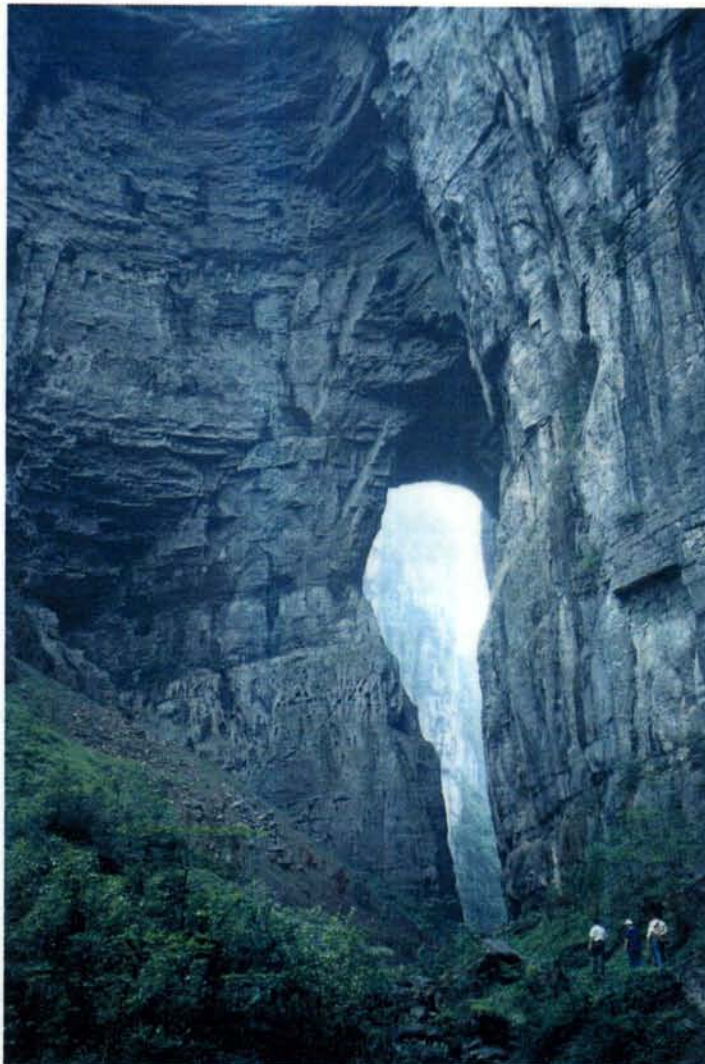


**CHINA CAVES PROJECT
WULONG COUNTY
2001 EXPEDITION**

重庆

Supported by Speleological Union of Ireland

武隆



江口

天星

CHINA CAVES 2001 REPORT

In June 2001 four SUI members (Anne Lynch, Eoghan Lynch, Conor McGrath and Owen Williams) joined a China Caves Project Expedition to Tian Xing, Wulong and Nan Tian Hu areas in the Chongqing Municipality. The expedition, led by Brian Judd, explored a number of vertical pots around the village of Tian Xing. Da Xiao Dong (-500m) and Ma Wan Keng caves provided some sporting caving consisting of numerous pitches through canyon style passages. In July 2001 the expedition moved onto Wulong and Nan Tian Hu and explored a number of spectacular natural bridges, shafts and caves.

The report is compiled from log book entries written during the expedition. Author names are shown in bold. All photographs are by Brian Judd unless stated and are copyrighted.



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重庆

Chongqing
Municipality

武隆

Wulong
County

江口

Jiang Kou
Town

天星

Tian Xing
Village

DA XIAO DONG AND MI DONG

DA XIAO DONG (Xiao Dong Ba, Chin Da Dong, Mega Dong) - Down the Doline

Erin Lynch, Chris Densham, Lev Bishop, Rob Garrett, Zhang Yuan Hai

The day began well when we managed to blag a lift from part of the reporter entourage. Unfortunately our local guide then led us on a wild goose chase through overgrown trails leading right back to the road where we had started.

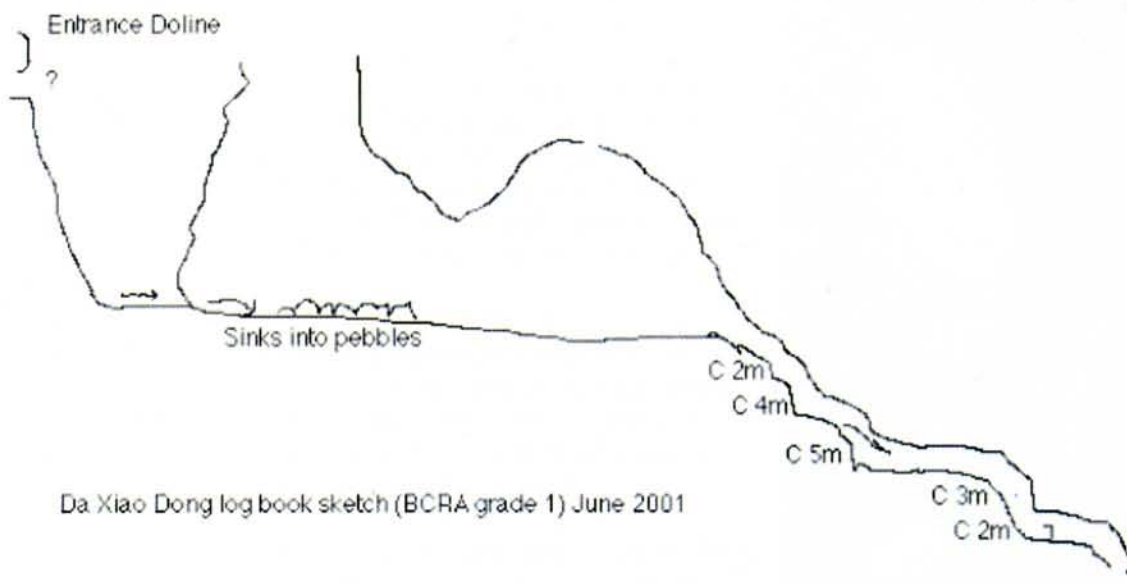
This should have been a clue, but we were slow learners, so we followed him down the doline and along a sketchy traverse to a ledge at the cave entrance. All would have been fine except for the 5 second drop between us and the floor.

Chris Densham continues: We were standing on the side of a large version of Malham cove, with a river at the bottom flowing into an entrance the size of Gaping Ghyll main chamber. The place had potential! But first we had to get down. Our useless guide disappeared and we spent the next several hours thrashing around on jungley slopes trying to get down. It rained. Eventually we recruited the services of an agile elderly gent (or rather Zhang did) who led us straight to the bottom just before the ledge overlooking the right hand side of the entrance halfway down the doline.



Used up all our rope rigging handlines. Followed the stream into massive entrance. Followed the RH wall round... back towards daylight. Retreated to a rift heading off at the back, into a lovely dark walled canyoning style cave, vaguely reminiscent of Sa Fosca in Majorca in low water. However the plentiful flood debris and scoured walls demonstrated this was an active flood overflow. Armed with a single travelling tape we shinned down the first 2m climb (a fine Fontainbleu bouldering problem on return) then a 4m chute, having to retrieve the tape for the next ~5m traverse climb. Another couple of short climbs, then some zig-zagging horizontal reached a chute which we were ill-equipped to descend. Returned to Zhang and our camera crew and trudged back to Tian Xing village in the dark, bagging a lift from a Chongqing TV 4WD for the last km or so.

Cloud in Da Xiao Dong Doline



MI DONG

Wookey, Brian Judd, Eoghan and Anne Lynch, Oz Williams, Conor McGrath



Chongqing TV jeep

Gear shifted to road head by TV crew in 4WD. Very handy. Rope left in nearby farmhouse. Team **Da Xiao Dong** went off in cars & team **Mi Dong** + huge entourage of TV people, photographer, reporters, locals & translator (Xami) set off. Got a couple of people to carry some of our gear but descent into doline was still very hard work. Descent of ~100-150m was extremely slippery and full of nettles (milder than English ones). Staggered down hill getting very hot & tired, photographed all the way by enthusiastic cameraman, who came all the way to the bottom despite being a big man with a big camera bag.

Eventually (1:30) got gear sorted & Eoghan rigged pitch. All new bolts needed as 1996 ones weren't re-findable except one which broke Eoghan's 8mm tap when he tried to clean it out. Team rigging (Eoghan and Conor) went downstream, followed by team photography (Anne and Brian), whilst team surveying (Wookey and Oz) went upstream. Brian's camera failed so he joined the survey team, speeding things up significantly, and Anne went with the riggers. After surveying 200m upstream (to apparent dead end that very likely continues some 30m up the back wall) we followed the others downstream.

Entrance is very impressive - something like 60m round & 150m deep intersecting massive passageway which is about 60 x 30m upstream and 40 x 20m downstream. Entrance pitch is ~80m, but broken into 5 parts. Downstream is basically a canyoning trip. Very shortly inside the entrance the passage appears to split into a lower streamway & higher roof passage. The streamway is ~10 x 10m. There are loads of pools many of which need swimming, and some cascades and climbs a couple of which need handlines. There are also a few short pitches.

Team survey met team rigging returning at 3rd pitch. They reported that cave was sumped, somewhat earlier than the previous furthest-reached point. It was time to go home so we all cleared off out, de-rigging back to the entrance. (Rest of downstream cave is already surveyed). Entrance left rigged so that this lost survey can be re-done at some point.

Dark by the time we got out. Then slogged back up out of doline - at least it was a bit cooler! Farmers living near cave offered dinner - we refused, but accepted tea and shelter when it started raining. We were all shagged so got 3 of them to carry some of our gear and show us back to farmhouse and road, where we intended to leave the gear. Unfortunately they took us to wrong house (and woke up confused residents!) so once this was cleared up with aid of more diagrams they took us to road where we stashed gear, then staggered home to **Tian Xing** village arriving at about 11:30 and got some dinner before crashing.

