

Vol. 9. No 2

# F U S S I



**One of the editors helping to make the Rendelsham cave a little bigger...**

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



The Boat



The Hovercraft

## MAVIS and FUSS PRESIDENTS

### STOP PRESS:

Intelligence has been received from our spies in Perth that an incident of major diplomatic embarrassment to the speleological fraternity occurred recently. Photos and a leaked report reveal that a previous FUSS President, resident in Western Australia, was travelling in a brand new hovercraft at Roebuck Bay when he crashed into the only stationary object, a boat, in the 200sqkm bay. At the time, a person going by the name of Mavis was the only other occupant of the hovercraft. As this issue hit the press an emergency meeting of FUSS Presidents had been called to discuss this latest scandal. More details as they come to hand.

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# ASF Conservation News from Western Australia

## **Minimal Impact Caving Code (MICC)**

The MICC was accepted 24 months ago at the ASF conference in Victoria. Last year I reported that I felt that attitudes had changed very little during the prior 12 month period. At the end of 1996 little has altered to change my opinion. If anything I continue to despair at the rate of damage to fragile cave systems. Cavers are still exploring, new, extremely low energy cave systems with techniques reminiscent of the 1960s.

It was clear at the end of 1995 that ASF members have either not read the MICC or do not believe that it is necessary. Events in early 1996, where two "new" fragile cave systems were track marked by the surveyors only to have ALL of the track marking removed by subsequent cavers, can only be classed as caver vandalism. These actions have and will result in considerable damage to both caves which would have been avoided if the track/route marking had been maintained. Strong action should be taken against the perpetrators before cave managers begin to group all cavers into the vandal category and remove our access rights to caves.

To ensure that ASF cavers are aware of the MICC and what it contains, a waterproof leaflet has been produced detailing the MICC and the Code of Ethics. This will be distributed to clubs prior to the ASF conference in 1997. The costs were borne by a donation

specifically for this purpose.

## **Cape Range Marina**

The limestone required for the marina development was obtained from a quarry near Exmouth. The mining company engaged Darren Brooks, a local WASG member, to make assessments of any caves found as a result of the quarrying activity.

In late 1996 such a cave was found (Quarry Cave) and Darren examined the cave and found a significant bone deposit. He reported his find to the WA Museum and the mining company. Before the WA Museum had time to arrange a trip to examine the bone deposit more carefully the cave was severely damaged as a result of blasting of the quarry face to within a short distance of the cave entrance. Darren reported this to the WA Museum staff, the mining company, the Department of Environment Protection and the Department of Transport. The mining company was ordered, by the DEP, to halt quarrying activities at or near the cave. Unfortunately when WA Museum staff examined the cave the main chamber was severely damaged and the bone deposit could not be accessed.

Until stringent clauses are placed in conditions of mining that cause the immediate session of mining if a cave is discovered or breached then caves such as Quarry Cave will continue to be destroyed. Approaches will be made to the DEP to

attempt to ensure that such protection is afforded to caves found as a result of quarry activities.

## **Cape Range Limestone Mine and Quicklime Plant**

During 1996 an amazingly comprehensive report (given the short time available) was prepared by Elery Hamilton-Smith, Andy Spate and Kevin Keirnan on the significance of the Cape Range caves and karst for the DEP. This report detailed many of the shortcomings of previous work and highlighted the world significance of the Cape Range by recommending World Heritage Listing. Attempts were made by the DEP to keep the report secret and not to release its findings. Fortunately the report was leaked to the press and page one headlines ensued. Accusations flew thick and fast for about a week as the government was severely embarrassed by the reports findings.

The final decision of the DEP regarding the Limestone Mine and Quicklime Plant will be released early in 1997. At the time of printing, (March 97), it had not been released. This is likely to be a major issue for the ASF if the DEP rules that the mine is to proceed in its current location.

## **Leeuwin-Naturaliste National Park (LNNP) The Permit System.**

The department of Conservation and Land Management (CALM) has stopped listening to caver input into cave management

# ASF Conservation News from Western Australia

issues in the LNNP via the Cave Management Advisory Committee (CMAC). As a result the proposed assessment of the now 500+ non caving club leaders is not likely to proceed despite considerable effort by members of the caving community.

