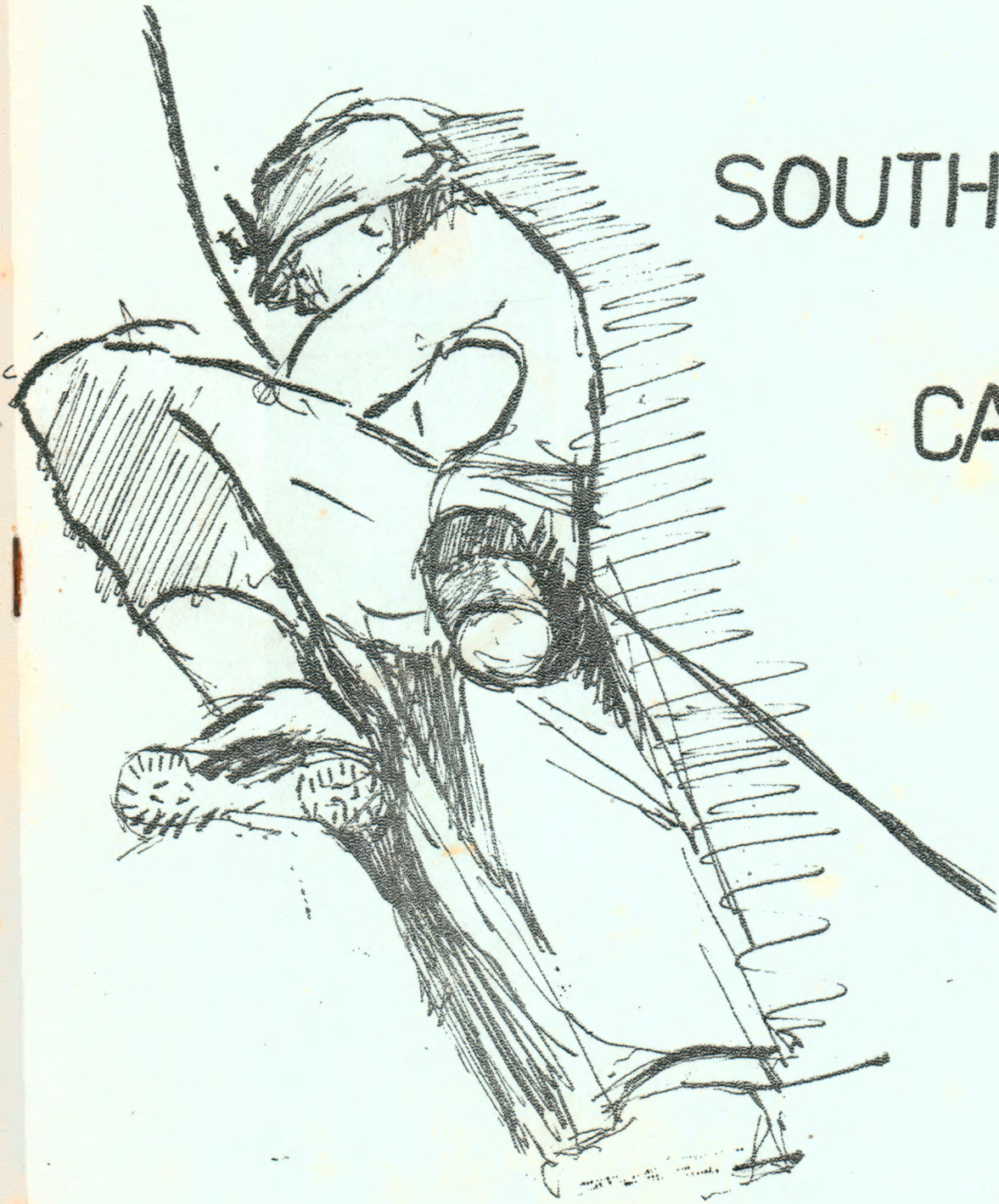


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# SOUTHERN CAVER

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31st MARCH 1972.

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*Southern*

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Magazine

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*Cover*

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Society Club Rooms :- at rear 132 Davey Street, Hobart.

Meetings :- Each Wednesday evening at 8 o'clock.

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31st March  
1972.

