

Oolite

Journal of the
Blue Mountains Speleological Club

Volume 32. December 2006



OOLITE

Journal of the Blue Mountains Speleological Society
Volume 32 January 2006-December 2006

CONTENTS

Cover Photo: BMSC 40th Anniversary Cake

Contents	Page	
From the Outgoing President		3
Rant from the Editor	3	
Trip Reports		
Jenolan 26 March 2006	4	
Jenolan 22-23 April 2006	5	
Jenolan 1-2 June 2006	8	
Walli 3-4 July 2006	9	
Jenolan 5-6 August 2006	11	
Yarrangobilly October Long Weekend 2006	13	
BMSC 40th	16	
Timor with NHVSS	18	
Archive Article - Tuglow	19	
Club Contact Details	20	

From the President

As outgoing prez of 2006, I would like to sincerely thank all those who made our 40th such a great night. Especial thanks go to Ian Bogg, a BMSC "original" who gave such an excellent talk, bringing back many memories for the early members, and regaling newer members with the exploits, achievements and adventures that so defined our club in previous times. Thank you Ian!

Also thanks to our MCs, Rick and Iain, and to Rick and Anne-Marie who put together a DVD with BMSC's pictorial history. We can run off more copies for \$5 + postage if anyone is interested. And especially thanks to Amanda Niciak, (a gal who never does anything by halves) creator of the work of art that graces the cover of this issue...Onya Mandy!

Hats off also to Phil, Kim and Colin for the behind-the-scenes organising work. And, (lastly and leastly)...To my own dearly beloved Rob the "Blues Doctor", and his partner in crime Paddy Han-non for the musical services of Doctor and the Badman for the night...(they played for drinks, which turned out to be more expensive than paying them would have been...) Guys, you were fabulous.

Awards on the night went to: Iain Lynch and Rick Brett, for service and leadership; Louise Coleborn, BMSC's Club Legend; Emily Kaar for Junior Caver of the Year; and some of our other microbods, Tim Mann, Tom McKendry and Sam Kaar for their achievements in caving.

I would also like to take the opportunity to thank, once again, our web guru Jim Foster, who between work and his large family somehow finds the time to run our website (no wonder he doesn't get time to cave...). Thanks Jim, from all of us.

Cindy Mann, President 2006.

Rant From the Editor

Since 2006 was our 40th year, and also to fill up our journal, I have decided to reprint an historical article from our early journals. This does not, however, mean that as far as contributions go, that you are all off the hook, because next year isn't an anniversary, and I will be expecting Stuff to Publish from Members for 2007's Oolite. If y'all don't get off your butts and send in some photos, trip reports, articles, anecdotes, or whatever, there won't be an Oolite next year. Just so you know. Usual Editor's rave. Apologies to Alicson and to non-BMSC readers (if there are any) for the tanty.

Cindy Mann, Journal Editor

Jenolan – 26th March 2006

Cavers: Iain Lynch (T/L), Mike Materazzo, Michelle Coleborn, Donna McKendry, Cindy Mann.

Ahhh...my first BMSC trip of the year, and what a way to start. After collecting the keys we parked near the workshop and met some hapless guys trying very hard to smash the window of their car to retrieve keys. A sorry sight.

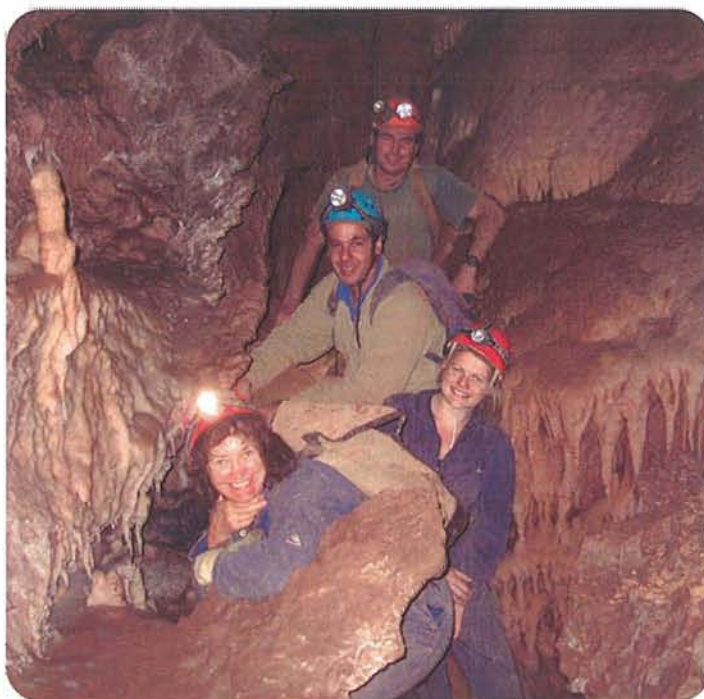
The 15°C or so of Temple of Baal was almost balmy compared to the chill outside. Heading down the cut we spent an hour or so stuffing around trying to remember just where in Temple of Baal the passage to Barralong was. Eventually Mike spotted the metal climbing bolt that marks the way, so we climbed up and we were in. The guys had issues with the triangular "squeeze", and it was on the other side of this we could hear the river. Moving on we soon came to the (once) beautiful calcite pad that Newbould and Culley saw fit to autograph. (Various outraged young BMSC microbods, later viewing the photographic evidence, enquired as to whether "someone orta kick their butts for that!")

A few metres on and we were at the climb-down to the long straw. The area under the climb-down is recessed and very well decorated. This is not obvious from above, and substantial damage could occur by kneeling small and delicate speleotherms by cavers sliding over belly-down and feet first. Care is needed also due to the proximity of the long straw. To the left, when facing the straw, there are some exquisite shawls and helictites. We moved through the Chocolate Flowstone area and on to the Masterpiece chamber, and found where this magnificent column had once been attached upright. Since the drought and the receding water level, the very small attachment point of the Masterpiece can be seen. Small wonder it came down - the main body of the column is remarkably larger in diameter than the slender, usually-submerged section that attached it to the floor, making it very precarious. Presumably in times of flood the base of the Masterpiece had been eroded. It was easy to see where it hit long ago against the opposite wall, and shards of crystal are still there, in a tiny hollow. We took lots of photos here, and also marvelled at the (dry) rimstone dams, very large and beautifully scalloped at the edges.

