THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SYDNEY UNIVERSITY SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Box 35,
The Union,
University of Sydney

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Price: Five cents

Edited by Ron Murray

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Volume 7, Number 5 12th March, 1968

ACTIVITIES CALENDAR

APRIL 4th	ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (see page 20)	7:30 p.m.
6-7th APRIL	CLIEFDEN	Rick Daniel 863652
EASTER (April 12-16)	BUCHAN	John Dunkley 854333
EASTER	COOLEMAN	
MAY VACATION (4 days)	CLIEFDEN	Denis Ward 6442497
MAY VACATION	CENTRAL AUSTRALIA TRIP (Mk. IIA)	Graeme Jessup
" "	TIMOR	Pete Boshier 41-6079
" "	ORANGE AREA	"
July ?	'ROUND AUSTRALIA	Rick Crowle
June Long Weekend	BARRINGTON TOPS	John Dunkley 854333

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The eighteenth Annual General Meeting of the Sydney University Speleological Society will be held on the top floor of the Geography Building, Sydney University at 7:30 p.m. on the 4th April, 1968. As well as the election of officers for '68 -'69, we are promised films as the major entertainment. For the benefit of freshers and other confused bods, the Geography building (alias the Griffith Taylor Building) is located opposite Manning House in Manning Road, and can be reached by walking down the road opposite the Union. It's the building on the left-hand corner of this road and Manning Road. Come along and watch this example of political SUSS in operation.

At this A.G.M. the SUSS committee for 1968-1969 will be elected.To help you to vote for the right person for the job, we publish the following from the President:

OFFICIAL SUSS POSITIONS

Members filling SUSS committee have the following obligations:

President:

1. Chair all General Meetings and Committee Meetings.
2. Inform Secretary of forthcoming meetings.
3. Ensure everyone else does what he should.

Vice- President:

1. Prepare the Year Book.
2. Organise the preparation of a SUSS journal each year.
3. Chair meetings in the absence of the President.

Secretary:

1. Collect all mail from Box 35, The Union.
2. Read and file all mail.
3. Reply to all correspondence,as directed by the ommittee.

SUSS OFFICIAL POSITIONS (cont.)

Secretary (cont.)

4. Arrange Committee Meetings to suit all members.
5. Inform Geography Dept. of forthcoming meeting dates.
6. Inform University of Meeting dates to ensure vehicle entry.
7. Compile the Agenda for meetings.

Assistant Secretary:

1. Accept all material for the Newsletter.
2. Edit and arrange typing onto stencils.
3. Arrange for S.R.C. to print 200 copies.
4. Collate, place in envelopes, and post at Bulk Rate.
5. Take all minutes at General Meetings and Committee Meetings.

Treasurer:

1. Accept all money payable to SUSS and issue a receipt for every payment.
2. Place money in bank each month.
3. Pay cheques as directed by the committee.
4. Present a report at each General Meeting.
5. Arrange the auditing of SUSS account at end of each financial year.

Full Committee Member.

1. Render positive and reliable assistance to the Assistant Secretary in the production of the Newsletter.
2. Assist the Vice President in the production of the Year Book and the SUSS journal.

Associate Committee Member.

Render assistance when necessary to other committee members.

Librarian.

1. Accept all publications and keep catalogued.
2. Inform Newsletter of all new books etc.
3. Bring a selection of books to General Meetings for loan to members.

Committee Positions (cont.)

Eqipment Officer/ Safety Officer:

1. Catalogue all gear.
2. Store in an accessible place.
3. Lend gear to SUSS members on $1.00 deposit and file signature and deposit until item is returned.
4. Chase up late returns & inform Secretary at General Meeting.
5. Regularly inspect gear for defects.

N.B. All Committee Members are expected to come to all General Meetings and Committee Meetings.

