

# ASF

## NEWSLETTER Summer, 1980, No. 87



*Ian White (left) and Anthony Graham (right) preparing for the climbs  
Nettlebed Cave, New Zealand. — Photo by Guy Cox*

### THE AUSTRALIAN SPELEOLOGICAL QUARTERLY

Registered in Australia for transmission by post as a periodical — Category "B"

AUSTRALIAN SPELEOLOGICAL FEDERATION

P.O. BOX 388

Broadway N.S.W. 2007

**50c**

Recommended

ISSN. 0313 — 413 X



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# ASF NEWSLETTER

## Number 87, Summer, 1980

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### EDITORIAL

The I.S.C. (International Speleological Conference) is being held in the United States in July, 1981. John Dunkley tells me that he has full information, and later will be able to provide further information about travelling cheaply in the states. There will be more in the next issue. Don't forget Cave Convict either.

As regards the next issue ; more disasters. There is a dearth of copy for the next issue. This issue is four pages short. Where are all those articles, eh ? If they don't start coming in, you may have to be satisfied with rambling dissertations by the editor. Surely that threat will start copy rolling in !

Peter Radcliffe is now Secretary of ASF, Tony having earned a quiet retirement after so many excellent years.

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DEADLINE DATES FOR FUTURE ISSUES-For numbers 88, 89 and 90 are 1st May , 1st August and 1st October, 1980, respectively.

\*\*\*\* - \* - \* - \*\*\*\*

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After that evening, I fed her insects every time I came to the grotto. She accepted everything that was alive on my palm... There were plenty of insects in the air, and I do not believe that necessity played any part in her acceptance of food from me. None of the other bats ever swooped to welcome me as I walked across the field, or took insects from my hand. And so I can only presume that when the White Lady accepted food from my hand it was a demonstration that man and bat could be friends in spite of all the differences between them, in spite of the fact that they lived on totally dissimilar planes of existence.

"The White Lady" - Leonard Dubkin.



## RESCUE PULLEYS

John Webb\*

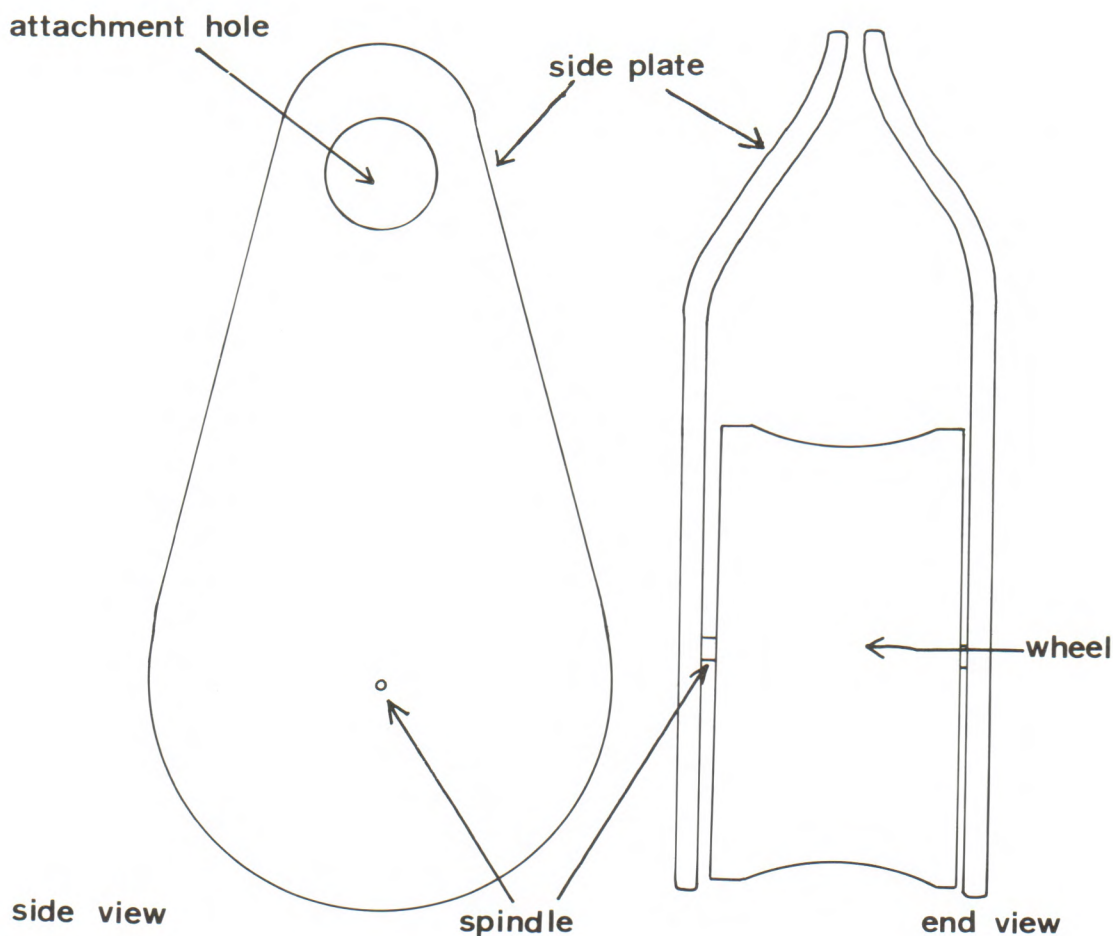
Pulleys can be of vital importance in a cave rescue if hauling is involved, and it is useful to know which of the different brands available is most suitable. Table 1 gives a selection of readily available sailing, climbing, and caving pulleys which could be used for cave rescue; while not exhaustive, this list includes the three main types (based on material used in their construction).

