

ASF NEWSLETTER

Summer, 1980/81



Entrance of Commando Cave, Mt. Etŕa, Queensland — Photo by Glenn Pure

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

ISSN. 0313 — 413 X

50c.
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NEWSLETTER
Autumn, 1981, No. 91

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Once again, I have to ask for articles. Perhaps you don't even have to write one. Have you published one in your club newsletter that would be of national speleological interest? If you're not sure if it is, send it anyway, and I'll decide. In particular, I would like you to read Rauleigh Webb's letter. At present, there is no copy for *ASF Newsletter* # 92, so the deadline date has been extended.

Read also Andrew Pavey's Vice-President's Report, noting especially his reference to how he would like a Conference to be. Perhaps this will spark some Letters to the Editor. In particular, Andrew writes of more informal discussions. These were held at CAVE CONVICT, and indeed, they were the liveliest sessions.

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DEADLINE DATES FOR FUTURE ISSUES

For numbers 92 and 93, the dates are 1 June and 1 August , 1981 respectively.

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THE DISCOVERY AND EXPLORATION OF SPIDER CAVE, JENOLAN,

Richard Mackay, Guy Cox, Bruce Welch, Mike Lake and others

This discovery is of particular significance since it has given access to the underground course of the Jenolan River between Mammoth and Imperial Caves (the Hairy Diprotodon). Many of the formations in the cave are of outstanding beauty, and to protect these the cave has been gated and a track marked inside. Groups visiting are asked to take particular care - boots and overalls become very muddy.

The entrance to Spider Cave was found by Bruce Welch (SUSS) on 15 May, 1975. When discovered, the cave was only 130 m in length and ended in a tight constriction of the passage (Dingo Dig). By 21 December, the passage was enlarged sufficiently for members to enter Frustration Chamber and later (June, 1976) Helictite Chamber. A rockpile was found at the end of a tight squeeze in December, 1976 but was not explored until 16 June, 1979 when Mike Lake and Bruce Welch (the only two small enough) broke into large virgin passage after several hours of exploring, squeezing and digging. This large passage led them quickly to the Jenolan Underground River - the Hairy Diprotodon had been found at last! Next day, after considerable digging, a large party was able to get through and further explore the riverway.

The cave entrance is a low solution tube crawl which leads to a small drop into a medium size chamber. A series of drops then leads to the main chamber, which contains some good flowstone, moonmilk and cave coral as well as wombat, wallaby and dingo bones. A large sediment deposit in the Main Chamber has apparently been removed by the stream which descends into Dingo Dig. This tight passage rises into Frustration Chamber, from which the 'Z' squeeze leads into a passage with unusual calcite growths and then into the large (60m) Helictite Chamber.

From here, Pirates' Delight (so named because everyone who goes through gets a sunken chest) is negotiated into a circular chamber. Pirates' Delight is a typical phreatic loop with silted base followed by a classic ramp, up which the water flowed. Beyond this is a chaotic jumble of boulders. The original way on was a very tight squeeze (the Irreducible Minimum) but a more spacious alternative (the Expandable Maximum) has since become excavated.

At the end of the rockpile, a marked path passes a mud slope leading up to an aven. Mud formations abound: forests painted vertically rolled cones, a few centimetres high and glop holes are formed in a thin layer of mud over flowstone. Extensive cascades of superbly white flowstone and numerous speleothems decorate both sides of the Khan Passage, which leads south to the Little Khan - a dominating white three metre stalagmite. Long twisting helictites extend along one wall.

Turning right after the rockpile, a marked trail is followed over a mud bank to the streamway. This bank contains some magnificent examples of the glop holes that give this area - Glop Hole Gallery - its name. Beyond the streamway turnoff, another mudbank rises to another rockpile. Pushing upwards, it is possible to penetrate about 25 metres.

To the left of the mud slope is a horizontal passage. This leads to Terror Traverse, high on the north side of the Mausoleum. From here, a stream canyon followed through sandy sediment brings one to a small antechamber containing a shawl over 7 metres long. A squeeze then follows proceeding to an enormous Glop Hole. This area is dominated by extensive shawl development, including a rift with more than a dozen 'singing' shawls, some 7 metres long, which echo any high pitched sounds. Above the Singing Shawls, a climb leads to Caverna Alba, a low flat chamber with innumerable straws and a floor paved with crystal gourds.

At Glop Hole Gallery, two streamways converge, and disappear into a crawlway. A steep vadose canyon and a climb down a parallel shaft finally lead to the main river passage. The Jenolan River is entered about 5 metres upstream of the Mausoleum (a large cavern). Near vertical bedding planes can be seen in the roof.

Downstream, the riverway follows the strike of the limestone before bifurcating; one branch flows into a bedrock hole; the other into a rockpile. After some rather hair-raising rock removal, the river has been negotiated for about 20 metres.

Upstream, the river becomes a slow-moving pool at Pike Lake. Further upstream, another lake is formed at a dyke, beyond which Sump 1 is encountered. This sump is approached by progressively decreasing airspace. It is no more than a metre long and the contrast on emerging is startling! One surfaces directly in a large lake chamber with a high roof. Further upstream, the river meanders within spacious passage for only 17 metres to a boulder choke. The stream emerges from a constricted rift; 3 metres along this rift the water wells up from a deep blue hole. Divers report that the rift opens and continues down for 13 metres.

The totalled surveyed length of the cave is 1077 metres. Many side passages are not yet surveyed. Persistence in exploration could well lead to further cave. The best lead is the downstream rockpile which must be very close to the upper reaches of the Imperial system.

Editor's note:- The map prepared by SUSS of Spider Cave won the Caving Equipment Award at CAVE CONVICT.

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THE SPELEO BUSHRANGERS

Now be honest with yourself. Can you think of a cave system in New South Wales that is not associated with a bushranger? If these evil-doers had banded together to form a Speleo Club, it would have been the biggest and richest that the state has ever seen.

However, they did all their caving alone or in small groups and I doubt whether they would have gained membership to the ASF anyway. They had atrocious safety records.

Let us now examine the exploits of some of these Speleo Bushrangers and to keep it brief they will hereafter be referred to as the BMSC, (Bushrangers Mutual Speleological Club).

We will begin with our faithful James McKeown (whom Jenolan guides will refer to as an escaped convict, not a bushranger). McKeown explored the open arches at Jenolan in the 1830s. His caving career was short, as he was soon evicted by James Whalan. Perhaps McKeown should have applied for a permit for the weekend. His grave is said to be at Hazelgrove near Oberon, though I haven't been out to see.

We must leave Jenolan now as it becomes far too law abiding and travel across the ranges to Abercrombie, the haunt of many a bushranger.

History tells us that Ralf Entwistle and his Ribbon Gang fought it out with the 39th Regiment around the Arch in November, 1831. Three of the gang were shot and the remaining ten were captured after three days when their ammunition ran out. They were hanged in Bathurst in February, 1832. The leg irons on display in the Arch date from this time. So ended the longest cave inspection at Abercrombie. Imagine the cost for tickets!

