

# ASF NEWSLETTER

March 1973  
(autumn)

AUSTRALIAN SPELEOLOGICAL FEDERATION



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# ASF NEWSLETTER

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# ASF NEWSLETTER

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## EDITORIAL . . . . .

Once again more material has been submitted to the Newsletter than can be used in this issue. Apologies in particular to Andrew Spate, also to UQSS. Since the body of this issue was typed, there have been more developments in the Texas and Bungonia conservation issues, and we hope that the next issue will contain good news about these disputes. The ASF Conservation Commission is working flat out on these and several other issues of national concern.

The Newsletter Commission has been expanded to include a co-Editor (Andrew Pavey), a Sales Manager (Keith Oliver) and a Distribution Manager (Paul Murphy). Sincere thanks to all these people; it is to be hoped that the Newsletter will continue to improve with their assistance. Thanks also to ISS for their again unsolicited 'demand' that they be permitted to collate and envelope this issue. The smaller the society, the bigger the heart, perhaps?



## N O T I C E S        -        Coming Federation Activities

SECOND BARBARA DEW MEMORIAL LECTURE        -        Wednesday, June 6, 1973 at 8 pm.  
 The Second Barbara Dew Memorial Lecture will be given by Dr Graham Nelson in the Womens College, University of Sydney. Title: "LIVING AND CAVING IN PUERTO RICO". All welcome.

GATING OF TUGLOW CAVE - The ASF NSW Liaison Council, in cooperation with the National Parks and Wildlife Service, has agreed to assist in gating Tuglow Cave. A site inspection has been held and all local clubs are asked to assist when the date (probably in June) is circulated.

FIRST AUSTRALASIAN CONFERENCE ON CAVE TOURISM - 10-13 July, 1973.  
 To be held in Jenolan Caves House under ASF sponsorship. See announcement on page 6 of this issue.

SIXTH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF SPELEOLOGY - September, 1973 in Czechoslovakia.  
 At least 4 ASF members will be going. Papers and field trips to follow. Details from Commission on International Relations, or from Ian Wood, Julia James or Jeanette Dunkley.

YARRANGOBILLY SEMINAR - Tentative date: October long weekend, 1973. One day of talks and slides in Canberra, followed by caving and field inspections at Yarrangobilly on the Sunday and Monday. Details will be circulated to clubs as soon as possible.

ASF COMMITTEE MEETING - The next Committee Meeting of the Australian Speleological Federation will be held in Melbourne on 26-27 January, 1974.

SEMINAR ON CAVES AND KARST OF NEW GUINEA - To be held in mid-1974, probably in Sydney, sponsored jointly by the Australian Speleological Federation and the Speleological Research Council Ltd. Programme will be announced later this year, along with venue.

TENTH BIENNIAL CONFERENCE - The Tenth Conference of the Australian Speleological Federation will be held in Queensland late in 1974.

## Sundry Notes

LOST PROPERTY - CLIEFDEN - The NIBICON Area Director for Cliefden, Keith Oliver has advised the recovery of some unclaimed gear left in the house early in January. If you are missing some clothing or equipment, identify it to Keith and reclaim it. He can be contacted at 44 King Street, St Marys, 2760, ph. 6231768

EDIE SMITH AWARD, 1972 - The first presentation of the Edie Smith Award was made at NIBICON in Sydney. The recipients were Mr E.A. Lane and Dr A.M. Richards, who have been joint editors of Helictite, the Australasian Journal of Cave Research, since its inception in 1962. An independent publication, Helictite has achieved international acclaim as one of the best 5 speleological research Journals in the world.

## AN APOLOGY

Under the heading "On Cave Numbering and Other Things" in ASF News1. 56 (1972), p. 2, it is stated "Both Mr Ellis and his society have written stating that they do not endorse these amendments and that they will use another scheme". Mr Ellis has since pointed out that his real complain concerned an article on the subject appearing partly under his name in ASF News1. 55 p. 9. The situation is thus:

1. The article had as stated been edited in accordance with the minor amendments accepted by the NSW Liaison Council.
2. Mr Ellis did not recommend or endorse these amendments.
3. The article attributed to him was thus not what he had written.

For what was a quite unintentional misrepresentation of the dispute, I wish to apologise to Ross for an embarrassment this has caused.

- J. Dunkley



# NOTES    ON    SOME    CAVING    AREAS

## IN    SOUTH-EAST    ASIA

by R. Michael Bourke

Spectacular and extensive karst scenery - Numerous readily accessible caves - Rumours of great caves in inaccessible and inhospitable places - An intimate association between caves and local culture and religion - only a few cavers. That is the Asian caving scene and it is beckoning the adventurous Australasian speleo . . .

During April-June 1972 I travelled overland through Java, Bali, Singapore, the Malay Peninsula and as far north as Chiang Mai in northern Thailand. Caves were visited in Indonesia and Malaysia. Information on the location of caving areas was collected and is presented below. This paper is very incomplete and is meant as an introduction only to a region that boasts so spectacular karst scenery and many known caves, and in which really extensive caves will perhaps one day be found. Hamilton-Smith (1969) has also provided general information about the region, particularly Japan.

### INDONESIA

**SUMATRA (Sumatera):** The Gunung Saribu area north of Padang is known for its karst forms. (Gunung =mountain, Saribu=thousand)

**JAVA (Djawa):** On the south coast the Gunung Sewu area is famous for the extensive tropical karst topography. Big caves occur near the town of Wonot Sari (Pers.Comm. D.Balazs).

Early work by the Czech scholar J.V.Danes and the classical studies of the German, H.Lehmann, were done in this area. A smaller karst area at Karangbolong, south of Gombong, is known for cave temples. Other limestone areas are scattered throughout the island.

**BORNEO (Kalimantan):** Many caves are reported from the Malaysian part of the island, and no doubt the cavernous limestone occurs on the Indonesian side.

**BALI :** There is limestone on the island, although I did not hear of caves in it. The Elephant Cave (Gua Gadjah) at Bedula is a small man-made cave that was part of an ancient monastery. A photograph of the ornate entrance features on the cover of the Life World Library book on South East Asia (Karnow, 1964).

The Bats' Caves (Goa Lawah) at Kusamba forms part of a Hindu temple and is home for many bats. The rock appears to be of volcanic origin and is probably an old sea cave.

**CELEBES (Sulawesi):** A rugged limestone range extends from Maros north of Makassar to Pangkajene. Sunartadirdja and Lehmann (1960) have described the area (cited by Verstappen 1964). Mesolithic cave paintings are found in caves near Maros. The Tana Toradja district 300km north of Makassar is renowned for the feast of the dead and the burial caves.

**TIMOR:** Extensive limestone areas and large entrances are rumoured from both Indonesian and Portuguese Timor. Several Australian cavers have visited Timor. Beswick (1972) gives reports of caves from the Portuguese side.

**AMBON, CERAM & TANIMBAR :** Smaller limestone areas exist on these islands but no further details are available.

**WEST IRIAN (Irian Barat) :** The high limestone mountains in the centre of New Guinea extend far into the Indonesian side. There are undoubtedly large caves as are found on the Australian side but they have yet to be found or reported.\* Caves are recorded near Jegriffi 80km south of Djayapura (Hollandia) (Galis 1957a) near Tainda (Galis 1957b) and reference is made by Verstappen (1964) to a cave near Tulo in the Star Mountains.

The Hungarian geomorphologist Dr. Denes Balazs has published a paper on karst regions in Indonesia (Balazs 1968) that should be a valuable reference, although I have not seen it.



## MALAYSIA

**MALAYA, SARAWAK & SABAH:** Limestone rock and caves occur abundantly in Malaysia especially in the Kinta Valley, Perak, in Perlis, in southern Kelantan to the west of the National Park, and in Sarawak in the Bau region, near Kuching and in the Subis region. (Stauffer and Morgan, 1971) The limestone generally occurs as tower karst -- impressive hills with sheer rock walls rising several hundred feet above the surrounding alluvial plain. Conical karst (Kegalkarst) consisting of rounded hills is known from Perlis near the Thai Border and near Bau in Sarawak. Gobbett (1965) presents a map of limestone hills in West Malaysia with 27 locations.

Wilford (1964) gives locations, descriptions and surveys of hundreds of caves in Sarawak and Sabah. Information on cave distribution in East Malaysia is also presented in Wilford (1965). In a special issue of the Malayan Nature J. (Vol. 19 No. 1), 11 papers cover the geology, ecology, biology and conservation of Malaysian caves.

The Batu Caves near Kuala Lumpur are the best known Malaysian caves and also the most southerly in West Malaysia. They serve as a cultural and religious centre for Malaysian Hindus and are a major tourist attraction. Other well known caves are the Chinese Cave Temples near Ipoh, particularly the Perak Cave Temple. Also popularly known are a cave containing a Chinese Buddhist shrine near Kuantan on the east coast of the Peninsula, and caves in the Templer Park near Kuala Lumpur and in the Taman Negara (National Park) in the centre of the Peninsula. The Niah Caves in Sarawak are known from the evidence found in them of settlement as early as 40,000 years ago.

From the road or railway one can see impressive cave entrances in the tower Karst, sometimes hundreds of feet up with stalactites hanging down over the entrance. Caves are commonly found at ground level, being generally horizontally, not vertical. Mining the tower karst for limestone causes conservation problems as does tin mining inside caves in Perlis.

## THAILAND

I was able to collect only scattered information on cave distribution in Thailand, although frequent references to extensive karst areas occur in the literature.

The limestone of northern Malaysia continues into southern Thailand and, in fact, part of the border, the Setul Boundary Range, is Ordovician Silurian limestone. This is conical karst not tower karst. Tower karst is visible from the train as one goes through the Malay Peninsula to Bangkok. At Phet Chaburi 166km south of Bangkok, the hills are pocketed with caves, many of which are Buddhist shrines. Two of the well known hills are Khao Luang and Bandai.

Caves are reported from the Kanchanaburi area 133km west of Bangkok, better known for the River Kwai. Kaeng Lawa, reputedly one of the most beautiful caves in Thailand, is located near Wang Po. Kangkorn Thong Cave is 30 minutes by motor boat from Kanchanaburi.

North of Nakorn Sawan in Central Thailand tower karst with caves and quarries is visible from the road. South of Lampang rounded limestone hills are present but caves are not visible from the road. At least one cave is reported north of Lampang. North of Chiang Dao, Tham Dap Dao and near Chiang Rai.

Extensive karst areas are rumoured in N.E. Thailand.

