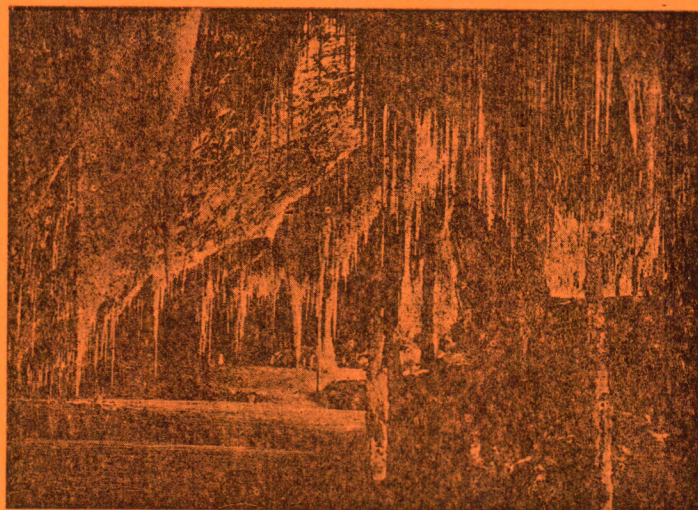


# SOUTHERN CAVER



PRICE 50 CENTS

VOL. 7 NO. 1

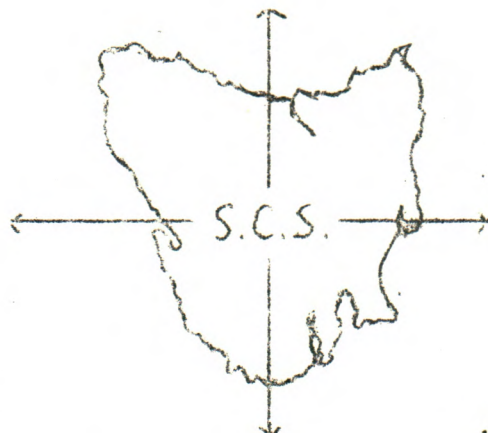


# "SOUTHERN CAVER"

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Steve Harris, Mike Cole,  
Kevin Kiernan Graeme Watt

COVERS: By courtesy of Graeme Watt

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VOLUME 7 NUMBER 1

JULY, 1975

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## CONTENTS:

Outgoing President's Report.....	Page 2
Treasurer's Report.....	Page 4
Quartermaster's Report.....	Page 5
Election of Office Bearers.....	Page 6
Election of Hon. Members.....	Page 7
A Word From the Incoming President.....	Page 8
Caves on the Julius River.....By S.Harris.....	Page 9
Society Criticises S.W. Management Plan.....	Page 11
Cave Survey Notes.....By S.Harris.....	Page 12
Book Review.....By S.Harris.....	Page 19
Area Reports.....By S.Harris.....	Page 21
Fire in the Eyes.....By S.Harris.....	Page 22

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## IT WAS A GOOD YEAR : A PRESIDENT'S REPORT

It has been a pleasure presiding over a caving club as active as the Southern Caving Society was during my term of office.

Apart from the regular caving excursions, there has been much purpose and drive behind certain projects which came to completion during the year.

Herberts Pot, the largest cave in the Mole Creek System has been surveyed and drawn up. Leigh Gleeson, Graeme Bailey, Lindsay and Stewart Wilson and Steve Street spent many miserable and cold hours fighting the snow melt waters of a winter Mole Creek. The surveying was completed in November 1974 and the map was drawn up in December. With 4.4 kms of passages, it ranks third on Australia's deepest list. The survey will appear in volume 7 of the Southern Caver.

Kevin Kiernan, our most prolific contributor to the Southern Caver is to be congratulated not only for his articles, but for the actual field work and research they entail. A fighter on the conservation front also, it is only unfortunate that the burden he shoulders in this respect is not more equally shared.

The Society was represented on two major expeditions during the summer period 1974/75. . . Kevin Kiernan was an organiser of the Gordon River Expedition, an ill fated trip, the speleological ambitions of which were frustrated by heavy rains and floods. . . A dramatic report of this trip appeared in Southern Caver v 6 No.3. Leigh Gleeson and myself joined a national expedition to the karst areas of New Caledonia in the French Pacific. . . A comprehensive report of this trip will be appearing later this year. Leigh and myself also attended the 10th A.S.F. Convention at the University of Queensland in Brisbane.

Interclub relations between T.C.C. and S.C.S. have been very amiable with much co-operation. Laurie Moody the T.C.C. president last year was an excellent bloke with whom to deal when any matter came up affecting both clubs. As for the northern clubs, there has been no contact.

My thanks to a capable Graeme Watt as Secretary, Ron Mann our sober treasurer and the members of the editorial committee of Southern Caver : Dave Elliott, Ron, Kevin, Graeme and Alex Terauds. Bob Cockerill and Leigh Gleeson acted as Police S. & R. liaison officers.

