



MSS

Quarterly Newsletter
Summer 2014-2015
Issued March 2015

Society Information.....	page 2
MSS 50 th Celebrations.....	page 3
International Congress of Speleology.....	page 4
MSS Website security update.....	page 4
Editors 2 Cents.....	page 5
Trip Reports	
Cliefden 18 th -19 th October 2014.....	page 6
Wolligambe 1 –Boxing Day- 26 th December 2014.....	page 9
Yileen 27 th December 2014.....	page 10
Deep Throat Canyon 10 th January 2015.....	page 13
Kids Canyoning Weekend 7 th -8 th February 2015 (Wolligambe 2, Twister & Rocky Creek.....	page 15
Trip Calendar.....	page 19
<i>Appendix 1 – Meeting Minutes.....</i>	<i>page 20</i>

Cover Shot: MSS Kids in Twister Canyon.
Photo by John Gray

Society Information

Club EPIRB

Just a reminder to all trip leaders that we have the new EPIRB and this should be taken on every remote trip. Our Equipment Officer, Jim (0407 284 256), jcrockett3@bigpond.com), has this, so please coordinate with him to collect it before you lead 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
Cathi Humphrey Hood
Jim Crockett
Rod Smith
Beth Little
Jim Crockett,
Rod Smith
Natalie Etherton
Rod Smith
John Gray

Membership Fee Details

Full member \$80
Family membership \$160
Prospective member \$30 (3 months)\
Honorary membership \$45
Already a member of an ASF Club?: \$30

Preference is for payment by Direct Debit to:
Account Name: MSS
BSB: 062-021 (Commonwealth Bank)
Account: 00901421
Cheques or Cash also accepted.

Metropolitan Speleological Society

MSS is Celebrating 50 years of Adventure!

We wish to invite you to the 50th Anniversary Celebration for the Club.

Date: Saturday 5th Sept 2015

Location: YHA Katoomba Events room

Time: Activities commence 5:30pm

(event is kid friendly and will include slideshows, buffet dinner and other activities)
Formal proceedings finish by 9pm *(all welcome to stay on for further mingling)*

Dress Attire: Gumboots or Volleys encouraged.

Price: Adults \$40

Children *(under 13)* \$25

#BYO: Alcohol *(Softdrinks, juice, tea & coffee are provided)*

RSVP: Friday 20th March 2015

Payment Details:

Name of Account: MSS

BSB: 062 021

Account number: 009 014 21

*Please put as a reference: "Your surname" 50th

Return Acceptance Slip:

Post: PO Box 178, THORNLEIGH NSW 2120 or

Email: 50th@mssadventure.org.au

THE EVENT:

Accommodation is available at YHA Katoomba. If you would like to take advantage of this, please let me (Beth) know as YHA as requested that all bookings where possible be done via MSS (Beth) and will result in a group booking rate.

Beths' contact details: 0450 226 811 or 50th@mssadventure.org.au

DO YOU HAVE?

If you have any questions about the event or wish to contribute to the night in any way, please don't hesitate to ask. In particular I would love to collect and print some photos from the early days for the venue to illustrate our history-as well as borrowing any old caving gear for decoration.

THE PUBLICATION

This year MSS will be putting together a special 50th Anniversary publication and we are currently looking for ideas and contributions by any interested parties.

We are currently working on a number of articles such as; list of all committee members, presidents address, 50 years of MSS type article, and stats of trips (where we've been). We would also like to compile the following articles, and we seek your contributions;

- What MSS has meant for our members over 50 years?
- Culinary delights of MSS (memorable food in memorable locations).
- Profiles of the founding members and past presidents.
- Club member achievements (whether caving related or not)
- Gallery section (to illustrate our history). Please include a caption with photo supplied.
- Memorable trip reports (send in your suggestions/votes for your favourites over the years, no limit on your how many you may like to nominate)

Any other suggestions for the publication content are very welcomed.

THE MSS SHIRT

We will be releasing a special shirt, or potentially a small collection of shirts, to celebrate the MSS 50th Anniversary. We are looking to club members for submissions, and there will be prizes for best entries. Submit your ideas for t-shirts by 20th March 2015.

Looking forward to seeing you all this year to celebrate our 50th!

Beth Little

50th@mssadventure.org.au

0450 226 811

International Congress of Speleology 2017 update

As some of you might already be aware, Australia will be playing host to the ICS (International Congress of Speleology) in July 2017 in Sydney.

The ICS Organising Committee is currently looking for groups to organise various field trips before and after the running on the Congress. At a previous MSS meeting it was decided that MSS was in a position to organise field trips to Yarrangobilly caves and it was agreed we should proceed with this task. It was also felt that it might be better to organise this in collaboration with another group so currently we are having discussions with CSS (Canberra Speleological Society).

