

Quarterly NEWSLETTER

Spring 2013 Edition
Issued December 2013



MSS NEWSLETTER

Society News	2
Editorial.....	3
Trip Reports.....	3
Jenolan.....	3
Zorro Canyon.....	7
Upcoming Events.....	8
Trip Calendar.....	8
<i>Appendix 1 – 48th AGM meeting minutes</i>	9
<i>Appendix 2 – MSS Equipment List</i>	12

Cover Shot: Rod Smith setting up a belay in Juggler's Canyon.
Photo by Rob Clyne

Society News

Club EPIRB

Just a reminder to all trip leaders that we have the new EPIRB and this should be taken on every trip. Our Equipment Officer, Jim (0407 284 256), jcrockett3@bigpond.com), has this, so please coordinate with him to collect it before your next trip.

MSS Officers list

Position

President president@mssadventure.org.au
Secretary secretary@mssadventure.org.au
Treasurer treasurer@mssadventure.org.au
Equipment Officer equipment@mssadventure.org.au
Librarian library@mssadventure.org.au
Training Officer training@mssadventure.org.au
ASF Liaison

Newsletter Editor(s) newsletter@mssadventure.org.au
Website Manager webmaster@mssadventure.org.au
Public Officer

Name

Jim Crockett
Rod Smith
Jim Crockett
Jim Crockett
Rod Smith
Beth Little
Jim Crockett,
Rod Smith
Jim Crockett
Rod Smith
John Gray

Membership Details

Full member \$80
Prospective member \$30 (3 months)
Family membership \$160
Honorary membership \$45
Membership of other ASF Clubs \$30
Preference is for payment by Direct Debit to MSS Bank Account
BSB 062-021 Account 00901421 (Commonwealth Bank)
Cheques or Cash also accepted.

Editorial

Unfortunately there is only 1 trip report for this edition of the newsletter. One reason is that just as we were all warming up for the start of the canyon season the Blue Mountains were devastated by a series of catastrophic bushfires resulting in damage to not only large areas of National Park but also heart breaking destruction to many properties. We are lucky that there was not any reports of damage to any MSS members properties in the Blue Mountains. These damaging fires have forced the NPWS to close a number of areas including many popular canyoning areas including Wollangambe, Du Fours and Serendipity canyons. These are being regularly assessed and may be open before the end of 2013. Other areas currently closed and not likely to be opened again until 2014/2015 season include all canyons accessed via Waratah ridge (HITW, Bungleboori ck and tributaries), canyons north of the Wollangambe river, Bell creek canyon and all canyons south of the Bells line of road between Bell and Mt Banks.

Nevertheless there are still many canyon areas still open and this may be a good opportunity to plan trips to less visited canyon areas, which usually means longer walks and in our new trip schedule we are endeavouring to do just that.

We just had the 48th MSS AGM last week and one of the issues we discussed was that of making it compulsory to have all participants on MSS canyon trips or any vertical activity to wear UIAA approved helmets. (It is already mandatory on Caving trips) The obvious reason is the improved safety that this would give to all participants. This issue is up for discussion and if you would like to make comments then please contact the MSS training officer Beth Little, President Jim Crockett or Secretary Rod Smith. We will review this at the next MSS meeting on the 6th February.

Since returning from my successful and enjoyable trip to Europe earlier this year I have been busy starting organise for the International Congress of Speleology to be held at Penrith Panthers conference centre in 2017 as the appointed secretary. This is going to be a massive undertaking for ASF and Australian Cavers but will present a great opportunity for foreign cavers to get to know and see some Australian caves as well as opportunity for Australian cavers to meet and network with foreign cavers.

I recently went on a work trip to Papua New Guinea and knowing this country has some excellent opportunities for discovering new caves I was keen to seek out any opportunity for caving that may have presented. Fortunately a contractor I had hired to help me with the work there was from a smaller island some distance from New Ireland. I knew that New Ireland itself has some good caves but this contractor also advised me that there were some caves on his hometown island that had never been looked at. He was very welcoming to take us there in the future and so I will be working with him to see if we could organise a mini-expedition to this island hopefully in the next 2 years or so.

