

April 1963

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"THE CALCITE"

Vol 1; No 2

EDITORIAL:

After the last general meeting, the H.C.G. seems to have got off to a good new start. It is good to see a few new faces, and we welcome the new members, but it is a shame to find some of the old ones missing. Maybe we will see them at the next meeting.

Contrary to what ^{out} was printed in the last issue, it has now been decided that all monies received by the "Calo-ite" will go towards buying equipment for the magazine and not towards H.C.G. funds as originally stated. So, maybe in the (dim, distant) future we will be able to issue a magazine with drawings (?) photographs (!) colour(!?!), (Let's not get too ambitious, we have yet to produce a legible copy. Sub-Ed).

When the H.C.G. made a proposal at the meeting of 22nd February about "OPERATION DUSTBIN" in affiliation with other groups and societies, we certainly didn't expect so much interest shown, nor did we expect things to move so fast. The weekend has been chosen, and a programme outlined.

Having the official backing of A.S.F., we certainly helped to start something. Now let us hope that the actual work done will be as enthusiastic as the response has been. It just shows what a little push and a bit of talking in the right direction will do.

Out thanks to Glen Chandler (S.U.S.S.), Evalt Crabb and those involved in the making and organising of this project.

REPORT ON MEETING - 31st MARCH 1963

Although the meeting did not start on time (Mr. Sub-Ed has been severely reprimanded), it started a lot earlier than was anticipated. (There were thirteen present, seven
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of the 'Old Guard', and six new faces. Arthur's house looked a little crowded.

The Constitution was read through and adopted after discussions on certain points. Our thanks to the Constitution Sub-committee in helping draft the constitution.

Office bearers were elected as follows:-

President Mr. E. Crabb

Secretary Mr. D. Gant-Thompson

Treasurer Mr. E. Powell

Committee Members:- Messrs. J. Kerr; B. Pearcey; and
A. Rose (Q.M.)

Record Keeper: Mr. R. Booth.

A motion was adopted that the "Calcite" funds are to be kept separate from the H.C.G. funds.

Next on the agenda was a report on "OPERATION DUSTBIN" The Bungonian Reserve Trust has expressed interest in the idea, but will be unable to help physically. Various other societies were contacted and expressed their enthusiasm to the effect that 4th-5th May 1963 is "OPERATION DUSTBIN" weekend and SSS, SUSS, NNSWSS, together with Blacktown SS are definite in their appearance, while members of Newcastle, Canberra, and Woollongong will appear if possible.

As "O-D" has the official backing of the A.S.F., it seems that we are realising the possibility of co-operation and co-ordination with federated and non-federated groups and societies. (Fan-fare of trumpets off-stage, and a Goon-type voice crying, "There's hope for Australian Speliology, yet".

The programme to be followed is:---

Cleaning up by all concerned on the Saturday.
A Giant Bar-B-Q on Saturday evening with caving on the Sunday.

Owing to the expansion of numbers in the Group, it
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would be advisable to hire a hall for our next meeting which we hope to be able to do. The next meeting will be on the 28th April, starting at 7:45 p.m. (Sharp, Mr. Sub-Ed!!)

REPORT ON EASTER TRIP

Eleven people were on the trip to Bungonia at Easter, travelling down in three cars, two cars leaving at 11.00 p.m. Thursday, arriving early Friday morning, with Hatari arriving four hours or so later.

Hatari was actually found in the region of the Grille, Grant evidently under the impression that he would be the first one to drive a Land-Rover to the bottom of the Grille, (Can you imagine a Land-Rover climbing down the long ladder?)

Friday morning was spent in general caving and familiarisation of the area for the new members.

That evening was spent in visiting the camp of more potential members and then night surveying in the Fossil by all the Group plus two girls from the above mentioned camp.

Saturday morning, surface mapping - then one party went abseiling over Hogan's, another went for a walk, while the remainder went into Golbourne for umpteen-bottles of liquid refreshment in order that they could celebrate Eddy's 21st Burp (hic) day in style.

That night was spent in a haze of alcoholic befuddlement enlivened by the arrival of the first swimmer ever to reach Bungonia accompanied by his pet Heinkel.

