

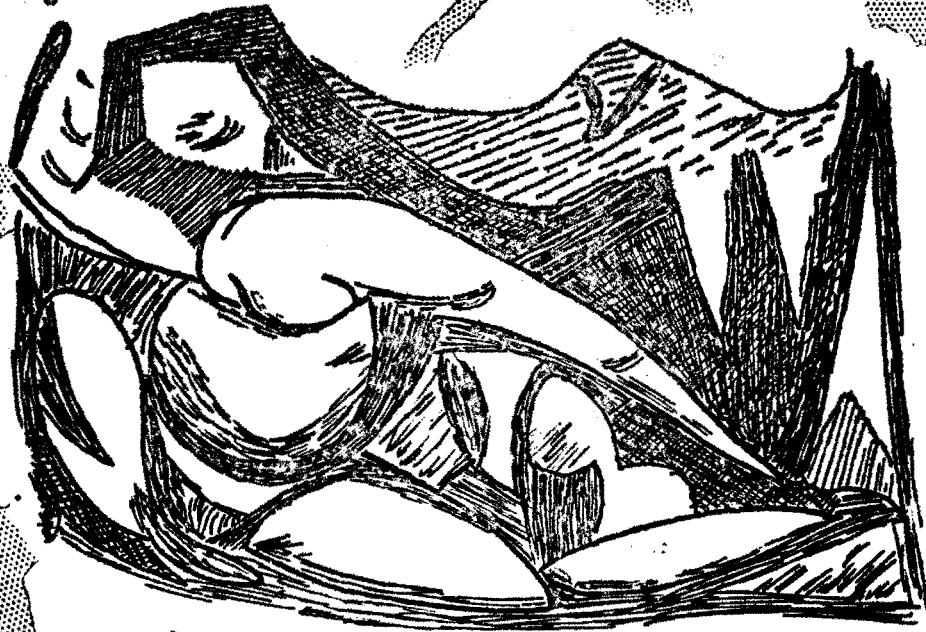
**ASF**

AUSTRALIAN  
SPELEOLOGICAL  
FEDERATION

NUMBER 43

MARCH 1969

# NEWSLETTER



Annual Subscription 35c  
Single Copies 25c

Registered in Australia for transmission by post as a periodical.

===== A S F NEWSLETTER =====

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY THE

AUSTRALIAN SPELEOLOGICAL FEDERATION

P.O. BOX 388 BROADWAY N.S.W. AUSTRALIA 2007.

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Editorial . . . . .

IF YOU WEREN'T AT THE A.S.F. CONFERENCE AT GOOLWA THEN YOU'RE NOT GOING TO READ MUCH ABOUT IT HERE. THERE WAS NO WRANGLING ABOUT CONSTITUTION, MEMBERSHIP OR PUBLICATIONS. DESPITE ITS GEOGRAPHICAL PROBLEMS, THE FEDERATION IS ON THE MOVE AND NO LONGER HIBERNATES FROM YEAR TO YEAR. THE A.S.F. HANDBOOK, THE BIGGEST AND MOST AMBITIOUS PUBLICATION IN THE HISTORY OF AUSTRALIAN SPELEOLOGY, IS OUT. THE CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS WILL BE TRANSCRIBED AND PUBLISHED FOR THE FIRST TIME. THE FEDERATION WILL BE DIRECTLY REPRESENTED AT THE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS IN GERMANY AND AT THE MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL UNION OF SPELEOLOGY. CAPITATION FEES REMAIN THE SAME.

JUST ABOUT THE ONLY THING STAGNANT ABOUT A.S.F. IS THIS NEWSLETTER. AND IF YOU THINK YOU'RE GOING TO READ MUCH ABOUT THAT HERE, YOU'RE WRONG AGAIN. THERE WILL BE NO EXPLANATIONS; IT'S NOT MY FAULT OR RESPONSIBILITY THAT IT'S LATER THAN EVER. THERE WILL BE NO PONTIFICAL PRONOUNCEMENTS AT THIS STAGE. AND THERE WILL, I TRUST, BE NO COMPLAINTS UNTIL THE NEWSLETTER IS REHABILITATED. THERE IS JUST ONE STATEMENT OF POLICY I WOULD LIKE TO MAKE. THE NEWSLETTER STAFF OWES ITS MAIN RESPONSIBILITY TO THE FELLOW WHO PAYS - THE INDIVIDUAL CAVER. NOT MERELY TO THE SOCIETIES WHO FORM THE COMMITTEE OF THE FEDERATION. SO IF THERE ARE ANY COMPLAINTS OR SUGGESTIONS ABOUT STYLE OR CONTENTS, THE EDITORIAL STAFF WANTS TO HEAR THEM. FROM INDIVIDUALS PREFERABLY. AND OUR OVERSEAS EXCHANGE CONTACTS WILL NOT BE FORGOTTEN. THEY TOO WANT TO READ ABOUT WHAT AUSTRALIAN CAVING IS DOING. NOT WHAT ITS REPRESENTATIVES ARE SAYING.

