

NEWSLETTER MONTHLY

MAY 2011



MSS NEWSLETTER

Society News	1
Trip Reports	
<i>Chillagoe</i>	2
<i>New Zealand - Caving in the Waitomo karst of New Zealand's North Island</i>	7
<i>Capertee National Park</i>	14
<i>Timor Caves</i>	17
Upcoming Events	20
News from the Underground	20
Reviews	
<i>Banff Mountain Film Festival</i>	25
Crossword.....	27
Trip Calendar.....	29
<i>Appendix 1 – 405th General Meeting Minutes</i>	
<i>Appendix 2 – ASF Council Meeting April 2011</i>	
<i>Appendix 3 – NSWSC Meeting May 2011</i>	

Cover Shot:

Jim going for a swim in The Queenslander, Chillagoe
Photo by Jim Crockett

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

Society News

Jim is ASF VP

At the recent ASF Conference held at Chillagoe our very own Jim Crockett was elected one of the ASF Vice Presidents. ASF has a number of Vice Presidents and they are then nominated to take on specific roles. Jim's role will be decided in January at the next ASF meeting. See appendix 2 for notes on the recent ASF council meeting.

Jim's Other Role

Jim has also taken an executive position within the NSWSC. He was elected at the recent NSWSC meeting held at Jenolan. See appendix 3 for notes on that meeting.

Club EPIRB

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

Cave of Forgotten Dreams

During a 1994 caving trip in France, cavers discovered a true wonder, a wealth of prehistoric cave paintings deep within a labyrinth cave system. Cinema's great raconteur film producer, Werner Herzog, has produced an extraordinary 3D documentary about the find. The film is showing during the Sydney Film Festival in June and Joe Sydney is getting a group together to see the film. Details of the film can be seen at <http://sff.org.au/films-container/cave-of-forgotten-dreams/>. Joe can be contacted at 0405 039 398 or jsydney@choice.com.au.

405th General Meeting

The 405th MSS General Meeting was held at Jim's place on the 5th of May. The minutes are attached as appendix 1. We discussed a number of things, including:

Web Manager

We decided to create a new committee position of Web Manager. The responsibilities of the Web Manager can be found in the minutes from the meeting, which are attached to this newsletter. Due to the excellent work Dave has done to date with the website we have asked him to continue that work.

Caving in Sri Lanka

During Jim's trip to Chillicon he found out there may be an organised trip to Sri Lanka next year to study and explore the caves there. If you are interested in possibly joining this trip then let Jim know (0407 284 256, jmtcrockett@unwired.com.au)

Jenolan publications

The Jenolan Caves Historical Society are reprinting a number of occasional papers written in the 1970's plus a new one on photography at Jenolan between 1860 and 1940. We will look at purchasing a copy of these to add to the MSS Library.

Next meeting

The next meeting will be held at Chris Johnstone's place on the 25th August.

Trip Reports

Chillagoe

17th to 22nd April 2011

Report by: Jim Crockett

Photos by: Jim Crockett

Participants: Jim Crockett, plus representatives from many clubs across Australia.

I was really looking forward to Chillicon. This was to be only my 2nd ASF conference, as my first was in 1997 in Quorn SA so it was a long time between conferences.



Typical tower Karst

I made the decision early to fly up to Cairns and catch the bus as I did not like the idea of driving for 4 or 5 days to get there. When I arrived at the airport I was searching for the charter bus and wandered around for a while trying to locate it. I eventually recognised the familiar face of Ken Grimes talking to 2 other people who were sitting on the grass area outside the terminal. There were numerous items of alcohol beside them and they were consuming beers. I found out they were also cavers, Stan from SA and Anne-Marie from WA just getting started early.

We eventually located the others for the bus trip plus the driver and we were on our way. We had a brief stop for food shopping and then back on the road. Not long after I was offered a beer and it was hard to refuse. The mood was certainly set for an interesting week.

We arrived later in the afternoon after a 3 hour bus trip and were dropped off at our accommodation. We were all soon back at the Chillagoe town hall for the welcoming barbecue and the chance to meet, mingle and drink with lots of cavers from all over Australia. It was very

convenient that the hotel was only across the road from the town hall and so plenty of opportunity for drinking. After a full day of travelling and greeting people I retired back to the Chillagoe ECO lodge for my first night.

I was up early and made the 20 minute walk to the town hall for the official opening and first day of activities. The conference was opened by the Town Mayor and then straight after we had the first presentation which was by an International speaker. This was all a bit controversial, because as it turned out he was a Karstologist who was originally from Romania but now residing in Canada who was a “born again” and who now had beliefs in Creationism. This created a great degree of angst among all the scientists present especially after he was trying to prove that some well known caves in Canada were only about 9,000 years old instead in the many millions agreed by scientists.

We broke for morning tea and this turned out to be one of the best parts of the whole conference with outstanding catering provided during each day for morning and afternoon tea and lunch. More presentations followed including one where the presenter via a pre-recorded video was suggesting an idea he had for using smart phones for cave surveying. After lunch we had various options for town historical tours or show cave tours. This followed the same routine for each of the days with other tours on offer including Smelter tours, Fossil tours plus joyflights which were either very early in the morning or at sunset and then we had the wild cave trips scheduled to commence at night.

The afternoon continued with a few more presentations including one on the history of caving in Mole Creek Tasmania before the completion of the first day's activities.

But all was not finished for me as I was booked for my first wild caving trip that night. We assembled at 8pm and squeezed into a Landrover for the trip to the longest cave at Chillagoe called the Queenslander. My caving team included the Bunton family of Stephen, Kathy and Grace and Brian Evans led by CCC member Winfried Weiss. Our team was going into one of the many entrances while another team would enter via another and meet us somewhere in the cave.



Grace Bunton in The Queenslander Cave

The night was warm and we entered via a short ladder pitch and it was not long before I was sweating up in the hot cave environment. It was lucky that we soon came across a flooded section as this wet season has been the wettest one for a long time. We were then forced to swim but it was a cooling and enjoyable relief. This dunking was enough to keep me cool for the rest of the night. We were soon out of the water and negotiating one of the many up and down

sections of this cave which seems to be a general feature of most of the Chillagoe caves where you have to climb up and down many times. One major feature of this cave was the amount and diversity of cave fauna. We saw lots of bats (diadem leaf nosed bat), large spiders, hairy marys (long legged cave centipede) snakes and much more. At one point on a challenging down climb I lost grip on the slippery wall and slipped down a few



Childrens Python in The Queenslander Cave

metres but no harm was done. We did eventually meet up with the other team and soon made our exit at a large entrance full of vines and large fig trees. On the walk out we had to be careful of the sharp rocks which can be quite painful and also have to be aware of the aggressive plants such as stinging trees. I eventually made it back for bed at about 1.30am but had a most enjoyable night of caving.

So with a bit of sleep I was up again early and fuelled up from breakfast and back to the town hall for the start of the program for the 2nd day. We had presentations on cave science in Sri Lanka, another historical article from Tassie in the morning. It was discussed there might be opportunities for some Australians to visit Sri Lanka and help them with their cave science activities such as cave surveying and fauna surveys. Later we had another presentation about Australian Swiftlets which started as being quite interesting but went far too long and most people fell asleep. We broke for lunch and I then went on a tour of the old Chillagoe smelter. In the afternoon we had further presentations on Paleokarst by the controversial international speaker, then other presentations on the caves of Pungalina station NT, the history of caving in Chillagoe and finally one on sandstone caves of NSW. That was the end for the day and by this time I was tired after 2 full days of activity.



Chillagoe Smelter

After a good night's sleep I was rejuvenated and ready for my D-day as today I had to make a presentation on "Should ASF host an International Caving Conference?". The morning presentations started with one on Laterite parakarst, sandstone caves in Thailand, Lava caves research in Hawaii. Then it was my turn, my first ever presentation and it went very well. At lunch I got a lot of positive comments and my feasibility study will be continuing until the final decision is made about whether ASF will put in a bid to host the UIS (Union

International Speleology) conference in 2017. This decision will be made at the ASF council meeting early next year. After lunch we had further presentations of Bats and Swiftlets of the Chillagoe area and interesting one on the biology of Bullita cave (Jubbarra-Gregory Karst in NT).

