

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SYDNEY UNIVERSITY SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Box 35,
The Union,
Sydney University.

Price Five Cents

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Volume 6 Number 8

1st November, 1966

ACTIVITIES CALENDAR

November		
12-13	Hill End gold mines - Bat-banding ONLY	Barbara Dew 575890/681307
19-20	Bungonia - Bat-banding	Barbara Dew
December		
10-11	Cleifden - Bat-banding and geomorphological investigations	Barbara Dew
15	GENERAL MEETING (date not as previously advertised)	Usual place 730pm.
27-31	6th A.S.F. Convention, Mirboo North, Victoria -see page 4 for details	Duplicated application forms and details from Geoff Butlin or Glenn Hunt.
31+	A.S.F. Trips following Convention - see page 4 for details	
1st Dec-11th Jan.	Flinders Island - Palaeontological excavation and surface exploration -see page 4 for details	Jeannette Partridge
January	C.E.G.S.A. Expedition to Mulla-mullang, Nullarbor Plain - transport in cars	Glenn Hunt 495784
	S.S.S. Trip to Nullarbor, especially Mulla-mullang -transport in cars	Erik Halbert 6305502

* GENERAL MEETING *
* The 66th G.M. of S.U.S.S. will be held at 7.30pm in the *
* usual place, top floor of the Geography Bldg., University of *
* Sydney, on Thursday 15th December, 1966. Park in grounds *
* after 6pm. *
* GUEST SPEAKER: Mr Frank Gaven - Secretary & Director, *
* N.S.W. Dept. of Tourist Activities DETAILS on Page 2 *

 * GENERAL MEETING *
 *
 * This meeting should be a must for all members to attend *
 * Our guest will be MR FRANK GAVEN, Secretary and Director *
 * of the N.S.W. Dept. of Tourist Activities. Mr Gaven *
 * will give a talk in which he will presumably touch on *
 * matters concerning the function of the Tourist Bureau *
 * and its aims and policy. The talk will be followed by *
 * a question time. If you have any responsible questions *
 * concerning tourist areas, etc., this will be the opport- *
 * unity to ask them of the man in charge of tourist *
 * affairs and tourist areas. It is hoped that all SUSS *
 * members will attend as this is to be "The Talk of the *
 * Year" and the last chance to get together and make plans *
 * for the holidays. *
 *
 * MEMBERS OF OTHER SOCIETIES ARE CORDIALLY INVITED *
 *
 * Supper will be served *
 * For further details see front cover or next issue *
 * *****

MARRIAGE SUSS is proud to announce the marriage of John Steele and Elizabeth Thomas on August 29th last. Congratulations and best wishes for the future.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Leslye MacKay	49A Jetty Road, Brighton, South Australia
Mike Shepherd	c/- Geography Dept., University of Sydney, Sydney
John Steele	Unit 13, Aloha Court, Barber Ave., East Lakes, N.S.W.

PROSPECTIVE MEMBERS

Prospectives who paid their 50 cents in or before June are reminded that if they wish to continue their affiliation with SUSS, receive the Newsletter, go on trips, etc, they should renew their prospective membership or apply for Full or Associate Membership by the General Meeting listed above. Pay your 50 cents to the Treasurer, Glenn Hunt, or post to box 35, The Union, University of Sydney. If you wish to apply for Full or Associate Membership contact the Hon. Secretary, Geoff Butlin, at the above address and ask for an Application Form.

EDITORIAL NOTE My thanks to Glenn Hunt for editing and producing this issue of the Newsletter.

-Geoff Butlin

OBITUARY

JOHN HENDRIK McCONNELL

It is my sad duty to inform members of the death on 7th October 1966 of John McConnell, sometime Assistant Secretary and Associate Committee Member and one of the more senior members of the Society. Many of the younger members possibly did not know John, for he had been in ill-health for some time. However in the past he had been a very active member, participating in numerous trips, and doing a great deal for the Society. All those who knew him admired his intense keenness, not only in SUSS, but in whatever he was doing. Only recently he made a welcome re-appearance on the SUSS scene, and showed no less enthusiasm than before; he returned from the Yarrangobilly trip only four days before his death. All members I am sure, join me in expressing the Society's sincere sympathy for Mr and Mrs McConnell and John's brothers and sister in their tragic bereavement.

G.S.B.

