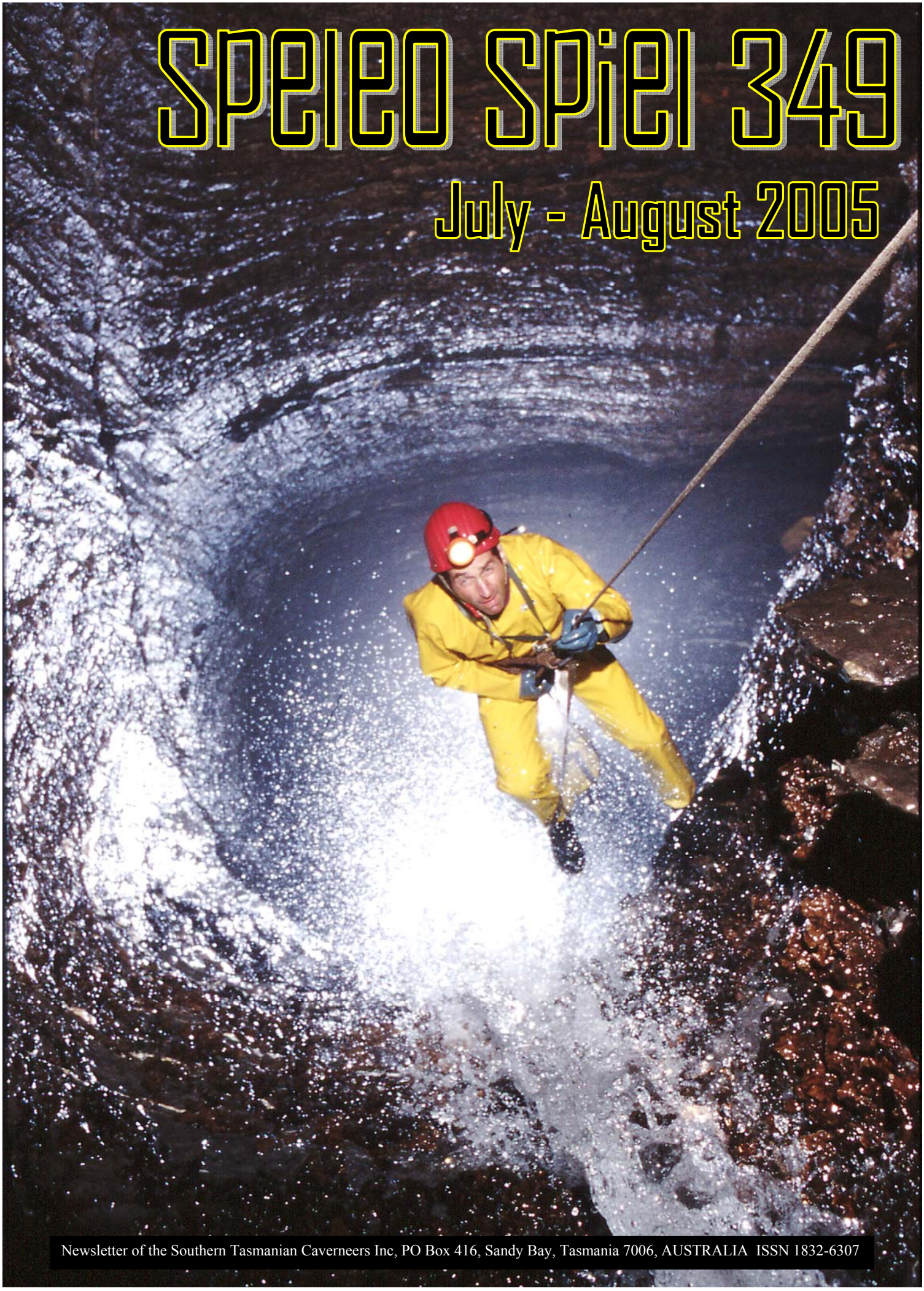
Speleo Spiel 349

July - August 2005



Newsletter of the Southern Tasmanian Caverneers Inc, PO Box 416, Sandy Bay, Tasmania 7006, AUSTRALIA ISSN 1832-6307

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Front Cover: Rolan Eberhard ascending the last streamway pitch in JF-4 Khazad-dum (photo by Stefan Eberhard)

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.

