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HIGHLAND CAVING GROUP

CALCITE

Newsletter of the Highland Caving Group.

ISSUE - JAN - JUN 1970

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We gratefully acknowledge the assistance given by all who contributed to this issue of "Calcite", especially Miss Luana Gilmore and Mr John Baker.

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CALCITE JULY 1970

EDITORIAL

Group Publications

This issue is the first CALCITE to be produced under the new concept. We now have a separate news letter to be issued on a two-monthly basis to keep members informed of planned activities and other topical matters. CALCITE will now be issued once or twice a year (depending on the availability of material and the energy of the editor) and will contain comprehensive trip reports, reports of other activities and articles, etc of more lasting interest to members.

The success of the new CALCITE depends, as before, on YOU - the members of HCG. So please submit reports of all activities and if you dream up or come across articles, jokes, cartoons, etc of caving interest send them to the editor so that they can be considered for inclusion in your magazine.

Group Cooperation

Some exciting developments have now taken place in the sphere of cooperation with other clubs and groups. These are the formation of the Central Regional Council of Speleological Societies and our affiliation with the Sydney Teachers College Caving Club. Both moves have great potential for us and caving in NSW in general. However, these developments carry some heavy responsibilities for us - the members of HCG. Because of the closer cooperation with other clubs involved and because we will be required to set the standard for the young members of the STCCC it becomes more important than ever that our standard of organization, safety, conduct and support for activities should be of the highest possible level so that HCG can maintain (or regain) its place in the caving world.

(W. Patrick)

BITS AND PIECES

After extracting a Scout from the guano slide above Kings Cross at Colong - he had foolishly gone down without a rope or ladder and got himself stuck - the group shall adopt the motto. HELP EDUCATE SCOUTS.

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Classic question asked while camped at the base of the Grand Arch at Colong by a bush walker: "Excuse me, mate. Where are the Colong Caves?"

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Overheard halfway up Carbide Spur on return from Colong. Exhausted caver to friend. "The first thing I am going to do when I get back to the car is rip off the 'SAVE COLONG' sticker".

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Cave Rescue at Bungonia. The Group performed a cave rescue during a visit to Bungonia in March. The victim who had stumbled into a hole in the vicinity of B12 was extricated by means of a shovel, pair of leather gloves and a plastic bucket. After a short rest at our camp he strolled off nonchalantly into the bush. The victim? -- a spiny anteater.

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Doing it hard. Due to the relaxing nature of the Wanderers' Caving Group activities at Byaduk on 8/9 Jan 70 the party was obliged to take a "day off" from their holiday. They spent it climbing Mt Eccles.

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Strange Creatures Encountered in Colong Cave.
On Sunday 19 Apr 70 two strange creatures were seen in Colong Cave in company of a group of cavers(?). Long fuzzy black hair, floral shirts, jeans, no shoes, no lights, sex - possibly male and female. May we be spared from such encounters in future.

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To the members of this club, the general meeting takes place on the last Sunday of every month at 121 Hoxton Park Rd. Liverpool, and commences around 7.30 p.m. The President, Secretary, Treasurer, Librarian, and a committee member are getting sick and tired of looking at each other, meeting after meeting. So howzabout letting us see YOUR face once in a while. We're starting to forget what our members look like.

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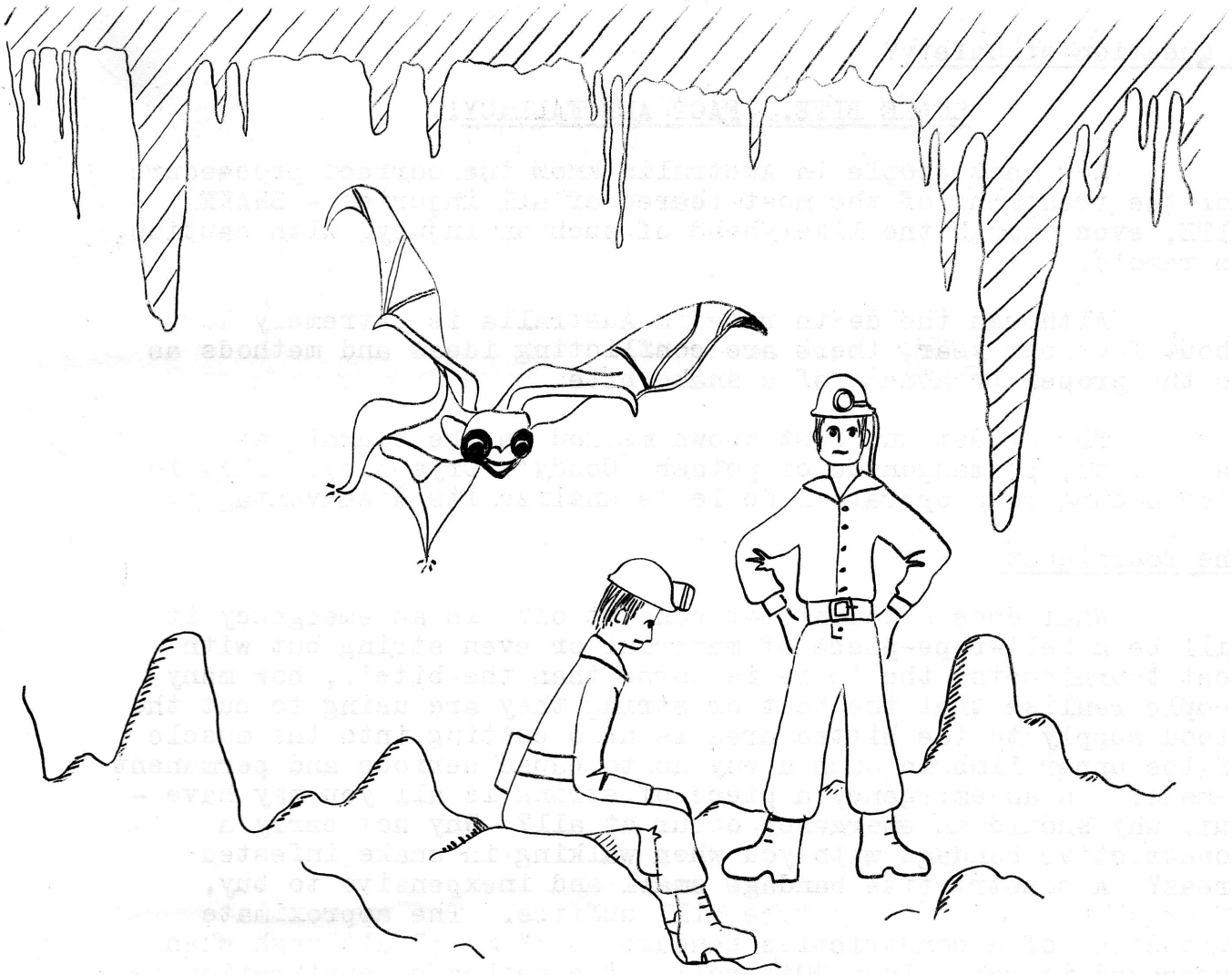

"Don't worry about the bats, Brian, they only grow as big as your thumb".

For the comfort of Speleo's?? who wish to take their armchairs on trips with them, two members of this club are toying with the idea of constructing a chairlift from Batsh Camp to the main Arch at Colong with four wheeled drive deck chairs to the entrances of both Lannigans and Onslow Caves. Sorry chaps, but you'll have to walk from there on in.

Any Donations????

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Frank Crome is now based in Mareeba catching pigeons for CSIRO. He has already visited the Royal Arch Cave at Chillagoe and reports that tourist inspections are carried out by issuing each member with a carbide lamp. Wot - no coloured lights? We look forward to reports of further caving activities from Frank.

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A Question of Safety?

SNAKE BITE...FACT AND FALLACY!

How many people in Australia know the correct proceedure for the treatment of the most feared of all injuries - SNAKE BITE, even though the likelyhood of such an injury, with caution, is remote.

Although the death rate in Australia is extremely low, about four per year, there are conflicting ideas and methods as to the proper treatment of a snake bite.

