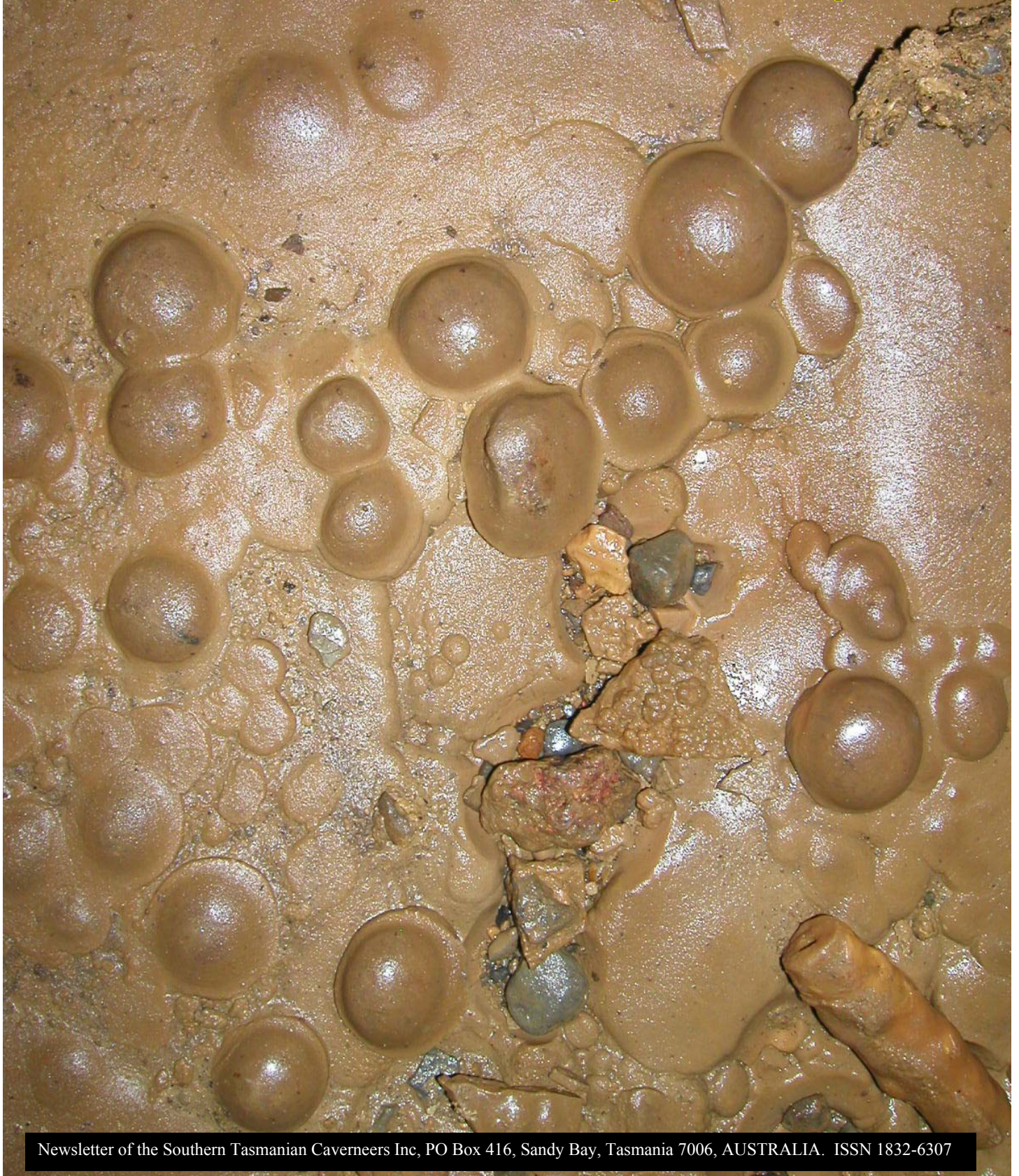


SPEIEO SPIEI 346

January - February 2005



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Front Cover: Cemented cave pearls (or cobbles) in KGV (photo by Arthur Clarke)

Back Cover: Serena Benjamin's 'back cover' on the back cover (photo by Arthur Clarke)

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Speleo Spiel

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Issue No. 346, Jan. - Feb. 2005

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Editorial

My apologies for the tardiness of this issue. A combination of lots of work away from home and a lazy attitude towards all things cave related has delayed SS346 somewhat.

This issue is suffering from the recent visit of Madphil. He not only caves almost everyday while he's here, but he also submits trip reports for all those trips and promptly prepares surveys of what he finds! The man is a freak. All this adds up to lots of *Spiel* material. As a result I have left a fair bit out of this issue that should theoretically go in (i.e. all trip reports for February and a few other articles submitted to me). I apologise to the authors of those articles, but don't worry, the next issue is due out in two weeks anyway! If Madphil ever emigrates and sets up in Tasmania permanently then we'll have to increase the subs for the *Spiel* to cover the extra paper we'll need for all his trip reports and surveys.

Alan Jackson

Forward Program

Social Meeting (Republic Bar)	20 th April
General Meeting (Republic Bar).....	4 th May
Social Meeting (Republic Bar)	18 th May
General Meeting (Republic Bar).....	1 st June

And plenty of caving too...



The first of the new issues, No. 60, carries material prepared for the 5th issue of the *Bulletin of the Tasmanian Caverneering Club* in the early 1960s - but never published. There is a report on Croesus Cave, describing the cave and putting forward proposals for its development [proposals which would certainly not be endorsed today], an article on cave surveying, as it was practised in the 60s, a report on the discovery and early exploration of Pyramid Cave at Mole Creek, a detailed bibliography of Tasmanian caves to Feb. 1963, a bibliography of material published by TCC to Feb. 1963 and a list of the holdings of the TCC Library in Feb. 1963. In addition, a letter to TCC from legendary French caver, Norbert Casteret, dated 12 April 1955 is reproduced, and translated, together with 14 original black and white photos which he provided, plus details of their publication elsewhere.

Aware that this publication is unlikely to be a runaway best seller, and to minimise expenses, only a few copies of it are being printed for libraries. STC members and others interested can download a pdf version from the STC website at www.lmrs.com.au/stc.

Greg Middleton

Stuff 'n Stuff

THE STC WEBSITE HAS MOVED HOUSE. Dean could no longer host it at TESA, so it is now hosted at my work's website. The only changes are the address and the *Spiel* archive. To keep size down only the latest issue of the *Spiel* will be available for download. Previous issues are still available on request from Dean or Alan. Go to www.lmrs.com.au/stc and get excited.

THE STC SAILING DAY was a success. Wind was distinctly lacking in the morning, but it picked up for the afternoon journey home. A sea cave was spotted in Alum Cliffs, so we managed to keep the day 'cave related'. Thanks to all those who supplied sea worthy vessels. I believe it is to become an annual event. There are a few photos at the end of this issue.

EDITOR'S APOLOGIES. Yes, you heard it right, your illustrious editor does occasionally make mistakes (he just rarely admits to them or apologises for them). Greg Middleton in his typically fastidious scrutineering of the *Spiel* has found some discrepancies in SS345. In the various reports covering the exploration of the Smorgasbord (JF) area there has been some incorrect labelling. Fork Pot and Sawn Off Pot are given a few different numbers throughout the course of the *Spiel*. Some 'C' numbers are mixed up, but I don't care about them anymore as they have since been assigned proper Karst Index numbers. Fork Pot is JF-271 and Sawn Off Pot is JF-272 (Sawn Off is incorrectly referred to as JF-271 in one or more of the reports). Thanks Greg.

SOUTHERN CAVER REVIVED. A new issue of *Southern Caver* - No. 60 - will be published by STC in April 2005, nearly 10 years after the Southern Caving Society published the last issue. At the time of the amalgamation of TCC, SCS and TCKRG in December 1996 it was agreed that *Speleo Spiel* would continue as the bi-monthly STC newsletter, while *Southern Caver* would be an occasional publication, produced when material became available. It has now been agreed that *Southern Caver* will be used to publish material from the group's combined archives that has either not been published before or had very small circulation.

JF-272 Sawn Off Pot : 18 December 2004

Madphil Rowsell

Party: Madphil Rowsell, Steve Bunton

With Alan, Gavin and Rolan setting off to Pooshooter, rather than make an ensemble of 5 to sit about while someone bolted, Steve and I elected for another option. We were thankfully shown another draughting cave to look at. A root had been sawn through and Alan pushed a tight drop into a chamber on a previous trip, so definitely had some potential. I laughed when I first saw it, it was well tight. An attempt with all my gear on also confirmed it! Steve was definitely going to have problems. It did have digging potential and so worked away aided with a stick provided by Steve. Finally managed to dislodge the key stone which left an easily negotiable drop into the pot. We were off!

More digging dropped us into another small chamber, with a lower dead end and no draught. Steve found the draught issuing from a small rift on the far wall. Pretty tight again. Managed to tie off around a “good looking” rock, and eased on though, dropping into a chamber. The cave was finally looking really good. Waited for

Steve, but despite much work he couldn’t make it through. Nightmare. He was happy for me to go and have a look around. A couple of small chambers with two good pitches heading off. Good stuff. Steve then reported my belay had collapsed a bit and that I had better come up. Reluctantly headed up thinking she’ll be alright. Once up, gave the whole rock a kick and it completely collapsed! Good call. Re-jigged the thing and headed back down and started bolting. Put in 3 bolts (all we had) to get to the head of a good pitch. Solo surveyed what I had found below with Steve patiently waiting. Finally reunited, we headed out to complete the survey. Managed to rip my new TSA [over suit] badly, resulting in major paddy!

The cave now looks really interesting especially after all the hard work getting into the place. Needs one more bolt to drop the good free hang and see what happens! My thanks has to be extended to Steve for patiently waiting in the cave, when I was getting all the fun!

IB-10 Mystery Creek Cave : 20 December 2004

Madphil Rowsell

Party: Madphil Rowsell, Gavin Brett

A chance to see what the lads had found in Mystery Creek and to finish surveying it to see where it was actually going. Nice draught heading down the crawl off from Matchbox squeeze, can’t remember one last time as we might have been a bit more excited by the place. Finally got to the avens where Jeff had pulled the pin on surveying.

The lads had taken a scaling pole in and climbed up several of the avens with one heading into more passage. Good effort as it didn’t look that inspiring. Once up the climb, through a big boulder ruckle, you broke out into a largish chamber. Looked well good with several ways on. Headed on up through another boulder climb into huge chamber “Expletive Hall”.

Several big avens dropping in with several other leads and pots heading off from the chamber. Pretty good extension. Would be even more interesting if it was proved to be heading to Exit.

After a quick show around down to business. The job today was to tie all these previously surveyed leads together and survey back from Expletive Hall to the cairn Jeff, Ali Moodie (UK) and I left some 2 years ago at the climb up. Didn’t take too long to do both chambers, before tackling the boulder ruckle. Glad Gavin knew the route as I was all over the show, well confusing! Still, finally headed back and tied into the cairn. Nice trip and good to survey it. Back in town the data was somewhat disappointing, as most of the extension was over previously known passage – the climb up to the railway tunnel. Still, good effort!

