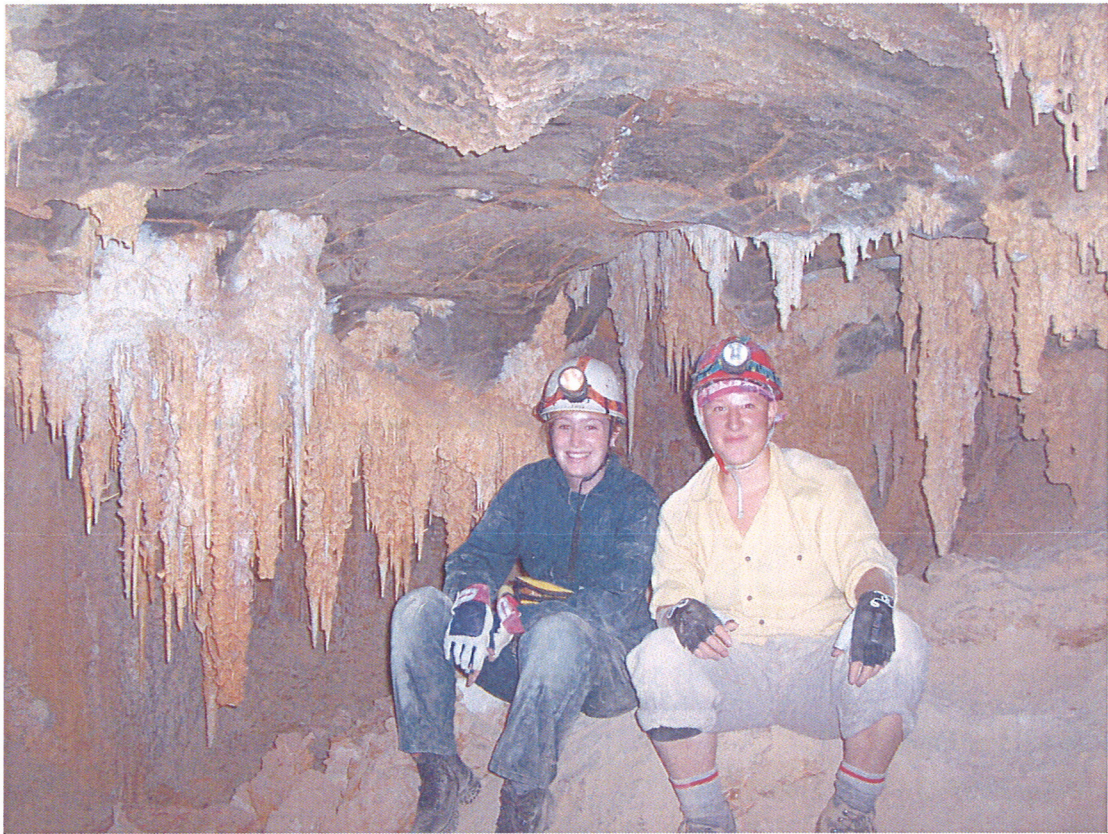


F U S S I



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**The Quarterly Newsletter of the
Flinders University Speleological Society Incorporated**

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Front cover photo: Tegan and Rochelle in Maires Cave.	
Photographer: Heiko Maurer.	
Back cover photo: photographer: Tegan Laslet.	

RANDOM ACTS OF CAVING

Rochelle

Bonjour everyone who is reading this! Since I am stuck in essay mode, I feel like I need to introduce what this paper is about ... so, here goes ... This short blurb is a little summary about how the caving trip was in the Flinders Ranges, from my perspective. So ... first off, I went in with pretty much NO expectations because, realistically, caving is a pretty random thing to do on one's weekend, as I came to realize.



Anthony, Rochelle, Chris and Tegan, before going underground.

For me, I'm a fairly recent 'adventurer', and also a recent "Australian" – or so I like to think – so I went in with the mindset that I was basically willing to try anything, as long as I could ask a million questions to make sure I was on the right track. And it was the perfect group to do that with because every person who went on that trip had a bit, or combination, of knowledge to offer, and I think that that was what made the trip that much more enjoyable.

There were people there of all different levels and backgrounds, with a range of experience – or lack thereof such as myself – in regards to caving and other quirky non-mainstream activities, and that made it so much easier for me to feel comfortable while underground! I wouldn't say that I am a full-on claustrophobe, but I'd be lying if I said that I didn't have moments underground when I felt just a little bit nervous and had to do a lllliitttle yogic breathing to calm the nerves, because really it is all true, I did have nervous moments. But as I have learned about cavers (or maybe, just you guys), there is no rush, and thus you can take your time and go at your own pace, however slow or fast that may be.

