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EDITORIAL

On Science and Sport

At the risk of being submerged by a flood of abusive letters to the Editor, I am resurrecting an old speleological controversy--'Caving-Science or sport? It is some time since this was last mooted around SUSS circles-I think Tom Landecker's celebrated article some years ago was the latest rejoinder. So, prompted by the recent visit to the Society by Joe Jennings, I feel that this is an opportune time to review our position.

SUSS Speleology is 99% sport and 1% science (perhaps a little more if science is stretched to include surveying). Only 2 or 3 current members of the Society are actively engaged in research, and these few only in the biological field. From time to time a member takes an interest in the geology or geomorphology of caves but it is usually only a passing interest. To my knowledge no member of SUSS (certainly not in the last few years) has done a thesis on any aspect of scientific speleology for even so much as an honours degree, although one member has expressed interest in working on aspects of karst morphology for an honours B.A. degree next year.

It seems to me that the primary reason for this state of affairs is the lack of encouragement by academics. There simply are no members of the staff of this University conducting, or qualified to supervise, full-time research in bio-speleology or karst morphology for example, and N.S.W. caves do not appear to contain anything of significant archaeological or anthropological interest. The other problem is one of access. Even if researchers were able to pay regular visits to their field sites, which they frequently cannot for reasons of finance or remoteness, there still remains the prospect of having to apply two weeks in advance to visit areas controlled by the Tourist Bureau.

For those able and willing to surmount these obstacles however there is great scope for original research in areas such as Coolemon, Yarrangobilly or even Jenolan.

N E X T G.M. J U L Y 9th S E E N O T I C E W I T H I N ➔

53rd GENERAL MEETING, 11th JUNE

For the first time in three years or so the Society had a special guest speaker at its meeting. The occasion was doubly noteworthy in that the speaker was an authority on karst morphology and a caver of many years standing, well known to many earlier generation members of the Society. Joe Jennings has inspected karst (i.e. cave) features in many parts of the world but on this occasion he dealt with his exhaustive research at Wee Jasper, an area sometimes visited by the Society. The most informative talk was illustrated by excellent slides of some caverns which because of their size are most difficult to photograph well.

For those members interested in pursuing their knowledge of cave development and karstic features, some notes and references to literature compiled by Joe are available in the Library.

007
FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE AND 54th GENERAL MEETING

Negotiations are at present under way for a first-release extravaganza in 35mm and SUSSCOPE, to be screened (it is hoped) at the next G.M. on July 9 at 7.30 in the usual place. Smuggled at great risk through the Iron Curtain, "From Russia with Love" starring Margaret Innes is an exposé of the USSR in the 1960's. The supporting attraction will be a documentary on Scandinavia. Box office plans are now open.

007
ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS TO YEARBOOK

Those who have not yet received their 1964 Yearbook should apply forthwith to the Secretary. Apologies are tendered for the irregular pagination and typographical errors--this was due to the great haste with which the Yearbook was compiled.

Please note the following alterations and additions to the membership list:-

<u>Full Members:</u> Transfer Dick Crowle from Prospective list		
add: KNOWLAND, Peter	Lot 1, Sagars Road, Kenthurst	
HINWOOD, Jeffery	162 Shaftesbury Rd. Eastwood	856862
<u>Corresponding Member</u>		
CAMPBELL, Noel	P.O. Box 99, Armidale, N.S.W.	
<u>Prospective Member</u>		
BRYSON, Allan P.	3 Clanville Road, Roseville	462017

CLOTH BADGES

For sheer ostentatious/vulgarity you can't go past a genuine SUSS cloth badge. Sew several on your pack and parka--it might assist you when hitching. Also, SUSS badges are very useful for patching strategic areas of your trog-suit. Barbara Dew will be pleased to supply any number at 2/3 each.

BASH-HATS

For the very latest in speleological millinery, the Safety Center, 42-48 Pacific Highway, North Sydney (XB6061) can supply you with fibre-glass bash-hats at 38/6 each, plus 4/- if you want a headlamp bracket and flex-clip so that you can pass yourself off as a Newcastle or UNSW speleo. (might be useful in emergencies)

EQUIPMENT OFFICER

Due largely to matrimonial commitments, Jeff Hinwood has resigned the post of Equipment Officer. His successor is Wade King. When presenting your congratulations you might also tell him what you did with all that SUSS Equipment you have been hoarding these last couple of years.

