

CAVE EXPLORATION GROUP SOUTH AUSTRALIA Inc.

PO Box 144 Rundle Mall, Adelaide, 5000



Volume 37 Number 3

August 1992

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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.

1992 COMMITTEE

PRESIDENT and PUBLIC OFFICER	Graham PILKINGTON	(h) 396 3044 (w) 396 3044
SECRETARY	Peter HORNE	(h) 295 6031
TREASURER	David WRIGHT	(h) 382 7481 (w) 226 9214
MEMBERSHIP, LAND OWNER and TRIP LIAISON	Eddie RUBESSA	(h) 336 4775 (w) 341 1595
MUSEUM REPRESENTATIVE	Neville PLEDGE	(h) 272 5483 (w) 207 7454
Committee Member	Nigel DOBSON-KEEFFE	(h) 336 5895 (w) 282 8501
Committee Member	Paul HARPER	(h) 354 0950 (w) 267 3144 x296

1992 OFFICE BEARERS

LIBRARIAN	Mark SEFTON	(h) 277 9086 (w) 379 1111
PUBLICATIONS	Mark THISELTON	(h) 364 2123 (w) 292 1846
QUARTERMASTER	David McINTYRE	(h) 268 2816
RECORDS	Stan FLAVEL	(h) 380 5404 (w) 228 4732
SAFETY and TRAINING	Peter KRAEHENBUEHL	(h) 344 1426
SOCIAL EVENTS	Sue McCORMICK	(h) 370 3507 (w) 210 4289
S.A. SPELEOLOGICAL COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES	Grant GARTRELL	(h) 298 2203 (w) 256 2200
	Graham PILKINGTON	(h) 396 3044 (w) 396 3044

POSTAL ADDRESS: CAVE EXPLORATION GROUP (S.A.) Inc.
P.O. BOX 144,
RUNDLE MALL,
ADELAIDE, SOUTH AUSTRALIA, 5000

FRONT COVER: Alan Jevons, photographed by Paul Harper in Coppermine cave (2Y12), January 1991.

CONTENTS

Volume 37 Number 3 August 1992

	page
EDITORIAL	32
TRIP REPORTS	
Nullarbor Plains	Max Meth 33
Nullarbor Plains (R T Maurice 1897 trip)	Max Meth 37
Lower South East	Kevin Mott 41
The Shaft	Mark Thiselton 42
Adelaide Hills	Paul Harper 44
Yorke Peninsula	Paul Harper 44
Lower South East	Paul Harper 44
Corra Lynn	Graham Pilkington 46
Corra Lynn	Graham Pilkington 47
TECHNICAL and OTHER ARTICLES	
Membership	48
Cave Cricket Research	Ron Simms 48
Cave Cricket Identification	Ron Simms 49
Ganason Nadason Thank You Letter	50
PROGRAMME August to November 1992	51

Deadline for articles for Volume 37 Number 4 is Wednesday 28th October, 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

It is pleasing to see the efforts of those few members involved within our own committee as well as those few people involved within the South Australian Speleological Council. Without their commitment to speleology one can only ask where would speleology be heading and more importantly where would it end up? It is true that we have had a number of issues thrown at us (cavers) lately, some of which have probably been stewing in the past for some time before finally raising their ugly head. To all those unselfish people involved - many thanks, keep up the good work. With this kind of dedication we will see Speleology advance into the future in a way that we will be able to continue to enjoy our pastime while preserving those features for future cavers.

Similarly it is pleasing to see the success of a few members such as Ron Simms, Alan Jevons and Clare Buswell, who have been involved in a research project of cave crickets in the Naracoorte Area. Already this team has successfully completed a few trips to the Naracoorte area to count the cave crickets within a large number of Karst Features.

It is important when performing any activity in speleology to go about it in the correct manner. This will start with the initial planning stage, the preparation, the actual activity, and finally the documentation stage of the activity. You may think that this is only necessary for a major expedition or research project, but even the smaller cave trips run by members should have a small trip report written for publication within the newsletter. (After all I need something to do!)

I am always looking for material for future editions of the Newsletter, so if you have some thoughts running around inside your head worth sharing with fellow cavers or have been on a caving activity lately (or not so lately), put them on paper or better still a floppy disc and send them to me. I will also gladly receive photographs, drawings and maps for inclusion in future editions of the Newsletter.

Many thanks to those people who contributed to this edition of the Newsletter.

Mark THISELTON

TRIP REPORTS

NULLARBOR PLAINS

17th to 20th April 1992

Party: Max Meth, Jeanette Oakley and Gary White.

Features visited: (* could not locate)

SA: 5N1, 5N4, 5N6, (5N28)*, (5N29)*, (5N30)*, 5N31, 5N171, 5N176, 5N263, 5N266 to 5N269, 5N524 to 5N529.

WA: 6N2, 6N19, (6N24)*, 6N25, 6N34, 6N166?, 6N167, 6N169, 6N521, 6N522, 2 wells -man made.

On Friday the 17th, we drove north from Eucla on the Reid road. Quarrying for stone for resurfacing the WA portion of the highway has resulted in 2 new quarries - neither being inspected by us. They are both fenced off. One is NE of the junction of the microwave repeater track, the other is east of the junction of the Weebubbie road, and about 100m south of 6N167 Cairn blowhole.

6N167 is in an area of many rock pavements which are mainly to its south. It is east of the Eucla-Reid track in a 13 x 6m small rock pavement, in a depression 3.5 x 3.5 x 0.35m deep. The blowhole is 1.2 x 1.1 by 2.1m deep. 2 rockholes are located to the SE.

