

# COLLIERIE



Journal of

*Blue Mountains Speleological Club*

Vol. 26 No. 1



# OOLITE

## BLUE MOUNTAINS SPELEOLOGICAL CLUB

Post Office Box 37  
Glenbrook NSW 2773

VOLUME 26 NO 1 1997

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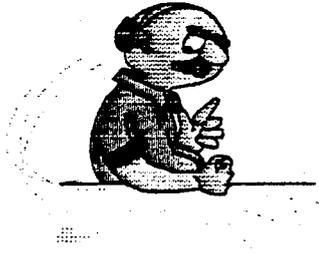
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# 1997 CLUB POSITIONS



President Iain Lynch



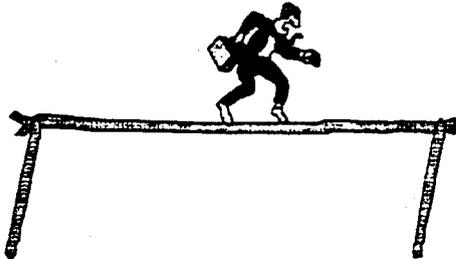
Vice President Kevin Coleborn



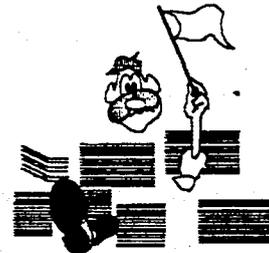
Treasurer Alan Whitmore



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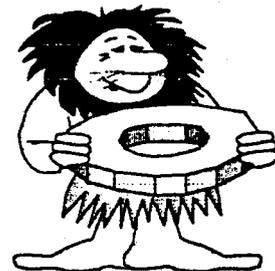
Safety Officer Rick Brett



Trip Secretary Kevin Coleborn



Committee Member Mason Dow



Equipment Officer Rick Brett

ASF Delegate Terry Coleborn  
Michelle Coleborn  
Map Co-Ordin Louise Coleborn  
Librarian Kevin Coleborn  
Publicity Officer Neil Fallshaw

Journal Editor Cheryl Lynch  
Social Secretary Cheryl Lynch  
Area Co-Ordinator Troy Magennis,  
Louise Coleborn Rick Brett and Lionel  
Baker

# TRIP REPORTS

## **CLIEFDEN**

**10-11th February 1996**

**Members:** Rick Brett(TL)-12, Kevin Coleborn-12, Shane Anderson-8, Jamie Brett-4, Daniel Whitmore-8, Alan Whitmore-8, Greg Cook-12, Neil Fallshow-8, Michelle Coleborn-7.5, Sue Coleborn, Carolyn Brett.

**Report:** Purpose of the Trip was for the AGM and Caving. On Saturday Shane, Rick, Kevin, Alan, Neil, Greg and Daniel went in to Murder for 4.5 hours and then Rick Kevin, Alan, Neil, Michelle, Daniel and Greg

went in to Molong for 3.5 hours. On Sunday Taplow was entered by Rick, Kevin, Michelle, Greg and Jamie Lee for 4 hours.

Rick Brett Trip Leader

## **COOLEMAN**

**2-4th March 1996**

**Members:** Rick Brett(TL)-5, Carolyn Brett, Kevin Coleborn-5, Shane Anderson-5, Lincoln-5

**Report: Friday:** We all arrived at Yagby Guides office about 10am. After checking in with they duty guide and picking up the key to Eagles Nest we set off for Cooleman. this was our first trip to Cooleman in many years, but fading memories were still accurate and before long we had followed the Long Plain Road in, found the correct turn-off (yes it had a big sign, but you still had to find the sign) and arrived at Blue Waterholes. Under a picture perfect blue sky we quickly set up camp. Having arrived on a Friday we had the place to ourselves.

After some lunch we trogged up and set off to find some caves, heading south along Cave Creek. Following a well defined (and recently slashed)path we soon come upon and entered Cooleman cave exiting via Right Cooleman. These caves are open to

general public access but are still in fain condition. Certainly they have not endured the heavy visitation of areas like Bungonia and Wee Jasper. This was so for all the public access caves at Cooleman. Next we located and entered Murray Cave, an easy walk in horizontal cave. We strolled in and soon came to the sump noting that the cave was quite active in places. The next cave we went looking for was River. Only two of our party had been to these caves before and we only had a rough idea of where River was located. Never the less after a bit of a search, Kevin located the entrance and down we went. We soon came to the fast flowing stream and waded to the sump where a guideline attached to the passageways disappears invitingly under the water. Peering through a small hole the other end of the line was plainly visible in the chamber an the other side of the sump. The water was freezing though and no-one was particularly keen on swimming the sump. Eventually however, Kevin took the plunge and dived through to the other side. As no-one else was in the slightest bit interested in joining in that sort of masochism he soon returned and immediately bolted for the surface in search of some warmth and sunshine. The rest of us followed at a more leisurely pace. We the returned to camp.

**Saturday:** Saturday was earmarked for the gorge downstream from Blue Waterholes. After the normal relaxed BMSC start to the day we set off along the well defined path through the gorge. Even if there were no caves here the area would be worth visiting simply for the walk through the gorge. Before long we located and entered Barber's Cave and spent some item thoroughly exploring it and locating all five entrances. As with the other public access caves this one also was surprisingly good condition with much active formation. Kevin and Rick exited via the entrance at creed level (CP17?) which required a bit of squeezing as opposed to the walk around nature of the rest of the cave.

Continuing on downstream we then arrived at the very pretty falls where lies the entrance to White Fish Cave. This is a very

wet cave and only Kevin and Shane elected to do the swim into the further reaches of the cave. After a good look around we exited determining next time to bring a ladder as there was an interesting looking lead which neither had pushed before. The volume of water in this cave makes it a very different proposition to the rest of the caves and Coleman.

This completed our caving for the weekend. We ran out of time to do Eagles Nest as Shane and Kevin returned to Sydney that night. On Sunday the remaining party member did another walk down the gorge.

Shane Anderson.

## **HOLLANDERS RIVER**

**12th March 1996**

**Members:** Lionel Baker(TL), Kevin Coleborn, Louise Coleborn

**Report:** We made our way to Jenolan to meet up with Barry Richards who was to come with us. On arriving we found he had a hand injury and he could not go with us, so we departed company and headed of to Budthingeroo.

After negotiating a falling tree we arrived at Budthingeroo Trig. We spent many hours exploring possible leads on the spur and saddles. After finding the old track we followed this down for some time.

After this we entered the lower saddle to the valley floor and across the paddock passing a big black snake on the way. No limestone was encountered as we headed upstream. At this point none of the paddocks were familiar.

So after four and a half hours we headed back to the truck not finding the grave or any limestone what so ever.

Lionel Baker.

## **JENOLAN**

**23 & 24th March 1996**

**Members:** Rick Brett(TL)-13, Kevin Coleborn-14, Carolyn Brett, Jamie & Kirsty Brett, Alan Whitmore-7, Daniel Whitmore-7, Greg Cook-14, Lincoln-7, Mason Dow-7, Shawn Murphy-13, Teresa Brett-13, Paul-7, And Robyn Selton-13

**Report: Saturday:** Due to our late arrival at Jenolan on Friday night, Saturday morning got off to a fairly slow start. With brekkie over and Teresa and Shawn finally ready (They lost the car keys) we departed the pig farm and made our way to the playing fields carpark, calling in at the guides office along the way to collect the keys.

With an array of batteries, tapes and spare overalls our visitors were finally equipped and ready for their assault on Mammoth. Finally at the entrance of the cave, some of our guests had bewildered looks on their faces as our experience members like Alan and Greg layed on the ground and squirmed into the small entrance which Mammoth offers. After some further reassurance the new comers hesitantly followed the person in front of them into the cave and to their surprise were amazed as to what was on the other side of the entrance passage. After we were all in the cave and making our way down the rock pile our party looked as though they were now feeling comfortable with their surroundings. Eventually we had all passed the Jug Handle and made our way into Horseshoe Cavern were the high Avens were pointed out. Prior to leaving Horseshoe Cavern I asked Mason if this was what he thought caving was like? Mason answered with a yes and asked was there more to do.

Soon enough with Alan and Daniel leading the party we made our way through the railway tunnel and onto Hell Hole where ones real caving and were mud was waiting for us. The small steep slope in Hell Hole was a testing area for most and for those at the rear of the party, well we encountered severe foul air and not the CO2 type thanks to Kevin. Thankfully the air movement in

the cave rectified the problem at Hell Hole, which allowed us bigger people to struggle up the horrible part of the cave. Eventually all were out of Hell Hole and at the top of the Naked Lady Chamber where ones photographs were taken and the pretties pointed out. The party made its way down through the rock pile where some of the hairy bits received comments from Paul, Robyn and Teresa, however Kevin was close by to give reassurance and instruction. Well finally at the bottom of the Naked Lady Chamber we stopped for a snack and well earned drink. whilst most of the party had a break Kevin and I checked to see if there was any water in Ice Pick Lake, no water was found however a very muddy vertical solution tube was explored by Kevin who when climbing pushed some mud out of the tube and into the stream passage simple during his climbing efforts. The mud coming out of the hole was runny and splattered all over me as I waited for Kevin below.

