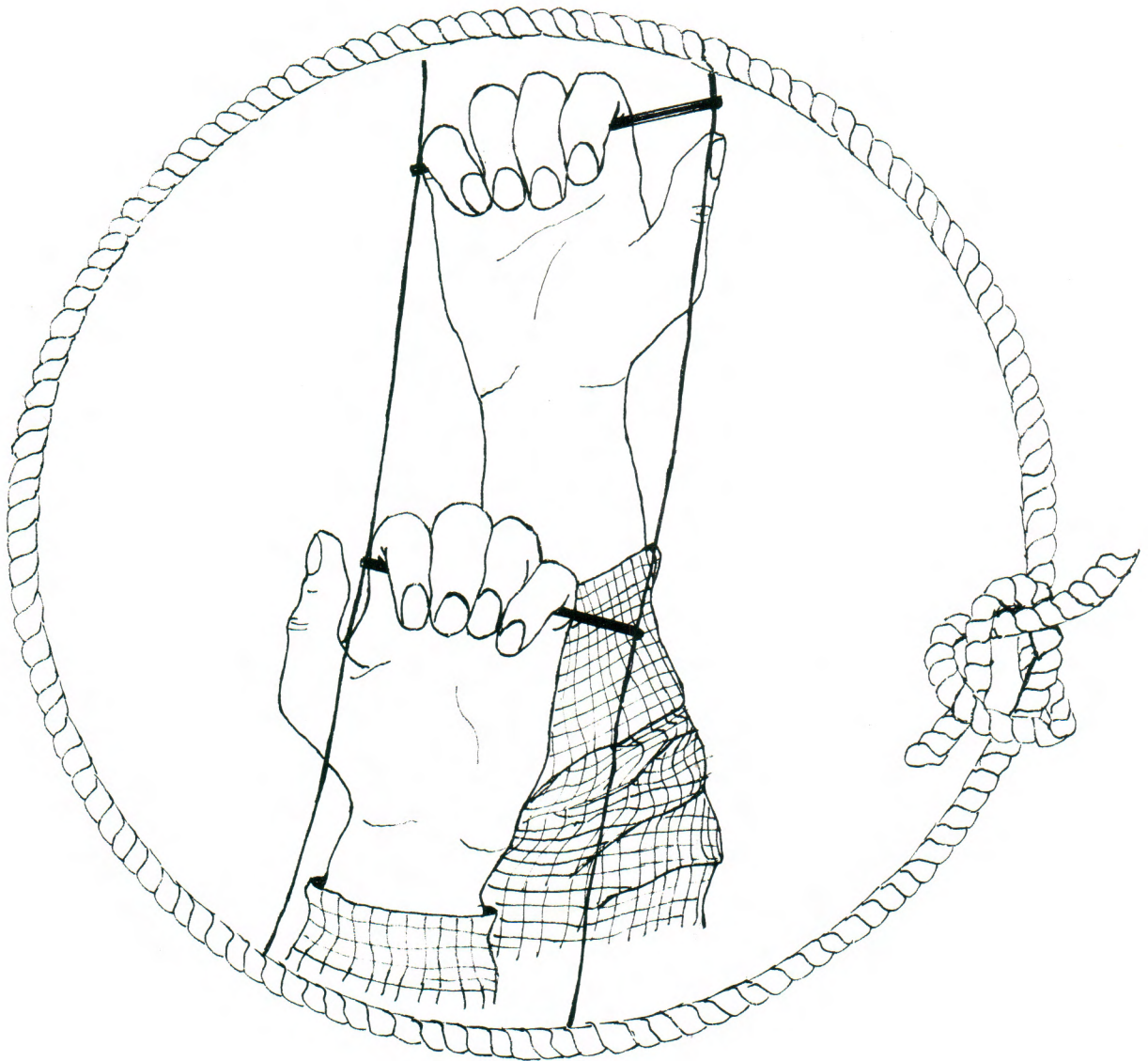


SOUTHERN CAVER

Volume 11, number 1.





SOUTHERN CAVER

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Editorial

The "Southern Caver" has changed it's format from this issue. Printed on A4 instead of the old quarto, and consecutive page numbering throughout the 4 numbers of each volume constitute the major superficial changes. The cost for each copy has been raised to one dollar so as to help offset the increased costs of production.

