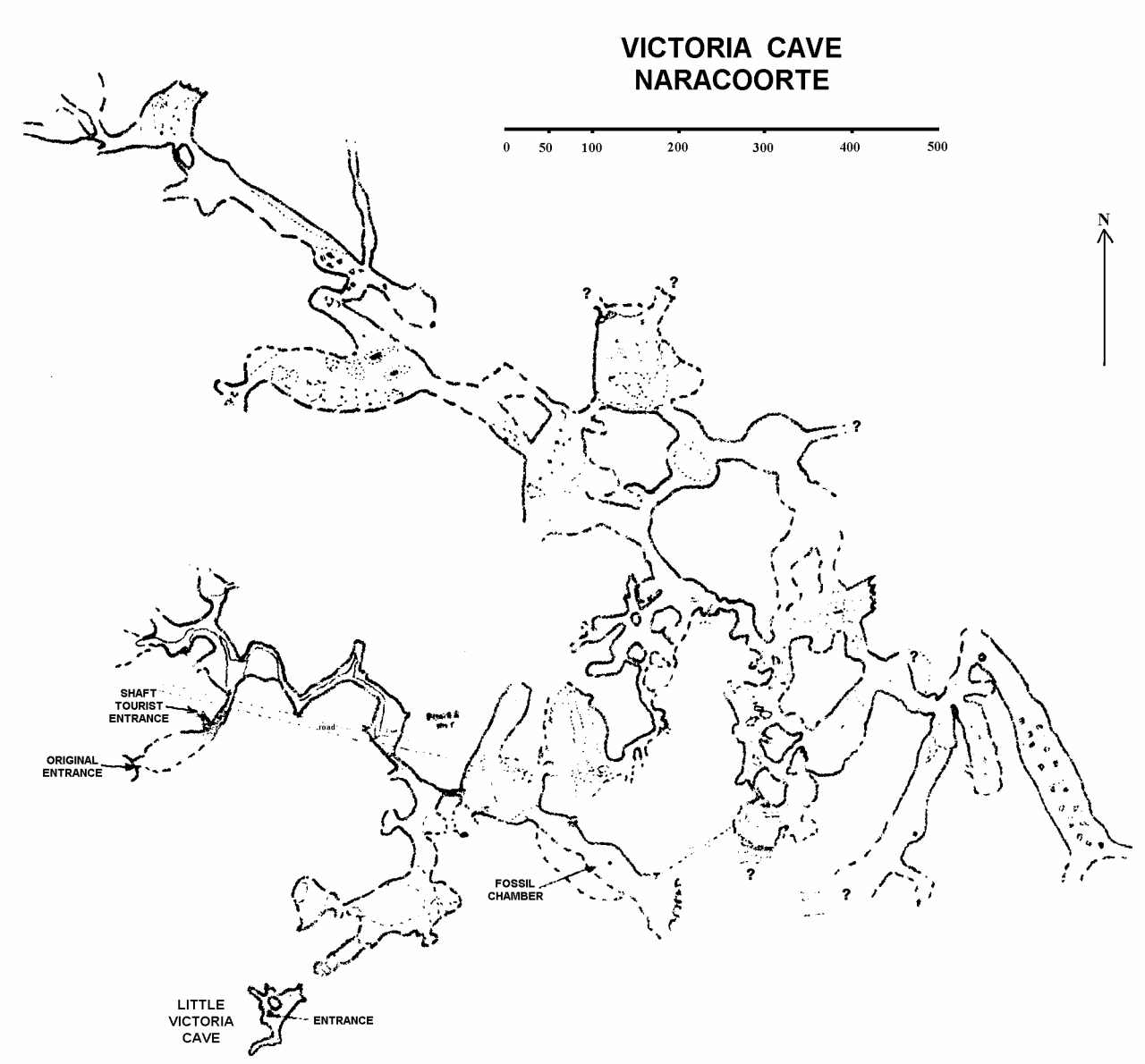
NEWSLETTER

Cave Exploration Group

South Australia
C/O SOUTH AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM NORTH TERRACE ADELAIDE

AUG 1971 – OCT 1971



1971 No. 3, August - October 1971.

Front Cover: Victoria Cave, Naracoorte. Please note that this map is purely a provisional sketch map aimed simply at giving some idea of the extent of the cave. Apart from some of the earlier sections it is not to C.R.G. Grade six standard and is not designed as a finished work.

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EDITORIAL

HEREFORD STREAM CAVE - AN OBITUARY?

In the last annual report Ric Bowen gave an alarming account of the chances of survival of Hereford and Stream Caves. They are now completely blocked up with cows, sheep, wire and rocks. The result is one lost cave (Hereford Cave). 'Stream Cave is unique to South Australia for there is a stream flowing in it. Therefore it is of prime importance that this cave is saved due to that one single feature.'

It is true that the stream is indeed a unique feature but I feel there are far more important reasons for conserving this cave than merely to be able to observe a running stream. First, and most prominent of these reasons is to avoid water pollution. Caves act as inlets for underground water and the most simple way to pollute this water is to pollute the inlet. Dead cows and sheep will certainly achieve this objective.

Another salient reason for conserving Stream Cave is for the biological aspects. Although in no great numbers, bats have been sighted in this cave and in 1966 one bat was banded with a C.S.I.R.O. band. Generally certain types of invertebrate fauna are found in association with cave-dwelling bats and it would not be unrealistic to suppose that perhaps some of these animals could also be found in Stream Cave.

Perhaps a secondary reason at this time, but one that could be most important later, is conserving the cave for itself. In future years it is possible (it is hoped) that an intensive study of the geomorphology of the Mount Gambier area could be made. In such a case the more caves that are unenterable the more incomplete the finished picture would be and, more important, perhaps some most important evidence could be lost.

