

Speleo Spiel

Issue Number 301 Mar-Apr 1997

Newsletter of the Southern Tasmanian Caverneers PO Box 416 Sandy Bay Tasmania 7004

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Meeting the first Wednesday of the month in the Brownlow room at Hampden House Battery Pt 8:00 pm.

Social gathering the 3rd Wednesday of the month at the Shipwrights Arms Battery Pt. 7:00pm.

Editorial

You can always do better in hindsight, looking at Issue 300 I realised I made absolutely no fanfare about the number. 300 journal issues from Australia's oldest continually running caving club. This is certainly a landmark which should not pass unremarked. I think in truth I was so overwhelmed by the responsibility of editing this august rag that I lost sight of its editorial traditions. Those 300 issues represent a great amount of work by a relatively small number of dedicated individuals. Since I began caving with the TCC in the early 80's I have caved with many other cavers in various parts of the world, but I cannot think of any better trips than those done in Tasmania with members of the TCC. Although the TCC is now merged with the SCS and the TCKRG, I hope the camaraderie and competence shared by Tasmanian cavers will continue for another 300 issues.

You may have noticed that the Spiel appears to have become a by monthly publication. This is not through any official policy decisions merely an

extreme lack of content. As of 31/3/97 we were in receipt of 1 trip report. I know there are peoples out there doing some caving but it seems the results of their efforts aren't making it to the editors desk.

Where to now: The merger of the clubs should provide an opportunity to change some of the problems that have been inherent in the previous organisations, a combining of energy and resources, documentation of karst in a retrievable format, recruitment and training of new members. Caving in general has been on the decline for some years & I suspect that we will need a more active approach if we want to keep the club healthy into the next decade.

I would like to see a serious recruitment strategy devised and implemented, perhaps some of our semi retired members could commit to a program of novice trips. Bob Cockerill's offer to extract knowledge from some of the fully retired members should be embraced with vigour even urgency. To those of you who still hold a passion for this obscure sport, let's make this new club work. I suspect that the merger was the easy part - don't lose the opportunity we have created.

John Hawkins-salt ED

Club Matters:

Social Meetings:

Some of our members felt the need for a social gathering in addition to the monthly meeting, the idea being that the meeting could get on with meeting business without being dragged out by all those discussions usually settled over an ale or two.

Until further notice social meetings will be held on the 3rd Wednesday of the month at The Shipwrights Arms Battery point from 8:00pm on.

The Ex Tall Trees Café

Site of the recent TCC 50th anniversary dinner has recently changed hands. Although the previous owners have taken the name, Tim & Wendy who own and manage the Tyenna Valley Lodge ph (03) 62882293 are now running the Café as well. We have been assured that good food will still be available for famished cavers to fortify themselves for the drive back to Hobart.

As mentioned before Tim & Wendy have 3 sets of Florentine gate keys and will lend them to forgetful cavers for a nominal deposit.

STC electronic archive project.

The archive is progressing well with the addition of material on Gunns Plains and Mt Cripps (*thanks to the SRCC*). There are now nearly 500 caves, 100 Spiels, 10 Southern Cavers and 250 surveys listed.

I still desperately need help to enter old Spiels and Southern Cavers. This requires no specialised knowledge only a word processor and some spare time.

Any members who would like a copy of the archive please contact John Hawkins-Salt and he will even come and install it if you need some help.

Things to do

During track inspection at Ida Bay someone suggested compiling a list of things to do re caving. I.E. Surveying jobs, known leads, un-investigated entrances. Etc.. I think this is a great idea so below are a few things I think need doing. Please send any suggestions to the editor.

If you see something listed which you know has been done then let me know.

Growling Swallet.

- Re survey main stream from Windy Rift junction to Sump.
- Finish Servalan survey and check climb down in boulderpile, take 10m handline.
- Survey up first stream in Necrosis, continue to climb cascades.
- Climb avens in Tiger Mountain.
- Climb at end of Nix inlet.
- Survey and check leads in the Cesspool.

Other Florentine stuff.

- Re-Survey Sesame + Roland's extensions (see S Caver#59) & get UTM for entrance.
- Connect Dribblespit entrance to surface survey.
- Climb to high passage at base of ladder pitches in Niggly Cave (see Spiel#261).

