

CAVE EXPLORATION GROUP SOUTH AUSTRALIA Inc.

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N E W S L E T T E R

CAVE EXPLORATION GROUP SOUTH AUSTRALIA INCORPORATED

meetings held on the 4th Wednesday of each month at 7:30 pm for 8:00 pm
in the Royal Society meeting room, South Australian Museum.

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DEADLINE for articles for Volume 36 Number 3 is
Wednesday 24th JULY, 1991.

Opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of individual authors and not necessarily those of the Cave Exploration Group (S.A.) Inc. nor its Committee.

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EDITORIAL

A lot of attention has been given to Abloy padlocks of late, due to the fact that the committee has in the past 12 months, recommended the use of these locks on a number of gates.

These padlocks although slightly more expensive offer higher strength as they are made of better material, are more flexible in their key/lock combinations, and have keys which are harder to copy, providing increased security for our needs.

Although some gates have not been all that resistant to vandalism in the past, we need to assess the long term security of karst features that we manage, including the replacement or modification of certain gates to allow the introduction of further new Abloy padlocks.

Lately I've heard members asking where their newsletter is ?

It's true, we've had a couple of teething problems putting together and mailing the last newsletter (Vol 36, No 1), but we seem to be over this and it's now up to you!

So if you have any articles, trip reports or programme ideas share them with us, so that we can all read them in a future newsletter and enjoy caving together.

Mark Thiselton

TRIP REPORTS

GIANTS HOLE (P12), Derbyshire, U.K.

7/4/90

Party: Peter Kraehenbuehl, Desiree Novak and Mark Silver(L).

In order to avoid the hordes of people in P8 cave, complete with their bus at the entrance, we paid the farmer for parking on their land and headed for Giants Hole P12.

The inflow entrance is mostly a walking passage until the 10m ladder pitch is reached, which has thread and bolt belays. If you look carefully you can see a Dave Elliot bolt, (Author of SRT training manual by TROLL.) marked with red material and precariously placed in the roof to avoid any waterfall effect. The streamway soon becomes a vadose stream canyon, the infamous 'Crab walk' 688m of sideways shuffle. Desiree asked Mark what you do if you meet another group in this section. We soon found out the hard way, by chimneying up about 2m towards the roof, allowing another group out of the cave.

Soon after this, we negotiated the Razor Edge Cascade, a climb down with some aspects of awkwardness, then a fixed ladder. Along the way we past an area known as Geology Pot, there is a chain handline to some upper levels. This leads to an area we didn't tell Desiree about (she didn't want to get wet in this cave), the Giants Windpipe, a low wet crawl through Phreatic passage. Mark's splashing ahead alerted her of the truth and much muttering was uttered about being tricked into going through the water! (been there, Ed) After a cool dip the passage becomes a more pleasant fossil streamway with some good decoration, including water filled rim pools.

Before the climb down to the Crab Walk there is a free climb up a fossil stream passage, free climbable by most but we had a handline anyway. A group following us were offered the handline at least for the first caver but they were too good for that! So they thought; much discussion was heard from behind our group, with the familiar grunts of people climbing under pressure! They did eventually catch up to us at the "Crab Walk Traverse" (another bit we didn't mention to Desiree!) You straddle the gap until you can climb down to stream level.

A handline/belay is a good idea here for those not used to climbing much in caves. Utterances were again heard about this "straddle the gap" business!

From here the trip is easy back to the Stream Pitch and to my horror I had to climb a LADDER, belayed by someone else! What no SRT! Oh the sheer embarrassment of it all! (it's good to get back to basics now and then, Ed)

Giants Hole was a top trip and again those in wetsuits (all two of them!) told me how warm they stayed when traversing the Giants Windpipe. Oh well, perhaps I'm hydrophilic!

Peter Kraehenbuehl

MERLINS' MINE, Derbyshire, U.K.

10/5/90

Peter Kraehenbuehl, Phil Brown, Fred and Mark Silver (L).

This after work 'quickie trip', eventuated after a protracted dry spell and the rumour - spread by Phil - about the sumps drying out enough to prevent the usual total immersion problems. (you must be getting old Krunchy, Ed)

There are two entrances, we went in the smaller, lower one which follows a mined and enlarged natural passage, leading to a partly shored 9m ladder pitch. A squeeze and drop down to a junction gains the natural cave passages, the Merlins' Streamway.

Taking advantage of the very low water levels we crawled the normal low arch and down to the start of Shags' Sump (rope in place).

