

1994

A Steep Learning Curve

"We have a habit in writing articles in scientific journals to make the work as finished as possible, to cover up all the tracks, to not worry about the blind alleys or describe how you had the wrong idea first, and so on. So there isn't any place to publish in a dignified manner, what you actually did in order to get to do the work."

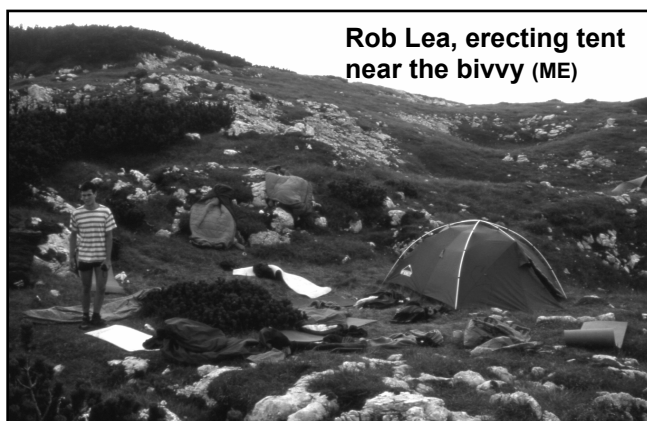
Richard Feynman, American physicist, Nobel Lecture, 1966.



In a sense 1994 was a very steep learning curve for us. We managed to pack in as many mistakes as could be imagined into this expedition. Although some of the problems were inevitably due to settling in to a new area, many were as a result of our inexperience. In terms of pre-planning and fund raising, the expedition had been very successful. However, one of the big problems that the expedition had was trying to cater for a large variety of expectations.



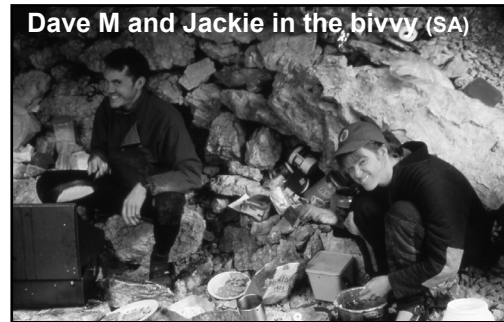
Although many people were interested in exploring, there were a significant number who were there for a holiday. The fact that we had a comfortable base camp in a house in Tolminske Ravne (rented from an "Old Git" at a cost of hundreds of pounds) didn't help - much more time was spent down the hill than in subsequent years. People only tended to stay at the bivvy on the Plateau for a few days at a time. This was partly a necessity due to our inefficient methods for food preparation and water collection.



1994 was the only year (so far) where two union minibuses went out, one for the full six week period with the "hard core expedition" and the other for the middle three weeks of the expedition with many of the "summer tour people." In total, 23 members of ICCG made it out to Migovec. We were made to feel very welcome by Andrej Fratnik and Simon Gaberšček, who joined us at times on the mountain and negotiated limited permission for us to camp in the National Park.

Some of the older members of the club (including Pete Hambly and Tim Palmer) foresaw problems that might occur and, a few months before the expedition started, broke off to set up their own "rebel" expedition to Mangart with friends from North Wales Caving Club.

Food was a big problem, we bought everything in Tolmin and it tended to be either bulky and fresh or tinned (with the exception of dried Peak meals which are almost inedible). Additionally, the food didn't have a high enough fat content. There were people on the expedition who believed that fat was bad and that the most important thing was carbohydrates. Others believed that fat was essential and lively discussions would take place between these two points of view.



As a result, perhaps, of a relatively low fat diet there was a lot of lethargic and hungry people around as well as a lot more in between meals of chips or mash and margarine. Apart from having a low fat content the food was not appetizing enough – the traditional dinner we had adopted from previous tours was a homogenous slop of tomatoes and chick peas, the traditional breakfast was bread and jam. Water was also a big issue; the way we got water was from melting snow into water bags and also by carrying water up the hill. We had no barrels up top and so had very low capacity for water storage. All in all we weren't very well prepared but nonetheless, some exploration took place...

Jim Evans and Mark Evans

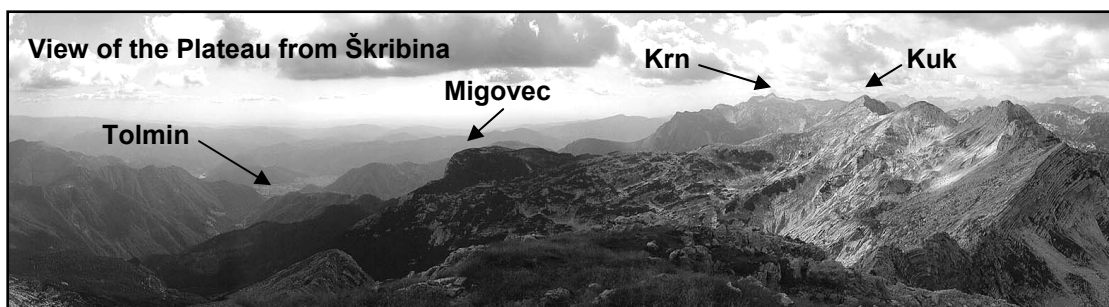
Diary Extracts '94

"Warm morning. Lay in the sun drying out till a brew was put on. Odd weather - really bizarre. Bivvy is in sun but cannot see more than a few hundred metres in any direction before hitting walls of thick, grey cloud. "

"Pete staggered into the barn in the small hours of the morning having walked all the way from Tolmin after his latest liason-dangereuse. I say walked - he says he ran most of the way convinced he was followed by wild boar, ghosts and moving rocks! - what's he been on??!"