Members were not wanting for social activity. Wednesday night meetings were often succeeded by drinking and dancing at "Travs." Occasionally the Tea Tree Hall resounded to heavy rock and heavy footed cavers while the sessions at Alex's floated on grog rather than music but were none the less enjoyable.



As for the coming year I would recommend the following actions:-

- (1) A coherent and direct action with regard to conservation of caves and karst areas, especially -
  - (a) protective status for Kubla Khan, Mole Creek System, Exit Cave - these of tantamount importance.
  - (b) a campaign to "save the Gordon" be commenced.
- (2) Some new gear is needed especially ladders.  
Quite a few are in need of replacement. We have materials for 2 x 50' ladders of the old copper crimped style. These should be constructed and thereafter new ladders should be of the resin bonded rung type. Thought could be given to purchasing Bonwick ladders.  
A complete new set of numbering gear is needed.
- (3) A subtle but concerted membership drive should begin.

A pleasing detail to finish on. Our permanent clubroom at 132 Davey Street is always open to cavers visiting the state and we were often pleasantly surprised when cavers from the great distances of U.S.A. and N.Z. called in on Wednesday night. See you there sometime. Cheers!

STEPHEN HARRIS



## TREASURERS REPORT

Production of the Southern Caver was the largest single item of expenditure this year closely followed by rent for the clubroom.

The Society managed to show a small surplus this year of \$4.65 thanks to the efforts of members carting hay. Without the \$70-00 from this source the funds would be well into the red. There is a possibility of similar work this year and any opportunity should not be overlooked.

I recommend that the incoming Treasurer adopt the following new subscription rates :-

Full Member	\$12.00
Associate Member	\$ 5.00
Student Member	\$ 6.00
Social Member	\$ 3.00
Junior Associate	\$ 1.00

These rates alone will not cover estimated expenditure next year and any member who has tangible suggestions should convey them to the Treasurer.

<u>INCOME</u>		<u>EXPENDITURE</u>	
Balance forward	\$18.00	Rent	\$104.00
Subscriptions	271.00	Southern Caver	105.00
Southern Caver	43.00	Insurance	19.78
A.S.F.	19.50	A.S.F.	18.00
Badges	12.20	Post Box	8.00
Bank Interest	3.44	Cheque Book	2.00
Hay Carting	70.00	Subscriptions	30.00
Bottle Sales	13.00	Battery Charger	65.00
Miscellaneous	5.00	Equipment	46.86
		Miscellaneous	33.85
		Balance carried forward	22.65
	<u>\$455.14</u>		<u>\$455.14</u>

### Society Funds

Credit Bank Balance	\$22.65
Interest Bearing Deposit	258.00
Conservation Account	28.95
	<u>\$309.60</u>

RON MANN



## QUARTERMASTERS REPORT

The Society owns the following major items of equipment :-

### LADDERS

11 x 30 foot  
1 x 20 foot  
1 x 10 foot  
1 x 8 foot  
2 x 50 foot ladder material

### HEADERS

4 x 30 foot  
3 x 5 metre  
3 x 10 metre

### ROPE

1 x 360 foot Kernmantel  
2 x 150 foot Kernmantel  
1 x 360 foot  
3 x 120 foot  
4 x 60 foot  
1 x 20 foot

### SURVEY EQUIPMENT

2 Suunto Compasses  
1 Suunto Inclinator  
1 100' Tape  
1 Compass/Clino Holder

### MISCELLANEOUS

2 pairs Cloggers  
Duplicator  
Rope Protectors  
Ladder Bags  
Number Punches  
Hand Drill  
Helmets

The only equipment purchased this year has been several helmets and two dry cell cap lights.

The condition of the majority of the ladders and ropes is quite good however there is some rust showing on several ladders and this will have to be carefully watched.

No progress was made with the construction of the two 50 foot ladders in 1974/75 but this will get under way this year. A new jig has to be manufactured before crimping can be commenced.

RON MANN



## ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS 1975/76

The Society elected the following office bearers to represent it for the year 1975/76 :

<u>Patron</u>	Mr. R.D. Baker
<u>President</u>	Ron Mann
<u>Secretary</u>	Graeme Watt
<u>Treasurer</u>	Michael Cole
<u>Magazine Editors</u>	Dave Elliott & Ron Mann
<u>Magazine Committee</u>	Stephen Harris, Michael Cole, Graeme Watt, Kevin Kiernan.

It was resolved that further appointments would be made at the discretion of the President should they become necessary.

\* \* \* \* \*

### Price Increase

The price of "Southern Caver" will increase with this issue (Vol.7 No.1) to 50 cents per issue or \$2.50 for four issues posted within Australia.



