

SECRETARIES' REPORT

MARCH 2010 – MARCH 2011

Research

This year we have been joined by Chris Smith, a Newcastle graduate who is currently working on a PhD looking at quantifying rates of landscape change in different karst regions using U-Pb dating of speleothems, on which he presented a poster at this year's BCRA Cave science symposium. Gina Moseley also presented at this year's symposium on 'Early-mid Holocene sea level fluctuations recording in speleothems of the Yucatan', in addition to continuing her work as a cave scientist researching in Mulu and elsewhere and participating in the beginnings of a project looking at hurricane signals recorded in speleothems in the Turks and Caicos islands.

Caving

Dickon Morris, Stuart Alldred and Ross Hemsley embarked upon a reconnaissance of the area around Borsh in southern Albania, where unfortunately not much cave was found. The overall impression gained of the area is that it has potential, but large systems will be elusive. Chris Binding and Mark Tringham were part of a multi-club return expedition to Montenegro, part sponsored by the Society, following up on a previous expedition there in 2009. Their report is in this issue of *Proceedings*. Once again members have joined the OUCC expedition to the Picos and the CUCC expedition to Austria and other trips members have attended include to Matienzo, north Albania (Eldon Pothole Club), and the Gouffre Berger (Masson Caving Group).

Dickon Morris participated in the digging at the terminal rift of Manor Farm Swallet, which found approximately 100m of new passage and made Manor Farm the second deepest cave on Mendip at 179m. Alison and Pete Moody, Andrew Atkinson and Simon Flower have continued work in Charterhouse cave, for which team, from the Society and the WCC, won the J-rat Digging trophy for the second year in a row. Graham Mullan, Tony Boycott and Linda Wilson have been digging in Reservoir Hole, and members are involved with numerous other ongoing digs. Recently a team of members discovered approximately 100m of passage in south Wales, exploration of which is still ongoing. For the sake of tradition, I mention the GB dig, at which this year's progress once again amounts to approximately 0 m.

Club trips have been to the usual areas, including south Wales, Yorkshire and of course Mendip, and Devon by way of a change. The year has seen an excellent intake of freshers, a large proportion of whom we haven't managed to scare away yet, good news on that front.

Other

A full re-survey of Gough's cave has been in progress, as part of the construction of a complete 3D model of the Cheddar catchment area. Sally White has also been helping out with surveying work in parts of the three counties system in the Dales with the Misty Mountain Mud Miners. Charlie Self is currently writing a regular column entitled 'cave and karst science explained' in the journal *Speleology*. The grants kindly made to us by the Alumni Foundation and the Oliver Lloyd Memorial Fund have been used in the purchase of new oversuits and helmets which this year's freshers have been able to make use of. The Students' Union are also to be thanked for their aid in the form of tackle grants.

And last but by no means least, the leak in the Hut roof has finally been cured!

Catherine Hulse and Dickon Morris