

AUSTRALIAN SPELEOLOGICAL FEDERATION

Number 46

December 1969

# NEWSILETPIER



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#### ASF NEWSLETTER

AUSTRALIAN
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FEDERATION

Editorial

IF FULL-TIME DEVOTION TO THE DISCIPLINE IS ANY THERE IS NOT A SINGLE PROFESSIONAL SPELEOLOGIST IN THIS COUNTRY. THERE ARE NOT MORE THAN A HALF-DOZEN PART-TIME ACADEMIC WORKERS THERE ARE NO FOUNDATIONS OR POKER MACHINES TO IN THE FIELD. FUND SPELEOLOGICAL ENDEAVOUR AND NO PAYING SPECTATORS. KNOWLEDGE ONLY TWO CLUBS RECEIVE OCCASIONAL GOVERNMENT AND THEN ONLY AS SMALL RECOMPENSE FOR DISCOVERING POTENTTAL TOURIST CAVES, AND ONE OR TWO UNIVERSITY CLUBS OBTAIN SPORTS UNION HANDOUTS. PERHAPS BECAUSE OF THIS, A FEW CLUBS INDIVIDUALS HAVE BEEN MYOPIC AND INTROSPECTIVE, OBSCURING SOME QUITE RESPECTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS. AUSTRALIAN SPELEOLOGY IS HELD IN DESERVEDLY HIGH REPUTE ABROAD, FOR WHICH WE MAY THANK SUCH CONSISTENT WORKERS AS J.N.JENNINGS AND E. HAMILTON-SMITH. AUSTRALIA WAS ONE OF THE FIRST SUPPORTERS OF THE INTERNATIONAL UNION OF SPELEOLOGY AND HAS BEEN WELL REPRESENTED AT INT-ERNATIONAL MEETINGS.

BUT ALL THIS IS A COMMONPLACE. WHAT IS REMARKABLE IS THAT SO MUCH HAS BEEN DONE BY ORGANIZED AMATEURISM. PARADOXICALLY. WE TEND TO OVERLOOK MANY ACHIEVEMENTS BECAUSE OF THEIR VERY INSTITUTIONAL EXISTENCE. THE A.S.F. FOR EXAMPLE. BRITAIN WOULD ENVY SUCH A FEDERATION OF THE HUNDREDS OF CLUBS THERE. OR CAVE NUMBERING SCHEMES, SAFETY STANDARDS AND GOOD CLUB PUBLICATIONS. THE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS MEETINGIN STUTTGART FEATURED SECTIONS ON TOURIST CAVES, CAVE TECHNICAL CAVING AIDS AND EVEN ON DOCUMENTING THE LONGEST AND DEEPEST CAVES IN THE WORLD, AS WELL AS ON KARST MORPHOLOGY AND BIOSPELEOLOGY. IT IS HEARTENING, TOO, TO REALIZE THAT ALMOST ALL SPELEOLOGY IN WESTERN EUROPE IS NON-PROFESSIONAL AND NON-FUNDED, AND THAT SCOUTS, VANDALS AND IRRESPONSIBLES ARE RATHER UBIQUITOUS A PROBLEM THERE AS WELL.

NOTICES

#### A.S.F. COMMITTEE MEETING

The next Committee Meeting of the Australian Speleological Federation will be held in Melbourne on 24 - 25 January, 1970, the Victorian Speleological Association being host.

# EIGHTH BIENNIAL CONFERENCE

The Eighth Biennial Conference of the A.S.F. will be held in Hobart, Tasmania, in late December 1970. Details will be available shortly.

# FIFTH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF SPELEOLOGY

by John Dunkley, A.S.F. Delegate

The Fifth International Congress of Speleology was held in Stuttgart, West Germany, from 22 to 26 September, 1969. Australia was well represented by Bernie Joyce (Melbourne), Tom Wigley (CEGSA, presently working in UK) and John Dunkley. Bud Frank (Texas) and Paul Williams (U.K.), who were recently working in Australia with Mr J.N. Jennings, helped swell the numbers. Papers on aspects of Australian speleology included work on karst morphology in New Guinea (Williams), on Nullarbor cave breathing (Wigley) and on excavations in sandstone caves at Mt Moffatt, Qld. (Joyce). These were very well attended and received and are indicative both of interest abroad in Australian speleology and the high repute in which it is held. Field trips followed to the karst areas of the Swabian Jura, Switzerland and Austria.