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By world standards Australian caves are not very deep, nor are they particularly difficult. There is no chance of world record depth caves in this country, where the maximum local limestone relief is 2,000ft. However, while the shattering depths of thousands of feet attainable in Europe, North America, and perhaps Asia are beyond our grasp, it is quite possible that Australia will soon hold the deepest known in the southern hemisphere. Limestone relief in Australia is generally greatest in Tasmania, and as a result most of the deepest caves occur here.

Depths reached early in the history of cave exploration in this country are open to some speculation. As early as the 1870's caves were explored on the Nullarbor Plains and some of these may have been the "deep" caves which extend down around 350ft. to the watertable. At Camoweal in Northern Queensland depths of 240ft were reached as early as 1916, 200ft was reached at Hastings in Tasmania about the same time. Early exploration at Bungonia N.S.W. into the Grill Cave and Drum Cave reached at least 350ft. By this time depths of 200ft had been attained at Jenolan in N.S.W. Argyle Pot at Bungonia, now known to be 420ft deep was probably discovered by the guide Louis Guymer around 1900, but not bottomed until 1960.

Reliable speleological information in Australia dates mainly from 1946 when the country's first caving society, the Tasmanian Caverneering Club, was formed. Soon after the formation of their club, T.C.C. members discovered two very deep caves in the Junee-Florentine area of Southern Tasmania. One of them, Rift Cave, was explored to a depth of slightly over 400ft. The other, Growling Swallet, was to become the deepest known cave system in Australia. It is possible that Growling Swallet was known prior to its location by T.C.C. as it lies within 150 yds of the old Karnbergs pack track leading from the township of Fitzgerald up the Tyenna valley and down the Florentine to the old settlement of Dawson. The stream entering the cave is quite audible from the track, which was put through in 1925 and may have intrigued the odd traveller.

By the early 1950's this cave had been descended to a depth of 500ft making it the easy depth record holder. At this depth a 50ft waterfall was reported which was not overcome for a couple of years. Tired of their "old" record T.C.C. spent some time attempting to set a new one, and after many unsuccessful hours in other caves, including Pillingers Creek Cave, eventually returned to Growling Swallet in February of 1957.

A party consisting of F. Brown, D. Latham, J. Poynter, J. Wanless, R. Adams and A. Goede descended the cave. A 30ft ladder proved sufficient to get down the "50ft" waterfall. Below this a few yards of steeply sloping stream bed brought the party to a muddy chamber from which the creek siphoned. The depth at this point was measured by aneroid as 560ft.

It was not for another ten years that the record was broken again. After a few years of exploration in Exit Cave, the horizontal system associated with the efflux of Mystery Creek, which has since been recognised as the longest cave in Australia, a large log of wood was discovered high on a talus bank at the foot of a large aven. Surveying ensued, and after 70 underground stations and 172 on the surface, the entrance to the shaft, later named Mini-Martin, was located by Brian and Jeanette Collin on the weekend of 8-9th July, 1967.



The survey indicated the depth between the entrance of Exit and Mini-Martin to be 720ft. The 22nd July, 1967 saw an attempt to link the caves which did not succeed but set a record of 360ft for a single ladder pitch.

On 19th August, 1967 another attempt was made by T.C.C., T.C.C.(N.B.), and T.U.M.C. The surface party of A. Goede, P. Brabon, S. McIntyre, R. Allsop, D. Chuter, J. Cunningham, F. Brown (T.C.C.(N.B.)), D. Bates (T.U.M.C.) and R. Tyson (T.U.M.C.) paved the way for the descent party. A. Keller and J. Marshall linked the two caves via ladder pitches of 360ft, 100ft and 80ft, meeting up with the underground party in Exit Cave consisting of B. and J. Collin, R. Woolhouse (T.C.C.N.B.), and P. Gourlay (T.C.C.N.B.), R. Porch (T.C.C.N.B.) had the thankless job of descending the first pitch to belay the others down further, before making the long climb back to the surface.