Back to the main streamway we went through sump 1, which is 18m long and diving guidelines are in place. This low crawl can be free dived when full, but it only gave us wet knees. More wetness ensured as we went from sump to sump - no longer sumps but.....Merlins' 2, 3 (which can be bypassed) and 4, which leads to an end chamber of walking height and greater, with straws on the roof. It is here that you encounter sump 5, which was still a sump and impassable. It was great to see a cave that many miss because of the normally high water levels.

I was told that all that the cool water was a pleasant and refreshing trip by those with wetsuits on! I could only agree after a couple of ciders at a local pub on the way 'home' - after all wet fibrepile is a tad heavier and more uncomfortable than wet wetsuit!

Peter Kraehenbuehl

FLINDERS RANGERS

April 24-28 1991

Stan Flavel and Clan plus friends.

The night was stormy, (sounds like a good start to a trip) as we started out on yet another Flinders Ranges expedition. This exploration combined with a tourist caving trip was to be something different because the average age of the cavers was only 6.

Originally the trip was to have concentrated around the Mt Sims and Arcoota Creek area to explore some leads for new caves, but due to the threatening weather experienced at Orrorroo we decided to head north to Oraparinna for shelter. While at Oraparinna we visited Yellowfoot Cave F33 for a twilight trip to visit the bats (3 noted) and to introduce young Ben Reardon at 15 months of age and Elysia Flavel at 3 years to the joys of real caving. After a few tentative pauses they both seemed to enjoy the fact that they were being encouraged to get amongst all the cave dirt.

The next day saw the keen contingent of young and old cavers aspire to the summit of the rocky crag in the Bunkers Range, home to the exhilarating Eyrie cave F15. The walk to this cave is considerably easier to young and old with the new eastern access track available. Eyrie Cave is a fine example of a dusty cave filled with guano, dust, bones, more dust, spectacular decoration, even more dust (That much dust Eh!, Ed.) and the most spectacular entrance panoramic view of any Flinders Ranges Cave. That night Terry gave an invited talk on bats to the eager crowd at Wilpena. Later we assembled at a dam nearby and listened to and caught a solitary bat which was shown around to wide-eyed children and parents. The night was organized as part of the School holiday program run by NPWS and was very successful.

The next day the young cavers (and us oldies) were keen to discover more hidden underground delights. I decided that a reward for good behaviour was in order and so a trip to the Frozen Waterfall, was in order. This spectacular 30 metre high limestone deposit has several small caves in it: F65 and F66 one of which is well decorated and above ground. An easy climb to the top gave the children a wonderful playground in a well vegetated valley below the peak of Mt Carnaervon.

Heading south, the caving party travelled to an overnight stop at Holowilena Station. Clara St Dora Cave was tackled by the junior cavers and much delight was had. However the three dead kangaroos in the entrance leave a bit to be desired.

In conclusion I might say that caving is an activity for all ages and children should not be excluded from any but the most dangerous of this State's caves. Children are inquisitive and adventurous and usually follow instructions closely. (I always read the riot act to them before entering a cave) Some adults I know are less than co-operative in this respect.

Stan Flavel

TECHNICAL & OTHER ARTICLES**MEMBERSHIP**

Congratulations to the following members.

Transfer to Full Membership.

Eddy Rubessa

Full Membership

Brian Rivett

35 Hambridge Rd
Elizabeth West, 5113
Ph. 255 3525

TOURIST TRIP THROUGH CEGSA RECORDS

Many people do not ever see the working Records system of a group such as CEGSA.

I will be holding a Records Day at Murray Rd, Inglewood on the 29th of June. Just to entice the uninitiated out on what will probably be a cold, wet, winter day there will be a BYO barbecue under cover to enthuse you.

There will be several projects to undertake simultaneously including updating of cave reports, cross-referencing, map repair and general organization plus inputting data into computer database.

Please let me know if you can come and don't be afraid to bring kids along, besides the weather everywhere else is so lousy why not come along and rave on with us anyway.

Stan Flavel

If you: want to go on a trip,
 are planning a trip,
 would like to learn specific skills,
 want to use your talents or skills.

Then LET the Membership Liaison Officer KNOW

THE BONES OF CORRA-LYNN

This is a summary of a paper presented at the Conference on Australian Vertebrate Evolution, Paleontology and Systematics, in Alice Springs at Easter 1991.

The caves at Curramulka were known even before the town was established. Edward Snell recorded his visit to the 'Caverns' in 1850, noting that there were piles of bones in some of the chambers. These bones were, however, essentially modern, and while recording the recent fauna of the area, are not the subject of this note.

Correll's Cave was one of the first visited by the fledgling CEGSA in 1955. Modern bones of the now almost extinct bettong Bettongia lesueur were collected for the Museum, but no fossils were found during their explorations or for many years thereafter.

