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*NUMBER 55  
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# SOUTHERN CAVER

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## MEETINGS

The Society meets on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of each month in the CURRAN ROOM (or occasionally in the adjacent SITTING ROOM) at HAMPDEN HOUSE (formerly the Queen Alexandra Hospital), 84 Hampden Road, Battery Point-from 8:15 pm onwards. Visitors and prospective new members are welcome. Further details of our activities can be obtained from any of the above Office Holders, or by writing to us at the address above.

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**Disclaimer:** The views expressed within are those of the Authors, and not necessarily those of the Society.

**Cover Photo:** Descending the Family Atomics pitch into Arrakis-J.Butt



## EDITORIAL

Despite the non-appearance of a Southern Caver for over a year members of the Society have been very active, (perhaps that's why no one has had the time to write articles or edit this magazine?). Well this is an attempt to free us from the ice and hopefully the new 'High Tech' look Southern Caver is going to become a more regular publication.

Certainly SCS has been doing many good things over the past 12 months, these are summarised fully in the AREA REPORTS which follow. Some highlights are: In March 1988 Rift Cave (JF34) was thoroughly looked at and a major extension located, increasing the depth to 180 odd meters and the known length of the cave at least five-fold. Unfortunately this find didn't break into the hypothetical Junee master cave, but it is certainly a worthwhile find. (Details of this discovery are presented in this issue. A survey will be presented in the next Southern Caver). Work on the survey of Kubla Khan for Lands, Parks and Wildlife has progressed well; completing the job is now a much more tangible concept. A Progress Report is included in this issue.

The past year has also seen an increasing amount of co-operative work with other cavers, chiefly members of the Tasmanian Caverneering Club. This is pleasing to see as both clubs are small and often it is difficult to get the person power together to easily accomplish tasks. Co-operative activities have included exploration in the new extension to JF341 and a December 1988 mini expedition to Precipitous Bluff.

In the latter part of 1988 the Tasmanian Speleological Federation (TSF) was formed. The TSF, representing members of Tasmanian caving groups will hopefully provide a unified voice for the Tasmanian caving community and be a channel through which we can effectively communicate and interact with the powers that be. The TSF has been recognised by Lands, Parks and Wildlife and recently they requested input about quarrying activities and caves at Ida Bay. It is to be hoped that we as cavers can provide useful information and ideas, after all it is very much in our own interest to do so!

Without undue difficulty one can imagine other appropriate activities for TSF, one thing which comes to mind (but the thought is almost dreaded) is that Exit Cave could be comprehensively surveyed. This is a task that is long overdue and from many angles (for example-conservation, assessing the cave's true extent, relating it to nearby quarrying operations, incorporating recent discoveries etc.) is very desirable. Such a task for any of the Tasmanian clubs alone would be rather formidable.

As a final comment I'd like to urge all budding contributors to put pen to paper (or fingers to keyboard) to help with the next issue. Amongst various members there are quite a few finished but unpublished, or not quite completed surveys, these too are extremely welcome; why not do yourself a favour and get your name in print and some credit for all the hard work that has been carried out?

Jeff Butt



## AREA REPORTS: Dec 87-Feb 89

Over this 15 month period 90 trips were recorded in the Minutes Book, and a conservative estimate is that around 100 'club' trips occurred, well up on other years. Contributing factors to the increase in recent times has no doubt been the passage of two dry summers and the mildest winter for some time. On an area by area basis there were approximately:

- 38 trips to the Junee-Florentine
- 28 trips to Ida Bay
- 17 trips to Mole Creek
- 5 days at Precipitous Bluff during the Dec. 88 TCC expedition
- 4 trips to Hastings
- 2 trips to Mt. Weld
- and 1 trip to each of Mt. Cripps, Julius River, Weld River, Gunns Plains and Bubs Hill.

It is interesting to note that the number of trips to Mole Creek was down on normal, this reflects the current private property access problem. There were also access problems to the Junee-Florentine (due to fire danger and ANM being unco-operative) however the number of trips doesn't reflect this. Visits to out of the way places was on a par with other years. A general observation is that members don't like travelling too much, most caving occurs in the closest areas. It is a fortuitous coincidence that these areas host some of the best caving in the state.

Activities in each area are outlined below:

- Ida Bay: 5 trips into Exit  
 4 visits to Old Ditch Road, (one Mini-Martin exchange)  
 2 visits to Valley Entrance (including the first Mini-Martin exchange)  
 2 visits to Mini Martin (exchange trips above)  
 3 trips to Midnight Hole  
 about 8 trips to Mystery Creek  
 2 trips to Thun Junction  
 1 trip to each of Big Tree Pot, Milk Run and A.F. (IB110).

- Junee-Florentine: Threefortyone-7 trips exploring, surveying & photography  
 Rift-6 trips surveying, exploring  
 Growling Swallet-3 trips, including one to Frownland  
 KD-Dwarrowdelf-4 trips including 2 exchanges  
 Owl Pot, Welcome Stranger-3 trips each  
 Tassy Pot, Sesame-2 trips each  
 1 trip to each of Niagara Pot, Satan's Lair, plus visits to a few holes (old and new) in the Rift Cave region.

- Mole Creek: 4 surveying weekends to Kubla Khan  
 3 trips to Prohibition, Wet Cave-Georgies Hall  
 2 trips to Rathole  
 visits to Lynds, Loggers Labyrinth, Honeycombe, and potholes in the Tatana Magra region.

- Mount Weld: 2 trips to Arrakis, some exploration.

REMEMBER THE AGM-WEDNESDAY APRIL 26. BE THERE!



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**Farewell Lindsay**

Lindsay Hicks is nearing the end of his stint as an Ag. Scientist with the Uni, and unfortunately Lindsay is heading back to Queensland. We will be losing an ever reliable member, and our cave photographer extraordinaire. Lindsay, from all in the Society we wish you well back on the North Island and hope to see you back down here again soon.

**Adios Jane and David**

Jane Boot and David Bain, our beloved physios are soon heading off on two year oversea jaunts. They plan to take in South America, The United Kingdom/Europe and New Zealand. I believe the good old caving gear is going along too. Jane and David, from all in the Society hope you have a jolly fine time. Be warned, upon your return we expect a good slide show and some interesting stories!

**PRIMA SPEDIZIONE SPELEOLOGICA ITALIANA IN TASMANIA  
1989 CALENDER**

Remember Ivano, Dino and Christina our Italian visitors from the GRUPPO SPELEOLOGICO FAENTINO? Well I recently received a nice surprise in the mail, namely four copies of a large format, full colour caving calender featuring scenes from good old Tasmania (and one ring-in from Ayers Rock). The quality is excellent and the gesture appreciated. The calenders have been distributed to those who showed our friends around down under.

**CAN YOU SURVEY?**

Many cavers regard surveying as a difficult thing that is totally beyond them. In reality surveying is just another skill (like SRT) that anyone can learn. Ideally all cavers should be capable (or at least know the principles) of conducting a simple survey, processing the data and drawing up the results.

In an attempt to facilitate this, several introductory sessions will be held in the future. Watch out for these.

**INCORPORATION**

After two years of procrastination and inactivity on the part of various 'incorporation committees' the state of being Incorporated is imminent. At the recent Extraordinary General Meeting our Constitution was amended to be in line with the Corporate Affairs people and to modernise it to reflect current practices. Incorporation should be effective from the start of the next caving club year (May 1).

**A NEW CAVERS BIBLE?**

Alan Warild's new book VERTICAL is deservedly gaining an excellent reputation. VERTICAL is full of up to date information on many facets of caving, including personal gear, rigging, SRT, logistics and surveying. Warild is concise and writes with a style that is easy to read. There are numerous tables of data, thereby allowing a rapid comparison of the material presented. Additionally diagrams are well utilised and are clear and easy to interpret.

Content-wise VERTICAL is ideal for the novice, old hands will find plenty of good reading too. In summary this book is recommended to all cavers. If you want to have a look at a copy then we have one in our Library. It seems that everyone else also has their own copy too-I guess that's a good recommendation in itself.



**DOLLARS FOR TIME IMPLIES LIGHT FOR HIRE**

A modicum of effort about nine months ago filling out Department of Youth, Sport and Recreation Sports Development Grant Application forms has paid off—we recently received a good solid cheque. This money is earmarked for our much needed new set of Caving Lights. This month will see extremely reliable Gell cell based club lights start coming on line and before too long we'll have a dozen residing with our new light Caretakers, Mess'rs Fulton and Hudspeth. These new lights will provide high intensity light for 12 hours, and are available for hire at \$2 for members, \$3 for non-members (helmet included).

**WANTED.....DEAD OR ALIVE**

**YOUR OLD OLDHAM OR MSA BATTERY AND/OR HEADPIECE.**

The Society is currently revamping these by 6 Volt Gell Cell refits and turning 'tired old glowers' into 'shiny young spots'. If you have any lights sitting around, gathering dust then please approach us. Donations are most welcome. We are prepared to negotiate too, if it comes to that.

**BULK GEAR ORDERS**

Need any gear from Wildsports, SRT Equipment or Kathmandu???

Do you want to get 10% off the purchase price???

Then take note, currently the club is assembling bulk gear orders to go to all three companies, so why not join in and help everyone (the Society included) get a decent discount. If you wish to peruse catalogues and compare prices, then just ask me. Orders will be submitted shortly.

**SICK OF FRIGGING WITH THE RIGGING?????**

If you like caving the easy way, ie. not carrying 70m of rope for a 50m pitch, then read on. VERTICAL CAVES OF TASMANIA is excellent in providing a description of what ropes are required for many of the more frequently visited caves. However it isn't complete (people keep finding new caves too) and occasionally is inaccurate due to new bolts being placed, or old ones disappearing. So here's the solution, at the rear of the GEAR LOANS BOOK a RIGGING INDEX has been commenced. It will only be as good as the information put into it, so after any trip if you found you had heaps too much rope, or not enough, or placed a new bolt or anything else of note happened then please record your findings. These will be of benefit to everyone, including yourself on a return trip. Additionally these notes will provide a record of who did what and when, for example when/where bolts were placed.

