

CAVE EXPLORATION GROUP SOUTH AUSTRALIA Inc.

PO Box 144 Rundle Mall, Adelaide, 5000



Volume 38 Number 4

November 1993

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Merry Christmas

CAVE EXPLORATION GROUP

SOUTH AUSTRALIA Inc.

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

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FRONT COVER: Father Christmas leaving the magic cave on his annual expedition.

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The deadline for copy or background material for Volume 39 Number 1 must reach the Editor by Wednesday 23rd February, 1994. Material not meeting this deadline will be retained for possible use in a following issue.

The views 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 the last edition of Volume 38 for the CEGSA Newsletter. Next year will see the circulation of Volume 39, provided of course that enough articles are submitted for publishing.

As of the August General meeting, George MacLucas has filled in as our Records Officer, in the absence of Stan Flavel, thanks George. Wow! Space must be of a premium at the MacLucas home, what with George acting Librarian and now Records Officer!

Members at the August General meeting were able to catch up with two of our country members, who are less frequently observed out of their respective home land of the Lower South East, namely Kevin Mott and Fred Aslin who both joined us at this time. Good to see you both.

Athol Jackson guided us through Wombat cave, all from the comfort of the meeting room without travelling to Naracoorte, thanks to his great slide presentation, which out of interest he prepared for the ASF Conference held in Adelaide back in 1976! Thanks Athol.

At the September General meeting, we were visited by two American cavers, namely Mike and Chris Churchill from Huntsville, Alabama. Mike was here in Australia on a work trip and fortunately brought several slides of the caves typically found around their home, such as the Alabama caves and the Carlsburg cave in New Mexico. Both Mike and Chris invited members visiting the United States to contact them and hopefully see the caves in their region.

The September General meeting would have to have been one of the all time shortest meeting held or close to it.

Peter Horne was awarded Life Membership to CEGSA during the September General meeting. Congratulations Peter. Maybe now you can settle down to completing your Lower South East Cave Reference book?

Elery Hamilton-Smith advised the group as to the first documented visit to Corra Lyn cave, as published in "The Adventures of Edward Snell". Mention was made to caving by candle light only.

During the October General meeting, Ron Simms gave a presentation of his work on Cave Crickets. This communication was both well presented and informative. Thanks Ron.

As usual for this time of year, the Committee and Office Bearers think about stretching their arms and feet and consider taking the challenge on for a further twelve months. Maybe it's time you should consider helping out. See you at the Annual General Meeting in February.

It looks like I am going to be extremely busy over the next six months or so with my employment. If I continue as Editor, I will require articles being sent to me promptly to assist in publishing this fine Newsletter. Expected publication dates for Volume Thirty Nine are March, May, August and November 1994, but may change subject to my work load.

To all those authors out there who have contributed to Volume Thirty Eight of the Newsletter, Thank You. It has been encouraging to see the calibre and volume of articles presented for publication this year, I only hope it will continue in the future.

To all CEGSA members and readers of the Newsletter, I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Prosperous New Year.

Mark THISELTON

TRIP REPORTS

KELLY HILL CAVE

15th to 19th February 1993

Participants: Grant Gartrell, Merry Long and Jan Nielsen.

Feature: 5K1.

We visited Kangaroo Island for a short holiday and wind down after completing our blueberry harvest season. Jan was on a working holiday from Denmark, and had been working at the farm for several months. He had some caving experience and had heard glowing reports of K.I., and I will take any opportunity that presents itself to visit Kelly Hill, so it seemed appropriate to pay a short visit to the cave.

We had originally made application to visit the Silt Cave (K14) section of the Kelly Hill system, but Robert Ellis was away on leave and Viv Florance indicated that our approval was for the silt floored section below the K1 entrance and for the old tourist run. In view of the short time available we were happy enough to confine ourselves to this area, but that is not quite how things worked out.

Once again in a low sandy crawl off the back end of the silt, the G. Gartrell whiskers started to twitch in a delightful little breeze, and it didn't take all that much persistence to push up a sand slope through a number of small cavities until a more roomy chamber, still on the side of the same large sand cone, was reached. An easy crawl south across the slope led to a small window, a further crawl, and then a rapid descent down the side of the sand cone through a hole and down into a small chamber with roof height about 3m, width about 5 -6m and extending south 10m or so before rising up into a small, well decorated chamber.

Although Jan and I had a quick look around this chamber, at this stage of the day we had lost the breeze, and decided that because we were only a small party, with Merry our only immediate backup, it would be prudent to save the rest for another trip.

Grant GARTRELL

KELLY HILL CAVE**14th to 20th May 1993**

Participants: Grant Gartrell, Merry Long, Eddy, Corinne, and Isabelle Rubessa, Ruth Lawrence, Gary Woodcock and Jeanette Chapman.

Feature: 5K1.

The purpose of this trip was to survey the March discovery and to attempt to find out where the breeze was coming from. It was obvious that more cave remained to be found.

There was another trip to Kelly Hill at the same time. Kevin Mott had arranged for the Maranatha Christian Group, led by Brent Golledge to use our campsite at Kelly Hill, but at the last minute was unable to join them to assist Brent. There had been a bit of a mix-up in communication over the arrangements about this. I'm not being critical of Brent's leadership in these comments, but the upshot is that the campsite was pioneered by CEGSA and although for a short while it was available for general camping, this is no longer the case. Use of this campsite is now strictly restricted to CEGSA parties, and this privilege is because of the work we put in to the area. The definition of a CEGSA party in this context does not extend to a Maranatha party with a couple of CEGSA members present, nor to any other group. CEGSA members should make sure that they clearly understand this point, do not abuse the privilege, and do not place the park staff in the embarrassing situation of having to knock back an application.

