

CEGSA NEWS



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

Volume 53 Number 3

Issue 211

AUGUST 2008



CAVE EXPLORATION GROUP (SOUTH AUSTRALIA) Inc.

PO Box 144, Rundle Mall, 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: Ray Gibbons exploring 6N-2711, Nullarbor Plain.

Photo: Peter Ackroyd, 17 Oct 2003

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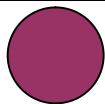
QUARTERMASTERS NOTE.

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 53 Number 4 (Issue 212) must reach the Editor by Wednesday **12th NOVEMBER 2008**. Material not meeting this deadline may be retained for possible use in a following issue. The preferred method is via E-MAIL to atholjax@adam.com.au as an attachment or on 3.5" IBM floppy disk, or on a CD, in Word or ASCII text format. Of course other forms of communication will still be gratefully accepted. Photographs are preferred to be in colour (jpg format) and not embedded in the text.

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.



PRESIDENTS SPOT

Most of our members go caving for the sheer joy of being underground in a natural cave.

The highlight of caving for most cavers is being the first to enter a pristine passage. In other words finding new stuff. But if CEGSA lasts for thousands of years, this means we need to “reserve” lots of caves and passages for them to find rather than finding it all in our own caving career.

So the problem is, how do we know how much is still to be found? The best techniques rely on statistics. In South Australia we have some great advantages over other parts of the world.

Firstly, our limestone areas (and I include the whole of the Nullarbor in this) are mainly horizontal and vast. Hence there exists lots of rock for the caves to be in.

Secondly, we have only a few trivial “rivers” and they do not disappear into the classical river-capture style caves where the entrances are obvious and looked at. Instead we have predominantly groundwater caves; that is, caves formed by the chemical reactions within water at or close to the nearly horizontal air-water interface. This means that entrances are not generally part of the cave systems and occur after the cave has formed. In many (most?) instances, no natural entrance will exist. We have many examples of large caves which have never had a natural entrance and access to them was made possible only after sinking a well, mining, or creating a road cutting.

Under these conditions, statistics may not be ideal because the sample is biased to those caves that have natural entrances and we have limited knowledge of the ratio between those and the caves without entrances. We will have to assume that the existence of an entrance does not indicate a higher density of caves in the vicinity. Ian Lewis will contest this because it conflicts with his theories of cave development along the Naracoorte ridges. It also goes against “common sense” to propose that caves are just as numerous out on the flats between the south east sand dunes (where almost none have been found) as they are under the dunes. A full analysis should zone the land and process each zone independently.

If anyone is interested in doing the above analysis, then please feel free to call in on Records and I’ll help you gather the required data.

Preliminary examinations of the Nullarbor by several people have come up with a figure of about 90% still to be found. Therefore future generations will not be starved of pristine caves to explore – if they only had the means of both locating and then getting into them!

Graham Pilkington

TRIP REPORTS

Christmas 1954 Nullarbor Caving Trip

The 50-year-old recollections of a great adventure for a 9 year old.

Peter Wright, May 2006.

My first memories of this trip were pleading with my Dad to let me go. I was nine years old. There appeared absolutely no chance (I did not really ever expect there would be a chance). He told me that I would "look like that grease spot" on the shop counter because it was so hot out there. Then suddenly, after I had totally abandoned all hope, things changed. I was going! Apparently the caving guide also had a son about the same age as me and he wanted to go too, so a deal was done.

I don't know how this trip eventuated. I suspect that my father (Arnold 'Burley' Wright) met Captain J. Maitland Thomson, heard his Nullarbor cave stories and decided to organize a Scouting group to do the trip. Captain Thomson (I understand) was ex Harbour Master at Port Adelaide, but sometime in his life had flown aircraft between Port Augusta and somewhere in WA on a regular basis. It was on these flights that he first saw some of the large Nullarbor sinkholes, and used them for navigational landmarks. His curiosity about these caves became such that eventually he visited many on the ground. I have no idea of the dates of this history or how the flying fitted in with this man's history except that his most recent visit on the ground to the Nullarbor was ten or twenty years prior to the trip being now planned. With a history anything like I have described, there should be other records of this man.

The trip was 3 weeks. The fee per person was 28 pounds (we 2 kids went for 14 pounds each).

Who else was on this trip?

Arnold 'Burley' Wright[*] was, I understand, the trip leader and organiser.

Captain Maitland J. Thomson[*] was "Official Cave Guide".

Noel Mollet[*], I am pretty sure, drove the Holden Ute.

Ken Langford (from Enfield) supplied and drove the truck (in exchange for his trip fee). Others included Ces Giles[*], John Lynzaad, Bert Jackson, Keith Trundle, Errol Smith[*], Bob Hopkins[*], Ron McKinnon (the Piper) and Alf Bailey[*], myself [Peter Wright[*]] and Thomson's young son[Dean?].

I think there were 19 people total, although I struggle with the seating arrangements. There were 3 in the front of the Ute. There were 3 (maybe 4) in the front of the truck. Then the truck had a covered canopy behind the main cab that had 2 bench seats across it, facing each other. This was typical of local council trucks of the day. Each end of this seating area was open (no doors, windows or seat belts). There must have been seating for 6 facing in each direction, which sounds now like a real struggle. We two kids always tried to get the end 2 seats on the passenger side for some reason.



Typical Campsite.

It is unbelievable, but I can't remember Thomson's son's name, but he had his 9th birthday while we were away. I had turned 9 in the November just past. He was to get a slug gun for his birthday, he knew that, but he could not have it until his actual birthday. He searched for it for days, but could not find it. I found it, in the fold of fabric joining the top of the bench seat of the Holden to the rear wall below the rear window, but I did not let on.

This trip was a pretty big deal (it seemed to me at the time). There were pics and stuff in the 'Advertiser' before we departed

showing sponsor supplied food (Dad was a grocer so that was to be expected) and the brand new Holden Ute from GMH (no doubt encouraged by Henry Rhymill, SA Headquarters Commissioner for Scouts at the time, who was also the GMH Works Manager). I specifically remember cans of 'Spam' type meat and Tip Top bread (my Uncle Clarry Winfield worked for Tip Top). Bread in those days was wrapped in greaseproof paper. Our bread for the trip was especially double wrapped for us so that it would keep longer, although I still remember eating it a little *green*). I am also pretty sure that all the fuel was supplied by a fuel company.

Final packing for departure happened outside our home in Emilie Street, Sefton Park. The truck and Ute were loaded with all the provisions. The truck already had 44-gallon drums of fuel on board and water supplies too. I think the water was in square riveted steel tanks, but I am not sure.

I received 2 special gifts just before departure. The first was an army style water canteen that I put on my belt. The cap was secured to the neck via a metal figure-of-eight link chain. Somehow, while we were packing, I hooked a link of the chain into my finger like a fishhook and needed the Medico to extract it. The second was a pair of (in those days) very exotic and very expensive Polaroid sunglasses. A huge deal was made of this gift. I had lost them within 24 hours of departure.