The next area contained lots of shallow pools, crusted over with calcite, which called for very careful stepping. Then onto the 2m (or so) pit. Michelle, Donna and I managed with some assistance from the guys, which made up for the accidental boot in the face (and subsequent shiner), that I sported due to a stray number 12 boot I connected with a few minutes earlier...(Onya Mikey!).

Onto the slide where I attached a tape to that handy piton in the floor, and we followed the stream to the Duckunder. Typically, Iain stripped to undies and went to the ladder, which he decided, most un-typically, not to climb. We all stayed warm and dry and hung it on him from the bank, just like we always do in these situations.

We headed back after lunch, past the fabulous tri-coloured flowstone that cascades and glitters like a frozen waterfall of brown, red and cream. We exited the cave after 7h and headed for the café to enjoy a steaming cappuccino... Pure bliss!



Cindy Mann

Donna, Michelle, Mike and Iain in Barralong

Jenolan – 22 – 23rd April 2006

Cavers: Iain Lynch, Phil Niciak, Paul McKendry, Colin Tyrrell, Cindy Mann (T/L).

It was another one of those beautiful crisp, clear Jenolan mornings, and when I pulled up at the cottage I had enough time for a quiet walk before the Phil, Colin and Paul arrived. By about 10:30 we were walking up the valley to Wiburds, and showing some members the entrances to the Right and Left Nostrils (which one's which?) Serpentine, Bow and Henning's along the way. This was to be a short trip, because we had agreed to meet Iain at 4:00, back at the Playing Fields. Somehow along the way I managed to hit the deck face first and gouge my knee – always a great start to a caving trip.

We decided to enter by J-92 rather than my planned route of J-58. Colin noted a large spider and some cricket-like insects which we photographed. We checked out the area which has obviously been blocked off with small rocks and continued further in. However we spent only an hour and a half in the cave, and most of that was spent (in the case of Paul, Colin and myself), in trying to find where the blazes Phil had shot off to, and (in the case of Phil), shooting off to somewhere just out of voice range and Poking Around with nary a thought of the curses and imprecations of which he was the subject. The cave was noticeably drier than we'd previously seen it.

After a munch outside the cave we headed to our rendezvous with Iain. This time it was Colin's turn to trip over a block of limestone and cop an injury that gave him a month or so of grief. We made it back early, except for Colin, who, limping pathetically and still bleeding arrived later. It was freezing, so rather than wait for Iain, I drove back to the cottage to meet him. Which was just as well, as (typically) he was planning to cycle down with the scaling poles (all 6 of them) under one arm.

Colin had to leave early, and when Iain and I caught up with the others we headed straight for Glass, which somehow reminds me of Durin's Doors – an impressive arch type opening (except of course you still have to go through on your belly). We entered Glass around 5 pm, and I headed down the ladder and across to the bottom of the scaling pole pitch area. Paul followed and we waited while Phil and Iain rigged the poles and floated them across the chasm. It was similar to the we'd done it on similar SSS trips, but with the difference of hauling 2 joined poles coming at you horizontally, rather than vertically, one at a time. It worked fine. Iain, as always, had thought it out well. Next the packs. Then we set up the scaling poles which Iain ascended to fix the belay. Then we sent up the ladders and his photographic gear for tomorrow. By now it was dawning on me just how *rilly* badly this sucked, doing all this so the BMSC Chevalier Lottery Winners could cruise on through tomorrow and enjoy Chevalier Extension while Phil and I had to miss out and content ourselves with hearing them banging on and on about it at the next meeting. Which they did, *ad nauseam*. Phil and I had done Chevalier before, so we knew just exactly what a great time they'd have.

All this took 4 hours, and by now (it was 8:30) I was cold, tired and hungry (not to mention cranky). We came out into the freezing night to see the stars shining. The black towering shape of the bluff across the valley from us took our breath away when Iain pointed it out to us. It was a cold and cautious walk back down the slope, but before long we were in front of the fire, giving Iain's bottle of Glenfiddich (God bless him), a good old caning. We lasted till 11:30, which was, sadly, rather longer than the Glenfiddich.

Sunday

We woke a little the worse for wear, when Shane, Ali, and Mike showed up before 8, keen to be off. Barry Richards, also on the Chevalier trip, arrived shortly afterwards. Phil and I headed up the southern limestone to check out Heffalump trap, which we did. Impressive. The valley is very interesting in that one side is all shale and eucalypts the other is limestone with a fair few Kurrajong trees. We trogged the bluff for a while and found some interesting pieces rather weathered calcite, and tried not to think about the gang in Chevalier.

Cindy Mann

Chevalier 23/4/07

Iain, Paul, Michael, Barry, Alicson & Shane

We met at the caver's cottage at 8am before driving to the upper car-park from where we started walking up the valley. Chevalier is part of Glass cave. We had to put our harnesses on at the entrance as there is a narrow bit at the start which is immediately followed by the ladder pitch. Paul went in first – there was a downhill chimney and crevice to be negotiated to the belay point where he wedged himself in.

Shane went next and left his pack with Paul. I could hear him huffing and puffing through a squeeze to get onto the ladder to climb down onto a saddle with big drops either side. I was getting very nervous by now listening to all this. I went next and found the first bit to get to Paul a bit daunting. It was the sort of climb down & chimney where I would normally expect Shane to help me with but he was waiting further in.

