

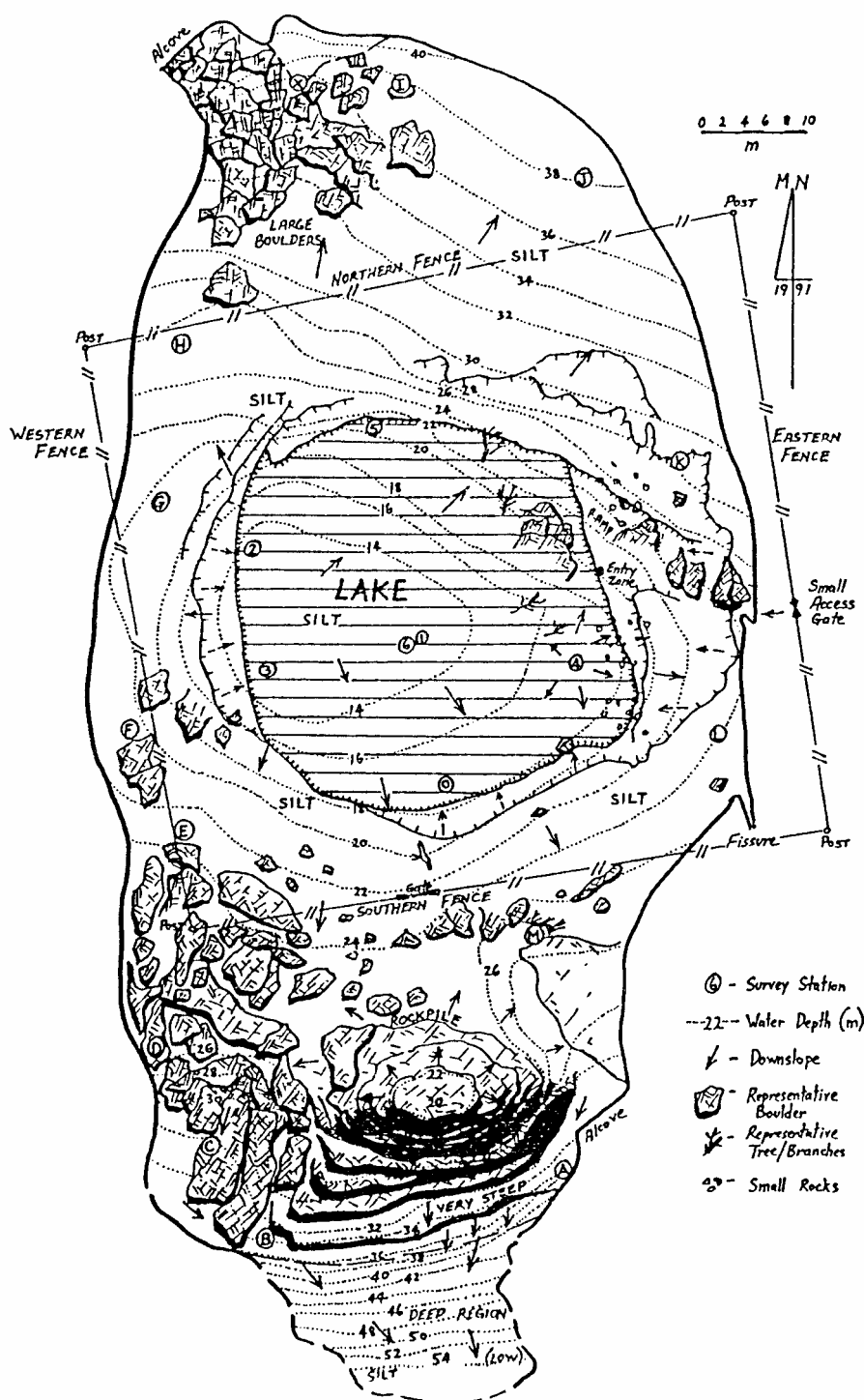
PO Box 144 Rundle Mall, Adelaide, 5000

Volume 37 Number 1

March 1992



NEWSLETTER



CAVE EXPLORATION GROUP SOUTH AUSTRALIA Inc.

