

SUSS BULL 39(1)

Extreme Danger Edition*

New and Improved!!!*****



In This Issue:

Chris Norton Tales of Epic Obscurity

Morris Tells about Ice Mammoths

Thunder and Lightning attack Davis

Staraj Rambles on about Jenolan

Nothing from Matthew Ridley!

* I made this bit up!

** Note – all improvements limited to the bare minimum.

*** How can something be both New and Improved ? If it is New, then what was there to improve it from?

Introduction to SUSS BULL 39(1)

Welcome to SUSS Bull 39(1). I received many varied articles, many at the latest moment, and so unfortunately some were omitted for this bull, but will appear later on. The stories found in this bull are quite interesting and informative, so without further ado, here is where you will find them.

<i>Introduction to SUSS BULL 39(1)</i>	<i>Inside Front Cover</i>
<i>Editor – Reign of the Tyrant.</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>President's Report:</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Gossip and other News.</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Jenolan – Attack of the Woolly Rhinoceros (5-6/6/99)</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Brittle Bazaar Cordelette Route</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>Night of the Wombat</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>Thunder, Lightning, Rain, Caves and Gold Mines.</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>Splash Down!</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>Son of Obscure Karst</i>	<i>19</i>
<i>Henry Fairlie-Cunninghame (1930 – 1999)</i>	<i>27</i>
<i>SUSS Committee 1999/2000</i>	<i>Inside Back Cover</i>
<i>SUSS TRIP LIST: August 1999</i>	<i>Outside Back Cover</i>



Ian Cooper and Shannon Crack Are Eco-terrorising in Imperial Cave, Jenolan.

Editor – Reign of the Tyrant.

By Gregory Holmes.

You asked for it, now it is here. Don Matthews, after a promising start delivered three excellent action packed bulls for your Speleological reading pleasure, and I promise to deliver the same, plus a fourth! NB: Don also promised that he would get his last BULL published eventually. This bulletin continues in classic club tradition with a wonderful Norton epic, a delightful Staraj adventure, a veritably icy report from Verity, and dashing road journey with Davis. Having read these stories already, I can say you are in for a treat, and hope that you all enjoy BULL 39(1).

However, if you aren't interested in these articles, there are important parts of the bull for all, with the Triplist kept on the back cover, the contact details of the NEW



committee, and the all-important club gossip section.

Also I made some effort to make this Bull graphically pleasing, and collected photos from various sources, most notably Alan Pryke, for your viewing. I would like to get photos from other sources and anyone who has stashed a load of pretty pictures away, should dig them up and arrange for someone to scan them for you (I can do this if you like).

This Bull contains mainly articles written by well established club members, and though I find them great reading, I would also like to see writings from less prolific authors to diversify the perspectives into Speleology which are presented here.

Articles need not be long, or necessarily full of humour. In fact short serious articles are most welcome to me, and have a very high probability of getting published.

All submissions should be sent to me either via email (holmes@wolf.net.au),

Snail mail:

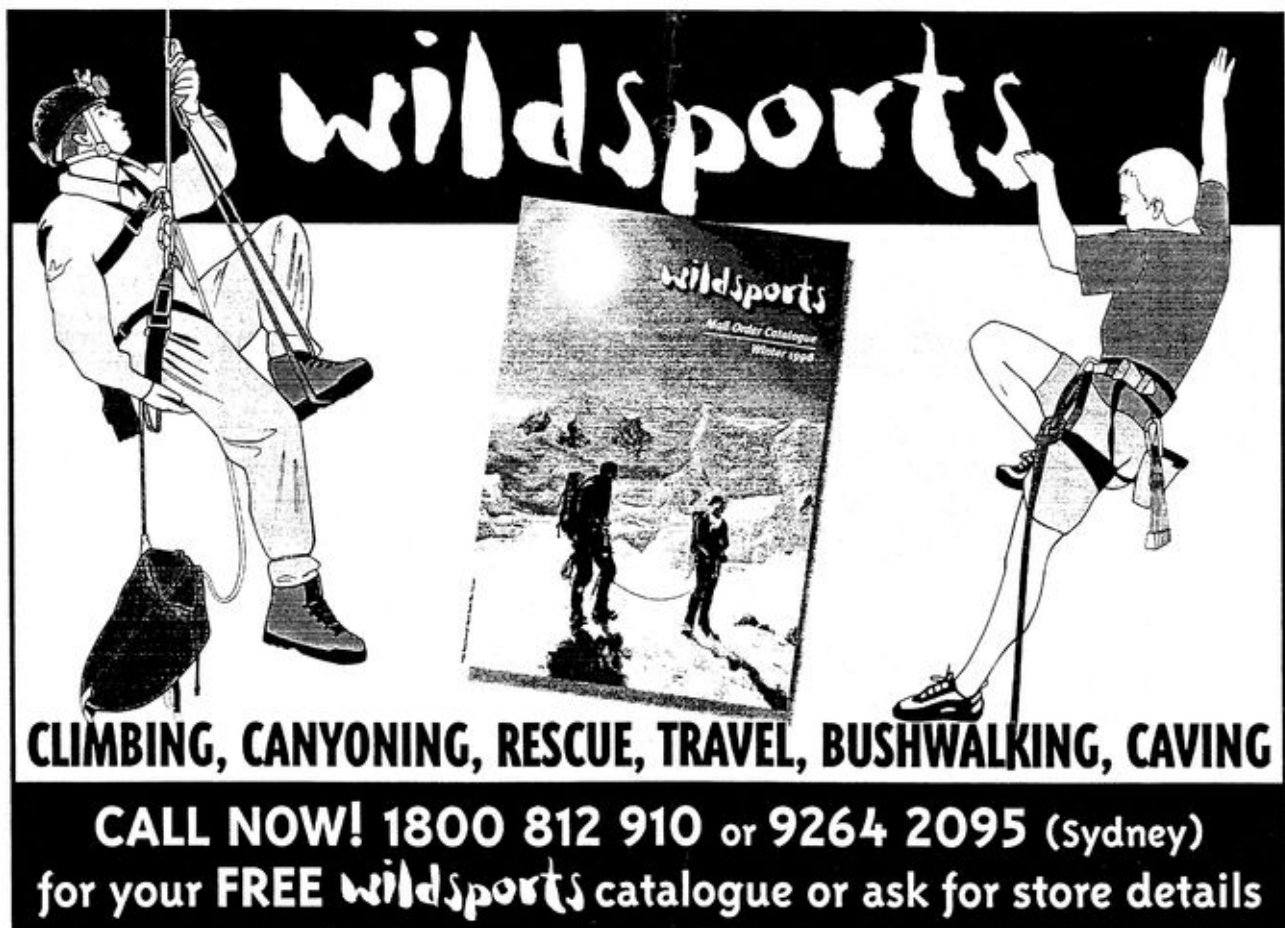
Greg Holmes
121 St John's Rd Bradbury
NSW 2560

Or in person, as I am on many of the trips the club runs, and sometimes even attend General Meetings.

Any feedback on the structure of the BULL is also welcome.

Again I would like to thank all contributors for this BULL, and thank those who have already volunteered to write in the next one (You know who you are).

Enjoy.



The advertisement is a black and white graphic. At the top, the word "wildsports" is written in a large, stylized, lowercase font. Below the text, there are two line drawings of people climbing. On the left, a person is shown in a full-body climbing harness, holding a rope. On the right, another person is shown in a similar harness, also holding a rope. In the center, there is a small image of a "wildsports" catalogue cover, which shows two people in a mountainous landscape. Below the illustrations, the text "CLIMBING, CANYONING, RESCUE, TRAVEL, BUSHWALKING, CAVING" is written in a bold, sans-serif font. At the bottom, the text "CALL NOW! 1800 812 910 or 9264 2095 (Sydney)" is written in a bold, sans-serif font, followed by "for your FREE wildsports catalogue or ask for store details".

wildsports

CLIMBING, CANYONING, RESCUE, TRAVEL, BUSHWALKING, CAVING

CALL NOW! 1800 812 910 or 9264 2095 (Sydney)
for your **FREE wildsports** catalogue or ask for store details

President's Report:

Greetings from the President

Hello Hello Hello Hello Hello Hello Hello Hello Hello Hello Hello

Hello Hello Hello Hello Hello Hello Hello and **hello** to all

of you! That's the constant greeting that you get from the very friendly people of Java, Indonesia. Recently I was fortunate to be part of a caving expedition to Java along with Phil Maynard. We got to explore uncharted caves and go zooming along rivers of gour pools with spectacular waterfalls to abseil. My favourite two days of the trip was negotiating a very wet pitch of unknown dimensions, having to sort out suitable rebelay points on the way down and then descending to find the river continuing down a passage. Exhilarating stuff. Then, to top it all off, the next day was spent in shopping heaven! We set out to purchase gemstones and it ended up being a very successful venture.

I hope that the year brings to you days of sheer caving pleasure, with a spot of shopping thrown in of course. Great things are happening at Jenolan, one being the surveying of Wiburds. Currently the cave is 3945m in length and 60m deep. If all the potential connections and extensions join then Wiburds will be more than 6000m long! This project has certainly required a massive team effort to survey. Another huge effort is the surveying of Mammoth Cave, which involves SSS and SUSS and will probably take 10 years. There are many other caving destinations to enjoy, choose from the many on offer from the triplist.

I hope to see you underground,

Carol Layton

Gossip and other News.

Canyoning Disaster in Switzerland.

Tragically, in late July, 99, a group of Australian and New Zealand tourists in Switzerland came unstuck in a canyoning trip. Whilst inexperience and commercialism may be to blame, don't let us all forget that all outdoor activities, including caving and canyoning involve an element of risk, that being the power of nature. No matter how physically tough and skilled one may be, nature always has the ability to overcome, and we must choose when it is wise to go against nature, and when it is not.

DM

Congrats Annalisa and Steve.

Not so tragically, the club is fortunate enough to have two members willing to take the final plunge and get married. Well done Steve and Annalisa, I hope you have a wonderful time.

