

VOL. 10 NO. 1

# SOUTHERN CAVER

PRICE 50 CENTS



"SOUTHERN CAVER"

Published Quarterly by the  
Southern Caving Society.

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COVERS: By courtesy of Graeme Watt

Registered for posting as a periodical - Category B.

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## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Once again it is possible to report a successful year for the society, at least to the extent that we have had reasonable levels of involvement and certainly good club spirit.

We've been engaged in a fairly wide range of activities from surface work (at the Loddon River and Mole Creek) surveying (Kellys Pot) but principally with return trips to known caves.

During the year little original exploration has been done reflecting both the increasing difficulty of extending known systems and the small size of our active field teams.

The society has on average managed to have a trip going every fortnight although there has been considerable fluctuation in the frequency of trips.

Unfortunately, field work over the summer was relatively quiet which is a pity as this season represents an often unique time to extend caves which are often hampered by high water levels. As opposed to this the current autumn has seen trips virtually every week.

One of the more pleasing aspects of the club's operations in recent times is that we have been able to match the demand for trips with the supply of available trip leaders and transport. This has avoided much of the frustration to keen new members which was sometimes in evidence a few years back.

Things look optimistic for the coming year. We have an enthusiastic team which at the moment has more trips on their agenda than there are weekends available to accomodate them (already we have had to have some mid-week trips this financial year).

Some new and old members have shown an interest in learning single rope techniques. This will enable them to visit some deep caves which they would otherwise not normally get the chance to see. Secondly it will significantly increase the now very small active SRT team.

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One of the principal problems facing this and any other small group is that with the continual loss of experienced and one-time active members so much time must be spent on introducing new cavers to the "game" in the hope that they can effectively fill the gap caused by the attrition of old members. The consequent lag effect which may occur means that many difficult but interesting trips cannot get off the ground for want of an experienced team. (A good example is a recent JF14-Khazad-Dum trip with only a two man team.)

Caves like Cauldron Pot, Tassy Pot and so on have not been visited for years, primarily for this reason. This will be a continuing problem, I think.

The society has as usual been reasonably active in our liaison with the Police Search and Rescue Squad. This is commendable and must continue. Within our own ranks there is an ongoing need to maintain a satisfactory level of safety procedures in respect of equipment standards, lights, underground clothing and helmets (including chin straps). With an accident free record for many years there is a tendency, at times, to underestimate the magnitude of potential risks and become 'casual' in this regard.

It is possibly regrettable that none of our club members have any active interest in cave conservation. Regrettable because there are several caves where we need to look more closely at the provision of marked tracks and indeed even at gateing. Where applicable we need to implement ASF codes of ethics where these can be shown to be both desirable and necessary.

Finally, a welcome to new members and resurrected armchair members - good to see such interest and revival in active caving.

LEIGH GLEESON



TREASURER'S REPORT 1977/78

An amount of \$13.65 was carried over from the previous year and there is a small surplus of \$4.76 at the end of this financial year.

Expenditure this year has been heavy in some areas and light in others - four new Bonwick ladders were purchased at a cost of \$127.75 and A.S.F. capitation fees rose by 50 cents per member to \$3.50 which had not been anticipated.

Expenditure on the "Southern Caver" this year is \$20.00 less than in the previous year due mainly to reduced postage costs and a change in production from being run off by the committee to being printed by the Division of Recreation.

Only six months rent on the clubrooms was paid this year which means that instead of being eight months in advance we are now only two months in advance. This situation will have to be looked at with a view to returning to the more desirable eight months in front.

The Society would not have been able to purchase the new ladders had it not been for donations amounting to \$80.00 from club members and \$23.00 obtained from the sale of ladder rungs and short ladder pieces to the T.C.C. and club members respectively.

More fund raising is needed to enable the Society to get back to its former position with rent and to cover increasing costs.

I recommend no increase in fees for the next year, mainly because I believe an increase would be rejected by many members who have not taken the time to compare cost of membership with the many benefits they can obtain from that membership.

All members therefore will have to help with fund raising.

