



MSS Quarterly Newsletter

Summer 2015 - 2016

Issued March 2016

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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.

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



THE MSS T-SHIRT

has finally arrived!

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- It comes in a variety of sizes from S to XXL
- It comes in a variety of one colour



It's also available as a polo shirt



And a hoodie!



\$25

\$30

To purchase these unique items at these amazingly low prices, contact Rod,
secretary@mssadventure.org.au but hurry, this offer will not last!

MSS WEBSITE SECURITY UPDATE



<http://www.mssadventure.org.au/>

When logging in 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 members' 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

INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF SPELEOLOGY 2017

Update

Report by Jim Crockett

Arrangements for the Speleo 2017 Congress are proceeding nicely and we have some exciting field trips being organised from the Kimberly WA to Tasmania and everywhere in between.

The congress is also looking to be an exciting program and suitable for all caving types from scientists to weekend cavers.

We are just looking for any ways to bring down the costs and one of those is through sponsorship. If you have any ideas on how and who we could obtain sponsorship from please advise me ASAP.

Also there are still plenty of spots for anyone who wants to volunteer with the organising and operation of the congress, please advise me and we can find a suitable job for you.

MSS Training Day - 28 November 2015

Report by: Beth Little

Participants: Rod Smith, Marilyn Scott, Nat, Ray and Fletch, Nicholas and Marcela, the Johnstone family and Beth Little (TL)

Believe me, my young friends, there is nothing – absolutely nothing – half so much worth doing as simply messing about with ropes. Simply messing.

Our training day was more a weekend up at Rylstone where Nat and Ray had generously offered to host us on their property. My huge thanks to them for accommodating us for the weekend. In the large shed on Saturday we were able to settle ourselves in, and leisurely pace our afternoon of training indoors where we hung around and tweaked gear and techniques. We had participants with a range of skills on the day. We covered topics in discussion such as: rope care, basic prusik techniques, ladder technique, essential knots, ascending with mechanical devices (sit/stand technique), SRT practice (changing from abseil to ascending and back), SRT cont'd (knot cross overs, re-belay, deviations, traverses). With a whole range of rope obstacles set up to try. The kids along stayed for the fundamentals, but their preference to play outside in the cubby house (of all cubby houses) allowed the adults opportunities to have hassle free time to sit and watch the antics as people hung around and problem solved scenarios.

In my opinion Ray upheld his title as BBQ King with dinner for us on Saturday night, coordinating the variety of meats we had all bought with us. Chris' BBQ Haloumi with Lemon deserves a very worthy mention as was a mouth-watering stand out piece. Nom nom. Salads a plenty for all to share; board games and great company for the evening.

Sunday we headed to Dunns Swamp to get some abseil practice in for those needing to practice their skills in the outdoors. I suspect Dunns Swamp was named by the locals to keep us city folk away. It is by no means a swamp, which tends to bring up images of oozing smelly mud, and an overwhelming assortment of biting insects. This 'swamp' was a gorgeous lagoon, with reed lined edges and elegantly lined by the exposed rock of the ranges surrounding. A really lovely place. We arranged a few little abseils on the rocks near the camp area. It was a very hot day and so we planned to stay just the morning so that us Sydney siders could make it home ok. The adults enthusiastically took advantage of the abseils on offer. Unfortunately, the kidlets were less enthused, needing 'encouragement' which perhaps we could chalk up to being exhausted following the general splendor and excitement of the rest of the weekend. Or the heat. Many of the party plunged into the cool waters as a well-earned reward for the hot morning's work.

All in all, a lovely weekend which will be remembered. Our thanks again to Nat and Ray for hosting us.



Deep Pass – 27 December 2015

Report by: Rod Smith

Participants: Angus Wildie, Nui Wildie, Ambrossia Wildie, Sapphire Wildie, Tony Le, Chris Johnstone, Owen Johnstone, Rod Smith (TL)

As many know, MSS has a tradition of doing Wollongambe 1 on Boxing Day. Unfortunately, there are years when things get in the way of that tradition. This is one of those years. With only Tony keen to go on Boxing Day I thought we could postpone the trip by one day to increase the number of participants. And so, on the 27th of December, 8 of us met at the Mt Wilson Fire Station to do Wollongambe 1.

There was only one problem, it was 11 degrees. With three children (children tend to feel the cold) in the group we decided that it wasn't wise to do Wollongambe.

But we were not to be deterred! After much deliberation we decided on River Caves.

Tony left his car at Mt Wilson and jump in with me, then we all headed for Newnes Plateau. With all the logging going on out there it looked very different in places, so I had to pay attention to make sure I took the correct turns. Other than one very minor detour I did well in that regard and soon we were on the Mt Cameron Fire Trail approaching the Natural Bridge. Here we came across a group of trail bike riders stopped by a creek crossing and no idea how deep the water was. My recollection was that it wasn't deep, so I ploughed in, and found it was deeper than I thought. Thankfully I was able to reverse back out before I totally embarrassed myself.

I remembered there was another way round that didn't involve crossing a creek, but that reminded me there was an even better choice of canyon for the day, Deep Pass. From where we were it was only a short drive to the Deep Pass carpark.

By this stage it was a good time for lunch, and by eating at the cars we didn't have to carry it through the canyon.

We walked down the hill and I showed everyone the camp ground at the bottom. Tony was just focussed on the cliff face opposite, wondering how easy it would be to climb.



Staying dry in this section is challenging, but not impossible

follow me back to the cars while the rest went back down the canyon.

The walk back to the cars is quite easy and we were back quite quickly. It didn't seem like long before the rest of the group returned as well. A top canyon with a top group.



One of the many climbs in Deep Pass

Back-tracking slightly we followed the track leading to the canyon. Soon we were at the end of the canyon, which disappointed a few people, until they learnt we were doing this canyon from the bottom to the top, so we still had to get to the start.

Working our way through the canyon everyone was handling the climbs well and staying dry, except for feet. Some were wishing it was a warmer day as the water looked very inviting. There was even some discussion about possible jumps in places.

When we reached the start Chris made it clear straight away that he wanted to go back down the canyon. I decided that I would lead any out that wanted to go straight back to the cars, and the rest could return via the canyon as they couldn't really get lost. In the end Ambrossia and Nui opted to

Joke:

A ***** (insert descriptor of your choice) was on a guided tour at a local cave. At a certain point on the tour, all the lights were turned off to illustrate the concept of total darkness.

As this was done, amid the typical oohs and aahs, the ***** exclaimed, "Wow! Can you imagine what this place must be like at night!"

True Story:

While guiding a commercial tour the guide turned the all lights out. They were over 200m from the entrance and over 60m deep. Someone in a deadpan voice says: "I thought it would be darker than this!".

Geronimo Canyon – 10 January 2016

Report and photos by: Rod Smith

Participants: Murray Newman, Emma Parnell, Nick Payne, Marcela Quintero, Tony Le, Rod Smith (TL)

I received a message from Nick that he and Marcela were running about 10 minutes late and would arrive at the fire shed around 8:40am. I'd told everyone to be there at 8:30am, but I hadn't told them; hopefully we'd be walking by 9:00am. I arrived early to find Murray and Emma already there, Tony arrived shortly afterwards. As the message indicated, Nick and Marcela arrived at 8:40am. Despite being the last to arrive, Nick and Marcela weren't the last to be ready, that award goes to Tony.

The walk down to the Wollangambe is reasonably straight forward, as long as you know which of the tracks to take. The track up the other side is a lot less distinct, particularly since the fires of a couple of years ago. We lost the track and, from previous experience, I knew it was possible to get impatient and drop in too early, which would mean dropping into the canyon part way down and missing some of it, so, I kept us moving up the ridge until I was sure we'd gone far enough.

Everyone was happy when we turned downhill and made for the creek. Halfway down Tony realised he'd left his wetsuit in a different pack in his car. Being quite a hot day we decided he could get through without. As it turned out we hit the creek higher up than necessary which meant we also did an extra abseil and we were soon into the canyon proper.

We put on our wetsuits, Tony putting on all the clothing he'd brought plus a set of thermals I had.

Although Emma and Murray are new to MSS, they had been doing a bit of canyoning already, and the experience showed.

It wasn't long before Tony was starting to feel cold. Although I don't believe his condition was bad, we kept him moving and out of the water as much as possible; he kept us informed about how he was going so we could more easily manage things before it became a serious problem.