After Aborting his effort to reach the top of the tube due to the slippery mud, Kevin returned and we made our way back to the party. After briefly describing the way on to the Snakes Gut and how to negotiate some of the obstacles, Alan again led the way. With most of the group moving along well, Greg and Teresa trying to go head first sown the 5 metre climb before reaching the flattener to the Snakes Gut and instructed her on the better method to use your feet the other way around. Fast approaching the bottom of the Skull and Cross Bones through they last rift of the Snakes Gut some Grumbling of tiredness were mentioned. Upon reaching the bottom of the Skull and Cross Bones, we split the party into two groups, one group would go and check out Central River whiles my group would head on out. With Paul, Robyn and Teresa in my party we made our way up over Skull and cross bones area and back over the top of the forty footer and eventually out into the afternoon air. Kevin's group continued on with some exploration being down around Central River area, prior to departing the cave. Saturday most of the group made the way home.

**Sunday:** Sunday Morning was spent search for Shawn's keys. Believe it or not Kevin found the keys down beside the creek, underneath a piece of bark. Once the keys were found we were then able to trog up and make our way to the playing field carpark. Today a party of six would head to Mammoth again. We entered the cave and made our way to the top of the forty footer where we rigged the ladder pitch to allow Shawn, Robyn and Teresa to test their skills. After everyone was belayed safely down myself and Kevin made our way down the forty footer via the rock pile. Upon reaching the bottom we met up with Greg, Shawn, Teresa and Robyn where the finer skills of laddering were discussed. With Slug Lake being our destination we were soon on our way, briefly back tracking to visit the Grinning Monster lake on the way. Soon enough we had reached Lower River where extreme leg stretch was encountered to allow us all to make it across Lower River with out getting wet. With Lower River behind us we made our way up the mud bank along and then down where a great 90 degrees squeeze was encountered. Fortunately for us shorter ones the squeeze was easy. Unfortunately for Shawn he approached the squeeze facing the wrong way which caused him to have to back out in a rather awkward manner. With an alternate route around opted for, the straighter but tighter option. With all of us giving Shawn some encouragement and direction he eventually pushed through the squeeze. With us all now through it was simple walk down to Slug Lake. The water level in the lake appeared to be sown as the dive line tee off point was about 10-15 metres from the water. After poking around for a couple of minutes we decided to make our way back out of the cave. Once again that dreaded squeeze had to be passed, which this time was a little easier for Shawn, however hid Levi's were now a lot more worse for wear. Teresa, Greg, Kevin, Robyn and Myself opted for the dogleg squeeze which was easily passed soon enough we had reached Lower River where the sound of running water greeted us. Now a little more tired the girls prepared for a fall into the river as their confidence was I

little I was than earlier in the day. With their overalls safely in my pack. To my surprise I made it across, followed by Kevin who assisted Shawn, Teresa and finally Robyn. Unfortunately Kevin allowed Robyn to attempt the last bit on her own, not a good move Robyn fell quick steps and Robyn although we was now on dry ground. Well with Robyn's fall and Greg still to climb across we were suddenly amazed to see Greg simply jump in the water and wade across. Well don Greg. With the dry gear on it was now a short trip to make our way out of the cave. Unfortunately near the bottom of the forty footer I suffered a slight shoulder dislocation due to overbalancing in a body jam. With the shoulder back in we then continued out of the cave via the ladder. Greg and Robyn opted to make their way up through the rock pile whilst we packed the ladder and trace away. We all exited the cave after Seven hours underground.

Rick Brett

## CLIEFDEN 6-7th April 1996

**Members:** Kevin Coleborn(TL)-12, Rick Brett-12, Carolyn Brett, Jamie & Kirsty Brett, Rob Mann-6, Cindy Mann-6, Timmy Mann, Sue Coleborn, Richard Coleborn, Alan Whitmore-6 Daniel Whitmore-6, Neil Fallshaw-12, Robin Fallshaw and Shelly Fallshaw.

**Report:** Some of us arrived on Friday (Kevin, Sue and Richard) and picked up the key for Main Cave, as Anthony and Co were spending Easter in Sydney. After picking up the key at about 1 O'clock. I went for a walk and had a look at the influx on the creek next to the hut, which seemed to be an efflux. It was running a little bit but nothing major. Then I headed down to the Belubula for a look then back the hut for dinner. Rick and family arrived about 9 pm and we had a quick hand of 500 and bed (the Guys beat the Girls again). Next morning everybody else arrived and we were ready to go caving by around 10.30am. We already had the key to Main Cave, so a small party of us set of for Main

Cave. We headed into the Main Chamber and did a circuit clockwise around the chamber, Rick took a couple of photos. We then quizzed everybody who didn't know the way out as to which was the way out. Cindy, Alan and Neil were all close but Ricks thumb and fore finger never let him down. Alan then lead us down to the Laurel Room an we had a look around. We then headed for the Boot Room, we spent a fair bit of time looking around the Boot Room and looking at the Crystal Boot and the Waterfall Formation. We then had a look up in the Clown Room and the Lower Entrance Chamber. We then made our way to Helictite Wall, after spending some more time taking photos and discussing the theory on how are Helictites formed. We headed out after 6 hours caving back to the hut for a couple of beers and stock the summer fire as the temperature plummeted and the mercury was sitting on the floor. After dinner we played 6 handed 500 and you guessed it, the Guys won it again, we then hit the sack.

Sunday was pretty much like Saturday, we headed down Main and went to the Main Chamber, Laurel Room, Boot Room, Lower Entrance Chamber, Helictite Wall and the Clown Room. The members on the trip were different, but we spent another 6 hours doing a repeat of Saturday. We now feel a lot more familiar with Main Cave, we ended up back at camp for similar night to Saturday night except most had headed home by now. The Trip was reduce to Rick and family and Kevin and Family. So four handed 500 was played and won by the Guys again. Monday Rick and Kevin spent 3 hours trogging above Transmission. Several entrances were rediscovered and a couple of prospects noted. But nothing new was found, the rest of the day was spent tidging and packing our gear and headed home after a relaxing weekend caving.

Kevin Coleborn

## **BUNGONIA**

**27-28th April 1996**

**Members:** Kevin Coleborn-13, Shane Anderson-7, Rick Brett-11, Chris Warburton-13, Stuart-5, Moreen-13, Alan Whitmore-5, Mason Dow-11.

**Report:** B4-5 Extension was the cave in order for today, after an early drive down we set up camp in Bay 20 by 9.30am and were signed in and headed into B5 by 10am. We decided to abseil down the 40 foot and 20 foot pitches, after Shane set the pitches he descended and all the beginners abseiled for the first time, Kevin then descended and set up a couple of rebelays for the more experienced to cross. Finally we were all down and at the start of the Rat Run, which was 6-8 inches deep in water and were there is water to be crossed. There was cavers that want to head out, the rest of the party discussed whether if they got wet, would they still get through the extension, what the heck we well give it a try anyway. Couple of hours later Shane and I ended up in the largest chamber and waited for 3/4 and hour for the rest of the party. Once they got to the largest chamber Shane and I headed up Shaduf to see if we could exit through the duckunders, while the rest caught their breath. The duckunder were full of mud and not possible to get through, so we met back up with the rest of the party, at this point Shane headed out as he had a dinner appointment to get to. The rest of the us spent some time looking around the largest chamber and headed down the rest of the cave. We made it down as far as the 20 foot climb where we struck CO2 and decided not to climb down into the CO2 pit We turned around and headed out, not straight out, we had a little trouble crawling and several hours to get back to the bottom of the pitch. I was shivering pretty bad by this time, but the entrance was near, only two ladder pitches to go. After Rick ascended and derigges the pitches from the rebelays we proceeded to belay every body else up the ladder, I free climbed up last. The cave was exited at 9pm and we headed back to camp, where most headed home only four of us remained and a relatively early night was had by all.

On Sunday we had a late start, some members were feeling a bit sore, so grill was the plan. We trogged up and headed down at about 11am a quick trip down to the Crystal Palace and back was all that was needed to satisfy the party that they had been caving Sunday and we headed home after on enjoyable weekend caving.

Kevin Coleborn

## **Wyanbene**

**4-5th May 1996**

**Members:** Kevin Coleborn (TL), Rick Brett, Shane Anderson. 6.5 hours by all.

**Report:** As there were no keen persons for a Wyanbeen in May. The three of us planned a day trip, Rick turned up on my door step at 5.30 am. Then head over to Shanes place then to McDonalds at Goulburn and then to the carpark near the entrance, we trogged up and headed on. We made a quick trip to the keyhole and through to the Jail Bar's where we headed up to Cleapatras Bath. What a climb it is, Kevin Scrambled up and set a ladder for Rick and Shane after that we headed down to the start of the water crawl were we did a quick look for Atchisons Aven's, after no luck we got wet and headed to the Gun barrel. Shane took a couple of photos and then off to Caesars Hall and after some 50 & 60 flashes and some spare batteries, some more photos were taken and then down to frustration lake with one ladder and 3 tapes. Diarrhoea pot was done hand over hand, Anderson wall was climbed and ladders set. Frustration Lake was found wetter, more photos in Caesars Hall and headed out doing the Tourist section on the way out.

Kevin Coleborn Trip Leader

## JENOLEN 28-29th September 1996

**Members:** Kevin Coleborn (TL)-10, Rick Brett-5, Shane Anderson-3, Cindy Mann-5, Rob Mann-, Alan Whitmore-10, Daniel Whitmore, Neil Fallshaw-10, S. Fallshaw-10, Lincoln ■■■-10, Jody.

