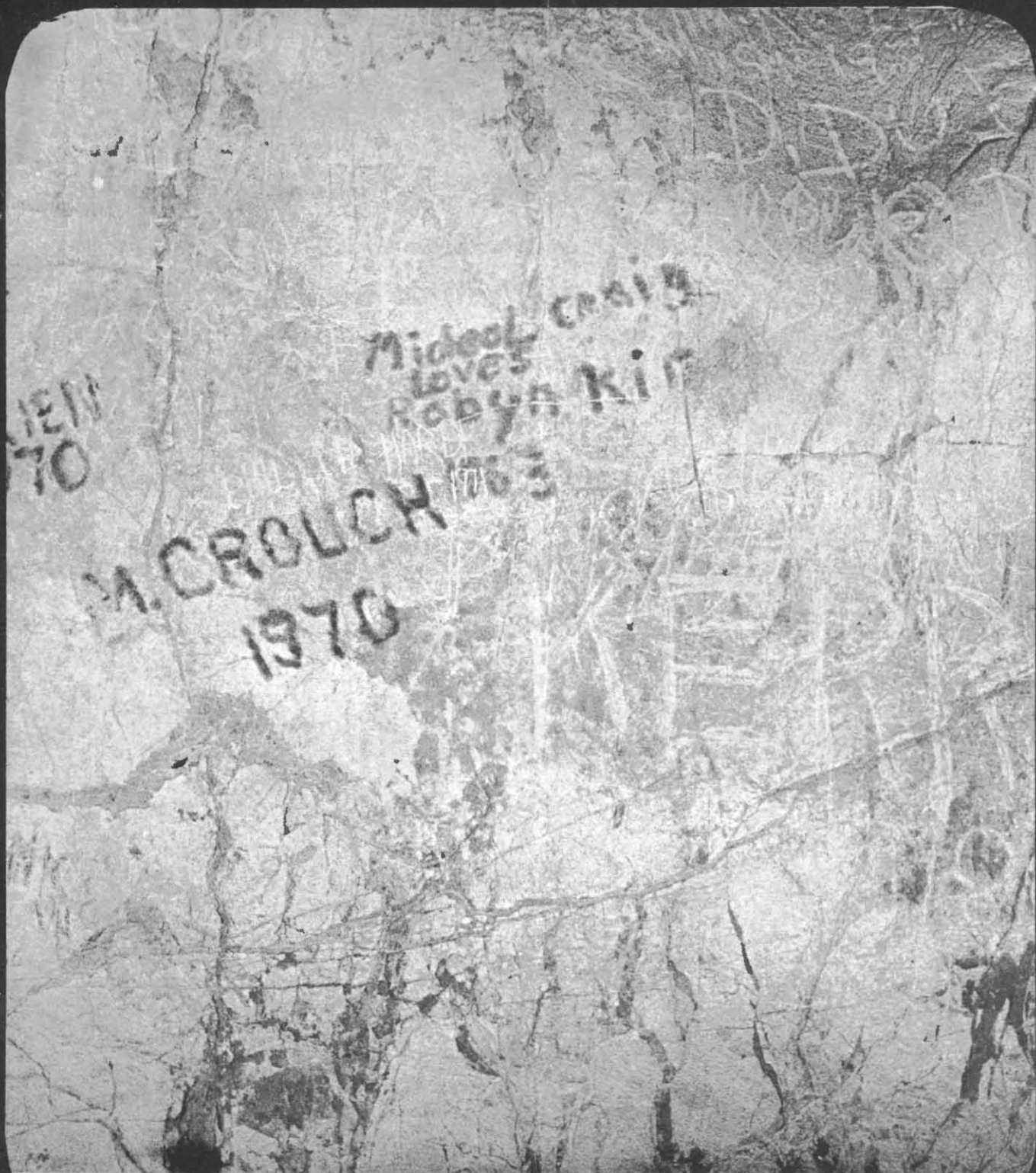


ASF

NEWSLETTER

SUMMER
1974

66



Take Nothing but Photographs, Leave.....

The Australian Speleological Federation was founded in 1956 "to further speleology in all its aspects on a national level, to gather together Australian speleologists and formulate national policies in furtherance of these aims."

Publications include ASF NEWSLETTER (quarterly), PROCEEDINGS (biennially), AUSTRALIAN SPELEOLOGY (annually — more or less), SPELEO HANDBOOK (an encyclopaedic work on speleology in Australia) and irregular reports on matters of timely concern, chiefly conservation matters.