When discussing rescue pulleys, six factors should be taken into consideration: attachment point, rope insertion, weight, strength, efficiency and cost. The pulleys in Table 1 will now be assessed in terms of each of these factors.

### Attachment point

It is preferable if the pulley can be easily attached to a carabiner. Some sailing pulleys (e.g. Gibb) have a rather narrow attachment loop which will take a sling but not a carabiner; others (e.g. Fico) use a shackle attached to the top of the pulley. Climbing and caving pulleys have a hole in each side plate (see Fig. 1), making the attachment point an integral part of the pulley itself, and this is probably the best system.

Figure 1. Generalized diagram of climbing/caving pulley.



### Rope insertion

It is best if the rope can be inserted into the pulley at any point along its length, i.e. not have to be

\*c/- Geology Department, University of Qld., St. Lucia, Q., 4067.



RESCUE PULLEYS Cont;

fed through the pulley from one end. Some sailing pulleys ( e.g. Gibb ) do not fit this requirement.

Weight

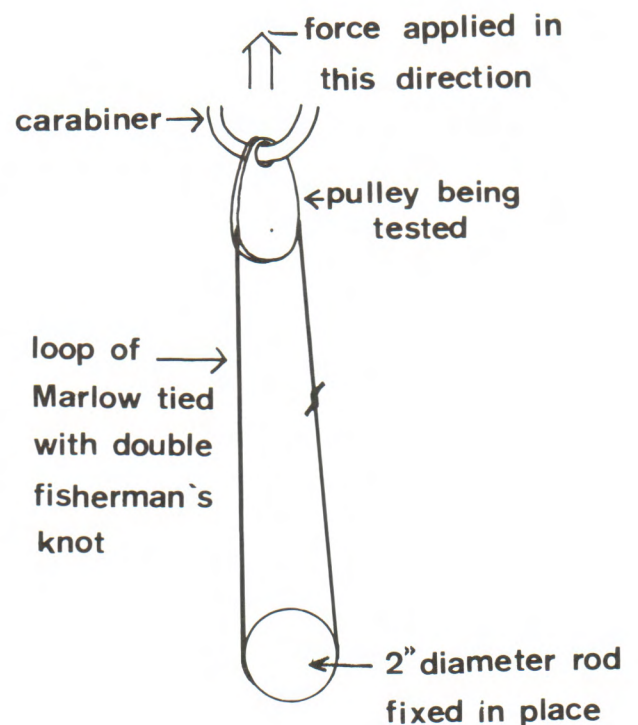
Pulleys weighing more than 200 g are probably too heavy for caving use. All those in Table 1 weigh less than this , and the REI and MSR pulleys are particularly light (40 g ).

Strength

Table 1 shows the breaking strains of some pulleys as specified by the manufacturers; 1500-2000 kg is probably adequate for cave rescue purposes. The listed strengths of the REI and Riley pulleys were tested using configuration in in Fig. 2. The REI pulley broke suddenly at 2370 kg, simultaneously failing at the carabiner attachment hole and at the point where the spindle joins the side plates. The Riley pulley began to deform at carabiner attachment at about 1200 kg , and at approximately 2000kg the spindle started to tear out of the side plates. At 2470 kg , the wheel shattered , probably because of the sideways pressure from the side plates as they deformed around the spindle. Thus both pulleys lived up to their manufacturers' specifications.

Figure 2.

Method used for testing strength of pulleys.

Efficiency

Wenzel (1977) developed the system shown in Fig.3 for testing the efficiency of pulleys ,based on the Z pulley system often used in cave and mountain rescues. His results are given in Table 2. Similar tests were applied to the REI , Riley and Gibb pulleys in the present study ; Table 2 shows the calculated efficiencies. The REI pulley was common to both sets of tests , but Wenzel (1977 ) obtained a higher efficiency using the same diameter rope. This may be due to the fact that he bent the side plates on the REI pulley he tested to stop their binding on the rope. This was not done in the present study , which also used a rather stiff 11 mm dynamic rope , thus reducing the pulley efficiency. In any case , the results are still useful for comparative purposes.

Table 2 shows that rope flexibility has a small but significant effect on the efficiency of pulleys , some ropes giving 10 % greater efficiency than stiffer ropes of the same diameter. However the most important factor is the pulley itself , particularly the type of bearing and to a lesser extent the diameter of the wheel. Of the pulleys tested , the Riley would appear to be the best ; while others will do the job , more energy must be expended to lift an equivalent distance.

Wenzel (1977) also tested the efficiency of using carabiners instead of pulleys in hauling systems , and found



RESCUE PULLEYS Cont :

them to be negatively efficient , i.e. they required a pulling force greater than the weight lifted.

Cost and availability

As Table 1 shows , the prices vary from cheap to moderately expensive .Riley caving pulleys can be ordered from Caving Equipment , Sydney ; the other caving and climbing pulleys can be mail ordered direct from their manufacturers ( addresses available on request ).Australian climbing shops stock a variety of climbing pulleys. They include several brands not mentioned here which have aluminium side plates and nylon wheels, so the data presented herein on the REI and MSR pulleys is probably applicable to them. Sailing pulleys are readily available from most sailing shops.

Conclusions

Of the pulleys tested in this study , the Riley caving pulley is best suited to cave rescues , in particular because of its high efficiency.

Reference

Wenzel, D., 1977 .The Efficiency of Rescue Pulleys . Off Belay , 34.

Figure 3 . Method for testing efficiency of pulleys (from Wenzel 1977 ).

$$\text{Efficiency of pulleys} = \left[ 1 - \frac{F - \frac{W}{2}}{\frac{W}{2}} \right] 100 \%.$$

A force of  $\frac{W}{2}$  would raise a weight of W kg

if the system were frictionless. However , rope stiffness and pulley friction reduce the efficiency.