Ida Bay Surface Work – West of Blaneys Quarry : 21 December 2004

Madphil Rowsell

Party: Madphil Rowsell

Decided to have a bash around the western side of Blaneys Quarry. Went up the Southern Ranges track and found IB-30 and IB-130. Headed down from there and located IB-68 and IB-69, but couldn’t find IB-16. Headed across to IB-42 and continued up the valley

expecting to find IB-70, but no luck and found myself lost. Pushed on up and hit the Southern Ranges track. Walked back down and located IB-39 tag this time. Decided to have one more foray and headed down to the IB-80’s area and found IB-79, IB-80, IB-81 and IB-71, setting a traverse back to the Southern Ranges track. Headed home.

IB-176, IB-148, IB-149 : 22 December 2004

Madphil Rowsell

Party: Madphil Rowsell, Matt Cracknell

Headed back to IB-176 Measureless to Man to finally finish the survey. Had all the gear this time which helped!! Didn't take too long to complete and gave Matt a bit of awkward rigging practice on the second pitch. No longer measureless to man! [See map, page 5] Surveyed down to the caves we had located last time IB-144, IB-148 and IB-149 and tied them into the network. Decided to drop a few to see what they did, and survey them for the record. [See maps, pages 7 & 8] Dropped IB-149, nice drop of 16m into a small

chamber and not much else. A tight rift 4m off the deck headed off with a pitch at the back, but not pushed. IB-148 was a doline feature, pitch of 10m to a terminally choked rift/cross rift system. Disappointing as really deserves to do more. There was another hole on the other side of the doline, but we didn't drop this. No day light holes were found underground in IB-148 so this may be worth looking at just to check. Decided to head back contouring to Benders Quarry and located IB-147, IB-146 and IB-157 along with another couple of potential holes. Good day out.

Ida Bay Surface Work – West of Blaneys Quarry : 26 December 2004

Madphil Rowsell

Party: Madphil Rowsell, Ric Tunney, Janine McKinnon

Back up the Southern Ranges Track and surveyed in IB-39 tag. Surveyed down the traverse set on 21/12/04 tying in IB-81, IB-80, IB-79 and IB-71. Headed over to the IB-72 area and Ric eventually located entrance. Surveyed from IB-71 to IB-72. Continued up valley

and located IB-74, IB-75, IB-77 and tied in entrances. Contoured around the contact surveying as we went to IB-76, and on down to IB-1 and IB-25 which proved surprisingly easy. Surveyed along a traverse Ric and Janine had set (07/02/04 - *Spiel* 340) to IB-15 area, but could not locate the tag. Set traverse along old track back to Blaneys Quarry. Good day's work.

JF-272 Sawn Off Pot : 27 December 2004

Madphil Rowsell

Party: Madphil Rowsell, Alan Jackson

We were keen to head back to Sawn Off Pot and drop the pitch I had managed to get to last time. Hopefully after all the hard work getting to this point last time would be rewarded with the cave opening up a bit. Had to put one more bolt in prior to dropping the pitch. While I was bolting Alan headed off and pushed the climb I had baulked at after half the wall had dropped off on me. He reported that it had headed to another aven which must be very close to surface. Finally the pitch was ready to drop and with a deviation, got a nice clear hang to the floor. Landed in a large chamber with a climb down off to one side. Didn't look too good.

Once Alan was down, we had a look at a boulder ruckle at the base of this second chamber. Alan wasn't impressed. I went in for a second look and managed to dig a squeeze through and head into more boulder ruckle. Managed to worm several more metres of passage before being stumped again. Found another interesting spot and removed a few more boulders to access a very loose and unstable climb down to a short pitch/climb down with a draught. Baulked here as I didn't like the stacked nature of the boulders which would bar exit if collapsed. Retreated. Alan had a second look and came to the same conclusion. One to push once the better leads have been exhausted, or for someone more bold (stupid!). We finished surveying [see map, page 6] and headed out. We were disappointed as we thought this place had finally opened up a bit.

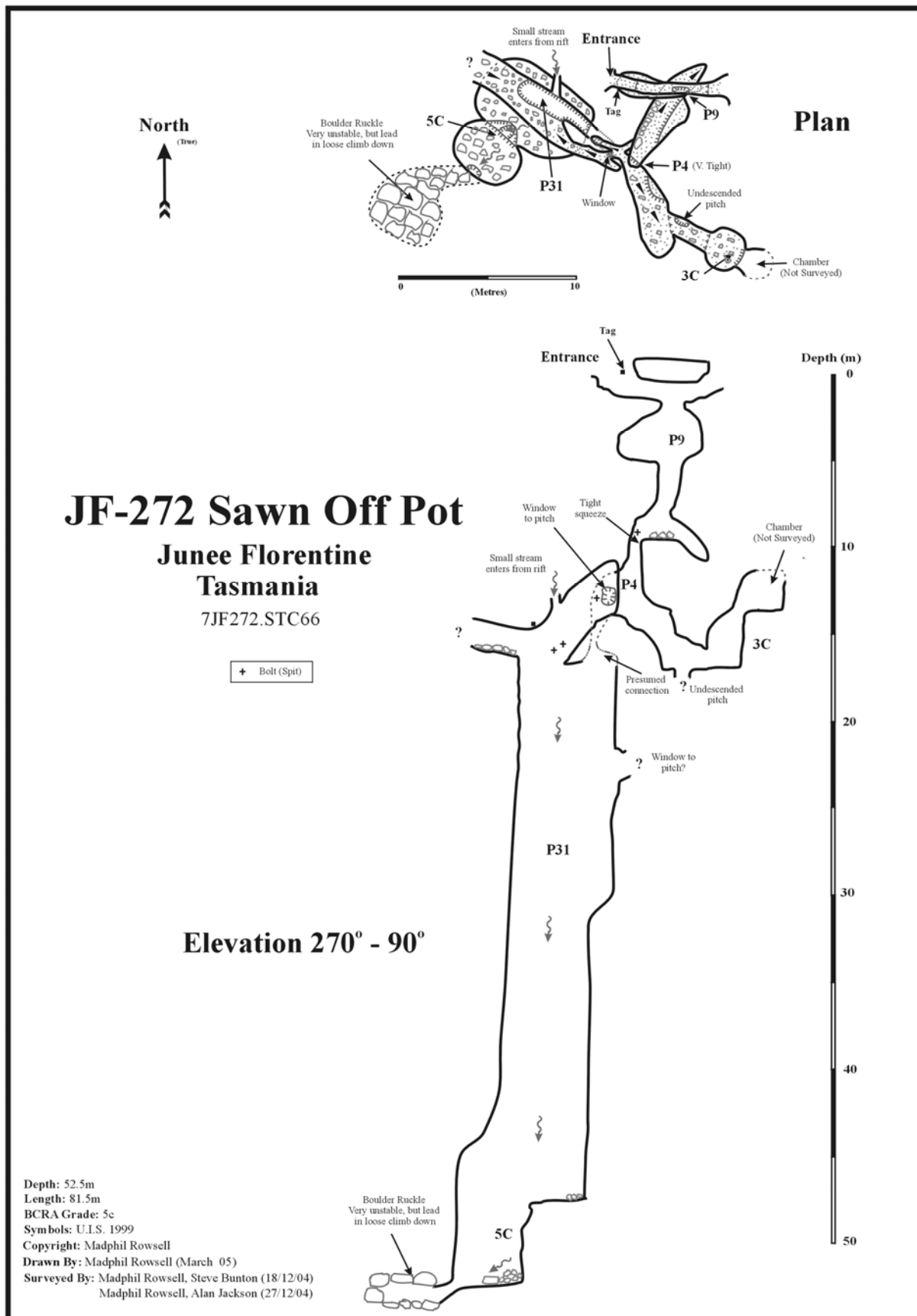
IB-149, IB-148, IB-144 : 30 December 2004

Madphil Rowsell

Party: Madphil Rowsell, Matt Cracknell

Headed back to the North side of Marble Hill to the IB-149 area. Wanted to link the traverse from IB-149 to IB-156 area. Took a while to set the traverse and progressively made our way back surveying along to IB-147, finding a couple more interesting holes. Headed up the hill from IB-147 to tie the traverse to

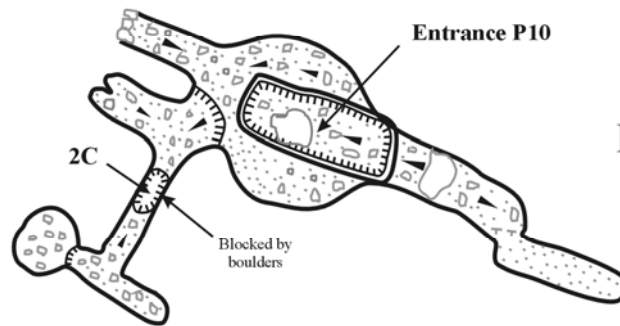
one heading up to the contact and IB-171. Also tied in IB-146, (near IB-147). Headed towards Benders quarry and located IB-157, and tied it in with loop from previous traverse to IB-156. Too tired to do any caving so headed back to the booth. Took an evening hike over the top of Blaneys quarry, trying to find IB-28 and IB-45, but no luck, glad to crash out.



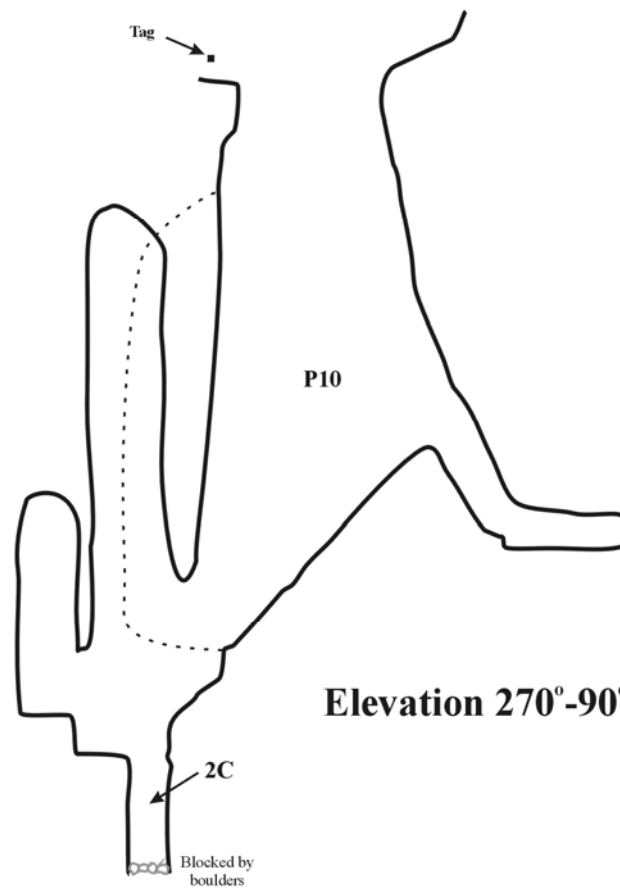
IB-148 (Un-named)

