23 September 2025**

**DIVERS: S LEE, A KOZLOWSKA**

**Support: C Holdstock, J Volanthen**

Evidence of potential submarine resurgences could clearly be seen from land as boils of water at the surface near Stoupa Harbour. JV and CH assisted in getting the divers' kit to the northern edge of Stoupa Beach, then surface swam to the resurgences. SL used the buoys that demarcate the swimming area of the beach to determine the approximate bearing and distance to the resurgences before diving in search of them with AK. One was inside the buoy line at a depth of about 3 metres and was approximately 1 metre wide. The other, significantly larger, source was outside the buoy line at a depth of 7 metres.

The telltale blur caused by the mixing of fresh and saltwater, a distinct cold temperature change, a lack of bottom-dwelling sea life in the immediate vicinity and noticeable discolouration of the sand all

indicated outflows of fresh water, but there were no visible openings in these locations. On the dive back, SL noted several additional small geysers of fresh water emanating from tiny fissures in rock structures on the ocean floor. While significant effort would be required to further pursue these submarine resurgences, they suggest the presence of a master cave located somewhere in the vicinity.

**VATSINIDI CAVE AREA, Mani, Peloponnese**

**36.867784 22.246766**

**24 September 2025**

**DIVERS: M B THOMAS, A CIESIELKA**

MBT last dived this site eleven years ago (NL194:21-22). It was definitely worth another look. AC and MBT did one dive from a handy local beach using DPVs to reach and re-find three of the caves. MBT then did a second solo dive of 70 minutes to locate the fourth and largest of the caves for a look around, following an extremely old dive line to its end. The end was not the end and, after passing a low arch, 30 m of line was laid to find a halocline and wriggle to surface in a decorated chamber. Fresh water appeared between boulders but unfortunately no way on was found above water. The diver feels it's unlikely this short section was new ground but very nice none the less. More invasive lionfish also found unfortunately.

**29 September 2025**

**DIVERS: M B THOMAS, A CIESIELKA**

**Support: C Read Henry and S Lee**

Due the Greek weather gods saying no to the divers' plan A, conditions were far to dangerous to enter/exit the sea outside Selinita Cave. The divers returned to Vatsinidi Cave area for another look around. Conditions were lumpy on the entry and exit, and no further cave found.

Many thanks to CRH and SL for quick transport of equipment back to the van after diving.



**SPAIN**

**TRAS LA JAYADA, Picos de Cornion, Western Massif**

**03 July 2025**

**DIVER: A D SEDDON**

**Support: Ario Caves Project 2025**

The aim of the dive was to make a reconnaissance of the Rising Sump, an inlet to the main (and major) streamway of the Sistema Jultayu. This was discovered several years previously but records were scanty and no diving had taken place.

The dive site is at the end of a significant rift at a depth in excess of 400 m from the surface, in an area where some sumps have been short and relatively shallow with dry cave beyond, eg Cabeza Muxa and upstream Asopladeru de la Texa, but also surprising deep, eg downstream Asopladeru de La Texa. The two factors, of relatively difficult access (that is, requiring support) combined with a wide variety of diving being contemplated, influenced the kit choices.

The diver elected to wear a semi-drysuit to allow for a reasonable, but not long, duration dive. A KISS Sidewinder closed circuit rebreather was used, modified to integrate a buoyancy cell. This would facilitate repeated dives to explore beyond a flooded section, with sufficient protection for both diving and dry caving. The gases used were 32% nitrox in two 5 litre cylinders plus oxygen in a 2 litre cylinder. No single item of kit was unreasonably large or heavy, and if the sump reached

greater depths than 34 m then the lack of a drysuit would be as much a no-go factor as the MOD of the diluent; while the unit could reasonably be run semi-closed on that richness of gas.

Most exploration in Tras La Jayada was based in underground camps in a couple of locations, this was also the case with the diving project.

In the nature of things, life got in the way of plans... Due to the logistics of several expedition members leaving for home, the window for diving was reduced to two days. Therefore the rebreather was assembled by the sump pool the day before the dive, then a small team including the diver spent the night at underground camp. All other kit was made ready at the dive base, in preparation for a morning dive, with porters descending from the surface to remove all diving equipment around 13.00 that day.

