

SPELEOGRAFFITI 1985

(Volume 18 No 1)

SPELEOGRAFFITI 1985

Journal of the National University Caving Club

Committee Members

President	R. Horne
Secretary	G. Brimms
Treasurer	R. Poynton
Equipment Officer	G. Wimbush
Librarian	J. Henderson
Safety Officer	A. Butt

Editors

R. Horne
M. Alexander

Printers

Aardvark Press

Photographer

G. Brimms

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Greetings fellow cavers.

1985 has been a busy year for the club with many of the members fully booked with skiing, bushwalking, socialising and even (gasp) studying. Some even managed to squeeze in some caving.

On a more serious note however, a number of trips have been run in the past year to some of the less traditional caves for NUCC. These included Yarrangobilly(a first for a number of years), Buchan, two trips to Cooleman and numerous trips to Narrangullen.

Sadly we were unable to field a team at Bungonia'85 due to the uncertainty about the bushfires in the area and Speleo sports was cancelled by the organisers due to lack of interest (2 teams only registered - both from NUCC.) A small number of trips were also run in 1985 to the more common NUCC habitats- Wee Jasper, Wyanbene and Mt Fairy.

My thanks to all those who helped to keep interest up in 1985, particularly to Garry Brimms who has run the club almost single-handedly in the past year and to Craig Petterd for the use of his boat for Narrangullen (and fishing) trips, and also for his services as chauffeur.

After two years as President and many more in other committee positions, it is with regret that I will not be standing for election as an office bearer in 1986. I have decided to devote my efforts to my studies and work, and I hope that the AGM will see the election of a new team to lead NUCC through a prosperous and interesting 1986.

My thanks again to all those who have been active in 1985. Your continued activity and support will ensure the continued success of NUCC in the years to come.

Yours in caving

Rod Horne.

N.U.C.C. LIBRARY

In case you haven't found out yet, NUCC has a library. At the moment it consists of two filing cabinets full of many interesting publications, newsletters, and articles. We have 'SPELIOGRAFFIETIES', NUCC's newsletter, from 1964 if you are interested, and also many other A.S.F. societies' newsletters - from last month to almost twenty years ago. Unfortunately it is in a bit of a mess but this is in the process of being rectified.

Did you know that some NUCC members of "years gone by" mapped the caves they trod? Some results of this are in the library. If you wish to know about some special area (with respect to caving) there could well be some information. It is worth a look through just for the experience (especially at the moment as some of it is a big mess).

To test your knowledge, what is :
an aven,
Karst,
a jama,
a Zwischenhohle.

These are out of

A Glossary of Karst Terminology
by W. H. Monroe
in the NUCC library.

Anything can be borrowed. As the library is in NUCC's storeroom you have to get someone who is allowed to get things out for you, or let you in, depending on negotiations with the front desk.

TRIP LIST 1984

During 1984 N.U.C.C. was involved in a number of trips - more than we initially thought. This is the list of trips that we conducted during the year.

DATE LOCATION

26/01	Buchan
10-11/03	Bungonia - Cave Rescue Weekend
7/04	Narengullen
7-8/04	Wee Jasper - Beginners Weekend
25/04	Wyanbene
29/04	Wyanbene
20/05	Wee Jasper - Punchbowl
27/05	Narrengullen
22/07	Bungonia
9/09	Bungonia
28/9-1/10	Buchan
?	Narrengullen
?	Narrengullen
?	Narrengullen
?	Bendethra (Garth)
1/12	Mt. Fairy
8-9/12	Mt. Franklin
16/12	Mt. Fairy
16/12	Narrengullen

Editor's note

As no SPELEOGRAFFITI was produced in 1984, we the editors (Margaret Alexander and Rod Horne), have taken the liberty of including some of the material intended for SPELEOGRAFFITI 1984.

TRIP REPORT

NARRENGULLEN October - November / 1984

In this period there were three trips to the area. The first trip was an introduction for the people who hadn't been there before. The second and third trips were more exploratory trips to chase down entrances marked on some old documents in the club store room.

The introductory trip to the area was just to Narrengullen (TM? and TM?). The interesting point to come out of the trip was the number of holes in the cave roof. These appeared to lead somewhere, though, as yet we haven't explored them (it sounds like a good excuse to use the scaling poles we've got).

The second trip was a quick trip to TM?, followed by a check on TM9. The participants on this trip were Craig Petterd, Mark Carson, Andrew Wall and Garry Brims. To get to TM9 we had to swim from the boat, after passing the gear to shore. The cave really isn't worth the effort as it rapidly drops to the water level of the dam and is unaccessible (but if you haven't seen it it is worth one swim).

The members on the third trip were Craig Petterd (many thanks for the use of your boat in these trips), Anne Robinson and Garry Brims. In this trip we hoped to find some interesting cave entrances around the Burrenjuck Dam area. However, things did not work out as planned, especially when the source material was left back in Canberra. We attempted to find some entrances from memory, but this was unsuccessful. All was not wasted (it was certainly relaxing in any case) as we did find a small hole not marked on the aerial photographs that would have been our source. The entrance is just east of "Shark's Mouth" (TM?).

