

And then the fun began! Just like Grindley to hurt himself on the wrong side of so many restrictions and crawlways. However, no one was more surprised than us how well the stretching went! We used every trick in the book and in very short order, our injured friend was on the surface chatting to the nurse and sipping brandy. A very satisfying end, to a successful weekend.

We finished up with a debrief back at Tuckerway Lodge, then after being presented with our certificates, made our way back to Adelaide. All those present have indicated they are happy to be on the SA volunteer call out list in the event a genuine rescue arises. FUSSI are discussing holding another CROP within their club to further increase cave rescue awareness within South Australia. My thanks to Graham, Marie and Ross for assisting so much with the weekend, and everyone else for their enthusiastic participation.

**Richard Harris.**  
CEGSA SAR Officer and ACRC SA Rep.

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### Roe Plain and Warbla Cave, Oct 1-12<sup>th</sup> 2010

October this year saw me participate in a wonderful trip out to the Roe Plain to dive Olwolgin and Burnabbie Caves, followed by a rare opportunity to explore and photograph Warble Cave on the SA Nullarbor. The trip coincided with a visit to Australia by the famous US cave diver Forrest Wilson (a good friend of CEGSA members Ken Smith and Ian Lewis). So it offered a great chance to see some new caves and meet one of cave diving's legends.

#### Fri 1<sup>st</sup> October

Got away at 0530, driving by myself to Eucla to meet up with Paul Hosie (WASG) and Liz Rogers (CDAA) with whom I will be visiting the Roe Plain Caves. The Roe Plain is pretty much Paul's baby. He has led most of the exploration and discovery since it really got going in 2002. I made a good start with light traffic at that time of day and I hit Port Augusta by 0830. Exactly 14hrs after departing Adelaide I roll into Eucla then go out to Weebubbie Cave to camp with Grant Pearce (CEGSA) and family who are also out here for some diving.

#### Sat 2<sup>nd</sup>

Up with the dawn at 0500 (can never sleep in on these trips!) and since I won't be meeting Liz or Paul until midday, a quick trip to Abrakurrie Cave is in order. The desert looks amazing! Green grass and wildflowers everywhere after the big rains this year. We follow the east west track over to Chowilla Doline and then head south to Abrakurrie. It is my first visit here and inspired by Ian Lewis's diprotodon images I want to try and capture some shots of my own using modern digital cameras and light painting with our dive lights.



Abrakurrie Cave - A composite of 3 images stitched together.

An enormous and beautiful cave and it is a terrible shame we can only spend a couple of hours here. Back to Eucla roadhouse to wait for my companions. Liz Rogers arrives on time (well, on one of the 3 time zones anyway!) with her parents Peter Rogers and Cheryl Bass...also well-known cave divers. But Hosie is nowhere to be seen. Hmmm... A couple of hours later he finally calls – from Cocklebiddy Roadhouse! It seems his heavily laden trailer has broken a spring and he ain't goin' anywhere!

No worries, we'll go to him. Liz (and her 50 bags of gear) join me and we drive on to Cocklebidly. Paul has salvaged some spares from another trailer that met a similar fate earlier in the year (Note to self, don't lend Paul Hosie my trailer) so we spend the evening in the dirt making repairs to the springs. Bush mechanics at their best. Out into the nearby bush to camp for the night.

### Sunday 3rd

Yawn...up at 5 again. A few hours on minor tracks out into the Roe Plain, and we arrive at the Olwolgin Campsite. From camp, the cave is 1.3km walk and Paul has intentionally not tried to push a vehicle track through in order to help conserve the cave. The downside is however, all the gear must be carried in. Harden up Harris! It only takes 3 trips then we have all the cylinders, dive gear and underwater photography equipment into the site. Once you are there, entry through the doline to the water's edge is a relatively straight forward affair, with only a small amount of crawlway to negotiate. Since we are here, we may as well have a dive and so in we go. With a maximum depth of 11m and a water temp of 19-21 degrees, we spend a comfortable 65 minutes checking out the beautifully sculptured tunnels. Olwolgin (N1951) is a truly beautiful cave. It is full of the most bizarre and interesting biology one can imagine and I would love to spend time just studying this one site. A huge diversity of bacteria, hanging roots, green tannic water and multiple haloclines make it very photogenic. Paul has used dry cave track marking techniques to guide divers around the more fragile areas in the cave...with great effect. Babylon Lake deep into the cave, has the most toxic air I have ever (accidentally) tasted. Floating dead white centipedes and spiders litter the surface. Huge root bundles cascade into the water below. Simply awesome.