RANDOM ACTS OF CAVING



Chris exiting the Catacombs.

So, what were my overall thoughts on the caves, and the caving itself? GREAT! I have always been a fan of the environment's amazing natural beauty (for lack of a better description), especially here in Australia, and this was a perspective I have never seen, or really even understood. I really had no idea what to expect. I mean, the caves were not as colourful or alive (in the actual sense), as maybe a botanic garden would be ... but they have a different sort of beauty, and one that has to be appreciated for the oddities they are. I mean – some of those formations – the tites and mites etc, (let's be honest here – I was not the scientist of the crew, I was the question asker!), take thousands and thousands of years to form, and every one is so different and unique, and some are sparkly, some are crystal-y, some look like Christmas trees, up, down, sideways ... everything was happening all over the place ... and to add to that it was pitch black and silent ... the experience really did feel surreal.

Another learning experience – Navigation underground. Now navigation and direction has never been my forte *above ground*, so once you take that underground, and toss in some tunnels, squeeziness and darkness, well, the combination was a bit of a challenge to me ... As I would turn around and have NO idea where I had just come from because, as far as I could see, there were a whole lot of tunnels floating about and I could have come through any of them. It really did feel like a whole other world down there. Luckily I had a couple of caving gurus as guides and to have FANTASTIC inspiring conversations with while down there!!

RANDOM ACTS OF CAVING



Stals and Helictites. Maires Cave

What I liked best about caving – or maybe I should say – the overall lesson/gist that I got out of the caving weekend: (please excuse my teeny political/philosophical rant coming out) ... basically, there is a lot of stuff going on in the world – above ground – a lot of stuff that can wear on one's positivity for it, (and by 'one' I mean me!), and I personally try to live my life in a way that is as least harmful to any one, or thing, (including the environment) as possible, while still appreciating the beauty and the positive aspects of life ... and that is what I understand caving to be about actually – it seems to embody the same principles. I found caving to be peaceful, calming, beautiful and detached from many negative things in the world, but at the same time, it is connected to, and is actually based upon and *within* the natural beauty that so many people forget to appreciate regarding the world, in all of its different wonders.

I feel quite honoured to have taken part in the weekend and experience this different side of the Ranges. The people were wonderful, the caves/abseiling/squeezing/dirtifying fantastic, and it was just an all-round enjoyable weekend for so many reasons! In fact, I would say it was the most 'random' weekend I've had in a looong time ...*wink*!

Editors note:

Flinders Ranges trip to Mairs, and Clara St. Dora in late September 2005. People on the trip: Rochelle, Chris Wood, Tegan Laslett, Anthony Kakosanke, Bronya Alexander, Jan Schmortte, Clare Buswell, Heiko Maurer.

Since this report was written, Rochelle has returned to Canada, we wish her well and maybe we will see her next trip report from overseas.

JUNE 1ST AND THE LOSS OF STUDENT SERVICES FOR FUSSI MEMBERS

Clare Buswell

Most of you will be aware that from the first of June 06 student organizations at Flinders Uni will no longer exist in their current form. This is simply due to the fact that the funding for them will decrease because students no longer have to pay a compulsory student Union fee. In terms of jobs it will mean the loss of around 150 jobs out of Flinders Uni. For FUSSI members it will mean the loss of our storage space in its current form, no more recurrent funding at all and possible problems with public liability insurance. In terms of membership fee costs you can expect a rise. The following is by way of an explanation of what is in store.

BREAKDOWN OF FUSSI FEES. Currently.

1) FUSSI membership fee \$20.00. Everyone pays this.

2) Clubs and Societies Affiliation Fee.

If you are *not* a student, then you also pay \$30.00 to our parent organization Clubs and Societies. (Students already paid this amount when they paid their student service fee at the beginning of the year.) What this \$30.00 does is to provide public liability insurance costs which is recouped by the University from Clubs and Societies.

3) Australian Speleological Federation Fees. FUSSI is a corporate member of the ASF. This membership gives us access to caves around the country, insurances specific to caving, access to heaps of other caving clubs and their skills and knowledge base. This all comes in really handy, when for example, we go caving in Tasmania and we want to know the situation with deep wet caves, or need to put in a permit to caves in Mole Ck or to cave at Naracoorte for that matter. Without this membership, caving for FUSSI and would cease to be. FUSSI members pay the ASF fee as individuals via the club.