We also must apologise to Brent for having to keep our mouths zipped up as to why we were there at that time. Even Robert Ellis was not told of the extent of the discovery until after Brent's party had left.

On the first day underground we quickly made our way back in, up the sand slope, down the sand slope, dusting off the overalls, and into the formation chamber. Almost immediately Jeanette felt the breeze coming out of a small window over a broken block of calcite on the eastern side of the chamber, and was able to slip carefully between some small stalactites into a continuation of the chamber. The rest of the party followed, and we found ourselves in another small, well decorated chamber which stopped quickly in formation chokes in all directions. The breeze was coming out of a hole in the middle of the floor through which we could see another chamber below. Obviously the floor wasn't as thick as one might have thought. A second hole a little further over gave an easy drop down, and we found ourselves at the start of a large chamber full of huge blocks of badly shattered rock, some showing 2 to 3 metres of solid flowstone layering, and many with very sharp edges. Interspersed with this throughout the chamber were clusters of excellent formation. This is definitely not the place for a party of novice cavers.

Gary and Jeanette left the cave for a while, and Eddy, Ruth and I systematically searched the crevices leading off from this chamber. After an hour or so we were just about ready to give it away, when I found a way through the breakdown which led into a tall rift passage. I called to Eddy and Ruth who followed me in and we followed it to an area with holes in several directions and a lot of black mud over the floor. I investigated a branch to the left while Eddy checked out one to the right. Mine stopped fairly quickly. Eddy's didn't. We began following up behind him and it sounded as though he was disappearing into the distance. I detected a certain amount of excitement in his voice, and started to catch him up, only to hear him disappear around a corner. His voice went up about two octaves and he made a noise which sounded like (expletive deleted) *WOOP WOOP* as it echoed around the stygian halls forlorn. I thought to myself 'It's Eddy up front, he gets excited easily, it's probably nothing to rave about, but it doesn't sound bad for all that!' Then I came around the corner and saw it myself, and probably said something like (expletive deleted) *WOOP WOOP* myself. That's the spot where we had to take Robert Ellis (then still at Kelly Hill, but now in charge of Flinders Chase), and Jody Gates from Flinders Chase. They were both suitably impressed. On the last day we found a small tunnel bypassing a flowstone floored area of the cave.

H

HThe new discoveries are, especially in some sections, particularly delicate, and access to this area of the cave should be limited to small parties with suitably experienced leaders. Robert has asked that I should act as coordinator of work to be carried out in this section of the cave, and I am happy to undertake this.

H

Grant GARTRELL

KELLY HILL CAVE**27th August to 5th September 1993**

Participants: Grant Gartrell, Jan Nielsen, Peter Horne, Mark, Karen and Murray Sefton, Steve Milner, Gary Woodcock and Jeanette Chapman.

Feature: 5K1.

After the discoveries of the previous trip and with question marks still remaining it was obvious that we would be returning soon. Eddy being a responsible husband stayed home to be close to Corinne who was due to bring another little Rubessa into the big bad world. Congratulations to the new Mum and Dad. All that self-sacrifice paid off, Eddy.

H

HOur objectives for this trip were to continue the exploration, carry out a detailed survey, do some serious still photography, and produce a short video of the cave. It was a top effort by all participants. The slides are outstanding, the video is great, and the map is good enough to hang in the art gallery.

H

HA second large highly decorated chamber named 'Back of Woop Woop' was found out the back of Woop Woop of all places. This chamber is 70m in length, and again is a 'boots off' area. Access to this chamber is either via a long and circuitous route with a short muddy crawl, or a very tricky insinuation of the body through formation and then down a steep flowstone slope, unsuitable for novice cavers or the not-very-athletic.

H

HOne of the rewards of detailed surveying is that you explore the cave thoroughly, and in this case, this resulted in closing a few loops and finding a high level connection back to the broken rock chamber below the floor holes, which bypassed all the muddy stuff. A second bypass in the same vicinity was also discovered shortly afterwards, leading beyond the Woop Woop chamber, and all these bypasses enabled us to close survey loops and thus verify the survey accuracy, which was excellent.

H

HPeter's video gear was carried into Woop Woop for one trip. The movie lights are great for looking around chambers, enabling you to see decoration in a way just not possible with smaller lights. Even so, some of the decoration we could see did not show up as well as we would have hoped on the video. Video is far more sensitive to light than conventional cine film, and makes it possible to film without taking tonnes of car batteries underground, but even so, the more light you can have, the better. We also did not anticipate the pervasiveness of the sand in the sand crawls at penetrating Peter's camera carry cases, and getting into the works of his tripod, and so forth. It would be good to go back again one day for another session, but we should prepare for it and make sure that the cameraman can concentrate on filming, and that the others on the party are well briefed as to the support they must provide. Even someone who is simply panning a movie light should practice beforehand and understand the effect the cameraman is trying to achieve. It is also worthwhile trying to get hold of a high bandwidth (high resolution) professional quality camera for this work, but of course that costs quite a few thousand smackeros more. Those of you who have experienced Peter's cinematic artistry before will know that the video we did get will be worth viewing. I'd go further and say it is amazing, given the difficulties. He's sort of lucky but he's not. How many people see five echidnas crossing the road in single file when they've got their camera with them? ... but by the time he got out of the car they were all half buried and refusing to move. Pierre would tell you that's the story of his life, unless you can run faster than he can.

