Thanks must go again to Pablo and family at Bar Germán - using the restaurant as a base during the larger expeditions is vital and greatly appreciated. The Ghar Parau Fund committee awarded £400 to Matienzo 2013. In applying for our annual permit, we are grateful for the support of the Federación Cántabra de Espeleología.

As usual, only the larger finds have been mentioned above. Further details with surveys can be found on the Matienzo Caves website, www.geography.lancs.ac.uk/matienzo/page1.htm and, in detail for 2013, at www.geography.lancs.ac.uk/matienzo/history/2013.htm.
Cave exploration around Matienzo during 2013

Nearly 50 people took part in the Easter expedition with the weather being spring-like, veering towards the “quite wet” for those on the campsite. Only 2km of new passage were surveyed but nearly 90 new sites of speleological interest were identified. Most new passage was surveyed in El Cubillón at Moncobe - an inlet series and a climb over the sump. Simas del Picón is being resurveyed and small extensions were made. Torca la Vaca (Hornedo) was pushed upstream to a rift chamber with high level passage heading off to the north, open and going, but some closing down when explored later in the year.

Over 90 cavers and associates took advantage of the dry summer and low water levels. The caving period lasted for about 5 weeks and more than 5.3km of new cave passage were surveyed plus 2.5km of re-survey in Cueva Carcavueso, part of the 4 Valleys System. The longest new cave was Cueva de los Urros providing 1.4km of passages. More than 900m of new passages were discovered in Cueva de Mostajo (Cubija).

Southern Sector

In Cueva Vallina, in the passage running north of Bathtub Passage, an “horrific” aven, covered with mud, was climbed to where it “did nowt” and, pushing through the northern boulder choke, explorers dropped a 15m pitch to a mud-walled outlet and immature inlet above. At Alisas a number of shafts were dropped to conclusions. Sites 2000, 2049 and 2051 were found to choke.

On the hills to the south of La Vega, the high level resurgence (site 2290) was surveyed for 41m before it closed in.

Rupert Skorupka’s diving quest to find the missing resurgence water in Comellantes was
thwarted at Easter by too much water and bad visibility. After a flood event, Cueva del Molino at Bustablado was running milky while Comellantes was clear. One interpretation is that Molino is receiving snow melt water from the Porracolina mountains to the south while Comellantes is getting water from Cueva Vallina and the South Vega system (where there was no snow melt). There is now a guide line through the Reñada duck but this shouldn’t be used for free-diving.

An overnight camp was carried out by the Danish team in Hidden Hole with a view to pushing a number of leads. Unfortunately, one of the tackle sacks fell down the 57m Gloom Pitch. This contained water, milk and the DistoX so, although drinking water was found in the cave, the small extensions found on the 30 hour trip could not be surveyed.

At Trillos, high above the northwest edge of Vallina, site 1180 was pushed down 5 pitches to a depth of 44m. The 30 - 50m diameter hole at site 674 was finally explored and documented.
In Sima-Cueva del Risco, a new 180m long series was surveyed - Curly Mud Passage, and Dieline Passage was extended by 96m.
At the end of the Easter period, an open entrance (site 3884) was found southeast of the Jivero caves, just above the depression floor. This was explored upstream for about 200m in phreatic passages with vadose cut down. Exploration continued in the spring where upstream became smaller close to sink 2449. Downstream exploration was very wet (because of a wet spring period and having to crawl through a small waterfall) but a boulder choke was met within a few metres of the base of the second pitch and upstream of the pitch also stopped at a sump. The total surveyed was 341m.
Signal crayfish were spotted in Cueva del Agua and Cueva Jivero 2 in the summer. The presence of these invaders in Matienzo streams was communicated to the office of the Medio Ambiente in Ramales.
El Naso area west to Las Calzadillas

The high level *MUSC Series* in *Torca del Mostajo* was extended by 906m by the Manchester University Speleology Club. At the southern end, down a short drop, the passage continues down another unexplored 12m drop with possible leads below. To the north, which sets off part way along the 2012 extensions, complicated and varied routes have a number of leads still to pursue including a deep pitch to water. Resin anchors were placed on the entrance pitch and the traverse.
In the resurvey of Simas del Picón, a 47m extension was made in the Melted Wax Candle of Doom Chamber and 121m in the Picón Eye and Pee Pee Chamber extensions, close to the entrance. In the summer, significant extensions were found part way down the Mega Bat Series: over three hundred metres of mainly large passage heading west then east to almost connect with passage heading down from the entrance.

The Northeast Sector including the Four Valleys System

Cueva del Sifón Claro, dived from the back of a small chamber in 1980, was found to have collapsed. A jumble of boulders and fallen trees now covers the site, with holes down to water between rocks.

Cueva de la Espada and its surroundings were investigated a number of times over the year. In the cave, 92m were surveyed in small passages and the supposed link towards Llanio was dug. The bottom entrance has been signposted from the main road using the name given by the expedition in 1975 rather than the local name, Cueva del Ruchano.

Associated holes included the newly found site 3795. Here, a sloping p10 dropped into a short segment of large stream passage running parallel to the stream in Cueva de la Espada and presumably an inlet to that cave further downstream. A return was made to site 3442 which had been connected down into the Espada stream in August 2010. Extensive digging of mud was required before the cave and passages were accessible and could be surveyed. Site 3796 above a stream sink was explored for some 25m in a stal-filled crawl. Also documented was the enticing Sewer Works sink, site 3800.
Fox Cave, in an isolated and heavily vegetated valley 700m to the north of Cueva de la Espada, was pushed and surveyed to give 286m of passage with a number of entrances, some draughting. A lot of time was spent pushing and documenting old and new holes under a sandstone bed on the 265m contour above Cueva de Riaño. Three sites were originally documented in this area: site 640 was excavated this summer to provide a length of 10m. New sites include 3917, entered through a prominent portal which turns into a narrow rift with a parallel shaft descended for about 15m and site 3920, a 17m long cave which becomes too low in stream deposits.

