

CEGSA NEWS



Newsletter of the Cave Exploration Group (South Australia) Inc.

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CAVE EXPLORATION GROUP (SOUTH AUSTRALIA) Inc.

PO Box 144, Rundle Mall, Adelaide, South Australia, 5000.

<http://www.cegsa.org.au>

Meetings held on the fourth Wednesday of each month, except December, at 7.30 PM usually in the Royal Society of South Australia meeting room, Natural Science Building, South Australian Museum.

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Cover Photograph: Entrance of Albala Karoo Blowhole 5N171 19 April 1992 (Photo: Max Meth)

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QUARTERMASTERS NOTE.

High usage equipment will now be stored at the quartermaster's residence. Please make arrangements with the QM well in advance of required date for equipment. The QM can be contacted at the telephone numbers on the previous page.

NEWSLETTER MATERIAL

The deadline for copy or background material for Volume 49 Number 1 (Issue 193) must reach the Editor by Wednesday **11th February 2004**. Material not meeting this deadline may be retained for possible use in a following issue. The preferred method is via E-MAIL at atholjax@senet.com.au as an attachment or on 3.5" IBM floppy disk, in Word or ASCII text format. Of course other forms of communication will still be gratefully accepted.

The views expressed in this publication are those of individual authors and not necessarily those of the Cave Exploration Group (South Australia) Inc., its Committee or the Editor.

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What do cavers think of when they hear about a cave? A void.
 What do non-cavers think of when they hear about a cave? Avoid.
 This shows that cavers like small spaces.
 (Is this what is in most cavers heads – ed.)



PRESIDENTS SPOT

We now have a Secretary! Bill Binks has returned from his wanderings and put up his hand before he'd even been welcomed back.

Our web site is still having teething troubles as our host site had to be changed.

CEGSA is again meeting at the Royal Society Rooms at the SA Museum except for November, May and August which will be at a venue to be arranged. Let's hope that the return to the usual meeting place will return some errant members. Our meetings have been improved lately with the return of talks and displays rather than what to most are boring discussions on the workings of CEGSA. Best come back and have a look-see. If transport's a problem just let me know and I'll arrange some for you.

Graham Pilkington

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SPECIAL EVENTS

CHRISTMAS BBQ and GET TOGETHER

Date: Saturday 13 December

Time: 3.00pm onwards.

Location: Grant & Merry Gartrell's farm at Nangkita, about 1 hour south of Adelaide.

Directions: Drive down Victor Harbor Road to Mount Compass. Turn left at tavern on to Nangkita Road. Go just over 5km along Nangkita Road and look out for Blueberry Patch sign on right hand side.

BYO meat and a salad to share.

We've got a barbecue and plenty of chairs.

Mount Compass is usually a bit cooler than Adelaide, especially in the evening, so bring a jacket.

Please RSVP by phone: 8556 9100 or email: blueberrypatch@ozemail.com.au by Friday 12th so we've got some idea of numbers.

Can always organise a visit to Selicks at midnight, or 6am the next day for the keen ones.

Grant Gartrell.

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ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting will be held on Saturday, 14th February at 8:30 PM at the Hackney Hotel, 95 Hackney Rd. Hackney after a Dinner at 6:00 PM for 6:30 PM start. The Annual Report will be presented and an election for all Executive and Committee positions will be conducted.

Please consider carefully if you can stand for a position on the committee as it is your club and needs your input to operate successfully. Nominations for the committee must close prior to the commencement of the meeting.

Would all office bearers and representatives please have their reports to the editor by the 1st February so that they can be included in the Annual Report.

Committee.

Letter of Introduction

Hi CEGSA members,

We have recently joined CEGSA but since we are temporarily based in Melbourne, we will most likely not be able to attend CEGSA meetings in Adelaide – thus allow us to introduce ourselves. We are temporary visitors to Australia from the Czech Republic, Prague, where we have done just a little bit of dry caving. During our stay in Australia we started our cave diving training (August 2002) and this year have spent most of our weekends and holidays diving in caves. Our frequent diving in the Mt. Gambier area has got us in touch with Peter Horne, who has helped as a lot with diving less visited places there and also encouraged us to do a little bit of mapping for his Lower South East Reference Book update. We always considered cave diving being a part of caving in general, and later become more and more interested in dry and semi-dry caves again. We decided to join CEGSA because of our interest in caves of the Lower South East and on the Nullarbor (wet or dry). We have recently enjoyed our second beautiful 2-week trip to the Nullarbor, which included many of the newly described wet caves as well as some dry caves, which we visited with SRGWA cavers. Our recent stay in Australia is soon over; however before we leave back for Europe we would like to share with you some of our discoveries from the Mt. Gambier area. We look very much forward being back in Australia for some more caving in the future.

Drs. Petra Fundova and David P. Funda

(pdfunda@hotmail.com, pdfunda@seznam.cz)

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TRIP REPORTS

A new underwater section of Nettle Cave 5L186 discovered and explored in the Mount Gambier region of South Australia by visiting Czech cave divers, September 2003

By Drs Petra Fundova & David P. Funda, Melbourne, Victoria (Prague, Czech Republic)

We have prepared the following cave exploration report for the Cave Exploration Group (South Australia) to provide historical documentation regarding the circumstances surrounding our recent work and in the Mount Gambier region of South Australia.



Entrance to the Nettle Cave, view from the Crescent Lake, 30.8.2003, 1st dive.

During 2003 we have been diving almost every possible weekend in Mount Gambier, exploring most of the popular caves and sinkholes as well as some of the caves described in Peter Horne's Lower South East Cave Reference Book. The feature listed as 5L186, Nettle Cave (or Stinging-Nettle Cave,) has long been on our list because of Peter's reference to his brief scuba-dive there in July 1985. Earlier this year we heard about it again from cave diver Gary Barclay, who mentioned to us something like: "You should have a look in that small doline across the road from Pines (5L61) – it is small, shallow and silty, so you guys would love it!"

Soon after this, we met up with another cave diver, Andrew Higgins, who mentioned that he had dived Nettle Cave a couple of years earlier (August 2001). Andrew also mentioned having gone through a silty restriction at -8 metres, discovering a new, small tunnel leading to about 17m depth there. This definitely whetted our appetite and moved Nettle Cave straight to the top of our list, because Peter's book also stated that "...the 2m high cave quickly bottomed-out at a depth of 8 metres where a very silty restriction was encountered....". Peter's map also showed a narrow continuation with a question mark indicating possible extensions, so when we heard about Andrew's discovery beyond that 8-metre restriction we thought, "if it can go from -8 to -17m, it may as well go from -17 to who knows!..." So on Saturday, 30th August 2003, we were on the spot ready for our first muddy adventure in Nettle Cave.



Back Section at -8m, beginning of 'Andrew's Tunnel', 1.9.2003, 2nd dive.

