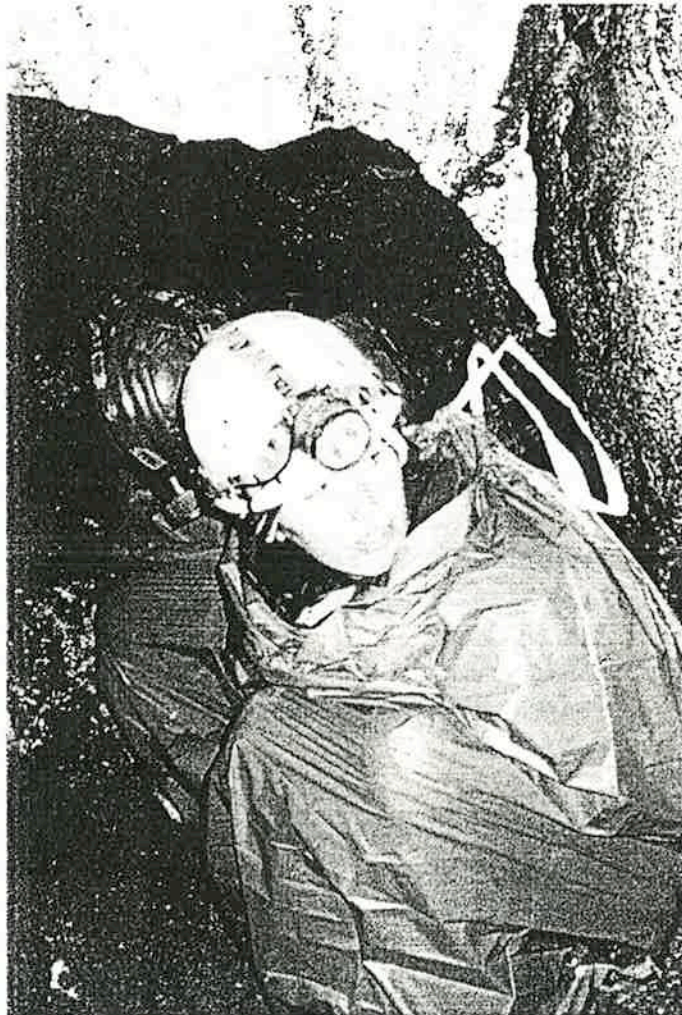


F U S S I



A rare photo of the Greater Orange-bagged troglodyte.

Vol. 10 No. 1 1998

The Quarterly Newsletter of the

Flinders University Speleological Society Incorporated

Who is Who in FUSSI

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In hiding from Mavis.)

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Meeting Time and Place
First Tuesday in the Month.
Kelly Morris Rm.
Union Building.
Flinders University.

Editorial

Hi Everybody!

It looks like another year is rushing us yet again. As the memories of the last one disappear into the burgundy light from the camp fire through a glass of fine wine, cast a thought to the organisation that has been put into every trip by the club executive, and trip organisers. Without them, what would we be doing now? Probably eyeing that teetering pile of washing that needs attention. And consider that this is Vol 10 of FUSSI; a decade in production.

This year doesn't look to be any slower, although you might wish so, with numerous trips, the ASC to sort out, and standards for caving bearing down on us (although we try to tie them up in red tape). FUSS has been off to a good start with a trip to Yarrangobilly, and the opening of Noorla Yo Long in Millicent.

Keep on Caving!



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Keep on Caving!

Caving at Yarrangobilly

Sofia Dodds

27th December 1997 to 4th Jan 1998

Members present: Clare Buswell, Heiko Maurer, Gaynor Bryant, Alan Brenchley, Kirsty Kitto, Ralph Richardson, Sharon Drabsch, Jonathon Walsh, Sofia Dodds, Kylie Clarke, Eric Schulz.