These are just a few reasons which come to mind immediately and, quite probably there are more, but I think these illustrate the point at hand. The point is not that Stream Cave should be conserved, as indeed it should (I think we all realize that), but rather what action can be taken to save it? If we want to save this most interesting cave the time to act is now, before it is lost as its counterpart is. Certainly it can always be excavated later if the situation ever arises but, by then the cave-life will be lost. It may return in time, it may not, but why take that risk?

Approaches to the appropriate land-owner have failed. What other course can be taken? South Australia, for the first time I believe, has a minister of conservation. I feel he is the obvious one to approach. What form should the approach take? The matter should first be brought to his notice in, perhaps, a meeting with representatives of our Group. If this fails other courses of action should be sought, perhaps even a petition could be arranged - BUT WE MUST ACT NOW BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE!

Trevor H. Maddock.

ABSTRACTS

SOME MAMMAL REMAINS FROM CAVE DEPOSITS IN THE SOUTH-EAST OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA. By C. R. Tidemann, South Australian Naturalist Vol, 42, No. 2. 1967.

Bone material from three caves in the Lower South-East of South Australia has been examined and identified as far as possible. In all, twenty-six species of native mammals have been separated, the majority of which came from Bat Cave at Naracoorte. The other two caves (Yallum Cave, nine miles west of Penola, and a small rock-hole at Tantanoola) yielded much less, both in the number of species collected, and also in the quantity of bone material as a whole.

From the material collected at Naracoorte, bones have been identified which would appear to constitute the first published record of the species Onychogalea fraenata Gould for South Australia, although it has previously been recorded from cave deposits in Victoria.

C.R. Tidemann.

LAKE LEVEL FLUCTUATIONS IN COCKLEBIDDY CAVE, NULLARBOR PLAIN, WESTERN AUSTRALIA. By David C. Lowry. Helictite Vol. 8, No. 3, 1970.

Changes in air pressure in Cocklebiddy Cave, Nullarbor Plain, Western Australia, cause the lake level to fluctuate by several centimetres. The relationship suggests that the explored part of Cocklebiddy Cave is part of a much larger system.

David C. Lowry.

THYLACOLEO, MARSUPIAL LION OR MARSUPIAL SLOTH? By Eileen Finch. Australian Natural History March 1971.

The structural abilities of the skeleton of Thylacoleo carnifex Owen are noted and its application to life discussed. Unanswered questions related to the infants of this species are discussed and their specific peculiarities mentioned.

A brief history of discoveries of Thylacoleo is also given noting the original discovery at Lake Colongulac in Victoria in about 1846 and its subsequent description by the great English anatomist. Sir Richard Owen in 1858. The first almost complete skeleton, found at James Quarry, Naracoorte in 1960 is also mentioned.

T.H.M.

PLATYPUS IN CAVES. By Elery Hamilton-Smith. Vict. Nat., 85, 1968.

This note records a live platypus and a dead one- from Dalley's Sinkhole (M35), Murrindal, Victoria. The platypus tick, Ixodes ornithorhynchi, was also collected. The platypus has also been reported from Junction Cave, Wombeyan, N.S.W; Moon Cave (B2), Buchan, Victoria; and Croesus Cave, Mole Creek, Tasmania.

A. M. Richards.

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS, 7TH BIENNIAL CONFERENCE OF THE AUSTRALIAN SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY held at Graham's Castle, Goolwa, South Australia between 27th and 30th December, 1968.

This is an excellent volume and the first published transcript of an ASF Conference. It contains 150 pages of papers, appendices and other notes taken from the Conference.

Eleven papers are included, one abstract and a summary of the Committee meeting. Four excellent papers on conservation make this volume worth purchasing on their value alone. Are you interested in Cave detection? A paper by Mike Webb on this subject is included. There are two excellent travelogues on caves in other countries as well as several other contributions - most readable!

The price of this volume is $1.40 plus postage from the Treasurer of the Group. Keep an up-to-date account of the Transactions of the Australian Speleological Federation and build a reliable reference source on Australian speleology. The transactions of the last conference will be available soon.

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Public Seminar on CONSERVATION OF THE ENVIRONMENT to be held at the University of Adelaide from July 16 - 18, 1971.

Ecology, pollution, resources and conservation have become household words in the past year or so yet the full implications of these terms and their relevance to the wider and fundamental issue of the environment and its preservation are perhaps not well enough known and understood. The aim of the Seminar is to present basic information, point out some misconceptions of the past and present and to suggest guidelines for the future.

The Seminar will be of interest to all concerned with the future of man and the earth on which he lives. A field excursion to localities near Adelaide which are high-priority areas for conservation will be made on Sunday July 18th.

The seminar will consist of six lectures and a field trip. If you are interested in attending this most important seminar you may contact the Group Secretary for further details.

T.H.M.

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IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE EXPLORERS OF CENTRAL AUSTRALIA.

By Robert F. G. Swinbourne F.L.S. F.R.S.
Botanic Gardens, Adelaide.

Judging from notes or comments made in literature from the time Europeans began settling Australia, people have had many preconceived ideas as to what the centre of this vast land looked like or what it held in store for intruders.

There were however two particular trains of thought and those were that it was a vast inland sea or alternatively it was totally uninhabitable. Time has of course since shown that neither were completely correct. When I say this I mean, that dependent on the season, it can be very hot, dry and inhospitable, but on the other hand, when good rains come it can become a huge bog area or all the rivers will flow and often become a vast sheet of water, however, after this recedes the vegetation which appears can be very interesting.

Pursuing many of the journals of various expeditions into Central Australia, one finds that they experienced periods when there was no surface water available and the other parties involved suffered extreme hardships, other expeditions appear to have had very little in the way of problems.

