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BULLETIN *of the*

Sydney

University

Speleological

Society



THE CUSS DINNER

57 people attended Speedy Gonzales restaurant for the annual Combined Universities Speleological Societies dinner on 26th September. 12 were from MUSIG, 4 from UNSWSS (these figures may seem small, but are probably a majority of the members of those societies!) one from France and the remainder from SUSS. The evening started with worries as to whether I would get there in time - no great problem, you may say, except that I had all the wine, sherry and port with me! However, I made it, and celebrated by dropping a flagon of red on the doorstep. In spite of this, nobody went thirsty.

The dinner took a leisurely course, in very cosy surroundings (I don't think it would have been possible to squeeze a single extra person in). Buns had been banned, but various people seemed to find substitutes - mostly, fortunately, just paper darts from the menu cards though place mats started moving at one time. After the meal, Mike Lake seemed to have some difficulty in quietening the mob to listen to the guest speaker, John Dunkley (whom God preserve). After talking for a minute or two over a slight babble of conversation, John got instant silence (broken only by applause) by knocking a pane out of the window on to the street below. From then on the audience was very attentive - maybe they were hoping for a repeat performance. John gave a very amusing talk on the appropriate topic of "heavies". Richard Willson then stood up to propose a vote of thanks. He gave this standing on the table, and concluded by pouring, with great aplomb, glasses of claret on the heads of Dave and Cathy Rothery. A waiter had crept in behind him, and almost passed out on witnessing this performance.

All told, a very enjoyable evening - good food, good wine and bad company. Even the restaurant were reasonably happy (and they got a generous tip!)

