

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SYDNEY UNIVERSITY SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Edited by the  
Hon. Secretary



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EDITORIAL

With the A.S.F. Conference almost with us, it is time to review our attitude towards A.S.F. Many people in recent times have voiced disapproval of the way A.S.F. has carried out the very difficult task of co-ordinating the activities of the various member societies. There have even been cries of "let's secede" but fortunately these cries have gone unheeded mainly due to the ceaseless efforts of a few members who foresee a need for a national body which can, through biennial conferences, publications, trips, etc., bring speleologists together from all parts of Australia.

These conferences afford a chance for member societies to discuss their various fields of activity (or inactivity), to resolve any difficulties and to plan for the future.

Surely a body which brings people together from all parts of Australia to discuss their common interests, must be worth having and promoting; the membership fee is a small enough price to pay for a federation which can, and does, promote such goodwill and understanding.

Let us hope that the coming conference is a success and that as many people as possible turn up.

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As this is the last newsletter before Christmas I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a very happy Christmas and a bright and prosperous New Year.

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LIBRARY ADDITIONS

U.N.S.W.S.S. Newsletter August 1962  
C.E.G.S.A. Newsletter September 1962  
A.S.F. Newsletter No.17 September 1962  
"Trog" - Kempsey S.S. - Vol.3 No.3  
" " No. 4  
" " No. 5  
" " No. 6  
"Communications" Vol. 6 No. 7  
V.C.E.S. Newsletter November 1962  
Canberra S.S. Newsletter No. 25 November 1962  
Caves and Conservation - a report of the A.S.F. Conservation Committee  
E. Hamilton-Smith, Convenor.  
Geografski Zbornik Vol. 7 1962  
Cuba Ano. 1 No. 5  
N.S.S. News Vol. 20 No. 8 Parts I&II August 1962  
Wire Rope Splicing - Cave Research Group of Great Britain.  
Rassegna Speleologica Italiana Anno XIV - 3 - 1962  
Die Hohle Heft 3 13 Jahrgang 1962

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Mr. Frank Harmon has informed me that trogs make a lot of noise when they pass the Guide's cottages at the top of the Fire-Trail at Jenolan. Would anyone Going down the trail, Particularly late at night, please show a little more consideration and keep the noise level to a minimum.

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CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT

Clause 7 of the constitution now reads: "A member alleged to have breached the Rules of the Society or whose alleged conduct may reflect unfavourably on the Society, shall be called on by the committee, at a meeting convened specifically for the purpose, to show cause why he should not be recommended for temporary or permanent suspension of any or all of the rights of membership. A General Meeting, convened specifically for the purpose within 21 days, shall have the sole right to suspend Members.

### NEW MEMBER

Jenny and Dave Anderson have recently been blessed (?) with a bouncing baby girl; her name?, Sharron. I am sure everyone will join with me in congratulating Jenny and Dave and in wishing them all the best for the years to come.

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### TRIP REPORTS

Jenolan 24th-25th November    Leader: Don Westaway.

The purpose of the trip was to collect water samples from the Lower and Central Level rivers of the Mammoth Cave and to analyse for trace elements. The following metals were analysed for; Al, Ba, Ca, Cr, Co, Cu, Fe, Pb, Mg, Mn, Ni, K, Na, Ag, & Zn, also  $\text{Cl}^-$ ,  $\text{SO}_4^{2-}$ . Positive tests were given for Ca & Fe only.

The water is relatively mineral-free with the Ca & Fe concentrations only 40 & 10 parts / Million resp. There was no detectable difference in the mineral content of the two Mammoth rivers and the Blue Lake, but more sensitive tests would be needed to either confirm or refute this.

However quite a different story is revealed in the pH measurements of the three samples; the Blue Lake had a pH of 8.6, the Mammoth rivers being 8.2 and 7.7 for the Central and Lower Levels resp. This seems to support the theory that the two rivers are in no way connected; i.e. despite their proximity they are two separate systems.

The origin of the blue colouration in the Blue Lake may be of the same nature as that of the Crater Lake at Mt. Gambier S.A. There the water changes to a brilliant blue for the months October to January. Experts believe this to be due to the presence of an algae growth at this time of the year.

Jenolan 1st - 2nd December      Leader: Jeff Hinwood.

Many good photographs were taken in the Chevalier Cave and these will be shown at the next G.M. Henry's Clandestine Cave (in the Mammoth) was entered by Henry who subsequently found this to be the Fire Cavern.

Jenolan 8th - 9th December      Leader: John Steele.