These were the sort of things we had to take into account when it was decided that a starting point for any botanical work would be to try to retrace those epic exploration trips to our borders and make collections enroute with a view of confirming their records and giving us more complete material to work on, as many specimens collected were very small or sometimes plants were only recorded so it became most important to collect these and confirm their existence.

The terrain of the country covered was extremely variable ranging from rocky hills to open gibber plains, there were floodout plains, deep red sandhills and harsh saline areas with salt-lakes and desert sand-plains.

Some odd pockets in ranges little known or not previously visited showed from the plant life present that they were relic areas from a much wetter period in time.

Rock carvings and drawings in some localities seen by us turned out to be a first time seen by any European and again indicated much better periods in ages gone by.

Because Alice Springs was our base we chose to retrace any of the expeditions from that starting point, hence our trips marked on a map would appear like spokes in a wheel. However, this still did not stop us encountering some very difficult times although our trips may seem shorter.

Some expeditions retraced in the area were those of John McDouall Stuart, 1861 – 63; Gosse, Ernest Giles, 1871 – 74; Overland Telegraph Expedition, 1874. Warburton 1874 who crossed from the centre to the Indian Ocean, one attempt marked on maps placed him in the centre of that now known as Lake Mackay (Mr. Mackay was also an explorer of note); Winneke, 1882; Tietkens, 1889, and the Horn Expedition of 1894 which was particularly involved with scientific discovery.

During the I930's the Madigan Expedition crossed the Simpson Desert. Giles and Gosse were in the area of Ayers Rock and Mt. Olga during 1873 and Gosse was the first European to climb Ayers Rock whilst Giles visited Mt. Connor. Chambers Pillar was first visited by John McDouall Stuarts expedition 1861 and again by other expeditions, however, it was not until 1894 when the Horn Expedition visited there that any mythology connected with it came to light. Mr. Gillen from Alice Springs noted that local Aborigines said it was from 'ALCHERINGA' which is more or less 'Dream-time'. This pillar, however, has been visited by very few Europeans as it is in an extremely difficult area.

Xanthorrhoea thorntonii a 'Grasstree' found growing near Gosse Bluff by the Horn Expedition was subsequently named after Mr. Thornton, who was on Tempa Downs Station 1894 and extended hospitality to the expedition. The plant is very rare in the area.

Lake Amadeus was first crossed by Gosse and then soon after by Giles. A party from the Horn Expedition was next and then our own party was the fourth in that area. The tracks or marks made by those before us were still to be seen.

The Horn Expedition visited many interesting areas and we, likewise, found these of great interest, such places were Glen Edith, Reedy Rockhole, George Gill Range, Glen Helen, Palm Valley, Finke River, Hermansburg, Painta Springs, Mt. Sender, Haast Bluff and many more.

During the time I was involved with botanical work in Central Australia we had recollected most of the plants previously gathered by those earlier expeditions and, in a number of cases, our recent collection (1956-65) has been the only other collection of the particular plant, since its first collection during such expeditions. A few examples being, Elacholoma hornii, Trachymene gillenae, Acacia peuce, Goodenia horniana, Bassia luehmannii, Actinotus schwarzii, Styphelia mitchellii. In Palm Valley we collected Livistona mariae palm and also Macrozamia macdonnellii, the 'Cycad'. This cycad was also noted from near the original Alice Springs.

Standley Chasm is another area which has since shown to be a relic area where plants have been able to shelter from the harsh surround. In the George Gill Range and odd points west thereof many retreated plants are to be found also, ie. Adiantum hispidulum, coarse 'Maiden-hair Fern', Psilotum nudum, and others. I feel one major influencing factor to be that rockpools persist longer because of -the overhanging rocky ledges, etc, where hot drying winds and hot sun rarely penetrates and soil doesn't dry out too quickly.

EDITORS NOTE: In the Footsteps of the Explorers of Central Australia was presented to the general meeting of the Cave Exploration Group as a lecture on the 28th May, 1971.

Mr. Swinbourne is, at present, working for the Botanic Gardens in Adelaide. He was, for some years, engaged in botanical surveys in central Australia.

T.H.M.

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NOTES ON THE MOVEMENTS OF CAVE CRICKETS by T. H. Maddock.

In December 1970, Sand-funnel Cave was first discovered by members of the Cave Exploration Group. Some five months later David Lloyd-Wright (present on the first visit to Sand-funnel) reported seeing cave crickets inside the entrance one evening. To my knowledge none of these crickets were collected and the species is not known to me. Nevertheless, this was a most interesting discovery and poses some equally interesting questions. To what extent can these animals be considered cave-dwelling? Are they actually nocturnal in their habits? Could these animals live at surface or sub-surface locations other than caves?

Richards (1965) reported that cavernicolous Rhaphidophoridae are very active insects despite their immobile appearance. It has also been reported (Richards 1966) that these insects begin to move outside the cave entrances about half an hour after sunset and the usual duration of time outside the cave was about half an hour. It was also noted that emergence was effected by weather conditions and when they were favourable a much greater proportion of the cave population emerged.

European Rhaphidophorids (Rhaphidophorinae) have been observed to leave caves to search for food at any time throughout the 24-hour day (Richards 1966). These insects are generally considered herbivorous although scavenging activities have been observed.

It could well be possible then that these animals wandered well away from their home cave under the favourable conditions of the summer and chose Sand-funnel Cave as a new home. Little can be assessed without a properly organised study. It would be interesting to hear more about these insects if anyone has the time.

REFERENCES

Richards, A.M. Movements of Rhaphidophoridae (Orthoptera) in Caves at Waitomo, New Zealand. Helictite 3, 4. 1965.

Richards, A.M. Activity Rhythms in Rhaphidophoridae (Orthoptera from Australia and New Zealand. Helictite 4, 3. 1966.

