



FUSSI

Newsletter

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Speleothems: Tindales Cave,
Mt Gambier.

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Neville Skinner.

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WET AND WILD TRIP

Huan Wang

March Long Weekend.

Those on the trip: Thomas, Edwina, Richard, Neville, Huan.

Those who helped organise but remained at home: Clare and Heiko.

I grew up in a military area and plenty of bomb shelters around in Beijing. I can never forget the time when my friends and I were playing hide-and-seek in air-raid shelters in the 90s. It seems that there is something in the dark that is so fascinating and appealing. Unfortunately, I have never had opportunities to explore a wild cave. Later, when American movies became more popular in China, the monster and natural disaster scenes of caving in blockbusters pushed me even further from this “extreme sport”, that is, until FUSSI showed me a spectacular caving journey in March 2013, the “Wet and Wild trip”.



We started the first day with a wander in pine tree forest. We, 5 people, spread out to search for the entry of Stafford Rd cave. I, honestly, didn't really know what we are looking for at that moment. A cave entry for me should be a concrete construction or a massive entrance which makes people dwarfish when standing in front of it. Neville, luckily, found it between two pine trees after 1 hour of searching. Exciting and scary feelings attacked me together when

Thomas asked me to tie my Karabiner on my harness to the robe he was holding. My virgin caving starts now! My instinct tells me I will have a great trip. Descending on a pile of dead sheep, apparently, will not be part of those good memories! We crawl, we climb, we creep and we squeeze. I cannot remember the details of moving along the tunnel, but the pain on my knee when moving without knee pads was carved in my heart. No pain no gain, the old saying goes. Everything was paid back when I saw the crystal chamber in which flowstones are amazingly spread. This is a really bright caving start for me.

Sheathers is a wet cave with crystal clear water. The rain was floating in the air when we packed up from Stafford Rd cave. The sticky feeling mixed with sweat and rain makes me eager to jump into a pool. “Let's go have a swim”. I cannot remember who said it when I was facing the open water area in Sheathers. Ice-cold water, tree roots hanging on the top and big tunnel, I think I am in a treasure-hunting computer game, except this one is real. When I was enjoying this wonder world, I found they, my team mates, all disappeared and I am the only one in the cave. Suddenly, fear attached itself to me and I felt something in the water touching me. “Go away”! I try to escape but a hand grabbed my ankle firmly. A head floated up in the water, Richard! He said “come on Huan, let's go to next chamber, you need to hold your breath and sink from here to the next one.” Seriously? I love caving but I love myself more, much more. I looked back at the darkness behind me and the water in the front where Richard disappeared again after he dropped me the line. I decided to follow them because it was scary either way. Guess what? I survived, surely. It is so amazing to explore the maze by this way.

WET AND WILD TRIP

Huan Wang

That night, when lying on my bed and my eyes closed, I still saw myself in the cave, floating on the water between tree roots with an amazed face. I will remember it for my whole life.

I don't know how many skills a caver needs to have. Abseiling, crawling, creeping, swimming, geology, history, biology, mineralogy, may be even painting and, this time, rock climbing. It is what we did when we got down to Gran Gran cave, faced with a long tunnel filled with body-deep water. Moving along the rocks was fun but while imaging alligators or piranhas jumping out of the water to bite me, it was, 'thrilling'. It, fortunately,



didn't happen. But what did happen is that I dropped into a big water pool and, like in Sheathers, got myself wet. The only difference this time: tougher, without wetsuit. It is regretful that I have seen the phenomenon of bats homing. But I will be back.