The purpose of the trip was to continue the survey of the Lower Level Mammoth Cave; and in particular to survey across the river. While the river was crossed, the survey was continued down to the river and across the first wide part but no further, due mainly to a minor fault in the instrument which was quickly fixed outside the cave.

We were not able to find the main passages over the river but we did find a series of three vertical drops which we will investigate in the very near future.

The river was crossed by a very ingenious system of ropes devised and set up by Noel Campbell and John McConnell. The details of this rope bridge appear elsewhere in this issue

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#### COMING EVENTS

Yarrangobilly    29th December 1962 - 1st January 1963

Biological

Leader: Judy Thomas

Phone: ML 3170

Christmas Party: There has been some talk of a Christmas party this year, but I have been unable to discover any details. It seems that Doug Denning is arranging it, so if anyone is interested they could contact him at LM 4719.

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Details of the Rope Bridge mentioned on P.4  
by John McConnell

When the party (complete with hot and cold running freshers) reached Lower Level Mammoth River , after about two hours fairly easy trogging, most members suddenly decided they didn't need their daily wash just then, and would prefer to cross said river in a state of relative unsaturation.

As the only way across was to span a seven foot width with the body in a nearly horizontal position-a feat requiring both strength and length-it was decided to erect a rope bridge, as 200ft of  $1\frac{1}{4}$  inch nylon rope was at hand. (see diagram).

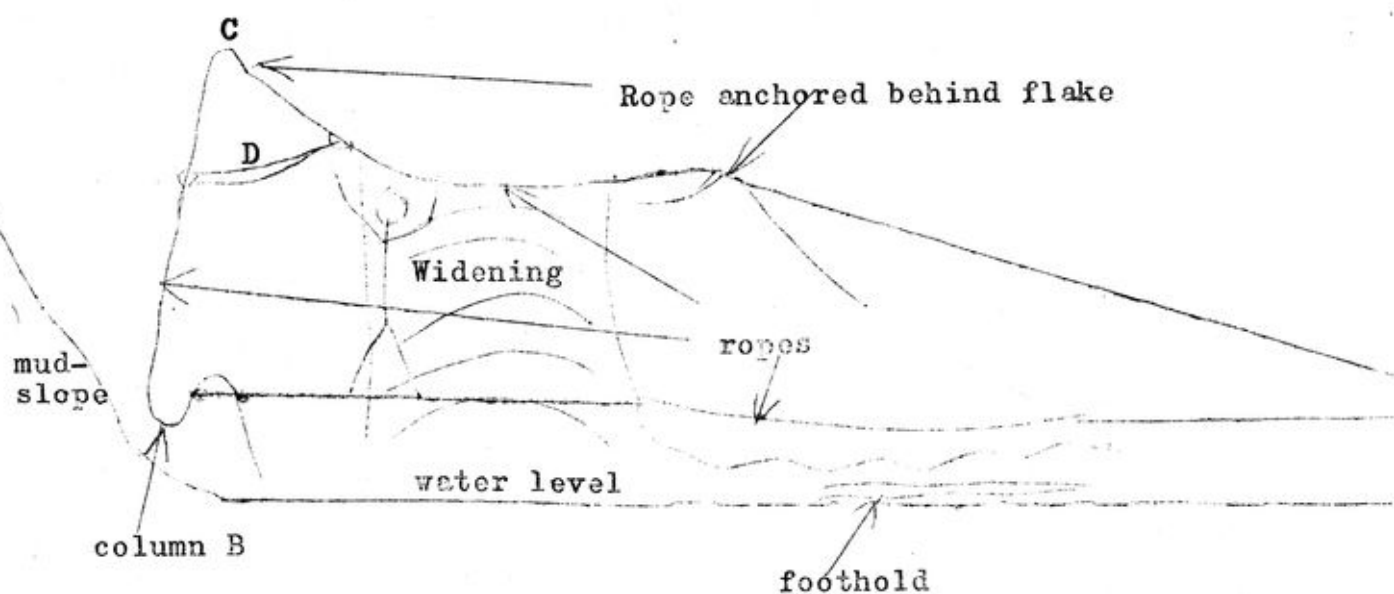
One "bunny" was sent across in the usual manner, and one end of the rope thrown to him. The other end was wrapped around "column" A, and a rolling hitch tied in the rope. At the far end, the rope was tied to "column B" and then passed up behind a flake in the rock to point C. A loop (D), about 4ft long, was then tied in the rope, and run back horizontally, and its end tied to the vertical portion of the rope. (This is because point C is out of reach). The rest of the rope was then thrown back to the near end and tied onto the lower rope with a rolling hitch at point E. Both ropes were then tightened by means of the rolling hitches.

