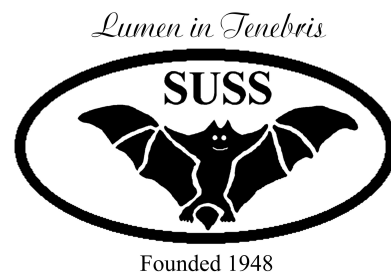


SUSS BULL 48 (3)

OCTOBER – DECEMBER 2008



Bulletin of the Sydney University Speleological Society

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**Cover Photo: Mammoth Cave, Jenolan
Olaf Thedin**

THE ASCENT: MOUNT TARANAKI

BY MEGAN PRYKE

Participants: Alan & Megan Pryke, Carol, James, Catherine & Geoff

“When do you think we should head to Mt Egmont”, Carol queried, ignoring the three syllable, alternative poetic name for this mountain. “I say Wednesday or Thursday, sooner the better, you never know when the drought will break, NZ is the land of the long white cloud”.

However, Friday ends up being the day, fitting in nicely with some gentle, urban strolling planned for the following day at “The Great NZ Muster”. This annual event is also known as the “Running of the Sheep”. Approximately two thousand sheep are let loose down Te Kuiti’s main street, which is lined with black shade cloth that human onlookers hold up to prevent stray sheep from entering browsing the shops. Prizes are awarded to those that can count, or guess, the correct number of sheep.

Thursday’s caving proved to be not as laid back as I anticipated. As our group returned to Puketiti Station from as far south as Waitoro Station, I focused on walking a nice even, relaxed pace in hope of lessening the demands of traversing over the hilly pastures. Shadows of cumulonimbus quilted the fields indicating changing weather. Was that a rain drop?

At 4 am I aroused for our 4:30 am departure. Carol, James, Catherine, Geoff and myself pile into the car. Wind-screen wipers clear away more than morning dew, it’s the first rain of the trip. The wider speed increases, Carol drives on as the others doze off.

It is still dark as we park the car at 7 am. At 7:30 am we start the hike, donned in raincoats to ward off the drizzle. Dawn light softened by twirling fog gradually exposes the mountain’s colours as we steadily ascend.

We briefly take shelter from a stiff breeze at a mountaineering hut. Wisps of wind rip fog add a little more interest to the distance limited, cloudy views.

Up a sheltered steep gully we continue, rough timber stairs making it possible to get over a section of steep scree. Beyond the stairs we start to experience the scree’s ball bearing effect. Geoff decides he has had enough, so turns back. I wonder myself at the rationale of what we were doing – climbing a mountain for a view of cloud. Carol’s was undeterred, her mind set on getting up as high as she determined safe to do so.

Higher up and the billowing clouds are below us, above a clear azure canopy, our grins mimic the horizon. A fellow walker’s weather prediction had been right. Nonetheless, I had placed some reservation on the correctness of local knowledge based on the conditions below, and the occasional warning signs.

Near the top, a wall of twisted, lava baked rocks surrounds a volcanic crater. The more substantial side of the crater wall is the top which we reached by 11:30. Lunch with a view at over 2,500 metres in altitude! Below trails of pyroclastic flows carpeted with thick, green vegetation buttress the mountain. To the north west the tops of Mt Ruapehu and the conical Mt Ngauruhoe poke out of the cloud layer.

After a good mooch about at the top and the crater, we start the descent. As I predicted, it was a bit hard on the knees with a few unscheduled sit downs. Deeper scree often provided a bonus foot break. Past the mountaineering hut we took a less direct track back to the car, passing through alpine vegetation, down and up gullies to the where we started.

Geoff had made himself busy around the visitor’s centre. He regaled us with amusing stories of his cafe encounters and purchases of bargain tea towels.

Wobbly knees were with me for a few days after the trip, sweet memories of the experience will last a lot longer!

CLIEDEN CAVES – OCTOBER LONG WEEKEND 2008

BY JILL ROWLING – CLIEDEN CAVES, OCTOBER LONG WEEKEND, 3RD TO 6TH OCTOBER 2008

Participants: Chris Norton, Jill Rowling, Mike Lake, the McKanna family; Guy, Romy, Grace & Charlie the Poodle, Rowena Larkins, Brendon Hyde, Max Midlan, Christine Lumm, the Scott family; Martin, Sue, Cosmin & Finn.

Friday Night 3rd October

Mike and Jill arrived at the Cliefden hut at about 8:15 pm and tidied the place. There had been a thunderstorm at Bathurst. They were joined later by Chris and Rowena.

Saturday 4th October: A Rambling Transmission and a Grovel in Gable

Transmission Cave, CL8 The day started off very dark, and a thunderstorm wandered through. Everyone was slack until the McKannas arrived, with the Scotts, Max and Christine shortly after. A few people walked down the creek to see the tufa dams, which were well and truly full of watercress. After sorting out the paperwork and getting the keys, we drove over to the silos.

On the way down we encountered a flood of sheep. Chris led us down to Transmission Cave (CL8), only to find he had to go back up to the car to get his caving gear. Not too much time was lost as everyone else was pfafting about. Transmission Cave is normally off limits due to horseshoe bats breeding or over-wintering, so the only time it would be accessible would be spring and autumn. We spent about 1.5 hours in the cave. Only one bat was seen (in flight), and was thought to be a horseshoe bat.



The Cliefden Cabin. Photo by Rowena Larkins

The cavers on this trip were Jill, Mike, Chris, Rowena, Martin, Cosmin, Guy, Max, Romy and Grace. Jill thinks she has located Armstrong Osborne's study site from his thesis: there are some interesting acicular crystal deposits in a sediment there. We saw tree roots, some calcite-covered: one looked like a Christmas tree, and some wall coatings (like Walli). A reddish earth fill was interesting. Max and Cosmin explored quite a bit of the cave, others less so.

Gable Cave, CL7 The group set off over the river, which was fairly low but still conducive to getting wet feet. On the way to Gable Cave, we saw a dark brown wallaby hopping around the place. Jill wondered whether it was a rock wallaby; it seemed agitated and dashed past Mike. In the creek, we heard something 'plop' - possibly a terrapin. We thought there may have been a platypus, as something was moving quickly in the creek.

We entered Gable Cave and spend about 1.5 hours going around this very interesting cave which really taxes the mental gears for remembering passages. The cavers were Chris, Rowena, Martin, Cosmin, Guy, Max, Jill and Grace. Romy and Mike stayed outside. Jill looked at more wall coatings (again similar to Walli) and general passage shapes. The cave is quite a maze, and well-decorated in parts. Old signatures indicate visitation goes back quick a long time.

