

SOUTH WALES CAVING CLUB

BELIZE 2008

REPORT OF THE CAVING EXPEDITION TO THE TOLEDO
DISTRICT OF BELIZE, CENTRAL AMERICA.

February-March 2008



ABSTRACT

This was the biggest expedition we have mounted to the region so far, involving ten members over five weeks.

Major extensions were made to Pueblo Creek Cave, including the massive Lobster Chamber.

Teams also reached features and sites deep in the jungle covered mountains, which had eluded previous trips.

Many sites were visited with information and contacts that will be invaluable to future teams.

THANKS

We would like to express our gratitude for all the assistance received from:

The Sports Council for Wales

Bruno Kuppinger; Sun Creek Lodge

Belize Department of Archaeology

Cotton Tree Lodge

BTIA; Toledo branch

The Choco Family

And all our guides, drivers and truck owners.

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Foreword

This is the report of an expedition to find, explore and survey caves in Belize, involving 10 members over 5 weeks between February and March 2008.

It has been the culmination of 4 previous trips to the area made since 2001 by members of South Wales Caving Club; each trip has grown in size and success with increasing experience. The initial inspiration for discovering huge caves in a tropical environment occurred whilst lying in the crawl in Daren Cilau, knowing there must be something better in life.

Initially four members set out to attempt to make the final arrangements for accommodation, vehicles and guiding, as well as walking some trails to check that it would be possible to reach the objectives. Experience has shown this to be essential, as communication to those we want to be in contact with is difficult. Those we can communicate with are often commercial operators and not always the best people to use whilst in the field. Also we find that things can change rapidly, even in the villages, with reliable guides moving away, deciding they don't want to work, or vehicles being crashed on drunken nights out.

One week later the main part of the expedition arrived and by then we had a number of guides and sites of interest in several of the Indian villages. We had also worked out the logistics required to get teams to the main objectives, so things progressed rapidly from here.



Expedition Aims

Primary aims

- To continue the exploration of the Pueblo Creek cave found in 2006
- To get a team to the remote Esperanza camp, to attempt to follow the course of the Central River/ Rio Grande.

Secondary aims

- To explore Roaring River within Tiger cave.
- To continue exploring other caves reported by locals or the authorities
- To continue development of responsible local cavers and the development of links to support future expeditions.



Belize 2008 Expedition Members

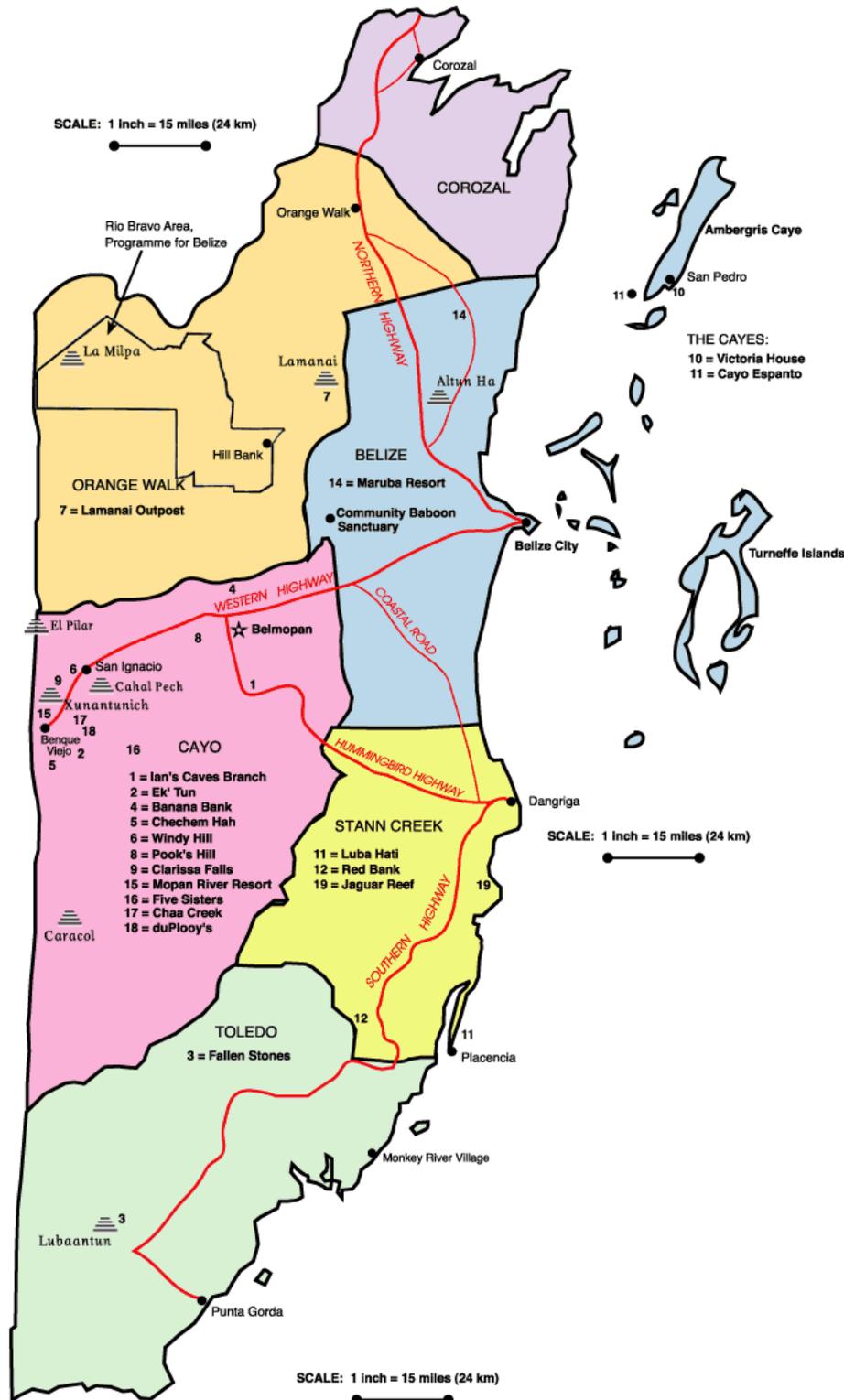
<p>Alan Braybrooke</p> 	<p>5 previous caving expeditions to Belize. 15 years caving experience across the UK and caving expeditions to Spain. Member of Cave Rescue team, South Wales and Shropshire caving clubs. Teacher of Outdoor Education</p>
<p>Andy Lewington</p> 	<p>Caver for 29 years CIC, Outdoor Instructor (MIC). BCA LCLMA Trainer/Assessor Member of Gagendor caving club. CCC Equipment Officer Caved in – UK, Ireland, France, Spain, Thailand, China, Mexico, New Mexico, Sardinia Interests in cave photography and ecology.</p>
<p>Brendan Maurice</p> 	<p>Caver for 10 years Cave photographer Caved in UK, Ireland, Greece, Mallorca and Lebanon Member of South Wales Caving Club</p>
<p>Gary Evans</p> 	<p>Caver for 23 years, working as an Indoor/Outdoor Trainer. CIC, Outdoor Instructor & Technical Advisor. LCLMA Trainer/Assessor. Cave Rescue Warden & Underground Controller. Advanced First Aid Trainer & Assessor. Significant amount of UK caving experience & European caves with expeditions to Belize in 2002, 2006 and 2008. Regularly involved in UK cave exploration (digging). Member of South Wales Caving Club (SWCC).</p>
<p>Nicky Bayley</p> 	<p>Significant caving experience, over 23 years in UK and France. 2 expeditions to Northern Spain, and 3 to Meghalaya (NE. India) Member of the Cave Rescue Team Skills in underground video and photography Member of South Wales Caving Club, Royal Forest of Dean Caving Club, and Cerberus Speleological Society</p>
<p>Paul Craddy</p> 	<p>I have been caving for many years now, but had yet to cave outside the UK. So the opportunity to explore new caves in Belize was too tempting. Belize is a fantastic country, with very friendly people and the caving was outstanding, particularly the exploration of Pueblo Creek, which was one of the most exhilarating experiences. An amazing experience in a fantastic country. I cant wait to get back and see what's at the end of Pueblo</p>

<p>Phil Walker</p> 	<p>Caver for 14 years, member of SWCC and SBSS Expeditions to Spain and France. 3 Previous expeditions to Belize (2001, 2004, 2006) Photographer & Cave Photographer</p>
<p>Rich Hudson</p> 	<p>Caving for 22 years with expeditions to Mexico, China, USA and loads of places in Europe and now Belize. Qualified Cave Diver with the Northern Section of the CDG. Assistant underground controller with the UWFRA. Member of the YSS as it has a set of handy bunks next to the Helwith Bridge.</p>
<p>Russ Brooks</p> 	<p>Experienced Caver both in UK and abroad</p>
<p>Toby Dryden</p> 	<p>Significant caving within the UK for the last 30 years. Soldier Development Instructor with the British Army Cave Rescue Warden Expeditions to Belize in 2002 and 2006 Regularly involved in UK cave exploration (digging) Member of South Wales Caving Club (SWCC)</p>



Belize: The Country and its Caves

Belize, formerly British Honduras, is a small English speaking country, approximately the same size as Wales. Lying on the East of the Central American mainland, dwarfed by its Spanish-speaking neighbours of Mexico, Guatemala and Honduras.



