

BULLETIN *of the*

S*ydney*

U*niversity*

S*peleological*



S*ociety*

SUSS BULLETIN 27(1)
March-April 1987.

SUSS MEETINGS

At the February Committee meeting, the Committee resolved to experiment and hold two general meetings of the Society per month. At the time of this Bulletin it is fair to say that the experiment has been a success.

SUSS MEETINGS ARE HELD ON THE FIRST THURSDAY AND THIRD WEDNESDAY OF EACH MONTH, at 7:30pm in the Common Room of the Holme Building.

Over the next few months a number of very interesting meetings are planned and we hope you will support them and attend:

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| Thur 2 April | Judy McNeal will present slides of her recent trip to <u>New Zealand</u> . The slides will include some of the classic NZ caves - Nettlebed, Harwoods Hole, The Mankiwitika to name a few. |
| Wed 15 April | ' <u>The Bunty Show</u> ' - Steve Bunton is one of the most entertaining speleo-orators in the country. For a number of years Steve was a leading member of SUSS, but for the last two years has lived in Tasmania and now edits 'Speleo Spiel'. Come and hear all about his recent exploits at home and abroad. |
| Thur 7 May | <u>ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.</u> |
| Wed 20 May | Julia James will present a collection of slides, some humorous, entitled ' <u>The ABC of Caving</u> '. For the information of new members, Julia is one of Australia's first rank speleologists and leading expedition cavers. |
| Thur 4 June | <u>Gaping Gyll, U.K:</u> two classic films by Sid Peru about 100 years of Yorkshire Caving. This is the story of the attempts to link Gaping Gyll, "England's grand-daddy of all potholes", to its resurgence at Ingleborough Cave. |
| Wed 17 June | Al Warild presents a slides/talk on various matters relating to <u>SRT</u> , including a few things not to do. Al, arguably Australia's finest caver, is an expert on the latest trends in SRT, and this talk is not to be missed. |



Sydney University Speleological Society

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

EDITORIAL

Hello and welcome to the first SUSS Bull of 1987. In this exciting fun-packed issue we have trip reports, a preview of the Mt Anne expedition report, conservation features on Bungonia and Mt Etna, and more!

This year, your SUSS Committee (read:sadists) have decided to try something new (read:fiendish). Instead of heaping all the Bulls onto one Editor (read:overworked, neurotic sacrificial lamb - there must be a reason that the Editors from the past few years all skip the country at the end of that year!), each Bull will be produced by a different Editor (read:unsuspecting victim), under the watchful eye of Keir V-T (read:hero) and his Macintosh. If you wish to assist with this innovative endeavour, contact the Committee and we'll find something for you to do...(evil laughter). Trip reports, cartoons, poems, movie scripts, blockbuster mini-series (whatever did happen to Jamison Valley?) - all gratefully accepted (especially if pretyped).

Anyway, before I wear out your patience (and the parentheses keys), I conclude this editorial and wish you happy reading.

Danusia jk.

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

Congratulations on the quality of the present Bulletins - a good blend of science and good old SUSS silly epics!

I have something I wish to sell, and I was wondering whether I could advertise in the Bull. I can't remember whether that was acceptable policy or not.

Kristin Young,
18 Nov 1986.

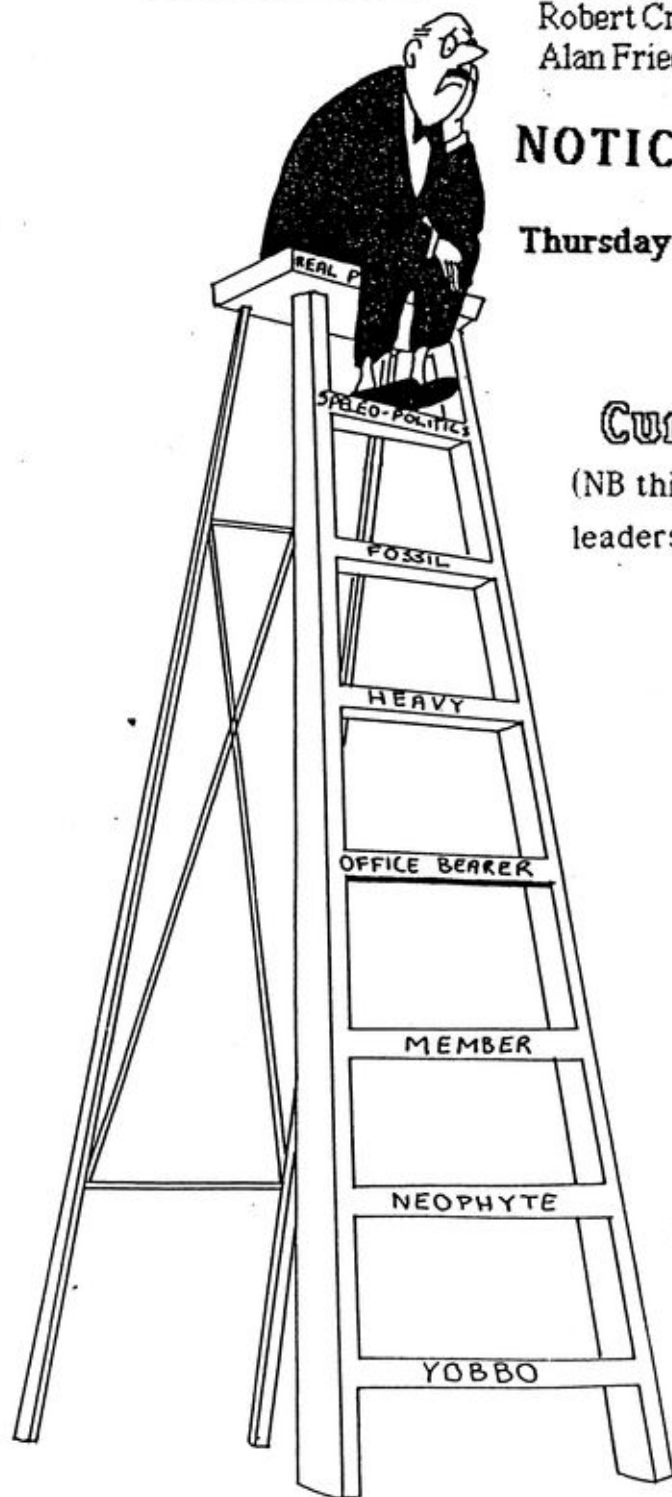
Dear Kristin,

Yes, SUSS does accept classified ads from members, as long as they are related to caving, gear etc. Sorry we took so long to reply - we would be happy to run the ad if you still want to submit it.

*Ed.,
24 Mar 1987.*

Current COMMITTEE 1986-87.

<u>Acting President:</u>	Keir Vaughan-Taylor, 692 3518 (w) or 519 9769 (h).
<u>Vice-President:</u>	Keir V-T.
<u>Secretary:</u>	Pat Larkin, 699 6892(h).
<u>Treasurer:</u>	Jacob Michelson, 449 8145 (h).
<u>Acting Editor:</u>	Dantusia Kucharska, 929 3518 (h).
<u>Minutes Secretary:</u>	Dantusia K.
<u>Acting Equipment Officer:</u>	Mark Pollinger.
<u>Acting Safety Officer:</u>	Mike Lake, 692 3145 (w) or 524 5229 (h).
<u>ASF Councillor:</u>	Chris Dunne, 270 0446 (w) or 560 1496 (h).
<u>Librarian:</u>	Martin Scott, 449 4092 (h).
<u>General Committee:</u>	Ross Bannerman, 929 5599 (w) or 750 9320 (h).
	Robert Crowe, 969 1362 (h).
	Alan Fried, 30 3896 (h).



NOTICE is hereby given that the **AGM** of the Society will be held on **Thursday May 7th 1987** (not in April as in previous years).

Current TRIP LEADERS.

(NB this is not a complete list as some of our trip leaders are away.)

