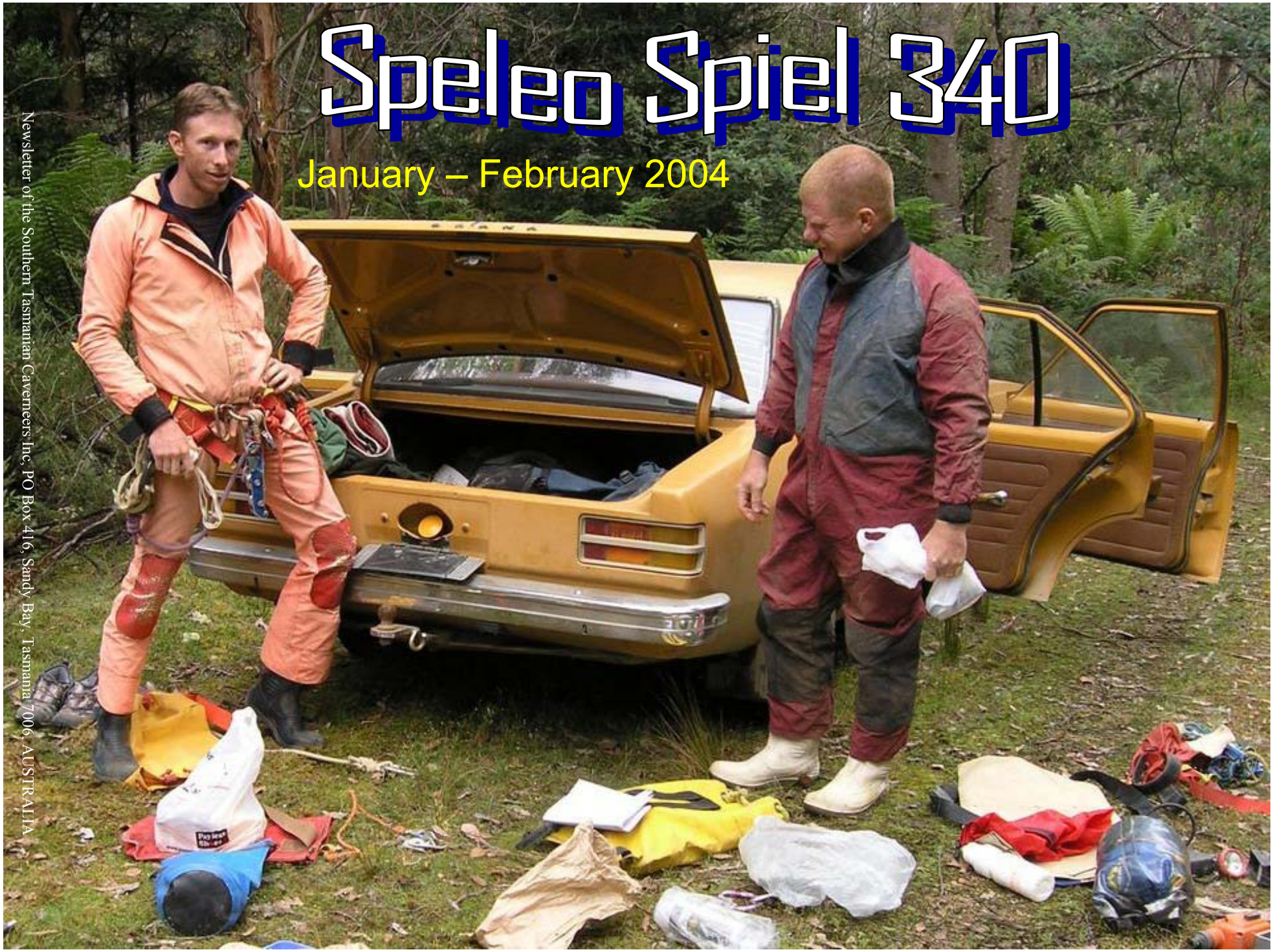
Speleo Spiel 340

January – February 2004



Newsletter of the Southern Tasmanian Caverneers Inc, PO Box 416, Sandy Bay, Tasmania 7006, AUSTRALIA

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Front Cover:
Two idiots proudly displaying their rubber suits and a clapped out 'Orana' with a temporary fuel cap (Photo by Gavin Brett)

Back Cover:
Jeff Butt's 'Special Citation' presented at the AGM in appreciation of his efforts for the club (Prepared by S Bunton))

STC was formed from the *Tasmanian Caverneering Club*, the *Southern Caving Society* and the *Tasmanian Cave and Karst Research Group*. ***STC*** is the modern variant of the Oldest Caving Club in Australia.

The Speleo Spiel

Newsletter of the
Southern Tasmanian Caverneers Incorporated
PO Box 416, Sandy Bay, Tasmania 7006
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Issue No. 340, Jan. - Feb. 2004

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Editorial

Here it is, ladies and gentlemen.
I hope that I can maintain the impeccable standard set by Geoff Wise during my reign as editor. I thought that putting out my first spiel a few weeks late would be a good start.
I had heard rumours that getting people to write trip reports can be difficult. I have evidence to the contrary and have included two versions of the one trip below!
I promise to be controversial and as politically incorrect as possible. Please send any criticism to the nearest garden gnome you can locate, or failing that, to Janine McKinnon who has written 95% of this Spiel anyway (insert Janine/gnome jokes here).
I will also take this opportunity to welcome aboard 'the Spiels' new official sponsor, the Xerox Shop in Bathurst St. They will be discounting the photo copying costs for Spiel production in return for advertising in the Spiel and word of mouth and business from STC members. The deal is still in its infancy and I will provide more precise details regarding member benefits at Xerox in future editions.
Enjoy the read…

Alan Jackson

Stuff 'n Stuff

A reminder that subs are due for 2004/05 and are payable to our lovely new Treasurer, Claire Brett, who will happily ~~embezzle~~ accept your money. A summary of rates follows:

Category	Full Rate	Discounted*
Household	$175	$160
Full	$110	$95
Concession/junior	$90	$75
Prospective	$30	
Active Life Members	$68	
ASF-exempt Full	$40	
ASF –exempt Prospective	$10	

*The discounted rates are available to those who opt to receive Speleo Spiel electronically and who renew their membership during the first three months of the membership year (i.e. by 30 June 2004)

Forward Program

Tassy Pot – P hanger testing.....24th March
Contact A Jackson
Riveaux Caves Project..... March/April
Contact A Clarke
Croesus Cave ..... 2nd April
Contact R Tunney
Serendipity.... no set date yet, but if you're interested…
Contact A Jackson
General Meeting (and EGM).....7th April
(Shipwright Arms, Battery Point)
Social Meeting.....21st April
Greg Middleton is showing more slides from Madagascar!

