

ASF

AUSTRALIAN
SPELEOLOGICAL
FEDERATION

NUMBER 47

MARCH 1970

NEWSLETTER



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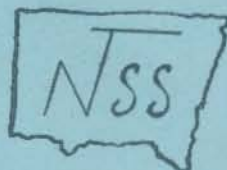
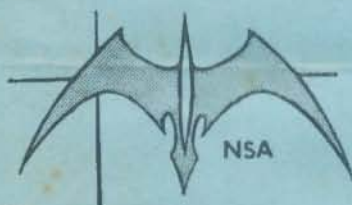
NUSS



VSA



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NUCC



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 Societies

Editorial

"I have never given a thought to conservation or pollution in any project I have undertaken. All I am interested in is getting the ore out as quickly as possible and selling it. There is no limit to the amount of ore and we have to turn it into cash. If there is any mess left, somebody can clean it up afterwards . . . " (Millionaire prospector Lang Hancock, April 1970)

WHAT HAS ALL THIS TO DO WITH SPELEOLOGY? WELL, CAVES ARE BUT ONE OF MANY ENVIRONMENTAL TYPES WHICH CONSERVATIONISTS ARE TRYING TO PRESERVE, LIKE THE BARRIER DUNES OF MYALL LAKES, THE FORESTS OF BOYD PLATEAU AND THE BEAUTIFUL BEACHES OF LAKE PEDDER. UNTIL RECENTLY, ALMOST EVERY CONSERVATION ISSUE IN AUSTRALIA HAS BEEN FOUGHT BY AN AD HOC LOCAL GROUP, IMPECUNIOUS IN THE FACE OF BIG MONEY AND LACKING INFORMATION, KNOW-HOW, INFLUENCE AND POPULAR SUPPORT.

BUT THE TIDE IS TURNING. THE LAISSEZ - FAIRE PHILOSOPHY AND HILLBILLY, DEVIL-MAY-CARE ATTITUDE CHARACTERIZED BY PEOPLE LIKE MR LANG HANCOCK IS PART OF HISTORY. SUDDENLY, WORDS LIKE POLLUTION, ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY PEPPER THE EVERYDAY PARLANCE. RESPONSIBLE CITIZENS ARE QUESTIONING THE BIBLICAL EXHORTATIONS TO BE FRUITFUL AND MULTIPLY AND TO HAVE DOMINION OVER EVERY LIVING CREATURE. THE KEYNESIAN ECONOMICS OF GROWTH WHICH DOMINATED POST-WAR ECONOMY IS BEING QUESTIONED AS QUALITY OF LIFE BECOMES AN ELECTION ISSUE. ACADEMICS AND OTHERS NO LONGER SUBSCRIBE BLINDLY TO THE POPULATE - OR - PERISH MYTH AND THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT IS CUTTING ITS IMMIGRATION QUOTAS.

ALL THESE MACROSCOPIC DEVELOPMENTS AFFECT OUR MICROSCOPIC ISSUES OF CAVE CONSERVATION, FOR IN THE LONG RUN THE SOLUTION LIES IN PREVAILING SOCIAL VALUES AND IN EDUCATION - OF SPELEOLOGISTS, LAND OWNERS, GOVERNMENTS, AND THE PUBLIC. EVERY CONSERVATION BATTLE THAT IS WON, FROM PROTECTION OF HAIRY - NOSED WOMBATS TO DECLARATION OF A NATIONAL PARK, MAKES THE NEXT ONE EASIER. EVERY CONSERVATION ISSUE THAT YOU SUPPORT WILL, HOWEVER INDIRECTLY, MAKE IT LESS LIKELY THAT A CAVE WILL BE MINED AWAY.

FOR THESE REASONS, SUCCESS IN THE COLONG CAMPAIGN (AND COLONG WILL BE WON) HAS IMPLICATIONS FAR BEYOND THE IMMEDIATE. PUBLIC FEELING ABOUT ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES IS TOO WELL AROUSED TO IGNORE. LET US HOPE THAT THE 1970'S WILL BE THE DECADE OF CONSERVATION, AND THAT IN 10 YEARS THE POPULAR PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE WILL BE SO CHANGED THAT WE WILL WONDER WHY THE 1960'S WERE SUCH DIFFICULT YEARS FOR CONSERVATION INTERESTS.

AND IF YOU THINK THE CONSERVATION CATCH-CRY IS JUST A FLASH IN THE PAN OR A COLLECTION OF CLICHES WHICH WILL NOT BECOME PART OF THE WAY OF LIFE IN AFFLUENT COUNTRIES, PLEASE REMEMBER THAT IT IS ONLY 10 YEARS SINCE SOMENEGROS IN JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI, SAT DOWN IN A LITTLE WHITE DRUGSTORE AND DEMANDED TO BE SERVED.