**TRIP REPORTS TRIP REPORTS TRIP REPORTS TRIP REPORTS**

Here's a reminder, after each trip the trip organiser, or someone else who has accepted the task is responsible for handing a written, or typed trip report to the Trip Report Secretary/Archivist (currently Phil Jackson). Please don't think of them as a boring task, they are very valuable in that they contain a record of who did what and where and when and why.

How often have you wasted time when looking for a cave, or not known the length of pitches, or were unsure of the route etc? Well trip reports can provide answers to all of these problems and save you a heap of bother. In fact the next time you are writing your trip report why not just have a bit of a think, was the trip memorable for being super easy/difficult, a complete waste of time or a very humorous occasion? If any of these it may be an excellent candidate to write up as an article for the next Southern Caver. Hint hint!

Ed.

**REMEMBER THE AGM-WEDNESDAY APRIL 26. BE THERE!**



## AN EXTENSION TO RIFT CAVE (JF34)

Lindsay Hicks

On Sunday March 14, 1988 a party consisting of Jeff Butt, Lindsay Hicks, Tom Porritt, Greg Jordan and Dave Rasch trudged merrily through the forest towards JF341, hoping to enjoy a combination of caving and photography. However, the last of our rope didn't quite reach the bottom of the 38m pitch. What a bummer!, everyone getting muddy for nothing.

We beat a humble retreat and munched lunch at the entrance. Greg jumped up and announced he was heading back to the cars, but would have a quick look in Rift Cave on the way back. A cloud of gloom hung over us all, but that did seem a reasonable consolation trip. By the time we reached the turnoff to Rift, Greg was coming back. He said it was worth a look, so into the entrance ravine we went.

After much photographing on the way down, we reached the darkness of the cave proper. Jeff and Tom headed down the main passage, while Dave and I poked around at some of the smaller passages leading off. Just past the large round boulder, I wandered into a small passage spiralling off to the right, joking to others that this must be 'the way down'.

A few minutes later, I yelled out to Dave, who followed me down. I was negotiating a 'battery-off' squeeze which was easily missed unless one slithered right down to the end of an apparent terminus. We came into a small bottle-shaped chamber and looked down a dripping, draughting fissure from which the sound of flowing water was issuing. Dave assured me this wasn't on the survey. I kicked off a pile of jammed rocks, causing a mini-avalanche and a strong smell of ozone from the sparks. We carefully climbed down into an active stream passage. Although it was tight in places we charged along it ecstatically, reaching the inevitable pitch, judged to be 20m.

We had evidently rejoined the main stream which disappeared near the end of the entrance ravine. It was the silver lining in our cloud of gloom. After coming back up, we met up with Jeff and Tom and sent them down for a look. Then it was back to the cars where Greg had been waiting for hours, and Sharen the whole day.

A return trip was made on Saturday March 26, with Jeff Butt, Helen Beggs, Russell Fulton and Lindsay Hicks. After setting up a traverse line Jeff placed a couple of bolts well out into the rift to avoid the water. This made for a sporting manoeuvre to get onto the pitch and descend 16m through the delights of open space. An excited request for more rope echoed up the pitch, and by the time we all got down, Jeff had stories to tell of an Exit-sized passage beyond.

We carefully climbed down a boulder-strewn winding passage into a very large chamber, more like a Subway than a Railway Tunnel. The stream promptly sank into the floor near the left wall, leaving us to check out many leads. The second passage on the left lead to a few climbs, after that some tight crawling lead to mud chokes at the deepest point in the cave. After a long day, we crawled back out of the cave and stumbled back to the cars. The next day Jeff Watson and Greg Jordan went for a look and to check for other leads.

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Good Friday (1/4/88) saw Jeff Butt, Lindsay Hicks, Greg Jordan and Jeff Watson make a return visit to survey the find. Near the bottom of the cave, Greg and Jeff W.'s efforts were rudely interrupted when Greg's gell cell suddenly put on a fireworks display, entailing a hasty abandonment from the acrid fumes and a still smoldering battery. The charred remnants were retrieved by Jeff Butt, Lindsay Hicks and Andrew McNeil the next day, who completed the surveying. At the deepest part of the cave a bit of digging was carried out, but only slight progress was made and the potential deemed fruitless. A few other leads were checked, but no real potential exposed itself.

A couple of weeks later, a hole above the new extension was explored. This yielded a 30m pitch, but little else.

So after 41 years, Rift Cave has yielded a little to further exploration. Although it turned out to be not as deep as we'd hoped, there aren't many caves around which give access to a depth of around 180m with only a single short pitch.

[EDITORS NOTE: A survey of the Rift Cave extension is scheduled for the next issue.]

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## **BOLT PLACEMENTS: DEC 87-FEB 89**

Bolts placed over this period comprised of:

-2 in Rift Cave (JF34), in the new extension at the head of the 16m pitch. Both are about 4m out in the rift over the pitch (to avoid the waterfall), one on each wall. The one on the Left is 1.5m above the lip of the pitch (head of waterfall), the one on the right is 1m above the lip. The rope hangs free and is normally clear of the water.

-1 in Thun Junction (IB20), at the top of the 35m pitch, at lip level on the left hand side wall and approximately 1.5m below a football sized chockstone. This chockstone is an excellent backup. The rope hangs free.

A few words about the Society's Bolting Policy is probably worthy.

-Bolts are only placed if suitable natural anchors are unavailable, or if required for safety, or to avoid some objective hazard (eg. waterfalls, abrasive rock).

-8 mm Petzl Bolts are used and these are always suitably backed up.

-Bolts placed in caves likely to be visited reasonably frequently have their hangers left in place. Past experience has shown that occasionally these hangers are removed by others. Visiting cavers are requested to leave Bolts in an 'as found' state.

-Bolts in caves that are unlikely to be visited for some time have their hangers removed. In these cases the casing is greased and a reflective marker attached via a nylon bolt. This procedure helps in the preservation and relocation of the casing. Note that if these nylon bolts are screwed in more than finger tight (about 5mm) they may break off, this leaves a difficult to remove nylon plug in the casing!

-Details of Bolts placed are to be recorded in the Equipment Store Bolt Register.

JB

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## **"THE OTHER SIDE OF P.B." or "WHAT I DID IN MY SUMMER HOLIDAYS"**

**Greg Jordan**

Over Christmas Jeff Butt and Greg Jordan took part in the T.C.C. Precipitous Bluff expedition. What a pleasure!

P.B. is an area of charming, varied and wet caves. The area still has considerable potential for development, although it is likely that the easy exploration has been done. (Mind you, I read exactly the same thing before this trip and that was proven wrong.)

Jeff and Greg set out on the intrepid walk in on 18/12/88. They had to brave the wiles of Southern Ranges weather: sunburn, distraction from the walking by scenery, being woken by sun beating down on the tent, ethereal morning mists clearing in time to start walking etc. Coming off P.B. four days later we met our first people who greeted us with veiled messages of hundreds of cavers camped at New River Lagoon practising fire stick farming, bugging the fauna (and possibly the flora), occupying acres of prime camping real estate, and, worst of all, having lots of beer. Their attitude changed somewhat when we told them that we were cavers.

We arrived at Damper Cave at about 5 pm and knew we were at the right place. There was a Christmas tree of wetsuits, S.R.T. gear, diving gear and other paraphernalia, and Arthur Clarke preparing to go underground. I believe this was one of Arthur's earlier starts. Twenty minutes down the track we were greeted by Bunty's tri-coloured big top tent and joined the P.B. circus.

Day one: Damper Cave. This is an active streamway cave which develops into attractive chambers and deep wades in clear blue water. Jeff found a strongly draughting side passage 'Honey and Cream'. "Don't be put off by the mud at the entrance" (Arthur Clarke). This turned out to be about 300m of ramifying passage, mostly mud grovels, chambers filled with assorted crud, rifts choked with dubious dolerite chockstones and tight wet crawls, plus abundant cave fauna.

Day two: Cueva Blanca. This is a small well decorated and fragile cave. There is a conceptual traverse from the pitch into the beautiful white room. The bottom of the cave includes a very pleasant streamway 'Black Curtains' which consists of series of black pools with shawls and stals hanging from the ceiling. Later, we started surveying 'Honey and Cream' but were stopped by clagged compass and clino (a hazard in these caves.)

Day three: A field trip for Greg to justify the tax deductions for the trip. Jeff went into Bauhaus. This has a very imposing entrance, complex fossil upper passages and another beautiful streamway. Greg got lost walking down the track and found a large doline and small entrance PB16 which was later found not to go. This doline was the start of a series of dolines which led to good things for Nick Hume and Bunty.

Day four: Christmas. This was possibly my most unusual Christmas. We decided to go into Quetzecoatl Conduit. In a masterful piece of sandbagging Nick talked us into surveying Wombat Wallow (*shudder*). This is a remarkably

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muddy gravel and there were magic moments of kneeling thigh deep in glop licking a centimetre of mud off the eyepiece of instruments. Back in the main passage we went for a bit of a roof sniff, a swim or two, got very wet and cold and generally had a good laugh.

Day five: Back into Damper to finish that survey, to take a few photos and to carry some diving gear for Stefan in his jolly successful dive.

All this time the weather was good and the lifestyle was a cruise. Arthur put on a home brew of stout a couple of days before we arrived and we drank it flat and five days old. Remarkably this was quite drinkable and its efficacy was shown by turning Bunty into a giggling idiot (well, more of a giggling idiot).

Then we put a heap of gear on the sea plane and walked out the South Coast Track.

P. B. is a bloody great caving area. There's heaps to do and heaps to find still. Take in a wetsuit if you go there. Thanks to Nick and Stefan for organising the trip.

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## **JUNEE-FLORENTINE-SURFACE SURVEYING IN THE VICINITY OF THE CHAIRMAN TRACK**

**Jeff Butt**

Recent extensions to Rift Cave and Threefortyone created quite a bit of interest amongst club members. Not surprisingly we were quite curious to know how these new finds related to each other and also to known caves in the region. This prompted Greg Jordan, Dave Rasch and myself in November 1988 to spend some time surface surveying from the Chairman Track carpark to The Chairman (JF99). Washout (JF129), JF149, Rift Cave (JF34) and nearby holes, Peanut Brittle (JF147) plus adjacent holes and Threefortyone (JF341) were linked in to the traverse.