The first night stop was at a Government experimental dairy near Whyalla. I have no idea why we stayed there; someone must have had a connection. I was fascinated with farm machinery and soon found a big shed full to explore. There was a 6-foot high chain mesh gate across the front, but that was no obstacle. Exploration over, I scaled to the top of the gate and jumped down to the ground, landing on a nail protruding from a plank of wood. The nail penetrated my shoe and buried itself in my foot. I recall standing on the piece of wood with my other foot to extract the nail. I was too embarrassed to tell anyone for fear of strife so suffered in silence. Luckily no infection ensued.

West of Port Augusta, of course, the 'highway' was still a rough, corrugated track with bulldust and limestone rocks.

The second night out was to be at a lonely, remote beach and jetty at Port Le Hunt, west of Ceduna [east side of Point Sinclair]. We arrived to find that the following day was the local district annual picnic day. Maybe a couple of hundred people were arriving from the surrounding stations, towns and aboriginal communities in cars, trucks, horse drawn vehicles, even camels. There were racetracks being laid out for the kids on the beach and bunting and shelters were being erected.

None of my other recollections of this trip are chronological, rather are specific to places or events.



Port Le Hunt. Peter Wright And Ron McKinnon with bagpipes.

We stopped one day at the cliffs at the Head of the Bight, and Rovers being Rovers, some had to get to the bottom. I think they simply used a rope, anyhow, a rock was dislodged and someone caught it on the head. Luckily he did not fall, but several stitches were inserted in his head after he got back to the top of the cliff.

One evening early in the trip, we built a rope ladder. The rope was about 25mm diameter and the rungs were wood, maybe 75mm x 25mm x 400mm. Each rung was pre-drilled with 2 holes at the ends so that the rope could be fed through. The middle of the rope was tied to the back of one of the vehicles and each rung was threaded on in turn. After positioning, a knot was tied in the rope behind each rung and tightened by a tug-of-war style effort from the troops. This ladder was about 20 metres long and provided access to many of the sink holes that would otherwise have been difficult to enter.

We visited many caves on the Nullarbor. Most are now well known, as were some of them then. We also tried with mixed success to find new caves using reports from locals and others. Names I recall

include Weebubbie, Koonalda, Warbla, Weekes, Abrakurrie, Jimmies, Bottle Blow Hole, Diprose[3 caves], Ivy, Murrawijinie[3 caves], Disappointment, and 'X' Cave.

Thomson had a hand drawn set of maps to many caves with instructions like "follow fence line for 9.3 miles", "turn left to 78 degrees and proceed 5.3 miles".

Often we followed a single set of tyre tracks across the plains that he claimed he had made on his previous trip 10 or 20 years earlier. Sometimes he got frustrated because these tracks had become complicated by the addition of other tracks made by rabbit shooters. I have never forgotten the lesson of the incredible fragility of this country that these tracks demonstrated.



Peter Wright and Maitland Thomson's son.

On several occasions we spread out line abreast about 50 metres apart and marched across the plains looking for a cave opening.

I do not recall helmets being used by anyone. Nor do I recall carbide lamps that were the main form of underground lighting used in early CEGSA days.

It seems that I got a reputation for being able to get into tight spots because I recall that on several occasions I was secured to a rope and lowered into the tight openings of unexplored new caves and blowholes to do an initial reconnoitre. I would shout back a description of the cave and if I thought that it went on beyond my torchlight. That often decided if further exploration took place or not.

One day we recorded 127 degrees F in the shade of the truck. We were some 100 miles north of the highway and there was a fierce northerly wind blowing. Rain was predicted and we made a dash for the 'highway' before we got bogged and had to wait until it dried out to move. The vehicles and people suffered alike during that dash to safety. With a strong tail wind, the vehicles overheated often and had to be turned into the wind and stop to cool down. We suffered because the tail wind meant that we were totally enveloped in the dust from the vehicle all of the time. I understand that this was a couple of days prior to Adelaide's Black Sunday when fires swept through the State. I don't recall us having any form of emergency communications, so to break down or get stranded out on the Plain proper might have had dire consequences.



Fowlers Bay Post Office 1955.

Sheep were being farmed on the Nullarbor. I recall coming across a fence that was built across the track that we were following, but it was no obstacle. Sheep in these parts so rarely saw a fence that they would not go near them. As a consequence, the fences consisted of only two low wires strung between posts that were maybe 50 metres apart. To cross a fence where no gate existed required a passenger to stand on the top wire while the vehicle drove over.

Photographing large caverns in caves was difficult because of the amount of light required to get a good exposure. I recall standing in Abrakurrie Cave. It had a ballroom flat silt floor, but the main chamber was so large that my conventional torch could not light up either wall or the ceiling. A device nicknamed a "diprododon" was employed on this trip for the first time. It consisted of a CO₂

fire extinguisher pressure vessel, modified with a tyre style hand pump so that it could be pressurized as required. The outlet was controlled by a tap and blew horizontally out over a shallow, round tray,

maybe 50mm in diameter. Beyond the round tray was another rectangular trough, maybe 25mm by 150mm. The technique was to pump the cylinder up to pressure, fill the round tray with powdered magnesium and fill the trough up with methylated spirits. When everyone was ready, the metho was lit, a signal was given and all the photographers would open their shutters, then the tap to the cylinder was opened, blowing the powdered magnesium through the flame. The resulting blinding white flash lasted a second or so and was sufficient to light the largest of chambers. There was also the legacy of a large cloud of smoke left behind from the flash. Many stunning photographs were taken using this method.

I think it was at Nullarbor Station, but someone had a birthday and others drove the Ute back along the road and retrieved a "road kill" wombat (already several days dead), which was carefully tucked up into the birthday boy's sleeping bag. I recall that he did not see the funny side at all.

Nullarbor Station was run by the Gurney family who welcomed us in true country style, although I suspect that we two kids were not part of the main celebrations. Gurneys had a lad called Trevor about the same age as the Thomson lad and I.

The Thomson lad was issued with a ration of slugs each morning for his slug gun. We used to sit on the back of that truck, bouncing over the plains, and try to shoot running dingoes at 100 metres. What is now funny is that we thought that we might actually bring one down. At least one other member of the party (Bob Hopkins) had a firearm. It was not uncommon to find snakes in the entrances to the caves, so a 'shooting party' was often sent in first as protection.



Nullarbor Station.

My father and I took both black and white photographs and colour slides. He had purchased a new German 'Exa' SLR 35mm camera immediately prior to this trip and I still have the 1930s vintage 'Wirgin' (?) camera that was used for the B & Ws.

I have no recollection of the 'home coming' at the conclusion of the trip, but I do know that Caving (and Scouting) dominated my recreational life for the next 15 years.

Peter Wright

May 2006

Edited by Graham Pilkington

Names corrected for spelling.

[X] = clarification or expansion.

