



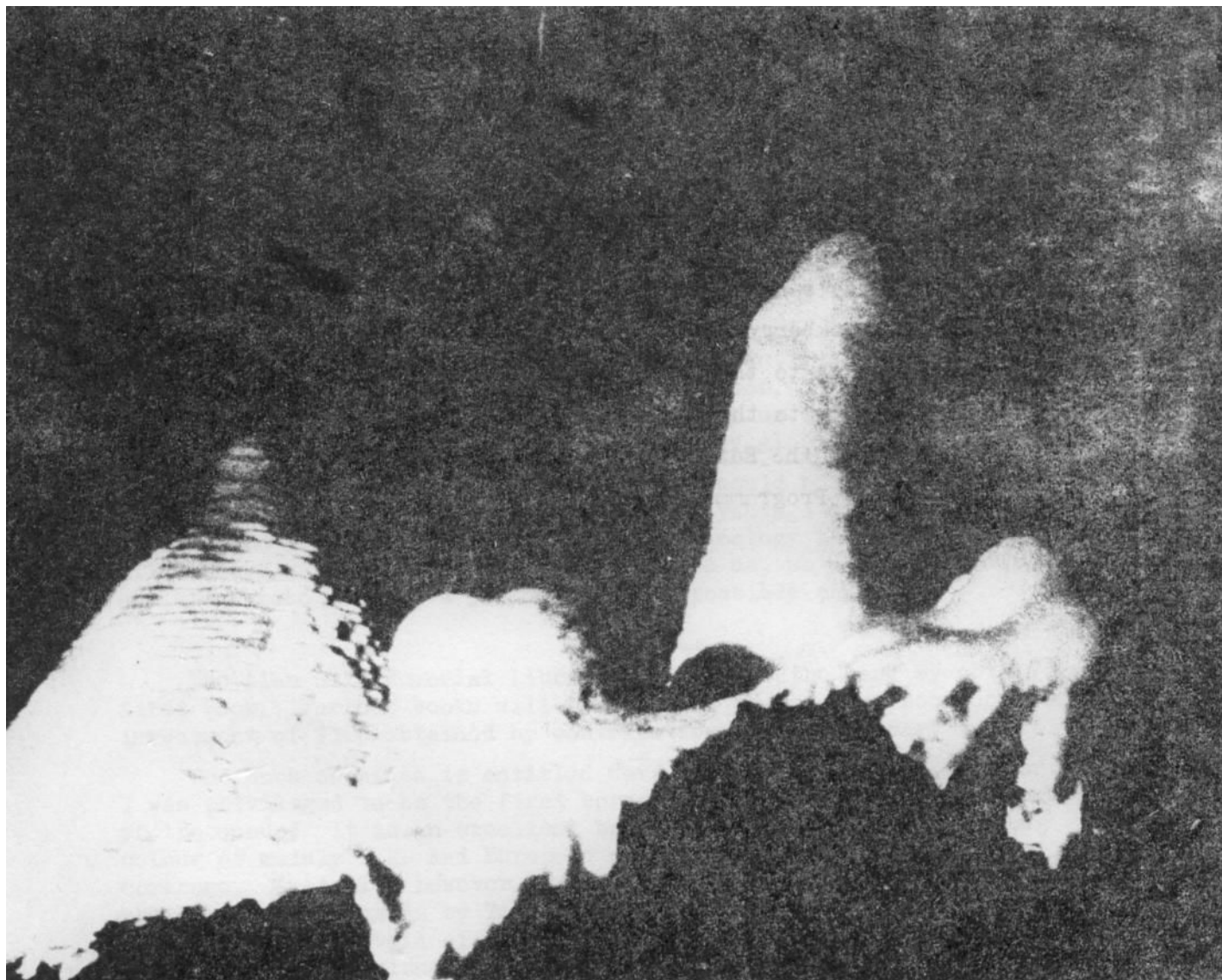
NEWSLETTER

Cave Exploration Group

South Australia Incorporated

C/O SOUTH AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM NORTH TERRACE ADELAIDE

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“RONGALBEATHAGMITES”
VICTORIA FOSSIL CAVE, NARACOORTE. S.A.

C.E.G.S.A. N E W S L E T T E R

Vol. 20 No. 3; NOVEMBER, 1975

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EDITORIAL

For a long time the willing horses in the group have been too few in number and it is about time they were given assistance before they finish up in the knackers yard! Three recent examples come to mind where help would be more than appreciated by the 'few'.

Firstly, there is the perennial one of ladder making, yes it is still proceeding, but at such a slow rate that those in the group who have placed orders may have to pay more because of material cost increases in the last two years. Secondly, field days. These are often as much of a social occasion as practice sessions, and in the past 2 or 3 years have been usually well attended. The last however, which was arranged specifically for belaying practice plus a barbecue, only attracted six people, all of whom were already experienced in belaying. Are even our newly joined Associate Members experienced belayers? All those who expect to be belayed for their own safety on a long pitch should consider the safety of others and learn what to do at the other end of the rope. Thirdly, the cleanup exercise in the Caves Reserve, Naracoorte, where the Group has undertaken to remove the mess left by the felling, and processing into railway sleepers, of about 70 large pine trees. Admittedly this was not listed as an official trip and it was arranged at short notice, nevertheless, nine members out of those contacted agreed to go down to Naracoorte for a weekend's work, and only five turned up! Lets hope the next working bee, which will be to clear away the ripped out stumps, will be better attended.

The reason behind the tree clearing of course is to make room for the Interpretation Centre behind the kiosk. The National Parks and Wildlife Service are hopeful that tenders can be invited, in about one month's time, for the erection of the building, after which no doubt there will be an official opening ceremony. I wonder how many glory seekers will turn up then?