RON MANN

SOUTHERN CAVING SOCIETY  
FINANCIAL STATEMENT 1977/78

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<u>INCOME</u>		<u>EXPENDITURE</u>	
Balance Forward	13.65	Southern Caver	120.00
Subscriptions	195.00	Rent	52.00
Southern Caver	62.50	ASF Fees	70.00
ASF	57.00	Membership Subs	20.00
Sale of Ladder Rungs etc.	23.00	Cheque Book	2.00
Sale of Surveys	3.00	Advertising	3.40
Donations	80.00	P.O. Box	15.00
Bank Interest	3.76	Equipment	127.75
		Library Purchases	6.00
	<u>437.91</u>	Postage	5.00
		Misc.	12.00
		Balance Forward	4.76
			<u>437.91</u>

Balance in Bank Account	\$ 80.76
Less U/Presented cheques	
529	\$ 6.00
535	\$ 70.00
	<u>4.76</u>

<u>SOCIETY FUNDS</u>	
Credit Balance	\$ 4.76
I.B.D. (8.75%)	\$331.72
	<u>\$336.48</u>



## QUARTERMASTERS REPORT

At the 30th April, 1978 the Southern Caving Society owned the following equipment:

### LADDERS

2 x 50 ft  
7 x 30 ft  
1 x 20 ft  
1 x 10 ft  
1 x 8 ft

### HEADERS

3 x 30 ft  
3 x 10 m  
3 x 5 m  
5 x 8 ft

### ROPE

1 x 360 ft  
3 x 120 ft  
2 x 60 ft  
1 x 20 ft

### SURVEY EQUIPMENT

2 SUUNTO COMPASSES  
1 SUUNTO INCLINOMETER  
1 100 ft TAPE  
1 50m TAPE  
1 COMPASS/CLINO  
HOLDER

### MISCELLANEOUS

2 PAIRS CLOGGERS  
DUPLICATOR  
ROPE PROTECTORS

LADDER BAGS  
NUMBER PUNCHES  
HELMETS

The society purchased four new Bonwick ladders this year at a cost of \$127.75. This purchase brings our equipment back to a reasonable level, however our ropes will need renewing soon.

The old method of rolling club ladders, i.e. the twisting of the wire rope has been abandoned in favour of straight rolling. This is the method which is evident in most British caving photos and prevents the lay of the rope from opening & dirt & water penetrating into the rope.

The use of 'C' clips on most of our ladders in place of shackles means that the new Bonwick ladders can be easily rolled and secured without the fumbling and the loss of shackles and pins associated with our older ladders.

RON MANN

ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS 1978/79

The Society elected the following office bearers to represent it for the year 1978/79.

<u>PRESIDENT:</u>	Mieke Vermeulen
<u>SECRETARY:</u>	Peter Russell
<u>TREASURER:</u>	Ron Mann
<u>MAGAZINE EDITORS:</u>	Dave Elliott and Ron Mann
<u>RECORDS OFFICER:</u>	Leigh Gleeson
<u>SEARCH &amp; RESCUE:</u>	Bob Cockerill and Aleks Terauds

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HONORARY MEMBERS ELECTED FOR 1978/79

Mr. R.E. Martin	Caveside
Mr. G. Linger	Caveside
Mr. T. Richardson	Mole Creek
Mr. D. Frankcombe	Maydena
Mr. & Mrs. Pat Kelly	South Mole Creek
Dr. J.N. Jennings M.A.	Canberra
Inspector M. Massie	Hobart
Messrs. Fowler, England & Newton	Davey Street, Hobart
Mr. R.L. Graue	Hastings Caves
Mr. J.N. Howe	Mole Creek

It was resolved by the Society that all Cave Guides would be accorded the status of Honorary Members of the Society.



## A WORD FROM THE INCOMING PRESIDENT

Well, contrary to the well voiced CEGSA opinion it would appear that there is after all a small place in the caving world for the fairer sex.

This year I hope to see the club active in all the various areas. Much good work has been done in the last year but a few lean periods were rather obvious (especially when the chill winds blow). This year we should see more enthusiastic and possibly fruitful work done in the Mole Creek region - onwards and downwards Herberts!!!!

Speaking of further exploration - there comes the perennial ethical problem of numbering and surveying caves thus destroying the "exploration" potential for future generations of cavers. Perhaps in well used areas this is not so critical, but in wilderness areas not often frequented, the zealous numberers should restrain their enthusiasm. These and other ethical considerations regarding underground camping, rubbish disposal at camp sites and "overuse" of certain areas of caves will have to be looked into.