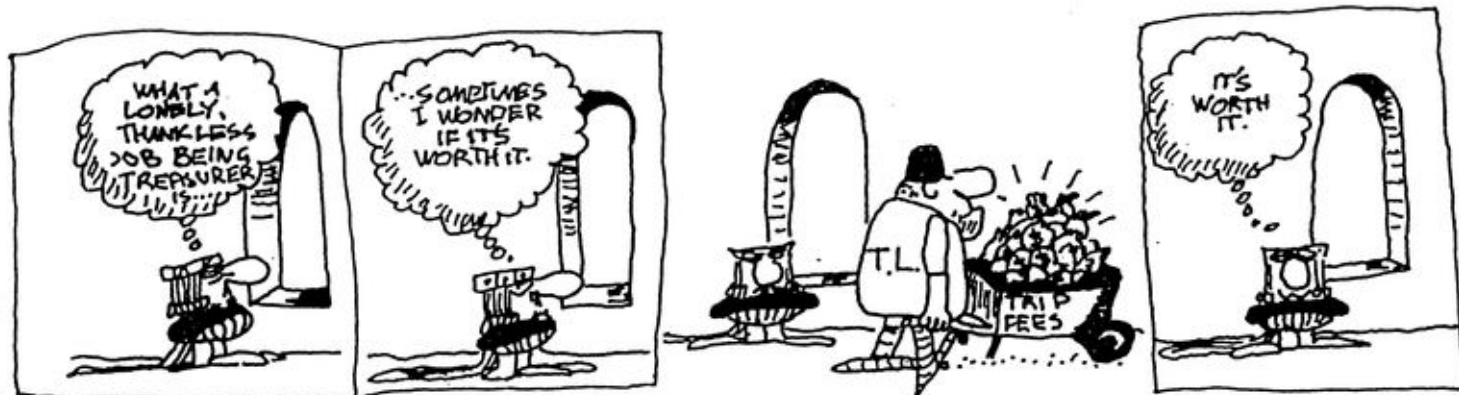
Rolf Adams, 969 6655 (h).
 Ross Bannerman, 929 5599 (w) or 750 9320 (h).
 Phil Cole, 525 2496 (h).
 Robert Crowe, 969 1362 (h).
 Ivan Desailly, 692 2525 (w).
 Mike Lake, 692 3145 (w) or 524 5229 (h).
 Pat Larkin, 699 6892 (h).
 Guy McKanna.
 Judy McNeill, 726 1845 (h).
 Richard McNeill, 638 0122 (w) or 726 1845 (h).
 Ian Mann, 047 59 1890 (h).
 Terry O'Leary, 319 1930 (h).

and soon...

Robert Brandt, 332 4158 (h).
 Danielle Gemenis, 33 3295 (h).
 Jacob Michelson, 449 8145 (h).
 Peter Northfield, 699 6892 (h).
 Martin Scott, 449 4092 (h).
 Keir V-T, 692 3518 (w) or 519 9769 (h).

CLUB CALENDAR

- Thur 2 April GENERAL MEETING.
plus slides by Judy McNeill: Caving in New Zealand.
7.30pm, Common Room, Holme Building.
- 4/5 April JENOLAN.
contact Robert Crowe, 9691362 (h).
- 11/12 April CLIEFDEN (permit pending).
contact Keir Vaughan-Taylor, 692 3518(w) or 519 9769 (h).
- Wed 15 April GENERAL MEETING.
plus slides by Steve Bunton (Tasmania): The Bunty Show.
7.30pm, Common Room, Holme Building.
- Easter
16-21 April BUCHAN (VICTORIA) (permit pending).
contact Robert Crowe, 969 1362(h).
also
MARTIN'S MYSTERY TRIP.
contact Martin Scott, 449 4092 (h).
- 25/26 April JENOLAN.
contact Pat Larkin, 699 6892 (h).
- Thur 7 May ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.
7.30pm, Common Room, Holme Building.



MEXICO, Nov 85-Jan 86

Phil Cole

Present: Numerous heavies; Guy McKanna, Phil Cole, Anne Gray (SUSS).

Well, they say dreaming is free. Actually it is somewhat more expensive than that - \$US100 per week to be exact, plus incidental transport costs to Mexico, costs of typhoid and cholera shots, anti-malaria pills, other medical insurance for encounters of the nasty tropical kind, cost of film, cost of souvineers, cost of beer...

I used to think that dreams only came true in Hollywood but picture this: a 2000m high range of (hopefully not too solid) limestone, lots of tropical rainfall, no surface drainage except major river valleys, dolines everywhere, no boy scouts, no Tourism Commission, an idyllic village in the mountains, great beer for 20c a bottle, 8 keen cavers, and 1.8km of rope! Add a sprinkle of enthusiasm and lots of carbide - and go exploring. The magic ingredient is the fact that NO-ONE has been in the caves before, not even gingos on shrooms*. And there is 1700m of depth potential!

But this is where the dream starts. Imagine exploring seven virgin Argyle caves stacked up on top of each other with Danae sized brooks in them. Do this for two months and find 4.3km of new vertical cave. Include lots of big shafts, up to 310m, narrow & wet & very sporty passage, lakes to swim, stalactites and lots of great beer. And keep pinching yourself to see if it's real.

Because this is what Mexico was like. Of course there are other things that should be mentioned before you all go out one way tickets "Viva Mexico". Realise that the caving is very serious, very technical, very physically demanding and never relaxing. Try doing 24 hour trips to -800m, arriving back at the hut next morning, sleeping all next day, and do another 20 hour trip the third day (and most third days). Learn to survey under any vertical caving conditions, including down pitches with multiple rebelayes. A phrase or two of Spanish (or Mazatec) would also be very useful. And don't forget to take a camera but make sure it's protected from the water. Better make it a Nikonos to be safe. Lots of flash power is useful too. Last but not least, take a helmet big enough to fit your ego.

And if you're like me and like dreaming more than reality, plan to go back again and again and again...Adrenalin can be a very expensive drug!!

Thanks to Al Warild who made the dream possible.

Further reading: Wild (Dec 1986), Descent (Sept 1986), NSS News (Oct 1986), and Australian Caver No. 112.

* 'Shrooms' - mushrooms. Magic, of course.

TASMANIA 1985-86 (ctd)

The story so far: *after arriving in Tasmania on Friday 13th December 1985, the intrepid speleors have acquired a vehicle, Val, repaired it extensively, and have had many an exciting adventure at Junees Homestead (not to mention the caves). Christmas was spent in the cosiness of the homestead, and New Year in the depths of K.D.Dwarrowdelf. The speleors have just departed (rather hurriedly and with considerable incentive from A.N.M. scudger operators) from the homestead, and are heading for Mt Anne.*

Wednesday 15th January 1986

In two cars, Rolf (Adams), Greg (Wilkins) and Keir (Vaughan-Taylor) with three locals Leigh, Geoff and Sac left Hobart for Mt Anne. On the other side of Maydena a large sign informed them that they were entering the South-West Conservation Park. Simultaneously a large truck loaded with what were once trees rumbled past. It seems that conservation parks are to trees what strawberry conserve is to strawberries.

Eventually a sign directing the view of tourists to Mt Anne was reached. It looked like just another raincloud. A long buttongrass plain awaited. The route was supposedly along a bombardier track, but nobody had bothered finding out what a bombardier is.

Rolf and Leigh spent a few hours roaming the plain imagining every semi-coherent streak of grassless mud to be part of the track. Eventually an unmistakeable track was found and the others were rescued from their fixation to the road surface. Everyone trudged along merrily - for the first ten minutes anyway. After that the effects of 45 kg on their backs (weighed before the packs got soaked by rain) set in.

Keir, with the most unbalanced pack, began to lag behind and was almost lost forever when he was swallowed up to the waist by a mud hole. After this episode, Greg's internal VAX claculated that the optimal plan would be to find a site to erect a tarpaulin and hit the slope tomorrow. Little did Keir and Rolf know that Greg's creation of falafel damper with curry was to be one of the best meals they would have for over a week.

Thursday 16th January

In the morning a fly was met - a creature which doesn't suck the living juice out of you as you walk, a creature which doesn't eat you alive, a creature usually associated with hot dry days. *Oh come here, little friend!* Then the hard slog up the hill began.

So as to make good progress, the unwritten rule was 45 minutes walk, 15 minutes rest. And so it began...walk for 45, rest for 15, walk 45, rest 15, walk 40, rest 20, walk 30, rest 20, walk 20, rest 20, walk 15, rest 20, walk 15, rest 25... Would the poor sods ever get there???

As any seasoned (hold the chilli powder) bushwalker knows, long walks are tediously dull producing a state of boredom unsurpassed by any other activity known to humanity, except of course SUSS committee meetings.