The journal will, it is hoped, feature occasional photographs in future issues and the editors welcome good quality black and white prints to be considered for publication.

It is expected that through this journal the activities of this Society will be reflected in good quality articles. Articles and notes from Tasmanian cavers outside the Society will also be happily received by us.

We congratulate retiring Editors Ron Mann and Dave Elliott for their enthusiastic dedication in keeping "Southern Caver" afloat for 10 years. Their example will be hard to follow.

Leigh Gleeson was elected to the chair for this year, Kathy McQuillan is Secretary and Ron Mann Treasurer. Our best wishes to these Cavers at the helm of our Society.

THREE FALLS CAVE (JF225)

Leigh Gleeson

Situated in the foothills of the Florentine Valley, Three Falls Cave is typical of the caves in the area. Its form is essentially that of a narrow vertical rift descending steeply to an explored depth of 84 metres.

The name has its origin in the very spectacular waterfalls cascading into the extensive doline in which the cave entrance lay. Under drier conditions only one small cascade is evident. The three falls amalgamate and sink into humanly impenetrable rock debris very close to the cave entrance.

The cave itself is virtually dry down to the 60 metre level where a cascade emerges from the ceiling of the rift. It has been tentatively assumed that this waterfall and the surface cascades are one and the same waters however the connection has not been formally tested.

The trend of the cave is basically East but from previous experience with other June/JFlorentine caves this directional trend may change suddenly should the cave be extended significantly.

JF225 has no side passage development other than that of the ceiling cascade mentioned above. Prospects for exploration along the length of the system thus appear very limited, although we are unable to say that the hole through which the stream sinks at the bottom of the cave is impassable. What we can say is that any exploration project would be a wet one and would require relatively dry weather conditions on the surface catchment.

As can be seen from the accompanying "Developed Longitudinal Section", this narrow rift system has only limited talus obstruction and limited formation. The bedrock walls are fairly clean, making climbing easy. That formation which is present is characterized by rich colours.

Necessary equipment for a bottoming trip would be a 25m handline, 12m ladder rig, 10m handline and 10m ladder rig.

Neither of the ladder pitches have very satisfactory anchor points near-by so a range of wire traces is required. The length used will depend on your aversion to shoddy tie-offs.

The location of the cave is very close to that of Tassy Pot but in this case is located on the other side of the old logging road which passes Tassy Pot. The cave is set back some 200 metres from the road. A 15 minute march up a gully through thick scrub is required to reach the cave.