Late in the afternoon, we returned back over the creek and up to the cars. The hillsides looked fantastically green and wonderful. Brendon arrived later that night, and it again rained.

Sunday 5th October

Charlie the Poodle was tied to a verandah post as requested by the hut owner. Jill dropped an updated trip form to the farm, then we drove over to the silos again. Due to the large number of attendees, we decided to split the group for Murder Cave in keeping with the permit. Group 1 comprised Chris, Rowena, Guy, Romy, Grace, Max and Cosmin. Group 2 comprised Mike, Jill and Brendon. Brendon was modeling a jacket which he had made for him when in Ethiopia. This splendid jacket had been carefully copied from one which he had completely worn out at the time. We did not ask which century this was and suspect time-travel was involved.

Murder Cave, CL2 Both groups visited Childrens Cave, actually part of Murder Cave, where there is a mummified and dismembered body of a kangaroo (see Rowena's photo). Group 1 went directly to Murder Cave and had a wonderful trip, seeing such delights as the Blue Stal, the Pineapple and the Helictite Room. Rowena managed to get a photo of the Pineapple and the Blue Stal by using a zoom. Both of these features are usually hard to get photos of, the Blue Stal particularly so as it is high up in the roof.



***Mummified kangaroo in Childrens Cave.
Photo by Rowena Larkins***



***The Blue Stal, Murder Cave.
Photo by Rowena Larkins***

Group 2 entered later, having pottered about looking at the Main Cave doline (CL1) and some fossils, Stable Cave CL11 which contains old beds. They climbed slowly into Murder Cave due to a certain person being uncertain of the drop until a hand line was placed. Jill photographed the moonmilk at the base of the drop. Others poked around the rockpile and spent some time taking photos in the Dragon Room



***The Dragon in the Dragon Room.
Photo by Rowena Larkins***



Brendon and his Ethiopian jacket in the Dragon Room. Photo by Jill Rowling

Beyond the Dragon Room is a small chamber with thick, acicular mineral coatings on the ceiling like a pool crystal. This mineral resembles gypsum (could really be calcite, gypsum, barite or aragonite). Two other coatings were seen here: one is a thin clear coating on the bedrock and the other is a rough coating on the bedrock. These look more like the thin gypsum coatings on etched surfaces like you see at Walli. (For a formal discussion of the Walli coatings see Jill's thesis online at <http://hdl.handle.net/2123/69> and look for the Walli chapter).

Groups 1 and 2 passed each other near the letter box squeeze. Group 1 headed out of the cave and Group 2 started looking for the Blue Stal but did not quite get there as Mike decided to wait near the Letterbox, and Brendon's light was already on its second set of strange batteries. They poked around the rockpile a bit then headed out.

On the way back to the cars they had a look at the lovely view across to The Island and Trilobite Hill, then got into a thistle and nettle thicket for a while.

The Non-attack Dog At the hut, there was consternation as Charlie the Poodle had been bailed up by a snake (either Brown or Tiger!) which had reared up in front of the dog and only disappeared when the humans arrived. Later that night, a rat wandered across the kitchen floor and disappeared under the lino. Charlie was shown it, but was really not interested in it. In fact, he went to bed early (must've been way too exciting for him!).

Monday 6th October

We woke up to the sound of heavy rain, dampening our hopes of being allowed to take one of the 4WD's across the farm roads and over the creek. Most people were not particularly enthused about caving. The McKannas packed and left for Abercrombie Caves, and the others (Jill, Mike, Chris, Brendon and Rowena) decided to go in Jill's car for a look at the thermal spring at "Kalimna". This measured a little over 29.5°C using a mercury-in-glass thermometer (-10–110°C). Considerable water flowed from the spring to a clear, shallow pool with green algae and cyanobacteria (I think). Someone has arranged some nice river cobbles around the top pool. We then drove out to the Boonderoo gate, then through the paddocks on the western side, to look at the entrance of CL69 Malongulli Cave. This overlooks the "Wyoming" residence, in a briar rose thicket. Brendon kindly opened and closed all the gates. We returned to the hut just in time for the heavens to open with a thunderstorm and hail. After lunch, we packed, cleaned up the hut, and left the keys and hut fees at the "Boonderoo" office as the Dunhills were out. Jill and Mike returned to Thornleigh via the Bells Line of Road again, which seems quicker than the Western Highway. It was very windy on the way home, but still about 20–22°C.



Is Chris checking a grave? Photo by Mike Lake



Jill, Brendan, Rowena and Chris at the Kalimna Thermal Spring. Photo by Mike Lake

PUZZLES IN FIG TREE CAVE

BY JILL ROWLING – WOMBEYAN CAVES, 25TH TO 26TH OCTOBER 2008

Participants: Jill Rowling, Mike Lake, Maike and Michael Bates, Renate, the McKanna family; Guy, Romy & Grace, Shannon Crack, Deborah Johnston.

Friday Night

Jill and Mike arrived to an almost deserted camping ground. Maike, Michael and Renate arrived next and set up their large, brand new 4-room Aldi tent: a topological curiosity.

Saturday

After a leisurely start, Jill and Mike walked to the guides office, later to be joined by the McKannas who had just arrived. Ice creams all round! A camper had brought in a leaf-tailed gecko that was found in her camping gear. The staff were trying to identify it, but it is more likely from Baulkham Hills rather than from Wombeyan (Jill later found a similar one at Thornleigh). Mike and Jill planned to go walking on the Saturday, as some people were not arriving until about noon, and the weather forecast suggested Saturday would be the better pick for this. The guides advised that a severe electrical storm had damaged a lot of electrical infrastructure, so once the Fig Tree Cave was closed for the night, there would be no lights on at all, and the top gate would be locked.

ML3 quarry and Waterfall Mike Lake led a walking party, comprising Jill, Michael Bates, Maike and Renate. On the top of the hill near the camping ground they viewed the entrance of Wineglass Cave, W10 (a pair of sports shoes were visible from the entrance). Near White Bend they looked at the entrance of CO2 cave, W43 (aka Jennings Cave), then went over the next hill and down the steep 4WD track to the ML3 quarry. Goats were seen here. Presumably they are attracted to the water ponding in the quarry. The quarry was quite interesting, as there are good examples of the block cutting process, and some small caves had been exposed in the walls. One of these had stalactites in it. Other geologically interesting features include faults, joints, a skarn. A small dead bush on top of a precipice was the stage for a couple of small birds, possibly Golden Whistlers, performing a courtship display. The male would expand and contract his wing and tail feathers, which were translucent from our perspective below him, all lit up in the sunshine. Very pretty.