Of course the Anne-a-Kananda doline was eventually reached (they're not *that* slack). Entering it involves careful feetal (no, that doesn't sound right; how about 'anklic') navigation. Down below the cave provided a small amphitheatre which

was to be home, with premade sleeping platforms for 8, and letting in the sunlight but diverting the rain except for a few drips, human or otherwise. A 10-15m high roof was easily sufficient for comfort, as was the 30m x 20m living area. The only problem was the temperature inversion (this does not mean inside the cave was 1/20° C while outside was 20°C, though some might dispute this.) What it does mean is that when a fire was lit the smoke would go up for 15m and then come back down for two days. Therefore no fire.

The first night, however, after walking all day in the rain, a fire was considered essential. "Just a little one, we promise. (We were kept honest by the lack of trees growing in the cave.)" The first serious attempt at speleology was the sleeping-bag cave - usually a dry cave but not this time. Greg had a solution [is this a pun? ed.]

He had heard from Rolf that sleeping bags kept in Nettlebed Cave (N.Z.) for 8 months without use were given sprinklings of carbide dust to remove moisture. He tried this technique - luckily the nights were cold enough to prevent him sweating too much!

Friday 17th January

They made it up the mountain - now it was time to have some fun! Keir, Greg, Geoff and Leigh went off to play in Kellar Cellar. To get to the tie-off point for the entrance pitch (probably the longest underground pitch in Australia), one must clutch onto snowgrass and a few loose rocks whilst the pebbles dislodged by one's feet fall 150m before coming to rest. Shortly after, just like the SUSS elections, the pitch was rigged. Greg's punishment for doing so was to go down first.

Ten metres above the floor, Mr Wilkins noticed he was only five metres above the end of the rope...the human calculator was again at work. He stepped off onto a ledge, carefully making sure the rope didn't disappear upwards as it relaxed from its stretched state and tying tapes to its end. He then grabbed the rope and jumped - the stretch in the rope took him down several metres but not all the way. Another small ledge; let go of rope; rope relaxes; grab tape; jump; rope stretches; almost down; oh stuff it! Let go and jump the rest. The other members of the party used the more conventional method of sliding down the handline.

Down below WOW! Have you ever imagined being one of the last grains of salt in a salt shaker? Keir's camera wasn't used to this much attention.

All very well, but they had to get back onto the rope to get back up the pitch. Greg and Geoff made it by tapeclimbing. Keir thought it was wasted effort so he told Leigh to climb up to the ledge. Halfway up she called out she couldn't make it.

"What's the matter with that girl?" thought Keir, "It's easy!". Halfway to where she was, Keir thought "She climbed up here without a rope???". And a bit later, "She climbed up *there*???"

They eventually made it out. By that time, Keir's battery was flat, Leigh's carbide light had no water, and the sun had been taken away to be recharged.

Not everyone spent their day in K.C. Rolf and Sac spent the day in a surface search (yes, they did find the surface). Many small grovel holes, of no consequence, were found near the main doline. Just for the sake of it a novelty - the piddly little A Cave with its short pitch was mapped.

Walking along the surface turned out to be quite an entertaining challenge, with all the depressions having vertical walls, and everything else being high thin ridges. A large gully-doline with strong breezes blowing out of many small holes was found. All these holes went no further than 5m before choking up with rock (and no, they

are not promising places for a dig). After much gully-side traversing and tree-hopping, something that looked like a cave was spotted. Cave B. It had 2 small pitches and a bottom entrance in another doline. At the end of this doline was something that looked like a real cave. Cave C. A route into this second doline not involving a trip through Cave B was negotiated.

Cave had a 35m entrance pitch (measured using known lengths of rope) leading to a wide room. Rolf had a good look at all possible leads before calling out to Sac that the cave ended. Just one more look... He squeezed over a boulder lying in an unpromising rift...Oh, there's a short pitch here...no more rope...it doesn't look like it goes anywhere. Still, it was worth coming back for.

Meanwhile, Sac had noticed a singular phenomenon. Every time someone came into contact with these bushes(scaparia), see, a cry of 'f...' emanated from them. Thus the plants were christened 'f...bushes'.

Saturday 18th January

Leigh packed and left for home. The weather didn't look too enticing so Rolf and Sac tried their luck at navigating in Anne-a-Kananda without a map. Sac had very little experience on rope so the deep cave became just a practice session learning tape knots, ropeknots, rebelay, redirections and how to cross them. Four pitches down, Sac decided his inexperience made continuing downwards inadvisable.

While this was going on, Geoff was trying to sleep. His efforts were thwarted by Greg and Keir's efforts to make a CaC_2 powered stove to combat the metho shortage. Directions: take one large powdered milk tin [milk, not tin] throw in lots of carbide and water, put punctured lid back on, cover face and light with outstretched arm [presumably holding a match. ed.] Geoff rolled over and opened one eye. Two metre fountain of water coming out of a tin. Attempt one. A bit later, he rolled over again and opened one eye. Two metre flame coming out of a tin. Attempt two, which could boil a billy of water in 3.5 seconds. Eventually a workable model, with water fed through a tube in one side, was created. It boiled water in 15 seconds but nothing could make the lentils and lima beans loose their crunch.

Obituary: this model of the carbide stove finally suffered meltdown. Other models replaced it, but none were commercially viable.

Sunday 19th January

Being in the state of Tasmania, a torrential downpour was not unexpected. Luckily the cavers did not have to face the weather, with Australia's deepest cave 10m from their sleeping bags. Rolf, Geoff and Greg spent the day playing in Ann-a-Kananda. Following trog marks, five pitches were descended. The route was then no longer obvious, but no problems - it was a fun cave to play in. The three played follow the leader down a long serpentinious chimney, then along a traverse over a rift. Rolf knocked a rock down the rift ...a long pause, then a thunk. There was 55m of nothing below them. Everybody jumped to the safety of a nearby ledge, quivering in their boots. The climb back up the chimney was a lot more careful than the scramble down. The proper take-off point for the pitch was found but not descended for want of a trace.

While this was happening, Keir was making sure no-one was ever going to leave Anne-a-Kananda again. Coming in, he had noticed one of the vital footholds for the downclimb into the doline had a small hole behind it. Armed only with fingernails

and a raincoat, he was determined to dig it out and thereby discover/create Anne-b-Kananda. Fortunately, or otherwise, the hole led to a deep, thin rift, too small even for a determined Keir.

Monday 20th January

Kellar Cellar was still rigged, Rolf was still enthusiastic, and thus the two met. Once more, the cave was spectacular. Derigging it alone, however, was like scooping up a whole plate of spaghetti with a single forkload and then getting it into a wallet-sized doggie bag without spilling any. On the (n+1)st attempt, Rolf was just about to conquer the situation when Sac arrived to talk him into a second visit of C Cave.

Still not confident with rebelay, Sac opted not to descend into C. Rolf went down pitch 2. The cave ended until he noticed a hole in the roof. Not a pleasant climb with large, loose rocks around. Another short pitch followed, but this ended in a rock choke. Down the bottom, though, he noticed another hole in the roof with an even trickier climb to get to it. This led to more loose rock, a squeeze and a fourth pitch. The opening to this pitch was barely body size, and this far into the cave alone, Rolf was not willing to gamble with it. He returned and told Sac the cave was worth naming.

Sac suggested the name 'Ambrosia' as in 'food of the gods'. Rolf, having seen the cave, felt that 'food of the peasants' was more appropriate. Thus it became known as 'Potatoes'.

It was dark as Rolf and Sac made their way back. As a result, they climbed the wrong spur. The darkness and the heavy mist limited visibility to a few metres. And still they found another cave - such is the nature of Mt Anne. Rolf went in as far as the first pitch, and Cave D had been born.

After the rain has cleared Keir, Greg and Geoff also expended some energy in a surface walk, with aspirations of reaching the summit of Mt Anne. The unearthly vegetation of the area caught their interests, leaving their original plan to fester.

Tuesday 21st January

Geoff and Sac left today, leaving behind their spare food. Greg and Keir had already set down the ultimatum that when the coffee ran out it was time to go. Although this was not a unanimous decision, Greg stepped up the strength of his coffee.

The day was sunny, so Greg went for a surface walk and was overpowered by the magical views with energy left only for sunbaking and posing for aftershave commercials. While traversing along one ridge with 70m of nothing below him, Greg thought surely no-one had been foolhardy enough previously to take this particular route. Ten cm from his nose he noticed a piece of tape tied to a f...bush. This heartstopping passage was the 'marked track' that Phil Hill had made for himself. Greg wasn't game enough to let go with one hand, yet Phil must have done so with both of his to tie this piece of tape. Obviously a brave lad.

