

CAVE EXPLORATION GROUP SOUTH AUSTRALIA Inc.

c/o South Australian Museum, North Terrace, Adelaide



Volume No: 26, No: 3 December, 1981

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CONTENTS

VOLUME NO: 26 No: 3 DECEMBER, 1981

	Page
EDITOR'S TRITE COMMENTS	1
FROM THE QUARTERMASTER	Meredith Reardon 2
ANNUAL DINNER	2
TRIP REPORTS	
CAMOOWEAL CAVES	Meredith Reardon 3
HARTLEY CAVE	Stan Flavel 4
FLINDERS RANGES	Kevin Mott 5
HARTLEY CAVE (cont.)	Meredith Reardon 6
BROKEN HILL / MOOTWINGEE	Meredith Reardon 6
NULLARBOR PLAINS	Gordon Ninnes 7
CORRA LYNN & BURLEEYUNG	Kevin Mott 8
TECHNICAL AND OTHER ARTICLES	
LADDER CLIMBING	Rod McDougal 10
SPINIFEX HOPPING MICE	Gordon Ninnes 11
WHAT GOES DOWN DOESN'T NECESSARILY COME UP ...	Dale Arnott 12
SOUTH AUSTRALIAN SPIDERS	13
TASMANIA'S SOUTH WEST	Meredith Reardon 15
FRANKLIN RIVER ARCHAEOLOGICAL DEPOSITS	Meredith Reardon 16
PROGRAMME	19

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

EDITOR ' S

TRITE COMMENTS

Having skipped through this edition looking for the interesting bits you will now have returned to browse through the important parts. One of these is our pull-out centre-folds. If you observed these closely you will have noticed that they are in fact trip report guides. If you didn't notice, turn to the middle now and have a look. Those of you who did notice can turn to them and have another look - just so you won't get bored while the others catch up.

Now, is everybody back with us again? Good! So back to where we were before we were interrupted by the noise of turning pages. These trip report guides have been included to make your contribution to this journal a little easier. By your following the step by step guide we can report a much wider range of the group's activities.

YOUR STEP BY STEP GUIDE TO BETTER, BIGGER, BRIGHTER TRIP REPORTS

- STEP 1: Remove centre-folds from this issue (do not lose them)
- STEP 2: Separate into 4 sheets
- STEP 3: In the week following your trip, fill in the details on one sheet (use extra paper if needed) - (typed if possible).
- STEP 4: Return to the Editor by one of the following methods:-
- a) Post to CEGSA c/o S.A. Museum
 - b) Post to the Editor c/o 25 Third Avenue, Forestville, 5035
 - c) Hand deliver at next meeting
 - d) Arrange for someone else to deliver at next meeting
 - e) Use any other effective delivery method
- STEP 5: Read all about it in next issue.
- STEP 6: Get supply of trip report sheets at next meeting or by mail from CEGSA.
- STEP 7: Continue as for Step 3.

Thanks for doing your bit

NIMBLE

*** THANK YOU to Bernie Maegraith for his help in interpreting hand-written copy and for the typing of same during the preparation of this issue.

***** Articles for the next Newsletter are due at the January Meeting. At the same time we will be producing the Annual Report. Please have your contributions for both ready at that time. Thanks for your efforts.

FROM THE QUARTERMASTER...

It is important that any gear that has been borrowed by returned immediately. Please return any gear that you have over-looked to the next meeting or give it to Kevin Mott or myself.

Remember, those people going on trips in the future and need gear need to have it available. That means the gear should be returned to the Quartermaster as soon as possible after use.

Thank you for your co-operation,

MEREDITH REARDON
Quartermaster.

ANNUAL DINNER

WHEN: Sunday - 6th December, 1981 from 4.00 p.m.

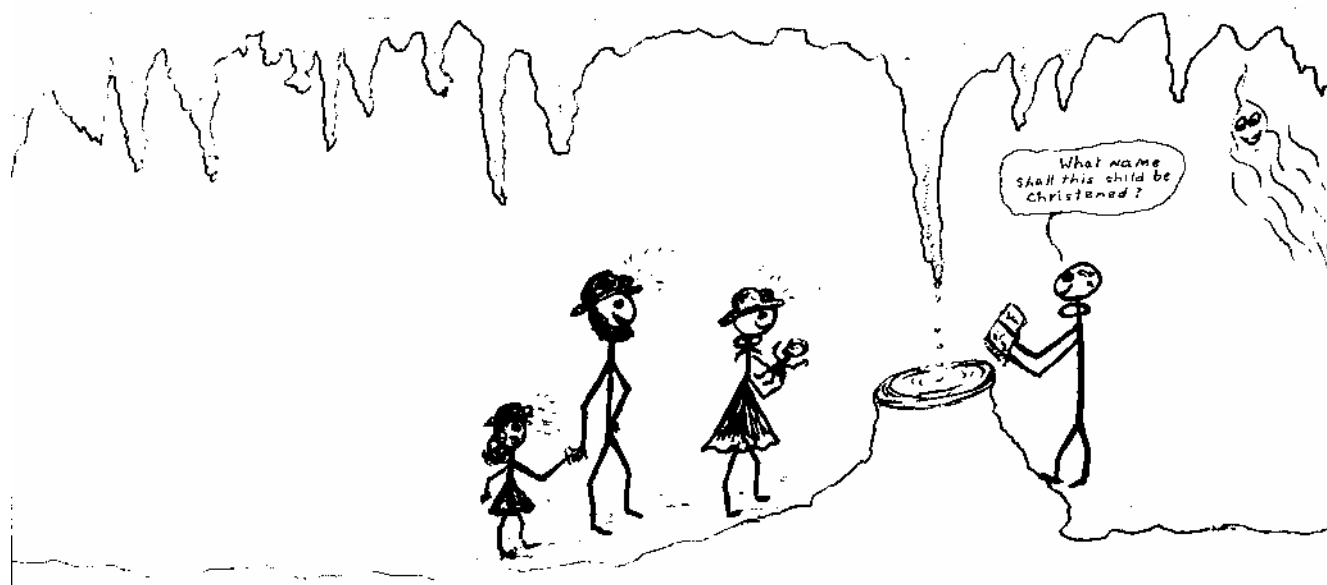
DINNER ABOUT 6.30 p.m.

