

July 1971

Volume 11, Number 3

NIBICON IS COMING : NIBICON IS COMING : NIBICON IS COMING : NIBICON IS!!

BULLETIN OF THE SYDNEY UNIVERSITY SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

*Lumen
in
Tenebris*

SUSS



FOUNDED 1948

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SUSS ANNUAL DINNER

Rebid left and right wing SPELEOS are INVITED to ATTEND the 1971 DINNER to be held at 6.30pm on FRIDAY, JULY 30TH in the GLADYS MARKS ROOM on the TOP FLOOR of MANNING HOUSE, UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY.

Provided for the ENJOYMENT of all ENGORGERS will be genuine hard-crust BUNS, generous supplies of not-to-rough WINES, delicious ROAST PORK and an ENTERTAINING guest speaker.

Former SUSS member, ALEX JONES, will speak on: (wait for it!!!!)

"THE PSYCHO-SEXUAL ASPECTS OF SPELEOLOGY"

Contact Chris Fieldhouse (76.5028) or John

Holliday (54.1922) for bookings

DRESS : ??

INSIDE :

MAJOR SUSS REDISCOVERY IN HAMMOTH CAVE, JENOLAH

THE RIDDLE OF THE HAMMOTH LAKES!!

TWO HAMMOTH CAVE MAPS

COOLEMAN IN WINTER --- Frozen Lethargy

===== SUSS -- The SYDNEY UNIVERSITY

SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY =====

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~~54.1922~~

COMING ACTIVITIES

July 1 General Meeting -- Room 328, south-east corner of the Quadrangle at 8pm. Slides will be shown. Supper supplied.

3-4 JENOLAN -- Surveying in Hiburd's Lake Cave. Jim Seabrook 74.6084

24-25 JENOLAN -- A joint trip with the Canberra Speleo Society. A small party of fit bods will be visiting the Great North Cavern and doing exploratory work in Can't Get Lost Section of Mammoth Cave. Surveying and photography as well. A rowdy campfire is assured!! At present this trip is overfull, and several people may have to be knocked back. John Holliday 54.1922

30 SUSS /ANNUAL DINNER -- See the front page, and note the change of venue to Manning House.

August 5 General Meeting -- Room 328, SE corner of Quadrangle at 8pm.

7-8 CLIEFDEN -- Will the Taplow Maze survey live to see another trip?? Come to idyllic Cliefden (on the banks of the Belubula) and find out. Murray Anderson 48.2685

21-22 or 28-29 JENOLAN (tentative) John Dunkley 759.9956

Sometime. YARR/NOBILLY -- Jim Seabrook (74.6084) hopes to run a one week trip to Yagby and the snowfields in the August vacation.

September ~~2~~ General Meeting

October 2-4 YARR/NOBILLY -- Surveying and morphological work in Eagles Nest. Jim Seabrook 74.6084

December/January 1972/73 ASF Ninth Biennial Conference in Sydney.

The Bulletin --- The Editor would like to thank the following people who have helped in the production of recent issues of SUSS:

front cover design: Ted Anderson

duplicating : John Dunkley

collating, stapling, stuffing etc.: Murray Anderson, Chris Fieldhouse, Margaret Roberts, Denis Ward, Jim Seabrook, Margaret Holliday, a little red wine, Bruce Holliday.

special thanks to Geoff Butlin

curse to Merlin, the monstrous, 'deserves a kick in the guts', 'needs a magician to work it' duplicator and frustrator!!!

tea and sympathy : JHH

THE NORTHERN RAILWAY TUNNEL --CAN'T GET LOST SECTION, MAMMOTH CAVE, JENOLAN.

John Dunkley

It is recorded in an old SUSS Journal that the Foz Hole at Jenolan was discovered by a party "while they were resting after exploring the Casteret Cave". Quite a few SUSS discoveries have been about as purposive as this. Recently, in such typical casual, fortuitous fashion, SUSS blundered upon the biggest "discovery" in Mammoth Cave for many years, although the participants would probably deny that they had done it "while resting after exploring the Mammoth Cave".

