

Volume 23

December 1983-January 1984

Number 3

BULLETIN *of the*

Sydney

University

Speleological



Society

Registered in Australia for transmission by post as a periodical - Category B

Box 35, Holme Building, University of Sydney, N.S.W. 2006

Annual Subscription \$6

Present : Guy Cox and Teresa Dibbayawan

Airlines are getting competitive these days, and we were given the opportunity of a stopover at no extra cost on a cheap fare to California (where we were attending a conference). New Zealand or Hawaii were the choices - which would you have chosen?

International flights all stop at Honolulu, which is on the island of Oahu. The active volcanos and the caves are on Hawai'i Island (the Big Island), which also has about one tenth the population density. We arrived at Honolulu airport at about midnight, slept there and caught the early flight to Hilo, capital of Hawai'i. This was on Monday 10th, and we had until Saturday evening on the island. We also had a photocopy of the report of a British expedition to the caves - though as it turned out we did not visit any of the caves which they had explored. Hilo is on the east coast of the island, which is the wet side, so we decided initially to spend a few days at Kona, on the drier west coast. We organised a cheap car-hotel package, and drove around the south side of the island, taking in the active volcano Kilauea on the way. Driving up the west coast we picked up a hitch-hiker who turned out to be a zoologist/archaeologist from the University of Hawaii, who told us of some cave locations near Kona.

Next day, Tuesday, we set out to look for one of these, near Kona airport, but on the other side of the main highway. He had warned us that the entrance was not easy to find - it proved to be impossible! We spent the whole morning in some rather heavy bush-bashing, but couldn't find any sign of it. We found a marvellous beach, instead, at Kiholo, and spent the rest of the day there. On Wednesday we went looking for another cave, with much more satisfactory results, as described on the next page.

On Thursday we decided to return to Kilauea, driving up around the north end of the island, so as to complete the full circuit. Kilauea is where most of the well-known caves are, but we decided that the opportunity to see a volcano errupting was not to be missed, and spent Friday walking out to the edge of the currently active zone (along trails which were very determinedly marked closed).

LAVA TUBE CAVE NEAR KONA - CAVE DESCRIPTION

Location Near Kahulu'u, between Ali'i Drive and Kuakini Highway. The main entrance lies on the SE side of King Kamehameha III Road, by electricity post no. 6, where electric wires branch off to the east. Going uphill (towards Kuakini Highway) this is just after the 35 mph speedlimit signs. The entrance is a circular hole, partly surrounded by a stone wall, up a gravel slope (road cutting) at the side of the road. This entrance is a pitch of approximately 5 m, but a small hole to one side provides a freeclimbable way in.

Downflow The cave extends from the entrance in both directions. Downflow, it consists of a spacious walking passage. Two side passages on the right join each other, and continue - we did not follow this branch to its end. The main passage continues at walking size for a considerable distance, until a collapse causes a short constriction. After this it opens out into a big chamber, at the end of which daylight is visible, entering through a small eyehole. Just beyond the eyehole, on a ledge on the left of the passage, is the first of a number of burials. To the right, beyond this, is another entrance, which has steps formed up to it and a drystone wall screening it from direct communication with the chamber. The entrance itself is a square hole, approx. 0.5 m on each side, and is presumably the means of access used for the burials - possibly it would formerly have been closed by a flat stone. In the chamber beyond this entrance are many more burials on ledges on the left and right of the passage. In some the bones are more or less in their natural positions, while in others the bones are jumbled. Some have what appears to be rotted timber and cloth with them.

At the end of this chamber the passage forks. The left-hand branch passes above the right-hand, and joins it again via two holes in the floor, the second of which provides the easier descent. The lower route is a hands-and-knees crawl. From here the passage is spacious for a while, but debris gradually fills it to the roof. "2109 feet" is written on the wall at the end - this is presumably the distance from the roadside entrance.

Upflow Initially the upflow passage is large - 5x5 m - and ascends steeply. After an S-bend there is an oxbow passage, above which the slope becomes more gentle. The roof lowers just before a large collapse which has formed a pit open to the sky - it looked as if it would be difficult to climb out here, however. The way on is a dogleg crawl among boulders, leading to big passage again. The passage shape becomes more variable, and it ends in a low, wide chamber. Two other passages lead downflow from this chamber; one is initially quite large, but the roof soon lowers and we did not follow it further. Upflow, the passage seems to be totally choked, but a small passage on the left leads to a small and very inconspicuous hole to the surface. This entrance, too, seems to have been modified with dry-stone walling inside the cave, but we saw no sign of burials in the chamber beneath.

General The cave probably contains at least 2 km of passage. It seems to have been frequently visited, though not seriously vandalised. Many visitors seem to have unrolled balls of string as they went - a somewhat superfluous precaution in a cave consisting of a single passage with five entrances along its length! The cave also seems to have been surveyed. The passage is generally in a dull, dark-coloured lava, and devoid of lava speleothems. Near the bottom entrance, however, there is a small chamber lined with glossy chocolate-brown lava which has formed attractive patterns. Tree roots hang from the roof in several places.

At the time of our visit the whole area above the cave was being surveyed for a new residential and commercial subdivision. It is to be hoped that appropriate steps will be taken to preserve and conserve the cave, both for its archaeological significance and its geographical and scenic interest.

Guy Cox

Trip Report
Rockclimbing and Clausttral Canyon
or
The Day Mike Set Himself On Fire
19th - 20th November, 1983

Present: Judy Clarke, Keir Vaughan-Taylor, Anne Gray, Nick Melhuish, Mike Lake and his stove.

We left Sydney at a comfortable hour on Saturday morning and headed for Mt Piddington where we intended to do some climbing prior to visiting Clausttral the next day. Keir entertained us on the way up by means of sick jokes and interesting driving techniques. We had a short stop at Springwood for Mike to buy some Shellite to put in his infamous stove. Little did we know what the fiery consequences of this were to be. We took a second quick break to visit an old convict dungeon and flogging stone which Keir wished to investigate and which Mike decided were just a ripoff for gullible tourists. We left this area by a rapid, unorthodox route up a steep embankment which Keir's Escort handled well, much to our amusement and to the shocked amazement of some breakfasting tourists.

We reached Mt Victoria without further incident and stopped for some food at the cafe. Then we drove the short distance to Mt Piddington. Instead of parking in the normal spot, Mike encouraged Keir to drive right to the end of the steep, rough fire trail, saying "I would even take my Audi down there". Keir believed him, until halfway down the roughest part, when the car jammed itself on a large rock and Mike said, "Well, perhaps I wouldn't after all". Keir began to reverse, but it was too late to turn back, so we slowly bumped our way onwards and reached the end without damage.

