

# SumpThink

## March 2000: Issue #265

### Club Night

Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2000

*Topic* Mt Owen Trip

*Speaker* Barry Cullen and participants, with photographs

*Venue:* Small Gallery, Turnbull House 7.30pm

*Contact:* Barry C 527 7332

Prior to the meeting club members meet informally in the Backbencher from 6pm for a meal and chat.

### Climbing Night

Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> March 2000

WCG **activity night** at *Hangdog Climbing Cavern*, 453 Hutt Road. See you from 6pm to 9pm. Committee members will be there to provide the opportunity to climb, practise SRT, and find out about caving gear. Bring your friends and family along too.

**Please book in** to ensure a safe ratio of instructors, and to allow for sufficient rigging.

*Contact* Bob W 04 298 9281 [star-plus@clear.net.nz](mailto:star-plus@clear.net.nz). Discounts for entry and for any gear you purchase. Food is available just down the road at Station village, or Pizza delivery.

Bring your gear if you have it, including helmet, electric light, harness, SRT equipment, etc.

### Call for Articles

The **SumpThink** editor requires articles for **SumpThink**.

Articles can be on WCG activities and events, (including those from last or earlier years), other caving trips, eg personal ones, or related activities undertaken by club members, eg tramps, skiing, canoeing etc.

Factual articles on Speleology or related subjects are sought.

Photographs, particularly scanned photographs are sought, either on their own, or accompanying articles.

The **SumpThink** editor also need volunteers to write up an account of the monthly meetings, if enough volunteers can be found this would mean each person doing one about every two or three years!

Articles and photographs can be submitted electronically or by traditional means.

Please support your club and make a record of its achievements.

thankyou

**Simon**

**SumpThink** editor

[sumpthink@caving.wellington.net.nz](mailto:sumpthink@caving.wellington.net.nz)

## Events Calendar 2000

Wed 8 Mar 7:30pm	WCG	Club Meeting Mt Owen trip reports and photographs Contact Barry Cullen 527 7332	<a href="mailto:bc@caving.wellington.net.nz">bc@caving.wellington.net.nz</a>
11 to 12 Mar 2000	WCG TTC	Makuri Coonoor <b>Puketoi</b> ; talk in Palmerston North Saturday night Contact Simon Davis 938 1956	<a href="mailto:sd@caving.wellington.net.nz">sd@caving.wellington.net.nz</a>
31 Mar 1 to 2 Apr 2000	WCG	Puketiti Contact Rob S 04 298 8584	
Wed 12 Apr 7:30pm	WCG	Club Meeting <b>Kayaking</b> in South America Contact Mike Wood 477 0909	<a href="mailto:president@caving.wellington.net.nz">president@caving.wellington.net.nz</a>
21 to 24 Apr 2000 Easter	NSG WCG	Patarau, North West Nelson Contact Jane and Jennifer	
Wed 10 May 7:30pm	WCG	Club Meeting Under the Motorway – Knots Contact Rob S 04 298 8584	
12 to 14 May 2000	WCG TTC	<b>Okupata</b> (Fraser's Bluff) Survey Prospect (optional long weekend) Contact Simon Davis	<a href="mailto:sd@caving.wellington.net.nz">sd@caving.wellington.net.nz</a>
Queen's Birthday 2000	WCG	<b>Mahoenui</b> Contact TBA	<a href="mailto:President@caving.wellington.net.nz">President@caving.wellington.net.nz</a>
Wed 7 Jun 2000	WCG	Committee Meeting Contact Barry C 527 7332	<a href="mailto:secretary@caving.wellington.net.nz">secretary@caving.wellington.net.nz</a>
Wed 14 Jun 7:30pm	WCG	Club Meeting Fifth of the Year Contact TBA	<a href="mailto:president@caving.wellington.net.nz">president@caving.wellington.net.nz</a>
Sat 8 Jul 2000	WCG	Mid Winter <b>Swim</b> Contact Rob S 04 298 8584	

## Contributions to SumpThink

Keep those contributions coming. Please **email** contributions to the editor, or put them on a floppy disk or piece of paper and snail mail them (2 High Street, Petone).