I managed to negotiate it OK and passed Paul who put me on belay. The up squeeze was a bit tricky, knees and elbows were used. It was scary at the top where you had to lean out over a big drop and get onto the ladder. I had a lot of difficulty getting my knees out of the tight squeeze and onto the ladder and I don't know how Shane and Paul (the tallest in our group) managed to do it. The ladder climb was OK. When I arrived at the saddle I didn't dare look down. I straddled the saddle and moved along it, then had a climb down/slide to get to another saddle where Shane was waiting for me. Then it was a short climb to a waiting point.

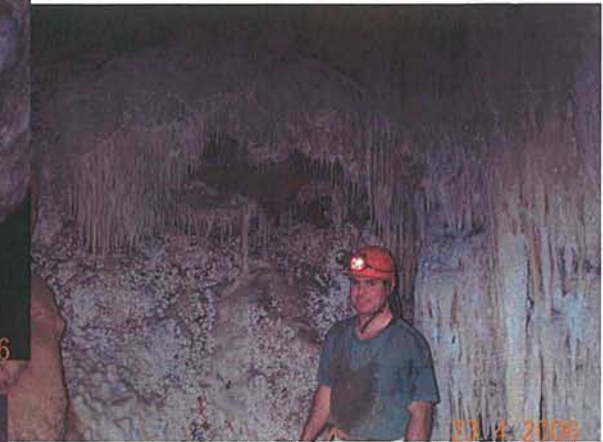
Barry had a lot of trouble with the squeezes and after two attempts to get onto the ladder gave it up and went back out. The other three had no trouble and all the packs were lowered down by rope. Our next adventure was climbing up a caving ladder that was attached to a scaling pole. I went up the ladder first and found it easier that it looked. The others soon joined me on a small platform with fossils in the wall. We had some snacks then changed our footwear to enter the detrog section.

It was a crawl to get into this bit. The helictites, straws and crystal formation commenced straight away – I took heaps of photos. We had another ladder climb to descend which was quite easy. The final chamber had some good formation in a wishing well type structure.

The trip out was good. The descent of the ladder at the scaling pole was a bit tricky. I did it first. Iain had the tough job at the end of bringing the ladder down a few meters so that it was solely attached to the pole. At the bottom, the pole had to be dismantled. Shane led the way up onto the saddle at the bottom of the next ladder which I ascended first. I had some difficulty getting my feet into the squeeze and down into the safety of the crevice section. I belayed Shane up to the top of the ladder and we then ferried across the pieces of scaling pole which Shane passed on to me. It probably took a couple of hours to dismantle everything and ferry it out of the cave however we were only underground for seven hours. This was thanks to Iain, Paul, Cindy and Phil who had gone in the day before to set up the scaling pole. This took them about four hours.

It was a very enjoyable trip – I took about fifty photos.

Alicson Anderson



Jenolan - 1st-2nd June 2006

Cavers: Rick Brett, Colin Tyrrell, Paul McKendry, Cindy Mann(T/L).

We decided on another trip to Wiburds, since our previous visit here had been so brief. Also I needed to take a couple of soil samples for the project. We walked from the cottage, enjoying the stroll through McKeown's Valley, and were entering the J-92 entrance around 11:30. We explored (we think) the Dyke area. The wall of the Dyke appears to be compacted sediment, but it is completely blackened on one side. We moved through 22 passage (we think) and towards Neddy's Knock. Paul shot off to the right and went as far as he could fit. The incline is on about a 45° angle. At the end was the hole leading into another area, and he asked me to see if I could make it through, which I did. There were 2 possibilities once through the hole. One led to a rockpile of dubious stability, and the other led to a short climb that was easy going up, but tricky coming down, as the footholds were in a recessed area, and I would've liked a tape if doing it on my own. Phil struggled for a while to get through the hole and almost made it, but not quite. This meant I couldn't go any further, as I didn't want to get stuck somewhere if no-one could hear me or, if necessary, reach me. If I was to get stuck there was every chance my companions would fill in the hole and bolt.

We continued exploring. Paul and Rick were somewhere we thought might be in the Northwest Passage, and they were gone about 30 mins. The rest of us poked around near the main stream-way passage. The cave was noticeably wetter than on our previous visit. I took some samples and we started to move out when Rick and Paul rejoined us. Coming close to the entrance I found 3 areas where the cave wall appeared to hold colonies of actinomycetes, so I sampled there. I think they may have been actinos, anyway – and they certainly matched Jill Rowling's description of actino colonies on cave walls. We made our way out after about 5h, and ambled back, poking our noses into Hennings on the way.

We had a pleasant evening and Colin had brought some excellent white port, which rounded things off very nicely.

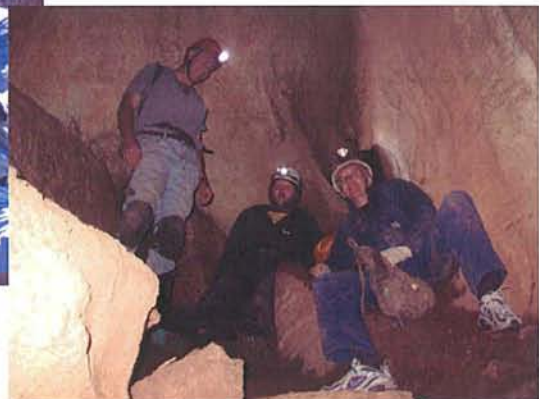
Sunday

We planned a walking trip up the southern limestone, but unfortunately, I discovered I had some car trouble, and by the time we (or rather Paul and Colin) got it sorted, it was time to go. Bloody Suby cost me nearly \$2G and its given me trouble twice now. Where's the value for money these days???

Cindy Mann again



Wiburds. Paul, Colin and Phil



Walli – 3-4th July 2006

Cavers: Rick Brett (T/L), Mike Materazzo, Kim, Andrew, Emily, Sam and Rowan Kaar, Colin Tyrrell, Paul McKendry, Cindy Mann.

