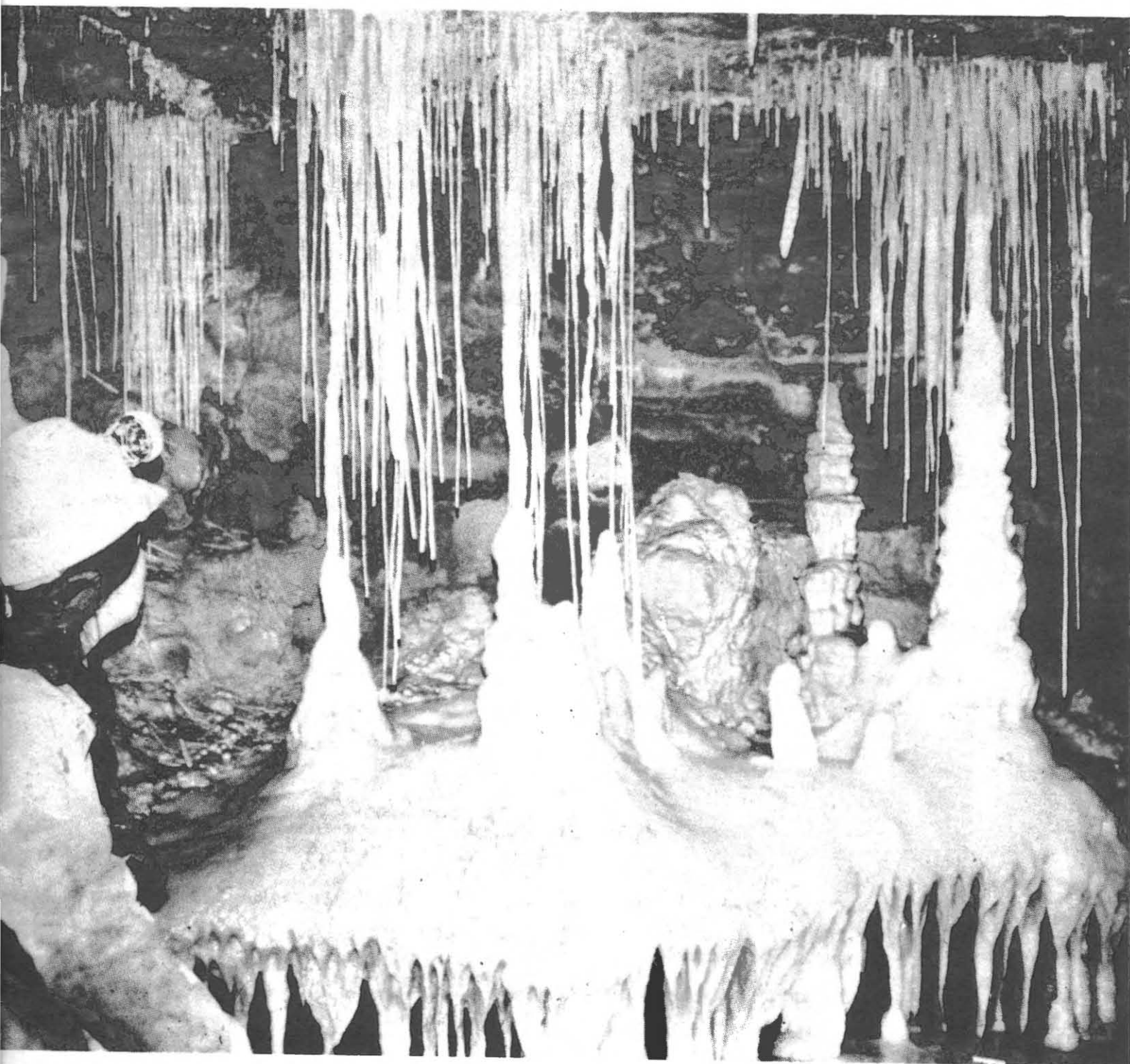


ASF

NEWSLETTER

Spring, 1977 No. 77



Pat Culberg looking at Formation in "WELCOME STRANGER," Maydena — Photo by Laurie Moody.

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EDITORIAL

No doubt everyone noticed the piece of late news which was added to the cover of the last issue. Exit Cave looks assured of being made a State Reserve. The Tasmanian Minister for National Parks and Wildlife, Mr. Batt, announced the decision on July 21st following discussions with the Forestry Commission and Australian Paper Manufacturers Ltd. It was agreed that an area surrounding the cave would be released from forestry rights. Negotiations over the future of Exit had followed the presentation last year of a report commissioned by the State Government on the need for ecological protection. The report had recommended that the cave be reserved. At present there are no immediate plans for development but a lease has been granted to Roy Skinner to conduct visitors to the cave on "adventure excursions". Although there have been a number of people deeply involved with the long-term conservation of this cave, two names stand out above the others - Roy and Andrew Skinner. It is certain that both must feel elated that their efforts have not gone unrewarded.

Contribution-wise, I have received a couple of letters (one of which I fully intended to publish but misplaced and lost) urging the withdrawal of the "Who's Who" series which were regarded as being little more than "ego-trips"! The writers will be pleased to know that none were received for this issue. Another point of contention concerns the "Caves of Australia" series, which I am pleased to announce, will be resumed in the next issue. I have just received one on the Camooweal Caves and I am led to believe that one on the Mt. Gravatt Caves is being prepared. In regard to club news and club newsletters see page 6 for the statistics.

In the past few issues, I have frequently expounded Tasmanian conservation issues. It is not that I am biased towards other Australian conservation problems but due entirely to the fact that no-one is bothering to send me any information regarding interstate areas etc. I would appreciate hearing from anyone willing enough to enlighten me on this subject in time for the next issue. I also ask that readers note the deadline for issue No.78 as we intend to have it in your hands by Christmas.

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DEADLINE DATE FOR ISSUE No.78 - 1st. DECEMBER

Contents include: Camooweal Caves - Andrew Pavey.

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Editor ASF Newsletter: Laurie Moody, 13 Mason St; Claremont, Tasmania. 7011 (002 493842)
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SUBMISSIONS

Adrian Davey

1. General

- 1.1 These guidelines refer to submissions made by speleological organisations relating to cave and karst conservation issues. Likely recipients of such submissions include:
- * government ministers.
 - * government departments.
 - * statutory authorities and commissions.
 - * government inquiries.
 - * other technical or conservation organisations, e.g. ACF, National Trust, IUCN, etc.
 - * mining or logging companies.
- 1.2 The nature of submissions varies, but includes:
- * supply of data: scientific records, surveys and the like.
 - * supply of information: integrated facts on a range of topics relative to a given area or subject.
 - * statement of opinion: in relation to proposed actions, etc.
 - * request for action: to achieve some conservation goal.
 - * request for funds: to assist projects related to conservation.
- 1.3 Before preparing a submission, it is wise to think very carefully about the following key points:
- * who is the submission aimed at, and what does that ultimately mean in terms of the kind of submission that should be made?
 - * what questions does the submission attempt to answer, and is there some more appropriate target for those particular answers?
 - * what are the terms of reference of the inquiry, and does the submission fit clearly within them?
 - * what are your real objectives in writing the submission?
- 1.4 These guidelines are not to be regarded as rules, but rather the basis for choice of the most appropriate general form and content of submissions. Operation of the guidelines should not inhibit initiative or imagination.