We have to be careful when reading references to Abercrombie that they refer to the Caves, and not the Abercrombie Ranges. I can find no reference to Ben Hall's using or even visiting the Abercrombie Caves. He had friends in the Abercrombie Ranges whom he visited when travelling between the Lachlan and Goulburn districts, but the caves were too well known in the mid 1860s for these to be used as a bushranger's hideout. The caves had been known and visited by everyone from miners to Governors for thirty years prior to Ben Hall's day. They had been explored, lived in and built in (dance floor) before Ben Hall turned to unlawful pursuits. Hardly a place for any self respecting bushranger to try to stay concealed in. A bushman such as Hall would never allow himself to be caught in the enclosed trap which is the Abercrombie Caves.

However, if any bushranger of note ever used the caves to advantage, it would have to have been Johnny Piesley whose territory was the Abercrombie area. He ranged in the late 1850s, teaming up with Frank Gardiner for a few famous shoot-outs with police in the area. If Piesley used the caves, it must have only been for a short time, as he was caught and hanged in 1862.

Assuming then that Ben Hall avoided the Abercrombie 'traps', and was not going to be caught like Entwistle, we will follow him back across the Lachlan Plain where the mail coaches crossed - Ben Hall permitting. In his own Weddin Mountains, he used sandstone and quartzite overhangs for shelter and storage. The question remains - did he use limestone caves?

In *Bungonia Caves* (1972:9) a reference is made to the possibility of Hall, Gilbert and Dunn's using those caves in 1865, but, as the book suggests, this is doubtful. The bushrangers were not in the area long enough to use the caves. Furthermore, the area was not known to them, the police were close (in a matter of months, all three would be dead) and the unknown terrain at Bungonia would not lead to a safe getaway if the police did close in on them there. Besides, they were not up on SRT and they had forgotten their ladders this time.

Earlier, in 1863, the hooves of the gang's horses had clattered over limestone, at Cliefden, when they were raiding in the area. The caves at Cliefden and Walli are not the type that would be attractive to an outlaw. The caves were hard to find, with small entrances and a little close to Carcoar and the 'traps'. Even old William Montague Rothery, the owner of Cliefden, who was tied to a chair while the bushrangers enjoyed themselves at his expense, never entered the caves. Perhaps the early miner/settler cavers were attracted by large open arches such as Jenolan and Abercrombie, which resulted in the early popularity of these areas and not others.

The Nelungaloo Caves near Parkes have the distinction of being called Ben Hall's Caves. *The Lachlan Tourist* writes The legend suggested that Ben Hall frequented an inn on the Forbes-Bogan Gate road and that this escape route, if strangers were sighted, involved having horses tethered in Goobang Creek and a swift ride upstream to a cave. The legend also suggests that Hall rode into the cave mouth from the creek and that the cave could be negotiated for a mile underground.

SUSS, who have been working in the area, have been unable to prove this latter part of the legend. Although the caves are near where Ben Hall was shot, the area is a bit too far north for him to have visited often. But who knows?

THE SPELEO BUSHRANGERS (Cont.)

As George Knox, the Superintendent at Abercrombie Caves puts it

Of Ben Hall, we are sure of three things only - where he was born,
where he lived and where he died. All else is mere speculation.

Not a bad thing to remember, especially in relation to
cave areas.

Moving now to other areas we find reference to a man called Glover who was said to be a member of the Hall gang. I can find no reference to this. He was supposed to have planted gold in the Cooleman - Blue Waterholes area.

At Timor, the Main Cave is supposed to have 'F Ward 1885' written on the ceiling. Fred Ward was the name of Captain Thunderbolt, a New England bushranger who was shot in 1870. Yes, 1870!

Another inscription in carbon on the ceiling in Cleatmore Cave near Braidwood reads 'T Clarke July 1862'. The Clarkes (one was Tom) roamed this area before turning to bushranging. As a bushrangers' haunt, Cleatmore Caves are ideal. The Clarkes were hanged in 1867. The inscription may be genuine though the style of handwriting does not look old. However, the fact that the month and year are given adds to the authenticity.

The Hunter River Valley bushranger 'Jewboy' Davis is said to have stored his loot on Pilchers Mountain. There are caves at Pilchers Hill, near Dungog. Where?

Well, maybe they caved and maybe they didn't. Whatever the case, the legends will continue to grow and the facts will become as foggy as a pair of spectacles in Main Cliefden. We do know however, of Bushranging Speleos who are active today, either collecting loot from tourists before a cave inspection or after a speleo trip in the form of trip fees.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Following are letters to the editor, placed in their order of arrival. It is up to you to make comment. The letters are printed in entirety.

Dear Rosie,

In the *ASF Newsletter* # 89, an article appeared which I feel needs further comment. The article was entitled 'When is a sump a duck? Or what constitutes a cave dive?'. While this article does raise some pertinent questions about just how far cavers may enroach into the field of caver diving, it does leave me somewhat apprehensive.

Certainly sump free-diving is a potentially dangerous pastime, but for that matter so is SCUBA-assisted diving. When SCUBA diving is carried out by those not educated in the techniques and specialized equipment and precautions dictated by the 'dive' in question, be it above ground or below, a tragedy can be just around the corner. Statistics support this fact, with many diving fatalities being avoidable had those involved only known what to do and how to do it, correctly and safely at the right time. To make a statement that ,

...The use of tanks by divers (not necessarily CDAA qualified divers)
in caves, should not be discouraged where their use significantly
increases the safety of the caving being undertaken....

is indeed a paradox. Any responsible qualified diver is bound to uphold those codes of diving, described by the various qualifications they hold and consequently would decline a 'cave dive' unless they held a CDAA ticket or some similar qualification. Even so, the use of an air-tank to investigate even small sumps does not necessarily imply a greater safety factor, especially when undertaken by novices to cave diving. The fact that the diver on the UNIWA exploration did navigate a series of sumps that were too risky for free divers can only emphasize the hazardous situations a diver using SCUBA to 'enhance' safety can find him or

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR (Cont.)

herself in.

This article seems to project the philosophy that the individual explorers should be answerable only to themselves. What then is the point of having any codes?

To conclude, I am in absolute agreement with Rauleigh Webb that it seems almost unbelievable that the ASF could pass a code, sight unseen. Apart from the obvious difficulties of complying with an unknown code, it would appear that this particular code in its present form is incomplete, when applied to cavers as opposed to cave divers.

Yours faithfully,
Rob Capon (WASG).

Dear Rosie,

I write the following letter to the editor in the hope of drumming up greater support for 'Down Under All Over' in the *ASF Newsletter*.

The thirteenth bi-ennial convention of the ASF has come to a successful conclusion in Melbourne. This conference was hosted by VSA and an admirable job they did in its organisation I am told. However, on an entirely different front - their contribution to the 'Down Under All Over' section of the *ASF Newsletter* has been sadly lacking.

