

Metropolitan Speleological Society

Quarterly Newsletter

Winter

Issued September 2018

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Cover Shot: Trish Morrow in unpublished canyon (Photo: John Gray)



SOCIETY INFORMATION

Club PLB

Just a reminder to all trip leaders that the Club PLB should be taken on every remote trip. Our Equipment Officer, Beth (0450 226 811), equipment@mssadventure.org.au) has this, so please coordinate with her to collect it before you lead your next trip.

2018 Office Bearers

President	president@mssadventure.org.au	Jim Crockett
Secretary	secretary@mssadventure.org.au	Rod Smith
Treasurer	treasurer@mssadventure.org.au	Cathi Humphrey Hood
Equipment Officer	equipment@mssadventure.org.au	Beth Little
Librarian	library@mssadventure.org.au	Rod Smith
Training Officer	training@mssadventure.org.au	Beth Little
ASF Liaison		Jim Crockett & Rod Smith
Newsletter Editor	newsletter@mssadventure.org.au	Marilyn Scott
Website Manager	webmaster@mssadventure.org.au	Rod Smith
Public Officer		John Gray

Membership Fee Details (2018)

Membership Type	Fee	Prospective membership options (12 months)	Fee
Full member	\$80	Single Prospective	\$30
Family (2 adults + children)	\$160	Family (2 adults + children) Prospective	\$60
Family (1 adult + children)	\$120	Family (1 adult + children) Prospective	\$45
Social	\$45		
Already a member of an ASF Club?	\$30		

Cheques or Cash accepted but **preferred method of payment** by Direct Debit - Account: Metropolitan Speleological Society; Bendigo Bank; BSB 633 000; Account Number: 163 131 451.



News

Welcome to New Members

This quarter, we're welcoming two new members, Jonathan Finch and Brendan Bryne.

Brendan has already been out caving with Chris Johnstone to Jenolan (read all about what they got up to in the trip report).

Jonathan (or Jon), is an experienced caver, having spent lots of time underground and hanging around on ropes in the UK which is where he's originally from. Jon is keen to canyon with us and is also a keen bushwalker.



New Website

We've launched the new website and www.mssadventure.org.au has been given a face-lift! Big thanks to all those who have contributed with the proof reading, design, photographs and graphics (you all know who you are!). The members' area (login is your firstname.lastname and password is "forester") has some new content: .pdf pages with directions to most of our frequently visited areas (if you have suggestions for more let us know); archives of past newsletters (this is a great new feature); links to useful websites; a page highlighting the MSS branded merchandise and eventually the ability to edit your own details (Rod's working on this as we speak). You'll find there's also additional content on the public site, hopefully it's informative and vibrant enough to attract some new members! Check it out now.



New Bank Account

We have opened a new bank account with Bendigo Bank which will allow us to make electronic transfers, the new account details are:

Metropolitan Speleological Society Inc

BSB 633 000

Account Number: 163 131 451

So, if you have previously set up the details of the MSS Account (so that you can transfer trip fees and membership fees), please make sure that the above details replace the previous account. We will maintain the old account for the time being should there be any accidental deposits to it!



Navigation Training – 15 – 16 September 2018

Have you ever watched one of our experienced members lead a trip into the bush and seemingly know exactly where they're going just by instinct? Well, it's not instinct, it's training and knowledge, and we can provide that training and knowledge. Soon you too can head into the Australian bush knowing that you are prepared and capable to navigate your way back out.

Think about booking onto Rod's trip, these training days don't come up very often, and the more people on trips who know how to navigate the better! If you're interested, contact Rod, roderick_smith@hotmail.com.



DistoX – Cave Surveying Tool – time to buy!

The DistoX performs multiple measurements at the same time and at the push of one button. The laser beam measures the distance (to within 1mm) inclination, and compass bearing, plus calculates the true horizontal and vertical measurements of each survey leg. Hence it does what used to take ages with three instruments and does it with the click of one button.