Everyone was now ready to get outside for a bit of fun for the running of the speleosports events. I was keen to join a team but I was having trouble finding buddies to form a team but then was lucky when Bob Kershaw gave me the opportunity to take his place in the "Old Fossils" team of Graeme Smith, Brian Evans and now myself. We were told that all 3 team members had to be harnessed and joined together by a 1m section of rope. We also had to survey this new cave we had just found as we went. Interesting concept I thought. Somehow we were the first team to start. Our first task was to get under the farmers gate as he had lost the key. Then we had to make our way through the debris pile of timber and rotten vegetation and who knows what else. Then the next task was to negotiate the cave reference area (a hard surfaced cricket pitch) but we could only use 2 points of contact. The 2 cave packs came in handy for this. Then we had to all retrieve equipment that was lost in the sump of the cave, a 240L Sulo bin filled with water. Then the interesting part where had to all clip in and follow a rope through the children's play equipment, quite a challenge but we made it unscathed. The next challenge was the only one that was actually underground. The team of 3 had to pass roped together under the road through an 800mm diameter drainpipe. Well seriously I thought I was going to die there because the temperature would have been at least 50 deg C as the pipe was completely blocked by bodies with another group close in front of our team. It was quite a relief to get out but we had one further challenge which fortunately I was just an onlooker for, but Graeme drew the lucky straw.. This required a prussick up a rope to retrieve an item and return it to the ground. The last thing we had to do was to complete our cave survey. We were in the best position for that because we had been using a state of the art underground surveying GPS. Cave survey is attached.



I met a local CCC member Phil Harrison who knows both John Gray and Min Neville which was quite a surprise. He runs outdoor education courses at Cairns Tafe.

Well after all that effort it was time for some afternoon tea and then I returned to my accommodation to get cleaned up ready for the Caveman's (Caveperson's ?) dinner that night. This was held at the back of the CCC club house under canvas overlooking a large rock outcrop on the hillside which had been brightly lit up. The meals were a treat as usual, compliments to the caterer and they went down nicely with some red wine. We were treated to live 70's music from the best local band and it certainly was good music. There was a host of awards and presentations made and even some dancing was done at the end of the night. Quite an outstanding night.

Well this conference was surely providing a full on experience and not a moment was being wasted. I woke up and had a fulfilling breakfast and then a walk to the town hall. The presentations started off with 2 different ones on fossils for the Chillagoe area and its caves, followed by one on karst terminology. We broke for lunch and then I did a tourist cave trip to Trezkin cave. Unfortunately Donna cave was not available as it was currently flooded. The afternoon continued with a very interesting presentation by Ken Grimes (my roommate for the week) on the Jubbarra-Gregory Karst in the NT, a place I would like to get to one day.

After that we had a bit of free time but after dinner we were expected back to the town hall for the auction to raise money for the Karst Conservation Fund. There were a lot of books and magazines plus other interesting items auctioned and some aggressive bidding was done. I think they raised nearly \$1000.

So it was now Friday and the last official day of the conference, I bit sad as I was having such a good time. The morning we had presentations on the karst features of the Nullarbor plain and Silverfish in Australian caves. And that was it, end of the formal presentations.

The afternoon was to be the ASF council meeting and many issues were discussed which I will detail elsewhere. Lastly we had to have elections for all the vacant positions. When it came to election of ASF Vice Presidents I was asked if I would be willing to stand as they needed one more VP. I gave it a bit of thought and said Yes. So now I am a Vice President of the ASF. One reason they want me in this job is to continue my work on the International conference feasibility study.

So that was it end of the ASF conference, but I was still keen to go wild caving and there were a number of trips running tonight so I put my name down for the one to Disney cave.

So after dinner it was back in the Landrover and a 30 minute walk along the Savanna plains to a typical Chillagoe cave entrance. Our team which included a couple of people from the other wild cave trip I did and the same trip leader. We all had a good night



Good decoration in Disney Cave

exploring this cave named after the Disney cartoon characters you can see in the formations? Yeah just look over there that's Donald Duck. We had an interesting ladder climb to get to a lower section and lots of ups and downs as is usual in these Tower Karst caves, we saw lots of wildlife in and out of the caves including the nasty green ants. I was back in bed at about 1am and needed to get some good sleep for my last exciting event on Saturday morning.



Deceased tarantula

After a few hours sleep I was up early as I was booked for a joyflight around the Chillagoe area. Wow outstanding views for the 4 passengers of Mt Mulligan, the Karst Towers at Chillagoe and Mungana, the Red Dome mine at Mungana and the Chillagoe township was certainly worth going up in the air. Later that day I was invited to go on a drive north to the Walsh River to have a look at some other cave features, thanks to Sue and Nick.

I can say that I thoroughly enjoyed my time at this ASF conference, meeting a lot of new people, making friendships and networking with lot of people. Some of the moments of this conference can be re-lived as on the last day everyone attending was handed a memory stick carabiner style which had complete proceedings of the conference papers as well as video of all the presentations (except mine of course which for some reason they did not video)

I left Chillagoe on the Sunday morning but stayed in North Queensland for another 5 nights, visiting long lost relatives in Cairns and then Journeying to Townsville to go to Magnetic Island and I certainly enjoyed my time.

New Zealand - Caving in the Waitomo karst of New Zealand's North Island

April 2011

Report by: John Oxley

Photos by: John Oxley

Participants: John Oxley, David Stuckey, plus representatives from SUSS and other clubs.

Most people know of the Waitomo caves and the spectacular glowworm show caves. Some may even have experienced the famous Black Water Rafting or Lost World guided trips. Most people however may not know that these attractions sit in just a tiny part of the Waitomo karst area which covers hundreds of square kilometers. Apart from there being probably thousands of known caves in the greater area, a big attraction is the potential for finding new caves. There are relatively few cavers in New Zealand to explore a very large area of limestone and so there still remain some relatively easily accessible areas that have not been thoroughly explored. The caves are not deep by New Zealand standards but they are wet. Waitomo has the very best streamway caves I've ever seen.



The mob at the shearers' quarters on Puketiti Station

Our group consisted of people from SUSS, SSS, NUCC, ASG (Auckland) and of course MSS. This year the focus of our attention was some 40km south of the Waitomo tourist area on private property. We were lucky enough to be able to stay in the shearers' quarters on two separate sheep and cattle stations - basic accommodation but it suited our purposes.

Alan Pryke who organized the trip has been coming to the area for seven years. He knows all the good and bad caves and along with others on the trips has surveyed many of them.

This year's fun started at Rauroa sheep station. The first cave we visited was Rimu, a large easy going walkthrough streamway. However the interesting feature of Rimu is the 'window' part way through which opens into the side of a cliff overlooking a gorge. The stream pours out of this window in a 40m waterfall to the valley below. Not an easy exit. The more usual exit is via an upper level passage which eventually deposited us in a patch of rainforest further along the hill.