NEW MEMBER OF A.S.F.

..... Central Queensland Speleological Society

The Central Queensland Speleological Society became the 20th member society of the Australian Speleological Federation when its application was approved at the Melbourne Committee Meeting in January 1970. By way of introduction, here is an outline of the history of the latest member ...

By 1967, quite a few people were exploring caves in the Mt Etna - Limestone Ridge areas. After some preliminary discussions a public meeting called by the Mayor of Rockhampton and chaired by a Council alderman was held in Rockhampton Town Hall on 27th July, 1967. A Steering Committee was appointed, Constitution and By-laws drawn up and the first elections held later in 1967. Meetings are now held on the third Monday of every month at the Adult Education Board, cnr. East and Fitzroy Sts., Rockhampton. The St Johns Ambulance Brigade presented the Society with a First Aid Kit to take on trips.

To date, CQSS has concentrated exploration in Limestone Ridge, although trips are also held to Mt Etna area. Two new caves were found recently and named Rainbow Cave and Rain Gauge Pothole. Assistance has been given wherever possible to the University of Queensland Speleological Society in their endeavours to have Mt Etna - Limestone Ridge declared a National Park and protected from mining depredations. Local youth clubs who expressed an interest in caves have been guided through several systems. There are now 21 full members of the Society.

Material by CQSS members has appeared in a couple of other club newsletters but production has now commenced of the Society's own newsletter which, it is hoped, will appear monthly, called "The Explorer.

PRESIDENT: Mr E. Gomersall

SECRETARY: Mrs A. Kersey

EDITOR of NEWSLETTER: Mr R. Lorraway PATRON: Dr A.R.B. Skertchley

* * * * *

A NOTE ON MR. J. N. JENNINGS

A number of club publications in the past year have incorrectly bestowed the title of Dr or Professor on one of Australia's foremost speleologists, a Trustee of the A.S.F. The contributions of J.N. Jennings to knowledge of Australian karst, coastal, glacial and periglacial morphology stand as sufficient monument, and I know he will not be offended if I point out that the appellation "Mr" is quite correct, and that his title is that of Professorial Fellow in Geomorphology, Research School of Pacific Studies, the Australian National University. Mr Jennings is a member of Canberra Speleological Society.

ASF COMMITTEE MEETING

JANUARY 1970

The following is a brief outline of some of the more important business transacted:

Societies represented: CSS, VSA, SUSS, SSS, HCG, BMSC, KSS, MSS, UQSS

Business arising from minutes: \$66 had been raised for the Edie Smith award and more is sought. It was resolved that the A.S.F. subscribe to the Australian Conservation Foundation.

Reports of Executive: Reports of the President, Secretary, Librarian, Newsletter Editor and Newsletter Manager were read and accepted. The Treasurer's report was deferred pending a more complete statement.

Structure of the Federation: Elery Hamilton-Smith read his report which had been discussed with a meeting of the N.S.W. Co-ordination Committee. Main purpose of report is to determine the adequacy of the structure and organization of the A.S.F. in relation to its present function and what changes may be necessary to provide for future growth. Main proposals:

1. to continue present arrangement of annual meetings with Conferences every second year.
2. to appoint Commissions to carry out the work of the Federation in the fields of Newsletter, Handbook, Library, Biological Research, Cave Safety, Conservation and International liaison.
3. to revise and republish every ten years at least the guideline documents of the Federation (Code of Ethics, Terminology, Conservation, Survey, Nomenclature and Safety).
4. to have facilities for the chartering of regional liaison councils of speleological societies where required.

A further report will be drawn up for the next Committee Meeting in Hobart.

International Union of Speleology: John Dunkley reported on Australia's participation in the Fifth International Congress of Speleology in Stuttgart, West Germany and the concurrent meeting of the International Union of Speleology. It was resolved that the A.S.F. become a member of the I.U.S. at a cost of \$30pa. Several appointments were made to maintain liaison with the I.U.S. Secretariate and Commissions.

A.S.F. Newsletter: The contents, material and backlog were severely criticized by several societies and heated debate continued on and off for two days. Four proposals were made:

1. SSS - guarantee to produce Newsletter for 2 years only as a supplement to the Journal of SSS.
2. To continue present arrangement but expand Newsletter Commission to 4 with power to co-opt (J.Dunkley, E.Anderson, E.Crabbe, N.Poulter)

3. VSA - to produce the Newsletter as a club effort.
4. CSS - to discontinue the Newsletter.

No other Society was prepared to accept the first proposal as it involved an unacceptable condition of submerging the A.S.F. Newsletter beneath a club periodical and there were doubts as to the sincerity of such a radical plan which only deferred the problem for 2 years, solving nothing except the backlog. The second proposal was accepted with certain conditions imposed by the proponents, the third lapsed and the fourth is still on the notice paper for the next meeting.

