

NEWSLETTER MONTHLY

JULY 2010



MSS NEWSLETTER

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Cover Shot:

Calcite straw in Tuatini Cave, Mangaia, Cook Islands

Photo by Cathi Humphrey-Hood

NEWSLETTER OF THE METROPOLITAN SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY INC.
P.O. Box 178, THORNLEIGH, NSW, 2120

Society News

MEETING REPORT: 1ST JULY
2010

Meeting Minutes

The third MSS meeting for 2010 was held at Jim Crockett's place in Eastwood on the 1st April

The meeting got started at 7:40pm with 4 members in attendance.

It was decided that the complete minutes for each meeting would be added to the subsequent newsletter. This will give people an opportunity to view everything that was discussed and provide feedback and/or corrections. The minutes for the last meeting can be found at the end of this newsletter.

Meeting Format

It was decided that meetings, although good, had become a little too informal. Rod Smith took on the task of creating a template for meetings going forward. This is attached at the end of the newsletter. Please provide any feedback to Rod so this can be finalised for the next meeting.

Meeting Schedule

Rod was also given the task providing a schedule for meetings. We all agree that quarterly meetings are sufficient, but the AGM, usually held in November, doesn't line up with the current quarters. So, the proposal is:

Next meeting: early October

2010 AGM: (preferably late) November

2011 onwards: meetings held in February, May, August and the AGM in November.

Exact dates to be determined by the host.

Training Officer

The NSWSC have requested a contact within each club to represent the club in training related planning within the NSWSC. Since Johan's resignation as the Safety Officer, we decided to create a Training Officer position to replace the Safety Officer position (effectively a name change). Rod was tasked to ask around the members to find someone to take on this role for the remainder of the year.

Since the meeting Beth Little has volunteered to take on this role.

Next Meeting

To be hosted by Beth Little. The exact date has not been set.

Wee Jasper Book Launch

On the 21st of August there will be a launch of the new Wee Jasper book, to be held at Careys Cave, Wee Jasper. If you wish to attend please email Jeanette Dunkley at jgdunkley@gmail.com. She will send you a formal invitation which you must RSVP by 14th August. If you can't make it to the launch but would like a copy of the book, please let Rod Smith know before the 21st August.

The World's Twenty Deepest Caves

Rod Smith

Following last months article on the 20 longest caves in the world, we now have the 20 deepest. Like the 20 longest, this list changes in time as new discoveries are made. Exploration is continuing in most, if not all, of the caves on this list.

Although the source of both these lists seems quite reliable, a number of other sources report the depth of Gouffre Mirolda as 1733m, which would make it the 3rd deepest rather than the fourth. This list is taken from <http://www.caverbob.com>.

- | | | | |
|---------------------------|---------|----------|-------|
| 1. Krubera (Voronja) Cave | Georgia | 15.486km | 2191m |
|---------------------------|---------|----------|-------|
- Krubera Cave was first explored in the early 1960s, although it was named after Alexander Kruber who performed some field studies in the area during 1090-1910. Before 1980 no caves in the area were known to extend below 300m, but through systematic searching by the Kiev Speleological Club, by the end of the 1980s five caves were known to extend below 1000m. During this time Krubera received it's second name, Voronja Cave, which translates to Crows' Cave, due to the number of crows nesting near the entrance. Although there were five caves in the area known to extend below 1000m in depth, Krubera didn't reach this milestone until 2000. In January 2001 Krubera was pushed to a depth of 1710m making it, at the time, the deepest in the world. In October 2004 the cave was pushed beyond 2000m in depth, the first time in the history of speleology. In 2007 the current depth of 2191m was reached.



Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Voronya_Cave

Photo by Stephen L. Alvarez, from Deepest Cave, Call of the Abyss, National Geographic, <http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/ngm/0505/feature4/multimedia.html>

2. Ilyuzia-Mezhonnogo-Snezhnaya Georgia 24.080km 1753m
Currently the second deepest cave in the world, further exploration of this cave is still continuing. In 2008-2009 an expedition of 16 people entered the cave through the highest entrance with the plan to explore to the lowest point. Due to the length of the difficult passages, high level of water and need to repair rigging it took 13 days to reach the lowest section. Here they explored for 7 days and celebrated New Years with fireworks, singing and dancing.

Source: <http://www.caverinfo.com/2009/12/ilyuzia-mezhonnogo-snezhnaya-20082009/>

3. Lamprechtsofen Vogelschacht Weg Schacht Austria 38.000km 1632m
Two separate caves, the Vogelshacht and the Lamprechtsofen, both located in the Leoganger Stienberger are, were connected by a Polish expedition. Once this connection was made, the depth of the new Lamprechtsofen Vogelshacht was measured at 1535m. This made it, at the time, the second deepest cave in the world. It didn't stay at number 2 for long. Since then a new depth has been discovered of 1632m.

