

Volume 16 Number 4  
OCTOBER, NOVEMBER 1976

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# BULLETIN *of the*

## *Sydney*

## *University*

## *Speleological*



## *Society*

PRESIDENT'S REPORT 1975/76.

RANDALL KING

It is a pleasure to be writing this 27th Annual Presidents Report, on a plane, en route to Port Moresby for the 1976 New Guinea Expedition. During the last year SUSS has revived to become possibly the most active Society in Australia. This is due to the almost complete dedication of many members, and, especially, those on the Committee. Often the results of work may initially be intangible, but taken cumulatively, these add to an incredible amount of documentation and research.

To mention all of the credits and projects could not be done in this short a space, but it is appropriate to mention some of the major accomplishments. Firstly, the Jenolan Book. At the beginning of 1975 the situation of the documentation of the Northern Limestone was basically an haphazard collection of 25 years of maps, and a few individuals carrying their knowledge of the area in their heads. The project of a book on the area, which had been a dream of SUSS cavers for many years, was far from ever becoming a reality. Little needs to be said about the tremendous amount of time, energy, and hard work and over 50 field trips, which has followed the reinitiation of this project. The results will speak for themselves when the book is published in the next few months, but I am sure it will justify the claim of the highest quality speleological publication in Australia, continuing in the tradition of the Mammoth Book. But while we are involved so fully with this project, I hope that it is kept in mind that caving or speleology in any area doesn't have to be justified by a book to be valuable.

The other major facet of which we can be duly proud is the vast improvement in the size and quality of the SUSS Bulletin, which reached over 200 pages for the last volume; highest ever in this Societies history. To all those who have been involved in writing, editing, typing, printing, collating and addressing I extend our hearty thanks without hesitation and hope that assistance can continue to be provided in these areas in the future.

And in what direction is SUSS heading? Of course, being a University society provides an element of change that has both advantages and disadvantages. Of primary importance in this regard is the continuing training and encouragement of new members so as to provide the expertise in a few years time. I also hope that the interclub caving trips of late are kept up; this is vital to broaden the experience and social contacts of the caving fraternity. Lastly, a plea for tolerance. An old idea, usually rejected out of hand in the past, may in new hands come to fruition, and should not be sceptically avoided.

Good luck to Guy Cox, the new President, and the rest of the Committee; I hope they are given the support needed to function effectively.

Mt. Hagen  
1/8/76.

[illegible]

TRIP REPORT : JENOLAN 30 JUL- 1 AUG76

Present: B. Welch (TL), Guy Cox, Kathy Handel, Paul Greenfield.

Activities of the weekend were:- Maiden Cave.- documentative photography.  
- Southern limestone- familiarization.  
- Spider Cave- further assessment of the plan for track marking.

The whole weekend was a joint trip with MSS, and a more co-operative and informative weekend would be hard to find. I feel that it is only with such superb inter-society co-operation that speleology at Jenolan will advance.

The weekend started with a trip into Maiden Cave( discovered by MSS in 1975) on which several members of both MSS and SUSS took photographs. The aim of the photography was to provide a photographic record of the cave, something which is lacking for most caves, and one of the most documentative procedures which should be encouraged.

After strolling down the valley, looking at the upper and lower entrances to Serpentine Cave( J125 and J72 respectively), we all set off to have a look at a cave that Ken Keck( MSS ) knew. WE walked down the valley discussing various caves on the way, of course a visit to Naked Lady Cave (J103) was made to view the naked lady carving.

Ken found the cave he was telling us about with no trouble at all, despite the fact that it had been several years since he had last visited it. Guy and Bruce wriggled inside and the cave was just as Ken had described it - just one small chamber. However, the most interesting thing about the cave was the historical signatures seen on the wall. These read: Wiburd 1910, Vos 1886, Brown and Yard 1918?1925.

The cave is located on the same side of the creek as J45 but further downstream and a little higher. The cave will be fully documented on a future weekend.

On Sunday, all went to Spider Cave. There were two main purposes:- firstly to have a look at the new inner sections with a view to working out track marking requirements, in preparation for the weekend 14-15AUG76. Secondly the visit was an opportunity to show MSS the cave. Congratulations to Derek Pepper's wife, Marlene, on getting through squeezes 1 and 2. All the other MSS members found the squeeze too tight, as well as Guy. Kathy, Paul and Bruce pushed on through squeeze 3, the most difficult technically, and had a look at the rest of the cave. The muddy sump definitely has a small breeze going through it and is worthy of digging. This breeze is no where near the strength of the gale which seems to be always passing through squeezes 1 and 2 and 3.