We then walked down to the base of the cliffs and met Anne and Nick at the base of Angular Crack. We watched a group of people battle up Graveyard Wall (Grade 24) while we ourselves spent a few hours making a leisurely ascent of Tombstone Wall (Grade 15). Afterwards, slackness prevailed, and when we discovered a horde of people on Hocus Pocus (8), we decided that the pub was the most attractive option. Keir drove his car safely up the rough hill while Mike and I walked. Anne and Nick left to return to Sydney and exam study.

The pub proved to be rather boring apart from our discovery of some beer mats containing entry forms for a Naughtie Week in Paris. So we entertained ourselves by ringing Richard in Sydney to tell him that we were sending in some entries on his behalf.

After this bit of silliness, we drove to Mt Banks to camp, so that we would be fairly close to Clausttral for the next day. Mike then decided that it was time to test his stove on Shellite, having previously successfully run it on Metho. We watched him with some apprehension, but our fears died down when the stove proceeded to burn docilely at simmering speed. The only problem was that it refused to go any faster. Mike wondered why, and fiddled with the valve, while Keir and I peacefully finished eating dinner. Suddenly Mike gave a yell, and we looked over to see him struggling to push the valve back into the stove as flames were shooting out. The futility of this rapidly became evident and we were shocked to

see Mike leap up and run, with his arm and back on fire. Luckily, the flames quickly went out, leaving Mike and his fibrepile only slightly singed. We all ran away from the burning stove and watched with awe as the campsite was brightly lit up by the flames from three quarters of a bottle of ignited Shellite. Luckily no explosion occurred; the Escort was out of range (just)! and the open space was big enough to avoid starting a bushfire. Once our pulses slowed down, we stamped out the remaining flames and doused Mike's burning food box. Mike asked someone to put water on his hand, so Keir threw water all over him. This enabled us to see the funny side of the whole situation and we laughed for a long time.

On Sunday, we woke to a cool, cloudy morning and set off to Claustrol. Having overslept, we arrived to find nine cars already parked there. Mike had decided that it was too cold for canyoning so only accompanied us as far as the start of the wet part. Keir and I continued on, expecting long delays from all the people ahead. We overtook a party of four before the pitches, and saw noone else from then onwards. In spite of freezing cold water and no wetsuits (it had snowed the previous week in the Blue Mountains) we enjoyed the canyon, and even took some photographs. The water level was fairly low, but the pools seemed much clearer than usual. It was a pity that the sun wasn't shining but the place was still very impressive and attractive. We reached the end, feeling somewhat chilly, walked out quickly, being met by Mike on the way, and returned to Sydney in good time.

Epilogue

Mike's stove was undamaged after its fiery experience, so it and its owner are still alive to cause further holocausts on future trips.

Judy Clarke

Trip Report Jenolan

August 29th - September 2nd, 1983.

Present: Richard McNeall, Judy Clarke, Rolf Adams, Keir Vaughan-Taylor, Joanne Kamlede, Peter Southern, Robert Brand, Geoff White, also Mike Lake (our Mammoth Guide) and Graeme Galloway turned up for Thursday.

Monday

It was the crack of noon as we hovered ceremonially outside the guide office, waiting for the appropriate book signing to take place inside. The tourists walking lazily about in the sunshine could obviously tell we were hardy speleos by our serious "I've just got out of bed" look. Caving is a serious business. You have to be silly enough to venture underground but not silly enough to not be serious. Monday, despite the slightly late start, was still to be a day of serious, no mucking about caving.

The serious objective of the Wiburd's Cave mission was to experience the atmosphere of Yawning Gulches and take note of the water level. The atmosphere was mysterious and the water level all but gone - only a small residue of yecchy glop into which we all ceremonially tested the knee depth.

It was Joanne's first caving trip and she was practicing tricky moves for the more difficult caving that lay ahead in the coming week. Ironically, the slippery manoeuvre out of the Yawning Gulches entrance turned out to be the most difficult conquest of the whole weekend. She eventually did get to the top and in fact all the way out of the cave where she triumphantly declared that she liked squeezes. So we set off to try out the first few squeezes in Spider Cave in order to determine if Pirate's Delight had sunken beneath the waves. It hadn't.

Tuesday

Block Cave was obviously the route to the yet undiscovered Southern Limestone Master Cave. There were just a few handfuls of loose gravel to remove from the tunnel connecting the two. It was only seconds before we had removed the few handfuls of gravel separating the two cave systems and yet still no breakthrough was made. It began to look as though the promises Richard had made about the ease of the great discovery ahead of us were slightly exaggerated. He suggested that we remove a few more handfuls of gravel..... still no breakthrough. We widened the tunnel, we deepened and even went forwards some. We unearthed large boulders that threatened to cancel the dig. By attaching a rope to the blockages and lots of people to the other end the obstructions could be hauled along the tunnel and out of the way of progress. For five or six hours, we dug, hauled, scraped and tunnelled. The tunnel roof started to look far too unstable for common sense and we cancelled the dig. Block Cave is undoubtedly the route to nowhere.

Wednesday

Cold, crisp, Wednesday morning and something overcame everyone. We all decided to go for a morning constitutional through the glorious gums to check out the arrival of Robert. Sure enough there he was at the main gate with a video camera perched on his shoulder like a pet parrot. At times he would twiddle its beak and zoom in on some true to life aspect of on site caving. The plan was to return to SUSS with a video trip report.

Spider Cave is one of the goodies. The stories about Dingo Dig around the campfire had suitably primed the uninitiated with the right psychological terror. Just as you think you couldn't fear any squeeze as much as Dingo Dig, they tell you about Pirate's Delight. Usually it would be best to save the Pirate's Delight stories till everyone is in the chamber between the two and caught between the devil and the deep brown crawl.

After Robert very sensibly left his body on the outside world side of Dingo Dig, it was me that became the largest person in the party. I therefore followed our fearless leader Richard to see how it was done. He flowed his body into the constricting funnel and

explained that larger people can remove their boots to make getting round the bend easier. "Move forward on your back, rotate the left hip up with you, left arm up and right arm down....." and his voice disappeared down the tunnel somewhere. "Was that directions or a new dance step?" At least he knew how to get half way through. His boots thrashed the mud and at times his body would quantum leap to a higher mud level emitting high frequency squarks.