Ida Bay stuff.

- Investigate shaft parallel to last pitch in Hobbit Hole (see Spiel#268).
- Much Much more once Arthur puts pen to paper.

Trip Reports:

Follets Swallet: February 1997

A New 'River Cave' In The Florentine Valley

Follets Swallet was probably discovered in about 1991 by ANM workers in the Coles Creek area, near Wylds Craig at the northern end of the Florentine Valley. The cave was named by Russell Drysdale, who did a survey of karst features in that area for ANM in 1992. Russell named the feature after Rosemary Follet (a former ACT Chief Minister) on the basis that, while naming geographic features after living persons was a break with convention, he thought the name Follets Swallet had a good ring to it.

Follets Swallet lies on the margin of limestone hill where Coles Creek itself passes briefly underground as a meander cut-off through a minor spur. It may be stretching the point to describe the feature as a 'river cave', but Coles Creek is a sizeable stream and Follets Swallet must be one of the more significant stream caves in the Junee-Florentine area in terms of discharge.

Coles Creek rises in the Gordon Range where its catchment encompasses an area of approximately 3800 ha. By comparison, the Junee River at Junee Cave has a catchment of about 5500 ha, while the catchment of Lawrence Rivulet Rising is in the order of 2000 ha. Higher rainfall within the latter catchments, which include high altitude areas on the western margin of the Mount Field massif, is likely to contribute to a range of factors which promote greater runoff compared to lower relief areas in the Coles Creek catchment. In terms of discharge, Coles Creek would appear to be of roughly the same order of magnitude as Garths Creek (the stream which flows into Growling Swallet at JF36), which has been gauged at 0.3-0.6 cubic metres per second at low to medium stage.

While I had known of the existence of Follets Swallet for several years now, and had visited the entrances on several occasions, various factors interceded and it wasn't until February 1997 that I got around to exploring the cave with my father Ian. Our explorations indicated that the inflow entrance was an impressive opening several metres wide and only contained a short length of accessible passage. About 15 m from the entrance we encountered a deep siphon containing a considerable quantity of floating and submerged wood and other vegetable matter. The wide, low chamber associated with the siphon was also the location of significant accumulations of seemingly recent silt, forming banks a metre or more high. It is difficult to say whether there is any link between the silt and dead wood, and nearby logging activities, although logging would need to be considered as a possible contributory factor. The Forest Practices Code, which has been operational since 1987, proscribes logging within specified distances of streams, but eroded material from coupes can still be expected to make its way into nearby streams at some sites. A least one coupe is currently being harvested a kilometre or so upstream of Follets Swallet, and the limestone hill containing the cave was clearfelled and burnt at about the time the cave was discovered.

Some of the wood trapped in the cave may have been there for a number of years, decomposing slowly and contributing to the generation of gas which caused the water to bubble vigorously as we moved about near the siphon. The possibility occurred to me that this form of 'bad air' may well be quite flammable - no place to be running a carbide lamp! In comparison to the inflow, the outflow entrance is a relatively modest opening. However, we found it to contain a more extensive section of passage, extending upstream for a distance of maybe 100 m in a 2-3 m wide passage developed in a relatively straight line along the strike of steeply dipping limestone beds. Traversing the cave required a flat-out swim, during which I was glad that I had the benefit of a wetsuit. The upstream limit of the readily accessible passage was marked by an abrupt siphon, possibly only a few tens of metres or less from the siphon at the inflow end. certainly, the length of passage traversed from the outflow to the siphon would appear sufficient to account for most of the distance between the two entrances.

In summary, explorations at Follets Swallet have revealed an interesting and relatively unusual cave containing a large stream and some sizeable passages. The cave provides an excellent

example of a subterranean meander cut-off, compounding the evidence that the Coles Creek area contains a significant assemblage of caves and other karst landforms. The area is also noteworthy as the location one of the few remaining tracts of essentially undisturbed forest in the Florentine Valley.