WHERE: Beach at Kingston Recreation Park

B.B.Q. Bring chops, sausages etc., swim wear, yourself and grog.

PRESENTATION OF AWARDS.

A BIG WELCOME TO CEGSA's YOUNGEST MEMBER



Congratulations to Ann and Graham Pilkington on the occasion of the birth of their son, who was born on the 13th November and weighed in at a healthy 8lb. 10ozs.

TRIP REPORTS

CAMOOWEAL CAVES

Arriving in Mt. Isa on the Institute of Medical & Veterinary Science Bat Collecting Trip, Terry and I were intending to stay only to stock up on petrol, water, food etc. and to fly over the locality. The flight over Camooweal and Lawn Hill was spectacular. Camooweal caves, seen from air as gigantic holes in the flat surroundings, were only surpassed by the gorges at Lawn Hill. This rugged area between the Barkley Highway and the Gulf of Carpentaria, really captivated us and we were determined to get there.

However, it was not to be. Rain (at this time of the year?) fell for four days and nights and blocked many roads, making it impossible to get to Lawn Hill. Even in the best dry weather, those four-wheel-drive roads are very rugged!

We got to know Mt. Isa well, especially the post office, the telephone booths and the house of Ken and Sue MacLean - (what about the pub? Ed.). Ken and Sue didn't know us from a bar of soap (in fact, we would have found it hard to recognise a bar of soap at that stage too!).

We discovered the names of local cavers from Ralph Page's family and Ken and Sue were the ones we called on first. What hospitality! Our interesting stay in Mt. Isa included visiting a nearby waterhole called "Black Angel" to catch NYCTICEIUS genus of bat; going to the Overlander Hotel - (was right wasn't I. Ed.) to be entertained by the Bushwackers, a band we really liked; teaching a class-and-a-half of matriculation students in Ken's class time, 'The Biology of Bats' with live specimens from "Black Angel" waterhole.

While Terry entertained the matrices, I went to the Mt. Isa Mines on the off-chance that I might get in on a women's tour (women in the afternoon and men in the morning). I got in on a cancellation. If I hadn't I would have worn a false beard to do the men's tour - reminiscent of the "Life of Brian"!

The tour was fantastic. It was a highlight of any underground experience I have ever had. Terry never got there despite our efforts to get him to the mine at 7 a.m. for the tour. There were no cancellations. If you are planning a trip to the area, get a travel agency to book you in, in advance, because in the tourist season it is heavily booked.

The tour comprises the drop in the massive lift down to the lowest level of the workings in the silver/lead/zinc mine - 2,200 feet in about 30-40 seconds (I wasn't looking at my watch)! The tour is not for the faint-hearted. I was surprised at the extent to which they educated us in the processes of the mine by letting us see the goings-on. The noise, darkness, heat, stuffy air (at times) and hand-over-hand on a rope down a blasted slope to the lower level was really gutsy stuff!! The mine dudes you out in all the appropriate gear - boots, socks, gloves, overalls, battery pack, helmet and light, and air filter mask.

Although, I think the separation of the sexes on the tour is ridiculous (they say it is because they have only one change room), but they should be commended on their approach to the tours - in educating the public. It is a pity, however, the guide was stuck in the days when women were not allowed in the mines - he gave me the impression he did not really care about my questions as he was condescending and evading detailed answers. He is not a good asset to the public relations of the Mt. Isa Mines.

The cut-and-fill method used there is interesting - the left-overs when the metals are extracted are returned to the mine to become the ground level, so that successively higher levels are worked.

MEREDITH REARDON.

*** See Meredith for more detailed description. Ed.

HARTLEY CAVE

The promise of finding a new cave is exciting to any speleologist. If, in fact, you need to actually dig a new cave, the necessary impetus must be enough to overcome the thought of the inevitable gut wrenching, back straining, fear jerking effort to disclose the secrets of the earth.

Well, enough of that rubbish! The potential for a new cave is being realised by those involved in the necessary re-excavation of silt from the plug-hole in a leaky, dam. The owner of the dam at Hartley, Mr. John Callides, reported the rapid draining of his three month old dam after its maiden fill. This news was mentioned in the "Southern Argus" newspaper and news of the caverniculous fossils (see author for interpretation, Ed.) spread to the S.A. Museum.

The newspaper article was read by Peter and Carolyn Hill (two of our promising cave freaks) and was followed up by their visit to the site and a lengthy talk with John.

I first heard of this cave on Saturday, July 11th and the close proximity to Nairne meant that I, for the first time in my life, eagerly got out of bed on a Sunday morning (also nearly choked on my muesli). Kathy, Peter and I visited the site to find collapsed silt covering the previous dig six to eight feet below. Rain during the previous week had flushed sand and silt in to the sump hole.

The following Saturday, July 18th, a large energetic team of diggers descended on the site and proceeded to talk, watch, eat, laugh and finally dig. Safety lines were rigged and diggers were thus prevented from disappearing into any bottomless abyss. Terry, Meredith, Pat, Julie, Johnno, Denise, Carolyn, Peter, Kathy, John Callides and I dug vigorously for much of Saturday. The avid Argus reporter was there with dogs too.

The dig consisted of excavating sand from along a water passage of four metres length through which the water had scoured in the initial draining of the dam. It is estimated that one million litres drained through the tunnel in approximately 20 minutes. No vertical shafts were encountered and so with the sun sinking in the West we retired for the day.

Rain during the following week proved to be a considerable nuisance. Several keen diggers returned on July 26th to the dig only to find a small stream funnelling down our partially filled hole. Much of the previously dug silt had slumped and washed in the side tunnel. I slithered down the half filled tunnel for three-and-a-half metres to find water percolating down at the end of the dig. Ten minutes lying in freezing water and slowly sinking was enough fun for one day - (brass monkeys would not have retained their virility).

And so we waited. Largely through the efforts of Meredith Reardon it was arranged for the Channel 9 News Service to do a short segment on Australia's equivalent to Florida's new sinkhole.

This event was a big drawcard for cavers and spectators. It provided enthusiasm for a second major attempt at the excavation. Much very soggy dirt was removed and the original passage enlarged, but alas no large decorated or any bottomless chasms were revealed.

Since then John has reported the roof of the tunnel has collapsed making the vertical (?) shaft easily accessible with about eight feet of dirt to move. The continued dry weather means that further earthworks will be more stable.

