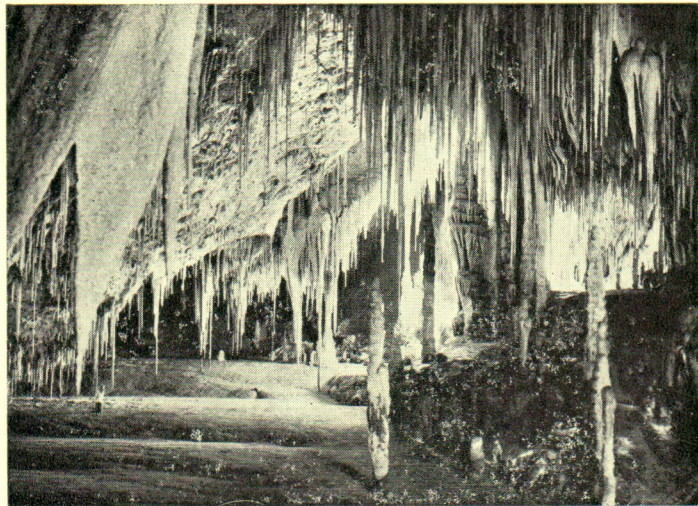


# SOUTHERN



# C A V E R

▨ VOL.4 NO.1 ▨

PRICE 25 CENTS

# "SOUTHERN CAVER"

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the Southern Caving Society.

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## PRESIDENTIAL REPORT

Delivered at the A.G.M. on 26th April, 1972.

Gentlemen!

The Southern Caving Society has had another interesting year composed of a fair amount of caving, scrub-bashing, social activities and general meetings. I shall not enumerate our achievements - they have been fully documented by our Trip Secretary and ably recorded in last year's issues of the 'Southern Caver'. Nor will I dwell on our disappointments - you who have been caving know them as well as I do.

I will, however, give you some figures, activity statistics you may call them, that may appeal to you:

There were a total of 40 separate trips in the caving year to April 26th, 1972, (c.f. 54 in the previous year). Junee-Florentine continued to hold most of our interest with 18 visits, (27 in 1970); Hastings was a close second with 13 trips, (5 in the previous year). There were four trips to Mole Creek and the remaining five were to various caves or areas, e.g., a long trip to Exit, a practice ladder climb on Sphinx Rock.

Altogether 26 bods., including several unfinancial members and two prospectives did the caving. It has not been our practice to single out individuals for plaudits or brickbats but I shall name three of our cavers who did the bulk of our caving. They are Chris Harris (28 trips), Kevin Kiernan (22 trips) and Dave Elliott (18 trips). Only one other member logged more than ten trips in the year. And, of course, we had our wooden spooners, too, whom I will not mention by name - their names are conspicuous enough by their absence from our trip reports.

If we were looking for excuses for our relatively poor showing in the field we could say that some of our abler cavers were outside the State or out of action because of injuries; or that the weather, for instance at Mole Creek was unsuitable for trips; or that those members who can usually be relied upon to provide transport had other commitments during most weekends.

During the year just past the Society purchased 600 ft. of new nylon climbing rope and two sets of cloggers. Further, all our gear was thoroughly examined and that equipment that had had more than its fair share of use and abuse was discarded. These actions were in line with the long standing policy of the Society to have only dependable gear available for use by our members.

The magazine committee has done outstanding work in the preparation and production of the 'Southern Caver'. We trust that the new committee will continue the now established practice of regular editions and that our members will support it with the same enthusiasm.

I shall conclude by expressing my thanks and gratitude to the executive Committee of Steve Harris, vice-president; Mike Cole, Secretary and Geoff Fry, relieving Secretary; and Bob Cockerill, Treasurer, for their very able assistance in the conduction of the meetings and the general running of the Society. I trust that the new President will be fortunate enough to have similarly capable members on his Committee.

Gentlemen, I thank you for your attention. I have enjoyed being President of the Southern Caving Society for the past year. Thank you.