Then followed a period of three years when the record remained intact, despite the discovery of a number of very deep caves. Then, on 20th June, 1970 a party consisting of G. Blake, K. Kiernan, C. Harris, G. Watt and J. Morley of the Southern Caving Society discovered an extension in Tassy Pot JF223 in the Florentine Valley. This cave had been discovered by Don Frankcombe, of Australian Newsprint Mills who log in the area, in late 1967, and was explored to a depth of 250ft in January, 1968 by T.C.C. From a chamber at 250ft an 80ft chimney, large chamber and 270ft ladder pitch was explored over a series of trips. At the foot of the big pitch is 100ft of horizontal passage. The cave was bottomed at 800ft on 15/11/70 by an S.C.S. party consisting of D. Mitchell, K. Kiernan, C. Harris, G. Watt, P. Robinson (T.C.C.), J. Morley and A. Clarke (V.S.A.), with the latter three reaching the bottom. The surface party consisted of J. McCormack, K. Rassmussin, G. Fry and G. Blake. The descent required 17 hours underground in what is one of the most severe pots in the country. For the first time the record had left the hands of T.C.C.

However S.C.S. did not hold the record on its own for long. The passing of the 800ft mark also meant the passing of the time when individual clubs were capable of setting records independently of one another.

On 22nd November 1969 Brian, Jeannette and Peter Collin and Sally Morris of T.C.C. found a swallet JF4, later named Khazad-Dum, of a stream of some two cusecs 1300ft above Junee Cave, the presumed resurgence some 2½ miles distant. Progress in the cave was halted at the top of a high waterfall 200ft in. On 22nd January, 1970 a second entrance, JF5, was found and explored to a point below the first waterfall, but progress was immediately halted by a second.

Khazad-Dum remained un-named and unexplored for months, but just before the 8th A.S.F. Convention, conducted in Hobart, T.C.C. decided to push the system. An eye-bolt traverse was used to enable the ladder to hang clear of the waterfall, but no-one ever bottomed the pitch. Instead an upper level passage in JF4 was explored on 4th January 1971 during an A.S.F. field trip by V.S.A. members M. Pierce, D. Carr and L. Williams, N. Poulter (H.C.G.-S.U.S.S.) and K. Hodson (N.S.W. Bap. C.C.). The operation required the use of a scaling pole. The result was spectacularly successful. The passage led to a route which by-passed many of the waterfalls and as a result by the end of the A.S.F. trips two weeks later the cave had been pushed to a depth of 650ft. At this point a number of smaller waterfalls were encountered. A passage leading off from the new route was later explored to a depth of 500ft without linking up with the main cave.



On 23-24th January, 1971 a combined S.C.S.-T.C.C. party consisting of P. Robinson (T.C.C.-leader), P. Shaw (T.C.C.), K. Kiernan (S.C.S.-T.C.C.), G. Blake (S.C.S.), C. Harris (S.C.S.), J. Morley (S.C.S.), N. Poulter (H.C.G.-S.U.S.S.) and L. Kavalieris (N.U.S.S.) broke the Australian depth record. After descending a series of 20-30ft waterfalls P. Robinson descended a final 30ft drop and stopped atop a further deep waterfall shaft. During the same trip the cave was surveyed (Gr.4) to a depth of 630ft, aneroid readings below this point indicated the total depth reached on the trip to be 840ft, a new record. The descent required 18hours underground.

Then during the Australia Day long weekend 1971 a combined T.C.C.-S.C.S. team mounted what was probably the biggest and most severe underground speleological expedition yet undertaken in this country. A support team consisting of A. Goede (T.C.C.-leader), D. Mitchell (S.C.S.), D. Cripps (T.C.C.), S. Nicholas (T.C.C.), R. Bloomfield (T.C.C.) gave able assistance in gear transportation and rigging of the early pitches. Delia Maloney (T.C.C.) did a magnificent job as camp cook while Bob Cockerill (S.C.S.) and Aleks Terauds (S.C.S.), gave surface support on the Saturday.

Eight hours spent underground in preparation on the Saturday were followed by a dramatic and torturous 21 hour descent the following day, February 28th, 1971 which dragged on until Monday morning. The assault team of P. Robinson (T.C.C.-leader), P. Shaw (T.C.C.), K. Kiernan (S.C.S.-T.C.C.), N. Poulter (H.C.G.-S.U.S.S.-T.C.C.), C. Harris (S.C.S.) and G. Watt (S.C.S.) attained the point reached previously by P. Robinson at a depth of 840ft. From here K. Kiernan, P. Robinson, C. Harris and N. Poulter explored down a further 70ft pitch and 10ft cascade. K. Kiernan then attempted descent of a further waterfall of unknown depth but was forced to abandon this attempt by the force of the waterfall 30ft down at a new record depth of 950ft.