Bare feet through Pirate's Delight has good cosmetic value for the feet but bare feet have no purchase on the mud floor for the upward slither to the chamber above. You have to put your boots back on and of course there is no turning round. This has to be done blind and using only toes and psychokinesis. In the Bus Stop, our mottley crew of pirates looked as though they had been run down by a bus, but the real caving lay onwards and through the rockpile, through gloppy chambers and finally the amazing appearance of Lower River. There in that grand chamber you would expect to see stars. Somewhere up there is Terror Traverse. We were going there on the way back. Joanne asked, "Why is it called Terror Traverse?" "Oh, because it traverses across to the Eyrie." "What's this about terror?" Time for cafeteria caving: "Care for a jelly baby?" On the banks of that beautiful river, we picnicked on chocolate, lollies and nuts over the dim glow of romantic candles.

The object of the Spider Cave Mission was to remove the scaling poles that had been in the cave for nearly a year. There was some doubt as to whether the bolts would budge from their rusted positions and permit dismantling of the poles. Dislodging the bolts was easy. All we had to do was make sustained remarks about how hopeless women were at mechanical tasks. Like magic, the nuts were removed from their bent and stripped threads and only with the use of bare teeth, sloppy shifting spanners and female enthusiasm. With the poles in pieces, it was merely a matter of carrying the poles back through the rockpiles, the squeezes and the tunnels to the outside world. Khan passage was visited and all in all... Wow! Great photographic stuff. Khan passage was definitely worth the crawl with its amazing formations of aragonite growing gnarled and twisted out of the cave wall. The crawl was worth the crawl. The crawl with scaling poles was not all that bad. The poles are in fact a climbing asset as you can use them to bridge nasty sharp rocks and form handholds where none normally exist. The return squeezes seemed easy on the return. Practice makes perfect.

Once again the moment of entry into the real world on the outside was in darkness. Tomorrow was the big one that all this caving had really been in practice for; Mammoth Cave, destination the famed South Australian discovery Twiddly On Pom. Merely up down and along a bit.

Keir Vaughan-Taylor

Thursday

With ideal weather not to be out in, and at a punctual nine-make-that-ten, our party of ten set off, some of us naively unsuspecting of our fate. Our destination, the most northerly extreme of Jenolan's largest cave, "Twiddly-on-pom".

Mammoth Cave is certainly not without variety. It contains an abundance of grotty rockpiles and an occasional mudslope, one forming the grand finale to the trip in.

There were several "delightful" squeezes, the vertical and the flat and grovelly kind, loved by all with knee pads and cursed silently, or not so silently, by the rest. "Gravel Grovel" comes to mind somehow, where a crablike scuttling ability was useful.

Some OK formations and quite sculpturesque passages were encountered, as were good glimpses of Central River for the more aesthetically inclined.

There was a challenging, short, vertical ascent near the start, where newly-acquired chimneying methods were applied, with or without style.

"Omeneez" squeeze was interesting, a humbling mudslide which well deserved its name after the narrow holdup at the top. After extruding our bodies through this, we encountered an invigorating bath, where Richard (watch the formations) McNeall failed to drown Judy, although it provided good entertainment.

"Gravel Grovel" turned out to be a good warm-up for North Tunnel, which I loved (now that I am far away from it) and which, at times, required worming ones body through miniature pillars of stalactites which had long since fused with the floor. The unaffectionate razor blade was avoided. At last we came to Great North Cavern and LUNCH - of widely differing degrees of nutritional value. Most ventured on to Twiddly-om-pom and towards suspiciously sinister sounding sniggering from those ahead. This 10m drop began with a free descent by ladder through a squeeze, which was a bit squeezier than some would have liked, particularly on the way up. There followed a steep mudslide and a rope which continued over the edge of a two metre drop. Rolf and Keir snooped around further on and did loosen a few stones, but did not manage to substantially extend maps of Mammoth Cave.

It was already 6.00 pm as those humans among us toppled back down Omeneez squeeze. Those up front at the time were lucky enough to receive a cultural appreciation of speleology from Graeme in the form of some pleasant poetry.

Avoiding wet feet at this stage by some careful stone-stepping proved to be futile when a certain relatively "Dry Siphon" decided to become "slightly" wet, and everyone seemed to have an amazing newfound energy in charging through it.

By the time we were near the entrance, I had long lost those rejuvenating effects of my substantial (compressed remains of dried fruit, jelly beans and chocolate) lunch and had to resist the lure of a Slug Lake detour. Judy, Keir, Richard and Rolf could not resist the temptation, making this one of the few times both the north and south limits of Mammoth have been achieved in a single trip.

Meanwhile, the rest of us happily retraced former footsteps, exiting 10 hours after our first sight of J13.

I would highly recommend Mammoth Cave to anyone who relishes pain, or enjoys diversity in their caving expeditions. It was an unforgettable highlight of some great first days' caving.

Joanne Kamlade

Friday

We walked through the Devil's Coachhouse and down through the weir to enjoy the sunshine. Afterwards we drove home.

Recent Additions to the SUSS Library

- Downunder, August, 1983, 122(2) - comprehensive article on *Miniopterus schreibersii* and *Miniopterus Australis* (bats).
- SSS Journal - Franklin River meeting
- Spar, July, 1983
- Labyrith (sic), September, 1983, 34
- Nargun, August, 1983, 16(2)
- Speleo Spiel, July, 1983, 187 - article on diving the Junes Resurgence, complete with map (not for the hydrophobic); Trip Reports - Tassie Pot, Midnight Hole, Rescue Pot, Slaughterhouse Pot survey.
- Speleo Spiel, August, 1983, 190 - Effects of forestry on caves of the Mole Creek area; Trip Reports - Lost Pot (with survey), Niagara Pot, Satans' Lair survey.
- N.Z. Speleological Bulletin, June, 1983, 126(7) - articles on Nettlebed, Pio Pio Caves, map of Baby Grand.
- Laichinger Hohlenfreund, April, 1983 - various articles on stratigraphy, petrography, karst hydrology, speleogenesis and morphogenesis of Laichinge Tiefenhohle etc - all in German.
- Proposed draft of the constitution of ASF Incorporated.
- NSS News, May, 1983 - Crooked Swamp cave incident, NSS index for 1982, article on "safety".
- NSS News, June, 1983 - article on Huatta project caves, Mexico. Read about diving a sump 272m below a -1221m system. Watch the progress towards a new world record. Tear your hair out while you study. Article includes maps and photos of this fine system and an update on the latest 1800m plus cave, Nita Nanta (-1026m). And, yes, you read it here first, an article on the Spelean Shunt (see how the Americans reinvent the wheel, though they do acknowledge its Australian design).