Plenary sessions of the International Union of Speleology were held concurrently with the Congress, 24 countries sending delegates from as far afield as New Zealand and Venezuela. Activities of the I.U.S. have expanded since its inauguration in 1965, and an International Newsletter is now planned, together with a central information bureau. To finance these and other activities, a levy of US\$30 per member country will be made from 1970 on.

Tom Wigley attended meetings of the IUS Commissions on Karst Denudation and on Speleochronology, and out of curiosity the writer went to the inaugural meeting of the Commission on Tourist Caves. Australia has been asked to nominate representatives for some of the Commissions and in particular for information on our longest and deepest caves and on tourist caves. A full report on this aspect will be presented for the Committee Meeting in January 1970 in Melbourne.

At the final meeting of the International Union, it was decided to hold the next Congress in September 1973 in Olomouc, Czechoslovakia. Professor Bernard Geze was re-elected President on the Union, while Dr Hubert Trimmel of Vienna became the new Secretary-General.

# Personal Pestscript

The writer was flattered and most gratified by the camaraderie of the European and American cavers with whom he spoke, and by the genuine interest exhibited in Australia. The New Zealand delegate, Les Kermode and I were overwhelmed by offers to show us round the caves of one country or another. Les finally took off to see caves in Jugoslavia, Greece and Lebanon, while I accepted an invitation to Czechoslovakia fromthe Director of Tourist Caves, Dr L. Blaha, who arranged visits to most of the tourist caves there and enabled me to see the unique speleological museum at Liptovsky Mikulas. On the way there and back I was able to see many caves in Austria, Hungary and Jugoslavia and I am most grateful for the assistance received.

# CAVE NAMING AND NUMBERING IN TASMANIA

Preliminary report abstracted from material in "Speleo Spiel" by Albert Goede.

The Nomenclature Board of Tasmania has appointed a Cave Nomenclature Sub-Committee comprising Ian Jennings (Convenor), Ken Newham and Albert Goede, to consider cave names approved by clubs and published in the A.S.F. Handbook.

A cave numbering system has been instituted at Loongana and Ida Bay using  $2^{11} \times 5^{11}$  aluminium tags. The following area prefixes have been suggested for the comment of the Tasmanian clubs:

B - Bubs Hill CC - Cape Barren F - Flowery Gull G - Lower Gordon GF - Upper Gordon	Island JF - y K - L -	Junee-Florentine	N - PB - RA -	Precipitous Bluff Ranga(Flinders Is.)
GP - Gunns Plains H - Hastings I - Ida Bay	MA -	Mt Anne Mt Ronald Cross W - Weld	T TS - R -	St Mary's Trowutta Tim Shea Redpa

#### ABSTRACT

Dwyer, P.D., Population Ranges of Miniopterus schreibersii (Chiroptera) in South-eastern Australia. <u>Aust. J. Zool.</u> 17, 4:665 - 686.

The paper analyzes 2,083 movements of  $\underline{\text{M. schreibersii}}$ . Biologically and geographically separate populations exist in morth-east N.S.W., south-east N.S.W., south-east N.S.W., south-west Victoria and south-east South Australia. Most bat movements take place within but not between these regions. This observation is not explicable solely in terms of distance. It may be due to real differences in population characteristics, but could be due merely to concentrations of banding activity.

# CONSERVATION ACTION

#### QUEENSLAND.

Extensive sorrespondence has been maintained by UQSS with the Australian Conservation Foundation, the cement company, the Mines Department, and the local shire council. A 7,000 word report on the desirability of making Limestone Ridge into a National Park was prepared and submitted to the Lands Department. On 18 November a party including a local councillor inspected damage to Main, Commando and Winding Staircase Caves due to quarrying. The National Parks Association has submitted to the Government a plan for a 130,000 acre National Park for the Einasleigh - Mt Surprise lava area. The region includes 34 miles of collapsed lava tunnels and numerous scoria cones and craters. As the country is valuable grazing land the prospects at this stage do not look especially bright. (cont. p. 8)

# ACCIDENT AND RESCUE IN DEVILS DEN, MT FAULKNER

by Joan Brabon Secretary, TCC

Devils Den is a well-known cave in dolerite, located on the slopes of Mt Faulkner above the suburb of Claremont, Tasmania. It is not far from Mt Wellington, is barely 8 miles from downtown Hobart and had frequently been visited by inexperienced nearby residents.