During the previous couple of months we had regularly been diving in the Mount using only 10-litre side-mounted scuba cylinders, so no major modifications to our low-profile gear were necessary. The doline lies beside the track which runs from Pines to the main road near Tank Cave, and the outer edge of the entry to the entry lake is about 19 metres from the road. After a 3m descent on a muddy slope we got to see the entry lake, but we were surprised to find that it was much larger than we expected from the map. Instead of a small rocky pool, there was a quite large undercut lake chamber. This might be due to the significant lowering of the regional water table that is being mentioned around the district. A brief look with a mask only, careful entry, and the dive was on!

The cave looked very much as on the map and everything was covered with thick brown silt. We got to the beginning of the 'Back Section' and started to look for the tunnel Andrew had mentioned to us. It was easy to find, so, down the hatch! The tunnel opened a little bit at 10-12m depth, forming a small room where two divers could exchange positions, then it continued down at a steep angle of 50° - 60° as a very narrow restriction between two walls, bending a little bit to the left, right, and left again. The dark silt was after us so Petra had to dive through it head first and not to waste any time on descent. Turning around was rather squeazy and after a few moments we found ourselves with 10cm visibility on our way back. We then did a short side-trip to the Back Section and we hit the water surface knowing we were approaching the entrance only by the depth shown on our computers.

"Wow! It is a little bit like Mud Hole (5L97)!?" "Yeah, but unlike Mud Hole, this one is definitely silty, don't you think???" "Well, like Mud Hole from -17 to -22 m! It's 19m deep but that's it." Of course we liked it and spent a couple of minutes on the surface of the lake sharing our first impressions and also checking both ends of the lake (muddy crawling). Luckily, it is all pure mud with no broken glass.

Because the water gets muddy quickly after entry, only the first diver gets to see



Restriction at app. -17m in the original "Andrew's Tunnel" (max. depth was -19m). After some gardening at the end of this dive (1.9.2003) most of the right-hand-side of this tunnel collapsed and now forms the beginning of the "Avalanche Chamber".

something below 8-10m, so we dived it again on Monday, September 1, to -19m. On the way back from "Andrew's Tunnel" we found a small window at about -12m, just big enough to put one's head or camera in. Clear, blue water and a tunnel/fissure between two vertical walls of the entry chamber led down and seemed like getting bigger. We had realized we were not finished with this hole yet ... "What shall we do??" was coming through my head as the silt was closing in around the tempting window. "It is small, just too small. Even for Petra in a wetsuit. Even for Petra in a wetsuit and no scuba tank..!" Vis was gone but since nothing was lying on the 1m boulder which formed the bottom of the window, I tried to do a little bit of gardening and pushed the boulder in. It fell in easily, but now there was really nothing to see there. We left the scene with hope to break in next time.



Newly opened "Avalanche Chamber" at -34m, view into the low flattener at the bottom of the cave, NW direction, 19.9.2003.

We were back on the third weekend in September and dived the cave several times. On the first dive, on Friday September 19, Petra led the dive – we went through the restriction at 8m and hoped to get to a possibly enlarged window at 12m. But as we approached, we realised that everything had changed; we could not recognize the place! It was not just the one boulder I had pushed in; it had to have caused a small avalanche! The tunnel (or rather its east wall) was almost gone and now there was a large fissure with clear, inviting, blue water leading to the right in a SE direction ... it was just getting bigger and bigger. We are at -25 m and it still goes!

Our air consumption surely went up – Petra waved with her torch back to me, "Look at this!?" Would you believe it!!?" was all I could read from the look on her face! There were several openings between the two walls of the collapsed chamber to follow, and there was much more room at -25 m. The "Avalanche chamber" was also going in a horizontal direction. Without much hesitation we both followed the largest lead down to 30m. The outer wall of the chamber forms large steps about every 5m or so, and there are a few boulders trapped between the two walls forming picturesque blue windows leading down. Everything was covered with untouched, thick silt, but there was plenty of room to move around this virgin cave without damaging anything.



"Avalanche Chamber", detail at -35m, 19.9.2003.

We went down yet another step, which reminded us a little bit of the restriction in Three Sisters (5L13), and were at the bottom at around -35m. The last flattener at this depth is about 10-15m long and it continues as a narrow fissure just 20-30cm high through which we could see yet another small step down – was this the beginning of a horizontal draining system? ... does it go to the Pines or Nettle-Bed Cave (5L290)? We had made a few loops in tunnels leading in the SE direction (150°) around the bottom but had to watch our air supplies a little bit; who would ever expect to run into deco time in the Nettle Cave?! Beautiful!

Our subsequent dives saw us concentrating on exploring all of the easy areas of the cave. We especially checked out the horizontal extensions heading to the SE (i.e. towards Pines),

but we found no easy passage or conduit system there. The newly discovered "Avalanche chamber" opens at app. -12m, but the first passage-step in the SE direction (just underneath the Back Section) can be entered from about -9 to -10m depth, immediately after negotiating the initial restriction at -8m (easy to be overlooked on the way in). From the water surface to the (present!) max. depth at -35m we used about 55m of line. There is a huge boulder trapped in between the two walls, reaching a maximum depth of around -25m and forming a natural crossing for diving either the smaller NE or larger SE extensions.

At the NW extension, longest penetration was possible at about 30m depth with bottom at about -33m. The two steeply descending walls get very close to each other there, and no easy extension seems likely. A quite different situation is at the opposite SE horizontal extension where a much wider gap between the two walls is choked by large boulders. The two walls of the collapsed chamber copy the profile-direction of the surface doline and extend in a SE (150°) direction towards Pines at several steps, the longest horizontal extension being probably at the -17 to -12m step. Altogether, the horizontal span of the collapsed "Avalanche chamber" is about 50m, but at different depth levels. The character of the limestone is very much like in Pines' main chamber (light color, hard limestone), very different from probably the much younger Nettle-Bed Cave (5L290) which has a much more sharply-defined outline and angular corners.