Speleo Spiel

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Southern Tasmanian Caverneers Incorporated
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Editorial

Another *Spiel* out so soon. The only good thing about getting one out late is that the next one looks early. It's another bumper *Spiel* with some interesting and varied reading – I've enjoyed compiling it.

It has been a reasonably active period considering the winter weather. KD has been 'done' in yet another new way and a return over summer is on the books to tick off another new way. Exploration in the Smorgasbord area is progressing slowly – our options are running out up there, but there's still work to be done.

My apologies to Joe Farrell for the delay in printing his rather amusing article on Extreme Ironing. There has been such a glut of material for the *Spiel* lately that I just couldn't find room until now. I am sure it has been worth the wait for all those readers out there 'chomping [*sic*] at the bit' to read it.

My apologies also for the amount of photos of Rolan in KD in this issue. What can I say; he's just so darn photogenic! Great hunk o' spunk that he is.

In my other roles as Social Secretary and SAR Liaison Officer I have pulled my finger out. A multitude of social activities abound in the Xerox Shop Forward Program (plug, plug…), and more details on most of these activities can be found in Stuff 'n Stuff. You will also find a Search and Rescue questionnaire on the back page. Please read it, fill it out and return it to me ASAP – it could save your life, or someone else's.

Alan Jackson

Forward Program

- General Meeting (Republic Bar) ..... 7th September
- STC Quiz Night - Social Meeting (Republic Bar) ..... 21st September
- STC Mole Creek Weekend..... 1st-2nd October
- General Meeting (Republic Bar) ..... 5th October
- Social Meeting (Republic Bar)..... 19th October
- CAVEX 2005 .....10th-11th December
- Christmas BBQ..... 14th December - at Gavin and Claire's (4 Clutha Place)

Stuff 'n Stuff

BIRTHDAY CONGRATULATIONS are in order for long time club member Albert Goede. He turns 70 on 9th September, and no doubt appreciates me publishing it in the *Spiel* and letting the whole world know (or maybe I'm being a little ambitious regarding the circulation of this rag). So, congratulations Albert – here's to another 70!

AN STC VIDEO NIGHT was conducted at August's social meeting. A few old videos from Stu Nich's collection were supplied by Bunty, and we also watched the National Geographic IMAX 'Journey into Amazing Caves'. There are still a few more to go in the pile, so maybe we'll have another one some day. Thanks again to Tony and Pat for supplying the venue and nibbles – I think Matt enjoyed the carrot/celery and dips a little too much.

THE SECOND STC QUIZ is coming to a Republic Bar near you. **Wednesday 21 September 2005 at 7:30 pm**. We'll be upstairs, not in the Green Room where meetings are normally held – just ask a friendly staff member for directions. The event will be an improvement on the inaugural quiz held at the 2005 Midwinter Extravaganza – there'll be flashing lights, beautiful models in bikinis and a multi million dollar showcase… Well, maybe. Teams will be made up of three or four members and need to be registered with The Quiz Master ASAP. An entry fee of $2 per person will be charged to cover model wages and a cut for the organiser…

MOLE CREEK WEEKEND – a weekend of fun and frivolities is on the cards in the Mole Creek Karst on the first weekend in October (1st and 2nd). A variety of permits are being arranged to all the old classics. If you feel the need to visit some of the more obscure caves in the area then suggest it and get it organised. I'm unsure of the status of the Marakoopa Hut, but camping is available at the Mole Creek Camping Ground. More details shall abound on the email circuit.

SEARCH AND RESCUE QUESTIONNAIRE – on the back page you will find a self assessment questionnaire regarding your skills and availability for future search and rescue emergencies. Please fill it out and return it to Alan Jackson ASAP. For those who receive a hard copy of the *Spiel*, it has been placed on the back page with a blank overleaf so that you can rip it off the back without destroying the integrity of your prized issue of the *Spiel*. For the electronic people amongst the club then I suggest printing it out and then filling it in – writing on the screen of you computer with biro is not recommended.

SEARCH AND RESCUE EXERCISE 2005 (CAVEX) – Damian and Alan have had a few ideas and the proposed date is 10th-11th December. This year's exercise will be based near Hobart (most likely Lost World on Mt Wellington, if the weather permits). It will focus on skills sessions like patient care and first aid, haulage systems, vertical rescue and how to have a cave rescue exercise without getting cold, wet, muddy and scared of the dark, i.e. we've taken all the fun out of it! If you have any ideas on things you'd like to see covered then let Alan know and we'll try to cater for you. Also let Alan know if you intend coming so we can get a feel for numbers.