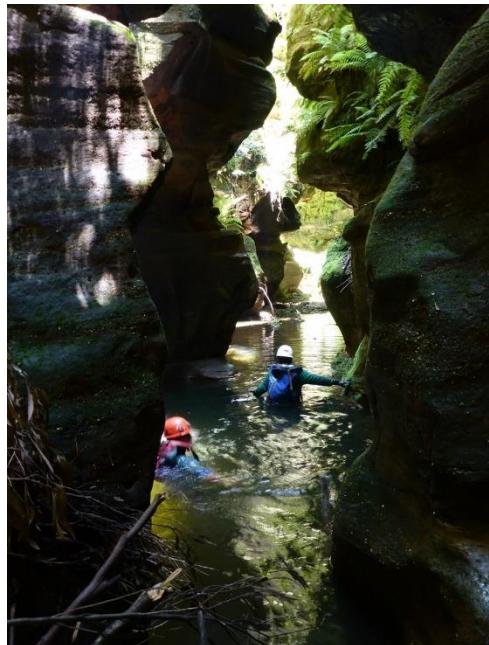
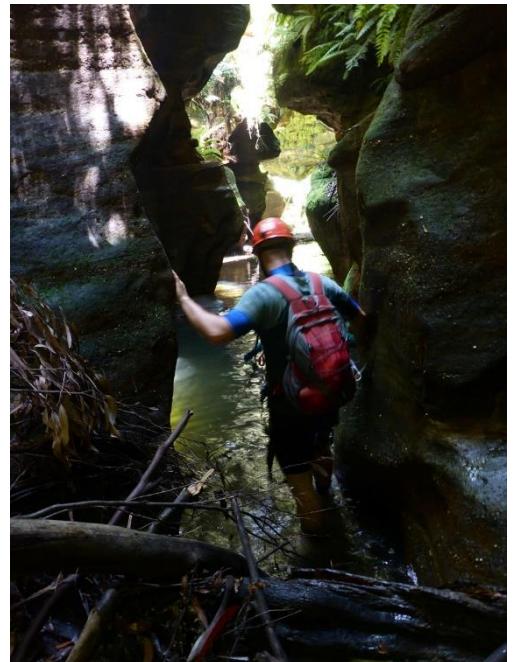
When we reached the Wollangambe, it was definitely warmer. We started looking for a good lunch spot. Soon we came across a pile of boulders that looked like it had come off the cliff above us only a few days earlier, we decided that wasn't a good place to stop. We then had a swim, we pulled out one of the ropes and pulled Tony across it so he wasn't in the water too long. Shortly after that we found a good spot for lunch.

Sitting in the sun it wasn't too long before Tony became much more talkative, he'd obviously warmed up. No-one felt in a particular rush, so we enjoyed a leisurely lunch in a beautiful location. After eating I realised I had a choice, start moving again or fall asleep. The wise option was to start moving, so that's what we did. No more swims, so Tony stayed warm enough for the rest of the trip. I decided to see how observant the group was. We came in sight of our entry point and Marcela surprised me at how quickly she recognised it. Nick didn't

believe her until I confirmed it.

We removed our wetsuits and were then left with only one thing to do, the uphill walk to the cars. I knew I was out of condition and would be slow, so I was happy to let everyone go in front of me. Sure enough it wasn't long before I lost sight of them.

I eventually made it to the cars to find Tony had already left, but the others were waiting for me. Another great trip.



Newnes Forest Canyoning – 22 – 26 January 2016

Report by: Mark Hornshaw

Participants: Rod Smith, Nick Payne and Marcela Quintero, Mark, Ilka, Samuel, Jarvis, Hugo, Kai, Renata and Dominique Hornshaw

Australia Day offered us a public holiday Tuesday this year, so the plan was to take a 'day off' on Monday and make it a four-day long weekend at Newnes Forest. The planned schedule included two days of moderately difficult canyoning and two days of easy canyoning for everybody to enjoy.

As the weekend approached the weather forecast predicted 100% chance of rain every day of the weekend and the coming week. This made it look less than ideal, not just for the thought of camping in wet tents but also for the risk of flash flooding and raised water levels in the canyons. The harder canyons we planned to do (Hole-in-the-Wall and Banks) involve an upstream swim to exit, which the track notes say could be dangerous or impossible in high water flows. So the entire trip was 'on notice' by the trip leader Rod, up until the Thursday night. But as we came closer to the weekend, the forecast was estimating only a few millimeters of rain each day after a very wet Friday (which turned out to be accurate) and so we went ahead.

Our family drove up during the day on Friday. We felt pretty crazy driving to a campsite in pouring rain, along muddy roads with frequent 'slosh puddles' as we call them. We could have come up the next morning like the rest of the crew... but with a family of eight it is a big undertaking to pack everything and set up camp, and we needed a whole day.

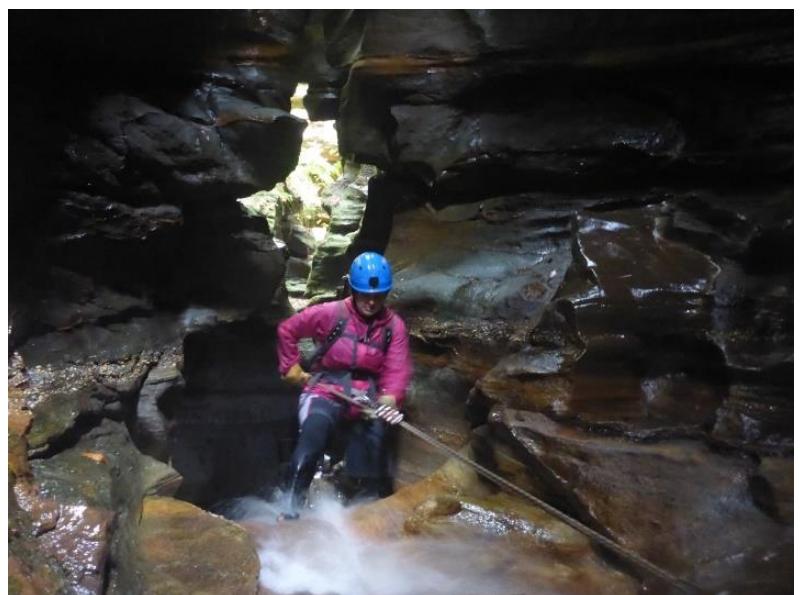
The original plan was to camp near the Hole-in-the-Wall carpark, but on reaching this (in the rain) we decided there was no way we could set up our camper trailer in two to three inches of water that covered the ground. So we headed for Barcoo Swamp where there is a grassy and better draining campsite. After setting up camp, I drove half an hour back to get some phone reception and inform the others who were coming up the next morning. Saturday morning we were joined by Rod, and soon afterwards we set out for the day, meeting up with Nick and Marcela on the way.

The first day we did two very easy canyons. First we walked through the Glow Worm Tunnel – a tunnel originally built as part of the railway line to Newnes, but now home to luminescent insect larvae. The walk down to the tunnel and through it, originally graded for steam trains, is easy, while the rainforest around it is stunning. On the way back, Rod, Nick, Marcela, and the Hornshaw children returned via the Glow Worm Tunnel Canyon which skirts around the mountain instead of through it. Ilka and I walked back the way we came, as Ilka is still suffering with joint pain as a result of Ross River Virus which makes it difficult to get around.

After a lunch stop, we left Ilka to read and swish flies at the car, while the rest of us investigated Wolgan View Canyon. This is a dry and easy graded canyon that was no trouble for four year old Mini (Dominique). But the difficulty rating is no predictor of the quality. It is a very impressive canyon, well worth seeing. At the far end, the view over the Wolgan Valley (which gives the canyon its name) was most impressive. This was the closest view of a six star Emirates resort that my kids will be getting. Unless they are paying.

We arrived back at camp with plenty of time to make a camp oven or BBQ dinner. But some of us (especially Nick and the Hornshaw boys) wanted to make a quick dash down Twister Canyon for a bit of watery fun. The jumps and slides of Twister are great entertainment, way better than Wet'n'Wild, and totally free. Me and my boys had done this a couple of times before and knew the way, so Rod (who has done it about 16 times before) stayed back and attended to the camp fire, while me, Sam, Jarvis, Hugo, Nick and Marcela drove the short way to the Rocky Creek carpark and plunged in to Twister. We reversed the canyon to exit, and repeated the jump-ins on the way back, some from even higher up.

On Sunday we prepared for Hole-in-the-Wall. There had been only minimal rain since Friday, so even though the day started out overcast and gloomy, we decided to go ahead.



Rod, Nick and Marcela, Sam, Jarvis and Hugo and me set off, leaving Ilka, Kai, Renata and Mini to spend the day in camp.



particular definition of fat. The exit swim/wade up Dingo Creek was no problem, and the climb and walk back to the car park was long but acceptable. Nick and Marcela had already packed their things that morning, so we said goodbye to them back at the cars.

