

**CTCG**

**NEWSLETTER**

**capital territory caving group**

p.o. box 638, woden, a.c.t.



Number 78/ 6 (E).

August 1978

Next meeting;

Venue to be Advised..

THURSDAY 14 th September

President's Report

This month the newsletter appears to be one week late. Actually, the meeting was one week early. The meeting was held 10.8.78 at the chemistry building lecture theatre, at the A.N.U..

Brother Nicholas Sullivan, visiting Australia for the fifteenth time, spoke to a combined group of Canberra cavers on Energy Flow, in a biological sense, in caves. His lecture was accompanied with seventy-five excellent slides. With the aid of the slides, Brother Nick showed that decaying matter washed into caves, combined with bat guano, forms the basis of a life support system for interdependent cave creatures. It could be seen that small beetles live on this decomposing matter, starting a food chain for cave dwellers which went from insects and spiders, through to salamanders and fish.

The slides of the salamanders were most interesting, as this amphibious lizard is not found in Australia. They are classic examples of how animals adapt to cave conditions; their eyes are degenerate, and in some cases, non-existent; they can be spotted, but generally lack pigmentation, making it possible to see gut and internal organs; and have longish legs and tail. We also saw an example of a fish which was completely eyeless and which showed its brain and spine through its skin. Probably the most unusual cave dwellers were the clams which were found in an Austrian cave. The lecture was fascinating, and I felt that even though biology was superficially touched upon, it gave us an insight into the delicate ecological balance of cave life. It only takes what appears to be a minor deviation of environmental conditions, to break the food chain and wipe out colonies of animals. An example given was, "If bats were to leave a cave then 90% of life in that cave would cease to exist". Something to think about!

C.T.C.G. attendance was excellent, with a small number of C.S.S. and our club members having tea with Brother Nick prior to the lecture.

Lindsay Atkinson showed some films at July meeting. They were very interesting. We saw a good one on rock climbing produced for the army in the early 50's; a better one on Husky Dogs and a real beaut one on Sailing in Canada as a past-time. What's more (more? did I hear you say?), Yes, what's more, the last two were just about in full colour. Lindsay promised even better next time.....he muttered something about Canberra Gardens.

Last club night Mark Hallam resigned from his position on the committee, due to pressure of other activities. Mark agreed to remain as Conservation Officer for the club. Jim Reid is now the new committee man.

The club is paying a ten dollar levy to the N.S.W. Speleo. Council. It will help keep them in the black for a while.

cont./...

## President's Report cont'd.

Two club members, Ian Brown and Mike Johnson, are making a batch of battery chargers for lights. These will be operable from either 240 volts or from a twelve volt source, e.g. car cigarette lighters. The cost will be what it costs in parts. It's a good thing- all you do is plug in the light and it's charging. Every good caver should have one. See Mike or Ian.

Next meeting, 14 th. September, Reg Bament is organizing and conducting a film and lecture night on Drinking and Driving. Reg will have some accessories to help conduct experiments with members, (club members). We are hoping to find a bigger meeting place than our usual rooms, so the venue has yet to be decided. We'll conduct a 'ring around' to let you know for sure, but if we miss you, then give one of the committee a buzz.

That's it folks! See you 2nd. Thursday of Sept..  
PHILL...

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T SHIRTS    T SHIRTS    T SHIRTS    T SHIRTS    T SHIRTS

The Uni. of Queensland has organized a quantity of silk-screened T shirts to be sold, in a fund raising effort for the preservation of Mt. Etna Caves in central Qld.. On the front of the T shirt is a face on view of a bat in flight and the slogan 'SAVE OUR CAVES'. We have printed on the back our own C.T.C.G. logo and name - similar to that on the newsletter cover.

Anyone wanting a T shirt, contact Ian Brown as soon as possible. The cost is \$5.00 all inclusive and various colours and sizes will be available.

T SHIRTS    T SHIRTS    T SHIRTS    T SHIRTS    T SHIRTS.

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SKI TOURING

Chris Nicholls is organizing a SKI TOURING instruction weekend. Chris is an experienced ski tourer, and in the light of recent publicity about inexperienced people getting into bother because of lack of proper instruction, this may be the way to get some clues. The area hasn't yet been decided; the weekend set aside is the 2nd. and 3rd. Sept. Members of bush rescue will also be attending. Contact Chris on 478949 during working hours.

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DON'T BE AN ARMCHAIR CAVER - COME TO THE NEXT MEETING !!



Introduction to Caving Equipment...Part TwoLamps and Lighting:

The Australian Speleological Federation recommend that at least two totally independent forms of lighting are to be carried by each person. Sources of light are many and varied and the use of each will depend on; money, purpose of the light, time it will run for, and convenience.