Most of the caves we looked at in the area had been visited by at



Gypsum Crystal



John in Aussie Cave streamway

least some of the group on previous trips but we were also keen to check out some other caves. New Zealand cavers have explored the area irregularly over many years but have not accurately documented all they have found. Some of the information about the caves was by word of mouth only. One such cave was described as "the best cave in the area" but its location came with only a vague description. One afternoon several of us decided to see if we could find Groove Cave. After a couple of hours of wandering back and forward over the hills we found an entrance which looked interesting. A substantial creek in thick bush rushing into a hole in the ground, reappearing a few meters further down the hill then disappearing again. Unfortunately the one person among us who had a length of tape had returned to the hut a little earlier so we had a few interesting moments finding a way down from the overhanging trees and fallen logs into the stream way. It occurred to me that I was going to have an even more interesting time getting out of this doline as I had dropped the last half metre to the streamway to get in. Never mind, the cave was looking far too exciting to worry about that now. Anyway, Al soon followed me in. I spent some time checking out the upstream lead but it soon choked so I turned downstream following Al who was by now several minutes ahead of me. The stream dropped steeply in a continuous series of cascades and small waterfalls on solid bedrock, very sporty but quite easily negotiated in comfortably large passage. It seemed like a long time and probably a hundred metres or so before I finally caught up to

Al who had stopped at a larger waterfall. He wasn't sure how deep the pool at the bottom was and was reluctant to try climbing down without help. After some discussion I eventually climbed down using his outstretched leg as a hold, then climbed back up to prove that it was easy to do so. We continued down several more small waterfalls before the negotiable cave came to an abrupt end in a sump. Heading back up the cave was easier than the descent and part way back we met the other two who had become tired of waiting on the surface for us. We climbed out into the quiet of the late afternoon air. My ears were ringing from the noise of the water in the cave. It would be interesting to see if we could locate the stream outflow which would probably be in the forest somewhere down the valley - another day, another year.

The following weekend was Easter and time for us to move camp a little north to Puketiti, a sheep and cattle station of about 5,000 hectares owned by a large corporation and of course riddled with caves. As at Rauroa Farm, we were accommodated in the shearers' quarters which at Puketiti was

the original farm homestead now over 100 years old and in a somewhat dilapidated state. However it had ample space for all of us including a large kitchen with long communal dining table, working washing machine and dryer, several bedrooms, some with beds and a couple of good showers with a hot water system which worked most of the time.



Meeting the locals at Pukititi

First cave here for us was Pompeii. Another classic large streamway through trip. Some sections of the cave were reminiscent of a wide gravelly stream in a Blue Mountains canyon. It's one of those caves where you just can't get enough light for the large caverns. It made me aware of just how old fashioned my light was. I was still using my Oldham headpiece with an Everled insert and 3 D cells in a "sewer light" on my belt. Everyone else was using a headpiece with helmet mounted battery pack and they were all brighter than mine (though in one case, not as waterproof)! I think now it's possible to get a modern LED light that is superior or at least as good as a carbide light. The problem is that it will cost a small fortune for a really good one.



Dave in the upstream entrance of Pompeii



Glowworm threads

The next day was cool and raining. It appeared that the weather was having a negative impact on some people's enthusiasm for going underground (or more accurately, putting on wet muddy caving gear). While some of the keener ones were heading off to do some surveying, others were going to spend the day around the hut playing "Angry Birds" on the computer or going for a drive into town for ice cream. So although Al had suggested that Long John was a great cave and quite an easy trip

there were only two starters. We drove several kilometres then walked the last kilometre or so. The entrance was a small 10m vertical pitch completely covered in bushes on a steep hillside. Fortunately we had GPS coordinates for the entrance so we had no problem locating it. We rigged the rope and abseiled in. There were dozens of tree roots hanging down the pitch taking advantage of the constant trickle of water. At the bottom we landed in the usual streamway which flowed into an impenetrable rockpile almost immediately. However our goal was upstream over a kilometre to the point where the stream flowed into the cave. We removed our harnesses, put them into a pack and clipped the pack to the rope. We'd be returning overland to retrieve the gear later. For most of the trip the cave was another underground bushwalk but there were a couple of interesting side passages not marked on the survey we had with us. The entire cave could be negotiated without needing to get wet above the knees if it weren't for the little dam the farmer had built a few metres inside the upstream entrance to enable water to be pumped out for the stock. Although even that could be passed with a bit of careful bridging. Once back out in the misty drizzle I had only a vague idea of where we were relative to our entry point to the cave. We were in a completely different valley to where we had entered the cave. Thankfully the GPSr soon had us heading through the rain back over the ridge to recover the rope and our gear. We had literally passed right through the hill over a kilometre in a straight line from where we started.



The 10m entrance pitch to Long John is under the bush



Mangawhara Cavern

An improvement in the weather brought an increase in people's willingness to pull on wet smelly thermals in the frosty morning. Most of the group had decided a trip to the adjacent property to check out Mangawhara Cavern was in order. Although it involved a drive of about 40km we would end up only a few kilometres from the hut. Of course we could have walked but the intervening terrain was extremely hilly and not a comfortable walk wearing caving gear. Anyway, driving meant that we were required to pass the ice cream shop. Mangawhara Cavern can be described as a much larger version of the Devil's Coach House at Jenolan. It has a daylight hole in the roof and a substantial river flowing out its lower entrance. Although daylight is always visible it is dark enough to require lights to traverse the length of the chamber. We decided the most interesting way to get in was to abseil from the 40m roof hole. Once in, there were some spectacular oolites and a large crystal

covered slope to see but the main attraction was simply the huge chamber itself. On the return walk to the cars we were rewarded with spectacular views across the "egg carton" landscape of the karst to the snow covered peaks of Mts Ngauruhoe and Ruapehu a hundred kilometers to the southeast and Mt Taranaki to the southwest.



Mangawhara Cavern top end

It was time to have a look at some of the famous gypsum decorated caves of the area. Puketiti is well known for the spectacular Flower Cave (see David Stuckey's report in the April 2010 issue) but there are other well decorated caves too. Kuratahi and Agamemnon are two of them. Both these caves have amazing gypsum formations of all sorts. The gypsum and selenite in these caves owe their existence to the thick layer of volcanic ash which was deposited across the area by the Taupo volcano in AD



The “Springy Thingy” in Agamemnon

In Agamemnon Cave

180. In areas where the ash still overlays a cave there is a good chance that sulphur based minerals will form in the cave. As with most of the caves in the area, these caves have active streamways but it's the dry upper levels which have the spectacular formations. We were guided into Kuratahi by Phill from ASG who bravely carried with him his expensive DSLR, a couple of lenses and several flash units. As we climbed up into the upper levels the bedrock walls became more and more covered with white crystals until we reached a point where the entire walls on both sides were completely covered from floor to ceiling with pure white gypsum crystals. There were needles, flowers, fluffy balls and amazing extruded spirals. In some places the veneer of gypsum was peeling off the bedrock wall in great hemispherical flakes. We spent an hour or so helping Phill photograph some of the formations and taking some shots of our own.

During the two weeks of caving we collectively visited over 40 different caves including at least one previously unknown and some of the group completed the surveys of a couple of caves.

Thanks to Alan and Megan Pryke for organising the trip and liaising with the various land managers, David Stuckey for arranging the food order and to everyone who participated for making it a great trip.

Capertee National Park

30th April and 1st May 2011

Report by: Rod Smith

Photos by: Rod Smith

Participants: Rod Smith, Brian Reeves (NHVSS), Ray Etherton (NHVSS), Natalie Etherton (NHVSS), Josh (NHVSS), Fletcher (NHVSS), Dave Noble (NPWS), Neville, Robert, Lachlan McDonald, plus other locals

In hindsight I can say that the chosen dates were not the best, considering cavers were getting back from Chillicon and New Zealand, plus other commitments. Yet we still managed to get a group together and make some progress on the exploration of Capertee National Park.

I arrived Friday just after sunset and set up camp. With no-one else around I got an early night, very peaceful.

The original plan for the weekend was to remove rubbish from a doline and then hopefully find an opening underneath. Dave wanted to be there to represent National Parks and catalogue the rubbish removed in case there was anything of value, most likely from an historic point of view. Dave showed up around 9am and I quickly learnt that the plan had changed. Neville had become inspired since our last visit and had already removed a lot of the rubbish from the doline. Still, from a cavers point of view, this was good news as we might get to something sooner.

Since no-one else had arrived by this point Dave went off to do some other work while I read a bit and waited. Around 10am Ray, Brian and Josh arrived and Dave returned, we were ready to



start! A short drive from our camp and we were at the doline, where we were joined by Neville and Robert.

An apple tree had grown out of the rubbish pile and needed to be removed. This was attacked with a tractor and chainsaw. Now the tree itself has been removed although the stump and roots remain, and will need to be removed at some point.