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Now for an important informative interlude:
We wish to welcome the following new Prospective Members gathered during Orientation Week:-

ALEXANDER, John	5 Rosebank Ave., Epping	?
ARNOLD? Miss R.	66 Cavendish St., Stanmore	?
BAKER, Greg	21 Bolaro Ave., Gymea	5246126
BIERENSON, Henry	69 Govett St., Randwick	391355
BRODIE, Miss	Flat 5/14 St. Mark's Rd., Randwick	?
BROWN, Miss M.	Women's College	
BROWN, David	81 Faunce St., Gosford	?
BUCKINGHAM, Louis	50 Kendall St., West Pymble	?
BUCKLEY, Chris	1 Mepunga St., Concord West	734373
BYRNES, John	69 Chase Rd., Turramurra	?
CAYZER, Jeff	10/17 George St., Burwood	7472325
DALLEY, W.J.	84 Bent St., Lindfield	463694
DAVIDSON, Jim	17 Old Kent Rd., Greenacre	7590269
DOBOS, Stephen	50 Carrington St., Waverley	?
FLOOD, Miss W.	5A Boundary Rd., Mortdale	?
GRIESHABER, Louise	11 Chamberlain Ave., Rose Bay	375826
GRIFFIN, B.A.	c/- Dept. of Ed. & Sc. Box 3987 G.P.O.	Sydney
HIBBARD, David	6 Albert St., Beecroft	
HOLLINSWORTH, David	4 Todman Ave., West Pymble	?
HOWLIN, Neil	5 Swan St., Revesby	?
JORY, C.H.	St. John's College	
LISTING, R.	63 Belgrave Esp., Sylvania	?
LORD, R.	240 Liverpool Rd., Enfield	702463
PARAMORE, Toni	Y.W.C.A. Liverpool St., Sydney	
PRITCHARD, H.	Economics Dept., S.U.	
RAVLICH, Robyn	75 Annandale St., Annandale	5608802
SEDDONS, Lois	12 Peacock St., Seaforth	9491271
STEDMAN, Roger	7 Alma St., Pymble	442140
SULEEMAN, Sema	12 Hill St., Baulkham Hills	?
TATE, R.	26 Bon Accord Ave., Bondi Junction	?
WATSON, Robert	30 Mary Pde., Rydalmere	?

Please inform of errors,ommissions, phone nos. etc.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

(The opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the EDitor, and neither he nor the society is responsible for them.)

PEOPLE IN GLASS HOUSES

I was most surprised to hear an esteemed member of another speleological society complaining at a recent SUSS meeting about the mess & damage being done in the Bungonia reserves by adjacent quarries.Perhaps he complains because he fails to appreciate the economic factors involved;namely for cheap steel and cement we need cheap limestone andthis is aided by pushing overburden over the side of the gorge rather than carting it away. However I doubt that this is the reason for his complaint- I rather suspect that his antagonism is caused by jealousy. As he later described, he and his group are busily blasting and digging on the other side of Bungonia Creek, in the Reserve. No doubt this action doesn't violate Reserve regulations, has approval of the Trustees, and is otherwise justifiable.

Or is it?

Unlike the limestone miners they have no economic reasons for their action but only the possibility of finding a new system. While the adventure of finding or extending a cave is great, I feel that the destructive action being used in this case is quite unjustified.If you can't overcome the system without physically changing it, then either change your technique (try the bottle marked "Drink Me") or give up.

While only x feet of excavation (and accompanying debris) has been achieved so far, worse could eventuate.One of the aims of the exercise is to drain such caves as Grille, with which the efflux they are excavating is expected to connect.It almost goes without saying that any breakthrough of this great dig into such a cave would be immediately (within a week) completed by the installation of an airtight door (such as in the Binoomea Cut at Jenolan).If not, such an opening with the associated draining of the CO_2 and the change in cave ventilation would undoubtedly drastically alter thechemical balance of the cave. What were once wet, glistening, active formations could well become dry, dusty ones or perhaps spongy ones like those in Barber's Cave, Cooleman. The biological ecology could also be changed just as easily. The infrequent draining of CO_2 from the system (by opening the airtight door) to allow exploration, would probably be harmless enough, but if some clown left the door open after a trip, it could well do infinitely more damage than the muddy hand thoughtlessly placed on a flowstone.

Perhaps it would be better if this situation had no possibility of arising in the first place.

H. Wright

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR (cont.)

Notes on Trip Leaders' Qualifying Trip.

As an introduction I would like to quote a few lines, from the SUSS newsletter Vol. 7 No. 3 P. 6, which was written by the Trip Leader for this trip :

"Instruction will include -
1. The responsibility of leading a trip.
2. The functions of a trip leader both in and out of the cave.
3. What to do in the case of emergency.
4. The science of cave safety."