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NOTICES

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A.S.F. COMMITTEE MEETING

The next Committee Meeting of the Australian Speleological Federation will be held in Melbourne on 24 - 25 January, 1970. Host Society will be the Victorian Speleological Association. Details later.

NEWSLETTER PRODUCTION

This issue of the Newsletter was edited by John R. Dunkley and produced by an Editorial Committee consisting of Edward G. Anderson, Evalt Crabb, J.R.Dunkley, Jeanette Parkes and Norm Poulter.



DOWN UNDER ALL OVER

## NEW SOUTH WALES

-----  
 B M S C President Grahame Nelson has obtained a position in Puerto Rico and hopes to get in some caving in the Rio Camuy. Several practice sessions have been held in Glenbrook Gorge, including some at night to simulate cave conditions, and a film night was held on caving and climbing.

-----  
 H C G Highland has had a quiet period with activity centered mostly at Bungonia. Insignificant B39 was extended in conjunction with M.S.S. Negotiations are under way to merge the Wanderers Caving Group (Canberra) with H.C.G. A ladder safety harness has been developed and a combined trip with W.C.G. to an abandoned silver mine at Tolwong was staged.

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 M S S Some joint trips have been held with B.M.S.C. A general revitalization of the Society is evident this year.

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 O S S President Greg Tracy reports a good year. Several digs are under way, notably "Marrigal" or "Dog's Body" at Cliefden, and exploratory trips went to Mt Carmel at Wellington and to Sancho's Hole at Mt David. A forestry compass has been purchased and mapping projects seem likely.

-----  
 S S S Some "hard" members caved in the Mt Owen area of South Island, New Zealand, while some "softies" looked around the Waitomo area of North Island. All reported marvellous hospitality and "vast innumerable" waiting to be discovered. Near Hamilton they arrived just in time to assist in the rescue at Gardener's Gut. The third issue of Communications Occasional Papers has appeared, devoted solely to Chillagoe.

-----  
 S U S S This year set a new record with 78 new prospectives signed up in Orientation Week. About 60 went on the annual freshers trip and 15 or so on a field day to the sea caves at Avalon and Palm Beach. Well known caving identity and former editor of the A.S.F. Newsletter Ted Anderson was elected President following the resignation of John Dunkley to go overseas.

-----  
 UNSWSS With a record intake of new members this year, the Society now boasts 17 full members, 10 associates and 25 prospectives. With 35 participants, the freshers trip to Cliefden also set a record for the society

## Bungonia

The N.S.W. Co-ordination Committee organized another successful "clean up" of Bungonia in February. About 50 members of 9 societies managed to collect 30 cubic feet or so of rubbish which was later removed by arrangement with Mulwarrie Shire Council.

S.S.S. has continued work on the efflux. Early in January an attempt was made to lower the previous record -19' water level. After initial difficulties, the syphon was set working on a Saturday night. As expected, by early Sunday afternoon the water had dropped to -18'. Another section of pipe was fitted and the water level continued to fall to -21'. At this point it unaccountably rose  $1\frac{1}{2}'$  and remained static. The effluxions gave up.

The B4-5 extension was entered by S.S.S. and an attempt made to climb a steep mud slope beyond the lake. A group from Gympie High School Geological Society found water in the low squeeze of B4-5 in January. They also report three 'grems' in the Grill, clad only in costume, two barefooted and the other well shod in sandals.

Some bones found in B37A (provisional reference) by B.M.S.C. and M.S.S. were sent to the Australian Museum.

## Church Creek

A large group from S.S.S. spent all of one day chopping and hacking their way through the Blue Mountains after bush fires had dropped many logs and branches across the tracks to Church Creek. Later, Lewis Cave (CC6) was surveyed and some digs commenced.

## Cliefden

The U.N.S.W.S.S. freshers trip was the Society's largest ever. Cliefden Main Cave was visited, with the not uncommon discovery that finding your way out is very confusing. Trapdoor and Gable Caves were also visited. O.S.S. have tried to tidy up the loose and dangerous rubble slope at the entrance to Cliefden Main. They have been unable to find the major extension to Taplow Flat Cave discovered by S.U.S.S. in January, 1968.

## Jenolan

A small S.U.S.S. trip in January examined parts of Mammoth Cave to assess the feasibility of a detailed geographical study of the cave. This would be a useful preliminary to any serious morphological in this rather complex system, and would be more appropriate to the Society's capabilities.