It is hoped that we can return to the area as it appears promising. And is a good excuse for lounging around in the sunshine in the back of a boat for a day...Isn't caving wonderful.

QUOTABLE QUOTES AND RUMOURS

Allan C. : "It's too dark to go caving."

Mark F. : "It's important to be able to do it left-handed, in case you have to do it in the dark one day."

Garry B. : "It didn't really need stitches."
(overheard outside Woden Hospital after a Mt. Fairy caving trip)

Allan C .: "SPELIO SPORTS is fun. I've been twice."

Anthea dyed her overalls PINK on purpose.

TRIP REPORT

Mt. Fairy - 1/12/84

Participants - Garry Brims, Mark Carson, Marc Fauvet

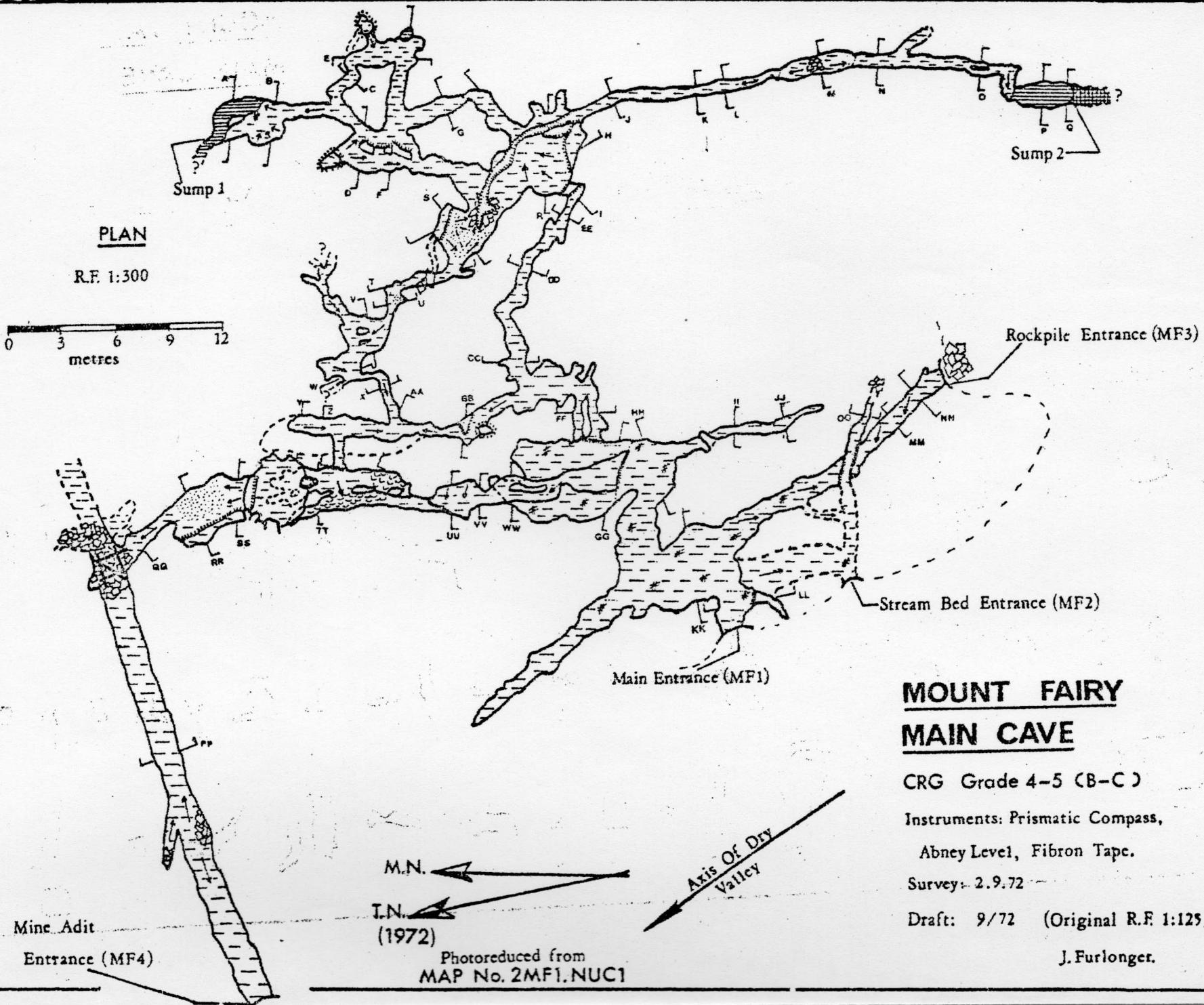
This trip was an initial exploratory trip to Mt. Fairy to see if we could find some cave entrances reported to be in the area. We were able to get some rough directions from Peter Hart (many thanks Peter).

A late start was forced upon us due to the elections. As we hadn't really planned any caving no one objected to this. We arrived at the Mt. Fairy area around 11 am. After a small discussion of where the caves might be, we set off (in the wrong direction). An hours searching left us with no cave entrances but a pleasant spot for lunch.