"Following the successes, fun, arguments, caving and all that of Adelaide 1956, Hobart 1958, Canberra 1960, Kempsey 1962, and Perth 1964, you are invited to the Sixth Biennial Conference of the Australian Speleological Federation"

An excellent venue has been chosen at Mirboo North, 100 miles from the hustle and bustle of Melbourne in the Strzelecki Ranges, between Trafalgar and Leongatha. We are to eat, sleep and yap at the Gippsland Educational Tours Ltd. Hostel, which has a high standard of accommodation and catering. The Convention Fee is \$18.00 and covers all costs including the traditional CAVE MAN'S DINNER. Application forms, plus fee (or deposit of \$5.00) must be in by 12th December, 1966; so get yours from Geoff Butlin or Glenn Hunt as soon as possible. They are to be addressed to:-

Miss Val Bertram,
Convention Secretary,
12 Edwin Street,
PRESTON, VIC.

The program promises to be very informative and stimulating.

- * Papers on Conservation by John Dunkley and Graham Wallis.
- * Speleochronology (cave dating) by Cliff Ollier
- * Geomorphology of Mullamullang by Glenn Hunt
- * Speleological Publications by Elery Hamilton-Smith
- * Caves at Chillagoe (Queensland) presented by S.S.S.
- * Slides and news from Mullamullang, New Guinea and New Caledonia.
- * New areas and New Discoveries
- * News from other shores
- * Geology of Buchan (probably)
- * Any other papers and tit-bits.

Perhaps the greatest benefit is that one makes new friends, and sees new faces (after recent SUSS meetings what a relief).

Following the Convention there are various jaunts around Victoria.

- * Limestone Creek and Indi: exploration and survey in a little known area. Party limited to 15 bds.
- * Volcanic (lava) caves of Victoria: a one week trip, little scope for exploration, but opportunity to see these unique caves. Leader - Cliff Ollier.
- * Buchan- Murrindal area: up to three weeks, hundreds of caves with excellent prospects for new discoveries.

Further details are on the sheet accompanying the application form.

Another trip which may interest people is one being conducted to Flinders Island by Jeannette Partridge. This seems to be a unique opportunity to do some caving in this part of the World, although it does clash to a degree with the Convention.

Perhaps I should quote from Jeannette's letter -

"I wonder if you could pass the following information on ...? I will be on Flinders Island, complete with farm, car and army of assistants, from 1st December to 11th January. One of the aims of the trip is to continue excavating a bone deposit in a cave there, and to look for any other such caves. Anyone who happened to be around that way (i.e. Vic. or Tas.) would be welcome to turn up. As far as I know there is only the one cave (rather uninspiring from the caving point of view), but the limestone is fairly extensive, with several unexplored (at least by me) holes. The only way to get there is by ANSETT from Melbourne or Launceston. No notification is necessary, but a telegram a few days before to me c/- Whitemark P.O., Flinders Island, would ensure a lift from the airport. In any case anyone on the island could direct people to the farm. Apart from the limestone Flinders Island is worth visiting; 40 by 15 miles, and up to 2,500 feet high; it is the largest of about 40 islands in the group, and is ideal for fishing, walking, topaz hunting, etc. We will also be collecting animals, and visiting at least two of the near-by islands, either by boat or Plane.

I realise that this does not give much warning, but perhaps someone may be interested.

Regards,

Jeannette Partridge."

TRANSPORT TO MELBOURNE

John Dunkley has a Holden Station-wagon available and will accept any takers. He will be leaving on or around the 20th December, but this is subject to amendment. He plans to spend a day or so in Canberra researching on the history of the Nullarbor, and will then have a leisurely drive through the Snowy and the scenic parts of Victoria. Takers will be asked to share in the cost of petrol and oil. Ring 854333.

Would those who intend to go to Melbourne* let Glenn Hunt know and indicate if you are taking your own transport. Ring 495784.

"CAVES OF THE NULLARBOR"

As you are probably aware, SUSS and CEGSA are going to jointly edit a book about speleological investigations on the Nullarbor Plain. This is to be entitled "Caves of the Nullarbor" and will be sold to interested bods for one dollar plus postage. The book will include review articles of general interest, as well as those with a more scientific bent. Joe Jennings is to write on geomorphology, Elery on biology, Dr Gallus on archaeology, Glenn Hunt and Erik Halbert on mineralogy, Tom Wigley et al. on meteorology, John Dunkley on the history and bibliography, CEGSA and SUSS on the check-list for caves, and papers on vertebrate and invertebrate palaeontology and possibly on botany. Good quality printing and photoreproduction is anticipated.

John Dunkley informs me that he will welcome any help in looking up the relevant references in Australian libraries as this is a mammoth task for one man. If anyone can help in book-worming or in supplying info' they will be greeted with open arms.

