

CAVE EXPLORATION GROUP SOUTH AUSTRALIA INC.

c/o South Australian Museum, North Terrace, Adelaide



Volume No: 25, No: 2 August, 1980

N E W S L E T T E R



PUNYELROO CAVE – Swan Reach

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FRONT COVER:

The picture on our front cover was submitted by Meredith Reardon as an entry in our Black & White photo competition.

This Newsletter is Registered for Posting as a Periodical, Category B.

EDITORIAL

It's always nice to begin an editorial with a happy note, and this time I'm very happy to oblige.

Vigorous campaigns by conservation groups have led to a great triumph for the last of the "wild" rivers of Australia. I think every one who took even the slightest interest in this campaign, were relieved to see the Tasmanian Government bend to public dismay and shelve their plans for the damming of the Franklin. This edition of our Newsletter contains a report which was written before the announcement of the Tasmanian Government and for that reason may seem a little out of context. However, I have decided to include part of the article to illustrate the pleasures and opportunities which still exist and hopefully will do so for some time to come, to explore this wilderness area.

At present we are experiencing difficulty in finding enough experienced people who are willing to lead trips. In the past it has fallen mostly to the Committee to take on this task and this worked out quite well. However these past few months have shown that we need more of our general members to take trips. Illness and accidents have taken their toll of our former "cheerless feeders" and we hope that they feel better soon. What about some of our intrepid females - lets show that we are just as keen and able as those males.

DOT PEISLEY

Editor

ERRATUM:

The last copy of the Newsletter was
Volume 25 No: 1, May, 1980.
Please alter your copy.

CEGSA CONSTITUTION

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

Motion to be put at the Sept General Meeting 1980:

- A. That 3(b) be amended by deleting "who are over 15 years of age and"

CEGSA RULES

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

Motions to be put at the Sept General Meeting 1980:

- B. That 4(c) be amended to read:

"Persons under 18 years of age may attend Group Trips providing that a Member attending the trip takes full responsibility for them. The Trip Leader must be informed of this arrangement, in writing, prior to the trip."

- C. That 4(d) be deleted.

- D. That 10(d) be added to, to read:

"Trip Leaders have the authority to deny any person or member the privilege of attending their trip. Participants on a trip must obey the Trip Leader"

S.W. TASMANIA

10/1/80 - 24/1/80

PARTY: Peter Knapp, Gary Jones, Dave Trueman and Kevin Mott.

The main purpose of the trip was to attempt the traverse of the Western Arthurs Range. Of the party of 4, two of us had not hiked in Tassie before and none had done the Western Arthurs.

When we left Adelaide Airport at 7.00 am on Thursday, 10th January, we were not charged excess baggage but the packs were labelled "heavy" At Hobart we checked in at the Police Station, had lunch, left some clean clothes at the Harrington Street Bus Station then caught a taxi to Lake Pedder. I don't think the taxi driver had ever been outside of Hobart. He spent more time gawking at the scenery than watching the road! After being told that comprehensive insurance used to be voided on the Pedder Road he was even more nervous. When we were sorting out our packs, we found a shifting spanner caught up in one of them. It obviously belonged to the taxi driver. We placed it under one of the huts at the end of the road but it had gone by the time we returned.

We finally left the road at 3.30 pm and eventually arrived at Junction Creek at 7.00 pm. We camped at the hut that night. Those we met coming out generally described the last 10 days as having been fine weather - an ominous sign in Tasmania. Whilst at Junction Creek a group arrived after beating a retreat down Maraine E. because the wind at Lake Oberon the previous night broke their tent poles.

Next morning the tops of the Arthurs were enveloped in mist and there was a light drizzle on the plain. We figured we could make it up Maraine A. and on to Lake Cygnus without too much difficulty. When on top of the range we lost the track several times and ended up spending that night bivouacked under a large rock in the Capella Crag. While setting up camp the mist lifted slightly and we were able to determine our position. We were able to make our way down to Lake Cygnus next morning. There was another party already camped here waiting for the weather to clear. We simply did the same thing, set up camp, read and played cards.

The other party retreated back via Maraine A. next day as they had had enough with 3 days in the one spot. By midday this mist had lifted so we packed up and headed up Mt. Hayes. By the time we reached Square Lake I was buggered. After a rest we headed off to Lake Oberon. From previous reports the track was difficult to find. We found it with little difficulty. Whilst selecting a tent site our selection was over-ruled by Peter when he discovered we were adjacent to where a young lady was bathing in the icy water. To this day Dave still insists he did not see her. True love is so blind. A site was eventually selected amongst some bushes. That evening I took some superb sunset photos only to find out later that I had black and white film left in the camera.

The next day we headed for High Moor, as the weather was fine. We had lunch atop Mt. Capricorn. The descent of Mt. Capricorn can only be described as interesting. The angle of dip varies from 70° - 90° & you climb down a switchback of tracks via roots and foot holds cut into the clay. Absolutely no rock. Anyone doing the traverse in reverse must be horrified by the sight. The following two days were spent at High Moor because it was too misty to travel.

During the first night a tent pole on Peter's tent collapsed. This was overcome by taking a length out of the other pole and lowering the tent. The 9m of climbing rope was used to further secure the tent.

When leaving High Moor for Mt. Taurus you must negotiate the Beggary Bumps which occasionally means sliding along the edge of a cliff. The Tilted Chasm is exactly as the name suggests; a chasm tilted down about 45°. Care must be taken so rocks and yourself are not dislodged onto the person below. After finding the way around Mt. Taurus we finally came out to Haven Lake. Gary stayed behind to get a photo of us approaching the Lake. We unfortunately misunderstood exactly where we were supposed to be. The yell we heard was not one requiring help but one of abuse at a good shot spoiled. We took advantage of the remaining patch of sunshine to dry clothes. Generally campsites looked like a Chinese brothel with clothes adorning every suitable bit of shrubbery to take advantage of what little sunshine there was, a total of 2 days out of 14!

The next leg to Promontory Lake was supposed to be relatively easy. Upon reaching the ridge above Haven Lake the wind and drizzle started to get heavier. When we reached the plateau between this ridge and Mt. Scorpio the weather gave up and burst either a bowel or a bladder. After finding limited shelter behind a rock it issued forth for some twenty minutes with gale force winds, hail, rain and sleet. At the end the countryside resembled a snowscape. When we finally reached Promontory Lake we found we had to walk 2/3 of the way around the lake to reach the campsite. This was the only lake we had to climb up to.

We awoke early next morning to find a layer of ice (hailstones) around the tent. It was generally decided to use the alternative route to Maraine K. then exit as the tops were still wet and misty and by now we were getting tired of being held up by mist.

We forgot that all the water that had been falling in the mountains must drain onto the plain. Our way was finally blocked when we found 2 creeks highly swollen. After having lunch, a way was found across the creeks via an overhanging tree. A flying fox was rigged to haul our packs. A slash along the Arthur Plains "Canal" and several more creeks eventually brought us back to Junction Creek.