Saturday On the afternoon of Saturday 14th December, 1968, Timothy Walter p.m. and five other boys were exploring Devils Den when without any warning a rockfall started as they crawled along a tight passage. Tim was about 80° inside the cave and 60° vertically down. He was pinned under heavy boulders. The others behind him were partly buried in earth and small debris. Fourteen year old William Fell managed to free himself and went for help. Constable Ian Cox returned with the boy but could see that reinforcements were needed and sent for them. By nine o'clock all the boys except Tim were free.

By 3am rescue operations were well under way with Police, army, Sunday ambulance, Hydro-Electric Commission personnel, the Salvation Army as well as cavers assisting. Headed by Doug Turner, local caverneers from TCC and SCS took over underground, while HEC men carried equipment to the cave entrance from a base camp 2 miles downhill along a rough track. A compressor was put into action to ensure plenty of fresh air underground, operated by Mr Eric Owen. Jacks were hauled into the cave and rescuers tried to force the heavy boulders off Tim's legs. Space a problem as no more than 4 persons could get into the small chamber at one time. A space was cleared and one leg was freed, enabling Tim to be raised to a sitting position. He asked for a cigarette and was fed on chocolate and fluids. Morphine had to be administered twice during the day. attempts to move the boulder failed as no solid foundation could be found for the base of the jack and it became obvious that a larger Porto -Power would be needed and this was sent for. Operations continued to be hampered by difficulties of getting equipment to the cave, the walk requiring 1 hour from base. The Salvation Army walked up and down the hill all day with food and drink and other material for the rescuers. Their sterling efforts cannot be too highly praised.

Sunday A major setback occurred on Sunday afternoon when a collapse p.m. happened when Tim had almost been freed, and the rescuers were back where they started. It was decided to shore up the cave walls, and timber was sent for. By this stage the cavers in the squeeze were close to exhaustion and an urgent call for small cavers was sent to the mainland. About 4pm, 6 cavers arrived at Hobart Airport from Melbourne and were transferred by helicopter direct to a specially cleared landing site only 50 yards from the cave entrance. About the same time an old logging track was discovered coming up the hill which could be negotiated by 4-wheel drive vehicles. An ambulance was towed to within a short distance of the cave.

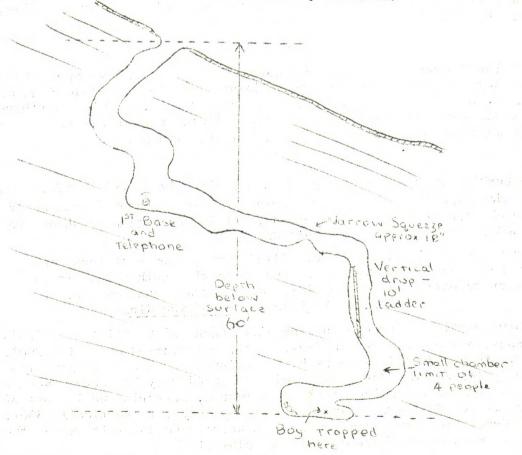
Sunday By 8pm shoring of the cave walls was complete and Tim had been night uncovered of loose material again. The Mainland cavers went to work with a large Porto-Power jack and freed Tim at 10.30pm, 32 hours after the collapse. He was quickly brought to the surface where Dr Huygins treated him for possible kidney damage. At 11.15 he was placed in the ambulance and sent to hospital. A number of rescuers camped at the site too exhausted to walk down to their cars at base camp.

Monday Experts from the Mines Department exploded the cave entrance on Monday morning and it is now completely sealed.

POSTSCRIPT Injuries suffered by the boys were:

Tim Walter - leg injuries requiring calipers for a short time. Robert Morgan (16) - broken arm. Peter Fisher (15) - 11 stitches forehead Michael Walter (18), Doug Hall (15), William Fell (14) - cuts and bruises.

Caverneers working inside the cave were Peter Brabon (TCC), Michael Cole, Robert Cockerill and Eddie Guinan (all SCS) and Bob Woolhouse (TCCNB). Two cavers from VSA including Graeme Wilson also assisted. In addition, there was the small army of other cavers, HEC men, Salvation Army volunteers and others whose efforts outside the cave were invaluable. Peter Brabon has recently been advised that he has been awarded the Silver Medal of the Rcyal Humane Society for his part in the rsscue and it is believed that other members of the team will be similarly honoured.