We drove along the Weebubbie road looking for 6N25 which has not been seen since 1957. After 2km we turned north at a claypan and practically drove right into it. It is a depression 10 x 9 x 1.3m deep with a rock ledge under which a low cave heads north. The opening is 1m long and only 0.4m high. It was raining and we did not go in. There had been heavy rain earlier in the week and the current light rain was really only of nuisance value. There is a 3m tall Native Willow (*Pittosporum phylliraeoides*) growing in the doline.

From here we went north to another EW track, then east along it to a blowhole which was 8m south of the track. I think it is a new one but its description matches 6N166 Squeeze blowhole. It could be that 6N166 has been misplotted. We had looked for 6N166 at its grid location but could not find it.

Our "new" blowhole is in a rock pavement 22 x 9m being oriented NS and the blowhole is at the south end. It is 0.5 x 0.4 x 4.2m deep oriented at 350. It is in the NE corner of a claypan and is unenterable (to me) as it constricts to 0.3 x 0.3m.

It is a sad thing when the Nullarbor Records Officer cannot tell if he is at a particular feature or not. I'll have to shift the blame somehow. Basically we need more accurate descriptions and locations in the Atlas. If anyone out there is listening, please send me any details you have to update Atlas descriptions. Any info at all will be welcome and much appreciated.

If Stan is listening (Eh reading! Ed.), I wonder if your records have any more detail on 5N166, Stan? In the mean time it goes in my "problems" file.

We returned past 6N25 to the Weebubbie road and continued west, looking for 6N19 Weebubbie Road Blowhole. We didn't find it. Somehow we got on a different track. A track which follows an old fence and leads straight to Weebubbie cave 6N2. Along the way we saw a shallow depression, 6N521 which is 25 x 16 x 1m deep on the east side of the (then) NS track.

Then a double rockhole 6N522 which is 3km from 6N2. The track crosses the centre of the rockhole area, and, with the rain, it was full of water. We looked, without success for 6N24 along this fence, and also along the fence that heads NW from Weebubbie. 6N24 has not been seen since 1957. It is (supposedly) 1.2km NE of N2 and "just west of fence".

We returned to the double rockhole, continued east for 1.3km then turned north on a track. After 700m we came to an NE-SW track. Turning SW we came to 6N19 Weebubbie road blowhole. It is 4m east of the track. For a relatively small feature this is very interesting. Like 6N25 it is in a shallow depression 6.5 x 6.5 x 0.55m deep and is 0.65 x 0.55 x 3.3m deep and easily climbed. A further drop of 2.5m leads to a NS streamway. We camped near Weebubbie cave.

On Saturday 18.4.92, we drove along the microwave track south of Weebubbie and 20m west of the track we looked at 6N169, a small cave in a depression, and remarkably similar to 6N25. Further south we found 6N34 Watertruck blowhole. It is 50m west of the track. It is not free climbable as it has a 5m overhanging pitch. There is no map in our records. ANY VOLUNTEERS? It is well worth a visit.

At Eucla we spent time in their museum. We noticed reference to wells dug in the 1870's? by Muir, a pastoralist who ran sheep on what was then Moopina station. Gary knew where they were, so we went for a look. One is at the ruins of Naliwoodin, north of Eucla and is about 4m deep; the other is 10m deep. It is 1.2km to the west, 30m north of the track - which is the "Old Coach Road". This was before the "old" Eyre Highway was built. Both these wells may well have been sited on shallow caves or blowholes. It is hard to tell now, the rock has weathered to a point where it is hard to believe it was excavated.

We drove east along the Old Coach Road then north along the Deakin road into S Aust. We went to Trig Point T6/4735. I was hoping to find a track to the Bundulla Rockhole. But no track could be seen. We returned to the Old Coach Road and crossed again into SA stopping 1.7 km from the border (3.1 km from the Deakin track junction). Here there is a track marked by a cairn - a small rock on a larger rock - which crosses an old fence after 20m but stops at 150m! East of this point we found a blowhole 5N524. It was just a stroke of luck that we found it in the relatively dense bush land. It has a 3m high Pittosporum 2m away and of course the obligatory red back spider inside. It is in a depression 4.5 x 4.5 x 0.4m deep with a rocky lip on the west side and a rock pavement 3 x 2m on the north side. The blowhole is 0.55 x 0.5 x 3.6m deep with a 3.5m long passage.

East again there is a blowhole 5N525. This is in an earth floored depression 2.4 x 2.3 x 0.2m deep. Bare rock 1.6 x 1.3m surrounds the hole on 3 sides (not the N). The blowhole is 0.8 x 0.7 x 1m deep. The cave is only 2m long but has a strong breeze. There is a 1m high Old Man Saltbush (*Atriplex Nummularia*) in the depression. We failed to find a track to Bundulla or Bunburra rockholes from the Old Coach Road, nor could we find the track north to 5N180, 261 & 262.

But we found the unnamed blowhole 5N263 which is 12m north of the Old Coach Road. It is in a depression 19 x 15 x 0.4m deep with a rock pavement area 9 x 4m. The blowhole is 1 x 0.9 x 4.9m deep at 080. At the bottom it has narrowed to 0.5 x 0.4 and a low passage was seen heading north 1.5m then west. The view and further exploration was cut short by a resident 2m long Western Brown snake.

After travelling west we turned south towards the old Eyre Highway. On this track we found 2 new features. First was 5N526 a shallow earth floored doline only 1m deep. The second one, 5N527 was much larger, 200 x 150 x 4m deep. The track skirts the west lip of the doline which is aligned NS. It has steep rocky sides on the east and large rock pavement areas to the north, with one rockhole.