So it is not so long until the end of 2013 and I am sure we are all busy working towards our summer breaks and time over Christmas to meet up with family and friends to share food and drink and then later end the year with a bang. So I will wish all MSS members a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

PS: I got another trip report and was able to add this to the newsletter before going to Print/Web

Regards
Jim Crockett

Jenolan - 19th-20th October 2013

Participants - Rod Smith, Beth Little, Chris Johnstone, Helena Johnstone, Ben Johnstone, Owen Johnstone

Please enjoy what's jotted in my joyfully jaunty Jenolan journey journal:

With the fires burning out of control like a jalopy juggernaut on a joyride, the trip to our majestic objective was subject to the conditions. Checking the NPWS site, Jenolan was still open, and the RFS site didn't show any fires near the joint. There was the possibility that the Great Western Highway would be closed due to adjacent fires jaywalking accross, but that didn't happen.

I picked up a juvenescent Beth on the way through and we joined Chris, Helena and the juvenile Johnstones at the Jenolan Cavers Cottage. They already had the fire going, and the junior Johnstones were in pajamas and counting jumping jumbucks. The rest of us weren't too far behind.

Although cool overnight, the days warmed up, justifying no jumpers or jackets. We started Saturday with J20 - Rho Hole, we just had to find it first. I located J24 - Ian Carpenter very quickly and the conjecture was that, since they connected, J20 - Rho Hole wouldn't be too far away. An hour later we still hadn't found the entrance. Finding the cave was in jeopardy when I investigated a small depression and found a locked gate. Although we couldn't locate the tag, the key fit the lock, so we were confident it was the right cave, although there was some jocoserious jabbering about a juxtaposed jail.

There was only one killjoy. Although the key fit the lock, and it turned, the lock failed to open. We all had a go, with numerous cajoling techniques on display (no jimmys or jackhammers), but all to no avail. Although we'd found the cave, which doesn't always happen, it had rejected us like jaded jailbait.

A bit dejectedly we returned to the cars for lunch. From there we set off in the opposite direction, to find J72/J125 - Serpentine.

Again we were able to locate another cave, this time J35/J36 - The Nostrils, very quickly, to narrow down our search. However, this time we found the entrances to J59/J60/J61 - Little Canyon and one of the J72/J125 - Serpentine entrances very quickly. Jackpot! We were going underground, so we danced a jig, or jive or jitterbug, as the case may be.



Chris at the Hip Hugger, Little Canyon Cave Jenolan -Rod Smith

Knowing the through trip was probably out of the question, unless we conjured a miracle, we decided to enter the J59/J60/J61 - Little Canyon end and have an explore. Finding the entrance that appeared the easiest to navigate, we descended into the dark like jaguars in the jungle.

The cave became more interesting the further we went. It starts with a sloping floor under the base of the cliff, not too dissimilar to some sandstone caves. As we progressed further the jagged rock jutting out changed into a much more rifted shape, hence the Little Canyon name. Soon the only way forward was a

major chimney that'd turn legs to jelly. Closer inspection adjusted my perception so I judged it was possible to climb without injury.

Ben had had enough by this stage, so he and Helena ejected and went back to the cars while the rest of us tackled to chimney. The chimney was not as difficult as it first looked and soon we all made it to the top. Our trajectory then jolted us into the squeezes, four in quick succession. I made it through the first three, but jerked to a halt at the fourth. The others kept telling me it was the smallest so far, and with the return journey causing jiggling in my jockstrap, I decided it was a good time to stop.

Chris, Owen and Beth continued but, being that they were also aware of the jittery return journey, didn't venture too much further. The squeezes must have been easier on the way out, we didn't find the return journey as bad as we were expecting.

Returning to the surface it looked like someone was using a jacinthe filter, or maybe the surface of Jupiter. No joking! The sun shining through the smoke haze added a very distinctive colour to everything.

We rejoined Helena, asleep in the car, Ben had jogged back to the cottage.