I was part of the party of five who range-rovered up to Yarrangobilly arriving on the 29th of January. It sure is nice up there in the Snowy Mountains, and Cottrills Cottage has great surrounding mountain views and a river made specially for hot and exhausted cavers to fall into at the end of the day. The verandah posts were already crowded with overalls, boots and gloves drying from the day's trip to Bathhouse, and everyone looked relaxed and settled in. Our first trip (Sharon and Jonathon, Ralph, Kirsty and I) was to Old Inn (Y12) and Jonathon eventually discovered the entrance no thanks to the description given in the map which was something like, "a small hole on the inside of a valley somewhere around the place." The microclimate was to die for after all that beating around the bush and soon we all dove into the cave leaving the map in the car as it had been pretty useless so far anyway. ...Ahem. Inside Old Inn we came across what looked like some small fossils in a limestone wall. Funny how the earth recycles itself continuously- one day an ocean floor the next a cave wall. There were slopes of red formation and we also found a small lined ledge containing three or four white cave pearls looking like small sugared almonds. A thin brown coloured snake eyed us warily as we exited the cave to dart it's way back into the undergrowth, uncomfortable with all the attention.

Back at camp some good meals were cooked up. They were tasty and wholesome thanks to the arrival of a fridge to keep fruit and veg. We were only nearly asphyxiated just once by the overpowering fumes of a laksa on the boil but it was yum in the end. Evenings were spent watching superb light shows in the distance c/o Mother Nature Storm Clouds Entertainment Inc. The stars turned out in force as well once it got dark prompting science fiction flavoured conversations and other bemused wonderings.

My next trip was with Ralph, Kirsty and Sharon into Coppermine (Y12). I'd never seen such a showcase of decoration being a beginner caver and I was pretty impressed. There were trays, straws, helictites and decoration dripping from every conceivable surface. Again there was that Thousand Island Dressing-coloured formation to be seen as well as a range of other colours. There was one formation that looked like a judge's wig and the wall behind the duckunder looked just like organ pipes. Around one corner we found a whole mass of brown spheres washed up in the mud. We couldn't find the join to the upper section and I look forward to finding it the next time we go back.

Y5 was the next encounter for Jonathon, Kirsty, Sharon and I. It took us a while to realise that the way we had to go was down, down, down through rockfall. It's a pretty awesome cave and so different from the ones before. Not as much decoration but full on clambering and manoeuvring around, under, over and through cracks and crevices. The walk through the forest was nice afterwards. Everything seems especially noisy, vibrant and alive after scrabbling around in the complete dark seeing things that look so alien.

New Year's Eve and Cottrills Cottage was as superbly decorated as some of the caves complete with streamers and balloons hanging everywhere. There were some truly inspired outfits all

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January 1998

round: stripy, sleepy-time, glittery, knotted, frilly and suave with Alan taking the cake for the most daring colour and pattern combinations! Silly animal masks added that certain "je ne sais quoi" to the general sophistication and style of the evening.

Y3 on New Year's Day was a group attempt with Kyle, Eric, Clare, Heiko, Sharon, Jonathon, Kirsty, and myself. There were perfect tiny globules of water condensation or seepage covering all the rock faces. It reflected torchlight in such a way that all the surfaces became silver and shimmer. We got stumped as to how to continue after a while and the cold was kept at bay by some by taking refuse in garbage bags. Later Kyle did a cave alien impression using a space blanket while Heiko, Eric and Clare scouted around looking for a way through. The cave wasn't cooperating though and we had to turn back. The day after we collected our gear that had been left at the Y3 entrance overnight and headed for Y1 a little further down the gully. I didn't have the energy to cave after the trek and stayed in the impressive cave entrance area with Kylie while Eric, Kirsty, Heiko and Clare happily lowered themselves down the dark abyss heaving with gusts of cold air. They reappeared rather sooner than expected having got to the same point as the day before and not progressing. That evening a friendly chap from SSS (Sydney) turned up and regaled us all with hearty tales and photos showing himself dangling down 'Death Hole' or something. He joined us for dinner and seemed to have an unending storehouse of caving anecdotes and tips. FUSS headed separate ways on Saturday the 3rd January. Thankyou to the organisers of the trip who got keys, maps, cottage bookings... the list goes on.

See you all again soon!

Conservation Commission Report 1997

Rauleigh Webb

Cape Range Limestone Mine and Quicklime Plant

The final decision of the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) regarding the Limestone Mine and Quicklime Plant was to allow the mine to proceed with development once further studies were undertaken with respect to cave fauna. All other aspects of the development have been given the OK by the minister. At the time of writing (30 December 1997) these studies had not been completed and the status of the mine is unknown. This issue is likely to be a major one for the ASF in the coming year as this massive mine has the potential to have a dramatic impact on the karst of Cape Range.