We reached the Old Highway at an old tank then headed east and south on the microwave access track. Another shallow doline (unnumbered) was noted along this track. The track ends at the new Eyre highway near the 20km post. 1km south is the coast which here is not vertical cliffs but a sloping ramp known as the Merdayerrah Bench. A track runs along the top of the Bench to "Merdayerrah Wells." We found nothing resembling a well there and returned to our campsite at Weebubbie.

On Sunday 19.4.92 our first stop was 5N176, Warbla Track No 1 blowhole which is 14m W of the track in a depression 11 x 11 x 0.4m deep. It is 0.5 x 0.4 by 1.8m deep in a rock pavement 5 x 3m. A second blowhole 0.7m away at 315 is 0.3 x 0.25 and also 1.8m deep. Both drop into a single low roofed chamber 11 x 8m which heads south. It has a flat earth floor.

Next came Warbla cave 5N1. A truly impressive entrance. It is the most "typical" of all the Nullarbor entrances that I have seen. Many relatively uncommon plants were in flower around its rim. We also looked at unnamed blowhole 5N266 which is located east of a bend in the Old Highway on the north side. It is in the north side of a depression 11 x 9 x 1.9m deep. The blowhole is 0.8 x 0.6 x 2.3m deep at 250 and slopes down to small hole.

Albala Karoo blowhole 5N171 was our next stop with the nearby gravestone of Herman Johnson who died on 10 Dec 1889.

South of there is the moonscape like cratered feature called Koomooloobooka cave 5N6. It has 6 blowhole like entrances and 3 rockholes in its extensive weathered rocky entrance area.

Then, in a row, and all on the west of the track and very close to it are 5N267 unnamed blowhole, 5N268 Mini Clay Dam blowhole and 5N269 unnamed cave.

5N267 is 2 blowholes 4m apart. One is 1m deep and the other 1.6m. It is 4m W of track well south of 5N6.

5N268 doline is eroding actively but the tons of clay that have recently been washed in haven't blocked it. It still blows cold air. It is 13m W of track south of N267 in a depression 10 x 9 x 2.8m deep. The blowhole is 0.45 x 0.3 x 0.8m deep at 130. It slopes down at 300 then bends to the north.

5N269 is 18m W of track and south of N268. The doline is 4.5 x 3.9 x 0.4m deep and the blowhole is 0.6 x 0.4 x 4.2m deep, hidden by a 4m tall bushy dead tree on NW side. The cave extends 1m west, dropping a further 0.5m.

North of 5N268 and 130m west of the track is 5N31, Bildoolja cave. This cave is one of the oldest known caves, being known of since 1880 when it was shown to the SA government surveyor James W Jones by locals when he was selecting sites to drill for water. What remains a mystery is the following;

(a) The old directions for reaching 5N31 say that it is reached after passing a cave on the east of the track viz: 5N30, but no cave is known on the east of the track.

(b) Aerial photos show a doline 4km west of 5N269 but no-one to my knowledge has ever been there. This may well be Bildoolja cave, and if it is, then 5N30 will be about 1.2 km north of it. (and the cave numbered 5N31 now, will have to be re-numbered). The missing doline is located in very well wooded country.

In the morning of Monday 20.4.92, we found a new blowhole 5N529. It is due west of Mini Clay Dam blowhole and is marked with a cairn 0.5m high. It is 4.5m deep with no passage at the bottom.

Next we went looking for 2 other caves not seen since 1957. The first was 5N29. We couldn't find it, nor 5N28.

Then it was on to Koonalda cave 5N4 where we met Bob Ware. He told us that Mike Swift was doing seismic work at Allens cave 5N145, and he told us about breakins at the Homestead. Apparently all the buildings have been broken into. We verified that the internal gate to 5N4 was intact although the lock had been cut off the ladder gate. Inside the doline we ate some figs and almonds off the trees which survive since the Gurney's left. Other trees there are lemon, kumquat, quince, mulberry and plum. After this feast it was time to return home.

Max METH

NULLARBOR PLAINS

Report (unpublished) by Richard T. Maurice 23.6.1859 to 24.4.1909 of his expedition of 1897 to Boundary Dam, held by the Public Records Office, Adelaide. (report condensed, and comments by Max Meth).

Places visited or (mentioned): Eucla, Bunburra Rockhole, unnamed blowhole, unnamed blowholes, unnamed rockhole, Coompana Rockhole, Diamond Bore, unnamed blowhole 5N171?, Tanks and cave = 5N4 Koonalda Cave, Wirertinna rockhole, Lake Buldundinna, Lake Pedringa, Boundary Dam or Watriga, Coolardunna - 2 dams, Lake Wilpardo, Nurgaroo Rockholes, (Iningunna), (Youldeh = Ooldea), Lake Carloo, Coopoolagina Rockhole, Poodioorbinna Native Well, (Muguning), (Waratinna), (Murgaroo), Domuetta Rockhole, Ilbarra rockhole, Wiratinna Rockhole, Batts Tanks. Palinure rockholes, Beadon Tanks, Chintern rockholes, Lake Paroo, Lake Cachina, Lake Toolalee.

Party: Richard T. Maurice, Bill Voke (Voake?), Mingo - a Eucla aborigine

Thursday 22 July 1897 Left Eucla on camels heading for boundary dam which was found and named by Earnest Giles. (in 1875? It is 260km due North of Eucla on the Northern boundary of the Nullarbor Plain.) We hoped to pick up some traces of Fairie and Wooley who were lost some years ago (1888). We camped at a distance of 12 miles (19.2km).