Ida Bay, Tasmania

7IB148.STC67



Plan



Length: 27.0m

Depth: 14.1m

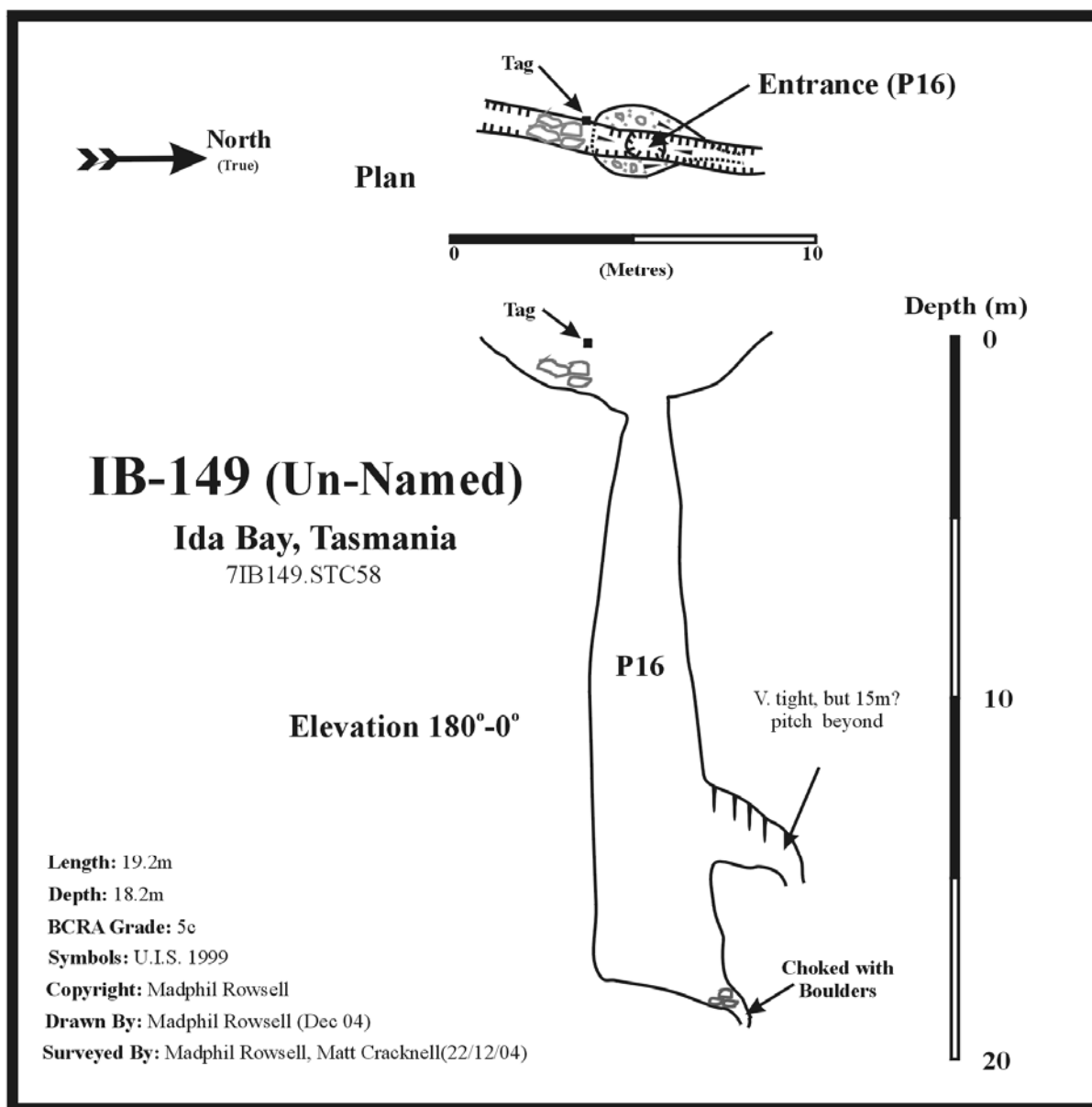
BCRA Grade: 5c

Symbols: U.I.S. 1999

Copyright: Madphil Rowsell

Drawn By: Madphil Rowsell (Jan 05)

Surveyed By: Madphil Rowsell, Matt Cracknell (04/01/05)



Ida Bay Surface Work : 31 December 2004

Madphil Rowsell

Party: Madphil Rowsell

Headed back up the Southern ranges track and down to IB-71. Headed down the valley and located IB-70 and IB-78. Decided to survey them in. Very slow progress solo surveying. Set traverse down to IB-42 and

continued solo surveying down to it, also tying in IB-163 and IB-41. Could not find IB-43, IB-44 or IB-26. Headed east and located the IB-126, (massive doline). Set traverse back, but too tied and late to survey it in. Slow progress but pleased with the day's effort.

IB-12 Crip Hole and Surface Work : 4 January 2005

Madphil Rowsell

Party: Madphil Rowsell, Gavin Brett

Decided to have a look at IB-12 as in good location to drop into the new Mystery Creek extension. We would

also survey the cave as there didn't seem to be any survey of the cave. [See map, page 10]

Found the tag this time which was a bonus. Easy rigging on naturals for a 5m pitch followed by a 30m

to a large chamber. (Amazingly both pitches had 2 bolt placements despite the very good naturals) A small squatty pitch of 5m yielded another small chamber with very tight rift continuations. A no hoper. No detectable draughts at the bottom and not really any digging potential. Headed out surveying as we went.

Gavin had to head off for an ASF meeting so headed off to try and find IB-122 and IB-123 reported to be

near IB-12 (west of) but no luck. Headed down and located IB-89 and tied it in to survey network. Headed over to west end of Blaneys Quarry and surveyed from the permanent station there along the start of the traverse to IB-15 to the junction to IB-68 and IB-69. Tied both entrances in. Tried to locate IB-16 tag but no luck. Ran out of time so headed back to the booth to get picked up.

IB-11 Midnight Hole : 4 January 2005

Matt Cracknell

Party: B. Evans, J. Cockayne, Al Warild, Chris Ross, Mike Wasmund, Matt Cracknell

Tuesday late afternoon the six of us met at Hastings Visitor Centre for the meet 'n' greet; then to the car park for gear arranging, making sure everyone had what they needed and their helmets were the right way around. We made it to the IB11 entrance at 1730, being hotly pursued by the lyrebirds that have become a very obvious member of the forest community. Top of the

first pitch one caver almost suicide rigs his 5-bar rack, a quick lesson and disaster is averted. The descent took many hours with photo stops punctuating the darkness, the squeeze gave me butterflies, due to the large nature of some members of the party!

Good trip, took high route, spotted some glowworms and back on the surface at about 10:30 p.m. Just the beginning of a big week for cavers in Ida Bay.

Ida Bay Surface Work – West of Blaneys Quarry : 5 January 2005

Madphil Rowsell

Party: Madphil Rowsell

Back in to the west of Blaneys Quarry again. Spent an hour or so trying to find IB-16 tag but still no luck. Set traverse from here over to IB-126 and also located IB-164. Surveyed it in to IB-126 and continued along traverse set on 31/12/05 to near IB-42 area. Had

another look for IB-43, IB-44 and IB-26 and found all three (third time lucky!!). Tied in all three tags to survey network. Continued to survey from IB-42 down to the Bender-IB-15 track. Pushed on back surveying along to the junction near IB-68, closing several loops. Late so headed home. Data and loop closure proved very good.

IB-14 Exit Cave : 6 January 2005

Madphil Rowsell

Party: Madphil Rowsell, Joe Sydney, Andrew Baker, Winfried Weiss, Chris Ross, Mike Wasmund

Conference tourist trip up to the Ballroom and then Edies Treasure. Pleasant relaxed trip but with lots of

photos. The results made the waits worthwhile. Nice to be back in there after a 2 year absence as you forget how big the place is.

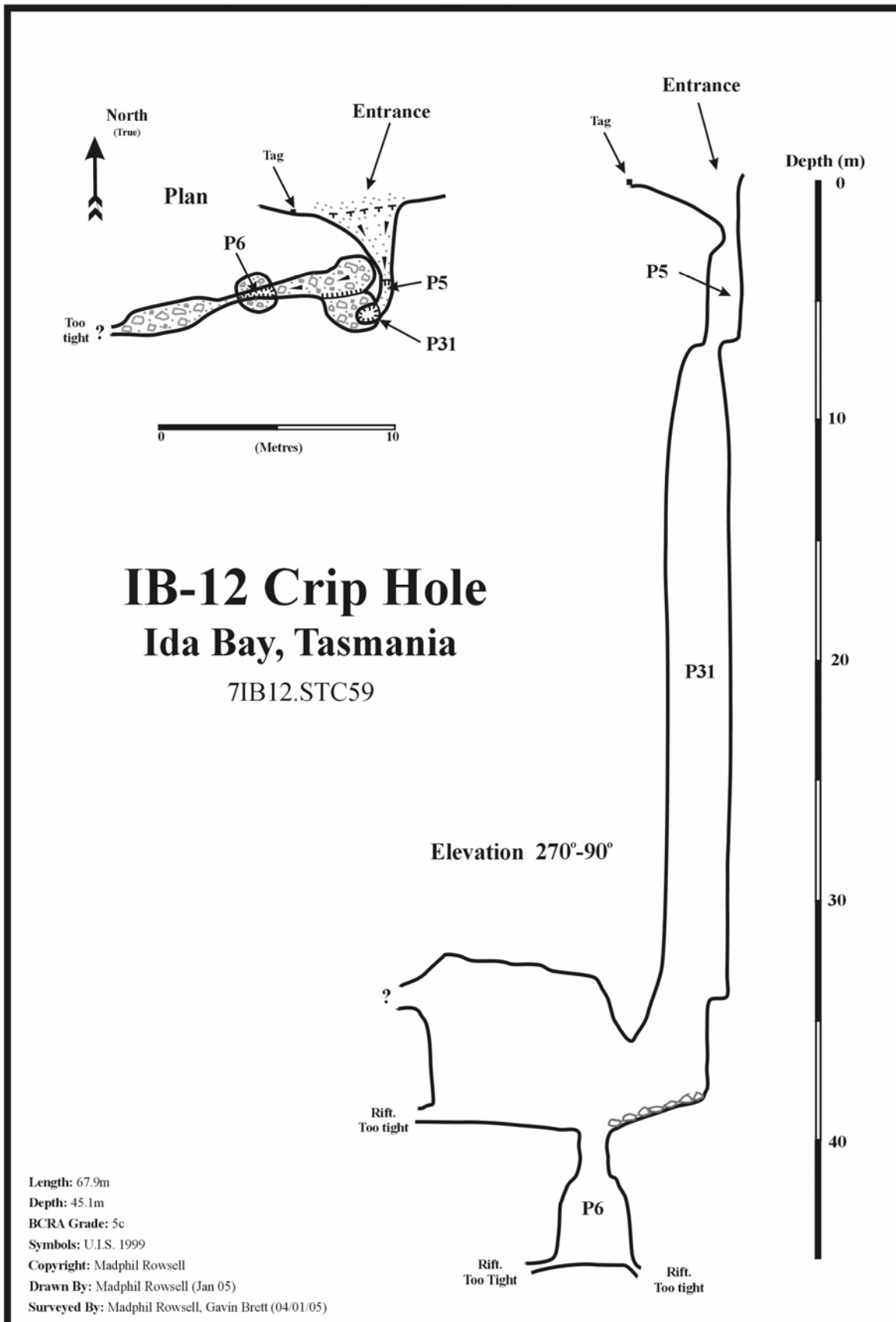
IB-97 Pseudocheirus and Surface Work : 7 January 2005

Madphil Rowsell

Party: Madphil Rowsell, Andy Baker, Brian ?