With this in mind the following points were noted:

1. There was NO DOUBLE BELAY which meant that the last member of the inward trip and the first member of the return trip had to do the climb unroped which in anyone's books is very dangerous; evidently life hasn't a high rating.

2.Another practice which was carried out quite frequently was the ascent and descent of pitches over 15ft. without belay, this may not seem a real danger but as two members of the party had falls of about 10ft. it was lucky that both escaped injury. One fall occurred when coming from the "Laundry Chute" on the way out when a well-used 2 inch pillar formation gave way.The unfortunate caver could have received a severe injury had he not by chance fallen in a spread-eagled fashion. The other fall was in the vicinity of the "Laundry Chute" when the caver's foot slipped and he slid about 10 ft.: another few feet and he would have been at the top of a 15-20 ft. drop. If both cavers had a simple belay this would not have happened. You may think what a drag to have to give a belay of this type but it is worth it in the long run.

3.Keeping in mind that the trip was a training one, the prospective leaders were not asked:

Questions on basic safety;
Questions on First Aid and its applications;
Questions on rescue procedure;
To show any abseiling or prusikking ability.

The Trip Leader did not observethe caving techniques of the prospective leaders, as once in the caves most of the party split up and there was no chance of determining the prospective leader's ability in caving and appreciation of the associated dangers.

In finishing, "Trip leaders, especially in caving, have a most definite responsibility to their party"-SUSS Vol.7 No.3.

-Richard Daniel.

TRIP REPORTS

Cliefden February 17-18 Denis Ward

Present on trip: Denis Ward (Leader), Rick Daniel (M), Ron Murray (M), Glenn Hunt (M), John Dunkley (M), Frances Moore (?), Angela Dunn (P), Margaret Parkinson (V).

Departing from Strathfield station at about six p.m. Friday evening, the party finally reached Cliefden (Taplow Flat camping ground) 2 a.m. the following morning. After a not-so-early (the usual) breakfast Taplow Flat cave was entered, whereupon mapping was carried out.

Initially, it was found that the most efficient size of a party surveying a cave (grade 3, prismatic compass and tape), was one of about five persons:

one-to take compass bearings;

one to hold a light above the person using the compass;

one to write bearings-draw map, wall detail etc.

two persons to set up survey stations and take distance readings. If there happens to be a shortage of personnel one person may be dispensed with- however it becomes extremely boring/lonely being by yourself away from the rest of the party.

Any more people, particularly in a cave like Taplow, with its constricted passages, makes for inefficiency, as the excess bods tend to get in the way of the survey party.

Whilst half of the party were engaged in mapping, the remainder, under the guidance of John (Supersloth) Dunkley, entered the new section for a quick reconnaissance. After approx. four hours, the entrance squeeze (especially widened for the comfort of a bulkiferous Hunt) leading to the new extension was reached- mapping continued for another two hours whereupon interest abated. The following hour was spent looking around the new extension, some side passages containing pretties being discovered- our exit from the cave was made at 7.30 p.m. On Sunday, a somewhat smaller mapping party (three persons) entered the cave- some 150 ft. of passage was mapped in approx. 3 hours.

The entire party departed for Sydney, via Orange, at 3 p.m. Sunday afternoon.

Although only 650 ft. of passage was mapped, the trip may be regarded as successful , for-

1. It introduced members to the techniques of cave surveying- something which although not difficult to comprehend are best taught while actually mapping.

2. It enabled the formulation of efficient techniques- lessons learnt will be applied to future trips.

From these the following arrangements re the continuation and <u>completion</u> of the Taplow Flat cave will be carried out.

Cliefden Trip Report (cont.)

On the next trip it is proposed to have at least two independent survey parties operating in the cave simultaneously -the only consideration that needs to be taken into account being that at no stage must the two parties meet- it might be a trifle embarrassing if the two maps did not coincide. In order to do this no more than 12 persons will be required.

Denis Ward.

Wee Jasper 10-11th February Graeme Jessup

This trip to Wee Jasper was instigated for the purpose of enabling prospective Trip Leaders to qualify for approved Trip Leaders.

