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ASF NEWSLETTER

THE AUSTRALIAN SPELEOLOGICAL QUARTERLY



New Directions for ASF

photos Max Perkins

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AS F NEWSLETTER

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EDITORIAL

This edition of the A.S.F. Newsletter is notable in that it is the first time for many years that the editorial and managerial functions have been located in one city. The fact that the newsletter has appeared in the past has been due to the hard work of Rosie Shannon the outgoing editor, and Tony Culburg the previous business manager. On behalf of all members I would like to extend our thanks for keeping the newsletter running despite the tyranny of distance. Thanks should also go to John Taylor who has just resigned as A.S.F. Treasurer, a position he has held for eleven years. The Federation has been fortunate indeed to have had such continuity in the management of its finances.

The theme of this issue is "A New Direction for ASF", and there are several reasons for this choice of theme. The newsletter itself has had a move and the editorial, managerial and back issue functions are now located in Sydney. We hope this will lead to better communications and alleviate some of the past problems, which were largely caused by distance.

Communication, or rather the lack of it, was a major theme of discussion at the ASF Committee Meeting held in Canberra earlier this year. (An appropriate city in which to discuss lack of communication!). The delegates who attended that meeting felt that the ASF had lost its identity with the general membership. The average speleo-club member it was said, seemed to see the ASF as a mythical "THEM" rather than seeing it as an organisation of which they are an integral part. This was put down to a lack of communication. It was suggested by some of the more acidic critics that if the executive of the ASF and the convenors of the various Ad Hoc Committees do not report on their activities, delegates can not give any information to their clubs. Similarly, if the clubs do not send delegates to ASF committee meetings or do not INSIST that their delegates report to their members, they still don't get information about the activities of the ASF.

The ASF is doing things, but the membership is not being informed.

The Newsletter is going to keep you informed. Executive members such as the President and Convenors of some of the Ad Hoc Committees, through the Newsletter, will be keeping you up to date with reports of their activities. The President's column will be a regular feature starting in the next issue and news from the Ad Hoc Committees will be printed as information comes to hand. These reports will be concise and informative, with the aim of keeping you up to date with what your Federation is doing.

As well as providing more space for "Federation News" the Newsletter committee intends to start some new sections, which it is hoped will increase interest in the newsletter. In this issue you will notice we have a "Conservation Column" and a section entitled "Guano". The latter is largely a miscellaneous column for such things as funny stories, cartoons, recipes and any other

bits and pieces. Other columns we intend to introduce as regular features are an "Equipment and Techniques Column" and a "20 years ago" segment. We will also make use of good articles, from other publications, which deserve wide circulation.

Finally, we need two things; firstly your support, as this newsletter is only as good as its contributors. If we don't receive material from you, we cannot go to press. We are in desperate need of copy for the next issue so PLEASE put pen to paper! Secondly, we need constructive criticism. We are all new to the job and comments on any aspect of newsletter production and content will be appreciated.

Remember, the success of this newsletter is your responsibility, we just put it together.

What sort of member are you ?

Are you an active member
The kind that would be missed?
Or are you just contented
That your name is on the list?

Do you attend the meetings
And mingle with the flock?
Or would you rather stay at home
And criticise and knock?

Do you take an active part
To help the work along?
Or do you feel you've done your part
By saying "I belong"

Do you work on committees
To make the group tick?
Or leave the work to just a few
And talk about the clique?

Please come to meetings often
Help out with hand and heart
Don't be just a member
But take an active part.

Think it over ask yourself
The question isn't long
"Am I an active member -
Or do I just belong?"

- Anonymous

Published by "Port Macquarie News"

NOTES ON THE ASF

A Report of the ASF Committee Meeting on 30 and 31 Jan 82

TERRY O'LEARY

The annual ASF committee meeting was held in Canberra on the January long week end. Many societies did not send delegates to the meeting, so I have prepared the following brief notes about the major items of interest.

The new ASF Secretary is Cathie Rothery and Lloyd Mill is the new Treasurer. Lloyd replaces John Taylor who has done an excellent job for the last 11 years. I am the new assistant Secretary.

As the ASF is to be incorporated in the ACT the need for a Public Officer has arisen. Jim Reid, who lives in the ACT, has been persuaded to fill this position.

The Newsletter is now under new management, Roman Lichacz is the editor, and the new manager is Ian Mann. This means that the newsletter preparation and management is now centralised in Sydney.

The Membership Ad Hoc Committee has been reformed with Peter Dykes (HCG) as its new convenor. Other members are Darell Warden (Hills Speleo. Club), Ben Nurse (SSS) and Andrew Pavey (UNSWSS).

It was proposed that the 1989 IUS conference be held in Australia. Philip Toomer is contacting people known to be working in this area. Philip is the convenor of an ad hoc committee to investigate the feasibility of Australia hosting this conference. I am sure he would appreciate any thoughts on the matter. I have been seconded to the ad hoc committee and feel such a conference is an excellent chance to advance speleology (and caving) in this country. Planning must begin now if we wish to convince the IUS that we can host the conference. The deadline is the 1985 IUS Conference.

Various reports were given by ASF committee members and highlights will be published in the ASF Newsletter. However, some points of interest are as follows.

A cave in South Western Tasmania, which has become a major archaeological site, will not be called Fraser Cave. It is against ASF and International Union of Speleology (IUS) policy, as well as normal geographical nomenclatural practices, to name caves after living persons. The cave is on the lower Franklin River and under threat of being flooded.

Editors Note: The amount of recent publicity given to the name Fraser Cave will, however, make this decision virtually meaningless!

It was suggested that ASF revise its administration to help improve communication and hence its image. In line with these suggestions an ASF brochure is being prepared and the newsletter's structure is being reviewed.

There will be a Tourism and Management Conference at Lakes Entrance (in Victoria near Buchan) in 1983 (Autumn?).

There are several ASF publications which should be used by clubs in conservation submissions. They are "Guide to Submission Writing", "Guidelines on Conservation" and "Bibliography". Conservation efforts are to be co-ordinated by Elery Hamilton-Smith and the convenor of the Ad Hoc Committee on Conservation. I feel they would appreciate every club having a member responsible for conservation and environmental issues who could correspond with them and help where possible.

Hills Speleology Club, who have been Associates for some time, applied for full membership of ASF. A postal vote is required since 2/3 of ASF member societies must approve such applications (and prior notice must be given). The 11 ASF groups represented at the committee meeting all agreed that Hills Speleo. Club should be admitted as full members of ASF.

Two thirds of the member societies of ASF were not present at the Committee meeting. A quorum was only just present.

Action

1. Clubs should establish a position of Environment Officer (if one does not already exist) who could, with convenors of the appropriate ad hoc committees, help ASF have a much more widespread and co-ordinated voice in conservation issues.
2. Consider the Aims of ASF. A motion was passed to double the number of Associate groups. The ASF at the moment does not reach enough cavers and we must increase our base of support if we wish to remain a viable organisation. Individuals and clubs need to think about the questions of individual, group or other forms of membership; methods of spreading our message and ways of getting ASF tasks done.

RE-ORGANISATION!

We tried hard - but it seemed that every time we were beginning to form into teams, we would be re-organised. I was to learn later in life that we tend to meet any new situation by re-organising and a wonderful method it can be for creating the illusion of progress while producing confusion, inefficiency and demoralisation.

Petronius Arbiter, 210 B.C.

Letters to the Editor

Archaio/Fraser Cave

Now here indeed is a vexatious situation. I find I must agree with Kevin Keirnan and company in their motivations for naming caves along the Gordon and Franklin rivers after incumbent politicians although the contribution to the attainment of the desired effect by this means seems a bit ineffectual now that the controversy over the area has reached such proportions as it has. I doubt that the Prime Minister is really likely to be impressed to the extent that it would influence any decisions he might make to any notable degree. I hasten to add however that my sympathies lie wholeheartedly with those who are trying to save the Franklin and perhaps the balance is so delicately poised that any contribution is worthwhile.

I must also agree with John Dunkley's lamentation that we should not be saddled with the name Fraser Cave for ever.

Albert Goede's claims to impartiality on the part of the Tasmanian Nomenclature Board have a somewhat hollow ring when, as Kevin points out, one considers the decision on Lake Pedder (a name which I for one have never acknowledged in respect to the larger version). But notwithstanding that the board has made some unfortunate choices in the past, I feel I must support Albert's assertion that impartiality and resistance to pressure from political or any other pressure groups should be maintained in the decision making.

