

# **ASF** **NEWSLETTER** **Winter, 1980, No. 88**



John Graham in the main streamway, Nettlebed Cave, New Zealand, Photo by Guy Cox

## **THE AUSTRALIAN SPELEOLOGICAL QUARTERLY**

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**50c**

Recommended

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# ASF NEWSLETTER

Number 88, Winter, 1980

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## EDITORIAL

The same plaintive cry again. Virtually no copy for Issue 89. The appearance of Issue 88 would have been more protracted except for some kind people who responded to the last call for copy. Don't be put off by thinking that your article would have to be full of "scientific stuff". Speleology is the last bastion of the well-informed amateur, and long may it remain so. "Helictite" and the "ASF Newsletter", I feel, should have the same relationship to one another as "NSS Bulletin", and "NSS News". The Newsletter should be a medium for disseminating semi-scientific information and articles of interest to all speleologists. So, if you do have articles of such interest, send them.

One point about bibliographies. Try to set them out the same as the bibliographies in "Helictite". This conformity would help, as bibliography formats are as numerous as there are institutions.

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## DEADLINE DATES FOR FUTURE ISSUES

For numbers 89, 90 and 91 are 1 st. September, 1 st. November, 1980 and 14 th. February, 1981 respectively.

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## CAVE CONVICT

### THIRTEENTH BIENNIAL CONFERENCE OF THE AUSTRALIAN SPELEOLOGICAL FEDERATION

The thirteenth biennial conference of the Australian Speleological Federation will commence on Saturday 27 th. December and continue to Wednesday 31 st. December, 1980. The conference will be conducted at the Pharmacy College, Parkville. The accommodation is at International House and the Speleosports will be held at Prince's Park, all venues within walking distance of each other. Living-in at the Conference should be considered a vital part of the conference, as it means meeting other cavers in an informal atmosphere and freely participating in the evening social activities.

The photographic competition ( not to be confused with the competition funded by Noel Plumley in an article which follows ) will be conducted along similar lines to preceeding conferences, and the photos or slides will be limited to those taken since WACCON. Start preparing your entries NOW ! Black and white prints must be a minimum of 20 x 25 centimetres mounted and colour prints a minimum of 12.5 x 17.5 centimetres mounted. Slides should preferably ( but not necessarily ) be mounted in glass.

Printing costs are high and to minimize the price of publications to buyers, the committee of CAVE CONVICT is interested in soliciting advertisers for : (a) the guidebook (b) the abstracts (c) the proceedings. If you, or anyone you know, are interested in placing an advertisement in any of the publications, please contact the committee for details of costs and layouts.

The committee is now issuing a preliminary call for papers to be presented at the conference. If you have been engaged in some activity that you feel would make an interesting topic for presentation, please inform the committee as soon as possible to assist them in the task of scheduling the sessions and seminars. Alternatively, if you would rather be an active participant in a seminar on various speleological activities, such as SRT, photography, new equipment, etc., let the committee know what contributions you could make and what topics you would like to see covered.

Cave CONVICT stickers are available at \$ 1.20 ( post paid ) from the address above. Registration forms will be available soon through a variety of sources, i.e. ASF mailing list, clubs and societies and some retailers.

Please assist the Cave CONVICT committee by promptly returning information, as this will greatly help in planning for the conference.

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## CAVING EQUIPMENT AWARDS

At the thirteenth biennial conference of the Australian Speleological Federation, Caving Equipment, as a "carrot for the donkey" ( no literality intended ), propose to give two \$ 50 open orders with Caving Equipment for the funniest ( or most humorous ) article / cartoon and the "best" map published in the Australian Speleological literature.

Caving Equipment wishes to improve the interest and standards of club / society newsletters / journals. They feel that by offering these awards, they will be doing something positive to encourage more interesting articles and improve surveying and mapping standards.

The funniest article / cartoon is pretty straightforward. Some suggestions for criteria of "best" map are survey grade ( higher the better ), closure accuracy, completeness ( plan, long section and cross sections ), adherence to ASF survey standards, presentation, drafting and quality of printing. Low grade sketches printed on a blotchy stencil are not going to win ! Some consideration will be given for the longer and deeper the cave. This is to encourage people to do the longer and harder caves.

CAVING EQUIPMENT AWARDS ( Cont. )

Send your selections for these categories to the Cave CONVICT committee, at the address noted in the previous article.

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## NOEL RUMNEY PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION

This is a biennial photographic competition to encourage an interest in biospeleology and an awareness of cave ecology. A cash prize of A\$100 will be awarded to a photograph ( laboratory shots will be allowed ) of any form of cave flora or fauna of Australia, Papua New Guinea or New Zealand, which is adjudged to be of outstanding biospeleological interest and photographic excellence.

Conditions of entry

1. The entries must have been taken since the end of the previous conference of the Australian Speleological Federation.
2. No more than two entries may be entered by one person.
3. Entries must be in 35 mm slide form.
4. The following details to be supplied with each entry;
  - (a) Identification of depicted specimen(s) if possible.
  - (b) Date of collection / photographing.
  - (c) Name and location of cave.
  - (d) Collection / photographing point in cave.
  - (e) Name and address of collector / photographer.
  - (f) Exposure details and other pertinent technical details.
  - (g) Other features of interest.
5. The definition of the word "cave" will be at the discretion of the ASF committee.
6. If none of the submitted entries are, in the opinion of the judge, to be of a satisfactory standard, a winner will not be chosen and the prize money will be accumulated until the next competition.
7. The decision of the judge will be final.

The judge is to be appointed by the conference organising committee, to be of an impartial nature, and preferably a professional photographer with some knowledge of cave and / or biological photography.

Noel Plumley, who has initiated this competition, is an English caver who spent time in Western Australia. One copy of the winning slide will be sent to Noel ( now in England ) and another copy to the WASG slide collection, the costs of this borne by Noel.

Send your entries , clearly marked Australasian Cavellife Photographic Competition, to the Cave CONVICT committee at the address shown in the foregoing articles.

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## BOOK REVIEW

Jeff Simmons

"Bats" by David Pye. Illustrated by Colin Threadgill. London, The Bodley Head, 1974 ( Second edition ).

When I first picked up this book, I expected it to be a children's story book. It isn't quite. It is a delightfully written and clear informative little book with beautiful colour and monochrome illustrations. Both the text and the detailed illustrations seem to be accurate. Unfortunately Australian bats are not touched on. My one criticism is the use of the word "radar" to describe echo location; perhaps "sonar" would be more appropriate. A valuable book for the layman (and others ) interested in these fascinating animals, despite the lack of local content.

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## CAVE SURVEYS

Lloyd Mill

Cave surveying is an activity that for long has been considered "respectable" speleology. Some have a passion for it, others couldn't care less. In the case of VSA, members are indulging in a lot of surveying, more so probably, than any time in the past. VSA have a moderately effective system for processing and storing the data and finished product. We are building up a store of various maps and figures.