Any trog who is game enough proceeds along a ledge at water level until he reaches the widening. He then steps onto the lower rope and makes his way along as shown-taking care not to drop his lamp as the rope swings. It was found necessary to re-tighten the ropes after each person had crossed.

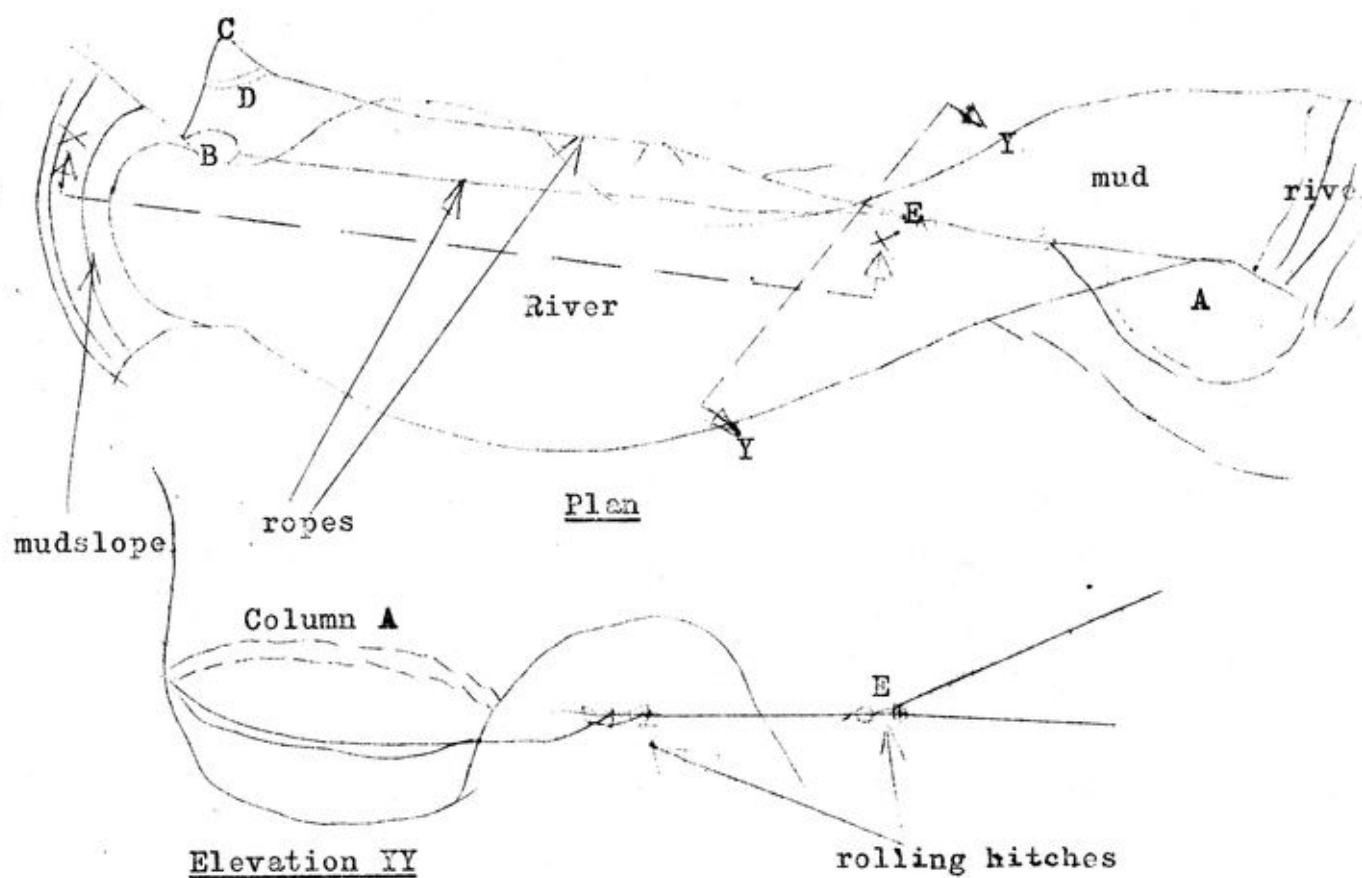
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On the Jenolan trip of 8th-3th Dec. a new type of masonry nail was tested for use as fixing survey markers to limestone. They are sold in packets of 100 under the "Impacta" brand. They were found to be satisfactory provided that sharp blows are used to drive them in.

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Elevation XX



Elevation YY