Then the digging commenced. There was still a lot of rubbish, mostly old bottles and the like, and certainly soil as well, being removed. At times there was two of us digging, sometimes only one. We mostly attacked the bank under the apple tree stump as we suspected that's where we'd find the opening.

By lunch time a lot of rubbish and soil had been removed, but no opening had presented itself. We returned to camp for a break and to meet Natalie, Fletcher and some of the locals who had arrived in the mean time. During the break tents were erected and camp prepared, but it wasn't too long before we returned to the work site.



Although digging continued, some of us wandered off to see what else could be found. Neville had not only removed some of the rubbish from the doline, he had cleared a lot of the weeds in the area, so walking around was a lot easier, and features easier to spot. It wasn't long before seven dolines were identified, all filled with rubbish and/or soil (including one's we already knew about), but one captured our attention. Quick investigation indicated that it was soil and chicken wire in this one, and the soil was loose, thus easy to dig.

Digging commenced and the chicken wire quickly exposed. However, there was more than we expected, and it would not be easy to simply dig it out. I found Robert and asked him if he'd mind trying to use the tractor to haul the wire out. He agreed and we set to work.

Due to the fact the wire kept breaking and the sheer quantity of it, we soon realised this was going to take longer than expected. Lachlan arrived and quickly put the winch on his 4wd to use help us. As daylight started to fade we finally pulled the last of the wire out, having also removed some logs that were probably old fence posts. We called it quits for the day and headed back to camp.

The rain arrived while we were cooking dinner, which was annoying, but it wasn't too bad. When we awoke in the morning the clouds had gone and then sun was out.

We returned to the new doline and started digging the loose soil. At first there was just dirt, but later in the morning we hit bedrock. By lunch we had uncovered the top of a solution tube, big enough for someone to get into, but still full of soil.

After lunch the digging continued, with even the children joining in. During the afternoon the numbers slowly dwindled as people made their way home to prepare for the working week. It didn't stop some of the more committed (or maybe insane). We hit rock across the tube but thankfully found it was a floater. Ray made the decision that we get the floater out then call it quits for the weekend. It took another hour or so, but the floater was removed, in four pieces.

The last of us then packed up and headed home.

Although we hadn't found a new cave, progress has been made and there's still a lot of potential. We're already planning our next trip (see the trip calendar), and there's a lot of projects. In the northern end of the karst area are the seven indentified dolines, digging has commenced in four. We believe only one is getting too narrow to not warrant continuation. In the southern end there's a patch of blackberry we'd like to remove since it may be hiding something, and is not far uphill from a spring. We also want to look in winter in the hopes of finding steamers.

During the trip someone said that for cavers the chances of exploring a newly discovered cave is better than sex. There was some debate about this, but certainly a lot of people are hoping to find something out there.

Timor Caves

14th and 15th May 2011

Report by: Rod Smith

Photos by: Rod Smith

Participants: Rod Smith (TL), Jim Crockett

As I drove home I decided I would write the trip report as soon as I got home so it was fresh in my mind. But what would I write? Would I do the standard “we did this, then that, then that, etc.”? Or should I be a bit more creative?

Maybe I should write about what we ate. This could include the dinner Friday night at Musselbrook RSL, which I wouldn't recommend. It's not that the food was bad, but it wasn't great, and the only seats we could find were out on the balcony with the smokers. All-in-all not a pleasant experience. Lunch on the way home was better, the food of a similar standard, but quicker, cheaper and much easier to find a seat. This was had at the roadhouse at the northern end of the F3. There was also the food we ate while we were there. Jim tried something new, which was an organic pumpkin risotto, which he enjoyed with a steak. I stuck to a chunky soup, which was nice, but finished off with a chocolate mousse for dessert, which I shared with Jim. This was something new that I'd found. A Cadbury chocolate block with chocolate mousse filling. They had other flavours, caramel and hazelnut, but I decided to try the chocolate. It was delicious.

On the other hand, with Part I of The Caver Chef series coming up soon, maybe I should leave the food talk for that.



Maybe I should write about the journey. The Timor book says it takes 5 hours from Sydney. We got there in 5, but that included an hour for dinner, so only 4 hours of driving. We left Sydney before the evening peak, but got some of the Newcastle peak, which is not as bad. We only missed one turn-off, I saw the sign as we flew past, so found a side road to turn around in and retraced our steps. Not a big deal. The drive back was a similar time. Of course, once they finish the Hunter Freeway project it'll probably save another 20 to 30 minutes off the trip, but that won't be ready til 2013.

On the other hand, there another trip planned to a similar area in June and a trip to Kempsey planned for October, so there's plenty of opportunity to talk about driving north.

Maybe I should talk about other cavers. As we were exiting TR2 – Belfry Cave we saw a family, two parents and four small children, entering. None were wearing helmets and we didn't see any lights, but they may have had some hand-held torches in a backpack. We moved on to TR4 – Helictite Cave and, after a thorough exploration, we emerged to find them entering this one. They said they were locals, from Musselbrook, and were amazed we had come all the way from Sydney just to visit the caves. We admitted there is something strange about us.

On the other hand, the next trip is the family friendly trip to Jenolan and there'll be plenty of talking about children in caves then.

Maybe I should talk about history. Some of the history of the area is quite interesting. Such as the fact that the karst area used to be called Isaacs Creek with a prefix of IC, and some of the tags are



the originals with the IC scratched out and TR written instead, the numbers are the same. Also, NHVSS have done a lot of work up there, finding and tagging caves, as well as producing the Timor Caves book, but they're not the only club that have done work at Timor. There's mention of the Cooranbong Speleological Association, as well as UTSSS, SSS, Hills and MSS. On a trip in 1973 members of MSS surveyed a newly discovered chamber in Belfry Cave which Jim and I, unfortunately, didn't get into. This was due to the squeezes that needed to be negotiated.

On the other hand, all this history is taken from the Timor book, which the library has a copy of and can be borrowed by interested people.

Maybe I should talk about surface trogging. Prior to this trip I'd only GPSed the locations of three caves at Timor, TR15 – Glen Dhu Cave, TR81 – Eyrie Cave, and TR82. However, now I can add TR1 – Main Cave, TR2 – Belfry Cave, TR3 – Shaft Cave (first entrance), TR4 – Helictite Cave, TR5 – Nebilung Cave, TR7 – Hill Cave (first entrance), TR8 – Hill Cave (second entrance), TR9, TR10, TR11 – Scat Hole, TR16 – Crutch Cave, TR17 – Shaft Cave (second entrance), TR21, TR24, TR25, TR54 – Bell's Lookout, TR55 – Appendix Cave, TR56 – Grease Pit and TR71 – Prodders Pitch. TR3, TR16 and TR54 didn't have tags, but based on the available evidence I'm quite sure I've GPSed the correct reference.

On the other hand, all these cave entrances are marked on a map published in the Timor Caves book, so having these coordinates isn't that useful.

Maybe I should talk about squeezes. The first cave we found, Grease Pit, looked like a squeeze right from the start. Considering the fact it also looked rather vertical, and we didn't have any



vertical gear (we'd decided there'd be enough to do without it), we didn't even attempt it. TR9 and Appendix Cave didn't have any squeezes in them, so the first squeeze we encountered was in Belfry Cave. Jim went through the Rat Hole squeeze and had to remove his helmet to fit. I figured that was a sign for me to not even bother trying, so I waited while Jim explored. Although there is some tight sections in Helictite Cave, there's only one awkward section that needed to be negotiated on one's side and over some broken formation, but not too tight. Main Cave is quite large and open, so no squeezing. Hill Cave has the flattener, which I tried to get myself stuck in. Halfway down a slippery 45° slope, with my chest jammed, I was thinking that reversing would be near on impossible, when I suddenly popped through, much to both Jim's and my relief.

On the other hand, this just re-affirms I need to lose weight.

Maybe I just need to think a bit more about how to approach this trip report.