On Saturday morning instruction and practice was carried out in the tying of the double fisherman's, figure of eight bowline, ordinary bowline, and the use of prusik loops.

The party then proceeded to Punchbowl cave where instruction and practice was carried out in the art of belaying up and down.

Peter provided a very relaxing singsong on Saturday night and the party, girls and all, proceeded to do battle with Dog Leg cave on Sunday.Digging was necessary at the first sump after which a ladder was used to scale the muddy wall.

Fortunately the second sump was also 'dry' (well at least we only had 6" of slurry to crawl through).Quite a quantity of good quality formation exists once the second siphon has been negotiated, and the river passage finally terminates in a rockpile some 300' further on.

We made quite a sight as we emerged from the cave, and it was only a matter of minutes before we were all washing in the Goodradigbee River.

All in all, a most stimulating weekend.

G. Jessup.

The following people passed this Trip Leaders' Course and are now Authorised Trip Leaders:-

Peter Boshier
Graham Bradley
Rick Daniel
Paul Jackson
Ludwig Muenzenrieder

oooOOOooo

Denis Ward is arranging a SUSS contingent to the series of six (6) A.B.C. Youth Concerts. If anyone would like to attend, please phone Denis at 6442497.

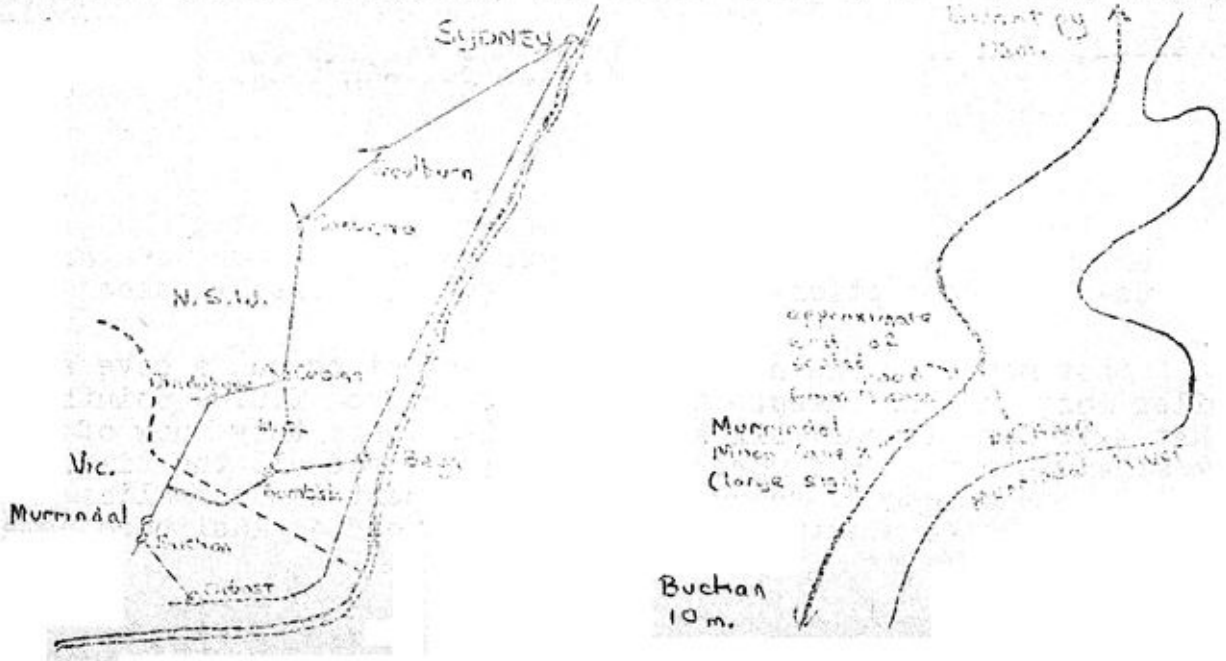
We now hand over to our guest speaker for this month, John (Supersloth) Dunkley:::::::---(but first we present a map of the new Cliefden extension)-