Had a couple of jobs to do in the Pseudocheirus area so offered it as a Conference Trip. Two takers. Initially headed into Pseudocheirus and dropped down the pit to the streamway to have a look at what was down there. (Didn't do this last time.) Small rift headed off but only for about 6-7 meters before closing down to a tight half mud filled passage. Surveyed it and tied it into previous station. Headed back out. The cave could really do with re-bolting/'P' hanging as current bolt is in a bad place, giving a bad rub unless rigged properly with a deviation.

Spent the afternoon looking for IB-117, IB-118, IB-119 and IB-105. After much bashing, found IB-105 and IB-118 reasonably close together which was surprising (didn't fit the location description). Also found what we thought was IB-119, but could not find the tag. Found lots of other holes too, some of which should be tagged. Set a survey traverse but didn't survey them in as wet, cold and getting late. Really need a full day over there surface bashing as a lot of development there.



IB-3, IB-2 Loons Cave : 8 January 2005

Matt Cracknell

Party: Gerard (?), Gary Whitby, Jenn Whitby, Matt Cracknell

This was going to be a short trip, half day, so I decided on a grovel in Loons Cave. We all made it past the first vertical section then abandoned the SRT gear and headed off up the well developed streamway passage. Occasionally getting stuck in the mud and trying to avoid the small pools with dozens and dozens of *Anaspides* shrimps, we noticed that many of the larger shrimps seemed to be protecting the smaller juveniles. I climbed a mud bank into a small chamber with old helictites and then we found ourselves having lunch at the intersection of small grovelly passages.

Time to go, I decided on the wade out while the mainlanders prusiked the 20 m entrance pitch that really needs a redirect if people are going up. I had fun with the worms and assorted sludge that accumulates in the outflow of this cave, the water levels were lower than I had seen in the past.

All arrived back safely at the car after spending 3 hours underground. Later I realised that the Whitbys had

recently been in Lechuguilla, that explained the look on their faces as they had to squelch in the mud up to their knees in one of the grottiest caves I could have taken them to.



Some cavers and a road at Ida Bay. Photo by Matt Cracknell

H-1Newdegate Cave : 9 January 2005

Matt Cracknell

Party: Vicky Bresnan, Norm Poulter, Matt Cracknell

I was looking forward to this little expedition, it had been about a year since I had been beyond the tourist pathway. Unfortunately the organization wasn't up to scratch and 3 places weren't filled on the permit, that basically meant that we had to carry more gear each, those ladders weigh a ton! We worked up a sweat in Binneys Tunnel and marvelled at the bizarre helictites and anthodites that line the wall. Norm and Vicky took photos in Binneys Chamber while I rigged the ladder pitch that leads down to Mystery Corner and the lower streamway. I was pretty chuffed with the eventual rig, using a 15m ladder anchored with long trace chocked around a large boulder. The 30m belay line was double anchored, one on the same boulder as the ladder and a secondary on a nearby natural, 2 long and one medium length slings were used at anchor points. We used the belay line as a descent line and the ladder for the climb out.

The many helictites at the base of the pitch got their fair share of charged particles from our flashes. Norm hung around while Vicky and I had a brief look at the streamway section which had no water in it at all, we saw a *Hickmania troglodytes* and Vicky slipped on the mud bank on the short climb out. I had a quick look high in the roof at a steeply inclined passage that just got bigger and bigger, this section is not on the survey. There is a lot of garbage in this area of the cave, corroded bits of steel, telephone cable and plastic wrappers. We safely belayed out and met up with Arthur and his bug friends in Binneys Chamber. They had not had much luck finding glowworms but Arthur did note that the siphon area, where the streamway practically sumps out, was filled with sticky mud, more than he'd seen before. The trip out was pretty relaxed, we also did our best not to muddy the tourist pathways, this could be done a little easier with plastic sheeting to change boots on, back at the cars we shared chocolate and cherries, 4hrs underground.

IB-24, IB-27, IB-64 : 9 January 2005

Madphil Rowsell

Party: Madphil Rowsell, Gavin Brett, Tom Porritt, Andrew Baker

Had been wanting to head back to IB-24 Hang About Hole, it had been blowing cold air when Jeff and I were surface surveying the cave in several years ago. Andy

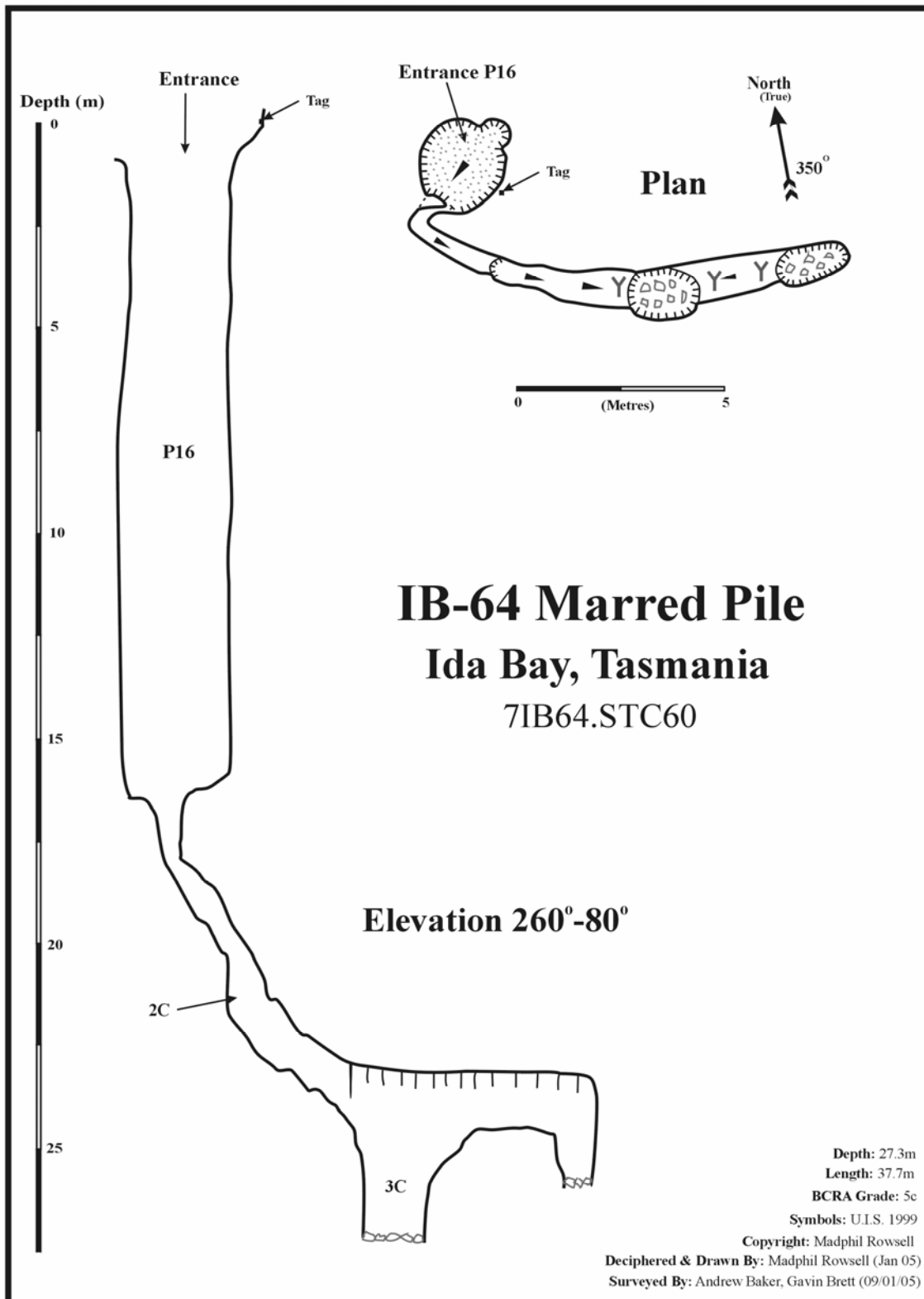
was keen to cave again, Gavin and Tom were at a loose end so they decided to tag along.

The cave wasn't draughting so well when we got there but it would be interesting to see what it does and survey it for the record. I headed on in, and soon found

very limited naturals. Even more of note was the 20m slope of loose boulders that funnelled on down to the pitch head. With some enlightened rigging off poor naturals, managed to get down to the head of the first pitch. Wasn't really happy with lots of people heading in here, especially with the poor rigging and boulders. Gavin came in part way before we decided to pull the

pin and look at one of the other caves close by. He headed on out while I derigged.

By the time I was out, Andy and Gavin had headed down IB-64 while Tom had headed off down IB-27 Chicken Bone Pot. Nightmare! Decided to head back into IB-24 again, re-rig and put a couple of spits in to



drop the first pitch. I could hear Gavin and Andy in IB-64 (quite clearly at one point), so a sound connection there. Bolted the pitch and headed out in search of more rope. After a long wait [5 minutes max! *Subed.*], Gavin finally gave me his spare rope after they had finished surveying IB-64 [see map, page 12]. Took Andy with me to drop the pitch while Gavin headed in to see how Tom was doing in IB-27 as he had run out of rope too!

At the pitch head, an additional bolt gave a nice free hang of about 25m to a large ledge with another 20m or so pitch heading off. No naturals again so had to bolt

again ('Y' hang). Could hear Tom and Gavin in IB-27, so that may connect too. We had run out of rope again, so headed on out and decided to de rig, as it sounded like the others were still in their cave. Reunited on surface they had had more luck with rigging, good naturals, dropping two pitches down leaving at a third. Sounded interesting too. Headed back.

From a fairly disorganised day, some good and interesting sound connections found that otherwise would have probably not been noticed. Both IB-27 and IB-24 could warrant a good survey.

IB-171 Rocket Rods Pot : 10 January 2005

Madphil Rowsell

Party: Madphil Rowsell, Joe Sydney, Andrew Baker, Darren Brooks (WASG), Greg Thomas (WASG), Winfried Weiss

Took a party into Rocket Rods to have a look about and to check out two leads. A bit of touring through the main chamber and the long straw chamber, then dropped over the back to "Refusal at the first". From exploration lower down, an alternative lower pitch at "Date with destiny" had lead to a slot with an additional aven and pitch beyond but too narrow to pursue. I had hoped that a climb up at the bottom of "Refusal at the first" might lead to the top of this aven. I had forgotten how gnarly it was! Still, soon aided up the short climb

only to find avens heading up and no leads down. No go, disappointing but another thing crossed off in here. Possibly worth another poke in the boulders at the top of "Date with destiny" to see if a way down to this aven could be found.

