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THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE "HIGHLAND CAVING GROUP"

EDITORIAL:::

To an observer steeped in formal procedures, this group must appear a rare conglomeration of mis-matched people, of intern strife, torn by rumours and outbursts. BUT, despite a very few noisy ones, certain projects are progressing very nicely. The Bungonia and Mudgee programmes are certainly up to schedule, to the point where specialised work is under way. The formation of four sub-committees, namely, Bat Research, Mapping, Buckaroo, and Cave Diving, now separates these activities from general Club business. As participation in these sub-committees is subject to invitation only, each group will be fully effective, especially when considered in conjunction with certain proposals regarding eligibility requirements for trip leaders.

Other societies having political troubles are, unfortunately, hamstrung by the first rules of debate, etc, and so cannot unload their undesirables by primitive (and effective) methods.

These policies may have the effect of leaving boats by the wayside from time to time (and it will happen again in the future), but at least we can be proud of our attitude to cave preservation, sense of public responsibility and cave safety.

Where to next? It would be too easy for us to become ingrown, and adopt the paranoic attitude of certain contemporary societies - an attitude having far-reaching consequences on attempts to build a fully effective national body. There is a nagging thought that perhaps we may initiate another show to bring cavers of different colours together, as was done at the Bungonia clean-up.

Perhaps, but then, why us?

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A GHOSTLY ENCOUNTER

The Central West of New South Wales is an area steeped in the rich tradition and romance of ghost stories and legends - some fictitious, other factual - reminiscent of early convict settlers and squatters.

(continuing... A Ghostly Encounter.)

Lighthouse Hill, Henchman's Flat, Deadman's Creek, all have their legends... most of them necessitating one's acceptance of supernatural happenings for full credence.

"You're going to have a wet time, mate; sure you don't want some rum to keep your whistle warm?" the bar tender enquired.

"No thanks, I prefer the whisky - mightn't keep you as warm, but who's worried after a few grams of this stuff?" Peters remarked, and then went on, "Any ghost stories about this region?"

"Now that's a Thing! Say, you're a hiker or something, aren't you?"

"A speleologist - that's a cave explorer."

"Oh! And you wouldn't be going out to them there Munghorn Caves, would you?"

"Well, as a matter of fact, I did intend going out there and spending the weekend, just looking around. Why do you ask, anyway?" Peters responded in a hurt tone.

"Well, mate, I wouldn't advise it. You see, ever since them two young fellows was lost in one of them there holes, that place has been haunted!"

"Haunted...." Peters voice was now an excited whisper. "How do you mean, Haunted?"

Bar tender gained new interest as Peters slid a 2/- piece across the counter to him, and balanced another on the edge of his empty glass.... "Yer see, it was like this....."

"There were these two young fellows, Young and Jones, I think their names was, up from the big smoke for the weekend, long before my time it was, and they went out to look at these caves - never seen again they wasn't!" The bar tender finished waiting new questioning.

"Shouldn't they have just gone straight home, without seeing anyone?" asked Peters anxiously.

"Could have, mate, but they left all their gear behind, and their car here was this broken old leading down into one of the holes where you can throw a stone down and never here it hit the bottom."



(continuing A Ghostly Encounter)

It was morning... not that one would have guessed it, from the state of the weather outside. Peters soon had a warm fire in the fuel stove, and settled down to a breakfast in the shepherd's hut. Outside, the night before, a howling blizzard had suddenly caught him forcing him to take refuge in this hut. He was now forced to spend the day in the hut.

Breakfast finished, Peters set about spending the day inside. Once or twice, he gazed out the window, only to turn dismally back to "Ghost Stories of an Antiquary", but his mind continually wandered back to the details of the supposed double accident that he had heard the night before.

Nightfall came early, and the weather showed little signs of improving. After reading by the light of his caving helmet for a while Peters put a couple more logs on the fire.....

It was then he thought he heard it.... a scraping at the door....it was just his imagination... too many ghost stories.... must give them away...what was that young Ron had said last trip..."you get to believe them after a while, like that bloke".....might only be a cat?

The wind and sleet blew the unfortunate body into the hut, and it was all that Peters could do by leaning on the door to close it. "Poor bloke... nearly done," muttered Peters, as he carried the lean body onto one of the wall bunks. He was very light and the worn pack that he eased off the square shoulders contained very little. The man was rather old and weathered, his face lined with the year marks of many seasons spent out in the weather. He took a drying sock from the stove and proceeded to bathe the wrists of the traveller.