MSS is still looking for helpers to run the field trips at Yarrangobilly during this time, if you could help in any way it would be most appreciated. If any club members are interested in helping out with this could you please advise Rod Smith or Jim Crockett. Jim is also currently negotiating an agreement with the Yarrangobilly management on accommodation.

We will definitely be running our own MSS trip(s) before the congress to hone our caving skills and using this time for gathering information for a future field guide.

For more information on the 2017 congress visit <http://speleo2017.caves.org.au/>

When you login to the member's area of the Website you will notice a new access method requiring a member's login and a password. This feature has been added to improve the security of the member's area.

To access the members' area the login will be your current email address and the password remains as "forester"

There is an added feature to allow you to make a password change and also if you wish to change your login to something else other than your email you can send a message to Rod at webmaster@mssadventure.org.au

For those that indulge in social media and want to see some MSS adventure in action visit: <https://www.facebook.com/MSSAdventure>



The Editors New Clothes.

Hi fellow Groovers& Shakers, please feel free to welcome me to my first ever MSS newsletter, compiled & edited by yours truly- and sometimes with wine.

I would firstly like to sincerely thank Jim for all his hard work to collate and produce these informative and entertaining newsletters during the last few years. For me (and I'm sure I'm speaking for all of the recipients of the MSS newsletters)-reading each seasonal newsletter is always an enjoyable pastime, and regardless if I was present on the trip or not. Jim you have left me with some large fonts to fill!

For those who don't know me, I joined MSS a few weeks ago. Just kidding. I'm not a life long caver, having only realised the joy of skudding around in the dark and hanging off ropes about 8 years ago, before then I was just bored. Myself and family joined MSS about 4 years ago and while my family enjoy the occasional bonding foray into dark or dank places, they tend to enjoy it more when I leave them at home and go off on weekend MSS adventures.

Carrying out the Editor's role this year will give me an opportunity to assist the MSS committee from my remote location all the way out in woopwoop Rylstone. Thank science for electricity and computers! (I really volunteered for equipment storage, but nobody wanted an extra 200km per trip to pick up gear. I don't know why, it's a nice drive.)

I do believe that it's also my role to chase trip reports and photos for each edition. I apologise in advance if I sound too pushy at first, but if your reports are punctual & good- you make me as an editor look good, and in return I will promise not to render your report in comic sans. I am also happy to receive any articles of interest, suggestions or ideas for upcoming editions, any input is most welcome. I'm looking forward to this year of challenges.

Cheers,
Natalie

TRIP REPORTS

Cliefden Caves 18th-19th October 2014

Report and photos by: Cathi Humphrey-Hood
Participants: Rod Smith, Natalie Etherton,
Cathi Humphrey-Hood, Elswyth Porter, Aengus Porter,
Angus Wildie, Nui Wildie, Ambrosia Wildie
and Sapphire Wildie.



After a tediously slow ride across Sydney during peak hour due to a later than expected departure time, it took Elswyth, Aengus and myself a good 5½ hours to make the trip from the Central Coast to Cliefden hut. Fortunately Rod's directions were spot on and we reached the hut around 8.40pm. It lay in darkness, and while I worked out how to get all the lights and other things switched on, the kids took one look in each of the bunk rooms and decided they were too creepy, and that they were going to sleep on the lounges instead. Rod arrived a little over an hour after we did. He had picked up the survey gear from Jim and the aim for the next day was to do some surveying in Casuarina cave.

Natalie had decided to arrive the next morning, and she turned up bright and early. After a quick stop at the Boondaroo property house to speak to the owner, we headed off to do Casuarina. The day was absolutely beautiful, with blue skies, a warm sun and a very light breeze. We parked by the Belubula River, geared up and set off through a luxuriant green undergrowth of stinging nettles. Rod wielded the secateurs with great skill and after a short scramble along the bank of the river he had found our cave (CL32).



With memories of her first cave at Wee Jasper (Dogleg) still foremost in her mind, Elswyth was pleasantly surprised that she did not need to negotiate any tricky drops or squeeze herself through any tight, twisting and very narrow holes. Casuarina is a fairly straightforward stream passage cave with a few nice patches of decoration. It ends in a steep rising incline which apparently once hosted a second tagged entrance that has been lost in recent times. As the smallest in the group, Aengus was hoisted up the incline to join Rod in the search for the exit but he couldn't fit through the hole either. The incline appears to follow a natural bedding plane, so with some detective work it might be possible to relocate it from the outside.

After lowering Aengus down we left the cave while Rod and Natalie unpacked the survey gear and tried to get the instruments to talk to each other. I took the kids back to the cars and we had a lovely picnic by the banks of the river while waiting for the surveyors to finish their delicate work.