**Visitors:** J. Valla-8, (5) members from Shoalhaven Rock Activities Group-8.

**Report:** After meeting at the Pig Farm on Saturday morning, we met the rest of the party at the cavers cottage picking the key up along the way. We shuttled two car loads of people down to the Playing fields and triggered up ready for our assault on Mammoth well (J13). After entering we split up into two groups, one group going down the 40 footer and the more adventurous going down through the Mammoth Squeeze, for some sporting fun. Rick and Alan headed down, the rest followed me on towards the Mammoth Squeeze. Joe a new comer to caving, in his first cave entered Mammoth Squeeze second. Approximate 15 minutes in the cave and 10 minutes in the Squeeze and he didn't want to go caving on Sunday, but while Joe rested, abused and swore in his first squeeze the rest of the party decided that this squeeze was for the small and the skinny and went back round and down the 40 footer. We all met at the base of the 40 footer and headed down to the lower river, I was leading from the rear and took Ross and Liane down to Grinning Monster Lake on the way. Once we got to the lower river I notice Joe falling into the river up to his neck, but I do grant him the fact he was keen he swam into the cave not out, so the fall could be done again on the way out. Joe dampened the spirits of the other caver as not many thought they could cross. So after a quick look around the 5 people on the other side of the river started back, Joe the third to start back opted for the swim from the start and was wet once again. We all headed towards the Entrance Chamber, so half the party could exit the other half could head up to Central Lake. We headed down the Pock pile half way between Skull and Cross Bones and Hell hole turn off and blindly found our way down to Central lake,

which had 300 mm more water than the last few trips. We then headed back up the Skull and Cross Bones and out to more rain, lucky Rick had the key to the Cavers Hut. We spent Saturday evening around the fire drinking various alcohol and telling obscene Sambo jokes and having a good time in general.

Sunday we headed into Aladdin to take some photographs and have a good look around, and guess what Joe was on the trip again. But I'll kill the suspense there is no squeeze in Aladdin and no river. After a couple of hours we had seen most of what there was to see and headed out for a walk up the valley, noticing some good potential digs opposite Hennings, which Rick has not written in his report yet.

Anyway everybody had a good safe time at Mammoth. Lincoln set up the ladder for the 40 footer Kevin, Rick, Alan belayed the pitch Alan also lead the way down to Central River.

Kevin Coleborn Trip Leader

## YARRANGABILLY 12-14th October 1996

**Members:** Rick Brett, Kevin Coleborn, Shane Anderson. **Visitors:** Alicson Noble.

**Report: Saturday:** Following the drive down from Sydney the previous afternoon (very hot and stormy) we all enjoyed a civilised sleep-in before getting under way at the standard BMSC start time of around 10am. We did have an excuse though as the Guides office was not open until that time. Arriving at the office shortly after 10 we introduced ourselves to the very helpful and friendly duty guide Adele, and picked up the keys for caves we intended to do.

Our first Destination was Eagles Nest. After parking the car as far in on the track as we could (too far in fact as it turn out), we set off on the usual meandering walk along the track through the bush to the Y3 entrance. Enter we quickly came to the initial rock fall chamber where we stopped for a while to take some photographs. Most times in the

past we have simply motored through this section but there is some quite good formation in the fair sized chamber.

Continuing on we made our way through the zigzag section of Western Eagles Nest, eventually arriving in the area of the Junction and Red Crystal Room. From here on we proceeded at quite a leisurely pace with many stops for photographs. Following the marked path was made out way past the Crystal Pools into the Easter Eagles Nest and on through the Railway Tunnel to Flatbed Cavern. All this area is well decorated and the track marking seems to be an effective method of protecting the cave. We eventually exited via Y2. After making our way back to the car we found we had driven a hill too far. After much heaving and shoving not to mention getting well decorated with mud from spinning tyres we managed to extricate the vehicle and make it back to the bitumen. That evening as with all other evenings of our visit it was off to the thermal pool for a great refresh swim before returning to Cotterills for tea.

**Sunday:** Our first cave today was Y10 (Old Inn). There was quite a flow of water into the entrance and the sound of the waterfalls in the rock pile made normal conversation impossible. After filing in the visitors book we made our way into the upper section. Proceeding through the dry upper stream passage we soon came to the detrog in Rimstone Chamber where we remove our boots and overalls. The floor of the small section of active stream passage here is covered with red Rimstone microgours - very pretty - and we spent some time taking photos while losing all sensation of feeling in our feet due to the cold. After putting our gear back on and a quick check for frostbite we made our way back to the entrance and out.

Our next destination was Y5 (East Deep Creek). Our object here was the first detrog in the upper section - we didn't even bother looking at the duckunder as the amount of water flowing meant it would be impassable. Once again after removing boots and overalls (and ignoring the howls of protest

from our feet), we enter this exceptionally well decorated area to spend down more time taking photos. The detrog restrictions this and Y10 have proven their worth in protecting these remarkable pretty sections. With the photography over and our feet gratefully re-shod we made our way back out of the cave. This was the end of the trip for Rick and Kevin as they had to return to Sydney that evening.

**Monday:** With only Shane and Alicson left this was to be a lazy day's caving in the old tourist caves Harrie Wood and Castle. Of the two, Castle is by far the larger and is better decorated though there is a very interesting old biscuit tin Harrie Wood which is very heavily calcified over. A lot of work had been done in Castle with much of the old chicken wire and iron railing having been removed. This greatly improves the attraction of a visit to Castle as the cave though not demanding is quite well decorated. A perfect last day cave.

That completed our caving for this trip. All the caves entered had high levels of activity due to recent rains. In fact there were quite deep pools in Eagles Nest which most members of our party had only ever seen dry before. After a last swim in the Thermal pool it was off back to Sydney. Many thanks to Adele for her kind assistance during our visit.

Shane Anderson

## CLIEFDEN

14-15th December 1996

**Members:** Rick Brett(TL)-6, Kevin Coleborn-11, Cindy Mann-6, Rob Mann-5, Alan Whitmore-6, Neil Fallshaw-6, Daniel Fallshaw-6, Tim Person-6, Greg Cook-11

**Report:** We arrived Friday night with Kevin, Sue, Tim and Greg already in attendance. Saturday morning saw the arrival of Alan, Neil, Daniel, Rob and Cindy. Saturday morning we visited tetanus, with photography in mind. A ladder was set up to gain entry to the cave with safety. Upon all reaching the bottom of the ladder the rubbish pile was carefully negotiated due to

the large amount of broken glass etc: the oolites were viewed and the small eastern passage below the ladder was explored, the cave was exited after almost 1.5 hours.

After leaving Tetanus the party headed for Main (CL1). Main was entered with some photography in mind and cave name, familiarisation. The party visited the boot room, Clown Room, Lower Entrance Chamber and Helectite Wall. Exited the cave after 4.5 hours underground noting a distinct lack of blowfly's. Saturday night was spent celebrating the up coming Christmas. The night was well enjoyed with the attendance of Anthony Dunhill and Family. Sunday-Well the morning after the Christmas party was a little slow so the day was pretty well spent down at Transmission Flat swimming in the Belubula river.

A party of 5 visited transmission and Trapdoor, with cave familiarisation in mind. Kevin lead the party to both caves reporting that Transmission was still as dry as ever and just as confusing as ever. The confusing part was seconded by Greg who become slightly disorientated during his exit of the cave via the higher passages.

Trapdoor was found to be damp as normal. The extension entrance was pointed out by Kevin who once had entered the extension. Now his legs won't even fit in the hole. all who viewed the extension felt they would not fit in or out so the cave was exited to allow for swimming time.

**Rick Brett** (Trip Leader)

## **Palona Brook Limestone and Aboriginal Art Cave 17 March 1996**

**Present:** Lionel Baker (TL), Louise & Terry Coleborn, Cheryl & Mitchell Lynch, Margaret Russell, Dave McDonald and Mark and members of the Lapidary Club, Robyn, Marion, John,

### **Palona Brook Limestone Cave**

We all met at the gate of Lady Carrington drive and set out at about 10am along Lady Carrington Drive. After about 3 km a steep track leads off to the right and follows

Palona Brook. The track climbs to about 20m above the creek level. Follow this track for about 1.5 km then the track drops down to the creek level the cave is a short distance along the track. At one end of the cave there is a 13m waterfall where Palona Brook flows over the terrace rocks.

The cave is a large overhang but has some large dead calcite speleothems that have a green lustre from the moss. Parts of the cave are vandalised with graffiti. The cave is approximately 50m long and 9m high with a maximum width of 14m. The floor is mostly sand with some rocks.

The speleothems are mainly stalactites with some stalagmites and a floor to ceiling decoration. There is suppose to be a tunnel of about 12m under the waterfall that has decorations in it. When creek is dry it would be interesting to take a look.

### **Site No 52-3-0244 Giant Fish Cave**

Grid Reference: 320175E  
6220027N

From Palona Brook Limestone cave we climbed up the waterfall and followed the creek for a short distance. Then A short steep climb out of the creek and a short climb took us to the caves on the ridge. One of these caves has Aboriginal art and is known as the Giant Fish Cave. The cave contains charcoal drawings of a large fish with scrub turkeys, a turtle, emu and other small fish drawn over Them. We returned to the limestone cave and had lunch and then headed back to the cars.

From here we headed out to the head of Palona Brook where Lionel showed the group three sites, the Birth Site and Dancing Men, the Fish Site and the new men in the pool site. Also Lionel showed us another small track intaglio similar to one in Palona Brook above the waterfall.

This article from The Sydney Morning Herald on Tuesday 2nd of January 1996 is the cave in the last Trip report.

# Park shows off hidden natural wonders



Ranger Helen Jessup examines a stalagmite at Palona Cave, which is part of the only "limestone" cave system in Sydney, at the Royal National Park. The caves are a feature of the National Parks and Wildlife Service Discovery Program, which provides activities around the State during the school holidays. Other activities being organised at the park include birdwatching tours, spotlighting tours and snorkelling.