The survey (the plan is shown opposite) was carried out using Sunto's and a 50m fibreglass tape. The precision to which we worked indicates a survey grade of between 4 and 5. Comparing our survey data with the topographic contours on the recently released Maydena 1:25000 Tasmapi is encouraging and makes us feel that a reasonable job has been done.

The SCS survey of the Rift Cave extension shows that it extends approximately 150m to the northwest, directly away from Threefortyone and the other known numbered caves. There are a couple of holes up behind Rift Cave, but these did not go. [NB. A survey of the Rift Cave extension has been completed, but is not yet drafted. It should appear in the next issue.]

A recent grade 2 survey of the Threefortyone extension carried out by Greg and Jeff shows that the extension is oriented along a southwest-northeast axis. [This survey could be published, however it would be preferable to wait for and/or assist the TCC with a higher quality and more complete product.] The cave extends from, approximately below the known entrance then 450m to the southwest. This places the 'end' approximately half way back towards the large dolines near the carpark. Recent surface thrashings over the region

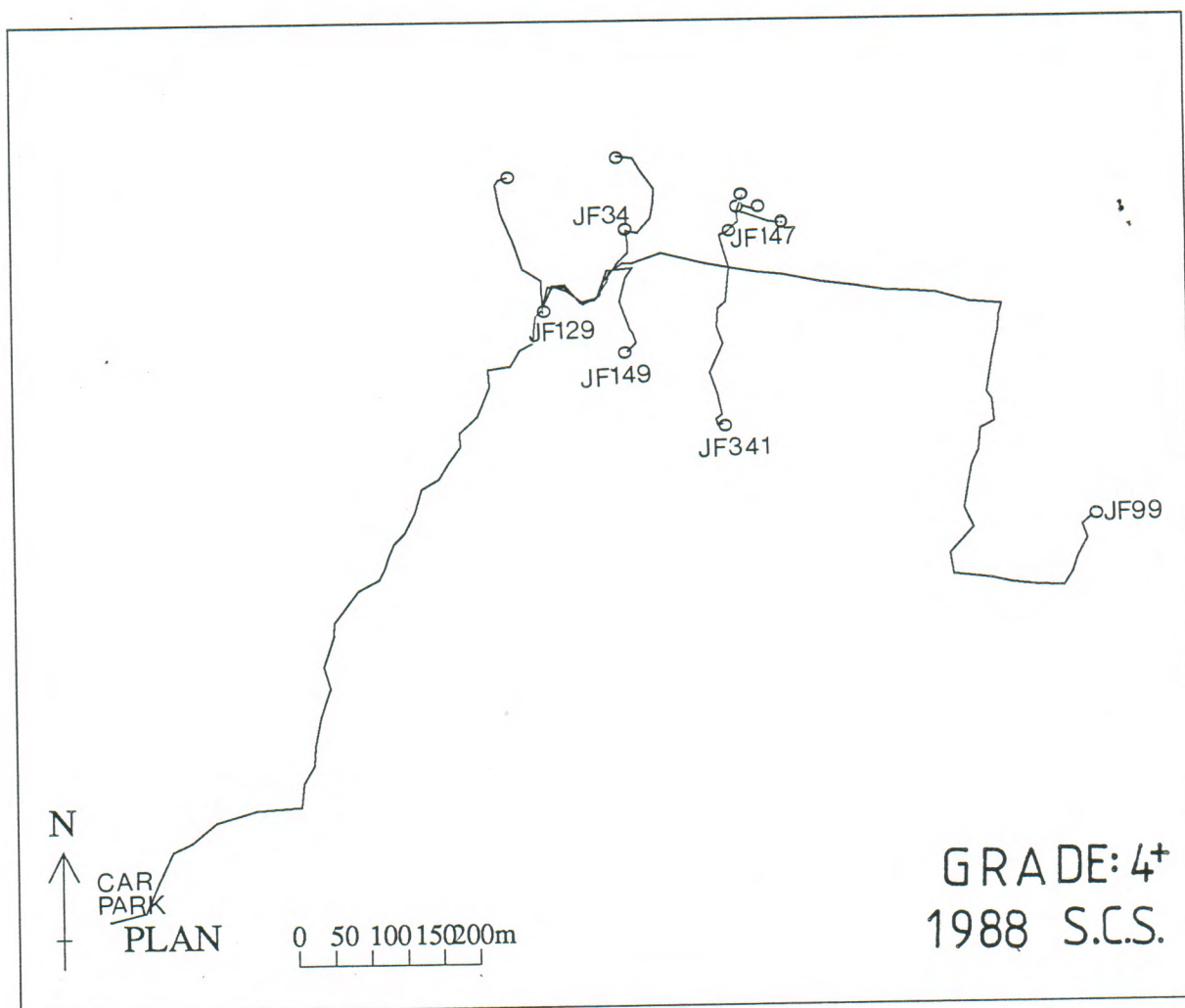
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above yielded nothing. JF149 was the only cave located anywhere in the vicinity, but this is rather a way 'off-line'.

It will be interesting (in due course) to see how all the surface and underground data gells together.

JUNEE-FLORENTINE: RIFT-341-PEANUT BRITTLE-CHAIRMAN  
REGION: SURFACE TRAVERSES



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## KUBLA KHAN SURVEY-PROGRESS REPORT

Jeff Butt

In case you were wondering about the status of our Kubla Khan survey for Lands, Parks and Wildlife, here's the latest. The field component, apart from a field test of the product has been completed. Analysis of the data, quality control, closing loops etc. has been finished (a few details are given below). Drafting of a 1:1000 Master map and a series of 1:200 sheets has commenced.

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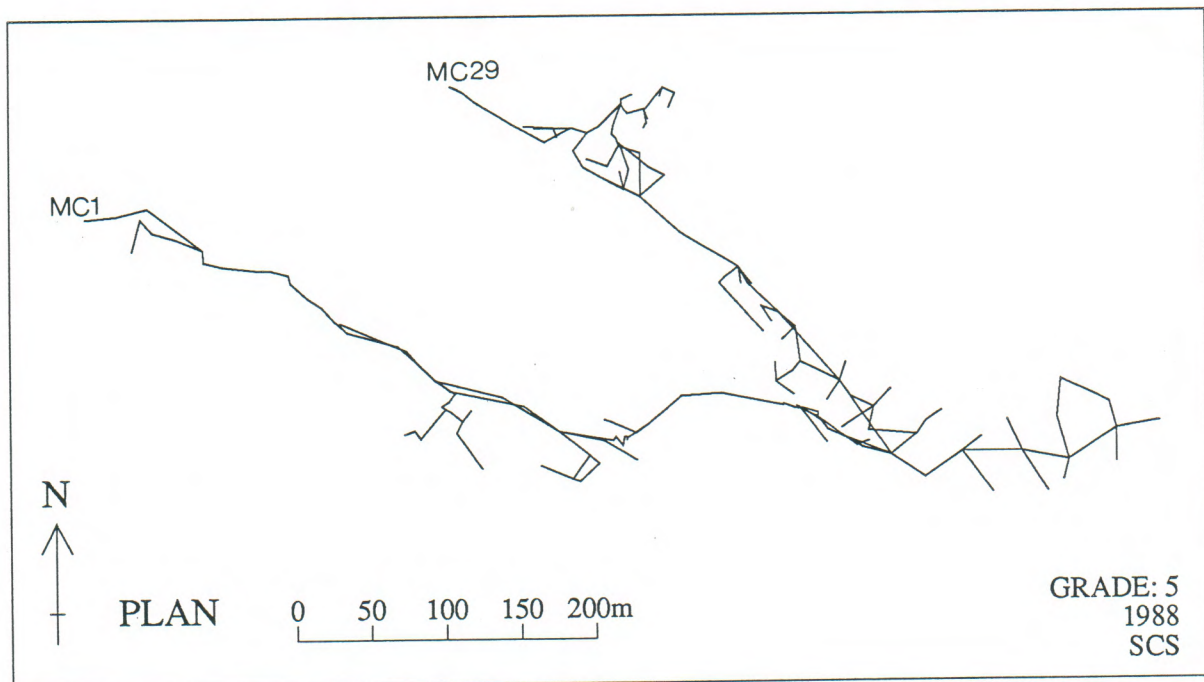


In all 3880m of traverse was measured, comprising of 680m over the surface between entrances MC1 and MC29, 1130m on the main traverse underground and 2070m to tie in detail. The main traverse was conducted with a variety of instruments; theodolite and electronic distance measurer over to surface (Grade 8 accuracy); Miners Dial and fibreglass tape (Grade 6) underground except for the 'difficult bits' (Keyhole and streamway), where Suntos and fibreglass tape were used (Grade 5). The admixture of instruments gives a minimum survey grade of 5.

The misclose on the main loop was 6.09m representing a misclose of 0.34%. This result is quite good, exceeding the accuracy expected of a Grade 6 survey. Data was adjusted (using weighting coefficients recognising the differing instrumental accuracy) to effect closure.

Detail in the cave was surveyed to Grade 5 accuracy using Suntos and fibreglass tape. Wherever possible these sub-traverses were tied into the main traverse at two places. In all seven loops were thus formed, the average misclose of these being 2.5%. The data for these loops was also adjusted to effect closure. A copy of the resultant line diagram Plan is shown below.

## MOLE CREEK KUBLA KHAN



Hume and Eberhard recently published (Speleospiel No. 241, 1988) a survey of the Sunless Sea Passage, the dive linking Cairn Hall with the resurgence MC-X34. This data has been gratefully provided and will be incorporated for completeness.

We can look forward to copies of the finished product in a forthcoming issue of this magazine.

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## QUOTABLE QUOTES

Lindsay Hicks and others

The following notable quotes were either heard first hand or passed on with immaculate accuracy by the SCS grapevine.

*"We'll out-number them, out-cave them and out-drink them".*

RF, referring to the approaching S&R weekend at Mole Creek.

*"It was a retrospective pleasure trip".*

JW, referring to a horrible, wet and muddy vertical trip the week before.