The oldest and best known method is the tourniquet, razor cuts, permanganate of potash (Condy's Crystals). This is also a dangerous operation so let's analize its disadvantages.

The Tourniquet

What does a tourniquet consist of? In an emergency it will be a belt-rope-piece of material or even string but with most tourniquets, the 'cure is worse than the bite'., how many people realise that the belt or string they are using to cut the blood supply to the bitten area is also cutting into the muscle of the upper limb in such a way as to cause serious and permanent damage. In an emergency a piece of string is all you may have - but, why should an emergency occur at all? Why not carry a constrictive bandage with you when walking in snake infested areas? A constrictive bandage small and inexpensive to buy, after all, a cycle inner tube will suffice. The approximate dimensions of a constrictive bandage is 3" x 15" although when purchased it comes in a 10ft roll. The method of application is that as you wrap it around the upper limb you pull it tighter and tighter, the broad surface of the bandage spreading the area of contact thus preventing injury to the muscle.

Cutting the Wound

This is the main area of concern. Why cut and suck? Why run the risk of poisoning yourself? Why risk cutting into a muscle or artery and give the poison greater access to the blood stream? Apply pressure to the area yes - but don't cut the area, you're trying to save someone - not disfigure them.

Condy's Crystals

The usefulness of this crystal is indistinct, and therefore cannot be dealt with in depth except that its value is considered next to nil and so is not recommended for use.

Duration of Constriction

This is where most controversy reigns. Most authorities say that after a period of 15-20 minutes have elapsed the constriction should be eased for a few seconds and then re-applied

for a further 20 minute period and the proceedure repeated every 20 minutes thereafter. Nothing could be further from the truth.

The proceedure listed above is for haemorrhage where there is actual loss of blood from the damaged area. We are dealing with snake bite where we are trying to prevent the escape of the poison to the rest of the body and the nervous system. The proper duration of constriction is 1½ hours, no more no less, relaxed, then re-applied for a further 1½ hours when the process is repeated.

Correct Treatment of Snake Bite

1. Until a constrictive bandage is applied, cut the blood supply to the affected area by applying direct pressure by way of the appropriate pressure point.

2. Remove clothing from effected limb so that it will not reduce the effect of the constrictive bandage which must be applied directly to the skin of the UPPER limb. Apply the constrictive bandage.

3. Wash or wipe the skin clear of venom splashes.

4. Immobilize the limb, place the patient at rest and maintain body heat and try and calm the patient as exercise and anxiety will increase the circulatory rate and hastens absorption of venom into the body, complete stoppage is judged by obliteration of the pulse below the bandage.

5. If breathing is failing apply artificial respiration.

6. Remove patient to nearest point of medical aid. Prior notification has added advantage in that all necessary arrangements can be made before the arrival of the patient, thus greatly increasing his chances of survial.

7. The limb may swell, turn red, blue or pale in colour.

8. The bandage must be released after 1½ hours and re-applied slightly above the original position.

9. Identify the snake for correct anti-venene. If it cannot be identified - take it with you, preferably dead.

10. The best thing though - is don't get bitten in the first place.

(N. Poulter)

References

Manual of the St. John Ambulance Association. 1966
1969

EXTRACT FROM AMERICAN - "GAME NEWS"

Ever Give Any Thought to Those Parts of the State That Don't Immediately Meet the Eye? Here's a Look at the .....

CAVES OF PENNSYLVANIA

by George F. Jackson

Caves were man's first natural home and he has been fascinated and awed by them ever since. Prehistoric peoples used them as homes, burial places and for religious rites. Sometimes they painted and carved records of their activities on the walls.

Today, as every tourist knows, millions of visitors go through the commercial caves which are found throughout the country. At last count there were 11 commercial caves in Pennsylvania. These are easy-to-walk through, well-lighted show-places of the natural underground. The noncommercial "wild" caves, the unexplored ones - of which there are more than 600 in Pennsylvania - are those that arouse the greatest interest in the sport caver and the speleologist. These naturally air-conditioned and mysterious parts of the metherworld offer challenges unequaled in the outer world of sunshine. There may be places where no man has ever trod, tiny forms of animal life, or beautiful and lovely sights all sparkling and gleaming like jewels in the explorers' lights. It is an impressive sport and an intriguing scientific pursuit.

Speleology (from the Greek word spelaion: cave, and logos: study) is a new science in America. Spelunking (from the Latin spelunca: cave) is a word used to describe sport caving as differentiated from the more scientific aspects of underground activity. Many speleologists, however, have become spelunkers or cavers as they prefer to be called, and some sport cavers have become speleologists because of their curiosity about the formation of caves and their contents.

Most of Pennsylvania's caves were created as a result of the solution of underground limestone and marble. These relatively soluble rocks are found throughout the state. With a few exceptions caves have developed along joints in the rocks. Some are simple in pattern and consist of only a single tunnel. Others are more complex, with many interconnecting channels and several levels. Passageways vary in size from over 100 feet high to "crawlways" only a few inches in height. Most are reasonably horizontal but some have deep pits. Fills of silt washed in from the outside and heaps of fallen rock here and there dot the floors of most.

Almost all authorities agree that the actual formation of caves is a result of a solutional process which dissolved and eroded away the limestone, but beyond this point there is some

difference of opinion. The various cavern development theories are interesting but it is beyond the scope of this article to go further into them.

Stalactites and Stalagmites

After their formation some caves are decorated with lovely sparkling stalactites (hanging from the roof) and equally spectacular stalagmites (rising from the floor). Formed over long spans of time by slowly dripping calcium carbonate-laden water, these deposits may have a color range from pure white through all shades of brown, red and black, even pale green and blue. Some have weird shapes and may resemble objects in the outer world. No two are alike. All are enchanting.

The temperature of most caves is usually the same as the average annual mean temperature of the surrounding area. Pennsylvania caves, therefore have an average temperature of 54° F.

The cave life of the state is varied but there are no eyeless fish or blind crayfish such as are found in caves of the Midwest and South. This is because the last glacial period occurred too recently to permit the evolution of any eyeless cave species. All life forms that may have existed in caves before the glaciers came were destroyed by the immense ice sheets and their frigid waters.

Snakes never enter the dark zone of caves, although they are occasionally found around entrances, especially during the hot summer months when they seek the cool air issuing from the cave. They have sometimes been seen in steep pits opening to the surface, having fallen in and been unable to crawl back out.

Perhaps the best known denizen of the states caves is the bat, one of the most maligned creatures of all time. Bats are neither blind nor do they carry "bugs" or get into one's hair. Despite all the old fairy tales and rumors, today we know that bats are extremely helpful to mankind, that they are mammals, not birds, have teeth, fur and give birth to living young and nurse them on milk. Not only are they one of the world's older mammals, but they also are probably the most numerous animal in the United States. Their sonar-like echo-location abilities enable them to navigate in total darkness with great ease.

Cave Dwellers

Eleven species of bats have been found in Pennsylvania. Normally, bats sleep in caves during the day and fly out at dusk for their evening feeding. The enormous quantities of insects they consume makes them a valuable animal. Some species hibernate, hanging head downwards, on the ceilings and walls of caves during

the winter. Large groups often resemble a big furry brown blanket fastened to the roof. Wintering bat colonies should not be distrubed. If aroused, bats fly around using up the energy and fat they have stored and are unable to live out the rest of the winter. No caver should ever harm cave bats. They are not dangerous to man. In recent years a few bats carrying the rabies virus have been detected, but almost any warm-blooded animal can also carry and transmit the disease. Since the normal Pennsylvania cave bat, cannot bite through the skin of one's finger it is unlikely that they can transmit the virus by bite, or even by fouling the air, for the state's cave bat population is extremely small as compared, for example, with the huge bat caves of the Southwest, where the normal bat population exceeds millions. However, common sense dictates that it is wise to avoid handling any wild animal, especially one that appears sick or acts erratically.

Two other Pennsylvania cave dwellers commonly seen by cavers are the cave rat, Neotoma magister, and the cave cricket, Hadenoecus subterraneus. Neotoma is the same creature that is famed in the West as the "pack rat". Not to be confused with the disease-carrying Norway or household rat, Neotoma is a clean, native rodent and, like its western cousin, collects shiny or brightly colored objects and hides them away. It has great curiosity and shows little fear of humans. Once common in the easternmost section of the state, it is still found in caves of the central and western portions.