HONORARY MEMBERS ELECTED FOR 1975/76

Mr. & Mrs. D.W. Frankcombe, Maydena.  
Mr. R.L. Graue, Hastings Caves.  
Inspector T.E. Howard, Tarooma.  
Sergeant M. Massie, Hobart.  
Mr. J.W. Howe, Mole Creek.  
Dr. J.N. Jennings, M.A., Canberra City, A.C.T.  
Mrs. Lambert.  
Mr. G.R. Linger, Caveside.  
Mr. R.E. Martin, Caveside.  
Mr. G.J. Melville, Mole Creek.  
Mr. & Mrs. M. Oliver, Chudleigh.  
Mr. Richardson, Sandford.  
Mr. T. Richardson, Mole Creek.  
Mr. C.J. Shaw, Mole Creek.  
Mr. & Mrs. Roy Skinner, Hobart.  
Mr. D. Turner, Rose Bay.  
Dr. J. Wane, Lenah Valley.  
Mr. Gourlay.

It was resolved by the Society that all Cave Guides would be accorded the status of Honorary Members of the Society. Should there be additions to this list that have escaped our notice, acknowledgement will be made in a subsequent edition.



## A WORD FROM THE INCOMING PRESIDENT

This year is the beginning of our second decade as a Society and with determination and combined effort will be as successful as the last.

Conservation issues, a feature of recent years, will require careful consideration by the Society to ensure that valuable wilderness areas and caves are protected for future generations. In a submission to the National Parks and Wildlife Service, relating to the proposed draft plan for the South West National Park the Society has called for the inclusion of Exit Cave within the boundaries. Apart from currently being the longest cave in Australia it is unique in southern Tasmania and for this reason alone should be protected.

In other areas of the state efforts should be continued to have reserves declared over important caves and areas especially Kubla Khan. I will be investigating the possibility of a reserve being declared covering Welcome Stranger at Maydena and the fact that this cave lies just outside the boundary of the Mt. Field National Park may be of some value.

As I mentioned in my Quartermaster's report for last year, the condition of several ladders is deteriorating and construction of the two 50 foot ladders will begin this year. Preliminary work is required before actual crimping can commence, however I hope to have this under way by summer.

Search and Rescue techniques will receive attention this year and in this regard I urge all members to keep their gear in first class order and to have adequate lighting available at all times.

The Southern Caver has maintained a high standard for many years and the Editors, Dave Elliott and myself, together with the committee plan to maintain this standard and I request suitable articles from members.

Our attention this year should be concentrated in the Juneeflorentine and Mole Creek areas. Intensive scrub bashing in the Juneeflorentine should produce new caves and there are many areas not bashed or fully explored by the Society. The Mole Creek system at Mole Creek has plenty of scope for further exploration and a surface survey of the cave entrances has to be completed.

I ask all members to endeavour to make this year one of the Society's best.

RON MANN



NEW DISCOVERY : CAVES ON THE JULIUS RIVER, NORTH WESTERN TASMANIA

Stephen Harris

The Saturday morning of the long weekend 14-16 June saw three members besides myself (Chris Harris, Steve Street and Lindsay Wilson) on the long road to an area in the far northwest of Tasmania never before visited by a caving team. Caves south of the Arthur River in an area south-west of Lake Chisholm (itself a water filled doline) were originally mentioned to the author by Lloyd Matthews of the Mines Department. As a geologist he had done some reconnaissance mapping in the area but his memory and location description of the caves was sketchy.

Any interest in potential caves of the area languished until 1973/74 when the Forestry Commission began pushing a road south of the Arthur River. The Commission intends to open up for exploitation a vast area of previously trackless PreCambrian dolomite, a rock which is cavernous in other areas of the state including at Montagu and Redpa, about 38 and 32 kms. respectively North west of the area under discussion.

A postgraduate geology student, Brendon Griffin, in 1974 mapped a portion of this country lying generally to the south of Trowutta. In the course of mapping he was told of the partly subterranean course of the Julius River which flows north into the Arthur. Concurrently the area was being investigated by foresters, to one of whom, Phil Shepard, we are grateful for assistance and information.

With map and directions to the area kindly supplied by both Brendon and Phil we couldn't go wrong. The party set off on Sunday morning to wade the 2 kilometres or so down the Julius River, a picturesque and swiftly flowing watercourse. Rising from the banks on either side were the moss dripping inhabitants of an Stygian wilderness - dank and chill it appeared to us on this winter's Sunday - only the tops of the forest trees glowed in a watery sunshine. The water in the river sucked at the vestiges of warmth in our legs.

Barely an hour elapsed since our start when we were confronted with a wall of dolomite which the river had breached leaving a 7 metre high arch. Only another 130 metres in daylight and the river sinks at the base of a high vegetation covered cliff. This time the water forces its way through a spur on a course of several hundred metres before resurging in an incised valley carrying a smaller stream.

Our party reached the main cave about noon. We spent some time checking out the immediate vicinity of the influx. Lindsay then tackled the main watercourse. He was unfortunately halted a



short distance into the cave by a sump which he waded into so that he was chest deep in the icy water but there looked to be no way on.