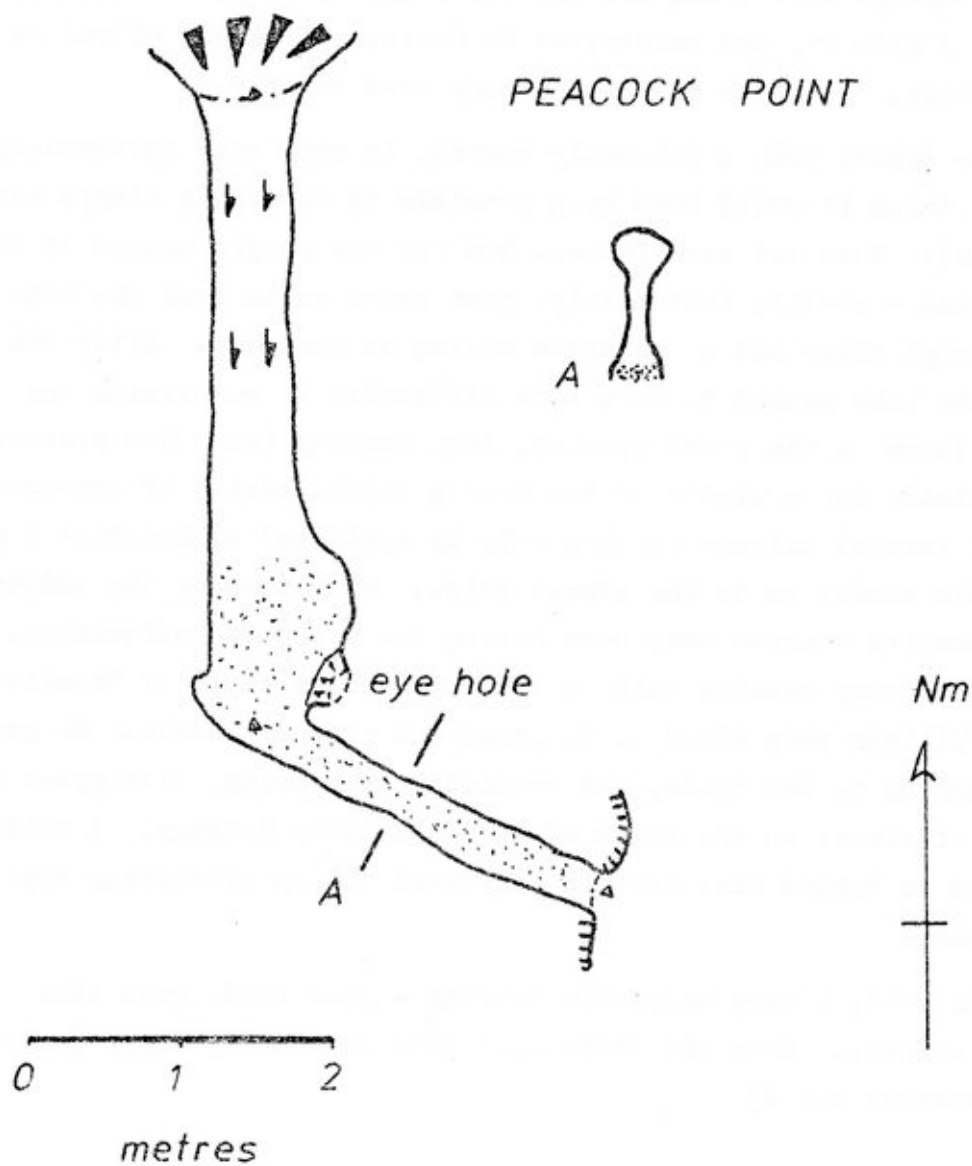
Guy Cox

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Now available - full size prints of the Spider Cave survey. Just the thing for your bedroom wall - if it is big enough.

\$ 5.00 from Guy Cox (Electron Microscope Unit,
basement of the Bank Bldg.)

AUREOLES CAVE



SURVEYED BY : Guy Cox & Mark Twigg

DRAWN BY : Guy Cox

ASF Grade 4.1

AUREOLLES CAVE

Peacock Point, East Balmain

Length: 7 m Depth: 2.5 m

Location

The cave is situated in the Illouera Reserve, Peacock Point, East Balmain, N.S.W., and is developed in the Hawkesbury Sandstone. To find the cave, walk south along the waterfront, almost to the end of the reserve at Peacock Point itself. A prominent rock scarp contains the lower entrance at ground level; the upper entrance is found by climbing up the face following an obvious water pipe.

History

The cave was shown to the author by Aureole McAlpine during autumn 1980. It is commonly visited by the local children, who generally make the through trip from the top entrance, exiting through the bottom part of the keyhole passage at the lower entrance. I followed Aureole through, but preferred to use the upper section of the keyhole. To the best of my knowledge this was the first through trip by an adult.

Survey

It was decided to survey the cave after the SUSS committee meeting on 22nd September. Jeff Crass, Mark Twigg, Guy Cox, Ian Mann, Mike Lake and Ross Newbery were present. The cave was surveyed by Guy Cox (instruments) and Mark Twigg (tape and recording); the latter did not actually enter the cave. Instruments used were Suunto compass and metal tape; the tape was removed before bearings were taken. Meanwhile the others made a thorough exploration of the cave. Jeff made the trip through the upper level, while Mike became the first adult (?) to get through the lower part of the keyhole. Ian Mann experienced considerable difficulty with the upper level of it, but eventually succeeded. I attempted the low route with no success, and exited via the upper level also. Thus four adults have now made this mini-epic trip; Ross did not attempt it, muttering something about his clothes.

Future prospects

The lower part of the keyhole passage is floored with sand, and could be dug. This would be rather unsporting.

I was struck by a stroke of genius once; just once, for that is sufficient; by the content of my Geomorphology lectures that if the last ice age ended 8,000 years ago then the aborigines would have run from the rising water. My unfailing memory served me with the fact that black-people had inhabited the lucky country for 25-30,000 years. My consciousness was then switched on to loads of boongs sprinting uphill, carrying the odd woomera and other all too few belongings, diggery-doodles flailing in the breeze, escaping the rising torrents and the blue boys who'd arrest them for topless bathing and vagrancy. It also occurred to me that during those days Australia wasn't stricken with the ills of unemployment nor inflation, however, this is not my point. I merely wish to demonstrate that man did exist back in the Geological History of this region and thus it makes it plausible for me to journey back in time to when it all began.

The limestone sediments of Eastern Australia were layed down in the obscene period and later uplifted by orgasmic activity. During this time man wasn't around. He, as a representative of what we call vertebrates, would have been a fish. This would have made it exceedingly easy to copulate with mermaids and this explains why there are few fossils in limestone except for crinoids and non-naughty things which the chief censor allowed in the "Fossils Record" (which these days stands at 33 strokes).

Well, where to begin this hole-hunter's guide? The obvious question is - where are the Buchan Caves? Under the Buchan ground is where you find most caves and, though I have not personally been to this area, I can tell you I have heard 3 rave reviews on the area.

One was by our president who is a fine man upon whom I look down quite often. Another was by a man who is now dead - so his taste's not all in his mouth and then the 3rd is by the Victorian Tourist Department who like the colour of your money and anyone else's so they make it sound like value. It isn't! (simply because it is Victoria and unless some more Geology happens it is likely to stay there.)