The kids decided that they'd had enough physical exertion for one day, so we dropped them back at the hut and set off again for the Island. The Island is currently located by a lush green blanket of lucerne (and more stinging nettles) and after a fairly warm slog across the fields and all the way to the other end, I realised I'd forgotten my helmet and had to trudge all the way back again. By the time I returned, Rod thought he had found the right entrance. Maybe.





This one (CL-6) did contain a tight, twisting and narrow entrance hole. After a few body lengths of twisting, it opened up a bit into a little round room with a nice little decorated pile on one side and a neatly arranged skeleton (of what looked like it might have been a fox) on the other. Everything was very dry. Around the next corner it opened further into a well decorated room with lots of holes and potential paths but no obvious way on. Rod looked around for a while but eventually the dust got to us and we wiggled our way out again.

We returned to the hut and cleaned ourselves up. Angus, Nui, Sapphire and Ambrosia arrived very late in the afternoon. After introductions, we cooked dinner and Rod got a nice fire going. The kids soon had a game of Ticket to Ride Europe underway on the table and plans were made to do a trip through Main Cave the next morning.



Elswyth decided she would stay at the hut and rest but the remainder of our intrepid group piled into vehicles and set off to find Main Cave. Main Cave, unfortunately, decided it did not want to be found. It looked like we zigged when we should have zagged up over the hill from the flat near the river, and a substantial amount of time was spent roaming over the hill. The sun was warm and the morning was magnificent, with very little wind. The limestone outcropping on top of the hill was fairly massive and not very fossiliferous.



Eventually Rod suggested that Children's Cave at the top of Murder cave might be a nice alternative – and so it turned out to be. After a low, flat entrance, it opened into a remarkably pretty and surprisingly white cave, with reasonable amounts of decoration and a few twists and turns just to keep things interesting. It was about the right length for the kids, too, not too long but long enough to be well worth the trek over the hill. Though it was also very dry and dusty, something our lungs did not appreciate.

We emerged into a by-now rather hot midday sun.



A quick lunch back at the hut was followed by packing and tidying up - Rod and Natalie were very efficient and soon had the hut looking like no one had ever been there. I had to whisk the kids away because Elsywth had a school camp the following week and we still needed to pack her stuff - as it was we arrived home around 6.40pm.

I had noticed quite a lot of faulting in the area while we were walking around the caves and a geological map reveals small faults everywhere (Webby and Packham, 1982, reference below for those interested) which would be nice to have a look at, along with the stratigraphy, on a return trip. I'd like to see what Main Cave looks like too!



Wollangambi One.

Date: Boxing Day

Trip Leader: (well kind of) RayEtherton

The Victims: Natalie, Dearne, Vince, Tommy, Josh, Hailey, Fletcher, Rod, Rob, Laura, Jim, Patrick.

This is the first trip I have run with MSS and the first trip that I have run for more than 30 years. So I started with an easy one.

We met at the Mt Wilson fire at around 10 and started walking downhill. Upon arrival we all found corners to get changed into our wetsuits inflate our inflatables and then the paddling began a nice leisurely trip down the river.

"Rob & Laura contemplating the answer to the ultimate question". Photo by Haley Bambridge



*"I love being out bush"
- photo Natalie*



*"Not all inflatables are created equal"
photo: Haley*



*"I think Rods' meds are wearing off"
-Photo Natalie*



*"Rambo (aka Tommy) Wondering if he should take out the 50 armed guards or quietly float past them.?"
Photo by Haley Bambridge*



We stopped at the entrance to Kelvinator Canyon for lunch. A quick side trip was offered but taken up by none. After lunch it was off to the exit and nice dry clothes for the walk out. Sadly my dry bag had other ideas as I pulled my sodden "dry" clothes out.

Some people needed a belay on the climb out fortunately Rod had packed a harness and a rope and did a fantastic job of helping those that needed it. Fletcher got bored with waiting on the ledge and shimmied up the climb followed by Laura's comment "wow-I'm going to suck in comparison". When it was Laura's turn she shimmied up followed by Natalie's comment "hey Laura- you sucked!". We arrived back at the car around 5. A fun day, a totally enjoyable canyon with great company

Yileen - 27/12/2014

Participants: Nat Etherton, Chris Johnstone, Ben Johnstone, Owen Johnstone, Rod Smith (TL)

Although it wasn't raining, it was overcast and colder than it had been on Boxing Day. The good news was that I wouldn't be adding to any sunburn I received the day before. The bad news is that we'd need to watch the cold.

Nat and I arrived at the lower Pierces Pass parking area, the designated meeting spot, a few minutes early. Chris arrived with Ben and Owen a couple of minutes later. The first challenge for the day was determining which car(s) would stay and which would be driven to the departure point.

Eventually we all piled into Chris' and my car and drove to the Mt Wilson turn off on Bells Line Of Road. Here Chris then started organising his gear for himself and his boys. The next challenge was getting the boys out of the warm car and into the cold morning, mountain air.