Recent events indicate that the Group could be entering a very rewarding but demanding period. If we are to take advantage of the opportunities to further the aims of both the group and speleology then much more support from all members will be essential. It is up to us, we make the group what it is so let us make as good a job of it as we possibly can.

-----oOo-----

The Alan Hill Memorial Library has got off the mark by obtaining it's first book. Further books will be obtained as interest accrues from an investment of \$300 obtained by contributions to the library fund.

The book obtained is entitled Caves and it is written by Alan Waltham. I was privileged to be the first borrower, by elbowing my way to the head of the queue! It is an excellent book, profusely illustrated, many in colour of mainly UK and European caves, although other countries get some coverage. Australia however, gets only a few brief mentions including one photograph of Koonalda by Tom Wigley. Mullamullang is referred to by the author as being devoid of water, perhaps we ought to lend (or soil?) him a copy of our Occasional Paper No. 4! The end paper maps of which indicate there are at least 15 lakes or sources of water, all rather salty admittedly, but drinkable, especially when diluted with fresh water which has to be carried in by the cavers.

-----oOo-----

Receiving Dot Peisley's two contributions for the Newsletter, prompts me to say that her Membership Report echoes many of the points I have made above, and her Trip Report into Blackberry prompts the following observations.

I am pleased that Blackberry Cave is still enjoying the respect of CEGSA members. This is no doubt due, to a major degree, to both the difficulty of access and the incredible beauty of the decoration. Although small by international standards, except perhaps for the 5m straws in Straw Chamber, the pure white sparkling and profuse decoration, together with transparent flowstone areas, undoubtedly make it one of the best caves in the State. As for the difficulty of getting in, not to mention the greater difficulty of getting out, see Dot Peisley's trip report in this issue. Where Kevin Mott nearly got stuck wearing only muddy boots and a threadbare cloak of embarrassment, is in the middle of a 10m tight crawl, the whole length of which entails pushing one's gear, helmet, battery, belt, camera etc, through in front of one's head. Halfway along is a ridge of calcite across the floor, which slopes away going in, so that a quick exhalation and a push is all that is necessary. Coming out is a different story, as one's chest rests against the sloping calcite. At least two quick exhalations, immediately following one another is an essential preliminary, then with toes dug hard in, the body is rammed forward repeatedly until sufficient flesh, hair etc. has been removed to permit a dignified exit. I sometimes wonder how our female members fare at this spot. Unfortunately, there is no room to stand (or sit) and observe their technique! It isn't often I have the inclination to name cave features, but I would like to christen this one The Skin Stripper Squeeze, especially after having had a fire break ploughed down my chest. If anything, I think it is more painful than negotiating the Knick Knack Knocking Knodules just prior to the squeeze entry into the Straw Chamber. Despite all this, I hope to get in there again, and if I can get out, in again!

Ed. Bailey.

ANNUAL DINNER. SATURDAY 29th NOVEMBER, 1975

We are hoping to repeat the success of last year's dinner by holding it at the same place, namely the Golden Door Restaurant, 125 Hindley Street, (Opposite the "My Fair Lady" Cinema).

Time 6.30 for 7.00 pm. Cost \$4.00 each

During the evening the Annual Photographic Competition award will be made. To enter, slides and prints must be handed in to a Committee member not later than Wednesday, 12th November, 1975.

CONGRATULATIONS

To Ann and Graham Pilkington on the birth of their daughter Charni on the 28th July, 1975. At birth Charni weighed 3.4 kg.

SECRETARY / TREASURER

As notified in the last Newsletter, the position of Secretary/Treasurer has become vacant owing to Anne Wilson having to skip the border into W.A. for about six months. A replacement was elected at the August General Meeting, namely Anne's sister Jane. So if you want a letter written, or require some money, see Jane! And the best of luck!

And There It Was, Gone!

Tenison-Woods, J.E., 1862

Geological observations in South Australia, principally in the district south-east of Adelaide : Longman, pp 323 - 333.

The above work has long been quoted in CEGSA circles to "prove" a connection once existed between Blanche and Bat Caves. The failure of twenty years searching to find the fabled joining passage has usually been attributed to the blocking of the passage (at both ends) by either the guano miners or cave curators or both.

Using the relevant description, a thorough examination of Blanche and Bat caves has been conducted. However, the complete lack of physical correlation between the written work and Blanche has led to doubts as to the accuracy of Tension-Woods' narrative.

Like others before me, I thought that a detailed analysis of the original writing should give more clues. Unlike my predecessors, however, I did not examine just the short extract at the bottom of page 331, but treated the whole of the Blanche Caves section as a unit. I then proceeded to dismember the writing into sub-units, each complete in itself, and attempted to place (from my own knowledge of the caves and their history of discovery) each part where it belonged irrespective of its location within the text.

This process left a residue of personal comments by Tension-Woods which together with modes of description, could be used to analyse the author. I will do this first so that you will become acquainted with him.

First, he was a religious minister and also an amateur geologist (you'd be lucky to find a professional geologist in those days). He would therefore, (and this is evidenced elsewhere in the book) believe in the church version of Genesis and be similarly inclined to interpret all he saw in its terms e.g. bottom of page 323.

"It is like an immense Gothic cathedral, and the number of half finished stalagmites, which rise from the ground like kneeling or prostrate forms, seem worshippers in that silent and solemn place."

His general descriptions are full of wonder and awe, yet remarkably accurate for the whole of the text. From this I conclude that he either had a remarkable memory or was taking notes. As-a geologist he should have been taking notes and as I will show later I am convinced that this is part of the solution to the elusive cave link.