The Federation is governed by a committee consisting of a delegate from each member society. Meetings are held annually, each second meeting being coupled with a convention open to any interested person. Continuing activities are administered by permanent commissions, while special aspects of policy are the subject of ad hoc study committees.

The Federation represents Australia on the International Union of Speleology.

Correspondents are requested, wherever possible, to direct enquiries to the relevant office-bearer or member society.

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ASF NEWSLETTER

Number 66

Summer 1974

Contents

Editorial	
ASF Abseiling Code	Lloyd Robinson
Longest and Deepest Caves	Ross Ellis
What's new in Junee-Florentine	Laurie Moody
Key to the bats of south-eastern Australia	Les Hall
Notices	
ASF Eleventh Biennial Convention, Canberra, 1976	

Editorial

Here it is at last — the next ASF Newsletter - beset by the usual unbelievable typing and printing delays. Your temporary editor apologises for the delay and promises that it won't happen again as he has no intention of offering to do it again. I would suggest as a general rule that the best way to get things done is not to ask me to do them I might then catch up on some of the many things that I must catch up on at home, office and caving club.

Thanks are overdue for John Dunkley and his team for having produced the Newsletter over so many years; Andrew Pavey especially for the production of covers and numerous other jobs over the past year. John gave over a year's notice of his intention of standing down as Editor of the Newsletter. It is to the shame of ASF that at the Brisbane committee meeting there were no nominations immediately forthcoming for this and other jobs (including the Presidency!).

I feel that ASF is at a critical stage of its history and we should be trying much harder to carry out the aims and objects of the Federation. In this regard it is perhaps interesting to note that the annual committee meetings are largely, but not exclusively, attended by the same people year after year. It may be that an old timers clique exists but the business of the Federation has been in the same hands for some time now and it is gratifying to see a large number of new faces on the Executive.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Elery Hamilton-Smith on his election as the first Honorary Fellow of the Federation and to thank him, on behalf of all ASF member societies, for all he has done in the past and for what I, at least, know he will do in the future!

Andy Spate

A.S.F. SAFETY RULES FOR ABSEILING

Lloyd Robinson

A. SELECTION OF ROPES

- A1 Terylene (polyester) or nylon ropes should be used.
- A2 The minimum diameter of terylene or nylon rope should be 100 mm; smaller diameter ropes give too little friction and are easily abraded and cut.
- A3 The use of single laid ropes should be avoided on free drops (causes spin).
- A4 Never abseil on polyethylene or polypropylene ropes using a method where the rope is passed through a metal friction device, as these fibres have a low melting point.
- A5 Natural fibre ropes should never be used since:
 - (i) cotton or hemp ropes are not strong enough when of a suitable diameter for abseiling.
 - (ii) manilla or sisal ropes are no longer manufactured to a suitable standard
- A6 Ropes of unknown history should not be used for abseiling.
- A7 Ropes that have been subjected to heavy stress (e.g. in stopping a severe leader fall or in towing) should not be used for abseiling.
- A8 If forced to use any sub-standard rope in an emergency, test it first by handing the weight of two people from it. In using such ropes it is important to descend slowly and smoothly.

B. CARE OF ROPES

- B1 Ropes should be checked before each trip for:
 - (i) extensive surface abrasion (light abrasion causing a fuzzy appearance can be ignored)
 - (ii) internal abrasion and powdering at the strand axis (laid ropes)
 - (iii) distortion of the lay
 - (iv) decayed, burnt, soft or hard spots
 - (v) areas of reduced diameter
- B2 Keep ropes free from kinks and unnecessary knots
- B3 Never stand on a rope

2.

- B4 Coil up any excess rope at the bottom of a pitch and place it clear of people and falling rocks.
- B5 Ropes should always be carried in packs, both underground and on the surface
- B6 All ropes should be kept away from corrosive chemicals. Do not place ropes near batteries
- B7 The rope should be kept clean as this minimises the abrasive effect of mud and grit. Washing may be carried out in the caving area in streams. At home the best wash is achieved in a washing machine using a mild detergent or pure soap and cold to warm water. If soap or detergent is used it is essential to rinse the rope in fresh water.
- B8 The rope should be kept as dry as possible in the cave. Wet grit accelerates rope wear.
- B9 Wet rope should be dried thoroughly as soon as possible in a stream of cool air away from direct sunlight. Only store completely dry ropes — store away from direct sunlight.

C. CHOICE OF ANCHOR POINT

- C1 Take care in the selection of anchor points. Where possible use two separate points; independently tied off.
- C2 Never rely solely on one artificial anchor (piton, bolt, jamnut, etc.).
- C3 When the anchor point is rough or the rope travels over dirty surfaces it is advisable to protect the rope with plastic hose or sacking — in some cases a wire trace is useful.
- C4 When people are taught to abseil they should also have lessons in the selection and use of anchor points.