IB-11Midnight Hole: 27 January 2004

By Janine McKinnon

Party: Jason Gardner, Matt Cracknell, Janine McKinnon, Ric Tunney,.

Gavin Brett had returned from a Midnight Hole trip to report the two-years-old P-hangers were wearing away. Gavin is an engineer, so we couldn't doubt the truth of this report; but engineers talk in microns, so we weren't sure if it was significant wear. Anyway, in consultation with Jeff Butt, it was decided that we should fit steel rings to the P-hangers on the three longest pitches (pitch 3, 39m; pitch 5, 34m & pitch 6, 49m). It was thought that, as these involve the most rope-pulling and are far enough into the cave for the ropes to be muddy, they would have the most wear. The decision only to put rings on these pitches was constrained as Jeff only had six, 10mm stainless steel rings. We decided to attach the rings to the P-hangers with 8mm carbon steel maillons, tightened with a spanner and stuck with Locktite.

We all met at the car park at 9.30 am and it was a straight-forward walk to the cave entrance. Jason overheated a bit on the climb, which exacerbated his 'flu symptoms', but he recovered in the cool of the cave.

I had made up a temporary notice for the cave entrance and the log book (see below):

Gavin had leant us his digital callipers. We measured all the P-hangers at three locations: the top (horizontal part), the outside (vertical part) and the bottom (at the apex where the load is taken and where rubbing occurs). The purpose of the first two measurements was

to obtain an idea of the mean diameter of the (nominally) 8mm P-hangers. In each case the figure recorded was the lowest of at least three measurements (in millimetres). Gavin showed touching faith in our conscientiousness by letting us juggle such a valuable instrument over some rather big drops. (*Table of measurements are shown in the following trip report – Jeff's technical version of events. Ed.*)

We were surprised there was visible wear on the first pair of P-hangers. On this pitch, the rope should be clean and not very abrasive. Similarly, the second pair were also worn. In each case, the wear on the pull-down hanger was much greater than on the abseil-from hanger. It was looking as if the stainless steel used for P-hangers is quite soft.

We replaced the log book at the bottom of the first pitch and drilled some holes in the bottom of its case; there were a couple of inches of water in the bottom.

The P-hangers on the third pitch had lost almost 0.4 mm. We attached maillons and rings and descended. We were using two ropes joined by a rethreaded Fig 8. The knot jammed safely against the ring. A test pull showed the rope ran easily through the rings.

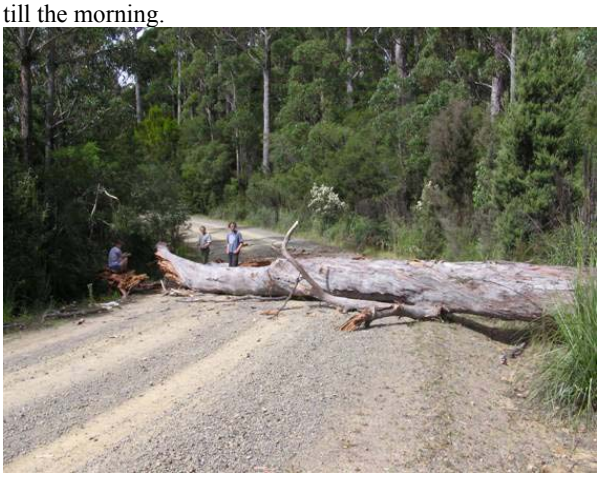
When we saw the P-hangers for the fourth pitch we had a surprise. The pitch is only 8m, but both hangers were badly worn. One had lost 0.6mm. The problem was, we only had four rings and maillons to do the next two pitches. Should we use one here and one on the fifth pitch, or save them both for the fifth pitch? We decided the wear, being greater than the wear on the fourth pitch, warranted fitting a ring. So we fitted a ring to the more worn hanger and continued.

Both P-hangers on the fifth pitch were badly worn. As we suspected that both hangers on the sixth pitch would be really badly worn, we fitted one ring to the more worn hanger and continued.

The sixth pitch was in the worst condition of all, as we had expected. One hanger had lost 1.3mm! The hangers have been in for about two years and at that rate about ten years hence a party would cut through the hanger when pulling down their rope! We fitted two rings to prevent this disaster.

The situation now is that some of the worn hangers have been protected. Two hangers – the right on pitch 4 & the left on pitch 5 – are worn and need protecting quickly. As it's a lot harder to replace a P-hanger than to replace a ring, in the long run we need to protect all the hangers in this cave. Hopefully, we can arrange for the next party to do this and to replace the sign at the cave entrance.

We returned to the cars at 3.30 pm. We were then delayed when we found a very large tree had fallen across South Lune Road. Fortunately CDMA phones work from the car park. Matt rang Keith Vanderstay at Hastings and he arranged for Forestry to clear the road for us. This was done so efficiently that we were only held up for an hour. We were lucky it was so early and people were still at work and we were not forced to stay till the morning.



If a tree falls and nobody hears it…(Photo Ric Tunney)

Some of the P-hangers have had maillons and rings fitted. This is to stop the P-hangers from being abraded when ropes are pulled down on through-trips. On these P-hangers, please make sure you run your rope through the rings, not the P-hangers.

January 2004

Midnight Hole temporary notice

IB-11 Midnight Hole – The Wear and Tear on the P-Hangers: 27 January 2004

By Jeff Butt

Because of the wear and tear on the P-hangers in Midnight Hole a bit of preventative work was called for. On 27/1/04 Ric Tunney, Janine McKinnon, Matt Hines and Jason Gardiner headed down to Midnight Hole equipped with the following bits and pieces

- Gavin Bretts' electronic Vernier Calipers.
- Six 8 mm maillons and six stainless steel 'descending rings' (52 mm outside diameter ring made from 10 mm stock) that I happened to buy in Canada on spec. last year for such a purpose.
- one bottle of loctite (for locking up the maillons to deter theft).

The intention was to measure the wear on all the P-hangers and to install the 6 rings/maillons on longer pitches (pitch 3, 5 and 6).

The DMM Eco P-hangers are made from nominally 8 mm stock, and the specifications are that they are safe in use as long as the minimum worn diameter in any direction is 6 mm or greater. I got the team to measure the P-hangers in several places so that we could really identifiy what was due to wear and what was due to manufacturing tolerances.