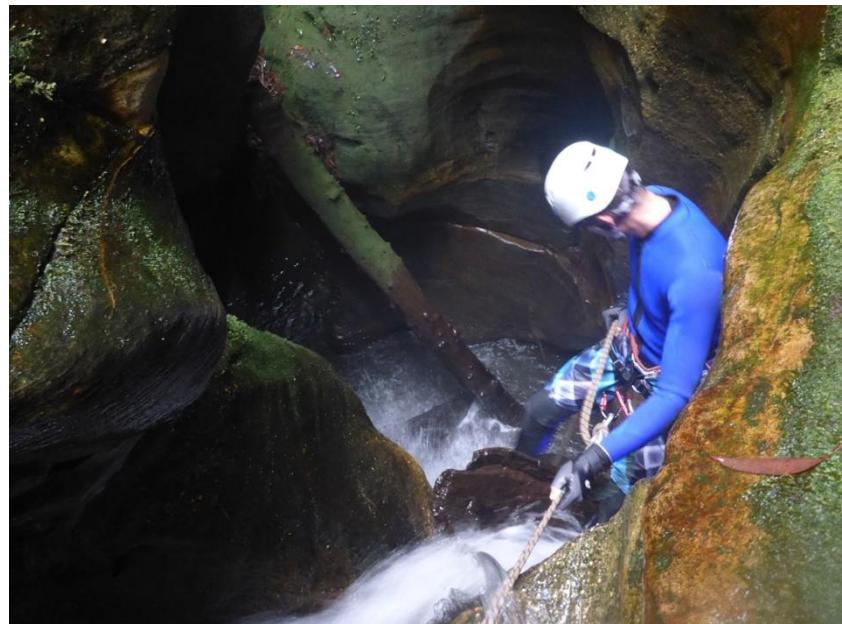
It was now just Rod and the Hornshaw family on Sunday night. We decided to leave Banks Canyon for another time, so we wouldn't have to abandon Ilka and the younger kids at camp for two long days in a row. Perhaps I was feeling a bit guilty for hogging all the fun. So the Tuesday plans were brought forward to Monday, making it more family friendly. Monday morning was spent at camp, eating multiple rounds of breakfast including Hugo's famous damper, voted the best damper in Newnes Forest. After... whatever you call the third meal of the day when it occurs just before midday... Rod, me and all six kids set off for River Caves Canyon. Ilka's knees were not up for this and she decided to stay at camp.

River Caves is a great next step from Wolgan View. Slightly steeper and longer entry and exit climbs, and a wet flowing canyon but only knee deep. The canyon is narrow at the top but undercut and wide at the bottom, so it feels sort of cave-like. The kids had a great time catching (and releasing) blue yabbies. We helped the youngest one Mini to 'charge' over fallen logs, and climb over some of the rocks, and a couple of piggy backs were awarded on the climb out. Eight year old Renata and ten year old Kai did great and needed no help. All the big people wanted piggy backs too but there were no willing piggies for them. After River Caves we said goodbye to Rod, whose camping setup needs no packing or unpacking at all.

The Hornshaw crew spent the last night camping by ourselves, and then spent the whole of Tuesday packing the camper trailer, driving home, unpacking mountains of wet things and washing a layer of mud off the car and trailer.

We wouldn't mind a four or five-day weekend every week.

This canyon generously rewards those who make the effort, and is now definitely one of my favourites. It includes narrow zig-zagging slots and some waterfall abseils into mysterious holes that open out as you descend. In one section the water flows through caverns under large rocks and is completely dark inside. The glow worms here were like stars in a dark sky – much more densely pack than in the Glow Worm Tunnel itself. Some of us had headlamps which helped a lot, as the way through involved swimming around a bend, climbing onto a high muddy rock, swimming some more, and then squeezing diagonally upwards through a narrow crack between fallen boulders, all in the dark. The track notes say this section is "not for fat people". But thankfully none of us met that



Glen Davis Canyons – 15 – 17 January 2016

Participants: John Gray, Rod Smith (TL), Marcela Payne, Nick Payne, Hugo Hornshaw, Mark Hornshaw, Cathi Humphrey-Hood

With Mark and Hugo already at the campground, the rest of us met at Talisman's Pizza at Hartley for some very nice pan-fried pizzas while the last of the weeks' torrential rain eased up into showers. This meant the run out to the campground was a little like rally-driving through mud in some sections, but the ford across the river that I had been worried about had been concreted all the way across since I had been there last and was now no more than 2 inches deep. We arrived a little while after 10pm, found what we thought was Mark and Hugo's tent, and everyone promptly set up tents or arranged cars and crashed for the night.



The campground in the morning: Kangaroo City (photo: JG)

The weather was marginally better the next morning, though still slightly overcast. We were heading off to "Abandoned (Mine) Canyon" on the Coinslot Canyon side of the valley. No one in the group had been to this canyon before, but John had some trip notes from a previous party and as the longest abseil was said to be about 35m, we took a 35m, 38m and a 60m rope with us.



Hill day 1 - Climb to top (photo: CHH)

Fortunately, someone had kindly left some ropes for us on a few of the more exposed places, which were fairly new, and came in very handy when things got a little too vertical.



*John standing by with a reassuring rope - this had been left by a previous party, so we were obviously on a well-known route.
(Photo: CHH)*

It took us over three hours to reach the top - worth it for the view alone. The campground looked rather small from the top of our hill, and after a short rest and the obligatory photo stop, we set off over the crest and down into the next valley in search of our canyon.



Just to prove we were there! (Photo by JG)

Day 1: Abandoned (Mine) Canyon

The trip notes listed 9 abseils, but John wasn't exactly sure where the canyon started and we didn't want to drop in too high just to battle our way through scrub for a few extra drops. After scrambling down a few ridges, we came to a point where the creek came together and the only way down was via a rope.

The first abseil was about 15m and was fairly straightforward and dry. After a short walk down through a narrowing creek section, we came to the next one and it was time to get wet. We had a quick bite to eat and donned wetsuits. The abseil ended in a pool but with another one just beyond, John and Mark continued down to search for the next one while the rest of us came down part one and then did part 2. Part 2 ended in a lovely swimming pool.

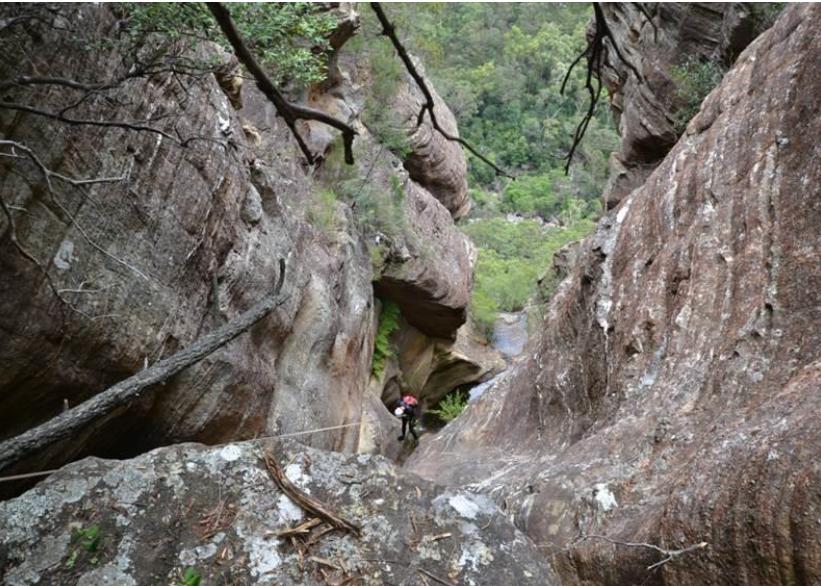


Now, the start of the actual canyon, abseil #1 (photo: JG)



A beautiful pool in the middle of Abandoned Canyon - this was the real canyon bit, very pretty but there wasn't enough of it!

(Photo: JG)



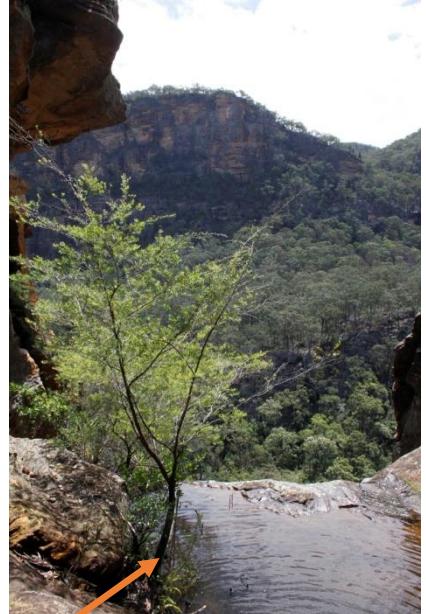
This shot beautifully sums up the abrupt finish of the canyon section (photo: JG)

amount of rope we had, put the 60m and the 38m together and thought... "Dunno... maybe.... Righto John, you go first."