Aleks Terauds

\* \* \*



Report on the Seventh Annual General Meeting

26th April, 1972.

by Aleks Terauds

The 7th A.G.M. was a historic occasion in that it was held at the Society's new club-rooms, 132 Davey Street, Hobart. As the starting time of 8.00p.m. approached there was no need to worry whether there would be a quorum. Instead, the Committee was concerned whether the as yet sparsely furnished room would have enough seating for everybody. As it happened, there was not and late comers had to watch the proceedings standing.

Immediately prior to the A.G.M. the executive Committee requested the members' attention for a short general meeting for the purpose of electing to membership two prospectives, Leigh Gleeson and John Ward. This was accomplished by general acclamation and the A.G.M. was under way.

Aleks Terauds, Presiding, opened the meeting by welcoming the visitors and our long standing honorary member and former Churchill Fellow, Roy Skinner to the meeting. Apologies were then requested and recorded. The relieving secretary, Geoff Fry then read the minutes of the previous A.G.M. and these were confirmed; there was no business arising from the minutes. The President followed by giving his Report of the Society's annual activities, introducing it with the statement that the Report would also appear in the next issue of the Club's magazine. The Report was formally accepted by the meeting. Next, the Treasurer, Bob Cockerill, gave a short account of the Society's finances; the full financial statement, including the annual balance sheet and auditors comments were deferred, to be presented at an extraordinary A.G.M. in the near future. In a discussion of the Society's finances it was decided not to alter the present subscriptions or trip fee payments.

With the 'bread' out of the way the meeting could get to the 'meat', the election of the office bearers for the next year. A call was made for proxy votes and after these were recognised by the executive Committee the President vacated the Chair.

Following our long established custom the youngest member at the meeting was requested to take the Chair for the election of the new president. Nominations for this position on hand were read out and further nominations accepted. John McCormack was elected President, took the Chair and after a short speech of acceptance conducted the rest of the meeting and election of members to the other positions. These were sharply contested and were filled only after spirited voting and some close counts.

The full line up of office bearers for the new year was:

President	- John McCormack
Vice President	- Steve Harris (re-elected)
Treasurer	- Geoff Fry
Secretary	- Graeme Watt
Search & Rescue Officers	- Barry James and Dave Elliott (both re-elected)
Quartermaster	- Ron Mann
Editors of 'Southern Caver' & 'SCS NEWS' & Librarians- Archivists	- Aleks Terauds & Bob Cockerill
Magazine Committee	- Dave Elliott Ron Mann Paul Schupp

The position of Trip Secretary remained with S. Harris; Area Officers positions were not contested with a view of reviewing these and, perhaps, re-allocating their duties. The selection and election of the Society's Hon. Auditor was left to the extra-ordinary A.G.M. as was that of honorary members and new party leaders.

The A.G.M. was concluded by a pep talk from the new President.

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FINANCIAL STATEMENT AND TREASURERS REPORT

<u>Income</u>		<u>Expenditure</u>	
	\$		\$
Subscriptions	57.00	ASF Fees	19.00
Trip Fees	51.00	Equipment	179.54
Southern Caver	13.90	Publications	44.89
Badges	20.95	Badges	26.62
Miscellaneous	15.52	Social Expenses	9.30
	<u>\$158.37</u>	Donations	8.00
		Subscriptions	4.00
		Administration	7.49
		Petty Cash	17.00
		Room Hire/Rental	54.00
			<u>\$369.84</u>

Trading Deficit for 1971/72	<u>\$211.47</u>
Add Credit Balance 1970/71	<u>\$322.43</u>
Cash at Bank	\$110.96
Cash in Hand	\$ 19.40
	<u>\$130.36</u>

Credit Balance General Account 1971/72	\$130.36
Credit Balance Interest Bearing Deposit	\$219.85
Total Cash Assets 1971/72	<u><u>\$350.21</u></u>

\*\*\*\*\*

REPORT: The large trading deficit for the year can be attributed to the allocation of more than the entire years income to the purchase of equipment. The rental of our new club room has placed a further strain on the system.