I recently reviewed the clubs that have been contributing the regular feature in our *Newsletter* over the period 1978 to 1980. Over this three year period, nine issues of the *Newsletter* contained 'Down Under All Over' contributions. Of the nine issues, no club contributed in every issue, but WASG came close with eight.

Looking at the contributions on a club for club basis, those that did bad to poor were, I believe, VSA (1) and SSS (0). Other only fair efforts were CEGSA (2) and UQSS (2). On the positive side NUCC (7), CSS (6) and CTCG (5) turned in the best state coverage.

Overall, I think that it is a pretty poor effort. The *ASF Newsletter* is the only publication that reaches individual members of caving clubs and hence the only method you have of informing the cavers of Australia what your club is doing. So you 34 other clubs out there how about appointing a reliable person to send contributions to 'Down Under All Over' in 1981. Let's support our editor and federation in this small but significant way.

Yours faithfully,
Rauleigh Webb (WASG).

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He rolled to all four feet and lumbered across the cave. Emerging through its entrance, he found himself in a long torchlit corridor, down which a further dragon shape was rapidly receding. Concluding this must be the- what it had called itself- grand-uncle of the body Jim was in, Jim took after him, digging in his memory the name the other had used for himself.

'Wait for me, uh- Smrgol!' he yelled.

But the other dragon shape turned a corner and disappeared.

The Dragon and the George. Gordon R. Dickson.

DIFFERENTIATING NYLON & TERYLENE

Simon Jolly

Most cavers are aware of the alleged danger of the concurrent use of lead acid batteries and nylon vertical gear, and similarly alkaline batteries and terylene gear. So, is that tape of yours nylon or terylene?

It is a simple process you might think, to test the effect of acids and alkalines on a small sample, but in practice this gives far from clear results. Concentrated mineral acids rapidly dissolve both nylon and terylene and weaker solutions often have no appreciable effect on either. On several terylene samples I have tested, prolonged boiling in a concentrated sodium hydroxide had no visible effect.

If one looks up the text books, it seems a definite test for terylene (polyester) is that it dissolves in boiling 0-dichlorobenzene in less than six hours. Furthermore, hot formic acid will dissolve nylon (polyamide) but not terylene.

A far simpler test I have found is to immerse fibres of the tape to be tested in a saturated solution of potassium permanganate (Condy's Crystals). The solution must be super saturated, that is with crystals undissolved after vigorous mixing. In a day or so nylon fibres are considerably weakened and soon disintegrate completely. Terylene remains completely unaffected.

You can now go caving with that 'Montgomery ring of confidence', though I can't help thinking if this morbid fear of the vulnerability of our tapes is really justified.

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ASF VICE-PRESIDENT'S REPORT

As a result of unexpected work and family pressures, I have been far less active than I expected I would be in the past two years.

Few problems have been reported to me requiring action. Those of immediate interest were all on conservation matters. Aside from one or two concerned individuals, there seems little interest or expertise in the area in NSW at present. This is a parlous condition and requires some attention from the clubs concerned. The lack of expertise is particularly worrying as there is clearly no way of bringing sufficient personnel to bear on a big issue such as the Colong and Bungonia issues of the last decade. In particular, there is little expert knowledge of the smaller and less frequently visited areas or of the potential problems which might arise. Issues which need some attention are the possibility of high voltage power lines crossing the Wellington outcrop, mining exploration permits in the Kemsey area and the increasing commercialisation and 'development' of the Bungonia area.

On other matters, I would judge that caving is going through a trough situation at present with less activities, discoveries or systematic work being carried out than in earlier years.

As far as the ASF executive is concerned for me, it has hardly existed. So little contact has been made throughout the period as to be no contact. I would hope that the Committee would take special care in selecting incoming office bearers to ensure that a level of activity is maintained.

As for the *Newsletter*, excellent work on the part of the editor was spoiled by the continuous non-arrival of it. A month ago, I received a nice bundle of the year's issues together. This is not an effective communication method. I believe that if the ASF and its member societies are to pull themselves out of their present doldrums, then the *Newsletter* should be devoted far more to news and articles of lively interests. Without this and reliable regular production, we are in no position to respond to the increasing pressures of the 'eighties. At present, there is little doubt that ASF represents (and I use the term loosely) no more than a small fraction of those persons in our community going caving. I see as the major task of the incoming executive, the lifting of the image of the ASF and its role into a more prominent light within the community. If this is not done, our abilities to alter planning processes seriously effecting our access to caves throughout the country will be greatly reduced and eventually will not be consulted or listened to at all.

I am sorry not to attend the Conference. It will be the first I have missed in twelve years. However, I do believe that before considering the site for the next conference (1984 -Ed.) the Committee should seriously review the reasons for the biennial conference and whether it is achieving its objectives in the present format.

I would like to see a return to the less comfortable and organised days, with the Conference being held in or near a major caving area, rather than a large city/university college environment. I'd like to see more emphasis on discussion and activities relating to caves and caving and less on the 'gee-whizz-audio-visual' presentation. And even (shock! horror!) the concept of camping, campfires, get-togethers in the local with perhaps no more than a marquee or the local town hall for the formal meetings etc. I think that in this way the appeal could be broadened to include more of the Joe caver, who are in fact the vast majority of people caving these days and with whom the ASF is losing touch. Perhaps we should aim for 80% new faces and 20% old hands instead of the other way around.

I hope this report stirs up some lively discussion.

Andrew Pavey.

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ASF HANDBOOK COMMISSION REPORT — 1980

The major work completed this year has been the significant task of commenting on and returning the NSW cave forms. This now completes all states. Now that the unexpected three year form-correcting stage is completed, the way is clear for a relatively rapid conclusion to the project.

This will, however, still depend on the people who have been generous enough to work on the data forms, and whether they can make the extra effort to read the instructions fully and carry them out faithfully. To help in this regard, I am completely updating the instructions, with particular emphasis in the areas causing problems. These will be available soon. Then, when all other aspects of the *Handbook* are ready to go, two months notice will be given for getting all the data up to date for publication. It should be also noted that processing methods have been improved so that now it is much easier to fill in the forms.

There was a request last year to investigate splitting the *Handbook* into two parts - the cave lists and the papers. I undertook to look into this after finishing the urgent task of returning the NSW forms, expected around June. I was unfortunately not able to finish the NSW forms until December 1980. However the original reasons for combining the cave lists and papers for just this first and expensive developmental edition (essentially I need maximum revenue) are even more valid today than when I did the original planning and costing because of the effects of inflation. Briefly, the reasons are:-

- (i) If the cave lists are published separately, they are not eligible for the book bounty, worth maybe \$1000. The recent checklist was not eligible for the same reason, but the combined first *Handbook* was.
- (ii) If the papers are published separately, they cannot be paid for by the grant, the unused portion of which must then be returned.
- (iii) Sales of the papers, and hence revenue from them, will be greater if they are joined to the cave lists, and the ASF's message will be spread further.
- (iv) Handling effort for one book will be much less than two. This may not unduly concern you, but it certainly concerns me. ASF has only a limited amount of volunteer labour time available to it. This was the original reason for automating the cave lists at all.

