



# Not Calcite, not the minutes

## A bulletin of the Highland Caving Group

*A member society of the Australian Speleological Federation inc*

PO Box 154, Liverpool BC, LIVERPOOL 1871  
President: Evalt Crabb (02) 9607 2142 (w & h)

email: [hcg@hcg.org.au](mailto:hcg@hcg.org.au)  
Treasurer: James Skinner (02) 9713 2757 (h)

## February 1999

### Introduction.

The success of any organisation depends on the quality of its communications. Poor communications leave groups of people waddling along, gradually declining and without a sense of direction.

So... here is the latest effort.

Our original newsletter, Calcite, has a very spasmodic history. Even now, issues 31 and 32 have not been completed yet, and issue 40 has waited for a long time for me to write the history of HCG - a daunting task. For the past few years minutes of meetings have been distributed, and there have been random newsheets. Calcite has become a vanity publication, usually many years out of date.

The quality of communication has been poor, and meetings are not the best vehicle to inform members of much detail.

This bulletin is an attempt to effect improvement. Rather than just minutes it contains much more. The evolution of our publications through HCG Journal, Calcite, Minutes, occasional Bulletins is just plain stupid for a special interest group with 25 members. Maybe we should have a monthly Calcite and an occasional Journal. Whatever future discussion devolves, all levels of communication should be the priority. WE have lacked that for too long.



### Minutes - Nov. 1998

10th November 1998

[ from notes of Chris Dunne ]

**Present:** Evalt Crabb (chair), Chris Dunne, Lindsay Matheson, Jim McGregor, Robyn Mountford, Brian Race, James Skinner, Joe Sydney.]

**Visitor:** Grace Matts

**Apologies:** Phil Fleming, Marie Horvath, Ian Lutherborrow [ maybe one other... ]

**Past Minutes:** Minutes for August and October were mailed to members in the last week or so. As yet there are no Minutes for September's meeting - both Evalt and Robyn took notes and will collaborate to produce the September Minutes.

**Correspondence:** Bank Statement from Westpac; Circular from VSA re the *Down to Earth* Speleo Convention to be staged at Buchan on 6-8 March 1999 - see the attached flier. There was no corro out.

### Treasurer's Report:

James advised as follows -

Income:	
Nightly takings (October)	\$8-00
Expenditure:	
Fees to ACKMA	(\$40-00)
Balance:	\$337-60

It was noted that James is not yet a signatory to the club's bank account. This is with the Royal Exchange branch of Westpac in the City. Chris is to ascertain from them who the current signatories are (he is one himself) and we'll update the signatories. Our practice has been to have about five signatories with any two to sign cheques.

Later in the meeting Jim asked what

the situation was with the clubs books. Grace advised that it is only necessary for a group such as ours with limited funds to keep a Receipts and Expenditures Book. Books for Profit and Loss or for Assets aren't warranted. Jim offered to computerise our accounts if we choose. It was also emphasised that a receipt must be issued for all income and all expenditure should be paid by cheque.

Also later in the meeting, Grace Matts joined as a Member. She has been an ASF Individual Member for several years and is a longstanding member of SSS and Cave Rescue as well.

### GENERAL BUSINESS

#### Trash and Treasure - Saturday 14th November

Joe reported that preparations are on track. We have confirmed sponsorship from SRT, Eastwood Camping, Wild Stuff, Julie Bauer Books and Choice Books. Catering is arranged. SUSS have booked some stalls. As for the other stalls... well, we all know how slack cavers can be, leaving things to the last minute.

#### Wombeyan Draft Plan of Management

It was agreed that we should make a club submission to this Draft Plan - Evalt, Chris and Grace will discuss this further. Of major concern is the absence of any mention of Cave Rescue and a heavy emphasis on accommodating commercial adventure caving. This is linked to the availability of facilities such as the kitchen and dormers at Wombeyan, which aren't available at Jenolan, making Wombeyan more attractive to commercial tour operators. There is also little or no mention of speleo and recreational use of caves.