D. EQUIPMENT AND METHOD

- D1 5 cm (2 inch) seat belt webbing (nylon or terylene) is recommended for harnesses. Rope harnesses are uncomfortable.
- D2 Leather gloves must be worn.
- D3 Except for short pitches, classic and over—the—shoulder methods should not be used. The dangers are:
 - (i) rope burns
 - (ii) Loss of control when descending can result in the person falling off the rope.
- D4 The Pierre Allain descender and the twisted knot method should not be used.
- D5 The recommended method uses the brake bar assembly:
See "Vertical Caving Techniques".
- D6 Care should be taken to keep loose clothing, hair, etc. clear of abseiling devices.

E. BELAYING

People should be belayed while learning to abseil or while doing difficult or dangerous abseils.

- E1 Classic and over—the—shoulder methods can be belayed by using a belay rope in the usual fashion.
- E2 Methods involving friction devices can be safetied from below by pulling the abseil rope taut if the person abseiling experiences difficulties. The abseiler can be controlled from below in any further descent by regulating the tension on the rope.

F. THROUGH TRIPS

Here a doubled rope is used. If two ropes are required the best knot for joining them is the double fisherman's knot. The rope can be retrieved from the pitch after the descent by pulling on one end. A disposable anchor sling may be needed.

- F1 Before the last man descends, the rope should be pulled from below to check that it runs freely.
- F2 Make sure that any knot does not have to be pulled around the anchor point and that it will not catch in crevices.
- F3 Ensure that the rope is untwisted before pulling down.
- F4 It is essential that one of the party is a competent prusiker. Only prusik to retrieve a stuck rope where both ends of the rope are at the foot of the pitch and one is anchored.

N.B. The only way a through trip can be carried out in complete safety is to carry sufficient ropes to double rope all the pitches

ASF ELEVENTH BIENNIAL CONVENTION

The Eleventh Convention will be held in Canberra in the period immediately following Christmas 1976. It is planned to extend the convention period by one day to allow more time for papers and their discussion. The venue will almost certainly be Bruce Hall at the A.N.U.; daytime papers will be given in lecture theatres about 150 metres away. Preliminary discussions have suggested a cave for the Cave Man's Dinner and the local Humes concrete pipe factory for the Speleo Sports. Further details will be circulated to Clubs shortly.

We would like to hear from all interested people with suggestions for papers, discussion topics, potential speakers and so on; organisational suggestions are also more than welcome. We would also like to hear now from those interested in giving papers and from any volunteers for session chairing which we believe to be a vital part of convention presentation. Please write direct to CSS/NUCC, C/o 18 Arabana Street, Aranda, A.C.T., 2614. We hope to make this the best convention yet, even get the Proceedings out, but we can only do this with your help.

REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON LONGEST AND DEEPEST CAVES - 1973

This is the third annual report of this Commission, the fourth listing of the longest and deepest that has been compiled is appended. The lists show the 82 longest and the 100 deepest caves in Australia and are as accurate as I have been able to ascertain from the information available to the Commission. Most of the information has been sifted from publications which means that if I don't happen to see a pertinent issue or article then I don't know about the new save found, the extra bit added to such and such a cave or the extree 300 metres surveyed.

Several changes have occurred since the last listing of deep caves and numerous changes have been made in the longest cave list. Many of the lengths and some of the depths are still only estimates; even in the case of caves which have high grade surveys done of them. Definite figures regarding surveyed lengths and depths should be made available direct to the Commission so that an accurate list based on survey data can be compiled. Once again I appeal to Society map recorders, surveyors or interested persons for help in keeping these listings up to date and as accurate as possible. If you know of any cave which is over 600 m in length or greater than 60m in depth or of any inaccuracies in the listings then please let me know of them.

A listing of the 25 longest and the 25 deepest caves was sent to the I.U.S. Commission on the Longest and Deepest Caves via Dr H. Trimmel in April 1973. I have received correspondence in connection with the Commission from the following cavers and I thank them for their interest and help: M. Bourke, J. Brush, P. Mathews, G. Middleton, A. Pavey and P. Wilson. Speleo Spiel, Spar, Western Caver, Journal of the Sydney Speleological Society and the AFS Newsletter have been the source of numerous references and clues to revised and new lengths and depths.