Leeuwin-Naturaliste National Park (LNNP) Permit System

The Department of Conservation and Land Management (CALM) still continues to ignore the suggestions of cavers and continues to develop Calgardup and Giants caves as self guided tourist caves. NO plans have been developed for the massive infrastructure that is to be placed into both caves but rather complete ad-hoc seat of the pants management continues unabated. The ASF has protested to the minister who has indicated after a 6-month delay that CALM will "take the ASF's suggestions into account". This response to development within a National Park with absolutely no planning and totally outside of the current management plan can only be classed as pathetic.

Track/Pathway Development and Restoration Work

After placing tie-off points at the entrance to Arumvale Pipe causing cave users to use a sandy slope the error of this decision has been noticed. Following slope degradation the cave has been closed while a platform is built, similar to that at Calgardup Pipe, to avoid further degradation. Other possible management strategies such as "resting" the cave or removing it from the self-guided cave list were not considered.

Lake Cave Interpretive Centre - CaveWorks

The Interpretive Centre (CaveWorks) at Lake Cave was officially opened during 1997 and has generated considerable comment from all visitors that I have spoken with. This facility will continue to "grow" and become the major source of caver education in Western Australia.

Caver Monitoring

Passive infrared and vibration detectors have been trialed in caves in the South-West to determine compliance with the LNNP permit system. This trial is likely to be extended in 1998 with the possibility of detectors that inform management of non-permit cave trips.

Nullarbor World Heritage Listing

The election of the liberal government placed the proposed listing in limbo. No new developments have occurred since the WA liberal government was elected. Same status as 1994.

South Coast Management Plan

As at December 1997 none of the proposed National Parks or reserves in the Nullarbor region have been declared. The required legislation is STILL LOST (I have stated the same thing for the last 7 years!) in government mumbo jumbo! This has now worsened as a result of the Mabo and Wik decisions.

Meanwhile the caves of the Nullarbor continue to suffer with unrestricted access, no on the ground management of some of Australia's most fragile cave

systems. Attempted dating of a stegamite from the Nullarbor Plain placed it beyond the limits of U/Th dating i.e. > 350,000bp. This is almost certainly true of the majority of the black speleothems from the Nullarbor caves. These speleothems are being degraded 'naturally' as a result of the salt wedging process that occurs in Nullarbor caves however the added degradation of cavers misplaced feet should not continue to be added to this process.

Nambung National Park

Another form for the management classification of caves has been developed by Mike Newton for the Nambung National Park and Mike has undertaken some field tests of the form. No other progress on the Nambung National Park Management plan is known to the author.

Drovers Cave National Park

The proposed land clearance adjacent to the National Park has been given approval with over 50 conditions being attached to the clearance approval. The Minister for the Environment has also requested further work on the flora before clearance can proceed.

The National Park was recently (December 1997) almost completely burnt bare. The impact on caves is not known at the time of writing. Trips will be conducted in early 1998 to ascertain the impact of the fire on the caves and karst features.

40,000 Grottoes

The after effects of reading an entire gift set of Casteret in one afternoon

Anon.

Reprinted from SUSS Journal 4:2 Dec 1957*

Five kilometres from the village of Essuy-Porc, the torrent of X..... disappears in a hillside. It reappears 500 metres further up the hillside and flows into the Garonne. The reasons for this curious behaviour are based on Hydro-speleological laws, which it is not in the nature of this work to include. Although no one had actually succeeded in following the underground river, or indeed, even entering the cave, I established the course of the river by emptying 3 tons of Fluorescein into the disappearance point. The magic green colour soon spread the entire south of France, across the English Channel, and is reported in at least two caves in Cuba. The suggestion, however, that Greenland derives its name from this is, of course, false.

I was very determined to enter this cave somehow and to explore its mysteries. Its very inaccessibility was a challenge to me, and like every natural athlete who sees a challenge, I constantly dreamt of conquering it. (I used to dream of some other interesting things too, most of which lie outside the scope of this book). It happened that one day I was sheltering from a blizzard in a draughty shepherd's hut in a valley, eating some cheese sandwiches and candles (things which I always carry with me), when I noticed a small hole high up in the cliff face. The climb was arduous as the hole was 400 metres above the valley floor and the rock face was smooth and overhanging, but 30 minutes climbing saw me at the top.