Prior Exploration

Our attention has generally been focused upon the Toledo district in Southern Belize; this area has in the past suffered from extremely poor links to the rest of the country. However, the Landrover road and occasional unplanned canoe crossings are in the past and only a few miles of the Southern Highway are awaiting tarmac. The poor links had made it an awkward district to access so the caving potential had not been developed, as in some of the central districts.

Being only a short flight from the USA, there is a history of many trips to Belize, though little published information. The same names appear. Also with the caves' importance to the Ancient Maya, there has been much exploration of caves by archaeologists, so gaining information about locations can be difficult though they have less interest in active systems.

Our expedition followed a trip by Irish cavers, who shared their contacts, allowing us to survey a cave they had explored.

As the internet develops, information is continually increasing in volume.

By SWCC:

- In 2001, 3 cavers visited and surveyed several caves, between San Jose and San Pedro Columbia
- In 2002, 5 cavers returned to Columbia, though success was limited by Hurricane Iris, which had devastated the area after the 2001 trip, (no one had mentioned this to us in our preparation.)
- In 2004, 2 members joined 3 other cavers based at the British Army camp at the airport, explored several caves across the country.
- In 2006 we returned 7 cavers, basing ourselves at Columbia again, mapping the major Champon Cave, though a very wet dry season made some trails impassable, limiting our exploration. Following a request by the department of archaeology we visited the village of Pueblo Viejo, where Trekforce had identified some sites. The first site visited was Pueblo Creek Cave; a pitch descended showed no evidence of prior exploration and a major cave followed. Exploration finished when at the limits of the available time a huge log jam was climbed and we could look down on the open passage continuing below.

Persistent rain delayed the departure of the planned trip to the Central River sink, Esperanza Camp. Poor quality trails slick with mud along with huge packs made going slow, though we got within 2km of the objective. Losing the trail, an unplanned and uncomfortable bivvy with no water was followed by abandoning caving kit and a retreat. A cave was found, Lagonita, though we only used this as a water source as things were still a bit grim on the survival side of things.

Esperanza and Columbia reserve area

Back in 2001 with the poor maps we had then, the indication of the Central River sinking deep in the jungle was a tantalising prospect. It caused us to relocate to San Pedro Columbia, locally called just Columbia. From there we were able to investigate caves associated with two underground watercourses.

We were concentrating on The Rio Grande, which we believe to be the resurgence of the Central River and also, the Columbia River, that we believe, features in several caves to the West though we do not know of its main sink.

Columbia River; in 2001 we visited the resurgence, a huge mushrooming of water in a pool, though a small hole to one side of the pool dropped into a less intimidating sump. Also high on the hill we descended an 80m shaft with a large sump at the end.



Rio Grande; we were given basic directions by locals, to where the river started, eventually finding Bat Cave, a large but not extensive resurgence cave. A short distance away is Tiger Cave.

Over the following years we continued to prospect around the area, finding small caves, more often confirming where there were none!

In 2006 we did reach as far as Champon Cave, a major cave on the Central/Rio Grande system, an active river cave that is also a wet season resurgence.

We also started progressing towards Esperanza camp where the Central River sinks. Unfortunately, we were hampered by the after effects of Hurricane Iris; lost and blocked trails, locals abandoning outlying farms and the caves they knew in those areas, followed by the growth of an impenetrable undergrowth layer, where previously you could walk between huge trees.

These attempts were beaten by the distances, heat and lack of water but we got closer every time, to within 2km in 2006.

2008 1st Attempt

Sunday 2nd of March

Gary, Al and Phil

With reaching Esperanza camp as a main objective we set out to walk the trail as part of the set up phase of the trip, before the main party arrived.

Three members, Gary, Al and Phil set out with three guides on Sunday the 2nd of March. Ominous clouds above the hills threatened, and we had to ford a previously dry river, now flowing busily from the mouth of Champon cave. Soon after this the rain started, a torrential cloudburst that continued for hours at a time over the following two days until there was not a part of our bodies that was dry and few things in our packs not soggy. Absolutely filthy it later became quite chilly too and we regretted our decision to lighten packs of stoves and pans.

At our campsite the guides identified that the route finding problems were due to illegal Chatte leaf cutting, so instead of one clear trail, the deep jungle was now criss-crossed with small paths, which often led nowhere.

More heavy rain on day 2 with the trail crossing steep hillsides, it become extremely treacherous, though below us we saw a 'lost world' of huge limestone cliffs and massive depressions.

We reached Esperanza at lunchtime, after a lucky GPS fix enabling us to re-orientate our guides.

Following the river down, the hoped for cave didn't materialise, with the river simply disappearing into the riverbed and bank. The undergrowth was so dense here that we could have stood right next to a cave and not known. The guides who had been confident about caves there on day 1 were now very reticent and the situation started to feel a little tenuous as our bodies were suffering after 36 hours of rain.

On the walk back we entered a small rift cave above the massive depression, finding some nice pottery and Jute shells but little else.

The trail also ran by a shaft that, once we managed to find a rock (not an easy task), passed the test by producing several seconds of silence followed by a resounding boom and a good rumble into the distance.

Another soggy camp, then the long walk home, leaving the black clouds over the hills and baking in the sun on the white roads.



2nd Attempt

We sent two guides in to cut good trails to Cumbres, with the hope that without being held up by looking after us they could travel faster and find the correct trails. Cumbres was an area of massive dolines we had heard of many times but never managed to visit.

The day after, Rich, Andy, Brendan and Nicky went in with a third guide, hoping to meet up with Edwin and Ramon at Champon Cave. The plan worked - the trail was found and open.

Jungle bash to Cumbres

Thur 13 March 2008

Nicky, Rich, Brendan, Andy
Guides: Edwin, Ramon, Marcello

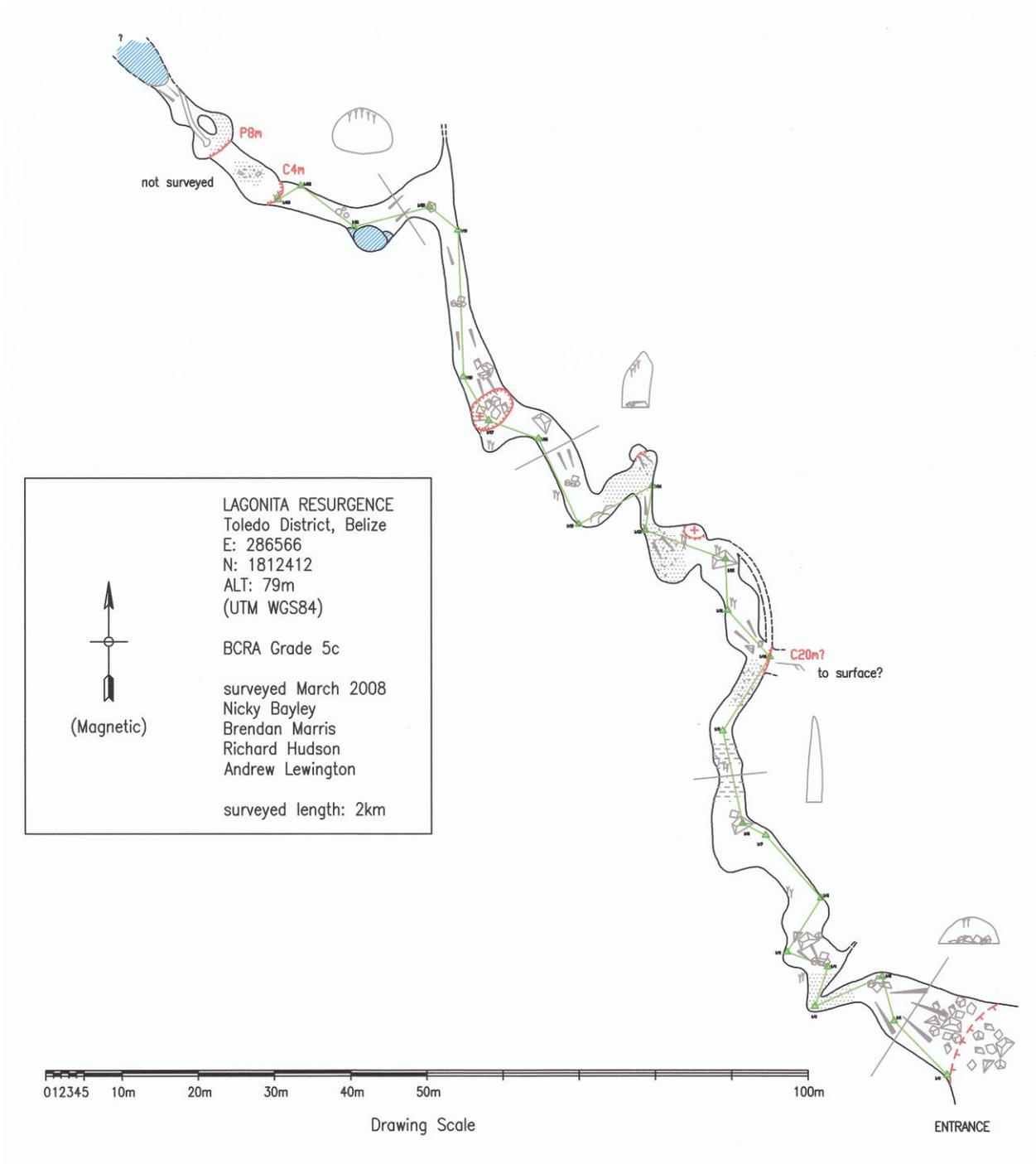
Up at 4.30 am, almost before the chickens! and started walking with Marcello at 5.30. On the walk Brendan spotted a deadly Coral snake in the dry river bed that the guide must have nearly trodden on. Three hours later we reached our first watering hole, a known cave called Champon, where Edwin and Ramon were waiting for us. There was just time to re-fill water bottles, before setting off again, reaching the next stop, **Lagonita Cave** at about 1pm. This was a cave that had been a lifesaver for the previous expedition in 2006, when the way was lost in the jungle on route to Esperanza. The team managed to get back to this known water supply, but didn't have the energy to investigate it. Camp was set up not far away, and we then went into the cave to explore. The entrance had a noticeably cool draft, which was encouraging. Approximately 200m into the cave was a small drip pool, just beyond which there was a climb and a short pitch, dropping onto a steeply sloping mud bank into deep water stretching ahead out of sight. Having come all this way, carrying all our camping gear, rope and rigging kit, we had no proper caving clothing, and more importantly no buoyancy. We surveyed the cave to the top of the climb, and went back out for something to eat, and some well earned rest.