Concerted efforts must be made in the coming year to raise sufficient funds to meet these increasing costs without jeopardising our ability to purchase additional equipment as and when required. The Interest Bearing Deposit should continue to remain untouched against the event of a major loss of equipment in the field.

The financial records of the Society have been examined and found correct by our Auditor. I thank him for his assistance and the members for their co-operation during the year.

Southern Caver

(6)

July, 1972

R.J. COCKERILL.

A WORD FROM YOUR NEW PRESIDENT

I would like to thank all members for electing me to the honoured position of Society President.

I will endeavour to uphold your faith in me and strive to place the Southern Caving Society as one of Australia's leading caving clubs. However, I will need your full support and assistance in helping me to achieve this aim.

With our move into new club rooms our FINANCES will be strained and we will have to be more active in the money raising field in the ensuing twelve months.

SEARCH and RESCUE equipment is urgently needed and that means \$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$ (or pull some strings). We also need practice in simulated rescues.

NEW EQUIPMENT will no doubt be required, but it is essential that we maintain and control existing gear much better.

FIELD WORK, more is required. We want another record year, with completed surveys and numbering of caves returning to the forefront. There are many projects to involve yourselves in.

It will be a long hard road, however, I know I can count on you for your untiring support.

John McCormack.



## Report on the Florentine River Search & Rescue Exercise

Members of the Society were invited to attend a Search and Rescue exercise at Maydena on May 6th, organised by the New Norfolk Civil Defence Corps, as a combined operation with police search and rescue.

The aim of the exercise was to simulate a Police Class Two search and rescue operation requiring assistance from volunteers, concentrating on the "missing-injured person in the bush" problem; and to study the difficulties of communication in the field between parties and Base, also between Base and Police Headquarters in Hobart.

The Society, was well represented by the following members: B. James, D. Elliott, (Search & Rescue Officers), J. McCormack, R. Mann, K. Kiernan, and D. Mitchell.

Some 25 miles behind the A.N.M. barrier the exercise got under way with the formation of two rescue groups code named "Alpha" and "Bravo". Kevin Kiernan and David Mitchell were briefed to act as the "missing party" and sent into the bush. The "Alpha" group, including John McCormack, was assigned the task of finding them.

"Bravo's" assignment was to search the river area for a dummy that had been positioned by Ron Mann and Dave Elliott.

Barry James was attached to the Police Communications Section and assisted in establishing a radio link on Mt. Tim Shea.

With the finding of the dummy, and the location of the "missing men", the afternoon was given over to rigging a flying fox to transport the stretcher and dummy across the river. This section of the exercise, though by no means an unqualified success, proved most interesting to watch.

Consensus of opinion was that the exercise, overall, was quite successful.

Two points of criticism I consider worthy of note are:



- (1) ~~The unsuitability of the stretcher used.~~  
Our experience to date indicates that the Neil Robinson type stretcher is far superior to those in common use, and it should be a matter of priority to make more of them available;
- (2) Many of the searchers clearly experienced difficulty in coping with the heavy bush, and would benefit from more experience in these conditions.

Our members had an enjoyable and instructive day, and we take this opportunity to thank Rein de Vries and the members of the New Norfolk Civil Defence Corps, for their invitation to participate.

D.J. Elliott.

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Search for Missing Royal Derwent Hospital Patient,  
October 13, 1971

Mr M.H. deVries, the Search Coordinator, requested the club's assistance in this search. Within two and a half hours from being contacted an S.C.S. party fully equipped with all necessary gear and consisting of Barry James, Bob Cockerill, Aleks Terauds, Mike Cole, Kevin Kiernan and Graeme Watt was at the briefing point at Plenty Road. Most of the delay was caused by heavy traffic encountered from Hobart to New Norfolk.