The proposal to develop Calgardup and Giants caves as locked self-guided caves generated two complete proposals as well as a submission from the Augusta Margaret River Tourism Association (AMRTA) to run a booking system for the caves and to conduct commercial tours.

A rewrite of the original CALM proposal attempts to alter the entire permit system by proposing fees of \$7 (adults) and \$4 (children) for all of the 15 self guided caves in the LNNP. This proposal has the potential to provide considerable funds for CALM to employ cave guides and managers. It also has the potential to destroy the permit system with leaders caving without permits in protest at the pricing structure. Juggling these two balls will be a large challenge for CALM managers. Results new year?

**Track/Pathway Development & Restoration Work.** A major stairway has been constructed in Calgardup Cave. Despite the development of a site working plan for the cave, the development of the cave was conducted on an ad-hoc basis resulting in considerable over

development with the use of incorrect materials resulting in unnecessary cave pollution.

An abseiling platform is in place over the Calgardup Cave solution pipe. This platform has reduced the damage at the site to almost zero. Restoration work is still required.

Considerably more work is required at a number of the sites in the LNNP before caves will stop being degraded.

## **Lake Cave Interpretive Centre - Cave Works**

The Interpretive Centre at Lake Cave called CaveWorks was officially opened on 22nd February 1997. The centre developed with a large Australian Tourism Commission grant, considerable monies from other governments agencies and the AMRTA is set to be the centre for caver education in the South-West.

The efforts of the AMRTA in taking the concept, originally from the CMAC, and turning it into reality must be applauded loudly. Caves can only benefit from the education of cave visitors.

## **South Coast Management Plan**

As at February 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 6 years!) in government mumbo jumbo! This has now worsened as a

result of the Mabo and Wik decisions.

Weebubbie Cave was closed to visitors in late 1996 by the Department of Land Administration (DOLA) as a result of a mining engineer's report on a rockfall that occurred in the cave. By January 1997 the ASF had negotiated access to Weebubbie Cave as ASF leaders. This result was only achieved because of the comprehensive nature of the ASF public liability insurance. Details of how access is obtained will appear elsewhere.

Last year I indicated that the number of features on the Nullarbor had doubled since 1994. During the past 12 months the numbering of features has continued to increase with over 1600 features now numbered. While the number of new caves is significant the documentation, track marking and surveying of these features continues to be poor. Those cavers responsible for finding caves should also act responsibly and undertake follow up work on their finds. The lack of surveys and track marking is resulting in damage to a significant number of new caves.

## **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.

# ASF Conservation News from Western Australia

**Yanchep National Park**  
Groups with no caving experience have been given access to caves in the Yanchep National Park despite the protests of recognised caving groups. This management decision appears to have occurred at a very high level within CALM. Hence the major concern as it shows a considerable lack of understanding regarding the fragility of the cave resource.

Attempts will be made to try and reverse this disturbing management decision.

**Nambung National Park**  
The draft Management Plan was released for comment during 1996 and the ASF responded with the following recommendations for alteration or inclusion in the final plan:-

The Federation proposes the alteration of the recommendations from Section 5 of the draft Nambung National Park management plan to read:-

1. Consider the vulnerability of geological features, landforms and soils in all management operations, such as new access, firebreaks, fire management plans, catchment alterations and site developments.

2. In consultation with speleological groups, complete a resource inventory, classification system and access policies for caves and karst features in the area.

3. Liaise with speleological groups and other karst management specialists regarding management and other operations that are likely to impact on karst features.

The Federation proposes the following additional recommendation for Section 6, Hydrology:-

Consult with other government agencies and adjacent land owners to devise land use agreements to ensure the long term conservation of river catchments.

The Federation proposes that the following additional recommendation be added to Section 11 under Prescribed Burning:-

3. Burn Plans will contain edge burns at identified cave and karst sites that are considered highly vulnerable to damage from fires.

The Federation proposes that an additional recommendation be added to section 13 Introduced Plants and Animals:-

3. Sensitive cave and karst sites will be monitored for introduced species and eradicated as soon as practicable.

After checking with the ranger in charge at Nambung National Park it was found that the final plan is still under preparation and should be released during 1997.

**Drovers Cave National Park**

No management plan has been prepared for the park and one is not likely in the near future. This lack of management plan leaves issues such as the impact of adjacent land clearing on caves in the park in limbo.