JF-8 Junee Cave – Cave Diving Exploration Trip : March 2004

Tim Payne and David Doolette

Since first undertaking exploration of the second sump upstream in JF-8 Junee Cave with Stefan Eberhard and Chris Brown in 1998 (Eberhard 1998), we have been sufficiently intrigued and challenged to return twice to continue exploration. This report summarises our most recent exploration and belatedly reports our 2002 trip. Determined not to be delinquent with this recent report we began writing while queuing to board the *Spirit of Tasmania II* ferry during our trip home from Tasmania to South Australia. It is bad luck that, expecting to sleep through most of the overnight Bass Strait crossing, we left the computer in the car hold, because the trip was unexpectedly extended when an intoxicated passenger jumped overboard and the ferry spent 9.5 hours conducting an unsuccessful grid search in sight of the Tasmanian coast. Instead of finishing this report then, it has languished for several months upon our arrival home.

Cave diving is the sort of activity that to the uninitiated seems dangerous and foolhardy. It will come as no surprise to cavers however that the truth is far from this perception. The explorers and pioneers of cave diving, through many years of trial and error, have perfected a set of techniques and principles that control almost every aspect of a dive and virtually eliminate risk. Unlike mountaineering, or other adventure sports, the controlled nature of cave diving results in boring stories that are never written or read. That said, however, Junee Cave is one of the most difficult cave dives possible. The water is a cool 7 degrees Celsius and underwater visibility ranges from about 3 metres at best, to a more typical value of 30 cm. The limestone is hard, black and sharp; it seems to swallow the light from even the most powerful dive torches while also threatening to cut our drysuits that provide our only barrier to the cold. There are numerous restrictions, which can trap the diver underwater, fast flowing current in places, which can push the diver against the sharp rock and silt that if disturbed can completely eliminate visibility, leaving the diver to find their way through the cave by feel alone. But worst of all the second sump is not only at the end of a long stream passage along which carrying heavy diving gear is difficult, but is also extremely deep. Deep diving requires the use of special gas mixtures to reduce nitrogen narcosis and significant time slowly ascending (decompression) to minimise the risk of decompression sickness ("the bends").

2002 Trip

In 2002 the two of us returned to the Florentine Valley along with Pam Payne, Peter and Janine Kraehenbuehl and family. While the two of us dived the Junee Resurgence, the others enjoyed the outdoors and we would later join up for some dry caving. During our previous 1998 trip four divers dived as exploration and support teams. While one pair of divers performed an exploratory dive the other pair helped the other pair haul their bulky and heavy gear from the cars to the start of the first sump, through the tight, zero visibility first sump, through the spectacular dry chamber against the flow of the underground river and over the waterfalls, and back again. This was thought important so the exploration divers could conserve energy to battle the extended immersion in the chilling water and because heavy work following diving increases the risk of bends. In part from lessons learnt and in part out of necessity in 2002 only the two of us would dive. This required a high level of fitness, rationalisation of equipment, and careful planning. Even the most meticulous plans are based on assumptions about what the cave will do, and as we discovered the Junee Cave is certainly not predictable.

Dive one

To prevent the line from being cut by the sharp rock during the high winter water flow, we had, like earlier explorers, installed a heavy rope in place of the usual 3 mm line commonly used in Australia on our dives in the second sump four years earlier. We were unsure whether the rope line would have survived but even more daunting was the uncertainty about what had happened to the huge reel containing a hundred or so metres of this rope that we had left near the restriction when we had had to terminate the final dive. This might have been blown throughout the underwater cave passage, creating a risk of entrapment, especially in the region we affectionately termed The Teeth.

The plan for this first dive was ambitious and optimistic. In a single dive we were transporting three oxygen cylinders (breathing oxygen in shallow water is used to accelerate decompression), two small cylinders of trimix (oxygen/nitrogen/helium gas for breathing deeper than 35 metres), and twin air cylinders on our back. The assumption was that the line in the first sump would still be intact and we would get the gear through this sump and transport it to the other end of the air chamber (For Your Eyes Only). We would then do a dive to examine our 1998 line. This would take us briefly to the extreme limit of air diving safety so we would switch from our twin air cylinders to the trimix cylinder for the few minutes spent between 35 and 60 metres, switching back to air for the bulk of the decompression and then change over to oxygen for the 3 m and 6 m decompression stops.