## Timor

Visited in January by a joint M.S.S. - B.M.S.C. party, primarily for familiarisation. Termite tunnels were examined in the Belfry and some wallaby bones found in Shaft Cave. On a further B.M.S.C. trip in February marsupial bones were collected for the Australian Museum, and the location photographed and mapped. The S.U.S.S. Freshers Trip visited most caves at

Timor as well as Glen Dhu (Woolshed) Cave up the Isis River.

#### Tuglow

This continued to be the home ground of B.M.S.C., with five trips since Christmas. The main cave was found to contain several types of spiders, guano flies and larvae, a frog and a frog skeleton. An as yet unidentified skull found embedded in flowstone was removed to the Museum.

#### Walli

S.S.S. continued a dig in Wa39 with some mechanical assistance. Unfortunately the cave was blocked a further 8' in, but several other dig sites look promising. B.M.S.C. collected some mammalian teeth in Piano Cave

#### Wee Jasper

B.M.S.C. has examined and photographed fossils in the Dip and elsewhere.

#### Wombeyan

S.S.S. continued its program of numbering the entrances. As usual during mapping exercises, lots of holes were checked and though most needed digging, an interesting new find was dubbed Termite Cave (W44). A steep chimney entrance drops 30' to a small chamber making up most of the cave. A large number of bones is strewn across the floor which is traversed by a sinuous termite ridge, a most unusual feature also reported at Timor (above).

#### Wyanbene and Big Hole

Two trips by S.S.S. are the only ones reported to this area recently, both for general exploration only. The Big Hole was laddered and 12 people made the long climb in and out in five hours.

#### Yarrangobilly

On Australia Day weekend a large party showed how much basic exploration can be done when the aims are clear and the organization effective. S.S.S. has been trying to break into the "Northern Master Cave", postulated to take all the drainage of the four Coppermine Creeks. Nearly a mile of unknown cave lies between these intakes and the known efflux, Coppermine Cave (Y12). Three lines of attack were drawn up for the assault:

- a) Attempting to find a way through the rock-pile in the Coppermine Cave, best prospects being in this upper level because water level impassable.
- b) Pushing exploration in Y10, Y9, Y8 and Y45, which are the active dolines taking the four Coppermine Creeks, nos. 1, 2, 3 and 4 respectively.
- c) Checking out known caves and looking for new ones between the intakes and the efflux, in the hope of breaking into the master system from above.

Although the master proved elusive, the exercise proved of considerable value in adding to basic knowledge of the northern part of the limestone.



## QUEENSLAND

----- has had an extraordinary recovery from near-obscurity only a few UQSS years ago. With about 85 members, U.Q.S.S. is the largest club ----- in the country. On the other hand, it has its problems: no other club has to travel so far to its caves, and no other club is in danger of losing nearly all its caves. For Mt Etna and Texas are threatened. In fact, the phenomenal renaissance is attributed mostly to the conservation publicity. Twenty-six trips got off the ground in 1968, and members were caving all over Australia. Some unusual areas visited included Dundarraha lava tunnels (Bam Bam Springs), Gore, Limevale and also Ashford in N.S.W. The Society Newsletter "Down Under" was resurrected after two years hibernation and is now a regular, well-produced publication.

## Camooweal

A party of five from Brisbane, plus some S.U.S.S. and U.Q.S.S. expatriates from Mt Isa, rediscovered five major and three minor caves. Two were mapped and three sketched, and there was some insect collecting and photographic interludes. Transport and the climate are the main problems of access, but more trips are planned.

## Mt Etna

The long 900-mile round trip saw seven trips during 1968 and 2 early in 1969. Two sporting vertical caves, Crick Hollow and Jolly Rodger, were entered for the first time and found to be over 200' deep. Four smaller caves were found in 1968 - Wintering Hollow, Smelly Bat Cave, Triffid Hole and Belt Cave - and extensions discovered in Carn Dum, Resurrection and Helms Deep. Photographs and measurements have been made in a number of caves as part of the conservation publicity program. It was found that mining had occurred within one chain of the entrance to Winding Staircase Cave, in breach of the agreement between the mining company and the Mines Department.

## Mt Surprise - Einasleigh

A remote area 180 miles NNW of Townsville, visited by Peter Dwyer at Christmas, 1968, has great potential for long lava tunnels. In March, 1969 locals guided Henry Shannon through half a mile of 20' x 30' cave to a lake beyond which the cave clearly continues, supposedly for miles. Ah well!

## Texas

A theodolite survey on surface began late in 1968 and Russenden Cave was mapped to Grade 4. Early in 1969 there were 3 trips, two spent in fruitless search for caves in the nearby Reedy Creek limestone. An attempt was made to find the influx of the stream in Glen Lyon Cave by diving in Pike Creek, without success, and this remains a hydrological puzzle. Apart from this, there has been some general exploration and introduction of new members to the area, along with some insect collection and photography. Digging has led to two small caves called Cundowie and Cruiscin. The conservation program has continued at Texas, and Henry Shannon was able to present some relevant economic arguments against the proposed irrigation.