New Member Society: UQSS supported the application for membership submitted by the Central Queensland Speleological Society. It was unanimously resolved that CQSS be admitted to membership subject to compliance with the membership requirements

The Meeting closed at 5.10pm, Sunday 25th January, 1970.

* * * * *

ACCESS TO CAVING AREAS

Important changes have recently occurred in conditions of access to certain caving areas which should be noted by all concerned

BUCHAN

All caves in the Reserve have been closed to all cavers.

COOLEMAN PLAIN

All speleologists are advised that access to the caves of Cooleman Plain now requires a permit from the National Parks and Wildlife Service. Permission will be granted only to accredited members of the Australian Speleological Federation under conditions similar to those operating at Yarrangobilly. The NP & WS have cancelled all snowline permits for grazing in the Cooleman area and the good show of wildflowers this year is attributed to this action.

MULLAMULLANG CAVE, NULLARBOR PLAIN

Access to all caves on Madura property, Nullarbor Plain, Western Australia including Mullamullang Cave, will be granted only by written permission of the owner (Mr Birmingham) or the manager, in advance.

WALLI

Sydney Speleological Society has been entrusted with the control of caving in this area and the land owner will not admit parties without letter from SSS.

COLONG and TUGLOW

Following appointment of a Ranger to Kanangra-Boyd National Park, cavers would be advised to carry proof that they are members of an A.S.F. Society or access to these areas may be refused. Conditions are under review.

TROGLOBITIC SPIDERS FROM THE NULLARBOR

by J. W. J. Lowry, WASG

The recent reprinting in this Newsletter (Hill 1969) of a CEGSA trip report on the Nullarbor, in which a troglobitic spider is recorded, may give a false impression of the state of knowledge of troglobitic spiders from the Nullarbor area. To date the following facts are known:

1. On 29th August, 1966, J.W.J. Lowry collected fragments of a blind spider, together with fragments of dead cockroaches from Roaches Rest Cave (N58). These were sent together to Dr M.J. Mackerras, who later sent the spider to Dr Barbara Main. This spider belongs to the Family Dipluridae and was described by Main (1969). It was reported incorrectly in both the April-June 1969 issue of the CEGSA Newsletter and in the June 1969 ASF Newsletter as coming from Mullahmullang Cave (N37).
2. On 20th October, 1966, a second species of troglobitic spider was found by D.C. Lowry running along the walls of Weebubbie Cave (N2). It belongs to the Agelenid group (M.Gray pers. comm.) and is alluded to briefly on page 9 of the paper by Main (1969).
3. On 24th December, 1967, a third species of blind troglobitic spider was collected by B. Muir and M. Gray from the Dome in Mullahmullang Cave (N37) and the web was photographed. Brief mention of this spider is found in a trip report by Muir (1969), and also on page 9 of the paper by Main (1969). The spider belongs to the Family Dictynidae (pers. comm. M. Gray and Dr Barbara Main) and according to Gray is the same species collected by a party led by P. Hawkes on 10th January, 1969, in the Dome of Mullahmullang Cave, and recorded by "A.L.H." in the April-June 1969 issue of CEGSA Newsletter.

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- MUIR, B. (1969) : Nullarbor Plains Trip, 1967. Western Caver (March 1969) 8 (2) : 28.

* * * * *

Editorial note :

I wish to thank sincerely the following readers who also assisted in the elucidation of the above matter:

Mr M. Gray (Australian Museum, Sydney), Mr E. Hamilton-Smith, Mr R. Yates and Mr W. Goedecke.

CONSERVATION ACTION

ROUTE OF SNOWY MOUNTAINS HIGHWAY, YARRANGOBILLY

Over the last few years extensive realignment and widening of the Snowy Mountains Highway has occurred between Kiandra and Talbingo. Near Rules Point the present road reaches 4500', dropping steadily to 3400' near Yarrangobilly village. Thus most of the present road follows the margin of the limestone above the winter snow line and snow clearing is often necessary. To reduce the need for clearing, the Department of Main Roads originally planned to re-route the road lower down the plateau, approximately along the 3600'-3800' contour level for most of the distance. Such a route would endanger seriously not only such well known caves as North, East and West Deep Creek Caves (Y7, Y5 & Y6) and the Eagles Nest system (Y1, Y2 & Y3) but would ruin significant surface karst features such as the Tombstones and minor dolines. The plan was apparently dropped and the intention now is apparently to rebuild the road south of Yarrangobilly village and Y10, then to bring it back onto the present route near the northern end of the caves reserve, after which it would cut down through the timber, bypassing the top end of the Long Plain near Rules Point.

