

SPELEOGRAFFITI :

April 1989

SLAP! (nominally designated as: Volume 2)



" WHAT IS N.U.C.C. ? ":

N.U.C.C. is the code name for the National University Caving Club. It was established in Canberra in 1963. For further information contact the University's Sports Union.

THE BEGINNING OF N.U.C.C.

- according to C.S.S.

In the beginning there was C.S.S. (Canberra Speleo. Society) and C.S.S. was a caving club. Slowly this club expanded and travelled towards its destiny. Its destiny was a cross-road, a cross-road of chaos, lost equipment, waivering of rules and mutiny. Eventually, after a midnight raid, the mutineer disbanded from C.S.S. and founded N.U.C.C. From bad foundations great things have grown.

In the end there was N.U.C.C. And N.U.C.C. was good yet young. As its members age some slip into the anicent cycle of returning to the beginning. They return to C.S.S. to breed and multiply, another generation is born. And the children's children shall eventually proceed and be incorporated into N.U.C.C.

BY The gossip,
Malicious

PUBLISHERS NOTE

The rights of individuals to have their work published in an undiluted form have tried to be complied to. In some cases underlying and retitling have occurred. This has been done to add clarity, and to give the overall publication a greater consistency in style.

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This magazine has been written by members of N.U.C.C. All views expressed are those of the individual authors &/or the editor, and do not necessarily reflect the official policies of the Club.

I would like to thank all the article authors for their various contribution. Thanks are also due to the University for its grant, and to all the beaurocrats who couldn't quite seal the cave entrance with their red tape. All the mothers in the world must also be thanked for producing sons & daughters who may one-day join N.U.C.C.

Finally but not least, I would like to thank Phil the Photocopier, for not getting bored and braking down when it had to print the same page so many times.

INTRODUCTION

" What on earths the Speleograffiti ? "

Speleograffiti sounds like some scribble on a cave wall. Between 1964-1989 many Speleograffiti's have been produced, often three a year. The Speleograffiti is N.U.C.C.'s blasphemous and totally deranged magazine. Trip reports, derogatory comments, editorials and poems some-how edge their way into this magazine.

The " Best of N.U.C.C. " came about due to an attempt to index and complete the records of N.U.C.C.'s Speleograffiti collection. Editions were missing. As I examined the decaying relics, the 1960 & 1970's Speleograffiti's, I was struck by how similar the articles in them were to the articles in the 1980's additions. The same caves and similar comments on their merits keep reoccurring. Many early articles were just as relevant today, though they included some changes in equipment, technical methods, and the caves superficial environment are included.

" Who on earth forced these people write for the Speleograffiti in the first place. "

" Who were the people of the past who contributed so much to N.U.C.C.? "

The long forgotten heros who only ten and twenty years on are completely unknown or hiding in C.S.S.

" Who the hell is Peter Hart, John Brush, John Furlonger, Michael Webb, Allan Caldwell, Susan Nicholls, Gordon Taylor, David Moore, R.F. & F.B, Marj Coggan and Anonymous? "

They too crawled, trudged, squeezed, swore, and puffed, their way through the caves we now tackle. (Pub Ed : Not speleograffitiing the walls with luck.)

" How experienced were they? "

"What discoveries and changes to the caves have occurred in the time since they were club members. "

The Speleograffiti paper is about the only way we can learn anything from them and about them.

"What humour, skills, stupidity, and club 'personalities' did they have.

Many of the articles and comments of the past were extremely funny. 1973 saw a spree of comics on caving contributed by one member. 1985 recorded many incriminating quotes. It is the humorous articles of the Speleograffiti's that have taken a major role in this publication, " The best of N.U.C.C. " Amusing trip reports, articles, quotes and embarrassing memories. Occasionally the serious editorial, complaint and trip report have slipped in for educational and interest reasons. Yet, mainly this paper is just meant for fun.

Read on McTrog . . .

PUBLICATIONS EDITOR - (PUB. ED)
JANE CUDMORE

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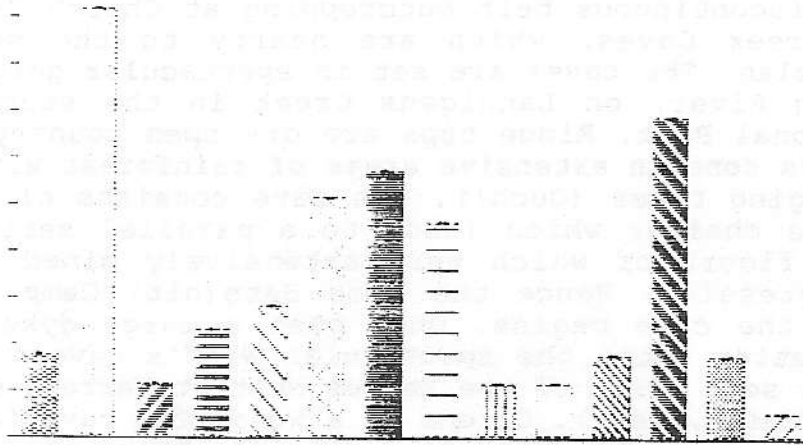
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CONTENT ANALYSIS

of 'The Best Of N.U.C.C.'

BAR. CHART

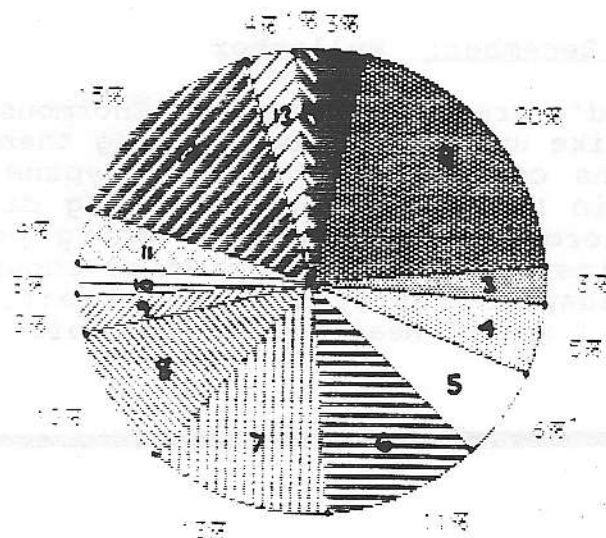
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PIE CHART



CAVING AREAS :

THE FUTURE:

from Speleo. July 1988

27-28 August: Colong

Colong is one of the longest cave systems in the state, with over 6km of passages mapped, and more yet to be mapped. The limestone is part of a discontinuous belt outcropping at Church Creek Caves and Billy's Creek Caves, which are nearby to the north, and eventually Jenolan. The caves are set in spectacular gorge country of the Kowmung River, on Lannigans Creek in the southern Blue Mountains National Park. Ridge tops are dry open country, however the deep valleys contain extensive areas of rainforest with old red cedar and stinging trees (Ouch!). The cave consists of a large, arched entrance chamber which leads to a parallel series of dry passages, the floors of which were extensively mined for guano during the depression. Hence the name Bats(hit) Camp where the steep walk to the cave begins. Once past a large dyke the cave becomes much wetter until the spectacular Woof's cavern is found. Very similar to some parts of the Eagles Nest at Yarrangobilly, but not as good. (Biased, me?!). Colong is a wonderful cave for getting lost in, especially in the upper maze section. There are reports of other caves in the area, however I've not yet seen them. There is good potential for mountain goats to find new caves on the bluff.

Access is by all weather road (The Mt. Werong-Yerranderie Rd.) to the Bats Camp turnoff, then a dry weather road to Bats Camp. A steep but not too long (compared to Bendethera!) foot track is followed down to the Lannigans Creek valley. This track was called the Acetylene Spur track, by the miners who lugged 60 lb packs of guano up and down it for a quid in the thirties. Another track, the Carbide Spur, also leads down from Bats Camp, and makes a good round trip with plenty of rainforest and a great dry valley.

Access and permits are controlled by the Oberon office of the NSW Parks Service; contact as for Tuglow.

1st 2 weeks in December: Nullarbor

One of the world's great karst areas! Enormous caves more than ten km long, more like underground bushwalking than caving, spectacular cave decorations composed of calcite, gypsum and halite (salt), sometimes all in the one area, reflecting different climates of times past, enormous underground swimming pools, mummified and preserved remains of animals which died thousands of years ago, amazing cave adapted fauna, Aboriginal art, great exploration potential, need I go on? Real expedition stuff.

cont →

CAVING AREAS:

from Speleo. July '88

OTHER GOOD AREAS (Already visited)-1988

Cooleman Plain

In Kosciusko National Park. Interesting both for its caves and surface karst landscape, most of the limestone is found in open sub alpine grassland and woodland much affected by cold air drainage. Three spectacular gorges are found along Cave Creek, the main tributary of the Goodradigbee River. Other surface features include large dolines and streamsinks such as the Devils Bridge, and the large drowned doline wrongly called Bung Harris' Dam. Many relics of previous grazing and mining activities are found here including the Coolamine Homestead complex, Harris' Hut. and the Mt. Black Mine.

Caves are managed by the NSW National Parks Service with three levels of access: 'Adventure Caves' such as Murrays, Cooleman and Barbers have no access restrictions but are well worth viewing. 62 known caves are in the 'Wild Cave' category with access by a yearly permit system. These include the active River Cave system, including Glop Pot, a cave containing a lake. The other large system in this group is the New Year Cave system. There are 19 'Special Purpose' caves which are available only on a special purpose permit issued for scientific or serious speleological work. There is only restricted potential for vertical caving at Cooleman.

Access to Cooleman is by dry weather road only and it is suggested that even 4WD vehicles use the road only in dry conditions, due to the probability of damage to the track, and sedimentation of cave and stream systems. In wet weather please park at the water tank on the Cooleman Mountains and walk the 4 km into Blue Waterholes. It can also be a bit bleak here at this time of the year. Further information: Neil Kell, Cave manager, Yarrangobilly (069 49 5335).

Big Hole

To be filled in later. The Big Hole is just that; an enormous hole in flat lying sedimentary rocks thought to be the result of collapse into an underlying cave system-possibly the same type of feature as the Gunbarrel in nearby Wyanbene Cave, but one stage later! It is over 100 m deep and involves an abseil/prussik of approximately that distance which is a bit of a grunt for those not used to it. It is, however a spectacular trip with the chance of meeting the famous lyrebird. A short walk away is the canyon and caves at Marble Arch, or Cleatmore Caves. These areas require a separate permit if it is intended to go caving.

Located in Deua National Park, the Big Hole is managed in a similar way to Wyanbene Cave by the NSW National Parks Service. Access is

cont. →

MORE CAVING AREAS :

from Speleo. July '88

by all weather road through Captains Flat and Krawarree then a 20 minute walk after fording the Shoalhaven River (which is difficult if it's 2 m deep or anything, so watch out for the weather). Further information: Steve Dovey, Ranger, Braidwood.

Bendethera

This is one of the more beautiful and inaccessible karst areas in the state, tucked away in the deep gorges of the scarp country inland from Moruya. Accessible only by foot or 4WD there is a good possibility of finding new caves here. The limestone rises in a series of steep bluffs above Con Creek, a tributary of the Deua River, however the valley floors are wide and grassy and make excellent camping areas. Pockets of temperate rainforest are found in unburnt gullies which are the home of many lyrebirds. Unfortunately the limestone is covered by thick Acacia scrub, which is boring for cavers, but wonderful for botanists as this species is endemic to small exposures of limestone in the immediate area.

The main cave at Bendethera consists of a single, very large chamber containing massive but very dry decoration. It, along with other equally unlikely caves such as those at Kybean and the outer parts of Wyanbene, was used as a guided tourist cave around the turn of the century. Water Cave and Fig Tree Cave are interesting but small caves as are Gin Cave and the newly found Tonic Cave to the south.

Bendethera Caves are, once again, in Deua National Park and managed by the Parks Service at Braidwood and Moruya. A draft management plan for the area has been written. Access is either by foot down the steep bridle track from the Minuma Range Fire Trail, or down the Dampier fire trail itself. This trail may also be used by experienced 4WD users, however it is difficult. Easier 4WD access is along various fire trails from Moruya. Further information: as for Big Hole.

Tuglow

Tuglow Caves are found in the southern end of the Blue Mountains National Park, overlooking the steep gorge of the Tuglow River. The karst itself is quite small, covering less than 2 km², however the main cave is extensive. The country is dry eucalypt forest with wetter eucalypts and rainforest species in the gullies. Excellent campsites are found along grassy river flats of Tuglow Hole Creek to the south of the cave. Tuglow Cave is an active stream cave developed on at least two levels, containing a good entrance pitch, waterfall pitches and good decoration in parts. Many other cave areas are found in the vicinity, such as Hollanders River and Jaunter, in various mixtures of bush and farmland.

DOGLEG :

from Speleo. Dec. 1980

WEE JASPER, Dogleg. 25th May, 1980.

Party: Gordon Taylor (L), Ron & Tim Levy, John Briggs, Tim Rudman, Michael Horn, Richard ? and Stephen Ralser.

Our 8.00 start was considerably delayed when G.T. failed to turn up with our transport as his parents' car had broken down the day before. However R.L. had his car and S.R. was able to borrow his parents' car. We finally arrived at Dogleg at about 11.00.

Soon after our arrival Alan Harding, who had been conducting a survey beyond the sumps, arrived with his scouts. Descending via the high entrance we were soon at the sandtrap (except G.T. who had headed out to the low entrance).

With minimal digging the sandtrap was cleared, a ladder hung on the opera house wall and our way to the sumps was made with considerable excitement. The third sump of Dogleg has been open on very few occasions in the past for short periods of time. Beyond lies the majority of Dogleg's passage and all of its formation.

The third sump was almost completely dry, the water level was a good 3m lower than at the same time last year, leaving only a thick glutinous mud to crawl through. Beyond we followed a narrow high stream passage with considerable awe. There were beautiful and delicate formations every step of the way. Helictites, stalagmites and flowstone all in pristine condition.

This passage runs for about 150m to where it forks. We took the left hand branch down a low wet passage. Numerous holes in the roof and side passages hold promise of further cave. About 100m down this branch the double duckunders were met. Beyond is mostly crawling in a mud which must surely send hippos rolling in ecstasy. Crawling up to our armpits in this mud, with the consistency of molten chocolate, S.R. had the idiocy to take out his camera for photographs.

Finally the terminal sump, a fairly small but deep pool is reached. No obvious diving possibilities were found. Returning to the fork in the passage A.H.'s group was met coming out of the right hand branch. We ventured up a hundred meters or so and it proved to be a mostly dry, low passage. We decided to leave the long crawl for a return trip and headed back to the entrance.

Four hours after entering we emerged, wet and covered in a sandy mud, feeling very triumphant at having been beyond the 3rd sump of Dogleg. We all agreed the previously disregarded Dogleg was one of N.S.W.'s best caves. Beautiful and sporting.

Tim Rudman.

HELICITITES :

Summary

from Speleo. Aug 1972

Helictites grow at the free end and not at the attached end. Helictites are tubes that assume their crooked slope as a result of the symmetrical orientation of crystals at the growing end. Helictites are produced instead of stalactites when there is a hydrostatic head pushing solution through a capillary tube at an extremely slow rate.

WEE JASPER TRIP REPORTSUNDAY, 18th JULY from Speleo. Sept '76PARTY: Peter Hart (L), Michael McKenzie, Terry McHugh.

After a journey of $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours along "Sawyer's Gully Road" our small party arrived at Wee Jasper and parked near the entrance to "Dogleg" (which happens to be open at the moment). Originally, about 11 cavers were coming, so when we found that the number was actually 3, there was quite an excess of equipment.

At about 10.00 a.m. the equipment was set up for the descent into "Pitch Chamber" of "Punchbowl" cave (WJ8). I laddered down first and Mike and Terry abseiled down afterwards.

From here we moved through the onicket and into the "Ballroom", where "Fossil Wall Chamber" was visited. There is a small colony of bats in this chamber at present, so visiting parties to this area should take care not to unduly disturb them.

"Far Chamber" was next to receive our attention and a couple of small offshoot chambers, namely "Edies Grotto" and "Mud Crack Chamber" were visited.

Next, we made our way under the "Balcony", around "Control Hole" and up through the "Window". After sliding through the "Slippery Dips", "Loxin Chamber" was eventually reached. "Strawberry Shortcut" was then used to go back to "Far Chamber" and after spending 3 hours in the cave, we emerged from its depths.

Lunch was now enjoyed and afterwards we travelled to "Gong", No. 4 extension of "Dip" cave and admired the delicate formations to be observed in "Gong Room".

We now returned to the car and prepared to leave, when we discovered that Mike had lost his wallet. After an unsuccessful search, we departed as it was becoming too dark. It would be appreciated if anyone finding this wallet in the area, return it to N.U.C.C.

PETER HART.

THE SHORTEST EVER TRIP REPORT

BUNGONIA TRIP REPORT15-16 July 1978from Speleo.
March 1979

We know who went, and we know what we did, so to all others bad luck. If I feel so inclined I will write a more extended report.

STEVEN RALSER.

After some prolonged torture, Steven saw how unreasonable he was being and here follows a translation of the scrawled document that he wrote, being a more extensive trip report.

I liked Steven's clear + comprehensive first effort the best and thus only included that - (pub. editor).

from Speleo. July 1988

ARGYLE POT - BUNGOWIA

27 March 1988

Lyle Williams, Chris Bradley, Jane Cudmore, Rebecca Doulgeris, Lindsay Irvine, Andrew Longhorne.

The alarm rang loudly in my ears. I woke with a start, leapt up, grabbed my caving gear and screamed down to the carpark. Today was the day, my first caving experience.

From there it was straight to Argyle cave. I examined the hole in the ground and almost bolted. What? They expect me to go 200 m down into the earth? Oh well, I was willing to try anything once.

After donning equipment we proceeded, under the leadership of Lyle, to go down the cave. This was a conscious move to escape the clinging thistles that had decided to attack us, almost as if they were guarding the entrance against intruders.

The Argyle Pot is a relatively vertical cave, starting with a downward sloping squeeze of 20 m. By squirming on our stomachs, groaning, pushing and a little swearing we made our way to 'luxury' of a space 30 x 90 cm long! There we rigged up the abseiling equipment and there were suggestions that Andrew might like to do a 'free fall' - but in the end no one had the heart to push him in!

The abseil consisted of two drops of 20 m and 15 m respectively, with a 10 m climb in between, where we talked, and lit matches to test for the presence of CO₂. The CO₂ concentration was in layers as it was decided that there was more oxygen at 23 m than at 45 m. The group decided not to proceed further into the earth's interior due worries of further CO₂, although the cave did continue down two more branching shafts.

Rebecca and I were initiated into the arduous art of prussiking. It was terrific although quite strenuous. The upward pitch was 40 m high and jutted out with an overhanging ledge half way up - beginner's luck I guess. Chris 'photographer extraordinaire' couldn't resist catching people in awkward positions or with surprise camera snaps. Two of his victims could be heard plotting to 'accidentally' drop the pack with his camera.

The return trip was associated with and hysterical laughter, but eventually we left the cave at 5.30 pm. At the surface, some great pictures were taken of our clothing (who would wear WHITE overalls down a cave, Chris?) After missing lunch, we were already for our barbeque, and vegetarian 'meat' for the group's vegetarians, Lindsay and Rebecca. We then played 'fun' games of kicking Chris' cup, pushing people out of trees and throwing water (Andrew, of course, was not involved!). The only problem on the trip was the insufficient number of jumars causing time to be wasted sharing these items around. The personality of the group, however, meant the trip was a great success.

Jane Cudmore

N.U.C.C. GOES MAPPING

from
Speleo.
April
1977

CAVES OF THE ROSEBROOK (BUNYAN) AREA, N.S.W., PART 2

J. BRUSH

At last, here they are, the maps of R1 (Rosebrook, Bunyan or Cloyne Cave) and R2, as promised in Speleograffiti in April 1973 (Brush 1973). On a further trip to the area in May 1973 (Coggan 1973) these two caves were surveyed and the maps have now been drawn.

As with RB3-10, the caves are on "Cloyne" near Bunyan N.S.W. and permission to enter the area must be obtained from the property owner, Mr. Pfeiffer.

R1 is the "main" cave at Rosebrook. It is a complex cave developed on two levels, with the floor of the main level some 28 metres below the surface. Despite its depth and the near vertical entrance pitch, only a 9 m ladder is needed. This is for the first section of the pitch from the surface. The rest of the narrow spiralling tube has ladders permanently installed. Quite a variety of materials has been used in the construction of these ladders and the long steam-pipe one at the bottom should be treated with due respect.

The lofty main chamber, at the base of the entrance pitch, is the largest in the cave. It contains some patches of what must have once been quite attractive decoration, though they are now rather grubby and have been vandalised.

From the northern end of this chamber a climb up a rubble slope takes one up towards the upper level. Most passages in this area are less than 2 m wide and high and as many are interconnected this level is a virtual maze. The passages are largely in bed-rock (but with a muddy floor) and are almost devoid of decoration.

By climbing down holes in the floor one can drop down into the inner end of the main level. This area varies in height from one to 3 metres and contains areas of magnificent cave-coral decoration. Unfortunately, the decoration has been damaged to some extent by muddying and breakage.

The northern end of the Rosebrook limestone has now been searched for cave entrances reasonably thoroughly. The area is that shown on Page 30 of Speleo-G 10(2).

Several years ago CSS looked at the southern end of the belt (south of the Numeralla Road), though no caves were found. The remaining central section of the belt has not to my knowledge been closely looked at for caves. CSS attempted to visit this area when it looked at the southern section, but could not get permission to do so. This was at the height of the cave drowning season in the Mount Gambier area of South Australia, and the owner of "Tolbar" feared that we too would surely drown in any caves we might find on his property. No amount of arguing could convince him that we were not going cave diving and that in any case, it was unlikely that the caves on his property (if any!) would contain water.

References:

Brush, J. 1973; Caves of the Rosebrook (Bunyan) Area, NSW, Part One. Speleograffiti 10(2): 29-31

Coggan, M. 1973, Rosebrook trip report, 5 May 1973. Speleograffiti 10(3): 56-57.