Rolan Eberhard

The best laid plans of mice & cavers JF-36 8/3/97

Party: Dean Morgan, Kelly Miller, Leigh Douglas, John Hawkins-Salt

Aim: to inspect the leads at Tiger Mountain mentioned in the TCC exploration journal

The many recent trips into growling had re-familiarised most of us with the entrance series and Windy Rift. With traverse times gradually improving we decided to try something a bit more committing. Unfortunately or perhaps fortunately none of this was meant to be.

Although the day dawned bright and sunny by the time we pulled into Westerway for the usual breakfast stop, dark clouds and drizzle caused us to reconsider the plan. Perhaps we could collect the bolting gear from Necrosis then try to find Nix Inlet?

Equipped with a revised plan and moderate enthusiasm we entered the cave by about 10:45. On reaching the Destiny junction we emptied excess gear from the packs to be picked up on the way back to Black River. By the time we had all made the grovel up Avon's Aven we scratched the plan to go to Black River and resolved to have a poke around Necrosis.

On the main route through Necrosis a small usually active stream is met not far from Avon's Aven. The usual route continues downstream some 50m + before taking another side branch. Upstream continues through tight serpentine rift to a junction. Kelly Leigh & I followed the LH passage through another 50m? to a small inlet aven with obvious continuation above. Judging from trog marks this area had been visited before but perhaps only once. *(Due to similarities with the upper level Trapdoor overflow this may be a good place to bolt)* Meanwhile Dean had taken the RH passage from the junction, crawling through 30m of tight serpentine passage on a calcified floor lead to a small dry aven. An excellent collection of Oolites at the base of the aven and the preceding 10m of passage made the whole trip worthwhile. *(As good as if not better than Upper Oolite in Mammoth cave Jenolan NSW)* Further visitors should take care with their footing to avoid damaging this area.

Continuing on to the 5 ways chamber we stopped for lunch and had another look at the damp aven in the lower part of the chamber. After lunch Dean & Leigh started out, leaving Kelly & I to start bolting the aven.

Over 2 hours the top of the aven was reached, about 11m above a ledge which can be gained from back in the rift. Much to our disappointment the top of this aven was merely a platform from which another 15m+ aven continued up. A borehole passage from this platform extended some 30m+ to a 10m pitch, which probably connects with known cave? *The aven was left rigged with an old 9mm rope to check out the pitch. Note: the rope crosses two rub points and is unprotected. The first person up should ascend very gently.*

We reached to the surface at 8:00pm both completely exhausted, Kelly's return being further hampered by ingesting some disagreeable tuna.

In hindsight Tiger Mountain is an awful long way into the system, to get there a party needs to be VERY fit, well psyched and have good weather. The doubtful weather and resulting loss of psych prevented us from getting anywhere near our goal and caused all of us to wonder if we would have been fit enough to make it anyway.

John Hawkins-Salt

Introduction to New Feeling 23/03/97

Party: John H-S, Muki

Aim: An introductory trip for Mr Muki, and to look at digging prospects downstream beyond the passover.

With only one other starter who had never been caving before we decided against the now all too familiar grind into Necrosis. Not having been far into New Feeling before I thought it would be useful to see what if anything could fall prey to a bit of bolting.

The normal route into Mini Khan Chamber proved easy to find being quite well trogged now. Though we couldn't find Jeff's bypass (Southern Caver #58). We were both suitably impressed with the decoration, particularly the crystal pools in the crawl. A bit of scouting around the Khan chamber didn't reveal any obvious high leads so we continued on down to the Passover. After dropping down the 3m climb we followed a couple of short passages but could not get motivated to enter the apparent flat out belly crawl that led on to the final section.

The return to the surface was similarly uneventful with Muki proving to be more than competent on the pitches and climbs. Old gym ropes were left in place on the 6m climb in the Passover and the 12m pitches into and out of Khan Chamber, though all slings and biners were removed. No potential leads were found though we didn't look very far of route.

Back at the car after 6.5 hours, a most enjoyable trip. Muki was fairly impressed with the activity so I immediately started conning him into a more vertical trip in the near future.