Let's hope for a big new cave close to Adelaide.

STAN FLAVEL.

QUOTE

Heard on the Nullarbor Plains after a request to clean up a lunch site

"but we are Scouts!"

FLINDERS RANGES

PARTY: K. Mott, J. Mott, M. Reardon, B. Lengs, B. Maegraith,
J. McCormack, G. Ninnies, K. Ninnies, P. Clarke, R. Clarke.

6th - 8th June

At a more or less predetermined hour of departure the motley convoy set out for the rigorous journey to the rendezvous point : Johnburg. We arrived there in the early hours of the morning or was it the late hours of the evening. Anyway who cares, it was dark, windy and cold (so I was told). Camp was set up for the night in the grounds of the local hall.

Next morning we were woken by the melodious note of a score of crows. During the night the Clarke's had arrived from Broken Hill. If not, an excellent frost covered papier-mache cardboard cut-out of Peter was resting in the middle of our campsite. A certain unnamed male member of the Ninnies clan suddenly astounded us by appearing from out of the hall. Apparently a back door key was common to both Ninnies abodes. Yes the Ninnies family was established here in ye olden days as testified by the honour roll in the hall. Breakfast turned out to be a pleasantly drawn out affair with the luxuries of gas, water, windproofness and table tennis table complete with bat, balls and slippery floor. The only fatality of the campsite were a couple of red-backs under the seat of the dunny.

The journey to Mairs Cave commenced with a thorough examination of the ruins at Johnburg. At Mairs Cave the group split up with some exploring Clara St. Dora and the rest checking the locks of Mairs Cave and collecting snails from near the entrance to Mairs Cave. After a luncheon adjournment, the party continued to Arcoota Creek. Here we were led to believe you could follow the fence to the caves. Not so, even the Range Rover had trouble. We then found a track a bit further north which led to the cave. We started to get some drizzly rain at this time. No one really ventured far into Arcoota Creek Cave. Quite a lot of time was spent looking for the cave near Arcoota Creek Cave. Instead we found a small cave to the west and two small caves east of Arcoota Creek Cave. The less adventurous drove the cars back to the Main Road and the rest walked back over the hill looking at the two new caves on the way. On arriving back at the cars we were short two people; Kerry and Barbara. They eventually turned up back at the cars. They weren't lost; we were separated from them. With everybody in tow we finally headed for Hawker and a petrol and meal stop. The meals ordered at about 7.30 finally arrived around 9.00. A warm log fire is no consolation for a cold meal of soggy veges and ice cold meat (at least it was brown). Having thus been fully sustained we headed off for Enorama Creek, our next camp.

On Sunday we checked in with the Ranger then headed off for Eyrie Cave. This cave is a cave man's dream; a real room with a view, being situated at the top of the Bunkers Range. Some time was spent taking in the view, photographs, sustenance (lunch for uninitiated) and snail collecting. It later turned out that Fred collected snails nearby on an earlier trip. That cave-sniffing snout let you down, eh, Fred. The return trip to the cave took most of the day. On the way back to the camp we collected a load of firewood and were amazed at the large number of kangaroos that abounded in the area. The evening around the camp was a night of memorable merriment in which everyone had a 'barrel' of fun.

On the Monday we walked along the creeks looking at the many small caves in the cliff faces. Some time was spent in Thunderdrum Cave exploring and collecting specimens. A walk over the hills sought an outflow from this cave. The most likely spot did not show any signs of cave development. During the trip we obtained accurate grid references for Arcoota Creek Cave, Eyrie Cave, a new cave near Eyrie Cave, Thunderdrum Cave and Yellow Rock Wallaby Cave.

The new cave near Eyrie Cave is on a bend in a creek and is an inclined (upwards) gap in bedding planes. The creek has cut its way down through the bedding planes. Portion has subsequently fallen out leaving a cave 6m long and 6m wide. The roof height at the entrance is about 1.5m. The cave is 5m above the floor of the creek.

KEVIN MOTT.

HARTLEY CAVE (continued)

Channel 9 came to Hartley for a publicity exercise for CEGSA and thrilled a good contingent with the helicopter visit.

The reporter dealt with the topic in an interesting manner and did promote our Club as an active bunch of people. (If the place never goes down to limestone we'll look a stupid bunch of people!!).

I enjoyed my whirl in the helicopter anyway and we will contact Channel 9 again if any other publicity crops up. After all, CEGSA is action and Channel 9 is action news! The latest news is that the dig fell in after more recent rain!

MEREDITH REARDON.

BROKEN HILL - MOOTWINGEE AREA

October Long Weekend 1981

Two cars headed from Adelaide on the Friday to Broken Hill. Those who went were Ed. Bailey, Sylvia Bailey, Trevor Bailey, Jonathon Bailey, John McCormack, Terry Reardon and Meredith Reardon.

Our plans of what to see were fairly heavy and we didn't really know how we were going to get through it all. However, we got off to an early (!!) start at 11 a.m. on Saturday to depart for our first look at mines in the region. Ros and Peter Clark took us to Silvertown first for a quick look at the ghost town and then out to the Pittaway's property where some mining is still going on.

A quick exploration of 'Hen and Chicken' Mine, a disused, and very unstable mine, was very interesting - the timber beams supporting part of the entrance and tunnels were being held together by cobwebs and nothing more!

We were really impressed with the working mine on their property called 'Day Dream'. Unfortunately, our late start meant that we could not stay very long down the mine - it is apparently really worthwhile exploring for several hours or more. Colin Pittaway very kindly gave up his time to show us through some of the new and old workings. An intriguing part to get imagination going was rock fall - a huge boulder filling a cut away chamber - remarkably when it happened years ago, nobody was hurt.

Heading back to Broken Hill so that Terry and I could attend an early evening wedding, a very flat tyre in the Clark's Range Rover was an unhappy sight. We piled into the Bailey vehicle hoping to be rocketed to Broken Hill and we succeeded. Of course, we got to Church on time but the Bride was 15 minutes late - remember Murphy's Law?

Well the day after the night before yielded more pleasure still. We travelled to Mootwingee over good dirt roads and got there in 1½ hours in time to greet the Baileys who were just about to head back to Broken Hill. We proceeded to do a 2 hour walk over the Wilyakali track which included the dam, Aboriginal hand stencils and a rock pecking of a lizard. The walk is really worthwhile, over beautiful conglomerate hills with scuttling lizards and birdlife flying around the dam

The eroded sandstone landscape of Mootwingee has special significance - not only does it record in its wealth of Aboriginal art galleries the life style and beliefs of Aboriginal tribes, but the rugged still beauty of this far-west oasis gives the visitor a sense of timelessness.