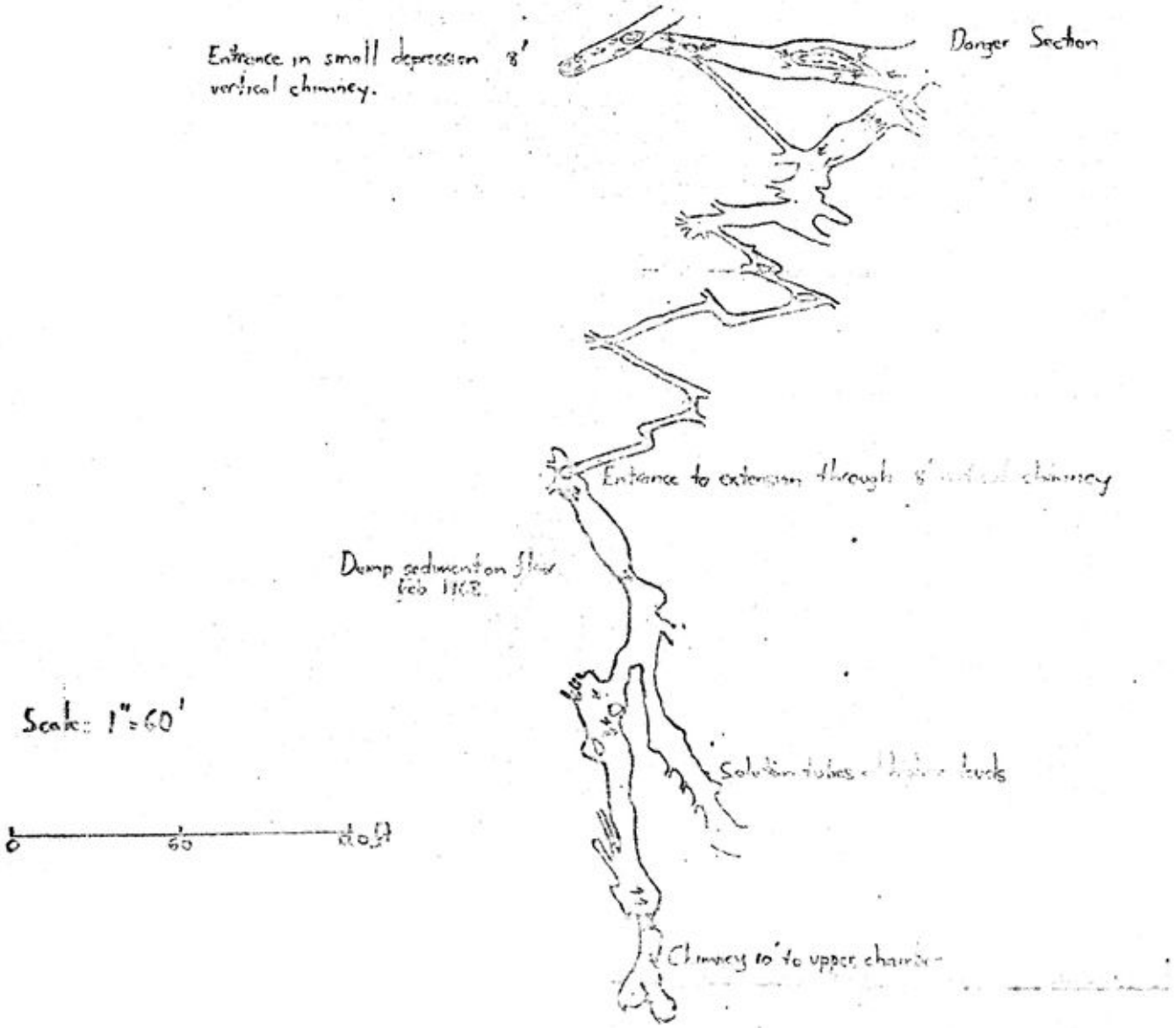
Forthcoming Trip - Murrindal-Buchan, Vic. 12-16 April (Easter)

In a break from the traditional Easter trip to Yarrangobilly, this year Murrindal is the venue, in eastern Victoria. The camp is sited on the Murrindal River about 10 miles north of the little town of Buchan, and 395 miles from Sydney by the shortest route, through Cooma and Jindabyne. A return trip via McKillop's Bridge on the Snowy River and thence through Bombala to Cooma is very good scenery and is only 12 miles longer. Those with time to spare may care for a return via the south coast.