The Rising Sump is accessed by a muddy four metre abseil directly into deep water, but a well-installed line at water level helped with kitting up. The sump pool itself is spacious, approximately 2.5 metres long by 1.5 metres wide, but the underwater continuation quickly narrows to 60 cm wide at its largest point (with many other less wide options available). Visibility after kitting up was poor, and the initial head first attempt at progress led to an impasse in not-quite-big-enough passage and a thought provoking retreat to base.

Having located his big-boy pants the diver descended the rift feet first and more carefully, using small excrescence line belays on the true right wall to find the best route. After fifteen metres the nature of the passage altered from a tall rift aligned with the above water feature, to a more comfortable silt floored tube curving slightly to the left – the rift above pinching to nothing.

Thirty two metres of feet first progress from dive base, at a depth of 20.3 metres, the tube entered the base of a much larger rift chamber perhaps six metres high and up to three metres wide. The flat floor had some slabs and the way on appeared clear, in the briefly good visibility. Unfortunately, at forty metres from base the way on was found to be a silty alcove, and in the murk the diver elected to aim for a potential roof tube noted when first entering the chamber, hoping for a short U- section sump. Forty seven metres from base, at a depth of 14.7 m, the roof tube was located and judged too small to enter.

At this point the diver's metaphorical big-boy pants were becoming both droopy and cold; so the line was reeled in to the start of the silt floored tube and secured there in preparation for future dives. The return journey up the rift was, pleasantly, uneventful.

Back at base, the chilly diver arrived to find his sherpas already waiting and raring to whisk the heavy metal to the surface. De-kitting went smoothly despite the diver's fingers being reduced to pathetic meat sausages after twenty eight minutes in 5°C water, and nothing was dropped.

It would be worth returning to this site on another occasion as opportunity allows. Getting to the underwater chamber warm, quickly, and with confidence in a good probability of an easy return to base might reveal a way on that the diver missed.

Thanks to all the team who made this possible, with especially credit to A Brown for locating the sump in trying circumstances, to P Baker for being a surprisingly patient diver fluffer, and to J Arce Sáez for cramming soup into the diver before he even had time to get changed.

## Tourist and training dive reports



### UK AND OVERSEAS TOURIST REPORTS

**AQUAMOLE POT, Kingsdale, North Yorkshire**

**SD699783**

**16 November 2025**

**DIVER: J HIGGINS**

**Support: C Morrison, A Tharrat**

After visiting both ends of the 168 m sump on previous trips, the diver was keen to complete the traverse to exit at Valley Entrance. Excellent support from fellow Pennine members Conor and Andy saw one 5 litre and one 3 litre cylinders, plus lead and fins deposited at the sump pool. Fortunately the line was unbroken through the sumps, although it could do with a few more belays. An SRT kit was carried though the sump in a tacklebag for the pitch up to the roof tunnel. The diver emerged at Valley Entrance 4.5 hours after leaving the car at the Rowten layby.

**KINGSDALE MASTER CAVE, Kingsdale, North Yorkshire**

**SD 698774**

**Upstream Rowten Series (Frakes' Series)**

**12 October 2025**

**DIVERS: S BARNES, S DEVEY**

First significant underground carry for both SB and SD. The divers passed the first five sumps upstream from KMC, and although there would have been plenty of gas to carry on to Frakes' Passage, turned instead at the planned turn point after the 15 m sump. SD took a brief look down the slope in the downstream sump on the way out. A good first trip with lots learnt for the next iteration.

**PEAK CAVERN, Derbyshire**

**SD149826**

**Peakshole Resurgence**

**01 November 2025**

**DIVERS: F EHLERS, J LISTER**

Training dive for Fabian.

A transportation of equipment though sumps theory session, was followed by Fabian diving the sump with the equipment, drill, rope, bolting kit, harnesses etc. He then stashed the diving kit and bolted up the Aven in the school room, supported by Jim, who went through self belaying.

It was also good to see Tim Webber, who dived through to say hello.

**22 November 2025****DIVERS: J C BELLMAN, L BROCK**

Last reported in CDG52 (NL52:27-28), the divers were curious to check out the mine. After a very friendly welcome from Peter and his wife, the divers were shown the dive site which is a scramble up a muddy woodland banking. There is just enough space to park a car at the bottom. A handline was tied on at the top to assist with the kit carrying - this was removed afterwards. A ladder is required to help scale the brick wall which holds back the water.

