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THE NEWSLETTER OF THE AUSTRALIAN SPELEOLOGICAL FEDERATION

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The Federation and You

Well, the 4th Biennial Conference is over and Kempsey is still recovering from the influx of cavers from all states and two Territories.

As the minutes of the Committee Meeting have already been distributed to all Societies there is little point in discussing here the motions carried or rejected at the Meeting. Perhaps, though, the major issues should be mentioned in brief.

1. The Snowy Mountains Group has been considered defunct and has been removed from Membership of the Federation.
2. The membership of the Brisbane Group has lapsed due to the failure of the group to meet Constitutional requirements.
3. The Darwin Speleological Group have been admitted as members.
4. The Cave Exploration Group (South Australia) are still officially members of the Federation, though their resignation has been received and been under discussion for some time. Geoff Rebbechi (V.C.E.S.) has been appointed to present the Federation's discussions on the points raised in their letter.
5. The Cave Survey Committee has been disbanded following receipt of its report. Thank you, Bob Sexton, for a job well done.
6. Contact and liasion is to be made with various bodies National

and State on the matter of conservation of caves.
7. Reports were received from the Bat Research Committee, the N.S.W. Co-ordination Committee and the Cave Conservation Committee. Bat Research and Conservation were accepted with minor alteration, while the N.S.W. Co-ordination was rejected due to inherent innacuracies.
8. The Annual Subscription Fee was laid down at 2/6 per head for 1963.
9. Next Committee Meeting to be held Victoria Jan. 25-27,1964.
10. Next Conference to be held Western Australia.
11. After considerable discussion on the matter of Bill Penman's claim for world and Australian records for various endurance stays underground, it was decided that the Federation would accept Australian records claimed provided that the standards under which the records were claimed are submitted and that confirmation be deferred until the next Meeting, and that world claims be handed over to the International Speleological Congress.

Following the great filibuster sessions there were some enlightening discussions on the general matters of caving and exploration. Papers were presented on the 'Caves of the Buchan-Murindale area', 'Western Australian Caving areas', 'Insect Parasites on Bats', 'A Survey of Australian Cave Fauna' and 'The Geology of the Macleay District'. Various films were also shown including a documentary on the Underground Laboratory at Moulis in France, on Batu Caves (Malaya), Lascaux and its famous cave paintings and a 'physical-caving' film on the recovery of Marcel Loubens body from the Gouffre Pierre St. Martin. The Caveman's Dinner at the Conference Hall wound up proceedings. Following the formal part of the Conference excursions were made to caves in the Macleay limestone belt. This is covered later.

What has been gained from the Conference? We have promises of closer liasion with various organisations on the matter of co-ordination of field activities and with cave conservation. A definite trend toward the more serious aspects of Speleology among the various groups is apparent. There has been considerable discussion on the matter of world and Australian records for stays underground, a matter which has no real bearing on the field of Speleological research.

On the development of closer co-operation between various Societies there is still petty bickering, but this situation seems to involve primarily ideological beliefs and the notions of superiority of some groups. This is certainly not in the overall interests of Australia's contribution to a better understanding of l'inconnu Souterrain.

MEET YOUR EXECUTIVE

Elery Hamilton=Smith, A.S.F. President is well known to all Societies as Foundation and Hon Life Member of C.E.G.S.A., vice President of S.A.S.S., member of V.C.E.S., first Secretary of the Federation, Convenor of the Conservation Committee and as well member of various overseas societies and scientific bodies. A Social Worker by profession he has made to full caving use his travels. Known for his unflagging enthusiasm and his astute organizing ability, evidenced in leading of the 1956-7 Nullarbor Expedition.

Peter Matthews, A.S.F. Secretary is one of the most experienced members of the sub-aqua Group (Diving) and is foundation member of S.A.S.S. and a member of V.C.E.S. An expert cave surveyor, he has been the Secretary of S.A.S.S. and convenor of the Victorian Cave Records Committee. He is known for being tireless on trips, the first one awake (with accompanying clatter) and still caving while all else are asleep to dream of sunless seas.