Sources: <http://library.thinkquest.org/06aug/00922/caves.html>
<http://top-10ofworld.blogspot.com/2009/01/ten-deepest-caves-in-world.html>

4. Gouffre Mirola / Lucien Bouclier France 13.000km 1626m



Photo from: <http://leshorizonscaches.blogspot.com/2007/02/raid-2007-au-gouffre-mirola.html>

The Gouffre Mirola is located in the Haute-Savoie region in France. Between the 9th and 12th of January 2003 an expedition, led by Michel Philips, pushed the depths of the cave. This involved exploring flooded passageways with 3 team members. They reportedly reached a depth of 1733m, making it, at the time, the deepest in the world.

Source: http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gouffre_Mirola <http://library.thinkquest.org/06aug/00922/caves.html>
<http://top-10ofworld.blogspot.com/2009/01/ten-deepest-caves-in-world.html>

5. Reseau Jean Bernard France 20.536km 1602m
The Reseau Jean Bernard was named in the memory of Jean Dupont and Bernard Raffy of the Groupe Vulcain who died in 1963. The Groupe Vulcain had found the cave four years earlier in the Samoens region of the French Alps. Since then at least seven more entrances have been found, the highest at 2264m above sea level. Although Reseau Jean Bernard was thought to be the deepest cave until the 1980s, it is considered by many professional speleologists to be a not very interesting climb.

Source: <http://library.thinkquest.org/06aug/00922/caves.html>
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gouffre_Jean-Bernard
<http://top-10ofworld.blogspot.com/2009/01/ten-deepest-caves-in-world.html>

6. Torca del Cerro del Cuevon (T.33)-Torca de las Saxifragas Spain 7.060km 1589m
Located in the central massif of the Picos de Europa, in the municipality of Asturias in Cabrales, this is the deepest cave in Spain. There are two entrances, the Torca del Cerro del Cuevon, also known as T-33, and the Torca de las Saxifragas, also known as TR-2. The through trip takes three days and is considered the most technically difficult cave in the world.

Source: http://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sistema_del_Cerro_del_Cuev%C3%B3n
<http://top-10ofworld.blogspot.com/2009/01/ten-deepest-caves-in-world.html>

7. Sarma Georgia 6.370km 1543m
Sarma was first discovered in 1990 in the Caucasus range, in Abkhazia, Georgia. It took ten years before the depth was pushed beyond 280m, down to 750m in 2000. The following year the depth was first pushed beyond 1000m, and then later beyond 1500m, the second exploration only halted due to a shortage of ropes. Speleologists who attended expeditions in late 2007 and early 2008 believe Sarma has the greatest potential to overtake Krubera as the deepest cave.



Exploring Sarma: from <http://www.cavediggers.com/SarmaCaveVideo.wmv>

Source: <http://cave.sarma.co.il/html/s1.htm>
<http://top-10ofworld.blogspot.com/2009/01/ten-deepest-caves-in-world.html>

8. Shakta Vjacheslav Pantjukhina Georgia 5.530km 1508m
 Shakta Vjacheslav Pantjukhina is situated in the Bzyb'sky Massif in Georgia. It is not the only deep cave of the more than 400 that exists in the area.

Source: <http://top-10ofworld.blogspot.com/2009/01/ten-deepest-caves-in-world.html>

9. Sima de la Cornisa-Torca Magali Spain 6.445km 1507m
 The second entry from Spain, Sima de la Cornisa-Torca Magali can also be found in the Picos de Europa mountains. It has only been in the last couple of years that speleologists have descended a "bottomless pit" to its current depth of 1507m.

Source: <http://top-10ofworld.blogspot.com/2009/01/ten-deepest-caves-in-world.html>

10. Cehi 2 Slovenia 5.291km 1502m
 Cehi 2 is the deepest cave in Slovenia and is located in the Canin Massif, in the Western Julian Alps on the Italian-Slovenian border. Discovered in 1991, only two years later a group of Italian cavers had already pushed it to a depth of 1370m. By the turn of the century, Ukrainian cavers had increased the depth to 1380m in a new section of the cave.

Source: <http://www.authorstream.com/Presentation/gmurali-135118-10-deepest-caves-world-deep-cave-travel-places-nature-ppt-powerpoint/>
<http://www.ljudmila.org/jkz/cehi2/>

11. Sistema Cheve (Cuicateco) Mexico 26.194km 1484m
 In the mid 1980's Bill Farr and Carol Vesely discovered the Sistema Cheve in the southern Mexico state of Oaxaca. It is now the deepest cave in the Americas having been pushed to 1484m, but dye tracing shows the potential for the cave to reach as deep as 2547m. Since further exploration requires diving and thus porting large amounts of gear into the cave, a lot of expeditions are focusing on trying to find lower entrances into the system.