The afternoon proved more fruitful. Before leaving the area we decided to check up a dry valley. This contained several mine shafts, and a little way further up, the main cave (MF1, MF2, MF3). A quick check inside made certain that we would be back to fully explore it. Further up the valley on the left-hand side was another entrance (MF12) - does this mean there are 8 entrances still to be found?

As it was a warm day we decided we had done enough searching at this stage and decided to leave. On the way back to the car we found a further 2 unlabelled holes which could have been entrances (these were found later to not go anywhere). The day was rounded off by a quick stop at the Bungendore Pub on the way back to Canberra.

Note: A map of the Mt. Fairy area is included to help others find these caves, though as yet we have not found the owner of the land in which the caves are.



MOUNT FAIRY MAIN CAVE

CRG Grade 4-5 (B-C)

Instruments: Prismatic Compass,

Abney Level, Fibron Tape.

Survey: 2.9.72

Draft: 9/72 (Original R.F. 1:125)

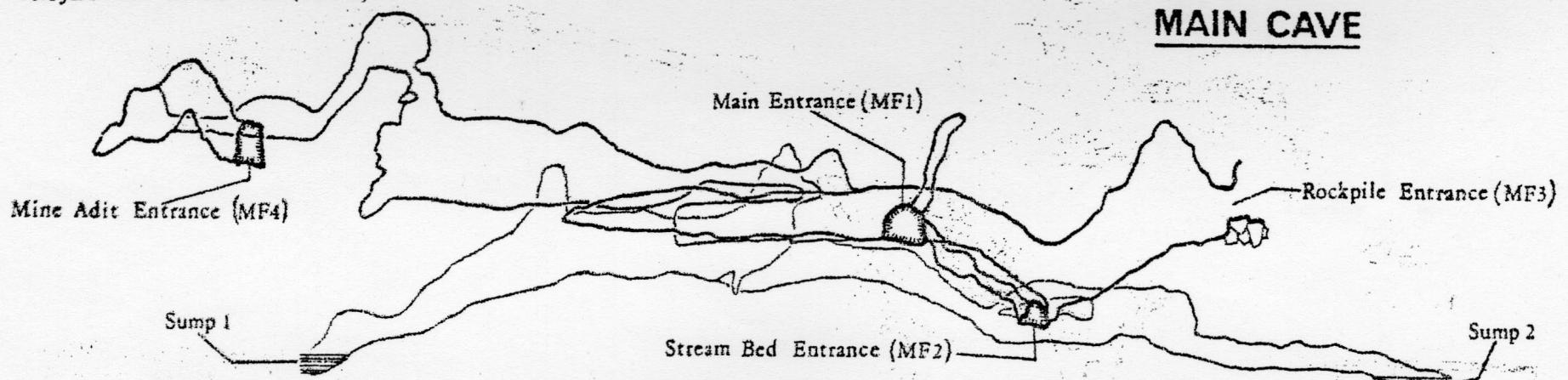
J. Furlonger.

MOUNT FAIRY

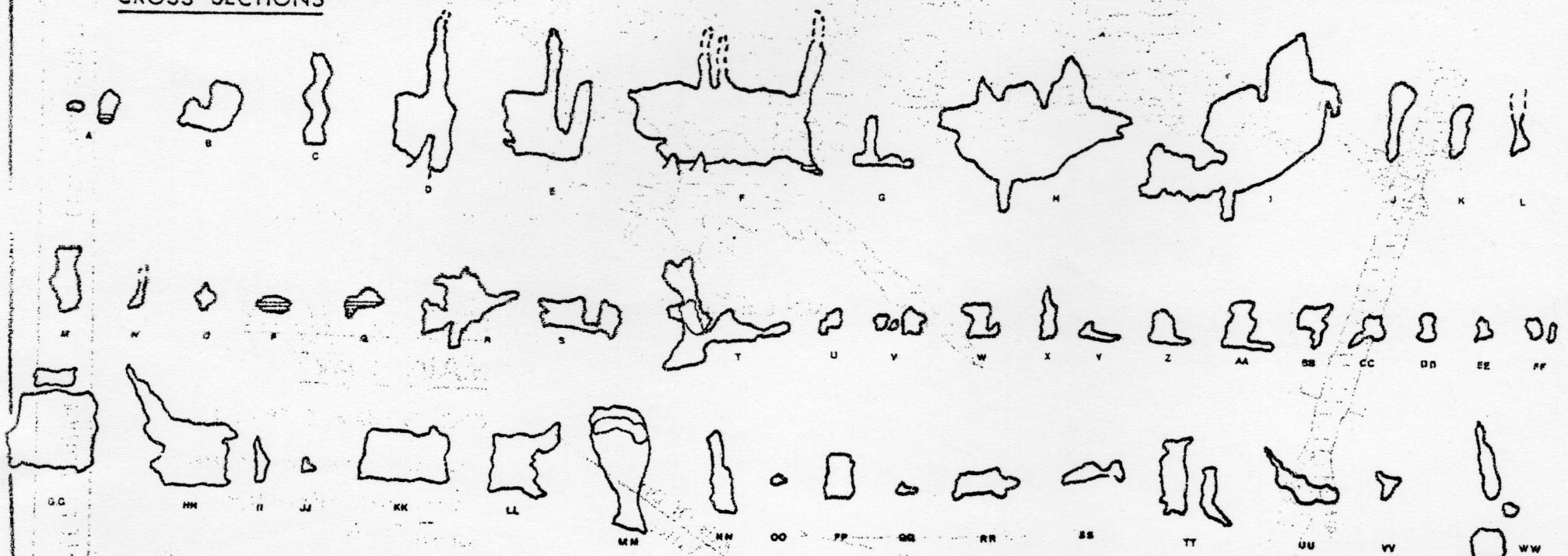
MAIN CAVE

PARTIAL LONG SECTION

PROJECTED ONTO 182° (TRUE)



