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Access to Limited Access Caves in Tasmania

I have received a letter from the Tasmanian National Parks and Wildlife Service outlining access conditions applying to the new permit system for certain Tasmanian caves.

The permit system will be introduced on 1/7/83. No cave or part of any cave will be completely closed for the time being.

The caves to which the system will apply are: Newdegate, King George V and Wolf Hole at Hastings; Exit Cave at Ida Bay; Croesus, Lynds, King Solomon, Haillie Selassie, Marakooa, Kubla Khan and Ghenghis Khan at Mole Creek; and Gunn's Plains Cave.

No access restrictions will apply to other caves in the Hastings Caves State Reserve, Exit Cave State Reserve, Junee Cave State Reserve, Mount Field National Park, Baldock's Cave State Reserve, Trowutta Caves State Reserve, Franklin-Lower Gordon Wild Rivers National Park or Southwest National Park.

Permits will only be issued to party leaders who are members of groups which are full members of the ASF, and to persons undertaking approved research.

Separate applications must be made for biological, geological or archaeological collecting.

Permits will only be available from:

The Director,
National Parks and Wildlife Service
P.O. Box 210
Sandy Bay
Tasmania, 7005.

At least 14 days should be allowed for issue of permits. Only a limited number of permits will be issued for Kubla Khan Cave each year.

All applications should give the name and address of the trip leader, name and address of the caving club they belong to, the cave to which a visit is planned, date of visit and purpose of visit.

A condition of the permit is that a report be made of the trip and forwarded to the service.

Each club should designate an authorized officer who will be responsible for lodging applications, which should be made on official club stationery.

I have a copy of the permit form for those interested in perusing it.

Graeme Galloway

Trip Report
Kangaroo Island, South Australia
9/1/83 - 18/1/83

Present: Graeme Galloway, Bruce Stewart, Terry O'Leary (SUSS), John et al, Terry and Meredith Reardon, Bernie McGraith (CEGSA), Norm and Robert Poulter (SRGWA), Derek Hobbes and Judith Bateman (MUCG), Nick, Sue, Alice and Stephen White (VSA).

Following the ASF Conference in January this year a number of trips were organized to various caving venues. The above-mentioned people went caving on Kangaroo Island which lies off the coast of South Australia. Kangaroo Island is the third largest island (excluding mainland Australia) in the Commonwealth of Australia, after Tasmania and Melville Island. It is 156km long and 57km wide at its extremes, and was separated from the mainland by rising post-glacial seas about 9500 years ago. The first European to discover the island was Matthew Flinders in 1802.

Sunday 9/1/83

We departed from Port Adelaide late in the morning aboard the M.V. Troubridge and arrived at Kingscote, the main town on Kangaroo Island, about 7 hours later after a very rough and, for many, seasick voyage. That night was spent at the local caravan park preceded by a much needed visit to one of the Kingscote pubs.

Monday 10/1/83

The majority of the day was spent touring on the southeast coast of the island. We began by visiting Cape Gartheaume, which features an abandoned whaling station and an abandoned eagle's nest complete with abandoned bones. With gay abandon we then travelled to Seal Bay, where up to 500 sea lions (*neophoca cinepea*) (latin variety) bask and coyly pose for tourists' photos. The next venue visited was the Little Sahara Desert, which is a fairly extensive region of white drifting sand dunes, from the highest point of which more sand may be glimpsed. Then we went to Vivonne Bay which features seals, fairy penguins and the occasional freak waves which almost washed 2 members of our group off a rock.

All of the above-mentioned venues afforded spectacular views and the rare opportunity of coming close to a number of wild animals. That night we camped at farmer Robert Smith's property where there are a number of spectacular caves which we planned to investigate the following day.

Tuesday 11/1/83

This was our first day's caving on Kangaroo Island. Guided by Robert Smith we first did Fossil Cave, a small but archeologically important cave because of the extensive number of fossilised animal bones present there. After Fossil Cave we laddered the 7m pitch into Emu 4 Hole Cave which, after a 15m crawl, opens into a magnificently decorated main chamber where there is a plethora of superb formation. To the left of this chamber the cave goes about 40m to a section of the river from which a number of sporting crawls begin, the most interesting leading to a small chamber whose floor was coated with at least 40cm deep fine calcite crystals.

We then went to the right-hand section of the cave, and after negotiating a fairly arduous passage of about 100m in length, we arrived in the most spectacular cavern I have ever seen. In the middle of the river a limestone block rises 2m towards huge stalagmites which are surrounded by live straws. The river was explored and a tight, heavily decorated passage pushed for about 10m.

The last cave we visited on this property was Hiccup Cave which contains a huge cavern and underground lake. Two of the group dived the lake, using SCUBA gear, and managed to push the cave another 25m.

Special thanks are conveyed to Robert Smith for allowing us to enter these caves and for his hospitality during our visit to his property.

Wednesday, 12/1/83.

From Robert Smith's property we travelled to the nearby Mt. Taylor Caves. The main cave here is not extensive, but contains a series of large caverns and much decoration. This cave provided us with a good mixture of free climbing, squeezes, and great scenery; as well as 8 active beehives in its entrance.

After doing Mt. Taylor Cave we went to Remarkable Rocks on the southern side of the island. These rocks are a collection of massive boulders which rest upon an immense granite dome overlooking the deep blue waters of the southern ocean. The boulders have been sculptured into various surreal forms by the action of millenia of wind and rain. (However there are those who believe they are, in fact, the remnants of an ancient aboriginal-built, alien-inspired landing ground.) One of the other noticeable characteristics of this area is the renewable sign indicating how many people have drowned there.

Following our visit to Remarkable Rocks we went to Capedu Couedic, about 8km west of the rocks. Here there is a lighthouse which was built in 1906. At nearby Weir Cove, personnel and supplies were landed during the time of construction of the lighthouse. An old stone storeroom, water tank and the ruins of the flying fox which was used to haul individuals and supplies up the steep 100m cliff are still present here.

Near the Capedu Couedic lighthouse is the amazing Admiral's Arch, a gaping archway carved through the headland, and Casuarina Islets where a colony of fur seals live.