The fireflies put on a good display but the night was quite cold, and despite feeling as though I had not slept a wink, I managed to miss the only event of the night when a large beast, probably a tapir came storming through the middle of the camp tearing up trees and rampaging (allegedly!)

Fri 14 March 2008

At first light we set off walking to an area called **Cumbres**, where from aerial surveys, there was evidence of 3 large depressions. The guides managed to take us to 2 of them, but although looking extremely impressive, with 100m cliff faces, there was no significant cave formation. One of the depressions did have the remains of an old wall built around the base, which was presumably Mayan.

Lagonita Resurgence Cave



Gibnut Skull Cave.

The guides came across another entrance along the trail, with a sloping mud floor leading down to a section of dry fossil passage about 200m long with many bats, and the skull of a Gibnut. We were suitably shocked at the size of the skull of this giant rat, and decided we wouldn't like to meet one defending its territory underground. The entrance was GPS'd, but the cave was of little interest, and remains unsurveyed.

The next stop was a shaft that had been GPS'd by the others as they passed to Esperanza. They had no ropes, so it had been left undescended. Rich rigged our 60m rope to a conveniently placed thread, and the rest of us settled down to rest our feet for a moment. Just as Rich was gingerly testing his weight on the rock thread, there was a loud gunshot which ricocheted around the forest, and excited shouts from the guides, one of whom had bagged a "jungle chicken". We gathered around to take a look expecting a pheasant-like bird, and were somewhat shocked to see him proudly holding out a beautiful green, but rather dead looking parrot. Having established the fact that he could descend the pitch without fearing for his life, Rich carried on, and disappeared from view, to return a short while later reporting that there were further drops, and he'd run out of rope. We called the shaft **Dead Parrot Pot** packed up and set off again to collect more water from a tiny spring at Tigres Camp, and then slogged back to camp for ration packs and parrot supper (that looked and tasted like chicken).



Sat 14 March 2008

We made another alpine start in the morning, and managed to get all the way back to Columbia by midday, stopping off at the coke shop for drinks and Pringles. The others had all gone to PG to collect Paul Craddy, and we spent the rest of the day washing, reading Harry Potter and cooked up some corned beef hash from the mountain of unnecessary supplies brought from the UK.

(Nicky)

Tiger Cave

Well known to locals, and easily found beyond the Rio Grande resurgence, which we believe to be the resurfacing Central River, sinking at Esperanza and probably encountered again at Champon Cave.

First entered by Phil and Alan in 2001, nearly 1km was surveyed before a length of static line was found on a climb, beyond this point they continued until they reached a static sump containing large Catfish. On return to the UK, Phil managed to track down the original surveyors, who provided us with a survey and some information about other sites visited in the mid 80's.

In 2002 the team returned, descending an unpleasant pitch that led to a lower series of sumps. A series of canals were crossed to get to the Roaring River, the subterranean Rio Grande. Exploration at that time was limited, as entering the water looked a very serious prospect. In 2006 we had hoped to be able to bolt along and keep out of the main flow, the surprise that time was being able to drive to the cave entrance due to the construction of a hydroelectric scheme. No one thought that we would be interested in this.

The plans for the scheme were to dam the water above the cave, diverting it from its underground course and through the turbine, we decided to save the effort involved in exploring the river until it was a dry walk!

In the past we had used Tiger cave to acclimatise to the heat found underground in Belize. On their first full day in the field the main part of the team visited the cave. With the prospect of unexplored cave waiting the other side of a cooling swim the team were soon off.

Tourist trip around the dry series

Tue 4 March 2008

Nicky, Rich, Andy, Russell, Toby, Brendan and Bruno

Toby and Brendan were taking photos in the large jungle entrance chamber. Whilst Brendan was visiting the outside world, Toby sat with his light off and noticed a glow. Thinking it was a dropped item he went to investigate and found it to be a beetle larvae. We exited the cave to wait for the other part of the team who we had sent up the rope climb. They reappeared a couple of hours later after being up Roaring River, with tales of exploration!

(Toby)

Roaring River

Nicky, Rich, Andy, Russell and Bruno

On reaching the start of the stream way, we found the water levels were lower, and progress could easily be made in the stream. Upstream led to climb and then a sump after approx. 100m, while downstream a few long swims led to a split in the passageway. In the upstream passage a large net was spotted high up the wall - evidence of the large amount of water that used to flow down this passage (and still can - see 16th). Taking the left hand fork took us to small cascade, where we called it a

day, and headed out, quite satisfied with 350m of surveying. Not bad for our first day. Meanwhile, Toby had found a luminous millipede whilst sitting in the dark holding a flashgun. Brendan had managed to capture the creature on the camera. Despite being a bit chilly in all that water, Bruno had enjoyed himself immensely saying it was "the most adventurous thing" he had ever done in Belize. He then shared his picnic with us and after the previous night's meal of "green" and a breakfast of porridge, we wolfed it down telling him he could come again anytime.

(Nicky, Andy)

Wed 12 March 2008

Nicky, Russell, Andy and Rich

We headed back down Tiger Cave to continue the exploration of Roaring River. Downstream from where we had left off, there was a waterfall inlet, which Andy just about managed to climb up, reporting it led to another swim and climb/cascade (still an open lead). The climb needed a rope to negotiate safely, so the inlet was not explored further. A little way on we reached the expected sump. The right hand lead, where the downstream passage split was surveyed for approx 100m to another sump, and a further pretty side passage to a perched sump. The rock was really brittle and extremely sharp, and most of us sustained cuts to shins and hands when footholds suddenly gave way. Exited the cave and sat in the sun till Toby arrived

(Nicky, Andy)



Sun 16 March 2008

Al, Paul, Toby, Phil

Plans to climb the waterfall were halted, when on arriving and calling in to see Jeff at the office, we found that the turbines had been shut down for maintenance. With the water rapidly reaching towards the limit of the reservoir before it overflows into the cave, we decided that we would rather leave the climb for the future and have a future ourselves. Apparently it spends most of the wet season using the overflow as well as the turbine route.

San Jose

This was the first area visited by Phil and Al back in 2001, with limited success, though one cave, locally called Gibnut Cave, was explored. Two pitches were descended, at the lowest point of the cave running water was heard beyond a mud bank, alone and too hot it has not been followed up. This may be the highest point that the Columbia system has been encountered?

Edward Central

During the set up phase Toby and Gary had met Emraguildo in San Antonio, he claimed to have a friend who had recently found some caves while out hunting.

Wed 5th March 2008

Al, Rich, Nicky, Russ

After two stops to fill the vehicle with water we were dropped on the trail with a maximum of 45minute walk to San Jose, an hour and a half later we were very grateful of the cup of tea we received at Valentino's house.

The trail took us out on a route past Union camp and on towards Edwards central, on the way we past a 15m shaft next to the trail. After our interest in this cave Valentino remembered more caves nearby. Rich entered one though it did not continue far.

We were surprised when our jungle trail appeared on a logging road, when our guides became a little sheepish as it would have been possible to get a vehicle to where we were thinking it was going to be a remote camp. Instead we found a logging camp of a dozen men and a Belize Army patrol all camped in the same area, making it feel very busy.

It seemed the guides had planned a nice jungle experience for us as tourists, not what we had been expecting! Long chats over the campfire seemed to let them know what we were after, we hoped.



Thur 6 March 2008

AI

Retreated early due to injury, managing to get a lift with Mr Yung who ran the logging camp, gathering bits of information on the caves in the area. Eventually hobbled back to base and got on with a busy exped, sitting in a hammock.