On March 27, 1971, a confused crew led by John Dunkley setting sail up the North Tunnel foundered in uncharted waters (or mud) at the top of the long mud-slope leading up from the Junction-Bypass area. Assured by sailing orders from Ted Anderson that to get to the Great North Cavern, "you can't get lost", they had no hesitation in diving into a low bedding crawl which looked just like the 100% Friction Squeeze. At the other end, though, it emerged into a sizeable chamber well carpeted with thick mud, one wall having the smoked inscription "R N C 22-7-61 25-11-62". We have not been able to find the identity of this person but I suspect that he was a sometime member of either Cooranbong Speleo. Association or the old Newcastle Tech. and Uni College Speleo Society, both of which were active in this part of Mammoth in the early sixties. Since the section was unknown to either SUSS or SSS, we are claiming rediscovery and have named it 'Can't Get Lost Section'.

To the north-east of the main chamber is a crawl and formation squeeze leading after 30' to the most dangerous bedrock squeeze I have seen, as Brian Wythes will testify, having been stuck in it for about 15 minutes. A Skull and Crossbones on the wall nearby suggests there was an earlier victim.

To the south-west an increasingly tight rift leads about 40' to a short drop which was not pursued. The main chamber goes south-east into a rockpile which Andrew Pavey negotiated 60' or so in June.

A grade 4 survey was put through in June by John Holliday and Andrew Pavey and shows some interesting results. The main cavern strikes 150° - 330° , a major joint throughout Mammoth, and is dead in line with the Railway Tunnel near the Ninety Foot shaft. To my mind there is little doubt that SUSS has at last found the fabled northerly extensions of the Railway Tunnel, one of the great unsolved mysteries of this cave. (See maps on pages 33, 34.)

The next question to be answered is, where does the system go in the opposite direction? The entrance crawl (99% Friction Squeeze) could never have handled enough water to form Railway Tunnel size passages. Possibly the route north is buried beneath the unknown thickness of mud in Can't Get Lost, and the function of the bedding plane squeeze was to channel water out of the North Tunnel into the Railway Tunnel, before this flow was captured by shafts leading down to the Bypass and Central River. It is significant that there is only a thin veneer of wet, light brown clay in the entrance crawl, compared with the drier, deep brown mud of the main chamber.

continued over

Possibilities for future exploration include:

1. Continue pushing the rockpile in a general southerly direction.
2. Push the rift to the south-east -- it probably leads into the North-West Passage.
3. Closer investigation of 60'-70' even (shaft) off side of main chamber.
4. Closer look at evens in the Middle Bit with view to working up to the west.

In the meantime, SUSS requests right of further exploration of this region until next year.

ON THE SUBJECT OF 'CENTRAL LEVEL LAKE'.

John Dunkley

In the living memory of present SUSS members, the name 'Central Lake' or 'Central Level Lake' has always referred to a body of water encountered intermittently between the bottom of the Skull and Crossbones and Central River in Mammoth Cave, Jenolan. The purpose of this note is to clarify the confused literature on this name.

The first published note is that of Fairlie-Cunninghame (1953):

"An attempt was made to find the underground lake entered through the Central Level of the Mammoth Cave. According to reports, the route was past the names pencilled on the wall of a side passage off the Central Level, over the large fallen rocks and along to the large passage at the end of these rocks. At the end of this passage a way is found down through large rocks to a narrow, vertical cleft about 20' deep in solid rock, at the bottom of which there are several passages, one of which leads along a tortuous path to a water filled tunnel. Allegedly there was sufficient air above the water to get through to the lake but it was found that the tunnel was completely filled with water and progress was impossible."