2. Format

- 2.1 A submission may be either in letter format, or stand on its own. The latter is preferable, especially when the content is substantial.
- 2.2 A brief covering letter should accompany the original copy of a submission, clearly identifying:
- * the subject of the submission.
 - * the specific situation to which the submission responds (e.g. advertisement in the press for public comment on a particular proposal by a particular date) and the name of the overall programme if it differs from the main subject.
 - * the range of issues encompassed in the submission.
 - * the interests, expertise, and qualifications of the organisation making the submission.
 - * the address for correspondence; and the business telephone number of at least one person intimately associated with the preparation of the submission and qualified to speak on behalf of the organisation.
- 2.3 Unless in letter form, a submission should stand on its own, and always contain the following information on the cover, or readily accessible elsewhere:
- * title: which should convey the essential features of the issues under discussion, and the situation to which the submission responds.
 - * the name of the Department, Inquiry, etc. to which the document is submitted.
 - * the programme under which the submission is made, if applicable.
 - * the name of the organisation making the submission; and where appropriate, the name(s) of the authors or co-ordinators of the submission.
 - * the address of the organisation.
 - * the date of the submission.
- 2.4 A submission should generally commence with a concise summary of its essential features, particularly if the submission is lengthy (say 3-4 pages or more). The summary should present details in the same order as the text, and any recommendations made in the submission should be included in the summary.
- A summary should stand on its own and be capable of being read without the rest of the document. In a large submission, it is often worth using coloured paper to identify it from the rest of the document.

SUBMISSIONS Cont;

- 2.5 The summary should be followed by an exhaustive and detailed contents page, including a list of all appendices, maps, etc.
- 2.6 A careful, logical sequence should be followed throughout; and the presentation of information designed to provide a full and balanced understanding of the situation. It may assist the structure and sequence of the submission if all relevant sections and sub-sections are identified by a numbering or lettering system.
- 2.7 Detailed information which is relevant to an understanding of the subject, but not essential to the logical development of the argument, should be placed in a table or appendix and referred to in the appropriate place(s) in the text.
- 2.8 Illustrations, be they photos, diagrams or maps, should be included only if they are significantly assisting in an appreciation of the issues, and should be carefully chosen and placed to ensure greatest impact.
- 2.9 Design and layout are quite important - every attempt should be made to ensure that the components of the text, and the illustrations are laid out in a fashion which enables the reader to follow the flow of the submission easily.
- 2.10 It is a fact of life that most submissions will be photo-copied. Wherever possible, use photos, maps and diagrams that will reproduce easily. Huge foldout maps are both difficult to copy and a headache to manipulate - they probably won't be looked at properly - use the smallest maps you can get away with and still show adequate detail. For similar reasons, A4 vertical format is to be preferred for submissions, unless there is some very good reason to differ.

3. Content

- 3.1 The amount of detail and scope of a submission should be carefully considered in relation to the task at hand, and the nature of the process to which the submission is contributing.
- 3.2 The distinction between facts and opinion in the submission should be kept clear at all times. Nothing discredits a submission more than erroneous and unwarranted claims. If in doubt, any information should be checked and double checked before inclusion.
- 3.3 Agencies receiving submissions generally take most notice of those that are constructive and useful to them. In other words there is a lot to be said for analysing the likely needs of the recipient organisation and presenting the information and opinion in a manner that will be most useful to them. The more hard facts and clearly stated opinions in a submission, the more likely it will be useful.
- 3.4 Wherever the information is available, any details of the usage of caves and karst areas should be given. The nature of the environment and natural features at a particular place is generally far better known to government agencies than details of usage. Any figures, be they visitor numbers, quarrying statistics, traffic counts, etc. can be of use.
- 3.5 Where a submission includes proposals for classification, or zoning, or for boundaries between classes of land, it is essential that there be detailed substantiation of the reasons behind the proposals, and the advantages and disadvantages of the options proposed relative to other likely outcomes. Any agency considering a submission will find proposals much more acceptable if the case for them is persuasive and clear. It is simply not sufficient to state the outcome that is desired - it is absolutely essential to give reasons, and to leave no stone unturned in the argument.
- 3.6 Wherever possible, proposals should be made within the constraint of the local legislative and administrative arrangements. Any proposal will be most attractive to an administration if it can be achieved within the existing legal structure. Further, any proposals which (unwittingly) run counter to the realities of government administration, land tenure, and the law, are virtually doomed to failure. This is not to say that reforms to the law should not be proposed; but it must be recognised that the easier the way out the more attractive the proposition will be; and changing the law is certainly not easy.
- 3.7 Proposals for the reservation of areas of land and the protection of sites need to contain specific and practical provisions for the management of the area, and should fit into existing government administrative arrangements wherever possible.
- 3.8 Where the submission is for funds to assist with a project, it is advisable to supply carefully calculated and realistic costs at a level of detail which does not commit funds unnecessarily, and which allows for maximum flexibility at the time the money is actually spent. The major items of proposed expenditure will require substantiation and justification. In many cases, a grant will not be made directly to an unincorporated organisation; it will help therefore if the most efficient means of administering the grant are explored and proposed.

The above information was kindly supplied to assist clubs and societies who are considering submissions for any purpose. Any queries on the above can be forwarded to Adrian Davey, ASF Convenor of Conservation (See front cover for address).

YARRANGOBILLY - CODE OF CONDUCT

1. Cavers must remember at all times that most of the cave area is part of an Outstanding National Area in the Kosciusko National Park and as such is to be afforded the highest measure of protection:
 - (a) The breaking and/or removal of formations, or marking of cave walls in any way, is not permitted.
 - (b) The removal and/or destruction of any plant or animal material, living or dead, from within caves or on the surface is forbidden.
 - (c) The removal of rock specimens, minerals or fossils from within the caves or on the surface is not permitted.

N.B. For the purpose of study no bones or sub-fossils are to be removed from caves. For examination, specimens should be photographed, measured and otherwise documented and left in situ.
2. Deposition of organic and inorganic litter within caves is to be avoided at all times. Use of caves for toilet functions is expressly forbidden.
3. Camping and/or lighting of fires within caves or cave entrances is not permitted.
4. Members of caving groups should not smoke within caves.
5. Speleological visitors should follow a single pathway through caves to minimise human impact and protect formations. In certain caves groups will be required to follow a specific route.
6. The use of cave formation for balance, grip, belay or support must be kept to a minimum.
7. Exceptional care must be taken in areas of delicate decoration. Muddy shoes and clothing must be removed when negotiating these areas and all care taken to leave the passage mud-free. Helmets should be removed where delicate roof decoration is threatened and floor crystal should not be negotiated with heavy boots. Footwear with metallic nails should never be worn in the caves.
8. Caving groups should in no way interfere with the hydrology of a cave system. Digging, dye tracing and diving are forbidden unless specifically approved by the Senior Ranger. No explosives are to be used in caves or cave entrances.
9. Groups camping in the vicinity of cave entrances must adhere to the Service policy of taking out all rubbish and materials which they bring into the area and must take all care to minimise the risk of pollution of water supplies in the cave vicinity.
10. All groups visiting Yarrangobilly and Cooleman Caves should be familiar with, and abide by, all the Regulations set out on the reverse of the Application for Speleological Visit.

REGULATIONS GOVERNING SPELEOLOGICAL ACTIVITIES AT YARRANGOBILLY AND COOLEMAN CAVES.

1. Only accredited Speleological Societies affiliated with the ASF will be permitted to undertake caving explorations, unless written permission is obtained from the Senior Ranger, Talbingo Sub-district.
2. The Senior Ranger, Talbingo Sub-district, is to be provided annually with a list of the members and office bearers of the Society.
3. All applications for speleological visits must be made on the official Application Form. Letters will not be sufficient.
4. The maximum number of members on any one trip is to be twelve, with a minimum of four for safety reasons. Not more than four in any caving party are to be prospective members of an organised society.
5. Each trip is to be under the guidance of a fully experienced leader who will be responsible for the safety and conduct of the party.
6. Applications for speleological visits must be lodged with the Senior Ranger, Talbingo Sub-district, at least four weeks before the date of the trip and must be signed by the Secretary of the Society.
7. Each application is to include the names of all members of the party, details of all caves to be entered and the purpose of the trip, and the proposed location of the base camp.
8. Groups must abide by the decision of the Senior Ranger in respect of what caves they may enter,

YARRANGOBILLY - CODE OF CONDUCT Cont;

8. the nature of the work they may undertake, the location of base camp, the provision of access and any special conditions that he feels are warranted for their visit.
9. The trip leader must report to the Ranger-in-Charge at Yarrangobilly Caves immediately on arrival. No work is to be commenced until this contact has been made.
10. Not more than one speleological group will be permitted to visit one cave system for investigation at one time.
11. All flora and fauna in National Parks are protected, both on the surface and within caves. No person may undertake biological collection without an official Scientific Consent from N.P. & W.S. and even then only with the express permission of the Senior Ranger.
12. On completion of a visit the leader will report his departure to the Ranger-in-Charge and notify him of any vandalism or misconduct.
13. Two copies of a report of each visit will be forwarded to the Senior Ranger, Talbingo Sub-district within fourteen days of the completion of the trip.
14. Two copies of any maps and publications produced at a later date will be forwarded to the Senior Ranger, Talbingo Sub-district.
15. A Society shall make available to the Park, free of charge, copies of all reports, maps and other material prepared as a result of investigations in the area.
16. Groups are to abide by the Code of Conduct for Yarrangobilly Caves which has been forwarded to speleological groups.