Rolf and Keir had returned to Potatoes with all the ropes except those still rigged in A-a-K, and the 110m. The squeezey 4th pitch, 25m, was entered, but only just. This led to a room, thence a small crawlway, a short pitch, then a small room with absolutely no way on. Did they go home? No! They used NSW caving techniques. There was a small crack which small stones could disappear down...out with the hammer. Bash, bash, grunt, grunt, another pitch with a squeezey start. To get down,

the 2 remaining ropes had to be tied together. The pitch led to a cylindrical chamber with a pitch in one corner (since when did cylinders have corners?). Down below, a streamway could be seen. No rope.

The two cavers left, derigging as they went.

Wednesday 22nd January

Greg felt that he had been neglecting his natural instinct to do bugger all and so he took the day off to do just that. Keir and Rolf entered A-a-K. After wasting time routefinding, exploring and rigging, the two eventually met Greg, who had gotten bored doing bugger all. And so the three descended. The route taken included pitches of approximate lengths 5m, 15m, 13m, 12m, 12m, 60m, 6m, 18m, 30m, and 8m. It was found later that they were not headed for the the deepest part of the cave by this route.

The section of the cave seen was not especially pretty or spectacular, but the pleasant temperature and the continual passage of pitches made it a cave of high fun content. After the final 8m pitch, there was a long rift which went down via many levels of serpentinious passage. Rocks dropped down indicated a depth of over 80m. Further along the rift there was a nice shaft going down all the way. However the rock in this area was too crumbly so no-one dared rig a rope to go down. An anti-climax, but a good day's caving.

Thursday 23rd January

OK. Anne-a-Kanada had been derigged. They had the ropes. One final bash at Potatoes.

Rolf knew how to rig the cave and so placed his ascenders in the bottom of his pack to prevent them getting in the way in the squeezes and climbs. He rigged the entrance pitch. He connected onto the rope. He lowered his pack below him. The pack was not connected.

"Um, Keir...remember that incredibly stupid thing I did at the first pitch in Cauldron?"

Apart from this incident, the seventh pitch was reached quite quickly. Greg spent a while placing a bolt at the cramped entrance to the pitch so as to let the rope hang free. It turned out to be 38m deep and shaped like the inside of a bell. The streamway was disappointing, sinking into rocks and coming from a pebble choke. This time there was no way on. There were still a few unexplored leads midway through the cave but there was no enthusiasm left to explore them - they were unlikely to lead anywhere like A-a-K anyway. Potatoes was a fun cave, though by no means pretty, spectacular or stable.

On the way back there was a detour via Cave D. Rolf descended the 2 pitches to the final chamber, and could find no way on.

Friday 24th January

To fill them with energy, breakfast was a Keir creation of tomato damper (a lot better than rice and crunchy lima beans). Just before leaving, a fire was lit to dispose of the burnable rubbish. Good ol' temperature inversion was at work, and this time the smoke bordered on toxic. Visibility in the living area was reduced to 1.5m. Greg and Rolf rapidly finished packing and ran the first 15m out of the smoke. They waited.

"Keir...Keir, are you OK? Where are you, Keir?"

Out he came, gasping.

Walking downhill was definitely quicker, but by no means easier. This time the sun was present and on the buttongrass there was no shelter from it. Once again rests were frequent. Eventually Greg's legs told him they would go no further until he obtained some sugar to eat. But the three had no food among them.

"Wait a minute. I've got the garbage bag in my pack. With all the garbage we've got our jam tube which still has some jam in it."

"Get it out!" demanded Greg.

The three took turns at extending their tongues like never before to get just a hint of sweetness. It worked; they made it back.

As Keir walked down the road to Val he saw Val's driver door open to meet him (no other witness). A relief to be back, but bad news. The left rear window had been smashed and a note had been put on the dashboard:

TASMANIAN POLICE

VEHICLE NO. AT 7703 PARKED ON SCOTT'S PEAK ROAD ON SAT
11TH JAN 1986 IS HEREBY CHARGED FOR 'J' PARKING.

SECTION 6.3 OF POLICE OFFENCES ACT 1926.

You are summoned to the Hobart Supreme Court @ Hobart on
December 25 1986.

POSSIBLE CONVICTION FINE

\$200 and/or 6 months jailor both.

Signed: Mr R GRAY

OFFICE OF THE LAW

This was all written on a sheet of note-book paper. Keir came back worried. "J-parking? I've never heard of J-parking before." Greg: "You were parked on the left hand side of the road, weren't you?" Keir: "I don't know." Greg: "Well, did you have to turn the car around?"

Rolf read the note with a bit more care: "Our summons is for Christmas Day. It has been signed by R. Gray in block capitals. Val's numberplate is AF 1705."

Driving back, Keir noticed for the first time that Val had a clutch pedal until he saw that there were only 2 pedals. They had no means of fixing the brakes, so they just drove carefully and not all the way back to Hobart. National Park Pub provided the accommodation. Greg did the ordering. Packet of chips for entree.

"Have you got any food?"

"No, sorry, you're too late."

"How about pies?"

"Yeah, I can put some in the microwave."

"OK, I'll have three."

The bartender turned around to fill the order when Keir added "I'll have three as well." Rolf ordered another two. Dessert was a KitKat; a well balanced meal to round off a great caving trip.

The "Horrible NSW Cavers" would like to thank everybody who gave them help on the way, particularly Phill, Ann, Rik, Janine and Arthur.

VIVA NEW SOUTH WALES ! or,
Bungonia, Wombeyan, Kanangra Main, Danae
Brook and Jenolan, 22 Mar 87.

Danusia Kucharska

Present: Peter Northfield (TL), Pat Larkin, Phil Cole, Danusia Kucharska.

Rather than sitting around at home all weekend, Peter and Pat decided to lead a physically, mentally (and technically) demanding trip to a few karst areas close to Sydney. They decided to only take one vehicle, which had been specially designed to cover the rugged terrain, so there were two places left for other passengers. Phil and I snapped up the opportunity. Mike Lake, true to form, piked.

After the usual pushing around of a vehicle with "starter trouble" (a tradition honoured in last year's Speleosports!) we left Sydney at 9.45am and chatted excitedly as we followed the highway south to Bungonia. From our vantage points in the raised passenger seats, we could see all the way to the bottom of the 76m drop under Pheasant's Nest Bridge.

The view was so different that we missed the turnoff at Bungonia. We followed a spectacular gorge near the Shoalhaven River, until we noticed the quarry had been successfully re-afforested. We turned back and eventually found the right track - the quarry had merely been temporarily misplaced, and had in fact grown, not shrunk.

Anyway, we quickly "did" Bungonia Gorge, camera shutters clicking constantly. It didn't take us long, so we decided to make track to Wombeyan.

The scenic little camping green was soon reached (especially at the speed Peter was zooming around the corners!). We only hung around long enough to take some nice pikkies of the valley and Victoria Arch, and have a quick look at the Sigma Cave area.

We had the time, camera film and rope we needed to "do" Kanangra Main, so that was our next destination. The first pitch had an impressive amount of water going over. We were in the vicinity, so we popped across for a short peek at Danae Brook - an eerie dark deep... ("God, I wish it had a roof on it!" - Phil Cole). As our vehicle flew back along the Kanangra Road, we pitied the absent occupants of the long line of parked cars, no doubt still battling the elements somewhere.

It was still quite early, so we dropped in on McKeown's Valley and took some scenic shots around Rowe Flat. We finished our rolls of film whizzing through the Grand Arch and Devil's Coachhouse (Jenolan), scaring the dickens out of the tourists.

We got back to Sydney at about one o'clock - so we went to Peter and Pat's for lunch. (!)

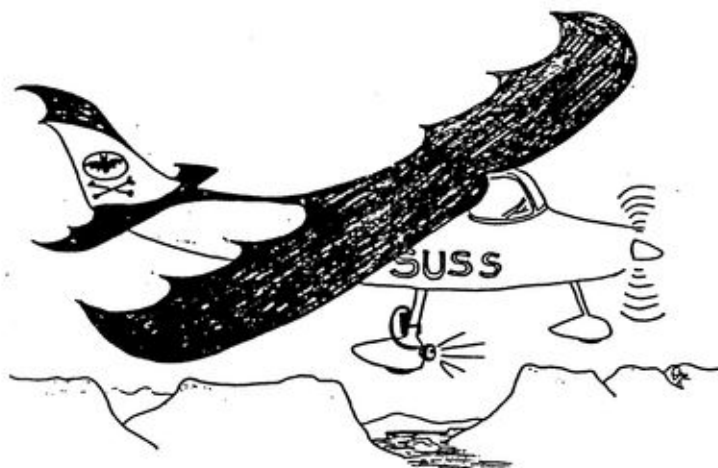
"Thank you for flying SUSS Airways. We hope you enjoyed your flight and hope to have the pleasure of your company next time you fly SUSS."