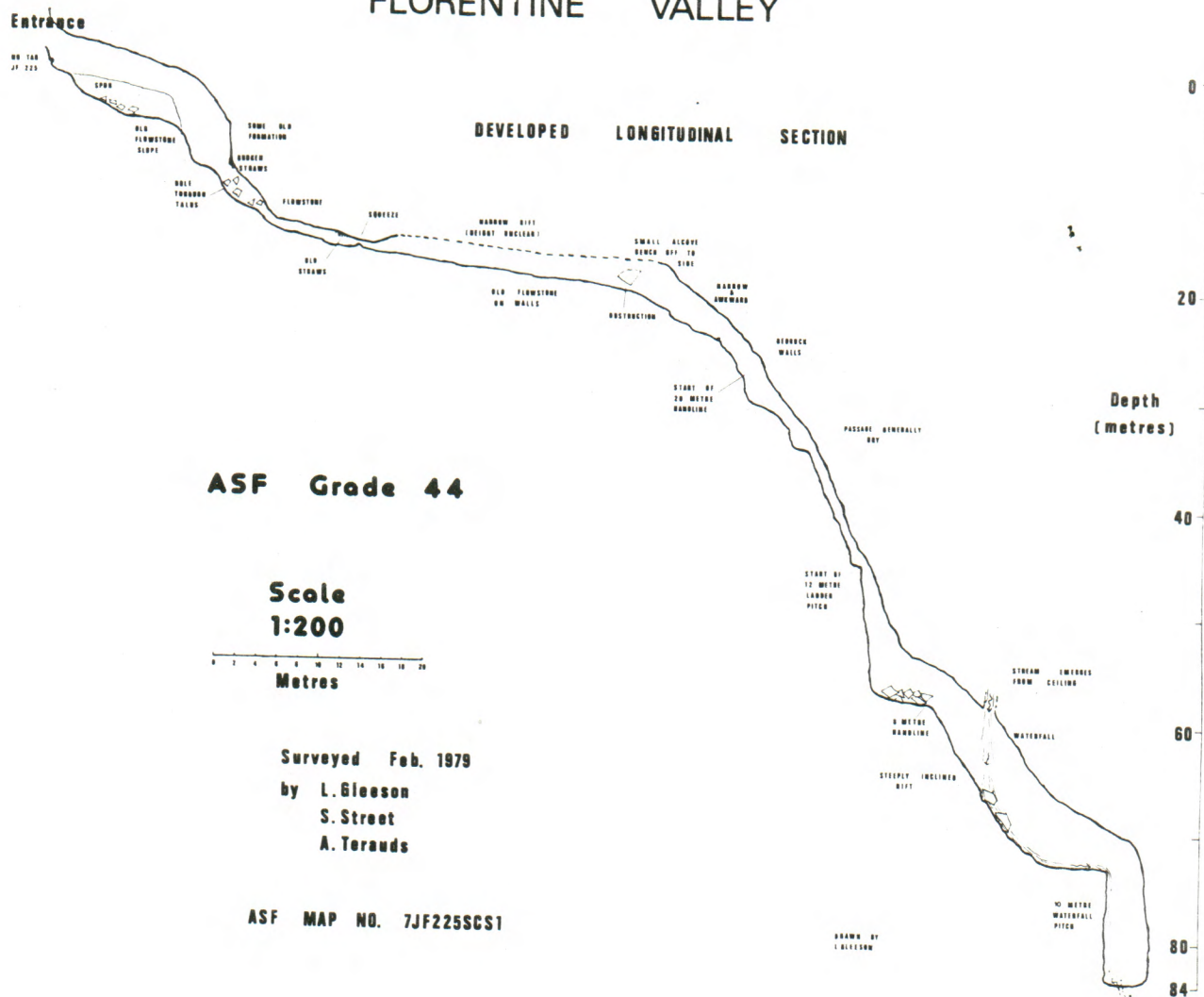
World Archaeology, Vol. 10, no. 3, February 1979 was a special issue on caves.

Copies are \$4 (U.K.) and may be obtained from:

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Newton Road,
Henley-on-Thames,
Oxon RR9 1 EN
GREAT BRITAIN

THREE FALLS CAVE JF 225

FLORENTINE VALLEY



MOLE CREEK CAVES
INSPECTED BY AN EXPERT

Taking advantage of a holiday visit to Tasmania by Mr. J. C. Wiburd, Supt. of the Jenolan Caves, the Tourist Department arranged with him to inspect and report upon the caves which exist in different parts of the island. Mr. Wiburd reached Launceston by the Rotomahana last Thursday, and caught the evening train to Mole Creek, being accompanied by the Director of the Government Tourist Bureau (Mr. E. T. Emmett), Mr. E. A. Counsel (Surveyor-General), Mr. T. W. Fowler (Engineer-in-Chief), and Mr. L. S. Bruce (manager of the Launceston Tourist Bureau), all these gentlemen being members of the Scenery Preservation Board.

On Friday Scott's Caves and Baldock's Caves were inspected. The latter are the property of the Crown, having been leased to the Northern Tourist Association until its disbandment in June last. These caves will now probably be proclaimed a reserve under the Scenery Preservation Act. They contain some exquisite stalactitic effects, and easier access to them is to be given. They are lit with acetylene lamps. Both Scott's and Baldock's Caves are within a few minutes motor journey of the township and are therefore more visited than any other caves. The next day the party visited Byard's Caves known as the Marakooa Caves. These are of immense extent, as well as of great beauty. Although the party spent nearly four hours in the passages and halls now accessible, Mr. Wiburd expressed the opinion that what has been done is "merely scratching the surface".

The party were conducted to the King Solomon Caves by the lessee, Mr. James, and several hours were spent in viewing their beauties. Considerable work has been done inside in the way of ladders and platforms, and providing acetylene lighting. These caves also are of immense extent, but only the introductory caverns have been opened up. There are several other caves on Mr. Jame's leasehold, some small and very beautiful, others of unknown dimensions.