In later editions, each part was in fact planned to be republished independently because the required update cycles are so different, and because the cave lists will no longer need the financial support of the papers. Note also, that all authors were advised some time ago that they would be invited to update their papers just before publication.

Other activities during the year include:

- a progress report to the Australian Heritage Commission.
- *Checklist* sales (about 90 since the Buchan Committee Meeting).
- a submission to the NSS (our USA equivalent) who are considering starting their own cave data base. Our own experience to date and the issues and pitfalls involved were described. They were also asked to consider the advantages of taking a unique opportunity to facilitate future interchange of developmental effort between ASF and NSS, by choosing to use the equivalent computer company in the United States.

Any states, which have home or free computer time available, and would like to process their own cave forms locally to avoid the need for the forms to actually leave the state should contact me to discuss the matter further.

Peter Matthews (Convenor)

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ASF LIBRARY REPORT

In 1978, I undertook to continue the negotiation, commenced by Brian Lefoe, with the National Library of Australia, concerning the possible housing of the ASF collection as part of the national collection. The gentleman with whom Brian was negotiating had left, and it was necessary to begin again, with a M/s R. Missingham..

The National Library would be more than happy to accept the ASF material, including much of the material from government departments and other bodies, surprisingly. The following points should be considered by the Committee in making a decision about the future of the ASF collection:-

- (i) Borrowing of material can be conducted using the inter-library loan system which works from any public or institutional library in Australia. Most probably, depending upon the source of the request, a photocopy of the material would be made available, to be paid for by the

ASF LIBRARY (Cont.)

by the person requesting.

- (ii) The collection would be catalogued within the main National Library system, which is now being stored on computer (successfully). Major libraries around Australia have, or will have, access to the system and 'instant' searches for holdings and so forth will be, or are, available.
- (iii) A monthly article/abstracting service (APAS) will reference appropriate material as it is acquired and this is also available locally.
- (iv) Maintenance of the ASF library, as a library in private hands is impossible and dangerous.

A.P.Spate.

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REPORT OF AD-HOC COMMITTEE ON MEMBERSHIP

As I undertook at WACCON, I have liaised with Ben Nurse on the membership structure of the Federation. I had hoped by now to have produced a report on the future structure of the Federation. This has not been the case.

As I see it at present, there are three possible structures for organised speleological activities in Australia

(i) Australian Speleological Society

One society covering the whole of Australia, each member paying fees to the central body and having voting rights. Electing an executive committee.

In a country the size of Australia, the usual problems of distance and frequency of meetings would create the same problems that are faced now for the executive. To overcome these problems to some extent, New Zealand and the United States have adopted this overall structure with the formation of local sub-groups of members of the entire body which act defacto as local clubs - called respectively TOMO groups and GROTTOS. In this arrangement, it is possible to be a member of the national body without necessarily being a member of one of the local bodies. Voting is on a one member one vote basis although in practice, those who turn up are usually those who vote. Such a structure allows for the few individuals ('identities') who wish to be members, but who do not feel at ease as members of one of the local groups.

(ii) ASF - Federal structure

A federation of groups representing all cavers in each State. Fee paying and voting within each State and electing representatives to the national body.

The usual problems of geographic location of members and caving areas present problems. Voting at a national level would be on a State basis. This raises the problem of the loss of one person one vote principle, in that the more populous (in caver terms) States would have less influence than the least populous on a per capita base. The closest parallels to such a structure are the Australian Senate and the British caving Councils. Such a structure could be developed by only recognizing the current 'Liason Councils' in ASF Committee meetings.

(iii) ASF - Local group Federation

Essentially the structure as at present.

This has the problem of not meeting the one member one vote criteria at the federal level. It does not at present allow for individual members at a national level. The liason councils sit in an awkward as constructs of a subset of the federal body reporting to it, but with a membership not necessarily uniformly representative of the groups in the area in which it operates.

Discussion

It seems to me that there are several problems which need addressing:-

- (i) Equity of voting - preferably on a one fee one vote basis, as this seems to generate the most heat in discussion.
- (ii) Individual membership of the national body for those unwilling to join one of the local groups.
- (iii) Sufficient flexibility to allow new groups to join shortly after formation and to remove old

(Cont. on page 11)

NOTICES AND NEWS

FOURTEENTH BIENNIAL CONFERENCE

The Fourteenth Biennial Conference of the Australian Speleological Federation will be held on 3-7 January, 1983 at Flinders University, Adelaide, South Australia. The Conference proposes to have two aims as basis of discussion. These will be

1. Visual aspects of cave recording

- (i) This theme will cover all aspects of cave recording. Topics will be inclusive of photography, both in two dimensional and three dimensional, and their application in mapping, scientific and navigational activities in caves.
- (ii) Trends in cave mapping with the advent of computer plotting, alternative methods of depicting caves and holograms.
- (iii) Use of information retrieval systems, that is microfiche, aperture cards and word processors.

2. Forecasting the future of Australian Speleology

- (i) How advances in technology affect speleology.
- (ii) Cave access and management in the coming decade. How past trends may affect the future.
- (iii) Population pressures on our natural cave resource.

PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE FROM ASF

Brian McQuillan has certain publications available which are listed below. Please write or ring Brian to arrange those which you require. The prices quoted are exclusive of postage. Brian's address and phone number are on page one of the Newsletter.

ASF Newsletter # 52-54, 56, 58-60, 62-69, 72-86.