However, the question must be asked. What is the use of it all in the long run? Besides gazing at it, putting names on it, and using it as a route guide, what is the use of a cave map?

Well, there are actually some good scientific uses which I hope to detail in this article. The cave map is an essential tool in interpreting the history of a cave and what is happening to it now.

Caves are often influenced by the geological structure of the piece of limestone that they are in. By this, I mean that caves tend to develop along bedding planes and joint planes. Sometimes this detail is obscured on the surface by soil cover and vegetation. Close examination of the plan view of the cave can reveal a pattern which is based on joint or bedding planes. Examination of the map of Exponential Pot, Buchan, reveals a joint pattern which is not obvious in the cave or on the surface.

What is the value of knowing the pattern anyway? Well, if substantial cave is developed along a joint in one area, there is a good chance that more cave will be found along this joint in another area. The search for caves could be made much less random.

Faults also influence cave development. The rock along a fault is usually broken up and tends to imitate rock-piles. This is especially true in the Reserve system where rockpiles are found where small faults cut across the system.

The history of a cave system is usually one of a stream cutting down into a floor, stopping a while, abandoning the passage and cutting a new one, the cycle then continuing. The abandoned passage then begins to fill up in places with mud and calcite formations. This forms a series of levels in the cave. Usually the upper levels are heavily decorated but only sections of them can be found. The lowest level sometimes has an active stream, is fairly continuous and sparsely decorated.

On the surface, the equivalent of different levels in a cave are river terraces, which are benches cut in the sides of a valley. These terraces record the heights at which the river stopped its downcutting for a while, and widened its valley.

The extended cross-sections of a cave will reveal where the levels are and how they relate to each other. This can be related (by comparing heights) to the river terraces. The history of the cave can then be tied into the history of the surface landscape. Also missing sections of various levels might become obvious. In the Buchan Reserve, the tourist cave system has a number of levels, possibly three or four. When the surface survey is complete, this might become more obvious. Only the upper level and segments of the lower are known. Certainly at the upper end of Dukes, higher passage can be entered. The survey might point out whether there are higher passages above the current stream passage.

These are just a few possible ways cave surveys can aid us in "sorting out" the caves we visit. However, I feel we have not really used the surveys we have done. I invite anyone with similar or differing views to reply through the pages of the ASF Newsletter.

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## GORDON — FRANKLIN WILDERNESS

A hydro-electric scheme damming the Gordon, Franklin and King Rivers in Tasmania has been recommended, costing at least \$2,00 million. South-west Tasmania including the Gordon-Franklin area contains some of the finest wilderness in the world, including one of the few remaining stands of temperate rain forest.

The first stage is to be commenced in 1981. This will flood the Gordon River Splits, the entire Olga River, the Angel Cliffs, the Denison Gorge and the lower part of the Franklin, south-eastern Australia's last wild river. It is of world heritage standard as a wilderness of significant size and diversity.

The second stage will dam the King and Andrew Rivers and the rest of the Franklin, including the Darwin meteorite crater and other beautiful gorges and rapids. Both stages of the scheme will destroy countless Huon Pines, caves, and other magnificent scenery and destroy wildlife habitat and rare plant communities.

South-west Tasmania, apart from all the preceding, has an economic value as wilderness as hundreds of tourists

THE GORDON - FRANKLIN WILDERNESS ( Cont. )

enjoy natural recreation there annually, e.g. bushwalking, canoeing, caving, rafting, sightseeing and the Gordon River cruise.

As Australia has virtually little "real" wilderness left in the south-east ( where the population is concentrated ) increasing numbers will be visiting there to experience wilderness.

The HEC claims that only one per cent of the wilderness will be lost by actual flooding, BUT the rivers themselves ARE the wilderness. Once roads, dams, power stations and transmission lines are built, the wilderness is lost forever.

The Tasmanian National Parks and Wildlife Service has recommended that the entire catchment of the Franklin and Lower Gordon Rivers should be declared a Wild River National Park.

Hydro-electric power from these dams would only be sufficient for another ten years. There are alternative energy sources, and these and conservation measures will have to be adopted eventually, so why not save the remaining wilderness now ?

The preceding points are of importance for all Australians, and I would think especially for cavers. Not only for the caves in the Gordon - Franklin, but for the right of wilderness to exist.

How can YOU help to save this area ?

Write letters to Premier Lowe and the other Labor members of the Tasmanian State Parliament. ( Addresses follow.)

Write to the newspapers throughout your state. ( Send a copy to the Tasmanian Wilderness Society,

28 Criterion Street.,

Hobart, Tasmania, 7000. )

Write to the Prime Minister, Mr. Fraser, asking him to list South-West Tasmania on the register of the National Estate.

Join the Tasmanian Wilderness Society - become a life member for \$ 2.

Make a donation to TWS . Donations are tax deductible if sent through the Australian Conservation Foundation with the following format.

" To the Director, Australian Conservation Foundation,

672B Glenferrie Road,

Hawthorn, Vic., 3122.

Dear Sir,

I attach a donation of \$... to the Australian Conservation Foundation. I prefer this donation to be spent to support the activities of the Tasmanian Wilderness Society. I look forward to receiving your receipt for the purpose of tax deductibility.

Yours faithfully, etc."

Here is a list of Tasmanian State Labor Parliamentarians.

The Hon. D. Lowe, Premier, Public Buildings, Macquarie St., Hobart , Tasmania, 7000.

The Hon. N. Batt, Deputy Premier, Public Buildings, Macquarie St., Hobart, Tasmania, 7000.

The Hon. J. Amos, Minister for the Environment, Marine Board Building, Franklin Wharf, Hobart, Tasmania, 7000.

The Hon. M. Barnard, Minister for Tourism, Marine Board Building, Franklin Wharf, Hobart, Tasmania, 7000.

Mr. M. Weldon, MHA, House of Assembly, Hobart, Tasmania, 7000.

The Hon. A. Lohrey, Minister for National Parks and Wildlife, Lands Department Building, 134 Macquarie St., Hobart, Tasmania, 7000.

Mrs. G. James, MHA, House of Assembly, Hobart, Tasmania, 7000.

The Hon. T. Aulich, State Offices Building, 10 Murray Street , Hobart, Tasmania, 7000.

Mr. N. Polley, MHA, House of Assembly, Hobart, Tasmania, 7000.

Mrs. M. Willey, MHA, House of Assembly, Hobart, Tasmania, 7000.

Mr. G. Adams, MHA, House of Assembly, Hobart, Tasmania, 7000.

Mr. N. Aird, MHA, House of Assembly, Hobart, Tasmania, 7000.

Mr. D. Baldock, MHA, House of Assembly, Hobart, Tasmania, 7000.

The Hon. J. Coughlan, State Offices Building, 10 Murray St., Hobart, Tasmania, 7000.

The Hon. R. Davies, Speaker, House of Assembly, Hobart, Tasmania, 7000.