John Noonan, A.S.F. Treasurer, also a very experienced diver and Foundation Member and Treasurer of S.A.S.S. Renowned for his tactful, quiet approach to unfinancial members and for his ability to hit native fauna with his car - he now has a new car.

Graham Wallis, re- elected A.S.F. Librarian, is most conscientious in his duties as Librarian, introducing a working card index system. A geologist by profession he is also Foundation member of U.N.S.W.S.S. Is now married.

Gordon Bain, A.S.F. Publications Officer, is Foundation member and President of P.M.S.S. and a member of W.A.S.G. Is known for his caving pilgrimage around Australia in 1962. Has plans on a world caving tour in the future and has interests in photography and insect collecting.

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AND SUB COMMITTEE CONVENORS

Dave Purchase, A.S.F. Bat Research Committee, is a member of the C.S.I.R.O. Wildlife Research Division Staff, former Secretary of C.S.S. and is currently with A.N.A.R.E. at MacQuarie Island banding penguins instead of bats. Elery H-S is currently acting as Convenor during his absence.

Ian Wood, A.S.F. N.S.W. Co-ordination Committee, is vice President of U.N.S.W.S.S. His main interests are collecting cave insects and cave surveying. Being a Draftsman by trade with a large manufacturing concern in Sydney, he is particularly useful for general art work and drawing-up of surveys etc.

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MICHEL SIFFRE

At Kempsey discussion aroseover the claims by Bill Penman on his underground stay at the 16 Mile caves at Catherine in the Northern Territory. My impressions were that delegates knew little of the Siffre story except what was dished up by the press. The P.M.S.S. has been fortunate to receive and have translated a copy of 'Speleology Scarasson - Expedition to the Marguareis' by the Speleo Club Martel, Nice. I trust that the summary given below will put the expedition into perspective and provide a comparison with the Penman expedition.

Forward by Yves Creac'h, President S-C Martel:

Siffre's original intention was to study the glacier Scarasson located 350' below the entrance of the Gouffre Scarasson in the Marguareis, a glacier difficult of access on the surface and underground. Having recognised the inconvenience of making several descents, it seemed that a study of living conditions in a hostile environment and its repercussions on the human organism would be interesting to carry out. So many possible developments seemed to arise from this second point that the study of the glacier became of secondary importance, without however being neglected. Instead of several people remaining in the cave with a permanent link with the surface Siffre envisaged the extreme case - that of one man.

One may object that he had a telephone; certainly there should have been complete isolation, but basic security measures necessitated some means of giving the alert in the event of accident.

The Scientific Objects of the Expedition

A. The adaption of the man to a subterranean environment.
B. The study of the loss of a sense of time.
C. The study of the glacier and its movements.
D. Observations of the equipment used.
E. Prospecting, exploration and surveying of the cave.

Extracts from a diary keptby Noële Chochon

28.6 - 3.7.62 Organisation of a base camp and telephone in the Gouffre de Scarasson.
7.7 Expedition nearly cancelled because changed conditions were observed in the cave since the previous year (much more snow).
11.7 Supplies lowered into the cave and carried the final stage.
13.7 Two near disasters while lowering supplies.
16.7 'Jour J'. Descent of Siffre and four others to film the camp etc. Others return to surface. Last question to Siffre was: 'On the eve of your descent what do you fear the most?' Siffre:'Everything!'