Was Tension-Woods a "regular caver"? or had he only been into the entrances of large caves? In a previous part of the book he talks about various overseas and interstate caves and mentions fossils found within caves. He was, therefore, at least an armchair caver. One has to remember the infancy of caving in those days, including the lack of exploration equipment (p 327, "Very soon the cavern becomes as dark as night, so that no further exploration can be made without candles -") further insight can be gained by his horror of confined spaces or broken ground — "with candles and the fear of God in him who wouldn't feel frightened"? Examples abound in both categories:

"— the ground becomes painfully uneven"

"— the utmost caution is necessary, as there are pits, caverns and holes in all directions--".

"Whether it is that the air is hot and close, or whether the depth [all of 15m?] compresses the atmosphere beyond its usual density, I cannot say, but certainly the quiet presses painfully upon the sense of hearing and the closeness gives a feeling of smothering which adds to the horror of a place deep in the earth and from the light of heaven."

Truly a "natural trog", but to continue: remember the intention of this analysis is to find a passage, now lost. So I asked myself, how did he describe passages I do know?

The main south end of Blanche, described as "low" (p323) and also "height twenty foot" (p325). That's low? He must have been used to "Nullarbor type" caves, (or lived only in Cathedrals?).

The north end of Blanche where the height drops to 1.5m:

".. the passage onwards is so small that one must stoop very low in order to proceed.

It is not without a shudder that one goes through this passage. Far away from the light of day, this groping along a small vault makes one dread to be bent down between stone walls, unable to stand straight or breath freely." (p328).

Truly a hardy man, willing to squeeze along a 20m connecting passage anytime. But how DID he describe this long sought after passage? As follows:-

"there is an opening, which, after being followed for some distance (on all fours, for it is exceedingly small)".

All fours is SMALL? At least we can conclude that vertical fissures are out and that once unblocked the passage should be easy going. But enough of the man, what of the sub-unit analysis? It goes as follows:-

pp323 to 330: a clear description of Blanche Cave from south to north excluding the two side chambers.

p330, last paragraph to p331 line 23: a good description (excepting that no bats are mentioned) of the northern side chamber.

pp331 lines 23 – 29: a description that fits the Stick to Wet Cave (west to east) connection.

p331 line 29 to p332 line 10: a mix-up in names, "Deep Cave" was Cathedral (next described). Else this description fits both Bat and Wet (the roadside cave north of Cathedral), however, history has it that Stick and Wet were joined about this time, viz "but quite lately there was a communication found between the two". Not the phrasing to use when he supposedly only just traversed that connection. Using notes, not his own experience?

P332 lines 10-20: a good description of Cathedral. Given as "At the side of this cave (Wet?) there is another cave, probably also communicating; the passage has been discovered at the same time".

P332 line 21: "This is the last of the subterranean beauties --".

From the above it is obvious that he had not mentioned in the text (assuming the text is a continuous narrative) the following caves within a hundred metres of the others; Stick, Wet (Tomato), and Blackberry.

At this time Blackberry was just two holes in the ground whilst Alexandra remained undiscovered. But to mention Cathedral (by description) without reference to Tomato-Stick seems unlikely. However, if, as I advocated, the cave he emerges into from (according to the text) Blanche, is Wet Cave, then Bat Cave remains unmentioned.

I now put forward my version of what happened.

Tension-Woods kept notes on what he was doing and saw, whilst visiting Blanche Cave. (Note the detailed description of this cave; nine pages of text including side issues.) He then either stopped taking notes, after all most caves are similar, "of course the festooning of stalagmites is as fanciful and full of beauty as elsewhere, — "or lost some of the notes he took. I suggest that he was taken to see the entrance of Bat Cave on emerging from Blanche, then proceeded to Stick, through to Wet and thence out into the daylight again. On first visit, the entrance to Wet and Bat look similar to non-cavers. From there he walked the few metres to Cathedral and hence the last (at that time) of the decorated caves. The above fits Tension-Woods description beautifully, with the exception of the jump from Blanche to Stick caves (missing sheet of notes?). Even the "all fours" passage is then correct. Sorry for the incomplete logic of this article, but without knowing both the Naracoorte caves and being able to read the quoted text in full (Tension-Woods was even more verbose than me!!) you miss the subtle points I cannot easily convey.

Maybe this article will remove some enthusiasm in trying to connect Bat and Blanche, but I hope not. I have written this denouncement of the oft-quoted book to stop people looking where everyone looks and get them to look for a connection that does not fit "the description". Of course, this has already been done but so too with Victoria Fossil Cave, Blackberry or Cathedral, all of which have been extended after CEGSA "experts" started looking elsewhere!

Graham Pilkington

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

It has been very gratifying this year to see that we have more applications for membership and others attaining full membership. It is not quite so pleasing to find that some of our members are members in name only. It would be nice to see some new faces on trips now and again, especially since experience is gained and also knowledge of what CEGSA is really doing. A club is only as good as the members in it, but lately it seems to be the few "old faithfuls" turning up at trips and doing the work. We have many and varied activities from exploration to surveying, ladder making to rope and ladder techniques. There is always something to interest someone so there's no excuse. If there are problems such as transport, contacting the trip leader will often help as a spare seat can usually be found. How about showing more interest, don't leave it to the same few, maybe you can find that huge new extension or a new cave !!!

We welcome: Associate Members - Zita Bielskis Robert Ridley
 Judith Kershaw Al Sankauskas
 Peter Milligan Peter Stace

We congratulate: Full Members - Dale Arnott
 Jim Cundy
 John Young
 Robert Van Den Berg
 Susan Roberts

Dot Peisley
 Membership Officer.

TRIP REPORT: TOWN CAVE Curramulka - Two trips, July 1975

1st. trip: Ian Lewis(L), Dale Arnott, Jim Cundy, Rod McDougall and Peter Stace.

2nd trip: Ian Lewis(L), Dale Arnott, and three divers who don't wish to be identified!