The Melocco Bros. Quarry, MC3. Photo by Mike Lake

We continued over the next hill and stopped to take photos at the verandah-like entrance of Glass Cave (W9). Jill thinks the “Glass” part of the name might refer to some dry helictites in the twilight zone of the south side, which definitely look as though they are made of glass. Following Mike’s GPS, they walked southwards following a dry creek where they startled a small wallaby. They walked past River Cave (W13), past a dry creek junction, past various tagged entrances (W252, W251 and an untagged hole). Many of these are not enterable. Yellow orchid flowers, possibly “Parsons Bands”, occurred in groups along the walk. Where the creek began to narrow into a gorge, we went south-west, over a hill to an electric pole, then down to Mares Forest Creek for lunch. This was a beautiful spot, near springs such as the River Cave Spring (W47), which was flowing well down a tufa slope, and some other tagged cave entrances (W292).

[River Cave Spring (W47) flows into the northern side of Mares Forest Creek. There is a larger resurgence into the southern side of Mares Forest Creek just a few metres upstream. This is “Marble Sewer Cave”, W46. A few metres around the corner from this and on the same side is “Young Forsyths Folly Cave” W292. Ed.]

We continued downstream, along the lawn-like south-side river banks. They passed an overhang cave with what looked like a wombat burrow (no tag found), then a red granite outcrop indicated the top of a waterfall. This would be a great swimming spot; possibly a hand line would be helpful. Jill noticed that on the south side of the waterfall, the granite was below and to the east of the marble, separated by a fine-grained rock with a dark coating. The marble looked melted along the contact with the dark rock.



W9 entrance of Glass Cave Photo by Mike Lake



**The resurgence "Marble Sewer Cave" W46
Photo by Mike Lake**

Our group scrambled up the north side of this canyon. Some people found this a bit tricky. Jill used gardening gloves, to avoid prickles. The rock on this climb looked like a reddish quartz porphyry, in which were flowering numerous "Billy Buttons" (yellow hemispherical daisies without petals). At the top of this slope, the rock and the vegetation understory change. The herbs were mainly a type of miniature *Xanthorrea*. The rock is red and black, fine-grained and very tough. Some surfaces sparkle with fine crystal facets. When Jill was doing her thesis, she determined the rock was a phonolite on account of its nepheline and spinel minerals, and had fallen from the sky during a volcanic eruption, with lapilli and rhyolitic textures. (*Here endeth the lesson.*)

We continued in the warm afternoon heading back to the camping ground, passing W378 and the "Geoff MacDonnell highway" then the Bullio tourist track and back to camp for an early dinner.

Exploration in Grants Cave (W136) Meanwhile, Shannon and Deborah were investigating the extensions in Grants Cave, as they had found a daylight hole on the previous trip and were keen to explore more of this area. They were accompanied part way by Guy, Romy and Grace as far as the squeeze, but its filtering meant the McKannas had to be satisfied with the (rather extensive) entrance series. The odd bat was seen. Shannon and Deborah returned to camp later that evening while everyone else was at Fig Tree Cave.

Saturday Evening in Fig Tree Cave: We have a Puzzle

After dinner, most people went into Fig Tree Cave as Jill needed to do some catch-up sketching and also we have a puzzle, namely the big pit in the Ballroom and associated chambers off it. As the Bathroom (part of the Marble Streamway) was relatively dry, we decided to enter Fig Tree Cave via the Victoria Arch (W150) entrance. At one point in the arch, you can see both entrances. To see a rare event, we turned our lights off and it was an eerie sight, with the huge dark arch dimly lit by the deep blue twilight coming from each entrance. Apart from the railings and path, this may be what the arch looked like before electric lighting. We proceeded fairly quickly along the streamway. The Bathroom had only a small pool of water.

On the show cave path of the Opera House, they discussed what would be done. They had a quick look at the Bat Chamber, the Ballroom and Ceiling Room, but did not find a way into the extensions. They left Jill to sketch the Ballroom and Bat Chamber. Mike Lake took one group over to the exit gate and sketched the path coming in. Others just headed back to camp.

There were hardly any bats in the Bat Chamber but they were certainly active in the Ballroom. When Jill was sketching, they whizzed past at a great speed, up and down the chamber, sometimes in pairs, chasing each other and paying little attention to her apart from avoiding her at the last minute.

So the puzzle is this: Jill remembers visiting the bottom of the pit in the 1980's, via a rockpile route. She also visited the chambers visible on the far side of the pit at that time. We have yet to find the route (although Jill has been losing a bit of sleep over it and is mentally ticking off possibilities). Guy, being a climber, is just as happy to go the direct way with some gear, like the 1860's party. The subtle approach would be just as satisfying.

Sunday

Most people slept in. It did not rain so we have no idea if the Aldi tent is waterproof, but apparently the occupants could see daylight through the seams. Michael B, Maïke and Renate had to leave early, so they walked around the Arch area for a while before returning to Sydney. The remaining people split into groups as follows:

Fig Tree Cave Sketching Jill entered Fig Tree Cave via the top (W148) entrance, using a token, and spent about an hour sketching the track on top of the survey. She is convinced that caves create time warps as there is still more work to be done on the track. Near the upper entrance, there is still plenty of white fluffy mineral on the rocks, as noted on the September trip, but it is starting to dissolve and coalesce, looking more like white fairy floss now. Jill still thinks it may be a nitrate and certainly contributes to the formation of dust in the entrance.

Surface Activities near Grants Cave Deborah and Shannon scrambled around the hillside near Grants Cave and estimated the position of a small untagged hole in Grants with respect to the hillside; it may be around 30m away from the lower Creek Cave entrance of Fig Tree Cave but needs to be measured more accurately as things jump round on the GPS.

Fig Tree Cave – Water in Lower Levels Guy, Romy and Grace scrambled down to the sump junction of Fig Tree Cave, and reported about 20 cm water in the right hand sump, and about double this in the left hand sump. They could see the show cave lights from one part of the (left-hand) branch, so we should do a loop on a future trip and link the top and bottom surveys.