This rerouting at the southern end would almost certainly interfere with the narrow limestone belt east of Harriewood Gorge and ruin yet more country. Furthermore, the view of the Long Plain, which is the largest area of natural grassland in the high country, would be missed.

The main danger to the caves themselves would arise from the sand, silt and other debris washing into them. As well, any re-routing of the road nearer to the cave entrances would greatly increase the risk of unauthorized entry, leading to vandalism and accidents. Simply realigning and widening the present road will still encroach on the dolines of Y10 and Y45 and probably on Y8 and Y9 as well. The solution leading to least cave damage, but unfortunately to most snow clearing, would be to locate the road off the limestone to the east of the present route. Canberra Speleological Society considers that realigning and not re-routing of the road would do least damage to the park as a whole. They have made representations on this basis to the Department of Main Roads. NUCC, SUSS and SSS have also protested to the DMR and other clubs are urged to make their voices heard. Further information on the exact routing of the proposed new road should be available when Mr J.N. Jennings returns from winter field trips in the Kimberly Ranges.

The following are extracts from a letter from N.C. Gare, Superintendent, Kosciusko National Park, in reply to representations made by National University Caving Club :

" ... I can assure you that no caves will be damaged ... the plan with all caves marked on it has been given to their (D.M.R.) design staff and special surveys have been taken by the Department to ensure that no cave is on the road alignment ... When the final alignment is known I will let you know.

Every effort is being made to protect the caves from damage of any type. The D.M.R. has been asked to build siltation traps on the downstream side of all earthworks, on all streams to ensure that siltation levels do not reach the level to harm the caves.

The Park is currently taking siltation counts on all major streams running into the limestone ... we will continue to take siltation counts during construction and if it goes beyond the recommended value (200ppm) we will ask the D.M.R. to stop work and rectify the situation.

The National Parks and Wildlife Service is vitally concerned with the protection and preservation of these caves and you may be assured that no effort will be spared to ensure that damage is not occasioned during the proposed road re-alignment works."

(The last paragraph was abstracted from Speleograffiti and added to the information supplied by CSS)

* * * * *

C O L O N G - The Church Creek "Cave - In"

The latest gimmick to keep Church Creek Caves in the newspapers was a "cave--in" whereby the caves were more or less occupied by one group or another for 9 days last year. The Colong Committee did the organizing and labour was provided by SSS, SUSS, UNWSS and several bushwalking and scout groups. Freelance photographers Gary Steer and John Davis (of "Rucksack" fame) were there with cameras for TV. Reports describe the whole operation as very miserable with rain and mist every day.

* * * * *

SOUTH AUSTRALIA - The South-east and the Nullarbor

Timely representation on cave pollution in the south-east of South Australia were made by Fred Aslin and Grant Gartrell to a State Water Resources Committee investigating existing and future water supplies for the state. A typical example of the problems encountered down there, earning a prize of stupidity 1st class, must go to whoever tipped a load of fresh sheep carcasses into Three Sisters Cave, Tantanoola.

There were times when it must have been unthinkable that the Nullarbor would ever be a conservation problem. Yet Weebubbie Cave is only one of many caves which are showing terrible scars from pollution and uncontrolled exploitation. A perfectly good pipe was already laid in Weebubbie Cave to draw off water, yet a hole has now been drilled straight through the roof to pump water out. The old pipe has been left in the cave with large quantities of other rubbish. If you possess photographs of this cave taken several years ago, hang on to them. They are irreplaceable. Reports of blowholes signposted for tourists being half full of rubbish or smelling of rotten meat from 20 yards away are alarmingly common.

The deep caves of the Nullarbor have great potential as future tourist attractions. The immense size of the chambers in such caves as Abrakurrie and their contrast to the surface landscape so desolate and flat must class them as among the wonders of the world.

* * * * *

DID YOU KNOW THAT T.C.C. IS THE ONLY SOCIETY IN AUSTRALIA THAT NOTIFIES A.S.F. OF ADDRESS CHANGES BEFORE THEY OCCUR?

DISCOVERIES AT YARRANGOBILLY

by M. G. Webb, NUCC

Two new discoveries at Yarrangobilly by NUCC are significant for their relationship to nearby, better known caves

Y59 - BRUISER POT

The entrance is situated in broken rock near the top of the large bluff overlooking the Ranger Station and about 50 yards east of South Glory Hole tunnel. There are many small holes in the broken rock, most of which connect to a small collapse type chamber just below the surface. A squeeze between rocks gives access to the 35' entrance shaft which ends just above a further 10' drop on to the scree slope. By exiting to the right it is possible to reach the floor with no further equipment, although a 15' ladder makes the work much safer.