#### ASF Yeppoon Meeting - January 1999

Evalt asked if anyone had concerns



with the proposed changes to the *ASF Diving, Cave Safety and Minimal Impact Caving Codes*. There was some discussion of the Bolt Laddering debate – there has been a lot of discussion on the *Ozcover*s eMail list. Garry Smith's proposals to change the part of the *Safety Code* dealing with CO<sub>2</sub> was said to be mostly about wording.

#### **SSS Annual Dinner**

Evalt, Joan and Chris all went to Sydney Speleo Society's Annual Dinner. Guest Speaker was Elery Hamilton-Smith, a former ASF and ACKMA President and one of the founding fathers of both organisations. He gave a showing of old glass *Lantern Slides* of Jenolan and some of the early visitors and Guides, most dating to the later years of last century and the early years of this one.

#### **NHT Grant for Karst Vegetation in the Macquarie Catchment**

Chris gave a summary of this project which was mentioned in last month's Minutes. The NSW Speleo Council is to manage the \$27,330 grant and will be calling on clubs and members to be involved in field work to map the extent of karst and karst related vegetation in this region. It's an excellent opportunity to promote inter-club trips and improve our documentation of many small and some not so small caving areas in the Orange-Wellington-Mudgee triangle.

#### **HCG's Web Site**

This is hosted by Jim McGregor through his ISP company, Cybernet. Robert Wray did most of the work to build the site but it hasn't been updated in several months. We need some help for this. The site is at:  
[www.hcg.org.au](http://www.hcg.org.au)

Email access to information on the club can be accessed at:  
[info@hcg.org.au](mailto:info@hcg.org.au)

#### **Future Distribution of HCG's Minutes**

Dirk Stoffels has asked if he can receive the *Minutes* by eMail and not by post. Several other members with eMail access agree they would be happy to get the *Minutes* by this means and save the club some postage. In future, if you have an eMail address in the club's address

list, you'll get the *Minutes* electronically and not by post. They'll also be posted on HCG's Web Site.

Evalt, Brett, Jason and Jim are to liaise on getting the current address list to Jim who is prepared to improve updating and distribution of this list.

#### **Cave Surveying Course**

Together with 14 people from several clubs Joe attended the course run by *Mr and Mrs Speleonics* (aka M Lake and J Rowling) at Wombeyan last weekend (7/8 November). The course, which Joe said was excellent and very useful, ran over two very long and full days, looking at everything from scratch and also looking at some of the dozen cave surveying programs available, eg. *Survex* [sounds like a brand of condom?]. Some of those attending from MUCG expressed the desire to join some HCG trips in the future.

#### **NAV '99 - Rogaining Event**

This is on 26/27 June 1999 and we want to enter some teams from the caving fraternity. Contact Joe Sydney for details.

#### **HCG's Christmas Party - and Ian's Mum**

This is usually held at Ian Lutherborrow's place at Appin. His mum suffered serious injuries in a car three weeks ago is still hospitalised. Consequently Ian has been preoccupied with visits and family concerns. We rang him from someone's mobile (was it Jim's, Lindsay's or James' – I forget now as all were offered) and Yes, its still on:

Saturday, 5th December at 19 King Street, Appin.

1. It's BYOE.
2. There's plenty of floor space for sleeping over, and probably a walk on Sunday, 6th.
3. Phone us at Ian's on 02 4651-1055 or 015 274 662 if you're running late!

Ian's mum suffered multiple breaks and has had two operations, but there is steady progress. We all wish her the best for a speedy recovery.

#### **Future Trips**

[See October's Minutes.]

#### **vale...**

Following the optimistic reports from the Nov. meeting and the subsequent Dec. party regarding Ian's mother, we (at Yeppoon) were saddened to hear that she finally succumbed to her injuries.

Floral tributes were arranged on behalf of club members.

To Ian and his family, we extend our deepest sympathy and support.