From this area we went to Kelly Hill Caves which is the main tourist area on the island. Late that afternoon Norm and Robert Poulter and I did the main tourist cave, guided by one of the rangers. Kelly Hill Caves were named after a horse, Ned Kelly, who discovered them in 1880 when he and his rider fell into a deep cavern in the area. The horse's skull is a feature of the tourist cave here. We camped nearby and used Kelly Hill Caves as our base for the next few days.

Thursday, 13/1/83.

A number of us began the day's caving activities by searching for wild cave entrances. We found one very close to the main tourist cave which turned out to be the entrance to Silt Cave which, to our knowledge, had not been entered for about 40 years. Upon entering the tight entrance we found a squeeze at the bottom of a 25m dirt slide. A crawl-through passage led to another steep-sided squeeze, from which a short crawl leads to a rockpile in the main chamber. This chamber contains spectacular formations of many types and promising-looking leads. We then returned to the camping area from which we went to Ravine du Casoares at the north-west part of the island. From the parking area we walked about 6km to the ocean where there is a beautiful beach and a largish limestone cave which we explored. This cave contained two very large chambers and one very dead fairy penguin.

Friday, 14/1/83.

We began the day by re-entering Silt Cave in order to try and find the connection to the main tourist cave. During this endeavour I became separated from the others and wandered in various stages of desperation about the nether reaches of the cave for about an hour. By following various breezes, some of my own making, I eventually met the others at the rockpile from where we beat a hasty retreat from this challenging cave.

In the afternoon some of us walked the 3km to Frosted Floor Cave. Peering down the 20m pitch we could see a number of live snakes eagerly awaiting our descent. Bruce Stewart abseiled into the cave armed with a big stick and frightened the vipers away (while I supervised from above) and then the rest of us abseiled into the main daylight chamber. The floor of this cave is coated with hard-packed calcite and was strewn with the skeletons of many animals, including snakes, wallabies, possums, goannas and echidnas. We progressed about 100m along the cave and then, unable to find the way on, we stopped and constructed a midden-like mound for future archeologists to ponder over. We then went back to the entrance chamber and hastily laddered out of the cave, inspired by the wriggling tail of a brown snake beneath a close-by rock.

That night, back at the campsite, I was overtaken by an attack of dehydration which Bruce mercifully remedied by mouth to can application of a largish quantity of South Australian beer.

Saturday, 15/1/83.

We travelled to Snake Lagoon at the south-west of the island. This is an ancient lagoon site, now long dry, and it is believed that the giant diprotodon once roamed this area. From the lagoon we walked a few kilometers to the mouth of Rocky River. This area is very scenic and we spent some hours here climbing the cliffs, swimming and generally taking in the many beautiful features encountered.

Sunday, 16/1/83

This day I rested at the campsite at Kelly Hill Caves while some of the others, who had not yet been to Ravine du Casoares, went there and the rest returned to Rocky River mouth where John dived for abalones. That night we feasted on abalones and generally prepared to leave the area the next day.

Monday, 17/1/83.

Leaving Kelly Hill Caves, we drove back to Kingscote and then to nearby Emu Bay where we searched the rocky shoreline for trilobite fossils. We then went to Antechamber Bay at the western end of the island. We camped here and during the night were attacked by possums, rats and fairy penguins, one of which crawled under Bruce and fell asleep.

Tuesday, 18/1/83.

This was our last day on the island and we began by travelling the short distance to Cape Willoughby Lighthouse. This lighthouse was established in 1852 and was the first lighthouse erected in South Australia. After leaving South Australia's first erection we called in at Penneshow, the main township at West Kangaroo Island and then drove back to Kingscote.

We arrived at about 2pm and, given that the Troubridge did not sail until midnight, we spent our remaining time at the island relaxing at the local pub. (In fact, I became so relaxed I couldn't move.)

On the way back to Sydney from Adelaide, Derek, Bruce and I called into Wee Jasper where we looked at the entrance pitch to Punchbowl Cave and did a quick trip in Signature Cave.

Graeme Galloway

Mendips Caving, England.
26th - 27th March, 1983.

Having brought much of my caving gear all this way, I could hardly spend six months here without going underground at least once. So I contacted a Bristol caving club, the Bristol Exploration Club, and managed to join a trip. I travelled up to the Mendips and met the club in their local pub. British cavers are drinkers just as much as Australians are (in fact, S.U.S.S. has quite a long way to go to beat the beer consumption capacity of this lot, as well as the size of the guts). The pub is fairly close to the club hut where we spent the weekend.

On the Saturday, I was a bit frustrated by the fact that we didn't go caving until the afternoon due to the hangovers suffered by many of the others, but I did get to see Wells Cathedral in the morning, part of a visit to the shops. The cave we did in the afternoon was decidedly unexciting. It was called Tynning's Barrow, and the purpose of the trip was to extend a dig at the bottom. The cave itself was a muddy, damp vadose system, containing a couple of ladder pitches and absolutely no formations.

At the bottom was the dig, an horizontal one about twenty metres long, eighteen inches high, with six inches of water to lie in (I'd borrowed a wetsuit). We pulled some rocks out, and then I was introduced to the English digging methods. These involved two pounds of gelignite, detonators and a length of wire. We retreated to the end of the wire, set off the "bang", which was quite impressive, especially the pressure blast, and then made a quick exit in order to beat the fumes. They don't seem to care much about cave conservation here; smoking down the caves, while preparing explosives, what's more!

On the Saturday night, the others all went off to the pub as usual, and I decided to be boring, feeling rather tired after a heavy week's work and very little sleep, so went to bed, and slept through their riotous return.

On Sunday, I was able to see a bit more of what real Mendip caving is like. The whole area consists of mainly horizontal systems, most of which are wet and have rivers and streams in them. A lot of diving is done in many of the caves (one has twelve sumps so far) and it is common for short sumps to be free-dived. Wetsuits are worn as a matter of course. I was rather amused at the form of the cave entrances. Both caves that I did were entered via vertical concrete shafts with manhole covers on top to provide protection and security.