Despite this severe section of cave the chances of Khazad-Dum being descended to a much greater depth are excellent. On this trip a dry shaft of unknown depth was found leading from a gallery at 840ft but not explored due to lack of time.

The story of the Australian Depth Record is an exciting one, and no doubt future efforts to better it will prove at least as dramatic as those of the past.

#### EDITORS NOTE

Since this article was written, Khazad - Dum has been bottomed at a new Australian depth record of 1020 feet.

The following article is an account of this expedition.



## AN HISTORIC DESCENT.

by Kevin Kiernan.

A claggy sky, light drizzle, a dismal start to the 18th December, 1971. For a change, despite late nights and pre-Christy celebrations everyone was enthusiastic on the same day. Two previous weekends we had been defeated by the water. Would this be the third?

Departure from Brian's an hour late (Robinson late as usual); Bridgewater and a small patch of blue sky; Westerway and the clag is receding and hopes lifting, Maydena and the sun is out. Up the road to Khazad-Dum as the last wisps of mist disappear from the summit of Tyenna Peak; into the scrub and half an hour later the entrance of JF4, Australia's deepest cave, bathed in sunshine. The stream is high but feasible.

\*\* "The road goes ever on and on;  
Out from the door where it began;  
Now far ahead the road has gone;  
And I must follow if I can."

The assault team disappeared under ground at about 10-30 a.m. With them was Bill, who went as far as the first telephone at the top of the scaling pole pitch, plus Andrew and Brian. With Andrew belaying, Kevin, then Phillip descended the 94ft. free hanger, down the talus slope under the Balrog (immense menacing chockstone jammed in the roof), along the bypass with its 30' and 69' pitches into the streamway at -450ft., where a pile of tackle remained from the previous weekend. By this time Chris had caught up. Down the long streamway to the top of the first (20ft.) waterfall. Very wet! Then down to the next waterfall (30') now rigged dry as a 45 footer, where Peter and Graeme caught up, down to the 15 footer (now also partially dry as a 20') and to the top of the 25ft. waterfall at -720ft., the last of the pre-rigged pitches.

The water hammered over the edge with such force, that although the top was very wet getting through the torrent the rest was not too bad with the water flying out overhead. In a flurry of spray and bad language (tut-tut) the abseilers learnt to their loss, that while abseiling the gentle waters last year meant getting wet only to the knees they now got the jet in the face. Then down the cascades and 20' pitch, 10' chimney wide of a waterfall and a few scrambles to the top of the very wet 30' drop to the -840ft. level. At first glance no-one could see an eyebolt, so obviously one must be installed. Here we go again, another hour's wait. It would seem that T.C.C. members should have taken up motor-racing to satisfy their obsession with playing with nuts and bolts - the height of decadence.

Meanwhile, back on the surface someone noticed there was water falling out of the sky. A quick conference was held by the S.W. weather prophets who in their expertise came to the conclusion that it was raining. So they snuggled back into their sleeping bags to get some shut-eye so they would be nice and fresh in the morning to go and string a net across the Junee efflux to catch the drowned lemmings as they were spat out by the torrent. Then the air dried out. Pondering the implications of such an occurrence they concluded that the rain had stopped and they could get up and brew some coffee.



Downstairs the air was still wet. The team was operating at the utter limit with far more water than the wettest trip this deep before; any more would have been impossible. The abseilers were more successful on this last 30' so most abseiled.

At last the -840ft. level! To the right the water drops down a further 70ft. pitch descended last time. Traversing across the top of the drop a short passage leads to a quiet, dry, draught-free circular chamber 15ft. in diameter. At last a chance for a quick meal. Those wishing to continue drew "straws" to decide the two explorers. Clambering 12ft. up one wall the dry shaft spotted last time was viewed. Deep, wide, misty, quiet, the sound of the stream faintly echoing from the bottom. But the size of the thing! The comparatively small passages had ceased and the cave had grown up. The Junee master cave! Could we be entering the dreamed of Junee master cave?