John H-S

Easter on the lake, or caving SRCC style

Lake Mackintosh Mount Cripps karst area

Party: Many members of the (SRCC) + Maree John & Storm H-S (STC)

The extremely low water levels in the dam afforded the opportunity to inspect some archaeological karst features in the White Hawk creek outcropping of the Mt Cripps limestone, said features are usually submerged by about 2m of potential electricity.

The archaeological site was located and inspected, it is believed to have been an indigenous shelter cave with excavation revealing habitation dating from, 17,000 to 15,000 years ago.

Further up the creek a pleasant bank was located, the billy boiled and lunch consumed, much to the amusement of a resident platypus. We then located Goshawk Cave and surveyed the efflux stream which being some 6m below the known cave is usually under water. Several other caves were investigated, the most interesting of which was White Hawk Creek Cave, carrying the entire flow of the creek through about 80m of passage, providing a pleasant 10minute through trip.

Although the caves in this area are generally short, being limited by the narrow contact, they occur in a beautiful area making a trip to Mt Cripps well worthwhile for anyone passing through the West Coast.

For information about the area contact the Savage River Caving Club. Po Box 1114 Burnie 7320, Email: brunlea@vision.net.au.

Peanut Brittle JF-147 5/4/97

Party: Dave Rasch, Kelly Miller, Rob Williams, John H-S.

Aim: To cogitate on how we could fail to bring the right ropes to bottom the sucker yet again. (Se SS300).

Thankfully Dean's dark words had dissuaded us from visiting Cauldron Pot. Continuous rain on Friday made Peanut Brittle somewhat wetter than anticipated, so I assume Cauldron would have been a deluge.

The entrance was reached without drama, though some confusion about pitch lengths left Kelly half way down the first pitch/waterfall until an extra rope was lowered then the pitch re rigged.

Dave's assurances that the cave was bone dry last time and that we would probably lose the water before the next pitch didn't do much for my plunging body temperature. We forged onward, Kelly and I both taking advantage of the rigging practice. By the pitch after Junction Hall enthusiasm was definitely cooling. Two pitches later standing in another supposedly non-existent waterfall we realised we were one rope short and wouldn't be able to pass Dave's previous low point.

A timely retreat was called, deciding to de rig as none of us could imagine rushing back to finish the last pitches. The return was relatively free of incident although some careful manoeuvring on my part left Dave & Kelly with uncomfortably large rope packs. Sitting in the dark and shivering for an hour was almost suitable penance for our too quick exit.

Although drier conditions might have made the cave more enjoyable I could clearly see how it acquired its original "bad rap". It is worth noting that the whole cave is rigged on natural gear with good redirection's and rebelay's appearing whenever sought, making it quite good for rigging and SRT practice.

John H-S

Beginners Luck ? or scaring off new members. Necrosis 13/4/97

Beginners: Jason Reynolds, Muki, John H-S

Aim: A beginners trip for Jason & Muki, To bolt the aven noted on our last trip, and to remove all the bolting gear.

Just for something different we entered through Slaughterhouse, as this was Jason's first ever caving trip I thought the entrance series might prove inspiring. It did. We reached Trapdoor Stream in reasonable time. A quick detour to the scaling pole aven to gaze at the Indian rope trick revealed recent flooding as all our previous tracks were gone and the floor of the aven was still very wet in places.

Herpes III elicited the usual noises of appreciation, as did the "tiger tooth" type passage leading up to the aven. Muki opted for the sharp end, wanting to learn the gentle art of aid climbing. Jason and I alternated the belay, jogging on the spot to stay warm while belaying must have been an interesting site.

1.5 hours climbing lead to the top of the pitch in a small chamber with the stream issuing from a slot in the wall. Climbing into a tight rift above the chamber lead to a balcony overlooking the pitch then back into the rift to rejoin the stream above the restriction. The passage continued up in two cascades through clean black limestone with some large flowstone for contrast. The second cascade about 8m high will need aiding. The clean rock and the void above the cascade boosted hopes of a continuation in similar passage above.

A return to push this lead would involve a long trip with quite a bit more aiding. If this passage continues at the same angle as hoped the next pitch shouldn't be far away. **Any takers?**

The entrance was reached at 8:30 pm after 10.5 hours underground. With about 20m vertical and 30m horizontal of continuing new passage, I think the beginners had had a good introduction to caving.