The base for the DistoX is the Leica Disto X310 which has an add-in electronics board installed into it which is designed and made by a person in Switzerland and only fits into the Leica Disto X310, so that once added the Disto becomes a DistoX.

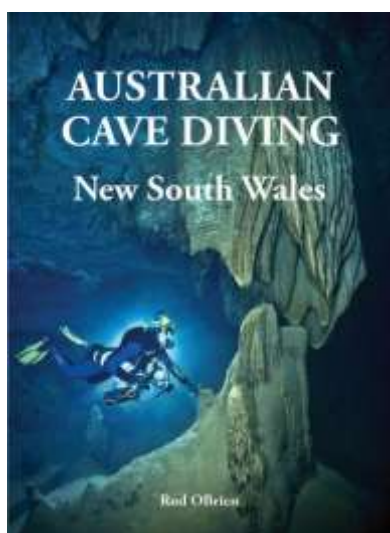
The Leica company has stopped making the X310 and the person making the plug-in board is not going to spend the huge amount of time required to reverse engineer the newer versions of commercial Distos to design and manufacture more plug-in boards.

There are just 200 of the Disto X310 models left in the world, hence once the current stock of 200 runs out there will be no more DistoX (world-wide) unless Leica or another individual is prepared to take on manufacture of the specific board.

If you want to get one of these great instruments, then it will set you back around \$750 (including fitted board). You need to buy the base Disto X310 and then in Australia there are two people who are able to assemble and supply the boards to be installed, Burkitt and Kevin Moore. If you are interested, please contact membership@mssadventure.org.au.



Book Review - Australian Cave Diving



This book by Rod O'Brien follows the history of cave diving in NSW from its very beginnings in 1952 through to 2016. The main dives listed are when the cave was first dived and by whom, exploration dives and survey dives.

Included are the first cave dives in Australia in 1952 and 1953 by SUSS member Denis Burke (the father of Australian cave diving), the first cave dive using SCUBA equipment in Australia in 1954 by SSS member Russell Kippax and UEC diver Michel Calluud and the first female cave diver in Australia UEC diver Lois Linklater in 1954. Other prominent events where cave systems were joined, and new types of diving equipment used are also included.

Self-published, only 200 books have been printed. The book costs \$60 plus \$18 postage and handling (for 1 – 2 books within Australia). To order email Rod at constructiondiver@bigpond.com include your name, mailing address an quantity and advise which payment you prefer, EFT, or Paypal.



Diary Alert

The Darkness Beneath: Caving Tasmania

(31st ASF Conference 30 Dec 2018 - 4 Jan 2019)

ASF have a conference every second year and in 2019 it will be held in Devonport, Tasmania. This is an amazing opportunity for cavers as Devonport is a mere 60k as the crow flies from one of Tasmania's most renowned caving areas, **Mole Creek Karst Area** (Kubla Khan, Croesus and Genghis Kahn). Pre- and Post-Conference caving trips will be on offer, an opportunity not to be missed to cave with the "locals" and to see some highly restricted caves.

The website (with details of what caves are on offer, accommodation options and a range of things to do in Tassie) has been released: www.asfconference2019.com, and registrations are now being taken.

MSS will be well represented at the Conference, so far Rod, Cathi, Michael, Anna, Marilyn, Alan, and Dave going. It's not too late to register!



Check out the website, there are some fabulous photos of the Mole Creek caves.



Edd about to descend into A13 or 14 at Abercrombie. (Photo: Marilyn Scott)



MSS Projects

Have you felt that you wanted to give something back to MSS, but didn't know how? Or maybe you didn't want to commit to anything due to time constraints? Well, here's your opportunity.

Over the last few years various members of MSS have taken on projects on behalf of MSS. In most cases assistance on these projects would be greatly appreciated. This can be as little as offering an opinion on a topic up to contributing as much time as you're willing to commit.

The following list details the projects, the type of assistance you could make, and who to contact to offer your help.