The cave I went down on Sunday, with a different group of cavers who hadn't been to the pub the previous night, was called St Cuthbert's Cave. It is a real rabbit warren with passages everywhere. After entering through the inevitable concrete shaft, we descended via a ladder down a narrow rift with a waterfall pouring into it. We then followed the streamway for a while, a bit like K.D., before climbing and crawling along lots of passages, through rockpiles, and in and out of chambers. We saw various nice formations along the way, called the September Series, and some beautiful, large, white cave pearls. We did a round trip, ending up by coming up the "Waterchute" (as it sounds) and then struggling back up the ladder in the rift; my borrowed wetsuit made bending very difficult.

Altogether, it was a good trip and a nice weekend. It was good of the B.E.C. to allow me to come along, and I found that they were not totally out of touch with Australian caving, or cavers at least, having had a visit from the Julia James contingent in recent years. Also, one of the members, Tony Jarret, told me he had been cave diving with Guy Cox in recent years.

Judy Clarke
(by mail from England)

Caving in Yorkshire
30th April - 2nd May 1983

Being the beginning of May, it was the Mayday Long Weekend, so I was able to do three days of caving rather than two. I had contacted a member of the Red Rose Cave and Pothole Club, Olwen, and she had arranged for me to join a trip with them. I met up with several members of the club in a pub (called "The Snooty Fox") in the attractive little town of Kirkby Lonsdale. They were very nice people and went out of their way to show me some really good caves. We stayed in the club farmhouse (Bull Pot Farm) which is on the edge of the limestone and thus in a good position from the cavers' point of view.

On the first day one of the club members, Andy, took me down to the closest cave (200 yards from the farmhouse) called Bull Pot. Although fairly short, it was very enjoyable, having an attractive streamway at the bottom as well as a small waterfall at the entrance (by-passed by a back way). Getting into the streamway involved crawling under a duckunder with six inches of air space (rather wet) but it was worth it. The Yorkshire caves are mainly very active with streamways and waterfalls in most of them. The limestone in these streamways is a lovely light grey colour (almost milky) and thus very attractive (rather different from Tasmania's often black rock).

On the second day another member of the club, Hugh, took me on a through trip in Lancaster Hole. This cave is the longest in Britain, having around thirty miles of passages, and has a number of different entrances. We went in via Cow Pot, which involved two really nice abseils of eighty foot and one hundred and forty foot. The first was at the entrance, quite a narrow shaft, and the second lower down. The second pitch was quite spectacular, narrow to start with then opening out into a huge chamber. The rope comes right down into the centre of it and you descend, slowly rotating, in a gentle shower of water.

Once down in the cave, I was shown the Collonades, three large columns (one of which has been glued back together after having been broken when some idiot tried to climb it). We then went down to the streamway and followed it upstream for a mile or two. It was really lovely, fast running but no pitches or climbs. The passage was really large, ten to thirty feet wide and up to one hundred feet high, and the stream was about three feet wide and six inches deep, flowing over the lovely smooth white limestone. There were a number of circular pools, with rushing water between them. I really enjoyed it.

Later we left the stream and went up into the massive, high-level dry passages, which were quite impressive with various small stalas and straws on the roofs. We visited some of the pretty parts of the cave, including the famous Easter Grotto, which has been severely overtrogged. One of the caverns had a lovely straw-covered roof. We left the cave via a smaller streamway, quite a narrow, vadose passage and also up a couple of ladderpitches.

On my third day we did a nice wet sporting trip through a cave called Swinsto (part of the Kingsdale system). It involved following the streamway over eight short pitches with wet crawling and walking in between. Being a through trip we only needed one rope so it was like doing an underground canyon. The pitches all had waterfalls down them (semi-avoidable) and varied in length from about twenty feet to sixty feet. Again it was attractive light-coloured limestone. At the bottom the stream joined the Kingsdale Master Cave with its river which has an attractive canal-like streamway for some distance. I really enjoyed the trip, and we exited in the rain via a garbage-bin entrance only fifty metres from the cars.

Altogether I had a great time caving (as well as pleasant evenings spent in the pub, followed by hair-raising drives back to the farm). I am very grateful to the Red Rose Club (especially Hugh and Andy) for having me along and showing me so much in such an hospitable way.

Judy Clarke
(by mail from England)

Trip Report - Cooleman Plains
Easter 1983

Present: Colin Matthews, Rolf Adams, Michael Gibian, Adrian Philby, Helen Moore, Graeme Galloway.

This year the annual SUSS Easter Cooleman Plains trip almost didn't eventuate, mainly as a result of the difficulties experienced by some in arranging transport to the area. However six of us managed to get to get to Cooleman Plains which are situated in the northern end of Kosciuszko National Park. It is amongst the most scenic caving venues in NSW.

Helen and I arrived on Saturday at Blue Waterholes, the main camping area, and met the other four SUSS members who had just returned from River Cave, in which Colin had dived the sump. That afternoon, most of us did Frustration Cave. This cave is entered via a free-climbable 10 metre pitch which leads to a small chamber and the river. We followed the river upstream, and then climbed about 10m up to another small chamber, from the roof of which a 7m tight aven leads to a daylight hole. We then returned to the river, and crawled downstream to the lake end of the cave. After a number of failed attempts to find the pretties section that Colin assures us exists in this cave, we left the cave after a quick 1.5 hour trip.

On Saturday night, we celebrated Colin's birthday by helping him consume his supply of booze. May he have many more (tinnies).

The next day, the first cave we visited was Barbers Cave (CP14,15,16,17). This cave is named after a nearby Yass resident who provided horses for the geologists Leigh and Etheridge for their visit to Cooleman in 1893. We entered the cave, which is situated about 1km along Clarke's Gorge from Blue Waterholes, through the lower river entrance, and, after an enjoyable exploration of numerous stream passages and small chambers, which are, in general, poorly decorated, we left the cave via the top entrance, about 350m from our starting point.

After doing Barber's Cave, Colin set off to solo Whitefish cave, and the rest of us made our way to Murray Cave (CP3). Murray is a large, walk through, heavily decorated cave which was named after Terry Murray who was the first European to take up land at Cooleman. The negotiable length of the cave is usually about 200m ending in an extensive sump. However this year, for only the third time this century (the others being the extended drought years 1902-03 and 1968) the sump was dry, enabling us to get another 200m along the cave to its end. The rangers have placed a visitors book at the cave's end, which all of us eagerly signed as SUSS members. It could well be another century before this part of Murray Cave is again readily accessible. In addition to the extensive unspoiled formations in the second part of the cave, the signatures of four tourists from 1902-03 have been written on a large stalactite near the end of the cave. However, we successfully fought the temptation to add "SUSS-1902" to the collection.