On leaving the cave it was snowing and hailing- rather exciting. Most of the snow melted as soon as it reached the ground, however on the Five Mile Hill the snow lay about 2" thick.

Guy and Bruce were the last to leave because they measured up the entrance of J51 Casteret Cave.

Bruce Welch.

## A VISIT TO THE DREADED QUARRY

Vince Morand.

On Saturday 18th September, some members of the Sydney University Geology Society, myself included, went to inspect the Marulan South limestone quarry. Upon arriving at the head office late in the morning we were greeted by a chap with thick glasses who was the man in charge of the quarry. He led us into the office and gave us an introductory talk before showing us around the quarry.

We were told that recently SPC and APCM(A) had merged into the one company BCSC, and this would mean a more efficient extraction of the limestone with the northern and southern parts of the quarry under the one ownership. This fellow seemed to think that this would result in less friction between conservationists and quarry owners, but BCSC still plans to dig out 60 million tons of limestone from the north wall of the gorge. This southernmost part of the quarry is expected to operate for another 25 years. The company plans to build a large wall of mullock in the middle of the quarry, and will use this to fill in the hole at the end of the 25 years, but they will need a hell of a lot of mullock to replace 65 million tons of limestone.

Because of the Shoalhaven water supply scheme, SPC had to build a gabian wall to stop silt from the mullock heaps reaching Barber's creek and the Shoalhaven. This gabian wall was made by putting rocks in cages and building a wall out of them, and this acts as a dam for all the silt. This operation cost a considerable amount of money. The present mullock heaps also have to be revegetated.

Our guide also told us that there had been a lot of natural regrowth on the scree slopes on the northern sides of the gorge, since the photo on the office wall had been taken. When I looked at the scree slopes later on the only growth that I could see was in the amount of rocks on the slope. But he also agreed that mining industries had gone too far in many cases, but also that conservationists can go to extremes also ("You can get your radical conservationists just like you get your radical unionists").

After this inspiring talk we journeyed to the southern end of the quarry, which is 2 miles from the head office. We stopped on a point about 100 feet above the lowest bench, from which there is a magnificent view across the gorge to Troy Walls. It was very windy here, and so we didn't stay too long because the only way to avoid being blown off the precipice was to pick up a heavy boulder to weigh oneself down (or else be fat). I did however find a small cave here, a few inches wide and 10 or more feet deep.

We then went back along the wide floor of the quarry to look at the jaw crusher where there is a fine powder coating on everything, despite regular spraying with water.

There is a large tower with floodlights for nightwork situated on a high point to the east of the main central part of the quarry. From here one can see just how huge the quarry is, even though they have only just scratched the surface at this stage.

The kiln was the next thing to succumb to our detailed inspection. It is a long cylinder, 11 feet in diameter and 300 feet long, lined with bricks. It



A Visit to the dreaded quarry :- (continued)

was not operating when we were there, but it is always kept very hot, so that when we looked into it from the igniting hole at one end, we could see red hot rocks lying around with flames sweeping across them, and the bricks lining the kiln were glowing orange. We couldn't see more than about 30 feet down its 300 foot length because of the flames. I wonder what it's like when it's turned on.

The granite contact in the northern part of the quarry was next inspected. Here a mass of granodiorite has intruded the limestone and has recrystallised it. There are masses of calcite crystals around here, some as long as two inches. It was a geologists paradise, and the guide said we could stay there as long as we liked. But it was getting dangerously close to lunchtime, so we picked up as many crystals as we could and zapped over to Bungonia Caves for lunch.

After lunch we visited some caves, Julia James having lent us some lights. Dave Dickson and I were the only ones who had been caving before, the others were yet to taste the delights of the subterranean world. We had a look at the entrance to Hogans, and then the entrance to Drum. Then, of course, we all went down the Grill Cave. Most of the group got down to the horizontal ladder, but two decided to go back to the surface after a while ("How do you get out of here anyway?"). We assumed they would reach the surface eventually. When we reached the horizontal ladder we turned out the lights to show everyone how dark it is when there is no light; some people get a thrill out of this. Then Dave Dickson and I went down to the Crystal Palace while everyone else went back to the surface.

