

THE SYDNEY UNIVERSITY SPELEOLOGICAL
SOCIETY

"Lumen in Fenebris."

SUSS - founded in 1948 -

Address:

Box 35,
The Union,
Syd. Uni. 2006

Registered for
transmission by
post as a
periodical.
Category B.

TRIPS ?????

DON'T KNOW OF ANY.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

To be held at the Union (somewhere)
at 7.30 pm
on Thursday 3rd April 1975.

Next General Meeting.

Same place (probably)
Same time
Date: 1st May 1975.

SUSSsussSUSSsussSUSS

The following is the second draft of the (then) proposed A.S.F. Abseiling Code as was circulated to Member societies for comment in November 1974. This draft was put to the Brisbane A.S.F. Committee Meeting at the end of December 1974. It is hoped that members of this society will read it carefully and stick rigidly to it as it is certainly of more than mere academic interest - it's not just the societies 're record' that is at stake but rather your life!

SAFETY RULES FOR ABSEILING

A. SELECTION OF ROPES.

- A1 - Terylene (polyester) or nylon ropes should be used.
- A2 - The minimum diameter of terylene or nylon rope should be 10mm; smaller diameters give too little friction and are too easily abraded and cut.
- A3 - The use of single laid ropes should be avoided on free drops (causes spin).
- A4 - Never abseil on polyethylene or polypropylene using a method where the rope is passed through a metal friction device, as these fibres have a low melting point.
- A5 - Natural fibre ropes should never be used since:
 - i) cotton or hemp ropes are not strong enough when of a suitable diameter for abseiling.
 - ii) manilla or sisal are no longer manufactured to a suitable standard.
- A6 - Ropes of unknown history should not be used for abseiling.
- A7 - Ropes that have been subjected to heavy stress (e.g. in stopping a severe fall or in towing) should not be used in abseiling.
- A8 - If forced to use any sub-standard rope in an emergency, test it first by hanging the weight of two people or the equivalent from it. If the descent is against rock, the classic method of abseiling should be used as the rope is only bent around large diameters. If the descent is free use a friction device descending slowly and smoothly.

B. CARE OF ROPE.

- B1 - Rope should be checked before each trip for:
 - i) Extensive surface abrasion (light abrasion causing a fuzzy appearance can be ignored).
 - ii) Internal abrasion and powdering at the strand axis (laid ropes).
 - iii) Distortion of the lay.
 - iv) Decayed, burnt, soft or hard spots.
 - v) Areas of reduced diameter.
- B2 - Ropes should always be carried in packs, both underground and on the surface.
- B3 - All ropes should be kept away from corrosive chemicals. Do not place rope near batteries.
- B4 - The rope should always be kept clean as this minimizes the abrasive effect of mud and grit. Washing may be carried out in the carrying area in streams. At home the best wash is achieved in a washing machine using mild detergent or pure soap and cold to warm water. If soap or detergent is used it is essential to rinse the rope in fresh water.
- B5 - The rope should be dried thoroughly as soon as possible in a stream of cool air away from direct sunlight. Only store completely dry ropes - store away from direct sunlight.

C. CHOICE OF ANCHOR POINT.

- C1 - Take care in the selection of anchor points. Where possible use two separate points.
- C2 - Never rely solely on one artificial anchor (piton, bolt, jammut, etc.)
- C3 - When the anchor point is rough or the rope travels over dirty surfaces it is advisable to protect the rope with plastic hose or sacking - in some cases a wire trace is useful.
- C4 - When people are taught to abseil they should also have lessons in the selection and use of anchor points.

D. EQUIPMENT AND METHOD.

- D1 - 5cm (2 inch) seat belt webbing (nylon or terylene) is recommended for harnesses. Rope harnesses are uncomfortable.
- D2 - Leather or asbestos gloves must be worn.
- D3 - Except for short pitches, classic and over-the-shoulder methods should not be used. The dangers are:
 - i) Rope burns.
 - ii) Loss of control when descending can result in the person falling off the rope.
- D4 - The twisted knot method should not be used.
- D5 - The recommended method uses the brake bar assembly:
See "Vertical Caving Techniques".