The short jaunt back to that giant scar in landscape, Lade Pedder, ended the first phase of the trip. Dave and Gary left for Hobart. Peter and I picked up the stockpile of food we had left at the Rangers Hut and sorted out supplies for an assault on the Mt. Anne Circuit.

As the peaks were misted over next morning we hiked up the road to the turn off to Mt. Anne. By the time we reached Mt. Anne hut, the weather cleared and we had magnificent views of Mt. Anne. The next day we were due to climb Mt. Anne. The weather turned foul. About midday we decided to try for Mt. Anne hoping the weather would break.

When we reached the base of the final ascent the weather worsened considerably making the climb too dangerous. We returned to camp through gale force winds. The next day we descended to the road and obtained a lift to Hobart, then back to Adelaide the following day.

KEVIN MOTT.

BURNSIDE MINES TOUR

Saturday 3rd May, 1980

As the result of the enterprising actions by a Burnside Library librarian, tours were arranged to the Burnside Mines within the Council area.

Terry Reardon and I were fortunate to be able to go as the tours were so very popular. I only managed to get us on the "emergency" list (but luckily there were two drop-outs!).

The Magill Stone Mines were often small (kneeling room only) tunnels into hillsides which were worked by Cornish miners. Any minerals/ores found were removed, slate was taken by laborious methods such as hitting a wooden chock into the rock and wetting it so that on expansion it cracked the rock (apparently quite loudly and effectively)

Basically, the mines are of great~ interest. Wheal Gawler (the Gawler Mine) being the first mine in Australia. However, history appears to be of little concern to Burnside Council, according to our group leader from the Mines Department, Royce Wells. Royce quoted and showed us instances of these mines being filled with rubbish, or built over as the Council has in the past had no qualms about opening up the land for subdivision. Roads have been made over 250ft shafts and houses have been built over shafts (which tend to collapse when they are no longer able to breathe!). One house is actually built on a huge rubble pile at the top of a very steep hill on the exact location of the hidden mineshaft (Wheal Watkins - Watkin's Mine). Very risky - rotting timber or concrete in the shaft and the loose rocky surface will at some future date, give way, causing havoc to the houses below.

Apparently the yields at these separate mines were not seen to be economical when the mining region in Broken Hill was opened up. The Burnside Mines closed down (and some were re-opened this century) although the galena (silver-lead ore, approximately 200 oz. of silver-lead per ton) was up to 6 times as rich as Broken Hill.

The last crazy action on the part of the Burnside Council came for Royce Wells when the exploration tunnel barely going more than 20 to 30ft into the hill near the Tollgate Motel (Mt. Barker Road) was preserved. It is an expensive tribute to the rich mining which is still possible in the Burnside area, with a stone/cement entrance to the tunnel, gated and lit up with 2 miners inside working to fill the ore-train.

The questions Royce Wells wants to ask ratepayers, historians and S.A. Citizens are:

"Where is the logic behind what is going on in this district?

Why preserve an exploration tunnel which did not even become a mine?

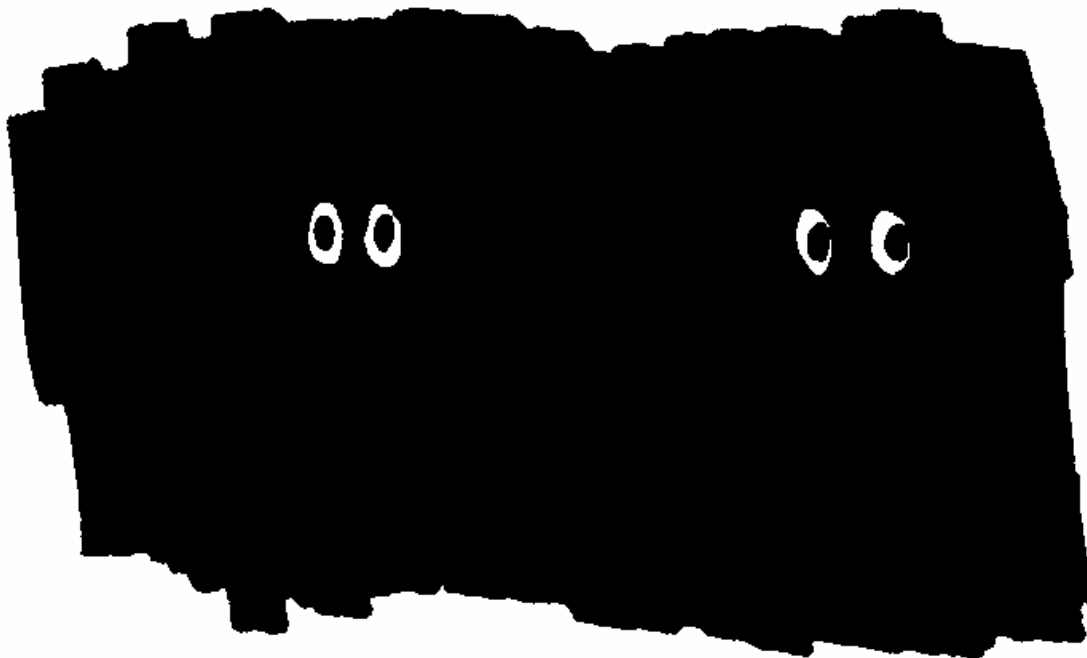
Why leave so many complex systems in the hills to be filled with rubbish or allow the structurally unsound land to be built on?

When the land under and around the houses resting on 250 - 450ft. shafts collapses, will the Council be able to justify it's past greed for subdivision money?"

An interesting and novel day - we spent much of the day on foot walking between mines or along the small dark corridors of the "adits" which are access tunnels to the shafts allowing ore to be taken out.

Thank you to the Librarian for organizing; an impressive and educational afternoon.

MEREDITH REARDON.



"Is this the way?" I dunno, it somehow always looks the same when you can't see it!"

Ed. Bailey.

NARACOOORTE

April 25th - 27th.

This trip had an unusually large number of people attending, about 30. This is even more than the number who can usually be bothered to attend the annual CEGSA-VSA Dinners.

Friday morning one party went to Henschke's Quarry to survey in the recent excavation sites. The cave is still threatened with quarrying but so long as the owner is able to leave it we will continue to excavate it. The rest of Friday was taken up with trips to Wombat and Cathedral for tourist and exploration purposes. Blackberry for assessment of new gate, Fox for photography and exploration and a new cave U116 for excavation.

Saturday saw further exploration in Fox Cave, a tourist trip to S102 and surveying in Victoria Fossil. One group went down to the Lower South East for diving. On Sunday there were trips to Sand Funnel, Victoria Fossil and another new cave, U117.

KEVIN MOTT.

FRANKLIN RIVER RAFTING TRIP

A CHALLENGE OF A LIFETIME!