Upcoming Events

WEEKEND 11th – 13th June (Long Weekend) GLENROCK CAVING
Trip Leader: Rod Smith, 0438 444 262, roderick_smith@hotmail.com
Contact by: **30th May**

What's involved?

Exploring the Glenrock karst area, surveying, bolting, and other activities. Car camping.

You will need:

Car camping gear, water, caving gear (including srt gear).

News from the Underground

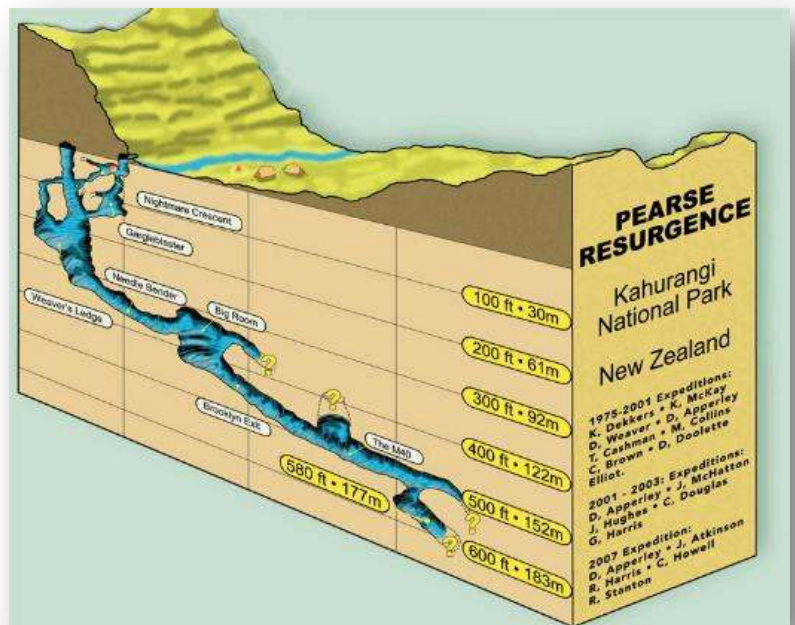
News from the underground aims to provide snippets of what has been happening around the world, primarily in the areas of caving and canyoning, climbing, mountaineering...

Shooting, scheduled for May, should by now have wrapped on the Japanese Kyodo News 3D documentary film of the Han Son Doon cave in Vietnam. The cave features the largest underground chamber in the world, and the film will be guided by Ho Khanh, who discovered the cave in 1991. This image (right), and a National Geographic film of the cave made in 2010 can be found posted on espeleobloc (for a version of the article translated into English, see cavingnews.com).



Cavingnews.com also brings word of a recent cave diving expedition to New Zealand by Australian divers. Funded in part by National Geographic, divers reached -194m in the Pearce Resurgence but have not yet discovered the source of the resurgence – the original purpose of the dive. Divers say it may be the world's deepest cold water dive – and they're coming back for more in 2012 to continue their search for the source of the river.

Graphic of the Pearce Resurgence by Curt Bowen, from Advanced Diver Magazine, 2007, posted on dive.net



At the end of April, a 77 year-old woman fell 100 feet to her death in the Grand Canyon, USA, while on a two-week camping and rafting trip. Barbara Evert was a member of the Colorado Mountain Club. Story by the [Denver Post](http://denverpost.com). Only a few days before, the body of 24 year-old Robert Watson of New York was located 700m below the rim – searchers had been looking for him since April 6 after a vehicle was found unattended near the South Rim. His body was finally recovered on May 6 – he was believed to have fallen. Information from a post by RAM on the Yahoo Canyons group (28/5/2011).

Still on the subject of the Grand Canyon, after the North Rim guide was released last month, the South Rim Canyon Guide for the Grand Canyon is now available also as a 4MB download from <http://go.nps.gov/v2a69m>

May began badly for parachuting, with a tragic mid-air collision claiming the life of an experienced skydiver at Tooradin, Gippsland. The collision occurred at a low altitude of just 33m, when two parachutists from a group of six came together, collapsing the canopy of one completely, and partially deflating the canopy of the other. The first man did not respond to CPR and died at the scene, while the other was rushed to Royal Melbourne Hospital. Report from the [SMH](#).



Erhard Loretan has died after a fall on the summit ridge of the Grünhorn, in the Bernese Alps. His client, who also fell, was taken to hospital in a serious condition. Erhard was the third climber to achieve the 14 x 8000m summits, including a sprint to the top of Everest in a single 40 hour ascent, a climb achieved without bottled oxygen. Mt Loretan, the highest peak in Antarctica, was named after him following his solo ascent in 1994. The fifty-two year old climber had a string of climbing achievements. He died on April 28th – his birthday. Source and photo: [The](#)

[Telegraph](#) (UK).

Hikers and climbers in Scotland – not normally a place associated with the words “forest fires” – have been asked to take care following blazes at Inverkirkaig in Assynt, Lochailort near Mallaig, and Torridon, where 6 hillwalkers were airlifted to safety. While not large by Australian standards (fires have involved a total area of around 9 square miles), the ecological damage is expected to be significant. Source: [UK Climbing](#).

The youngest member of Hillary’s 1953 Everest team has died at his home in Darjeeling, at the age of 75. Nawang Gombu Sherpa was the first person to reach the summit of Everest twice, making his first ascent with Jim Whittaker in 1954 and his second ascent in 1965 with Awarae Singh Cheema from India. Read the obituary of this remarkable Sherpa in the [UK Guardian](#).

The bodies of two skier-climbers missing since April 26th on Split Mountain, California were found on April 28th partly buried in avalanche debris. Kip Garre and Allison Kreutzen were experienced backcountry skiers and were thought to have been climbing the couloir when the avalanche let loose. From the debris trail it appears they were swept almost a thousand vertical feet down the Split Couloir. More details at [Powder Magazine](#).

The survival of a fifty-six year-old Canadian woman, who was rescued seven weeks after the van in which she and her husband were travelling became stuck in mud in a remote area of Northern Nevada, highlights the extraordinary ability of the human body to survive extreme conditions and has implications for search and rescue of lost adventurers. Rita Chretien lived on snow and some trail mix after bad weather forced their vehicle off a forest service road at 5,200 feet. Her fifty-nine year-old husband left the van to seek help. She was finally discovered by some hunters, but her husband has not yet been located. Story from the [SMH](#).

In a growing trend toward recouping rescue costs, Wayne County Utah have established a \$500 base rescue 'fee', with extra costs added as resources are added. The fee was introduced after SAR volunteers were said to have expended all personal funds they could. Information from a post by davewyon1 on the Yahoo Canyons forum (11/05/2011). Wayne County Utah contains a number of popular canyons.

Petzl issued a recall - initially - for the L60 and L60CK Scorpio via ferrata lanyards (produced up to March 4th 2005) after a failure in normal use on May 5th led to a groundfall on the first section of the Bastille via ferrata in Grenoble, France. A 24 year-old man suffered serious injuries as a result of falling 20m (source: ledauphine.com). Petzl have assumed responsibility for the accident, and following further investigation, they have now issued a further recall for "all SCORPIO lanyards manufactured before May 17th 2011 up to serial number 11137****". The relevant product references are: L60, L60 CK, L60 2, L60 2CK, L60 H, L60 WL, K29VF 1, K29VF 2, K29VE 1, K29VE 2, K29V 1, K29V 2."

Petzl ask that if you own one of these products, you should stop using it immediately and contact the local Petzl distributor in your country. The Petzl contact for Australia is Spelean at Artarmon NSW. The product recall information is available on [Petzl's website](http://www.petzl.com).