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ROPE FAILURE

The following article appeared in Nargun Vol.10 No.3 and was supplied by Anetia Vincent. It originally appeared in the New Zealand Speleological Bulletin Vol.5 No.96.

Article that summarises a fatal accident in England, when an abseiling rope broke. The rope went over the lip of a shaft and no effort was made to protect it. This accident happened way back in 1974, but it seems relevant to mention it in this issue. The one day SRT exercises at Mt. Macedon showed that we can keep on making the same blunders even under the most favourable of practice conditions.

The article goes into details about ropes, shock leading and figure-of-eight descenders. The rope was polypropylene, which, under testing, failed after about 35 seconds. Similar nylon ropes lasted 25 minutes at least, which is quite some difference. The club doesn't use these "toy ropes", but it is interesting to read of golden oldie horror equipment.

The next point is about shock leading. That's what happens when you stop for a rest, and then zoom off again rapidly. It also happens when the person moving gets enthusiastic and goes down in big bursts of motion. This one is fairly hard to resist when the abseiling is pleasant. Did it myself on the practice day but have now decided to be more careful after reading the article. Presumably, small amounts of shock leading can eventually have the same effect as a bid shock-lead, like towing a car with a rope.

The last point is about figure-of-eight descenders. It comments that fig.-of-8's are excellent for pitches of up to about 50 metres, but after that height, things start to happen which are not too good for the rope. After about 50m you have to start hauling yourself down the rope, due to excessive friction from the weight of the rope. This creates an uneven descent, which in turn produces lots of oscillation of the rope. In other words the rope flaps around like a beauty above you, and if there are any nasty sharp edges, then you should start 25 minute count-downs.

So much for the figure-of-eight, the old favourite. However, the length of pitches in most caves used regularly by VSA isn't likely to be over 50m. But the nature of the problem is well worth remembering, and, heavy emphasis, the fact that the rope must be protected. It takes only a 15ft. fall on your back to make you a paraplegic (happened to a rock-climber I know).

The final point, learnt from the Mt. Macedon day, is that when one is actually on the rope, it is much harder to remember all the finer points, such as rope protection, especially when one is well past the friction area. So along with enjoying the spectacle of watching the person abseiling, or prussiking up, perhaps it should be emphasised that we all ought to watch the rope. The person on the rope is often fully occupied on just that one process. And if it happens to be a long "free-hanging" prussik, where there is lots of spinning around, all sorts of disorientation makes it harder and harder to think of one thing at a time, so I repeat, the rope ought to be the responsibility of all present!

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!ROISLECXE

The following article appeared in TIME Magazine, August 16, 1976 and features a book review written by a John Skow. The book itself (316 pages) is strangely entitled "!ROISLECXE - The Longest Cave". It was written by Americans, Roger W. Brucker and Richard A. Watson.

"Flatlanders never have been able to understand mountain climbers, and not even mountain climbers understand the pale, mud-smeared troglodytes whose curious passion it is to worm their way down through the clammy dark into the deepest and narrowest capillaries of caves. These low adventurers are brave, but their squirmy feats seem inglorious. If, slithering downward, one of them carried a banner, its strange device might well read !ROISLECXE.

Now come a Yellow Springs, Ohio, advertising man named Roger Brucker, and Richard Watson, a philosophy professor at Washington University in St. Louis, to explain the damp fascinations of caving ("spelunking" seems to be a word not much used by cavers). Their book is a splendid armchair challenge, properly made, properly obsessive. For non-cavers who read it, the sensation of being trapped in Mother Earth's vermiform appendix is persuasively real and the impulse to run gasping into the open air is strong.

Brucker, 47, and Watson, 45, are cavers of the first rank. For nearly two decades they belly-crawled toward what they call "the Everest of world speleology", a presumed connection between Kentucky's vast Flint Ridge cave system and neighbouring Mammoth Cave. The possibility of such a connection must have occurred to Floyd Collins, the solitary caver who discovered Great Crystal Cave under Flint Ridge in 1917 and who died in nearby Sand Cave in 1925, after being trapped there for 15 days. Collins' grisly death stirred the nation's curiosity, and for years tourists in Crystal Cave paid eagerly to see the caver's body displayed in a glass-topped coffin. It is still there, though no longer on display, and minus a leg pilfered by rival cave owners. Modern cavers, say the authors, often have a word with Floyd as they head onward and downward.

Mud-Choked Fistulas: The Flint Ridge/Mammoth connection, which would establish the system as the longest known cave in the world, required techniques more organized and rigorous than Collins' lone adventuring. By the 1950's, when Brucker and Watson began caving, it was necessary to survey, with chain and compass, every foot of the miles of new cave then being discovered. Some of the finds were spacious passages and great, vaulted limestone halls, but far more often the explorers tried to keep their nerve intact and their carbide lamps lit while jammed into mud-choked fistulas less than a foot high. The authors' implied comparison of Kentucky caving with the climbing of Everest is a mild hype, neither necessary nor justified; Everest is far deadlier, and an expedition there requires several arduous weeks, not the 24 to 36 hours of a Flint Ridge cave crawl. But caving is difficult enough to call for a rare sort of courage and endurance. A common technique, horrifying to imagine, is to exhale in order to reduce the size of the rib cage, then squiggle along, unable to breathe deeply until the squeezeway widens. To do this in an unknown passage, realising that rescue is impossible and that the passage may narrow, not widen, is not simply grubby - it is gallant.

The final connection came in 1972, the authors relate. Brucker missed it because, although he is not a large man, he was not able to compress his body enough to get through a tight spot, now officially labeled the Tight Spot. The most effective member of the connection party was a small (115 lbs.), wiry woman named Pat Crowther. Large, lordly people are handicapped as cavers, of course, and flyweight readers will follow Crowther's muddy tracks with tears of appreciation in their eyes. When she and her skinny companions popped like corks through the Tight Spot and moved on into Mammoth Cave, the provable length of the great limestone entrails became 144.4 miles. The authors, still not satisfied, think that in all some 300 miles of passages exist. !ROISLECXE"

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CLUB MAGAZINES & CLUB NEWS

Having just made a check on my stock of club magazines, I find that a total of 23 clubs have at some time been sending me a copy of their magazine. However, I have yet to receive copies from 11 other clubs. I have prepared a list of those clubs that are sending and when I received their last copy. If you have been sending and I have not been receiving please notify me as soon as possible. The list also includes clubs which are sending or not sending club news!

| <u>Magazine</u> | <u>Club</u> | <u>Last Magazine Received</u> | <u>Club News</u> | <u>Club News Last Received</u> |
|-----------------|-------------|-------------------------------|------------------|--------------------------------|
| ? | BCA | None | None | None |
| Oolite | BMSC | Vol.9 No.1, June 1977 | Yes | ASF Newsletter No.77 |
| Bermagui Caver | BSA | Vol.3 No.4, June 1976 | Yes | ASF Newsletter No.71 |
| Tower Karst | CCC | June 1976 | Yes | ASF Newsletter No.72 |
| Newsletter | CEGSA | Vol.22 No.3, Sept. 1977 | Yes | ASF Newsletter No.77 |
| The Explorer | CQSS | Vol.7 No.4-5, Apr.-May 1977 | Yes | ASF Newsletter No.69 |
| The Very Latest | CSS | Vol.7 No.4, July 1975 | Yes | ASF Newsletter No.77 |
| Sevac | ESA | No.9, November 1976 | Yes | ASF Newsletter No.70 |
| ? | HCG | None | Yes | ASF Newsletter No.72 |

NOTICES & NEWS

REPORT PADS

As discussed at the last ASF Committee Meeting, VSA has had pads (30 sheets) of each of the draft report forms made up, namely, CAVE REPORT, TRIP REPORT and SKETCH PAD. These are available to other clubs who are interested as well. The price for this first batch is \$1.20 per pad of each type, plus postage. Later batches are expected to be much cheaper. Postage should be calculated on the basis that each pad weighs about 140grams. Order and cheque should be sent to P. Matthews, 66 Frogmore Cres, Park Orchards, Victoria. 3114. The above price is at cost.