Tim submerged into the first sump and followed the line; David followed shortly behind. Tim had an extra stage and would benefit from the undisturbed silt, but David was unlikely to see anything. In such conditions cave divers are trained to communicate through tugs on the line and it wasn't long before David felt the line tugging repeatedly, almost like the signal for an emergency, accompanied by billowing clouds of silt. In completely zero visibility and in a series of tight restrictions, David waited for a clearer signal but the

tugs faded and then stopped. Either Tim had resolved the problem, or drowned, and the latter seemed unlikely since he was carrying five separate breathing gas supplies. As David proceeded, it became clear what had happened. In many places the fixed rope line had been buried underneath a metre or more of sediment by the moving silt banks; Tim had merely been heaving the line out by plunging his hand into the silt bank and lifting it back to the surface. The first sump was a complete success; we had restored the line to a usable location and had transported all of our gear through successfully. (Note: the line placement in the first sump has numerous line traps [i.e. it leads you through places that are impossible to pass through] and is far from ideal, especially since zero visibility is the norm in this sump. However this positioning for the line ensures that there are a minimum number of rub points against the sharp rock and so ensures the integrity of the line).

Following the cold immersion in the water of the first sump, transporting the gear through the dry chamber restored our warmth; indeed we were both now drenched in sweat. It is difficult to dress warmly enough to fend off the cold during diving, but not to overheat with the physical exertion in the dry chamber. For the types of exposures that David and Tim were planning, dry suits are essential and getting wet (even from sweat), can severely reduce the thermal protection provided from the suit. Regardless we set off into the second sump. As for the first sump the line was generally intact, although buried. We also added two more stakes to better direct the rope line away from line traps. At 40 m depth Tim stopped at a restriction and called (ordered to begin exiting) the dive. The heavy work removing the buried line had both increased his level of narcosis and the delay fixing the line meant that the carefully scheduled deep trimix portion of the dive was no longer possible. Trimix dives are performed according to a rigid, pre-planned schedule. David had a quick look beyond the restriction and reported that the line appeared intact.

Dive two

On this following dive, we passed back through the first sump. This time it was somewhat easier since the extra tanks required for the trimix dive in the second sump were already in the cave having not been used the previous day. We passed yesterday's turn around point and continued to a depth of 57 metres where we found a break in the line, not far short of where we had rather hastily left the reel of rope in 1998. We tidied up the small amount of loose line but our dwindling supply of trimix allowed only a few minutes at this depth so we ascended and pondered the absence of either the reel or a huge amount of loose line.

Dive three

Despite being short of our previous furthest point of exploration, we decided we would aim to push past that point on the next dive. At 60 m, there was a restriction that we had been unable to pass on the previous visit in 1998, and at the same point we expected to find the loose line and reel from the previous dive. Assuming the cave would get deeper, this time we carried a large supply of trimix in our back mounted tanks and a supply of air to use shallower than 35 metres in a stage cylinder (a cylinder that can be detached and left on the cave floor and retrieved on return).

At the broken end of our rope line we tied on thinner 3 mm polypropylene line and continued. We found the missing line reel near the location where it had been left four years previously. The line was broken at the reel, but the reel was buried in the gravel swept in by the winter flood and couldn't be extracted. Luckily, the reel must have been buried before the line had broken. At this 60 m depth, the restriction that had been impassable under high flow conditions was passed easily, but at minus 65 m the cave passage unexpectedly turned back up and we entered an enlarged part of the underwater tunnel, confronting what appeared to be a silt floor sloping upwards. At 57 m in a still ascending tunnel we tied off the line and exited the cave having added approximately 60 m length of fixed rope line.