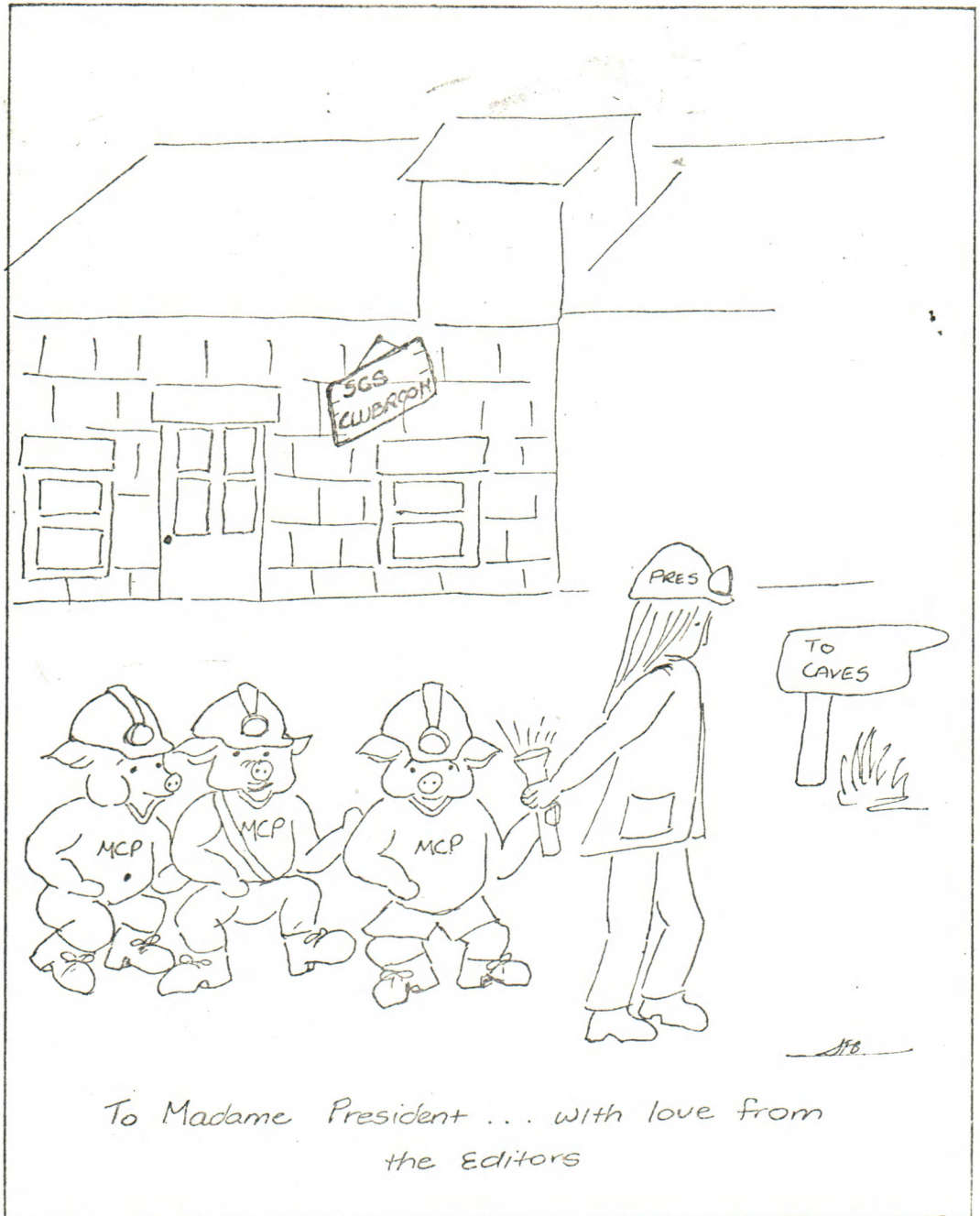
It would be very pleasing to see the co-operation between the SCS and the TCC grow this coming year. Over the last year these contacts have been most encouraging and greatly enhance the possibility for many fruitful caving jaunts.

Still on the subject of successful co-operation the interest shown in caving by members of the Ambulance Board was very useful, - we showed them the caves and they showed us how to mend ourselves afterwards. I hope they come up to the club this year for refresher courses for both parties.

Well, I appear to have satisfied our faithful long suffering editors, bless their hearts, and perhaps other people will follow my example, and write something for the Southern Caver. It hasn't escaped my notice that both editors are thinning a bit on top - must be due to frustrated hair-tearing because of lack of articles for the magazine. Save them from the necessity of hair pieces - articles cost less.

Well people, that's all for now. Lets' see you all soon up at the club rooms.

