

## MATIENZO 2011

From 3<sup>rd</sup> August to 26<sup>th</sup> August, the DCC contingent was in Matienzo. This year, the Club was represented by Tony Brocklebank, Sue Morton, Geoff Standing, Bill Booth, Len Gee, Nigel Dibben, Liz Taylor, Steve Martin and Tom Howard. Tony, Sue, Geoff, Bill and Len stayed in the Daughters' apartments, Nigel and Liz in Dibben's Diner and Tom maintained true tradition by tenting it. Tony had his eye on the Hornedo area (nearest caves to Arkwright's Bar) but various other trips were undertaken in the main fortnight of activity and these included teaming up with other expedition members including Ali, Pedro, Phil and the Dingles.

As well as caving, of which there was a good deal, and surface exploration, members went to a local show cave, climbed a *vía ferrata* at Ramales, attended the local horticultural show, took part in art classes, beached, barbecued and ate out at local restaurants.

The trip saw Tom enter his first piece of virgin cave, Tony open up at least two new entrances, the Club surveyed about 150 metres of passage for the expedition and numerous photos were taken and added to Juan's archive.

## HORNEDO EXPLORATION

A number of visits were paid to the area of Hornedo, north of Riaño on the road down to Entrambasaguas. This is the area of Torca La Vaca and Snake Cave and the hope was to find a top entrance to Snake Cave, beyond current sumps. Work was mainly concentrated in three areas with a couple of other holes investigated as well. One of the ones we visited but did not push at the time went to 300 m. Conveniently, each trip usually ended in a visit to the Euro Media bar or to Arkwright's where several boxes of his €1.50 wine were bought.

### **3577 – DIGGING**

On the first visit, we located a small slightly draughting dig in a shakehole. This was dug out in one session and a small chamber entered with a possible continuation. Prospects did not look good. The possible continuation under the far wall was dug on a separate session but no progress was made.

### **3564 – EXTENSION, EXPLORATION, SURVEYING AND PAINTING**

This was a find on the other side of the same valley behind the "tidy" farmer's farm which had been entered by Phil and Dan. It ended in a stal dome blocking an obvious continuation. Our secret weapon (Tom) was inserted into the squeeze and forced through under threat of being sold to the Earby and managed to get into a short but decent extension. The rest of the cave was surveyed the same day and a return was arranged to enlarge the squeeze so the Chairman, Lamp Master and Treasurer could get through to dig and survey. This was duly done with snappers and the cave was finished although there is a slight draught in a too-tight passage at the end. Sue broke new ground by doing some painting underground of a stal curtain which Bill back-lit with candles. The total surveyed length of the cave is 76 m. In the same area, Nigel and Ali checked out the survey of 3567 and added a bit more detail to the plan as well as identifying two more holes: 3589 and 3590.

### **3568 etc – SPOTHOLING AND EXPLORATION**

Still on the hunt for a back entrance to Snake Cave, we spent an afternoon tramping around the hillside above the river near to the Hornedo bar. Six entrances were checked including two new ones and two were entered (by Tony and Nigel) into nasty sandstone narrow scratchy draughtless rifts. The potential is there but the local capping of sandstone has probably put an end to any useful passage. The findings were written up in the expedition log.

<p><b>3577 – dig (picture by Tom)</b></p>	<p><b>3564 – squeeze with Tom (picture by Bill)</b></p>
<p><b>3564 – new passage</b></p>	<p><b>3564 – Sue painting</b></p>
<p><b>3569 – north entrance</b></p>	<p><b>3570 (Tony doesn't look too pleased!)</b></p>

### **SIMAS DEL PÍCON (0075) – DIGGING**

Tom and Nigel went with Pete Smith (Pedro) to Simas del Pícon in the Cubija valley to investigate a draughting dig in a choke near the entrance. The dig is not far from the laddered entrance into a huge chamber although (fatso) Nigel had to move a few boulders before he could join the others. We spent some time digging down breaking up boulders by hand and exposing a very narrow hole down about 2 m. In the end, Pete decided that it was not going to go and we left it for another day. Unfortunately, we didn't get back for another look but the cave itself looks worth a photographic trip.

## CUEVA REGATO (3494) – EXPLORATION AND PHOTOGRAPHY

As a warming-up trip, Tony and Nigel went on their first day with Johnny Southworth and Phil Goodwin to photograph, explore and add detail to Cueva Regato in the Hornedo area. The cave has two entrances and we went in Regato 1. Side rifts were explored and an unsurveyed hole down was checked out leading to connections back to two other points in the cave. Johnny spotted a high level passage which Tony was able to enter by climbing but it ended after a short distance. Photos were taken and the additional work was written up in the log. Regato 2 was also entered by Nigel and Johnny, and photos were taken there as well.