Mr. J. Devine, MHA, House of Assembly, Hobart, Tasmania, 7000.

The Hon. M. Field, State Offices Building, 10 Murray St., Hobart, Tasmania, 7000.

The Hon. H. Holgate, Education Department, Hobart, Tasmania, 7000.

Mr. W. McKinnon, MHA, House of Assembly, Hobart, Tasmania, 7000.

THE GORDON - FRANKLIN WILDERNESS ( Cont. )

The Hon. C. L. Batt, MLC, "Woodlands", Melton Mowbray, Tasmania, 7410.

The Hon. B. K. Miller, MLC, 11 McGuinness Crescent, Lenah Valley, Tasmania, 7008.

The Hon. K. J. Venn, MLC, 6 Dewrang Place, Mt. Stuart, Tasmania, 7000.

Now, armed with these addresses, there are some points to be considered and perhaps mentioned in your letters. The Tasmanian Tourist Bureau estimates that 80,000 visitors to Tasmania annually, come for bushwalking, rafting or other wilderness activities. These represent significant economic activities as the visitors spend money on food, accommodation and so on.

You could make the point that many of these visitors may not come to Tasmania if the wilderness area is further damaged. Some other points that you could make are that the Lower Gordon River Cruise, a major tourist attraction is threatened by the scheme, the environmental effects on the Gordon downstream of the dam, on Macquarie Harbour and on the catchment have not been adequately investigated, the South-West wilderness has been continually eaten away by forestry and hydro development and Lake Pedder has already been lost. Alternatives should be properly examined before a decision is made to destroy the wilderness forever. Once flooded the wilderness is damaged irreversibly. Suggest that the whole of the Lower Gordon and its tributaries should become a Wild River National Park, as recommended by Tasmania's National Parks and Wildlife Service.

Remember, many Tasmanian MPs do not realize that Tasmania's wilderness is something really special. They also regard the HEC as having served the state well. So praise Tasmania and its wild areas, and emphasize their unique character, and its attractions for YOU, rather than condemning the HEC.

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## BLASTING THREATENS CAVES

Andrew Pavey

We are not alone in the world, with conservation problems. Here is a reprint of an article in the "Sydney Morning Herald" of the 4 th. March, this year, under the caption of "BLASTING THREATENS CAVES".

"KUALA LUMPUR, Monday - The Batu Caves - the outcrop of limestone caves on the outskirts of Kuala Lumpur which attracts more than a million visitors annually - is in danger of being closed down.

Quarrying for limestones used for making cement has caused rockfalls and has now threatened the safety of the caves, a spokesman for the Tourist Development Cooperation said here today.

There is also a Hindu temple in the caves which attracts as many as a million people early in January for the annual Thaipusam festival of penance.

Fears of damage to the caves by quarrying for limestone have been expressed since the 1950s but little heed has been paid to them.

There are three quarries in the area - one Government owned - and they use enough dynamite and gelinite to bring down 3,000 tonnes of limestone daily.

M. G. Pillai "

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Dark air-life looping

Yet missing pure loop....

A twitch, a twitter, an elastic shudder in flight

And serrated wings against the sky,

Like a glove, a black glove thrown up at the light,

And falling back.

D. H. Lawrence - " Bat " .

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## WORLD WILDERNESS CONGRESS

J. H. Huon de Navrancourt

This is a much precied report from John H. Huon de Navrancourt, of the North Queensland Speleological Association, of the World Wilderness Congress of this year, which was held in Cairns. Most of the points I have extracted are concerning speleology, but as John himself notes, this was lamentably absent.

"I must firstly thank the North Queensland Speleological Association for the payment of half my fees for this congress. Secondly, I must thank Brian Holt and his wife for giving me accommodation.

At this point, I would like to use a quotation :-

"Of serious conferences, very few are to exchange information and fewer still are to reach decisions. Most are to proclaim shared purposes, to reveal to the participants that they are not alone, and thus to re-inforce confidence.

Or they are to stimulate action, where action is impossible.

By occuring, they persuade participants, and often others, that something is happening when in fact nothing is happening, or indeed, can happen. "

J. K. Galbraith, The Age of Uncertainty.

However, the World Wilderness Congress was an interesting experience for me, and offered me the occasion to speak about the North Queensland Speleological Association to various people, viz., the Hon. Mr. David Thompson, Mr. John McCabe, ( Chairman of the Queensland Conservation Council ), Mr. Tenni ( Member for Mareeba ), and Mr. Percy Tresize.

I was especially happy to find ( through the Congress notice board ) my companion of fifteen years ago, in the Papua-New Guinea Starr Mountains Expedition, Tom Hallyer. Tom had just arrived from his walk from Cape York to Cairns. We talked about the visit next year to Chillagoe, of Brother Nicolas Sullivan from the United States, and about the Caving Congress in the United States.

Outside the sessions, I had an interview with Mr. J. Porter, Controller of the State Emergency Service. He suggested to contact Mr. Bill Healy of the SES, Mareeba, in planning a new Search and Rescue Group for Chillagoe. It was suggested to consider Brian Holt's place ( if he agrees ) as a base for the unit's first aid supplies, two way radios, and suggested funds could be set aside for this."

John continues on, and notes the sessions of the Congress, and their content, on a day to day basis. For Wednesday, June 11 th., he notes the following.....

"A lecture on Tasmania, by Dr. Bob Brown, showed also an exciting film about the last ' Wild River '. Unfortunately, the occasion was lost to describe the caves. In fact, , in all the Congress, Speleology was not mentioned at all. The Chillagoe Club was notably absent, except by a limited, but excellent display at the Crosswell Hall Wilderness permanent display.

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## HISTOPLASMOSIS AND THE AUSTRALIAN CAVER

Derek Hobbs

Histoplasmosis is a subject often mentioned among cavers, and yet there have been only two suspected outbreaks reported among cavers in Australia. What is Histoplasmosis and what risk does it pose to cavers in Australia ?

Histoplasmosis is a systemic fungal infection caused by the organism, Histoplasma capsulatum.<sup>(1)</sup> The organism was first described by Dr. S. T. Darling in 1905-6<sup>(2)</sup> who believed it to be a protozoan. In 1912, Da Rocha Lima suggested that it was a fungus.<sup>(3)</sup> This observation was confirmed in 1934, when it was grown on a culture medium by De Monbreun.<sup>(3)</sup> Naturally occurring H. capsulatum has been cultured in the United States from a wide range of mammals and birds, including dogs, cats, bats, domestic poultry and wild birds.<sup>(2)</sup>

### The Disease

There are three main forms of Histoplasmosis, the acute pulmonary form, the progressive disseminated form and the chronic cavitary form.<sup>(3)</sup> Histoplasmosis is usually caused by inhaling dust contaminated with spores from H. capsulatum.<sup>(1)</sup>

Acute pulmonary ( benign inhalation ) Histoplasmosis is the commonest manifestation of the disease. The usual symptoms are cough, with or without haemoptysis ( blood stained sputum ) or purulent sputum, dyspnoea ( laboured or difficult

# HISTOPLASMOSIS AND THE AUSTRALIAN CAVER ( Cont. )

breathing ) of varying degrees and chest pain.

