

# THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SYDNEY UNIVERSITY SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Box 35,  
The Union,  
Sydney University.

Price Five Cents

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Edited by the Hon. Secretary

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Volume 6 Number 5

1st August, 1966

## ACTIVITIES CALENDAR

August	PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION/EXHIBITION	See page 2
8-14	Abercrombie	Barbara Dew 575890 (H) 684514 (W)
8-27-28	Wombeyan	Barbara Dew
	Coolemon (still doubtful)	Geoff Butlin 462213
8 +	Mullamullang, Nullarbor	John Dunkley 854333
8-28	Wee Jasper	Graeme Jessup 444016
8-28-29	Colong	Vince O'Donnell 482776
September	GENERAL MEETING	Usual Place 7.30p.m.
October	Yarrangobilly	John Dunkley 854333
October	Limestone Creek [A.S.F.]	John Dunkley 854333
+	Buchan [A.S.F.]	John Dunkley 854333

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PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION/EXHIBITION

The 1966 Photographic Exhibition and Competition of S.U.S.S. will be held at 7.30p.m. in the usual meeting place, top floor of the Geography Building, University of Sydney on Thursday, 4th August, 1966. Presentation of this Newsletter to the Special Constable will permit you to enter and park within the University grounds.

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For those who were not present at the last General Meeting, I have to announce the resignation of the Society's very efficient Assistant-Secretary, John Dunkley. Let it suffice to say that it is hoped John will reconsider his move.

VICE-PRESIDENT. Congratulations to Graeme Jessup on his election to the Vice-Presidency.

FULL COMMITTEE MEMBER. Erik Halbert fills the vacancy left by Graeme's elevation.

While on such formal matters, the Secretary has received notice of the following Constitutional Amendments, to be put to the vote at the next General Meeting, Thursday 8th September.

"That paragraph 8e become 8e(i);

That the following clauses be inserted as 8e(ii), (iii), (iv), (v) and (vi) respectively:

- 8e (ii) An itemised account must be presented to and approved by a Committee Meeting before any expenditure of Society funds, or funds administered by the Society, is undertaken.
- (iii) Prior approval need not be gained if the amount concerned is less than \$1.00
- (iv) Except as in paragraph 8e(iii) above, the Committee may not approve expenditure in the name of the Society after the expenditure has taken place.
- (v) Any decisions by the Committee or Society concerning expenditure must be implemented within the Society financial year in which the decision is taken, otherwise the decision shall no longer have any force or effect.
- (vi) For the purposes of this constitution, "expenditure" shall mean any contract, agreement or order which carries any compulsion for the Society to expend funds.

That the following clause be inserted as 4g:

4g Voting at Committee Meetings shall be limited to one vote for each Committee Member present.

Moved by Michael Morris."

"That paragraph 4e become 4e(i);

That the following clause be inserted as 4e(ii):

4e (ii) Following the Annual General Meeting, the incoming Committee shall prepare a budget setting out expected income and an outline of suggested expenditure. This budget shall be presented to the first General Meeting following election of the Committee for discussion and approval.

Moved by Malcolm Watson."

The grapevine suggests that another member is working on other clauses, so make a note to express vocally or otherwise, your opinions on 8th September in the usual premises, top floor of the Geography Building, University of Sydney, at 7.30p.m.

PHOTOGRAPHIC  
 O T O G R A P H I C  
 C O M P E T I T I O N  
 AND  
 P E T E X H I B I T I O N  
 EXHIBITION

Date: Thursday 4th August 1966

Time: Entries received from 7p.m.  
 Judging approx. 8.30p.m.

Place: Usual meeting premises,  
 Geography Building,  
 University of Sydney.

Parking: You may park in the Grounds  
 AFTER 6p.m.

There are three (3) sections, viz.

1. Black and white print
2. Colour print
3. Colour slide

The subject must be related to caves, caving, or a SUSS trip.  
 You may enter up to five (5) photos in each section, i.e. not  
 more than fifteen altogether.

