

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SYDNEY UNIVERSITY SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Box 35,
The Union,
University of Sydney

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Edited by Ron Murray

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Volume 8, Number 3

July, 1968

FORTHCOMING ACTIVITIES

(*)= see within

JULY

27-28 CHURCH CREEK (*)

30 MAMMOTH MAP MEETING (*)

AUGUST

1 GENERAL MEETING Geography
Building
7.30 p.m.

3-4 The Colong Marathon (*)

September ? Clean Up Bungonia (*)
" 7-8 CHURCH CREEK (*)

17-18 CLIEFDEN Denis Ward 644-2497

Last week of vacation:
Timor, Barrington or Bungonia J. Dunkley
85-4333

NOTICE OF MOTION TO ALTER CONSTITUTION proposed by Denis Ward:-
"To delete the words "one general committee member" and to add: "and two committee members at least one of whom shall subscribe to clause 3 (c) (ii) above.""

+ + +
At the last General Meeting Pete Boshier resigned as Assistant Secretary, owing to pressure of work, and Chris Fieldhouse was elected to the position.

+ + +
At the next SUSS meeting (on August 1) Glenn Hunt may deliver a talk on the morphology of the Nullarbor Plain.

+ + +
As mentioned on the front page, a meeting will be held on July 30 to finalise arrangements for the joint SUSS=SSS map of Mammoth Cave, Jenolan. It will be held at Flat 2, 50 Gladesville St., Hunter's Hill, and all interested are invited to attend.

+ + +
TRIP REPORT

COLONG

13-14 July

Ron Murray

Fears were held for the eventuality of this trip because of the petrol strike, but enough petrol had been stockpiled to make it possible. So, at about 3 a.m. (yes, that's right, THREE O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING) we left Sydney in a long wheel base Land Rover, arriving at Batsh Camp at about 11 a.m. After the rest of the party arrived, we set out along the track to the top of the hill, and arrived without serious mishap. After arriving at the bottom of the hill and setting up camp, we entered the cave and reached Woof's Cavern, then exited again. The next morning, lethargy having set in, we decided not to place caving on the agenda for the day's activities. Instead, after a four-hour breakfast, running partially contemporaneously with some surface exploration of the other side of the gorge, we began the assault on the hill. Some time later we arrived at the top and left. For those in need of thrills I would recommend sitting on the bonnet of a Land Rover while it is negotiating this track. Otherwise don't try it.

After sampling Oberon's hospitality and petrol we arrived at Sydney at about 7 p.m. Sunday.

FUTURE ACTIVITIES

A meeting to determine final details of presentation and possible publication of the map of Mammoth Cave, Jenolan, will be held on Tuesday 30 July at 8.30pm, 50 Gladesville Rd. Hunters Hill.

It is proposed to organise a further cleanup of the rubbish at Bungonia, possibly with the aid of a council garbage truck. A date in September is probable and details will be announced.

COLONG (yet again)

At its meeting on July 20th the N.S.W. Co-ordinating Committee of the Australian Speleological Federation decided unanimously to support the Colong Committee in its efforts to persuade the Government to reconsider the granting of mining leases over part of the Colong Caves Reserve. The meeting also called for a complete survey of limestone caves in the northern part of the Reserve. It was felt that standard clauses in this instance were not sufficient for their designed purpose of protecting caves, as they would be difficult to enforce, particularly in an area as remote as Church Creek.

Information was given to the meeting that on July 13 a party of S.S.S. members attempted to reach Church Creek via a public stock route, but had been denied access at the point of a gun. A statutory declaration asserting that he had this right was obtained from Mr Neville Lang, owner of Bindook Station via Oberon, who is a Trustee of the Caves and a Justice of the Peace.

As well as offering full support to the activities of the Colong Committee, the Federation urges members of societies to take part in special speleological trips associated with the Colong campaign. A programme of activities appears below and full details of the situation are elsewhere in this Newsletter.