Systemic symptoms may include fever, rigors ( fever- shivering ), night sweats, generalised myalgia and arthralgia (muscular and joint pains ), weight loss and exhaustion. There is an incubation period of about two weeks and symptoms persist for about three to six weeks. Given the predilection of H. capsulatum for the reticuloendothelial system, it is likely that even in the mild self limiting pulmonary forms, the fungus has actually spread to other parts of the body. ( The reticuloendothelial system is the system within the body concerned with the formation and destruction of red and white blood cells and the storage of fatty materials. It also plays a part in immunological response and inflammation ). Even so, it seems that a high percentage of cases may be asymptomatic. Emmons et al <sup>(2)</sup> found that in some areas of the United States, 60-90 percent of residents react to the intradermal infection of histoplasmin without presenting a history of any unusual respiratory disease.

However, in somewhat less than one percent of cases, the disease progresses to the severe ( progressive ) disseminated form. This form of Histoplasmosis usually presents with similar symptoms to the acute pulmonary form, but the fungus becomes widely disseminated. The respiratory manifestations are then overshadowed by systemic manifestations. The fungus may attack any organ system within the body, the blood, bone marrow and lymph nodes, being most often affected. This form of the disease may prove fatal if left untreated. It is not known what causes the disease to become disseminated. However, it is thought that factors such as initial dosage of spores <sup>(2)</sup> and the patients immunological status are involved. <sup>(4)</sup>

The third form of Histoplasmosis is the chronic cavitary form. This form is usually found in older patients. It may present with symptoms such as productive cough, low grade fever, occasional haemoptysis and chest pain. A chest X-ray often shows signs of pulmonary cavitation closely resembling that of Tuberculosis. The disease is probably already present in the reticuloendothelial system and may develop into the severe disseminated form. The progress of the chronic cavitary form is slow, but may prove fatal if left untreated.

## Cases reported in Australia

Prior to 1972, only seven cases of Histoplasmosis had been reported in Australia. The first five cases presented with chronic ulcers or lumps in the mouth or larynx. <sup>(3)</sup> None of these people gave any history of caving or contacts with bats.

In 1967, a case of Histoplasmosis was reported from Adelaide. <sup>(5)</sup> The patient, a 25 year old male, contracted the disease while renovating an old house. The patient had been an active caver from 1961-66 visiting at least 25 Australian caves. The presenting symptoms included chest pain, shortness of breath, cough with sputum, marked lassitude, weight loss and an ulcer on his gum that was prone to bleeding. H. capsulatum was identified in tissue biopsied from the ulcer. A chest X-ray showed reticular opacities distributed throughout both lungs.

The patient was treated with Amphotericin B and recovered. H. capsulatum was cultured from a neighbour's fowl pen and garden. It seems likely, according to the authors' report, that this was the source of the infection.

The seventh reported case in Australia was in a geologist caver, who had come from the United States six months previously. <sup>(6)</sup> The patient, who had not been in any Australian caves, presented with loss of vision in one eye. Chest X-ray revealed calcified foci consistent with Histoplasmosis. The patient responded well to Amphotericin B.

A case of Histoplasmosis was reported from Chermide, Queensland <sup>(7)</sup> in a caver who had visited Mt. Garnett caves. These caves do contain bats, although the species was not mentioned. Culturing of H. capsulatum from both the patient and the cave proved unsuccessful. The authors, however, feel that there was little doubt about the diagnosis as numerous characteristic chlamydospores were seen on microscopic examination of material collected in the cave. ( A Chlamydospore is a spore body formed by certain yeast and fungi. It may, or may not be, specific to a particular fungus ).

In 1976, an outbreak of Histoplasmosis was reported amongst a group of cavers who visited Church Cave at Wee Jasper, New South Wales. <sup>(3)</sup> The investigation began initially with six people who visited the cave, as a group, in August 1976. These six were investigated after three of them made separate presentation at Royal North Shore Hospital, Sydney, with an acute febrile illness with cough and dyspnoea. Of the group, only three had had previous caving experience, two with no ill effects. However, one of the three experienced cavers did remember having an attack of dyspnoea with cough and wheeze about two hours after leaving a cave two years previously.

No bats were seen inside the cave, but several were noted near the mouth of the cave. The floor of the cave was noted to be covered in dried bat guano. Church Cave is one of the eight known nursery caves in Eastern Australia of the colonial "bent wing bat" Miniopterus schreibersii. <sup>(3)</sup> Another cave used by this bat as a nursery cave is Drum Cave at Bun-

( Cont. on page 11 )

## NOTICES AND NEWS

### ASF SECRETARIAL NEWS

The initial draft for the agenda of the next ASF Committee meeting will be posted on 1 st. August, 1980. The final agenda will be posted on 1 st. November, 1980. Any business that is to be placed on the agenda will have to be sent to the Secretary by the above dates.

Secretary's address is :- 42 Priestley Parade,  
Point Clare, via Gosford,  
N. S. W., 2250.

### IS YOUR CLUB FINANCIAL ?

John Taylor ( Treasurer, ASF ) reports that the following clubs are financial as at 22 nd. May, 1980. They are:-  
MSS, SUSS, CQSS, TCC, VSA, SCS, OSS, MUSIG, ISS, NUCC, CTCG, CSS, KSS,  
NSWITSS. Associate : NQSA, CCOG, HSC, PNGCEG.

Not much use to put this notice in the Newsletter, as you won't be getting a newsletter if your club isn't financial. One never knows !

### PUBLICATIONS

Phil Toomer will shortly send information requests to ASF societies, asking which publications are for sale. This information will be used to compile a centralised list for future reference.

### CAVING IN NORTH QUEENSLAND ?

As an accompaniment to the article by J. H. Huon de Navrancourt, Brian Holt ( Treasurer, N.Q.S.A. ) says, " If you ever come up to Chillagoe, you have to pass through Cairns, so let me know, and the Club will, if possible find you accommodation in both Cairns and Chillagoe. This goes for any ASF member."

### BACK ISSUES OF ASF NEWSLETTER AVAILABLE

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

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

### SPELEOSPORTS

Cavers performing their skills competitively, but in the safety of simulated conditions. This annual madness will be held at Macquarie University, 23 rd. and 24 th. August, 1980. For further information, contact Cathie on (02) 8681348, or David on (02) 8583524.

### ADDRESS LISTS FOR ASF NEWSLETTER

Tony Culberg has again said " that if a member society expects to get the ASF Newsletter, then that society must supply him with an up-to-date address list."