**Deadline** for **SumpThink** is the **third Wednesday** of the month. **SumpThink** is published monthly from February to December.

## WCG on the Internet

WCG has changed its email list provider. The pages have been tidied up and new links and content, notably some useful documents, added. Feedback and contributions are always welcome.

<b>caving.wellington.net.nz</b>	Wellington Caving Group Home Page
<b>caving.wellington.net.nz/sumpthink</b>	SumpThink
<b>www.egroups.com/lists/wgtncaving</b> or <a href="mailto:wgtncaving-subscribe@egroups.com">wgtncaving-subscribe@egroups.com</a>	Email group, for the latest in event information Subscribe on the web or by email
<b>www.egroups.com/lists/sumpthink</b> or <a href="mailto:sumpthink-subscribe@egroups.com">sumpthink-subscribe@egroups.com</a>	Email delivery of <b>SumpThink</b> Subscribe on the web or by email
<b>caving.wellington.net.nz/nzcaving</b>	Index to NZ Caving sites and publications, Includes CCG's <b>Cavity</b> and NSG's <b>Caverndish</b>

Canterbury Caving Group are now at [http://www.geocities.com/ccg\\_nz](http://www.geocities.com/ccg_nz)

Hamilton Tomo Group are now at <http://www.geocities.com/htgnz>

## Contact WCG 2000

<b>President</b>	Michael Wood	477 0909	<a href="mailto:president@caving.wellington.net.nz">president@caving.wellington.net.nz</a>
<b>Secretary</b>	Bob Wellington	04 298 9281	<a href="mailto:secretary@caving.wellington.net.nz">secretary@caving.wellington.net.nz</a>
<b>Treasurer</b>	Rob Sowerbutts	04 298 8584	
<b>Membership Convenor</b>	Rob Sowerbutts	04 298 8584	
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	Mark Phillips	235 8173	
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	Rachel Miles	801 9979	<a href="mailto:rm@caving.wellington.net.nz">rm@caving.wellington.net.nz</a>
<b>Gear</b>	Bob, Rob, or Mike C.		<a href="mailto:gear@caving.wellington.net.nz">gear@caving.wellington.net.nz</a>
<b>SumpThink Editor</b>	Simon Davis	938 1956	<a href="mailto:sumpthink@caving.wellington.net.nz">sumpthink@caving.wellington.net.nz</a>

## For Sale

**Calcium Carbide.** At Club Meetings, or from the Treasurer. Coffee or Milo tin quantity to club members and approved non members.

**Varta AA alkaline batteries.** Superb value. Contact Bob W or catch him at club night to make your purchases.

## Sell and Swap

**SumpThink** carries **Buy, Sell, and Swap** notices from members. Please send to the editor.

## March Hangdog Climbing Shop Special

Rope Bags. Contact Hangdog for prices and orders.

To **order** ring Hangdog on 589 9181, email [hangdog@paradise.net.nz](mailto:hangdog@paradise.net.nz), or visit 453 Hutt Road.

# November Caving at Waitomo

*With Simon, John, Barry, Bob, Ann-Marie, Sue, Mark*

After a long and forgettable drive on a Friday night after work, we gratefully crashed at the HTG hut at Waitomo. *Saturday* saw us head off to **Rumbling Gut** after a suitably late breakfast. We took a couple of goes to get there, cos the leading car took a bit of persuading to get to the right place [*blush – ed*]. We entered R G at the Phosphate Pot, a sporty start to a sporty cave. After dropping down a few passages we reached an intersection. A branch to the right leads to a small aven. The main passage continues on through uneventful cave to the top of Last Minute squeeze; an awkward rocky crevice about 10m long that includes a sharp turn, and has to be done lying on your side.

However, there were no casualties and we continued to the next challenge, a squeeze up a steep slope with few handholds. People tried a variety of ways of ascending: on their fronts, on their backs, starting one way and turning over halfway through.