Time Underground 7 hours



Mi Dong Entrance pitch

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XIAO DONG BA VILLAGE AND DA XIAO DONG

Brian Judd, Eoghan and Anne Lynch, Oz Williams, Wookey, Conor McGrath, Zhang Yuan Hai

Madam Tan had arranged for Rob Garrett and Erin Lynch to go to other areas on 'The Magical Mystery Tour'. Lev Bishop and Chris Densham decided to join them and they all left Tian Xing in the morning. We hadn't expected this and it meant changing plans to adapt to the sudden loss of expedition personnel. Those remaining were taken by jeep to near Xiao Dong Ba village. The jeep belonged to the Hui Bang tourism company, who bought Furong Dong for 30 million Yuan on a 50 year lease. It currently costs 50 Yuan to go in the cave and recently there have been 50,000 visitors a year, half the number when the cave was first opened to the public. Our expedition is good publicity for them.



L. to R. Anne, Wookey, Oz, Conor, Eoghan - asking Zhang if he knows which way to go.

Anne Lynch continues: From drop off point, we intended to complete journey to Da Xiao Dong on foot, with assistance in route finding from Zhang Hai. We had great difficulty locating the doline - and took approximately 3-4 hours to find it. We were all very tired at this stage, and agreed to dump the gear at the cave entrance and change the handlines on the slope down, leaving the caving until tomorrow. Again had difficulty with route finding on the way home to Tian Xing village, however we were saved by the GPS and arrived home to a welcome feast of potatoes (thanks to Zhang Hai) at approx 7:30pm. Brian was disappointed that no film crew awaited our arrival.

Anne Lynch and Eoghan Lynch

The following day: After a tough morning, sorting the gear, having breakfast & lunch, we headed up to the Mi Dong farmhouse to shift the gear to the junction farmhouse. Armed with a note from Zhang Hai explaining that we needed 3 porters @ 20 Yuan each to move the rope, we negotiated with 1 porter @ 40 Yuan who insisted that he was able to carry 550m of rope! And was ably assisted by Eoghan who carried 200m of rope. Arrived at the junction farmhouse and looked for the key of the store (which was previously hidden by Brian under a shoe) thought at

one stage it had been eaten by the resident duck, but eventually the key was found, dropped the gear off, paid the guy, took a location on the GPS for the **Mi Dong** junction and headed back to **Tian Xing** village for dinner.

Oz Williams, Brian Judd, Wookey, Conor McGrath



Oz, Conor and Wookey with camera crew

Wookey headed off down **Da Xiao Dong** to start rigging, whilst Conor, Oz and Brian started surveying and taking photos. After surveying the massive entrance (100m + wide) chamber entered a 'narrow' passage and dropped first short pitch where we met Wookey rigging the next pitch and bathed in bright camera lights. A pattern of short pitches, deep pools, more rigging and more surveying soon entailed.

Got a lift in a very smart 4WD up the track towards **Xiao Dong Ba** village, stopped about 15 mins walk from the farm house. Took some silly photos of Brian using his 'mobile' phone and then moved on down to our new residence. Dumped our over night gear, met our hosts and then headed on down the doline with camera crew in tow.



Conor McGrath Da Xiao Dong



Log Belay

At -50m and 350m in from the entrance we ran out of rope with the cave still going and at the head of a 10m? pitch. The cave's very clean washed with some very handy flood debris, Brian used a log jam for rigging to save on bolts. Pulled out and returned to the farmhouse for a top feed of rice, potatoes and bacon, yum yum. Phoned **Tian Xing** a few times and then crashed out to the sounds of Chinese TV and a bloody cow bell.

Time Underground: 5 and a half hrs.

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DA XIAO DONG, SUI LIN AO KOU AND OTHER SHAFTS

Brian Judd, Wookey, Oz Williams, Conor McGrath



Conor McGrath and his All Terrain Brolley

Woken in the farmhouse at **Xiao Dong Ba** village by a 7:00 am telephone call from Zhang Hai to say the jeep was on the way with ropes and rigging gear Eoghan had put together. Wookey and Brian quickly dressed and arrived at the end of the track just as Eoghan and the jeep drove up. It was a wet and dull morning, which became a very wet and dull day. Conor had been awake most of the night listening to the cow bell and all of us were tired from the previous three days work. However after an enormous breakfast we managed to get under way by 9:00 am.

There was considerably more water flowing into **Da Xiao Dong** than the previous day. Brian, Oz and Conor arrived at the entrance, kitted up and wondered where Wookey had got to. Slowly our wonder turned to concern. In fact instead of lying drowned in the by now torrential entrance stream, he was busy hacking a dry way into the cave through the jungle, using his trusty Swiss army pen knife. Oz and Brian headed into the cave, only to discover it would be fairly silly to go caving due to the large amounts of water flowing down the passage. After 30 minutes underground we decided to have a very damp time surveying out of the Doline. We then walked back to **Tian Xing** village in pouring rain. On the way a women felt sorry for Brian and gave him an umbrella! The rest of the day was spent drawing up surveys, drinking beer and trying to dry out.

GPS Coordinates: (WGS 84 Datum, UTM)

NAME	Zone	Easting	Northing
Furong Dong cave	48R	0782365	3237156
Mi Dong cave	48R	0786084	3233729
Tian Xing village	48R	0784755	3236192
Xiao Dong Ba village	48R	0788984	3236595

(This marks the point where path down sets off at lip of doline)

TURN03	48R	0788498	3236072
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(Xiao Dong Ba village Farmhouse/Track junction)



GPS Coordinates continued: (WGS 84 Datum, UTM)

NAME	Zone	Easting	Northing
TURN01	48R	0788275	3235140

Road junction with path to **Xiao Dong Ba** village

PATHOF	48R	0787320	3235468
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Road junction with path back from **Xiao Dong Ba** village

TURN04	48R	0785500	3234832
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Road junction for **Mi Dong** cave/ **Xiao Dong Ba** village split (gear farmhouse)

RDHEAD	48R	0785758	3233864
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End of Road near **Mi Dong** cave

RDSTOP	48R	0788495	3234901
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Rd jn. towards **Xiao Dong Ba** village

co-ords from 1:50000 map

Name	E	N	Offsets(GPS->1:50000 map)
MIDONG	0786350	3235120	+260E +1390N
TIAN XING	0784700	3237600	-55E +1408N
FURONG	0782350	3238200	-15E +1044N
RDHEAD	0785750	3235200	-8E +1336N

Eoghan Lynch, Anne Lynch, Zhang Yuan Hai

Up at 6:30 am to pack rope and hardware for B Team (Brian, Wookey, Oz, Conor) Packed all gear and took jeep to top of track. Quick stop at junction farmhouse for rope. (Junction for **Mi Dong**) Met Brian and Wookey at end of road. Happy to meet me. Returned to **Tian Xing** for breakfast and later set out with Zhang Hai to look at some shafts South West of Tian Xing.

Sui Lin Ao Kou 48R 0784373 UTM 3235529
Alt:1178m Farmer said it was descended in 1994 or 96
10m diameter shaft cave going off.

Yan Feng Quan 48R 0783833 UTM 3235373 50m
diameter shaft. Heavy vegetation. Difficult to know
where to descend. Farmer said blocked after 20m

Sheng Jitang 48R 0783212 UTM 3235701 Alt:1018m
5m diameter. Edge of track easy to miss.

Blow Hole 48R 0783022 UTM 3235518 Alt:1003m
Draughting Hole must be dug out.

Shu Jia Gou Shang 48R 0783422 UTM 3236174 Alt:1122m 5m diameter 20 -30m deep (Bird
nesting)

Wei Jia Lin 48R 07835558 UTM 3236174 Alt:1086m Very overgrown deep shaft (Descended to
104m Blocked)

Got very wet on way home and had to stop off in farmhouse to dry off in front of fire. Were also
persuaded to stay for dinner. Very Tasty. Great Day!



Raising the flag at 'Base Camp' a room
in the village school.

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FURONG DONG

Wookey, Everybody and Cast of Thousands



Today we had agreed to visit **Furong Dong** show cave and get filmed by way of payment for use of Jeep for last few days. Driven down to cave (just above Jiang Kou) in jeep in tearing hurry as we were presumably late. Effective use of government siren and public address megaphone to shift mechanical diggers out of the way on roadworks (It's great being famous and important!)

All arrayed in shiny (if ill-fitting) orange 'Chongqing Exploration' boiler suits we went into cave, along with huge host of hangers-on (2 TV crews, assorted Journos from 3 newspapers, Mr Yu (local tourism head), show cave manager etc.). There were about 22 people in total.

Wandered through show cave, taking a few photos (and getting photoed by tourists - setting off our flashes), before heading off up massive boulder slope to the gated section of cave.

The cave is extremely impressive - huge stal, massive caverns, lots of lights. In the extension, still relatively little visited, and thus in quite good condition, we tried to teach and show the Chinese good caving ethics - no litter, keep to the path, don't touch the formations. Our success was mixed. Keeping them on a single path proved virtually impossible, although they did stick to a relatively narrow swathe.



There was a lot of milling about as we tried to find a sensible way up into the 'new' (1996) passage that novices and TV cameras would fit. In the meantime everyone visited the right hand passage. Wook and Brian were interviewed in the final chamber, which contained some exceptional gypsum flowers and general white calcite gypsum/aragonite. We tried to stress unique nature of formations here and cave conservation.

They filmed a great deal in this area (so much so that their video light failed immediately in the 'new' cave). We were very concerned about the damage this would do to the really nice bits, as well as genuine danger of loads of people going through boulder choke, so negotiated that only cameraman and light man and reporter would come through with us and Zhang Hai.