Sunday morning, feeling rejuvenated, we decided to start be having another crack at J20 - Rho Hole, this time the project was aided by WD40. As soon as we arrived I sprayed a liberal coating of WD40 all over the padlock. Would it be enough, the jury was out. I sat down to let it do it's magic, but Helena didn't have the same patience. After a few minutes of playing with the lock it opened, but was still jambed in the bolt preventing the gate from opening. I took over from Helena and soon had the padlock free and gate ajar, our return jubilantly justified, we were in! Rejoicing we geared up and entered the first chamber.



The Drip, In Rho Hole Jenolan – Rod Smith

Once we were all underground Chris located the squeeze to the second chamber and went through. We all followed, except for me at the end. I made three attempts, burning kilojoules, but it was like trying to fit a jam jar between my jaws. I just had to jealously sit and wait.

Unfortunately I can't tell you about all the jewelled wonders the others saw, I'll just have to change my shape for my next visit. Maybe if I became a jejunator I could jettison my jumboness.

Ben was the first to return from their sojourn and was above ground in a jiffy like a jackrabbit on jellybeans. As Helena started negotiating the squeeze I heard Ben talking, and someone else answering. I sent Helena up to find out who he was talking to, and make sure there wasn't any problems. It turned out there had been a tour into J19 - Aladdin, and Ben had surfaced the same time they had. It must have been a surprise to the guide to see Ben apparently on his own, and that Ben knew they'd come from J19 - Aladdin because he was also a caver, and using the right jargon. Helena emerging would have set minds at ease.

By the time the rest of us made it up the tour group had gone. We promptly jammed the lock into the gate and returned to the cars for lunch. Still needing to pack up and clean the cottage we judged there was no more time for hijinks.

Another top joyous Jenolan jaunt.

Rod.

This trip report has been brought to you by the letters E and T, and the number 127



Helena relaxing ? In Rho Hole Jenolan – Rod Smith



Jugglers Canyon team – Rob Clyne

No trip report yet received for Jugglers Canyon but from all accounts it was an excellent day with many of our junior members honing their abseiling skills.

Zorro Canyon

Sunday 1st December 2013

Canyoners - Rob, Rod and Tony.

I must say I hadn't heard of Zorro canyon until Rod suggested we do it on the Sunday after our trip down Juggler on the Saturday.

There were only 3 of us today.

Travelling across the Darling Causeway you could really see the damage the October fires had done. After meeting at the Zig Zag we travelled out to the Glow Worm Tunnel road then turned left onto Sunnyside Ridge Road.

I was amazed how well the road was graded and seemed a lot wider than I remembered it.

A coal mining operation explained the mystery with the road dramatically getting rougher and more "bushy" just past the coal mine turn off.

Another right hand turn and a long run out along a ridge we parked at almost the end of the track.

Rod had done the canyon the previous season but it was quite difficult to pin point the spot to start.

Rod thought we were in the ballpark so we geared up and headed bush. Scrubby country with some nice pagodas but the canyon entry seemed allusive. Trying a few more ridges, a bite to eat, a chat and a bit more exploring unfortunately didn't yield any results.

With time marching on etc we decided to come back again with better maps and start earlier in the day.

Rod suggested lunch at Bird Rock would be good on the way back. We took a "short cut track" which turned out to be "interesting" part on the trip.

After an interesting hill climb (wish I still had the Troopy) we came across a nice tree blocking the way.

We had group meeting – deciding to use Tony's patrol to pull it out of the way with a chain.

Surprisingly it all went smoothly and we ended up at Bird Rock enjoying the expansive view for lunch.

We parted ways back at Zig Zag still having an enjoyable day even though we didn't find the elusive Zorro Canyon.

But it will still be there for "next time"

Cheers Rob

Upcoming Events

11th - 12th January 2014 Canyoning Bugleboori
 Contact: Beth Little, 0450 226 811 , littlebeth78@hotmail.com
 Contact by: 9th January 2014
 Grade: Medium/Hard
 Many canyoning options in this area.
 Trip may get changed due to the recent Blue Mountains fires.
 Many canyons in this area are currently closed contact trip leader for advice.