Colin, Paul and I left Woodford around 6:30 and stopped for an excellent brekky at Bernards Bakery at Bathurst – indescribably better than the gruesome fare at Blayney on the last visit. Coincidentally, Mike and Rick joined us.

We had permission to use the hut at Cliefden, and after pitching camp we set off for Lake Cave (WA 42), checking the area to locate as many cave entrances as we could for Rick's map. Before caving we trogged around Lake Hill. Colin found a hole that looked like it went, as it had been marked rather obviously with a stick. Paul, looking with him, also found one. I decided to trog on my own. And found zip.

Finally, we found Lake Cave. It was every bit as awful as Rick said it would be. The section, soon after the entry, near the squeeze-shelf, gave way to the most acrid, biting, choking dust I've ever encountered. Paul at least was prepared – he'd brought along a dust mask. Colin didn't fit through the squeeze and even skinny Paul had some difficulty. We rigged the 30' ladder on a couple of small columns on the right hand side of the wall, with the trace wrapped around so we could angle the ladder to fall as directly as possible to keep the rungs horizontal. Even so, we needed to climb down to another ledge before we could get onto it. Once down we had a look at Rick's "Bleeding Stal", but owing to the dryness of the cave, it looked more rusty than bleeding. We spent the next couple of hours exploring a fairly un-interesting cave. Paul and Mike examined a higher pass and found a "Cindy sized hole" which Paul asked me to try, but Rick wanted to leave the cave. So it'll have to wait till next time (if we can ever bring ourselves to tackle that hideous dust again). We exited Lake Cave after 4.5 hours.

Upside, it was getting dusky. We canned the idea of doing Piano Extension (which was a pity because it's a favourite with us), and just did Piano (WA-12), trying to keep out of the line of fire of the shooters on the hill, and hoping they'd spot our lights, and then wondering if perhaps we should hope they wouldn't spot them. We did a quick trip through Piano (1.5h) and Colin took some very good photos of the signatures that infest this cave and date back to 1883 (as far as he could make out). Exiting well after dark we headed for the hut and were greeted by the Kaar family and the very welcome fire they had got going. We had a very enjoyable night, especially when Rick played his dij for us. He is seriously good at it now, and has even mastered the "circular breathing". Most of us slept in the hut, despite having set up tents – the fire was just too inviting.

Sunday

We left about 10 for the car-park at Walli, where the old campsite is still set up. We drove to near Deep Hole (WA-17) and lugged the gear over. Paul and I rigged the pitch off the U-bolt on the higher rock, running it off the log as well, and the ladder off the lower rock. We used both the 50' and 30' ladder, and I abseiled down, making sure the ladder was laying correctly. Close to the bottom it was apparent the air was a bit CO₂-ey; also the ladder didn't quite reach. So I prussiked up and we attached a third ladder. While we were doing that, Mike went down with matches to test the air. Eventually, after sorting out pitches, kids and gear, we were in. Once again, our microbods did very well. Emily and Sam abseiled independently. Emily was using a Petzl stop, but was rigged with too much friction, making it a slow trip down. She kept her head, though, and her sense of humour. Rowan didn't have the weight to abseil by himself, so he came down with his dad. The CO₂ was bearable, but we all noticed it except for Mike. Rick went down the slope to the chamber on the left, and found the CO₂ level there was much higher. I have struck bad air in this cave before, but never this high up! So we followed our noses (and lungs) and kept to areas where we could breathe. We enjoyed the cave, which has many very pretty sections, and the gang laddered out after 6.5 hours. My new Petzl Traxion came in very handy as a belay device. I prussiked out, pulling the ladder up onto the mid-way ledge as I went. We'd had a great time.

It was 7:30 or so before we made it back to the hut, so we did a lightning clean-up and left after Colin fixed his headlight, which was stuck on high beam.

Cindy Mann



Deep Hole

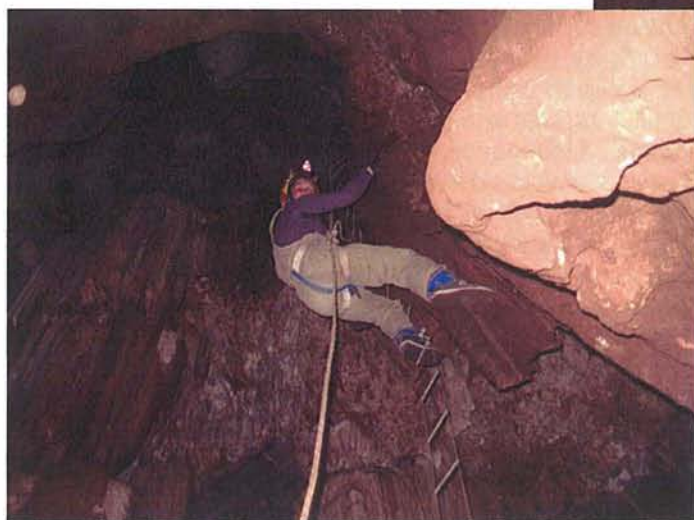
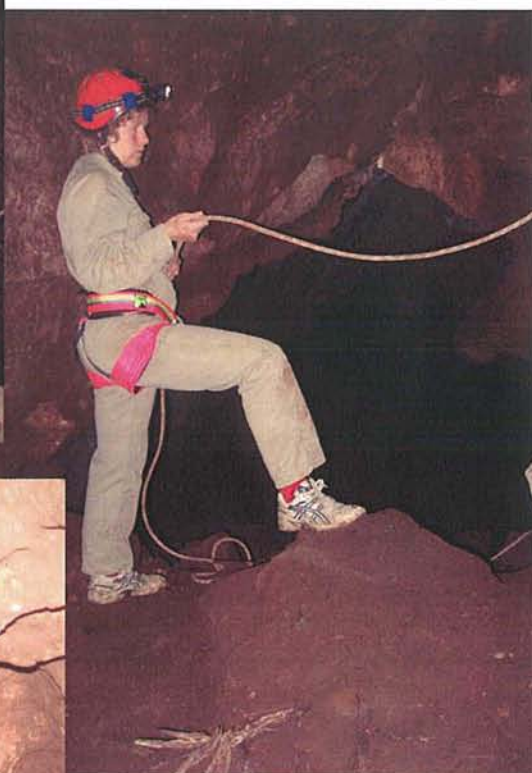
From top:

Cindy;

Andrew and
Rowan;

Kim;

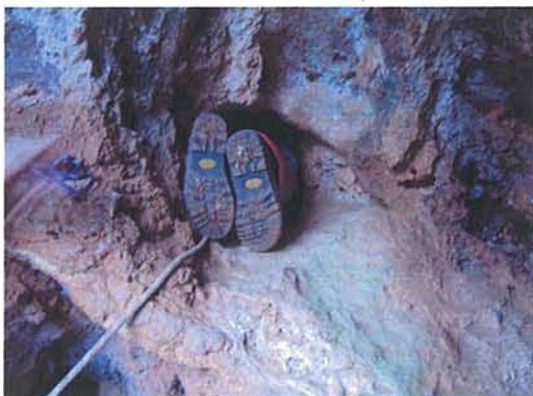
Emily



Jenolan – 5-6th August 2006

Cavers: Rick Brett, Phil Niciak, Paul McKendry, Tom McKendry, Colin Tyrrell, Helen Simpson, Kim Kaar, John Bonwick, Cindy Mann (T/L) Tim Mann, Sam Kaar, Emily Kaar.

Everyone met at the Guides Office before heading to the Playing Fields, via the cottage to dump our stuff. We decided to do Serpentine first. Due to having some big guys with us, we thought it best to enter through J-125 (the top entrance) in order to avoid the squeeze. We tied the 50m rope off to a tape attached to a rock a few m outside the cave. I attached a few prussic loops to the rope to make the descent a little easier.



The entrance (left) is fairly confined, and it was soon obvious that half the guys weren't going to get their shoulders through. I went down first, using the rope as needed, and this made it much easier than it would be otherwise. Timmy, Helen, Phil and John followed. Everyone else wandered off to do Wiburds. John suggested checking out the upper chambers, which we did, and there was plenty to see there. I really regretted not having my camera with me! Timmy and Helen really loved it.

Back to the bottom of the entrance, and then we moved further down until we were almost on top of the last bit of the descent. John classic-abseiled down, and I slid, wrapping the rope around my leg for extra friction. When everyone was down we headed off into the Serpentineous Passage. It really is amazing. We found the entrance to the squeeze and decided to take it, rather than reverse our route. No-one had any problems (especially not Tim), and we exited the lower entrance (J-76) after a very enjoyable 5h.

Back at the Playing Fields we waited for the others awhile, until eventually Phil, Helen and I decided to see what was keeping the others. We caught them up near Hennings, and they'd had an enjoyable time in Wiburds.

BMSC got extra lucky this weekend: Ted Mathews invited us around to his place that evening so we could see his most interesting presentation on processes associated with speleogenesis at Jenolan. It was fascinating, and timely too, as Armstrong Osborne's paleokarst research had been published during the week. After Ted's it was back to the cottage for our meeting. Barry Richards also attended which was great. Finally it was bed by midnight.

Sunday

We were up early-ish (thanks kids), and headed to Hennings. On the way we checked out the



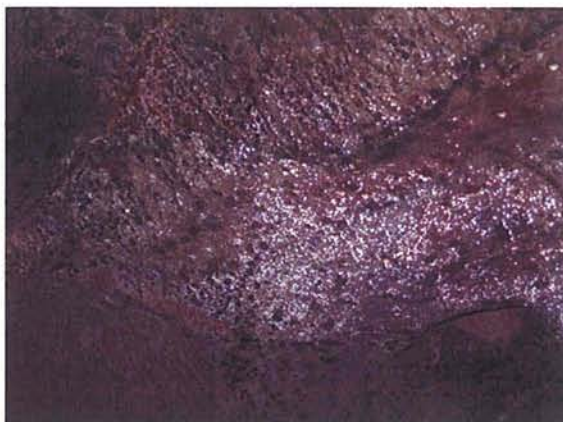
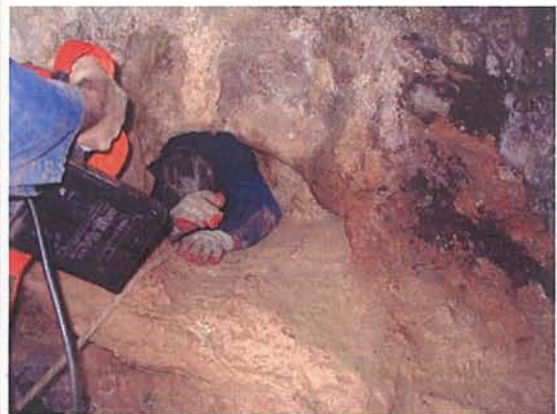
little gallery of sunlit holes that comprise Duodenum. Some of the guys found some surprising little fossils clustered together on the outside of one of them (left). What are these strange vermiculations? A fossilised worm burrow? Tube worms of some type? There are plenty of marine fossils immediately nearby. (Where was Ted when we really needed him!)

Hennings was fun, especially with Ted's talk to inspire us, so we looked for as many of the fossils and morphological features (especially gunk) that we could to photograph, as well as historical graffiti. The kids had a great time exploring and taking turns leading. All up it was a very enjoyable 4h trip.

Cindy Mann



Tom, Sam and Tim in Hennings (above) and Tim in Serpentine (below). Fossils in Hennings (top right) and Phil and Helen exiting squeeze in Serpentine (lower right)



Actinomycete colonies? Hennings Cave.



Yagby – 2006 October Long Weekend

October long weekend and with it the usual long Friday night drive from Sydney with people arriving throughout the night and early morning in various dribs and drabs.