Maddock, T.H. Environment and a Naracoorte Cave Cricket. CEGSA Newsletter 1971 No. 1.

VICTORIA CAVE NARACOORTE

By T. H. Maddock.

Victoria Cave might not be Australia's biggest cave (yet) but it must be considered Australia's most important cave, as far as bringing Australian speleology to the eyes of the World. To a certain extent it has already done that attracting visits from Brother Nicholas Sullivan, past president of the National Speleological Society and Professor Richard H. Tedford, palaeontologist from the American Museum in Now York. What is more, it has caused a boom in public interest in caves. More people visited the Naracoorte Caves Reserve in the first three months of this year than in the entire twelve months of the previous one. Such interest as this can only be to the good of Australian Speleology.

Victoria Cave was first opened as a tourist cave late last century when the property was held by the Department of Woods and Forests and became their second tourist cave. William Reddan, caretaker of the reserve did much of the early exploration work as well as opening the cave to tourism. Reddan must be considered South Australia's first speleologist apart from the Reverend Julian Edmond Woods who described many of the South-East's caves in his book, 'Geological Observations in South Australia'. Reddan did much of the early exploration work of the Naracoorte Caves and first brought their fossils to the attention of the South Australian Museum when he found part of the mandible of the Marsupial Lion. Thylacoleo carnifex in the Bat Cave in the same year he made the first exploration of Alexandra Cave which was to become Naracoorte's third tourist cave.

Robert Sexton of the Cave Exploration Group was responsible for the first survey of the cave and it was noted for its conspicuous absence of bone material. Little more attention was paid to the cave until Grant Gartrell led a party through a small restricted passage which they found to open into a large rock collapse chamber. Leading off this chamber was what appeared to be a silt-floored chamber scattered with rocks and stones. It was not until closer examination that it was noticed that these rocks weren't actually rocks at all. Over the floor was scattered the remains of Diprotodonts, giant extinct kangaroos and marsupial lions. The whole area was a gigantic animal graveyard!

Remains from this fossil deposit have been well documented in speleological literature by Wells (A.S.F. Newsletter, Dec. 1970 and Proceedings of the Eighth Biennial Conference of A.S.F.) so details will not be repeated here but it is interesting to note that the site was compared to only two others in the world by Dr. Tedford. (The tourist section of the cave has been extended and now tourists can view the excavation site and sometimes see palaeontologists and speleologists-in the process of removing fossils).

Leading off the rock-fall chamber was a narrow fissure passage which leads to yet another chamber and it was from there that Bob Henzel pushed through the seven-and-a-quarter-inch-squeeze. From then on the cave simply exploded into a mass of chambers and passages totalling well on the way to three quarters of a mile. This took place early in 1970 but after that there was a sudden lapse in exploration work in the cave.

It was not till much later in the year that Ron Galbreath found what has become known as the 'Right-hand' Extension (this is the area closest to the fossil chamber on the map, front cover). Just after this, Grant Gartrell extended the left extension of the cave and its length telescoped to over a mile and a quarter of known passage.

Since then, minor discoveries of chambers and passages have been added by Gartrell, Galbreath and Goedecke but the next major break through was when Peter Hawkes (of Dome-cracking-in-Mullamullang fame) tunnelled up through twenty feet of solid silt from the back of the 'Up-side-down Chamber' and broke through into the fossil chamber. The route into the new extension was significantly shortened and simplified!

Exploration in the cave has forged one more great step this year, a chamber of no great size but of far more than passing interest and of particular importance. Off the very end of the furthest right-hand extension (see map) a small circular hole was found which led into a very low chamber of about one hundred and fifty foot length. This is of interest in a cave like Victoria? It is when the floor is covered with the largest deposit of mammal remains one could imagine seeing. Everywhere is littered the complete skulls and mandibles of several species of Sthenurus and Macropus kangaroos, a multitude of other animals and one skull of an echidna - about twice the size of today's echidna!

So Victoria Cave is slowly but surely increasing in size (every time someone walks anywhere) but, with each step something that should never happen happens - something that is going to make the eyes of speleologists all over the world look to Australia. But, if we are going to make something really worthwhile then a concentrated effort is required by everyone, not just in CEGSA but in the ASF who is genuinely interested in promoting Australian caving. Now is the time!

NOTE: The photo-reduced map on the front cover was made last December for the ASF Conference. CEGSA will not guarantee that it will still be recognisable now, some six months later.

NARACOORTE TRIP REPORT 11, 12, 13/6/71.

A trip to the Naracoorte area this June long weekend was attended by five CEGSA members from Adelaide, four from Naracoorte and four visitors.

Sand-funnel Cave was visited and mapping of the main section of the cave was finished. Possum Caves 1 and 2 were visited and a location map was prepared.

The new section of Wombat Cave was mapped to CRG Grade 6 standard. The section is over 400 feet long and consists of a large chamber with huge blocks of fallen rock on the floor. There is a good display of formation in the new section which is comparable to some of the formation in tourist caves.

A general tourist trip was run in Smoke Cave with only a few of the party being able to penetrate past the Letterbox Squeeze.

David Lloyd-Wright and Ric Bowen spent a day at Beekeepers Cave with a chain-saw removing the dead timber from around the entrance. The local kids will have nothing to stick down the hole now.

Ed Sangster, after a solid weekend's work on the hole behind Cathedral Cave could only say, 'I can't wait to get back!'

Peter Chappell (Trip Leader)

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S.A.M.A.F. BULLETIN

If anyone is interested in buying this publication could he please contact Peter Chappell. Four copies are published a year and each contains a wealth of information on such activities as Search & Rescue and Conservation. They are well worth having.

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MULLAMULLANG N 37 MAY 1971 By Peter Hawkes.