The ASF opposed a significant land clearance on a large block adjacent to the Drovers Cave National Park as it is considered to be the catchment for Old River Cave. This cave is the largest cave in the park and the only known cave in the park with an active streamway. The massive land clearance is expected to have a significant effect on the water levels within the cave.

The DEP report on the proposed land clearance recommended that the clearance be given the go ahead with a number of minor monitoring restrictions. Unfortunately no monitoring was proposed in Old River Cave despite ASF recommendation to the contrary. The ASF has appealed the decision and the current status is that we are awaiting the outcome of the appeal.

A proposal is being derived to "open" the gate and other cemented closed solution pipes on Drovers Cave so that air movement can be restored to the cave and hopefully bats will return to the cave. This proposal is currently stalled on the design of the future gate. Further developments are anticipated in 1997.

**Rauleigh Webb. ASF Conservation Convenor**

# If You Go Down to the lake Today

Clare Buswell

**Present persons:** Clare Buswell, Kevin Cocks, FUSS: Athol Jackson, Marie Hubycz, CEGSA: Sharon, Andy and Graham Machin: CAVEX.

6TH APRIL 1997 or there abouts. Post ASF Conference trip.

"I've managed to gain access into Narinna Lake cave" said Athol. It was said, I noticed with a little look of triumph on his face. Mind you such a look was justified after the many hours of discussion that has occurred on the issue of access and Narinna Lake Cave around the caving traps in Adelaide.

I decided that I'd go and join Athol, after having spent the last few months being an armchair caver organising the ASF conference. Going caving would be rather novel. The only draw back to this plan was that I would have no camping gear as I had left home with no intention of actually heading bush around conference time.

Narinna Lake cave, like most Flinders caves, is a long way from anywhere and one spends lots of time driving over dirt roads and dodging kangaroos to get there. Then there is the long walk to find the bloody thing, then there is the other long walk back to the car to get the one item of gear that you decided that you didn't need and left behind only to discover that you did need it after all!

In this case the hunt for Narinna was only a short walk but the gear fetch was a matter of going through

Marie Hubycz' box of tricks and seeing what we could tie together to make into a hand line or ettiers. This was achieved via the use of a couple of bits of binder twine, fencing wire and a tie that Andy had brought to do the "official bit" at the Conference. Off we all went and found to our delight that, the bit of fencing wire was not really needed as the bit of Kinnears bright orange rope that Graham had was capable of doing the job all on its own.

Athol decided that many photo opportunities where to be had so much time was spent taking shots of the lake and some strange calcite formations on a wall. Meanwhile back at the lake, I was amazed at its white floor, due to the dropping of the calcite raft that forms on the surface of the water and then drops down or is deposited when the water level drops. As the cave had been closed to all, both divers and cavers, for some time this meant that the silty floor had not been disturbed, so the calcite raft covered the floor. Quite magical to look at.

A couple of very large and well fed gecko's had taken up residence in the entrance area, but they were not really interested in conversation or photographic opportunities so we left them to it. No cave crickets were found, despite the fact that the cave environment seemed well suited to them. I wonder about those gecko's!

We all exited without incident, de-rigged our bits

and pieces and walked back to camp for a well earned beer.

Much discussion was had on the topic of conferences, the ASF and being on a caving trip with three clubs represented. Sitting out under the stars and getting away from the conference and all its pressures was a great tonic. Well done Athol in gaining access again!

Note on Rigging: Hand line is the simplest, but you can take a ladder or abseil. The last three feet before the floor is a clear drop.

## FOR SALE

## ASF CLOTH BADGES



**LIMITED  
EDITION  
\$4.00ea**

**Ring Clare  
8353 6018**



# Rendleshams Again

Clare Buswell

## Members Present:

Clare Buswell - Trip Leader. Glenys Crane, Gaynor Bryant, Liam Dwyer, Heiko Maurer, Frank and Antoine.

May 18-20. 97.

This is the third year of the cave clean up and of the development of the reserve into an adventure course at Rendelsham's. Gone from the cave are the car bodies, tones of household rubbish, asbestos, roofing iron, tires, bed bases and lots of soil interlaced with broken bottles.