A couple of trips in July (I can never remember dates these days!) resulted in a little more of this cave being discovered and a little more caver's skin being removed and fossilized forever in the glutinous mud of Town Cave.

Lured by the challenge of a really hard trog (i.e. prodded from apathy into action by an over zealous trip leader with a self-destructive urge), we abseiled in the rain down the entrance shaft, which was pouring with water from the Curramulka stormwater drain, and got ourselves utterly soaked in the process. The not-too-obvious Drainpipe Extension was examined and Jim Gumby (where did he spring from? Ed.) performed some acrobatics while checking out the roof holes. However, these did not go anywhere. Someone passed a comment about all the glocky mud around the cave, asking "Where does all this crap come from?" Answer from Peter, "BIG BATS MATE!".

The lakes in Stooges Extension were assessed for diving potential (small) and we all hauled ourselves up the 30m ladder pitch, grubby as always.

The following weekend, in a fit of enthusiasm (not to be confused with efficiency) I returned to the cave to investigate the lakes with a tank - and a facemask of course! Five of us zoomed down the shaft loaded up with Lewis's endless heaps of diving gear, difficult to distinguish from the cave because he hadn't been washed for months like the rest of his stuff, and we grunted off into Stooges with bags and tanks in tow. Everyone had a good laugh while I:-

- (i) cleaned out all the sticky Selleys wood glue from the regulator (mouthpiece) which dribbled from the new polystyrene container I had constructed for it.
- (ii) shredded, ripped and scored several square metres of precious skin crawling into the little lake chamber, bringing with me the usual quantity of mud.
- (iii) freezing to death while trying to find a relatively dry standing height space in which to pull my overalls on afterwards.

All this after dropping my only adjustable spanner down some utterly inaccessible little grot-hole in the floor so I couldn't re-adjust my equipment I tell you Cave Diving is not really very glamorous at times! Well, "It's all for caving".

The result of all that effort was unfortunately very little -- the slightly smaller lake was full of silt and went nowhere in a very tight way, while the slightly larger one dropped 5m between walls of razor sharp dog-tooth spar crystals (the wet-suit ripping variety) to a flat bottom about body length size with - get this folks - a single STRAW! There it hung, peacefully waiting for someone to look at it in its watery home not far from a small cluster of stalactites, equally wet.

The small pool halfway along Stooges at the bottom of the deep floor hole was penetrated for only a short distance, as silting and a squeeze made the task too dangerous.

No one need bother to dive in there again – it's a lot of effort for no return, unless you would like to say "Hello" to the lonely straw for me.

Ian Lewis

TRIP REPORT: GREY'S HUT CAVE, 9-10TH AUGUST, 1975

Ian Lewis (L), Dale Arnott and Peter Chappell.

Records show that Grey's Hut Cave had not been visited since about 1967, when it was surveyed to Grade 6 by Norm Hocknell and a companion. The map of the cave detailed a very small single chamber with a modicum of formation (ever seen calcited modicum?) So rather late on a Friday afternoon an impromptu investigation trip was decided on, following phone calls to both the others by myself about entirely different subjects! (Those things happen you know!)

Access to the cave was achieved by speaking to Mr. Bliescke of Melrose, a combination of luck and circumstance more than anything else, because there are dozens of Bliesckes around the area. The cave is located on one of the many creeks in the hilly region behind Mt. Remarkable itself and required a 7km drive through the various backblocks, although it is actually only about 3km from the main road where we started.

But the drive in and the walk down the creek afterwards were worth it. It is a very strange little cave, quite unlike anything that any of us had seen before, whether in the Flinders Ranges or elsewhere in South Australia. A tentative theory is that it was originally a hole in between large slabs of granite or other silicate rock that slid down the hillside and packed up against each other. (Did the whole hole slide down surrounded by rocks, or did the rocks come tumbling down after the holes had packed themselves together? Ed.) Subsequently the space became subject to water flow from the rains which brought calcium carbonate and associated minerals in with it. These now line the walls and roof in the form of stalactites and areas of "coralline" knobs which are stained in many places a bottle green, suggesting the presence of copper minerals as well. Algae may account for this, or some portion of it, but this was not in evidence.

If you were mad keen you could dig in here, but I suspect that you wouldn't get anywhere because you'd run out of limestone very quickly. There is a healthy sized stalagmite (alive, like most of the formation in the cave) that sits comfortably in the middle of the single chamber, but was not even shown on the Grade 6 map! The map, we concluded, was more like a Grade 2 sketch, but it still showed almost all there was to see anyway.

As an historical note, a family by the name of Grey lived in a wooden hut not far away on the other side of the creek for many years until economics forced them to abandon the land and move elsewhere. Hence the name of the cave, which has been known about for a long time, probably for 70 years or so.

Ian Lewis.

BLACKBERRY CAVE, NARACOORTE 16TH – 17TH AUGUST, 1975

D. Peisley (L), J. McCann, K. Mott, L. Williams.

A beautiful morning above ground meant a good day for caving. A quick trip to Naracoorte was organized to pick up a camera from Norm Hanson for he wanted to try his luck with some film. We soon trogged up and loaded (up?) down with tripods and various ex-army surplus gear we set off ready for a good day. Arriving at the gate we fiddled and twiddled with the locks to find one very stiff and the other impossible to open.

Kevin did a quick sprint back to his car for some de-rusting stuff, a little more tugging at the locks and we were away.

(It was decided beforehand that we would make our in first and photograph on the return trip. This way we could select our shots and take our time.) After a few bumped elbows and knees we found ourselves at the beginning of the new section.

From this point it was much slower and more difficult carrying all our gear, taking off boots, sometimes socks too, and cleaning mud from gear before advancing across clean areas. We arrived at the large straw chamber and had some sustenance before going on a general exploration.

