



FUSSI

Newsletter

Vol. 22 | No. 1 | 2010



Committee

PRESIDENT

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ASF REPS

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NEWSLETTER EDITOR

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LIBRARIAN

Vacant

WEB MASTER

Edwina Virgo

SAFETY OFFICER

Paul Waclawik

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Front Cover Photo:

Warbla Cave. Nullarbor.

Front Cover Photo Credit:

Clare Buswell.

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SECRETARY'S REPORT

FUSSI had a total of 15 members in 2009, four of who caved with us for the first time! Plus another two new members have just joined us last weekend for a trip down to Naracoorte and Penola where we caved in S102, Quarry cave and L5 Monbulla cave.

A highlight last year was to regain access to Y1 Corra-Lynn cave on the Yorke Peninsula, thanks to a funding grant that helped us re-join the Australian Speleological Foundation's Public Liability insurance. (We hold Public Liability Insurance with the Uni as well.) We made two day-trips to Corra-Lynn mid-year, one including some cave rescue practice with the haul mat. I was thankful to be the "casualty" in this instance and not have to negotiate tight spots with the mat, but I could clearly see it wasn't easy and provides even more incentive to be careful while caving to minimise getting into these situations! Thankyou to Clare for taking us through this exercise!

Other trips were to the Flinders Ranges in September (Clara St Dora, Mt Sims Cave and Mairs cave) and again in October to relocate Good Friday as Mavis had pinched it. Unfortunately we didn't have a major weeklong trip over the last year but perhaps we'll get one in this coming season. Happy caving!

Bronya Alexander. FUSSI Secretary, 2009.

SAFETY OFFICERS REPORT FOR 2009

Last year, 2009, was another safe caving year for FUSSI with no injuries, incidents or bad hair days! Due to this record, I decided that the stretcher that the club owns, AKA drag mat, needed an outing. So we trussed up Bronya and took her for a drag around a few passages in Y1 Corra-Lynn Cave. The basic idea was to demonstrate how difficult it is to extract an injured person from a cave. Importantly it was hoped the exercise helped the decision-making processes involved in cave rescue. That is to answer the question:

Do you have enough people on site *and* do they have the expertise to be able to facilitate a rescue UNAIDED, OR is outside help needed?

As a club, we tend to cave in remoter areas of the State, sometimes hours from medical and rescue help. We owe it to each other to be proficient in first aid, make sure our individual first aid kits are maintained, always in your cave pack and to practice search and rescue techniques. Get a first aid certificate and, if you already hold one, seriously consider doing other modules that are on offer.

A couple of useful things to add to your caving bag:

A thermal top. It weighs virtually nothing, takes up little space, but if you have to sit around waiting for help or for recalcitrant cavers that have lost track of time, then you have something to keep you warm.

Extra in-cave food. It doesn't matter what it is, but if you end up delayed you will have something to give you some energy and not leave you gnawing the leg off your fellow cavers!

Perhaps the most important thing: always, always, tell somebody what cave your group is going to, your expected return time and an overdue time - how long to wait before they should call for help. Never go off exploring in a cave on your own.

SAFETY OFFICER'S REPORT

The ASF Cave Safety Guidelines are still being reviewed. FUSI had input into this review in 2009, with the revised Guidelines being finished for the ASF Council meeting in January of this year. We await the release of the Guidelines soon.

The ASF caving leader and training standards and the cave rescue orientation programme, (CROP) continue to evolve. The ASF National Cave Search and Rescue Commission has formally adopted Al Warild's book, *Vertical* and Dave Merchant's book, *Life on a Line* (2nd ed), as the principal training resources for SRT training. The FUSI library should purchase copies of these two volumes. If anyone is interested in becoming a trip leader then come and talk to me.

Safe Caving.
Clare Buswell.
FUSI Safety Officer, 2009.

EQUIPMENT OFFICER'S REPORT FOR 2009

We did not purchase any gear in 2009, but did sell 8 of our carbide lamps and associated documentation. That cleared out a bit of space. Space ...

Once upon a time we had a secure storage space for our gear and library. In 2009 without any consultation with us, our gear was moved twice and is now in unlocked cupboards or on the floor of a room in the Union building, to which anybody, meaning everyone from Security to the Faculty Dean, can obtain the key. We have had, as a result, a significant amount of gear 'go missing'. Replacement value of around \$4000 - \$5000.