The beauty of caving, personally, is the eternity of time. Millions and millions of stories are in the enclosed space and waiting for people to explore for years and years. Tindales cave is my favourite of the trip. It is not only because of the stunning scenery and spacious tunnels but also rendered me a witness to history. The cave is like a graffiti gallery. My imagination fired again when I saw graffiti from the 1930s. How did they get into the cave? What gear were they using? Why did they come to the cave? What happened? Did they hide here for World War II? Or maybe trying to escape from the army of the empire? A million people may have a million answers, but the cave is staying there and telling people the stories in its own way, silently and eternally. It was incredible when I realized that I am experiencing the same space with people from 80 years ago. The same chamber, the same stone and the same spot where they drew the graffiti. People age and time goes by but here, in the cave, life stays still.

I can never overpraise the beauty of Ewens Ponds. You will be intoxicated by the magnificent underwater scenery even standing on the deck. The incredible visibility makes me feel that I am swimming in a super HD film, super clear and not real. The first thing I did the second I jumped into the water with full gear on is spitting out my snorkel and shout out "WOW". Thank you FUSSI for bringing me to this breathtaking spot. Floating along the ponds, I was keeping my eyes open so as not to miss anything. The amazing green and the golden beam underwater made a perfect ending for this eye-opener of a trip.

Now, when I writing the report, I cannot help but stop for a long time, soak myself into these unforgettable memories and enjoy the experience again and again.

A big/huge/massive THANK YOU for Clare and Thomas. It must be really painful to plan and organize the trip. I have joined different outdoor clubs in different countries for years. You guys, literally, are the best organizers I have ever seen and I mean it. (Not one of the best, it is the best) committed, self-sacrificed, responsible, thorough, sound-minded and having post-session meetings for improvement. I am so proud that I have been in such a mature group with you.

Office Bearer's Reports

President's Report

2012 proved to be a typically busy year for FUSSI. No less than 12 trips were put on with a gourmet selection including major trips to the Nullarbor, the South-east, Bungonia and Tasmania (see details in the FUSSI journals for 2012). The Nullarbor trip did not involve attempted arson, (that was set aside for 2011), the South-East trip to the Mt Gambier area at the beginning of the year had 8 beginners and included visits to Ewen's and Piccaninny Ponds, and the Tasmanian trip was joined by a member of the Victorian Speleological Society. The Bungonia trip was a weekend course in cave surveying (expect a request to purchase a Disto-X310) There was also a cross-club cross-state day at Naracoorte where we had the opportunity to meet with the new management team at Naracoorte Caves World Heritage Area, offering the prospect of the easing of restrictions of access to caves other than Stick-Tomato. FUSSI bodies failed to get up close and personal with any of the local bat population when they helped with the yearly bat count of the Lower South East Karst area. Cross-club digging trips to Corra Lynn gained several metres of tunnel and enticing prospects, but no new passage.

The financial position of the club continues to improve (see separate Treasurer's report) and the renewal of the equipment continues to make progress, except perhaps for the club lights – the technology seems to get better and better week by week and choosing a general caving light now means it is obsolete 6 months later. We do have to bite the bullet on this one though.

The only disappointment was that the 'heroic few' did most of the (gourmet – Nullarbor & Mole Creek) caving while the large number who signed up at the beginning of the year faded from view under the pressure of study. Perhaps, caving is going the same way as fox hunting, squash, whist or outdoor sports: if it doesn't have a motor - 4WD or trail bike – doesn't attract any attention. If it doesn't involve a ball, it is not considered a sport! People don't realise the pleasure (the real, first-hand, rather than virtual) or the experience of an Opium Den, Pleasure Dome, Mini-Martin entrance, or even 'The Drain' can provide. Or perhaps caving is like a Yo-Yo: forever doomed, to make a comeback.

Get out there and go caving!

Heiko Maurer

SAFETY OFFICER'S REPORT

Clare Buswell

The year passed as a generally safe one, no burns, no falls and no trips to hospital. Attacks by the local wildlife did continue however, with a bee stinging the Safety Officer on a trip to the Flinders Ranges.