Source: <http://www.speleophysics.com/mdcovin/play/cheve.html>

From a 2006 expedition to Sistema Cheve, photos by Matt Covington
http://www.speleophysics.com/mdcovin/play/photos/J2_2006/tn/imgp2213.jpg.html



12. Sistema Huautla Mexico 62.099km 1475m
 Also located in the Mexican state of Oaxaca, Sistema Huautla was at one stage the deepest cave in the western hemisphere. It is also a rather complex system with over 17 known entrances. One of the major breakthroughs came in 1994 when a team of 44 people, lead by Bill Stone, dived the terminal sump. Although the expedition included the death of one of the team, they had pushed the depth of the cave to 1475m.

Source: <http://www.speleophysics.com/mdcovin/play/huautla.html>
<http://library.thinkquest.org/06aug/00922/caves.html>

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|-----------------------|-------|---------|-------|
| 13. Sistema del Trave | Spain | 9.167km | 1441m |
|-----------------------|-------|---------|-------|

Sistema del Trave is the third Spanish cave on the list and can also be found in the Picos de Europa. The cave was first found in 1982 near the village of Bulnes. Three caves were joined in 1987 to form the one system and in 1989 the terminal sump was reached at 1441m in depth.

Source: http://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sistema_del_Trave
<http://www.asturnatura.com/naturaleza/sistema-del-trave.html>

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|--|--------|---------|-------|
| 14. Evren Gunay Dudenli (Mehmet Ali Ozel Sinkhole) | Turkey | 3.118km | 1429m |
|--|--------|---------|-------|



Exploration of Evren Gunay Dudeni, the deepest cave in Turkey, began in 1993. When a flash flood hit in 2001, Mehmet Ali Ozel lost his life. It wasn't until 2004, with the help of the Bulgarian Speleological Federation, that his body was recovered. It was on this trip that the maximum depth was also reached.

Source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Egma>

Inside Peynirlikönü Düdeni, BUMAK,
<http://www.bumak.boun.edu.tr/sayfa.php?bolum=raporlar&yazi=evrengunaymehmetaliözel&navigasyon=var&duygume=var>

- | | | | |
|---------------|------------|----------|-------|
| 15. Boj-Bulok | Uzbekistan | 14.270km | 1415m |
|---------------|------------|----------|-------|

If anyone has any information about this cave – we'd love to hear about it!

16. Gouffre de la Pierre Saint Martin-gouffre des Partages France / Spain 80.200km 1408m

The Gouffre de la Pierre Saint Martin is located in the Pyrenees-Atlantiques in France and is the longest cave on this list. First discovered in 1950, a depth of 320m was reached in 1951. In 1956 a tunnel was started to capture water from the cave but was abandoned until 2006. By 2008 the project had been completed and the water used to run a hydro-electric power station producing 4 megawatts of power.

Source: http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gouffre_de_la_Pierre-Saint-Martin

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|---|-------|----------|-------|
| 17. Sima de las Puertas de Illaminako Ateeneko Leizea (BU.56) | Spain | 14.500km | 1408m |
|---|-------|----------|-------|

The entrance to Sima de las Puertas de Illaminako Ateeneko Leizea was discovered in the Spanish Pyrenees in 1979 by Jean-Francois Pernette and I. Ortilles. On that day Pernette reached a depth of 92m. In the following two years the depth of the cave was pushed to 1338m making it, at the time, the deepest in the world. In 1986 and 1987 a Bulgarian team dived through 6 sumps, stopping at the seventh, at a depth of 1408m.

Source: http://www.ulsa.org.uk/rants/rant.php?rant_id=645

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|-----------------|--------|---------|-------|
| 18. Kuzgun Cave | Turkey | 3.187km | 1400m |
|-----------------|--------|---------|-------|

Five expeditions between October 2000 and July 2004 explored the Aladaglar Massif in the Eastern Taurids Range within Adana-Kayseri-Nipde provinces of Turkey. The aim was to find deep caves, the potential in the area could be as great as 2700m. While exploring two likely leads in 2003, Kuzgun Cave was found and a depth of 180m reached almost immediately. By the end of

the 2003 expedition the depth had been pushed to 400m. The following year this depth was pushed to 1400m, an addition of 1000m in one trip!

Source: http://www.speleogenesis.net/spotlights/spotlight_areas.php?expl_area_id=3

19. Sustav Lukina jama-Trojama (Manual II) Croatia 1.078km 1392m
The deepest cave in Croatia, Sustav Lukina jama-Trojama was found on the 28th of September 1992 by a group of Slovakian cavers. It is named after Ozren Lukic - Luke, a Croatian caver who died as a soldier during the Croatian Homeland War.