#### DOWN UNDER ALL OVER

#### SOUTH AUSTRALIA

At the A.G.M. Bart Dasborough was elected President, while his predecessor Grant Gartrell is taking on the Newsletter. The Constitution was changed recently to provide for a place on the Bureau. Mr E. Maddock was later appointed to this position, one unique in Australian speleology which illustrates the Group's excellent public relations. Other events included a successful field day in Belair National Park, and the 'CEGSA Occasional Dinner No. 1'. The latter unexpectedly was cut short when 3' high flames spurted out the bottom of Tom Wigley's newly resurrected Giant Carbide Lamp. The pub was saved.

#### Curramulka

Digging in the ever present sand has revealed yet another new section in the formidable Corrells Cave, with some respectable decoration - gypsum needles, helictites and botryoidal stalactites. TCC ex-President Albert Goede was conducted through Corrells and was heard to suggest that it might be worth visiting again. Needless to say, a few more hundred feet was found en passant. A gate has recently been installed on the cave to keep out some of the locals.

#### TASMANT A

The Tasmanian CaverneeringClub & the unaffiliated SouthernCaving Society have agreed to act as joint hosts for Eighth Biennial A.S.F. Conference in Hobart in December 1970. TCC Northern branch at Launceston will assist on Mole Creek field trips and hopes to entice some mainland cave divers to some promising siphons.

#### Ida Bay

Scrub bashing on the north side of Marble Hill is paying off. On April 19, indefatigable Exit explorer Brian Collin discovered an active pot down which rocks fell for four seconds, giving an estimated sheer drop of 250° - 300°. They named it Hobbit Hole:

"... Not a nasty, dirty, wet hole, filled with the ends of worms and an oozy small, nor yet a dry, bare sandy hole with nothing in it to sit down or to eat: it was a hobbit-hole, and that means comfort..."

(J.R.R.Tolkien: Lord of the Rings)

Two subsequent parties staggered up the hill laden with all the club's worldly possessions of rope and ladders. The pot fizzled out at -200'. Fortunately, they didn't lose heart but continued surface exploration. behind a muddy log was a muddy rift, and all agreed they had never seen a less promising entrance. Brian Collin disappeared, muttering until out of earshot that it wouldn't go. Anyway, next day they got vertically 350'. It's called Revelation Cave and you'll be hearing more about it when the diggers get to work on the bottom sand and talus block.

#### VICTORIA

The June issue of "Nargun" containing the second annual report of the Victorian Speleological Association reflects the great increase in caving activity in that state. Several new maps have been prepared, cave numbering has continued at Buchan and Murrindal, and there is an impressive list of projects under way. Several trips have been run specifically run for beginners. The Victorian Cave Search and Rescue Organization has been re-organized and suitable equipment is being obtained. There have not been any rescues in Victoria, but members were involved in the Gardeners Gut rescue in New Zealand and in the Mt Faulkner episode in Tasmania (see report this issue of Newsletter).

#### Buchan

The Back Creek area of Buchan turned up several new caves, including a 58° shaft leading a further 60° to a dig. A new "first" in August was a through trip from Wet Cave EB30 to Wombat Walk EB3. Intensive efforts to enter Scrubby Creek from the Mines area above were abortive.

#### Western Districts

The volcanic plains of western Victoria are not often visited now, though many lava caves are known. On this trip exploration was carried out at Warrion Hill (near Colac) which looks promising, also the western side of Mt Porndon, Panmure, Mt Eccles, Byaduk and Mt Hamilton. The only discovery was a maze of lava tunnels at Byaduk. A 135° cenote in Warrnambool limestone was abseiled to an impressive cave, another entrance to which overlooked the sea from 60° up.

# North-east Victoria

A new gravel road is available from Benambra via Limestone Creek to Black Mountain on the Buchan-Suggan Buggan Road. The limestone at Marble Creek was examined. The creek flows underground for about 100 yards and there are several small dolines. There is very little cave development and nothing accessible to anyone larger than a wombat. The southern section of the limestone is generally covered with soil and gravel from the hill above and the doline was completely closed except for a very small wombathole.