In January 1985, Graham Pilkington brought out the first truly fossilised bones from the now renamed Corra Lynn Cave. These were at the time, unidentifiable wallaby jaws and bones. Subsequent trips for better material produced a giant koala (March 9, 1985), a giant ringtail possum (March 30) and other distinctive fossils. Fossils have now been found at several sites around the edge of an as-yet-unpenetrated zone of the cave, determined by Graham's surveys.

As of now, the fossils fall into at least 27 species of vertebrates, mostly marsupials. There have been one or two frog bones, a couple fragments of turtle, several bones of snakes, blue tongues and goannas and numerous vertebrate and ribs of the giant python Wonambi. Only one species of bird has been recognised - a giant flightless bird referred to Ilbandornis, known previously only from late Miocene deposits of central Australia. There are two species of dasyurids (represented by 4 specimens), a thylacine jaw, two species of koala (one similar to the living one, the other nearly twice as large), three species of wombats, possibly two species of diprotodontid (only fragmented teeth), a species of Palorchestes similar to one from central Australia, a couple small fragments referred to Thylacoleo, the giant ringtail possum, a small glider (one jaw), a small potoroo (two specimens) and a variety of kangaroos: the most abundant are two small wallabies of different sizes which may be different species of Baringa, an extinct genus: a middle sized wallaby Troposodon represented by five jaw fragments, a giant wallaby Protemnodon (the size of a grey kangaroo) and a short faced kangaroo Simosthenurus.

Unfortunately, there is no known way to date these fossils directly. There is no charcoal preserved in the deposit, and in any case it is useful for radiocarbon dating only for the past 40,000 years. Although there is flowstone associated with the bones in one place, the age indicated by the fossils is far

older than the 200,000 years obtainable by uranium series dating to flowstone. Instead, we must look at the fossil themselves, comparing them with other faunas from dated sites. This is difficult in Australia, because so few vertebrate fossil sites are directly datable, but a relative age scheme has been established. Thus, the Ilbandornis, Palorchestes and possibly one of the diprotodontids is similar to species from the late Miocene Alcoota Fauna of central Australia, the Prontemnodon is similar in some respects to several Pliocene species from Queensland, Victoria and New Guinea, and the Troposodon is similar to one from a Pliocene site in New South Wales. There is also negative evidence - the total lack of any rodent remains suggests that rats had not yet reached Australia: an arrival during the Pliocene is indicated by several sites in Queensland and Victoria. Thus, in summary, the fossils appear to be of Mio - Pliocene age, about 5 million years, which makes this the oldest known cave deposit in Australia and possibly one of the oldest in the World.

Another interesting aspect is the light the fossils throw on the environment at the time. The high number of arboreal species (4) and the absence of grazing kangaroos indicate that Yorke Peninsula in the early Pliocene was well vegetated with forest and a substantial shrubby understorey for browsing animals.

Neville Pledge.

CAVE LEEUWIN

The following extract from the proceedings of CAVE LEEUWIN, Margaret River, W.A., December 1990 / January 1991 have been reprinted for your information.

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FENGLIN KARST (TOWER AND CONE KARST) IN CHINA.	Dr Zhu Xue Wen
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 35(2) June 1990
 35(3) September 1990

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B	Biological	Bo	Botanical
D	Description	Di	Diving
E	Exploration	H	History
M	Map	P	Photography
Pa	Palaeontology	S	Survey
Sc	Scientific	Sr	Search & Rescue
To	Tourist	W	Work

The index is divided into the following categories:

Caving activity by region
 Technical and other articles

CAVING ACTIVITY

Caving activities are listed by Cave number, newsletter reference, author and activity

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PROGRAMME

JUNE

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12	Committee Meeting	
15/16	Upper South East - Naracoorte Area	Stan Flavel
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26	General Meeting - "HOLES IN RECORDS"	Stan Flavel

JULY

6/7	Yorke Peninsula - Corra-Lynn Expedition	Graham Pilkington
10	Committee Meeting	
13/14		
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24	General Meeting - SINGLE ROPE TECHNIQUE	Peter Kraehenbuehl
28	S.R.T. Training Session	Peter Kraehenbuehl
	Venue to be advised	

AUGUST

3/4		
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14	Committee Meeting	
17/18		
24/25		
28	General Meeting - DARREN CILAU, WALES	Steve Milner
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SEPT

22-Oct 12	Australian Expedition to Old Homestead Cave, Nullarbor Plain	Graham Pilkington
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NOVEMBER

16/17	Western Victoria - joint CEGSA/VSA; includes Dinner	Mark Sefton
????	Punyelroo survey	Mark Sefton
????	S.O.S. Cave	Mark Sefton

Check with the Membership Liaison Officer for any additions or alterations to the program.