Friday 23 July 1897 Travelled 7 miles (11.2km) ENE and arrived at Bunburra Rockhole after noon. (Maurice's distance of Eucla to Bunburra is 19 miles - 30.4km. The straight line distance is 24 miles (39km) from the Telegraph Station and 22.5 miles (36km) from present day Eucla.) "Consequently we had the whole afternoon to hunt round and inspect this large rockhole". We camped 2 nights there.

Saturday 24 July 1897 We travelled "some few miles in an E direction" to a blowhole which we found to be 20 feet deep. (They travelled specifically to this blowhole from Bunburra Camp as a day trip. This may have been 5N261 - which is 8.5km to the East. It is 6m = 20 feet deep and leads to a 50m long cave. But Maurice does not mention a cave at the bottom. His only description is:- "There was much noise issuing from it").

Sunday 25 July 1897 We headed due North from Bunburra passing through undulating country and leaving behind the "belt of timber which appears to extend EW parallel with the telegraph line". We then found ourselves in broombush country. "Whilst having dinner a wild dog got on our tracks and coming within 100 yards Mingo shot him."

Monday 26 July 1897	This morning was very foggy and we could not see our camels until 8.10. An hour after starting we noticed the broombush was getting scarcer. At noon we came to a "quantity of blowholes some being very deep all of which we investigated." (This group of blowholes is not in our records.) Eventually we camped within 100 yards of a very big rockhole. Mingo is not much use with the camels, but is a good shot (with the rifle), and he is very keen to look in any blowholes.
Tuesday 27 July 1897	This morning we started West. We saw several wild dogs and caught a small snake (pultin). After travelling for 2 days we returned to our camp at Bunburra having done 68.5 miles (109.6km).
Thursday 29 July 1897	We headed East and came to Coompana Rockhole and camped for the night. This rockhole would hold about 3000 gallons (13,500L) of water. (my estimate is 900 litres possibly 1300. I think he made an error of 10x in his calculation).
Friday 30 July 1897	Next day we headed ENE and passed within sight of the diamond bore (Albala Karoo?). Then we camped near a blowhole (5N171?).
Saturday 31 July 1897	We left camp heading East and came to tanks where we watered the camels then proceeded to inspect a cave. (5N4 Koonalda Cave). Mingo had told us it was a big one which we soon verified. "This cave is situated at the northern end of a vast limestone depression in the plain some 150 yards long 100 yards wide and 50 yards deep. (The soil depression is 500 x 200 x 6m deep; the cave doline in a rock pavement is 80 x 50 x 20m deep). The cave contains a big subterranean lake of salt water."
Thursday 5 August 1897	Today we reached Batts Tanks.
Saturday 7 August 1897	We started for Boundary Dam. Calling at Nurgaroo rockhole we headed NW till we reached Wirertinna rockhole which holds about 150 gallons.
Sunday 8 August 1897	Today we got into mallee and porcupine and patches of thick scrub.
Monday 9 August 1897	Today we struck our first big sandhill where a camel fell and broke its saddle. Passed some black oaks (casuarina), from which natives obtain water by breaking the roots into pieces to get the water they contain.

Wednesday 11 August 1897	We came to lake Buldundinna and camped. Following along its south side, we noticed from the top of sand hills other lakes to the W and NW. From this I concluded that we are too far west. Giles had said that Boundary Dam was "the last lake to the East of the colony of W Aust". We returned to our camp passing a small lake called Pedringa. There were bones of a horse here, "doubtless belonging to Fairie and Woolie. "The scrub around here was mainly bocata with occasional black oak, sandal wood and mallee. There were kangaroo called Coolbare, which have big sharp feet.
Thursday 12 August 1897	We headed East and cut Giles track "which was still distinctly visible in places showing he must have had rain. In half an hour we came to Watriga or Boundary Dam which (is a salt lake) runs NE and SW. It is pretty square in shape and is surrounded by sandhills at the SE end. There is a little creek running into the lake which natives have dammed up to a height of 5 feet.
Friday 13 August 1897	This morning we started Northerly and got into some dreadful sandhills to the NNE. After passing through higher sandhills we came to Lake Wilpardo. We only had 15 gallons of water. I knew it would take 5 days to reach Nurgaroo and the Rockholes there. I decided not to go North to Iningunna. The only water I knew of between here and Youldah (Ooldea), a distance of 200 miles, was Batts Tanks.
Saturday 14 August 1897	Left Wilpardo and came to Lake Carloo. In an hour we came to Coopoolagina Rockhole which is situated on a little limestone rubble hill with mulga and saltbush round it. Here we headed ESE then SE by S passing through the same sort of country, sandhills, spinifex, black oak, gullies and 2 small lakes. At 1pm we came to Poodioorbinna Native Well where I hoped to get water. "It is 12 feet deep and full of dirt which we laboriously cleaned out but found nothing." It was exceedingly warm all day. Mingo brought us some delicious Parakeelia, <i>Calandrinia balonensis</i> (C Polyandra?). This little plant contains a large amount of moisture. That day we had covered 20.75 miles.
Sunday 15 August 1897	I decided not to go to Muguning as it might be 25 miles or more. It would take 2 days to go to Waratinna and the camels would not get a drink till Murgaroo (5 days away). At mid day we got 3 buckets of water (60L) at Domuetta Rockhole. (One thirsty bull camel, carrying a 300kg load, can drink 200L of water at a sitting, yes that is 200kg of water).
Monday 16 August 1897	We found several small rockholes, one called Ilbarra on a little flat. We went to Wiratinna Rockhole and emptied it.