On the way back to the campsite, Michael and I did Cooleman Cave (CP1), entering through Cooleman Right, and leaving through Cooleman Left. This cave was first described by Leigh and Etheridge (1894), however it was not until about 1962 that the connection between the right and left sections of the cave was discovered.

Altogether, the Coleman Right and Coleman Left system is about 400m long, and features considerable decoration, and some fairly sporting crawls. Adrian and Rolf did Coleman Cave later that day after exploring a sporting series of side passages in Murray Cave.

That night, we continued celebrating Colin's birthday until his beer and port ran out.

Early on Monday morning, it began raining heavily and as a result we had to push both the cars a considerable way up and along the 10km muddy track from Blue Waterholes to the main gravel road leading from Coleman Plains to the Snowy Mountains Highway.

In general, caving at Coleman is to be highly recommended for many reasons, including the relatively easily do-able caves, the spectacular panorama and the fact that although over 100 caves are known in the area, it is still relatively unexplored.

Graeme Galloway

Trip Report
Jenolan
May 16th - 20th

Present: Richard McNeall, Barry Smith, Rolf Adams, Mike Gibian,
David Blunt, John Kaye.

MONDAY

Arriving early, we were pleasantly surprised to find that we were allowed to camp at Mammoth Flat. While I put on a wetsuit, the others armed themselves with buckets and digging gear and we set off for Mammoth Cave. The objective was to swim Slug Lake, scale the mudslope on the far side and investigate the possibility of digging at the top.

On the way to Mammoth, we came across a tourist. Conversation revealed that he had been with a Bondi bushwalking club, which had helped SUSS to survey Mammoth Cave over twenty years ago. He told us about a Sydney University professor who had put all the oolites from Oolite Cavern into a tobacco tin which he hid in the cave to protect them from vandalism.

After this interesting chat, we entered the cave. Lower River seemed to be carrying much more water than usual and the large flowstone pools on the way to Slug Lake were completely full. These were the first encounters with the high water levels which were to frustrate us considerably during our stay at Jenolan. Slug Lake itself contained a live eel about 40 centimetres in length. As there is clearly no way the eel could have come downstream through the gravel sink, it may well have come upstream via Imperial and Spider Caves.

Swimming the length of Slug Lake is not easy, as there is a nasty constriction towards the end which makes diving necessary. I climbed up the mudslope to find Rolf had beaten me there. He had wormed his way through some very tight mud holes to avoid the lake altogether. The passage on the far side of the lake is very narrow at the top, and it would take a superhuman digging effort to make anything of it.

On the way out, John, who was feeling a bit lazy, got the buckets and bailed out a low crawlway to avoid squeezing over a couple of sharp rocks. We returned to the camp to build up our reserves for the big trip into Spider the next day.

TUESDAY

Barry was not in the mood for Spider Cave and elected to stay back at the campsite. As it turned out, he was to have the last laugh.

We set out for Spider Cave, planning to use the scaling poles to climb what promises to be a high-level bypass to the downstream rockpile. We were also going to bring the poles out for some much-needed maintenance. They have now been down Spider for a year.

After a struggle, and a swift jog back to the car for some WD40, we managed to unlock the gate and enter. Dingo Dig was very full of water and half an hour's bucketing was necessary to allow breathing to take place in the squeeze. Z-squeeze also had a nice puddle in it, so we were saturated by the time we reached Pirate's Delight. Pirate's had enough water and mud in it to drown most people, and so we turned back towards the surface. Next time I will take a pump.

Barry was amused to see us return so early, wet, cold, and covered in mud. It was all too much, and so we recovered at the Hampton pub, playing pool and eating hamburgers.

WEDNESDAY

We had a break and did the nearby Kalang Canyon. Instead of having the two necessary 50m ropes, we had a 60m and a 40m. A very silly, but effective system was devised to overcome this problem. There was one point where Mike showed us how to slide elegantly down a scree slope. He managed to stop himself just before a 30m precipice.

THURSDAY

While David was heading home to go to footy practice, the remaining five of us headed up the valley. Wiburd's Cave proved difficult to locate, but not impossible. Yawning Gulches was half full of water so our proposed attack on Henry's Dig was abandoned. A water level marker was left and hopefully we will soon know how fast the cave is filling up. The surface stream is now sinking opposite Watersend Cave.

FRIDAY

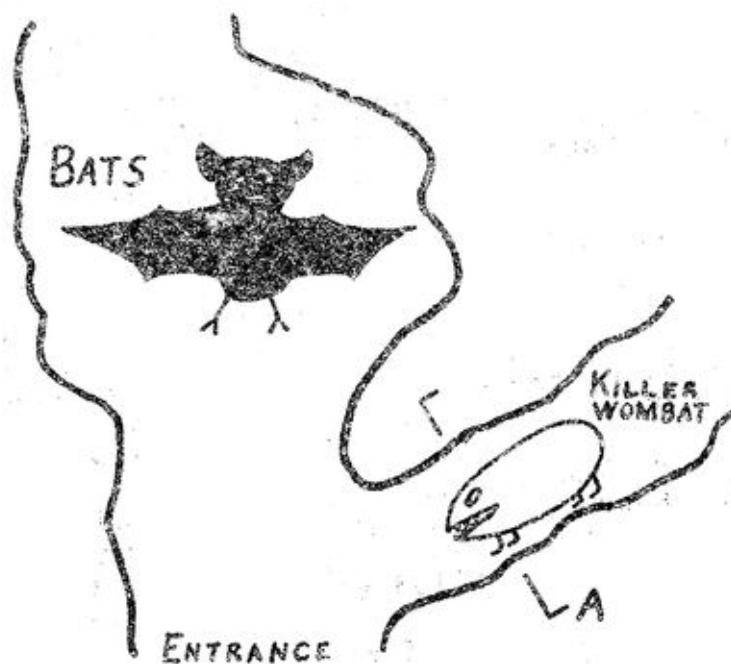
This was Southern Limestone day. On arriving at Heffalump Trap, we found that there had been considerable earth and rockfall into the dig. We didn't do a lot of digging before moving up to Paradox Cave to investigate prospects there. Rolf again demonstrated his willingness to enter unenterably tight sections of passage. In one part, John and myself, found ourselves face to face with a huge killer wombat. An extremely rapid exit was performed.