Semi-permanent water in the rock pools of Mootwingee first drew the Aborigines from their wanderings across the plains. Today, you can see evidence of their habitation in the rock peckings

and paintings which decorate the red sandstone. This 2 hour self guided walk is designed to introduce you to the natural features of the Mootwingee landscape, the wealth of flora and fauna, and the cultural features, the Aboriginal art, characteristic of the inland.

Little is known of the Wilyakali tribe or any other tribes who lived here before Europeans settled the inland. The age and significance of much of the art is thus difficult to determine.

While the National Parks and Wildlife Service welcomes you to Mootwingee Historic Site, we remind you that defacing is illegal, and digging, even on a small scale, destroys a site or part thereof.

We stayed overnight at the Park and slept under the shelters on top of the tables! Novel! On Monday morning we walked around the Galleries track to look at a rock gallery of shelters rich in hand stencils.

Heading back to Broken Hill we toured the School of the Air where Ros works and looked over one of Pro Hart's galleries.

All in all, a long weekend of variety.

MEREDITH REARDON.

NULLARBOR PLAINS

October long Weekend 1981

PARTY: K. Mott, G. Ninnes, K. Ninnes and 47 Scouts of varying degrees of intelligence.

We found on this trip that to be Leader you had to do almost everything for the group - from organising the luggage up. We were to leave Adelaide at about 7.30 p.m. Friday night, but after much shambles we finally got away at about 8.15 p.m. The shambles included sorting out from the pile to be taken such things as chairs, benches, picks, shovels and many boxes. We still managed to 'squeeze' in such things as a petrol driven generator, marquee and 2 large B.B.Q.s.

After travelling all night (not to be recommended with a bunch of scouts) and all morning, we arrived in the area. After a couple of false starts we found a good look-out over the cliffs and spent an hour photographing them and observing the children at the weekend's first attempt at gibberology.

We then progressed to Weebubbie Cave and set up camp. This was supposed to be a one night camp, but, after observing the time it took to set up we decided to make it camp for 2 nights. Anyway, after a quick lunch (1 hour) we all headed down the cave. All of the group headed immediately to the water and a considerable number entered same. In fact enough entered to make it look like a public swimming pool on a hot Saturday afternoon.

Next morning we moved out and after looking at a couple of blowholes, Chowilla Landslip (more gibberology) we arrived at Abrakurrie Cave. After a quick lunch (BBQ - 2 hours) all had a look in the cave. While down we were treated (?) to a fireworks display - which in that space looked miniscule. Following this magnificent display, all exited leaving behind a volley ball for the next visitors.

Next morning, camp was repackaged and we moved out for the return trip. First stop was the Eucla Sandhills then back to Nullarbor Station and the Murrawijinie Caves. After a brief look here and a quick lunch (see Nullarbor quote) we set out for Adelaide arriving back at about 6.00pm.

Some thoughts - a group this large is perhaps too big for this sort of trip - make sure the Leadership from outside CEGSA is adequate - don't be backwards in putting your foot down on matters of caving ethics - **THINK TWICE BEFORE TAKING IT ON!**

GORDON NINNES.

CORRA LYNN & BURLEEYUNG CAVES

7th - 8th November

CORRA LYNN: K. Mott, J. Mott, J. Ellis + 6 Adelaide Bushwalkers and 6 Barrier Rangers.

BURLEEYUNG: K. Mott, J. Mott, G. Ninnes, L. Ninnes + I. Ninnes.

CORRA LYNN The aim of the trip to Corra Lynn was to show members of A.B.W. and Barrier Rangers the cave. We ended up showing them how obnoxious a few ignorant scouts can be.

We met the bushies and Barrier Rangers at the cave at 9.00 am. Prior to going down the cave we ascertained the programme of events of the Gilles Plains Scouts so we would not clash with large numbers in the cave. We then trundled down into Grand Central as an introduction to the cave. Neither John or myself were overly familiar with the cave but eventually managed to find our way to the top of the Rope Crevasse. From here we then proceeded to Bushwalkers Chamber, the Octopus Chamber and somewhere else the location of which I am still greatly confused about. Along the way we lost 3 of the Rangers who, dissatisfied with pace, undertook their own sightseeing trip. On the way out we found candles burning in the 'Kitchen/Bedroom' area. Several young scouts explained they were sleeping there. We explained our code of ethics and asked that they refrain from sleeping there.

That afternoon John took the bushies to the beach (a rare commodity at the 'Hill'). I gave Rendle a quick tour of the cave and pulled out a mountain of binder twine prior to heading off to Clare for the night.

Someone has been busy in the cave placing ladders at the foot of the Rope Crevasse and Crystal Crevasse. Most found them more of a hindrance than useful.

The next day John had a run in with the scouts when he had to extract a large terd (thankfully solid) from the entrance area of the cave. We are 99.8% sure one of the scouts could not make it to the one man dunny on the surface. We can account for the movements of our party but as the Scout Master said "Did you actually see him squat?"

Although the scouts left the area spotless on departure, I feel that their behaviour is abhorrently irresponsible in their attitude towards the cave. If everyone was to adopt their behaviour then the cave will be of no use to anyone. We can't stop people using the cave but we do expect our ethics to be followed, especially when explained, as they have evolved over the years so all may safely and pleasurably enjoy caving.

Relations between scouts and cavers deteriorated a few years ago and are now only being patched up. The episode at Corra Lynn left a sour taste in the mouths of the Bushies and the Barrier Rangers as well as the members of CEGSA.

BURLEEYUNG:

On Sunday morning Julie and I met Gordon and family at Black Springs where we then journeyed to Burleeyung Cave. (See Newsletter 27 (3) p.7-9 for details). We mapped the cave to Grade ASF 3:3, the surveyed length was 30m; not the ¼ mile as suggested in the newspaper report.

The flies there were so bad that Rendle refused to come out of the car and when he did he tried to get down the cave. Truly a cave dog.

KEVIN MOTT.

QUOTE

Meredith Reardon on the Barter Scheme" I've got something you want"



By courtesy Adrian Beale.