[*] participant became a member of the Cave Exploration Group (South Australia) after it was created in 1955; in fact many of these people were instrumental in forming CEGSA, an idea that germinated during this trip. Because of the informal nature of CEGSA for the first year (the Group even had various temporary names until the current name was invented and agreed to in Feb 1956), no membership list existed. It's possible that other participants were involved with CEGSA before the official membership began on 29 Feb 1956.

Slow Road to Eucla — Roughing it in the Nullarbor

Trip dates: 6–22 October 2003

Party: Peter Ackroyd and Ray Gibbons.

The idea of this trip was to build upon the nomadic approach to Nullarbor karst investigation undertaken in October 2002 (Ackroyd, 2008A). Letters were written to the manager of Madura Plains Station, located (by road) about 250 km west of Eucla. The manager kindly granted permission to cross the property, which set up the overall plan. This was to spend a few days in the vicinity of Eucla looking for more of Max's mysteries (lost or misplaced karst features that Max Meth, then Nullarbor cave coordinator, wanted "sorted out"), then zooming across to Madura Plains Station, up to the northern boundary of the station (55 km north of the Eyre Highway), before a slow, meandering trip back to Eucla, locating and tagging as many NXK numbers (temporary numbers applied by Ken Boland from his ultralight aircraft) as possible. Using this method, 123 new karst features were found and documented and 7 existing features had additional data collected (see appendix for details).

Prior to the trip, Peter and Chris (Ray's wife) bought between them several hundred dollars worth of food and equipment, including four steel "star" posts as part of a post and tarpaulin windbreak — making for a much more comfortable campsite out on the relentlessly windy Nullarbor Plain.

The departure from Adelaide on Monday 6 October marked the start of the trip proper. That night, at Max Meth's in Ceduna, Peter was deep in discussion with Max regarding the first draft of a redesign of the Nullarbor Karst Index database. This project had already taken Peter and his wife, Jenny Smith, a year. The original database structure was, as everyone agreed, a mess. Jenny had saved the raw data and thrown out the existing database. Then she, with caving input from Peter, had redesigned it so it was able to be used by anybody, not just a few experts.

This was also the time to get the latest on "Max's mysteries". N-25 was a feature which had very little description but did have quite good (1957) location information. Max had unsuccessfully tried to find it using data from Ken Boland's April 2001 test flights (Ackroyd, 2002). The other task was to locate a Harry Wheeler rockhole, QWRH-90, south of Wally Draper's rabbiters camp. The location of Wally Draper's camp had already been discovered (Ackroyd, 2008A), so how hard could it be to find a "pronounced pavement with two rockholes"?

Leaving for Eucla the next day, Peter and Ray went through the quarantine checkpoint at the Western Australian border where all the fresh produce was inspected and approved. Driving north from Eucla for a few kilometres to the N-25 area (a short distance North West of the quarry site), was the work of a few minutes. This area had been checked 12 months ago (Ackroyd, 2008A) and the only feature found at the location had been N-1810. This time an exhaustive three hour search was carried out, by car and on foot. A small rockhole and a few shallow dolines were found and, later, tagged and documented. However no sign of any other cave-like features was found. The conclusion reached was that N-25 and N-1810 were one and the same.

A move west to Wally Draper's old campsite and careful odometer readings made to match those recorded by Harry Wheeler in 1970 should have resulted in the finding of QWRH-90. A couple of pavement areas, neither of them "pronounced", were found and checked for rockholes with very poor returns. Treks further afield turned up a nice little cave, N-2655, containing lots of cave coral and a recently dead kangaroo hunched up in the deepest, furthest corner of the bottom passage. However no rockholes in "pronounced pavement areas" were found.

Returning to Eucla on 10 October to refuel and a 250 km drive to Madura Plains Station was the start of a two-week long loop back to the east, examining temporarily numbered NXK features. Peter and Ray called into the station homestead, "Moonera", as arranged prior to the trip, allowing them to make the acquaintance of Angela McQuie, wife of the manager Dougal McQuie. In the late afternoon, a 35 km drive north along station tracks lead to the Station's north boundary fence — a very solid anti-dingo fence maintained by a regular weekly run along the fence track by a "dogger".



A typical campsite on the Nullarbor.
Photo: Peter Ackroyd, Oct 2003.

The next morning, Ray changed over to his "bluebush wheels" before continuing east to the north-eastern corner of the Station. Along this 80 km section of fence several blowholes and dolines were noted. These had never been numbered or tagged. From the north-eastern fence corner a faint track headed north along the down-throw side of a 100 km long north-south fault line. The country here is slightly more fertile, possibly because of additional erosion along the fault line, and a small forest of myalls (*Acacia papyrocarpa*) survives in isolated splendour.

and turning to the east, a start was made on the tagging of the NXK features that had been noted from the air six months before (Ackroyd, 2008B). Old rabbiters' tracks, and occasionally their camps, were found and utilised where possible.



Peter Ackroyd in "the kitchen" on the Nullarbor.
Photo: Ray Gibbons, 12 Oct 2003.



Peter Ackroyd doing the office work on the Nullarbor.
Photo: Ray Gibbons, 11 Oct 2003.]

A routine quickly became established. At the end of the day's work, a clear site would be selected as a camp. The vehicle would be parked side on to the wind and Ray would construct a 4 metre long windbreak using the four star posts and a tarpaulin attached to the car at one end. Peter would offload cooking gear, tables and chairs and get the fire started. After a quiet can apiece, the tents would be erected and cooking commenced under the stars, whilst another can went south. The meal consumed, it would be bedtime by 10 p.m. (S.A. time).

At dawn (about 7 a.m. South Australian time), the fire would be kicked into life. After breakfast Peter would settle into computer and book-work, incorporating the previous day's records into the freshly minted Nullarbor Karst Index Database that he and Jenny had created.

While this was going on, Ray would go off on a karst walk with radio, GPS and water. He invariably returned after an hour or two with several new features. These became the first calls of the day with a steady regimen of number tags being stamped out, GPS coordinates being logged, karst descriptions being recorded and photo-tags being taken until night fell once more.

In this manner, slow, but steady progress eastwards was made. One interesting observation was that for every NXK feature on the search list, up to three or four times that number of karst features were eventually found and recorded, simply because one stumbled onto them on the path between known features. Given that this represented just one path of many possible paths for joining up the dots for the NXKs, one can only guess at how many features remain out there on the Nullarbor, waiting for others to find

Features of particular interest that were found and tagged included N-2655, the blowhole and cave mentioned earlier. This cave has since been used as a reference cave by a research team from Swansea in the United Kingdom, Rob Davies and Stefan Doerr, in their study of wind flows and micro-gravity measurements over parts of the Nullarbor.

N-2660 was a blowhole and cave a little to the west of an old track. Its entrance had been enlarged at some time in the distant past, judging by the weathering of the broken edges. A passage leading to the southeast was not explored due to the rather active presence of a yellow-faced whip snake (*Demansia psammophis*). Dead Camel Cave (N-2662) had a strong draught. A chert core stone was found nearby as well as the eponymous dead camel.

N-2671 was a blowhole and cave at one end of a water-washed channel. The cave had five Australian kestrel chicks on a ledge within. Consequently, it wasn't fully explored.