'Yet another fence has been positioned out that way, but if you have been there before you can't go much wrong' said Mrs. Connicks, wife of the Madura Station's manager. So off we went - and went - and went - - - It was an interesting drive. We passed tanks, yards, fences, dolines, sinkholes; it was just like driving in the Adelaide Hills - up and down, up and down. Six hours later we came to the conclusion that we had missed the turn-off and headed South to come out at Moodini Pass.

So we tried again - and this time the same thing happened. So back to the Station we went and in ten minutes had found where we had gone wrong, and also that there would be no more changes for a couple of years.

We went directly to the cave the next time and started to make camp, some twelve hours and 230 miles later.

The tent was pitched and a fire was started by our fire-starting expert who thought he could out-run the flames. The four of us, Richard Hutchins, Wayne Goedecke, Peter Chappell and myself cracked a 'warmy' to celebrate our arrival and then headed to a well-earned sleep.

The first day, the hard day - Our objectives:

i) Dig in the South Doline,

ii) Climb the 'Dome',

iii) Check the roof hole south east of survey point 32, all, in some way, had to be started. The ladder was taken in over the first one and a half miles and the dig in the South Doline was started. The dig showed great potential so the next day all concentrated on the dig and at about midday on Wednesday, the last stone was jacked away leaving virgin ground lying ahead. Everyone was tense, wondering, waiting. Was this it? Would this be a dream come true? But it was not to be.

We dropped down another forty feet and followed four breezes to a disheartening destination, solid rock crevices about four inches wide. We all turned back towards the surface discussing what could have been and wondering how long it would be before the South Doline shared its secrets with someone.

Thursday. The time had come. We all set out for Camp One and then the 'Dome'. The ladders were picked up on the way through and then we proceeded to Camp One a hitch. While at Camp One we set up camp, had a meal and slept for four hours. At 11pm on Thursday we all set out for the 'Dome'. All went well until the last rock-pile; it always has to be that last rock-pile. We dug, hammed, smashed, pushed and pulled, and then finally it came. 'She's through! You bloody beaut! We're in!

We stood there looking up. This was what we had come one thousand miles to climb. It was sheer, it was soft and it was loose, more so than it had been in the past. We looked down at our feet. This was what we were going to use for the first forty feet of the climb. It was an aluminium extension ladder in two twenty feet extensions. We had completed our first task when we had carried this ladder over some three and a quarter miles underground.

The next task, if successful would be the caving feat of the year and caving history, climb the 'Dome'. The ladder was set up. It looked small next to the one hundred and forty foot face and the climbers were even smaller as they started their ascent. Special 30" pitons were used during the duration and the climb and rubble showered down. The rubble was softer than soft and rubblier than rubble. How it stops there I still do not know. In places the only way to obtain a handhold was to ram one's fist into the rock. It would penetrate up to six inches or so.

The hundred and forty feet took some five hours to climb, five long, long exhausting hours.

There is no sign of any open cave as seen by the climbers.

Once at the top a rope was positioned and the climber, Wayne Goedecke prussicked down to the belay point some fifty feet above the floor where he joined me. The extension ladder was replaced and we both descended to the solid floor of the dome.

Within half an hour we were out and off back to Camp 1. I don't think anyone looked back. Back at Camp 1 we had another meal and a sleep before starting the long journey out. On the way out just by survey point 32 which is just above the Drop Off, the ladder was positioned into a roof hole some forty feet above the floor. I ascended the ladder and entered the cave, in some places fifty feet wide and about two hundred feet long. A good breeze was felt and this area I think would be very fruitful without much work.

The party continued its way out and at Oasis Valley we met Garry Havens and Ann Wilson on their way in.

We finally made our way out at 4.00 a.m. on Saturday, some forty-two hours after we had set out.

Saturday was our day of rest. Sunday a trip to Loonganna. Lynch Cave N60 was visited and Rick Hutchins went west on the train.

We returned to the cave, packed and headed for home, completing another successful Nullarbor trip.

Many thanks go to all the people on the trip for their cooperation and teamwork.

Best of luck to Rick Hutchings, who has headed to South East Asia for a couple of months "rest".

P.R. Hawkes

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NULLARBOR PLAINS By P. A. Chappell.

There is an intended trip to the Nullarbor Plains this Christmas for about two and a half to three weeks. Major caves on the Nullarbor will be visited and possibly a couple of days will be spent at Lake Hamilton.

At the moment there is an acute lack of cars. If you contact Peter Chappell as soon as possible arrangements will be able to be made.

TRIP REPORT, Avenue Range, June 26 & 27.

This large trip of 3 members finally left Adelaide at 11.30 p.m. on the Friday and headed for Tailem Bend by the back way over the Wellington Punt, just for a change. On arrival at Keilira we found a home away from home in the shearers quarters on the Rasheed property, "Bodapuckie". Saturday was spent locating four caves which were new to us, as well as driving through four miles of mud and slush around Bald Hill. Of the four caves the best and furthest North was one about two miles north of Bald Hill, and it comprised two chambers, both reaching down to the water table. Also evident in it were a number of animal bones under water (possibly kangaroo) and a few Wetas. The area around this cave bears a closer look as it is all scrub which very few people have been into. The other three were closer to the Keilira School, two being small rock collapse chambers and the other being a series of holes in the rock face of a quarry which is now unworked.