Source: <http://www.speleologija.hr/lukinajama/index.html>

20. Abisso Paolo Roversi Italy 4.000km 1350m

The deepest cave in Italy, this cave is found in the cavernous area of Carcaraia and came to be named after a cave diver who died in the region. It was pushed to -1250m in 1995, with further exploration in 2004 yielding the current known depth. The bottom of the cave sometimes fills with water, making exploration difficult.

Source: <http://www.apuane2007.it/guida/carcaraia.pdf>

Abisso Paolo Roversi, photo by: Bartoszewski

Source: http://www.sktj.pl/epimenides/wypr/abisso_p_r_p.html



Caving in the Cook Islands Cathi Humphrey-Hood

Several years ago I set off to do something I had long wanted to do – watch a total solar eclipse. That was in Russia in 2008. Now hopelessly addicted to eclipse chasing, 2009 took me to China and 2010 to a little spot in the Pacific called Mangaia. While the 2010 eclipse was mostly clouded out, I discovered that Mangaia has several important things to recommend it:

- a) it is in the middle of nowhere
- b) it is warm in winter
- c) there is hardly anyone living there
- d) it has caves

Mangaia is the southernmost of the Cook Islands, a 45 minute flight from Rarotonga. A mere 51.8 sq km, it is the second largest of the Cook islands and also one of the oldest. Around 2½ million years ago, the limestone reef surrounding an old volcano was uplifted a long way



above sea level, and today a wall of limestone a kilometre wide (called the makatea) circles the island at heights of up to 60m. The summit of the extinct volcano has been whittled down to only 169m, but water running off this over the years has hit the limestone wall and sought a way through to the ocean. In so doing it has dissolved channels through the limestone, forming the remarkable caves for which Mangaia is renowned.

The limestone on Mangaia is relatively young and free of alteration by heat and pressure, having a character more like the kind of beach-rock you find on modern reefs. Sometimes the rock is little more than boulders of coral, with the original structure of the organism barely changed. It is highly calcareous and very sharp, stabbing up through the soil all over the island, forming jagged mounds all through the rich tropical forest.



Tourist map from Cook Islands Sun

There are only 500 people still living on Mangaia, and they still identify with their traditional family/tribal boundaries (maraes). Before European contact (and indeed, for some time afterward) the caves were used as refuges during times of war. People in extremis were laid just inside the entrance to the cave; after death, their spirits were thought to protect the cave for that tribe. The largest and best known cave is Teruarere, likely to be over 2km long (though only 800m or so has been explored). Almost 4km of Mangaian cave passages have been mapped by researchers from the ANU Research School of Pacific Studies, and the maps are online in a published paper that can be found here: <http://si-pddr.si.edu/dspace/bitstream/10088/5835/1/00417.pdf>

After the eclipse a group of us arranged to take a cave tour with a local guide, to a cave on his family's land. A relative of the guide (who had tagged along) explained that the caves were closely guarded by the families (the knowledge of which was critical in a time of war), and he would not be allowed into another family's cave. Overseas visitors are exempt from this, having no connection to the island and thus no vested interests in acquiring knowledge of the caves.

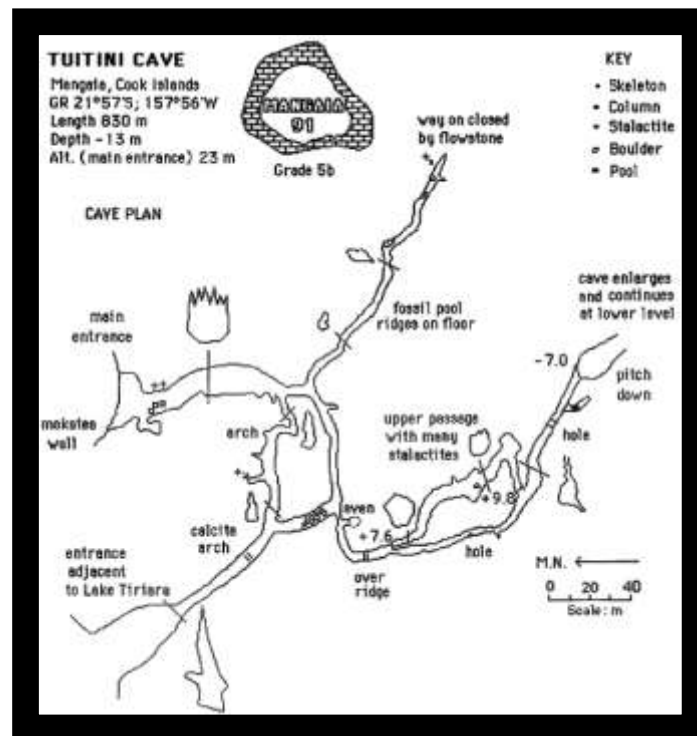
The cave we went to look at is Tuatini, located beside Lake Tiriara. Formed when the sea was at a higher level than today, this cave is now dry and lies above the streams that currently allow the lake to drain to the ocean. The cave is reached by a short walk up a rough path (re-hacked out of the forest by the guide the previous week). The section of the cave we saw leading from the main entrance is an easy walk through some beautifully decorated passages. There has been a lot of damage in the form of breakage – while some cave tour advertising photos show tourists sitting and climbing all over the various formations, I doubt tourism is responsible for much of the wreckage - it should be remembered that the caves have served as sanctuaries and living quarters for centuries and damage is a natural part of that usage. The photo on the front cover of the newsletter shows a new calcite straw forming from the broken stump of a stalactite.