The forms are still in draft format to get them into use quicker so that realistic comment can be made on their design prior to typesetting. It is recommended that they be used in the form of a cave recording kit taken on each trip, such as described in Nargun 9 (3) Sept. 1976, "Recording Cave Details". VSA's reporting increased 504% last year using these methods.

One of the significant advantages of the forms is that they permit immediate filing on a per cave basis, which saves a lot of cross-reference work for club record keepers and makes information on any particular cave much easier to find.

Peter Matthews,
Documentation Convenor.

SPELEO HANDBOOK

No interesting new stages to report yet unfortunately, just a lot of time-consuming administrative and checking work. In the light of the data checked so far, and the improvements made to the ease of use of the form last year, an addendum to the Cave Summary Guide has been written, and is being returned with each State's forms. I hope I'll have something more interesting to report next time.

Peter Matthews,
Handbook Convenor.

INTERESTING PUBLICATION - CONSERVATION-WISE

Essential background for anyone involved in a limestone mining - cave conservation dispute is some information on the properties required in the limestone for cement manufacture. This is particularly so if there is any discussion on alternative supplies of limestone. I have recently come across an extremely useful publication which may be of use to other societies:

Bowen, O.E., Gray, C.H., & Evans, J.R. (1973) The mineral economics of the carbonate rocks. Bulletin 194, California Div. of Mines and Geology. (1416 Ninth St; Sacramento 95814).

It proves very readable information on such things as chemical analytical data, mining and processing methods, costs of mining and transportation, uses, etc.

Lex Brown.

S & R READY TO GO IN TASMANIA

Tasmania Police advise that they now have available 700 miners cap lamps, fully charged, at two hours notice. They are also working on obtaining more in the north of the state. We have also been advised that a helicopter has now been placed on permanent standby.

COMPETITION

ASF needs an emblem or logo. ASF Newsletter (I am informed. Ed.) will provide a prize of \$20.00 open order on any one of our advertisers for the logo considered most suitable. Please send your entries in black ink (or similar) to:

A. Culberg,
P.O.Box 36
Lindisfarne. Tas. 7015

Please include your name and address. The judges decision is final and there is no obligation to award a prize. Closing date for this competition is January 31st. 1978.

ARTICLES ARE WANTED FOR THE ASF NEWSLETTER

Articles are wanted for the Summer Issue. If you can help out drop me a line as soon as possible. Closing date for the Summer Issue is December 1st. 1977.

NOTICES & NEWS Cont;NEW SPELEO GROUP IN QUEENSLAND

It appears that a new group of speleos have undermined the city of Brisbane. The group specialises in exploring sewers and have boldly announced themselves as the Brisbane Sewerlogical Group. Personally, I think the whole idea smells but these things have a tendency to catch on. A party of seven "smellies" visited Oxley Memorial Drain early in July and described it as being the most picturesque sewer they had been in so far. Later in the same month, five of these "smellies" visited Kangaroo Point Drain and an interesting trip report can be read in Down Under Vol.16 No.4 Sept. 1977. Anyone for the Hobart Rivulet?

HANDY TIP

Are you aware that battery acid leaking from your battery pack is extremely detrimental to caving ropes? Most people do and keep them well separated. Leaked acid may remain active in the car for several weeks and as most cavers are well versed in SRT nowadays, that piece of rope could mean the difference between life and death! Thanks Jim!

CLOSE CALL IN KHAZAD-DUM

Sunday 25th. September proved rather nerve-wracking for two male cavers and their female companion when they ran into trouble on the way out of Khazad-dum, Australia's deepest cave. Information is still rather sketchy at time of writing due to the fact that a written report has not yet been received from the people concerned. According to Max Jeffries, it appears that the party were returning after bottoming the cave when the girl experienced problems with her Jumar on the waterfall pitch. Half-frozen and suffering from exhaustion the girl was finally dragged to a ledge where her companions spent an hour or more endeavouring to restore circulation and warm her up. Eventually they were able to continue and arrived back at Maydena some five hours overdue. Search & Rescue was advised to stand by when another party who had also visited the cave, advised Max Jeffries that the trio were late. Fortunately, S & R were not needed. The cavers concerned are believed to be members of a northern Tasmanian club.

RECIPE ANYONE?

This is a recipe for an enjoyable high energy food suitable for caving trips, bushwalking, ski-touring etc. First soak 250 gm. of dried fruit (raisins, currants, sultanas, apples, apricots, etc., according to taste) in rum or brandy for up to a week. When this is ready, melt 250 gm. of dark cooking chocolate, a tablespoon of butter and 2 dessertspoons of honey (preferably leatherwood) over hot water, stirring frequently to prevent it sticking. When it has melted add the fruit and mix it thoroughly. Next add six shredded wheatmeal biscuits (granita etc.), allowing them to soak up the mixture. Finally, add small quantity of rolled oats until the right consistency is reached. Then store it in the refrigerator in Aluminium foil trays.

Brian Franz, VSA.

WORLD RECORD CAVE DIVE?

I have been informed on good authority that a group of WA cavers and divers have carried out what could possibly be the longest cave dive ever completed anywhere in the world. Word of this exploit has been kept fairly quiet due to the fact that the people concerned, namely Simon Jones, Phillip Okely, Keith Cooke, Gregory Scharf, Richard Beilby, Steven Sinclair of Melbourne, Keith Dekkers of New Zealand, did not want to start a rash of similar attempts by irresponsible persons. However, I feel that this feat is extremely worthy of mention to Australian cavers.

It appears that this group of people, pushing air cylinders on an underwater sled, penetrated some 2,130 metres along a water-filled tunnel at Cocklebidy. The exact date of this venture is unknown at present but is believed to have taken place in May-June of this year. The party was led by Hugh Morrison a Perth diving instructor and examiner for the Australian Cave Divers' Association. The party spent 12 hours underground during the excursion. Presumably, this would make Cocklebidy the eighth longest cave in Australia with a total length of 3,930 metres. Despite their efforts, it is believed that the tunnel still continues for some distance. According to a newspaper statement, the group began exploring the cave three years ago and last year penetrated about 1,370 metres. They found a rockpile at about 1,220 metres where this year they set up a telephone station to maintain contact with people outside. The rockpile is the only part of the tunnel out of water. Mr. Morrison said that most of the tunnel was about 13 metres wide and the water was up to 13 metres deep. The cavers pushed 15 cylinders of air on their sled and each carried another three on special back frames. The biggest problem apparently, proved to be food which had to be brought in inside a sealed chamber as were also dry clothes.

Without a doubt, a very notable feat but not one to be tackled by the inexperienced. Congratulations to all those concerned and the Editor would appreciate further details from anyone involved.

NOTICES & NEWS Cont;THE UNDERGROUND PRESS

It is proposed to review the regular publications of each member society and to reinstate the awards of Best Newsletter of the Year, Most Improved Newsletter and Best Published Photograph. All nasty letters, letter bombs, etc. are to be directed to the Secretary of ASF! The following comments are his not mine!