SE extension at app. -30m,
"Avalanche Chamber", 19.9.2003

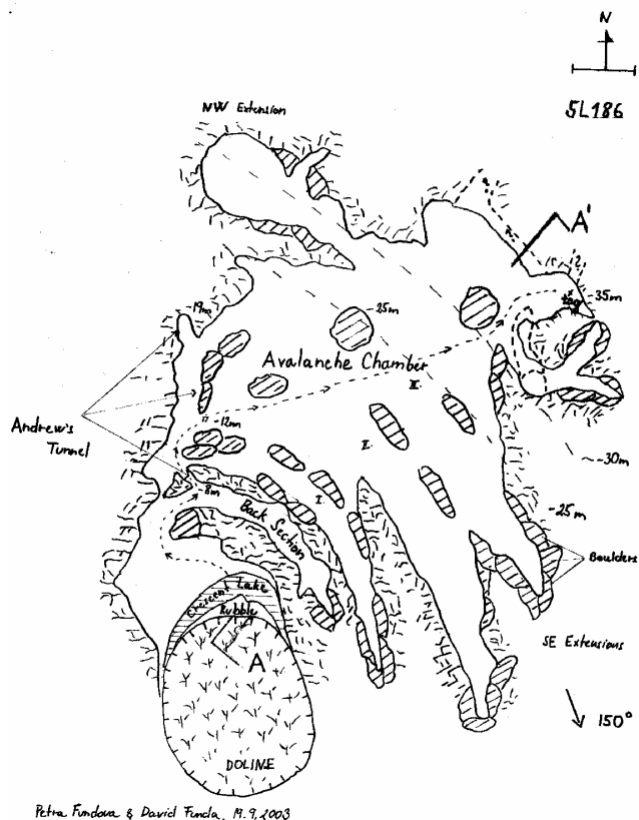
With a little bit of gardening at the bottom of the main chamber there is a good chance to break through yet another step downwards, maybe into the (presumed) original horizontal draining system. Another less likely possibility also exists along the SE edge of the chamber, but gardening among the huge boulders here seems a little bit scary, considering how readily our earlier efforts had quickly resulted in the "opening" of this cave!



Petra at the Crescent Lake after the discovery
dive. No further comments necessary!

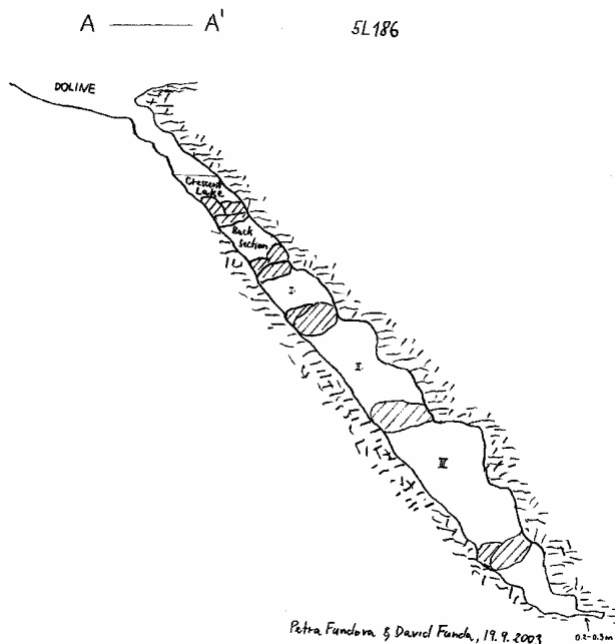
More detailed exploration and mapping of the cave is still awaited, because cave diving politics intervened as people started to become aware of the fact that 'something' had been found at Nettle Cave, and divers were being seen there. As a result, Primary Industries (Forestry) recently made the decision to prohibit any further diving in Nettle Cave until a proper access policy could be sorted out. Nevertheless, we were happy that we had seen enough to realize that this is a significant discovery: while Nettle Cave is not as large as Pines, it is as deep as the impressive Dark Room in Pines and the distance to the deepest point at -35m is only a little bit shorter than the length of the Back Passages to the Dark Room. We believe that this site would be of considerable interest to cave divers, especially those who do not mind diving (and avoid silting) in Mud Hole, Nettle-Bed and the Three Sisters. Side-mounting is not essential, but equipment configuration should probably be tested individually on the spot.

We hope that this report will serve both as a useful record of the events surrounding our discoveries and as a guide to the cave divers who will follow these early steps. Have fun diving there in the future!



David and Petra Funda

(pdfunda@hotmail.com,
funda@wehi.edu.au, pdfunda@seznam.cz)



P.S. Although the caves in Mt. Gambier area are by far the most frequently dived in Australia, do not let a false assumption, that everything has been fully explored there, mislead you! We know from our own experience that there are many other features "out there" just waiting to be explored - but that's going to require an/other article(s). ☺

We would like to take this opportunity to thank Peter Horne for a great deal of support and encouragement for our exploration diving and mapping around Mt. Gambier, also for his help with this article; Phil Argy - "Blue Lake Diving" - for his continuous support without which this discovery would not have been possible; and Linda Claridge for introducing us to cave diving.

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Nullarbor

26 September to 6 October 2003

CEGSA: Graham Pilkington

WASG: Ann-Marie Meredith, George Young

Features visited: 6N83, N372-375, N380, N400, N402-403, N772-773, N1216, N1278, N1313-1314, N1363-1364, N1712-1713, N1744-1745, and N2396-2399.

26 Sep

Travelled to Max's at Ceduna to say hello then set off for the Nullarbor. I got just past Nundroo before stopping for the night.

27 Sep

I had purchased a GPS unit that continuously sends data to a PC specifically for plotting Nullarbor track locations. I tested it at the start of the Eucla-Forrest track to determine what timing to use and how well it worked. A 4-second interval – about 40m spacing @ 36kmph –

appeared to be the best setting for the Link Track that I did as a trial run. However, getting out to the Link Track was more devious than usual because I just happened to time my arrival at the Eucla golf course at the only day in the year that they close the road that crosses the "greens" for the annual national golf tournament. I arrived at the Old Homestead Cave Hut at dusk where Ann-Marie and George from WASG were setting up camp.

28 Sep

We all went to an area about 200m north of the entrance to add to the 93AC survey in the upper crystal level. Ann-Marie was feeling unwell so we had to stop after a short time but did manage to complete one of the unfinished passages. We added only 10m as it ended in a sponge-work chamber that took ages to navigate for little reward.

29 Sep

Rained all day. With Ann-Marie too sick to cave and me not wanting to make the trip through the bogged countryside to the cave entrance 320m away, we just enjoyed catching up with the goings-on in each other's State. In the late afternoon the rain stopped long enough for a surface walk out to the blowholes in the "hill" north of camp followed by a look-see of the surface above the northern limit of cave exploration just over 2km away.

30 Sep

Ann-Marie had recovered enough to try caving again but only near the entrance. I led the way to the Potholes Backdoor to survey the NE end since this is only an hour in and still had unexplored tunnels. A laser distance measurer was put to good use. Two days ago the trial run had been of limited value in the confines of the sponge-work but we got the full value in these more open tunnels. The passage we were surveying ended rather abruptly after only 60m as it swung round to join a known tunnel. The connection was not made because the join was buried and not worth the effort of excavating. But it did explain the sharp "bend" of the other tunnel!

1 Oct

George and Graham returned to continue the survey of the NE end of the Potholes Backdoor. Ann-Marie was again unwell and enjoyed the patter of raindrops all day. Some higher level fissures along the main drag to the NE were located and mapped. At the far end, the chamber discovered last Easter was added to the survey after many short rays though the contortions of the previously blocking rockpile and sponge-work bypass. What I had taken to be a 10x6x3m high side chamber turned out to be the continuation of the main drag.