John H-S

Ida Bay Track Management 19-20th April 1997

Present; Ian Houshold (Leader since no accidents occurred) and Stuart Graham (NPWS) Stephen Bunton, Arthur Clarke, Dean Morgan with Anne from South Australia, Jol Desmarchelier and Kelly Miller on Saturday and with John and Maree Hawkins-Salt on Sunday.

Dean's machine struggled with a flat tyre and a dodgy ignition system so he and I were consequently late reaching Dover. We were rescued by Arthur sleeping in and therefore we rendezvoused moderately simultaneously at Benders Quarry about 11.30, a car swap to the Cockle Creek road having been organized by the punctual people.

The objective of the weekend was to walk a number of the cavers' tracks which cross the Ida Bay Karst. These tracks are generally marked in a semi-systematic way with flagging tape and recorded in a semi-systematic way in various caving club journals. The fact that these taped

tracks are in the World Heritage Area makes them subject to management by NPWS and they need to be considered in their track management plan.

The first shock to the cavers was that it is no longer possible to drive to the top of the quarry. Most of us thought that when the quarry was being rehabilitated that the road would remain open. It was closed to prevent hoons hooning on the upper benches of the quarry but now that the quarry is protected by an extremely substantial gate this no longer seems an issue. For some cavers it is a mere inconvenience but for exploration trips it has almost succeeded in killing off interest that side of the hill. It has therefore succeeded in its aim of protecting Exit Cave in the long term. Those cavers doing tourist trips into the known caves now need to add almost an hour to the length of a fairly long trip.

The next dialogue between cavers took place at the top of the quarry where we talked about the location of the start of the Skinner Track and the status of this track. As a caver I would like to see the Skinner Track become a permanent, well marked trunk route through the area and a series of survey reference points. The tracks branching from it to other caves need not be so well marked but either way NPWS are concerned about the environmental degradation and thus they are keen to see all these tracks following routes which minimise erosional damage.

We briefly looked down the Pseudocheirus Track, up the National Gallery Track and discussed its re-routing. We then looked at the Mini-Martin, Big Tree Pot Track but not the Old Ditch Row Track. We looked at the gates on the entrance to Exit namely Slipped -In, Dropped-In and Bobs Hole. Ian demonstrated their nifty "opening from the inside if you don't have a key or loose it, you idiot!" function. From there it was off to the entrance of Exit Cave. This was a place that I hadn't visited since Easter 1977, yes 20 years ago! Exit Cave was my first cave in Tasmania. For all other trips into the Exit Cave system I'd used other entrances.

With time running out or daylight, more particularly, it was every person for themselves on the walk out to the road. The track albeit flat is a lot wetter and boggier than I remember. A topic of discussion at high speed was the lack of enjoyment that punters going on an Exit Cave Tour would experience trudging in and out along this track on a daytrip. Arthur spoiled his reputation and actually got out of the bush just on dark, not sometime later than this, as is more typical. Anne was a little less than impressed with the dismal end to a day's scrub trudging... the rest of us were desensitized to Tassy conditions due to years of over-exposure.

Further discussion of management issues passed the evening at Arthur's.

John and Maree arrived bright and early. Sunday's excursion was through the scrub at the base of Blayney's Quarry via several swallets and then towards Hobbit Hole and back via Revelation Cave and Yodellers Pot. In an attempt to re-route the track out of the steep gully below these caves we headed cross-country and Arthur announced that now we were entering unexplored territory. No sooner had he done so, than I found a small hole at the base of a right-angled corner in a small cliff. There was a drop of about 3m to the floor but it was dirty and a bit tight so I left it, tagged with a plastic red, white and green bread bag. Before it becomes famous and gets called Bread Bag Cave, I'd prefer Vogelshaft after the brand of the bread!

We returned to the quarry stopping occasionally to discuss the "status" of tracks. Again I'd like to see a main trunk track here to aid future exploration and documentation. Ian and Stuart weren't convinced of the necessity for this and we agreed to prioritise the work on the Skinner Track. Depending on the success of the work on that track we would then evaluate tracks in this surprisingly interesting little Karst area.