TECHNICAL & OTHER ARTICLES

LADDER CLIMBING - PRECAUTIONS ON LONGER PITCHES

In recent months club trips have seen two potentially dangerous, possibly even fatal, events on ladder pitches. In both cases the cavers involved were inexperienced, and the climbs reasonably long, these being Town and Mairs Caves (30m and 25m respectively). These instances are well worth thinking about. I suspect that the type of problem involved happens more often, even on smaller pitches, and if it goes on, it can only be a matter of time until it happens once too often.

In both cases inexperienced cavers ventured down pitches which are demanding, particularly for beginners, even if not in the marathon standard encountered elsewhere. On their return, they 'froze' on the ladder and were subsequently removed by being hauled up the pitch, involuntarily, in seat harnesses.

Since I was not present on either trip, I cannot vouch for the experience of all the trip members, nor of the instructions given to anyone in particular. I gather though, that both experienced and very inexperienced people were there on both occasions. Although all ended well on these two trips, it is easy to envisage different outcomes. I know for a fact that a seat harness was only taken on the Town Cave trip by accident, since I lent mine to a trip participant as a last minute 'throw it in just in case' with the abseiling rope. If these had not been available a rope haul up the shaft would not have been feasible without risking injury. Secondly, if the trips had not had the manpower that they did, the haul would have been equally impossible. This might have been achieved by use of a winch or by using a car. The former may not however been available, and the second is definitely not advocated at all, even as a fall back. Pulling with a car could be extremely dangerous, and quite apart from this, the cave may well have been inaccessible to a vehicle even if contemplated. (Consider Mairs Cave). Further, in the event that the situation arose in harsher conditions, exposure risk may have been potentially dangerous if the victim and a friend had been left while others went for help.

The solution lies, as always, in prevention. The club does, and always has, left it to the discretion of the trip leader to determine whether an individual climbs into a particular cave. The decision should be based on caving experience, or if this was little or none, on some other sensible assessment of suitability. In times gone by, I recall that senior cavers actively dissuaded enthusiastic novices from going down deeper pitches. Where is this advice now? It was obviously not used on the two trips in question, and I can also recall other trips where more reticent people were persuaded into the cave.

I would think that it was the more prudent part of discretion to let individuals opt out of going into a cave until they had progressively climbed longer pitches and could make a better assessment of their own ability. Perhaps these two incidents will serve as a timely reminder.

The problem isn't only confined to the inexperienced. Even cavers experienced in terms of hours, but not in length of climb, may be in trouble on a considerably longer pitch. Although I could rattle up and down a 100' pitch, I can distinctly remember being somewhat tired and worried (understatement on **BOTH** counts) climbing 210' at Wooltana. What would have happened if it had been someone whose limits had been that little bit less?

Without lecturing further, the moral is obvious:-

- (1) Never let a complete novice onto a long pitch. ('Novice' may not simply imply no caving experience. Sufficient rock climbing etc. and general fitness may be appropriate to allow the person onto the trip.)
- (2) In the case of cavers with some experience, find out what ladder climbing they have done, and recommend against too big a jump in the height. Again, experience in other areas and similar factors may still be relevant.
- (3) Don't attempt to persuade reticent or nervous people to go down a cave unless you are sure of their ability on similar pitches.

While some people may gain encouragement or confidence from some friendly support, and be capable of the pitch, others may be too embarrassed or unassertive to say no, and go ahead even if they still doubt that they can do it.
- (4) If someone doesn't go in, don't make them feel left out. Don't show any disappointment or ridicule them, but support the sense of their decision. Point out that having people on the surface IS important, and that they may still have a role on the trip into this particular cave.

On the subject of what is a long pitch, for any individual, all sorts of factors need to be considered. However, since in CEGSA we are probably talking about South Australia I would personally recommend that the most careful decisions be made before allowing beginners into any cave with a pitch of the order of Mairs or Town Caves. Town Cave in particular should not be treated with disrespect. Although only a small cave, it is very tight and arduous, and reasonably cold, especially if the team is lingering at the bottom awaiting the climb. Furthermore, it may have a reasonable fall of water on a climber during the winter, and these factors greatly accentuate fatigue.

One last thought. Without holding myself up as being knowledgeable in law, I believe that considerable legal responsibility befalls a caver running a trip with novices involved. I do know that in this State, the obtaining by the club of a signed indemnity against a claim for damages in the event of injury is worthless to the trip leader, except in as much as it gives a general warning to all that some danger may be involved. Thus, if you are in a position where you are entrusted to controlling, advising, and protecting a novice you are responsible to a large extent for their safety. Cavers generally would probably not sue a fellow caver in the event of injury this may NOT be the case with their relatives. Think about it.

ROD McDOUGAL.

SPINIFEX HOPPING MICE

Due to a slight population explosion (150% in 2 months) I have some to spare.

If you are prepared to obtain a permit you can have a couple. Like the mice, I will deliver.

GORDON NINNES.

FROM YOUR TYPIST / PRINTER

Due to recent price increases with regard to paper etc., we are endeavouring to keep the cost of printing this Newsletter down to a minimum, hence the new-look with this edition. Bold headings and a smaller type size for text will help in this regard. Your views would be appreciated.

JAN PETERSON.

WHAT GOES DOWN DOESN'T NECESSARILY COME UP

OR

WHY DIDN'T I ATTEND THE FIELD DAY?

What a field day? What a field day?

A field day is a training and practice session for all those interested in survival in the vertical. The next session will be held in Morialta Gorge on Sunday, 7th February, 1982. All those interested in attending should meet at the Tower Hotel car-park, on the corner of Magill and St. Bernards Roads, at 10.00 a.m.

As well as abseiling and jumaring, anyone who is interested can be given an introduction to rock climbing. Even if you have nothing else in the way of gear, a decent pair of sandshoes and (if possible) a helmet should be brought along.

For those of you with young kiddies whom you may be considering bringing along for the day, I should point out that the area is unsuitable for them as the cliffs are about 20m high, the paths at the top are narrow and there is no open area for them to play and be watched.

If there is anything you would like to know about the day, equipment, the area or anything else, please phone me after hours on 352-6942.

And while we're on the topic just a word to those who are thinking about buying some gear. If you have little or no experience you should phone me or Kevin Mott or the Reardons (or anyone with experience) for a few hints before you so much as part with so much as a penny, as the retailers tend to consider their own capital gain to be foremost.