#### QUEENSLAND

Reconnaissance trips went to Ulidgee Creek (S. Qld) and to the UQSS Drake-Tabulam area (N.S.W.) but only rock shelters were found. The major trip was to Camooweal in December. Aerial photographs were used to pinpoint possible cave locations. Of the 12 prospects, a caves were found and 9 proved devoid. Surveys were made of 5 caves and 4000° was mapped in Niggle Cave with another 3000° explored but not mapped and plenty of possibilities left for the future. The optimists are talking of the longest caves in Australia. Certainly there is little doubt that some water at least effluxes 70 miles from the sinks.

(cont. from p. 3)

#### SOUTH AUSTRALIA

In the May issue of "Nargur", VSA President Nick White describes how the town water supplies if Mt Gambier and Keith in the limestone areas of south-east South Australia are being polluted.

#### TASMANIA

On 27 March 1969, Pickands Mather and Co. applied for an Exploration License under the Mining Act covering a considerable part of the Mole Creek limsstone area. TCC suspects that this is part of a feasibility study of an iron and steel industry for Tasmania. Mole Creek not only has large deposits but is convenient to rail transport. The area in question includes Herberts Pot, Shish Kebab, Wet Cave, Honeycomb Caves and several others. SCS and TCC have alerted local farmers to potential pollution of water supplies and notified the government of the possible effects of quarrying on nearby tourist caves. The next step should be toprepare large scale maps showing cave locations.

#### REVIEW

WILLIAMS, P.W. & J.N. JENNINGS, Contributions to the Study of Karst. Research School of Pacific Studies, Department of Geography Publication G / 5 (1968). Australian National University, Canberra, 1968. x + 110 pp., 14 figs., 17 plates, semi-hard cover.

These two papers offer contrasting approaches to the study of karst features, the one traditionally observation, description and deduction, the other leaning more towards modern quantitative analysis, which nevertheless manages to avoid the statistical manipulations which characterize and sometimes confound modern geomorphology.

Using more than 400 water samples from 38 locations, P.W. Williams studied limestone solution in the Fergus River Basin, western Ireland. A significant relationship was found between limestone corrosion rates and stream discharge rates. 80% of total observed solution occurred inthe top 8 metres of limestone. Corrosion seemed more significant in the centre of the limestone outcrop, where streams are saturated with limestone.

J.N. Jennings describes the karst morphology of the dune limestones of the southern and western coasts of Australia. To a certain degree karst processes have gone on concurrently with consolidation of calcareous sand shell into aeolian calcarenite i.e. the karst is partly "syngenetic".

Publication was clearly restricted by finance. Reproduction is by photo-offset and photographs suffer accordingly. The material has been typed and is not justified. In places footnotes in the same large type-face as the text take up a disproportionate amount of room. Neverthe this is an important high quality addition to the karst literature which should be of interest to serious cavers overseas as well as in Australia.

#### SUPPLEMENT TO A S F N E W S L E T T E R Nc. 47, Dec' 69

#### AUSTRALIAN SPELEOLOGICAL FEDERATION

#### N.S.W. CO-ORDINATION STANDING COMMITTEE

#### Bro. NICHOLAS DINNER AND LECTURE

Bro. Nicholas of La Salle College, Philadelphia, Pa. U.S.A. will be visiting Sydney in August this year. He has agreed to deliver a lecture to Speleologists and Cavers entitled;

"THE RIDDLE OF THE MAYAN CAVES, GUATEMALA"

This will be accompanied by slides

A dinner is to be held in conjunction with the lecture and will be held at the;

GRADUATES CLUB LTD., 1st. Floor, 243 Commonwealth St., SURREY HILLS.

on

Monday, 17th, August, 1970

The dinner will commence at 6.30~p.m. and the lecture at 8.00~p.m. The bar will be open throughout the dinner and after the lecture. You may attend either the lecture only or the dinner and lecture.

DINNER AND LECTURE. \$5.00 LECTURE ONLY \$1.00

Bro. Nicholas is well known for his lectures, having visited Sydney on two previous occasions. The Graduates Club is well known for its food.

Attendence at the dinner and the lecture will be by invitation only. To purchase tickets, fill in the application form below and post to:

Mr. I.D. Wood
"ELTHAM"
Leichhardt Ave.,
GLEBE POINT.
N.S.W. 2037

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