The Table below shows the measurements the team took. The maximum wear was 1.34 mm. As one goes down the cave the ropes get progressively grittier, which increases the abrasion potential. Also the longer the pitch the longer the abrasion lasts during rope retrieval. The logbook records show that prior to this trip there have been 17 trips down the cave (about 10 trips/year). The P-hangers went in in Sep/Oct 2001 and the logbook was installed on 21/7/02. So I'd estimate that the P-hangers may have been used up to a maximum of 30 times.

The plan is to install similar rings on all the pitches for this popular cave. I currently have placed an order to Canada for some more of the rings (where they are extremely reasonably priced at ~$4 each).

Ric made up a small sign to attach to the sign at the entrance of Midnight Hole telling of the installation of the rings. Now, when threading your ropes at this cave, you should thread the rings and not the P-hangers themselves. The bulk of the rings should mean that the rate of any wear from now on should be extremely small and that we will not have to go to the time and effort to replace any of the P-hangers in the future due to rope wear.

The places where the team elected to put the maillons/rings is shown in the last column.

Pitch	P-Hanger	Top (mm)	Outside (mm)	Bottom (mm)	Nominal Wear (mm)	Ring Installed
1	Left	8.04	8.07	7.71	0.29	No
21 m	Right	8.02	8.06	7.98	0.02	No
2	Top	8.08	7.94	7.70	0.30	No
12 m	Bottom	7.98	8.30**?**	7.95	0.05	No
3	Left	8.01	8.00	7.65	0.35	**Yes**
39 m	Right	8.05	8.06	7.63	0.37	**Yes**
4	Left	8.03	8.04	7.40	**0.60**	**Yes**
8 m	Right	8.04	8.02	7.62	0.38	No
5	Left	8.10	7.98	7.37	**0.63**	No
34 m	Right	8.15	7.96	7.14	**0.86**	**Yes**
6	Left	8.09	7.96	6.66	**1.34**	**Yes**
50 m	Right	8.03	8.07	7.22	**0.78**	**Yes**

IB-9 Big Tree Pot 1 February 2004

By Janine McKinnon

Party Gavin Brett, Alan Jackson, Janine McKinnon.

After 4 days of record rainfall this trip almost didn't go, but as the weather appeared to be calming down a bit on Saturday, Alan & Gavin decided they would go. I came along for the ride. I've never done this cave and it's on my list of "must get around to sometime" so now seemed a good time-whilst I think I can still do a 90m prussik.

We got to the entrance (which for those who don't know is right beside the Mini-Martin track just short of Mini-Martin itself) after an hours walk and at a very respectable 10 A.M. As we got organised Gavin started to set up the rigging for the first pitch, which is right near the entrance at the bottom of a short (approx. 3-4m) mud slope. Being a hands-on, engineery sort of guy he couldn't help fiddling, could he? So as we were pondering the consequences of our response of "yes" to his question "is this rock moving?" he pulled out a small stone wedged under one corner of the rock and a big rock started sliding down the slope. Luckily it wedged before it blocked the entrance to the cave (it was bigger than the entrance hole to the first pitch). We

had lost our tie back anchor (not a great one obviously!) but more importantly it was a "Rock of Damocles" hanging there, waiting to crush anyone near the pitch head or trap people in the cave if it kept sliding.

We decided to try and move it to a more secure position and after much discussion & looking for suitable rigging points we made an attempt to pull it up the slope with ropes & 2 pulleys. Not a hope; we moved it a few inches and that was it. Then we tried lowering it down the slope in an attempt to position it on a flat area beside the first pitch. We couldn't even get it to move. It seemed well and truly wedged (although it didn't look that secure). So we left it tied back with tapes and traces to the bedrock on the flat area outside the cave entrance. If you look around at ground level back from the slope, out towards the valley, you will find the bedrock undercut, providing a good anchor point. Gavin then started rigging the entrance pitch with the tie-back to this. It was now 11.30A.M, so our little excitement had used up quite a bit of time.

Our subsequent descent was smooth and uneventful. The cave was quite cool and dripping down the pitches but not wet to the top of the 90m pitch. The rigging to this point (except, of course for our entrance pitch tieback) had been straight forward and according to previously published details (see Speleo Spiel no. 317). We used separate ropes for 3 of the first 4 pitches as we found this more convenient for several reasons, but the one long rope could be used if parties preferred.

We put a handline down the 4m that is described as a "pitch that is an easy climb" and whilst this made it quicker to negotiate it really is quite a simple "bridge type" climb that shouldn't require a hand line for a competent caver.

As a rigging point for a 90m pitch the broken stalagmite base on the LHS at the pitch head was a little unnerving (seeing the broken off top half of the formation sitting next to the base) but served us fine. The 90m is a magnificent pitch, a beautiful free-hanging shaft of large dimensions with a waterfall (a small one) coming in on the LHS about 2/3 of the way down. The acoustics were excellent and there was time for a full song on the way down, as a slow abseil was necessary to avoid the rope overheating. The steady drizzle down the pitch also helped keep everything, including cavers, cool. Alan was disappointed though as he said the acoustics weren't as good as they'd been when he last did the trip in dryer conditions. Apparently the waterfall isn't normally there and the sound of falling water was interfering with the sound reverberation.

We rigged the last 9m as a separate pitch, and this is where we really got wet. The waterfall coming in on the LH wall runs across the floor at the bottom of the 90m and over the 9m right where the abseil goes. A fast abseil kept us pretty dry going down, but there was no chance of avoiding a drenching coming up right under the flow. This was only as a result of the higher than usual water levels in the cave. The boys had a poke around for 10 minutes at the bottom whilst I had lunch and then we started out. Time to the bottom: 2 hours.
I went up the 90m first and it was a magnificent prussik. The extreme bounce in the rope wasn't so pleasant.

The backward progress was fairly smooth and efficient with the person who took the bottom rope heading straight out of the cave whilst the other two derigged behind. We were all out a few minutes short of 5 hours from when we started rigging the first pitch, at 4:25 P.M.

The rock was still where we'd left it and a bit more debate, and shoving, on the subject convinced us all that it is fairly securely in position and should be alright to be left where it is. If any future groups fell unhappy with a couple of tonnes of rock hanging near the entrance they should bring some gear to secure it before they go underground. 3x3m tapes, 1x4m tape & 1trace should do it.