*"Aw, Bullshit Man. This is the Master Cave!"*

JB, after being the first person to see the huge size of the Rift Cave extension.

*"Let's go surface trogging on Tarn Shelf".*

RF, at the SCS-VSA Florentine extravaganza after a heavy night at National Park.

*"I've already been into a horrible, wet, muddy cave with awful climbing and squeezes. Is this cave we're going into now anything like that?"*

Fiona the Policewoman, referring to a previous exercise in Welcome Stranger, whilst en-route to . . . . .Rat Hole.

*"bullshit Bullshit Bullshit BULLSHIT BULLSHIT".*

JW descending the 90m (a 5 bullshit) pitch in Big Tree Pot.

*"HELP! HELP! , can you come back down and show us the way through the rockpile?"*

GJ (at the base of Mini Martin) to JB (half way up the second pitch) after trying unsuccessfully to guide some visitors through.

*"I am old".*

Ivano, the 30 year old Italian Caver during his first confrontation with Tasmanian bush (on the way to Arrakis).

*"I don't care! I'm a f..... greenie and you're hurting my tree".*

JW, (acting out a Forestry TV commercial) shouting to JS (Tyrolean traversing between treetops) whilst a certain member of the Rescue Squad revved a chainsaw against the tree trunk.

*seemingly minutes of ear piercing silence then' "I don't believe that".*

JW, after kicking his unconnected gear bag out of the way at the top of pitch 3 in Dwarrowdelf.

*"Don't be put off by the mud at the entrance".*

AC's suggested words of advice for potential visitors to the Honey and Cream extension in Damper Cave.



## HONEY AND CREAM-AN ENTERTAINING EXTENSION TO DAMPER CAVE PB1.

Jeff Butt

Day 1 of caving for Greg Jordan and myself at Precipitous Bluff (as SCS representatives) on the December 1988 TCC Expedition: the plan for the day was to resurvey Damper Cave. (A resurvey was necessary as the original 1973 data had been lost/misplaced. This happening is not an atypical one and heightens the need for keeping club records in order.)

Stefan, Steve and Paul headed into Damper to push the known limits and then to survey their way out. James, Nick and Greg started surveying at the entrance. Arthur was concentrating on chasing bugs. I was content to take a few photos and amble along with the survey party. Prior to the first rockfall Nick mentioned that Cueva Blanca (PB4) lay somewhere above us, as a result I thought that having a bit of a poke around was in order.

Not unexpectedly there were quite a few possibilities. At the 'end' of the first major sidepassage (on the left) several small stream branches created interest. These generally became tight, muddy and not exceedingly interesting propositions (no draughts). The effect of wearing 7mm wetsuit bottoms also mitigated against too much physical effort.

The duck at the first rockfall provided a good opportunity to lounge and cool off, thereby rekindling my interest. A roof collapse and attendant rockfall on the left shortly after the duck was also given a cursory look and deserves further attention (preferably without a wetsuit!).

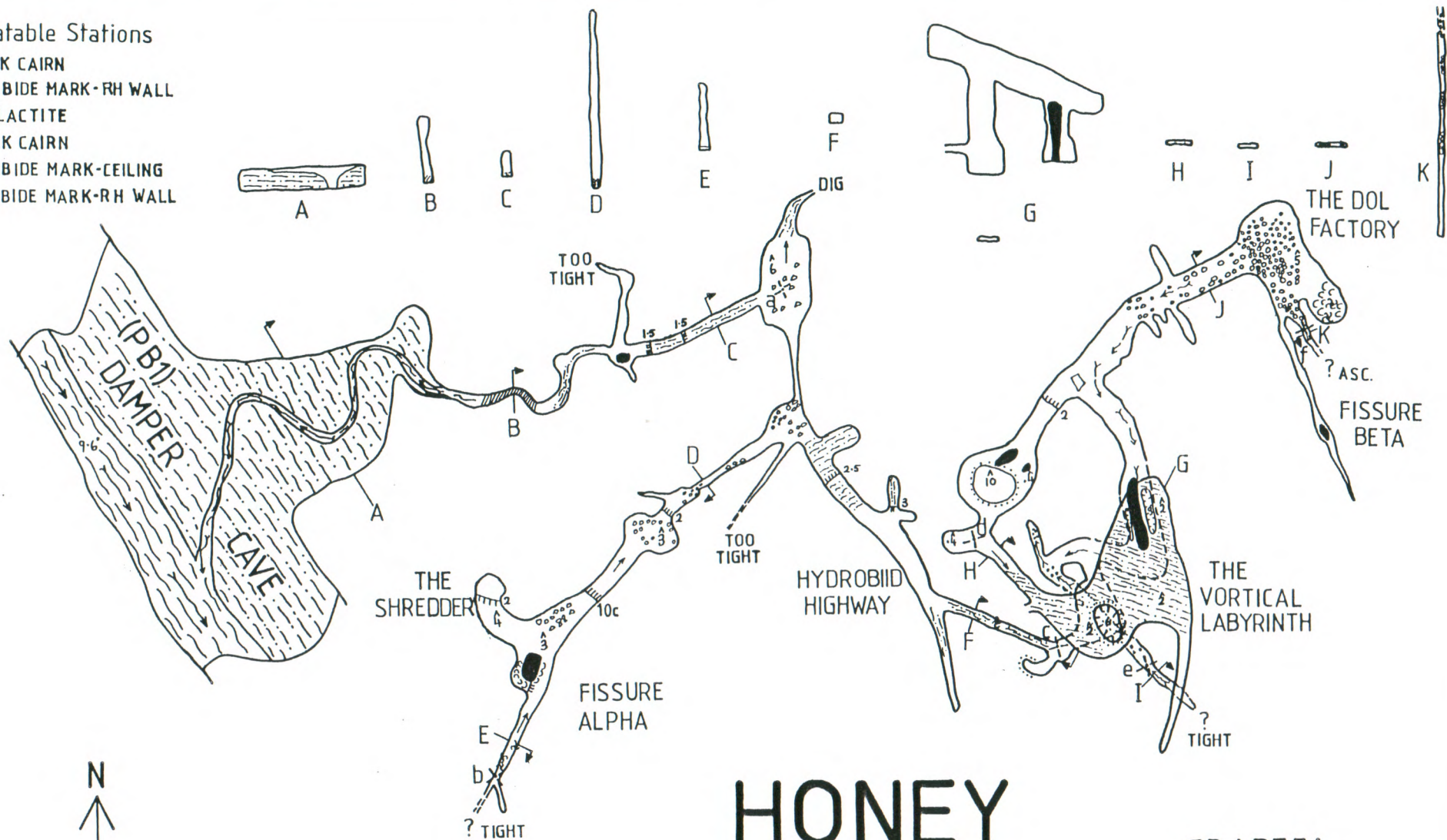
Just prior to the much photographed 'tonsil' (about a 4m mega stal descending to within a metre of the floor) a small stream entered from the right (shown on the original Damper survey). This stream had incised a body width slot in mud/clay which elsewhere filled the passage to within 5cm of the ceiling. A bit of grovelling ensued (through what is basically a mud filled canyon) then some more and suddenly I realised that in this virgin passage there was a hint of a breeze, just the encouragement required.

All of a sudden I popped out into a large perpendicularly intersecting passage. A quick look left bombed out, though a keen soul would contemplate a dig here. Not I, so off to the right and into a small chamber with three leads. Twin parallel rifts headed off, the leftmost one was too tight, the rightmost (Fissure Alpha on the accompanying maps) yielded a 10m climb and further possibilities. The third lead, however was the most enticing. After a short distance along Hydrobiid Highway (a name suggested by Arthur on account of the large amount of fauna) the passage narrowed to body sized and hosted a howling breeze. Ahead lay a straw column cutting the passage in two and blocking progress. Feeling reluctant to destroy it (evidently I'm not TCC material) I decided to return and look for an alternative route, without success. I decided that, that was enough soloing for a while the moment and retreated to locate the others and tell of my find.

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- Relocatable Stations
- a. ROCK CAIRN
  - b. CARBIDE MARK-RH WALL
  - c. STALACTITE
  - d. ROCK CAIRN
  - e. CARBIDE MARK-CEILING
  - f. CARBIDE MARK-RH WALL