I wasn't sure exactly where the fires from October 2013 had burnt, so I didn't know if we'd have a clear track to follow. As it turned out I needn't have worried, the track is quite distinct (we lost it only briefly near the end). Soon we were descending a ridge between two creeks, the creek below the junction being our destination for the day.

We weren't in the creek long before the decision was made to don the wetsuits, the next section looked a bit damper. While getting changed Ben and Owen started discussing, in a general sense, who would want to see various parts of other people's anatomy. More specifically, why would anyone want to look at men's more private area. Chris suggested that a certain group of people may actually want to, and we had a representative from that group with us. Natalie (wisely?) decided not to contribute to that conversation.

With wetsuits on we proceeded down the canyon, managing to avoid the water.

Even though I had done Yileen three times previously, I only remembered two abseils. Thus I was surprised when we came to a drop that wasn't either of the abseils I'd remembered, yet down-climbing looked rather difficult. While I looked at the drop rather bemusedly someone, I think it was one of the boys, found an anchor on the end of a ledge on the left, behind a boulder. Begrudgingly I had to let go of my memory and admit we would be doing one more abseil than I'd remembered.



Soon we arrived at an optional slide which I did remember. Everyone else slid down, then I walked down. It seemed to disappoint the others that I didn't do the slide, but it was cold and I didn't want to get my head wet.

After that was another drop, and another abseil that I didn't remember! It looked possible to jump, which Ben was keen to do, but rather awkward, so we weren't keen to let him. Instead we abseiled, but Ben found a ledge he could climb up to which allowed him to do a jump, not quite as high but a lot safer. I waited at the top while he did his first jump.

As I prepared to abseil I heard a voice ... It was calling my name. Did it want me to search for enlightenment at the bottom of the pool? Or did it want me to find inner peace while hanging off the end of a rope?

No, it was just saying hello. I looked around and saw two people making their way down the canyon. Assuming it was the closer person who had called I was trying to recognise them. When I eventually looked at the other person I realised straight away it was none other than Dave Stuckey. The other person was Louise, a SUSS person I had met once before when she had joined our group to do the Naked Lady Circuit in Mammoth at Jenolan.

Dave was proving what a hard man he is by doing the canyon without a wetsuit. He had told Louise that she didn't need a wetsuit, but she hadn't believed him.

I descended and then Ben and Owen each had a jump before Dave and Louise abseiled the drop. We let Dave and Louise through, they were definitely going to be faster than us. And we haven't seen them since.

The canyon kept going, and so did we. The decision was made to stop for lunch, the boys were getting cold and we thought getting some food into them may help warm them up a little. There wasn't any sun due to it being a very overcast day, so no-one warmed up much during our stop. There was, however, one advantage of the boys being cold, they talked less!



A bit more canyon then we finally arrived at an abseil that I remembered. This is an 18m drop that starts on a slope then goes vertically through a slot into about waist deep water. A nice abseil, but we didn't enjoy it as much as usual due to the temperature.

The last, and final, abseil follows shortly after. This is the big one, approximately 55m overlooking the Gross Valley. Spectacular views, and certainly a test to see how you are with the height. Chris went first, then the two boys so that they could get warm. Nat was the penultimate abseiler, then I came down last. As enjoyable as the canyon is, on a day like that it was great to get out and get everyone warm.

Surprisingly the boys offered to carry the ropes, as long as that was all they had to carry. We let them, it was greatly appreciated. Ben fit the rope he carried into a pack, Owen just carried it by hand.

We made it back to the carpark in good time. Nat decided to check exactly what the time was, then asked the age old question "what time do you think it is?"



"4:00pm" Chris replied.

Ben and Owen didn't have a guess, but I went with 4:42pm.

"4:34pm" Nat proclaimed.

With great enthusiasm Chris excitedly exclaimed, "I was the closest ... "

" ... Without going over."

As we were getting ready to go and retrieve the other vehicles, Chris was attempting to get Owen to put some shoes on. "When we get to our car you'll be standing on the side of the road."

Owen's reply to this was, "But why can't I sit in the middle!"

Nat and I just looked at each other and laughed. That was about all we could do.

With everyone in Nat's car we drove back up to the Mt Wilson turn off to get the other vehicles. Then we parted ways and headed home.

Another great trip.

All Photos: Rod Smith

Deep Throat Canyon –

10th January 2015

Participants: Rob Clyne, Natalie Etherton, Rod Smith (TL)

The more canyoning you do, the more likely that, sooner or later, you will have a trip that will be termed "an epic". But what exactly makes a trip "an epic"?

Does a trip become "an epic" when someone gets injured, or worse. Or is it when something else goes wrong, such as a navigational error. Maybe it's just based on how long the trip takes to complete. Or, more likely, any of the above. However, does an injury or navigational error automatically make it "an epic"?