2 Oct

Ann-Marie & George left for Perth. The afternoon was sunshine and a chance to dry the contents of my tent. By now I had become accustomed to sleeping in a wetsuit (the label said sleeping bag) but decided a change was in order. Later I did some surface locations and entrance photography for N375 and new features N2396 & N2397. N2396 has a depression of 5x4x0.6 and a blowhole 0.45x0.3x2 @060. Since it is only about 1100m from and in sight of the Hut it should have been seen before! N2397 is 2m diam. and 0.1m deep blowing air.



N2396 Blowhole.

Photo: Graham Pilkington.



N2398 Blowhole.

Photo: Graham Pilkington.

3 Oct

A rain-free day! I took the opportunity to locate and photograph the entrances of N2398, N1278, N1712, N1713, N2399, N1745, N1314, N1313 and N1744. N2398 has a 1m diam. 0.4m deep depression with a blowhole of 0.4x0.25x2.1m maybe with a cave off the bottom. N2399 is a group of blowing holes from under the caprock, the largest being 1m wide 0.3m high and at least 2m horizontal extent over a rock sheet before reaching the actual blowhole.

4 Oct

The visitor record written on the Hut walls over the last 15 years is beginning to peel and fade so I photographed most of the "graffiti" to put in a visitor's book. A real visitor's book will be placed in the Hut on my next trip. After the rain had eased off I took photos of plants and "trees" near OHC. Someone might be interested in the forty or so different kinds that a layman could see on a casual look. Once I was sure that heavy rain and dark clouds would not spoil a photo mission I located and took entrance photos of N402, N374, N403, N380, N373, N400, N372, N1363, N1364, N1216, N773 and N772. Only twice did I have to get into a blowhole to keep dry.

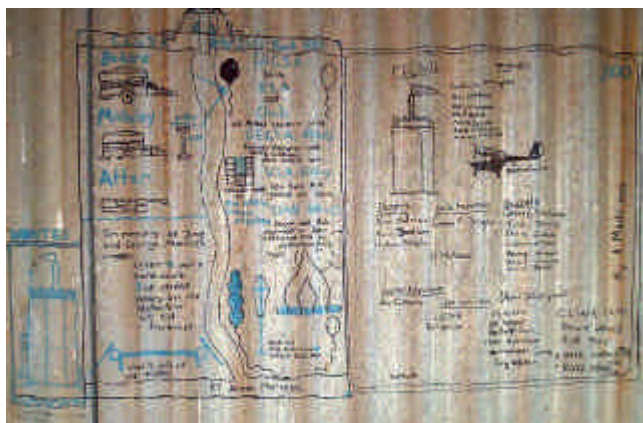


A Tree on the Nullarbor. Photo: Graham Pilkington



N2399 Blowhole.

Photo: Graham Pilkington.



Trip Reports on a Wall. Photo: Graham Pilkington

5 Oct

Time to leave. The track had dried out enough for my van to have a chance of getting back to the highway before the next heavy rain arrived. Before leaving I gathered up a van load of rubbish left scattered all over the plain from the original dwelling (circa 1910). This included about a dozen sheets of rusting iron and most of the scrap pile that Max Meth had dumped 430m north of the Hut in 1988 to make way for the new Hut on the site of the old. Considering that small loads of rubbish had been removed each trip over the last 15 years and that Ray Gibbons and I

had already removed a trailer-load of rubbish compressed and piled to the height of his 4WD on a previous trip, there was still a lot of rubbish to clear. The junk joined the rest at the Eucla tip. I cringed every time I went over a bump (i.e. several times a minute) as metal-on-metal noises came from behind me. I wasn't game to check the inside of the van. I did stop occasionally to remove the boulders that a duel-wheeled 4WD truck had kicked up along the Forrest-Eucla track. It appeared that the driver was doing several trips a week and trying hard to beat his speed record each time.

Graham Pilkington

AVENUE RANGE TRIP - A NEWCOMER'S PERSPECTIVE

October 4th – 6th

The weekend began for Mike and Trudy by meeting up with Paul- a seemingly experienced CEGSA member- pity he forgot his caving helmet and had to borrow Marie's pink one!! Lucky there's a surrogate mother who comes prepared in every good group. After chicken and chips on the river, a cappuccino on the way and a car ride of thrills (as Trudy attempted to orientate herself to driving Mike's 1960s car with only three gears), Mike, Trudy and Paul stayed at Fairview Conservation Park, 30km from Avenue. There, they camped under the stars, as experienced campers do (well, some slept in the car hey Paul?), and went for a lovely walk past two large lagoons. Highly recommended as a pre-trip venue.

Marie and Chris- well, they were to meet Mike, Trudy, Paul and Dave at Avondale at 9am Saturday, after staying at Dave's for the night. Apparently they rose at 5am to start running errands, such as picking up crow bars so that Dave could dig his own cave. Pity the hardware store had to forge it from scratch- probably the only explanation for being more than half hour late (how was the sleep in followed by bacon and eggs at some ritzy café guys?). Anyway, not to worry. Fred was there early, rearing and ready to go. No time for formalities or introductions, there were caves to be dug and pegs to be hammered and tape measures to be stretched. Serious business was about to happen.

The group travelled to nearby farm property, where they had a chit chat with the owners and then set up home in the shearing shed. By the time Marie finished setting up her rocking chair, table, ghetto blaster and fridge, it resembled more of a three star hotel than a shed. Thanks Marie! Chris set about putting his tent up for the weekend- apparently he just likes his own space, but those in the know say he has tried to sleep next to Dave and his snoring habit before! The rest of the group braved the shed, despite the possibility of high frequency noises throughout the night.

Our first task was to survey one of the three caves on the property where we were staying. It had two entrances so we split up into two teams, the "A Team" and the "Letter After Z Team". Dave, Trudy, one of the farmer's daughters and Mike made up the "A" team while Fred, Chris, Marie and Paul headed up the "Letter After Z" team. We had lots of company in the cave, one echidna and approximately 1,387,943 mosquitoes (some of which did not make it out alive). Well the plan was for each team to start at opposite ends and meet in the middle. I'm not sure what the "Letter After Z" team were doing but when the "A" team reached them they were still at their entrance??? Never the less the job was done and Fred was happy.



Button and Zipper Eating Goats.

Photo: Marie Choi

The afternoon was spent looking for other caves on the property, excavating and playing doctor Do Little with the very friendly zip and button eating goats. After a hearty meal we caught up with the property owners and went for an explore in their cave which was only a few meters from their front veranda. Not a large cave but some nice formations.