Summary of Mapping Work

Last year SUSS completed most of the creek level mapping in Fig Tree Cave. Apart from the mid-year hiatus involving search and rescue, this year SUSS has been surveying the middle levels, including the show cave track and large chambers (Opera House and Ball Room). The sketching has been playing catch-up, and the computer work depends on the sketching. SUSS does not have many active people capable of in-cave sketching. Maybe another survey training day is needed. So to date, the following mapping work is still to be done in Fig Tree Cave:

- * The pit off the Ball Room and other small leads off the Ball Room
- * Small leads off the Opera House
- * The chambers visible beyond the pit
- * Link between the Opera House and the creek near Sump Junction
- * Link between the entrance chamber and Sump Junction
- * Maintenance area between the entrance chamber and the Opera House
- * Sketching in the Opera House
- * Upper chamber between the entrance chamber and the Opera House. I think Trickett called this The Nave.
- * Upper chambers on the eastern side of the Opera House
- * Cave above Victoria Arch.
- * Floodway above the creek in Creek Cave
- * Floodway above the creek in Bathroom



Jill, Renate, Maike and Mike discussing the geomorphology in ML3. Photo by Michael Bates

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS TO PUZZLES

BY JILL ROWLING – WOMBEYAN CAVES, 22ND TO 23RD NOVEMBER 2008

Participants: Jill Rowling, Rowena Larkins, the McKanna family; Guy, Romy & Grace, Shannon Crack, Deborah Johnston, Sam Morin.

Friday Night

Jill arrived on a balmy Friday evening, having spent the day at Bungonia at a BRAG (Bungonia Recreational Activities Group) meeting, so came to Wombeyan via the relatively luxurious road from Goulburn. We did not have the “cavers” corner’ this time, as a large group of kids and their minders were occupying it. Instead, we picked a spot away from trees on the other side of the creek. The forecast for the weekend was foul weather but for some reason the rest of the SUSS contingent ignored this and arrived the following morning.

Saturday

It rained overnight but the morning started all sunny and warm in the sun, when it came out, but a chill breeze dictate hat, gloves and raincoat. Jill had a leisurely breakfast in the sun, rain and possibly melted snow. Presently a couple of cars arrived: Megan and Alan, then Shannon, Deborah and her nephew Sam. Jill obtained some tokens from the guides office and learned that the Junction Cave wiring is “fried” but the other show caves were operational. They had experienced a big Willy-Willy a couple of weeks earlier which had touched down in the camping ground and tore the tops off some of the trees, sounding like a freight train. Back at the camping ground, Rowena had arrived so we were ready to go except a dark storm came over and hailed on us. The clouds looked like snow, and it was like mountain weather: bright and sunny then freezing wet.

Grants Cave, W136 Shannon, Alan, Deborah and Sam went over to Grants Cave, then Deborah and Sam went over to the daylight hole. This is very close to the Creek Cave exit of Fig Tree Cave, and a forestry compass survey would be required.

Fig Tree Cave, W148-W150 Jill and Rowena went to Fig Tree Cave via the top entrance and sketched on the show cave path, occasionally explaining things to tourists several times over. Unfortunately the wiring for the sound and light show is still not operational. One child exclaimed that *that* (a large stalagmite in the Opera House) “looked just like a large frog, sipping a cup of tea”. Rowena and Jill exited via Creek Cave for a late lunch, except it was pouring sleet. When that stopped, they wandered outside to see Deborah and Sam at the Grants Cave daylight hole, then returned to their sketching. Rowena found an error in the survey of the Colonnades so we need to fix that up. After 5pm, one of the guides came through to check and lock the cave, so they exited shortly after this for an early dinner. A pair of lapwings (aka Spurwing Plovers) had decided to nest on the lawn with the cricket pitch and were trying their hardest to lure everyone away (the female) or orbit and dive bomb them (the male), all the time clattering and “dit-dit-diting” loudly. Mind you, they also tried to chase the kangaroos away (a futile exercise, since the kangaroos also think it’s their lawn).

Saturday Evening at the Camp Ground It was freezing at the camping ground, and the Barmah was chock-a-block full of Camp Quality kids and their minders. Jill managed to cook outside and others opted to cram into the Barmah with its log fire.

Saturday Evening in Fig Tree Cave Solving Some Puzzles Guy, Romy and Grace had just arrived and went into Fig Tree Cave with Megan to attempt some of the climbs: the one above the Bathroom is still a non-goer, and would need either scaling poles, an extension ladder, or just a Disto survey from the path. The pit at the north end of the Ballroom was descended and laddered, and the lower extension was not checked, although it was noted there is a sort of canyon in the bottom, possibly an extension of the one in the bottom of the Opera House. Given the state of their tent, and the weather forecast, the McKannas left to go home.

Jill and Rowena spent a few hours having a good look at the cave to determine next year’s activities: what has not been surveyed yet. They looked at a climb in the north of the Ballroom, overlooking the Opera House and above the Ceiling Room (or possibly this is in fact the Ceiling Room: Trickett’s map is a little unclear here). Since the wire netting has been removed, this climb is now very exposed. It would definitely need some protection but appears otherwise do-able. It should gain access to the chamber visible on the far side of the pit. Jill recalls it was easy with a hand line about 20 years ago ...

They looked at the chamber in the southwest corner of the Opera House, which has a rimstone (gour) floor completely covered in bat guano. Under nearby boulders, Rowena found some deep holes which appear to be going to the creek. In the centre of the Opera House, on the south side of the Grand Stalagmites, Jill noted some awesome

holes forming a canyon which presumably also leads to the creek below.

They looked at the wobbly rock in the hole next to the undeveloped path on the eastern side of the Opera House, and Jill thinks she has been down that hole a long time ago, and that it connects to the base of the pit in the northern end of the Ballroom. The wobbly rock could be hauled out. Beyond it is a rift with loose sides, trending north-east.

Rowena climbed up to The Nave, an area between the entrance chamber and the Opera House, and returned to the path to sketch it roughly (survey required). She also climbed down the Entrance chamber rockpile to look at the fairly impressive downstream sumps area. She reported water in Sump Junction, but the rimstone dams were dry. The downstream sump appeared to fork (although this could be an optical illusion). Jill remained in the entrance chamber and looked at the white mineral extrusions, which appeared to be more active (i.e. less congealed), possibly because of the cold dry weather. She determined the material was Nitre (from its cold, salty taste – Yuk!).

Getting Blown About at the Camping Ground Back at the camping ground, the wind was shocking. It was a pretty wild night, with sleet and wind gusts that bent people's tents flat, and with the wind roaring through the trees. The "dit" birds complained about it with every gust.

Sunday 23rd November

Some people discovered their tents leaked. It was 4°C according to one car thermometer, and still very windy. Some people had breakfast in the Barmah.

Trip Supervisor Practice 1: Laddering in the Pit After breakfast, we went to Fig Tree Cave, to the pit at the north end of the Ballroom. Here, Deborah set up a ladder and belay to the satisfaction of the trip supervisors. Three people descended: Megan, Alan and Rowena. The pitch is overhung and lands on a ledge, from which people can climb around and look at the rockpile. There are several holes in the floor. Rowena reported a couple of leads heading off to the north east (Jill thinks one of these leads back round to the hole in the undeveloped path). A second ladder was needed for the deepest hole (we used the main ladder, lowered down). Only half of it was needed. Alan presently emerged from the Ballroom behind us: he had found a creek and sumps, and realised it was part of the upstream sumps area, so had returned through the show cave.