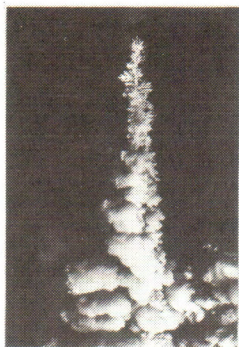
### AUSTRALIAN CAVE LIST NOW AVAILABLE

The Check-list of "Australian Caves and Karst" is now available. Order through your club. Club orders should be directed to Peter Matthews. The special price to ASF members is in recognition of their work in recording cave data, which has made the list possible.  
\$6.00 to ASF members. \$10 to approved non-ASF buyers. Price does not include postage. Up to five copies is 50¢ per copy. Above copies, then parcel rates apply @ 200g per copy. Send to :- Peter Matthews,  
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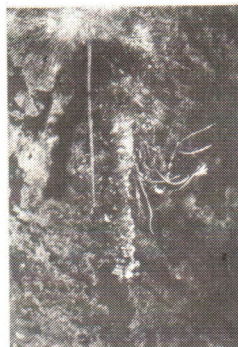
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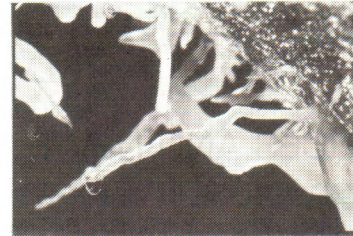
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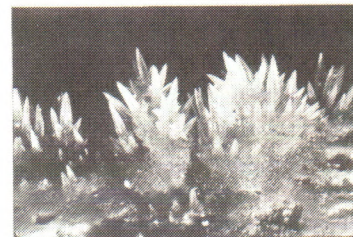
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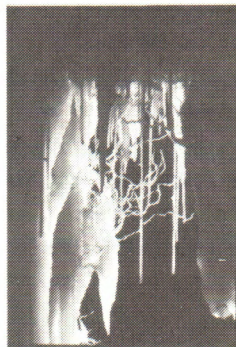
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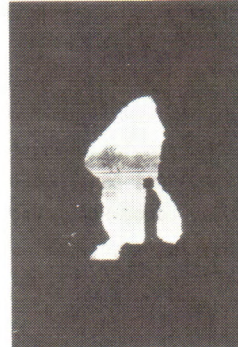
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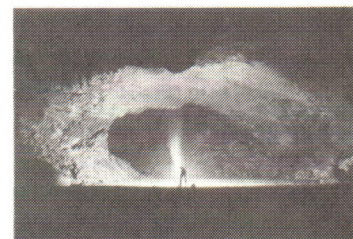
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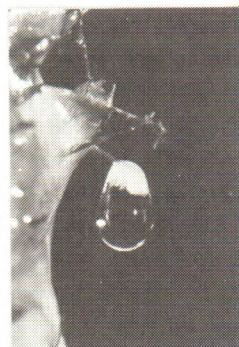
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Overseas ---- surface \$1.00, SAL \$4.00, Airmail - Europe \$6.90

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All prices quoted are in Australian Dollars and are subject to change without notice.



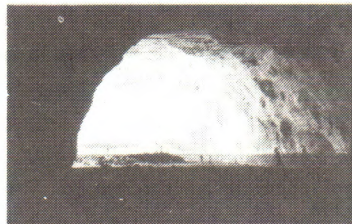
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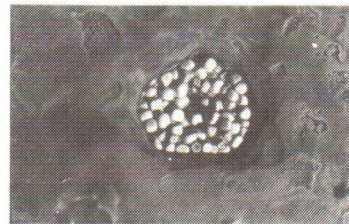
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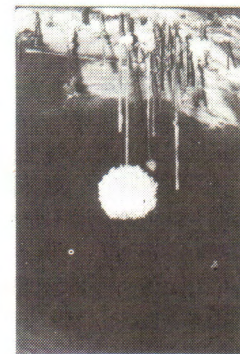
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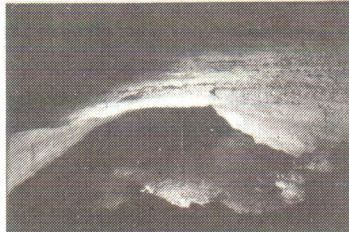
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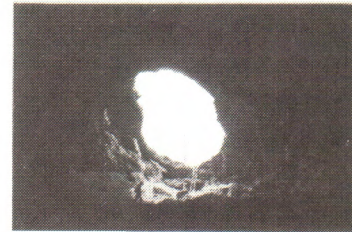
TV4



NH4



NH1



NH3

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HISTOPLASMOSIS AND THE AUSTRALIAN CAVER ( Cont.)

gonia, New South Wales.

All six patients spent two and a half hours in the cave. However, two to three weeks later, all six experienced a systemic upset consisting of headache, tiredness, myalgia and arthralgia, malaise, pleuritic chest pain, fever with rigors and night sweats.

Five of the patients developed respiratory symptoms, which included a dry cough which later became productive of a small amount of sputum and mild exertional dyspnoea. One even experienced fainting attacks. Both the respiratory and systemic symptoms settled over a period of one to six weeks.

The report of this outbreak did not state what treatment was administered, so presumably, the patients did not require medications and recovered uneventfully.

The result of the investigations carried out on the six patients is as follows :-

PATIENT NUMBER	CHEST X-RAY	SPIROMETRY	HISTOPLASMIN SKIN TEST	SEROLOGY
1	Fine millary pattern	5.3 - 5.7	—	+
2	Extensive millary pattern.	4.4 - 4.1	+ (10 mm)	+
3.	Extensive millary pattern with hilar node.	3.7 - 4.5.	+ (7 mm)	+
4	Normal	5.1 - 5.2	+ (20 mm)	—
5	Normal	4.0 - 4.4	+ (10 mm)	+
6	Normal	3.3 - 3.5	+ (10mm)	+

These spirometry results showed respiratory function to be normal in all patients.

Histoplasmin skin tests are considered positive if an area of induration 5 mm or more in diameter is present 24 to 76 hours after injection. <sup>(2)</sup> In this case, 0.1 ml of histoplasmin ( Parke-Davis ) was injected in the forearm and the results read at 36 hours.

The serological test used was the Rapid Slide Latex Agglutination Test ( Hyland ). The results were only given as a positive or a negative. Two of the five patients with positive reactions also gave positive results to a test for coccidiomycosis. Coccidiomycosis is a fungal disease affecting the respiratory tract and is caused Coccidioides immitis. <sup>(1)</sup>

The haemoglobin levels, white cell counts and sedimentation rates were also normal. Sputum cultures failed to isolate H. capsulatum.

Patient number three had a mediastinoscopy to investigate the hilar lymph node seen on the chest x-ray. (A mediastinoscopy is an operation whereby an instrument is inserted under the sternum and the structure in that region are visually examined. If anything unusual is seen it can be biopsied). The lymph gland mentioned was biopsied and microscopic examination showed non specific, non caseating granulomata. These changes are consistent with a number of other non-fungal diseases. No H. capsulatum were seen on this section.