Madame President



To Madame President ... with love from  
the Editors



## NOTES FROM A FRANKLIN RIVER DIARY

By Kevin Kiernan

On the lip of the Propsting Gorge, looking upstream into the Great Ravine ... mist obscured the sunset but the views on the way in over Mt. McCall had been superb: up the Andrew Valley and West Coast Range to Eldon Bluff; out over Macquarie Harbour; south along the Elliott Range; south-east to the Prince of Wales Range; north-east to Frenchmans Cap. A magnificent vista: Welcome home.

The new day dawned through mist, which kept the sun at bay as the grunt began down the track near the haulageway with all the gear, a grunt made more difficult by having the rubber boats inflated (part way only!) for some stupid reason. Some hours later we were assembled at river level: three refugees from Sydney, Ross Ellis, Harry Coleman and Robert Diggs; longer term refugee Greg Middleton, and yours truly. Launching out onto the brooding water, getting used to a strange craft: a couple of minor rapids and drift on, getting back into the spirit of the Franklin. Suddenly a big rock, a sideways boat, a sharp crack and no more paddle. Terrific. Thirty minutes down, two weeks to go, and onto our spare paddle already. A little further and then we camped ephemerally on rocks, some beneath the boats, just below the Nicholls Rivulet confluence. A brief wander downstream proved this to be a bounteous land, and reaching up I plucked a fibreglass canoe paddle from a stately sassafras. Soon after the chasm was filled with spilling moonglow and sleep caught us. It was good to know we were back in the care of the Franklin.

### 20 FEB 78

So good to be back. A couple of rapids, a couple of portages, confidence growing with practice. Down the sombre corridor of Glen Calder, a portage to bypass sharp rocks in a narrow rapid beside a neat little natural arch, then another at the **Pigtrough**, where green forest and pandani lines the delicate tracery of a waterfall and a forest garden sits upon a high pedestal of rock in the middle of the gorge. Beyond lay the Newland Cascades, with the first limestone at their exit. Rode the first bit for the most exciting ride so far, but portaged the rest due to low water and courage. Found a bedding plane cave just beyond, with some pretties, on the true left bank, behind a curtain of green dripped spray. Camped by a sandy beach on the opposite bank, just downstream. The site is Calders Ferry, near here convicts Maddox and Couz from Sir John and Lady Franklin's party tried to cross on a raft in May, 1842 but were swept a mile downstream before reaching the opposite bank. The rest of the party finally made it across at Eleanors Ferry, a few kilometres further on.



21 FEB 78

Awoke to another misty morning, steam arising from the waters as the sky grew increasingly bluer. Lit the fire, a quick dip, and prepared a brew to wake the others while drying. After breakfast wandered up the creek opposite camp and surrounded by twenty headed monster pandani in the Black Forest. Found one small hole but seemed to run out of limestone. Then downstream along the Franklin cliffs to opposite some outcrops on the other side, which contained a few holes, then back up to yesterday's cave where Greg and Ross were mapping. From there back to camp to collect Digger and Harry, then down to the new holes: a minor efflux, a little arch complex, and one a bit harder to get at.

The following morning we set off middlingly early to **finish** the previous days exploration and then on listening to the birds and Ross' puns and checking holes in bluffs. A little below Eleanors Ferry some overhangs afforded protection from a sudden squall, as the day grew noticeably colder. As another hit we pulled in to a rock ledge beside a promising hole in the true right, on the outside of a bend. There we lunched inside a spacious entrance hall leading to a moderately extensive cave (F51) with a small efflux beside it (F52).

Adjacent to the caves is a sheltering overhang. Sitting beneath it beside a warm fire there is such an incredible sense of peace. The occasional squall dances across the slow waters and petals swirl on the dark mirror, from which solemn forest and sky are brooding in reverse; raindrops or drips from the rock wall raise bubbles on the water from time to time, and a hundred metres or so downstream a small rapid leads to another and then a limestone bluff. Immediately opposite is a small sandy beach lined with drift wood, like the inner recesses of this ledge: a great firewood supply though sometimes its a little hard to burn Nature's masterpieces. Harry is drying his lilo beside the fire and the others are in F51 surveying; the sky is billowing white and grey and the smoke frisks about. A little flow from the decorated recesses of F52 trickles partially under the fire, lit on a minor platform of wood to keep the kindling dry ..... spent the evening by the fire watching the rain on the river and the streaming of platypus: just gazing on silently. Slept in the entrance hall of the main cave.