After calming down, we noticed an upper entrance, tagged J263. It doesn't go very far.

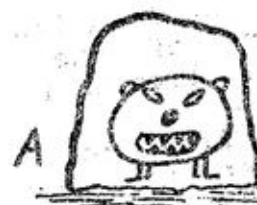
A quick walk down the valley brought us back to the cars, and we headed back home for a well-earned holiday.

Richard McNeall

J48 Paradox Cave



SCALE: N/A
GRADE: 0
DATE: 1983



Trip Report - Yarrangobilly
June 11, 12, 13 1983
"Caving in the Snow"

Present: Graeme Galloway, Roy Winstanley, Cheryl Aldritch, Geoff and Ev Innes, Ivan Desailly, Guy McKenna, Rolf Adams, Adrian Philby, Colin Matthews, Keir Vaughan-Taylor.

Despite the early, extravagant arrival of the ski season, a number of us journeyed to Yagby to uphold the tradition of SUSS's annual visit to this superb caving area. Situated in the Kosciuszko National Park, Yarrangobilly Caves are almost certainly the best protected in the state, and special thanks are conveyed to Andy Spate of the NPWS for allowing us to visit this karst at such short notice.

A number of us drove to Yagby on Friday night via Tumut as Andy had contacted me that morning to tell me he had left the keys to Cotteril's cottage, our base for the weekend, for us by the road on the way to Yagby. Given that we reached Yagby at 3-30 am on Saturday amidst considerable sleet, snow and bitter cold the fact that we were able to sleep in Cotteril's was most comforting.

Upon arriving at the cottage we found it was covered by about 15cm deep snow and most of us beat a hasty retreat to bed except Colin and I who contemplated the vagaries of nature for about half an hour over a snow chilled tinny before retiring.

After considerable effort getting up later that morning we decide to tourist Y10 (Old Inn). Ivan, Colin, Rolf, Adrian, Keir (who arrived that morning) and I entered the cave in the early hours of the afternoon after negotiating the steep, snow-covered climb down to the creek which flows into the cave.

After following the creek for a short distance one encounters a vertical squeeze which descends for about 2 metres to a passage which leads on to the rest of the cave. Some of us went through the squeeze and the rest of us descended a nearby climb and then continued following the stream through a rift passage which leads to another squeeze. I had negotiated part of the squeeze in my 1982 visit so I waited in the thought provoking darkness while the others verified the squeeze was impassable.

Following this we retraced our steps to the beginning of another passage which leads to a large, fairly well decorated chamber. My aim was to explore further a 7 metre vertical shaft found on my previous visit to this cave.

Ivan and I climbed down this shaft which led off at the bottom to two tight rift passages. Ivan free climbed down this shaft to rig the ladder, and after the others descended we made our way along the right hand passage which led back to the main chamber. We then followed the left hand passage which turned out to be well trogged and which led to a rockpile which we climbed up for about 10 metres in a high chamber but could not find any promising leads.

We emerged from Y10 after about 4 hours of very enjoyable caving.

Arriving back at the cottage we found Ev, Geoff, and Guy waiting for me with a snowball welcome. Soon after, Roy and Cheryl arrived.

On Sunday we did Eagle's Nest (Y1,2,3) which has the distinction of being the deepest cave on the mainland. We entered via the Y3 entrance and descended into the first main chamber, The Eyrie. From here a climb leads down to a reasonably tight squeeze which in turn leads to a couple of interesting free climbable pitches which eventually culminate in a rift named Sexual Intercourse it's Cold (name slightly changed). It was.

From this venerable chamber we negotiated a 5 metre crawl to the first gate. From here, an inspiring rift passage leads to numerous large, well decorated chambers.

After passing through the rockpile we arrived at the start of a long high passage along which numerous superb cave features can be observed. These include mud formations and oolites, which Roy photographed, as well as various other kinds of cave decoration.

Another feature of this section of the cave is the track marking and formation clearing (!! ed) recently done by CSS. The track marking in particular is commendable because it provides a clear way on as well as directing traffic away from the fragile sections of the cave, such as the straw section on the way to the Y2 entrance.

We emerged from Eagle's Nest via Y2 after about four hours of superb caving.

On Monday before leaving Yagby we obtained directions from the ranger about the location of Coppermine Cave for future reference.

Graeme Galloway

Bendethra

15th - 18th May, 1983
(or barefoot, semi-nude caving)

Adrian Philbey and myself stumbled across Bendethra Cave during a bushwalk in the Deua National Park. Having carried no more than bushwalking gear, we entered the cave with only flashlights for illumination and no secondary sources (shock, horror!!). We were immediately struck by a twenty tonne boulder on our collective crania....(sorry) by the size of the cave, ranging from 30m in height and nowhere less than walkthrough size. After procrastinating in the twilight, we ventured into the sanctum of darkness beyond the tourist ladder only to be presented with a lake, 10m across and without dry passage.

Boots were removed, trousers doffed and minimalist method* undertaken. The long slippery flowstone slope on the further shore proved interesting, despite assistance of an ancient handrail. Gingerly we trod the limestone fantastic through the more removed sections of this cave, scrabbling up further slopes and mudslides. At one point in the cave, the entrance could be seen shining brilliantly 150m away, surrounded by the pitch blackness of this tunnel-like cave.

*This new caving technique aims to return speleology to the pristine simplicity it once enjoyed before the present rush of frantic exploration fuelled by modern technology, to bring an aesthetic grace to the sport, unencumbered by the hideous array of plastic and metal growths that encrust today's caver. It requires movement through hostile caverns in bare feet and protected from the elements only by a pair of underpants.

The formations through the entire cave are excellent, being generally of large dimensions. For instance, one finely fluted column reaches 25m into the roof. The flowstone in the further reaches was equally impressive and well preserved. Passage sizes emphasized these with much of the higher stream passage being at least 15m high and wide. The cave appears to be fossil phreatic with minor vadose action judging by the simple stream course followed and lack of side development. Any erosion appears to have stopped long ago as is apparent from the thickness of sediment and the weight of decoration. Little chance exists for extensions except at high levels.