H

HThe next trip to this area will probably be in the March to May time frame next year. We are planning to undertake careful track marking in the more sensitive areas of the cave, and to clean up some sand which is already spreading towards the first decoration area past the initial sand cone. There are no obvious leads at this time, but several possibilities still remain, and the potential is good.

H

Grant GARTRELL

NULLARBOR PLAINS**25th September to 3rd October 1993**

Participants: CEGSA: Graham Pilkington, Mark Sefton, Max Meth, Gary Woodcock, Ian Charlesworth; Max (Dave) Hall (28th-30th Sep.)
 WASG: Rauleigh Webb, Ann-Marie Meredith, Cameron Eldridge, Jay Van Ballegooyen
 Others visiting at the same time:
 Canberra (29th Sep.): Andrew Wall and party
 Narrabundah College Canberra (1st-3rd Oct.): Neil Montgomery and party

Features: 6N83, 128, 192, 343, 379, 381, 382, 389, 401, 404-408, 688, 707, new features 716-725, and some nearby features of N83 including 8 as yet un-numbered new ones. (all in WA).

Friday-Saturday, 24th-25th September 1993.

Just getting out to Old Homestead Cave via a stopover at Max's Ceduna house. A minor problem of engine overheating and coolant loss was cured by a new radiator cap. On return to Adelaide, it was discovered that running a water cooling system on steam destroys the water pump! A late start from Adelaide and the engine problem led to a 3am arrival at Ceduna and an 11am start the next day.

After a chat with Bob Eglington at Mundrabilla Homestead, we headed off from the Eyre Highway. The track was damp but had only minor patches of water.

Sunday, 26th September 1993.

The first day of caving. I had decided back in Adelaide that the main tasks of this expedition were to clean up the 1991 survey's loose-ends and to do as much of the high level as possible. The cave has three main levels. The major extensive level is in the middle and is best described as the sandy level. It contains the major phreatic tubes. The lower level is the currently active level from 1 to 8m below the middle level (depending on the amount of collapse debris). This level mainly consists of intertwined tubes usually about 1m but exceptionally up to 3m diameter. Water uses this level several times a year after the typical semi-desert type downpours. The high level is the calcified level. Many passages are wall to wall calcite: rafts, 'mites, flowstone, rimstone pools, . Other features are gypsum masses and flowers, sharp rocks, vuggy walls, roof pendants galore and low roofs. These are some of the reasons that the level has been left un-mapped - it is difficult to survey while protecting both yourself and the cave!

The morning was taken up putting camp in order. Graham went back with the trailer for firewood (a 62km round trip!) and managed to loose the spare wheel off the trailer. The rough track on an unladen trailer was too much for the strap holding the wheel in place. The wheel was never recovered even though searches were made for it on subsequent traverses of the track.

Max and Gary used the morning to accurately locate and describe two blowholes (N382 and N389) that lie south of the ridge south of OHC. The first is 1m deep and the other 1.4m deep, both have passages leading off.

In the afternoon, three teams entered the North cave.

Mark, Rauleigh, and Ann-Marie went to the Vengeance Series discovering a connection with two Main-Run roof holes. The first is a large nearly free-climbable hole on the NE edge of the main tunnel while the second is a smaller one in the centre of the main tunnel. During the 120m of mapping, care had to be taken not to damage the many calcite rafts and gypsum needles. One tunnel's needles led to the name Coconut Alley.

Max, Gary and Ian went to relocate Gonzo's Attic but mapped a few loose ends instead, including a new high-level loop 60m long connecting a Main Run roofhole to the NorthWest Passage.

Graham, Jay and Cameron headed for an area just north of RDFN to map a known patch of high level passage. They never got there. On the way they passed another high lead that had been sketched in by the 1991 surveyors. It lead into a complex of "pottery" tunnels typically 1m high and up to 10m wide. Accurate surveying of these types of passage is slow because vision is limited by mounds and pillars while access is restricted trying to minimise disturbance.

Monday, 27th September 1993.

Mark, Rauleigh and Ann-Marie headed back to the Vengeance Series. They took photos on the way and within, before surveying on beyond the large roofhole. The tunnel here is 10m wide by 4m high now called Piss Potters Passage due to the wall-to-wall "pottery". The tunnel heads at right-angles to the main tunnel beneath and has needles up to 200mm long. Track marking also reduced survey time resulting in only 50m being mapped.

Max, Gary, and Ian located and mapped the 40m of Gonzo's Attic.

Graham, Jay, and Cameron returned to the area tackled the day before and finished up with 180m of survey for the two days mapping. The main trend was heading southwest as a series of touching phreatic chambers that needed the joins enlarging. The last chamber reached was not mapped because time and energy ran out. Progress will have to wait for another trip.

Tuesday, 28th September 1993.

Mark, Rauleigh and Ann-Marie couldn't stay out of the Vengeance Series. However, Mark set up a ladder in the large roofhole to speed access. 120m of passage was mapped leaving at least two going leads. Notable features included a 600mm gypsum needle and a passage filled by dirty needles dubbed HIV Negative.