Meetings held on the 4th Wednesday of each month, except December, at 7.30pm in the Royal Society meeting room, South Australian Museum.

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FRONT COVER: Plan View of 5L42 - Ten Eighty Sinkhole, supplied by Peter Horne.

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Deadline for articles for Volume 37 Number 2 is Wednesday 22nd April, 1992.

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

EDITORIAL

Welcome to yet another New Year, promising to bring more changes and challenges to our lives.

This year sees the introduction of a new Committee and Office Bearer Structure within our Group, with many new faces to fill those positions.

Congratulations to those people who have accepted the nomination to fill these various positions for the following twelve months, your invaluable assistance will ensure that our Group will continue to exist and for Speleology to advance.

Currently another small group of keen cavers are completing the Competent Caver Course, being run in conjunction with the Scout Caving Group of South Australia. Congratulations to both those cavers attending the course and those dedicated cavers who are running this course - Well Done! It is important that we all continue to learn and practice those skills and techniques that will make our caving safer.

What makes us a good Caver? It's not just turning up on the day to join a trip and visit a particular Karst feature! No! There is the need to plan the trip, even if it is only a single day activity. There is the land owner/managers permission, the members of the party, their experience and skills. The personal caving gear required along with any particular equipment needed to safely negotiate access down and up pitches. This will need to be booked, picked up, cleaned up after the trip and returned to the Quartermaster. There may be the need to collect fees for such a trip to cover possible Key Hire, Gear Hire and any other costs incurred in organising such a trip. Familiarisation of the local Search and Rescue procedures, including the nearest phone location and medical help. Just to name a few!

Let us all continue to take an active part in the way we run our trips to ensure that they continue to be enjoyable and safe.

To assist in publishing this Newsletter, I would appreciate receiving any Trip Reports, drawings, cartoons, photographs or any other articles that could be included in future editions. Do not be shy, send them to me.

Mark Thiselton

TRIP REPORTS

PORT LINCOLN AREA

7th - 14th July 1991

Party: Gordon Ninnes and various students and teachers from St. Michael's College, Henley Beach.

It was intended to visit several of the features in the Port Lincoln area as part of a Year 12 S.A.S. Geography excursion. Caving was offered as an elective section of the excursion.

Due to a number of problems, mainly access and time, only one of the recorded caves in the area E12 was visited. However, four new features have been found, and three of these are probably worth further visits for further exploration.

If you intend visiting this area, you will find the location map 5E.CEG129 invaluable because it shows you, apparently accurately, just where many of the caves actually are. However if you depend on current master-sheet grid references, you could wind up in deep trouble! For example, among those that could easily be checked, the following mistakes could be found: the grid reference for E12 puts it about 300m out into Proper Bay so don't try to drive to the grid reference. E59, E60 and E61, presumably, from the CEGSA location map and descriptions, all sea caves, are all master-sheet grid referenced about one kilometre inland. The master-sheet grid reference for E64, definitely described as a sea cave, puts it 500 metres north of the CEGSA location map site and some 200 metres inland.

Those master-sheets that could have grid references updated after this trip have had notes added so look for them, those suspect are so noted.

If you intend to visit caves to the west of Lincoln check access well in advance. Most of the country appears to be controlled by the Engineering and Water Supply, as it is where a lot of the local drinking water is drawn from. They have locked gates controlling these areas. A few features are on NPWS land. Some of the land is privately owned, possibly by B.H.P. who run a railway line through the area.

E12 was under the control of the EWS until recently, but is now under joint control with them and National Parks. (Theoretically the EWS have control of water and that area under the ground), while the National Parks control the surface area. Just who controls the cave might be tricky to work out but the local ranger, who did not now that they had a cave on the park, seemed to think that the National Parks would control it. In any case no one seemed interested in stopping people from entering the cave. A track, one of many in the area, leads directly to it and then further to the foreshore.