Instead of the usual direction we skirted around the walls up the large rockpile and over a small ledge to the back of the chamber. We seemed to be going from one chamber to another and there seemed no end to it.

We finally came to another long decorated passage with numerous large pools. This really halted everything as we would have had to strip everything off before proceeding and the thought of getting cold and wet didn't appeal as we knew of the long trog back. (Some other day, what!)

Some attempts were made at photographing the long straw but it's too long even for a wide-angled lens, however, we did try. There was so much decoration it was hard to choose where to start, it was all so beautiful. So with selecting shots, setting up tripods, focusing, setting flash etc., and so forth (difficult with my fingers crossed for good shots), we slowly made our way back. Again the sacred ritual of removing boots etc. on clean sections. For one of our party (who shall remain nameless) it was more removal than he/she bargained for as we inched our way through the little squeeze. In spite of the gravel rash he gamely posed hiding his embarrassment cutely behind his trog lamp while the others snapped away with their cameras.

It was a very rewarding trip for us all and I'm sure the slides we got 'speak' for themselves. There is still more exploration in the back of that cave though I'm sure it will keep.

The next day was spent-rather more leisurely with a drive out to do some above ground cave searching and a general ramble around in the sun.

Dot Peisley

AMENDMENTS TO THE RULES

Please make the following amendments to your copy of the Rules

- A. alter 1. from "——50 miles ——" to "—— 80 kilometres ——"
- B. alter 3. from "—— 21 years ——" to "— 18 years ——"
- C. add : 4(c) Persons under 16 years of age may attend official Group functions providing that a member takes full responsibility for them,
- D. add : 4(d) Visitors unable to take out Associate membership due simply to age, may attend official Group functions until of age.

AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

Please make the following amendments to your copy -

- A. add : 4(d) The Committee shall conduct and manage the affairs of the Group, subject to this Constitution and Rules.
- B. add : 4(e) No person may stand for a Committee position unless they already are financial for the whole of the term of office.
- C. add : 4(f) No action taken by Committee can be deemed unconstitutional due simply to vacancy.
- D. add : 5(a)(xi) Public Officer.
- E. alter : 5(b) to 5(b)(i)
- F. add : 5(b)(ii) Co-opted office bearers shall hold office until the following A.G.M. or until their successors are appointed; whichever occurs first.
- G. add : 5(b)(iii) The Public Officer shall be elected at an A.G.M. or G.M. and shall hold office until a successor is appointed.
- H. add to the end of 5(e)(vii) He shall also maintain a list of all financial member, in book form, to be available at all official meetings.
- I. add : 5(e)(xi) The Public Officer shall perform the duties as laid down by the South Australian Association Incorporation Act for a Public Officer. He shall also be responsible for monitoring the legality of the Group's activities.
- J. alter : 6(f)(i) from "—— 50 miles ——" to "—— 80 kilometres ——".
- K. add : 7(c) To vote for a person for a Committee position, the voter must be financial until the next A.G.M.
- L. add : 15. THE SEAL
- M. add : 15(a) The President and Vice-President shall be custodians of the Group Seal.
- N. add : 15(b) The Seal shall be affixed to documents only by direction of the Committee and in the presence of one of the custodians; and the affixing of the Seal shall be attested by the signatures of the custodian in whose presence it was fixed and of the Officer who affixed it.

STOP PRESS

The Australian Museum's quarterly publication, "Australian Natural History" has recently been bedevilled by industrial disputes. Consequently, the June 1975 (Vol. 18 No.6) issue has only just been published. Nevertheless, the lengthy wait has been worthwhile, as the whole issue is devoted to Australian Caves.

Articles range from the early settlers endeavouring to find sources of limestone and hence the discovery and recording of cave locations, to cave exploration, cave documentation, cave formation, fossil deposits, speleochronology, cave and aborigines, cave ecosystems and cave conservation and exploitation. Contributors include such well known trogs as Joe Jennings, Andrew Pavey, Rod Wells, Cliff Ollier and John Dunkley.

Altogether a worthy exercise for the Museum and all the contributors and well worth the \$1.33 (inc. postage) it costs from the Australian Museum, P.O. Box A2J5, Sydney, who, I am sure would be extremely pleased to receive a deluge of orders.

Ed. Bailey.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

415 Peguot Ave.,
New London, Ct 06320.

September 29, 1975

Dear Sir,

Your August 1975 Newsletter editorial has sent my imagination into an absolute frenzy, whipping up gigantic waves which yet may barely lap against the shores of my fair homeland. The tyranny of distance...not to mention the tyranny of posts and telegraphs!

At last the faithful CEGSA hut may meet with misfortune and the possums and the ghosts of our caving ancestors duly evicted will be forced to seek new haunts. Two years ago CEGSA was to have a more efficient and salubrious replacement for the old hut. After the Public Buildings Dept. costed the plans the luxuries like floors, walls, ceilings and roof were pruned back savagely, but at least we were left with the principle. Our old hut would have to stand until the money miraculously appeared for a new one. Now it seems that even the principle may be taken from us. No longer are we simply awaiting a higher priority than a new toilet block at Fort Glanville, say, - we are no longer compatible with the aims of a Conservation Park! Really! Once we were respected friends of the people in charge of the Naracoorte Caves. I hope I am wrong, but today we, or at least what our hut stands for, seem to be just an embarrassment to them. Have we changed or have they changed, have times changed or is it just me that's changed? I suspect the lot of us have, but I still don't believe that is justification for what appears from here to be an impending raw deal for CEGSA.

The Group in using shelter provided by a hut while working in the area is no more in residence in the Conservation Park than tourists camping in the camping area, and certainly less so than the Park staff. Does the intended withdrawal of the Group's facilities from the Park coincide with the removal of the camping area and relocation of the staff housing?