Is "an epic" also subjective? For example, Danae Brook would be considered "an epic" by mere mortals, but not by the likes of John Gray or Tony McGregor.

I was thinking about these things as I drove home on the evening of the 10th, after doing another "epic" trip. The reason for it being "an epic" was primarily the length of the trip, 13 hours, although there was a minor injury and a guest appearance from John Gray.

I had been expecting a long day, so I'd told Rob and Nat to meet me at ZigZag at 8:00am. This had meant the alarm had gone off at 5:30am and, although I was early, I was the last to arrive.

After verifying that someone is still ensuring there is toilet paper in the toilets at ZigZag, we made our way out to the Hole-In-The-Wall carpark at the end of Warratah Ridge Rd. There were two other groups there, one heading for Hole-In-The-Wall, the other heading for Bjelke's Mind. The group going for Bjelke's Mind looked fit and capable, but it was still going to be a long day trip for them.



We left the carpark around 8:45am, which I was happy with. The fire trail is still easily navigable, although gets a little sketchy in places after the Hole-In-The-Wall turn-off, something to be aware of if walking it in the dark. The end of the fire-trail is not as obvious as it used to be, but there is a small rock cairn to mark it.

The track from here was affected by the fires from the end of 2013. Before then it was becoming quite obvious almost as far as the saddle above the end of Bubble Bath. Now, you lose it within 10 metres. We could find it in places, but more care needs to be taken with the navigation than previously.

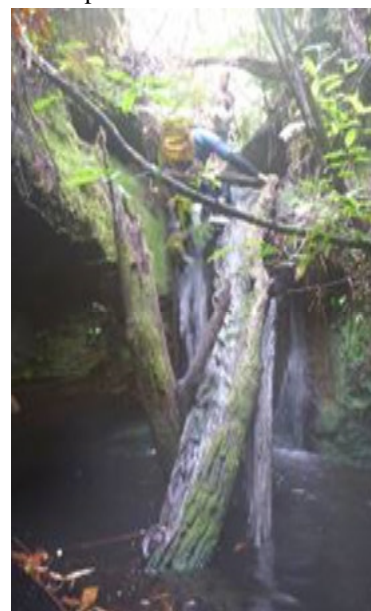
The good thing was that our navigation was working well on the day, so we got to the ridge above (to the west) of Deep Throat with only very minor issues.

We were surprised that the guys going for Bjelke's Mind hadn't passed us on route. They looked generally fitter than us and ready to go when we left, and with a bigger day in front of them, they should have been pushing it a bit harder. We speculated on that as we admired the view from the first pagoda on the ridge. Maybe we're better than we thought we were ...

Ready to move on we found the pagoda had a drop off of a couple of metres, so, after back-tracking, we found we were already being forced off the ridge. I felt we were still too far upstream, so we stuck to the side of the ridge for a while. We got sick of that after a while, so we found a relatively easy way down and made for the bottom.

Although the scrub was thicker at the bottom, we managed to find a way around the worst of it and within a short time could see a swampy section ahead. This swampy section coincided with a tributary joining from the other side. We skirted around the swampy section because, as Rob put it, it would be a haven for snakes. But as soon as we'd passed the swampy section we were back in the creek as the canyon was due to start.

Within a short distance things started to look a bit more canyonish, and we reached the first abseil. This abseil is less than 10 metres high, but is not straight-forward. Rick's guide says it's then a walk from here to the final two abseils at the end of the canyon. It would appear that Rick's definition of a walk varies from ours.



It didn't take long before we found another short drop, which we abseiled, and then another. I don't remember the exact number, but there was at least two extra abseils. One was rigged around a tree that had been burnt slightly on the "up-canyon" side. As I began the descent and loaded the rope, a large section of bark peeled off the tree. This gave Rob and Nat a fright as they thought the whole tree had broken.

In time we arrived at the two abseils that mark the end of the canyon. These are definitely the highlight of the trip. Both around 40 metres in height.

The first drop is reasonably straight forward and has a pool at about 30 metres down, which you need to cross to finish the abseil. No-one had any problems with this. While we were preparing to tackle the second abseil, Rob saw something drop from the top of the abseil into the pool, and then splash around a bit. He may have been trying to freak us out a bit, but no-one attempted to find out if there was anything there.

The second abseil is not so simple. The anchor is low, so starting the descent is difficult. There is then a pool about 10m down which, according to Rick's description, sucks you in, and is what the canyon is named after. Getting over the lip to continue the descent is also harder than the first drop.



I went first and made the start look difficult. I was preparing to get sucked into the pool, but was somewhat disappointed. Once over the lip of the pool the rest of the descent is very nice, with some lovely sculpting on the wall near the bottom. Rob came next. When he reached the bottom I asked him the all important question, "which rope do we pull?" Neither of us had looked. So when Nat got to the lip of the pool we managed to be heard enough so she could check which rope was the puller. Crisis averted!