Left: A column surrounded by broken stalactites. This is in an area of passage that would have had people walking through it – formations that are out of the main traffic areas are for the most part untouched.

The Mangaian lived entirely in the caves at certain times, and there are fireplaces, the scattered remains of candlenuts (which could be lit in bunches that could burn all night), and soot staining on some of the flowstones from the smoke. The fires were set in areas with natural chimney openings so the smoke could escape.





Map of Tuatini from Ellison, Joanna C., Caves and Speleogenesis of Mangaia, Cook Islands, <http://si-pddr.si.edu/dspace/bitstream/10088/5835/1/00417.pdf>

We also found a crab in a small pool near the arch, about 50m in from the entrance. The crab, apparently common in the caves, was a muddy colour and a good handspan across the body.

There is still a lot of exploration to be done in Mangaia and almost certainly there are caves still to be discovered. The potential for cave diving has also to be considered. Tuatini (the spelling varies) glittered with calcite, flowstones, stalactites and columns, and I can't wait to return to Mangaia to see some of the other caves. If enough people are interested, there exists the possibility of working with the local people and tour operators in Rarotonga to put together a specialised tour tailored for cave exploration.



References:

Tange ke: Welcome to Mangaia, Publication of the Mangaia Historical and Cultural Society
Caves and Speleogenesis of Mangaia, Cook islands, by Joanna C Ellison, 1993, <http://si-pddr.si.edu/dspace/bitstream/10088/5835/1/00417.pdf>
Cook Islands Sun, Aitutaki Atiu & Mangaia Maps

Upcoming Events

Because MSS members departing for the Nullarbor trip are leaving on the 28th July, trip reports for club activities in June will be published in the August newsletter.

SUNDAY 29th AUGUST - MSS TRAINING DAY

Trip Leader: Rod Smith

Contact by: ASAP

As some people couldn't make the earlier date, the training day will now take place on Sunday the 29th August, weather permitting.

What's involved?

For those who have abseiling and ascending skills but are either out of practice or would like to go to the next level of rigging and rebelay.

You will need: Abseiling gear.



It's not too late – if you get in soon – to participate in the **International Vulcanospeleological Symposium at Undara 12 - 17 August** – and the pre-symposium excursion to the lava caves of Western Victoria!

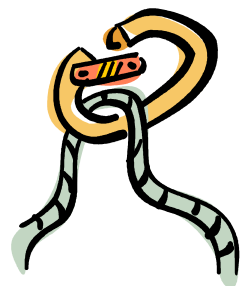


All details are on our website at: <http://ackma.org/14VSC/>

Greg Middleton
PO Box 269, Sandy Bay, Tas. 7006 Australia
14th International Symposium on Vulcanospeleology Organising Group
Undara, N. Qld. Australia. August 2010

Monthly Horrorskope

Your adventure stars for August 2010 ... or for any other time period you care to apply them to.



European Death Knot (EDK) - 1st Jan - 31st Jan

Oh what tangled webs we weave when there's too many cooks and three's a crowd. A journey of a thousand miles begins with a bird in the hand. He couldn't hit the broad side of a picture worth a thousands bears shitting in the short end of a stick. He who lives by the sword shall ask what his country can do for him. If I had a dollar for every time it wasn't rocket surgery.

Figure Eight - 1st Feb - 28th Feb

If you're going to do something this month, make sure you do it properly. If you go on a diet, only eat green leafy vegetables. If you go the other way, only eat chocolate. If you're going to kill yourself, make sure you take out as many innocent people with you as you can.

Tape Knot - 1st Mar - 31st Mar

This month you will feel like you are tangling with the great vacuum cleaner of life, ie, it all sucks.

Prussic Knot - 1st Apr - 30th Apr

Get out and smell the roses, or some other smelly flower in the vicinity. Marvel at nature, enjoy it's beauty, from the largest whales to the smallest microbes. Be astounded at how the tiny microbes enter your system, break down your defences, and kill you.

Double-Fishermans - 1st May - 31st May

You will discover something amazing this month. It may be the fabled Yeti, Yowie, Bunyip, Drop Bear or honest politician. Either way it will astound everyone. And, if you don't find it, make it up!