The only other discussion for the weekend was John's proposal to run commercial trips through Midnight Hole. Thus the start to the Midnight Hole track was also investigated.

All in all it was a most successful weekend. It was good to liase so closely with NPWS over track management and a weekend in the scrub was definitely more congenial and productive than typing submissions and reading recommendations. Thanks to Ian for proposing this weekend and listening to our views and to Stuart who will be the man on the ground. Well not entirely...

The acid test will be whether any cavers turn up to track maintenance weekends in the future. I urge everyone to attend, otherwise it will become evident that the cavers don't really value these tracks and there won't be a lot of incentive for NPWS to maintain them either.

Stephen Bunton.

Stuff

Bolt laddering, how to, should we?

You will notice many recent trip reports have referred to the practice of bolt laddering. With a sport climbers' disregard for ethical or environmental considerations I have rushed into this practice with very little consideration/discussion of possible impacts.

The practice of bolt laddering has been around for many years and was often used by aid climbers to link a climb through sections of otherwise blank rock. The difference here is that big wall climbers left them in place for the next climber. In caving the bolts can be fully removed and a semi permanent rope rigged in its place. This leaves only the empty 8mm hole as evidence.

How to.

Bolt laddering is the technique of building a ladder out of bolts, to climb a rock face or in this case an aven, in the hope that something significant will be found at the top.

1. A bolt (I have found 8mm by 40mm Dynabolts) offer the best compromise of acceptable strength and speed. It is placed by drilling a hole in the rock at ones' maximum reach. To this a hanger plate is attached then a Quick Draw (*double carabineer and short sling*) and an Etrier (*short 5 rung rope ladder*).
2. The climber is belayed with dynamic rope the same as for lead climbing. They should also trail a static rope for rigging the pitch and to pass extra gear up and down.
3. Clip the quick draw with the dynamic rope and climb as high as possible on the Etrier then with a short sling or daisy chain clip directly to the bolt hanger.
4. Reach up and repeat the process using a second Etrier. Retrieve the first Etrier and continue.



As with normal aid climbing traditional protection like nuts, hexes, pitons and SLCDs can and should be used where possible instead of bolts. If the rock is of sufficient quality, free climbing moves can be made to hasten progress.

Another variation is to use a skyhook for every second move if no natural placement is available a small hole can be drilled about 15mm deep at an angle of about 45 degree's. This is much faster and saves battery power thus extending the range.

Dynabolts and hangers can be easily removed and reused several times. On muddy rock it is no trouble to grab a handful of mud and cover the holes. ERASING ALL TRACES of your desecration.

The above technique allows 2 or at most 3 people to carry enough equipment to scale to any reasonable height - 10 to 20m an hour would be average progress. The benefits over older scaling techniques are obvious.

Should we?

The argument over whether to place bolts or not is as old as the hand drill and in my opinion the two camps will never be reconciled. The decision over whether to place one bolt or none or many should be made with careful consideration of the following points.

- The preferred ethics of those who discovered the cave.
- The preferred ethics of those responsible for the majority of exploration in that cave.
- Guidelines of any relevant land or cave management authorities.

If rock climbing circles are anything to judge by then heaven help the individual who makes an inappropriate decision.

Where and why? The mechanics of where and why will depend greatly on the structure of the karst area concerned. In this case I am referring specifically to the Junee Florentine area. In particular Growling Swallet and to a lesser extent other major caves in the area. Throughout the exploration of Growling Swallet the discovery of higher level fossil sections was significant in bridging across to connect with major parallel stream systems. Also the surface over these systems has been heavily explored with many draughting pots narrowing down or choking off. Pushing as far as practical up inlet streams in the system should help to narrow the choice of which caves above might succumb to more concerted persuasion. The final version of the On Station software will be able to calculate the UTM of any station in the system so by surveying up these inlets then plugging the resulting UTM into a handheld GPS the GPS unit can lead you to a point near enough directly above a known point in the cave. Although this idea is not new the application of new tec simplifies the process enormously.