Max, Gary, and Ian cleaned up some loose ends in the South Cave. First completing 30m of the Trident Series, concentrating on the multi-level rockpile chambers near the end, followed by a start into surveying the CheeseWorks.

Graham, Jay, and Cameron went to map The Lower Streamway off the Son Of Main that Russell Bridge (SSS) had indicated goes during the 1991 expedition. Unfortunately the start could not be located. What was thought to be it petered out after only 14m and had already been mapped! On to known country and an unmapped floor-hole off the by-pass tube just before RDFNC. This was just a 16m link back to the Lower Streamway but eliminated three ?'s in one go.

Max Hall arrived from Balladonia

Wednesday, 29th September 1993.

Max, Max, Ian and Ann-Marie went for a drive. First stop was N688 near the track down to the Highway. From there it was W towards N128 but first stopping at N716, an 18x13m depression 35m S of the track with several breathing holes, the largest was 1.1m deep. Next was N717 10m N of the track, an 8.5x8x1.2m deep depression containing a hole of 1.5x1m. Blowhole N343 is 66m N of the track marked by a cairn at 58m and is 0.5x0.4x3.8m deep in a depression of 20x10x1.2m deep. A passage leads off for 1.7m. N128 was reached at dusk.

Graham and Cameron took the day off. And it was a good job they did! A wet gale hit camp necessitating rapid collection and storage of stray items and battening down the tents. We were concerned that the "away" team would be marooned but they arrived back very late after most of the surface water had drained with tales of clear sky and dry tracks until nearly back at camp.

Mark, Rauleigh, Jay and Gary chose this day to photograph the North cave out to the Oesophagus, including the some of the Vengeance Series.

Thursday, 30th September 1993.

Graham and Ian went to the Officers Mess and mapped 155m near the entrance. In the process a shortcut was discovered from the Mesa Chamber to the start of the large tubes. SW off Mesa is a jumble of vuggy rocks, pendants and alcoves. At the back of this, Graham removed a chunk of rock and the Kitchen Cupboard was entered. Much of this area consists of plates of calcite rafts and other delicate items. About 250m of tunnel was discovered, ending 150m SW of Mesa. From the calcified silt deposits, it is evident that water surged through these tunnels thousands of years ago and the trend suggests that the source was the cave entrance.

Mark and Gary did some more photography. This time of the South cave entrance chamber and North cave to the White Room.

Max, Max, Rauleigh, Ann-Marie, Jay and Cameron headed off for Carlisle Cave N707. On the way they attempted to drive to Skink Hole N82 but the track they took did not go there. Instead they visited 1.2m deep blowhole N718 and Quandong Doline N719. This is 100x50x2.2m deep with walls on the W, N and E and a 3.5m tall Quandong tree at the extreme N. The S side is a gentle-sided depression 150x50m

Carlisle Cave is in a treeless area in a 90x50x2m deep depression. In the SW of this is a 13.5m diameter collapse 30m deep. A sloping rock/clay ramp surrounds the hole making it very dangerous to look down. Max Meth found a small cave on the NW of the depression while the other five descended the hole into a good sized cave. More details will follow after a report from Rauleigh who is planning a return trip to map the cave as a WA project.

Max Hall returned home from N707.

Friday 1st October 1993.

Max, Gary, and Ian completed the survey of the CheeseWorks. It was hoped that this area would lead to wonders beyond measure but it was not to be. The CheeseWorks has 155m of passage.

Graham Ian Jay and Cameron went into the Officers Mess. Graham and Ian did some check survey legs while Jay and Cameron mapped an 18m long side tunnel. The two teams then tackled an area with two levels and many unknowns near the E end of the Officers Mess. The combined effort produced 142m of map. On the way out an area off the north central part of the OM was investigated and two patches of cave noted. The west one was about 170m in calcified passages and the east one 80m in sandy tubes and chambers.

Mark, Rauleigh and Ann-Marie got the job of heading north. The lack of air movement forced abandonment of an In The Drains survey so they completed 80m of survey of the higher level RDFNG rockpile tunnel. This tunnel (10 wide by 4 high by 180m long) is very unusual for Old Homestead. It is well above every other level; it is large sandy rockpile passage whereas all other higher level passages are small and crystalline; it has many surface forms of animal life (mostly dead); and it always has a breeze at the entrance slot. These features imply that it connects to the surface (probably via small cracks) but also hint of a higher level system that has eluded us in other places.

Neil Montgomery and about 20 school kids arrived in a bus.

Saturday, 2nd October 1993.

Mark, Gary, Ian, Jay and Cameron went off to the Spring Series to take photos. Ann-Marie went with them into the South cave and then returned.

Neil's group went off to survey and push the Lord Of The Rings at the end of the Spring Series.

Max walked out W to clear up locations and details on some of the nearby features. A new rockhole N720 was 450m W of the doline. To the NW features N379, 381, 404-408 were visited and N721-725 found.

Graham went for his walk to the SE into an area devoid of surface features. He located 8 features, including 2 blowholes 3m deep and a doline 22x12x1m deep. Devoid means no-one has looked.

Rauleigh just enjoyed the surface.

Sunday, 3rd October 1993.

The recent rains had damaged the track by allowing vehicles to rip it up. The van and trailer added their own mark by just managing to navigate the flooded sections so as to arrive on the other side somewhere near the desired location. Mundrabilla Station had received very heavy rain - water was everywhere.