## BURMA, CAMBODIA, LAOS &amp; VIETNAM

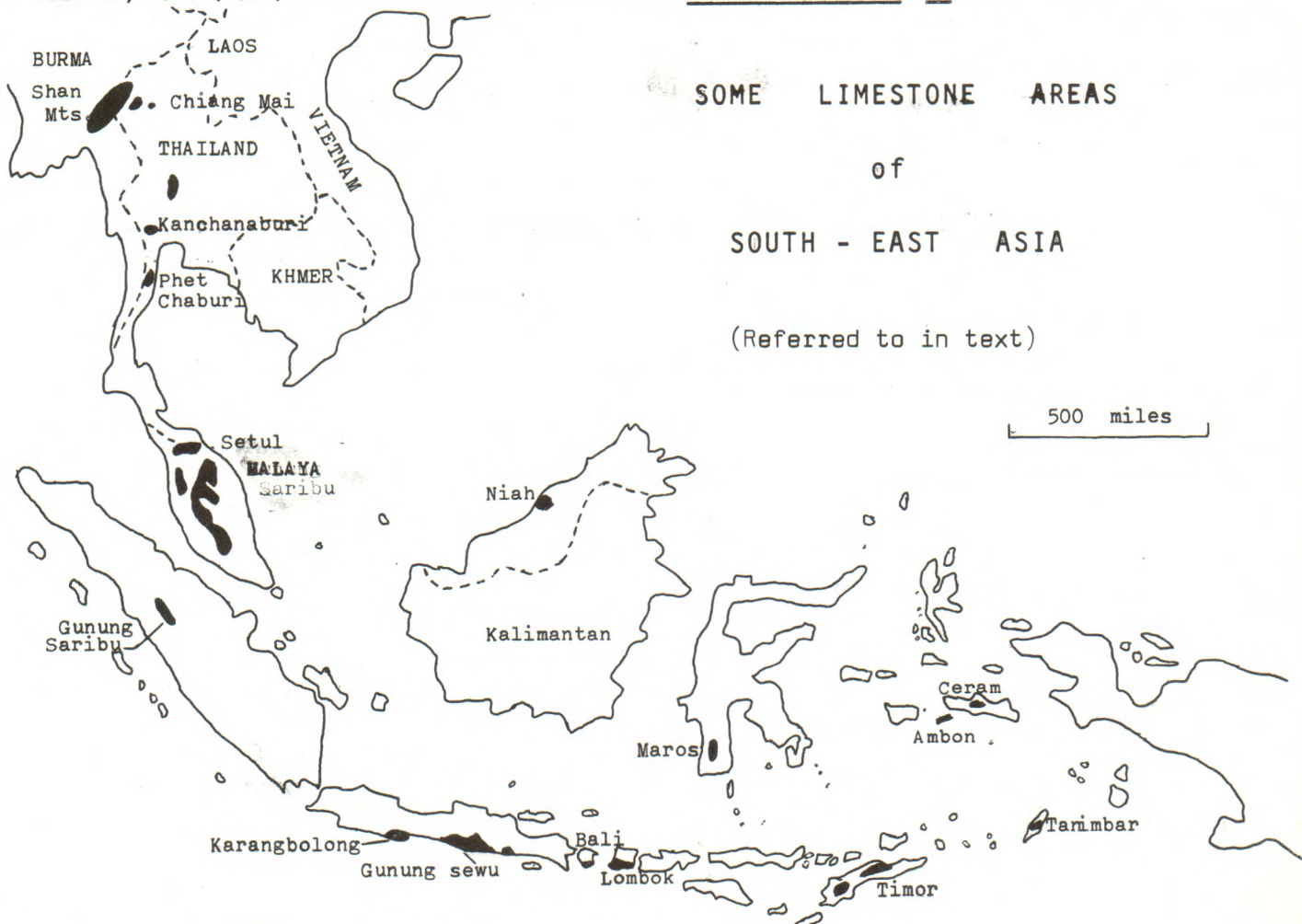
Other travellers had vague tales of limestone areas and caves in these countries. I have no detailed information except that caves are said to exist near Sam Neua city in Laos. Silar (1965) has described the extensive tower karst that is found in southern China and North Vietnam.

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# FIRST AUSTRALASIAN CONFERENCE

## ON CAVE TOURISM

JENOLAN CAVES, N.S.W.,

10-13 JULY, 1973

The First Australasian Conference on Cave Tourism will be held at Jenolan Caves House from 10-13 July, 1973. Organized under the auspices of the Australian Speleological Federation, with the assistance of the NSW Department of Tourism, this Conference has as its objectives:

To assist the further development of cave tourism in Australia, specifically by

- a) providing an opportunity for the exchange of knowledge and experience between all those involved in Australian cave tourism.
- b) in particular, to provide an opportunity for the wide sharing of the experience and knowledge gained by Roy Skinner in the course of his Churchill Fellowship study tour during 1972.
- c) Providing an opportunity for those involved to discuss and determine methods of future cooperation, liaison, or sharing of experience.
- d) encouraging harmony between responsible speleological groups and cave operators and administrators.
- e) stimulating an awareness in the general public of the specialised nature of caves as recreational areas.

### Preliminary Enrolment Form

Forward not later than 31 May, 1973, to Mr J. R. Dunkley, 22/53 Alice St, Wiley Park, 2195.  
Make cheques payable to "Australian Speleological Federation".

Please enrol me provisionally as a Participant in the First Australasian Conference on Cave Tourism:

NAME . . . . .

ADDRESS . . . . .

. . . . .

Please tick FORM OF ACCOMMODATION required (essential):

Single room with private facilities (\$64.50)

Single room without private facilities (\$55.50)

Double room with private facilities (\$58.50)

Double room without private facilities (\$49.50)

Do you require transport from Sydney? YES / NO

N O T E : A deposit of \$3 per person enrolling MUST accompany this preliminary enrolment. Write separately if you do not wish to damage your Newsletter. However, it is essential to indicate form of accommodation required before 31 May.

### Venue, Accommodation, Transport

The Conference will be held in Caves House, Jenolan Caves, New South Wales, about 120 miles west of Sydney. Single, twin and double room accommodation will be available in rooms with or without private facilities.

Transport for participants will be arranged from Sydney Airport on Tuesday 10 July and returning on the morning of 13 July. The first Conference session will be on the evening of 10 July.

### Programme

Full details of the programme are being arranged, and at this stage the following sessions appear likely:

- Review of Australian Cave Tourism
- Cave Tourism around the World
- Cave Tourism and Conservation
- Cave Tourism and speleological exploration

Other aspects of the subject which are likely to be explored include

- Recreational Geography and Economics
- Practical Aspects of Design and Development
- Development of Ancillary Facilities

### Conference Fee

The Conference fee will cover:

- Full accommodation including meals from dinner on 10 July to breakfast on 13 July.
- Luncheon at Katoomba on 10 July
- Transport Sydney to Jenolan and return.
- Conference Proceedings and associated publications



## M U S I G      -      N E W   M E M B E R   O F   A S F

*by Paul Murphy*

Macquarie (University) Mountaineering Society was formed in 1967, the instigators being Richard Daniel (formerly of OSS) and Harry Luxford (formerly of Sydney Rockclimbing Club). In 1968 MMS was formally accepted into the Macquarie University Sports Association.

Over the years MMS has been very active in the fields of caving, rockclimbing, bushwalking and ski-touring. In 1969 canoeing was added to the list of activities. It has grown from an original membership of 20 in 1967 to 150 in 1972. The Club is very active in Bushwalkers Federation Search and Rescue and the Canoe Association of NSW.

In late 1969 about 6 people started to carry out mapping of the Little Wombeyan Creek area under the direction of the Club patron, Dave Rootes. Work in this area includes: surface geology, surface map of cave entrances, tagging of most caves, surveys CRG Gr 2 and 3 of all caves tagged, digging of LWC1 and LWC16.

The name of Macquarie University Speleological Investigation Group was born about this time to differentiate between sporting caving done by MMS and speleological work done by MUSIG.

1970 saw work being carried on in the Little Wombeyan Creek area as well as at Bungonia. Bungonia has been our main area of study as most members feel that this area is far from exhausted. Work done at Bungonia over the past two years includes: Meteorological work in B16-51 (published in MMS Yearbook 1971), siltation studies B16-51, geomorphological studies B16-51, Mapping CRG Gr 5 B16-51, discovery and exploration of Adytum (160ft deep extension) in B51, resistivity studies, digging in B50 and B125, CRG 3 mapping of a number of small caves in Becks Gully-Hollands Hole area, and a development of mathematical models of humidity relations in various cave types. Whilst engaged in this work the membership of MUSIG grew. When the Constitution was finally ratified in May 1972 the group had a financial membership of fifteen.

Work has also been done in the Cliefden area. This includes the mapping of Island Cave, finding a third entrance to Island Cave, and resistivity work on Island and Taplow Maze Caves, and discovery of Tiddlelick, a vertical cave 120ft deep.

## S I X T H   I N T E R N A T I O N A L   C O N G R E S S   O F   S P E L E O L O G Y ,   1 9 7 3

The Sixth International Congress of Speleology will be held at Olomouc, Czechoslovakia, from 3-9 September, 1973. Pre- and post-Congress excursions will extend dates from 31 August to 9 Sept.

Formal Congress sessions will be divided into Geology, geomorphology, Hydrology and Climatology, Biology and Palaeontology, Archaeology, and Applied Speleology (the last including tourism, safety, technique and equipment, speleo-therapy etc.). A plenary session of the International Union of Speleology will be held in conjunction with the Congress, and delegates will represent the ASF which is a member of the IUS.

Specialist excursions are available covering karst morphology, cave tourism, archaeology, biology, cave diving and rescue techniques etc. Australia has been well represented at previous International meetings, and at this stage at least 4 people are known to be going from Australia. Further information may be obtained from the ASF Commission on International Relations. If you're suddenly fired with enthusiasm, here are some approximate costs:

Air - Sydney to Prague (45-180 day exc.):	\$697.90 approx.
Congress fee including Proceedings	: \$30 - \$40
Accommodation (all inclusive)	: \$8 - \$10 per day (7 days)
Excursions (transport & all accommodation :	\$35 (3 days) to \$130 (8 days) or so



# KARST OF THE KEMABU PLATEAU, IRIAN JAYA, INDONESIA

by Edward G. Anderson

. . . A whole new caving area right on Australia's doorstep?