There is an entry fee of 20cents irrespective of how many  
 photos you enter.

There is a prize in each section, of approx. \$2 value; a winner  
 in one section is automatically eliminated from any  
 subsequent section.

Please bring your photos as early as possible, in any case  
 NO LATER THAN 8p.m., and don't enter the full 15 if  
 any is not of reasonable quality or originality.

In other words, choose your entries carefully. GOOD LUCK !



TRIP REPORTSTimor

July 2-3

David Drummond

The trip to Timor on the weekend of July 2nd and 3rd was a success except in so far as the weather was concerned. After a marathon drive from Sydney, Timor was reached at 3a.m. on Saturday. The first event after arrival was the detection of a strange hissing sound which was explained as the car settled into what we hoped was not its final resting place. Limestone is sharp. On awakening, and after a visit from a Census inspector, in order to escape the sunlight (as all true cavers should), we plunged into the startlingly obvious Belfry Cave. Little did we know that it was the last sunlight (or Census inspector) we would see. As this was primarily biological trip (aren't they all?) we made a bee line for the squeeze beyond which we hope to find a tunnel leading us to bats, more correctly what we were after was bat ----, in which to collect bugs. Persuading prospective members to "force" the squeeze by threatening to burn their toes with a troglodyte lamp was fun. Not finding bats, or more correctly their ----, we presumed we must do something to justify our existence so we mapped our way out producing a "Sketchmap of the Belfry Cave, Timor, beyond the squeeze". [See page 7]. We did find some worthwhile bugs, some with reduced eyes and little pigment, indicating their addiction to caves. We also noted considerable evidence of that addiction of brother man of writing his name on walls, not very appropriate since we didn't find the bat ---. Perhaps you think I'm bats, but we all had a good time in the ----. Sorry!

It was just as we left the cave that it began to rain. While two volunteers cooked a meal (in the rain) the other two (already soaked) found the nice dry warm Hill Cave, on the opposite side of the valley. This was not explored very far due to lack of time before eating. After a cold dark wet meal, there was little to do but sleep; or rather float about in one's sleeping raft as far as the confines of the tent would allow.

Six a.m. saw us out and about (for fear of drowning), for the purpose of getting dry. Not being able immediately to find the Main Cave (frustrating in the circumstances) we decided what was needed was a surface map locating the entrances to havens of shelter, so we made it (for those who are interested). [See page 5]. We entered the Main Cave at 11a.m. Lo and behold we found two bats (the usual) (one dead), but no bat ----. The nether limits of the Main Cave were explored (Have you ever tried to climb up a vertical squeeze feet first with your head in foul air, with prospective members threatening to burn your toes?). We found lots and lots of interesting bugs.