If you have had more experience and are rigging yourself out good and proper, then you should put a lot of thought into what you are creating. Over the past few years I have noticed that cavers are tending towards the complex in their SRT (Single Rope Technique) gear in the belief that the more **THINGS** you have attached to your equipment the more fail-safe it is. This may not be the case. One thing you **MUST** keep in mind is that the sort of caves in which you are likely to use your SRT are friendly caves **ONLY** if you are prepared for them in mind, body and equipment.

You are likely to be abseiling in waterfalls; standing around at the bottom (or top) of pitches becoming numbed with cold whilst you wait for your turn; being so buggered that you would have trouble spelling your name and then having the extra effort of caving in a wetsuit.

So, whatever gear and rigging you are planning **IT MUST BE SIMPLE**, otherwise your numbed brain and icy fingers will not be able to put it together. Keep to a minimum the things you have to do and check whilst you are underground. Don't have any knots, buckles, c-links and the like that you can get away without - as sure as eggs you will forget to do one up or not do it up properly.

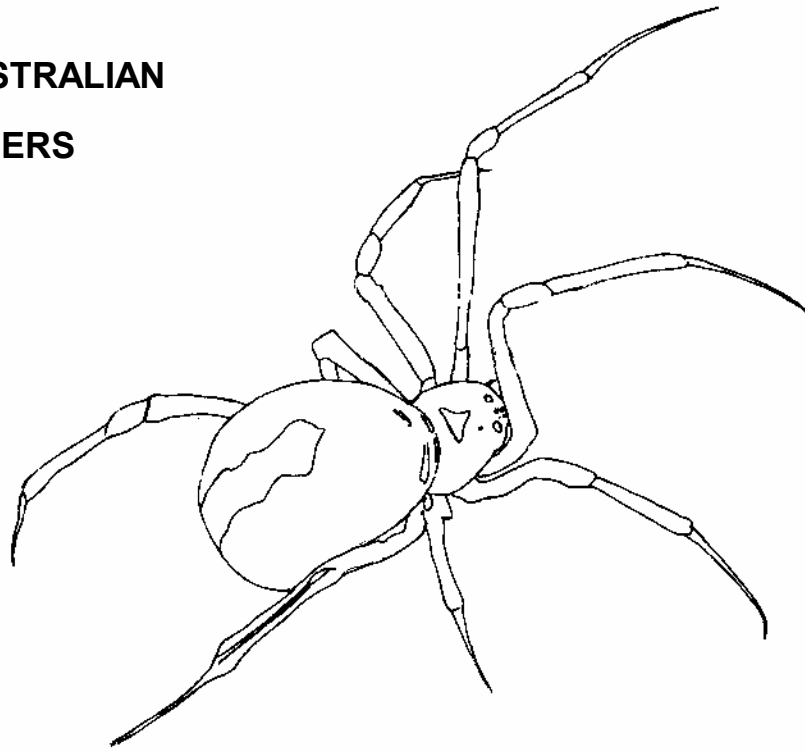
Have big clips rather than little clips (as long as they don't get in your way) as they are easier to handle. Have things which fall off if they are not correctly attached rather than things which look like they are on and aren't.

When you are underground it all looks very different to how it seemed on a sunny afternoon at Morialta. Think carefully about your gear as your life will most surely depend on it.

See you on the 7th February, 1982.

DALE ARNOTT.
(Safety and Training Officer)

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN SPIDERS



Spiders are not insects but belong to the huge phylum Arthropoda which includes insects. The phylum is composed of creatures with an external jointed skeleton. The eight-legged members, scorpions, spiders, mites and ticks, make up the class Arachnida, all of which have the head and thorax fused together and lack antennae. Four other well-known classes, all bearing feelers on the head, are the Crustaceans (Crayfish, Crabs, Shrimps, etc.), the Millipedes, the Centipedes, and the six-legged insects.

Spiders form an order, (Araneae) of the Arachnid class and about 1,500 Australian species are known. All kill prey and are equipped with a pair of fangs for injecting venom. Fortunately, the venom of most species has a very mild effect on man. Some, however, can produce great pain while two are able to kill a human being. All spiders produce silk and use it for various purposes, such as to make egg-sacs, to run out a life-line, to form a parachute to float off in the air as a spiderling, or to trap prey as the orb-spinners do so expertly.

The spider order is divided into two sub-orders - spiders that have the fangs turned downwards (Mygalomorphae); and spiders that have the fangs turned inwards (Araneomorphae). The latter group contains far more families and species than the former whose best-known members are various Trapdoor Spiders (family Ctenizidae). Several species of Trapdoor spiders occur in S.A. The one most often brought to the Museum is **Aganippe subtristis**, a heavy brown creature that responds most aggressively when dug from its vertical tunnel in the ground. Gardening often brings one into the open. Another member of the family is the so-called Mouse Spider (**Missulena**). The extremely squat, blackish female seemingly makes a hole large enough to admit a mouse. The much smaller male is gun-metal blue with basal joint of the fangs and part of the head bright red. The males are vagrants and are often seen roaming around in autumn. Trapdoor spiders can bite deeply and painfully but none is known to be a threat to human life. They feed on prey caught wandering near the trap door at night. An allied family is Dipluridae which includes the notorious Funnel-web Spider **Atrax robustus** of coastal N.S.W. This species fortunately does not occur in S.A., although various Trapdoor spiders are often mistaken for it. Other species of its family occur in the State and all are aggressive if provoked.

Of the numerous spiders with in-turned fangs, the Redback, **Latrodectus mactans** (family Theridiidae), is apparently the most dangerous. Its bite has caused deaths, but in adults recovery is recorded in 95% of untreated victims. The bite is painful. An antivenene is available. Fortunately the spider is not aggressive and most bites result from accidental contact such as pinning the spider by the legs when placing a hand behind or under cover where it lurks.

Country lavatories provide a haven for it; many bites have occurred in them. Only the female is dangerous. The relatively tiny male is rarely noticed.

The Black House Spider **Ixauticus robustus**, (family Dictynidae), makes untidy webs about houses and out-buildings. This spider is often mistaken for the Funnel-web due to the funnel-shaped web it spins. However, it is not aggressive and rarely bites, but some victims report that it can cause much pain.