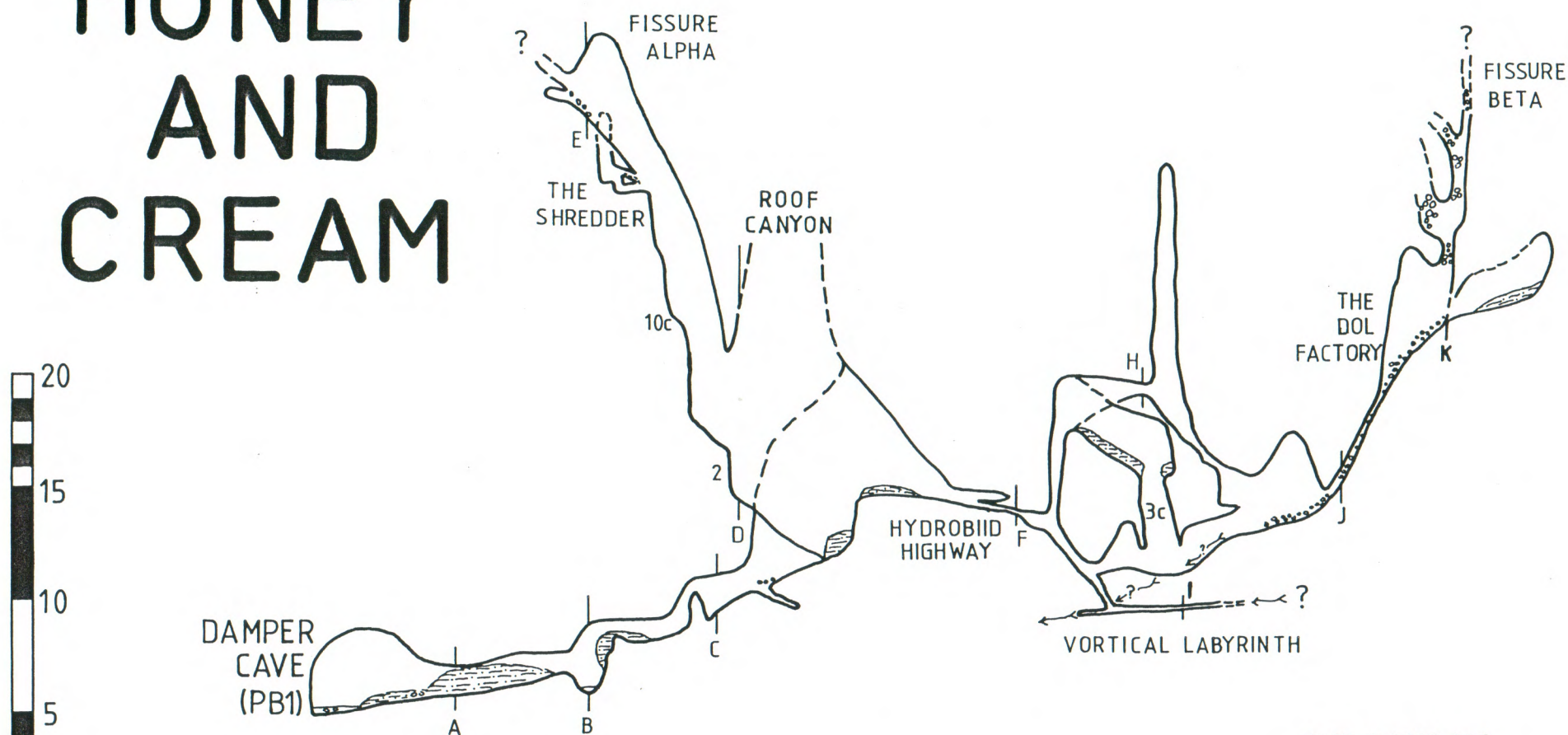


# HONEY AND CREAM

GRADE54  
 SURVEYED BY: J. BUTT  
 12/88 G. JORDAN  
 DRAWN BY: J. BUTT 3/89  
 MAP 7PB1SCS95



# HONEY AND CREAM



DEVELOPED LONGITUDINAL SECTION  
VERTICAL EXAGGERATED BY 2.5 TIMES

GRADE 54  
SURVEYED BY: J.BUTT  
12/88 G.JORDAN  
DRAWN BY: J.BUTT 3/89

MAP 7PB1.SCS96

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By now both survey parties had met, and a pleasant jaunt to the sump followed. This jaunt certainly justified the wetsuit bottoms, and provided you didn't stand still long enough to sink into the mud (otherwise each armpit became an active cold shower) bottoms only was okay. After this I conned Greg into coming and having a look and helping me survey the find. After about 16 legs the much loved mud had pervaded the instruments (despite Greg's valiant tonguing efforts) and we'd had enough for the day.

The following day after visiting Cueva Blanca we returned to continue exploration and surveying. In Fissure Alpha the 10m climb up limestone ribs yielded a chamber on the right containing some interesting razor karst (The Shredder). It was possible to climb a few metres above this; slipping was a concept not to consider here! Straight ahead the passage contains some decoration (straws, stals and a bit of flowstone), not at all unlike parts of Cueva Blanca. Recent clay falls were evident in the region and several white landsnail shells were found. The ascending passage continued, but became tighter and awkward. A small cairn on a sloping ledge was left in the region, approximately 20cm below the last survey station (a carbide x on the righthand wall).

Our attention returned to the draughting lead, the blocking straw column was removed in the interests of exploration. A short distance further on we emerged into a chamber, more leads, left, right, up and down. A brief look showed we had a labyrinth on our hands (The Vortical Labyrinth). Thoughts of doing the survey were nightmarish, however the mud and condensation got the better of the compass, thereby providing temporary relief. We systematically explored all leads. Some interesting squeezing amongst semi-mobile dolerite cobbles led to a sizeable chamber (The Dol Factory). At one end a rift (Fissure Beta) showed promise, this ascended steeply and was chockers with many potentially dangerous head-sized dolerite cobbles. This was ascended for approximately 8m before it became too dodgy. Some gardening in the future would be prudent before pushing this lead further. The last survey station in this region is a carbide 'star' on the right hand wall at the base of the climb.

Two days of alternative caving passed and we'd forgotten about the squalid nature of the new extension. Additionally it was our (Greg and myself) last day of caving as our gear was flying home the following day, so we thought we'd better finish the survey. This we did, for a change defeating the mud trying to clag out the instruments. The remaining lead perhaps worth a future look is the small streamway beneath the Vortical Labyrinth-it appears to continue, however one would have to dredge a shallow channel through the streambed in order to proceed. The final survey station here is a carbide x on the ceiling about 8m from the junction. With the surveying completed it was time to head out to the Damper Stream for a much needed degrease.

Sitting around that evening (polishing off the dregs of our stout) the name Honey and Cream came to mind, after all what else is nice to have on Damper? The added advantage of such names is that the quality of the mud at different places resembles each of these commodities in various forms, ie. candied, whipped and runny!

From the start of Honey and Cream 190m of passage was surveyed, additionally a further 80m of passage in the form of minor side passages and oxbows was estimated, giving a total length of approximately 270m.

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Looking at the developed vertical section, it is evident that both Fissures Alpha and Beta attain a similar height (approximately 30m) above the Damper stream level. Roughly placing the Damper Cave and Honey and Cream surveys onto a locality map suggests that the southeast extremities of Honey and Cream approach Cueva Blanca to within 50m in the horizontal. An estimate of the vertical difference is 10-20m. Both Fissures Alpha and Beta deserve further attention, particularly Beta as it is heading in the correct direction.

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## **WARGATA MINA (JUDD'S CAVERN)**

**Rob Beedham**

It is now fairly well known that aboriginal hand stencils dating to at least 12,000 years ago have been found in Judd's Cavern. The cave has been renamed 'Wargata Mina' by the Tasmanian Aboriginal community; the name means 'My Blood' and refers to the fact that scientific analysis of the stencil pigment revealed mammal blood, possibly human. It is a very significant archaeological site and is one of the reasons the area is to be listed on the World Heritage Register.

The Aboriginal community and the Department of Lands, Parks and Wildlife are asking all people not to visit the cave unless supervised. Signs have been erected on the Farmhouse Creek track and at the cave entrance and a leaflet will be handed out when applying for a permit from the Forestry Commission to visit the area (still a requirement following the Farmhouse Creek blockade of 1986!).

The site is considered to be so significant that two track rangers were employed last summer to show bushwalkers and cavers the cave stencils and ensure that they are not inadvertently damaged. Please don't go looking for the stencils yourselves as they are not that obvious and could be damaged without realising it.

[EDITORS NOTE: I am unaware of any official correspondence asking cavers to avoid visiting Judd's Cavern unless supervised and hold the view that such a request is rather extreme. The Judd's Cavern system with its 4 known entrances (King Billy Hole, The Propylaeum (C17), C18 and Judd's itself) approaches the 3km mark in length, and indeed much of the system is only accessible to cave divers. Aboriginal use has only been known to have occurred near the daylight zone of the main Judd's Cavern entrance. Surely this doesn't give exclusive rights, or the right of control over any other region of the system?

I concede however that people (cavers included) should desist from seeking the hand stencils out in case of accidental damage. As a case in point a recently published Caving Calender includes a photo of hand stencils in SW Tasmania-adjacent to them is an experienced caver with a carbide light! Soot particles from such devices tend to accumulate on the surrounding walls (take Scott's cave at Mole Creek as a classic example) so despite good intentions it is quite possible that people may inadvertently cause some damage.]

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## ***The Rockpile-revisited***

### **LIKE A LUCKY DIP?**

Here's an idea for a caving trip with a difference, maybe you could call it the Five Entrances? The idea I'm mooting is to get say a dozen starters (TCC invited too), a permit for Exit and three hats. In one hat place each person's name, in each of the other two place names of the 5 major entrances (Mini Martin, Old Ditch Road, Skyhook Pot, Valley Entrance and the Efflux), with sufficient duplication to match the number of starters. Then make a random selection from each hat, the idea being that each person enters the cave via the first drawn entrance and exits via the second. We could possibly expand the game plan to cover a weekend with a bit of a nosh-up on Saturday night. Is anyone out there interested?

### **ROPE STOCKTAKE**

The store currently has 680m of rope, but only 310m of this is in lengths in excess of 30m. Attrition has resulted in us having 190m in lengths less than 15m, we have handlines to burn! It looks like rope purchases will need to be considered in the next financial year.

### **CLUB SPIRIT**

At a recent BBQ spirits were certainly flowing freely, however I'm pleased be referring to a spirit of the non-intoxicating kind that was displayed at a recent working bee. It was fantastic to see so many willing workers turn up, heaps of work was achieved and it turned out to be quite a social day. As a result the club gear is in the best condition it has been for some time. MANY THANKS TO EVERYONE WHO MADE THE EFFORT.

### **PHOTOGRAPHERS, TAKE NOTE!**

Do you have a suitable photo for the cover of the next Southern Caver? Black and White prints are preferred, however a contrasty print or slide may also be suitable. If you can help, then contact the Editor.

Ed.

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## **GELL CELL POWERED CAVING LIGHTS- PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE AND UPDATED INFORMATION**

**Jeff Butt**

Since my article on Gell Cells and Caving Lights published in Southern Caver Number 53, Jan 1987 [NB. Copies of this magazine are available from the Society for \$3, postage included] many club members have been using gell cell based caving lights. Over this period a few valuable lessons have been learned. Additionally new batteries have been added to the range available and several different globes have been discovered. The purpose of this article is to pass on my increased knowledge in the hope of improving the reliability and durability of your gell cell based caving light.

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**MODES OF FAILURE, PREVENTION AND CURES:**

Over the past two years four modes of failure have been observed, namely:

1. failure of internal solder connections to battery terminals
2. inability of the battery to accept a charge (usually after being discharged and often this being due to an 'accident', such as a short circuit in the headpiece and/or cable)
- 3 battery case cracked or broken
4. loss of capacity for no apparent reason.