We scrambled to the top of the entrance fissure which took us onto the hill behind the insurgence. Another joint fissure was located nearby which extended down to the underground stream the noise of which easily carried to us while we decided whether or not to drop ladders. One of our number considered the shaft to be deeper than the length of ladder we had on hand (30 m.) and another argued that the bottom of the shaft was not beyond the sump into which Lindsay waded. We decided to locate the efflux and try from that end.

Following down a smaller stream on the northern side of the spur through beautiful rainforest we shortly came to an impressive efflux. The stream was wide, deep and seemed to carry much sediment as it flowed from a wide low entrance at the base of the steep valley side.

Chris stripped to a woollen singlet and shorts and waded in. Gasping with the coldness of the water he was feeling for footholds in the wall. Then - no more footholds. The water was too deep to wade. Chris retreated. He reported no end in sight and claimed that the cave opened up slightly but at this time the water was the barrier between us and this virgin cave.

Time was passing and the threat of early darkness forced our return - back over the spur and up the Julius River.

The trip was a fair success despite some disappointment in not being able to follow the main watercourse from influx to efflux. A follow-up trip is planned for summer when water levels may be lower and "li-los" and wet suits will be necessary equipment. There are a small number of shafts and fissures to be explored in the vicinity of the arch, the main cave and elsewhere in the forest (P. Shepard pers. comm.).

A further trip should include someone who knows a little of cave fauna collection as we noticed that the two small caves near the arch and various clefts and fissures above the main cave contain trogloditic fauna - wetas and cave spiders.

The area is of great geomorphological interest and scenic and the intention of the Forestry Commission to create a reserve centred on the Lower Julius River and Lake Chisholm is to be applauded.



## SOCIETY CRITICISES S.W. MANAGEMENT PLAN

On May 27th the Minister for National Parks and Wildlife (Mr. Batt) officially released the draft management plan for the South West National Park. Aspects of the plan were criticised by the Tasmanian Conservation Trust, the Lake Pedder Action Committee, the Blanfordia Alpine Club and the Southern Caving Society. The full text of the Society's press release follows :-

"The inclusion of Precipitous Bluff in the State Governments proposed extensions to the South-West National Park was a step in the right direction, but the new South-West plan overall was miserably inadequate, a spokesman for the Southern Caving Society said last night."

"The Australian Speleological Federation, of which this society is a member, has previously called for government initiatives to protect limestone country in the South-West of Tasmania."

"The Precipitous Bluff area certainly contains large and interesting limestone caves, and invertebrate fauna which is found no where else."

The Society is disappointed that Australia's longest cave, the 10 mile long Exit Cave, is not included in the proposed park extensions.

"It would also be tragic if other areas of great speleological value were ignored simply because they have not been exposed to the publicity which might make them politically worthwhile for the government to be seen to be conserving."

"The Society is particularly disappointed that the Lower Gordon River area has not been included. A dramatic expedition to this area this year found it to be of very great promise indeed. Waterfalls were found issuing out of riverside cliffs, and one large cave entrance found, from which there issued a volume of water dwarfing that of any other Australian cave."

"Despite bad weather the area was found to warrant a further national expedition, comprising speleologists from most mainland states. This is being planned for the coming summer."

"The Society acknowledges too, that this area is of very great wilderness value, and urges the government to implement the Tasmanian Conservation Trusts proposals for an enlarged South-West National Park and throw away the present unsatisfactory South-West Plan."



SOME NOTES ON THE SURVEYS OF VOLTERA,  
BONE PIT, JF.206 AND SESAME

By Stephen Harris

Bone Pit is a dry cave discovered in 1951 and recently surveyed to a depth of 100 m. It is a good sporting cave consisting of a series of talus climbs and 3 ladder pitches. Exploration was initially by the T.C.C. but has not been exhaustive although obvious leads have been thrashed. Thong extension was explored by G. Bailey, one of the survey team; and a small "passage" (actually a continuation of the joint rift) about 6.5 m. above the floor of the final pitch (denoted by an asterisk and arrow on the survey) was pursued into a tight constriction by Chris Harris after the 1971 A.S.F. Conference.

The cave basically occupies a cleft which is the influence of N.N.W. - S.S.E. jointing. The name of the cave is apt - the testimony scattered throughout. The 1973 A.S.F. list of longest caves shows Bone Pit as 29th.

Voltera was first explored in 1970. Its principle assailant was Alex Terauds who dubbed the swallet a Lithuanian word for "Goddess of the great erotic vagina". The cave explored is the dry negotiable passage heading in the same general direction as a large stream sinking from the doline into an unnegotiable entrance. The short passage in Voltera terminates in a boulder choke which has been unsuccessfully pushed down to a constriction. A small stream flows in the "dry" part of Voltera but unfortunately the larger volume of water cannot be tracked.

The surveyed length of Voltera is 132.6 m. and the surveyed depth is 28 m.