---

## **ASF Conference**

### **22nd Biennial Conference Australian Speleological Federation 1999**

*Taking Caving into the next Century with Fun, Unity and Fellowship*

The 22nd Biennial Conference of the Australian Speleological Federation was held as the last Conference of this Century at the Capricorn Coast, Yeppoon Queensland from January 4-8 1999. The Theme of the Conference was highlighted in a relaxed mode covering a variety of topics. This was a national conference with participation from all over Australia. We emphasised Karst Management as well as Cave Management because they are very much interrelated. Although this seemed the primary theme of the conference, we did not limit papers to this topic and in fact strongly encouraged papers on other cave and karst related topics. The Conference was held at the Yeppoon Recreational Camp with field trips to Mt Etna, Bat Cleft and Johansen's Caves. Pre- and Post-Conference trips were planned for Limestone Ridge, Mt Etna, Broken River and Chillagoe. Due to the weather, the Broken River trip was cancelled.

One of the main attractions at the Conference was the Speleo-Art. Speleo-Art is an informal group of artists (based in the UK) with a particular interest in Caves and Speleology. They exhibit at caving conventions, organise exhibitions, workshops and so on. There were 41 pieces of art on display and a sculpture. Many pieces were sold on behalf of painters whose art came from places such as Canada, UK, Australia and Slovakia.



Another interesting segment of the Conference was the paper presented by Kim Henley, Principal Blasting Specialist - Quarries and Construction Orica Explosives and Chris White, Company Manager of Pacific Lime Pty Ltd on the Restoration Blasting near Limestone Caves at Mt Etna and Limestone Mine.

This was followed by a site inspection on Mt Etna to which all visitors attended gaining further insight into the processes for the Mt Etna Rehabilitation Strategy.

The Conference closed on an enjoyable note with a Seafood Buffet at the Cave Man's Dinner. Presentation of Awards bought lumps to many throats and some tears (of happiness) too. There were two nominations for the Edie Smith Awards - Henry 'Cusec' Shannon and Norman Poulter. Certificates of Merit went to David Martin, Kier Vaughn-Taylor and John Toop of Department of Environment.

Overall, even though the attendance was not quite what we expected, and the weather was unpredictable, we have been assured that everyone enjoyed the week's activities and enjoyed the fun, unity and fellowship. Positive feedback has made all the effort, stress and family strains over the past 12 months, worthwhile. One thing for sure is that in 2001, at the Bathurst Conference, we are all going to relax and enjoy the Conference.

*Peter Berrill - President CQSS*

And now some attendance statistics: despite there being 23 member societies in ASF, there were less than 60 participants in the Conference. Of these, 7 were HCG members and another one a former member (now in WA)

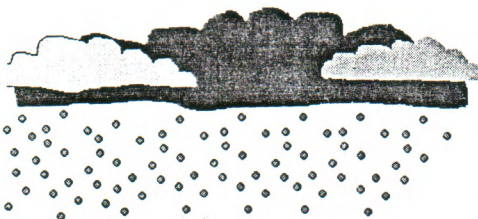


Sofala, 16/1/99, wedding of Eddy Powell, member of HCG 1958-1968 (ref. Powell Pot). Evalt is best man, repeating 1966 role.

## A Trashy Report!

It was a day just as any other, but in this case it was the day before the first outdoor 'Trash 'n Treasure' day. The forecast was not good with rain developing overnight and showers predicted for the big day. Driving home through the inner city traffic from Marrickville to Dural (1.5hrs) I wondered how the day would be considering that only one club had booked a stall for the day. Frantic phone calls during the day from Highland organisers would ask 'how many bookings have we got' and I would reply only 'SUSS'.

Although, through the grape vine I had heard that many were coming to buy, only a few would sell!



Continuing the drive I looked south and could see the ominous looking wolf packs drawing closer and closer to Sydney. Just after a crack of thunder, the radio blurted out reports of hail the size of golf balls with torrential rain coming across from Campbelltown, Liverpool and heading towards Bankstown. The omen of one stall holder, and hail the size of golf balls indicated that the gods were surely not pleased. I went to bed that night thinking they were right.