On the whole, I was pleasantly surprised by this cave of minor repute. Its extent of passage (about 250m at rough estimate), the size of passage and the quality of formation make it worthy of a far superior reputation.

Other caves in the area include a small and highly unstable rockfall/resurgence, BD2 on Con Creek (Guy, this one was made for you), BD4, Water Cave, a chamber 20m in diameter and a few others.

The area is not only worthwhile for caverneering, but is an excellent bushwalking spot. The Deua Valley drops 1000m from the top of the Minuma Range with the Deua River at the bottom. We found it most practical to leave the car at Pike's Saddle (GR 310 145 Snowball) on the Braidwood - Numeralla road about 20km beyond the Wyanbene turnoff. NPWS tracks then lead to Dampier Trig and the Minuma Range. We followed the range to a point directly above the caves from where the Trickett Zig-Zag Track is said by some, including our faithful map, to depart for the caves. Instead we found ourselves stumbling down a 45 degree, heavily-wooded scree slope, without even a rabbit path to follow.

Despite its torturous nature, this route proved most efficient, and if one sticks to the ridge which descends to the fairly obvious limestone area then troubles should only be large instead of monstrous. The route out via the Deua River is extremely picturesque and would have made the trip worthwhile in itself without the added bonus of limestone. The round trip including modest caving activities (or immodest if attempted semi-naked) takes at least three days and may be extended to cover other caving areas in the vicinity i.e. Wyanbene, Marble Arch, Cleatmore, and one discovered in 1978, Deua.

Paul Chatterton
Adrian Philbey

References

- Bendethra Caves; Capital Territory Caving Group, May, 1978
- Norbert Casteret; Ten Years Under the Earth.
- John Brush; "Deua - A New Caving Area in NSW", in WACCON Proceedings of 12th ASF Conference

Recent Additions to the SUSS Library.

This is the first of a, hopefully, regular update of the additions to the SUSS library. The library is located in Paul Greenfield's office, LG21, Madsen Building.

- Cave Diving in Australia; I. Lewis & P. Stace, 2nd ed. - updated edition of the book on Australian cave diving, especially at Mt Gambier.
- SSS Journal, March, 1983 - Trip reports etc.
- SSS Journal, May, 1983 - Trip reports and other articles.
- MSS Newsletter, May, 1983 - Trip reports of Abercrombie, etc.
- NSS News, June, 1982 - cave lights issue, including Electric Carbide Ignition article, and all you ever wanted to know about carbide lamps.
- Bibliografija Publikacij Slovenske Akademije Znanosti in Umetnosti v Letik, 1972 - 1980.
- Travaux de l'Institut de Speleologie "Emile Racovitza", 1868 - 1947 (from Romania)

Please excuse ignorance (bliss?), but I don't know what the above two items are.

- Speleo Spiel (TCC Newsletter), Jan, 1983, No. 184. - Trip reports on Growling Swallet, Owl Pot, Midnight Hole, Peanut Brittle Pot, Kubla Khan and Trapdoor Swallet Survey. I guess they don't have much to do down Tassie way. Ho hum!
- Speleo Spiel, March, 1983, No. 185. - Trip reports on Growling Swallet. Tackle notes on Serendipity. Map and locations of Benson and Hedges series pots in Florentine Valley.
- Speleo Spiel, April, 1983, No. 186. - Annual reports. Yearly summaries and two Australian depth records, ho hum! Cave diving in Junee Resurgence. Ice Tube-Growling Swallet connection - hardly worth reading about really. And yes, a really great trip report from yours truly. Forget the other trivia and read something really worthwhile.