Extracts from Siffre's Telephone Reports

16.7 - 26.7 Organising himself and his study of the glacier.
27.7 Solitude starting to weigh on him - he realises that colors change.
28.7 Very frightened of melting ice.
31.7 Siffre believes the date to be 28.7
4.8 Speaks for 2½ hours, believes it to be 45 minutes.
5 & 6.8 Big rock fall. Fears the telephone line may be cut.
7.8 Reluctantly Siffre washes .....
8.8 Now only making one meal per day. Most time spent on his notes.
10.8 His feet are always cold.
11.8 Struggles with the problem of condensation in the tent. Has as much as 10 cms of water on the ground sheet.
12.8 Numerous falls on the glacier.
17.8 Huge fall on the glacier 3 metres from his tent.
25.8 Siffre believes it to be 10.8
3.9 Severe storm on the surface, hail and gale force winds.
4.9 Siffre believes he has only been down one month and is depressed at the thought of another month.
6.9 Siffre finding it difficult to remember what he has done a few hours before.
7.9 Siffre calculates he has spent 33 days, but counting his

physiliological days (one sleep to the next) he finds that he has spent 52 days. (I_n fact he has spent 53 days)

9.9 Siffre preoccupied with the idea of getting out. He does some excercises.

10.9 Tired and finds the day long. Suffering from dizziness.

12.9 Many troubles - back ache, stomach ulcer, rheumatism of his foot, boil on his lip - does not complain of any of them.

13.9 Wonders what he is doing at the bottom. Finds his position absurd.

14.9 Siffre is told he will come out in three days. Can't believe it at first. Finally:'If I had known I would have eaten all my tomatoes and my fruit!'

16.9 3 people go down to Siffre's camp and find him in good form.

17.9 Siffre leaves his camp at 0730, climbs the first 40m shaft, but takes an hour over a squeeze (la Chatiere) and loses consciousness. Recovers enough to emerge at 1100. By 1700 he was in hospital in Paris having traveled to Nice by Helicopter

New Observations on the Scarasson by Yves Creac'h

(main points only)

1. Siffre's findings have not yet been published.
2. Enormous differences in snowfall.
3. Rockfalls which frightened Siffre caused either by earthquakes (one recorded in Northern Italy at end of August) or by melting ice releasing cracked rocks.
4. Changing front of the glacier - retreated by about 10cms (possibly caused by heat generated by Siffre - though Creac'h doubts this)
5. Main remaining problems - origin, age and destination of the glacier.

(Thank you, Margaret Evers of P.M.S.S. for the translation).

Comment

It is interesting to note that Siffre was totally withdrawn from the world during his stay underground. He had no form of watch nor was he given any indication of the time or date while he was in the cave. All supplies were carried in at the start of the expedition and there was no physical contact at any time. The serious water shortage, intense cold and rock and ice falls made the stay

harrowing in the extreme, and it was only the frail telephone link and his programme of research that kept Siffre sane.

THE PUNCH CARD SYSTEM OF THE A.S.F. LIBRARY

The Library of the A.S.F. now possesses a punch card system of indexing which will catalogue all speleological articles held in the A.S.F. Library, in the first instance, and by member speleo group libraries, in time. As can be imagined this will be a long task since it is necessary to read an article completely, before it can be fully indexed on a punch card. It is important to remember that no matter how much time and effort is put into the indexing, it is only as useful as people make it, ie by using it. By this I do not mean to imply that I want every member to write in for something on speleology in general, just to give me something to do! Use it, but use it for a specific purpose, eg for some research work you may be doing or a topic you are interested in. The following is a brief resume of what the punch card index is and how it works.

Classification, whether author, subject or location, are indexed by means of a card with holes positioned around the perimeter. To index a particular classification it is alloted a number or series of numbers, referring to particular holes on the card, these numbers being unique for that particular classification. To note this classification on a card the reference holes referring to that classification are punched out around the edge of the card. When sorting for this particular classification, sorting needles are inserted into the pack of cards through the appropriate holes and when the pack is lifted those cards on which the desired classification appears fall out, (ie, are sorted) All the cards not applicable are retained in thepack by the sorting needles.

The usefulness of a punch card system lies in its flexibility with respect to the indexing of subjects or locations. By using one card we have punched on it references to author, location and any desired number of subjects. Were ordinary cards used then it would be necessary to use six cards on the average, to cover each article directly, ie one each for author and location and four for subject indexing.