- NSS News, July, 1983 - Chillagoe Caves expedition report, 1982; an intriguing article on lava caves formed as lava moulds around fallen logs which later burn out and leave a hollow passage, as the author says, "trunk passage, in the literal sense"; Fisher Ridge cave and an informative article on brain buckets, comparing the virtues of various types of helmets. The abstract of this article is "a good quality climbing helmet should be considered for certain types of caving where rockfall or tumbling falls may render a caving hard hat useless". Do you think it's time to replace that old mining helmet of yours?

The following books were purchased pursuant to a grant from the Sports Union. They're for your use - I've already read them. Their eventual location should be Paul Greenfield's office on Lower Ground Floor, Madsen. Not only do they provide a wealth of caving info, but some of them provide a damn good read.

- The Darkness Beckons, Martyn Farr - The definitive history of cave diving. This book is a must read - don't let it rest in its watery grave.
- Single Rope Techniques, Neil Montgomery - The Bible for vertical caving. Getting a bit dated, but eminently useful when taking your first steps (ropewalk, I hope).
- Mt Etna and the Caves - Report for Queensland Conservation Council.
- Discover Naracoorte Caves, I. Lewis - for your next SA trip.
- PNG NSRE trip report, 1973 - good pictures and much info.
- Caves and Karst of the Muller Range - Atea '78 report - excellent, will have you drooling into your Nutri-Grain.
- ASF CAVCONACT proceedings, 1976.
- Timor Caves - SSS Occasional Paper No. 6 - and, no, you don't have to watch out for Fretilin guerillas, the caves are northwest of Sydney.
- Hills Spelology Club Yearbook, 1980-81 - includes update on Timor Caves.
- Wombeyan Caves - SSS Publication - a must for planning a trip to Wombeyan.

Phillip Cole
Librarian

P.S. All members please feel free to use the SUSS Library at any time. It is well-organised, and full of interesting material. All you have to do is fill in a borrower's card if you want to take the book or journal away to read. For those who are not quite sure, it is located at the back of the Madsen Building (Computer Science) on the Lower Ground Floor, in Paul Greenfield's office, LG 21. Paul is around most of the time, but, to avoid disappointment, you could check in advance by ringing 692 3524 (or just 3524, if you use one of the various free internal phones scattered around the uni)

Trip Report
Wombeyan
November 26-27, 1983

Present: Mike Lake, Joanne Kamlade, Alison Parker, Rolf Adams, Robert Brandt, Jurgen Biessing, Colin Matthews, Graeme Galloway

Despite transport problems, 8 of us managed to journey to Wombeyan to partake of the many features this superb karst area offers. The main aims of the trip were to introduce the new cavers with us to speleology, and to investigate the upstream section of Bullio Cave.

After checking in with the guides, we set off to find Bullio. Guided by my vague memories of the whereabouts of this cave from my visit to it some 15 months ago, we proceeded to Mare's Creek, about 2km from the campsite, where we located the entrance to Balcony Cave. This short, walkthrough cave opens out to overlook the upstream section of Mare's Creek and its imposing canyon. Following a quick trip in Balcony Cave, we located the entrance to Bullio further up the hill. A steepish, 10m climb leads down into the daylight entrance chamber which branches off right and left. The right hand passage ends after a short distance in a large cavern with no obvious way on.

The way to the main part of Bullio is to the left from the entrance chamber. A short climb up 2 aged wooden ladders leads to a mainly walkthrough passage along parts of which animal bones are scattered. Just before the iron ladders, there is a large, well-decorated chamber, which features a skull perched atop a stalagmite. From this chamber, a steep 3m muddy climb leads up to the beginning of the main pitch. Two ancient iron ladders lead down a gentle, 10m slope to the top of a vertical 20m iron ladder. The top of this ladder is connected to the other by a sturdy stick across which one scurries on the knees in order to begin the descent.

The leisurely climb down affords great views of the huge cavern and its formations, notably a giant shawl, and inspires, (at least in me), a feeling of awe at the effort expended on installing this ladder.

At the base of the ladder there are two ways on to the river. One, a ten metre pitch to the left, is to be abseiled using an iron stake that has been driven into the floor as an anchor point.

We followed the right hand way and, after descending two more iron ladders and a short flowstone slide, arrived at the river.

From this point, about five metres of the downstream section of the river can be seen flowing over a rim. Colin and I attempted to traverse this section, during which endeavour I pretended to fall into the river and exhibited "getting wet" behaviour. I then climbed over the rim and followed the passage for about 50m at the end of which there is a small lake.

Returning, I found the others contemplating the importance of cave safety. Colin, Rolf and I then proceeded upstream, whilst the others enjoyed some "dry" humour.

This section of the river flows through a high, narrow passage, which, soon after entering a rockpile, ends in a small chamber and sump.

On the way back downstream, we examined a walk-through dry passage off to the right of the river. The passage goes on for about 40m. At its end, we observed something so terrible that I can't even write about it.

Returning to the others, we found that they were in a higher level chamber, observing the "Finger of Providence" - a 3m high stalagmite which is topped by a small finger-like formation.

We then had a leisurely retreat from Bullio.

Our next endeavour was to examine what is probably lower Bullio Cave whose entrance is located right on Mare's Creek. When I stumbled across this section last year, I found the first chamber bone dry, the floor covered by vegetation. This time, the chamber was submerged in deep water. From this chamber, an impressive walkthrough tunnel thrusts straight ahead for about 40m then heads off to the right. It then proceeds for 100m, punctuated by numerous large rocks, to what seems to be a dead end, although a tight upward squeeze may lead on. Given that this time the water levels in the early section of the cave were so high, we did not push on to the tunnel's end.

Returning to the creek, some of us looked at promising-looking holes, but found they led nowhere.

Back at the camp that night, some of us got maudlin and told jokes.

On Sunday, we set off to find Basin Cave. Located across the creek from Bullio, Basin has, like many of the caves at Wombeyan, been visited by cavers for more than a century. Proceeding to the right in the entrance chamber, a steep 4m pitch leads to a huge chamber. Straight ahead is a "window" which looks into another large cavern, whose floor appears to be some 20m sheer drop below.

The way on to the main part of Basin is to the left of this chamber down a 15m pitch. On my last visit here, a handline was needed to descend the last 15m of this pitch. However, this time we found that a wooden ladder had been placed at this point. This leads to a very large chamber whose floor is covered by many rim-pools.