Thank goodness he did, because when it gets to the point that you've run out of rope on a long abseil, out of sight from the people above you, it helps to have someone on that abseil who stays calm and who knows exactly what they are doing. The trouble, was from where we were, we couldn't see or know exactly what John was doing. Was he OK? Rod belayed himself and leaned out over the edge, and after a shouting exchange where no one could really hear anything, barely made out something along the lines of "...doesn't reach..." and "... rope..." Which was reassuring, because at least we knew then that he was OK. Rod then lowered one end of the remaining rope, and

Then we ran out of canyon! We came around the corner and lo and behold, the river was there below us. A long way below us. The exposure was breathtaking.

The next drop wasn't as long as it appeared, but with the view of the river so far below, and a bit of an awkward start (which also wasn't as bad as it looked), it looked daunting to begin with. We made our way down to an abrupt ledge and a short abseil from a rather thin looking bush (it really wasn't a tree). Fortunately, the abseil was slightly stepped, so the tree took the weight gently.



The anchor for this abseil was a very small tree; it passed the "rule of thumb", whose thumb we're still trying to determine.

The trip notes listed the longest abseil at 35m - which was supposed to be the last of them - and that's where we found ourselves, above a sheer drop which also happened to be overhung for about half the drop, and was probably slightly more than 35m. It made for a very quick finish, after fighting your way through the bushes at the start. But then, where to go? John hadn't brought the trip notes with him, and we scrambled down a bit further, only to find ourselves doing another short abseil and then being confronted with a cliff - and a sling. The river was still a long way down, however, and we looked at the

when he thought John had hold of it... let go of the other end. "Hope that was the right thing to do," he said, and shrugged. Not much we could do about it now if it wasn't!

John tied the ropes together and descended, but after much deliberation and discussion of worst case scenarios, decided to use the single 60m so that no one had to abseil over a knot. Rod very quickly put together a single rope retrievable setup and after everyone went down he threw the pulldown side over the edge and came down on the single. There wasn't a great deal of that 60m rope left, so we figured the drop was slightly over 50m. The SRT setup worked well, and we got all the ropes back before picking our way back toward the campground, joining the old tailing road which was flat but growing a wonderfully lush crop of stinging nettles.



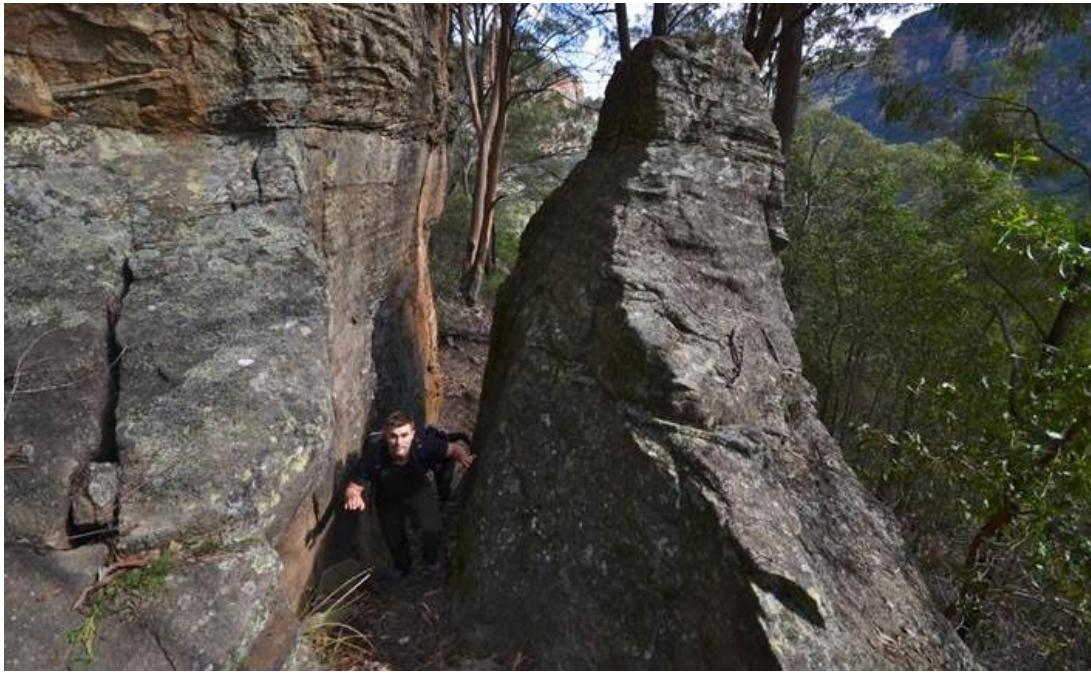
The last (unexpected) abseil (photo: JG)

We got back to the campground after 5pm and everyone was just a little worn out. During dinner, Rod tied a demonstration of how the SRT system worked.

Of course, the next day we were going to climb up that cliff-line all over again, only this time on the other side of the valley ...

Day 2: Doomsday (or Bull Ant) Canyon

There was more complaining and a lot more swearing by me as we headed up the hill again, especially when it came to the really steep bits, which never quite got to belaying point this time but (at least as far as I was concerned), weren't far off. While Abandoned Mine was named after the old mine works found at the end, Bull Ant was named after the gauntlet you had to run to get there (though we're not sure where the "doomsday" part comes in). Marcela was the only unlucky victim who scored a bite from one; Rod narrowly avoided the same fate. These things had an amazing talent for sitting right where the best handholds were and daring you to move them. Fortunately, they seemed only to inhabit the valley side, and once over the crest the rest of the walk in was relatively peaceful. John and Rod picked exactly the right moment to start descending from our trail, and we dropped into the very beginning of the canyon.

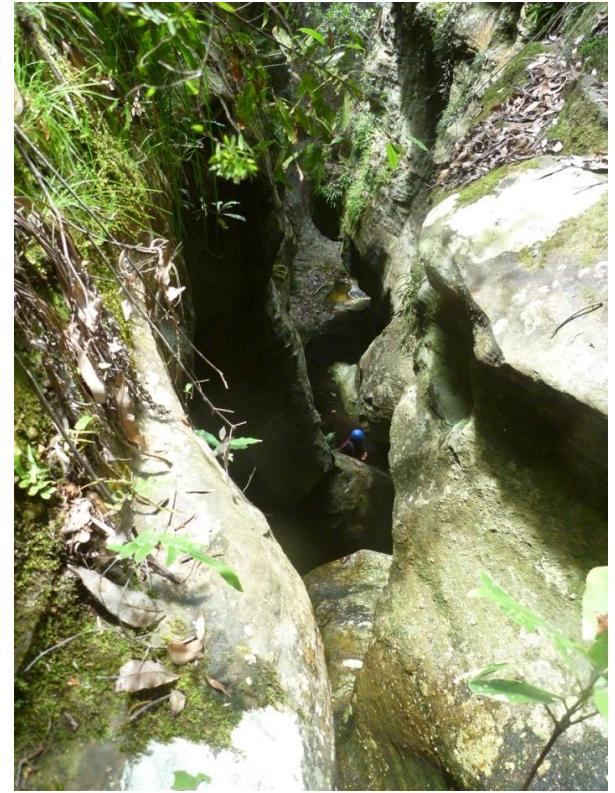


Bull Ant alley, move quickly lest they latch onto you (photo: JG)

The abseils started almost immediately. We all put our wetsuits on except John, who demonstrated a singular desire to stay dry - a position he maintained almost all the way to the end of what was actually a reasonably wet canyon. I must say that this is one of the nicest canyons I've done in a long while. It was narrow, green and wet, with a bridge to be passed under, some tricky little slots and some lovely pools.



Beginning a series of abseils (photo: CHH)



Looking down before reaching the pool of no return (photo: CHH)

John and Mark went through setting up the abseils and Rod and I came through cleaning them up at the end. There are a lot of abseils in this canyon. The most interesting is the one that passes down into the pool of no return. It's almost a pothole, except for a gap at the bottom that you can duck through - and even John couldn't stay dry through this one.