E. BELAYING.

- E1 - Classic and over-the-shoulder methods can be belayed by using a belay rope in the usual fashion.
- E2 - Methods involving friction devices can be belayed from below by pulling the abseil rope taut if the person abseiling experiences difficulties. The abseiler can be controlled from below in any descent by regulating the tension on the rope.

F. THROUGH TRIPS.

- F1 - Before the last man descends, the rope should be pulled from below to check that it runs freely.
- F2 - Make sure that any knot does not have to be pulled around the anchor point and that it will not catch in crevices.
- F3 - Ensure that the rope is untwisted before pulling down.
- F4 - It is essential that one of the party is a competent prusiker. Only prusik to retrieve a stuck rope where both ends of the rope are at the foot of the pitch and one is anchored.

N.B. The only way a through trip can be carried out in complete safety is to carry sufficient ropes to double rope all the pitches.

SUSSUSSUSSUSSUSSUSSUSSUSS

A MESSAGE TO ALL FUTURE CONTRIBUTORS TO THE BULLETIN:

- Ed.

As will soon become very apparent the Editor will welcome all material for publication - whether it be a trip report, drunken ramblings (often synonymous with the former) OR EVEN some material of scientific or historical interest. As it appears that we will be reverting to the use of a duplicator this year after our short, but rewarding venture into the land of off-set printing, it would be extremely appreciated if this material could be initially prepared on stencils. This would certainly help in ensuring that your material is published rapidly. Either ask the Editor for some or buy some for yourself and send us the bill.

1. This song here is of our best,
But don't forget it's only in jest!
Our recollections are only hazy,
Only because all SUSS are crazy.
2. Malcolms beard is just as we feared,
He's got to be careful it doesn't get seared,
We'll all say that he's got no liver,
When he falls into Lower River.
3. He jumps down first, and he goes down fast,
And we're waiting for him to die at last.
The pitch down there is a big temptation,
But will it enhance his reputation?
4. Reputation, reputation,
The vertical cavers conflagration.
We all know that his names Handel,
But what does he do with Peter Campbell?
5. Seabrook's President for a year,
Oh no! Oh no! we cried in fear,
Alas he got in there, the tub,
So now our meetings are in the pub.
6. At the end of the year was the Annual Dinner,
Seagoons cooking made us thinner.
Our Mark 1 buns flew across the hall,
Lethal weapons they don't use in war.
7. Wingless abseils give us fright,
And so we must hide, out of sight,
While he nurses all his aches,
He won't go without his cornflakes.
8. His 1100 is a dream,
But what about at Wyabene?
While we were all having a bitch,
He went and drove us into a ditch.
9. The Woe Jasper campsite was all sandy,
Meanwhile Austin was drinking the brandy,
But that was his biggest blunder,
It ended in an Aussie thunder.
10. He wanted Jenolan for his Honeymoon,
But Cathy said "You stupid goon",
Bungonia is their usual lair,
Never was there such a pair!

The Great SUSS Saga cont.

11. Tunney lives in Wollongong,
And that's because he's such a nong.
He gave his clothes to charity,
Giving someone else his fleas.
12. There he is now, in the Drum,
Practising, being a bum.
Then he found the rope too short,
Will he live to make another report?
13. Our friend Peter, he got lost,
In Henning's Hole we'll let him rot!
There is no light to look around,
Cause the sun don't rise, beneath the ground.
14. Now he's stuck in Mammoth squeeze,
It's so tight that he can't breathe,
If we leave him there in the night,
He'll grow into a phalactite.
15. One fine day in Chevalier,
Brendon was not so cavalier.
He dismantled the scaling pole,
THAT BLOODY ROPE'S STILL UP IN THE HOLE!
16. His jokes are famous from coast to coast,
One of these days we'll make him roast,
The torch is erected in the cave,
It's big enough to fill a grave.
17. Spike was there at Mammoth Flat,
When for seven days and nights it spat.
His four hundred hour overalls,
Hardley got any use at all.
18. A geologist to the last,
He puts that beer down mighty fast.
All the ladies think him sweet,
But he reeks from those cans in the creek.
19. Lately there has been a rumour,
About that fellow Phillip Toomer,
All those maps that he doth make,
Are really just a bunch of fakes!
20. There is yet one person that we know,
Gracious, talented, a caver though,
And now, as you must all agree,
This great one can only be me.
21. For this song I hold no responsibility,
It's just an expression of sheer futility,
The names we've heard don't represent,
Any person living or dead.