The walk back to the car was brightened up by a mobile botanical lesson from Alan, which very effectively took our minds off our heavy packs. Not that I can really complain as the boys had most of the heavy stuff. We were back at the cars an hour after leaving the cave. A very enjoyable day's caving in excellent company. This is a trip to be highly recommended for anyone competent in vertical skills.
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JF-36 Growling Swallet - Photography: 5 February 2004

By Janine McKinnon

Party: Ric Tunney, Janine McKinnon

This was a trip to practice photography with our new digital camera. The water level was high for summer and I think there has been some redirection of flow down the dry route at the lower waterfall. This was taking significantly more water than I remember for similar cave flow levels previously.
We spent most of the time underground exploring and photographing in the "Yorkshire Drain" passages as we had not previously been to this section of the cave (pretty amazing considering how many times we've been in this cave).
This area in the entrance series of Growling should really be considered as excellent beginner territory.
Anyway, after 3 hours we were out with a collection of, on subsequent viewing, rather poor images. More photography practice is definitely needed.

Searching for IB 1 – Revelation Cave: 7 February 2004

By Janine McKinnon

Party: Ric Tunney, Janine McKinnon.

Jeff (Butt) has proposed this cave as a field trip option for the conference next year. As none of the people likely to be leading field trips there had been to it we thought we'd better go and check its exact location and the best access to it. It might be a bit embarrassing to spend several hours wandering about in the bush trying to find it on a conference trip!

This was a good idea as we did take 3 hours to get there. There are the remnants of a very old (? 1985 exploration) taped track, which we followed but few of the tapes were left and there were several large tree falls along the path necessitating detours. Route finding was slow. The GPS was of little value most of the time. The route finished at a small stream sink which fitted the description of Hobbit Hole (IB 15). We were able to get a 6m EPE fix and it coincided very closely with a GPS location we already had. I couldn't find a tag; maybe it was never tagged?

We continued south, over into the next valley which our information said should contain IB1, and after some looking around found the tagged entrance. The entrance is uninspiring but the cave is reputed to have good passage in it. Again we got a good (7m EPE) GPS fix. This location is 40m NE of where the cave is shown on Arthur Clarke's 1989 map of the Ida Bay caves. (This is rather good considering Arthur didn't have access to a GPS and had to do a surface survey.)

About 30m down the valley we easily found a small, untagged pot which we took to be IB25 Yodellers Pot.

The route back to the quarry was via IB15 and, now knowing the way, took us an hour back to the car park.

Skinners Track - Track Clearing: 8 February 2004

By Janine McKinnon

Party: Alan Jackson, Ric Tunney, Janine McKinnon, Joe ?.

After our trip up to Big Tree Pot last week Alan was keen to tidy the track a bit. Ric and I were already staying down at Ida Bay and so Alan arrived at 8:30 A.M. He had bought along someone he had met the previous day who was keen to have a look at the geology of the area (*never found out his last name – Ed.*). The weather was good so it was an excellent day for wandering along in the bush.

A lot of the winter falls had been moved on a previous (aborted due to floods) trip to Exit cave in November but nothing had been cleared on the Mini-Martin track.

We managed to tidy up both the track to Mini-Martin track and Skinners Track all the way to Exit.

IB-97 Pseudocheirus: 9 February 2004

By Janine McKinnon

Party: Ric Tunney, Janine McKinnon

This was another proposed conference trip venue that we wanted to locate and visit. Mad Phil (Rowsell) gave us some directions by phone from the UK which proved to be excellent and we found the cave with minimal stuffing around. It is a couple of hundred metres further down the hillside from Comet Pot. After passing to the RHS of the Comet Pot doline we followed the ridge down, and slightly off to the right, until we reached an area of numerous dolines. The route then curves around to the left along a narrow ridge with dolines on both sides. IB 97 is next to IB 98 which is a small swallet.

IB97 is a pot with a largish chamber at the bottom. There are some old but quite nice formations in the chamber.

The pot is a 40m deep and about 5m wide mostly cylindrical tube. It makes for quite a scenic abseil and prussic. We rigged a tape around the tree right on the lip with a tie back to a tree about 5m directly behind the belay tree. There is a bolt and hanger in-situ on the wall about 10m down just below the obvious first ledge. This is for the necessary rebelay. The hanger looks very new and was probably put in last summer. Unfortunately we were unable to remove the hanger and put a keeper in the spit as the hanger and nut were of smaller dimensions than the club's supply (and the one we had brought to use thinking we would have to put our own hanger in) and so our spanner was too big. As the hanger is in excellent condition though, it can probably be used safely by any future parties for several years yet.

There was a glancing rub further down the pitch but as this was not sharp, and was only 8-10m above the bottom no protection or rebelay was thought necessary. No damage was seen on our 11mm Bluewater rope on inspection at the end of the trip.

It doesn't take long to look around the chamber, but we played with our new digital camera for a while before heading out.

This cave would make an excellent trip for cavers fairly new to SRT and crossing rebelays (although 40m is quite a good drop for those new to rope work). It is dry, easy to communicate at the rebelay point with people at the top and an uncomplicated, mostly free hang pitch. It is also in interesting topography and visually impressive.

The walk back up the hill and back to the carpark took about 1 hour.

JF-344 Serendipity #1 – (*a retro bolting frenzy! Ed.*): 12 February 2004

By Janine McKinnon

Party: Alan Jackson, Gavin Brett, Ric Tunney, Janine McKinnon.