About 50m along this chamber, a meandering walkthrough tunnel (on whose walls there are signatures dating from the early 1870's), leads to another big chamber. Shortly on, 2 decaying, wooden ladders lead to a high, long section at one point of which the flowstone can be climbed to another cavern containing massive limestone basins.

A short way on is the 14m pitch which leads on to the lower part of the cave. A ladder was rigged and we all descended into the huge, well-decorated cavern, much of the floor of which is covered in bat dung. A number of bats were observed flying to and fro at the top of the pitch.

We then returned to camp, and, after making our farewells to the guides, drove off, both cars remaining in radio contact for part of the way, in order that the lead car could report such delights as "rock on the road", "car coming", and "tourists relieving themselves ahead".

Graeme Galloway

Trip Report
Kalang Canyon
Sunday, 10th July

Present: Mike Lake, John Kaye, Keir Vaughan-Taylor.

Mike is usually punctual unless he is lost. Since he was late, it was logical that he was lost. The telephone rang and Mike explained that his motor vehicle navigational system needed more key information such as notable landmarks. I live opposite this enormous railway station, (recognizable by large, clattering trains). This data seemed to put him on the right track and just to be sure I stood perched on the kerb and waved furiously as Merly Stoss's racing Audi attempted to reduce the passing railway station to a mere blur. "House numbers are easier to see below the speed of light", I said, leaping into the car. We set off to collect John in Pymble and the navigational equipment in Mike's car led us erringly to our destination by a process of Newtonian approximation. The problem was that the navigational equipment in Mike's car consisted of a street directory, most of its pages detached and suffering from an advanced case of entropy. I shall not go into the details of how we went to Pymble via Hornsby. At Pymble, the Audi was left to sleep away the weekend while the Austin Kimberley drove through the night to Kanangra.

It was to be a glorious blue sky day for an abseil the next day. You could tell by the luminous sodium sunset glowing across the gorgeous gorges of the mountains as we motored our way into the soft blue distance.

Red sky at night

Shepherd's house burning down

The crystal clear night sky holds little heat to the planet's surface. This is a useful meteorological condition for cooling vehicles that overheat at Jenolan Caves. We just so happened to have just such a vehicle and took full advantage of this facility. As the temperature gauge sank slowly towards the N for normal we told each other abnormal jokes. When the punning reached an

intolerably low level it became necessary to step out into the crisp night air and gaze briefly at the blazing stars and say "Wow"!!!

Our campsite was fully refrigerated for us by the time we pulled over the rolling track to a suitable campfire. Mike was most emphatic about getting an early start, so we all curled into our pre-cooled sleeping bags and dozed away till dawn.

The morning revealed everything covered in frost. Grass, gum trees, sleeping bags and motor car engines. Our early morning start referred to an early morning motor car start. Obviously the battery terminals needed breaking off so we did that first. The fanbelt was loose so we tightened it. This meant we could break off the ignition wire and spark plug leads. As we worked on the car as a team, we gradually disassembled the vehicle not only into its component parts but thoroughly damaged component parts, fully warranted against possible future use. This was the moment we all recognised as coffee time. When you're in a hole, stop digging. Many coffee sessions and battery boosts later, the engine fired to life as though there had been nothing untoward with its operation. Away we cruised to Kalang canyon with the added thrill in the knowledge that we would come staggering exhausted up that murderous gully to a motor car with starting sickness.

We used 50m and 45m Bluewater ropes. John and I would single rope down and Mike followed on dual ropes. There were seven pitches, each pitch more far out and amazing than the last. What could be a more pleasant way to spend a sunny day than becoming a microdot on the vertical plane of that massive landscape. I gain a great deal of satisfaction sitting in the sunshine on some inaccessible plateau overlooking great jagged peaks, and reading in the logbook about the poor unfortunate SUSS people who went earlier in the wet and cold. My heart went out to them....just a little.

The efficiency of the moves from one pitch to the other was confounded by rope tangles and discussions about which was the best route to the next pitch. Even though we always deduced the optimum route, the discussions exceeded the time saved. The final pitch can be done in two ways. The famous explorer, Richard McNeall, is known to have pioneered a route through trees and shrubbery and ending in more trees and shrubbery. John, having experienced this route once before, suggested that there existed an alternative route. Mike confidently led us to the correct pitch (Mike inserted this line - ed.) Indeed, it can be clearly seen on the other side of the waterfall, marked by the yellow tape that everybody else uses. This pitch is an excellent grand finale, with Kanangra's orange sandstone walls standing witness to another great day. We were five hours coming down Kalang canyon and all but a mere three quarters of an hour coming up Murdering Gully where, not only did the car start, but we downed a bottle of cider I'd been carrying around all day, but forgot about.

Keir Vaughan-Taylor

Wee Jasper Caves

Located only four hours drive from Sydney, Wee Jasper Caves offer a special and (for SUSS) unusual type of caving. It is called "caving without pain". There are no gruelling squeezes, infinite crawls or awkward rockpiles in this system of typically large passages. There are, however, several pitches, large chambers and pretties to stimulate the brain. Below are descriptions of some of the major caves.

Signature Cave

Lovely walk- and runthrough cave. It takes less than half an hour to go through this graffiti-covered cave. It offers many optional squeezes for people like Rolf, and it is not possible to get lost.

Punchbowl Cave

Apparently this cave once connected to Signature. The cave is entered through a 20m pitch which is easily rigged off a large column. It contains two very large chambers. One of these is floored in batshit and the other has some very nice decoration. From the latter it is possible to climb up some bolts and look back over the entrance pitch. Also of interest is the Laundry Chute. This is a slippery vertical chimney at the bottom of which there are some fine crystals. The attached map is not meant to be a survey. It mainly gives an idea of how the passages connect.

Dogleg Cave

Again, it is not possible to get lost in this cave. A low wet streamway is followed for a while before you emerge in the best triangle-shaped passage I have ever seen. If you are keen you can swim to the sump.