CEGSA Newsletter has shown dramatic improvement in recent issues. Their cover photo is now intelligible and the printing machine is not missing any pages.

Summary

| | | |
|----------------------|---|---|
| Cover | - | very good |
| Typing | - | uniform, few errors |
| Printing | - | uniform and clear |
| Layout | - | clear, not crammed |
| Content | - | varied and interesting |
| Condition on arrival | - | pitiful, and not the fault of Australia Post either! Some clot folded it several times to fit it into an envelope, and a limp ragged thing emerged. |

All told though, CEGSA Newsletter sets a good standard.

PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE FROM UQSS

1. copies of "Australian Speleology 1972" - \$2.75
2. copies of the "1974 ASF Conference Proceedings" - \$5.00
3. copies of "Mt. Etna and the Caves" - \$4.00
4. copies of "The Case Against the Pike Creek Dam" - \$1.00
5. copies of "Pike Creek Dam - A Preliminary Criticism" - \$0.40
6. "Stop Mining Mt. Etna" stickers - \$0.20
7. "Damn the Dam: Save The Texas Caves" stickers - \$0.20
8. Bat certificates - \$0.50
9. "Save Our Caves" T-Shirts - \$4.50
10. copies of "Mt. Etna Caves" - \$5.00 (only a few left)
11. copies of "1973 Papua New Guinea Speleological Expedition" - \$5.00
12. copies of "Lelet: report of the 1975 New Ireland Speleological Expedition" - \$3.00
13. copies of "Australian Natural History" June 1975, Vol.18, No.6
Special issue on Australian Caves - \$1.20
14. copies of "An Economic Study of the Qld. cement industry by J. Ware (Lecturer in Political Economy, Griffith Uni.) and M. Metwally (Reader in Economics, Uni. of Qld.) - \$1.50
15. copies of geological report on Limestone deposits in central Qld. J. Tweedale (B. Sc. Hons.) - \$1.50

N.B. The above prices do not include postage. Anyone wishing to order should contact:

The Conservation Treasurer,
Uni. of Qld. Speleological Society,
C/- Union, University of Queensland,
ST. LUCIA. Queensland. 4067.

SPELEO-GIGS

COMING EXPEDITIONS & EVENTS - ASF COMMITTEE MEETING 1978

The ASF Committee Meeting will be held in January (28-30), 1978. Venue is Mt. Keira Scout Camp, Mt. Keira Rd; Mt. Keira, New South Wales. 2500. The meeting commences at 11.00am on the Saturday and finishes when the work is done. Accommodation is available at the chalet which has four rooms each with eight bunks. Visitors are advised to bring their own linen, sleeping bag, etc. A kitchen is available for the use of delegates who must supply their own food. Camping facilities are also available. A lodge has been acquired for the meeting and a swimming pool may help in cooling the atmosphere. The cost is \$5.00 for the two nights (Sat. & Sun.). Bookings can be made with ISS through Dave Dicker as soon as possible, as spaces are limited. Delegates are also asked to specify whether tent or chalet. Meals will be supplied if prior bookings are made with ISS. Transport for interstate delegates from Mascot can be arranged through Robin Steenson.

TASMANIA - JANUARY 1978

Rauleigh Webb from WASG is bringing a party of WA cavers to Tassie in January and arrangements have been made with myself (Ed.) re information and guides to cave sites. Caves to be visited include Cauldron Pot, Khazad-dum, JF 99, Welcome Stranger.

ITEM OF INTEREST

The article appearing below was featured in the CEGSA Newsletter Vol.22 No.2 July 1977 and, I feel, well worthy of a reprint in ASF Newsletter. Our thanks to Kram Smith of CEGSA who will no doubt be surprised to see it included completely uncensored!

NEWS FLASH!!!

Just to hand, we have the Provisional Results of the MAD PERSON OF MULLAMULLANG Competition. This year's competition was held from May 14th. to 21st. at Mullamullang Cave, and was well attended by 17 hard core cavers from 4 states, and Kevin Mott (Masochist & Sadist) from Payneham.

First place was taken by Derek Hobbs, a prominent NSW speleo from MUSIG, for his attempt at being the fastest thing to travel along the Madura airstrip, and not take off!! Derek said, "We were going fine but were hampered by cross winds and back seat driving." Mr. Neil Smith, man on the spot, when asked about the attempt said, "I didn't really see much, I was too busy trying to get my seat belt out from under the seat."

Second was Jim Cundy for his valiant attempt to photograph the whole staff of the Madura pub. He made a good effort by getting shots of the cook, the kitchen hands and one waitress before being stopped in his tracks by the second waitress who suspected his motives (Who didn't!). A comment from the man who knows what cool is all about, Mr. Terry Reardon, "That was COOL."

Third was Neil Smith who attempted to get to the railway line during daylight while he had Ian Lewis in his party. The party arrived the usual 1½ - 2 hours late after surveying some grotty hole, carelessly described as a cave.

Other noteworthy efforts were: Terry Reardon's, "I crossed the Nullarbor on one headlight." effort! Neil Smith's, "I got defected across the Nullarbor.", 4 blowouts certainly proved that the police weren't all that far wrong. John Masala proved himself defective by driving from Canberra to Mullamullang (approx. 1,500 miles), going caving for half a day, then returning to Canberra. Never mind, he probably makes Mobil Oil very happy. Max Meth's attempts to catch a goods train to Port Augusta, and Mr. Ian Lewis's attempt to skull a Schooner of Beer, before being foiled by a burp.

The Most Impossible Category was won by Adrian Davey's attempt to convince SA cavers that digging should not be carried out in caves. He is not the person to ask about how to set a gelignite charge!

A noteworthy late entry was Mr. Kevin Mott's attempt to map the Eucla Rubbish Dump, this attempt failed due to a broken trip meter. He made a valiant effort though, by producing for records, two fully noted maps to 1:250 of the Cocklebidy and Madura Rubbish Dumps. These will probably be filed under the new categories of Refuse 1 and Refuse 2.

These points were just a few happy moments out of all the good times had on another I.D. Lewis expedition.

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CLUB MAGAZINES & CLUB NEWS Cont;

| Magazine | Club | Last Magazine Received | Club News | Club News Last Received |
|-------------------|---------|-----------------------------|-----------|-------------------------|
| Newsletter | ISS | December, 1975 | Yes | ASF Newsletter No.77 |
| Trog | KSS | Vol.12, No.7, March 1976 | Yes | ASF Newsletter No.77 |
| ? | LSC | None | Yes | ASF Newsletter No.73 |
| Newsletter | MSS | No.12, June 1975 | Yes | ASF Newsletter No.70 |
| ? | MUSIG | None | Yes | ASF Newsletter No.77 |
| ? | NC | None | None | |
| Labyrinth | NSWITSS | No.14, December 1976 | Yes | ASF Newsletter No.70 |
| Speleograffiti | NUCC | Vol.13 No.1, Feb. 1977 | Yes | ASF Newsletter No.77 |
| Descent | OSS | No.1, June 1976 | Yes | ASF Newsletter No.77 |
| Nuigini Caver | PNGCEG | Vol.5 No.1, July 1977 | Yes | ASF Newsletter No.74 |
| Southern Caver | SCS | Vol.9 No.1, July 1977 | Yes | ASF Newsletter No.77 |
| Caver's Chronicle | SRGWA | Vol.5 No.4, August 1977 | None | |
| Journal | SSS | Vol.21 No.3, March 1977 | Yes | ASF Newsletter No.73 |
| Bulletin | SUSS | Vol.15 No.2, June 1975 | Yes | ASF Newsletter No.75 |
| Speleo Spiel | TCC | No.127, September 1977 | Yes | ASF Newsletter No.77 |
| Spar | UNSWSS | No.64, May 1977 | Yes | ASF Newsletter No.75 |
| Down Under | UQSS | Vol.16 No.4, September 1977 | Yes | ASF Newsletter No.76 |
| Nargun | VSA | Vol.10 No.4, September 1977 | Yes | ASF Newsletter No.77 |
| Western Caver | WASG | Vol.17 No.1, July 1977 | Yes | ASF Newsletter No.77 |

Club magazines and/or news would be appreciated from new clubs - Avondale Speleo. Society, Campbell Town Caving & Outdoor Group, Central Vic. Explorers Assn., Hills Speleology Club and the Baptist Caving Assn.