GH

Congrats Matthew & Vanessa

Did I say two members. Well, I hear that there is another pair just committing to take the same step in the not

GH

Goodbye Racheline, Goodbye Heidi, Goodbye Matthew, Goodbye Annalisa & Steve.

Strangely, despite us being a friendly and active club, many of our members have found reason to disappear off to the far corners of the globe. I hope they all have the courtesy of sending us updates of their travels, and we look forwards to their healthy return.

GH

Congrats to everyone else for staying in the country and not getting Married/Engaged/Working too hard.

Finally something must be said for all the sensible people who aren't getting married and/or leaving the country. At least there are some people remaining in the country to read this bulletin...

GH

Your Gossip Could Also Appear Here!

Yes! That's right, any of you could write to me with a little bit of something that is going on related to the club (this can be as sketchy a relation as you like) and it could appear here, with your initials after it.

GH

MATTHEW RIDLEY'S Days are numbered!

In a recent conversation, Shannon Crack revealed that Matthew Ridley suffered an extreme embarrassment on a not-so recent SUSS trip. Well Matthew the challenge is up, submit a report on the trip or someone will write one for you!!!

SC

Late News !!! Evil Twin of Matthew Hole Discovered ?

Message received from Chris Norton:

Extract from minutes of last Southern Tas Caverneers meeting:

>Funds received:

>

>Subscription for membership: Russell Fulton, \$45

>Jaimie Allison to become a Full Member: \$20

>Matthew Holl - prospective member - \$15

The country isn't big enough for two...

Cheers,
Chris

CN

Jenolan – Attack of the Woolly Rhinoceros (5-6/6/99)

By Verity Morris.

Participants: Mark Staraj, Ian Cooper, Steve Hirst, Chris Norton (leader), Vanessa Luxton, Verity Morris, Max Midlen, Robert Fairlie-Cunninghame, Phil Maynard, Paul Maynard, Simon Goddard.

Saturday:

Steve Mark Verity Simon and Max headed off to Wyburds J202, together with Vanessa who was set to roam the valley alone.

Max had a promising lead from a previous trip so we all dug for about an hour. However, Simon and Max were the only two able to see anything more than the feet of the person in front them, and energy for the dig dwindled quickly. After only an hour Verity, Mark and Steve decided it was a prime time for quick rest stop. Yeah right! None of us went back to the dig for two hours, leaving Max and Simon to face the dirt alone.

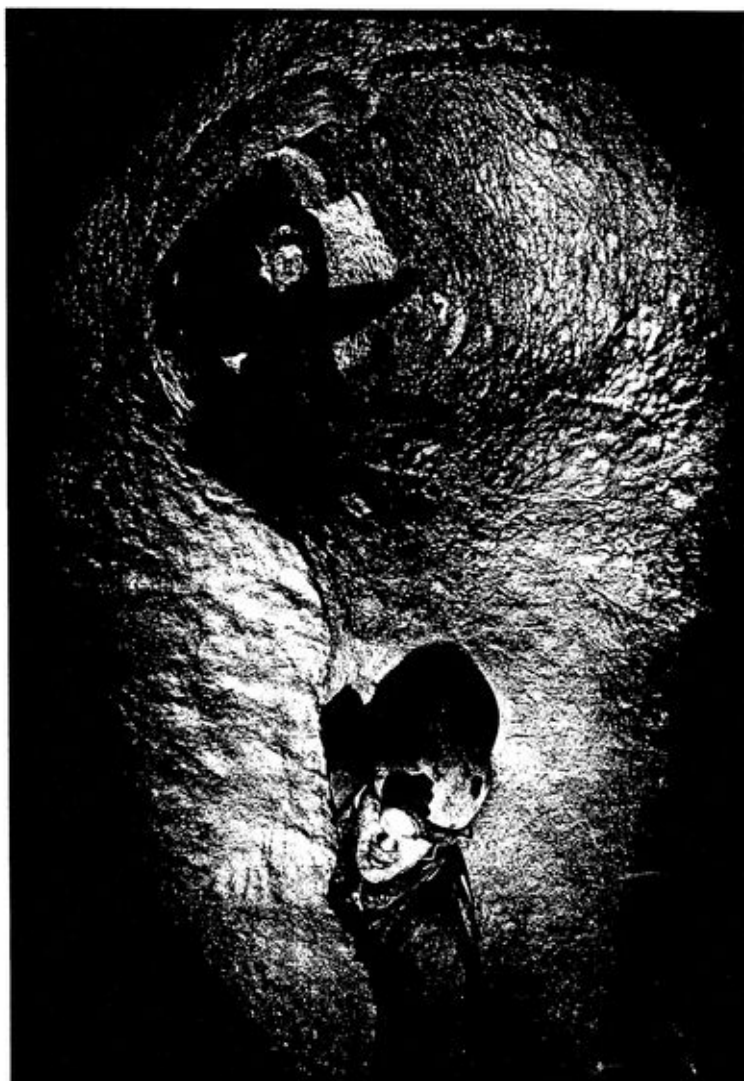
Steve set off to explore Blowing Hole a little, whilst Verity and Mark rested comfortably on the grass and talked incessantly. Vanessa, encountering the two layabouts on her return from the valley, joined in the many and varied topics of conversation. After two hours of such idle chitchat, Mark and Verity decided they had, perhaps, to re-join the digging troops. Luckily they were spared such effort by the return of Max and Simon, who had broken into another small chamber and squeeze. Weary but happy, they filled us in on their progress: the lead still looks promising with a big draft breezing out. It may connect to J56, although no connection is yet apparent with Wybirds Lake Cave.

MEANWHILE Chris, Paul, Phil, Ian and Rob made their way to Brittle Bizarre (BB)

To enter BB one must ascend a sizeable pitch. Phil and Chris rigged a cordelette for the entrance pitch, to replace a SUSS rope. 15m up the pitch, two 8mm bolts secure a galvanized chain with a mallion for the cord to run through. There is a significant rub point and the first person up the rope must rig a redirection through the tape located 11m up the pitch. At the chain there is a cross over to a permanently rigged 11mm rope that ascends the last 4m into BB. Brittle Bizarre is one of the better-decorated sections of Mammoth, with flowstone, stalactites, stalagmites and some large helictites. [SEE NEXT ARTICLE FOR MORE ABOUT BRITTLE BAZAAR]

Sunday:

Verity, Mark, Max and Rob went to continue the dig in Ice Age. On the way in through Primeval Fear, Max got himself wedged by his battery belt. Being his first time through, he was unaware just how committing the squeeze is. No worries, Mark pulled him through and all was well. Until exit time!



We spent about 2.5-3 hours digging and de-swamping the sump at the dig face. Not a lot of progress was made, but Max gave several suggestions on how to streamline the efficiency of the dig. NEXT time we will be a lean, mean, digging team! It also looks quite likely that the water is (OK, could be) a perched sump, and not the lower river as many pessimists would have us believe. Sheeeesh, where is the solidarity in this club, I ask you!

On our return, Primeval Fear had become slightly smaller again. It is a characteristic of this squeeze that each time someone goes through, they pull in some more loose cobbles. Given the small dimensions to begin with, every extra pebble has a marked effect. Consequently each of Max, Verity and Mark became jammed to varying degrees

(only Rob slid through relatively unencumbered - lithe little bugger!). Mark was particularly uncomfortable for a short period, inching himself through bit-by-bit until he could extricate himself from the lecherous hole.

On the final leg of the journey Max decided to climb the 40ft (more like 20ft I suspect). Verity arrived to see him just disappearing over the top and couldn't help herself but follow up behind, closely tailed by Rob; we avoided the rock pile - yippee - and earmarked our new 'regular' exit from Mammoth. Much more civilized than clambering through the rock pile! Mark felt too worn out from his Primeval Fear escapade and decided he wouldn't attempt the 40ft today (although he has since become a convert, I believe). We all met up again at Mammoth entrance and tromped back on to camp.

ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WORLD Ian Phil and Paul all went to Wybirds. On their way Phil checked out J202 and was suitably impressed by both the dig and the gale that was blowing out. Next they went to Yawning Gulches where they corrected a major survey error, before heading onto upper Yawning Gulches, 22

Passage and Lake Chamber. In Lake Chamber they examined the stream sink - a bit of work to do there. Finally the group connected J319 to J220 by survey, and proceeded back to camp.

Steve Simon Chris and Vanessa toured Middle Bit of Mammoth and followed Central River upstream. Central River wasn't flowing, nor was it sumped at the first sump, so they were able to enter railway tunnel extension. They walked a considerable distance up Railway Tunnel extension (Central River) until reaching the second sump, which was full. This is as far as people had gone in the big 1994 drought! Simon and Steve who hadn't seen the extension before were greatly impressed by the whole section and a good day was had by all!

MONDAY:

Verity, Mark and Ian stayed on for an extra night. Ian's Holden was playing up a bit - well, it wouldn't start. As it turned out it was only petrol, but by the time we had all decided what to do with our day and Ian had secured enough petrol to get the car going, it was 12 noon. Ian wanted to be on the road by 4pm, it was a beautiful day, our cave suits were all wet and muddy, we are bunch of wussesso we went walking in the Gross Valley; Govetts Leap down to the Bridal Veil Falls. 'Twas a lovely walk, the birds did sing, the sun did shine and all was well in the world. We finally headed off for the City of Sin around 5pm, leaving the beautiful Blue Mountains behind us once again.

Brittle Bazaar Cordelette Route

By Chris Norton

On 5 July 1999, a cordelette route was installed into Brittle Bazaar in Mammoth Cave, Jenolan, above Can't Get Lost.

Brittle Bazaar was first entered in November 1974 by Joe Friend, then one of Australia's top rock climbers, after a difficult climb up an aven. Following exploration, the rigging was removed, and this part of the cave is believed to have remained unvisited for almost 25 years until December 1998, when the tight and muddy Neverpass was climbed to rig a new rope into Brittle Bazaar. The purpose of the cordelette is to give all cavers the opportunity to visit this portion of the cave, which is one of the highest known parts of Mammoth and contains some of the cave's few pristine speleothems.