The Great SUSS Saga cont.

22. And so it ends for seventy-four,
And let us hope it comes no more,
Thus everyone has been cussed,
All of us here in the immortal SUSS.

Randall King Dec. '74

SUSS SAGA

Moderately fast 1974 EDTN

This song here -is of our best- but don't forget- its

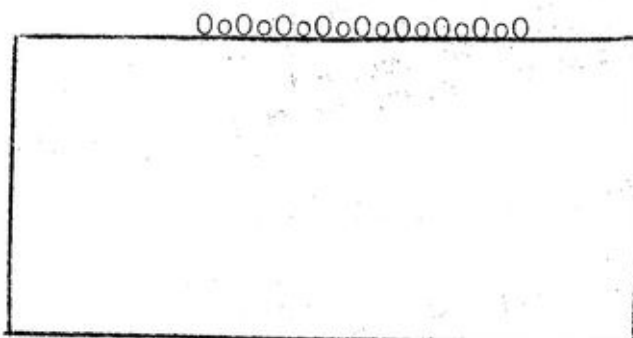
only in jest. Our recollections are only hazy- Only because

all SUSS are crazy. etc.

Coda Final FINAL TIME

Melody is only approximate. Ad lib when ready.
Guitarists: When solo, CAPO3. Use lots of staccato.

R. King.



Photograph inside Mammoth during a snowstorm.

F. BLOGGS
1/4/75

The folling letter was received by the Society earlier this year, it's message certainly having relevance now and in the future.

14th January 1975.

"Dear Sir,

Department Policy re Speleological Activities at Jenolan, Wombeyan and Abercrombie Caves.

The Department has become concerned at the tendency on the part of some societies to submit applications for trips to Caves under the administration of this Department, lacking the necessary information and not within the prescribed time limit.

Such applications will be refused in future.

I have set out hereunder the conditions which govern approvals:

1. The group to visit the caves must come from an accredited speleological society.
2. The object of the visit must be demonstratably scientific and the purpose of the trip stated in the application.
3. The majority of the members of the group must be experienced speleologists.
4. The maximum number of members on any one trip must be twelve of whom four can be prospective members applying for the trip.
5. Each trip will be under the leadership of a fully experienced speleologist who will be responsible to ensure that, on the visit, members of the group will observe all the tenets of caving ethics as practised by reputable caving organisations throughout the world.
6. Applications for permission to undertake cave trips must be lodged with the Department at least seven days in advance of the proposed trip. The application should be signed by the secretary of the society.
7. Each application should contain a list of the persons comprising the group.
8. Upon arrival at the reserve, the group leader must report to the Manager, Senior Guide or Superintendent as the case might be.

I am sure you will appreciate these conditions are designed to ensure the safety of members of the caving group, the avoidance of damage to the caves and formations therein, and to avoid interference with members of the public in their inspection of the caves and enjoyment of the surrounding areas, and it is necessary they be complied with at all times.

Yours faithfully,

R.E. Murdoch.

Director N.S.W. Dept. of Tourism.

SUSSFUSSSUSSFUSSSUSSFUSS

KEEP BUNGONIA GORGEOUS - Install showers for cavers!

"THE CAVES OF BORNEO"- A TV SPECIAL BY RICHARD ATTENBOROUGH

This famed naturalist has a somewhat glorified reputation so it was with bated breath that I awaited this great television milestone on a subject dear to every speleologist's heart. Being more known for his wildlife investigation, I was not surprised by the fact that the documentary was aimed from this angle, rather than with a view to the true aesthetics of caves themselves. With this in mind, the show was very successful.