Between Slaves’ Cave and Freedom Pot, site 3018 was descended in a very tight shaft into a chamber which drops into 20m of well decorated passage. After digging out the collapsed entrance to Cueva de Fresnedo 2 the pitches were rebolted for SRT, and an outlet passage about 3 km from the entrance was pushed for 180m. This ended in a mud choke but, part way along, a stream could be heard down a hole which needs descending.

Torca de Yusa (with its 118m deep entrance pitch) was dropped to open passage seen up a mud wall climb a couple of years ago was found to choke down a pitch of 10m depth and down a 15m loose and muddy pitch that dropped into a large chamber.
A resurvey was started in Cueva de Carcavueso. Over 2900m of passages were surveyed including 437m of previously unsurveyed routes. The length of the 4 Valleys System is now about 56.5km.

Cueva de Bollón was also pushed in tight passages. It may be possible to excavate through.

Northwest Sector

At San Antonio, 217m of passage at Fuente Aguanaz between the resurgence entrance and the middle entrance then up to the boulder choke near the top entrance was surveyed.

Jim Lister and Colin Heywood concluded their series of dives from Wild Mare up to Bassenthwaite Lake in Torca la Vaca in the summer by surveying 64m through Elephant Sump and taking photographs in the downstream sections. It is now clear that the Lake is part of the main drainage through the cave and not a back-water.

The Wrong Trousers inlet at the bottom of the entrance pitch in Torca la Vaca was
extended by digging out the low upstream section and entering a slightly larger set of passages for over 200m. All leads closed down in the summer.

A two-night camp beyond Lake Bassenthwaite allowed 6 people to survey a number of passages totalling 267m. A “molephone” positioning and conversation was also carried out from an underground station near the Wasdale Screees and the surface on the side of a large depression. A number of digs - potential second entrances – were excavated in the hope of

Torca la Vaca 1: Phil Papard using the Molephone to talk to Johnny and Jude Latimer underground in Torca la Vaca. (Juan Corrin & Paul Dold)
2: The underground camp. (Paul Dold)
3, 4: Andy Pringle; 5: Dan Jackson
6, 7, 8, 9: Tom Thomson
entering Torca la Vaca beyond the lake. The open 4 x 2m entrance to site 3812 (with the working name of Yo-yo Cave) leads straight into a sloping chamber and a couple of up and down climbs and pitches before ending in an unstable dig.

Site 3890 turned out to have more interest than most shafts with some horizontal development in the depth of 39m. One hundred metres to the southeast, site 3853 also showed some promise with a chamber at the bottom of two pitches. The only way on at 44m depth appears to require “serious digging” at the base of the final boulder slope.

In La Gatuna, site 3496 was excavated on a number of occasions to reveal a 15m pitch with a very narrow draughting rift at the base.
At Moncobe, in **El Cubillón**, an inlet series was explored and a climb over the sump was found to close in. *Snail Aven* was bolted but closed in after 18m. In the same area, on the western side of the cave, a boulder choke was passed and passage continued up a waterfall into inlet passage which was followed for some distance but not surveyed. The downstream sump was also inspected with a view to future diving.

Passages half way down the p85 in **Cueva de la Casa Vieja** were investigated leaving open rift routes for the future. Work here is mainly technical rope work and “not for novices”.

In **Cueva de los Urros**, site 2917, cavers squeezed through the tight entrance series to enter 1.4km of maze cave. This is mainly on one level but there are passages both above and below. The site was surveyed using a DistoX over 9 visits.

![Map of the cave](image)

**Note:** The survey is best viewed on the website at [http://www.geography.lancs.ac.uk/matienzo/surveys/2917Los_Urros-no-centre-lines.pdf](http://www.geography.lancs.ac.uk/matienzo/surveys/2917Los_Urros-no-centre-lines.pdf)

Cueva de los Urros. *(Simon Cornhill)*
Some interesting holes were found at the “hidden valley”, south of Cobadal: site 3829 is an open 15m deep hole that takes water but closed down at the base; site 3831 is a straight 7m descent into a completely choked chamber; site 3830 has a echoing p20 - 25m which was undescended at Easter because conditions were too wet from water showering out of the roof. In the summer, it was disappointing to find it choked 21m down with “no prospects”. Nearby site 3908 drops in a series of chambers to a tight, draughting but blocked solution tube. Eight metres to the east, site 3909 was excavated to a 5m drop into a chamber with a draught coming out of the floor. To the south, site 3907 was dug out to enter 6m of small passage under a sandstone bed.
Two resurgences were pushed on the south side of the northern depression at Cobadal. Woodcutter’s Cave was explored to a too tight continuation and Double Horse Trough Rising was pushed and surveyed for 130m to where it gets too small.

At Camposdelante, site 3543 was shown by a local to have a cave behind thick vegetation. This was used as a Civil War shelter but passages were seen going off a chamber. The cave was hurriedly abandoned in the summer when a bouldery wall above a dig started moving. The site (surveyed to 106m long and 21m deep) “may warrant another visit”.

Juan Corrin and Peter Smith, November 2013