16/1/80 - 3/2/80

PARTY: **Jim Cundy**
 Stan Flavel
 Barbara Lengs
 Karel Lengs
 Peter Morris
 Terry Reardon
 Meredith Reardon
 Annette Bates
 Ric Hutchings

Setting off on the morning of Wednesday 16th January in drizzly conditions, we looked forward to the warm dry weather that must be ahead of us. We found the Collingwood River to be a good place to test our boat handling and prepare us for the tougher tasks ahead of us.

Jim was an experienced canoeist and Peter had negotiated the Franklin by raft last year but the rest of us were relatively-to-completely inexperienced.

Well prepared for any problem that should arise along the way, we obviously had put a great deal more thought into our trip than others on the river at the same time. However, carelessness and scanty preparation did not account for all the media coverage over the January period of this small territory. There were other reasons for the focus; two politicians from Tasmania Parliament were being shown the river by raft by a party of Tasmanian Wilderness Society Members and a few watchful eyes were on them, (naturally) and a C.B. radio in their party kept their isolation minimal.

Also, a party of Mercury Newspaper journalists were rafting down the Franklin and chose to travel on one very hazardous day - a day that we were well and truly in tents -- a day when the river was flowing dangerously fast and control of the rafts would have been very difficult. Having capsized on a minor rapid prior to the "Thunderush" in the Great Ravine the party lost their boats and became separated, most getting washed over Thunderush in what must have been horrifyingly fast, thundering water and another member being hurled over yet the next major rapid, "The Cauldron" - the names speak for themselves even in relatively normal conditions, let alone after 3 days of continuous rain. This man did live to tell the tale. Helicopters rescued the party and took them to safety - we all watched helicopters patrolling for two days not really sure how our relatives and friends back home would take to the news of people being rescued in this region.

Another party of canoeists had their plans interfered with when one member broke a collarbone and had to be helicoptered out.

More recently still, one man died in the region of Glen Calder (see map). I guess any holiday or sport can be risky but that doesn't make it not worth the risk.

To experience the cooperation and friendship of everybody in our party, the hostility and unpredictable nature of the weather and to be responsible for your own survival in Wilderness was one of the most precious experiences of my life.

Our expectations of good weather were dashed on the rocks! Sixteen out of seventeen days on the river, it rained. We actually spent eight days in our boats and the remainder were spent "sitting it out" in our campsites (or cramped sites!) We saw the calm, tranquil quartzite gorge, the Irenabyss (Valley of Peace) transformed into a raging torrent - normally there is no sign of a current there as the water is so deep. We saw the large sloping rock which forms a boundary to "Thunderush" rapid submerged under four metres of tempestuous water.

From the rapidly flowing waters of the Franklin we travelled to the wider, not much above sea-level, Gordon River. Here we met our match, the wind. It was not enough that the blue sky had always evaded us on the horizon, but the headwind had to bid us a hard-working end to our journey. The long last legs of our journey (days 16 and 17) were spent paddling furiously, because if we stopped the wind would carry us backwards, as it was stronger than the current. To torment us further, we were unsure about whether the "Denison Star" came as far as Butler Island on Fridays, as sometimes it turns from MacQuarie Harbour at Marble Cliffs further down stream. So rather than stay at Butler Island and miss the boat, we paddled into this headwind for Marble Cliffs and when we stopped and relaxed there, along came the "Denison Star" and passed us for Butler Island to collect us on the way back! Gluttons for punishment!

Four walking tracks are there if you decide to take part of the trip or if you need to pull out in an emergency. But, beware! In these circumstances you would not be able to carry out all your gear (your paraphernalia takes about three trips per person on portages etc.) and the tracks could become a dumping ground for discarded gear. You need to go thoroughly prepared with **everything** to make your party self sufficient, from boat mending kits to clothing for all weather conditions.

While I'm on that subject, our party had comments to make on "Notes for Franklin River Rafters" by Bob Brown, which is the bible for those attempting the mecca rafting trip. The notes are great for planning many aspects of the trip but some danger points are not emphasised enough. Perhaps the inexperienced are wrongly encouraged to get up and go, facing the portages, for example, (which is getting gear and personnel from upstream of a waterfall/major rapid to downstream) which involves exhausting trips over the tortuous canoeists tracks in order to reduce the size of a single load. As it was with us, the portages took longer than the book stated, much longer, and we didn't muck around What was it that the sign said under the Collingwood Bridge? "This is not a trip for the unwary..." Well it's not!

Bob Brown suggests wet suits to be optional boat garb - we propose they are essential! Exposure definitely could be a problem especially when capsizes cannot be avoided (in our party we totalled 25!) and so much rain.

For the sake of wet conditions comfort, a wet suit long john or punts are a must. Bob Brown suggests one barrel and a rucksack. Almost our entire party had all goods sealed in large plastic drums which were a godsend. They kept everything bone dry which is essential. They are sturdy and can be carried by harnesses or handles fitted by you how you see fit. It is essential to do a lot of thinking about how to carry this gear on portages for comfort and keeping your hands free to "cling and clamber"!!

A good pump is also essential - a Steiger Quicker does the job well - it pumps on both strokes. A choofer for every three of four people is essential. Fires are not possible in wet conditions, obviously, and firewood is scarce in parts. When you've been standing over a spark of a fire for an hour and it starts to rain heavily you abandon attempts to keep it going and need some alternative.

Apart from some of our experiences resulting in differing opinions to Bob Brown's, we are most grateful to all the information and inspiration we plucked from the literature. The "Sunday jaunt" image conjured up by the film "The Last Wild River" certainly didn't emphasize the difficulties and traps that the weather, the river and the wilderness had to throw at the unwary. However it did give us the inspiration and with that introduction to the great beauty and mystery of the river, we were determined to go there.

.....

Unfortunately time and lack of appropriate caving gear did not permit us to explore any of the caves on the Franklin. Fascinating limestone areas attracted our attention, low overhangs large enough for our boats to enter. Ric entered No: F32 cave (until out of the daylight zone) which was 2.5m above the present water level. Since, I have read that the cave was reported to have glow-worms, have a hole to the surface cliff and was found to be a channel for the perennial river flowing through it ending with a waterfall (Wilderness Caves ... p. 40 and 81). These caves will be lost under the mud of the Hydro waters if the area is flooded by H.E.C. - the Olga River Valley is the only area devoid of caves as they are a feature of the remainder of the proposed site (Habitat Vol. 8, No: 2, p. 19).

I've painted a very scanty picture of our trip - mostly what I wanted to do was to inspire you to seek information about the area and start taking action you deem appropriate to fight for its preservation. It's an emotive issue for me now; what a loss if it's flooded.

H.E.C. BE DAMNED!

MEREDITH REARDON.

REFERENCES:

1. "The Franklin and Lower Gordon Rivers - a Wilderness Pictorial"

Journal No: 12. Tasmanian Wilderness Society.

October, 1979.