ASF Cave Survey and Map Standards

Caving in Australia \$1.00

Conservation of Mulla Mullang Cave, WA \$0.50

'This or This', Conservation of Australian Caves \$0.50

Cave Management in Australia I

Cave Management in Australia II

Australian Speleology 1971

NIBICON PROCEEDINGS

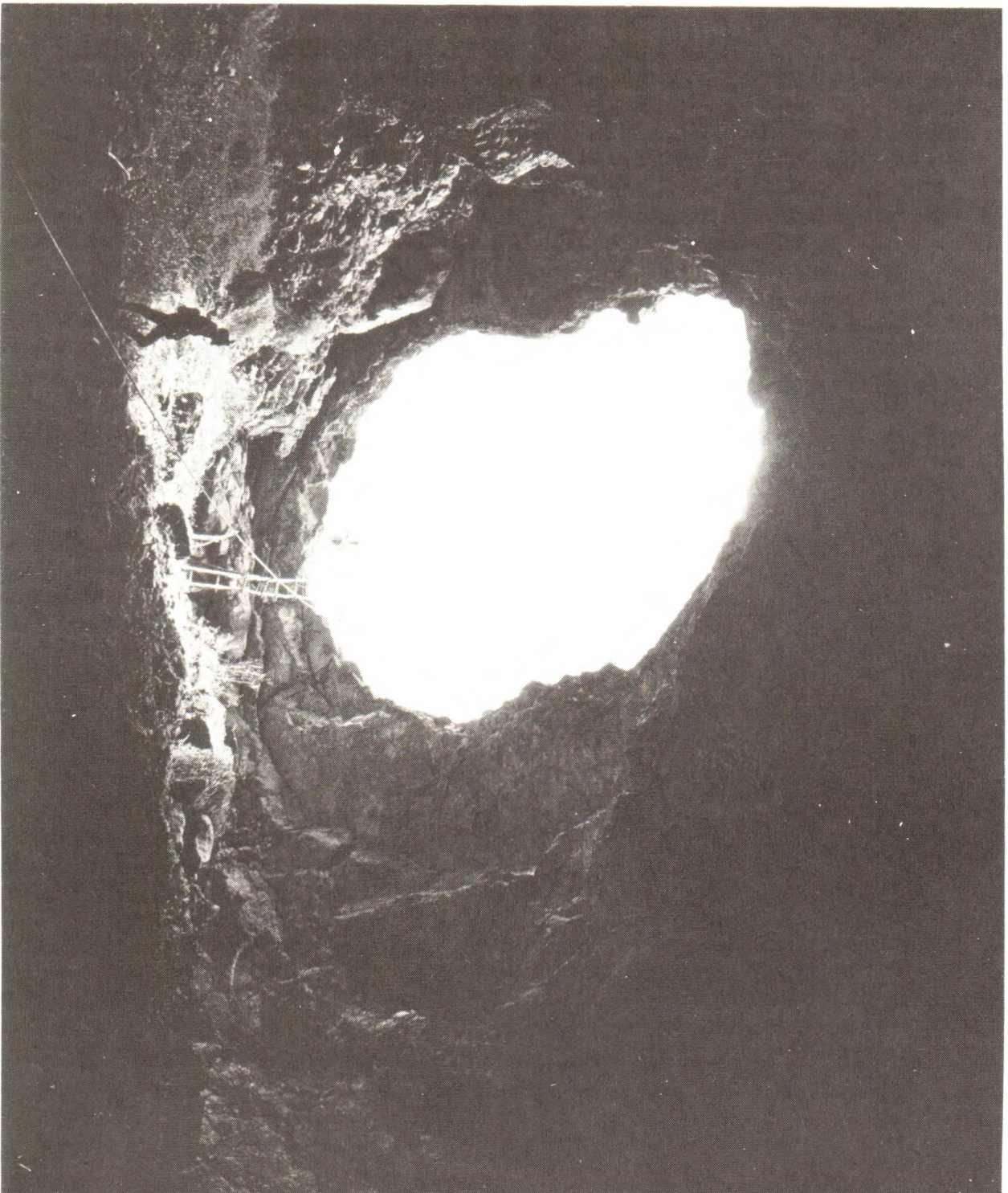
Andrew Pavey would like those NIBICON participants who are owed proceedings to write to him if you have changed your address since NIBICON. He requires an up-to-date address list. Andrew's address is 45 Arcadia St., Glebe, New South Wales, 2037.

CAVE RESCUE EXERCISE

Did you go to the N.S.W. Cave Rescue Group's exercise at Bungonia on 7-8 March at Bungonia?

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Entrance to Murrumbidgee Cave (N47) Nullarbor Plain, Western Australia

Photo by Poulter
Speleo Print • NH 3

REPORT OF AD-HOC COMMITTEE ON MEMBERSHIP (Cont.)

groups which have ceased activity or become unfinancial.

- (iv) Provide sufficient formal recognition to organisations of groups dealing with Government etc. on a regional basis.

If the Committee agrees with these ideas then I would be prepared to continue to develop them and produce a discussion paper for circulation in the *ASF Newsletter* and thereafter a number of clear recommendations for the next Committee meeting.

Andrew Pavey.

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NEWSLETTER REPORT

Four issues of the *ASF Newsletter* were published in 1980. The new typewriter has been a great help in cutting typing time.

The major problem has been the lack of articles. Personal representation has been the main method of soliciting articles (I don't think many read the editorials.). Many articles which appear in club newsletters are of value to speleology nationally, and hopefully these will appear in 1981.

Another complaint by many is that they don't get their newsletter. The blame for this must lie with the offended person's club or society. The address lists and monies must be sent to John Taylor at the earliest possible time in the year, and it is the responsibility of the person who has this position to update as the year goes on.

In the capacity of newsletter editor, I have noted with growing concern, an element of 'one upmanship' creeping into articles. I hope you have not noted this as I hope I have been editing successfully. Because of this trend, I believe that any future editors must be aware of this and edit ruthlessly, so as not to offend.

I am willing to continue editing for 1981 only, definitely not after that. Editors must change.

I would like to thank Tony for all his help, and especially for keeping costs down. Tony does not wish to continue coping with the printing and distribution next year, so someone in Tasmania could do this and take over with the printer we use now.

Rosie Shannon.

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NIBICON PROCEEDINGS

I have spoken with Albert Renshaw on several occasions during the year about the production of the NIBICON proceedings. Albert has recently taken on a full time job and this has slowed up progress more than was anticipated. The final typing of all papers has been completed and the artwork is now ready for a layout. It was hoped to have this completed before the Committee meeting so at least the proofs could be shown around, unfortunately this was not possible. In the post-Christmas break, we are confident of being able to get this completed.

Sufficient funds exist in the account to produce a fairly good offset printed publication. The major problem foreseen is the addresses of the participants at NIBICON. It is proposed to send a postcard to the last known address, to establish which are still there. Cross checking with the ASF master address list will also provide updates and an appeal in the *Newsletter* and to each club/society will also be utilized.

At this stage, I believe it is better to produce the proceedings than to attempt a refund, as the same difficulties in locating individuals will occur and raise the question of who receives the funds not claimed. From a bibliographic point of view, it would be better to maintain the series. Although a number of papers will be by now well out of date (one author has requested that his paper be not printed because of this), nevertheless, the volume will have attained some historical perspective and value.

Andrew Pavey.

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AUSTRALIAN SPELEOLOGY COMMISSION REPORT

It will not be news to anyone that very little has happened since the last committee meeting. At present the only volume likely to see light of day in the near future is *Australian Speleology 1973*. Pat and Tony Culberg are editing this volume and have reached the stage where final typing has been done and all but a couple of the maps have been re-drafted

REPORT OF AUSTRALIAN SPELEOLOGY COMMISSION (Cont.)

to an acceptable printing standard. Assuming less disruption in the future, this volume may be well be produced in the coming year.

The *Best of the Early Days* volume which I have been working on is still in the half completed stage. I have had totally insufficient time to proceed with the project this year owing to family and work commitments.

Despite requests for volunteers and assistance in the last few meetings, no one has been forthcoming to offer assistance in the production of further volumes in the series.