Some correspondence has concerned itself with definitions of cave length and cave depth. My definition of cave length is as follows: the length of a cave is the total length of passageway measured along a traverse line running approximately through the centre of passages or chambers of the cave (i.e. the measured length not the horizontal length) and including the length of all passages, shafts, caverns, alcoves and squeezes. An alcove would not be included in the length unless it was over 5m in length although this is up to the discretion of the person surveying or totalling up the survey figures. Distances along traverse lines would be included except in the case of lines surveyed to gauge the size of chambers or halls. In other words, cave length is the distance you would walk (excluding any retracing of your steps) while visiting every part of a cave.

Cave depth is rather tricky and some curly points have been raised. The I.U.S. definition (and the one they use to define the world's deepest) is the "difference between the highest point in an explored and measured system and the deepest point reached and measured in the same system". Using this definition several saves in the lists published here could be deepened, as for example both the Drum Cave and the Mammoth Cave, N.S.W. have lofty chambers the roofs of which are much higher than the entrance. Generally, in Australia, caves have been measured from the floor level at the entrance to the floor level at the lowest point. The I.U.S. definition makes it possible to include essentially horizontal caves in the deep caves list. Wyanbene Cave can be considered at least 112m deep (?) because of the measured height of the Gunbarrel Aven. Of course numerous others have lofty chambers. I would welcome any comments or suggestions on this matter.

According to the latest listing of the world's longest or deepest caves (Atlas des Grandes Gouffres du Monde, by Paul Courbon, 1973) Exit Cave is still out of the running. It lists 29 caves all of which are over 20km in length. We are even further out of the running in the deepest listing as there are at least 150 caves deeper than Khazad Dum noted in the Atlas.

One point I should like to make clear regarding my position as convener of this Commission is that I am not psychic and that the paragraphs appended to a description of Corra-Lynn Cave in ASF Newsletter No. 61, p.5, are not warranted or necessary. The cave had not been properly described before, it is only vaguely described in the first edition of the Speleo Handbook and there was no indication of it being a long cave in anything published prior to my last listing. Certainly no definite figures regarding its length had ever been published. Apparently it was not considered of any consequence until recently and I was not informed of its great length when I appealed for such information in ASF Newsletter No. 59, p.18.

Any information for the Commission on longest and deepest caves in Australia should be forwarded to the Convener:

Ross Ellis,
14/10 Fourth Avenue,
Campsie, N.S.W. 2194

(A recent listing of the longest and deepest caves by State appears in the Journal of SSS 19 (1): 3-5 and 19(2): 36-40, - Ed. note)

AUSTRALIA'S LONGEST CAVES

1.	Exit Cave, Ida Bay	Tas.	17,000 metres
2.	Mullamullang Cave, Nullarbor	WA	11,300
3.	Colong Cave, Lannigan's Creek	NSW	6,000
4.	Corra Lynn Cave, Yorke Peninsula	SA	5,600
5.	Johannsens Cave, Mount Etna	Qld	4,880
6.	Mammoth Cave, Jenolan	NSW	3,700
7.	Eagles Nest Cave System, Yarrangobilly	NSW	3,600
8.	Royal Arch Cave, Chillagoe	Qld	3,050
9.	Queenslander-Cathedral Cave	Qld	2,610
10.	Niggle Cave, Camooweal	Qld	2,600
11.	Cutta Cutta Cave, Katherine	NT	2,500
12.	Victoria Cave, Naracoorte	SA	2,500
13.	Wet Cave-Georgies Hall, Mole Creek	Tas	2,290
14.	Sand Cave, Naracoorte	SA	2,290
15.	Cave Spring Cave, Kimberleys	WA	2,130
16.	Loons Cave, Hastings	Tas	2,020
17.	Wolf Hole, Hastings	Tas	2,010
18.	Wiburds Lake Cave, Jenolan	NSW	1,890
19.	Northern Tourist Caves, Jenolan	NSW	1,840
20.	Wyanbene Cave, Wyanbene	NSW	1,830

Australia's Longest Caves (continued)