One of the most important things you can do to help with safety is to do a First Aid course. In caving, falls are the most common accidents, resulting in twisted ankles, stuffed knees, and cuts and bruises. Around the campfire burns seem to rate fairly well in the accident stakes. After that the local fauna comes into play. So if you have no idea what to do with a triangular bandage, how to deal with ticks, bites and burns, practicing bandage bondage on your caving friends may help ... !

Lets hope that 2013 is a safe caving year by making sure your gear is safe, you know what to do in case of a caving accidents and you abide by safe caving practices. Read the ASF Safety Guidelines for Caving - you will learn heaps.

Office Bearer's Reports

FUSSI Treasurer's Report

for the period

1 April 2012 – 30 April 2013

Overall Summary

Opening balance	Income	Expenditure	Closing balance
\$6,721.22	\$3,136.50	\$1,535.95	\$8,321.77
		Difference	\$1,600.55

FUSSI monies were stored in three locations: two bank accounts with ANZ and petty cash. \$5,000.00 has been allocated to a term deposit that matures every 3 months at a rate of 4.35% per annum.

	Main bank account	Debit card account	Petty cash	Total
Opening balance	\$5,539.97	\$335.25	\$846.00	\$6,721.22
Closing balance	\$5,723.49	\$1,734.28	\$864.00	\$8,321.77
Difference	\$183.52	\$1,399.03	\$18.00	\$1,600.55

Breakdown of income

Bunnings Marion Fundraiser	\$1,416.00
FUSA Grant	\$1,000.00
Member contributions:	
Membership fee	\$400.50
Gear hire	\$320.00
Total	\$3,136.50

Breakdown of expenditure

Gear purchase (SRT equipment, ropes, storage crates)	\$1,451.18
Operational (Catering, photocopying, domain name)	\$84.77
Total	\$1,535.95

Thomas Varga.

Gear Officer's Report for 2012

Purchases 2012:

3 X Yellow LED camping lights	\$30.00	\$10.00ea
2 X Black Plastic crates with lids	\$64.00	32.00ea
60m Dynamic rope	\$310.00	Made into Cow's tails. Sold excess to members
4 X Vertical Flashpoint Harnesses	\$366.96	\$91.74ea
54 Metres 1" tube tape	\$117.18	\$2.17/m
4 S/G Maillons for cows tails	\$42.84	\$10.71ea)
Total	\$930.98	

Office Bearer's Reports

Retired Out of Use in 2012:

74 Metres 1" tube tape
All 50 mm seatbelt tapes
8 sets of cows tails.
4 Harnesses.

To be replaced 2013.

4 harnesses.

6 lights

1 rope. 50 metres. New rope purchased Feb. 2013 along with 21 metres of 1" tube tape, total cost: \$247.00.

Estimated cost to replace the rest ... how long is a piece of string?

Lights are the Most urgent.

On more mundane issues, please note that FUSSI gear **only** goes on FUSSI trips. Any gear lost or damaged on such trips must be paid by those members on that trip. Please return gear in a clean state: wash it in cold water, use a brush to get the dirt out, and dry it in the shade.

This makes for a happy Gear Officer.

Clare Buswell

LIBRARIAN'S REPORT

For those of you who don't know, FUSSI has its own library. Like most libraries, it is full of useful information, most of which you will not find on the Web. Similar to most libraries it is stored in the basement of a building, that most people never see. It is part of our gear store.

As usual we have received our normal range of journals from caving clubs and organizations around the world, with which we have reciprocal exchanges. A lot more of this is coming in using the digitised format. We also purchased a couple of new books, one on Bungonia and the other on Timor Caves.

If you want to know about how caves are formed, or selecting caving gear, to information on caves in Mexico then contact the librarian. Books etc. are available on loan for a month. If anybody finds anything that you think the FUSSI library should purchase then let us know. Similarly if you find any useful stuff from the www then send us the link.

NEWSLETTER EDITOR'S REPORT

The editor urgently wants your trip reports and snippets of info found around the place.