Liz Rogers in the doline at Olwolgin.

### Monday 4<sup>th</sup>

Getting the hang of this bushwalk today...might even be good for me! My 5 o'clock start saw me manage a load before breakfast so I felt very superior by the time the others awoke. Two dives today and Liz and I both took heaps of UW photos. Also lugged my oversized video camera and housing in for a dive. Fair to say I slept very well that night.

### Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup>

Today for something different we are going to check a hole that Ray Gibbons told me about – Blackadder Cave (N3959). He spotted it late in the day on a recent trip but didn't have time to look at it properly. It isn't far from camp, but we have to backtrack a fair way to cross the scrub to access it. Unfortunately it proved to be a small solution tube, which was pretty choked with dirt and rocks. With no sign of it breathing we decided that it wasn't worth a dig at this stage. We didn't see the tag so can't be completely sure we are at the correct spot although there didn't seem to be anything else around. Took a GPS mark to check with Ray.



Paul Hosie next to what we believe to be Blackadder Cave.

One more photo dive in Olwolgin in the afternoon and Liz and I even get to lay a little line in some new passage. Plenty more to find here still it seems! Nice campfire that evening and Liz makes a particularly good herb damper in the camp oven.

### Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup>

Not wishing to confuse my body clock, I got up at 0500 again and retrieved the last of my gear from the cave. Today we are off to Burnabbie to dive although we will continue to use this camp as our base. More dirt tracks to negotiate but the plain is even prettier down here. Pretty, but sharp it seems because I soon had a double puncture and Paul had one also. Plenty of spares and repairs however



so it doesn't hold us up for long. Shortly after, the radio aerial is ripped off. Hmm...getting expensive this trip.

Burnabbie is good... and bad. Good because you can drive right up to the cave. Bad, because you must grovel through a 20m mud filled flattener with your gear to get to the water's edge. Once there, gearing up occurs almost lying on your side. Most inconsiderate! But once into the water and away, another wonderful and weird Roe Plain's cave awaits. Amazing calcite rafting, rocks covered in black bacteria, kilometres of pretty sculptured passage and more delicate tree roots. Definitely worth every ounce of effort. A nice long dive almost to the end of the main passage, and plenty of photos taken.

On the way back to camp we stopped to look at a large dry doline which has been tagged N2782. Just under the tag, the dirt floor doesn't quite reach the limestone ceiling and suddenly with the idea of finding my own little Burnabbie, I thought I could feel a breeze gently emanating from the area. Hosie agreed and we had a bit of dig through the soft soil, gradually enlarging the entrance. It was encouraging enough to decide we would return tomorrow with tools and give it a good go.

### Thursday 7<sup>th</sup>

0530, a sleep in! Whoohoo I must be starting to relax. After brekky we are straight back to N2782. Better prepared, Paul and I put in a good 4-5 hours digging while Liz dragged soil away from the entrance. I seem to be somewhat... ahem, larger than Hosie so he spent most of the time up the pointy end of the dig while I lay half way back retrieving his dirt. We probably got in a good 7-8m before running out of steam. A breeze is definitely present and it certainly has potential for another go some time in the future.

Resembling more mole than man, I decided there was little point trying to de-dirt myself when we were about to go diving anyway. So over to Burnabbie for a final dive (with video camera), which I had to turn early when one of my regulators completely failed not far in. So I waited in the entrance pool while Liz and Paul completed their dive. Exited in the evening and back to camp for a small party as we would be leaving Paul tomorrow, while Liz and I headed east back to our next adventure at Warble Cave in SA.

### Friday 8<sup>th</sup>

Got away mid morning and took the Telegraph track to Madura for a shower and a burger. Are the burgers better at Madura, Eucla or Cocklebiddy?? Further research required.

Mid afternoon saw us at Warbla Cave (N1) where we met Ken Smith and Forrest Wilson, Cheryl Bass and Peter Rogers and Grant Pearce. Peter has obtained a scientific permit to dive this reference cave, with the primary goal of photographing and videoing the bacterial colonies here. Everyone except Forrest is down the cave so Liz and I decide to load our gear in and see if we can manage a dive before night-time.