Early Saturday morning I awoke to the raucous sound of a visiting Channel Billed Cuckoo sitting on a tree outside my bedroom window. If you haven't heard one, they sound something like a semi-trailer at ten paces. Looking out the window I knew that the weather forecasters has got it wrong again, sunshine and it was already stinking hot at 6am! Beaut, it's going to be a great day! In time I connected the Cave Rescue trailer to the van and headed off towards Bankstown.

On arrival at the Cave Rescue HQ, I noticed a 4WD parked opposite but didn't see anyone so I ignored it. I

started preparing the Cave Rescue Headquarters and getting it ready for the day. Half an hour later Brian raced in and said 'why didn't you wake me, I've been sleeping in my 4WD for the last hour!' Soon after members of Highland Caving started turning up, James & Robyn, Evalt & Joan, Brett & Julie.

By 9am, we had our first customers but the show wasn't to start until 10am. From then on people would dribble in. I didn't recognise any of the faces from the speleo community so I asked where they were from and where did they hear about it. Many belonged to bushwalking clubs in the local area with a few from the central coast. It was reassuring to see that of the 80 notices that went out to speleo, bushwalking, outdoor groups and retail stores in and around Sydney that the notices were actually read.

Not long after this, we had our first enquiry about wanting a stall. It was Andy and Cath all the way from Tallong near Marulan. Robyn had set up a registration point inside the HQ and booked in our first stall holder. Andy and Cath had heaps of caving and canyoning gear as Andy had an outdoor adventure tour business in Tasmania and decided to come to NSW bringing all their excess gear with them.

Soon after SUSS arrived, then another stall holder and another. By 10:30am we had six stall holders with heaps of gear. A desk was put aside for Julie and Peter Bauer who set up a book stall selling their newly released 'Under Bungonia' book along side many other titles from JB Publications. They were even kind enough to donate a copy of the new Bungonia book for the 'big' raffle.



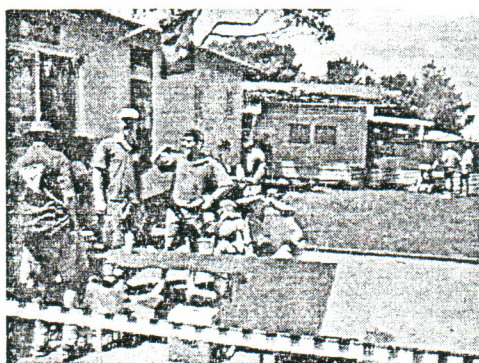
Julie Bauer, author of 'Under Bungonia'.





An interested buyer of the Bungonia book

At around 11am people were really starting to roll in and were feeling a little hungry, so Brian and James fired up the BBQ and laid on the sausages. By 12 noon Brian and James were down to the last half a dozen sausages. Angus from Rover Speleos who turned up late in the afternoon bought the last of the snags. The BBQ was a success and a credit to both masters of such fine culinary and gastronomical delights!



Early AM and already enjoying the snags!

As people rolled in, the social area was mainly around the registration area inside the building. It was estimated that at it's peak, there were about 100 people. A number of times one couldn't hear oneself thinking over the tones of laughter and tales of caving and canyoning trips. Not just from the speleo community, but from the bushwalkers who also turned up.

One such group, the Panania Bushwalking Club, stayed around for most of the afternoon just having a chat. It seemed many were also impressed by Brett's funniest home canyoning videos. These was no doubt this kept people amused and was the social focus and centre of

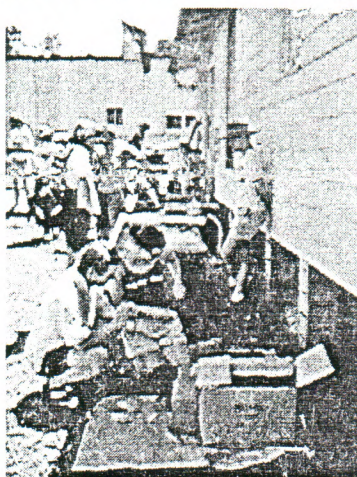
attraction for at least an hour.