With the present system it is possible to index for 79 individual localities in each of the 14 Australian*Divisions, eg N.S.W., Tasmania, New Zealand etc. For overseas localities there are 99 (or if needed

149) spaces for references. With the subject reference, space is available for 2301 individual subjects under 99 major headings, with a further 1200 subjects in reserve. To date about 300 cards have been completed, with a further 70 unfinished due to lack of data. Below is a list of the major subjects each one divisable into 24 sub-divisions.

General subjects
Safety and Accidents
Caves and cave development
cave formations
techniques
equipment
medical
chemicals and Chemistry
Photography
Physiography and karst Morphology
Hydrology and Meteorology
Geology and Stratigraphy
Minerology
Palaentology
Mining
Archaeology
Botany and Biology
Vertebrates - Bats and others
Invertebrates - Arthropods
Insects
Crustacea
Arachnida
- Molusca
- Worms
Zoology
Geophysics
Geolelogical Ages

The largest division, comprising two major groups, is that of General Subjects which covers such headings as:

Conservation
Damage
Vandalism
History and Folklore
Poetry and Romance
Why Go Caving? - Reasons why
Caving in general
Caving in ... (a specific country)
Nomenclature & Classifications
Exploration
Descriptions
Book Reviews
Punch card systems
Libraries
Expulsion fro a Society
Gating of caves
Honours (to a person)
Guides and Guiding
Conventions, Conferences etc
Administration
Indices and Bibliographies
Ethics
Access to an area
Films
Studies - comparative and otherwise
Tourist caves
Humour
Lists of caves.
Constitution and By Laws
Australian Speleo Federation
Speleological Societies
Bushcraft (Camping etc)
Cave Temples

Caves Reserves
Depth Estimation
Biographies (auto or not)
Heat Exchangers

As mentioned above it can be a tedious job and any member of the Federation willing to help in the reading and indexing of articles is more than welcome by me. All enquiries should be addressed to me at: 4/117 Milson Road, Cremorne, N.S.W. and I repeat, when making an enquiry be as specific as possible. Lists of subjects will be published from time to time.

Graham Wallis
A.S.F. Librarian

A PLEA FROM THE PUBLICATIONS OFFICER

Once again we have the plaintive cry of 'more material' but this time with the added twist of 'by air mail please'. Most Societies are sending to the P.M.S.S. Newsletters and assorted new snippets, but I would appreciate your assistance in sending all such material to the Publications Officer as well. These will be for P.O.'s records only. Would Secretaries please note that mail charges to the Territory are essentially the same as in the Commonwealth, in that free air mail carriage is given to articles in envelope form and do not exceed 10" by 5" by 3/16" and 1 oz in weight. Deliveries of articles by air will mean that I will be able to publish recent news, instead of material as old as the mud in the Mammoth. Please cO-operate.

BAT RESEARCH COMMITTEE

Elery H-S, as acting Convenor is anxious to hear from any cavers who are interested in helping to compile details of all occurrences of cave dwelling bats in Australia. C.S.I.R.O. have made available cards to be filled in whenever bats are seen in a cave. The survey will supplement and aid the present banding scheme. Further details are available from club secretaries or direct from Elery.

16th International Salon of Speleological Photo Art

The Salon is to be held at Columbas, Ohio, U.S.A. May 25-26,1963 Details in N.S.S.News, Vol.20, No.11. Correspondence to: James W.Dyer, Salon Chairman, 2605 Medary, Columbas 2, Ohio.

INSTITUTE OF SPELEOLOGY

The University of Kentucky has established an Institute of

Speleology under the Directorship of Dr. Thomas C. Barr. This will provide not only a programme of speleological research, but the opportunity for candidates for higher degrees to specialise inthe speleological aspects of their subjects.

This Institute should not be confused with the Cave Research Foundation which is conducting Speleological Research in the Mammoth Cave Region, Kentucky. Latest news is that an underground laboratory is to be built in the Mammoth Cave for bio-speleological and other research.