The fees are broken down as follows:

Student rate,	\$61.00
Single rate	\$68.00
Introductory rate. Valid for only 3 months.	\$20.00

Due to the fact that FUSSI is part of a University, we are able to get a discount on the above as CURRENTLY the Uni is subsidising a public liability insurance policy, which is the equivalent of the ASF's.

So the ASF fee breakdown goes like this:

Student rate	\$28.50
Single rate,	\$35.50
Introductory rate. Valid for only 3 months.	\$10.00

Up until now the Club has been able to subsidize our members' ASF component of these fees due to us being part of Clubs and Societies. The government's banning of compulsory membership of student unions means that we are unable to continue this subsidy. Furthermore, the University is also considering not funding the current public liability policy, which falls due in Oct.

All this translates as an increase in the FUSSI base rate fees from \$20.00 per person to: \$20.00 + \$28.50 (Student rate with insurance discount.) Total \$48.50 if you are a student. If you are not then the fee is \$20.00 + \$35.50 = \$55.50. Both students and non student members will also have to pay a fee to whatever student organization exists after June 1 so that we can continue to store gear on campus, etc. (The amount is still undecided.) If the Uni pulls out of the public liability insurance policy, (and this issue is being discussed between student organizations and the Uni at the moment), then you will be looking at

LOSS OF SERVICES FOR FUSSI MEMBERS

paying \$80.00 or more for membership of FUSSI as we will need to take out PLI with the ASF.

If you think that this is high then here are some comparisons with similar organizations that have memberships to national organizations:

Baseball. *Per semester.* \$150.00 membership fee + \$72.00 administration fee. On top of this are uniform and gear costs to each member.

Basketball: Per Season - which tends to last half a year. \$100.00.

Hockey: Per season: Full time student of Flinders Uni \$115.00. Graduates of Flinders Uni: \$180.00 Workers: \$200. On top of this are gear costs which each individual must pay.

Diving Club: \$45.00-\$85.00. Per year. They also pay a gear hire fee of \$5-\$7.00 per item each time they go on a trip.

Our hard working FUSSI executive has been discussing all this and wants feed back from members about fund raising activities and how to meet some of our costs. In the past FUSSI members have raised money by selling falafel rolls, cakes on campus, car washes, and film nights.

What ideas have you got, let us know.

EQUIPMENT REPORT

In 2005 we spent a bit of money on new things, repairs and nothing at all on Mavis since her deflationary activities on the Nullarbor. FUSSI replaced some out-of-date helmets, and all the cows' tails on our harnesses. We also repaired some FRPs' (f***'g rope protectors). A while ago some fire hose fell off the back of a fire truck as it was of no use to fight fires, due to having lots of leaks and being cut in strange lengths. It does make great rope protection, being canvas on one side and rubberised on the other. Abrasion resistant double plus!

We should also be thinking of upgrading some of our lights to 6 volts but the cost of doing so will be high, around \$120.00 ea.

The old cow's tails have been converted to dog, alpaca and sheep leads, (they were tested on the sheep, by hauling him around the paddock), and the helmets to flowerpots as a way of making some money from defunct gear. Writing of money, we have also received our last grant money from our parent organization, Clubs and Societies. So that's it, from now on in we have to pay our on way. I wonder whom we can auction off?

WHAT IS ON FOR THE NEXT FEW MONTHS

21-23/4	Naracoorte area: Chris Wood is co-ordinating. This is a great beginners trip. We go down on Friday night and come back on Sunday arvo. Email or phone Chris: wood0334@flinders.edu.au 8387 2449.
10/5	Our out of this world AGM. Promises to be an eventful night. Wine cheese, whips, boots and ropes provided. 6. p.m. Geoff Harrison meeting room, under Clubs and Societies in the Union Building. Everybody and their cat are welcome.
3/May	First Aid Course. Run at Flinders Uni. Cost is \$135.00. Runs over 5 afternoons. Apply at Union Access after the 24 th of April.
10-12/6	Flinders Ranges. Cave hunting in the middle Flinders. Come along and be the first to find a new cave. Great weekend of walking and caving.
2007 Jan 2-6	Australian Speleological Federation Conference. Celebrating 50 years of Australian caving. Mt Gambier. South Australia. Go to it, as ASF conferences are heaps of fun.
TBA	Search and Rescue weekend.
Other trips	NSW, Nullarbor

FOR SALE

AUSTRALIAN KARST INDEX.

\$10.00ea to members

The book that tells you who owns Dead Sheep Cave,
how often it floods, whether it is locked,
if it is on the World Heritage List and
what you need to take with you if you go into it.

A cavers' must-have book.

Also for sale

4.5 VOLT BATTERIES.
\$8.00 ea.

See Clare

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