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*Journal of  
Blue Mountains Speleological Club*

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## Blue Mountains Speleological Club

Journal Number 29-1

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Postal Address  
PO. Box 37 Glenbrook 2773

Contact Number Iain Lynch President (02) 47517774  
Email [iclynch@ozemail.com.au](mailto:iclynch@ozemail.com.au)

Editor - Cheryl Lynch

Due to many changes in caving, BMSC is only producing one or two Oolites a year. So enjoy the read until next time

Cheryl Lynch

## Presidents Report for the Year 2001

Firstly I would like to thank everyone in the club for a safe and enjoyable year in 2001. It has been a successful years caving, with most trips running and most meeting run with reasonable attendance. Even though a slow second half of the year with the non accessibility to some major areas, restricting access to their caving area due to insurance problems. Although I know in 2002 you can improve on the attendance on the trips and meetings. Remember a club is only as good as it's members, and you only get out what you put in, so if we all sit back and do nothing the club will suffer, so you should all pitch in and share the running of trips and participate where ever possible and not leave the running of the club up to two or three people as this will only burn these people out and the club will suffer as history has proven. Enough doom and gloom 2002 should be a good year as we already have permission to enter Chevalier and the insurance problem is all resolved with the ASF finding insurance. The membership fees will be increased slightly but we all voted for the insurance so lets not complain about the small increase and git out the get out moneys worth. If you compare out membership with that of Soccer, Indoor cricket or any local community team sport it is only a small amount. So lets get behind the ASF and caving and get out caving and enjoying the fact that we are a small group of people in the word that has the opportunity to enter some of the most remote and beautiful places in Australia. I will not be running for president this year as I have other commitment s and not be able to attend meetings.

Presidents BMSC 2001  
Kevin Coleborn

### Position for 2002

President - Iain Lynch  
Vice President - Cindy Mann  
Secretary - Phil Niciak  
Treasurer - Cheryl Lynch  
Equipment Officer - Rick Brett  
Safety Officer - Iain Lynch  
Publicity Officer - Rick Brett  
Journal Editor - Cheryl Lynch  
Trip Secretary - Iain Lynch  
Records Keeper  
Librarian - Cindy Mann  
ASF Delegate - Iain Lynch

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## JENOLAN

### 3 MARCH 2001

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### To Infinity ..... AND BEYOND

It all started when I rang to confirm our booking to visit the better parts of Jenolan Caves. Unfortunately I learned that an imminent invasion of aliens required all the forces of the Jenolan guides to maintain the security of their installation. Those 6-foot track marathoners would be arriving in droves, and ALL the guides were on emergency stand by.

Urgent arrangements had to be made. Should we risk our own peril and visit Jenolan? There was no question. The quest for adventure stirred us into attempting the arduous trip to Great North Cavern in the Mammoth quadrant of Jenolan.

From our early morning rendezvous, where we charged our energy levels, seven gallant heroes set forth into the deepest, darkest realms of Jenolan. Some amongst us knew of the terrors ahead, though we dared not share our thoughts with our new recruits, fearing the effect it would have on their state of mind. And so we set off. Would we fulfil our quest? And unscathed? Would we return at all?

We charted our route towards our first port of call, a rocky landscape, through which a slight stream ran – a place known to space rangers as the dry siphon. Our circuitous trip to this location led us through sparse areas of hyperspace such as the Horseshoe Cavern, then on to Central River and through the notorious rock pile. Many an unsuspecting space cadet had been lost in this maze. Fortunately our experienced space rangers led us through and on to our destination.

Passing the dry siphon was a crucial challenge in our quest. To navigate this obstacle successfully meant that suits remained dry and the arduous journey that followed could be undertaken in relative comfort. To be unsuccessful left the ranger partially saturated and susceptible to the effects of cold, using valuable energy to maintain body temperature. Most of our force made it through, suffering an acceptable level damage to the integrity of our suits.

So on we sped, through to the vertical black hole, known as 100% friction. Particularly difficult to negotiate for a space ranger, more used

to the vastness of space. And especially difficult for those more experienced, but whose once physical prowess had somewhat declined.

It was now that we commenced the greatest challenge of our quest. The long and agonising crawl through a funnel of darkness. Not too dissimilar to the black hole we had already passed through, only infinitely longer and subject to gravity in a horizontal plane – again a force not usually encountered by space rangers.