By now it had started raining, but we were only going to get wetting anyway as we had to wade upstream in the Bungleboori to get to our exit. We arrived at a point that we thought must be close to the exit, but decided to check the map and GPS. The exit was only another 100m or so upstream. I immediately recognised where we had to climb up behind a tree.

Again the track that I had remembered from previous trips is now basically non-existent, so we may not have taken the best route up, but it worked.

We were starting to get concerned about the time. Although there was still some daylight, it was getting late in the day and we weren't at all confident of getting back to the cars in daylight. We at least wanted to get to the firetrail before sunset, walking the firetrail after dark is not a big problem.

Following the ridge up didn't require any difficult navigation, but the closer we got to the firetrail the wider the ridge got, and hitting right on the end of the firetrail without a track to follow was not likely to happen. And the ridge seemed to go on longer than expected.

We were discussing stopping to pull out the map and GPS again when we hit on a familiar landmark, part of the track we'd followed in earlier in the day. Turning left we were on the firetrail a couple of minutes later, and we still had some daylight.

By the time we reached the Hole-in-the-Wall turn off it was time to pull out the torches, and in the end we reached the cars at about 9:00pm. The group that were doing Hole-in-the-Wall had obviously returned well before us, but the guys doing Bjelke's Mind hadn't come back. There was still no sign of them when we drove away.

Nat and I had originally planned to do another canyon on the Sunday, but after such a long day (12.5 hours), and with the weather deteriorating, we opted out. As we approached ZigZag we came across a vehicle, stopped. As I pulled up to see if they needed assistance I realised it was John Gray. I found out that Jane had been concerned when she hadn't heard from Rob and so had contacted John. John, being the great individual that he is, had loaded Kathy and the kids into the car and come for a drive to see if we were OK.



We were OK, we'd just had an "epic". Rod

All Photos: Rod Smith

Kids Canyoning Weekend

Saturday 7th: Wolligambie 2 Canyon

Team Leader: Rod Smith

Participants: Ray, Natalie & Fletcher Etherton; Chris, Owen & Bennet Johnstone; George, Kaitlyn & Ryan Petrides,

Sunday 7th: Twister & Rocky Creek Canyon

Team Leader: Jim Crockett

Participants: Jim, Fedz, Bon & Chris Crockett; Rod Smith; Ray, Natalie & Fletcher Etherton; John, Kathy, Keeley & Isabella Gray; Liz Brownlow; Angus, Ambrosia & Sapphire Wildie; Tony Le; Rob & Abbie Clyne.

This weekend canyoning trip was organised for the kids in MSS, a chance for the parents to make their children suffer, a chance to run their much loved children through the full gamut of emotions; from fear to abject terror, from feeling cold to glacial freezing, and experiencing high anxiety to mind numbing horror. Well, that's what you would think happened when you read the trip reports written by several of the victims- ahem "participants"- the fortunate kids who recovered enough to pen a few words that is.



Saturday's Victims

Photographed by Ray Etherton

Camera owned by George Petrides

On Saturday we woke up early in the morning. We drove to canyoning with some friends of ours. It took 2 hours to drive there and we were so excited.

When we got there we got ready to ~~ubish~~ walk. When we were walking we saw a big python. The snake was staring at us. After that we saw 5 or 4 massive termite mounds and they were so cool. Then we started walking across a pretty big cliff. I felt really scared!

Finally we arrived to the water. We all got dressed into our wet suits cause it was freezing cold. We did canyoning for 6 hours and it was so scary because there were waterfalls we had to go through. Also there were big spiders walking on the water and no one could touch the bottom of the water. The best part was when a big lizard jumped on Nataly's head. Finally we got to the end. We had to climb up this pretty big steep mountain. After

After that we were at the top of the mountain we saw great views! and finally we finished canyoning we went to our car and left. It was really fun and scary. I might do that again.

Ryan the end



Trip Report: Ryan Petrides
Photos: George Petrides

On Saturday we went canyoning with some friends of ours. At first we walked down this rocky path for at least 3km. Ben spotted a diamond python it was amazing and beautiful. We kept walking and then arrived at the canyon. We got dressed in our wet suits and got prepared. This took quite a lot of time I think that it was a bit too long. We also found a brown snake. Once the canyoning was over we started to climb up ^{some} these rocks ^{and} it was really scary. On our walk we found a perfect view of the mountains. We walked through bushes and twigs, it was hard. We had seen the campsite, we completed the walk, eight hours non stop.

At first I found it fun but then it was tiring and wouldn't ^{seem to} end. But this was an experience. The rating of this Adventure would be a 7/10.