Photograph by GREG WHITE

## People in our Club

# Kevin Coleborn

**Date first caved with BMSC:** 1975 at age 4

**Date Joined BMSC:** 25th January 1987

**Attained Full Membership:** 18th October 1987

**Attain Tripleleader Status:** 1st November 1988

**Positions Held in Club:** Secretary 1996, Librarian 1996/97, Trip Secretary 1997, President 1993-1995, Treasurer 1992, Committee member 1989-1991, Safety Officer 1992, Social Secretary 1987/88

**Area most visited:** Jenolan (26)

**Number of Trips:** 115

Has over 1000 hours



### Things about Kevin

- Never one to be shy of a camera. In hope of being on another climbers video in Peru, gashed his leg with his Crampons.
- Never Trust the Jam knot
- Where did Kevin get the leach?
- Who remembers Kevin leading them around in circles in Taplow Maze



A sooty owl, bones from its prey, and Mr Holland in the cave owls have inhabited for 35,000 years. Photographs by RICK STEVENS

# Owls' eyrie opens window to 35,000 years of natural history

By JAMES WOODFORD  
Environment Writer

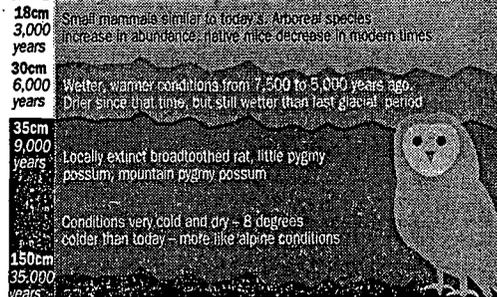
Scientists were surprised when they found a family of forest-dwelling sooty owls living in a cave at Jenolan, but were astonished to find evidence the birds and their ancestors have been using the same roosting hole for as long as 35,000 years.

On almost every evening throughout these 35,000 years, loaded with up to 500 grams of freshly caught prey, a male owl has flown silently to the hole in the stalactite-dotted cavern, to feed the female and young who have spent the day at the nest.

Sooty owls swallow their prey whole and what they cannot digest - mostly bones, hairs and skulls - they regurgitate.

The birds living in the cave have swept their waste down a funnel behind the roost into a cavern. It is in this cavern that Mr Ernst Holland, who is responsible for managing the caves at Jenolan, found a midden, or pile of owl waste, protected from the weather and beyond the reach of scavengers.

## HIDDEN IN THE MIDDEN SPECIES FOUND AT JENOLAN



"The midden is a window to the environmental processes of the last 16,000 years," he said. "The view outside would have changed a lot."

After excavating only 60 centimetres into the midden, zoologist Ms Deborah Morris and geomorphologist Dr David Gillieson, senior lecturer at the Australian Defence Force Academy, had travelled through

16,000 years of natural history. There is still a metre of sediment left to excavate.

They discovered periods of intense fires, from layers of charcoal dated to around 9,000 years ago, and periods of extreme wet weather about 5,000 years ago. They were even able to tell that there have been at least two periods when fierce winds blew, because of the

uniform fineness of the sediment found in the midden.

During the 16,000 years that has been excavated the climate has warmed by up to 8 degrees. A sub-alpine ecosystem changed almost to rainforest and then to dry forest.

Sub-alpine mammals, such as the mountain pygmy possum, the little pygmy possum and the broad-toothed rat, which were the main prey found in the midden until 9,000 years ago, became extinct locally as the climate warmed and their habitat disappeared. The remains of both rabbits and cats were found in the top layers of sediment, deposited since the arrival of Europeans.

All the animals found were within the size range expected for prey of sooty owls. While it is possible another species used the hole, scientists suspect it has always been used by sooty owls.

Mr Walter Boles, bird specialist at the Australian Museum, said the site was unique in Australia and probably in the world.



# WORD PUZZLE

COMPLIED BY KYLIE COLEBORN 1989

The Hole	Cr leak eek	The +ee Mountains
M A R B L E	My Rope I'm	<b>Get</b> <b>it all</b>
<b>STONE</b> o o o	Muddy <hr/> all all all	COUNTRY S K N G
FISHERMAN FISHERMAN	ALCoAsVtE	THE GLOW DARK
SWAN	RO      CK	<hr/> GROUND RIVER
LINE	TAP	W a t e r
COL UMN	PIT	HABITS
<b>ROPE</b>	LEAD RE	⊙⊙⊙⊙ DRIVE
<b>DANE</b>	0 <hr/> PHD, PHD, PHD	4:39 OPERATOR
CcCccC	<hr/> KNEE LIGHT	DIRT      SOOT SMOG    DUST    MUD SAND     GRIT MIRE     GRIME    CLAY SLIME    SOIL
SE    SESAME	<hr/> READ	i i <hr/> OOOOOOOO
SILICON WAFER <hr/> SHOULDER	<b>MATH THE</b>	SHE

## Solutions

1. The Big Hole
2. Marble Arch
3. Drip Stone
4. Double Fishermans
5. Swan Song
6. Bowline
7. Broken Column
8. A long Rope
9. Great Dane
10. The 7 Seas
11. Open Sesame
12. Chip on your Shoulder
13. Leak in the creek
14. I'm at the end of my rope
15. Muddy overalls
16. Lost in a Cave
17. Spilt Rock
18. Taplow

19. Bottomless Pit
20. Ringleader
21. Degrees Below zero
22. Neon Light
23. Read Between the Lines
24. The after Math
25. The Andes Mountain
26. Get Away from it all
27. Cross Country Skiing
28. Glow in the Dark
29. Underground River
30. Waterfall
31. Bad Habits
32. Wheel Drive
33. Big Time operator
34. Dirty Dozen
35. Circles under the eyes
36. She hit the Ceiling

### AVAILABLE TO BUY

#### **THE FAR SIDE**

By GARY LARSON



BMSC Club Stickers \$1.00

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BMSC Metal Badges \$2.00

Caving Passport to Adventure Sticker

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Others \$2.00

Globes - Small \$1.00

Globes - Large \$2.00

Contact Cheryl Lynch on (047) 517774

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MANN Rob & Cindy	14 Bedford St <del>Merrylands 2160</del> Woodford	(02) 96323258
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**NOTE: Any Changes or errors to Neil Fallshaw**

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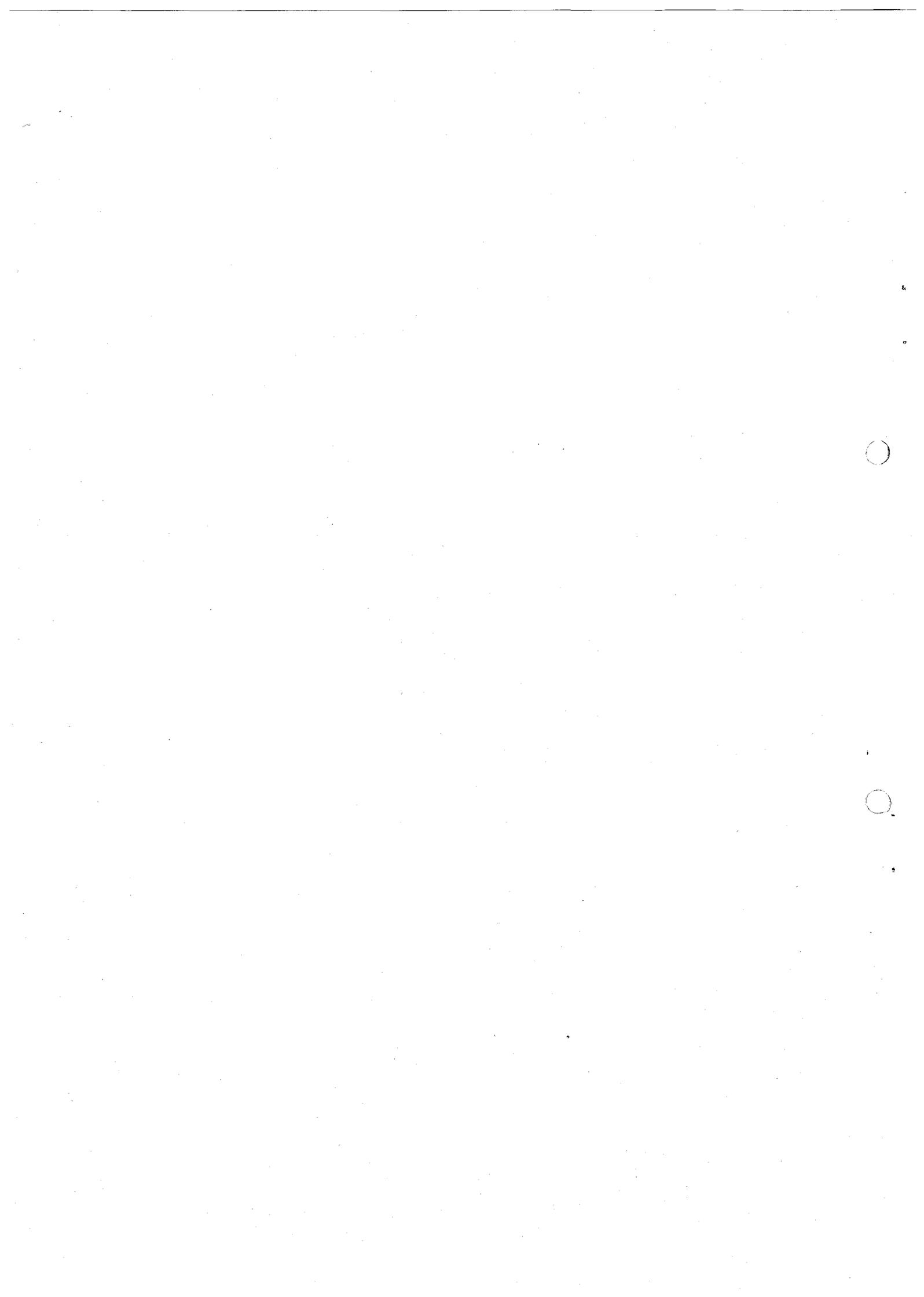
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*Journal of  
Blue Mountains Speleological Club*