MAPPING

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from Speleo. April '73

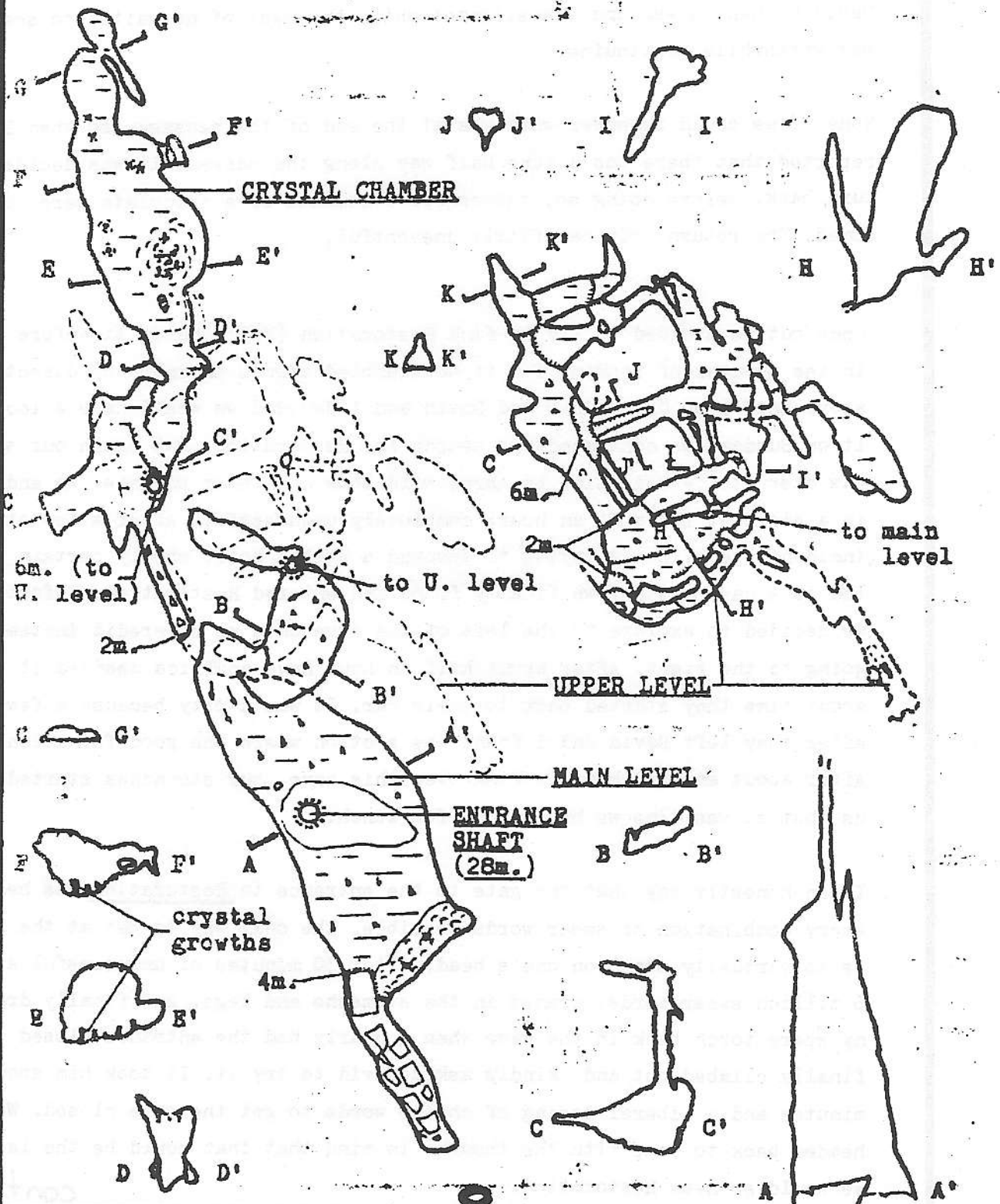
ROSEBROOK CAVE (R1)

Rosebrook, NSW

Surveyed 5 May 1973 by John Brush, Marj Coggen and David Bowden using Miner's Dial and Fibreglass tape. Final draft by John Brush February 1977.

ASF Map No. 2R1.NUCL

metres 1:200
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YAGBY YARN :

from Speleo. July 1973.

Saturday. David Horner, Trica & Dave Berman, Glen Murphy.

YARRANGOBILLY 31/3/73 - 1/4/73.

We went underground fairly early on Saturday morning. The first cave on our agenda was East Deep Creek Cave. On this trip we went straight downwards towards the stream passage although the going was pretty slow as this was only Trica's first trip and Dave's second. Many good formations were encountered in the passage before the stream passage. When the stream passage was reached David H. went ahead and investigated while the rest of us waited to see if it was worthwhile continuing.

None of us could remember what was at the end of the passage, so when David reported that there was a lake half way along the passage it was decided to turn back. Before doing so, the crumpled remains of a chocolate were consumed. The return trip was fairly uneventful.

Once out we decided to try to find Restoration (Y50) and do it before lunch. In the process of looking for it we stumbled across an entrance directly above East Deep Creek Cave and David and I decided we would have a look at it on Sunday. We continued our search for Restoration, but again our search was disrupted - this time by three wild sows and their piglets. We ended up in a pig hunt for $\frac{1}{4}$ of an hour; completely unsuccessful. After a few other incidents, e.g. David trying to descend a Wombat hole, wholly certain that it led to a cave system; we finally found and entered Restoration. Unfortunately, we decided to explore to the left of the cave once we entered it instead of going to the right. After about half an hour Dave and Trica decided it was about time they started back to their car. It was a pity because a few minutes after they left David and I found the section where the good formations were. After about another hour looking over this cave, our stomachs started to tell us that it was time we headed out for lunch.

I can honestly say that the gate to the entrance to Restoration has heard every combination of swear words possible. The only way to get at the lock is to virtually stand on one's head. After 30 minutes of unsuccessful attempts 6 million swear words, cramps in the stomach and legs, and finally dropping my spare torch back in the cave when I nearly had the entrance closed off. I finally climbed out and 'kindly' asked David to try it. It took him about 10 minutes and a liberal dosing of choice words to get the gate closed. We then headed back to camp with the thought in mind that that would be the last time we would go near Restoration.

cont. →

(July 1973)

Sunday. David Horner, Melinder Brouwer, Steve Horn, Dora Horvath, Glen Murphy.

Once more we headed off towards East Deep Creek Cave. We first headed to entrance above East Deep Creek; seen by some of us on Saturday. It seemed to be just a lot of collapsed boulders from the roof. There were no very good formations so after an hour of general exploring we decided to head back to East Deep Creek Cave. On this occasion we turned left once inside the cave instead of heading towards the stream passage as on the previous day. After about an hour of just heading down the obvious tunnels, we finally came to a small pocket of crystals tucked away in a corner. They were very clean with a pool of water at the bottom of the crystals.

The time came to turn around. Although they spoilt the appearance of the cave, I was rather glad that someone had left a pathway of arrows to follow out, since none of us had been too attentive on the way down. (I think there is a lesson to be learnt here somewhere - Ed.) In a few cases the arrows saved us a bit of time looking for the right way out. We emerged and then faced the problem of carrying all the gear from camp up the hill to the cars.

ABOUT THE FIELD DAY.

from Speleo. April 1973

NUCC holds field days about once a year. The aim of these is to enable members to become more familiar with the equipment, as well as becoming more proficient in technique.

There are various places within easy reach of Canberra which are ideal sites for such events. Marble Arch is further away than the others, but it has the added advantage of having some caves for those who wish to go caving. The area a few miles north of Wyanbene has a narrow gorge about 100' deep but only a few (very few) feet wide. At the upper end of the gorge is a large arch way. There are two main caves (one wet, one dry) and some smaller ones.

Besides ladder practice and belaying, members will be able to learn to abseil and prussik, learn to tie a couple more useful knots, and improve their chimneying technique. (Chimneying is a very useful technique for caving, especially for those with short legs, arms, slippery feet, etc.)

ALL MEMBERS ARE URGED TO TRY AND ATTEND.

A WORTHWHILE DAY IS GUARANTEED.

All those who want to go should contact Mick Ellis, Room A239

John XXIII.

Is This For Real?

from Speleo. July 1988

MILL CREEK SWALLET - YARRANGABILLY
(the quick trip 24/4/88)

It starts something like this.

My knees and elbows are bruised and sore from all this crawling. Its good to be finally out of the cave (someone up ahead must have my pack) and into the sunlight. I catch up with the rest of the group.

"Who's got my pack then?"

Blank meaningless faces stare back at me. This is our third consecutive day of caving and everyone has bruised and sore knees and elbows and there is a general look of weariness amongst the mass of bodies lying on the track.

Oh, s....., don't tell me no one's got my pack. At this stage depression sets in and everyone lies quite, as much from tiredness as a fear that any motion will be taken as an indication of volunteering to go back into the cave.

I grab a ladder, a tape and a couple of krabs and announce.

"I'm going back in. Anyone coming with me?"

More blank faces.

"I'll go." says Jane.

I wait for a chorus of macho shouts of "No, you sit here in the sun and rest, Jane, we'll go"; but I see that women's liberation has progressed further than I had expected as the only comment was from Chris;

"You can borrow my knee pads, Jane. If I can get them off without taking my boots off." (Good on you Pres.).

With a "See ya soon" we head off.

Here's a blow by blow description of the trip.

RT (relative time) zero

"Ready Jane?"

"Yes"

"OK, lets go."

We race passed a beautifully marbled stream passage entrance, (pretty but a bit blurred). First crawl, ouch ... the numbness had already started to leave my knees but is quickly restored by strategically placed rocks.

RT 2 min

Main chamber.

"You OK"

"Yes"

The second crawl is attacked.

cont. →

con't Crawling in YAGBY:

"Here's the squeeze into the pitch chamber. Can you pass me the ladder?"

"Yes, OK."

RT 20 min

The ladder is rigged and checked.

"You wait here and I'll race down and get the pack."

"OK"

ladder, ladder, ladder

main passage

jog, jog, jog, wriggle, crawl, scramble, walk

Ooops end of passage, no pack, must of missed it.

Walk, scramble, crawl, wriggle.

Ah, here it is, what a stupid place to leave a pack, in future I'm leaving it in the middle of the passage where I'll have to trip over it to get out.

Jog, jog, jog, ladder, ladder, ladder.

"Hi Jane."

"Hi Marc."

Haul, haul, haul, undo knot, roll ladder, roll ladder, drop....
pick up ladder, fold ladder, fold ladder, stuff into pack.

"Ready Jane?"

"Yes."

RT 30 min

"Lets go."

Squeeze, grunt, wriggle, crawl, crawl, crawl, crawl,...

Main chamber.

"You OK?"

"Yes."

"Lets keep going."

Crawl, crawl.

Marbled passage, jog jog.

"Stop."

"Why?"

Open pack, take out ladder.

"Here Jane grab the ladder."

"Piss off."

"No, I want to get my camera in the bottom of the pack."

"Ah, OK."

Rummage, rummage, zip, snap, click, FLASH, wind, snap, zip, rummage.

"OK, lets go."

Scramble, scramble.

Daylight and out.

Walk, walk, avoid blackberries, walk.

And there they all are, spread-eagled all over the track.
Blank meaningless faces stare back at us. We are now feeling alive and active not like when we first came out, and eager to get moving.

"Come on guys lets go we want a swim."

RT 50 min.

Marc Fauvet

**** MILLS CREEK SWALLET ****

from Speleo. March 1988

Yarrangabilly Y29

25-07-1987

Party Ian Houshold, Andrew Wall, Chris Bradley,
Marc Fauvet, Josephine Batty, Rod Edmundson

We were finally going to do it. After many years of NUCC absentia in the cave exploration and mapping area, we were finally going to survey and map a cave.

All the party bar one drove up on the Friday night and lodged in sumptuous luxury at the Yagby cave exploration chalet alias Cotterill's Cottage. Having a more pressing Friday night I decided to drive up on the Saturday morning. Oh, no! Snow on the road. This is going to delay me. I bet they'll all be trogged up and impatiently awaiting my arrival or even worse, gone off without me.

Well, I got to the Ranger's Station about fifteen minutes late and not seeing any cars I checked out the carparks. So they weren't there yet. This gave me the chance to have a chat with Denny; walk down to the river for some water, boil a billy and have a quiet cuppa until they arrived. Another chat with the ranger; another quiet cuppa. Over an hour later and they still weren't there. They finally arrived with some pathetic excuse about problems starting the diesel motor in the cold weather (mind you, by then the sun was well and truly up and it was anything but cold).

We trogged up and made our way through the usual "prickly" plant infestation at the entrance of the cave. How could this cave not be surveyed? It could only be ten minutes from the tourist caves.

The cave entrance followed the stream passage which in fact disappeared into the cave. There was very little water there that day but the beautifully "marbled bathroom-like" cascades testified to what must be some spectacular water activity when Mills Creek is flowing.

We arrived at a small chamber. Alright, this was the main chamber and big by this cave's standards. While we settled down to some munchies which substituted for lunch (I told you they were slow getting here), Ian proceeded to give us a crash course in cave survey. The Sunto compass and inclinometer seemed easy enough to use but they had obviously been designed by non-cavers (how the hell are you supposed to read the damn thing in the dark and illuminate your sighting point at the

Con't →

same time. The solution is really quite simple: use three hands and two lights - and if you can get someone to help you, then this really makes life easier). We used a plastic tape in an orange case for measuring distance and decided to use the case itself as a sighting point (hence, all measurements are taken to the top of the orange case).

Having had our practice survey, we divvied up the gear and headed off (I wish I could do that, it might make some of these crawls more comfortable) down the crawl where we split into two groups (Rod, Andrew and myself in one and the rest - Ian, Chris, and Josephine in the other). I don't know what the boys did to Josephine but we later heard that she gave up and came back out to the main chamber leaving Ian and Chris to continue the survey.

Well, as surveys go, it went and we meandered our way down the stream passage to a sump (on the right) which showed no leads up or down. I stood in it and it was wet but it didn't go anywhere. We doubled back and took measurements in all directions. I tackled a tricky little climb which eventually showed many leads, up, down, left, right, etc but we didn't survey it although I shouted some compass bearings and estimates of distance back to the group. We ran into Chris who had doubled around from his side. This should be handy in showing the accuracy of our two surveys as they should join up roughly in the same place and in the same plane (see map).

We then came back to the bottom of the ladder pitch (I failed to mention this before, how remiss of me), checked out a horrible muddy stream passage on the left which showed some promise and considerable discomfort (through the rockpile). Why must one have to spend so much time lying on the ground/in the water when surveying?

At this stage we called it quits, having made considerable progress even though we hadn't checked out all the cave. We had, in fact, covered most of the "main" passages and as our surveys had joined up it would give us a good idea of the cave layout and point out the more worthwhile leads to pursue.

We retreated to Cave House for some warmth, coffee, nice conversation and Scotch in no particular order. We also discovered that a robot can ascend/descend a rope and make the coffee. Well, maybe it can't make the coffee but I'll never know as I had to head back to Canberra.

Marc Fauvet

Map : Drawn by Ian Houshold.

WYANBENE: * * TRIP REPORT * *

from Speleo. 1986 Annual

Where: Wyanbene

When: 6 April 1986

Party: Chris Bradley, John Deen, Susan Downing, Geoff Dunn,
Andrew Edwards, Jonathon Evans, Richard Greenwood,
Kathy Henderson, John McKinnon, John Stanner,
Jamie Stephenson

This modest party of eleven (most of the time) headed toward Wyanbene from the ANU at approximately 8 a.m., myself arriving slightly late as usual. We all charged into the cave at 10.30 a.m. At 10.35 a.m. we were all somewhat damp (with the wet stretch still to come).

We reached the climb to the "breezy hole" (Editor's note: Blowhole?) just before the ladder pitch. Through the hole we waited for a ladder and belay rope. As luck would have it, seven of us piled up before the ladder arrived. For two members, it was their first ladder climb (actually a descent) and for one member, it was his first cave.

Jamie took a party of five ahead to meet us at Caesars. When the rest of us had completed the pitch we followed on through knee deep water, squeezes, and crawls until we came across another light in front of us. A little puzzled at first, we found the other five had not found the way. We pointed out to them a little hole and crawl into a river.

All of us crawled up the wet stretch amongst the crinoids (pre-Cambrian fossilised animals) with exclamations of "Gosh, the water's cold!" and "Heavens, how do you move in this jolly narrow passage without getting totally wet!" or words to that effect (Editor's note: I bet!).

Reaching the wetstretch bypass, it was found the best way to get out of it was to stand on someone else's head, or else it was very awkward. (Editor's note: I would think that the person who had his head stood on would be very awkward for awhile, too!). Much chocolate was consumed after we all got through.

The Lavatory Pan and other squeezes proved equally interesting and finally we arrived at Rockfall Chamber. Consensus was to have lunch (1.30 p.m.) and then continue onto Caesars without packs as we wouldn't have time to go on to Frustration Lake - this was a beginner's trip after all. Groundhog (Andrew) did, however, go exploring and we all put helmets on in case he dropped rocks on us.

After lunch we went through Jewel Cave and into Caesars, to the bottom of Caesars, through the knee deep water passage and up the mud slopes. Much fun was had watching some members having great difficulty climbing the mud slopes, and even more fun watching them losing a foothold and sliding back down the slope very rapidly (Editor's note: Comes from having your head stood on).

At about 2.30 p.m. we started to head back. Groundhog took the lead. After awhile, I enquired where they were all going. All returned from heading off the wrong way and we had a head count. Ten. "We've lost one!". We all stopped for about five minutes until Groundhog had decided no one was behind him and would return. We gave him a heavy pack to carry to try and slow him down. I'm not sure if it worked.

About seven of us visited Helectite Chamber on the way out. It was very pretty. We were at the cars around 5.00 p.m. After packing up, everyone had a "Variation" or two (no, Grant, they were chocolate biscuits!) (Editor's note: Do I detect smut here?) before returning home to a nice hot shower.

WYANBENE CAVE DESCRIPTION

from Speleo. July 1976

For the benefit of those who have not been to or heard of Wyanbene, I will give a brief description.

Wyanbene Cave (WY1, WY2) is located about 48 km South of Braidwood, near Krawaree. The cave has been surveyed by NUCC and 1830 m. of passage are mapped, making it equal 3rd longest in N.S.W.

At the WY1 entrance there is a small ladder which leads to the stream passage. If one follows this upstream, a sump is reached. At this point, one has the choice of turning into the former tourist cavern (used in early 1900's) or climbing a flowstone wall and passing through a hole known as the blowhole (because of the strong breeze usually associated with it).

From here, it descends via an 8m. ladder pitch and rejoins the stream passage. Following this, one passes a number of interesting chambers, such as the "Jailhouse", "Cleopatra's Bath" and "Helictite Chamber".

Up to this point, the caver has managed to keep reasonably dry, however things will soon change when the "wet stretch" is reached. This section almost completely saturates the person who is keen enough to proceed this far. Fortunately this may be partially avoided by "Aitcheson's Bypass".

Eventually, the passage opens up into the "Rockfall Chamber". At the top of this, to the left, one gains entrance to "Caesar's Hall" a large chamber of impressive dimensions. On the right of "Rockfall" is a passage leading to the "Gunbarrel Aven", a large rising shaft 110m. high and yet to be properly explored.

In the roof of "Caesar's Hall" there are a couple of holes, also unexplored. It is thought that these may be part of the upper levels and may connect with "Gunbarrel" as well as bypassing the sump at "Frustration Lake", which is at present the end of the cave.

At the bottom of "Caesar's Hall" is a pool of clear water which becomes muddy on disturbance and is known as "Diarrhoea Pit". A few more 6m. climbs brings one up to "Frustration Lake" and the known end (?)

CAVE TERMS :

from Speleo.
1986 Annal.

Cont.

Doline:

1. A closed depression draining underground in karst, of simple but variable form, e.g. cylindrical, conical, bowl- or dish-shaped. From a few to many hundreds of metres in dimension.

2. Queue of unemployed at the C.E.S.

Fault:

1. A fracture separating two parts of a once continuous rock body with relative movement along the fault plane.

2. Entering a cave without your light.

Free Pitch:

1. Where a rope or ladder hangs vertically and free at the walls.

2. As opposed to a "toll pitch". The government has yet to introduce these as there is some difficulty in collecting the revenue.

WYANBENE :

from Speleo. April 1977.

WYANBENE TRIP REPORT - 8/5/77

Party - Peter Hart (L), Richard Baldock, Leo Berzins, Noel Call, Jeff Diamond, Michael Horne, Terry McHugh, Michael McKenzie.

Well, at last NUCC managed to round up enough masochists, to transport a scaling pole into the depths of Wyanbene.

We assembled at the Wyanbene turnoff on the Krawaree road at 7 a.m. and shortly afterwards arrived at the cave entrance.

Noel arrived shortly after the first group had entered the cave, and so we equipped ourselves, took the remaining section of the scaling pole and headed in.

The journey to Caesar's Hall was about 3-4 hours and many groans were heard as it was announced that the sections would not fit through the first exit to Aitcheson's bypass.

Once we had reached far Caesar's Hall it was decided that the scaling pole was too short to be safely used in the aven here, and so we proceeded to Anderson's Wall.

Mike M. free climbed the Wall, while Noel, Richard and myself started assembling the pole. Shortly, it was long enough for Mike M., to attach a ladder to it, and the rest of us used (tested?) it to get to the top of Anderson's Wall.

This being accomplished, Leo, Jeff and myself hauled the pole up and spent about 10 minutes trying to turn it around into the upper level above the Wall. I climbed the ladder several times, but it was deemed to be unsafe each time to actually reach the top.

Hence, another 2 sections were added and the pole shifted to a new position, hopefully more stable, as people below were getting tired of a shower of loose mud. This enabled Mike M. to climb into the level and have a look around. He found a small passage leading off to a chamber 3 metres square and about $\frac{1}{2}$ metres high with a hole leading straight back down to the stream.

Meanwhile the rest of the group had free climbed the other side of the wall and gone to the lake. Richard, who is a cave diver from the University of Bristol Speleological Society (Great Britain), swam to the end of the lake and found an air space. He considers that the lake is well worth diving, and intends to do it when he obtains his equipment.

On their return journey they experienced some difficulty in climbing back up the wall, but eventually succeeded.

The scaling pole was then used to descend Anderson's Wall and the long journey back to the surface began, M.H., M.M. and myself seeing Gunbarrel on the way out.

We reached the surface after a total of 8 hours underground and headed back to Canberra after a very interesting though somewhat disappointing trip.

PETER HART.

COOLEMAN PLAINS :

from 1985 Annual.
* * WHITE FISH REVISITED * * Speleograffiti!

Where: Cooleman Plains

When: 1 March 1986

Party: Cavers - Rob Capon
Marc Fauvet
John Kennedy
Camp Follower - Debby Howse

This was to be a follow-on trip from the Australia Day Long Weekend trip in January 1986 (see Speleograffiti '85).

I suppose it must be stated, first and foremost, that caving should be as comfortable as possible. So when someone (who shall remain nameless) complains that I've got too much gear, the only suggestion that I can make is: "Maybe you should get a bigger truck, John!".

Anyhow, we set out from Canberra with daylight still showing and hopefully nothing left behind. By the time we arrived at Cooleman, it was dark so we quickly got out the gas lights, the table, the two folding chairs, the folding bed (whose bed was that J.K.?), the barbeque, the charcoal grill (the only way to cook steak), the eskys, the tents, etc, etc.

You may recall the last time, I woke everyone up by accidentally dropping my steel tent poles (three times), so this time I was extra careful not to wake anyone (there was only one combi camper apart from us) - until we switched the TV on, that is. Yes, you read me correctly. We took a TV, and we finally found a use for wire traces - swung up into a tree, they make a nice aerial extension. So we watched "Seeing Things" while we cooked tea. R.C. and D.H. arrived late after close of transmission so they missed out on bush TV viewing.

The morning came and with some rain already fallen and possibly more due, we quickly disposed of breakfast and got the caving packs ready. Wet suits all round, four ladders, God knows how much rope, cameras in waterproof containers, lunch and the usual paraphernalia of lights, helmets, tapes, whaletails, etc. We had managed to fill six packs (two each as D.H. wasn't caving), so we roped (no pun intended) D.H. into helping carry some of it down to the cave.