## SOUTH AUSTRALIA and WESTERN AUSTRALIA

----- A quiet but worthwhile year is reported for 1968, with the  
CEGSA major achievement being organization of the A.S.F. Conference  
----- at Goolwa, and field trips. At Naracoorte, the club hut has  
been painted and electricity connected. Expatriate member Tom Wigley has  
been caving in the Rocky Mountains in Canada.

## Flinders Ranges

The main trip of 1968 was to meet a group of Port Augusta cavers. Their reports were followed up and in Mairs Cave bones of Cave Lion, Tasmanian Wolf, Tasmanian Devil and others were found, giving it an important place in the state's palaeontological history.

## Kangaroo Island

Twenty cavers participated in the A.S.F. Field Trip, and an extensive program included both known caves and search for new ones. In Kelly Hill Caves Reserve, Frosted Floor Cave was relocated. New Year Cave was found  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile west of Kelly Hill and a new extension in West Bay Hollow. Several new small caves were entered by digging in some dolines west of K1.

## Nullarbor

A gravimetric survey of Mullahullang Cave by C.E.G.S.A. and S.U.S.S. suggests a major continuation of the cave south-west of the entrance doline and a large passage between Easter Extension and the Drop-Off. The results are encouraging and there is enough scope possibly for a university research project. Investigation of sea caves near Wilsons Bluff proved them to be caused by wave action and not, as had been hoped, by the sea having intersected stream beds.

Three separate expeditions followed the A.S.F. Conference. S.U.S.S. has commenced a high grade surface theodolite traverse to establish water table levels and to provide reference points for future underground surveys. It seems that the water table is much lower than was thought, and its gradient must be extraordinarily low. C.E.G.S.A. found an unidentified live spider in the Dome, Mullahullang. At Yalata Mission they followed up a report in the Adelaide 'Advertiser' of 16/11/68, that someone had found "tiny blind fish" in a Nullarbor cave. The claim appeared untenable.

n.b. a detailed report on the A.S.F. Field trip is being prepared and will appear in the Newsletter for June or September, 1969.

## South - East

The Victoria Cave entrance project has been completed and results suggest the site would be suitable for a tourist cave. Further major extensions have been found in Fox Cave. Several instances of caves in need of protection were given by the President at the A.S.F. Conference and the Minister for Lands, Mr Brookman, who was present, agreed to give sympathetic hearing to a deputation with a scheme of needs and priorities.

## TASMANIA

-----  
 TCC A marked drop in caving activities is reported for 1968-9 and there have not been many new recruits. The Search and Rescue Organization was called out twice. In December the rescue of Timothy Walter from a dolerite cave on Mt Faulkner showed how many problems were involved in a call-out only ten miles from Hobart. The soul-searching was only just in time. On March 6, two people were rescued from a cave near Maydena with excellent teamwork and public relations. In a lighter vein, T. C. C. member Robin Booth takes the prize for the most original insurance claim of the year. While parked in a paddock during a Gunns Plain trip, his car suffered \$200 damage when a ram rammed its reflection in the doors.

## Ida Bay

Two trips to Exit Cave have added another 1000' or so in 4 or 5 places. Australia's longest cave now stands at  $7\frac{1}{2}$  miles surveyed but in the last year surveying has not kept pace with discovery and the total length must now exceed 8 miles. During a surface traverse in the thick bush nearby, a spectacular 20' x 40' sinkhole with vertical walls was found, but there was neither equipment nor time to explore it.

## Mt Anne

Access is easier as the result of construction of the Scotts Peak Road. Track-cutting has started from Sandfly Creek towards north-east ridge. This should shorten the walk-in to four hours and the walk-out to three.

## VICTORIA

-----  
 VSA The big news is the completion of the club's hut, an old farmhouse half a mile from Buchan. A lot of renovation has been done and it is hoped that the convenience of the house will encourage at least two trips per month to Buchan and surroundings. The house is freely available to visitors as well as to club members subject to house rules and fees are most reasonable. Visitors should write to V. S.A. in the first instance.

## Buchan

A lot of the work on the house, including erection of large 'trog sign'. Some meteorological readings were taken in Royal Cave, exploration in Moon and Mabels, photography in Federal and surface surveying in the Reserve.

## Murrindal

A very successful Scout instruction trip to Lilly Pilly, Anticline and Murrindal Moon, plus some caves at Buchan, was an encouraging vindication of the club's policy of embracing and assisting independent cavers. In this way they hope to avoid some of the problems which have occurred in N.S.W. due to increasing numbers of unattached cavers.