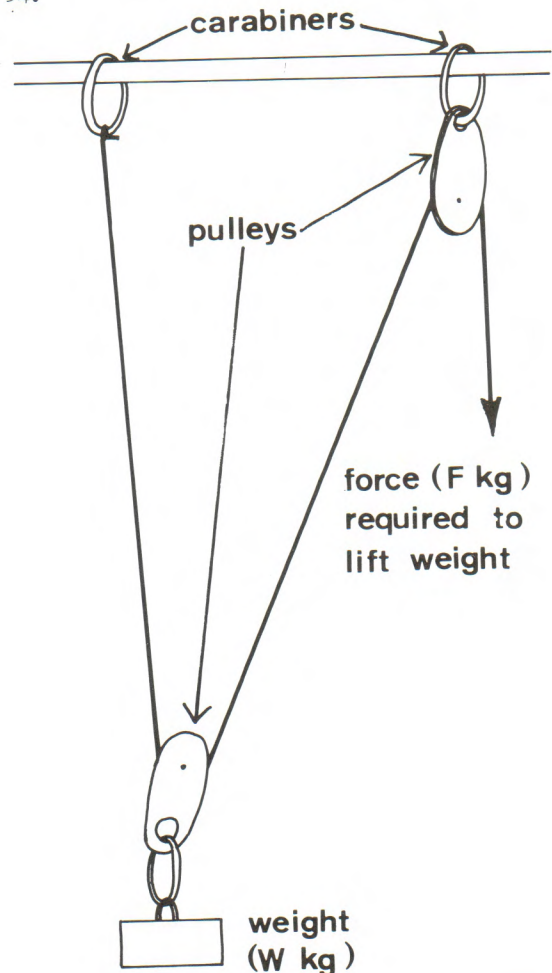


TABLE 1

Brand	Type	Construction		Strength (kg)		Cost (A\$)
		side plates	wheel	specified	tested	
Gibb	sailing	TUFNOL	TUFNOL	1545	-	~10
Fico	sailing	stainless steel	plastic	-	-	12
REI	climbing	aluminium alloy	nylon	2270	2370	3
MSR	climbing	aluminium alloy	nylon	-	-	-
Petzel	caving	aluminium alloy	nylon	-	-	<10
Riley	caving	stainless steel	plastic	2000	2470	6



RESCUE PULLEYS Cont.;

TABLE 2

Brand	Efficiency ( % )				
	Wenzel (1977)		this study		
	9/16" goldline	11 mm dynamic kernmantel	11 mm dynamic kernmantel	9 mm dynamic kernmantel	12 mm static kernmantel (Marlow)
Gibb	-	-	5-10	20-25	10-20
REI	48	56	0-10	30-35	20-30
MSR	54	60	-	-	-
Riley	-	-	60-65	70-75	65-70

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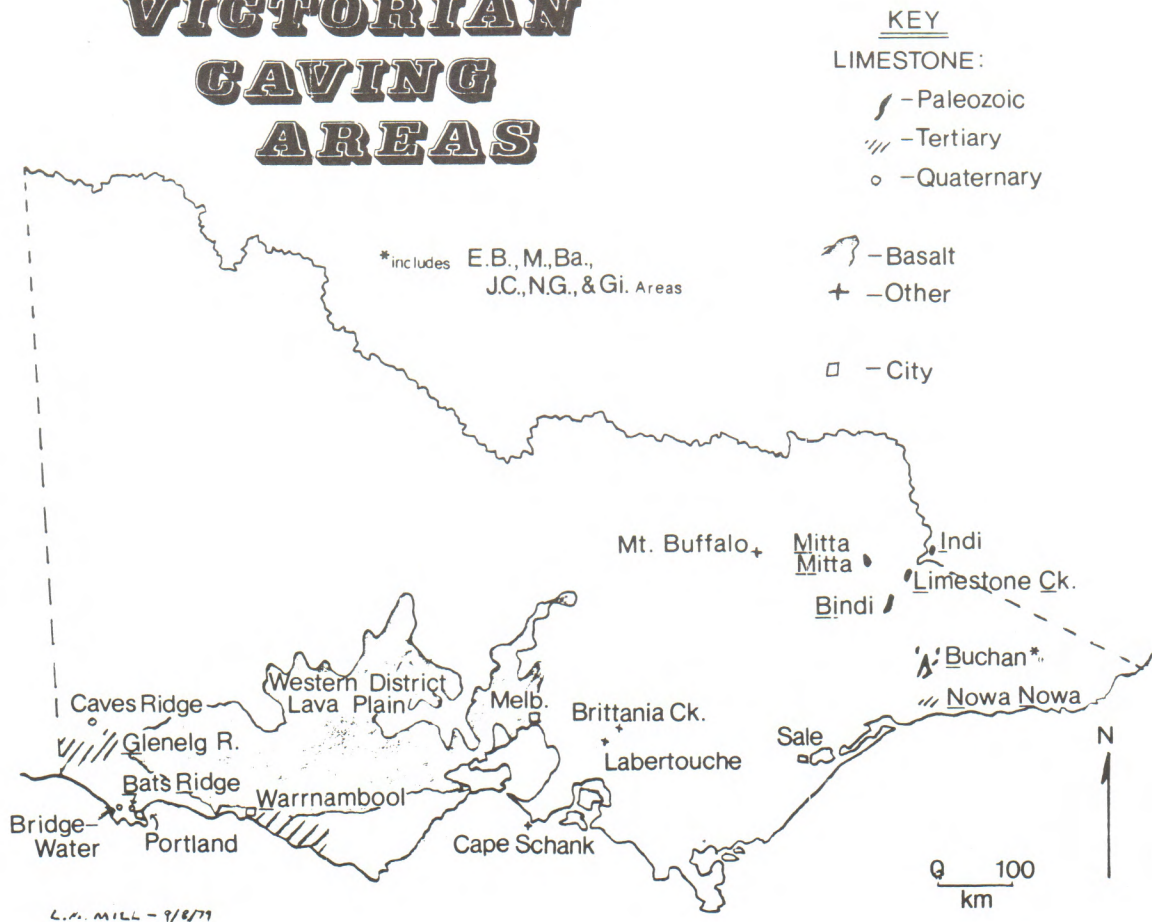
## CAVE CONVICT FIELD TRIPS