"Iain and Andy finally arrived at the bivvy. They had got halfway across the face of Migovec when it got too dark to see, so they spent an uncomfortable night huddled in a bush afraid of falling down the cliff."

"A thunder storm started as we reached the bottom of the mountain. We ran a little way, then stopped as the rumbling was prolonged and distant. Then, less than 100 yards away, lightning struck a tree. We removed our metal-framed rucksacks and pegged it across the flat meadow."

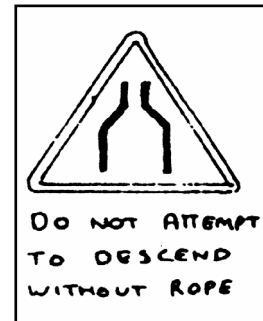


The Exploration of White Shiver Pot (M20)

Another blissfully sunny day. After a few fruitless hours of exploration, finding nothing but blocked shafts, Harry, Chris Birkhead, Jackie and I rested on the ridge near Škrbina. We admired the magnificent panorama, dreamed of discovering a truly huge cave, and relished the delights of the finest cherry flapjacks, washed down with a warm infusion of peat and twigs - leftover from using tacklebags for snow collecting. In the immediate foreground lay a shaded dry valley with several enticing holes.

The largest pothole was 15m across and appeared to drop down about 20m to a snow-plug. Harry began rigging the rope, taking care to avoid dislodging any of the abundant shattered rock, while I prepared to descend the monster. I soon began to abseil tentatively down, feeling a little drunk on the excitement. After fifteen metres, I encountered the temperature inversion layer and plunged into a pool of what seemed to be near-freezing air. At this point, the error of wearing T-shirt and shorts became apparent, but curiosity spurred me downwards. The last few feet were the worst, as the rope twanged on the loose rock wall above me, showering the snow below with fine shingle. Finally, the Eagle had landed and I made firm contact with the frozen surface of the snow plug.

To date, all the snow plugs that we had looked at had completely blocked the shafts and I didn't feel confident that this one would be any different. However in one corner, underneath an overhang, I spotted a hole leading down through the snow. The walls of this sub-shaft were made of solid, but very dirty ice. After some deliberation, I pressed against one grubby wall and descended slowly down the narrowing gap. To my horror, as the end of the rope approached, I noticed that there wasn't a knot in the end: hurriedly I tied one. At the very end of the rope, I found a small slot in the shaft and climbed in. This appeared to be going somewhere. Was it an air pocket in the ice or the start of something bigger?



**"Capturing the Fear"
Descending into White
Shiver Pot (ME)**

Excited talk filled the bivvy the following night when Harry and others returned with the news that they had pushed the cave down deeper, to -75m. Several bottles of Slovenian plonk later, Iain and I were grateful to the rest of the team as we somehow became the following day's exploration party.

The next morning, after a massive photo session at the first rebelay, "capturing the fear," I joined Iain at the flat limestone wall, where Harry's footprints ended, 15m deeper than I'd been before. After gaining his bearings, Iain steadied himself and hammered in the first spit. Finally he was ready to insert the cone. "Bollocks! where are they?" The next 15 minutes were spent in sub-zero temperatures hunting for the cones which were wrapped up in white tape, a colour scheme which didn't aid their discovery. From then on the pitch became known as "Cones Hotline."

To our left was a high-roofed side chamber, 10m further down the slope. I tentatively abseiled down the icy, slippery rope to a boulder floor, wary of a huge, three metre long icicle poised precariously above my head. As I moved towards a possible way on, the floor suddenly collapsed and dropped about a foot. If my heart wasn't pounding already, it was now in danger of arrest! Beneath my feet, the gap opened out into an ominous abyss.... going where? This was a job for Mr Maniac.

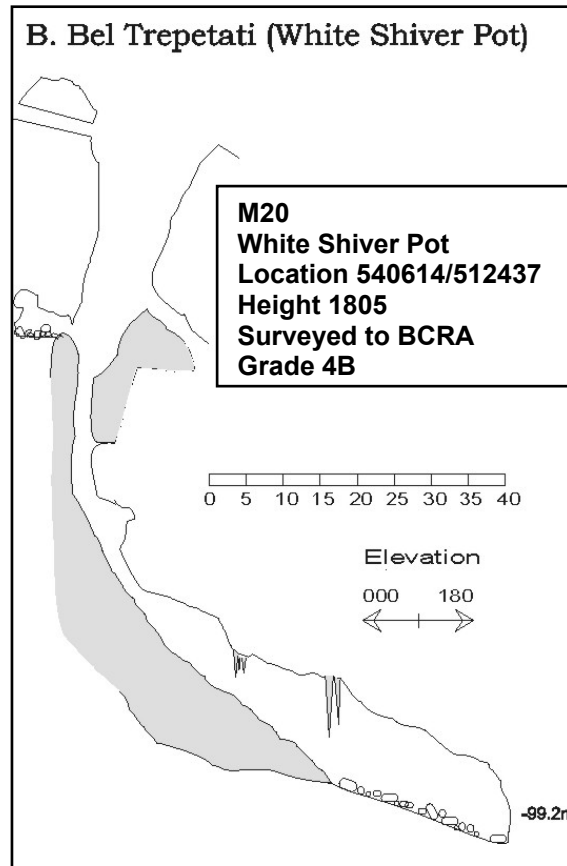
Iain descended on his back and slid down the steep snow slope, passing under a huge inverted candelabrum of 3m long icicles, until he was enveloped by the void. Several minutes later came the cry, "Rope Free! It's bloody huge!!"