I forgot to mention one thing the canyoning. I left this ^{to the} last because this wasn't the best part. On the canyon we saw gobbies, spiders and these weird things on top of the water. We saw huge rocks with all sorts of nature on it. There were jumps where you could jump off rocks and land in the water. We had to get over these rapids. It was scary and fun at the same time.



My Worst Canyon Experience Ever.

On Saturday 7th February, 2015, we went to Wolligambe 2. The people who came with us was Natalie, Ray, Rod, Owen & Bennet, Chris, George and Ryan and there was a girl who was Ryan's sister but I don't know the girls name. An hour walk in, on the way we saw a diamond headed python. The way in was the way out for Wolligambe 1. I was the only one who took the hard way down the rocks on the way down. It was cold, one message Never Go There. It was fun, very cold and had good jumps to jump off.

Near the way out we saw a brown snake. When we were getting changed ready to go out I accidentally knocked some poor persons clean dry socks in the water and one shoe. Then we headed out. There were long bushes, I couldn't see anything same as the adults, and the track was the only thing I could see. Then when we got back we went back to my camp and got clean clothes on. Then the other people ditched us and went home for food. And one person stayed- he was the best.

On Sunday 8th February 2015, we did the Twister Canyon. The way in was mostly fun for me and a bit fun for the others because it was steep. When we got there we got changed into appropriate clothes for the Twister Canyon like wetsuits and other stuff for water what keeps you warm and a helmet. When we got in the water was freezing, freezing, freezing cold. I was the 6th to get fully in the water. There were a couple of jumps. The first thing was a slide, the second thing was a slide but there were different ways to go down instead of the slides because the water was freezing. There were 3 big jumps. I didn't do any of those. The final one was the scariest so we had a harness on us then we got lowered by a person named Rod.

Then we got to the end and got changed and had lunch. We saw a yabby in the water, then we forgot about it and started skipping stones. Then we were heading out. The water was underneath the ground when we were heading out- you could hear it. Then we found a spot to hang out to wait for the others at the back. On the way out was a very steep hill going up. When we got up the hill, all the kids really wanted water. And there were flies bigger than your thumb nail. Then we said goodbye to everybody and headed home.

Twister Canyon was the worst canyon I have ever done but for adults it's the best canyon. I would do Wolligambe Canyon again.

From Fletcher Etherton.

Trip Report by Ben Johnstone

It started off with us trekking in but about half way in I noticed a large python and seemed especially spooked because I was about to pick it up. When we were close to the canyon there was a bit of a climb and Kaitlyn seemed a bit spooked by the height but made it down fine. Not long after we did make it to the canyon and some people decided to stack one lilo on top of the other to help stay drier though later I made a "team" with Fletcher.

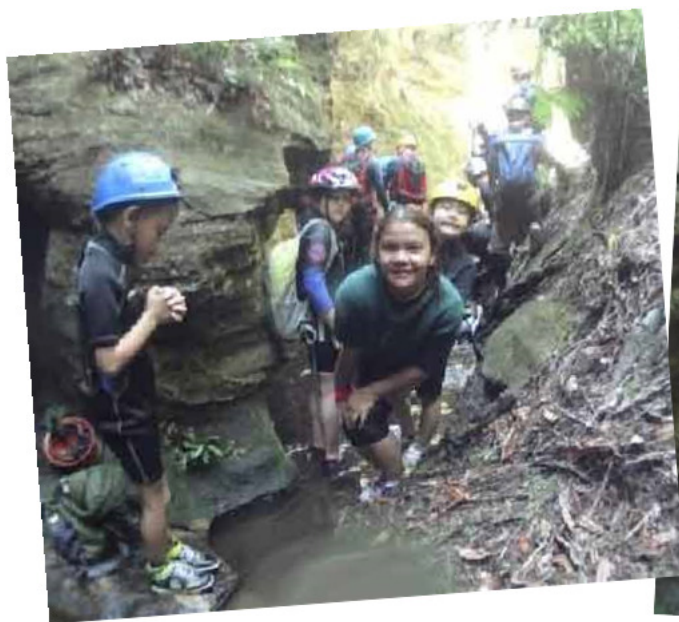


Not much of note happened in the first 10 minutes when I hadn't teamed with Fletcher. It was a bit tedious at first because all of the kids were new to the lilos and also with Kaitlyn and Ryan new to the whole experience. Most of the journey was free of incident except for the part when Owen tripped over and went under in a bit of a rapid area. There was also a incident in when I slipped and fell in when we were at the lunch area but I got away mostly unscathed with just a few minor bruises. Me and Fletcher also had a challenge to see who could keep the most rocks safe after a certain point so we could skip them, we called them the cargo and kept them in between our two stacked lilos. At one point when Nat was waiting a lizard used her as a bridge and ran across her from the edge to a rock in the middle. The whole journey took about 6 hours and the landscape out of the canyon looked as though a bushfire had happened recently. The whole journey was enjoyable but much of it was just boring floating along and lying down. It needed more jumps and slide things.

