

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SYDNEY UNIVERSITY SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Box 35, The Union,
Sydney University,
N.S.W. 2006

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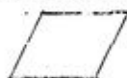
Volume 10, Number 5

September - October 1970

COMING EVENTS

- October 1 General Meeting - top floor, Geography Building. Slides of Tennant Creek, Mt. Isa etc.
- 3,4,5 KEMPSEY - Search and rescue trip in tres scenic Macleay Valley. Organisation by the N.S.W. Coordination Committee of the Australian Speleological Federation. Information from John Dunkley 759.9956
- 24,25 JENOLAN - core-sampling, exploration in Mammoth Cave. John Dunkley 759.9956
- November COOLEMAN - tentative dates Nov 29 to Dec 2. Permit to be applied for. A recovery trip - underground exposure tests, surveying. Contact Ludwig Muenzenrieder 4282034 or John Holliday 541922.
There will be no general meeting in November.
- December 3 General Meeting - top floor, Geog. Building.
27-30 ASF 8TH BIENNIAL CONFERENCE - Hobart, Tasmania.
- January 1-13 Conference Field Trips - Mole Creek, Ida Bay, Juncos-Flor-entino, and Mt. Anne. Applications from Jim Seabrook.

NOTICE TO ALL MEMBERS



If there is a tick in this square you are unfinancial and this will be the last Newsletter you will receive. (Oops! Excuse me. That isn't a square, it's a rhombus)

SUSS - Editor: John Holliday

Typing: John Holliday, John Dunkley

Collating, stapling etc.: John Holliday, Jim Seabrook, Chris Cosgrove

TRIP REPORTJENOLAN - July 25/26th.

Rick Crowle led a trip to Jenolan which was memorable for the great variety of activities indulged in over the weekend.

On Saturday, after some tree bashing to get to the campsite, Hennings and Serpentine were visited, mainly to introduce our new recruit to the joys of subterranean exploration. Serpentine was interesting with its tight passages, s-bend and mud slides. Another visit should be in order, to climb out via the other entrance.

On returning to the campsite the Terrible Trio had arrived (with beer and cider at the ready) and after evening victuals (plus some incredible tea) the group, minus the girls, set off to Mammoth to photograph people climbing the 60 foot ladder at the entrance. At bedtime we realised there were some accommodation difficulties --- Rick was crowded out of his igloo and had to sleep under the stars; Pam's new Hotham had been pirated and thus she spent the night in a Van Winkle. Lucky for them it was neither too cold nor raining.

Sunday was spent in Mammoth cave exploring for some, and Kanangra Walls photographing for others. In Mammoth, Lower Level River was crossed at the 7ft horizontal chimney --- the water level was very low, but still there was enough to get wet had one fallen in which I very nearly did. Oolite Chamber and Extension were visited (the latter with much difficulty), then a quick trip out to head for home. The others had returned --- amazingly there had been no wind or low cloud at Kanangra --- and so we were soon on the road for home.

The author would like to thank Rick for persevering with people who claim they are beaten by the Oolite Extension.

Just for the record: personages present were Rick Crowle, Murray Anderson, Pam Fitzgerald, Rosalind Dale, Rob Watson and the Terrible Trio.

Murray Anderson

Field Day -- Wahroonga Rocks -- Sept 13

Despite attempts by Hughie to wash out the day about 20 bods braved the elements above the cliffs at Wahroonga at various times during the day. Four were there by 11.00am and the abseil wall was rigged with a rope and instructions on abseiling were given. This was followed by a demonstration of prussicking --- I succeeded in making this seem so difficult that nobody was game to try it. Our Equipment Officer appeared later in the morning and a ladder was set up. Murray was nearly cut in two when some brave bod jumped off the ladder to test the belay.

The afternoon started with a demonstration of the theodolite which left most of us as bewildered as ever. A second ladder was set up after lunch so that we could practice climbing free ladders. Most had a go at belaying and several different methods were demonstrated including a ratchet and a glove belay. Whilst people were coming and going all day the numbers picked up in the late afternoon. Several visitors from SUBIF were

included in this influx and added much to liven the proceedings.