This seemed to be OK, so we set off, going carefully through boulder choke. Team TV's (Wei Bing = 'Bob' and light man) 50W video light failed immediately so they were filming on Wooks 2W LE (brightest light!) and assorted dingy torches. Wandered through cave (quite hard going over boulders) to exceptional area of stal. Meanwhile 3 more people turned up - 2 from camera crew and Mr Yu (who had completely the wrong attitude - trampling all over and sitting on pristine stal boss!). Eoghan, Anne, Oz & Conor had meanwhile returned from far end and some debate ensued about what to do next - try to persuade everyone to turn back, with threat they would come back tomorrow unchaperoned, or take them to the end so that TV footage would be complete.



In the end we compromised and 2 members of TV team (with lightweight camera) and Wook, Brian, Connor and Zhang Hai went to the end, with others returning. This worked well with 2 TV guys conscientious about travel in file etc. Took some more video then photoed out. Everyone hungry and thirsty after long day. Tidied up litter (batteries, packets, eggs etc.) on way out. Noticed that a few people had tried to take souvenirs, although most had been crushed. Finally got out at 6pm - on 8 hour trip!

Back to **Jiang Kou Town** for shower (cold), dinner (good) and seeing ourselves on telly! Certainly an experience in practical cave ethics/conservation. Continued to push message over dinner.

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XIAO DONG BA VILLAGE AND C1 TO C16

Wookey, Brian Judd, Conor McGrath, Eoghan Lynch, Anne Lynch, Oz Williams

There were some very sore heads this morning, especially Brian who had been extremely drunk after being 'gambeid' to death, then gone out welly-shopping and drinking (Anne forcing beer down him until he was incomprehensible). He spent much of the evening making everyone smell his new Chinese £1.50 wellies (so good Wook bought a pair too)



At 10am we came back up to Tian Xing village. We weren't very dynamic so some fettling and sleeping and poring over maps was done. Brian, Eoghan and Conor got a lift to Xiao Dong Ba village to bring gear back from the cave farmhouse so we could drop some of the shafts Eoghan had found on 19th June.



Large Resurgence Cave just visible in the middle of this picture, resurging into one of the valleys feeding Da Xiao Dong.

Location: GR: 893373 (approx) 1:50,000 map 8-48-108-z Alt:1300m (approx)
Probably best to contour East around to it from the top of the 4WD road leading to Xiao Dong Ba village.

Zhang Hai had borrowed 1:10000 maps of the area (from Furong Dong Dev Corp.) which had loads of entrances marked so we made a list to check out.

Along Furong Dong Road, Sheet H-48-108-131

- C1 Keng 89610 32150 1074 50m from Rd facing E
- C2 Doline 89510 32030 1052 100m W of Rd
- C3 Keng 89530 31440 1060 150m SW of Rd
- C4 Keng 90120 31100 1005 (1005) ~600m from Rd
- C5 Keng 91580 30010 1035 90m N of track
- C6 Keng 91500 29850 1020 50m E of track
- C7 Keng 91430 29660 1030 60m E of track (Other side of hill)
- C8 Keng 90870 29370 1013
- C9 Keng 90860 29420 1013 8 & 9 are 2 holes - either end of depression
- C10 Keng 90910 29570 1049 depression 60m W of track
- C11 Keng 90920 29830 1085 Depression 60m W of track
- C12 Keng 90910 30100 1113 Depression 50m W of track

Caves near Tian Xing

- C13 Keng 0793030 3233970 1095 In paddy field in front of village
- C14 Keng 0793000 3733700 1120 in gully above village bowl
- C15 Keng 0792910 3233570 1130 In same gully as 14
- C16 Keng 0793160 3233720 1120 Same gully, 40m above track



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WEI JIA LIN, C13-16 AND XIAO CHAO

Wookey, Brian Judd and Conor McGrath

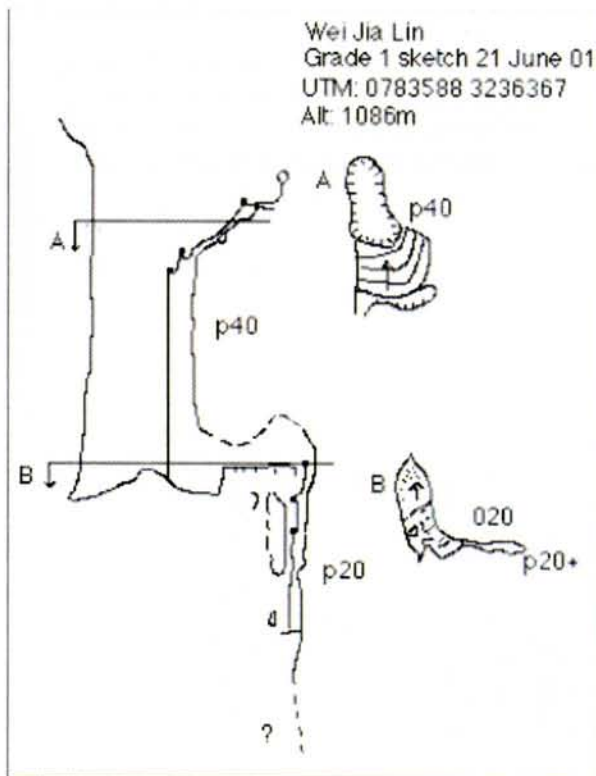


Got up bright and early, fettled our gear, packed ropes and went off to Wei Jia Lin cave. It had finally stopped raining and sky was almost blue in places, although mist came down on walk to cave. Helpful locals hacked path to lowest side of shaft and Wook rigged in to very nice shaft ~30m deep. Bottom at first appeared blind, but climbing up 5m in one corner allowed access to narrow rift through an annoying, catchy hole.

Beyond was a 5 climb down and ~10m more pitch - big rocks went some way - excellent - it goes. Brian and Conor came down with more rope. Wei Jia Lin cave was drippy everywhere and draughted in - this made it very cold in T-shirt and oversuit or cotton oversuit.

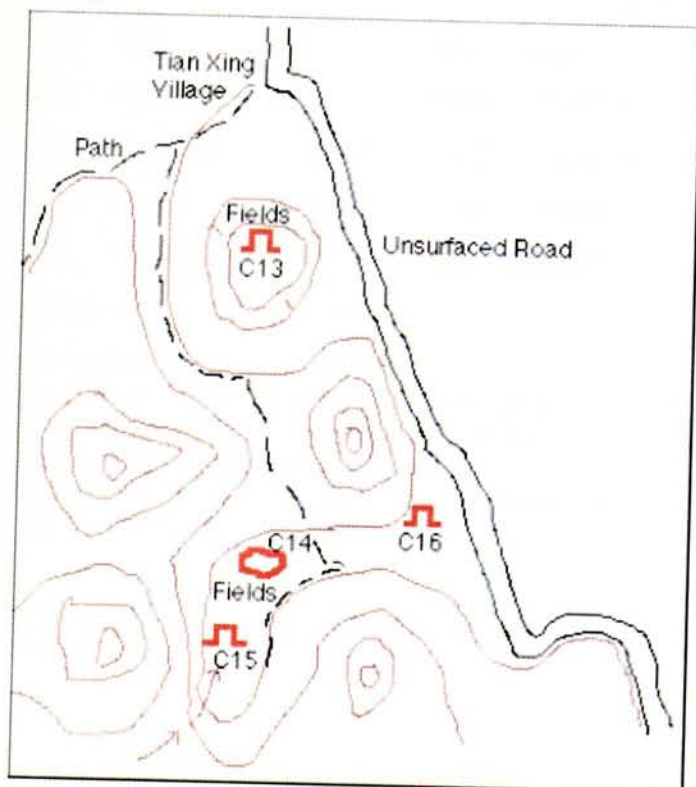
Rift is very chossy but Wook persevered and got down past a narrow bit and down another ~10m into bigger passage. Rocks thrown here rattled some 20-50m down the rift then fell with a terrific boom! There is clearly something very big below. We obviously didn't have enough rope and were all freezing - this wasn't T-shirt caving any more: so we hurried out, re-rigging the 40m on the rift pitches and the 70m on the entrance, and changing the start of the hang for a better rig. It was too miserable for surveying without proper gear.

Time Underground Wook:5hrs, Brian and Conor:3hrs



Wei Jia Lin cave is at: GPS: 0783558 3236358 1:10000 map: 0791862 3234135 ~1050m -> -50m

GPS: 0782365 3237156 1:10000 map: 0790669 3234933 ~500m -> +100m?
height diff ~400m, ~1km apart (nearest points)



Got home quite early, had tea then Wook, Brian and Oz went for an evening walk to see if the caves marked on the 1:10000 map could be found on the ground. The 'crapper sink' (C13) immediately below the village was obvious (too small, wet and smelly to enter) and provided a useful GPS -> map coordinate offset (the 1:10000 grid is different to the 1:50000 grid by several km). The other three caves proved easy to find in the small valley just over the col South of the village and depression.

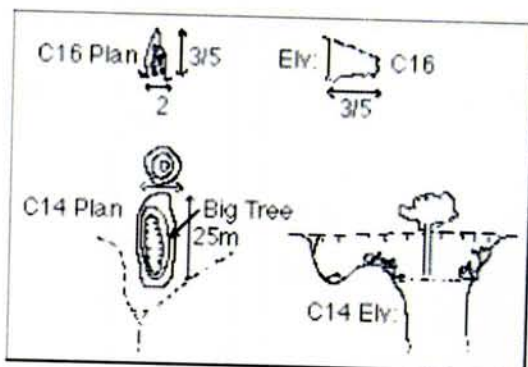
C15 is a wet sink - difficult to see but water seems to go into a 2.5m slit about 3m down. Looks like it goes but would be very wet. Seems very likely that it connects to C14 as it's only about 150-200m away.

Photograph shows Tian Xing village government buildings and school. The rice paddy in the foreground contains the sink 'C13' which proved too small and wet to enter.



C16 is at the end of the valley, close to the track. It is a choked joint.