E12 is basically a single low passage, extending about 50m east and 85m west of the entrance. There is some rubbish, including broken glass, in the entrance. There are some candle soot initials at the end of the easiest bits, but not very many.

The first of the new features to be recorded (now numbered E73) was found about 150m east of E12. It is a 15m diameter, semicircular collapse with some possible leads that need to have the rocks pulled out before any passage could be pushed. It is possible to see a couple of metres beyond some of these. It appears to be the collapsed entrance to a sea cave, it is only 15m off the water, but the back end of it is close to being in line with the projected western end of E12. At its highest point the collapse is about 3m high.

The next three features visited (now numbered E74, E75, E76) are found on the Coffin Bay Peninsula and are on Coffin Bay National Park Land. Do not try to visit these without National Parks permission, 4WD, some good local knowledge of the tides, and, depending on the tides, being prepared to stay the night. With several sand dunes and marshy bits to be crossed and a couple of places where high tides periodically cut the 4WD track. These features can all be found along the coast, near the Black Springs camping area and are within about 300m of each other.

The first to be found E74 was a 3m by 0.5m slit that dropped 1m to a sand filled floor. It is located alongside a Park Vehicles Only track near the Black Springs camping area. Digging may prove fruitful.

The next feature, E75, after some discussion was shown to us by the Ranger. The Ranger claimed that in the past it has been partially excavated by the Museum looking at Aboriginal remains. However, Graham Pretty, the Curator of Archaeology says that the Museum has no record of this, nor does Neil Draper, the NPWS Archaeologist. The cave looks as if it began life as a sea cave but erosion is now continuing as the wind scours out calcrete beds under the cap rock. It begins at sea level and runs up at about 20° slope for some 30m with about 15m of this being entrance. Leads continue from that point further into the hill. These look promising, but were not pushed due to the inexperienced nature of the group. Some surface animal bones were collected and forwarded to the Museum. These have been tentatively identified as rat, bandicoot and bird. A low grade map is being prepared.

The forth E76, is a combined sea cave entrance (mostly blocked), 2.5m deep blowhole entrance, and passage of unknown length. Entry would be easiest through the blowhole entrance.

There are a lot of other dolines and indications of caves in the area, but until a group with more equipment and combined skills visit the area, information will be sparse. Probably 20 sea caves of reasonable size were seen in passing but no accurate locations were obtained. The Ranges reported seeing "large" sea caves in the areas of Point Whidbey on the western end of Coffin Bay Peninsula and along the coast from Jussieu Bay to Memory Cove on the southeast corner of Lincoln National Park.

Location references and maps with paced distances have been prepared for all new number caves and all entrances were photographed for records.

Gordon NINNES

MOUNT GAMBIER, THE FLINDERS RANGES AND OTHER INTERESTING PLACES VISITED IN 1991

Hi there, folks! Yep, I'm still alive and flipping ... even though you have not seen anything controversial from this writer in the Newsletter of late!

Not that anyone would be particularly interested, but I thought I'd better write a brief report of my caving activities during 1991 just in case nobody else could be bothered!...

My year's underground exploits started rather strangely this time, as I was helping my friends, Yen and Chi, to visit their family in Vietnam. We spent some time at a place called Cu Chi, which is an amazing 200-kilometre network of low and horrible (not to mention hot, humid and claustrophobic) tunnels which were dug and used as bunkers and escape routes by the Viet Cong during the Vietnam war. Unlike our copper and opal mines, however, the Cu Chi tunnels were quite difficult to negotiate; in fact, one 45-minute exploration almost claimed the life of one of my Vietnamese friends when he suffered a severe asthma attack while moving through a low bit!

I almost didn't particularly enjoy the "squelchy splat" feeling (right between the eyes!) when I ran into a large bat of some type in one passage ... sorry, Terry, I could not get it out of the country. (Probably had rabies, too - but then, nobody would be able to tell by observing ME!)

