

DEFINITIONS AND COLLOQUIAL TERMINOLOGY.

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Many words have been introduced into the English language over the last hundred years. Some because there is a need to describe a new item or process which has been discovered. Some examples are Karabiner, Piton and Wetsuit. On other occasions a new word or group of words may be used to describe an action or new sport. Examples which spring to mind are Chimneying, Cave Diving, Prusiking and Abseiling. There are the words which are spelt differently, depending which school you went to. A classic example would be Karabiner or Carabiner. The need to formalise the spelling and exact definition was recognized many years ago when the ASF first published in 1968 the Speleo Handbook, edited by P. Matthews.

The 1985 Australian Karst Index added to this on-going process with an excellent glossary of terms listed in section 14. The authors must be commended on such a comprehensive list of definitions for words in use up to that period.

Currently there are a number of slang and colloquial caving terms which have been used widely for many years. The exact definition of these words remain open for interpretation, as there appears to be no recent listing of their correct meaning. Hopefully this following list will be thought provoking and set the wheels in motion toward having some additional words officially recognized in the Speleological fraternity.

ARMCHAIR CAVER An experienced caver who is now incapable of caving or a person still able to, but has lost the urge to actually go caving. On the other hand they may spend much of their time writing or reading caving books and hours may be spent reminiscing over photographs from past trips.

BOOBTUBE A clear flexible tube about one metre long. Used like a straw to drink water from small crevices or inaccessible pools. The original name was the Super Syphon Sucker, first utilised widely around 1973-74 by Jeffrey Smith a Venturer Scout in the Kotara Unit (N.S.W). Jeffrey used it extensively on bushwalking, caving and cross-country skiing trips and the use of such a tube spread widely among outdoor enthusiasts from there. Several name changes occurred over the next few years, however during the last 10 to 15 years the name Boob Tube has been most widely used.

BOULDER CHOKE A collapse of rock from floor to roof which makes further progress difficult or dangerous.

FOUL AIR Cave atmosphere containing a high concentration of carbon dioxide (CO₂) which affects a cavers respiration and metabolism. This term usually refers to air which contains 1% CO₂ (by volume) or greater. Simple test:- A lighted match will go out if foul air is present.

GROT-HOLE A small insignificant cave with no possible leads, often tight and difficult to manoeuvre oneself in.

GROUND-TROG The systematic search of the surface ground for cave entrances.

JUG-HANDLE A small loop of rock shaped like a handle, used as an anchor point or hand hold to aid climbing.

KRAB Short for Karabiner. A steel or aluminium alloy snap-link used in rope work.

MICROBOD A term used to describe a child or an adult caver of small build - able to fit through narrow passages and seemingly able to dislocate their joints to negotiate tight corners.

OVERHANG A ledge or shelf of rock which projects past the rest of the rock face below. Also referred to as part of an abseil (either above or below ground), where the abseiler is hanging free of the rock face. This occurs once an abseiler has passed a projection of rock which makes it impossible for the abseiler's feet to touch the rock face without swinging on the rope.

ROOF-SNIFFING The act of edging oneself along a small water-filled passage, on your back with only sufficient airspace for eyes and nose. It should be pointed out that this practice can be very dangerous for inexperienced persons.

SCROGGIN An edible random mixture of nuts, dried fruit, rice crisps, unwrapped lollies, chocolate and edible seeds. The mixture is consumed by cavers, bushwalkers and other outdoor enthusiasts as a source of high energy food. It is made up to suit an individuals taste and requirements.

TOURI A group of tourists at a commercially developed caving area. In other words those people who go on guided or self guided tours where fixed lighting is provided to view the caves. "Stay out of sight of the tourists (touri)", is often one of the conditions attached to a caving permit, where the permit cave is in the close vicinity of a commercial tour cave.

TROG-UP Attiring oneself in suitable clothing and necessary equipment in readiness to go underground.