I suggest that, as the board has accepted my proposed name, it withhold from seeking ministerial approval and thereby from official gazettal and we all go along with Fraser cave until the present furore has been settled one way or the other. If the conservation case triumphs the name can easily be changed later, if not it won't matter anyway - except to a few intrepid cave divers.

ARCHAEO - G^R formerly and still sometimes spelt
ARCHAIO - Ancient, primitive.

(Oxford dictionary definition).

ROY SKINNER
31/12/81

Conservation Column

Mullamullang- In Need of Help?

NORMAN POULTER - SRGWA

Mullamullang Cave (N37) is Australia's second longest cave, and in caving circles at least, is one, if not 'THE', most famous.

First entered in 1964, negotiation of its 4.8km main passage is no easy task due to the cave's high humidity, seemingly endless high rockpiles and the salinity of its many lakes. A lot of people who visit the cave vow never to return but rarely forget the experience. Maybe it is because of the former sensation and the cave's remoteness from regular monitoring that Mullamullang is starting to show the suffering it has received at the hands of its visitors.

Mullamullang was most likely the first cave in Australia to have a base camp established in it (Hill 1966). For the 1965-66 Expedition, a camp was located at the 'Junction', 4km from the entrance. There 20 people, with surface support, spent seven days to permit study of the cave without an arduous, daily, multi-hour trip from and to the surface.

A legacy of the 1966 Expedition that remains in the cave today is an 'emergency dump' at Camp One and a telephone line, which was laid so that the Camp could maintain contact with the surface in order to co-ordinate supplies. In recent times this 'dump' has been depleted to the extent that there is now only spent carbide, contained in a rusting dish two empty square tins and three plastic bottles.

My first experience with Mullamullang was during the 1972 CEGSA Diving Expedition. The well planned organisation of this expedition fell short in relation to the underground camp it required in Mullamullang. Little thought had been given by the multi-society participants to the removal of human body waste (solids) from the cave, with the result that there were quite a few little sealed plastic bags scattered throughout the cave during the five day underground stay. A couple of mine were among them, a practice not repeated on later trips.

An unexpected visit to Mullamullang during the 1981 Goede/Jennings Nullarbor Expedition allowed a more enlightened appraisal of the cave to be made.

It was found that:

1. A trail of empty soft drink cans had been established in the early stages of the cave - presumably heading for the Easter Extension.
2. Spent carbide had been dumped indiscriminately throughout the main passage.
3. The telephone lines were broken in numerous places making its future use negligible.
4. The 'dump' at Camp One consisted of spent carbide, empty containers and galvanised roofing nails - to hold up the ceiling of the Dome perhaps
5. Several deliberate hand and foot prints had been carefully pressed into the Coffee and Cream section of the Easter Extension, possibly to act as scale for photographs or just to see what the texture of the decoration was like. Some of the prints were that of a small child.

During visits to the cave over a period of three days, several kilograms of nails, containers of spent carbide, the drink can trail and a quantity of telephone line were removed from various parts of the cave.

It is evident that there is an increasing number of non-cavers visiting Mullamullang. This is indicated by talks with staff at nearby Madura Roadhouse, the drink can trail and more than likely, the hand and foot prints in the Easter Extension.

It is also evident that the various deposits of carbide primarily originate from - cavers, even though it can be argued that carbide and carbide lights are freely available from camping stores throughout Australia.

With the introduction of the non-camping in caves policy, there must be plenty of room in the rucksacks of individual Mullamullang visitors to remove the remaining rubbish from Camp One and even some of the dumped carbide from the main passage. Small cup-like scoops, burst-proof containers and perhaps a brush and pan would be all that is needed for this little chore. Empty tins and plastic bottles are easy items to carry out of a cave.

It is perhaps fortuitous that the forthcoming ASF Conference is to be held in Adelaide at the end of 1982. It should be a forgone conclusion that an expedition to the Nullarbor will be planned. If this is the case, then a golden opportunity presents itself to rehabilitate Mullamullang, organised as part of the Conference field trips.

During the Goede/Jennings Expedition, Adrian Davey was theorising that restoration of the damaged sections of the Coffee and Cream may be possible with the aid of old fashion flour sifters. It may be possible to duplicate the texture of the decoration. A discreet sign inside the entrance to the region advising cavers and non-cavers alike as to what is expected of them was suggested also.

The amount of rubbish remaining at Camp One is not great. The rubbish could be removed by a small party of people in one trip. As mentioned previously, all that would be needed to remove the carbide is a small cup-like scoop and a strong container. Removal of small amounts of dumped carbide from the main passage would be a bit more difficult, but feasible. Several kilometres of the now useless telephone line presents its own logistic problem of how much of it can be pushed into a given rucksack.

In order to prevent further abuse by carbide users, it may be an idea to find out if it is possible to attach labels to carbide containers sold through retail outlets describing the correct method of carbide disposal. A 'DON'T DUMP CARBIDE' sign in Mullamullang might prove useful.

The situation in Mullamullang is not serious - yet. Let's get in before it does.

REFERENCES

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Occasional paper #4 CEGSA

Poulter N. 1981 SRGWA (in) Down Under All Over. ASF
Newsletter #92.

MORE CAVES, ARCHAEOLOGY, TURMOIL AND PROBLEMS ON THE FRANKLIN RIVER

KEVIN KIERNAN

The discovery of further archaeological sites in the threatened Franklin River Valley has shown that remote karst area to be one of the great archaeological areas of the world. Finds were made both in known caves and in new caves discovered during February - March 1982. None of the finds equal the richness of those found in Fraser Cave, but they compliment them. The Franklin River Valley has become the richest archaeological area in Australia - equal in significance to the classic prehistoric valleys of France in the unravelling of the history of humankind.

The Emerging Picture

Within the Franklin River Valley, a controversial part of Tasmania's South-West wilderness, lies evidence of the lonliest outpost of humanity in Prehistory. This was man's most southerly outpost during the last Glacial Period. For man was here 10,000 years before he reached South (and probably North) America. The cave sites beside the Franklin River record his emergence from Asia and the trek southwards to a subantarctic peninsula, where he was not to follow the path of agriculture pursued by his European contemporaries.

Amid the rigours of an ice age, limestone caves assumed an importance to man in Tasmania far surpassing that which they held on mainland Australia. Cut off on an island by the rising post glacial seas, which drowned the land bridge by which he had gained access to the Tasmanian peninsula and constantly driven back, as a rising sea level drowned his coastal dwelling places, man was forced from the western karsts by the spread of increasingly dense vegetation. The sunny cave entrances around which this remarkable people had warmed their bodies as they butchered wallabies and flaked stone tools, in a manner so similar to their European counterparts, now fell silent and were lost in the shadows of the dripping forests. The relicts were later eroded by a surfeit of running water.

Ten thousand years after this departure from the caves the forests began to contract. Perhaps some tentative re-exploration commenced in the late Holocene. The Franklin River Valley was entered by escaping convicts and early surveyors who found the environment equally difficult. Tribal memory of caves was gone, and no artefacts were added to those which had been left behind in the ice age strong holds. Re-exploration by the indigenous people was tragically terminated by the violence, greed, and insensitivity of agricultural invaders from another hemisphere. Their revulsion at seeing their own recent past being acted out in this distant land caused them to eliminate the actors upon the stage they over-ran.

Politics Running Amok

Much has transpired since my last contribution to this newsletter. On 12 December 1981, all Tasmanian electors voted in a referendum on a proposal which would flood the Franklin River Valley. Their choice was between the government favoured Gordon-above-Olga scheme or the Gordon-below-Franklin proposal; favoured by the Hydro Electric Commission, State Opposition and multi-national industrialists.

The state Labor premier Doug Lowe assured listeners to the national current affairs radio programme "AM" that Tasmanians would be able to vote for the option of no dams at all. He was forced by his party to rescind that undertaking. The reason? A "no dams" result was untenable to the government. The joke? Democracy. The choice? Between losing an arm or losing a leg. The result? 33% of Tasmanian electors voted informally by writing "No Dams" across their voting paper.