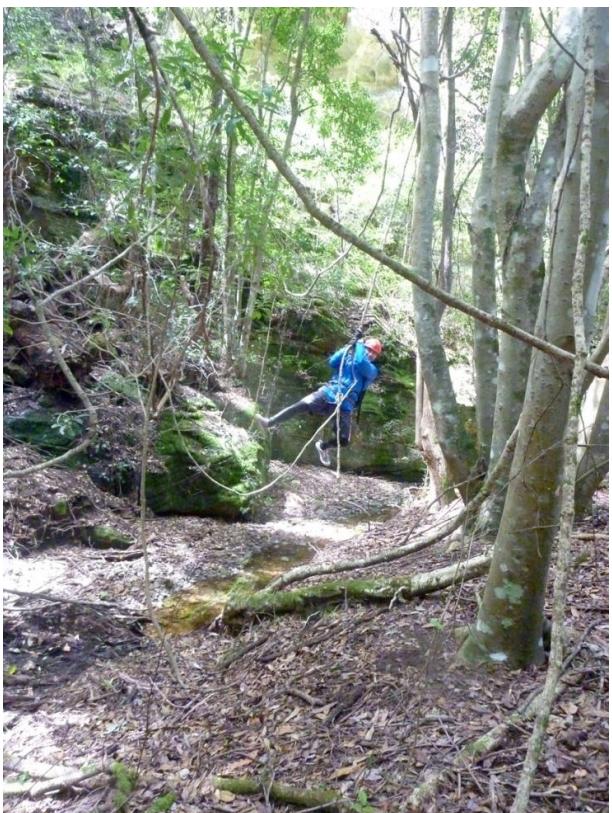


Rod escaping from the pool of no return (note the spider!)
(Photo JG)



Abseiling into the hole of no return (photo JG)

We found a comfortable spot to have lunch, which wasn't too far from the end of the canyon. It opened out a little at this point and then turned into Tarzan's jungle, complete with a complex of rope vines.



Above: from the water to the jungle (photos: CHH)

The canyon tightened up again for a couple of final abseils and some slippery bits, before ending in one last climb-down at a point where a small pool of water dropped below the sand and disappeared.

Some people changed out of their wetsuits, but I kept mine on as the walk out was all downhill, and back through bull ant territory. It turned out to be a comfortable trek, and once again the route-finding was faultless - we came out on the high point of the fire trail so there were no uphill bits at all. We arrived back at the cars a bit after 3.30pm, and with a trip back to Sydney looming everyone hastily broke camp and said goodbye. All in all, it was a very successful weekend's canyoning!

Kanangra/Kalang Falls

Report by: Chris Johnstone

Participants: Rod Smith (TL), Mark Hornshaw, Jarvis Hornshaw, Sam Hornshaw, Hugo Hornshaw, Chris Johnstone

Back in October last year I suggested that we needed to do Kanangra main, mostly because it is one of the big ones and because I had seen a story about it in a National geographic.

(<http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/2011/10/australia-canyons/jenkins-text> - Incidentally this is a great article about canyoning in the Blue Mountains and well worth looking at with some lovely pictures).

I remember getting looks from various people at the meeting and warnings about how difficult it was. It didn't scare me, I am made of stronger stuff, I mean how hard could it be? Then someone said that it was the walk out that was hard, again I thought I was made of sterner stuff, but I was convinced that Owen, Bennet and Helena should not come. It wasn't until much later I realised that I hadn't asked about the walk out.

Anyway Rod said he would be the trip leader and he was going to limit the numbers and everyone had to be quite good at canyoneering and it was likely that me and him would be bringing up the rear on the walkout and it was a hard walkout and we would need to be quick and we would have to do leapfrogging at each of the belay points to get out before midnight and I mean how hard could it really be, anyway I am strong like Ox, and at least I wouldn't be carrying the gear for the kids as well for once.

It was decided Kanangra Main could be done and I was get to get my wish. So, the plan was to meet at the Kanangra Walls car park around dawn so that we could start walking in to Kanangra Main by 7 am. All well and good but there was no way I was going to be there at that time if I left from Sydney in the morning. And given I already had that reputation for being late, I really didn't need to be late again. After a bit of negotiation with the leave pass coordinator, sleeping in the car the night before was agreed upon.

Next to set the scene.

The party was to be Rod Smith, Mark Hornshaw three of his boys, Sam, Hugo, and Jarvis and finally myself

It was the wet week at the beginning of February. All week it had been raining lightly and there was some question about if we should go. Mark and I were a bit nervous because of the dire warnings, but Rod replied from New Zealand saying we should go ahead anyway and we should grow some (not really....). Kanangra Main was to be a first time experience for 5 of the six of us. We were all looking forward to it and prepared.

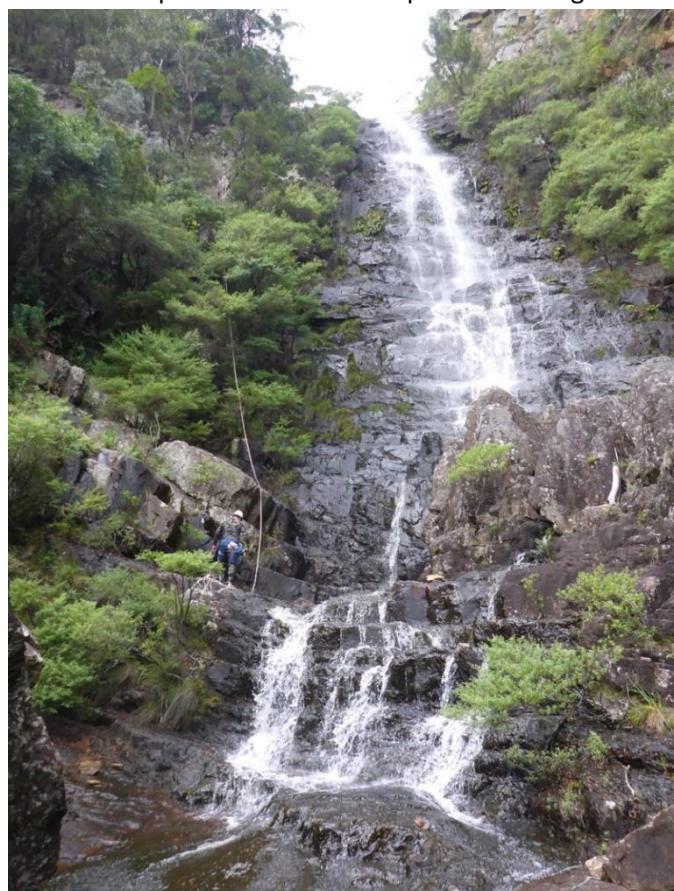
I set out after dinner, and made my way up to the Kanangra Boyd National Park. The weather was looking a bit dodgy but having committed I was going through with this. I met up with Rod at the carpark at Kanangra Walls and saw a darkened car with sleeping people which we assumed contained a Hornshaw Clan.

Soon sleep was upon us and despite heavy traffic we slept well (I have lived in inner city streets that have less traffic - I don't know why people were driving so far out of the way, but I guess some people have strange ideas about what fun is).

Morning came and as usual I was the last one up and I am pretty sure I would have slept through the day if Rod hadn't provided an alarm service. My MSS award is well deserved and I am by no means the best person for mornings but after a false start we did get away around 7:30 on the track to Kanangra Main.

The track went down to a creek and Rod who is usually right (I have established this on previous trips – see my report on Clastral Canyon) said we should follow the creek to the falls to start the canyon.

We followed the creek doing a bit of unexpected bush bashing until we came to a well maintained track with a platform at the end. This did not bode well because there isn't a platform or a good track leading to Kanangra Main. We had inadvertently come to the top of Kalang Falls. The blame thrower came out, a fight ensued, names were called, knives, slingshots and firearms appeared and then it escalated badly.... No not



really, but we had clearly made a mistake. We decided that Kalang Falls, while not the Canyon we wanted to do, was good enough and we weren't going to have enough time to go back to the start and do Kanangra Main. The only other decision was if we needed all the ropes we had carried in. In the end there was no real need to burn them so we decided that we should carry them through.

The trip had become a Kalang Falls canyon trip.

Kalang Falls is supposed to be a dry canyon but I had carried my wetsuit and it looked like I could get wet if I wanted to so I decided that I was going to wear it no matter what. Mark, Jarvis, Sam and Hugo concurred and donned theirs. Rod on the other hand had just spent a week in the frigid waters of New Zealand and had stopped feeling the cold – he wasn't going to be persuaded. And he had one of his famous partial t-shirts on anyway – this was a chance to keep his nipples on display – Phwarrrr.... I think,...maybe....ummm....ok, no.

None of us had read the track notes for Kalang Falls but Rod had done this one before so we knew there were quite a few abseils and we knew we had enough rope. Time to go, a short walk to the first drop and we mobilised.

Firstly, the view from Kalang Falls is terrific. The valley is steep and spectacular. Spirits were lifted and the incident with the blame-thrower was forgotten.

Finding the first anchor point wasn't too hard, we rigged up and over the edge we went. In preparation we had brought a number of things including radios and whistles to let each other know that we had finished pitches. Let me say that while they might have been a good idea, in practice, we didn't use them past the first couple of pitches.

The first pitch was a down the side of the waterfall about 40 m I think. You can avoid the water if you want but since I was wearing my wetsuit I made sure I at least got my feet wet.

