

S P E L I O G R A F F I T I

The Newsletter of the National University Caving Club.

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The Annual General Meeting.

The A.G.M. was held on Wednesday, 5th April in the Meetings Room at the Union.

The minutes were dispatched in record time, and were followed by the Treasurer's, President's and Equipment Officer's reports. These were read and accepted, and the meeting turned to the main business of the evening - the election of this year's Office Bearers :

President	-	Ian Raine
Vice President	-	Michael Webb
Secretary	-	John Tilley
Treasurer	-	David Nicholls
Equipment Officer	-	David Moore
Committee Members	-	Carla Van Driel
	-	Norman Stokes
	-	Peter Aitcheson.

The election was followed by films, the meeting ending at about 10.00 p.m.

PRESIDENTS REPORT 1966-1967.

The fourth year of the existence of the National University Caving Club draws to a close. This year we have lost many of our valuable members, one especially Mr. N. Henry. However we have gained many enthusiastic new members at the beginning of this academic year and thus the club's future is not only secured but bright.

Through the continued support of the Sports Union we have been able to increase our equipment by the addition of 300ft. rope, 1x50ft. ladder, 1x30ft. ladder, a first aid kit, several pitons, a piton hammer and carbide. Without this equipment the club would not be able to function or survive. Unfortunately our 2 original ladders (50ft. each) have had to be condemned, however it is hoped to be able to recover 25ft. of ladder from each. Also a nylon rope has been misplaced or perhaps stolen - the whereabouts of it is uncertain.

Again since the last A.G.M. the club has been very active with an average over the 12 months of a trip per fortnight, including the 12 week break for the Christmas vacation.

The standard of last years Orientation Week activities was maintained with the display, slides and films.

The safety record of the club has not been shattered during the last 12 months due to the responsible attitude of both trip leaders and members alike. It is to be hoped that it will be maintained and as much care and vigilance be exercised in the future as in the past.

One new caving area has been explored, Tuglow Caves, and new caves and parts of caves have been explored at Bungonia, Colong, Wee Jasper and Wyanbene.

An interesting series of General Meetings were held during the year although poorly attended towards the end of second term and during third term, no doubt due to pressure of examinations.

An interesting and varied set of trips has been planned for first term, which I have no doubt will be extended and broadened by the incoming committee, and promises a bright, interesting and active year of caving ahead.

The following article has found its way by devious routes into my possession. If the person who wrote it would like to write some more, I'll be very grateful to receive them.

Beginners.

Much more instruction should be given to the uninitiated beginner-cavers. It's all very well to attract new members, but they must be told exactly

- i) what to expect
- ii) how to treat caves
- iii) how to treat equipment
- iv) how to treat trip leaders (i.e., specific instruction.)

The first experiences of a caver are often the most lasting and the strongest impression he will have. Therefore they must be first-rate impressions : it ought to be second nature to him to treat equipment with respect. If and when he becomes a trip leader, he will instil this same thoughtfulness and responsibility into his fellow cavers, so that the good condition of equipment is perpetuated. A questionnaire given to beginners would be a solution to their lack of experience, if a talk/lecture/discussion, based on their answers, was given after.

Trip Leaders

Trip leaders are chosen, presumably, for their cave-experience, and sense of responsibility. These qualities are measured by the committee, but must be constantly kept under strict watch. Admittedly, half the fun of caving lies in finding out for yourself 'what it is like'. but trip leaders should instruct beginners carefully and curb their own exploratory urges to watch over their charges, (though not necessarily interfering with them), to make sure they are as safe as he is. The results of the lack of warning given to a new caver may be amusing to the old hands, but can be terrifying, and extremely off-putting to the poor new-comer. Anyway, how can a caver respect a Trip Leader of whom he sees nothing underground but a distant dim flickering light, or a large, muddy, efficient pair of boots disappearing through an amazingly small hole, while the hollow command echoes weirdly from a terribly long way off - 'Come on up he-e-e-re....Yo-o-o-o-can do-o-q-o it....' Unfair I reckon.

Equipment.

As said before, if cavers are drilled from the very first, there should be no trouble. Strict surveillance of the part of the trip

leaders, older cavers, and the committee should put a stop to any further damage.

The Caves at Bunyen, N.S.W.

The limestone at Bunyen is dotted with numerous sink-holes and dolines, varying in depth from 5' to 140'. A number of these are under excavation by myself and some very willing helpers. At present one cave is known; to be visited by this club on May 6th. It is a pot-hole 97' in depth, of which the last 35' is a relatively easy ladder pitch. An alternative to ropes route does exist, of roughly grade b climbing standard. The cave is formed of three main chambers, interconnected by a maze of fissures, tunnels, and grottoes. The lower chambers are, fortunately, difficult to find, and this probably explains their relatively unchanged state. The maximum depth reached by BUL is 105', according to survey I carried out two years ago. In the first chamber, the floor is mainly collapse rubble, but Hope Cave - the lowest section - has a pure crystal floor, covered with coral encrusted stalagmites. In the higher, muddier sections, helictites and white stalactites and shawls brighten the walls of the tunnel. The squeezes are invariably lined with sharp formations, one, the Underpass - having its walls shrunk by 3" by the crystal lining its walls.