Failure Mode 1 is due to weakening of the internal solder joint, this occurs when soldering cables onto the external tabs (due to heat conduction). To prevent this it is recommended that either a heat-sink is attached to the terminal (on the battery side) whilst soldering is carefully carried out, or preferably the cable be electrically connected via a female spade connector which is then mechanically fixed in place by glueing (eg. with Araldite). It is possible to repair the internal soldered connections; access is gained by removing the cell vents (the circular marks on the battery top are actually removable vents), however this is not an easy task.

Mode 2 of failure is generally due to lack of care or maintenance. Occasionally people forget to charge their battery after use, this results in the battery 'running-out' during a subsequent use. To prevent this when/if the battery is obviously getting low (dim yellow glow) the light should be switched off and a backup used. The battery should then be recharged as soon as possible. 'Accidents' such as short circuits in the cable or headpiece are not uncommon. Such events often result in a rather sticky situation with red hot cables and acrid fumes from melting/burning rubber/plastic. Often such 'meltdowns' apart from being unpleasant are potentially dangerous in a caving situation, especially in a region with little air space or airflow. The best action is to rip the cable from the battery in an attempt to stop the source of heat, failing that bury or drown the battery (thinking of minimal impact whilst doing so!), or dump it and escape to cleaner surroundings. In the latter cases the battery will totally discharge and usually ends up being destroyed (ie. it refuses to accept charge). As an aside, this was the fate of GJ's battery in Rift Cave-see the relevant article in this issue.

Prevention is always better than cure, so check your cable. If it is old, or has cracked/brittle/peeling insulation replace the cable. Another good idea is to add a fusible link into the wiring, near the battery (say a 2 Amp fuse), then if a short occurs the fuse blows and saves the situation.

Failure mode 3 is generally due to hard use and/or inappropriate encapsulation. Gell cell cases are quite fragile, they won't tolerate being dropped onto a hard surface or excessive abrasion. If your gell cell is encased in a soft-pack then give it due consideration when in tight places. A hard case (plastic or metal, if metal beware of potential terminal shorts!) is a better option. Aluminium diecast boxes or hollowed out MSA/Oldham battery cases make excellent containers.

Problem 4 could be due to age (however gell cells should last several hundred cycles if looked after and appropriately used), but most likely is due to incorrect charging (either over or under charging). For cyclic applications (such as a caving light) your constant voltage charger should be set at around 2.4 to 2.5 Volts per cell (ie. 7.2 to 7.5 Volts for a nominally 6 Volt battery). For details about a charger you can build, see my previously mentioned article. After about 18 to 24 hours the battery will be fully charged and should be

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removed from the charger. If you are using a simple 'constant' current charger (eg. a 12V power supply and a 10 Ohm series resistor) then the battery should only be charged to replace what was used plus about 10 to 20% extra. Near the end of the charging period have a listen for gassing, some slight gassing is not abnormal, however if it seems excessive then check how much current you are putting in and think about reducing the charging rate.

#### NEW BATTERIES:

Over the last two years there have been several additions to the Exide RE Series of gell cells, including the RE6.3 (6 Volt, 3 Amp-hour) and the RE4.3 (4 Volt, 3 Amp-hour) models. Some countries have access to a much broader range of batteries, for example the Yuasa NP series available in New Zealand. This range includes the very useful NP4.10 model (4 Volt, 10 Amp-hour) and the NP6.7 (6 Volt, 7 Amp-hour) which incidentally is the same physical size as the Exide RE6.6. Availability of batteries such as the NP4.10 allows the option of staying with a 4 Volt system. This choice has the added advantages of not needing new globes or charger modifications. SRT Equipment sells a near equivalent of the NP4.10, namely a Power Sonics PS490 (4 Volt, 9 Amp-hour) battery for around \$35 plus freight.

#### A 4 VOLT VERSUS A 6 VOLT GELL CELL SYSTEM:

The option of staying with a 4 Volt system (Standard Miners Cap-lamps run at 4 Volts) is rather attractive, however there are some advantages of changing over to a 6 Volt system. It is interesting to note that the TCC have adopted the 'stay with 4 Volts approach', whereas SCS has opted for the 'change to 6 Volts' method. Both are equally valid, by way of example I'll compare the two systems and relate their relative merits and the work involved in the conversion process. Assume you start with a dead Oldham cap-lamp, then for the

4 Volt [TCC] option: You purchase a Power Sonics 4 Volt, 9 Amp-hour battery for around \$35 (plus freight) and a suitable sized Aluminium diecast box for around \$9. You scrap your old battery, keeping the metal top. One side of the diecast box is removed, belt tabs and a bottom end reinforcing strip are riveted on. The gell cell fits snugly inside and the metal top from the old battery is made to fit over the top and screwed in place. The total cost of the upgrade is around \$44.

6 Volt [SCS] option: You purchase an Exide 6 Volt, 6 Amp-hour battery for around \$25 and a pair of 6 Volt globes for around \$3. The top of the old battery case is carefully cut off. After neutralising the contents with bicarb of soda they are removed. The inter-cell divider is cut out with a hacksaw/hot knife and the vent holes are glued. The gell cell fits snugly inside the old case. The metal top is then refitted. The 4 Volt charger is modified to operate at 6 Volts. Here the total cost is around \$28.

Note that each system has 36 Watt-hours capacity, ie. 12 hours duration with a 3 Watt globe. The 4 Volt system is slightly lighter and the encapsulated battery is about half the physical size of the 6 Volt system. However it is also slightly more expensive and the range of 4 Volt globes available is smaller.

#### 6 VOLT GLOBE UPDATE:

My original 6 Volt globe survey needs updating, it is now easy to purchase suitable globes for both low and high beam positions. As a guide generally 3 Watts is desired for high beam and around 1.5 Watts for low. Personal

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preference and the degree to which globes can be focussed are also important considerations. The following table lists all the 6 Volt globes I know about, powers range from a dim 0.5 Watts to a hefty 6 Watts. The unit prices shown are approximate only (some bulbs come in twin packs).

MODEL/BRAND	TYPE MOUNT			PARAMETERS			SUPPLIER	
	GLASS	BEAM		V	A	W	COST	NOTES
Energiser HPR51	QH	C F	H	6.5	0.7	4.5	7.47	1,2 1
Energiser HPR36	QH	C F	H	5.5	1.0	5.5	7.47	5,1,2 .2
Thorn	QH	C F	H	6.0	0.4	2.4	?	*(3?)
Eveready 1163	S	LR S	H/L	6.2	0.3	2.0	0.61	1,2 3,5
Eveready 1417	S	P F	H	6.0	0.5	3.0	0.61	1,2
Eveready 2454	K	P F	H	6.0	0.7	4.2	?	*(1?)
K12	K	P F	H	6.0	0.65	4.0	1.99	4
PR12	S	P F	H	6.0	0.5	3.0	0.50	4
Sanyo 1	K	F,P S	H	6.0	0.5	3.0	2.00	3
Sanyo 2	S	D S	H	6.0	1.0	6.0	0.80	3
Super Lux K	K	P S	H	6.0	0.5	3.0	2.50	3
Bike Headlight	S	D S	H	6.0	0.5	3.0	0.80	3
Bike Tail light	S	S S	L	6.0	0.08	0.5	0.80	3 4
GE 40	S	L S	L	6.3	0.15	0.9	0.50	5,4 5
GE 46	S	L S	L	6.3	0.25	1.6	0.75	4 5
GE 50	S	S S	L	7.5	0.22	1.7	0.75	4 6
no-brand 1	S	L S	H/L	6.0	0.35	2.1	1.48	1 5
no-brand 2	S	L S	H	6.0	0.5	3.0	1.48	1 5
no-brand 3	S	S S	L	6.0	0.3	1.8	0.48	1
National MB-60G5E	S	S S	H/L	6.0	0.5	3.0	1.68	6 3

Notes: TYPE Indicates the type of gas fill.  
 QH=Quartz Halogen, K=Krypton, S=Standard.  
 Generally QH are whitest and brightest, K are next, S are yellowest (but much less expensive).

GLASS Indicates the shape/type of glass envelope.  
 S=Small, L=Long, F=Frosted, D=Dimpled,  
 LR=Large Round, C=Cylindrical, P=Pre-focussed.

MOUNT Indicates the type of base on the globe.  
 F=Flange, S=Screw.

BEAM Indicates the position(s) the globe is most suited.  
 H=High, L=Low. L-H, H-L swaps are often possible.

COST Per globe as at March 1989.

SUPPLIER 1=George Harvey, 2=Lawrence & Hanson,  
 3=Bike shops, 4=Tandy, 5=Dick Smith,  
 6=K T National Electronics, \*=now difficult to locate.

NOTES 1=long life, 2=expect a shorter life at 6.2V,  
 3=hard to focus for High Beam, 4=dim light,  
 5=wont fit Oldham Low Beam, 6=tested bulb  
 draws 0.28A at 6.2V, (equivalent to no-brand 3).

It is difficult to make recommendations as to which bulbs are best, the choice largely comes down to cost and availability. A good combination for Oldham headpieces is no-brand-3 for low beam, and Super Lux K for high beam (screw mount) or PR12/K12 (flange mount). For MSA/FX2 headpieces the Super Lux K is ideal for high beam. For low beam the choice is wide, suitable ones are no-brand 3, GE46, GE50 or GE40.

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**SUMMARY:**

Gell cells are able to produce the goods as far as a relatively inexpensive caving light goes. With time we are gaining more experience with these devices underground and are gradually overcoming some of the pitfalls. Additionally the ranges of batteries and globes are continuing to increase, this is very handy as it allows a greater choice in what is used.

[EDITORS COMMENT: SCS has 6 Volt Exide Gell Cells and 6 Volt globes for sale at reasonable prices-refer to our 'add' on the last page of this issue.]