Gear hire fees in 2009 raised \$275.00, which is rather more than in 2008, at \$200.00. We need to urgently replace our caving lights and this is going to cost a considerable amount of money depending on what we buy: Scurions, Petzel Ultra, Sten lights, Princeton Tec Apex or retro-fit our miners lights. The last two on that list, which are the cheapest options, come in around the \$180.00 mark each.

We will also have to look at funding the stolen gear. The Uni insurance will not replace it as there was no proven forced entry into the storeroom! So we will have to get out and do a bit of fund raising, or change our name to Flinders University Speleological Soccer Society Inc. so as to get funding from other bodies. (Anything to do with kicking a ball pays, it seems!)

JUST SO YOU KNOW:

I would like to remind people that it is NOT the equipment officer's job to clean gear lent to members. If you borrow it, return it clean.

I would also like to remind people that club gear is only lent for designated club trips/training days. If gear is returned damaged (or lost) from a trip then the members on that trip are financially responsible for its replacement. (FUSI Standing Orders)

Gear hire fees remained unchanged in 2009: One day trip, for helmet and light only, (eg Y1 Corra-Lynn) \$5.00, Weekend \$10.00. Long trips of more than 3 days, e.g Nullarbor: \$25.00.

If anyone is interested in buying their own equipment then come and talk to me beforehand.

Clare Buswell. Equipment Officer, 2009.

LIBRARY OFFICER'S REPORT

Lots of stuff has come in over the past year and it has all been catalogued. More and more caving club journals are coming in, in electronic form or are accessible from the clubs' websites. This move to electronic format saves us lots of space and brings me to the request that we put our own FUSSI Newsletter, around 17 Volumes of them, on our website. This will require a scanner, and some time. Can anybody help out here? As the library is now mostly sitting on the floor as a result of the last move, we need to have a working bee to sort it out. We need to get hold of some shelving and a few other bits. If anybody has a weekend trundle around garage sales, keep an eye out for bookshelves. The FUSSI library is there for members to use, it contains a **great** deal of information, from how to take decent cave photos, books on caving techniques, as well as info on caving areas. The latter is a must if you are going to run a trip anywhere.

Xu Min. FUSSI Library Officer, 2009.

MINUTES OF THE AGM – MARCH 25, 2010

Chairperson: Michael Meynell-James

Present: Michael Meynell-James, Bronya Alexander (recorded the minutes), Clare Buswell, Paul Waclawik and Debbie Callison, Thomas Varga, Nate Koch, Edwina Virgo, Shane Organ, and two others.

Apologies: Heiko Maurer, Alison Thompson, Matthew Meynell-James, Jan Schmortte, and Vicki Whelan.

Minutes from previous meeting

These were accepted as a correct representation of last year's AGM.

Reports

The Treasurer, Secretary, Safety Officer and Equipment Officer all gave a brief summary for the last year. See above Reports.

Nominations/Elections for Executive Committee

Positions – Occupants voted in for 2010

- President – Michael Meynell-James
- Secretary – Bronya Alexander
- Treasurer – Thomas Varga
- Safety Officer – Paul Waclawik
- Equipment Officer – Nate Koch and Shane Organ
- Web and Newsletter Editor – Edwina Virgo
- Librarian – Vacant – Alison Thompson to be approached
- ASF Representatives – Bronya Alexander and Clare Buswell

Other Business:

Fundraising

1) Sport and Rec Grant

- Last years grant application wasn't successful – there was discrepancy over whether they considered us a "sporting" club.

MINUTES FROM 2010 AGM Con't

- This year's grant application – we'll have to think whether applying this year is worth it. The general consensus at the meeting was that we should still try, but it depends on the time it would take to put in a serious application. The rounds this year are in May and August.

2) Flinders One Grant

- Last year's grant application was successful and was used to subsidize the cost of Public Liability Insurance to the ASF, which gave us access to Corra Lynn cave on the Yorke Peninsula (access is denied without ASF insurance cover).
- This year's grant application – have just applied for funding towards high quality head torches. Depending on what we buy, these cost about 300 Euros or US\$300 each, but Clare notes that the exchange rate right now is pretty good. If we were successful, there is the option of ordering a few at a time and we need to think about how best to do this.