- **Abercrombie Book** (Contact: Beth Little) - an up-to-date book on the Abercrombie karst area; a couple of trips to Abercrombie are planned, check out the Calendar for the dates.
- **Abercrombie GPS Tag Location** (Contact: Rod Smith) - The aim of this project is to locate and GPS all the tags at Abercrombie. Over half have been located but there's still plenty to go.
- **Abercrombie Surface Survey** (Contact: Rod Smith) - A lot of the tags at Abercrombie are very close together, so the idea is to do an accurate survey between those tags to be able to see potential relationships between the caves. This project hasn't started yet as there's been a focus on having GPS waypoints for each tag location, but there's no reason why a surface survey can't start. Surveying skills are not required to help on this project.
- **Surveying - Resurvey Stable Cave** (Contact: Jim Crockett) - This project came about because we couldn't find a single map that covered the entirety of Stable Cave.
- **Documentation** (Constitution) (Contact: Chris Johnstone) - This is mostly complete although there's still some debate regarding the membership types we should be offering.
- **Catalogue MSS Library** (Contact: Rod Smith) - We have a lot of information in the MSS library, the ultimate goal is to have the catalogue on the website so members can access information ease.
- **Bolting Course** (Contact: Rod Smith) - This hasn't progressed much passed the idea phase, but could be another useful skill members may be interested in.









Trish coming out of a cave in the pinnacle - Glen Davis (Photo: John Gray)



Double Bowline

by Beth Little

I've had lots of contact from people about the double bowline, looks like the website I indicated may not have had the easy method. Here are some shots of the technique for everyone. Guarantee you will love this knot!

Step 1: Double the rope over	Step 2: Tie a 'Granny' knot or 'Thumb' knot	Step 3: Identify the last part of the rope going under the loop. This will be the part you 'pull through' in a bit...
		
Step 4: Bring your loop over the knot.....	Step 5: Then pull through the part of knot you identified	Step 6: You then have your double bowline – beauty isn't it!
		



TRIP REPORTS

Caving – Abercrombie, 16 – 17 June, 2018

Report by: Beth Little

Participants: Beth Little (L), David Stuckey, Rod Smith, Catherine & Garth McLachlan, Edd Keudell and Marilyn Scott



David (setting up a photoshoot of Edd) using his Samsung Galaxy S5 phone, he was just mucking around seeing what the camera would do, amazingly great results.

The goal of our weekend was to firm up plans and gather ideas for the book that MSS may coordinate and publish on Abercrombie Caves. MSS has a long history of caving at Abercrombie, with a number of our members living in the area (or being guide there). MSS has done a significant amount of caving at Abercrombie in the past, including projects surveying caves, exploring new leads, finding caves, digging passages/links from one cave to another, changing light bulbs for the rangers, hauling gear up to the caves for the rangers, etc etc.

On this weekend, we were going to suss out which caves we would re-survey (with our new Disto-Xs) and get a head start on the surveying we would do in August.

Our first cave Saturday was Stable Cave, in Stable Arch. Bushrangers used to stable their horses by putting a make-shift gate across the opening. We checked out the bottom cave gate (to make sure the key fitted), and then popped up to A13 & 14 to give Edd a feel for the area (and the tight squeeze). Then we dropped in via the top gate to Stable Cave.

Our next stop was Bushrangers cave, off the Main Arch Cave, which has a number of “bedrooms”. These are large chambers with a nice flat sandy floor, and you could just imagine the bushrangers bedding down in these caves hiding from the authorities (which was what they did). There wasn’t any evidence of camp fires in the caves that we could see, perhaps fire scars have been cleaned up by the rangers over time.

It was great having David along on the trip, he kept us entertained with tales of “the old days” when he used to come with his parents on family vacations and the caves weren’t as highly regulated as they are now. Always great to be on a trip that the nostalgia flows.

After Bushrangers we headed up along Arch Cave, apparently this is the largest natural archway in limestone in the Southern Hemisphere, it’s 197.5m long and 62.5m at its widest part. It is far more spectacular in length than the Jenolan archway, but doesn’t get the visitation that Jenolan gets.