Laurie Moody
ASF Newsletter.

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DOWN UNDER ALL OVER...

news from around the societies.

- BMSC** : Greg Powell reports that BMSC have been caving at Yarrangobilly where further work is being carried out for the National Parks and Wildlife Service. Under Ted Matthews, Mammoth Cave at Jenolan was explored and later with Brian Skinn as trip leader, a party slept overnight in Mammoth in preparation for a Tassy trip at the end of the year. Trips have been held to Cliefden as usual where a dig has been begun near the old mine and whilst on their last visit there, a commemorative plaque was installed just inside the gate to Cliefden Main as a memorial to Phillip Coburn. This was his favourite cave. New members have been undertaking their training on Field Trips to attain Full Membership status and a social evening was held at the home of Jack & Alma Cummings, where slides of a recent caving trip, to Tasmania by two members, were shown. As well, a four-wheeled drive trip to Church Creek via Yerranderie was much appreciated by those present. The previous walking attempt to reach these caves was unsuccessful as the flooded Kowmung could not be crossed. The club thinks it holds the record for the youngest micro-speleo, as Alan & Gwen Fairweather's new baby daughter Selina, "ventured underground" at Abercrombie at the club's AGM at the tender age of 1½ weeks. Can any other club top this? Future trips are planned to Jenolan, Cliefden, Bungonia, Tuglow, Yarrangobilly, Hollanders River and Wyanbene.
- CEGSA** : Jim Cundy reports that several major events have taken place during the last few months resulting in a boost for the club in regards to interest and enthusiasm. The first of these was the combined interstate Mullamullang trip in May led by Ian Lewis during which an estimated 1km of cave was added to the map in the Easter Extension. Eighteen cavers took part in this week of exploration and mapping. Clubs represented were CEGSA, VSA, CSS, NUCC and MUSIG. The annual CEGSA-VSA dinner also went ahead at Naracoorte in the true caving spirit and was thoroughly enjoyed by all. Those who couldn't remember were assured that they did have a good time. A record 68 cavers took part in the dinner but only a few went caving the next day. A Search & Rescue Exercise was held at Naracoorte in the fashion of that at Bungonia, but on a smaller scale. A total of 80 cavers, St. Johns members, Police and Rescue Group members participated in the 9 exercises which were organised by Kevin Mott. Although this was the first exercise of its sort for the majority of CEGSA members, they managed to handle the situations with some success. They all agreed, however, that they still had a lot to learn. Full details of the Exercise and the findings are in the CEGSA Newsletter Vol.22 No.3. Under the leadership of Neil Smith, a trip was run during September for two weeks. However, due to the distance involved, only one week of caving was conducted before returning (Neil and Joyanne Smith remained for a further two weeks). The local Chillagoe Caving Club proved most helpful during their stay. Other smaller trips have also been run to Kangaroo Island, the Flinders, Naracoorte, River Murray and South East.
- CSS** : Gordon Taylor reports that the last few months seem to have seen an upturn in interest in many of the smaller caving areas in their region. These have mainly been pleasant one day trips to such areas as Michelago, Mt. Fairy and Rosedale. On the Mt. Fairy trip some fossil bones were found. These were collected and identified by Dr. Jeanette Hope of the A.N.U. They proved to be a Tasmanian Devil, a wombat, macropods, rodents and snails. Despite this, a later trip failed to turn up any more material. Not to be outdone by other armchair societies, CSS published what must be a first in Speleo literature with the printing of the latest TVL. Not to be beaten with late trip reports, the issue contained a series of 20 year old reports. By Dr. George Dunnett, they recount the initial experiments in 1957 which eventually led to the establishment of the Australian Bat-banding Scheme. As well as those already mentioned, trips were conducted to Yagby, Bungonia, Colong and Wyanbene. Monthly meetings have been greatly improved with a series of very successful talks. Speakers included Adrian Davey on Buchan, "Dingle" Smith on Hydrology, and a KHA representative on Kosi Huts. Of great interest to club members was a seminar series organised by the Zoology Department, A.N.U. Topics included, "Formation and Development of Caves" - Dr. J.N.Jennings, "Fossil bones in caves" - Dr. S.H.Hope, "Speleo-chronology" - Dr. C.D.Ollier, "Mans use of caves" - Dr. A.Rosenfeld and "Ecosystems Undérground" - Dr. J.A.Harris. The series proved most informative and drew good audiences for each session.
- ISS** : Bill Bevan informs us that ISS have not visited Wyanbene since their very successful balloon flying episode in February. Over the four months up until July, trips have been run to Tuglow and Cleatmore. Both trips to Cleatmore were over long weekends and were mainly to familiarise members with the area, as many had not been there before. Much of the time was spent on the surface looking for holes and possible caves. The next trip to this area will be to number as many of the un-numbered holes as possible and record their position. Tuglow has been subject to a cleaning up exercise. Armed with a bucket and brush, members have spent much time carefully cleaning the formation and are pleased to find that much of the mud washes off. However, some of the formation has grown over the mud and cannot be cleaned. Still, much of the mud and name-scrawled walls are easily cleaned and reveal some of the caves former beauty and history. The basically pink limestone is embedded with grey and white fossil markings which have been

DOWN UNDER ALL OVER Cont;