A week after returning to good ol' Oz - I've still got bitumen grit in my teeth from kissing the tarmac! - I found myself in cold, overcast Mount Gambier coordinating another brief research study in the Blue Lake. A highlight of this trip was the bolt of lightning which I saw (though unbelievable torrential rain) as it struck some trees on the ridge around the southern side of the lake. As usual, the brilliant turquoise-blue colour of the water quickly fade to a gloomy 4-metre vis. grey haze about 20m down, but the presence of an "Aquazep" (sort of like a battery-powered torpedo which you ride on) and towing lines made things a lot more enjoyable for a change (thanks, Chris and Paul!) The Lake was also graced with several other interesting wet suit clad biological life-forms which we all appreciated (but etiquette prevents me from identifying either Sonia or Mia, who, I'm sure, would kill me if I referred to them in this manner!)

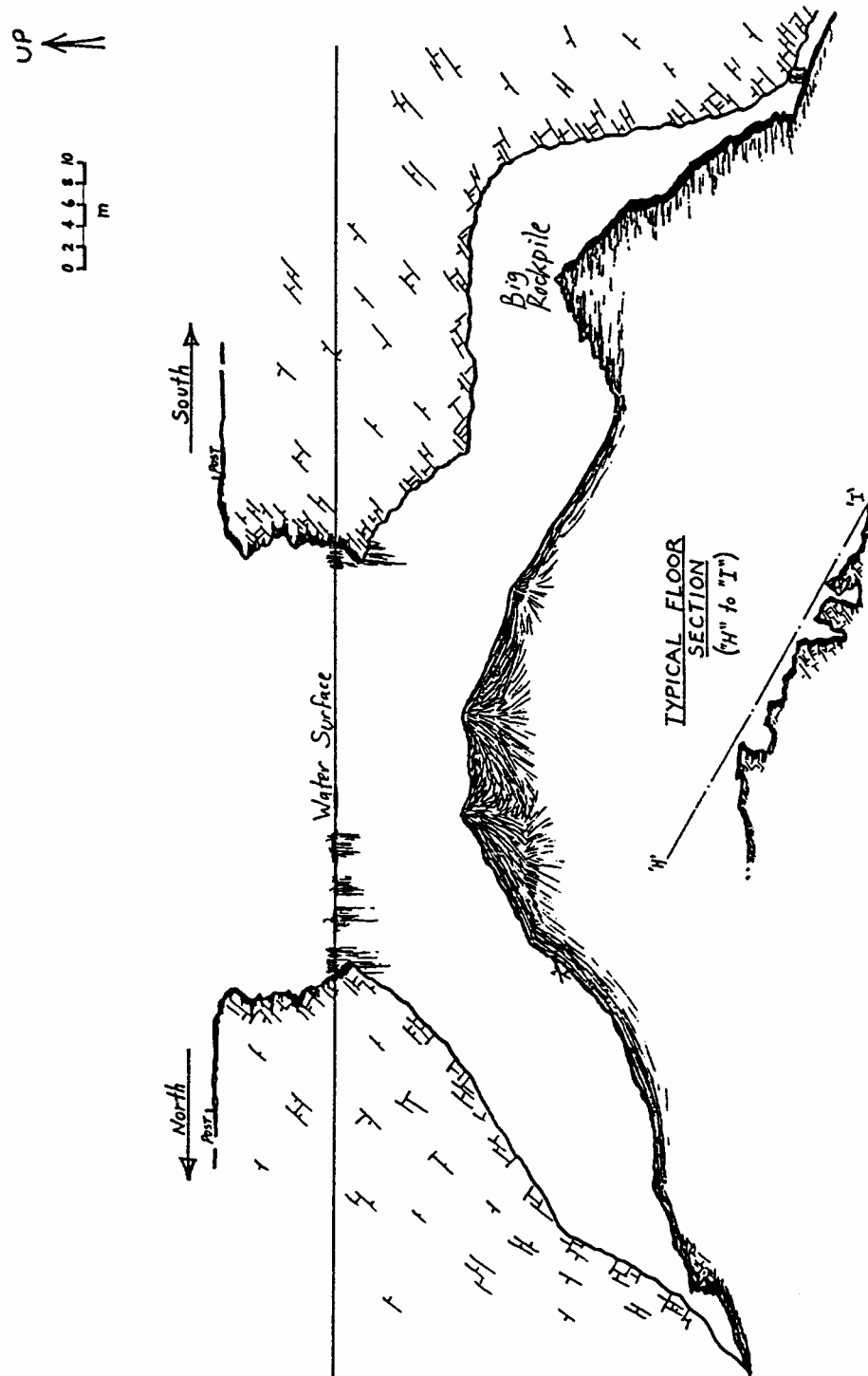
About a month later, I was in the Mount again, this time helping cavers/divers Grant Pearce and Chris Murphy with preliminary assessment and mapping work in their important recent find, 5L290 (Nettle-Bed Cave), on behalf of the Cave Divers Association of Australia. The rest of that trip was spent guiding underwater tourists through The Shaft (5L158) and adding more details to the complex underwater survey which the South Australian Underwater Speleological Society (SAUSS) was completing in the large water filled cenote, "Ten-Eighty Sinkhole" (5L42, or "Simpsons Hole" as it used to be known).