Compiled by Bob Brown.

(Quotations and map of flooded S.W. taken from their journal).

2. "Journal Tasmanian Wilderness Society"

Journal No: 7 - December, 1977.

(Bob Brown's article referred to:

Maps of Franklin Rafters route).



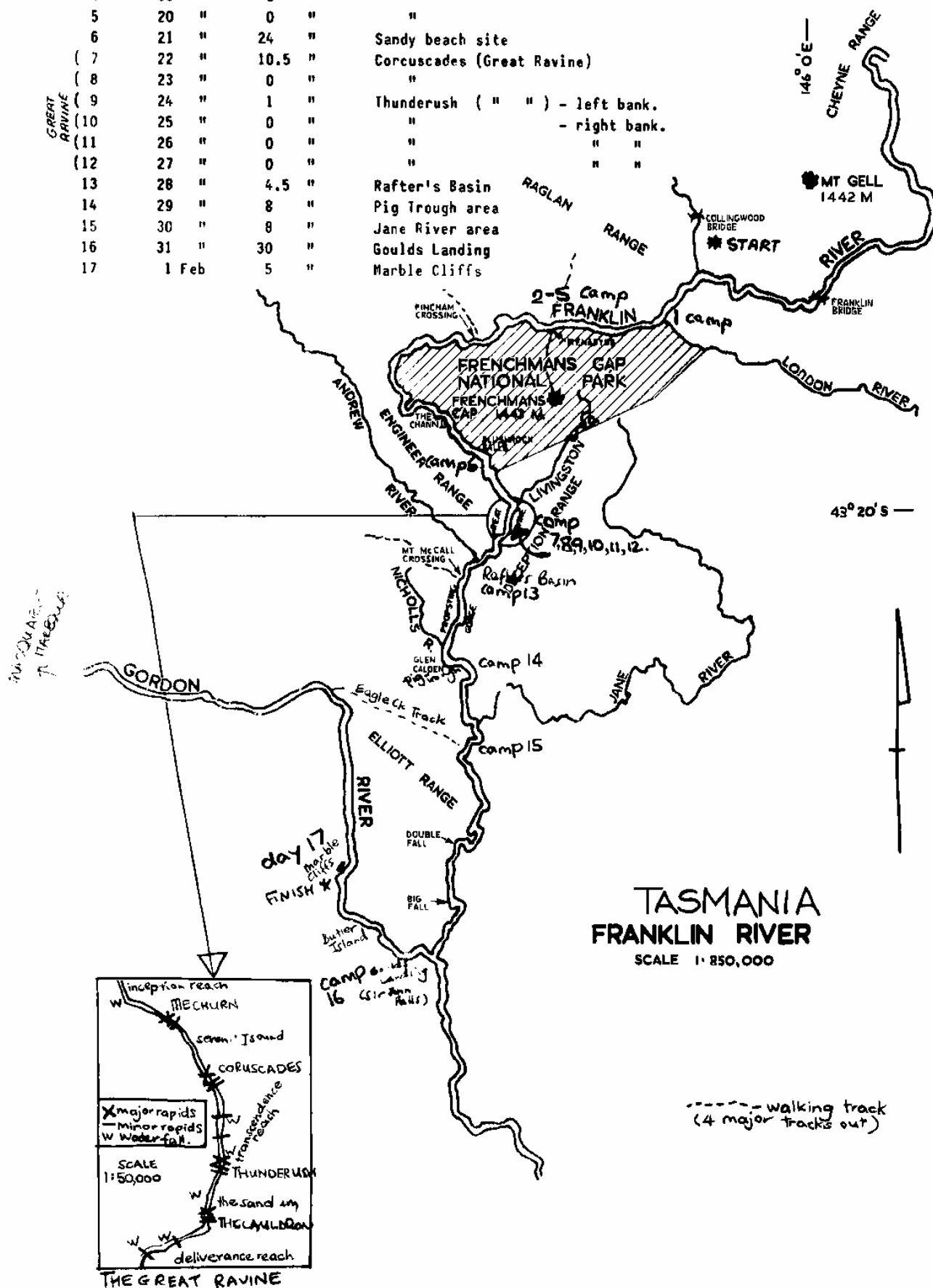
TRIP CONTACT LIST

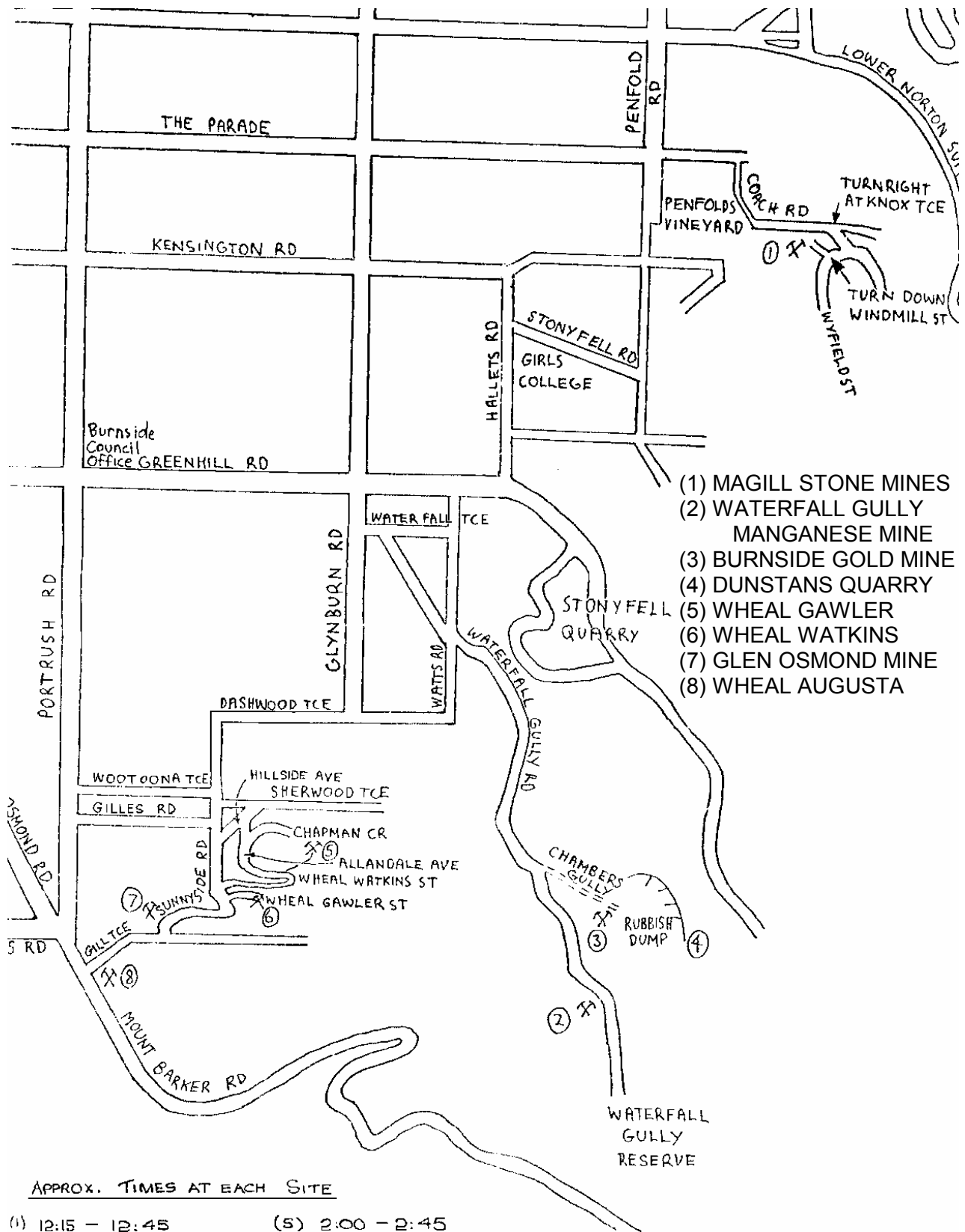
**Meredith Reardon,
Terry Reardon,
Graham Pilkington,
Kevin Mott,**

