

SYDNEY UNIVERSITY SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

# ***CALCITE***

## ***26***



SEPTEMBER 1978

The newsletter of the  
Highland Caving Group  
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EDITORIAL

Steven Bunton is away in New Guinea on the Atea expedition, so I have taken over his job for this issue only.

This issue is the second of the revived "Calcite". It represents a further two months in the life of the club with four trip reports - an average of one trip a fortnight. In addition, during the last two months members of the club have been on trips with other clubs and Peter Dykes and others have been on a four-wheel-drive trip to Cape York. This level of activity is, I feel, the minimum acceptable in HCG.

Conservation rears its ugly head with the apparent loss of a caving area in the Mudgee area - "Buckaroo" - to quarrying. Unfortunately we were unable to object to this and it would appear that quarrying in the area is acceptable to all but the most "rabid" conservationist.

Communication has always been a problem in HCG. Members live far apart and consequently find it difficult to attend General Meetings. To try to overcome this break-down in communications, I, wearing my hat as Secretary, will be writing a piece called "Briefings". The first of these appears in this issue.

In conclusion I hope this "Calcite 26" lives up to the traditions of yesteryear, and serves as a pointer to Calcites of the future.

- Rik Tunney

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They Also Served

Evalt Crabb, Chris Dunne, Peter Dykes, Rik Tunney

Report to the N.S.W. Speleological Council on  
Scout Caving

- P. Dykes

Introduction

The Scout Association includes the largest percentage of the caving public and therefore should have some communication with this Council at the least and A.S.F. at the best. A situation arises that A.S.F. finds it difficult to reach out to all the cavers of Australia and preach its doctrine. Scout Area Caving Teams have already accepted the A.S.F. doctrine and are capable of reaching out to all scout cavers. This is something that A.S.F. and this Council must view as beneficial.

Scout Association of Australia - N.S.W. Branch

Various submissions have been made to the N.S.W. branch regarding administration of scout caving, resulting in publication of a Branch Policy. In this, caving is to be controlled at an Area level, each Area having responsibility for setting up its own Caving Committee and Caving Team. This indicates that any relationship between the Council and scouts should occur at an Area level, with all scout Areas being individually represented.

The Role of an Area Caving Team

Area Caving Teams have developed in five Areas, namely:

- St. George
- Central West Metropolitan
- East Metropolitan
- North Metropolitan
- Newcastle and Hunter

Their role is to provide caving expertise in the fields of leadership, safety and conservation to scout groups in their areas. They do so as semi-autonomous constituted groups,



under the authority of their respective Area Commissioners. All of the teams have accepted as standards of conduct the A.S.F. code of ethics, safety and conservation and most have some members who are members of a speleological society. In addition, some of these teams have a status with this Council and A.S.F.

#### Proposal for Scout Representation on the N.S.W. Speleological Council

##### (A) Scout Association - N.S.W. Branch

A formal offer from the N.S.W. Speleological Council should be extended to the N.S.W. Branch to be represented at the Council.

##### (B) Area Caving Teams

A formal offer from the Council should be extended to all Area Caving Teams to be represented at the Council. Membership should be granted on the following conditions:

A letter from the Team's Area Commissioner being enclosed in its application. This letter should state that the Team is recognised and that its application for membership is approved.

The Team should submit with its application a copy of its constitution and by-laws and these should adhere to the Council policy on "Criteria for Recognition of a Caving Group as an Area Caving Team".

The Council should, as a general rule, refuse all other scouting groups status on the Council and instead refer them to their appropriate Team or Area Commissioner.

Representation should take the form of associate status on the Council. The representatives should be allowed to speak on all matters as well as place items on the agenda.

#### Criteria for Recognition of a Caving Group as a Scout Area Caving Team.

Only one Team will be recognised for each scout Area and

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that team must be recognised and approved by its Area Commissioner.

As a minimum a Team should be adhering to the "Standards of Competence of Scout Caving Activities" as laid down by the N.S.W. Branch.

Every Team should have as part of its constitution the A.S.F. Codes of Ethics, Safety and Conservation.

A Team should have as its aim the improvement of scout caving to an acceptable level. It should be promoting safety and conservation and should be endeavouring to ensure that its message reaches the scouts in its area.

#### Recommendations.

That the proposals concerning scout representation on the Council be endorsed.

That the criteria for recognition of a caving group as a scout Area Caving Team be endorsed.

That the Scout Caving Committee be made a Standing Committee of the Council and that its duties be:

To liaise between the Council and the Scout Association on matters concerning caving and caving policy.

To encourage Teams to seek representation on the Council.

To formulate and present for approval Council policy on matters of scout caving.

#### Conclusion

This report mainly deals with distinguishing a caving group as a scout Area Caving Team for the purposes of its representation on the Council and the type of representation scouting should have. It does not attempt to answer the

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broader question of what course scout caving should take.