I spent three days in late April taking some young Chinese student friends through the Flinders Ranges with Yen, during which time we managed to have a 40-minute run through Thunderdrum Cave (5F29), which echoed with my rather naive friends' screams when they came across the spongy corpse of a long-dead kangaroo. A week later, I took Yen to Yorke Peninsula, where we dropped in to Corra-Lynn while some other cavers were there. However, we gave up and exited about half an hour into the cave when we still didn't find any bodies.

5L42 - TEN EIGHTY SINKHOLE

LONG SECTION

(Drawing supplied by Peter Horne)



Another trip west with Yen, to Port Lincoln in mid-May, also entailed a brief stop-over to observe the surface of the "Sinkhole" (5E13 - Deathtrap Cave) there. It looked as crumbly and unstable as ever, and since we didn't have any caving gear or landowner permission, we didn't try to enter this interesting feature.

Between 24th May and 22nd September, I drove the 450-odd kilometres to Mount Gambier another 5 times and did more Ten-Eighty surveying (which fellow cave diver Mark Nielsen and I finally completed - see drawings included in this Newsletter); continued with CDAA Mapping and Research Group studies in Kilsbys Hole (5L46) in truly abysmal weather prior to finalisation of preliminary general diving access negotiations; and visited several dry caves including Morgans Cave (with its bloody spray-paint graffiti), 5L67, 5L195, 5L198 and a nice new "dry" discovery by Andrew Cox and Tony Hambling, 5L301.

After these trips, I was occupied with other caving research, video and documentation work and recreational activities including a second trip to the Flinders to take some friends through Narrina (5F11, where we had a good dive but discovered that some mongrel had cut a convenient "twin-tank stand" in the sloping wall), and a final trip to Mount Gambier in mid-November to undertake water sampling and other tests in Kilsbys Hole again. I also took advantage of this trip to record some basic tape distances and depths etc. in 5L61 - The Pines - which I hope to map more thoroughly in '92.

So, that was my year ... another fairly quiet one, actually, entailing just 8 trips to the lower South East (23 days) and several "up north" and "to the west"; and I only got wet 32 times in caves and lakes. But considering the state of "the" economy and MY economy, I think 1992 will prove to be even LESS productive for me, unfortunately (anyone out there wanting to hire an underwater cave mapper??)

Peter HORNE
(Trainee CEGSA Armchair Caver)!

MURRAY PLAINS

30th November 1991

Party: Kerry Ninnies, George and June MacLucas, Ian Charlesworth, Eddy Rubessa, Paul Harper, Stephen Henning and Lance Hoey.