Within the Indonesian half of New Guinea, recently renamed Irian Jaya, the central mountain chain extends for more than 600 kilometres along the fourth parallel of latitude south of the equator. This complex system of ranges is by no means inaptly named the Snow Mountains, for towards the western end the highest peaks in South-East Asia are permanently snow and ice capped, despite the proximity of the equator. The largest area of ice, including a number of glaciers, occurs in the Nassau Mountains and is adjacent to the highest peak - Carstenz Pyramid, elevation 4884 metres. These glaciers are the subject of detailed research by a joint team from Melbourne and Monash Universities, with funds from the Australian Research Grants Committee. When I was offered a place as surveyor in an expedition to the glaciers, just after Christmas last year, the consequent dilemma presented by my involvement with NIBICON was easily solved: I understand NIBICON managed exceedingly well without its manager.

From the point of view of a speleologist, the World Aeronautical Chart of the Snow Mountains contains a number of fascinating patches, more or less blank except for the tantalizing words "k a r s t" and "n u m e r o u s      s i n k      h o l e s". Our trip to the glaciers involved walking from the nearest airstrip at Ilaga, 60 km to the east, and the route crossed several extensive areas of karst. In addition, during the flight by chartered light aircraft from Jayapura to Ilaga we were treated to impressive views of innumerable large dolines in the Upper Baliem Valley and the Baliem River itself disappearing into an enormous cavern and reappearing more than a kilometre downstream. At Pyramid, base camp for copper prospecting by Newmont Mining Corp., the geologists showed us some souvenirs of their caving activities: a number of pieces of stalactites and columns, not less than a metre long and 30cm thick. During the walk to Carstenz, we were continuously on limestone for six of the seven days, though not all of this exhibited karst forms, partly because of closely underlying sandstones, or glacial moraine cover. In fact there is a surprising amount of surface drainage and many large lakes. However, many spectacular karst features were noted in passing, particularly along the Kemabu Plateau, an area of about 500 km<sup>2</sup> at about 3500 metres elevation. For three days our route weaved among every possible variety of doline, countless small swallets, and literally acres of sinister looking limestone pinnacles and tall towers. At least one of the large karst valleys deserves description as a polje. At our crossing of the 600 m. deep Zengillorong valley, I measured the flow from a resurgence at about 30 cusecs. About 8-10 km. further on, and at general plateau level, we almost walked over the edge of the largest doline of all: probably 100 m. deep and about the same diameter. A waterfall of about 30 cusecs roared over a cliff at one side, tumbled down a steep talus slope, and disappeared into a chasm of intimidating proportions. With suitable equipment, however, further exploration would not be unusually difficult, and the prospects are indeed inviting. While we were ill-equipped for caving, and could spare little time, nevertheless I investigated the entrances of a number of the smaller sinkholes, and there is no doubt that many of them "go".

Despite the great extent of the Kemabu karst, and the undoubted prospect of large numbers of caves, I gained the impression generally that the probability of notably deep caves is slight. I suspect that the limestone is not of remarkable thickness, at least in the Kemabu area. But we saw only a very small part of the total extent of limestone in Irian Jaya. The difficulty in making any rational assessment of the extent, type and speleological potential of the karst lies in the almost total lack of air photo coverage, topographic and geological maps. However, access to these areas is not impossibly difficult, and as transport connections with Indonesia will probably improve in the future, there is every reason to seriously consider the possibility of exploratory speleological expeditions in the next few years.



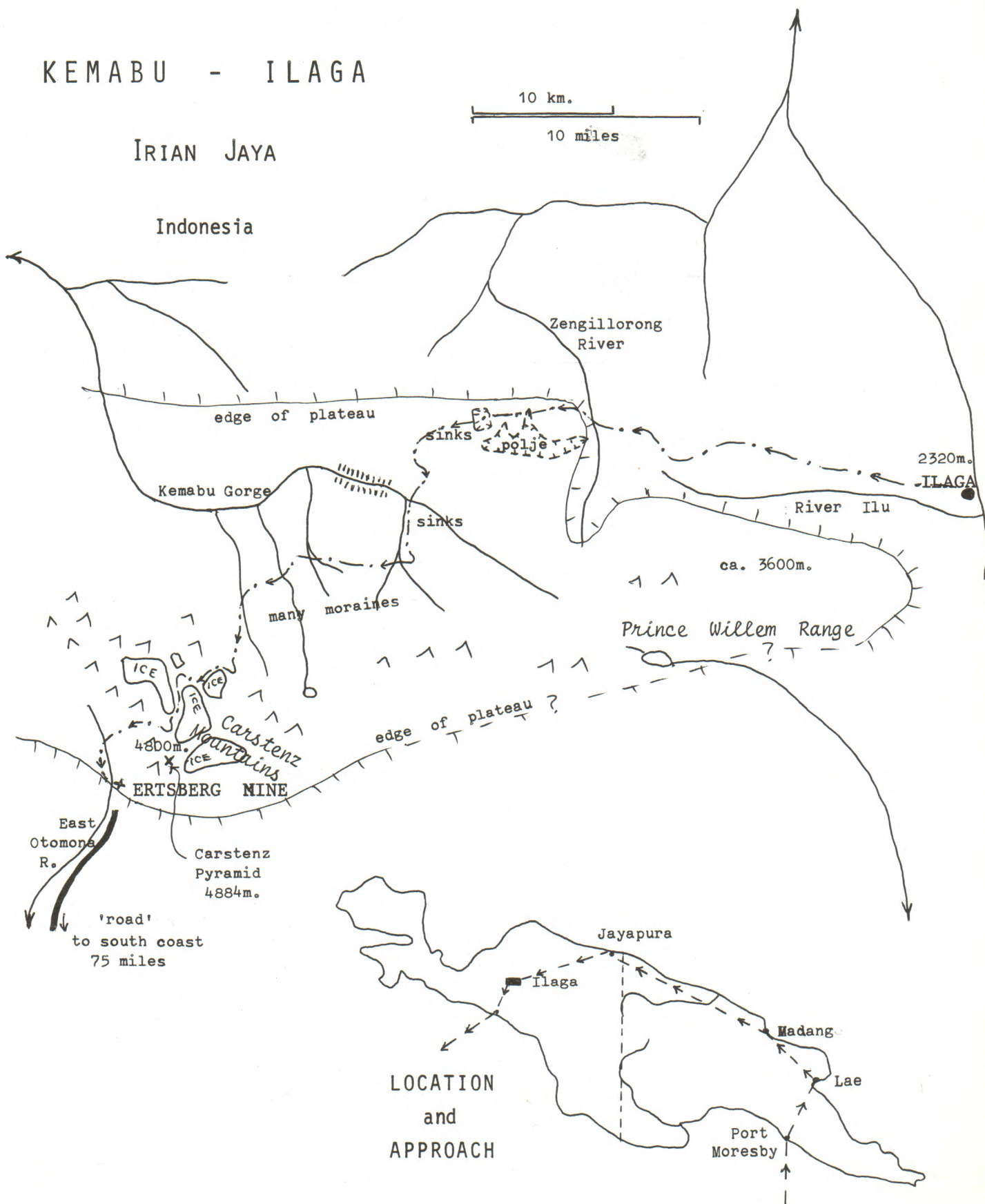
# KEMABU - ILAGA

IRIAN JAYA

Indonesia

10 km.

10 miles





## CONSERVATION ACTION

At the last Committee Meeting of the A.S.F., Warwick Counsell was appointed Vice-President and Convenor of the Conservation Commission. With the kind of enthusiasm that was necessary in prosecuting the widely reported Bungonia conservation cases in court, Mr Counsell now proposes to really ensure that there is some action over the many cave conservation issues in Australia.

### ASF CONSERVATION COMMISSION

*by Warwick J. Counsell*

An Australian Speleological Federation Conservation Commission was established at the Canberra Committee Meeting in January 1972.

The failure of that meeting to appoint a Convenor inhibited the Commission's function during the eleven months to NIBICON so I am taking this opportunity to advise speleos that there is a convenor for 1973 and that the Commission will function within its terms of reference to deal with situations as they arise without delay and with the greatest effort.

Briefly, these terms of reference are:

Firstly, to ADVISE the ASF Executive on conservation matters and to SUGGEST courses of action for the ASF Executive.

Secondly, to ESTABLISH LIAISON between societies, the executive and outside bodies.

Thirdly, to PUBLICISE conservation issues.

Fourthly, to PROVIDE A CLEARING HOUSE for conservation information.

For the Commission to fulfil these aims, it will be necessary to enlarge it by co-opting persons more able than myself to handle certain situations, or merely to spread the load. However, no matter how large the Commission becomes (within reason), its real ability to function depends on you!! You are the unknown correspondent in the field.

If I am to advise and suggest, I want advice and suggestions to give. If I am to establish liaison, I want to offer expertise. If I am to publicise, I want background material. If I am to act as a clearing house, I want something to clear.

Whether the Commission is successful depends on you. There is probably no karst or cave in Australia which is untroubled by changing times, changing climate or changing money, and it is up to individual speleos to help the Commission share these troubles

### "ENCYCLOPEDIA OF AUSTRALIAN CAVE CONSERVATION"

*by Warwick J. Counsell*

Late last year a request was sent to some eighty addresses for papers on conservation topics for NIBICON. The emphasis was very distinctly on area analyses and this was the form which the Conference Seminar took, and the form in which the Proceedings will be published. But there was an ulterior motive: to impress on those who bothered to write, on those who thought and on those who just listened, the variety of conservation threats, the complexity of the solutions and the relatively few areas which are not in danger of some sort.

As a follow-up from that Seminar, the ASF Conservation Commission is soliciting short articles on problems for Australia's first "Manual of Cave Conservation". It is hoped that the Australian Conservation Foundation will join with the ASF in publication of this comprehensive guide to areas in danger. The breadth of subject matter is by no means final but the aims for copious illustrations of the unspoilt and the spoilt, a contrast of the virgin and the whore. Hopefully it will appeal alike to readers of both "Playboy" and "EcoNews". Write in with your private conservation problems; if you can't think of a cave with problems, write about one without a problem and I will send a problem for it by return post



# YES YOU CAN, NO YOU CAN'T - DEVELOPMENTS AT BUNGONIA

by Warwick J. Counsell

Cavers, bushwalkers and conservationists generally could be excused for uttering sighs of relief when the Mining Warden handed down his decision following the enquiry into mining of Bungonia Gorge (for the background story, see ASF News1. 52 : 4-10).

In an historic judgment the Warden found that Public Interest in preservation of scenic and recreational aspects outweighed the Public Interest in mining of the area, having regard to the everlasting impairment of the environment as compared with the short term benefit of mining. He further recommended that any mining in the area should not extend beyond the limits proposed, a witness called by myself.