Saturday

Next morning saw a good sized and keen party set off at about 9am for Eagles Nest. Participants were Iain (TL), Michael, Paul, Colin, Cindy, Ali, Shane plus a couple of ring-ins from SSS – Ian Wild and John Bonwick. We had about a 2.5 km walk in before arriving at the cave at about 11am. As it was to be a “through” trip there followed a brief search before we found and went in the upper entrance Y3.

We had a few squeezes and climb downs to begin with before the rockpile section. Here there seemed to be a choice of routes through the boulders and it took a couple of attempts before we found our way through to the top of the ladder pitch. This was in two stages of about 4 metres each with a large chockstone in the middle. The pitch was successfully negotiated with not too much drama. Next was a confusing set of climbs and crawls before the 6-7 metre squeeze to reach the gate. By about 2pm everyone was through. We still had some zig zags, a large chamber, some stream passage and a crevice to negotiate before arriving at the pretty sections. Here there is a roped track to follow past some impressive formation – mainly straws and shawls. Eventually (many photos later), we came to the end of this section and after a few blind alleys and the odd tricky climb we exited via Y2 at about 5:50pm. An excellent trip however the consensus was that next time we probably wouldn't bother going in via Y3.

Sunday

Today we decided to split into two groups – one group (Iain, Ali & Shane) for Janus and the other for East Deep Ck & Restoration. In Janus there were a couple of ladder pitches, plus some climbs and scrambling through slots and crevices to get to the detrog section. Here there was some absolutely fabulous formation in large quantities – lots of pristine rim pools, flowstone, columns and straws. Ali easily used up a whole roll of film and Shane was heard to compare the chamber to Genghis Khan in Tasmania. It was very impressive. Exiting the cave was quite quick with the trip time all up being about 4 hours. Meanwhile Cindy led the other group of Colin, Paul, Phil plus a couple of SSS people and they had the longer day naturally with two caves to do plus a larger party. Everyone seemed to enjoy the day and afterwards most visited the thermal pool for a welcome tub and scrub.

Monday

Today for various reasons it was only Iain, Cindy, Ali and Shane who had any interest in going underground – in this case Coppermine. It was about a 2km walk down the fire trail to the cave entrance. We explored the entire lower stream passage section up to the sump. Everyone got wet feet of course and going through a duck under increased the wetness to waist level. There is some very good formation at this level, especially near the end however the best is up higher past the locked gate. However we weren't entirely convinced of the route to the gate and with the prospect of a tricky climb and with last day caving syndrome kicking in we opted to leave that for another day. Back it was to the cottage where we found most of the others had already packed and left. Thus endeth another excellent Yagby trip with some quality time underground.

Alicson Anderson

A note on Eagles Nest (Cindy Mann)

We were surprised to see that the pool in Eagle's Nest was completely dry. Last year it was under an actively-dripping ceiling, but this too was now dry. In fact the whole streamway was drier than on our previous visit 12 months ago.

October 2006 →



← October 2005

Sunday

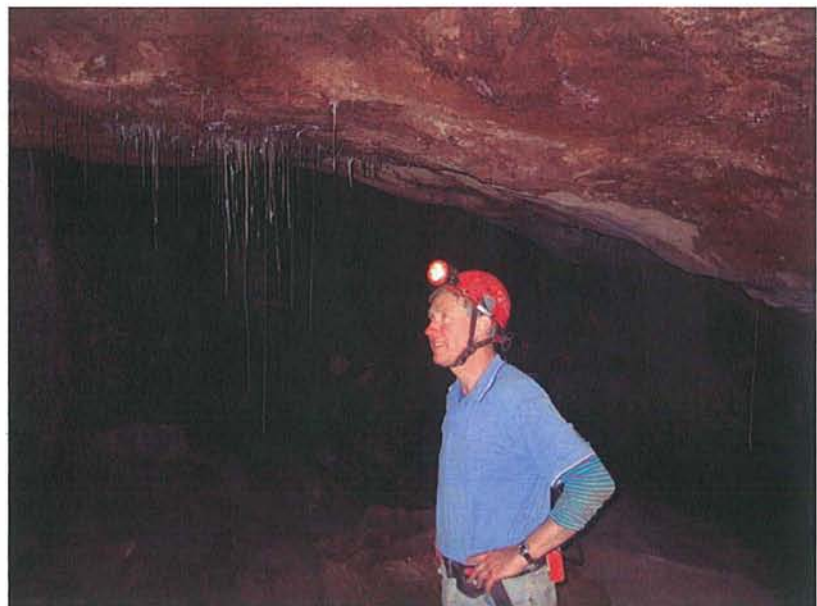
East Deep Creek was on the agenda for those not doing the fabulous Janus. The group comprised Mike, Phil (trainee T/L), Colin, Cindy and 2 ring-ins from Victoria, Jude and Gordon. Like Eagles nest, the cave was thought to be fairly dry by those who'd done it before. We made our way to the detrog area, and I was very glad of my thermals and dive boots and gloves, unlike Paul who toughed it out in undies and bare feet. It was gorgeous, and the group moved through it 2 at a time. As we neared the exit, we met up with an eager SUSS crew on their way in. We stopped for lunch in the doline, drying off in the sun, after a great 3 and a bit hours, before moving on to do Restoration.

Restoration is fairly close to Eagles Nest, so we found it easily. Again, Phil was TTL for this easy, very pretty cave. The straws in here are truly lovely, with some exceptionally long ones, perhaps 3m or so, I estimated. There is no detrog, just a marked trail to protect the decorations. Fabulous! We spent 1.5h in Restoration and enjoyed every minute.

After briefly checking out Skeleton Cave we headed back and made for the thermal pool, and after that an enjoyable evening outside Cotterill's, around the fire with the SUSS cavers.