11th - 12th January 2014 Interclub Kids Caving – Wee Jasper
 Contact: Jim Crockett, 0407284256, jcrockett3@bigpond.com
 Contact by: 9th January 2014
 Grade: Kiddies
 Chance for the kids or grandkids to have a try at caving.
 Adults also welcome as we need plenty of supervision
 Car Camping at Billy Grace reserve

25th - 26th February Canyoning Newnes Plateau
 Trip leader: Jim Crockett, 0407284256, jcrockett3@bigpond.com
 Contact by: 23rd February
 Grade: Medium
 Camping at yobo's
 Surefire and Closet Canyons.
 Possibility of extension on Public holiday

October or later (TBA)
 Caving at Colong

Trip Leader: Rod Smith
 Contact: 0438 444 262, roderick_smith@hotmail.com
 By: TBA
 Grade: Medium

11th - 12th January
 Canyoning Bungleboori

Trip Leader: Beth Little
 Contact: 0450 226 811 littlebeth78@hotmail.com
 By: 9th January
 Grade: Medium/Hard

11th - 12th January
 Interclub Kids Caving
 Wee Jasper
 Organiser: Joe sydney

Trip co-ordinator: Jim Crockett
 Contact: 0407 284 256, jcrockett3@bigpond.com
 By: 9th January
 Grade: Easy/Kid friendly

25th - 26th January
 Canyoning
 Surefire and Closet
 Long walk or cycle required

Trip Leader: Jim Crockett
 Contact: 0407 284 256, jcrockett3@bigpond.com
 By: 23rd January
 Grade: Medium

1st - 2nd February
 Canyoning, Bushwalking
 Kowmung, Tuglow Area

Trip Leader: John Gray
 Contact: 02 47392111 john.gray@sydneywater.com.au
 By: 30th January
 Grade: Exploratory/Hard

6th February
 MSS Meeting
 At Canada Bay SES Headquarters

Co-ordinator: Rod Smith
 Contact: 0438 444 262, roderick_smith@hotmail.com
 By: 6th February
 Grade: Planning

15th February

Trip Leader: Rob Clyne

Canyoning
Grand Canyon

Contact: 0409033224 caver@people.net.au
By: 13th February
Grade: Easy/Medium

15th - 16th March
Canyoning and Caving
Wombeyan
Mares Creek Canyon

Trip Leader: Rod Smith
Contact: 0438 444 262, roderick_smith@hotmail.com
By: 13th March
Grade: Medium

3rd - 4th May
Caving
Jenolan
Far country / Little Canyon dig

Trip Leader: Rod Smith
Contact: 0438 444 262, roderick_smith@hotmail.com
By: 1st May
Grade: TBA

14th - 15th June
Caving
Jenolan
TBA

Trip Leader: Rod Smith
Contact: 0438 444 262, roderick_smith@hotmail.com
By: 13th June
Grade: TBA

23rd - 24th August
Caving
Jenolan
TBA

Trip Leader: Rod Smith
Contact: 0438 444 262, roderick_smith@hotmail.com
By: 21st August
Grade: TBA

Date TBA
Caving
Wyanbene
Cleaning and recreation

Trip Leader: Rob Clyne
Contact: 0409033224 caver@people.net.au
By: TBA
Grade: Medium/Hard

MSS 48th Annual General Meeting, 30/11/2013
Held at The Grand View Hotel – Wentworth Falls

Meeting Opened: 17:05

Present:

Rod Smith, Jim Crockett, Fedz, Kris, Bon, Chris Johnstone, Owen Johnstone, Bennett Johnstone, Rob Clyne, Laura Clyne

Apologies:

John Gray, Helena Johnstone

Any Corrections to Previous Meetings Minutes:

None

Correspondence:

Post:

Jenolan Hut Association – letter asking us to pay \$160
The Very Latest – Vol. 18 No 1 May 2013
The Very Latest – Vol. 18 No 2 October 2013
SUSS Bull 51(4)
SUSS Bull 52(1)
Caves Australia 193
Caves Australia 194

Email:

ESpeleo #4 for 2013

Committee Members Reports:

President – None

Treasurer – Motion by Rob Clyne (second Chris Johnstone) to leave fees at
Full member \$80
Prospective member \$30
Family membership \$160
Honorary membership \$45

Except remove: Non- ASF (No Caving) \$30

Cavers already registered with ASF (other clubs) \$30

Carried

Our bank balance looks good due to the grant which has yet to be spent. This grant is for the Macquarie Karst project and we are still working with the Stakeholders on how we should spend these monies. The money will be fully spent, but ultimately MSS will have ownership of any items that are purchased, but it's likely this or other similar projects will be going on for some time.

So if you take out that amount (\$4980) from the balance then we are still in a good position at \$5578.50.

The only other commitment we have is the purchase of new survey equipment which I am trialling which is going to cost Euro 900 (approximately AUD\$1350), which would leave us at \$4228.5.

In this case I cannot see any reason to increase the yearly subscriptions beyond the current rates.

I do not for see any large costs in the coming year outside of that.

Jim Crockett

MSS Treasurer

See appendix for financial report

Equipment Officer – See appendix for full list of equipment.

Training Officer – None

Librarian – None

Web Manager - None

Elections:

President declared all positions vacant and called for nominations. Officers elected:

Position	Name
President	Jim Crockett
Secretary	Roderick Smith
Treasurer	Jim Crockett
Equipment Officer	Jim Crockett
Librarian	Roderick Smith
Training Officer	Beth Little
ASF Liaison	Jim Crockett, Roderick Smith
Newsletter Editor(s)	Jim Crockett
Website Manager	Roderick Smith
Public Officer	John Gray

Status of Action Items:

Bolting Course – Rod Smith: None

Resurveying Stable Cave – Jim Crockett: With the purchase of new surveying gear, which is currently being trialled to iron out any issues, we are one step closer to achieving this.

Abercrombie surface survey – Rod Smith: None

Abercrombie documentation – Rod Smith: The last visit to Abercrombie resulted in GPSing another 14 tags. This takes it well passed halfway.

New Business:

Topo maps – Mike Nicolls has a selection of topo maps he has proposed donating to the MSS library. Jim will contact Mike to arrange picking up the maps.

OH&S – It has been proposed that we should enforce the wearing of helmets for all canyoning, caving and rope-related trips. If anyone has any comments relating to this plus submit them by the next meeting.

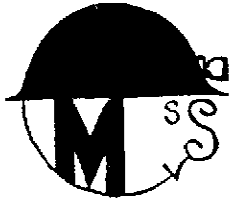
New trips –

Date	Leader	Activity	Location	Grade	Notes
15/16 Mar	Rod Smith	Canyoning/Caving	Wombeyan	Medium	
1/2 Feb	John Gray	Canyoning	Kowmung, Tuglow area	Exploratory/ Hard	
3/4 May	Rod Smith	Caving	Jenolan	TBA	Far Country/ Little canyon dig
14/15 June	Rod Smith	Caving	Jenolan	TBA	

23/24 Aug	Rod Smith	Caving	Jenolan	TBA	
TBA	Rob Clyne	Caving	Wyanbene		
15 Feb	Rob Clyne	Canyoning	Grand	Easy/Medium	
25/26 Jan	Jim	Canyoning	Surefire and Closet	Medium	

Next Meeting: Canada Bay SES 6th Feb

Meeting Closed: 18:15pm



Metropolitan Speleological Society Inc.

A MEMBER OF THE AUSTRALIAN SPELEOLOGICAL FEDERATION

P.O Box 178, THORNLEIGH, N.S.W. 2120

Metropolitan Speleological Society Annual Accounts 01.11.2012 - 31.10.2013

Opening balance

Bank Account	\$ 4580.97
Petty Cash	\$ 300.00
Total At 01.11.2012	\$ 4880.97

Income

Membership Subscriptions	\$ 2415.00
Trip Fees collected	\$ 452.00
Bank Account Interest	\$ 0.90
Accommodation monies collected	\$ 416.00
Grant – Macquarie Karst Project	\$ 4980.00
Total Income	\$ 8263.90

Expenditure

ASF Subscription Fees	\$ 1606.00
Bank Account Fees	\$ 3.85
Miscellaneous cost (Postal, Annual Statement & Equipment)	\$ 803.35
Accommodation	\$ 173.00#
Total Expenditure	\$ 2586.35

Cash Balance

Petty Cash	\$ 169.00
Bank Account Balance	\$ 10,414.50
Total Balance at 31.10.2013	\$ 10,583.50

Cheque to OSS for Hut deposit fee is yet to be presented.