JF.206 is a small swallet, often dry and strewn with talus blocks, which grades gently down to gravel beds and a pool, 24 metres distance from the surface at a depth of 10 m.

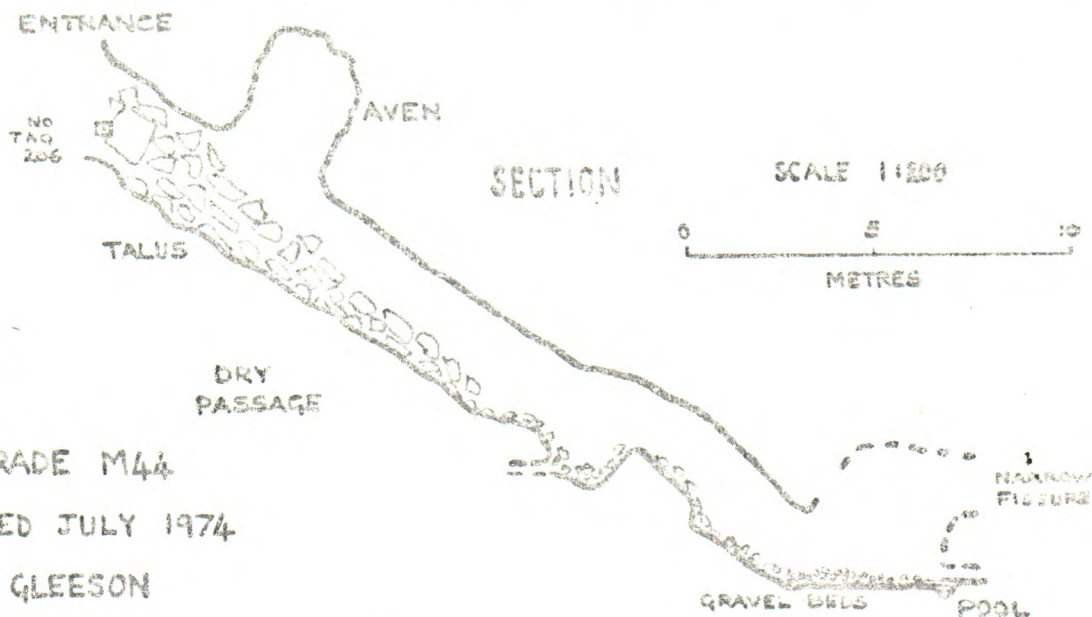
JF.210, or Sesame is a small cave filled with talus blocks situated in a large doline. The depth of Sesame is 18.5 metres terminating in a gravel choke. Near this cave is JF.211, or Sesame II which is 240 m. deep.

Reference

Kiernan, K.W. Tasmanian Caving Areas : June Florentine.  
Southern Caver 2, No.3 Sept. 1970