Rod was off the end as I got there and went off to rig the next pitch. We had brought 4 x 50-60m ropes because we needed them for Kanangra. It ended up being a good idea because there are a few long pitches and being able to rig ahead did mean we could take it quite easy on the way down.

It was only a short clamber over the rock to the next belay point and there was another photo opportunity.

Then 2 more pitches through the bush next to the Falls about 30m each, no water this time, disappointing, but still a pretty spectacular outlook. More Photo opportunities. A short boulder-hop and another pitch, this time a bit wetter but still not in the waterfall. By now there was some light rain again so the rocks were getting slippery

A bit more boulder hopping. Through this canyon, I noticed all the rocks are slippery and sharp, especially when wet. I am no geologist but I am sure if they find out what makes them so slippery, we won't need oil or graphite ever again.

After the short clamber, there was a bit a tricky climb around to the next belay point. Young Hugo has either got monkey or mountain goat DNA. He was off like a flash taking the high route to belay point around a tree over a 50m plus face to the next pool. The more sensible of us belayed off a 'rule of thumb' tree and worked our way down the rope to the belay point in a more controlled fashion.

This abseil I think was even a little overhung, but one of the longest on the trip and there was an opportunity to get wet at the bottom. Of course I took it.

A few more abseils and the pitches were starting to blur together. We had lost count of the pitches. Photo opportunities were still abundant but I had become apathetic. I was even asking myself how many more of these could there be. It was enjoyable but even looking back at the photos it is a bit hard to tell which order they come in.

We got to a pool with a small jump opportunity, I jumped it once – hmm refreshing - but Jarvis, Hugo and Sam decided more than once was required, I think it was Jarvis who did it 6 times. At least it broke up the constant on-rope, on-belay, off-rope palaver.

Thank god this abseil was the last abseil before the next one. A couple of drops later we did a short boulder hop through some thick forest as the ground got flatter, surely the end was close.



At about 3:30 Rod stopped on a flat rock and had good news for us. We finally reached the bottom of the Falls where Kanangra Creek comes in. We had forgotten how many pitches we had done, estimates ranged from 12 to 231. Later I went back and read the track notes. Apparently there are only 10 but I am sure we did more. One thing was for sure, we had come down a long way and the cliff tops looked along way up.



suspect that doing this walkout is like child birth, you forget the bad parts and the second time it is easier.

Finally we reached the track at the top of the gully. The going got easier, and we wandered along the track which really felt like a 4 lane highway back to the cars. Mark, Sam, Hugo and Jarvis disappeared up the track leaving Rod and me to rest.

We followed a few minutes later but arrived at the cars totally spent. It was now after 7:00 pm and we still had to drive home. To our surprise, Mark had decided that his boys needed Pasta and had started cooking. I don't know what possessed him because I think my kids would have died before I found the energy to feed them.

Rod and I took our leave, deciding that the nearest acceptable food would be found at Mount Victoria and left Mark to deal with tired but hungry kids.

All up, Kalang Falls is quite a good canyon. It is definitely big in terms of number and height of drops but not that technical. The views are spectacular but the walk out is a killer. Overall, not for the feint hearted or beginners.

I am still reconsidering my desire to do Kanangra Main, but as I said I think it is like child birth. Maybe next year but not for a while.

Now the bad news, it was time to do the walkout. We had the option of either going up via the gully or via the ridge. The ridge has a lot of loose rock so we decided to go via the gully. Falling rock was likely to become dangerous if we all went up together and we voted not to leave the kids behind.

It was then that Rod told me the name of the gully was 'Murdering' Gully. At the time I thought that it was a pleasant little quip, you know like 'sheep dip' is called 'sheep dip' because you have that duck under – I was wrong, it called 'murdering' because it near kills you. Aptly named, there is no doubt.

You start by looking for a track, and when you don't find it, you bush bash as best you can up the stream path, when you can't get through the undergrowth, you try to push a way around it. When you can't walk because it is too steep, you dig into the dirt and crawl. There are even some dodgy little clammers holding on to roots and dead trees....Woohoo! It was all fun.

And just to make it all really wonderful, there are bugs and spiders and leeches, lots of leeches. They were many types of leeches, those little black ones, ones with coloured spots and some with stripes. I fed at least one big leech and it got fat on my blood. It has taken 3 weeks for the bite to disappear and it still itches.

About ½ way up I remember telling Rod that if I suggested doing this canyon again, he was to tell me to @#\$% off. But I



The view from the track looking down Kanangra Creek

New Zealand Canyoning Festival – 29 – 31 January 2016

Report by: Rod Smith

Last year Daniel "Chucky" Clearwater started the New Zealand Canyoning Association. Two other things went hand-in-hand in this. The first was the New Zealand Canyoning Guidebook, written by Chucky, which was released last year. The second was the inaugural New Zealand Canyoning Festival to be held over the last weekend of January this year.

When I found out about the Canyoning Festival I immediately registered, this seemed like an opportunity too good to pass up. A month or so later I decided I should organise some accommodation, flights, and a hire car as well. With my flight over booked for mid-morning on the 28th I made sure I was mostly packed the night before. A couple of last-minute things in the morning then a taxi ride to the airport. The direct flight to Queenstown meant I arrived mid-afternoon New Zealand time. I picked up the hire car and drove to Wanaka, where the Festival would be based.

I settled into my room for the next week then contacted Julie Burton who, having been the individual who told me about the Festival, was also over in Wanaka. I arranged to catch up with her and Aine Gliddon for dinner that evening.

Julie had a plan for Friday, which involved sight-seeing, all on foot. I met Julie and Aine in the morning and we started by walking to the base, and then the top, of Mt Iron. Not a difficult walk, but it certainly gave us enough altitude to provide some very impressive views of the area. We were even able to do a round trip as the track continued down the other side and finished directly opposite Puzzling World. Puzzling World is a local attraction that contains an impressive maze and a variety of illusion rooms. It's definitely worth a visit when you're in Wanaka. We went in and looked through the illusion rooms before getting lunch.

On the way back through town we stopped at Black Peak Gelato, another must while in Wanaka. All the gelato is made on site and the flavours vary from day to day. After gelato we made our way around the lake, passing That Wanaka Tree (Google "That Wanaka Tree" to find out what I'm talking about). Not much further we left the lake front and went up to the Rippon Lea winery. Julie and Aine sampled the wines on offer while I admired the view over the vineyard and lake.



The iconic Wanaka Tree

Although there was one workshop run on Friday, for us the Festival kicked off at 8:00am Saturday morning at the Wanaka Visitors Centre. A room had been booked as Festival headquarters, and here we were given a lot of relevant information for the Festival as well as meeting up with the trip leaders and participants for our days activities.

I started with a trip down **Robinsons Creek**. I soon found out that our trip leader, Greg Tilden, and Joe Bugden, who was helping Greg, both live in Drummoynes. Also, of the eight people on the trip, we had four Aussies, three Kiwis and one Yank.

Robinsons Creek is in the Haast Pass area of Aspiring National Park. It took about an hour to drive there. One of the advantages of canyoning in New Zealand is immediately apparent, from the carpark we good see the last drop in the canyon, the walk out takes less than 1 minute. Parking so close to the canyon meant that the walk in is also quite short, about 30 minutes of mostly uphill. This was luxury canyoning!

The water was my primary concern about the canyoning in New Zealand, it's colder and there's more of it. Being predominantly snow-melt the water felt icy, but with thermals, full wetsuit, gloves, beanie and spray jacket I was warm. I didn't really notice the volume of water until the first abseil. Right in the middle of the waterfall I could feel the pressure on my legs. I didn't mind until I got to the overhang, which I couldn't see through the curtain of water, and suddenly all the water is pouring on my chest and face. I had to turn my head down so I could breathe, and the extra pressure made the abseil a bit quicker. I got to the bottom and off the abseil and caught my breath.

I'd got through my first experience of the water volume without a problem, it all got easier after that. Especially since most of the abseils were not in the direct flow.

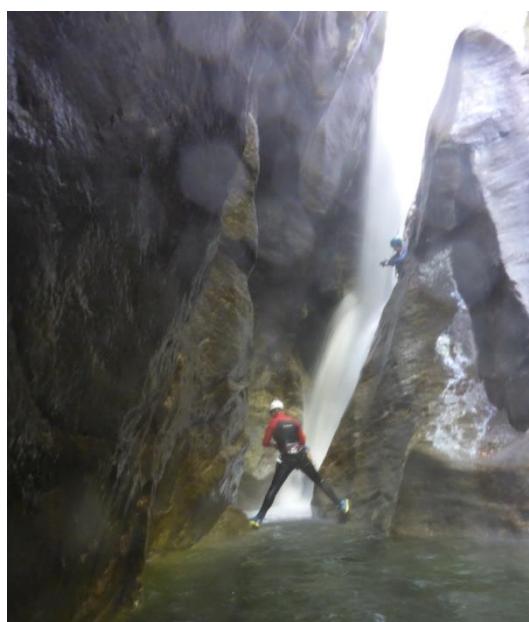
The second abseil ends in the "Roundy-roundy pool", so name because you can get caught in the eddy and go round and round. I watched the person before me go round before a throw rope was deployed to pull her out. I went down and was told that just before abseiling off the end of the rope (the length set quite accurately), to jump out and then swim like crazy. Following instructions I was nearly through when I saw Greg's hand reaching out in front of me. I grabbed it and was pulled the rest of the way across.