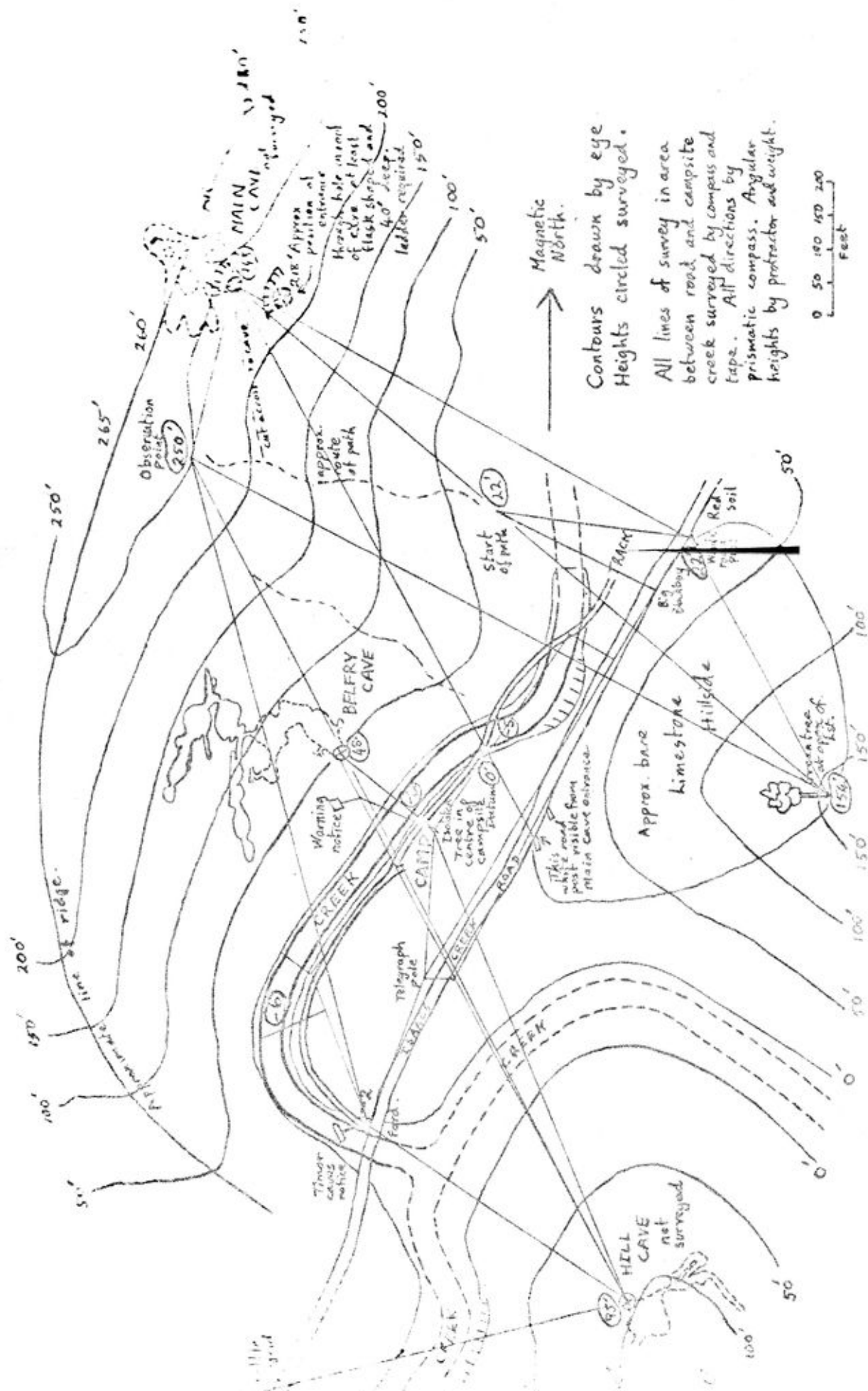
On returning to camp we found it overrun by a screaming fellowship on a bus. It disappeared down caves. We felt fools taking compass bearings through the bus. We took its photo at its request. We observed some interesting anthropological data on the natives, to wit: Female way of washing interior thorax after traversing cave mud - (1) stretch upper vestment as far forward as possible at the neck; (2) pour putrid creek water down the hole so formed;

[Continued Page 8]

3 July 66.

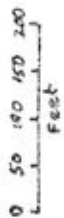
M. Fisher. M. Bramley. B. Otter.