**Cueva Regato – in cave 1**



**Cueva Regato – ladder pitch in cave 1**



**Cueva Regato – formations in cave 2**



**3554 – dig. Tony's digs are to the left (where his boots are) and straight ahead.**

### 3554 – DIGGING AND EXPLORATION

The day after Cueva Regato, Tony and Nigel went to another of Johnny's digs on the road past Alisas towards the coast. The hole is a depression in the side of the hill which had been missed on previous scans of the area because it is effectively hidden by trees and the slope. Johnny, Phil and John Clarke had been snapping down a passage to the left which draughted slightly. Tony and Nigel looked at two other rifts in the same shakehole. After dropping his chisel down one of them, Tony was forced to cap it open. The result was a hole about 3m deep with no obvious way on.

### EL SUTO (3450) – SURVEYING

El Suto had been found shortly before and was rigged by Johnny S and team. Nigel, Tony and Steve went in to survey but the riggers were only a few minutes ahead so after a lot of hanging around, it was partly surveyed and then left for another day. Towards the end of the fortnight, Tony, Steve and Tom went back and descended to the lowest point rigged and then surveyed out. The cave was derigged and next day all the ropes were washed – a long job given the horrible muddy conditions in the cave. Tom drew up the survey.

Unfortunately during the derigging trip it was realised that John and Phil hadn't in fact bottomed the cave, a parallel shaft to the final pitch was disto'd to the same depth as the pitch itself, but boulders thrown down continued well beyond. As we had no bolting gear a return trip is needed.

Big Steve describes El Suto as "definitely" the most unpleasant cave in the entire Matienzo area; he likes it so much he's offered to return. Tony agrees - on both counts and suggests renaming it Torca de Mierda.

### OFFICERS' MESS (3460 & 3461, SOUTH VEGA) – DIGGING AND EXPLORATION

A return was made to the dig area explored in 2010 know as Officers' Mess. The previous year, 881 had been resurveyed and four digs opened (Officers' Mess, the fridge on the path and two in the shakehole). One of these, the fridge, had to be blocked up after objections by the farmer. At the end of 2010, a fifth hole in a rift had been opened but left. This year, the main dig was pushed a bit further – inconclusively – although there is still a good draught but most work was on the rift, 3461, left at the end of 2010. This was widened over two days and Tony, Tom and Bill were able to get into a small chamber with a large boulder (a piece of the wall from the entrance passage!) blocking the way down. The area still seems to be worth a bit more digging but Nigel's two-day rule (no dig should be pursued for more than two days) still seems worth applying.

Notwithstanding the ridiculous two day rule, Tony wisely returned and Bill was able to destroy the offending block after which Tony destroyed a further squeeze to allow normal sized people to get to the point Tom had already reached in a hading rift full of small boulders, after we started removing these Bill could see on for a few feet and the air quality has improved a lot. A return is planned.



**3460 – Officers' Mess. Tony outside and Pedro in the dig checking progress.**



**3461 – Officers' Rift or Slot-a-Mess. Tony setting a snapper and Bill helping.**

**CUEVA OÑITE (0027)/CUEVA DEL RISCO (0025) – EXPLORATION AND SURVEYING**

This was a trip to support Pedro who wanted to complete a survey and look at a low crawl over some stal. Pete drove Tom and Nigel up to Oñite inlet and we quickly got through the crawls [compare last year when Nigel completely failed to find the way through!] and down to the decent streamway. After a while, we got through the Sala Carballo and into the section where Pete’s survey ended. Tom was pushed through another flat-out squeeze over stal to get into a few metres of low passage which Pedro was able to enter as well and the extension was surveyed out. The survey was then completed of the bit Pedro had done before and we exited with Nigel leading. After a couple of detours, we made surface safely.

**CUEVA DE ENTRAMBASAGUAS (3232, CUEVA DE LA ESPADA/CUEVA DE RUCHANA and 0103) – EXPLORATION AND SURVEYING**

Cueva de la Espada was entered twice. The first time when Tony decided to enlarge a rift by the side of the Riaño/Hornedo road that Johnny S and others had found. Tony generously gave his services in the interests of speleology and with a bit of care to avoid passing traffic, a massive chunk of limestone was removed – but not enough to allow entrance. The film is quite impressive as is the dent left in the road. This encouraged a curious Spaniard farmer’s wife to pay us a friendly visit and she soon had her son with her and he led us into the downstream end of Espada (now known as Cueva de Ruchana) equipped with one helmet and two lights between the four of us (Tony, Tom, Nigel and the farmer). After a quick look around, and appropriate comments of buena and muy gracias, we left the area. Nigel returned a couple of days later with Ali to survey and push some leads in the upper end, now know as Cueva de Entrambasaguas. A couple of possible draughting routes were found and Ali has recorded these for future exploration.