N192 was located and mapped on the return. It has a blowhole entrance 2.9x2.6x4.9m deep located in a very large rock pavement. The single chamber is 28x19m tapering from 3m high at the entrance to 1m at the sides. A tight passage off an alcove on the NW side had a breeze.

The rough track and bush bashing finally took its toll. A trailer tyre went flat while at N192. Of course the van had different wheels. After much deliberation about abandoning the trailer verses nursing it back to Mundrabilla Roadhouse it was discovered that the fault was a break in the tube where the valve pipe connects. Many tests later, a rock wedge against the valve was found to reduce the air loss to a negligible amount. We got all the way back to Mundrabilla Roadhouse with only one stop to re-inflate the tyre. The rock stayed put all the way held in place only by wishful thinking.

Naturally Mundrabilla could not help us. Sadly for us the rock was removed before we found this out and could not be re-positioned to repeat the previous miracle. 18km towards Eucla we had to leave the trailer and do the 1½ hour round trip with the wheel to get it repaired. That meant a 1am arrival in Ceduna.

A total of 1170m of cave was mapped (370m known plus 800m new) bringing Old Homestead Cave up to 24km mapped. A further 500m was found. We now have known but unmapped passage at 2km and unknown but expected at 3km. Mapping as we explore (with the occasional lapse!) will always lead to a high level of unknown but expected cave - there are so many places where mapping stopped but the cave continued.

Graham PILKINGTON
Max METH
Mark SEFTON

LOWER SOUTH EAST - DIVING KILSBY'S HOLE

30th and 31st October 1993

Participants: Peter Kraehenbuehl, Janine Tamblyn, Darren Crawford, Ian Williams and Mark Thiselton.

Features: 5L11, 5L19-20, 5L46, 5L61 and 5L72.

This trip started out some six months earlier, when we approached the Cave Divers Association of Australia (CDAA) coordinator of Kilsby's Hole 5L46 to gain access to the site.

Kilsby's Hole had formerly been leased to the Weapons Research Establishment (WRE) for experimental use. Fortunately they decided to discontinue their lease. Now the South Australian Police Force have leased this dive site for training purposes, and as a part of their lease, have allowed the CDAA to coordinate limited dives to this magnificent sinkhole.

Four groups of approximately six qualified divers are given the opportunity to dive in Kilsby's Hole over one weekend every three months. Then once you have dived Kilsby's Hole you have to wait for the remaining members of the CDAA to have their turn before returning. During the dive there was one surface attendant and one in-water attendant. Imagine dry caving with these sort of conditions.

Saturday morning saw Darren, Ian and Mark diving in the crystal clear waters of Piccaninnie Ponds 5L72, while Janine and Peter dived Allendale East Sink Hole 5L11. Any trip to the Mount would not be complete without a visit to Piccaninnie Ponds!

Saturday afternoon saw the five keen divers wait in the queue at The Pines 5L61 cave dive site for over one hour before gearing up and entering the water. It was worse than Rundle Mall. As can be expected from such use, we found the visibility of the water to be poorer than usual, but acceptable enough to allow us to still enjoy our dive.

Sunday morning saw Darren, Ian and Mark diving Kilsby's Hole, as Janine and Peter had already dived their privilege. Janine and Peter dived Engelbrechts East 5L19-20 cave dive site during this time.

We were fortunate enough to find Kilsby's Hole with rays of bright sunlight shining into the lake filled chamber, so much so that at a depth of forty metres, we did not require the use of our torches, unless to highlight items of interest on the walls of the cave. The only other inhabitants that we saw to occupy the sinkhole were a number of fish which the landowner apparently introduced.

Sunday afternoon saw the group return to Allendale East cave diving site, allowing Janine to practice some of her underwater photographic skills before heading home.

Mark THISELTON

TECHNICAL and OTHER ARTICLES

MEMBERSHIP

Change of address

Kevin Mott		(H)	087 23 1461
18 Reginald Street	MOUNT GAMBIER SA 5290	(W)	087 35 1660

HONORARY LIFE MEMBERSHIP

Peter Horne was awarded Honorary Life Membership at the September General Meeting. This was in recognition of the outstanding contribution that Peter has made to CEGSA and South Australian caving; in particular to the study and mapping of underwater caves.

CEGSA CHRISTMAS BREAK UP PARTY

Who: CEGSA Members, family and friends.

Where: Sue McCormick's Home.
45 Grevillia Way, BLACKWOOD.
Ph. 370 3507.

When: from 4pm on Saturday 11th December 1993.

What: Barbecue (BYO everything, including a chair).

Theme: "HATS" to be worn!

Please contact Sue if you intend to participate.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 1993 CEGSA Annual General Meeting will be held at Mark Sefton's home, located at 36 Norman St, St. Marys. On Saturday the 5th of February 1994 from 4pm onwards. This function will consist of a Barbecue (BYO everything). The Annual General Meeting will commence at 7pm. Please RSVP with either Mark or Karin Sefton on telephone number 277 9086.