The NSW Minister for Mines was obviously shocked by this decision because he had previously supported the proposals of Associated Portland Cement Manufacturers (Aust.) which the Warden rejected. Subsequently, on Mr Fife's recommendations, State Cabinet referred the Warden's decision to the State Pollution Control Commission. The Company then submitted an environmental impact statement which was made public at a strgane desk in a strange office, and a firm "NO" to all requests for a copy.

Requests to the Minister for Environment Control and the head of the Commission were rejected with suggestions that the company would supply the statement. When approached, the company claimed that they wouldn't give them to everyone, and that they could be obtained from Department!

As if that were not enough, the company then submitted its nth proposal: a scheme claimed by the Department of Environment NOT TO EXIST, and yet one which was to be considered by the State Pollution Control Commission on 13 April, 1973. This proposal of course can then escape criticism by the expert witnesses who were able to analyse the company's previous schemes.

In the five months after the Mining Warden's decision the SPCC was approached several times with a request that it receive submissions prior to any decision. The final state of these enquiries is a letter advising that the matter is "being investigated". It will be all over long before they advise whether a submission is possible.

There may not be much of an illegal nature about the manner in which the environment, the environmentalists and the public are pushed around in this state, but it is disgustingly immoral.

## "THE CASE AGAINST PIKE CREEK DAM" - DEVELOPMENTS AT TEXAS

by Warwick J. Counsell

This bureaucratic looking report aims to debunk a smokescreen of secrecy about the Pike Creek Dam. The dam, to be started this year, will inundate the Glen Lyon, Russenden, Viator, in fact all the caves and limestone in the Border Rivers belt, popularly known as Texas Caves.

As these caves are in the only significant cavernous limestone within 200 miles of Brisbane, the Queenslanders are understandably outraged. They have produced a fresh analysis of the economics of the proposed dam, and the irrigation scheme it is supposed to provide, and draw the conclusion that the dam is not only unnecessary but also uneconomic. When the loss of the only readily accessible karst and caves is taken into account the case against the dam is quite indefensible.

UQSS and the QCC are setting the ball rolling with press releases to all newspapers, letters to politicians and interested people. They can only do so much, so the ASF Conservation Commission asks everyone to lend a hand by writing to their local members (Federal and NSW & Qld. State too). (some of the finance is coming from the Commonwealth). Don't forget your local newspaper.

The efforts to force withdrawal of finance for the scheme will be successful only if everyone cooperates to convince the three governments that they are offending voters as well as the environment.

(copies of the book available from UQSS for \$1 - address inside cover)



## THE P. B. AFFAIR

by Kevin Kiernan

" . . . All the earmarks of another Colong or Mt Etna . . . "

Conservation interests have now twice won court struggles to prevent the granting of a special Prospectors Licence to Mineral Holdings (Australia) Pty.Ltd. in the Precipitous Bluff area, but still face further challenges. The story is complex.

Through the latter months of 1972 the attitude of the State Government to the application became obvious. After a series of 'no comments' from various government ministers in relation to the objection lodged under the previous government by Mr. Peter Murrell, Director of the National Parks and Wildlife Service, the situation became clear when Agriculture Minister (in charge of National Parks) Lloyd Costello admitted in a letter to the writer "It is not the intention of the Government that the Director of National Parks should object in this matter". To an innocently worded reply he failed to respond. As the private objectors contemplated a subpoena for Mr. Murrell he was unexpectedly shipped away to Macquarie Island for a few weeks.

Mr. Jim Hemsley, Chief Wildlife Officer for Tasmania, was subpoenaed instead. He gave evidence openly, being due to leave the country a few weeks later anyway. Other witnesses included Dr. Geoff Mosley of the A.C.F. and former Tasmanian MLC Mr. Ron Brown of the South West Committee, while for Mineral Holdings, a former chief geologist for the Mines Dept. and editor of Limestones in Tasmania Mr. T.D. Hughes appeared. Difficulty was experienced in interpreting Mr. Hughes' marking out of the lease, firstly as there was some doubt that a datum peg had been placed, and secondly because the distances given did not fit between the coordinates at the lease corners! By using the distances the area was 14 sq. miles, by coordinates 7 sq. miles!

Mineral Holdings' main attack was that the objectors did not have a legal interest. Counsel for the objectors argued against this by drawing attention to the fact that the South Coast Track was maintained by the PWD. He suggested that because of this the Government had given a licence to walkers, a licence legally constituting an interest. As this licence was available to any member of the public there was a public interest. The Warden upheld this and after only a brief presentation of evidence concerning the values of Precipitous Bluff, and concern that fire might start in the rainforest, counsel for the objectors called a premature halt claiming the case so clear cut it wasn't worth continuing.

In his decision the following day (5 Dec) the Warden (Mr. J. Temple Smith) found that mining activity was not compatible with the concept of wilderness, and that the benefits of retaining the area in its present "primeval and pristine condition far outweighs the nebulous benefits which may result from mining activity".

The response of the State Premier and Mines Minister Eric Reece was to angrily draw attention to appeal provisions open to the company. After a publicity barrage Mineral Holdings through their negotiator Mr. P.B. Nye (another former chief geologist for Tasmania) held day long discussions with Mines Dept. officials and then appealed to the Supreme Court.

In January a team of cavers from several ASF Societies visited the Bluff area making several discoveries with good press, radio and television coverage. An exasperated spokesman for Mineral Holdings claimed there was more than "lizards, moss and caves" at stake. Quite true! He also reiterated the company's earlier claim that mining of the Bluff was not proposed, merely the foothills.

Subsequently the Launceston Examiner exploded the bombshell of the year with a front page claim that State Cabinet had decided to include the area in the South West National Park. The reasons, according to the Examiner were fear of another battle like Lake Pedder, of what federal Conservation Minister Moss Cass was up to (he had asked conservationists for a report)



and rumours that Senator Murphy was examining the possibility of withholding export licences to any company using the P.B. limestone. The State Government retaliated angrily denying anything but the purest motives and admitting the report to be partially true. Through a joint statement by Mr. Costello and Deputy Premier and Environment Minister Merv Everett it was stated that the decision was in no way influenced by the claimed factors, having been made some weeks before but not announced for the fear of prejudicing pending legal action. They said it would not be formally announced until all grounds for appeal had been exhausted. One cannot help contrasting the Government's action here with its stand when a writ was lodged in connection with the Pedder campaign, when it refused to allow a hearing and promptly changed the legislative situation.

The appeal date drew near but was postponed and then withdrawn from the list. Unexpectedly Mineral Holdings made a preliminary appeal seeking that the original determination by the Mines Warden be brought to trial in examination of whether the Warden had been correct in asserting the objectors held an interest in the area and in dismissing the application on environmental grounds. The effect would have been to short-circuit the full appeal, or at least give the company an extra bite at the cherry. However, in a four page judgement in chambers the Master of the Supreme Court, Mr. R.G. Brettingham-Moore dismissed the application awarding costs against Mineral Holdings.

A new date for the appeal has not yet been set down.

## YET ANOTHER TASMANIAN CONSERVATION PROBLEM

*Condensed from  
letters from  
Kevin Kiernan*

"...I should also mention that in the same area (as Exit Cave, Lune River, Tasmania), we have found Bradley Chesterman Cave to now be polluted. This appears to have resulted from tipping and accidental spillage in the quarry area which is not far from the furthest extremities of the cave. It appears the quarry manager, out looking for an alternative water source to Mystery Creek, in accordance with the proposal we (the South East Cape Committee) put to him, looked at this cave. After a short time in the cave he felt ill and left chundering, not regaining full vim and vigour for some days. We didn't strike it that bad, but the smell did become nauseating after a time. It is somewhat oily, probably from diesel fuel, which starts to come through only after heavy rain. The whole matter is worth considerably more examination to establish if this truly the case and if so what other pollutants are likely to be involved. There is nothing much we can do to correct the situation now but it can serve as a good example of the damage that may be accidentally caused through ignorance. I don't believe we should hold the company to blame or get stuck into them in any way though, as they are generally not too bad and look likely to close down soon anyway, in favour of chasing silica near the Hastings Reserve (no damage). The limestone for the zinc works will then come from Mole Creek, not that I can see any point in opposing the development there within present leases either."

## CAVE CONSERVATION PROBLEMS WITH A DIFFERENCE

### No. 1 - Borenore Caves

*by Warwick J. Counsell*

Borenore Caves, in folded and faulted Silurian limestone, lie twelve miles from Orange in the Central West of NSW. The Boree Cavern (an arch) and the Verandah Cave (an undercut) are large daylight lit caverns through which the Boree Creek passes.

Although both caves are supposedly protected by Reserves for the Preservation of Caves, they are the subject of long standing grazing leases and for many years inclement weather has driven stock to shelter in the two caves.