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## MINIMISING THE IMPACT - ABOVE GROUND

Rob Beedham

All cavers should know about cave ethics - not damaging formations, boots off areas, etc., but above ground it is often a different story, as revealed by this extract from a track ranger's report on the camping area near Australia's second deepest cave Annakananda in 1987:

*"Groups of cavers have visited the site and may be responsible for the library of items deposited at Annakananda entrance campsite. This presently includes:*

- 18 wine bladders*
- 1 large plastic water drum*
- 13 tins of carbide (mostly used)*
- 1 pair sandshoes*
- 1 fireplace (full of foil and half-burnt rubbish)*
- 1 whisky bottle."*

Also mentioned is *"poor sanitary practices in the doline of Annakananda have occurred with heavy use and such numbers in a group."*

This article is especially relevant to caving in Tasmania, where conditions above ground make different demands on cavers than many areas on the mainland. However, these above-ground ethics, better known as Minimal Impact Bushwalking, can be applied anywhere.

Going caving in Tasmania, particularly on expedition style trips taking several days, generally involves a good deal of bushwalking and camping in remote wilderness area, more often than not off the beaten track (where bushwalkers fear to tread!). Thus it is all the more important to cause as little damage as possible because if a new cave is discovered it is likely to become a centre of activity. The first people who camp in an area often set the standard for subsequent visits.

Firstly, if at all possible, choose a hard campsite that will withstand considerable usage. Please put environmental considerations before your personal comfort, although that may mean walking a few hundred meters to get to the cave, or to water. Think about the access tracks through the campsite which can quickly become muddy. Remember that in an alpine area such as the north east ridge of Mt. Anne vegetation is very slow growing and takes a long time to recover after it has been trampled. Never cut vegetation alive or dead (cutting vegetation is illegal in national parks).

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Secondly, fires. Please don't light them; bring a fuel stove for cooking. The reasons for this are several:

- The danger of bushfire is the most obvious,
- Collection of wood degrades the area around the campsite (in some areas the only wood is King Billy or Pencil Pine which take hundreds of years to grow),
- Fires cause unsightly scars and unburned wood (charcoal) takes years longer to decompose,
- The ground may be peat, in which case it is illegal to light a fire at all (maximum fine \$1000). Peat is a fibrous dark brown material which when dry can burn easily, or smoulder underground for months even when it appears the fire has been put out, bursting into flame again in the next dry spell. Cavers on Mt. Anne in the summer of 1988 will have seen the fire burning on the Jubilee Range-a fire which burnt for 3 months or more because it was burning in peat.

A final point on fires in Tasmania; as of 1/4/89 it will be illegal to light campfires on many of the major walking tracks (the Overland Track, Frenchman's Cap, the Arthur Ranges, Mt. Anne, the Southern Ranges, Walls of Jerusalem).

Other points about minimal impact bushwalking:

- Go at least 100m away from both water courses and campsites (and cave entrances!) when you go to the toilet, and bury it about 15cm underground.
- Rubbish-carry everything out that you've carried in. Don't bury it or burn it. Buried rubbish inevitably gets dug up again either by animals or future campers. Burnt rubbish leaves bits of aluminium foil or unburned plastic behind (anyway you shouldn't be lighting fires.)
- Washing-for cavers washing of both selves and equipment is usually a necessity. Don't wash in the creek, rather take water away from the creek and throw spent water at least 50m away from water courses so that it filters through the soil. If you have to use soap at least make sure it's bio-degradable.
- Tracks-try not to make new tracks and on existing tracks keep to them; that way damage is limited to a small area. Cavers are notorious for taping new tracks which quickly become muddy or irreparably damaged. If you have to tape a route to a new cave entrance think about it first - avoid muddy areas, steep slopes, etc. The route you are taping may become a major walking track if your discovery is an important one.

Cavers have a responsibility to maintain the environment in which we find caves in as pristine condition as possible. How else can we argue against those damaging activities (clearfelling, mining) which threaten our favorite past-time. Minimal Impact Bushwalking leaflets can be obtained from Tasmap Centre, GPO Box 44A, Hobart 7001.

[EDITORS NOTE: on a recent reconnaissance trip to the NE ridge by GJ and JB Annakananda was visited. In our opinions the campsite was in a neat and tidy state, however most of the 'rubbish' as noted above was present. The whisky bottle, sandshoes, wine-bladders in disrepair, a bag of foil and plastic and two empty tins (approx. 4kg in total) were carried out. I believe that these days that cavers are much more environmentally aware than they have been in the past. If every trip is treated as a clean up trip (such as we did) then the slackness of those in the past can be counteracted to some extent.]

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## NUMBERING OF CAVES AND KARST FEATURES AND A DESCRIPTION OF ACCESS TRACKS AT IDA BAY.

Arthur Clarke

### CAVE NUMBERING:

In the late 1960's and early 1970's, cave numbering in Tasmania was undertaken by the three major caving groups. Numbers were issued in consecutive groups of 100, and allocated as follows: Tasmanian Caverneering Club 0-100, T.C.C. (Northern Branch) 101-200 and Southern Caving Society 201-300. This accounts for what has seemed to be an anomaly in the numbering at Ida Bay (or Marble Hill), where in the current 'Australian Karst Index', the numbered sites run from 1 to 21, then from 201 onwards. In early 1984 (under the dubious title of 'Area Coordinator'), the author took over cave numbering at Marble Hill in earnest, following number '21' with IB22 ("Con Cave") and then continuing in numerical sequence, attempting to locate other previously numbered locations. Some of these including nos. IB203-205 have not been found (Quarry dust??). IB202 (ASF Pot) is just visible with the bottom end of the 21m and 19m shafts exposed in the lower face of the present quarry.

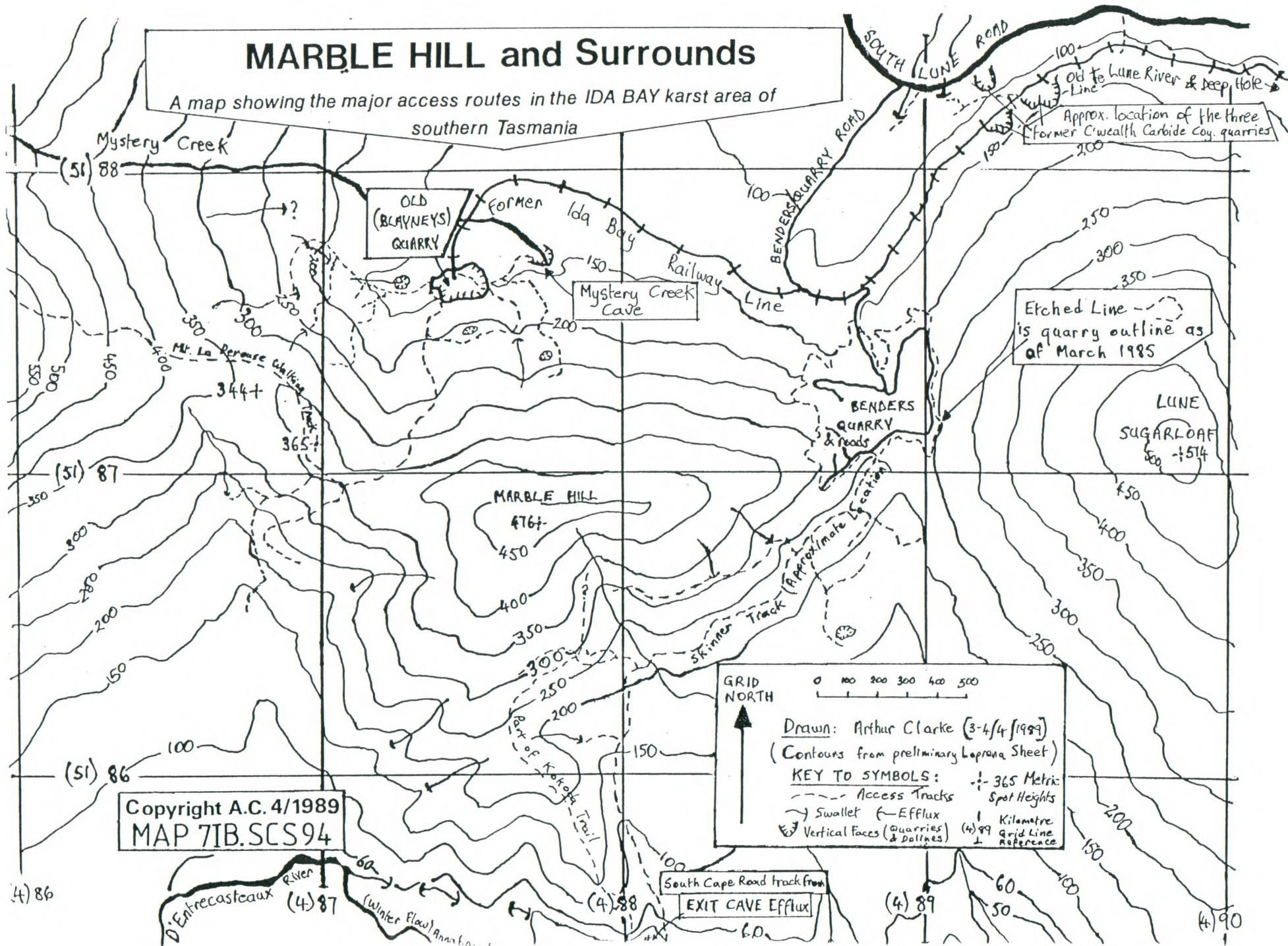
To date, most number-tag sites are at cave entrances. The earlier (lower number) tags were often not prefixed with "IB". In general, numbering has adhered to the principles outlined by Peter Matthews in the "Australian Karst Index-1985" following Australian Speleological Federation standards. Tagged sites in the Marble Hill region have been numbered according to the following guidelines:

- (a) an explored entrance or feature, regardless of size; deemed as having speleological or related interest;
- (b) an unexplored entrance or feature with speleological interest;
- (c) a cave or karst site, at which speleologists or bushwalkers etc. could encounter difficulties - either by an accidental slip or fall at or into the site, and/or a site not being climbable without some mechanical aid (ladder or SRT, etc.);
- (d) where several entrances exist close to each other or in the same doline or collapse feature; usually only one entrance has been numbered either being the first seen or explored or the most obvious from first approach.