- July 13 - 14 S.U.S.S. trip to Colong for reconnaissance reached Woofs Cavern, Colong Cave without trouble.
- July 27 - 28 Trip to Church Creek in the northern part of Colong Caves Reserve to continue search for caves. Under auspices of S.S.S. but all welcome. Own transport desirable but may not be essential. Some walking necessary, mostly surface exploration. Good prospects. Details Greg. Middleton , 421388.
- August 4 - 5 The Colong Marathon, organised by the Colong Committee. See accompanying notice for details. A SUSS contingent will be formed if there are enough takers. Ring John Dunkley, 854333. Otherwise you can phone the Liaison Secretary of the Committee direct - Mark Weatherly , 840265.
- September 14 - 15 Unlimited combined speleological trip to Church Creek under auspices of A.S.F. Land Rover shuttle service over last few miles for car owners. Details from convenor, Bob Hawkins (SSS), 5233975. A S.U.S.S. contingent will be drawn up at the next two meetings. Perhaps someone would like to help organise things for this.

COLONG

THE BASIC FACTS

The Colong Caves Reserve, in the Southern Blue Mountains, was first gazetted in 1899 for the preservation of caves; was proclaimed a bird and animal sanctuary in 1928, and re-dedicated for public recreation and preservation of caves in 1939. It lies, 62 miles W.S.W. of Sydney, at the heart of a particularly beautiful and interesting wilderness area and wildlife refuge.

The Government's proposals for the Kanangra-Boyd National Park (a major conservation project under consideration since 1932) have always included the whole of the Colong Reserve, and did so as recently as January 1967. Since then the proposed boundary has been arbitrarily altered so as to exclude some 5000 acres, and with them about two thirds of the Colong Reserve (but not the Colong Caves themselves) in order to allow Commonwealth Portland Cement Company to use the limestone from within the Reserve for cement manufacture. The limestone is to be quarried, crushed on the site and transported by pipe in the form of slurry to the cement works at Maldon 42 miles away.

Though the mining area may be relatively small when compared with the whole Park, it will involve the removal of a complete mountain (Mount Armour), the erection of a crushing plant on the site and of a 100 million gallon capacity dam nearby on the Kowmung River - the only unpolluted major tributary of the Warragamba Dam - the disposal of overburden and cleared timber, the slurry pipe, pylons carrying power lines, a network of service roads, workmen's quarters, all of which must cause erosion, siltation and pollution; the reverberation of blasting and the perpetual all-pervading dust cloud which will hang over the area. This industrial intrusion, visible or audible (or both) from its farthest confines, will ruin the wilderness character of the Park.

Applications to mine in the Reserve were refused by the Government of the day in 1939, and again in 1958, not because it was in a reserve (our out-of-date N.S.W. Mining Act gives the Government legal power to ignore this type of reserve), but because it was held to be "inimical to the public interest". Yet the present Government granted this consent in July 1967, arguing that "this was in the best interests of the State", and refused, in spite of all protests, to reconsider it or allow it to be contested before a Mining Warden's Court.

From the Company's point of view this high quality limestone will be cheap to mine and to transport to its existing works at Maldon, and the cement produced there is exempt from the Road Tax payable by its less centralised competitors. It would therefore be highly profitable, particularly as the price of cement in Sydney would not be affected.

New South Wales is particularly rich in limestone deposits, and suitable sources exist in many areas which can be mined at a reasonable profit. The Government can still, without undue cost or hardship, revoke the Colong leases and substitute others in such places, where the scenic and wilderness value is much lower.

A meeting of representatives of fifty conservation and allied organisations was held at Sydney University on 29th May 1968, which unanimously passed a number of resolutions deploring the Government's action, rejecting its arguments and calling upon Government and Parliament to review the Cabinet's decision, and asking for a full public enquiry.