Dive four

The cave still appeared to be going up, so we started to plan the necessary dives that would allow us to ascend in to the long awaited master cave stream passage in the Junee system. This was potentially going to be almost the worst type of dive profile. Although trimix diving is now common, a double bounce profile from such depths creates considerable extra risk, so we planned our ascent very carefully. We dived to the bottom of the second sump, then back up the other side to our previous position, where we had tied the line at 57 m depth. The sediment floor of the tunnel actually turned out to be just a thin dusting of silt over a solid rock surface, so there was very little opportunity to place more stakes to secure the line. In this larger passage, we hoped that the added conduit area would result in a slower water velocity during the high winter flow and that this new line would survive for future exploration. However, this was wishful thinking and future expeditions should expect to spend several dives restoring the old line! Almost immediately beyond this point, the cave passage started levelling out, totally blowing our planned dive schedule. So much for assumptions! We did however lay another 60 odd metres of line, extending the cave a little bit further. David tied off the line at a blockage in the tunnel that we could not pass. This appeared to be a relatively small restriction that would be passable blocked with large boulders. Beyond the boulders, the continuing passage is clearly visible. Importantly though, the water flow through this reduced restriction was small, hinting that there may be an alternative route for channelling the cave water. Twenty or so metres back from this end point, on the left hand side, there was another potential continuation of the tunnel. Unfortunately, we didn't have the time to investigate this possible lead, but given the low current flow through the small restriction where the boulders are blocking the tunnel, we were confident that another flow-through conduit must exist.

This second sump dive lasted 2 hours and was a bit of a problem for Tim. On the way in while carrying his

heavy twin cylinders (approximately 60 kg) over a waterfall in For Your Eyes Only, a foothold collapsed under Tim's weight plunging him headfirst into the stream under the weight of his gear and the water flow. With a considerable amount of effort and stretching, Tim was eventually able to push his head above water and struggle to a standing position unhurt. However, by the time we finished transporting gear to the start of the second sump, Tim felt slightly wet inside his drysuit, but decided to continue on regardless. Since his last visit to Junee Cave, Tim had acquired electric heating for inside his drysuit, so despite being in for a very long and cold dive, Tim was counting on this new hi-tech warming device to make up for the wetness. This is the fourth dry-suit failure in Junee Cave during the history of its exploration.

After spending nearly 2 weeks hauling gas tanks we had had enough! After a couple of days rest in the nearby caves and some walks in the National Park, we headed for home.

2004 Trip

Dive 1

Our intention for this trip was simple and optimistic: to find a route around or through the boulder choke in the second sump and find kilometres of phreatic or vadose passage and map what we could. We came equipped for this eventuality including a backup plan: push Junee as far as we could and use any remaining days to enjoy a few nearby vertical caves. Once again it was only the two of us to dive, all our friends, even those who had never dived Junee, were mysteriously busy.

Our planned first dive was to stage cylinders of decompression gases into For Your Eyes Only ready for subsequent exploration dives and to excavate and repair the line as necessary to the 40 m depth limit of air diving into the second sump. The first sump line was not as badly buried as in 2002 and remains in good condition and although separated from one anchor this does not alter the line position and was not repaired. The diving conditions were quite good with the water flow only marginally higher than we had experienced on previous trips. As a result of a regulator malfunction upon reaching For Your Eyes Only and David incompletely charging his head torch, the dive into the second sump became impossible but Tim carried the four oxygen cylinders to the beginning of the second sump.

Dive 2

Despite not having done a preparatory dive to renew the shallow part of the route in the second sump, spurred on by the good condition of the line in the first sump and the good diving conditions, we planned a deep dive out to the end of our previous exploration for the next dive. After a day spent preparing and filling cylinders with the various gas mixtures for our second dive we carried these to the beginning of the first sump late in the afternoon and were pleased to find the water level had dropped, conditions were improving.