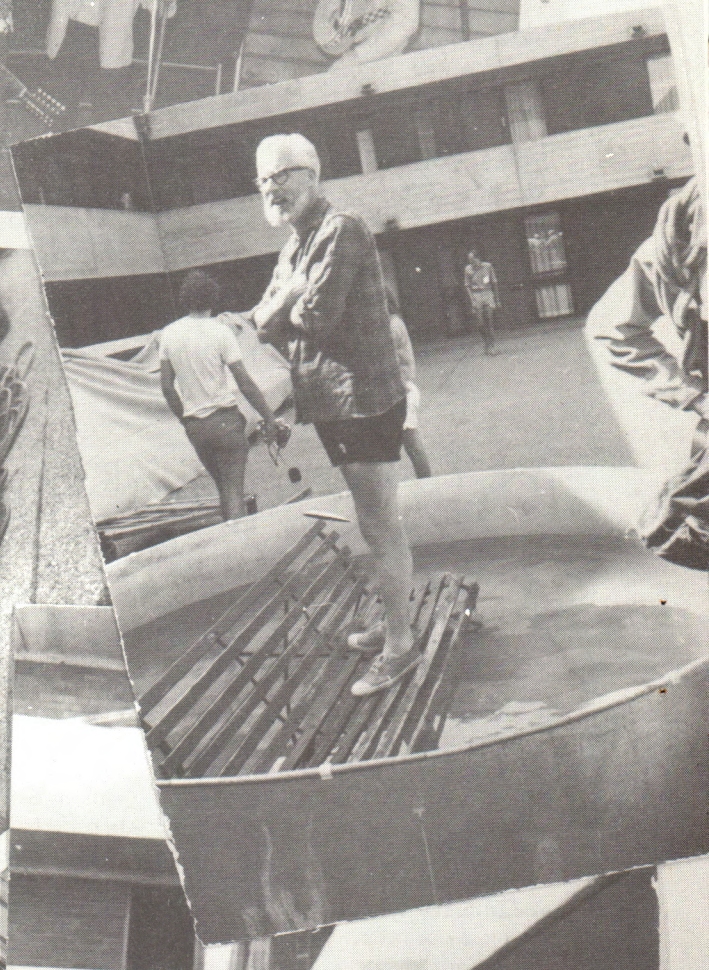
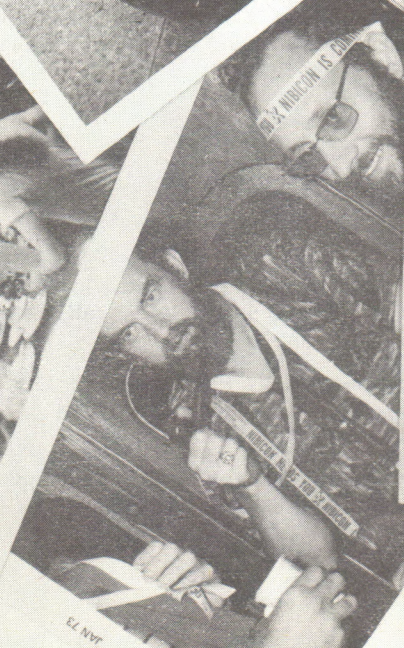
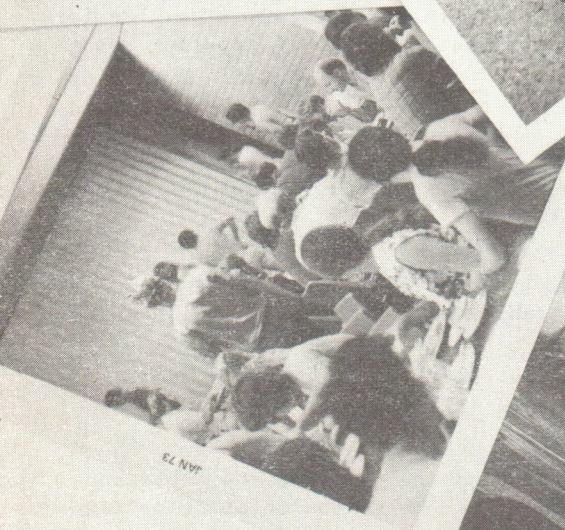
Cattle and sheep are unfortunately somewhat larger than bats and the signs of their presence are considerably distracting. It seems unlikely that these beasts can be forced to abide by ASF Code of Ethics Sect. 6 (4), and fencing of the caves seems inevitable.





NIBICON

Photos by Andrew Pavay & Jeanette Dunkley





## P R E S I D E N T ' S      R E P O R T ,      1972

By    Elery    Hamilton-Smith

## INTRODUCTION

It is pleasing to report that 1972 has been a busy year for most officers of the Federation. It has also been a challenging year and I trust that we have acted in a way which the future will show to have been wise.

I was personally fortunate to meet with speleologists in a number of other countries during the year. This has done a great deal to impress me with the relative unity and strength of the Federation, and with the importance of this. Too often, speleologists in other countries are greatly hampered by their own disunity in taking effective action on such matters as conservation and safety.

Of course, I would not deny that the Federation has its own divisions and tensions; we will, simply because cavers are people. However, these problems can be solved by frankness, rational discussion, tolerance, and often compromise. We will be both fools and knaves if we permit these problems to break down our essential unity. Let me also say that it is important to recognise that such problems are never the result of one party or one person taking any particular action; They only arise because there are two sides to an issue.

During the last year, it seems to me that publishing is the rock about which some such divisions have occurred. Nick White was asked at the last meeting to suggest some guidelines for us and he has done this. I hope this will help us to clarify procedures and set the field for more effective co-operation, but that will depend upon how we each act upon the policies laid down. It seems to me that it is very important that we do not impede people from getting on with a job and that we do publish our knowledge; there is certainly enough that can be done in this field so that with complete co-operation and sharing, none of us will have to compete with others for the next century.

## CONSERVATION

This has been a busy year for conservationists but it is pleasing to see the growth in public support. Within our own sphere of interest, all those involved in the Bungonia effort must be particularly commended. This represents a high point in conservation action in Australia and although not gaining so much public attention, one must also refer to the recent mining warden's decision on Precipitous Bluff as a further step of probably equal importance.

At the same time, we can only regret that the Queensland Government continues to set the standard in irresponsibility and lack of concern; no other State has paid so little heed to the importance of environmental protection, and it is to be hoped that this one may become a little more enlightened within the coming year.

Some States have had excellent opportunities to present their viewpoint to appropriate authorities, and to see action resulting. The Federation itself was offered and accepted the chance to submit a proposal to the Western Australian "Conservation through Reserves" Committee. This resulted from the vigilance and interest of John Dunkley and I hope it will be followed by a continuing interest in the Nullarbor by the Federation as such.

At the same time, this issue highlighted the weakness of our own internal communication. The Federation were not informed by our own member society in W.A. of this committee. When we did hear of it, we wrote to the President of W.A.S.G. but our letter did not reach him until after our own submission was prepared and submitted; apparently it sat in a Post Office box!



Similarly, by not consulting with the Federation in preparing their submission, W.A.S.G. deprived itself of the opportunity to make use of the accumulated expertise now available. One hopes that a Commission on Conservation will solve this problem, but then as I said earlier, cavers are people!

This is perhaps also the point at which to raise our need for greater financial resources. We should have been able to give much more aid to the Bungonia campaign: we should also have been making contributions to other conservation campaigns: even the simple task of our submission on Mullamullang and the Nullarbor has been paid for privately and we hope will be recouped by selling copies of the submission. This is not good enough, and we must try to establish greater funds for this purpose.

A new twist on the conservation-safety issues has arisen with the 'discovery' of histoplasmosis at WeeJasper. We will be discussing this matter further, and it is clear that it will demand new policies from us. Again, I wonder if we have been alert enough. One of the earlier victims was an enthusiastic cave explorer, and although his infection was not attributed to this source at the time, perhaps we should have been alert enough to have known about it and to have made some further investigations.

#### CAVE TOURISM

We are very lucky that Roy Skinner, as a Churchill Fellow, has been able to study cave tourism throughout the world. I believe it is wholly in our interests to see that Roy's knowledge is shared with others in the cave tourism game: accordingly we have made some preliminary investigations which will be reported separately, and I hope to see us take action on this.

#### ADMINISTRATION

There are four matters of Federation administration which I must report and upon which some comment is necessary.

- (a) Edie Smith Award : Both Joe Jennings and I found ourselves in what politicians call (quite often, especially in Victoria) 'a conflict of interest'. That is, as members of the selection committee, we found ourselves proposed as awardees by various members. I only wish to report that we therefore relinquished our own positions as members of the committee and asked both John Dunkley and Andrew Spate to replace us for the current year. We thank them for their willingness to take this extra responsibility and trust that the committee of the Federation endorse our action.
- (b) Newsletter advertising: As President, I asked John Dunkley to refrain from charging advertising fees to a member society until this issue could be determined by the committee. Doubtlessly John might have made the same decision independently, but on receiving a request from the society concerned, I felt I had no option but to take some action. Let me make several points on this:

- \* My decision is not to be taken as any precedent in determination upon this matter when it is debated later in the meeting.
- \* I trust that such interference by an officer bearer in the work of a Commission will be rare indeed: as I see it, the Commission structure is intended to enable people to get on with a job with a minimum of interference, and with accountability expressed through the Commissions own report to the Committee.
- \* At the same time, I see the major guidelines to any Commission or other agency of the Federation as being resolved and recorded policy where such exists and the budgetary provisions for action. Where, as in the advertising issue, neither of these quite meet the question, then I would argue that the Federation's first responsibility is always to its own member society.

The Committee might care to debate aspects of my action on this matter, and I would certainly welcome any such debate which may clarify some policy guidelines for the future.

- (c) Documents for this meeting: I deeply regret that a number of reports for this meeting have not been circulated in advance: I regret even more that I have been a guilty party in this respect. We all know the amount of pressure upon some of our willing workers which makes it hard for them to get reports out early. Can I stress that we must try to do better in this respect for future meetings - it is unfair to member societies and their delegates if documents are not available for preliminary discussion.



(d) Public Enquiries: The Secretary finds the amount of correspondence to the Federation is steadily increasing. He has dealt with over 50 letters in the past year, many of which were seeking information about the Federation. He suggests we should prepare a simple document or brochure, detailing the aims, structure, organization and programme of the Federation, perhaps with an address list, which would facilitate dealing with enquiries, and perhaps making the Federation in other ways. Again, I stress this has been placed on the agenda for discussion. I would personally stress that this one area is where we must take care not to overlap with the kind of data which should be available from societies for individuals who wish to take up speleology.

Finally, in closing this report, I would like to thank all those who have helped during the last two years in making the Federation a more active and effective body- other office-bearers, chairmen and convenors of committees and commissions, delegates from member societies and hundreds of other individuals throughout societies. At the same time, I apologise to those with whom I have had little contact, or whose correspondence has had to wait for a reply - I can assure them it is not due to any lack of interest on my part, merely to the various pressures under which I have had to work.

## COMMISSION ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

*by John Dunkley &  
Elery Hamilton-Smith*

The Commission's activities during 1972 were restricted to matters of a routine nature.

Information regarding tourist caves and caving contacts was provided to several ASF members travelling abroad: Peter Matthews & Dr Harvey Cohen of Melbourne, Chas Stone-Tolcher (CQSS), Ian Bogg (BMSC) and Frank Brown (TCCNB). Assistance was also given to Mr R. Skinner, Hastings Cave, Tasmania in relation to his Churchill Fellowship Tour. O

One of us (EHS) was also fortunate in having the opportunity to visit caves and meet with speleos in various countries. This visit included meetings with officers of the various nationally organized bodies in the UK, discussing common interests and problems.

With the advent of cheap excursion air fares to Europe and USA, there seems likely to be an increase in such enquiries. Both Europe and America have a large number of both tourist caves and caving clubs, and careful planning will be necessary to derive the best from a short trip. It is hoped that Australian speleologists will feed back to the Commission the reception and experiences they gain overseas, so that future travellers will be well catered for.

The Sixth International Congress of Speleology will be held in Olomouc, Czechoslovakia, in September 1973. Preliminary information is available. In addition to the formal sessions in Olomouc, there will field trips both before and after to Czech caves, covering such specific interests as karst processes, cave diving and exploration practice, and cave tourism. Further enquiries are invited.