On the subject of equipment, a recent study of 'harness suspension syndrome' in cavers is pointing away from the harness itself as a cause of restricted blood flow, and toward venous blood pooling in the legs as the cause of circulatory failure. The study came about because it was noticed that some cavers fell unconscious and died far quicker than should have been the case from hypothermia or circulation restriction alone – in some cases in as little as six minutes. The report is fascinating reading : <http://www.caves.org/section/vertical/nh/56/ProlongedSuspensionInAnAlpineHarness.pdf>

Himalayan mountaineering has taken a toll on climbers so far this year:

On May 1, 55 year-old Rick Hitch collapsed on the way to Everest's camp 3 and his seventh summit. He lost consciousness and could not be revived – the cause of his death is unknown. Report from [About.com](http://www.about.com);

Irish mountaineer John Delaney died on the north side of Everest after running into trouble at 8800m. He was assisted in climbing down but collapsed and died at the top of the 3rd Step. Report from [Explorer'sWeb](http://www.explorersweb.com);

Swiss climber Joelle Brupbacher was found dead in her tent at Makalu's camp 3 on May 22nd. This was the fifth 8000m expedition for the 33 year-old. After advice from companions to turn around at 2.30pm and 8,200m due to the time, she returned to camp 3 with her Sherpa; when other team members continued down to base camp the next day, she was unable to move from the camp and attempts to bring her bottled oxygen were delayed. Report and photo from [Explorer'sWeb](#);



Popular Dutch climber Ronald Naar collapsed and died on Cho Oyu during a descent from camp 3 at 7,500m. Report from [Explorer'sWeb](#);

Also from [Explorer'sWeb](#) comes the report of the death on Everest of 58 year-old Takashi Ozaki from HAPE after he aborted his climb at 8,600m. In 1980 he made the first full ascent of the north face of Everest along with Tsuneo Shigehiro, and had 6 x 8000m peaks to his credit.

The [BMC](#) reports the death of Shailendra Kumar Upadhyaya, the oldest person attempting a climb of Everest. The 82 year-old had climbed to camp 1 through the ice fall, but decided to return as he was feeling unwell. He collapsed and died on the way down. Nepal introduced a minimum age of 16 years but has no maximum; Tibet restricts now permits for Everest to those aged between 18 and 60.

In brighter news, [Explorer'sWeb](#) reports that Hungarians Laszlo Gal and Zsolt Eross reached the summit of Lhotse on May 21. The summit was the 9th 8000m peak for Zsolt - and his first with an artificial leg. His right leg was amputated below the knee following a climbing accident in the Tatras in 2010.

Kenton Cool claimed his 9th successful summit of Everest – and also claims the first 3G tweet from the world's highest point after climbing the mountain on an assignment from Samsung to test the 3G signal. In a major coup for advertising, after tweeting he phoned his wife from the summit using the Samsung handset. Report from the [BMC](#).



Italian mountaineer Simone Moro, working with Fishtail Zermatt Air Rescue, has found an empty tent on Thulagi in the Manaslu region while undertaking a search for two climbers from a Russian expedition who have not been heard from since May 8th. Footprints have been sighted above the tent - these end at a ridge and there is no further sign of life. More information on this mystery, a report on the work of Fishtail Zermatt, and high altitude helicopter rescue work in general can be found at [Explorer'sWeb](#).

Two people in two separate incidents were rescued from Zion National park in the USA on May 21st. A 24 year-old hiker from Norway jumped a mere five feet from a small pinnacle at the summit of Angel's Landing and fractured his lower leg. Rangers waiting for the helicopter heard that a 62 year-old man was in trouble with chest pains and diverted to his assistance – the elderly man was flown by air ambulance to hospital after suffering a massive heart attack. The Norwegian hiker was successfully short-hauled off the summit by helicopter. Report from Tom Jones on the Yahoo Canyon forum (27/05/2011).

The night of Sunday 29th of May produced some awful weather in the area of Sydney and the Blue Mountains, and two canyoneers had the pleasure of spending a night in it after a planned trip to Firefly Canyon in the Wolgan Valley. Searchers found them at 11.20am on the Monday morning 'near a fire trail at the end of the canyon'. Report from [The Daily Telegraph](#)

Reviews

Banff Mountain Film Festival 2011

Review by Rod Smith

The Banff Mountain Film Festival is an annual event held in Banff, Canada. It showcases short films from around the world about mountain places and cultures, and the adrenaline of exploration and adventure. A selection of the best films then does a world tour.

Having seen a number of tours previously, and enjoying every one, I was looking forward to seeing this year's films, and I wasn't disappointed. There were eight films shown.

The Longest Way

This film is based on a year-long walk from Beijing to Urumqi (in north-western China), a distance of over 4000km. Christoph Rehang, who did the walk, took a large number of self-portraits as he went, then put them together into a short, time-lapse, film. A reasonably simple concept, yet done well, and made for an enjoyable start to the film festival.

Life Cycles

In my opinion this was the one disappointment of the film festival. The cinematography was brilliant, but I felt like I was watching 14 minute advertisement for Shimano. Probably best to leave it at that and look at the rest of the films.

Azadi: Freedom

The focus of this film is skiing in Kashmir, but looks at the culture and history of the region. This isn't about amazing skiing, but rather skiing in an amazing place. Speaking as a non-skier, I can still see how Kashmir would appeal to a large number of people after having seen this film. The film looks at both the perspectives of locals as well as tourists and takes an honest look at the history and safety of region for locals and visitors alike. They don't deny Kashmir has been a very

dangerous place to visit, but stress that it is now a lot safer. The footage of the skiing shows slopes that are largely untouched and not crowded, you wouldn't have to go far to be unlucky to find anyone else on the slope with you. Not a place for people who want a perfectly safe, five star, skiing holiday, but if you're after culture and uncrowded slopes, and are willing to take a small risk, then Kashmir is well worth a look.

Dream Result

Dream Result follows a group of white-water kayakers in search of new "playgrounds" and pushing the limits of what they're capable of. Shot in Norway, Argentina and USA, the scenery is quite spectacular. This film focuses purely on the sport of white-water kayaking and includes a lot of footage, so great for people wanting to see a lot of action. Included is a section which could nearly be called bloopers, what happens when things don't go accordingly to plan. Mostly this was just footage of people descending waterfalls at awkward angles, bouncing off rocks, getting stuck, and surfacing with broken paddles and, in one case, a broken kayak. There was, however, a mention of two injuries, the first a broken collarbone and the second a broken back. The broken back was obviously a vertebra and not the spinal cord, as the kayaker said he'll make a full recovery. The film finished with one of the kayakers attempting a 186 foot waterfall in Washington.

Cross Country Snowboarding

After the intermission was the shortest film of the tour, Cross Country Snowboarding. This is about two men promoting the sport of cross country snowboarding. I was reminded of Trey Parker and Matt Stone of South Park and Team America fame as these two described their new passion. Good fun, and not to be taken seriously.

Last Paradise

Another film incorporating more than just sport, Last Paradise focuses on the history of extreme sports in New Zealand. Included is historical footage and interviews with a number of the pioneers of various sports, including snowboarding, bungee-jumping and wakeboarding. A truly fascinating look at the birth of a variety of sports, and how these pioneers are still active participants in these sports that they started up to 45 years ago. Some amazing footage and insights, another film well worth seeing.