The day concluded with a B-B at the Andersons house. This was a most enjoyable evening with plenty of food and drink for all and our thanks go to Mr and Mrs Anderson for their wonderful hospitality.

Jim Seabrook

WARRUMBUNGLES; LIGHTNING RIDGE; MT. KAPUTAR

Aug. 18-25

Three grime-covered, downtrodden, exam-haunted SUSS members -- Brian Mythes, Jim Seabrook, and John Holliday -- plus one SUBV member -- Steve Williamson, -- recently escaped for a week to the north-west of the State.

Tuesday: Three bods left rainy Sydney at 6.30am, Jim and the author having endured the bar of the Graduates Club a few hours previously. After crossing snow-covered roads to Bathurst we meet Brian, and travelled to the Warrumbungles via Sofala, Hill End and the saloon bar of the Imperial Hotel, Coonabarabran.

Wednesday/Thursday: The 'Bungles were at their glorious best. Their magnificent beauty seemed to give Steve a touch of absent-mindedness. Or perhaps it was his new glasses --- perhaps whilst curing his short-sightedness they made him odd-sighted. Anyway, Wednesday night at Ogma Hut he mistook the chimney for a chamber-pot. As the red-hot coals fizzled and steamed three fellows rapidly evacuated. Jim plans to take Air-O-Zone on all future trips.

Friday: After lunch at the burnt-out Gulargambone pub (the temporary bar is in the old laundry), and a tangle with the Aboriginal problem at Walgett we finally made "the Ridge" and the Diggers Rest.

Saturday: The Ridge was magnificent --- warm, sleeping under the stars, fanging on dusty dirt tracks. Brian did the only caving of the trip --- he chimneyed down two thirty foot shafts, bash hat and all, only to find that they had been partially filled in. The night, as was Friday night, was spent in the Diggers Rest, boozing, and listening to the "The Gemstones" and the talent quest artists. Opals? No luck! But anyway, it seemed to me that the only way to make money at the Ridge is to either firstly, own the pub, or second best either the caravan park, the motels or the Foodlands store. A word of warning: try not to go there on the school hols.

Sunday: Amidst swirling dust driven by a hot nor-wester we evacuated for Mt. Kaputar, visiting exiled member Ron Murray at Moree on the way. Sure enough it came. Rain! I'll swear Mt. Kaputar is colder than Yagby. Everyone got wet that night (except the author) and thus Brian and Steve left for home on Monday. Jim and the author remained until Tuesday despite the continuing inclemencies (christ knows how I stood the cold).

Mt. Kaputar National Park is really worth a visit. Its bigger, higher, more rugged and perhaps most importantly, less crowded than the Warrumbungles. Jim has long-range plans for a trip there next May.

John Holliday

TRIP REPORTJenolan - 19/20 September

The trip was designed as one of a series of continuing multi-purpose weekends - with photography, continuation of the dig in the Oolite loop, and further work on the geography and morphology of Mammoth.

The usual preliminaries down at the Guides' headquarters consumed a pleasant half hour, with thanks for the coffee. We are also indebted to Mr Harman for the use of the workshop to unbolt the pieces of the auger drill so that we could get to work.

Another hour or so was expended setting up ladder and belay at the top entrance to Mammoth and getting the 10 people down. Rick Crowle took a party down to the Oolite extension to photograph while John Dunkley and John Lockard lugged an auger drill into the Railway Tunnel. Two hours giddy running around and around, hauling the drill up and extracting mud and rocks, screwing another section on to the top, putting it in again etc. The bit finally struck a large object 11' down into the mud in Horseshoe Cavern and jammed. This is probably not the bottom. Most of the cores revealed a silty loam consistency with occasional bands of sandier material and a few pebbles up to 2" in diameter. We hauled the drill up and spent the next couple of hours poking around the end of the Railway Tunnel and in a quick inspection of Central River (abt. $\frac{1}{4}$ cusec with signs of recent higher levels in Central Lake almost as high as Balancing Rock).

Meanwhile Jim Seabrook went into Glass Cave and Ian Carpenter Cave to obtain an estimate of the degree of vandalism. The former got a rating of 3, whatever that means. (3 Seabrook Units). And back in Mammoth, the squeeze into Oolite extension was conquered remarkably readily and an orgy of photography ensued. Exit was not made until about 9pm.