21.	Arramall Cave, Eneabba	WA	1,810
22.	Weelawadji Cave, Eneabba	WA	1,800
23.	Khazad Dum, Junee—Florentine	Tas	1,774
24.	Taplow Maze Cave, Cliefden	NSW	1,680
25.	The Labrinth Cave, Augusta	WA	1,680
26.	Croesus Cave, Mole Creek	Tas	1,670
27.	Newdegate Cave, Hastings	Tas	1,660
28.	Welcome Stranger Cave, Junee—Florentine	Tas	1,650
29.	Moparrabah Cave, Kempsey	NSW	1,630
30.	Fossil Cave—Hogans Hole, Bungonia	NSW	1,620
31.	Kubla Khan Cave, Mole Creek	Tas	1,590
32.	Spring Cave, Chillagoe	Qld	1,530
33.	Mammoth Cave, Witchcliffe	WA	1,530
34.	Easter Cave, Augusta	WA	1,525
35.	Kintore Cave, Katherine	NT	1,525
36.	Tuglow Cave, Tuglow	NSW	1,400
37.	Dip Cave, Wee Jasper	NSW	1,280
38.	Markham Cave, Chillagoe	NSW	1,230
39.	Southern Tourist Caves, Jenolar.	NSW	1,220
40.	Koonalda Cave, Nullarbor	SA	1,220
41.	Trogdip, Buchan	Vic	1,200
42.	Mount Hamilton Cave, Mount Hamilton	Vic	1,190
43.	Scrubby Creek Cave, Buchan	Vic	1,160
44.	Camooweal (Four Mile) East Cave, Camooweal	Qld	1,080
45.	Punchbowl—Signature Cave, Wee Jasper	NSW	1,070
46.	Carpentaria Cave, Chillagoe	Qld	1,070
47.	Weebubbie Cave, Nullarbor	WA	1,070
48.	Judds Cavern, Cracroft	Tas	1,000
49.	Guy Cave, Katherine	NT	1,000
50.	Five Corners Cave, Lower South East	SA	990
51.	Damper Cave, Precipitous Bluff	Tas	990
52.	Glen Lyon Cave, Viator	Qld	980
53.	Francombe Cave, Mole Creek	Tas	980
54.	Quetzalcoatl Conduit Cave, Precipitous Bluss	Tas	950
55.	Mitchells Crossing Cave, Lower South East	SA	940
56.	Honeycomb Cave, Mole Creek	Tas	940
57.	New Southlander Cave, Chillagoe	Qld	920
58.	Punyelroo Cave, Murray River	SA	920
59.	Geck Cave, Chillagoe	Qld	910
60.	Fox Cave, Naracoorte	SA	910
61.	East Deep Creek Cave, Yarrangobilly	NSW	910
62.	Marakoopa One Cave, Mole Creek	Tas	910
63.	Cocklebiddy Cave, Nullarbor	WA	840
64.	Connelly Cave, Witchcliffe	WA	830
65.	Yallingup Cave, Yallingup	WA	825
66.	Dog Leg Cave, Wee Jasper	NSW	790
67.	Main Cave, Texas	Qld	770
68.	Beekeepers Cave, Naracoorte	SA	770
69.	Lynds Cave, Mole Creek	Tas	760
70.	Junction Cave, Wombeyan	NSW	760
71.	Elysium Cave, Mount Etna	Qld	760
72.	Gunns Plain Cave, Gunns Plain	Tas	750
73.	Oraparinna Cave, Oraparinna	SA	750
74.	Resurrection Cave, Mount Etna	Qld	750
75.	Barkers Cave	Qld	730
76.	The Tunnel, Kimberleys	WA	690
77.	Strong's Cave, Witchcliffe	WA	650
78.	Coorow Cave, East Moore	WA	640
79.	Grill Cave, Bungonia	NSW	620
80.	Crystal Cave, Witchcliffe	WA	610
81.	Murray Cave, Cooleman Plains	NSW	610
82.	Wollondilly Cave, Wombeyan	NSW	600

The next annual committee meeting is to be hosted by Illawarra Speleological Society in the Wollongong area; presumably — over the Australia Day weekend, 1976.