John who is acting editor for SUSS would appreciate it if someone with an editorial flare and familiar with the Nullarbor could take over the Editorship.

* "Melbourne" should obviously read "the Convention at Mirboo North".

EXTRA ACTIVITIES FOR EXAM-SHOCK SUFFERERS

Bungonia - 3-4th December - Fossil Cave and environs Graeme Jessup
444016
The Mount Solitary Expedition - 10-11 Dec. - Bush- walking and Back-
bashing Graeme Jessup
444016

Graeme also plans to lead an onslaught on Luna Park. Such things as The Tunnel of Love, The Ghost Train, The Rotor and other erudite attractions will be given the once over. The date is yet in the air for strategic reasons, so keep your eyes open in the next Newsletter or contact Graeme in a few weeks.

TRIP REPORTS

Hill End and Cudgegong 7th August, 1966 Barbara Dew - Leader

One of the old gold mines in the district contained a number of bats, four of which had been banded. One peculiar bat has proved to be a new species of the genus Chalinolobus. It is as yet undescribed, and appears to quite rare as only a few have been found at various localities over the past few years, despite extensive banding.

Swallow Cave at Cudgegong was also visited. 80 odd bats were found and promptly banded. These were all Miniopterus schreibersii. Some ticks were collected from sundry swallow nests.

The bat-banding program around Sydney (eg. North Sydney Tunnel) is progressing.

Yarrangobilly 1-2-3rd October, 1966 John Dunkley - Leader

Saturday saw a group of travel-weiried trogs in conflict as to what to do. After wandering around the Tombstones area, some of the more hardy plucked up courage and plunged into the East Deep Creek system, whilst the remainder ducked back to camp to catch up on eating and sleeping.

Sunday morning saw everyone fit and rearing to go; the object was to continue work in Eagles Nest System and we were glad to have SSS manpower along to help us.

Following the formation of SUSS and SSS trips have been held at such long intervals to this system that many discoveries were not followed up because of ignorance of previous work. In 1955 SUSS linked West Eagles Nest (Y1) and the Eyrie Cave (Y3), while in 1957 H. Myres linked West with East Eagles Nest (Y2). After two unsuccessful trips of mine to relocate these connections, the 1966 SUSS Easter trip made a through trip from Y1 to Y2.

The route lies up and over the calcified rock-pile a few hundred feet into Y1, then down over several hazzardous drops more or less following an old stream passage which has been filled with large boulders. You finally emerge into East Eagles Nest, Y2, from under an insignificant rock about 700 feet from the end of Y2. The route is 4000 feet long and took Bob Holland of SSS and myself three hours, even though there were only the two of us. It is clear that very few parties have made the through trip and numerous unentered passages were mentally noted for further investigation.

While this through traverse was being made the remainder photographed the extensive ice formations found in Y1. These appear to be the most extensive ice flow reported at Yag'by, being up to four inches thick, several square yards in area and up to 15 feet long. The flows are believed to be formed when cold sub-freezing air flows into the Y1 doline at night, displacing the warmer air in the cave. This warm air is pushed upwards, and emerges as a relatively warm air outflow from Y3, 150 feet higher up. This party, under the tutelage of Don Rolls of SSS, also made a compass and tape traverse from Y1 to Y2. This has since been drawn up.

Paul Rose of the British Speleological Association (~~formerly~~ of SSS) has promised an explanatory map of the system shortly. As soon as this is available SUSS will draw up plans for an accurate survey of the whole system. This will be an ambitious undertaking because Eagles Nest is the biggest and most complex system at Yag'by, with about 7000 feet of passages. It is about 350 feet deep, from the Eyrie (Y3) to the bottom of Y2. It is of considerable geomorphological interest, being an excellent example of the stream piracy mode of cave formation.

Y19

This cave was drawn to my attention by Paul Rose who reported in "Cave Science", 5(37), April 1965, that it had been discovered by H. Myers and himself in 1959, and "as far as is known this first descent was the only one and further investigation may prove fruitful".

The cave was located (west, not north, of the blind, shallow doline mentioned by Rose), a ladder was dropped and six bods had a look at it. There had obviously been one or two visitors since the discovery. The cave was very wet; the ground above is typical lapiaz or clints and admits rain-water just as fast as it falls. No progress was made beyond the work described by Rose and any further work would involve removal of much rock and fill. Removal of this could well be justified at some later date, because in appearance Y19 is very similar to Y18 which was explored last Easter and extended to a depth of 333 feet. (see trip report and map).

