

S P E L E O G R A F F I T I

The Newsletter of the National University Caving Club.

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MAY, 1969.

EDITORIAL

Yes, this is really the second NUCC Newsletter in as many months. Due to unseasonal activity on the part of members (at least one, and as many as three trips per weekend) a flood of Trip Reports awaits publication.

One would think that this increased activity would naturally lead to increased proficiency among members. However, on the Buchan trip it was seen that most were not sure of their ability to correctly tie a basic knot, such as a bowline. This is something which is quite easily remedied (pester the Trip Leader until you can do it), or better still turn up at the next Field Day - cum Barbecue-cum-grogon-see Activities page for date).

Although this Newsletter is of reasonable size, the Editor has not actually been snowed under by articles from members for publication. Once again, PLEASE send in anything.

If you are not going caving because you don't like the idea of sleeping out in winter, how about suggesting a few one day trips at the next meeting? E.G., see previous issue. If you don't want to venture into the cold at all, spend the time writing an article.

The Editor.

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POST CONFERENCE NULLABOR TRIP - 12/1/69 - 18/1/1969.

(Continued from Last Issue)

Sunday 12/1/69

Went to look for Dingo Donga, but got lost many times, so we temporarily gave it up. Part of the party headed eastwards for home, while the rest of us headed west for Cocklebiddy. Some of us then went further west to Caiguna to search for an unexplored cave, whilst the rest stayed at Cocklebiddy. We decided to do Cocklebiddy and have another look for Dingo Donga on the way home. Couldn't find the unexplored cave.

Monday 13/1/69

Another look for the cave; still no good so return to Caiguna where we were told of a blowhole "just past the end of the airstrip". They weren't far wrong. Found and explored it. Hundreds of Redback Spiders. I could hear a strong wind through a tiny squeeze, but couldn't get through. Otherwise no go. The cave was then numbered N164. Back to Cocklebiddy to take pictures. Dobbed Henry in to do the swimming (we did give him my Lilo - a great concession) in the coldest lake on the Nullabor.

Then back for another look for Dingo Donga, this time following "typical vague Lowry type directions".

Tuesday 15/1/69

Some vague Lowry type directions! We had to turn 30 degrees to the left to save us falling into the thing. Henry and I stayed to explore while Hilly and Peter returned to camp to get equipment and Barbie. The cave apparently has only one chamber at the south end of the doline. The north end is just a rock shelter, but would be a fantastic camp-site. The chamber reaches a maximum depth of about 150', but no water. Bats, guano, bones and kestrels in the cave and doline. After the rest returned, we went back down to take more pictures.

After lunch we wandered off to Moonera Station for a talk to the Manager. This gave us leads to several other possible caves as well as a much needed bath. We spent three hours with Dave Simms and his wife, being offered cake, tea, biscuits, etc., all gratefully accepted. Couldn't find any of his caves, so back to camp for tea, then out spotlight shooting for the pot.

Wednesday 15/1/1969

Down to Moonera Tank cave. Wetas, bats, tight, loose rubble. The cave goes to water at about 250-300'. Free climbing pitches (6 of them) lie between collapsed rubble and are very loose and dangerous. So is the rubble slope in the second chamber up. This recedes through an arch into the bottom chamber, which is about 15' high, and 50' across, with a mud floor, and a lake at the end, this sumps all the way around. Peter couldn't find the entrance to the shafts, so when Henry and I returned to the entrance chamber we put him on the right track and waited for his return. When Peter came up we returned to the vehicle and headed off for Majura for a farewell drink with Hilly. Then, 4.30 p.m. headed off for Adelaide at 70 mph. Majura is 929 miles from Adelaide, i.e. 1800 miles from home. We camped about 10 miles east of Ivy Tanks on a very cold and windy night.

Thursday 16/1/69

Underway at 9 a.m. Were flagged down by Abo kids near Yalata Mission, where two tried to keep us talking while four more tried to steal everything that wasn't actually tied down. As it happened, everything was actually tied down. Saw a camel at Nundroo.