The first half of the show was almost entirely devoted to the antics of the native villagers in collecting swallow's nests from the roofs of the nearby huge caverns. Apparently the author was quite intrigued with this facet of human involvement in caves, as I was also. However, these natives should not be scoffed at, as they seem quite prepared to lose a couple of people each nesting season whilst gathering these so called delicacies. According to Mr. Attenborough the people have become dependent on this seasonal source of income, and it is an occupation with a short life span.

Two villages different methods of collecting were studied. For both villages, a ritual religious offering was made to protect the climbers from harm. I daresay this is probably followed with funerals when the season is finished! The more primitive of these methods consisted of tying one bamboo pole to another with rattan till it reached the roof, and then shinning straight up it with a pole to knock the swallows nests off at the top! This struck me as being a rather hazardous operation. This risk is taken only to get hardened bird saliva (which is all the nests are) for the posh restaurants of Asia and they receive only a fraction of the price paid for all their efforts. They utilise a radar system similar to bats, only the frequencies used are audible to the human ear. The noise from these thousands of swallows is quite deafening. However, the next village uses a slightly more advanced system of ladders, but which none the less looks only marginally safer. The caverns are purported to be 300-400 ft high, but knowing the effects of vertical exaggeration an inexperienced people, this figure must not be taken as absolute,

We now move on to an examination of a cave food chain. Birds and bats live in the cave and it is from the droppings that other life subsists. What at first appeared to be a huge sand dune was in reality a huge pile of bat droppings accumulated over centuries and had to be seen to be believed. To add to this beautiful subterranean scene were millions of cockroaches whose whole happiness in life seemed to be to

"THE CAVES OF BORNEO" (cont.)

burrow through these mounds. Some of the more comical asides were seen in Attenborough choking on the ammoniacal fumes, and in watching the cannibalistic cockroaches, little beggars that they are, rushing to devour one of their fallen friends. One of the daddy long legs type cave spiders was also unearthed.

The show finished with Mr. Attenborough dining on a glutinous mixture of Bird's Nest Soup in an upper class Djakarta restaurant. All in all, it was not a bad film. The general standard of film quality was excellent, although I felt a greater variety of subject matter would not have gone astray: even though this was probably restricted by time available. The production of more such films would, I am sure, be more than welcome in the caving fraternity.

Randall King

OoOoOoOoOoO

"TREK TO THE TOP" & PROJECT 75 - THE LEYLAND BROTHERS.
(Saturday 18/1/75. 6.30pm TCN 9 Sydney.)

When watching the film of this trip to the most northern point of mainland Australia - Cape York, I was suddenly astounded to see some film of caves. After recovering from the initial orgasmic reaction, which most cavers suffer from upon seeing anything connected with caves, the pen and paper were quickly brought out to record such a climatical event.

The two brothers were travelling by Jeep to the tip of Cape York Peninsula in Queensland, after being assured that travel was impossible, following the biggest floods for ten years. Some sandstone Aboriginal caves were first visited. Rock paintings covered the walls, which seemed to be mainly wind worn. All of these Aboriginal figures were then photographed, although the location of the caves was not specified.

Next was featured a small cave discovered by the side of the road a few miles south of the mighty Jardine River. It appeared to be a sedimentary water worn rift -type cave extending for 10-15 metres. Of significant speleological interest was the large colony of bats inhabiting it. Some rather spectacular filming of the thousands of bats emerging in a panic was shown. These were identified as Bent-Wing Bats (*Miniopterus schreibersii*) and I was quite surprised as I did not think their distribution extended so far north. A python was waiting just inside the entrance to the cave, presumably for a feed of nearby passing bat. As usual the film exhibited the Leyland Brothers normal high standard of filming and production. Shots like the Jardine River crossing with the vehicles submerged to their rooftops made for some particularly interesting viewing

12/10/74

TRIP REPORT - GLASS CAVE, JENOLAN.