CROSS SECTIONS



TRIP REPORT

Mt. Fairy - 16/12/84

Participants - Rod Horne, Jeanette Henderson, Neil Roediger,
Garry Brims

This was the second trip of the year to Mt. Fairy. It's purpose was to visit the main cave.

We arrived reasonably early so that we could spend some time in the cave. There were no problems finding the entrance this time, and we wasted no time in getting into it. Once inside we followed an easy route to a maze-like area (it doesn't look like that on the map that we found later - the map is included).

We followed one path which lead to a small chamber with some old formations. This chamber leads back on to a ledge near the main entrance chamber (which was mistaken initially for a further chamber - which might have had cavers in it, except the pack we spotted was our own!).

Also off this path was the way down to the stream passage. The stream passage consisted of sumps at both ends and a reasonably easy crawl between them from a large chamber. It was in this chamber that one of the members slipped and was cut. The cut was not large but it was decided to return to Canberra to have it checked (mainly for infection due to the amount of mud(?) in the area.

As the trip was ended early, we decided to have lunch back in Canberra. This in itself was quite entertaining as we were still dressed in old, very worn clothes.

TRIP LIST 1985- 1986

During 1985 NUCC suffered from a lack of documented trip reports. Listed below are those for which trip reports were supplied to the editors and a few dredged up from memory.

DATE	LOCATION
19/01	Mt Fairy
20/01	Wyanbene
3/03	Cotter- beginners trip
31/03	Wyanbene
5-8/04	Buchan
20-21/04	Mt Franklin- social weekend
5/05	Narangullen
18/05	Mt Fairy
?	Yarrangobilly (Garth)
10-11/8	X.C Skiing Weekend
21-22/9	" " "
5-7/10	" " "
2-3/11	Wee Jasper- Punchbowl/ swimming.
22-23/11	Bushwalk - Budawangs
7-8/12	Wyanbene
Jan long w/end 1986	Cooleman

FURST IMPRESSHUNS OV WHYUMBEAN

Aye longe, longe tyme agoe, (lyke thee beaginning ov larst yeer),
Tony Butt, Grant Anderson, Simon Brown, Margaret Alexander, Julie
Gibbs anned Kay Barney orl whent two Whyumbean. Itt woz thee furst
tyme eye hadd evver bean to Whyumbean. Wee sett orf frum Burton and
Garran Hall quiet erly inn thee mourning, anned druv aye longe waye
two thee kaves; thru Captain's Flat, parst aye pett cementary anned
lotz ov gunm trease. Ittoock quiet aye longe tyme. Thene wee terned
of thee rowed too goe downe aye durt trak markt '4-wheel drive
vehicles only'. Az their wher ownly for weels ohn bowth thee Golf
ahned thee Gemini wee corntinued.

Whee crost aye bigge reiver anned WOMBAT'S carr tryed two
graide thee rowd aye bitte. Itte woz aye verry hott daye ahned wee
wher loockin foreward too gheting inn thee nyce kool kave. Sumwun
hadd toeld mie thaat their woz ownly sicks inchers ov worter inn
thee kave, anned theye wer rite. Theye jussed didant mension thate
their woz ownly twelfe inchers off kave wiff sicks inchers off
worter inn sum partz.

MAYNE IMPRESSHUNS

Thee kave woz verry darck ahned wett. Itt hadd tite bitts ant bigg
chaimbers. Itt woz slipry (az pore Kay fownd owt). Wen whee wher
dooing lotz whee steemed upp thee kave, anned wen whee werr stil
wee ghott kold. Wombat keeped founding wholes inn thee stream, butt
att leest thee Bandicoot woz reesonbly wel beahaved. Their wher sum
stalacmites ahned stalagtites witch wer grate- theiy gaav uss
sumthing too haing ohn two. (Anned sum off themm wer quiet prettie.)

Orl inn orl whee hadd aye farely god tyme. Becoz sum off uss
wher inexpierenced anned/ore sik wee ownly whent too Caesar's,
butt hadd lotz off funn ohn thee muddslied. Eye wood evfen cornsider
goeing agin.

Luv, a loonyversity kaver.

P.S. Thee Captain's Flat pub ish knot two badde.



TRIP REPORT

WYANBENE Sunday 31 march 1985

PARTICIPANTS

Garry Brims, Anne, John Miller, Garth Wimbush, Warren Rae, John Tarbath, John Stanner, Andrew Wall, ,

REPORT

We arrived at the camping ground around 11 am. The road in had been dry and could be crossed without a four-wheel drive.