WHAT IS ON FOR THE NEXT COUPLE OF MONTHS 1998

Friday 13th Feb
7.30pm Henley Beach.
Library Night and T. Shirt Printing

Wed 25th Feb
11-2pm Plaza Flinders Uni
FAIR DAY
Glenys organising. 8293 1311

Sun 1st March
1.30pm.
Official Opening of Noorla Yo Long
Meet at Millicent opposite the Police station at 12.30 pm.
Ring Glenys 8293 1311

Tuesday 3rd March
6.30pm Off University footbridge
General Meeting. Rigging practice
BYO Drink and food and light

Tuesday 17th March
7.30pm Maid & Magpie Hotel Norwood.
South Australian Speleo Council Meeting

21-22 March Upper South East
Beginners trip
Kevin Cocks Coordinating
8272 3156

Tuesday 7th April
6.30pm **General Meeting**

10-13 April
Easter Flinders Ranges Trip
Kirsty coordinating 8359 2146

13-26 April mid Semester Break

May 5th AGM
Time and place to be announced.

MEMBERSHIP FEES ARE DUE.
STUDENTS \$20.00
EVERYBODY ELSE \$30.00

I paused at the entrance to light my carbide lamp, and entered the cave. The passage narrowed down to a cat-hole, which cat-like, I soon negotiated. The scene that awaited me on the other side was both awe-inspiring in its splendour and fascinating in its beauty. I was in a cavern of enormous size full of the most beautiful calcite deposits I have ever seen. It was a veritable fairy bower, which words cannot describe. I collected twelve oolites and demolished a forty-foot straw for setting up in my private museum and pressed on, spellbound. A surprise awaited me. On the floor I found a large stock of pure gold potsherds, plates and stone axes, definite proof of the cave having been previously occupied. I passed these by for I had decided to explore all of this remarkable cavern in the few hours I had to spare.

I soon found the underground river and followed it for three and five eighths miles (this guess was proved correct by subsequent survey) to a siphon. After hesitating for about five seconds I decided to force this siphon. I stripped off and plunged in. The water, supercooled to 28 degrees F., took my breath away. The current was fairly strong, but I negotiated the 50 yards underwater and emerged.

The cave here was dull and uninteresting and my progress was soon stopped by a huge waterfall. I stood at the top of this terrifying blackness and tried to guess how deep it might be but the river seemed to be falling into the bowels of the earth and the chasm had the appearance of being bottomless. My exploration was halted here, so I made my way back to the surface, well pleased with my day's work.

Two months later I returned with my wife and she lowered my 1000 feet down a rope. Still, I did not reach the bottom. It is a credit to her wonderful fortitude that she could carry the 1000 feet of rope up the cliff face outside and then belay me up and down the chasm. Since then the

bottom has been reached at 1010 feet from the top of the waterfall.

The cave is now very popular and is constantly being explored; however nothing new has been added to my original exploration. It is tragic that three young speleologists have been drowned in the siphon. Swimming this siphon without the proper gear is foolish and dangerous, I find it hard to have sympathy for anyone who indulges in this kind of folly. The crystal cavern is not as good as it used to be because vandals and souvenir hunters have removed most of the formation. Something should be done to stop this wanton desecration.

* This article was given to me by Rick Daniels once a member of Orange Speleological Society. C. B.

1997 Secretary's Report

Jonathon Walsh

The main activity that occurred for South Australian cavers this year was the organisation of the Australian Speleological Federation Conference in Quorn over Easter. The conference was very successful, with an attendance of about 70 people from around the country. The South Australian Speleological Council was the organising body, and the conference was testament to the maturity of the Council. Members of Fuss were directly and indirectly involved in the conference itself, pre-planning, literature production and post conference trips.

Apart from the conference in the Flinders Ranges, there were two other trips, one in June, and one in October. Both of these Flinders Ranges trips were over long weekends, and even though short,

were still very enjoyable. During the early half of the year the club continued the task of cleaning out the Rendelsham cave site. This work has been going on for over three years, and quite a difference is noticeable.

The main caving trip of the year was to Yarrangobilly in the NSW highlands in December '97 to January '98. Eleven people went on the trip and a wide variety of caving was done (including two people who went on a guided tour). The planning for such an extensive trip such as this is considerable and thanks should go to all those who helped bring it all together.