Ray Gibbons exploring a double blowhole cave, 6N-2675. Photo: Peter Ackroyd, 13 Oct 2003.



The aftermath of a windy night in camp. Photo: Peter Ackroyd.

At N-2681, the vast amount of air being blasted out of the small blowhole entrance caused Peter and Ray to enthusiastically expend two hours and much sweat in the enlargement of the entrance to, nearly, but not quite, caver size. This activity took the time to 6:30 p.m. when the sky began to look threatening. N-2682 and 2683 were documented and tagged before it became too dark to do anything more. A campsite was selected just as the storm hit. Peter lost his tent bag to the wind. Ray's tarpaulin was torn. A good 45 minutes were spent battling to erect tents — not helped by the thunder, lightning and driving rain.



Ray Gibbons standing beside the semicircular stone arrangement at 6N-2695. Photo: Peter Ackroyd, 14 Oct 2003.

The next morning was clear. Peter walked down the compass bearing he'd taken the night before and found his tent bag snagged on bushes only a couple of hundred metres away. The tents dried in the sun and the torn tarp was mended.

A rockhole complex, N-2695, had many chert tools and a semicircular stone arrangement nearby. There were five rockholes in all, the largest being 4.3m long by 2.0m wide by 1.0m deep and holding about 800L of water at the time of the visit. The total capacity of the rockhole complex was estimated to be 2,000L when full.

N-2750 "Drive Thru' Doline" was only a small field of four dolines, but it caused concern out of all proportion. With the sun in his eyes, Ray was directed by his navigator to travel west to the small feature. A loud thump and a flurry of excited activity, the engine being gunned and the load bouncing around, caused a significant increase in the heart rate. On safe territory once more, an examination of the track revealed a "small doline" and a lucky escape (see photo next page).

On the morning of the last real exploration day out on the Nullarbor, a dead snake, *Ramphotyphlops australis* was found next to the remains of the fire. It looked a bit singed and being a nocturnal snake, it may have crept a bit too close to the comfort of the warm fire during the night. These small, almost blind, worm-like snakes are rarely seen and are poorly recorded due to their nocturnal habit and the fact that they spend most of their lives underground chasing their preferred prey of termites and ants.

On 22 October, while heading back towards Eucla at the end of the trip, the expected sight of an abandoned, stripped trailer meets one's eyes near the eastern end of the Link Track. This east-west track links the Eucla-Reid Road with the Mundrabilla-Forest Road. The trailer was once the proud property of George and June MacLucas, but on a caving trip in April 2001 a structural failure caused it to be stripped of all usable components, including the axle, and the carcass abandoned by the side of the track.



Ray Gibbons at the remains of abandoned MacLucas trailer on the Link Track.

Photo: Peter Ackroyd, 22 Oct 2003.



Ray Gibbons and car tracks at 6N-2695, "Drive Thru' Doline".

Photo: Peter Ackroyd, 19 Oct 2003.

Update: For many years this trailer carcass was something of a landmark on the Link Track. In October 2007, Ray and Peter found it was no longer there and discovered that the trailer had been recovered from the bush sometime around 2006 by Harvey Gurney of Moopina Station, Eucla. It has been rebuilt, re-registered, and is now in active service again. In the bush, nothing is wasted.

Appendix: Listing of features examined and karst numbers allocated

New 'N' numbers allocated, tagged and documented: 6N-2651–2773 inclusive.
(Total = 123).

Existing 'N' numbers visited, data collected and feature tagged (when no tag found):

6N-166, 328, 605, 982, 694, 1229, 2048

(Total = 7).

Temporary 'NXK' numbers visited and checked on the ground:

NXK-29, 31, 35, 36, 65, 66, 67, 68, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 1023, 1026, 1027, 1073 (found to be not a karst feature — old tyre), 1075, 1107, 1108, 1109, 1110, 1114, 1115, 1116.

Total = 25.

All karst information was passed to the Nullarbor records keeper on 22 October 2003, in both hard copy and electronic form, having been processed while out on the Nullarbor in a format suitable for the Nullarbor Karst Index (now KIDSA) and is available to all cavers.

References

Ackroyd, Peter, (2002) On a Wing and a Prayer. *CEGSA News* **185 (Vol 47 No 1)** pp 5–12.

Ackroyd, Peter, (2008A) A Nomad's View of the Nullarbor. *CEGSA News* **209 (Vol 53 No 1)** pp 5–8.

Ackroyd, Peter, (2008B) Back With a Vengeance. *CEGSA News* **210 (Vol 53 No 2)** pp 18–21.

Peter Ackroyd, 25 July 2008

My Nullarbor Adventures and other ramblings from 17th April to 8th May 2008

Features visited =	82	
Consisting of N =	71	(including 27 newly allocated)
NX =	16	(4 new, 6 converted to N, and 6 remaining as NX)
NXG =	6	(4 converted to N, 1 converted to NX, and 1 remaining as NXG)
NXP =	6	(all converted to N)

Not my usual boring diary-style this time. This trip was all about locating some of the difficult to find Quartermaine-Wheeler (QW) features that we have catalogued in Records but ASF cavers have never been to. QW catalogued over 600 features including rockholes, some of these corresponded to those that CEGSA had already catalogued. Many trips have looked for the AWOL features without success, primarily because it's not only very tiring walking for days just to locate an insignificant hole but rather boring for the participants who are out on the Nullarbor to have a good time CAVING.

Follow that Feature

I realised a while back that because these features were located in the 1950's, the reason that we could not find them was because they have moved since, a bit like the drift of magnetic north. Using satellite imagery, it's been easy to relocate the very large rocky dolines, not far from where they had last been seen - it's obviously a very slow process dragging such a large entity through rock. However, the tiny features appear to have moved by many kilometres - it must be easy to shift these because it only has to plough through dirt as any tractor can easily do. Once found, we need to petrify them into staying put. This is best done by aiming a camera at them because we all know how camera-shy they are, it takes hours for cave photographers to get just one good shot. Of course we will need to visit them once in a while just to stop them moving off. That's how all things get lost, you stop taking any notice of them and they get bored and decide to move elsewhere.

Camels

Talking about things that are mobile, I got to see many camels. The first sign was when I was travelling down the Old Eyre Highway and noticed what looked like cattle poop all over the road. Strange, I thought, there aren't supposed to be any cattle in the National Park. Then a movement on the south caught my attention, it was a solitary camel. When driving my van, I like to keep my eyes on the road, that way both me and my van stay in one piece. The van doesn't handle the boulders and potholes like a 4WD. To see the camel properly (and an excuse for a rest stop), I pulled over



Camel near "The Creek"

and got out my camera. Well I didn't actually pull over, I just stopped in the middle of the one-lane "road" – there's only one lane for both directions in many places. The camel decided that absence makes the heart grow fonder and set off at a gallop in a direction that wasn't towards me. Another movement caught my eye; a second camel that had been in plain view but stationary, set off after the first. It's unbelievable how a critter nearly as big as the

"trees" and brown to boot, can be so well camouflaged. This shook me out of my stupor. I actually looked at the scenery and noticed at least three more stationary camels! During my trip down the old dirt Highway, I must have seen several dozen camels, observed lots of fresh and old camel droppings (not at all like cattle droppings!), places where families had rested (always in groups, ranging from 5 to 15), and patches of grazed grass that had puzzled me but I now interpret as eaten by camels. And I wasn't looking for camels and these were close to the old highway. The Park must be very badly "infested".