Footnote: this trip was a two and a half hour flight out of Bankstown, cruising at an approximate height of 4000'. Peter flew the four-seater Piper, whilst the rest of us "navigated".

Membership of the Aerial Arm of SUSS is open to anyone silly (and rich, enough to be interested in aviation techniques in speleology - or is that speleological techniques in aviation. Add a whole new meaning to the word "batbrain"!!!

Trip leader requirements - TOUGH! But it's the petrol costs on trips that'll ge. you. Note also you won't be able to park at the Jenolan Cottage...

SUSS AIRWAYS - Come fly in the dark with us!



ILLEGAL CAVING

In January, whilst on a SUSS trip, one of our trip leaders met a group of New Zealanders caving at Yarrangobilly without a permit. The trip leader, believing that the NZ cavers would continue to cave illegally, decided to accompany them in the interests of their safety and to ensure they had due regard for the sensitive nature of the caves.

Subsequently a letter of complaint was received from the Yarrangobilly Chief Ranger.

On the 24th of March 1987, the SUSS Committee formally and unanimously censured the trip leader concerned. In the Committee's opinion, it is the duty of all trip leaders and club members to comply with the ASF and SUSS Codes of Ethics, and the conditions governing the issue of permits for areas such as Yagby. If anyone is not aware of his/her obligations, they should contact the SUSS Secretary forthwith.

All SUSS trip leaders and club members are put on notice that failure to observe these standards is not tolerated, and will be met with appropriate disciplinary action.

JENOLAN, 28 Feb - 1 Mar 87

Pat Larkin

Present: Pat Larkin (TL), Derek Hobbs, Mark Staraj, Danusia Kucharska, Julius Pucci, Angus North, Dave Wilmot, Ian Atkinson, Ralph, Nicky, James.

This trip was our first for the University year, designed to introduce some of our newer members to Jenolan and the caving we do.

After visiting the Acting Senior Guide, Keith Oliver, we headed for Mammoth Cave. After a good deal of encouragement (and time), the party passed through Mammoth Squeeze and proceeded to Lower River and Oolite Cavern. There a number of stories of cave conservation were recounted. The party returned to the Entrance Chamber via a short diversion to the Railway Tunnel, Skull and Crossbones, and the Hell Hole. Much to Mark Staraj's disappointment, I found the suggestion of a GNC trip quite resistable.

That evening we embarked on the mandatory Hampton Pub excursion but resolved to depart mid-evening to join the Astronomical Society of NSW's observations of the supernova in the Large Magellanic Cloud (five of our members are also in ASNSW) which were to take place at Wiseman's Creek near Oberon. In true SUSS style, we ended up staying at the pub. Fate deemed "the pub" the correct decision - half of NSW was clouded out that night!

On Sunday we entered Rho Hole with the aim of exiting from Ian Carpenter Cave. All but three of our party succeeded in making the through-trip, which included the Watercrawl Squeeze. In my opinion, the Watercrawl Squeeze is one of the most demanding at Jenolan - a high achievement for our newcomers.



OH GOODY, ANOTHER JENOLAN TRIP

SUSS's MT ANNE EXPEDITION.

Pat Larkin

STAR DATE: January 1987.

MISSION: To go where no caver has ever gone before...

Present: SUSS: Rolf Adams Danielle Gemenis Martin Scott
 Ross Bannerman Derek Hobbs Graeme Smith
 Paul Boustead Pat Larkin Leonie Watterson
 Phil Cole Guy McKanna John Woodard
 Anne Gray Mark Pollinger Keir Vaughan-Taylor
 Louise
TCC: Vicki Bonwick Stefan Eberhard Janine McKinnon
 Rolan Eberhard Nick Hume Rik Tunney
 Mark and Gary
UK: Nick Hawkes(Yorkshire)

As most of you are aware, last year we approached a number of potential sponsors requesting support for a major expedition to Mt Anne in SW Tasmania. After encouraging finds on the Mt Anne trip of Summer 1985-86, we planned to return to the area in greater numbers and for a longer time.

On Boxing Day 1986, we left for a week's warm-up (cool-down?) at Junee-Florentine. We did a variety of wet, deep caves, including Growling Swallet, Gormenghast, Cauldron Pot, Khazad-Dum (KD), Welcome Stranger, Tassie Pot and Owl Pot. [Editor's note: many of these caves have been described in previous SUSS trip reports. See esp. Vols 23(1) May 83, 24(7) April-May 84, and 26(2, mid-86)]

The impact of 9mm rope and rigging technique on the Australian caving scene was dramatic. For example, a few years ago, a SUSS team bottomed KD using traditional 11mm rope and techniques in about 16 hours. With the aid of lightweight rope, more efficient SRT rigs and the use of rebelay & redirections, our groups completed the cave in 7.5 hours (Pat, Keir, Bruce and Mark P), and 6.5 hours (Phil, Ross B and Martin).

After weeks of purchasing and packing, on the 5th of January 1987 our helicopter left Cambridge Airfield, Hobart, destined for Mt Anne. A detailed trip report will appear in the next SUSS Bull. This note summarizes the main achievements of the expedition:

- * expedition members checked in the order of 100 caves, entrances and dolines.
- * about 10 significant caves (ie deeper than 50m) were found, explored and surveyed.
- * the expedition discovered over one vertical kilometre of new cave passage.
- * the deepest new cave was discovered by Martin Scott and Keir Vaughan-Taylor, and was named 'Deep Thought'. (MA 10). It was surveyed to -185m. It contains five streams which collect into a large streamway - the largest presently known at Mt Anne.
- * on the last day a good lead was found at the bottom of the cave 'Well of Loneliness'. (MA 29). We'll be going back!
- * the caves Kellar Cellar (MA 1) and Col-in-Cavern (MA 2) were surveyed.

Our photos have been submitted to the Editor of *Australian Geographic*, Howard Whelan. A full story is being prepared for a future issue of that magazine.

The University of Sydney's *Gazette* has reported on the expedition. Phil Cole's spectacular colour photo of Mark Pollinger in Kellar Cellar made the cover. It is also likely that there will be a Mt Anne feature issue in the future of *Australian Caver*.

Many thanks to our sponsors, without whose generous support the expedition could not have been so successful:

- * Dick Smith.
- * *Australian Geographic*.
- * Australian Airlines.
- * The University of Sydney Union.
- * Wildsports (formerly Caving Equipment).

Also, thanks to:

- * Bob Cannes and the University of Tasmania's Department of Surveying.
- * Jan Everett of Sydney's National Herbarium.
- * Julia James for all her advice and work to come on the Mt Anne water samples.

Finally, special thanks to the members of the Tasmanian Caverneering Club for their support and enthusiasm, especially Vicki Bonwick, Stefan Eberhard, Nick Hume, Rolan Eberhard, Rik Tunney, Janine McKinnon, Stewart Nicholas, and 'Bunty'.

Club of the Week

The Speleological Society, better known as SUSS, Australia's second biggest cave-exploring club, has undertaken several epic journeys, including one recently to a strange country called Tasmania, where for reasons best known to them, they tend to go every year. On this occasion, members entered the bowels of Australia's deepest known cave. The Secretary of SUSS, Patrick Larkin, says that a highlight of the event didn't happen in the cave at all, but occurred when one of our bold Sydney University types, minding his own business in a toilet in a pub in the island state, was mistaken for a Greenie, God forbid! and suffered the price for being caught out on his own in *Deliverance* territory when he was hit and kicked a number of times about the face and body by a local logging truck driver. Our SUSS member was stitched up, while the logger pleaded



guilty in court and was fined \$100.

Later on, whilst actually inside a cave, members of SUSS discovered amongst others, a spectacular cave which they named *Deep Thought* (locals nicknamed it *Deep Throat*), through which runs a large underground river.