Day three took us nearby to some caves frequented by the locals but not so far by us CEGSA mob. They were not too hard to locate so the slightly diminished "A" team (no

farmers daughter) and the very diminished "Letter After Z" team (no Marie due to migraine and Chris keen on finding new caves) got to work. Again the "A" team managed to survey a couple of hundred meters plus with the "Letter After Z" barely losing site of the entrance. The

"A" team did have a hiccup though. On one measurement a female member of the group was asked to move to her left slightly as the tape was caught on a rock. Clarification was sought from the female surveyor due to poor visibility. The message was repeated saying "if you are facing me move to "your" left". The reply came back "but I am facing away from you?" We managed to resolve this confusion after much discussion about her hair colour.

We exited, thankful for the previously inserted string line to follow due to the nature of the cave to a welcomed lunch. We then regrouped and set out plotting and digging the ten or so new entrances that Chris had found. His cave seeking senses were in top form. The last one was only a 100mm diameter hole that opened fairly easily and exposed another large cave expanse. Time was not on our side so we did not have time to see if it joined up with the one we were surveying. A job for another trip.

Our last day after quickly packing up camp in the shearing shed before they started crutching a mob of sheep took us to some depressions in another farmer's paddock. We left Chris and Marie as they were heading further east seeking other adventures. It resembled a mine field with 20 plus depressions scattered on it. After "Letter After Z" team (Paul & Fred) logged most of the depressions, with lightening speed I might add, we retreated to the farmers front lawn for lunch before the trip home.

Being Dave's last trip before heading to Tassie we let him talk us into stopping on our way home at another location to check out a ridge line he had wanted to check out. It turned up some more entrances so there is a lot more work to be done.

We said our good byes to Dave and Fred, and Trudy, Paul, and Mike in the trusty EH headed North West homeward bound for Adelaide.

A most enjoyable trip for all and a good introduction to surveying for the novices.

Trudy George & Michael Caruana

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FURNESS CAVE 5L146

SUNDAY, 19 OCTOBER 2003

PARTY: Kevin Mott, Peter Horne, Michael Hammer (Adelaide Uni PhD Student).

CAVE VISITED: Furness Cave 5L146.

Normally I wouldn't bother writing a trip report for a visit involving a brief look at a single feature, but Furness Cave (located near Furness Road, which was named after the late Mr Furness, oddly enough!) deserves special treatment!

I first came across reference to the cave a few years ago, when I was compiling the first edition of the Lower South East Cave Reference Book. I dug out the history of 5L146 (along with the other 300-odd numbered features at that time) and noted that Ian Lewis had made the comment in his 1975 "Occasional Paper Number 1" that Furness cave: "...is horrible to survey (in fact, to do anything in!", and Jim Cundy's earlier trip report of June 1972 provided the reason for this with all of his references to decomposing chickens and lots of mud in a phreatic maze system which was generally in the order of 0.3m to 1m high most of the way through. "Thank goodness Jim and other CEGSA members did such a good job with the survey, so I won't need to go back there myself," I rather naively thought...

In early October 2003, I happened to encounter a keen aquatic ecologist, Michael Hammer, who was studying fish (Southern Pigmy Perch and so on) and general water-quality issues,

and it was just a few days after first meeting him via email that I re-read the 5L146 notes as I was reformatting the book. Because I had only just read some of Mike's publications regarding the fish of the region I was surprised to note a reference in the Cundy trip report to some yabbies and a free-swimming fish being caught, apparently in the cave in a 'permanent pool'. Since Mike was going to the south east to give a talk in the Naracoorte Town Hall on Monday (20 October), and after I passed on the details, he invited me to accompany him so we could check out that pool.

I rang Mr Mott in the Mount and he was really super-duper helpful; not only did he provide me with overalls and a good map of the cave but he volunteered to come in with us - I think it was the first time in 30 years that he'd been there! We met the 'new' landowners, who were very friendly and interested in what we were doing (although they thought we were mad), and then trotted down to the main cave entrance which lies very close to a small swamp, at the base of a small hill and limestone ridge.

Pulling the obscuring boulders away from the entrance, Kevin peered in and found the original 1974 reference nail and then decided to go walkies to see if there were any other entrances. During this time I decided to check that it wouldn't be too difficult for any of us to enter (Michael had ever been in this kind of 'wild' cave before), so I pulled out the more annoying stones and jumped in. It was a breeze, literally! The wind was blowing into the cave and all you had to do was lie as flat as you could, push aside the bones and bits of glass, grunt and grovel forwards with your helmet held in front of you and continuing this way until you got in about 6 or so metres where you could get up into a crawling position. Soon we were all marvelling at what was a quite impressive chamber (ie over 2m high in at least one place) because it contained a surprising amount of decoration, and since Michael had gone to the trouble of dragging his camera into the cave, he tried his hand at taking some photos of the decoration as well as other features here and there.

We then spent about an hour or so grovelling in much worse places as we tried to follow the 'main drag' in the cave (ho, ho, ho, what fun we had!), and at one stage we got to a particularly nasty squeeze (I say 'nasty' because I've STILL got painful ribs from my failed attempt to get through it!) where I found one of the old 1974 Jim Cundy Survey reference nails pinned to the wall, with foil and data still readable! This looked like an "F", and I reckon it really WAS an "F" squeeze! While LaMottly was convincing Michael that he was skinny enough to get through, I wandered up and over to the left and found a very easy way through (more crawling, but similar to the entrance and shorter). This fortunately led to a much bigger area where you could easily have swung a possum!

All the way through this trial Mole Mott was checking the map, and in hindsight I doubt that I would have been able to so readily find my way to our target pool without Kevin's presence (and the map!) because of my lack of enthusiasm to push things which used to really excite me - getting too old and chubby nowadays for sure! While the map was a good guide to the layout of the cave, I don't think that it actually helped cavers to move through the cave easily because the most easily-negotiable tubes and squeezes were not plotted as such. This lack of info meant that we had to basically check out every damned horizontal solution passage and rocky hole, making progress very slow and arduous, but hopefully now that Kevin and I will be adding our own details to the survey, future visitors will be able to almost run through (well, compared with our efforts, at least!...)

We reached some pools of water which were not on the map, and then we found what was without a doubt the main 'permanent' pool, which is shown as being something like 40 metres from the entrance. We were well into total darkness here and Kevin discovered something wriggling on the surface of the pool; it was a white earwiggy-thingy, and it now resides in Adelaide awaiting identification. We all looked carefully in the pool itself but there was no sign of life; the water covered an area something like 8m long and was 1-2m wide and just over a metre deep (confirmed when I did a 5-minute snorkel-and-mask splash to check the bottom and walls) and there was a very thick raft of multi-layered calcite on the

surface too, which would almost certainly not have formed if there was anything bigger than the occasional syncarid in the water (but no syncarids either).