Boy, the snags must have been good, even the rego girls are tucking into them!

A display area inside was set up with photos of caving & outdoor pics. Alongside the photos we thanked the many sponsors who helped with the great raffle prizes. Thanks also to Robyn and others, they helped to sell raffle tickets. Knowing how tight cavers are, that surely was the most difficult of all tasks to achieve. It was decided that because they were so tight, that we would have a go selling a few more tickets at work and to have the draw a couple of weeks later at the Highland Christmas BBQ on December 5th.

The half dozen stalls produced some great gear for the first of the outdoor Trash 'n Treasure days. It was deemed to be successful as about \$1000 worth of second hand goods in good condition were exchanged.



Some of the 'Treasure' on the day!

Gear sold on the day included all types of caving gear - helmets \$10 to \$40, lights \$1 to \$60, harnesses from around \$30, Bonwick ladders \$40, descending racks \$10, reconditioned ascenders \$20-\$40 each, canyoning gear - wetsuits \$30

to \$40 and bags, personal flotation devices \$5, compasses \$5 to \$10 and heaps of small items.

Not to forget SUSS who also sold copies of the new Tuglow book, Jenolan books and extra large copies of Spider cave map for \$25.

Some items which unfortunately were not sold were sailboards and surf skis at bargain prices.



SUSS stuff, or wares.

A special thanks to Andy and Cath Tickner as they had heaps of caving and canyoning gear. Andy had an outdoor adventure tour business in Tasmania and decided to come to NSW and bring all their excess gear with them. During the morning Andy sold heaps of gear at bargain prices.

By 2pm it looked like the day was about over as interest was dying down and customers were few, so at 3pm the decision was made to pack up. The day was a success not just in trading but also for the interaction between speleo and other outdoor groups. It was estimated that just over 100 people attended. A suggestion that next time it should be considered being held in conjunction with Speleosports. Not a bad idea as most of the clubs usually attend with a good turn up of cavers.

When I look back on the day I recall my fears of not knowing whether people will turn up, whether there will be any stall holders and whether the gods favoured us with good weather. It now seems that my fears were unjustified as it was a roaring success and the gods did favour us on the day.

Our extreme thanks for their support must go to:

Wildstuff with a \$75 gift voucher, SRT with a \$50 voucher, Julie & Peter



Bauer for a copy of the new Bungonia and other books, Eastwood Camping with a \$25 voucher, and CHOICE Books.

Without the support and the generosity of the sponsors on the day, it surely would not have been as successful.

A final thanks to the organisers and helpers within Highland Caving and to the clubs that attended: BMSC, Endeavour SS, Metropolitan SS, Rover SS, SSS and SUSS.

### **Raffle Winners!**

The raffle was drawn by the club's part time barrel girl, and also President, Mr Evalt Crabb at the Highland Christmas party on December 5th held at Ian Lutherburrow's home at Appin.

The winners of the Highland Raffle are:

**1st Prize** - Wildstuff \$75 voucher  
Winner - Hamish McCracken

**2nd Prize** - SRT \$50 voucher  
Winner - Joan Crabb

**3rd Prize** - Under Bungonia Book  
Winner - Brian Race

**4th Prize** - Eastwood Camping \$25 voucher  
Winner - Carol Layton

**5th Prize** - CHOICE Books & JB  
Publication Book  
Winner - James Skinner

**6th Prize** - CHOICE Books & JB  
Publication Book  
Winner - Rebecca Fleming

**7th Prize** - CHOICE Books & JB  
Publication Book  
Winner - Joe Sydney, prize declined so it was redrawn, 2nd time draw was - Chris Dunne.

Many many thanks to all those that supported and attended the 'trash' day and to those that did not win a prize in the raffle. A special thanks must go to the NSW Cave Rescue Squad for the use of the premises.