Phillip Cole

SUSS Address List

June 1983

Rolf Adams, 18 Sirius Cove Rd., Mosman, NSW 2088, PM
 Andrew Alexander, 13 Annangrove Rd., Kenthurst, NSW 2154, PM, 654 1716
 Rohan Allen, 14 Cross St., Maitland, NSW 2320, Pl
 Andrew Allan, 30 Woodland St., Balgowlah Hts., NSW 2093, PM
 Dimitri Antkin, 67 Church St., Ryde, NSW 2112, Pl, 80 4517
 Dave & Carey Barlow, 358 Ocean View Rd., Ettalong Beach, NSW 2257, FA
 William Bor, 17 Sararanda Ave., Allambie Hts., NSW 2100, Pl
 Robert Brandt, 41 Jersey Rd., Woolahra, NSW 2025, PM
 Peter Brennan, 8 Beaconsfield Pde., Lindfield, NSW 2070, Pl, 46 2427
 Doug Brewster, 1 View St., Marrickville, NSW 2204, Pl, 55 1315
 Margaret Brooker, 35 Gibbes St., Newtown, NSW 2042, PM
 Allan Brotherton, 3/3 Morford Place, Cremorne, NSW 2090, PM
 R. Broug, 6/44 Howard Av., Dee Why, NSW 2099, PM
 Carolyn Cannon, 112 Carlton Cr., Summer Hill, NSW 2130, PM
 Brendan Carlton, 669 South Allen St., Darlinghurst, N.S.W 2010, PM
 Paul Chatterton, 131 King Rd., Wahroonga, NSW 2076, FM 48-1910
 Francis Chee, 125 Stuart St., Blakehurst, NSW 2221, FM
 Leslie Chung, 5 Howson Av., South Turramurra, NSW 2074, PM, 449-3175
 Judy Clarke, 10 Holden St., Epping, NSW 2121, FM, 869-1276
 Michele Clark, 759B The Entrance Rd., Wamberal, NSW 2260, Pl
 Bryan Cleaver, 141 Sulphide St., Broken Hill, NSW 2880, FM
 Phillip Cole, 12 Meldrum Av., Miranda, NSW 2228, FM, 525-2496
 David Cole, 12 Meldrum Av., Miranda, NSW 2228, PM
 Warren Cole, 12 Meldrum Av., Miranda, NSW 2228, PM
 Scott Coles, 20 Raglan St., Turramurra, NSW 2074, PM, 44 7439
 Cathryn Collins, 20 Menzies Rd., Marsfield, NSW 2122, PM, 869 1143
 Steve Cooper, 42 Nalya Rd., Cromer, NSW 2099, PM, 982 8389
 Judy Cotter, 27 Duff St., Turramurra, NSW 2074, Pl
 Guy Cox, Elect Microscope Unit, Sydney Uni., NSW 2006, FM, 818-1896
 Tim Dennis, 30 Bolard Ave., Gympie, NSW 2227, Pl
 Ivan Desailly, 7 Eddie Av., Panania, NSW 2213, FM, 773-3861
 Eleonora Dibello, 1/163 Enmore Rd., Enmore, NSW 2042, Pl
 John Dunkley, 3 Stops Place, Chifley, A.C.T. 2606, LM
 Kim Dunkin, 15 Richard Johnson Cr., Ryde, NSW 2112, Pl, 80 3479
 Chris Dunne, 114 Woodlands Rd., Taren Point, NSW 2229, CH, 525-8469
 Grant Elliott, 2 Dobson Cr., Dundas, NSW 2117, FM
 Peter Finlayson, 20 Lee Av., Beverly Hills, NSW 2209, PM, 570-8832
 Cathy Franzi, 52 Forbes St., Newtown, NSW 2042, PM, 516 4915
 Alan Fried, 104 Clyde St., Nth. Bondi, NSW 2026, Pl
 Graeme Galloway, Psychology Department, Sydney University, NSW 2006, FM
 Mike Garben, 67 Riviera Av., Avalon Beach, NSW 2107, FM, 918-6536
 Jeff Godfrey, Box 7000, G.P.O. Sydney, NSW 2001, PM
 Anne Gray, 392 Abercrombie St., Chippendale, NSW 2008, FM
 Paul Greenfield, 89 Macaulay Rd., Stanmore, NSW 2048, FM, 560-4952
 Adam Groser, 27 Mallet St., Camperdown, NSW 2050, Pl
 Nicola Guyna, Sancta Sophia College, 8 Missendon Rd., Camperdown, NSW 2050, F
 Carl Hamper, 64 Roland Ave., Wahroonga, NSW 2076, Pl
 Kathy Handel, 80 Delgrave Cr., Waniassa, North Canberra, A.C.T., FM
 Kevin Harlow, 32 Fishery Rd., Currarong, NSW 2540, AM
 Tony Healy, St. Johns College, Missendon Rd., Camperdown, NSW 2209, Pl
 P. and J. Hill, 44 Summerleas Rd., Fern Tree, Tasmania 7101, FM
 Marnie Holmes, c/- Womens College, Sydney University, PM
 Glenn Hunt, 23 Hipwood St., North Sydney, NSW 2060, FM, 929 8675
 David Hunt, 23 Hipwood St., North Sydney, NSW 2060, PM, 929 8675
 Mark Hunter, 21 Windarra Cr., Wahroonga, NSW 2076, PM, 48-6629

Geoff Innes, 3/29 Empress St., Hurstville, NSW 2220, FM, 57 6422
 Joanne Kamlade, 13 Oceanview Av., Dover Heights, NSW 2030, P1
 John Kaye, 17 Minnamurra Av., West Pymble, NSW 2073, FM, 498-3702
 Gideon Kezelman, 14 Oxley St., Glebe, NSW 2037, P1
 Randall King, 89 Marian St., Enmore, NSW 2042, FM, 519-5296 412-5626
 Danusia Kucharska, 35 Gibbes St., Newtown, NSW 2042, FM
 Stephen Kuschert, 51 Cooloongatta Rd., Beverly Hills, NSW 2209, P1
 Michael Lake, 31 Cr. Rd., Caringbah, NSW 2229, FM, 524-5229
 Patrick Larkin, 4 Holland Pl., Dundas, NSW 2117, P1
 Richard Mackay, 16 Northcote Rd., Lindfield, NSW 2070, FM, 46-1740
 Colin Mackenzie, 21 Earle Ave., Ashfield, NSW 2131, P1
 Ian & Rosie Mann, 48 Gwydir St., Greystanes, NSW 2145, FM
 Colin Matthews, 2 Grant Place, St. Ives, NSW 2075, FM, 440-3702
 David Matthews, 1A Jordan St., Wentworthville, NSW 2145, FM, 635-4097
 Elli McFadyen, 66 Lamb St., Lilyfield, NSW 2040, FM
 Guy McKenna, 48 Vineyard St., Mona Vale, NSW 2103, FM, 997-3758
 Richard McNeall, 49 Stanhope Rd., Killara, NSW 2071, FM, 46-1847
 Mac Monks, 11A Kitchener St., Oatley, NSW 2223, FM
 Sharon Mullin, 285 Bulara St., Duffy's Forrest, NSW 2084, FM, 450 1760
 Patsy Nagle, 43 Junction Rd., Beverly Hills, NSW 2209, P1, 53 7567
 Bruno Nicoletti, 20 Brain Ave., Lurnea 2170, P1
 Donald Nightingale, 16 Northcote Rd., Auburn, NSW 2144, FM
 John Oldroyd, St. Johns College, Missenden Rd., Camperdown, NSW 2050, P1
 Terry O'Leary, 30/269 Wolli Creek Rd., Banksia, NSW 2216, AM
 A. Osborne, 60 Lauderdale Av., Fairlight, NSW 2094, FM
 Vicky Owen, 16 Maramba Cl., Kingsgrove, NSW 2208, P1
 Joenne Pallister, 38 Lander Lane, Chippendale, NSW 2008, P1
 Adrian Philby, 12 Bluegum Rd., Annangrove, NSW 2154, FM, 679 1459
 Dom Rowe, 83 Northwood Rd., Northwood, NSW 2066, P1
 Martin Scott, 4 Bowen Av., Turramurra, NSW 2074, FM
 J. & T. Seabrook, 112 Old Berowra Rd., Hornsby, NSW 2077, FM
 Henry Shannon, 44 McCaul St., Taringa, QUEENSLAND 4068, LM
 Alan Skea, 15 Brisbane St., Fairlight, NSW 2094, FM
 Graeme Smith, 7/21 Sproule St., Lakemba, NSW 2195, FM
 Barry Smith, 71 Parklands Rd., North Ryde, NSW 2113, FM
 Peter Southern, 30 Abigail St., Seven Hills, NSW 2147, P1
 Jane Spring, 3a Edward St., Gordon, NSW 2072, FM, 499 2127
 D. Stafford, 49 Ayres Rd., St. Ives, NSW 2075, FM
 Bruce Stewart, 35 Woolgoolga St., Balgowlah North, NSW 2093, FM
 Judy Strickland, 10 Second St., Ashbury, NSW 2193, FM, 799-7264
 Peter Stupans, 43 Eaton Av., Normanhurst, NSW 2076, FM, 48-4592
 Tfoy Sullivan, 18 Spring St., Balmain, NSW 2041, P1, 8273865
 Judy Taylor, 2 Redgum Ave., Killara, NSW 2071, P1
 Charles Thomas, 2A Burns Rd., Wahroonga, NSW 2076, P1
 Rosemary Thwaites, 8 Allars St., West Ryde, NSW 2114, FM, 85-4368
 Peter Trueman, 8 Annemarie Cl., St. Ives, NSW 2075, P1
 Rik Tunney, 11 Connewarre Cr., Berriedale, Tasmania 7011, FM, 002 31-0351
 Mark Twigg, 46 Norfolk St., Killara, NSW 2071, FM, 498-2996
 Keir Vaughan-Taylor, 30 Erskinvill Rd., Erskinvill, NSW 2043, FM
 Peter Wade, 66 Woolooware Rd., Cronulla, NSW 2230, FM, 523 7124
 Dr. Michael Walker, Dept. of Anthropology, Sydney Uni., NSW 2006, FM
 Wesley Warren, 136 Caverndish St., Stanmore, NSW 2048, P1
 Dave Waters, P.O. Box 139, Botany, NSW 2019, FM
 Ian Watts, 36A Dalrymple Av., Chatswood, NSW 2067, FM
 C. Watts, 15 Darghan St., Glebe, NSW 2037, FM
 Bruce Welch, 21 Thompson St., Marrickville, NSW 2204, LM
 Craig Welsh, 29 Forbes St., Newtown, NSW 2042, P1, 51 3164
 Brian Wilkie, 12/11-15 Fountainebleau, Sans Souci, NSW 2219, FM, 529 4304
 Ray Williams, c/- Psychology Department, Sydney University, NSW 2006, FM
 Alex McPherson, 3/46 Meadow Cr., Meadowbank, NSW 2114, FM
 Phillip Williams, 3/46 Meadow Cr., Meadowbank, NSW 2114, FM
 Peter Winglee, 4470 South 36th St., Arlington, Virginia 22206, U.S.A., FM
 Roy Winstanley, 5/68a Smith St., Wollongong, NSW 2500, FM