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| Tuesday 17 August 1897 | At Nurgaroo Rockhole we got 135 gallons (600L) of water. Then we proceeded to Batts Tanks. After a rest we left for Youldeh (Ooldea) coming across a big blowhole. |
| Wednesday 18 August 1897 | Both Rockholes at Palinure were dry so we went on to Beadon Tanks where we camped. It had been a very warm day. |
| Thursday 19 August 1897 | We broke camp at 7.25 and reached Chintern rockholes at 2.15 where we camped. Here we found some native poplar trees growing - <i>Codonocarpus cotinifolius</i> . |
| Friday 20 August 1897 | We came across several little swamps and a big lake called Paroo. Later, to the West we saw Lake Cachina and at 5.00pm we camped near Lake Toolalee. We saw the track of an arritarita (I don't know what it is) but were unable to catch it. |
| Saturday 21 August 1897 | We made straight for Youldeh (Ooldea) leaving Paring to the North of us. "We deemed it would be useless to try again to visit the Leslier Hills because it would require a very heavy rain to put water into the native wells at Mobun", (about 300km NE of Eucla). |

(The report ends and does not continue with the return to Ooldea or Eucla.)

Richard T. MAURICE

Report submitted by Max METH.

LOWER SOUTH EAST

29th February 1992

Party: Kevin Mott, Adrian Mott.

Features visited: L107

Many moons ago some callous caver reported that I made a statement in a Committee meeting that "our records were full of holes". Well they are! One of those holes that was not a hole was L107. It has subsequently been made hole by allocating it to a feature known as Blackfellows Caves.

These are a group of sea caves on a promontory of land that are supposed to have some Aboriginal connection. This would have to be a long time ago as you need to swim to get into them. (Don't tell Peter Horne, or he might get in the swim of things! Ed.)

To help completely fill in this hole, I took it upon myself to locate these features relative to cadastral boundaries.

This was duly done on this trip as it seemed like a good thing to do at the time. Feeling super efficient, a survey of one of the caves was also completed. The fact that there was neap time on leap day of leap year had nothing to do with it! The remaining caves still need to be surveyed, so if you don't mind getting wet up to your crotch or head - depending on how high the tide is or how short you are.

To cap the day off, the keys to the car were left locked inside and entailed about half an hour of cursing with a scrounged piece of wire to be able to enter the vehicle. If you are not sick of the puns then on the hole it was about 3m to water, Ha Ha Ha Ha.

Kevin MOTT

THE SHAFT 5L158

23rd May 1992

Party: Peter Horne, John Henkel, Ian Williams, John Gleeson, Grant Fuller, Janine Tamblyn and Mark Thiselton.

The group met near Allendale on the Saturday morning ready to be introduced to the land owner, with whom we completed the usual cave diving indemnity forms and associated paper work to allow us to visit this unique sinkhole known as The Shaft 5L158. One requires an experienced guide to arrange and accompany the divers on any visit to The Shaft. Peter Horne "Puddles" was volunteered to perform the role of our guide, many thanks Peter.

We next crammed ourselves and all our diving gear into two four wheel drives to negotiate the wet track through the paddocks, providing access to the sinkhole as requested by the land owner. From my experience with other sinkholes in the Lower South East, I was expecting to find a large surface feature such as a doline, but to my surprise the entrance turned out to be a small solution tube of approximately 1m diameter.

We then set up our dive gear and rigged the entrance of the sinkhole with a pulley system to lower and raise our dive gear into the water and a ladder for the divers to access the water. Once inside the cave you soon find yourself in the middle of a large lake chamber having an approximate area of some 12 x 20m, the level of the water is some 8m below the surface of the land.

The cave itself is shaped something like an inverted funnel, so as you descend deeper into the cave, the walls become further apart. With all the divers and their gear on the water's surface we prepared to go on the dive, this included for example going over our dive plan, checking gear and buddy checks. The dive itself was to descend down a fixed line to the top of the introduced rock pile at a depth of around 35m. Apparently the owner at some previous time considered filling in this hole in their paddock, little did they know as to the extensiveness of the chamber below. We then headed over to a large rock feature known as "Saw Tooth Rock" at around 36m depth, with our maximum depth for the dive being 40m.

The visibility of the water in this sinkhole is breath taking at around 100m. This means that at our maximum depth of 40m we could clearly see the entrance of the cave as well as being able to see as far as our light systems would allow us to. Once our eyes had become accustomed to the darker environment within the cave, we were able to actually make out the detail of the rock floor with only the natural light coming in through the entrance. It is possible to cast a shadow onto the rock floor below while floating around. Apparently this sinkhole arrived at it's name by the brilliant blue shaft of light which can be seen around lunch time throughout summer. Light entering the water in this cave undergoes absorption, being dependent on the relative energy levels of the various wavelengths that make up natural light, causing the light to soon turn to a pleasant shade of blue. This same sensation can be seen on any dive, even in saltwater (Yuk!...Ed.) and is dependent on the depths involved.