At present there is no doubt that the staff houses are so close to the main centre of the Park that the occupants cannot keep normal domestic pets and indulge in otherwise reasonable leisure activities without interfering with the amenity of the Park and conversely without undue invasion of privacy from the Park. Only some, not all, of the staff occupy houses in the Park and they are certainly not on duty twenty four hours per day. At the same time, because it is a country area, there is a need for staff housing to be available, and for reasons of security it could be advantageous for some of it at least to be located adjacent or near to the Park.

Once again, because of distance from major cities and even from Naracoorte township, there is a strong case for maintaining a camping area at or near the caves. In peak hours now all one sees is a sea of cars. To campers at quieter times, in the early morning and at dusk, the Park reveals a beauty and tranquillity not experienced otherwise. The provision of some controlled facilities for camping makes it possible for some visitors to see the caves who might be unable to do so, and seems no more out of tune with the spirit of the Park than the provision of pathways and lighting in some of the formerly wild caves.

Have cavers now served their purpose to be cast off and forgotten? I hope not. In fact I do not believe that either the cavers or the National Parks and Wildlife Service have ever seriously considered the notion. Both CEGSA and NPWS in this area have many common aims and limited means at their disposal for achieving them. Mutual co-operation is logical. It improves efficiency. Lack of co-operation conversely will reduce efficiency. Without a hut on or near the Park, CEGSA's efficiency would undoubtedly be impaired, and yet NPWS now wishes to remove it.

It seems against their interests to do so if we are co-operating with them efficiently, so something must be missing from the argument. Are they co-operating with us as much as they could? Probably not, but as Government organizations go they have a pretty good record. A measure of their concern is their acceptance of the concept of annually appointing a representative to our Committee. They don't have to do so, but they do it anyway. Are we co-operating as much with them as we could? Almost certainly not! Some of us try harder than others, but the Group sometimes, at least to external observers, appears to be heading in six directions at once. NPWS is fairly new in this field and has shown a willingness to learn. CEGSA also has plenty to learn, and has been showing the first blossoms of a great deal of hard work on the part of some of its members. It is a good body and can still, or even more so, be of assistance to NPWS as well as other parties, once its re-organisation is completed and running smoothly. I believe there has been some lack of communication at the policy level. The Park is NPWS property and it is up to them to spell out a management and development policy for it. Documented cave exploration and research conducted by CEGSA and others in the area is of assistance to NPWS in estimating the magnitude and significance of the resource in their custody. Advice from CEGSA could also be (and often is) profitably sought in other aspects influencing management policy. Once an acceptable policy is drafted for the Park, including the projected role of speleological exploration and research by bodies such as CEGSA, then this should be made known to CEGSA so that the Group can frame its activities in the region around the policy, or if necessary lobby for amendments to the policy. With changing times and changing pressures, an acceptable policy at one time may ten years later prove inadequate to cope with new pressures. The Group's policy of letting most people "do their own thing" within the framework of the Constitution may no longer be acceptable at Naracoorte, for example, even though it was fine ten years ago. The world is changing faster than most of us would like to think. If there is in existence such a NPWS policy statement, I do not know of it. CEGSA has not told no or possibly NPWS has not told CEGSA. If there is not such a policy statement in existence, then its creation is a matter of urgency. Until CEGSA has knowledge of policy direction its co-operation can only be accidental, even if earnest, and its efforts should not be judged too severely accordingly. To deprive us of a hut at this time would be to pass sentence for past deeds on the strength of laws of the land contemplated for the future. It would appear to be a short-sighted decision.

While it is not difficult to agree in principle as to what activities should take place and how they should be conducted when sitting around a polished table in an air-conditioned Adelaide office, such contacts between CEGSA and NPWS are not the only, or even the most common one. At Naracoorte, the NPWS staff are residents and the CEGSA people, apart from our Naracoorte members, on the whole are from Adelaide or some equally remote place. There has been increasing visitation at Naracoorte by bands of anonymous looking people with helmets, boots and lamps, to the point where the staff can only possibly know a few regular old-timer members of CEGSA and one or two others by sight. The rest of us or them, (depending on whether CEGSA or otherwise) will unfortunately for all concerned be faceless beings.

Most CEGSA people are responsible and go about their business quietly. Many of the other cavers appearing down there are also responsibly quiet. A percentage of ours and theirs, however, are undoubtedly thoughtless. We try to discipline our own, but it is a fact that our organization is occasionally a little ragged in this area.

We should be able to do it without causing any pain to the Naracoorte staff, but such has not been the case. One or two incidents a year they could no doubt accept as reasonable, but with the build-up in numbers of cavers, ours and theirs, it is not just every month or so that we brighten up their days. Barely a fortnight, often a week, now passes without cavers turning up at Naracoorte for the weekend. Advance notice of CEGSA trips is given by letter or phone, but the arrangement has broken down on occasions in the past. The perfect caver will drive to Naracoorte on Friday night, arriving at midnight or two in the morning - slam all the car doors at least six times and boot lid twenty - knock three million tent pegs into the ground and then yell or tell stories at the top of his voice until morning ... sleep in 'til lunchtime and then crawl down a cave and do very little. He will make sure he gets nice and dirty and then walk into the shower, boots and all and block the drains with mud. A quick drive to town to buy enough bottles to make a nuisance of himself all night again and finally a roar off to Adelaide on Sunday, forgetting to say "Hello", "Goodbye" or "Thank you" to the resident staff, and simply assume it will be nice and clean next time he arrives. Most of us are not like this. We may have no option about arriving late at night, but some of us can do it quietly. We have all been on trips where the presence of such mythical beasts has been plainly felt. The staff are there on every such trip. To them the funny side wears thin after the first hundred times, and it becomes simply a source of friction. So do anonymous cavers claiming to be members of the Group arriving unannounced and demanding access to the hut.