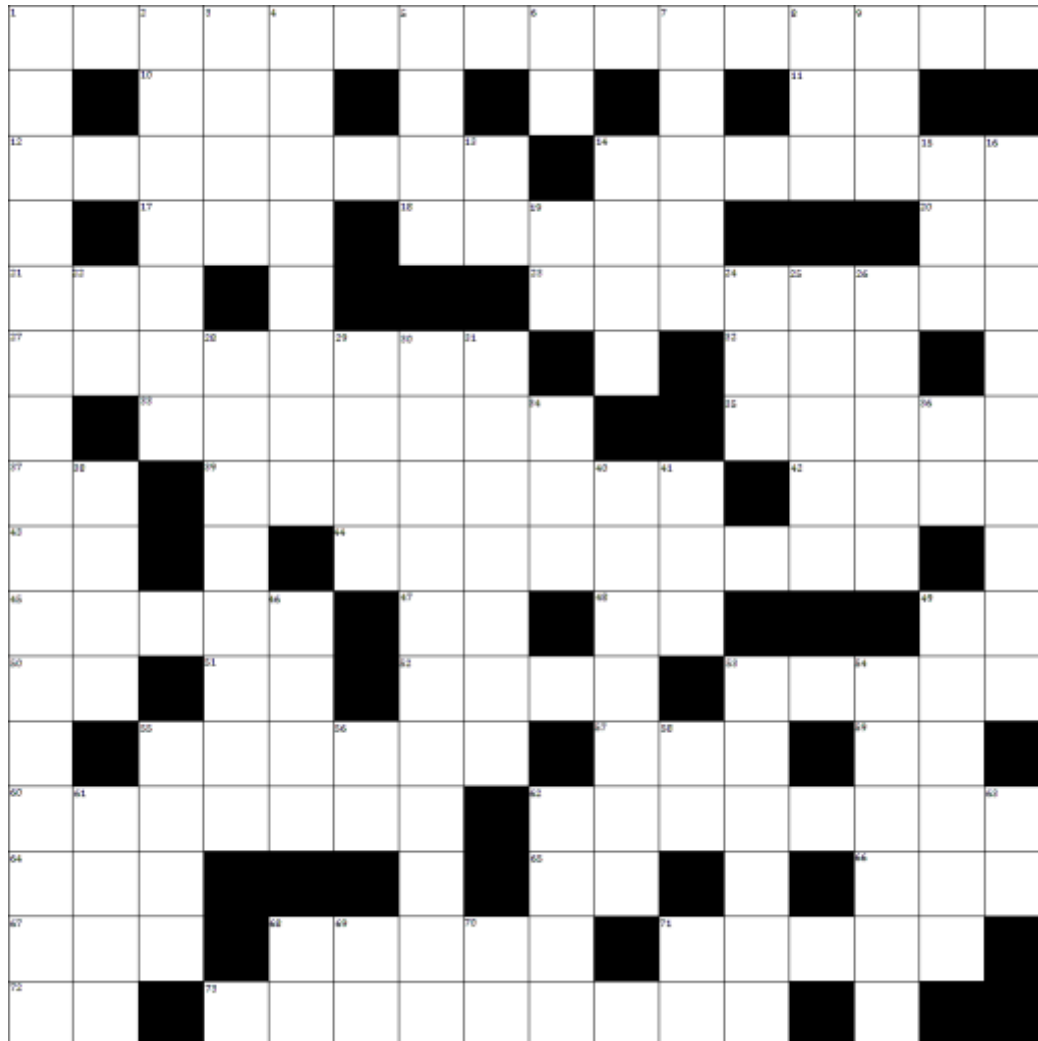
Into Darkness

For a caver it was great to see a caving film on the list. Rather than people pushing their limits, this film was just about caving in general, as seen through a typical caving trip into a particular cave, the name of which was not mentioned. The film showed some of the extremes of caving, from navigating very tight squeezes to large chambers filled with exquisitely beautiful formations. This film, more than any, I could easily relate to, which made it all the more enjoyable.

The Swiss Machine

The Swiss Machine focuses on Ueli Steck, a Swiss rock-climber and Mountaineer. Ueli is known for soloing some big walls and mountains, and setting speed records in the process. Including is footage of him climbing with Alex Honnold, who featured in one of last year's films where he soloed El Cap, among others. The film finishes with Ueli back in Europe going after his own speed ascent record of the Eiger. An amazing look at one of the most extreme athletes in the world.

Crossword



37. Lanthanum
39. Poignant
42. Measurement of area
43. Intelligence Quota
44. Do several jobs at once
45. Religious extremist groups
47. Intermediate Frequency

48. Calendar Year
 49. Odin's brother
 (Scandinavian mythology)
 50. Alcoholics Anonymous
 51. Iowa
 52. Bird
 53. Marine animal
 55. Happy
 57. Anger
 59. Nauru
 60. Stupidest
 62. Unfairness
 64. Type of tree
 65. Roentgenium
 66. As being
 67. No
 68. Allocated amount
 71. To excite
 72. Tin
 73. Dummy

Down

1. Multiplications by four
 2. Disturb

3. Grammatically the
 subject of a sentence
 4. Peaceful
 5. Delivered
 6. Printing measurement
 7. More correct
 8. A bristlelike appendage
 of a plant
 9. Allow
 13. Telegraph Office
 14. Wharf
 15. I Owe You
 16. Marked by fluctuations
 of fortune
 19. Queen's Bishop
 22. Printing measurement
 24. Type of public
 transport
 25. Belongs to a volcano in
 Sicily
 26. Duck noise
 28. Query
 29. Chemical building
 block

30. Converting securities
 into cash
 31. Of deep emotion
 34. Fish catching device
 36. Francium
 38. Pertaining to water
 40. Pinching
 41. Teletype
 46. Rescue
 49. Goodness
 53. Shiny garment
 decoration
 54. One of a kind
 55. Male name
 56. Island
 58. Rhenium
 61. Indian bread
 62. Middle-eastern country
 63. You (slang)
 68. Questions and Answers
 69. United Nations
 70. Tellurium
 71. Ratio of circumference
 to diameter

Last month's solution:

C A N Y O N I N G K N O B B L Y
 A R E L A T E L Y U L U N A
 V I C E D C A L A D D I N N
 I K N I G H T S B E I N G C
 N T E N R E C S S G O T H
 G R I M N E S S S C U M N E E
 S E A Y G O E S L I S P
 S S C H O L A R S S E A T
 T V S O O L I T E S I D M
 A O A P U K E E A T S K I
 L L P N E U M A S P O N D
 A C C R E D I T E D T U G L O W
 C A V E R G A N O F N B I
 T N A M A H P O E T I C N
 I I D I R T Y T H E R O O S T
 T S E N T H U S E U R U E
 E M P R E S S D E S C E N D E R

Trip Calendar

Weekend 11th-13th June
(long weekend)
Caving

Glenrock
Trip Leader: Rod Smith
Contact: 0438 444 262, roderick_smith@hotmail.com
By: 27th May
Grade: Easy/Surveying/Exploring

Weekend 2-3 July
Part 1 of the Caver Chef Series
Plus a walk

Timbergetters – Kanangra
Learn how to cook a leg of lamb in a camp oven
Celebrate some birthdays
Trip Leader: Johan Verhagen
Contact: 02 4758 9811, johan.verhagen@sydneywater.com.au
By: 29th June
Grade: Easy/Delicious!

Sunday 10th July
Field Day

Lower Blue Mountains
Trip Leader: Beth Little
Contact: 0450 226 811, littlebeth78@hotmail.com
By: 7th July
Grade: Instructional

Weekend 16th-17th July
Caving

Capertee National Park
Trip Leader: Ray Etherton
Contact: sox@soxelectrical.com or Rod Smith on 0438 444 262, roderick_smith@hotmail.com
By: 13th July
Grade: Easy/Exploratory

Weekend 23rd-24th July
Caving

Abercrombie – Joint trip with BMSC
Trip Leader: Jim Crockett
Contact: 0407 284 256, jim.crockett@reach.com
By: 20th July
Grade: Easy

Weekend August
Caving
Being planned

Cliefden
Trip Leader: Jim Crockett
Contact: 0407 284 256, jim.crockett@reach.com
By:
Grade:

Weekend August
Caving
Being planned

Wyanbene
Trip Leader: Jim Crockett
Contact: 0407 284 256, jim.crockett@reach.com
By:
Grade:

Thursday 25 August
MSS MEETING

Quarterly MSS Meeting
To be held at: Chris Johnstone's place
Contact: 0401 988 096, chris_johnstone@hotmail.com

Weekend 10th-11th September
Caving
Permit Pending

Colong – Joint trip with CASM
Trip Leader: Rod Smith
Contact: 0438 444 262, roderick_smith@hotmail.com
By: weekend before
Grade: Hard

Weekend 24th-25th September
Caving

Jenolan
Trip Leader: Rod Smith
Contact: 0438 444 262, roderick_smith@hotmail.com
By: weekend before
Grade: Hard