In the Marble Hill region, there are numerous known caves and entrances without number tags. Some were found in the late 1960's and early 1970's and others more recently. In general, where such caves have been reported in some way or rated as having speleological interest, an IB-X 'number' has been allocated for the site. These may not have been physically tagged. Some cave locations are only now coming to light through conversations with ex-cavers, bushwalkers, loggers and even S&R personnel that have been in the area in the past. A few have been recently located by 'beginner' cavers searching for 'new' caves. Local and interstate cavers visiting the area are encouraged to physically number-tag new discoveries, or if not, then to mark entrances with flagging tape, etc. and report finds, their location and access details. This also applies for karst sites as well.

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**OTHER KARST FEATURES:**

Other than cave entrances, the only karst features numbered are two small arches, collapse features and dolines, usually where a cave has also been seen. There are numerous other karst features in the Marble Hill region including more karst bridges or arches, trenches and miniature 'towers' in areas of severe karst erosion and strong jointing. There are also some small localised areas featuring development of rock pendants in overhangs and fluted karst 'spires', plus surface solution features such as flutes, runnels and 'rillen-karren'. There are some hydrological features not numbered yet, including an impressive swallet in a dolerite choke beside the contact along the Hobbit Hole track, west from Blayney's Quarry. Rumours also exist about other, interesting features, including an efflux east of Exit Cave?

**ACCESS:**

Early days - This was via the 'Kokoda Trail', and 'Plains Track'; for complete details the reader is referred to "The Caves of Marble Hill" by Arthur Clarke (1987), published in Southern Caver No. 54.

Present Access - (Refer to the accompanying map throughout this section)

(1) South Cape Road Track: This route was chiefly used as access to Exit Cave and the area south of Marble Hill, but since the popularisation of the Skinner track, is now less often used. It leaves the South Cape Road slightly north of a large Forestry Commission gravel quarry, about 0.75 km north of the D'Entrecasteaux River and bears off WNW. It is approximately 3 km long, and a fit walking party takes just under an hour to reach Exit Cave. Parts of the track are wet, boggy, partially overgrown with bauera and there is recent snow damage (treefalls). Little maintenance is carried out. However, being virtually flat all the way it had some appeal, especially after a long hard day's caving in Exit. (This track is not shown on the accompanying map.)

(2) D'Entrecasteaux River Track: This track is rarely ever used now. It is about 4 km long and follows the meandering river up to Exit Cave by following the right hand bank upstream from the bridge on the South Cape Road. Although it takes nearly 2 hours to reach the cave, it has the advantage of being in light scrub and rain forest most of the way, with occasional logs to climb over. (This track is not shown on the map.)

(3) South Lune Road: This is a gravelled Forestry Commission road, which turns inland heading WSW from the main (Lune River) Road just south of the Ida Bay/Lune River townships. It gives access to caves on the lower northern slopes of Lune Sugarloaf including IB2-6, and IB109-110 before the Quarry Road turn-off. A track from Loon's Cave efflux (IB2) connects with other caves and gives access to old quarries and the old Ida Bay railway line.

(4) Bender's Quarry Road: This turns off SW from the South Lune Road, about 3.5 km in from the main Road and leads up to Bender's Quarry, crossing over the old Ida Bay Railway line and access track (opposite car park) to Blayney's Quarry, Mystery Creek Cave and the La Perouse walking track.

(5) Blayney's Quarry: A twenty minute walk along a flat muddied track past the Lands, Parks and Wildlife (LPW) walker's registration booth, leaving the quarry road 0.75 km along from the South Lune Road. This track follows the old railway line west to the old quarry, crossing Mystery Creek en route. Blayney's Quarry provides access to several routes-

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(a) east along floor of quarry to Mystery Creek Cave (IB10), with a branch track uphill to Midnight Hole (IB11) and others en route;  
(b) from the Western edge, along the Mt. La Perouse walking track up along the top of the quarry wall (past IB30,130,201). There are several branches, namely:

(i) Ten minutes from the quarry a red taped track heads east to Holocaust (IB45) and Gollum's Grovel (IB28).

(ii) Approximately 40 minutes from the quarry a saddle is reached, in this region a white taped track branches to the left giving access to Thun Junction (IB20) and nearby holes.

(iii) About 100m further along the LaPerouse track a second branch to the left (mainly red tapes) gives access to Western Creek Swallet (IB18). A branch off this leads to Valley Entrance (IB120). (An old orange taped route in the region follows the contact southeast from Western Creek Swallet. This crosses the Thun Junction track.)

(iv) An unmarked and unsurveyed route branches off the LaPerouse track at the ridge crest before the above mentioned saddle is reached. This sidles down the Southern side of Marble Hill to Dismal Hill Pot (IB128) and Great Expectations Cave (IB129).

(c) west into the bush from the quarry is a taped (predominantly blue) route which follows a line of survey station pegs (C to F). This gives access to Con Cave (IB22); an area of interesting karst features to the south, and further side tracks branch from survey pegs. These side tracks lead to Hooks Hole (IB26), survey pegs H and I, IB42-44 and beyond to IB70-80; Bottleneck (IB48); Revelation Cave (IB1) and Yodellers Pot (IB25); then up to Hobbit Hole (IB15), past a 'dolerite' swallet.

(6) Bender's Quarry: [Permission should always be obtained before entering this site from the Quarry Manager]. Blasting occurs at all sorts of odd hours, including weekends, so be warned! Permission is usually mandatory, but the courtesy should always be continued, as he can suggest safe places to park, or advise what times blasting is expected.] Following the road into the quarry, continue past the crib rooms and crusher, then turn left in front of the limestone rubble pile and ignore right turns, thus skirting up around the left hand (eastern) side of the quarry to a convenient parking spot above the main quarry faces on the saddle between Marble Hill and Lune Sugarloaf. Bender's Quarry provides immediate access to the upper western slopes of Lune Sugarloaf (dolerite and cutting grass), the north-eastern slopes of Marble Hill, numerous small caves in the area and the Skinner Track. (A branch road has been recently formed towards Lune Sugarloaf, a short distance down from the saddle.)

(7) Skinner Track: This track was initiated by former Hastings Cave Superintendent and TCC member, Roy Skinner, who with the aid of many cavers (particularly SCS) axed and chain-sawed a track, roughly following the first 1954 Exit Cave route but lower down and more direct. The track leaves Bender's Quarry from the saddle, following an obvious bulldozer trail through cutting grass clumps for 75 m then into the rainforest. It is about 1.5-2 km down to Exit Cave, about 50 minutes fast walking, crossing a log with rope handline across the D'Entrecasteaux River 70-80 m downstream from Exit Cave efflux. The track is supposedly maintained by LPW but in practice cavers do the work. It usually takes 60-75 minutes walk out (uphill), and features some very nice myrtle forest, numerous lyre-birds and passes through large areas of limestone outcrop and dolines. Commencing from the top (quarry end), there are numerous side tracks:

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- (a) Little Grunt (IB23) track-a red taped track, 3-4 minutes in from the quarry, heading downhill, just past IB211 (on the Skinner Track) and connecting with IB90-94 and IB100, IB101.
- (b) Potholes Region-a blue taped track, 8-10 minutes in from the quarry, heading downhill passing the Comet (IB98), IB99; [with a branch track back to Tumble Down (IB94)]; then down to IB95-96 and Pseudocheirus (IB97).
- (c) National Gallery track-a yellow taped track, 10-12 minutes in from the quarry, heading uphill 20 m before the first major manfern gully on the Skinner Track, to National Gallery (IB47), then south along the contact past Cyclops Pot (IB57) connecting IB50-64, IB67 and Chicken Bone Pot (IB27).
- (d) Big Tree Pot (IB9), Mini-Martin (IB8) and Milk Run (IB38) tracks-a red-taped track, 25-30 minutes in from the quarry, heading uphill just past a steep gully with perennial stream. This goes direct to Big Tree Pot and the old Kokoda trail, with connections to Mini Martin, Skyhook Pot (IB34), Machete Pot (IB107) and Baader-Meinhof (IB113). A yellow side route to Coffee Pot (IB35), Crud Pot (IB37) and Milk Run (IB38) branches off a short distance up from the Skinner Track.
- (e) Old Ditch Road track-a red taped track about 35-40 minutes from the quarry, ascends a broad ridge to a prominent gully on the north side of the track and leads to Old Ditch Road (IB131). Continuing up this gully one reaches the Kokoda Trail, just southwest of Machete Pot.

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## *More Rockpile*

### **I SEE, BUT I DON'T BELIEVE**

On a recent trip to a tourist cave yours truly was exceedingly surprised to note that deep within the interior several small ferns and a carpet of moss were growing in the vicinity of one of the electric lights. Caves, once developed for tourism often develop green algae on formation due to the presence of the artificial illumination, but mosses and ferns?? I estimated that the region would receive around 2 hours of light per day that tours were operating. A photo of the unique display was taken.

Out of curiosity I quizzed our guide (who was interested in my observation) and discovered that the mosses had evidently 'self sown', but the ferns were a little experiment! After 4 weeks in new surroundings, they still looked very much at home.

### **BACK ISSUES of the SOUTHERN CAVER**

Do you have a complete set? Would you like an INDEX for the old editions (1967 to 1982 inclusive)? We have a selection of 'Golden Oldies', and plenty of copies of the INDEX and post-1982 issues. Please write if interested.

### **ABOUT THIS ISSUE**

In case you were interested, this issue was edited on an Apple Macintosh computer using Microsoft Word. The final copy was printed on a Laser Printer to give the desired quality.

Ed.

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## <> SCS WAREHOUSE SALES <>

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**OR TIRED OF BEING RIPPED OFF IN HOBART?**

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>>>>>5 cm tape (ideal for harnesses, rigging, gear bags, battery belts etc)  
in Virgin White (so you can personally defile it)  
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(\$3.30/3.80 per m)

>>>>>CARBIDE (often known as MAGIC ROCKS)  
NOTE: CARBIDE MUST BE USED RESPONSIBLY IN CAVES!  
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If you think of anything else that people are often after or you want any of the above then contact Jeff Butt on (002) 206302 (W) or (002) 238620 (H), or write to us: SOUTHERN CAVING SOCIETY, P. O. BOX 121, MOONAH 7009.

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