I would be quite happy to step aside as Convenor if anyone else is prepared to do the job.

Andrew Pavey.

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NULLARBOR KARST FEATURE REPORT

Kevin Mott

At present, the caves on the Nullarbor pose nightmare problems for people wanting to visit them, but not knowing the location.

Problems also occur where tracks change owing to alteration of usage and upgrading. New features are continually being found, but often don't get recorded because the discoverer fails to notify anyone.

To alleviate some of these problems, CEGSA intends to compile an atlas of location maps for all the known caves of the Nullarbor region. Expeditions by ASF club members should then not have to waste time tracking down someone who knows where the cave is or waste valuable time trying to find it. The individual maps would be dated and contain land tenure details.

A list showing all the features and the relevant number is being compiled at the moment and should be published shortly.

Below is a sample report form. If you know of any feature you suspect is not recorded, please make out one like it and send it to CEGSA at the address in the front inside cover. The form is also to be used for recording new features and updating existing records re ownership, location, tracks and description.

NULLARBOR KARST FEATURE REPORT

Send to Cave Exploration Group (S.A.) Inc., c/- South Australian Museum,
North Terrace, Adelaide, S.A., 5000.

Number: N- (Include State prefix 5 or 6, and suffix D (doline)
.....or E (entrance) if not cave number. If this is a new
feature, a number will be allocated promptly by CEGSA,
and the reporter notified.)

Name: (or name proposed)
.....(leave blank if no name)

Location Details (REQUIRED for new feature)

- (1) Grid reference:..... Sheet name :.....
- (2) How grid reference determined:
- (3) Other (e.g. latitude and longitude, bearings to known features, track
headings and speedometer distances. Preferably draw map on attached sheet.)

Description of surface appearance of feature (please attach photograph, preferably with scale indication, also include bearing, distance and camera details, if possible :

Tick either box if applicable:

Blowhole

Doline, no known cave

NULLARBOR KARST FEATURE REPORT (Cont.)

If previously numbered feature, is the identification beyond doubt ?

YES / NO

Tag sighted YES / NO

Tag affixed YES / NO

Any other details observed on visit (for example, description of cave dimensions, 'bats, bones, beasties', minerals, air movement). Include references to any forthcoming maps and articles: attach additional A4 sheets if necessary.

Name of Reporter:.....Affiliation:.....

Address:.....

.....Postcode.....

Date of visit:.....

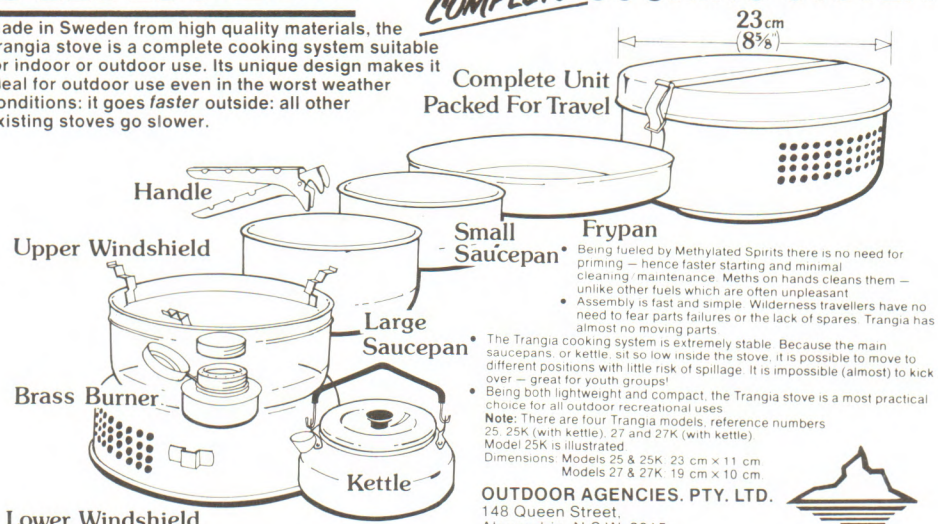
Date of report:.....

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 - The Trangia cooking system is extremely stable. Because the main saucepans, or kettle, sit so low inside the stove, it is possible to move to different positions with little risk of spillage. It is impossible (almost) to kick over — great for youth groups!
 - Being both lightweight and compact, the Trangia stove is a most practical choice for all outdoor recreational uses
- Note:** There are four Trangia models: reference numbers 25, 25K (with kettle), 27 and 27K (with kettle). Model 25K is illustrated.
- Dimensions: Models 25 & 25K 23 cm x 11 cm
Models 27 & 27K 19 cm x 10 cm

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POETRY

The following poem was written under the inspiration of a caving weekend at Wee Jasper by Sharon King, of 1st Broken Bay Venturers.

Getting trogged up the tension rises,
 put on my helmet, adjust the sizes.
 My overalls and belt must fit just right,
 check my battery, test my light.

A deep dark hole is all that's clear,
 I must descend into the dark and drear.
 Knuckles and knees are bruised and battered,
 but to get to the bottom is all that mattered.
 The bottom is reached, a rest is taken,
 sitting in the mud feeling slightly shaken.

The damp and cold begin to creep in,
 and before too long I'm soaked to the skin.
 Instead of feeling miserable because of the wet,
 I feel really great cause on caving I'm set.
 Steam is rising from my wet overalls,
 there's mud on my face from the squeezes and crawls.

When I see a formation that's muddy or broken,
 I think of the people who've taken a token.
 A wistful thought that they'd never been touched,
 but curiosity of feeling is much too much.

I sit on a rock, the air is cool and clear,
 at peace with the world no war down here.
 Relaxed and calm I let my mind drift,
 through happy thoughts my heart does lift.
 'I wish I could stay here forever my friend,
 escape from reality til life does end.'

Reprinted from *Scouting in New South Wales*. January/February, 1979.

Greg Powell (BMSG) sends this poem written after Newcastle and Hunter Area Venturer Caving Courses.

Kempsey Caves - Days of Wonder

Days went by endlessly,
 In the world of youth.
 We walked, we caved and met the night,
 Where light did not exist.

Lynne Nicholls - Edgeworth Venturer Unit.