Two genera of cave crickets, Ceuthophilus and Hadenoecus, are found in Pennsylvania caves. They are quite graceful and are usually congregated on walls and ceilings, but may be found in just about any open area of the cave. Unlike its surface relative, the cave cricket does not chirp.

It might be mentioned here that amateur collecting of any form of cave life is discouraged by all experienced speleologists. None are harmful to man. If no good biological use can be made of specimens, they should be left strictly alone. The same thoughtless vandalism that ruined many caves has also caused some species of underground life to become extinct.

Exploring caves is an exciting, interesting sport and a healthful one. Caving attracts people of all ages and both sexes. There is no pollen in caves and the air of most is refreshing and pure. It is not necessary to be a mountain climber or even a very rugged individual to explore caves. However, like any other out-of-doors activity, some know-how of what may be encountered, and some practice is required to prevent accidents or unnecessary anxious moments. Anyone going into a wild cave should follow the following commonsense ground rules:

Never go into a cave alone. Three to seven persons make an ideal group, and at least one member should be familiar with good caving practices.

Always carry three independent sources of light. These should be the main light source plus two extra sources. Experienced cavers use carbide or electric miner's lamps, with spare parts, and carry flashlights (with spare bulbs and batteries) and candles and matches in a waterproof package on long cave trips.

Among experienced caving groups hard hats are mandatory. Not because one is likely to be hit with falling rocks, but they do prevent many bumps and bruises on one's head.

Never use a rope or wooden ladder found in a cave, no matter how safe it looks.

Always carry a plastic bag, or something similar, to take out spent carbide and trash. Never leave any waste in a cave.

Never smoke, write or carve initials or names anywhere in a cave.

Taboo

Breaking stone formations is strictly taboo, besides there are state and federal (on government land) laws against defacing a cave. Literally dozens of caves in Pennsylvania have been so badly vandalized by thoughtless cavers that they are now completely devoid of their former beauty. Do not even touch delicate or small formations. Caves may be in hard stone, but they are extremely fragile, and one moment's carelessness may remove forever something that it took nature, literally millions of years to form. It is a caver's reponsibility to preserve the cave he explores.

Always obtain permission of the landowner before entering a cave.

Despite many stories you may have heard, read, or seen on TV, you are not likely to really get lost in a cave. Forget the old idea of carrying string to pay out behind you as you go along. You could not carry enough for even a small cave. If the passage-ways seem confusing, take along paper arrows, or slips of paper with painted arrows on them, and place them so they always point towards the entrance. Hold them down with rocks. Be sure to pick them up on return trip. Never mark directions on the walls.

Horizontal

Most caves in Pennsylvania are horizontal, but there are some with deep pits and holes. Vertical caving requires considerable skill, and should only be attempted by those with experience and training in this technique. Fatal cave accidents the world over have almost all been caused by falling, usually by inexperienced climbers or by improper use of equipment.

Vertical cave equipment may consist of cable ladders, ½ inch or 7/16 inch nylon or goldline rope and the hardware necessary for its use. Rope ladders and sisal or polyethylene ropes are not recommended.

In this article it is not possible to go into details of vertical caving, so if you are not familiar with basic mountain climbing skills do not attempt any cave climbs. The importance of these safeguards cannot be overstressed.

Almost all organized caving in this country is done by members of the National Speleological Society, a non-profit organization composed of scientists and laymen interested equally in the study, conservation and exploration of caves. The society has chapters throughout the United States, several in Pennsylvania. Its members, collectively, know more about caves and caving than any other group. If you are interested in knowing more about the organization and caves of the United States, write to the National Speleological Society, 2318 N. Kenmore Street, Arlington, Va. 22201.

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EXTRACT FROM CANBERRA TIMES - 2 Jul 70

Clue in Bones. Adelaide, Wednesday. A world authority on fossils, Dr R.H. Tedford, Curator of vertebrae paleontology at the American Museum of Natural History, New Yord, said today ancient animal bone deposits found in a cvae at Naracoorte, near the Victorian border, were among the richest in the world, and might give some answer to the puzzle of why so many forms of large animal life became extinct.

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A Cavers Dream

"Descend, bold traveller, into the crater of the volcano of Snaeffels, ..., and you will attain the centre of the earth; which I have ~~along~~ DONE, ..."

Jules Verne
"A Journey into the Interior of the Earth"

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SHARED TRANSPORT - CAVING TRIPS

As attendance at caving activities frequently involves sharing cars and invariably means driving cars across country and along tracks for which they are not designed, the Committee has drawn up a guide for drivers and passengers as follows:

a. To be transported in another member's car is a privilege which should not be abused. The passenger should:

Be punctual at all times.

Avoid action which can in any way damage the vehicle or inconvenience other passengers.

Remember that the owner is captain and his instructions must be obeyed.

Cheerfully pay his share of the travelling expenses.

b. Guide for owners in calculating expenses:

Cars under 1500 cc - $2.00 per 100 miles.

Cars over 1500 cc - $3.00 per 100 miles.

(Total cost to be divided evenly between all occupants of the car - including owner/driver).

TRIP REPORTS

The Group has been very active over the period Jan-Jun 70 as the following report of activities will show. As well as the normal Group trips several private trips were carried out by members and friends as the opportunity arose. The activities cover a large portion of south eastern Australia and four separate states - NSW, Vic, SA and Queensland.

South Coast of NSW

The trip to the South Coast was a small one. Was holidaying in the Kiama area with the express purpose of investigating a reported sea cave in the Gerringong area. In the company with John Sheriff a long time local friend we set out to investigate. After walking around the rocks for about ¾ of a mile from Gerringong the sea cave was located. The structure of the cave is a dyke cutting through the strata. The cave extends approx. 200 ft into the mountainside. From floor to ceiling is approx. 10 ft. About half the floor length is mud ranging in depth from 6" to 2 ft and because of a rockpile at the entrance trapping moisture the mud is in a highly liquid state. At the far end of the cave there are a few limestone formations but it was hardly worth the effort of struggling through the mud.

Another sea cave is reported to be in the area and according to local legend is much longer and more profusely decorated but was not located.

The cave formation was started during volcanic times. When the molten magma forces its way upwards through a vertical crack in the earths' crust, it forms a wedge cutting through the rock strata. When it has cooled, the surrounding rocks wear away, the dyke may stand up as a natural wall, running for many yards even miles, often in a nearly straight line. Sometimes however, the dyke rock weathers away faster than the surrounding rock. In this way the dyke appears as a ditch or if it's in a cliff face, it forms a cave.

(N. Poulter)

Bungonia: 26, 27, 28 Dec 69

Present. Bess Patrick, Noel Patrick, Roy Grinham, Brian Patrick, Karen Patrick and Bill Patrick.

The trip was organized by the Wanderers to fill in the spare time over the Christmas break and to attempt (again) to complete the traverse from B5-B4.

The afternoon of 26 Dec was spent in setting up our normal rough camp (which included Roy's caravan) in the HCG camp site. Early on Saturday morning Noel, Roy, Brian and Bill set out for B5 determined to make it this time. Our efforts

were at last rewarded and we finally emerged from B4 about 2½ hours later. No great difficulty was encountered although in one place in the high level passages of B5 we had to do a little digging to ease Roy through. Some good photos were taken of the highlights of the traverse.

On getting back to camp we found that we had been joined by four members of the UQSS - Alistar and Julie Watt, Dave Gillison and Bob Gowen. They were spending their Christmas break in a mini-moke visiting caving areas in NSW and were anxious to have a go at some of the deeper holes at Bungonia. As they had no ladders and had found that their directions concerning location of caves were inadequate they requested our assistance.

We were overjoyed to meet such enthusiastic and capable young people and on Saturday after a demonstration with some prussiking clamps by Alistar Watt we set out to rig the pitch in B22. Our guests, accompanied by Noel then made the descent and explored the lower passages.

On Sunday morning as our guests were still keen to go deep so a joint descent of the Drum was carried out. Exploration of the lower passages was restricted because of the desire not to disturb the bats.