Trip supervisor Practice 2: Mid Rope Rescue We packed up and went out via the Creek Cave exit for lunch (some were lured to the kiosk), then set up a rope at the fixed ladder leading to Chalkers Retreat. Outside were voices: some youths, clearly disappointed that they'd been "sprung" trying to enter the cave. Meanwhile, Deborah was trying to perform a mid-rope rescue with Shannon as the "victim", and after re-adjusting various cord length, successfully demonstrated this about 2 m off the ground. The only other addition to this setup could have been to rig the main anchor off a lowering system to make it quicker to lower the tangled mess when they get stuck! Of course that would mean more things to watch over ... We exited, packed up wet tents, handed in trip forms and headed off on our separate ways.

Summary of Work Still to be Done in Fig Tree Cave

Exploration and surveying in Fig Tree Cave is still required in the following areas:

- Fig Tree upp entrance chamber "Hole to water" rockpile: breezes suggest additional connections, possibly to Grants Cave;
- The Opera House has several leads: pitches going to creek level, connections to the pit in the north of the Ballroom, the side passage with the wobbly rock, and the south end;
- The pit in the northern end of the Ballroom has several leads, including the connection to the creek, something to the east and something to the north;
- Small extensions off the Opera House which require a change of shoes to avoid muddying the flowstone, such as Trickett's Drapery Room and the area north of the path;
- There are leads in the ceiling of the Ballroom and the Bat Chamber: maybe a camera on a balloon might help here (about 8 to 10 m up);
- The Nave (upper chamber between the entrance chamber and the Opera House).
- Maintenance and storage area between the entrance chamber and the Opera House
- The cut-off meander above the Bath Room;
- The phreatic loop which runs near the ceiling of Victoria Arch to near the gate;
- The cave in the ceiling of Victoria Arch;
- The Ceiling Room (balcony overlooking Opera House)

- The Ceiling Room extension (hole in the ceiling) which needs climbing protection;
- Fix up the Colonnades survey;
- The south end of the large doline (south side of Victoria Arch) lies roughly between the Drought Breaker and the pit in the north of the Ballroom. This rockpile should be looked at a bit more closely, especially under the more southerly cliff.

As well as the above, the following sketching catch-up work is still to be done in Fig Tree Cave:

- The Drawing Room;
- The showcave path east of the Opera House and before the Colonnades.



***Megan Pryke in Wombeyan Creek, Victoria Arch.
Photo by Mike Lake***



Alan & Megan Pryke & Phil Maynard in the southern entrance of Victoria Arch. Photo by Mike Lake



***Jill Rowling in Wombeyan Creek, Victoria Arch.
Photo by Mike Lake***

THE BBQ BY SHANNON CRACK

The food (usually considered to be an essential item at any BBQ) took an unusual route to Jenolan. After first travelling to Taronga Zoo (SUSS' party was not the only one this day) a brief stop was made to pick up the last few items. The food was late so late in fact that those who were waiting for it were concerned they'd have no dinner. Though, luckily, the food did arrive before starvation set in and cannibalism began.

But then question of cooking was arose. With one BBQ at the hut but no gas and another BBQ and gas locked away in the CFA hut this question proved most vexing as the food was now temptingly close and yet raw and unedible. To the rescue came the concept of fire (it's not a new thing but very handy) no need for gas or a bbq just wood to burn and a steel plate to cook on.

And thus without further delay fire was created in at the rear of the hut and the smell of cooking did soon fill the air. Upon the completion of cooking the food was set upon by all and sundry with ravenous fury.

SURVEYING GLASS CAVE BY ROWENA LARKINS

Participants: Phil Maynard, Ian Cooper, Chris Norton, Rowena Larkins, Shannon Crack, Michael Bates

Glass cave was discovered in 1877. It was so named, according to the SMH of 1889, "on account of the transparent beauty of its adornments". Glass featured as No 10 from the 1954 "26 Problems to be Solved at Jenolan" list: Linking of Rho Hole, Aladdin and Glass.

In the 1950s an additional cave was found in the area. Ian Carpenter Cave was subsequently connected through to Rho Hole providing the beginnings of an integrated cave system. Not much progress has occurred otherwise. Interestingly the key to connecting all these caves may well prove to be a common cave between all rather than separate links between each. The discovery of stream passages trending east and upwards beyond the Watergate Sump gives rise to the possibility of the Jenolan System lying between all three caves. Rho Hole would be the most likely cave to be connected first, based on its intense cold draft from two entrances. Case open.

In his list of things to do at Jenolan, Mark Staraj states;

"14. A River in Glass Cave. Yet another legend/myth/good story arose with the publication of the Northern Limestone Book. A caver from the 1930s/40s wrote to say that the map of Glass Cave did not seem anywhere near as large as he remembered it. On a multi-hour trip accompanied by scouts Osborne says that they explored a lengthy extension to both espy a river and also a tourist track. Needless to say numerous visits to Glass Cave found nothing at all and despite the additional details that supported Osborne's statement that he had visited Glass Cave some have concluded that the river had crept in from a half-remembered visit to Mammoth, or from static seepage pools at the lowest level. And then in 1979 divers indeed found a small stream underlying the area near Glass Cave – the Far Country stream. Was there truth in the story after all? Everyone remembered that Wilson's river was eventually found just where he said it was. Just maybe ..."

SUSS Bull 44(4) January-March 2005

The blue book map of Glass is indeed woefully incomplete. There are large rooms missing totally from it so it is in desperate need of a re-survey, but is there a river or a connection to another cave?

I was raised by my mum to be fashionably late. Sadly this resulted in me arriving at Jenolan slightly after everyone had left for the caves. Noting that a group had listed they were visiting Glass on the white board, and knowing that it would take time for them to set up the abseil and enter, I decided to attach myself to that trip and put my name on the white board. Trogged up I headed off to the cave deciding that if I called out from the entrance and heard people responding I would go in.

At the entrance I heard voices below and called out. I received a cheery "Come on down" from Phil, to which I responded "are you surveying with compass and clino". Chris responded "Now Rowena, you know you shouldn't call your fellow cavers names like Clino".



Phil Maynard surveying in Glass Cave
Photo by Rowena Larkins

The entrance to Glass cave is about 40 meters north of Aladdin cave and about 20 meters up the hill from the Rho entrance. Furthermore, it is about 30 meters up the hill from the dry Jenolan River bed.