Never before in Australian history had such a thing happened. Only seven percent (7%) voted for the Gordon-above-Olga - itself a vote against flooding the Franklin. Thirteen percent (13%) voted informally without writing "no dams" across their voting paper. Forty seven percent (47%) voted to flood the Franklin.

Immediately before the referendum a savage political axing saw Doug Lowe ousted as Premier by Harry Holgate. Lowe resigned from the government and called for Federal intervention into the factionalism occurring in the party he had served for so many years. This came only a day after moderate state Liberal Party leader Geoff Pearsall was ousted by staunch dam supporter Robin Gray. Government whip Mary Willey also resigned to join Lowe and Australian Democrat Dr Norman Sanders on the cross benches. From there the staunch anti dams threesome held the balance of power.

Holgate was left at the helm of a minority government which announced a new policy of support for flooding the Franklin. The state Liberal Party announced it would pass the dam legislation before seeking to topple the government. Faced with a troublesome cross bench, and attempting to play for time, Holgate successfully sought a three month's prorogal of Parliament. In consequence the Franklin Dam legislation could not be enacted in time to permit construction to commence during the 1981-82 summer and gave Fraser Cave another year.

Tasmania is a claimant state. If the scheme is approved much of the finance is likely to come from the Federal Government - all Australian taxpayers will pay to destroy Fraser Cave. The magnitude of this impost is causing increasing concern outside Tasmania, as it is to those Tasmanians who realise that they are already faced with debts on HEC borrowings of \$700 million, or \$1,600 per person. The annual interest bill is \$50 million.

Fifty percent of Tasmania's loan funds are spent on dams and power stations, while hospitals and roads suffer for lack of finance. In 1981 Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser, after whom Fraser cave was named, conceded in writing that the Australian Government had an obligation to protect the South-West. Only a few months later he was claiming that the issue was one for the State Government.

As the South-West is listed on the register of the National Estate there are indeed legislative obligations on Fraser's Federal Liberal Government, however embarrassing that might be to the pro-dams branch of his party in Tasmania. No doubt he noted that in March 1982 11% of the mainland electorate of Lowe scrawled "No Dams" across their ballot papers for the by-election to fill the seat left vacant by the retirement of former Liberal Prime Minister Sir William McMahon.

Back in Tasmania an attempted public relations onslaught by the Holgate government announced the appointment of television naturalist Harry Butler as its consultant on environmental matters. Butler, who has made his reputation from television and his money from mining companies has often been criticised by conservationists. Professor John Mulvaney of the Department of Prehistory at the Australian National University was one of the many who condemned the appointment and Butler's "dig it up quick" approach to Fraser Cave. Mulvaney specifically cited Butler's lack of archaeological competence, evidenced by the bulldozing of rock engravings dismissed by him at a development site in Western Australia.

The Select committee of enquiry set up by the Australian Senate visited Fraser Cave by helicopter. Its importance was explained to them by archaeologist Rhys Jones and also by Professor Mulvaney, who had previously described the site as having the greatest potential of any he had encountered in Australia. The Australian Heritage Commission, of which Mulvaney was acting chairman, unanimously condemned the power scheme. Two television crews also visited the cave, together with the Tasmanian Parks Minister Dick Adams, a man who voted in cabinet, on several occasions, to destroy Fraser Cave. Adams was subsequently carpeted by Premier Holgate after an abysmal performance in a cave mouth interview.

The Tasmanian Wilderness Society, whose current Director Dr Bob Brown was a member of the party which discovered the relicts in Fraser Cave, has called upon Adams to ensure management initiatives are taken to protect the cave. The Society is the spearhead of the fight to protect the Franklin River Valley.

March also saw a visit to the lower Franklin by two former directors of the Tasmanian Wilderness Society, its founder Kevin Kiernan and the present Democrat member of the Tasmanian parliament Dr Norman Sanders. During the visit Kiernan discovered a surface archaeological site. Its location? HEC excavations made several years prior to the 1979 Franklin Dam Proposal, which claimed that no archaeological sites existed in the area. Sanders returned to Hobart asking publicly whether the HEC was lying or merely incompetent.

Dr Sanders has formulated a parliamentary motion of no confidence in the government over its handling of the power issue, which if the Liberals choose to support (albeit from a different perspective) may bring down the government before the Franklin Dam Bill can be enacted. Although the same fate does not await the Legislative Council (upper house of state parliament), whose blocking of the Government's original proposal to save the Franklin precipitated the whole constitutional debacle, they now find themselves being scrutinised by a Royal Commission as a result.

The Caves of 1982

Times have changed since a tiny handful of amateur cavers, eight years ago, commenced exploration of the Franklin River karst in the hope that their activities might somehow bolster the case against damming the last major wild river in temperate Australia. Few Australians, or even Tasmanians, had even heard of the Franklin River when cavers named the first of their discoveries after the politicians who could decide the region's fate. This framework laid, the discovery by Kevin Kiernan in March 1981, of stone tools and bones in the cave named after the present Prime Minister rivetted international attention onto the Franklin and saw the cavers' nebulous hope reach fruition.

A small excavation in Fraser Cave was conducted on a shoe string budget in March 1981. Its results were such that in March 1982 the Australian Heritage Commission funded a \$10,000 NP&WS/ANU archaeological expedition, during which dozens of new caves were entered in the first determined attempt to explore the limestone inland from the river. Eight new archaeological sites were recognised by early Franklin caving stalwart Barry Blain with archaeologist Rhys Jones and Jim Allen. The first surface site in the Franklin River Valley was discovered by the "1982 Anarcho-geomorpharchaeo-illogical \$20 (non-helicopter) el-cheapo Cave Hunting and Artefact Finding Expedition" of Kevin Kiernan and Norm Sanders - en-route to joining the Heritage Commission party. They joined the Heritage Commission party just in time to be involved in the most exciting find of the trip. The story of this latter discovery says much about an interdisciplinary approach and teamwork.

Biglandulosum Cave was discovered and partly explored by archaeologist Richard Cosgrove and education researcher Melvin Freestone on 10 March 1982. The following day they found further caves in the same area. A day later when Richard had left the expedition, Melvin was unable to lead a survey party consisting of botanist and caver Steve Harris and ANU prehistory research assistant Micheal Southon back to the cave. As they retreated after a day of fruitless scrub-bashing they met ANU archaeologist Rhys Jones and geomorphologist and caver Kevin Kiernan heading out in the hope of a quick look at the cave.

Melvin joined Rhys and Kevin for another quick attempt. Their guide at first was a soggy sketch map, partly erased by water, which would have done credit to "Raiders of the Lost Ark" (or as Micheal Southon suggested, "Cavers of the Lost Karst"). In addition there was Melvin's fading memory of logways and land marks in the dense bush. Then there was Rhys' recollections of Richards verbal description, and finally Kevin's speculative calculations of likely cave sites based upon structural trends in the limestone.

Within a few minutes Biglandulosum had been relocated. Rhys and Kevin headed for a natural exposure of sediments just inside the cave entrance, but lured deeper by the aura of the place stopped instead at a second section deeper inside, which was devoid of archaeology, before briefly exploring the cave.

The expedition was extended to an extra day to permit a survey of the cave by Steve, Melvin and Michael. By the time Kevin joined them (an hour after arrival at the cave mouth) Michael, whose work at ANU involves bone studies, had located fragments of burnt and split bone in collapsed blocks of clay. Then Kevin, whose own field was stratigraphy, located in situ sediments which appeared to date from the period when Fraser Cave was occupied. They revealed stone tools in profusion among wallaby bones and limestone fragments. The expedition was extended for yet another day. The sediments were protected so that Rhys and fellow archaeologist, Don Ranson could have their first look. A section drawing was prepared by Don, Rhys and Kevin while Steve, Micheal and Melvin surveyed the 300m of passage. Photographs were taken, and finally Rhys and Kevin collected charcoal, pollen and matrix samples.

We left well satisfied with the team effort. Occupation of the cave by the original Tasmanians may not have been detected during this exploration had any of the links in the chain been absent. The different expertise and perspective of each participant came together to reveal an important site where man appears to have arrived shortly before the Last Glacial Maximum, and departed with its conclusion.

The cave is well decorated, of considerable geomorphological interest and with its 300m of surveyed passage is the largest cave yet found in the Franklin River Valley.



Tasmanian Wilderness Society

Contact these groups for details on future activities and news of the future of South-West Tasmania. If you can volunteer assistance in the form of manual labour, money, goods or services, your assistance would be greatly appreciated.