Nicky, Rich, Russell
Guides: Valentino, Emraguildo

Our guide Valentino took us to 2 large depressions relatively close to the sawmill. The first location looked really promising, but as we got down to the rock face, it was plain to see that there was no cave. Valentino pointed out the ruined remains of a Mayan fire oven, and we saw a rather timid tarantula. The second site was little better, and had a small burial chamber with some Mayan finger bones on a low stone altar. There was an abundance of fossilized stal on rock overhangs. A large silt floored chamber led to a mud slope, which was too steep to descend without a rope. A continuation couldn't be ruled out without another visit with equipment, but it didn't look too promising.

(Nicky)

They all appeared late in the evening looking very tired and dishevelled having had a lift for several hours on the top of a lorry load of roughly sawn timber, splinters aplenty.



Monday 10th March

Al, Phil, Nicky, Brendan

With the intention of following up some of the leads in the area we set out at 6am with Stephen and his truck on loan from Rob at the Big Falls lodge.

Stopping twice on the loggers road, bulldozed last year, from Jimmy Cut to Edward Central. Memories of original expeditions, faffing about with poor information, where you could be standing next to a cave and still not spot it.

We located some small muddy sinks, then on the next stop, luckily, a hunter came by who confirmed the cave mentioned was Gibnut cave explored in 2001, but never GPS'd, though another 45 minutes we left it for the future.

Our main objective was going back along the trail towards San Jose and a shaft we had walked past previously.



Ego Pot

Descended to the end of the rope we'd carried, quickly, Stephen fetched a spare rope from the truck, going there and back in the time it took us to go one way, without breaking a sweat!

18m pitch from surface. Small hole at bottom cleared of flood debris, leads to body sized tube. Appearing to be all one large rift a 15m free climb continues down the rift to loose platform over continuation of rift. This was not descended being narrow with some very threatening boulders above. Approx 20m further down could be seen but it appears too narrow.

(Phil)

Santa Elena/ Santa Cruz

6th March

Toby, Brendan, Andy, Gary, Phil
Guides: Elitario and son

Up at 6.00am and off to Santa Cruz to find a guide. He took us down from Santa Cruz, across the river Rio Blanco and on up towards the narrow valley with the stone path, an old logging road towards Blue Creek. The cave was up on the hill on the left and was called Rock Path and/or Rock Patch Cave. Approx 1 hour 30 from Santa Cruz.

Soldier cave

Brendan climbed up the back wall into a 'long' cave that didn't go anywhere.

Rocky Patch Cave

Very old cave full of crumbling stal and curtains. Minor bits of pottery. Cave recently explored by Keith Prufer and Wichita University. Survey stations marked throughout cave and reflectors can be followed for an obvious route through the cave. Second entrance found beyond Gour Pool, with pottery bowl. Andy climbed a rift by the second entrance that led into further passage with no way on.

On the way back we checked out the sink nearby, Brendan and Gary spent half an hour crawling around in some immature cave passages with small bats flying around them.

(Phil, Andy, Gary)



Salamanca

Black Creek / Patrick's Cave

Sat 8 March 2008

Nicky, Rich, Russell, Andy, Al
Guide: Emraguildo

Our guide Emraguildo had promised to take us to a large river cave not far off the road to the sawmill. The route through the jungle down into the entrance shake hole was very overgrown with brambles, and it took a great deal of hacking and sharpening of machetes before we reached the bottom. Sure enough, there was a large river cave at the bottom. Al confirmed that this was a site that had already been visited a couple of years ago, but was not surveyed. Al knew the cave as "Patrick's Cave" named after the guide who showed them the entrance, whilst Emraguildo called it "Black Creek Cave" The steep entrance led down to a couple of hundred metre section of river cave between 2 sumps. The cave was surveyed and location gps'd.

(Nicky)

The Underground River Columbia

16th March

We had stopped to talk with Patricio, in Salamanca, on a previous journey through the village. As a recommended local guide with good knowledge of the jungle, we had heard about him over several years. He had talked of a window into the river below, with the standard story of logs being put in there to transport them to the Columbia River and the Sea. This was close to the village just up a side branch of the dry river bed.

When we turned up to visit this site though, he was injured and not keen on leading, so this lead remains!

Pueblo Viejo Area

The village of Pueblo Viejo lies towards the extreme end of the road at the end of Belize so feels very remote. The road does continue a short way further towards the border, though the crossing, which is uncontrolled, has to be completed on foot and is a popular route for local Belizeans to take advantage of cheaper goods from Guatemala. In 2006 we were asked to visit some sites in this area to follow up some cave sites identified by Trekforce, a British organisation who had been doing some work in the area.

The first trip led to a very impressive River Arch, which was quite impressive in its own right, though dwarfed by the Pueblo Creek Cave around the corner, described separately. Higher up the river, which is dry for long sections in the dry season, were several waterfalls, with some small cave features around them.

There was also much talk of a cave 45 minutes from the village, which had contained many artefacts, removed by the Army, and with a bottomless pit at the back. An attempt to reach this was thwarted when the guide admitted he didn't know the way two hours in, when we were enjoying the view from the top of a hill. On the way back some small caves and a short shaft were explored.

Several sites were explored in this area as we managed to develop some excellent guides.

Pueblo Quarry Cave

1st March

The cave is about 200 metres further down the hill from the actual quarry, following the obvious path.

Small limestone pinnacle / hill on the right hand side contains small entrance 2m high, visible from the path.

Cave is low stooping passage for approx 30 metres to a fork. Right terminates after another 10 metres, left continues over small holes to an ascending low crawl, heading to surface.

A few small crawls and rifts unexplored but nothing of note to pursue further.

Minor formations and a lot of Gibnut tracks.

(Phil)

45 Minute Cave / Jaguar Print Cave / Pueblo Cave

5th March

Phil, Andy, Brendan and Toby

This cave is well known to the locals and tourist operators, most often referred to as 'the shafts' in the jungle or with references to a bottomless pit.

Impressive entrance leads to 2 conjoined chambers. All contain very old stals. Small crawl / climb up leads to another chamber with pitch. Locals believe it was never descended due to the 'Jaguar' that was alleged to be stuck at the bottom. Obvious boss 2 metres back for rigging. Pitch is approx. 20 metres split by a ledge. Although no obvious evidence of previous exploration, the boss appears to have rope marks.

At bottom of 20m pitch is smaller pitch of 18m. At the base of the shaft is a small gravel through a choke, but there was no draught and it did not look promising.

(Phil)

British Army Cave

5th March

Phil, Andy, Brendan and Toby

Locals refer to this as cave that pottery was removed from, and the one containing a Jade Figurine (although long gone).

Below the main entrance is a smaller rock shelter, often used as campsite.

The Main entrance is approx 10m higher. Small crawl leads to a number of interconnected chambers, approx 100m in total.

(Phil)

Big Cave

5th March

Phil, Andy, Brendan and Toby

Large but short cave with lots of Calcite formations. Took photos.

(Andy)

Shaft near Pueblo Creek

8th March

Phil, Gary, Toby, Brendan, Andy, Onarato

Approx 20 metres from main Pueblo Creek entrance. Short crawl leads almost immediately to steep slope down.

Slope can be free climbed with care. Approx 5 metres with 2m free hang at bottom. Small chamber at the bottom with no way on.

Above top of climb is exposed traverse too a loose platform above the pitch. A smaller chamber is visible across an even more exposed traverse. Possible drop / pitch visible but not promising.

(Phil, Gary)

Toucan Cave

8th March

Massive impressive cliff face contains large rock shelter, very old pottery present. Narrow to small crawl at the bottom, which soon becomes boulder choke. Choke emerges into large decorated chamber. Approx 200m in total. Rock shelter well known, but appeared that no one had ever been past the boulder choke.

(Phil, Gary)

9th March

Al, Toby

Surveyed cave.



PV Sinks

12th March

Swiss Cheese

Largish sinks with 2 parallel shafts. Lot of bats, 2nd shaft undescended but all appears to be same hole

(Phil)

Tree Cave

100m+ network of low crawls. Nothing of any interest and no obvious way on. Evidence of digging near the entrance

(Phil)

Fig Tree Cave

Approx 222m in total. Small stream cave with 3 entrances and would appear to be very active in wet season. Small side passage near entrance opens to small chamber with very clean washed tube into 4m pitch. Possibly free climbable, Undescended, worth a look if in the area again.

(Phil)

Fig Tree Cave II

Not far from first cave, unexplored. Guide states 15 minutes walking inside.

(Phil)

Rock Shelter Cave

Very large cave, 50 m high at least but ends round the corner with a second entrance. Some evidence of pottery.

Large rock shelter round the corner

(Phil)



Pueblo Creek cave

The discovery of this cave was one of the highlights of the 2006 trip; a team of four hitched a lift out to the village of Pueblo Viejo. Then faced with the challenge of getting to the site, despite having 10 figure grid references, finding the correct trails through the Milpas are near impossible. After some time wandering the start of various paths, a boy from one of the farms, Alexandro, took us to the dry river. From there the cave entrance was easily located.

Though the initial discoverers were frustrated by a pitch a short way in, a second team returned, rigged this and started surveying the massive flood system below.