The floor of this cave is mainly a scree slope at 45° angle, loose most of the way but calcitised at the bottom. In the lower part of the cave there is quite reasonable dripstone and coral formation, unfortunately quite dry. Two small tunnels lead off this part of the cave, one to a small chamber. Several digs were attempted at various places without success. The cave is approximately 120' deep by 150' long, with an average floor to roof separation of 40'. The cave is very close to North Glory Hole but there is no apparent connection. The name 'Bruiser Pot' derives from minor injuries resulting from dislodgment of rocks during an early descent.

Y58 - JANUS CAVE

Our first look at this rather insignificant doline 150' from North Deep Creek was at Easter 1969. We found the entrance led into a fissure, then low tunnel and short drop-off, then up a mud bank into a rock pile. So far there were countless boot tracks and tricouni marks, but on pushing our way through the rock pile into another chamber, we could not find any more and assume we were first into this section. The Rangers had no record of this cave, and so registered it as Y58.

On a later trip the fissure was bottomed and we found ourselves in an abandoned stream bed which we followed down into a large and very beautiful chamber containing vast quantities of pure white calcite which was a photographers paradise. The stream bed goes through the floor of this chamber, over a 60° pitch into a lower chamber, 40' below which we found a flowing stream. A few feet downstream, to our astonishment, we found an old iron bucket and digging gear. The large chamber was called the Rawlinson Chamber. The digging gear, of course, is the end of North Deep Creek. Dick Price and I followed upstream until we were able to leave the water and follow sandshoe tracks. After some interesting climbing feats, we emerged in North Deep Creek doline (Y7).

On our trip in August 1969 to Y58, Mick Alting and Roger Curtis collected a number of bones, including bat skeletons, a rodent, and one other skull,

unusual in shape and apparently a carnivore. It was sent to the CSIRO for identification, and they eventually became coherent enough to tell us that it was Thylacinus cynocephalus - the large, apparently long extinct eastern species of Thylacinus. The skull was very well preserved and CSIRO asked us to get the rest of it, sending a representative to assist, but unfortunately the remainder was not found.

Janus is the two headed keeper of the gate to the Roman subterranean hell. One head looks out, the other always in. Since parts of Y58 are very dirty and uncomfortable, the "hell" part seems reasonable, and unless you know the way, Y7 is an exit only from the Y58 due to the difficulty of climbing back up Y58.

Y23, Y24 and Y25 - Jersey Cave, North and South Glory Holes

For many years there have been persistent rumours of a connection between the Jersey Cave and the North Glory Hole. To simplify the work of lighting both the Glory systems and the Jersey, the Rangers wanted answers to these questions:

1. Is there a short cut connection from the North to South Glory Hole?
2. Is there a connection between North Glory and the Jersey? If so,
3. Where is it?

Exploration revealed a connection between Maze Lake sump and the Queens Chamber in North Glory, shortening by 600' the cable required to light the North Glory Hole. This represents a nett savings of some \$500 in cable and junction boxes. However, before the cable was installed, members of the club discovered another connection ending in the Kings Chamber, leading to considerable further saving. Work then started on the postulated North Glory - Jersey link, without any success. I developed another cave detection system (Speleograffiti 6 (6):9-10) to search for this hypothetical link, but have not visited Yarrangobilly since the equipment was completed and it has not been tested. During the search however, an upper level was discovered in the North Glory. Its most easterly point is approximately 100' up the rockpile at the end of the North Glory. The passage has been followed back in sections for 300' and the total length is 500'. Decoration includes calcite crystals, coral and stalactites.

Another NUCC party attacked from the Jersey and although three very attractive chambers were discovered, the supposed link was not. Two of the chambers lead off the now disused right hand branch of the tourist cave. Both are on the left side going in. The third chamber is at the far end of the tourist cave beyond the top of the steps. A tunnel was discovered on the left of the Dome leading on for 300' or so.

The Jersey was, until 1899, known as the Jillabanan, from two local aboriginal words meaning "black hole" because of its black flowstone formation. This was originally attributed to manganese, but Byron Deveson has found it to be apparently carbonaceous (Speleograffiti 6 (5)). Attempts were made to measuring ionization coefficients in North Glory and Jersey but the results were inconclusive due to insufficient sensitivity in the equipment.

Other NUCC work at Yarrangobilly

A new padlock was put on gate in Restoration Cave (Y50). A fissure 30' from Y38 was explored. It was blowing strongly but the passage narrowed to a slot beyond which another passage could be seen.

SEARCH AT MOUNT ANNE, TASMANIA

by R. G. Williams

Editor's Note: The following is a severely edited version of the "Report of the Field Operations of the Mt Anne Search - October 1969" by R.G. Williams, civilian ground-search controller (under authority of Inspector T.E. Howard, Police Search and Rescue Section). Because many of our caving areas, particularly in south-east Australia are in country not much less rugged than Mt Anne, a wide - ranging surface search is something which speleos should expect and be prepared for. The report below is a little difficult to follow without the map which was supposed to accompany it. If this map is obtained before printing, it will be added to the end of this Newsletter.