Headed back to the main chamber, down "The man trap" and off to the stream way. Pushed along to the end here where it was blocked by flow stone. Spent a while climbing up the tight serpentine meanders to see if there was any passage over the top, but alas none. Another thing crossed off. This only leaves the deep leads beyond "Let the squalor begin".

Ida Bay Surface Work – Valley Entrance Area : 11 January 2005

Madphil Rowsell

Party: Madphil Rowsell, Ian Curtis, Denis Marsh

Headed over to the Valley Entrance area to cross off a few more jobs. Surveyed in IB-18 Western Creek Swallet into the network. Pushed on down to have a poke at IB-189. It takes a lot of water when wet, but dry otherwise. Denis pushed it to a tight squeeze, before retreating. I had a go and pulled some boulders out of the way, and passed another very tight squeeze leading to a 4m pitch, but too tight to descend. The cave is only about 8-14m long and could be pushed if widened or dug into a possible other entrance, but much better

things elsewhere! [see sketch map, page 14.] The gents decided to call this one Intermittent Swallet.

Headed on to IB-19 to have a look at a hole that Jeff and I had found on our last trip together. Turned out to be connected to IB-19 further down that you could access without a rope. Found later from a sketch given to Arthur by VSA (Ackroyd et al. 1988 Nargun, 20(7):60) that this "New" pot was IB-121! The computerised sketch is shown. Both IB-19 and IB-121 really need surveying properly. A good little project for someone). Headed back in time to hit the pub for a mixed grill!!! Thanks guys, nice day.

IB-8 Mini Martin : 12 January 2005

Madphil Rowsell

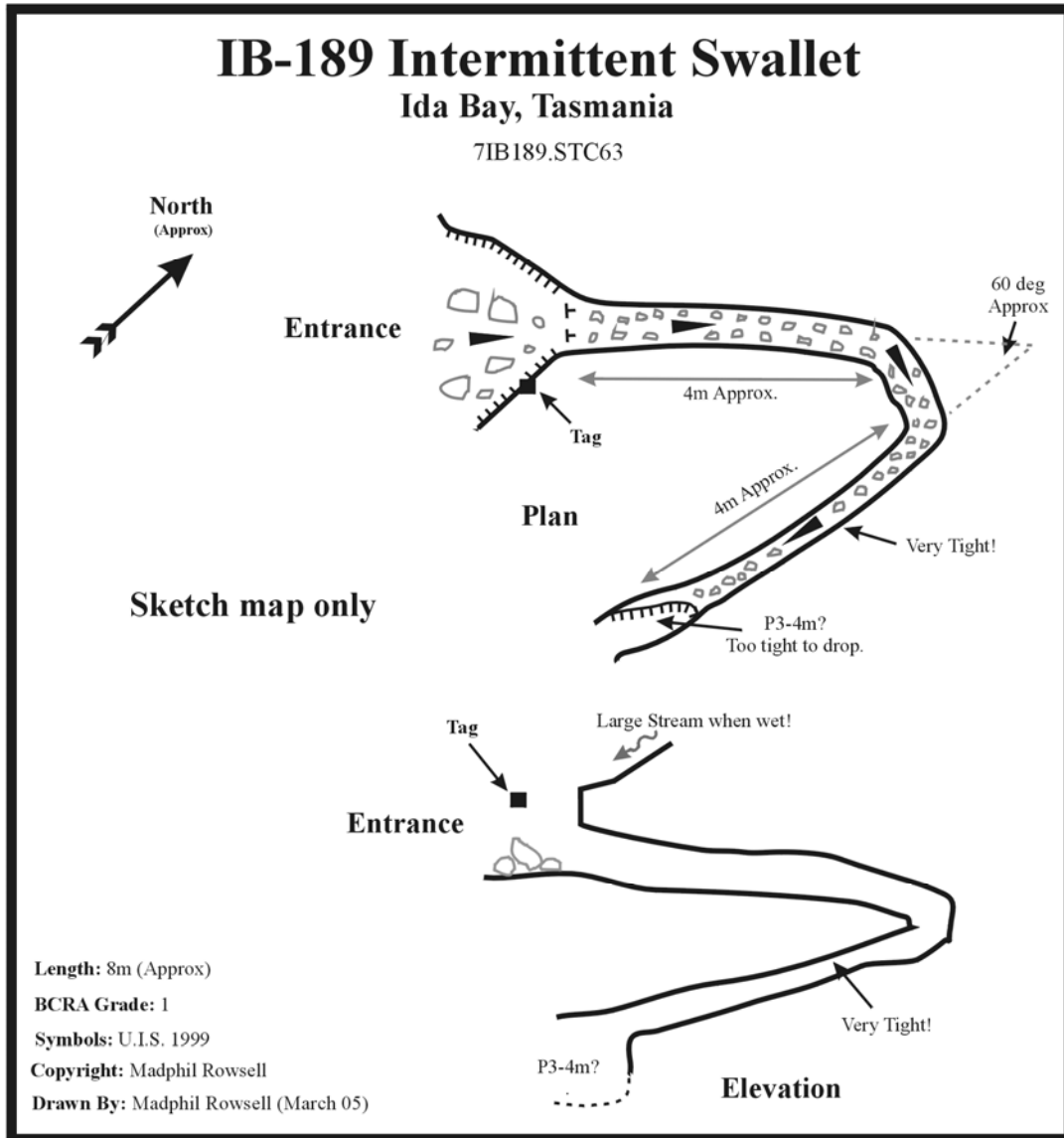
Party: Madphil Rowsell, Andrew Baker, Winfried Weiss, Ian Collette (WASG), Greg Thomas (WASG), Darren Brooks (WASG)

Another trip to Mini Martin but also a chance to check out a few parts of Exit I hadn't been too. The whole shaft was really misty this time, (not seen this before), somewhat eerie really and probably a bit disappointing for the lads as they couldn't really see the drop! All smooth running on the way down. Headed up to the Eastern Grand Fissure and left the guys to take photos

while I headed up towards Valley Entrance with Winfried until time shut us down. We endeavored and headed down to Mystery Creek Passage for a look. Pushed on past the rock pile, through the streamway to a chamber with a deep water section. Left Andy and Darren here, but continued on with Winfried for a long way with water getting deeper and deeper until sumped. Some interesting phreatic in the roof, needs surveying too!

Headed back and found that Darren and Andy had found a way up into some large passage above. Went for a quick look see and left big passage heading off. It had been looked at before, but no idea if it had been surveyed etc... Headed back due to time despite protests from Andy (Sorry!) Our final foray was into Eastern

passage for a look about. Interesting place, but would be good to get Arthur in here to get the full story. Headed on up Mini Martin with Andy, leaving Winfried to hopefully remember his way out with the others via Exit. Timing perfect, both arrived at the Mini Martin turnoff at the same time! Nice informative trip.



JF-36 Growling Swallet – New Feeling : 16 January 2005

Madphil Rowsell

Party: Madphil Rowsell, Darren Brooks (WASG)

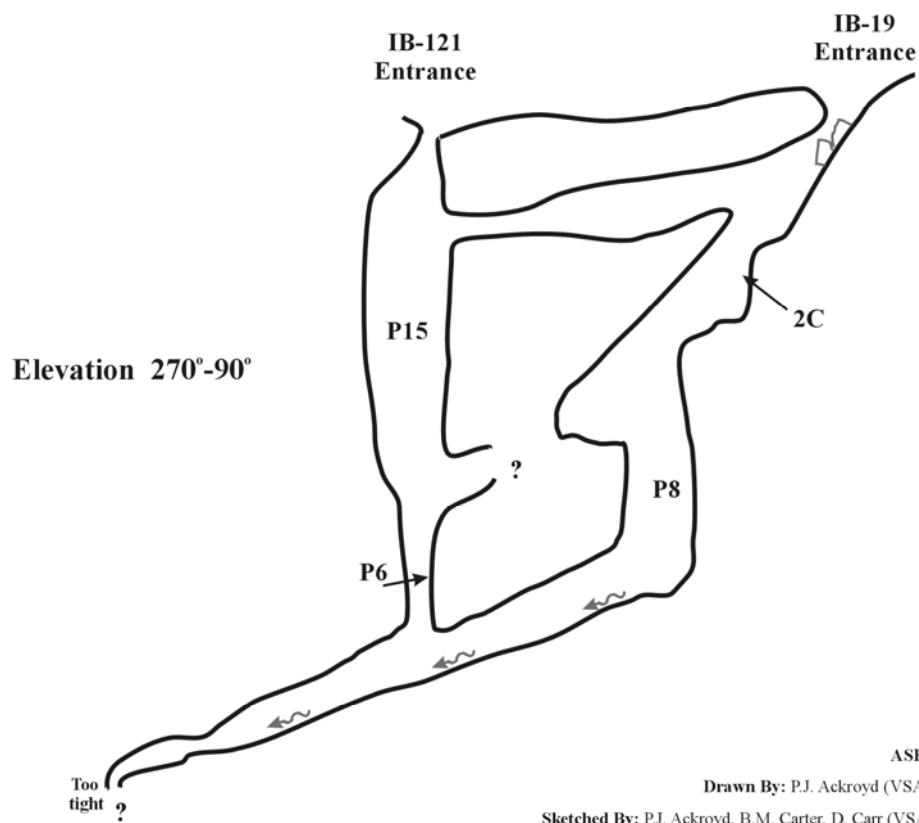
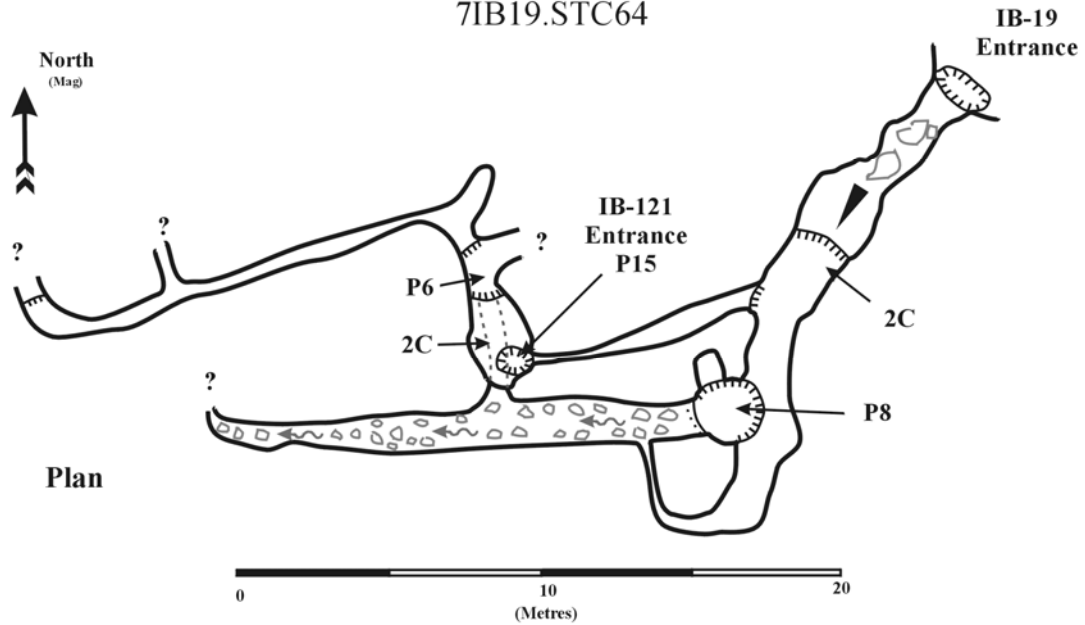
Gavin had talked about a good dig at the bottom of New Feeling inspired with their recent trips and interest in Serendipity. Thought it was worth a look, as hadn't been there before. Darren was up for a trip. With a bit of prior knowledge route finding was pretty easy but we had quite a surprise when we realised we were in

the bottom river section and did not require the 22m pitch to get there!! At the bottom, the dig was a real no hope (in Tassy anyway, a major task involving dams, bailing etc... to deal with the water and a lot of man power). Spent another hour or so pushing every nook and cranny, but no luck. Headed on out. Nice trip with some superb pretties. Could do with a bit more track marking (especially the crystal pool).