Roger thought he was paralysed at one stage, John kept on looking for a new cave under the water-tank, while Grant was taking off a cross between Tarzan and the Leader of the Light Brigade at Balaclava in trying to put his bed in the back of Hatari. There were also sundry other goings on, about which there is very little recollection.

On Sunday morning, the group went looking for the Chalk Cave, the N-N (Who said Eddy was lost?) and the western area

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around the caretaker's cottage. After lunch they all trooped back to the Lookdown in search of the "Sirius" Cave/AMONG OTHER things (Who wants to abseil over the Lookdown?) and all returned to camp before nightfall except for Blayne and Ev, who went wandering off to the shale slope area where Mr. Crabb tried to do the disappearing act over the edge of a 700' drop, but didn't succeed (what a pity!!)

In the evening, there was a late trip to the Grille with general exploration around the Bat Chamber. According to reports received, there was a pretty clever rescue carried out by the group, or so they say. Look out for your lamrells, Arthur, someone's after them.

Early start Monday morning, with Ev leaving first. (How could he tear himself away???), and the others leaving shortly afterwards. They had a good wash in Bungonia Creek, the first good one in four days (the stinkers).

Roger had a little verbal fencing with a constable when nearly home, but managed to convince him that he was the legal driver/owner of his car.

All in all they had a pleasant, though erratic weekend, with all the work set being completed.

This definitely

Watch out 'everybody', a little bloke; thongs, leather trousers, duffel coat and bowler hat. He always carries with him a small pink umbrella. If you should see such a character around, go up and challenge him saying, "You are Mr. Cal Siet" and he will give you a 50 years subscription for the magazine; but remember, he is very difficult to find.

"They seek him here, they seek him there,
H.C.Gers seek him everywhere.
Is he in darkness? Is he in light?
That very hard to find Cal Siet."

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A Short Story:

A party of cavers were going down a cave, two of them pushed on ahead of the other three. One of the two was a very refined young lady, while her companion was a bit of a rough talking sort of a bloke.

While the bloke was descending the shaft, the young lady dislodged a fair size hunk of rock which fell with considerable force on the bloke's head.

There immediately issued a spate of foul language. The young lady, being as refined as she was, fainted clean away at the sounds coming up the shaft.

Just then, the other three blokes came along, in time to hear the last stream of invective coming from the shaft.

Just then, the other three blokes came along, in time to hear the last stream of invective coming from the shaft.

"Hallo! What's happened to Cynthia?" says the first.

"It looks as though she's fainted," says the second.

"I wonder what caused that?" said the first.

"I don't know," replied the second.

The third bloke who had been standing to one side looking thoughtful suddenly speaks up: "It's a clear case of Asphyxiation."

"Asphyxiation?" How do you work that out," the other two cry.

"Why, 'tis quite clear," says he, "Cynthia's had a heavy dose of FOUL AIR!!!"

By-the-bye, Mr. Cal Siet reports that a certain party has been driving the Editor nearly up the wall with talk and descriptions of certain inventions aimed at making the study of Carbon Dioxide in the Bungonian caves a lot simpler(?) Maybe the group will hear more of this at a later date.

THE BUNGONIA AREA

By permission of Mr. E. Crabb,

The main known caves at Bungonia occur within a reserve of 640 acres, in a much more extensive deposit of limestone. The depth of this deposit, which is of Silurian period origin, is estimated to be at least 1000 feet. There are numerous entrances, possibly upwards of one hundred, and one of these, The Bungonia, or Grille Cave, was open to the public around the turn of the century. The main features of the caves so far explored are:- 'Rough interiors, with few, mainly dry formations, predominately vertical drop entrances, no clear navigable water passages, and a varying concentration of Carbon Dioxide in the atmosphere. There is one known efflux, believed to drain from all the caves in the reserve, which runs into Bungonia Creek downstream from Jerra Creek.

During recent surface mapping by the S.S.S., most cave entrances were identified by a code number, and for further description, this identification will be adhered to.