**Cueva del Risco. Picture by Tom**



**Roadside rift being snapped**



**Inside Cueva de Ruchana**



**Inside Cueva de Ruchana**

**DINGLES' DIG (3594, TORCA DE LUNA DE MIEL)**

Tom had a day spare so he was pinched by the Dingles to help them dig at their hole over Torca la Vaca called Torca de Luna de Miel – Honeymoon Shaft – 3594. He spent most of the day hauling boulders and hanging around in mid-air, or so it appears from the pictures. A large boulder seems to be blocking the way into a rift down which stones drop for ages. No doubt, they will return to the dig.



		
<p><b>Torca de Luna de Miel</b></p>	<p><b>The boulder removed</b></p>	<p><b>Simon climbing out</b></p>

**TORCA LA VACA (2889) – EXPLORATION**

As well as the digging, Tom joined Johnny and Jude on an exploration trip into Vaca through the duck. Being the first duck he had done, Tom was not too bothered on the way in but on the way out, he needed a bit of encouragement! The rest of the trip appears to have been long and tiring but the writer (Nigel) is not aware whether it achieved anything new. [No doubt Tom can correct me if this is wrong.]

**CUEVA-CUBÍO DE LA REÑADA (0048) – TRIP (Public Relations)**

At the request of Hornedo resident (Leah?), Tom and Nigel took her 14-year old granddaughter for a caving trip into Reñada. Laura had previously been through Jivero II so this was to be her first serious trip. After getting lost in the entrance series, Nigel eventually found the Blow Hole and from then it as plain sailing if a little nerve wracking because of he slippery surfaces. However, Laura coped very well and we were able to reach Stuffed Monk passage and take a few pictures amongst the better formations there. The trip out was easier and each hurdle was crossed without difficulty. The whole trip probably took about four hours and we emerged to meet Laura’s anxious mother and Juan, who provided transport.

	
<p><b>Going in</b></p>	<p><b>Blow Hole</b></p>



**Formations**



**At the end of the trip**

### **CUEVA DE CUATRIBÚ (0013) – TRIP FOR THE ELDERLY AND INFIRM**

Nigel had this bright idea that a quick trip down Cuatribú would be interesting and sporting for the DCC elder statesmen (Len, Dale Street and Bill) and Liz. He forgot about the walk-in. Despite tramping through acres of woodland, scrub and rocks, we all reached the entrance and visited the sections where bears' nests can be found (hibernation places for cave bears) and the stals polished by bears climbing through them. There are also numerous bear scratches on the walls and Bill found the cap of a bear's canine tooth. After taking photos, we left the cave and took the more direct route down the hill leading to Nigel having a nasty fall onto a boulder (end of caving for him – fortunately, this was more or less the last day anyway!).



**Dale Street crawls again!**



**Liz in a bear's nest, another on the left**



**Len and Dale Street resting**



**Liz and Bill look at bear scratches**

## CUEVA DE RASCAVIEJA (0077) – WALK-IN TRIP

Two other cavers on the site were from Chesterfield area and without transport, they were a bit stuck for caving options so Nigel took them (Stuart and Alan) for a walk up to the Bakers, then to Cueva Molino (Agua) and up to Rascavieja, the fossil cave on Enaso which has an impressive outward draught. Stuart stayed outside but Nigel and Alan went in, taking a few photos. Nigel still thinks the cave is worthy of serious re-exploration as the draught is like the Coventosa one.



Rascavieja



Rascavieja

## 489

Liz, Billy and Lennie visited 489 to remember Roy Hayes. His memorial was checked and a few flowers left for him.

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I think that's all the caving the Club was involved in. I've no doubt someone will correct me if I am wrong. I think something was done practically every day and I reckon that Tom went underground just about every day (if you count the little cave on the vía ferrata). Some general pictures follow.



Via ferrata (picture by Ali)



BBQ on the beach



**Horticultural show**



**Other cultural activities**



**Dingles' wedding celebrations**



**Meal out at El Cagigal**

**CENSORED**



**The Chairman in a Mankini**

**The Euro-Media bar at Hornedo**



**That's what I call style!**