## NEWSLETTER COMMISSION

*by John Dunkley*

Four issues of the Newsletter in 1972 totalled 92 pages. Purchase of a microface typewriter (funded out of my pocket so far) enabled about 35% more material to be accommodated per page, while my electric typewriter was also used extensively. An excellent flow of material, much of it not solicited, continued, and I am grateful to contributors for their faith. The Sydney societies again carried out the production work, a thankless, unrewarding task, but one without which the Newsletter would double its cost. Ian Wood handled address lists most capably; if you missed receiving an issue it's probably because your society did not keep him informed of addresses. Costs continued to rise; postage rose 25% again this year and the Post Office seems determined to keep raising charges for registered periodicals. Printing charges were contained but there is a rising demand for maps and photographs which has to be paid for. Finally, other commitments in 1973 will require me to relinquish much of the Newsletter, and expansion of the working Committee is recommended.



# REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON LONGEST AND DEEPEST CAVES

by Ross Ellis

This is the second report of this Commission and the attached appendix is the third listing of the longest and deepest caves in Australia. The first listing contained 25 longest and 25 deepest (ASF Newsl. 52: 19-22), the second, 55 longest and 40 deepest (ASF Newsl. 55: 3-4), and this, the third, the 65 longest and 65 deepest. I hope eventually to prepare a listing of the 100 longest and deepest caves.

The listings are not as accurate as I would like them to be as the information on many of the lengths and depths is still inadequate. I need more information about many of the caves where only estimates have been made of their lengths and depths. The caves marked with an asterisk in the lists are the caves on which I need further details.

Comparing the second edition listing of longest caves with this one it will be noted that there have been numerous changes in position and that ten new caves have been added. Several caves advanced their position, quite a few were demoted and some held their position despite the changes going on around them. In most cases the changes came about because of new discoveries made in the cave and additional surveying being done, but in some cases the change has been made because of the replacement of a cave that has since been found to be shorter than had been estimated.

Comparing the second edition listing of the deepest caves with this one it will be noted that there are 37 changes in position and that 25 new caves have been added. Only one of these changes resulted in the cave advancing its position in the listing. The other 36 changes resulted in the cave being demoted, due mainly to replacement by discovery of new deep caves and extensions to others. In some cases depth estimations have also been changed.

Since publication of the second edition of the longest and deepest caves listing in ASF Newsl. 55: 3-4, I have received additional information and suggestions from the following cavers:

Fred Aslin, Mike Bourke, Tony Dowling, John Dunkley, Albert Goede, Bob Hawkins, Julia James, Ian Lewis, Ron Lorraway and Andrew Pavey. I would like to thank them for their help and look forward to similar assistance from them and any other interested persons in the future.

A couple of ticklish questions relating to the correct way to total up cave passageway lengths have been received during the year. These related to: dune cave systems where there is virtually no passageway, only extremely wide chambers supported by numerous pillars. How do you measure passageway in this type of cave? How do you total up passageway in caves where there are numerous passages leading into the roof of a cavern, each requiring a ladder to get down into the same cavern? Would all passages and drops be counted or only the longest of the drops. When there are several short passages or alcoves leading off from a small chamber (say 5-20ft long), should these be counted as part of the length of the cave? I would appreciate hearing from anyone on these points.

This listing of Australia's Longest and Deepest Caves will be sent to the International Union of Speleology as our official list, but before doing so it would be appreciated if each Society map recorder or an interested person could check through the lists published here and let me know if there are any mistakes or if there are any other caves which could be added to the lists.

Any information for the Commission on the Longest and Deepest Caves should be sent to:

Ross Ellis, 52 Bundock Street, RANDWICK, N.S.W. 2031.



LIST 1 - THE LONGEST CAVES IN AUSTRALIA (3rd Edition, 1972)

C A V E		metres	feet	C A V E		metres	feet		
1)	Exit	Tas	16.1km	10m.	33)	Eagles Nest	NSW	1220	4000
2)	Mullamullang	WA	11.3km	7 m.	34)	Southern Tourist Jenolan	NSW	1220	4000
3)	Johannsens	Qld	4880	16000	35)	Koonalda	SA	1220	4000
4)	Mammoth	NSW	3510	11500	36)	Queenslander	Qld	1220	4000
5)	Herberts Pot	Tas	3350	11000	37)	Trogdip	Vic	1200	3950
6)	Royal Arch	Qld	3050	10000	38)	Mount Hamilton	Vic	1190	3900
7)	Niggle	Qld	2500	8190	39)	Scrubby Creek	Vic	1160	3800
8)	Wet - Georgies Hall	Tas	2290	7500	40)	Camooeal	Qld	1070	3500
9)	Sand	SA	2290	7500	41)	Punchbowl-Signature	NSW	1070	3500
10)	Victoria	SA	2130	7000	42)	Carpentaria	Qld	1070	3500
11)	Cave Spring	WA	2130	7000	43)	Weebubbie	WA	1070	3500
12)	Colong	NSW	2130	7000	44)	Five Corners	SA	990	3230
13)	Northern Tourist, Jenolan	NSW	1830	6000	45)	Glen Lyon	Qld	980	3200
14)	Wiburds Lake	NSW	1830	6000	46)	Francombes	Tas	980	3280
15)	Weelawadji	WA	1800	5900	47)	Mitchells Crossing	SA	940	3100
16)	Taplow Maze	NSW	1680	5500	48)	Honeycomb	Tas	940	3100
17)	The Labyrinth	WA	1680	5500	49)	New Southlander	Qld	910	3000
18)	Croesus	Tas	1650	5400	50)	Punyelroo	SA	910	3000
19)	Newdegate	Tas	1650	5400	51)	Geck	Qld	910	3000
20)	Welcome Stranger	Tas	1650	5400	52)	Fox	SA	910	3000
21)	Khazad-Dum	Tas	1650	5400	53)	Marakoopa One	Tas	910	3000
22)	Moparrabah	NSW	1620	5300	54)	East Deep Creek	NSW	910	3000
23)	Fossil-Hogans Hole	NSW	1620	5300	55)	Cocklebidy	WA	840	2750
24)	Kubla Khan	Tas	1590	5200	56)	Snake Hill	SA	790	2600
25)	Spring	Qld	1530	5030	57)	Dogleg	NSW	790	2600
26)	Tuglow	NSW	1400	4600	58)	Junction	NSW	760	2500
27)	Cutta Cutta	NT	1370	4500	59)	Resurrection	Qld	760	2500
28)	Easter	WA	1370	4500	60)	Lynds	Tas	760	2500
29)	Wyanbene	NSW	1370	4500	61)	Main	Qld	760	2500
30)	Dip	NSW	1280	4200	62)	Elysium	Qld	760	2500
31)	Markham	Qld	1230	4040	63)	Barkers	Qld	730	2400
32)	Loons	Tas	1220	4000	64)	Olsens	Qld	720	2360
					65)	The Tunnel	WA	690	2250

TOTALS: NSW - 16 , NT - 1 , Qld - 16 , SA - 8 , Tas - 13 , Vic - 3 , WA - 8

LIST 2 - THE DEEPEST CAVES IN AUSTRALIA (3rd Edition, 1972)

1)	Khazad-Dum	Tas	322	1055	33)	Warbla	SA	94	310
2)	Tassy Pot	Tas	244	800	34)	Execution Pot	Tas	94	310
3)	Mini Martin - Exit	Tas	220	720	35)	Devils Pot	Tas	94	310
4)	Sesame Two	Tas	219	720	36)	Dribblespit Swallet	Tas	91	300
5)	JF 14 (unnamed)	Tas	214	700	37)	Croesus	Tas	91	300
6)	Midnight Hole-MysteryCk	Tas	203	665	38)	Dwyers	NSW	88	290
7)	Growing Swallet	Tas	171	560	39)	Murra-el-elevyn	WA	88	290
8)	Cauldron Pot	Tas	168	550	40)	Tommy Grahams	WA	85	280
9)	Kellers Cellar	Tas	155	510	41)	Owl Pot	Tas	76	250
10)	Odyssey	NSW	148	485	42)	Honeycomb	Vic	76	250
11)	Satans Lair	Tas	143	470	43)	Niggle	Qld	76	250
12)	Niagara Pot	Tas	142	465	44)	Walls	NSW	76	250
13)	Revelation	Tas	137	450	45)	Speaking Tube	Qld	76	250
14)	Rift	Tas	131	430	46)	Camooeal Four Mile East	Qld	73	240
15)	Fossil - Hogans Hole	NSW	131	430	47)	Great Nowranie	Qld	73	240
16)	Gormenghast	Tas	128	420	48)	Little Nowranie	Qld	73	240
17)	Argyle Hole	NSW	128	420	49)	Koonalda	SA	73	240
18)	Grill	NSW	126	415	50)	Kubla Khan	Tas	73	240
19)	Weebubbie	WA	120	395	51)	Canellan	Qld	72	235
20)	Mullamullang	WA	119	390	52)	Carn Dum - Coprolorum	Qld	70	230
21)	Col-in-Cavern	Tas	119	390	53)	Abrakurrie	WA	70	230
22)	Herberts Pot	Tas	116	380	54)	Kestrel Number One	WA	70	230
23)	Big Hole	NSW	113	370	55)	Belt - Jolly Roger	Qld	67	220
24)	Drum	NSW	111	365	56)	Acoustic Pot	NSW	67	220
25)	Rescue Pot	Tas	107	350	57)	Tuglow	NSW	67	220
26)	Cocklebidy	WA	105	345	58)	Crickhollow	Qld	64	210
27)	Y 18 (unnamed)	NSW	101	330	59)	Windlass	NSW	64	210
28)	Pillingers Creek	Tas	99	325	60)	Bottomless Pit	NSW	62	205
29)	Bone Pit	Tas	98	320	61)	Elysium	Qld	61	200
30)	Splash Pot	Tas	98	320	62)	Johannsens	Qld	61	200
31)	Pannikin Plain	WA	98	320	63)	Waterloo Swallet	Tas	61	200
32)	Blowfly	NSW	94	310	64)	Canyons	Vic	61	200
					65)	JF 22 (unnamed)	Tas	61	200

TOTALS: NSW - 14 , NT - 0 , Qld - 11 , SA - 2 , Tas - 28 , Vic - 2 , WA - 8



# REPORT OF THE AD HOC COMMITTEE ON ETHICS

by Henry Shannon

At the Canberra Committee Meeting of the Federation in January 1972, I was appointed Convenor of an Ad Hoc Committee to review the current guideline document Code of Ethics. After discussions with colleagues the new draft Code below was drawn up. Further comments are invited before the final version is put to a postal ballot later this year.