Questions such as to which areas scouts should go caving, is scout caving safe, conservation minded and ethical pose enormous problems which can only be dealt with seperately. These are important issues and should be regarded as priority functions of the Scout Caving Committee.

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Trip Report

BUNGONIA

15-16 July 1978

Members present: G & J Hopkins, B Cleaver, R Tunney, C Dunne  
J Mares, P Mulligan, S Jamsek, D. Turvey

B54 Excavation

As no digging had been done for about a year it was expected that there would be a bit of infill. Much to our surprise there was about half a meter of it, due to some of the soil on one side of the shaft collapsing. The dig being some 10m deep now, we decided that a pulley method would be the best for removing the earth. This was done by using a single pulley attached to an 'A' frame, which was suspended over the shaft and held up by a rope tied to a tree.

Removal of earth was at a furious pace with the new method. On Saturday. Partly due to the fact that our human steam shovel (Brian) was filling the buckets with one other person at the bottom quicker than they could be hauled out. On Sunday we slowed to a more normal pace with more normal people filling the bucket as Brian had to go home on Saturday afternoon.

At the conclusion of digging on Sunday afternoon we had lowered the level another 2m to a total depth of 12m. My thanks go to all who gave assistance and I look forward to seeing you when the next digging trip to B54 is on.

-G Hopkins

Briefing

1. Graeme Smith's article on Phoenix Cave (Calcite 25;3) was sent to the Scout Association and they reprinted it for us in the September issue of "Scouting in N.S.W.". Hopefully this will dissuade scouts from entering the cave (unless they go in in flocks to see what its all about).
2. On Wed 26JUL members of the club attended a meeting of the Kanangra-Boyd Branch of the Neighbours of National Parks Association in Oberon RSL Club. As a result of this we sent them a copy of a specimen constitution (as produced by the Attorney-General's Department).
3. HCG now has an entry in the White and Yellow Pages. Unfortunately Telecom spelt 'Caving' as 'Coving'. To make up for this they are going to give us a boldface entry next year.
4. The NSW Federation of Bushwalking Clubs has sent us a wilderness useage survey. Wilderness areas which contain caves are:

Bimberi	Cooleman Plains
Deua	Bendethera
	Wyanbene?
Kanangra	Church Creek
	Billys Creek
	Lannigans Creek
5. The Club is investigating registering members with the N.S.W. Sports' Insurance Scheme. It appears that the N.S.W. Speleo Council will have to register as the state body and that it will cost about \$2 per head.
6. Jerry Hopkins is in the process of computerising our address list. This will make posting of Calcite much easier.
7. It has been decided to hold General Meetings bi-monthly. Calcite will be posted on the Monday preceeding the meeting.

8. The HCG entry in Down Under All Over in the latest issue of ASF Newsletter was written by me and not by Graeme Smith. (Apparently he does not agree with what was written.)

9. Details of Wacon costs are now available. These can be obtained from Evalt, but in summary -

Registration	\$12
Accommodation	\$15 per day
Proceedings	\$10
Dinner	\$12

10. HCG now have for sale at 40c each "Highland Caving Group" nametapes, in a style similar to scout group nametapes. The colour is gold on black. They are obtainable at meetings or from Rik.

11. A mining lease application has been made over Buckaroo Caves near Mudgee. A trip was made to see if there was any case to be made against the mining. There is a report on this elsewhere in this issue.

12. Barry Gibitt, who has recently taken over as manager of the Scout Shop at Wollongong, is selling foil pouches of food. These keep indefinitely without refrigeration and need only be immersed in boiling water to be heated. They are quite tasty and should be acceptable for caving trips.

13. NPWS are building an animal pound on the Kanangra Walls Road near Boyd Crossing (GR 041096 "Kanangra").

- Rik Tunney

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Trip Report

BUNGONIA

12-13 August 1978

Members present: Evalt Crabb, Bob Miller

This was to be a "talking to trees" weekend - unfortunately the talking time was reduced by getting lost between Cobbity and

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Bargo. And only twenty minutes at Cogno's!

A perusal of the infamous "Bungonia Book" indicated that there are 18 ferns and 1 moss to be found in the area, and being disbelievers, we started to check this out. After half a day, we had identified at least 7 mosses, including broad areas of sphagnum. Time ran out for methodical checking of ferns, but the genus Cyathea was recognised, not yet sufficiently mature to identify the species. Another rare species was located near the entrance to Phoenix Cave.

Much fresh cow manure was found in the Caves Reserve area.

- Evalt Crabb

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Trip Report

BUNGONIA

26-27 August 1978

Members present: Evalt, Joan, Delia and Neil Crabb, Bob Miller, Fay ?.