23 FEB 78

Away later than early after a wet night, though our quarters proved wonderfully dry and commodious. River up and still rising a little. After a couple of minor rapids we pulled ashore to a small stream cave with some dry, decorated and partly cut-away passages paralleling the river, and two entrances looking out over it from the cliffs.



The main entrance is under a large overhang with a dry sandy area among Huon Pines which would make an idyllic campsite. Surveyed this cave, then pushed on downstream looking at a couple more before reaching Bob Brown's "Royal Box" bluff, where an inaccessible entrance high overhead presents a tantalising prospect, the better for not knowing any answers. An interesting rapid and then Little Fall, the limit of last years push upstream, this time carrying a little more water with all the pavement flooded ..... Here Harry and his boat briefly went different ways, Greg wading out to help him pull it in but ending up getting swept through the next rapid with him, into the eddy at Wattle Camp creek. Stopped for lunch at the cave above the Jane and lit a fire for drying and a brew. Greg, Ross and Digger went surveying while Harry and I examined the amazing fossils. Late in the afternoon we paddled on down past the Jane and on to the Flat Island hut. Went for a brief reconnaissance jog along the HEC Eagle Creek track that evening.

#### 24 FEB 78

Awoke as the sun lit the flame cliff of the Elliott Range to a morning blaze: a quick breakfast and away, along the track for some much needed exercise after the sloth of boating, leaving the others in their sleeping bags. Stopped at the second plain to photograph Frenchmans Cap wrapped in morning mist, and the Prince Of Wales Range, then on through an enchanted forest: past pandani groves fringing burgundy creeks; a plunging waterfall and dew-lit spiders' webs. Limestone outcrops lie beside the track for the last kilometre or two to the Lower Gordon, with a few little holes. The rich colour of Eagle Creek and the morning stillness of the Gordon contrasts markedly with the squalor of the HEC camp. After a quick bite, more photos and de-leeching a return back over the Elliott Range as the growing warmth raised misty steam which mixed and wafted with the light filtering through the greenery. A drier return across the button grass and back along the miles of mossy concourse in time for lunch. Spent the afternoon on a lofty perch watching a sea eagle and offering roadmaps through the peaceful slumbers of three contented tiger snakes to wandering speleos whose movements became markedly shorter and more infrequent as the afternoon drifted on ..... then after an immaculate day in which there had seemed to be no clouds over the south-west, the sky suddenly billowed and darkness, wind and rain lashed the hut.



The day had not been totally slack: the 24km (return) trip to the Lower Gordon and back took only 4-5 hours, admittedly without a pack but establishing the feasibility of weekend trips into the Franklin limestone around Flat Island. The climb over the hills amounts to only a few hundred metres and so even with packs a one way trip should take little more than 3 hours. Useful piece of information.

25 FEB 78

Awoke to a still morning with only the gurgling of the river breaking the silence. Paddling and drifting under clearing skies stopping now and again to watch a platypus in his home eddy, or sit waiting in anticipation as bubbles arose from beside a submerged burrow in a sandy bank of the river. We stopped here and there to check outcrops, Greg trying to remind us that this was, theoretically at least, a speleological expedition. Lunched on a shingle island midstream, then just downstream found a transect cut for the HEC "scientific survey" - a swathe 10-15 m wide with big myrtles and all chainsawed aside. Utterly needless destruction when foot access was all that was needed: an engineer's environmental study, with grandiose scarring to prove their passage and plenty of man power and chain-saw fuel bills to pad the cost out and generally help give the impression that they really did go to a lot of trouble trying to prove there was no reason why they shouldn't destroy temperate Australia's last major wild river. Later stopped at Fraser Cave and a few of the others, and camped a kilometre or so downstream from "Double Fall".

The following day would see us to last years base camp near Verandah Cliff where Karen and Barry were waiting, having come in by jet boat from Strahan. The final leg was uneventful but for Greg's little epic at Big Fall. A light (unloaded) boat not paddled quite quickly enough over the lip left him caught in the stopper, struggling desperately to paddle out but each time sucked back exhausted until the boat took sufficient water from the fall to inspire him to action again. The last time proved too much, and after the inevitable capsize and a brief disappearance beneath water which was mostly air, boat and captain were spat back up and washed downstream.