FIRST AID KITS

Several new First Aid Kits have been generously donated to the Group, thanks to the efforts of Paul Harper. These kits will be held by the quartermaster for use on all club trips. There is no hire fee to have these kits on a trip, just the need to replace any items used

NOTES ON THE DISCOVERY OF VICTORIA FOSSIL CAVE (NOMINATED FOR WORLD HERITAGE LISTING)

October 1993

Although there was much written in the press about the discovery of Victoria Fossil Cave in August 1969, and various reports were even written for the CEGSA Newsletter, I don't recall ever describing in detail and in my own words the actual discovery. With the recent announcement that Victoria Fossil Cave at Naracoorte would be assessed for World Heritage listing by an international panel next year, and after some reminiscences about the past recently with Rod Wells, I felt that I perhaps should write a first hand account. Trip reports do have their value, and although when we made the discovery 24 years ago we knew it was significant, World Heritage as a formal concept did not yet exist. The third party published accounts of the time were not necessarily strictly accurate.

I re-read an account of the discovery of the Fossil Cave in the second edition of the book "A History of Naracoorte", by Judith Murdoch and Heather Parker. I found it interesting and felt that others might find it interesting too. This excerpt is from pages 123 to 125 of that book. Those with a liking for local history would find the rest of the book interesting as well. I don't know if copies are still available.

"From the beginning, observers have commented on deposits of bones, and layers of fossil material in the caves. The "Register" correspondent in 1879 noted that the floor of the Big cave was occupied in many places with a thick deposit of bones which represented millions of small rodents which could not have lived where they were buried, as bones were agglomerated together in confusion. Fr. Tenison Woods, in 1861, formed the theory that these were swept in by a flood. The correspondent thought this theory "hardly good enough." He further commented on fossil shells and corals and Bryozoa in "fossiliferous strata" in the walls of the cave. This sort of fossil material has been constantly found during quarrying in the Caves Range.

A letter written by Wm. Reddan, on 27th July, 1908, to Professor R.C. Stirling, said that his men were finding bones "here and there" in all of the six caves they had recently discovered. The tooth of a marsupial lion had been found in the Specimen Cave, and another in the Bat Cave in a layer of bat excreta which alternated with layers of red sand. Reddan said that the red sand in which bones were found could not have entered the caves through the small opening which existed in the roof, it had been deposited by some other means. Tenison Woods had said much the same 45 years earlier. It was in similar conditions that the sensational deposit of fossil bones in an extension of Victoria Cave was discovered on August 3rd, 1969.

Members of the Caves (sic) Exploration Group of SA - ordinary people, teachers, salesmen, students, typists - had been exploring the numerous caves known to exist near Naracoorte for several years. A group of local young people had become members of CEGSA and did their own explorations, but apparently had little contact with this group which came from Adelaide and camped in a CEGSA hut in the Caves Reserve.

There were eight people in the party late that Sunday morning, most of whom were investigating another part of the Victoria Cave. Grant Gartrell, President of CEGSA, and Alice Wells, were waiting for the other six when they noticed a draft coming from a small opening at the bottom of a wall. Grant began investigating and found a "squeeze" of about 10 inches partly blocked with rocks, which he began to push back behind him. Other members of the party joined in the business of removing the rocks and following behind. After a comparatively short time - perhaps half an hour - they came out in a cavern which is now known as Fossil Cave. They mounted the inclined portion and found themselves looking down at a silt floor with what appeared to be rocks lying on it. It took a few minutes to register that the rocks were bones, and that they had made an important discovery.

In the small party were Rod Wells, zoologist, and Ern Maddock, Curator of National Pleasure Resorts. These two were subsequently responsible for the remarkable union of science and tourism which took place.

The Victoria Cave, with Fossil Cave Extension, was re-opened to the public, with new lighting and easy access, in December, 1970. It involved colossal work by Ern Maddock, the voluntary workers of CEGSA, and employed workmen. Visitors may now see the beauties of Victoria Cave, then pass on to the underground museum where they may see a "dig" in progress, view the bones of Ice Age creatures on the spot where they were found, and learn about the nature of the find.

Distinguished visiting scientists have described the discovery as "one of the major discoveries of the century," one of the three most important bone deposits in the world.

The silt bed which is being excavated covers an area 200 feet by 40, with a further 40 feet under ledges each side. The silt layer, which is packed with bones, has been measured at depths of ten feet or more. Among the species identified are Thylacoleo (marsupial lion), Sthenuridae (large grazing kangaroos), Simosthenurus and Procoptodon (large browsing kangaroos), Protemnodon (giant browsing wallaby), Thylacinus (the Tasmanian tiger) not yet extinct, Diprotodontidae Zygomaturus (a lumbering animal of ox-like build), and a host of animals and reptiles still extant.

Within four months of the opening, Ern Maddock, whose enthusiasm and drive had done so much to create this unique display, died. He had spent hours and days of his own time working in the cave - one night he lost all count of time and stayed down all night. In November, 1971, a 25 - acre enclosed area of scrub in the Caves Reserve was set aside as a memorial to Ern Maddock. The Ern Maddock Reserve was initiated and created by the Chamber of Commerce, assisted by service clubs, the RSL, and the SE Historical and Restoration Society.

Late in 1973 it was announced that yet more wonderful scenic and scientific chambers had been discovered in the Victoria Cave. A three-pronged investigation was in operation. Grant Gartrell and party were working on the new passages, with a view to opening up at least part of the latest discoveries to the public; the work of excavating, preserving, classifying and exhibiting bones was going on under the supervision of Rod Wells; and Mr. Kevin Moriarty, a geologist, was in charge of the extremely important geological work which would be the key to solving the puzzle of how the bones came to be there."