Straws in Restoration

*Cindy bloody Mann again
(sigh...)*

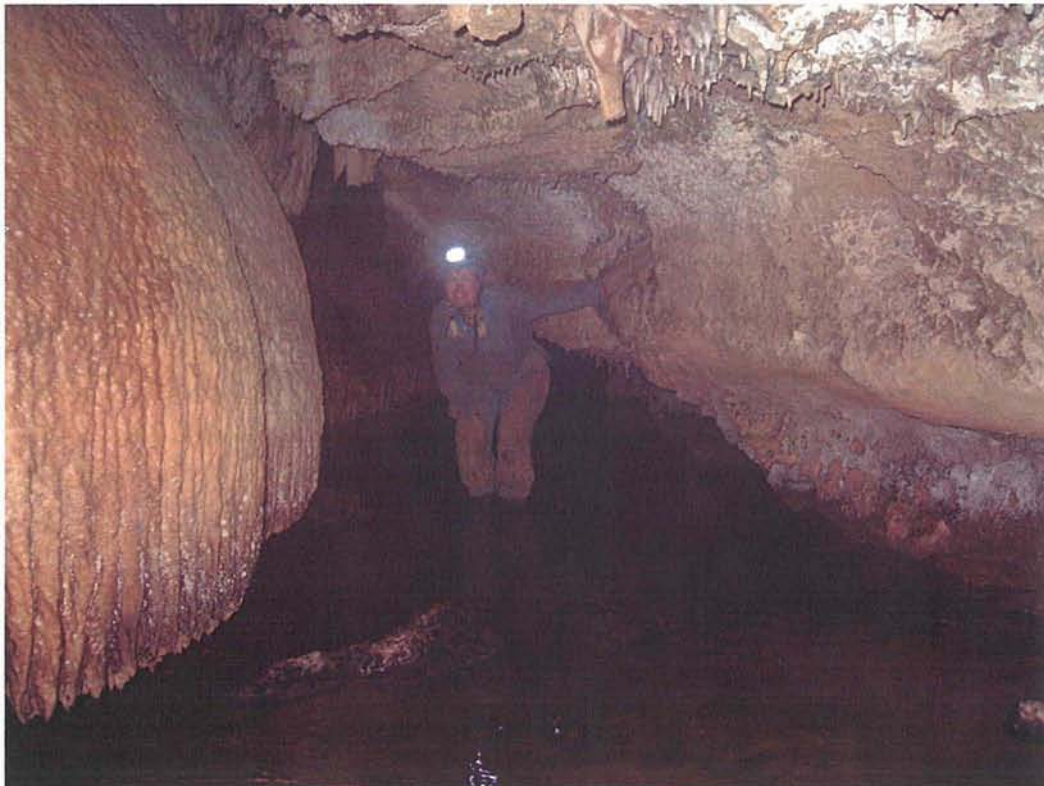


Oolite Vol 32 Dec 2006



The usual suspects plus a couple of SSS cavers;

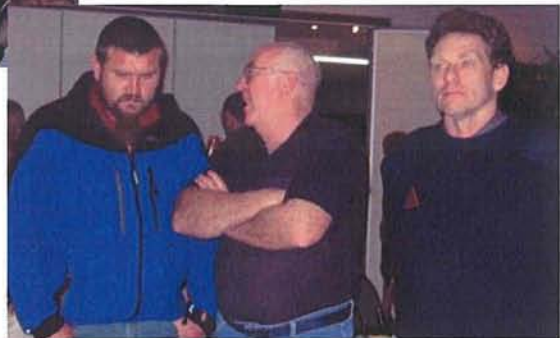
Below, Ali in the Coppermine streamway



BMSC Turns 40 !!



Thanks Ian, for a fascinating and inspiring talk! And thanks Amanda, for the cake.





People and Awards: Below, "Ol' Stiffy", a retiring Bluewater II, gets the long-service award. And elsewhere on this page, Emily Kaar is awarded Junior Caver of the Year 2006, and Louise Coleborn is honoured as our BMSC Club Legend. Tim, Tom, Sam, Iain and Rick also received awards.



**The BMSC Boys Travel to Timor
26-27 November 2006**

Participants: Phil Niciak, Paul McKendry and Colin Tyrrell plus a herd of others from SSS, NHVSS, UTSSS. **Trip organised** by Jodie Rutledge NHVSS

We left Hazelbrook at about 7 am, for the scenic (not) trip via the F3 freeway to Timor. (The Putty Road was closed due to some fires). The trip was mostly uneventful til we found the dirt road outside of Aberdeen. From here it was great. Paul thought otherwise, as we found some air on a crest. The trouble was, the road veered left, but we were in the air. Paul was thinking of an under-wear change, due to reluctance to trust the driver. The touchdown was all 4 points – not an issue. Phil just happily rolled around in the back, and thankfully no roos or cows to be seen. Paul's anxiety was partly due to memories of being airborne over a dip at 110kph on the way to Dunn's Swamp for a previous AGM – with a broken rib! Eventually, thanks to a fortunate wrong turn, we met Jodie and co at Timor reserve, then followed them back to the hut for lunch.

The rest of the Day:

After lunch saw us rock on down the road for a bit of surface work, cave surveying and finding a new lead (Paul) just down the road.

Colin and Phil did the surface bashing around TR48, Phil going down for a bit of surveying while Colin studied the most exquisite *Xanthreas*, which we believe are only found on limestone karst and amazing fossils in the creek bed. This was followed by snooze in the shade away from the 40 degree heat.

Meanwhile, Paul was living it up (he claims he worked really hard) in the cool of a cave (TR can't remember). After 3 of the party bashed away furiously, with primitive tools, for a couple of hours, they widened an opening that disappeared into the dark (as if it wasn't already so). Unfortunately for Paul, his enormous bulk did not allow him to venture into this new world, which let the others through to explore the wonders of this virgin cave (Paul's words), with Paul watching enviously as they vanished from view.

Jodie spent a bit of time surveying (Paul said he helped a bit).