I N T R O D U C T I O N

Precis

John Boyle, aged 26, formerly of Sydney but resident six months in Hobart, became separated late on Saturday, October 18, 1969, from a party searching for caves and potholes at the head of Sandfly Creek, $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles NNE of Mt Anne in the rugged south-west of Tasmania. Despite an intensive search involving aircraft and about 130 ground searchers, the missing man was not found and the search was called off late on Sunday, 26th October, 1969.

General Description of Search Area

The headwaters of Sandfly Creek drain into relatively open buttongrass plain oriented east-west and widening downstream to about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles where it is crossed by the Hydro-Electric Commission's Scotts Peak Road. Camp was set up by John Boyle and party in scrub just beyond the plain and about 4 miles off the road. South of the camp country rises steeply $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles SSW to Mt Anne. North and east of camp is a ridge averaging 1800' compared with 1450' at camp. Beyond the land falls to Weld River. The general area (save for the buttongrass plain) is clothed in dense rain forest with a well developed understory of horizontal scrub, dissected by numerous gullies. Visibility in forest is very restricted except from Camp Spur and the ridges leading to Mt Anne. Local rock is mostly dolomite and there are a number of small potholes. Progress is physically exhausting and navigation difficult. Only competent, well-equipped walkers were employed in much of the search area.

Events prior to the search

A party comprising Alan Keller (leader), John Boyle, Paul Taylor and Andrew Cole arrived at a quarry on the Scotts Peak Road on night of Friday October 17 and camped overnight. Next morning they walked to head of buttongrass plain (4 miles) and set up camp just inside the scrub at the foot of Camp Spur which joins to the north-east ridge of Mt Anne. They left camp at noon to search the Camp Spur area for potholes; it was agreed that no-one would enter a pothole alone. They spread out, Andrew and Alan on left, John and Paul on right. Contact

was maintained between all members of the party at intervals. At 3.40pm, Alan asked John to turn back down the spur and join Paul to locate a sweater accidentally left by Andrew at a pothole. Voice contact indicated that John headed off in the right direction but he was not seen again. The other three members met shortly afterwards and proceeded to the camp, arriving about 5.00pm. A large smoky fire was lit and searching by torchlight and shouting continued to 10pm.

At the time of his disappearance John Boyle was wearing a cotton singlet, long trousers and an old oilskin parka. His boots were Paddy Pallin "Sherpa" type. He had matches but no compass. The area in which he was last seen was within half a mile of camp and there are several vantage points from which the buttongrass plains may be seen.

The next day (Sunday) searching resumed until noon, when Alan left to obtain further help from Hobart. Fine but overcast conditions with low cloud on Mt Anne prevailed until late Sunday afternoon. Rain then started and continued all night with snow above 2000'.

Search Operations

- Sun, 20 Members of the Climbing Club, TCC and police arrived at midnight.
- Mon. 21 Search began 8 am after advance party reached Camp. Helicopter pad was cleared near camp. Footprints, definitely established as John's, were found in bed of Camp Ck. and traced to within 250 yards of camp. Hobart Walking Club, SCS and TCC personnel arrived in evening. Low cloud, poor visibility.
- Tues. 22 Search extended to Sandfly Ck. catchment. Walkie Talkie contact maintained throughout. Footprints found in creek bed, $\frac{3}{4}$ m. below Sandfly saddle. The footprints were lost later in the day. Helicopter arrived later in day in poor weather, flew over Weld Valley and the buttongrass area between Search Camp and the Scotts Peak Road.
- Wed. 22 Reinforcements arrived to replace a large party which had to return to Hobart. A party equipped for 3 nights went to join the Weld River downstream in hope of intercepting Boyle should he be attempting to follow river downstream. Only footprints were found, and these obviously preceded those found on Tuesday. During the day sweep searching carried out in valley of Camp Creek was continued.
- Thurs. 23 More replacement searchers. 3 search parties in operation. Weather fine all day.
- Fri. 24 Navy Wessex helicopter arrived. Dropped a 5-man party by winch into Weld Valley and picked them up 5 hours later after an unsuccessful search in the area.
- Sat. 25
- Sun. 26 Continued pattern searching in several areas.
- Mon. 27 Search was called off on Sunday night and the last searchers vacated Search HQ on Monday morning.
- Tues. 28 Large flock of black jays reported in Weld River area by helicopter pilot, searched unsuccessfully by party on November 1 - 2.