Sources are; 1. Matches

2. Candles

3. Cyalume chemical light

4. Carbide lamp

5. Dry cell electric headlamp or torches

6. Miners wet cell electric headlamp.

1. Matches are cheap, and are necessary to light candles, and carbide lamps where a flint is not provided. However, they must be waterproof, and preferably kept in a waterproof container with striking paper. Disadvantages are that they burn only for a short time, are subject to wind gusts blowing them out and require one hand to hold them. They are useful checks for "bad" air found in some caves.

2. Candles are relatively cheap, give a good light with some heat, are waterproof, have an indefinite shelf life, and need no maintenance. They are useful as markers and for conserving other forms of light, particularly electric, during stops to eat. They are also subject to wind gusts, and depend on having something else to light them with, e.g. matches.

3. Cyalume chemical lights are more expensive, but do not require matches, can be used underwater, and give a long lasting - 4 to 5 hours - yellow/green light. Care must be taken not to break the inner tube prior to it being needed. A cigar tube can be used for protection. They are reputed to have an indefinite shelf life, however this has been disputed by some people. While the light output is sufficient to see the immediate area around you, it is recommended only as an emergency source.

4. Carbide lamps work on the simple reaction of calcium carbide and water which gives acetylene gas. The gas burns with an intense white/yellow flame. They give a rugged, cheap, reliable source of light, and with proper servicing, are essential for extended trips, or for expeditions away from battery chargers. Disadvantages are that they can't burn underwater, can be cumbersome when climbing, and if one is careless, can melt rope, burn clothing and people, as the flame is unguarded. Also the jets can clog with mud, or the flame can be brushed out. Handlamps are unsuitable for vertical caving, and caplamps should be used with the utmost care. Three sizes of lamps are available.

cont.../



Introduction to caving equipment, part two, cont'd

Small cap lamps made are "premier"(English), "Justrite"(American), and the cheap "Butterfly"(Japanese). Premier lamps are preferred as the others are unreliable. They give 4 - 5 hours of light per charge.

Medium sized lamps, once again Premier and Justrite are handy, but not big enough for a days caving.

The larger sized lamps, Premier and Pinnacle, are probably the most useful. When using carbide lamps, a repair kit should always be carried. This should consist of several spare jets, a pricker, a small pair of pliers, spare torch globes and matches, with striking paper, sealed in a water-proof container. ALL used carbide should be removed from caves as it is both unsightly and lethal to cave fauna.

5. Dry Cell Electric headlamps or torches. "Any torch that goes caving is doomed to a short life", is usually true for most torches. Exceptions are some of the better constructed waterproof torches such as Eveready Dolphin.

A sling around the shoulders is a useful addition. Dry cell headlamps are useful as they keep both hands free. Although they are cheap to buy, running costs are high and for safety you need to carry spare bulbs and batteries. If the globe is removed easily, get a range of globes as spares, with a range of voltages (e.g. 3.8, 2.5, 1.8 volts). As the light dims, put in a globe of lower voltage. It is recommended that Alkaline batteries be used as these give longer continuous life. These lights do not work underwater unless they have been sealed for this purpose. Care should be taken not to damage the cable and battery case.

6. Miners wet cell electric headlamp. These are the preferred lamp used by experienced cavers as they are ruggedly built and stand up well to caving use. The headlamp has two globes, one on high beam, a long distance globe, the other is on low beam for close in work. They discharge the battery at different rates, the main beam gives about 10 hours use, while the low beam gives about 20 hours use. The battery casing of the Oldham lamps are coloured to indicate battery charge life. The black one provides about 10 hours use, on high beam, the red ones about 13 hours, and the pink ones about 15 hours. It is important to keep the battery charged, discharging and recharging it once a month. The lamps are completely waterproof and are recommended for use in wet caves. They also leave the hands free and give the light in the direction you are looking. However, they are expensive to buy and require an electric charger. They have a rapid voltage drop from when the lamp starts noticeably dimming till when it is useless, and they can leak. The cable from the battery to the lamp is strong and durable, but care must be taken not to catch it on obstacles

Next issue will cover the topic of Ladders, their care and use for cavers.

" A POME", by Judy  
( with apologies to the original  
author )

ARE YOU AN ACTIVE MEMBER  
THE ONE WHO WOULD BE MISSED  
OR ARE YOU JUST CONTENTED  
THAT YOUR NAME IS ON THE LIST

DO YOU ATTEND THE MEETINGS  
AND MINGLE WITH THE MOB  
OR DO YOU ALWAYS STAY AT HOME  
THEN CRITICIZE THE JOB

DO YOU TAKE AN ACTIVE PART  
TO HELP THE CLUB ALONG  
OR ARE YOU SIMPLY SATISFIED  
MERELY TO BELONG

ARE YOU A MEMBER BOOSTER  
OR JUST ONE WITH A KICK  
WHO LEAVES THE WORK TO JUST A FEW  
THEN TALKS ABOUT THE "CLIQUE"

ARE YOU A DYING EMBER  
OR A FLAME THAT'S BRIGHT AND STRONG  
ARE YOU AN ACTIVE MEMBER  
OR DO YOU JUST BELONG ?