In NSW we have many caving areas though most are small. This is exceptionally lucky because they lend themselves very easily to overcrowding, restricted excess, permits, vandalism, unsightly camping areas, sanitation problems, mining and blow-flies. Someone once told me there were blow-flies in other parts of Australia but since I haven't been there I think it's a myth - probably aimed at reducing cave-usage, as do camping fees. I don't see camping fees as a plot to reduce cave usage but merely to commercialize it. I find it somewhat analogous to a "Hangover Tax". The old saying that "it feels so good when it stops" has long been applied to caving but a visit to Bungonia has significantly changed lately. After a grueling day at the orifice, grunting, extruding, abrading one's body and breathing a combination of foul air; cave dust, fungus and blow-flies; the part that really hurts is the \$2 that it costs to have a drink of water and empty your bowells next morning. I remember I went to Bungonia once and only farted, the ranger wouldn't give me a refund either.

To attack N.S.W. by areas would be the best treatment; to use a long range missile would be appropriate. So in writing this I have chosen the BlueBallPoint Pen (B.B.P.P.).

Yarrangobilly - The feature of this area of most note is the

Caver's Hut. One of the few areas to have such a thing and as a consequence most of the caving is done by the wombats which live under it. Cavers rarely go underground here.

Coolleman - Not a bad spot, very pretty but most time in this area is spent repairing cars - for the journey is a fierce one. Rumour has it that there are good wet caves there, with sumps. But since I'm allergic to washing I wouldn't go there.

Tuglow - Another streamway type cave, I nearly had a wash here when I fell off one of the climbs traversing above the streamway in the traditional way.

Narangullen - A bit difficult to find and though it is a short two caves, provides a good day trip from W.J. I got my feet wet here since outside it was hot enough to boil a monkey's bum in the shade [that's a strange expression Bunt - ed.].

Wee Jasper - The best time to visit W.J. is Easter because at this time the the local cockies and Jackaroos (also Jillaroos) have a rodeo and you can't camp within cooee of the caves and this saves you going underground.

Wyanbene - Probably my favourite cave in N.S.W. This is an active outflow river cave system. Clean, lovely, well decorated, and sporting, especially if you try to not get wet above the knees. A good day out.

Big Hole - I knew a girl like this once.

Bungonia - Don't go, the place has been ruined.

Colong - A nice cave - should have been mined. That way S.S.S. wouldn't have produced the Bungonia Book and sunk Aussie speleo literature into the pits.

Jenolan - Guy Cox does an excellent travelogue on the area. Whilst I've been seen in the area, I deny having been there; it was my double. I do admit to having crossed Lower River twice though not touching the earth on the South Side and coming back only using one wall. The reason was I didn't want to get my feet wet. I suggest that every S.U.S.S. member go to G.N.C. - that way I'll be the only person with enough brains to say " never been there ".

Wellington - Don't go. You'll end up a fossil bone or something.

Tinor - They have a good race meeting there.

Kempsey - A really nice area since it's very close to the beach and the water temperature is pleasant all year round. Often women take off their tops and I'm a dead set perv when it comes to beaches.

Molong - I know a man with a doline in his front yard.

Cliefden - Again another area plagued by a hut. It used to have the best collection of elephant and Irish jokes available.

Moore Creek - "I got my hand down one of the caves once"

Walli - A good name for a caving area. Somewhat in the vein of our capital city Sydney. Who ever heard of a capital city called Bill.

Jaunter - Don't duck the junter fly the coup. My advice - don't go there, it's a communist plot. Go to Queensland - it's a conservative plot.

Queensland is the most hopeless state in Australia for caves. Most of Queensland's people live in Brisbane where they get least of the vote. In this city they are nearer Mole Creek Caves in Tassie than they are to those in Chillagoe or Camooweal. Mt Etna caves have been transported in neat paper bags to Brisbane where they have been re-erected in the C.B.D. and Texas Caves are flooded because water-skiing is more popular and less Freudian and thus more amenable to Uncle Joh. Remember - In the land of the blind the one eyed man is King.

My advice to anyone wanting to cave in Eastern Australia : DON'T. Piss - off overseas and be a limestone consumer over there, contribute to the balance of payments deficit, send this country bankrupt. Then when the parasite politicians have starved out of existence come back as a native and go caving t in the natural way. Muddy caves give you the darkest skin, so does bat guano and remember - Eat more Vegemite. Bye Now.