**5 Loxton Court, Hope Valley
5 Loxton Court, Hope Valley
66 Eyre Crescent, Valley View
3 Harcourt Road, Payneham**

**(h) 263 4879
(w) 258 8596
(w) 2725711 (h) 264 2598
(w) 227 2704**

DAY	DATE	TRAVELLED	CAMPSITE
1	16 Jan	10 Kms	Lodden River
2	17 "	8 "	Irenabyss
3	18 "	0 "	"
4	19 "	0 "	"
5	20 "	0 "	"
6	21 "	24 "	Sandy beach site
(7	22 "	10.5 "	Coruscades (Great Ravine)
(8	23 "	0 "	"
(9	24 "	1 "	Thunderush (" ") - left bank.
(10	25 "	0 "	" - right bank.
(11	26 "	0 "	" " "
(12	27 "	0 "	" " "
13	28 "	4.5 "	Rafter's Basin
14	29 "	8 "	Pig Trough area
15	30 "	8 "	Jane River area
16	31 "	30 "	Goulds Landing
17	1 Feb	5 "	Marble Cliffs





NEW BOOK

CAVE DIVING IN AUSTRALIA by Ian Lewis and Peter Stace.

For many years Australians have relied on overseas publications to gain information on specific specialist subjects for occupation, sport or hobbies. This, of course, has many drawbacks as subject matter refers to local overseas conditions which sometimes bears little resemblance to Australian conditions.

The new "Cave Diving in Australia" publication has much to recommend it. At last here is a book which is written by Australians for our conditions.

Essentially the book covers safety and training of cave divers with maps, tables and illustrations. It is surprisingly easy to read for novices yet it is not patronising and it should appeal to the more experienced diver too with the large amount of information it contains.

Each section is clearly laid out, complete lists of gear and guidelines leave no doubt as to what is needed and safety is stressed and hammered home. Maps and tables are clear and easy to read and the amusing sketches give a lift to the text.

The section dealing with deco tables, whilst fairly thorough, was none the less confusing to the novice diver and could have been circumvented by including the comparisons as an appendix with either the British or American tables being used in the main text. I would also liked to have seen some kind of index to save flipping through each time to find what I wanted.

However, criticism aside, I was very happy to read a book which remained at all times interesting, not boring and I'd definitely put this on the list of recommended reading for those contemplating taking up the sport or those already actively participating. Cheap at twice the price!

DOT PEISLEY.

NARACOORTE

3rd and 4th May, 1980.

PARTY: K. Mott, R. Scrivens, P. Knapp, J. Knapp and 5 Scouts.

After several attempts at hide and seek along the way the party arrived at Naracoorte about 1.00 am. Cathedral Cave was visited that night as an introductory cave for those who had not been caving before. One prospective hopeful declared that a side passage he was exploring did not go as his helmet would not fit. Three people subsequently fitted through; including yours truly to prove to disbelievers that "Mott was not getting fat". Cathedral is still not Mottproof. During the exit from the cave the peer member of the group ascended the ladder first. As he reached the landing and was about to commence the final ascent he was confronted by a large pair of beady eyes proceeding head first down the ladder. After collecting the several years he lost (to the delight of the junior members of the troop) he continued up the ladder. Each successive negotiator of that esteemed ladder had to enforce his right of way with that indignantly insistent possum.

Surprisingly, after a 4.00 am retirement everybody was up and breakfasting by 9.00 am. The first cave of the day was Beekeepers. Several members had not used a wire ladder before so approached the pitch with trepidation. Once down the bottom their fears were alleviated when they found they had an abundance of room in the large galleries. It had started to rain when it was time to exit from the cave. Everyone found the belay very handy for climbing the muddy ladder and slippery surface at the entrance. Because of the rain, lunch at the reserve was the order of the day. When it stopped raining "S102" would be visited.

Whilst waiting for the rain to cease the Interpretation Centre was visited to learn more about why the caves are there and the fossils and decoration contained therein. That evening a trip into Fox Cave was organised. This trip took in the sand castles chamber and the decoration chambers. Most were surprised at the diversity in the nature of the caves that had been visited to date. One of the more noticeable features of the trip was that the areas that are quite regularly visited show signs of deterioration from constant use. The balance of the evening was used up cooking tea or visiting the palatial campsite of our convivial neighbours; Flinders Uni Speleo Society.

On Sunday our camp was decamped early as one of the local hotels was having a picnic adjacent to our campsite. Sunday morning we visited Sand Funnel Cave. The tree growing at the top of the entrance cone has recently collapsed necessitating a change in tie off points.

Peter being the first one down suddenly started yelling abuse and muttering something about the ladder being short. After receiving a definite maybe about the drop only being a couple of feet he climbed off the ladder. Because of the constrictive nature of aforementioned entrance he was unable to see past his thighs to see how far it was. When he was off and out of the way another length to complete the gap was delivered down to him. The extra length proved useful in escaping from the cave.

During the return journey to Adelaide several speed traps were safely negotiated; which is uncommon for Claude.

KEVIN MOTT.

OTHER NEWSLETTERS

The group receives newsletters from other clubs on an exchange basis. Items of interest to our members include:

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| Tandanya 10 (2) | Nullarbor caving trip. |
| Free Caver No: 5 | More thoughts on survey accuracy. |
| Down Under 19(2) | Build your own slave unit for flash photography. |

CORRA-LYNN

10th and 11th May, 1980.

PARTY: Graham Pilkington, Max Meth, George Parker.

Great things were planned for this weekend. It was the trial run of dirtfill tester Mark II. Mark I had screw threads joining the pieces. Dirt clogging the threads was the worry but it was the excessive tightening in use that caused the difficulties.