Notes

The pitch is rigged in two stages - a cordelette portion, and a fixed 11m line. The cordelette portion of the pitch is approx 14m high, and is rigged from two bolts, with a chain between them and a widemouthed oval maillon through which the cord passes. As with standard cordelette technique, a broad knot will jam in the maillon; alternatively, a doubled rope anchored at the bottom of the pitch or a running krab may be used. The fixed rope runs up a steep flowstone slope from the top of the cordelette to the pitchhead. The first person ascending on each journey should check the fixed rope extensively for wear before others ascend on it.

The cordelette portion *does not hang free* from the top rigging point. The first person up the cordelette rope should ascend with great care, and rig a redirection from the jughandle on the rear wall. A tape is already in place; it is merely necessary to place a karabiner in the tape and clip the rope in to protect during subsequent ascents.

If the cordelette route is treated with care, it should provide many years of access. Please bear your fellow cavers in mind and treat it gently.

Night of the Wombat

By Mark Staraj

Participants: Mark Staraj, David Jackson.

Date: February 14 1998.

Today was it. Last day for mopping up the remnants of the Spider Survey. It had to be – the map had to be drafted for display 2 months later at the SUSS 50th Anniversary weekend. Had to and want to have little to do with each other. Nonetheless I dutifully prepared the pack for a 10-or-whatever-it-takes hours trip to finish up those fiddly bits. A look at David's face and I could see the shared enthusiasm. Nothing for it but to start.

First target was to the Bus Stop Rockpile – visited by myself the previous year, May 31 1997:

“Finally I followed the others and took my time, having a peek at the accessible parts of Helictite Chamber (Upper), and some exploration in the Rockpile. Solo exploring in rockpiles should be done with utmost caution! After a few interesting moments with loose and large rocks I managed to reach a point 10-15m up where the options closed down. Intriguingly the sediments caught on the rocks were graded in level so that those at the very top were covered in sand. It seems to me that a section of stream passage is somewhere nearby, but up high.” This was going to take some time. Dave made sure of this when he found a rift I hadn't noticed. This led up a good 8m or so to a constricted and difficult to enter passage. The dust motes indicated air moved upwards in this area. A fragile bone was also found lodged up high. Some 20m higher again is Frenchmans Cave. No connection today but after 4hrs at last this awkward section was complete.

Time to move on. No sooner acknowledged when David abandons me with the pack in a frantic dash for relief. Too much time spent doubled up over survey stations takes its toll. Reunited we struck out for the Colosseum. High up in this chamber is an old and blocked streamway dubbed the Aquaduct, that joins into it from the blank area on the map to the east. It can only be

negotiated for about 8m and was soon tied into the survey station at the bottom of the chamber. Next we picked up the partially complete survey of complex passages lying sandwiched between the Viaduct and Appian Way. This complex area completed another 3 hrs.

Well finally that was it – time to head out. The lackadaisical start to the day ensured a late finish and so it was we emerged from the cave at 10:30 pm to a still night and starry sky. We felt relaxed and contented – we had got it all done. The survey was complete. Enjoying the balmy night we sauntered towards the Playing Fields. At the creek crossing a movement in the bushes attracted our attention – caught in the pools of light was a wombat. It looked at us. Didn't move. It stood still.

"Hey, look at the wombat!"

"Yeah", said Dave and commenced crossing the creek bed while watching the wombat in wonder. They usually run or at least hustle away. But not this one. It twitched its nose at Dave and waddled purposefully forwards.

"Dave, its moving towards you!"

"Yeah."

He looked away as he climbed up the lip of the bank.

"Dave! It's running! At you!"

"Yeah?"

In disbelief he began to laugh. The wombat gathered speed. Dave began to run. Great peals of laughter now – what a deliciously ridiculous scenario. The wombat accelerated – a black blurr homed in on Dave's heels. The laughter took on a manic edge. Dave ran – fast, and then faster. Across Playing Fields he fled, the wombat no more than a metre behind him. I'm glad he had the cave pack.

Playing Fields looked decidedly dangerous so I opted for a more devious approach to the track via the creek bed. A started loping across the boulders. It was so bizarre it seemed like a dream – I laughed at the thought of Dave being chased by the wombat. Suddenly there was a noise in the bushes on the right from the direction of the Playing Fields. I didn't stop to see what it was. I ran hard. And I stopped laughing. Presently I reached where the track to the cottage crossed the creek and climbed the steep hill on the left. I looked to the right at the Playing Fields. There was Dave standing on a wooden bench! Alone in the middle of the Playing Fields. There was no sign of the wombat.

"Are you alright?"

"Sure. Are you?"

What does he mean? It was him that was chased.

"Yes. Why?"

"Because after I climbed onto this bench it circled me 3 times and then tore off in your direction."

There was no sign of the wombat.

"Oh!" I looked frantically around. Nothing.

"I think it's gone."

Dave got down and joined me in the creek bed.

We began to laugh about how it chased him for 100m and then circled him in anger and frustration because Dave was a foot off the ground – for a wombat Dave may just as well have flown to the moon.

We began to climb the track up the bank of the creek. Something charged out of the bushes on the left. We ran. Ran along the track to the right. After 50m it climbed steeply up the first switchback. We didn't stop.

By mutual consent at the start of the next switchback we stopped. After 10 hours in the cave it was all too much. "It can have me", I declared. I could run no further.

As luck would have it it had given up. Back at the hut the two or three people still awake listened in amazement to the story of our close escape. When we reached the bit about Dave holed up on the bench with the wombat tearing around him in circles, laughter broke out in the garage and the back room of the hut. As it died down I fancied I heard borne on the wind out of the valley the growl of a beast with wounded pride. An ominous sound. A shiver played up and down my spine. A promise that we had *not* had the last laugh.

Thunder, Lightning, Rain, Caves and Gold Mines.

By Brett Davis

YARANGOBILLY_22-26 JANUARY 1999

Participants: Simon Cruden, Brett Davis and Brian Gilmour (Visitor)

After reading SUSS BULL VOL 38 (3) I thought I should assure readers, and especially beginners, that not all SUSS caving trips end in flames, falls, breaks, tears and/or hospital stays - usually it is just a dead motor vehicle. I had been exhorted by Don Matthews like a subterranean Tim Shore the Demtel man to submit material for the BULL, but as I had been on a caving hiatus I did not have anything interesting to report other than 6 months of trip cancellations.

Simon and I had begun developing decidedly unhealthy looking tans so the trip to Yagby on the Australia Day long weekend seemed perfect. There were also trips just finishing or beginning to Tasmania, Victoria, Queensland, New Zealand and Cooleman Caves so use of SUSS equipment was impossible which would limit the number of caves we could visit. The next difficulty was that due to the number of simultaneous trips, our visit to Yagby was looking like being limited to just Simon and I so we needed at least one more body, moving or not, for safety reasons. A week before, we remembered that Brian had mentioned he would like to go caving and luckily, he was free that weekend. Matthew Hole kindly faxed the permit to me before flying to New Zealand for his appointment with a cave, a rope and gravity.

Our next difficulty was driving from Croydon Park to Auburn which usually takes about 20 minutes. In driving rain that would have inspired Noah, and our speed reduced to 10 k.m.h. most of the way, we finally collected Brian over an hour later. Out into the deluge we continued but this had been half expected by us. We had been to Yagby 4 times over the past couple of years, and every time there has been a rain which had curtailed the caving activities. I think we broke the drought in 1995 when we began caving and it has barely stopped since.

The rain was finally left behind at Camden but as we drove closer to Yass, huge flickering thunder heads began developing to the East, South and West. If we thought we had escaped the rain, we were sadly mistaken. As we turned onto the Snowy Mountains Highway, we entered the storms but we were getting used to it by now. When we reached Blowering Reservoir, I had had enough driving in the rain with poor visibility and low speeds and as it was close to midnight, with no sign of the rain abating, we set up the tent for the night near some of the speed-boaters that seem to be a permanent fixture of the area.

Saturday morning was bright and sunny so we packed the tent and continued onwards stopping at Talbingo for petrol and snacks. Cotterill's Cottage was unavailable due to it being used by the forestry workers again, so we set up camp on the Eastern side of the highway well away from the Yarangobilly Caravan, Camping and Four Wheel Drive Expo Spectacular! I have often wondered why people with four wheel drive vehicles and caravans set up in groups in a circle, like a group of Afrikaners defending

themselves against the Zulus on the veldt. Perhaps a reader of this article can enlighten me as I didn't feel comfortable asking the campers in case they chased me away with sticks and Mausers.

We decided to enjoy the rest of the morning sunshine rather than crawling through cold, muddy holes and picked up the keys from the Guides' office after lunch. On the way to the tourist caves, the storms returned with more of the usual torrential rain which wrote off any wild caves that afternoon as most of the caves we were familiar with have streams flowing into them. Brian would have to wait at least another day before entering his first wild cave. A tour through the self-guided Glory Hole was decided upon and after paying the guides, we resisted the urge to don caving gear and instead opted for warm coats.

Although it was a fine Sunday morning, we weren't going to be lulled into a false sense of security, so we sort of quickly had breakfast (you know how fast things move in the morning on a SUSS trip) and went to Coppermine Cave. We entered the cave at about 11 a.m. and I was happy to be in a cold, damp and dark place again that didn't have trains running through it.

We splashed our way upstream until climbing to the higher sections. After watching Simon negotiate the exposed sloping section which you need to cross to get to the rear of the cave, Brian wasn't feeling 100% confident about it, so rather than have him do something he wasn't too sure about or having him wait for us, a leisurely exit was made which enabled some exploration of parts of the cave we hadn't seen before. We exited Coppermine at about 1.00 p.m. and were pleasantly surprised to find it was still a fine day with no sign of rain.