# OOLITE

## BLUE MOUNTAINS SPELEOLOGICAL CLUB

Post Office Box 37  
Glenbrook NSW 2773

VOLUME 26 NO 2 1997

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Club Contacts - Iain Lynch, President  
- Kevin Coleborn, Vice President  
Editor - Cheryl Lynch

# REPORTS

## Bungonia 8-9th March 1997

**Members Present:** Kevin Coleborn-11, Rick Brett-10.5, Lincoln Fowler-3, Neil Fallshaw-8, Daniel Whitmore-8, Alan Whitmore-6, Oliver Davies-6, Graham Osborne-6, Brenda-6.5

**Report:** Rick, Brenda and Kevin arrived at 8.57 am Saturday morning, not a bad effort. Everybody else arrived shortly after. We entered B4-5 at about 10.30 am, Oliver, Graham and Brenda's first time caving with us so a gentle trip was in order. We entered B5 and took the route above the pitches through the Cement Bags and down the Hairy Traverse. Alan belayed Brenda down (also set the belay up) and we all grouped in the chamber below. Four of us headed down to the start of the extension, but were greeted with H2O about 50 metres from the start of the extension and the duckunder, both under water. We continued through the cave setting up a belay on the climbs out. Kevin belayed the first climb Alan belayed the second climb out. Oliver and Graham said the fossils near the B4 entrance looked like a fish, Rick's imagination was a bit off, he could only get a couple of shells.

We headed back to camp for lunch, but interrupted by Kevin we detoured via Argyle to go to the top of the pitch to test for CO<sub>2</sub>, yes approximately 1.5% at the top of the pitch. So lunch was in order and a decision was needed. After lunch Blowfly through trip was the go, in B51 and out B16. We trogged up and headed down to the entrance. After waiting for the Baptist Caving Group to exit out B16 we (we being Kevin) entered B16 and set the second pitch in B16 and Kevin and Rick set up the first pitch. Neil set the abseil pitch into B51 and we headed down, as the rain stated we were all almost in.

We all abseiled down the new club rope which was a bit faster than the norm. Rick lead the way through, the only time I seen him was his boots going up the Dragons Teeth. After some cursing we were through and down the next bit, through the round about bit and we regrouped. Rick thinking we were a quarter of the way through not 10 feet from the bottom of the second pitch out. Some laddered out (Rick and Alan belayed everybody), some used SRT and one climbed out, Rick also belayed everybody out the last pitch. Once we all got out B51 was derigged and Neil got some rope care skills (he coiled all the ropes with Alan). We then headed back to camp, we signed out, Rick and Alan feeling compelled to fix some guys car (John Fantini the guy who told me to get off a climb in the Blue Mountains), and then back to camp. We headed out to get some fire wood some where between Drum and Odyssey by car and all the fools had a good time around the fire slowly nodding off one by one and hitting the hay.

Sunday we awoke, some at 9.30 am all the way to 11 am. We eventually got away caving but Rick thought he left his tape and his only snap gate crab in Blowfly, so we had a quick trip back down to the Dragons Teeth, (Neil set up the entrance pitch). After 1 hr we went for a wonder to look for some cave entrances, B1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 17, 21, 22, 157, 164, 148, 48, 42, 40 where all located and a mental note was made by some of where the entrances were or are. We then drove down to the Grille car park to do Grille. We headed down to the Crystal Palace, Neil leading the way in with little problems and Rick finding his way out through the top section. We had a shower, signed out and pulled camp after and excellent weekend's caving.

Kevin Coleborn

## Cliefden

28-31st March 1997

**Members Present:** Kevin Coleborn (TL)-10, Lincoln Fowler-10, Rob Mann-3, Cindy Mann-8, Timmy Mann-1, Iain Lynch-10, Cheryl Lynch-1, Mitchell Lynch-1, Michael Matterazzo-10, Howard Davidson-6, Jack and Alma Cummings.

**Report:** After car trouble early Friday morning and a quick change of plan, (Lincoln also ended up with a changed plan, picking up Kevin from Seven Hills) we finally arrived at Cliefden at lunch time and had an easy afternoon sitting around chatting and kicking a football.

**Saturday:** After arriving, everybody was enthused to go caving as soon as we kicked that footy around for a couple of hours first, we ended up seeing Anthony, picking up the keys and heading down Main Cave. Mitchell and Timmy in tow, it was Mitchell's first time caving and the more experienced Timmy lead the way. But Mitch wanted to go kick the footy around and headed out Timmy followed then we headed down to the Main chamber, on to the Laurel Room then onto the Boot Room, Lower Entrance Chamber, Clown Room, Helecitite Wall then we headed out, no fauna noticed. The cave seemed to be drier than normal, approximately 15 to 17 degrees Celsius and the outside temp approximately 25 to 28 degrees Celsius. I don't need to tell you what we did for the rest of the day, but we had a relaxing time sitting around chatting late into the evening.

**Sunday:** Much the same as Saturday except the Easter bunny got stuck in the rabbit trap, Mitchell and Timmy seemed to do well out of the Easter bunny, but the rest of us did all right by Mitchell and Timmy. Later in the day we headed into Murder, we bumble our way through the Dragon Chamber and on to the chamber with the Blue Stall. After Howie climbed the climb out of the back of the chamber, he discovers some nice Flowstone and

Rimpools we then headed onto the Pineapple which has been found the long way again (ask Howie who followed me to find it), after that we headed out. For much of the same as Saturday except we had some beer with it.



**Monday:** After an early start. We headed into Yarrowigga the squeeze near the entrance troubled some but we all got through and headed up to the end chamber where I had a sleep while every body had a look around. Then we headed out. Iain Lynch lead all three caves under Kevin's supervision and kept the group in good order. Only needs to know his party a little better. A good weekend (long) had by all.

Kevin Coleborn

## Walli 25-27th April 1997

**Members Present:** Kevin Coleborn (TL)-10, Iain Lynch-10, Cheryl Lynch-3, Mitchell Lynch-3, Cindy Mann-10, Rob Mann-2, Timmy Mann-2, Graham Osborne-10, Michelle Coleborn-3, Lincoln Fowler-7, David Marsh-10, Stretch Fowler-7, Jamie Fowler-7, David Fowler-7, Steve Hallum-4.

**Report:** Graham met me at my house early Friday morning and we met Iain at his place not long after and we headed up to Mt Boyce to do a climb before the weekend. The grade 17 out on front of the main cliff. Iain lead to shake the nerves and Graham to second and myself to third. Iain blazed up in fine tradition and Graham blitzed the second for his first climb and I went up just for fun after that. Oh by the way it was drizzling all morning, so you can't complain about that. We then headed to Escalade for a bit of a bow peep. After a couple of hours we headed out to Walli. We arrived at about 4.30 pm and set up camp, got introduced to the scouts, had the law laid down and proceeded to sit around the fire talking about the days climbing. Oh this is a caving weekend. OK Saturday morning arrived and Iain set up a rope in the tree with a reelay and we sent everybody (almost) up and over the crossover some realising how out of date their Gibbs are or how 2 inches makes all the difference. After lunch we headed over to horse hole. Now setting up the pitch was done by the main abseil rope was set up by Iain and backed up by Graham the safety line was set by Dave and the ladder was set by Lincoln. I headed down first encountering the usual brown snake at the bottom of the entrance pitch. After alerting everyone of the snake, we then all proceeded down the pitch Iain and Lincoln belaying those who laddered after we were all down and we had all the pictures taken with the snake. We headed into the rest of the cave spotting a dead horse (only bones of course) and 2 frogs the one I seen was blackish,

a couple of squeezes were pushed by myself and Dave and then we headed back to the pitch after we all negotiated the pitch (Iain & Lincoln belaying again) we exited about 5 pm. Had something to munch on and got Timmy and Mitchell ready to go caving. We headed in to Piano at about 6 pm and all the beginners tried to lead the way and we eventually made it to the Main Chamber and Visitors book. After we all had a look at the Piano extension and all there is to see up that tricky climb we then looked around the maze on the other side of the Main Chamber. I wandered off to the sump where I encountered CO<sub>2</sub>, approximately 1.5% and headed out of there as soon as possible to find Mitchell and Timmy having a ball. We then started to head out. We exited the cave at about 8 pm for some dinner and port around the fire place and a few more stories about this and that. Sunday morning arrived and we all headed up the tree again and spent the first couple of hours trying new things. Then we headed over to Deep Hole where Dave set up the pitch, after Dave, Howie, Kevin, Iain moved the dead tree over the hole so as to get a better belay point (and somebody put a couple of artificial anchor points around the hole). We abseiled down and headed straight down the Rock Pile, then the right hand branch was explored some high passage was explored, and a couple of squeezes were pushed. Graham and Cindy realised how much attention they paid on the way in when losing their way out. Most used SRT on the way out some laddered. Cindy belayed Iain and Iain fell of the ladder so that Cindy passed the belaying and holding a safety fall. Dave Marsh also belayed Cindy who fell off the ladder for Dave, who passed his belaying and hold safety fall. Both Dave and Cindy passed falling off the ladder. Dave also passed his knots in front of myself, Iain and Lincoln three committee members (Dave knows his knots back to front and has no problems tying any knot asked after Deep Hole).

Cheryl lead a trip to Oolite but could not find the entrances, 20, 18, 54 or 16 were located, the small party had a look at WA16 and as all headed back to camp.