After quickly gearing up we went underground. As we had decided to try and reach Frustration Lake the trip was straight along the stream passage (except for the necessary shortcuts). At Rockfall Chamber we temporarily lost the trail and consequently looked at the Meanders (which are definitely worth seeing because of the height and meandering nature of the passage).

We picked up the trail after lunch. It is located at the upper region of Rockfall Chamber and involved climbing over the rockfall and through a passage between the rocks. This then opens into Ceasar's Hall.

Of note in Ceasar's Hall are the formations on the left-hand wall once it has been entered. These consist of large areas of crystals and formations which look like cave coral on a stem.

Proceeding further down and along the stream passage Far Ceasar's Hall is encountered. The path from here is easy to follow. It consists of a drop into Diarrhea Pit (at the top of Far Ceasar's Hall) and continuing along (the only passage) until Frustration Lake is reached. From Far Ceasar's Hall the party split into two groups. One rigging the pitches, and the other removing them on the way out.

Frustration Lake fills the remainder of the stream passage, and is said to be the end of the cave (except for cave diving). Its colour (blue/green) is reported to be due to copper in the water. This colour is noticeable in some aragonite flowers just before and above Frustration Lake. There is another trip planned so that a camera can be taken so that the colour can be recorded.

The trip out followed the path in. We exited from the cave at 8.30 pm and were greeted by a small camp fire lit by members who had been the first out. This revived our spirits enough to make it back to Canberra (and a meal of pancakes at midnight). All in all, a most enjoyable and enlightening trip.

One point to note is the number of pitches encountered. Initially there is a drop of approx. 6m to the stream bed. The

other pitches are after Far Ceasar's Hall. The drop to Diarrhea Pit is about 10m. This is followed by a climb of about 4m and a drop closely following of about 8m (one ladder can be used for both). Next is a chimney of about 5m and final drop of 12 to 15m just before Frustration Lake.

Narangullen Cave

Narangullen is a smallish cave on the shores of Burrinjuck Dam, near Yass. It is the largest cave in the Taemas/Warroo system.

A small intermittent stream flows down a gully and into the base of a small hill. Over the years the stream has worked its way along a fault in the hill, forming a cave which requires little technical skill to explore, but is one of the most interesting in the Canberra area, as it contains numerous formations which are still alive.

Access to the cave is via a boat trip from the Good Hope property, which takes about 15 minutes in a runabout, and anything up to an hour in one of the hire boats available at Good Hope.

NUCC currently has a couple of old maps of Narangullen, and some literature written in the early '70's. The club has already discovered a chamber which is not marked on the maps and it is hoped that future trips will be made which will increase our knowledge of this cave

Craig Petterd



TRIP REPORT

Where: Narangullen Cave

When: 5 May 1985

Party: Garry Brimms Jenny Edwards
 John Levins Paul Hardiman
 Marc Fauvet Craig Petterd

The above intrepid party departed from Canberra at about 10.00 a.m., arriving at Good Hope at 11.00 a.m.

We then loaded ourselves and our gear into the boat and headed off down the lake towards the cave. The day was so beautiful that Paul was heard to mumble "why didn't I bring my fishing rod?"

Before reaching the main cave, we stopped at TM4, which is a small cave entrance about $1\frac{1}{2}$ kilometres to the east of Narangullen. It is quite interesting as it is basically a small hole in the middle of an otherwise featureless paddock. An apparently impassable squeeze prevents access to what appears to be a 10' vertical shaft, with a small chamber at the bottom.

On arriving at the cave (or at least as close as you can get by boat), we unloaded ourselves, trog gear, a rope, a ladder, and six lengths of scaling pole. It had been decided that we would make an attempt to climb into one of the holes in the roof of the cave.

We trundled off around the side of the hill towards the entrance, lugging those bloody poles with us. We entered via TM3, the lower of the two entrances. At the end of the first large chamber, there are two large boulders with a narrow wooden plank spanning the gap between them. Spurning such artificial assistance, I attempted to demonstrate that the (smooth and near vertical) side of the second boulder could be climbed by the 'running leap' method. Suffice to say, that this method does not work very well!