We all met at Wongulla around 10.30 am on the Saturday morning. The day was spent trekking the River Marne valley between Wongulla and Black Hill. (I understand that certain members of the party really enjoyed themselves ? Ed.) Many small rock shelter type features were seen and one larger single chamber cave having a small entrance was found (approx. 8 L x 5 W x 3m H). This area and the features within it are rich with fossils.

We also visited Shell Hill and saw the "Hill", solid fossilised oyster shells, as well as the Black Hill Springs, one of the largest natural springs in Australia.

The trip ended around 5pm at the Walkers Flat general store, where we enjoyed some refreshments before heading home.

Lance HOEY

UPPER SOUTH EAST

3rd - 5th January, 1992.

Party: Gary Woodcock, Sue McCormick, Paul Harper, Jay Robinson, Helen Czerneckyi, Ian and Suzanne Charlesworth, Gus Transfa, and Corinne, Eddie and Isabelle Rubessa.

Caves Visited: 5U37, 5U63, 5U73, 5U24, 5U23, 5U14, 5U15

Having met up with Gary and Helen on Friday afternoon we made plans to look at 5U37. We entered via the Crawl entrance and made our way through to the Bat Chamber and beyond. (Found a dead snake and tortoise on rockpile at Window Entrance.) There were no bats but plenty of guano, which Helen found quite interesting, especially since she didn't have any gloves. Ho! Ho! At the Terminal Chamber we found a possible lead, after 90 minutes of frantic digging, it ended to no avail. Disheartened, but not dampened, our enthusiasm took us to 5U63. Helen declined emphatically and headed back to town comforts. (First time Yuppie Female Wimp). Luckily she did, for 5U63 had an uncomfortable crawl, good breeze, but awkward to work in. Requires further progress.

Next morning everyone was present and then we picked up Sue and Helen from the Hotel (we others braved the intermittent weather in tents) and proceeded to 5U73, 5U74 was filled with wire and rocks) and 5U73 has got a truckload of rubbish in it, but it didn't deter us. Sue, Gary and myself explored the northern end and the rest went south. Having discovered another lead, Gary and I again went to work, with Sue joining us this time. This lead has very good potential as we found out, when Gary inadvertently dropped a few rocks down a slit in the collapse we were digging. With time against us we left it, for another day.

After lunch we headed down to 5U24 and 5U23. We stopped at Naracoorte Caves and said a quick Hello to Brian Clarke (NPWS) Afterwards we spend some time looking for 5U24 and 5U23, but finally found them with the help of the property owner; the entrances were cleverly disguised. 5U23 has lots of Cave Crickets, which Helen thought were giant spiders and exited with gusto; akin to a gust of air. But that didn't deter my young daughter, Issy (with a little coaxing). A cave enjoyed by almost everyone. Next was 5U24 which Ian, Suzanne, Gary, Sue and I investigated. We came across Bone Dig and found a frog in it, alive but torpid. I asked Sue to give it a kiss, as Gary and I watched intently. Sue tentatively puckered up to the nonchalant amphibian. However, fairy tales do not indulge the unbeliever; a bit more credence next time Sue.

Sunday morning we got ourselves set up at 5U14; but only Sue, Gary, Jay and myself went down the 17 metre funnel, the constriction seemed easy this time than on previous trips... (must be all those Scouts and Venturers wearing the squeeze bigger). (Maybe you have lost some weight or have improved your some of your caving techniques? Ed.) The girls enjoyed this cave with its dormant decorations, tree roots (pine) and sand cones. After lunch the party split up, with Gary and myself investigating 5U65, 5U66 and the rest to 5U15.

5U65 we found a bit awkward to enter and exit, comfortable silted floor and miniature sand cones. The crawl leading to further chambers has silted up and will require some excavation. On the way out we rescued a Blue Tongue Lizard which had fallen in; nice chamber.

5U66, after hastening the demise of numerous lethal arachnids inside of the entrance, I entered warily considering the strong vulperine odour and the remnants of its sumptuous repast of chickens and rabbits, went down a 4 metre slope to compacted silt floor flatteners (wide, but crawly) which led to a chamber of standing room, not overly exciting; so we headed out to see how the others were getting on at 5U15.