The long-legged, flat-bodied Huntsman Spiders (family Sparassidae) are common under loose bark and often invade houses where they may live behind pictures on a wall. They run quickly and may move in any direction - occasionally up a leg. They are widely known as Itriantelopes, or 'tarantulas' in Australia.

Jumping Spiders (family Salticidae) are small active creatures that stalk flies and other insects, on plants, walls, posts, etc. They run out a line of silk as they leap on their prey. Most are greyish but a few are colourful.

Wolf Spiders (family Lycosidae) are fast-running ground spiders that emerge from their holes at night to run down their prey. Females may be found dragging around the spherical egg-sac attached to the spinnerets. After hatching, the young spiders often cluster upon the body of the mother - a remarkable sight.

The Orb-spinner or Garden Spider (family Argiopidae) includes a large variety of species that are expert web-makers. They are inoffensive but may bite if handled. The venom of most has a very mild effect on man. The Garden Orb Spinner (*Araneus*) is a squat red-brown spider which builds a new web nightly. The Satin-back Spiders (*Nephila* species), make a more or less permanent web and squat in the middle of it. Their web is very strong and may be gold in colour. The small and attractive Jewel Spiders (*Gasteracantha*), live in communities but each has its own little orb within the extensive spread of web. They are harmless. One of the most remarkable of this family is the Bird-dropping Spider (***Celaenia excavata***) which is often found on a twig with its large, brown spherical egg-sacs. This spider builds no web and never seems to move. If handled it shams death to perfection and will never attempt to bite. At night it extends the first and second pair of legs and awaits the near approach of a moth which is seized quickly. It appears to have some scent lure for certain moths which form its prey.

The white-tailed spider (***Lampona cylindrata***, family Gnaphosidae) is recognised by its cigar-shaped, blackish coloured body and white spot on the end of the abdomen. It often lives in houses where it runs about on walls and may sometimes get into a bed. Although not aggressive people have been bitten whilst in bed as a result of accidental contact. The spider also may crawl into clothes and people in the course of getting dressed have been bitten on the body. Victims report that the bites are extremely painful.

Crab spiders (family Thomisidae) are small species that live on bark, leaves or flowers. Those on flowers feed on small flower-haunting insects. The common name is derived from their ability to run side-ways as well as forwards. These little spiders may be brown, green, yellow or white. All are harmless.

TASMANIA'S SOUTH WEST

As you are probably aware by now, the Tasmanian Government's determination to let the next election rule their choice of further H.E.C. development in the S.W. Wilderness region has caused further set-backs for conservationists. *** STOP PRESS. The Premier, Doug Lowe, (Franklin River sympathiser) has just been sacked. The referendum of November 14th (at the time of writing this article) is still going ahead without the option of "NO DAMS". The choices that are intended to be listed (if you can call them choices) are disfranchising the Tasmanian public by offering them the questions:-

Which dam should we proceed with:

- (a) the Franklin scheme?
- (b) the Gordon above Olga scheme?

(with no apologies to the Editor: 'Gordon have you ever been above Olga?!!!) (Which Olga?? Ed.)

Effectively people are unable to express their view by this appalling referendum. According to the S.A. Branch of The Tasmanian Wilderness Society, a Liberal Government, if elected, would ignore the verdict of the referendum and go ahead with the Franklin or integrated scheme anyhow, mutilating the wild rivers, the Gordon, King and Franklin and surrounding land by denuding hills, cutting roads, and generally destroying whatever is near and opening up the rest to further destruction.

Register your protest or support the fight as soon as you can even if the referendum has passed, by:

- (a) joining the T.W. Society (at the Conservation Centre or see me);
- (b) giving a donation - advertising costs heaps;
- (c) writing to the Minister for the Environment (Federal) to inform the Feds of your feeling that National money should not be poured into loans to destroy the S.W.
- (d) writing to Tasmanian politicians to point out why the S.W. should be saved.

MORE INFORMATION:

The referendum confounds previous decisions made by the Lowe Labour Government - especially that on 11th July, 1980, the government released its decision to:-

- (1) Preserve the Franklin and Dowe Rivers in an enlarged S.W. National Park and
- (2) Build a scheme on the Lower Gordon above its confluence with the Olga River.

To describe the devastation that would occur if either scheme was approved by the people is to touch the tip of the iceberg of encroachment into the S.W. Wilderness area unique in the world and listed in the Register of the National Estate.

The Gordon above Olga scheme would have a 107m high rockfill dam which would flood some 110 sq. km and with its 55km of roads, quarry, worksite village and powerlines, would compromise 500 kms of pristine wilderness. A large habitat of ancient Huon pines, rainforest and native flora and fauna would be lost. Many extraordinary features of valleys, chasms, gorges, caves, peaceful places and raging torrents of rivers would be submerged. Opening up the area would put at risk what little of the wilderness would be remaining - fire, feral animals, denuded hills and erosion, are just a few of the likely outcomes.

So much must await our discovery in the S.W.'s dense rainforest, not only the resources of power, minerals and forestry. Recent finds have created intense interest in the archaeological value of preserving the S.W.

Surely output of power must be high to warrant such a massacre of the wild terrain of S.W.? But this is not so; the Olga scheme would produce only 118.5 megawatts - only 4 years uptake on H.E.C. predicted demand increases. Compare this to the Torrens Island output of approximately 1200 megawatts serving our locality.

The population of Tasmania is less than ½ that of Adelaide and so much of the power is serving industry which is encouraged by cheap rates for power. However, these industries are not labour intensive. Also far from many more jobs being provided by the new schemes, is the fact that short term employment would be created but very quickly the jobs will be gone until only a few would be required for maintenance, patrol work and plant supervision.

The S.W. is a unique world heritage and the Federal Government has claimed that it has offered assistance to the Tasmanian Government to establish a National Park of world significance in the S.W. and encouraged the Tasmanian Government to nominate areas such as the S.W. for the World Heritage list. But incentives need to be offered more strongly and money will need to be provided urgently to save this area from needless destruction.

Conservationists need to be realistic that not every place on Earth can be preserved, but every representational area of a specific type of country needs to be preserved for future generations to say:-

"That is what the world was like."

Wallace Stegner (American Wilderness writer) once said:-

"..... something will have gone out of us as people if we let the remaining wilderness be destroyed if we pollute the last clean air and dirty the last clean streams and push our paved roads through the last of the silence the reassurance that it is still there is good for our spiritual health even if we never once in 10 years set foot in it."

