

**ASF**

AUSTRALIAN  
SPELEOLOGICAL  
FEDERATION

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# NEWSLETTER



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THE AUSTRALIAN  
SPECIOLOGICAL  
FEDERATION

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Number Forty One -- September 1968

A.S.F. NEWSLETTER

AUSTRALIAN  
SPELEOLOGICAL  
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Editorial: Whither us?

IT CAN BE SAID, WITH A REASONABLE DEGREE OF CERTAINLY, THAT BY NOW THERE IS A LITTLE CRITICISM OF THE ASF NEWSLETTER. BUT BEFORE SHOUTING 'YES!', LET US LOOK BACK ON SOME FACTS.

THE IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF A NEWSLETTER ARE FREQUENCY, WHICH SHOULD BE CONSISTENT; PRESENTATION, WHICH IS DECIDED BY THE PUBLISHER-us- AND CONTROLLED BY AVAILABLE BUDGET AND FACILITIES; AND CONTENT, WHICH IN THIS CASE IS SUPPLIED BY THE COLLECTIVE US.

FIRST, THE QUESTION OF FREQUENCY. THAT WE ARE NOW WELL BEHIND SCHEDULE CAN BE ASCRIBED TO A FEW WELL DEFINABLE REASONS, WHICH COULD BE OVERCOME PROVIDED NO MORE SCUTTLING OCCURS. AN UNDERTAKING WAS GIVEN AT A CONFERENCE THAT THE BACKLOG WOULD BE ELIMINATED, AND THIS PROMISE STILL HOLDS.

AS FOR PRESENTATION, IF ANYONE CAN DO BETTER, THEY ARE VERY WELCOME TO COME FORWARD AND DO IT-NOT SUGGEST-PHYSICALLY DO IT.. NOW, THE IMPORTANT ASPECT, CONTENT. IT IS HIGHLY UNLIKELY THAT THE EDITOR ALONE DOES ALL OF THE MEANINGFUL SPELEOLOGICAL WORK UNDERTAKEN IN THIS COUNTRY; HIS OWN CAVING EFFORTS WOULD PROBABLY MAKE VERY UNINTERESTING READING. EVEN LESS LIKELY THAT THE EDITOR CAN BE IN EVERY CAVE IN THE COUNTRY EVERY DAY THROUGHOUT THE YEAR, OBSERVING AND REPORTING ANY WORTHWHILE ACTIVITY. SO THE CONTENT IS SOUGHT FROM ALL SOURCES MADE AVAILABLE TO THE EDITOR; IF IT HAS TO BE ABSTRACTED, THEN DISTORTION OR OVER-CONDENSATION MAY OCCUR. WHOSE FAULT IF THE CONTENT IS NOT ALL IT COULD BE?

AND TO CLOSE, WOULDN'T IT BE A SHOCK IF MEMBERS OF THE FEDERATION COMPETED FOR THE GREAT HONOR OF BEING 'NEWSLETTER STAFF'.. NO, WE ARE NOT COMPLAINING, WE ARE DARING AND DEFYING...

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THE FEDERATION NOW OWNS A DUPLICATOR.

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DOWN UNDER ALL OVER

## CANBERRA SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Trips to Abercrombie, Bendethera, Bungonia, Cooleman, Rosedale and Wyanbene.

## Abercrombie

Moving away from their usual stamping grounds, 8 members of the Society visited Abercrombie Caves. Caves entered were the Grove, Bushranges and Albany as well as the Main Arch. A large fissure above the Grove Cave was entered to a distance of 75ft. but became too tight for further descent. Some surface trogging was also carried out without any significant finds.

## Bendethera

16 members spent several days at Bendethera, 8 walking the ten miles in, the rest negotiating fire trails in three Landrovers. Camp was set up on Flagpole Flat and an attack made on the Efflux but without success. A 210ft. pot was located and explored, while another cave, thought to be Gin Cave, located. Seven other pot-holes were located, the deepest being 90 feet. The sump in River Cave, 200ft. upstream, was dived to a distance of 12ft. and an air-space noted. It was however, too narrow to allow the diver to surface. Bones for identification were collected in several caves.