Why write for the Newsletter you may ask? To become famous is the obvious answer! Not only that it looks good on your CV as it shows that you have an ability to write in a style that is not purely academic. There are however, other important reasons: the newsletter lets others know what the club has been doing, acting as a PR notice. Trip reports inform members of what a great trip they missed out on making them so envious that they will not want to miss the next one. Reports also let people know what gear is needed for caving around the place. So go on, send the editor your version of a trip you went on, let everyone know who you think is the greatest chocoholic or snake fiend and thus should not be trusted with those goodies. Remember, never let the truth get in the way of a good trip report and the editor has a stash of $C_7H_8N_4O_2$, available: only to those who write for the FUSSI Newsletter.

Office Bearer's Reports

I have transferred into digital format 24 years' worth of FUSI Newsletters and an early FUSI handbook. These are now on CD. It is my intention over the next few months to send copies to all ASF clubs and organizations with which we have newsletter exchanges. There will be some costs involved with this process: CDs, postage, etc.

Looking forward to getting your trip reports for the 25th year of the FUSI Newsletter.

Clare Buswell

FUSI Annual General Meeting Minutes 2nd May 2013, Flinders University.

Present: Bronya Alexander (BA; recorded the minutes), Clare Buswell (CB), Thomas Varga (TV), Edwina Virgo (EV), Richard Boyle (RB; Chair), Michael Meynell-James (MMJ), Carlos Mesa, Jason Thomann, Louise (Richard's partner).

Apologies: Heiko Maurer, Jan Schmortte and Neville Skinner.

Meeting opened at 6:20pm

Last year's AGM minutes accepted as true and accurate record (BA; CB)

1) Executive Reports

Treasurers report from TV – overall funds are going well with a greater income than expenditure over the last year (figures circulated).

Brief reports from **President** (by CB on behalf of Heiko) and **Secretary** (BA).

Safety Officer report (from CB) mentioned that safety incidents over the last year included a bee sting and small knife cut while cooking. As an added safety precaution, a satellite phone was hired for the Nullabor trip, with a buddy system arranged for regular contact to another FUSI member not on the trip. It was agreed this worked well and a good idea for future Nullabor or other isolated trips. CB suggests that having a current first aid course (or doing a refresher) would be useful - Edwina provided a brochure on First Aid training courses by St John's. Also a suggestion to read the ASF safety guidelines – there is a link from the FUSI website.

The **Library Officer** wasn't in attendance, but Clare mentioned that there needs to be some work done on the library. She has been scanning old FUSI newsletters to keep digital copies and give to other caving clubs, including the original FUSI handbook.

The **Gear Officer** (CB) has mentioned that there is a missing harness with cows tails and maillons, having gone missing some time around June. CB also gave everyone a handout of different headlamps available in light of choosing some to order. There were operational problems with some recently purchased headlamps so the club now owns very few. Preferences are sought for the new lamps.

2) FUSI Committee elections:

All Exec positions were listed as vacant and a call for nominations were made. Each nomination was seconded and there were no disagreements, producing the following Executive Committee for 2013/2014 (incl. initials of nominating party followed by seconder):

FUSSI Annual General Meeting Minutes

President	Heiko Maurer (CB; BA)
Secretary	Bronya Alexander (TV; CB)
Treasurer	Thomas Varga (BA; MMJ)
Safety Officer	Clare Buswell (BA; TV)
Equipment Officer	Clare Buswell (BA; RB)
Library Officer	Edwina Virgo (CB; BA)

CB has requested that she take on an executive position on the proviso that Executive meet every 2 months. This was agreed by Executive.

3) Amendment to FUSSI constitution

It is proposed by CB to add the following to the constitution to make us eligible to apply for funding grants.

“Flinders University Speleological Society is affiliated with the Flinders University Students Association.”

All were in favour of this proposal.

