

Sydney University Speleological Society,

Box 35,           The Union,  
University of Sydney,  
SYDNEY.  
26th August, 1956.

Dear Sir,

As you are aware, the Inaugural Meeting of the Australian Speleological Federation will be held on 27th - 28th December, 1956, near Adelaide. The Cave Exploration Group (S.A.) has booked the National Fitness Council camp at Parnanga for the occasion, and the Group will arrange meals and all facilities, as set out in the application forms you will have received by now. However, the amount of organisation involved in this catering and in the subsequent Nullabor and Kangaroo Island Expeditions has led the C.E.G. to request S.U.S.S. to be primarily responsible for the actual programme of the Meeting.

Accordingly, I wish to put before you the following provisional programme, for your consideration and suggestions, and for communication to those of your members who will attend the Meeting.

After lunch on 27th December, the Meeting will be declared open, each Society will give a brief (10 minutes) account of its activities and plans, and each delegate will have approximately 5 minutes to answer questions about his Society. The aim of this series of reports is to give all those attending the Meeting a general idea of the state of affairs in Australian speleology, to let them know "who's who", and so on.

Afternoon tea will be served, and then a South Australian geologist will give a talk on "Cave Terminology", and discussion will follow. On the night of the 27th a Symposium on "Cheap Caving" will be held. This is intended to cover more topics than its title might suggest, and to provide an opportunity for general dissemination of ideas. However, its theme will be centred on its title, and it is anticipated that many valuable notions will be aired by those present.

The morning session of the 28th will be taken up with a talk by one of the C.E.G. members on "Limestone and Lack of It", and associated discussion. Then in the afternoon will come discussion and voting on the Constitution, using the broad outline of the Draft Constitution which you have already received, and leading to a final Constitution before the evening session. The latter will consist of the formal inauguration of the Federation with a distinguished guest speaker, preceded by a Caveman's Dinner, and followed, it is hoped, by a brief talk and a showing of slides on "World Caving."

Most of the gatherings will take place in the hall in the camp, and the C.E.G. will arrange for all meals, tea-breaks and suppers, although obviously help will be appreciated in the preparations.

It is hoped that, in the near future, each Society will elect a Delegate to represent it and vote for it at the Meeting. Although most discussion will be general and open to all, on those matters which require a decision by vote, each Society shall have a single vote and this must be registered by an official delegate or proxy. It is apparent that an early election of a delegate where possible would be a good thing, and I would appreciate your forwarding to me the names and addresses of your principal and secondary delegates as soon as they are decided, so that copies of our future correspondence may also be sent directly to them. A further very important matter is whether your delegate will be empowered to act in your name, or whether his final decision to join the Federation must be subject to the ratification of your Society. I would ask that you give this matter your consideration as soon as possible, bearing in mind that former case would give the Federation a much stronger basis at its creation, and I would be grateful if you can communicate your decision to me when it is made.

It seems desirable that each person attending the Meeting should have a prior publication giving abstracts of the various report and talks. If you can arrange that an abstract of the report on your Society be sent to me in the near future this would facilitate matters

The interest shown already in the Federation by various overseas groups and individuals has served as a reminder that we have an international standard to attain and surpass in Adelaide and afterwards. This, I feel sure, can be done only with your help and support. Accordingly, I shall look forward to your sending me any comments, criticisms or suggestions which you feel may contribute to a more successful Meeting and a stronger Federation.

Yours sincerely,

Brian J.O'Brien.

(President.)

Copies to: Canberra, Cooma, Hunter Valley, Mt.Isa, Orange,  
S.A., Sydney, Tasmania, Victoria, W.A.