Paul and crew returned to camp at about 8 pm, totally stuffed, to hear from Phil and Colin demanding the curry that Paul had promised to cook. In reality, P and C were having a great time socialising with the others, whilst enjoying hors-d'oeuvres and some fine BMSC wine.

After a great curry (thankfully with no anchovies – refer Yagby trip), prepared by Chef Paul, the evening was capped off with a slideshow of the day's adventures including the new cave extension.

Sleep came easily.....zzz

Sunday: What a relaxed brekky (with the wafting aroma of Colin's bacon and egg breakfast) and chatting about the various clubs activities, saw some of us descend into Glen Dhu cave (TR15) for a couple of hours relaxed exploration in what is possibly a very underrated cave. There was a good mixture of formations, geological features and wildlife. Each to their own, Paul and Phil happily slumbered in every hole they found, interspersed with high activity looking in the myriad of chambers, while Colin was happy to study the numerous bats and 2 species of birds that had made their homes near the entrance.

Another part of the group went surveying elsewhere...

After lunch we made the long tour home for a much needed sleep. (We sound like a bunch of old buggers!)

Thanks go to Jodie R for inviting us. It was really good sharing this trip with members from 4 clubs. It was great to share experiences with all these folk, who were very accommodating towards us.

It is a time that we hope can be repeated again on a regular basis.

Pictures can be found at: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/biggestcol/tags/timornov2006/>

Colin Tyrrell and Paul McKendry

Something from the BMSC Archives...

Tuglow and Hollander's River

Tuglow was again predominant in our trips this year and despite the extensive explorations of the main cave and surrounding areas in previous years, we were able to make some new finds.

The first trip to Tuglow this year was led by Stan and was aimed at giving some newer members of the club experience in the main cave. It has become a memorable trip because Stan was unable to find the upper level.

Three weeks later several of us went to Tuglow again. This time the aim was to abseil and climb down the main entrance shaft, and to explore any previously unexplored passages in this area. When this was accomplished and several new sections investigated, we set off with digging gear to the very end of the river in the upper level. We intended to dig out the gravel beds which had prevented further progress on previous trips. It was found that the gravel beds had shifted by the stream and approximately 100 feet more cave was accessible including one section with a roof approximately 60 feet high. In another section the passage was blocked by a sump. A natural dam below the sump was removed and after an hour the water level had dropped by about 9 inches. This was just sufficient to allow the sup to be passed, but the passage was again filled with water several feet further on and progress ceased.

The next trip to Tuglow was organised in two sections, one to further explore sections of the entrance shaft and the upper level passages and the other to take photographs. Nothing new was found in the entrance shaft, but in the upper level, several hundred feet past the twelve foot waterfall. The roof of the cavern exceeds 100 feet in height and we could clearly hear a land rover above us on the surface. We planned to establish the location and depth of this spot with radio depth measuring equipment, but as yet we have not done so. Further upstream we found a tunnel on the left which had not previously been entered. The floor of the tunnel showed evidence of a strong flow although it was dry at the time. The tunnel, which is about 400 feet long and ends as usual in a series of rock falls, contains some fine crystals and needles, and has been surveyed presumably by U.N.S.W.S.S. We proceeded again to the gravel beds at the end of the main passage and found further sections opened by recent rock falls (an earthquake was reported in the area the previous Friday).

The photographic group obtained some impressive pictures in the Window Cave when a brilliant shaft of light shone in through the entrance hole for a short time. While in this cave they managed to scale the left-hand wall of the main chamber to reveal a hole 25 feet up. This was something we had failed to achieve on several previous trips. The high passage was found to go on a short way and then is blocked by soft mud. It was decided to return at a later date to dig in this section as it heads in the general direction of the main cave.

A further cave was located in the western section of the main limestone outcrop. It was explored and found to be somewhat larger than the Plastecine Cave but was mainly notable for the fine example of soft "moonmilk" formation which covered the walls in the lowest section. The "moonmilk" was very well preserved indicating that the cave had possibly only been visited several times before. One passage in this cave leads through a small crack to another entrance.

Several months later Bob led a trip back to the Window cave to dig in the high tunnel. After three hours work the dig was found too difficult and without much promise and was abandoned. The remainder of the weekend was spent wandering around in the main cave.

The final trip this year to the main Tuglow area was further investigation of the western limestone outcrop and the "moonmilk" cave and to number this T4. The main discovery of the weekend was a small efflux 10 feet above the river near the western edge of the limestone. This will be further investigated to see if excavation or blasting would be worthwhile.

It is quite a while now since Myles Dunphy drew a map of Hollander's River for us indicating the limestone outcrop that he could recall. In August this year, our consciences had bothered us about this, so that we planned a trip to investigate the outcrops. Despite our good intentions, the strong wind and heavy snow which fell all day Saturday and the illness of several of our party, finally forced us to turn back at Perishing Point on Hollander's River. A repeat of this trip now has high priority and should be accomplished in the next month.

Source:

Nelson, Graham (1968). Summary of Trip Reports: Tuglow. *Oolite* 1(1): 19-22.

COMMITTEE CONTACT DETAILS for 2007

President: Phil Niciak	4758 8388
Vice President: Paul McKendry	4758 8497
Treasurer: Colin Tyrrell	4758 7194
Secretary: Paul McKendry	4758 8497
Safety Officer: Rick Brett	4730 1764
Equipment Officer: Rick Brett	4730 1764
Trip Officer: Mike Materazzo	4729 2615
Publicity and Journal: Cindy Mann	4758 6322
Webmaster: Jim Foster	4872 3275

BMSC Web Address: <http://www.bluemountainsspeleologicalclub.com>

when its all about getting down and dirty,
there is only one choice.....



summit
GEAR

purveyors of the finest outdoor equipment and double entendre
since 1981

80 Bathurst Rd
Katoomba NSW 2780
(02) 4782 3018

11 Ross St
Glenbrook NSW
2773

www.summitgear.com.au