Went down to Fowler's Bay for a look. A beautiful collection of sanddunes and Antarctic Ocean, and a foul smell of rotting kelp and fish. The place is virtually a ghost town with a few fishing boats and some ruins. It was from here that Flinders set sail on his voyage. A long jetty leads out into the Ocean and gives a pretty view of the hamlet, away from the smell.

A monument to Flinders stands at the land end of the jetty. On to Ceduna arriving at 1.30 pm. Hot. On to Smokey Bay, where I had a swim in the Antarctic warmer than it ever was at Narooma. On to Streaky Bay. A typical coastal resort but with a more pretty town than coastline. However, since Streaky Bay is only 350 miles from Adelaide. Next door in S.A. Milkshakes foul and extortionate. Got second flat tyre of trip just outside Streaky Bay. On towards Adelaide - chips in Port Augusta, camped 45 miles from Adelaide for the last night of the trip. Fine and warm after a hot day.

Friday 17/1/69

Up early, reaching Adelaide 9.30 am, and go up to Pioneer Offices to see about a trip home. All coaches booked out for the next week. Across to Railway. Managed

to get seats for Melbourne 7 pm tonight, then connect with Daylight Express 8.40 am tomorrow at Sunshine; theoretically arrive home 6 pm tomorrow.

Saturday 18/1/69

Arrived at Sunshine (Vic.) ten minutes late after 14 hours for 600 miles. Fortunately, Daylight was also ten minutes late. Arrived home at 6.30 p.m.

A.S.F. CONFERENCE AND TRIP. - FACTS AND
FIGURES

Left Canberra by VW on Christmas Day at 7 p.m.

Arrived Adelaide 4 am 27/12/68 after hitching 500 miles in 10 hours.

Distance travelled from south side to North Terrace 2800 miles in nineteen days.

Burnt 128 gallons of petrol.

Explored 14 caves and blowholes, including 8 of the "Deep" caves.

Spent 70 hours in Mulla-mallang, and 30 hours in the others, a total of (just over) 100 hours for the trip.

Walked about 12 miles underground.

Drank an average of 16 pints of beer per head over the trip.

Car fare, south side of Adelaide to North Terrace, \$43.00

Total cost Canberra to Canberra \$145.00.

Michael G. Webb.

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"THE CAVES OF NORTH WEST CLARE, IRELAND"

The University of Bristol Speleological Society has brought out the above book. It contains a complete study of the caves in an area of 50 square miles, correlating and updating all the papers published over the years into one volume. It describes the discovery, exploration and survey of over 35 miles of underground waterways and rivers over a period of 17 years.

There are chapters on Geology, the cave geomorphology, water catchment and tracing, and on exploration. Appendices include surveying, water tracing, and a comprehensive list of references.

If you want a copy of the above work, Michael Webb has the order form. Cost is £5.5.0 sterling.

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"SPELEOHANDBOOK"

Published by A.S.F. last year. It has been found that there are a few copies of this still available. It has articles on Cave Science, surveying, cave safety, equipment, techniques, as well as a comprehensive list of caving areas and caves in Australasia. The cost of this book is \$3.50. If you are a member of this club and want one, contact Ken Palmer as soon as possible.

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TRIP REPORTS

WARROO. Saturday 29th March

This was a cave hunting trip in the limestone south of Goodhope on the Burrinjuck Dam. Bods present were Mick Alting, Philippa Wisdom and myself. We left Canberra at about 8.15 am., arriving at the locality some 45 mins. later. After consulting with the land holder, who spoke of several "cat's holes" at the northern end of the ridge, we headed off over the dry lake bed. Five minutes later we were well and truly bogged. After spending half an hour messing around in the mud and burning the clutch out, we decided to ask the above mentioned farmer for assistance. The assistance came in the form of a land-rover, and a length of thick steel rope which was deftly placed around the rear leaf spring of the car. Several tension packed seconds later the war was hauled from the mud. With this episode fresh in our minds we thought it better to continue the trip on foot. The only hole we found turned out to be a large fissure sloping down at an angle of about 80°, 5 feet wide and 75 feet deep at its greatest dimensions. Several subsidiary fissures were associated with the main fissure which was explored for about 150 feet, although it went on further. The main fissure had some formation, shawls, sharp coral and some small stalactites about 100 to 150 feet in. Although this cave went on further than we explored, it appeared to be getting narrower, and probably pinches out. The cave would make excellent chimneying in some parts. Several recent bones and skulls were noticed and it is probable that older ones exist beneath the thick layer of mud which forms the floor of the cave.