\* \*        "Pursuing it with eager feet;  
              Until it meets some larger way;  
              Where many paths and errands meet;  
              And wither then? I cannot say".

A void so wide the far wall was not visible to a single lamp, and nothing but the jingling of the ladder disappearing into the gloom to betray the presence of a caver sweating away down below, while others of his kind froze above, paying out the lifeline and stethoscopically analysing his progress from its movements. Brief delays, slight jerkings, he is tiring. Finally a whistle blast, then two. Haulings, the rope flicks back over the top. A green trog suit ties on, it is wearing a balaclava and orange helmet all emblazoned S.C.S. It also vanishes, then a few minutes later another whistle blast, then silence and blackness.

As the belay team settled back to shiver, Philip and Chris found themselves in a huge cavern over 100ft. high, sandbanks piled high on each wall. At one end a 60ft. waterfall cascades in. They remember that day 9 months ago when four reached the top of it, and one half-drowned trying to get down.

The two explorers then made their way down to the stream, then the passages shrank. Horror! Anticlimax! Dreams fell shattered as they followed 200 ft of passage to a deep, quiet, smelly, frothy sump. A real Gollums Pool. Philip stepped in but found it out of his depth. Some minor passages were pushed to no avail. Chris tried to climb a very high and steep slope which appeared to open into a cavern on top, but had to give up, so back to the foot of the ladder.

\* \*        "Still round the corner there may wait;  
              A new road or a secret gate;  
              And though I oft have passed them by,  
              A day will come at last when I,  
              Shall take the hidden paths that run,  
              West of the moon, East of the Sun".



Much sweating and hauling later we gathered back at -840ft. for a meal. But alas it was not to be. Graeme dropped the billy down the 70ft pitch while getting water. When he returned to tell his sorry tale he came precariously close to losing more than just a billy.

Then back towards the surface but not without incident. Philip had split the leg of his rather loose fitting wet suit. Every waterfall saw his leg grow huge, and the comic sight of him tipping it upside down to pour the water out halfway up the ladder. The tackle was piled at -450ft for the support team to pick up the next day. Back in his tent Bill was awakened by the Telephone.

"Hullo Brian, Kevin here."

"Sorry, wrong number." Clunk!

Tries Again,.....

"Hullo Bill"

"Yeah, wadja want?"

"Khazad-Dum was bottomed at approximately  
1020ft. at 7.00 o'clock last night. We  
are on our way out. Please tell Brian  
we want a Khazad-Dum Express of the first order."

In a well timed move Brian and Andrew had already started into the cave. By the time the assault team had gathered at the 94 footer Bill had made the phone call and one by one we flew up the ladder full of thanks for the Express haulers.

By 2-30 a.m., Sunday, 19th December we were all gathered around the fire after only 14 hours underground, the shortest deep Khazad-Dum trip in history. We jovially discussed the possible effect on the support party should the phone ring now they knew everyone was out of the cave. Andrew seemed to think he would be able to run back to the cars much faster than Brian or Bill. Then as tiredness set in the assault team staggered off down the track to the cars and homestead, leaving the others in their tents until the rest of the support party arrived later that morning.

In a super-efficient effort the support party retrieved the gear in only a few hours on the Sunday. Many thanks from the assault team.

\*\* Apologies to J. R. R. Tolkein - "Lord of the Rings"

\*\*\*\*\*

## SAFETY

No.2 in a Series

by John McCormack.



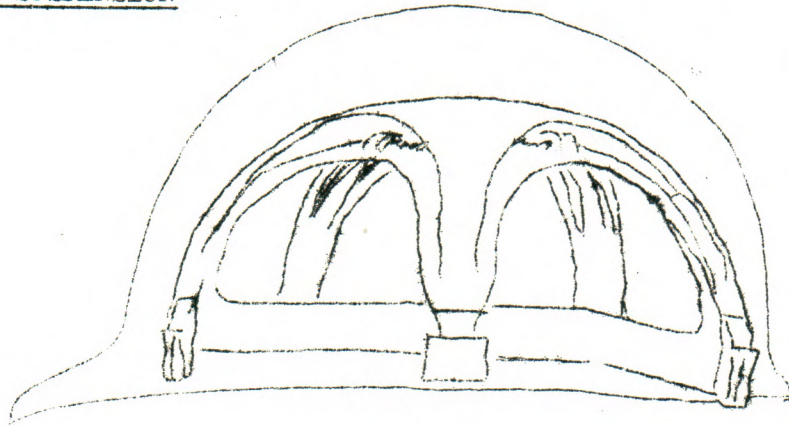
HAVE YOU checked your Safety Hat lately ? ? ? ?