Three-quarters of an hour later (and suffering from exhaustion), we struggled into our wetsuits, and talked joyously about the forthcoming immersion into the freezing waters.

.....continued overleaf +++

cont →

Well, forewarned is forearmed, but the water was still cold, but then again we had to make several trips through it and attempt to keep the packs as dry as possible. So we struggled through the water, into a small chamber, up past the gate, across the mud ledge, up past the knotted rope into a hole in the wall, and then (Sound familiar? It should, that was all I told you last time).

And now for the revelation. Along a muddy passage for about fifteen to twenty feet. Rig an anchor point and abseil twenty-five feet into the darkness. Poke around and negotiate a mud slide into you guessed it more cold water (Ah! The joys of a warm wet suit). Well, we poked around a bit more, negotiated a partial duck-under and finally arrived at a sump. This is it. There's just no way through unless the water level drops.

So we took a casual return to daylight, stopping to take heaps of pikkies of people immersed up to their necks in cold water. This may seem like a short trip (considering we probably only went 250 metres as the crow flies or the worm burrows, I don't mind), but with all the gear and mud and water, we were still four hours underground.

After a pleasant lunch (in the sun!), we washed the gear, rigged an already wet rope to some stout trees, and abseiled over the waterfall. Oh, what joy to be carefree. (We actually put it down as a training session in case we have to abseil a wet pitch in a cave.)

All in all, it was a great day, but this cave is proving a hard nut to crack.

Marc Fauvet

from Speleo. 1986 Annual.

CAVE TERMINOLOGY:

- | | |
|-----------------|--|
| Cave Breathing: | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Movement of air in and out of cave entrance at intervals. 2. The associated air currents within the cave. 3. Heavy breathing just before total panic when your light gives up the ghost |
| Cave Fill: | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Transported materials such as silt, clay, sand and gravel which cover the bedrock floor, or partially or wholly block some part of a cave. 2. Boy Scouts at Wee Jasper on a long weekend. |
| Choke: | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rock debris or cave fill blocking part of a cave. 2. Error in abseiling when the rope tries to use your neck as a friction bar. |

Leg: 1. A part of a survey traverse between two successive stations.

2. Devices attached to body which greatly assist in exploring caves (especially when used in pairs).

Marble: 1. Limestone recrystallized and hardened by pressure and heat.

2. Best to lose these if you are serious about caving.

Plan: 1. A plot of the shape and details of a cave projected vertically onto a horizontal plan at a reduced scale.

2. Attempt to organize a caving trip. By definition, this is never adhered to.

Pot (-Hole): 1. A vertical or nearly vertical shaft or chimney open to the surface.

2. Place to stash your marijuana.

Spring: 1. A natural flow of water from rock or soil onto the land surface or into a body of surface water.

2. One of several pieces of your car likely to break on travelling over rough roads to caving areas.

Tufa: 1. Spongy or vesicular calcium carbonate deposited from spring, river or lake waters. Cf. travertine.

2. Description of cave as an excuse for turning back: "It's too tufa to go on." (Editor's note: According to the Concise Oxford Dictionary, this word is pronounced "toofa", not "tougher" as the author would imply. A better excuse for turning back would then be: "It's tufa to the end and I'm cold, wet and tufaking tired to go on!")

Karst: 1. Terrain with special landforms and drainage characteristics due to greater solubility of certain rocks in natural waters than is common. Derived from the geographical name of part of Slovenia.

2. Means by which fly fishermen get the "fly" out into the lake or river. (Editor's note: Crap. This word is spelt "cast".)

Bone Breccia: 1. A breccia (Editor's note: i.e. rock of angular stones cemented by lime) containing many bone fragments. [Scientific attention should be drawn to the finding of such in caves.]

2. Usually used in the exclamation: "Careful! That fall will breccia your bones. (Editor's note: It will only breccia your bones if you pronounce it incorrectly. According to the Concise Oxford Dictionary, "breccia" is pronounced "breksha". A better exclamation would then be: "A fall like that breccia bones, your camera, and your Arnott's Milk Arrowroot biscuits, if you're unlucky enough to be carrying them in your pack at the time you decide to dip out.)

3. Result of fall in 2. is bone breccia (Editor's note: Not necessarily. See above.)

TRIP LEADER - TORTURES +

TERRIFIES BEGINNER! :

Beginners.

from Speleo. April 1967

Much more instruction should be given to the uninitiated beginner-cavers. It's all very well to attract new members, but they must be told exactly

- i) what to expect
- ii) how to treat caves
- iii) how to treat equipment
- iv) how to treat trip leaders (i.e., specific instruction.)

The first experiences of a caver are often the most lasting and the strongest impression he will have. Therefore they must be first-rate impressions : it ought to be second nature to him to treat equipment with respect. If and when he becomes a trip leader, he will instil this same thoughtfulness and responsibility into his fellow cavers, so that the good condition of equipment is perpetuated. A questionnaire given to beginners would be a solution to their lack of experience, if a talk/lecture/discussion, based on their answers, was given after.

Trip Leaders

Trip leaders are chosen, presumably, for their cave-experience, and sense of responsibility. These qualities are measured by the committee, but must be constantly kept under strict watch. Admittedly, half the fun of caving lies in find out for yourself 'what it is like'. but trip leaders should instruct beginners carefully and curb their own exploratory urges to watch over their charges, (though not necessarily interfering with them), to make sure they are as safe as he is. The results of the lack of warning given to a new caver may be amusing to the old hands, but can be terrifying, and extremely off-putting to the poor new-comer. Anyway, how can a caver respect a Trip Leader of whom he sees nothing underground but a distant dim flickering light, or a large, muddy, efficient pair of boots disappearing through an amazingly small hole, while the hollow command echoes wildly from a terribly long way off - 'Come on up he-e-e-re....Yo-o-o-ou can do-o-o-o it....' Unfair I reckon.

A NOVICE WRITES :

My First Caving Trip from Speleo.
Feb. 1966

The title seems to be somewhat high schoolish, but then I first went caving when at high school, or I should say, the English equivalent of it. Some years ago now, more than I care to admit, I had the good fortune to spend some months in England with relatives on the English-Welsh border and attended an English grammar school. It was only by accident that I went caving. A friend of mine was an ardent 'potholer', and when one member pulled out of a trip I was asked to make up the number. After a small amount of persuasion I was off on my first caving trip.

After a short train trip, and a walk of some twelve miles, all uphill, we were on the Derbyshire moors - a high limestone plateau.

If you think England is crowded, take a trip up onto the moors. Nothing but treeless emptiness, bare rock, short tufty grass, a few forlorn sheep, stone walls and the road stretching endlessly to the horizon. That is, when there is a clear day and you can see the horizon. Normally, visibility is limited to a few hundred feet; all around is a prevailing wispy mist, weaving eerily across your path. Disembodied sounds come mysteriously out of the mist - the solitary bleating of sheep, the phut-phut of a diesel engine from some hidden farm, the soft keening of the breeze in the telephone wires high in the weird, eternally moving mist. Desolation on an open, sunny Australian plain is paradise compared to the moors. Every few miles we crossed a small stream emerging from nowhere, cascading on over broken rocks into some dark abyss. Eventually, after several hours, and several blisters, we reached our destination and made camp. Ever tried to pitch a tent on ground with 1" - 2" of top soil, or make a fire on a treeless plain? I still vividly remember scouring the surrounding neighbourhood for wood and coming across an old signpost at a disused crossroads which must have been there in the days of the stage coach. Needless to say it isn't there now.

The next morning the great moment came, the ladders were unrolled and dropped down the first pitch into Oxlow Cavern - 60'; but I didn't know that at the time, so full of enthusiasm I started down. About halfway down I began to have second thoughts about caving. Not that I was frightened but the ladder was shaking furiously and rattling, the shaking being transmitted from my knees, which just would not keep still. Further encouragement from the top and I was down, sitting in a pool of cool water thanking every saint I could

cont. →

NEW ZEALAND CAVING:

Con't of "A novice writes."

think of. A short scrambling climb down a rock slope 'midst a growing stream of water and we were at the next pitch, a free fall one, starting from a small circular hole in the floor. Down a swinging ladder and I was on the floor of the chamber below. The noise of the water was deafening as it cascaded over the edge of a limestone buttress, the crash of it hitting the bottom reverberating around the chamber. A rope around the waist and I was sliding over the buttress to the bottom through a curtain of cold water. The water going down the back of my neck and out through my boots. On again and then we stopped at a sump. The small stream had now swollen to a full sized underground river completely filling the cave. Where did the river go? Probably on for miles to emerge triumphantly into the light at Castleton or Burton. So back we went, up through the waterfall and the ladders, the last climb being the longest and most difficult of all, so long in fact, that I called down to ask how far it was to the top and was rewarded with a quiet 'you're here'. It was night. I had been underground for twelve hours.

So ended my first caving trip.

David Fenn.

WAITOMO

from Speleo. Feb 1966

Waitomo, situated about 150 miles south of Auckland, is New Zealand's best known caving area. The surrounding countryside is partly grazing country and partly natural forest, with just an occasional limestone outcrop.

The three tourist caves are quite large in parts, with chambers up to 50 feet high, but elsewhere you have to make your way along narrow passageways, carefully avoiding precipitous drops down to lower levels. In one place the eerie quiet is broken by the amplified rumbling of a large underground stream, which emerges from the depths of a narrow tunnel and disappears into the darkness a little way further on. In places the formation is particularly good, with large rock faces glimmering with crystal, and occasional helictites, but in the main the caves are quite dead and unattractive from this point of view.

FRESHERS IMPRESSIONS 8

IN AND OUT OF HOLES

from Speleo.
1983 Annal

As a complete fresher to caving I had better say a few words for people who think they might be interested. Wow! Great! Fantastic! Amaazing!!!! Now I suppose you would like some sentences?

The reason I joined the caving club was because I was looking for something different to do. Caving certainly is that, and much more. I'm certain everyone has a different reason for doing caving, but they all boil down to the same thing - to have fun. I find that with each trip my interest and awareness of all my surrounds grows.

My introduction to caving was on a rainy weekend in March at Wee Jasper. After spending a night in a tent (needless to say it developed a leak directly over my head!), walked into Signature Cave had a poke around and left.

Following this came trips to Bungonia, Buchan, Wyanbene, Cooleman, and (of course) Wee Jasper. Each of these trips I remember for different reasons. For example:

1. In Devil's Punchbowl - standing at the foot of the abseil in, looking up at the ceiling (which seems miles overhead), lit by the daylight creeping in.
2. Wyanbene - kneeling in a low tunnel in a few inches of water.
3. Dip - lying in the Rathole listening to the bats flying around in extension 3, and hearing the occasional bat flying past you.
4. Cave 29? in Buchan - at the bottom of the final ladder looking at the stream a little way further on.
5. Barber's Cave at Cooleman - the cavern with the shawl running down its side.
6. Right Cooleman - seeing a Wombat!!!
(The poor wombat must have nearly died seeing Randolf in its home.)

The last trip was to Cooleman, and with a trip like that I can hardly wait for next year.

(Enough Said?!!)

PS.

Your not living if you haven't been SIX FEET UNDERGROUND!!!!

SCAVENGER HUNT :

FILCH 1970

from Speleo. July 1970

The annual silly season at the A.N.U. has come and gone again, with the passing of Bush Week 1970. This year, a N.U.C.C. team again participated in the Scavenger Hunt with the intention of improving on their effort of fifth (out of over 20 teams) last year.

The event started with the gathering of as many club members (and others) as possible at 9.30am on Friday in the Union to receive copies of this year's pilferage lists and the "Tarago Telegraphs" - we had to sell 60 of these (Anybody who wants one or more see J.B. - special reduced rate for club members and anyone else who wants one 10p each). We were fairly stunned by the length of the list and by the relative difficulty involved when compared with previous years.

It had been decided previously that any items in short supply should be tried for before the others and accordingly, P.T. took off to make away with the high table chair from Bruce Hall and C.P. to get the painting of Pope John XXIII from the College. Then people scattered in all directions. Two adventurous members attempted to remove one of the minute hands from a certain prominent clock. They were thwarted by rust, lack of time, lack of tools and a couple of members of the local constabulary, who, despite much fast talking, would not part with their Commonwealth number plates for the good of the club's cause (ie a share in the nine gallon keg first prize).

About this time, K.P. and D.G. were chasing the manager of the Monaro Mall. He wasn't at the Mall but his secretary carefully noted us as the team which had got in first. Unfortunately, we missed out there, some other team caught him before he got back. Fast-talking J.C., in the meantime, had collared a barmaid and bagpipes from the Scottish Bar at the Canberra Rex and (don't ask how) had fronted up with an old lady who maintained she had been abducted against her will.

Meanwhile, back at the ranch, P.T. had visited the Zoology Dept. and had astounded the judges by conjuring up an officially labelled bottle proclaiming the contents to be aardvark-first quality. He followed this by inducing a gorilla to abort itself so that he could produce, much to the judges horror, the afterbirth (charges will be laid later by the S.P.C.A.).

About this time, J.F. and M.B. were running rampant in the studios of 2CA. They induced all present to buy copies of the "Taragraph" (some feat this the staff hadn't been paid yet) and had seized a vital component from one of the computers used there. They had also plundered Boots Lansley's personal collection

cont. →

cont. SPELEO. SCAVENGERS 8

of recordings, to obtain a copy of "A pub with no beer" (on tape -the instructions sais on a portable record player, so cassette machine was placed on top of a hastily borrowed turntable for this rendition).

J.B. and D.S. were about then confronting a bewildered Vietnamese embassy in search of a relative of a member of the Saigon Government. They found one but, things were against us again, he could not go without the permission of the ambassador who had just gone out, it was not known where to. So, instead, they spent some considerable time finding a piece of concrete pipe over one foot in diameter and a length of railway line (over five feet long) which was not too heavy to be lifted.

Back to the Union where a thrill-seeking crowd watched rapt as Amanda Call (age four months) bared her chest (left female breast-15 points). Then there followed a sequence which the judge concerned, at any rate, found quite amusing. The instructions called for a "live whore" -15 points. We produced Amanda again-Call girl!

Time was running a bit short by then, but M.B. had an idea- a diseased sheep was required. He and P.S. dashed out to a nearby farm and ther found a very dead lamb, consisting of head, four legs and skin -nothing more. This was produced as a diseased sheep:

Judge: What's wrong with it?

M.B.: It's got an upset stomach.

They accepted this- 10 more points to the club's cause.

This was followed closely by a beer bottle hastily filled by three members. The judge felt it (warm), sniffed it and said: "Ugh! Take it away!"-more points scored. Then came what was deemed by most people present to be the most enjoyable exercise of the day -prone press ten people high on D.C.- K.P. missed out on this but he been promised a special demonstration that he can join in on on the next trip -one way to raise our membership.

This section of the contest closed with the presentation of J.C. as a speed freak. The judges took one look and accepted the submission. You must be well known Jim. We were all wondering how you managed to turn up earlier with a member of the Drug Squad.

The final section of the Hunt for this year involved the production of a true ethnic bush-type character to entertain the gathering at the Bush Dinner the following night. An eager group took off on a tremendous pub crawl around the neighboring towns in search of such a character who would come. Captain's Flat and Major's Creek both drew a blank, but we came upon two likely people in Araluen- Patrick and Basil. They said that they would come and that Patrick would even perform his famous egg

cont. →

trick for the amusement of the crowd. M.B. and K.P. took off the next day to get them, only to find that Basil's wife had telegraphed to say that she was arriving that afternoon and that they should meet her at the station. So we missed out on an entry in that section of the competition - worth 40 points. We found out later that only two out of twenty-six teams produced anyone at the dinner, and that the standard was considered so poor that that section of the competition was cancelled.

Special commendations should go to:

P.C. for coordinating our efforts,
M.B. for the help from 2CA,
J.C. for getting the barmaid and old lady and for freaking,
P.T. for the aardvark(!?) and Packhard's seat,
N.C. for his artificial insemination syringe,
D.G. for his pint of blood,
C.P. for the painting,
J.B. & D.S. for the train line and their pipe,
P.S., D.G. & J.F. for you know what in the beer bottle,
and especially to A.C. for the strip and mis(s)use of her name,
and of course to K.P. for his undying optimism and drive which kept us all going when we were all ready to give up.

Result: We came second by 38 points.

Now, next year.....

John Furlonger

THE GREAT ANZAC DAY BBQ FOR RETIRED (AND ALSO OTHER) CAVERS.

from April/June 1974

25 April 1974

This was probably the largest gathering of cavers seen in Canberra for many years with literally dozens of people from CSS, NUCC, HCG, BMR as well many others.

The CSS 'at home' BBQ was in constant use for about seven hours cooking everything from large rumps (steak type) to canned sausages.

Perhaps the highlight of the afternoon was provided by Andy Spate and Neil Anderson with their epic bridge to bridge canoe trip down the "flooded" Cotter River. For the benefit of the many spectators lining the bank, they thoughtfully sank the canoe right in front of them. This stunt was much appreciated by the crowd.

During the afternoon a number of visits were made to Cotter Cave. Each party was carefully checked before going under to ensure they had the required independent source of light per 3 or 4 people

Numbers dwindled throughout the afternoon so that by dusk, only the hardy NUCC people and the Andersons (who were waiting for us to finish using the BBQ so they could take it home) remained.

The event was a great success and the general feeling was that it should be made an annual happening. Next time it is hoped a few more NUCC members will turn up..

SPELEOSPORTS :

from Speleo. 1983 Annual

SPELEOSPORTS

Come one, come all, to Speleosports!!!!

Speleo.....?!

Are you looking for a challenge?

Do you want more from your caving?

You need Speleosports, guaranteed to put the zing back into your sport!!!!

But WHAT IS this Speleosports????

The recipe is:

- 1 Weekend in September
- 25 Teams of fun-loving, thrill seeking cavers and as many cave-type obstacles you can imagine.

Still interested??? READ ON!!!

For a number of years, a weekend of fun and games has been organised at Macquarie University in Sydney. Teams come from far and wide to participate in this masochistic event. The course is best described as ... interesting, but the most fun is had by the spectators following the current team around the course.

In 1983 the course was as follows;

1. Over a climbing net
2. Along a vaulting horse
3. Crawl through a road culvert - 24 i.d.
4. Along a simulated ledge, very difficult as no sense of balance after the pipe.
5. Ladder up the climbing wall on the gym
6. Abseil down same
7. Through duck-under
8. Crawl through a pipe 30' i.d.
9. Swim through the slop trough - aptly named, complete submersion
(Imagine a trench 12' by 2' and 1' deep, filled with water and stirred well!!!)
10. Enter the creek under roadway - 6' i.d.
11. Crawl up feeder pipe inside of creek pipe and chimney out of roadside grate
12. Down a second grate to commence the Infinite Crawl
As anyone who has survived the experience will tell you, a better name could not possibly be found.
It is a veeeerrry tight 18" i.d. pipe, approx. 120' in length and your crawl is assisted by a running hose placed in the pipe.
The one unforeseen problem is this; if you are behind someone fairly large they block the water flow like a cork and you gradually get into deeper and deeper trouble.

cont. →

cont. SPELEOSPORTS 2

13. The Crawl exits into the Aven (inspection shaft) which leads back to the creek pipe. For the spectators above the grunts and groans emanating from the pipe provide much entertainment.
14. Wade down the creek pipe and clamber up the bank (particularly smelly this year)
15. Wander along a nature path until the straws. Crawl down, under and up.
16. Swing across the flowstone on ropes being careful not to fall.
17. Walk (by now) back towards the first creek entrance and prepare for the flowstone. Remove shoes and socks and attempt to walk up soapy wet plastic sheet without falling over or touching the flowstone with any part of your very filthy body.
18. Stagger back to the finish (uphill).

During all these adventures the team is required to transport a raw egg, a piece of Caramello chocolate and a caving ladder. The egg is checked between 11 and 12 and is usually carried in a padded tin. In 1982, our first year, we wrapped the egg in a spare pair of socks and placed it between the net and shell of a helmet - improvisation at its limits.

In 1983 our performance was better than '82 and we attracted the least penalty points of all the teams. Points were awarded for unsafe practices and leaving your ladder behind (guilty, at the top of the wall with no means of recovery). Overall we came eighth; the winning team 7 minutes in front.

After all the strenuous efforts the presentation and barbeque. Memories of the '82 BBQ are of a tent which needed more and more support as the night wore on, and of a fellow, who in mid sentence, crossed his legs and fell over (thrills and spills !?!).

1984???

We Shall Invade And Conquer!!!!!!!

I have had two doses of this strange tonic and am ready for a third.

If you're still interested remember this,

AFTER SPELEOSPORTS ANY CAVE IS EASY!!!!!!

ALLAN CALDWELL

EDITORIALS:

CARE FOR CAVES 8

Editorial.

from Speleo. Aug 1972

It has come to notice of the members of this club that the littering and defacing of caves has increased considerably over the past year. This has been observed particularly at Wyanbene cave, which has been visited regularly over this period for surveying being carried out. Even between trips an increase in the amount of litter especially carbide dumpings, chocolate wrappings and discarded batteries, has become noticeable. Fungus growths are much more common originating in food which has been dropped. One example is a baked beans tin with the remains of a meal and some paper stuffed inside, which was blatantly left sitting out in the open, in the area between the stream passage and the wet crawl, and in which fungus had begun to grow. Signatures are also starting to appear.

Deformation of cave formation is becoming an increasingly popular pastime of vandalous tourists. The helectite formations in Wyanbene are becoming broken and marked, not to mention the ruination of the once enchanting crystal grotto of Punchbowl cave at Wee Jasper.

Littering near the cave entrance is another offence which has become worse over the past year (Don't worry about the change in type size), one would think people would care more about these areas, but they obviously don't.

It is to hoped that Speleos have had nothing to do with the above desecration, and that something can be done to prevent it getting any worse in the future.

BBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBB

ANGRY & BETRAYED :

from Speleo. Dec 1978

EDITORIAL

Recently the club received a letter from the National Parks and Wildlife Service, Yarrangobilly (as did other clubs), informing us that NUCC could no longer go caving at Yarrangobilly or Cooleman Plains. The stated reason for the ban, was that due to manpower shortages the Service could not properly supervise caving at either of the two areas. It also stated that the situation would not be reviewed until February 1981, with no assurance of access at that time either.

I personally feel angry and betrayed by the decision. Over the years cavers have been encouraged to work with the system, with the intended aim of better protecting our caves. We have had to suffer a laborious bureaucratic system, and have put many hours into documenting caves, and in gating caves, all in the belief that it is in the interests of cave preservation.

One cannot feel anything else but betrayal when the very gates we so painstakingly helped to put in place, are now used to prevent us from going caving. The belief in the speleological community that cavers are capable of self-regulation, appears to have fallen on deaf ears in the service. No-one better knows our caves than cavers. In fact in the past the NPWS has shown an abysmal lack of knowledge of anything speleological.

For too long we have simply gone along with the service, supplying information and manhours, and in return, each year suffering more and more loathsome bureaucracy and control. I for one, am fed up. The time for co-operation and compliance is over. If I wish to go caving at Cooleman or Yagby, I will do so, and challenge the Service to stop me.