- ISS Cont; hidden for many years. The club hopes to continue this work and bring an awareness to other cavers of what should and should not be done in caves. Four members, Lloyd Robinson and his family, John and Carol Redpath and Dave Dicker also visited the Kimberleys during this period.
- KSS : Neil Bannerman reports that after 18 months of digging, KSS has finally made the Halfway Efflux at Carrai officially a cave. So far it has yielded two chambers of which one has the prettiest formation yet seen in the Macleay Valley. A recent working bee at Tait's Creek Cave has laid the foundations for a steel gate on the entrance to prevent vandalism but also the club hopes to equip the cave with lights to conduct interested groups of people through. Abseiling seems to be gaining a lot more interest not only with club members but also members of the public, with several successful days at Yassobah. The club is also in the process of acquiring more rope and crabs for this sport. On the not so successful side is the frustrating time that KSS have been having trying to acquire a government grant to buy a rescue stretcher for their district, so far without result.
- MUSIG : Colin Killick informs us that MUSIG has been fairly quiet for the past couple of months. They are still awaiting the publication of their magazine Quaver, but the University Sports Assn. is rather slow in printing it. Much activity, however, is planned for the coming months. Trips have been run to Mt. Fairy, Bungonia, Jenolan and Cliefden. The Cliefden trip was reasonably successful with several spiders being gathered for the Australian Museum. Jenolan was less successful due to a communications breakdown prior to the trip. Everyone thought that someone else was bringing the equipment! Consequently they had little gear. Fortunately, Wiburds Lake Cave is horizontal and the lack of SRT gear was not that important. The cave was almost devoid of insect and arachnid life. MUSIG feel that they have reached the limit of their work at Mt. Fairy and trips there have tapered off with waning enthusiasm. Nevertheless more trips to the area will doubtless be arranged. On a lighter note, yet another Chocolate Crackle sale was held at the University and raised more money for the club resulting in a very healthy bank balance, even after the purchasing of a Suunto Compasses.
- NUCC : Gordon Taylor also reports that lately NUCC seem to have had a preoccupation with the Wyanbene area. Many trips have been led to the area. One trip involved lugging a scaling pole through the main Wyanbene cave. Several vain attempts to locate Ridge Mine Pot were made until they finally found it recently. Even if they hadn't, the view is worth the climb. Whilst at the Wyanbene area in the Uni. holidays, Big Hole was descended and Marble Arch visited. Trips were also made recently to Mt. Fairy and Macphersons Swamp Creek. A talk by Joe Jennings on "Karst in New Zealand" at a recent meeting, also proved most interesting. All in all the past few months have been fairly quiet but not uneventful for NUCC.
- OSS : Ray Rowney informs us that OSS have continued their efforts in increasing its knowledge of limestone areas and has recently completed trips to Tuglow, Yarrangobilly, Mammoth (Jenolan) and Abercrombie. Further trips have also been undertaken in the local area and these include Cliefden, Gowan Green and Canomodine, all of which will be expanded on in Descent No.2 shortly to be available. A change of editor and an attempt to enlarge their magazine's format have contributed to a delay in its appearance. OSS and BMSC co-operated in a plaque laying ceremony at Main Cliefden on the 30th. August in memory of Phil Cobourn who was killed in the Granville train disaster early this year. The plaque reads in part "Phill's favourite cave". This was covered by local radio station 2GZ and TV Channel 6/8 Orange. OSS also completed filming approx. 800 ft. of 16mm film inside Main Cliefden that weekend. Exploration in a new cave at Canomodine saw the discovery of two large teeth in good condition. These were subsequently identified by Greg Dean-Jones and Professor Bischoff of Macquarie University as Diprotodon. A full scale palaeontological excavation is possible.
- SCS : Ron Mann reports that in the Junee-Florentine area, a party of four spent several hours in Khazad-Dum going down to the top of the 90' pitch. Only one of the party had been to the cave before and the other members were impressed with what they saw. Four members of the Ambulance Board of Southern Tasmania were taken to Growling Swallet to give them an idea of the problems involved in possible cave rescue situations. They were then taken to Welcome Stranger for a complete change of scenery and were most appreciative of the efforts of Leigh Gleeson, Bob Cockerill and Aleks Terauds. Kevin Kiernan and others went to the Mt. Weld area and laddered a large pot but it terminated at 60 metres in muddy rifts. Kevin says that good potential remains in the area and the forest scenery is superb. The Upper Loddon River area was visited again over the June longweekend and the party reached the doline they had attempted to locate the previous trip. They only found one cave entrance in the doline which has steep sides in places and thick vegetation. The cave did not look promising. Two of the Ambulance Board members who went to Growling Swallet visited Wolf Hole at Hastings, "touristed" this popular cave, spent five hours in it, then went to Ida Bay and explored Entrance Cave. A party led by Leigh Gleeson spent 13 hours in the Labyrinth area of Exit in August and camped at Camp 1. As an alternative to caves, several members spent some hours by the seaside near Hobart, practising SRT off the cliffs at Blackmans Bay.

DOWN UNDER ALL OVER Cont;

- TCC** : Laurie Moody reports that no outstanding discoveries have been made over the last three months. However, TCC has received a much needed boost with an influx of Hobart Matriculation students joining its somewhat depleted ranks. The club also celebrated its 31st birthday at the Annual Dinner but attendance was not as expected. Stuart Nicholas has been busily engaged with the construction of 150 ft. of new ladder which is now ready for testing. The Maydena Branch have been busy numbering a further twelve caves taking the tally to 129. Trips have been held to Liffey Falls Cave (in the north of the state), Bubs Hill, Exit, Wolf Hole, Genghis Khan and the Junee. Yours truly has been doing little caving of late but found time to investigate a number of sea caves south of Hobart. TCC member, Bill Tomalin is also the proud father of twin boys but to my knowledge they have yet to go caving.
- VSA** : Dave Smith informs us that as is usual during winter many cavers turned to skiing but caving has not suffered as a result of this. As usual, Buchan is the centre of activities while many other areas were visited also. At Bats Ridge, a survey of Hammer Cave was commenced and work was also done in BR16. Remembrance, Chimney and Hut Caves were also visited. Several sea caves at near-by Cape Bridgewater were visited and these contained small colonies of bats. Angel Cave at Cape Schanck has also been surveyed. A Search & Rescue exercise was held at Parwan Lava Cave and nearly 20 cavers attended what was quite a successful day. The main problem to arise was the method to be used in searching for the victim and ensuring that passages were not searched twice. The VSA was represented in the major survey work in Mulla Mullang in May and about one kilometre was added to the surveyed passage and more awaits. At Buchan, the new Stirlings Cave has been surveyed to the bottom of the main pitch. The survey of Dukes Cave is nearing completion with only small side passages and several avens to be done. A trip into Fairy Cave with the scaling poles to explore several avens unfortunately found nothing. A survey of BA11 was started in the Basin. A survey of Exponential Pot has also been re-commenced (again). There have also been two dinners held recently, the first being VSA's 10th. Anniversary Dinner. More than 80 past and present members attended the very successful night. The second was the annual VSA/CEGSA Dinner held at Naracoorte. About 70 cavers attended the revelry both at the pub and the hut. The VSA would like to congratulate Ian Lewis for collecting the Piss-Pot of the Night Award.
- WASG** : Rauleigh Webb has taken over from Kerry Williamson and informs us that they have not been idle. Augusta: In Easter Cave (Au14) the new passage has been named the CEGSA Extension as CEGSA members were on the initial exploration trip. The possibility of completing a photographic survey of this new extension is being examined. Due to the lack of rain in the West for quite some time, the water table is very low. Consequently the Gondolin Extension has been re-entered with a combined WASG-WASSG (Witchcliffe Area Speleological Sub Group). Peter Bell has begun an extensive area survey of the Augusta region. To date the surface work has positioned 15 caves and also produced a new cave, Foundation Cave (Au28). Below ground, the surveys of Bone Cave (Au2), Harleys Cave (Au6), Old Kardardup Cave (Au9), Au10 and Foundation Cave (Au28) have been completed. Peter has also begun a survey of the Labyrinth (Au16) to ASF Grade 5-5. Witchcliffe: Frank and Barry Loveday have been mapping at their usual rate. Their area survey of southern Witchcliffe is now complete with the addition of the surveys of Crystal Cave (WI62), Soil Shute (WI64), WI 69, WI122 and the complete Arumvale System (ie. Breakneck Gully (WI54), WI55, Arumvale Pipe (WI56) and Arumvale Cave (WI57)). Besides this work, they have also surveyed Connelly Cave (WI148) whose length is now 1100 metres. The map itself being a colossal 3.7m long. Rauliegh also tagged 96 caves in this area and surveyed Green Cave (WI2) and Kudjal dar (WI114). Peter Bell has also surveyed Giants Cave (WI21-22) and begun a survey of Mammoth Cave (WI38). A very successful rescue practice was held in and around Giants Cave. WASSG has done some interesting water divining in the Connellys-Rudducks-Calgadup System. Yallingup: Tagging in this area is nearing completion. In Terrible Cave (Ya12) the water table has been sighted. Lower West Coast: Trips have been made to the Mandurah caves. On one of these trips a large number of bones of paleontological interest were collected from an unnumbered cave. Nullarbor: While returning from the Conference White Wells, Moonera Tank, Weebubbie and Murra-el-el'evyn Caves were visited. Nambung: A cave management plan is being drafted for the National Parks Board for all of the caves in this area. Yanchep: An area survey is under way courtesy of Mike Newton. Jim Cambell has surveyed Water Cave and six new caves have been found in this area. Eastern States Areas: Following the ASF Conference, which was attended by about 20 members of WASG and WROK, the following areas were visited:- Buchan, where Ken Lance found a new cave which he called Fat Lip Hole (He swears that he will never find another one in VSA country due to the pages of forms which had to be completed for registration), Bungonia, Yarrangobilly, Jenolan, Maydena and Mole Creek. General: A submission to the Department of Conservation and Environment has been drawn up. A large amount of work has been done on the new WASG hut which will be assembled at the Boranup campsite by the new year.

THE SPELEAN SHUNT TECHNIQUE

Phil. Toomer & Bruce Welch

Abstract

A new method of rigging a trailing ascender as an abseil safety device. The device described is readily released after its activation.