## Lloyd Mill

As you are well aware Cave Convict is the name of the next ASF Conference to be held in Melbourne during the last days of 1980. This brief article gives details of the field trips planned for the following month to enable people to plan their holidays in advance.

The map shows most of the caving areas in Victoria. A lot of these are not on the field trip list. If you have a special interest in any of these areas see Lloyd Mill at the Conference. He might be able to arrange something.

## VICTORIAN CAVING AREAS

SHORT TRIPS

These might be slotted in during the Conference or immediately after. The caves being considered are :-

- (i) Ponvan Cave : a fairly typical cave (lava) near Bacchus Marsh, west of Melbourne.
- (ii) Labertouche Cave : an interesting granite boulder cave of uncertain origin.



CAVE CONVICT FIELD TRIPS -1980 Cont;LONGER TRIPS

These will commence after the conference.

- (i) Western District- lava and limestone. This will be an excursion. A group will gradually move across the Western District, visiting such places as ; Mt. Hamilton, Mt. Eccles, Byaduk, Tower Hill (volcanic karst); Warrnambool Coast, Loch Ard Gorge (Tertiary Limestone) and Bats Ridge (Quaternary Limestone). The group will camp at various places in the fortnight after the Conference. People can leave or join in when they wish, providing they let the leaders know during the Conference. Leaders are Nick and Sue White and Ellery Hamilton-Smith.
- (ii) Limestone Creek- Silurian Limestones. This will be a drop-in area. Area Co-ordinators will be based near the Main Bluff for the two weeks after the Conference. There are a number of discrete outcrops containing caves in the area. This is the area for those who like caving in a bush setting. Only three hours drive from Buchan, this area is worth a visit for a day or two, before or after you visit Buchan. There is a possibility of an extra visit to Indi (N.S.W.). The Area Co-ordinators are Bruce Brenton (first week) and Bruce Leslie (second week).
- (iii) New Guinea Ridge - Devonian Limestone. This will be a walk-in area. Area Co-ordinators will be camped on the Snowy River for two weeks after the Conference. The area has a number of very good caves and much potential for more. In addition, it is highly scenic, being at the end of the Tulloch Ard Gorge. If you are thinking of visiting the area for more than a day, bring all your camping and walking gear. The Area Co-ordinators are Brian Fronz and Rudy Frank.
- (iv) Jacksons Crossing - the southern end of the New Guinea Limestone. This is another area which will require people to walk in and camp. VSA have done very little in this area, so there could be discoveries to be made. The Area Co-ordinator will be Bruce Leslie (first week).
- (v) Buchan - including East Buchan and The Basin. All of these areas will be on a drop-in basis for most of January. The main centre of operations will be at Homeleigh and all cavers wishing to visit any areas around Buchan (including Jacksons Crossing and New Guinea Ridge) will need to report to Homeleigh first. Accommodation will be available at the Top Hut and various bush campsites, as well as at Homeleigh. Availability will depend on numbers, so bring all your camping gear to be safe.

CAVING RESTRICTIONS

These are the same as those that apply to VSA members at Buchan.

- (i) The Caves Reserve : The Officer-in-Charge is very co-operative, but he does ask that there is no caving on the Caves Reserve when the tourists are swarming around. If you wish to see the tourist caves, see the Area Co-ordinator. Otherwise- no caving there.
- (ii) Scrubby Creek Cave : All trips are to be led by a VSA Leader (we have special leaders for this cave) when available, who is in sole charge. A wet-suit is recommended. Anyone wishing to go on a trip must satisfy the leader that they are experienced enough to handle a sump (low air space). This is for safety, as we have had a few near drownings.
- (iii) Exponential Pot : The policy for this cave has not been decided at club level yet. We have a club policy which will probably be adopted. Details at the Conference.

The Buchan Area Co-ordinators are Lloyd Mill, Tom Whitehouse, Dave Smith (Basin Area) and a host of others.

Complete details of the field trips will be in the Guidebook, and announced at the Conference. Hope to see you at CAVE CONVICT !

\*\*\*\* - \* - \* - \*\*\*\*

The opening into the hillside was left open and often in hot summer days the Narnians go in there with ships and lanterns and go down to the water and sail to and fro, singing, on the cool dark underground sea, telling each other stories of the cities that lie fathoms below. If you ever have the luck to go to Narnia yourself, do not forget to have a look at those caves.

## NOTICES & NEWS

### AUSTRALIAN CAVE LIST NOW AVAILABLE

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The list shows very brief details of all registered caves up to November 1979 for most areas. It is an interim list until the much fuller "Australian Karst Index" is published. The hold-up with the Karst Index is in sorting out wrongly/carelessly filled in cave forms. This time around, the instructions will be even more explicit, the (same) forms will be easier to use, and hopefully, the instructions will be better followed.

Peter Matthews,  
66 Frogmore Crescent,  
Park Orchards, Vic., 3114.