After lunch, rather than waste such a pleasant day underground, we went to Kiandra to explore the old gold fields. As you can probably tell by now, we aren't what you would call fanatical cavers. Our first stop was the dead centre of Kiandra, the cemetery, as on two previous visits to Kiandra, it had rained before being able to visit it. We then took the car bouncing along some old tracks and looked at some of the old buildings, gold diggings and mining equipment around the area.

We weren't spared rain all day, as on our return to the camp-site, storms returned again, forcing us to evacuate to the under cover cooking facilities at the tourist caves. If you ever use these, it is recommended by the guides you use the one closest to the car park, as the possums like to lick, play and defecate on the electric barbecue furthest from the car park.

Officially the SUSS trip ended on Sunday night, but due to the poor weather over the weekend, we thought the guides wouldn't mind if we visited Old Inn Cave prior to returning the keys on the Monday morning. Simon and I also thought it would not be right to end the trip after just one short cave visit after travelling all the way from Sydney. We entered at around 10.00 a.m. and after a thorough tour of the lower and upper sections, Brian was satisfied with his introduction to caving and we exited at around midday and returned the keys to the guides. We didn't set any records for time spent underground or caves visited over the weekend, but it was enjoyable anyway.

An immediate return was not made to Sydney as none of us had to work again until

Wednesday, so we camped on Monday night on the banks of Three Mile Dam near Mt Selwyn. We returned to Sydney on Tuesday, with the car running worse the closer we got to home, coughing, spluttering, blowing smoke and generally being an embarrassment. It stalled a few hundred metres from home but I got it going again, it backfired one last time in the garage, then expired, refusing to be revived again. That was lucky!

After intensive surgery and an extended rehabilitation, the car is now running better than ever, although after finding all the things wrong with the engine, I was amazed we made it out of the driveway let alone all the way to Yarangobilly and back!



Misadventures of a Very Naughty Man.

[ed: I got this message from Chris, and I think it is funny enough for all the club to enjoy. Either that, or he paid me off to advertise his current marital status!]

An eventful trip back last night. [ed: after an eventful weekend in the blue mountains]

At the Great Western Highway junction I met Don & Estelle, who had broken down and whose car had just been repaired. Actually, the battery lead had just worked free of the battery. I continued.

After stopping at the Wentworth Falls patisserie, I pulled back onto the highway only to have a familiar dark blue Toyota ute pull behind me and follow me for some distance. Stopped at the Springwood traffic lights, the driver leapt out and scrawled something in the dust on the back of my rear window. I couldn't make out what it was, but continued on home. Upon arriving at the car wash I could finally read it - 'Sexy and Single'. So that was the reason for all the tooted horns and flashed lights.

Hoping you all arrived safely,

Chris

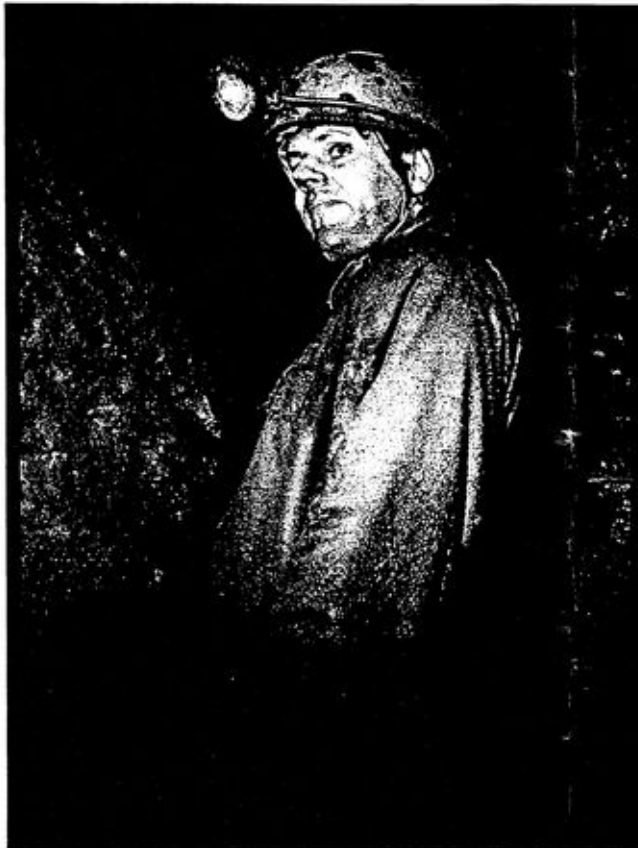
Splash Down!

By Mark Staraj

Jenolan (11/7/1998)

Participants: Mark Staraj, Racheline & David Jackson, Phil Maynard, Richard Pfeil, Andrew Matthews.

The strike force had been assembled for a further assault on the extremities of Spider Cave – Gnome Room extensions yet again. However this group, unlike the previous



attempt, were focussed on forging a dry bypass of the Endzone Sump whereas the divers (aided by their caste of hundreds) had laid about 120m of dive line to reach a constriction.

With the Spider survey now inked some leads suggested themselves. I was keen to look more closely at a 2m diameter tube complete with stream canyon in the floor that ascended eastwards, adjacent to the sump. Perhaps it is the fossil JUR (Jenolan Underground River) passage and will provide a bypass? Phil had noted that the intermittent (perhaps abandoned) streamway coming from the east into Gnome Room draws within 20m of another arm of the cave – a chamber also with intermittent stream passage called “4:45 to Central”. He thought the missing segment on the map might hide a T-junction where

both streams join and are fed from a common source. If this could be found then it might offer another way north towards Mammoth Cave, also bypassing the Endzone Sump.

With the objectives set it was only a question of how to get there. So – would it be Wishing Well and a waist deep wade across the JUR, the usual way north? No, I contended with a smile. Well then Etrier Pitch, which avoided getting wet but meant hauling a ladder through the squeezes for the 6m drop? No! The smile was broader this time. The relief was soon replaced by puzzled concern. How then? Splash Down of course! No one could recall hearing of such a route let alone what it was like. What was it like? It's fun – that's all you need to know. Oh...Oh!

I knew what it was like of course – a 3m deep pothole right into the middle of the river

where it was about knee deep.

Bye-the-bye things progressed smoothly and I led the team via Appian Way into Cloisters where I branched off towards Etrier Pitch. Shortly – “So we are going to Etrier Pitch then?” – like ha,ha the trip leader doesn’t know where he’s going. Mmm. I see what you mean. I say “Ah, no. Slight detour.” As I back out of Etrier Pitch. Nearby an obscured hole gives way to the passage I seek. “This way”, I announce cheerily. “ And mind the 7m deep hole in the floor.” I step around it myself and proceed to where the tube steepens more noticeably.

There it is. Splash Down. Andrew caught up behind me. “Is everything alright?”. “Sure” I lied.

Splash Down was not 3m deep but 5m deep. It didn’t drop straight into water but onto solid rock. The adjacent river wasn’t knee deep but ankle deep. Pretty close. However the slight differences looked significant. Still ‘when in battle never admit defeat’. No that didn’t seem like much help. ‘When leading never admit to being mistaken – it was always part of the plan’. Yes! ‘Whose purpose must always remain obscure to confuse the enemy’. Well that solved what to do and why I’m doing it. Unfortunately it said nothing of how. I proceeded by crossing the hole and chimneying down against the wall. After 2m the holds became sketchy. I sprang through the eternal night. KaaaaaaVOOOOOOSSSSHHHHH! Spray filled the passageway and the splash was deafening. Andrew shouted in alarm. “Are you alright?!” “Yes? C’m on down.” All part of the plan of course.

The plan had called for a series of lemmings plummeting one after another into the river with outrageously satisfying splashes and occasional spectacular mishaps. The plan revolved around at least one or two near drownings. Instead everyone cautiously scaled the wall to reach the ledge. I stationed myself underneath in case people needed assistance. Unfortunately and somewhat surprisingly as he had almost reached the bottom, David suddenly pitched forwards and outwards. Lost control he had. Yes. With arms churning like propellers he never had a chance. In moments he was full stretch, face first, a spreadeagled worship of the JUR.

A short excursion was now made to a nearby but little known stream passage. Fresh washed the crawl way led off from less than a metre above river level due East and passing at a depth of 11m beneath Cloisters to where it ended on the other side after 10m where a pool lay against the north wall. The pool itself appeared to be not more than 5cm deep over a floor of sand, gravel and pebbles and it receded beneath the north wall. Perhaps if it was drained and dug out it would give access to more passage? To test this hypothesis Dave was volunteered for the task. He slid his feet in test the depth. When he had sunk up to his waist and not hit bottom he made a frantic grab at the walls and pulled himself out – this was a sump! A sump made of quicksand! I have dubbed it Sump Thing Not Nice. After piling ourselves four deep so we could all view the sump we returned to the river.

Sump Thing Not Nice has some intriguing possibilities. It has not been determined which way the water flows. On the one hand it could represent another inflow from a surface sink. It could for instance be linked to the down stream end of the intermittent stream way in Dig at the End of the World which is more or less 35m away to the

northeast. If not then it probably is sourced from the large blank area to the east of Cloisters/Circus Maximus and may therefore ascend and intersect fossil passages there that are currently inaccessible. If instead it is a flood overflow passage taking excess water away from the adjacent Wishing Well (Sump 1) the possibilities are just as fascinating. There is no known inlet in the down stream JUR that could correspond to this passage. So if it is not an anabranch of the JUR then it would be a separate stream. Such a stream does exist much further east and south – it is found in Far Country, a branch of the Jubilee section of the Show Caves. However passing Sump Thing Not Nice is doubtful. It may prove impossible to drain because the sediment would choke the pump and its proximity to the JUR and its position below river level may mean the river seeps into it thus keeping it always full. On the other hand it can't be dived because of the sediment and would be a dangerously tight fit (body sized tube - tanks would have to hand held).

On the way back upstream I heard a loud splash and laughter. Unfortunately not in view. When it comes to family traits you can see that the Jacksons are closely related. Racheline found herself spreadeagled on her back in the middle of the river!