This account is not quite correct. I actually went into the cave that morning with the specific intention of checking out an indeterminate "flattener" shown on the existing CEGSA survey of Victoria Cave. Alice decided to sit at the passage junction and wait for the other party who were showing Ern Maddock the possible location for a dug link between the Victoria Cave south extension and the Little Victoria Cave - for the purpose of creating a through walk so that tourist parties would not have to retrace their steps.

I felt a moderate breeze in the flattener which spurred me on to pulling out rocks and squeezing through and up a very tight fissure. I broke through after about 30 minutes into a large chamber with a rocky floor and a silt bed running off the far side. I had a quick investigation of the chamber and walked carefully over the silt to where it rose in a sand cone at the far end, on the way observing a portion of a lower jawbone of Thylacoleo, with the distinctive premolar tooth, just near what later became the chute to the "upside-down" chamber. I then retraced my steps to the top of the crawl. At this stage Rod Wells and Bob Henzell were pulling more rocks out of the crawl below, and I enlarged the top section as well and made it a little safer with the luxury of plenty of room to work in. The rest of the party, including Alice, made their way out of the cave. Rod, Bob and I noted two other passages leading off the rockpile chamber and had a further look at the silt. At that stage it became apparent that many of what had looked at first like sand-covered rocks and pebbles on the silt surface were in fact bones. Then we found a complete Thylacoleo skeleton on the silt surface in an alcove at the base of the rockpile overlooking the silt bed. It was obvious to us even then that it was an extremely significant and exciting find of unprecedented quality and magnitude.

Ern Maddock did not get to see the new discovery that weekend, since time did not permit before we had to make the journey back to Adelaide. He nevertheless immediately recognised its significance. Sadly Ern died only two years later. Bob Henzell moved on to other things. I continue to locate and explore new caves with some success, despite an increase in girth, and Rod continues to unravel the paleontological mysteries of the Victoria Fossil Cave. For all of us it has been a privilege to be part of the ongoing history of this cave.

Grant GARTRELL

INSIDE EARTH

CAVES BENEATH THE NULLARBOR

I believe this to be a first, a combination of aesthetic and Scientific material from our own CEGSA members, together in an exhibition of paintings, drawings, photographs, maps, videos et., of the Nullarbor Plains caves, taken outside of the club rooms and exhibited in a public place. A reputable gallery, Prospect Gallery, 1 Thomas St, Prospect, Adelaide, South Australia. To be opened on the 20th of March 1994 at 2:30 pm by professor Elery Hamilton-Smith of RMIT, who is a founding member of CEGSA. The Exhibition closes on the 10th April 1994 (please check with the Gallery as to their new 1994 hours).

This is a wonderful opportunity as there has been virtually very little cave painting in Australia, or indeed for that matter, the world this century. It is also a good opportunity for participating members to show their skill in cave photography. It also offers an airing for the early historic photographs scattered amongst members. Kevin Mott has agreed to loan a few photographic plates in his weeping of the early photographs of the late captain J. Maitland Thomson, pioneer Nullarbor caver. Greg Bulling will be showing a few videos. I believe one or two new ones not yet in our library. Terry Reardon will be submitting some nasty (or cute, if you like) cave dwellers. Elery Hamilton-Smith will be exhibiting an extract from his work on "Koonalda" cave. Jim Cundy, Kevin Mott, Steve Milner, Athol Jackson, Grant Gartrell and Gary Woodcock will be submitting a various photographs, most of which will be mounted and framed. Other slides will be selected for continuous viewing from a screen in a suitable area of the gallery.

For my part, I will be submitting a large number of very small paintings emphasising the feelings of mystery and suspense within the caves. This echoes on the ongoing interest in my main body of art work dealing with the unconscious. The journey into the dark unknown through dreaming, mythology and alchemy. The obstacles encountered in the fearsome long journey to the lower regions of the earth has furnished many mythological tales of gods, demi-gods, heroes, saints and mortals. The realm of dreams for many depict journeys into deep chasms of the mind. Most cultures especially in the west hold a reverence for caves, they hold a dread and mystery that has lasted throughout the centuries. It is still for most people a forbidden area that still intrigues. Hopefully the public will be intrigued with our exhibition. A combination of the scientific and the spiritual, the mystery and the enlightened, an interesting and alchemical combination.

June MacLUCAS

THANK YOU, ALL!

This is DIFFICULT!

Having just gotten over the shock of being advised that I had been nominated for Life Membership with CEGSA, and then having this approved at the last General Meeting, I really wanted to thank everyone for their expression of thanks for my involvement with my favourite caving/speleological club over the past dozen years or so ... but it is difficult, because it is embarrassing to make a big deal about it ... but I really wanted to express my thanks to those who were so kind!

So, I've decided NOT to write an article about it! I mean, I was just your typical caver and cave diver, helping the cause like so many other members have done over the years, and I am truly very proud to join the other "Lifers" (move over, Lewy!), but anyway, however it happened and whoever was behind it all, I'll end by saying "Thank You" again! I hope that I can continue to proudly serve THE BEST caving organisation in South Australia (at great risk of incurring the Speleo Council's wrath ... yeah, yeah, I know!), for many years to come!

Whew! Got out of THAT one easily enough (although I was made to sit up the front of the meeting when the nomination was approved ... but that's ANOTHER story)! ...

Peter HORNE

NORM HOCKNELL

I probably met Norm for the first time in mid 1965. It may have been earlier but the time does not matter, for it is the man and his works that I remember.

