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EDITORIAL

The ASF Conference was the time and place for appraisal of Speleology up to 1960 and a glimpse of Speleology to come. I felt, sitting in that stewingly hot YMCA camp shed that I was witnessing a basically Speleological meeting such as has always been held and will always be held, like a prayer meeting or a speech day.

Speleology in Australia has changed very little, and why should it when it is sound and practical. Speleology here is not carried on with the same intensity, scientificness, and professionalism, which is accompanied by expensive probing scientific equipment and a good deal of publicity. It lacks a bevy of scholars and scientists who have been churning out papers since 1930 on matters related to speleology

This is because Speleology in Australia is relatively a tiny tot, there hasn't been time for this type of person to grow up in speleology and confer on it the aura of prestige itenjoys in Britain, Europe and America. Other factors in the retardation of its growth are the immenseness of the distances compared with the smallness of the population, but the mushrooming of small, keen societies will help to advance the barriers of knowledge into the great unknown, crying Speleology Alive! Alive O!

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The next General Meeting of SUSS will be held on THURSDAY February 2nd at 7.30 p.m. in the 3rd Year Lab. on the third floor of the New Geography Building, Manning Road, University of Sydney

Adagenda: 1: Opening by the President in the Chair

2: Confirmation of minutes of last General Meeting.

3: Correspondence and business arising.

4: Reports: Treasurer.

ASF Conference.

5: General Business

Notice of motions etc.

ASF Conference

Circulars

Irresponsibles etc.

Ropes

Gropes

Gripes.

THE NEXT GENERAL MEET-

ING: FEBRUARY 2nd.

NEW GEOG. BUILDING

3rd Yr. Lab. !!

Say after me.....

Several erroneous statements concerning Jeff Hinwood and SUSS Productions were made in the last circular. I hope to rectify all mistakes made as pointed out to me in letters from both Hinwoods.

Jeff is concerned about the circulation of various rumours suggesting bad managership by himself and Jon, alleging that losses were made due to incorrect bookkeeping and sales losses made due to delays in despatching orders. These are groundless, orders dropping off due to failure of or delay of supplies of slides. The minutes of a past committee meeting also state



IRRESPONSIBLE RUSHES INTO PRINT!

O President Peck his views has expressed;  
In all of SUSS history his screed is the best.  
To save SUSS reputa's his ostensible aim  
But ~~perhaps~~ perhaps egomania's really his game.  
He'll squash anybody who questions his law  
But his own peccadillos he'll gladly ignore.

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The attached communication was mailed to selected members of SUSS by the President. It is quite transparently ~~in~~ designed to muster a "stack" to this meeting so that some as yet unspecified disciplinary action can be taken against certain members who are alleged to be irresponsible. The President describes this irresponsibility in the vaguest possible terms, but no doubt he has a vast supply of facts ready to put before the meeting, and if he runs true to the form he displayed at the last Committee Meeting, we can expect to see mountains of malediction made from molehills of minutiae.

Whether you as a member are annoyed or merely amused by this high-handed action, the fact remains that it is only one of a series of such actions by the President, which prompts me to ask the following questions:

- (i) Why did the President take it on himself to write the minutes of the last G.M., when such action is clearly beyond his power?
- (ii) Why has he persistently obstructed attempts by members to have the rough copy of the minutes restored to the Secretary?
- (iii) Having written these minutes himself, why did he give them to the Assistant Secretary only to remove them from the Assistant Secretary's house while the ~~was~~ was unattended?
- (iv) Why did he suppress a circular put out by the Secretary and substitute one of his own making, despite the fact that he has stated ~~him~~, over his own signature that he has no power to do such a thing?
- (v) Having issued his own circular, why was he at such great pains to have it kept secret?

K.A.Stillman



... must have to report that used is at the cross-roads pending a decision on the Society's future. As you are no doubt aware, SUSS visits the Tourist cave areas by right. The persons who decide whether SUSS is to be permitted to visit these areas, base their decision on the Society's reputation. But the past year or two has seen the rise of a new cult in SUSS, known as the Cult of Irresponsibility. It is bad enough that these self-styled "Irresponsibles" often abuse the Society's Privileges, but what is far worse, they broadcast full details of their escapades far and wide, and even add a few fictitious details to give extra spice to their stories. A few "Irresponsibles" openly state that they couldn't care less if, because of their activities, SUSS was banned from these caving areas, and certainly, unless some action is taken soon, this could easily result.

Not content with using word of mouth to harm the Society's reputation, the "Irresponsibles" have rushed into print. Their latest effort (which probably reached you in mid-December) was a poorly produced, immature and not always even factual political screed; not expressing Society Policy, although it bore the Club's name, but one individual's views. It attempted to wash all the SUSS dirty linen in public, and carried a juvenile "advertisement" of doubtful taste. I shudder to think how the Society's stocks would have crashed in the eyes of the Tourist Department, Mr. Dunhill at Cliefden Caves and the Australian Speleological Federation had they received the copies the secretary intended them to get.

I consider that behavior at caving areas calculated to offend the authorities in charge of these areas, or calculated to give a bad impression of the Society, is irreconcilable with Aims of SUSS as set out in the Constitution, and indeed with the aim of any bona fide Speleological Society. As I understand the Position, the self-styled "Irresponsibles" have either their own highly distinctive interpretation of the Aims of SUSS, or no regard for them at all. Some go so far as to make no secret of their disregard of the Society's Rules and virtually challenge the Society to pin something on them if it can.

One of the leaders of the "Irresponsibles" who was elected (at the last poorly attended General Meeting), the Society's voting spokesman to the A.S.F., Canberra conference, inter alia, apparently disregarded a Society instruction and voted against the only SUSS member to be a candidate in the A.S.F. Executive Elections. The next general meeting will hear his reasons, which he assured the Committee took 16 hours to think up.

To sum up, this cult of irresponsibility is a cancerous growth, and anti-social movement, which is a major threat to the continuance of SUSS as a bona fide Speleological Society. It is time to take a definite stand against the egoism and selfishness of the "Irresponsibles".

Decisions affecting the whole future of SUSS will be made at the next General Meeting, to be held on Thursday 2nd. Feb. 1961. Questions such as "Will irresponsibility be tolerated" and "Is SUSS to become a juvenile political and picnic club?" plus many more will be answered. The answers are important, as they will decide whether you, as a SUSS member will, in future, be able to go caving at Tourist Cave areas and cave systems on private property like Cliefden. The "Irresponsibles" are confident of getting their own way at this meeting, as although they constitute under 20% of the Society's Membership, they are going to turn out in force, and anticipating a small attendance of other SUSS members, expect to be a majority. Therefore, I request your presence, and the presence of all members so that decisions of the meeting will represent society opinion. If you can't make it, please express your views in a letter to me at the above address.

Yours faithfully, Warren Peck SUSS President

President Aust. Sp. el. ~~Southern~~ Fed 1.