Nearly 200 caves are known in the area, only one or two of which can be classed as suitable for beginners. For this reason it is not recommended that inexperienced people come. This is not to imply that a lot of hard work will be done, but what is done will involve a certain degree of skill. Some of the properties which we hope to examine are accessible only by Land Rover and possibly VW. Others will require driving up to 40 miles return, and others again may require some walking. Because of the size of the party, it will be necessary to organize two or more activities at a time, including surface exploration and possibly mapping. We will probably concentrate on the Murrindal area but the exact itinerary may depend on whether we can assist any Victorian speleos.

At the moment transport just caters for those interested; any vacancies are subject to there being cars available. Drivers can obtain further directions from the leader (John Dunkley, 854433). Remember, garages are closed on Good Friday, and in any case there are none in the 80 miles between Jindabyne and Cobargo (the latter will serve petrol illegally, but better fill up on Thursday night.)





Surveyed Feb 1968 by G.S. Hunt and members of SUSS
Drawn by D. Ward.

Part of

Taplow Maze

Clifden. NSW.

ODDS and ENDS

On 23 February, Glenn Hunt and John Dunkley gave a lecture on aspects of caving to aspiring scouts aiming at the Speleology Badge. Topics covered included equipment, conservation, some activities carried out in caves such as photography, surveying, meteorology work, bug collecting etc. The general impression gained was that the scouts are probably more interested in adding the badge to their growing collection than in any serious caving. However the requirements for the badge are more stringent than our membership requirements, so we can't complain that they are not adequately prepared. The long term benefit to speleology is rather doubtful but at least an effort was made.

This weekend will see practice Search and Rescue trip organized by Highland Caving Group. It calls attention to the fact that so far in Australia we have had only one fatal accident caving and in N.S.W. the full S & R scheme has not been tested. The reasons why we have been fortunate have been explored at length by various people so will not be reiterated. The latest Bulletin of the British Speleological Association shows that the Cave Research Organization there has handled recently some 8 major and 15 other rescues in just one year in the Craven area alone. One person died (this is outside the area where a major tragedy happened to Leeds University last year when six cavers died in Mossdale Caverns in a flood). The total deathroll in the U.K. since 1946 is 27. About half of these can be described as 'well experienced'. The major reasons given for fatalities are flooding and inexperience (each at least ten death. Clearly experience is no guarantee against injury or death but, of course, it is to be expected that death is closer for the expert because it is he who will attempt the hardest caves. The multiple tragedy in Mossdale was a flood in what is generally acknowledged to be the most dangerous cave in the country. Our single fatality here came to an experienced caver on a pitch which is easy by any overseas standards. Perhaps one of the reasons for our lack of serious accidents so far is that there are few caves in the country where flash flooding is a problem.

The latest intelligence from our correspondent in Canada is that the Cave Research Foundation has extended Flint Ridge Cave to 64 surveyed miles. The end is not yet in sight, nor has the much talked-about connection with Mammoth Cave been established

Last month it was noted that the Tasmanians had a cave six miles long and 720' deep. A recent letter from T.C.C. points out that Exit Cave is only six surveyed miles long; they know of at least another mile and more is being discovered all the time. they also have the second, third and fourth deepest in Australia. The connection between Entrance and Exit Caves had at last been established by fluorescein.

ABSTRACTS and REVIEWS

"An Introduction to the Yarrangobilly Caves, N.S.W., Australia." by P.V.Rose. Cave Science 5, 40 : 413-425.

In parts 1 and 2 of this paper (reviewed in SUSS Vol. 6 No.4) the author dealt with the Plateau area of Yarrangobilly. In this final part the Southern dariange area and the tourist caves are treated. Descriptions are included of Harrie Wood Gorge, Rules Ck. and the valley containing the hotel and camping ground. The author theorises that the last valley is at least partly a collapsed cave system, the blockage at the exit to the valley resulting in deposition of alluvium which is now being removed.