Dip Cave

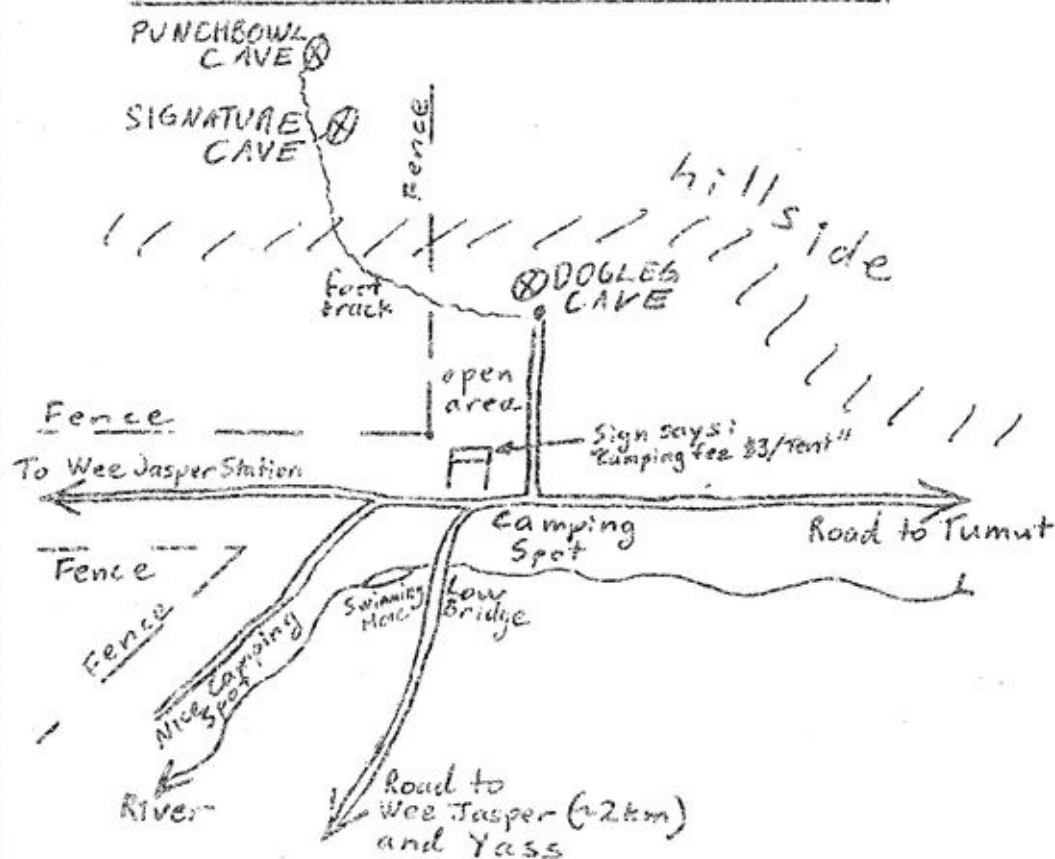
This cave is comprised of five parallel series, all linked together. It has two abseil entrances, and one walk-in doline. Series five in particular is very pretty. Negotiating the two meter deep pit will keep you amused for a few minutes. A nice abseiling through trip is to abseil in down the tight 20m pitch and abseil out down the Rathole.

Gong Cave

This is the sixth series of Dip Cave. It has a separate five meter entrance pitch. The Gong Chamber at the end is so called because you can thump the formations and cause them to make a "gong" noise.