Alan and Gavin had been keen to get into this cave for quite a while and they thought that we might be useful to have along as we've been there several times before.
Foolish boys. It's 20 years since Ric or I have been there and we've been into lots of other caves since to help confuse our memories. But we wanted to go there again so we were in.
We did remember how to get there, which was useful, particularly as there were no tapes at the turnoff from McCallum's Track and only one or two in the first few hundred metres along the track. Lots of tree falls and clambering over large logs slowed the pace a bit but we got to the entrance after 45 minutes walk from the Eight Rd car park.
We had tackle to bottom the cave but we only intended to go to the 4th pitch on this trip, and leave the final pitch rope there to continue to the bottom on the next trip. Alan and Gavin had to work the next day so we didn't want to make this (or any?) trip too long or late returning (that's my excuse anyway, I'm no longer young or silly [or probably fit] enough to choose to do 14 hour epics).
We planned (roughly) on doing 4, maybe 5, trips into the cave in total so we could explore it properly, including side bits on the way down and the extensive passage at the bottom. We particularly wanted to look around at the end nearest to "New Feeling" in Growling Swallet to hopefully finally determine if a connection is possible. I know, others have looked hard before, but what's wrong with a bit of (probably self delusional) dreaming now and then?
After sorting out gear we started off and got 20 metres before encountering our first route-finding puzzle. Where was the entrance? I remembered it being a tight (now dry but I remembered it as taking water) Swallet about 10m from a small cliff. Ric remembered it being directly below the cliff; Gav and Alan were certain it had to be where the water sank about 30m away. We all went exploring and Ric and I were both proved correct as our two respective entrances joined up almost immediately. We were unable to find the tag despite looking around at both entrances. We'll look a bit more next trip.
After a bit of hunting around in the rock pile immediately inside the entrance we located the easiest route down, which proved to be a small(ish) hole on the RHS of the small chamber we were in. Lots of loose rocks made for a careful passage of this steeply descending section, but technically it was very easy.
Previous trip reports (15 years ago approx) talk of this entrance area being very constricted and unstable and likely to seal off at any time. Apart from the potential problem of loose rocks (being kicked down on people below) we didn't find it tight or worrisome; not nowadays anyway.
The point where the stream sinks and you climb up to a crawl on the right was easy to find as it was well trogged despite the cave probably not having been visited in at least a decade. The (lots of) little piles of cairns at intervals along the way here helped too! To an excess really. I didn't remember them so maybe they were put in by groups subsequent to our last trip. They certainly didn't do much for our "wilderness experience".
Our progress to the top of the first pitch (Cathedral Pitch 31m) was quick and uneventful. Also much shorter than I'd remembered. Some time was spent rigging the pitch, which involved a short traverse (about 3-4m) along the rift above the drop and a rebelay off the boulder wedged in the rift.
The drop was a free-hang and essentially dry (just a few drips). This is a lovely pitch (they all are) with flowstone fluting on the RH wall for most of the pitch.
Castigation Crawl follows immediately from the bottom of the pitch and whilst I had remembered this section I had thought it elsewhere in the cave. It is a misnomer really-more like "some waddling and mostly narrow, high, tortuous serpentine" than "crawl".
It wasn't particularly hard to negotiate, even with full rope pack of 11mm rope (although it was quicker and nicer on the way out with no gear), and only took a few minutes to get through.
Diemos Pitch (36m) was next. A traverse line was rigged along the rift to the obvious boulder wedged over the drop. Again a lot of time was spent discussing and rigging the pitch. There is a bolt on the RH wall which had a hanger attached. The hanger was removed and the spit examined. Despite it being some 20 years old it looked OK so we decided to use it and placed a new hanger in it. We were worried about a potential rub-point we could see some 10m down the pitch, so a 3-way hang was set up using the bolt, a thread on the RH wall and the boulder. This worked fine, but on consideration after dropping the pitch and checking for rubs we decided that the bolt was unnecessary and the other two belay points would be fine on their own. We didn't bother taking it out of the set-up but on future trips we wouldn't use it.
Up to this pitch we were still dry (except Alan who'd gone playing in the stream sink at the entrance). The pitch was another free-hang but the stream hits a ledge partway down and after that the rope was partly in the spray of the waterfall. We only got damp on the way down but got moderately wet on the way up. The water levels in the cave were quite low so on a wetter trip this rigging would ensure a very wet prussik. There are some small projections on the wall partway down on the RHS and on the next trip we will try to use one to set up a redirection.
Another stream enters at the bottom of the pitch from the left and considerably increases the stream flow.
A short (4m) pitch only a few metres further along was rigged with a trace from a boulder wedged in the

passage about 3m above the drop. It was possible to do the pitch dry if some care was taken.
The next short section of passage was very narrow, tortuous serpentine and a little more difficult with a full rope pack than Castigation Crawl had been. On the way out I did discover it was wider (and therefore easier) if you stayed up higher.
Deluge Pitch (20m) was described as another traverse out along the rift and belaying off 2 bolts. Much, much time was spent trying to find these bolts (you can see that having Ric & me along for rigging memories wasn't much use!). To cut a long saga short, we tried traversing at stream level, 3m up, 5m up, 8m up…. Finally, when we were starting to think of "plan B" Alan found one of the bolts – just a casing that was projecting from the rock surface. This bolt was deemed unsafe, and was so from its initial placement. There was no sign of the other bolt so we decided to look more on the next trip. A good natural some 4m above the bolt was found that we decided would be useful when we rigged but as we had now been underground for 4½ hours we decided it was time to head out. Ric started out to save time waiting on pitches, whilst the rest of us secured gear and generally pfaffed (*is this a word, Janine? Ed.*) about for a while longer.
The trip out was smooth and easy without any tackle (oh, if all vertical caving was like this) and we were all out 1.5 hours from the turnaround.
We did find the turnoff to the higher entrance on the way out and I followed this out to ascertain where it was on the surface. It would be a suitable entry point if the JF344 entrance ever did choke off.
We spent a bit less than 6½ hours underground. We didn't do quite as much as we'd planned (we'd wanted to have the 4th pitch actually rigged) as the rigging had consumed more time than we'd expected but it had been a lot easier than I'd been expecting (?dreading) and a very fun, relaxed trip in great company. So far, the cave has been a lot easier and enjoyable than we'd remembered; but we haven't been down "Deluge "pitch yet! The saga will continue…..

LOST & FOUND: 1 petzl zoom head lamp. Found at the bottom of Diemos pitch. Condition – very poor.
1 rubber glove. Found at top of Deluge pitch.

JF-344 Serendipity #2: 21 February 2004

By Janine McKinnon

Party: Alan Jackson, Gavin Brett Geoff Wise, Ric Tunney, Janine McKinnon.