By the time Dave and I got back to the cars, everyone else had packed up everything. We both remarked that this was good planning on our part, and we then all went on our merry way home.

TRIP REPORT- JENOLAN 13/14 NOVEMBER 1976  
Geology and Hydrology of the Northern Limestone

B. R. Welch

Present: B. Welch, G. Cox

On arriving at Jenolan, Bruce attended the J.C.H.A.P.S. Committee meeting while Guy did some geologising in the Northern Limestone. Dinner in Caves House, and then the General Meeting of J.C.H.A.P.S.

Sunday, being a superb day, was spent doing further work on the geology of the Northern Limestone, some hydrological observations were also made. We progressed up the valley to the end of the flat which runs north of J244 Watersend Cave, and climbed the hill at the end of this valley. Lunch and a swim at Watersend Cave, then back to Mammoth campsite via the top of Wiburds Bluff and the Big Rift. A brief investigation of a proposed fault at Spider Cave, then up to the top of the hill behind the Rangers house, after inspection of a reported fault at the south end of Playing Fields. We left Jenolan at about 7pm.

PLANO FILM FILM INFORMATION

Trip report 6-14/8/76 Jenolan. Peter Campbell, Peter and Robert Winglee and his girlfriend whose name I apologise for forgetting, Rob Kay (SUSS U.K.), Brendon Hyde, Prue Kirby, and Neil Montgomery. (not necessarily in that order)  
Correction: Lizette Heness was also there.

6/8/76

Most people drove but once again I rode from Mt. Victoria to Jenolan. I can recommend this as one of the finest rides in N.S.W. A full moon over the historic 5 Mile Hill road is Quite an experience, especially if there are no cars.

7/8/76

A trip into J13 (Mammoth Cave) for track marking and photography in Oolite Cavern; the track marking was a dismal failure owing to the untimely demise of my twist drill. The photography was more rewarding with a view of the ceiling 20m. above. This is shale with some ? marble "inlay". I tried out my Olympus OM-2 here, and its capability for metering flash intensity was useful since it allowed apertures of f8 at 10-15m, thus providing plenty of depth of field. This camera, 2 electronic flashes, a slave unit, spare film, and a small tripod fit in an ammunition box with foam padding as well; a tribute to miniturisation.

8/8/76

The evening was spent at the Smoke Concert in the Grand Arch. The locals were out in force as were inebriated bikies from all over N.S.W. It was entertaining to watch the latter risking incineration by staggering around a large bonfire, to the strains of Australian folksongs played by a local bush band. Noel Rawlinson was hard at work making his infamous snake sandwiches, and raising money for JCHAPS.

9/8/76

Surveying in Spider Cave (J174) in the new section was continued as was digging in the new earth sump, which appears to be heading upwards, just like the first. A 1:1000 map of the new section is included with this report (to be published in the next Bulletin- Ed.) My day was spent writing off a dig opposite Serpentine Bluff, and examining the side creeks in the area which appear to carry a permanent trickle of water, but sink before they reach McKeon's creek.

10/8/76

Surveying in the Southern Limestone was to be commenced, but we, and many of the locals became mysteriously ill from something we must have all eaten. We had definite ideas as to why we had this gastroenteritis, but for diplomatic reasons felt that no one else should be knowledgeable of the cause. We tourists in the Lucas with paper bags.

11/8/76

Surveying as far as the car park was "completed", creek tagging in the Southern limestone was completed (at least as far as we went), and surveying in Spider Cave was finished that night.

12/8/76

Surveying continued back down from the carpark to a permanent survey station near Caves House, due to some unfortunate circumstances. This was using 2 forestry compasses as theodolites to avoid magnetic anomalies in this built up area. We returned to Sydney for an interesting SUSS meeting with Julie James showing slides of New Zealand caves.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 47

Abstract

A discussion as to the usefulness of trips into Mammoth Cave.

Mammoth Cave is perhaps the best sporting cave at Jenolan, and would almost certainly be visited more often than any other non-tourist cave in the area. Surely we must ask ourselves- why so many trips into Mammoth Cave, especially now that the Mammoth Book has been published. All too often trip reports simply state "Mammoth Cave was entered" or something similar. Are all these trips, or even a majority of them, sporting trips?- perhaps not.