The team at Warbla Cave L-R Liz Rogers, Ken Smith, Cheryl Bass, Peter Rogers, Grant Pearce, Forrest Wilson and Harry Harris.



Warbla Cave.

We could, and we did and what a pretty place it is too. The limestone here is the purest white, or so it seems after the green tinged walls of the Roe Plain caves. Access is moderately hard work carting gear down to the water, but much easier than Cocklebiddy so I am happy with that! No cameras this time, just relaxing and after a great dive we return to the surface late at night to eat a steak that Liz's mum has kindly prepared for us. Life is good!

**Saturday 9<sup>th</sup>/Sunday 10<sup>th</sup>**

Back on SA time and suddenly it seems I can sleep in again. One big dive each day and we have seen most corners of this lovely site, taken a zillion photos and videoed the place to death. Grant Pearce has provided a fabulous lightweight HP hose that goes all the way to the water, so we fill tanks underground without the worry of dragging them out each day. But eventually all good things come to an end and everything has to be hauled out...I hate that bit! Nothing makes you sleep like carrying dive gear out of a cave.

**Monday 11<sup>th</sup>**

With everything out of the cave, Grant Pearce who will be joining me for the drive home, get away at midday and with the bit between our teeth, make it all the way back to Adelaide. Home a day early I am in the good books at home and have a chance to wash out some gear before heading back to work on Wednesday. A top trip.

**Richard Harris.**

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**Waraweena Sanctuary and Sliding Rock Mine, July 12-17<sup>th</sup> 2010. Part 2.**

This part was inadvertently omitted from the report in Vol 55 NO 3.

Depth Measurement in Shafts

Three shafts which contained water were plumbed with a lead weight on a nylon cord. A second rope was stretched across the top of the shaft to allow the plumbing weight to be dropped in the centre and at other places in the shaft. We attempted to find to the deepest area and any possible holes in the choking of the shaft. GPS coordinates were taken alongside each shaft and these are given as map coordinates (UTM UPS) using the Australia Geodetic Datum 1966 to match the topographic map of the area. Coordinates in a different format can be provided on request.

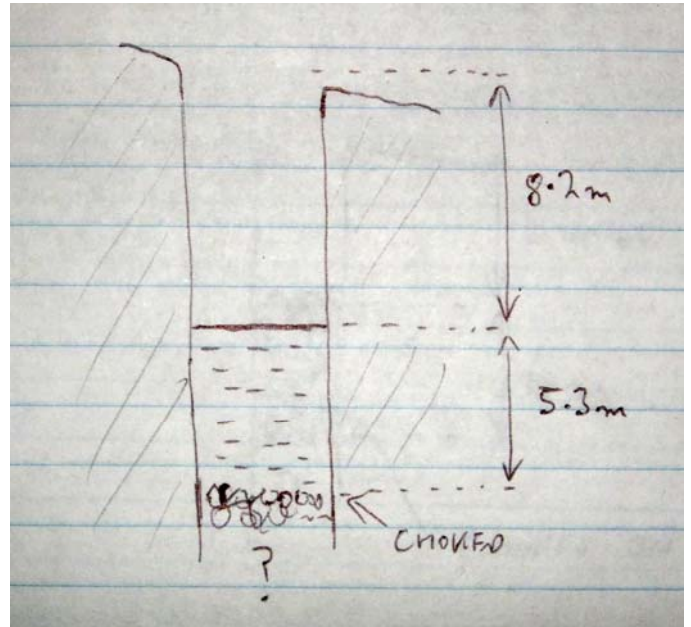
“Shaft 1”

This is a large and obvious water filled shaft near the cornish chimney for the old pumphouse.

Coordinates 54J 0270236 6593208 (easting and northing)

Depth from ground surface to water level 8.2 metres

Depth of water, surface to rock choke 5.3 metres



“Shaft 2”

This is a deep shaft 55 metres uphill from shaft 1. The fencing on one side of the shaft had been undercut by material falling in the shaft. To improve safety two droppers and four runs of fencing wire were installed further back from the hole

Coordinates 54J 0270207 6593162 (easting and northing)

Depth from ground surface to water level 13.5 metres

Depth of water, surface to rock choke 1.5 metres