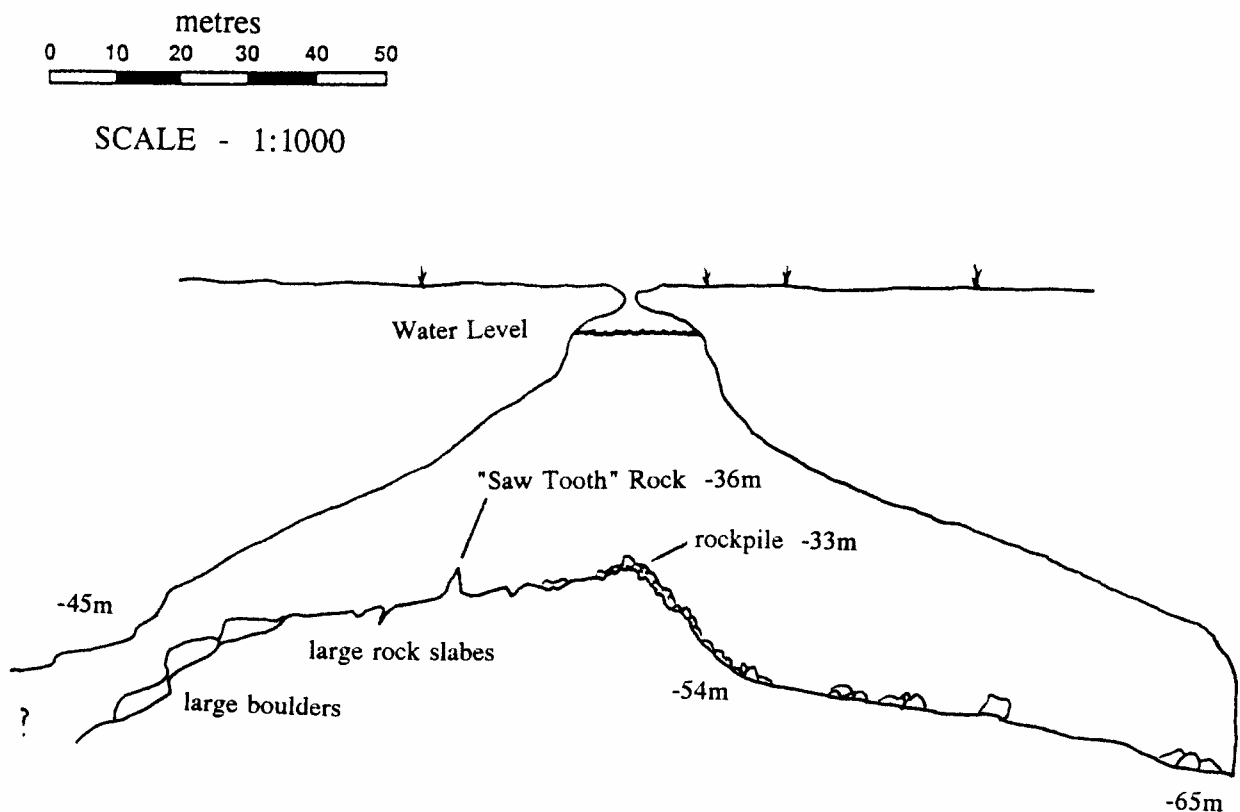
Although we may not have seen The Shaft in ideal conditions, it was still worth the visit to experience the magnificent grandeur of a cave of this size, without the effort of using ladders or some such system to negotiate the depths involved. Surely this would have to be the closest one could get to the feeling of floating in space without actually experiencing it.

Unfortunately all good things must come to an end and as we ascended to the surface, the group split up with three divers following the wall anticlockwise and the other four divers heading clockwise. This allowed us to gain a better idea of the actual size of this sinkhole. Leaving our gear in the cave, we headed out for lunch and returned that afternoon to complete a second dive. For me this second dive turned out to be even better than the first as I now had a better idea of what to expect.

The Shaft is not without incident, back in 1973 four divers drowned from the effects of Nitrogen Narcosis at a depth of around 65m. It is pleasing to see how the efforts of the CDAA have negotiated access to dive sites such as The Shaft, which must surely be of world class standard.

We concluded the day by hauling all our gear out of the water and back onto the ground above, where we then packed up our gear ready to leave this beautiful sinkhole until another time. Many thanks to all those involved in making this yet another great trip.

Mark THISELTON



THE SHAFT (5L158)

Elevation

ADELAIDE HILLS

30th May 1992

Party: Fern Raintree, John Meikle, David and Debra McIntyre and Paul Harper.

Feature: 5A5 Sellicks Hill cave.

We met near the cave on Saturday evening for a familiarisation trip as I was the only one who had been there before. We used two ladders, making good use of the new bolt, which had been placed at the top of the first pitch and tied back to a large boulder 5m back from the top of the second pitch. All up it was an enjoyable two hours of caving and it's so close to home.

Paul HARPER

YORKE PENINSULA

20th and 21st June 1992

Party: Gary Woodcock, Brian Rivett and Paul Harper.

Feature: 5Y1 Corra Lynn cave.

The purpose of this trip was to extend the "Goes off North" passage in the Skeleton Crevasse area. We have now entered an intersection and are in the process of digging upwards. Up until now we have been digging out mud and clay from the passage, but now that we have entered this intersection we are now removing large rocks held together with sand. As this is above our heads, we have decided to stop digging until we can find a safe way to proceed.

Paul HARPER

LOWER SOUTH EAST

6-8th June 1992

Party: Fern Raintree, John Meikle, Ken Grimes, Ian and Suzanne Charlesworth, Chris, Sandy, Mack and Ryan Hales, David and Debra McIntyre, Gary Woodcock, Eddy Rubessa, Ian Lewis and Paul Harper.

Features: L10, L13, L18, L19, L20, L29, L38, L40, L64, L69, L70, L73, L74, L75, L79, L81, L86, L95, L113, L119, L171, L172, L173, L201, L221, L261, L262, L263, L304, L307, L308 plus un-numbered feature near L119.