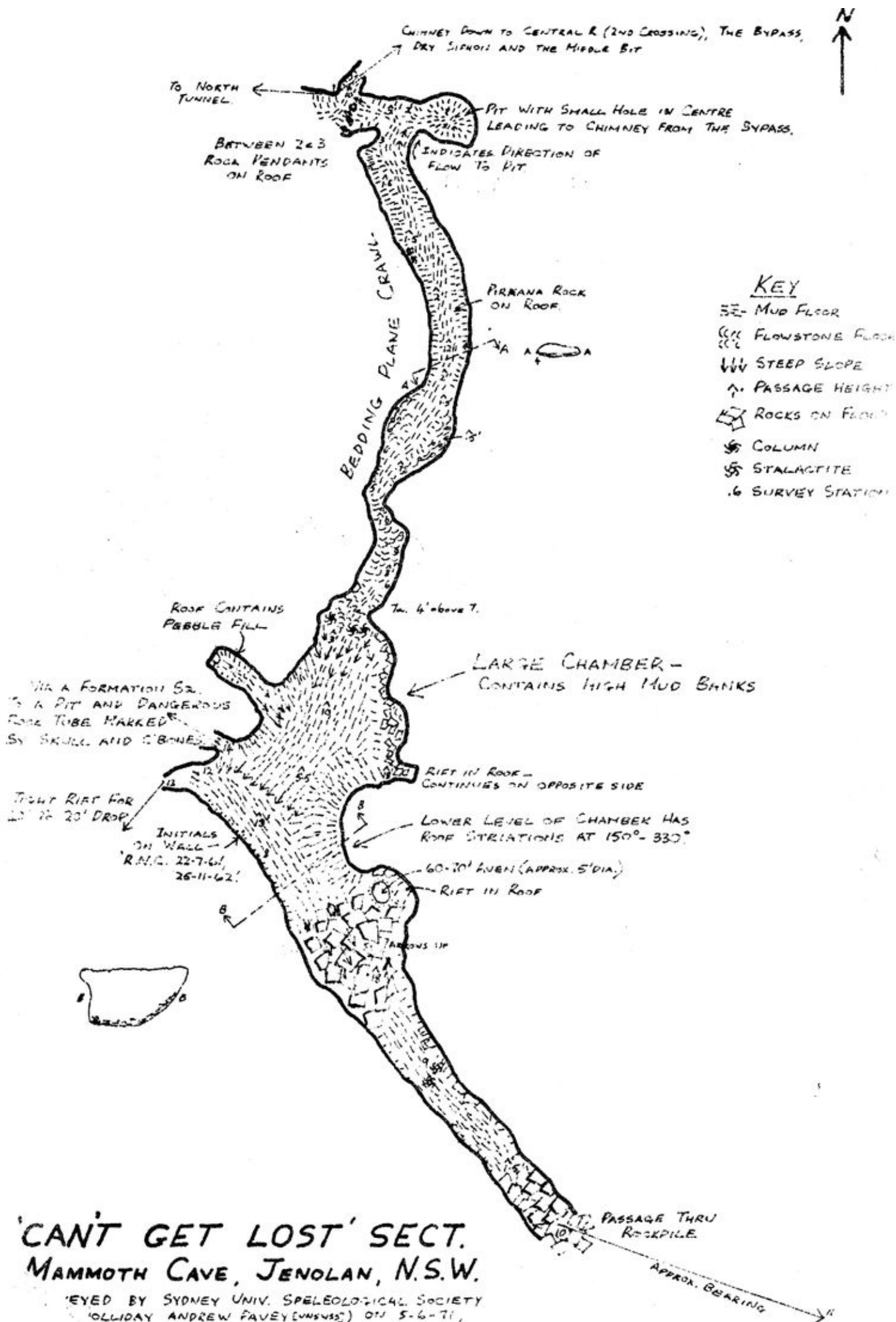
Several points emerge here:

1. The only route that could be described as a 'tortuous path to a water filled tunnel' is the Snakes Gut which leads, when the water is down, to what we now call Ice Pick Lake.
2. Although it varies considerably in height, Ice Pick Lake is apparently permanent, whereas the one en route to Central River is not only much smaller but quite often absent completely.

The next reference is Wardrop and Tattersall (1954), careful reading of which confirms that they are talking of the same lake as that now called Ice Pick. So whence the confusion? In part this ^{is} undoubtedly that from 1956-58 little or no work was done in Mammoth, and by the time intensive exploration was renewed in 1959, the pioneers had been replaced by a new breed of go-getters. Furthermore, throughout the late 1950's, visits were so infrequent that they may have all encountered water along the route to Ice Pick Lake. In 1959-60 Ian Williams (SUSS) was very active in Mammoth yet he apparently did not suspect the existence of Ice Pick Lake as a sketch map accompanying his 1960 paper labels a siphon in that direction. The paper purported to explain the confusion about routes, but succeeded in making the matter murkier still:

"From here (Skull and Crossbones) the Central Level 'lake' is reached. There

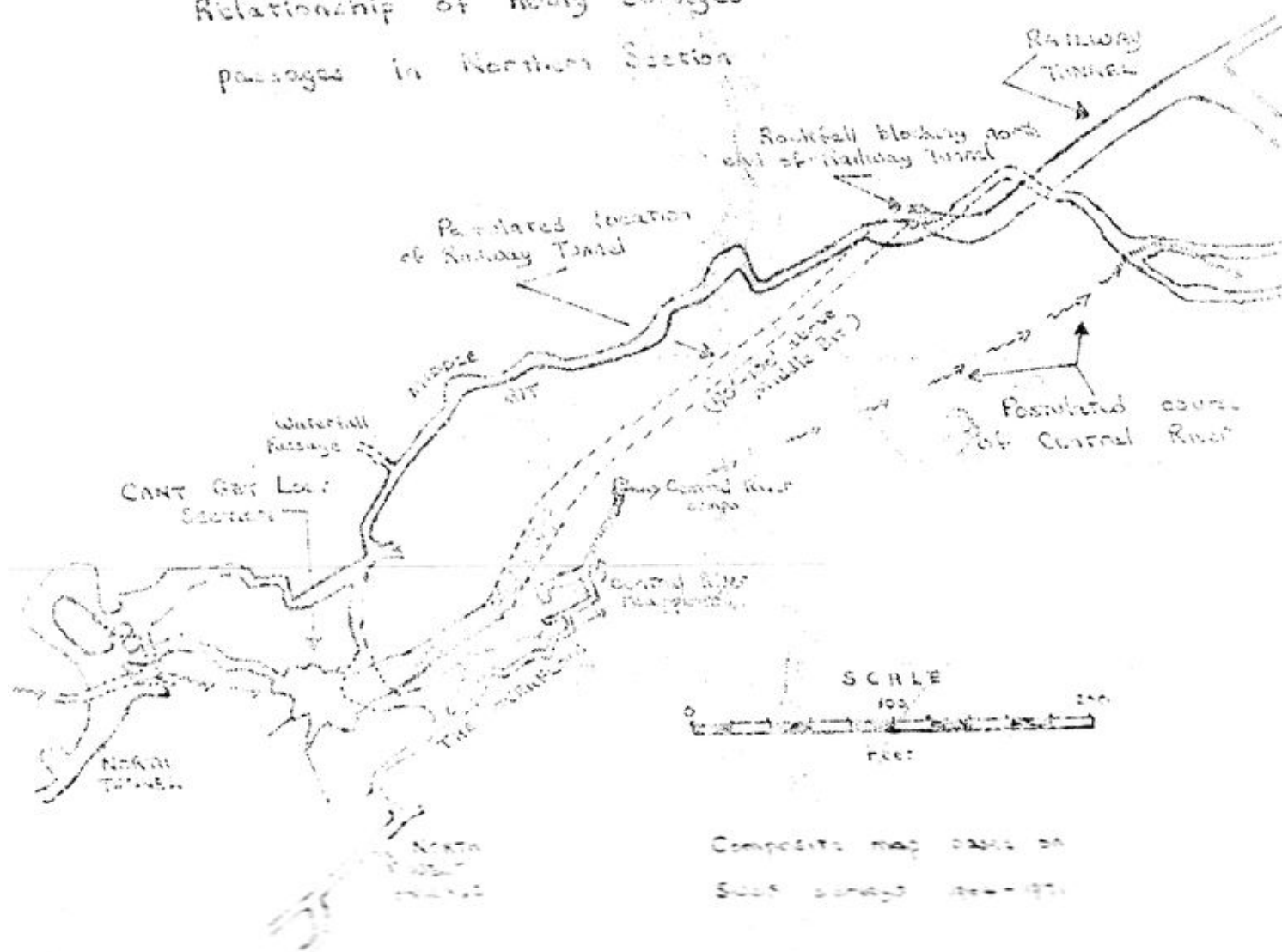
cont. following maps on page 35



MAMMOTH CAVE

JENOLAN

Relationship of newly surveyed
passages in Northern Section



are several references to this lake in SUSS Journals, by Fairlie-Cunninghame and by Leo Tattersall....."

He goes on to describe the intermittent body of water "now called Central Level Lake". Points emerging from this are:

1. This is the first appearance in print of the term "Central Level Lake".
2. It is applied to the body of water en route to Central River, but Williams wrongly assumes that this was the same as that described by Fairlie-Cunninghame and by Wardrop and Tattersall.

Since the present generation in SUSS were raised by Williams or his later disciples, his terminology gained currency.

However in the mid 1960's, SSS began poking around Mammoth, and a report by Bob Hawkins (1964) describes a trip to "Central Level Lake", meaning, lest the confusion be carried further, the original lake of Fairlie-Cunninghame et al. Note, though, that Fairlie-Cunninghame never used this name. This name was used by SSS even after agreement with SUSS in 1968 to accept the name Ice Pick Lake for the original (Halbert, 1969). Not that I blame them.