Patrick Larkin says that a slide show and report of the expedition will be held at the Society's next meeting, which will take place in the Common Room of Holme Building, on Thursday the 5th of March at 7.30 p.m. Wine and cheese will be served. Afterwards SUSS will retire to the pub. For more information about SUSS phone Patrick on 699 6892.

from:

The Union EYES
Vol 1. No 1.
March 2 1987.

TRANSCRIPT OF RADIO TRANSMISSION,

Mt ANNE, 8 Jan 87.

This communication was sent from the Mt Anne base camp to the Speleotech '87 ASF Conference, via Hobart.

[Keir Vaughan-Taylor]

This is Keir Vaughan-Taylor speaking from the Mt Anne Caving Expedition. So far we're sitting in a little tiny tent on the edge of the mountain and it's snowing continuously. It snowed all night - we got about 5cm of snow last night. We can't see very much from where we are. Just the ridges below. Every now and again it clears and you can see Mt Anne briefly, and then it clouds in again. It's fairly cold and we won't be doing anything today. Moving about on the limestone in this kind of weather is [nothing] short of suicidal.

The country around here is near-vertical everywhere. To move about you literally have to climb from one place to another.

Our achievements so far include:

- * ...the advance party arrived here and found a pretty good campsite - it's a flat sheet of limestone near the top of the ridge, [and] protected.

- * The helicopter next day landed the rest of the party and all the gear was dropped. We set up a pretty good camp, I think. Good water source. So far, everything's going to plan, much to everyone's surprise.

So far, what we've tried to do ... is get a decent track out towards where we're going to do most of our exploration. The old track went along the middle of the ridge and involved literally climbing over 100m deep shafts, so we've found a track which you can move along ... at night without [putting] too much of your life at risk. We've explored out to Col-in-Cavern and noted quite a number of caves along the way. Not to mention some incredible dolines, which are beyond description. In the near future we hope to get into them.

Martin [Scott] and myself dropped into one of these caves. So far it's 150m deep and still going, and we've done a fair bit to trackmarking.

Perhaps Phil [Cole] would like to say a bit about what happened the other day.

[Phil Cole]

Yesterday morning we went searching south of the campsite. One of the aims of the trip is to check the extent of the dolomite in the region so we can see exactly how much of the area can possibly bear caves. The NE ridge is well known as a cave-bearing area but there is potential in other parts. On the flight, Martin noticed other areas of dolomite on other ridges nearby, and possibly dolomite on the ridge towards Lot's Wife, on the other side of the valley. Also, from camp we saw an outcrop suspiciously like dolomite so we went over towards the south area of the mountain and had a look.

Unfortunately it turned out to be a shale-type rock. The interesting thing was there were some streams there. If they sank, it would have been quite good potential for caves to go down towards the Lake Tink area eventually.

In the afternoon, we went up looking for a sinking stream that Keir thought he'd found the day before while scrub-bashing to try and find a campsite. That flows east off the ridge [near] Anne-a-Kananda, which would also head down to the valley towards Lake Tink, and it would also have considerable potential. We couldn't find the stream. We beat our way down through the ... quite difficult bush, and we

eventually tried to head back up.

Pat Larkin took a small fall and dislocated his shoulder, and has since been evacuated from the mountain, unfortunately. The rest of us have battened down the hatches to put up with the storms.

We're hoping to go caving tomorrow.

[Martin Scott]

Today, I and Keir went off towards Kellar Cellar.

Kellar Cellar is a rather large doline, just to the north of Anne-a-Kananda, and ... we noticed a few small holes high up on the doline. It turns out there's two holes ...[static]... about 90m straight down into a really large chamber - really impressive for the first cave we've ever looked at up here. That led off to ... a few climbs, another small pitch, and a few more climbs and chimneys, down to a point where we ran out of rope, unfortunately. So we'll have to go back there tomorrow. It looks like we've got at least 120-130m, with another 50m pitch, perhaps. Who knows!

Potential up here's really good. Heaps of dolines all the way out on the NE ridge that've still got to be looked at - they're requiring track marking as well.

That's the end of the transmission. Hopefully it recaptures the atmosphere during the early stages of the expedition, and gives those of us who weren't there some idea of what it was like.

"But I never said that!..."

by a variety of people who probably wish to remain nameless...

" 'But they wouldn't let me on the flying saucer with my clothes on!' "

- Derek Hobbs, recounting a hard day at the Funny Farm.

" I have an understanding with Garden Gnomes. "

- Justin Young (Kristin's brother).

Definition: **OXANGLIE** (noun): *a word that annoys Mike Lake.*

" Is there water at the entrance of this cave? "

- Ross Bannerman, empty carbide bottle in hand,
approaching the entrance to Growling Swallet.

"But the men are all sane."

- a TCC member, scratching his head.

"But Pat, why did you take the custard photos out? I want to show the readers what these caving expeditions are REALLY like."

- Howard Whelan, Editor of Australian Geographic.

BUNGONIA

Keir Vaughan-Taylor

Three hours drive south from Sydney is the deepest gorge in Australia - Bungonia Gorge. The gorge is magnificent, dropping vertically into a narrow chasm where enormous marble boulders are polished smooth and white by white water in the winter seasons. The area is bounded by an extensive cave system which include the deepest cave on mainland Australia.

Caves usually mean limestone and limestone to industry means cement. Industry at the moment is doing its utmost to gouge great holes in this national monument. As fast as explosives can be planted and the limestone carried away the cement company seeks to cause as much physical damage as possible before the "greenies" cause trouble.

In the past a well organised campaign to boycott Blue Circle Cement was very successful in combatting the attack on the gorge. Most local councils had ceased to buy from the cement company and it was certainly having an economic impact. Since the "good old days" however the ownership of the company has become divided among many multi-faceted companies such as BHP. The cement produced at Bungonia is 'mixed' economically with a chain of companies that get limestone from many places. BHP for example gets shipments from Japan in ship that carry limestone as ballast. The ships then return with cargoes of steel.

The absurdity of the Bungonia devastation is that many alternatives for the mining of limestone in the Marulan area have been proposed. (Dr D.F. Brannigan, Snr Lecturer, Geology, Sydney University). Such proposals however condone the act of mining on the canyon walls. It is this author's opinion that with other sites available for limestone quarries this particular mine on the edge of a National Park should not be tolerated.

The Charbon and Portland cement works are situated close to limestone quarries and together produce 0.4 million tonnes of cement per annum. The cement manufacturers proposed closing the Portland and Charbon works because government restrictions on road transport made it inefficient to transport cement more than fifty miles. On the 1st of January 1974 the embargo on the transport of cement by road was lifted. The company was therefore free to transport its product and the sole reason for closing the alternatives was gone..... The devastation continues at Bungonia.....Why?

It is interesting to note the sequence of events leading to the present mining conditions. In 1971 the Associated Portland Cement Manufacturers lodged application 558 Goulburn for a Special Mining Lease of 87 acres between their Marulan South quarry and south bank of Bungonia Creek. Objections were immediately raised by members of the public and as a result a public enquiry was held. Caving groups organised protests, bumper stickers were printed, long tedious political arguments consumed many peoples valuable time and the boycott of Blue Circle cement was organised. The campaign to protect Bungonia Gorge began in earnest.

The cement company claimed that they required 65,000,000 imperial tons of limestone to justify expansion of its Malden Cement works and enable it to maintain a share of the cement market. The company also claimed that their plan preserved the view from Adams Lookout and quarried only eastern limestone. This quarry, they said presented a quarry of great depth and small area which provided a

greater tonnage per unit surface area than other proposals.

The mining warden rejected the mining companies proposals. In his final summary report he said, " I find that the public interest in the preservation of the recreational and scenic qualities of the area outweighs the public interest of having the area mined. In making the finding I have considered the impairment for all time of this unique natural feature as compared with the short term benefits from mining.

It appeared as though the gorge issue was over and the wilderness would survive another million years or so. A few months after the wardens rejection the cement company quietly lodged a further submission. The submission comprised two schemes called Q8 open and Q8 closed. In these schemes the extent of the mine was brought to the edge of a steep cliff plummeting some 300 feet to the gully floor. The Q8 closed scheme is marginally smaller than the Q8 open scheme but basically involves the wholesale amputation of a mountain.

The blasting at the Bungonia mine is engineered so that the fragmented rock is catapulted landward rather than over the precipice. Despite modern explosive techniques, the explosions avalanche rock some 1100 feet to walking tracks within the gorge. Huge boulders litter the canyon floor and mullock silt constantly pollutes Bungonia Creek.