Our early start the next morning was met with a minor disappointment, the water level was back up again. The first sump dive and the two trips carrying gear up For Your Eyes Only were uneventful, perhaps mysteriously easy. We paused for a Powerbar and headed into the second sump, each wearing or carrying six cylinders. We dropped three oxygen cylinders at 6 m and carried on breathing from nitrox (oxygen/nitrogen) stage cylinders dropping these and a spare at 35 m. We continued on breathing a mixture of 20% oxygen /50% nitrogen /30% helium The heavy guideline in the beginning of the second sump was more extensively buried than we had expected and required considerable excavation beyond 35 m depth. Beyond 57 m depth we had used 3 mm polypropylene guideline and we had expected some breakage, we were not disappointed. The line through the restriction that descends from 60 m depth was shredded and about 10 m of loose line streamed back up the tunnel with the water flow. Fortunately in this gravel bottom section of tunnel the visibility was a glorious 2 to 3 m so this entanglement hazard was easily dealt with. A segment of new line was installed through the restriction and the old line was found intact beyond where the tunnel begins to ascend from the deep point of 64 m. Another break was found further on and again a new segment installed. Along with line repairs made in 1998 the line was becoming fairly heavily patched and our distance marks intended for survey were becoming less meaningful. This line maintenance was time consuming and we reached the possible left hand side lead noted on our previous trip with only a few minutes dive time remaining. We marked this intersection with an arrow indicating the way out, tied on the exploration reel and started in only to be disappointed, what in the low visibility had appeared a separate tunnel turned out to be the far left hand wall of the previously explored tunnel, so we returned to the intersection removing the new guideline. We then had time for a quick recce up our old line and found it ended in another break. Having spent nearly 30 minutes deeper than 50 m we had reached the safe limit of our gas supply and were facing extended decompression time in the cold water so we headed out of the cave. We collected our nitrox cylinders and endured decompression stops at 35, 21, 18, 15, 12, 9, 6, and 3 m resulting in a total dive time of 106 minutes. This year both of us used electrical heating in our drysuit as well as home made drysuit gloves making the long cold exposures in the cave a little more tolerable.