At base we found Barry and Karen arrived OK, but without the intended ABC film crew who had piked on coming up to film the river that will become Tasmania's main conservation issue in the next few years. But worse, Barry had copped a stick in one eye, very painful and blurring his vision. He was jet boated out to Strahan and flew back to Hobart for specialist treatment. The rest of the trip was spent around the lower Franklin caves, guiding two members of the Federal Government South-West Resources survey through them and generally festering. Too soon it was time to leave.

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1 MAR 78

..... Last nights on these trips are always sad occasions, each time is like ticking off another of the Franklin's closing years. I've lost all hope for the preservation of this river. Last time it seemed likely there would not be another of these extended trogging visits. This year another seems even less likely. Harry and I lingered by the fire, long after the others had crawled into their pits: not wanting it to end I guess. Talking, remembering. Its hard just to let go of five priceless summers, turn away perhaps forever from a place you have grown to deeply love, to know the temple where you've knelt over the years is already being desecrated, and that people who don't know or care will soon let it be smashed out of existence by other people with cash register eyelids and different gods to persue, and having caught them, to sell.

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## FURTHER EXPLORATION IN KHAZAD-DUM

or THE RAINS CAME...

By Leigh Gleeson

Khazad-Dum was bottomed some six and a half years ago as part of a well planned exploration bid. The descent involved both Tasmanian clubs and was a gruelling exercise of underground team work and determination as the only shaft descent techniques used then were ladders and belay ropes. The trips were necessarily long, and involved a large support team.

After the original descent the cave was left largely unvisited until more recent times, during which a spate of SRT trips have made the descent of this Australian classic a regular "tourist trip" for the real enthusiasts. In the last couple of years two or three successful trips a year have bottomed the cave. For some time it was assumed that exploration possibilities for extending the cave downward were exhausted, however, this was a mistaken belief. Fortunately some local cavers remained optimistic that new leads might well be found in the enormous basal chamber and in particular in the narrow passages behind the terminal sump. This optimism lead directly to a well planned exploration trip by a team of Sydney cavers in 1976 (see ASF Newsletter, Spring 1976) which resulted in an extension of the depth of the cave by between six and fifteen metres. An additional two sumps were discovered on that trip and some potential leads were left unchecked.

One of the problems exploration teams were up against in seeking to extend the system was simply the sheer difficulty and time required in getting into and out of the cave. On a typical K-D trip one would only spend an hour or two at the bottom before starting the ascent and even then the round trip would often take fourteen hours.

It was against this background that a few of us thought that a solution to K-D exploration difficulties lay simply in establishing an underground bivouac in the basal chamber for a few days until a lead was found. The theory was that a small team could quietly slip down the JF 14 vertical entrance into K-D, stroll down to the sump with hands in pockets and casually check out the various leads between regular pots of tea and lemon pancakes. In other words, all energies could be devoted to exploration without having to trouble oneself with the problem of getting out of the cave in the same trip.



So it was then that Lindsay Wilson and I were escorted to the entrance of JF 14 in early May by a team of cavers from the society. We were to be underground for three days and our objective was clear-cut - a no nonsense K-D extension.

Well, never in the history of the Society has such a thoroughly prepared trip had an outcome that was so far removed from the predicted sequence of events as did this jaunt. Unfortunately for us the JF 14 creek was running fairly high after a week of rain up in the Juneau area. Furthermore, some of the recent snows were beginning to melt. This meant that four out of five of the shafts (70', 90', 180', 120' and 220' respectively) were carrying water (cold and nasty). Despite the fact that we were in waterproofs from head to foot we were soon wet to the skin.

It took us over six hours to reach the bottom with what seemed to be a mountain of gear, spare fuel, lights, etc. Wet and buggered, we happily escaped from the waterfalls to a dry campsite high up in the basal K-D chamber. We got to bed that night about 10.00 p.m., lulled to sleep by the thunderous roar of the entire K-D stream bilging down the 100' waterfall into the final chamber, to our front, and the hissing sound of water raining down from near the 220' shaft to our rear.

We did not wake up until 8.00 a.m. the next day, and during breakfast we were forced to face the reality that our eventual ascent was going to be a much more serious matter than we had imagined given the high water levels and the increasing weight of our gear. We thus planned to spend only about three or four hours in exploration and retire early in order to be up at 2.00 a.m. on the following day to start our ascent.