The aim of this trip was to familiarise ourselves with the region and visit some of the major features in the area. We all headed down to Mt. Gambier on the Friday, arriving at all different hours. Ian Lewis had kindly made his house available to us so we all stayed there.

Saturday morning Gary and Eddy left early and spent all day digging in L74 while the rest of us went in a convey of vehicles to L29 Drop Drop cave to view the entrance. We then headed to Wandillo, where we split into two groups to visit L73, 74, 75 and 95, all of which are un-named caves. We then drove to L304 which is a nice stream passage cave with many entrances and side passages, which we had time to explore. We then continued to L86 Considines cave and explored both end of the cave. We headed back to Mt. Gambier to pick up the key to L19, 20 Engelbrechts cave, but as none of us had our club membership cards on us, we were initially refused the keys until we showed them our drivers licenses and a copy of the CEGSA Annual Report which lists all members names. So with the key in hand, we headed to the cave just in time to witness two groups of cave divers disappear into the depths. (Now this has to be the best way to explore a cave and see its true beauty! ... Ed.)

After a slow start on Sunday, we went to L119 Snake Hill System which has multiple entrances. We had an enjoyable time getting lost while crawling from entrance to entrance. Meanwhile Gary and Eddy were in the forest digging in a small grotty hole 200m south west of L119. We then visited L307, 201, 261, 261, and 263 which are small caves nearby. On the way back to Mt. Gambier that evening we visited some of the larger sinkholes in the area, being L113 Myora, L40 Hells Hole, L10 Caroline, and L64 Bottle Brush. That night we were entertained by Mack, Chris, Ian Lewis and Gary playing the Guitar and Gary and Chris on the Harmonica.

Monday morning saw us packing our bags before going on a tour of cave features on the way to Mt. Burr. We visited L81 Fossil cave and were shown where L62 Windmill cave was. We then drove to L79 Crevice cave and L221 Vines fissure. John and Fern left us to go home and we headed off to L13 Three Sisters cave and L18 Tindales cave, at this stage Ian and Suzanne decided to leave for home also. We then drove past the "Wombat Holes" which are in an area with dozens of huge depressions. Upon arriving at L69, 70 Mt. Burr cave we decided we did not have enough time to enter the cave so we headed over to the three features south of L35, 36 Graveyard cave. These were L171, 172, 173, and after spending some time there we went to the township of Mt. Burr where Chris, Sandy, Mack and Ryan decided to leave us and head home. The remaining group of Eddy, Gary, David, Debra, Ian Lewis and myself went to L38 Rendelshams cave, where we spent some time exploring it. Ian Lewis then went back to Mt. Gambier and we all headed back to Adelaide.

Our thanks to Ian Lewis for letting us stay at his house, and to Chris, Ken and Ian Lewis for organising and giving us the information which made this a truly enjoyable trip.

Paul HARPER

CORRA LYNN

7th June 1992

Party: Graham Pilkington, Neville Pledge, Sue McCormick, Roger & Siona Pilkington.

About the 15th of January '92 Andrew Slater (owner of Corra Lynn Cave) discovered that a water trough had been draining onto the ground. The mains water feeder had probably been replenishing this outflow for a week before discovery. As a consequence the ground around the trough wasn't - quagmire was a better term. About 8m away between the concrete apron and the fence a black patch had appeared which on investigation proved to be a belled collapse into soil 3m diameter at the bottom, 1.5m at the surface and 1.3m deep.

Plotting the position of the collapse on the map showed that it had to be into Dreamland somewhere near the end of the Freeway. It could be from the level above that but known passages are 20m away.

A trip was made in May to determine that the Alberta Section was still open. Much flooding had occurred but was nearly dry again with only very minor collapse at the Clayballs Dig.

After discussions with Andrew it was agreed to sink a shaft into Dreamland from this collapse. The major purpose to be for the removal of the tonnes of 5 million year old bone-containing rock from Dreamland (for the SA Museum) and secondly as an emergency exit from Dreamland to avoid the Alberta should it become impassable or impossible for an injured caver. The new entrance will NOT be used for trips to Dreamland. The Alberta & Portal will then limit access to the more delicate areas of the cave to the more experienced cavers.

This trip was the start of the excavation into Dreamland via the surface collapse. It was a trial excavation to determine what the ground conditions are like and the best way to tackle it. We used buckets to carry the dirt to the cave compound to be used to increase the soil depth over the shallow sheet calcrete. Only a trace of nodular calcrete was noted at the dig from about 0.2 to 0.4m depth. This suggests that the calcrete layer at the cave entrance is either relic or that the new collapse has occurred at the site of a re-filled collapse.

We shifted maybe 10 tonnes of dirt by bucket brigade, lowering the dig by one metre, and named the site the "Fantasia Entrance".

Graham PILKINGTON

CORRA LYNN

27th June 1992

Party: Graham Pilkington, Sue McCormick, Paul Harper, Dave and Ken Clarke, Roger & Siona Pilkington, and several visitors (some helped).

A continuation of the Fantasia Dig.

This time we brought a trailer to carry the dirt to the cave compound! However, it takes quite a while to empty a trailer and proved easier on the backs but slower to shift the dirt - we needed the digging spades to empty the trailer! After two trips a trailer tyre sprung a leak and I had to go into Curramulka to get it fixed.

On return, Andrew and Shawn had arrived on their way through to the adjacent paddock to plant some of their 500 hundred trees for this year. Andrew gave us permission to dump the dirt near Fantasia and he would shift it later by front-end loader. After this we really got to work! A wheelbarrow was used to cart the dirt 10m from the dig and could just keep up with the full buckets spewing out of the hole.