The final trip into this cave in 2006 involved the whole team, who continued as far down stream as time allowed, progress being slowed by the amounts of standing water encountered and limited flotation available. Eventually we were halted by a jumble of tree trunks leaving us suspended 30 feet above the floor with the cave echoing into the distance.

A main objective of the 2008 trip was continuing the exploration of this cave, probably involving camping at or in the cave, as it is nearly a 2-hour journey by truck and walk from base.

Two teams visited the cave on the 9th of March. Nicky Andy and Brendan were heading to a large chamber with a surveying and photography mission.

A second team of Rich, Russ and Gary were going to continue to the limit of exploration and continue surveying from there, this team set up camp at the entrance allowing them to use all the time they wished.

Sun 9 March 2008

Nicky, Brendan and Andy

Objective: to photograph and survey the large chamber at the previous limit of exploration (2006).

A short wade through a stagnant pool led to another collapsed shake hole, and the imposing mouth of the cave. Creamy coloured rock merged with slippery Moonmilk, and you were never sure which was underfoot. A hundred metres or so of this was followed by a 60 ft free hanging pitch, which dropped into an impressive chamber with a waterfall. Following this was an extremely unpleasant wade/swim through a foul smelling pool which bubbled underfoot as you sank down into the soft mud below, whilst fending off floating logs on the surface. From here on the cave grew to grandiose proportions, and after a few long swims beneath massive black tree trunks wedged menacingly in the roof, we reached the "chamber of enormity" This was really just an extremely large dry bend in the passage which swept around to rejoin the stream way below. We took some photos, had a scout around, and took some measurements rather hurriedly, as we were cutting it short on our return meet time with Toby and Al.

(Nicky)



Gary, Russ and Rich

We made good progress to the previous limit reached in 2006 and then pushed on. The previous log jam had diminished and the passage continued as a set of circular chambers with deep water in. The route included some tricky climbs and a descending pitch. Eventually we broke through into a major chamber – Lobster Chamber, named after the lobster we encountered immediately as we crossed the entrance pool.

It just got bigger and bigger and Russ and I were over-excited as we dashed through the cave, leaving Rich exploring a large ascending side passage. After meeting up again, the 3 of us decided to go a short distance into the large passage beyond the chamber and then survey back. We could only take a line survey through the chamber and undertook a full survey through the pots.

We left it as an open lead in stonking walking river passage. The surveying was slick and steady, if a little slow. Some of the climbs back up became interesting – especially when Rich broke the only hold off one climb, leaving me to scabble my way up after him with his help up at the top.

We were out at 8.40pm, tired and very pleased. After an entertaining time sorting out Russ's hammock, we finally got to sleep around 10.30pm

(Gary)

A second trip to this cave occurred on the 17th of March. The bulk of the team had established camp at the entrance the previous evening and were planning to stop a second night as well.

They split into two underground teams, with Russ, Rich and Nicky surveying Lobster Chamber, while Andy, Paul and Brendan were going to photograph it.

Al and Phil led the first tourist trip into the cave, taking Bruno one of our local contacts and a recent caving convert, since he was on the Tiger cave pushing trip. Al had spent most of the previous weeks lounging in his hammock since injuring his knee at Esperanza; luckily the cave was large enough for walking poles. With their aid as well as plenty of drugs and assistance from Phil, we reached Lobster Chamber.



Mon 17 March 2008

Nicky, Rich, Russell

The previous trip into Pueblo Creek had surveyed a line straight through the large chamber (Lobster Chamber), we set off to have a better look around and survey the area properly. Whilst surveying we found yet another huge chamber off the main one, which was very well decorated. Large coral heads of calcite fanned upwards like giant fir cones, and huge stalagmite statues and totems were interspersed with fine mud formations. We named this the crystal maze. Surveying these immense chambers took some time, and it was getting late. When Russell found a small inlet to the main stream, he almost considered not mentioning it to Rich just so we wouldn't have to survey it. Rich followed the inlet up to find a sump after a short distance, but couldn't persuade myself or Russell, to crawl up to survey it. This was suitably named mutiny inlet, and we began to head out of the cave. It was quite tiring swimming along the pools with little buoyancy, and it also proved difficult to get out of the water in some places where the sides of the passageway were particularly steep. We exited after a 14 hours underground, and to our surprise, found that the other team were still in the cave.

It was another hour before they arrived, with tales of more swimming, grand formations, another unexplored inlet and fine open stream way at the end, still going strong. They had surveyed approx. 750m.

(Nicky)

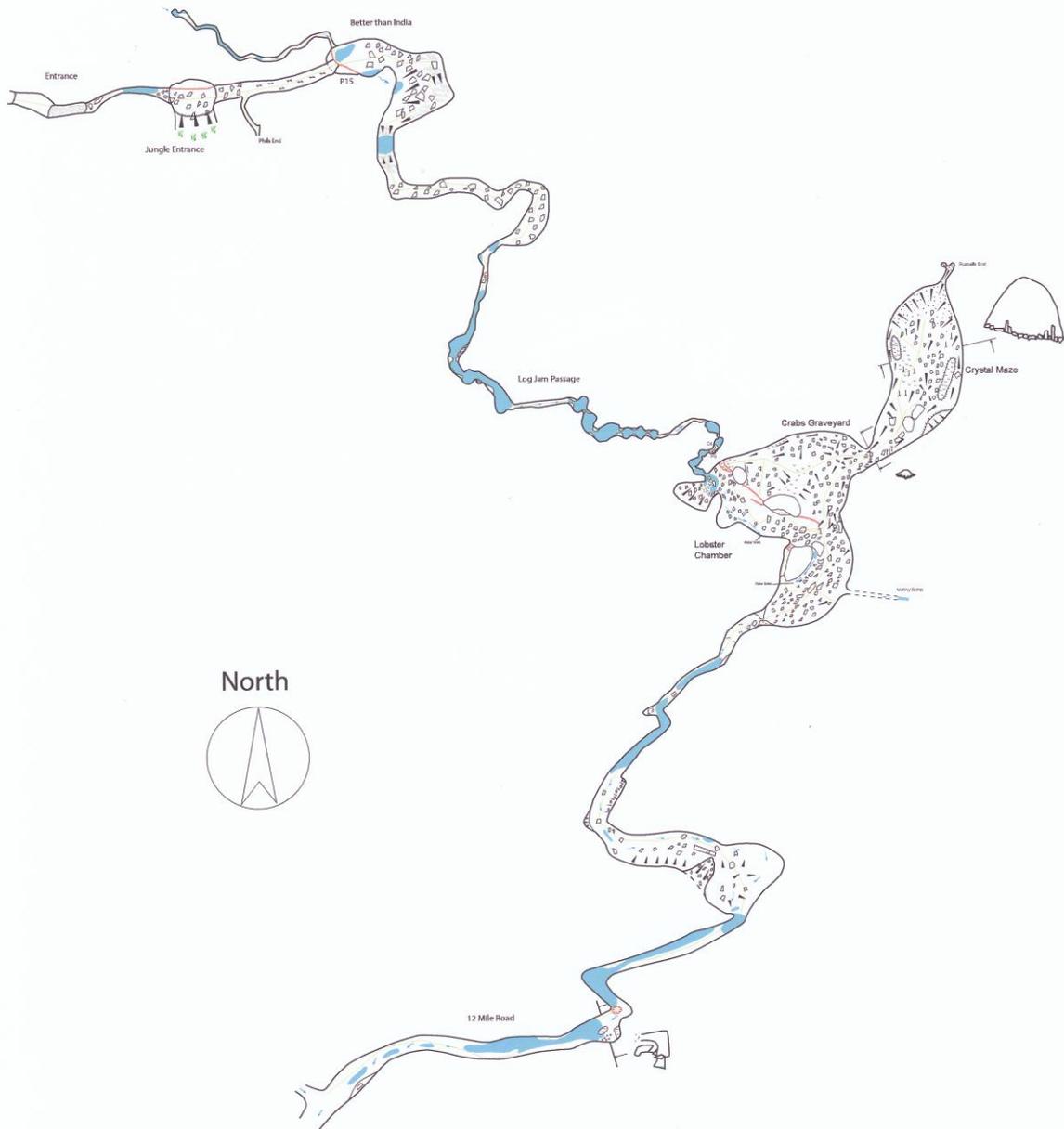
Andy, Brendan, Paul

Brendan took photographs while Paul and Andy moved flashes and bulbs around the big chamber. The biggest problem was getting enough light – with only three of us we could not set off many bulbs.

After this we continued to survey the downstream passage. I took a small amount of photography equipment - as it turned out I needed more light as the passages were larger than expected. We surveyed for approximately 750m along a pleasant streamway – it was great not to have to do any more swimming as we found we could traverse easily along ledges or use stepping stones to cross the stream. At times the passage was much larger and including two impressive flowstones features, one huge one coming from an aven high in the ceiling (too large for me to photograph). The cave down here looked clean, there was no organic debris or mud. About 18.00 we reached a sizeable inlet which we explored for about 80m, to a pool. This passage contained mud unlike our main passage and may not be that far from a sink. The passage was left unsurveyed and continues. Downstream from the junction the easy streamway goes down a c.7m climb (steep but solid with big handholds) and continues off into the distance. The junction seemed an obvious point to finish surveying so we headed out, taking a few photographs on the way and exiting the cave at 22.30. It was great to get the wet clothes off, not so good to put wet ones back on, as it had rained heavily for a time while we were down and some of my kit had got wet. Bruno had left some more decent food for us which was very welcome.