(cont. p. 28)

THE COLONG COMMITTEE

Correspondence to Room 2, Fourth Floor, 15/17 Young Street, Sydney, N.S.W., 2000

**SAVE
COLONG**

Miss G. Hanley; Dr. E. McClure, M.B., B.S.; Mrs. Thistle Y. Stead, B.Sc., M.Ed.; Professor R. N. Johnson, B.Arch., A.R.I.B.A., F.R.A.I.A.; Messrs. M. K. Dunphy, A.S.T.C., A.R.A.I.A.; John French, B.Sc. (For.), A.I.W.Sc.; M. F. A. Keen, O.B.E., B.A.; B. R. Kiljuna, B.A., Dip.Ed.; G. Middleton; E. Vole, B.Arch., A.R.A.I.A.; R. N. Walker, B.A., Dip. Pub. Ad., F.R.I.P.A.; I. M. Wyatt; P. A. Young, B.A.

Secretary: M. F. A. Keen, Scotland Island via Church Point, 2105. 99-8886.

Liaison Secretary: Mark Weatherley, B.A., 18 Begonia Road, Normanhurst, 2076. 84-0265.

Press Secretary: Milo Dunphy, 67 Waratah Street, Ostley, 2223. 57-7741.

Treasurer: P. A. Young, 225 Delaware Road, Horsley Park, 2164. 620-1229.

RUN A MILE AND HELP SAVE COLONG**THE COLONG MARATHON**

4TH & 5TH AUGUST, 1968

COLONG CAVES TO PARLIAMENT HOUSE, SYDNEY

FIRST RUNNER STARTS: At first light, Sunday 4th August**LAST RUNNER FINISHES:** 11.00 a.m., Monday 5th August (Bank Holiday)**DISTANCE:** Approximately 170 miles**ROUTE:** Colong Caves, Batsh Camp, Oberon, Hartley and Great Western Highway**TYPE OF EVENT:** A relay run carrying a piece of natural limestone with a petition signed by the runners and the Colong Committee**NUMBER OF RUNNERS:** Approximately 200**TRANSPORT:** Will be provided from and to Sydney**EACH RUNNER:** Should be prepared to cover one mile**PURPOSE OF MARATHON:** Publication of letters and editorials regarding Colong has been discontinued in some newspapers.
The Colong Committee needs to create news in order to achieve coverage in the news media.**SAFETY:** The Colong Committee will provide a vehicle with flashing lights to drive behind the runner but accepts no responsibility for any accident or injury.**SPONSORSHIP OF RUNNERS:** It is suggested that each runner endeavour to obtain sponsors for his own mile run at the rate of 50 cents per sponsor, such funds to be donated to the Colong Committee.**IF YOU ARE WILLING TO ASSIST THIS EVENT PLEASE COMPLETE THE FORM ON P. 28 AND RETURN TO THE ADDRESS STATED BY TUESDAY, 23RD JULY, 1968.**

To: The Secretary, Colong Committee, Room 2, 4th Floor, 15/17 Young Street, Sydney, N.S.W., 2000.

THE COLONG MARATHON

I am prepared to *run a mile
 *provide transport
between the following hours_____ and _____ on
 *Sunday 4th
 *Monday 5th

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
PHONES _____
ASSOCIATION OR CLUB _____
MAKE AND TYPE OF VEHICLE* _____
NO OF PASSENGER PLACES* _____
* cross out where inappropriate

after 23 July, phone the Liaison Secretary, Mark Weatherley at 840265, and give this information.

(cont. from p. 26)

It also set up a Colong Committee of eight noted conservationists under the chairmanship of Professor R.N. Johnson, B.Arch. ARIBA, FRAIA, Dean of the Faculty of Architecture at Sydney University, to direct and co-ordinate a campaign for the mobilisation of public opinion in order to bring pressure on the Government to change its mind, to revoke the mining leases it has issued in the area, and to re-include that part of the Kanangra-Boyd National Park which has been excluded.

The Committee believes that, important as the Colong issue is, much more is involved. If mining on this destructive scale is allowed here it will be the green light for the State Governments and mining companies of all kinds, everywhere, to go ahead regardless of any consideration but that of immediate profitability.