Harnessed up I entered the cave. The entry is up a 45 degree up-sloping crawl, in a phreatic tube, roughly 1 meter in diameter, followed by an 11 meter abseil down alongside an old tourist ladder. Once down I provided the survey party with the use of the Christmas present I had bought myself, a disto.

The party had just surveyed the large chamber entered by the abseil pitch and were heading to some chambers under the ladder heading south. These consisted of several well decorated rooms with crawls between them. In search of the elusive river, or connection to Rho, Ian Carpenter, or Aladdin, we attempted to negotiate a tight squeeze. The smallest in the party, yours truly, was the one who fitted through the squeeze and had a scout around. There were several chambers a few meters wide, and the cave obviously continued. So the others contorted their bodies and eventually there were three of us in these southern chambers. Hobnail boot marks showed we were not the first visitors to this room which was not on the blue book map, but did it go to the river? Aladdin? Something new?



**Shannon Crack sketching in Glass Cave.
Photo by Rowena Larkins**

We surveyed passages which went 10 meters south of the ladder, with a total length of just over 22 meters ending in a decorated chamber with no obvious leads. Only 30 meters to go to join with Aladdin!

Back to the main chamber and we surveyed up to the top of the north most rock, which was about 5 meters above the base of the ladder and a good point to survey into another room which turned out to be about 13 meters long (also not shown on the blue book map). There was an unsurveyed tight squeeze which others had tried to enter in Glass which had been found to be too tight. After a bit of a break, Shannon poured himself through the squeeze and surprisingly Michael went through too, though he found it tight.

We surveyed this section, another 12 meters of passage heading west in the direction of the Imperial Streamway. The survey was continued back in the main chamber and surveyed into the large 13 meters long room which was 2 meters wide and about 3 meters high at the lowest point. The ceiling was well decorated and we could imagine the original decoration in Glass as seen in the late 1800's. There were signatures on the wall from the 1930's at the entrance to this room, which was not that remarkable, as people have been signing their name in this cave for over 100 years. The end of this room has a rift heading east about 3 meters long which was a bit small to be entered, another rift ran for 5 meters south, and was about 10 cm wide (distos are great!). Two pits in the floor here are waiting to be surveyed by someone small. We surveyed this room and stopped when we had a headlamp failure.

As per good practices Michael had a spare so he swapped lights over and we proceeded back to the cabin. When tested there later he found his four year old, one Watt LED had died. Still more to survey. Still rooms which were not on the blue book map to be added, still no river and still no connection to the other caves. Surveyed depth is 27 meters from the entrance, surveyed length is 266 meters, excluding Chevalier and Loubens. The new survey shows the cave goes 15 meters south of the entrance, 28 meters north of the entrance and 33 meters west into the bluff.

KALANG CANYON BY LOUISE JOHNSTON

Participants: Louise Johnston, Deborah Johnston, Phil Maynard, Paul Maynard

The usual weekend Jenolan caving trip got off to an unusual start when I arrived to find three people ready to blast off to Kanangra for some canyoning. Unfortunately without a harness, descender, wetsuit or shoes this was not looking like a good start to my canyoning season. Luckily Ian Cooper, Rowena Larkins and Phil Maynard stepped in to kit me out and it was off to Kalang!

Being my first Kanangra canyon I was expecting big abseils and dramatic scenery but wasn't quite ready for the shuffling along slippery ledges peering straight down some of these big abseils. Luckily my only slip was off a 1.5 metre ledge. Even still, that was enough to have me gasp in fear of a twisted ankle and a mega rescue operation. Fortunately all was well and also fortunately Phil Maynard and his brother, Pirate Paul seemed to know where the rigging points were, as I would be unlikely to be climbing over the edges of cliffs looking for them.

The abseils seemed to get bigger at each turn with Deborah's confidence slowly growing. Still, it wasn't bolstered by Phil's response to her question "How big is the next one?". Disappearing quickly over the edge of the cliff he bellowed out "BLOODY HUGE!" I offered to go next and again she asked "So ... how big is this one?" The only sensible response was "OH! YEAH, ITS BIG!" before zipping down the rope.

All too soon we came to a water jump, the bane of my canyoning adventures. Crouching on the edge looking into the crystal clear water less than two metres away, free of any dangers or obstructions I found it hard to justify the irrational panic coursing through my body. Eventually there was nothing for it but to jump, something I didn't enjoy nearly as much as Deborah and Paul who climbed up for extra jumps.

The canyon ends with an amazing view out across the Kanangra wilderness, unfortunately the beauty of the area is associated with its steep cliffs, deep gullies and wild ravines which are also part of the steep hike out. With the day getting later and a shared hatred of leeches we elect for the climb straight up a ridge complete with rolling boulders, innumerable millipedes and burning calf muscles. We made it to the cars with not a lot of daylight to spare and rain clouds rolling in, but still plenty of time to get back to the warmth of the Jenolan hut for some well deserved cheese, wine and leftover chocolate.

SURVEYING NORTHWEST MAMMOTH BY MICHAEL BATES

Participants: Phil Maynard, Rowena Larkins, Jack O'Brien, Rod O'Brien and Michael Bates

I have only been to the northern section of Mammoth Cave once before, and that was about 4 years ago to assist with the survey of Brittle Bazaar. During this December's week long trip, we made two trips surveying in the northwestern part of Mammoth. The Northwest Passage is a fairly infrequently visited part of the cave. When you look at the map in the "Yellow Book" it appears that the most interesting thing about the Northwest Passage is that you don't have to go down the "infinite crawl" to get to that extremity of the cave. In actual fact, the trip down Northwest Passage is a fun and slightly sporty trip with interesting passage and geology.

Our quarry for the day was to survey Guzround from the end of the survey in Northwest Passage. We went via Debouchment Detour, through the Middle Bit and the ironically named dry siphon (which, incidentally, had about 1–2 cm of water in its gravelly bottom). Through one of the squeezes in Northwest Passage, Rod's famous chest pushed a bow wave of gravel out of the squeeze, clearing the way for the rest of us who may have found things a little on the tight side, were it not for Rod's bull-dozing chest.

Guzround does not appear in the yellow book, but is a rock pile that allows one to bypass Guzova (which involves a 10 m tape climb). The survey team was Rod, Rowena and myself, while Jack and Phil ran around the rock pile exploring. The surveying was slow, as the rockpile is not the easiest of surveys in the world, even as far as rockpiles go.

After completing the survey, we departed the cave uneventfully.