Tasmania
129 Bathurst Street
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(002) 34 9366

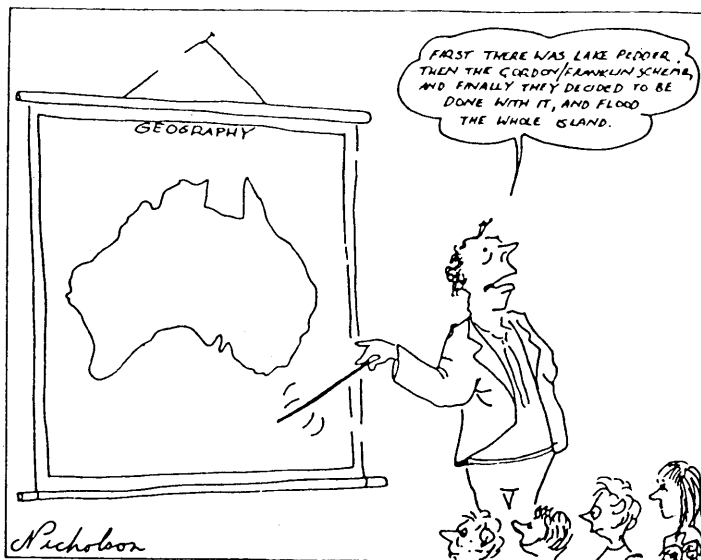
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Victoria
419 Lonsdale Street
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(02) 267 7722



Thampana Cave (N206)

NORMAN POULTER - SRGWA

Thampanna Cave (N206) is situated in the Mundrabilla region of the Nullarbor Plain, Western Australia. A multi-level cave with at least 512m of passage, a recently discovered extension contains the finest deposits of Coffee and Cream seen since the discovery of Mullamullang Cave's Easter Extension in 1966. The present terminating chamber has magnificent examples of what appears to be 'live' gypsum decoration. A partially preserved possum was found nearby. In typical Nullarbor fashion, the cave 'breathes' most markedly. This paper describes the work carried out in the cave during the SRGWA October Nullarbor Trip.

Location

Speleologically speaking, Thampanna Cave was first entered and named by members of the Western Australian Speleological Group (WASG) on January 3, 1980 (Tulp & Webb 1980) although spray-pak addicts had visited parts of the cave as early as 1975.

During the course of the Goede/Jennings Expedition of April/May 1981, the cave was visited by members of the Cave Exploration Group South Australia Inc. who discovered a vast, well decorated extension. (Mott 1981). The cave was re-visited by the CEGSA members the following day in conjunction with the Goede/Jennings party.

At the time of the April discovery, confusion arose about what name the cave was known by (if any) and where it lay in relation to the survey sheet covering the area. (Goede 1981). The location roughly co-incided with Thampanna Rockhole as listed on a sketch map produced by WASG, although this did not correspond to the position of the Rockhole on the survey sheet. The feature in question (N206) was only a few metres from the southern edge of the access road while the survey sheet showed the Rockhole as being some distance to the north of the same road.

Further confusion was encountered in November 1981 following representation to the WA Lands and Survey Department, as well as to the Division of National Mapping, when it was discovered that the latter organisation had recently re-surveyed the region and produced a new map which showed Thampanna Rockhole south of the road. The Division of National Mapping maintains that the position of the access road had been moved north in the 15 years intervening since the publication of the 1963 Eucla survey sheet, and the 1978 supplementary survey, which was released prior to the new metric Eucla survey sheet published early in 1981.

Examination of the relevant air photographs do not however, support this stance. The road - in the immediate vicinity of Thampanna Rockhole has remained in the same position throughout both surveys. Prior to the 1978 supplementary survey however, the road was upgraded, altered and extended west of the indicated position of Thampanna Rockhole. It is in this region, west of Thampanna Rockhole, that this writer proposes Thampanna Cave (N206) to be. This could explain why the cave was not visited by cavers prior to the extension of the road during 1975.

Following a lengthy visit to officers of the WA Lands and Survey Dept. to verify my interpretation of the 1961 and 1978 air photographs, I am confident in publishing a location for Thampanna cave - although this would still require field verification.

Thampanna Cave (N206):

- 572078 (Eucla SH52-14 1:250 000) Imperial 1963
- CK 7392 (Eucla SH52-14 1:250 000) Metric 1981
- CK 7392 (Yalganimirra 1:100 000) Metric, under prep.

This location is at least 1km west of the location of Thampanna Rockhole, which, due to a suggested plotting error by the Division of National Mapping, is still to the north of the road.

Cave Description

Thampanna Cave serves as a catchment for a large claypan and must, on occasions, accept huge amounts of runoff over a short time span. This is evidenced by the fact that the rockpile at the base of the solution tube entrance is concave shaped (to a depth of approximately 2m) and that flood debris can be found in many places throughout the main passage as well as the flattener passage that leads to the new extension.

The cave entrance is situated almost in the centre of a rock 'amphitheatre' approximately 20m in diameter. The amphitheatre is some 60m south of the access road. The entrance shaft is approximately 3m in diameter tapering to approximately 2m at the ceiling of the entrance chamber, some 6m from the floor. The velocity of a breeze flowing from the cave was extremely high, as noted by Goede in April and appeared to be even higher during the SRGWA October trip.

Apart from 'mummified roos' at the base of the entrance pitch mentioned by Tulp and Webb, there are a large number of dead birds to be found. These are found mainly around the entrance zone, although some were found much further down the main passage, in the dark zone. During April, all the birds found were of the black variety, but in October, several multi-coloured parrots or lorikeets were observed - several with wings torn cleanly off, undamaged whole wings were found in other parts of the entrance and twilight regions. It is assumed that the birds death and body damage are attributable to the entrance wind turbulence and not to predators or drowning.

The new extension has a long 'stream' passage that Mott and Pilkington claim to be vadose although Goede describes it as a 'phreatic tube'. Dr Joe Jennings also maintains the passage to be of phreatic origin, stating it to be, in personal communication, a 'dynamic phreatic passage - waterfilled with fast movement'.

There are at least four deposits of Coffee and Cream in the cave, three of which are to be found in the new extension. The entire extension has yet to be fully explored.

AIR FLOW MEASUREMENTS

Although Webb in personal communication maintained that there was no air flow during the 1980 visit, the air flow experienced during the April 1981 trip (Mott) suggested an air flow exceeding that of the famed Southerly Buster in nearby Mullamullang Cave (N37). Mullamullang's Southerly Buster was measured in 1966 at a peak flow of 34kph (Hill 1966).

Utilising a hand held Wilh Lambrecht KG wind vane anemometer on loan from the University of WA, spot checks were carried out over two days of visits to Thampanna Cave. All readings were taken in the centre of the 2m ceiling aperture while being attached to an electron ladder. A reading taken on October 23 (3pm WST) gave a velocity of 11.71mps, while the highest reading on the following day (2pm WST) recorded 19.81mps which works out at a staggering 71.32 kilometres per hour.

A future trip to the cave with remote sensing air flow detectors would be a practical proposition for making long term, detailed studies of the cave's air flow characteristics.

POSSUM REMAINS - AND THEIR REMOVAL

During the Goede/Jennings Expedition, the remains of a fur covered possum was discovered in the furthest extremity of the new extension. The possum was lying on a large rock near the top of the rockpile and almost below a large, dry gypsum decoration which is the dominant feature of this particular section of the chamber. No importance was placed on the possum until talks were held with the WA Museum some weeks later. Consequently, the main objective of the SRGWA trip was to recover the possum on behalf of the museum.

In order to prevent deterioration of whatever organic remains there might have been on the possum, once it was out of the cave environment, it was proposed to seal the possum in a nitrogen atmosphere. For this purpose, the University of WA provided a bottle of compressed dry nitrogen gas, ancillary equipment and a plastic bag heat sealing machine, the power was provided by a generator on loan from the museum.

The possum, comprising the complete skeleton of fragile bones and fur was recovered along with the remains of some small beetle-like creatures, using aluminium foil as a protective dish. All pieces, including fur, were placed in the dish, in a box, and then covered with more foil. The dish was placed around and over the foil, the box was then sealed. A labeled tag marks the spot where the possum lay.