Another movement caught my eye; a second camel that had been in plain view but stationary, set off after the first. It's unbelievable how a critter nearly as big as the



Trees in camouflage

The Strangler

Another infestation, assuming that it's not native to the Nullarbor, is a type of strangling creeper. I cannot remember seeing it before, at least not in the overwhelming numbers that are now prevalent. Maybe it was kept in check by sheep and cattle? Its mode of operation is to send out runners in every direction and grow over everything it encounters. The leaves are almost non-existent, the runners contain chlorophyll. It can obviously tolerate low rainfall and the lack of nutrients. The network of runners may even help it to move nutrients to where they are required from many tens of metres away. I didn't examine the plants closely, but it's possible that a single plant extends for hundreds of metres. I never saw them isolated from bushes but they did extend out from bushes across open ground for tens of metres, usually connecting to their next victim. Maybe they need the bushes and trees to survive?

Dingos

On my travels I had the constant companionship of a friendly dog, but not the same one all the time – they took it in turns. Every night they would sing me to sleep and keep me company during the day. One even helped out around camp. The Nullarbor dingos are a disappearing breed. I did see a few, but most of the dogs were obvious cross-breeds. Even the evening howling has been corrupted with a bark-like adjunct. Visually, however, it makes it both easier to tell one dog from another for us scent-impaired critters and adds a bit of variety to the scene.



Dog near Koonalda Homestead



N-1027 rock basins, one hidden over a slight rise

Follow that Lead

In trying to locate the “missing” QW features I did ask every local dog for their help, in the belief that the dogs would be well aware of every hole nearby, but like most conservation-minded cavers, they would not divulge locations. This left me with using the brute force method of locating features occasionally tempered with some common sense and a rare bit of thinking. Before the trip, I looked on Google Earth satellite images for most of the features that I was going to search for, but the obvious ones are large and distinctive and had already been located. However, I did spot the twin N-1027 rock basins, about 2km to the west of where we had estimated them to be.

Most of the “lost” features cannot be identified from the satellite images. Remember that the possible location is within an area of about 20 square km (locations are only known to within an estimated 2 km and have been discovered over 3km out-of-place) and the features are not much larger than the usual 1m pixel-size! Make your own estimate of how long it takes to scan through that much terrain at the highest resolution. An example is N-1033 – a completely vegetated doline with a half-metre blowhole in it. This I stumbled into on my way back to my van for a rest-break after 2 hours of systematically looking for it.



N-1033 @250 from 8m

I know what I meant

I had a great time trying different ways to interpret and use what Quartermaine and Wheeler had written to describe the location and appearance of these truant features. Because both Quartermaine and Wheeler are dead, I couldn't ask them to interpret or expand their notes for me.

I'll give you an example; one blowhole was described as "in a hollow in the cottonwoods" that was 0.8 miles SW of a specified track intersection. The intersection noted has long since disappeared (it was where a track to the coast from the Old Eyre Highway crossed the Old Coach Road). However, I was able to relocate the intersection to within a 100m from faint markings and a sketch map made by Wheeler showing distance along tracks. The group of trees and 44-gallon drum at the intersection had vanished but a patch of ground where they had been was still distinguishable by the blemish on the ground. From there, I travelled out the required distance and direction, and after passing through a few hundred metres of dense cottonwood scrub came out into a 20m diameter clearing that was a shallow depression. But no blowhole. By this time on the trip, I had realized that when distances were given as decimal mileages, then it meant that it had been measured using an odometer whereas estimated distances were always given as fractions (eg 1½ miles as against 1.50 miles). The specified 0.8 mile had to mean that the blowhole had been driven to, but on examining the clearing it was obvious that no vehicle had driven to there and that it would be next to impossible to have done so. So I moved over to the open ground closest to me and swept an arc 0.8 miles from the intersection and found the blowhole only 400m away (due south of the intersection, not SW. The adjacent tree mentioned in the QW description has vanished).



N-1060 @235 from 3m.

Why Use a Compass when "left" will do?

That was another discovery that I had made about the QW location descriptions. Almost all bearings were just guesses even though they had a compass with them on at least some occasions. For instance, they would say "turn left off the track into grassland where the track heads at 153 degrees" but never would they give the bearing of "left" which in almost all cases was not a right-angle. Getting back to the "hollow in the cottonwoods" description, this turned out to mean that the grass plain embayed (hollowed) into the tree line, NOT a depression (hollow) in the ground.

Trees as Location Markers and other Fire Hazards

But the major difficulty in translating location descriptions was the insistence by QW in describing what was in the immediate vicinity - such as "next to a dead tree" or "near a sandalwood" - without looking up and realising that that description fitted almost everywhere you looked. Most features had



N-1014 @155 from 8m

local vegetation and tree descriptions which might have been very useful at the time but in the intervening years things have died and been replaced. A series of major fires have swept across the Plains dramatically altering some places. The grass fires also burnt out isolated trees that had encroached into grass territory, thereby returning it to grassland, but removing the QW location "markers". One feature that had already had several attempts to find it was described as "a small hole in saltbush". Ignoring the obvious quib to this, I looked for this hole firstly in the saltbush stands surrounding all the groups of trees, then systematically, everywhere, and finally located it out in open grassland - all the saltbush had been burnt off and replaced by grass years ago.

The fires have affected the trees in different ways. Most eucalypts are recovering from root stock, even in intensely burnt areas; several tree species have the same technique for survival. However, other trees tried different strategies. Several just played possum with their feet in the air which obviously stopped them burning but left them lying like turtles and they died in shame. Others successfully tried camouflage. But many are just a ghost of their former selves.



Dead tree clear-burnt leaving a silhouette



Tree playing possum



Isolated tree clear-burnt



Central part of tree burnt out



Burnt trees recovering

I Forgot to Mention

Another problem was what wasn't said - such as when a feature was described as "in a spear grass dish" and that "the spear grass was too thick to locate another feature" that he knew of that should have been close by (and is in the middle of a spear grass plain). He forgot to mention that this "dish" was at the edge of the grass plain adjacent to the trees. Instead he expanded by saying "there are two dead trees close by" implying that this was unusual, which it might be for trees out on the grass plains but not in the treed area. This oversight meant that I initially looked for the blowhole out in the open grassland and wasted many hours before getting round to examining the treeline which is



N-1059 @345 from 5m

N-993 @135 from 6m away
after the covering logs were removed

highly irregular with multiple “headlands”, “bays”, “peninsulas” and “stacks”.