Mimicking Iain's technique, I slid down into a 60m wide chamber. Huge icicles decorated the roof and to one side, an ice waterfall clung to the wall. Every surface was enveloped by a thin layer of clear ice, which glistened when caught by our headlamp beams. Tiny ice crystals, sent aloft by our movements, created a sparkling mist to add to the mystery. But danger lurked everywhere in this stunning grotto, from the incredibly frost shattered walls to the precarious icicles which tapered towards their point of attachment.

In the ensuing couple of hours, we exhaustively searched every inch of wall, in the hope of finding a lead from the chamber but to no avail. The initial elation of discovery soured to disappointment. We consoled ourselves with another flapjack and regrettably headed out to inform the others.

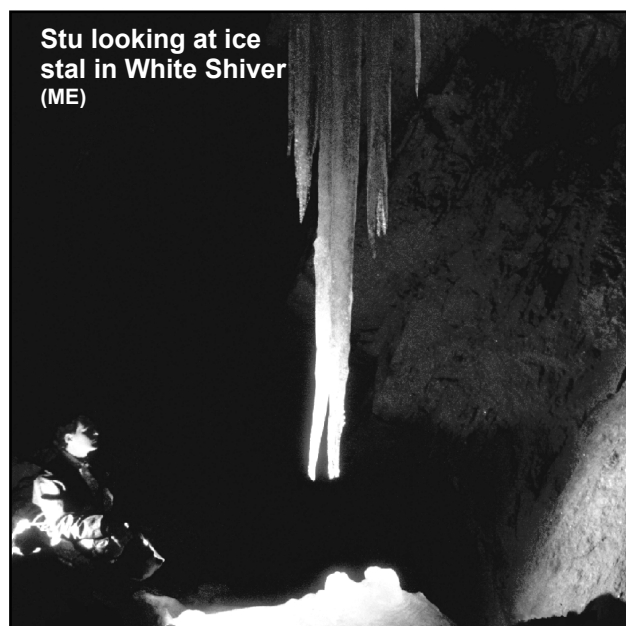
At the foot of the entrance pitch we encountered Malcolm, concerned by the looming dusk and only then realised that we had been gone over six hours. The gear was hastily packed and we set off together, to drown our sorrows over a bottle of vino around the camp fire. White Shiver pot (M20) had ended at a surveyed depth of 99.2m (though it's actually a tad over 100m if one counts a drop behind a cleaved rock).

Rob Lea



"Bingo! Rich, Gavin, Tony and I went prospecting and found a series of deep holes on the plateau near the bivvy.... Plan for an Alpine start the next day. We were especially happy because this find did not involve the 'old lags' who tend to dominate the scene whenever they can. This was virgin territory and it was ours!"

Stu Adler



The Discovery of Torn T-Shirt Pot (M18)

Torn T-Shirt entrance was found one August afternoon when Clive, Malcolm and I were wandering around the eastern edge of the plateau:

“Here is a likely hole - I’ll have a look in” said Malcolm. Ten minutes later he returned.

“Well the good news is that this cave is 350 metres deep..... and the bad news is that it’s a second entrance to M2.”



Disappointment – our hopes had been built up as he’d been gone for a while and then dashed on his return.

“Here’s another likely looking hole,” said Clive. “Jim, I believe it’s your turn.....”

I put the Petzl zoom on and cleared away some of the scree at the entrance, continuing head first into the cave. I got to a tube rift and continued to the head of a 6m climb. This looked promising but I didn’t want to continue any further with just shorts and a T-Shirt. I headed out, ripping my T-Shirt in the process, to tell the others. We decided to use bits of my T-Shirt to mark the entrance and return as soon as we got a chance.

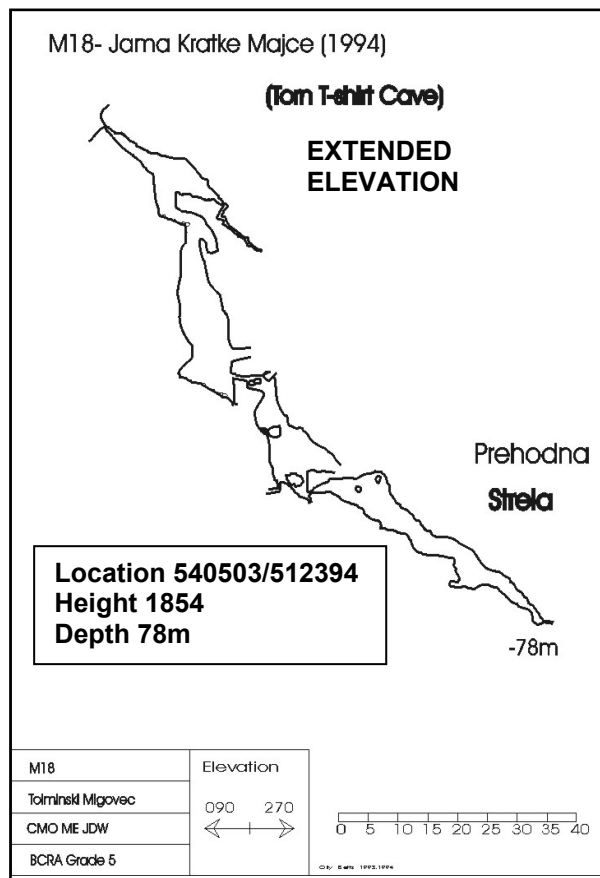
Several days later, I returned, this time with Rob and Iain. We free climbed the drop to the head of a moderately large (25m) pitch, hammering in two bolts for a Y hang.