Now we have bats back in residence, solution tubes that are deep and clear of rubble and a cave that is beginning to get back to being a cave rather than a rubbish dump. The Reserve also is changing. Many pine trees have gone, native trees and shrubs have grown, the cave entrances are fenced off, the adventure course is nearing completion and is being used as a place where school groups and unemployed youth can learn some life skills and have some fun.

This weekend saw us continue with the rubbish dig. This time on the sand cone near the main entrance. Heiko remained on top as the bucket hauler and emptier, whilst the rest of us dug away. Over a morning and latter on in the weekend, an afternoon, we managed to shift 90 buckets of glass laced sand, building rock and rubble to the surface. The pile of dirt, though not as impressive

as previous mounds (See FUSSI 7. No. 3. 1995.), saw the sand cone loose some of its non cave occupants: cow and sheep bones, hoop iron, plastic, bottles, cans, wire, and sundry other bits of garbage. We have taken off the first layer of the cone and are now into a layer of dumped clay, who knows what is under that! We also shifted aside cut Gambier building stone. This needs to be lifted out separately from the main entrance as it will be easier to remove, as the solution tube we are working in is pretty narrow.

A few more clean up efforts and this cave will look like old or new or sparkling- or rehabilitated or what ever it is caves look like when they are no longer rubbish dumps!

Some part of the week end was spent looking for a couple of well known caves that Mavis had taken or had at the least filled in the entrances to and then covered over with burnt pine forest. Mmm...this is not a new event, but it is getting to be embarrassing if you can't find the cave and you have a few new members along who want to actually go caving rather than cave hunting!

We explored Gran Gran, and

the colour of overalls changed dramatically from blue to brown. This brought about lots of comments about water and not wanting to get muddy AND WET! Then the leader decided that it was time to take a look at Graveyard cave and get some chimneying practice in. Liam trundled down the solution tube whilst the others climbed down the main entrance and explored nooks and water tables. We all met up in the main chamber and left via Liam's entrance tube. Much grunting was heard and some skill displayed.

Overall it was a slow weekend with lots of conversation about travelling and studying in overseas universities as Frank and Antonie are overseas students. Frank is from New Mexico and Antonie from Belgium. We also spent considerable time talking with Constable Des Knolls who is the person in charge of Rendelsham's Cave Reserve. Tall and short stories were told of Bluey and many other local things. Most of all we talked of the changes at the Reserve and the social good to come out of the project.



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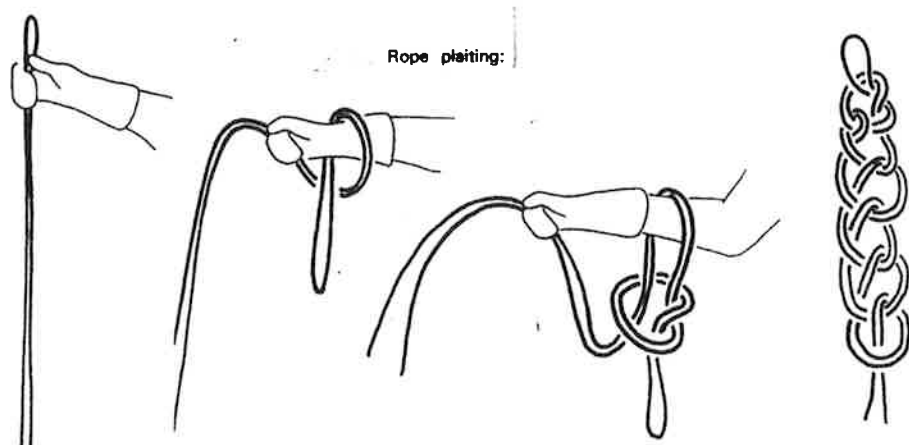
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**FUSS meets the  
first Tuesday in  
the month.**

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# BASIC CAVING GEAR\*

Compiled by Clare Buswell

## HELMET WITH FOUR POINTS OF ATTACHMENT.

So it does not fall off if you get hit on the head.

## BOOTS WITH GOOD TREAD.

## OVERALLS OR ADEQUATE CLOTHING FOR THE CAVE ATTEMPTED.

## THREE LIGHT SOURCES.

## SPARE BULBS FOR EACH OF THE LIGHT SOURCES

Pack them in a smash proof container such as a film canister or a tobacco tin.