IB-19 & IB-121 (Un-named)

Ida Bay, Tasmania

7IB19.STC64



JF-268 Pooshooter : 17 January 2005

Madphil Rowsell

Party: Madphil Rowsell, Gavin Brett, Darren Brooks (WASG)

Headed back up to Pooshooter to look at the lead that Gavin and Alan had found last time. Had been quite wet so the cave was quite drippy. Didn't take too long to get down to the swing across and rift. New territory for me, two shortish but nice pitches, the last rigged off a huge v-shaped boulder (another sword of Damocles). This dropped you into a little chamber with a tight rift heading off that needed widening. The place was pretty

grim, wetter than last time apparently, but felt well cold. Was glad I had a plastic suit on!

Had a look at the rift, a constriction, then opened out to a good pitch. Spent a while trying to widen the constriction, but without success. Cold wet and frustrated we headed on out. Bit of a wasted day really, no progress but did start to clean up some of the rigging on the entrance shaft which was good. Have to come back and try again.

JF-345 Ice Tube : 18 January 2005

Damian Bidgood

Party: Madphil Rowsell, Darren Brooks, Damian Bidgood

The trip reports here will only outline the basic rigging details of what was achieved as Phil will make a detailed report on the rigging.

This was the first of 5 trips in Ice Tube to safely re-bolt the cave for SRT and pull-through trips. Phil had been to the cave once prior only getting to the bottom of the second pitch Degenerated Man and having a look in the Placebo area. So intentions for this trip were to bolt to this area and navigate and bolt further on as far as either Inlet Pitch or Ramp Pitch (pitches 4 & 5). For this cave it was decided to use Petzl expansion bolts and rings.

The trip started well with Phreds Downfall (25 m) and Degenerated Man (22 m) drilled and rigged successfully, placing two bolts at the top of each of these pitches. Degenerated Man was set up with a

safety line along the left side of the traverse out approx 4 m to two bolts high on the left wall. This was to get the rope out of the water as much as possible as the bottom half of this pitch is a wet shower.

After entering Placebo Effect a line was bolted at the top of the short 7 m climb avoiding the climb itself. This was done to avoid walking over loose rock and an exposed bridging section at the top of the climb. After this the 7 m short drop pitch was bolted with two bolts and set up.

By the time we reached the top of the 19 m Inlet Pitch time was getting on for this trip as people (except Phil of course) had to get back to Hobart. So this pitch was drilled with two bolts at the top out over the pitch as a Y-hang and a safety line tied 3 m back from the edge. The pitch was set up for the next day and we exited the cave.

JF-345 Ice Tube – JF-36 Growling Swallet : 19 January 2005

Damian Bidgood

Party: Madphil Rowsell, Damian Bidgood

Phil and I entered the cave at about 12:45 p.m., the same time as on the 18/1/05. Ambitions were high to finish the cave and have it rigged for SRT. After debriefing the first day we had thought of changes we can make to Phreds Downfall and the Inlet Pitch to make them safer and easier for rigging. This was mainly making minor modifications to the bolts and rigging.

We made our way to the Inlet Pitch and descended to the Ramp Pitch (29 m) where this pitch was rigged with two bolts as a Y-hang over the pitch, plus a re-belay approx 8m from the bottom. This was quickly done and we descended to the Vertigo Traverse where an existing safety line was in place. At the end of the traverse over the Fabulous Spangle Pitch 1 (47 m), two bolts were added over this pitch getting the rope well clear of the water. Two re-belays were added into

this descent to prevent rope rub on SRT. Immediately at the bottom of Fabulous Spangle Pitch 1 was the Fabulous Spangle Pitch 2 (12 m). The top of this pitch had two bolts placed on the right wall, this achieved an almost dry descent, but the water spray gets you near the bottom.

After a short descent of serpentine passage we got to the 3 m Handline pitch and a decision was made to drill a bolt for safe SRT at the top of this on the left wall. Killing Joke Pitch (44 m) was next; at this point the rock was getting very crappy but two locations were found on the right wall to place bolts. There were two re-belays set up on this pitch as well, as there are two ledges to get over on the way down. This pitch can get you wet in places as well.

Maelstrom Pitch (35 m) was finally reached and two bolts were placed on the right floor surrounded by more crap rock (for SRT). This enabled a straight run down

this pitch with water the only thing to get in the way. A large pool of water was obvious from the top of this pitch; when you reached it you found it was only a couple of centimetres deep.

The final bottom pitch, Never Forever Pitch (14 m), was reached. This had one bolt and a handline in place for access on a large slippery rock bank on the left. A better handline was fixed and another bolt placed to set this pitch up. Approx 7 m down this pitch on the opposite wall is the entrance to Fallopian Tube which you swing across to access.

From here you take off your harness etc... and make yourself as thin as possible. The first 5m is tight in spots; one short vertical squeeze taking me some time to work out the best spot to slide through without

getting my trog suit hung up on one, of what seemed at the time, hundreds of projections. My light and helmet was taken off so I could get my fat head through as well. After this exciting little delay, where Phil and I had nightmares of having to SRT back out (and by which time it was about 21:00), we made our way through Mothers Passage to Growling, accumulating an extra 10 kg of mud each.

We got to the main streamway in Growling, had a quick wash down and refuel and began the walk out, reaching the entrance by midnight. The result of the debrief after this day was that more had to be done, such as chains on some of the Y-hangs and some fine tuning of hand lines etc... Phil organised a third trip with Ric and Janine to do some of this the following week.

MC-14 Lynds Cave : 22 January 2005

Alan Jackson

Party: Alan Jackson, Geoff Wise, Dave Chiam, Matt Young

I was working on the west coast and spending weekends in Devonport, so I was relegated to soft caving for a few weeks. This created an opportunity to cave with Geoff Wise, something I hadn't done for quite some time (I'd had a long enough break and was almost mentally ready for the challenge!) It was also

an opportunity to play with Geoff's excessively high resolution digital camera.

We found the cave alright, which surprised us, as none of us had been there before. Trip was short and pretty (typical of Mole Creek really) and a nice change from the rigours of Pooshooter and the like in the JF. Earthquake damage to the flowstone was interesting. Nice cave.

JF-268 Pooshooter : 23 January 2005

Madphil Rowsell

Party: Madphil Rowsell, Matt Cracknell, Gavin Brett

Back again to look at the squeeze again and see what we could do. First priority was to tidy up the SOS pitch and rig it better. Two bolts at the top of the big rock, and then a good 'Y' hang on the first part of SOS, really made a difference, both for safety and speed. Headed on and soon at the tight rift again. Thankfully the place was a lot drier than last time. Even better was that the Cave Gods were smiling and it didn't take long to widen the constriction enough to pass.

Matt had the honour of dropping the new pitch as he had never been in virgin passage before! Turned out to be another big rift with a number of shafts dropping away. Quite complicated. Rigged and dropped one shaft, but ran out of rope at the head of another pitch. Well interesting. Headed on out surveying as we went. First time I have enjoyed heading up SOS! Nice day and looks like the cave may get quite interesting.

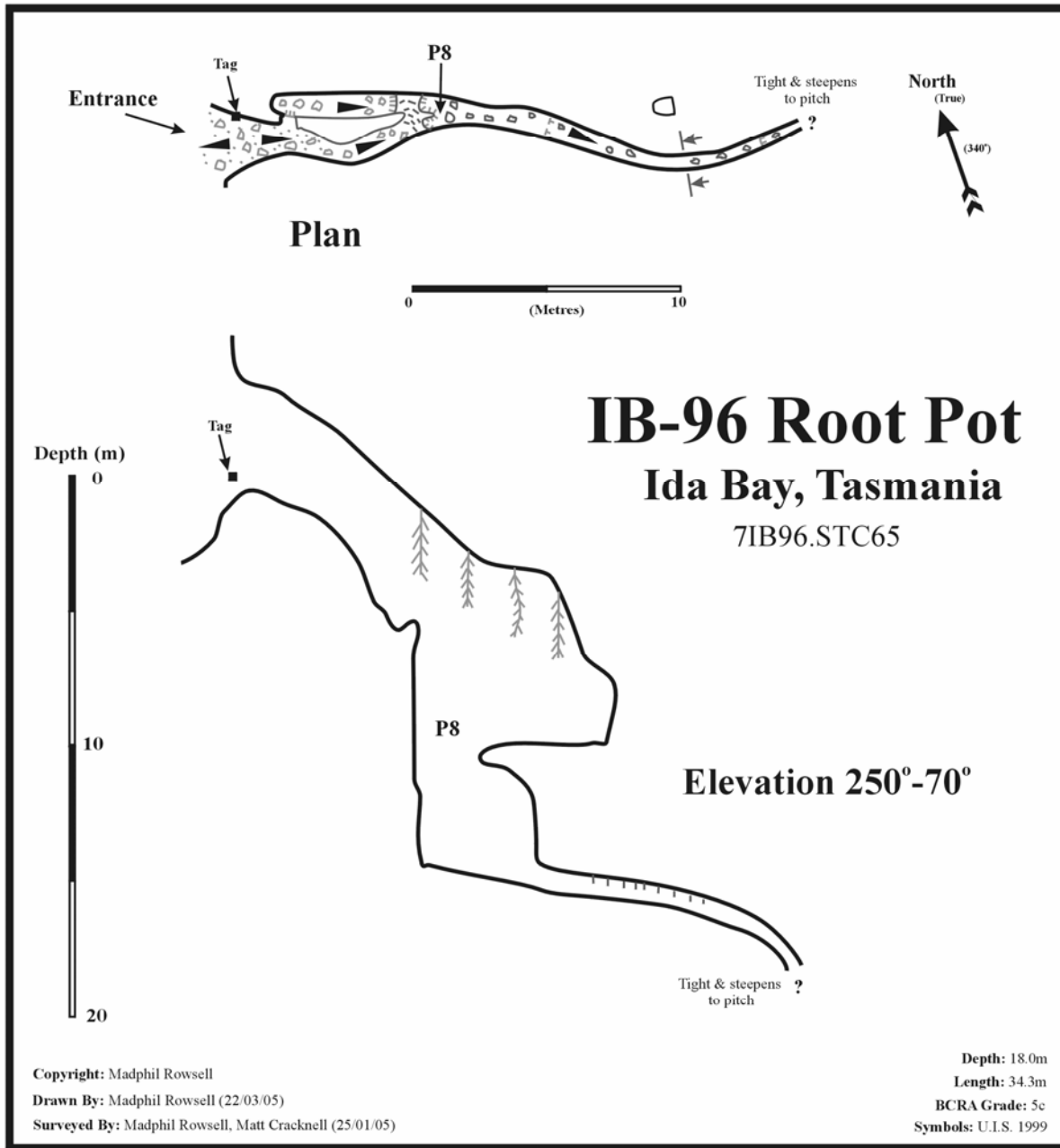
IB-96 Root Pot & Surface Work : 25 January 2005

Madphil Rowsell

Party: Madphil Rowsell & Matt Cracknell

Wandered into the Comet Pot Turnoff and went searching for IB-213 Regatta Day Pot. Spent 2 hours wandering about down from IB-47 National Gallery, but no luck. (Anyone have any knowledge??). Headed on down to IB-97 Pseudocheirus and started surveying in the traverse set on 07/01/05 to IB-105 and IB-118. Thankfully Matt showed up halfway through and sped up the process quantumly [*sic!!*]. Pushed on over to what I think is IB-119 (description fits) and looked for the tag again, but no luck. Surveyed it into the network.