# JF 206 JUNEE/FLORENTINE

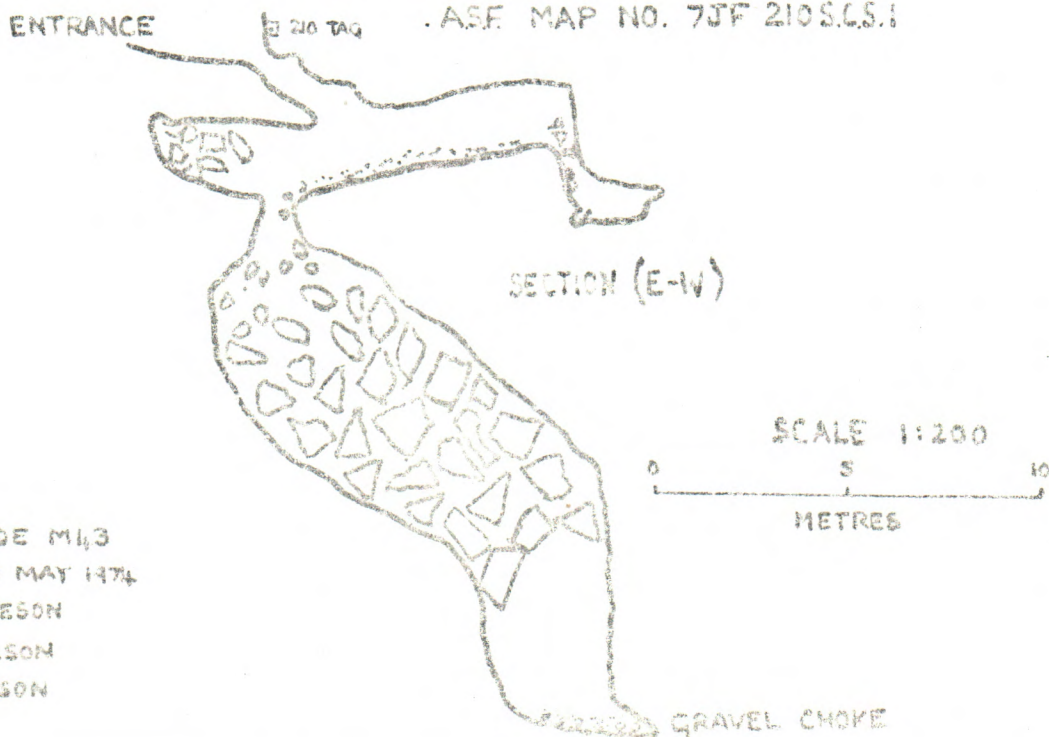
ASF MAP NO. 7JF 206 SCS 1



ASF GRADE M44  
SURVEYED JULY 1974  
by L. GLEESON  
L. WILSON  
D. MONTGOMERY

# SESAME I CAVE JF 210 JUNEE/FLORENTINE

ASF MAP NO. 7JF 210 SCS 1

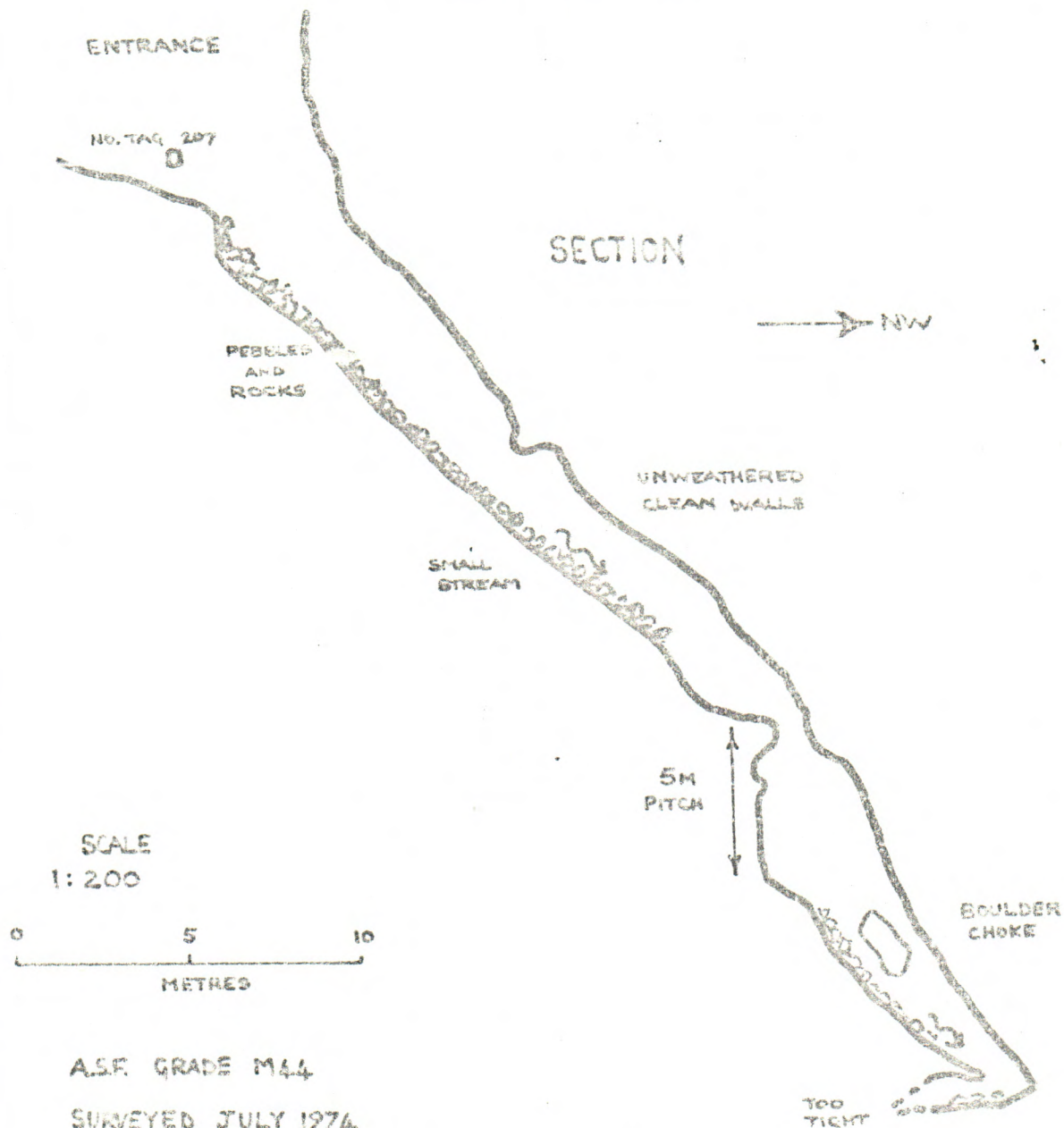


ASF GRADE M43  
SURVEYED MAY 1974  
by L. GLEESON  
L. WILSON  
S. WILSON



# VOLTERA JF 207

ASF MAP NO 7 JF 207 SCS 1.  
JUNEE/FLORENTINE



SCALE  
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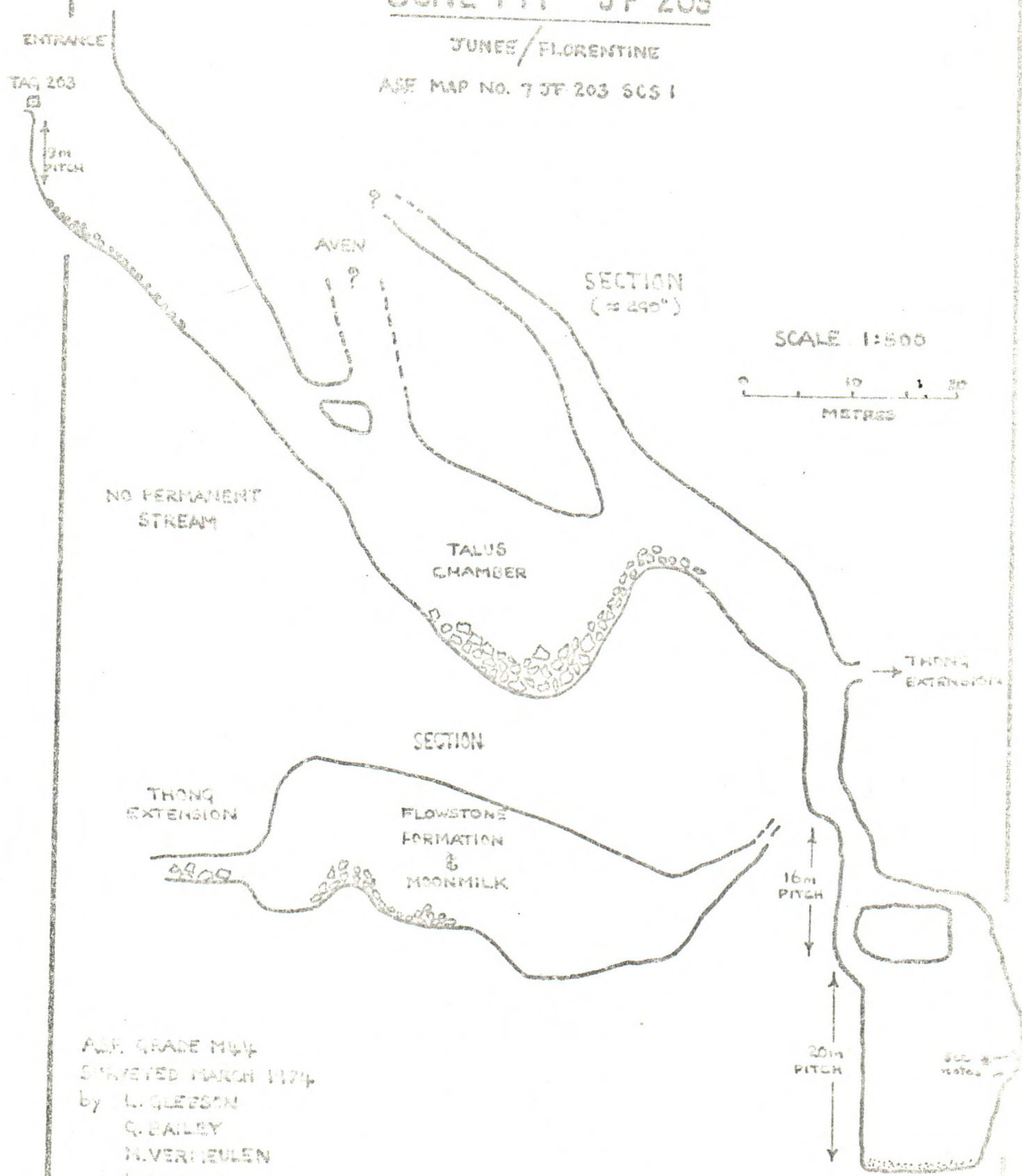
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METERS

ASF GRADE M44  
SURVEYED JULY 1974  
by L. GLEESON  
L. WILSON  
D. MONTGOMERY

# BONE PIT JF 203

JUNEE/FLORENTINE

ASE MAP NO. 7 JF 203 SCS 1



ASE GRADE MAP  
SURVEYED MARCH 1974  
by L. GLEESON  
Q. BAILEY  
N. VERHEULEN  
L. WILSON



CAVES - By Tony Waltham

Macmillan 1974; 240 pages; 236 photographs and 9 diagrams.

"I'm only looking thank you" I said to the shop assistant as I embarked on one of my frequent browsing forays, this time in a new bookshop in Magnet Court. I had not intended buying anything, especially not a book costing \$12.95, but its cover hit me in the eye. A photograph on a black background with the title in bold white letters.