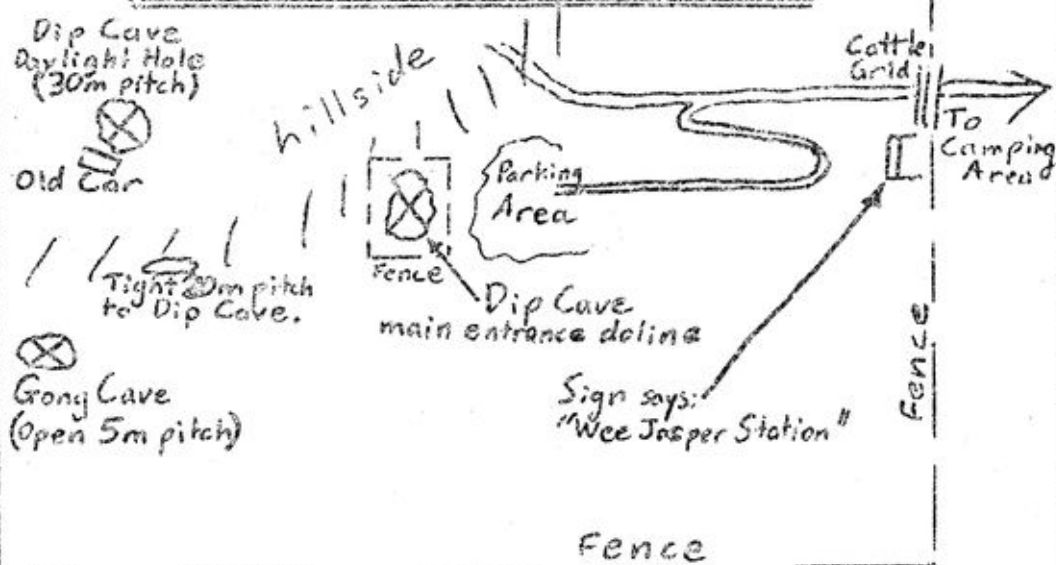
Richard McNeall

WEE JASPER - CAMPING AREA



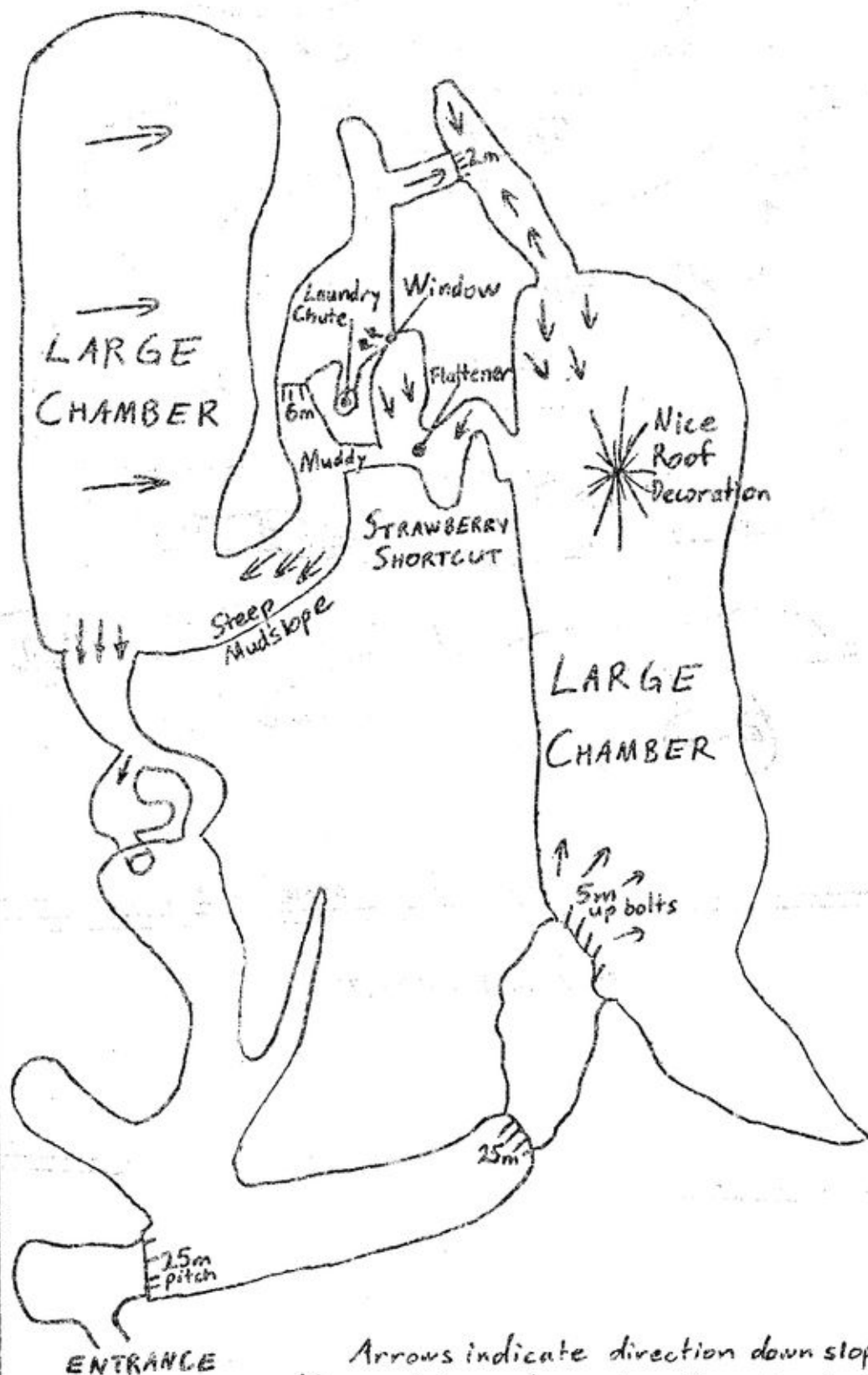
Map not to scale and not oriented

WEE JASPER STATION

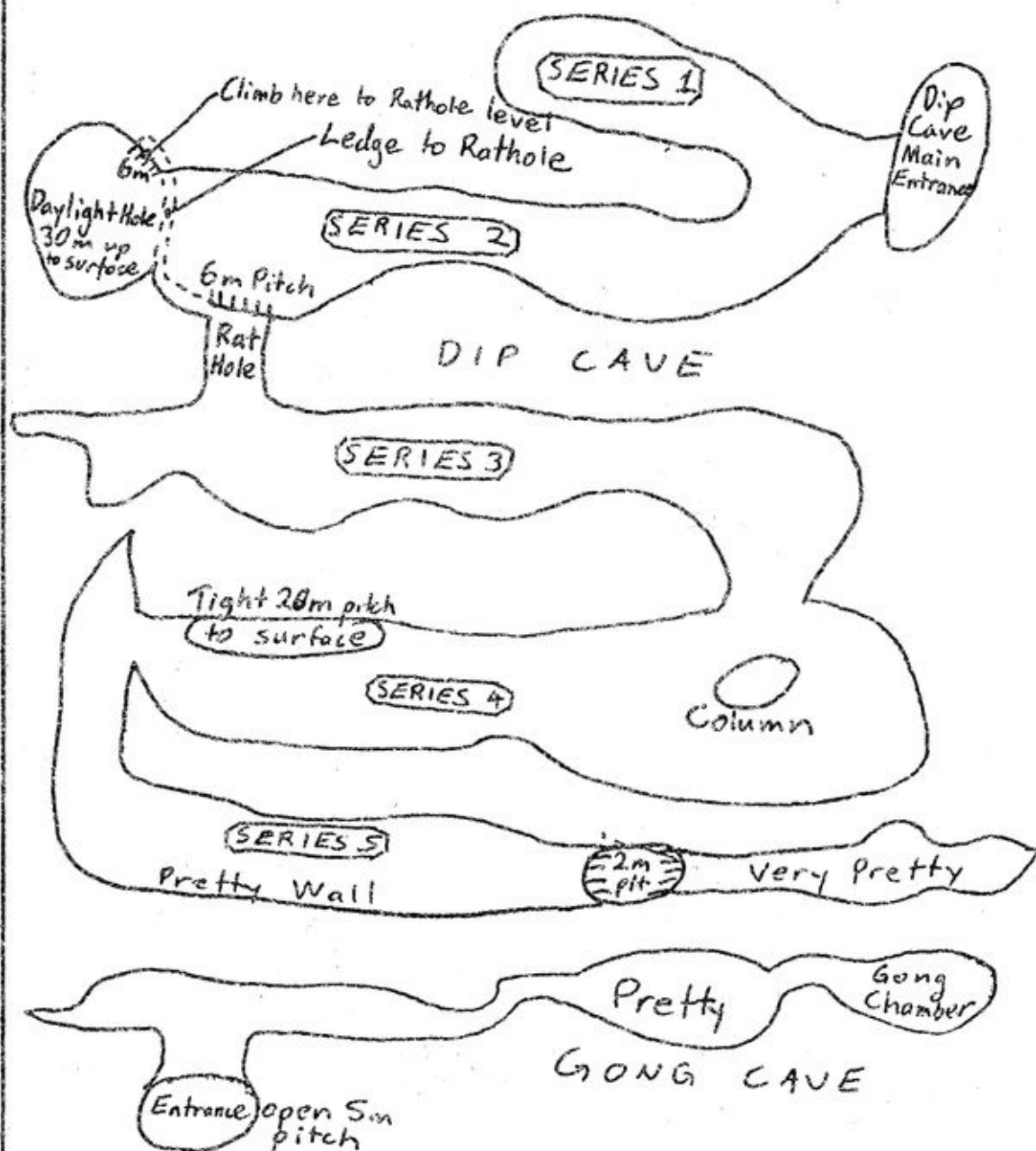


Map not to scale and not oriented

WEE JASPER- PUNCHBOWL CAVE



WEE JASPER-DIP & GONG CAVES



Map not to scale and not oriented.

Trip Report
Jenolan
6th - 7th December, 1983.

Present: Grant Elliott, Paul Kamlade, Kristin Young, Boris Zak, Greg James, Mark Hunter; Graeme Galloway and Robert Brandt (Wednesday only).