RETURN TO NORTHWEST MAMMOTH BY MICHAEL BATES

Participants: Ian Cooper, Phil Maynard and Michael Bates

With Guzround surveyed, we returned to NW Mammoth to survey Guzova and Guzunda, then to tie them into Guzround and finally complete the loop to Infinite Crawl. We in fact did more than that, even beginning the survey to the northern parts of Infinite Crawl, almost to the end of the previous Mammoth survey.

After surveying and descending Guzova, Phil "Cortés"¹ Maynard decided to pull the tape down, meaning our only means of retreat was via Guzround or Infinite Crawl. The reason for this is that he wanted to steel our resolve to conquer Guzunda as he remembered that particular piece of passage to be a place that does not lend itself to gentlemanly caving.

Luckily for all involved, Guzunda was relatively easy surveying. A small side passage was also surveyed which quickly became too tight for anything human sized. It is anticipated that it will link up with a side passage from Infinite Crawl², and indeed, this passage appears to be shown as an unsurveyed passage linking Northwest Passage with Infinite Crawl in the Yellow Book.

The survey was linked back to the Guzround survey and through more rockpile to the current northern extremity of the Infinite Crawl survey. At this point, there appears to be two avens (one heading roughly south, the other

¹Hernán Cortés burned his ships upon his arrival in the New World in 1519. His reasoning for doing so was to ensure that none of his men got any funny ideas like retreating should their idea to conquer the Mayan Empire not go according to plan.

²While the main section of Infinite Crawl from the Junction to the Northwest Passage has been surveyed, the side passages have not yet been surveyed ... I can't imagine why this is the case.

roughly north) that warrant investigation. It is postulated at this stage that the southward aven is a higher level passage back to Infinite Crawl. A similar hypothesis was put forward for the northward heading aven by our resident geologist.

From the junction of the two surveys (the Northwest Passage branch and the Infinite Crawl branch) the Infinite Crawl does a quick detour to the east before turning northwards again. At the point where it turns northward again, there was another aven found that warrants further investigation and surveying. We continued for another two survey legs northward before we decided that we didn't quite have enough time to survey all the way to Nibicon Dig in Serpentine that day, and so instead we began the long journey home through the aptly named Infinite Crawl.

WIBURDS LAKE CAVE BY MICHAEL BATES

Participants: Ian Cooper, Rowena Larkins, George Bills, Mel Stamell, Shannon Crack and Michael Bates

Saturday was a fine-ish day after some fairly consistent rain for the preceeding two days or so. On our way to Wiburds, we noticed that the creek at the Playing Fields was flowing and sinking entirely into End Zone (the northern extremity of dry passage in Spider Cave). Ian Cooper estimated the flow to be approximately 0.3 cusecs (or $0.3 \text{ m}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}$ for those who prefer SI units).

The day was a day for the "micro-bods" with Shannon and Mel selected to go to Wretched to try and establish a voice connection between the NW part of Wretched and SSS extension at precisely 1.15pm. Needless to say, we who were not as micro got to go to SSS extension to establish that side of the voice connection. The post-voice connection plan was for those in Wretched to complete the survey of the NW portion while the not-so-micros familiarised themselves with various western parts of the cave. We were to meet back at River Section at 4pm and wander off together. If only things worked out so perfectly ...

On their way to the annointed place, Shannon managed to slide down into 4m pit, that he then spent the next 5 or so hours trying to get out of. After exhaustive investigation, he was able to conclude that it doesn't go anywhere. Later, back at the hut, there were a number of names that were suggested for said pit, including Shannon's Crack and the Crack Trap – although my personal favourite is The Crack Den.

We in the SSS extension were making as much noise as we could at the annointed time. Upon not hearing any reply, we assumed that the voice connection would not be made. We then had a jolly good time in SSS Extension, the Fingers of God and the Brown Room. We also went to Yawning Gulches to see whether there was any water there, but it is still dry. It is worth noting that the cave is wetter than it has been in recent times, but is not as wet as "normal."

The un-micros were having such a good time, that it wasn't until after 4.30 that we got back from Yawning Gulches. It was recalled that Mel had left her hat and other surface gear near the entrance of the cave, and that if this gear was gone, her and Shannon were also gone (most likely to J75, as Shannon had mentioned earlier in the day that he wanted to have a quick look in this on the way home). At the entrance, there was none of Mel's gear, so we decided it was time to head back to the hut.

Shannon and Mel were not at the hut when we arrived, and we deduced that they must have discovered kilometres of virgin passage in J75. At about 6.15, when we were beginning to get concerned and were considering chasing them down and wrestling them out of J75 Mel, and a big ball of mud that vaguely resembled Shannon, arrived back at the hut and relayed their ordeal to us. But what of Mel's gear? It had been put into one of the packs that the non-micros had left on the surface, and its presence went unnoticed. Since everyone was now returned safe and sound, it was time to quench thirsts and enjoy the last night in the hut to celebrate a fun and productive week of caving!

DWYER'S CAVE BY MAX MIDLEN

[This report covers the July week-long trip and December week-long trip in 2008.]

Participants: Max Midlen, Phil Maynard, Paul Maynard, Rowena Larkins, Stephen Kennedy

When caves have a reputation such as Dwyers have, they just don't happen! The seed of such an undertaking has to be planted well in advance, as all regulars to Jenolen can testify to. On the whole, they just ignored me. I'm not sure how it caught my interest but it was probably after listening to a story from Coops or Keir, with sufficient embellishment to make it was the worst cave in Australia. It surely can't be that bad?

I had been working the hardest on Alan. Mentioning all the times I had been with him – hours on end. Surveying around every rock, looking at every nook and cranny without any complaint what so ever. He was just not interested, replying with (lame) excuses such as "we only have five ladders", or "Megan has a new washing machine" etc. etc.

Eventually, disgruntled I asked Alan if he would do the upper part at least. He succumbed to my pleading along

with Megan and Rowena. Those new to the cave were pleasantly surprised, as was the fat leech hitching a ride with Rowena. Watch out he'll be hungry! "Come on Alan next month" I kept asking. He replied with only one word "Rho".

Who would have thought that the world youth were my saviour? With most cavers avoiding Sydney by at least one state we were assured of a quiet week long July trip. Arriving early Saturday morning I was greeted by Phil: "Do you want to do Dywers?" he asked nonchalantly. I nearly kissed him . . . nearly!

We only had four ladders (the blue book advised seven) but we pushed on regardless. Who needs ladders anyway? Shortly after the 50 ft ladder of cloud pitch, Phil and myself agreed on a better suited position for a bolt for the Chocolate Box pitch. Just the short 15 ft ladder is required with a longish tether.

After a trudge across the floor of chocolate box and then a drag or climb up an inclined rift to an awkward climb through a hole to a position where the delights of the Slop Trough five metres below can be admired. This can be free climbed up and down but a tape is useful.