While the failure to find obvious forms of life in the pool was a bit disappointing, it left us with some doubt about the earlier report, and this was still not cleared up even when Kevin rang Jim Cundy later that night because Jim couldn't remember anything about a fish and yabbies (or the weird wet sticky-clay "stoolactites" which we found stuck on one wall, possibly manufactured by a bored survey team...at least it was different from the Nativity Scene in Gloop Cave...)!

So there you have it - the first description of Furness Cave in 30 years or thereabouts. I found it to be a most interesting cave, sporty but safe compared with lots of others I've visited over the years, and the through-breeze is an added joy for overweight, sweaty, waterlogged and very muddy cavers who would otherwise die from exhaustion! The landowners also naturally expressed concerns about liability issues and this aspect will need to be addressed in the near future. There are a few places in the cave which require some care but the feature as a 'hole' is a very simple place to explore; no ladders or abseiling gear needed here for sure! It is also located in an area of considerable geologic interest and more work needs to be done here one day ... but please don't ask me to lead a trip, I still have to finish reading the telephone book before I have time to go back!...

Peter Horne.

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Corra Lynn Cave Y1

2 November 2003

Party: Graham Pilkington, Gary Woodcock & Jeanette Chapman & sons, Tom Klopff

Features visited: 5Y1, Y2.

The two vehicles met at the park beside Town Well Cave. A quick look was taken of Y2 entrance. It is still collapsing.



Collapsing Town Well Cave Entrance.
Photo: Graham Pilkington.

Tom and I went on an introductory tour of Corra Lynn Cave, meeting up with the others in Bushwalkers Chamber. Gary, Jeanette and sons then visited Octopus while we collected a plastic bowl and ropes from along the Bushwalkers Run. The bowl was disintegrating from being eaten by ?mice. Later on I retrieved the buckets from inside the cave door. Two of these had missing chunks of plastic as well as holes and teeth marks from what looked like the front incisors of a mouse.

Tom and I went out for lunch then visited Grand Central and Woodside. We meet up with the others as they were exiting

Ramshorns.

The cave was drier than usual (not that it ever has water in it) which was surprising because winter is just over and we had the normal amount of rain. Maybe the healthy-looking tall wheat growing over much of the cave had something to do with it.

Graham Pilkington

TECHNICAL and OTHER ARTICLES

MEMBERSHIP

Change in Membership details:-

Max Meth	7101	New E-mail address	maxmeth@bigpond.com
Graham Pilkington	7201	New E-mail address	p-c-h@bigpond.net.au

Welcome Back to:-

Bill Binks	9412	(H) 8431-4490 (W) 8389-8800 29 Hyland Terrace, ROSSLYN PARK SA 5072 (E) binks.bill@saugov.sa.gov.au
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Would all members please advise, if not already done so, of any changes in membership details (address, telephone numbers, e-mail, mobile phone numbers) as soon as possible for inclusion in the Annual Report Membership List for next year.

Chris Gibbons.

Membership Officer.

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MEMBERSHIP FEES

CEGSA MEMBERSHIP FEES FOR YEAR 2004

These fees are due on 1st January, 2004

Full Membership	\$ 44.00
Full Country Membership	38.00
Associate Membership	36.00
Long Term Associate	44.00
3 Month Introductory	5.00
Joining Fee	12.00

ASF LEVY FEE FOR YEAR 2004

Single	\$ 68.00
Family	121.50
3 Month Introductory	20.00

YEAR 2004 FEES

	CEGSA	+ASF	TOTAL
Full Membership	\$44.00	\$ 68.00	\$112.00
Full Country Membership	38.00	68.00	106.00
Associate Membership	36.00	68.00	104.00
3 Month Introductory	5.00	20.00	25.00

Variation for Family Membership

1 st Full Member + 2 nd Full Member			
Less \$16.00 for only 1 CEGSA News	\$72.00	\$121.50	\$193.50
1 st Full Member + 2 nd Associate Member			
Less \$16.00 for only 1 CEGSA News	\$64.00	\$121.50	\$185.50
1 st Associate Member + 2 nd Assoc Member			
Less \$16.00 for only 1 CEGSA News	\$56.00	\$121.50	\$177.50

Enclosed with the November Newsletter is your account for the 2004 Fees. Please make sure your payment of fees includes CEGSA and ASF if applicable.

If there are any queries regarding the fees please give me a ring on 8258-9847.

Thanks.

Chris Gibbons

Treasurer/Membership Officer

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LIBRARY AND RECORDS REPORT

Library:

CEGSA has purchased the latest book on caves, *Beneath the Surface*, edited by Brian Finlayson and Elery Hamilton-Smith, 182 pages. This book looks at all the cave systems of Australia. Contents include: variety of cave type; formation; cave fauna; fossils; Aboriginal relics; and decorations in caves.

Received from Max Meth copy of Harry Wheeler's unpublished book *Features of the Nullarbor, limestone country*, 99 pages. Comments by Max included.

Received from Max Meth copy of *The Trans Australian Wonderland*, 1923. Text only no illustrations b A.G. Boland, 5th edition 1927. 135 pages. Comments by Max included.

Received from George MacLucas, copy of AS ISO 1000-1998 *The International Systems of Units (SI) and its application*. 23 pages. For those pedantic surveyors who may wish to know if they are using the international system.

Records:

Received from Peter Ackroyd photos on disks of 48 Nullarbor karst features personally tagged by Peter during May Nullarbor trip.

Received from Peter Ackroyd photos on CD Rom of karst entrances tagged in October from a trip to Nullarbor along with Ray Gibbons. 130 pictures.

Monographs:

Received from Neville Pledge *The Upper Fossil Fauna of the Henschke Fossil cave, Naracoorte SA*. From memoirs of the Queensland Museum 28(1) page 247-262 Brisbane ISSN 0079-8835.

Received from Lance Hoey, 'A trip to the Underworld from a trip in 1957' in the *Modern Motor Magazine* by Ted Lane, 1957, page 35-37 & 79-80.

Received from George MacLucas 'Marsupial Lion or pouch raiding possum?' In *Australian Science Magazine* by Antoni Milewski, September 2003, page 14-17.

Received from George MacLucas 'Underground Adventure' in *Walkabout* January 1961 by Ellery Hamilton-Smith (CEGSA Life Member) page 25-27. The article is on caving throughout Australia and what cavers do.

Newspaper clippings:

3 articles received from George MacLucas:

- 1) 'Fossil find by recreational cavers' in *The Advertiser* 24th September 2003. A jaw bone found in Romania could be evidence of earliest modern humans at same time as last of the Neanderthals.
- 2) 'Mid Summer Night's Dream' *The Advertiser* Saturday August 2nd 2003. page 51. To be performed by Victorian Theatre Company OZACT inside the Naracoorte Caves in September/October 2003.
- 3) 'Kubla Khan Cave, Tasmania' in *Weekend Australian* October 4-5 2003. Front page article and page 8. A limited access cave which some of our members have been fortunate enough to have adventured through.