The top of the hole was trimmed back to prevent collapse and reduce damage to the buckets as they often caught on the overhang. We ended up with 2 broken plastic buckets out of 6 - two handles and two handle fasteners.

By closing time just before dark we had dropped the dig to 3.5m depth and opened up the surface to 2m square. To go much deeper we need shoring. The lower half of the dig now slopes in from 3.5m diameter down to 1.5m as buttressing.

For the next digging trip we should have shoring materials and a hauling gantry.

Graham PILKINGTON

TECHNICAL and OTHER ARTICLES

MEMBERSHIP

Welcome to a new Associate Member;

Suzanne CHARLESWORTH 9207
Lot 3 Burnside Rd.
STRATHALBYN SA 5255

CAVE CRICKET RESEARCH

The South Australian Speleological Council (SASC) has recently received a grant through the National Park and Wildlife Service (NPWS) to research the life pattern of the Cave Cricket *Novotettix naracoortensis* within the Naracoorte Karst area.

Two field excursions have already occurred with a third planned for the weekend of 27th and 28th June. The response from the land owners in the area has been excellent, allowing us to visit many forgotten and infrequently visited features. The range of Crickets observed in the area to date has been larger than anticipated. The work load involved in this research is quite large, what with visiting and investigating the many features within the area, counting and sexing the specimens observed. Assistance from any caver for this project would be appreciated.

During CEGSA trips any observations of crickets should be noted, with the numbers present, size and sex along with the cave identification recorded and forwarded to :-

Ron Simms
29 Kentdale St.
Grange SA 5022
Ph. 356 5366

Furthermore any members who would like to join our monthly trips to Naracoorte can contact Ron Simms at the above address.

Ron SIMMS

The following information has been supplied by Ron Simms to educate and assist those keen cavers amongst us who would like to learn more about one of the many inhabitants of the Karst features that share their environment with us every time we go caving.

CAVE CRICKET IDENTIFICATION

This guide has been developed to allow for quick and easy identification of the various growth stages of the Naracoorte cave crickets *Novotettix naracoortensis*, when undertaking a cricket census in a cave.

- | | |
|--------------------|---|
| 1. Eggs | Will not be seen under normal circumstances as they are laid buried in small holes within the cave roof. |
| 2. Nymph | Very small, varying from 1 to 3mm in body length. Antennae fine and long, can exceed body length. Newly hatched nymphs can be difficult to see. |
| 3. Juvenile | Small in size from 3 to 8mm in body length with the abdomen filling out in size and the hind legs larger. Antennae longer. Not showing any adult sexual characteristics. |
| 4. Adult Male Body | varying from 9 to 14mm in length (can be longer), with four (4) small projections (cerci) from the base of the abdomen. Hind legs long and spindly with the antennae up to six (6) times the length of the body. |
| 5. Adult Female | Body varying from 9 to 18mm in length with a long spur (ovipositor) projection from the base of the abdomen. Colour of ovipositor will vary from pale to pinkish red. The purpose for the colour has not been determined, but is thought to indicate the sexual maturity or the egg laying stage. The hind legs are shorter and thicker than the male's with the antennae up to (six) 6 times the length of the body. |

The Naracoorte crickets all have eyes and can see, but they do not make any audible noise due to the lack of tympani organs or rasps. They are sensitive to the body heat and excess in carbon dioxide gasses given off by humans.

Changes in localised cave temperature, humidity and atmospheric pressure effect their movement and general activities within and outside the cave. Cave crickets can be found in the entrance of caves at night when the conditions are suitable.

They react to prolonged strong light and will move away from it. Normally they move slowly by walking, but are capable of quick movement and can leap long distances. They are able to leap from the roof upside down and land the correct way up on the cave floor. Cave crickets are Very Fragile, and if handled may lose parts of the antennae and appendage (legs) very easily.

The following Thank You Letter was received from Ganason Nadason of Malaysia, and has been reproduced here for everyone to share.

Ganason Nadason,
No.7, Jalan 14,
Taman Batu,
68100 Batu Caves,
Malaysia.

12th. December 1991.

Dear Mac,

How are you getting on? I hope all of you are in the Christmas mood and having a great time.

I would like to thank CEGSA for allowing me to attend your monthly meetings and caving trips.

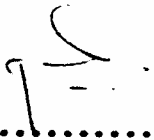
If any CEGSA member is passing through Kuala Lumpur, please ask them to contact me if they want to visit some of the caves here. My home telephone number is 03 6892817 and my office address is as follows :

Ministry of Land and
Cooperative Development,
9th.Floor,Wisma Tanah,
Jalan Semarak,
50576 Kuala Lumpur,
Malaysia.

Tel : 03 2921566

Thats all for now. And I wish all of you a Happy Christmas and happy caving,

Yours faithfully,


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PROGRAMME

August

22/23	Corra Lynn		Paul Harper
26	GENERAL 7:30pm	Rock for Caves	Graham Pilkington
29/30			

September

5/6			
12/13			
19/20			
23	GENERAL 7:30pm	Batty bits	Terry Reardon
26/27			

October

2-11	Nullarbor -		
	A Survey feast for those who like to go caving		Graham Pilkington
3/4			
10-12 LWE	Flinders Ranges		Paul Harper
17/18			
24/25			
28	GENERAL 7:30pm	Old Homestead Cave	Graham Pilkington
31/			

November

/1	
7/8	
14/15	
21/22	
25	GENERAL 7:30pm
28/29	

December

5-16	Nullarbor	Max Meth or Graham Pilkington
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Check with the Trip Liaison Officer for any additions or alterations.