Steve Bunton B.Sc D.S. F.W.
(Lecturer in Comparative Ambiguity)



TRIP REPORT.

by MIKE LAKE

BUCHAN, VICTORIA.

August, 24th to 29th.

Present; Mike Lake. (T.L.)

Richard McNeall.

Philip Cole.

Sunday

After nearly being wiped out by a 4-WD driver on the horrific Jindabyne track on the trip down Richard and Philip were in no mood for heavy caving. Royal Cave is a tourist cave about 450m long discovered by Frank Moon in 1908. Decoration rivals that at Jenolan. The gour pools are many feet across, however, they are no longer live and I noticed that they are topped up with a garden hose. Considerable amounts of algae are visible growing around the incandescent lights.

Homeleigh, the house owned by V.S.A. as a co-operative, is very pleasant to stay in and well worth the three dollars per night as outside it was rather cold.

Monday

One awakes to find the local limestone mining company has parked their truck, full of crushed caves, outside Homeleigh (well the truck driver lives across the road).

Directions for finding cave entrances were supplied by a very helpful V.S.A. member and from sheets compiled from the sixth Australian Speleological Convention in 1966. Anticline cave was found with relatively little trouble thanks to Philip's stumbling on to it. There is a single large cavern 280' long, 140' wide and with a perfect anticlinal roof 40' high. Two small possums were living in a cluster of large stalagmites, apparently fed with leaves by the local children.

Tuesday

Whale cave lies in the Buchan Caves Reserve and was relatively easy to locate. A thirty foot pitch just inside the entrance was not attempted as a nasty squeeze preceded it. We were also informed that a wombat inhabited the cave. After returning to Homeleigh for some snakes, we proceeded to Baby Berger. A complicated rockpile leads to a 150' pitch which is easily rigged, requiring only two rope protectors at the top. Only Richard and myself possessed ascenders; consequently some considerable difficulty was experienced in an attempt to send down a pair of ascenders. Baby Berger is owned by the aforementioned mining company which has machinations to utilise the cave as a sludge tip; already preliminary blasting has been carried out in the vicinity.

(to be continued next month)

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FUTURE EVENTS

October

Thursday 2nd. Talk by Nima Tenzing on Nepal at the SUSS General Meeting. 7.30 pm, Common Room, Holme.

4th, 5th & 6th. October long weekend. Jenolan - Mammoth & Southern limestone. Contact: Mike Lake 524 5229

18th-19th. Kalang Canyon. Contact Ian Mann 631 4321

Monday 27th. SUSS Committee Meeting, Graeme Smith's - 7/12 Sproule St, Lakemba.

November

Thursday 6th. SUSS General Meeting, 7.30 pm, Common Room, Holme Building.

15th-16th. Colong - exploration and surveying in the new extension. Contact Ian Mann, 631 4321

23rd-24th Wyanbene. Contact Ivan Desailly, 773 3861

Monday 24th SUSS Committee Meeting. Mike Lake's - 31 Crescent Road, Caringbah.

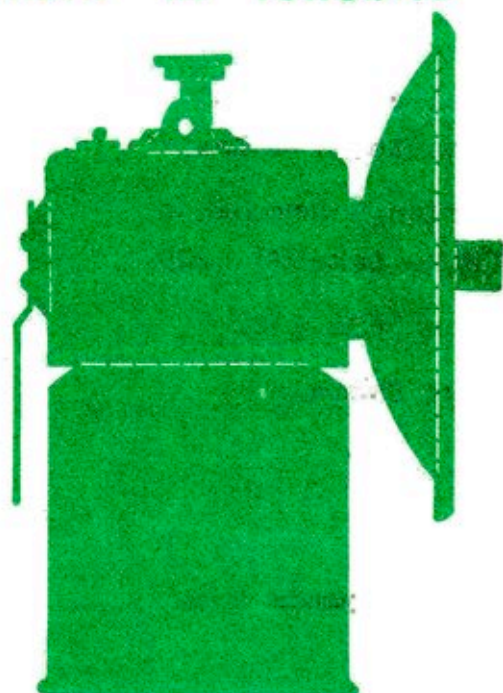
29th - 30th Jenolan. Contact Ian Mann, 631 4321

December

Thursday 4th. SUSS General Meeting. Norm Poulter will talk on 'Some remote and Inaccessible Places' Common Room, Holme, 7.30

26th - 31st. Cave Convict - ASF Conference at Pharmacy College, Melbourne. Contact Ian Mann if you want to arrange shared transport.





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of the

SYDNEY UNIVERSITY
SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

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