

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SYDNEY UNIVERSITY SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Box 35  
The Union  
Sydney University



Edited by the  
Committee

price sixpence

Registered at the G.P.O., Sydney, for transmission by post as a  
periodical

Volume 3 No. 5

4th March 1964

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PRESIDENTIAL PEP TALK

For the second time in recent history it has become necessary for the President (in the absence of the Secretary) to raise that which is supposedly mightier than the sword and put it to paper. As the appearance of this circular also co-incides with Orientation Week, it is aimed somewhat towards our new fresher intake.

In the past year SUSS seems to have been put back on the map of Speleological Respectability after a rather non-profitable few years. A good deal of work has been done (albeit by a comparative few) and has resulted in new discoveries such as the Restoration Cave at Yarrangobilly and those of the Nullarbor. Survey work has progressed at Jenolan, and the bat-banding scheme has gone ahead considerably.

It is hoped that this increased activity will crescendo in the coming year. If this is to happen it is obviously up to present members to continue themselves, and also to encourage and help new prospectives to see and exploit the many opportunities in the various branches of Speleology. They are also responsible to make sure that new members learn what might be called "the art of the sport", in order that they may enjoy caving to the full and also continue the excellent record of safety for Australian caving. For some reason this record exists in spite of the haphazard caving of some, but this is no excuse for future carelessness.

Caving is a sport in which most can participate, and provides many openings for useful and constructive work by the interested. Yes, caving is a science too.

John Lotz

President

(Autograph books will be signed at the next G.M.)  
**NOTE:- GENERAL MEETING - SEE PAGE 6**

NULLARBOR EXPEDITION 1963-4

Nineteen members of the society participated in the Expedition out of a total of 42 people from all states of Australia except Western Australia. It is hoped that other co-operative trips of this nature will be held more frequently in the future.

Thanks to maps drawn from air-photos by J. N. Jennings of C.S.S., the location of new sinks and caves was possible. The most notable of these discoveries was N37, a cave situated approximately 20 miles north of Madura. This cave is the largest on the Nullarbor and probably in Australia, of the caves thus far discovered (real tourist language). One and a half miles of this cave was surveyed, from the entrance to the last lake. This lake is approximately 150 ft. long, 20 ft wide and 15 ft. deep. (The two previous lakes were relatively small). An estimated half a mile was beyond this lake. The average width of the cave was 80 ft and the height 50 ft. Notable in the cave were the large silt dunes and rockpiles and the remarkably low salinity of the last lake (0.7% NaCl).

## Known caves visited:-

Koonalda & blowholes  
Madura 8 mile north  
or Firestick  
Abracurrie  
Chowilla  
Blowhole N21

Murra-el-elevyn  
Kestrel Caverns 1 & 2  
"Spider Sink"  
Weebubbie  
Claydam Sink

## New Caves :-

N37 and two sinks  
South-West of N37  
Blowhole near Firestick

Large degraded doline North of  
N37  
Two dolines near Abracurrie, one  
degraded, one with lake.

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Thanks must be given to Peter Aitken of C.E.G.S.A. and the S.A. Museum for making the Expedition much more mobile - important in finding the new caves. Also Peter collected cave fauna for the Museum's Speleological collection cared for by E. Hamilton-Smith, the A.S.F. President; and provided interest in his methods of collecting surface insects.

All-in-all a thoroughly enjoyable and profitable time was had by all.



Glenn Hunt  
Hon. Treasurer

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TRIP REPORTS

JENOLAN 11-12th January 1964

Leader: Peter Auld

Surface Exploration of the Southern Limestone was carried out by the three participants, and the following information was obtained:

- 1) A small cave (entrance high above the creek near cave's house) was entered through a 20 ft. drop, opened up at the bottom but there was only enough room for three people to just move round. This cave had been entered before by someone having the initials V. E. Extensive chipping had been done along a narrow passage containing clean formation, but to no avail. This cave also contained a complete animal skeleton (possibly a wallaby).
- 2) The next section of limestone that was looked at contained a sinkhole and a small cave which was entered via a 15 ft. drop. A very noticeable draft was issuing from a small hole at the bottom.

At this point the limestone dropped away to the second tributary of the creek which was flowing quite rapidly, but before reaching the junction of the main creek, it disappeared underground. Quite a large sinkhole was found about 40 - 50 ft. away.

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3) About 100 yds. from the junction of the second tributary and near the main creek another sinkhole was found - the largest one yet - but no passages led from its bottom. Here the creek flowed rapidly at first, slower near the sinkhole and disappeared completely before the junction.

At this stage in the investigations it is possible to state these points:

1) Caves, (and sinkholes - for these surely indicate positions of caves that have and possibly still do exist) seem to be classified into two levels - those on the level of the present creekbed (2 sinks, several small collapses, 1 cave) and those higher, toward the top of the belt (2 sinks, 3 caves), not including the "Bottomless Pit".

2) The disappearance of water from the two creeks near this junction and the existence of sinkholes at these points poses an interesting problem which warrants further investigation.

On the Sunday a cave, reported by H. Shannon, was investigated, the entrance being a small hole above Wiburd's Lake Cave. Ropes were needed to bottom the cave of 50 ft. and plentiful formation was found.

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COOLEMON 25-27th January 1964

Leader: Bill Crowle

Caves visited were; Barbars, Black Range, Coolemon Main, White Fish, and also a cave a few hundred yards downstream from the White Fish and above a cave with a large efflux of water. This is possibly the Murderer's Cave.

A slime fight was enjoyed by all on, and around, the waterfall. Much time was spent washing off the weed thus encountered. Coolemon Mine was also visited.

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WEE JASPER 8-9th February 1964

Leader: Jane Watts

On the Saturday the Dog Leg Cave was entered and due to the drought at Wee Jasper, the first siphon was passed. It was quite difficult to haul oneself out of the mud and up the rope at the other side of the siphon. However it was worth it as quite fine formation was found. Some members of C.S.S. attempted to drain the water from the second siphon with a large length of polythene pipe.

The mud was washed off in the Murrumbidgee, the Goodradigbee being too low.

After returning, Punchbowl Cave was entered. The party emerged not having found the Snicket. Next day the Snicket was found and the cave beyond explored.

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JENOLAN 229th Feb. - 1st March 1964

Leader: Glenn Hunt

The purpose of the trip was to continue a dig started last Easter in the Oolite Cavern of the Mammoth. After about two hours' digging with crow-bar and sledge hammer it was possible to admit one Bill Crowle. He slipped down an 8 ft. deep "fissure" and entered a very tight passage sloping down at about 30 degrees. He spent about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hours enlarging this squeeze and came to a part where, unfortunately, his legs were too long preventing him from turning a bend. A "micro-bod" is needed to make further progress (ANY VOLUNTEERS !!!). When lower level river rises the water level in this section is apparently just below the fissure, but drops quite a distance (tested by dropping a rock), in dry spells.

A dig was attempted by John Dunkley in Smirnoff's passage but it soon became evident that it led nowhere.

The dig in Oolite maze section of the Oolite Loop will be continued.

Saturday night was spent, to the tune of three hours, in J41 at the invitation of S.S.S. who were carrying on their exploration in the active section of the cave past the Percolator Squeeze. They spent 18 hours underground in this extremely hard section. J41, they say, is approximately 250ft. deep; quite a deep cave by Jenolan standards.

Serpentine cave was also visited. The tributary creek, crossing Mammoth Flat, was dry even before crossing the track. This state of affairs was quickly altered due to a typical Jenolan downpour which left all concerned drenched.