AUSTRALIA'S DEEPEST CAVES

1.	Khazad Dum, Junee—Florentine	Tas	322 metres
2.	Cauldron Pot, Junee—Florentine	Tas	264
3.	Tassy Pot, Junee—Florentine	Tas	231
4.	Mini Martin Cave — Entrance Cave, Ida Bay	Tas	220
5.	Sesame Two Cave, Junee—Florentine	Tas	219
6.	Midnight Hole — Mystery Creek Cave, Ida Bay	Tas	203
7.	Eagles Nest Cave System, Yarrangobilly	NSW	174
8.	Growling Swallet, Junee—Florentine	Tas	171
9.	Kellars Cellar, Mount Anne	Tas	155
10.	Niagara Pot, Junee—Florentine	Tas	149
11.	Odyssey Cave, Bungonia	NSW	148
12.	Satan's Lair, Junee—Florentine	Tas	143
13.	Revelation Cave, Ida Bay	Tas	137
14.	Rift Cave, Junee—Florentine	Tas	131
15.	Fossil Cave, Hogans Hole, Bungonia	NSW	131
16.	Gormenghast Cave, Junee—Florentine	Tas	128
17.	Argyle Hole, Bungonia	NSW	128
18.	Grill Cave, Bungonia	NSW	126
19.	Drum Cave, Bungonia	NSW	125
20.	Weebubbie Cave, Nullarbor	WA	120
21.	Mullamullang Cave, Nullarbor	WA	119
22.	Col—in—Cavern, Mount Anne	Tas	119
23.	Herberts Pot, Mole Creek	Tas	116
24.	Big Hole, Oranmeir	NSW	113
25.	Wyanbene Cave, Wyanbene	NSW	112
26.	Y18, Yarrangobilly	NSW	110
27.	Rescue Pot, Junee—Florentine	Tas	107
28.	Three Falls Cave, Junee—Florentine	Tas	107
29.	Devils Pot, Mole Creek	Tas	105
30.	Cockiebidy Cave, Nullarbor	WA	105
31.	Pillingers Creek Cave, Junee—Florentine	Tas	99
32.	Bone Pit, Junee—Florentine	Tas	98
33.	Splash Pot, Junee—Florentine	Tas	98
34.	Pannikin Plain Cave, Nullarbor	WA	98
35.	Blowfly Cave — B51, Bungonia	NSW	94
36.	Warbla Cave, Nullarbor	SA	94
37.	Dribblespit Swallet, Junee—Florentine	Tas	91
38.	Croesus Cave, Mole Creek	Tas	91
39.	Glory Hole Cave, Yarrangobilly	NSW	91
40.	Execution Pot, Mole Creek	Tas	90
41.	Y40, Yarrangobilly	NSW	90
42.	Kellys Pot, Mole Creek	Tas	90
43.	Dwyers Cave, Jenolan	NSW	88
44.	Murra—el—Elevyn Cave, Nullarbor	WA	88
45.	Tommy Grahams Cave, Nullarbor	WA	85
46.	Devils Coachhouse — Imperial Cave, Jenolan	NSW	85
47.	Owl Pot, Mole Creek	Tas	76
48.	Honeycomb Cave, Buchan	VIC	76
49.	Niggle Cave, Camooweal	Qld	76
50.	Victoria Arch—Creek Cave, Wombeyan	NSW	76
51.	Speaking Tube Cave, Mount Etna	Qld	76
52.	Lake Cave, Augusta	WA	76
53.	Zulu Pot, Junee—Florentine	Tas	73
54.	Kubla Khan Cave, Mole Creek	Tas	73
55.	Camooweal (Four Mile) East Cave, Camooweal	Qld	73
56.	Great Nowranie Cave, Camooweal	Qld	73
57.	Little Nowranie Cave, Camooweal	Qld	73
58.	Koonalda Cave, Nullarbor	SA	73
59.	Ians Hut Cave, Buchan	Vic	73
60.	Canellan Cave, Camooweal	Qld	72
61.	Carn—Dum—Coprolorum Cave, Mount Etna	Qld	70
62.	Abrakurrie Cave, Nullarbor	WA	70
63.	Kestral Number One Cavern, Nullarbor	WA	70

Australia's Deepest Caves (Continued)

64.	Mammoth Cave, Jenolan	WA	70
65.	Belt—Jolly Roger Cave, Mount Etna	Qld	67
66.	Accoustic Pot, Bungonia	NSW	67
67.	Tuglow Cave, Tuglow	NSW	66
68.	Severance Cave, Precipitous Bluff	Tas	66
69.	Christmas Pot, Chillagoe	Qld	65
70.	Crick Hollow Cave, Mount Etna	Qld	64
71.	Windlass Cave, Bendethra	NSW	64
72.	Aqua—Mire Cave, Hastings	Tas	64
73.	Old Homestead Cave, Nullarbor	WA	64
74.	Sellicks Hill Cave, Yorke Peninsula	SA	64
75.	Wooltana Cave, Flinders Ranges	SA	64
76.	Bottomless Pit, Jenolan	NSW	62
77.	Tasman Arch, Tasman Peninsula	Tas	62
78.	Elysium Cave, Limestone Ridge	Qld	61
79.	Johannsens Cave, Limestone Ridge	Qld	61
80.	Waterloo Swallet Hastings	Tas	61
81.	Canyons Cave, Buchan	Vic	61
82.	JF22, Junee-Florentine	Tas	61
83.	Capstan Cave, Nullarbor	WA	61
84.	Kestral Number Two Cavern, Nullarbor	WA	61
85.	Moonera Tank Cave, Nullarbor	WA	61
86.	Chimneys Cave, South West	WA	61
87.	College Cave, Bungonia	NSW	60
88.	Piglet Help Help Cave, Mount Etna	Qld	60
89.	East Deep Creek Cave, Yarrangobilly	NSW	59
90.	Narrengullen Cave, Taemas	NSW	59
91.	Cave "F", North West Cape	WA	56
92.	Hidden Cave, Mole Creek	Tas	55
93.	Barrington Cave, Barrington	NSW	55
94.	Windy Hollow Cave, Mount Etna	Qld	55
95.	Jam Pot, Buchan	Vic	55
96.	Rock Drop Cave, Mole Creek	Tas	52
97.	Janus Cave, Yarrangobilly	NSW	52
98.	Winding Stairway Cave, Mount Etna	Qld	50
99.	Elephant Hole, Mount Etna	Qld	50
100.	Putrid Pit, Bungonia	NSW	49