After the press publication of this initial outbreak a further ten cavers, who had been in Church Cave in the previous twelve months, presented to the Royal North Shore Hospital. The report on this outbreak did not present any discussion on the significance of these results. These results, when taken as a group, would not appear to be very significant. As well as this it must be remembered that this was a retrospective study and the test presumably carried out at the time of presentation at Royal North Shore Hospital. This may well have been up to 12 months after the visit to the cave. As well as this, histoplasmin skin tests and serologic tests are not diagnostic. <sup>(2)</sup> This is because of the very strong cross reactions with other pathogenic fungi.

The findings relevant to the diagnosis are summarised as follows :-

HISTOPLASMOSIS AND THE AUSTRALIAN CAVER ( Cont.)

PATIENT NUMBER	CLINIC FEATURES	CHEST X-RAY	SEROLOGY	HISTOPLASMIN SKIN TEST
7	+	+	—	+
8	+	+	+	+
9	+	+	—	+
10	+	+	+	0
11	—	+	+	0
12	+	+	—	0
13	—	+	—	0
14	—	—	—	—
15	—	—	—	0
16	—	—	—	0

Fifteen samples of soil and bat guano were also later obtained from Church Cave. H. capsulatum was again not isolated from these samples.

The information presented on the initial six cases does seem to indicate that they had Histoplasmosis. However, the continued failure to culture H. capsulatum or even locate it under the microscope, means that the diagnosis is not proven.

A group of scouts visited a cave at Wee Jasper in late 1978. Two of them later presented to the Repatriation General Hospital, Concord, with a respiratory illness. <sup>(8)</sup>

Initially, the disease was thought to be Histoplasmosis or Aspergillosis. (Aspergillosis is a fungal infection caused by a fungus from the genus Aspergillus). <sup>(1)</sup> However, Dr. Breslin now feels that it is unlikely that the disease was either of these. He now describes the disease as granulomatous changes. This is only a descriptive term. It describes the cellular changes seen with the aid of a microscope. Granulomatous changes were also described by Isbister et al. <sup>(3)</sup> in their report discussed earlier.

Discussion

During my investigations into Histoplasmosis, I found there had been very little research this disease in Australia. Added to this, there had been almost no research into Histoplasmosis and its relationship in Australia to cavers, bats and caves. There was only one piece of research into Histoplasmosis amongst cavers in Australia that I was able to locate. This was an unpublished report of a series of Histoplasmin skin tests carried out by Glennis Wellings at NIBICON about ten years ago. In this series, Ms. Wellings claims that about a third of cavers showed a positive reaction.

The incidence of Histoplasmosis in Australia is not known. <sup>(3)</sup> However, four large epidemiological surveys, which relied on histoplasmin skin tests, reported an incidence of positive reactions, ranging from zero in several thousand to six in 768. <sup>(3)</sup> It may not be significant to compare results from NIBICON series from ten years ago with other more recent tests. However, the apparently high incidence of positive reactions among cavers is interesting and indicates that further investigations are necessary.

Conclusion

It is certain that H. capsulatum is present in Australia. This is indicated by the successful culture of H. capsulatum from several patients <sup>(10, 11 and 12)</sup> and its successful culture from a fowl pen in Adelaide in 1967. <sup>(5)</sup> However, it is difficult to draw any conclusions about the incidence and distribution of H. capsulatum in Australia. In fact, it would probably take a great deal of expensive research into the subject to determine the relationship in Australia, of Histoplasmosis and cavers, caves, birds, bats and other mammals.

Acknowledgement

Firstly, I would like to thank all those people who have provided information for this essay.

Secondly, I would like to thank especially Mr. J. Levey, Principal Microbiologist at the Repatriation General Hospital, Concord, for his invaluable help and guidance in preparing this article.

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## EIGHTH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF SPELEOLOGY

The NSS, in co-operation with numerous North American Speleological organizations, is pleased to sponser the Eighth International Congress of Speleology at Bowling Green, Kentucky, U.S.A., from 18th. - 24th. July, 1981, with field excursions and symposia preceding and following the Congress.

The International Congress of Speleology occurs every four years. The 1981 Congress is the first in the United States, and Speleologists there are therefore eager to present both an overview of karst and cave features and speleological research in the United States, and a detailed introduction to karst and caves in the Mammoth Cave region and adjacent areas.

Sessions will be held for the exchange of information on methodology, discoveries and speculation in all areas of Speleology. Papers will be solicited in the areas of cave and karst geology, karst geomorphology, chemistry and physics of karst, hydrology, mineralogy, speleogenesis, speleochronology, pseudo-karst, volcano speleology, palaeontology and archaeology, economic and environmental karst studies, aspects of cave flora and fauna (including taxa) evolutionary and zoogeographic dynamics, cave tourism and management, cave conservation, documentations, techniques and equipment, speleotherapy, and cave diving. All accepted papers will be pre-printed for the Congress in a Proceedings. Abstracts must be less than 250 words. Papers must not exceed six pages (size not given -Ed.) typed, single space, and including abstracts and illustrations. Papers will be included in Proceedings only if the author has paid the full member registration. Abstracts are due by 1 st. September, 1980.

Costs are as follows : Full attendance at the Congress ( includes Proceedings and Guide Books) \$106.

Accompanying member ( excludes Proceedings and Guide Book ) \$71.

Student \$71.

Proceedings \$33      Guide Book \$ 15

Non- attending member \$48 ( You get the Guide Book and Proceedings )

EIGHTH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF SPELEOLOGY ( Cont.)

For more detailed information, write to the following :-

Eighth International Congress of Speleology,  
Secretariat,  
Department of Geography and Geology,  
Western Kentucky University,  
Bowling Green, Kentucky, 42101, United States.

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## CAVES IN LITERATURE

We've had book reviews on a serious note. Here follows what one could call book reviews on not such a serious note. Do you realize the quantity of "caving " literature there is. There is really a great deal, seemingly confined to children's fiction and science- fiction. The more cynical reader might say "Escapism !" Well, 'tis escapism. So is caving. As Tolkien says in "Tree and Leaf"- "Why should a man be scorned, if, finding himself in a prison, he tries to get out and go home ? Or, if, when he cannot do so, he thinks and talks about other topics than jailers and prison walls ?"

I've selected several extracts from novels, all readily available in Australia in paperback. I hope these may inspire some reading.

Let's look at some of the passages ( pardon the pun ) about caves in science fiction first. I've only selected a few from the number around. There are many more. Caves are so convenient to hide in, to live in, to be carried off to, and to be ( unfortunately ) terrified in. Science fiction authors use caves ( especially Andre Norton ) as an excuse for an "attack of the horrors ". For example, in this extract from "Trey of Swords" by Andre Norton.