A small cave was found around from Piano which was entered by myself which went down a 7 metre climb to a chamber with some dry decoration some leads were followed to their limits and one pushed to

the surface for approximately 75 feet, estimated during visit. A good weekend had by all with some good caving had.

Horse Hole 4 hours

Piano 2 hours

Deep Hole 4 hours

WA16 1 hour

Kevin Coleborn

## Speleo Sports 3rd May 1997

**Members Present:** Kevin Coleborn, Steve Sawyers, Graham Osborne, Iain Lynch, Cheryl and Mitchell Lynch.

**Report:** The invitation said a 9 am start, so we all met at Kevin's by 8 am, before heading off to Macquarie University Sports Centre. Cheryl and I did our best to lose the others on the way but we all got there with time to spare. Things looked a long way from ready so we walked around the sports centre, checking the course and other things. At about 9.30 am the organisers called us in for a tour of the course and explanation of the rules. Once again those tyres looked a little too small for my liking. We all went off to get ready and very soon the first teams were on their way. We were third to start and began shortly after the first team finished. First through the double bath tub duck under as Kevin led the way. Steve noticed there were bricks in the bottom which he informed us at the end. Perhaps head first was a bit dangerous after all. Next a squeeze under the fence, before a twisting, squeezey tour of three netball rings/poles. Next was a ladder climb to the top of the gymnasium roof before abseiling down.

It was a quick trip for Kevin as there was no belay and you had to let go of the rope to get through the tyre. A short run led to another squeeze under fence and in a concrete drain, where I left part of my shirt behind in my haste.

The next obstacle was the traditional slippery plastic 'Flowstone' which was fairly easy with a good run up. A 200 metre run (something you find in every cave?) led to the next event which went through a stormwater pipe. Out of this was the straw crawl, all right if you're the equivalent of a sixteen year old boy. If your a women of well built man, you had no chance. Still we all got through, accruing some penalties, and to this point we were the fastest. Then came the tyres.....five of them suspended on a tape 2 metres of the ground. We got through these with out too much trouble. A short run to the next and last obstacle. Five tyres tied tightly together on the ground. Steve went first with comparative ease, then Kevin who struggled somewhat. Then Graham, who veritably destroyed the structure. Meanwhile I'm telling Steve to get ready to do it again. But I tried and much grunting and several minutes (or was it hours?) I got through. We sprinted to the finish in a time good enough for third place. The winning team were for Sydney Uni and comprised of four guys who looked about 16.

We also realised that only more skin would be lost of we entered the individual event, so we changed and headed home. A good time was had by all and we look forward to next year. Hopefully on a course better suited for bigger people

Iain Lynch

## Jenolan 24-25th May 1997

**Members Present:** Kevin Coleborn (TL)-13, Alan Whitmore-7, Daniel Whitmore-7, Graham Osborne-7, Steve Sawyers-7, Glen Robinson-7, Iain Lynch-13, Steve Hallum-13, Michael Materazzo-13, Jody Skinner-8, Lance Hayden-8, Robert Morse-7, Michael Lansdale-7, David Marsh-13, Chris-12, Michael-12, Charles-1, Dave Noble-12, Cheryl and Mitchell Lynch, Terry and Louise Coleborn, Troy Maginess.

**Report: Saturday:** We all met out at the Cavers Cottage at 8.30 am, I picked up the key for Mammoth and Spider on the way through. After everybody who hadn't been there before had been given the grand tour of the hut, it was decided we would split into two groups and do Mammoth first. Dave and I lead our party to the Great Northern Cavern and through to Twiddly OmPom. Alan and Glen led their party into Slug Lake.

We all trogged up and headed down to the parking area for Mammoth and then onto the cave, (Alan will submit a report for Slug Lake). We headed in various ways through the Daylight Chamber and then headed to Horseshoe Cavern and to the Skull and Crossbones. Instead of climbing down to the Skull and Crossbones and onto Central Lake, we headed straight over Skull and Crossbones and down the Ninety Footer. With Dave leading we headed to Central River or that's where he thought we were going. After back tracking a bit we regained our way and arrived at Central River. Crossing Central River (dry as a bone) we headed onto SSS Camp site and onto the Rock Pile. With Dave leading through the Rock Pile everybody else struggled to keep up and find their way. Eventually we arrived at Dry Syphon where we stopped and had something to eat. Nobody was keen to lay in the Dry Syphon as it was unusually full of water. After a little bit of hesitation by all, we headed through the Dry (wet) Syphon.

The next obstacle was 100% friction where most struggled through and Iain slid back to the bottom and made it through on his second attempt. After some considerable crawling we ended up at the final squeeze before the Great Northern Cavern, where I attempted to get into the Nudist Colonies as the water level in the squeeze was completely dry. Not able to fit and no one else wanted to try we headed onto Great Northern Cavern. Steven was feeling very tired and ill by the time we got there so Graham and Steve started to head out while the rest of us headed on to Twiddly OmPom. Dave rigged the ladder pitch with normal 5 metre tape tied to the end of the ladder to make it reach. After exploring both ends of Twiddly OmPom and digging out a squeeze at Central River Dave and myself forged our way to the extremities of the cave through extreme slop. After getting totally muddy we started to head out. We all headed out at our own pace regrouping at the Dry Syphon. On the way out we headed down Central Lake and headed up the Skull and Crossbones. By this time Steve was extremely tired and needed some assistance climbing up. At the top we met up with Alan's group and 15 minutes later were outside in the cool night air. After the walk back to the car and detrogging we went back to the cottage. Several people left to go home, the remaining stayed and had dinner. Terry and Louise turned up for a quick visit before their JCHAPS meeting. Troy also turned up for a quick visit but ended up staying for the after dinner entertainment of seeing how many yellow pages you could stand on. David Marsh managed 20 books, Glen managed 21 books, Dave and I beat the record by standing on 22 Yellow pages and this only took several hours. Eventually we turned in for the night.

**Sunday:** Sunday saw an early start for BMSC standards, we were underground by 10 am. A party of 12 started into Spider after the first squeeze the party size reduced to 9, after the second squeeze the party split into 2 groups. Pirates Delight was unusually dry and proved difficult for most of the party. The Rock Pile proved to be a little tricky to negotiate but we were all well rewarded with the Khan Passage and the River Passage, Spider has to offer. After the whole party stripped we all pushed the sump as far as we dared.

Deciding a long wet suit and goggles were needed to negotiate the upstream sump. After exploring the down stream sump and several of the side passages we headed out. We had an uneventful trip out and ended up at the cottage, where we tidied up and started to head home. A good weekend's caving was had by all.

Note: Alan, led a trip into Slug lake and separate trip report will be submitted by him

Kevin Coleborn

## **Wyanbene** **14-15th June 1997**

**Members Present:** Kevin Coleborn (TL)-, Steve Hallum, Oliver Davies, Steve Sawyers, Graham Osborne. 6 hours each.

**Report:** Oliver, Steve S and myself arrived at Wyanbene at 8.45 Saturday morning. A half hour later, Kevin and Steve H. arrived. At near enough to 10 o'clock we entered the cave and made our way to the six metre ladder pitch. Steve S and I rigged the ladder, I then belayed for the group as they descended, with Kevin belaying me. After negotiation the pitch, Kevin asked me to lead on. We soon passed by the jailhouse bars and triangular squeeze, it was after this point that a few good navigational tips from Kevin came in handy, as the rest of the group were not as keen as I to continually getting a dunking in the stream. After the water crawl we made a detour to the Gunbarrel Aven, which I thought to be quite impressive. After a few more tips from Kevin, we made our way to Caesars Hall. We then crossed the chamber, some doing it harder than others. At Diarrhoea Pit I rigged a rope to be used as a handline for the climb down and up. We soon made it to Anderson's Wall, where Steve S attempted to climb the wall, but decided to bow to experience and let Kevin do the

climb. Kevin then lowered a ladder and belayed as the rest of the group climbed up. We then lowered the same ladder down the other side, and proceeded to the lake, where we viewed some excellent aragonite flowers and stopped for a rest break.

On the return trip down Anderson's Wall I belayed as the group descended the ladder and then belayed from below as Kevin climbed down. Steve H was given the task of leading the group out, which he proceeded to do. One issue to highlight was that a previous group to us had left white arrows made with chalk at various locations along the stream passage, up to the Rockfall Chamber. We did not spot any after this point, so one would assume that was as far as they travelled. Back at the six metre ladder pitch, Kevin belayed the ascent of the group up the ladder and I locked the gate as we headed out of the Keyhole. We then exited the cave at around 4 pm. Kevin and Steve H then drove back to Sydney, while the rest of the group stayed Saturday night.

Next morning we made a trip to view the Big Hole and then returned to Sydney.

Graham Osborne

## People in our Club Barry Richards

*Congratulations Barry Richards, Barry has been selected to be the Club Patron of BMSC.*

Was President of Torana Viva Car Club but this all changed when he began Caving.