Pueblo Creek Cave, Pueblo Viejo, Belize



Scale (10m)
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

Drawn By: R Hudson
 Surveyed in 2008 by: N Bayley, R Brooks, P Christy, G Evans, R Hudson, A Livingston
 Surveyed in 2006 by: B Marns, A Braybrook, T Dryden, G Evans, D Heward, P Walker, R Williams, DW

Other Areas

Lying between Punta Gorda and the highlands are a number of limestone peaks, rising from the coastal plains, always looking interesting and with local stories about caves, they have limited potential due to their proximity to sea level

Caliente, Laguna

Tues 11th March 2008

Nicky, Rich, Phil, Al

Our guide, Senator met us at his father in law's, we left as rapidly as possible without having to buy baskets or anything else he wanted to sell us. We soon left the road and the van bounced along towards the distant hills. My vague memories of the map that this area was called the Caliente swamp which contained no paths through was eventually confirmed when we confronted a lake, having waded through vile smelling mud, with wild fires burning around us and having to duck far to close to the mud when a swarm of killer bees flew overhead.



Fri 14th March 2008

Russ, Toby, Phil, Al

Following the horror and failure experienced last time we decided to work it out for ourselves having heard plenty about the caves there.

Driving to the far side of the swamp we got into the village of Laguna, where we started questioning, the school bad boys, out burning rubbish. They gave us good directions, a wooden ladder gave access to a nice but well visited cave, complete with a plank to sit on and enjoy the view out of a window above the village.

We surveyed out before we managed to climb into a lower chamber, much less visited containing with several pottery shards and some nice stal.

Criquet Sarco

Friday 7th March, 2008

Gary, Andy, Brendan, Toby

Up at 5.45am and away at 6.30am with Cesario and Rosario to Criquet Sarco to look at caves on their daughter's husband's land. A long journey down in the back of the truck on a very hot day.

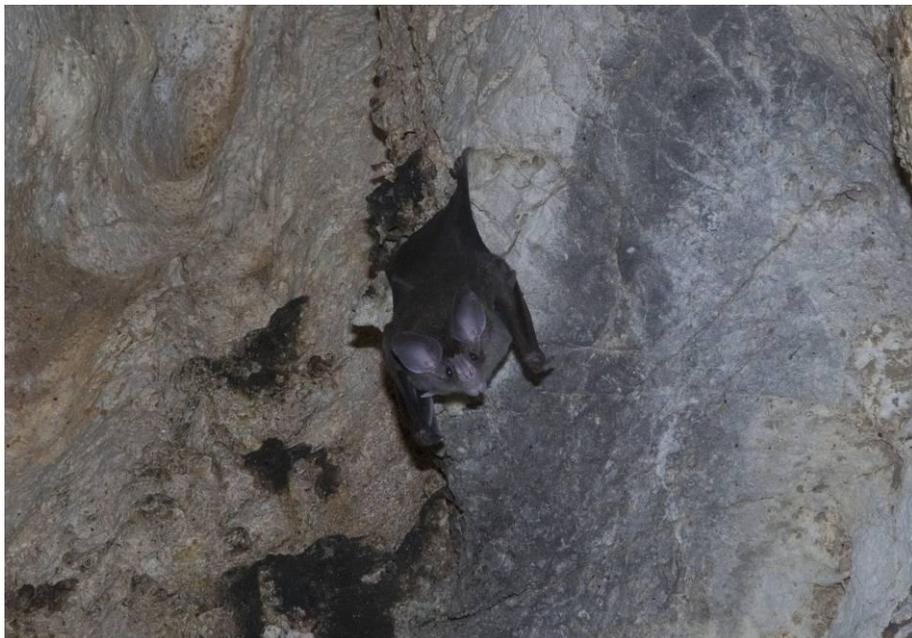
We were taken by 3 guides for a 45 minute walk to some small limestone hillocks. The first hole went no-where, though bats came out and waited for us to go, clinging high up to a nearby tree. The second hole was bigger and led to a series of crawlways leading on to a chamber around 20 metres long. There were some scary scratch marks in the mud flows on the floor, the work of some large creature with oh too big paws.

The third hole led to what was described by the guides as the 'big cave'. It consisted of disappointedly short and man sized passages in an old relict cave. The one saving grace was the fantastic Woolly Vampire Bats roosting there, this was a bit disconcerting as the passages were not that big, not big enough to comfortably share with a bat that has a 2 ½ foot wing span.

The area is quite low lying so we were not too optimistic about finding anything major.

We headed back to Cesario's Daughter's house for a bowl of rice and the on back to base in the hot mid afternoon, managing to seriously overheat the truck on the way.

(Gary, Andy)



Summary

Finally Esperanza Camp was reached, though no open passage was discovered. It is an area of massive features and there are still going leads in the area, with information on more. Exploration in this area will be limited by its remote nature, until a time when the trails are open enough to permit mules, as they have in the past, or a helicopter can be used to get sufficient supplies and equipment in.

Significant finds were made in the Pueblo Creek Cave, with another 2km of passage and the massive and beautiful Lobster Chamber. This cave continued, the team having to turn back from huge open walking passage.

Interesting information was received about large systems to the South, which could be then connected to this cave.

Tiger Cave, with a significant amount of its water diverted into a Hydro Electric scheme, had its Roaring River explored which so far has revealed several hundred metres of exciting river cave.

Many other sites were visited and though no major finds were made, some fine caves were entered, located and surveyed.

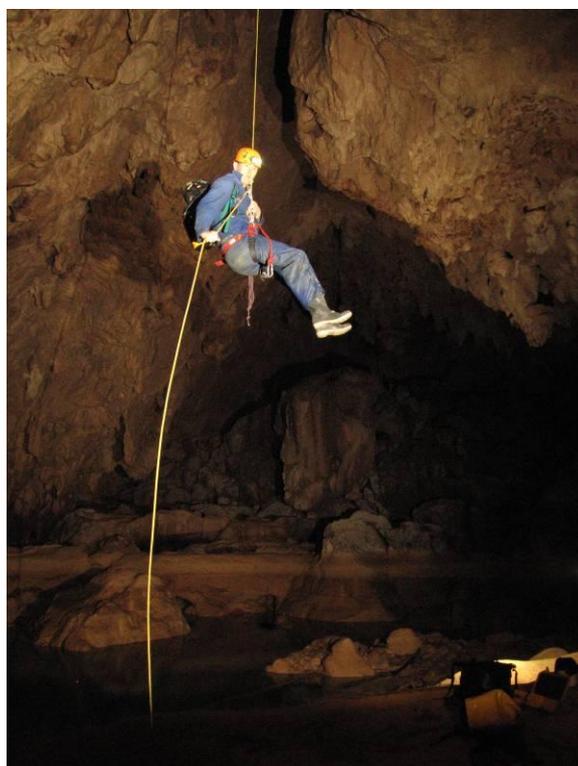
Our knowledge of the region has been further improved and we now have better contacts than ever, who will be invaluable to future work in the area.

Appendices

Expedition log

Date	Locations	Team	Hours
23 rd Feb	Travel UK to USA	GE, PW, TD, AB.	-
24 th	USA to Belize City	GE, PW, TD, AB.	-
25 th	BC to Punta Gorda Via Belmopan, permits	TD, PW. AB, GE.	- 2
26 th	PG to San Pedro	GE, PW, TD, AB.	-
27 th	San Antonio/ Santa Cruz Pueblo Viejo/ Santa Elena	AB, PW. TD, GE.	6 6
28 th	SP & PG	GE, PW, TD, AB.	8
29 th	Rio Grande bridge to San Miguel SP	GE, PW. TD, AB.	18 4
1 st March	Pueblo Quarry Cave Pueblo Creek Cave	TD, PW. GE, AB.	10 10
2 nd	Esperanza camp	AB, PW, GE.	177
3 rd	Esperanza Camp Team arrive, Columbia Resurgence	AB, PW, GE. TD, BM, AL, RH, RB, NB.	Above -
4 th	Esperanza Camp return Tiger Cave, Roaring River	AB, PW, GE. TD, BM, AL, RH, RB, NB, Bruno.	Above 54
5 th	San Jose Camp PV, 45 min cave etc Rest	AB, NB, RB, RH. PW, TD, AL BM GE.	125 38 -
6 th	San Jose Camp Santa Cruz, Rocky Patch Cave	AB, NB, RB, RH. PW, TD, AL BM, GE	Above 45
7 th	Criquet Sarco Rest	TD, BM, AL, GE. AB, PW, RH, NB, RB.	24 -
8 th	Salamanca, Patrick's Cave PC, caves by entrance	NB, RB, RH, AB, AL. GE, PW, TD, BM.	45 36
9 th	PC, Toucan Cave Pueblo Creek Cave, camping. Photography and survey	AB, TD RH, RB, GE NB, BM, AL	18 87 35
10 th	Edwards Central PC, camp and pick up Ill	PW, NB, BM, AB. RB, GE, RH, TD AL.	36 Above -
11 th	Caliente Swamp Rest	NB, PW, RH, AB. TD, GE, BM, RB, AL.	8 -
12 th	SC, Sinks Tiger cave, Roaring River Leaving for UK Injured	TD, PW, BM. RH, RB, AL, NB. GE AB	25.5 32 - -