Paul dragged the group through the sump which had a few centimetres of water in it, into the adjoining chambers, but they all enjoyed this extensive cave system, and amazingly Helen did too!

Footnote: My personal objective of this trip was to investigate caves (e.g. 5U73, 5U63, 5U65, 5U66, 5U74) which are infrequently visited thereby enhancing my vast knowledge of the area.

Eddie RUBESSA.

TOWN WELL CAVE

29th February 1992

Party: Steve Milner, Mark Sefton, John Meikle, David McIntyre, Ian Charlesworth, George MacLucas, Fern Raintree, John Henkel, Gary Woodcock, Sue McCormack (The Spirit), Lance Hoey, Mark Thiselton, Debra McIntyre, Jo Bauer, Craig Daly and David Meesham.

This large group of cavers met late on the main street of Minlaton, where we signed the agreement forms, paid the deposit and picked up the keys to the entrance.

Upon arriving at the cave entrance, we unlocked the gate mechanism and began to rig the 30 metre entrance pitch, while others concerned themselves with their own personal gear. We rigged a ladder and a dynamic belay rope for the less experienced cavers and a static rope for the more experienced to abseil in and SRT out.

The first caver entered the cave around 12pm and after waiting for his team and the next team leader to descend went off to explore a part of the cave. As could be expected we soon found groups meeting within the cave system.

Some time later, members of the party had begun to exit the cave, while others continued exploring. The weather was not being kind to us as it had begun to rain making belaying and communication difficult.

Due to this large group of cavers, we decided to split into four teams of four cavers to ease group management within the cave environment.

Due to some confusion, one such caver had began to climb out on the ladder thinking that they were being belayed, and after climbing a short distance, became tired and began to climb down because they were not able. This caver then slipped and fell some 3 metres, being eventually arrested in their harness on the belay rope without reaching the debris at the bottom of the 30 metre entrance pitch, luckily without causing any really serious injury.

Two of the more experience cavers within the group, along with help from others already on the surface, assisted this caver back to the surface. This left a further eight cavers waiting to exit the cave.

With the weather not improving, a waterfall began to form in the entrance pitch, making communication even more difficult between the surface party and those still underground. The remaining eight cavers began to exit the cave slowly by ascending through this waterfall. (Good training for Tasmania I hear ?..... Oh !.....What A feeling !.....Ed.)

Due to the apparent lack of harnesses, three of the party were belayed up the ladder with a bowline under their arms and around their chest, albeit not the best technique to use, it did provide some safety. It was later learnt that two of these cavers did have a harness but chose not to wear it ?

With the last caver exiting the cave around 6pm, we de-rigged the entrance pitch in the rain and locked the entrance until another time. Back in Minlaton we returned the keys and received our deposit before conducting our debriefing at the local pub. Ending this saga. But unfortunately not, as some poor sole was left to clean and dry all the dirty wet cave gear.

We all need to be reminded from time to time about the basic skills required when we visit a cave system, these may vary from area to area. There needs to be a good system of communication, as well as a good working knowledge of ladder and belay techniques. These can be learned and practised in trees, climbing areas and even shallow cave entrances before being applied to larger pitches.

Steve MILNER and Mark THISELTON

TECHNICAL and OTHER ARTICLES

MEMBERSHIP

Welcome to these new Associate Members:

Nicki TRENORDEN 9203
8 Golflinks Rd
Stirling
SA 5152

Damien TRENORDEN 9204
8 Golflinks Rd
Stirling
SA 5152

Graham NATHAN 9205
21 Wolseley Rd
Blackwood
SA 5051

Welcome to these new Full Members:

Bart JENSEN 8806
PO Box 174
Kangarilla
SA 5157

Correction to Volume 36 Number 4;

Dave HALL 9108
PO Box 496
Esperance
WA 6450

LIBRARY HOLDINGS - BOOKS AND MONOGRAPHS

To make the Alan Hill Memorial Library and the CEGSA Library more user friendly, Mark Sefton has produced a list of the Books and Monographs held in those Libraries.