Between 4.40 p.m. when the party was deployed into the search area and 6.00 p.m., the official termination of the search for the day we searched thoroughly the sandstone cliff face and area above it for any signs of the missing man. The exposed face of the cliff, the height, overhangs and crumbly nature of the rock often necessitated the use of our equipment. The terrain was, in fact, of such a nature, that no person in the search party other than the cavers could have carried out this part of the search adequately. And our members, without in any way risking injury but instead employing standard caving techniques did their part extremely well.

The body of the missing man was found some days later in a different area.

R.J.Cockerill & A. Terauds

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## Thylacine Remains - Florentine Valley

On the 16th July, 1972, S.C.S. members Graeme Watt and Leigh Gleeson succeeded in reaching the bottom of the little known Zulu Pot in the Florentine Valley. Although this cave has been visited on earlier S.C.S. trips a shortage of ladders had prevented the full descent. When the bottom was reached skeletal remains of a large animal were found and the skull was salvaged and brought back to Hobart for detailed examination. The skull was later identified as that of the Tasmanian Tiger or Thylacine, Thylacinus cynocephalus Harris 1808.

The find aroused considerable interest as the Thylacine is believed by some authorities to be extinct. A further trip was organised for the following weekend and on 23rd July the remainder of the skeleton was recovered and transferred to the Tasmanian Museum for detailed study.

The results of the two expeditions yielded an almost complete Thylacine skeleton in a truly remarkable state of preservation. In situ, the bones were found almost embedded in a mixture of rock fragments and mud over an area approximately four feet square. The vertebral column was partially articulated suggesting that the carcass of the animal became transported to the area intact. To ensure recovery of as much of the skeleton as possible a considerable quantity of the material around the bones was collected in plastic bags and carefully washed in the laboratory.

When compared with an articulated skeleton the Florentine Valley specimen was found to be complete with the exception of a few small bones from the paws and the posterior five or six caudal vertebrae. The remainder of the vertebral column, long bones and the pectoral and pelvic girdles were recovered intact.

Although Thylacine osteological remains have previously been recorded from Tasmanian caves (T. Goede pers. comm.) several features of the present specimen are of special importance. Although no trace of soft tissue remains the skeleton is considered to be of fairly recent origin. The wet conditions prevailing in the cave almost all year round are not ideal for good preservation and other bone material recovered from the cave shows extensive leaching by water almost to the point of complete disintegration. Examination of the skull (photograph) shows two incisor teeth missing but no other visible signs of damage. All sutures were intact and the remainder of the teeth were only barely loose in the sockets.



The near perfect condition of the skeleton immediately leads to speculation as to how it arrived in the position in which it was found. In section, Zulu Pot is an almost vertical pothole approximately 240' deep. The entrance commences with a steeply sloping fault terminating in a small cavern with a side passage leading off about 3' above the floor level. Immediately beyond this passage is a 120' vertical shaft terminating in an almost flat floor with another level 10' lower at one side. A side passage off the lower level leads immediately into a cylindrical pothole about 15' deep and 10' diameter. The floor is rockfilled and the skeleton was located on the floor among rubble. No other side passages or entrances were found.

It seems probable that the animal entered from the surface and fell down the shaft. From the foot of the shaft the carcass would appear to have been transported undamaged by inflowing surface water to the bottom of the side pothole which is the lowest section of the cave.

Examination of the skull indicates a fully adult specimen. All molar teeth are fully erupted and show signs of wear. The overall length from snout tip to tail tip is approximately 150 cm with an estimation made of the length of the missing caudal vertebrae using a complete skeleton. The maximum width of the skull is 132 mm, maximum length 232 mm.

Although timber cutting has been in progress in the Florentine Valley for almost a hundred years there does not appear to be any real evidence of the animal's existence in the area during recent years. The last Thylacine killed in the wild was in 1930 and in 1933 the last captive animal died in the Hobart Zoo. This would seem to suggest that it is unlikely that the present specimen is less than 30-40 years old although the excellent state of preservation would not indicate a much greater age.

The skeleton has been placed in the collections of the Tasmanian Museum Reg. No. A890.

A.P. Andrews.