C14 was a big shaft 5m x 15m. About 50m deep. Rocks thrown in make very gloopy noises, suggesting quite a lot of water at the bottom - definitely needs checking out (A second depression to the W is choked)



Cave	Map co-ords			GPS co-ords			GPS-Map offset	
	East	North	Alt.	East	North	Alt.	East	North
C13	0793020	3233970	1095	0784681	3236184	1110	8339	-2214
C14	0793000	3233700	1120	0784729	3235912	1116	8271	-2212
C15	0792970	3233570	1130	0784677	3235806	1120	8293	-2236
C16	0793160	3233720	1120	0784847	3235949	1128	8313	-2229

Average offset ~+8304 ~-2223

Corrections: (by Zhang Yuan Hai)

Dan Wan Dong ~~Da Wan Dong~~ (Big Circle cave)

Tiang Xing village ~~Tian Xing~~ village (Sky Star)

Chin Da Dong ~~Da Xiao Dong~~ (Big Sink Cave)

Xin Lou Kou/Zing Lou Kou ~~Xin Lu Kou~~ (New junction)

Tua Wan Dong ~~Tuo Wan Dong~~



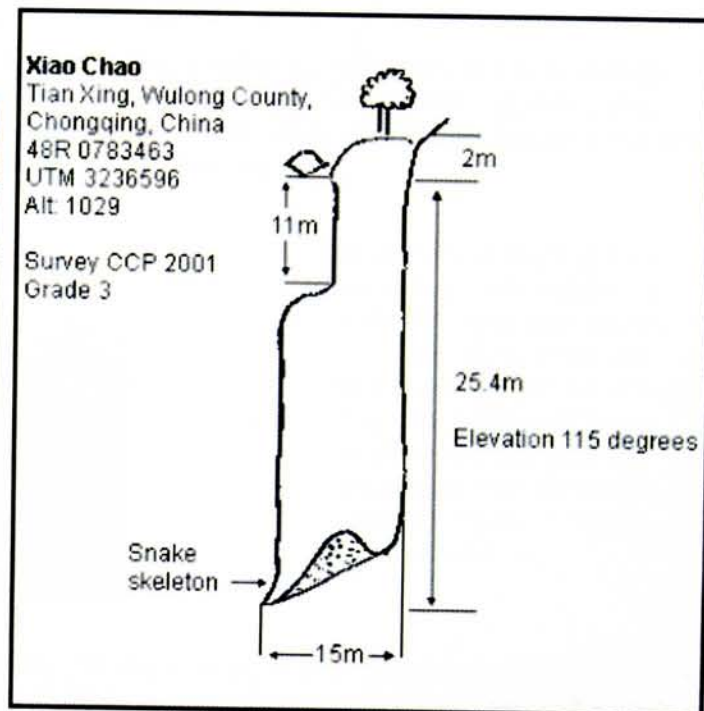
Zhang Yuan Hai

Oz Williams, Eoghan and Anne Lynch

Eoghan, Anne and Oz went down **Xiao Chao** cave:



Anne Lynch



Exploration stopped at - 25.4m, no draught, no way on, no prospects, no hope.

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SHU JIA GOU SHANG, SHENG JITANG AND WEI JIA LIN

Oz Williams, Eoghan and Anne Lynch



First went to drop Shu Jia Gou Shang 48R 0783422 UTM 3236174 Alt:1122m

Dropped first 5m through very loose muddy choss, nothing handy to rig off, nothing solid to bolt off. Found a large birds nest (possibly a rook, raven, blackbird or other black flying thing) which was full of six or seven young. This and the fact that Eoghan spotted a 75cm (he measured it) long and nearly as thick as his fore arm, green (with a diamond on it's head) snake, made me want to go and find something else to do. So we pulled gear out and went to:

Sheng Jitang 48R 0783212 UTM 3235701 Alt:1018

With great help from local farmers, one to use GPS to guide us from previous cave (he was amazed) and one to clear vegetation from shaft. Eoghan dropped shaft, rebelay at -7m, -17m and -57m approximately. Dry to start but main shaft starting to get damp at -17m. Anne continued to show what Irish women are made of. With no more rope we returned home to a hair cutting session. Anne don't give up the day job.

Wookey, Brian Judd, Lev Bishop, Chris Densham

Wei Jia Lin

Back bright and early with 190m of 9mm rope, drill, 2 batteries, 16 hangers & a load of slings - intending to push on down into big cave - Furong Dong here we come. Newly rigged entrance pitch rope reached (good start!) and we surveyed in. Instruments immediately fogged hopelessly at bottom of pitch so gave up with surveying and went rigging.



Valley leading down to Furong Dong

Soon down at pushing front (travelling close together to avoid throwing rocks too far - there are lots of them, and little option to get out of firing line). Drill managed 1 hole before giving out (and we realised we had left spare battery at base) so rigging had to be imaginative.

Got down with 3 more dodgy sling rebelay to where we could see a ledge/floor. Nearly jacked as Brian was freezing due to unwaterproof oversuit and fact that cave drips everywhere, but Wook

shinned down to bottom with rubs galore to check it out.

Astonished to find that rift was blind! Brian even went back up to throw rocks with Wook at bottom to check we hadn't missed something but this really was it - amazingly misleading sound-effects, even from 20m off the floor. Derigged and bodge-surveyed to get a good depth & reasonable pic. Met Chris and Lev at top of rift pitch who had kindly brought another 130m of rope! Carted everything home. Time underground 5 1/2 hrs. Tight, wet, awkward and disappointing. Quite nice rigging though.



Wookey in an annoying squeeze Wei Jia Lin

Wei Jia Lin Cave Description

Open shaft (p44) starts as funnel approx 10x10m rigged from tree on right hand side bank and bolt in rock (RHS) at ground level (on lowest side). Main shaft ~4x6m, with two bolts above lip (-8m) and hang bolt at -12m (all RHS). Nice hang against wall to floor heap of rocks and wood. Floor L-shaped & choked at both ends, but at N and a c5 gains a continuation in narrow (<1m) rift. At one point there is an annoying squeeze through a hole then climb down 3m to pitch head (spike belay 2m above).

Rift is quite varied but generally 1-2m wide in the wide bits - there are 2 parallel wide bits all the way down. Middle one is biggest but also wettest so rigging goes down other one for 1st 20 and last 16m. Series of steps (5 rebelay) reaches floor level. Rift aligned N-S, and heads at about 80°. Very drippy throughout the cave.

Chris Densham, Lev Bishop, Zhang Yuan Hai

Chris and Lev returned from Madam Tan's magical mystery tours of You Yang and Wulong, leaving Rob Garrett and Erin Lynch to keep up the good work. Zhang Hai took us to 2 shafts near Tian Xing. Then carted over 130m of rope and bolt kit to assist Brian and Wookey in Wei Jia Lin. Had the satisfaction of dragging the gear through nasty scrofulous rift then dragging it plus a whole load more rope back out as Brian and Wookey had managed to bottom out. At least we gave some entertainment to a group of around a dozen or so interested locals.



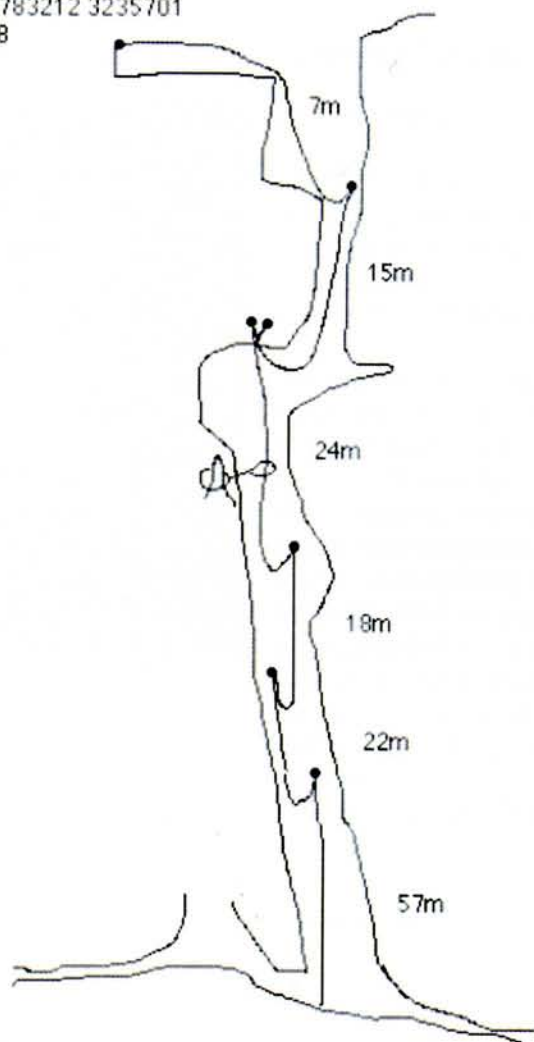
Chris Densham

天星

SHENG JITANG, YANG FENG QUAN AND DA XIAO DONG

Oz Williams, Conor McGrath, Eoghan and Anne Lynch

Sheng Jitang (CCP2001)
 Grade 1
 Depth: 142m Length: 30m
 UTM: 0783212 3235701
 Alt: 1018



Got to the bottom of **Sheng Jitang**. Oz rigged, Conor followed. Found the floor at -145m. Small stream and loads of gravel. Downstream ended too tight. Up stream led to a short climb, followed by an aven, then tight uphill passage before becoming too tight again. Very muddy, disappointing finale, but lovely shaft. Came out to a small crowd of onlookers, one TV camera man and one photographer who shoved his camera at anything that moved.

Also talked to farmers about **Yang Feng Quan**. They say it's blocked after 20m. Some farmers have been down on ropes.



Conor McGrath and friends

Lev Bishop, Brian Judd, Wookey and Chris Densham



Lev Bishop Da Xiao Dong

Da Xiao Dong push, survey and photograph

A longish walk up to the cave. Brian set off into the cave brandishing the drill but soon had to turn around to get new batteries for his lights. Chris managed to persuade me to take the long rope into the cave so Brian and I headed in rigging Chris and Wookey followed with survey and photo gear.