### BACK ISSUES OF ASF NEWSLETTER AVAILABLE

Brian McQuillan has in stock, back issues of the ASF Newsletter, from Issue 70 to the present issues, excluding Issue 73, which has sold out. Call, phone or write to Brian for details :-

Brian McQuillan,  
27 Liggins Road,  
Hazelbrook, N.S.W., 2779.  
Phone (Home) (047) 586868.  
(Work) (02) 2189603.

### SECOND WORLD WILDERNESS CONFERENCE

The second World Wilderness Conference will be held at Cairns, Queensland, 9-13 June, 1980. Write for further details to :-

P.O. Box 823,  
Cairns, Q., 4870.

### PLUMLEY AUSTRALASIAN CAVE LIFE PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION

Some details of this have been forwarded by the WASG correspondent. I believe that the competition has still to be agreed to by the ASF Committee. Basically, it is proposed to be a biennial competition to encourage an interest in biospeleology and an awareness of cave ecology. More details later.

### PHILIPPINES EXPEDITION

Traditional Explorations Pty. Ltd. have an expedition going here (mountaineering) in April, 1980. Contact Tom Hayllar, c/- Traditional Explorations, 28 O'Connell Street, Sydney, N.S.W., 200.



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*Descending the 30m. pitch in Khazad Dûm (JF4), Tasmania*

*Photo by NPoulter  
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**BOOK REVIEW****Philip Toomer**Vertical Caving : Mike Meredith

Printed by Westmorland Gazette , Kendal , England , United Kingdom.

64 pages, 12 chapters, 18 photographs

Price :: \$ 7

Distributed in Australia by

SPELEAN PTY. LTD.

The preface tells " Mike Meredith..... was(on) the staff of the Wernside Caving Centre as Chief Instructor for three years.... in Grenoble , he became a leading light in the Furets Jaune de Seyssins. Now resident in Austria , he has had the opportunity to study development in caving techniques in three countries. This book is a distillation of what, in his experience, is the best "style" for the modern speleo."

With this as a preamble, the comments from Mike Meredith deserve serious consideration. This I have given the book chapter by chapter. My comments make up the rest of the review.

The basic philosophy expressed throughout the book is that safety is the paramount consideration in SRT and that human error and not equipment failure is the cause of most accidents.

The book deals briefly with the selection of rope, including in the page and a half, most of the considerations - except the well documented problem of the rapid degeneration of Polyester ropes. As much attention is paid to the care of ropes.

The section about knots suggests that the figure eight is the only suitable knot to use, but nowhere mentions the use of overhand knots to lock the figure eight, particularly necessary when stiff ropes are jointed with the figure eight.

In "Personal Equipment" the Mallion Rapide, much used in Europe but used by only a few cavers in this country, is given what can only be described as a "rave review" - they certainly deserve closer examination.

Great detail is given regarding the placement of bolts of various kinds - there is no conservation message at all. No wonder there is a proliferation of bolts in the regularly visited caves of Europe. -Australia beware. " ...A sound natural anchor is often useful as a back up belay or for a traverse line." !!!

Abseiling is examined and there is an informative description of the Petzl style descender and shunt. General procedures for passing knob and intermediate anchors are given.

The Prussiking chapter examines in some detail the Frog method and also the "Texas Two" rig is briefly examined, as are the rope walking methods - generally considered to "transform .... passing an intermediate anchor into an epic struggle". The chapter concludes with some useful fault finding hints.

Rigging pitches is considered in useful detail outlining the "tricks of the trade", and stressing the safety considerations and highlighting potential problems.

A chapter entitled "Plan B" considers, the "other" way of doing things - e.g. using crossed Karabiners to abseil, prussik knots to prussik etc. - a mandatory part of the repertoire of all vertical cavers.

The tackle transport and mini rescue chapters, particularly when reviewed together, provide succinct, useful information and offer several techniques for moving people and gear up and down.

"Learning SRT" puts into print the stages of learning SRT and provide a syllabus for the student of SRT. The chapter stresses that a knowledge of SRT is not sufficient to be a competent caver; a knowledge of the underground environment is essential, it further states... "it is not possible to acquire physical skills by reading a book".

The final chapter is the "justification" chapter, it makes no excuses just states that one good system has been proposed as a starting point.

The book achieves what it sets out to do. It is no way a substitute for any existing books in the field. It is certainly a very valuable addition to the current literature and expands sections of the book by Montgomery in a most useful fashion. It is indeed pleasing that it is not a rewrite of Montgomery's book. The last mentioned book is in fact one of the three books listed for further reading.



## NEW ZEALAND EXPEDITION — NETTLEBED CAVE — 1980

Guy Cox

Nettlebed Cave, under Mount Arthur in the north of the South Island, was first discovered just ten years before the start of this expedition. For nine of these years though, all that was known was a series of dry, sandy passages ending in a draughting hole at the top of a "stal" slope. The potential was clear— the entrance is just up a dry creek bed from the huge Pearse Resurgence, and indeed acts as a flood rising for the Pearse. Water tracing had shown a hydrological connection from Grange Slocker, 976 m above. In January 1979, the draughting hole was finally chemically enlarged into a series of three squeezes. Draughting is perhaps an understatement, since the wind speed in them can reach 50 km/hr. The squeezes are quickly followed by a rather grotty duck after which the cave improves greatly, with a series of large well-decorated passages leading to an underground river. The situation at the start of the trip was that six kilometre of passage was known; the riverway (carrying about  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the Pearse flow) ended in a waterfall estimated at 25 m high, and many leads elsewhere awaited us.