Watch for the June 1975 issue of Australian Natural History published by the Australian Museum, Sydney. The issue will be devoted to caves and will have articles by the following authors:

History	Lane
Exploration and Technology	Montgomery and Pavey
Geomorphology	Jennings
Speleochronology	James
Biology 1	Harris
Palaeontology and Archaeology	Merrilees and Dorch
Speleochronology	Ollier
Conservation and Tourism	Dunkley and Rieder

C.Q.S.S. have had printed on white T-shirts with a bat insignia the wording "SAVE OUR CAVES" in 1½" high block letters in black. These shirts are available in three sizes, SM, M, OS. They are for sale at \$4.00 plus postage. When ordering please allow sufficient for postage; any change will be returned with the shirts. Postage is of course cheaper on larger orders. Send orders with cash to

C.Q.S.S.,
P.O. Box 538,
Rockhampton, Qld 4700

WHAT'S NEW IN THE JUNEE—FLORENTINE?

"Khazad—Dum 'bottomed' at 311 metres"!

It is nearly two years since this statement appeared in the TCC magazine. It is over two years since K.D. (common Taswegian abbreviation) was the big name in caving circles. This 'big hole' is still the deepest cave in Australia and looks like keeping this title for an indefinite number of years. In all probability, it now seems most unlikely that a deeper cave will ever emerge out of this area.

Exploration in the Junee—Florentine area is still being carried out by the persistent few but interest has now swung towards the search for a 'show' cave. To date, the Junee—Florentine is still renowned for its grotty caves, the one exception being Welcome Stranger Cave in the Florentine Valley. The caves of this area are notoriously wet, muddy and cold.

Since October 1973 the relentless duo of Jeffries and Moody, stubbornly persist in their search for that 'show' cave. With what could easily be called monotonous regularity, they keep searching, finding at least one or two caves each trip. However, this 'show' cave continues to elude them. At time of writing, a proposed trip to explore a new cave recently found and briefly explored by Max, may have to wait a little longer due to rain. This cave is reputed to contain the most promising amount of decoration since the discovery of Welcome Stranger.

June 1974 saw the first official crossing of the Florentine River by a TCC party in search of caves. Several further forays, led by myself with Max as guide, have resulted in the discovery of several small horizontal caves on the western side of the Florentine River. The extent of the limestone on the western side comprises an area approximately one kilometre wide by 24 kilometres long. The relief is by no means high but the scope for horizontal caves is very feasible. Due to excessive amounts of heavy rain during August—September 1974, work on the western side ceased. The Florentine has a nasty habit of rising quickly after a moderate fall of rain. Prior to this wet spell, we had been crossing the river via large fallen logs but our natural 'bridges' were soon immersed beneath the fast-flowing waters. With access denied, we then concentrated on an area in the central northern sector of the Florentine Valley. Cave numbering has also been on the venue with several 'old' caves, namely Pillinger's Creek Cave, Ross Walker Cave and 'D4' Pot, being relocated and numbered after a decade or more of being known by name only.

To me personally, the Junee—Florentine is the most exciting and rewarding area (plus grottiest) in Tasmania. What's more, if there's another good cave there —we'll find it — perhaps!

OTHER NEWS

January of 1975 is loaded with promise in regard to caving. The proposed "invasion" of the Cracroft area is the priority objective of TCC and no doubt will draw members of the Mainland caving fraternity. However, amid the Cracroft 'extravaganza', a small insignificant group of Cracroft drop-outs led by myself, will push into the Rasselas Valley which lies west of the Florentine Valley. The objective of this trip will be to try and establish the area. From what can be established to date, the limestone is virtually all low relief but provides the feasibility of horizontal systems. Perhaps the greatest of the modern day South—West pioneers, the late Olegas Truchanas, observed large limestone cliffs whilst canoeing down the upper reaches of the Gordon River which passes through the Rasselas Valley. Apart from this piece of information, little more is known about this region. I intend to spend about five days in this area but have yet to fix a definite date.