- 1 (1) They will in reporting their work, avoid and discourage sensationalism, exaggeration and unwarranted statements. (existing 1)
- (2) They will in publishing their work take particular care to acknowledge other peoples' contributions to the work involved; either as clubs or individuals, published work, personal communication or whatever.
- (3) They will be discreet in disseminating information that might endanger caves. In particular they should not broadcast their knowledge of entrance locations or routes.
- 2 (1) They will treat guides and other officials of tourist caves courteously and respectfully. (existing 2)
- (2) They will endeavour to be courteous to the general public, but will defend caves from the attentions of the uninstructed where this is deemed necessary for the protection of the cave.
- 3 (1) They will carefully observe the established rules of good camping conduct (as is)
- (2) They will clear their campsites of their own and other peoples' rubbish and spent carbide. Such rubbish should preferably be carried out or else buried. (amended from: they will be careful to bury all carbide and rubbish (existing 2(2)))
- (3) They will bury their faeces when camping in bush conditions
- 4 (1) They will have specific or tacit approval from the owner or guardian before entering private property or caves reserves (as is)
- (2) They will follow normal local practices regarding gates on properties or reserves (as is)
- (3) (present clause unnecessary, delete? - reads:) They will not, except in cases of emergency, presume on the goodwill of owners in dry areas for supplies of water. Prior arrangements must be made.
- (4) They will take care to avoid interference with stock or crops. (as is)
- (5) (present clause reads) They will, where a cave entrance has been blocked by the owner to prevent injury to livestock, either reblock the entrance after use or construct a substantial and permanent fence around it. (suggested amendment to add the following:) They should endeavour to persuade the owner to leave natural entrances open.



- 5 (1) They will not leave rubbish in caves; their own or other peoples. Spent carbide, flash bulbs, wrappings and other refuse must be brought out of the cave (amended by adding "their own or other peoples")
  - (2) (present clause reads) They will not disfigure caves by any unnecessary. (Suggest add:) Survey marks should be small and inconspicuous.
  - (3) (present clause reads) They will take care to avoid disfiguration or destruction of cave decoration (formation) (suggested amendment is add following:) or any other natural features of the cave. Disturbance should be confined to tracks. In areas of clean flowstone floor, muddy clothing or boots must be removed and only clean clothing worn. Tracks should be marked out and rigidly adhered to. Helmets should not be worn in the vicinity of stalactite clusters.
  - (4) (our old friend: now reads:) They will not under any circumstances leave faeces in caves, they will prepare themselves beforehand or, when underground, make provision for the removal of faeces. (Comment: this clause is generally ignored with regard to underground camps (some WASG parties excepted). This should not be tolerated. Two proper courses are open: a) to enforce the present article; b) to water it down to an enforceable level. Amendments for course b) are below. I prefer to keep present wording but I think most clubs will opt for a change, so:  
Amended version: spot difference:) They will not in normal circumstances leave faeces in caves. They will prepare themselves beforehand or, when underground, make provision for the removal of faeces.
  - (5) They will, when camping underground, take stringent precautions to isolate all organic wastes, including faeces, from the cave ecosystem, preferably by removal of all such introduced wastes from the cave itself.
- 6 (1) They will, when visiting an area frequently visited by another club, do all in their power to cooperate with that club (as is)
  - (2) They will conduct disputes in a restrained and gentlemanly manner.
- 7 (1) They will behave responsibly in environmental matters.
  - (2) They will endeavour to protect the caves of Australia.

Comments on the proposed Code of Ethics should be sent to:

C. Henry Shannon, 44 McCaul Street, Taringa, Queensland 4066

## SPACE FILLER

One of the most regular contributors to the columns of this Newsletter, Mike Bourke has commenced publication of the Niugini Caver, a newsletter of events in caving around Papua and New Guinea. The first issue contains articles on Bibima Cave, the Hindenburg Wall, Caves of New Britain among others. Subscriptions: 50c. an issue or \$2 a year, send to:

R. Michael Bourke, D.A.S.F., KERAVAL, East New Britain, T.P.N.G.

AUSTRALIAN SPELEO ABSTRACTS: Have you subscribed yet? Current and back issues (2 per year) are now available from the Convenor of the ASF Bibliography Commission (\$1-50 a year for this year, \$1 1970, \$1-50 1971). Write to :

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## DOWN UNDER

## ALL OVER

## . . . NEWS FROM AROUND THE SOCIETIES

Many of the club newsletters in the last few months have been running stories about NIBICON and the Field Trips. CEGSA led the race into print about discoveries at Jenolan, while SUSS, UNSWSS, BMSC, KSS, UQSS and CSS have all had their pages overflowing on NIBICON material. Tasmania seems to have grabbed plenty of room too, with TCC, SCS, SUSS, UNSWSS, VSA and UQSS waxing enthusiastically about Cauldron Pot, Khazad-Dum, Exit, P.B. or what have you. Perhaps it would be easier if all A S F Conference Field Trips were held in Tasmania in future? . . .

**B M S C** In his Annual Report, President Ken Pickering reports a quiet year, although over 20 trips were organized during the year, with the emphasis on Jenolan (in Wiburds Lake Cave) and Abercrombie. Several hundred feet of passage have been discovered in Wiburds and nearby. Other trips have gone to such seldom visited areas as Murruin Creek and Limekilns, but no startling discoveries are reported.

**CEGSA** Have made a few minor extensions to caves at Naracoorte and at Buckalowie. They report " ... Clara St Dora, where one member of the party was nearly locked in, two parties were locked out, and about twenty-five feet of cave was added"..."A grasshopper plague, a navigator error of  $7\frac{1}{2}$  miles and losing the track doomed the Noppa Noppa (!) Expedition and left it half in and half out of the creek bed." 400ft of passage has been discovered in Cathedral Cave, described as the one least likely to reveal new extensions at Naracoorte. An electric jackhammer has been acquired for digging in Victoria Cave and elsewhere. Damn the creeping mechanisation of caving! Otherwise the year has been a disappointment, membership is down and none of projected publications has yet appeared.

**C O S S** members have been busy recently acquiring property and in particular caves! Yes, Richard Badynski has bought a property containing Frys Caves. Exploration has continued in Johannsens Cave (now over three miles long) and elsewhere on Limestone Ridge, with some small gains.

**C S S** have toured to a number of southern areas with most activity being centered around Colleman, where access difficulties were encountered. A dig in the North Branch sink provided scope for ingenuity in removing and replacing boulders with little gain of cave. At Yarrangobilly, Eagles Nest and Bathhouse were visited. The DMR silt traps do not appear to be very effective. Digging has also resumed in Dog Leg at Wee Jasper.

**H C G** 21 trips to 6 areas in the last year. At Cliefden one cave was found, partly dug out and mapped to Grade 4. Cleaning formation commenced in Boonderoo. Surface torgging of outcrops remote from Belubula River and Davys Creek. At Wee Jasper, a practice Search and Rescue, "victims" being removed from Punchbowl and Dip Caves. 16 Members went on Cliefden and Yarrangobilly NIBICON Field Trips and there were 6 at the Sydney session.  
(from Keith Oliver in Sydney)

**K S S** have made several trips to areas around the Macleay lately. At Carrai, Yessabah and Willi Willi, bat caves were visited to obtain soil samples in connection with histoplasmosis studies. With Noel White and Kav(alieris), another party went to Bull Creek for a "good look at the geology" but no limestone was found.



## M S S

have continued their gas analysis programme at Jenolan and elsewhere. Following the acquisition of surveying equipment there has been an active programme at Abercrombie and Jenolan. Another area visited was the sandstone cave at Kincumber near Gosford. A total of about 18 trips were held during 1972.

## N U C C

At Michelago, where we have had three trips, some thirty caves have been found, mapped, numbered and tagged, showing that there is much more there to interest the caver than one would expect after reading the Speleo Handbook. A trip was also run to Bunyan (Rosebrook) where a rough surface sketch and some cave maps were done. It is proposed to map the main cave there in the near future. The Wyanbene map has finally been finished. Or it will be finished by the time you read this. It is on four sheets approx. 30" x 45". At Yarrangobilly in December an apparently new cave was found near the natural bridge. It also appears to be a bat cave of some sort - not sure yet. On the NIBICON field trip to Yagby two small caves found near Y12 some years ago were mapped. Perhaps our greatest achievements, however, have been in North Deep Creek at Yarrangobilly. Here in December a small extension was found and a hole in the roof of the chamber past the duckunders was noted. On the NIBICON field trips we returned (with VSA and UNSWSS members) with a scaling pole, and found a new long extension. The length, excluding all side passages (some still unexplored) is about 100 metres. (from John Brush in Canberra)

## S U S S

The great NIBICON bash must have burnt out some SUSS members, and February and March have not seen a great number of trips. The annual pilgrimage to Wee Jasper went as usual but most of the action again seems to be at Jenolan, where follow-up trips to NIBICON continued work in Mammoth Cave (Twiddley-om-Pom) and Wiburds Lake and Alladin Caves. The December '72 Bulletin has an article on recent exploration of rarely visited areas upstream of Wiburds Lake Cave. No caves but some karst development reported and the limestone is certainly more extensive than previously thought.

## U N S W S S

continue to be a most active society, if the trip list is any guide. Apart from the usual stamping grounds, trips have gone to such unlikely places as Fraser Park (sea caves), Appletree Flat (maps and cave descriptions in Spar 21), Nangwarry near Nowra (sandstone caves, quite a few of them - Spar 22), Kincumber (sandstone caves near Gosford previously visited by MSS) and Glen Davis / Coko Creek. The main trips connected with the discovery and exploration of Twiddley-om-Pom (Mammoth Cave, Jenolan) are published in Spar 23 along with a useful map. The same issue reports that Speleotours (Ink) Director Dave Perkins has reconnoitred a remote (and doubtful) caving area at Ravine, Lobs Hole, near Yarrangobilly.

## V S A

Well, we thought some other clubs had been cranking the P.R. handle pretty hard lately, vying for prestige and all that, but VSA will presumably be seeking Royal Patronage after a trip recently reported in Nargun. Here are 12 'heavies' standing ostentatiously around the grounds of Government House, Melbourne, at a Garden Party for the Australian Conservation Foundation. Attracted by the "boldy written SPELEOLOGICAL", Prince Phillip swoops and asks questions about holes in ground, limestone quarries and so on. Shortly after he is observed cornering the wives about whether they stay up top cooking for husbands etc. Beyond that episode, Nargun is full of trip reports on Tasmania, where VSA seems to do a lot of caving these days. Two recent issues also devote a good deal of attention to soul searching on Search Rescue, and some problems are discussed following a recent practice sessions.