4) Fundraising

The recent BBQ on Apr 20th at Bunnings Marion was again a huge success, raising \$1400 for the club. As this was our first Sat BBQ, it was definitely easier to pick up the onions and sausages that morning (not possible for a Sunday BBQ). Even though we could have started at 7 am and sold a few more, it was agreed that with the limited number of volunteers we had it would have meant a longer day for the same people, plus the need to collect sausages/onions the day before, so probably not worth it.

5) Future club trips

- May 11-12: Joint club trip run by Scouts, Naracoorte – Fox Cave. Also with Latrobe Uni doing geology survey.
- June 8-11: Naracoorte/Mt Gambier. Fox, Sand access???
- July 27-28: Joint trip run by FUSSI. Naracoorte – proposal only at this stage. Caving skills trip.
- Sep 7-8: Joint club trip, Vic Fossil cave at Naracoorte.
- Dec 5?: Joint club trip to Five Corners Cave, Naracoorte.
- August (2nd or 3rd weekend): Flinders Ranges, Mt Sims and Good Friday cave.
- Mark Sefton is planning a Nullabor trip in Sep/Oct
- CB keen to do a 2-week trip in Tassie around Jan 2014.
- EV would love to do Hang Son Doong cave in Vietnam!

6) How to correctly inspect your caving gear

Hands-on demonstration by CB on correct inspection of ropes, harnesses, tapes and helmets.

Meeting closed, 8:30pm

FOX CAVE REVISITED

Clare Buswell

May eleventh saw Mark Sefton and myself drive down for a one day trip to Naracoorte Caves National Park to join up with a crowd of La Trobe Uni students (about 30 of them), undertaking a course on geology, hydrology and a bit of cave surveying. Fox Cave was the site of the latter exercise for which Mark, Clare and Kevin Mott joined them. Our purpose however, was to solve a small problem for the Manager of the Park and look for a suitable exit for extracting an injured person in a stretcher.

The problem for such an issue in Fox is the nature of a narrow letter box squeeze before an equally narrow, disembowelling gate near the entrance! Such squeezing requires flexibility and a degree of thinness! An injured person on a stretcher does not fit this requirement, unfortunately. Numerous maps of the cave were consulted with possible options discussed, dismissed and put on the must look at list.

The most promising lead for this exercise was a narrow crawl, that, on the map, came off one of the main routes in the cave and led back towards the entrance. Importantly, it would bypass the body demanding contortions of the entrance gate. That had to be a plus.

The group of Uni students, cave guides and lecturers took about ½ an hour to negotiate the squeeze and gate. Kevin, Mark and I hung around the entrance and discussed the nature of life the universe and everything. Eventually, minus Kevin, we made our way to where the crawl-way comes off a main passage and proceeded down it. It went for around 10 metres and then pinched out to a height of 12 cm and a width of about 30 cm. It is however, in very easy digging sand! This could well work as a possible extraction passage. From now on, we need to get hold of Kevin's RDF machine and locate the passage above ground as we have a sneaking suspicion that we may well be near another solution tube that hits the surface not far from the entrance of the cave. This will require another trip to Fox to work this out.

Mark and I then proceeded to take some photos in the chamber known as the Madonna Chamber and then back at the breakdown that leads up into the Edelweiss Chamber. We managed to leave the cave around 6 pm, after we had taught a few students about Kevin's RDF machine and located the area near the gate on the surface. A good day's outing with the promise of some great results for the cave's Manager, Deborah Carden.

WHAT'S ON

Flinders	May 27 th - 31 st May	Clare co-ordinating. Trip full.
Melrose	Sunday 1 st June	Clare Co-ordinating. SRT competent only may attend.
Naracoorte	June 8-11 th	Caving on the Park and other areas. RSVP by Sun 26 th May. Long weekend accommodation needs to be booked ASAP. New members welcome.
Uni Exams Period. 26 th June – 6 th July		
Naracoorte	July 27/28	Caving skills weekend. Rigging, ropes, ladders and recalcitrant types. All welcome