The party visited other tourist resorts including the Westmorland Falls, and the well-known Alum Cliffs in a gorge of the River Mersey. Altogether the members of the board were greatly impressed with the possibilities of Mole Creek as a tourist resort, containing as it does almost every variety of scenery.

During this week Mr. Emmett will accompany Mr. Wiburd to Ulverstone where the Gunn's Plains Caves will be inspected. Afterwards it is the intention to visit Junee and the caves in the Florentine district, if a guide can be obtained, and finally, the caves at Ida Bay.

THE LIMESTONE PROVINCES OF SOUTHERN CHINA

Bruce H. Crawford

The two provinces of China which touch Vietnam are Kwangsi in the east and Yunnan occupying the south west corner of China. Lying between them and to the north is Kweichow. These provinces contain the largest exposed areas of limestone in the world. The limestone in fact, covers an area several times the size of Tasmania.

It is not only the extent, but the form of the limestone excrescences which catches the visitor's interest. Karst towers abound, and range in height from 3 metres to 750 metres. In parts they are cheek and separated by narrow ravines. Elsewhere the towers may be isolated, in which case they are separated by fertile plains covered with crops of rice and dotted with villages.

The shape of the towers is best described as that of a tooth, some of incisor shape, others with the more rounded top of a molar. Naturally, caves, grottoes, hollows and tunnels abound.

The centre of the most spectacular scenery is the city of Kweilin on the Likiang River, a tributary of the Pearl River which empties into the sea at Canton. It is often referred to as the most beautiful area in China.

Tall limestone hills are covered in lush forest except on their steep sections. More often than not mist clings to the base of the hills.

There are no foothills. The limestone rises abruptly from the plain.

The grottoes and caves have inspired poets to write on their walls to commemorate the occasion of a visit or to celebrate their beauty.

In Kweilin the most popular hill to visit is Tieh Tsai Shan (Folded Brocade Hill).

The Chinese love of metaphors is shown in the names of the caves and other features of this fantastic area: e.g. Mural

Hill is a broken cliff on the Likiang River which is said to depict nine horses in various postures. This site has attracted poets, artists and travellers since the Tang dynasty (618-907).

On my visit to Kweilin (April, 1979) my party was taken to Reed Flute Cave. It is a limestone cave with formations similar to Tasmania's King Solomon Cave. It is contained within a hill remarkably small in relation to the cave length - 500 metres.

The walk through the caves forms a circuit, thus saving congestion. Coloured lights are used throughout. The guide refers to features with legendary tales. For example the hunter and the deer on the wall was the subject of a lengthy account. Inside the cave is a large grotto which can hold over 1,000 people. This is called Crystal Palace, which is the palace of the Dragon King in Chinese fairy tales.

A stone pillar is called the Dragon Kings magic needle. It was used as a weapon by the Monkey King Sun Wu-kung in the famous novel "The Pilgrimage to the West". The story says that the Dragon King would not let Sun Wu-kung have it. The Monkey King was so furious that he took it by force defeating the Dragon King's army of snails and jellyfish and creating a great disorder in and out of the palace. There we saw broken stalagmites in the shapes of snails and jellyfish scattered around the cave.

The hill containing the cave is 10 kilometres from Kweilin. On the way we noticed tunnels being dug into several limestone hills. These are to be used as air-raid shelters for any Russian invasion. The rock removed is crushed and used for road and other engineering works. The urban areas of China are honeycombed with air-raid shelters.

We travelled 83 kilometres downstream from Kweilin in a 15 metre cabin cruiser. To help our enjoyment we were towed 75 metres ahead by a motor launch thus making our trip more peaceful and heightening our appreciation of some of the most spectacular scenery in the world.

The boat journey under soaring limestone cliffs was awe-inspiring. Tiny villages able to communicate only by footpath or canoe were passed every 2 or 3 kilometres in small areas separating the hills.

Mists clung to the sides of the monolithic karsts. Men using cormorants as fishers sat in low boats on the tranquil edges of the river.

Children stood on the banks of the river near the isolated villages and waved. There was a feeling of timelessness and the unchanging rhythm of life. No jarring note of commercialisation or desecration disturbed our enjoyment as we were gradually enclosed by ever higher cliffs and mountains.

* * *

Kunming, the capital of Yunnan province is a city of over two million people, situated 180 kilometres north of Vietnam.