Clove Hitch - 1st Jun - 30th Jun

This is the month to get hitched. Go out there and tie the knot. Don't let people call you strange, even if you are marrying a length of rope.

Bowline - 1st Jul - 31st Jul

This is the month to let your inner beauty shine through. People will only see you as an amazing attractive individual, even if you look like a hippopotamuses' rear-end that's been repeatedly beaten with the ugly stick.

Noose - 1st Aug - 31st Aug

If you find yourself just hanging around you better find something to do. You don't want to be at a loose end, shooting the breeze, with your feet dangling over the edge.

Overhand Knot - 1st Sep - 30th Sep

When it's all looking down and gloomy, when you're wondering if things will turn around for the better, just remember the famous words of ... that guy, the famous one, that did the thing that made him famous, and said the saying, which you should remember.

Alpine Butterfly - 1st Oct - 31st Oct

Follow the pink echidna to find the sapphire gorilla. Place the sapphire gorilla on the pedestal of finite wisdom to reveal the map to the fabled lost statue of the demi-gods. The statue of the demi-gods will lead you to find the inner sanctum.

Half Hitch - 1st Nov - 30th Nov

Keep it simple this month. Don't try anything complicated like astrophysics, neurosurgery or counting to ten.

Sheet Bend - 1st Dec - 31st Dec

This month you will lose something that you have cherished. It will teach you to not become too attached to anything. Remember, you can always replace your collection of celebrity toenail clippings/life-size figurine of Elvis made of egg-shells/fertility statue made of Samoan elephant tusk/first born.

News from the Underground

News from the underground aims to provide snippets of what has been happening around the world, primarily in the areas of caving and canyoning, climbing, mountaineering...

July 2010

Honnold does El-Cap again – this time with rope... On the last day of June, Alex Honnold teamed up with Sean Leary for a triple route climb up a El Capitan. They started the night before, taking 4 hours to climb the Nose, followed by the Salathe Wall in 6 hours and then, slowing down in the summer heat, they climbed the 2000 feet of Lurking Fear, 19 pitches at 5.7 C2 that usually takes most climbers around 5 days, finishing their 3 climb combo in 23 hours. Story and photo by Tom Evans: <http://elcapreport.com/content/elcap-report-63010>



Also at the end of June and also at El Capitan, Kate Rutherford and Madaleine Sorkin ticked off the first female team free ascent box next to Free Rider, a variation of the Salathe Wall (Steph Davis made the first female free ascent in 2004). The route consists of 37 pitches, including the 7 inch 'Monster Offwidth' crack. Source: Climbing.com

http://www.climbing.com/news/hotflashes/ifree_rideri_sees_first_female-team_free_ascent/

Bulgarian Petar Unzhiev died from HAPE on K2. He was at camp 2 in excellent weather, which other climbers believe was a factor in his death – not wanting to miss the opportunity of climbing in such excellent conditions, Petar pitched in too quickly (only four days) after arriving on the mountain. Those near his tent heard his laboured breathing during the night but believed that his high altitude porter (HAP) would call for help if anything happened – unbeknownst to them, the porter had returned to base camp that night without notifying anyone else.

Sadly, July claimed the life of a cave diver - highly respected cave diver Wes Skiles died while diving off the Palm Beach coast on July 22. He was not cave diving at the time but had been working on a marine research project which had apparently just concluded. The 52 year-old was diving with others, who found him motionless on the bottom of the reef shortly after he had told

them he was ascending because he had run out of film. His beautiful photography was well known in the world of cave diving. Source: Gainsville.com



Ichetucknee River, image by Wes Stiles
From the Karstproductions website

July 15 - Bones in a cave in north-western QLD are providing palaeontologists with new insights into ancient marsupials. Twenty-six skulls and other bones belonging to the extinct long-legged wombat like creatures called Nimbadon were found in a cave near Mt Isa by scientists on a field trip. The bones included several complete skeletons, with some animals thought to be as young as 4 months old. Source: SMH.

Caverinfo.com reports the success of the fourth Balkan Camp in Romania with hundreds of cavers meeting and visiting showcaves in the area. 80 cavers joined in a rescue training exercise in Cetate Ponorului Cave.

Also from caverinfo.com - if your Spanish is up to it you can read about the caving dolls made by action-figure manufacturers Madelmann. There are a range of figures and accessories available: <http://truji-espeleo.blogspot.com/2010/07/espeleomunecos.html> .

Italian caving exploration progresses with another kilometre of new passages explored in Lovettecannas in Sardegna. The 15 hour trip saw the discovery of a giant chamber and a 100+m pit, putting the cave in line to be one of the deepest in Sardegna. From: caverinfo.com (the Italian source article is just as brief, though it does include the names of the cavers)



For those missing the cold and wet environment of the underground, UCET Ogof Hesp Alun Caving July 2010.mpg by Jaswauk gives us 9 minutes of a recent trip to the sump of Ogof Hesp Alun, near Cilcain in North Wales. It not only looks cold, wet, and muddy, it also looks awkward... just what caving is all about, I hear you say.