The eyelids flickered, and a pair of hazel eyes shone in the half light of the roaring fire. Peters grinned with relief... "I'll get you a warm drink.... what are you doing out in this weather?" he asked.

"No, don't bother," the voice was clear and fresh. "I'll be going on to the camp cave in a minute. Not far from here... shouldn't have spent so long in mapping..." he stopped, exhausted.

"But you must have a drink... and you can stay here the night," Peters pleaded.

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(continuing A Ghostly Encounter).

"All right, then, I'll have a cuppa, but then I <sup>am</sup> must be going. There's a mug and some mint tea in my pack."

"Don't worry. I Have a spare mug and some Instant coffee, here."

"This tastes good. What did you say it was; Instant Coffee? Never heard of it before."

"Oh it's been out for, a few years, now. By the way, the name's Peters, John Peters."

"Well, thanks, John, mine's Young, Bob Young. Thank's for the hospitality. Must be getting back to camp or my mat'll be worried."

"Mate?" Peter's enquired.

"Yes, you may have heard of him," replied Young pulling his pack onto his back, "his name's Paul Jones."

The weather outside was calm. The blizzard had stopped just as quickly as it had started. Peters rushed through the door.

Nothing outside was stirring, except the slowly falling mist. Curlew gave its final vocal salute to the silence of the night.

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#### REPORT ON MEETING -- 26TH MAY

Held in new quarters (the 2nd Fairfield Scout Hall, there were 19 members present. The meeting started at 8.10 p.m.

The several important topics discussed included arrangements for the construction of ladders for the Group -- and for private individuals. Also a report was received on the current situation at Mudgee, which appears to be favourable. The meeting then adjourned at 9.00 p.m. for supper and a general discussion on transport arrangements for the following weekend was held.

Following the general meeting, a Committee Meeting was held during which several items were discussed during the next several hours. The main problem was that concerning applications for membership which were finalised.

This meeting concluded at 1.30 a.m., due mainly to the weather being cold.

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OFF THE BEATEN TRACK:::

MOUNT ECCLES - VICTORIA

Situated near Macarthur, between Hamilton and Port Fairy in western Victoria, Mt. Eccles is an extinct volcano, with a lake, Lake Surprise, in the old crater. There are numerous caves in the wall of the crater, one of which has been entered by the author for a distance of at least three hundred feet. The passage was a reasonably constant 10' wide by 4' high, and horizontal. The floor, walls and roof are a dull brown colour, but a few glass like drip formations appear from the roof near the walls.

Due to limited time (Macarthur was an overnight stop on a longer trip) no further work was done in the area, but caves are also reported at Byaduk, about seven miles north.

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REPORT ON TRIP 8th - 10th JUNE 1963

Following the committee's policy, readers will notice there is no name of the area visited mentioned. As this area is a virgin one, and the HCG is interested in opening up this system, we hope that readers will understand this secrecy.

Following a reconnaissance trip by two members the week before, a full scale trip was made by the club with 3 cars and 13 members present.

The party arrived early Saturday morning and slept in the cars until light - camp being then set up. One party continued excavating an entrance partly opened by another group, of which there were 3 members present that weekend.

Another party spent several hours on a shaft only to find it blocked by several shawls.

Sunday was spent in like manner to Saturday - digging, but late Sunday or early Monday morning, another promising shaft was located. This was worked for a few hours before the party left for home on Monday morning.

One very large boulder was removed with the kind assistance of the other societies Land Rover, only to find that the "seemingly large" shaft wasn't so large after all.

The opportunity was also taken during the weekend to make all members familiar with safety roping techniques, and also the art of digging in confined spaces.

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In spite of the frustrating conditions encountered (cave wise), the Group's morale remained high, and everyone seems eager to have another crack at it!

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FRAGMENTS OF DAL SIET

BY-THE-BY.....

Anybody interested in PIPE CLAY????

CONGRATULATIONS DEPT.

I have been asked to pass on the Group's congrats. to our President (who had the baby) and his wife, (MR. & MRS E. CRABB) on the birth of their daughter, Delia, on Friday 7th June.

If she is brought up in the tricouni marks of her parents, there will be at least one promising caver in the future generation. I have heard a rumour (no basis to it surely??) that she has already been fitted with a safety helmet, and that a special pair of booties with tin tacks being used for tricounis have been knitted.

Those in the 21 (and over) club welcome Grant to their number. ---a very enjoyable night, morning..... All the best of British luck to you!!!