The dirtfill tester is simply a posthole digger with a small tee handle and a shaft that can be assembled from smaller portable lengths. Mark II has a 0.1m bore and shafts connected by bolted sleeves. It suffers from excessive time to connect the pieces of about 1 minute each joint. Not bad in long access tunnels where the unit can stay together, but no good when a curved approach means dismantling part or all the tester each scoop. A rapid method is being designed for the Mark III.

The tester's primary usage is for penetrating the numerous dirt and clay blockages in Corra-Lynn to see (literally!) if there is any passage beyond. This enables a rapid elimination of potential digs without much disturbance to the cave. At this stage the test holes are being left open to discourage other digging fiends from tunnelling. However, the tester does not remove the necessity of digging even "failed" blockages because it drills straight holes (well nearly!) and cannot see around corners nor through rocks.

This weekend we tested tunnels off the west side of Bushwalkers Chamber and in the Jawbone. The Jawbone area was largely unsuitable for using the tester due to rocks and meandering passageways but one tunnel off Bushwalkers was a success. The first probe, sent at near roof level broke into airspace after 1m, the second hit a rock in the dirt, the third and fourth set 0.4m before roof level both entered clear space. Number five went 1.5m through clay then shot forward a metre and hooked behind a rock ledge. We decided to dig it out and be more careful next time we reach air space!

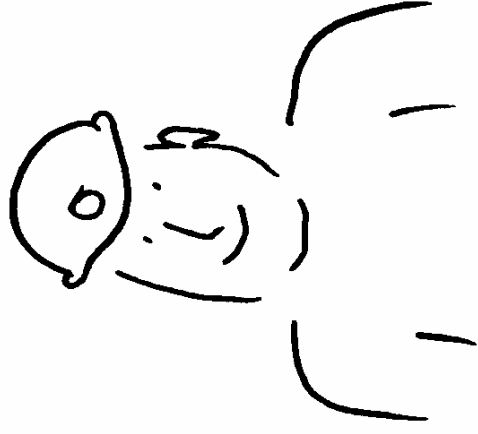
The reason for so many holes was twofold; one was that the passage beyond the dirt filled cross fissure was not in line with ours and hence we had penetrated to one edge of the opposite passage and that passage took a gentle right hand bend almost immediately; the second reason is that excavating clay blocks is hard work with digging gear but was very easy with the borer. Once a hole is in the clay, conventional digging is more a dirt disposal problem. The opposite tunnel was 2m long with a rock wall pinch-out.

The disappointment was not great, the stuffy air conditions even after piercing the dirt had lead us to believe it was terminal (but, you never know, and even then maybe a rock moved at the next blockage...

I won't talk about how Saturday night several houses near us were heavily damaged by the fierce storm and we got wet in our tent in a tent. The inner tent was not to keep the rain out anyway, just the three million mice to the hectare!

GRAHAM PILKINGTON





BIG HEAD SAYS HE CAN FIND NORTH BY JUST
USING A MATCH AND HIS DIGITAL WATCH !

Ed. Bailey

WEA COURSE

'CAVES AND CAVE EXPLORATION'

Our club recently conducted a four week course at the Institute of Technology in Adelaide. Whilst the enrolment was not high it was considered successful with 13 people attending. Numbers on the final evening dropped to 6 but the foul weather and dastardly 'flu helped to contribute to this fall.

The first night was conducted by myself and Kevin Mott. I briefly covered as many preliminary subjects as I could. Subjects such as CEGSA history, ASF, general geology, Cave formation and Decoration were all whizzed through. Other related subjects such as Karst Features, use of caves and rules of caving were also covered. Kevin rounded off the evening by showing the various types and varieties of caves found in Australia, particularly South Australia pointing out interesting features and unique differences.

The second evening was led by Rod Wells from Flinders University and he gave a talk on his speciality - Fossils. He covered the geology and cave formation of both the S.E. and a little of the Nullarbor. He drew a vivid picture of Tertiary Australia which provoked many questions. An added bonus was gained as again Kevin showed us more cave features.

The third evening was conducted by Terry and Meredith Reardon. Terry showed all the gear used for cave exploration covering both personal and team gear such as light sources, ropes and ladders and SRT equipment. He also covered safety, search and rescue. Meredith topped off the night showing something of the Chillagoe area in Queensland, the result of several visits there with some excellent caving experiences.

The fourth and final evening saw Ian Lewis dragged out of a sick bed to give a talk on the wetter side of caving - diving. In spite of his illness he managed to give a very interesting slide show with many aerial shots of sinkholes. Little anecdotes of his experiences made it a most enjoyable evening.

The course has finished but those who attended on the final evening were taken to Naracoorte on the weekend July 26th - 27th under the leadership of Stan Flavel. Here they saw first hand that a cave looks and feels like, the thrill of underground exploration.

A couple of sour notes. The room designated had no facilities which were asked for. Fortunately, I checked beforehand and made my own arrangements. There was an awful mix-up over rooms. First night I found the room occupied so I had to look for another room. On the fourth night again I found the new room occupied. Again I had to find another room. Not only was this annoying but most inconvenient as the students had to be redirected in both cases. Better organisation by WEA would overcome these problems.

Altogether this did not alter the success of the cause. The content was good but those who took part agreed that each evening could have been longer and the course extended by at least a couple of more weeks. It could definitely be worth doing again with these changes.

DOT PEISLEY.

FLINDERS RANGES

14th - 16th June, 1980.

PARTY: K. Mott, J. Mott, P. Clarke, R. Clarke, G. Parker, M. Meth, J. Ellis, M. Ellis, J. Cundy and M. Tysza, G. Pilkington.

After a confused and chaotic start, well on the part of the trip leader anyway, everybody managed to assemble at that thriving megopolis in the heart of the Lower Flinders, Johnburgh. From there everyone proceeded to Wilchata where a camp was set up on the banks of Nappa Nappa Creek.

We were due to meet the owner, Gordon Jones at 8.30 am, so everyone started to rise about 8.00. During breakfast a flock of sheep started grazing nearby. They quickly moved on when told to knick off by a vociferous Mott. A general consensus decided that George's mobile, self serve, travelling food machine offered poor service. Gordon Jones was late, due to vehicle trouble so whilst waiting people investigated the nearby hills, creek and ruins.

Gordon then guided us to the caves which he described as pop holes. The caves are in the west side of an outcrop of dolomitic limestone trending north south and dipping at approximately 80° to the west. The west side of the outcrop is an exposed limestone bluff about 60m long with a maximum depth of about 20m.

The creek on the western side has eroded the mudstone away to expose the bluff. Cave development in the outcrop is not overly extensive. Most is vertical solution pipes with small horizontal passages up to 8m long trending N/S. The feature has been allocated the number F34. Whilst wandering between the cars and feature a fine collection of mushrooms was obtained.

Prior to lunch those with a modicum of sanity returned to the vehicle to be entertained by the talking radio type goon show.