D. Drummond.

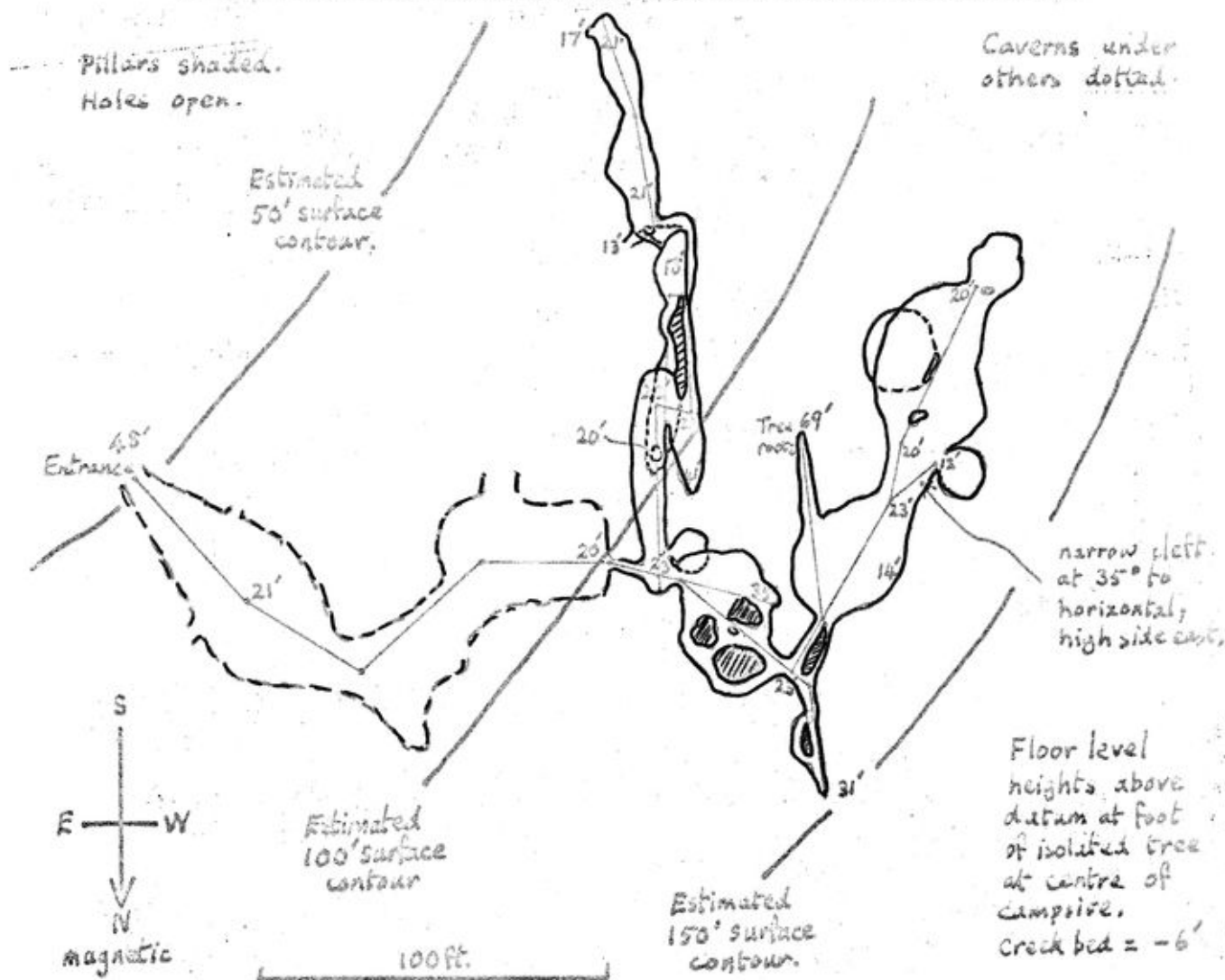


Contours drawn by eye  
Heights circled surveyed.

All lines of survey in area  
between road and campsite  
creek surveyed by compass and  
tape. All directions by  
prismatic compass. Angular  
heights by protractor and weight.



Sketchmap of the Belfry Cave, Timor, beyond the squeeze. Survey lines by prismatic compass and tape. Heights by protractor and weight. Cavern shapes drawn in by eye from notes and memory.



D. Drummond. M. Fisher. M. Bromley. B. Otter. 3 July 66.

[Continued from Page 4].

(3) rub. We cooked some sprouts on a boiling tin of aqueous carbide while reflecting on the fate of the caves. We also had a proper meal. We returned home, tired, wet, enthusiastic, and dirty (and took a week to get dry).

David Drummond.