Gordon Taylor

Note: This is the personal view of the editor, Gordon Taylor. It does not represent the official view of the National University Caving Club, nor any of its members.

#

from Speleo. Feb 1971

"Birthday Trip Report"

There was an old caver named Noel,
Spent his birthday down in a hole. .
'twas then he was thirty,
And he was all dirty,
.....what a silly old bugger!

Phil.

There was a young caver called Phil,
Who thought Noel had gone over the hill,
But when Noel came back,
He had Phil in his pack,
Which proved that Phil was a dill.*

*What a silly old bugger.-Phil.

SEAL SIGNATURE? 8

from Speleo. Sept 1966

EDITORIAL

Preserving Our National Heritage.

We have had this sentiment, in various forms, thrown at us for so long we are immune to it. I cannot think of a more offputting title for all article.

The subject rears its unwelcome head because of a storm about Punchbowl Cave. This is a national issue, but is a personal one to NUCC-ites, many of whom cut their caving teeth on this cave. A proposal to seal off the Signature entrance sparked off violent controversy. Two main reasons put forward for the action were: i) to protect the formation; ii) to protect the bats.

Counterarguments that both were non-existent in Punchbowl Cave were thrown up. An ugly rumour has reached our ears that if it wasn't true before it certainly is now. We have good reason to believe that the cave has been completely stripped.

People concerned about the fate of Punchbowl have been asking 'Will other caves go the same way?' It is the wrong question. Other caves - ultimately all caves will be completely destroyed unless drastic action, in the form of legislation or private enterprise on a vast scale, is taken, and in the near future.

The important question is: does it matter? Does it matter whether our grandchildren are denied the chance to get bruised, cold, wet and exhausted, to risk injury or panic in an alien world, depending on the frail assistance of a flickering carbide lamp or dim torch? Thousands of people have never been caving and do not seem to be neurotic, paranoid, depressed or schizophrenic because of it. Alternately, can we talk of the inviolability of nature in a world that is so unnatural as to defy death, a world where life itself can be created out of sterility? What are we saying if we say 'It must be preserved'?

CLOSE CHURCH CAVE ? :

EDITORIAL from Speleo. Nov 1972

Well, Wee Jasper is in the news again. Not about accidents, or rescues, or scouts this time, but about a fungus - Histoplasma capsulatum, to be precise.

Some weeks ago, several cavers became ill after visiting Church Cave. It was later learned that the illness was Histoplasmosis, a ⁿfungal disease of the lungs.

In the numerous newspaper articles that followed, perhaps the most striking was one on the front page of the Canberra Times 21:10:72 with the headlines "Closure of Bat Cave Proposed". In the article that followed, the President of the Goodradigbee Shire Council said that if the cave proved to be a source of infection, the Council would be compelled to close it off, no other course of action could be considered.

While it is understandable that the Council is concerned about the bad publicity the area is receiving in the matter of this disease, with its possible effects on its tourist cave (Caley's), I think they should have a good look into the situation, before, in a moment of panic, they decide to fill it in.

Church cave is an important breeding cave of Miniopterus schreibersi, in fact it is one the few breeding caves for the bent-winged bat on the East coast. Thus its closure could have a devastating effect on the bat population. Alternative breeding sites may be found, but chances of finding an area where the necessary conditions are duplicated are indeed remote.

Surely the more sensible course of action would be to erect a fence (rather than a gate) around the entrance, together with a sign warning of the possible dangers. This should be sufficient to stop most people entering what is, well let's face it, not a very attractive cave (for cavers) anyway. There is no formation to speak of, it is not very extensive, is very hot and dusty and occasionally has foul air. In normal circumstances the cave should not be visited for much of the year anyway - during the bat breeding season (Nov.-Mar.). Thus its closure would have little effect on cavers, it would however, have a disastrous effect on the bats. Thus in the interests of conservation this cave should not be filled in, and as a club we should do all we can to prevent this occurring.

...EDITOR.

CATERING FOR ALL :

Letter to the Editor.

from Speleo. April 1968

This was received at a recent Committee meetin which Sue Nicholls was unable to attend.

"I'm very sorry I couldn't be here in person tonight as I have a number of things to say. However I hope this will be sufficient to register my remarks, at least for the moment.

Firstly.

I must strongly object to the way most of the trips I have been on have been rushed. Naturally the trip leader knows the cave and the route fairly well. Familiarity breeds contempt, and consequently everyone else is hustled along at a rate of knots, which prevents anyone who wants to from having a good look at whatever's to be seen.

I don't want to cast aspersions on Peter Aitcheson's trip leading abilities for which I have the very highest regard, but the walk to the cave on the recent Coolman trip was exhausting, and it struck me as a bit idiotic having to sit down to catch my breath before even entering the cave, to say nothing of missing most of the magnificent scenery on the way. We had the whole weekend to play around with, and yet we got to that cave as if it was going to vanish forever at any moment.

I realise that the number of people on the trip was unusually high, but the fact remains that it could have been taken a little slower with no serious inconvenience to anyone.

Secondly.

If the numbers of people going on trips remains high, more bash hats should be provided by the club.

Thirdly.

More co-operation between the Bushwalkers, the Mountaineers, and the Caving Club would prove highly advantageous in the way of rainproof equipment, haversacks etc.

Finally

Having the honour of being the only female Committee Member, I should like to plead for a little consideration on the part of the trusty, stalwart male majority for the (presumably) gentler sex.... I don't mean to say that we are all poor miserable weaklings without any physical strength whatever, nor that a great deal of patience hasn't already been shown to us by the gallant men of the Club... but, with reference to the aforesaid hustle, even when one has seen the scenery, one doesn't like tearing along through brush and boulder after fleet warriors who take tall mountains at a single bound.

Perhaps I should add that on the whole there is nothing grievously wrong with the organisation of trips, and in general they are managed magnificently. But the points I have mentioned - the rushing of the enthusiastic leaders, the present shortage of helmets and wet weather equipment, and the regrettable lack of male energy in the female members - are all points worth mentioning."

Susan Nicholls.

1967

EDITORIAL from Speleo. Feb. 1967

The National University Caving Club is entering its fourth year. During the last three years the club has grown from a little cluster of people who like crawling around in the mud to an organization of considerable size. Each year about thirty 'tyros' are introduced to Our Favorite Sport, and many of them remain to become experienced cavers.

As the club increased in size, more organization and more equipment became necessary. We learnt about both by experience. The main innovation was the cave rescue system, discussed on page 3 of this Newsletter. We hope it will never be necessary to put the scheme into action, but the possibility is always there.

Over the past two years the club has been building up its equipment stock. It started from humble beginnings, by building a 20' rope ladder, which did heroic service before it was condemned. Then we moved on to wire ladders, and started talking in terms of 100 foot lengths. The committee is in the process of building another hundred feet of wire ladder which may, one day, see the muddy floor of some cave.

Whether the club continues to grow and flourish depends on the members. We have the example of the first three years before us. Let's better it!

* * * * *

CAVE TAGGING:

from Speleo. April/June 1974

WEE JASPER

27 April 1974.

Party - see below.

Another combined trip with CSS to continue the search for caves on 'Goodradigbee'.

Once again the party was split into two groups, and the search resumed. A number of small caves were found, some of which terminated in water, probably the result of recent heavy rains. One of these, Coral-water-grumble cave to be precise, contained some hidden and unidentified grumbling monster.

38 caves have now been found on this property, and it is likely more will be found before the search is finished. Until you try to cover every square metre of an area, you just don't realise how much limestone there really is.

John Brush.

Footnote: Caves tagged were

WJ 46-49 inclusive
57, 58,
73-79 inclusive
and 96, 97.

Earlier in the year WJ 50-56 inclusive & WJ 80-95 inclusive were also tagged. (Pub. editor).

Dear Sir,

Conservation Close At Home

On my first trip past the flowstone wall of Y58, the cave was white and clean, with tracks through the prettier parts of the cave narrow (about one boot wide) and well defined.

On the second trip into Rawlinson Chamber on Saturday September 13th, I was upset to notice that the tracks had in most places grown to over 8" wide and that much of the pure white flowstone was now a muddy brown. On the Sunday, the damage had grown to alarming proportions. If this rate continues, the cave is likely to end up as dirty as Dip 2 by the end of the year.

In view of the above, I would like to make the following suggestions:

- (i) Next trip, the cave should be cleaned up.
- (ii) Because of the damage they cause, tricounis should be banned in Y58.
- (iii) Narrow tracks should be made through the cave and people made to stay on them.
- (iv) If there is an alternative to a pretty route, use it, even while exploring.

Unless something is done to repair the damage, Y58 will get WUCC the reputation of being nothing better than a group of determined vandals with initiative.

Yours faithfully,

Michael G. Webb.

FURST IMPRESSHUNS OV WHYUNBEEN:

Huh?

from Speleo.
1985 Annual

Aye longe, longe tyme agoo, (lyke thee beaginning ov larst yeer), Tony Butt, Grant Anderson, Simon Brown, Margaret Alexander, Julie Gibbs anned Kay Barney cri whent two whyumbean. Itt woz thee furst tyme eye hadd ever bean to whyumbean. Wee sett of frum Lurton an Carran Hall quiet erly inn thee mourning, anned druv eye longe way two thee kaves; thru Captain's Flat, parst aye pett cementary anne lotz ov gum trease. It took quiet aye longe tyme. Thene wee torn of thes rowd too goe downe aye durt trak markt '4-wheel drive vehicles only'. As their wher ownly for weels ohn bowth thee Golf anned thee Gemini wee corntinued.

Whee crost aye bigge reiver anned WOMBAT'S carr tryed two graide thee rowd aye bitte. Itte woz aye verry hott daye anned wee wher loockin forewerd too gheting inn thee nyce kool kave. Sumwun hadd toeld mie thaet their woz ownly sick inches ov worter inn thee kave, anned theye wer rite. Theye jussed didnt mension thate their woz ownly twelfe inches off kave wiff sick inches off worter inn sum partz. (Remedial English classes start on Monday. Please attend - Pub. editor)

LIBEL, BLASPHEMY - By N.U.C.C.?

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

from Speleo June 1978

Dear Sir,

In reference to your article on the Marble Arch trip contained in this edition, I feel I must rebuke considerable half truths and inuendos in this article concerning my driving ability. It should be pointed out that the said "Jag" has like all good sports cars, a low ground clearance. There is no doubt in my mind that this was the real reason for the superficial scratch occurring on my car. Any suggestion that it was a result of incompetent driving is to be categorically denied.

Whilst on the subject of driving, I feel mention should be made of one further incident on this trip. Whilst driving from Marble Arch, Mr. Hart went the wrong way and on his return to the correct track managed to become indisputably bogged. Surely this is incompetence at the highest order. He managed to do this in a mere puddle. As my car was ahead we had continued to Big Hole unaware of Mr. Hart's folly. After taking all the gear to the Hole, I became concerned at Mr. Hart's lateness and so walked down to the track only to meet John Briggs. This poor gentleman had been forced to walk from Marble Arch to Big Hole to get us. One wonders why the man who caused this whale catastrophe did not walk back himself. The cynical amongst us saw it as a ploy to monopolize the female company on the trip. Could this be true, Mr. Hart?

I hope in future that more constraint is exercised in future in the publishing of such blatantly libellous material.

Yours sincerely,

(RALLY CHAMP G.T.)

to the uninitiated GORDON TAYLOR.

The Cave Environment.

from Speleo. July 1970

The cave environment is usually thought of as being separated into a twilight zone near the entrance, a middle zone of complete darkness and variable temperature, and a zone of complete darkness and constant temperature in the deep interior. The twilight zone has the largest and most diverse fauna; the middle zone has several very common species which may commute to the surface. We are concerned with the deep interior, where the unique aspects of the cave environment and its obligate (troglobitic) fauna appear (8).

Green plants cannot live in permanent darkness. Thus, deep within caves, the troglobite must find other forms of food, and food is scarce. Leaves, twigs, and soil fall into, or are washed into, caves and, in general, constitute the food base of the troglobite. Near cave entrances there are troglloxenes such as pack rats and hibernating bats and insects, but these contribute little to the food base of species that dwell in the deep interior. In the main, troglobites live in caves of the temperate regions. In tropical caves and in a few caves in southern temperate regions, perennial colonies of bats or birds (swiftlets or the oilbird) are important sources of food for the abundant facultative species (troglophiles); there are few troglobitic species in these caves.

APATHY * the LAYMAN

EDITORIAL.

from Speleo. July 1973

The most fashionable, yet urgent public concern at the present must indeed be conservation. This is a very extensive topic, but for cavers one of the greatest areas of interest is mining of limestone areas, such as Bungonia Gorge, Mt. Etna, and Precipitous Bluff. All are magnificent natural features and should, in the best national interest, be preserved at all cost. But in these three cases "the powers that be" see industry as being far more important and are willing to agree to the industrialists' pleas.

Another major issue is the flooding of Lake Pedder. Whether or not it can still be saved is now doubtful. Such a tragedy should never be repeated!

The greatest problem is is how can the layman, who is concerned about conservation, be an effective force? He obviously has not the capital resources of industry, and that speaks for a lot. At present there is Bungonia Committee, a Lake Pedder Action Committee and so on, but how effective can such bodies be? The conservation cause must not only have the sympathy of the public but that of the government as well.

Closer to home, there are also areas of concern, perhaps not as important nationally as the above examples, but nevertheless important in the preservation of this club. At present a cloud of apathy has descended and this is only slightly the fault of new members, but largely the fault of the older ones. Some (most?) of the more experienced members, in their great (?) wisdom (?) have retired (some were never very active anyway!) to armchair caving with the result that trips are practically non-existent, due to apathy on the part of those trip leaders who have adequate time to organise such trips. The same fate seems to have befallen the editorial committee of this newsletter!

So now is the time to get off those fat backsides and start doing something.

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SAFETY SCENARIO :

Cave Rescue Systems*

from Spelea Feb 1967

In our club, though not many realise it, we have a cave rescue system. This system may not be very efficient at the moment, but I feel that it is a worthwhile part of the organization and some effort should be made to improve its standard for the good of the club and the safety of all members.

There is one good reason for a cave rescue system.

On November 18th 1964, a group of young folk set out for a caving trip. The caves were only one and a quarter hours out of town. Its official name is Yonggamugl Number 3 (commonly called Queen's Cave). The cave itself consists of several levels comprising rather a large system with the main chamber over 400 yards long. Two experienced members went into a squeeze about 200 yards from the entrance in a side passage. After pushing this squeeze for about sixty or seventy yards, they were forced to turn back. They had left the main party to carry on to the main chamber under a third experienced guide, with instructions to leave the equipment belonging to the aforesaid two at the entrance of the squeeze. The equipment consisted of two lights, one rope and a bag filled with food and extra clothing. When these two arrived at their starting point, they found no equipment waiting. Unable to continue their journey into the cave, they started back to the entrance. While in the squeeze one torch had been broken. The other was now fading fast so they were forced to sit and wait for the return of the rest of the party, who went out the other entrance! Lesson one, of course, was never to split a party in a cave. Lesson two lay in the equipment. Always carry your own equipment and never take off with anyone else's. All very easy to see with hindsight!

The time was now 5.30 p.m. on the Saturday night, both cavers were lightly clad as their extra clothing was in the bag. I shall now let one of the party describe the incident:

'I suppose that I should have taken notice of my desk calender for last weekend, which blandly warned 'Solitude at length grows tiresome'.

'We made a couple of attempts to get out on Saturday afternoon, but they were unsuccessful. Clambering over

* This article is presented with apologies to the author who may recognise it. - Ed.

cont. →

Cont. SAFETY SCENARIO :

Speleo. Feb '67

rocks in pitch darkness in not my idea of fun.

'At one stage we came upon a large hole in the floor. We could hear the sound of a river through it. It was at least 60 feet deep. I felt rather sick!

'If you are motionless for any length of time coldness comes very quickly. We had to get up and exercise to keep warm - running on the spot, slapping ourselves to restore circulation, jumping up and down ... any warmth we gained soon disappeared.

'Once, I believe, I slept for a continuous six-hour shift; and on awakening was practically frozen stiff.

'The whole incident had developed into a nightmare. At 6 a.m. on Sunday we made another attempt to get out. I felt sick, helpless and discouraged. It seemed we had all the time in the world.

'About midday we tried to find our way back to the floor of the cave but had no luck. So I curled up, shivering on a small ledge to sleep.

'That night we made a further attempt at reaching the exit - by following the bats out - but we came to a large cleft which we could not cross in the dark, so we left it till morning.

'About 11 a.m. on Monday we were back on the floor of the chamber. Bob had figured that we would be found by midday - Thank God we had a luminous watch! Then we started whistling and shouting.

'Suddenly a faint glimmer appeared in the roof of the Chamber - they were here! It didn't take us long to get to the search centre in the main chamber and down a couple of mugs of hot tea and a sandwich. Then we were off back home!'

(Excerpt from an article by Mr. K. Jackson in the Kundiawa News, November 1964.)

It must be called to mind that this was a large cave, several miles in extent over five different levels with two underground rivers in it. For this reason, and this alone, did the rescuers take so long to find the cavers. Actually the team had been searching since about 8 a.m. on Sunday morning as soon as they failed to check in at the police station. But for the rescue system, people might not have bothered to look till Monday morning.

N.U.C.C.'s Competitors

HEARD ACROSS THE STALAGMITES.

from Speleo. Aug 1967

SSS have been digging in B16 - B51 at Bungonia, in an attempt to connect it to the big B4 - B5 Extension. They dug into a deep rift which headed in the right direction, but it unfortunately closed down before it reached the estimated position of the Extension. They are now following a strong draft in B22.

CSS announce that six members are off to West Australia in September. They hope to get to the famous Easter Cave, and, on the way home, to look at some of the Nullabor.

MSS have passed the word around that the top entrance to the Grill Cave at Bungonia has temporarily been closed, owing to the developing collapse of the entrance area. Grill ~~can~~ still be entered through the sink below the blocked entrance.

NUCC members have found that the heavy rains at WJ a fortnight ago have flooded Dog Leg again - water was pouring out of the lowest entrance (WJ12) on 27 August, so that's probably the end of exploration beyond the water trap for a year or two. The cave was last open in 1964.

TCC appear to have found the surface entrance of the Mini Martin. The bottom of this shaft was found earlier this year, with a number of logs lying at the bottom of it. The depth at the bottom of the shaft has been estimated to be 400-500', and when connected to Exit Cave the depth becomes a new Australian depth record of 600-700'.

We have received a report on Carpentaria Cave at Chillagoe, written by a member of the Carpentaria Exploration Company. Chillagoe is about 70 miles west of Cairns in North Queensland, about 1400 miles from here. The cave is approximately 4000' long, with great possibilities for further extensions.

MSS is running a photographic competition. Any members interested in submitting entries should talk to John Tilley or Michael Webb.

ATTENTION: ~~from Speleo~~ from Speleo. Aug 1967

On Saturday the 22nd of May, 1965, U Thant called once again for confidence in the United Nations, South Melbourne held out Essendon in a tight finish, and John Bryant fell fifty feet in the Drum Cave and died.

John was not an extraordinary young man. He was eighteen, about the age of most fresher cavers in the N.U.C.C. After a hard day's caving he was tired, like most of us get. The first pitch in the Drum is 135', a little larger than most of us have tried, but not of extraordinary size. John had climbed about fifty feet when he slipped. How many of us have slipped on a ladder? The knot he had tied in his safety line gave way, but how many people in this club know that a bowline will not hold under stress in a nylon rope? His compatriots did not know where the car keys were, and so had to run to Bungonia village for help, about seven miles away, but how many drivers let people know where they put the car keys, and how many people pay

Cont. →

cont. How Many People Pay Attention When They are Told?:

cont. Speleo. Aug 1967

attention when they are told? No, nothing that afternoon was unusual, except that John Bryant became Australia's first death in an organised caving club.

We haven't learnt from this sad tale. Just three weeks ago, an N.U.C.C. party surfaced after setting a club record for the number of hours underground, with over half the party suffering from exposure. It is not to my credit that I was one of them. Fortunately, no serious accidents occurred on this trip. However, at the end of it, none of us were in a fit state to be underground. One should not even have been allowed to enter the cave, since he had had less sleep than usual the night before, and then no breakfast. Another hour underground and he could have died. As it was, in a quarter hour wait at the bottom of a ladder pitch, while wet to the armpits, he literally went to sleep on his feet while waiting for tackle to be hauled up. Luckily he was able to get into a dry sleeping bag and have a hot cup of tea before he became unconscious. One other was in little better state, and repeatedly fell asleep in the Land-Rover while we were looking for a dry place to stay. Two others had mild exposure, and only the trip leader did not seem to be suffering much from this complaint.

You see, the problem boils down to three factors : gear, knowledge and fitness. The first, as Equipment Officer, I can try to eliminate, but the other two are entirely in your hands. They can kill as easily as any T.V. villain, either swiftly as in the first example, or slowly and insidiously as in the second.

Skills can be learnt on Field Days, on actual trips, or even in the Union. But on the last Field Day, only a handful of the people who needed it most turned up. On trips or around town they can be learnt by asking, especially people who lead trips. Nobody has been killed for asking, but plenty have been killed for not doing so. Practice is also essential, so go on more trips, and when at home practice things like knot tying. You could even try chimneying in the back hall. Don't just follow blindly into a cave, but look around and especially behind you for guide features that can be used on the way out.

Fitness is an everyday affair. Don't laugh at Harold, he could save your life if you follow his fitness scheme. Play squash, walk to (the) Civic, instead of driving there, run around the oval, or the block at night. Take salt tablets and glucose tablets with you on long trips. Have a good night's sleep beforehand, and plenty of breakfast before you leave.

Or don't come caving with me!

D.H.MOORE.

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# CAVE SAFETY :

from Speleo. April 1970

Over the last few weeks safety in caves should have become very important to various members of the club, and to the club as a whole. There has been three accidents during the Easter trip and the Wyanbene trip on 12th April.

I shall outline these incidents for those who weren't there.

The first incident was in IAN'S HAT CAVE M-54 at Murrindal in the Buchan area. IAN'S HAT CAVE is a pot approximately 250 ft deep, involving a 30' and a 50' pitch to a large rock jammed in the fissure, then a 60' pitch to a ledge and a further 50' pitch. John Furlonger was on the ladder 30' below the ledge when a rock was dislodged about 90' above him. As he was being belayed we didn't lose him when the rock landed on his bash-hat. No-one seems to know how the rock was dislodged, but this incident does out the necessity of wearing a protective helmet, and making sure that it is in good condition and replacing it after heavy bashes.

The second incident over Easter had more of an effect on the whole party. It occurred in the MABEL CAVE EB-I at East Buchan. We had passed the first sump and were just coming back from the second sump. To reach the second sump an easy climb of no more than 10' is necessary. John Brush was attempting to climb to a large passage about 20' up the wall. About 15' up, one of his handholds gave way. He fell and twisted his ankle. This was enough to stop him from doing any more caving over the weekend. Apart from the fact that he could not do any more caving, the results of the accident were not serious. If they had been, getting him out of the cave would have been very difficult and very painful, even though the cave is not a very difficult one.