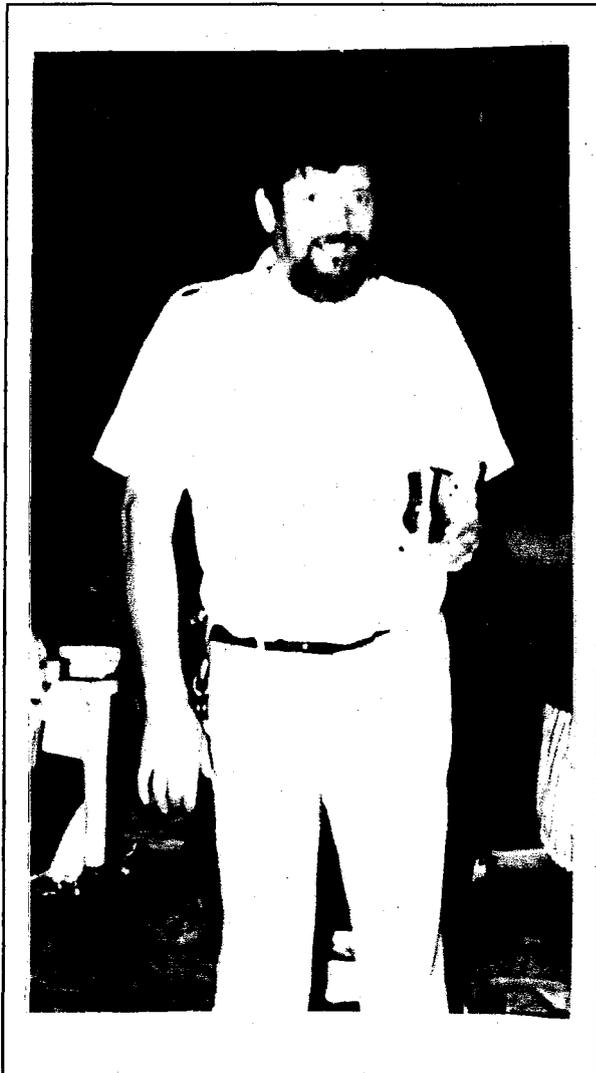
**Date Joined BMSC: 1969**

**Attained Full Membership: 1969**

**Attain Tripleleader Status: 1971**

**Positions Held in Club: President 1974-1976, Equipment Officer 1972-1973, Committee Member 1977-1979.**

**Total Hours: 409**



**1986**

Barry was awarded a Bronze Metal for bravery for his part in a hazardous mountain top rescue of a young boy.

**1990**

He was granted Life Membership of St John Ambulance because of his work as a first Aid Instructor.

**1997**

Made a Life Member of Jenolan Caves Historical and Preservation Society.

# Essentials

**Polar  
Fleeces  
Clothing**

**Hiking  
Boots  
Sleeping  
Bags**

**Rope  
Abseiling  
gear**

**Accessories  
Goretex  
Jackets**

## Outdoor Specialists

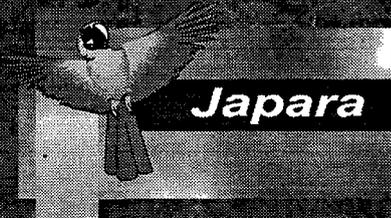
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Photo Guessing Do you know where these Photo where taken.



Photograph 1



Photograph 2



Photograph 3



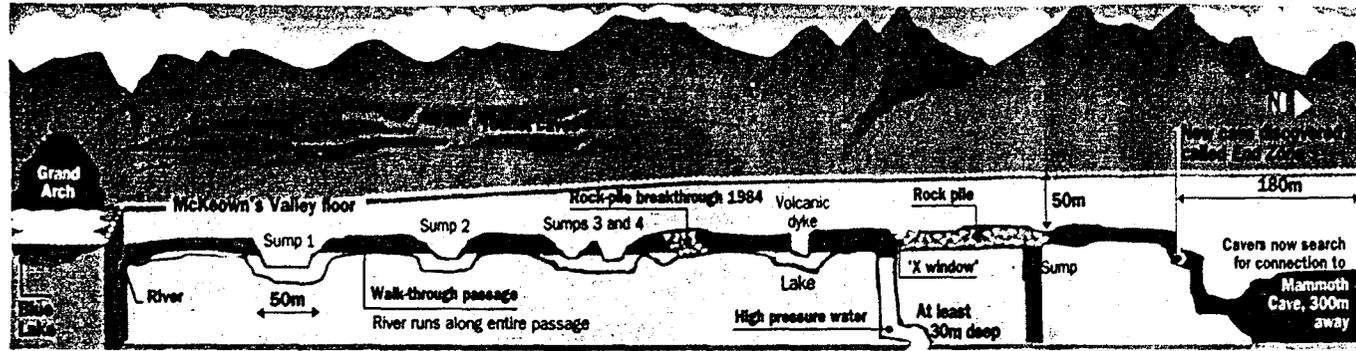
Photograph 4



Photograph 5



Photograph 6



# Missing link: cave divers plumb new Jenolan depths

By ADAM HARVEY

A die-hard team of subterranean explorers and divers has discovered spectacular new caves deep beneath the Blue Mountains, at Jenolan Caves.

If the "End Zone" links two tourist cave systems at Jenolan, as is suspected, it will form the longest surveyed cave in Australia - at least 31 kilometres of labyrinthine tunnel.

The geologists, geophysicists and weekend adventurers suspected End Zone existed in the area and in an 18-hour underground expedition, they finally dug, squeezed and dived into the new section.

Until now, no-one has been able to forge a trail through the narrow tunnels that hold the underground Jenolan River.

The foray into End Zone involved three teams of eight people, 24 packs of gear, air tanks, video equipment, lights and ropes, said the team co-ordinator, Mr Keir Vaughan-Taylor.

"I can't stress how difficult this was," he said. "People talk about Everest, and it's easy to see how difficult Everest is. This isn't Everest, but it's close."

The limestone-rich water is cold - about 10 degrees. Divers wear dry suits, and must keep moving.



Depths revealed . . . team members dive through the caves, above, from their entrance, right, where Greg Ryan and Merv Maher pause after exploring the recently discovered system.

Photographs by PETER HALE, KEIR VAUGHAN-TAYLOR and MARK SPENCER

"The greatest enemy is the cold," said Mr Vaughan-Taylor. "Once someone stops moving they get cold, and once they start shivering it's 'out of here'."

Progress is measured in metres in the narrow tunnels and submerged caves, and there's a constant danger of getting lost in offshoots and minor caves. The divers battle claustrophobia and disorientation: they sometimes cannot tell whether they're facing up or down.

The discovery was one of the most significant cave finds in memory, said the Minister for the Environment, Ms Allan. It

To find somewhere on Earth where no-one else has been is an extraordinary feeling.

vindicated the State Government's decision earlier this year to give the caves the same protection as national parks, she said.

The explorers must tread carefully. The underground river is a haven for primitive life forms, and the limestone formations are fragile. The Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust has strict guidelines about what to avoid.

The trust gives access to the

cavers because their discoveries help explain how caves are formed. The best way to understand how 200 million years of water pressure carved a cave is to map how the water flows today.

Mr Vaughan-Taylor works for Sydney University's geology department, but explores with the Sydney University Speleological Society. The society and cavers from New Caves, at Newcastle,

made the breakthrough into End Zone.

They have explored about 180 metres of new section, and think there is at least 300 metres before the tunnel meets surveyed caves.

That's 300 metres as the crow flies. The distance travelled will be many times that.

"To find somewhere on Earth where no-one else has been is an extraordinary feeling," Mr Vaughan-Taylor said.

"It makes you feel pretty small. For an instant you realise how big - and old - the world is."



# Cave reveals oldest yet human bones in Europe

By DAVID KEYS  
in London

Archaeologists have discovered the oldest European human remains - dating back 800,000 years - and evidence from the site shows that the two adult females and four children were eaten by other humans.

Of around 80 human bones and bone fragments unearthed, about half had cut marks made by sharp stone tools.

Scattered around them were other food debris - the bones of horses, deer, bison, rhino and possibly elephants - and up to 100 stone implements.

Some of the bones had been broken open to extract the highly nutritious marrow from them.

It is the earliest known example of cannibalism and women and children might have been chosen as the easiest prey.

The Spanish archaeologists



Teeth found among the 800,000-year-old bones.

who found the remains, just inside a cave at Atapuerca in northern Spain, believe the six victims - and presumably the cannibals - belonged to a previously unknown human species which they have called *Homo antecessor* (Ancestor man).

In a paper published in the journal *Science*, the team proposes that in Europe the species

eventually evolved into Neanderthal man.

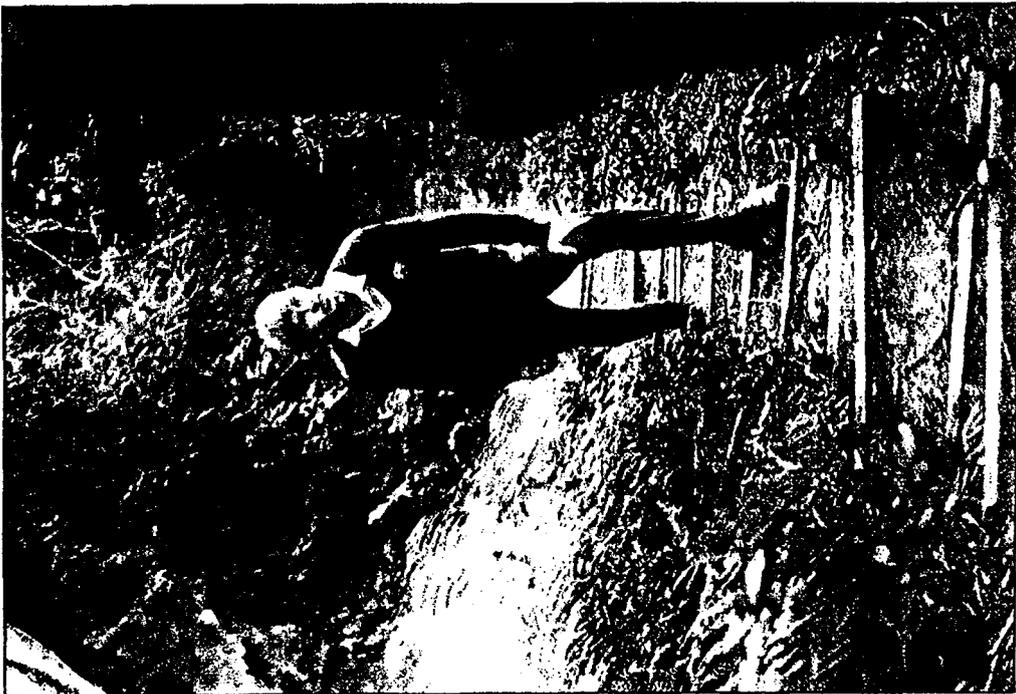
But they also believe that about a million years ago *Homo antecessor* arrived in Europe from Africa and that members of that species who stayed in Africa eventually evolved into our species, *Homo sapiens*.