Now we made directly for the Gnome Room area where we arrived around 20min later. Here we split into teams of two. Phil and Richard entered Gnome Room and proceeded into the rockpile passage at the back. A thorough search for the streamway under the boulders produced only digging prospects. A cursory attempt was made but only resulted in the lead being written off.

David and Racheline investigated holes in the vicinity of Max Headroom and amused themselves for a short while in an unmapped passage that led off to the west at head level. It did not go very far.

Andrew and I climbed into the large tube. It appears that it once continued further in the guise of a rift but this is sealed with a plug of sediment. A climb near the end went nowhere neither. We returned to the base of the tube and followed the main passage around past the turnoff to Endzone Sump to where it turned west and again ended in a sediment plug after a handful of metres. The passage dimensions are here about 3m high by 2m wide. At its end the roof ascends steeply and Andrew climbed the steep mudbank but with no success. This short but significant continuation looks as though it was missed during the mapping. We then returned and after passing the tube again noted yet another passage to the west – a rift some 6m high broken into different levels by jammed rocks and ledges making navigation a bit of a puzzle. This is an inlet that would be active in floods – the ledges appear to represent an old stream level. Once in the rift a distinct breeze can be detected. The passage trends west for about 10m where it turns abruptly north. At this point the rift slopes upwards some 8m or more out of sight. Andrew investigated this while I followed the rift north. After about 6m I was forced through a squeeze and up a tight chimney for a couple of metres where the floor levelled out and looked like promising passage. Alas it opened up into a room under a rockpile and despite the tantalising freshness of the air no way on could be located.

It seems to me that this inlet is probably the route for water sinking in the creek bed near the degraded doline almost 50m directly above. The airflow is possibly from an

unnegotiable breathing hole located and investigated by SSS a few years ago a few metres up slope from the creek. Unfortunately it is not tied into the Spider survey as SUSS was unaware of it at the time the surface work was being done.

We all regathered at Max Headroom and gazed up at the ceiling 15m above. The roof rises here like a tapering shaft and just near the top the walls recede back so that it appears possible a passage may be concealed leading off from the top. No other sign indicates passage but it is almost irresistible to speculate that there lies a passage to bypass the sump (it is at about the right height for the fossil level of the river). Probing this will be difficult and would require a skilled rockclimber to negotiate the overhanging faces or the hauling of scaling poles a good 2hrs into the cave. Either way it appears this question mark will remain for some time.

Having finished with exploring we headed out of the cave.

Results of the trip?

- Splash Down is a freeclimbable route [down only] to the river for the adventurous at heart.
- Sump Thing Not Nice has interesting long term possibilities.
- There are no known leads left in Gnome Room.
- There are no known dry leads left at Endzone Sump.
- Some more surveying is required, around 30-40m in the Endzone area.
- Possibilities exist in the explored inlet west of Max Headroom. Another visit is warranted.

Have You Been Caving for more than a year, and are sick of the state of club gear?

Here is a good solution – get some gear of your own. As a club requirement, Trip Supervisors learn a great deal about caving gear, and most would tell you that using your own gear, besides being a matter of personal pride, also increases your caving enjoyment. Imagine, using the same light that you made sure worked a week/month/year ago, or not having to use the same dirty old helmet.

Whilst club gear is there for the use of everyone, it is mainly necessary for beginners to become a part of the club and learning whether they enjoy caving, before forcing them to outlay hundreds of dollars in gathering their own gear. Once you get started however, it really helps the club pass this gear down to newer members if it isn't being used by the same people every trip. Think about it though, having your own gear is probably better than relying on the same old club gear that everyone complains about. **DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT!**

Get some gear you can trust!

[Ed: This man who needs no introduction, writes a brilliant new article in every bull (I'm just writing this so we'll get another article for the next one. Be prepared for a Chris Norton Masterpiece)]

In October 1998, a group of SUSSlings had themselves a whale of a time at some of the less often visited karst areas of Northern NSW. It was so much fun we wanted to do it again. And thus was born...

Son of Obscure Karst

Wee Jasper, Paddys River, London Bridge, Mount Fairy, 24-26 April 1999

By Chris Norton

Participants: Audra, Geoff McDonnell, Chris Norton, Richard Pfeil, Alan Pryke, Megan Pryke

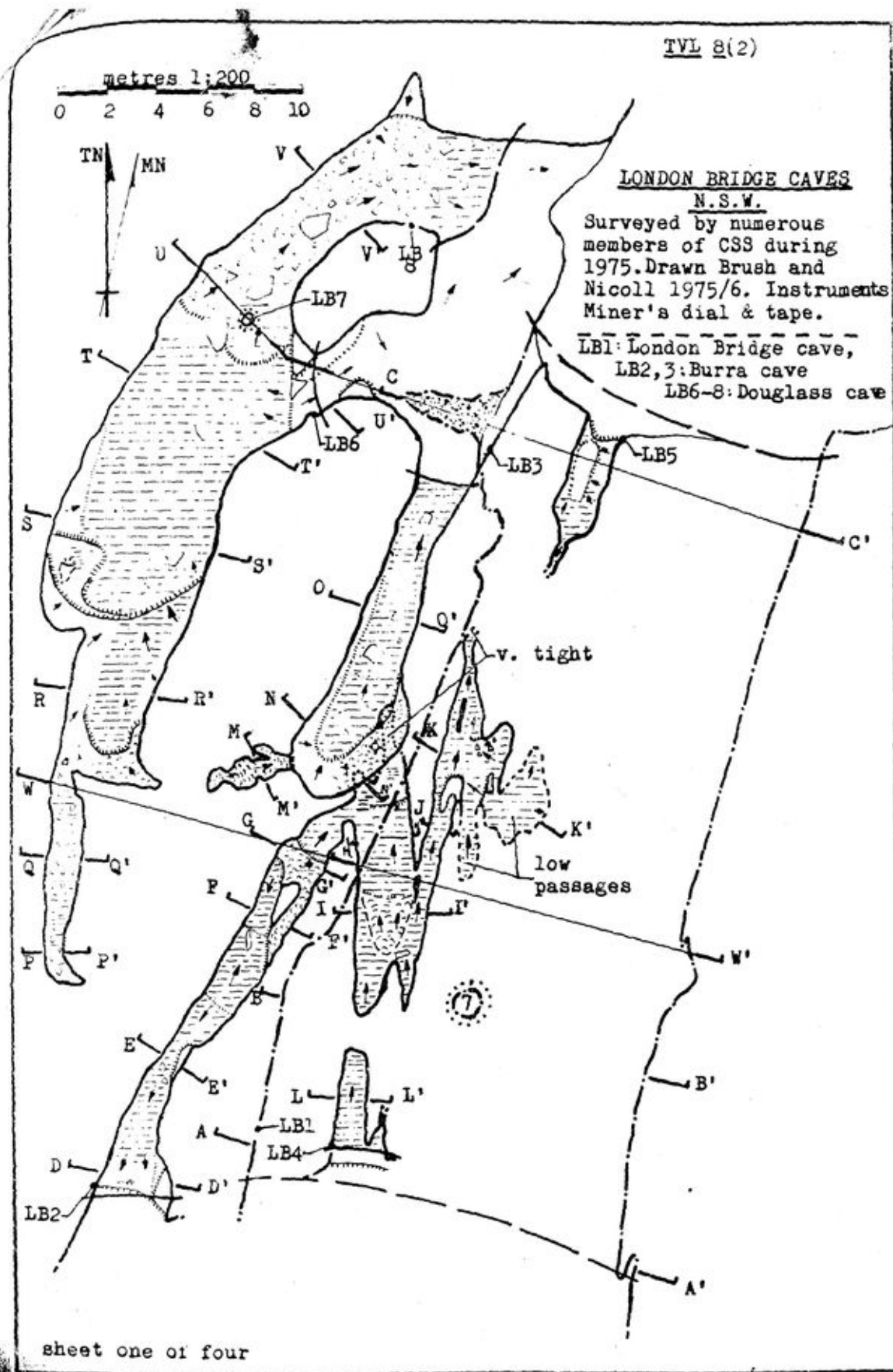
Can You Keep a Secret?

If it was an obscure karst trip, what were we doing at Wee Jasper? This, one of the most oft visited 'yobbo' caving areas, den of the fierce scout and beanie, prominent in the map of NSW karst areas in the SUSS beginner's handbook, is not really that obscure, is it?

Well, things hadn't been planned that way. Initially, we were to have enjoyed the wilds of Cleatmore, but that area has been closed by National Parks to count bugs. Plans then shifted to Taemas and Warroo, the caves of which are located around the sides of Lake Burrunjuck and must be reached by boat. Nice idea, but unfortunately since it was the end of the irrigation season and the lake was empty the trip would have involved dragging our boat ten kilometres along a silty-floored swamp, falling into the odd puddle along the way.¹ In desperation, Chris decided to return to the scene of his first caving experiences over 15 years previously, but swore to stay away from Dip, Punchbowl, Gong and Signature.

First up, we camped at Chris' Obscure Campsite. This was designed to keep us from the hordes of people who would no doubt be taking advantage of the long weekend and visiting Wee Jasper. To our surprise, however, the regular campsite was empty the next morning, and the only other outdoorsy types we spied all weekend were a group of venturers, a small school group and three bushwalkers dressed in combat fatigues who were having extreme difficulty finding their way along the Hume and Hovell Track, providing much amusement for us to watch during breakfast as they wandered hither and thither, sat under trees, pulled out maps etc while a mere 10m from the track.

¹ Gratuitous advertisement - 18-19 September is the next scheduled Taemas/Warroo trip. Book now!



