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CALCITE

Newsletter of the Highland Caving Group.

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LIVERPOOL, N. S. W.

EDITORIAL.

"IS S.U.S.S. Necessary"

At Easter, HCG. members had an opportunity of seeing, for the first time, the performance of an official SUSS. trip. We saw 40 odd people at Coolamon, spending their entire weekend "grogging on" and singing around the campfire, although late one afternoon a few found their way to the top of the bluff over the Coolamon Cave, to direct their "gibberology" at HCG. members returning from the River Cave. Fortunately the nearest boulder crashed no closer than a few feet from one of our members. Although this was supposed to be a caving trip, not one HCG, CSS, or MSS member actually saw a SUSS member going to or from a cave. When called on in an emergency, all but about three chickened out, on the excuse that they had no light; these three, on being offered refreshment at the camp of a top level executive of a political party "plundered the landscape, and in particular over the access road, completely blocking the possibility of any traffic movement.

We have now seen the performance of a "superior" Society. Based on our observations, we wonder why should SUSS. have right of access to any Tourist Cave Area, any significant cave area or onto any private property? Certainly HCG. should doubt the validity of any alleged work at, say, Jenolan, and investigate these doubts; our field performance is within a much higher standard of ethics than that displayed.

Doubt must also be raised as to what right these "educated vandals" have in taking part in a rapidly maturing Federation by what divine right can they deny ASF membership status to the type of people who took part in the diving trip into the River Cave who carry out logical excavation work, who spontaneously came into a Search and Rescue operation.

In short, I suggest that there is no justification for the continued existence and acceptance of the Sydney University Speleo. Society.

E. Crabb.

A.G.M. Election of Officers;

President: E. Crabb
121 Hoxton Park Road,
Liverpool.

Secretary: Bob Smith
16 Alice Street,
Sans Souci.

Treasurer: E. Powell
P.O. Box 32,
Villawood.

Committee Members: W. Bryant
105 Chester Hill Road,
Bass Hill.
E. Kaye
325 Edinburgh Road,
Castlecrag.
A. Rose,
13 Kembla Ave.,
Chester Hill.

WHAT IS: "Conservation".

Conservation when applied to caves amounts to "preservation in their original state".

Of course every time a cave is entered some change or damage is inevitably caused even though it may not be intentional. This is simply wear and tear, but enough care generally taken to minimise this as far as possible.

FOR EXAMPLE: Do you remove your boots before crossing flowstone, or similar floor formations?

Do you allow muddy hands or clothes to touch formations?

If a cave feature is dirty or damaged do you consider that a little more dirt or damage doesn't really matter (if it makes your traverse of the cave easier)?

If a fellow Spelio is unintentionally damaging a cave in this manner, do you tell him?

What if it's some stranger you happen to run into? A number of non-Spelio organisations are now entering caves, shouldn't we (possibly through ASF) try to educate them in cave conservation.

Remember it takes a long time to repair damage, whether it be caused by vandalism or by ignorance of correct behaviour.

BUNGONIA TRIP 29th, 30th & 31st January, 1966.

The object of the Trip was to continue digging Bl7 (and surrounding sinks) which had been started in late September. It is situated 100 yards West of the Junction and 40 ft. South of the road. All loose rubble was removed and the walls shored up. Gelignite was then used to remove a large rock. This proved to be a successful operation. By Sunday morning the hole had deepened 15ft. It then entered a small chamber and seemed to continue on down at 30°. The rest of the weekend was spent removing silt.

Meanwhile, on Saturday W.Bryant and A.Rose worked on 17 Jnr. adjacent to B17. After 2 hours digging it opened into a small cleft approximately 10ft. wide. During the afternoon a descent was made. The cave was found to be approximately 85ft. deep and contained many small fossils. Further exploration of a tight passage was discontinued because of CO2 build up.

On Sunday E.Powell and B.Russell started digging at 19A?, the sink being loose and unstable. After approximately an hour B.Russell descended about 10ft. but encountered CO2 and abandoned further attempts. On Monday W.Bryant made the descent and found the hole clear of CO2 and approximately 35ft. deep. Any further exploration of this hole would be limited.

A party of four decided to go down the gorge on Monday. However, at 3p.m. they had not returned, making it difficult for other members who wished to go home.

On the whole the trip proved ~~xxxx~~ successful and further attempts shall be made to extend 17Jnr. in the future.

Trip leader: A.Rose. Members: K.Rose, E.Powell, W.Bryant, B.Russell, K.Thompson, M.Booth, W.Williams, Mary and Norm.

Later arrivals: M.Kaye, R.Mellor, B.Smith, A.Moule, R.Booth, R.Shaffer, E.Crabb and J.Crabb.

COOLAMON TRIP 30th January, 1966.

Present: R.Smith, A.Moule, J.Allen, P.Newton, J.Moule.