Blasting is usually done on weekdays. There are three large yellow warning signs for bushwalkers in the valley below the blast site. An hour before the explosions sirens go off to warn anyone in the area. (The schedules are on the signs.) The sirens are sounded at shorter and shorter intervals until finally another slice of the mountain is granulated. The sirens and explosions are easily hear on the other side of the gorge as far back as the campsites by the ranger station. The drone of many diesel trucks can also be heard on quiet nights. The mining goes on day and night.....

On the right hand side of the mine is another valley that feeds Bungonia Creek. Most of the debris empties into this valley and it is now full. From here it empties into the main canyon. At present only a small number of car sized boulders have rolled across the walking tracks however if the rock slide were to become unstable after rain this could rapidly change.

In the Goulburn area the issues of importance to a politician mainly relate to employment. Any notions of closing mines is not good either for employment figures or votes. Ministers approached at various times at first reacted sympathetically and then chose to forget the whole thing.

Water runs under the bridge and rocks roll down the widening escarpment. The ministers do nothing as is their job. A. L. P. policy is quite clear on this subject. The ALP has made zero effort to fulfil its platform policies in this regard despite letters reminding the Premier's office of their published policy. Apparently there are forces operating on the opinions of political offices that override the public interest.

The mine is in full cancerous operation. So much has already blown apart and dumped over the cliff into the valley below and destroyed

Mt ETNA, Central Queensland

This article is reproduced from a paper written by Joe Vavryn of the Central Queensland Speleo Society. I visited Mt Etna in December 1985 - a trip report was published in SUSS Bull Vol 26(2) last year. SUSS will be asking for donations to the Mt Etna Fighting Fund in the near future - I urge you to help as much as you can. SUSS can provide more information about the issues to those interested.

Danusia Kucharska

Dear Fellow Cavers,

The representatives of caving clubs at the Australian Speleological Federation Inc Conference, Speleotech '87, have started a Fighting Fund for Mt Etna.

I am enclosing a copy of the paper presented at the ASF meeting, in the hope that you will be able to help us in this, the longest going conservation battle in Australia.

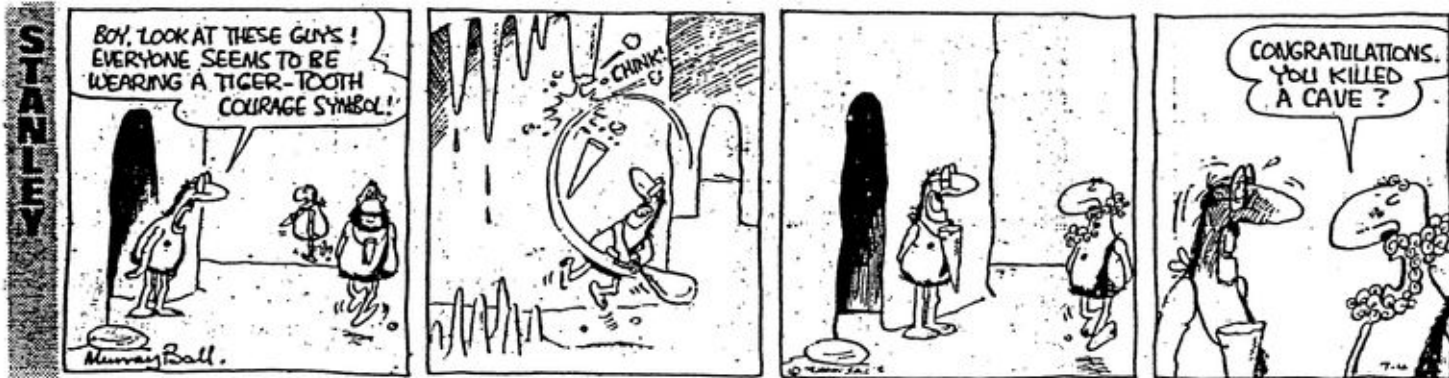
Yours in Caving,

Josef Vavryn,

Rockhampton, 17 Feb 1987.

The Fight to Save Mt Etna Caves from Limestone Mining

This treatise is a record of the dates and events, heavily condensed, of the history of Mt Etna since the caves area was first settled. I hope to show that since the fight to save Mt Etna was first joined, seriously, in 1964 or thereabouts, that the Central Qld Cement Company and the Qld Government have had no intention to voluntarily release Mt Etna from limestone mining. Even in the event that conservationists took the Qld Government to court, the Govt had prepared plans to counter such. This was clearly shown when the Govt rescinded the Recreation Reserve R444 on Mt Etna and refused to give a fiat to prosecute the Govt. The next event, the passing of a law stating that any mining lease inadvertently granted illegally will now stand and be legal, was aimed at any mining lease granted illegally, including Mt Etna. At this point in time there is very little that is being done to save Mt Etna. I hope that this paper will create new interest and revive the flagging 'Fight to Save Mt Etna' with input from ASF member societies and individuals. If the treatise does not have the desired effect, and if CQC Pty Ltd starts mining the main cavernous north face of Mt Etna, then the next ASF conference will have a 'Letter of Requiem' read to them.



MOUNT ETNA CAVES
THE FIGHT TO SAVE MOUNT ETNA CAVES FROM LIMESTONE MINING
by JOSEF M C VAVRYN

HISTORY

1882: John Olsen found the first caves in the Rockhampton area in 1882; they are the present day Olsen's Tourist Caves.

1884: He started guiding tours for the public through his caves, Olsen's Tourist Caves, in 1884.

1886: Although no record exists at this time, the discovery of Johannsens Caves by John Olsen occurred around the year 1886. (Theodore Olsen, deceased, personal comment 1967.) Theo Olsen, son of John Olsen, did not call the caves on Limestone Ridge "Johannsens Caves", but called them "Mount Etna Caves". This name also appeared on Lands Department maps.

1892: A report regarding the feasibility of mining guano from Olsens and Johannsens Caves was prepared by the assistant Government geologist, Mr William H Rands (Rand 1892). Mr Peter McLean, Undersecretary Department of Agriculture, collected guano samples for analysis in 1892. Guano had therefore been removed from Olsens and Johannsens Caves by 1892 (Rands 1892).

1919: The Lands Department granted P H Ebbott a special lease of thirteen years duration for guano mining on 9 December 1919.

1920: On 21 February 1920 Reserves R444 and R272 were gazetted in the State Government Gazette, reference page 724, as Recreation Reserves. Mount Etna was covered by R444 and Limestone Ridge by R272. At that time a Recreation Reserve was the highest form of protection given to Crown Land. It could be mined providing no damage was done to the surface area.

1925: On 11 November 1925 Mining Lease 200, which covered Mount Etna, was applied for by G J Twine, J W Hetherington and J J McAuley. This appears to be the first limestone mining lease granted on Mount Etna. On 21 November 1925 an application was made by J H Hart for a further four leases for limestone mining on Mount Etna and Limestone Ridge: ML201, ML202, ML203 and ML204.

1926: In February 1926 Mr F W Whitehouse reported on the "Limestone and Guano Deposits of Mount Etna". He stated that "The prettiest caves seen from their display of stalagmites and stalactites were those of Mount Etna". In the same year Mount Etna Fertilizers Pty Ltd set up a fertilizer processing and packaging plant on Portion 118.

1935: Mr B Pilkington, on 11 April 1935, applied for ML236, an area of 10 acres on Limestone Ridge.

1939: Three years later in 1939, Mr Pilkington applied for a further lease of 51 acres on Limestone Ridge, ML243.

1948: Mr Pilkington set up a research laboratory in 1948 and employed a chemist to prove the quality and extent of the limestone deposits on Limestone Ridge for cement manufacture.

1951: Two large international cement companies were attracted to the area in 1951 and sent representatives to inspect Mr Pilkington's leases. This event moved the local cement company, previously contacted by Pilkington, to re-examine the area.

1954: E M Pilkington applied for ML281, an area of twenty acres on Mount Etna, on 1 June 1954.

1958: On 1 July 1958 Mr B Pilkington applied for ML307 on Mount Etna, an area of 4 acres.

1959: On 30 July 1959 Hartley Investments Pty Ltd was formed and on 21 October of that year the name was changed to Central Queensland Cement Pty Ltd (Central Queensland Cement Pty. Ltd.).

1960: W R Thompson applied for ML340, an area of 36 acres and 34 perches on Mount Etna in 1960.