But there was caving to be done. Main objective for the day was to visit a particularly nice cave² on private property. Chris had not been able to get onto the owners beforehand, so they had to be visited for permission to be sought. But their house was empty upon our arrival, so instead we all decamped to Dogleg Cave, of which only Geoff had been to the back. And we were soon to find that the "back" is not the back at all. According to Rob Targett of ECRC, who we found departing the cave with a mob of venturers, a little digging in the sand traps at the purported rear of the cave leads up a tube into a cave "as big as Punchbowl, with chambers to match". One to bear in mind for the end of the next dry season, folks (as the sand traps are flooded for a good part of the year). The verdict on Dogleg? Only do it when it's dry folks; but the railway tunnel passage at the end is well worth seeing.

Back to try and get into the Secret Cavern of Mystery. But the owners, secret and mysterious, were not to be found. Their fire burned, their radio blared, their keys were in the lock and their dog tried his best to look menacing, but there was no-one to dispense permission or keys. In order to fill in some more time, we made a slight concession and visited the radically unobscure Careys Cave, which is a tourist cave. This cave is fairly extensive and well-decorated, particularly towards the back. Geoff, becoming very effusive over the helictites,³ was heard to exclaim "This is show cave quality!". Alan reminded him that it was, in fact, a show cave. We escaped, and returned once more to the owners of the Secret Cavern of Mystery to find them just returned from shopping, and agreeable to us entering the cave. One problem - the key was with someone else⁴, who was somewhere else⁵, and because of a particular event⁶ would not be available for another hour or so.

² At the request of someone in the Wee Jasper area who does not wish the details of this cave to become public knowledge, details will be wilfully fudged and the cave will henceforth be referred to as the Secret Cavern of Mystery. If you want to know more about this cave, speak to the author, or Rob Whyte of UNSWSS.

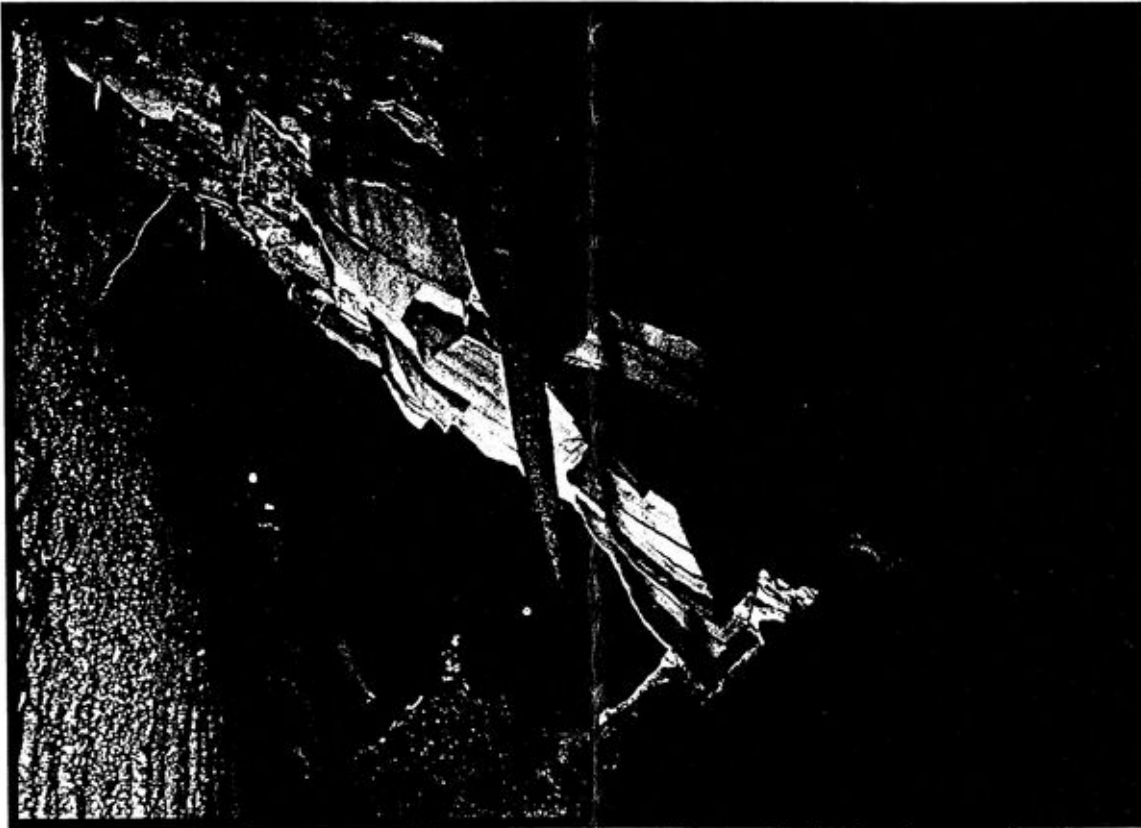
³ Don't worry, we cleaned it up afterwards.

⁴ Identity not to be revealed in interests of secrecy.

⁵ Refer to footnote 3.

⁶ Refer to footnote 4.

This was just the excuse we had been waiting for. The newly erected Wee Jasper Store now has a café annexed to it. Devonshire tea, fish and chips and hamburgers beckoned.⁷ We answered their call⁸ and spent a pleasant 45 minutes in the sun before



going to meet the someone else at somewhere else to obtain the key to the Secret Cavern of Mystery. But because the particular event that was delaying someone else from being somewhere else⁹, and keeping him somewhere else¹⁰, we had to wait somewhere else¹¹ for another hour or so before we finally got the key.

⁷ Actually, they didn't really beckon. This is just a literary device called 'metaphor'. Hamburgers and scones don't have fingers and can't beckon. A fish may be able to beckon if it could get its fin into place, but that was hard for this particular fish as it had been filleted, coated in batter and dropped in hot oil; and the fins were probably in some compost heap hundreds of kilometres away.

⁸ Again, not literally. If you sat there talking to your fish and chips someone would probably call the men in white coats.

⁹ This refers to the 'somewhere else' alluded to in the previous paragraph.

¹⁰ This is a different somewhere else to that in the previous clause - in fact, it is somewhere else from that somewhere else.

¹¹ This is the first somewhere else again, not that described in footnote 9.

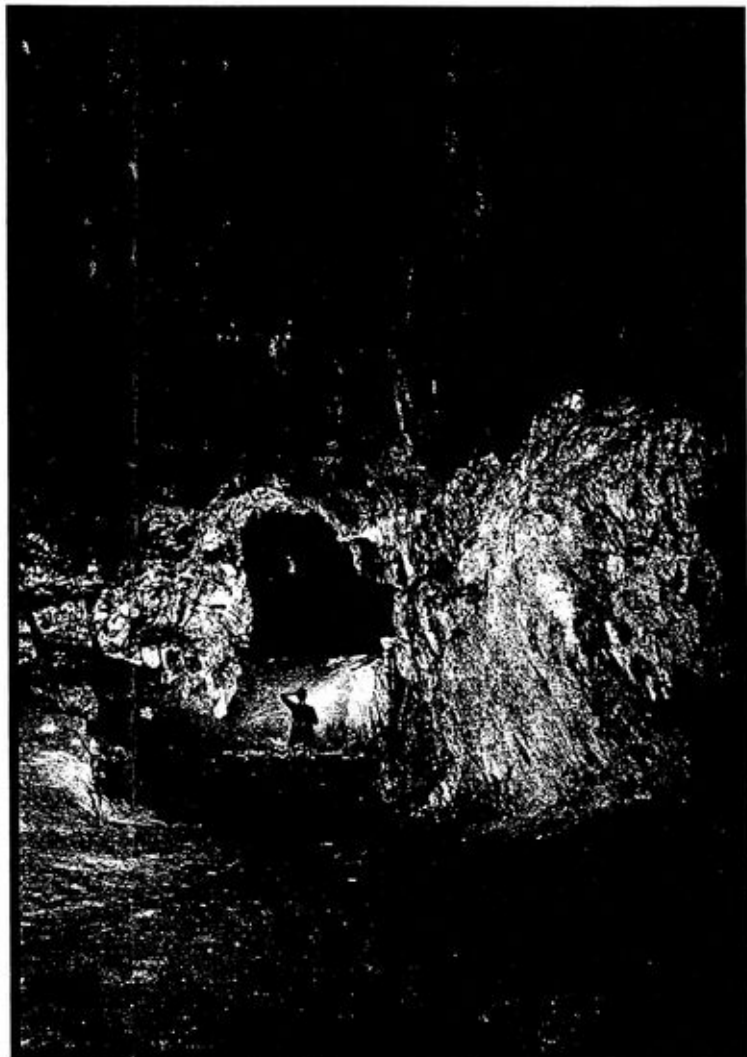
So, what was found in the Secret Cavern of Mystery? Well, it wouldn't be a secret if we told you here. Suffice it to say that it was quite late at night when Audra, Chris, Megan and Richard returned to camp; and another hour or so later still when Alan and Geoff finally ran out of film and beat their own retreat. As midnight drew nigh, everyone hurried off to bed.

Sightseeing

Sunday was to be no day of rest for our intrepid obscure karsters. They awoke from a fitful slumber. Although the ground all around was coated in a thick white frost, and the water had an icy layer on top, Geoff announced that he "was red hot last night"; and left us all to wonder what he could be talking about since it obviously wasn't the temperature.

Our minds could not dwell on that topic for long, as we had to head off to the ACT for some karst areas near Canberra. To add to the obscure nature of the trip, Chris elected to lead everyone down the Doctor's Flat Road through Brindabella National Park, rather than the more orthodox route. Upon completion of the cross-country section of this route, it was agreed that Doctor's Bumpy Track would be a more appropriate name. However, we had soon arrived at Cotter Dam Reserve, home of the Paddys River Caves.

These caves are about 10 minutes walk along an easy track from a public carpark. Their location is not signposted, but access is painfully easy, with a well-worn track taking one straight to the entrances. And if anyone was in doubt as to whether there were caves in the vicinity, a glance at the thick blackberry bushes lining the limestone gully would leave no room for argument. The three entrances to PR-1 (Cotter Cave), PR-2 (Powder Store Cave) and PR-3 (Blasted Cave) are very close together and we could bound readily from one to the other with little problem. Cotter Cave is by far the largest (about 65m, not including small side passages), and is railway-tunnel-like in dimensions. Unfortunately, the entrance is obstructed by a locked gate, so without the key you can only go as far as the gate will permit you. Powder Store Cave is 14m long and consists of a single person-sized passage; Blasted Cave is 20m long and



requires a bit of wriggling around to get to the furthest extremities. However, all 3 caves can be done without the need for overalls.