After a couple of more abseils we reached the highlight of the trip, a 25m abseil into "the cavern". This is a very impressive cavern sculpted out by the water. It's also possible to climb up behind the waterfall, just to add to the experience. Another couple of drops and we were back at the cars. What a superb canyon!

I drove back to Wanaka to then participate in the next activity for the day, a swiftwater workshop. With the volume of water in the New Zealand canyons being able to move in swift water and understanding the hydraulics present is a very important skill. The workshop was run by Rachel, who had years of experience teaching these sorts of skills to whitewater kayaks and the like. With other similarly skilled people helping out there was a lot of knowledge to be drawn on.

The workshop was held in a section of river that is set up for whitewater kayaking, so there was plenty of practice of the skills we learnt. This was an excellent workshop and a great addition to the Festival.

That evening was the social event. Held at the Wanaka Visitors Centre there were some retailers selling equipment, information on Didymo, spot prizes, a raffle, Chucky introducing the committee of the New Zealand Canyoning Association and lots of socialising with food and drink. I got the biggest surprise when my name was the first called out of the raffle, I now own a brand new 50m canyoning rope. What a way to cap off an amazing day! Sunday I had a rest day.



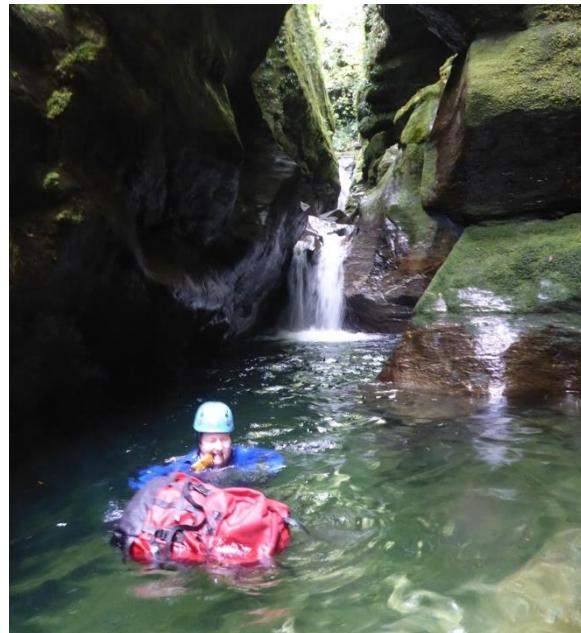
Although the Festival was now over, a lot of people were staying longer and doing more trips during the week. Although I hadn't lined up anything in particular, I joined a large group at Relishes Cafe as they were discussing their plans for the day. Aine and I managed to find a trip to **Imp Grotto** with space to fit us in. Once it was decided I raced back to my room, through all the required gear into the car, then went to pick up Aine.

The drive was a bit further than to Robinsons, and we were the last to arrive, but not by much. Like Robinsons we could see the last drop from the road. If you didn't know where to look it would be easy to miss where the track leaves the road. It starts very steeply and there is a fixed rope to aid in the initial ascent. The track is reasonably easy to follow and it wasn't long before we were at the start of the canyon.

The first drop of 12m can be jumped, if you are so inclined. Aine and I opted for the abseil. The rest all jumped, but Shannon lost his GoPro in the pool at the bottom. The next waterfall is a corkscrew shape and abseiling is the only option.

The third abseil takes you into a pool that may be where the name of Imp Grotto came from. Once on the lip of the pool the options are to jump or abseil. The jump is only about 4 or 5 metres high, but the landing area is small. I waited until one of the others came down and watched them jump first. Once I saw that I was happy to give it a go, and had no problem with it.

The last drop can be done as either a slide or abseil. The slide requires walking along a log and then lowering yourself between the log and the rock face before just letting go. It's about 7m and almost vertical. It looked intimidating, but I decided to do it. I was long enough that halfway down I thought that it may have been a bad idea, and then I



was in the water, and almost upside down. Apparently there's a little lip at the bottom that throws everyone off, so most people end up almost upside down before they resurface.

Some of the guys had climbed onto the road and were doing jumps into the pool near the bottom of the slide. I was more than happy with my day and so just watched. I left feeling that Imp Grotto was even better than Robinsons.

Tuesday Aine and I decided to do **Burke River**. For Burke River you swim upstream from the end and turn around whenever you feel like it. Since we could turn around at any hydraulic we felt we couldn't handle, we felt safe enough with just the two of us.

We arrived at the car park to find Chucky and two other canyoneers heading off to explore a previously unexplored canyon. They left a bag with a six-pack in the water at the end to keep them cold, probably a better option than an esky. By the time we were ready they were out of sight.

Other than the cold the first thing you notice about the water in Burke River is how clear it is. Sections that look knee-deep are actually up to you neck or deeper. The next thing we noticed was the flow. Although we were swimming through large pools there was still enough current to make swimming through them an effort. We swam most of the way close to the edges to make use of the rocks to pull against.



Bourke River



Aine swimming in Bourke River

We passed a tributary that we guessed was the one Chucky and co. were exploring, and we later found out that we were correct. Then, after about 2 hours swimming upstream we encountered a small cascade that looked a little dangerous for people of our limited whitewater experience. Here we were able to get out of the water out a boulder and stop for a short rest.

The swim back downstream was much shorter, we reached the cars in about 45 minutes. Although not technical we still enjoyed Burke River immensely.

Wednesday was set aside for me to clean and dry my gear before heading home. Shannon and a couple of others returned to Imp Grotto and successfully retrieved his GoPro, before two of them suffered minor injuries. Julie also suffered a minor injury in Robinsons which she did with Aine and another group.

Thursday, after checking out a couple of the outdoor shops in Wanaka, it was time for me to bid farewell and start making my way home. I drove to Queenstown, returned the hire car, flew to Christchurch and then flew to Sydney.

I had an awesome time and it won't be the last time I go over to New Zealand to go canyoning. I thoroughly recommend it to everyone.

Dargans Creek Canyon 28 December 2015

Report by: Jim Crockett

Party: Tony Le, Patrick Rayner, Jim Crockett (TL)

After the usual hustle, bustle, work and overeating over Christmas it was time for me to get out to nature. Initially there were quite a few wanting to continue canyoning but that faded to just 3 of us including my nephew Patrick doing his 2nd canyon.

We set out from the parking area with heavy metal heavy rock music beaming from another group who were camping there, we were glad to get on our way as neither of us were fans of heavy metal.

Down to the dam wall and about to descend the steps and then ... ahhh LOCKED GATE!! why?? So, slight change of plans, walk uphill and find the alternate entrance gully, seemed easy but took us a while trying to find the easiest way down, but eventually down into the creek. So wetsuits on and off we went. Patrick was so excited he fell and bloodied his shin, I told him this sort of thing happens all the time, just wash it and it should be alright.

The canyon is pretty straight forward, a few swims, climb ups, climb downs, jump ins and one longish swim near the end. We went pretty quick with only 3 of us and not stopping for photos as I was filming on a helmet camera.

We got to the exit junction with the side creek and up the waterfall without too much fuss with the 2 newbies (to this canyon) upfront. They both started to continue walking up the side creek and I advised them to look on the left and up. They were both surprised that we were going to exit up that SPIKEY TREE! I went first telling them that I will go up and set up a rope at the top for them if they want it. I got up to the safe spot and turned around to see Patrick just stepping off the spiky tree. We still had Tony to get up and after a bit of convincing him that he could easily do it he made it up safely. So that turned out easier than I thought.