Fifteen kilometres to the south-west we visited the Western Hills, about 500 metres high. For 800 years a Buddhist Temple has existed near the top amongst a thick temperate forest. The road ends at Dragon Gate where the monks have built a path along, up and inside a vertical limestone cliff. The cliff has been tunnelled out and the visitor can peer out of the side of the tunnels 500 metres down the vertical cliff to Tienchih Lake, large and serene below. Temple after temple is passed on the tortuous climb 1,000 steps up to the top.

One hundred kilometres south of Kunming exists a limestone area called the Stone Forest. The karst towers here range only up to 20 metres high but cover the tops of the gently rolling hills for square kilometres looking much like giant Central Australian termite mounds.

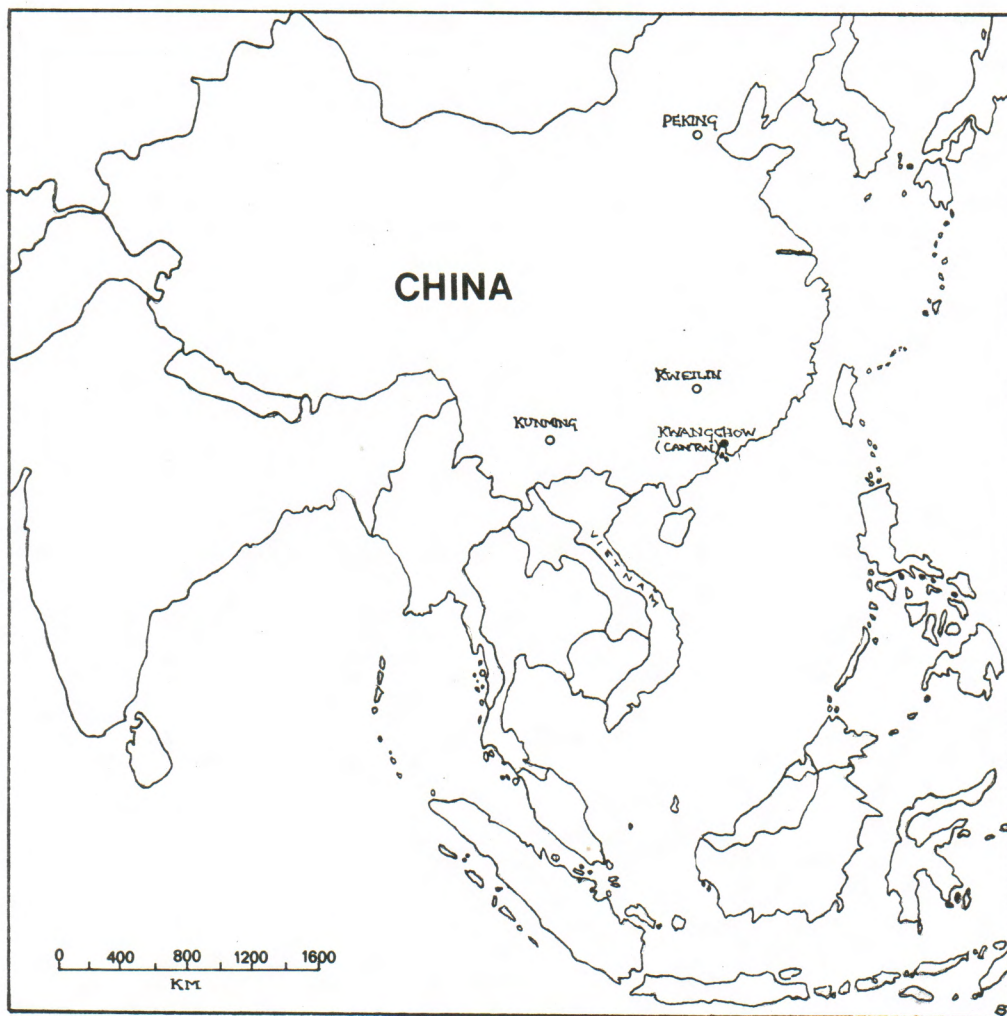
The formations can also be likened to a series of densely packed stalagmites with the roof of the cave removed. It is a tourist resort developed by the Russians in the 1950's but it is now used extensively by the Chinese and since 1978 has been opened for overseas tourists.