There are a number of side caves, one of which is Koh-I-Noor, which was opened to the public in 1900, there are steps cut into the limestone, apparently, there was a wooden ladder that was in place on a big rock below and the tourists would climb the ladder and then go up the steps to enter the cave. The wooden ladder was washed away in floods in 1950 and not replaced. Tourists don’t get to go up there anymore.



Catherine at the gate, note the white writing in the top right corner, David wrote on it back in 1989 when Mike Nichols (MSS member) who built both the upper and lower gates, and put them into place on 22nd July (Photo: David)



The wooden ladders (no longer used) in Bushranger Cave.

There is also a very large “dancefloor” that was built in the early 1900s and was where farmers in the surrounding district met up for social evenings. The dancefloor is in amazingly great condition, possibly because it is well up from the flood zone of the streamway through the arch. A number of MSS members have been married here at the dancefloor over the years.

The streamway through the arch was incredibly dry, even a pool towards the end was much lower than anyone remembered, even though there’d been a bit of rain in recent weeks.

Once we’d had enough of wandering through the caves, we retired for dinner and discussed which caves would be resurveyed for the proposed book. The forecast was for “showers” and BOM got it right, it rained when we were getting ready to cook dinner, stopped long enough to light the fire after dinner, then rained again sending everyone off for an early night, then rained again for breakfast. Although a number of brave souls stayed up standing around the fires with their umbrellas hoping for a break in the weather. Being wet, and the freezing temps, was not very pleasant! But the company was. Fortunately, there’s a communal kitchen over by the Ranger’s office so we took advantage of that to cook out of the weather.



The old dis-used steps going up into Koh-I-Noor Cave

Next morning we all headed over to the Grand Arch again to calibrate the Distos, my laptop in hand. We choose the Arch to strategically stay out of the weather! While the rest of us were calibrating, David, Garth and Cat went exploring through some of the Grand Arch’s side tourist caves (which surprisingly were much warmer than out in the arch).

The first calibration effort failed, probably because we were too close to a metal walkway, so we moved further out of the cave. We think we had too much interference from helmets and watches and perhaps were taking readings too far away to be accurate.



Beth calibrating her Disto.

The entryway proved a better spot. You have to take 56 readings, and you are supposed to get the accuracy below .5, I got mine to .8 which is still not good enough and Marilyn’s was over 1. By this time though it’s around noon and we’re absolutely frozen, so we gave up. We figured our trembling hands may have been a factor to the poor reliability.

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I’ll try again in the local sports field, if I can find one without a lot of interference!

We were packed up and were on the road just after lunch and, evidence of how cold it was, there was a dusting of snow in the higher elevations just outside of Bathurst. Fried chicken for Edd & I on the way home at Bathurst – yum!

Thanks everyone for braving the cold and coming on the trip – great company! Next time in Winter let’s get a cabin to have a warmer trip.

Bushwalking – Mogo Creek 23 & 24 June 2018

Report by: Marilyn Scott

Participants: (MSS) Steve Rowse, Heather Reid, Trish Morrow & Marilyn Scott (BWOC) Helge Lawrence & Michael Williams

This was a joint MSS/BWOC trip. Ten people signed up for it but by the end of a week of rain (and a lot of valid reasons), the numbers had whittled down to six which in the end was probably for the best.

The weather was perfect, brilliant sunshine, no rain and only cold at night. Despite a week of rain, the creeks were bone dry, we picked up enough water for the weekend but only just (although if we'd walked downstream on Mogo Creek for 200m there was plenty of water, we just couldn't be bothered). The water-source on our side creek (big enough to bathe in) that I remembered from a previous trip was dry.



Our stunning campsite amongst the blue gums (couldn't find evidence of anyone camping there before).



Nice open ridge walking while we searched for the proverbial needle in the haystack (the aboriginal art)

The goal of the trip was to look for some aboriginal art - two emus and a "birdman". I had a six-digit grid reference, but this proved useless, should have gotten eight digits (will remember that for the future), also would have helped too if we'd known whether to look for rock engravings or cave art.