Perhaps the worst incident was the one at Wyanbene. Andersons Wall used to be a chimney climb (about 20') with a small hole at the top. The hole was between the roof and a few rocks wedged in the fissure. Two of these rocks are now on the floor of the passage and we are very fortunate that Barry Thomas is not there too. Barry had just climbed the ladder, without a belay, and was sitting on top of the pitch leaning against one of these rocks when it fell. Barry also fell but grabbed the ladder before he had gone 3'. Since then several of the older members of the club have commented that they thought that the rock wasn't too safe. Yet we (myself included) still used it as a handhold on the last lift over the ledge.

# SAFETY : 1987

from Speleo. Feb 1988

## Accident Report

This year has once again shown that proper training and commonsense does pay off as it has been near-accident free and the two accidents we did have occurred above ground.

(a) The first accident resulted in a bruised elbow as a result of an abseiling miscalculation. The party anchoring the abseiling rope at Devil's Punchbowl decided not to use the traditional anchor point (a star picket of unknown origin) but instead tied off to two sturdy trees further up the hill. This in itself was acceptable as you should never use anchor points that you feel uncertain about. The member abseiling had a proper harness, helmet and whaletail and even had someone else check that he was correctly attached to the rope. However he failed to take up all the slack in the rope (which was considerably more than he expected as the anchor point was further up the hill than usual), and stepping off the cliff fell about one and a half metres before all the slack was taken up. As everything was rigged correctly there was little risk of a serious accident, and the end result was that he swung into the rock face and bruised his elbow. This, however, is the type of accident that under different circumstances could be very dangerous and is also easily avoided, the point to remember being to always check everything out even in familiar surroundings.

(b) The second accident was simply one of those things that will happen no matter how careful you are. After exploring the 'hole in the road' at Yarrangobilly the party headed back to the car. Whilst walking back one of the party somehow kicked up some dirt which, as luck would have it, lodged in his eye. This can be quite painful and it took several washings with the eye cup (from the first aid kit) and a considerable quantity of water to dislodge. The point to remember here is that this could be quite uncomfortable if it happened several hours underground and there was insufficient water to wash it out properly. For those of you that feel the only liquid you need to take caving is a 'Popper' pack, just think what it would be like to wash your eye out in orange juice. There is another remedy, of course. Before the water was brought from the car to the patient (a distance of thirty metres), a young lady with the party suggested that if the patient could make his eye cry then the tears would wash the dirt away. She then pinched hard on the patient's left nostril with her finger nails. Tears did flow, and we're quite sure that the solution would have worked but, alas, copious quantities of water and an eye cup arrived and the patient was saved further agony.

In summing up, accidents can happen but given proper care, commonsense and training they should be minimal and help should always be at hand.

Marc Fauvet

# HISTORY OF JENOLAN CAVE :

The History of Caves: Jenolan Cave Area  
from Speleo. Feb. 1967

Although not the first cave system in N.S.W. to become known to white man, Jenolan Caves have become the main tourist caves in the State.

The first white man to visit Jenolan Caves was an escaped convict, McKeown, who used a small cave as a hideout for his bushranging activities, during 1841. Later, he built a rough hut on the bank of a watercourse, still known as McKeown's Creek.

A settler, James Whalan, discovered McKeown's camp when tracking stolen cattle and, aided by a policeman, captured the convict. Upon his return to Fish Creek township, Whalan told the settlers what he had seen: the Grand Arch, Devil's Coach House and Carlotta Arch, declaring that he had been to the end of the world.

In 1866, the area was made a reserve, and a caretaker, Jeremiah Wilson, appointed a year later. He built a small residence which was destroyed by fire in 1895. Work on the present Caves House commenced shortly after, local limestone being used as the building material.

That the caves were known to the aborigines is certain. An aboriginal skeleton was discovered embedded in the limestone floor of one cave. The area still bears its aboriginal name 'Jenolan', meaning a high cliff or mountain.

A recent discovery in the caves is the skeleton of an extinct species of Tasmanian wolf, which was found in Pleistocene earth deposits.

\* \* \* \* \*

## SAFETY SYSTEM :

The System.

from Speleo. Feb. 1967

Trip leaders shall obtain equipment from equipment officer and enter into the book the names of all persons on the trip; where they are going and when they shall return. This book is then left with a committee member who shall then be responsible for it. If the committee member is not contacted within a reasonable time of the proposed return, he shall a) ring the police local to the caving area and alert them

b) organise a group in Canberra and go straight to the caving area to institute a search. In the event of NUCC being short-handed, then CS3 shall also be called in, although I myself feel that this should be done anyway.

Remember one thing - this system is a proven one and as long as you use it you are safe. That may sound trite but it is also true.

\* \* \* \* \*

# RESCUE GROUP FORMED 8

from Speleo. Nov 1970

## CAVE RESCUE GROUP FORMED. "Courier," 19th. Nov.

A membership-drive meeting of the newly formed Cave - Cliff - Bush Rescue Team was held at the Chifley Primary School last night.

Mr. Rick Price, founder of the team, said it's aim was to assist the Civil Defence movement in times of emergency.

In addition he said, the group would deal with small emergencies, such as a lost bushwalker, that Civil Defence would not normally cover.

Mr. Price also started the Civil Defence movement in the Woden Valley.

Membership stands at 10. All these have had previous experience with such organisations as scouting bodies.

Mr. Price hopes to build the team into four sections of 11 members each, so that one section can be on stand by each weekend.

Males between the ages of 18 and 30 are eligible to join the movement.

"Physical reasons prevent us from taking people older than this for the rescue team," Mr Price explained.

However older men and girls could be trained as headquarters staff or to become members of the signals team. → *females can't be in movement? (pub. editor).*

Training for the team includes such operations as bush rescue, map and compass reading, cliff rescue, first aid, wireless training and headquarters procedure.

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## CAVES THREATENED BY MINING.....

The Colong scandal is not an original happening. Recall this earlier incident;

In a cavern, in a canyon,

Excavating for a mine,

Dwelt a miner, Forty-niner,

And his daughter, Clementine.

Percy Montrose. 19th. Century.

# EXPLORATION :

## NEW CAVING AREAS AROUND CANBERRA?

from Speleo.  
April 1969

There are several limestone deposits within 30 or 40 miles of Canberra which may prove to contain small caves. Up to date, caves, although not extensive are known at the following localities: White Rocks, S of Queanbeyan; London Bridge, S of Queanbeyan; Cotter, W of Canberra; Mt. Fairy, NE of Bungendore; Michelago, S of Canberra.

There are several other areas which have not been properly examined, if at all.

Limekiln Ck., junction with Shoalhaven River, referred to as Etrima in the Speleo Handbook. Reported to look cavernous by Clarke in his book "Southern Goldfields". Four small caves have been reported.

Warroo, South of Goodhope, see trip report. The crinoidal limestone in this area is reported to contain a fairly large cave and several sinkholes.

Primrose Valley, South of Bungendore, I have not examined this area yet but hope to do so in the near future. Reported to be several limestone deposits in the lower Silurian sediments of the area.

Area East of Bredbo contains a large number of limestone deposits in lower Silurian sediments. One of these is about a mile long by  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile wide and is near to a track and straddles a creek. This area will also be investigated shortly.

There are two large deposits of the Micalong Limestone, South of Wee Jasper, one is near the road and has been metamorphosed to marble by the large intrusion of porphyry SW of Wee Jasper. It is about  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a square mile in extent and larger than the other deposit which is about 4 miles South, at the junction of Limestone Ck, and the Goodradigbee River.

Many caves have been reported on the East side of the Goodradigbee both North and South of Wee Jasper but have not been examined. (Unfriendly farmers)? ?

There are at least five limestone deposits South of Captain's Flat. Although most of the above areas are not likely to contain caves they are worth looking at just to satisfy one's curiosity at least.

Kenneth Palmer

# LAST LICKS :

LAST LICKS. from Speleo. Aug 1972

In Mexico south to Argentina the common vampire makes it economically impractical to raise cattle or horses over large areas. This is due to the fact that the bat carries the deadliest of infectious diseases... Rabies. Efforts to destroy the bats by such crude methods as dynamiting or using flame throwers have proved too costly, inefficient, and disastrous for neighbouring populations of beneficial, insect-eating bats.

Now, after years of dangerous field work, US investigators have developed new techniques that promise to vanquish the vampire. "With ghoulish justice, the little beast that lives by blood will be made to die by it".

Two quirks of nature promise to be his undoing. One is the fact that bats, like rats, are more sensitive than most mammals to the effects of anti-coagulants. The most effective anticoagulant known, warfarin, is used in calculated overdoses as a rat poison, however a team of Mexican and US. workers in 1968 tried to kill bats using diphenadione. The main problem being how to get the stuff into the vampires.

One way would be to inject the anticoagulant into the stomachs of cattle, from which it would pass into their bloodstreams. The dose would not be enough to kill the larger animals, but any vampires would suck enough to kill it.

The second quirk of nature suggested another method. Like cats, vampires lick themselves to clean themselves, and will also clean each other when necessary. One researcher thus reasoned that it would be effective to catch a few bats, daub them with diphenadione, then release them to return home and bleed to death - as well as poisoning their grooming partners.

To catch the vampires, a nylon mist net was suspended above the fence of a cattle corral. The net is invisible to the bats, and is also transparent to their sonar system. When a bat is caught it is carefully removed from the net and about half a teaspoonful of petroleum jelly containing 50mg. of diphenadione is rubbed on its back.

Shocked, the bat returns to its cave, hollow tree or old building and licks as much of the goo off his back as he can. In the process he poisons himself fatally. Other vampires come to help groom him and also become poisoned. On average, a single smeared bat has been found to cause the death of 20-30 other bats.

Successful tests have been carried out in Mexico and Brazil, and the methods are now to be introduced to Bolivia.

The benefits are expected to be widespread: a marked decrease in both human and animal rabies and other infectious diseases carried by the bats; an increase in the weight of beef cattle, and a comparable increase in milk production. There is no chance of the bat becoming extinct, according to experts it will return to the jungle and live as it did before the coming of the Spanish, sucking wild animals instead of cattle and horses.

..... Adapted from "TIME", July 24th 1972. p.54-55.

There was movement at the Uni, for the word had passed around,  
That a trip to Wyanbene was under way.  
It was to that place of torment that a bunch of us were bound,  
To seek the slosh and mud in which we play.  
All one tried and noted cavers from their homes both near and far  
Had gathered to the carpark in the frost,  
For the cavers love hard caving where the cold wet waters are,  
And the leaders do their best to get us lost.

There was Noel who grew his beard when the days of RUCC were young,  
The old man with his hair as red as amber,  
But few could cave beside him when his blood did fairly run,  
He would squeeze and climb to wherever men could clamber.  
And Brushy of Red Hill is always there to lend his hand,  
Or hair (for rope) in things got tight,  
And never a hole would stop him whilever his hair would hold,  
He learnt to cave by crawling through a pipe.

And one was there a short one, in a small and dinty car,  
He was hairy, like a wombat- oversized,  
With a touch of commonsense, to find a cave he'd travel far,  
And such are caving clubs most prized.  
He was hard and tough and wiry- just the sort that wont say die,  
There was alcohol-causing lightness of his tread  
And he bore the badge of a hangover in his dull and glassy eyes  
And the sag and general holding of his head,  
But his light so dim and weedy, one would doubt its power to stay,  
And the old man said, "That light will never do,  
For a long and wet cave lad, you'd better stay away,  
Or get another light which will beam true."  
So he scraped and scratched and scrounged till at last he found  
a spare;

"I think you'd better let me now," he said,  
"I warrant I'll be with you and I'll make you stare  
Once we reach the end I bet you I'll be ahead.

So they went, they found the cave, halfway up the limestone hill,  
And although it was a grotty looking hole  
The old man gave his orders- "everyone you must not spill,  
Or damage anything beneath this knoll,  
And Brushy- you must lead one mob and try to keep them all in sight,  
Cave boldly lads and never fear the spills,  
For never yet was caver that could pass the wet stretch right  
And come out of there without their body chilled."

So Brushy caved to lead them, he was climbing right in front,  
Where the best and boldest cavers take their place  
And he came upon a waterhole- to the ladder pitch and space,  
They halted for a moment while he hung the "climbing sash,"  
Then he saw the well loved wet stretch just in view.

And he charged right down the ladder pitch and to the crawl he came  
And off it to the long cold stretch he flew.  
Then fast the freshers followed where the walls both low and black  
Resounded to the splashing of their tread,  
And the curses woke the echos and they fiercely echoed back  
From walls and roofs just inches from their heads.  
And onward ever onward the the wild man pushed that bloody cave,  
Where so sharp rocks and squeezes coincide,  
Far back the old man muttered "we may bid that mob good day,  
And save ourselves to push this caverns size.

## con't Wet Wyanbene Poem

When they reached the place called "Diarrhoea pit" even Drush's  
face held fear,  
It might well make the boldest hold their breath,  
The thick brown mud looked silky and the water crystal clear,  
To fall in there was a fate much worse than death.  
Then the one with hair from face to ....., thought he'd better  
go ahead,

And onto his muddy back he flung his gear  
And he tried to climb above that wet and muddy bed  
While the others stood and watched in very fear.  
He slipped at once and then again but twice he held his feet,  
He cleared a rocky outcrop by his side  
And the one with hair from face to ..... never even wet his seat  
Before upon a wet rock he did slide,  
"Oh no," he screamed, "No not in there," but his cries were all in  
vain,

Into that wet and muddy stuff he spilled,  
And the sounds which issued from his throat weren't those of  
dreadful pain,  
For he found to throw about this stuff held thrills.

He was wet and brown and slimy as he climbed the further front  
And the freshers on the stones still standing mute  
Saw him ply his body fiercely, he made the top- 'twas quite a  
stunt,

Then they bogged across the clearing in full pursuit.  
And they lost him for a moment, where a muddy pitch did drop,  
In the dark, but a final glimpse revealed in a dim and vacant  
cavern the hairy one waited still,  
With his sodden pack slung just beneath his heels.

And the mob reached the place of loose rock, the hole above gaped  
wide,

He ascended like a rat up a drainpipe,  
At the top he waited peacefully, then he turned to another side  
And finally reached the end to prove what he was right.  
But his scrounged and strapped up light, its beam began to fail,  
He was mud from head to tail from the "pit",  
But his pluck was still undaunted when "whoops" into the lake he  
sailed,

For once again upon wet rocks did slip.

And in the depths of Wyanbene his ghost its voice does rise,  
His worn and muddy trog suit hangs on high,  
Where the water's clear as crystal and the carbides fairly blaze,  
In the dark and humid air where voices cry.  
And back around the Uni. the cavers drink and sway,  
To the stereo and the influence of the grog,  
The man with the hair from face to ..... is a speleo word today,  
And the cavers tell the story of his trog.

With apologies to . . . A. B. Paterson via E. V. Collins.

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# POETRY:

from 1985 Annual

## THOUGHTS OF A LATE NIGHT CAVER(\*) - ON WAKING

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That thing that leans against the wall -  
it has to be my overall.  
That lump's a helmet, I surmise.  
By George, my shirt has fossilized.

I see enough through reddened rims  
to force my weak and feeble limbs  
to stagger to the bedroom chair  
while finding muscles that weren't there.

My knees are done in sundry hues  
of reds and browns and blacks and blues.  
Mud came off in the bath last night  
and blocked the drain up nice and tight.

But lived I did. This room's not hell.  
(Today is ... Monday. Work ... Oh, well ....)  
I have survived. (I think I do)  
and had a great time trying to.

(\*) CAVER : speleologist nuccus  
=====

APPEARANCE : Uniform dull brown colour. Large green, blue,  
black, or white head.

LOCALITIES : Can be found in small, wet, dark habitats  
(eg. a mini in a carwash,  
inside a can of soup,  
in the 7 dwarve's submarine )  
- usually under SE Australia.

HABITS : Weird.

A POME GLEANED FROM THE LITERATURE BY FRANK BERGERSEN.

THE CAVERN From Speleo. Dec 1973

by Charles Tomlinson.

Obliterate  
mythology as you unwind  
this mountain interior  
into the negative-dark mind,  
as there  
thergypsum's snow  
the limestone stair  
and boneyard landscape grow  
onto the identity of flesh.

Pulse of the water-drop,  
veils and scales, fins  
and flakes of the forming  
leprous rock,  
how should these  
inhuman, turn  
human with such chill affinities.

Hard to the hand,  
these mosses not of moss,  
but nostrils, pits  
of eyes, faces  
in flight and prints  
of feet where no feet ever were,  
elude the mind's  
hollow that would contain  
this canyon within a mountain.

Not far  
enough from the familiar,  
press  
in under a deeper dark until  
the curtained sex  
the arch the streaming buttress  
have become  
the self's unnameable and shaping home.

# HELL OF A WAY TO DIE :

## Adventures of A Tyro from Speleo. June '65

To be accompanied by a harp(ie).

- 1) One day we got a tyro and he wanted to go below, (Repeat twice)  
But he ain't gonna cave no more.

CHORUS: Gory, gory, what a helluva way to die,  
Gory, gory, what a helluva way to die,  
Gory, gory, what a helluva way to die,  
No, he ain't gonna cave no more.

- 2) We dropped him down the Glory Hole, and watched him hit the ground,  
(Repeat twice)  
No, he ain't gonna cave no more.
- 3) We got him up a thousand feet and then the ladder broke,  
(Repeat twice)  
No, he ain't gonna cave no more.
- 4) He smashed himself to jelly on the stalagmites below, (Repeat twice)  
No, he ain't gonna cave no more.
- 5) We scraped him off the floor like a blob of raspberry jam,  
(Repeat twice)  
No, he ain't gonna cave no more.
- 6) We immersed him in the thermal pool at ninety-five below,  
(Repeat twice)  
No, he ain't gonna cave no more.
- 7) We packed him in his rucksack, and we sent him home to mum,  
(Repeat twice)  
No, he ain't gonna cave no more.
- 8) We took him out to Punchbowl, and it made a mighty tomb,  
(Repeat twice)  
So, he'll be there evermore.
- 9) Glory, glory, what a mighty way to lie, (Repeat twice)  
Cos he'll be there evermore,  
So, he don't need to cave no more,  
No, he don't need to cave no more.

## CAVE FAUNA from Speleo. Sept 1966

You have heard of bats-in-belfries; we are bats in caves,  
Seeking a foretaste of the exciting life in graves,  
We are only really happy when we're cold and sore and damp,  
As through the mud and water we slither, slide and tramp;  
Through the squeezes rocky, Fearless Leader out in front,  
We wriggle, writhe and wrench, with pant and groan and grunt.  
Onward ever downward, never stopping till we've found  
A dead end or a river and we have to turn around.  
Onward ever upward, Fearless Leader shows the track  
And the rope that I am carrying is sculpting out my back.  
At last we reach the exit which is where we entered in  
This paradise of devils that we wet out to win.  
The sky is blue, the sun is warm, birds sing, but best of all  
Is that I can stand up straight. I no longer have to crawl.

\* \* \* \* \*

# WYANBENE SAGA :

WYANBENE SAGA from Speleo. April '70

Any resemblance to real people, living or dead, in the following account is purely coincidental.

I pity those who have never seen  
The glorious depths of Wyanbene.  
These poor ones can never know

What it is that makes people go  
Again and again into the waters,  
As often as not to act as porters.

'Twas on Apriltwelfth, a holy Sunday,  
That NUCC went there or so they say.  
They carried wierd and wondrous things  
To investigate the underground springs,  
And chemicals and many a balloon,  
The roof of Gunbarrel with which to festoon.

They arrived to find a party of scouts  
Mapping carefully the ins and outs  
Of the first (the tourist) quarter  
Trying to keep out of the water.  
Through this mob waded the NUCC party,  
Somehow managing to keep hale and hearty.

Before this tale doth go much further,  
A description of the group is worth a  
Few lines so that you may realise  
The problems before them and surmise  
As to whether such an assemblage  
Any scientific work could stage.

Morris Whistle was the leader  
Looking around as he freed a  
Leg from an inquisitive stalagnite  
Wandered along with a pack on his right  
And one on his left shoulder - a length  
Indicating his leadership and strength.

No L. Summons was next in charge,  
Staggering not beneath a large  
Bundle containing bottles green and bold  
Which were labelled "Sparkling Rhinegolde".  
Alas, no more, you alcohol venerator,  
For these were to be their hydrogen generators.

Next came Equo with his Qantas air bag,  
Still carrying its 'Destination Sydney' tag.  
Some would have it he was hairy;  
Others knew him only as merry.  
He was there with photographics  
To record for others their bawdy antics.

cont. →

Grog Ansen was his right hand man,  
Resplendent in his all-white tan,  
Verses sung though only half,  
Were sure to raise from Grog a laugh.  
He was to use himself as rule,  
Later to compare with Kambah Pool.

Filly Goatherd was the main diver,  
He looked in need of a liquid reviver,  
Carting along the best wet suit,  
Cursing the water in his boot.  
He observed the cave with consternation,  
Muttering: "Whatever happened to conservation?"

Along the line to Thomas Barry,  
When behind he would not tarry,  
Lest in the dark he be left alone,  
Knowing not which way was home.  
He was headed for Anderson's wall,  
There to induce a rock to fall.

Jon Undergrowth was also there,  
With his tremendous mane of hair.  
His orange trog suit was full of holes  
And for what was he carrying those funny poles?  
He was headed for the famous Gunbarrel,  
There some yards of cotton to unravel.

James Curtsy was last but not least,  
He was carrying a tasty feast,  
For though he was last of the group,  
He had in his bag the unmade soup.  
He was headed for Frustration Lake  
Use of his expensive gear there to make.

Following along a much-travelled path,  
These eight romped on past Cleopatra's bath,  
Thence past the chamber known as Helictite  
Where one member paused to fix his light;  
Until at last they came to that well-known place  
Where each must crawl upon his face.

Along the dank and humid course  
They crept, driven by an unknown force  
To rend their clothes and bruise their knees  
As they did in Aitcheson's Squeeze,  
Swearing and cursing at those clumsy soft packs  
Which some forgot to remove from their backs.

Then 'tis said the group did split  
Into two groups, each to do their bit:  
One to bathe in Frustration Lake  
And the other with balloons to take

cont. WYANBENE  
SAGA:

To Gunbarrel, there to shed some light  
On the question of that aven's height.

To Gunbarrel went the following four:  
No L., EquO, Grog and Jon - no more.  
They played with balloons and bits of string  
But found out not a single thing  
Except that it is two hundred feet high.  
At least all that two balloons would sky.

Although they did not accomplish much,  
The problem fascinated them such  
That all there vowed to return again  
With a modified source of hydrogen.  
Four hours spent in that foggy chamber,  
They headed for the lake as one member.

Back at the lake in betweentime  
The diving and napping in the meantime  
Had begun - Morris and Filly were taking their dip  
- Very keen they needed no whip.  
Rolling off the airbeds into the murk,  
The cold themselves up did perk.

They were followed in by Tom and Curtsy  
Who was heard to say: "This water hurtsee  
Head - but that is enough,  
I can take it, I am tough".  
Morris changed out of his wet suit  
To greet the others in muddy trog suit.