Caves discussed include Y22 (Jillabenan), Y23 (Jersey), Y24 (South Glory Hole), Y25 (North Glory), Y26 (Harrie Wood), Y27 (River or Creek Cave), Y28(Easter), Y29 (Mill Swallet), Y30 (Grotto), Y31 (Castle), Y44 (Federation). The author notes that the drainage of the area is by no means as simple as it appears. Maps are included of Y5L (East Deep Creek Lower Level) (SUSS), Y10 (CSS), Y24-25 (Trickett) and Y1 (East Eagles Nest) (SUSS). The last is reprinted from the SUSS Journal 2, 1, which appeared in 1955. It omits the connection to Western Eagles Nest and points up an urgent need for a survey of this system.

The paper concludes with an analysis of the thermal pool, a bibliography, an index to SUSS Journals and a checklist of caves.

The three papers together are, of course, a significant addition to our knowledge. However it seems a sad commentary on the state of publications in Australia that Rose found it necessary to put this paper in a British speleological journal

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S.S.S. "Communications", Occasional Paper No. 2, December 1967.

Three papers are included in this journal. "An Historical Background to Colong Caves" by Greg. Middleton is a welcome addition to the meagre writings on Australian cave history, as well as giving the background to one of the biggest conservation battles ever witnessed in Australia. "A Review of Kite Ladder Construction" by John Bonwick summarises the author's experiences and recommendations in a field in which he is undoubtedly an Australian expert. Finally "Caves of the Porol Ranges ... New Guinea" opens our eyes to the tremendous possibilities awaiting future cavers in this, one of the major untapped caving areas of the world. One can see why so little work has been done there inview of the terrain.

The quality of reproduction of this latest "Communications" has improved, and for ordinary ink duplication is very presentable. A lot of money seems to have been wasted on some rather poor photographs, however, and there are a number of spelling errors which could have been eliminated. Finally, one hopes that the dreadful numbering system of this worthy publication has finally settled down.

"Landform Studies from Australia and New Guinea" edited by J.N.Jennings & J.A.Mabbutt. A.N.U.Press, Canberra, 1967. xxiii + 434 pp., numerous photographs and maps. $10.50

This significant book presents a cross-section of papers on aspects of recent research in geomorphology in Australia, including denudation chronology, coastal and fluvial morphology and relict soils. Two chapters are of particular interest to speleologists:

Ch. 12: "Some Karst Areas of Australia" by J.N.Jennings

The author describes a representative selection of karst in Australia, each characteristic of its particular environment and evolution. Examples treated are Wee Jasper (humid climate but in limited area of limestone), Cooleman Plain (rejuvenation with relicts of Pleistocene periglacials), Mole Creek, Tas. (a very active and complicated area, probably also affected by climatic changes), Nullarbor Plain (retarded by aridity) and finally, the Limestone Ranges of the Fitzroy Basin, W.A. (a tropical savannah karst). All of these areas have been described previously by the author in varying degrees of accessibility, but this paper performs a valuable service in bringing them into perspective. It focusses attention on the fact that in Australia we have some karsts similar in lithology yet significantly different in development from either the classic Yugoslav or the tropical karst. To complete the broad spectrum of karst in Australia, perhaps we can anticipate a really authoritative treatment of the lithologically characteristic caves of S.E.South Australia and of S.W.Western Australia.

Ch. 14: "Landforms of the Newer Volcanic Province of Victoria" by C.D.Ollier.

The rolling plains of western Victoria make up one of the largest lava fields in the world. It comes as a surprise to most people to learn that activity ceased as recently as 3000B.C. and it is even more surprising to the geologist to learn that there is no sign whatever now of any kind of activity - no fumaroles, no hot springs or abnormal seismic effects. Nevertheless, most characteristics of vulcanicity are present, including numerous crater lakes, plenty of scoria, miles of lava flows so recent that soil has yet to form over the bare rocks, and of course the lava caves. These latter are widely scattered and range up to over 3000' in length at Mt Hamilton. In a previous paper the author proposed a new theory to explain the development of many unusual features of these. In size they vary from a matter of a decimetre or so across (not a cave in the human module sense) to that of Skipton Cave - up to 60' across and 25' high. At Byaduk, the Harman Valley lava flow contains a series of caves of considerable size separated by roof collapses which give an impression similar to that of collapse dolines in limestone. At Mt Eccles one can climb 40' up a spatter cone and drop a ladder over 100' down the vent straight into the magma chamber. This whole area is most fascinating and the reviewer can recommend a trip there as well worthwhile.