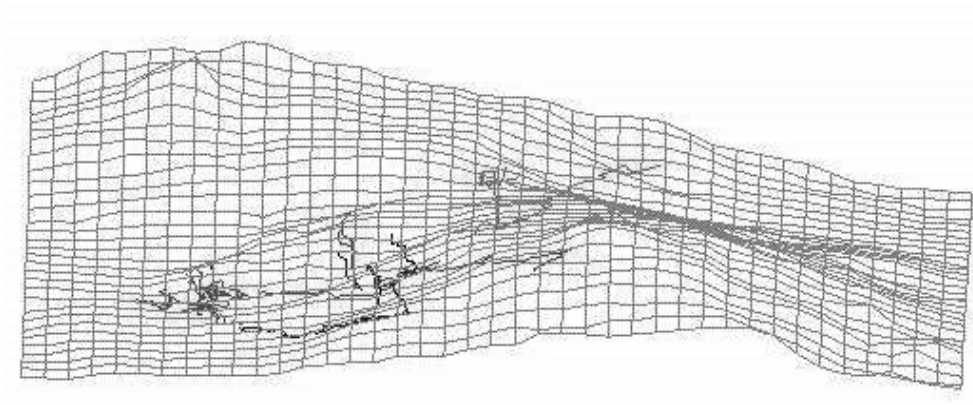
John H-S

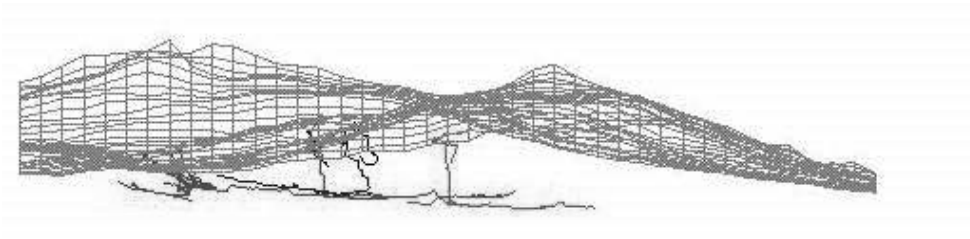
Net Stuff

This is an abbreviated version of net specific stuff contained in the on line version of the spiel. Unfortunately unless the spiel changes to a full colour glossy format I cannot include the wonderful graphics, full colour photos, screen shots and direct links. Anyone who would like to subscribe to the electronic version please contact the editor.

On Station

Over the past couple of months I have been playing with various cave mapping programs in an attempt to decide which program to use in conjunction with the Club Archive. So far On Station seems to be the best choice. With Stuart's help most of the SMPS data has now been ported across. You can download the On Station software from <ftp://cvs.openbsd.org/pub/onstation/onstatn3.zip> To use it you will also need to install [opengl.zip](ftp://cvs.openbsd.org/pub/onstation/opengl.zip) from <ftp://cvs.openbsd.org/pub/onstation/opengl.zip> A copy of the TCC's data in On Station format is available by Email attachment to STC members upon request - contact the editor. On Station will only run on Win95 or NT not having access to a Mac I can't recommend a suitable package for that platform.





These shots give some idea of the potential of the system, they are a lot easier to read in colour. The area shown covers Growling Swallet, Serendipity and Niggly systems. Growling Swallet entrance is the cluster of passages in the lower left corner of both shots. Wherretts Lookout is in the right foreground and The Knobs in the left background.

OzCavers snippets:

The following section includes the odd general interest item copied from the OzCavers mailing list.

Subject: Clubs address list web pages

Date: Sat, 5 Apr 1997 17:58:07 +1000 (EST)

From: Peter MATTHEWS matthews@melbpc.org.au

Glenn Baddeley's long awaited clubs list web pages have now been loaded. (Thanks Glenn! - another of ASF's doers.) The pages show all ASF and other speleological organisations in Australia, together with their address, contact person, and any web pages.

<http://rubens.its.unimelb.edu.au/~pgm/austcave/orglist.html>

Subject: Population Dynamics

Date: Mon, 21 Apr 1997 14:30:57 -0500

From: Keir Vaughan-Taylor keir@es.su.oz.au

When Margaret Thatcher introduced the poll tax, the census data indicated that persons between 18 and 35 vanished from the population.