The Chinese have woven this natural scenery with legend and thus it has become a special part of their heritage.

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PROBLEMS OF FAUNA COLLECTION

Kevin Kiernan

Following the 1973 SCS Precipitous Bluff expedition, mounted to obtain information on a cave area then threatened by limestone quarrying, the Society received a complaint that as the area lay within the South-West Conservation Area it had breached National Parks and Wildlife Service regulations by collecting without a permit. In addition to highlighting some inadequacies in the relationship between the Service and groups and individuals in the community whose expectations of government it essentially represents, this situation also drew attention to the need to adopt a more organised approach to cave fauna collection. Subsequently negotiations between S.C.S. and the Service towards a general collecting permit came to nought. It is indisputable that this has been a major factor in the virtually total absence of interest in cave fauna by S.C.S. and other collectors over the past 5 years.

I am reminded of the irony and lack of understanding encountered by a friend, who, while undertaking field work as part of a doctoral study on structural geology, was waylaid on the shore of the vast hydro-electric storage, which obliterated Lake Pedder National Park, by a ranger distraught at his collection of quartzite samples from within the park when there were plenty of places outside the park where quartzite could be found! Or of the professional public service entomologist whose attempts to study the invertebrate fauna of a state reserve encountered the same lack of understanding by those from whom he had to seek permission, when he was told to collect them somewhere else!

The problem has now been compounded by the protection of cave crickets, harvestmen, beetles, glow-worms and pseudoscorpions. That means a permit for collecting them from any site, and a special one for State Reserves or Conservation Areas. The problem is that the realities of collecting do not always wed readily with the accepted practices and precedents of public service administrators. For example, after applying recently to collect from a karst area in the South-West Conservation Area, I was given a permit on a form which specified that I could collect from the nominated area provided I did not collect in a Conservation Area! Moreover, there

are other problems: due to questions of weather, personnel, transport etc. it is not always possible to plan far enough ahead to make application early enough before a trip. In addition, the necessity for individual applications and subsequent report on each trip (whether anything is caught or not) required by the National Parks and Wildlife Service means a lot of unnecessary paperwork for all involved.

Legislation to protect any fauna is of highly questionable value if there is no knowledge of what that fauna is, its distribution, status, and other aspects of its biology. Without collecting we can never find out. Admittedly some heinous things have been done in the name of science, but present protective initiatives are largely self defeating. A better permit system is needed.

STATE LIAISON

This column will be a regular feature in future issues in an attempt to avoid unnecessary duplication of effort, and inadvertent over-collection of cave fauna due to not knowing where collection has occurred previously.

In view of the importance of avoiding such duplication, and the fact that some clubs in the State do not publish any record of their activities, the Society is willing to throw this column open to such groups and individuals to briefly record their efforts in numbering, recording of new bone sites, cave surveying, collection of cave fauna and so forth.

Nelson River Bones

Further to the item in the last issue of Southern Caves, Dr. Peter Murray has now examined the bones collected from Nelson River by Kevin Kiernan and David O'Brien. The material is predominantly wallaby and he has confirmed the suspicion that some are burnt. Both the faunal composition and the burning are suggestive of aboriginal occupation. As noted in the report last issue, the deposit is possibly of late Pleistocene age. Further work is required in these aspects.

Cave Surveys

The following surveys have been completed during the quarter:

<u>Nelson River Area:</u>	(1)	Inflow Cave	KK/DOB
	(2)	Outflow Cave	KK/DOB

<u>Sea Caves</u>	Tasman Peninsula:		
	Eaglehawk Neck - Blowhole		KK/KH
	Tasmans Arch		KK/KH
	Basket Bay - Remarkable Cave		KK/KH
	Blackmans Bay:		
	Blackmans Bay Blowhole		KK/RS
	Un-named parallel arch		KK/KH
	Arch Island:		
	Arch Island Arch		KH/KK/GJM
	Rumbleguts Cave		KK/KH/GJM

Julius River Area:

(8)	The Arch	KK/GB
(9)	Julius River inflow cave	KK/SH
(10)	Julius River outflow cave	KK/SH
(11)	Un-named cave near (9)	KK/SH
(12)	Un-named cave near (11)	KK

Cave Numbering

No new numbers have been affixed by the Society.