Happy Birthday... also to John Dougall - 18 on the 17th (June). Now that you are legally entitled to enter hotel, John, just the word of advice..... DON'T!

PROSPECTIVE' DEPT.

.. welcome to John (Bugs) Hazel, and Miss. Lorraine Appleby. Another possible new member is R. Smith's (alias PMG BOB or Mr. Pardon) dance Miss. Joanne Leslie. Unfortunately neither could make it for the last trip.

Whispered into my little shell pink... about a certain respected member's encounter with the mutilation murderer at a recent meeting... also a couple of members seem to be very keen on walking - what with ghosts about???... some members are fond of eggs - raw ones at that... they say that Mudgeo is a land flowing with milk after King's gallant effort.... with a voice like that, little wonder... the way - about ghosts... Dave has a tale and a half to tell about the last trip. Ask him (if you're game, and have time.) At last, last, we've found it... the midnight bathhouse!



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About water...two of the younger members, or maybe three?? DO drink something else apart from rot-gut!

A special para should be set ap<sup>a</sup>rt for Mrs. Kaye after the splendid job she did last trip. What with sups of tea, (and cake, too!) I hope she comes on EVERY Trip!!!

That's all for this m<sup>o</sup>... more fragments of me, next mo<sup>n</sup>th.

MOTTO OF LAST TRIP: I'm sinking of you<sup>s</sup>!!!

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#### POLLY-TICALITE

Friend Calcite (pardon - Cal Siet) hears all the moans, in one ear a plea for more formality, in the other ear, that the complainers are the real offenders. Which side is right??

Confucius once said, "Liquor is not offensive by itself; it needs to be surrounded by stomach." The effect on a certain stomach is causing concern to some members who can't stomach the standard.

(Glib excuse).

Anyone can buy and use gelignite (up to a certain limit) but your scribe suggests that if an explosive's expert is available, concede to him; if a cave is involved, concede to a leader interested in preservation; otherwiae a stick where the chicken got the axe!

Office bearers - who is doing what? Are you going to resign? Is anyone dissatisfied with your actions? (This should start some rumours!!!!)

Heard a certain person say that you can throw mud - or see pretty caves. Your choice. Now why did he say that????

Rumours flying about the president - why so quiet? Why so close to another society? What is behind the sub-committees deal? Must get him drunk sometime and get him tal<sup>k</sup>ing. He may even spill about Bungonia!

Finally, which prospective trip leader will initiate what?????????

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#### CAVE SCIENCE: :::Meteorology

The meteorology of caves is concerned primarily with the circulation of air and water, and this is largely dependent on external influences. Many people, often ask how it is that a cave is

ventillated, when it is below the surface of the earth, and also when it is away from all external pressure systems, and so on... Nothing could be further from the truth, for, while we do have a certain number of caves in which large pockets of foul air are found, the majority of caves seem to be too well ventillated for comfort!

In this limited space it not possible to ennumerate fully the full means by which caves are influenced by meteorological changes, but we will attempt to give a basic idea of what happens. Much of the information given here has been taken from overseas reports on this topic, but is still applicable to Australian Caves.

Circulation<sup>of air</sup> in Caves is governed by the following main factors. Firstly, water flow. The water in travelling through a cave carries with it, either along its surface, or in the form of air bubbles in the water, quite a considerable quantity of air. Secondly, the air flow in caves is aided by a combination of the external pressure systems, and the temperature change between the air outside and the air inside. A stream of hot air flowing into a cave is soon cooled, but in the interim, a pressure system is set up at the point where the hot and cold air mixes. This may have far reaching effects in the cave, down to 100 feet or more, depending on the topography of the cave.

Human activity in caves also aids ventillation to a certain extent. This would appear to be the case in several of our tourist caves, as the high concentration of CO2 which is normally encountered under these circumstances is not found.

Pressure systems on the outside, as previously mentioned, are also a major factor in the ventillation of caves. For example, where there is a high pressure system on the outside, near or over an entrance from which cold air is issuing, then a small anti-cyclonic depression is found; this phenomena is also found in the opposite circumstances where the air in the cave is warmer than that outside as is the case during the winter months, early in the morning.

The water flow in caves is also dependent on many circumstances, and these are mainly attributable to the air flow reaching the cave. It is not normal for the temperature to be so low inside a cave as would freeze water, although this does happen, due partly to condensation, and the cooling effects therefrom. This condensation occurs when the pressure systems are such externally as would cause very warm or cold air to mix with a contrasting type inside the cave under conditions of extreme draught.

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