DO SO NOW ! , and if necessary replace it.

It is imperative that they are checked regularly for signs of damage due to impact and bumps received under general caving conditions.

MAKE SURE your hat meets the Australian Standards specification AS-Z1●-1967 by bearing a stamp quoting this number.

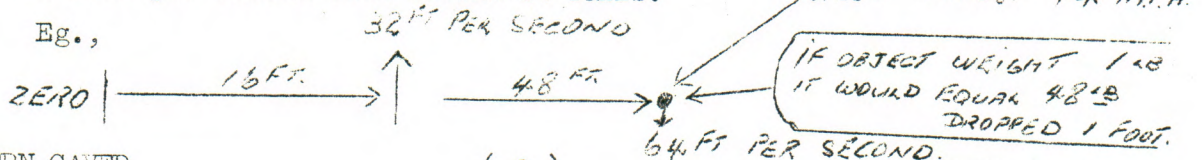
### CHECK SUSPENSION



You must have  $1\frac{1}{4}$  inch clearance between suspension harness and outer shell at all points.

DID YOU KNOW that gravity accelerates a falling object at a rate of thirty two feet per second each second it falls.

Eg.,



SOUTHERN CAVER

( 9 )

MARCH 1972.



Steve Street owes his life to his Safety Helmet(James North) so ensure that yours is in proper condition and worn correctly.

SAFETY HATS CAN BECOME DANGEROUS MISSILES.....

when placed on the rear window ledge of a car; a sudden stop could cause them to fly from the ledge and strike the head or neck of the driver or passenger.

SO REMEMBER DON'T place your helmet on your car's rear window ledge.

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WANTED .... WANTED. .... WANTED ..... WANTED  
WANTED ..... WANTED. . . .WANTED. ....

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and we will relieve you of these items WITHOUT CHARGE.

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## LIGHTING IN CAVES

### Part II.

#### ELECTRIC LAMPS

Electric lamps used in caving are of two types. The first is the professional cap lamp and belt mounted storage battery combination used in the mining industry. The use and maintenance of these units will be the subject of a later article. The second and more widely used type is the hand torch or a home made cap lamp powered by dry batteries. The selection and use of these is discussed below.

#### HAND TORCHES

No hand torch currently available was found to be specifically designed for caving although some intended for use by boat owners and fishermen fulfilled most of the requirements. Metal cased hand torches were found to be of little use underground as they showed poor resistance to shock and water. Most such torches also rely to a large extent on riveted and spring loaded electrical contacts and the exposure of such parts to muddy water or dampness will rapidly render the unit useless. Most of the metal torches examined also would be poorly protected against corrosion, either internally or externally. This category also included bicycle torches.

Rubber cased or polythene torches are a far more practical proposition at only a small additional cost. "Rugby" torches (or equivalent) are reasonably shock-resistant and waterproof but in some, changing batteries and globes underground could be difficult owing to the entire outer casing having to be removed. Rather than attempt this, it would be better to carry a spare torch and use both alternately. Most polythene torches can be made almost completely waterproof by a smear of grease on the threads at the ends and by cementing the glass into the rim with rubber solution.

#### HAND LANTERNS

These are preferred by cavers when a wide powerful beam is required. The less expensive lanterns however are metal cased and therefore open to the same objections as metal torches. Lanterns encased in rubber or plastic are usually more expensive but are more suited to underground use.

#### CAP LAMPS

Most of these comprise a lamp unit on a helmet (usually home made or salvaged from a bicycle torch or hand lantern) and a battery carried in a pocket or in case on a belt. When building such a unit considerable thought should be given to both lamp and battery. Most commercially made lamps which can be used have the globe centered at the rear of the reflector giving a narrow spotlight beam. In most professional cap lamp units however



a second globe is included in the upper side of the reflector which has a twofold purpose - i.e. it can be used to give a wider beam of light if required and it is the emergency source should the main lamp fail. If this can be incorporated into the unit it will greatly increase the usefulness and reliability, particularly if both lamps can be wired to a three position switch which can select either lamp.

