

## SECRETARIES' REPORT

MARCH 2008 – MARCH 2009

### Research

Gina Moseley has continued her PhD on speleothems, presenting her research at a major conference in San Francisco. Her work has resulted in her to being named the *Young Cave Scientist of the Year* by the B.C.R.A. She accompanied an expedition to Mulu as a research scientist in order to sample sediments to gain some insight into the age and speleogenesis of these magnificent caves .

Rick Schulting will be obtaining some more radiocarbon dates from Aveline's Hole, in an attempt to identify whether certain burials were Late Upper Palaeolithic in date as opposed to Mesolithic. Andy Farrant is currently finishing a paper on the Burrington Caves which is one of the reasons why there has been a delay in the publication of this year's *Proceedings*.

### Caving

This year yet again sees the Society with an increase in the student membership, and the majority of these were taken underground before Christmas. This was mainly due to the creation of the new committee position of Mid-Week Caving Officer. Debs Mann has done this job extremely well. From this the society has retained the highest number of fresher's for several years. The standard of caving trips being undertaken has greatly increased over this time last year, with freshers being dragged on Priddy Green Sink trips and rigging whole SRT caves, for example.

Club trips have been well attended and thoroughly enjoyable. Inter-club relations have continued to be fruitful with the company of the OUCC for Bonfire Weekend and recently a weekend trip to Ogof Draenan. Other club trips have taken us to Mendip, Wales, Derbyshire, Yorkshire and the Forest of Dean. CHECC in Derbyshire this year continued to increase inter-club relations, which were further strengthened by caving with members of SUSS in Yorkshire.

Over the summer five members of the society went to Co. Clare, to resurvey some of the caves for the new edition of the Caves of Co. Clare and South Galway. This was a great experience in learning how to survey and the increased skill set will hopefully see the younger members of the society organising and leading exploration expeditions. Ben Morley and Gina Moseley joined the highly successful SUSS expedition to Crete .

There have still been no major breakthroughs on the digging front, but hopes remain high. With the breakthrough in Charterhouse Cave, Tynings Great Swallet has been abandoned. With the instillation of pumps siphons and other technical wizardry it has been possible to reach the dig face of Bat Passage on several occasions and work has now started on a less technical method for draining the sump.

### Other

The website continues to expand with the successful addition of an online forum and a caving trip blog (or 'clog' as it is now known). It is also worth noting that there is a searchable index to our newsletters thanks to the work Ruth has started. The closure of *Bat Products* and the untimely death of Tony Jarrett, who will greatly be missed, has led to Andy Sparrow opening a new caving supply shop in Cheddar. We wish him the best of luck with this venture.

*James MacFarlane and Michael Salter*