## **NHT PROJECT**

You have heard, perhaps vaguely, of this proposed project, which is formally titled: **Macquarie Karst Vegetation Rehabilitation Project.**

Staying with the formal tone, the Aims are:

*Raise awareness of the uniqueness of karst and karst adapted vegetation for groundwater sustainability.*

*Quantify and prioritise karst areas in the region in respect of remnant vegetation in agricultural landscapes.*

*Demonstrate strategies to rehabilitate karst related vegetation communities/habitat for long-term sustainability.*

*Prepare a Regional Karst Management Strategy.*

Proposed Actions are:

*Field investigation to identify karst areas, conduct preliminary vegetation inventory and identify factors degrading the karst ecosystem in each area. Update the ASF national Karst Index Database. Prioritise areas by significance needs and practicality for rehabilitation. By use of a Demonstration Site highlight the importance of conserving, rehabilitating and protecting karst ecosystems. Etc.*

The defined area is the upper section of the Macquarie River catchment, but the Mudgee region is now included - the Cudgong River is a tributary of the Macquarie. (Don't ask why small bits of the Cox's and Talbragar catchments are included!)

The Project Co-ordinator is Peter Dykes, responsible to the NSW Speleological Council. Bruce Howlett (OSS) is the co-ordinator for the western portion, extending from Limekilns to Geurie. This includes Molong, Wellington, Baker's Swamp, etc. I am the co-ordinator for the eastern portion from Portland to Dunedoo, which includes such places as Coco Creek, Ilford, Cudgong, Mudgee and many others.

***These are boundaries of responsibility only. Any member of any participating club is welcome on any trip to any area!***

While the project extends to some regeneration of remnant bushland, evaluation of effects and, in the

future, community workshopping, the main thrust as far as we are concerned is full documentation of all karst and its features within the region, using the documentation processes of the Australian Karst Index, with (new) inclusion of karst vegetation and possibly GPS positioning. And, of course, tagging (boring!) of all karst features.

The western portion has been reasonably well explored and a number of cave areas, and caves, are known.

Using Lishmund's *The Limestone Deposits of New South Wales*, possibly only a third of the limestone deposits in the eastern portion have been investigated - many of these contain known caves, Local contacts indicate there may be more, unlisted deposits and there are indications of caves known only to the local people.

***The methodical approach of this project could lead to someone, at some time, discovering a new cave!***

While it is not part of the NHT Project, it makes sense to extend the investigation of the eastern portion to include cave mapping, photography and possibly photo-tagging, and research into the history of discovery and use of the caves. There are postulated aquifers, and relationships between quarrying and cement manufacture/shale oil processing/gold-mining and use of limestone for roadbase.

***Wow! This has all the indications of an exciting project!***

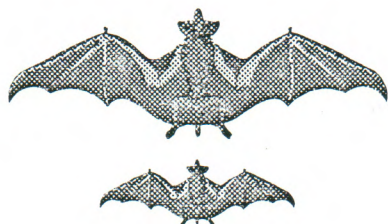
For anyone who may be interested in Bruce Howlett's trip programme, it is:

6/7 March	Baker's Swamp
2/5 April	Wellington
1/2 May	Dripstone
29/30 May	Stuart Town
26/27 June	Molong
24/25 July	As required

Bruce has suggested that I might like to run my trips two weeks after his but this is not always possible - see later discussion.

Bruce's contact details are:

Bruce Howlett  
3 Miriyan Dr.  
KELSO NSW 2795





ph. 02 6331 4627 (h)  
ph. 02 6332 8141 (w)  
(he works shifts)

I would appreciate hearing of any HCG members participating in his trips so that I can negotiate opportunity to participate in ours.

Just to confuse everyone except, say, Phil, my trip planning will be based on **seamless integration of speleological investigation, picturesque camping locations and passive recreation opportunities.** That is, most trips will suit families.