Our aim this trip was simply to continue rigging to the bottom of the cave. It had been raining quite a lot over the preceding two days so we were a bit concerned about how wet the cave would be. This turned out to be unwarranted as, even though the water levels were higher than last week they were not significantly so.
Three of us started underground at 9:45 A.M, with Alan and Gavin heading off about 10 minutes in front to get a start on rigging some sort of a rebelay or redirection on Diemos pitch to make the bottom of the pitch a bit drier. We caught them as Alan was descending the rebelay he had placed hanging from a ledge about 10m down the pitch and about 3m off to the right. The rebelay was a rigged over an obvious, but not large, projection and it needed some care when passing not to dislodge, but it gave a beautiful DRY drop to the bottom. Alan later complained about how muddy he had got when swinging over and holding on to the projection. There was no evidence this projection had ever been used before, but it certainly improved the pitch (*the reason it had not been used before is probably due to its unsafe appearance! Ed.*)
Ric, Geoff and I stayed together as we descended as Geoff had not been into the cave before.
We quickly reached the top of the 4th pitch (Deluge) and found Alan and Gavin half way through rigging the drop. A traverse line was rigged from a boulder in the large chamber before the start of the tortuous rift about 10m to the belay point. This was the large natural keyhole found on the last trip. There was a convenient ledge for a couple of people to sit on here, so I went out to join Alan and watch Gavin at work setting up the rebelay on the bolt about 5m down from the backup. Yes, this was the bolt protruding from the rock that we had deemed unsafe last trip, but as we'd been unable to find the other bolt, this one was in a perfect location for a rebelay from our anchor point and we had a "bomb proof" backup, so we decided to use it anyway. Gavin left almost no slack in the line between the backup and the bolt-just in case it did fail - which meant threading our petzl stops was a bit awkward, but it gave us more confidence in the safety of the rigging. A ledge near the bolt made the changeover easy. Gavin found a redirection further down on the right; just when you thought you might be about to get wet! This was a knob, about 5m above the bottom, around which he wrapped a tape. Again there was no evidence it had ever been used before. This redirection pulled the rope around a small corner away from the waterfall. We were down four pitches and were all basically dry.
Alan and Gavin headed down and on to check out the top of the last pitch and I followed next with the 70m 11mm rope for the final drop. It took a few minutes to negotiate the tight, tortuous serpentine with the rope and I arrived to find the boys finishing lunch and keen to start looking around for rigging points.
Some time was spent again looking around and discussing possible belay points. It was finally decided to rig a trace around a natural on the RH wall near a solid chockstone. A backup was tied over the top of the chockstone to a natural back at the start of the chamber, on the LHS.
Gavin descended and started looking around for a rebelay point on the obvious ledge about (yes, you guessed it) 10m down (well it wasn't 20m down I don't think).
As he did this the rest of us discussed our plan of action. We didn't think we'd spent enough time exploring the passage at the bottom today to be useful

and I couldn't see any point all going down just to poke around for an hour or so and then all have to chug our way out, with lots of waiting at pitches. We would be down the bottom next trip anyway. So it was decided that Ric and I would start heading out whilst Gavin and Alan completed the rigging to the bottom and then turn around and start out. Geoff thought about going down with them to bottom the cave but decided he'd prefer to start out with us.
I headed out first and waited for Ric at the top of the Cathedral pitch. Geoff was with him (well, not literally on the pitch of course) and Ric informed me that the other two were close behind them. I exited 6 hours after going underground with the others appearing over the next ½ hour.
It had taken us two trips to rig to the bottom, but by taking time and care with belay points the cave had been rigged dry all the way. On both trips we all emerged a little tired but in no way exhausted. On both enjoyed the walk back to the car in the late afternoon and we were back in Hobart for a late dinner.
Next time-fishing around at the bottom.

Notes on the bolts on Pitch 4 (Deluge)

The first bolt on this pitch was placed by Jean-Paul Sournier on 27 November 1982 (Speleo Spiel 182) during the second bottoming trip. A second bolt was placed by Al Warild between then and November 1983, as the first bolt had been poorly placed (Speleo Spiel 193). This bolt was then used for subsequent trips, but was reported as unsafe (Speleo Spiel 203), although it was continued to be used. The hole was not drilled deep enough and the casing protrudes about 4mm. The casing is now 21 years old. We were only prepared to use this bolt if it was well backed-up.

JF-223 Tassy Pot – P-Hangering: 25 February 2004

By Damian Bidgood

Party: Damian Bidgood, Gavin Brett, Alan Jackson

The trip started not exactly to plan; the start time was delayed briefly before Alan and Gavin leaving Jeff's House with the trusty "orana". After picking myself up in town and progressing to New Norfolk for a fuel and food stop, we were faced with a minor hitch, we did not have a fuel cap key. A phone call was made to Jeff who gave trusty permission to break the lock on the cap, instead the highly skilled garage attendant broke the cap off, half of which fell into the fuel tank. After a brief worry about bits and pieces in the fuel tank, the team purchased an expensive thief proof plastic cap to replace the other.

On arriving at the nine road Gavin put the massive height clearance that the race proven suspension on the "orana" gave, to the test. No the road did not come through the floor; it just gave character to it.

We arrived at the cave got dressed and started on the huge hike to the entrance, upon recovering at the entrance, Gavin prepared to rig the first pitch. He progressed over the side to the re belay point. Meanwhile Alan and I talked about the highly skilled strategy ahead of us with the drilling. After what seamed a long time, they checked on Gavin's progress (thinking he should be at the second pitch by now), they found he was still at the re belay looking for an anchor. After being joined by Alan who gave him the insight he needed, progress started again.

The trip ran smoothly with rigging and drilling being conducted until reaching the top of the bottom pitch. Roles were worked out, with Alan and Gavin descending the pitch to the first re belay near the top. The batteries on the Police drill were being used by this time as the club's battery pack was left in the chamber below the second pitch. The thinking behind this was that we had four holes to drill with the two batteries each of which Jeff and myself were getting three holes out of per battery. Well this was not to be the case today. They only managed one and a half holes. As two holes had already been drilled at the top of the bottom pitch, it was decided that I would climb and get the clubs battery pack whilst the other two finished the first re belay.

After returning with the battery pack, it was Alan who was going to descend to the bottom re belay to begin drilling. He rigged himself and descended to it and began to drill. Only short moments later there was some abusive yelling to be heard at the top of this pitch from below, this continued for some time until Gavin gained voice contact with Alan to find out what the problem was. The highly technical connectors which connected the battery pack to the drill were continually coming off because the highly technical elastic band which was used to help hold them on had fallen off into the never, never. So after a few more minutes of being amused by Alan's choice in words, Gavin descended to him to begin the gluing process. They then both ascended to the top of the pitch when this was finished.

It was decided to put in two hangers at the top of the vertical section of the third pitch, but during the drilling process only one and a half holes were drilled as the clubs battery pack which has proven eight plus holes spat the dummy after four. After this the remaining two holes were finished on the way out, with the only decision to be made was that the final hole would be finished off on the hanger testing trip.

In all there was seven hangers finished with the last one to be finalized soon; one is situated at the re belay on the top pitch to be used in conjunction with a natural there (tape or trace on a flake/spike). One at the top of the second pitch, to be used with another existing bolt there (stainless bolt with hanger in place). Two at the re belay section of the third pitch. Two at the top of the

bottom pitch to be used with the large rock tie back and one at each of the two re belays on the bottom pitch.