Headed back to IB-96 Root Pot. Wanted to drop this to confirm whether it did drop into Pseudocheirus itself, or be a possible bypass to the constriction in the stream passage in Pseudocheirus. The cave itself wasn't very long. After a short pitch, a grotty streamway lead off before becoming too tight. Surveyed our way out, not being really inspired by the amount of 'mankness' acquired for the small amount of caving done. Still, need to check these things out!! The data did show (as previously predicted) that IB-96 Root Pot did head to IB-97 Pseudocheirus. No bypass to the tight streamway! IB-95 may be worth a look.



Ida Bay Surface Work : 26 January 2005

Madphil Rowsell

Party: Madphil Rowsell

Headed back into West of Blaneys quarry to finish off one of the traverses. Ric, Janine and I had surveyed from IB-39 on the Southern Ranges track to IB-15 (26/12/04). I wanted to close the traverse back to the quarry. On the way up tied in IB-22 & IB-48 into the network, before starting the slow task of solo surveying up to Hobbit Hole. Wasn't too bad once you get into a

routine, but depressingly slow, especially when it was so hot. Was glad when I finally got there. With knowledge from Arthur, climbed down into the cave and finally located the tag (another one down!). With the afternoon still young, walked back and finally found the IB-16 tag. With time still to spare should have headed up to the IB-72/IB-74 area to find IB-13, but the heat had got better of me and I bailed. A good day!!

JF-268 Pooshooter : 29 January 2005

Alan Jackson

Party: Alan Jackson, Madphil Rowsell

Managed to squeeze a weekend back in Hobart, so Phil and I slogged back up to Pooshooter for another demoralising attempt at making this cave achieve its potential.

We headed back in to the limit of exploration from the last trip. This was quickly bolted and descended into a medium sized chamber with an aven heading up (thus the impressive echoes). The continuation from this point was muddy and brief. Bummer.

Option 2. We headed back up and prepared the parallel shaft for descent. This pitch was a good 10-15m,

spacious and clean. From the base of this pitch an inviting second pitch could be seen. We thought it was game on again and we gleefully rigged the pitch. At about 20m long, this pitch is one of the more spectacular in the cave. A beautiful narrow canyon with washed solid walls and the odd water sculptured knife-like projection on the wall. The continuation from this pitch was muddy and brief. Double bummer. We gave the area an appropriate name on the survey flagging tape (four letters and starts with a 'c') and surveyed our sorry little bums out of the cave.

There are still two possible leads in this area of the cave that we shall return to at the next opportunity. I'm beginning to dislike this cave.

The Truth and Nothing But...

Albert Goede

A comment on Arthur's article on King George V Cave in *Speleo Spiel* 344 (pp. 11-15). On page 12 Arthur claims that in 1946 KGV was known as King George Cave and he holds the Nomenclature Board responsible for changing the name to King George V Cave. As a long standing member of the Board I would like to put the record straight. The cave was already known as King George V Cave when it was first visited by TCC in either 1946 or 1947 so the name change must have been earlier and was not connected with the Board. The Board did not approve the name until 1972 and made no change.

A Candlelight Tour of Mystery Creek Cave

Arthur Clarke

During research for the book on the history of cave tourism in Tasmania – being co-authored with historian Nic Haygarth – some interesting newspaper articles have “come to light”, including a report describing a candlelight tour of *The Queen's Cave* (Mystery Creek Cave) in 1892. Quite a long article, it makes “illuminating” reading and suggests that the cave has not changed much in over a century or more, apart from now... following the recent major flood event in early February this year. A few excerpts from this newspaper article are quoted below.

Mystery Creek Cave at Ida Bay was reportedly discovered by timber-getters in the late 1880s, but not publicised till early in 1891. One of the first known reports of a tourist trip to the cave was reported in *The Mercury*, on Monday May 25th 1891, followed by another identical report with accompanying photographs in *The Tasmanian Mail*, Saturday May 30th 1891. (The article from *The Tasmanian Mail* – submitted by Tony Culberg – was reprinted in *TCKRG Journal* No. 6: August 1993.) Both articles described the party of 25 people who travelled from Hobart on board the *S.S. Huon* to Ida Bay in the Lune River estuary, then walked six miles there and back in one day to see the “fine marble cliffs”, the cave passages and glow-worms. It was suggested to be named: “Queen Victoria Caves”, but the cave was generally reported as either *The Queen's Caves* or *Southport Caves*, until being referred to as the *Ida Bay Caves* around the turn of the century.

On February 20th 1892, another tourist trip was reported in *The Tasmanian Mail* (on page 34) in an article titled: *The Queen's Caves, Ida Bay*. Quite a detailed article, it starts as *An excursion of a private character to the Queen's Caves, Ida Bay, was made in the S.S. Huon on Saturday evening last and during on Saturday, when a most enjoyable trip was spent by those who made the journey. The caves, which are situated some distance beyond Hastings in the mountain ranges at the back of the “Narrows” and Southport, have been for some years past fairly well known, but up to the present time have not been explored beyond a distance of some three-quarters of a mile from the mouth. About three years ago Mr. Tyler, who owns a sawmill at Ida Bay, was exploring the bush for some fresh timber, when he came across a stream of fresh water, one of the many filling up the gullies in the heavily timbered district. As this one in particular was not only of greater magnitude, but flowed in a contrary direction to the others, his curiosity became aroused concerning its ultimate destination.*

The article goes on to detail a voyage that got away at about 8 o'clock down the D'Entrecasteaux Channel under a moonlight sky on board the steamer (*S.S. Huon*), chartered by Mr. Horace Watson. Under the command of Captain John Fitzpatrick, the steamer made good progress down the Channel until reaching heavier waters in the open sea, which

upset the stomachs of a few passengers! Eventually, further south, the steamer headed west to calmer waters near Southport, then up the Lune River estuary and across the sandbar into the “Hastings Lagoon”, tying up at Tylers Mill wharf in Ida Bay around 2 a.m. Most of the group stayed awake, then after a 6a.m. breakfast of steak and sausages, the 39 people in this party including Mr. A. Morton curator of the Hobart Museum and Dr. O’Brien of the Hobart General Hospital departed for what was estimated to be a six mile walk to the caves. The anonymous writer refers to the ardours of the walking track, which initially crossed three miles of open button grass until the forest of *immense trees, as straight as wharf piles*. An opening in the dense forest gave a glimpse of the Southern Highlands and a view looking down over “Tom’s Bottom”... the broad southern flood plain area of the Lune River at the foot of the northern slopes of what we know today as Marble Hill (west of Lune Sugarloaf).

In early days, the walking track from Ida Bay to Mystery Creek Cave approached the entrance from the east, so Mystery Creek itself was not seen until tourists reached the mouth of the cave. The writer goes on to say (in somewhat “flowery” language): *Sometimes climbing over heavy logs, at other times wriggling beneath them, and again stepping carefully over a moss-grown bridge spanning a creek, the pure and ice cold waters of which bubbled far below, a turn of the blazed track brought them to the face of a cliff which sprung as perpendicular as the side of the house in front of them. Here a creek of considerable size gushes through an opening about 30ft. high and 16ft. or 17ft. in width into the mountain’s bosom. Several immense pieces of the limestone rock were lying about in most fantastic positions, a certain order being maintained in their placement as though by some fierce and terrible internal convulsion, which at some remote period had taken place in the interior of the mountain, they had been forced from the sheer wall of the cliff outwardly to form an entrance or channel for the creek. It was not without difficulty that the party succeeded in landing beneath the roof of the arch.*

Candles were lit, and away the party went, the guide heading the procession. Progress was necessarily slow on account of the rugged nature of the rocks scattered about in all directions. In addition to having to cross the rivulet at intervals, huge crevices of unknown depth would open so suddenly at the very feet of the explorers that they were from time to time fairly startled by the peculiarity of the position. The first chamber is almost at the archway, and opens out to a height of about 80ft. or 90ft. and some hundred yards in length. It is covered and studded with stalactites of glittering aspect on every side, whilst the drippings from the roof above formed mounds of crystals below, resembling very much huge moundings of rock salt, over which water had been poured and had frozen. The air was keen and biting, but not by any means unpleasant. Perfectly pure and rare, it did not strike those present with a chill although heated by the scramble to the caves. Up over a terrace of rocks, into the darkness beyond, the leader’s candle twinkled like a star; then down again, over a perilous sliding rock to the bed of the creek. Here the passage narrowed, and apparently at length closed altogether. However, a crevice sufficiently wide to admit one at a time wriggling sideways for some yards brought them to the second chamber. It was even larger and loftier than the first, and was beautifully encrusted on all sides with the drippings from above. On the roof of this cavern a gorgeous sight presented itself. Millions of spark lights burned with a steady flame set in groups like the constellations of the southern skies. One could without any stretch of the imagination at all, fancy that the roof had been lifted off disclosing the firmament above. “What is it!” was the query. “Glowworms” [sic], replied the guide laconically, and dived into the gloom of oblivion beyond.

Although it is evident that the writer has a slightly confused memory of the order of passages and chambers (as mentioned above), it still provides a graphic account of their cave tour by candlelight. Continuing on the writer describes hearing the water being channelled off in another direction (in the Cephalopod Creek passage) as they progress to an area of *immense pieces of rock as large as a small cottage, and nearly as square... thrown about in indescribable confusion... so recent was evidently the displacement, that the living rock was as fresh as though broken yesterday. It was the result of an earthquake.*¹ ... And when the guide calmly announced the discovery that some of the displacements had occurred since his last visit to the caves a peculiar feeling of unsafety took possession of the silent group. This reads as if the tourist party were now located in the chamber before the fallen slab (skyline route) and collapsed column, but then it goes on to describe how *they were led into a narrow and tortuous passage, scarcely high or wide enough to admit the body, which opened into another chamber. Passage after passage was found, until the weary work of squirming on all fours and at times flat on the stomach through narrow rocky tunnels and fissures caused a halt to be made, and having gone far enough they returned to the large cavern. By the aid of magnesium tape and a blue light, photographs were taken of the grimy seekers after novelties, the spectacle being a weird one.*

It would be interesting to see these photographs today, if any still exist!