MEREDITH REARDON.

FRANKLIN RIVER ARCHAEOLOGICAL DEPOSITS

information gathered from the
"Hemisphere" Magazine Article
THE EXTREME CLIMATIC PLACE

This article is most informative about the recent finds in the S.W. of Tasmania. It discusses the most important find by Geomorphologist, Kevin Kiernan, in a cave in dense rainforest in S.W. Tasmania in 1981. A member of the team subsequently to work in the area on the discovery is Dr. Rhys Jones, an Archaeologist at the A.N.U. who is interviewed in the article by the Editor of 'Hemisphere'.

The limestone cave just off the Franklin River has yielded one of the richest archaeological deposits in Australia. One excavation produced 100,000 flakes/cubic metre which are pieces of stone formed when striking a fine-grained stone with a hammer stone. The result is a very sharp flake used for cutting, scraping or removing bark from timber, meat and fur from the kill and to make wooden tools.

Interestingly, some of the stones are Darwin glass, a natural glass formed on the impact of the meteorites at what is known as the Darwin Meteorite Crater - from their formation they are called impactites. Their location being approximately 50km N.W. of the cave site shows they were sought out and carried away to be made into stone tools and at some time, left in the cave to be found recently.

Carbon 14 dating completed since the interview has confirmed that the samples were 19,000 yrs old (±1,000 yrs). This puts the information into perspective - the last ice age was 12-18,000 years ago.

In Dr. Rhys Jones' words:-

“ ... It is very rare indeed that you get any human occupation of any limestone cave in Australia, and when you do, the occupation is of brief episodes, with odd visits, over say, 10,000 years. In this cave, however, it is totally different .. “ (*1)

From the samples collected, Dr. Jones deduces that the cave site was probably a base camp of between 30 - 50 people for a short period annually where dirt would cover the previous collection of bones and stone tools. Each time the cave was visited this occurred resulting in a rich deposit of animal bones, relics and hearths over thousands of years.

The discovery of human middens (meal remains) gives indications of hunting strategy and diet. From the remains of virtually only wallaby and wombat, it is gathered that the people had a narrow target for food. The middens are discernible from animals dying in the cave in three ways:-

- (1) from their charred state,
- (2) from the smashed remains where the marrow has been consumed and
- (3) jaw bones and leg bones are the most common found.

Dr. Jones describes what the region was like during the Ice Age. Naturally it was quite different from today with glaciers in the mountain valleys and open country similar to the tundra of the northern hemisphere where it is cold and dry.

Sandra Bowdler has studied a site called Cave Bay Cave on Hunter Island off N.W. Tasmania where carbon dating have shown relics to be 23,000 years old - the oldest in Tasmania.

Dr. Jones describes:-

“ ... Before 23,000 years ago, Tasmania was an island, much as now, with the sea more or less at its present level. But around that time the world was getting colder. More and more water was being locked up in the ice sheets, the ice sheets expanded and the level of the sea dropped 100 metres, exposing a great, dry, plain between Tasmania and Australia. Calculations from world temperature curves show this plain was opened up about 24,000 years ago.

Now what Sandra Bowdler has are remains of man in this cave off the north-west of Tasmania about 23,000 years old - a marvellous conjunction of events. It shows that as soon as this gate was opened, people took the opportunity to go there ...” (**2)

What extreme climates must have been experienced in the journey from north to south? Living in the Ice Age, human beings were actually 1,000 kms north of the great ice sheet and icebergs were probably floating along the Tasmanian coast.

“ ... Here we have then in a cave like this, human beings who are experiencing the great climatic event, the only ones in the south because only Tasmania is that far south ..” (*3)

Dr. Jones draws comparisons between these finds and those classic cave sites of France:

“ ... Although the sites are nearly 20,000 kms apart, the fundamental thing you can say about them is how similar was the experience of their inhabitants. In Tasmania you had isolation because as the ice melted at the end of the last Ice Age, the sea level rose, Bass Strait was formed and cut off Tasmania from the rest of the world. And the two paths came together again only 150 years ago with saddening effects for the descendants of these early men from the Franklin and Gordon Rivers ... “ (**4)

--- A very moving conclusion to an interesting article.

* * * * *

From the article 'Archaeology in the Western River Valleys' by Kevin Kiernan in 'Wilderness' magazine (the journal of the Tasmanian Wilderness Society) I gleaned some further information:-

"... These revelations emphasise that Tasmania's wild western rivers are of great archaeological importance The French sites are still revealing fundamental information a century after their discovery. Flooding by the H.E.C. would not permit the potential of such sites to be realised In the dense forests of Western Tasmania so much must await discovery ..."

MEREDITH REARDON.

*1 - p.55 Hemisphere.

**2 - p.59 Hemisphere.

*3 - p.59 Hemisphere.

**4 - p.59 Hemisphere.



Merry Christmas

PROGRAMME

MEMBERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND MEETINGS FOR INFORMATION ON TRIPS AND
TO HEAR ABOUT TRIPS WHICH MAY NOT APPEAR ON THE PROGRAMME

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6/12/81	End of Year Munch-out at 4.00 p.m. at KINGSTON RECREATION PARK (between Seacliff and Marino) B.Y.O. Food and drinks. BBQ's provided.
9/12/81	Committee Meeting. 10 Chapman Street, Torrensvile.
13/12/81	S. & R. Exercise at Carrickalinga Cave. Meet outside Milk Factory Myponga township at 9.00 a.m.
26 & 27/12/81	Naracoorte - Kevin Mott.
28 - 30/12/81	Lower South East - Kevin Mott
26/12 - 3/1/82	Naracoorte - David Turner (?) + Adelaide Bushwalkers
.....	
27/1/82	General Meeting.
30,31/1 & 1/2/82	Lower South East - Kevin Mott
7/2/82	Field Day - SRT and Climbing. Meet at Tower Hotel on Corner Magill and St. Bernards Roads at 10.00 a.m.
10/2/82	Committee Meeting 10 Chapman Street, Torrensvile.
24/2/82	Annual General Meeting - have your nominations ready!

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EASTER:

Trip No: 1	Nullarbor - Meredith Reardon
Trip No: 2	Lower South East - Gordon Ninnes

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