Mammoth Cave is a complex and mystifying cave, and it still holds its greatest secret - the Woolly Rhinoceros. Perhaps the goal of every devoted Jenolan speleo is to solve the mysteries (both hydrological and morphological) of Mammoth Cave. Is this cave the key to the whole Northern System? In an attempt to develop theories on Mammoth Cave, speleos have spent many hours simply wandering through the cave, with a watchful eye, perhaps discussing a scallop mark or a sediment bank with a fellow caver; or committing a joint controlled passage or a trickle of water to memory. Cavers come and go, but the theories don't seem to be lost quite so easily. Some of the theories on Mammoth Cave are to my knowledge 4th hand, so the numerous trips made by our predecessors have not been in vain.

It takes a long time, involving many trips, and hours of thought and argument, to get the "feel" of Mammoth Cave. Once one gets this feel, one knows where to look for certain evidence that will ultimately lead to new theories or perhaps the answer to one or many of the numerous problems of the cave.

What I am trying to say is that one single trip into Mammoth Cave does not in itself achieve something concrete, but combined with years of study a much clearer view of the cave can be formulated. The policy of numerous trips into Mammoth Cave may some day lead to further discoveries and some answers as to the nature of the hydrology and geomorphology of the cave.

Let us not forget that some of the greatest discoveries have been made by prospective members, and that new enthusiasm for some speleological project has been generated by seemingly 'tourist' trips into the cave.

AA

SNAKE SANDWICHES AND SOUTHERN SURVEYING (cont. from p46)

13/8/76

Bruce and I were the only ones to return to Jenolan and arrived early on Friday morning. Surveying in the Southern Limestone was completed just beyond the river fork below J23 (Bottomless Pit) (using leap frogging)

14/8/76

We buried a Macropod and then drove to the Liason Council meeting at Dapto, then returning to Sydney.

N.B. Survey data to be published soon anyone who wants it sooner, see Bruce Welch.



## FUTURE EVENTS

### DECEMBER

- 11/12 Wyanbene. Transport required. Randall King. ph. 969 4543  
11/12 Jenolan. Bruce Welch. ph. 929 0432.  
20 Committee meeting. 9 Wyong Rd. mosman. 7.30pm. R. King  
27-31 ASF Conference. Canberra. R. King/ B. Welch

- 4/5 Bungonia. Geoff Innes. ph. 525 4871  
17-24 Jenolan. Peter Campbell/ Bruce Welch.

### JANUARY

- 7/8 or 14/15 Kanangra Canyons. Kalang Canyon through the Waterfalls. R. King.  
22-24 Tasmania. June- Florentine. Randall King.

### FEBRUARY

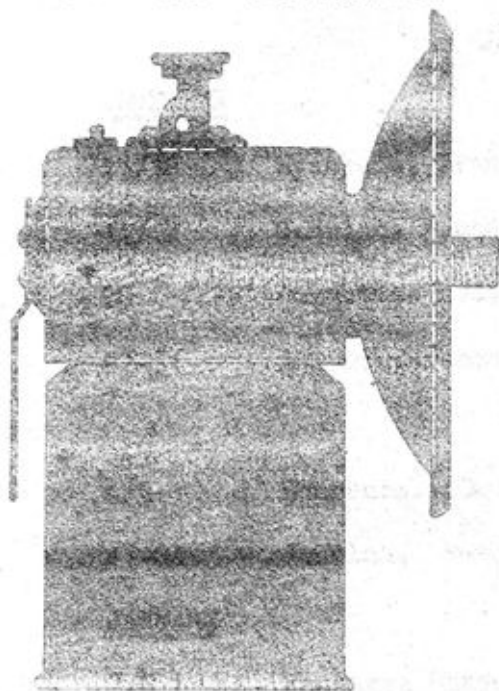
- 14-28 New Zealand. Tataka/ Mt. Owen. G. Innes/ R. King.  
21 Committee meeting.

### MARCH

- 1-5 ORIENTATION WEEK + SUSS STALL  
VOLUNTEERS NEEDED.....  
6 SUSS Field Day.

### SOME TIME

- Danai Brook Canyoning. Malcolm Handel.  
Avalon Head abseiling. Bruce Welch.  
1978 NEW GUINEA EXPEDITION



# SUSS

BULLETIN  
of the  
SYDNEY UNIVERSITY  
SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

BOX 35, THE UNION,  
UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY,  
N.S.W., 2006.

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