“Nice Shaft - ROPE FREEcan’t see any obvious ways on but you might as well come down.” The others joined me and we began looking for possible ways on.

“Looks like there’s something up this climb,” said Iain, always keen to climb where possible.

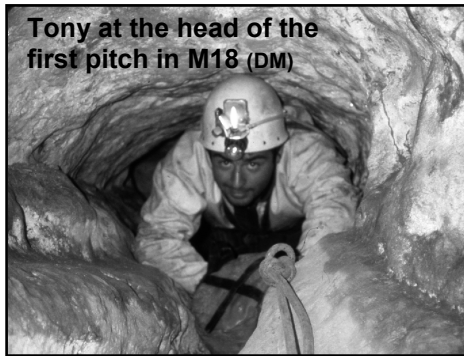
“It looks well loose - we’d better garden a bit,” was Rob’s response - gardening is Rob’s favourite activity. He was right here though, it needed doing.

After a while, we proclaimed it safe and crawled through the passage to find a dodgy climb up (later to be rigged as a pitch). At the top, we found ourselves at the head of a short drop into a chamber. One trip later, with the same team armed with ladders and a drill, and we were in the chamber. Again, no obvious way on. But wait. What about this squeeze up into that rift?



“I’ll give it a go,” said I. With a bit of struggling I was through

“Looks good - you might as well follow me.”



Tony at the head of the first pitch in M18 (DM)

Only Rob took up my invitation and we headed down the rift (now known as Shreddies) for the first time – negotiating the awkward sections, climbs and squeezes in haste – eager in our discovery. The rift started to slope steeply down and we sensed that some sort of transition was coming. Then round the next corner....

“Where do we go here?” I said to Rob. “There doesn’t seem to be an obvious way.”

“I can’t see one either - I’ll just try the bottom of the rift.”

We were unable to find a way on that day. Heading out, we heard booming noises in the rift, which turned out to be lightning accompanied by a violent rainstorm. Rivers started coming out all over the place. When we surfaced, we could see that there had been some concern for us as no-one knew what we’d found.

I became convinced that the cave must go and tried to persuade more people to have a go at the five hour trip to the end and back. Mark, Jackie and Clive went (and surveyed), but again, they didn’t get any further; so unfortunately that was it for 1994.

There was some debate on what to call the cave, one possibility was “lightning hole” because of the storm, but that sounded a bit corny. Mark started to call it Jimsky Jammer to go with Harry’s hole over the ridge (later renamed White Shiver Pot) , but we decided that naming things after people was not exactly in the spirit of group exploration and as Clive had started calling it “the cave marked by the Torn T-Shirt,” the name kind of stuck.

Jim Evans

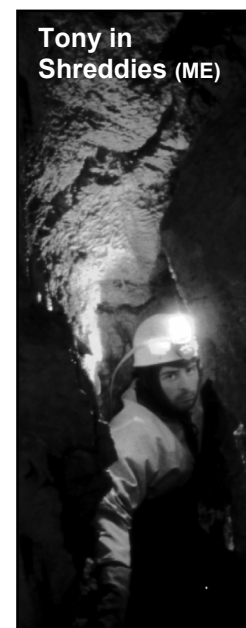
“Finally set off to complete survey of Torn T-Shirt. Surveying OK but a complete pain. Dave, having climbed to within half a metre of the bolt at the top of the pitch, dropped the tape and had to abseil down and climb all the way back up again. Did we laugh!?! Instruments very difficult to read - need a good light from the side.

In the rift, I tried to get my carbide to shine onto the compass but only succeeded in setting my hair alight. Last bit with station lengths of only 1 to 2 metres was very tedious. Out about 8.30. No rain but thick swirling mist - visibility only about 10m at the most. The pink string from M16 was very useful to find the way back to the bivvy.”

“Late start all round. Eventually went down Torn T-Shirt to continue surveying down the rift at the bottom. Managed a few stations until, oh dear I got stuck in the squeeze, so passed survey gear through to Mark to continue. Actually I could’ve got through but surveying in a winding rift with Jackie was becoming hell so the squeeze provided excellent excuse to get out of it.

Back at the bivvy that evening, 2 bottles of wine were opened but between 8 it really only tempts and doesn’t satisfy.”

Clive Orrock



Tony in Shreddies (ME)

A change of tactics: Rigging M16

Three weeks of pitch bashing on the plateau hadn't brought much success. Our hopes for large, easy discoveries were slowly being crushed. We thus decided to rig M16 to give us the chance to do some deep caving. It was also feasible that there could be new areas to find inside the cave...