Little trouble was experienced getting the box out of the cave except at the entrance pitch where, although the box was weighed down with several kilograms of ballast, it still suffered from buffeting caused by the strong updraft.

Once clear of the cave, the possum was quickly unpacked and within half an hour was sealed inside three nitrogen filled bags, ie a bag within a bag within a bag.

Dr Alex Baynes of the WA Museum subsequently identified the possum (cat. #81.10.1) as a Brush-tail, *Trichosurus vulpecula*, the 17th, such specimen recovered from the Nullarbor region. The Brush-tail is now thought to be extinct from the Nullarbor, being confined almost entirely to the forested south-western corner of the state.

TRACK MARKING

As mentioned by Mott, a hastily built trail was marked with rock cairns in the terminating chamber during the closing stages of the April visit.

During the October trip, the trail was extended and upgraded with the use of a small reflective markers. The trail starts well into the extension, beyond the phreatic passage in order to avoid drawing unwanted attention to the beginning of the extension. The trail marks a path through a large deposit of Coffee and Cream, triangular shaped markers indicate directional changes. In the terminating chamber a junction is reached with the lower trail leading to where the possum was located while the upper trail skirts another deposit of dark Coffee and Cream before stopping in the vicinity of live gypsum decoration.

Although the extension is not yet fully explored, it is hoped that visitors to this region will adhere to the main traverse trail and thus prevent numerous un-warranted and damaging side trails.

CONCLUSION

Thampanna Cave is an exciting, deep cave with its potential yet to be realised.

It is indeed unfortunate that it was given a name similar to that of a well established feature nearby, namely Thampanna Rockhole (named in 1885).. If the cave had to be named at all, someone could have been a bit more original.

So far, eleven people have seen the new extension with minimal damage to the sections of extensive Coffee and Cream through which the trail must pass. There is no damage in the terminating chamber. It is hoped that the extension, and indeed the entire cave, stays in this condition and does not suffer the fate of other caves in Australia which have had their confines despoiled by thoughtless and indifferent visitors.

With the exception of some spray-pak graffiti, Thampanna is clean, help keep it that way.

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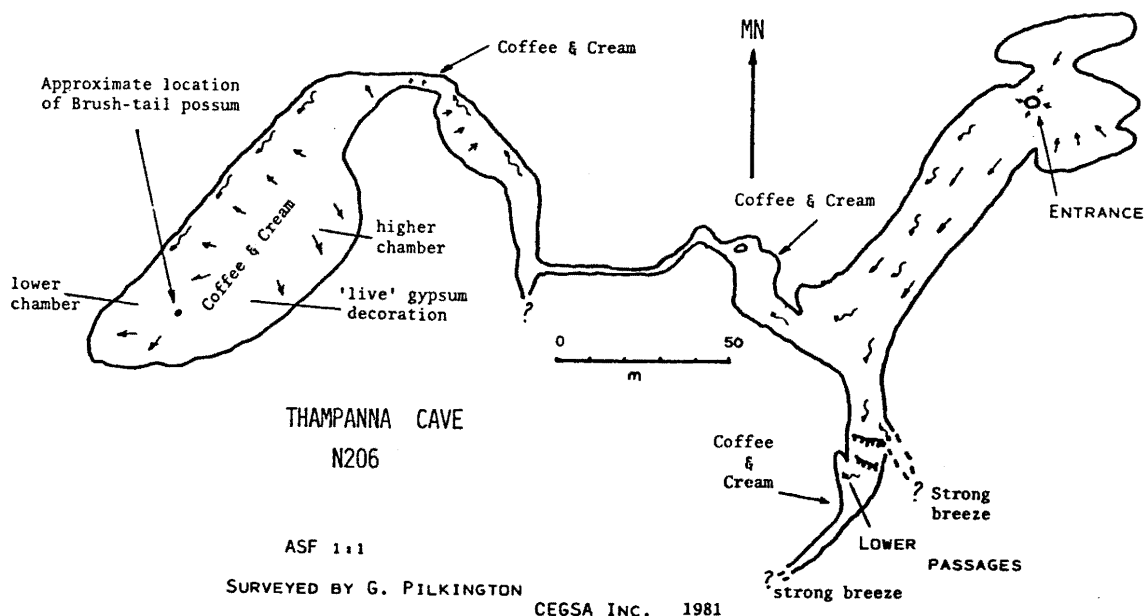
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|------------------------|--|
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| Mott K. 1981 | <u>Nullarbor. April 17 - May 1, 1981 CEGSA Newsletter Vol 26 #2 August 1981 pp5</u> |
| Tulp E. & Webb R. 1980 | <u>Nullarbor 1979 - 80 WASG Expedition The Western Caver Vol. 19 #4 pp3</u> |

MAPS CONSULTED

<u>Eucla</u> - SH52-14 Edition 1-AAS (imp) Series R502 1:250 000 compiled 1961 published 1963	<u>Eucla</u> - SH52-14 Edition 1(metric) 1:250 000 compiled 1978 published 1981
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AIR PHOTOGRAPHS CONSULTED

<u>Eucla</u> - H52-14 CAF 4006 18-11-1961	Run 6 Height 25 000ft. (7620m) Print # 5169, 5170, 5171
<u>Eucla</u> - SH52-14 CAE/F 8749 9-2-1978	Run 6 Height 4570m Print # 117, 118, 119



Serendipity: A New Florentine Swallet

STEFAN & ROLAN EBERHARD

It was the thrill of underground exploration that prompted some cavers to search the more inaccessible regions of Tasmania's Florentine Valley for virgin potholes. Persistent scrub-bashing was eventually rewarded when in October 1980 Stefan Eberhard located a rather nondescript but nevertheless significant entrance some 1 1/2 hours walk from the nearest logging road. It consisted of a moderately-sized stream-sink surrounded by picturesque rainforest, and was named Serendipity in recognition of, "a happy discovery by chance".

Members of four caving groups contributed to the prolonged exploration of Serendipity which culminated in the bottom being reached at an estimated depth of 250m. If this estimate is correct, the cave will be the third deepest in Australia.

Initial exploration revealed a squeeze through the entrance talus, and a climb down through boulders to a steeply-descending stream passage. This soon narrowed down to a small slot through which the water disappeared. This rather uninviting prospect was rejected and a crawl some two metres above the floor investigated. After several metres it opened out into a spacious fossil stream passage which eventually led to a drop. A dash back to the surface for some ladders preceded the descent of a spectacular free-hanging pitch into a high chamber. Only a trickle of water was present and one entire side of the shaft was covered with massive flutings of flowstone throughout its length.

An obvious passage leading from the base of the pitch was followed and although it narrowed to a crawl, the dull roar of a far-off waterfall was ample incentive for anyone.

A small chamber, with what was presumed to be the entrance stream cascading from the ceiling, was eventually reached.

A short distance from this point the water plunged down an intimidating pit. The bottom could not be distinguished and lack of gear prevented any continuation.

A fortnight later on a return trip, the waterfall was attempted with the assistance of Steve Harris and Robert Blakers. A ledge 10m down was reached, there the stream cascaded over a further drop. No anchor point that would rig the rope out of the full force of the waterfall could be found and it was felt that further exploration would require a larger, better equipped team. The spray-filled gloom allowed only a tantalising glimpse of the stream continuing its course along the base of the rift.

December 30th saw a renewed assault on the cave by Ed Garnett (CTCG) Mark Wilson (SSS) and S Eberhard. The impressive waterfall pitch was overcome by climbing further out into the rift above the shaft and belaying over a chockstone. As we descended through the spray and wind, we noticed another waterfall entering from the wall. This joined with the main stream which then dropped down several short cascades, one of which necessitated a handline. Continuing on along the narrow meandering streamway, a talus collapse halted progress. A cautious scramble through this obstacle revealed another very wet waterfall pitch requiring 20m of rope.

Further descent brought the team to yet another waterfall which disappeared down into the darkness. By dropping rocks, (and a whaletail), it was established that this hole was quite deep! The rope was anchored around a threatening boulder balanced in the rift and a 12-13m drop to a ledge ensued. The remaining rope was tied on and Ed abseiled down to a lower ledge only to find the length of rope inadequate. The party reluctantly retreated, leaving the cave rigged, and not emerging into the forest until late at night.