Despite our fruitless search for the elusive art, the trip was great ... good company, easy walking through dry sclerophyll forest, a short walk to our stunning campsite amongst blue gums, a cuppa with lunch in the sun before we headed off to search for art sites, more firewood than we knew what to do with, baked potatoes provided by Steve, the opportunity to leisurely poke around on some ridges and cliff-lines and a visit on Sunday to an aboriginal

art site that I'd visited in the past and thankfully found again. AND, best of all, my walk didn't turn into the epic predicted by some (my walks have the reputation of turning into epics, although for the life of me, I can't usually see what was so epic about them!).

Thanks to everyone who joined me, I will be putting other walks on around Mogo Creek (not too far from Sydney) as this area is rich in aboriginal art, you just have to look around to find it!



My favourite place for lunch, a massive 100m rock slab - why no self-respecting aboriginal didn't do engravings on this is beyond me.



The Sun Cave art from Sunday, there was also a hand stencil and some other very faint art.



Canyoning - Glen Davis, 18 – 19 August 2018

Report by: John Gray

Participants: Marilyn Scott, Jeff Boyd, Trish Morrow, John Gray (TL)

Nothing puts you on edge like strong wind. We stood at the top of the 70m dry falls in Drowned Rat Canyon as gusts of wind did their best to knock us off our feet.

Those of us lucky enough to have Friday off work had arrived at the campsite in time for a very relaxed evening by the fire. At 8am on Saturday morning we all set off up the hill and climbed into the warmth of the sun. It had been a cold start at minus 1 degree. We soon overcame all the little climbs and reached the halfway ledge. Calm conditions gave no warning of what the afternoon would bring.

We were no strangers to the long traverse on the halfway ledge as we had done it before. The previous occasion was a very wet day trip to explore what we later named Drowned Rat Canyon. The name described our appearance at the end of the day. The ledge itself contains no great difficulty but in places is loose underfoot with some mild exposure.

Several months ago, we did a through trip in the canyon and solved the problem of the final 70m drop. (This trip was described in a previous newsletter). A long story short, to enable our 60m ropes to reach the bottom, a large amount of tape was left behind.

The main objective of this trip was to send Marilyn and Trish down the big abseil and then I would retrieve the tape and reverse the last 2 small drops. This would leave the canyon with no sign that we had been there. Jeff would accompany me on the long walk back to camp.

Sounds good on paper. This is how it really played out.

We all did the first short abseil down the side wall of the canyon. I rigged it single rope as I was using Petzel ascenders to get back out. Abseiling in at this point avoids a pool of unknown depth. We all walked up to the pool and back. I then rigged the 2nd abseil. This drop has another large pool at the bottom. On the previous trip we bypassed this pool with an abseil off a boulder high on the left side. We noted then that a large ledge (that could not be seen from above) would allow us to abseil directly down without getting wet. Still following the original plan, Marilyn, Trish and myself did this abseil. At the bottom was a small overhang several metres above the pool. I braved the strong gusts of wind and walked out to the tree where we had left 10m or so of tape last time. Not surprisingly, the tape was no longer hanging down the cliff as it had blown back onto the ledge behind the tree.



Half-way ledge traverse (Photo: John Gray)



John on the first abseil, the single rope would be left in place to exit the canyon (Photo: Marilyn Scott)



John at the base of the second abseil, this single rope would be used to prusik out but was not long enough to be used double. (Photo: Marilyn Scott)

At this point Marilyn made the decision that she did not feel comfortable with doing the abseil in such strong wind. She was an experienced prussiker so we decided that Trish and myself would do the abseil, pull down the 2 X 60m ropes and head back to camp. As Marilyn would not be able to retrieve the sling from the original tree (being situated several metres out along a 1 foot wide ledge with huge exposure), I re-rigged the sling from a small teatree. The end of the rope from the previous abseil was just long enough to back up the anchor point.