After taking a few days to find the entrance, (Harry and I had only seen it once during in the winter), M16 was rigged over a number of trips, putting extra bolts in as we went. My first trip in the cave was with Mark. We continued the rigging from the top of Brezno Strahov, putting a bolt in at the top (I think this was the first bolt we'd ever put in). Mark headed down the pitch, which looked daunting with loose boulders everywhere; it started off with a steep boulder slope and then suddenly dropped off.

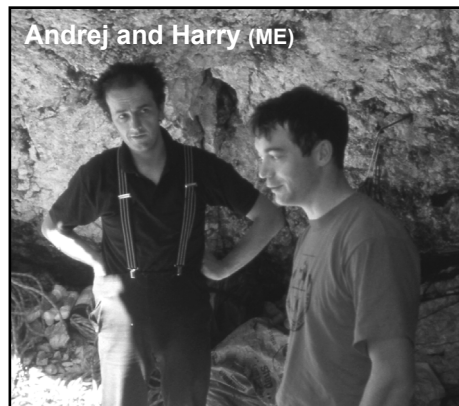
"I've found a rebelay bolt.... looks reasonable.... I'm going to rig it," Mark shouted up with a slightly nervous tone.

It obviously wasn't a brilliant bolt, I thought to myself. He was soon past it, however, and calling up the pitch to tell me there was one more free-hanging rebelay. After a short wait, I heard a relieved "Rope Free" and followed him down the pitch.

We carried on down the next small pitch, which led to a balcony onto a large chamber. After a short drop and a traverse over a hole, we were standing in its centre. From here, there seemed to be a lot of possibilities - we couldn't work out the way on. After some searching, we left the problem to the next group.

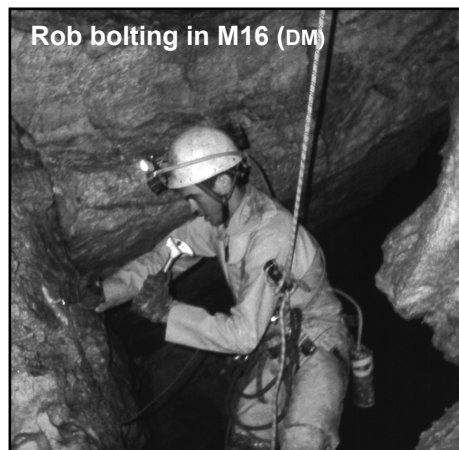
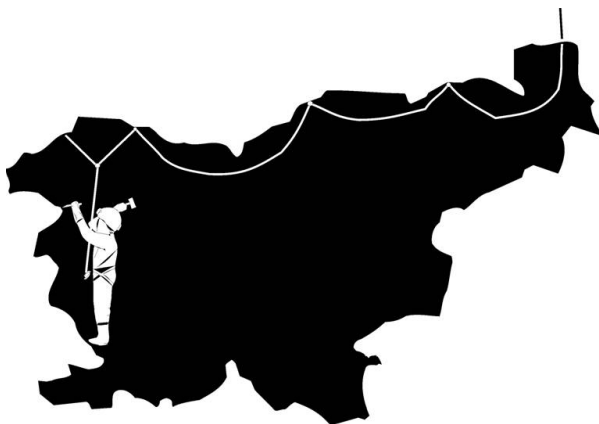
On the following trip, Harry and Rob took Andrej with them and therefore had no route finding problems. They rigged their way down Ta Mokr and on to the vast Galactica chamber, the floor of which is over 350m below the entrance. Rob came back with stories of Andrej's economical rigging style and fast prussiking method...

Jim Evans



"Fratnik doesn't believe in clipping in - he peers over massive pitches with no cowstails - he only has one anyway. He prussiks one step per second and free climbed as much of the pitch as possible before ascending on the rope - 'Why you always use rope? Climbing is faster!'"

Rob Lea



Nothing ventured, nothing gained: Below Brezno Strahov

On another trip into M16, Frank and I found a way on through the boulders in the chamber below Brezno Strahov. We soon reached a small, sharp rift which we followed for about 30m. Along the way we noticed small pieces of brown cotton in various places but were not sure what they were (finding out later that this was 'Topofil' used by a French surveying party a few years earlier). We soon reached a climb down into a chamber with a small inlet stream coming in. The way on looked tight, but after some faffing, Frank managed to squeeze through at the bottom of the rift. I followed him after a number of attempts at working out the best way to approach the constriction (forwards, backwards etc). Beyond the squeeze a difficult climb down led to the head of a pitch. We placed a couple of bolts and descended for ten metres or so. Another drop followed immediately. We hammered in two more bolts before leaving the cave. We were keen to tell the camp of our exciting, going lead.

On the following trip, we recruited Malcolm to come with us and set off with plenty of rope. Now familiar with the route, we wasted no time in arriving at the limit of our previous exploration and quickly dropped the pitch we had bolted. This led to a difficult looking climb. As soon as Malcolm saw a black hole at the bottom of the chamber below, however, he climbed down with great agility. Throwing rocks down this hole, it was obviously a long way to the bottom and looked very exciting.

"No need for any bolts here," said Malcolm, rigging his way onto a few dodgy naturals. We didn't question him. "I'll just go down a bit and see what the pitch looks like....I think I can see a ledge not far down." After a bit of a pause, Malcolm shouted back with the news - "There seems to be another rope on the opposite side of the pitch, it looks very familiar."