Possibly due to his remarkable performance on Saturday night, Mr Seabrook started Sunday off rather well when he failed to find Wiburds Lake Cave just upstream of J41. It was later located by other members in its old position another $\frac{1}{2}$ mile upstream. John Dunkley and Denis Ward poked around a few odd places. Warbo Cave (provisional name) was pointed out. It needs an official SSS number. It was noted that there was no water at all anywhere in Hennings Creek. This is remarkable, as Central River was flowing strongly in Mammoth Cave and it has been one of our assumptions about Jenolan hydrology that this river receives most if not all of its flow from Hennings Creek. If not, where else? We know it does not come from McKeowns Creek (unpublished report of C.H.C. Shannon) so another odd Jenolan mystery goes unexplained.

It should be noted here that Mr Denis Ward did not set foot in a cave the whole weekend. He is apparently assuming the role of SUSS "Co-ordinator of Activities".

- John Dunkley

FILM REVIEW

"The Troubleshooters" - seen on ABRN-TV in Grafton, 25/8/70. Episode called "How much is a man's life worth?".

About the last thing I wanted to do while loafing en route to Brisbane was to watch TV. However, here I am sitting in this transport cafe in Grafton reading the local rag when I notice one of my favorite shows is on local TV so hurry back to hotel.

Well there's this guy that works for Mogul Oil stationed in Singapore it seems and there he stands resplendent in bash hat (with Mogul badge) and trog suit, before this great cliff which anyone can see is limestone. And sure enough, just as anyone with an ounce of intelligence can see, he goes in to this cave by himself, there is a rock fall and he's trapped and no-one knows. Oh yes, and of course he's an Australian.

Well, his pal Peter Thornton, a director and troubleshooter for Mogul, hears this guy is lost, so flies down from Bangkok (no risk, any time for a pal). They decide he's lost in a cave etc. and in no time flat the company has established a S. & R. field headquarters.

Next thing you know, he's decided that he needs a drill to get through to the guy. There's one available in Jamaica, so he hires a BOAC charter freight jet to pick the thing up, fly to Singapore, stopping to pick up a few drillers in Bahrain (no risk, any time for a pal) £11,500 the bill it seems. Meanwhile do plebeian things like start to remove rocks from rockfall.

Drill arrives, decide by magic seismographical methods just where fall is in cave and where is chamber holding trapped man. Drill down 390' deep 6" shaft. Fellow in cave having delusions. Note carbide lamp still going strong after three days since rock fall. Good ad for pinnacle or somesuch. Rumble rumble, drill bit emerges from roof of cavern dead centre. Pull up drill, drop telephone. Chat about old times. Note they never got around to sending any food down. No wonder the guy was dead when they finally broke through the rock fall a few hours later.

But that's not all. Fancy dying in only 4 days. In a tropical cave too, and not even injured. But then again, a recent check I made revealed that there are no limestone hills in Singapore. In any event, there was not one tree on the bare limestone plateau above the cave where they were drilling. Remarkable in Singapore. Not only that, but no rainforest type vegetation below. All filmed in the Mendips or in Yorkshire I'd say. And of course, as usual in these films, there was so much other light in the cave that you wonder why the guy needed a light at all.

- John Dunkley

WANDERINGS OF AN INEBRIATEVolume 2

Alas! The Budget has caught me with my pants down. The cost of getting to good country pubs is up 3 cents a gallon; vino prices are up and I guess I'll have to take up stomach scouring cheap stuff (McWilliams?); Marlboro Country is three cents dearer a light and finally beer has arisen one cent. Meanwhile my finances plummet. I can't stand metho, so if you see potato peels brewing over a SUSS campfire don't be alarmed. Potatoes are cheap and the brew will merely be meant to give me enough strength to pull up my pants.

Prior to the Budget I went west several times to idyllic Cliefden. There by the enchanting Bellubula River I marvelled at the amazing cossack dancing of one ZS, witnessed the disgusting drunken dancing and subsequent earth-shattering collapse of one JS, and enjoyed the unusual pleasure of consuming (one could hardly call it drinking) red wine from a Sth. American bota.