THE BUNGONIA OR GRILLE CAVE

The main cave of the area situated at the junction of three water-courses, the entrance covered by an iron grille gate, is situated about 20 feet above a sink now silted. The main passage spirals down anti-clockwise, then runs almost due South to a depth of about 160 feet. It then reverses direction, and all further passages run to the north. Altogether there are eleven iron ladders in the cave, of which seven are between the entrance and the 160 foot level. Between the sixth and seventh ladders, a passage runs to some formations protected by chicken wire, then to the top of a long muddy slope. From the bottom of the seventh ladder, another passage runs over a horizontal ladder, along a watercourse, meeting the other passage at the muddy slope. Between the entrance and the top of this muddy slope is a huge complex of passages connecting between and around the two main paths. In some of the smaller passages near the entrance are many formations of many types, now dry and dusty. Around the base of the muddy slope there is usually a variety of life, such as white centipedes, worms, and weetas. From the top of the muddy slope, a now dry watercourse runs down, and joins the present watercourse. This passage is narrow, and lined with dry fl

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e Bungonia or Grille Cave (cont.)

d stalagmite formations; it is known as "The Piano". At the d of this section, an iron ladder leads up to the "Crystal lace". A series of low chambers, once absolutely covered white, like formations, mainly straws, shawls and helectited. om here a passage runs down, following a watercourse, ending a large chamber, known as the $\frac{1}{2}$ Bat Chamber". Here there pears to be an upward extension, but a scaling pole is requ- for further exploration. The main watercourse continues rough a tight squeeze to a large, low roofed sloping cave, to other junction. From here, one tunnel, low and narrow, skopes wn for quite some distance, ending in an almost vertical cleft approximately 90 feet. depth , to running water ending in a phon. There would appear to be further passages from the eft, but difficult conditions have hampered exploration to date.

-X-

The Staff wishes to thank J. and 'Skip' Dougall for their assistance received in the production of our last issue.

~~X-X~~

The Editor wishes to thank all those involved in the attendance
his surprise party on the 20th April, and says that he had a
very good time, although he reckoned that he nearly fell out the
por when he first came in!

~~X-X~~

SCIENCE CORNER: :::

BATS (CHIROPTERA)

ly mammals that have the power of flight. The fore limbs
re modified to form wings, and the fingers of the two hands
re developed to such a degree as to be longer than the body
f the animal. The membrane extends between these fingers
nd the side of the animal, and involves the short hind limbs
nd tail. The body resembles that of a mouse.

ost bats are insectivorous but some live on fruit and certain species will suck the blood of sleeping animals.

their flight is so jerky and irregular owing to their catching insects in flight, sending up to 200 ultra-sonic pulses per

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Bats (continued):

second and listening to the echo. According to scientists, ounce for ounce and watt for watt, a bat's sound system is a thousand million times more sensitive and efficient than either radar or sonar devices invented by man.

They can also avoid any jamming system, recognising their own echoes in a room with 70 loudspeakers, and 28 hair thin wires, strung at random. The speakers were reproducing noise 2000 times as intense as the echo, and on the same frequency, but still the bats flew without collision. They can also recognise the echoes from insects and differentiate between echoes returned from branches and trees, etc.

Another interesting fact about bats is that the life-span compared to its size (mammals) is very long. A field mouse seldom lives longer than a year, while a horse is old at 17. Many species of bats live to be 20 or more, and although their diet is mainly fatty insects, there is no marked difference in the arterial walls of a bat of one or a bat of twenty. How bats age without arterial deterioration is what scientists are trying to find out.

Virus infections that strike other mammals, have little effect on bats, and they are the only animals that generally survive rabies. Once this immunity factor is isolated, mankind will have a new serum with which to fight new diseases.

When breeding, the bats are still unconforming, as the female bat is the only mammal that can hold male sperm in storage until such time as it is needed. Most bats mate in Autumn, before hibernating, but only ovulate in the following spring, thus allowing fertilisation. They also form maternity wards, infesting steeples, attics and recesses around farms. The males are put out to solitary roosts. Only one baby is usually born at a time. If scientists can discover the secret of a female's storage of sperm there might be a new method of artificial insemination for animals, and could give new clues to human infertility problems.

There are 1300 known species of bats, and they populate all areas of the world except the polar regions. Contrary to popular belief, they are not dirty, in fact they are very clean animals. Also they are not blind. Not all bats hibernate, but hundreds of thousands vanish during the winter months. Where do all the bats go in the winter time? No one really knows, and it is at present a subject of research.