REPORT OF SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF SEARCH OPERATIONS

Movements of John Boyle

The only evidence we have of John Boyle's movements after he became separated from his companions lies in the tracks in Camp Ck, in Creek 2 and leading out of creek 2 in direction of "Radio Hill". The footprints were made by the type of shoe worn by John, and while this type is popular with bushwalkers, no searchers were in the area before they were found, and it is extremely unlikely that another party was in the area at the time of his disappearance. It is not possible to determine whether the prints in creek 2 were made before or after those in Camp Ck. Smoke reported by aircraft was in all cases traced to searchers and there is no evidence that John managed to light a fire at any time. His movements remain conjectural. It should be noted, however, that the tracks found were not the result of a deliberate attempt to mark a trail. Had such an attempt been made, the search would probably have been successful.

Radio Communication

Ground searchers were equipped with four Pye Bantam walkietalkies belonging to Police and operating on Police radio frequencies. Hourly contact was maintained between search controller and distant parties and with police at base camp. Thus had John been found, searchers could have been readily redeployed. The Pye sets weigh 4 lbs each, are simple to use and will operate under the conditions described for two days on 13 x 1½ volt cells weighing ½ lb. in all. Six smaller walkie talkies were used but were found to have very short range in the dense forest and broken terrain.

Gas Siren

The H.E.C. supplied a gas siren of the type used on launches as a fog horn. Found to be audible over great distances. Could be useful in early stages of a search when missing person might be within earshot and capable of being guided to safety. The siren and spare gas cylinders are light enough to carry.

Access Tracks

Cutting of tracks with chain saw greatly facilitated access to search area, serving as reference lines for detailed searching and reducing possibility of searchers losing their way. It was found that one person using chainsaw, a scout marking way ahead, plus 3 or 4 helpers clearing up, cutting blazes and carrying fuel and oil constituted a very efficient track cutting team.

R E C O M M E N D A T I O N S

Advance Party

Where a person has been missing overnight, without equipment or food, in rough country, a large party of 30 or so experienced persons should be sent into area immediately. This is bearing in mind that by the time alarm has been given and searchers transported to area, the missing person will probably be faced with a second night in the open. Such a large party will require one person to

be search controller, and in this way the basis of the necessary search organization will be ready and established should the operation have to be expanded.

Record Keeping and Camp Management

In event of a search expanding beyond initial advance search party, a person should be appointed to accompany search controller to record radio messages and generally maintain a written record of the progress of the search. In addition, a camp quartermaster should be appointed to control extra food supplies and equipment sent to search base, to ensure that camp hygiene and fire precautions are observed, and to maintain a record of persons entering and leaving area.

Female Searchers

There has in the past been a reluctance to accept women on searches and there were few on this operation; however, there are a number of women walkers in Tasmania whose assistance, either as searchers or as camp helpers, would be extremely valuable and no attempt should be made to exclude them on grounds other than competency.

Equipment

1. In view of their proven value, more Pye Bantam sets should be obtained and made available for use in future searches.
2. One or more gas sirens and spare cylinders should be available specifically for search purposes - say at police headquarters.
3. A supply of maps and/or aerial photographs should be obtained of search areas at an early stage and forwarded to the search controller.
4. Where searches are called in dense forest country, chain saws should be taken in at an early stage to cut access tracks.
5. A supply of coloured plastic tape should be on hand for route marking purposes in any type of bush country.

* * * * *

A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Tasmanian Caverneering Club, and in particular Albert Goede and Mrs J. Brabon, for their assistance in obtaining the considerable quantity of information on Tasmania which has appeared in the last few ASF Newsletters.

I would also like to thank for their forbearance the authors of the papers published in this and following two Newsletters. In many cases the original manuscripts had to be edited to fit in, or added to by abstraction from club newsletters. Lack of time and the need to edit and type three newsletters in the space of a month left no time to consult authors as closely as necessary.

DOWN UNDER ALL OVER

... NEWS FROM AROUND THE CLUBS

CSS

The Very Latest has reappeared after an 8 month suspension and it is now coming out monthly again. A large number of trips has been run in 1970, including assistance to J.N. Jennings in water tracing at Cooleman. At Yarrangobilly, further water tracing seems to indicate that the hydrology is not as simple as it seems, and a lot more work is needed.

KSS

Kempsey has not had a good year due to pressure of work, however they co-operated with NUSS in the exploration of such areas as Mt Pleasant and Spokes Hill, and with John Harris (University of Queensland) in bat research at Carrai and Willi Willi Bat Caves. As usual, the trip reports in "Trog" lay emphasis on problems of access which plague the caving areas of the Macleay Valley.

NUCC

1969 was NUCC's best year ever with 45 trips to 15 areas, making it the most active Society in Australia for that year. Most of the advances were made at Yarrangobilly and Wyanbene. A couple of trips failed to find anything worthwhile at Talbingo, but a few small holes were found on reconnaissance trips to Ravine and Goodravale. The elusive Warroo Cave was not found but a few other holes did turn up in this new area.