Laurence R. Moody
President, T.C.C.

SOME NOTES ON IDENTIFYING CAVE—DWELLING BATS IN SOUTH—EASTERN AUSTRALIA

by Leslie S. Hall, CSIRO Division of Wildlife Research, P.O. Box 84, Lyneham, A.C.T. 2602.

The identification of bats found in caves in south—eastern Australia is reasonably simple due to the fact that only two species are generally encountered. The following table summarises the major features of these two species and should enable a person to determine which species he or she has under observation.

<u>Bent—Winged Bat</u> <u>Miniopterus schreibersii</u>	<u>Eastern Horseshoe Bat</u> <u>Rhinolophus megaphyllus</u>
<u>Description</u>	
Grey—brown when young to chocolate brown adult. Old specimens have gingery fur	Greyish, light tips to fur
Ears round with tragus	Ears pointed, no tragus
Simple face	Face has complex noseleaf
Forearm 44—49 mm	Forearm 46—50 mm
Wings long and narrow with tip folding back	Wings broad and short
<u>Distribution</u>	
Naracoorte S.A., western and eastern Vic. eastern NSW as far west as Cliefden and Narrabri, coastal Qld, NT and extralimital	Buchan Vic., eastern NSW as far west as Cliefden, eastern Qld to Cape York, extralimital
<u>Habitat</u>	
Usually in large caves, sometimes in tunnels and mines etc. Rarely in buildings. Large clusters of torpid bats found in	Large or small caves, mud chambers, mines, and rock shelters. These areas usually characterised by high temperature and

Some Notes on Identifying Cave-Dwelling Bats in South—Eastern Australia (Continued)

Habitat (cont'd)

cold caves (10–12°C) during winter months. Summer groups usually active

humidity. Occasionally found in torpid state.

Behaviour

Occasionally single or in ones or twos, but generally in larger clusters. 120 bats per sq. ft. of cluster. Clusters usually on sides of walls or in avens. Active bats readily take to wing with a direct and rapid flight. Flight is noisy and bats will collide with humans in confined areas. Mild bite. Large maternity congregations of 10,000 or more in summer months

Always singular or "spread-out". Rarely less than 10 cm from each other and hang suspended from ceiling. Active bats twist their body from side to side and move ears. Silent and highly manoeuvrable flight. Rarely collides in confined area and can bite very well. Largest maternity groups appear to be 2–300 individuals, but more often 20–50 individuals.

In north—eastern NSW., Miniopterus australis, the Little Bent-winged Bat occurs as far south as Kempsey. This bat is a small version of M. schreibersii, its forearm being 37–39 mm. Its general behaviour is similar to M. schreibersii.

Myotis adversus, the Large-footed Bat, is slightly smaller than M. schreibersii (forearm 38–40 mm), and has greyish brown fur, funnel shaped ears and extremely large feet (10 mm long). This bat is a regular cave-dweller as well as having been recorded from railway tunnels and tree hollows. It has been found in caves from the Glenelg River, western Victoria; Buchan, eastern Victoria, Narrengullen, NSW; and in Queensland. All the caves in which this species has been found are close to, or overlooking permanent water. The species is considered rare, but widespread. The colony size is usually small (10–20 individuals), but breeding colonies may reach 100.

Chalinolobus dwyerii is a very dark, blackish bat which has a white strip of fur where the belly fur meets the wing membrane. Its forearm range is 39–42 mm. It is a simple faced bat, similar in looks to M. schreibersii and has been found at Wombeyan Caves and in mines in the Hill End area of NSW and it is likely to be found in mines and caves in central NSW, possibly in caves in the Hawkesbury sandstone area.

Nyctophilus geoffroyi, the Lesser Long-eared Bat has been occasionally seen in mines and there are one or two records of the species being seen in caves at Cooleman Plains, NSW. Skeletons of this bat have been found in caves at Yarrangobilly and Wombeyan Caves, NSW. The bat is a light-grey colour with a forearm length of 35–39 mm. This species is immediately distinguished from all other cave-dwelling bats of this size by its very large ears (20 mm long). The ears are joined over the head and can be folded by the bat. The species usually roosts in tree-hollows, old buildings and sheds and is not generally regarded as a cave-dwelling species.

The late Barbara Dew caught Pipistrellus tasmaniensis and Nycticeius balstoni in a cave at Jenolan Caves, NSW. This is the only record of these species being found in caves and it is considered unlikely that these two bats are regular cave-dwellers.