After completion of our caving the UQSS party accompanied us to Canberra where we all enjoyed a slide show and much discussion on caving in Australia, England and Wales (Alistar and Julie were newly arrived from the UK).

On Monday the UQSS party departed for Wee Jasper armed with cave plans and directions. Unfortunately family, etc, commitments prevented us accompanying them.

This chance meeting proved to be most enjoyable and beneficial. We all became friends instantly because of our common interests and a valuable link has been formed. Any member visiting Queensland should contact Alistar Watt at 44 McCaul St., TARINGA, Qld, 4006.

(R. Grinham)

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<u>The Efflux?</u>

"..... .....
where Alph, the sacred river ran
Through caverns measureless to man
Down to a sunless sea."

Coleridge
"Kublai Khan"

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TRIP REPORT

Colong Caves 2nd-9th Jan 1970.

Having arranged this trip for about 3 months, the group set off to Colong with a total of 2 members. As neither of us had transport, we were chauffeured to Batsh Camp. One hour and forty minutes later, we arrived at the caves. The following day, after joining forces with another group, the Onslow Cave was entered. Taking 100ft of rope and 45ft of ladder, we headed for the guano slide above Kings Cross. Upon entering the chamber, we were met by six senior scouts who asked us if we could get one of their party up from the bottom of the slide. (He had jumped in without a ladder or safety line). The ladder was then used to get him out, and it was found that the slide finishes in virtually nothing. The party then proceeded to the Terraces and about an hour was spent in the rockfall not far away.

During the evening, another trip was taken into Lannigans Cave and all small holes were explored. An attempt was made to see where the Palmer St extension went to, but sprialling up about 35ft and crawling down on ones stomach for roughtly 40ft, it became too tight to go any further. So the return journey was made by lying down and reversing feet first uphill.

On the Sunday, the five of us went past Woof's Cavern and found ourselves crawling in the creek below searching for a reported cavern larger than Woof's, but this search was in vain. We all emerged from the creek blue and shivering.

By Tuesday, all of the groups excepting our own had returned home, so it was time to search for new openings on the surface. Searches were carried out along Lannigan's and Cave creeks, over the top of the arch, and over the area of the Red Cave (wherever that is). In all, twelve holes were found, but all will need digging.

Thursday came, and it was noticed that food and battery supplies were going. Then a miracle happened. Two fellows wandered into our camp around 7.30 p.m. to have a quick look at the caves, so after taking them into Kings Cross and the Terraces, we asked them if we could get a lift back to Batsh Camp in their rover. They did better than that, we got a ride back to Woodford, and after a phone call, our taxi was on it's way to take us home.

The great adventure was over .....

(K. Oliver)

Cape Schank (Vic) 2 Jan 70.

Present. Noel Patrick and Frank Crome.

This area was visited as a curtain raiser to our major expedition. After climbing around the cliffs, Angel Cave was finally located at sealevel at the base of a limestone outcrop. The cave terminates in a chamber about90ft long, 30ft wide and 20ft high with some decoration. A small colony of bats (possibly bent wing) was noted. Although the sea entered the cave at high tide the cave appeared to be a normal freshwater cave.

(Noel Patrick)

TRIP REPORT

Expedition to Western Victoria and the Mt Gambier - Naracoorte Area. 5-16 Jan 70.

Present. Frank Crome, Noel Patrick, Brian Patrick and Bill Patrick.

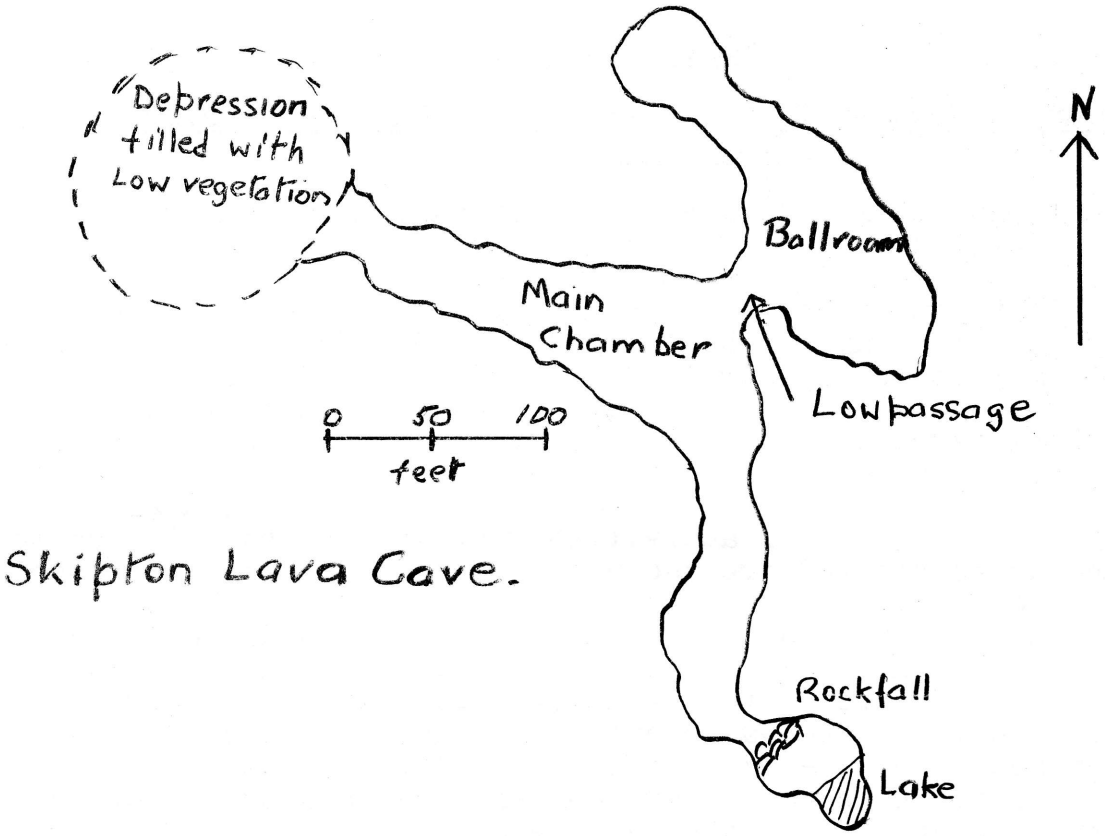
After some weeks of planning and research the expedition actually got underway at about mid-day on Tuesday, 6 Jan 70 when the party met up in the Eureka Stockade Park at Ballarat. Caving commenced almost immediately as we moved direct to the Skipton Lava Caves on the same day. The party travelled in two cars, comparatively light, although all our caving gear - ladders, ropes, lights, etc was carried. Overall the trip was a great success and in most cases activities went as planned. The route taken and areas visited are shown on the attached map. The whole expedition gave further proof of the need for research, advance planning and personal contacts in the areas visited. Our best contact was Fred Aslin who we met, with his wife Janet, in the CEGSA Research Centre in the Naracoorte Caves reserve. Fred is a dedicated young man who was spending his annual holidays sifting bones (on behalf of the South Australian Museum) out of the silt floor of a small cave which had been exposed in a quarry close to Naracoorte. Fred proved to be a mine of information on caving matters in South Eastern S.A. and arranged for us to visit a number of caves in the Naracoorte area. We spent some time assisting in the sifting of the silt from the cave and found it most interesting although nothing spectacular was revealed while we were there.

The expedition came to an end at Horsham at about 3 p.m. on Thursday 15 Jan when the party split up - Frank and Noel to Melbourne and Bill and Brian to Canberra.

Details of the areas and caves visited are given below.

Skipton Lava Cave. This cave is located on the lower slopes of Mt Widderin, which is an extinct volcano. The entrance to the cave is situated in a doline-like depression adjacent to the

shearers' quarters of the "Mt Widderin" station. The cave consists of two large dome-shaped chambers - known as the main Chamber and the Ballroom. They are quite large - the Ballroom is about 200ft long by 40ft wide. The floors are quite level, mainly mud except where it is covered by rock falls. An extension of the main chamber leads to a small lake which in the light of our lamps appeared quite blue. A windmill on the hill above, pumps water directly from this lake. The water supply is permanent, although Mrs Notman, the wife of the owner of the station told us that in the recent drought the level had become very low. Mrs Notman, as well as giving us permission to visit the cave, laoned us a plan made some years earlier by the VCES. The sketch below is based on that plan.