Ashley Woodcroft, 12 Albion Ave., Pymble, NSW 2073, P1
Jim Woodhill, 16 Lander St., Chippendale, NSW 2008, PM, 37 5158
Ben Wright, 72 Campbell St., Balmain, NSW 2041, P1
Michael Wright, 47 Elvina Av., Avalon, NSW 2107, PM, 918 3544
Kristin Young, 8 Levick St., Cremorne, NSW 2090, FM, 90-6867
Boris Zak, 8B/170 Willarong Rd., Caringbah, NSW 2229, P1, 525 1279

Trip Report - Wee Jasper
June 24-26 1983

Present: Richard McNeall, Phillip Cole, Warren Cole, Mike Lake,
and Brian

FRIDAY

We drove down in the Cole truck.

SATURDAY

After starting the day with an exhausting trip through Signature Cave, we set off down the Punchbowl pitch. Strangely enough, Phil didn't insist on a back belay. Deep in the cave, we came across Neil Montgomery, who doesn't like PMI rope. He showed us some interesting parts of the cave, along with a quick shortcut.

Phil and myself did a rapid trip through Dogleg Cave before returning, wet and cold, to the campsite. Mike had arrived there an hour before us, but still hadn't started a fire. There was a nice lunar eclipse to watch over dinner.

SUNDAY

An attempt to start the Kingswood revealed that it wouldn't. While Warren was away begging for help, I saved the day by fixing the horn. Unfortunately the improvement in beeping power didn't start the motor.

The problem was rectified, and we did a relaxed abseiling through trip in Dip Cave. Gong Cave was full of Venturers, but we did all of that cave, before bludging another jumper lead start and going home.

Richard McNeall

Future Events
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August
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- Anytime Skiing. Contact almost anybody.
New members should note that during the skiing
season the second S in SUSS is assumed to be an
abbreviation for Skiing.
- 29th-2nd Jenolan. Contact Richard McNeall (46 1847)
- 30th Committee Meeting. 89 Macaulay Rd., Stanmore.

September
=====

- 1st General Meeting. 7:30pm Common Room, Holme Building.
- 3rd-4th Jenolan. Contact Guy McKenna (997 3758)
- 24th Speleo Sports. Form a team. Win PRIZES and GLORY!!
This is normally won by SUSS teams so continue the
tradition. A mesochistic time is assured for all.
Entry fee is \$3.50 per person. Contact Richard
McNeall for details or come to a meeting.
- 27th Committee Meeting. Computer Science Common Room,
Hadsen Building.

October
=====

- 6th General Meeting. 7:30pm Common Room, Holme Building.
- 8th-9th Jenolan. Contact Guy McKenna (997 3758)
- 21st CUSS Dinner. Meet all the heavies you have just heard
legends about! Throw buns at them!! More details below.

December
=====

- Most of Cooleman Plains. Graeme Galloway is planning to run
a long exploration trip at Cooleman. He hopes to find
most of the known caves (and some of the unknown ones?)
Cooleman Plains is a beautiful area and is NOT at Jenolan!

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Cavers' Annual Dinner

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The annual Sydney Cavers' Dinner will be held on Friday,
21st of October at Macquarie University Union. Tickets will
be available at SUSS meetings and will only cost \$11 each!
For this paltry sum you will not only receive a paltry
(sorry that should read Poultry) dinner but be supplied
with two (two!!) buns. It is recommended that only one of
these be consumed with the meal and that the other be reserved
for the subsequent bun fight.

July-August 1983

SUSS

BULLETIN
of the

SYDNEY UNIVERSITY
SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

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

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