Twenty five years ago he held the post of CEGSA Records & Library officer. He was an active CEGSA member and perhaps only his contemporaries will appreciate just how much he did and how wide were his interests. I above all people have Norm to thank for helping unscramble the South East area records as above all things he was a DOER. He hated procrastination and small talk and I guess that is part of why he and I got on so well.

Remember that in mid 1965 the records stood at S150. That means 150 caves had been recorded for the WHOLE of the South East (upper and lower). After the Upper and Lower South East numbering was split, S150 became L94. Compare 94 numbered caves with 322 now, with dozens still to be documented!

Norm and Carol D Mount married on 7-9-66 in Adelaide and they shifted to Mt Gambier shortly after. I managed to get Norm a job at Panel Board Pty Ltd (where I also worked) and he was able to keep his carpentry trade.

Norm tragically died at his Kain St, Mt Gambier residence on 18-12-1968 and was buried here in Mt Gambier 1000 hrs on Saturday 21-12-1968. Carol returned to live in Adelaide.

At the end of my bed is a cupboard he made, my shelves house many of his caving books and when I peer through the 'Miners Dial' that was once his, I not only remember that Norm bought it, but that he taught me the value of USING it to produce maps.

It is now 25 years since this caver, mentor and friend died and I can do no better than quote part of what Grant Gartrell wrote as an obituary. "Norm used to live for his caving, and he had an uncanny habit of turning up to discuss records in the middle of tea time. We would try to trick him by not having tea till mid night, but even then, as the clock struck twelve, there would be a knock on the door, and lo and behold..... there would be Norm. What would we give to hear his knock again".

Fred W ASLIN
19th October 1993

USE OF BAGALOWIE HOMESTEAD

The keys to Bagalowie Homestead are held by Nugget Chapman (Ph. 380 5071).

The Land owner has asked us to only use the main road (not the station tracks), not to use the stacked logs for firewood (they are needed for fencing), to ensure that the bore water is turned off at the windmill, that Guns, Dogs and Motorbikes are not welcome.

The homestead contains a kitchen table, chairs, beds with mattresses, and we hope to have the septic toilet system working soon. The rain water tanks are usually full, and the house is wired for 240V.

KEYS

If you are having trouble contacting the Quartermaster (David McIntrye), try contacting some of the other Committee members, if David is unavailable, the keys are always left with another Committee Member.

INDEX TO VOLUME 37

Volume 37 contained the following issues:

37 (1)	March 1992
37 (2)	May 1992
37 (3)	August 1992
37 (4)	November 1992

The index is divided into the following categories

Caving activity by region
Technical and Other articles

Key to abbreviations used in this index

B	Biological	Bo	Botanical
D	Description	Di	Diving
E	Exploration	H	History
L	Locate	M	Map
P	Photography	Pa	Palaeontology
S	Surveying	Sc	Scientific
SR	Search & Rescue	T	Tourist
W	Work		

CAVING ACTIVITY

Caving activities are listed by Cave Number, Newsletter Reference, Author, and Type of activity.

ADELAIDE HILLS

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EYRE PENINSULA

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E13	37 (1) p8	P Horne	T
E59	37 (1) p4	G Ninnes	L

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F11	37 (1) p8	P Horne	Di
F29	37 (1) p6	P Horne	E

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	37 (4) p68	P Harper	T
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	37 (4) p68	P Harper	T
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L67	37 (1) p8	P Horne	E
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L72	37 (2) p22	M Thiselton	E
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N525	37 (3) p35	M Meth	D
N526	37 (3) p35	M Meth	D
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TECHNICAL AND OTHER ARTICLES

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Cave Cricket Identification	37 (3) p49	R Simms
Cave Cricket Research	37 (3) p48	R Simms
Library - Books & Monographs	37 (1) p12	
Nullarbor Plains (R Maurice)	37 (3) p37	M Meth
Obituary - Ken Lynn	37 (1) p13	E Hamilton-Smith
SA Speleo Council	37 (2) p26	G Pilkington
Surveying	37 (4) p70	K Mott
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TRIPS

Feel you are not being invited to go on trips?

Trip Leaders announce trips at the General Meetings and in the Newsletter, it is up to you to contact them if you want to participate!

PROGRAMME

November

24 GENERAL MEETING, 7:30 pm ***** **UPSTAIRS** *****
 Caving in Wales Steve Miller
 27+28

December

(No General Meeting)
 4+5 Lower South East Eddy Rubessa
 11 Christmas Break Up Party Sue McCormick's home.
 11+12
 18+19
 25+26

Dec/Jan Nullarbor Plains Max Meth

January

1994

??? Tasmania Chris Hales
 1+2
 8+9
 15+16
 22+23
 26 GENERAL MEETING, 7:30 pm
 Video (title TBA)
 29+30

February

5 1993 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
 36 Norman St, St. Marys. (4pm BBQ, 7pm AGM) Mark & Karin Sefton's home.
 5+6
 11
 12+13
 19+20
 23 GENERAL MEETING, 7:30 pm
 Video (title TBA)
 26+27

TBA Buckalowie Creek Area Nugget Chapman
 TBA Punyelroo cave Mac Macdonald
 TBA Corra Lynn cave Graham Pilkington
 TBA Sellicks Hill cave Nigel Dobson-Keeffe
 and/or Gary Woodcock
 TBA Combined Clubs Trip Chris Hales
 20/3-10/4 Art Exhibition - Inside Earth
 Prospect Gallery. June MacLucas

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