The abseil was magnificent and not nearly as affected by the wind as we had feared. Jokes were made about measuring the wind strength by

throwing rocks off and seeing if they came back up. (I have actually done this at Narrowneck with small flat rocks, they do come back up). Trish did a great job with leading down the abseil as the wind blew the ropes into a few unexpected places.

The rope pulldown was uneventful and I sat with Trish for a leisurely lunch at the base of the drop. The position was very sheltered with hardly a breath of wind.

We got back to camp just before 3.30pm. I was feeling uneasy about how Marilyn and Jeff would be coping with their half of the bargain. I immediately packed some extra food, water and a headtorch. (after all, it was supposed to me who dealt with reversing of the canyon followed by the long walk back). We decided that Trish stay at camp to light the fire and raise the alarm if we didn't come back.



Trish on the second abseil (Photo: Marilyn Scott)

I calculated that I probably would have enough light to walk for 1 ¼ hours, at which point I would get back right on dark. I would meet the others coming back well before that. Right?

I was motoring along so managed to get about ¾ of the way back to the canyon after 1 hour. I was starting to get quite concerned as there was still no sign of them. It was with some relief shortly afterwards that I walked into the start of an overhang and saw Jeff appear up ahead. They were glad to get the extra water and after a short rest we set off back towards camp. I calculated that we would just about reach the top of the big downhill section just on dark. As we walked back, the full story was revealed.

The first of the drops that Marilyn needed to reverse proved to be much harder than we thought. Although the small overhang was only a short distance from the ledge below, it was enough to give Marilyn a thorough workout. It didn't help that her prussik loops were jamming on the single 9mm rope. Fortunately, Jeff was at the top and able to give her some assistance. This is where Marilyn's vast experience kicked in and she was able to overcome the problem. The price she paid was exhaustion. The second drop was much

easier, and they exited the creek at about 4pm. As the sun sets at 5.28pm they started weighing their options for finding a comfortable place to spend the night.

As predicted we got back to the top of the big hill as the last of the twilight faded. My LED headtorch faithfully led us down the hill following the sinuous path through the small cliff-lines. I was glad that I had traversed this hill quite a few times in the last few years. On the last downclimb I went first to light the way down for the others. The slope was very dusty, and I was mostly blinded by the light reflecting back from the airborne particles. Towards the bottom I stepped on a large rock which promptly parted company with the slope and took off down the hill. Luckily, I stayed put. A little bit of scrub later and we emerged on the fire-trail. Trish was very relieved to see my headtorch coming down the hill as it was now 7pm.



John at the top of the third abseil, with the new anchor set up, going down to set up the 60m abseil (Photo: Marilyn Scott)



Trish at the base of the pinnacle looking out into the Capertee River. (Photo: John Gray)

Back at the roaring fire we all collapsed into our chairs and had a well-earned rest.

On Sunday we decided to do an easy walk up to the rock pinnacle near Freshwater Creek. We discovered many slots and caves to explore. One such slot led to a larger chamber with a window that brought you out halfway up a cliff. Behind the rock pinnacle is a protected depression full of huge boulders and ferns. The presence of several movement sensor cameras indicated that rock wallabies are being studied here. We got back to camp in time for lunch.



A small crawl-through cave at the base of the pinnacle. (Photo: Jeff Boyd)