3) BBQ Sausage Sizzle

- FUSSI members held a sausage sizzle outside the Mt Barker Bunnings as a fundraiser in February.
- Profit/Loss – Profit estimates were between \$60-\$100 for the day. Problems were that we had catered for far more sausages than we sold, hence we didn't make much money and were left with lots of sausages that were kindly stored in Clare's friend's freezer.
- What to do with the leftover sausages? Clare mentioned that she belongs to another group who is considering doing a BBQ in May, so there is the possibility of selling the sausages cheaply to them. The idea was also raised that we could just sell portions of it to club members, although there may be problems with it being frozen in bulk so hard to separate without thawing out. Also discussed the possibility of running a BBQ for students on university grounds.
- Suggestions for improvements and other location/events – it was agreed that the BBQ was not a good fundraising method for our group because of the time it took and how little money was raised.

4) Other fund raising ideas

- Sell old equipment?
- Raffle prize?
- Sell chocolate? – this was suggested as they are easy to leave in staff rooms and hence don't take much effort to sell.
- Sponsorship (batteries, camping equipment, lights, fuel)
- Set up a Zip line on campus and charge a fee for a ride.

Costs

1) Membership Fee Structure

- FUSSI fee \$20.00 for the year.
- ASF fee/increase Current fee Structure
 - Introductory \$20.00 Valid for 3 months
 - Student \$68.00 Valid 1 yr
 - Single \$68.00 Valid 1 yr
 - Family \$121.00 Valid 1 yr

2) Gear Hire Fee

MINUTES FROM 2010 AGM Con't

Since 2006 we have charged gear hire on all trips. It was \$10.00 for a weekend and \$25.00 for 4 days onward. Gear Hire fees raise around \$200.00 annually and do not come anywhere near covering the costs of replacing of gear. For example, a harness costs around \$150.00, helmets similar.

Michael proposed that gear hire be only charged on vertical trips. This would still include trips where a rope/ladder is used, not just SRT equipment.

- So the fees for gear hire in 2010 are: \$10/weekend, \$25 for a long trip (eg Nullabor), and no fee for horizontal-only trips such as Corra Lynn.
- This fee structure will be on trial just for this season and should be discussed again at the 2011 AGM.
- Note – the gear hire fee still does not cover loss or damage of gear on a particular trip. If this happens, then the members on that trip are expected to cover those costs.

3) Trip Petrol Costs

- Currently, the club petrol agreement is that passengers cover the full cost of petrol for a trip and the drivers don't pay anything, they pay for the wear and tear of the car. For example, if two cars go on a trip, the combined petrol costs should be calculated and divided equally among passengers, then returned to drivers to cover their full petrol costs.
- This works fine when we have 2 or 3 passengers in each car to share the costs, but a recent trip involved 3 cars and 6 people. In this instance, the 3 drivers collectively paid one third of the petrol costs, and the 3 passengers shared the remaining two thirds (passengers paid twice as much as drivers). However this is not ideal and in future it is agreed to organise cars further in advance to make sure we don't have excess vehicles on a trip.

Contact Details.

Michael stressed the need to have personal info such as email/phone numbers removed from the FUSSI website, and from trip reports. This was strongly agreed to – Heiko to remove these from the website (thanks Heiko!)

Future Trips.

Next local trip

Corra Lynn

Sunday April 18th

Estimated costs include petrol (about \$30 per passenger). BYO lunch. No gear hire costs. There is a key hire fee of \$2.00 ea to cover hire charges for it.

Upcoming trips and activities

- Corra Lynn (with possible rescue activity), Sunday May 23rd

- Training exercise (Flinders Uni footbridge), 2nd May, 10.30 Start.

- Nullarbor

Proposed Date is between Jul 12th and Jul 25th

Expressions of interest/commitment for this trip to be sent to Michael in the next month or two. Costs will be somewhat larger due to the long driving distances.

Meeting Closed.

NEWS FROM THE LIBRARY

ACKMA Journal. No. 78. March. 2010.