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Tuglow

July 2-3

Harley Wright

The first half of the assault was launched on Friday night, when a large, antedeluvian Landrover departed from Forestville, heavily laden with four bods + equipment. Pausing only at Castlecrag (to load Miss Stewart), at Parramatta (to turn back in a second attempt to find the Castle Hill turnoff), Kurrajong Heights (to admire the view), Mt. Vic. (coffee), Jenolan (more petrol), top of Parachute Hill (lock front hubs), the great grey Landrover eventually forded the mighty Tuglow River.

For those who think the fire-trail up the other side is rough, let me hasten to assure that it is a veritable highway when compared with the trail which turns off to the cave. This is not to be recommended for man, beast, or vehicle. The Landrover ended up being led along the track at 2m.p.h. by Angus.

The following day the Trip Leader and his party of two arrived, and an assault on the Tuglow Main was made. Two intrepid members (Leader & Angus) discovered that the River at the bottom of the cave can be reached via the apparently bottomless cleft next to the usual entrance. A 200foot length of rope was found to be sufficient for the drop, but only just. However, finding sufficient courage for the drop was, unfortunately, beyond all but the two aforementioned people.

Animal life observed included one unbanded bat, a number of unbanded, highly active blowflies, and a number of tourists who defied description.

A suggestion that the waterfall be viewed stirred up a great deal of apathy, but the party finally arrived at the famous siphon (probably under the impression that this was the way out). Amidst the screams of the tortured, and the groans of the dying, the valiant band went THROUGH the siphon. Not content with this, they pushed on relentlessly over the remaining 10 yards and viewed the waterfall, to the accompaniment of such light-hearted banter as "C-C-C-Christ its Cold" and "Let's get out of here" and "I can't move my legs any more".

On the way back through the siphon yours truly dropped his trog lamp, which necessitated some diving, which in turn necessitated some appropriate words.

After an evening of carousing and general yahoing, our gallant band retired and awoke to see the sun. A quick conference was held, and a brilliantly conceived plan to explore and map the lower level extension of Plasticine Cave was abandoned as being technically and physically too arduous. Instead, it was decided to divide the party, some to explore the farthest extensions of the Fisherman's Hut, about 1/2 mile upstream, the rest to climb into the Window Cave.

After these daring forays the group made a strategic withdrawal to Sydney, where they are at present resting and recovering.

Michael Morris

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Cliefden

July 9-10

Barbara Dew

Cliefden Main: Purpose to see if bats were present (both *Miniopterus* and *Rhinolophus*), and if so to collect ecto-parasites, make blood slides, and band. Also to try and identify some bat bones. As no bats were present (at least none were seen) and the bones far too fragile to move nothing was done in this line. We took regular maximum and minimum temperature readings, and found a 20° variation throughout the system. This was of great interest, and with the almost 100% humidity may partly explain the wonderful and varied growth of helictites which are better and more thickly encrusted than noted elsewhere. The cave was examined in some detail for bats, and guano heaps looked at for fauna, but little of note was found.

Murder: The entrance chamber was visited with the aim of collecting the abandoned nests of the Fairy Martin, but these had all been destroyed by vandals.

Cable: Once again the cave was examined for bats, and only one flying individual was seen. It was very active, due probably to the warmth of the cave. Cave spiders were collected, and two beetles. Several old nests of two species of Swallow (Fairy Martin, Welcome) were collected and yielded a good "crop" of ticks. This cave, like the others, was quite hot.

Barbara Dew.

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A REQUEST FOR FUNDS. The two maps in this issue of the Newsletter were produced by having special stencils made at a cost of \$3.50 each. Currently the Editor has personally borne the cost of these stencils, but regrets that he has reached the limit he is personally prepared to "donate" to other members (\$14). By the reactions expressed at the last two General Meetings members apparently like the Newsletter in its current format, so how about donating one of these stencils, or sharing the cost with a friend?

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JOURNAL 7:1 -----still only 50cents.

YEAR BOOK 1966 ----- 20cents from the Secretary.