MSS TRIP CALENDAR

1 Sept 9am – 3pm SRT Training Day Boat Harbour	NEW NHVSS	Trip Leaders: Members of NHVSS Contact: daniel@danielburtphotos.com or 0448 827 596 Grade: Instructional Details: We have been invited to attend the NHVSS training day. Possible re-belays, traverses and rock-climbing set ups.
8 - 14 Sept Caving Yarrangobilly		EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST Trip Leader: David Stuckey / Co-ordinator: Marilyn Scott Contact: marilyn_scott@bigpond.com Details: A week of caving at Yarrangobilly. TRIP FULL
8 - 9 Sept Caving Abercrombie		Trip Leader: Cathi Humphrey-Hood Contact: cathi@emeraldimages.com.au or text 0414 663137 Grade: Easy Details: Recreational caving plus opportunity to do some photography.
15 - 16 Sept Instructional		Trip Leader: Rod Smith Contact: roderick_smith@hotmail.com Grade: Educational Details: Navigation Training
22 – 23 Sept Bushwalking Wollemi Wilderness	NEW	Trip Leader: Marilyn Scott Contact: marilyn_scott@bigpond.com Grade: Easy – Medium Details: A circuitous walk along ridges to campsite on the Wollemi. All off track. Navigation practice available for those who attended Rod's course.
Sept 29 – Oct 27 Caving Nullarbor		Trip Leader: Cathi Humphrey-Hood Contact: cathi@emeraldimages.com.au Grade: Easy Details: Joint trip with NHVSS. Looking for new caves .
12 – 13 Oct Bushwalking Shoalhaven	NEW	Trip Leader: Marilyn Scott Contact: marilyn_scott@bigpond.com Grade: Hard Details: Exploratory trip down either Water Race or Tail Race Creek, camp on the banks of the Shoalhaven, return route yet to be determined.
20 & 21 Oct Cave Surveying Wombeyan		Co-ordinator: Marilyn Scott Contact: marilyn_scott@bigpond.com or 0417 453 170 Grade: Instructional Details: COURSE FULL!
3 – 4 Nov Caving Timor	NEW NHVSS	Trip Leader: Garry Smith Contact: gksmith29@icloud.com Grade: Easy Details: Timor Caves, Hunter Valley. Easy caving in a great setting. Staying at the Glen Dhu Hut.
3 – 11 Nov Caving New Zealand		Trip Leader: David Stuckey Contact: stuckedl@cba.com.au Grade: Easy/Medium Details: TRIP FULL
10 - 11 Nov Caving Wyanbene	NEW NHVSS	Trip Leader: Peter Brady Contact: pbrady@simonplace.net Grade: Unknown Details: Wyanbene and the Big Hole (for further details contact Peter)

17 – 18 Nov Canyoning Katoomba	NEW	Trip Leader: Rod Smith Contact: roderick_smith@hotmail.com Grade: Easy Details: Wowzers & Doomsday previously scheduled for this weekend are being postponed . Instead, some easier canyons will be on the calendar based on participant's skill level, beginners welcome.
26 Dec 2018-4 Jan 2019		The Darkness Beneath: Caving Tasmania (31st ASF Conference) pre- and post-conference trip dates to Mole Creek Karst area into some spectacular caves. See notice on Page 5.
Easter 2019 Caving Ashford	POSTPONED	Trip Leader: Rod Smith - Contact: roderick_smith@hotmail.com Grade: Easy Details: This is a chance to explore a new area. Ashford is situated near the Queensland border. According to Google it's about 8 hours from Sydney. There's at least four known caves. More details to follow.

APPENDIX 1 – MEETING MINUTES

MSS 427th General Meeting – 2 August 2018

Held at SES Canada Bay

Meeting Opened: 7:40pm

Present: Jim Crockett, Roderick Smith, Cathi Humphrey-Hood, Katryse Nicholls, Owen Nicholls, Marilyn Scott (via Skype)

Apologies: Chris Johnstone, Beth Little

Any Corrections to Previous Meetings Minutes: None

Correspondence: None

Committee Members Reports:

President: None

Treasurer: The new MSS bank account has been opened. Currently most of the money is in the old bank account.

Brought forward:	\$3,223.18
Total Incoming:	\$347.50
Total Outgoing:	\$143.00
ASF Fees	143.00
Closing Balance:	\$3,427.68

Anyone who wishes to look at the full report, please email secretary@mssadventure.org and it will be emailed to you.

Equipment Officer: None.

Training Officer: None.

Librarian: None.

Web Manager: The new website is live! The public facing aspect is complete. The members area is functional but over time expect more features and information to be added.