Our few hours of exploration on the bottom came to nothing. We hauled all our SRT gear and ropes down through the narrow crawls against the possibility of any new leads. Kicking and thrashing about in the mud and squalor got us nowhere. It all became rather frustrating. Wet and miserable, with carbides choked up with mud, we ceremoniously checked out a few leads, but were quietly wishing we were somewhere else. Frustrated, we retreated back to our camp and prepared for bed, quietly wondering how it was possible that we could come down here for three days and achieve absolutely nothing.

Our ascent the next day was indeed a nightmare. It took us three and a half hours to get ourselves and our gear up the 220 ft. shaft alone. The cold waters sapped our energy and left us with frozen hands. For hours we painfully hauled the water logged gear foot by foot up the shafts. There was physically too much work for the two of us, the loads were just too heavy especially as we were often standing under waterfalls or in their spray. By 2.00 p.m. that day we had to abandon all our gear at the bottom of the second pitch in order to meet our surface arrival deadline for search and rescue purposes. A return trip was thus necessary to recover the gear.

So there you go ... the best laid plans of mice and men can go astray. In retrospect we achieved nothing - no extensions, and it wasn't even pleasant. In fact, it was bloody awful. Funny thing though, in some strange kind of way, these are the trips that remain in ones memory as the classics.

Now we are having a rethink on the best way to approach another K-D exploration trip. Maybe it would be more realistic to wait for the drier months of summer. Certainly the possibilities for extension still exist for those who can't gainfully use their leisure time somewhere other than in the bowels of the earth.



## AREA REPORTS

By Ron Mann

This report covers the period from 17th April to 12th July, 1978 during which a total of 9 trips was undertaken by members of the Society.

### JUNEE/FLORENTINE (7 trips)

On the 23rd April Bob Cockerill, Aleks Terauds and Bill Nicholson (TCC) went to Beginners Luck Cave in the Florentine to see if the cave was suitable for the forthcoming Search & Rescue exercise.

Leigh Gleeson and Lin Wilson set out to bottom JF 14 over the 29-31 April with a support party of Aleks Terauds and Peter Russell carrying the gear to the cave. The aim of the trip was to explore the base chamber of Khazad-Dum and the party decided to go down the JF 14 entrance because it involved fewer (although longer) pitches. ~~A full report appears elsewhere in this issue.~~

On the 1st May Bob Cockerill, Aleks Terauds and Bill Nicholson (TCC) guided members of the Police Search & Rescue Squad through Beginners Luck in preparation for the S & R exercise.

The next trip to the Junee area was to recover the gear from the JF 14 epic. A large party of eight led by Leigh Gleeson walked to the cave and after several members had retrieved the gear from the bottom of the second pitch, carried it back to the cars.

"Operation Womguano" the S & R exercise, was held in Beginners Luck Cave on 27th May and was attended by large numbers from SCS, TCC, the Police S & R Squad and the Ambulance Board of Southern Tasmania. Despite the inclement weather various rescue techniques were practised. We hoped to have an in depth report from our Search & Rescue Officers on all aspects of this exercise, however a report had not been received at the time of printing.

Leigh Gleeson took three members of the Ambulance Board of Southern Tasmania to Sesame 2 (JF211) on 16th June. Some of the Ambulance Board members have developed an interest in caving and this trip was in response to their request for some action. Ten hours were spent underground without reaching the bottom of the cave and Leigh remarks that another 3-4 hours would have been required to do this. Leigh also notes that because of the awkward nature of some of the pitches the trip becomes slow however because the cave is pretty dry this is not so unpleasant.

About the centre of the cave (60 ft rope pitch) things are fairly loose and a lot of care is required but once in the stream passage (which only carries a little water) there is no problem. There is an interesting upper level in this section of old stream passage containing old dried out formation.

Leigh Gleeson, Lin Wilson and Peter McQuillan set out to find Rift Cave on 1st July. The results of their trip plus a survey of the cave done by Kevin Kiernan in 1973 appear earlier in this issue.

#### HASTINGS (1 trip)

Leigh Gleeson, Peter Russell and B. Turner (visitor) set off in wet weather on 20th May to go to Wolf Hole. The party spent approximately five hours underground looking at the cave going as far as Lake Pluto.

#### MOLE CREEK (1 trip)

Leigh Gleeson and Mieke Vermeulen took four visitors to Mole Creek towards the end of May for a quiet "tourist trip".

Heavy rain spoiled the trip but they managed to explore Honeycomb and Wet Caves. A highlight of the trip, according to the report, was when one of the visitors fell in the creek at the campsite while attempting to get water.