Far greater reliability will also be obtained if spring metal or riveted electrical contacts are replaced with screwed or soldered connections. These should be used throughout the entire circuit from the battery terminals to the lamp socket.

The battery case, if carried on a belt will be subjected to considerable vibration as well as water and mud. Construction should preferably be of rigid metal with welded seams and a water tight seal around the openings. If a standard size lantern battery is being used the electrical connections between the battery and the lead off wires should be well mounted on the case and firmly spring loaded. If individual cells are used they are best taped together with masking tape in the position they are loaded in the case and connected together with short lengths of wire soldered to the battery terminals. A ready made battery can then be carried underground as a spare ready for use.

#### BATTERIES

With very few exceptions all torch and lantern batteries are of the "dry cell" type. These consist of a zinc case lined with a paste of flour and ammonium chloride. The centre of the cell is filled with a mixture of crushed carbon and manganese dioxide around a carbon rod. The whole contents of the cell are moistened with ammonium chloride solution and sealed.

As a current is drawn from the cell, the zinc is converted to zinc chloride and hydrogen accumulates around the carbon rod. In time, this hydrogen is converted to water by the manganese dioxide, however should a continuously high current be drawn from the cell a build up of hydrogen will occur which increases the internal resistance and the current falls off rapidly. As a general rule current can be drawn from the cell until current fall becomes noticeable (i.e. - the dimming of the lamp etc.). Should the discharge continue after this point there is a risk of permanently damaging the cell by separating the internal contents from each other by pressure.

The period of time for which a cell can safely be used depends on the size of the cell and the current used. When the current falls to approximately 75% of the initial value it should be turned off and allowed to recover. The period needed for complete recovery will be approximately twice the discharge period for high currents and equal to the discharge period for low or moderate currents. As the cell ages the discharge periods will gradually get shorter and the recovery periods longer. When cells are connected in series the discharge period



is equal to that of a single cell while cells in parallel have a discharge period equal to a single cell "X" no. connected.

#### USEFUL LIFE

Dry cells have a definite period of useful life irrespective of whether current is drawn from the cell or not. This period is known as the "shelf life" and for most cells manufactured in Australia the effective shelf life varies from 1 - 2 years depending on the size of the individual cells. After this period has expired the discharge periods are so short that the cell can be virtually useless. When purchased, most batteries have an average shelf life of three months.

#### CHOICE OF BATTERIES

Most employ cells connected in series or series/parallel combinations. The following are the most popular -

- 1) Size "D" torch cells. These are used in either 2 - cell hand torches (3 volt) or 4 - cell cap lamps (6 volt). They are designed for intermittent use and it will be found that the discharge period is comparatively short (30 - 40 minutes) but the recovery period is fairly rapid. There is virtually nothing to be gained by buying the more expensive "leakproof" or "transistor" cells. All such cells will leak ultimately and radio batteries are designed for only a low current consumption. When using torch cells it will be found best to carry one more spare sets of batteries and change over as soon as the light begins to fall off.
- 2) Size "F" cells - these are used in most bicycle and lantern batteries where they are connected in groups of 2, 4 or 8 cells. Because of their larger size the discharge period is longer than that of "D" cells but when used in the large lantern batteries in conjunction with a sealed beam lamp the period may be drastically shortened due to the high current consumption. For this reason such lamps should only be used sparingly when required. A better arrangement for continuous use is a 4 cell lantern battery and a 6 volt torch globe. Discharge period in this case will be approximately one hour or more.
- 3) No 6 Cells - these are the largest single cell manufactured and regular cavers who do not object to extra weight may find two of these to be the most economical long term proposition. Under test two such cells operated a standard size torch globe for a continuous period of 10 hours with no appreciable sign of dimming. They are somewhat cumbersome and heavy (950 gm) but have a long shelf life and great reliability.