1962: On 9 April 1962 Central Queensland Cement Pty. Ltd. bought ML340 from Thompsen. The other three leases on Mount Etna and Pilkingtons two leases on Limestone Ridge were bought between this year and 1965.

1963: In 1963 Mount Morgan Ltd acquired ML306 on the northern end of Limestone Ridge and began to quarry limestone at the entrance to Johannsens Cave.

1965: On 25 March 1965 Central Queensland Cement Pty. Ltd. negotiated a major contract with Noyes Pty Ltd for the erection of quarry equipment and instalation was to commence in 1965.

1966: The Central Queensland Cement Pty. Ltd. quarry on Mount Etna was begun in 1966 and a crushing plant, storage bins, workshop and mine office were erected.

THE FIGHT

1962: The first trip by the University of Queensland Speleological Society (University of Queensland Speleological Society) to Mount Etna was in 1962. The large colony of Little-Bent Winged Bats (*Miniopterus australis*) in Bat Cleft was discovered late in 1962.

1964: In August 1964 Mr John McKean of the CSIRO Division of Wildlife Research visited the area and wrote to ASF expressing his strong concern that the Johannsens Caves, which house a large colony of Ghost Bats (*Macroderma gigas*) were being quarried. In reply to enquiries the mining company stated that "they didn't know which were Johannsens Caves". In December 1964 a report was prepared by E Hamilton-Smith for discussion at the Perth ASF Conference 1964 - 1965. University of Queensland Speleological Society members prepared data for this report. The report was sent to the ministers of the departments involved and the National Parks Association. Following these representations operations at Johannsens ceased.

1965: University of Queensland Speleological Society published a letter in the Brisbane "Courier Mail" concerning the proposed quarrying of Mount Etna in 1965. In reply the manager of Central Queensland Cement Pty. Ltd., Mr Woodcroft, denied claims that quarrying would destroy caves.

1967: Easter Sunday 1967 Resurrection Cave was first entered by the University of Queensland Speleological Society. This cave is situated under the first and second benches of the eastern quarry on Mount Etna. On 28 August 1967 the late Mr L J Jones, general manager of Queensland Cement and Lime (parent company of Central Queensland Cement Pty. Ltd.), stated that the company had an agreement with the Mines Department to limit quarrying to areas outside of 1 chain from exposed caves, ie. caves with natural entrances. In October Mr P C Caffyn of University of Queensland Speleological Society had a meeting with the man replacing Mr Jones. Mr Walker said that he had put the matter in the hands of Mr Woodcroft, general manager of Central Queensland Cement Pty. Ltd.. On 27 October Mr Woodcroft stated that his intention was to mine the whole mountain. In December Mr Tichner, manager of the mine, said that the northern edge of the quarry, as it stood, would form the boundary of the quarry.

1969: The agreement between Central Queensland Cement Pty. Ltd. and the Mines Department not to work within 1 chain of a known cave entrance was breached in 1969. The distance between Winding Staircase Cave and Number 4 Bench was 57 ft. In July a report was prepared for R272 on Limestone Ridge to be declared a National Park. A 31-page submission was passed on to Mr Sullivan, Minister for Lands. Attempts to gain interviews with company directors

were unsuccessful. In August workings were found within 76 ft of Main Cave's lower entrance and blasting had occurred within 141 feet thereof.

1970 - 1971: Central Queensland Cement Pty. Ltd. started mining on the western toe of the northern flank of Mount Etna.

1974: In April 1974 the National Party candidate for Capricornia Mr Connor said that "... the Premier, Mr Bjelke-Peterson, has given me an assurance that mining of Mount Etna would cease in the near future". In May 1974, National Party candidate Mr Connor said, "... the Minister for Mines has assured me that a new national park will be dedicated on not only Mount Etna, a but also on the main cave system on Limestone Ridge". Organised tours to view the emergence flight of the Little-Bent Winged Bats from Bat Cleft commenced in December 1974. Estimated numbers of visitors per season: 400 average - signatures are available in the visitors book. On 24 November 1974 another politician jumped on the bandwagon. Deputy Premier Gordon Chalk said that he was "sympathetic to the gazettal of a national park on Mount Etna". On 25 November 1974 a letter to the Labor Party candidate for Port Curtis from the Minister for Mines, Mr R Camm, vindicated claims made that there were alternative economic deposits of limestone available other than Mount Etna. A company was surveying mining prospects in the Bracewell - East End area of Mount Larcom. The company had applied for four leases and Mr Camm, Minister for Mines, said that the lease area aggregated 5,612 acres for the mining of limestone and clay.

1975: On 7 January Minister for Mines, Mr Camm, said, "... at no time have I, as Minister, ever indicated that Mount Etna would be preserved as a National Park".

23.1.75: The State Government cabinet gave approval for the continued mining of Mount Etna and gave their endorsement to the decision to make Limestone Ridge into a National Park.

24.1.75: The decision by the Queensland Government to continue mining Mount Etna came one day ahead of a report by the State Ombudsman. He agreed that there was an anomaly in the Government's decision on a course of action while he was still investigating complaints of such a course of action.

1.2.75: Electrical Trades Union members asked the Queensland Trades and Labour Council Conservation Committee to authorize bans on the supply of electricity to the crushing plant of Central Queensland Cement Pty. Ltd. if mining commenced on the main northern face. Also in that year the Queensland Conservation Council obtained a Queen's Council's opinion that the leases on Mount Etna may have been invalidly granted. To take the Queensland Government to court the AttorneyGeneral's Department must grant a fiat, ie. permission to proceed. No such fiat was granted.

1976: In 1976 the Department of Mapping and Survey changed the names of the caves on Limestone Ridge from "Mount Etna Caves" to "Johannsens Caves". Also in that year the book "Mount Etna And The Caves" was launched.

1977: In 1977 the Queensland Government rescinded the Recreation Reserve (R444) on Mount Etna. The Attorney-General's Department refused to grant a fiat to prosecute the Government.

1978: In 1978 the Ghost Bat (*Macroderma gigas*) was listed as an endangered species in the Mammal Red Book.

1980 Central Queensland Cement Pty. Ltd. broke into Elephant Hole cave in the western quarry.

1981: Mount Etna Caves were placed on the National Heritage List on 25 August 1981.

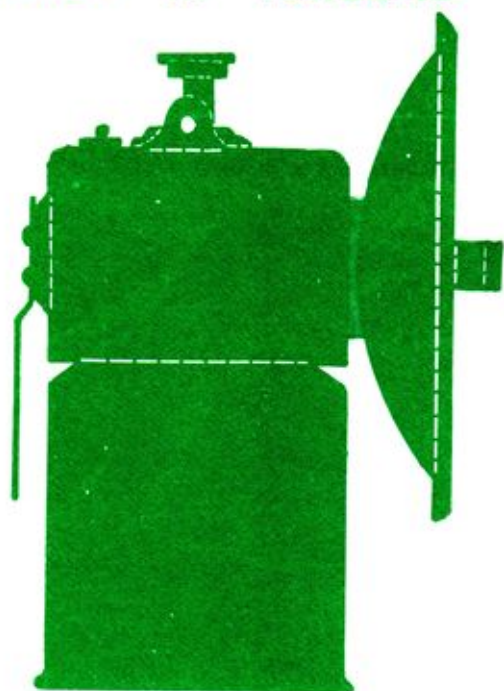
1982: In June 1982 mining opened an entrance to "Crystal Palace Cave", a cave in the western quarry. Its main chamber's dimensions were - 30m x 10m x 10m high approx. This cave had the most helictites ever seen on the Australian mainland. Literally millions were destroyed when the company blasted the cave in July. It is now a flat plain. In November 1982 the company erected a 2m high barrier in the bottom of Bat Cleft Cave. This barrier obstructed approximately 50% of the passage to the nursery area. Had this barrier been allowed to remain it would have resulted in the catastrophic destruction of a large number of that season's juveniles.

1984-1985: Mid 1984 the company started lowering and widening the road from the crushing plant to the western quarry. It was completed in early 1986. There is now a 20m cliff face at the bottom of the Bat Cleft Track.

1986: Estimated supply of limestone in the western quarry is approximately 3 years at the present usage.

1986 onward: Considering the supply of limestone in the western quarry and the widening and lowering of the road, and in view of the monies and manpower spent on same, the conclusion can only be that the company will start mining the main face in the near future, at the most in two to three years.

Lumen in Tenebris



SUSS

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of the

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SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

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