After some distance a couple of our crew succumbed, and were forced to return to the space station. The five remaining pushed on into the realms of darkness beyond.

On and on and on. This horizontal void of darkness seemed to go on to infinity. But that was our destiny. To go where no man had gone before.....well at least not every man. Tirelessly we pushed on, and soon were confronted with the final obstacle. A narrow, flat squeeze around a column. Like trying to fit Jupiter between the Earth and the Moon. On reserve energy levels, we all pushed through to the almost unimaginable expanse of space that is the Great North Cavern.

Locating a suitable spaceport we stopped, and recharged energy levels, before exploring some of the expanse of this cavern. We had achieved our destination and with enormous pride, humbled by our respect for the arduous return journey, we departed for home.

Our entire crew reunited at the initial rendezvous point. It seemed an eternity since we had left on our mission this morning. And as we returned to mission control I was beginning to wonder if it was all a dream.....I reality it was the usually long, strenuous trip to Great North Cavern and return. **7 hours** in total, and not unlike any previous trip. Almost pointless, yet always worth the effort.

#### **Space Ranger Members**

Kevin Coleborn  
Michelle Coleborn  
Steve Hallum  
Iain Lynch (TripLeader)  
Cindy Mann  
Michael Materazzo

#### **Space Ranger Visitor:**

Dave Noble

Iain Lynch

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## Wee Jasper Caves Weekend of, May 12-13, 2001.

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Well the weekend started with Kevin, Wendy and Matt, heading down to Wee Jasper on Friday evening, passing me in the opposite direction as I headed home from Narellan after a dedicated days work.

Michelle and Myself (Rick) headed off from Sydney after some well earned coffee at 6AM on Saturday morning. The drive down the Hume from Sydney was uneventful; we didn't get any speeding tickets. Finally after our second fuel stop in class, we made our way down to Wee Jasper, where after entering the dirt track down to the camping area on the Goodradigbee River we were met firstly by Kevin, Wendy and Matt, heading off to familiarise themselves (in particular Matt and Wendy) with the Wee Jasper Karst, after which we were then confronted by well armed members of the Australian Defence Force Academy forces who were on exercise at the Wee Jasper camp grounds and surrounding area.

After negotiating the roadblocks Michelle and I made our way to the campsite. Where we found a suitable level area, however unknowingly rocky area to set up the tents (The tent pegs did not accept the fact that the ground should be soft). With impeccable timing, Kev, Matt and Wendy arrived back at camp after Michelle and I had managed to decipher the assembly of the tents and get them to a stage where one could enjoy a comfortable nights sleep. Kev informed us that Punchbowl cave was full of defence forces guys, pulling out dead bodies with a hauling system. After this news the trip leader (Rick) decided that it would be a wise idea to visit Dip cave after a lunch break.

Finally with lunch all but completed, we decided that we should have some free throwing practice before we trogged up in preparation for the afternoons climbing. After we were all organised we headed for Dip Cave. A short drive we later arrived at the Dip car park, only to find about 15 vehicles in the car park. Well you did not have to be Iron-stein to figure that Dip would be crowded so a quick decision was made to head over to Punchbowl Cave. Well as luck would have it the cave was now empty of Defence force personnel, except for their equipment. We rigged the pitch from a good stal, which was backed up by a bombproof rock, which avoided us tangling with the defence force academy's equipment that was already over the 25 Metre abseil.

We set the pitch for abseil in and for a ladder climb out. Kev led the way into the darkness, after a minute or so he yelled that he was clear allowing the rest of the group set up and abseiled into the dark and exciting depths of the cave. Well done to Matt who completed his first ever cave abseil. With all five of us safely at the bottom we headed off to find our way into the cave.... A little embarrassment later we found out and solidly confirmed that there were three separate and totally different passages that lead us to the passage that lead towards the main chamber area of the cave. Of course the most difficult two ways were the first two to be discovered..... After this Kev took a short cut and scared the Cra... out of me ... Yes the correct way was finally discovered (Thanks Kev for approx ten years missing from my life)

After some concerted effort of exploration to locate the chamber containing the mud formations, which ended up being a party of two due to the tightness of the passage, we gave up the search, Our party re-grouped and then headed up into the rather smelly bat chamber, where we took in the awe inspiring size and beauty of the chamber. From here we headed up into the slippery and damp Mezzanine level where we carried out some extensive exploration. During the exploration of the sketchy parts of the upper areas by Kev, Matt and Myself, Wendy had gathered some courage of her own, intum finding a shorter route to exit the level, compared to the way we had come in.