At the Mammoth Map Meeting (anon. 1968) between SUSS and SSS, the word 'level' was proscribed completely, and in particular it was emphasised that "Central Level Lake", wherever it was, was not in what was then called "Central Level" (which meant the Railway Tunnel level). The term "Ice Pick Lake", dubbed on the original "lake entered through the Central Level" of Fairlie-Cunninghame et al., commemorated an exploit whereby SSS assailed the far side in lilos, climbing the mud with the aid of g-picks and the like.

So there it is. The name "Central Lake" is that described by Williams, and "Ice Pick Lake" is the original lake of the pioneers. The confused literature has caused no end of trouble in trying to work out who found this one who explored that.

Acknowledgements to E.G. Anderson and C.H. Shannon for assistance in this elucidation.

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SUSS AT LARGE

Roving SUSS reporter, Norm Poulter, will sail from Tasmania for Victoria and Sth Aust. on July 21st. He wishes to thank the Tas. Caverneering Club for their companionship, and in particular Brian and Jeanette Collin and Albert and Therese Goede. Also he wishes TCC the best of luck with Khazad-dum!!!

TRIP REPORTSCoolleman Plain - June 12-14th."Slush, Frost, Bloody Cold and Some Caving!!"

Present: John Holliday(TL), Jack Vaughn, Judith Vaughn, Jim Seabrook, Rick Tunney, Jan Turner, Zyg Szramka, Manfred Listing (N's), Graeme McGown, Ian Milligan, Bev Riley, Cherie Wheeler (P's), Graeme Swift(V).

With such warnings as 'Tantangara's the only way in' and 'see you next summer' still fresh in our minds, four ordinary vehicles left Sydney for Coolleman. - ~~Manfred~~ pushed right thru via Tantangara that night, and spent the weekend snobbing at Harris Hut. Meanwhile the others spent Friday night kipped next to oil heaters in several friendly Canberra houses (thankyou Graeme and Cherie).

Saturday morning we took the plunge and took off down the Brindabella track. It was quite passable and we had good fun busting the ice puddles. So far so good, but after only 200yds of the track into Coolleman we had to jack up and put the chains on the VW. To keep the weight forward and so that they could easily pile off, Jim and Graeme rode on the running boards whilst gripping the roof rack. Then followed a rather energetic spell of steering in the tres moist conditions -- out of one skid and into the next. The highlight was undoubtedly the uncontrolled slide down the hill into the bog before Coolamine homestead. Rick, as we later saw, had managed to collect an innocent bystand- ing tree on this hill.

Graeme S. and Cherie did not leave Canberra until late and coming in at night, successfully got stuck in the bog. After a freezing night camped on the Plain they were rescued next morning by John and Graeme Mc. Thus it was Sunday lunchtime before everyone got to the Blue Waterholes.

Caving? Well, Sunday afternoon saw a three hour photography trip into Clown Cave by most of the group, with Jack succeeding in getting his long awaited obscene photo. Meanwhile Manfred and Rick were trundling about doing valley surface survey.

John (well dosed with Keomagma and not daring to go underground), Zyg, Judith and Graeme S. pushed off down to the Goodradigbee R. From there John and Graeme bashed thru the thorn bushes for 3/4 mile to the cave on the Goodradigbee where approx 1/3 of its flow passes underground thru a spur (limestone bluff). This cave is on the left side going downstream and, if one is prepared to get wet, could be entered for approx. 40ft at the offlux end. The influx end is partially blocked by logs and one can only look down on the rushing water. Coming back a cave, possibly Cormorant Cave, was stumbled upon in a side valley off the Goodradigbee.

Campfires over the weekend were of course very large -- it was bloody cold (20deg mins.) and frosty at night. Profuse profanities from the direction of the creek on Saturday night came from a wet arsed Graeme Mc. who had found that carrying logs whilst on frosty stopping stones is a dicey business.

There was only one other group camped at Coolleman. He knew that they were fishing out of season and at various times had heard rifle shots. Jim is an honorary ranger under the Fauna Protection Act, and thus on Monday morning, accompanied by three be-karabinered and hopefully thuggish looking

Cont. over

bodyguards, he visited their campsite. One fellow readily admitted that he had used a rifle within the Park and even kindly obliged with his name etc. He was subsequently reported to the NPWS, but because of a legal technicality will only get a warning letter rather than a fine.