For all the batty people in the club, this issue leads with some great bat research at Naracoorte. Fixed transmitters were placed on 6 bats, five females and one male, and tracked for their flight escapades via car and plane over two consecutive nights. (Bats don't travel in straight lines or follow roads. Unco-operative little blighters!) It appears that they visited mates and hunted for food over a long distance, some 25-35km from Bat Cave at Naracoorte. The results are interesting despite the small sample size. Is the long distance travelled from Bat cave related to food supply, or were the temperatures of the two nights on which the flights were followed, conducive to visiting relatives as far away as the Coonawarra? (Sounds like an excuse for a piss up, if you really want to know.) What was also interesting is that on both nights the female and male bats flew in opposite directions. The females went south and the male bats flew northeast over the Victorian border, 35km away. Whatever the answers are, more research is needed.

The other important work done recently has been the identification of ulcers that have been found on bats in Bat Cave. When first observed in 2008, it was feared that it could be as problematic as White Nose Syndrome is in the US. Luckily it has been identified as a parasite, *Riouxgolvavia beveridgei*, that was first described in 1965 and found in *Miniopterus* in Northern Queensland. Still, questions remain as to why there has been a large and steady decrease in the bat population in Bat cave, going from 35,000 in 2000 to 21,000 in 2008. There are a number of variables that could provide the answer, ranging from loss of habitat, to the accuracy of bat population counts, and how well we know where they live over winter.

Sydney Speleological Society Journal Vol. 54. No. 2. March 2010.

This issue covers the rescue that occurred in Bouverie Cave in 2008 in NSW, in which a caver was extracted 54 hours after he had gone missing. It was written by the ambulance officers who attended the rescue, and is illustrative of their perspective.

Sydney Speleological Society Journal. Vol. 54. No. 3. March 2010.

Front cover has some photos of the caver's bane: cave gates, complete with posed photo of an abandoned caver looking for a way out! The gates in question are at Colong, NSW. Trip reports on attempting to locate or relocate cave tags at Yarrangobilly, somewhat thwarted due to heavy rain. A report of a tree planting exercise to replace trees from a previous tree planting exercise that met an untimely end due to frost the previous winter. A continuation of one caver's wanderings around the globe, this time in China, visiting a couple of tourist caves 50km from Beijing. Beijing Shihua Cave is a big cave of seven levels, three of which are open to the public. The two hour tour was worth the money as you got to visit vast caverns, heavily decorated chambers and the river which flows through it.

NSS News. Vol. 68. No. 3. March 2010. Conservation Issue.

An interesting article describing how to re-attach bits of broken speleothem back together again. Uses a bit more than super glue and looks a bit like a cross between a home handy person job and orthopaedic surgery. The issue also lists the amount of conservation and restoration work undertaken by NSS members in the US over the course of the year. For example, one group undertook a cleanup of one of the many lava tubes open to the public in Utah. This particular Lava Tube, known as "Number 2", is apparently a popular spot for glow stick parties. The group undertook a search on the web that revealed many blogs from families and LDS groups discussing these parties. The report goes on to state that the: "NSS members removed 4 large trash bags of glow stick paraphernalia and sent a report to the Park as they were obviously unaware of the amount of destruction going on in their lava tubes."

NEWS FROM THE LIBRARY Con't

Apart from the clearance of rubbish from caves, water testing, looking for E-coli and chemical contamination in cave streams and springs was also undertaken along with gate construction, cleaning flowstone to get rid of muddy tracks, and bat population counts.

One of the more interesting notes in the issue was the fact that the NSS is trying to keep a track on all the volunteer work that its members carry out, and have put up a generic work sheet on its website so the members can record what volunteer work they do. This enables the NSS to apply for grant money for its members and inform land managers of the benefits that cavers provide to them. Sounds like something the ASF should think about doing.

Interesting web sites:

For new discoveries of all things that live underground:

<http://www.physorg.com/news173346378.html>

For batty bits: for a bat that likes to walk rather than fly about!

<http://www.biomedcentral.com/1471-2148/9/169>

http://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2009-07/uons-bwb072909.php

MEMBERSHIP FEES ARE DUE NOW

To avoid confusion the breakdown of fees is as follows:

FUSSI's own fee, is \$20.00 for the year.