Not surprisingly, the expedition was popular and several applicants had to be turned away. Even so, at times there were as many as 30 people in camp at the Pearse Resurgence, and about 50 took part. Tony White and I represented SUSS; the other major foreign contingent was a party of cavers from Bradford (England), who had been making a film in Harwoods Hole. From the 28 th. December, 1979, we made our way in dribs and drabs to the road end, a pleasant picnic spot near some waterfalls on the Pearse River. The walk-in took an old gold-miners' track along the Pearse, the upper section crossing the river no less than nine times. (Distinctly refreshing, since the water temperature both in the cave and in the resurgence, was 6°C.) The walk could be done in 1½ hours though 2 hours was more normal.

First exploration of the cave took two directions. One group, with Tony as resident madman, attacked a series of climbs in the Meltdown series— high-level, well-decorated passages to the south of the main trunk routes, which probably represented a former Vauculian resurgence. Over the next few days they went a long way, but without finding any exit to the surface. Meanwhile, I joined forces with the English mob in an assault on the main stream waterfall... This was taken as a classic rock climb, with Ian White (no relation to Tony) leading, and Anthony Graham second. John Graham and I acted as dogsbodies—taking photographs, putting in bolts, brewing tea etc. The climb was spectacular to watch—up the side of a waterfall carrying around 0.2 cumec. Communication was almost impossible. The climb took two days in all, and in the end the "25 m pitch" turned out to be over 60 m !

Once rigged with SRT ropes, it was a truly inspiring pitch — or rather a series of pitches, since we rigged it as two pitches and a traverse. Above it, the stream led quickly to a large boulder pile, which fortunately could be scrambled over without difficulty. Following the stream again up a series of cascades, the next party was stopped by a more serious boulder choke. Fortunately, a rather grotty way through this was found/engineered, and a tall vadose canyon led on, to yet another choke, this time apparently impenetrable. All was not yet lost, for on the next trip, by climbing up the wall before the choke, we entered a large phreatic chamber, Salvation Hall, above the choke. A pitch led back to the river, but after another couple of hundred metres, it choked again, and to date that is the upstream limit.

However, it was not to be the end of the cave. Tony White started climbing again, and 80 m or more above Salvation Hall, he found the Cobweb Zone, an extremely complex series of small phreatic tubes. From there, several pitches descended—and the survey showed that none of them overlaid known cave. So far only one has been descended, and that one led to 800m of large passage, paralleling the downstream riverway. Two inlet streams had invaded these dry galleries, and descended onwards via pitches, which we didn't have the tackle to attempt. This series—The Ancient Briton — is still going, albeit in the wrong direction. Two pitches remain uninvestigated in the Cobweb Zone. They could equally well lead to a similar series going upstream. The cave is still wide open — though getting to the end is becoming quite a major trip before any new ground is broken.

To date, the surveyed length is 9.2 km, with probably another kilometre known but not surveyed. The Cobweb Zone just tops the Meltdown, giving a vertical range of something over 350 m. No records, but quite a cave— especially as it is all uphill.

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## INTERNATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL CONFERENCE

The Eighth International Speleological Conference will be held in Bowling Green, Kentucky, U.S.A., in July, 1981. Seems a long time away, but it really isn't. The northern summer is the peak time for air travel to the U.S. You may even have to book a year ahead. More information in Issue 88, but if you require urgent information, contact John Dunkley, 3 Stops Place, Chifley, A.C.T. 2606.

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## DOWN UNDER ALL OVER

## news from around the societies

- CSS :Gordon Taylor reports that CSS has had a very active period,visiting Cooleman,Wee Jasper,Wyanbene and Yarrangobilly.At Cooleman, the visitors book was inspected.It appears from this that some 91 % of people caving there, do so illegally.A minor rescue of two people stranded in a cave was also carried out.At Wee Jasper,the visitors' books were also inspected, indicating that hundreds of people have visited the caves in the last few months.With the co-operation of the local council, a sign has been erected at the entrance to Church Cave warning people of the danger of histoplasmosis in the cave.At Yarrangobilly,further exploration has been carried out in Bathhouse Cave and the cave extended.Meanwhile ,in Canberra,CSS has entertained ASF President Ken Lance,and this was partly the reason for the Wyanbene trip.
- CTCG :Jim Reid reports that the group had a long hard trip to Frustration Lake at Wyanbene.Conditions were cold and wet both inside and outside the cave ,i.e. it rained.In December,a weekend trip to Cooleman Caves,was in direct contrast to this.The trip had excellent weather, and tried to convert all of the group to arm-chair cavers.Caves entered were Barbers and River.In January, a trip to Wee Jasper saw the breakthrough of one club member's regular efforts at extending a dig in a well known cave.A new extension was discovered and a surveying trip is now required.Three other trips were taken to Wee Jasper.In February, a one day excursion was taken to investigate the closure of the road to Bendethera. The National Parks and Wildlife Service closed the track.This now entails a one hour walk to the caves.Windlass Pit was re-discovered.In the January-February period,three members spent their holidays travelling to Western Australia via the Nullarbor.Another three members went to Tasmania.The club is expecting some good travelogues and slide shows over the next few months.All members are improving in single rope techniques.Exercises have been held at various member's homes and a useful evening was spent at the A.N.U. gymnasium through the generosity of NUCC.
- NUCC :The main event for NUCC over the summer, was a club trip to Tasmania for almost two months.As well as the usual tourist trips, considerable new exploration was done.In the June-Florentine,JF 341 was explored, and revealed a cave of some 200 metres depth , with excellent formation.At Ida Bay , the track to Mini Martin was cut, and Mini Martin was descended, as well as another nearby cave to a depth of 100 metres.Several entrances were also tagged.Two days were also spent in Exit, where Conference Concourse was looked at.The club participated in the TCC trip to the Cracroft area ,where several medium sized caves were found and surveyed. As well , two previously known caves, Icebox and Scull Cave were surveyed and further explored. Several track in the area were re-cut.To finish off the trip in Tassy, several days were spent touring at Mole Creek , and living off 15 ¢ milkshakes.
- OSS : Members attended a Cave Safety and Rescue practice at Bungonia, Jenolan and Walli Caves,and a rescue practice at Coonabarabran and Coolah with the Police Rescue Squad.The club has conducted its own training days too.A new surface survey has been carried out at Canomodine to help with the location of newly discovered caves - Diprotodon and Devils Cave.The mini-conference at Macquarie Uni was attended.They won the Speleo Sports. The Odyssey Cave gate has been repaired.Keith Oliver from Jenolan is willing to act as co-ordinator for work done at Cliefden.C.C.O.G. has assisted OSS in the palaeontological dig in Diprotodon Cave and in the cleaning programme at Cliefden.
- SRGWA : The club has suffered a membership decline in recent years, a fate that all caving groups have experienced at some time or another.Steps have been taken to improve matters.A display was mounted at the Perth Royal Show that unfortunately brought no results.A similar display will shortly appear on the library circuit , in a further effort to show the public what caving is all about , hopefully attract new members , and perhaps sell some Speleo Prints.The Speleo Prints were launched as a fund raising activity midway through 1979, the ASF and SRG being the beneficiaries.The prints are now available in two sizes, 20 cm X 25 cm for \$ 9 , and 51 cm X 61 cm for \$ 18,the cost of postage being extra (see ASF Newsletter 84 for details ).They are really spectacular.The club's palaeontological dig for the WA Museum has gone into temporary recess.Peter Summers has found it necessary to repair a gate recently damaged during a break-in of Weelawadji Cave ,near Eneabba.