A rift continues above this squeeze, dropping back into the stream after a while. Finally we reached a deep pool which had only a chain across it as a way to get past. Despite their best attempts to persuade us greenhorns to walk through the pool using the chain to pull ourselves along, we found that you can cross the pool by walking the chain.

The exit wasn't far past this last obstacle, and it was here that the navigation really began, we were in the bottom of a basin full of trees, and the route to the cars was a bit of a guess. After going round in circles for a little while we got out, and went back to the hut, calling it quits for the day. Meanwhile, Ann-Marie had been having a strenuous day in Te Kuiti. We had a typical WCG feed for tea; smoked seafoods, cheeses and crackers for entrée, then mains and a big dessert too.

*Sunday* – decided to check out the sights in **Waipuna**, and see if we could also poke around in Luckie Strike. Waipuna's entrance is tame in comparison to Rumbling Gut's, and the early downstream reaches of the cave are easy to travel through. Waipuna abounds with formations, particularly flowstone. Some of the self-explanatory flowstone formations include 'elephant', the citadel & the promenade deck. Amazing stals/calcite formations include the portcullis, electrodes, umbrella, the leaning tower of Pisa, the totem pole and Mt Egmont.

One area of Waipuna has a whole heap of different sorts of formations all adjacent to each other: stals, rim-pools, flowstone etc. The bandleader is a stalagmite about 2m high but only 50mm in diameter, and has been glued together lots of times from clumsy caver's efforts. Another dozen or so tall, thin stals, nearby make up the Mexican Garden, cos they look like tall knobby cactii. Anyway, enough of the descriptions, we eventually got muddy working our way up into the back recesses of the cave, after checking out the 'Pizza parlour' (home of the Leaning Tower).

Barry found out the hard way how kneewrecker crawl gets its name, as he forgot his kneepads. From the back of kneewrecker, there were two possibilities; Barry could make his knees even worse by taking kneewrecker on again, or we could get wet by crawling through the stream under some stals. We got wet.

We finally made it back to the entrance and opted to move on to look at **Luckie Strike** rather than do any upstream exploring in Waipuna. Unfortunately Trouty started feeling crook so we left him to suffer while we threw a rope down Luckies' hole and clambered in. We checked out the cascading pools at the entrance, then used our thrown rope to climb back out.

We thought we'd better check on Ann-Marie, and it was just as well, as she was exhausted after spending a hectic day in Te Kuiti, so we took her home, the poor dear.

All up a good weekend of exploring and thanks to the organisers for their efforts.

**John R**

# John and Jane's January Jaunt

## Waitomo Caving

See Jane's poem in the previous issue of **SumpThink** for the actual action; I thought I'd just give a brief description of the caves we did, for anyone who hasn't been in them.

### *Rumbling Gut*

Sporty, about 2 hours through, a couple of rocky squeezes, some water, not much mud, few formations.

### *California Dreaming / Moa Ana*

Only just being mapped by Kieran & co., this cave joins up to Moa Ana, just a few k's up the hill from the HTG hut. A 20 minute walk over a hill then a 30m abseil that is blessed by passing through a light waterfall. After getting soaked you're ready to make your way along about 1km of streambed about 3-4m high & 1m wide, but often too narrow to wear a backpack.

Shortly before the stream ends in a muddy sump the main passage is left via a small climb through a hole near the roof. This passage is followed for some time and becomes a kneewrecker that puts Waipuna's kneewrecker to shame. The passage is left through a small hole that leads into the back of Moa Ana cave. Few formations except flowstone in California.

Somewhere in the depths of Moa Ana is a tricky little bit that requires a wiggle up an exceedingly slippery muddy bank, a 4m vertical climb (freeclimb for the 1st one up), closely followed by a 2m climb over another muddy bank. From here my memory fails me but I can guarantee three things; 1 It was dark. 2 It was dirty. 3. We loved it. Anyone help me out here? You leave Moa Ana through a lovely wide, sandy cavern that previous survey parties have slept in. About 3-4 hours from California through to entrance of Moa Ana.