They arrived to hear the fearsome story  
Of how Thomas Barry nearly came to gory  
End while climbing up Anderson's Wall  
Where an x ton rock decided to fall.  
After an incident as this was (Hairy)  
All there pledged to be more wary.

'Twas decided then it must be lunch-time  
Not having eaten since seven o'clock munch-time.  
Tom then managed to fool a  
Cold Morris into lending his ruler  
To be placed into the murky gloop,  
Which hopeful stirring might turn into soup.

Sadly, though, the ruler was plastic  
And although these things are quite elastic,  
When placed in hot water tend  
Around and up themselves to bend.  
When Morris got the poor thing back  
Straightness was its only lack.

cont. →

No L. then espied the water  
And, thinking twice of wife and daughter,

## cont. WYANBENE SAGA :

Seized a lilo in his hand  
Blew therein until expand  
It would no more. Quoth he: "Now the fun,  
I will show how diving's done".

He carefully lined the lilo up  
And putting down his scupy cup,  
He lept and landed in the water,  
Just where that fat old lilo oughter  
Have been—  
But 'twas nowhere to be seen.

As he came up to the surface,  
The others rolled around with mirth as  
His voice with chagrin was loaded:  
"The \_\_\_\_\_ thing has exploded".  
The old lilo had split its sides  
And lost most of its guts besides.

Then 'twas time to head for home,  
But going out some did roan  
Around the bottom of Rockfall Chamber  
Looking for a sand-bottomed chamber.  
By searching carefully around and around  
The entrance thereto was found.

There followed a quick exploration  
With all there going in anticipation  
Of new and wondrous treats  
Following up their earlier feats:  
The chamber though was not very large,  
Being not much larger than a double garage.

They headed then for the entrance light  
But when they got there 'twas already night.  
Having thus spent their day in fun,  
All said: "I'll be back" as one  
—"We will be back now we have seen  
The glorious depths of Wyanbene.

Some poor people can never know  
What it is that makes some go  
Again and again into the waters  
Leaving their warm and dry home quarters.  
I pity those who have never seen  
The glorious depths of Wyanbene.

JOHN FURLONGER.

Speleomonk entering Wyanbene: "Is this just the begining of another  
dirty habit?"

# ARTICLES WANTED DESPERATELY:

The innovation of some Publication Officers has reached new heights as they try to fill their page Quota. Are cavers' illiterate or is this just a successful pretence to escape writing Trip Reports - (Pub. editor).

from Spelea. May 1970

THIS

IS

YOUR

PAGE.

IMAGINE

HOW

ARTICLE

GOOD

YOUR

WOULD

LOOK

FILLING

UP

AND

THIS

THEN

EMPTY(?)

WRITE

SPACE.

IT

AND

PHIL

SEND

IT

SHEPHE'D

TO

57

"How about writing an article for Speleog.?"

"You must be joking! I'm a write-off at anything more original than lecture notes."

"No, seriously, you must be able to write something. Anything. Please?"

You know the sort of rot you go on with. That gremlin mind says "Rubbish him to death, and then profess ignorance." Maybe you can even convince yourself that you can't write.

But the thought, evil thing, sticks in your mind, and sooner or later you start thinking about a topic, just to pass the time away. After all, you've been caving solidly now for three years. There must be something you can write on.

I know. "My first trip". The ideal thing! But where did that idea come from? The last Speleograffiti? Or the one before? Perhaps the one before that? Horrors, maybe all three? Besides which, it only retells the fumbling of a scared fool who swore he'd never go caving again. (How many years caving did you say you'd done?) Cave Safety! Just what we need! The mind leaps into action again. You, the safest bloke in the Club. When was the last time you put three ropes through a karabiner? Last week? When did you last go into a cave so tired you could barely stand? Same time; but it really was a tremendous effort the night before, and you only drove the last thirty miles back home without remembering a single thing. The trip before we nearly ran out of light. Three carbides out of four fouled up, and no candles or matches. And prickers? Well, I mean to say, they do cost two cents each! Perhaps I could title the article "Procedures to be carried out before Cave Rescue" and sign it "A recent sufferer from Rigor Mortis". How about "A Short History of the Wee Jasper Caves"? But where would you get all that information, and when would you read it all? That may be okay for Geology essays, but really, for that miserable newsheet? Hardly..

In desperation you turn to that last small straw, the cave you know and love best. "My favourite Cave" you see emblazoned for posterity above two pages (well, would you believe half a page?) of turgid rubbish on Dog Leg, or Colong, or Signature.

Perhaps Mike will forget about me. I didn't say I'd do one. Anyway, I've got too many essays now. And I promised to go out with Margaret on Friday. And I can't miss going caving next weekend. You never know, I may do something exciting then. I could write a superb piece, a veritable literary masterpiece after that.

"Hey Joe! Do you want a game of table-tennis now? Did you hear about Fred at the turn last weekend? He was so paralytic he had to be carried out the front door....."

DAVID MOORE.

HIS

PAGE

HAS

BEEN

IMPREGNATED

WITH

A

CONCENTRATED

MIXTURE

PREPARED

FROM

FULL CREAM MILK  
EXTRACTS OF MALTED BARLEY  
OTHER CEREALS  
SUGAR  
COCOA  
VITAMINS A,A? B,D,  
THIAMINE  
IRON  
RUM

IT WILL  
SUPPLY

YOU

WITH

ENOUGH

ENERGY

TO

CAVE

FOR

MORE

THAN

20 HOURS.

JUST

TEAR

OUT

THIS

PAGE

AND

DISSOLVE

IT

IN

1 PINT

OF

COLD

WATER.

ADD

FULL CREAM MILK  
EXTRACTS OF MALTED BARLEY  
OTHER CEREALS  
SUGAR  
COCOA  
VITAMINS A,D,B.  
THIAMINE  
IRON  
RUM

POUR OFF THE FLUID AND DRINK, SUCK, CHEW  
AND SPIT OUT PIPS.

HUNGRY? :

from Speleo July 1970.

MAGIC WORD:

from Speleo. Feb 1988

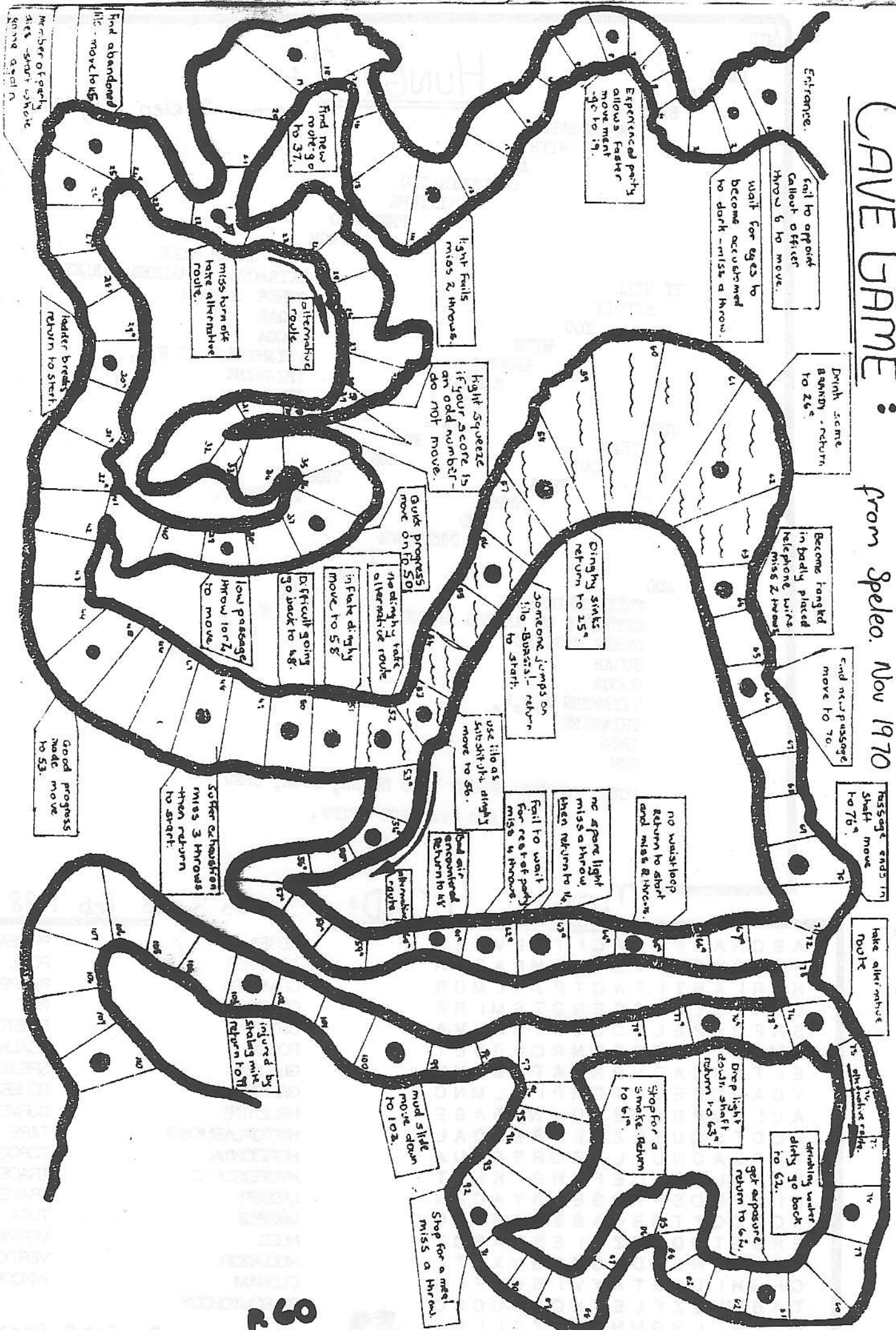
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FCOPROLITE GCOMPASSH  
HVRIARTIFACT PJKLMUR  
EENYOLPACE ENOTSMIRE  
SRFGSPELEOLOGY HAI VA  
RMABITCODEFNROPRSET  
EITUSCADNPRSATUBVYI  
VCABOCELFTGHPIJLMNC  
AUIOMPRSTE OUHWEABE  
RLCTSQUEEZELYREDDAL  
TAPEADNULLABORESTUA  
UTABLTRACEFGHGIKLMT  
FINPPOSPWRSETRYACEN  
AOECOTTORGABEMAHDLLO  
ENSETODPRZLIESBABCZ  
VEHSSNLYDDCEFGNXETI  
CFGHIULETAYWISUTFIR  
TABWHLZFLEFHOPCUCBO  
ASCALINGMNETITCILEH

ABSEIL  
ARTIFACT  
COMPASS  
COPROLITE  
CRYSTAL  
FOSSIL  
GLACIER  
GROTTO  
HELICTITE  
HISTOPLASMOSIS  
HORIZONTAL  
HYDROSTATIC  
LADDER  
MARBLE  
NUCC  
NULLABOR  
OLDHAM  
PALEONTOLOGY

PHREATIC  
POOL  
RAPPEL  
RIFT  
RIMSTONE  
SCALING  
SPELEOLOGY  
SQUEEZE  
SURVEY  
TAPE  
TOPOGRAPHY  
TRACE  
TRAVERSE  
TUFA  
VERMICULATION  
VERTICAL  
WINDOW

# CAVE GAME:

from Speleo. Nov 1970



## QUOTABLE QUOTES AND RUMOURS :

from Speleo. 1985 Annual

Allan Caldwell : "It's too dark to go caving."

Mark Fauvet : "It's important to be able to do it left-handed, in case you have to do it in the dark one day."

Garry Brims : "It didn't really need stitches."  
(overheard outside Woden Hospital after a Mt. Fairy caving trip.)

Allan Caldwell : "Speleosports is fun. I've been twice."

Anthea dyed her overalls PINK on purpose.

from Speleo. Aug 1972

"I got it got caught between the ladder and the wall."

from Speleo. July 1973

John Brush : "It's not that I like hogging the trip report section, it's just that all those other slack arses are not leading any trips, or if they are, they are not putting pen to paper."  
(His defence for writing fourteen of the fifteen trip reports between Jan-June 1973)

from 1988 Trip

Alison Machin : "I've had some strange things between my legs but you are the strangest."  
(Addressed to Jane Cudmore as she proceeded to crawl into a tunnel between Alison's legs.)

Misellaneous

"When you least expect it, expect it." - caving, accidents or sex?

"Old cavers never die they just pass the age of 30 and become ineligible."  
( "Were cavers banned from N.U.C.C. at 30 in the past?" )

# QUOTES

TWELVE YEARS IN THE HEART OF A MOUNTAIN. from Speleo. Aug 1972

This article is composed mainly of quotes from the above named book by Pierre Chevalier.

"I used to think that the interior of a range of hills was a compact mass; like the inside of a well baked brick. But it's not you know, at least not in a limestone area. It's an amazing system of abysses and galleries, a honeycomb of winding passages, some choked with rubble, some inundated by waterfalls. There may be storey upon storey of rock chambers and vast halls, with maybe no way in, no way out, all beyond some little tube-like corridor no more than a foot in diameter."...

On seeing one of his footprints made a few years previously he says

...."did you know Casteret, in one of his caves, came across a human footprint made 25 thousand years ago?"....

Casteret must have been there to see the footprint made, surely, to know its age.

Comparing climbing to driving:

..."surely this under-the-plateau stuff is only glorified rock climbing. It is like swapping a racing car for a nice, cosy rubber tyred invalid carriage"...

On methods of water tracing:

"There are various ways of "following" water which disappears into impassable channels ; paper boats of bright and varying colours may be launched, or water may be dyed with strong dyes at different points. The finding, later on, of a tossing boat or technicolour flood solves many problems of communications or direction".

On the dangers of suffocation;

"But I am less afraid of suffocation in there (small tubes), than I would be in a stuffy room containing four pipe smokers having a prolonged game of bridge!".

On sleep and waterfalls.

"IN his eagerness he replaced sleep by brief naps on the rock and hammered away under waterfalls as calmly as you or I would brave 30sec of rain".

On mapping:

..."every portion of gallery and meandering passage was mapped roughly in his wet and muddy note book. Later he would draw an accurate plan in his hotel room. Every step was counted, and measurements were taken with out stretched arms: one body span of Fernand's was known to equal so many feet".

And finally, on nomenclature:

..."they had to ascend gigantic shafts or wells; and to each they gave an appropriate name such as 'Balcony Shaft' or '3 Sisters' (this one in honour of three sisters who cooked for them)"...

All almost worth "renouncing Speleology" for, "In favour of sweet-pea growing or the quiet life of a melon farmer".....

ADVANCES IN SPELEOLOGY

number 105.

from Speleo. July 1973

by Rank Frank.

Let's do it,  
Freda,

Don't you think we  
should wait, Fred?

Heck no, I've waited for  
ages to do it, and now I've  
got the chance

But you don't know  
how to do it, do you  
Fred?

Yes I do Freda, I've read  
instructions, it's easy

Oh well, all right then  
Fred, I'd like to find out  
if it's as good as they  
say  
it is too.

O.K. Freda, I'll just whip it  
out and bend it up and we'll  
be in business

continued →

cont. →



from Speleo. May 1970

# SPECIAL CUT-OUT PRACTICE SQUEEZE

## INSTRUCTIONS:

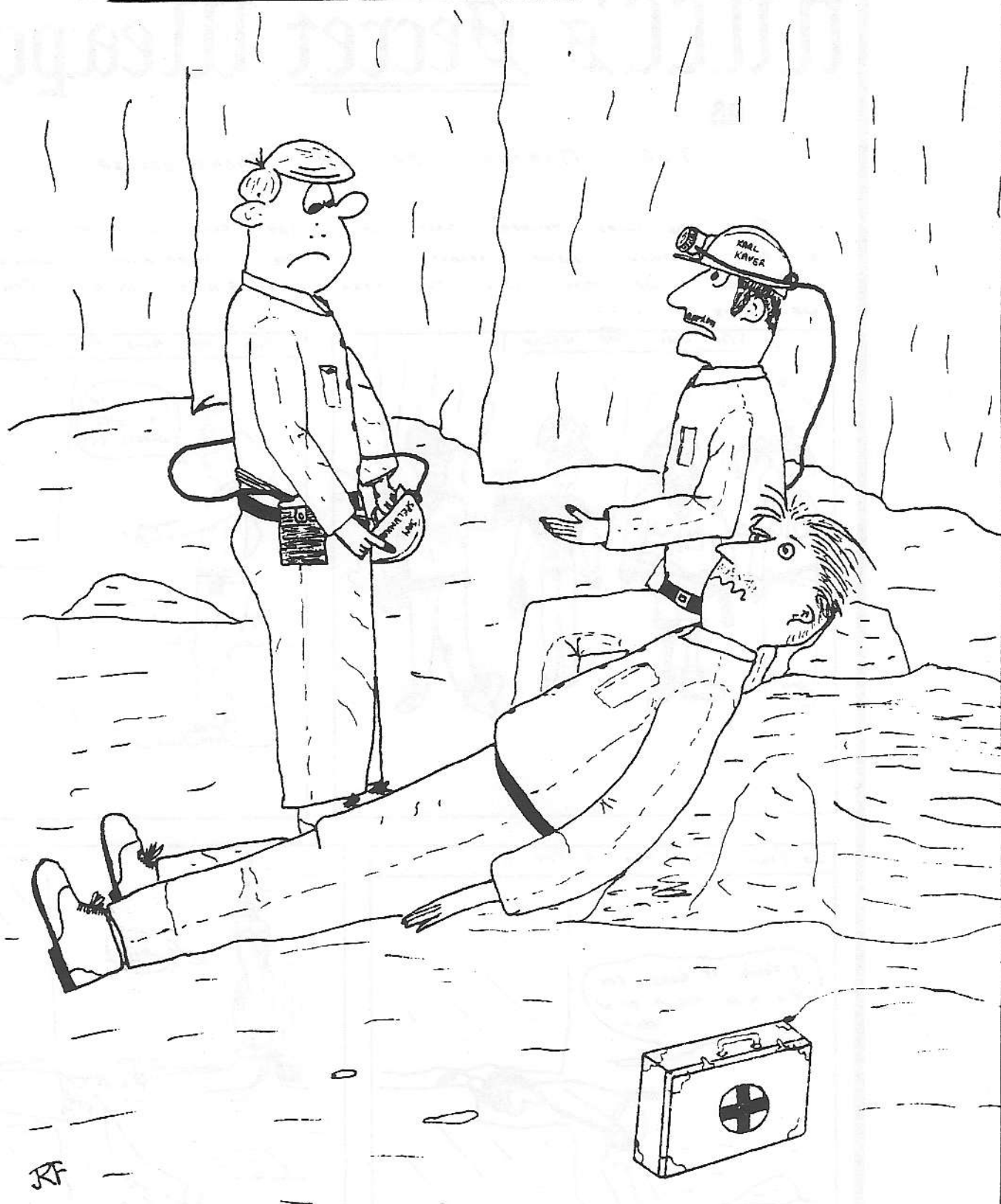
- 1) CUT OUT PAGE
- 2) CUT OUT SQUEEZE  
AS INDICATED

CUT OUT  
THIS SPACE

MALE MEMBERS  
CUT ALONG  
DOTTED LINE

- 3) YOU NOW HAVE PRODUCED YOUR CUT OUT SQUEEZE, TEST YOUR SKILL. COMPARE RESULTS OVER.

Don't FORGET THE 1<sup>ST</sup> AID KIT :



"The First Aid Kit fell on him".

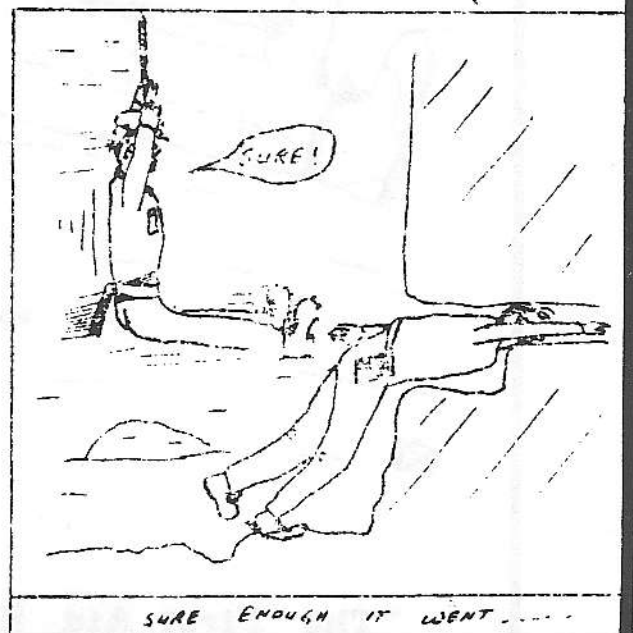
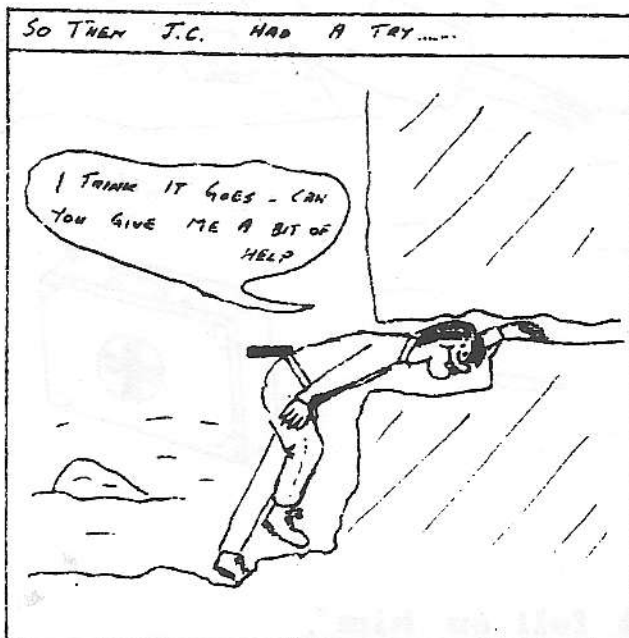
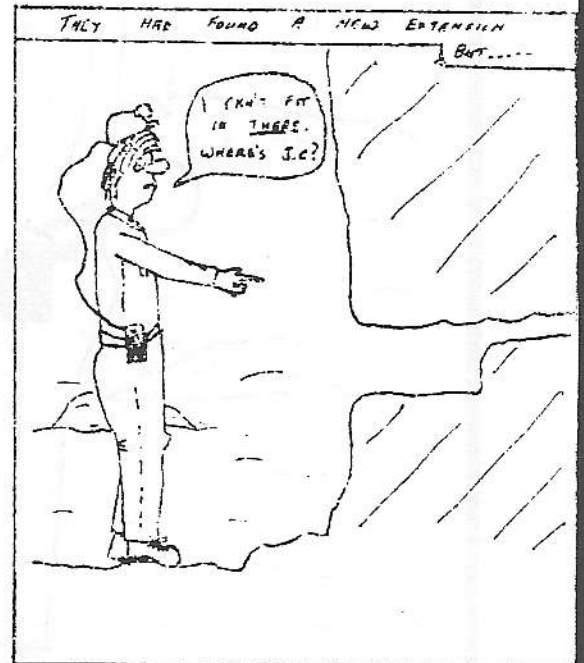
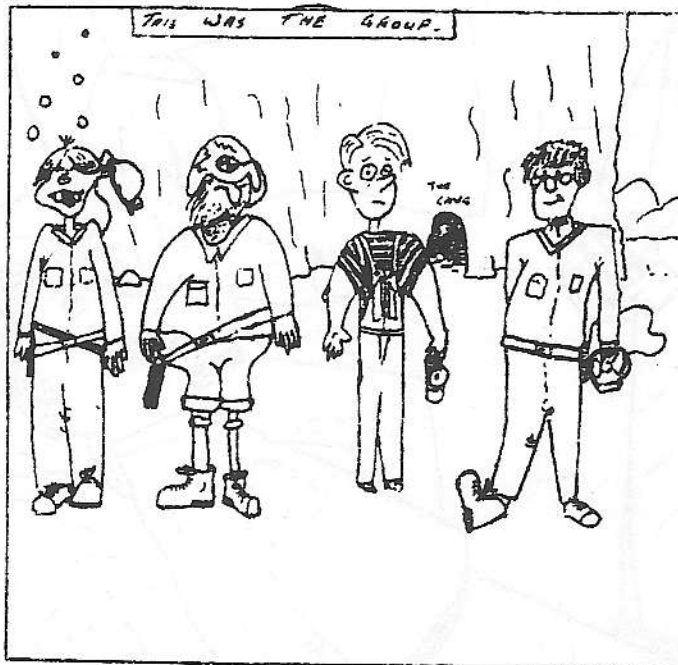
from Speleo. Feb 1971