Membership Report: We have one new member since the last meeting, Brendan Byrne.

Project Updates:

Abercrombie book: Beth submitted a written report: "I thought I would summarise a bit of an update about the Abercrombie book for the meeting as it's been a busy quarter;

- The book is now in a draft form 'as such' on Dropbox. A separate word doc for each chapter, with a corresponding folder titled by chapter for where we can pop all the images and library content that we are utilising. I'm having issues with dropbox as have maxed out my limit, and think I really need to increase my limit to work further on the book, to make it more workable. I wasn't able to access the docs Cathi recently sent me as didn't have enough space.

- I've been through Cave chronicles and copied content (kept it in blue) into the corresponding chapters
- I've been through Barry Cubbitt's library (extensive, 8 DVDs worth) and started culling items that are not required after reading them. [For examples, perhaps photos that had no relevance to our book, or we weren't able to track the photo owner]
- I have contacted Susan White (ASF publications) to inform her that we are planning to produce and book and ask her to inform us if we need to know anything. I have not had a reply.
- I have contacted David Smith (Manager Abercrombie region) via email and phone message to inform of our book plan and seek NPWS support. I am yet to have a formal reply.
- I have contacted Peter Dykes in his role as Indigenous Liaison Officer for ASF. He is happy to assist us with the Indigenous acknowledgements at beginning of book, plus the part of the chapter on pre-colonisation history. He was meeting elders a fortnight ago to discuss it all further.
- I've been in contact with a number of the Invertebrate specialist (Spate, G Smith, Eberhand). There has been no Invertebrate specialist research at Abers since the 1994-1995 state wide survey. Andy has offered us to write a similar chapter to what he did for the Timor book, as long as we didn't need it this year. I've let him know we'd be interested in his help.
- I've started the Chapter on Caves (first draft on Drop box), organising the area and listing all the Karst numbers based on Ken Keck and Barry Cubbitts comprehensive summaries, notes, and Ken's original book. Rod has offered to assist to co-author or review this chapter with me.
- Cathi has confirmed she would be interested in coordinating/authoring the Geology/Hydrology Chapter. She has a trip planned early September for some photography for same.
- The Abercrombie trip in August will look at Surveying Stable Cave and Arch. I've booked a cottage so that we can deal with the possible cold weather! So far participants are; Beth, Marilyn and Edd. Permit is approved.
- So far, I think we will need good photos of some of the Karst features and cave entrances. I might work on David Smith to see if we can get permission to take some drone shots, in particular I wonder if a drone shot of the different cave 'areas' or bluffs would look effective. I'm sure we can find someone who would be keen to take some drone shots for us if we get permission.

New Business

- FTP site: Considering some of the issues Beth has experienced with dropbox it was suggested that we look into an ftp server that would suit our needs. Rod volunteered to investigate if we could have ftp facilities under our web hosting.
- Bank Account update: We agreed that we will leave the old account open for a while but start using the new account and transfer most of the money across straight away.
- Next year's committee: Next year's committee will see some changes. If anyone has considered helping out, now is a great opportunity to do so. We can make sure you are given a role that you are capable of performing.
- Jenolan cottage: We were advised that we have insufficient funds with Jenolan Cottage. We agreed to transfer money to them to rectify this.
- Sports grants: There are sports grants available from the Office of Sport. We agreed that at present there is too much happening to consider applies for a grant this time.
- Meeting location: Marilyn has been looking into alternative locations to hold our meetings. Some initial feedback has not been positive, but there are still options. Also, Jim mentioned he may be able to source a location. Jim will work with Marilyn to see if that's a viable option.

Other general business:

Trip planning: NHVSS have scheduled a training day for Saturday the 1st of September. There will be more details on the newsletter.

Date	Leader	Activity	Location	Grade	Notes
12 – 13 Oct	Marilyn Scott	Bushwalking	Shoalhaven	Hard	Exploratory trip down Water Race or Tail race Creeks

Next Meeting: TBA

Meeting Closed: 8:25pm