This pays for our recurrent costs, eg., buys books for our library, photocopying of maps, maintains our first-aid kits, etc.

Added to this is our membership to the national caving organization, the Australian Speleological Federation (ASF). Why do we belong to this organization?

To gain access to caves on some private properties and on all National Parks, membership to the ASF is basically mandatory. It shows these land owners and managers that we abide by the ASF Safety and Minimal Impact Caving codes, Code of Ethics and hold Public Liability Insurance with the ASF. Importantly, membership to the ASF gives us contact with the caving fraternity around the country and overseas. It is great to be able to go caving in parts of say, Victoria or NSW, and be able to ring up the local cavers and ask for their advice and help. We do the same for them.

ASF FEE		Add FUSSI Fee	Total
Student at Flinders:	\$61.00	\$20.00	\$81.00
Single	\$68.00	\$20.00	\$88.00
Family	\$121.00	\$20.00/person	
ASF Introductory	\$20.00 (Valid 3mths only)	\$20.00	\$40.00

You can pay it via electronic transfer into the FUSSI account.

BSB: 015-210

Account No: 6150-00795

Account Name. FU Speleo Society.

Kindly identify your payment by the words: 'Mship' and your last name.

MEMBERSHIP FEES Con't

Please note:

The Membership fee that new members pay, totalling \$40.00, consists of the ASF introductory fee of \$20.00, which is valid for 3 months, and the yearly FUSSI fee. So if you paid it on 1 March it expires on 1 June. If you continue to come caving after that date you will need to pay the difference between that and the full student rate, which will be \$41.00. This will cover you for the rest of the year.

Some of you may also note that membership fees have risen somewhat, this is because FUSSI is no longer able to subsidize some of the cost of the ASF section of the membership fee. In previous years FUSSI has subsidized approximately a half to a third of the fee, via grants from the Student Union. Blame Johnny Howard and Steve Fielding for dismantling student unions for the increase. There is not a great deal the FUSSI executive can do about it (that's legal anyway!)

CONTACT LIST FUSSI MEMBERS

ALEXANDER, Bronya		
BUSWELL, Clare		
CALLISON, Debbie		
KOCK, Nate		
MAURER, Heiko		
MEYNELL-JAMES, Matt		
MEYNELL-JAMES, Michael		
ORGAN, Shane		
Sam		
SUTER, Katherine		
THOMPSON, Allison		
VARGA, Thomas		
VIRGO, Edwina		
WACLAWIK, Paul		
XU, Jiamin		

WHAT IS ON FOR THE NEXT FEW WEEKS

LAST TRIP

March 19th - 21st South East: Leave Friday night, return Sunday.
Contact: Bronya

LAST MEETING

AGM Tuesday 25th March Bring your friends and tie them up. Kelly Morris Rm. Union Building, 6pm. Wine, cheese and other bribes are offered.

MID SEMESTER BREAK: 12th to 23rd of April

April 18th One day trip to the Yorke Peninsula. BYO Lunch, drinks.
Contact: Bronya

NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 27th April Nullarbor planning, pre-training day and search and rescue session. 6pm. VENUE: Drama Centre OR sports centre TBA. Clare coordinating.

May 2nd Training day. BYO lunch, Fingerless Gloves.
Contact: Paul

May 23-24th Yorke Peninsula. Search and rescue weekend.
Contact Michael:

MID YEAR BREAK: 5th to 23rd of July

July 12-25th Ten day Nullarbor trip. Dates are to be **finalized** by the end of April. Those wishing to go on this trip, must have gone caving with the club beforehand. It gets very dull on the Nullabor if you find out this caving gig is not your thing!

CAVING CONFERENCES

August 2-17th, 2010 International Symposium on Vulcanospeleology. Undara QLD. Pre-Symposium Excursions: - Mt Eccles, Western Victoria. 7-10th August. Info at: ozspeleo@bigpond.net.au.

April 2011 National Conference. Australian Speleological Federation's Biennial Conference. Chillagoe, Far North QLD. JUST GO TO IT.

May 2011 Australasian Cave and Karst Management Association's Conference. Ulverstone. Tasmania.