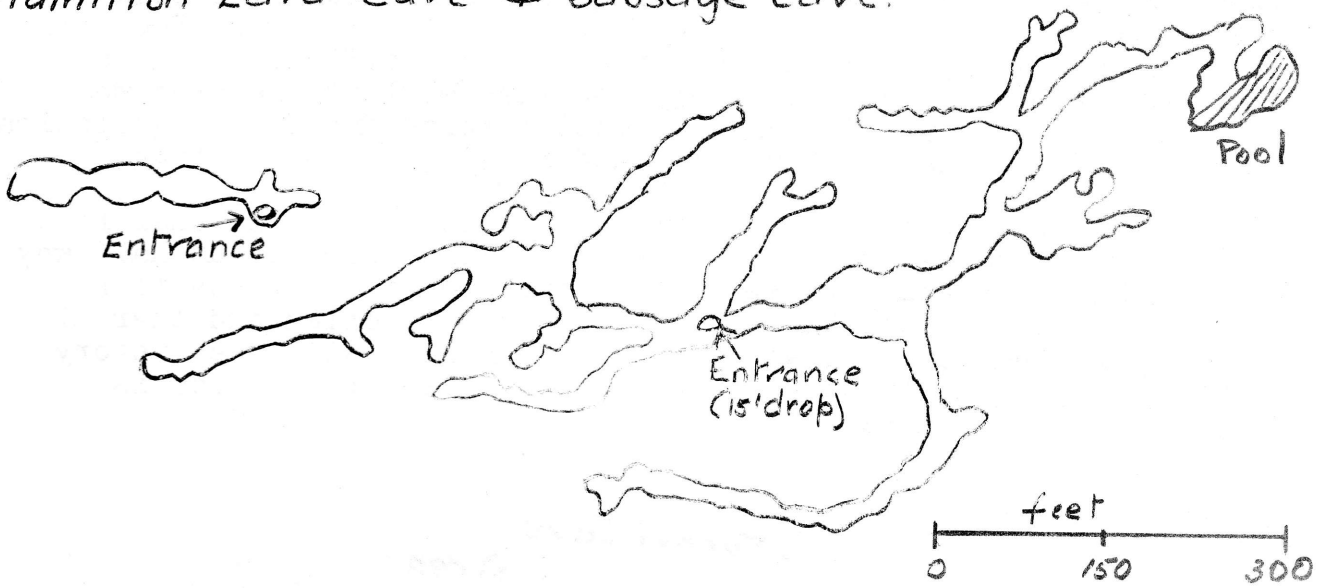
Skipton Lava Cave.

As all our previous experience had been with limestone caves we were impressed by the porous nature of the volcanic rock, the lack of decoration and the way the light from our flash equipment seemed to be absorbed by the walls of the cave. Three hours were spent in exploration and photography.

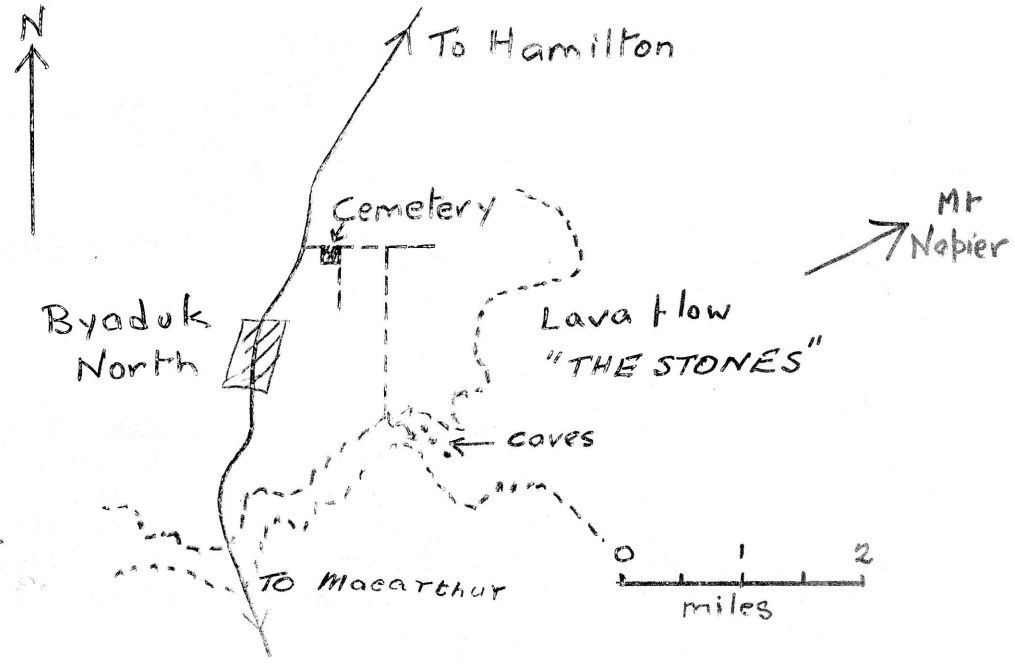
Mt Hamilton Lava Caves. We visited this area on 7 Jan 70 after obtaining permission and directions from the owner of the property. There are three caves in all - Mt Hamilton Cave, Sausage Cave and Insect Cave. Unfortunately we were not aware of the presence of the Insect Cave at that time - although where we parked our cars was right alongside the entrance. The caves are located on the lower slopes of Mt Hamilton which is a lava cone with a most impressive crater. The Mt Hamilton Cave is a complicated maze-like system which contains over 3,000ft of passages - much of which

involves crawling. The lower section of the cave contains a small pool of water - which when we saw it contained more mud than water. The Sausage Cave is about 250ft long and consists of a number of fairly large chambers linked by short constricted passages - like a string of sausages. These caves contain a number of features such as, lava fountains, lava stalactites, clay balls, cupolas and lava blisters which are peculiar to lava caves and which we were to find in various forms in other lava caves. The following sketches which are based on a plan published in "Helictite" of Jul 1963 give some idea of the layout of these caves.

Mt Hamilton Lava Cave & Sausage Cave.



Byaduk. The Byaduk Cave area is located in a most impressive lava flow - known locally as "The Stones" - a few miles east of the village of Byaduk north (see location map below):

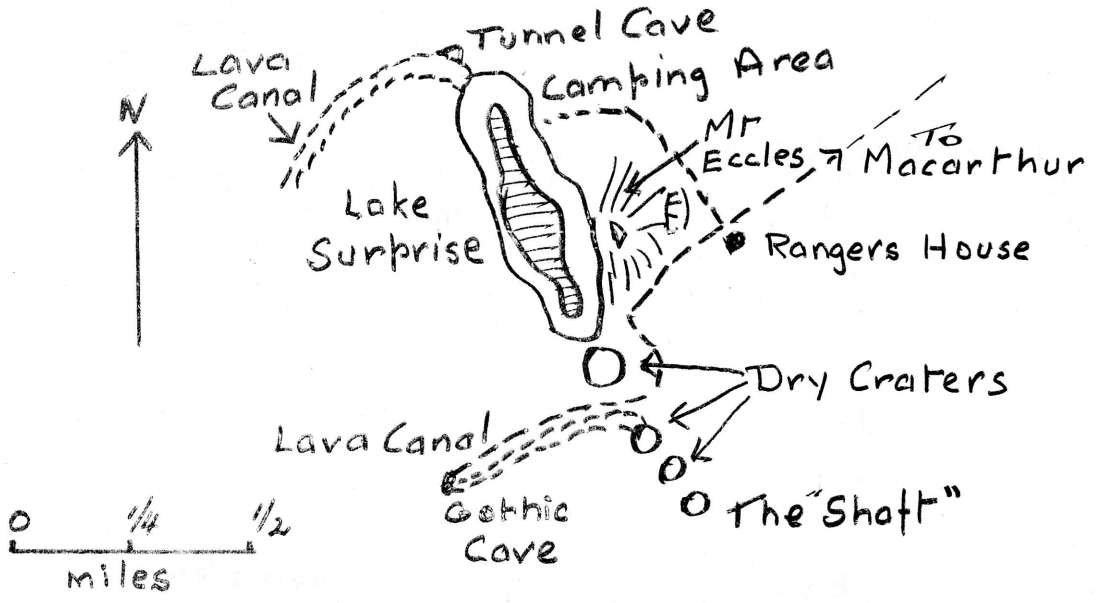


Reference:

Coleraine 1:100,000 map

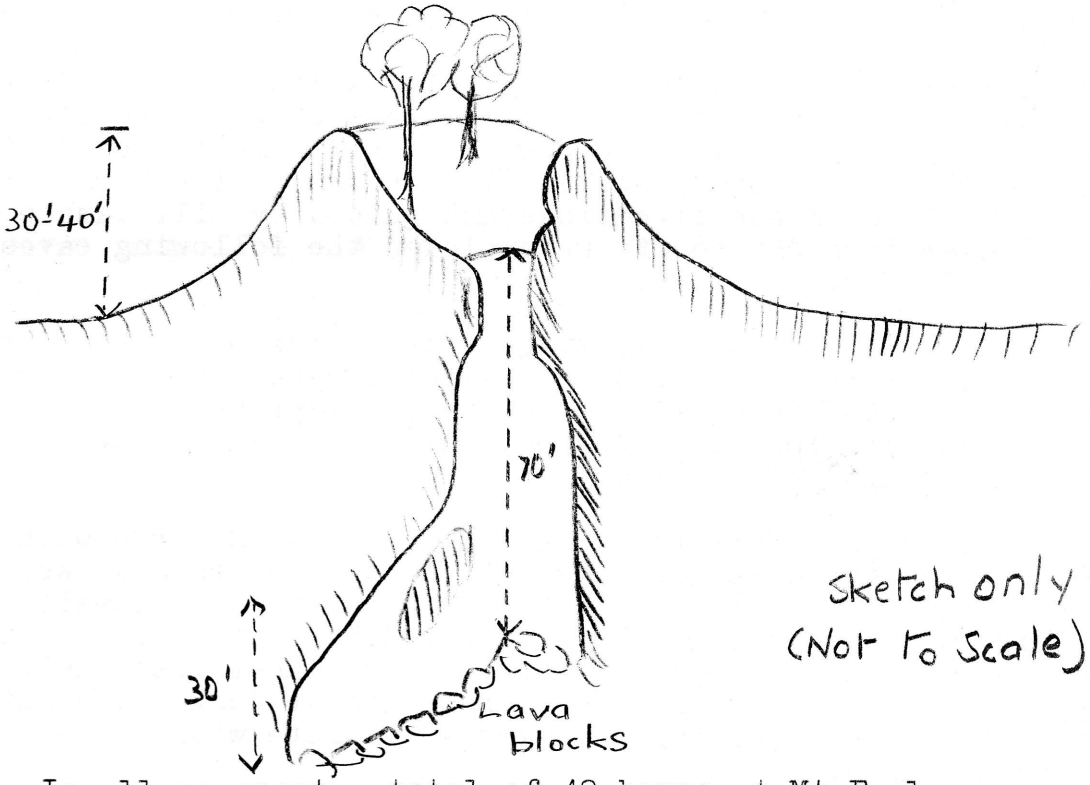
We arrived in the area about midday on 8 Jan 70 with the temperature above 90°. As is usual in this part of Victoria there were no trees to provide shelter or shade for our camp which we finally set up at the edge of the lava flow near a scraggly wattle tree. Fortunately, although fairly exposed the area was well drained as we had to weather a violent electrical storm that night. This certainly confirmed the value of using a fly with our tents. On the afternoon of 8 Jan and the following morning we worked up and down "The Stones" entering most of the caves listed in the Speleo Handbook. The caves generally have a large tunnel-like cross section and in many cases are connected by lava canals. They can be entered, in most cases by climbing down over rock falls. Although we used a ladder in one or two places. The going both on the surface and in the caves is most difficult because of the profusion of loose rocks. By the time we left the area we were all very weary. The area is most interesting from a geological as well as a caving point of view and is well worth visiting.

Mt Eccles. The next port of call was the Mt Eccles National Park which is situated above 5½ miles west of Macarthur (about half way between Hamilton and Port Fairy). Permission to camp has to be obtained from the Park Ranger but this is no problem and there is no charge. The Ranger also issues a brochure giving the history layout and points of interest in the park. The plan below is based on this brochure:



The centre piece of the park is Lake Surprise which is a most impressive crater lake about 800 yds long, 200 yds wide with the surface about 150ft below the crater rim. There are two fairly small lava caves in the area - Tunnel Cave and Gothic Cave - which we examined and photographed. The main feature in the Mt Eccles area from our point of view was "The Shaft" - a

vertical vent in a small cone to the south of Lake Surprise. This involved a vertical ladder pitch of 70ft with a descent over sloping lava for a further 30 to 40ft (see diagram).



In all we spent a total of 48 hours at Mt Eccles - resting, caving, climbing the mountain (585ft) and examining the various geological features.

Mt Gambier. The next area we visited was Mt Gambier where we first of all tried to find caves which were marked on our maps. The caves were there all right - exactly as indicated but all were full of water. After viewing many of these waterfilled sinks and climbing Mt Schank - an extinct volcano with a large, deep crater south of Mt Gambier we called on one of the contacts we had been given. Unfortunately this young man's interest was cave diving and the only caves he knew of were the waterfilled sinks we had already visited. However, after a fruitless visit to the Glenelg River area on the S.A/Victorian Border we returned to Mt Gambier and managed to locate the Five Corners Cave which, with the owners permission, we entered at about 5 p.m. on Monday 12 Jan. The entrance to this cave is located in a doline beside which a cowyard has been constructed - the farmer uses the cave as a dump for all the refuse and muck from the yard. Entry is effected by climbing down over car bodies, farm implements, fencing wire and cow manure. Even in a large internal chamber with no obvious connection to the outside world a great pile of similar rubbish was encountered. The cave is very extensive with passages at various levels leading in places to exposures of the water table. Some interesting deposits of flaky calcite over fine sand were seen. The cave is interesting and has great

potential - it is said to have over 4 miles of passage - but we found that after three hours the desire for a shower became overwhelming and at 8 p.m. we emerged and headed for the nearest camping park. We have never before seen a cave so polluted.

Naracoorte. On the following day after a fruitless visit to Tantanoola in an effort to visit the Lake Cave we headed for Naracoorte where we were fortunate enough to meet Fred Aslin and his wife Janet in the CEGSA Research Centre at the Naracoorte Caves Reserve. Under Freds directions and guided by Bill Gamble - a young caver from Naracoorte we explored the following caves on Wednsday Jan 70.

Fox Cave. Situated several miles outside the Caves Reserve. This is a magnificient cave with some extensive passages and chambers. The decoration, although not extensive, is impressive with straws up to five and six feet long, as well as large helictites. In all we spent six hours in this cave and enjoyed it immensely.

Blackberry Cave. This is a small cave in the Reserve with about 600ft of passage in all with some good decoration. We were quite interested in the large deposits of lublinite on the walls and roof of the cave in some places. Our other activities in the area included several hours assisting Fred and Janet with their bone dig, watching the bats leave the Bat Cave at dusk and a guided tour (after hours) of the Big Cave - complete with guide and coloured lights.