\*\*\*

Eds. Note: The author of the above article, Phil Andrews, knows what he is talking about. Phil is a vertebrate zoologist at the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, Hobart.



Faces on the Cuttingroom Floor - The Hollywood Bit

July 1972

(11)

Southern Caver

by D.J. Elliott

Truly has it been said that beneath the brassiere of every shop girl beats the heart of an actress. It is no less true that beneath the caver's dirty boiler suit is buried the soul of a frustrated thespian. Therefore, it came as no surprise that when our good friend Doug Turner dangled his carrot of celluloid immortality, the response was immediate and gratifying.

The Army had commissioned the making of a colour film as a public relations gesture, and the Society was requested to assist in a small sequence involving a search and rescue operation underground. The venue selected for the filming was the tourist cave at Hastings.

A gallant company of volunteers consisting of Sue and Phil Andrews, together with (would you believe?) four past presidents and the vice-president, namely, Barry James, Bob Cockerill, Dave Elliott, Alex Terauds and Steve Harris, departed on Friday night (April 28th) after a rushed tea, arriving at the tourist cave about 8.30p.m.

The participants were filled in on the story line and what was expected of them, and filming began immediately.

The plot was that two bush walkers had wandered into a cave, and the girl (to be played by Sue Andrews) had fallen breaking a leg. The cave had been located and cavers called in to perform the actual rescue underground.

To the accompaniment of whirring cameras and dazzling Kleig lights, incredible feats of daring were performed that would not have disgraced the late Errol Flynn. Rocky cliffs were stormed, spectacular ladder pitches descended, and remarkable feats of abseiling were accomplished.

After filming, we spent the remainder of the night as guests of the Army at Strathblane. The drinking contest was a draw, but we won the liars' contest hands down.

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Filming was completed the next morning with leading lady Sue Andrews giving a memorable performance entombed in the vastness of a Neil Robertson stretcher. This was the first time some of us had actually seen one of these legendary stretchers and the opportunity was eagerly taken to try it out. A few outdoor scenes in the Hastings scrub followed, and our assignment was completed.

At the time of writing we have not seen the completed film. Did we make the grade, or were our efforts consigned to oblivion in the cutting room? Whatever the outcome, it was an enjoyable and "different" weekend, and we take this opportunity to thank Doug Turner and also Major Bob Geeves for his hospitality.

..... O .....

### Herberts Pot

by R. Mann.

Contrary to popular belief Herberts Pot is alive and well and living at Mole Creek.

S.C.S. has not had many trips to Herberts this year due mainly to a wet summer and winter and lately to the exploration of JF211 at Maydena.

On the 30th March, over Easter, a party including V.S.A. members explored upstream and downstream.

Exploration was the aim of the trip on the 12th August when 5 members explored upstream over the waterfall.

Wet conditions prevented the next trip of 8 members from getting very far on the 19/20th August.

S.C.S. hopes to continue exploration this summer and to commence a survey to eventually link up with the survey of Kellys Pot.

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Summary of Trip Reports from April, 1971 - April, 1972.

The previous year has seen a slackening off in the number of trips compared with the last year and this may be attributed to a diminishing of numbers in the club. However, a total of 40 trips were held, most of these being day trips to the two most popular areas: Junee-Florentine and Hastings. Very few weekend trips were held.

As a brief summary there was the S.C.S. participation with the T.C.C. in a joint effort to bottom what is now the deepest cave in Australia. Phil Robinson of T.C.C. and Chris Harris of S.C.S. were the ones to go right to the bottom and were backed by a large support party.

Other trips to the Junee-Florentine area by the club numbered among them about 5 photographic and "tourist" trips to Welcome Stranger. On one of these trips a link was proved (using flouroscein) between the syphon in Welcome Stranger and a small swallet on the surface. There is enough distance between them for interesting extension but no way yet has been found beyond the syphon and the swallet is impassable.

The Florentine area saw many scrub-bashing trips and most of these were methodically concentrated around the Nichols Spur area and along a branch of the Tyenna River. It was the first trip of the financial year which found and numbered several small caves very high above Christie's Road. These caves were explored but presented no significant results.

