

OPEN AND SHUT

Two recent discoveries have their entrances filled-in

Hole-in-the-Road (St. George's Cavern)

This cave was broken into by a contractor digging a cable trench for British Telecom with a JCB. Being between Wells and the Hunter's Lodge, in the old Bristol Road, the cave soon attracted cavers from a number of clubs who explored a series of phreatic chambers connected by squeezes in sticky, red mud. A total of six chambers were eventually dug into, mostly in Dolomitic conglomerate and the total length is about 45m. The cave ends next to a surface depression and is thought to be a fragment of ancient resurgence passage.

The hole was opened up on the 23rd April and capped with concrete on the 14th May. Sources: Dr. Peter Glanvill & the Mendip Caving Group Newsletter.

Slightly longer, rather grottier and exposed for only 4 hours was the cave opened up by the Manchester University Speleological Society on the south side of Penygent Gill



Mallender Cave, now sealed.

Juan Corrin

Mallender Cave

When the new owner of Nether Hesleden Farm, Littondale, Robin Mallender, took over some months back MUSS asked for, and were given permission to dig a shaft they had had their eyes on for some time. They proved that water sinking there did not go to his water supply perched 50ft above Gill level and located the sinks some 200m away. On one of his visits up to the dig the farmer asked for assistance in improving the water supply in order to bring it up to Ministry of Agriculture standards – it was considered too open and needed the take-off point underground.

The next day saw MUSS at the resurgence and after removing a few boulders they opened up a small cave entrance. The cave turned out to be a typical Penygent Gill type – tight and wet for most of its length. Awkward sideways crawling in up to a metre of water wearing a furry suit added nothing to the

enjoyment of the cave and it was left when a strongly draughting, 'too-tight' rift was encountered at a fork. A very wet passage to the left emitted no draught and was considered silly with the sun beating down outside.

The farmer was sitting at the entrance when the cavers emerged and work started on sorting out the water supply.

Within six hours a 10m long trench had been dug into the hillside, a 4" metal pipe placed along its gently sloping length into the mouth of the cave, the whole excavation refilled with the removed rubble and extra giant blocks peeled off the slopes from around the entrance (to put entrance 3m under rock) and the scar covered with sods.

Mallender Cave, although still going after 200ft., is most definitely 'out-of-bounds' as it is Nether Hesledens only water supply.

L. D. J. Mills



Tony Jarrett at the entrance to Hole-in-the-Road.

Dr. Peter Glanvill