13 th	Cumbres camp PV, Rock shelter cave etc. Injured	RH, AL, BM, NB. PW, TD, RB. AB.	76 21 -
14 th	Laguna, Caliente Cave Cumbres camp	RB, PW, AB, TD. RH, AL, BM, NB.	16 96
15 th	Cumbres camp, return Rest Arrive from UK	RH, AL, BM, NB. RB, PW, AB, TD. PC	48 - -
16 th	Salamanca and Tiger Cave Pueblo Creek camp	AB, TD, PW, PC NB, BM, RB, RH, AL, PC	16 54
17 th	Pueblo Creek Cave, tourist Survey Photography	AB, PW, Bruno. RH, RB, NB. AL, PC, BM.	14 72 72
18 th	PG bank and admin Pueblo Creek return	AB, TD, PW TD, RH, RB, NB. AL, PC, BM.	6 86
19 th	Travel to BC Presentation to BTA	PW, RH, RB, NB, BM, AL. TD, PC, AB	- 6
20 th	Belize City	Whole team	-
21 st	Expedition ends	-	-
Total man hours worked			1432.5



Grid locations

A full listing of Grid References from the Belize Expeditions of 2001, 2002 and 2006 were provided in the 2006 Report. The list below summarises Grid References taken during the 2008 Expedition.

Area	Date	Site name	Grid ref	Notes	
Laguna/Caliente	14/3/08	Caliente Cave	All grid references removed at request of Belize Institute of Archaeology (IA)	20m off entrance	
Pueblo Creek	08/3/08	Toucan Cave			
	13/3/08	Rock Shelter Cave			
Salamanca	08/3/08	Patricks Cave			
Esperanza Columbia	03/3/08	Esperanza sink			501m alt
		Cave with no name			
		Place with no name			Potential
	15/3/08	Champon			79m
		Gibnut skull cave			91m
		Cumbres			429m
	16/3/08	Lagunita			79m?
		El Tigre camp			415m
		Dead Parrot shaft			484m
Rio Grande	29/2/08	RG bridge			
		Sink 1			
		Sink 2			
		Sink 3			
Santa Cruz	12/3/08	2 parallel shafts			approx 10m
		Tree cave			approx 100m
		Fig tree cave			200m 3 entrances
		Cave 3			un-entered as above
Union Camp Jimmy Cut Edward Central	5/3/08	Ego Pot			
		Rich's Cavern			
	6/3/08	Collapse sink			
		Large rock shelter			burial?

Photography

For cave photography I used a Canon S70 compact camera (7.1MP) in a waterproof housing. The aging camera was a bit temperamental but the waterproof housing allowed it to be used in the wetter parts of the caves.

I used a variety of electronic flashes which worked fine apart from one firefly becoming unreliable, this turned out to be a poor connection within the unit. Flashes were kept in small clear Ortlieb bags where possible, whilst not waterproof if immersed it did allow the flash to be handled with wet hands.

Flashguns – Vivitar 285, Vivitar 283, Metz 45CL and a small Pentax 160. I used rechargeable batteries which I charged back at the base.

The slaves were all firefly 2 units mounted on hotshoes so they could be switched between flashguns.

Equipment was transported in a mixture of dry bags, Darren drums and a pelicase. The dry bags were fine to keep water off the flashes but leaked on immersion in water, the Darren drum worked except for one trip where it was used as a float and was therefore forced underwater, it leaked slightly. It may have been the lid was not tight enough but it seemed OK at the time. The pelicase was totally reliable but relatively bulky.

I took some 5B flash bulbs which were used with Brendan's flashguns to light bigger chambers.

As I was not using bulbs I did not use a tripod.

Outside shots were taken with a Canon 5D. The occasional cave photography shot was taken using this camera with the Pentax 160 flash to trigger the other flashes.

All pictures were taken as RAW files allowing more chance of recovering poorly lit areas using Photoshop without losing quality.

(Andy)



Finances

	Flights	£650 X 10		£6500
	Insurance	£81 X 9		£738
A	Accommodation	\$3518Bz	£1172	
B	Guiding	\$1550Bz	£516	
C	Transport	\$2838Bz	£946	
	Food	\$309Bz	£103	
D	Additional Belize	\$291Bz	£97	
E	Additional UK			£150
Totals	Field/ UK		£2836	£7388
Total	Before report production	£10224		

A: Accommodation

Hotels \$888Bz 23-person nights, (B.C. and P.G.)
 Villages \$2630Bz 165-person nights Inc evening meal.

Total \$3518Bz

B: Guiding

31 guide days at \$50Bz per day

Total \$1550Bz

C: Transport

Taxi	361	
Bus	381	
Vehicle hire	1225	
Drivers	225	
Fuel	646	
	\$2838Bz	£946

D: Additional Belize;

Included purchase of base camp furniture, tips, phone cards and shopping, some of which would have been food

E: Additional UK;

Medical supplies	£20
Map scanning and software	£80
Gifts to Bruno	£20
T Shirts	£30
Total	£150

Permission

All cave exploration in Belize falls within the jurisdiction of the Department of Archaeology who control access. This is due to the significance that caves played in the Maya beliefs and the artefacts that maybe encountered within caves. To prevent theft or remains from being destroyed by ignorance, permission must be obtained from the DoA. This needs to be initiated before reaching Belize but usually involves a visit to the offices in Belmopan.

Additionally, permission to camp in the Jungle and Forest Areas must be obtained from the Forest Department before heading into the jungle areas. There may be charge for this, depending upon whom you meet in Belmopan.

Transport and travel

Flights to Belize at present all route through US hubs, though with the recent extension of Phillip Goldson Airport there may be flights from the UK direct. There are many deals usually available, depending when bought and who through. As a short night stopover in the US is usually involved, a ticket including a hotel is good. Though a night in snowy New York in our tropical gear, next to an all night coffee stand, surrounded by tramps was a fine experience.

Once in Belize there is an excellent network of buses linking the country, cheap but time consuming, though a great way to see the place and people.

Vehicle hire; Belize has a massive weighting on prices geared to tourists, with vehicles at the airport too shiny for expedition work and very expensive.

Even in PG an older vehicle will still cost \$150Bz per day, in the villages a private arrangement can be made, for \$50-75Bz.

Pickups are the preferred transport except when enjoying another wet dry season.

They also give the opportunity to give lifts as hitchhiking is a common form of transport and helps to become integrated.



Accommodation

Living in the communities is difficult, often we are sources of entertainment with people sat in our room watching us and there were always numerous children around. Children crying, dogs, chickens and music can all lead to slightly disturbed nights sleep.



Guiding

With many of the locals farming or hunting, there is a vast pool of information available. Previously we had little difficulty arranging this, though following the hurricane more people seem to have taken on normal jobs and were also busy fixing damage to homes or farms damaged by its effects. Though there were many people who claimed to know of sites, finding people with the time was a problem. We used a number of guides throughout the expedition, with variable results. However some locations would have been impossible to find without them.

One thing we did find is that the locals have little concept of time or distance. Sites that were claimed to be 'just down the road and left at the second bridge' would be 8 kilometres away and after 10 bridges. Likewise, people telling us that they went to a place last year, actually went there 5 or 6 years ago!

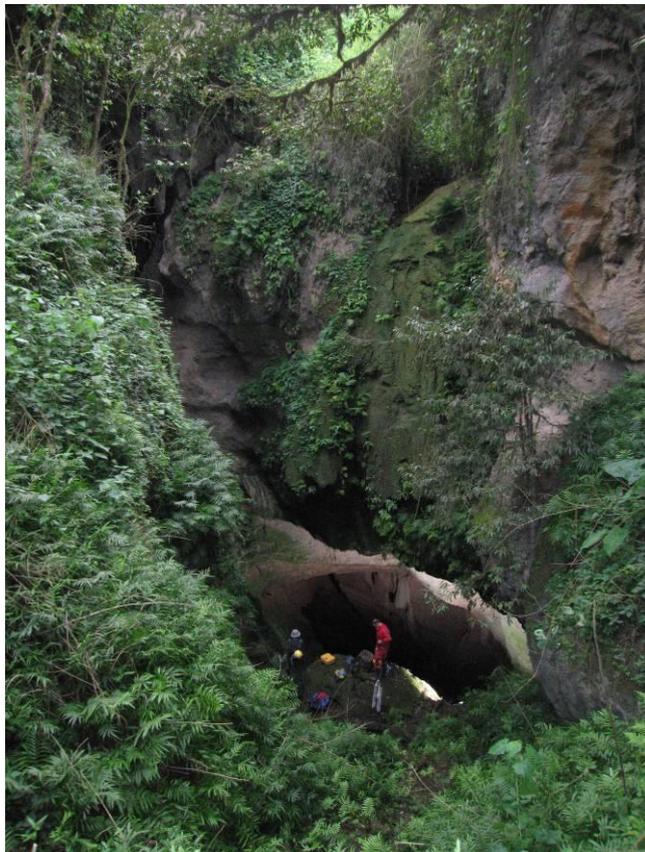
Medical

Before leaving, details of necessary inoculations were obtained from GP's, the cost varying from surgery to surgery. The largest expense was to cover for Rabies and required a month to work. Advice on requirements was provided to Team members by the expedition Medical Officer (MO) and medical questionnaire and next of kin questionnaires were completed for all Team members before departure.