GEORGE MACLUCAS

Librarian and Records Officer.

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TINDALE and ALBALA KAROO

Recently I obtained a report titled ENVIRONMENTAL, ANTHROPOLOGICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND TO THE NULLARBOR PLAINS, by Tom Gara and Scott Cane, published in 1988. CEGSA does not have this publication in their library, so I intend to make my copy available. Upon reading it, I noticed on Page 185, that Norman Tindale is cited under the heading ALBALA KAROO as saying that the name ALBALA KAROO means "descending place of the ants". What Gara and Cane actually say is (p185):

Albala Karoo Rockhole. A blowhole formerly about 25m deep near Koomoolooooka Cave. Jones recommended a trial boring for water at the blowhole in 1880 but the diamond drill bit jammed after penetrating only a few metres and could not be extricated. The site is locally known as Diamond Bore. According to Tindale (1974, p64), Albala Karoo is a corruption of "Ngalbata karu" which means "descending place of the ants". He noted that the name probably referred to a water source in a cave that the Aborigines found by following a trail of ants.

But when I checked, I found that Tindale actually says something slightly different, (Tindale, 1974, p64):

"One of the guides to water on the Nullarbor Plain is a line of ants going down through sinkholes in the limestone to find water. With the intimate knowledge he must have, the Aboriginal follows such leads and many caves have been entered by man following such indications. The name "Ngalbata karu" literally "creek" or "descending place of the ants" was given to a cave near Koonalda on the Nullarbor Plain. On the map it is corrupted as "Albadakarroo", and it is a memorial to such a find that yielded water to someone in the past.

That paragraph has a few statements in it that are, frankly, very hard to believe!

1) I have never heard of ants forming a trail to water. Certainly, I have not seen it, on the Nullarbor or anywhere else.

2) But Tindale also says the ants go "down through sinkholes in the limestone to find water" and on the Nullarbor that would mean descending in a cave about 80 vertical metres. That, I venture to say, is impossible for ants.

3) Why on earth would "the Aboriginal follows such leads" as an ant trail. Would a cave that had no ant trail leading into it be ignored? Surely an Aboriginal (in traditional times) would explore EACH AND EVERY cave found, in the hope of finding food (trapped animals, bird nests etc).

4) "The name 'Ngalbata karu' literally 'creek' or 'descending place of the ants'". Wait a minute! Does it mean "creek" or does it mean "descending place of the ants"? It surely can not mean both. What about the fact that "Karoo" is an English word that means "Barren waterless elevated Plateau", which is exactly what the Bunda Plateau is.

5 "The name . . . was given to a cave near Koonalda". Well Koonalda Cave is a nearby cave that contains water (but no ants). There is no other cave nearby that descends to water. There is only 1 other cave in South Australia that is known to descends to water. There is no cave at "Albala Karoo". Albala Karoo itself is (or was) a vertical blowhole 84 feet (25m) deep and completely unclimbable. It was deepened slightly and the shaft enlarged during the failed attempt to drill for water. But besides there is (and never was), any water at the bottom. So there are two problems here:

a) we do not know which cave has been named Albala Karoo

b) we do not know why the name Albala Karoo was applied to the blowhole at Diamond Bore? Other than to say the name was possibly affixed to the blowhole in the absence of a better alternative.

6 Tindale says "On the map it is corrupted as "Albadakarroo". Which map is that? My map shows Albala Karoo. But I note that English word karoo AND karroo, both have the meaning given in point 4 above. It would have been helpful if Tindale had mentioned which map he was using.

7 Tindale concludes by saying that "a find that yielded water to someone in the past". We are dealing with the Dreamtime here, more or less, because it is certainly not recorded which Aborigine first found the blowhole at Albala Karoo, or the supposed cave that contained water. Anyway it would certainly have been good news for this supposed person from the past to find water in a cave. But presumably the cave (if it exists) could have been visited again and again by people. The first person only needed to tell everyone about the fortunate find: eg "Hey everyone, I followed some ants and found some water".

In my opinion, that pretty well debunks the idea that "Albala Karoo" has any connection with ants. The fact that Tindale does not cite a source for his information also makes it difficult to corroborate his idea. And the fact that Tindale does not give an Aboriginal vocabulary in his book also does not help.

There are some other facts that are relevant to this discussion:

a) Weebubbie Cave 6N2

According to Tindale (CEGSA records) the name Weebubbie is derived from Wipa = ant and Kapi = water. Well there are a few words for water in Aboriginal dialects. Kapi appears not to be the word for water in the Mirning dialect, but rather, the local word is 'gabbie'. Certainly, the name Weebubbie seems to derive more from Gabbie than from Kapi. In view of this seeming error by Tindale doubt is certainly cast on his proposed nomenclature explanation.

b) Abrakurrie Cave 6N3

The people of Eucla in 1899 referred to a cave as "Albala Kurroo." [sic]

An article, 'The New Year's Excursion to Albala Kurroo.' Appeared in The Eucla Recorder, p7-8 on 7 Jan 1899, by Anon "Pommax". It is clear that the cave visited was Abrakurrie 6N3. I quote a few excerpts from the article:

"A number of the young men of Eucla . . . made arrangements for an excursion to the great cave known as Albala Kurroo. The means of locomotion in the shape of vehicles, camels and horses. At half past one on Saturday the last day of '98 a start was made. When the South Australians arrived at 6.30 pm they were agreeably surprised to find a bright fire burning and a big "wommah" constructed read for use as a sleeping place."

"Everyone was astir by 4am and no time was lost in setting out to find the great cave which they had come 29 ½ miles to explore. Two hundred yards from the camp there is a great oblong-shaped ravine, fully a quarter of a mile long and 150 yards wide. The sides are strewn with masses of rock and slope towards each other. At both ends a wall of rock rises perpendicularly. Hidden amongst the huge boulders at the base of the southern wall is the entrance to the great Albala Kurroo cave."

"For 300 feet . . . huge stones impede progress, and then a hard level earthen floor with here and there a few small stones is reached."

There follows a lengthy description of the cave, but the party had an interesting trip back to Eucla:

"Next Morning another visit was paid to Albala Kurroo, and at 9 o'clock a start was made for Eucla. After going about a mile and a half . . . the guides showed the party a great funnel-shaped hole known as the "landslip" [This is Chowilla Landslip 6N17]. A little time was spent exploring the surroundings, and then a start was made for Weebababbie [sic] - supposed to be a cave of much greater dimensions than Albala Kurroo. Its position was not accurately known and as the entrance is small and hardly noticeable from the road, the party went past without seeing it."