This trip was intended as a follow-up to the previous diving trip on New Year weekend. It was decided to explore the downstream end of the River Cave firstly. After the diving gear had been carried into the cave John, Peter and Alan dived through the first siphon, which John had connected previously. From here the cave continues in a Northerly direction for about 200ft. until a pool about 4ft. is reached. J.Allen dived here, finding a horizontal siphon about 15ft. long which lead to a new extension of the cave. A.Moule followed through on the safety rope and waited while John continued on with the only light, to find that the cave continued straight for about 50ft. then makes an S-bend, but owing to the shortage of light he did not go any further. It was then decided to return to the surface to warm-up and have lunch, three hours having been spent in the cave.

In the afternoon the exploration was resumed upstream. This time John dived to a depth of about 15ft., and for a distance of 40ft. before surfacing in a deep pool, in a large cavern with a low, sloping ceiling. Compass readings taken here indicate that the cave is heading towards the "Glop Pot".

On the way back, A.Moule dived through a small, low side extension for a distance of about 10ft., finding that the cave branched off in similar passages in a possible three directions.

At this stage, those in the water were feeling rather cold, so, after taking some photos, the equipment was dragged out of cave, and all concerned headed back to camp.

On Saturday night, about 2ins. of rain fell so it was decided to leave Coolamon and join the other HCG. members at Bungonia.

On the trip planned for Easter, it would appear that the downstream end of the River Cave is the most promising for further exploration as only short distances are involved for diving and the water is fairly shallow.

Some form of radio communication between the diver and his stand-by would be valuable, but one reassuring observation made on this trip was that the diver's breathing could be heard over considerable distances.

The greatest problem in this type of caving is keeping warm for the long periods spent in the water.

A.Moule.

CAVE RESCUE:

"Should injured cavers be moved out of a cave rather than seeking medical assistance first?". This was the topic discussed at the NSW Search & Rescue Committee's meet at Bungonia Caves in July, 1965.

Opinions were divided, but a common conclusion indicated that the final decision rested on the trip leader.

The above effects all NSW cavers most pertinently. Should you be faced with the situation of having a badly injured mate in a cave, then there is no hard and fast rule to govern his removal immediate versus delay. The author has rather sharp feelings on the subject and favours "Remove patient immediately" school.

It would be nice to have trained medical personnel see the patient at the point of accident, to diagnose his injuries and to advise on his removal methods - but let's face it, we are not going to get trained medical personnel down into a cave.

Because of this it seems that we are "left on our own" whilst down in a cave and we will have to remove our injured ourselves, without the benefit of first getting worthwhile advice.

If a collapsible stretcher is not brought on the trip, then a chair knot, tied in the ropes end could be invaluable for hauling up shafts. Overalls tied between cut tree poles could be a useful stretcher for moving in tunnels.

To summarise: Do not wait for medical attention down under - there just isn't going to be any.

Make moves immediately to get the patient out to meet the ambulance at the surface.

The author invites anyone not in agreement to submit an article advocating the opposite case, "wait for medical attention"

Cavers remember, you or your trip leader may have to make a serious decision on the spot. So give thought to this subject now, as it may help you in decision making in an emergency.

Ron Mellor.

FUTURE ACTIVITIES:

As trip programmes have never, in the past, been closely followed, we offer instead a list of activities in progress by HCG. members. Generally, forthcoming trips are based on the listed activities;

BUNGONIA: Exploration of newly discovered Junior Cave. Grade 5 survey of Grille Cave. Excavation of Bl7. Analysis Grille Cave collapse.

MUDGE: Exploration of newly discovered cave above Lemon Tree Pot at Apple Tree Flat. Excavation "Big Hole" at Queen's Pinch. General surface exploration in Cudgegong area.

COOLAMON: Cave diving and exploration beyond collapse in "River Cave". Exploration of Easter Cave. Further exploration in "New Year Cave" to "Frustration" Cave.

Coincident with the Coolamon exploration will be further development of rebreathing gear, and underwater communication gear.

GENERAL: Further development of RDF. receiver to minimise noise level and improve stability.

BUNGONIA: 15th & 16th March, 1966.

Present E. Crabb, E. Powell, W. Bryant, R. Scheffer, N. Poulter, M. Booth. A short trip on this weekend was held to carry out further investigation of the Junior Cave. Unfortunately foul air was encountered only 15ft. down the first trip, so further attempts were abandoned. Saturday night was spent in extending the survey of the Grille Cave, Sunday morning was spent in a general surface exploration in a westerly direction, many interesting limestones being noted for future attention.

COOLAMON: Easter

The next issue of Calcite will contain a detailed report on this trip, which was noted for the extension of the River Cave by 400ft. to a rock fall; for the discovery of the Easter Cave by a long upstream dive from an efflux; and for the successful search and rescue operation (not practise) carried out at night in the downstream gorge area.

PUBLISHING NOTE:

We feel confident that this is the last spasmodically produced publication. The next issue will be published in a month, then regularly on a two monthly basis.