This was a disappointment; we had obviously found an obscure way to the top of Ta Mokr. Our hopes for a new bit of cave were gone, though perhaps we could find another lead? We decided to have a closer look at the passage above. We climbed up a few pitches of the inlet. This got tighter and more difficult to climb until we eventually gave up. Heading back out of the rift, I noticed that it was possible to keep going ahead instead of climbing back up through the boulder choke. I went to investigate while the others waited, it carried on for a bit, and then it seemed to be opening up and then.....

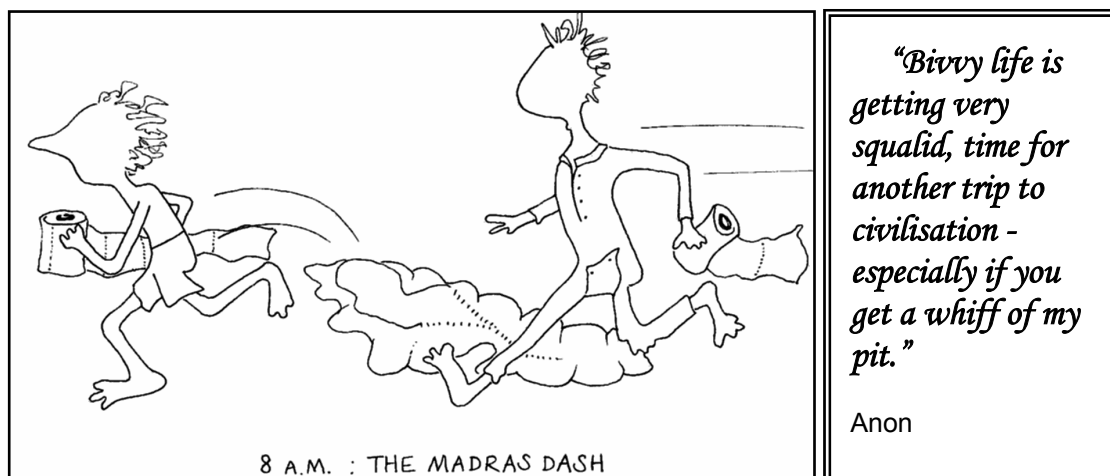
"Wow a big chamber.....oh..... shit!"

Malcolm was laughing.

"If I needed a concise summary of what you'd found that was perfect."

I had broken back into M16, between the chamber and Ta Mokr. The whole area seemed to be a complex maze of interconnecting passages (and what we didn't know then was we hadn't seen the half of it).

Jim Evans

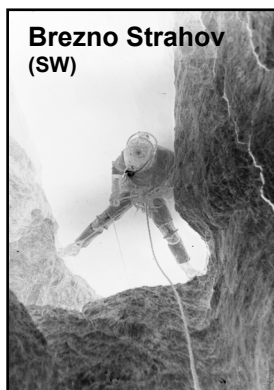


"Bivvy life is getting very squalid, time for another trip to civilisation - especially if you get a whiff of my pit."

Anon

Tearing and Swearing: Small extensions in M16

One of my most memorable series of trips in 1994 was with Simon Gaberscek. Most trips into M16 were concentrating on the "business end" of the cave, Galactica. We'd gone for the opposite approach: starting from the top and working down. The first grotty rift we tried was at the bottom of the first pitch series! It went without much persuasion and gained us about 30m of steeply sloping rift passage which culminated in an impossibly tight bend. The only lead from here was a small window high up in the left wall. "Do you think that might go somewhere?" I said. "Yeahproably" said Simon, explaining that an almost identical lead had been the key to the last cave system that they had explored. An hour later we gave up, there was no way we were going to get up there without a bolting kit and rope. No one has been back since! On the next trip we decided instead to concentrate on leads a little further down the cave.



We found a 'promising' looking lead at the base of Brezno Strahov. A climb down through boulders led into a rift which went on for 10m or so before tightening considerably. There was a large carbide cross on the wall, "Looks like the limit of exploration!" I said. I was about to add a comment like, "No wonder, there's obviously bugger all left to find" when I noticed that Simon was already reversing purposefully into a crack in the floor. I knew that this was the beginning of a lengthy struggle.....rip....oof....tear..... some swearing (in Slovenian).....etc. About half an hour later, he seemed to have moved about a foot or so. He'd already lost most of the arse of his oversuit and I was wondering how long it would be before he drew blood! Very soon afterwards, the final sliver of material which had been hindering his progress came off and he was through.

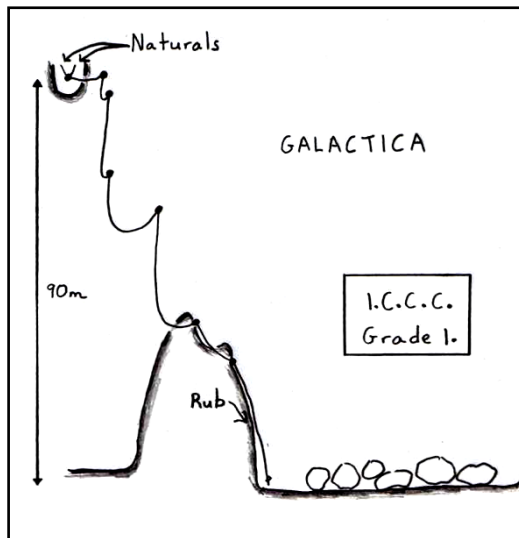
After some hammering with a stone to remove the really sharp bits, I followed him. "What happens if we can't get back?" I asked as I reached the crux point. "We'll worry about that later" came the reply. Well ask a stupid question, I thought. On the other side of the squeeze, we made our way down a steeply sloping, low, sharp rift passage. This was that real razor sharpness which is characteristic of all unexplored rifts on Migovec. After 10m or so we came to the head of a 5m pitch which Simon rigged with some difficulty. Below the pitch the rift continued, slightly larger for 20m until another pitch was reached. The pitch head looked awful, the passage cross-section looking like an inside-out porcupine. We unanimously decided to come back another day and headed out to find Jackie who we'd left at the foot of Brezno Strahov. We'd been gone for more than two and a half hours and she was totally frozen.