Training has become more important to the club as the introduction of caving standards moves ever closer, and government bodies look for accreditation to be formalised. This will only increase in the future and it is important that all members are encouraged to participate. The SASC has been working hard to provide a suitable training and assessment program and this is nearing completion.

Search and rescue weekends have been held at Corra-Lynn Cave with members from other clubs also taking part. The University Footbridge has also been host to a number of cross-club rope training sessions.

The club continues to have an active core membership and a steady influx of new cavers. It is up to all of us to make new members welcome.

I have enjoyed the year as Secretary and SASC rep, and I wish the incoming committee well for 1998.

HERE IS A REACTION TO AND TAKING ON BOARD OF DISCUSSIONS OF THE LAST ASF CONFERENCE ON THE ISSUE OF ROPE LADDERING AND THE ASF POSITION ON SAME.

Chris Norton

It was deemed inappropriate to use bolt laddering as a permanent and general climbing method when methods which have less impact were available. The impact on the cave environment was the most important issue in the debate. It is GOOD to see the outcome of those discussions being put into practice.

Last Saturday a party from SUSS visited Wyanbene Cave, and made a new discovery.

The discovery is that someone has installed two fixed handlines in the rear section of the cave. The handlines are made of knotted, laid rope with diameter roughly 30mm. This has been done since our last visit in May last year.

The handlines are installed on the climb out of the Diahorrea Pit and on Anderson's Wall (both up climbs when going into the cave). The climbs can be awkward but are easily freeclimbable and the common practice is for one member to secure a line for other party members to use, which is removed from the cave at the end of the trip.

The handlines are beginning to decompose and the top, knotted sections are now covered in mould. We would have removed them but unfortunately lacked the pack space to carry them. Any party visiting Wyanbene in the next few months may care to take two extra rope packs to remove these heavy, bulky items that are interfering with the cave ecosystem. NPWS have also been informed.

1998 ASF Conference Report

1998 ASF documents as handed out

Reports	1998.agenda.....
	Minutes of Quorn meeting 1997
	Presidents report
	ASF Awards- invite nominations
	Secretary's report- funding applications raised
	Documentation commission
	Surveying and Mapping Standards Commission
	Presidents report- UIS Commissions matching ASF?
	Codes and Guidelines Review ad-hoc Committee
	ASF Enterprises
	Changes to ASF Constitution & By-laws.
	Policy of Membership
	Policy on association
	By-law on admission of Corporate Members
	By-Law on Associates
	By-Law on Provisional Members
	Resolution: Fees for Introductory and Life Members
Library Commission	
Caving Club of Victoria	
application for full membership.	
John Dunkley	International.relations
	Cave management
	Strategic Planning
Caving Leadership 1997 Annual report	
Proposed formation of the ASF-CDG	
NSW Speleo Council Report to the ASF Council Meeting - Chris Dunne	
ASF INSURANCE	History 92 survey results
COMMISSION	
N&HVSS.....	Cave.safety.amendments
	Amendments Proposed By Michael Lake
Minutes of Hamilton Council Meeting	
Minutes of Wellington council	
Executive statement regarding treasurers report	
Club Membership	



22nd Biennial Conference Australian Speleological Federation 1999

- Taking Caving into the next Century with Fun, Unity and Fellowship

REGISTRATION

HOSTED BY: CENTRAL QUEENSLAND SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY INC
DATE: 4 - 8 JANUARY 1999
VENUE: YEPPON RECREATIONAL CAMP - CAPRICORN COAST
CENTRAL QUEENSLAND

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This will be the last Conference of the 20th Century.

The Yeppoon Recreational Camp is situated at 170 Matthew Flinders Drive at Yeppoon on the Capricorn Coast 40km north east of Rockhampton. At present the camp is being refurbished and will be in a tropical garden setting with a licensed bar. The camp is near some of the most picturesque and safe swimming beaches in Australia. The waters are warm and the tropical climate is similar to that of Hawaii. Lammermoor beach is just 200 meters away (there are 6 surf skis for use) and there is an Olympic Swimming Pool 50 meters from the camp. Aside from these there are excellent facilities at the camp including a floodlit outdoor hardcourt area for tennis, netball, volleyball and basketball with a grassed area for sports and games. There is also a BBQ area and table tennis.