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DOWN UNDER ALL OVER**News from around the Societies**

CCC Tom Robinson reports that 1980 was the year that science really turned its attention to Chillagoe. First there was a visit by Joe Jennings and Bao Haosheng on a three week geomorphological safari, then the World Wilderness Congress, then the expedition concerning bat and swiftlet echo location and Ken Stager from the Los Angeles Museum. Finally, the club members became temporary anthropologists and archaeologists, in company with the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies and lately with the James Cook University. Another year like the last and the club members may have to take up speleology professionally. Apart from those activities, there have been the usual five trips to the Mitchell-Palmer. Some members found a way to the limestone out from Greenvale, and some even got as far as Lawn Hill Gorge and Camooweal. Hardly a weekend went by without someone at Chillagoe. Abseiling trips were taken to the Herbert River Gorge, with the descent of the Barron Falls. The New Year Meet at Chillagoe was memorable in many ways. Chillagoe is a good place to see the old year out. Firstly the old smelter stacks are lit and belch smoke as the daylight of December 31 fades. Then the town settles down to entertainment to see the new year in. This culminates in the almighty blast which shakes the town as the calendar turns. New Year's Day was spent, by consent in just getting over New Year's Eve. But the monsoon started on New Year's Day. By nine that night, the sky over Chillagoe was a blaze of stars, but way over the Tate, the storms built up again and by one the next morning, the rain came to Chillagoe. The camp was not overly worried as they were on a bank about 6 metres above the creek bed. But what they didn't know was that the storm had dropped about 150-200mm in the catchment area. At two in the morning, the creek began to rise rapidly with a great roar in the trees below. It was rising at 30cm every two minutes, and was already half way up the bank to the camp. Someone remembered the SKUA generator which provided lighting for our tent 'town'. It had been shifted to a lower position to accommodate some late arrivals, but by the time we reached it it was submerged and the fuel had been washed away. The creek was rising very fast as we started to drag the unit back through the rubber vine to higher ground. As they did so, an old 'outhouse' came floating down in the darkness and crashed into them. It had been washed out from in the rubber vines, and they found its position when one of the salvage teams fell into the pit. It seems quite funny in retrospect, but it certainly wasn't at the time. By the time everything was dragged up to the camp, the creek was running a banker, and there was less than five minutes to clear tents and gear from the site. To make matters worse, the storm now broke over Chillagoe. As the last tent was struck, the water was 60cm through the lower part of the campsite, and as they left, a large uprooted tree floated through where the tents had been. Despite all this some caving was done. Sixteen adults, one child and four dogs arrived at Tony Mornoni's place at three in the morning. Six new caves were found and several others were linked in a system out from the Royal Arch. CCC won't forget that new year trip in a hurry. It's been raining ever since.

CEGSA CEGSA's twenty-fifth year was celebrated with a dinner. Two founding members, Vic Linke and Noel Mallet spoke on the early days of the club. Preparation for the Adelaide Conference is already underway. Preliminary information was available at CAVE CONVICT. There will be two themes (i) visual aspects of cave recording e.g. photography (ii) forecasting the future of Australian speleology. CEGSA ran a Workers' Educational Association (WEA) course entitled 'Caves and Cave Exploration'. The course was designed to introduce people to cave formation, techniques and different Australian cave areas. It was concluded with a field trip to Narracoorte. A team of people, coordinated by Dot Peisley was responsible for the course. Early in 1980, a forum was held on cave projects to stimulate activity within the club with specialists in varying fields leading trips. There are so many exciting areas to follow up. Courses for the State Emergency Services and plans for the Police Star Force to be involved in cave rescue have been most successful. Ron Allum, Pete Rogers and Terry Reardon dived at Pannikin Plains, Nullarbor, in the north side lake finding a tunnel 'roaring off' with no sign of ending. It has been explored for 500 metres. Further exploration has been hampered as the tunnel has a depth of 30 metres and this is causing decompression problems. Yellow Foot Cave was found in the Flinders Ranges, by Stan Flavel. Named after the Yellow-footed Rock Wallaby. A cave at Burra has been relocated after many years, unfortunately the report in the local paper of 1861 was much exaggerated, but it is the only cave in this area. Blackberry Cave at Narracoorte is being re-gated following the breaking of the old gate by vandals. The CEGSA hut at Narracoorte is being demolished. Camping will be in the campsite in the reserve. Meredith Reardon is the correspondent.

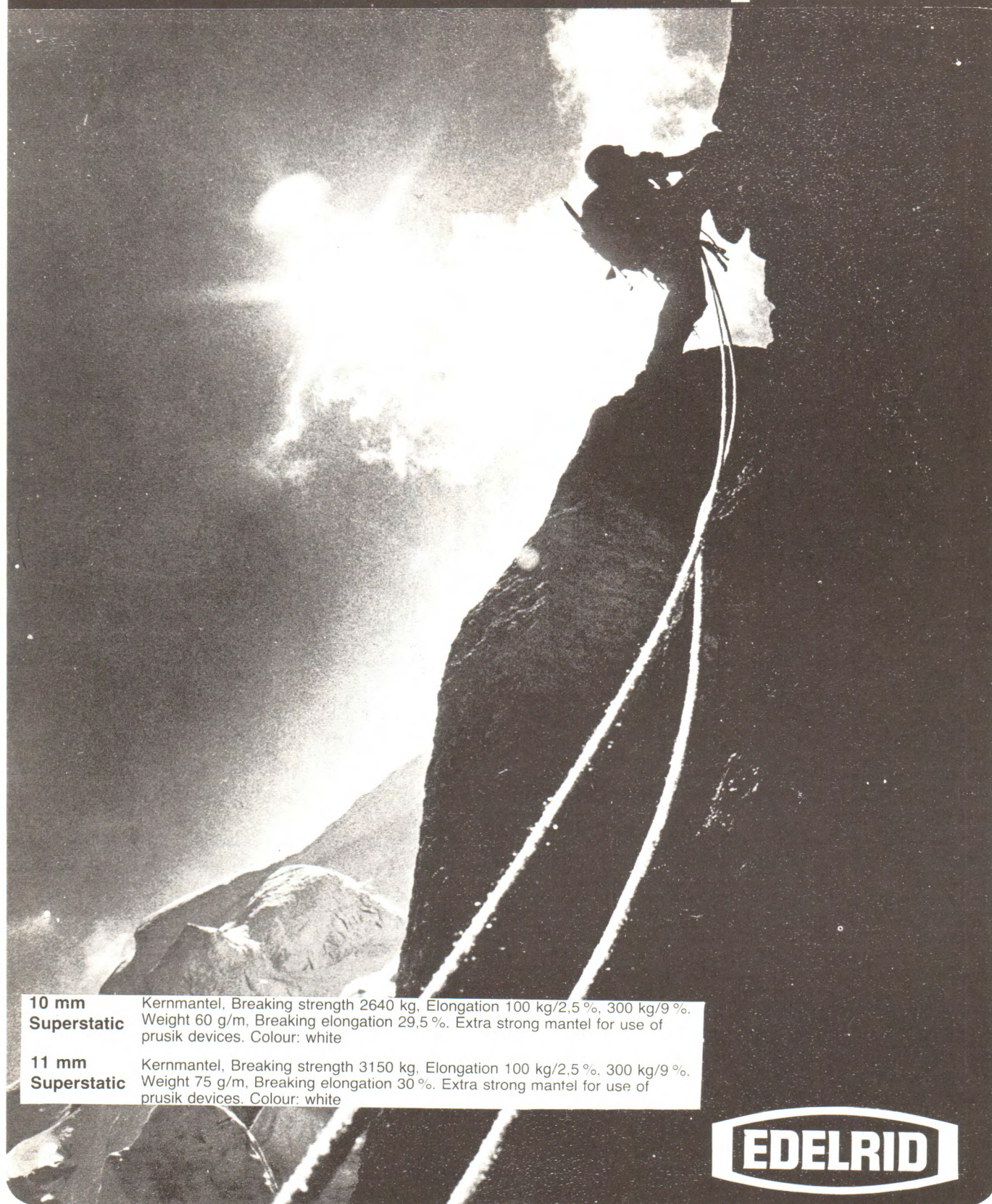
KSS Philip Holberton reports that there has not been much caving activity in the hot weather. The November trip went to the sea cave at Big Hill. The annual canoe trip was cancelled owing to lack of water. Members have taken advantage of the low water levels to make three expeditions into the gorge of the Styx River. One party, coming downstream, found an impassable section two kilometres below the Armidale Road. They have yet to reach this