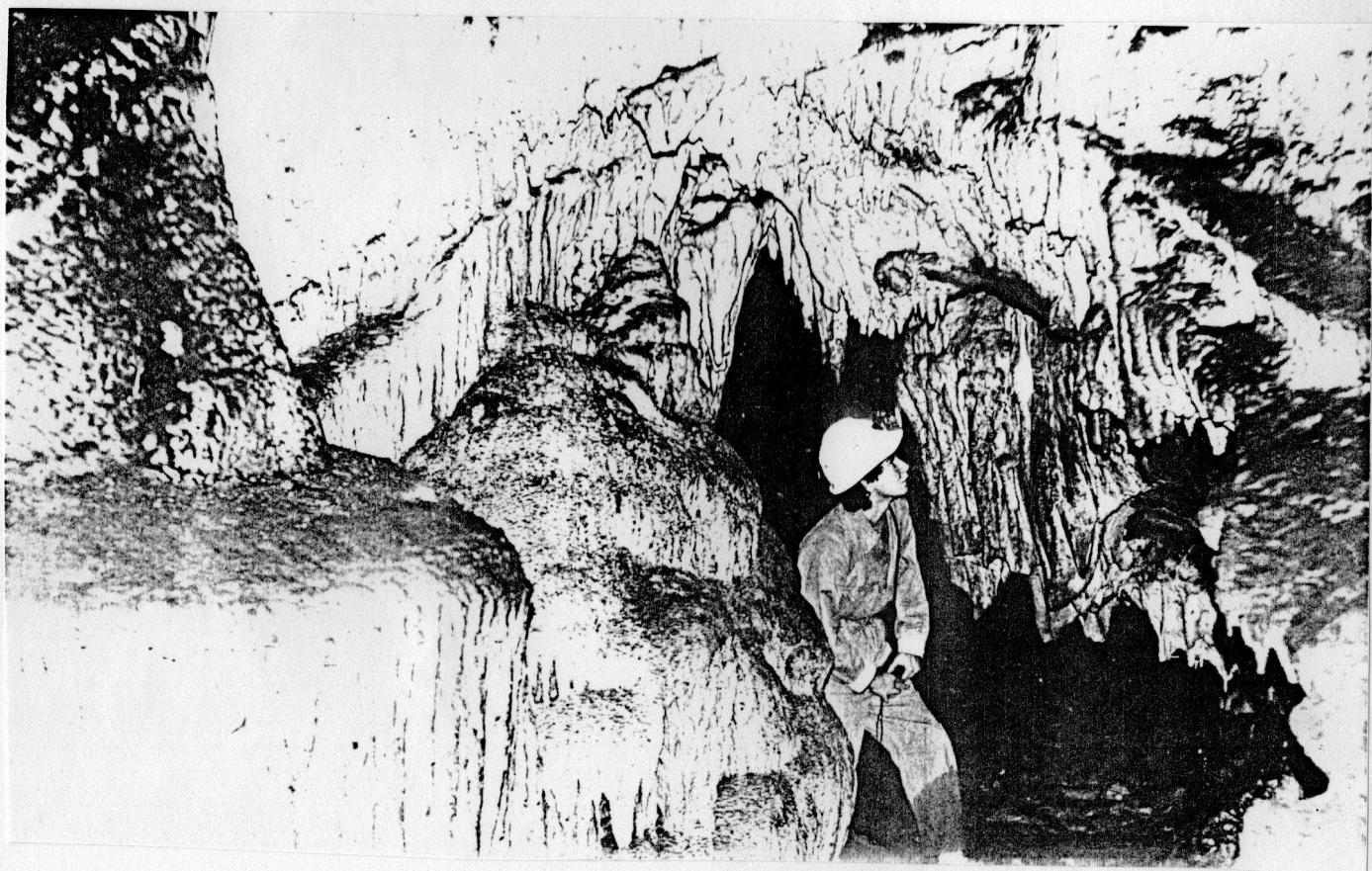
Anyway, we then entered the next chamber, which is large by anyone's standards. (A UNSWSS report suggests that it is 52 metres high.) Garry proceeded to experiment with his camera—the results should be quite interesting. At the far side of this chamber one normally scales a fairly slippery mud slope to gain access to the next chamber. Near the base of this slope, the creek which flows through the cave disappears into a sump. It reappears in the next cave in a matching sump.

Before climbing into the next chamber, Marc decided to have a closer look at the sump. In so doing, he found that there was a small (5 or 6 inch) air gap above the water. This was not apparent on previous trips into the cave, as the creek level has always been higher than it was on this occasion. At this stage we thought that the rocks we could see on the far side of the water were in the chamber we would reach by climbing the slope beside us. Garry then decided to crawl through the water, rather than climb over the top. A couple of minutes later we heard a very surprised voice call out "Hey, this is a completely different chamber!" We had in fact stumbled across an unknown chamber. The rest of us, except for Paul (wimp) crawled/swam through, to find ourselves in a sizeable chamber, which was decorated with some absolutely beautiful stalactite formations, all of which appeared to be growing. The creek disappeared out one side of this chamber through another (impassable this time) sump. One of the stalactites bore an uncanny resemblance to a shark's tooth and the chamber was promptly christened."

and the chamber was promptly christened "fang chamber".
By this stage people were starting to shiver, so we called it a day. We then carried those damned scaling poles all the way back to the boat!

All in all, a very worthwhile trip. Narangullen Cave is relatively untouched compared to the Wee Jasper system and is in much better condition.

Craig Petterd



TRIP REPORT

Where: Mount Fairy

When: Saturday 18 May 1985

Party: I can't remember except Bergère was there (four-footed canine)

Mount Fairy, for those of you who haven't been there, is a nice little dry caving area, just over one hour's drive from Canberra. But, don't follow G.B.'s instructions that it's the first turn right after the bitumen or you'll be through Tarago and into Goulburn before you realise it (they've sealed the road since). We're thinking of lighting a candle for the lone caver (on motor bike) who set off with the rest of us and was never seen again (so much for following instructions to the letter; good thing he didn't have any of the caving gear).

Well, the rest of us got there safely (we'd been there before and knew where the turn-off was). We actually met the owner this time (it's on private property and special care with gates and livestock is required) and gave him a copy of the map and got his address for future contact (G.B. has since lost it).