TRIP REPORTSYARRANGOBILLY

4-7 June

Tom Landecker

The long awaited gate was finally installed in the Restoration Cave. No other details of the trip are available.

WOLLONDILLY-BERRIMA RIVER AREA

27 March

Jenny Anderson

As a result of a report of a cave in this area, a one-day surface exploration trip was undertaken. A search of most of the valley allegedly containing the cave failed to find even so much as a patch of limestone, least of all a cave. Further exploration will be undertaken in the future to locate the cave, which allegedly contains some formation.

JENOLAN

23-24 May

John Dunkley

Thwarted in a bid to continue surveying minor side-passages in Lower Level Mammoth, the party attacked a high (estimated 40'+) chimney at the end of Smirnoff's Passage (so called for want of a better name). Pitons were used as an experiment in an effort to gain traction on the extremely smooth limestone which is covered with a thin layer of muddy water, without success. Efforts had to be abandoned after a little more than three hours because the air in this chamber appears to be almost super-saturated with moisture. After two hours it was impossible to light a match or candle, but troglamps continued to burn. Visibility was down to five feet. More work in this area may reap dividends as the chimney in question obviously carries a large volume of water in flood-time. Traces of small pieces of charcoal and wood were observed.

TUGLOW

23-24 May

Allison Jessup

For some participating members at least, most of the events of this trip occurred in getting there. A certain Vauxhall succeeded in getting from Windsor to the top of Five-mile Hill without the generator. The night was spent in the Grand Arch. No report is yet forthcoming from those who did make it through to Tuglow, but it is believed that the main cave was thoroughly looked at.

RECORDS, LE GOUFFRE BERGER, AND RECENT ADDITIONS TO SUSS LIBRARY

The Gouffre Berger is widely known as the deepest known cave in the world and those who have read Cadoux's "1000 Metres Down" will agree that here is caving on a mountaineering scale. However recent periodicals from overseas show that interest in this cave is growing to international proportions; it has definitely not yet been 'trogged out'. Following the initial French expeditions (see "1000 Metres Down") subsequent assaults have plumbed the cave to -3705 feet. A Belgian-American expedition reached the bottom in July 1963 (see NSS News, Vol.22, No.3, March 1964) and a few days later a separate British party dived through the terminal sump but was stopped by a second syphon for lack of equipment ("Cave Science", Vol.5, No. 34 October 1963). The crisp account of this expedition minimizes what must have been an enormous feat of organisation and precision teamwork.

"Sottoterra", Vol.II, No.5 (Bologna Speleo. Group, Italy) contains an account of the 1963 National Expedition to the Spluga della Preta, situated near Verona at the head of the Adriatic Sea. Exploration lasting three weeks resulted in the known depth of the cave being extended from 619 to 879 metres. At 2883 feet the Spluga della Preta therefore displaces the celebrated Gouffre de la Pierre Saint-Martin as the second deepest known cave in the world, after the Berger.

Speaking of records, there is an authoritative discussion entitled "For the Record" by a SUSS contact, Trevor Shaw, printed in the NSS BULLETIN, Vol.21, pt.1. The article contains documented facts on the deepest, longest and largest caves in the world. The same Bulletin contains sometime SUSS President Brian O'Brien's article on "Speleology in Australia".

"The Cave of Rouffignac" by L-R Nougier and R. Robert. If you can't read literal translations of that odd dialect known as Casteret-French, but still want to know something about French caves, here is the answer. "This book is intensely French and therein lies much of its charm" says the dust-jacket blurb. It is concerned with prehistoric paintings and archaeology but is very readable and certainly not of mere academic interest. "The book tells us of the fascinating animal world revealed in the Cave of Rouffignac, of hordes of mammoths and of rhinoceroses contemporary with Stone Age man ... of the amazing story of these paintings in a cave which had been known for centuries (since 1575 in fact), and the difficulties encountered in establishing their genuineness."

SPACE-FILLER

In case you have by now forgotten what was contained on page two, this paragraph, which is here for no other reason than to fill this page of the newsletter, will serve to remind you that the next General Meeting of the Society will be held in the usual place at 7.30pm on Thursday 9th July 1964.