Present:

Sanford Larson, Randall King, Peter Winglee, Me.

Following the successful survey of Alladdin Cave in 1973 (see 2J19SUS 1) John Dunkley suggested that there was a need to accurately survey Glass Cave and the Chevalier extension.

The Glass Cave entrance is situated near the Alladin Cave. Like the Alladin Cave, it is a multilevel system working inwards and downwards from the cliff face. Both caves were past tourist caves around the turn of the century (for hardier tourists than the speleos of today) and contain superb, though partially vandalised, formations. Alladin Cave contains some magnificent crystalline flowstone formation. Glass Cave also contains crystal pools and cave coral in its lower sections in addition to the usual pretties. Glass Cave is the gateway to the Chevalier extension which contains some of the best cave formations at Jenolan - of particular note being rimstone pools and aragonite crystals.

Geomorphology of the Alladin and Glass systems is interesting as they work their way down towards the remote sections of the Jubilee Cave beyond the Lily of the Valley. Both caves show possibilities for pushing down. There may be a way beyond 'E' squeeze in Alladin though we could not see it. In Glass there is a piton with a wire in place at the lower chamber - we could only look down to a level 24 feet below.

Arriving at Jenolan with our scaling pole pieces, but without joining knees (because no one knows where they are), we inquired at the Guide's Office regarding the possibility of borrowing some knees. The outcome of this confrontation was of some concern to me because it was plain that goodwill relations had been strained somehow by past events. Points to note are:

1) The guides have not been issued with any copy of my Alladin survey of 1973.

2) The guides are under the impression that speleos are entering exclusive such as Chevalier on the pretence of surveying and are "just sitting on their bums". They want results!!

The guides think there are too many maps of Chevalier anyway and that everyone has taken their photographs now.

3) It is likely that in future no more speleos will be allowed into any of the more decorated caves now gated whether for productive intent or not.

4) All trip leaders to Jenolan must nominate every member of the party, what each member actually did and what was achieved by the party. Full particulars in writing must be submitted within a few weeks to the N.S.W. Department of Tourism.

Glass Cave. (cont.)

Saturday was spent surveying Glass Cave to a Grade 5. Because of the geometrical complications of the entrance of this cave the effort in obtaining a higher grade survey for this cave would be exponentially greater. On Sunday we were fortunate enough to be able to borrow the required knees from the Guide's Office. Their double bolt knees will supplement for our single bolt knees. The traverse and detailing was continued to the short (7" long) stubby stalamite just through the flattener at the entrance to the Chevalier Cave near the edge of the rimstone pools. As time was expiring rapidly we terminated our traverse here and confirmed in principle the only available map of Chevalier Cave.

This map is in plan only and was sketched by B. Mason in 1954 to Grade 3 and a scale of 1" to 50'. (2J17SUS 1). Unfortunately the guides are under the impression that any surveys by speleologists will not produce a better map than this and therefore they are considering getting professional surveyors to map this cave. The SUSS map drawn was submitted on 22/2/75 and has been labelled 2J17SUS 2. Some detailing is required and some unsurveyed chambers remain.

Remembering the saying "A Hobby is hard work, you'd never do for a boss." I wonder if anyone could really produce a better map than us, within the financial limitations the N.S.W. Department of Tourism would naturally impose. Also how many surveyors would collect and remove a plastic bag full of rubbish. Last but not also of great importance, how many surveyors could "hang on" for 10½ hours and observe the fourth clause of the ASF Code of Ethics.

Brendon Hyde.

OoOoOoOoOoO

NOTICE OF PROPOSED MOTION.

"That Henry Shannon be made a life member of the Sydney University Speleological Society."

Henry Shannon was extremely active in the Society some years ago and in recognition of the many and varied but all significant, contributions which he has made to the Society it has been proposed that this gentleman be made a ~~full~~ ^{life} member of the Society.

SUSSUSSUSSUSSUSSUSSUSS