In all it was a successful trip showing that you can adapt and overcome, (*and that blood circulation in your legs is over rated! Ed.*), and batteries don't last forever. As a result of this trip there is now a new club battery pack and I have purchased a new 24volt drill with two batteries for the Police.

Retro-Bolting Serendipity? – Hang on a Minute!-February 2004

By Stefan Eberhard

When Serendipity was first explored and bottomed ca. 1980 it presented a great physical and technical caving challenge. A substantial proportion of the physical difficulty and technical challenge of exploring the cave lay in the fact that no bolts were placed – this required some innovative and imaginative rigging, and it also entailed lugging more rigging gear into the cave. After the first exploration we felt that the wilderness character and the great sporting challenge presented by the cave would be diminished considerably if bolts were placed by later parties. Thus in the write-up of the exploration published in ASF newsletter at the time, an explicit request was made that no bolts be placed in the cave.

Now twenty-four years after our first exploration of Serendipity, I still feel the same way about bolts in this particular cave. In this respect, I don't distinguish any difference between rock climbs and caves, and the ethical practise of respecting the style of the first ascent, or descent. In rockclimbing it is unethical to alter the character of a climb by placing additional bolts after the first ascent (retro-bolting), even if for perceived 'safety' reasons, although it is OK to remove old (unsafe) bolts and replace them with new bolts in the same position. In this way the original grade of difficulty and character of the climb (or cave) is preserved, and the adventure experience for future visitors is not diminished by reducing the objective dangers, and thus bringing the climb (or cave) down to a level that suits the abilities of those that otherwise might not be inclined to meet the original challenge.

The request to retain Serendipity as a 'bolt-free' cave was blatantly disregarded by a group of Sydney cavers who placed a bolt on the second pitch soon after the initial exploration. Previously this pitch had been safely rigged using all-natural anchors. Later trips placed two bolts on the third pitch to produce a Y hang out of the waterfall, with a tie-back to a natural anchor further back in the streamway. This is the only pitch where I would concede that the two bolts might be reasonably justified in terms of safety, by reducing exposure in the waterfall. All other bolts would be for convenience only. It was recently implied by an STC member that Serendipity was to be targeted for a retro-bolting exercise.

I fully support the club's efforts in replacing old and unsafe bolts, especially in popular caves such as Midnight Hole and KD for example, however, in extending this work to other caves I believe it is important that the club give some consideration to the ethical aspects raised above. In the case of Serendipity I hope that the traditional style of exploration in this cave will be respected!

Right of Reply-March 2004

By Alan Jackson

As all Speleo Spiel subscribers should now be aware by reading this far, the cave Serendipity in the Junee-Florentine area has endured a recent 're-visit'. This 're-visit', it would appear, has not been lacking in controversy. The four principle participants in the recent Serendipity trips, Alan Jackson, Gavin Brett, Ric Tunney and Janine McKinnon, have felt the need to a 'right of reply' to the various misconceptions that have been aired, particularly the preceding article by Stefan Eberhard, "Retro-bolting Serendipity…"

In an email circulated by Ric Tunney in his capacity as club secretary on the 5th February, it was proposed that Serendipity was on the cards, and that the visiting party intended "re-bolting where necessary". This comment appears to have been construed as 're-bolting where unnecessary and unethical'. As Ric's email clearly stated, we intended re-bolting **where necessary**, not wildy placing bolts wherever we could fit one in, and as a result no additional bolts have been placed, nor none replaced in our subsequent four trips.

A bit of research has shown that the original ASF newsletter account of Serendipity's exploration, authored by Stefan and Rolan Eberhard, does indeed include a request that no bolts be placed in this cave. The account of a trip on 27th November 1982 details the placement of the first bolt on the 3rd (Deluge Pitch). Interestingly, Rolan Eberhard, (one of the authors of the original ASF article), was present on that trip! Subsequent trip reports, authored by Stefan Eberhard, detail his efforts to locate various bolts in the cave. For someone so against their placement, he seemed more than willing to use them! There is no criticism of the bolts on record by either Stefan or Rolan. For 22 years, they have had an opportunity to publicly express their disapproval of the bolts in Serendipity. From this failure to publicly complain, from Stefan's repeated use of the bolts and actually spending time searching for them, and from Rolan's involvement in placing a bolt around the time he co-authored the ASF article, one could be forgiven for thinking they didn't really mean it when they wrote "it is sincerely hoped no bolts will be used on subsequent trips."

Essentially what we wanted to achieve by this 'right of reply' is to state that we were disappointed and mildly insulted by the reaction received, which we felt labelled us as not capable of making decisions to an acceptable 'ethical standard'

without the input of other club members. We are all members of STC, and as a result have read and agreed to the ethical standards set down by the club.
I understand that this reply may create a division of the club into an old school versus new school scenario, which is regrettable, but I believe that taking a few steps back is sometimes necessary to continue forward.

Extraordinary General Meeting – Proposed Motions for 7 April General Meeting

At the AGM, it was decided that a brief EGM will be held as part of the next General Meeting, which will take place on Wednesday 7 April.

The EGM will consider the following motions:

Motion 1

That Article 8.4 of the Constitution be deleted, and that Articles 8.5 to 8.11 be renumbered accordingly.

[Article 8.4 states that "Ten percent of all income, excluding any fees collected on behalf of the Australian Speleological Federation, shall be set aside in a separate account for scientific research purposes only."

This motion abolishes the "10% rule". The Science Account would continue to exist, and would continue to earn interest on its investments, but would no longer be subsidised by the General Account.]

Motion 2

2.1. That the following be inserted as Article 5.12 of the Constitution:

"Armchair Caver: Persons who have a attained the age of eighteen years shall be eligible to become an Armchair Caver. They are entitled to receive free copies of any newsletter produced by the Organisation; however, they are not members of the Organisation. The procedure for the resignation or expulsion of an Armchair Caver shall be the same as for a member."

2.2. That the subscription for Armchair Cavers for the 1 April 2004 to 31 March 2005 membership year be set at $40.

[This motion creates a means whereby inactive members of the club can retain a formal association with STC, without having to contribute towards the cost of public liability insurance. Hopefully, this will reverse the current situation, where the high cost of subscriptions causes members to leave the club as soon as they cease active caving.]

Motion 3

That Article 8.7 of the Constitution (under the current numbering) be replaced with the following:

"New members shall be entitled to pay subscriptions for their first year on a pro rata basis"

[Current wording: "New members joining in the last 3 months of any membership year shall receive membership for the following membership year."

This motion creates a much fairer system whereby, for example, someone joining the club in November does not have to pay a full year's subscription for only four months of membership.]