On Sunday we spent the morning on Van de Peer's property looking at unusual formations in B.B. cave (Stewart V.d.P. wine cellar) and also at a new pair of linked holes about 50ft from the entrance of B.B. cave. Stewart Van de Peer and Peter Rasheed with a couple of mates have opened up a new entrance to B.B. cave by blasting out a daylight hole and cementing it with a ladder down it. They also opened up a further hole in the new cave by blasting. This cave is about 120ft long with a number of low tight crawly passages and a pair of nasty entrances. The one closer to B.B. cave slopes down about 40 degrees and is very tight for about 6ft until you pop out into a low chamber on top of a rock collapse. The other one is a solution tube about 4ft deep and 1ft 6inches in diameter which pops into a low chamber about 18 inches – 2ft high. In all, not a cave to look at in the snake season, but it does bear out a closer investigation. Other unusual things in B.B. cave were a stalactite with roots growing down through the centre, and a colony of about, 50 Weta's and small rim stone pool. The rest of the day was spent with the locals looking at old granite quarry nearby (would you believe a beaten up Short Wheelbase Land Rover with 6 people and two dogs with the back totally submerged and the front bumper under water) and in trying to put said Rover sideways in the mud at about, 30 m.p.h. and the same load.

In all, a most interesting weekend in an area which needs looking at more closely as we have reports of at least two more caves, and possibilities for many more in Avenue, Ardune and the West Ranges.

D.V. HAWKE.

CONSERVATION REPORT - Grant Gartrell

Recently I was pleased to represent C.E.G.S.A. as part of a delegation from the South Australian Mountain Activities Federation (S.A.M.A.F.) who were received by the State Government Minister for Conservation, Mr. Broomhill.

The purpose of the visit was to acquaint Mr. Broomhill with some of the main or most urgent conservation desires of bodies belonging to S.A.M.A.F. and to seek his co-operation towards these ends.

Mr. Broomhill, a sincere and sympathetic man, gave us the impression that his Government is conservation-conscious and will do all it can to help us. Like any government they have limited resources and must inevitably run into conflicting interests. As one can well realise, it is not sufficient to merely ask that caves be conserved and expect him to wave his wand. To get anywhere at all we must present him with a strong case, which will enable him to argue convincingly for us in the parliamentary marketplace.

It was made clear to Mr. Broomhill that the submission to him on behalf of C.E.G.S.A. on this occasion was only preliminary. This took the form of literature produced by the Group, in particular, copies of “Caves of the Nullarbor” and “Mullamullang Cave Expeditions 1966”, as well as copies of papers outlining the problems of cave conservation (see e.g. Transcript of Proceedings, 7th Biennial ASF Conference).

It was assumed that Mr. Broomhill, only recently appointed to the position, would, in common with the vast majority of South Australians, know relatively little about caves and less about the aims, activities, and even existence of C.E.G.S.A. In essence we have provided him with what we hope he will find to be some interesting homework, so that next time an approach is made to him by C.E.G.S.A he will have an understanding of our problems and will be prepared and able to discuss our proposals constructively.

The next step is up to us. As I see it we have three distinct cases to prepare;

1. Overall legislation to protect caves from use as rubbish dumps or filling in seems desirable to us. Except where a cave is outstanding for obvious reasons we may find it hard to convince others of this. To some farmers, caves may seem to be only a nuisance which they must plough around or lose stock down. To others they may be bottomless pits providentially provided to tip one's rubbish into. Only an enlightened few appreciate their caves.

   General legislative protection might be conceivable if this could be shown to influence other areas of human existence. Where caves occur in water catchment areas, or in association with an underground water resource, the prevention of cave pollution certainly has wider implications. In the South-east of S.A., where

the underground water resources are being considered for fuller exploitation in the future, we might just have a chance, but at present we have little evidence to support our claims that putrefaction and sewage disposal into caves is likely to do irreparable damage to those resources. There is no evidence to suggest that it is not harmful, either. Our commonsense tells us that it cannot be improving the situation. We need to conduct tests and make surveys to back up our intuition with documentary evidence. Volunteers are required to help with this work. We also need keen cameramen to systematically photograph cave entrances which have been or are being filled in, and cave rubbish piles, which in some cases can exceed 60 feet in height and can be exceedingly photogenic illuminated by a shaft of sunlight.

This project is a major one and may take several years to complete. Even then we may not be successful, but we must try hard. In those several years we will lose even more caves than we have lost in the last ten years. The matter is URGENT.

2. The second prong of our program, perhaps even more urgent than that already outlined, must be to arrange our known caves into some order of priority within their distinct geographical regions, according to what we consider to be their major features of scenic, scientific, and recreational importance. Some people may disagree with the place of some caves on this list, and new discoveries may necessitate changes to it, yet the need for such a list is obvious.

While we may not have much chance of getting general cave protection legislation, and while we cannot hope to make every cave a reserve, we certainly have a strong case for the protection of outstanding caves of various types, and for the conservation of representative caves in any region. In many cases caves can be adequately protected by the acquisition of only small areas around their entrances, and reservation in this way need not interfere with an existing use (e.g. grazing) of the surface land. For a relatively small amount of Government expenditure we could get quite a lot of small but adequate cave reserves.

We need to present the Minister with an ordered list of caves, showing location, reason for its protection, proposed means of protecting it (e.g. small surface reserve or inclusion in larger new or existing reserve) and the need for physical protection (e.g. gating or fencing). Where the threat to a particular cave is immediate and the protection therefore urgent, we must say so.

Presentation of such a list to the Minister will not ensure that all the caves on it are protected. However, it will be good evidence to support our case. Projects may then be examined in closer detail and costed. Although each case would no doubt be considered on its own merits, effectively he will be able to work down the list and rule a line where the money runs out. Later on he may be able to continue further on down the list.

In drafting such a list we will need a fair amount of discussion and committee work. Practical site surveys and supporting photographic and documentary evidence (scientific papers, maps etc.) are needed to back up our claims.