NEWSLETTER NO. 18, DECEMBER 1962

In the issue for December, 1962 under Kempsey Speleological Society is a note that 15 members are on the 'achive' list. Is this an error of fact, 'h' for 't'; or an error of ommission, 'r' between 'a' and 'c' ?.

PUBLICATIONS OF INTEREST

New paperbacks

Allen, G.M. : 'Bats' Dover Publications, New York, $2.00 (U.S.)

A reprint of a long out-of-print standard text book of considerable interest to cavers.

Folsom, F. : 'Exploring American Caves' Collier Books, New York $0.95 c (U.S.)

This is a new edition, not just a reprint. and will be known to some Australian cavers from the first edition. An excellent review of American caves and caving.

Christopher, J. : 'Caves of Night' Panther Books 4/- (Aust)

Story of a group of people trapped in a cave by rockfall and their journey to the surface. Sex and sudden death confront the caver(and reader) but the description of the cave is speleologically credible - except that gypsum flowers do no generally grow in wet chambers.

Australian Caving in overseas journals

The Texas Caver (Vol.6, No.7) has a paper by Dr. E.L. Lundelius on his palaentological work in Western Australian Caves.

This work has already been reported to some extent is Scientific journals here.

Naše Jame (Yugoslavia) Vol.2, pp 80-82, has an article by R. Gospodaric on speleological activity in Australia. Unfortunately the text is in Slovene, but we expect to procure a copy and have it translated.

1960 SPELEO DIGEST

The N.S.S. Speleo Digest for 1960 is now available. This weighty publication contains all significant papers from the publications of the National Spelelogical Society Grottos. Both the 1959 and 1960 editions are available for $3.69 (U.S.) each including postage from the National Speleological Society Library, 1251 North Negley Avenue, Pittsburgh 6, Penn., U.S.A.

AUSTRALIAN CAVE FAUNA - NOTES ON COLLECTING

This 19 page handbook by Elery Hamilton-Smith runs from technical terms through collecting, baiting, labelling, packaging of specimens with special notes on fauna found in Australian Caves. Copies of the publication are available from the author: 17 Helwig Avenue, Montmorency, Victoria, at 5/- (Aust) each.

HELICTITE - Journal of AUSTRALASIAN CAVE RESEARCH

The second issue of Helictite containing articles on Yarrangobilly, Wyanbene and speleogenisis with a number of abstracts has now been published.

TROGGING AROUND THE SOCIETIES

Kempsey Speleological Society being host Society for the Conference report multitudes of cavers tramping through the caves in the Macleay District. At the field trips following the conference delegates and K.S.S. Members covered several areas including Moparrabah, Temagog and Carrai. Kempsey weather had several cavers floodbound in the Carrai area for six days, but K.S.S. nontheless welcomes cavers back to exploreuntapped reserves of the Macleay River area and to enjoy again the immense hospitality of the Kempsey folk.

Sydney University Sp. Soc has, so far this year, run trips to Tuglow and Yarrangobilly where cave crickets were collected in the recently discovered Restoration Cave and at Jenolan where they enjoyed the sight of McKeown's Creek flowing through the Devil's Coach House.

Port Moresby Sp. Soc. reports several fruitful trips to Chuave in the Eastern Highlands District of New Guinea. Exploration has been carried out in Duon Diri a fissure cave terminating at 150' and Morena a cave with an entrance 200' by 300' high in the cliffs of 9,000' Mt. Climbali. A full coverage of the area appears in the Society's publication for February 1963.

Cave Exploration Group (S.A.)over Christmas discovered three caves and hundreds of filled dolines and sinkholes in the area west of Mt. Schank. Several water filled sinkholes were located and the group continued exploration of Mitchell's Crossing Cave.

Newcastle Tech. and Uni. Coll. Sp.Soc. have teamed with Orange Sp.Soc. and Canberra Sp. Soc. in a trip to Cliefden early in February. Members of N.T.U.C.S.S. are also spending time at Kempsey and investigating reports on caves in the Mudgee area.