It is the number and quality of the photographs which has the immediate impact on skimming through the book and a large proportion are of British Caves although such are not over-represented as could be expected. Examples of points made in the text are fairly heavily British, but this does nothing to detract its value to us.

There are nine chapters under the following headings :  
(1) The World of Caves; (2) The World of Karst; (3) Cave Exploration; (4) The Use of Caves; (5) Formation of Caves; (6) Decorated Caves and Cave Deposits; (7) Life in Caves; (8) Man in Caves; (9) Caves of the World. The text is lucid and straightforward making it an ideal general introduction to cave literature or an appreciation of caves. Some chapters are better than others. I thought the photographs in chapter six could have been much better. The most appealing chapters are those on Cave Exploration and The World of Karst probably reflecting the personal interest and experiences of the author as an explorer and a geologist. The author has a conversational style of writing which shines through in these specific chapters as he relates experiences common to his own.

It is petty to point out spelling mistakes but the book does have three or four, e.g. on p.27 "abounded" rather than "abandoned" - disappointing to find in a book of this evident quality.

Chapter nine of necessity must exclude many cave areas of the world - sketchy, but considering the amount of information of very recent age about caves in out of the way places could not be all embracing. There are two paragraphs on Australian caves, one paragraph mentioning Jenolan but mainly preoccupied with the Nullabor, while the other paragraph was on Tasmania which is quoted for the benefit of Tasmanian readers :

"The island of Tasmania contains Australia's most important caves. The interior of the island is mainly covered by dense rain forest, which makes access and exploration very difficult, but once an entrance is located it commonly leads to a fine cave system. Exploration is

still active in Tasmania, and the most spectacular region appears to be around Junee where a large resurgence is fed by a number of sinking streams. One of these goes down the Khazad-dum pothole : an exciting series of stream passages and waterfalls leads to a sump at a depth of just over 1000 feet, unfortunately before meeting the main underground river of the region. However, elsewhere on the island through trips from sinkhole to resurgence cave are possible; one of the finest is down the great shafts of Mini Martin via a ten-mile long network of caves to the massive passages of Exit Cave, which return the caver to daylight 700 feet below the upper entrance!" (p.217)

The book is worth the money of similar books and the only one on my shelf to beat it is Radiant Darkness, but only just.



## AREA REPORTS

By Stephen Harris

This summary of trip reports covers the period 6th April to the end of June, 1975. There was a total of 7 trips, a small number, but useful work is being achieved, and some new people being introduced to the joys of caving.

### Florentine Valley (2 trips)

Two and a half hours were spent in Growling Swallet going right to the sump at the bottom. Only one ladder was used for the negotiation of an awkward 20' drop. A party in this cave only a couple weeks previously had found water backed up behind the sump right up to this chamber.

A small party at the end of June ventured into that perennially popular cave - Welcome Stranger to take photographs.

### Mole Creek (2 trips)

One of the trips to this area meant to push forward the frontiers of exploration in Herberts Pot but some bungling occurred on the part of the leader whereby the ladders were left in Hobart. A mutinous party slouched off to marvel at the spectacular Alum Cliffs; Georgies and Wet Caves being "done" the same weekend.

On a Sunday in early May five bods headed for Mole Creek with a specific purpose in mind - to survey Toboggan Cave.

### Hastings (2 trips)

The two excursions to this area patronised Wolf Hole, a favourite cave with its spectacular entrance doline amidst rainforest. One trip was a familiarization (new word for "tourist trip") for new members. The second party to the cave tackled the entrance with S.R.T. gear instead of ladders. Members on both parties went beyond Lake Pluto while others were content to take photographs and sit on the gravel beach of Lake Pluto.

### Julius River (1 trip)

Reported elsewhere in this journal is the first ever journey by cavers to this far flung area. Visited to our knowledge, only by foresters in recent years, the caves area is situated in very rugged and beautiful rainforest south of the Arthur Ranges in north-west Tasmania. The Julius, a substantial river flowing into the Arthur goes underground for part of its course. The team couldn't get right through the cave because of high water. In the same region are sinkholes, an arch above

the river and two other small tunnel-like caves in a cliff at the side of the river.

The rock in the region of the arch is a dense, thinly bedded, highly folded blue.grey dolomite.

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### FIRE IN THE EYES

By Steve Harris.

Many cavers have no doubt turned a light suddenly into the eyes of others on a caving trip after having been underground for several hours, and been momentarily amazed by the brilliant orange colour that luminesces in the eyes. This is due to a build up on the retina of the eye of rhodopsin or purple vision. The chemical is very sensitive to light and builds up in its absence. On being subjected to a light beam the rhodopsin breaks down through a series of chemicals until Vitamin A (as in carrots) is formed. Carrots being good for the eyes is not an old wives tale but a myth instigated by rumour from the British Intelligence Office in the Second World War to allay scepticism in enemy ranks of accurate bombing runs by the British for the short time between invention of the radar and the subsequent development of it by the Germans.