This is true statement representing the accounts of the Metropolitan Speleological Society as submitted at the Annual General Meeting 30th November 2013

Jim Crockett – MSS Treasurer

MSS Equipment List			
Hardware Items			
Item	Quantity	Description	Comments
Lights	3	Headtorch DOSS 3W LED	Some are new UIAA rated types
Helmets	3	1 Yellow, 1 Blue, 1 Orange	
Descender	3	SRT “STOP” Single rope	
Descender	1	SRT “STOP” Double rope	
Descender	2	6 Bar stainless rack	
Descender	1	Whaletail	
Descender	1	Kong	Inline type
Carabiner	8	Cassin oval alloy	Screw gate
Carabiner	10	Stubai oval steel	Screw gate
Carabiner	3	Stubai oval alloy	Screw gate
Carabiner	10	Oval alloy	Screw gate
Maillon	2	Mini oval steel	
Maillon	1	Oval steel	
Maillon	11	Oval alloy	
Maillon	2	Triangle alloy	
Maillon	1	D steel	
Ascender	2	SRT Medium	
Ascender	1	Petzl hand right	
Ascender	1	Petzl hand left	
Ascender	2	SRT Chest	
Ascender	2	Gibbs	
Pulley	2	CMI Large	
Pulley	1	small single SRT	
Pulley	1	small double SRT	
Pulley	2	Mini oval steel	
Stich plate	3		
Hammer	1		
Rock punch	1	Petzl	
Tap	1	10mm ?	
Hose	1		
Hangers	17		
Misc h/w for bolting	1		
Piton	7		
Climbing nut set	1	Sizes 1,3,5,6,8	
Hex set	1	Size 8x2,5x2,3,6x2,7	
Friends	2	Size 1	
Friends	3	Size 2	
Friends	3	Size 3	
Bolt plates	6		
Nut removal tool	1		

Ropes, tapes and Ladder List			
Manufacturer and type	Dia (mm)	Length (m)	Condition
Bluewater 2	11	46	Fair
PMI	11	40	Good
Edelrid	11	45	Good
Edelrid	11	20	Fair
?	11	100	Good – In Bag
Bluewater	10	100	Good – In Bag
Edelrid	10	18	Good
Edelrid	9	30	Good
Edelrid	9	45	Fair
Edelrid	9	37	Fair
Edelrid	9	18	V. good
Edelrid	9	45	Good – needs a wash
Edelrid	9	40	Fair

Edelrid	9	35	Fair
Handlines	11		3 x various lengths
Bonwick Ladder		2 of 9m plus traces	Good
Tapes	25mm wide	various	18 in total
Tapes	50mm wide	various	13 in total

Miscellaneous and survey equipment			
Item	Quantity	Description	Comments
Scaling pole kit	1		
Tiedowns	3		
Acetylene light	1		
Suunto Compass	1		
Suunto Clinometer	1		
30m Fibreglass tape	1		
PLB	1	AccuSat MT4106 – GPS model	
Waistbelts	3		
Harness	2	Vertical – adjustable	
kneepads	2 sets		
rope protectors	11		
Canvas gear bag	1		
drybags	2	Large	
Caving packs	5	medium	
Caving packs	2	hip packs	
Cowtail set	1	includes krabs	
seat harness	1	requires belt	
MSS sloppy joes	2	Printed MSS logo	New in package – maroon XL
bearsuit	1		
trogsuit	1	meduim	
sewer light	1		
cleaning eqpt	1	brushes etc	