The prominent feature of Mt Fairy is the thistles and they get thicker as you get closer to the cave entrances. The place is full of little holes and dead ends, a couple of interesting mine shafts, and one main cave which is best entered through the creek entrance (about 30 metres to the right of the mine shaft entrance which is shored up with suspect timbers).

It is a great little cave with clean, dry, maze-like passages everywhere (but not big enough to get lost in). If you find the right series of twists and turns, you can get down to a dry river passage which ends in a sump.

This time, however, G.B. held a surprise in store for us. By pulling aside some loose rocks, he revealed the tightest of squeezes (you'll probably have to take your helmet off to get through this one - it's tight! And about ten or twelve feet long. Definitely **not** for the claustrophobic!) which eventually opened into a passage, a very large chamber (by Mt Fairy's standards).

If you look hard enough, you finally find a smaller chamber from which a contortionary squeeze reveals a gem of a little room all glittering in white. In fact, it's the only chamber in Mt Fairy with any stalactite features at all. It's well worth the effort but be very careful as there's hardly room to move and this little wonderland is very susceptible to damage.

All in all, it was a great day (for those of us who made it!) and the beauty with Mt Fairy is that you finish early enough to get back to civilisation before all the shops close. Bungendore serves a great Devonshire tea (even though dogs have to wait in the car), and the wooden birds are cute.

Marc Fauvet

THOUGHTS OF A LATE NIGHT CAVER(*) - ON WAKING

That thing that leans against the wall -
it has to be my overall.
That lump's a helmet, I surmise.
By George, my shirt has fossilized.

I see enough through reddened rims
to force my weak and feebled limbs
to stagger to the bedroom chair
while finding muscles that weren't there.

My knees are done in sundry hues
of reds and browns and blacks and blues.
Most mud came off in the bath last night
and blocked the drain up nice and tight.

But lived I did. This room's not hell.
(Today is ... Monday. Work ... Oh, well ...)
I have survived. (I think I do)
and had a great time trying to.

(*) CAVER : spelologist nuccus

APPEARANCE : Uniform dull brown colour. Large green, blue,
black, or white head.

LOCALITIES : Can be found in small, wet, dark habitats
(eg. a mini in a carwash,
inside a can of soup,
in the 7 dwarve's submarine)
- usually under SE Australia.

HABITS : Weird.

TRIP REPORT

Where: Wyanbene

When: 7-8 December 1985

Party: Cavers:	Garry Brims	Kathy Henderson
	Allan Caldwell	Kathy Hitchings
	Rob Capon	Richard Hitchings
	Marc Fauvet	Bill Stead
	Paul Hardiman	Andrew Wall

Camp Followers:	Margaret Alexander
	Simon Brown
	Megan Fauvet
	Debby Howse
	Sheridan White

Spider Fighter Extraordinaire: Rob Horne

This report is vague because (a) it was dark when we set out; (b) the trip was three months ago, and (c) I've just written a mammoth trip report on Cooleman and I've got to wind this up quickly so that I can get to bed.

As far as Wyanbene trips go, it was typical - wet, and very wet - but we did make it to Lake Frustration (photos to prove it). The road is now in excellent condition but the Shoalhaven was very high and the approaches to the ford are now very steep (4-wheel drive only, even in good weather).

Really quite uneventful, except G.B. (we have to blame someone and from past experience, you're a likely candidate!) left the ladders in the car. If you've been to Wyanbene, you'll realise it takes about five minutes to discover you're missing ladders. So we all crowded into the "blow hole" to wait while a few people rushed back for ladders.

This in itself was quite interesting as we watched a group of experienced nurds squeeze past us (they remembered their ladders but forgot their helmets, boots, lamps and commonsense). More about these intrepid explorers later.

Approximately an hour later, we were on our way again, having safely descended the ladder, some less experienced people and some very experienced people requesting belays. (P.S. Never be too shy to ask for a belay and trip leaders should always offer one to everybody on any ladder pitch). However, this was not to slow us down nearly as much as our intrepid nurds who somehow managed to get in the middle of our group. There they were, walking along with their instamatics, puffing on cigarettes. Well, if you've only got a hand-held torch, every extra source of light helps! Or maybe the hot air was to offset the cold water seeping in through their sandshoes - who can tell with nurds.

After the nurds, it was the usual wet crawls (cold wet crawls, that is) to Lake Frustration and back. Some of us, however, really didn't mind the wet and cold; we had done Wyanbene before and came prepared with wetsuits (in fact, it was a pleasure to get wet so we could cool off).

Summing up, this trip had about four people too many. Wyanbene has heaps of ladder pitches which are always slow to rig, get everyone up and down, and then derig. And, all jokes aside, for the unfortunate few (I think that should read many) who don't have wetsuits, ten plus hours underground in a cold, very wet cave is **too long**. Keep the party small so that you can maintain rapid movement.

P.S. I have some excellent (by caving standards!) slides of this trip and any of you who wish to have proof of yourselves underground, please contact me. I'll organise to get prints made if anyone is interested.