"Mark really had an epic in the cave when his light went out half way up Brezno Strahov and he couldn't shout loud enough for me to hear. Luckily he managed to get his spare going in the dark."

The next day I rigged "porcupine pitch" and it too turned out to be around 5m deep. Again the rift continued descending for 20m until we reached the dodgiest looking passage I have ever seen! Two car sized boulders were precariously wedged together across the passage. The scene looked like the closing stages of a massive Jenga game, and it was our turn to play... We decided to pass. The way on was either over or under the boulders, neither option was very tempting and after a good look round we satisfied ourselves that this was going to have to wait for another year.

Although these trips only gained us about 60m of passage, the lessons learned were vital. You have to work for every inch of new passage and look at the most unlikely leads. The two leads that we looked at were dead ends but there are plenty more. The next year we came prepared with hammers, chisels and crowbars and we weren't afraid to use them.

Bolting up in Galactica Chamber



The way Galactica chamber is drawn on the original JSPDT survey, there seems to be a passage high in the roof, leading off. As this is all we had in the UK, we decided that we should attempt to reach this passage and would therefore need a bolting platform. Rob's dad designed and built an excellent platform which was first tested slightly closer to home (illicitly bolting up the inside of the Queen's Tower in South Kensington).

Once we were in Galactica chamber, we couldn't see an obvious passage way, despite some fairly intense looking. I did manage to burn my hand quite badly though while trying to look at the roof. My carbide melted my glove which then stuck to my hand.

The closest thing that resembled a lead was about 20m above the lowest part of the chamber. Malcolm and I decided to have a go at reaching it and after some hairy climbing; Malcolm got himself up to a flake about 8m up.

"Looks a bit dodgy to carry on... I'm going to put a bolt in."

"Good idea."

I agreed wholeheartedly, I was getting a bit nervous watching him so precariously balanced. After hammering the bolt in, he then assessed the climb:

"I don't think this is free climbable - I think you'll need to use that platform."

I noticed he'd used the word 'you' and took the hint. I began to assemble the platform while Malcolm dropped back down. Once I'd prussiked up to the bolt and pulled up the platform, I began to install it. With all the gear you need for this kind of climbing, it's like another level up from rigging - it takes some time to get used to the procedure. Once I was standing on the platform, I began hammering a bolt in.

"Hey, this is quite comfortable when you get used to it."

"Good, but it won't be comfortable to lug out of the cave," was Malcolm's response.

A couple of bolts later and I was almost at the top. My hand was now quite painful from the burn and I needed a break. Once I had descended the pitch and the adrenaline of the climb had gone I realised that my hand was actually very painful and I would need to exit the cave to get it treated. We finally got out about 2.00am, cold wet and tired.

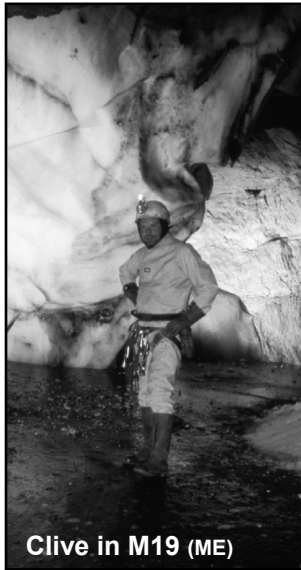
A few days later Andy and Iain, who had been doing a lot of climbing together, finished off the bolting but unfortunately they only found an alcove at the top. Later, Andrej told us that the passage leading off Galactica chamber can only be seen from the top of the pitch. We must have been looking in the wrong place, so it seems there is still a lead to be investigated here.

Jim Evans



Further Discoveries in 1994

M19 (Bullshit Pot) (Location 5405479/512394, Height 1856)



Clive in M19 (ME)

B.S. Cave is a tight extremely loose cave situated on the North of the plateau at the foot of Tolminski Kuk.

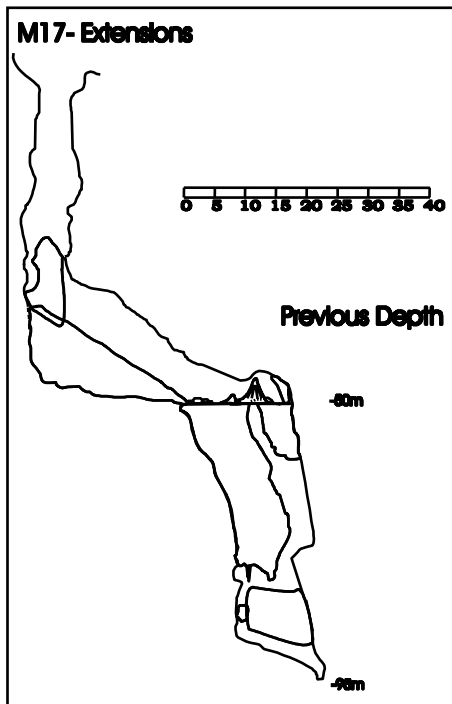
**“The draught was so strong it blew my carbide out!”
“Bullshit!”**

The entrance is a massive shakehole, 20m in diameter located 20m from M17. The shakehole is plugged with snow at a depth of -30m. Progress can be made by squeezing between the ice plug and rock wall and following the passage down. The cave was pushed to -75m at which point the walls became so unstable that further progress was impossible without shoring.