We had an efficient rigging trip, wasting no time with thinking about bolt placement, traverse lines or any of that kind of rubbish. I could hardly tie the knots fast enough to give them to Brian to clip into the bolts. We rigged about 5 new pitches finally stopping when we'd run out of bolts and rope, though we still had a whole battery left. Met Chris and Wookey on the way out but unfortunately they hadn't brought in much more gear so we left them to see how far they could get with 16m of rope and a hand bolting kit and headed out for a fine meal at the farmhouse. (Chris and Wook showed up 3 hours later having managed to bypass and/or free climb down the next 3 pitches and ended up at the head of a pitch with the sound of water at the bottom)

Time underground 6hrs (W,CD), 5hrs (LB,BJ)

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XIAO KOU AND DA XIAO DONG

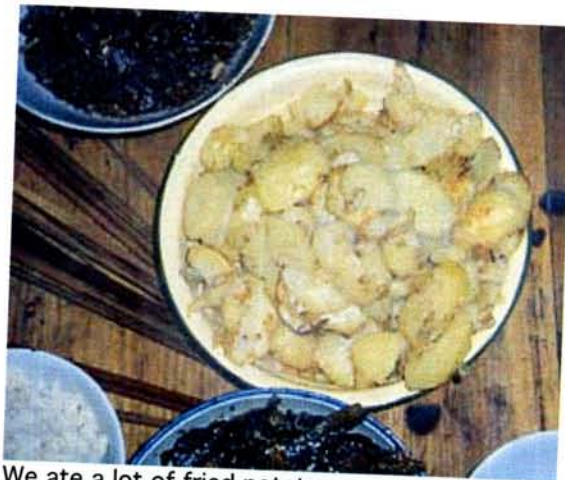
Oz Williams and Eoghan Lynch



Oz Williams

Went and had a look see above the end of **Furong Dong**. Local farmer called Li Qian Pin took us up to **Xiao Kou** (aka Qian Kou) It was a relatively small low entrance which looked like the ideal resting home for man-eating snakes. Eoghan did the gallant bit by loaning the local farmer his helmet and light. After a short lesson in end of tape holding off we set surveying and snake hunting. Fairly pretty passage with lots of relic stal and gypsum formations, through a couple of squeezes and disturbed hundreds of large(ish) bats.

After a while began to hear the blasting going on down in Jiang Kou and soon saw daylight. Exit was somewhere up a whacking big cliff over looking the Furong Dong valley and river. Managed to get a whole ten minutes admiring the view before weather closed in and obscured everything. On way back had a closer look at some holes in the floor. None seemed very promising. Was going to pop down one of 'em just to see but Li Qian Pin decided he needed to urinate down it and as I was only in my T-shirt & best slacks I decided against it.



We ate a lot of fried potatoes.



Then went back to Li's place to sit out the worst of the rain and to wonder how long four grown lads can survive on the contents of Wookey's sweetie tub. Later taken to see a couple of shafts and another very small entrance, none looked promising. Eoghan spotted another snake, it looked like a tree snake, long (+0.75m), thin and very green. May have a lead regarding a large entrance on a cliff somewhere above **Furong Dong** and deep in thick prickly vegetation. Li knows where it is and Eoghans keen.

On way home got invited in for supper and to celebrate Dragon Boat Day. Had some lovely salted ducks eggs and some wicked brew which appears to have been distilled from some poor unfortunate beast that's probably on the CITES list. Fell off the path just a couple of times but that was 'cos of the heavy pack and slippery mud, honest.

Pig sty and toilet

Wookey, Brian Judd, Lev Bishop and Chris Densham

Da Xiao Dong some more

Up for big breakfast at farmhouse and nice walk to cave. Short shower before we left made us worry a bit, but weather seemed acceptable. Underground by 10 (after Wook went back to get wellies!)

Zoomed down to rigging front, and after 1 bolt to line 1st climb we managed the next 3 pitches on naturals - very pleasing, as all nice hangs (conserve that battery!)

After rift climb down there is a pitch with a hole in the floor. This is bypassed on right hand side by crawling traverse through a window round stal boss to a p4. At the bottom of this things get a bit complicated: you can go back to look down hole in floor, or on over a bad step into dry sandy passage with a pitch at the end. You can also go back under the bad step (the obvious way on the return) and look down the hole pitch from a few metres lower.

Going down the pitch at the end of the sandy passage (p6) drops into a passage going upstream (dry) & downstream (looks like it can get a bit wet) and has a small stream that rises out of the wall and sinks in the floor 3m later! At the end of this is yet another view down the hole pitch.

Going the dry way gives 2 climbs down (c4,c4) to a short pitch (p5) where the stream is met again (probably the one seen for 3m just above?). Next is a big pitch (p20). It's wet at the near end where Chris descended first (and dropped the tackle sack) so we traversed and dropped it at the far end. The traverse ledge had a lot of nice formations (big old stals and



Wookey Da Xiao Dong

cauliflower stuff).



Chris Densham Da Xiao Dong

At the bottom of the pitch (needs a deviation 1/2 way down - there is a handy thread) we are now in larger passage than earlier overflow passage - with permanent(?) stream (may be the one last seen at entrance - seems the right size).

A climb up on right and traverse to p14 avoids a gully and water spout into deep pool (very photogenic)

Chris Densham continues: From here, in order to avoid big pool at bottom of next spout Wookey rigged epic traverse on right with skyhook and drill. Got round one more pool before reaching a point where we were definitely going to get wet!

The cave is now essentially a canyoning trip, cutting down very fast. Marvellous cave, although the fear of flood is always present. It seems it rained heavily at about midday for an hour or so. We noticed a small increase in stream flow at 3.30pm - was this the result?

Left at 4:20pm Lev and Brian straight out, Chris and Wook fettled some of the rigging with remaining battery power. Got 10 and a half bolts out of it! Top trip - Time underground 8hrs Lev & Brian, 9hrs Wook and Chris.

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DRAGON BONES

Conor MacGrath, Oz Williams, Anne and Eoghan Lynch, Brian Judd, Lev Bishop,
Zhang Yuan Hai



Lev Bishop

The Quest for the Dragon Bones

It began one misty morning on the road to Mi Dong,
We met the Dragon slayer on his quest for dragon bones,
With wellies, plimsoles and A.T.B.s * we agreed to go along,
With the Dragon Slayer on his quest - for the dragon's dong.

*A.T.B - All Terrain Brollies

Many hours later through the mist and driving rain,
It dawned upon this merry group that this quest was quite a pain.
Through trails and tribulations we arrived at the Dragons lair,
We found it barred and bolted, and no dragon living there,
Our hero, he descended, he's known as Eoghan by name,
He said, this looks a lot like home, but in fact it's not the same.

We decided to forego the bone
And the young Lev he did protest
For his quest was fame and fortune
Ours was head for home

We headed up the valley, steamy and quite hot
Whence we stumbled upon the hole known as 'Seven Li Pot'
The big man, he descended, into this unknown abyss
"I'll be back within a jiffey I'm only going for a p...,"
He descended this great pothole with great gusto and finesse
When half way down, he shouted 'I hope I've threaded my har-
ness

On reaching the slippy bottom, he got a mighty fright
He saw a passage leading off - it was so high and tight
"We'll come again tomorrow, with equipment and some gear
But for now we're off home for our dinner and some beer"



Eoghan Lynch

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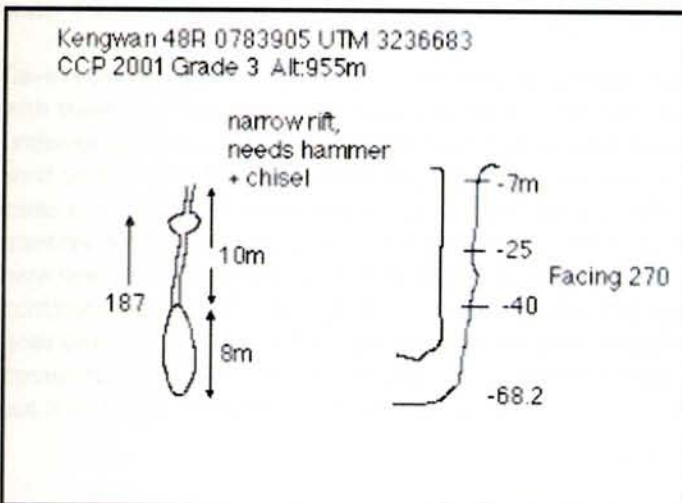
QIAN KOU, KENG WAN AND DA XIAO DONG

Oz Williams, Conor McGrath, Anne Lynch, Eoghan Lynch, Zhang Yuan Hai

"Anne's Birthday"

Went to look for **Wind Cave** 200m below **Sheng Jitang**, but farmers said it had no shaft at the back, only an aven so we went to **Qian Kou** to look at shaft part way along passage. No luck, only blind shafts, so continued on in new shaft **Keng Wan**.

Keng Wan UTM 48R 0783905 3236683 Alt 955



Eoghan bottomed it at -68.2m. Some horizontal passage to a tight rift with a draught.

A small amount of effort with a hammer and chisel would allow progress to larger passage. De-rigged, went home and had a big party for Anne, thanks to Zhang.

Xiao Kou (aka Qian Kou)
UTM 48R 078308 3236450 Alt 1120

Shaft1 48R 0783091 3236243 Alt 1165

Shaft2 48R 0783107 3236194 It 1164



June 2001 was wet

Wookey, Chris Densham, Brian Judd, Lev Bishop



Walking the inner tubes to Da Xiao Dong

Da Xiao Dong

Chris and Wook surveying and faffing. Brian and Lev single-minded rigging. Brian and Lev set off laden with tackle sacks, drill, a rubber ring, multiple wetsuits and buoyancy aids to rig the wet canyon we had partly explored last trip. Didn't get underground till 4pm after walking up with gear (including rings!), being taken to new farmhouse (closer to doline, but downhill and away from Tian Xing), and fed lunch (which Chris missed due to being over-eager and worrying about gear we left on col by doline).