After leaving this cave we had a delightful lunch, (sandwiches and warm soft drink, plastic flavoured water in one case), we then headed south, looking for Warroo cave. All that was found was a sink hole 30 feet or so across with a likely looking entrance, partially filled with rubbish. Mick willingly descended and found a pool of muddy water of unknown depth, as a change of clothes was not at hand the water was not entered. This cave is worth further investigation.

After a little more hunting we left for home, calling in at the Royal Hotel in Yass for a well earned drink.

Ken Palmer.

P.S. Would anyone who knows anything about Warroo cave please contact me.

YARRANGOBILLY

Easter.

People: Noel and Paulette Call, Phil Shepherd, Chris Ryan, John Furlonger, Ken Palmer, Bill Campbell, Annabelle Wheeler, Viv Lowden, Jim Curtis, David Hughes, John Brush, Phillipa Wisdom, David Berman.

Friday: Went down to Ranger Station to check in, then went up to look for East Deep Creek. After finding North Deep Creek and another cave entrance (more about that later) we explored West Deep Creek. This is a stream passage flowing through a steeply descending and unstable rockpile. Two of us reached the bottom but the rest thought better of it, so we came back again.

Y 58. The other entrance we found. Not a new ^{??} cave, but Jim Curtis and self found a new extension (300' then) to it. Very pretty, and quite large too. Ken MacNee (Yagby Ranger Station) registered our cave as Y58. Down to Thermal Pool for a swim, then eats.

Saturday: split into two groups - Noel led one party back to Y58, while David Hughes, Bill Campbell, Phil Shepherd and self looked at a collapse structure half way between EDC and West Deep Creek, then located East Deep Creek, which we spent four hours in, pushing the chamber system until we came to a chamber about the size of the A.N.U. Physics Lecture Block, with absolutely beautiful formation - flowstone, rimstone pools, lakes, stalactites, columns, helicitites, shawls - you name it.

Also wandered around in the Tombstones for a while, and found Restoration Cave. Back to Caves House to get the key for Restoration.

She wash a beooshiful parshy that night.

Sunday: Jersey, Jillabennan, North and South Glory, Harrie Wood caves (5 hours). Also one party did EDC and Y58. Found the key for Restoration didn't fit.

Monday: Two hours in the Jillabennan Cave looking for extensions. Put a new lock on Restoration Cave, then came home, arriving in Canberra about 11.30 p.m.

M.G.W.

BUCHANAnzac Weekend.

People: David Gibson, John Brush, Ken Palmer, John Furlonger Jim Curtis, Jim Atkinson, plus three visitors. + Mick Alting

Friday: Left Canberra at the ungodly hour of five am, just as a thick fog settled. We appreciated appearance of the city, but as we at times could hardly see the bonnet of the car, the trip to Cooma was rather slow. This was annoying, but as my car had no heater, trying to keep warm was more important. Met John Brush and Jim Atkinson At Cooma, and arrived at Buchan around mid morning.

Friday afternoon was an exception in that we found the cave we were looking for (SSS Cave) without too much trouble. This proved completely different from the description given us, being merely a series of fissures, the descent of which required more gear than we had (the club's gear was in Wy-anbene with David Christie - many thanks to OSS for the use of some of theirs). Went back to campsite, charged off to the pub at Buchan, and completed the evening drinking and singing (in that order) around the fire. Eskys aren't the best seats, are they Ken?

Saturday: Due to an epidemic of headaches, we started caving rather late on Saturday, intending to locate Mabel's Cave. The result of two hours climbing over a cliff face was a dispute with a wombat over possession of a cave. Eventually, we found a fairly small cave high in the cliff which was populated with numerous bats. This possibly was Clogg's Cave. It contained many old signatures, possibly authentic. However, a VSS representative did not know of it.