### *Zweibohlen, Gardners Gut*

Couple of k's drive southwest, then a 10 minute walk down from the road to an entrance where tapes are optional. About 2 hours through a lovely mix of sporty and straightforward sections. Some pretties. A couple of interesting drops of 4 & 8 metres, in height. Used a ladder to drop 8m into a streambed with lots of glowworms overhead. Good fun, first-timers love it.

### *Virginia*

Near Rumbling Gut, a 34m drop into the middle of the cave. Upstream is not muddy, and has formations such as flowstone, rim-pools containing the 'fried eggs', crystal pool. Our access to the upstream end included a full immersion for 5m or so; found out that 'blue' sperm don't swim. Looked at the map later and found out that a dry alternative access exists. Downstream, not much more than mud & rocks. Apparently a couple of cavers are trying to 'mud-dive' the bottom sump – bugger that!. About ½ hour each way upstream & down, plus lots of time to pull yourself 34m back up a rope!.

### *Lime*

Access from the main road past Rumbling Gut. Small, interesting cave with lovely crystal pools including one with cave rafts. To get into Lime, you can go down a stream that passes in and out of being underground, with lots of fun boulder-hopping, and glow-worms etc on the way through. About 2 hours for the return trip from the car.

### *Luckie Strike*

We only made it to the big cavern, about 1/3 of the way in. We used a lot of bridging in our route from the dry entrance to Frankton Junction, and again on the way back out via a high route littered with pretties. Going in is reasonably quick once you're past Frankton, but there are some moderately physically demanding bits further in. Took us 3 hours to get to the big cavern & back. Our rope thrown in the entrance didn't wash through the pools at the entrance, so we were forced to chimney back up to the dry entry on the way back out – adventurous. Don't leave this cave till last on your expeditions, or you may not have enough ergs to pull it off.

## Skiing Manganui 1999

This trip was three years in the making. It was cancelled two years ago due to an abysmal forecast, and last year through lack of snow, it was with some surprise there were no names on the list on the Tararua Tramping club night prior. Especially since it was the only ski field in the North Island fully open, and with full snow cover. A couple of casual enquiries didn't amount to a firm booking that night. The next day an email to an ex WCG club member in Auckland got the trip under way, and then one of the inquirers from Tuesday signed on. . (*Ed's note: just thought I'd throw this article in*)

Bill and Simon left Friday at 4pm, getting out of town before the traffic. Had a dinner that couldn't be beat at Jabies Kebabs on the main street of Wanganui, and rolled up to the Taranaki Accommodation Lodge in Stratford around 9ish. This was the former nurses home now used as a backpackers and very comfortable it was (recommended). We settled in and Jim arrived just after 10.

Saturday found us driving up the sealed mountain road through rain that turned to snow. A pleasant, but cool walk took us to the goods lift where we left our gear, and strolled round the gorge.

The T bar was operating and we wasted no time. The cloud and visibility came and went, but the snow was good, and the public shelter was a good place to take lunch. We tried a run up the top tow, but a wet rope, borrowed nutcrackers, and whiteout put us off. Some of the locals had surfed before breakfast, come up for the day's skiing, and hoped to get another wave or two in afterwards!

After staying till last run on the T, we headed down to pick up a refill of O'Neills finest from a boutique brewery south of town. After trying a handle or three, having a game of darts, we had to stay for pizza and a chat with mine host and friends. Apres ski indeed.

Sunday was one out of the box, the cone of Taranaki, smothered with snow down into the bush, beckoned, no pulled. It was calm on the field, with hard snow that was a pleasure to traverse, and bright sunlight. With our own nutcrackers we were up the top tow as soon as it opened at midday, when the snow had softened. This tow provides access to a superb slope, with a consistent gradient, and a variety of routes. I really shouldn't tell you how good it was. Suffice it to say this is going to become a regular skiing destination for me. A friendly club member showed us some of the best runs.