An unseasonably heavy snowfall, preceded by some extraordinarily heavy rain, covered the camping area with 4 inches of slush. After a snow-ball fight and words of abuse we decided to beat a hurried retreat and get back to the shelter of Suburbia. Needless to say minor trouble was had in extracting the cars.

(It is a pity that people have to indiscriminately put arrows all over the place. Apparently somebody, who signed himself as M.E.L., sprayed huge white arrows at various spots in Eagles Nest. Arrows should only be used if thought absolutely necessary, and then should be small and put in a relatively inconspicuous place. They should always point to the way out, and should be used systematically. -Ed.)

BELIEVE IT OR NOT

"Mischungskorrosion" is an effect where mixing of two solutions saturated in calcium carbonate will result in a solution capable of further dissolving action. This happens if the two solutions have different amounts of dissolved carbon dioxide or are at different temperatures. Bögli has invoked the process as an important factor in the genesis of many caves. Cave Notes, 8(2) and (3).

* * * * *

* "CAVES OF THE NULLARBOR" - PHOTOGRAPHS WANTED URGENTLY! *

* Photographs suitable for black-and-white reproduction *

* are needed to illustrate the various articles within the *

* publication. Black and white negatives giving good, *

* clear prints are desirable - illustrating the *

* morphology of the caves; showing the shape of passages, *

* mode of break-down, lakes, crystal growths, etc. *

* * * * *

A.S.F. EMBLEM - A.S.F. letter-heads feel nude without an emblem; so have some common decency - make one up and send it to the Secretary, John Dunkley.

OCTOBER MEETING OF THE N.S.W. CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE OF A.S.F.

The most important item under discussion was the problem of catering adequately for the growing interest in caving in N.S.W. This problem has also proved the most difficult to resolve.

Interest in caving is sprouting up in two situations: youth organizations, especially the Scouts, and among groups of friends, especially those who work or live together. It was pointed out at the meeting that uncontrolled traffic through caves caused most of the unintentional damage done. After several months this damage can be considerable. We were fortunate in having two leading scouts from the St. George scouting district there to brief us on the movement's policies and aims. They informed us that such 'outdoor' activities were encouraged and would get even more encouragement within the near future. The scouting movement encouraged individuality, and whilst they appreciated our concern, felt that it would be undesirable to function too closely with speleo societies. John Dunkley put forward a compromise view which was accepted by all at the meeting. The National Parks Service of the United States classified areas according to their nature and restricted access accordingly. Those caves which are prone to damage, or are important scientifically, should only be visited by experienced speleologists who had some definite project in mind. Other caves are ideal for the beginner, who is learning the skills of caving and developing an awareness of the principles of conservation. A.S.F. societies in N.S.W. would aid in instructing beginners.

It is more difficult to cater for other groups who do not have a centralized administration. Many small groups of speleologists sprung up unaware of the existence of longer established societies. When they did become aware of the existence of A.S.F. they had become too self-centred to want to blend with existing societies, even though the all-round advantages of such a merger are obvious. Discussion was deferred as nothing could be accomplished by the meeting.

Aspects of conservation at Wee Jasper, Colong, Wyanbene and Wombeyan were discussed. A rubbish tip is rumoured to be springing up near Dog Leg Cave at Wee Jasper and Colong still threatens to be mined away, or the country-side otherwise spoilt.

Glenn Hunt (on behalf of the President)

TRIP REPORTS cont..

Mullamullang (Nullarbor Plain) 26th August - 2nd Sept.

John Dunkley
Peter Hawkes

Following the successes of the CEGSA Christmas and Easter expeditions, SUSS and CEGSA organized a return trip in the August school holidays. The SUSS contingent consisted of hardened veterans John Dunkley, Dick (Mad Dog) Heffernan and Glenn Hunt (we just don't know when to stop). The CEGSA trio were most ably led by Peter Hawkes, who was largely responsible for the thorough organization so necessary on such a trip.

As is readily appreciated, Mullamullang's size is not the only difficulty. Sydney people have to do a 4,000 mile round trip which is a bit of a "drag" when packed into such a short time. Dick and myself had to leave a couple of days before the others as we had to be prepared to hitch from Adelaide. We boarded the Melbourne train at Sydney dreading the ordeal which was about to relentlessly unfold. Still, the railway is the safe way. After arriving in Adelaide we had a quick bit to eat, bought up some extra 'stuff', and sported our 70 lb. packs out to the most convenient hitching point. We didn't have long to wait - after two hours we picked up a lift in a ute' and advanced 25 of our thousand miles. This was to set the pattern for the 500 miles to Ceduna. We got to know the small wheat town on Eyre Peninsula intimately - we knew if the policeman was in town, what time everyone went to the pub, when they left and how they spent Friday nights. We were not alone - two other parties cramped our style, though we had time to get friendly with one pair - a Canadian and Australian carrying their ten-pin bowling balls to Perth for some competition. At least we thought to bring jumpers and sleeping bags, our friends had rather a cold time at nights.