## W A S G

Numerous trips were run last year to the normal stamping grounds of Margaret River/ Augusta and Nambung River (the latter 120 miles north of Perth). Main highlight was the discovery of the Pendulum - Gondolin section in Easter Cave. The discovery added about 1000ft of passage to the cave (and for better or worse made front page news in the Perth newspapers). Several other trips were led to other areas without significant news. (ed. note : Several large Western Cavers recently reached me and a longer article on recent work in W.A. will be published in this Newsletter as soon as possible when these are perused)

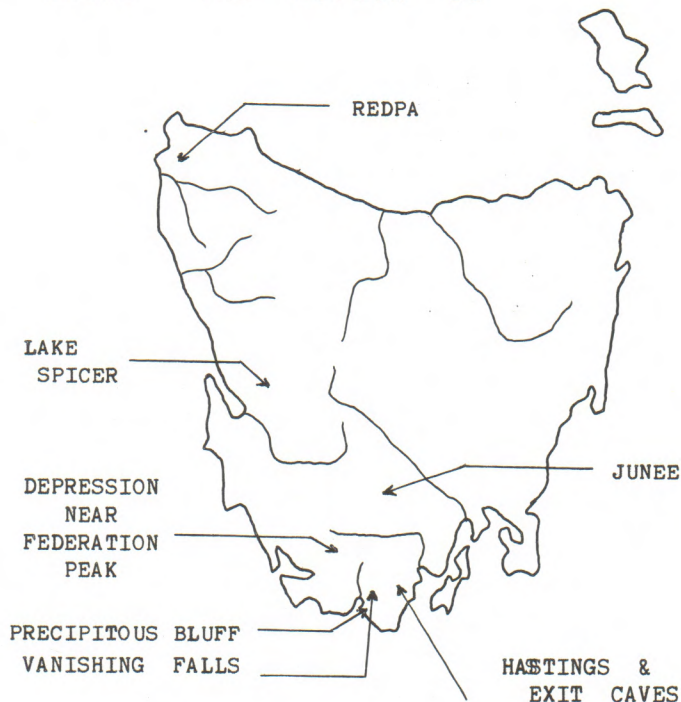
(from Norm Poulter in Perth)



## SCS

continues to produce a very commendable quarterly magazine Southern Caver. During the three months to January 31, 22 trips are listed, the major areas being Mole Creek and Hastings, at which latter a high grade survey of Newdegate (tourist) Cave is being undertaken by Ant Sprent. Two trips went to Montague / Redpa and located 6 caves, one of which was pushed 800ft (ho hum!). Sea caves have at last drawn attention and several have been located and explored at Surprise Bay; some contained formation. President John McCormack has found a way to raise a fast buck for club funds. Seems a drough stricken property owner near Richmond felt the need to have his convict built well cleaned up again. Much muck, mud and mire was mined and manoeuvred out by a crew of SCS before the hundred bucks was forthcoming. The major newsworthy activity, however, was the Precipitous Bluff Expedition (see elsewhere in this Newsletter) and its aftermath with mainland cavers ranging all over Tasmania. No less than 8 clubs were represented at the P.B. Barrel at the SCS Clubrooms on January 25!

## WHERE THE ACTION IS



## TCC

reports a breakthrough in Cauldron Pot at June. Bypassing a talus blockage at 400ft, the way on was naturally, WET, and at the end of 1972 progress stopped at the top of a 100ft waterfall. Three more trips this year pushed down to 862ft to make this Australia's second deepest cave after Khazad-Dum. Many other trips during January included what looks like the annual invasion from mainland Australia. Meanwhile, the unsung heroes behind the scenes are hard at it, the boys who make the spectacular deep cave pushes possible. In Tasmania it's a case of first find and second get to your cave, so Brian Collin has started another track-cutting marathon, this time to Vanishing Falls on the Picton River west of the Exit Cave area. This spectacular waterfall has been reconnoitred by Briah and Jeanette from the air but no surface party has reached it yet. The water vanishes into a cave and the resurgence is over a mile away so prospects seem excellent.

On the same flight with well known South West airdrop pilot Jim England, Brian and Jeanette have checked out a large depression two miles south of Federation Peak. The Huon map shows four streams converging on a depression half a mile across. Again a cave is evident although prospects are not held to be as good as Vanishing Falls. Access will be even more difficult in this region.

## A NEW LIMESTONE AREA NEAR LAKE SPICER

by Albert Goede

The first report of a small area of limestone in the Tyndall Range came from TCC member in 1970-71. At Easter 1971 an unsuccessful attempt to reach the area was made; the track proved too rough and broke a Land Rover axle.

In January 1973 Albert Goede was able to reach the area on a University field trip. It turned out to be of considerable scenic and geomorphological interest but caving potential seems limited due to the small outcrop and a shallow water table. 6 short caves were located, numbered and explored. The area was heavily glaciated by a small ice cap during the last glaciation and the caves are post-glacial, being developed in a small gorge eroded into the old surface since the ice retreated.



# U Q S S      N E W      B R I T A I N

## E X P E D I T I O N      1972 - 73

by R. Michael Bourke

Ora cave was visited and explored by a party comprising four Brisbane and two PNG cavers during December 1972-January 1973. When subjected to surveying the efflux and doline maintained their reported size (Bourke, 1972). The magnitude was awe inspiring. At the efflux almost 200 cusecs (7 cumecs) of water shot out of the cave in a cliff face 55m above river level.

The twin doline was measured at 260m deep. At the bottom the river emerges from a cave 27m high and 25m wide, stays on the surface for 60m, and then ~~disappears~~ into the cave again.

Exploration of the cave proved quite a challenge with a few hundred cusecs of river to deal with. In the upstream section progress was halted where the river emerged from a sump - very disappointing. Downstream a waterfall across the width of the cave prevented further movement in that direction. A climb around the waterfall was abandoned due to shortage of time. From where we halted the cave continued 21m tall and just as wide with the river filling most of the floor.

Although passage length only added up to 610m, the cave managed to pack a fair bit into it. As well as the large passages and wild river, there was a beautifully decorated chamber with a dome ceiling 30m tall, a lake, and a sump. Passing through part of the cave we gained access to the twin doline which was completely enclosed by sheer walls.

Access difficulties were worse than anticipated. It took ten days to get the full party and our 420kg (half a ton) of gear from Rabaul to the bottom of the doline where we camped on a 35° slope. This gave eight days for underground work and a rest day, leaving five days to return to the coast.

While at the doline camp one of the party, Leslie Lemon, developed an infected leg and consequent swelling made it necessary to carry her by stretcher back to the coast. Our respect for the carriers increased tremendously as the stretcher was handled over slopes of 40° with a few near vertical pitches. Though the injury and our radio contact with Rabaul we managed some unsolicited headline and radio publicity.

A fuller expedition report will be published in Down Under.

BOURKE, R.M. (1972) : Ora Cave, New Britain. ASF News 1. 56 (Winter) ; 3

## N I U G I N I      C A V I N G      N E W S

by R. Michael Bourke

There are now 24 starters for the August expedition. Van Watson flew over the area recently and reports approximately 40 sinks many of which are taking water. The plateau is at approximately 2500 metres a.s.l. with resurgences at about 1000 metres. Paddy Pallin has promised \$1300 worth of goods gratis and other discounts are coming in.

On the Gazelle a group of agricultural college students had their first introduction to caving and surveying in three river caves in the Gaulim area recently. They decided they like it and will be back for more, although some stayed on top when crawling in water with 10cm headroom!

The Chimbu cavers checked out 2 holes on the top of the Porol Escarpment in the Highlands. One was not a goer but the other was, and takes water. They got down below 30m. with a further 45m. pitch in front of them.



## P O S T C R I P T        O N        N I B I C O N

*by Ian Wood,*Director,  
ASF Ninth Biennial Convention

The Ninth Biennial Convention of the Federation was held in New College, University of New South Wales, during the period 26-30 December, 1972. Approximately 150 speleologists from all states of Australia attended, while for the first time there were ten visitors from New Zealand.

A very wide range of speleological activities was presented, including symposia and seminars on Biology, Geomorphology, Chemistry, Meteorology, Conservation, Speleopublications and many others. One highlight of the sessions was the testing of the majority of the participants for Histoplasmosis by Dr S. Nogrady of Royal North Shore Hospital, and Glenniss Wellings of SSS. Of those tested, a significant number had or had been in contact with the disease. Particularly prevalent areas were Queensland and the A.C.T. (Wee Jasper recently received publicity in the press).

Another highlight was the enacting of the first Speleosports competition. Teams representing clubs and districts competed in ladder climbing and prusicking races, and finally a 3-man, 1 woman team race cum obstacle course consisting of crawls through pipes and tyres, ladder climbing, abseiling and swimming through a pseudo siphon.

Over 50 papers were presented during the 3 day Convention including one from the USA. The photographic competition attracted a large number of entries, the standard of which was very high. A cruise and smorgasbord dinner on Sydney Harbour completed the activities before cavers left for field activities around New South Wales.

Being Convention Director does not make it easy for me to comment objectively on the overall running of the Convention. It is difficult to stand back and look at organization and make a critical appraisal, but some comments should be made.

Firstly, three days of high pressure Convention was not appreciated by speleos who are used to more leisurely activities. A five day convention with more free time would have been appreciated but good locations were at a premium at this time of the year and costs quite high;

Secondly, many people brought along their paper without prior notification to the organizers and wanted to present same. No-one was turned back. Many who had advised that they were presenting a paper gave no indication as to its final content or length. Hence hasty reshuffling of programmes was needed, with up to 3 sessions running concurrently, resulting in some confusion and inconvenience to those who were not able to attend in a full time capacity.

Also, field trips were not organized until during the actual proceedings, resulting in a lot of hard work for a few people at a time when they should have been able to relax and enjoy things.

A comment in one club magazine pointed out that the ASF was obviously not dead but very much alive and kicking even if it was only seen in action every two years. I agree; the Federation gains strength year after year, and is slowly becoming the truly representative organization of Australian speleology that it should be.

With the next Convention being held in Queensland for the first time in 1974, we should see an even greater display of speleological solidarity.

## EDITORIAL POSTSCRIPT

We apologise again for having to defer some authors' material to the next issue, and for the delay in appearance of this issue. The two are related: it is necessary to place a number of reports in the March issue of an administrative nature, and these need checking with authors at a time when all the year's work on new covers, changes in address lists on inside covers, changes in paper orders, checking on availability of back issues and editing annual advertisements have to be done. The Newsletter Commission never at any time promised to bring out the March issue in March, the June in June and so on. This is the autumn issue, and damn it, it's still autumn!

- Fred



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