A July 21 lightning storm has killed one climber on the Grand Teton in Grand Teton National Park in Wyoming and forced the rescue of 16 others. It took eight hours of work by helicopters and professional guides to get the climbers off the mountain after heavy thunderstorms moved in. 83 people were involved in the rescue effort. A 21 year-old man died after falling off the route but it is not known if his death was due to being struck directly by lightning. The other climbers have a variety of injuries, including burns. Report from [The Alpinist](#).



Grand Teton, photo from [Alpinist.com](#)

Sadly this was the second incident in the park – only the day before the lightning storm struck, Jilian Drow, also 21, fell to her death while hiking. A student at the university of Michigan, she was studying with the geology department at the Camp Davis Rock Mountain Field Station.

July 24 - Ozcanyoner Joe Bugden called attention to a rescue-gone-wrong in Maglia canyon in France after his girlfriend broke her ankle and was airlifted out. A few days earlier, 31 year-old Anne Silvestri had fractured her tibia in the canyon, but the helicopter that came in to winch her out dislodged some rocks, one of which struck her head, killing her. She was wearing a helmet at the time. Anne leaves behind a husband and two little girls aged four and 18 months. From: <http://www.nicematin.com/article/societe/anne-na-pas-survecu-au-canyon-de-la-maglia>

July 11 saw a successful French assault on Gasherbrum II, with three climbers reaching the summit. They had earlier declared their summit bid over due to atrocious weather. Full report from [Explorer's web](#) (who are having some trouble with their website at the moment).

Trip Calendar

Sunday 29th August
MSS Field Day

SRT & Rigging – Training & Revision
Trip Leader: Roderick Smith
Contact: 0438 444262, roderick_smith@hotmail.com
By: 26th August

Week 11th – 19th September
Yarrangobilly
Permits acquired

Caving
Trip Leader: Beth Little
Contact: 0405 226 811, littlebeth78@hotmail.com
By: ASAP
Grade: Medium

Weekend 16 / 17 October
Coko Creek (if we can find it)
and Ilford Cave

Cave exploration
Trip Leader: Rod Smith
Contact: 0438 444262, roderick__smith@hotmail.com
By: 11th October
Grade: Medium...ish
Joint trip with NHVSS

Weekend ? / ? October
Myall Lakes

Kayaking (date TBA)
Trip Leader: Bob Horn
Contact: (02) 9639 3672, randphorn@optusnet.com.au
By: End September
Grade: Easy/Medium

Milford Track
Mid-late January 2011

Hiking
Trip Leader: Johan Verhagen
Contact: 02 4758 9811, johan.verhagen@sydneywater.com.au
By: 15th June 2010 (because bookings need to be made)
Grade: Medium

Easter 2011
Chillagoe QLD

Chillicon
Trip Leader: Jim Crockett
Contact: 0407 284 256, jim.crockett@reach.com
By: expressions of interest by Oct 2010
Grade: Conference with field Trips

May or June 2011
Timor Caves

Caving
TBA

Appendix 1 – Minutes of MSS Meeting

MSS 402th General Meeting, 1st July 2010

Meeting Opened: 7:40pm

Present:

Rod Smith, Jim Crockett, Tim Grimes, Chris Johnstone

Apologies:

Beth Little, Dave Stuckey, John Gray, Cathi Humphrey-Hood

1. Jim obtained quotes for an EPIRB. Tim offered an alternative source for the EPIRB and will obtain a quote.
2. It was agreed that since most, if not all, issues are discussed at general meetings, there is no need for regular committee meetings. Committee meetings will only be held if there is a particular issue that needs to be discussed only by the committee, and the meeting will be scheduled at that time. It is envisaged that this will be very infrequently.
There will be only four general meetings per calendar year, the fourth also include the AGM.
The meeting format needs to be formalised a bit more than it currently is.
As well as the summary of each meeting included in the club news section of the next newsletter, the full minutes will be attached.
Action item – Rod Smith to draft a schedule for the meetings plus a meeting format. These will be included in the next newsletter for club members to view and provide feedback.
3. Rod had a look at hosting options and costs and provided a list for perusal. A more thorough list will be put together before any decision on hosting is made. Chris offered to help Rod with this. Dave has offered to continue hosting the site for free, however his hosting doesn't provide the functionality required for some of the desired changes to the site. It will continue to be hosted by Dave until any decision is made.
To help reduce costs of any hosting option, we will offer to host member's personal sites under the hosting package for a small cost.
4. In response to the NSWSC request for a contact in each club in regards to training, it was decided that we needed a Training Officer to replace the Safety Officer position. Since Johan resigned from the Safety Officer position, Rod is going to find a Training Officer. If no-one else agrees to take on the position, Rod will.
5. It was agreed to add the Gunns Plain book to the MSS Library, Rod was provided a cheque to cover the cost of this.
It was agreed to subscribe to the Helictite magazine for the next three years. Jim was given the form and a cheque to post.
Cathi Humphrey-Hood will investigate the cost of purchasing the back issues of Helictite. Once a cost is provided a decision will be made on whether to purchase the back issues.
6. Jim has already volunteered to help with the organising of the 2013 ASF Conference to be held at Talbingo. Rod and Chris both offered to help as well.
7. It was proposed to send a copy of our newsletters to NHVSS in exchange for receiving a copy of theirs. We agreed to do this.
It was proposed to run a joint to trip to Coolong with CASM. We agreed to do this. Rod will organise this trip.