The next day a "bottom or bust" effort was planned by David Barlow, Carey Mylan, Shane Wilcox (SSS), Ed and Stefan. However, one rally-driving attempt and a "bust" petrol tank later necessitated a slight change of plan. David, Carey and Stefan had the job of somehow getting the hire car out of the scrub and back to Maydena whilst Ed and Shane were given the gruelling task of de-rigging the cave. At this stage the depth of Serendipity was calculated at 160m with at least another 40m to go down the fifth pitch.

Tales of a deep vertical cave and unbottomed shafts provided incentive to get a six-man party up to the entrance in February 1981.

The team consisted of Geoff Fisher, Nick Hume, Len Smith, Phil Jackson, R and S Eberhard. This combined SCS/TCC trip only succeeded in having a solitary caver hanging off a rope some way down the fifth pitch, to prove that it was still going ondown. The attempt was thwarted by the cold, wet conditions and arduous nature of the cave.

On May 9th a return trip was organised, before the onset of winter curtailed exploration, but this hardly got underground. It rained, and then it snowed, and the small team (Andrew Briggs, R and S Eberhard, with sherpa support from Steve and David Harris) only penetrated a short distance before realising the vast quantity of gear, and the very "aqueous state" of the cave at the time, would make the trip impossible.

Saturday 19th September, a hastily scratched together, but nonetheless keen team of cavers arrived at Maydena in preparation for a determined push on Serendipity. The team comprised Trevor Wailes, Nick Hume, Andrew Briggs, R and S Eberhard.

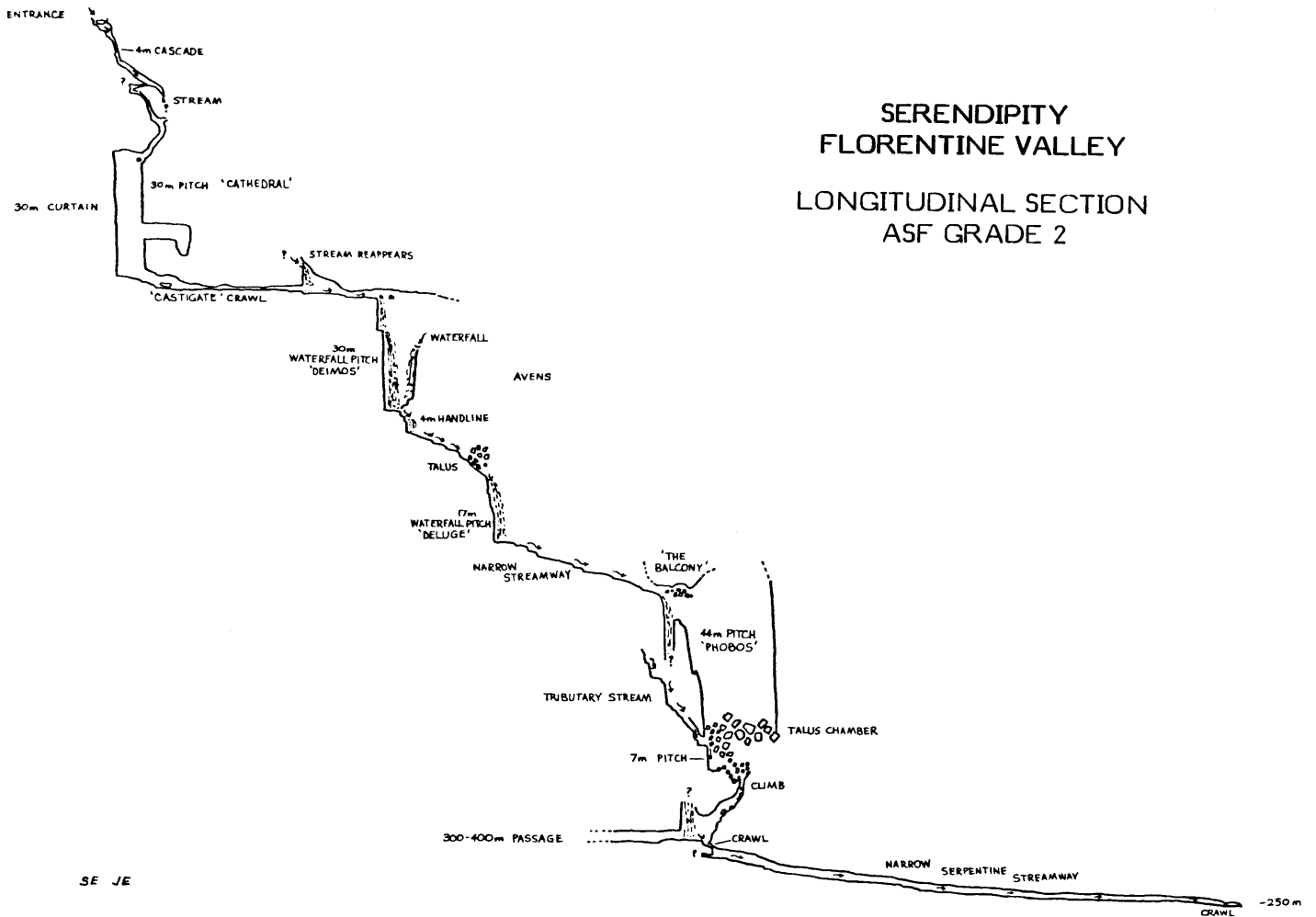
Even before the trip got underway problems were encountered when Nick succeeded in perching his Toyota on top of a log. After a considerable delay and a lot of mucking around, removing wheels, etc., the vehicle was released from its embarrassing position. The rigging party eventually got underground by the early afternoon. Relatively efficient progress was made down the upper pitches before regrouping at The Balcony, a small decorated chamber overlooking the final shaft.

With anticipation and excitement a rope was lowered into the black void below; swinging out from the comparative security of The Balcony induced a brief feeling of exposure before dropping the 25m to a muddy ledge where another tie-off preceded a further 15m drop into a large talus pile. Two routes led on down; a short drop into a small tributary stream passage and a considerably longer pitch into the main stream, which could be distinctly heard somewhere below. The former alternative was investigated first in the hope that it would eventually connect with the main stream lower down. This route involved a 7m pitch and some steep climbing through a loose talus section - a car sized boulder gave a frightening lurch when one unsuspecting caver lent against it! Fortunately, a few more short climbs brought us to the base of the main 70m waterfall.

At that point the stream disappeared down into a narrow uninviting slot before abruptly dropping into a vertical climb. Stefan pursued the tortuous serpentine passage for a hell of a long way (not sure how long?) to the end, but without gaining much appreciable depth.

Meanwhile Nick and Rolan explored a large dry passage behind the waterfall. This intersected another passage carrying a small stream but was found to choke off several hundred metres downstream. In the upstream direction the passage was only followed a short distance but no end was in sight. The haul out proved to be a prolonged and exhausting exercise with the last man reaching the surface after 10 hours underground. The long grovel back to the cars in the dark signified the end of a successful and truly memorable trip.

No bolts were placed during the initial exploration of Serendipity. Although their use may facilitate easier rigging of some of the pitches, it is sincerely hoped that no bolts will be used on subsequent trips, in order to preserve the wilderness character of the cave. The estimated length of the cave is 800 plus metres.



GUANO

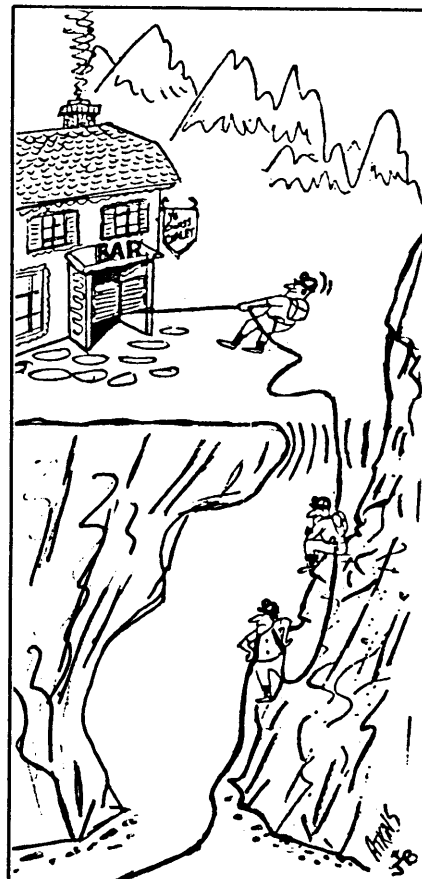
LORD OF THE KITCHEN

Sesame Seed Squares

Ingredients: 6 tablespoons honey
2oz peanut butter
4oz powdered milk
2oz shredded coconut (better than dessicated)
4oz sesame seeds

Method: Heat honey and peanut butter. Add dry milkpowder, coconut and then sesame seeds. Mix well and pat into square tin. Refrigerate to set. Cut into squares.