On arriving back at the campsite, the VSS rep. took us through the Murrindal Tourist Caves (Shades of Death, and Murrindal Cave).

Sunday: Due to another epidemic of headaches, the same as Saturday occurred. We had a quick trip through Anticline, where, surprisingly there were very few bats. This is interesting, as the cave found on Saturday was full of them. On visiting the lower stream passage, we found that there seems to have been a collapse at the far end since February. The bad language even rivalled Wyanbene during the climb back to the road. We returned to Canberra via Suggan Buggan and Ingebyra, arriving home around ten.

Mick Alting.

N.U.C.C. TRIP REPORT

WYANBENE

Anzac Day (& shortly thereafter)

Present: Dave Christie, Dick Price, Noel Call, Norm Stokes.
(not necessarily in that order).

Left Canberra soon after the dawn service and despite the best efforts of about 20 kids, a couple of grown up kids and two of their cars to block the ford, made it to the campsite by about 10.00 a.m. Pitched camp amidst the multitudes (as well as the above-mentioned, numerous members of South Pacific (?) Diving Club, complete with wet suits and Scuba gear, and some bods from Sydney somewhere) and went underground at about 11 a.m.

Made it to Caesar's for a second lunch just before closing time at Noel's a la carte kitchen (specialises in soup, sardines and scroggin, not to mention tea) soon after 1 p.m., good going considering the amount of gear we had with us.

From Caesar's on the cave is very muddy with numerous ups and downs along the fissure formed by the creek. Firstly down a 60 ft. inclined pitch on the rope into (partly) Diarrhoea Pit which needs no further description. Ten feet up a slimy little pitch and fifteen feet down the ladder to creek level. Along a bit and down a small mud slope into the Chamber Pot which is like Diarrhoea Pit only round instead of elongated. Another hundred feet or so of muddy fissure just above the stream and hence to a squeeze too wet and tight even for Wyanbene. Retreat about twenty feet and conclude that the only way is up. Noble leader chimneys twenty odd feet up, plus back a bit further only to run out of skill or handholds or something. Noble leader chimneys back down again.

Enter Sir Noel! Emulates noble leader's feat just to rub it in and then decides he wants his back against the other wall, leaving the three other stooges down below more time to work out what they're going to do when he falls. Meanwhile back at the ranch, Sir Noel spies a nasty-looking little hole twenty feet that-a-way at the other end of the fissure and heads for that. So ends the episode of Anderson's Wall. (The rest of us came up on the ladder.)

Down 40 ft. on the ladder and hence via a few more mudslopes and such to the lake. Lake Chamberis pretty big (about the same as Rockfall from memory). The lake is about 12 ft. wide and disappears around a corner about 20 ft. away - looks like a tremendous dive for those guys out there, if

they can get their gear in. Trouble is it's taken us $6\frac{1}{2}$ hours to get here, scattering our gear by the wayside. (Actually the diving types didn't find the way out of the wet stretch.)

Coming out was uneventful after Anderson's Wall, where we had to leave a waist loop in order to get down complete with gear and unbroken necks; the only obstacles being the piles of lolly paper and broken formation left behind by the above mentioned multitude.

We surfaced at about 11 p.m. making a total of 12 hours for the return trip, and came back to Canberra on Saturday morning.

Discussions with the skindiving boys on Saturday morning suggest the possibility of a combined trip late in the year.

Trips of this nature are not easy. It took Dick and I the experience of two August Specials to organise this trip to a degree which I consider to be essential for the safety and efficiency of the people involved. Fatigue is probably the worst enemy of trips of this length. Little things like slipping in Rockfall and narrowly escaping a broken leg and taking twice as long as usual to get down the slope from Key-hole make one realize very clearly the danger of not being completely fit.

D.M.C.