STC WaReHoUsE SaLeS

Publications

- "Caving Safety 1 Manual", 92 pages, covers Planning, Safety, Maps, Gear, Rigging, Emergencies etc. $20.00

Gear

- CAVE PACKS, cylindrical in shape, made from Heavy duty Ripstop PVC material, double thickness material at wear points, strong seams (triple sewn) and all critical stitching is on the inside (to protect it from wear), drain holes, large diameter eyelet's and a simple 'draw cord' closure as well as adjustable straps**.**
Now featuring a handle on the side to facilitate carrying the pack in low passages.
Strongly made. Available in either Yellow with different colour trims (navy, green, red, black etc.). So, they don't all look the same! Available in two sizes,
  the "STANDARD" (25 litres: 23 cm diameter, 61 cm long) and $55.00
  the "SUPER" (31 litres: 25 cm diameter, 63 cm long). $65.00
  but LARGER OR SMALLER-SIZED PACKS can be made to order, JUST ASK. POA
- Aluminium Bars for Rappel Racks. $5.00
- BATA full-length Gumboots, Size 9, Green with Orange Sole, and steel toecaps. $20.00

Tape

- **NEW STOCK....**Edelrid 25 mm Supertube tubular tape. Ideal for rigging, chest harnesses etc. (White) $1.50 per m
- **NEW STOCK....**5 cm (2") flat tape. Ideal for harnesses, rigging, gear bags, belts etc. (Black or White) $1.20 per m

Safety

- **NEW STOCK....**Edelrid 10.5 mm dynamic rope (for cows tails, safety loop) $4.50 per m, e.g. Cowstail $12
- Space Blankets (don't be caught underground without one!) **Just one left.** $4.00 each

Lighting

- Yuasa Gel-cells, 6 Volt, 7 Amp-Hour $24.00 each
- Metal Lamp Brackets, complete with fixing rivets and cable keeper. $7.50 each
- Used Metal Lamp Brackets and cable keeper. Good condition. Just need to add some small bolts. $4.00 each
- Used Plastic Lamp Brackets. Good condition and comes with fixing screws and a cable keeper. $3.00 each
- Jets (21 litres/hr) for Petzl kaboom (just a couple left) $5.00 each

Old Rope.....sorry, it's all been sold....but there will be more in the future!

If you need any of the above please contact Jeff Butt on (03) 62 238620 (H), or jeffbutt@netspace.net.au, or write to us: SOUTHERN TASMANIAN CAVERNEERS, P.O. BOX 416, SANDY BAY 7006.

Current STC Membership

Given name	Family name	Expiry date	Postal Address	Phone (H)	Phone (W)	Mobile	E-mail
Members							
Damian	Bidgood	31 Mar 2004	c/- Police S&R, 76 Federal St, North Hobart 7000		6230 2267		damian.bidgood@police.tas.gov.au
Claire	Brett	31 Mar 2004	4 Clutha Pl, South Hobart 7004	6223 1717		0419 731 969	claireb@keypoint.com.au
Gavin	Brett	31 Mar 2004	4 Clutha Pl, South Hobart 7004	6223 1717			gavin@keypoint.com.au
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Matt	Cracknell	31 Mar 2004	PO Box 14, Geeveston 7116		6298 3209	0409 438 924	crowdang@yahoo.co.uk
Geoff	Crossley	31 Mar 2004	44 Pradham St, Farrer, ACT 2607	02 6286 1113		0417 437 931	gkcrossley@bigpond.com
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Stefan	Eberhard	31 Mar 2004	2 Churchill Ave, Margaret River, WA 6285		08 9757 7411		scientist@westnet.com.au
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Andras	Galambos	31 Mar 2004	6 Lanena St, Bellerive 7018	6244 4769			baandi@netspace.net.au
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Kent	Henderson	31 Mar 2004	PO Box 332, Williamstown, VIC 3016	9398 0598	9398 0598	0407 039 887	kenthen@optushome.com.au
Andrew	Hogarth	31 Mar 2004	PO Box 21, Lune River 7109	6298 1771			
Alan	Jackson	31 Mar 2004	207 Albion Heights Drive, Kingston 7050	6229 8365	6231 5474	0419 245 418	ajackson@lmrs.com.au
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Sarah	Joyce	31 Mar 2004	PO Box 350, New Norfolk 7140	6261 1864		0438 255 259	sjoyce@postoffice.utas.edu.au
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Steve	Phipps	31 Mar 2005	133 Waterworks Rd, Dynnyrne 7005	6223 3939	6226 2251		sjphipps@utas.edu.au
Tom	Porritt	31 Mar 2004	PO Box 60, Millaa Millaa, QLD 4886	07 4056 5921			
Dave	Rasch	31 Mar 2005	25 Delta Ave, Taroona 7053	6227 9056			dave_rasch@hotmail.com
Phil	Rowsell	31 Mar 2004	c/- 22 Clutha Pl, South Hobart 7004				
Chris	Sharples	31 Mar 2004	GPO Box 1941, Hobart 7001	6239 6669	6239 6669		chris@sharples.com.au
Aleks	Terauds	-	60 Belair St, Howrah 7018	6244 3406	6244 3406		
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Keith	Vanderstaay	31 Mar 2004	754 Hastings Caves Rd, Hastings 7109		6298 3209	0429 983 209	hastings.caves@bigpond.com
Trevor	Wailes	31 Mar 2004	214 Summerleas Rd, Kingston 7054	6229 1382	6229 1382		trite@ozemail.com.au
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Chris	Davies	-	3 Alfred St, New Town 7008	6228 0228			
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Phil	Jackson	-	8 Malunna Rd, Lindisfarne 7015	6243 7038			
Barry	James	-	52 Edge Rd, Lenah Valley 7008	6228 4787			
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All membership enquiries should be addressed to the Treasurer.

Southern Tasmanian Caverneers

Special Citation


Khazad-dum before the p-hangers .S Bunton

to Jeff Butt

3rd March 2004

For your outstanding and dedicated service to the club since its inception in maintaining the gear store and register, charging the lights, carrying out the rope testing, instigating and supervising the p-hangering project, co-ordinating with the Police Search and Rescue, running beginners' trips and the training trips at Fruehauf quarry. All these things have contributed immensley to the smooth functioning of the club on a daily basis.

For making your home available for the AGMs and welcoming us into your home at any time.

For your services to caving in general with regard to surveying, mapping and documentation as well as your contribution to that great fraternity that is caving in Tasmania, Australia and abroad.

For these services we all give thanks.