The following section reads in a manner to suggest that some of the tour party then ventured down into the Cephalopod Creek side passage. *The sounding of falling waters proceeding from a small hole leading almost perpendicularly*

¹ This appearance of “freshly” broken shards and slabs of limestone in this chamber of Mystery Creek Cave is still apparent today and is probably the source of concern (or excuse, or perhaps bluff) used by James Gillies and the quarry manager working the Hydro-Electric Power & Metallurgical Company’s adjoining (Blaneys) Quarry in the early 1920s when they suggested to members of the Caves Board (part of the Scenery Preservation Board) that they should stay away from the cave because of the “recent” rock collapse and imminent danger to visitors.

downwards induced some of the more curious to make a search in that direction. Pushing through crevices and crawling along ledges they came at length to a spot where the water of the creek rushed away to unknown depths and was lost in the darkness beyond. The strong lights used failed to penetrate it, and with the limited means at their command they decided to return. Several times they nearly lost their way, but finally scrambled out again into the open chambers and forward into daylight once more.

On the walk back to the Ida Bay wharf, many visitors talked about their experiences in the subterranean “wonderland” and some collected “...rare specimens of ferns and mosses”, before they eventually reached the Tyler Mill wharf and the steamer which departed on the afternoon tide. The writer goes on to conclude that: *It is stated that a private club in Hobart intends chartering the vessel shortly for another trip, and the proprietors of the steamer themselves will probably undertake a repetition of the visit, which will be open to the public. It is a pity that the Government do not take steps to have the caves surveyed, as they are quite unknown, and their extent may possibly be enormous. Where the creek runs to is a mystery, but it probably works its way clean through the mountain, finding its outlet somewhere beyond on the opposite side. Such a place and so close to the city as the Queen’s Caves should immediately be treated in a manner deserving of their existence, in respect of which New South Wales is far ahead of Tasmania, for no sooner is such a place of interest discovered than steps are at once taken to have the locality thoroughly surveyed and protected against a visit from those who, as relic hunters, descend to acts of vandalism which, when allowed to go unchecked, frequently ruin what is at once a national treasure and a source of delight and instruction to those fortunate enough to visit it.*

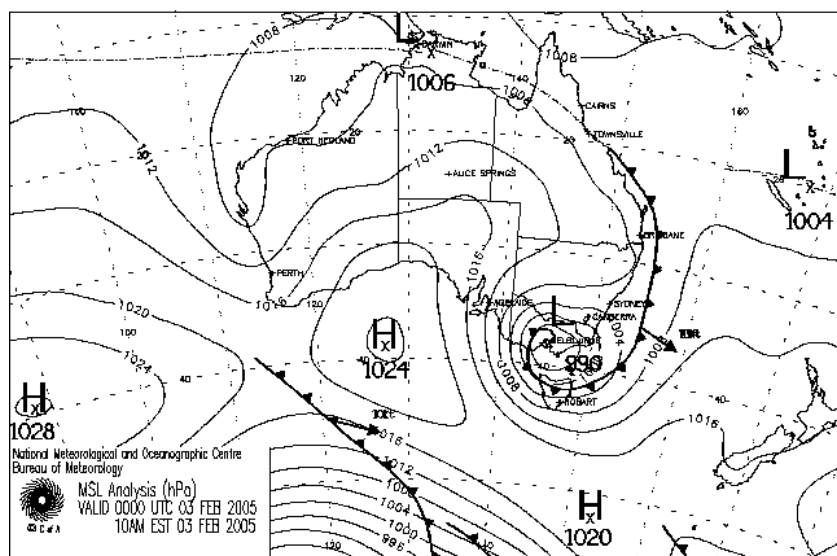
ENDNOTE: In light of the recent exploration by STC members of the upper levels in Mystery Creek Cave including the decorated chambers, the following item may be of interest. Around the time when the discovery of the Hastings Caves was being first reported (in mid-February 1918), the Director of the Tas. Govt. Tourist Bureau (E.T. Emmett) was defending the value of the *Ida Bay Caves* (Mystery Creek Cave) in order to prevent an extension of the quarry mining lease. Commenting on a recent visit to the *Ida Bay Caves* with J.C. (“Voss”) Wiburd – caretaker of Jenolan Caves – Emmett is quoted as saying: *Mr. Wiburd was impressed with the possibilities of the Ida Bay Caves. The beauties seemed to be in the galleries above, stretching away to the right and left, access to which would have to be obtained through holes in the roof.* You would have to assume that Midnight Hole and the recently explored upper levels weren’t known back then in 1918... or were they? Either way, Wiburd was obviously a very astute person in terms of his knowledge of caves and karst processes.

The Chronicles of Adamson – Part 3, Summer 2004/05

Matt Cracknell

Summer in southern Tasmania, wind, rain and the infrequent hot day or two in between, it also means tourists (lots of them), in the caves and at the pool. The adventure caving trips increased mostly to King George V, the sump/chute of this well used cave seems to have cleared but extra nutrient lies being devoured by a multitude of invertebrates. On one occasion I recorded three different looking Harvestmen, *Hickmanoxymma* spp., in the debris that lines the walls.

At several different times during December earthquakes were experienced in our part of the world. Northern Tasmania received a small one early in the month while the ocean in the vicinity of Macquarie Island felt a large quake in the morning of Christmas eve. Hikers camped at New River Lagoon were forced to move their tent to higher ground at around 6am due to the rapidly rising tide. On the 27th a surge in the ocean, a result of the large quake near Indonesia, washed out part of the Cockle Creek bridge. It was closed to access for several days, and forever after the price of waterfront properties will never be quite so much.



Weather chart for February 3rd demonstrating the intense low over Bass Strait and the resulting easterly/south easterly air stream

The floods of early February changed many things, on the morning of the 3rd. Hastings Chalet recorded 101 mm for the 24 hrs to 9 a.m. Most of this happened in a short 4 hour burst on Wednesday, the subsequent flash flooding was a catalyst for enormous change in many of the caves in the area. Newdegate Cave soaked the guides to the bone while in Mystery Creek and Exit caves the water was well above safe levels. Valley Entrance seems to have been buried in debris and the data logger collecting river heights in Mystery Ck is now under a large log. Next time that you go to IB-10 notice the amount of water now being taken by Cephalopod Ck! In an article (*Speleo Spiel* 336, p. 26 J. Butt), written about a similar event that occurred on 21/05/03, Jeff made some calculations on the amount of water involved in these situations. Using similar calculations to those Jeff used for the catchment of Mystery Ck (3 km²) and 100 mm of rain in approximately 4 hrs gives a flow rate of the creek at ~ 20 cumecs! (m³ s⁻¹) These are only rough calculations, you would expect more rain to fall in the catchment of Mystery Creek than at Hastings. The log that Jeff crossed on is now half washed down the creek.

Caving conference – a busy time for all involved. Hastings ran trips into Mystery Creek Cave and King George V Cave for a nominal fee on Wed the 5th. The six trips seemed to go without a hitch and running reasonably to time followed by a BBQ down at the thermal springs that was a success, with some of the delegates even going in the pool for a dip!

The cave cleaning has dropped off a bit while the busy season is happening, within the next year we hope to construct a raised walkway on the Palace flowstone section. The foot washes outside the cave and in the entrance have been occasionally looked after and cleaned. Late in February most of the guides took part in a voice training exercise that utilises relaxation and body awareness to enhance the natural voice. So in the future hopefully all the tourists can hear what the guides have to say.

Ice Tube Safety

Ric Tunney

Our recent photography trip to Ice Tube reminded us how cave safety has changed over the years.

The first photo was taken on the second through-trip of Ice Tube, 21 years ago on 17/4/84. It shows Stuart Nicholas and Janine McKinnon at the top of Pitch 2 "Degenerated Man" (22m). Both are standing less than a metre from the slot above the pitch. Stuart is searching in his pack for the rope for the pitch, and isn't paying a lot of attention to the drop below. Neither is belayed. Although you can't see, from memory, there was one bolt.

The second photo was taken this February and shows Janine McKinnon prusiking on the same pitch. The pitch-head was upgraded by John Salt a while ago and recently tarted up by Phil Rowsell and Damian Bidgood. They installed a permanent approach line and there are now two bolts with rings.



Stu and Janine at top of Degenerated Man pitch in Ice Tube in 1984. *Photo by Ric Tunney*



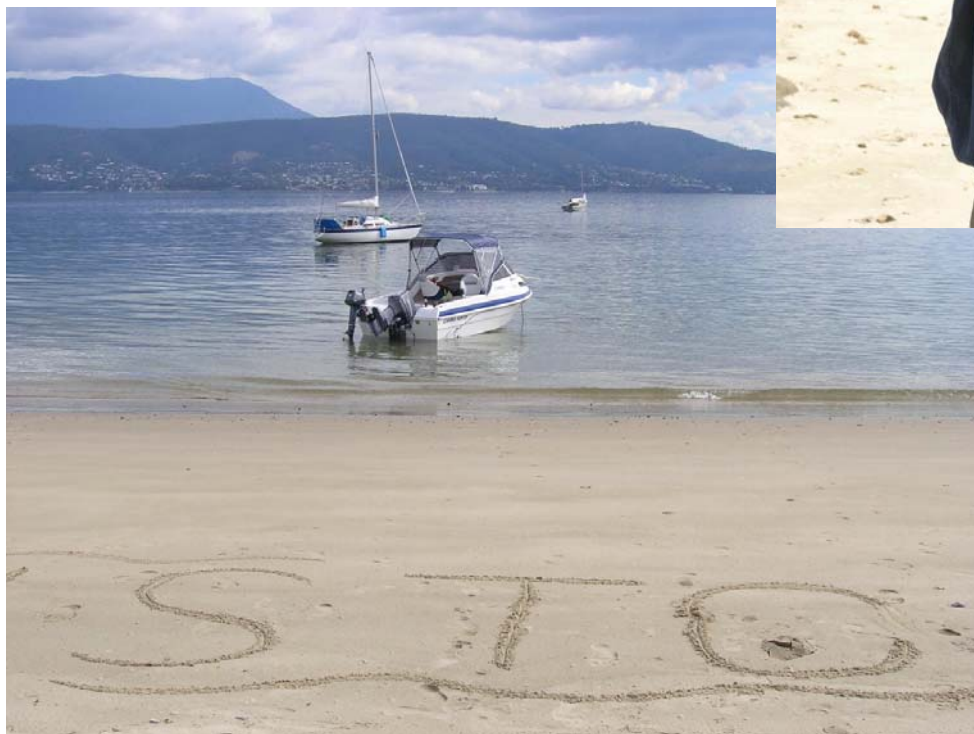
Janine on the new and improved Degenerated Man pitch rigging [*she hasn't grown any taller since 1984... Ed.*] *Photo by Ric Tunney*



Rolan, Patrick and Lawrence looking relaxed onboard Oberon. Photo by Claire Brett



Ken in his element at Mary Ann Bay. Photo by Claire Brett



A plethora of sea craft and some beach art. Photo by Claire Brett