## Bungonia

One trip in February descended the Drum, but was stopped by foul air in the crawlway at the bottom of the 134ft. entrance pitch. A further trip, this time into the Grill Cave where a member (an asthmatic) was affected by a 1% concentration of carbon di-oxide over 600ft. below the surface. His condition was such that he had to be 'rescued' by other members of the party. He was revived within the cave with the use of oxygen from equipment being used by members of Sydney Speleological Society who were conducting foul-air experiments in the cave.

In June, another trip to Bungonia was the initiation of several female members to caving. B16 was entered and a descent made down 2 pitches and through several tight squeezes until a vote by the prospective members initiated a return to the surface.

## Cooleman Plains

History was repeated in January when surveying in Murray Cave was carried past the third water trap for a distance of 700 feet, bringing the survey to a length of 1200ft. Signatures were discovered in this section containing the names of Southwell, Oldfield and Moore with the date 23-11-02, and Gamble, Sheedy and Haley and the dates 12-4-1903 and 13-4-1903. It appears that this section of the cave has not been open since this date as no other signs of entry could be found. Progress further into the cave has been blocked by a rockfall and a fissure near the 3 sump was located by radio direction finding equipment as being below a surface doline. A paper on this section of the cave has been prepared.

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## Rosedale (Bunyan)

One trip to Rosedale to take photographs of the excellent formations in this cave. Several hours were spent in the cave.

## Wyanbene

A final survey to complete the main traverse of the main cave was made during February. The total length of the cave now stands at 2700ft. Several side passages have yet to be surveyed and wall and floor details completed.

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## HIGHLAND CAVING GROUP

New Year's Day weekend was spent at Abercrombie; basically a familiarisation trip, however, investigation was made of a possible excavation site, and the drainage patterns studied.

Easter was spent at Cliefden, where excavation in the Lock Cave revealed another 25ft. of passage. A trip to the same area in June was a joint trip with OSS, UNSWSS and MSS, with little achieved other than some mapping in Cl32-3, a solution passage.

At the end of June, a cave rescue practice was held at Bungonia. The venue was kept secret until the Friday night, resulting in relatively poor attendance. Despite this, rescues were attempted in B37, the Grill Cave and B31. In B37, a series of tight vertical and sloping fissures, the 'injury' was a broken leg, caused by a fall in a loose rock pile. The 'patient' was manhandled towards the entrance, the whole system being too tight to permit use of stretchers or splints. Painkilling "TRIENE" available on the trip, would have been used on an actual rescue, as further abrasive injury in such a rescue would be inevitable. An observation at the time was that blankets and air-beds could be spread over sharp edges, over which the victim would have to be dragged.

The next rescue was in the Grill Cave. The 'injury' was a broken ankle and forearm, a result of a 12ft. fall - the location being below the Crystal Palace. First on the scene was a first aid officer, who applied arm and leg airsplints. The patient was then manhandled out, lifting by rope at pitches. At each such lift, a climber on a ladder guided and protected the patient. The complete 'rescue' was accomplished in exactly two hours.

The third venue was at the top of the third pitch in B31, to try and gain experience in the typical situation of an awkward squeeze at the top of a pitch. Altogether, the exercise proved to be very useful in gaining experience in many cave rescue techniques.

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## KEMPSEY SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Trips to Big Hill, Kemps Pinnacle, Temagog, Windy Gap, Yessabah and visits from the Newcastle Technical College Caving Club, Newcastle University Speleological Society, University of Queensland Speleological Society and a lone member from Canberra Speleological Society.

## Big Hill

These three trips were aimed at introducing members of other organisations in the Kempsey district such as the Lion's Club to the art of caving. On one trip, 120 people were progressively shown through the Laits Creek Cave.

## Kemps Pinnacle

Whilst not caving, this trip appeared to be excellent practice for some of the scrub bashing necessary in the Kempsey area. Kemps Pinnacle is 40 miles west of Kempsey in the Great Dividing Range and is some 3870ft. above sea level. An approach was made via a trail was cut into and out of the Pinnacle with machettes until the base of the Pinnacle was reached. The climb to the top of the Granite Peak was relatively easy except for the loose stones which proved hazardous to the lower climbers. Spectacular views abound of the Macleay Valley, the coast, the Northern and Western Tablelands and the valley 2000ft. below. Threatening weather forced an early retirement.