Comments: This recipe is easy to make and provides a high energy, high protein snack suitable for cavers, bushwalkers and skiers. After they have set, they are robust and do not go runny (although a bit sticky). I tested them (accidentally) by leaving a box of them in a car throughout a 40°C summer day, they were still firm and edible when rescued. They survive refrigerated for some (unknown) weeks or unrefrigerated for several days - if you can stop eating them. R. Lichacz



DOWN UNDER ALL OVER

SUSS

The past year has been an active and diverse year for the Sydney University Speleological Society, with members visiting and working at Jenolan, Bungonia, Yarrangobilly, Wyambene, Bendethera, Myall Lakes, Kempsey, Olsen Caves, Buchan, Limestone Creek, Jacksons Crossing, Nullabor, Kimberly Ranges, Tasmania, New Zealand, England and Mexico.

Exploration centred around New Zealand, Tasmania and Kimberly Ranges areas where numerous new caves and passages were discovered. Closer to home at Jenolan, the Spider - Mammoth cave link is close but still elusive.

Geomorphological and hydrological investigations are still under way in this area.

The Society also conducted bushwalks, canyoning, climbing and skiing trips and the Combined Universities Speleological Societies Annual Dinner. With the onset of the new university year the society looks forward to welcoming new members and following up last year's developments.

Guy McKenna

MSS

The Club is continuing to find new caves at Abercrombie.. The most recent discovery being A46 which is a high level cave on the eastern side of the Arch. The cave is 21 metres long finishing in a dig which could possibly by-pass the large sink hole above the Arch.

Information is currently being followed up as a result of discussions with Mr Bob Coops who was superintendant at the Caves during their major development. Two of the leads suggested by Bob have proved to be insignificant, however, we are proceeding to investigate three other areas mentioned by him.

A video tape was produced and screened locally by TV Station CBN8 Orange, about a bone dig discovered by MSS in A2. Specimens have been carefully classified and submitted to the Australian Museum. We are awaiting their report on these findings.

At Jenolan, further work on J79 (Maiden Cave) has been held up due to flooding. Progress in the dig is continuing with the development of a downward sloping passage.

MSS is continuing work at Yarrangobilly and further work will be carried out on the Club's extended trip in May.

Membership is steady at 27 and we are enjoying increasing co-operation from members of other Societies particularly HSC and OSS.

Scott MacFarlane

CCC

Chillagoe Caving Club has done little interesting caving recently, yet they have been busy. Some searching for "missing caves" (early tagged caves with no location or cave details) has found more new caves and some of the "missing caves". A trip to Undara Lava Tunnels (near Mt Surprise) attracted four first time visitors. The possibility of "histo" probably deterred others.

During the two week New Year camp at Chillagoe another attempt was made at producing post card photographs of the tourist caves.

The club has purchased a radio to use on the Flying Doctor frequencies. Work towards a club hut at Chillagoe has begun.

A marble tile and terrazzo maker in Cairns consulted Chillagoe Caving Club, National Parks and others before obtaining quarrying rights acceptable to all parties.

A miners homestead lease application on the clubs favourite camping site drew a number of objections.

The Mines Department has not made a decision as yet.

Tom Porritt

Hills

The club has visited several areas over the last year. These include Wyambene, Marble Arch, Colong, Tuglow and Wee Jasper. Activities such as strike and dip measurements were undertaken in all areas and rubbish was removed from caves visited.

Much effort has been expended in the Isis River area (Timor) and many important fossil discoveries made. Calcified bones have been found throughout most sections of the Glen Dhu cave (specimens dated at 30 to 40 thousand years old). The cave and hut were broken into and badly vandalised during Nov 81), thus a major 'clean-up' operation is underway in this unique cave.

A new cave was found at Isis River.

Lake cave is still not completely explored, since it is usually flooded, or contains CO₂. However, at least 1000 metres of passage has been explored. The cave is an active phreatic system consisting of a maze of joint controlled passages.

There is a possible threat of limestone mining at Timor and although there are no "known" caves in the leased area, there is a good chance of a phreatic system existing since the creek runs underground, for the entire length of the leased area.

Jonathon Campbell

NSWITSS

In the last part of 1981 trips were run to Walli, Tuglow, Murruin Creek, Colong, Church Creek, and Guthaga (skiing!). The camp sites below Piano Cave and inside Window Cave at Colong were found to be in an atrociously dirty state, so we cleaned up the areas before leaving. Three small caves that were found at Murruin Creek were tagged and surveyed. At Walli humidity and temperature surveys were conducted. In January soil samples were taken from Punchbowl Cave, Wee Jasper. In the future trips are planned for Wee Jasper, Shallow Crossing, Durras Lakes, Colong, Jaunter (joint trip with HCG and SUSS) and the Budawangans.

Roman Lichacz

CTCG

In January, 5 club members conducted an assault on Mt Everest. The Everest Base camp region was reached but the overall impression of the area was of majestic scenery and numbing cold.

The rest of us had to be satisfied with tripping closer to home so a quick trip to Frustration Lake in Wyambene cave was organised.

An autumn ('81) trip to Yarrangobilly saw us entering three of the inflow caves to the Coppermine system. Owing to the drought all these caves were practically dry. In Eagles nest, Deepest Dig was entered and was found to be completely dry.

A trip to Yarrangobilly in winter was a complete contrast. North Deep Creek cave was entered and the stream passage contained a very large amount of very cold water! Mill Creek swallet was also taking in a prodigious amount of water and was approached with care.

At Wee Jasper we have been exploring some of the small grotty holes on Punchbowl Hill. Although easy to enter some proved to have difficult exits. Foul air was noticed in one of these holes.

Jim Ried

SRGWA

The Group has decided not to amalgamate with WASG preferring to retain its own identity. A trip to the Nullarbor led to the discovery of a possible trogloditic slater in Weebubbie Cave (N2) and the recovery of a partially preserved possum from Thampanna Cave (N206). Closer to Perth, a trip to the southern part of the state early in the year recovered the skeleton of a Potoroo from Mill Cave (W159). Both the possum and Potoroo skeletons have been lodged with the W A Museum.

Norman Poulter

A big range of Paddymade bags -the choice is yours.



KIANDRA — compact! Mini size, mini weight with high quality and high comfort. Kiandra is a "3 season" semi-rectangular down-filled bag with ripstop nylon outer and cotton inner lining which ensures unlimited comfort. Able to mate with similar Paddymade bags. Kiandra's so small, ten will fit into an average size rucksack.



HOTHAM — versatile! The most popular Paddymade sleeping bag, perfect for every conceivable type of outdoor adventure. Hotham's box walls and high quality loft down, ripstop nylon shell and its ability to mate with similar Paddymades, make it the versatile, happy compromise sleeping bag.



BOGONG — the snow bag! The no-nonsense, no compromise winter sleeping bag. A versatile flat opening semi-rectangular bag, nevertheless is designed for truly cold conditions — perfect for skiers and climbers. Mates with similar Paddymades.



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PADDYMADE SLEEPING BAG COMPARISON CHART

MODEL	WEIGHT INC. STUFF SAC.	CONSTRUCTION	FILL WEIGHT	FILL	TEMP. RATING*	ZIP	SIZE IN STUFFSACK cm
KIANDRA	1.25 kg	Sewn Thru	500 g	550 Loft Down	5°C	Full Zip	30 x 17
BIMBERI	1.00 kg	Box Wall	550 g	550 Loft Down	-5°C	Side Zip	30 x 17
HIGH PLAINS	1.80 kg	Box Wall	1100 g	Featherdown	-5°C	Full Zip	34 x 23
HOTHAM	1.60 kg	Box Wall	700 g	550 Loft Down	-5°C	Full Zip	34 x 23
MELALEUCA	1.55 kg	Box Wall	800 g	550 Loft Down	-15°C	Side Zip	34 x 23
BOGONG	1.60 kg	Box Wall	900 g	550 Loft Down	-15°C	Full Zip	34 x 23
SNOWLORD	2.00 kg	Slant Wall	1100 g	550 Loft Down	-25°C	Side Zip	37 x 27

All bags fit people to 190 cm (6ft 3in) tall; bags to fit people 205 cm (6ft 9in) are available in most models.