"While the closer I put my face to the opening, the more I was aware of an odor, fetid and heavy, after the cool clean air of the valley.....I swung over that lip, searching for hand and toe holds.....Tsali followed me.. ..He wore a cord about his neck, a pouch of netting in which there was a jumble of stones....As we went further into the shadows...those took on fire, to give of a glow of subdued light."

Or as quite a usual place of residence.

"They approached the Cave of the Ridges at dawnbreak, moving through a slit in the basin wall so narrow they had to turn sideways to negotiate it....Paul bent for the opening, followed Chane into a cave illuminated by a thin grey light from somewhere overhead."

Frank Herbert, "Dune".

Another residence here.....

" The dragonmen peeled off smartly, and dropped, each to his own tier in the caves of the Weyr....As they reached the huge natural cavern that had been his since Mnementh achieved maturity, F'lar looked about him with his eyes fresh from his first prolonged absence from the Weyr. The huge chamber was unquestionably larger than most of the halls he had visited in Fax's procession."

Ann McCaffrey, "Dragonflight".

Or just more caves. They are so convenient for concealing things.

" David looped the ladder around his waist and arm, and looked about. The cavity in the face of the cliff was about ten feet high and six across. With his flashlight pointing the way, he walked inward and came face to face with...."

Issac Asimov, "Space Ranger".

CAVES IN LITERATURE ( Cont.)

Most authors of children's fiction are sympathetic to caves, but often are depicted as frightening too. Most children are more sensible than that, and ignore the implied fear and enjoy the stories. There is not enough room to quote all those extracts I would like. Instead, I'll quote from one only. It is very rarely that one finds some writing that makes one exclaim, "Yes, that's exactly how it is!" I feel this passage does. Judge for yourself. Keep in mind that the characters are being pursued, they didn't do this just for fun.

"Colin and Susan examined the surroundings in detail for the first time, and an awful truth dawned on them. There was no obvious way out of the chamber. Two tunnels led off in opposite directions, but they were flooded. ....Colin held his dive as long as possible, but the icy water constricted his lungs, and he soon was in need of air. He rose to what he implored would be the surface, but his hands and the back of his head scraped along the roof. Flustered, he kicked himself into a shallow dive, his stomach tightening and his head seeming about to burst. This time. No! Again he struck the roof. What was wrong? Why was there no air? Fenodyree had said... Ah! He remembered! Swim on your back. That's it! Colin turned frantically on his back. His knapsack pulled at his shoulders and began to tilt him upside down. He threshed in the water and managed to right himself. Then his lips broke surface. The air gushed out of his lungs, and Colin promptly sank swallowing a lot of water. He kicked so violently from the tunnel floor, that he nearly stunned himself on the roof, but it quelled the panic and he lay on his back, breathing....The roof was certainly low. In order to keep his lips above water, he had to squash his nose against the rough stone of the ceiling, which made progress as painful as it was difficult. ...." and further on in their escape from the cave...." Both the children had difficulty in entering the tunnel. For the first yard or so it sloped downwards, and then turned uphill, not sharply, but enough to cause discomfort at the bend. Sand choked the entrance, though even when that was behind them the tunnel was so heavily silted that it was almost beyond the children to move at all. They lay full length, walls, floor, and roof fitting them like a second skin. Their heads were turned to one side, for in any other position the roof pressed their mouths into the sand and they could not breathe at all. The only way to advance was to pull with the fingertips and push with the toes....they became unbearably hot. Sand lodged grittily in every fold of the skin, and worked into mouth, nose and ears..... Ahead, Fenodyree was battling with a fresh difficulty. He had reached a spot where the tunnel bent abruptly on itself like a hairpin, and teasing Widowmaker's rigid blade through the angle at arm's length was no simple task. ....He succeeded, but it was some time before he was in any condition to follow his sword.....Colin was an inch taller than his sister, and that was disastrous. His heels jammed against the roof: he could neither move up or down and the sharp rock dug into his shins until he cried out with the pain. But he could not move.

Durathor, coming up behind, took in the situation at once.

'Can you hear?' he shouted at Colin's ankles.

'Yes. '

The reply was barely audible.

'Try - to - turn - yourself - on - to - your - side! Thence - to - your - belly! I - shall - try - to - guide - your - feet! Are - you - ready?' "

Alan Garner, "The Weirdstone of Brisingamen".

I think Alan Garner has been caving, don't you?

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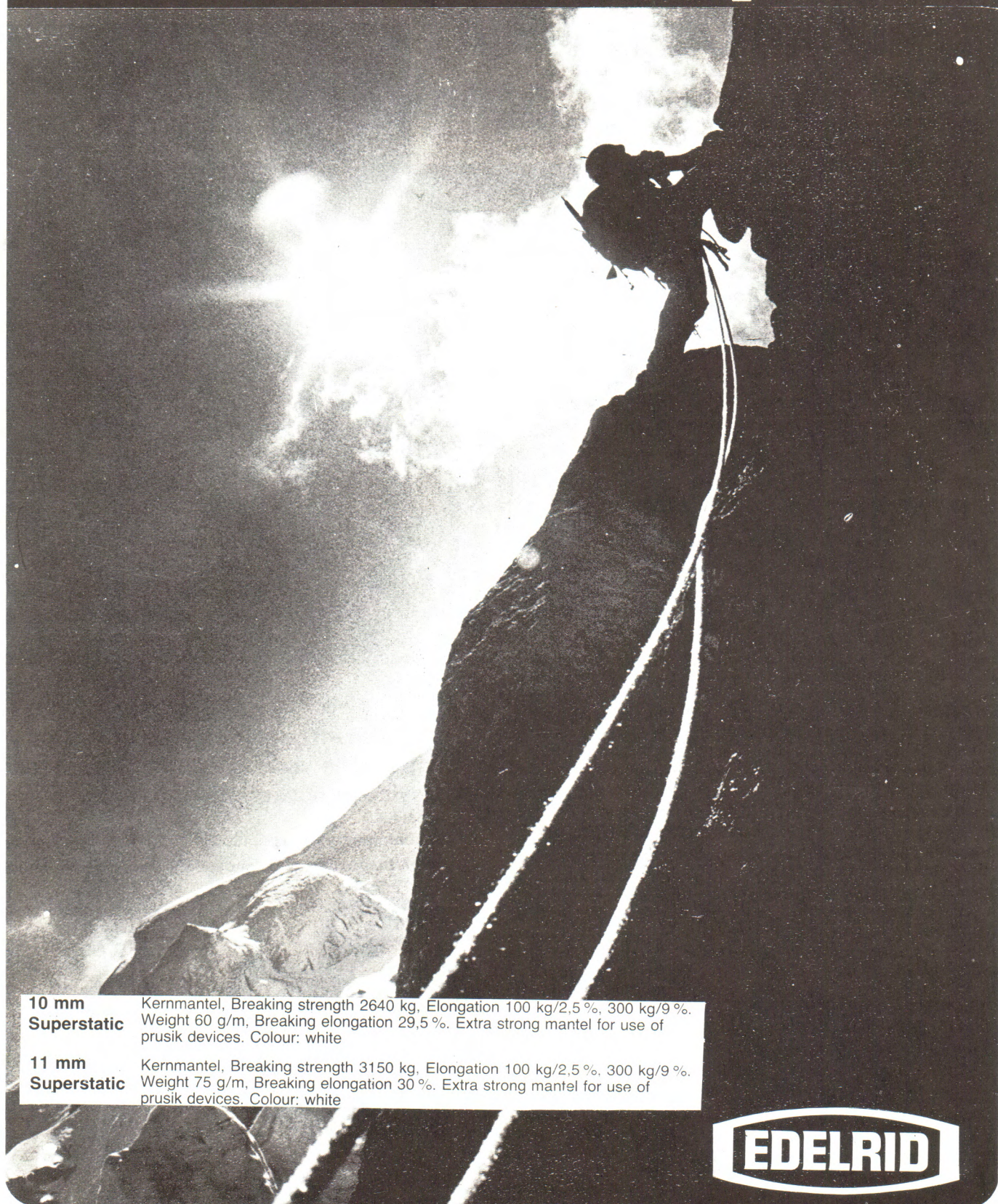
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## DOWN UNDER ALL OVER