#### CONCLUSIONS

No one combination of lamps and battery combines all the features



required for ideal underground lighting. Most cavers will require a compromise arrangement with the following factors:

- (a) cost and weight
- (b) whether intermittent high intensity light or continuous low intensity light is required
- (c) availability and convenience of lamps and batteries

Generally (c) is the most desirable, - i.e. a low intensity torch or cap lamp with spare batteries and globes for continuous use and a more powerful source which can be used for photographic purposes etc., for intermittent use. A useful emergency back-up system would be a water proof 2 - cell hand torch carried in a side pocket.

As a final point it should be remembered that the best systems are useless unless regular care and maintenance are observed. A few moments spent cleaning and drying all electrical equipment, removing spent batteries etc., after the trip is over, will pay handsome dividends.

P. Andrews.

\*\*\*\*\*

## JUNEE-FLORENTINE

Like a pack of lemmings they gathered, a team of seven from S.C.S. and T.C.C. to prepare Khazad-Dum (JF 4-5) for the summer assaults. The opening of the new Khazad-Dum season was a gala occasion, planned to facilitate the laying of the 'phone wire to -450ft.; placing of eyebolts at the lower waterfalls and surveying the lower levels. There were many oohs and aahs at the sight of 10-15 cusecs of nice icy meltwater thundering into the entrance, forcing everyone to go in the Serpentine entrance rather than the too wet main route. It was worth going down though! The waterfall near the free-hanging 94' pitch was spectacular enough, but that opposite the 70 footer at -450 Ft. was mighty; the now bypassed 95' pitch adjacent to it would have been invigorating to say the least, with 2-3 times more water than the wettest trip before; the driving gale of spray was enough to drench everyone on the far side of the chamber. The great old lady was putting on a superb show. The water bubbled and foamed down the streamway and leapt out over the 20ft. waterfall with such force as to make the passage look 4ft. longer than usual. Grave forebodings, much deliberation and many "not me" s later a ladder was rigged anyway, but guess how many volunteers there were? So we all want home. But the 'phone wire at least, was put in, and the experience of Khazad-Dum in flood was unforgettable. Perhaps for the first time in the history of Khazad-Dum everyone admitted they had enjoyed themselves, despite eight hours underground blown by spray, soaked to the skin and at times battling a torrent which threatened to sweep them off their feet.

One of the more interesting episodes over the past months has been the location of a large stream now christened "The River Trog", an east-flowing tributary of the Tyenna River, south of the main road. With a flow approximately equal to the Junee River, the stream is flowing from the direction of the Gap. No streams of much significance pass under the road west of here, so it seems much of the water may come out of the limestone. It may even be the long-lost and speculated upon water from the S.E. Florentine Valley. It has now been followed to within about 2 miles of the Gap, so we should soon know whether it has been worth the trouble. One party became lost in the incredibly dense scrub, perhaps the worst scrub of any Tasmanian caving area. This was largely occasioned by some sort of geological interference which plays havoc with compasses. Fortunately, the party eventually found its way back to the road just on dark.

One trip to Junee-Florentine was washed out by heavy rain, the only thing done being surface exploration of the ridge adjacent to the Junee homestead and a quick look at Dead Horse Cave (JF 34). There has been some surface exploration in a valley on the eastern side of the Gap; no success as yet. A party also looked at the spectacular rising of Lawrence Creek in the Florentine Valley.



## SOCIAL    NOTES

The services of a valuable Member were temporarily lost to the Society, when Secretary Michael Cole accepted a transfer to Melbourne. Michael is expected to return to Hobart in April.

Geoff Fry, nearly recovered from his accident has capably filled the position of Acting Secretary during Mike Coles' absence.

Members were pleased to welcome Gray Wilson when he returned to Hobart for a brief holiday at Christmas. The occasion was celebrated by two social trips to Hastings. A good time was had by all.

Other members on temporary visits were Paul Sargent and Rob Horner, Rob's temporary return was celebrated by several wet social evenings and were enjoyed by all who attended.

The Society was unfortunate in losing Greg Blake and Steve Street, both of whom are in New Zealand.

We wish them well in their venture.

Our congratulations to Phil and Sue Andrews, who were married at St. Georges Church Battery Point on New Years Day. They tried, unsuccessfully to get away without a caving send-off, but there was a security leak and a hastily arranged reception was organised.

