

TROPICON

TROPICON is the name given to the "SEVENTEENTH BIENNIAL CONFERENCE of THE AUSTRALIAN SPELEOLOGICAL FEDERATION Inc." to be hosted by the CHILLAGOE CAVING CLUB, CENTRAL QUEENSLAND SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY and UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY. The conference is to be held between 27/12/88 and 30/12/88 at the Queensland Recreational Council's facility at Tinnaroo. This lake was created by the construction of the Tinnaroo Dam in the late 1950's as an irrigation project on the upper Barron river. The conference centre is held on a tentative booking at present as confirmed bookings cannot be made until twelve months before.

This centre has a main accommodation block of four dormitories of twenty beds each. At the rear of this building is a block which can provide accommodation for a limited number of families with children. In the dining and kitchen area there are another forty bunks available, this being the old dormitory section. This is near the recreation room so late night revellers should take a bed in this area. Verbal permission has been obtained from the centre management to have a liquor license for the conference. The cost of accommodation as of August 1986 was \$13 per head per day: this includes all regular meals as no food preparation is permitted on the site. Within walking distance of the centre there is a motel, restaurant and a well appointed caravan park. The nearest hotel is about 10 km. away at Kairi.

Conference sessions are to be held in the hall (old picture theatre) or its replacement. The name of the village is Tinnaroo Falls if you can find a map with enough detail. A large area of park land has been set aside around the village and close to the dam wall. The conference centre has canoes and other odd things for aquatic sports available for use by centre guests at no extra charge.

For those interested in Speleo Sports the authorities at the site have provided some carefully designed obstacles, that are located at one arm of the lake, about a 400 metre walk from the conference centre. The suspended tyre obstacle should produce some food for thought. With tyres half buried in the ground (lake Tinnaroo Monster) I am sure a way can be thought of to utilise these to slow people up. The traditional tyre squeeze is there but in a slightly modified form. The next little item has all sorts of possibilities especially with the start of the flying fox in the background.

Post conference trips are planned for Chillagoe which is approximately two hours drive from Tinnaroo Falls. The construction of high bridges has produced a virtual all weather road with about fifty kilometers of dirt road. The township of Chillagoe has two pubs, store, bakery, post office, caravan park and service station. Telecom has recently installed an automatic telephone exchange.

Towards the north of the town is located the remains of the old copper smelter. The tower karst lies in a band south east to north west of Chillagoe with the northern end being about twenty kilometers from the town. Weather permitting a Palmerville trip may be an option.

Large chambers, some containing daylight holes can be found in some of the towers.

In spite of having an average rainfall of 800 mm. some speleothems have developed.

Aboriginal art can be found in overhangs and cave entrances.

Swiftlets and their predators can also be found in some caves.

Bush camping is available under the mango trees on Chillagoe creek, however, it cannot support a large number of people. This area has certain hazards not found at the club house. Camping, dormitory style accommodation, as well as cooking, shower and toilet facilities are planned for 1988.

Chillagoe has been a traditional mining area and activity is still being carried on today.

Pre-conference trips are planned to Mt. Etna and Limestone Ridge near Rockhampton. The emergence flight of Miniopterus australis from Bat Cleft will be in full swing this time of year.

The campsite near Mt. Etna is on the property of Norm Perhouse and is run by C.Q.S.S.

Watch for information about TROPICON in the Australian Caver over the next two years.