Judy bayment.

[illegible]

CLEIFDEN TRIP 8-9-10 September 78

The trip list is now full. Members attending are Reg and Judy Bament, Jim and Vickie Wilson, Ian and Marie Brown, Jim and Marge Reid, "Philthy" Phill Bowers, Robert Douglas, Sandi Fristad, and Russel Dempsey. Would all those who don't know the way from Cowra to the cottage, please meet in front of the Cowra P.O. between 9.00 and 9.30 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 8th.

By the way, Russell and I will be continuing our experiments with hot plonk and other mind bending liquids; if you wish to participate, please feel free to bring some ingredients etc., to make Saturday night worthy of the pains of Sunday morning.

Reg Bament

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Greg and Dawn Martin return home from their trip to Canada shortly with many stories to tell -- Takes of Government Grants to Caving Clubs, International connections, and proposal that the C.T.C.G. become a "Sister/brother Club" with a well known Caving Society in Canada .... we look forward to an interesting talk....

W.A.C.O.N.CAVING CONFERENCE TO BE HELD AT PERTH 1st. TO 5th. JAN.1979.

For those of you who attended CAVCONACT held in Canberra in January this year, the memories of that event should still be appreciated; for it was a very stimulating conference.

The next conference is to be held at Perth and the W.A. boys, (sorry, persons,) need your support to make it successful. It's a long way, but give it your consideration. It will be vital for some C.T.C.G. members to attend to put forward our point about entry to the A.S.F.. At the conference a vote will be taken to possibly allow C.T.C.G. to become a club in its own right in the A.S.F. Should you be interested in going, but need transport, or, better still, have seats to spare, contact Ian Brown, for further details.

The Winter A.S.F. Newsletter contains the latest news on W.A.C.O.N.

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FUND RAISING DRIVE

The past weeks have seen 18 members of the C.T.C.G. participate in a delivery of letter box "Junk Mail" to the Northern suburbs of Canberra.

Through the courtesy of A.C.T. Bush Rescue, we 'sub-contracted' a quantity of approx. 14,000 pamphlets and coupon books for delivery.

The funds raised from this will be used for club needs, and possibly to help towards the cost of sending a delegate to Perth for the W.A.C.O.N. conference.

Any members who did not help on the last delivery, can do so for the next, coming up in a few weeks time.

WE HAF VAYS OV MAKINGK YOU.....

We raise approx. 3 cents per book delivered, so the funds received can become quite significant with your help.

We hope that Bush Rescue will include us in future deliveries as this not only provides a source of income for the club, but gives certain 'cavers' some exercise. Contact Ian Brown and do your bit for the club.

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HAVE YOU EVER SMASHED YOUR HEAD OPEN FALLING DOWN A 50m.PITCH No? Pity! Sorry. I meant, aren't you lucky! But the way some of you are responding to our cry for your BLOODSHEETS you would think you were a bit thick, so to speak.

THAT'S WHAT THOSE PERSONAL DETAILS FORMS ARE FOR!!!!

When ALL members have handed them in or posted them to P.O. Box638, Woden, they will be bound and put with the First Aid Kit, and taken on every club trip.

THEN if you DO actually fall down that 100 m.PITCH, we will be able to administer first aid, confident that we know you are prone to Hay Fever, and this might affect the treatment given.

USE YOUR HEAD AND FILL IN YOUR FORM FOR YOUR OWN SAFTY



# capital territory caving group

## PERSONAL DETAILS FORM.



NAME: (Surname).....

(Christian Names) .....

(Preferred Name) .....

ADDRESS: .....

POST CODE .....

DATE OF BIRTH: .....

TELEPHONE: (Home).....(Work) .....

NEXT OF KIN: .....

ADDRESS: .....

## MEDICAL STATUS.

CONFIDENTIAL - In case of accident only -

Do you suffer from any chronic disease or disability?

e.g. (Epilepsy, Diabetes, High Blood Pressure etc.)

DETAILS: .....

Do you suffer from Claustrophobia or fear of heights etc? .....

Do you need to take any medication regularly?

DETAILS: .....

Do you have any allergies (e.g. to Penicillin)? .....

.....

Who is your Medical Practitioner? .....

Address: .....

What is your blood group? .....

(re-submit)

CAPITAL TERRITORY CAVING GROUP

EXPERIENCE DETAILS

Caving Experience;.....

Previous/Present Club Memberships: .....-.....

.....

Special Abilities/Skills: .....

.....

other comments; .....

.....

CERTIFICATION

*I hereby agree to obey the rules of the Capital Territory Caving Group as outlined in the official Constitution. I also certify that the details given in this application are true and correct.*

SIGNED

(applicant)

WITNESSED

(introducer)