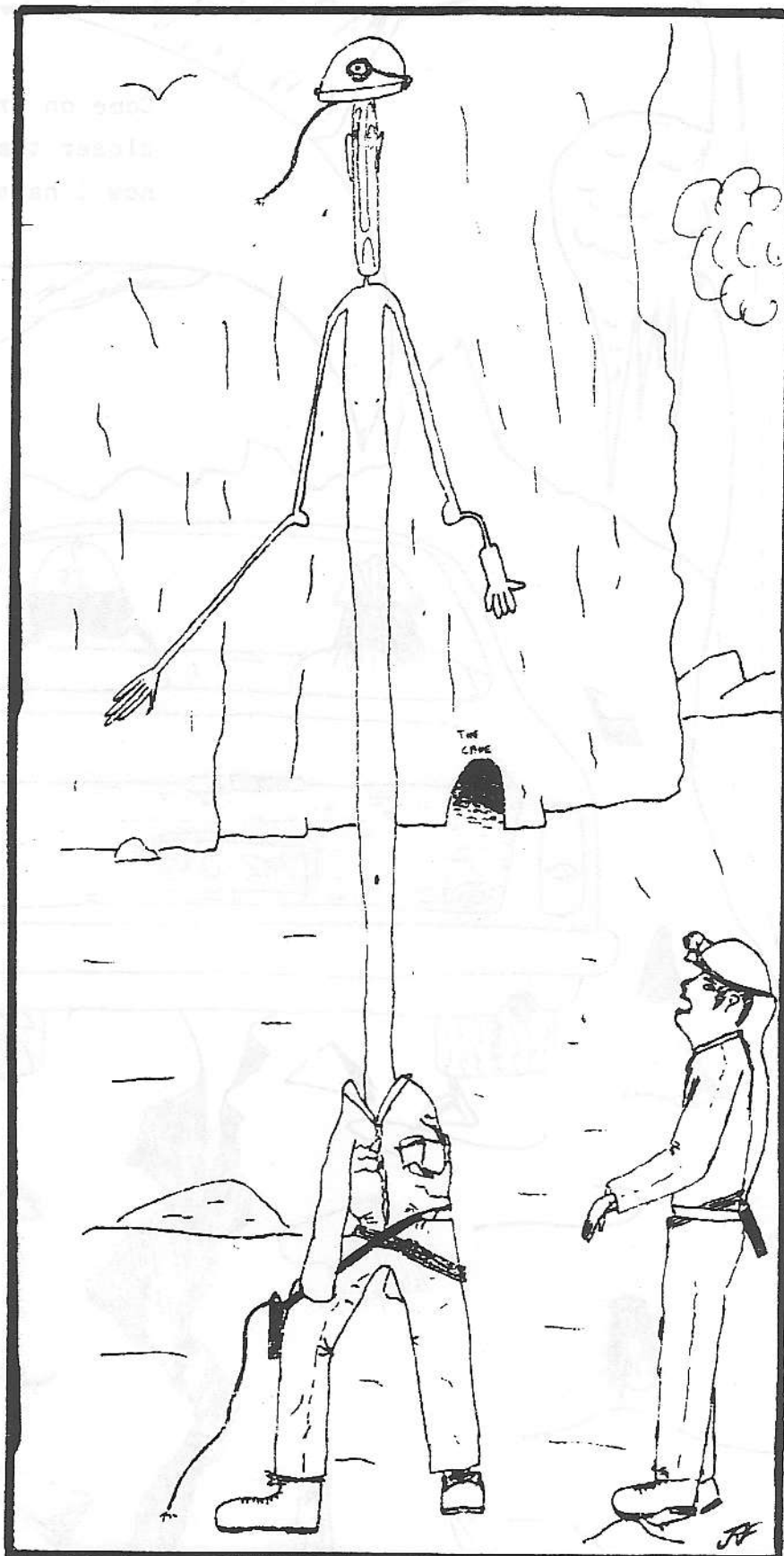
# N.U.C.C.'s Secret Weapon

OR

THE MAKING OF A BASKETBALLER.

THOSE WHO WERE MEMBERS LAST YEAR MAY REMEMBER THAT NUCC ENTERED A TEAM, WHICH CAME SECOND, IN THE INTRACAMPUS BASKETBALL COMPETITION. WE MAY WIN THIS YEAR WITH A NEW PLAYER. THIS IS HOW WE FOUND HIM.....





Reprinted from "Stop Press".

"Did you hear about the caver who got hold of a lot of karabiners really cheap?

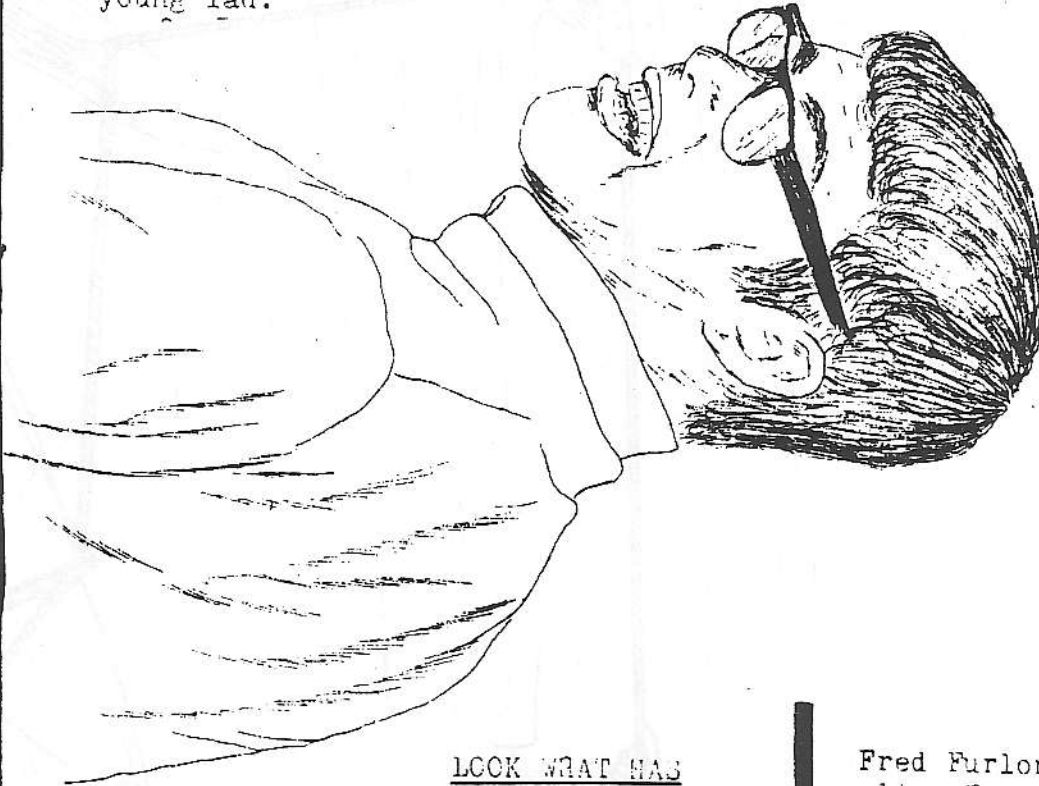
He got them in a shop where they were having an AB-SALE."

"Come on Fred, you can get closer than this. You know how I hate to walk!"



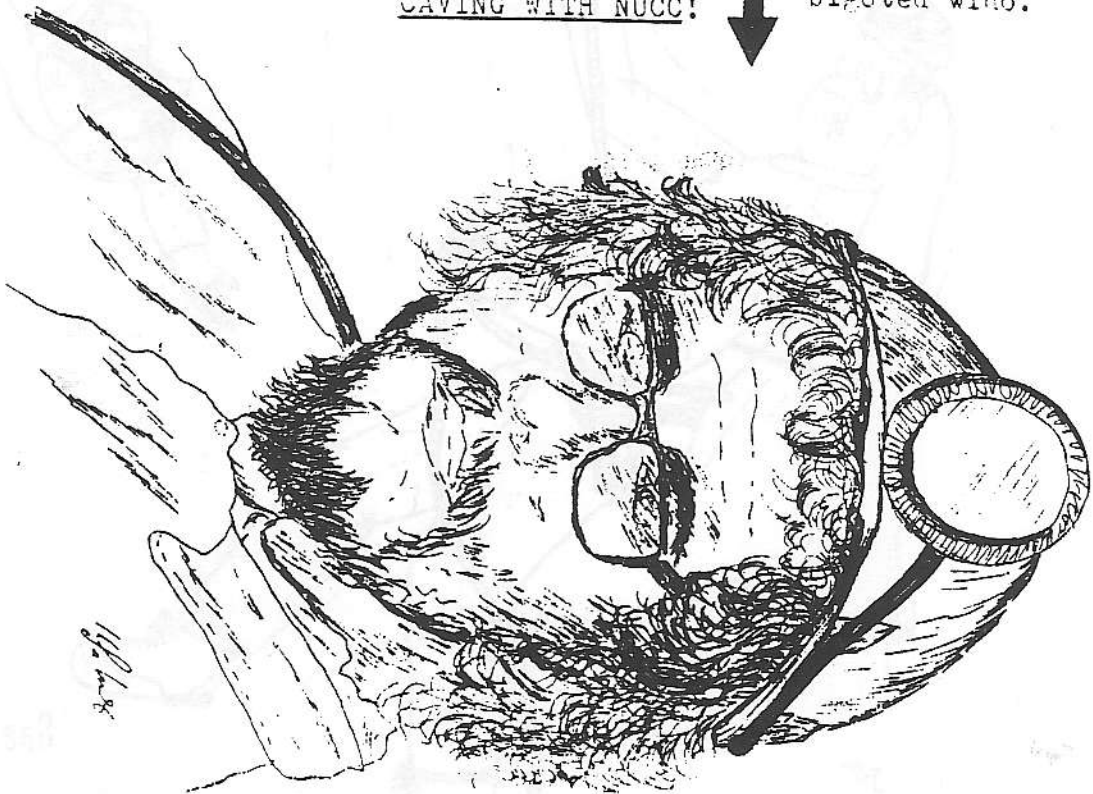
from Speleo. June 1972

John Robert Furlonger,  
fresher, clean, white  
and virginal. A clean  
cut, sober, couth  
young lad.



LOOK WHAT HAS  
HAPPENED TO JOHN  
AFTER 4 YEARS OF  
CAVING WITH NUCC!

Fred Furlonger,  
alias Furrydick,  
Fuzzdick. Uncouth  
bigoted wino.



THE HIDEOUS EFFECTS OF CAVING

ARE YOU BRAVE ENOUGH TO LAUE

# SAFE CAVING:

from Speleo. Nov 1972



'See you at the  
bottom.....'

OH! TO BE A CAVER from Speleo. May 1970  
the book according to  
NOEL.

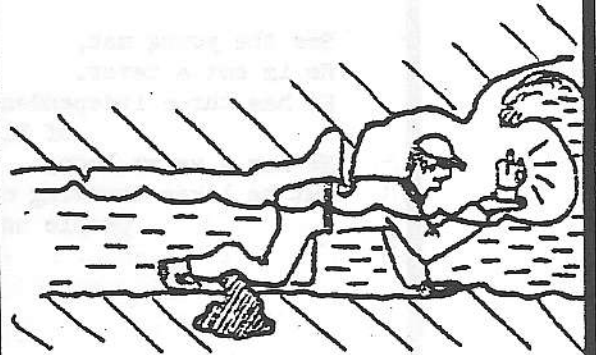
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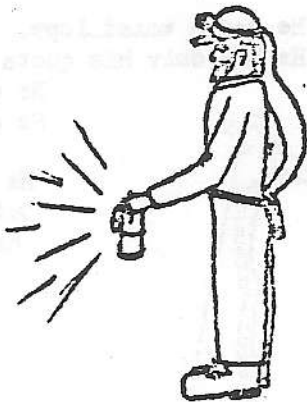
See the young man,  
He is not a caver.  
He is full of hpps.  
-Hop, hop, hop, .... Burp.

2.

See the young man,  
He is not a caver.  
He has only one light  
source.



3.

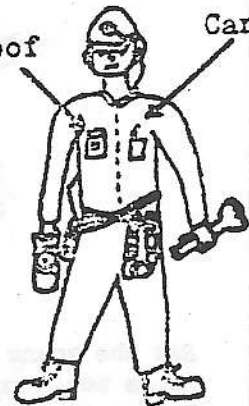


See the young man,  
He is not a caver.  
He has three independent sources  
of light,  
But he did not bring a waist  
loop.

4.

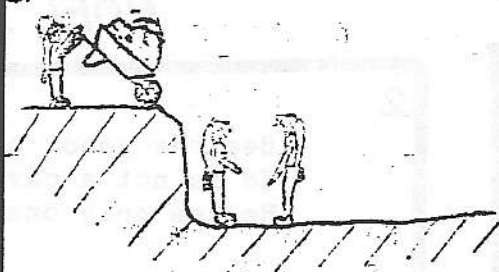
Waterproof  
matches  
tin

Candle



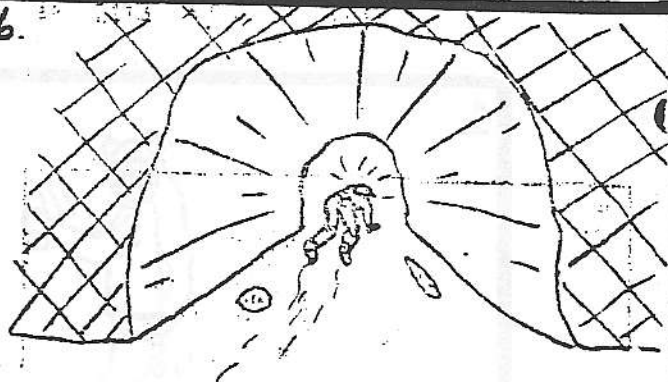
See the young man,  
He is not a caver.  
He has five sources of light,  
He has a waist loop,  
He also has all the gear,  
So that no one else can have  
Any Krabs.

5.



See the young man,  
He is not a caver.  
He has three independent sources  
of light,  
He has a waist loop,  
But he likes throwing mud at people underground.

6.



See the young man,  
He is not a caver.  
He has three independent sources of  
light,  
He has a waist loop,  
He does not throw mud (very often),  
But he rushes ahead without waiting  
for a companion.

7.

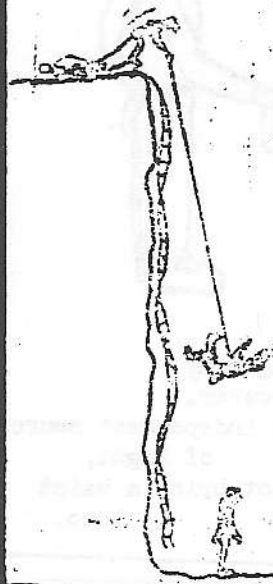


See the young man,  
He is not a caver.  
He has three independent sources  
of light,  
He has a waist loop,  
He has only his quota of gear,  
He does not throw mud,  
He does not rush off on his own,  
But he has not got a chin strap on  
his helmet.

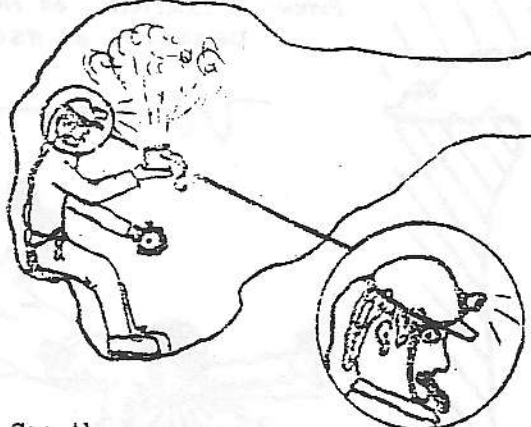
8.

See the young man,  
He is not a caver,  
He has three independent sources of  
light,

— He has a waist loop,  
He has only his quota of gear,  
He does not throw mud,  
He does not rush off  
on his own,  
He has a chin strap,  
But he does not secure  
himself when belaying



9.



See the young man,  
He is not a caver.  
He has three independent sources of light,

He has a waist loop,  
He has only his quota of gear,  
He does not throw mud,  
He does not rush off on his own,  
He has a chin strap,  
He secures himself when belaying,  
But he opens his carbide lamp in confined spaces.

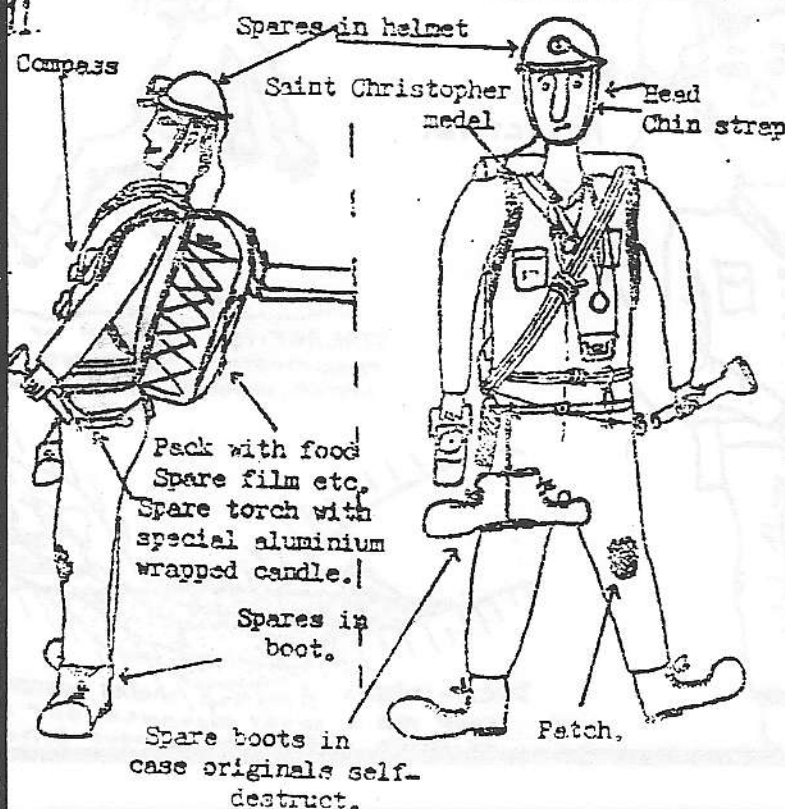
10.



See the young man,  
He is not a caver.  
He has three independent sources of light.

He has a waist loop,  
He has only his quota of gear,  
He does not throw mud,  
He does not rush off on his own,  
He has a chin strap,  
He secures himself when belaying,  
He never opens his carbide in confined spaces,  
But he has not appointed a call-out officer.

11.

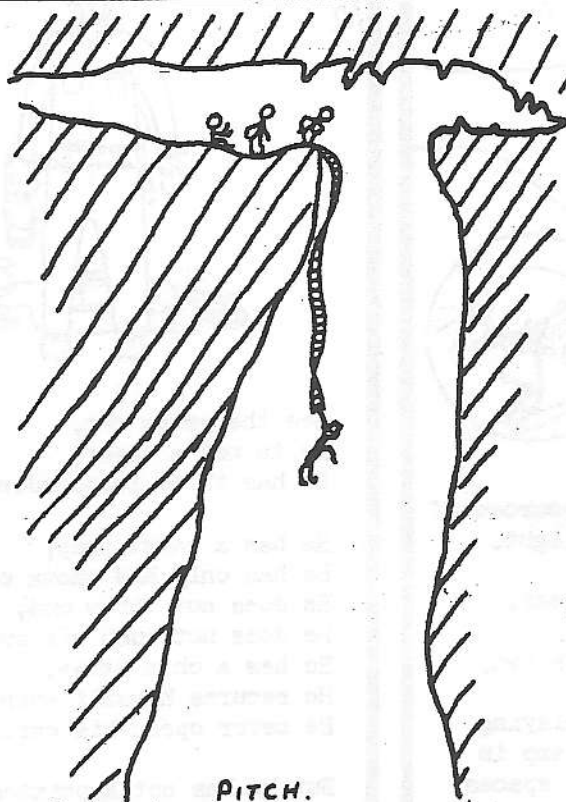


See the young man,  
He is not a caver.  
He has 25 independent sources of light,

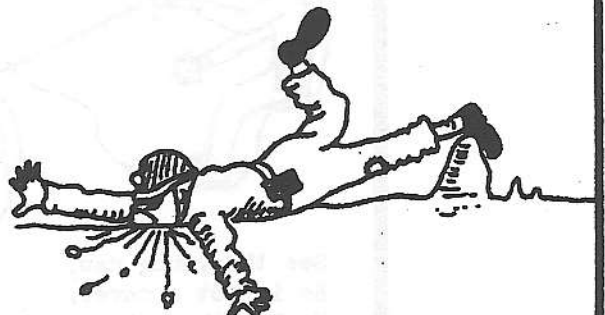
He has three waist loops,  
He does not throw mud,  
He can not rush off on his own,  
He has a chin strap,  
He secures himself when belaying,  
He never opens his carbide(s) in confined spaces,  
He has appointed four call-out officers,  
But he is so loaded down that a railway tunnel is the smallest passage he will fit down.

# SPELEO. TERMS 8

from Speleo. April 1970



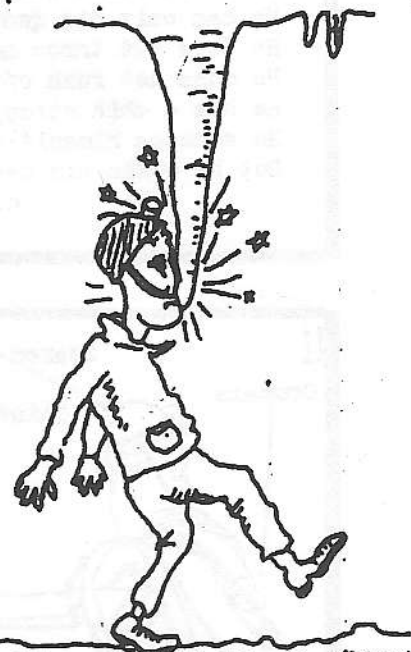
PITCH: A VERTICAL OR NEAR VERTICAL DESCENT OR ASCENT.