To the south of the island and Lume river. Last May a party ventured into Exit Cave and spent 7 hours mainly touring but doing a little exploring of no great importance; four miles of cave was looked at.

Throughout the year a small team have carried out a surface survey of the Hastings Caves reserve, tying in all known holes in the area. Systematic scrub-bashing by largely the same group has contributed to what can be acknowledged as a significant contribution in this area.

A 60 foot extension from Christmas Cave in Newdegate Cave was found by entering a one foot square hole after scaling a fifteen foot flowstone slope. It was well decorated with light orange flowstone, gourpools, orange-brown and cream coloured shawls and at the end of the extension a forest of pure white straws.



Quite a few caves were numbered at Hastings, most of these being already known. Even some digging of a small hole near Beatties cave extended it to 15 feet whereupon it was numbered and named.

Last July three members ventured to the Hastings area on a Wednesday night and returned to Hobart at 4p.m. the following morning after linking Trafalgar Pot (H207) and Erebus (Waterloo Swallet) via a muddy crawl.

One of the more interesting trips was to the Nelson River Valley (South of the Lyell Highway where it crosses Nelson Valley Creek). The outcrop of limestone here is little more than 30 acres and is covered by twenty five major dolines and a number of smaller depressions. The Nelson River (which had a flow of around fifteen cusecs at the time of the trip) disappears into a small channel which can't be followed because of debris which has been washed in. All along the river both upstream and downstream of the underground course the river is flanked by limestone cliffs up to 60 feet high. In these cliffs are some small caves with decoration, the largest one explored extends sixty feet before branching into 2 passages, one going up to the surface and the other along into one of the caves in the bottom of a doline. Virtually every doline in the area was noted to have at least one cave in it generally about fifty feet deep. There is no potential in the area for large caves.

There have been four trips only to the Mole Creek area over the year and only two of these of recordable significance. A party of eight members that went into Khubla Khan last June met with disaster. Steve Street fell thirty feet onto a flowstone floor and cracked his shoulder blade. This happened in the section just before the "Khan's Chamber" and to those familiar with the route back out the old entrance will appreciate the skill and swiftness of the rest of the party that got Steve to the Deloraine District Hospital within eight hours of the accident.

The most recent trip to Mole Creek camped at "Echo Valley" and descended some holes near Liena which were choked by mud and talus.

In summary it may be said that it has been a fairly quiet year and although no major speleological achievements were accomplished we could say that we did a little bit of everything : exploration, touring, photography, surveying, scrub-bashing as well as a small amount of private scientific work.



AREA REPORTS - APRIL 28TH TO JULY 31ST, 1972.

Hastings and Ida Bay: (4 trips; 19 persons).

The Society was entertained (with the practical benefit of some P/R of our own), by the Army at Hastings during the making of a cave sequence for their new Public Relations film.

Further surface surveying has tied Bell Chamber into the now fairly comprehensive map of cave entrances. A number of known entrances between Beattie and King George V caves remain to be plotted.

"Tourist" inspections of Entrance Cave and parts of Exit have been made for the benefit of members who had not seen them before.

Junee-Florentine: (10 trips; 45 persons).