Introduction

A simple, safe abseiling safety device has long been needed, and several different types of trailing ascenders have been designed by cavers throughout the world (Montgomery, 1977). Unfortunately, all of these are either unnecessarily complicated or require another prussik device to enable them to be released after activation.

The Spelean Shunt Technique uses only equipment which is currently available from caving shops. All that is required is a Gibbs ascender (with quick release pin), one "D" carabiner, and some 5mm or 7mm kern-mantle rope.

The Spelean Shunt is designed to ensure that, as soon as the abseiler changes his balance the cam will lock onto the rope. Thus if the caver was to become unconscious, or otherwise lose control, he would naturally move to a stable position (which means he would lean back) and the device will lock on. The Spelean Shunt is arranged so that the caver will not be pestered by the cam locking on during normal abseiling. The technique is also designed such that the cam may be released with a not unreasonable amount of force on the release mechanism of the device.

Description of Rigging

A Gibbs is rigged on the abseil rope above the descending device in the normal way. However, before attaching the Gibbs to the rope, pass a short length (about 1 metre) of 5mm kern-mantle rope through the eye of the Gibbs cam, then pass a "D" carabiner through the eye of the cam, then around the rope. The U-shaped part of the Gibbs is then passed up through the inside of the carabiner (See Fig.1), and then the quick release pin then inserted. The carabiner is attached in such a way that the long (ungated) side of the carabiner is on the same side of the Gibbs as the head of the quick release pin. Care must also be taken to pass the chain of the quick release pin around the outside of the carabiner.

The Spelean Shunt is now set up. Take hold of the two ends of the 5mm rope and tie a double figure-of-eight in it close to the cam eye. Pass one end of the 5mm rope through the carabiner in your sit-harness and join the two ends. The correct length for this loop will be found by ensuring that when the shunt is locked onto the rope under load there is 30-50mm between the shunt and the top of your descending device. The chest activating link is then attached. Pass a carabiner through the loop at the eye of the cam, then attach the carabiner to your

chest harness (n.b. your chest harness must be tight to be effective).

You are now fully rigged into the Spelean Shunt (Fig.2). As long as your body is kept upright the Gibbs will slide down the rope - if preferred, you may rest your left hand around the back of the Gibbs and hold the carabiner down thus ensuring that it will not lock on, during normal abseiling. The presence of the hand on the carabiner does not prevent the Shunt from working. If you have trouble releasing the cam, a short length of tape may be attached to the back of the carabiner to aid in its release.

The Spelean Shunt is so simple that it could be used to make routine stops on any abseil, rather than being reserved only for emergencies. This would be most useful when using an abseil device such as a brake bar rig, which does not have a ready stop position.

Reference.

Montgomery, N.R., 1977 Single Rope Technique (Sydney Speleological Society) pp 68-69.

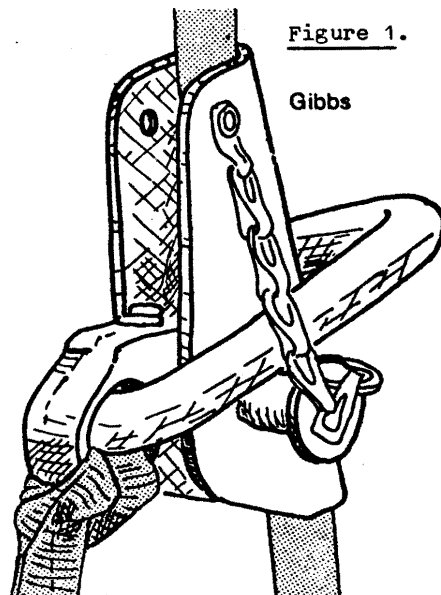


Figure 1.

Gibbs

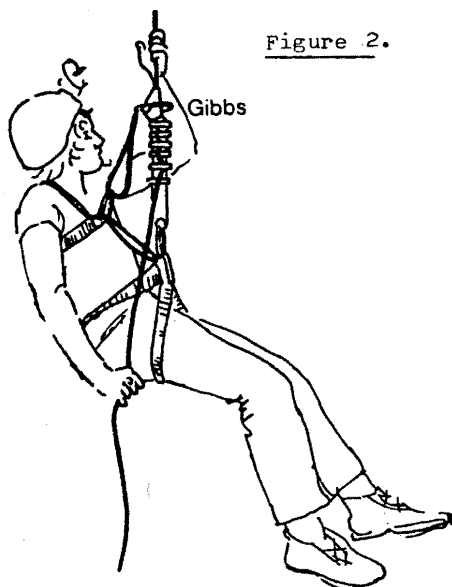


Figure 2.

Gibbs

BOOK REVIEWS

Single Rope Technique - A guide for vertical cavers by Neil R. Montgomery, published by SSS (Occasional Paper No.7) 122 pp. \$7.50 (Mail orders from Caving Equipment, 10 Binda St; Merrylands, 2160.)

This book fills a long recognised vacuum in the contemporary literature, a definitive work on the modern caving techniques practised in vertical systems. In the last twenty years, Single Rope Techniques have developed rapidly and few authors have developed the broad based knowledge to deal with the whole scene. Neil has been one of the major participants in the refining of these techniques in Australasia. The chapters cover (in order); Ropes for abseiling and prussiking, basic rope knots, anchors, rigging, harnesses, carabiners and helmets, abseiling and prussiking, vertical caving efficiency and self-rescue from a vertical cave. There is an appendix of equipment manufacturers and most importantly the book has a comprehensive index.

In the author's own words, "The book is intended for people with some experience of caving. There is no information on such basics as lighting and footwear." And so it should be. Equally, the book does not cover every single proposed prussiking rig or ascending device. Many have been described in the literature over the years and few have become popular. The book covers SRT as it is most widely practised.

The book is profusely illustrated with many clear line drawings and a few photos of spectacular shafts. The only real criticism of the book I have is that the bold cover design in black and 'Kodak' yellow tends to show fingerprints all too easily. This is not good in a book which will be fingered by many and serve a long, useful working life. I suggest you buy a copy (no caver should be without it) and when you do, cover it with plastic immediately.

Andrew Pavey.

Proceedings of the Second Conference on Cave Tourism and Management

Edited by G. J. Middleton, Published by ASF & N.P.W.S.(Tas) August 1977.
119 pp. IV \$7.50 including postage.

The conference was held in early May in Hobart and was attended by delegates from all parts of Australia. It is very pleasing to see that the proceedings can be published within three months of the close of the conference. One would hope that this standard can be maintained for all ASF conferences in the future!

The papers presented cover a wide range of topics related to "tourist" and managed caves, ranging from Exit Cave, a totally undeveloped tourist cave through to the problems of convincing shire councillors that caves deserve protection, and sympathetic development. There is something of interest to nearly every Australian caver. As governments realise, at long last, that caves are a scarce resource, there will be more and more control and management. To preserve their right to go caving, members of ASF need to ensure that government policies heed our needs. This type of conference is one way we can do this.

Technically, the production of the book is excellent. The layout is clear and logical, the typing is almost flawless, the maps are clear and easy to refer to and the photos have been well chosen and relate to the content of the book.

I commend this book to all those concerned with wider aspects of caves, and to all those would-be publishers who would like an example of how publications can be done.

Copies of the above are available from (please include payment):

Tony Culberg
P.O. Box 36,
Lindisfarne. 7015.

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RECOMMENDED READING

Nuigini Caver Vol.5 No.1 features an article by R. Michael Bourke on The Greatest Caves of Papua New Guinea as at December, 1976. The article lists the deepest caves, longest caves, longest pitches, largest chambers, highest caves, largest dolines, largest natural bridges, largest underground rivers and other Papua New Guinea cave records. I strongly recommend that if you can get your hands on a copy, you will be as enthralled as I was. Unfortunately, I do not know the situation in regard to spare copies but interested persons are advised to contact the Editor, Malcolm Pound, P.O. Box 3824, Port Moresby, National Capital District, Papua New Guinea.

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