## news from around the Societies

- ISS : Since August 1979, ISS have been fairly inactive as far as Wyanbene is concerned. The Gunbarrel photography project has been plagued with problems with equipment, but hopefully will be revived in the near future. The club has been active at Jenolan, in the southern limestone, and hope to install several sets of stream gauges in the area within the next few months. Several club members attended the Bungonia Cave Rescue weekend in March this year. The main reason for our inactivity in the last few months, is the forthcoming Kimberley Three Expedition, due to be held in June. The last expedition was extremely successful, and naturally gave stimulus to another one. The intentions, this time, are to investigate a few new areas, mainly in the Kunnunurra area, and hopefully to push the Cave Springs survey a lot further. A problem apparent on this trip, is the lack of people with suitable transport. Most seem to prefer to be picked up from the nearest airstrip. The trip is still on !
- MUSIG : MUSIG is still persevering with B 68. The project has been held up by vandals' breaking up the 200 metre polyurethane pipe in numerous places. The hand pump later seized. This was found to have been the result of a small pebble. Mapping has been halted at Jenolan's Naked Lady Chamber, as the club awaits the new forestry compass.
- WASG : Rauleigh Webb reports that activity has been high from January to May, 1980. The discovery of 400 metres of new cave at Eneaba in UNIWA Cave or Beekeepers Hole (E 10) sparked a great deal of interest, and two return visits have been made. The first of these saw exploration continue through a series of five air bells for a further 400 metres before a rockfall halted the exploration party of Mike Martyn and Dick van der Roest. Meanwhile, the survey of the cave reached the five ducks. The following day, Mike Martyn, Rauleigh Webb and Peter McMullan returned to survey the final 400 metres. Upon reaching the terminal rockfall, several rocks were removed and the passage continued; 300 metres later, a sump was reached. The survey out was completed in quick time and now the cave has a surveyed length of 1273 metres after one weekends' surveying. The return trip pushed all leads with the aid of the air tank and some 200 metres of cave was found beyond a series of sumps. The cave has at present halted in a terminal sump. If the water level falls more ( only 20 centimetres ) then exploration will be able to continue. We wait with baited breath. Elsewhere activity has been absent except for the Easter break, when a four day "assault" on Easter Cave saw the surveyed length go from 5.4 kilometres to 6.7 kilometres. The Loveday survey of Calgardup Cave is close to completion with several new sections being discovered during the survey. The length to date is nearing 800 metres. Three WASG members went to Mullamullang with a CEGSA party during May and they report a successful trip. WASG awaits the results of Neil Smith's levelling work in the Easter Extension. Neil also conducted some flow experiments in Mullamullang at Rauleigh's request. These will be reported on as soon as practicable.
- SUSS : Although the initial 1980 activity for SUSS included Freshers' trips to Avalon sea caves, Bungonia and Cooleman, it has been at Jenolan that most energy has been concentrated. At this time ( April 1980 ) all of the new sections of Spider Cave, which have been found so far, are surveyed and documented. A special issue of the SUSS Bulletin, devoted entirely to the new discoveries, has been published. Exploration work continues; an unsuccessful attempt has been made to find more high level passages by climbing various avens, and the downstream rockpile (which should eventually link up with the Imperial Cave ) has been pushed for over 20 metres. Upstream, divers have dived down a rift for more than 13 metres. Spider Cave has not been the only concern however. The temporary absence of Central River in Mammoth Cave has generated some interest here also. Further cleaning of Oolite Cavern, using our new cave cleaning equipment, has also been carried out. Canyoning has enjoyed some popularity in the last few months, Spring Creek ( Bungonia ) and Kalang ( Kanangra ) proving most popular. One rather disturbing incident occurred after a Kalang trip. The party were using two ropes. On descending one rope, Ivan Desailly found half the other one lying in a pile at the bottom. This brand new Bluewater 11 had been cut by a falling rock ! This happening is more than a little disturbing. Future trips are planned for Cooleman and elsewhere.

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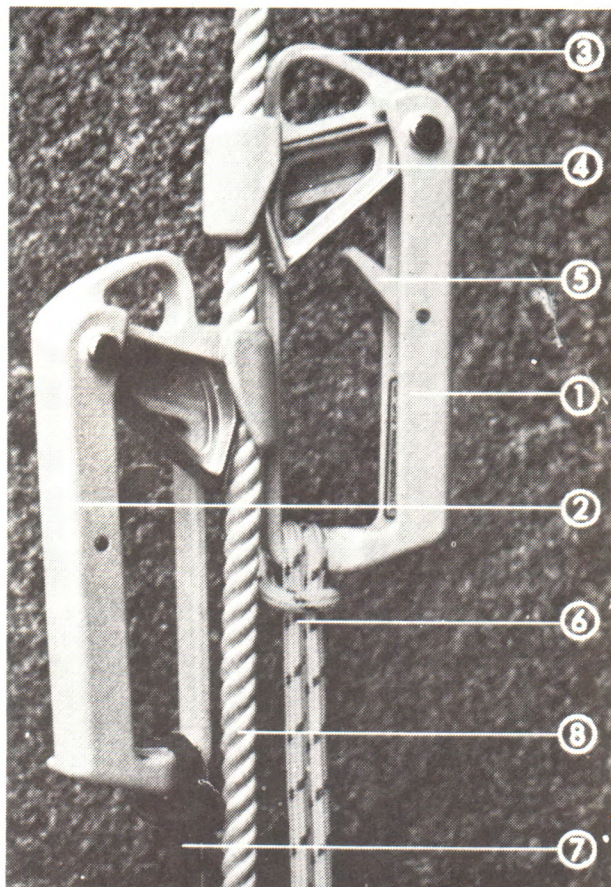


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