As one might expect, these caves did not occupy a great deal of our time. This was a good thing, as we were to lose about half an hour in between Cotter and Canberra when Chris' car didn't quite have enough petrol to make it the final 5km to the Weston Creek petrol station, necessitating a mercy dash by Alan and some red-faced sitting by the side of the road for Chris. Time was of the essence as our next stop, London Bridge, was reputed to have an early closing.

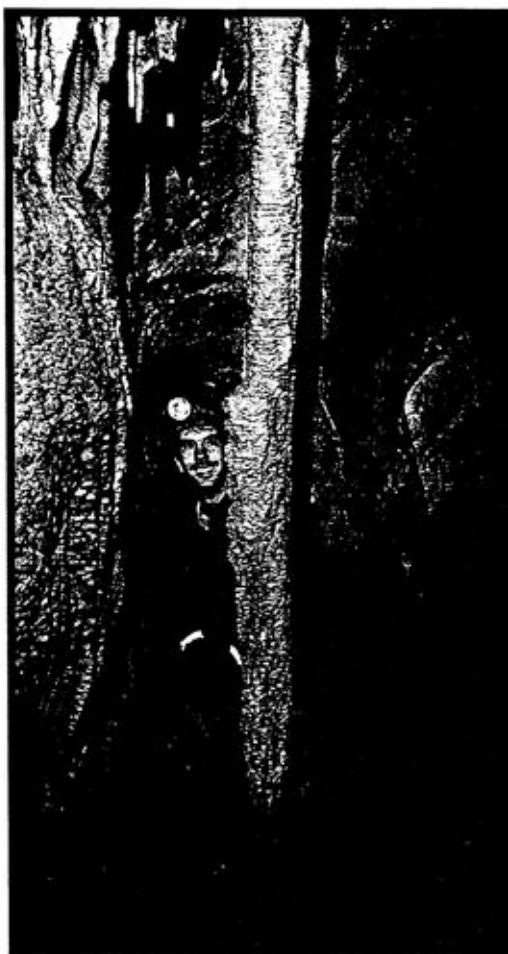
We weren't exactly sure where London Bridge was, but were told that if we showed up to Googong Dam Reserve south of Queanbeyan we could find out easily enough. This was true. At the information centre, there was a brochure telling us where we could find this obscure karst area. We drove on down the road to a parking area with capacity for about 30 cars, which was nearly full despite there being only 45 minutes to closing time. After parking our cars, we picked up brochures and followed the ants trail of tourists crawling over the hill, following the stylised signposts. A large cluster of tourists were gathered around the Bridge, which is a hole bored through a chunk of limestone which sports some small caves in the top. We set about wading across the river to explore the caves (although when Alan removed his trousers and started wandering back and forth through the arch wearing a T-shirt saying 'LOOK' in bold lettering, the number of tourists diminished notably).

There is little more to say about London Bridge other than that parts of it smell very batty; and it is one of the few places where you can do 11 caves in 30 minutes. We returned to the cars and hastened out the gate as the ranger arrived to lock up.

Lair of the Furry Menace

Besides being the butt of some rather crude jokes, Mount Fairy sports a campsite of very dubious quality alongside a very stagnant creek. This was where we camped on Sunday night. We very quickly found that the campsite has extremely hard ground that strongly discourages the placement of tent pegs, not much firewood, and subzero temperatures that had ice forming on the tents by 8:30. Sleeping bags were entered very early that night.

Dawn broke the next morning (probably due to the frost), so we swept up the pieces, glued them together and wandered over the hills towards the caves. We stopped to chat briefly with a neighbouring farmer to hear his tales of woe in



building his dream house: built it, burnt to the ground, built it again, defective work means it now has to be torn down once more. For the last three years he has been living in his garage. Poor chap.

On to the caves. There are about 70 tagged features at Mt Fairy, so we decided to pick a selection of the best for sampling. First up was the main cave, called, strangely enough, Main Cave (MF 1-4, 50). The cave was first entered down a mine drive, installed in about 1916 during exploratory mining for the site for a cement plant to help build Canberra. Fortunately for the caves, the limestone wasn't good enough, and Canberra was built from other stuff. We didn't get far down the mine drive, however. The first route into the cave we tried was full of huge quantities of guano. Pass. Chris started off down a second route, only to see a furry something ahead of him. Mice? Rats? Then he realised that he was in fact looking at the four paws of a very large hairy-nosed wombat, which did not look at all pleased to be entertaining uninvited visitors. As the wombat readied itself for attack, Chris beat a strategic retreat. The only remaining route was a small capacity, high friction squeeze, which Chris passed through but which the others passed on, departing the mine drive and entering through the main entrance.

The upper levels of the cave contain a very fun, very muddy phreatic maze. The intrigue is added to by the propensity of bats (of both normal and wom- varieties) to come rushing out of the narrow tunnels in front of you. However, if you can navigate these obstacles you can drop down to a tight, clean washed stream passage, which burbles out of the poetically named sump 2 and disappears into the mystical waters of sump 1. This passage is all the more remarkable for the fact that it is wombat-proof, there being tricky drops to climb down to it and until wombats develop abseiling skills only the most suicidal will be able to visit it.

Upon emerging from the main cave, we crossed the creek to Zed Cave (MF-34), which is basically a long mining drive which happens to intersect bits of cave every now and then. Megan confidently led off down this cave, only to call a startled retreat upon sticking her head around the corner at the end. She had verified the bit in the Mount Fairy book which to a section "rumoured to contain large fire breathing wombats". Obviously something more wombatproof was required so we headed off to MF-25, which starts with a 8m entrance pitch through an awkward slot and, according to the book, contains "excellent" decoration. If we discovered anything in this cave, it is that the appropriateness of any superlative is a matter of some debate; and in this case the only rational explanation for its use was that it was being used in a relativistic way.

Fox Hole (MF-12) is reputedly 98m long. We couldn't work out where most of the cave seemed to have got to. This cave depressed Audra, Geoff and Richard so much that they elected to sit in the sun whilst Alan, Megan and Chris trekked over to the other side of the valley to MF-40, which, although containing arguably the best decoration seen by us in this karst area, still didn't quite make it to the standards of the Secret Cavern of Mystery.

And so it was time to bid farewell to the furry-nosed foes and head once more toward home, where we could take out our copies of the Karst Index and place big red ticks besides yet more karst areas.

Access details

Paddys River Caves are controlled by the ACT State Government. The holders of the key to Cotter Cave can be reached on (02) 6207 2425; however, they are reputedly loath to lend it out as the entrance, where rotting wooden steps are installed, is supposedly very dangerous. Articles on Paddys River Caves with full location details are available in the SUSS library.

London Bridge is in the Googong Dam Reserve. Follow Cooma Road south of Canberra. The first turnoff to Googong Dam Reserve will bring you to the visitor centre, where you can pick up some information. Back on Cooma Road, head further south until you reach Burra Road. Turn left. Continue along this road and turn left onto London Bridge Road, which brings you to the tourist parking area. Note that the gates to this part of the reserve shut at 5pm. Again, more details are available in the SUSS library.

Mount Fairy Caves are located around the junction of Sandhills Creek and Caves Creek (see the Boro topo map at 374027). Turn east off the Tarago-Bungendore road along Mt Fairy Road (about 16km from Tarago), cross the railway line, zig right and zag left. Camping (not very satisfactory) is available on a small reserve alongside a creek at 367027 (just east of the bridge). We were told that the owner of the property, a Mr Zimmerman, does not object to people visiting the caves without obtaining permission beforehand. Mr Zimmerman lives in Canberra although he occasionally visits the property and stays in the campervan overlooking the campsite.

We are sworn to secrecy about the details of the Secret Cavern of Mystery. For more information try speaking to Rob Whyte of UNSWSS. He could tell you - but then, he would have to kill you...

Acknowledgements

Thanks to John Dunkley, Sherry Mayo and Andy Spate for providing information to assist with this trip. Particular thanks to John Brush for copying a number of relevant articles, which have now been placed in the SUSS library. Messrs Brush and Spate were at pains to point out that, in their view, there is absolutely nothing obscure about any of these karst areas. Having now visited London Bridge, the author is inclined to agree.

Useful references:

- Hills Speleological Club Ltd *Mount Fairy Caves* 1992
- Nicholl, B and Brush, J "London Bridge Caves" *The Very Latest* 8(2) pp17-24
- Nicholl, B and Brush, J "Paddys River (Cotter) Caves" *The Very Latest* 7(3) pp3-8

Henry Fairlie-Cunninghame (1930 – 1999)

Obituary by John Bonwick, 1999

It was Henry's broad sweep of interests and achievements in furthering the causes of caving, photography and conservation that make his life so notable. At the same time, it was his accepting nature, "up and at 'em" attitude and amazing inventiveness that are remembered by the people who knew him.

It seems that Henry's innovative and practical nature was given plenty of scope to develop during his primary and secondary education. This took place at St. Johns Grammar, Vaucluse - a small but unusual school where cooperation rather than competition prevailed in both intellectual and physical activities. It was coeducational and everyone was valued for what they could contribute. This was coupled with an almost unfettered freedom for students to engage in whatever caught their interest. John Townsend, a fellow student, said there was never enough hours in the day, whether it was preparing for a stage play or scavenging the local tip or harbour foreshores for materials.

Henry went on to study at the University of Sydney graduating in Physics and Maths in 1952. He joined the Sydney University Speleological Society in 1949 and for the next 10 years became involved in many aspects of caving and cave photography. He was president of the club in 1952 and 1953.

An early memory I have of Henry relates to a debate about cave photography. The phenomenon of post flash luminescence led some to speculate that repeated exposure might damage calcite.