Carefully trying to avoid the equipment getting absolutely caked in clay and mud and not leaving any footwear behind, it is only 15 metres to the Pulley system. This will use our third ladder. Two more pitches and only one more ladder. Simple, once up the pulley pitch remove the ladder and use this on the last pitch. Whilst fumbling with Karabeners caked in thick layers of mud Phil remarked how good it would be to bypass the Slop Trough with a Tyrolean traverse back across to the top of the Laundry Chute – ummn.

After the delights of the last hour or so we were surprised by the delights of the Pit of Babel. No, not by the clay and mud, but by the intensity of the white of the formations! Unrolling the last ladder soon had the 50 ft of Pit of Babel rigged. Although we life lined every pitch except the short Chocolate Box pitch, it would have been a soft landing anyway. A lifeline on the Pit of Babel is essential. The top is muddy and has an exposed belay point above a three metre slope which turns to a free hanging pitch.

From the Pit of Babel it only takes a couple more stops to remove the excessive build up of mud on the boots to reach the final pitch. The pulley system ladder was used and after 30 ft the bottom of the large rift was reached.

Quickly I had a look along the dig. This felt quite intimidating, probably due to the relationship of the floor, roof and walls to one another. Referring to the blue book, I reached the first of the 90 degree bends near the end. In order to get further, a micro-bod is required. On the way back across the floor of the rift, I had a look down the unexplored shaft. It looked interesting, but with no extra gear we had to leave it at that.

Strength is needed on the way out as we all found out. It's just the sheer weight of the clay on everything.

It was not until the December week long trip that enthusiasm regained enough to suggest another "look" at the deep end of Dywers. Phil, Rowena, myself and the small boy Stephen. I had plans for him.

On the exit last trip, we all cursed the short drop just after the flattener. This time it was re-bolted with a much better hang position. A better piece of fixed rope is still needed though. The novices to Dywers at least made the similar observations that we had made on our earlier trip – the mud and clay are extremely enjoyable. Rowena seemed to have the most fun as she mentioned it every time her Dunlop Volley left behind. The final rift was soon reached by all of us. Stephen (micro-man) was told immediately to get up the dig before he had any thought of changing his mind. Phil and Rowena admired the old digging skip and beer cans while I attached the fifth ladder to the base of the fourth ladder and explored the unexplored shaft.

Maybe there was more to it before the spoil of someones early dig made it's way down there, but basically it is a continuation of the rift with a gravel choked dry sump. Meanwhile Stephen was quietly exploring the dig. On his return he mentioned the lack of room and the mud. He got up to the 90 degree bend. All I know is we need a new, smaller boy!!!

CLIEDEN CAVES TRIP GALLERY



***Cosmin & Finn Scott, Transmission Cave.
Photo by Mike Lake***



***Martin Scott, Transmission Cave.
Photo by Mike Lake***



***Outside Transmission Cave, Grace, Finn, Guy, Martin
& Cosmin. Photo by Mike Lake***



***Rowena & Jill at the entrance of Gable Cave.
Photo by Mike Lake***



Brendan & Jill “No, not Out of Africa, were’re at Cliefden”. Photo by Mike Lake

THE SUSS BULL WOULD LIKE YOUR ARTICLES

The SUSS Bull welcomes trip reports and/or photos from members and visitors to our trips. Here are some guidelines on submitting material so that it can be used in the Bull.

Text Submit material to Mike Lake (MikeL@speleonics.com.au) in either plain text, Open Office, MS Word or \LaTeX 2e format. The Bull is actually typeset using \LaTeX 2e.

Photos Photos would usually be supplied in JPG or TIFF formats.

§ They must have sufficient resolution! If we wish to print a photo with a width of 10 cm then the photo must have a width of at least 1200 pixels. This is because for a minimum print resolution of 300 dpi (dots per inch), 10 cm = 4 inches which will be $4 \times 300 \text{ dpi} = 1200 \text{ dots}$. However a greater resolution is better as we usually need to scale a picture in size to fit the surrounding text and page layout. Most users submit pictures of about 2000–3000 pixels on each side which are a few Megabytes in size.

§ Don’t manipulate or try to ‘improve’ the picture unless you are an expert. Alan Pryke is an expert in improving images – just about everyone else in SUSS isn’t. Just send me the images as they are.

§ All pictures must also be accompanied by caption and attribution information. It’s best to include this information in a plain text file accompanying the pictures. Clearly indicate the filename of the picture for each caption. Example:

0134.jpg Jill and Mike in the entrance of Mammoth Cave, Jenolan. Photo by John Doe.

0110.jpg Formations in Glass Cave, Jenolan. Photo by John Doe.

§ Use filenames that do not contain spaces in them.

I look forward to receiving lots of articles and pictures for the next issue.

Best wishes in Caving
Mike Lake

TRIP LIST – MARCH 2009

SUSS General Meetings are held on the first Thursday of the month at 7:00pm (for a 7.30pm start) in the Common Room in the Holme Building at the University of Sydney.

For updates to this list, check out the SUSS Website: <http://ee.usyd.edu.au/suss>. Detailed information on each caving area (plus other useful information such as what you will need to bring) can be found in the *Beginner's Handbook* section of the Website.

Please Note: it is YOUR responsibility to inform the trip supervisor of any relevant medical conditions which may in any way affect your fitness, such as asthma, diabetes and the like.

March

7–8 Jenolan. Beginners' trip to Jenolan, our favourite area. Contact Deborah. birinxi@gmail.com

14–15 Timor. A joint trip with NHVSS to these caves in the Hunter Valley. Contact Phil Maynard, Philip.Maynard@uts.edu.au or 9908 2272 (home).

14–15 Canyoning. Beginners' trip; come and get wet in some canyons with Deborah, birinxi@gmail.com

21–22 Bungonia. Beginners' trip; easy caving at Bungonia with Deborah, birinxi@gmail.com

28–29 Wombeyan. Good caves and a good campsite in the southern highlands. Contact Jill, Rowling@ali.com.au

April

4–5 Jenolan.

10–13 Yarrangobilly. Easter trip to the fabulous Yagby caves down in the Snowy mountains.
Contact Deborah, birinxi@gmail.com

May

16–17 Jenolan.

June

13–14 Jenolan.

July

4–12 Jenolan.

IUS conference, Kerrville, USA. July to August, not covered by SUSS insurance as with any trip run in or primarily organised by a party from the USA, Canada or their external territories.

August

15–16 Jenolan.

September

12–13 Jenolan.

October

10–11 Jenolan.

November

14–15 Jenolan.

December

5–13 Jenolan.