When ASF lost SSS from its ranks, the reason was the fees. Indeed when the fees were reduced later the ranks of ASF swelled, club suddenly gaining members left and right. It appeared as if the population explosion was going to serious impact caving. Sadly SSS never rejoined.

The recent fee increases are already being allocated to the many worthy commissions....and I hear, an ID card for cavers ! I am wondering which clubs are considering withdrawal from ASF altogether. Anyone out there would like to comment.

Subject: Re Population Dynamics/ASF commissions

Date: Mon, 21 Apr 1997 16:12:52 +1000

From: BStewart@mhl.nsw.gov.au

Keir,

you must be joking about worthy commissions, what about the Cave Diving part of ASF? what a joke, what an absolute joke, that lazy slob Ron Allum hasn't done a thing for years and when someone tried to chuck him out and put some new blood in up went the hue and cry, oh poor Ron he's been away etc etc etc etc etc He's been away for many a year and hence the relationship with the CDAA for example has been non existent. No wonder people or society's leave ASF never to return, and now I read an ID card for cavers! what next, what a waste of money, what would you do with an ID card for cavers? is this what we can aspire to have for our fees another lump of plastic! can you blame SSS for not rejoining, why would they when this crap goes on. Cathys right Keir your very OBTUSE
Bruce Stewart

Subject: Jenolan Diving

Date: Tue, 29 Apr 1997 09:45:05 -0500

From: "Keir Vaughan-Taylor" keir@es.su.oz.au

(I think this report is for a dive upstream in Spider cave, very close to Mammoth ED)

The trip reports for the last years diving at Jenolan will be posted today on the SUSS web page some time today and will also be in the next SUSS bulletin.

http://www.es.su.oz.au/StaffProfiles/keir/caves/SUSS/SUSS_Home_Page

This weekend at Jenolan....(Written by Greg Ryan and edited bits by me.)

Entered the cave 10:00am Saturday morning. Made reasonable progress to the first sump, where we split company with Jenny and Matthew who were going to do the dry way. After ferrying the packs though the sump, I saw Matthew high in the roof, and he asked directions. I said I didn't know the cave, but that he had to go further north. After getting back into caving clobber, Keir and Ron went searching for them. Eventually they were found and they decided to go no further and head out. That added an hour to the trip. With only five porters the chain length for the gear was not really enough and 26 packs are difficult to stack in tiny crawlways.

We got to the dive site and Ron hit the water at 5.05pm. Ron was away for an hour. He tidied up Dave's line, then added 70m. It continues in a large 5m by 5m cathedral window shaped passage at -16m which then starts to descend to -30m. At -30m there is a crescent shaped restriction revealing a similar sized passage continuing below. But Ron couldn't easily negotiate the squeeze and was at 1/3s, so returned. He reported loud sounds from bubbles rising into what is possibly a surface but did not investigate. This will be the prime goal of any future dive. Ron was away for an hour.

We had a hot drink and waited to let the silt settle. Mike and Merv started the dive two hours after Ron's return, but there did not appear to be any improvement in the vis. Merv led, and negotiated the -15m restriction in zero vis, but Mike could not work out the restriction, nor read his gauges, so returned after trying for 10 minutes. Merv said vis cleared to a metre or so beyond the restriction, and continued clearing. He went as far as where it begins to roll off from -16m to -30m then returned quickly to check on Mike. The resulting video appears to be next to worthless, with close up pictures of orange mud.

As it was getting late, and the vis was very poor, Greg Ryan and I did not dive. We portereed gear back through Max Headroom Passage, the rock pile past the X window back through the Pike Lake sump and left it at the Riverway for the pick up team the next day. We got out at about 4.30am. The ABC Science show is doing a spot on the dive in the near future.

Subject: Publication trend

Date: Fri, 2 May 1997 08:55:03 -0500

From: Keir Vaughan-Taylor keir@es.su.oz.au

SUSS is now publishing the SUSS bulletin on the World Wide Web

http://www.es.su.oz.au/StaffProfiles/keir/caves/SUSS/SUSS_home_page.html

The last eight bulletins are available, the last issue contains comprehensive trip reports on the diving at Jenolan and some other places.