The dive is very short, with halfway being marked by an obvious air bell. There is line throughout in good condition, which is up in the roof toward the furthest point, approximately 100 m total from the entrance. The silty bottom is easily stirred, but JCB found staying up high allowed LB to dive second with reasonably well preserved visibility. At 1 m wide and 2 m tall with no junctions, it's impossible to get lost which may lend itself to use as a training facility.

**HELL COMPLEX AND MERMAID'S HOLE, Doolin****Clare 8A, E20.75, N29.10****16 August 2025****DIVERS: J WARNY, M RANDALL**

Back to the old stomping ground for MR. The car park is no longer free. MR having recently completed a Liberty sidemount rebreather crossover course, the pair took advantage of favourable conditions for visiting the sea caves. JW used a homebuilt "Orca" style unit.

Dive base and water entry was via Hell. To safely use this entry/exit point the swell ideally needs to be not more than 0.8 m. JW laid line and the pair completed a tourist loop in Hell including a flat out squeeze to see how the Liberty SM faired. A distinct lack of fish since last dive in 2017. Headed into open water via Pollnamongach and a 5 minute swim to regain Mermaid's Hole entrance at approximately 9 m depth.

Mermaid's has the original exploration line which is hard to pick out from the cave walls. Those unfamiliar with the site should take their own with silt screws. The cobbled rock floor gives way to silt banks. Tide was ebbing which made for heavy going heading in. A visiting diver would be well advised to seek local advice first. If the swell picks up you're in for a brutal exit. Max depth

**PIGEON HOLE, Cong, County Galway, Ireland**

13 metres, 131 minutes.

**12 July 2025****DIVERS: J WARNY, M RANDALL**

[Pigeon Hole Cave is located just outside Cong village inside Pigeon Hole Woods. While Cong village is in County Mayo, the cave is actually inside County Galway – Ed]

Access no longer an issue, storm Éowyn [24 January 2025] damage has been cleared. Coillte [Ireland's semi-state forestry company] is still clearing site stairway timber and mud deposits remain. JW intended to survey to the end of line using a Seacraft electronic navigation console. A home-built side mount CCR (T-Reb) was used by JW. This was a tourist / familiarisation trip for MR on two 12 litre cylinders.

Once through the cobbled restriction bedding passage opens up. JW waited for MR to appear, he gave the nod and MR headed upstream whilst JW surveyed in visibility of 5 m. Noticeable flow heading upstream required moderate effort in low water conditions, but an enjoyable glide out.

Max depth 33 metres, 75 minutes including deco. A very nice cave. 17°C!

**POULNACAPPLE, Kiltartan, County Galway, Ireland**

**11 July 2025**

**DIVERS: A SEWERYN, J WARNY, M RANDALL**

Direct access via obtaining the gate key is no longer available. Park at Kiltartan church. Cross the road, go through the gate (keeping Kiltartan church on your left) and you'll spot a breached stone wall and the Castletown River Resurgence. Look left and you will see an obvious copse and depression approx 100 m distant. Please reinstate any electric fences if present. The way down to dive base has a short permanent hand line and alloy ladder.

After a number of years since previous visits MR was unsure of the way on with poor visibility. He stopped at what turned out to be the last restriction, not a line trap as suspected. Local divers JW and AS remarked how dark the water was due to no flow. Max depth 14 metres, 32 minutes.

## Group administration and correspondence



**GOUGH'S CAVE, RESERVOIR HOLE AND SPIDER HOLE ACCESS**

### Caving access

After several years of work by a few dedicated people, the CSCC entered into a formal caving access agreement with Longleat Estates Ltd, on 26 September 2025. As part of this agreement access to Gough's Cave, Reservoir Hole and Spider Hole are now warden led caves. Training of wardens is currently in progress.

The access agreement is fairly strict and will be monitored by Longleat Estate and the CSCC. From a diving point of view it's not the mostly free rein we had before. But we need to build trust and a relationship with the current management of Gough's Cave. All being well we can adjust the formalities to suit given diving projects over time.

Before we start diving the infrastructure down to dive base needs totally overhauling. New platforms, new SRT rigging down the divers' pitch, new pulleys on the hauling pitch. Hopefully this work can be completed over winter/ spring 2025/2026.