REVIEWS

From the Librarian

"Caves of the Chillagoe District, North Queensland" By Elery Hamilton-Smith. Helictite, 4(3) April 1966.

The Chillagoe Caves, 120 miles west of Cairns, are situated in a belt of Silurian limestone, forty miles long and four wide. Although the known caves have only been found over a small area, it is probable that more will be found along the rest of the belt. The area, therefore, has great potential. The area is of considerable geomorphological interest. A wet monsoonal summer aids in considerable dissection of the outcrop into pinnacles with sharply fluted sides. Daylight holes are often located between the pinnacles and lead to complex caves below. The caves are large horizontal systems suggesting development a water table and appear to be highly joint controlled though some large rooms confuse the issue.

SSS have recently done valuable work in mapping caves and conducting a general reconnaissance. Suitably rewarded, they plan to continue this work.

Dave Lowry describes Gecko Cave, a newly discovered shallow cave on the Nullarbor Plain, south of Baladonia. The cave is virtually only an overhang arising from a small sink hole and is characteristic of many such caves in the area. The dolines are not thought to be collapses into deep caves as some of the larger dolines on the Nullarbor are. (Directions of location and map of cave).

Aola Richards records work she has done on the activity of wetas (cave crickets), by marking with dabs of paint and then releasing them. Like American forms, they are most active at dusk and dawn; British forms behave differently.

Helictite also contains an abstract of a French article on the way straws are formed.

Trog, 6(5) April 1966. A short article by Elery Hamilton-Smith entitled "Bugs, Beetles, and All That", makes quite good reading and gives some worthwhile pointers and information about cave animals and the need for their systematic collection. He distinguishes

- (1) Troglobites - specially adapted to cave life (rare in Aust.)
  - (2) Troglophiles - live out their whole life in caves but not specially adapted (majority of forms in our caves)
  - (3) Trogloxenes - only part of their life in caves (bats, etc).
- Some animals don't oblige us by fitting neatly into such an arbitrary classification. For example, a particular pselaphid beetle is categorized according to sex - males are troglloxenes while females are troglobites. Elery has also noted the occurrence of pselaphid beetles from Basin Cave, Wombeyan, Grill Cave, Bungonia, and in the Southern Limestone Cave, Jenolan, in another paper. (J. Ent. Soc. of Qld. 5 April 1966)

Speleo-Speil, June, 1966. Our Tasmanian friends need to cut tracks to many of their caves, lest they (caves and trogs) be lost. Two more weekends are required to add to the 1300 yards already cut to Exit Cave. Some SUSS members undoubtedly remember similar activities (lost caves and cutting tracks) at Margaret River after the ASF Conference at Perth.

Stop Press, June 1966. An excellent article on how to use carabiners. D-shaped ones are favoured to oval or pear shapes. Safety hazards are discussed and those doing absiel work should read about them.

A large extension to the Wyanbene main cave, aided by a drop in water level. It has been aptly termed Diarrhoea Pit and is said to exceed J41 in its gooiness. A new cave has also been discovered at Walli. The cave, quite large by Walli standards, was found after digging from a sink. (Best luck to Denis Ward with his dig in the Oolite Loop, Mammoth).

The Speleologist, April-May, 1966.

Impressions of some tourist caves in the U.S.A. By Dr T.D. Ford. This is an extremely interesting, easy-to-read article on the author's wanderings in some of America's noted tourist caves. He includes items of scientific interest (eg. solution features, evidence of past alluvial filling, cave decorations, etc.) The ultimate, he believes, are Carlsbad Caverns of New Mexico. The Big Room is 4500 feet long and tourists pad for one and a half miles around its perimeter. Some stalagmites are over sixty feet high, ten feet thicknesses of gypsum are exposed, and one breakdown block is 100 feet high! One might think that 827 feet is a long way up to the entrance. Not so: it is done by elevator; there is not a single step in the cave.