## Windy Gap

Investigations were carried further in a new cave at Windy Gap. The cave was bottomed at an estimated depth of 200 feet. Several new areas of limestone have been located by surface trogging with some small potholes and caves and a further efflux. During Easter, UOSS visited the area and located several new caves. A cave, closed during construction of a road during World War 2 was relocated but not re-opened. Coll's Cave was visited and Queensland Cave discovered. The Crystal Cave was also visited and a further 1000ft. added to the known length of the River Cave. In June, an assault was made on the Efflux and holes discovered on the trip previously mentioned. Some 6 persons from KSS assisted by members of NUSS armed with vast quantities of excavating equipment tackled the job. A hole above the Efflux was opened. The cave proved to be a single passage only 100ft. long with several blocked leads going downwards. No connection could be made with the Efflux.

## Temagog

An unnamed cave at Temagog has been extended a further 300ft. using explosives. After a false start in which the gelignite failed to explode due to a wire break, a narrow squeeze was opened up sufficiently to allow access. Progress was again stopped by a further constriction.



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Yessabah

This trip introduced members of Newcastle Technical College Caving Club to the area. Six caves were visited.

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## ORANGE SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

CSS was the host society for the ASF Committee Conference in January 1968, the meeting being held at the Technical College, with a field trip to Cliefden Caves.

Over the New Year week-end, a joint trip with NSA was held at Tuglow where all members became familiar with the whole of the main cave, and suitably celebrated the occasion.

Other trips were held to Sanco's Hole, Canomadine, Mt. Carmel and Columbine, the lava caves at Mt. Canobolas, but mainly to Cliefden. At the latter, the classic story of the man and his dog was proved to be true, under amusing circumstances. Having heard the story, (i.e. Dog chases rabbit, falls into hole, posts lowered to help dog escape, dog disappears) the relevant hillside was thoroughly examined. Giving up, the property owner was returning to his house when he slipped into an undiscovered hole. An examination of the hole showed that there was, in fact, a fencepost and a skeleton of a dog inside. Much effort has been put into further excavation of this, the Warrigal Cave. Other caves visited include Cliefden Main, Beonderop and Trapdoor.

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## SYDNEY SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

The past few months have seen much activity in SSS. Although the usual Christmas breaks have probably cut down trip numbers, this has been compensated in the chances for trips to go further afield and members have been to such places as New Zealand. Back in the State, work has continued on the long term projects and in running exploratory trips to small and less important caving areas. Interest has of course been high in Bungonia and a large number of trips have been taken there.

Jenolan

Further work has been carried out in the project of mapping Mammoth Cave. The area under attack has been the extremely complicated section between Central Level Lake and the Railway Tunnel. This part contains a multitude of tunnels leading off in all directions. A traverse has been completed through and the filling in of details is under way. Mammoth has also been the target of photographic trips, the Oolite sections and lower level river area receiving most attention.

**Bungonia**

This is the area which has has most trips with the Efflux as usual occupying most of the time and energy. Five trips have gone digging and removing earth, and latterly, the principle of the syphon has been involved in the form of 220ft. of 3inch rigid PVC pipe. With this pipe, the figures of 250-300 gpm. water removed have been recorded, although due to complications, the bottom has not yet been reached. The plateau has received some attention in the form of digging trips to B21. This is a sinkhole near the recently opened B22 and is showing considerable promise.

**Wee Jasper**

A photographic trip was taken to the Dip and Punchbowl Caves.

**Burrinjuck (Cow Flat Creek)**

This very seldom visited area (normally below water level of Burrinjuck Dam) was mapped and fully explored. The predominant feature of the caves was a 2-3ft. layer of soft mud which encrusted everything and made progress somewhat slow.

**Yarrangobilly**

A recent trip has been made to an area close to Yarrangobilly, it is located on the upper reaches of Jounama Creek. At various points in the area there are streams going underground and a balance of the water is getting to Yarrangobilly River. As time on this trip was short it is planned to do further work with tracers such as fluorescein.