Needless to say the others caught up with us at Ceduna as we were preparing to have breakfast. They had driven straight through from Adelaide all night and were a little worse for the wear. There were four of them packed into a Holden panel-van amongst all the gear, and when one considers they had twenty five gallons of water, fifty of petrol, carbide, surveying gear, etc. in the trailer, they did fairly well to fit Dick and myself in. Dunkley was complaining, "Get yer fist out of me ear, Hunt!" or "God your feet stink". Madura was a welcome sight and after refreshing, pushed on the remaining 20 odd miles to Mullamullang. Apart from breaking a U-bolt along a wrong track we took, we arrived in one piece and managed to get one or two hours sleep.

The object of the trip was to continue mapping and exploring the extension found on the Easter trip (hence called the "Easter Extension"). CEGSA had surveyed a mile of passage in this extension and in the nearby J.B. Maze, so our spirits were high. We also had visions of finding more very large passages. Easter Extension "runs into" the main Mullamullang passage near Oasis Valley - a group of a few small lakes about $\frac{3}{4}$ mile from the entrance doline. Collapse into the cave at the doline completely blocks the main passage in a southerly direction. Some passages in the Easter extension head back in a south-westerly direction so we also thought it possible to by-pass the blockage and get into the main passage again.

We decided not to camp underground as had been done at Christmas, and so each daily trip into the Extension meant a round trip of over two miles.

The first day was spent in familiarization and a little mapping and exploration. We returned to the surface and were guided back to camp by the light in Dave and Jackie Lowry's tent - they had told us they would come down from Forrest which is the base camp for Dave's geological survey of the Nullarbor.

There were many notable features of the trip-

1. A total of almost a mile of new passage was mapped and explored, bringing the total length of Mulla-mullang to almost six miles. Much more exploration needs to be done in this and other known extensions. We anticipate that more extensions will be found off the main passage.
2. Extremely beautiful and delicate "helictite" and flower formations in parts of the extension were found to be halite (common salt).
3. Methods of breakdown vary widely throughout the cave. The phenomenon of salt-wedging ('salzsprengung') appears to be very common in the Extension, both in wedging off flakes and grains of limestone.
4. Foot-prints of some strange animal were found far into the extension. We are completely baffled as to how an animal could have reached such a remote place. The part of the cave containing the prints has been dubbed "the Mystery of Mulla-mullang".
5. A couple more lakes were found.
6. Various cursory studies were made of the sediments of the cave by Dick and myself. Dick is interested in the rate and distribution of the breakdown and hopes to conduct more thorough research next Christmas. Sediments have also been washed in by periodic flooding and studies of compaction of the Dune have shown that at times the initial low sections of the cave are completely blocked off.
7. Various animals, including beetles and beetle larvae were collected from guano near the Dune. A colony of bats, presumably Chalinolobus morio, were perched above.
8. Several features of geomorphological interest were noted and should influence the overall interpretation of the genesis of the "deep" caves.
9. Jackie and Dave Lowry and myself collected the remains of numerous dead cockroaches from a cave to the north of Mulla-mullang. A previous cockroach from this cave tentatively named "Roaches' Rest", has no eyes and would therefore appear to be truly trogloditic. Bones of small animals were also collected by Jackie. A reasonably large stick with a burnt end was found out of daylight and indicated Aborigines may have entered the cave. Dark carbonaceous soil may indicate there was once a fire hearth. There is very old guano and the disappearance of the bats may account for the death of the cockroaches.

Much more work remains to be done on the Nullarbor. The results of the trip are expected to be incorporated into CEGSA's "Mulla-mullang Expeditions, 1966" and in subsequent papers to be written on the Nullarbor.

The trip back to civilization was reasonably uneventful but we made sure we had a swim at Eucla. We went to the cliffs south of Koonalda to break the trip and took photographs of the beautiful wildflowers. Glenn Hunt.