DOWN UNDER ALL OVER Cont;

TCC : Despite the fact that summer appeared to have forgotten Tasmania, caving activity has been at a fairly high level during the last few months. A seemingly scungy cave (JF 341) discovered on Junee Ridge towards the end of last year, has suddenly become quite significant following the descent of an estimated 55 metre pitch by Gordon Taylor from NUCC. Gordon, together with John Briggs and Tim Rudman spent about two months in Tasmania from mid-December doing a great deal of caving while there. Aside from JF 341, their trips included The Chairmon, Dwarrowdelf, Mini-Martin, (after re-locating it with Albert Goede's help) as well as visits to the Cracroft area and Mole Creek. Also caving here for a few weeks were Jill and Dave Gillieson (UQSS). They had originally intended to do a cycling tour of Tassie as well, but were sidetracked into spending most of their time underground by Albert Goede. All of the above people, plus various members of TCC, spent about a week in the Cracroft area with some valuable work being done by the group. Among other things, Four-Tape Cave (now renamed Icebox owing to its temperature!) was the subject of an extensive survey trip. King Billy Hole was re-located, the so called "Red Route" has been re-cut and marked again (with blue tape), Skull Cave was surveyed, and the ridge above Judds Cave revealed a total of 14 shafts, some having depth potential. Major trips planned in the near future include another Chairmon trip (JF 99) for more exploration and surveying, an attempt to unblock the entrance of Trap-door Swallet (near Growling Swallet) and further exploration of known (and unknown!) caves in the Junee area. Several new faces have appeared in recent weeks, which will help to boost the ranks and provide inspiration to some of the older members. The new year and new decade look like being one of renewed activity and enthusiasm for TCC.

UNSWSS : From Christmas 1978 to New Year 1980, UNSWSS has continued digging and surveying in the recently discovered upper level of Y 8, Yarrangobilly. Digging and squeezing have extended the upper level length to 380 metres, giving a total of surveyed passage length to 530 metres. The difficult S-bend Wiggle-Woggle squeeze protects a section of golden streamway, but there is very little other decoration. Bat banding for the CSIRO has continued at Bungonia, with 50-100 bandings being made on each night. Recatches average 2%, and included one bat banded 15 years ago by Barbara Dew, plus bats from other caving areas.

WASG : Activities for WASG from October 1979 to January 1980 included a study of CO<sub>2</sub> levels in Jewel Cave, conducted over three days in October. Some more mapping was completed in Easter Cave. A new survey of Quininup Lake Cave has been commenced by Mat Herne. The well trogged Tight Entrance Cave has finally been surveyed by Rob Capon. The Loveday survey of Calgardup Cave is also well underway but still requires a few more trips to complete. A recent SRGWA trip to Weelawadji Cave found to their amazement that persons unknown had sawed through the bars of the gate - a number of hours work. More damage occurred in the cave as a result of this break-in. The biennial WASG dinner was held at the Lake Cave Kiosk. A large turnout of 70 to 80 people ensured that the evening was a great success. Many thanks to the organizers, Eva and Mike. A deep gour pool was dived in Old Napier Downs Cave in the Kimberleys to yield about one kilometre of new cave. As this required swimming along the entire length, the new extension was named Aquarius by its discoverers, Simon Jolly (WASG/UQSS) and Arnold Nunnink (UQSS). Two trips to the Nullarbor took place during December/January. One, led by Peter Downs, spent a few days caving. Rauleigh Webb led another which spent two weeks conducting flow experiments on the flow rates of the lakes in the Nullarbor caves - good results were achieved in these experiments. Also a new cave with a 14 metre entrance pitch was explored on Mundrabilla Station.