SSS

The Society newsletter has been further upgraded in quality and quantity from its already first-rate standard. As the old name had outlived its original purpose, "Stop Press" has been rechristened the Journal of the Sydney Speleological Society from January 1970.

UNSWSS

has been very active at Bungonia in particular with some joint trips with SSS. The togetherness even extended to Yarrangobilly. Members were in New Zealand at Christmas and went caving at Waitomo in the North and at Mt Arthur in the South Island. A Bungonia progress report below.

TCC

Several new caves, including some active swallets, have been discovered in the Junee area. The obvious ease with which the Tasmanians keep stumbling across new caves suggests that starved mainlanders fed up with the Pitt Street crowds at Tuglow and Wee Jasper are going to have a ball on the A.S.F. Conference field trips. Exit Cave continues to grow, with $7\frac{1}{2}$ miles surveyed and a total length over 9 miles. It's thoroughly disgusting how they keep stumbling across the odd half mile or so which had been 'overlooked'. e.g:

"1000 ft. of passage was found just off the outer base camp. Apparently nobody has ever bothered to look in this very accessible area." !!

(from a trip report in Speleo Spiel (March 1970) 44 : p. 3)

A gate has now been installed on Exit Cave.

CEGSA

The Annual Report of the Group shows that membership has increased considerably, to 90 including Associates and Life Members. This year's leather medals go to Gary Havers, Ern Maddock and Wayne Goedecke. A longer report, including details of new discoveries, will be in the next issue of ASF Newsletter

UQSS University of Queensland Speleological Society must have the greatest collection of wandering speleos in Australia. The March 1970 issue of Down Under has trips reported to places as diverse as NSW, Victoria Tasmania and Western Australia (up in the Kimberlys) as well as closer to home at Camooweal, Chillagoe, Mt Etna and finally Texas. The same issue of Down Under must set a record as the thickest publication in Australian speleology ever to masquerade as a 'Newsletter'. It has no less than 60 pages. Work is now well under way on a conservation publication on Mt Etna.

VSA A search and rescue callout in January for some members believed overdue on a trip from Buchan to Limestone Creek fortunately proved to have been caused by bad communication, namely, failure to leave a message when the party did return before leaving again. However, it promoted a shakeup in S. and R. procedures and underlined the importance of keeping people informed when plans are changed.

* * * * *

... Space does not permit me to provide a lot of probably uninteresting chatter about work in progress in the various caving areas. What I am hoping to do in future is to provide longer articles summarising significant discoveries, surveys etc., or updating the information on cave lists in Speleo Handbook. Such articles will be printed if and when people write them... next issue will see something on NUCC discoveries at Yarrangobilly and UQSS work at Camooweal...

Bungonia

It is sad to have to report, after the well-deserved jubilation of 1967, that THE EFFLUX has collapsed. The deep, narrow trench which had been dug through the talus pile at the foot of the cliff out of which water runs proved too unstable during heavy rains and some quite large boulders slipped into the excavation. Work has been suspended indefinitely.

In mid-1969 many protests from UNSWSS "stirrers" about there being too many soft tourist type caving trips galvanized certain members into action: "do" B31, the Drum and B4-5 extension all in one weekend. Although these aims were not to be fully realized, the aftermath was a major project to thoroughly map both surface and underground Bungonia (especially the large and deep caves), and to undertake water tracing experiments. UNSWSS wound up providing surveying personnel and labourers while Julia James (SSS) provided enthusiasm, drive and more stirring. Even SUSS got in, very indirectly, with Ted Anderson doing a bit of surveying. In one weekend marathon, for example, the B4-5 extension was dug out and 3000' surveyed to the far end of what is, by Australian standards, quite a severe cave.

Mapping now shows that B4-5 extension runs more or less along and under the line of B22, B21, B15 and B16-51 and ends almost directly beneath the centre of the Drum, which itself ends slightly east of B11. The Grill Cave also heads towards B11. B11 is one of several digs which SSS has worked on intermittently over the years. An ingenious jib designed by Hohn Bonwick facilitated excavation of this awkward sink. The cave now goes down 70' through awkward squeezes a chamber which floods occasionally. Extensions are definitely possible.

THIS PAGE WAS RESERVED
FOR THE MAP TO ACCOMPANY
THE REPORT ON THE SEARCH
FOR JOHN BOYLE, WHICH
HOWEVER FAILED TO COME

THANKS ARE DUE TO THE
FOLLOWING "VOLUNTARY"
PRODUCTION ASSISTANTS:

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Lyn Wadson (NEWBaptistCA)

and Mrs Poulter who
sustained them.

good grief
what a hell of a job