The Distance was Obvious

I've already mentioned the difference in distance measurements between being quoted in decimals or fractions of miles. Sometimes the distance is in yards, these are probably all just guesses. What I discovered the hard way was that the guesses are best used by replacing the miles units with km units without changing the numerical value (yards need to be converted to the miles equivalent first). An interesting example of this guesswork was one feature that

had eluded us in the past which was described as “41 widely-spaced fence posts, about 700yds” from a track. We had always used the distance because the fence posts were all “identical” and only 5m apart which leads to a figure of 200m - a long way short of 700yds. I examined the fence well away from the track where counting was to start and found them to be 9m apart - obviously the first part of the fence had been replaced. 9×41 gives 370m, and low and behold there was the blowhole (90yd from the fence in thick scrub and can only be seen when you are 6m away hiding under some logs). 700yd is 0.40miles; converting using km for miles gives 400metres – very close to the actual 390m.

Many QW feature descriptions also have estimated “measurements” that are exaggerated for longer lengths but good for a few feet (yes this was the 50's).

Tracks and Trash, or, Feet are Not for Walking

When visiting these features, Quartermaine-Wheeler either planned their route carefully using tracks marked on maps or were taken to the features by locals (including rabbits and station managers). In almost all cases they appear to have driven to the features, even if the track was a recent bush track. In fact, most of the features were found initially by someone driving through the country.

Strategies that I employed to find these features varied from case to case. On one occasion I had to locate a blowhole 5 miles down a “rabbit's track” which was unlikely to still exist. However, there was a QW two-inch to the mile sketch map that showed the hole and a rockhole which was a further 2.5 miles at the end of the track. I had managed to locate the rockhole by satellite – a km or so “out of place” but fit all the location information supplied such as “in the centre of a 1mile diameter area clear of trees” and a bearing to a microwave tower (one of the very rare occasions when a bearing was given). The blowhole was “on the east side of the track in the middle of a grass plain where the track was at 150 degrees”. His sketch had the track at near south all the way. The only way to find the BH in a short time was to find the track. This is impossible in grass plains – tracks vanish completely within a year of use! But the track had to go through bushland to get to the rockhole, and bush tracks stay for decades if not centuries. A quick check of the bush edge showed me that it would be nearly impossible to locate unless I walked well into the bush and did a sweep across the dense bush to intercept the track – a very slow task and difficult without knowing within a few km where the track was likely to be. I opted to walk through the bush to the rockhole to confirm where it was then try to find the track from that end because the target would be within a km strip of bush. As it was, I almost missed the track on my first pass at the edge of the bush (scrub walking can be very difficult with many reversals needed to get out of being boxed in, hence my sweep along the edge



N-1064 @090 from 14m away

probably almost exactly 1km at 330 degrees (150 degrees in reverse) from my exit point – and there it was in the middle of nowhere. No track to be seen anywhere near it and not identifiable until within a few metres.

Snakes, well one type in particular.

I did get to do some caving just checking out some blowholes. But I – almost – stopped doing this after an encounter with a very aggressive 30cm long green snake with a black head. I was pleasantly descending this 3m deep blowhole to see what passage was at the bottom and noticed one of these little snakes that I had met on another solo trip. On that occasion it had taken a dislike to me invading its' residence and had struck out – hitting my leather glove luckily. On this occasion, I saw it slither into the drafting hole at the bottom of the pitch so I decided not to try to unblock said hole and leave gracefully. Another of the critters decided otherwise. This one was high up on the first shelf down and told me what it thought of my intrusion by rearing up then striking out. Stupid animal forgot about the hole between us and promptly fell down the pit. I had naturally placed myself on the opposite side of the shaft after first checking for a third occupant. I left for my camera and returned to take pictures. This time I'll get a good identification of what these blowhole guards are. It has been identified as a narrow-banded burrowing snake, *Simoselaps fasciolatus*, noted as not being aggressive! They are found throughout Australia but there are several sub-species, none of which match the Nullarbor variant. They belong to the cobra group of snakes.

I did see a few other snakes in my travels, mostly black, about 2m long and probably 4 cm diameter. I cannot give accurate measurements because I always forgot to place a scale ruler alongside the snake as I asked them to say "cheese".

first) but luckily for me the old-timer's habit of discarding anything of no immediate use – such as bottles when empty – came to my rescue. I saw a rusty tin can. We all know that these same old-timers never walked if they could help it, hence the track must be very close by, and it was. Mind you, I had to trace its' faint hints for several hundred metres into the bush before I could be sure that I was not on a roo trail. I follow the track all the way through the bush to where it emerged into the grass plain to the north – I never would have seen from that end, too faint. Triumphant, I returned to my vehicle having taken several hours and 9 km to succeed. Using the GPS data that I'd collected, and some simple maths on the track distances supplied by QW, told me that the errant blowhole was



Narrow-banded burrowing snake in N-4304



Snake down entrance of N-182

New Ones are a Real Distraction

It was not my intention, but I did locate several very good blowholes that we had known nothing about. One was over 15m deep – as far as I could measure – but after free-climbing a “7m” pitch on another trip only to have to get my companion Ray to lower down 16m of ladder for me to finish the climb to the bottom, I decided to leave it for another time.



N-4303 @070 from 7m



N-3869 @000: a 15m plus deep blowhole found after following up on a satellite image white spot.

Systematic searches are tiresome and take a long time but they do turn up extras. I once spent 2 days searching for a pair of features (a blowhole and a doline-cave) and ended up locating neither but came away with a new twin-entrance blowhole and a worn-out pair of boots.

Thanks for the Info, we would have lost it but for you

It may appear from the above ramblings that I am denigrating Keith Quartermaine and Harry Wheeler for poor documentation. Far from it. They were the ONLY people that we know of who were bothering to systematically record what they saw and not just visiting “large stuff”. Maitland Thomson did record navigation details to get to caves and sketch some of the features explored. But the only details we have are those passed on to us from trip reports made by others. He also paid little attention to minor features. Of course, those were the early days when little was known of anything.

That is, little was known by “outsiders”. The station managers, their staff, rabbiters, roo shooters and others knew a great deal of what caves were around – it just did not interest them except for losing stock down them. What Quartermaine and Wheeler did was to ASK. Most of the smaller and obscure blowholes that they noted were shown to them by the locals. Many a location description uses a rabbiters camp as the starting point (pity really, because we don’t know where most of the camps were!). If QW had not asked, then no-one would now know of the features because the rabbiters have left and few locals remain.

Without good maps (the CEGSA trip of 1956-57 started by producing a navigation map of the major tracks), no GPS, or other modern aid, they did the best possible at the time in describing how to relocate the features. They were not to know that it would be 50 years or more before anyone followed up on their descriptions and that the Nullarbor surface is much more dynamic than anyone had envisaged.