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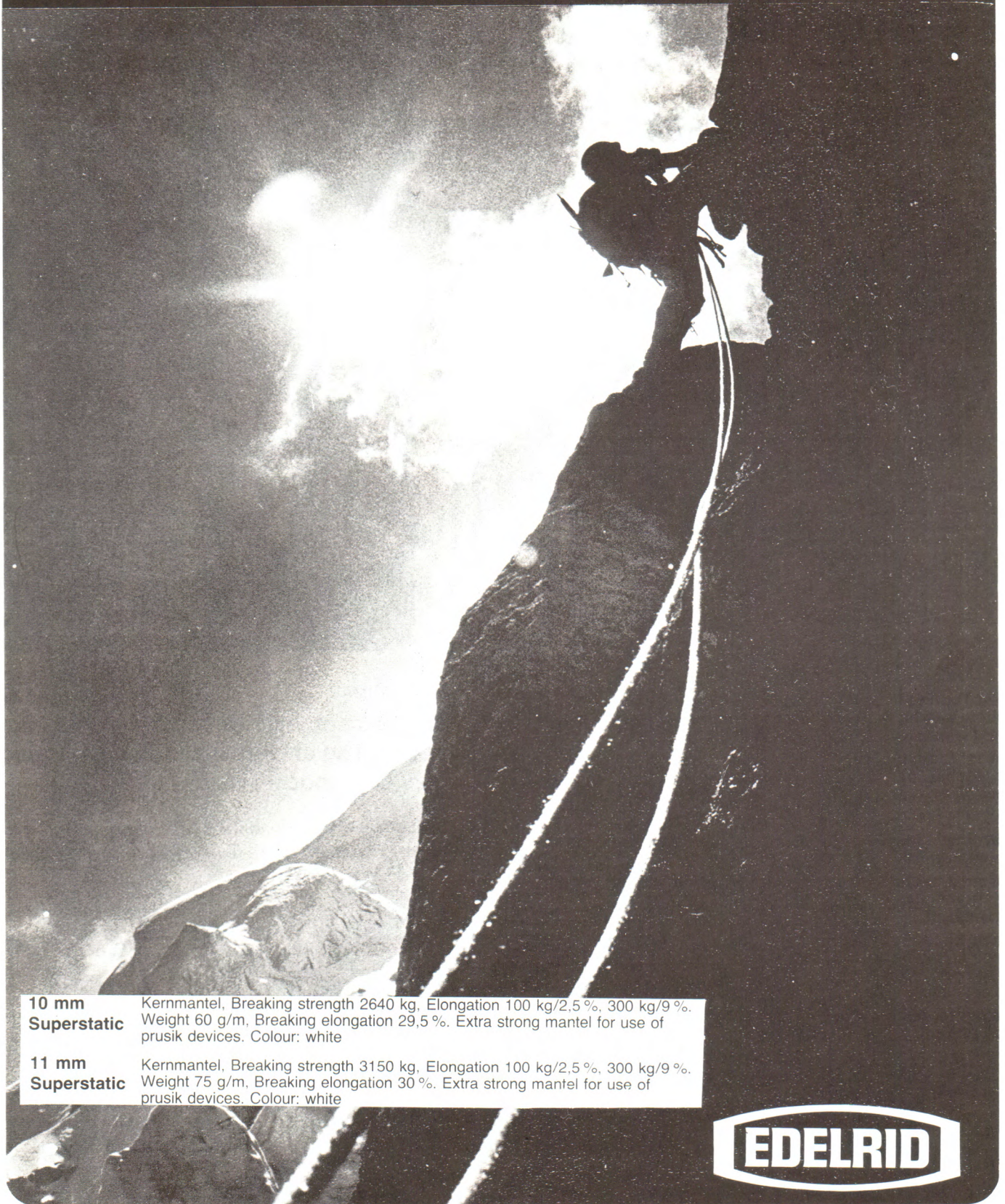
The glow-worm caves had been hollowed out of the rock far under Fabydon, so long ago that no one guessed at their existence, for the secret was guarded by the sliding stone in the ruined castle. It had once belonged to a wizard who mixed three spells together by accident and turned himself into a million glow-worms. All the caves stretching for many miles and leading in and out of each other in an endless maze, were faintly lit by the glow-worms that clung everywhere on the rocks.

"Over the Hills to Fabydon" - Nicholas Stuart Gray.

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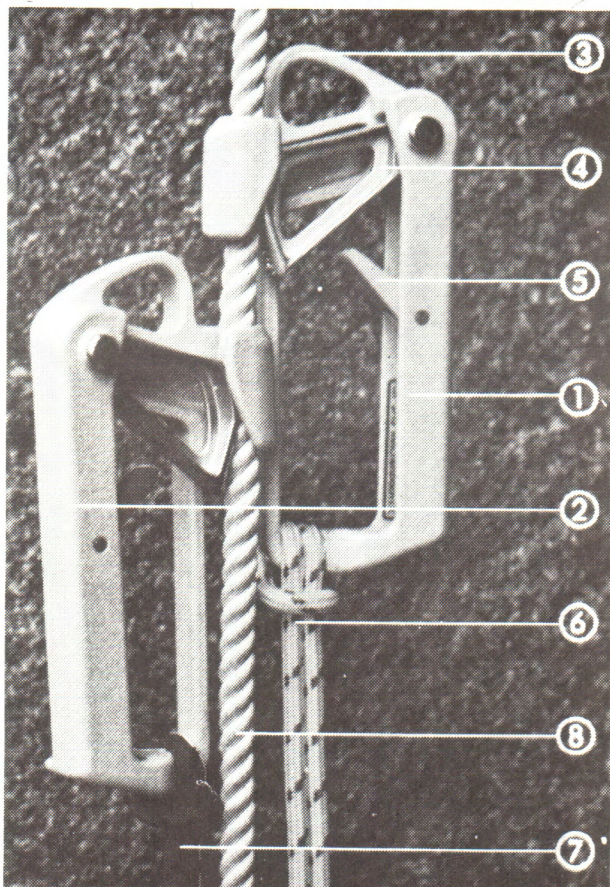
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