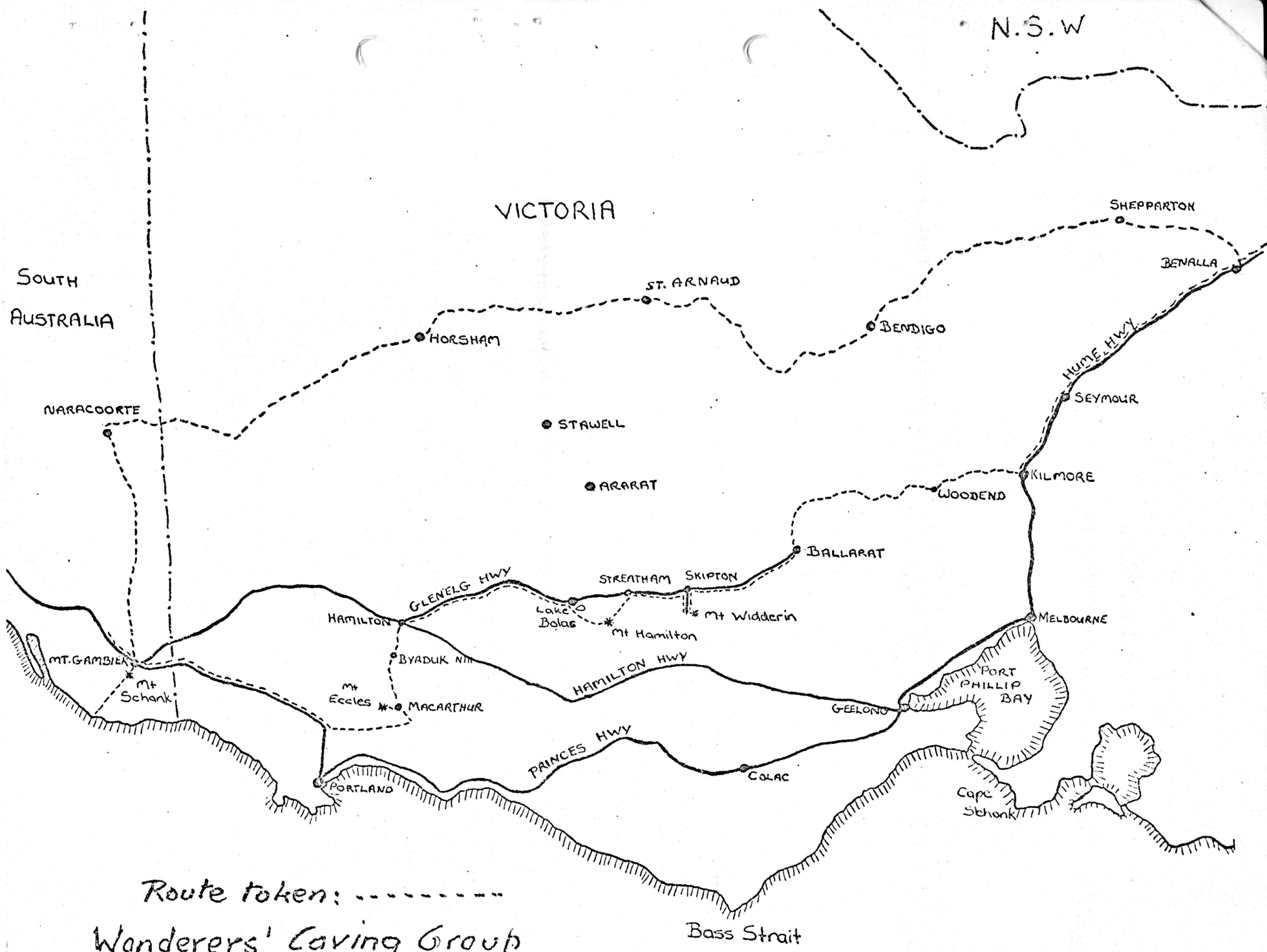
We finally left Naracoorte at about 12.30 on Thursday Jan - our caving trip was over.

Labertouche

Present: Noel Patrick, Frank Crome, Jeff Malley (Guest)

The Labertouche Cave is situated about 50 miles east of Melbourne. It is a most unusual cave, unlike anything we have encountered before. The system is formed in a pile of large granite boulders. No limestone is present. An active stream has washed the soil from around the boulders leaving passages in between. The party penetrated approximately 500 ft along the main stream passage but did not reach the end. Progress in the cave is made in the interstices in the conglomeration of rounded boulders resulting in a large choice of potential passages. Previous attempts by parties to mark routes through the cave have resulted in a bewildering array of arrows being painted on the rocks.

An interesting feature of the cave was the luminous fungus found growing in the remnants of soil between boulders. It glowed with a ghostly greeny blue light.



Route taken: .....

Wanderers' Caving Group

Expedition – 5-16 Jan 70.

TRIP REPORT

WEE JASPER - Australia Day weekend Jan 1979. 23-24-25-26 Jan 70.

Attendance 8 Visitors 2

As this trip fell on the eve of the ASF conference in Melbourne, a few of our members were unable to attend, so consequently, only three from Sydney were able to attend, the rest of the members were from the Canberra division. (Once again these people outnumbered the Sydneyites, and it is starting to become a regular habit). By 11.30 all but two of the party had arrived at the camping area below Punchbowl Hill and pitched camp. The next morning, the group moved slowly through the thousands ???? of other campsites on the way to the Jap's Hole. After three of the party had gone down to have a look and ascended with a little difficulty it was decided to go back to camp for a bite to eat before going into Punchbowl.

With all members finally present, we descended into the Punchbowl with the intention of looking for holes which hundreds of other speleos have overlooked. Edies Grotto, Jimmys Hole, Mudcrack and the Laundry Chute were among the areas closely looked at. Needless to say, we joined those hundreds who have tried before us.

On the Sunday, the party was split into two groups and we headed for the Dip Cave. While four members went into series 1 and 2, the rest of us went down the 65' pitch into No 4 series. While the group in 1 and 2 dug for bones, the others explored around 5, 5 extn and 3, 3 extn, then returned to the top just in time to meet the others emerging from the Rubbish Tip.

The last day was spent in the Signature Cave, once again collecting bones, and it was noticed that the air was very misty. On arrival at the surface it was decided to pull up camp as cloud was begining to gather once again and fearing another storm like the one on the previous night, we headed for home.

The trip was to be Noel Patrick's last for some time as he was due to report for National Service on 27 Jan 70. Best of luck, Noel.

K. Oliver

TRIP REPORT

WYANBENE - 7-8 Feb 70.

Present. Keith Oliver, Bill Patrick.

This trip was the first of what is hoped to be many combined trips with other clubs. The trip was led by Ken Keck of MSS and was attended by MSS(7), MBSC(5), HCG(2) and CEGSA(1). The aim of the trip was to study the origin of the air currents which are so evident at the Keyhole.

The cave was entered at 9 a.m. and after spending some time in the front (ex tourist) sections of the cave the party braved the water crawl and pressed on to the far end of Caesar's Hall taking air current measurements on the way. The results of these studies will be published later by MSS.

After a fruitless attempt to locate the entrance to the Gun Barrel the party left the cave at 7 p.m. - cold, wet and hungry - to be greeted by overcast skies and steady rain. This caused a fairly smart get away on the part of some members.

Congratulations must go to Ken Keck for his organization and leadership of this trip.

K. Oliver

BUNGONIA - 21-22 Feb 70

Present. Ev Crabb and family, Keith Oliver, Ken Keck, Norm Poulter, Tony Hele, Bill Patrick, Roy Grinham, Bess Patrick, Brian Patrick, Dave Eldridge, Wayne Evans, Paul Connally, Col Frost and Laurie Storey.

After setting up camp on Friday night a small party commenced operations by investigating B45 which is adjacent to our camp. This showed that access was possible behind a rock at the bottom of the shaft.

Saturday morning was spent on a survey of the limestone exposures surrounding B 54 and in further attempts to gain entry by digging at the bottom of B45. This was stopped by some minor collapse of rock which rendered entrance extremely hazardous.

In the meantime two of our younger members Wayne Crabb and Brian Patrick commenced digging in a silted up hole near the base of the doline. This dig looked and sounded so promising that the whole group perservered with it for the remainder of the weekend, reaching a depth of about 12 ft. With the hole still looking and sounding promising.

Other activities during the weekend included a trip to the upper level passages and the Crystal Palace in the Grill Cave, and some ladder practice from a tree for our prospective members followed by a descent of the first ladder pitch in B16 as a training exercise.