The Speleologist also relates recent efforts in New Zealand speleology. A group of NZSS members succeeded in bottoming a 550 foot cave under extremely hazardous conditions. The cave is near Mt. Owen in the north of the South Island. They did not count on blizzard conditions in Mid-December and found that water from the melting snow turned pitches into "vertical rivers". Other energetic work has shown that digging does pay.

Britain is having trouble with her thoughtless "speleos". Six sacks of rubbish were removed from Gaping Gill and other caves are in need of a clean-up. The moral "Take only photographs -- leave only footprints" is applied. [I hope even footprints are not left in caves WE visit -- Ed.]

Commission for the longest and deepest caves in the world, Int. Union of Speleology, Circ. No.1, March, 1966. Ed. Hubert Trimmel.

The first 180 caves with the longest length of passages in the world are listed according to the data that was then available. Mullamullang, if placed, would be about 40th. One or two other Australian caves could just get in. The first 250 of the world's deepest caves are listed. The deepest is still Gouffre Berger in France at 3680 feet, followed closely by Sima de la Piedra de San Martin in Spain at 3640 feet. No Australian caves go anywhere near getting into the first 250. We are about 100 feet behind the 660 needed, but Harwood Hole in New Zealand is 22nd. (1700 feet.)

National Parks Association Journal, July, 1966.

"National Parks and Nature Reserves in Western Australia".

National Parks and Reserves in Western Australia are divided into three classes, each conferring different degrees of protection:

Class A: Cannot be alienated except by Act of Parliament.

Class B: Alienated by Proclamation in the W.A. Govt. Gazette with reasons given by Minister for Lands to both Houses of Parliament.

Class C: Easily alienated by the Governor after Proclamation in the W.A. Govt. Gazette.

Provision for caving or possible caving areas:

(i) Yanchep Park - In dune country 32 miles north of Perth. Tourist Caves. Class A.

(ii) Margaret Bay - Hamelin Bay area - beautiful caves formed in eolianite limestone. Some are developed for tourist (Mammoth, Jewel, Lake Caves). Mammoth Cave contains numerous remains of marsupials, some being at least 37000 years old. Also Strong's Cave contains many valuable fossils and is now being excavated by the W.A. Museum. Other caves also contain fossils. Some caves contain colonies of bats. Some reserves in this area are Class A, but many are only Class C. A National Park is recommended.

(iii) Mandurah - small outcrops of coastal limestone and other limestone away from the coast. No caves reported. Several small reserves.

(iv) Murchison River Reserve - more coastal limestone - no caves mentioned. Recommended as Class A because of beauty of area.

(v) Napier - Oscar Ranges area - limestone (Devonian) regarded as the best example of a barrier reef complex in the world. Numerous caves (see articles by J. Jennings and M. Sweeting) many of which have interesting aboriginal paintings and artifacts.

(vi) Drysdale River area - Sandstone caves in gorges contain native paintings. National Park recommended.

Other areas recommended may contain sandstone caves (eg. Wittenoon Gorge) which contain valuable aboriginal relics. Not all caving areas are protected (eg. Nullarbor) but some of the most beautiful caves (eg. Easter Cave) are.

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The following Newsflashes were received from SUSS correspondents just before going to "press":-

From the SUSS Gourmet at The Union, comes the report that the Dinner this year was the most successful for many years, and everyone like himself, appeared to have an enjoyable time, especially as the quantity of food did not keep up with the efficiency of the Steward, and the good old Penfolds vintner made himself felt, as usual. A visit to Bridge Road, Glebe, afterwards, was the liqueur to the evening, a grand finale so to speak, though apparently Glebe residents disagreed somewhat.

From the SUSS Longreef correspondent comes the report that despite each sides' attempt to surpass the other at Gamesmanship, a basically SUSS team defeated or outwitted the SUBW team 12-8. Reluctantly, however, it was admitted that of the 8 in the SUSS team, 3 were BWs. A barbeque at Deep Creek, Narrabeen, afterwards, was enjoyed by all.