For persons coming with me to Bunyen, I can promise an excellent trip, the results of which usually appear worth the trials of the ninety-foot odd drop.

The caves are on private property, and permission to visit them MUST be obtained from Mr. A.F. Pfeiffer, 'Cloyne', Bunyen Siding, N.S.W., otherwise the caves will be closed to ALL cavers.

Michael Webb.

TRIP REPORTS.

Bungonia. 12/3/67.

After finding what we assumed was Fossil, we entered it. We went in 100' and came to a 40' pitch. Norm and I went out and got 50' of ladder and rope and back in, and down ladder - Then another 20' pitch, 20' from last. No more ladder, so return to surface.

After cuppa, enter Grill and proceed until air too foul to go further, but cave still stretching on ahead of us luring us into the depths of the earth and certain death due to asphyxiation if we had succumbed. Fortunately, we resolutely turned back, and up into that glorious fresh air.

Graeme Chapman.

Just after entering we ran into about 40 Boy Scouts in Grill Cave, testing for a 'Speleology' Badge or some such. We passed them as soon as possible, and met Tom Waite, who teamed up with us. We pushed on down, finding that we had run out of fixed iron ladders, but since the drops were very small, this didn't bother us. The floor was mainly large boulders and rock, with deep channels, 1' wide and 5' deep cut into it. Many metres further on, the CO₂ level jumped, but it didn't bother us too much, so we kept going. We eventually decided that it was getting uncomfortably dangerous a bit on the low side of - 200'. There are still some pretty patches in Grill, below 100', including some good helictites hiding in odd corners.

Michael Webb.

In addition, David Moore and two others reached about 1000' into Bl6, before the high gas level forced them to turn back.

Altogether, 15 people went caving at Bungonia that weekend from this Club.

Wee Jasper. 4/3/67. Fresher Trip.

Visited Dip 2-5, and 4th Extension. Entered Dip 4 by the 60' pitch which was laddered or abseiled. All abseiled into Dip 2 from the balcony below the rat-hole. We came out via the rubbish tip.

4th Extn. was done by the usual route. We spent about 6 hours underground each.

Ian Raine.

8/4/67. Dog Leg.

To Anderson's Squeeze for the nth, and probably last, time. Spent 5 hours of moderately hard trogging around dead ends in the area. There is no way much past A's Squeeze, and so it SHOULD be left in peace from now on. There is just too much fine formation up there to let Boy Scouts, etc. much it up like they have Punchbowl.

Suggest a Radio Survey to the 3rd water trap and taking a rough bearing on same in order to figure out where we have to dig from the surface in order to break through beyond the 3rd water trap.

Digging continued in the hole for one hour, although it seems fairly pointless and can only destroy formation if we break into Dog Leg.

David Moore.

Wyanbene. 8/4/67.

Went in as far as Rockfall chamber, after looking at the Helectite Chamber en route. David Nicholls found a squeeze leading from the top end of Rockfall, and coming out half way up the wall of a huge chamber with a scree slope leading up and down as far as we could see. Byron and I made 70' up this before it became too dangerous to continue. I shortly afterwards reached the roof by another route, while David and Byron reached the floor, most of which is very sticky mud. The chamber is in excess of 300' high, and probably reaches 400' or more. We found some bat skeletons on the floor. Where there is formation in this area it is very good, and there are numerous possibilities for extensions to the cave via the many side passages leading from this chamber. Carbide trouble forced us to return to the surface after 7 hours underground.

Ian Raine led the trip, and took another party in, independent of mine, which comprised Carla Van Driel, Ruth Tilsey, David Nicholls, Byron Deveson, and Russel Moon.

A party also went caving on Sunday 9th, under Ian Raine.

Michael Webb.

If we're to keep producing this newsletter, articles are required. All contributions welcomed, as well as offers of assistance. Please give them to any member of the committee, prefereably before the end of term for the next newsletter.

Also, volunteers are required to assist in the construction of more ladders over the vacation. If you are willing to assist please see Ian Raine, David Moore, or Michael Webb.

COMING TRIPS.

Bunyan. May 6 See Michael Webb or David Nicholls.

Bendethera. During Vacation. See Ian Raine.

Cheitmore. Long weekend in June. Probably go to Wyanbene as well. See Michael Webb.

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