Tuesday morning was fine when we met at the guides' office at Jenolan at 10.00 am. We were delayed because the permit had not arrived from Sydney, and the guides had to ring Sydney to authorise our visit. So we set up camp a bit late at Mammoth Flat. Grant had planned this mid-week trip with a view to checking out a few things in Spider. While I piked in favour of touring around the lush, green Jenolan reserve, Grant entered Spider with three unsuspecting companions at about midday. He expected the squeezes to be impassably wet, so I waited for their return at the entrance. When they didn't return after an hour, I concluded that they were able to do the cave so I walked back to Mammoth Flat. There I met Mark, who went on to join the others in Spider and do some exploring of his own.

Grant's group had not done Spider before, and indeed, were mostly new to caving. This didn't stop them getting to Lower River quickly, without stops. There they lunched, then headed straight to the Colosseum and up to the Dig at the End of the World. They did some futile digging at a nearby dig. After this wasted effort, they took only a few shovel-fulls from the End of the World. Grant believes this dig is promising and not dangerous, as Mike has claimed. It is phreatic tube, somewhat like Dingo Dig, half-filled with sediment and blowing heartily! They then headed back to Glophole Gallery.

Meanwhile Mark quickly soloed down to the downstream rockpile. He had great ambitions of making the historical breakthrough into Imperial this day. Alas, it was not to be. He climbed a couple of avens which ended, or appeared to end, in mud chokes. At least he now knows that hope for a breakthrough doesn't lie there. However, it still seems likely that the downstream rockpile area is promising for exploration. One gets the feeling that Spider is not done yet!

Mark met the others at Glophole Gallery and they headed out to pouring rain in the just-darkness at 8.00 pm. I had intended welcoming them with a roaring fire, but the heavy rain forced me to hole up with a good book in the back of the Subaru. Frankly, I hadn't regretted missing out on Spider that day.

We dined in the backs of cars and under flies in the unceasing downpour. Grant and Mark tried to forget the weather in a cask of riesling and spirited conversation. We went to bed and it never stopped raining all night.

Funnily enough, it was raining in the morning. Everybody gave some thought to piking as an alternative to donning wet caving gear. But Robert and Graeme had come all the way for the day so we had to remain. We met them at the gate, just as the wipers broke on the Subaru (the only acceptable replacement for a lost Kingswood). The rain abated while we trogged up and headed for Wiburd's. The valley was incredibly lush and green, although there was no unusual amount of surface water.

We spent a frustrating hour searching Wiburd's Bluff for the entrance. I was the only other person who had been to Wiburd's, but, as it was my first cave a few years before, I had little memory of it. It turned out that we had made the easy mistake of going too far north. When we did find it, we plunged in happily, out of the drizzle. We pottered around at a couple of levels, encountering a few pools but not always the way on. Eventually we figured out the way to the mudslide which was dry. We weren't in the right spirits for a protracted session on the slope, but Robert took a few action shots of flying bodies before we moved on.

We explored around various passages with mudslope floors but didn't really do justice to this large and interesting cave. I think many people visit Wiburd's as a fun cave to do after a more serious trip. I, for one, don't really know the layout of the cave at all. Also, it is becoming fairly dirty, as mud from the floor is being spread everywhere else by cavers. We popped down into Yawning Gulches, surprising most people with the fun little Corkscrew. There was no water on the floor here, but the water level mark on the walls is at a most interesting high level.

On the way out, we took some photos of some of the larger or longer sections of cave, using Robert's slave unit to test its performance. We popped out to an imminent thunderstorm, which soaked us on the walk back.

Back at Mammoth Flat, we fixed the Subaru's wipers and packed up the masses of soaking wet gear. The small creek near Mammoth Flat was flowing across the path to Wiburd's. The creek at the gate at the Playing Fields was also flowing. Puddles abounded. We farewelled the guides after a lengthy chat, and bought food at the kiosk. We also stopped at Hampton and Mt Vic. It rained all the way home.

That is the end of my first trip report in many months.

Kristin Young

Future Events

=====

January

=====

21st-22nd Jenolan. Contact Graeme Galloway (692 3571(w));

24th Committee Meeting. Place to be advised.
Orientation Week planning!

Anytime Canyoning. To be arranged at the last possible minute.

February

=====

2nd General Meeting. Common Room, Holme Building, 7:30pm

Tasmania. Contact Grant Elliott (858 1194) or
Bruce Stewart (94 5166).

March

=====

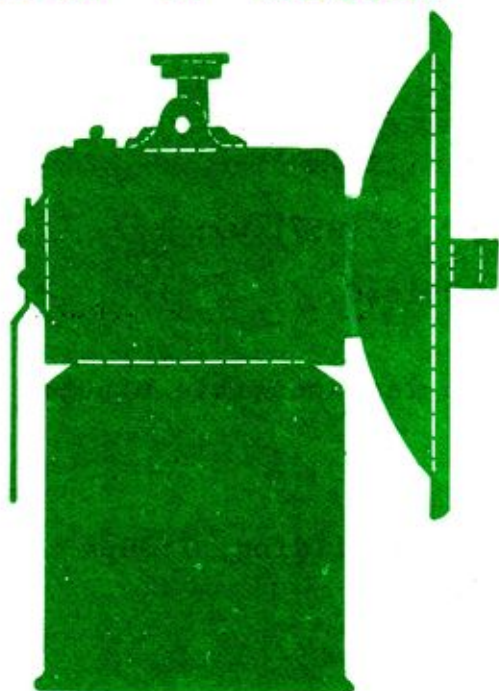
March is yet to be arranged but there will be trips every
weekend. Some of them may not even be to Jenolan or Bungonia.

April

=====

Easter Annual SUSS Cooleman trip.

This space intentionally left blank.



SUSS

BULLETIN
of the

SYDNEY UNIVERSITY
SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

BOX 35, HOLME BUILDING,
UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY,
N.S.W. 2006

Contents

=====

Page
=====

53	Trip Report, Hawaii, January 1983	Guy Cox,
56	Trip Report, Claustal, November 1983	Teresa Dibbayawan
57	Trip Report, Jenolan, August 1983	Judy Clarke
		Keir Vaughan-Taylor
		Joanne Kamlade
61	SUSS Library Additions	Phillip Cole
63	Trip Report, Wombeyan, November 1983	Graeme Galloway
65	Trip Report, Kalang Canyon, July 1983	Keir Vaughan-Taylor
67	Wee Jasper Caves	Richard McNeall
71	Trip Report, Jenolan, December 1983	Kristin Young
73	Future Events	
74	Contents	