I would not be surprised to learn that such events have had a bearing on the apparent decision to remove the hut from the Park. As things presently stand, if that were the case I would reluctantly have to give such a decision my support. Continued friction through thoughtless behaviour in our Group's name is a more important issue than the convenience of a hut.

Nevertheless, the hut is a convenience, and cavers can probably deal with or tolerate their own dirt and noise far more than the NPWS staff should have to. Part of the purpose of the projected new hut has been to provide cavers with their own showers, once and for all getting them out of the camping area showers and thus removing one source of friction. Working cavers need some accommodation or at least shelter. They can get by without it at the cost of greatly reduced efficiency. Distance to the Park for many people makes a late Friday night arrival, often in the rain, generally the only practical solution. Long caving trips involve cleaning up and cooking late at night. Discussion of surveys and plans for future activities and the sheer physical needs of an exhausted crew of returned cavers demands some form of semi-congenial surroundings and shelter.

CEGSA enjoyed a privileged position, at the Park, with the availability of the hut and free use of the showers, although because of heavy demands we made on the showers it was usual for us to keep clear until most campers (paying customers) had had ample time to avail themselves of the facilities. It was considered in the past that NPWS or the Tourist Bureau in bygone days got good value for money from the CEGSA hut in terms of the increased output it made possible. There is no doubt that the hut played a major role in the recent spate of new discoveries in the area, including the Fossil Cave deposits.

Perhaps NPWS no longer thinks the return justifies the expenditure. Perhaps there is a disagreement with apparent Group policy. Perhaps it may simply be priorities for spending limited funds which could deprive us of a hut. One thing is certain. If CEGSA is to continue serious caving at Naracoorte, and to make advances at an appreciable rate, it needs a hut. It is true that some of the caves are off the Reserve in addition to those within Park boundaries, and it probably is not critical just where the hut is sited.

The present hut is too close to staff housing because of the caver's noisy nocturnal habits, but at the same time gets some protection from possible vandalism because of this. On the other hand it is ideally located within walking distance of many Park caves, and it would be a retrograde step to graduate to a site which further increases our dependence on cars.

The Naracoorte hut began life as a guides house. When surplus to the requirements of the Tourist Bureau it was to be removed, but the combined representations of Dr. Paul Hossfeld from the University of Adelaide and Dr. Brian Daily, then of the South Australian Museum, gained a reprieve and a new role for the building as the CEGSA, S.A.M., U. of A, Naracoorte Research Centre. Some years ago CEGSA tried unsuccessfully to get proper tenure to the hut site from the Tourist Bureau, but was assured that the hut would continue to be available to the Group "for research purposes" provided that it was maintained in good repair.

The S.A. Museum made available some materials for repair of the hut, and Dr. Peter Crowcroft, then Director of the S.A. Museum, arranged to stay overnight in the hut on at least one occasion to symbolise both the Museum's continued interest in the hut, and the validity of accommodation as an integral requirement of research in remote areas. After the death of Dr. Hossfeld the University of Adelaide as such showed no further interest in the hut and faded from the scene.

When the NPWS inherited Naracoorte from the Tourist Bureau it is not clear whether or not they also inherited the Tourist Bureau's undertaking to CEGSA in respect of the hut. In any event "good repair" is a subjective thing, and despite members' hard work to date painting and carpentering, reglazing windows and so on, the hut could be removed tomorrow if the NPWS decided to do so.

In the spirit of past arrangements, in recognition of past efforts by members of CEGSA, and in goodwill for and anticipation of the future co-operation of CEGSA with NPWS in the area, it would seem proper for NPWS to provide some form of replacement structure or material assistance in obtaining such, in compensation for that of which they now propose ultimately to deprive us.

Other people besides CEGSA cave in the Naracoorte area, and at least one other S.A. Group, the recently formed Flinders University Speleo Society, has primary constitutional objectives closely aligned with those of CEGSA itself. CEGSA through seniority and hard work has developed extensive records and a sound framework of experience upon which its future can build solidly. We have grown from an infant body into a responsible and respected cornerstone of the Australian Speleological Federation. To use an analogy, we are the modern fathers of South Australian Speleology. Like any father we can only try to bring our children up correctly, we cannot stop them being influenced by other children and we cannot stop them becoming adults. It would be nice to maintain total control over caving in S.A., but like keeping children under the thumb, probably impossible if the kids are healthy. Maybe that's why we even have trouble controlling our own affairs. Our constitution stresses cooperation with like-minded organizations. Through education programs we may reach a few people who have good intentions but insufficient practical experience. We cannot hope to control ratbags and vandals, but we can constitutionally keep control of CEGSA. The Group has a lot of support and goodwill from individuals and government bodies, NPWS included, and needs every bit of it to survive.

CEGSA should be very careful to safeguard its desired image in external contact, and those not prepared to co-operate in this should face discipline or expulsion from the Group. We have a Constitution but relatively few are properly conversant with it. The machinery is there, but cavers are often more interested in caving than constitutions, and rightly so. Nevertheless the world is full of compromise and self sacrifice, and CEGSA doesn't really ask all that much of its members.

According to ripples reaching this side of the Atlantic, an idea surfaced suggesting that access to the hut temporarily be restricted to a small band of members working continuously at Naracoorte, apparently unfettered by other responsibility. If anything were guaranteed to create internal divisions within the Group it would be an attempt to deprive some members of access to some of the Group's traditional facilities. No matter how laudable its apparent intentions, the move would appear to have no constitutional basis and even to directly contravene the intent of the clause referring to the privileges of membership.

