

Secretaries' Report, 1969

Jubilee

The society was founded in March 1919 and so 1969 was the jubilee year. The Jubilee was celebrated on Saturday, March 8th, when many members attended. There were two guest lecturers. In the morning Mr. J. C. Coleman gave a talk on various aspects of caving with a number of pleasant anecdotes. In the afternoon Miss Kathleen Kenyon lectured on her excavations at Jerusalem and showed us a number of very fine slides in illustration of her work at there. In the evening a dinner was held in the Senior Common Room. The Guest of Honour was one of our founder members, Dr. B. A. Crook, who has played and continues to play an active part in the society. There were over 100 present at the dinner, which has been acclaimed by all to have been a great success.

Meetings

Five sessional and the annual general meeting were held as usual. All of these were very interesting and were quite well attended.

Caving

Ireland. Over Easter 1969 a small party spent a week in Lisdoonvarna. The main achievements were the identification of the resurgences of Poulmagree and tracing their surface and sub-surface routes from the principal resurgences a long way towards Pollsallagh. In this work much assistance was received from Mr. Johnnie Kellaher of Oughtdara. Many notes were also made of the level reached by a great flood that occurred on December 24th, 1968. On this occasion the turlough below Ballynalackan Castle filled up till it nearly overflowed into Poll-an-Ionain.

In July a party of seven went to Lisdoonvarna to do some caving and to have a holiday. Excursion trips were made through Doolin and the Coolagh River Cave. Mountain walking and bathing were also enjoyed. In Pollnagollum the new Maypole was used and proved easy to erect. One aven led only to a small but beautiful grotto and in another it was not possible to reach the top. The length available was also not enough for a third site. Some survey work was done in E2 swallet but it was not completed. This is a difficult cave to survey. The route from the north end of the Long Gallery to the surface was partially surveyed. This connection had been found by the S.W.E.T.C. Caving Club. It appears to have been partially cleared of debris by floods.

Further progress was made with the underground water tracing on the west side of Knockauns.

Mendip. Good progress has been made with tunnel to connect the drilled shaft at Manor Farm with the passage leading off the flood collapse shaft. The latter is too dangerous to be used much longer.

South Wales. In the Little Neath River Cave surveying and exploration of the passages beyond Sump 4 has continued. The total length of the system is now 6.9 km. with over a third of this still only accessible to divers. Town Drain has been resurveyed to grade 5c and some digging has been done at the end in the hope of an extension towards L.N.R.C. 5. The results have been disappointing and indeed it is still only a conjecture that Town Drain is part of the L.N.R.C. system.

During the year members have completed a new survey of Porth yr Ogof (p. 213).

Archæology

Stokeleigh Camp. Excavations of the trial area have been continued through the year. Three separate hearth levels have been found and a number of post and stakeholes. The relationship of these to the separate hearth levels is not yet clear. Two pits have been found. The number of iron articles is surprisingly large. Pottery, usually very fragmentary is present in fair quantity and this includes, from the higher levels, Roman pie dish forms. Two illegible Roman coins have been found. It is hoped to complete the trial excavations this year and then to prepare a report on them. A trial trench south of main area produced no finds and bed rock was soon reached.

Hyena Den. An immense amount of material has been shifted. Nearly all of this was proved to be a post-Boyd Dawkins fall. Undisturbed material has been exposed. It includes a layer of river sand from which bear, hyena, horse, ox and deer have so far been found.

Westbury-sub-Mendip Quarry. This quarry runs west-east. In the east face which is 30 m. high at the north end, several caves formed by phreatic solution were exposed and quarried away. In the N.E. corner a large bone fissure was exposed. It has stratified bone deposits 20 m. deep extending down as a cone. This is a working quarry and so there have been limited opportunities to deal with this discovery of the century. Members of the Wessex Cave Club have assisted in the rescue work on many occasions. A note on the most spectacular finds appears elsewhere in this issue.

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Proceedings

The Jubilee issue started a new volume. Opportunity was taken to make a number of minor changes in the lay out. It was decided not to alter the page size. The extra expense involved was not warranted by the marginal advantages to be obtained from a change to a larger page. The Jubilee issue was well received and sales have been good. The advertising of this issue has led to a large increase in subscribers mostly from abroad. Sales of all publications reached a record of over £300. This sum includes substantial amounts from the sales of offprints and back numbers.

Library

A major recataloguing of the library is well underway. Runs of several more sets of periodicals have been completed including the B.S.A. Bulletin and the Belfry Bulletin. A library list will be published in a later issue of *Proceedings*.

Museum

We wish to thank Mr. J. C. Coleman for his gift of the original rope ladder used in his exploration of Poulmagollum. Several parties from extra-mural classes on archæology have visited the museum. Visits by archæologists from foreign countries are becoming more frequent.

Acknowledgements

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