The Royal Hotel in Canowindra is worth a visit. Amidst the numerous cartoons painted on the walls in the bar is one accurately applicable to a certain club member (ie: the Tennant Creek kid). Its one of those pubs where the only difference between the bar and the saloon is that you enter via different doors. The appointments are not to lavish -- in fact the hard wooden chairs needed a coat of pink paint.

The overall pub standard westward is pitiful -- the best pubs seem to be at Carcoar, Mandurama etc. but unfortunately, because of over-active police supervision, they close at 10pm on Fridays, approximately 2 hours before one usually passes through.

A tale worth telling is that of the Hydro Majestic. This rambling conurbation at Moolow Bath has always intrigued me. Its name conjures impressions of major irrigation works, and thus inside I expected to find vast urinals, swampy carpets, dethridge wheels rather than cash registers, and of course watery beer. However the bar turned out to be rather ordinary -- more piddling than majestic. Anyway as we consumed our ales a member of the party mentioned that the place has a reputation -- an obviously sinful one for admitting unmarried couples clearly intent on fornication. My God! How could we drink in such a place? We arose, choking on our beers, hurled our glasses into the fire and thundered from the bar. An hour later we returned, backs stooped and with key-hole shaped eyes. One hundred rooms and not a thing. If there's one thing I stand its a pub that can't live up to its reputation. Thus I shall never return!!

GENERAL INFORMATION

Reprinted for the benefit of those intrepid SUSS spoleos who recently climbed The Castle -- an extract from the 1947 edition of "The Bushwalker": "About 13 miles west of Hilton on the south coast of N.S.W. is a huge sandstone feature known as the CASTLE. It dominates the Clyde-Budawang National Park proposal, and is a vertical sided island of rock, some half mile wide. Sheer above the ridges of Dry Creek, its altitude is about 2,000 feet. All enquiries to date, from both bushwalkers and local inhabitants, have failed to find a record of anyone who has

GENERAL INFO. cont.

scaled it, although several attempts have been made by experts with expensive equipment."

How 'bout that Marilyn!!

-For some incredibly obscure reason Rick Crowle is rushing off to the United States this month. He has resigned his positions on the Committee and as a result Jim Seabrook has been appointed Equipment Officer. There will be an election for the positions of Associate Committee Member and Safety Officer at the next general meeting. Anyway, best wishes Rick (and Pat for that matter)!

-It has been decided by the powers that be that such a masterly literary work as this newsletter should have a more impressive cover. Designs from persons wishing to immortalise their work will be well received. Please!!!

-After much eye-straining work Lois Seddon has repaired the neglect of past years by catalogueing the library. Books, journals etc. can be obtained from Lois at meetings.

-TASSIE Just who and what cars are going is at present undecided. There are still a few places left so how about coming down and giving the Tassie cavers a hand -- the poor blighters seem to find a cave wherever they look. The information bulletins and application forms are available from Seahorse 746084.

-The ASF Handbook is apparently temporarily out of print.

-Publications: A SUSS Journal should appear in the next few months. Meanwhile copies of Journals 7-1 and 7-2 are still available. The former contains info on caving techniques and the latter articles on Wombeyan and the East Deep Creek System at Yagby.

-The Editor recently became the proud protector of Little Bent-Wing Bat No. 813. These noble creatures reside at Mt. Etna Caves in Central Qld. -- caves which Bjelke and his mad mob are threatening to have destroyed. Certificates of protection are available at meetings and the money collected goes to the Qld. Cave Conservation Committee to finance the fight against the exploiters.

ODE TO A COMMITTEE MAN

Copied in the bar of the Imperial Hotel, Coonabarabran with minor alterations.