A recently produced film on the descent of the GOUFFRE BERGER (the World's deepest at 3,600 odd feet) will probably be shown at the A.S.F. Convention at Mirboo North. The descent of this cave is one of the milestones in cave exploration. Extremely deep chasms, waterfalls and freezing water required highly technical organization and leadership. The film should be worth seeing, if only in respect for the technical difficulties involved in taking it.

Timor

30-31st October

Graeme Jessup

The Timor Caves were reached after the usual long Friday night's drive. On Saturday we visited the Main Cave, Belfry Cave and some other hole. Only one or two bats were seen in the Belfry Cave which usually has quite a large colony. None were noticed in the other caves. Ed Ongley mapped a short section of serpentineous passage in the Belfry and took various measurements which will add to data he has collected from Serpentine Cave at Jenolan and some which he hopes to collect from other caves with sections of cave passages with a similar geometry.

The days were beautiful (no flies); the nights were also (no mozzies).

We all arose early on Sunday morning at about 6.30am, and members insisted that this feat be recorded for others to emulate. The Hill Cave was quickly visited, and once again, was noticeably warmer than other caves in the area. This was anticipated and a few temperature measurements were made.

We packed quickly and shot through to see if Burning Mountain was still burning. It was. We had enough time left over to see Putty Road by day which was quite a change from our usual frantic all-night drives.

Sundry Wanderings in the last couple of months - Glenn Hunt.

During a recent geology excursion with the Sydney Teachers' College I visited one of several molybdenite mines south of Yetholme, N.S.W. Access is restricted to this area and permission has to be sought to enter it. The mine visited is about 300 yards west of a disused house at the end of the track from Yetholme, and is of interest as it contains a small number of bent-wing bats (Miniopterus schreibersii) - four males and two females were counted. One alcove was extremely humid and reeked of bats. It contained a few small conical piles of guano. This, and other mines which Jane Watts says house bats, would be well worth a visit from Barbara Dew. A breeding colony could be found in the area.

On the same trip I visited Cow Flat south of Bathurst and pottered around some of the marble and dolomite quarries in the area. No caves were seen, though one is reported to run for a short distance from a quarry wall. South of the quarries, however, the creek cuts through about 20ft. of alluvium and two my surprise four cave entrances were developed in a pebble horizon in the alluvium. Three had collapsed in but one cave went into the alluvium for about 40 feet. The roof was quite compact and the passage which one can crawl along has a typical semi-circular cross-section and in places small domes have been formed by collapse of the dirt roof. One immediately thinks of such Nullarbor caves as Koonalda and Abbrakurrie which have this characteristic arched and domed roof. These structures are those typically formed by collapse due to stress arches being set up above some broad cavity in the rock (or alluvium). The arch and dome are the

most stable structures formed by collapse.

Recently I had the pleasure in helping Mike Shepherd sample sediments from the bottom of the Myall Lakes north of Newcastle. Mike is studying the geomorphology of the area for his PhD thesis. As always we try to have a look at any cave which "comes our way". On both the east and west sides of Myall Lake (the largest of the group) there are small outcrops of Carboniferous limestone. On the east side it crops out on the south bank of Bibby Harbour. I vaguely remembered seeing "Biddy's Harbour" Cave in Henry Shannon's prospectus of N.S.W. caves (SUSS Journal, 6(4), 1963). We had a small dinghy powered by out-board motor (courtesy of the University) so we pulled in by a large cairn of stones. The limestone seems very impure compared with our typical Silurian and Devonian areas. After groping around under lantana we located the cave in the wall of an old (hardly recognisable) quarry, about 6-8 feet above lake level. We stuck our noses in and didn't like what we smelt, but plucked up courage and entered on our stomachs. The first 40 feet or so were on hands and knees and then it deteriorated into a network of joint controlled passages which required a good deal of prostrate effort. The air was very thick and stuffy and appears to be the resting place for various beasts including hoards of the Old Lady Moth (*Sericea spectans*). This moth is common in houses (probably the reason for its name). The cave could have formed by water-table solution when the lake was a few feet higher, or else by phreatic solution along some more soluble bed when the water table was considerably higher than it is now. Henry refers to "Biddy's Harbour" Cave as being 400 feet long. Only about 150 feet of passage was looked at this time and the cave could therefore profit by a Yak trip, possibly in Graeme Jessup's speed-boat.

The cave is certainly worth mapping as it could have some bearing on the work Mike is doing in the area. Bats are meant to be in some cave on Alum Mountain above Bullahdelah.