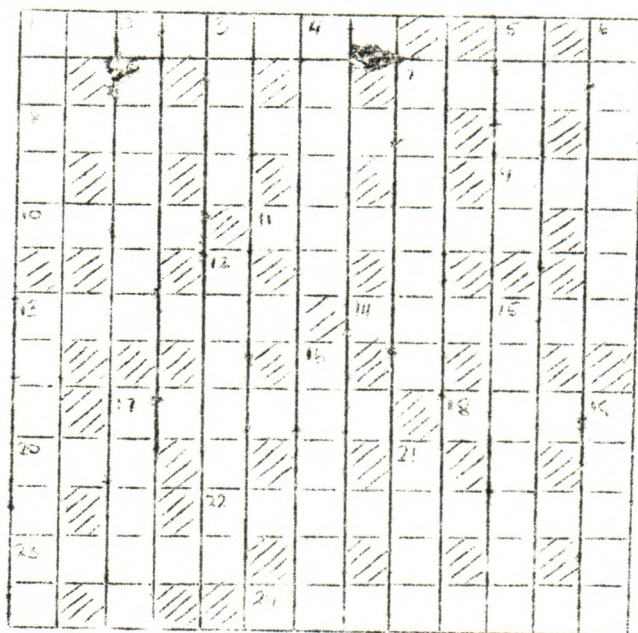
Sesame II (JF211), due largely to the efforts of L. Gleeson and J. Ward, has been pushed from 60 feet to approximately 720 feet in depth. The cave has been surveyed to the bottom. A full description and survey diagrams will be published in the next issue.

A surface survey was commenced at the divide of Chrisps Road opposite Pygmy Cave and followed the road to the "high-line" spar at the top of the ridge. A cross-country traverse from the spar tied in the entrances of JF203 (Bone Pit), 204, 205, 207, 208 and 206. Later traverses extended from 208 to 210 and 211 (Sesame II) and thence back to the road. Rescue Pot and associated holes, 209, Zulu Pot and Pygmy Cave remain to be tied in.

Zulu Pot has been bottomed at 240 feet. A Thylacine skeleton has been recovered from this cave - see P. Andrew's report in this issue.

At Welcome Stranger, on May 13th, the stream was disappearing into a hole under the right-hand wall at survey station 23. Except for the Madonna pool, the stream bed was dry downstream from this point.

A report on the combined Police and Civil Defence Search and Rescue Exercise to which S.C.S. was invited may be found elsewhere in this issue.



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E

Answers  
on p.18.

# CLUES

## Across

1. 17, and 13 dn. Club with reputation of excellent cavers.
7. Healing ointment.
8. Momentous.
9. Food fish.
10. Sins.
11. Caving headgear.
13. Complex set of connected parts.
14. Assists with rope.
17. See 1. ac.
18. One who uses.
20. Frozen water.
22. Way of tying rope (two words).
23. Carries.
24. Went upwards.

## Down

1. Fine oozy substance, e.g. mud.
2. Referees.
3. Hurt.
4. Young child's book.
5. Choose.
6. Chief, e.g. of party.
7. Cricket term for batsman out of crease.
12. Waiters.
13. See 1 ac.
15. Run away, e.g. from institution.
16. Goes in.
17. Monetary units.
19. Went up.
21. Breed of dog.



### SOCIETY NOTES

One of our more active members, Steve Street has returned to Australia after a sojourn in New Zealand. Steve is at the moment in Queensland, but intends to travel to Darwin to work there for a while before coming home to the caving isle.

\*\*\*\*\*

Steve Vince who at the present is in the Solomon Islands should be home soon; we trust he will resume his caving where he left it off.

\*\*\*\*\*

Bob Horner returned to New Guinea for another term with the Commonwealth Bank at Port Moresby; he also, should be back with us fairly soon.

\*\*\*\*\*

It is rumoured that Greg Blake, another of our New Zealand reps., may visit Tasmania at Christmas and probably be accompanied by his girl-friend.

\*\*\*\*\*

Not all of our bods. are in N.Z. However, John Morley, when last heard of, was said to be sitting on a glacier somewhere in South Island although exactly what he intends to do next nobody seems to know.

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### CROSSWORD ANSWERS

ACROSS: 1, Southern; 7, Salve; 8, Important; 9, Cod; 10, Errs; 11, Helmet; 13, System; 14, Belays; 17, Caving; 18, User; 20, Ice; 22, Reef Knots; 23, Totes; 24, Ascended; DOWN: 1, Slime; 2, Umpires; 3, Harm; 4, Reader; 5, Select; 6, Leaders; 12, Servers; 13, Society; 15, Abscond; 16, Enters; 17, Cents; 19, Rised; 21, Skye.