Wook and Chris fettled a couple of pitches by adding deviations on the way down to give riggers a head start, then surveyed down canyon. Surprisingly it was possible to stay out of the water the whole way.

Cave is excellent! After 1st epic traverse there is another pool with traverse, then another, followed by narrow section, with undercut pool then cascade into big pool. This is traversed by shelf on left hand side and is the only bit where the rubber ring came in handy. Next water drops down out of sight on left - we traverse right to a windows onto a big space. A ~15m pitch here lands on a wide balcony overlooking the canyon as it continues to drop off the edge into a big cross-rift. The water goes down here in a sprayey waterfall - we go down in one corner of the rift - keeping reasonably dry in normal conditions - but it must get extremely wet when it rains.



Lev Bishop dodges spray



Wookey surveys Da Xiao Dong

Met Lev and Brian coming back up as we surveyed down - time to go home in order to be back home by 11 (we had told them we'd be late, but we couldn't be too unreasonable). Top trip - this cave goes and goes - and keeps changing character. Brian and Lev had gone down ~60m then another ~25 but failed to reach floor (rope too short). This used about 150m of rope!

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MA WAN KENG AND DA XIAO DONG

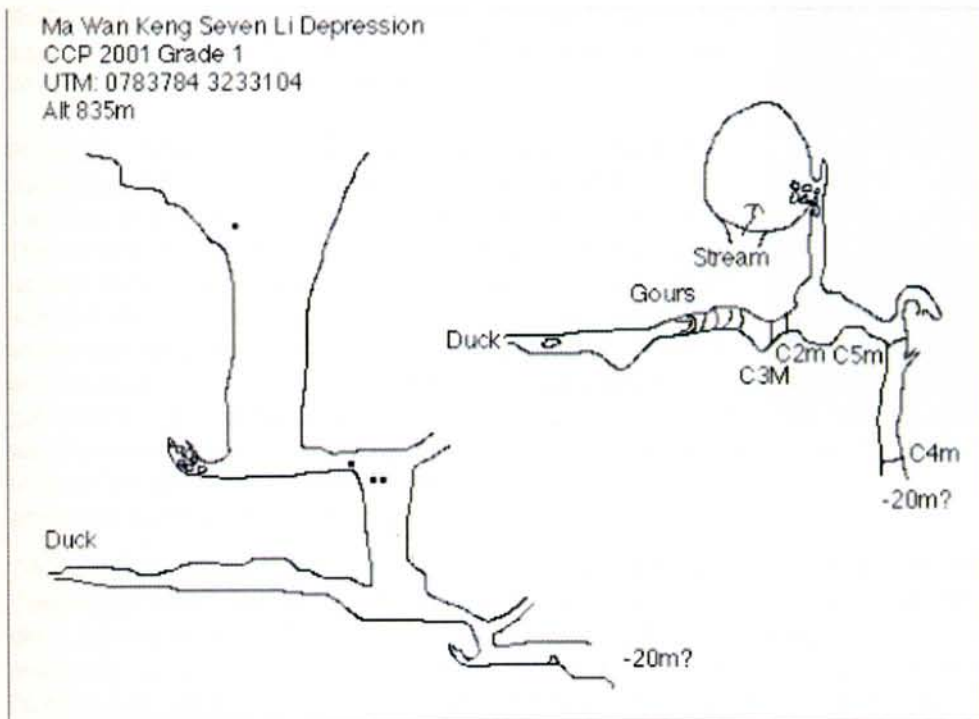
Oz Williams, Conor McGrath, Eoghan Lynch, Zhang Yuan Hai

Went back to Ma Wan Keng (7 Li Pot) . Oz rigged, Eoghan + Conor surveyed

Rope rigged in stream, may need rigging on opposite side if stream flows. 10m pitch followed by 28m free hang, 50m rope, 3 hangers, 1 rope protector. Horizontal passage at bottom for 40m, to second drop, 5m to Y-hang, 17m to floor, 3 hangers, 30m rope. Upstream 130m of walking passage to duck (not passed).



Farmhouse guard dog



Downstream 30m of passage, past 1 climb, to drop 5m and a pool, deep water for a few metres, a cascade and drop three, approx. 20m not dropped, no rope. Returned home via road, new route much easier.

Wookey, Chris Densham, Brian Judd, Lev Bishop



Chris Densham rigs

More pushing and surveying in Da Xiao Dong

Chris and Wook's turn at the front. Went down to ledge about 60m down pitch then removed 8mm that didn't reach floor and replaced with 46m of 10mm - this got to ledge about 8-10m off floor where the bottom of the rift could be seen with rushing water and a long, deep canal (Yuk!). Traversed at ledge level for ~15m to drop down beyond the canal.

Character of cave was now completely changed - long, dead straight canyon passage developed on joint. Bottom sometimes very narrow and easier to traverse - other times just walk along gravelly bottom. Riggged a shot traverse over a pool then a short 3m drop. Now 3:18pm and Wook had to go in order to get back to Tian Xing at sensible time. Other carried on... (team survey had just about caught up after taking some photos in the streamway 'Ants on the path'.)

Noticed that joint backs up to some 15m up the big pitch in some conditions (leaves and stuff everywhere) - It must get astonishingly wet down here....

Noted a cross-inlet in the bottom canyon - comes in from left & immediately disappears under RH wall - odd. Time underground - Wook: 7 hours, others 10 -11 hours

Postscript: Wook's trip home - Slogged out of cave, then up doline, back to farmhouse for rest of gear and headed off for Tian Xing at 6:45pm. Took shortcut we had used on way there. This worked OK (although as it was now dark I was beginning to wonder, before reaching the road again). What I hadn't realised was that this was the other road (towards 7 Li) so I went the wrong way along it & then turned off left (onto what I thought was the next short cut). Soon became clear I had messed up - got back to road and walked further before realising that this was the wrong road. Eventually found a house and got someone to show the path to Tian Xing. Got compass out (about time!) and it was slightly E of N which seemed about right.



Lev Bishop Traverses

T-junction lost me for a while - I'd just about given up and decided to retrace the whole damn thing when I found the continuation of main track up hill. Seemed plausible that this was the direct route back to Tian Xing that others had used back from dragon-bones cave so I kept at it, eventually coming over the top and seeing the lights of Tian Xing - hooray! Another 29 mins and I'd have given up and got in my pit! A salutary lesson in taking short cuts at night! Finally back at 9:40pm after 6.5 hours solid slog.

PPS. **Chris Densham** continues: After Wookey had to depart, Brian and Lev caught up with Chris who had by then put on some neoprene since it was looking unrelentingly wet beyond the 3m pitch. And so it was. A bit of wading, then some inlets sprayed in. It was a washing machine with a deep canal beneath. The passage was a few feet wide, the roof was lowering, it was piss wet on a dry day, and way back in the big pitch there was flood debris at least 35m above this point. And leaves stuck on the walls at least 20m above that. So we decided the better part of valour was to be found in discretion so we cleared out carrying as much gear as we could - full derig to big ledge and 1 tacklesack each to farmhouse for dinner at 10pm.

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MI DONG, MA WAN KENG AND DA XIAO DONG

Wookey, Eoghan Lynch and Zhang Yuan Hai



Mi Dong Entrance

Mi Dong survey and de-rig entrance

Traipsed over, got changed at top of doline this time and walked down (much easier than previous trip). Surveyed down pitch (awkward due to its rounded nature). Wook went off at bottom to look for lost NiMH battery. Failed to find it on way down, but caught glimpse of green in a pool on way back (using specs as goggles work surprisingly well in flattish water). It was 5-6 ft deep in a crack between boulders so took a few attempts to retrieve, somewhat corroded contacts, but otherwise fine. Unfortunately the diving got rather a lot of water in my new LED light which means every time I looked up it went out - that provided another few moments excitement as I was all on my tod.

De-rigged pitch and then surveyed up doline with Eoghan (Zhang had disappeared back up to top).

Finished by 4pm and walked home (Wook slow due to being knackered from yesterday's epic). Time underground ~1.5 hours

Oz Williams and Conor McGrath

Returned to Ma Wan Keng (7 Li Pot) and dropped last pitch. Surveyed. 5m climb to 12m pitch lands in deep pool. Across pitch to 5m climb and 10m pitch. 6m climb to natural hang and 16 pitch, 85m of horizontal passage to gravel choke. Bat droppings and a large rat noted at this level. There are high level passages throughout. Sump backs up to high level.