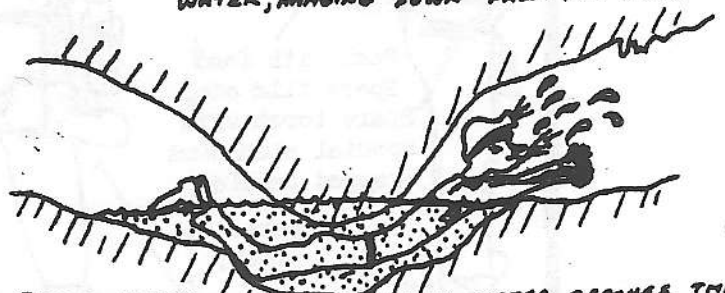
STALAGMITE: A FORM OF SECONDARY PRECIPITATION PROTECTING UP FROM A CAVE FLOOR.



HELICTITE:



STALACTITE: A FORM OF SECONDARY PRECIPITATION DEPOSITED FROM DRIPPING WATER, HANGING DOWN FROM THE ROOF.



DUCK-UNDER: A PLACE WHERE WATER REARMS THE ROOF FOR A SHORT DISTANCE BUT CAN BE PASSED BY A PERSON SWIMMING WITHOUT DIVING.

# ODD FACTS ABOUT N.U.C.C.

## 1960'S

- 1965 Their was several 'Men Only' Dog Leg Trips ( Would this have been allowed in the 1980's? ) Pub. Ed. - Specific people be excluded on the basis of their lack of ability but not because of their sex.
- 1965 saw Bendethra and Colong visited by N.U.C.C. for the first time.
- 1967 saw London Bridge, Cheitmore and Kybean caved by N.U.C.C for the first time.
- 1967 Cloyne Cave must have been very unpopular as three trips to this location were cancelled.
- 1968 Dogleg was opened for the first time in years.

## 1970's

- 1971 The record no. of people per trip was forty-five. This occurred at Mt. Coree.
- 1971 N.U.C.C. was the second largest club in the A.S.F. ( after S.S.S. ) though certainly not the most active.
- 1972 The elections at the general meeting could not take place 'constitutionally' due to less than 50% of members present.
- 1972 The N.U.C.C. library lived at in one of the students rooms at John XXIII
- 1972 N.U.C.C. had a mascot ( Kenneth Palmer ). His address and telephone no. are even listed under the Committee of 1972!
- 1972 In July, the sandtrap was opened by N.U.C.C. giving access to parts of the cave that were closed since 1967.
- 1973 saw Trogdip entered by N.U.C.C. Their first time.
- 1973 The western side of upper Goodradigbee valley was searched by N.U.C.C. for caves but this proved fruitless.
- 1973 School cases were brought to house the first aid kit. It is uncertain what happened to the school girls.
- 1973 also saw the outbreak of the dreaded disease Lethargiosis.
- 1974 N.U.C.C. made \$24.30 from the sale of Wyanbene Maps, but spent \$33.27 on phone calls.
- 1976 membership fees were \$3.00, as they were in 1977 & 1978. ( Pub. Ed. : " What happened to inflation." )
- 1977 N.U.C.C. was donated a 1 X 30' new ladder ( "What did we do to deserve that ?" )
- 1977 N.U.C.C. equipment found a permanent place to spread out and properly store - someone's basement.
- 1977 Bank interest was \$3.02
- 1978 N.U.C.C.'s equipment finally got a place of residence to itself. It moved to the Sports Union.

## 1980's

- 1985 Speleosports were cancelled due to lack of interest. ( Only two teams entered, both from N.U.C.C. )
- 1988 The club's first morals officer was elected, Chris Bradley. ( Pub. Ed. - A steaded decrease in the club's morality has occured ever since. )
- 1988 Of the club's twelve most active members, eight of them were paired up. ( Pub. Ed. - " Does relationships breed activity ? " or " Does caving activity lead to relationships ? " )
- 1989 N.U.C.C. is twenty-six years old. Speleograffiti has been going twenty-five years.

## GENERAL INFORMATION :

- No Speleograffiti was produced in 1975, 1981, 1982, 1984.
- In 1974 N.U.C.C. had it's first ever female President, congratulations to Marge Coggan. In 1989 N.U.C.C. had its first female Equipment Officer. ( Pub. Ed. : Based on twenty of the twenty-six years position holding club years, females have never held the positions of Vice President, Tresurer, or Equipment\Safety Officer.  
" Is this due to apathy of females to take positions of responsibility ? " or  
" Is it the result of pressure by males to purposely exclude females or at least not give them any encouragement to take part in the running of the club. "
- Extra activities of N.U.C.C. in 1971 included a golf day, bowling, a squash night and a basketball team. In 1988, N.U.C.C. went skiing, horseriding, bushwalking and introduced most active members to basic rockclimbing. ( " Will N.U.C.C. be a caving club in the future ? " )
- N.U.C.C. used to have many camp followers ( non-cavers that used to socialize above ground on trips. ) Unfortunately this species of caver has become extinct in the late 1980's.
- The speleologist's common name is caver, potholer, or 'trog'.
- Caving meetings during the 1970's were held only once a month. Over this period they took place either in the Chemistry Building or the Phyics Building. 1988 & 1989 saw twice monthly meetings in the Geography Building.
- Of the twenty-three trip reports written in 1974, seventeen were done by John Brush, ( 73%. ) Of the reports written Jan-June, he wrote fourteen of the fiveteen, ( 93.3%. )

cont. ODD FACTS - GENERAL INFORMATION

- "Is C.S.S. deserting caving and becoming a social club. ? "

Between April and June 1989, N.U.C.C.'s opponent is running only two caving trips. Two trips compared to four social outings and many committee meetings. The social outings include a tour the Victorian wineries ( where else ), and to see the tank stream in Sydney.

by  
PUB. EDITOR

DAVID RABBITBOROUGH PRESENTS "THE CAVER"

The caver, a creature of habit dons its overalls before descending into its habitat. A caver very rarely enter its caves alone, more usually in groups of four to six, which leads to the observation that this breed of animal is very social. It has never been quite determined what a caver does underground. However, a steady increase in the N.U.C.C. party's ranks for the last five years, and dirt around the caver's mouth and face area, suggest that breeding and eating are the most probable answers.

From its muddy appearance it must be deduced that the caver loves to roll in mud, probably as a means to cover its hairless skin against the rays of the sun. The caver spends most of its time above ground, where it sleep. It is, however, very important for a caver to feel safe and secure below the ground on a regular basis. Looks of agitation and desperation are often seen on a caver's face before descent, a sign it has been above ground too long.

The underground habitat of a caver, is one of long, twisting passages. These passages are believed to be the result of prehistoric earth-digging animals. Animals that slightly resemble the millipedes of today. These animals had heads at both ends of their body and were able to change the position of their legs at will. This enabled them to reverse back uphill up to the surface, thus eliminating the need to form another hole for exit. Often during the animal's game of tunnelling they would stop to play. This involved piling dirt stacks that often reached from floor to ceiling. Over the years many of these columns have broken only leaving pieces of them sticking up from the ground and clinging to the ceiling.

The caver is an easy creature to find. It can usually be found on a Saturday or Sunday about ten am. lurking around caves near Wee Jasper or Bungonia. It's smell of perspiration allows for easy detection. The caver comes in all sizes: small, big, thin and tall. There is a distinct variation in the amount of fur covering on its face, leg and arm-pit. In the female species bumps are located on the upper chest area. These give the female extra friction if she begins to slip while climbing. Male species have the advantage of being able to control the length of their hair. Females are encumbered by long hair that gathers mud and obscues sight. The male's hair has adapted to the environment more, and their hair is thus at more manageable length. Some cavers have reportedly been seen with round shiny objects growing in the upper part of their face. These are special symbols of distinction, marking out a leader from the followers.

The caver is a very aggressive animal, if approached. It carries coiled steel bars and ropes to defend itself with. Most scenes of aggression take place after the caver has consumed some unidentified yellow liquid from small conical-shaped cans. This act is, and the resulting aggression is, mainly restricted to the male species of the group.

One particularity of a caver is its love of carrying a small yellow pack whenever it goes underground. Between entering the cave and leaving it, the pack does not seem to have changed in shape or weight. This behaviour was a puzzle for years until it was noticed that it is nearly exclusively the male who attaches this object to himself. After years of dispute it has been decided that the yellow pack is used as physical decoration to attract females. The use of bright colour, and addition to size are commonly seen in mating rituals of other species.

On exiting from a cave, the caver invariably sits down to rest. Female specie members will often start rubbing dirt from faces and tidying their hair. Overalls are then discarded. Overalls are thought to be made of a sticky material for they seem to pick up enormous amounts of dirt. Once shed, the body of the caver is revealed. The caver's lower arms and legs are shaded in a white-brown colour. The rest of the body is decorated in multi-coloured shades. Colouring comes in many shades: red, white, orange, yellow etc. There is usually at least two colours; one for the upper body and another for the bottom. Circles and striping of shades in these regions is also common. One condition though is that it may not blend into the natural brown and green colour scheme of the environment.

Often before the caver will leave its weekend habitat it prepares to make a sacrifice to the Gods. A fire is built. Particularly on cold days, the caver will stand around its fire, rubbing its hands and giving thanks for another day of fun and safety. Long thin meat objects, and round flat meat objects are often thrown onto the fire where they hiss and spit in rage. These objects are eventually eaten. They symbolize the Gods that the caver worships.

by

JANE CUDMORE

# N.U.C.C GOES DANCING :

from Speleo. July 1988

## INVITATION

The National University Caving Club extends  
an invitation to members to attend :

### **The Inaugural NUCC Ball**

Date: Saturday August 20

Venue: Punchbowl Cave, Wee Jasper, NSW

Dress: Formal

Cost: \$5 (members) \$8 (non-members)

For details, please write to:

The National University Caving Club

G.P.O. Box 4

CANBERRA

ACT, 2601

or phone: Paul Hardiman (062) 54 8116 (h)

Chris Bradley (062) 52 5934 (w)

NB: Non-members must  
sign an indemnity form.

"Yes N.U.C.C really did have a ball. Outside the cave, Neil + Carol Anderson (CSS.), Paul Hardiman, Andrew Wall, Alison Machin, Mark Jones, Chris Bradley, and Eddie + Jane Cudmore, danced the night away. (Pub. editor - danced themselves under the table is more appropriate.). A great night, but I'll have to report that some slackers retired to bed before 2am."

The tripleader is my shepherd, I shall not stop,  
 He maketh me to lie down in Wyanbene waters:  
 He leadeth me not beside said waters.  
 He destroyeth my trog suit: he leadeth me in the  
 paths of grottness for his name's sake.  
 Yea, though I climb in the shadow of Big Hole,  
 I will fear no slipknots, for he went before me  
 My belay line and my bash hat they comfort me.  
 He preparereth a pitch before me in the presence of  
 much mud; he annointeth my head with gibbers,  
 My blood runneth over.  
 Surely madness and folly shall follow me all the days  
 of my strife:  
 And I will dwell in the abode of the Trog forever.

Anon.

(Name withheld to protect  
 the innocent.)

Trog-Fact or Fiction

from Speleo. April 1972

There must be some basis of truth in the stories of a TROG in Australian Caving areas. There are continual reports of sightings of a TROG and/or his sign from sources which are both many and varied, and which come from within both the general public and the caving fraternity. Why do so many people avoid caves....could it be that they know something????

TROG has been variously described as simeax in appearance, of short stature and covered either in fur or in a muddy brown TROGSuit-The reports vary in this respect. He is usually described as bootless and as being totally without any visible source of light. In fact he is reputed to avoid light whenever possible.

Members of this club have reported sightings at Wee Jasper (where, among other sightings, what must have been a young TROG wearing a red bash hat was mistaken for a mouse), Buchan and Yarragobilly.

The author would be grateful if news of any further sightings is passed on to him as swiftly as possible so that they may be properly documented. If at any stage it becomes possible to photograph one of these creatures from a safe vantage point such a contribution would be greatly appreciated as I am not sure if I believe in these animals yet.

# FRUIT JUICE VS WINE ? :

Rough red - on the decline? from Speleo. Aug 1972

What is wrong with NUCC cavers this year! At our recent wine and cheese evening, attended by about twenty persons, we went through 1 glass (broken and eaten by J.Brush, the man with guts of steel), 5 cwt of assorted cheeses and biscuits, 1 large can of pineapple juice, 2 flagons of orange juice but only 2 flagons of white wine and only one flagon of red. What's the world coming to, more fruit juice than grog consumed on such an occasion. Needless to say there were several cases of diarrhoea the next morning.

Marj Coggan - social commentator

DID NEANDERTHAL MAN HAVE THE A-BOMB? from Speleo. Aug. 1967

Two enterprising members of the N.U.C.C. have calculated the energy released during the formation of the Big Hole, near Wyanbene. It turns out to be 4 billion foot-pounds, or approximately that involved in the explosion of 24 million tons of our old friend Tri-Nitro Toluene. (T.N.T.)

This must have been quite a bang, since even 1 ton going off in e.g., Parliament House, would probably break every window in Canberra. Consequently we can be fairly certain that it happened before the area was settled around 1840. Indeed, Sturt mentions it in his "Two Journeys", so it must have been there before 1830.

Now the Big Hole is not situated in limestone, being about 2 miles west of a projection of the Wyanbene belt, so it is unlikely that the pit is a collapse into a cave. In fact a cave of such size as to form the hole when it collapsed would appear to be stable anyway.

We must therefore conclude that the Big Hole is not natural.

Hence to answer the question "What caused the Big Hole?" we must look further. The Australian Aborigine evidently does not possess the technology nor the inclination for destruction on such a scale, but what about Australo-Pithecus, or gold old Homo-Neanderthalensis? They were both warlike souls, delighting, like their modern counterparts, in making a mess for the sake of it.

Maybe some up-and-coming young Archeologist may like to carry out radio-carbon and strontium-90 tests in the crater to try to date it further, and to decide if they used U-235, thorium, or plutonium in their bomb?

M.G.W. & B.J.D.

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Maybe some up-and-coming Psychologist may like to carry out tests on the writers? - Ed.

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### Wanted & Unwanted:

## UNCLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS.

from Speleo. Feb 1971

WANTED: One bathtub. Must be;

- (1) A bonafide household vessel (with a plughole and plug) in which ablutions have been or can be carried out.
- (2) Be capable of floating while half sub merged in water.
- (3) No more than  $3\frac{1}{2}$  tons deadweight unladen.
- (4) Capable of travelling at  $2\frac{1}{3}$  knots while being propelled by two man power, a distance of not less than 550 yards.
- (5) Cheap, (like a Chinese prostitute).

..... We are serious!

(bathtub race - Canberra Day, 13th March, 1971.).

CONTACT: Capitan Call.

Bathtubsman Brush.

Plugholesman Palmer.

Faucetman Furlonger.

Showersman Shepherd.

[illegible]

WANTED TO EXCHANGE: Will exchange one very deaded lead acid battery, (suitable for use in daylight or with blown bulbs) for one bathtub.

CONTACT: Bathtubsman Brush.

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAARRRRRRRRRGCGGGGCHHH

DEFINITIONS; The Virtue Simplified Dictionary, (Encyclopedic Edition) defines the following.

CAVE. A hollow place in the earth; a natural underground cavity, usually with a horizontal opening into a hill-side or cliff, a den.

CAVEMAN. A prehistoric man who lived in a cave; hence any man who uses brute strength in a primitive way, especially in his treatment of women.

# "ARMED WITH A REVOLVER" 99 :

from Speleo. June 1972

## MOUNTAIN OF DEATH.

Adapted from an article by D. Browne  
in Walkabout, June 1972.

It is located south of Cooktown, North Queensland, it is visually awe-inspiring - black, bare and sinister, a 1000 foot high pile of enormous boulders two miles long, rearing out of the rainforest.

Black Mountain - to which many men have gone and never returned, shunned by native inhabitants.

"The formation of these mountains is unique, their appearance grotesque. Mountains of huge boulders full of chasms that go down to unrecorded depths."

The ridge is honeycombed with caves, nearly all unexplored. They dip down below ground level but nobody knows their extent or what they contain.

One of the few men to enter the caves and live, tells the tale:

"Armed with a revolver and a strong electric torch I stepped into the opening. It dipped steeply downwards, narrowing as it went. Suddenly I found myself facing a solid wall of rock, but to the right there was a passage just large enough for me to enter in a stooping position. I moved along it carefully for several yards. The floor was fairly level, the walls of very smooth granite. The passage moved this way and that, always sloping deeper into the earth.

Presently I began to feel uneasy (indigestion). A huge bat beat its wings against me as it passed, but I forced myself to push on (what courage?). Soon my nostrils were filled with a sickly, musty stench (he chuckled -Ed.). Then my torch went out (where were his three independent sources of light?). I was in total darkness. It was inky black. From somewhere which seemed like the bowels of the earth I could hear the moaning of bats. This was followed by the flapping of the wings of thousands of bats.

I began to get panicky as I groped and floundered back the way I thought I had come. My arms and legs were bleeding from the bumps with unseen rocks. My outstretched hands clawed at space where I expected solid wall and floor. At one stage where I had wandered into a side passage, I came to what was undoubtedly the brink of a precipice, judging from the echoes.

The air was foul and I felt increasing dizziness. Terrifying thoughts were racing through my mind about giant rock pythons I had often seen around Black Mountain.

## cont. 'Armed with a Revolver'

As I crawled along getting weaker and losing all hope of ever getting out alive, I saw a tiny streak of light. It gave me super strength to worm my way towards a small cave mouth half a mile from the one I had entered.

Reaching the open air, I gulped in lungfuls of it and fell down exhausted. I found I had been underground for five hours, most of the time on hands and knees. A king's ransom would not induce to enter those caves again....."

The mountain is composed of huge granite boulders covered in black lichen. The complete black surface coating may be uncommon but the boulder pile is less so. Near Chillagoe and at other locations in North Queensland similar phenomena exist. They must have been produced by the rapid erosion of a skeletal soil profile. Many soil profiles contain fresh rock kernels in them and removal of the soil component would produce a boulder pile. But such removal usually takes place so slowly the kernels also weather completely.

Any party that decides to unravel the mystery of the mountain will need to be very carefully organized to meet any hazard likely or unlikely - not forgetting the possibility of meeting a real python.

Anonymous.

### HOW THE OTHER HALF LIVES - OR HOW NOT TO GO CAVING

from Speleo. Aug/Oct 1974

30 - 31st March 1974

Saturday Night Baptist Union Caving Group Sydney entered Punchbowl about 8.00 p.m. Capital Hill Venturers watched them descend. Last man descended on a double rope which failed to reach the bottom - he then climbed out again and used another group's rope (to descend again) which was later removed. C.H. Venturers then went down and left a single rope for a prussik return. About 10.30 p.m. the Baptist group returned to the bottom of the pitch and decided to wait for some assistance, since they did not know how to prussik or self belay. Because they were cold they lit a fire. When I went to the pitch top at 1.00 a.m., to belay C.H. Venturers out, the first member of the Baptist group had just reached the ladder top after climbing without a belay, prussik or any other safety rig. He then proceeded to belay his party out - his own security was poor - he had 2 - 3 feet of slack trace behind him attached to a leather waist belt. The smoke from their fire penetrated into Loxin - the Ballroom and Strawberry Shortcut. C.H. Venturers were seriously affected by the smoke on their way back from Showl Corridor.

On the Sunday the Baptist group entered Dip 4. Extension - removed a nylon safety line belonging to C.H. Venturers and left their own sisal (old - worn) rope in its place and left their ladder fouling C.H. Venturers' ladder.

Ron McLachlan  
V.L. Capital Hill Venturers

0000000000000000

# STATISTICS

| Description                        | 1964 | 1965 | 1966 | 1967  | 1970  | 1971  | 1972 | 1975 | 1976  | 1977  | 1978     | 1980 | 1984  | 1985   |
|------------------------------------|------|------|------|-------|-------|-------|------|------|-------|-------|----------|------|-------|--------|
| Total no. of trips                 | 16   | 25   | 25   | 33    | 33    | 22    | 35   | 12   | 14    | 18    | 27       | 13   | 19    |        |
| Av. no. people/trip                | 9.77 | 6.8  |      | 4.69  | 7.5   | 12.41 | 8    |      | 6.04  | 4.8   |          | 5.2  |       |        |
| av. no. of females/trip            | 2.33 | 1.33 |      | 0.8   |       |       |      |      |       | 0.5   | 0.2      |      |       |        |
| av. no. of males/trip              | 7.44 | 5.47 |      | 3.89  |       |       |      |      |       |       |          |      |       |        |
| Largest no. of people/trip         |      | 27   |      | 10    | 12    | 45    | 24   |      | 10    |       |          |      |       |        |
| No. of areas visited               |      |      |      |       | 18    | 11    | 13   |      | 5     |       |          | 6    | 8     |        |
| Total no. of hrs                   |      |      | 140  | 183.4 |       |       |      |      |       |       |          |      |       |        |
| Av. no. of hrs spent underground   | 4.85 | 6.05 | 7.07 | 4.96  |       |       |      |      |       |       |          |      |       |        |
| Largest no. of trips of one leader |      |      |      | 0.33  |       |       |      |      |       |       |          | 0.15 |       |        |
| Av. no. hrs travelling to & from   | 3.7  | 3.72 |      |       |       |       |      |      |       |       |          |      |       |        |
| Av. no. of cars                    |      | 1.62 |      |       |       |       |      |      |       |       |          |      |       | 12     |
| Av. no. hrs walking to & from      |      | 3.7  |      |       |       |       |      |      |       |       |          |      |       |        |
| % trips to Wee Jasper              | 60   | 43   |      |       |       |       |      |      |       |       |          |      |       |        |
| % of trips to Wyandheue            |      |      |      | 58    | 27.27 | 13.6  | 22.9 |      | 35.7  | 5.5   | 14.8     | 38   | 10.5  | 8.3    |
| % of trips to Bungonia             |      |      |      | 12    | 27.27 | 22.7  | 25.7 |      | 42.9  | 38.9  | 22.2     | 7.7  | 10.5  | 25     |
| % of trips to other one area       |      |      |      | 12    | 11.11 | 13.6  | 0    |      | 7.5   |       | 18.5     | 15   | 15.8  | 0      |
| Name of other area                 |      |      |      | Yagby |       |       |      |      | 11.4  | 27.7  | 8.4      |      | 31.6  | 16.6   |
|                                    |      |      |      |       |       |       |      |      | Fiche | Yagby | Narrabri |      | Narra | 111111 |

Statistics compiled from numerous  
archivist's reports in magazines  
(eg. years of absurd detail) + other  
extra information in 'Speleographiti'.