## WAIST TAPE 5 METRES LONG.

Made from 50mm rated seat belt tape. Waist tapes come in handy to use as handlines. You can make up foot loops to help people climb up or down. Wrap the tape around your waist or carry it in your caving pack.

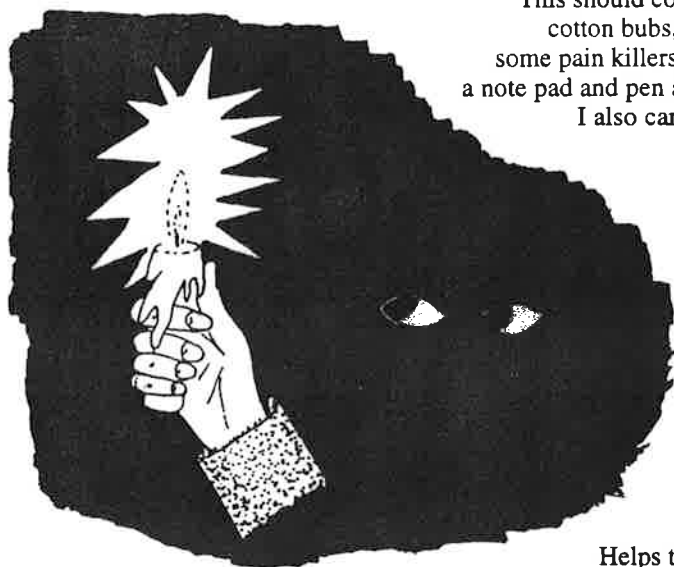
## TRIANGULAR BANDAGE.

You can make these from an old sheet or the left over protest banner from the last demo you went to. Carry it in your helmet or a pocket.

## A BAG TO CARRY THINGS IN. A day pack or bum bag.



Fig 1 Caving boots with deep-tread soles and either eye-holes, or 'D' ring lace fixings (as shown here), but NOT with open-clip fixings



One of the Old School

## FIRST AID KIT.

This should contain any personal medication that you are taking, cotton bubs, a compression bandage, cloth bandaids, tweezers, some pain killers, a small container of Betadine or Betadine swabs, a note pad and pen and a small plastic bank bag to put any rubbish in. I also carry Saline solution, to get the dust out of my eyes.

## DRINKING WATER.

## SOMETHING TO MUNCH ON.

Chocolate, or some energy giving food.

## WHISTLE.

Preferably a Fox Forty

You use less energy blowing a whistle than yelling for help if lost.

## POCKET KNIFE.

## GLOVES.

Helps to keep skin abrasions down and your hands warm.

## AN EMPTY WINE BLADDER.

To piss into. Women will need a small funnel.

\* This is for every member in the party.  
References: ASF Cave Safety Guidelines 1990.

# WHAT'S ON

8th. July	6.30.	<b>General Meeting meeting.</b> Brassarie. <b>Caver Leadership Accreditation.</b> What is all means and how to obtain it.
11th. July	10.30-3pm	<b>Library Working Bee.</b> Clubs and Societies. Come along and help sort out some of our cave area map files.
27th. July		<b>Corra Lynn.</b> One day trip to the Yorke Peninsula Glenys Crane organising.
5th. Aug	1pm.	<b>General Meeting</b> in the Clubs and Societies meeting room. <b>Search and Rescue seminar.</b>
16-17th. Aug	7.30	<b>Search and Rescue weekend.</b> Joint activity for all clubs. Organised by CEGSA sponsored by the SASC great weekend to be had by all. Details soon.
2nd. Sept	6.30.	General Meeting. <b>Rigging and Learning how to belay.</b> (Those doing the leadership course must attend.)
6-7th. Sept		<b>Caving skills weekend.</b> Yorke peninsula. Putting into practice the theory. (Those doing the leadership course must attend.)
21. Sept	11am	<b>Pulley Day. First session.</b> For people with advanced SRT skills only. Flinders University Footbridge. Sponsored by the SASC. Joint Club day.
28th. Sept-Oct 5		<b>Kangaroo Is trip.</b> Great caving to be had. Jonathan Walsh and Sharon Drabsch organising. Get in now and book those tickets on the boat.
12th. Oct	11am	<b>Pulley day.</b> Second session. <b>Onkaparinga Gorge.</b>