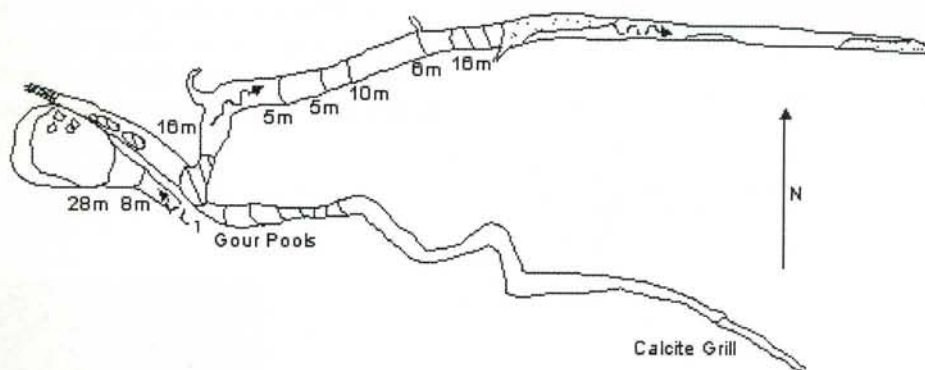
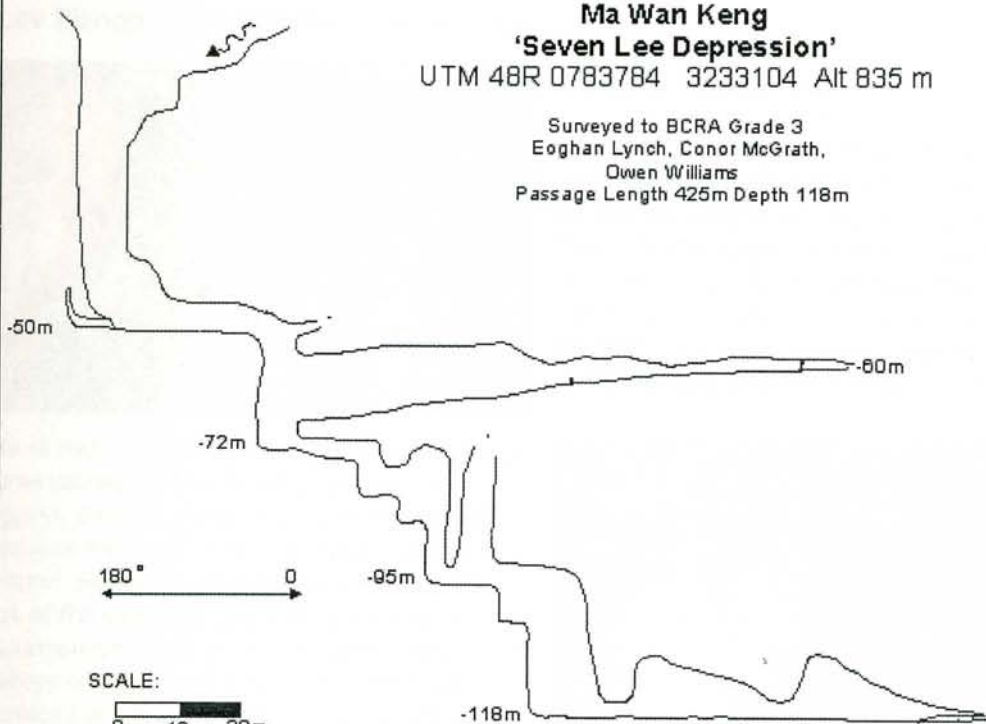


Conor McGrath

**Ma Wan Keng
'Seven Lee Depression'**

UTM 48R 0783784 3233104 Alt 835 m

Surveyed to BCRA Grade 3
Eoghan Lynch, Conor McGrath,
Owen Williams
Passage Length 425m Depth 118m



Lev Bishop, Chris Densham, Brian Judd



Derigging Da Xioa Dong

They said it couldn't be done - Brian was convinced we'd need two days to derig the cave if we were to get out at a sociable time. Chris and I thought "lets just go for it and see what happens". As it happened, the trip went like clockwork with the team functioning as a perfectly well-oiled machine (perhaps the well-oiling was due to the rice wine at breakfast).

We all had pulleys and spanners and we all took turns hauling, rigging hauling systems, derigging, shifting tackle, etc., so there was an absolute minimum of faffing and of waiting around. Slowly but steadily we made our way out of the cave and as we did so the tackle mountain grew and grew. I've never used pulleys so much on a trip before! We finally surfaced at 18:20pm with more gear than we could easily carry between us - six very full and fat tackle sacks. So we managed to stagger up the doline with our personal kit and a tackle sack each and carrying that warm glow of satisfaction with us of a job well done. Got to the farmhouse only half an hour late for our 19:00 hours rendezvous for a fine meal and an early night.



Lev Bishop gets wet

go. Chris thought Lev should go because he answered the phone. Lev thought I should go as leader. I thought they should draw straws and promptly lost.



Brian Judd and basket

Two hours later after sweating down the doline, fighting through the jungle and back up the steep and slippery path de-rigging the handline the glorious leader arrived back at the farmhouse. Our two other heroes were reclining in the farmhouse drinking tea. Foolishly the leader had imagined they would have organised the gear and even transported some of it to the col. This was but a wild dream.

Chris now thought that I hadn't worked hard enough and proceeded to load the wicker basket that I had, instead of the latest rucksack technology he had, with unfeasible amounts of heavy things. Chris assured me that he was himself carrying much more. Lev assured me that he was carrying much more. Chris had a lovely padded rucksack with a nice padded hip belt. Lev had a lovely padded rucksack with a nice padded hip belt. I had a huge wicker basket with thin shoulder straps. Chris and Lev are both Physicists, fairly used to calculating mass, volume, weight etc. Interestingly it turned out that the wicker basket was considerably heavier when weighed in **Tian Xing**.

The welts from the shoulder straps of the bamboo basket are beginning to heal now, but before feeling sorry for the glorious leader, who must after all lead by example, consider our three local porters who carried as much if not more and who made a return journey the following day to arrive at the village by 6:00am while all the cavers were still asleep!

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MA WA DONG, LAN NI WAN AND QI KENG DONG

Conor McGrath, Oz Williams



Coffin on veranda

Ma Wa Dong (Dry 7 Li Cave)

Returned to **Ma Wa Dong** for a photo trip. Lots of trouble with electronic camera slaves. Managed to climb up flowstone slope but upper level closes down. Lots of damage done to stal and flowstone in this upper level.

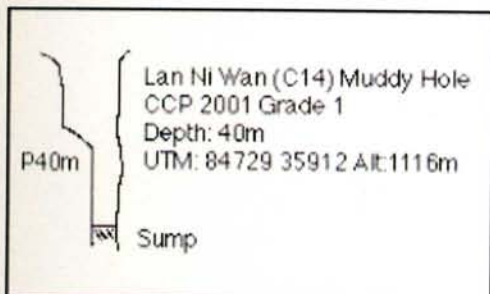
Brian Judd, Chris Densham, Lev Bishop, Zhang Yuan Hai, Bei Jing, ChengDu LhaSa, Cai Ling and a cast of thousands plus chicken. Well dozens anyway.



Cai Lin photo Chris Densham

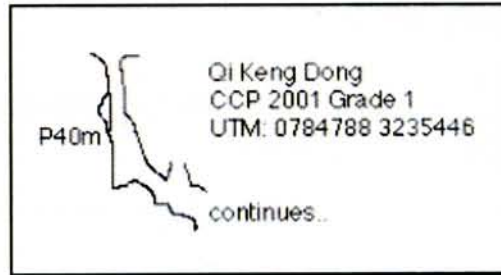
Last day in Tian Xing.

Started packing up to move. Chris spent the afternoon teaching Cai Lin Single Rope Technique (SRT) on a tree in the school yard. We then traipsed off to the two nearest holes to Tian Xing village which haven't been dropped yet.



The first one, **Lan Ni Wan** sounded wet when stones were thrown in and BJ optimistically packed wet suit and life jacket. In the event of course none of this was needed. The shaft turned out to be 40m deep to a sump in a narrow rift.

The second hole, **Qi Keng Dong** was descended by B.J. A rift 10m long and 5m wide dropped through vegetation and belled out slightly giving a free hang for the last 20m of a 40m shaft.



A climb down at one end of the rift revealed a continuation. Two more climbs led to a further pitch at which point the rope ran out at a depth of about 70m. The cave was blowing out strongly but there was no time left in Tian Xing to pursue it further. Zhang Hai derigged the shaft on his first and last SRT trip in the area.



Qi Keng Dong Entrance Pitch

武隆

TIAN XING TO WULONG

Cai Lin



So I chose freedom, running around. trying every thing new. but nothing impressed me at all. I never expected to. Don't cry for me Argentina. the truth is I never left you. all through my wild days, my mad existence. I kept my promise, don't keep your distance. Have I said too much.

Yesterday, I learned to how to use the equipments on the square. Chris climbed up the tree and fixed a rope on the tree. I had a strong mind that I'll catch the technique.



It won't be easy. You'll think it's strange. When I try to explain how I feel that I still need your love after all that I've done. You won't believe it, all you will see is girl you once knew. Although she's dressed up to the night. At sixes and sevens with you. I had to let it happen. I had to change, couldn't stay all my life down at hill looking out of the window staying out of the sun.



After I wore on all the equipments, I started my first lesson about using equipments. I didn't think it's difficult to remember. All I must remember, but the most difficult thing for me is that I am not strong enough. So, if I want to take part in cave expedition, I must do more exercises so that I can get stronger and stronger, and then. I will make my dreams become true. I do feel happy and excited now. Before I end the article, I want to say thanks to Chris and he is the best and the first teacher of mine who taught me how to use the cave expedition equipment.

Brian Judd, Oz Williams, Anne Gallagher, Eoghan Lynch, Chris Densham, Lev Bishop, Conor McGrath, Zhang Yuan Hai, et al



Natural Bridges

Travelled to **Wulong** by jeep and pickup. Prepared for the big closing speech and visited Natural Bridges and Fairy Mountain area. **Natural Bridges** consists of 3 dolines:

Sky Dragon Doline 210 - 275m deep, 500 - 650 diameter,
Green Dragon Doline 285m deep, 300m diameter,
Black Dragon Doline 200 - 270m dep, 300 - 600 diameter.

The Dolines are connected by caves. A path runs round the dolines, through an artificial tunnel in the shale and drops down to the floor of the gorge. Tourists can choose to walk out, use a sedan chair or a cable lift.

Sky Dragon Cave 112m high
Green Dragon Cave 108m high
Black Dragon Cave 123m high



Dragon Cave



Fairy Mountain is being developed as a resort to escape the heat of Chongqing. The whole area has been leased by the Hui Bang Corporation (like the **Natural Bridges** and **Furong Dong**). We saw one small cave and some depressions, but there was no time to investigate much. The area consists of meadows and trees given over to horses, some goats and tourist amenities - chalets, golf course, horse riding, go carting and hotels. We were too tired to appreciate it much.

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WULONG TO NAN TIAN HU

Brian Judd, Oz Williams, Anne Gallagher, Eoghan Lynch, Chris Densham, Lev Bishop, Conor McGrath, Zhang Yuan Hai, et al



Press Conference Photo: Chris Densham

After a buffet breakfast we started on the closing speeches to the local government and tourist authorities while being filmed and reported on by the TV and Newspapers. Zhang said it was only going to be seen by 13 million people! We spoke about the statistics of the expedition, the personal challenge, teamwork, conservation and thanked everyone.