*Temperature Ratings are a soft measurement — they represent an average expected performance level for a standard person although individuals will differ by up to $\pm 10^{\circ}\text{C}$. Paddymade reserves the right to alter these specifications without notice.



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DOWN UNDER ALL OVER

NUCC After a period of somnolence, NUCC has (we hope) surfaced from underground. The previous year began slowly with our president leading one trip to Wyanbene, before disappearing overseas for six months. However, some interested beginners were found and trips were led to Punchbowl and Dip caves at Wee Jasper. Later, even Wyanbene was attempted. Club members attended the recent Cave Rescue Group exercise at Bungonia and most benefitted from the experience. No less than thirteen novices were indoctrinated in the latter half of last year. They will form the basis of the club's members this year
Tony Butt

WAS YOUR CLUB HERE ?

IF NOT - WHY NOT ?

ASK AT YOUR NEXT MEETING !

VSA

Since our last snippet in Down Under All Over VSA members have been very active. Many trips to Buchan have eventuated and a lot of work, particularly surveying, both above and below ground has been completed in the Buchan Caves Reserve, Potholes and Basin areas. Exponential Pot continues to be surveyed and we appear to be reaching its limits although some areas are still unexplored (how many unexplored caves are there? Ed). The Potholes still hang under the threat of mining but negotiations are proceeding.

Several trips to Indi have occurred and the mapping there is virtually complete.

Bats Ridges has not escaped our attention and many kilometres of surveying has resulted from a concerted effort by a few leech and tiger snake enthusiasts. Several significant caving finds and the promise of more to come are making this a very attractive area in which to go caving.

VSA also ran a Kimberley trip, that lasted for 2 weeks, during May 81. Several new caves were discovered and a lot of the old faithfuls visited. Tasmania also received our attention during Easter 81 and another trip is planned for Easter 82. At the time of writing a trip on the Franklin River is taking place. The trip will last 3 - 4 weeks and has as its aim to discover new caves and document them before the river is flooded??

Tom Whitehouse

NOTICES and NEWS

Chillagoe Biological Expedition 1982 July

Brother Nicholas Sullivan is planning "The Explorers Club Chillagoe Caves Expedition" to study the fauna of Chillagoe Caves. The expedition will last one month.

The main objective is to study the rate and degree of cave adaption demonstrated in the discreet populations within six of the major caves. Brother Nicholas Sullivan finds Chillagoe caves remarkable in that apparently none of the caves (in different towers) are connected, so that discreet populations have evolved in each cave. Each population shows slight anatomical differences.

Additionally a study of aboriginal caves (paintings and archeology), mapping of those caves selected for study and photography of distinctive fauna will be undertaken.

Approximately 25 participants will be in Chillagoe, and assistance from visiting cavers will be welcomed.

For more details and up to date information contact Tom Robinson of Chillagoe Caving Club who is co-ordinating the expedition's movements through Cairns, North Queensland.

Tom Robinson
C/-Post Office
SMITHFIELD QLD 4871
Telephone: (070) 55 7133

* Correspondent Tom Porritt

FOURTEENTH BIENNIAL CONFERENCE

The Fourteenth Biennial Conference of the ASF will be held on the 3-7 January, 1983 at Flinders University, Adelaide. The Conference will have two topics as basis of discussion. These will be;

1. Visual aspects of cave recording

(i) This theme will cover all aspects of cave recording. Topics will include photography (in two and three dimensions) and its application in mapping, scientific and navigational activities in caves.

(ii) Trends in cave mapping and the advent of computer plotting. Alternative methods of depicting caves, such as holograms.

(iii) Use of information retrieval systems

2. Forecasting the future of Australian Speleology

(i) How advances in technology affect speleology.

(ii) Cave access and management in the coming decade. How past trends may affect the future.

(iii) Population pressures on our natural cave resource.

Editor's Note: I regret the marked lack of new information on the ASF Conference. This unhappy state will be remedied in the next issue!! The best that I can do until then, is to supply you with the following contacts, in the hope that they can supply the relevant information.

Grahame Pilkington.....(08)2642598 (h)

Kevin Mott.....(08)422441 (h)

CONTRARY TO POPULAR BELIEF, CONFERENCES ARE FOR CAVERS!!

NSW SPELEOLOGICAL COUNCIL

The NSW Speleological council met on 20 Feb 82. At that meeting new office bearers were elected (see inside front cover).

The Speleo Council aims to provide a forum for discussion between cave users and to provide, as required, a representative voice to government and management authorities in NSW.

To aid in the establishment of informal communication between cave users notification of club meeting times and an invitation to attend would be appreciated by the President of the Speleo Council, Philip Toomer. His task at present is to promote liaison between cavers and to determine what contacts exist with the various cave management authorities and re-establish contacts if necessary.

The Speleo Council will meet again on 22 May 82 at 10am. Details about the location and agenda can be obtained from the secretary, Judith Bateman on 02 929 0432.

Copy Deadlines

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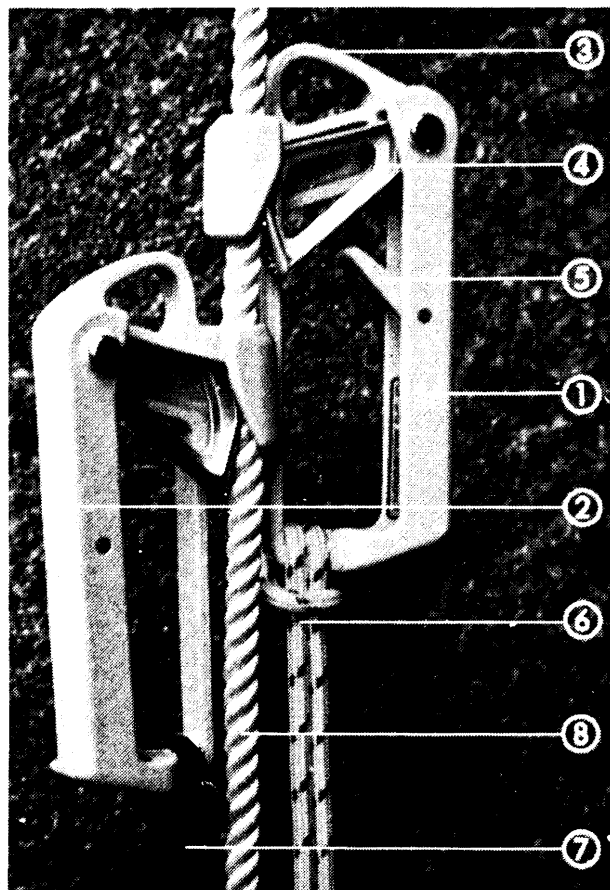
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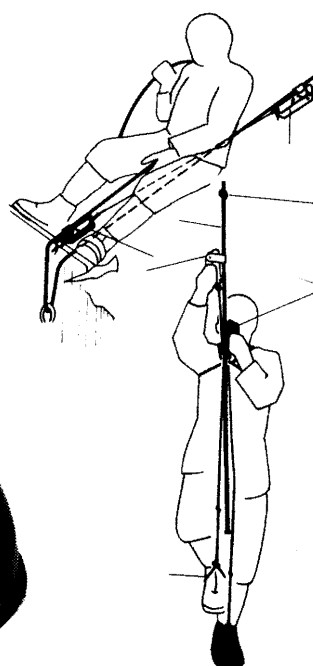
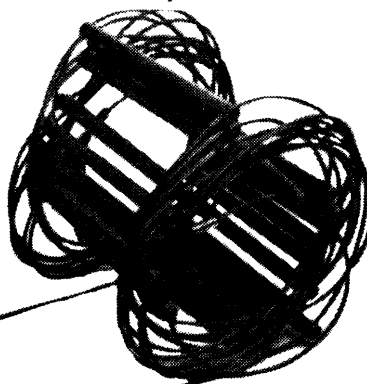


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