

1987 S.U.S.S. EXPEDITION TO MT. ANNE

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Abstract

Sydney University Speleological Society (S.U.S.S.) is running a three week, 15 person expedition to the Mt. Anne area in Tasmania. The expedition began on January 4th, 1987.

AIMS OF THE EXPEDITION

The Mt. Anne area contains one of Australia's deepest caves, Anne-A-Kananda, which has been descended to -373 metres. The relief of the Dolomite in the Mt. Anne area is about 700 metres, probably the greatest local relief of Karstic rock attained anywhere in Australia (Kiernan, 1979). These two factors, with the more than adequate rainfall, indicate a potential for deep caves, by Australian standards.

The expedition aims to explore the area, looking for caves with good depth potential. The caves discovered will be surveyed and mapped. The expedition intends producing a publication on the area in the near future. The following information is being compiled:

- cave descriptions and maps
- suggested rigging details
- entomology - Graeme Smith from Bayer
- water chemistry - Julia James from Sydney University
- geology - Martin Scott from Sydney University
- botany - Joy Everett from The Royal Botanic Gardens

The area has excellent potential for an Australian depth record.

FUNDING AND BUDGET

The expedition has a budget approaching \$20,000. Funding for the expedition was obtained from the following sources:

- expedition fees are anticipated to be \$200 - \$250 for the 3 weeks
- generous sponsorship from Dick Smith of \$5,000
- Australian Geographic will pay \$1,000 for an article on the expedition for publication
- the University of Sydney Union sponsored the food for the expedition to the extent of \$2,000
- Wildsports, formerly Caving Equipment, provided 200 metres of rope and 2 caving packs
- Aquasea Products provided waterproof flashes, housing, arms, and contacts for the expedition
- Australian Airlines provided airfares at a 50% discount

ORGANISATION AND TECHNICAL ASPECTS

The bulk of the food, caving gear, first aid supplies, plus the generator and carbide were packed into tea chests in Sydney. The 27 tea chests were shipped by sea to Hobart and stored in Rick Tunney's garage. The gear was then transported by road to the Scotts Peak Road.

A small party walked up to Mt. Anne and selected a campsite and prepared a helicopter landing site. The following day, a chartered helicopter was used to transport all the gear and some of the people up to the campsite. The campsite is about a 20 minute walk from the Anne-A-Kananda doline towards Mt. Anne. The helicopter will be used to transport the gear out when the expedition is finished.

A large First Aid kit was assembled for the expedition. As you probably have heard, a member of the expedition dislocated his shoulder while exploring the surface of the ridge. A Westpac rescue helicopter was in the area and they insisted on rescuing the injured person. He was transported to hospital in Hobart, where his shoulder was manipulated back into place. This person has now recovered and will be returning to Mt. Anne on Sunday, January 11. However, he will be restricted to surface work and map and information collation.

There was some interpersonal conflict in Hobart before the expedition left for Mt. Anne. However, this has now been solved and once on the mountain everyone's enthusiasm increased dramatically.

The caves will be surveyed using topofilms, Suunto compasses and clinometers, and fibreglass tape. Data will initially be processed on the mountain, using a portable computer. The final surveys and maps will be produced using computers in Sydney.

#### PROGRESS TO DATE

About 70 large dolines have been noted on stereographic aerial photographs. Several more dolines have been located by surface exploration.

On January 8th, several members of the expedition made a report on the progress of the expedition. The report was sent to an amateur radio operator in Hobart. The radio operator recorded the report and sent the tape to Sydney by overnight courier. The recording was used in the presentation of this paper at the 16th Biennial Conference of A.S.F. Inc.

Highlights of the report were:

- it had snowed continuously overnight to the depth of 5 cm
- a cave had been explored to a depth of 150 metres
- several new tracks had been cut

#### CONCLUSION

The Mt. Anne dolomite is in a remote alpine region adjacent to the South West Wilderness. The area has not been thoroughly studied and has excellent potential for some really great caving. On behalf of the members of the expedition, I would like to thank our sponsors for their generous support. They are:

- Dick Smith
- Australian Geographic
- The University of Sydney Union
- Aquasea Products Pty. Ltd.
- Wildsports
- Australian Airlines

There has been excellent support from the Tasmanian Caverneering Club. They have 5 members present on the expedition. These people are: Rolan Eberhard, Nick Hume, Stephan Eberhard, Rick Tunney and Janine McKinnon. S.U.S.S. members present on the expedition are: Pat Larkin, Keir Vaughan-Taylor, Phil Cole, Ross Bannerman, Martin Scott, Leonie Waterman, Danielle Gemenis, Rolf Adams, Anne Gray, Graeme Smith, Guy McKanna, and Derek Hobbs. Other people present were Nick Hawkes from England and Paul Boustead (UNSWSS).

#### REFERENCE

Kiernan, K., 1979, Caving; in "The South West Book - A Tasmanian Wilderness" Australian Conservation Foundation, p. 157-9

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