Graham Pilkington

NB information and the 700 photos of features visited is lodged in CEGSA Records

PAST TRIPS from May GM

- Eddie Rubessa went to the Flinders Ranges over the Easter long weekend and found a new cave..
- Lance Hoey took a group of 14 to Punyelroo and Gloop Caves on Sunday May the 4th.
- Graham Pilkington led three school trips to Corra Lynn Cave.
- Tim Payne held a laddering practice day at his home recently.
- Graham Pilkington went to the Nullarbor and will give a detailed report at the next General Meeting.
- Marie Choi went to Tasmania for Dave Glowacki's wedding.
- Paul Deer went to Punyelroo on the 22nd May. He reported that the lagoon was almost completely dry.

PAST TRIPS from June GM

- Eddie Rubessa took a trip to Narina Pound in the Flinders Ranges over the June long weekend, found a number of new features and obtained GPS coordinates for these.
- Grant Gartrell described his overseas holiday in which he visited a number of very fine tourist caves in Italy, France, the UK and China.
- George MacLucas described a trip to the SA side of the Nullarbor over the 17-29th May in which approximately 30 features, including some granite rockholes were visited.
- Peter Ashenden described a trip led by Marie Choi to Avenue Range over the June long weekend. They did some survey corrections in U217, visited U218 and found some new features warranting future investigation. They also visited Tantanoola Lake cave.

PAST TRIPS from July GM

- Neville Skinner described a trip to investigate the Pahara caves. Most were very shallow and the longest was 50 m in length
- Mark Sefton described the recent trip to the Gregory National Park. Surveying continued in the Bullita Cave System which is now more than 117 km in length. Several other caves in the park were also explored and surveyed.

TECHNICAL and OTHER ARTICLES

MEMBERSHIP

Change to Members Mailing List:-

Paul Devine CF 9906 Delete Home Phone Number
Postal Address – P O Box 66 PALMWOODS QLD 4555
(E) pddevine.eet@bigpond.com

Chris Gibbons F 0005 Change E-Mail address -
Ray Gibbons F 9403 (E) ragchg@bigpond.com

MEMBERSHIP FEES

CEGSA MEMBERSHIP FEES became due on January 1st AND ARE NOW **OVERDUE**. To renew your membership re-application for membership and the Joining Fee will be imposed in addition to the current fees.

CEGSA MEMBERSHIP FEES FOR 2008 YEAR

Full Membership	\$ 51.00
Associate Membership	42.00
Long Term Associate	51.00
3 Month Introductory	5.00
Joining Fee	12.00
Discount for e-mail CEGSA News	15.00
Discount for Country Membership	6.00

ASF LEVY FEE FOR 2008 YEAR

Single	\$ 68.00
Family	121.50
3 Month Introductory	20.00
Student	61.00
Journal Subscription	25.00

2008 YEAR FEES

	CEGSA	+ASF	TOTAL
Full Membership	\$51.00	\$68.00	\$119.00
Associate Membership	42.00	68.00	110.00
3 Month Introductory	5.00	20.00	25.00

Variation for Family Membership

1st Full Member + 2nd Full Member
Less \$16.00 for only 1 CEGSA News \$86.00 \$121.50 \$207.50

1st Full Member + 2nd Associate Member
Less \$16.00 for only 1 CEGSA News \$77.00 \$121.50 \$198.50

1st Associate Member + 2nd Assoc Member
Less \$16.00 for only 1 CEGSA News \$68.00 \$121.50 \$189.50

Discount for Country Membership applies for Family Memberships

Please make sure your payment of fees includes CEGSA and ASF, if applicable.

Chris Gibbons

Treasurer/Membership Officer

EXCERPTS FROM EARLY NEWSLETTERS

From CEGSA Newsletter #59 : July – October, 1970

SOME SEARCH AND RESCUE NOTES FROM "THE HOUSE AT POOH CORNER".

(reprinted from the AUMC bulletin "Chunder".)

The story so far ...

Pooh had been busily counting his pots of honey, when Rabbit came up, enquiring as to the whereabouts of Small, one of his "friends and relations". Rabbit is organising a search party.

Now read on ...

"Now" said Rabbit, "this is a search and I've organised it". "Done what to it?" said Pooh.

"Organised it, which means - well, it's what you do to a search, when you don't all look in the same place at once. So I want you, Pooh, to search by the Six Pine Trees first, and then work your way towards Owl's house, and look out for me there. Do you see?" "No" said Pooh. "What ---" "Then I'll see you at Owl's house in about an hour's time." "Is Piglet organised too?" "We all are" said Rabbit, and off he went.

Not even knowing what Small was. Pooh didn't know whether to look for him in "the top of an oak-tree or in the petal of a buttercup", so he drew up the following plan:

ORDER OF LOOKING FOR THINGS.

1. Special Place (to find Piglet)
2. Piglet (to find who Small is)
3. Small (to find Small)
4. Rabbit (to tell him I've found Small)
5. Small again (to tell him I've found Rabbit).

"Which makes it look a bothering sort of day," thought Pooh, as he stumped along.

Anyway, Small was found ...

... And two days later Rabbit happened to meet Eeyore in the Forest. "Hello, Eeyore," he said, "what are you looking for?"

"Small, of course," said Eeyore, "haven't you any brain?" "Oh, but didn't I tell you?" said Rabbit, "Small was found two days ago."

From CEGSA Newsletter #60 : November – February, 1971

THE CONTINUING STORY OF OUR FRIEND POOH BEAR, HUNNY EATER, AMACHEWER CAEVER ETC.

Pooh was humming this hum to himself, and walking gaily along, wondering what everybody else was doing, and what it felt like, when suddenly he came to a sandy bank, and in the bank was a large hole. So he bent down and put his head into the hole, and called out: "Is anybody at home?" ...

So Pooh pushed and pushed and pushed his way through the hole, and at last he got in. "You were quite right," said Rabbit, looking at him all over, "It is you, glad to see you. What about a mouthful of something?"

Pooh always liked a little something at eleven o'clock in the morning, ...

"Well, goodbye, if you're sure you won't have any more."

"Is there any more?" asked Pooh quickly. Rabbit took the covers off the dishes, and said, "No there wasn't." "I thought not" said Pooh nodding to himself. "Well, goodbye I must be going on". So he started to climb out of the hole. He pulled with his front paws, and pushed with his back paws, and in a little while his nose was out in the open again . . . and then his ears . . . and then his front paws . . . and then — "Oh, help" said Pooh. "I'd better go back." "Oh, bother" said Pooh, "I shall have to go on." "I can't do either" said Pooh. "Oh, help and bother."

Rabbit came around to Pooh, and looked at him. "Hello, are you stuck?" he asked. "N-no," said Pooh carelessly. "Just resting and thinking and humming to myself." "The fact is," said Rabbit, "you're stuck."

"It all comes," said Pooh crossly, "of not having front doors big enough." "It all comes," said Rabbit sternly, "of eating too much. I thought at the time" said Rabbit, "only I didn't like to say anything," said Rabbit, "that one of us was eating too much," said Rabbit, " and I knew it wasn't me," he said. "Well, well, I shall have to go and fetch Christopher Robin."