Angus McCoun (RSS) has indicated that some RSS members may assist with surveying. Apple Tree Flat is the logical site. (Or perhaps Coco Creek). We do not have the RSS programme nor do we have contacts for access permission for either site at this time. This trip may be substituted for another when details are available.

#### **Forthcoming proposed trips.**

13/14 March 1999. PORTLAND.  
This will be exploratory, locating 10 listed limestone deposits and looking at access and whether they are viable. There may be an eleventh. They are scattered over a reasonable area and most likely include quarrying sites.

Proposed camping sites are Wallace Lake or Lake Lyell (good canoeing and yabbing). Toilets.

27/28 March or 10/11 April 1999.  
COCO CREEK (2 sites) and BLUE ROCKS + possibly GLEN ALICE.  
2 known caves, rumours of more.  
Proposed camping at historic remains of Glen Davis. Toilets. Campfires.

8/9 May KANDOS-RYLESTONE. There are also other deposits nearby. Area has extensive quarrying. Access may be denied.

Proposed camping Dunn's Swamp (actually a beautiful clear pondage). Relaxed canoeing, wilderness walking, (Wollemi National Park). Toilets, Campfires.

Contact Evalt 02 9607 2142 or email  
evalt@cyber.net.au or  
evalt@hcg.org.au

(Trips associated with the NHS Project need not necessarily be led by myself) evalt.

## **Putting something back**

*We have received the following from Jo Ingarfield, Manager, Yarrongobilly Caves:*

Yarrongobilly Caves are preparing for Clean Up Australia Day on 7 March 1999. We are inviting you to participate in the clean up of tourist and wild caves in the Yarrongobilly area on this day. There are a number of tasks which we are seeking your assistance for:

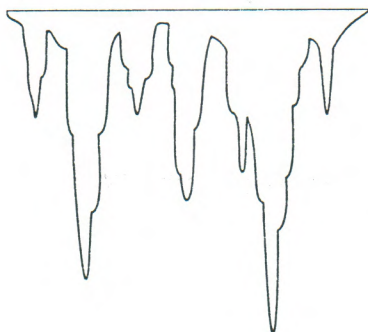
- Cleaning in Restoration Cave Y50
- Removal of rubbish/debris etc in North Glory Cave
- Removal of old light fittings and wiring in the Jillabenan Cave
- Removal of rubble in the Jersey Cave
- Cleaning in Coppermine Cave Y12 in upper section
- Cleaning around marked sections in Eagles Nest Y1 and Y2
- Cleaning around ladders and flowstone near SUSS extension in East Deep Creek Y5
- Cleaning in Crystal streamway in Janus Y58
- Cleaning of lampenflora South Glory Cave.

This is a great opportunity for a number of caving groups and Yarrongobilly Caves staff to get together as a social and networking weekend.

Should you wish to nominate your caving group for any of the above tasks and become involved in this national event, please contact me on 0264 549 597 or by fax 0264 549 598 by 26/02/99 to indicate your interest.

(Sgd) Jo Ingarfield

*So what a great opportunity for those who have enjoyed the excitement of caving in this great area to equally demonstrate their willingness to contribute to preservation of the area.*



## **Easter - Cooleman - anyone?**

Dirk Stoffels is interested in a trip to Cooleman at Easter, involving the Sutherland Bushwalking Club. Is anyone interested in a joint HCG trip? Has our annual permit been renewed? See Dirk at our next meeting.

## **Next Meeting**

The next meeting of HCG will be held at the Cave Rescue H/Q, Klemm St. Bankstown Airport on Tuesday 9th February 1999. (The first for three months!)

## **March Meeting**

The March meeting of HCG will be held same time and place as above, on Tuesday 9th March 1999.

This will be the Annual General Meeting, and all office-bearers are reminded that their annual report is expected at that time.

## **Trip List**

A trip list is not published in this issue; we need to find a process by which foreshadowed trips by HCG, ECRC, BCA, NSWSC and Cave Rescue Squad, perhaps RSS and HSC, also the NHT Project trips, could be looked at to create one list. Let's discuss this.

*la la for now, evalt*