IN THE PRESS AND ON THE NEWS

The Daily Telegraph (Wed. 4-11-66) reports Dave Lowry's recent find of a Tasmanian Tiger (thylacine) in a cave near Eucla on the Nullarbor Plain. This find is of considerable interest to zoologists throughout Australia and elsewhere as it may well prove to be the youngest specimen yet recorded on the Australian mainland. A radio-carbon date will be necessary to see if it is younger than the specimen found on the 1963-64 Nullarbor Expedition organized by SUSS. This specimen is approximately 3300 years old. "Museum authorities said ... the carcass could only be a few hundred years old. Skin and fur are intact on the carcass. Museum authorities said the dry conditions in the cave accounted for the excellent condition of the carcass.

A special aluminium foil container has been sent to the area to bring the remains back to Perth.....

Mr Duncan Merrilees, who is in charge of the Museum's fossil collection today described the find as very significant. He said it could throw light on the reasons for the disappearance of the thylacines and other marsupials from the mainland. One theory was that the animals were wiped out in a very dry period. But if the Eucla specimen proved to be only a few hundred years old this would destroy this theory." (Another theory has it that the thylacine was wiped out gradually after the introduction of a competitor, the dingo, to the Australian scene. -Ed.).

Although there was a bounty on thylacines early in the century, none has been seen in Tasmania since 1933.

Cave Sitter - A French restaurant owner, Jean Pierre-Mairetet, has spent 131 days underground to beat David Lafferty's record. He is in good health and hopes to stay till December 1st - a total of 183 days. (D.Tel., Tues., 11-x-66).,.....There has been much action in the Press concerning proposed mining operations at Colong. A committee is trying to find a way to remove the limestone from the area without affecting the beauty of the area. (Some hope). The area would be mined when the Marulan reserves run out. It is again a question of choosing between Conservation of our Natural Resources and their Utilization "in the National Interest" (S.M.H. Thurs., 6-x-66). Martin Foster, President of SSS, in Letters to the Editor (S.M.H. Wed., 2-xi-66) writes about the apparent contradiction where architects build buildings paved with marble and yet destroy areas of scenic beauty (for which no substitute can be found).,..... Conservation action is being done at Mootwingee, 80 miles north of Broken Hill. Mr Lewis, the Minister for Lands and Mines, described the area as "an oasis in which evidence of early Aboriginal man's occupation is abundant in galleries of cave paintings and rock carvings". Aboriginal stone implements are also abundant. Much vandalism has been done. Apart from the anthropological interest the geological history of the area is also of interest. Although there are no large mineral deposits in the area the sedimentary rock strata provide a unique scenery. (S.M.H. Tues., 1-xi-66).

OTHER ARTICLES OF INTEREST

The Old Man of Yarrangobilly by Angela Wettingham - People, Sept. 21, 1966. v.17, no.16. A retired guide and caretaker at Yarrangobilly Caves, Leo Hoad (85), is worried that closure of the caves completely will make it difficult to attract people back to the caves. Up to 4000 people have visited the caves at long-weekends.

The caves were first located by a stockman, John Bowman, in 1834 while he was searching for lost sheep. He found them in an archway which he named the Glory Arch.

Hoad, himself, was the discoverer of one of the most beautiful of 55 caves known in the area, the Jillebenan. He was guide and caretaker for 50 years and did much to develop the caves by constructing steps and facilitating access.

Any Questions:- Australasian Post, Oct 6, 1966, 1 photo. This section of the magazine answers questions from readers - one question inquires, "Where is the World's biggest stalactite?" - the answer - In the Cueva de Nerja, near Malaga, Spain. It is a wall supporting column extending 195 feet from roof to floor. The longest free hanging stalactite is thought to be in a cave in County Clare, and is 38 feet long.

Also in this issue is a photo of the Chillagoe Balancing Rock, near Chillagoe, north Queensland. This is one of the quaint features of the outcrops of the Chillagoe Limestone.

The Blue Mountains by Patricia Rolfe (Jacaranda Travel Guides) Jacaranda Press, 1964. Includes a section on Jenolan Caves and a discussion by Professor Griffith Taylor on the Geography of the range.

Acknowledgement is given to the Editors of "Stop Press", SSS's rag, from which the information in the above section has been gleaned.

Christmas cards with attractive nature photographs are available from the National Parks Association. Each costs 10c. Contact Geoff Butlin if interested.