After luncheon adjournment (necessitated by the ravenous rumblings of a mutinous minority of members) we were directed to a "sinkhole" further south, passing on the way an old manganese mine. This sink was 5m in diam. and 1m deep and according to the owner slowly filling up. Although on the edge of a band of limestone it appears to be within a creek bed deposit. Max determined to satisfy his inner digging needs proceeded to dig while others looked, talked, photographed or just plain stood around.

The inspection of the sinkhole over, part of the group then went to look at the "pink creek". This was where a creek had cut through the underlying mudstone sediments leaving a small canyon of streaked and coloured mudstone.

Bagalowie was the next port of call. Because of the lateness of the hour permission was obtained to camp near Clara St. Dora. Despite the occasional light drizzle which occurred overnight there were those who wanted to go caving next morning. The theory of the day's activity was that some would go into Clara St. Dora, and others would descend into Mairs. This way when the "Clara" mob were ready for Mairs they could go down unhindered. By SODS fifth binomial law of infunction and inactivity this was not so. We ended up with the usual chookyard confusion. Eventually when all who wanted to visit Mairs were down, Max, Graham and George went looking for caves. Silly. They found several small caves in the Clara and Mairs hills. Later Max found a new cave in the top of a small hill south of Mairs. After removing several rocks blocking the entrance they returned to Mairs for more gear. The cave has a window entrance approximately 0.3 x 0.4 dropping into a chamber 5m deep and 15m x 3m. The long axis at 160°.

Full exploration of sub chamber under the flowstone was interrupted by the presence of a snake. Being conservationists at heart it was left be. Besides I'm no hero. There were samples of coral in the cave and a stalactite lying on its side embedded in the flowstone. The temperature of the cave (F35) appeared to be relatively high. Once everyone had collected their senses and surfaced lunch was the order of the day before moving on to Mattawarrangala. I defy anyone to pronounce it.

Enroute to the aforesaid heretobefore mentioned Mattawarrangala we stopped at Matt Whim. While everyone was inspecting an HD Holden modified for drag racing, the local cat population invaded Jim's car and raided his cheezels. (Jim hates cats!) That night we camped at the turn off to Mount Sims. The evening's entertainment turned out to be "dodging an exploding mercury battery", surreptitiously put in the fire by Julie.

Most people went on a touristy of Mount Sims. Peter Clarke found out that he is not a human fly so ended up using his wife as a portable step ladder. Max and Co. once again went cave hunting. Graham found a small cave (F36) in one of three dolines east of F7. This was a 4.2m deep fissure cave oriented at 262°. The bottom appeared to under cut but because of the constrictive nature could not be fully investigated. The bottom was covered with washed in debris. George found a cave in the most southerly of 3 dolines south of F7. These were discovered by Dave Turner on a previous trip. This cave and associated dolines are numbered (F25). The entrance to the cave is 0.8 in 0.5 window entrance dropping 3.0m to an inclined fissure cave. It is on the northern side of a doline 12m (diam.) x 2.5m deep. The middle doline is approximately 60m north of the cave and is the largest of the 3 features. It would cover an area approximately 40 x 15m and is filled with breakdown rock. There are several small caves on its northern side. The northern doline is about 10m north of the middle one and is 12m in diam. The eastern side is degraded and slopes down giving the west side a depth of 6m. There is cave development on the S.W. side.

Peter Clarke and John Ellis went on to investigate "Bandoona Cave", (F37). They reported a smallish cave with several small chambers. On the way home Mott, who was between Jim and George turned off to make sure the previous nights fire was covered. When George and Jim met they assumed I had not gone on to Craddock but turned off to Holowilena. Not finding me there they then assumed I found my own way home. All in all a very successful trip where the leader skillfully managed to avoid going caving.

Entrances photographed: F3, F4, F7, F34, F35, F25, F36.
Entrances tagged: F7, F25.

KEVIN MOTT.

CAVE DIVING AT JENOLAN

THREE (3) TRIPS - Easter 79, October 79 and Easter 80.

PHASE 1.

During Easter 1979, cave divers from South Australia managed to get permission to dive in the main underground river in the Jenolan Caves, N.S.W. In the middle of a large complex of caves running off the Grand Arch are 8 tourist caves (all actually join up into a single system 6-7 kilometres long), one of which is called Imperial Cave. A feature of the Imperial Cave tour is a 20 metre descent to the bottom level, where an underground river appears out of a wall and sumps again after about 50 metres of passageway. Generations of tourists have thrown money into the stream, although this of course had no affect at all on the dedicated cave divers.

So in that previous year, Phil Prust, Ron Allum, Ian Lewis and Alan Grundy discovered about 1000 metres of passage upstream and downstream, some of which had been explored by early divers 25 years before and led by none other than that caver-organiser with a flair, Dennis Burke. We were highly impressed by the efforts of those early divers, who used fairly primitive gear and pioneered the sport in this country.

Let's now look at the diagram (see page 24). As I said, all this wet stuff exists underneath a 7 kilometre network which had been explored for 100 years by local Jenolan Guides. During the course of this, rumours told of another connection down a deep floor hole which got very close to the underground river. No-one knew where it was, or if it was just another old tale invented by an early explorer to boost his standing. We all commenced our diving from point X near the Grand Arch; the supposed roof hole was somewhere around Y, but 20 - 30 metres above us.

During Easter 1979, while we were exploring the branch near Y, we found a tobacco pipe in one of the smaller passages. Clearly it did not come in with a diver, and after mentioning it to the guides the Senior Guide (John Culley) remembered that he had lost it around that area while exploring floorholes 17 years before. This suggested the connection was close by, although nobody could find it.

In the meantime, we pushed as far up the river passage as we could, heading north. The main passage stopped in a huge jammed up rockpile where the stream trickled out from the bottom. As you can see from the map, that rockpile was tantalisingly close to the end of Spider Cave where the river sumps. We didn't know that at the time, as the river in Spider Cave was only found a few months later.

PHASE 2.

With the discovery of Spider Cave's river passage and the possibility of upward connections in Imperial, Ron Allum, Phil Prust and Terry Reardon explored the Spider Cave sumps on a quick trip in October. Spider Cave is knobbly and awkward and long - so it was no fun getting in and out even with the help of tame speleos to do the heavy work (we can always find some of those they like being associated with the glory!).

Ron dived deep going upstream in Spider Cave, where the submerged passageway became a squeeze. Downstream singly ended in the same rockpile as Imperial but from the other side. The speleos scrambled about in the roof of Spider Cave above the northern sump but have not yet fully explored some reasonable leads. No other diving was attempted on this trip due to time and effort needed, but the same river in Mammoth Cave beckoned with sumps of its own to explore

PHASE 3.