Madame Tan gave a very detailed speech and then there were questions from the authorities and reporters. The authorities are keen to get at least **Furong Dong** and **Natural Bridges** designated as a World Heritage site. We think this would be a very good thing and would like to help all we can. (Since then we've learnt it won't be possible.) Afterwards there was a splendid final banquet at which Mr You gambei'd each of us in turn and we returned the compliment to everyone there.



Lev, Anne and Eoghan, left for Chongqing with Cai Lin and so it was now down to Brian, Chris, Oz and Conor plus Zhang Hai and Mrs Tan who loaded into a minibus with the luggage and we were off towards **Feng Du**, the Ghost City. Five hours later we had driven past Feng Du (on the opposite bank of the Yangtze) and headed up into the mountains along a fast flowing river containing many rapids.



There was a lot of industry in the lower reaches - mainly quarrying, mining and cement works. Later the area became more unspoilt and the mountains were covered with trees and meadows. Eventually we arrived at **Nan Tian Hu**. This is a government hostel for officials at an elevation of about 1500m with surrounding forest up to 2000m. We arrived to find a party of officials including the mayor of Chongqing already in residence. That night there was a party and concert at which we were asked to perform.



Conor, Chris, Brian and Oz in Nan Tian Hu

The thought of performing reduced hardened cavers to jelly and we were suddenly bereft of songs, jokes, dance routines or amusing tricks. At first we investigated the possibility of abseiling off the balcony of the hotel onto the concert area, but this was vetoed by the police chief (and ourselves) when we found the balcony to be less than secure. The thought of sending down tons of concrete and tiles onto the dignitaries below, finally persuaded us we would have to sing after all. The only thing we could come up with between us was 'Ilkley moor ba'at' and even then we had to write the words out.

The concert started with a troupe of older women doing synchronised dance movements involving handkerchiefs, flags, banners and umbrellas. They were good but the team preference was for the younger women in short skirts who presented prizes at intervals. There were a couple of singers amplified to full volume and a very fetching young woman doing a solo dance. Then it was our turn. Somehow we got through 'Ilkley moor ba'at' without embarrassing ourselves too much. I did wonder if the Chinese were clapping along with us or giving us a slow handclap, but of course they were far too polite to be rude. It was engineered that we won pretty flowered umbrellas and then I was invited to join the mayor of Chongqing and two others in lighting the bonfire. After that we all danced round the fire and I was asked to dance with 4 young women. Chris waltzed with Madam Tan and tried to chat up a young woman dancer, watched unbeknown to him, by her boyfriend. We drank a beer before being ordered to bed by Madam Tan. All obeyed except Chris who had given up on the dancer and instead continued his quest to cross examine officials about caves.



Chrid Densham tries out a policeman's truncheon.

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NAN TIAN HU

Brian Judd, Oz Williams, Chris Densham, Conor McGrath, Zhang Yuan Hai



Xiao Shi Yuan

Unfortunately the impressive entrance degenerated into a narrow choked canyon after 120m. Another cave in the side of the doline was also blocked.

Taken by bus to doline Xiao Shi Yuan Elevation 1519m

We found this to be a large steep doline which was heavily overgrown. At the bottom could seen a 60m wide cave entrance. After fighting down through the vegetation we gained a scree slope which led to the entrance.



The entrance was impressive



Chria Densham Xiao Shi Yuan

One cave seen in the wall of the doline was not reached at all. A further cave seen 800m away was reported by locals to be only rock shelter.

We also looked at a crack in the top of the doline which came out on to the surface. This was at:
UTM 48R 0780746 3290113
Elevation 1149 and 2.7km from Nan Tian Hu hostel
Bearing 100 degrees



Oz surveys Xiao Shi Yuan

天星

DA WO TUO AND LUCI LAKE

Brian Judd, Oz Williams, Chris Densham, Conor McGrath, Zhang Yuan Hai

Long bus journey took us high into unspoilt countryside scattered with conifers, scrub, wild roses and horses. Very few people allowed here, although some people were harvesting thin bamboo and living in temporary huts.



Our objective - 3 dolines at a good height:



Da Wo Tuo 1 Doline UTM 48R 0770238
3274148 Elev 1820m

Da Wo Tuo 2 Doline UTM 48R 0770323
3274202 Elev 1836m

Da Wo Tuo 3 Doline UTM 48R 0770352
3273910 Elev 1839m

Unfortunately all turned out to be blocked although it was a very pretty area. We also looked at other dolines and a lake on the way back but these also turned out to be impassable due to large quantities of mud and boulders.

Luci Lake UTM 48R 0770548
3273770 Elev 1825m

Yankan (Overhang Doline)
UTM 48R 0770612 3274432
Elev: 1867
17.8 kilometres from **Nan Tian Hu** at 206 degrees. Main river sinks into choked stream bed. Minor stream appears then sinks into choked swallet. Locals pointed at this when asked about existence of caves by Chris using sign language.



天星

SHENG JI BA AND MAO YAN

Brian Judd, Oz Williams, Chris Densham, Conor McGrath, Zhang Yuan Hai

Sheng Ji Ba UTM 48R 0778087 3290501
Elevation 1451m

Situated only about 356m from the Nan Tian Hu hostel are three shafts:

Sheng Ji Ba Shaft 1 descended 2m then drops 8m to rift, slopes down 50m at 20 degrees and is blocked.

Sheng Ji Ba Shaft 2 Conor descends Shaft 2 "There's caterpillars down here. Man they'd eat you!". Zhang Hai "Can you find a snake!" "Nah. Totally chocked. Nuthin'." 35m Deep in thinly bedded limestone to a muddy pool.

Sheng Ji Ba Shaft 3 50m at 20 degrees blocked by slabs.



Oz with Heyes Cave Radio. We found reception better with one aerial instead of 2.



Chris Densham continues: Madam Tan helped me wash my filthy clothes in the hostel. We went to fetch our gear back from the shafts after a good lunch. On the way back we were intercepted by the bus on the square and whisked away for a "Waltz in the forest". We were taken to a fine twin entrance:

Mao Yan (Cat's eye) UTM 48R 0780728
3287327 Elev 1585m

The cave started in the usual thinly bedded limestone which we'd found prone to collapse and blockage. However this dropped down to a pitch in quality rock. Conor and Brian rigged down while Oz and Chris surveyed. A 20m pitch dropped to a chamber... with old nitrate pits in floor!

The cave was a master cave with inlets and a complex of interconnected canyons. Alas downstream passages were choked or sumped. Good draft appeared from the many inlets. Surveyed 300m plus, plenty left.





Conor's last trip in China 2001 was to end in crawling!

9:00 pm

After a quality dinner and ganbeis we were taken across the square for a press conference with the local officials. Brian said it is a beautiful area which may have a few deep caves. Conor said it could be a good area for trekking. Madam Tan talked for an hour or more but we had no idea what was being said. Eventually we got to bed.

重庆

7th to 9th July 2001

7th July 2001

Brian Judd, Oz Williams, Chris Densham, Conor McGrath, Zhang Yuan Hai



Journey back to **Chongqing** from 6:00am start arrive at 12:00 after one change of brake parts. Blood spattered on the road from 3 accidents. Pedestrians and drivers aren't aware of the dangers yet. People walk out in front of vehicles without looking, walk along dual carriageways, and are mixed up with traffic. Drivers rely on horns to warn people but don't reduce speed enough.

Sorted out gear for shipping back to **Guilin**.



In 2009, the Three Gorges Dam, 607 feet high and more than a mile wide is due to be completed across the Yangtze River. It will create a reservoir 370 miles long and totally transform the Three Gorges region. More than 2 million people will leave their homes as the flood waters rise. New construction is being carried out on a huge scale - new cities, bridges and roads, all built on the river's mountain flanks.

The dam is conceived to control flooding that over the centuries has killed hundreds of thousands of people. It is planned to provide energy, navigation for larger vessels and other commercial benefits.

Critics challenge the dam's value for flood control and think it will be an expensive disaster. They predict the environment ruined, displaced people suffering hardship, habitats of rare animals, such as the Chinese river dolphin, destroyed, archaeological sites lost and insufficient energy or commercial benefits.



Sign extolling the virtues of moving

8th July 2001

Brian Judd, Oz Williams, Chris Densham, Conor McGrath



Went shopping in **Chongqing** and later to a banquet given by SRT students that members of the expedition had trained.

Later still we went out taking photographs of neon lights at night with a tripod and flash. This attracted a crowd, which attracted two police officers. We realised at this stage that we were in a red light area.

It's amazing how naive we can be sometimes. The male police officer wasn't at all amused. It's strange that prostitution is openly tolerated here at all and seems to be on the increase. 1770 people have been executed in China over the last 3 months for crimes ranging from murder to stealing petrol. China is a safe country to visit as a foreigner because there isn't a high level of street crime. However it was obvious this policeman wasn't happy about us being here and taking photos. Eventually Madam Tan was summoned and she escorted us back to her Hotel. We're not sure if there will be any more action over this. Zhang thinks we could be fined and lose our film.

Probably we will be OK because of our foreign, 'celebratory' status. He will call the mayor of **Chongqing** if it looks like we're in big trouble. I'm sorry to cause trouble for Madam Tan because there is a loss a face for her if we behave wrongly and she may also be fined. There is so much we don't know about the rules and regulations governing life here. As a precaution I hide my film of the previous months expedition.



9th July 2001

Brian Judd, Oz Williams, Chris Densham, Conor McGrath

Oz Williams, Chris Densham, Conor McGrath left at 6:00am for **Hong Kong** and **Guilin**. Haven't heard anything further about taking photos last night but to be on the safe side I send my film out with Conor. Finished bagging and marking gear for airport.