So we continued up the gully and crossed over and up the ridge back to the cars. Tony was keen for us to go back via Deep Pass as we still had plenty of time but it was a long way from where we were so we let Tony go there on his own while Patrick and I headed home.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Come to
THE BLUE MOUNTAINS BAT NIGHT
& discover



WHEN: Friday 11 March @ 6:30pm
WHERE: NPWS Heritage Centre, Govetts Leap Rd, Blackheath
THANKS TO OUR FANTASTIC SUPPORTERS

nswnationalparks.com.au
Enquiries: (02)4787-8877



MSS TRIP CALENDAR

March 12 – 13 Canyoning tba	NEW TRIP	Trip Leader: Rod Smith Contact: 0438 444 262 or roderick_smith@hotmail.com
April 3 Mountain Biking Springwood	NEW TRIP	Trip Leader: Beth Little Contact: littlebeth78@hotmail.com
April Canyoning		Trip Leader: tba Macquarie Rivulet Grade: tba
May Walking Mt Wilson		Trip Leader: tba Possibly Wollangambe Crater Grade: Easy/Medium
May Social		Trip Leader: tba Tree Tops Adventures
June 5 – 10 Caving Yarrangobilly		Trip Leader: Beth Little Contact: littlebeth78@hotmail.com Grade: Medium/Hard This will be a joint trip with CSS to work on details of the UIS pre-conference trip
June 18 – 19 Caving Jenolan	NEW TRIP	Trip Leader: Chris Johnstone Contact: 0401 988 096 or chris_johnstone@hotmail.com Grade: Easy Open to suggestions for caves to explore
After June Caving Wyanbene		Trip Leader: tba Push to Frustration Lake Grade: Hard
October LWE Caving Bendethra		Trip Leader: tba Grade: Easy/Medium



WANTED – LEADERS!

There are a number of trips proposed on the current MSS Calendar that require leaders. The more people we have willing to lead trips, the healthier MSS is. So, what about it, put your hand up to start leading, or if you're already a leader, pick a trip to suit your busy calendar!

- **April:** Macquarie Rivulet, this looks like a stunning multi pitch abseil trip, we've only ever heard good things about it!
- **May:** Walking, possibly to Wollangambe Crater. This is a dead-easy walk, all on track you can do it as a day trip or an overnight adventure (tents not necessarily needed as there's a huge camp cave). If you've got kids, they can explore up and down the river.
- **May:** Tree Tops Adventures – this is a great day out for the whole family, challenge yourself on the high ropes. All you really have to do is be the co-ordinator!
- **June:** Wyanbene cave – push through to Frustration Lake about time we tackled some of the harder trips again!
- **October LWE:** Bendethra caves, this sounds like a good trip for kids, and loads of other things to do in the area.



APPENDIX 1 – MEETING MINUTES

MSS 419th General Meeting, 11 February 2016

Held at Canada Bay SES

Meeting Opened: 7:45pm

Present: Roderick Smith, Jim Crockett, Cathi Humphrey-Hood, Chris Johnstone

Apologies: Beth Little, Tony Le, Mark Hornshaw, Angus Wildie

Any Corrections to Previous Meetings Minutes: None

Correspondence:

SUSS Bull 53(4)

New Caves Chronicles

Caves Australia 201

Committee Members Reports:

President: None

Treasurer: We've recently spent \$1194.00 on getting the 50th t-shirts printed. These have been collected and are ready for purchase. The 2015 accounts balanced, which is good news.

Equipment Officer: None

Training Officer: Training weekend late 2015 was well attended. I'm thinking a late year training day 2016, so I can lock in a date at the next meeting for that. Is there anyone that is new to the club that needs an earlier date though?

Librarian: None

Web Manager: New look and feel went live earlier this week.

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

Electronic Meetings – Rod Smith: With the forum now up and running, and it slowly getting used more and more, we decided to just continue with this and remove this action item.

UIS Yarrangobilly Trip – Cathi Humphrey-Hood: There's been some recent correspondence with Cathie Plowman. It's in progress and on track, at least from our perspective. Beth is leading a preparatory trip in June.

Use of MeetUp – Mark Hornshaw: See Appendix 2. This was then discussed at length by those present. Some of the points raised were:

- There is a plan to provide similar through our own website, though customised specifically to our specific requirements.
- Currently trips are being held successfully without the use of MeetUp, we felt there wasn't a pressing requirement for this.
- MeetUp, although not overly expensive, would still be a cost to the club.
- One thing that would be useful is a reminder to members of coming trips.
- Setting up the functionality within MeetUp would be relatively quick, whereas getting it set up on our site will take longer.

The decisions made were that we would not go with MeetUp and that Jim will start sending everyone an email each month with coming trips as a reminder for people.

50th T-Shirts – Beth Little: A big thank you to Tim for tweaking the graphics and Cathi for organising shirt quotes and order recently. We should see them in next few weeks ready for sale I think (shirts and hoodies ordered).

Cathi: We have the T-shirts, I picked them up on Monday. They look fantastic.

It was decided that we would charge \$25.00 per t-shirt and polo, \$30.00 for the hoodies. Cathi will take some photos to advertise them in the website, forum and newsletter. Rod will store them and keep track of numbers left.

50th Publication – Beth Little: We should get cracking on this. It might be a good idea to develop a timeline for submission (say in three months), compilation (month following), final editing (month following), and publication (month following). That would have it out end August 16. I'd like to do a 'literary corner' section for the 50th publication. Featuring some top caving related book reviews and maybe a poem or two inspiring re: the underground. I'll get cracking on it over the next few weeks. If anyone has an ideas/suggestions related to this theme, please let me know littlebeth78@hotmail.com

The other articles I was working on were what club has meant to us over 50 years.

Jim, you good to start working on your 'President message'?

Is the new Newsletter editor happy to also take on the 50th publication project?

I've approached Rob Clyne for photos from the 50th celebration.

New Business:

Rod: I took some basic notes at the last ASF Council meeting. Here's a list of points that may be relevant to some or all members:

- All ASF documentation is available, if anyone wants a copy please ask.
- There is a subsidy for people to attend their first conference.
- Caves Australia needs a production manager, is anyone willing to help?
- Please flag any conservation issues.
- Anyone willing to put their hand up to help ASF in any way??
- ASF Conservation fund needs more money, donations are tax-deductable.
- ASF Working with Children policy: There was a lot of contention on this issue. Daniel Burt of NHVSS was elected as a non-executive Vice President to look into a Working with Children policy.
- Cave and Karst numbering guidelines, discussed and further discussion to happen.
- Membership fees unchanged.
- UIS needs more assistance, including, but not limited to:
 - SpeleoOlympics
 - Travel advice coordinator
 - Camp ground manager/administrator (museum of fire)
 - Publicity coordinator, including social media
 - Accommodation coordinator
 - Currency advisor Visa support
 - Social events coordinator
 - Photographic competition coordinator
 - Coordinate with vendors and exhibitors
- Does anyone in MSS deserve a nomination for an ASF award?
- Next meeting in SA next year - 7/1/2017.

After a discussion regarding the Working with Children policy is was agreed to provide the following feedback for ASF: We believe ASF should have a policy and a template for clubs to use.

As many of you may be aware, Natalie will not be able to continue in her role as the newsletter editor. As such, a new newsletter editor is required. Rod is looking into this and we should have a suitable individual shortly.

Trip planning:

Date	Leader	Activity	Location	Grade	Notes
18-19/6	Chris	Caving	Jenolan	Easy	Open to suggestions
Second half of year		Caving	Wyanbene	Hard	Push to Frustration Lake
May		Walking	Wollangambe Crater	Easy/Medium	
October long weekend		Caving	Bendethra	Easy/Medium	
12-13/3	Rod	Canyoning			
April		Canyoning	Macquarie Rivulet		
May		Social	Tree Tops adventures	Social	

Next Meeting:

Canada Bay SES – 5/5/16

Meeting Closed: 10:00pm

Meeting was followed by Tim Tams and photos from previous trips.

APPENDIX 2: Memo from Mark Hornshaw re Meetup.com

- This was a suggestion I made at the AGM, and I was asked to make a proposal for it.
- I am in several other meetup groups and highly recommend it for the club
- Meetup is a social media platform for groups to arrange events and manage RSVPS
- It does not replace the main website, but complements it. It is purely for the listing and managing of events
- Club members can join meetup for free, using their email address, or gmail account or facebook account
- Event organisers approved by the club can very easily to create an event, and then an “invitation” is sent to all club members through their email accounts.
- If the trip is limited to say 15 people, the RSVPs can be first in best dressed. When the spots are taken, other people can then join a “waitlist”. If anybody cancels their RSVP, the organiser can choose somebody else from the waitlist.
- Or if the organiser wants to screen everybody first (for example a hard graded trip), then everybody who wants to go can be waitlisted, and the organiser can select qualified people
- If the organiser sets it up accordingly, members can RSVP for themselves +1 or +2 etc.
- The details of the trip are entered by the organiser and are then contained in the event page for all members to see
- Everybody in the group can see who else is going and who is waitlisted
- People who are going (or waitlisted) can post comments on the trip page, and an email is sent to other people who are going to notify them. Better than the main MSS forum, as it is contained within the event page itself
- After the trip, the event page remains as a record, and participants can post photos there to be viewed by other participants
- The cost to the club is US\$9.99 per month. See <http://www.meetup.com/pricing/> No cost to individuals who use it.