Upon our return to the obscure balcony, we followed Wendy who led the party back into the bat chamber.

From here it was simply a return along the same path as we had entered. After a while we reached the bottom of the entry pitch, where we met with the first member of the new team of defence academy guys who were on their exercise of locating and recovering a dead (dummy) body. Of course curiosity was eating at us so we set out to locate the dead (dummy) body, before any one else. Wendy was the winner, discovering the body in a side passage, however the instructor from the defence forces seemed a little disappointed that we had located the body before his team had entered the cave.

Our party waited for the six defence forces guys entered via abseil, before we made our way out. Firstly Kevin prussicked up on SRT taking care of the belay at the top of the pitch. The next member up was Wendy, followed shortly after by Michelle and Matt. Well I must say it was an outstanding effort by the girls who seemed to conquer the ladder climb with only a few cursing words, closely followed by Matt who was on his first ever ladder climb.

As the trip leader I was the last party member to climb the pitch to the entrance chamber, where after reaching the top, I was able to congratulate our other members on their great efforts.

Notes.

The ladder rigging instruction for the Australian Defence Force Academy leaders certainly needs review. We observed at the top of the pitch that the ladder for their rescue exercise was connected to substantial slings via a carabiner however the carabiner was simply clipped to the top rung of the caving ladder (The "C" clips above the top rung were joined together, however dangerous and unnecessary load was put upon the ladder)

Our party spent 4.5 hours underground.

Saturday evening was spent around one of Kevin and Ricks famous fires. Yes the bigger the fire the bigger the fool...however we were warm fools.

Sunday started off rather casually as they generally do after a late night on Saturday. After breakfast we trogged up and headed for dip series. Our plan was to abseil into the top entrance of series four and then exit from there. Well we arrived at the car park and mosied around to the top entrances, where after a bit of discussion, we figured we were at the correct entrance. Kevin was volunteered as the re-con man to ensure we had actually selected the correct entrance pitch. Kev abseiled in and after a few minutes gave the all clear which confirmed that we had in-fact entered at the correct location. After the all clear the rest of the party entered the cave via the 85ft abseil. Last down was myself and once at the bottom it was decided that to become more familiar with the cave, I would lead the way out. Wow it was certainly different being in the lead and trying to view everything in reverse order as one would generally have a chance to familiarise themselves with the cave whilst entering. Each time I have vided this cave we would normally enter the cave via the walk in entrance of s... one. Well Kevin kept quiet (Can you believe that) and took up the rear and probably chuckled at my apparent lack of knowledge apparent misdirection. Fortunately I was able to explain to Matt, Wendy and Michelle what the layout of the cave was and where we were supposed to be headed. With good team assistance we actually found our way rather comfortably, although Kevin would from time to time move ahead and tauntingly wait for us to catch up. After only about an hour or two we had actually found familiar territory.

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In fact Wendy had located the rat run which was blasting with cold air. After discussing the rat run we decided that instead of doing the normal traverse, we would actually drop into series two via abseil directly at the end of the rat run. Although this was not the most enjoyable position to set up for abseil, it was certainly better than the ladder or abseil off the shelf further along the traverse. Matt was the first to abseil down, followed by Wendy, Michelle, myself and the lucky last was Kevin. Finally with all the party safely down on terra firma in series two we simply meandered out without any further problems. We finally reached the surface and the cars after some 3 enjoyable hours underground.

After reaching the cars we stowed away the equipment, and then Kevin and I went and retrieved the rope that we had used to enter series 4. After coiling the rope we both headed off to locate another entrance to the dip extension. To locate the entrance it actually took longer than anticipated and of course the entrance was nowhere near where it appeared on the map and of course there was no obvious track to it. Satisfied by locating the tag, we walked back up the hill and picked up the equipment and then headed for the car. Back at the car we found that some of the group had decided to walk back to camp...Keen.

Well a great weekend and fabulous weather.

Thanks to all who attended for making this another thoroughly enjoyable and memorable BMSC trip.

### Total hours underground.

Illustrious TL. **Kevin Coleborn.:** 7.5

The Abseil Queen. **Wendy Coleborn.:** 7.5

Always keen. **Matt.....:** 7.5

Group Psychiatrist & Motivator. **Michelle Coleborn.:** 7.5

Assistant Navigator. **Rick Brett.:** 7.5