FROM THE LIBRARIAN

 * Volume 4 of "HELICITITE" has been completed, and contrib- *
 * utions and SUBSCRIPTIONS are now eagerly sought for the *
 * 5th volume. Helictite has proved to be a most worthwhile *
 * journal, and is a must for those interested in the scien- *
 * tific aspects of caving and also the general caver who is *
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 * appeared in "Helictite" to illustrate an article on Abor- *
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Helictite, 4(4), July, 1966 -

100,000 Years of Stone-age Culture -- This interesting paper is abstracted in Helictite -- it is a general report on studies in the Prehistory of Borneo, but is mostly devoted to the exploration and excavation of the Great Cave at Niah. The main entrance to this vast chamber is 600 feet wide and 300 feet high! Apart from being the most important source of the famous birdsnest soup, the cave is also of great interest to archaeologists because of its habitation and use of as a burial ground by prehistoric man. The oldest burial has been carbon dated at 38000 BC and is the earliest record of Homo sapiens (modern man) found so far east. Stone tools, cult objects, burial procedures, cave paintings, death ships, etc. are discussed.

Excavation in this cave had reached a level corresponding to 100,000 BC. This and excavations in other caves in south-east Asia should throw much light on the early movements of modern man.

Observations on the Eastern Horse-Shoe Bat in North-Eastern New South Wales/
 By P.D. Dwyer.

Typically, Rhinolophus megaphyllus occurs in small colonies in a wide variety of cave and mine roosts (map shows distribution in north-eastern N.S.W.) but seems to avoid available roosts at higher altitudes in the area studied. The overall distribution of the species is within eastern Australia, from Cape York to a few localities in eastern Victoria, in areas of diverse vegetation types. It is found not infrequently among bats of other species.

Dwyer's study is the first systematic one to be attempted on the biology of the genus in Australia. He has conducted studies on the breeding cycle (mating occurs in May and June and birth in November), the population structure, seasonal activity and distribution.

Jiri V. Danes and the Chillagoe Caves District. By J.N. Jennings.

Elery Hamilton-Smith in an earlier paper (Helictite, 4(3), 1966) overlooked the important work of Danes, a Czech geomorphologist, at the beginning of this Century on the Chillagoe district. He did, however, reach many of the same conclusions. Elery describes the area as being "typical

tropical karst". Jennings, however, points out that this is a rather vague description as there are many types of tropical karst. For instance, the tropical tower karst of Malayasia and Indonesia consists of residual hills of limestone surrounded by alluvial plains. On the other hand, the Chillagoe karst resembles that of the Limestone Ranges of West Kimberley, in that the residual hills are largely surrounded by bare-rock pediments. The Chillagoe area may therefore be best described as a tropical semi-arid karst, resembling that of the Limestone Ranges in several respects. The geological context of the two areas differs, however, and this would appear to be of importance in the development of the karst features - similar features may be formed by different processes.

Several more points of interest are discussed. It would appear that Elery's broadly conceived paper has stimulated much renewed interest in the geomorphology of the Chillagoe area and has served to bring important literature to light.

Helictite also contains abstracts of several important papers.

Solution Doline and Sudjacent Karst Doline. By J.N. Jennings. Australian Landform Examples No.7, The Australian Geographer, 10(2), September, 1966, ppl32-133.

Easter Cave near Augusta, W.A. is given as an example of a solution doline which has been formed by localized solution around a solution pipe leading into Easter Cave. Although collapse has helped in formation of the cave it has not been involved in that of the doline. Dolines due to surface solution are present in most Australian limestone areas but it is often difficult to identify them. Digging for caves in the bottom of dolines would solve the problem - no cave would usually be found leading from the bottom of surface-solution dolines.

Dolines in insoluble rock above caves may be formed by collapse into the caves. Similar dolines may be formed by subsidence of insoluble surface rock as the top of some soluble rock below is being removed by solution without the formation of any definite cavity or cave. Both these types are referred to as "subjacent karst dolines". The Big Hole at Braidwood is an excellent example.

N.S.S. News, 24(5), May 1966.

Includes a very comprehensive report on how to construct a detailed description of a cave. An idealized system is set out and would be worth studying and applying, at least in part. Such topics as the history of the cave and its exploration, previous literature, survey methods, etc. are dealt with in the Introduction; then various topics are treated under other major headings:- Regional Geology, Karst Development, Overall Cave Description, Detailed description, Regional Relationships and Bibliography.

Our American friends want to know whether their 20 feet long straws are the longest in the World. From memory one in Strongs Cave, south of Perth, exceeds it by some inches.

Trog, 6(8), July, 1966.

Elery Hamilton-Smith has a follow-up paper from his last one with a more specialized discussion on "Some Beetle Problems". Peter Dwyer continues to band bats in the north-east quarter, especially in Willi Willi Cave near Kempsey.