DOWN UNDER ALL OVER (Cont.)

section from below. One expedition ran out of daylight, and the other was hampered by illness. So far no limestone, but most spectacular and unspoilt scenery.

- MSS Ken Keck reports that the current activities of the society have been mainly restricted to Yarrangobilly, Jenolan and Abercrombie, with an increasing emphasis on specifically objective caving. Yarrangobilly has been regularly visited twice yearly in recent times, assisting Dr. Winston Ponder and Mike Gray of the Australian Museum in location and collection of molluscs and certain types of cave insects. During a recent visit, the society was fortunate in finding Leak-in-the-Creek (Y112) completely drained owing to drought conditions. They were able to enter, and a Grade 2 survey has been published indicating considerable passage and potential if it clears again. It is again filled with water. Jenolan has seen considerable progress in the dig in Maiden Cave (J79) which is now showing promise. A tight fissure has been uncovered with considerable length of clear distance. This was obviously a conduit for the water which periodically filled the lake when the cave was first discovered. Abercrombie is the scene of the longest dig so far- about 75 metres. Recent tests have proven its connection to the Shaft Cave (A 13/14) which when followed through will give a most interesting connection between that cave and the Bushranger Cave, which is a tourist cave. Another cave at high level has also been discovered in the Arch as late as Christmas 1980. This proves to pass under the large sinkhole east of the Arch bluff and the potential seems good if the rockpile can be bypassed which appears feasible. Area surveying is still progressing at Abercrombie. All new developments are being added to make the map as comprehensive as possible. The membership presently stands at 32, and a most successful fifteenth birthday party was held at the end of 1980.
- SUSS Mike Lake reports that activity has not slackened off in the latter part of 1980. Some SUSS members, notably Steve Bunton, have been doing considerable caving in England and New Zealand, while Ian Mann has led a caving trip to Tasmania. On the local scene, a Colong trip resulted in new passage being discovered. Jenolan has been visited frequently with attention directed to the photographic documentation of Spider Cave and exploration in the Southern Limestone Region. Bungonia's vertical caves have been popular for training in rigging techniques and numerous canyoning trips, primarily down Spring Creek Canyon have been made. Wyanbene cave was explored to Frustration Lake and the Big Hole was bottomed via SRT. SUSS members were well represented at the recent CAVE CONVICT following which they attended the field trips at Buchan.
- WASG Rauleigh Webb reports on the period from September 1980 to January 1981. Once again WASG members have been very active during this period. Probably the most significant trip was undertaken by Rob Capon, Steve Appleyard and Al Ronk who began exploration of a new area in WA at Quobba Ridge. In all they documented 18 speleological features, which included several caves. No extensive caves were found, but the area has enough promise for their planning a return trip. A full report of these caves will appear soon in *The Western Caver*. Barry Loveday, with the assistance of Mavis Sowry and Peter Bell, has almost doubled the size of his area map of the Witchcliffe area. Their latest trip discovered a new cave west of Lake Cave - this area has great potential considering the Lake Cave stream and so a few more may follow this discovery. Budjur Mar Cave (W1 144) has been surveyed and added to Barry's area map. An interesting extension has been found in Terry Cave by Andrew Thomas and Keith Lightbody. These two WASGarites also managed some caving in Tassie in January visiting Kubla Khan, Black Shawl and Tailender at Mole Creek. Several other WASGarites visited Tassie after CAVE CONVICT and did varying amounts of caving. All the members who went to CAVE CONVICT returned with good stories of the conference and the field trips - accolades for VSA. A WASG dinner was held at Boranup, and was most successful with some 50-60 attending. A number of rescues have been carried out by WASG lately. A 'caver' fell from the top of Brides Cave doline (about 15 metres) while climbing a knotted rope. He sustained minor injuries and was assisted from the cave by WASG members. Another 'caver' managed to free climb the usual 17 metre pitch into Terry Cave and became lost in the bush. This resulted in a large bush search which was co-ordinated by the Safety Officer, Rob Capon. The lost 'caver' was found the next day after spending a night in the bush. Another party of 'cavers' failed to return from a trip into Walcliffe Cave and the police alerted WASG members but their assistance was not required as the two policeman had found the four 'cavers' in the cave with their single torch which had died.

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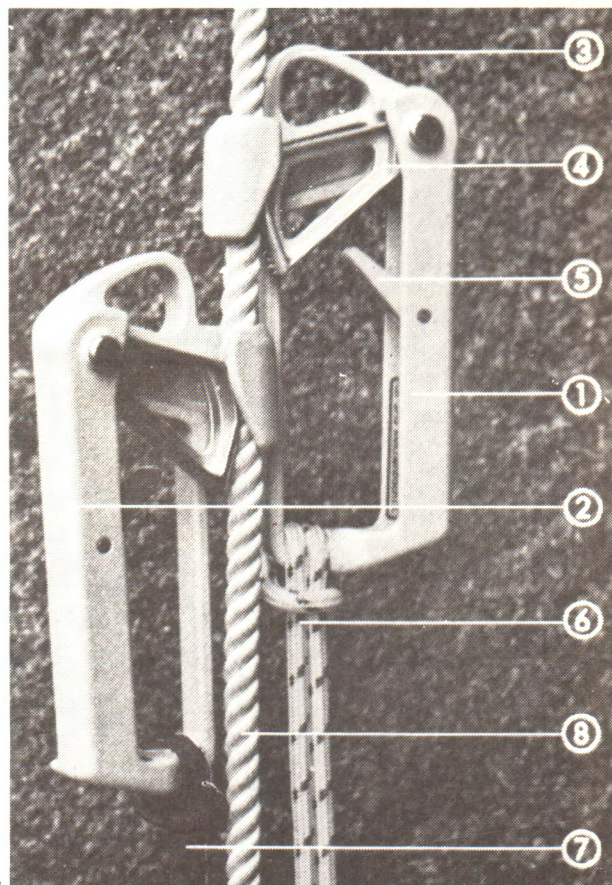


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