Uni. N.S.W. Sp. Soc. have been dabbling in photography (movie 8 mm silent) at Wombeyan, and have found that lighting systems used in large caverns is not really adequate. After reading for years of the 400ft hole at Bungonia - so enchantingly known as B 31 - we hear that it has been named Argyle Pot - shades of Merry England.

In the sunny west, Western Australian Sp. Group, have with the aid of Lex Bastian startod surveying the Labrynth Cave in the South West of the state. The complex phreatic cave seems to be growing as surveying progresses. Other trips have been to the Jurien Bay area, Namban and last April to Cape Range in the North West of the state between Exmouth Gulf and the Indian Ocean. David Cook, W.A.S.G. representative at the Conference spoke of these thickly bedded crystalline Miocene limestones in the Cape Range, in his discussion on the caving areas of Western Australia.

Sydney Speleological Society, has been conducting Radio Directional Finding Equipment tests at Jenolan. Five experiments were carried out with the equipment designed to locate the position of an oscillator inside a cave, and by the calibration of signal strength measure the distance from this oscillator:-

1. Horizontally and from one end of the Playing Fields at a distance of 800 ft it was possible to detect a signal and home-on to the oscillator.

2. From a distance of 300 ft horizontally it was possible to determine the direction when the signal penetrated about 150' of limestone ridge.

3. With the oscillator in the Devil's Coach House the position of a point above it was located, the signal passing through about 100' of limestone and 200' of air.

4. From five positions to determine if the directions of signals coincided at a point vertically above the oscillator.

5. A test similar to 3. with the oscillator in the Grand Arch, the distance penetrated being about 200' of air and 200' of limestone.

Experiments were successful and a more robust model is being made so that more field work may be carried out.

Members of S.S.S. are at present exploring limestone areas in New Caledonia.

Margaret Tesch of the University of Qld. Sp.Soc. has recently received a request for specimens of insectivorous bat droppings (guano) for the Mycology Section, Communicable Diseases Division, Public Health Centre, Atlanta, Georgia, U.S.A. The specimens will be examined for the fungus Histoplasma capsulatum.

"This fungus causes histoplasmosis - three fatal cases first described by Darling in Panama 1905-6. The next record was from Minnesota twenty years later, since then many more cases have been recorded in the United States where histoplasmosis is probably endemic, and occasionally in the British Isles, and other parts of the world. The fungus gives rise to a condition with fever,

anaemia, splenomegaly and ulceration. The prognosis is grave. Death frequently results from within a few weeks to under a year although the disease may take a prolonged chronis course and spontaneous recovery has been recorded.

"It should be mentioned that recent surveys have revealed many persons in certain parts of the United States who, while showing healed pulmonary lesions give no reaction to the tuberculin test but are histoplasmin sensitive, suggesting that histoplasmosis exists in an unrecognized, perhaps sub-clinical form in these areas."

Previous research has shown that this fungus may be present in bird and bat droppings and it is hoped to make a survey of its presence in Australian samples. Specimens should be collected in plastic bags, labeled with date of collection, site, type of habitat and collector's name and forwarded to:

Mr. D. Connole,
Animal Research Institute,
Yeerongpilly, S 4.,
Brisbane, QLD.

* AINSWORTH, G.C. (1952) Medical Mycology. Pitman and sons, London.

ITEM OF INTEREST

EDWARDS, Lovett F. 'Introducing Yugoslavia' Methuen and Co.Ltd, London, 1954.

Mention is made of potholes "fiobe" at Basovica near Trieste that were used for disposal of bodies during World War 2, at the times of partisan fighting. The story is told of a young Slovene partisan who freed himself ofhis telephone-cable bonds in one of the charnel houses and swam through underground channels to safety. The story is gradually becoming part of the folk lore of the hill peoples.

Correction: At * bottom page 7 substitute Australasian for Australian.