From Sapphire (9 y.o.):

Twister Canyon is a canyon with a lot of jumps and cold water. There are about 5 jumps into deep water. Some kids are brave to jump into water they cannot see the bottom of. Some are not. I'm one of the nots. They tell me it is fun, but the water is freezing.

Apart from the cold water, I had quite a lot of fun, made a new friend, talked about cool things, and watched everyone wince as they entered the cold water. Overall it was a good trip.



Trip Report- Sheep Dip. —Abbie Clyne

It was nothing like I had ever imagined. The water flew down the waterfall as if it was a bird that hadn't spread its wings for decades. The rocks were green with slime and as slippery as polished porches. The wet ferns shared their water droplets with the ground as they fell down from the tips of their leaves.

As I plunged into the water, I screamed loudly. The hot, humid air was a distance memory. The water was as cold as the waters surrounding Titanic. I ran my hand through the water. It felt like maple syrup: creamy and smooth.

My backpack floated peacefully on my back as I swam through the clear water. Throughout the canyon we had so much fun swimming, sliding, and jumping.

The walk out of Sheep-Dip was pure torture! Wet backpacks that were heavy and full of water. Rock after rock, step after step. After what seemed forever we finally reached the top where our car was. I had never been so happy to see it!

From Ambrosia (12 y.o.)

Twister Canyon was freezing cold. I didn't like it as much as the other canyons I have been to, but I know a lot of other people like it. I do not recommend it for people who don't like jumping off high waterfalls/cliffs..... but the trip was nice (ish).

Upcoming Events

Ningaloo Underground
30th ASF Conference
Exmouth, Western Australia
21-26 June 2015

<http://ningaloo.wasg.org.au/>



MSS Trip Calendar

12th April Abseiling

Malaita Wall

Contact: Rod Smith, 0438 444 262, roderick_smith@hotmail.com

Grade: TBA

25th-26th April Caving

Glenrock

Grade: Easy/Medium

Contact: Rod Smith, 0438 444 262, roderick_smith@hotmail.com

May
Caving/Training
Bungonia

Trip Leader: Beth Little
Contact: littlebeth78@hotmail.com

May 9th-10th
Caving
Wyanbene

Trip Leader: Ray Etherton
Contact: sox@soxelectrical.com, 04 2776 9729
Grade: Medium/Hard

June 6th-8th
Caving
Jenolan

Trip Leader: Rod Smith ,
Contact: 0438 444 262, roderick_smith@hotmail.com
By: 27th
Grade: TBA

15-16 Aug	Rod	roderick_smith@hotmail.com	Caving	Jenolan	
19-20 Sep	Rod	roderick_smith@hotmail.com	Caving	Jenolan	

MSS 416th General Meeting, 5 February 2015

Held at Canada Bay SES
Meeting Opened: 7:35pm

Present: Roderick Smith, Jim Crockett, Beth Little (by phone), Ray Etherton (by phone), Natalie Etherton (by phone)

Apologies: Cathi Humphrey-Hood, Chris Johnstone

Any Corrections to Previous Meetings Minutes: None

Correspondence:

SUSS Bull 53(2)
ASF Membership Invoice
Receipt for the Annual Return

Committee Members Reports:

President: None
Treasurer: None
Equipment Officer: We have received a quote for new helmets for the club.
Training Officer: None
Librarian: None
Web Manager: None
50th Anniversary Coordinator: Preparations are well underway. The room is booked. The invitations have been finalised and are about to go out.

Status of Action Items:

Bolting Course – Rod Smith: None
Resurveying Stable Cave – Jim Crockett: None
Abercrombie surface survey – Rod Smith: None
Abercrombie documentation – Rod Smith: None
Documentation – Chris Johnstone: None

New Business:

Karst atlas project – Joe Sydney has purchased a digital camera (Canon Powershot), 2 spare batteries and a memory card.

In an effort to make it easier for people to participate in meetings, especially those who are not in Sydney, we're going to investigate what options are available for phone and/or video conferencing. Rod Smith has taken on this action item with the aim to have some ideas to present by the next meeting.

Trip planning:

Date	Leader	Activity	Location	Grade	Notes
25-26 Apr	Rod	Caving	Glenrock	Easy/Medium	New caves are found on most trips
9-10 May	Ray	Caving	Wyanbene	Medium/Hard	
Spring	Rod	Caving	Colong	Medium/Hard	Postponed from the first half of the year
24-25 Oct	Rod	Decadence Walk		Easy	

Next Meeting:

7 May – Canada Bay SES Headquarters

Meeting Closed: 8:50pm
Meeting was followed by Tim Tams and photos from previous trips.