COOLEMAN PLAINS - (Easter 1970) - (26-30 Mar 70)

Present. Tripleader, Ev Crabb (plus family), Keith Oliver, Wayne Evans, Norm Poulter, Laurell Bennett, Tony Hele, Bill Patrick, Noel Patrick, Frank Crome.

Narrative. A typical drive to Cooleman with Keith Oliver getting bogged at Michelago, a diversion to see the Head Ranger at Yagby, then arrival at the Blue Waterhole to find nearly a dozen parties camped there. Friday was spent in getting there settling in a quick look through Right and Main Cooleman and generally poking around outside these two caves. Contact was made with Prof. J.N. Jennings leading to discussion on possible future diving in Glop Pot. On Saturday morning a party started walking upstream generally working over both sides of the gorge up to Murray Cave. Approximately two thirds of the obvious entrances were tried, the most significant one being on the northern side of the creek, directly opposite the junction of Cave Creek South Branch. There was no indication that this had been previously entered: exploration was limited by an upward squeeze and siltation at a lower level. Altogether the cave so far only amounts to about 50' passage.

After lunch the party visited the Murray Cave as far as the sump for familiarisation, then continued to go upstream along Cave Creek Northern Branch, past some swallets and gravel soak, diverging to a branch creek fed by Cliff Cave. Again for familiarisation this cave was visited to a point where water was contacted at the upstream end but no attempt was made at further exploration.

From Cliff Cave a direct route was taken to River Cave subject for a brief visit and the Creek Southern Branch swallet located to provide an overall sense of the drainage layout. Meanwhile two of the party had first investigated Right Cooleman Cave then undertaken an excavation in a wombat and tick infested hole high in the wall opposite Right Cooleman Cave.

On Sunday the entire party went downstream via Black Range and Barbers Caves, following the creek as closely as practicable, the general interest being the structure of the exposed limestone and possible variations in water flow rate. Unfortunately the return time came before we reached the Goodradigbee River. Immediately on return to camp two of the cars made an immediate start for home via Peppercorn Hill while the remainder engoyed an uneventful trip home the following day via Tantangara.

Observations and Discussions

Glop Pot. During discussion with Prof. Jennings it became apparent that there was a marked difference in recorded depth of Glop Pot between the diving trip of HCG and plumbing done by CSS. To clarify this it was proposed that there be a further joint trip between HCG and CSS after winter to again dive in Glop Pot to fully investigate the wall and bottom.

Upstream Gorge. Although none of the caves entered extended for very far in a few cases there was evidence of quite some vertical vadose and collapse development currently terminating in silt floor. However, it is thought that this development was coincident with the surface stream cutting still extent and any possible access to present stream passage between Murray Cave and Blue Waterhole would only be by the overflow insurgences at creek bed level. Although this would need substantiation immediately, following heavy rainfall. It is felt that the amount of surface run off remaining downstream of Main Cooleman Cave is minimal and it is logical to assume that overflow along the surface stream would join the main stream passage(s) with a common resurgence system.

Cave Creek Northern Branch. Although little work has been done in the Northern Branch in the past it has been suggested (Jennings) that the Blue Waterholes are a common resurgence to the whole of the Cooleman Plain and that the stream passage from South Branch via River Cave actually runs under the northern side of the gorge. Tenable though this theory is it may be of significance that the main section of Northern Branch falls through a much shallower gradient than South Branch and there is more evidence of surface ponding. Again, further to the north there is a very large swallet initially with shallow gradient but because of its height above Blue Waterhole and its location much closer to the downstream gorge could well have formed negotiable passage.

Cliff Cave Area. Obviously there is little possibility of access to the stream downstream of Cliff Cave as from the efflux the water runs only a short distance to a gravel soak. Upstream through the cave, however, there is possibility of original exploration, particularly near water level. This could well be the only possible access to passage anywhere between the swallet and resurgence of that particular creek.

River Cave. On the way to River Cave a pattern of dolines was noticed to the west but parallel to the River Cave - Murray Cave system. These appear to be longstanding except for two in which these had been relatively recent earth subsidence similar in structure to these over the Murray Cave extension. This is suggestive of a former or current cave system, parallel to River Cave but sufficiently displaced to suggest that it now bears no relationship to Cave Creek North Branch.

Downstream Area. Very little was actually done in this area particularly as the downstream area was visited after a particularly strenuous day and most of the time was spent in simply finding our way. However, it was generally felt that the flow rate of the creek could well bear investigation at several selected points between Blue Waterhole and the Goodradigbee River.

General. Once again we were victims of the major drawback of Cooleman Plain - sheer distance and unfamiliarity. It is suggested that when future trips are being planned that a rather narrower spectrum of interest be followed utilising as much as possible of the experience of those involved in the trip. If diving is intended then the work involved in simply moving equipment suggests that it may be necessary to negotiate a permit to cover rather more than 12 people.

The other point worth noticing is in regard to general campers in the area. No doubt our party was the only one holding a permit to cave in the area, but our movements were restricted by avoiding cave entrances so that their locations were not disclosed to those with rather limited sense of conservation.

E. Crabb

COLONG CAVES - 17-18-19 Apr 70

Present. Tripleader, K. Oliver, Laurell Bennett, Ev Crabb, Frank Crome, Bill Patrick, Brian Patrick.

The party assembled at Batsh Camp on the night of 17-18 Apr after successfully negotiating the rather hazardous final 20 miles. Because the Sydney party did not arrive until 2 a.m. and found the Canberra party comfortably bedded down it was decided to defer commencement of the walk in until early the following morning. After a reasonably early start the whole party reached the archway and had a quick lunch before entering the cave at 12.

As it was intended to camp in the cave, a base was established in the terrace area. Moving our gear in proved to be an education as few of us had ever attempted to cave with a loaded rucksack.

After camp had been established it was decided - because of the loss of sleep the previous night and the rather strenuous walk - to bed down before commencing our activities. The rest was most welcome and everyone managed a few hours sleep during the afternoon.

At about 5 p.m., after a quick snack the party kitted up and started for Woofs Cavern. Maps of the remote southern section of the cave show a large chamber with a muddy rocky floor which some reports claim to be the real Woofs Cavern but in actual fact both of these caverns are connected by about four passages and holes so it can be safely stated that both are, in fact, parts of the one cavern.

On reaching the larger of the two caverns a search for other passages was commenced. No significant finds were recorded as we were forced to make a hurried return to our campsite because of the fading of some lamps. After a meal the party settled down at about 1.30 a.m. to sleep. We were awakened at 0830 a.m. by a group of cavers (?) - about seven all told, with 2 or 3 torches and in a couple of cases, no footwear.

At 10.30 a.m. we left the Terraces with all our gear and on leaving the cave decided to return to Batsh Camp by way of Carbide Spur (never again). After an arduous climb we reached our cars at about 3.30 p.m.

(K. Oliver)

CLIEFDEN - 13-14-15 Jun 70.

Present. Tripleader, N. Poulter, L. Bennett, E. Crabb, K. Fitzsimmons, R. Miller, K. Oliver, W. Patrick, B. Patrick, R. Grinham, W. Evans, K. Ward and L. McGuire, Brian Patrick, Chris Sullivan, N. Patrick.

Objective. To use RDF gear, and to complete the mapping of the Warremba Cave. This trip turned out to be the biggest club trip for ten months with 15 members attending. Cars began arriving between 10 p.m. and 3 a.m. with three arriving at Cliefden via Cowra and the remaining four vehicles coming via Bathurst.

As the RDF gear was found to be out of order, due to a faulty condenser, and the mapping gear was genuinly left behind, general exploration became the objective, with parties going to, Yarrowigah, Big Cliefden, Boonderoo, Island, Transmission, Warremba, and Lock caves, with a couple of our members helping OSS members extend the Warragul dig. About 40' of passage was added to Yarrowigah cave, by the party led by Bob Douglas (OSS). Once again, the Big Cliefden party had difficulty in finding their way out of the lower entrance.

It was found that with such a large group of people on a trip and so many parties out at once, that an E.T.A. back at camp should be given, as the parties back at camp will, after a reasonable length of time, begin to wonder if something has happened. As a result, no matter how large a party may be, it is important to leave some idea of what time the party can be expected back, and the location of cave to be visited.

K. Oliver