Marc Fauvet

TRIP REPORT

Where: Cooleman

When: Australia Day long weekend 1986

Party:

Allan Caldwell	John Kennedy
Rob Capon	Liz McNee
Marc Fauvet	Anne Robinson
Debby Howse	Andrew Wall

This was to be another of those nebulous trips where, supposedly, there are quite a few caves in the area (reinforced by people's vague memories) but nobody is quite sure where. Cave maps are another of those mysterious things which never seem to be available when planning a trip.

So with an NRMA map of the "South Coast and Snowy Mountains" we set out for Cooleman late on the Friday night (actually, I'm lying - Rob had a detailed map of the area). Twenty-seven rabbits, four kangaroos (Debbie saw six but tree stumps look like roos, don't they?), nine large birds (how am I supposed to know what sort?) and two wombats later, we arrived at Cooleman. Mind you, so had the rest of Canberra and finding a camping spot was no easy task. But where was the rest of NUCC? They had said they'd get there on the Friday night. Not to worry. We'd set up camp and worry about them in the morning. Humble apologies for waking anyone up, but I only dropped my steel tent poles three times!!

Bright sunny morning (what do you expect at 9 a.m.?). Well, I suppose I'd better get some water for the billy. But what was Andrew's truck doing down there? Surely he didn't drive through the gate. No, in fact, Andrew and John (two separate Toyota four-wheel drives and three passengers) had found another fairly new track that got you to Blue Water Holes campsite and bypassed the gate. They (A.W., A.C., A.R., L.M. and J.K.) obviously got there in daylight and hence could find faint tracks and campsites.

Anyway, by about 10 a.m. we all set off in search of Barber's. We crossed a creek, followed a track, headed uphill, turned 180°, climbed more hill and finally got to the top of the ridge (funny place for a cave entrance). No, it's not quite there, so down the hill (other side), into a gully, avoiding some thistles (this must be near a cave entrance as they are always well guarded by thistles. Don't believe me? Then try Mt Fairy!), and lo and behold, a couple of holes in the ground (dry, too).

Well, lights on and in we went. Easy access with walking most of the way. Whoever was leading seemed to know the way so we (M.F., R.C. and A.W.) decided to check out an obvious passage (ten feet wide and as many high). Ah! This ended in a tiny squeeze (hang on, isn't that what we're here for?), well, a few more squeezes and we finally ended up in a chamber with a daylight hole and a sump. What sump? There was at least two feet of air above it (and the water was only an inch deep, anyway). By this stage, the rest of the party had started to filter through to us (did they really know the way through?), so we sent the big people through first (that's to soak up that inch of water; the earlier sentence should have read puddle, not sump). Shouts of daylight, creek, etc announced that this was in fact an exit (O.K., entrance, but only if you come from the other side). We had a quick snack, found the daylight hole from above then headed downriver to the waterfall for lunch.

Hello, hello, hello. A large overhang on the other side of the creek, an obvious cave entrance. Actually, I heard some nerd with a torch from some pedestrian (bushwalker - do I have to explain everything?) group shout out: "Oi, there's a dark 'ole 'ere." So we (R.C. and M.F.) splashed across the creek (you can't stay dry forever) and investigated. Sure enough, there was a definite hole in the ground (no tag, however, that would have been too obvious). This was, in fact, a very clean hole, all the rocks were shiny and wet (what do you expect from a cave entrance two feet below creek level?) and before long we arrived at beautifully round bath-sized depressions (yes, full of water and no, we didn't check out how deep). The hole continued down a fault (still dry), only to arrive at lots of water (and two fish).

Yes, it was cold. No, it was **very** cold. Oh s.....! It was neck deep. In fact, there was twenty to twenty-five feet of at least neck deep water to be crossed (swum). This ended in a sump but a 180° turn left gave access to a horrible and depressing (you'd be depressed too, if you'd been immersed to your neck in freezing water) muddy little chamber. A quick crawl up a muddy wall and ... Oh, no! A gate! Fortunately, it wasn't locked (it wasn't comfortable either as you wriggled over it. Of course, they put it in a squeeze). Onwards to a broken chamber, across a mud ledge and into a dead end. Dead end?! Rubbish! You don't put a gate to close off a dead end. A quick search revealed a hole in the ground (a mudslide actually, ending in water), and an exit hole five feet up the wall with a knotted rope coming out of it. It was all too muddy and slippery to progress safely so we promised to come back the next day with ropes and ladders. We exited (we were cold), checked out a few more possible holes (nothing), had a late lunch and all headed back to the campsite.

The rest of the day was dull and uninteresting, except for the nude bathers (forgot to tell you, they were there on the way in).

Day Two

We went back to Creek Cave (you think of a better name) with ropes and ladders, and one person less (A.R. chickened out). Everyone got through the wet bit (except A.H. who chickened out), into the chamber, past the gate and across the mud ledge (except A.C. and D.H. who chickened out), past the knotted rope, and then.....

Well, I'm not telling what was beyond there if you're all too chicken to go in (four of us know). But keep this in mind: if someone's going to go to a lot of trouble to put a steel gate in a difficult cave, just think of the marvels it must be protecting. Ask us (M.F., R.C., J.K. or L.M.) or come on the next Cooleman trip if you want to know!

Marc Fauvet