It thus appears that not only was the doline of Weebubbie known of in 1898 (in December), but the existence of the cave was also known, and the name of the cave was recorded as Weebubbie (give or take). It appears that the party did not take the road that went past Weebubbie, as the entrance would not be hard to spot. My previous article (Meth, 1995) mentions that The Eucla Recorder reported the discovery of Weebubbie Cave in Jun 1900. Clearly the discovery had been made at least 18 months earlier.

The Eucla Recorder article does not give the origin of the name Albala Kurroo.

c) Daisy Bates

Daisy Bates, in a newspaper article mentioned that Weebubbie Cave was known as "the place of the hidden feet (Australasian 16/7/1927).

References

Anon [Pommax], 1899, 'The New Year's Excursion to Albala Kurroo', The Eucla Reorder, 7 Jan 1899, Eucla.

Gara, Tom & Cane, Scott, 1988, 'Environmental, Anthropological And Archaeological Background To The Nullarbor Plains' ANUTECH, Canberra.

Meth M G, 1995, 'Weebubbie Cave (6N2) - When was this discovered by Europeans?', CEGSA Newsletter, 40#4, p104-5.

Tindale N B, 1974, 'Aboriginal Tribes of Australia.', Univ of California Press, USA

Max G Meth.

November 2003.

The Life and Times of Dave Glowacki

I met this brash young man with the tied dyed overalls almost 9 years ago, the first thing that struck me was his high voice but for a 20 year old he turned out to be an alright fun loving kid. Not quite sure what he thought of me, probably a bit bossy and crazy, but he became a regular on our south east trips anyway. The Old farmhouse he rented at Hynam became the unofficial "CEGSA" hut for a while.

Our trips would be a mixture of fun caving and working trips with Dave becoming a keen digger, mapper and photographer. Dave's location and job at Naracoorte gave him ample opportunities to check out the south east and he managed to discover, and rediscover a significant number of features over the years. Those of us that caved with Dave got on well and Dave even decided to celebrate his 21st with a caving weekend at Mount Gambier with a mixture of caving and partying. I think we had a small party at his Hynam place a couple of years latter, but Dave made the mistake of letting us stay at his place and went off climbing on the last day so we booby trapped his house, glad wrap over the toilet, surprises in his bed and "Poms" classic water balloon up the fireplace flue, It worked a treat, no warm fires that night.



In Corra Lynn Cave, 1966.
Photo: Marie Choi.

forgotten about until relocated when the vines were planted.

One of his most significant discoveries was with Damian "the Pom" and myself at Wandilo when we went to check a depression that Motty had told us about. It was 35c that day but we decided to give it a go and after several hours of digging we broke through to a small chamber to discover it full of fossils, they were in the silt, the roof the walls and even the flowstone and were in excellent shape.

Dave has a wide range of talents; he's an excellent rock climber, (so he tells me) and there's yet to be a musical instrument that I haven't seen him be able to pick up and play weather it be a guitar, Didgeridoo, harmonica, violin, drums etc. In fact Dave was involved with a successful band for a while that performed around the South East. He's developed into a great photographer and has won some



Tassie Fashion Statement 1998.
Photo: Marie Choi.

Over the years Dave was involved in a number of discoveries, he found a large number of caves and features at Furner including one inhabited by a very hungry rat. Dave and Frank also made a nice little discovery at Cave Ridge of a very pretty little cave that has sound connection to the other known cave in the area. On his rounds as a sprayer he came across the newly rediscovered Mildara Blass cave, it had been sealed in 1917 and



Playing the Violin at Mole Creek in 1988. Photo: Marie Choi.

prizes recently as well as sold his work. He's been a farm labourer, fruit and veg salesman, childcare worker, youth adventure leader. He's not stingy either and often shares his nursery rhyme sing with us and over the years has helped many members with their rope skills.

Some of Dave's other talents include his burping and his famous snoring tones which can be heard miles away, most people think its some kind of wild animal in pain when they first hear it. Dave also has the smallest

hips in the club which means he can get into places most of us dream of (NOT!).



Helping With Rope Skills.

Photo: Marie Choi.

Dave did his first trip to Tassie in 1998 with his mate and chick magnet Davey bear and was immediately hooked, from day one he dreamed of moving there. He went back again in 2000 and 2002 and now he's made the move. We farewelled Dave in October with his last SA trip to Avenue range and he goes and finds a heap of new features on his last trip, most that he didn't even get a chance to enter.



Dave's Farewell Gesture.

Photo: Marie Choi.

Like a lot of people that move to Tassie, Dave won't be back. Instead the person that you think is Dave is now "Wolfgang". Seems a lot of people like more than a change of location. Anyway Wolfgang is sure to drop in for a visit now and again and will gladly welcome visits from his CEGSA mates. Anytime your in Tassie, feel free to drop in, I'm sure he will have a lot of new features for you to check out in the near future.

Marie Choi.

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Some Internet Sites Worth Looking at.

Rescuers in overnight mission to save injured potholer
Martin Wainwright

Sunday November 02 2003

The Observer

To see this story with its related links on the Guardian Unlimited site, go to

<http://www.guardian.co.uk>

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Another site worth looking at for cave items is:

SignOnSanDiego.com News Science/Health

Date	Type of Event	Description	Contact
26/11/03	General Meeting	Maid and Magpie Hotel	Graham Pilkington
29/11/03	Working Bee	Library and Records	George MacLucas
10/12/03	Committee Meeting	Kent Town Hotel, 76 Rundle St. Kent Town.	Graham Pilkington
13/12/03	Christmas BBQ	Details: See Page 71	Grant Gartrell
28/12/03 17/01/04	Caving	Tasmania	Marie Choi
28/01/04	General Meeting	Royal Society Room, SA Museum, Adel.	Graham Pilkington
31/01/04	Working Bee	Library and Records	George MacLucas
01/02/04	ANNUAL REPORT	All Officers Reports Due to the Editor	Athol Jackson
11/02/04	Committee Meeting	Kent Town Hotel, 76 Rundle St. Kent Town.	Graham Pilkington
11/02/04	CEGSA NEWS	Articles and Calendar Items due to the Editor	Athol Jackson
14/02/04	AGM	Hackney Hotel, 96 Hackney Rd. Hackney	Graham Pilkington
25/02/04	General Meeting	Royal Society Room, SA Museum, Adel.	Graham Pilkington
28/02/04	Working Bee	Library and Records	George MacLucas
24/03/04	General Meeting	Royal Society Room, SA Museum, Adel.	
	Caving	Ongoing Vic Fossil Survey contact	Garry Woodcock
	Caving	Regular trips to Sellicks Hill contact	Grant Gartrell

Don't forget to register your trip with the Trip Liaison Officer so that the trip becomes official and is covered by insurance. If it is not registered then it is not covered and you may be liable. You must also be an accredited trip leader with the appropriate skill endorsement to take a party underground. Also, please make sure that a report of the trip is submitted.

Please submit your list of future trips early so they can be included in the calendar.