**Cow Flat**

This area was visited and several caves located and mapped. The area, although having much limestone is not rich in caves and the ones found were rather small and largely devoid of formations.

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**SYDNEY UNIVERSITY SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY****Cliefden**

During a visit to Taplow Flat Cave in January, a new extension, entered through a five foot drop and a squeeze was discovered. Further trips were held to map this cave, 650ft. being surveyed in February. In April, with two mapping parties, the survey was extended to 2300ft. In August, another 500ft. was surveyed and a new 200ft. extension discovered.

**Wee Jasper**

Visits were made to the area for trip leader training, followed by a Fresher's trip.



## Jenolan

In December a party discovered a new cave located near Wilburd Lake Cave. After a 25ft. chimney, a narrow passage led to a chamber approximately 50ft x 30ft apparently terminating in a rockpile, but a further smaller chamber was entered, with a 30ft. (approx.) pitch at the far end.

## Wyanbene

In April, a combined trip with CSS was held to carry out studies of serpentine passages. Two members sustained sprained ankles, but the remainder pushed on into the new extension, including a visit to the Gun Barrel. This is a large dome pit, with water-carved "rifling" down the walls. All limestone has been removed, the collapse material on the floor being black cherty material, some conglomerate and slatey material.

## Buchan

At Easter, 20 members visited Buchan in Victoria, in conjunction with members of VSA. Visits were made to Trog Dip, Hope's Cave, Didgeridoo Cave, Dalley's Sinkhole, Sub Aqua Cave, Wilson's Cave, Lilly Pilly, Anticline Cave and Pyramid Galenamine.

## Yarrangobilly

In June, a party visited the area to report on the possibility of installing gates on some of the caves on the plateau. Despite the snow and ice conditions, visits were made to East Deep Creek, East and West Eagles Nest and Eyrie. A report was furnished as requested.

## Cooleman

At Easter, a party visited the River C ave found the downstream siphon dry, and managed to explore approximately 1050 feet of passage, to where the river disappears in a narrow earthy passage. Inscriptions were found, dating back to the turn of the century.

## WESTERN AUSTRALIAN: SPELEOLOGICAL GROUP.

Trips to the South-West, Namban River and Yanchep.

## Namban River

This area is situated 120 miles North of Perth. Seven members attended a trip in February which was a mixed miscellanea of surface trogging, to relocate known caves, search for new ones and to collect specimens of cave life, cave minerals and bone material. Super Cave was entered, this being selected as a site for further studies and a survey of the cave prepared. Samples of phosphate minerals, bones and

fauna were collected.

Nearby an unnamed cave was located containing excellent formations, phosphate and bone deposits. The cave is to be gated as some evidence of vandalism was noted.

Westons Cave was entered and has been mined for phosphates, the rail ways remaining. Other caves entered were Pretty and Quondong Caves and several unnamed caves. Some good formations were noted as were bats and wetas. In Quondong Cave, stalagmite drip pits were found and samples of moonmilk collected for particle size determination.

In April, a further trip again spent some time surface trogging the area. More holes were located but none gave access to caves beneath. However, stones dropped down a group of holes indicated caves underneath as they could be heard to fall into water and mud in several cases.

#### South West

Only one trip is reported to this area, 200 miles South of Perth, and is situated in the Boraniup area. One cave visited was Ellensbrook River Cave where a compass and tape survey was carried out and some general caving indulged upon. Mammoth Cave Doline was investigated and Conference Cave visited as was Witshcliffe Cave. In Crystal Cave efforts were made to locate an extension reported in the past. This was not located, however, another extension consisting of a beautiful grotto of white crystal formation was discovered. Rock dams were built to prevent rubble from a rockpile encroaching on the grotto and the entrance sealed.

#### Yanchep

Two trips to Yanchep Caves where surveying has been carried out in Road Cave, an attempt made to link Boomerang Gorge Cave and Silver Stocking Cave. A small extension was found in a small cave above Water Cave and some bones collected. Several other new holes were located and entered.

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