Weekend 1st-3rd October
(long weekend)
Caving

Kempsey
Trip Leader: Danielle Lewin
Contact: 0404 305 878, danielle.lewin1@three.com.au
By: 26th September
Grade: Surveying

Sunday 13th November
Field Day

Lower Blue Montains
Trip Leader: Beth Little
Contact: 0450 226 811, littlebeth78@hotmail.com
By: 7th July
Grade: Instructional

November or December 2011
Caving

Tasmania
Trip Leader: Danielle Lewin
Contact: 0404 305 878, danielle.lewin1@three.com.au
By: TBA
Grade: Surveying

2012
Caving

Sri Lanka
Expressions of interest at this stage
Contact Jim Crockett on: 0407 284 256, jim.crockett@reach.com

2012
Caving

Buchan
Expressions of interest at this stage
Contact rod Smith on: 0438 444 262, roderick_smith@hotmail.com

Appendix 1 – 405th General Meeting Minutes

MSS 405th General Meeting, 5th May 2011

Held at Jim Crockett's place

Meeting Opened: 7:40pm

Present:

Roderick Smith, Jim Crockett, Chris Johnstone

Apologies:

Beth Little

Any Corrections to Previous Meetings Minutes: None

Correspondence:

Caves Australia No. 183

Helictite Volume 40 (1) and 40 (2)

The Very Latest Volume 16 No. 1

OSS Journal #11 – on CD

Committee Members Reports:

President: None

Treasurer: None

Equipment Officer: None

Training Officer: None

Librarian: None

Status of Action Items:

Constitution updating: None

Web site hosting:

A copy of the web site has been created on the new host, but there is some minor issues that need to be resolved before it's ready. This should be fixed by the end of May. The DNS will then be updated so our domain name will be pointing to the new host.

We discussed whether we should create a Web Manager committee position, and it was generally agreed that we should. The role of the Web Manager will be to be responsible for:

1. Ensuring that all variable aspects of the web site are kept up-to-date. This includes, but is not limited to, uploading the newsletters, the trip calendar and the members contact details.
2. Implementing the improvements agreed on in the January 2010 meeting. There is no time-frame, but they should work towards making the changes happen.

The Web Manager does not need to do the work themselves, but are responsible for making sure the changes are made.

We wish to acknowledge the great work Dave Stuckey has done with the web site to date and ask if he will take on the role as outlined above.

UIS Conference feasibility study: Jim presented the UIS Conference feasibility study at the ASF Conference in Chillagoe. It was met with approval by all who attended the presentation. Everyone was encouraging we make the bid, but the actual decision will be made at the next ASF meeting in January next year.

Updating membership details: None

Back issues of Helictite magazine: None

Other bank account options:

Chris has made some enquiries. The banks wouldn't offer anything better than what we already have, but he's trying to get on to Credit Unions Australia to ask them.

New Business:

Trip planning:

Kanangra, Timbergetters: 2nd – 3rd July, Trip Leader: Johan Verhagen (TL) – Easy. Trip objectives: Learn how to cook leg of lamb in camp oven. "Part 1 of the caver chef series". Also, celebrate birthdays. Plus walk.

Capertee: Late July, Trip Leader: Rod Smith – Easy/exploratory.

Sri Lanka: Next year – If people are interested contact Jim.

Colong: Possibly early September

Wyanbene: August, Trip Leader: Jim Crockett – Medium-Hard

Cliefden: August, Trip Leader: Jim Crockett

Jenolan publications – The Jenolan Caves Historical Society are reprinting a series of Occasional Papers written in the 1970's. They have also published a new paper entitled "Click Go the Cameras at Jenolan Caves 1860-1940" by Prof Elery Hamilton-Smith. Should we purchase any of these for the MSS Library?

Yes, assuming the price is reasonable.

ESRI GIS Software – ASF have done a deal to subsidise the purchase of this cave mapping software. Action Item: Look into the cost of the software and whether there's any benefit in MSS purchasing a copy. Assigned To: Jim Crockett. Time Frame: Open ended.

Next Meeting:

Chris' Place – 25th August

Meeting Closed: 8:45pm

ASF Council Meeting April 2011 – At Chillicon
Summary.

1. Insurance compliance.

A number of clubs expressed concerns that the new insurance policy must comply with the Victorian AAS (Adventure Activitiy Standards), when the ASF already has it's own set of standards. It was requested that the broker remove this compliance from the policy. This is going to be looked into.

2. Insurance costs.

The fees have been reduced due to the new brokering and increase in ASF membership and hence we could reduce the ASF sub costs but it was agreed that we should keep them at the current rates to cover for potential costs associated with the grant scheme and helictite journal going digital and hoping we can keep the fees at this rate for a number of years.

3. ASF Cave Safety Guidelines.

It was agreed that these be accepted with minor wording changes being made.

ASF Feasability study for hosting UIS conference.

It was agreed to continue this study with the final decision to be made if ASF decide to make a Bid at the next council meeting in January 2012. ACKMA also indicated that they would support any bid.

4. ESRI Cave mapping software.

ASF have reached agreement to offer this software to members just waiting for an MOU between ASF and users. User training guides and workshops to be developed.

5. Helictite Journal.

To go online as free digital journal. Monies currently in the Helictite fund (which were from the disbanded Karst Research Group) will ast at least 8-10 yrs before ASF would possibly need to provide any funding.

6. Executive Elections

Stan Flavel re-elected as ASF president for another term.

John Cugley, Deb Hunter, Jim Crockett and Bob Kershaw elected to the Executive for the next 2 years.

NSWSC (New South Wales Speleo Council) Meeting May 2011

Summary.

1. Environment, Climate Change & Water.

Stephen Meehan from the KGU (Karst and Geodiversity Unit) made a presentation on the new Cave access policy for all the Karst areas falling under the NPWS control. There are standards for the Cave permit application and standard cave trip report that must be adhered to. Some of these forms to be reviewed and made available on the public domain. Fees will not apply to ASF cavers as long as the forms are filled in correctly and submitted in a timely fashion.

2. Bungonia Recreation Advisory Group.

Projects currently underway, are the Bridge in B4-5 to prevent damage to paleo-sediments in the Kings Cross area and the removal of a large boulder which has blocked the main entrance to Hollands Hole. Joe Sydney is the co-ordinator.

3. KID – Karst Index Database.

Waiting on the OzKarst to be finalised so that the data can be exchanged.

4. OzKarst

Very close to being finalised including the Karst maps. Lots of groups waiting on some of this data so they can continue with other related projects. One of these is the finalising of which groups will have the responsibility for tagging and documenting for each Karst area. MSS will most likely have this for Abercrombie and Macquarie Park and potential for other areas which remain unassigned.

5. Standard form for Karst Database.

Peter Dykes has designed a standard form for gathering data to be entered into the Karst databases (Ozkarst and KID) It is suggested that we all start using this standard form, which will be made available on the ASF website.

6. NSW hosting of 2013 ASF Biennial Conference.

One of the themes will be Karst history. Meeting to be scheduled to continue organisation of this event. It has been suggested that a Webpage be created eg TROGalong2013.caves.org.au and this could have the Logo and basic info, contact details and possibly photos of the venue and links to other related sites.

7. ASF site Hosting.

Mike Lake advises that if clubs are interested then he can create domains under the caves.org.au at no cost to clubs. Eg we could have MSS.caves.org.au and a link to our website.

8. Wombeyan Meeting

Jill Rowling advises there is a meeting planned onsite at Wombeyan on 25th June with the cave manager for clubs interested in doing work at Wombeyan. Contact Jill Rowling

9. Macquarie Park Karst

There was a meeting held on 14th May among interested user groups to raise issues associated with this new National Park with the view to gathering info for later creation of a policy.

10. NSWSC elections.

Denis Marsh re-elected as President.

4 executives elected Cathy Brown, Colin Tyrrell, Jim Crockett, (4th position vacant with Mark Euston or John Taylor candidates)