Evacuation was via Tantangara, and Sydney was reached early on Tuesday morning after an hour or so had been spent earlier visiting Roger Curtis and Gaz Bryant (CSS) in Canberra.

Winter trips to Coolamon are undoubtedly tres enjoyable. However, anyone planning a trip there next winter should not expect to do much caving. You see, it takes a touch of masochism to drag yourself more than 10ft from the fire for any length of time. Burnt shoe soles and knees are the order of the day!!

John Holliday

REVIEW --- 'Equipment for Bushwalking and Mountaineering'
(prepared and published by Melbourne Univ. Mountaineering Club)
133 pages; price: \$1.00

This book is a comprehensive and informative guide to the choice of equipment required for bushwalking, rockclimbing, ski touring, caving and mountaineering. The book deals with all types of equipment that a rucksack sportsman is likely to need or encounter, although most of the equipment described would fall into the 'expedition weight' category rather than the ultra light weight type equipment available for the more fanatic bushwalker.

The information on the products described in the book was compiled from questionnaires filled in by bushwalkers and other rucksack sportsmen throughout Australia, thus ensuring that only the most reliable equipment is recommended. There is a list of addresses and prices in the back of the book to aid in planning purchases of gear.

The section on caving is not as extensive as is desirable. Even so it still serves as an excellent guide for a caver's initial purchases of gear. The major absence is in the field of scientific equipment and advanced exploration gear (Jumars, scaling poles etc.).

As many new members of SUSS are just starting out on their career in the rucksack sports I heartily recommend this book to them, both as a guide to the purchase of equipment and a manual to good, safe camping techniques. If a prospective caver uses this book as such a guide, then he could err only on the side of excess quantity.

This is a book that should grace the libraries of all rucksack sportsmen. Available from Mountain Equipment or Paddy Pollin.

Jim Seabrook

Their Prices Are Downright Demoralising, Yes Sirce!!

At The June COMMITTEE MEETING

1. Bev Riley, Graeme McGown and Ian 'Spoke' Milligan were admitted to full membership of the Society. Bev is an experienced ex member of UQSS, and Graeme and Ian were amongst this years intake of prospectives.

2. Murray Anderson volunteered to carry out a review of the By-laws. If you can suggest any alterations contact him.

3. Most of the evening was spent discussing the equipment situation. Murray, the Safety Officer, presented a report on the costs of constructing new ladders, and it is hoped that we will be able to do so later this year.

It is now a standing order of the Society that 'such surveying equipment as the Society has access to must be operated only by or under the supervision of persons approved by the Committee'. This provision was enacted to control the use of the forestry compass in particular. This instrument is actually still owned by several members who contributed to the original purchase.

4. ASF Newsletter : SUSS is rostered to collate, staple, fold, stuff and address the June ASF Newsletter when it comes out. John Holliday will probably be arranging an evening on which to carry out this huge task (800 copies of at least 20 pages will have to be dispatched), so be ready when the plea for help comes.

CONSERVATION

Clutha --- Governmental Stupidity!

At the May General Meeting SUSS passed a motion condemning the Clutha development, and declaring full support for moves to oppose such. Most people by now know what the development involves -- large coal dumps and a long off-shore coal loading berth at Coalcliff on the Illawarra coastline. It is quite clear that the Askin government hurriedly pushed the Clutha Development Pty. Limited Agreement Act, 1970 through Parliament last year so as to avoid any major difficulties with conservationists and local residents at Coalcliff. Unfortunately this is probably a lesson they learnt from the Colong issue. What they have done this time is to legally 'sew the issue up', before any public outcry could develop, and it appears that now that the Act has been passed not even the Minister can reject the development proposals.

Clearly what is needed in Australia is a similar system to that operating in America, where any legislation which is likely to affect the environment must ^{be} fully investigated by govt. agencies, and notice of which must be given to the public well in advance of the final decision being made, (ref: 'The Australian', 26-6-71, p.9a). Hopefully the Clutha issue will help in generating the public support needed to encourage Australian governments to introduce such a system of safeguards.

Save Lake Pedder

As approved at the June G.M., a letter has been sent to the Premier of Tas., Mr Angus Bothune, protesting at the impending 'drowning' of Lake Pedder and the possibility that further dams are planned for the South-West. As of yet, a reply, which courteous governments always send, has not been received.