This List has been attached at the end of this CEGSA Newsletter as a supplement, allowing you to keep it readily available to refer to easily for future use.

They are arranged in alphabetical order of the first author. The list of authors is followed by the date of publication and then the title.

FAREWELL KEN LYNN

Ken Lynn arrived in Melbourne during the later months of 1956, accustomed to getting on his bike and going out after work for an evening's caving. The distances of Australia came as a nasty shock - but he recovered very quickly indeed, buying a car and heading to Buchan at the first opportunity.

Then in December, he attended the inaugural conference of the Australian Speleological Federation and the subsequent field trip to Kangaroo Island. This marked the next key point in his life - he met wonderful June (then Marlow) - they later married, and in the words of the old story, lived very happily ever afterwards until his untimely death in mid 1991.

Ken became President of the Victorian Cave Exploration Society when it was established in 1957, and participated actively in trips throughout Victoria and South Australia until he and June went to Britain. They then returned and settled in Sydney, where both have been highly successful in their chosen field of industrial engineering. Both served at different times as state and then federal president of their professional institute, which must be a most unusual record for any couple.

To return to his caving, Ken took a long time to recover from going caving after work. I still remember the Wednesday nights when we met up after work, drove to Warnambool (160 miles), caved most of the night, then drive home for Thursday's work ! And there was the 3-day weekend when we drove to Adelaide, then to Buckalow, spent a great deal of time underground, then drove back to Melbourne for work on the Tuesday morning. Strangely, we decided to take the day off.

Although his involvement in Australian caving was relatively brief, Ken was a great inspiration to all who met him. He was tireless, always cheerful, and absolutely determined. One Naracoorte hole demanded a week of the most stringent dieting before it would admit him - but even that didn't deter him.

We are glad to know that although he had experienced some ill-health in recent years, the end came suddenly and peacefully. He died sitting in his garden, knowing that he had lived a successful, and thanks to June, a wonderfully happy life. Although now alone after some 33 years of marriage, June is able to look back upon her life with thankfulness and a lot of happy memories. She has the sympathy and best wishes of all of us.

Elery Hamilton-Smith

PROGRAMME

MARCH

28/29

April

4	Competent Caver Course	Peter Kraehenbuehl
11/12		
17-20	LWE Lower South East	Kevin Mott
22	GENERAL 7:30pm	
25/26		

May

2/3	
9/10	
16-18	LWE
23/24	
27	GENERAL 7:30pm
30/31	

June

6-8	LWE
13/14	
20/21	
24	GENERAL 7:30pm
27/28	

July

4/5	
11/12	
18/19	
22	GENERAL 7:30pm
25/26	

The Trip Liaison Officer was not available at the time of print to provide details on future trips for the Programme. Members will need to contact the Trip Liaison Officer for more information, or come along to General Meetings.

Check with the Trip Liaison Officer for any additions or alterations.

LIBRARY HOLDINGS

BOOKS and MONOGRAPHS

JANUARY 1992



CAVE EXPLORATION GROUP of SOUTH AUSTRALIA Inc.

This list is arranged in alphabetical order of the first author. The list of authors is followed by the date of publication and then the title.

THE ALAN HILL MEMORIAL LIBRARY

Bogli, A., 1980, Karst Hydrology and Physical Speleology

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Casteret, N., 1954, The Darkness Under the Earth, (two copies)

Casteret, N., 1962, More Years Under the Earth

CEGSA (R.T. Sexton), Undated, Cave Surveying in South Australia: Occasional Paper number 1, (three copies)

CEGSA (J.N. Jennings), 1961, Occasional Paper Number 2: A Preliminary report on the Karst Morphology of the Nullarbor Plains, (four copies)

CEGSA (R.T. Sexton), 1965, Occasional Paper Number 3: Caves of the Coastal Areas of South Australia, (Reprint from Helictite, 1965, 3 (3), 45-59), (three copies)

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