Anti-malarial drugs were obtained from chemists and were surprisingly cheap. Team members were responsible for their own regimes and were monitored by the MO to ensure that everyone was keeping their Malaria cover current.

In the field there were minor complaints, including bites and scratches, plus one or two infected blisters and cuts. This year again, there were a significant amounts of ticks picked up throughout the expedition. Individuals managed their own in the main, the MO dealing with some of the trickier ones. They did seem to choose some people more than others, the MO receiving only two himself, despite the 3 day trip into the Jungle, whilst some seemed plagued by a large number of them.

The use of re-hydration sachets helped at the end of hard days and prevented any serious cases of dehydration. Team members carried up to 4 litres of water each day, but even this wasn't enough on the longer days and everyone was encouraged to properly re-hydrate in the evenings.



Base Camp Medical Kit – Belize 2008

Airways	2
Antiseptic Wipes – Mediwipes	40
Bandage - Open Weave 5cm x 5m	1
Bandage - Open Weave 7.5cm x 5m	1
Bandages - 10cm Crepe	3
Bandages – 5cm Crepe	2
Bandages – Triangular	3
Betadine – Spray	1
Cervical collar	1
Container for Kit	1
Cotton wool balls	10
Cotton wool tipped sticks	10
Dental repair kits	1
Disinfectant for utensils.	1
Dressing – Finger	2
Dressing – padded plaster for Blisters	1 box
Eye Bath	1
Eye pads – sterile	2
Eye Solution – Optrex	1
Giving Set	1
Gloves – Surgical	3 pairs
Injection Kit – Syringes and needles & Venflon	5
Insulation Tape	1
Melolin 10 x 10cm	10
Melolin 20 x 10cm	1
Melolin 5 x 5cm	2
Micropore tape	2
Nit Comb	1
Normasol Irrigation solution	1
Paraffin Gauze Dressing 10x10	2
Plasters - Assorted Elastoplast dressings	1 box
Safety Pins	12
Salt	1
Scissors	1
Shampoo Prioderm 25g	2
Steristrips - 6mm x 75mm	1 pack
Thermometers (they break very easily)	1
Tisept Sachets	4
Transpore	1
Tulle Dressing	2
Tweezers	1
VentAid	1
Wound dressing – small No.8	3
Wound dressings – large No. 3	1
Wound dressings – medium No.9	2
Zinc Oxide Tape	1

Drugs & Medicines

Amoxicillin 500mg	20
Aspirin Tablets	6
Buccastem	10
Codeine Phosphate 30mg	10
Cold & Flue Remedy	3
Cuprofloxacin	20
Dextrose Tablets	1
Dioralyte sachets or tablets for rehydration	20
Ear Drops - Otoprin 10ml	1
EpiPen	1
Eye drops sachets - Amethocaine	2
Flagyl tablets 500mg for Intestinal Diseases	30
Gaviscon tablets	20
Ibuprofen 400mg	10
Immodium tablets	1 box
Metronidazole 400mg	20
Paracetamol Tablets	6
Piriton tablets or Benadryl	20
Sennokot tablets	10
Throat lozenges - Hibtane or Bradosol antiseptic	10
Throat Lozenges – Strepsils	6
Tums or Settlers	1
Voltarol – Diclofenac	10

Creams / Tubes

Antihistamine Cream - Caladryl cream 42g tubes	2
Antiseptic Cream – Germaline or Savlon	2 tubes
Canestan ointment 50g tubes for sweat rashes	1
Eye ointment Chloramphenicol 4g	1
Vaseline	1

Equipment

BELIZE 2008 COMMUNAL EQUIPMENT

Bolting kit x 2	Photography kit
Cooking Pans for Stoves x 3	Ration packs
Daren Drums x 2	Rope – 9, 10 or 10.5
Dinghy	Rope - 9mm Marlow LSK (50m)
Cordless Drill & Battery	Sewing Kit
Cordless Drill Battery Charger	Slings 16ft x 10
Expedition Report 2006 – Copy	Spits
Gaffa Tape	SRT Kits
GPS	SRT Rescue Gear
Hangers	Stove MSR Petrol x 2 or 3
Inner tubes - 2	Survey kit (Tape, Clino & Compass)
Kettle, Pots, Pans, Utensils	Tackle bags
Machetes – 2 & sharpening stone	Thru-bolts – 8mm x 20
Maillon Rapide 7mm Alloy x 10	Tin Openers
Map Cases	Water filtration pump
Maps of Belize	Washing up kit
Medical kit – Team	Waterproof Note pads



BELIZE 2008 PERSONAL EQUIPMENT

Aftersun	Money (US \$)
Baby wipes (wet wipes)	Mosquito Net & Coils (optional)
Batteries for Caving Lights	Mug
Belt, Caving - load bearing	Passport (with 6 clear months left)
Bin Bags / Plastic Bags	Pen Knife
Boots for jungle	Poly Prop Rope
Bum Bag	Powdered Milk
Camera (with spare batteries and film)	Reading material for journey
Caving Helmet with Lighting system	Rucksack and Waterproof liner
Caving Suit – lightweight or boilersuit	Sandals
Clothes for travelling	Shirts – long sleeved for jungle
Compass	Shorts
Copy of Passport main page	Sleeping bag liner/system
Credit Card	Sleeping mat – Karrimat or Thermarest
Dextrose Tablets	Socks
Diary / Notebook / Pencil or Pen	Spanner for Rigging / SRT Kit
Dry Bags for Caving Gear – Ortleib or equiv	SRT Kit
Dry seal bag for documents	Sunglasses and retainer strap
First Aid Kit – Personal	Sweets / snacks
Flight Tickets	Swimsuit
Food – Personal & additional to Group	Tea bags
Gloves – Cave (optional)	Toilet paper
Gloves – Jungle – for Macheteing	Tools
Hammock - Lightweight	Trekking Poles – optional
Hat – Wide brimmed and/or Bandanna	Trousers – long for jungle
Insurance documents	Underwear
Karabiners – Screwgate 2	Warm Hat
KFS & plate	Wash kit & towel
Knee/Elbow pads	Washing Powder
Lamp Bulbs – spare	Watch & spare or Alarm Clock
Lighting – spare (Mag light etc.)	Water - Platypus and Water bottle/s
Local contact details	Wellington Boots
Matches / Lighter	Wet Wipes
	Whistle

References

Previous Expedition Reports are available in the SWCC library and online at <http://www.adventurewales.com/links.html> :

Belize 2001
Belize 2002
Belize 2006

Below Belize, Queen Mary College Expedition to Belize 1988
And the British Speleological Expedition to Belize 1989

Belize '94

Mendip caving Group
c/o MCG, Nordrach cottage
Charterhouse, Blagdon, Bristol

Journal of Cave and Karst Studies

Aug1996 Vol58 no2
(Theme issue on Belize)
ISSN 0146-9517

International caving information
www.cavepage.magna.com.au/cave/belize.html

National Geographic, (Chiquibul Issue) and maps at
nationalgeographic.com

Maps of Belize

Large map of whole country two sheets
Published by Government UK (Directorate of Overseas Surveys)
Series D.O.S.649/1 North
Series D.O.S.649/1 South

Large-scale local maps

Military Survey UK, MoD
Series E755 (dos 4499) Sheet 38 San Pedro
Series E755 (dos 4499) Sheet 37 San Jose

Rough Guide

and

Lonely Planet guides

Contacts

Alan Braybrooke

Leader/Author

abraybrooke@hotmail.com

c/o SWCC 1-10 Powell St Penwylt, Pen-y-Cae, Powys

Gary Evans

Leader/Author

gary@swcro.fsnet.co.uk

c/o SWCC 1-10 Powell St Penwylt, Pen-y-Cae, Powys

Dept of Archaeology, Belmopan.

Mr G Thompson (minister),

Dr John Morris (research director)

00-501-8-22106 tel.

00-501-8-23345 fax

doabelize@btl.net

Ministry of Natural Resources + Environment, Market Square, Belmopan

Mapping section

08-22711

08-22249

Bruno Kuppinger

Accommodation & contact PG

Sun Creek Lodge. Toledo District, Belize CA

614 2080 ibtm@btl.net

Ian Anderson

Cave tourism and coordinates any cave rescue available.

822 2800 www.cavesbranch.com

Guides:

San Pedro

Ramon Pop

Marcello

Edwin Choco

San Antonio

Emergildo Ah

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San Jose

Valentino Chub

Santa Cruz

Elitario Mes

Pueblo Viejo

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