Henry investigated and duly reported that to the best of his knowledge there would be no damage. He did not ridicule those who raised the question nor did he infer that his opinion was the final authority.

This reflected his approach to many things in his life - things technical, scientific and the environment. He never used his position or his knowledge to put other people down.

His articles published in the SUSS Journal cover topics such as Cave Wetas, Inflating Balloons with Hydrogen, Tasmanian Caves, Wire Ladder Construction, (preceding Bonwick Ladders by 2 years) and the use of Flash Powder and Magnesium Ribbon. His advice on how to take a good cave photo could still be read with value today.

Henry's care and attention to detail produced superb photos that were published both locally and overseas and won him many prizes.

Harry Pemble remembers Henry and Ed Slater producing a movie film in the Lucas Cave, Jenolan in about 1952.

Although Henry didn't invent the "Diprotodon" (a name given by cavers to a device for producing an unimaginable burst of light with dispersed magnesium powder), he developed a very practical unit that could light up immense caverns that were beyond the reach of normal flash units. It was used to great effect by Henry and others in getting photographs of the caverns under the Nullarbor Plain. One of the many stories

that Henry was renowned for telling, was when he scared off a number of late night Lane Cove National Park visitors while test firing the Diprotodon.

His practical side was not without a sense of humour. On observing Dot Learmonth chasing her loose boweled child around the campsite, Henry suggested harnessing a roll of toilet paper to the child's back.

In 1956 Henry joined the Sydney Speleological Society. He became Vice President and later went on to become a very active member of the SSS cave diving team. He was of course not content to be just a diver. A lot of the equipment had to be manufactured or improvised and Henry's skills in this area were invaluable. He later demonstrated in the Lane Cove river that a diver to diver communication system was possible.

We didn't know back then but in about 1960 Henry started to emerge from the darkness so to speak. Through the Caloola Bushwalking Club he was associated with the infant National Parks Association and became absorbed with the great love of his life - the environment in all its manifestations.

His dedication to the NPA, and his adventurous spirit continued for the rest of his life.

Richard Thompson of the NPA remembers the sometimes bitter debates between the fanatical conservationists and those who just wanted to go bushwalking. Henry's experience, his balanced and practical views were respected by both sides and had a calming influence.

All this intense interest in what was "out there" left Henry little time for introspection or to consider the possibility that someone could be interested in him.

Janet Menzies Saddington distracted him long enough to show there were other aspects of life to which he might turn his attention. They were married in 1972. Family life became a new interest but did not lessen his commitment to the outdoor world.

It is most probably due to Henry's unassuming nature that few people knew he held a Scottish title dating back to 1630. He inherited the title from his father Sir William Alan Fairlie-Cunninghame, Bt. in 1981.

Sir William Henry Fairlie-Cunninghame, Bt. died at home, in Pymble, on 4 January, 1999, aged 68, after a twelve month fight with mesothelioma. He is survived by his wife Janet and son Robert.

The quotation, by John Burroughs, used on the order of service for his funeral was one with which Henry personally identified.

"The longer I live the more my mind dwells upon the beauty and wonder of the world. I am in love with this world; by my constitution I have nestled lovingly in it. It has been my home. It has been my point of outlook into the universe. I have not bruised myself against it, nor tried to use it ignobly. I have climbed its mountains, roamed its forests, sailed its waters, crossed its deserts, felt the sting of its frosts, the fury of its winds and always have beauty and joy waited upon my comings and goings."

SUSS Committee 1999/2000

President

Carol Layton
19 Beaumaris Crescent
MORTDALE 2223
Phone (home) 9579 5948
skeenly@healey.com.au

Vice President

Richard Pfeil
23 Altona St
ABBORTSFORD 2046
Phone (home) 9713 9460
rpfeil@powerserve.com.au

Secretary

Sushila Thomas
65 Alice St
NEWTOWN 2042
Phone
(home) 9557 3986
(work) 9351 4741
thomas_s@chem.usyd.edu.au

Treasurer

Shannon Crack
61 Flora St
LAKEMBA 2195
Phone
(home) 9740 4575
crack_sj@lab.eng.usyd.edu.au

Equipment Officer

Mark Lowson
35 Sproule Rd
ILLAWONG 2234
Phone
(home) 9541 0479
m_lowson@white.ug.cs.usyd.edu.au

Safety Officer

David Connard
10/42 Morton St
WOLLSTONECRAFT 2065
Phone (home) 9437 6762
david.connard@alcatel.com.au

Minutes Secretary

David Stanaway
16 Allen St
LEICHHARDT 2040
Phone (home) 9550 0010
david@netventures.com.au

Editor

Greg Holmes
121 St John's Rd
BRADBURY 2560
Phone
(home) 02 4625 2876
holmes@wolf.net.au

Librarian

Phil Maynard
5A Oxford St
NEWTOWN 2042
Phone
(home) 9517 1050
(work) 9514 7584
Philip.Maynard@uts.EDU.AU

ASF Councillor

Chris Norton
32 Crows Nest Rd
WOLLSTONECRAFT 2065
Phone
(home) 9959 3613
(work) 9262 6989
(fax) 9363 6998
chris_norton@hotmail.com

General

Robert Fairlie-Cunninghame
29A Orinoco St
PYMBLE 2073
Phone (home, work, fax) 9449 8725
rfairlie@nuera.com

Megan and Alan Pryke
15 Matson Cres
YOWIE BAY 2228
Phone (home) 9524 0317
mpryke@westpac.com.au

Disclaimer: None of the material in this BULL either purports or implies any indication of the opinions or policies of the SUSS COMMITTEE or the people who hold SUSS COMMITTEE positions, either in their own right, or in the eyes of the sports union. Please don't sue us, we don't have any money ! Any complaints to be send to BOX 35 Holme Building University of Sydney 2006.

Proudly sponsored by



SUSS TRIP LIST: August 1999

*If you wish to suggest a trip or have questions about this list contact any of the people below.
ALL trips are suitable for beginners, unless otherwise stated.*

SUSS General Meetings: 7:00pm (for a 7.30pm start to the formal part of the evening)
Holme Building Common Room, meetings are held first Thursday of the month. The Holme Building is the building closest to the Parramatta Road footbridge, on the northern side of the University campus. The Common Room is on the first floor (enter from Science Rd, on campus).

Email Address: Check out the SUSS web at http://www.ee.usyd.edu.au/suss/SUSS_Home_Page.html

• August

5 General Meeting Infinitely superior to 'Funniest Home Videos', Jason Moule will show us his excellent videos of caving trips in Australia and overseas.

7-8 Jenolan. Get muddy and have a giggle at the caving mecca of NSW: Jenolan. Contact Phil Maynard 9517 1050 (Hm).

14-15 Tuglow. Tuglow Caves has surged in popularity ever since SUSS released the definitive work on the speleology of Tuglow Caves. Check it out! Contact Phil Maynard 9517 1050 (Hm).

22 Mountain Bike ride, Sydney. Something a bit different, head down south to Helensburgh for a spot of exercise on the bike. This is a ride along dirt tracks amongst treeferns so a mountain bike is ideal. Contact Carol Layton 9579 5948 (Hm) or skeenly@healev.com.au (Email).

28-29 Kalang Falls. A beautiful spot to go abseiling in the Blue Mountains. Contact: Richard Pfeil 9713 9460 (Hm).

• September

2 General Meeting Another beautifully shot home movie but this time featuring an expedition to Vietnam!

4-5 Jenolan. Get a bit muddy and scream with glee at the caving mecca of NSW: Jenolan. Contact Phil Maynard 9517 1050 (Hm).

8-12 - 4th International Meeting of Cavers and 2nd National Speleological Congress. Hosted by the Czech Speleological Society. (Cave Diving Camp 13-18). For application forms, ask SUSS Secretary, Sushila Thomas (nicely).

11 Trash and Treasure Day, Speleosports, Cavers' Dinner. Contact Joe Sydney 9875 1887 (Hm).

18-19 Taemas/Wareroo. Fasten your lifejackets, swallow your seasickness pills and hop into a boat for a trip across Lake Burrunjuck to some of NSW's less well-known caves. Radio Chris 'Nautical' Norton 9959 3613 (Hm).

25-26

• October

1 President's Birthday Big Pissup Planned at Carol's House

7 General Meeting.

2-4 Yarrangobilly. Finish the Mill Creek Swallet survey, check out the secret lead in Eagles Nest and splash in the thermal pool. Chris Norton 9959 3613 (Hm). Permit Pending

9-10 Jenolan Head out to the limestone wonder that is Jenolan. Contact Greg Holmes 02 4265 2876 (Hm) or holmes@wolf.net.au (Email).

16 or 17 Royal National Park. Bring your beany & dolphin torch for a "pseudo karst trip". Contact Alan or Megan Pryke 9524 0317 (Hm).

23 NSW Speleo Council meeting, Kotara (near Newcastle). Contact Chris Norton 9959 3613 (Hm).

• November

4 General Meeting.

6-7 Jenolan SUSS's regular fun trip to Jenolan.

6-7 Wombeyan Caves. Surveying Course run by Mike Lake. This course is open to SUSS and non-SUSS people and covers using Suunto's to reducing the data and finally to drawing the completed map.. Cost will be \$50 for the two days and numbers are strictly limited to 15. Contact Mike 9514 1724 (Uni).

• December

2 General Meeting.

6-12 Jenolan Christmas Party trip. Lets get Wyburds long enough to register in the record books.

Tasmania Super Christmas Trip - closing date for expressions of interest: 31 August.

12-18 Mole Creek. Pretty easy caving but spectacular caving in the central north near Devonport. Coordinator Greg Holmes 02 4265 2876 (Hm) or holmes@wolf.net.au (Email).

18-31 Junee-Florentine, possibly Ida Bay. Cold, difficult caving in the central south near Maydena. Extensive vertical work required. Very cold and wet, should be fun. Coordinator Chris Norton 9959 3613 (Hm).