The new theory is that Ancestor man is the common ancestor of both ourselves and the Neanderthals, who became extinct 30,000 years ago.

Before the discovery of the Atapuerca cannibal victims, the oldest positively identified human bone ever found in Europe was a massive lower jaw found in Germany in 1907 and thought to date from between 500,000 and 700,000 years ago.

Tools made 900,000 years ago have been discovered in an even deeper excavation level at the Atapuerca cave.

# Bush track's back



Restored and re-opened . . . National Parks and Wildlife officer David Noble on the picturesque Fern Bower track

A CENTURY-OLD walking track - the Fern Bower track - will be re-opened to bushwalkers by the end of this month.

The track has been closed for safety reasons and work mostly involves the restoration of an historic flight of stairs by the National Parks and Wildlife Service.

NPWS district manager Geoff Luscombe said the track was a vital link within the track system of the Leura and Wentworth Falls area.

"It is a key link into the Jamison Valley... walkers will again be able to walk through this picturesque valley," he said.

"We have had to balance the restoration of historic features with the use of long-lasting modern technology.

"Thanks to valuable input from a local historian, we have been able to restore one of the wooden stairs on the walk as an historic representative of the original stairs."

Mr Luscombe said more than six tonnes of 100 per cent recycled plastic would be used in the stairway and bridge construction.

"By using this material we are not only removing significant amounts of waste from landfill, but also providing a material which will last longer than timber," he said.

The restoration is part of a \$5 million upgrade of other sites in Blue Mountains National Park.

# Flapping worldwide? They have to be bats

By LEIGH DAYTON  
Science Writer in Perth

Bats may have originated in ancient Australia more than 55 million years ago and then flapped their way to every continent on Earth, palaeontologists believe.

The scientists base their argument on new evidence linking South American vampire bats and New Zealand's strange burrowing bats to fossils from Queensland and the Northern Territory.

Until now, scientists believed that because there are so many species related to bats in the northern hemisphere, they must have started there, said Professor Michael Archer of the University of New South Wales.

But yesterday, at the Australasian Vertebrate Evolution, Palaeontology and Systematics conference in Perth, Professor Archer said fossil teeth and "arm" bones from the Northern Territory and Queensland, identified by his UNSW colleague Dr Suzanne Hand, proved that the evolution of bats was a more complicated story than previously thought.

This was because the fossils,

unearthed at Bullock Creek in the Northern Territory and Queensland's Riversleigh site, showed "absolutely" that ancestors of New Zealand's burrowing mystacinids arrived from Australia. The fossils also tie South America's ancient noctilionoidea bats to early Australia.

Professor Archer believes this new information raises the possibility that animals "somewhere near bats" got to Australia from the northern hemisphere, "did the bat thing", and then "back flooded" into the north as fully fledged bats.

One group of those ancient Australian bats flew to South America 35 to 50 million years ago, and to New Zealand some time between 10 and 23 million years ago, he said. This fits with recent biomolecular findings that the noctilionoidea and mystacinids are distantly related. Previously, experts suspected that New Zealand's bats arrived from South America.

"What we've now done is inserted the fossils in the middle of that story," Professor Archer said. "So New Zealand is actually the footnote to Australia."

## Bats may hold key to mystery horse virus

By GREG ROBERTS  
in Brisbane

Flying foxes, or fruit bats, may be the hosts of the mystery horse virus that has killed two Queensland men and baffled experts around the world.

The Queensland Department of Primary Industries has tested thousands of domestic and native animals for antibodies to the equine morbillivirus (EMV), but only two bat species, the spectacled and black flying foxes, returned positive results.

"We knew that EMV is not a normal horse virus but that some animal must be its host," said the department's senior veterinary officer, Dr Ian Douglas. "It may be that we have now found the natural host of EMV."

Scientists have identified a new virus, paramyxovirus, in

the bats, which appears to be very closely related to EMV. Further tests are under way to determine the relationship between the two viruses.

Of 55 flying foxes tested, 20 per cent tested positive for EMV antibodies, indicating widespread - but not necessarily fatal - viral infection in bat populations.

The racing identity Mr Vic Rail died of complications from EMV in 1994. The virus is also believed to have been responsible for the death of a Mackay farmer, Mr Mark Preston, last October.

Seven horses associated with Mr Rail's Brisbane stables tested soon after his death were positive for EMV antibodies, but none of the 5,000 live horses tested since has shown evidence of exposure to the virus, according to Dr Douglas.

## Virus linked to pregnant bats

Scientists have come up with a possible explanation for a deadly virus linked to horses: colonites of flying foxes giving birth en masse and showering horse grazing areas with birth fluid.

The virus - equine morbillivirus (EMV) - is known to have killed the horse trainer Vic Rail in 1994.

A Sydney conference was told yesterday that investigations into its origins had concluded EMV was not truly a disease of horses.

Professor Keith Murray, deputy director of the CSIRO's animal health division in Geelong, told delegates at the International Conference on Chemotherapy that researchers expected to rename the virus after results

showed it was a misnomer.

Research indicated EMV antibodies in up to 20 per cent of flying foxes after the discovery last year of EMV antibodies in the uterine fluid of one pregnant fruit bat, he said. "If there's a colony of bats in a birthing ceremony, horses grazing below could easily have a shower in it."

□ MICHAEL EVANS

Sydney Morning Herald  
3rd July 1997

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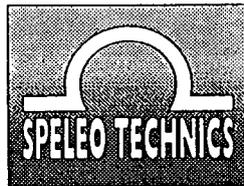
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# WORD PUZZLE



Find all the hidden words horizontally, vertically and diagonally. When you finish you have to find the hidden sentence.

One clue take every third letter there are 34 letters in the sentence

## WORDS

ASCENDERS  
ASF  
BEANIES  
BLUEWATER  
BMSC  
CARABINERS  
CAVING LIGHTS

COMPASS  
CRABS  
DAYPACKS  
DELTA  
DESCENDERS  
FOOTLOOPS  
HAT

HELMET  
KNOTS  
LADDERS  
MAPS  
OSS  
PACKS  
PETZL  
  
PULLEYS  
RESCUE BLANKET  
ROPE  
RPS  
RUCKSACK  
SHOCKCORD  
SITHARNESS

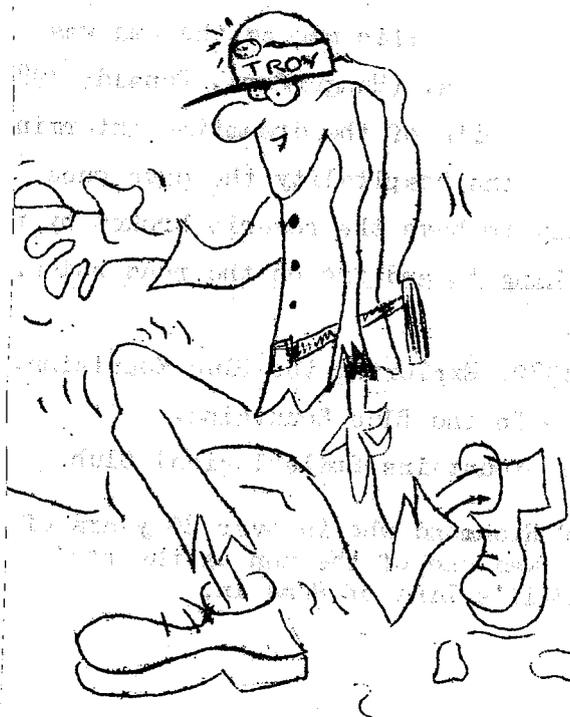
SLEEPINGBAGS  
SLEEPINGMATS  
SNO SEAL  
SRT  
SSS  
STOVES  
SWISS ARMY  
KNIVES  
TAPE  
TENTS  
THERMAREST  
UNDERWEAR  
WHALETAIL  
WHISTLE  
WIDEMOUTH

Congratulations to Kevin and Sue Coleborn on the birth of their daughter  
Jade Louise Kachoong  
and to Iain and Cheryl Lynch on the birth on their daughter  
Angelique Rose.

### Items for sale

BMSC Club sticker	\$1.00
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BMSC Metal Badges	\$2.00
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*Members	\$1.00
*Others	\$2.00
Globes - Small	\$1.00
large	\$2.00

Contact Cheryl Lynch on  
(047)51 7774



### Photograph Guessing

Thank you Lionel Baker for the Photographs

- Photograph 1 & 2 Knight Nobly Nob an Visitors Book in Tuglow Main.
- Photograph 3 Tuglow Main, Bottom of the entrance Pitch.
- Photograph 4 Skull in Tuglow Main, near the base of the entrance pitch.
- Photograph 5 Main Chamber in Tuglow Main.
- Photograph 6 Diamond Mine.

**Solution to Word Puzzle** Always leave all the caves neat and tidy.

Miss Print in the last issue Trip report Cliefden 14-15/12/96 Daniel Fallshaw is actually meant to be Daniel Whitmore. Our apologies.

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**NOTE: Any Changes or errors to Neil Fallshaw**