"If we can't pull you out, Pooh, we might push you back," said Christopher Robin. "You mean I'd never get out?" said Pooh.

"I mean," said Rabbit, "that having got you so far, it seems a pity to waste it." Christopher Robin nodded. "Then there's only one thing to be done," he said. "We shall have to wait for you to get thin again."

So for a week Christopher Robin read a Sustaining Book, such as would help and comfort a Wedged Bear in a Great Tightness, at the north end of Pooh, and Rabbit hung his washing on the south end. And at the end of a week Christopher Robin said, "Now." ... And for a long time Pooh only said, "Ow," and "Oh." ... And then all of a sudden he said, "pop," just as if he were a cork coming out of a bottle.

And Christopher Robin and Rabbit and all of Rabbit's friends and relations went head over heels backwards ... and on top of them came Winnie-the-Pooh --- free!

So, with a nod of thanks to his friends, he went on with his walk through the forest, humming proudly to himself.

%%%%%%%%%

Is it time to start putting CEGSA's financial assets to good use?

As a number of you are probably aware, there has been some debate recently, both at General meetings and Committee meetings about whether we should continue to squirrel away the money we have in long term savings accounts or start putting it to use in various ways that would benefit the club. Our financial assets are currently over \$10 000 and have been steadily growing as a result of occasional donations received in appreciation of services provided and bank interest. Growth of these funds has been ongoing and spending part of these does not preclude us from rebuilding them further over time. The CEGSA Committee would like to hear suggestions from its members as to how we might usefully use some of this money. One idea is to use some of our funds to progress the digitisation of our records so that they are better preserved for the future and more accessible to all members. All such suggestions should be in writing (e-mail is fine) and should be properly costed. In general, the Committee is of the view that they should be for one-off, rather than re-occurring items of expenditure.

Since substantial amounts of money could be involved, the Committee intends to proceed cautiously on this matter and such expenditure would need to be approved by a General meeting.

Mark Sefton
Hon. Secretary

27th Biennial Conference of the Australian Speleological Federation. Karstaway Konference.

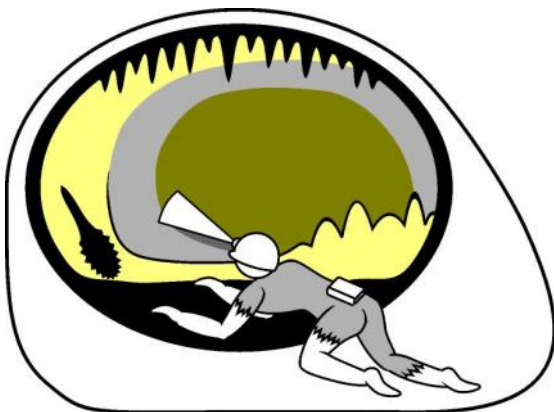
4th January to 9th January 2009.

Hosted by: Victorian Speleological Association,
Caving Club of Victoria and others.

The Registration form is now finalized and has
been placed on the conference website:

<http://www.caves.org.au/conf2009>.

This is the new logo that has been designed by Ken
Grimes for the 27th Biennial Conference of the ASF.
This represents elements of both VSA & CCV logos
and incorporates a caver in a castaway situation.



CARTOON TIME



Approved CEGSA Trip Leaders

Name	Caving Leader level
Marie Choi	Horizontal, Laddering and Vertical
Stan Flavel	Horizontal and Laddering
Grant Gartrell	Nil
Chris Gibbons	Nil
Amanda Grindley	Horizontal
Damian Grindley	Horizontal, Laddering and Vertical
Paul Harper	Horizontal, Laddering and Vertical
Richard Harris	Horizontal
Lance Hoey	Horizontal and Laddering
Peter Horne	Horizontal and Laddering
Paul Hosie	Horizontal, Laddering and Vertical
George MacLucas	Horizontal, Laddering and Vertical
June MacLucas	Horizontal
Steve Milner	Horizontal, Laddering and Vertical
Tim Payne	Horizontal, Laddering and Vertical
Graham Pilkington	Horizontal and Laddering
Phil Prust	Horizontal and Laddering
Eddie Rubessa	Horizontal and Laddering
Mark Sefton	Horizontal and Laddering
Gary Woodcock	Horizontal and Laddering
Michael Woodward	Horizontal, Laddering and Vertical

All the above named are also CEGSA Trip Coordinators.

Members may query the classification of any Trip Leader at any time with the committee.

It is a requirement that each trip be organised by an approved Trip Coordinator to be classed as an official CEGSA trip. It is also a requirement that dependent party trips be led by an approved Trip Leader at the appropriate skill level for the cave being entered.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Date	Type of Event	Description	Contact
27/08/08	General Meeting	Royal Society Room, SA Museum, Adel.	Graham Pilkington
30/08/08	Working Bee	Library and Records	Graham Pilkington
10/09/08	Committee Meeting	TBA	Graham Pilkington
14/09/08	Cave Search	Fleurieu Peninsula (subject to weather)	Grant Gartrell
21/09/08	Caving	Corra Lynn School Trip (helpers required)	Graham Pilkington
24/09/08	General Meeting	Royal Society Room, SA Museum, Adel.	Graham Pilkington
?/09/08	Caving	Nullarbor for 3 weeks	Graham Pilkington
?/09/08	Caving	Northern Flinders Ranges	Eddie Rubessa
08/10/08	Committee Meeting	TBA	Graham Pilkington
23/10/08	General Meeting	Royal Society Room, SA Museum, Adel.	Graham Pilkington
25/10/08	Working Bee	Library and Records	Graham Pilkington
12/11/08	Committee Meeting	TBA	Graham Pilkington
12/11/08	CEGSA NEWS	Articles for Newsletter due PLEASE	Athol Jackson
22-23/ 11/08	Naracoorte surveying in Beekeepers cave	Suitable for people who want to learn a bit about cave surveying. Wirreanda booked.	Mark Sefton
26/11/08	General Meeting	Royal Society Room, SA Museum, Adel.	Graham Pilkington
29/11/08	Working Bee	Library and Records	Graham Pilkington
10/12/08	Committee Meeting	TBA	Graham Pilkington
04-09/ 01/09	ASF Conference	'Karstaway Konference' Sale, Victoria	See conference website
	Caving	Ongoing Vic Fossil Survey contact	Garry Woodcock
	Caving	Sellicks Hill contact	Grant Gartrell

It is desirable that caving trips involving club members should, where possible, be registered as CEGSA Trips. To do this, the nature and timing of the trip must be nominated to the Trip Liaison Officer and/or minuted at a General Meeting of Members. The member registering such a trip must be an accredited CEGSA Trip Coordinator and must agree to act in this capacity for the trip. There must also be an accredited trip leader with the appropriate skill endorsement to take a dependent party caving.

* Please note that trips not arranged by an accredited Trip Coordinator and marked with an * may not be classed as an official CEGSA trip and may not be covered by any CEGSA membership benefits. *

Also, please ensure that a report (preferably written) of the trip is submitted in a timely manner.