The top tow ran until after the T finished for the day, but the sun went, and we had to get home. By request we had kebabs again in Wanganui.

We were Jim Simmons, Bill Dashfield, Simon Davis, and skied out. Now where was that excuse for staying Monday.

# 2000 Mt Owen Expedition

## Quotes (anonymous)

I fell on my front landing pads, they saved my wrists - female

We have things to scratch too - female

I prefer batteries - female

I put a squeeze into Jane - male

Who's for Camomile tea - female

L is for leg, R is for arm - male

I'm having trouble getting my leg over - female

That's a big beast you have there, and not to mention your pack - male

OooOooo Mike - female

Point the light at the stalagmite on the ceiling - male

I once met a Spaniard - male

## Participants

Barry C - esteemed organiser and dehy Chef, Bob W, Pru W, Rob S, Mike C, Jane F, John R, Simon D, Sue P, Jennifer R, Debbie C, Rachel M, Gavin H.

## Itinerary

*Wed*

Meet at terminal, pack truck. 9:30am ferry Arahanga to Picton. Second lunch at Blenheim. Stop at St Arnaud. Slips on the Buller Road west of Hope River. Camp at Owen River camp ground, wet, wet wet.

*Thur*

Fly in after cloud clears 11am ish. Set up camp. Walk to Bulmer Cavern Main entrance – rigged and trialled, and to Panorama entrance

*Fri*

Two parties to Bulmer Main Entrance, one visiting Lions den, both out at Panorama. One party in via Panorama

*Sat*

Bohemia, to Main chamber.

*Sun*

Walkers to Amphitheatre and Mt Owen around Castle Basin. Cavers to Panorama, Eye in the Sky and Whale's Mouth

*Mon*

Walk out departing 9:00 to 9:30 plus, 10:30 to 3:30, fast trip to the 6:30pm ferry Aratere, never seen Bob's truck move so fast.

*Next Year*

Suggestions are being sought: Te Anau, return to Mt Owen, Nettlebed, ...

## Photographs

## Wellington Caving Group Proposed Change to the Constitution

### Introduction

The WCG Committee proposes the following amendment to the Group's constitution by inserting the underlined text in the following section. The amendment limits the period for which a member is able to hold any given elected position.

#### **Amendment**

#### **6 OFFICERS**

- a. The Officers of the Group shall be:
  - (i) President
  - (ii) Secretary
  - (iii) Treasurer ( provided that the Office of Secretary and Treasurer may be held by the same person)
- b. If the President cannot attend meetings, a Chairman is to be elected for the duration of the President's absence.
- c. The Officers of the Group shall be financial members of the Group and shall be elected at the Annual General Meetings, except that in the event of the resignation or loss from office of an Officer, the Committee shall have the power to appoint a replacement for the period up until the Annual General Meeting. Such Officers shall be nominated and seconded by financial members of the Group and shall hold office until the next Annual General Meeting, but will be eligible for re-election (provided that no person shall hold any single elected office for more than three consecutive years.)
- d. The Officers elected at the Annual General Meeting shall take office at the end of the meeting at which they were elected.
- e. Officers elected by postal vote shall take office at the following meeting.

### Discussion

The committee is concerned that committee members may become 'stale' in their positions if they remain in them for an extended period. By limiting this period it is hoped that Group members will be encouraged to allow themselves to be elected onto the committee, providing new faces and a fresh approach.

The amendment does not prevent an elected member, at the end of a three year term in office from being elected into a general position, or any other elected position.

#### **Voting**

We propose discussing this matter at the February and March 2000 meetings, before putting the proposal to a postal vote, to close at the April 2000 meeting. The results and, if passed, the amended constitution, will be published with the May 2000 Sumpthink.

M K Wood  
President  
WCG

15-Nov-1999





Wellington Caving Group  
SumpThink Newsletter  
Return to: 2 High Street; Petone.

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