The rules for diving and conservation are listed below. The rules for access to the show cave are numerous and will be explained by the wardens before entry, but include:

- No changing in public spaces
- No swearing in the cave
- No mud on handrails
- Polite and courteous behaviour to staff and customers at all times
- No caving lamps on in the show cave (rely on show cave lighting)

One trip will be allowed into the cave a week. The cave will have an exclusion list of divers and cavers that cannot manage the above. Let's just abide by the rules and work towards a positive future with Gough's Cave and hopefully over time younger new wardens that have learnt the cave can come online. That is our aim.

## Cave diving

There are a number of additional conditions for cave divers wishing to explore the caves. These are:

- Only members of the Cave Diving Group are allowed to dive in the caves
- Diving trips must be pre-arranged via a Cave Diving Group Cheddar warden
- Divers must adhere to the Cave Diving Group's guidelines for the cave
- A trainee should be accompanied by a qualified diver unless he or she has had considerable cave diving experience with the group
- A trainee diver on their first cave dives must be accompanied by a qualified diver
- A solo diver should always have someone at base
- A diver should always have a continuous line to dive base
- A diver should always have 100% safety margin of air for the planned dive. This means he or she must obey the "thirds rule" of air consumption, being one-third in, one-third out, and one-third for emergency use only

Diving equipment must not be left in the cave without prior permission from Cheddar Gorge and Caves and Longleat Enterprises Ltd. Any such equipment:

- Must be listed and the list given to Cheddar Gorge and Caves and Longleat Enterprises Ltd
- Should be removed promptly once it is no longer required and, in any case, within three months

## Conservation code

To help preserve the condition of the caves, all party members must abide to the BCA six point code for cave conservation. This requires cavers to:

- Cave with care and thought for the environment
- Disturb nothing whether living or geological
- Avoid touching formations
- Keep to marked routes and never cross conservation tapes
- Take nothing but photographs
- Do not pollute the cave, leave nothing behind

**Michael Thomas  
Malcolm Foyle  
CDG wardens**



**BCA REPRESENTATIVE**

Simon Perkins was co-opted on to the central committee as British Caving Association representative on the 23 September. The CDG is one of the constituent bodies of the BCA and having open communication between the BCA and the CDG is very important.



## CDG NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS

The CDG Newsletter is the primary source of information regarding dives conducted by members and is a vital repository for those researching sites, compiling sump indexes and rescue teams that may need to come looking for you. Contributions are welcomed from all divers regardless of their membership of the CDG or otherwise. A house style has evolved; guidance on the standard format for dive logs and an example are given below. Such reports have evolved into a third person style, which works well so please consider adopting this format.

### **AMAZING POT, Superior Dale, North Yorkshire SD 123456**

**01 January 2026**

**DIVERS: A HERO, A N OTHERHERO**

**Support: B Odgit, S Carper**

AH dived first using two 3 litre cylinders. The diver laid 20 metres of line in Sump 1. A maximum depth of 5 metres was reached. At -5 m an ascent was made to surface in Amazing II.

#### Notes:

1. There is no abbreviation for litre
2. Depths should not be double negative (eg "A depth of -5 metres" is incorrect)
3. The abbreviation for metre is lower case "m" with a space between it and the number. The unit of distance is the **metre**, not "meter"

To make the editor's life easier, please either use separate attachments for each site, or send a separate email for each site - preferably with the appropriate site name in the subject heading. Please do not submit reports in PDF format as I may struggle to extract text or graphics. Finally, proof reading your work before sending it to me makes for a much happier editor!



Surveys and diagrams to accompany dive reports and articles are very welcome, however, photographs do not reproduce well so check first with the editor.

Surveys should be drawn to BCRA standards, with a title, grid reference, northing and scale, and indication of BCRA grade. Ideally they will be in electronic format, as a graphics file. JPEG or PNG files are best (not PDF). Please check with the editor before sending another file type.



Contributions on CD-ROM or paper can be sent to the editor's address which can be obtained by emailing [newslettereditor@cavedivinggroup.org.uk](mailto:newslettereditor@cavedivinggroup.org.uk).

Contributions can also (preferably) be emailed as soon as the log is complete rather than waiting for the submission deadline.

Please virus check before sending, as virus infected mail will not be delivered.

### **The secret file**

Dive reports of a "sensitive" nature can be submitted to the secret file where they will remain in complete confidentiality until released by the author. I will periodically contact authors of such reports to check that they wish them to remain secret.