Cave Fauna Collection

There has been collection from the following sites over the quarter:

- Julius River Area
- (1) Julius River inflow cave - several spiders
 - (2) Julius River outflow cave - several cave crickets

ANNUAL REPORT 1978/79

For a start I would like to thank all the members for their support during the past year. It has been a fairly quiet year but many smaller trips have been successfully completed. Two search and rescue exercises were held - one at Beginners Luck and one at Mole Creek. Both were a success in showing the police how difficult cave rescues could be. The Mole Creek exercise was particularly good as several small exercises at once ensured most people were underground and working - rather than sitting around getting bored.

We were delighted to have a large group of South Australians and Victorians over here at Easter time and hope they may make many return visits in the future.

Further contact with mainland cavers was had at Christmas time when our club had two representatives at the Perth Conference.

Finally I wish the incoming President the best of Irish luck and the same generous support I received from the members.

Mieke Vermeulen
President 1978/79

FINANCIAL REPORT

A balance of \$4.76 was carried over from the previous year with a surplus at the end of this financial year of \$40.31.

The Society purchased two Bonwick ladders this year at a cost of \$71.50 bringing our ladder complement up to a satisfactory level again.

The situation with the rent on the clubroom is now favourable after three payments during the year in contrast to the single payment last financial year.

To cover these costs of course requires suitable amounts of cash and with fund raising, donations, and a decision to break into the reserve fund for \$100 we covered the required amount.

The Southern Caver costs rose from the previous year due to rising costs of production.

It is apparent that members would prefer to hold fund raising events than see the subscription increase therefore I recommend that the subscription remains at \$15 per year.

The books have been audited by Mr. Dave Elliott and found to be correct.

Ron Mann
Treasurer 1978/79

EQUIPMENT REPORT

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
6 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 PT tape
1 50 M tape
1 Compass/clino holder

The Society purchased two 30 ft Bonwick ladders (including 2 headers) during the year which means that the ladders are all in fairly new condition. The three short ladders are reasonably old but have had little use and are in very good condition.

The condition of the ropes with the exception of the 360 ft is not so good and I recommend that the 360 ft rope be cut up into shorter lengths and the other ropes be thrown out or cut into short handline lengths.

The method of rolling ladders introduced last year is very effective if the ends are terminated properly and the ladder can be carried easily without falling apart or excessive kinking of the wire. All members should take the time to learn the method.

One problem that can arise with the Bonwick ladders is that if care is not taken in ensuring that the ladder is hanging correctly it is possible to severely kink the wire. This situation did not arise with our old ladders because the wire was free to move through the rung.

Ron Mann
Quartermaster 1978/79

AREA REPORTS

BLACKMANS BAY

On 26th May, Kevin Kiernan and Ross Scott surveyed the Blowhole at Blackmans Bay as part of an investigation by Kevin, of certain coastal erosion features in the State. The 17th June saw Kevin Kiernan and Karen Hughes further south on the coast beyond Blackmans Bay where more surveying was carried out.

IDA BAY

Rick Hutchings and Terry Reardon from C.E.G.S.A. were shown through part of Exit Cave on 28th April by Leigh Gleeson, Pete Russell, Pete McQuillan, Kathy McQuillan and Alex Terauds. During the 5 hours spent underground, 1 party ventured as far as the Grand Fissure while the other party spent some time in the side passages downstream of the talus.

JULIUS RIVER, LAKE CHISOLM

Kevin Kiernan, Graeme Bailey and Steve Harris spent the weekend of 23-24th June in the remote north-west area with the aim of further exploring the Julius River Cave. A full account of this exploration including descriptions of lesser caves, and an investigation of the enigmatic Lake Chisolm will be given in a future Southern Caver.

MT. TIM SHEA

Kevin Kiernan and Steve Harris spent Monday 18th June fruitlessly exploring the heavily forested slopes of this speleologically little known area. Further trips are planned.

TASMANI PENINSULA

Recent extensive exploration and surveying of sea caves has been undertaken by parties under the leadership of Kevin Kiernan.

On 2nd June, Kevin and Karen Hughes surveyed the Blowhole at Pirates Bay, Eaglehawk Neck; Tasmans Arch; and Remarkable Cave at Basket Bay.

S. Harris