If he is usually at meetings -- he haunts the place

If he's not there when wanted -- he's never on the job

If he talks on a subject -- he's always trying to run things

If he reminds you of a club rule you've broken -- he's always standing
over the members

If he agrees with you -- he's a yes man and lacks originality

If he doesn't agree with you -- he's ignorant

If he takes a holiday -- he's been on one all the year

If he never washes his trog-suit -- he's not upholding the dignity of
the club

cont. over

Australian Speleological FederationN.S.W. Co-ordination Committee Meeting

John Dunkley represented SUSS at this meeting in Newcastle on 22nd August, 1970. 6 other societies were represented. Some of the more significant matters discussed included:

1. Cave Numbering - a systematic approach to cave numbering has been proposed by SSS. Comments have been sought (and made by SUSS) and a further report will be presented to the next meeting.
2. Yarrangobilly - the route of the Snowy Mountains Highway near Yarrangobilly Caves has been the subject of discussion between speleological interests and the National Parks and Wildlife Service, and with the Department of Main Roads. At this stage the situation appears to be not so serious as it was before representations were made to the DMR. Further information is being sought.
3. Ethics - SUSS drew attention to the practice which some clubs have made of making unfavorable mention in their publications of the activities of other societies. Recently SUSS was attacked by an interstate society on grounds which turned out to be not only without foundation but on a complaint which should have been directed to another club or individual and wasn't even our responsibility. However the discussion rapidly turned up several other incidents involving people who should know better. At least SUSS can say that it has not had occasion to make scurrilous remarks about other clubs in our newsletter. A recommendation has been made for the consideration of the A.S.F. to add an appropriate section to the Code of Ethics which should effectively stop this practice.
4. Walli - SSS announced that it had assumed control of access to this area and that permits would be granted for responsible caving work in the area subject to certain conditions.
5. Path Marking in Caves - It was reported that a path had been laid through Y57 at Yarrangobilly with green paint. The following motion was passed to express the feelings of the meeting:
"That if a path is to be marked through a cave then this should be done with red PVC covered electric cable or similar, laid along the path and capable of being removed without damage to the cave."
6. Federation Membership Policy - discussion ensued on the large number of people who go caving outside Federation societies. As well, there are quite a few very responsible and often well-qualified individuals who have an interest in speleology but not such as to induce them to join a club. It was decided to appoint a small subcommittee to report on possible ways of reducing this trend and make appropriate recommendations to the full meeting of A.S.F.

TRIP REPORTCliefden 18-19 July

While this trip set out in great spirits with hopes high for a great number of feet to be surveyed in the coming two days, in true tradition lethargy prevailed and it developed into pure exploration.

On Saturday we explored several passages that a previous survey indicated came close to each other. Unfortunately a connection could not be found. That evening, after an excursion into the local at Camowindra, we had quite an interesting campfire (or so those who can remember tell me)

I don't remember too much of the next morning as I was suffering from a form of Polish Chemical Warfare known as "Wawel". That which I do remember seem to be vague impressions of meteorological forebodings interspersed with much frenzied packing. We got out just before the inclemencies arrived. Between Cliefden and Blayney Hughie let fly with every weapon in his arsenal - torrential rain, sleet and plenty of snow. With brief stops at Carcoar Dam and the Biggest Meals in the Golden West we made tracks for home and hearth.

- Jim Seabrook

TRIP REPORTWombeyan - 21st August, 1970

John & Jeanette Dunkley and Rick Crowle conveyed American visitor Bro. Nicholas on a one-day trip to Wombeyan. We found Mr Stiff in excellent spirits and lunched at the kiosk after dropping off a batch of slides for sale. A two hour trip through Fig Tree Cave followed, but we were able to find only 4 bats. However the inspection was well worth while to see the new tourist path and lighting in what was once a rather dull and seemingly dirty cave. Amazing what a few strong lights can do. The river passages in particular were magnificent.

Speaking of Bro Nicholas, those who missed his lecture on August 17 did themselves a big disservice. The slides of caves in Guatemala and the accompanying well-spiced dialogue will not soon be forgotten. Nor will his incredible close-up shots of the Russian invasion of Prague on 21st August, 1968. We look forward to meeting him again on his next swing through this part of the world.

SPACE - FILLERS

Buy a share in APCM today. Help Save Colong. Even SUSS is now a proud shareholder in this company, thriving on the potential destruction of this beautiful park. Ask for info at next GM.

Buy a Save Mt Etna bat certificate. 40c. at the next meeting.