The next meeting is tentatively planned to be held at Beth's place, subject to Beth's agreement.

Meeting Closed 9:45pm

Appendix 2 – MSS General Meeting Template

MSS [meeting number] General Meeting, [meeting date]

Held at [location]

Meeting Opened: [time]

Present:

[name list]

Apologies:

[name list]

Any Corrections to Previous Meetings Minutes:

[details or “None”]

Correspondence:

[list or “None”]

Committee Members Reports:

President – [details or “None”]

Treasurer – [details or “None”]

Equipment Officer – [details or “None”]

Training Officer – [details or “None”]

Librarian – [details or “None”]

Status of Action Items:

[list of action items from previous meeting with current status]

New Business:

[Any new items to discuss]

Next Meeting: [where, and date if possible]

Meeting Closed: [time]

Notes:

Meeting Number – An incremental number

Corrections to previous minutes – The minutes from each meeting will be published in the following MSS newsletter. This gives people an opportunity to comment on the minutes and notify the secretary of any corrections.

Correspondence – Any mail or emails received by the club. Any action items arising from the correspondence will be detailed here.

Committee Members Reports – Not required, but it's an opportunity for any of the committee members to present anything relating to their position. Any action items arising as a result of the reports will be detailed here.

Status of Action Items – Any outstanding action items from previous meetings will be listed here. The person responsible for the action item, if anyone, will provide an update on the action item, by proxy if they're not in attendance. If no update is presented then it will be assumed that the status is the same as it was at the previous meeting.

New Business – Any new items to discuss. Any action items resulting from the new business will be detailed here.

Next Meeting – A host and location for the next meeting will be decided. The host will decide on the exact date at least one month before the next meeting, so may not be available immediately. They should endeavour to choose a date that as many of the committee members can attend as possible.

Action Items – Any action items should be detailed in the applicable place. It should include the person or persons who will be responsible for the action item as well as a time-frame. If no-one volunteers to be responsible for the action item, it will be left blank and revisited at the next meeting. It's possible that someone will volunteer before the next meeting. The time-frame may be open-ended.

Appendix 3 – MSS Annual General Meeting Template

MSS [meeting number] General Meeting, [meeting date]

Held at [location]

Meeting Opened: [time]

Present:

[name list]

Apologies:

[name list]

Any Corrections to Previous Meetings Minutes:

[details or “None”]

Correspondence:

[list or “None”]

Committee Members Reports:

President – [details or “None”]

Treasurer – [details or “None”]

Equipment Officer – [details or “None”]

Training Officer – [details or “None”]

Librarian – [details or “None”]

Status of Action Items:

[list of action items from previous meeting with current status]

New Business:

[Any new items to discuss]

Next Meeting: [where, and date if possible]

Meeting Closed: [time]

Notes:

Meeting Number – An incremental number

Corrections to previous minutes – The minutes from each meeting will be published in the following MSS newsletter. This gives people an opportunity to comment on the minutes and notify the secretary of any corrections.

Correspondence – Any mail or emails received by the club. Any action items arising from the correspondence will be detailed here.

Committee Members Reports – Not required, but it's an opportunity for any of the committee members to present anything relating to their position. Any action items arising as a result of the reports will be detailed here.

Status of Action Items – Any outstanding action items from previous meetings will be listed here. The person responsible for the action item, if anyone, will provide an update on the action item, by proxy if they're not in attendance. If no update is presented then it will be assumed that the status is the same as it was at the previous meeting.

New Business – Any new items to discuss. Any action items resulting from the new business will be detailed here.

Next Meeting – A host and location for the next meeting will be decided. The host will decide on the exact date at least one month before the next meeting, so may not be available immediately. They should endeavour to choose a date that as many of the committee members can attend as possible.

Action Items – Any action items should be detailed in the applicable place. It should include the person or persons who will be responsible for the action item as well as a time-frame. If no-one volunteers to be responsible for the action item, it will be left blank and revisited at the next meeting. It's possible that someone will volunteer before the next meeting. The time-frame may be open-ended.