So in Easter 1980 a larger team of divers tackled the system. Besides the others already listed, Robin Garrad, Jenny Hiscock, Robyn Allum, Peter Roges and Cheryl Bass accompanied us. The object of this trip was to explore Ice-Pick Lake and Slug lake Sumps in the hope of making a connection with Spider Cave by diving. Ian dived Ice-Pick and negotiated a series of small passages linking larger chambers for a distance of 70 metres and 17m depth, but had to turn around due to using up his air - the passage just kept on going (this is heartbreak to a cave diver). Ron entered a very deep and high vertical passage which got longer and longer. He reached a depth of 30 metres which was by no means the bottom and found a small muddy air chamber which didn't lead anywhere. Like Ice-Pick Lake, the passage continued

Newer information from the Canberra Speleos suggests that the gravel beds above the cave between Mammoth and Spider extend to a depth of 60 metres or more. The prospects of joining the two caves look good theoretically, but the logistics are enormous. Ice-Pick may provide a bypass but this is rather unlikely - it will probably rejoin the Slug lake river section somewhere downstream.

When we drew up our maps, though, there is only something like 300 metres to go to join the 2 caves, and therefore the entire Mammoth/Spider/Imperial/Tourist caves complex a potential 12 kilometres or more, and as long as Mullamullang. Worth diving for.

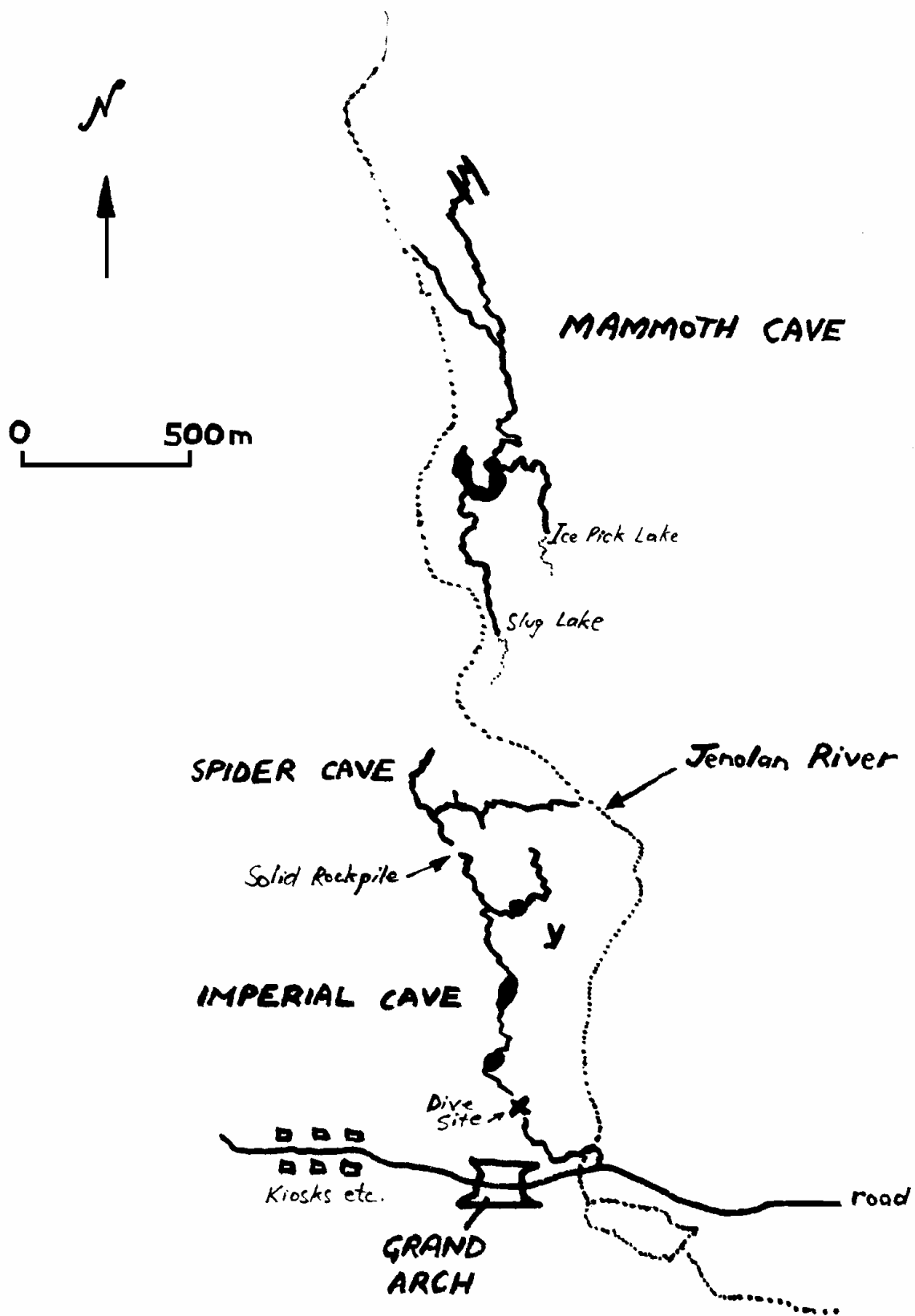
And as almost a footnote, Ron and Peter discovered the elusive floorhole in Imperial from the underside while Ian recovered the long-lost tobacco pipe as proof of the connection.

The roofhole was marked by old signatures on the walls, and a blockage of wire netting and posts in the top of it, all put there during reconstruction of the path above in the last decade. The Guides instantly knew where to look for it, and attempts will now be made to clear the debris out and provide access to the river beyond the sump - up till now the domain of the divers.

It took 25 years until divers got back to Jenolan, and discovered passages seemingly everywhere. Although it's a long haul from Adelaide, we'll be back - after all, who else would bother!? Besides which, the new discoveries there have given a real boost to the guides and the local speleos, and any discovery at Jenolan is noteworthy.

IAN LEWIS.

CAVE DIVING AT JENOLAN



PROGRAM

SEPTEMBER	10	Committee Meeting	4 McRae St, Windsor Gdns
	20-21	Corra-Lynn (Exploration)	G. Pilkington
	24	General Meeting	
	25-28	Cave Ridge, Vic.	VSA
	28	Burleyung Cave - Burra (Exploration)	K. Mott
OCTOBER	4-5	Broken Hill Mines & Mertawinjie Aboriginal Paintings	M. Reardon
	8	Committee Meeting	Beulah Road, Beulah Park.
	(Long Weekend 11, 12, 13 Lower S.E. and Flinders Ranges		K. Mott
			T. Reardon
	22	General Meeting - Stereo Slides	
	26	River Murray	K. Mott
NOVEMBER	8-9	Corra - Lynn	G. Pilkington
	11	Committee Meeting	66 Eyre Cres., Valley View
	18	Sorting & Mounting group slides	3 Harcourt Rd, Payneham
	22-23	Naracoorte - Exploration	K. Mott
	26	General Meeting - Diving in Florida and the Bahamas	P. Stace

FOR TRIP CONTACT LIST see Page 11 of Newsletter.