Trip Report

10/5/69 Warroo - Narrangullen

Members present - David Christie, Dick Price, John Furlonger and myself. After meeting at the turnoff on the G.H. road and asking the farmer for permission to visit the caves, we proceeded via rough track to Wr.3rd. Having forgotten to bring water for the carbides we filled them with mud solution from Wr. 3 and walked over the hill to Wr.2, (Cat's Hole). After considerable delay the ladders were attached and the pitch descended, (about 50 feet in two stages). The fissure was followed until further progress became impossible, i.e. 6" wide. At this point two chimneying attempts were made by Dick and myself, after a difficult climb of about 15 to 20 feet, the fissure could be seen to head for the surface at 45° and was too narrow for further investigation.

After returning to the surface it was decided to abandon the search for Warroo cave on Por. 126 and instead

take a trip down the lake to Narrangullen. The 7 mile trip takes about one hour, during this time we had lunch and admired the interesting scenery (there wasn't much else to do). On arrival at the cave influx it was obvious that a considerable volume of water had been flowing into the cave though there was no surface flow now. After entering the cave a loud roar was heard which sounded like a large river or a waterfall, it turned out to be a small stream, (less than 1 cusec), being naturally amplified by the chamber. The next chamber entered is very large, though not as big as Caesar's Hall, some good photos could be taken here. At the end of the cave the myriad of signatures was examined, (oldest found was 1879 and is probably authentic). Dick pushed a squeeze but found nothing, on the way out more dates etc. were found on a somewhat vandalised, but very interesting formation. It would appear to me, and the others agreed, that there are a large number of holes in the roof of the cave which could warrant further investigation, a short scaling pole would come in handy. The trip back up the lake was really good, there was hardly a ripple, though it was a little cold as the sun was beginning to set. A stop was made in Yass for refreshments before arriving back home.

= Numbering is not official.

Ken Palmer.

• YARRANGOBILLY

10/5/69.

People: Annabelle Wheeler, Bill Campbell, Jim Atkinson, John Brush, Robert Hedland, Graham Handley, Michael Webb(L).

Saturday: Checked in with Ken and Stewart, and ran a Yak trip through the Jersey. Identified the Jersey as the old Jillabennan. Along the track to the Castle Cave. Very nice. Thermal Pool for a swim, then back to camp. Ken came up later and we had a party.

Sunday: Jersey again, down to the Grotto Cave for some pictures and some caving, then yet again the Jersey. Also did some exploration in the North Glory Cave, discovering a beautiful upper level about 100' from the floor.

While we were in the Jersey with some Yaks, all the lights went out. The tourists were surprisingly well behaved in the dark, until Brushy and self acquired some lights to bring them out of the cave.

M.G.W.

WYANBENE

17/5/69.

People: Johm Brush, Jim Curtis, Maurice ~~Bell~~, Self.

Set off at 7 a.m. with the intention of making a more orthodox descent of my previous nemesis. Arrived at about 9 a.m. to find that the campsite was occupied (taken over) by 40,001 Boy Scouts. Entered cave around 9.15 and after a quick run around ~~tourist~~ area went aquatic. Three Rovers followed us in, took one look at the stream passage, and went home again. After an exceptional amount of cursing, swearing, and gurgling, we reached Aitcheson's Bypass, and decided not to get completely wet. This cost us considerable time and effort as three of the four played at being stuck in the infamous squeeze. Eventually, after getting lost at Sump 2, reached Caesar's Hall, where we proceeded to the scene of the crime. After descending about 15', I found further progress impossible due to fallen rock etc.

Went as far as Diarrhoea Pit, where we had a great mud fight. We then turned round and came home. Saw a couple of bats, which disputed possession at Sump 2.

Mick Alting.

COMING EVENTS

3/6/69	Committee Meeting	Chez Webb, 8 pm.
7-8/6/69	TALBINGO Cave Hunting	M.G.W.
11/6/69	GENERAL MEETING	Physics, Room8
14-16/6/69	BUCHAN	Noel CALL.
21/6/69	FIELD DAY	M.G.W.
28-29/6/69	ARGYLE POT with CSS	Noel CALL.
5/7/69	NARRENGULLEN	M.G.W.
12-13/7/69	CHEITMORE	M.G.W.
26/7/69	DRUM (Bungonia)	Noel CALL.

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