3. I believe that C.E.G.S.A. has a responsibility to promote the preparation and distribution of educational material to further the cause of cave conservation, and to foster practical cave protection, e.g. by offering to fence or gate caves that are causing concern to land-owners who might otherwise block them or bar access to them more permanently. Both these spheres of activity could prove too expensive for a Group with C.E.G.S.A.'s limited funds to pursue properly, yet the amounts involved would be minimal to the Treasury.

   While we have not been invited to do so, I believe that we should draw up proposals for these activities and make submissions to the Minister for Government grants to help towards our expenses. We are unlikely to receive assistance unless we ask for it.

In summary the scene has been set for a formal approach to the Minister on any or each of the issues of cave conservation. We must now prepare our cases thoroughly. If you agree or disagree with these ideas on the subject we would be happy to have your help both in ideas and assistance is preparing our cases.

Your Conservation sub-committee at present consists of

Ric Bowen
Grant Gartrell
Rod Wells (who is absent for 3 months)

We would like your help.

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C.E.G.S.A. Search & Rescue weekend, Naracoorte, May 29-30, 1971

The weekend was attended by 15 C.E.G.S.A. members as well as some interested outsiders.

The first day was occupied by lectures by various members of C.E.G.S.A. and members of the S.A.M.A.F. Search and Rescue panel. These lectures involved all members present in practical demonstrations and covered the fields of patient handling, First Aid in caves, and cave safety. Then a short exercise was held in Tomato Stick Cave involving the walking out of one patient and the carrying out of one patient from the centre of the cave on a stretcher. The stretcher and patient were then lifted out of the cave. This exercise involved much of the material presented in the lectures and ran very well.

The evening was spent in a very interesting talk and discussion with Terry Lavender on the Mendip's Rescue Squad in Britain. Bernie Dunn also presented some very interesting material during this discussion.

On Sunday, an exercise was held in BeeKeeper's Cave using two local girls as patients, one a stretcher case and the other a walk out case. This exercise was conducted very well although communications were the major breakdown. Comments I have received from independent observers have been most heartening, despite a number of minor points which will need attention.

I feel that all-who attended gained a large amount of experience, especially those local people from Naracoorte who attended in force. I was also pleased in the interest and attendance of the local full time St. John's Ambulance man and the Search and Rescue Sub-committee is at present looking into setting up a small Rescue Squad in Naracoorte.

A further report containing the Sub-committee's findings on the weekend will be tabled at a later date. I wish to thank all those who attended this weekend and I am sure all who attended found it most interesting and enjoyable.

D. Hawke - Search & Rescue Officer

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Baratta - Swan Reach - Sunday 20/6/71

To check out reports of caves due east of Swan Reach, and near a place called Baratta.

This trip proved successful and one major cave for that area was recorded and mapped, with many good possibilities in the same area.

I have never seen so many dolines! It was incredible and I feel sure that future investigation in this area is certainly warranted. I think we also made an impression on the property owner when we doubled the length of one cave in a few minutes. He will in future take more notice of holes and let the Group know of any discovered in the area.

The party consisted of Peter Hawkes, Robert Smith and myself.

W. Goedecke - trip leader

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KANGAROO ISLAND By W.G. Goedecke

Twenty four cavers, many on their first trip to the Island, had a very enjoyable Easter. The trip was not only a chance to see many of the caves but to visit Seal Bay and the Koala Farm.

There was also some work undertaken. A gate was cemented to Emu Four Hole, K20 and surveying was continued in that cave. An accurate ground location was carried out by Alan Hill.

A fence was placed at Whinkey's Cave, K19 to protect the long straws from possums.

Kelly Hill Tourist Caves were visited and perhaps the greatest find of the, trip was the rediscovery of Frosted Floor Cave K11. The size of K11 really impressed those of us who were game enough to climb down especially after meeting a seven foot Black snake at the bottom. The size of this cave could be compared to some on the Nullarbor.

Kangaroo Island is a great place to go caving and I would like to see more trips there especially as transport to the Island becomes easier.

A special thanks to Robert Smith for his hospitality – a great caver being born!

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SPECIAL NOTE FROM THE SEARCH AND RESCUE COMMITTEE

There will be a search and rescue weekend held at Naracoorte on the last weekend in August. Further details will be presented to the Group at the July General Meeting and also at the August meeting. This will be a follow-up to the recent S&R meeting at Naracoorte and we, the S&R sub-committee, urge all those present at the last trip to continue to give their support.

Details of that trip can be found elsewhere in this newsletter for those that are interested. Any others that want to join in on this trip are most welcome and the greater the numbers the greater the success of this venture Please give us your support.

David V. Hawke

S&R Officer

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OBITUARY - ERNEST MADDOCK

It is with deep regret that we must report the death of Ernest Maddock, President of CEGSA on the 28th June 1971, after a short illness.

Ern held a senior position with the South Australian Government Tourist Bureau specialising in management of reserves and pleasure resorts. In recent years he had a particular interest, both personally and professionally in the Naracoorte Caves Reserve. A bond developed between Ern and CEGSA that led to a veritable explosion of cave discovery in the Naracoorte area under his help and incentive.

His work with the Tourist Bureau has led to massive development work and the establishment of better facilities at the Naracoorte Reserve, including a roadside museum and the opening of the Fossil Cave, an extension of Victoria Cave, to the public. He has also added land extensions to the Reserve itself and established a wildlife reserve which now houses the Bat Cave.

Ern could only be described as a practical human conservationist who held a sensible and realistic feeling for the Earth and its people.

His loss will be felt deeply by many and the Naracoorte Caves Reserve stands as too humble a memorial to contain the ashes of this good man.

Members of CEGSA.

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A WORD FROM THE EDITOR

As a spokesman to the Group from my family I should like to thank all those among you who have been of assistance during my father's illness and also those who constructed this obituary. Thankyou to you all.