It seems that the hut could be made available to a restricted group of members only if the remaining members as individuals voluntarily agreed to stay away from the building. In short, you can use it exclusively until I decide to walk in the door. The conscious creation of internal divisions within the Group is inherently dangerous and could result in the disintegration of the Group, should little cracks grow into gulfs the Group has responsibilities to all its members as well as to its speleological aims.

The constitution merely outlines the nature of the Group's operations, and nowhere mentions that all caving must be completed by 1978. Are we in such a hurry that we must trample on those less fortunate than ourselves? This should certainly not be the case in particular when the caves enjoy the relative safety of inclusion in a Conservation Park.

CEGSA will and must weather this storm. Perhaps it was only one little thunderclap in otherwise blue skies. I can't see too clearly from here. Anyway - most of us really have very similar aims: sometimes we just differ a little in our ways of achieving them. After the dust settles it will be time to look around and see if during the confusion somebody has galloped off with the hut.

The Group needs a hut. It is a major part of our caving equipment. Suggestions have been made that general accommodation serving other bodies besides CEGSA could be developed at Naracoorte. The additional use is raised as a possible justification for greater funding. If it were to pass, administration and scheduling of accommodation would then be someone else's responsibility. Whose? CEGSA could not undertake it, and would have simply to compete, I suppose, on an equal footing with other bodies for hut bookings. The more the idea is discussed the less attractive it sounds, and the more it seems to move away from the original conception of a caver's hut.

Certainly the paleontological and related research facilities at Naracoorte will be excellent once they are completed, but they are not a cavers' hut. One should not exclude the other, since each fulfils a distinct need. I believe CEGSA should, if it has not already done so, formulate a clear hut policy including complete CEGSA responsibility for maintenance and operation of a hut suitably located in or near the Naracoorte Caves Conservation Park, and that CEGSA should seek maximum assistance from NPWS in bringing this into effect. This of course must be based on a foundation of clearly defined policies of co-operation on both sides, since the NPWS can only justify the construction of a new-hut if its use is going to further their policies for the Naracoorte area.

I can see no reason why CEGSA should not control such a hut. Somebody has to do so. If only CEGSA members use it this is logical, and CEGSA membership is open to anyone prepared to abide by the constitution. When arguing that this would set a precedent whereby the Oodnagalaby Peanut Pushers Society could also demand assistance for accommodation, opponents of the idea usually overlook the almost unique historical position of CEGSA. CEGSA is certainly the only body associated with caves in South Australia with direct links of any sort with the South Australian Museum.

It has to this day enjoyed some form of affiliation with the Museum, Master records are kept in the Museum strong-room, any specimens collected in the Group are Museum property automatically, and upon the winding up of the Group, should that occur, all its assets become the property of the Museum. The Group in bygone days was one of only two such bodies, the other being the S.A. Museum Underwater Research Group, submitting an annual report to the Director for inclusion in the Museum Board Report. As far as I know we are still doing this. We certainly should be, the Museum has always had a somewhat paternal interest in the Group, and also has a representative appointed by the Director to our Committee.

I cannot emphasize too strongly that our privileged position is after about twenty years now a venerable historic institution which has been of benefit to all parties linked to it, including the Museum, the Tourist Bureau, and lately the National Parks and Wildlife Service. Its very existence provides an historical basis for continuing Government assistance in the provision of hut facilities without creating an embarrassing precedent. There is still room for voluntary specialist organizations around the periphery of many Government activities. CEGSA can undertake numerous projects of an uncertain, exploratory or purely scientific nature, which cry out to be undertaken but for which the Government itself could not justify full-time staff support. We have a place in the scheme of things, provided there is a confluence of policy direction, and there's no getting around the fact that we are often more than a willing source of cheap labour.

We really deserve a palace with deep pile carpet and lemonade showers. Surely a modest little basic hut is not too much to stick out for. Definite policies and some security of tenure, as distinct from the last few years of indecision about the faithful old possum hatch, would make a vital difference. How about some really solid thinking by all concerned to see if a positive solution can be found quickly?

Although sorely tempted at this stage to try for the World Record, I shall arbitrarily terminate this blast from the past (thank goodness; - typist) forthwith, pausing only to lament the passing of the quiet informality of yesteryear, and to wish you one and all a pleasant summer as this place plunges into the slush and gloom of the impending ice-age.

" KEEP ON TROGGING "

Cheers,

Grant Gartrell

CAVE EXPLORATION GROUP (SOUTH AUSTRALIA)Programme for November 1975 to January 1976NOVEMBER

Wednesday 12th	Committee Meeting 8.00 p.m.	22 Quick Road, Mitchell Park
15th -16th	York Peninsula (L) R. McDougall Coobowie Corner Cave	Exploration and Surveying
22nd -23rd	Naracoorte (L) J. Wilson	Familiarization of Karst Forms
Wednesday 26th	General Meeting 8.00 p.m. Museum	K. Moriarty, Geology of Naracoorte area. (August postponed lecture)
Saturday 29th	Annual Dinner - see Notice this issue	

DECEMBER

6th - 7th	Naracoorte VDC Cave (L) R. McDougall	Surveying
Wednesday 10th	Committee Meeting 8.00 p.m.	66 Eyre Cres, Valley View
<u>NO GENERAL MEETING THIS MONTH</u>		
27th onwards	Naracoorte	Exploration, Surveying, etc. etc.

JANUARYNO COMMITTEE MEETING THIS MONTH

17th -18th	Curramulka (L) G. Pilkington	Checking finished (?Ed) map of Corra-Lynn
24th - 26th	Mt. Hamilton (L) R. McDougall	Exploring Lava Caves
Wednesday 28th	General Meeting 8.00 p.m. Museum Lecture Room	Post Xmas Slide Night

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