We were at Bungonia by Saturday night, refreshing ourselves against the howling wind. Sunday was fine, so some mosses and ferns were revisited, confirming our earlier observations. A new (to us) fern ally was found - possibly of the Lycopodium group.

No caves were visited, no new caves were found this time, but a more comfortable campsite was located. Maybe next time we will seriously attempt an ACCURATE listing of ferns, fern allies and mosses. Maybe. Bob showed interest in a listing of cultivars and exotics in the reserve.

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Trip Report

MUDGE

2nd September 1978

Members present: Evalt and Neil Crabb, Chris Dunne, Rik Tunney

Earlier in the week Rik and Ev had seen in the press a notice of application to mine, covering four portions on the NE flank of Mt Buckaroo just NE of Mudgee. These four portions were among

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five quoted in "Carne & Jones" as containing limestone outcrops, hence our interest. However the application was lodged with the Mining Warden's office at Dubbo and due to the Telecom strike we were unable to ascertain the precise nature of the minerals etc. to be mined.

Added to this cursory interest in this outcrop we also had a study done in 1964 by Blayne Percy covering this outcrop. In it he had drawn attention to such topics as water tables and palaeontological finds.

We therefore organised a one-day trip to Mudgee to see what exactly we were dealing with. We made a quick trip up late on Friday night and camped at about 2am by the roadside down a side-road about 8Km short of town.

Incredibly we managed to get up at 7am, skip through a cold breakfast and drive through town and out to the area of concern, via the road past "The Ranch" round to the north side of Mt. Buckaroo, by 8am. Here we found a homestead and behind it the pottery clay quarry marked on the "Mudgee" 1:100000 topographic map. A couple of hundred metres south is the old limestone quarry mentioned in Blayne's study. In this vicinity are a number of short (20m) caves.

Without actually approaching either quarries we decided that in view of the relative remoteness of this vicinity from the Mudgee vineyards (some 3Km direct), the fairly gentle relief of the outcrop and the possibility that the application might be for further clay, rather than limestone, quarrying, mining here would only marginally affect the surrounding area and it would be petty of us to try to make a case against granting of the lease on these grounds alone - the outcrop just doesn't warrant it.

However there is still the possibility of palaeontological significance and, though the outcrop is only small, it may warrant preservation or at least closer study.



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Having decided on this we headed back into town, where ~~Ev~~ hoped to visit Lance Tubnor, a one-time quarry operator who had once worked the old Buckaroo quarry. HCG had met Lance in 1963 on our first trip to Mudgee and on many subsequent trips; Ev felt that Lance might be aware of what the current application was about. However, on consulting the phone book to find his address we found only his wife's name entered and assuming Lance had died we decided not to approach her. We also decided that we had already made a good enough appraisal of the matter.

We therefore adjourned to the secondary purpose of the trip ie. wine tasting. We went out to Mudgee Wines intending to visit another one or two vineyards later. However Rik had to leave for Bathurst at mid-day and we got carried away tasting the beautiful wines, and discussing the matter of the quarrying with the Winemaker, Jenny Meek and her father. Many of the vineyards are on the floodplain of the Gudgegong River and its tributaries; this is 15 - 30m of alluvium overlying limestone. Limestone acts as an aquifer, continually feeding the water table, which would otherwise rely on surface run-off. This run-off is very seasonal around Mudgee and quite possibly, if it weren't for the limestone, the water table might fluctuate significantly, to the detriment of the vines. However the Gudgegong River and some of its tributaries in this area are perennial streams which would of course feed the water table and make the effect of any limestone aquifer only marginal.

Laden with four cartons of wine, we left Mudgee, having decided to lodge an objection to the Mining Application on palaeontological grounds only, in the hope that an Environmental Impact Study might be made before any lease was granted. Unfortunately we were unable to lodge our objection within the statutory period and we can presume that the Mining Lease will be granted.

- Chris Dunne



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TRIP LIST

September

16-17 Jaunter Peter Dykes 5248723

17 General Meeting 7.30pm  
Guide Hall Memorial Ave, Liverpool

23 NSW Speleo Council Meeting  
Venue to be advised.

30-20oct Cooleman Plains Rik Tunney 9821947  
Caving in the snow

October

14-15 Tuglow Rik Tunney 9821947

28-29 Mudgee Evalt Crabb 6072142  
(The Earth's birthday party (born Sunday  
23 October 4004BC at 9am ) will be held on  
the Saturday night)

November

11-12 Jaunter Peter Dykes 5248723

18-19 Tuglow Rik Tunney 9821947

19 Annual General Meeting 7.30  
Peter Dykes will give an illustrated talk on  
his recent trip to Cape York.

December

2-3 Tuglow Rik Tunney 9821947

2 NSW Speleo Council Meeting

16-17 Tuglow Rik Tunney 9821947

17 HCG Xmas Party

23 Leave for Perth

January

1-5 WACCON Perth