“Entered Bullshit pot to look for that elusive way on which produces the awesome draught in the place. None found and the draught’s not that strong - but certainly there.”

“Came to the conclusion that we’d come to the conclusion!”

M17 (Location 540478/512397, Height 1861)

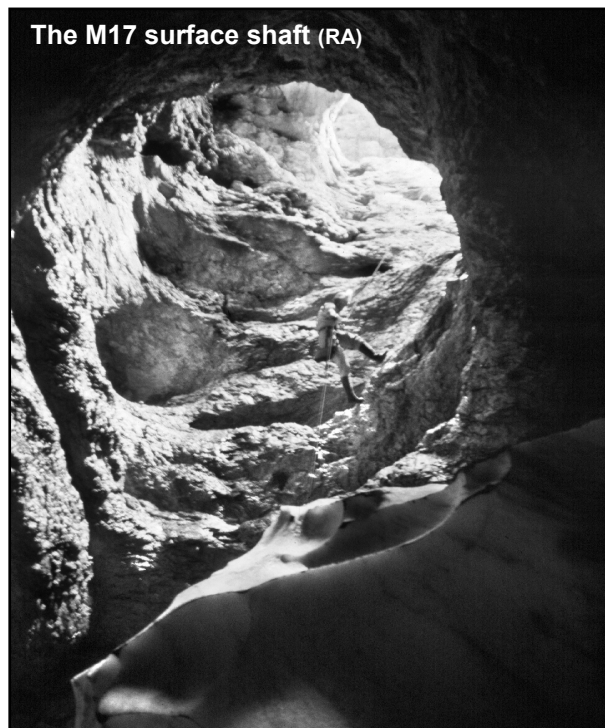


M17 (which lies close to M19) is a large surface shaft. A way down through the snow plug in this shaft leads to a large chamber with a 15m ice slope. Through a hole in the floor, a draughting 40m pitch was then pushed until it got too cold. The cave was thus left at depth of -95m.

Jim Evans



The big chamber in M17 (RA)



The M17 surface shaft (RA)

A Retrospective View of the '94 Expedition

As nothing significant was discovered in 1994, the theory that there was no more cave to find on Migovec was proposed by a number of cavers. With hindsight, this seems ridiculous but in fact it's a very common frame of mind to slip into. It's very similar to the idea that some have about science - i.e. "What's the point in working in science since everything has already been discovered?" Some of the proponents of the 'no more cave camp' have returned in years after big discoveries have been made and, if asked, would probably not remember the way they had thought in 1994. They would probably now have the attitude that it was inevitable that a huge amount of new cave would be discovered.

The expedition suffered from the lack of a clear plan of action. Partly this is inevitable in exploration (how can you plan for the unknown?) but there was no real focus of activity. Manpower was spread too thinly, with lots of prospecting on the surface being done while we were also rigging M16 with the intention of finding new passages. A lot of small advances were made which tended to stop at the first major obstacle.

In terms of cave actually discovered, the most significant finds in 1994 were probably Torn T-Shirt, White Shiver and Bullshit Pot. We managed to spectacularly miss some good leads. For example, many people looked up into the horizontal passage in M16 (later named Hotline) but no one actually bolted up the climb. This was partly because we were looking for leads going down. Another spectacular miss (again with hindsight) was Gardeners' World - we went as far as the first constriction but didn't make a serious attempt at passing it. Who knows what other good leads we missed that would yield to further work... We spent a lot of time looking at shafts and entrances over a wide area but never really gave any of them a serious push. Although the big shafts were generally choked, part of the reason we didn't make progress is because we were not equipped with the right tools. We were also, perhaps, in too much of a hurry to find new cave. In fact, there was an unhealthy competitive emphasis on speed in this trip. For example, people would talk about (and compete) on how fast they could get up the hill or get out from Galactica. We have since learned that this is completely incompatible with effective exploration which needs a gentle approach, allowing time to look around and explore possibilities.

By the time we left Migovec there were many who had no intention of ever returning due to a number of reasons - either because they thought we had exhausted the possibilities, or in some cases because they didn't think it was a good place for a holiday. But there were a few of us who were convinced that there was more to find and what was at fault was our approach. These few members became resolved to learn from our mistakes and return with some fresh ideas....

Jim Evans and Mark Evans

"The Imperial College Caving Club was founded in 1962, and ran its first trip abroad in 1966 - to the Trou de Glaz. The club continued to mature and more serious expeditions followed. It is good to see the tradition continuing with a new batch of students running the 1994 expedition to Slovenia. This was no holiday trip in warm Mediterranean caves; it was a serious and competent exploration of an alpine limestone plateau. The conditions could be described as "character building", and every member benefited from the experience. Long may Imperial College continue to support such worthwhile ventures."

All the best for 1995.

Dr. Tony Waltham (founder member of ICCC).

