

JENOLAN CAVES, AUSTRALIA: Associated with Sydney Congress 1986



The group

Ann Sefton planned the Teaching Workshop that preceded the Sydney Congress; the 46 participants came from 13 countries. Professor Otto Hutter was at that time responsible for the educational activities; he and his wife were able to join the group for part of the workshop. It was held at the Victorian era Jenolan Caves House in the Blue Mountains west of Sydney, the site of heritage-listed limestone caves. A tour of one of the impressive systems (River Cave) was included during a break in the workshop and was enjoyed by all. With the support of the local management, costs were kept low, encouraging a wide participation.



The workshop preceded the IUPS Sydney congress. International participants included a lively group of 7 physiologists from Indonesia led by Adrianta Surjadhana who is still actively contributing to the educational endeavours, particularly in supporting a longstanding international web group. Five Chinese physiologists participated: it represented their first return to an IUPS activity after many years.

The formal report submitted to the IUPS Council has not been located, but some notes exist. Along with some plenary presentations and discussions, participants worked in groups. They considered the diversity of content and delivery to develop and support learning activities appropriate for students enrolled in different programs (eg. medicine, science, health sciences). Issues also included the design and implementation of effective practical classes. Assessment was a lively topic, and the importance of inviting and reviewing students' evaluations of courses, learning activities and programs were seen to be essential, although it was a relatively new concept for some. Computers had not long been available and were limited in capacity and flexibility. Few programs had been at that time developed for teaching physiology and storage capacity was very limited in comparison to later technologies. Nevertheless, an early Apple computer was used to underpin the planning and was a source of considerable interest at the workshop as participants explored possible applications for teaching physiology. Additional computers were used for demonstrating some early IT-based physiology learning materials, developed by Joel Michael and Al Rovick at Rush Medical College Chicago. The response to the computers was immediate: participants were strongly supportive and enthusiastically explored ideas for teaching strategies.



Discussion group

All participants completed feedback forms at the final session. In a lively, frank and open discussion, they also commented on the program and activities in order to provide input for subsequent workshops. The session provided a model – new to many – for reviewing and evaluating specific teaching activities, courses and programs.

To summarise the responses, the highlights for participants included:

opportunities for discussion, informally and in the small groups;
chances to share common problems and experiences and to develop international friendships;

the wide variety of countries represented;

the location, the food and the hospitality.



Underground inspection: River Cave

List of participants

Adrianta Surjadhana, Indonesia; Nawal Kishor Agarwal, India; Cecil Allweis, Israel; Punnipa Ariyakulkaln, Thailand; Reg A Chapman, England; Chen Te-Ming, China; Bungorn Chomdej, Thailand; Laurie Cree, Australia; Marc Dawid Milner, Spain; Leanne Delbridge, Australia; Choesnan Effendi, Indonesia; Giles F Filley, USA; Bruce Graham, Australia; Huang Yiming, China; Suwana Hungspreugs, Thailand; C.W.Jooste, South Africa; R Kikuchi, Japan; Neal B Kindig, USA; Koencoro Ongkowijojo, Indonesia; S.K Lal, India; Ken Lukowiak, Canada; B.K. Maini, India; Joel Michael, USA; Moedjono, Indonesia; Usha Nayar, India; Rod Neame, Australia; David Powis, Australia; Allen A Rovick, USA; Ann Sefton, Australia; Ian Sefton, Australia; Martin Setiabudi, Indonesia; Soedarso Djojonegoro, Indonesia; Soekarman, Indonesia; Roger I Stewart, South Africa; Shin-Ichi Terashima, Japan; Joshua Tugumisirize, Australia; Wang Kun-ren, China; Wu Fu-Mei, China; Zhou Shao-ci, China.