It is heartening to see that there are, among you, some real people, even if they are hidden away inconspicuously amongst the general thong. One that comes to mind especially at the moment is Robert Allanson who was always there to lend a hand when it was needed. It's a pity that some of you bloody moralists couldn't take a look at someone like that and, if you are sincere, get things in their correct proportions.

While my father was alive he worked towards building this group into something really worthwhile and building the name of Australian Caving generally. It's a pity to see things falling away in the Group the way they have this year because of trivial and pathetic things brought up by people far too austere and ornately conservative to ever be truly sincere or ever achieve anything of note. How about pulling your fingers out?

I should like to pass on some thoughts that I feel my father would have wanted conveyed to the Group. Remember, any work that is carried out is futile if it is not recorded. The Constitution lists certain aims which should be carried out, for a group is nothing without aims. The Group is primarily an amateur body and the amateur status should be upheld. This, however, can be waved temporarily if it is beneficial to the Group to do so and, lastly, uphold the spirit of caving. This needs no elaboration.

Regardless of what I have said here, I am not pessimistic about the Group's future. I feel sure that things will right themselves in time and we can work together as one body to uphold my father's aims, which are the aims of every sincere caver, after all.

Trevor H. Maddock.

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NOTICE OF MOTION FOR ALTERATION OF THE CONSTITUTION

The following motion has been proposed by G. Gartrell. IF a seconder is found the motion will be put at the August General Meeting of CEGSA on 25-8-71.

' That Section 9, sub-section (d) of the Constitution be altered to the following:

"Annual or regular periodic expenditure, including payment of subscriptions to institutions and periodicals, of a constant amount on any item shall be deemed to be approved on a continuing basis provided that the approval of a General Meeting has been given in the first instance and provided that such approval shall not extend to contractual agreements and provided that such approval shall not apply to any variation in that expenditure. Notwithstanding the foregoing, approval for any item of periodic expenditure may be terminated by a General Meeting.

The Committee shall be empowered to spend not more than $25 in any one-month and not more than $10 on any one item without prior approval of a General Meeting." '

It is desired to point out that the proposal of the above motion is in no way intended to impugn the present Committee. The proposer merely feels that there is a delicate balance in the financial affairs of the Group between conducting too much of the business in Committee and conducting too much of the business at General Meetings. At present it is felt that the balance may have tipped a little too far towards the Committee, and that it would be healthier for the Group in the long term if the General Membership had a greater awareness of the problems of running the Group.

G. Gartrell.

The following motion has been proposed by M. Bateman. If a seconder is found the motion will be put at the August General Meeting of CEGSA on 25-8-71.

' That the motion for increase in the fees put by T. H. Maddock and seconded; by E. H. Sangster, and passed by a General Mating by rescinded. '

I, the editor am not aware of any reasons Miss Batsman has given for this motion and, therefore, I cannot give them here. T.H.M.

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FIELD DAYS - Two field days are planned for later this year. The dates chosen are September 19 and October 31 and the place is the Reynella Caves (not the same old spot). The usual activities and idiocies related to these occasions will again take place, so be warned. Climbing gear, etc. No grog! The puritans -

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In closing, the Editor would like to point out that there have been several contributions which have not been printed in this issue of our journal. I do not want those concerned to feel that any discrimination has been involved. The flood of contributions has been so great over the pass few weeks that the Newsletter would have had been extended to thirty odd pages to publish it all. Those articles which did not appear in this newsletter will most certainly appear in the next issue. Thankyou for your response to this journal. T. H. M.

PROGRAMME OF COMING TRIPS AND EVENTS TO NEXT ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

Several speakers have been arranged for the coming meetings but, as some of the dates have not yet been finalised, it was not possible to give exact dates in this programme.

Items will include; - G. Gartrell who will speak on Caves of the Nullarbor, A. L. Hill who will speak on compasses and their applications, P. F. Aitken (South Australian Museum) who will talk on conservation of our native fauna with reference to cave-dwelling animals, a film on cave diving, and a possible film and talk on the Koonalda Cave Excavations on the Nullarbor Plain. Other items may also be arranged. If you have something you think may be of interest, please let the Committee know.

AUGUST

7-8	Curramulka	Trip Leader: D. Hawke.
11	Committee Meeting	14 Arcoona Ave, Rostrevor.
14-15	Naracoorte	Trip Leader: P. Tunbridge.
25	General Meeting	Museum Lecture Room.

SEPTEMBER

8	Committee Meeting	8 Thornber Ave, Unley Park.
11-12	Naracoorte	M. Bateman.
19	Reynella	Field Day
22	General Meeting	Museum Lecture Room.
25-26	Curramulka	T. Lake.

OCTOBER

9-10-11	Tantanoola, Mt. Gambier	T. Maddock.
13	Committee Meeting	49 Semaphore Road.
27	General Meeting	Museum Lecture Room.
31	Reynella	Field Day.

NOVEMBER

10	Committee Meeting	46 Ormonde Ave.
13-14	Curramulka	P. Chappell.
24	General Meeting	Museum Lecture Room.
27-28	Naracoorte	P. Chappell.

DECEMBER

4	Annual Dinner. Details from Committee & Newsletter.	
8	Committee Meeting	8 Thornber St.
11-12	Curramulka	P. Chappell.
11-12	Naracoorte	E. Sangster.
25	Christmas	Everywhere.
26	Nullarbor	P. Chappell.

JANUARY

8-9	Naracoorte	T. Maddock.
12	Committee Meeting	14 Garth St, Woodville (free beer).
22-23	Curramulka	P. Chappell.
26	General Meeting	Museum Lecture Room.

FEBRUARY

7-8	Naracoorte	P. Chappell.
11	Committee Meeting	14 Arcoona Ave, Rostrevor.
25	Annual General Meeting	Museum Lecture Room.