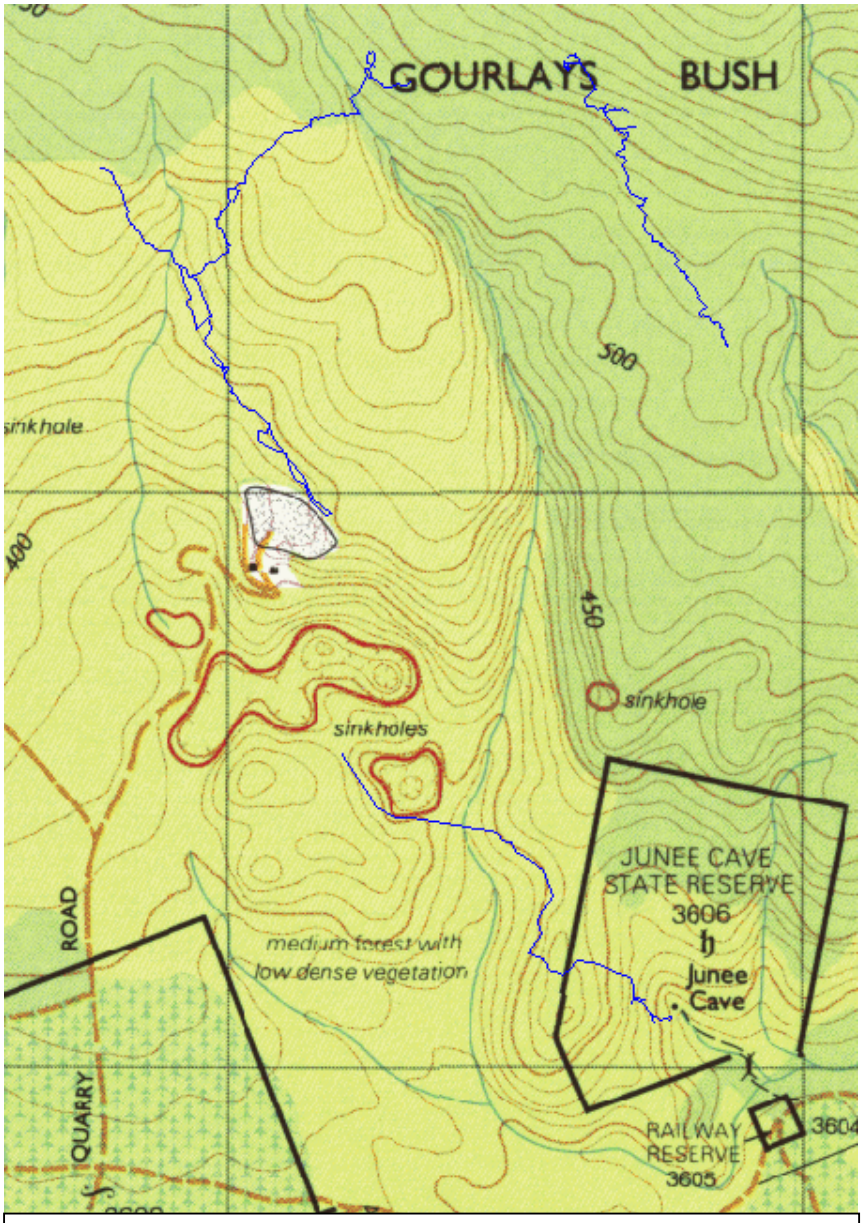
Dive 3

We were disappointed that the apparent tunnel was not a way past the boulder choked restriction but decided we should have another look at the restriction. This dive was planned the same way as dive 2. In the second sump we reached the break in our old line past the intersection arrow. Tim was in the lead and tied on an exploration reel to this broken line. Not far up we reached the boulder choked restriction. At first it looked the same to David, who being in the lead in 2002 had had the best look at it, fairly smooth, light

coloured boulders blocking the tunnel. Tim found that the tunnel widened on the right and he had been able to traverse along and up the rock pile. The rocks at the top of the boulder choke were similar to the formations in shallower sections of the cave, dark, sharp and with a sedimentary appearance. Tim spent several minutes trying to push through a gap in these boulders behind which he could see the tunnel continuing but was unable to fit. In more pleasant surroundings this would be an amusing challenge, but at a total distance of over 1 km into this cave, at 55 metres depth in cold turbid water we soon ran out of time and had to return to the inevitable cold during decompression and the work of carrying our equipment out of the cave.

Dive 4

We debated long into the next day about whether we could manage to re-configure the equipment we had with us in such a way that we could pass this small restriction before deciding it was best left for another trip. We had to make a brief excursion into For Your Eyes Only to collect the remaining cylinders we had not been able to carry out the previous day. It barely warrants a mention except as perhaps the shallowest trimix cave dive we have ever done, since we used the remaining gas in our twin cylinders from the previous day instead of carrying them out of the cave for refilling.



Topographical map of Junee Cave area showing surveyed cave passage (dark blue) of JF-8 Junee Cave (bottom), JF-341 (top left) and JF-99 The Chairman (top right).

We had been stopped again; Junee does not yield its secrets easily. We finished up our stay in the Florentine Valley with a through trip from Slaughterhouse Pot to Growling Swallet and a hike in Mt Field national Park, before that interminable trip home.

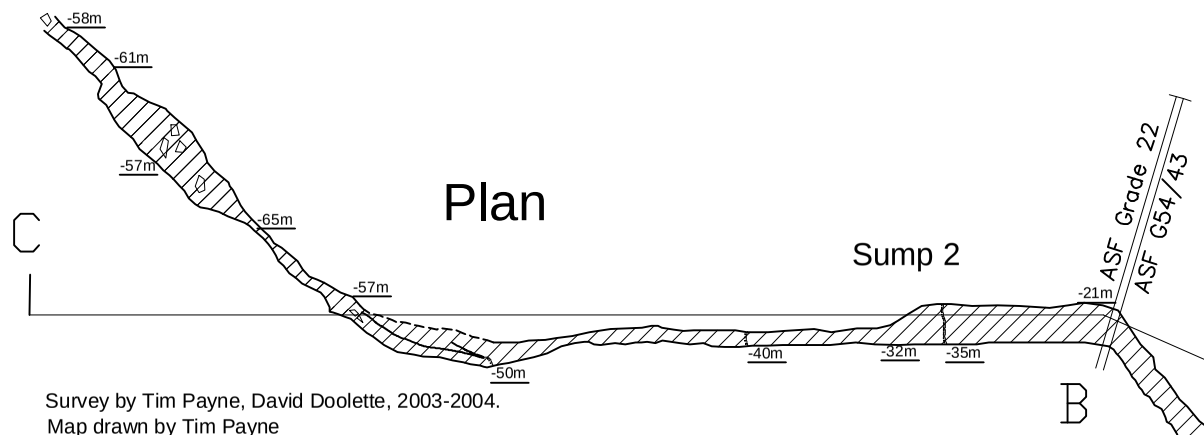
In summary, our dive pushes had extended the passage length of Junee Cave by another 140 m including a further 5 m in depth. Future gains are likely to be harder to achieve as the number of tanks and the length of the decompression time increases. Indeed the restriction at our furthest point may not be able to be negotiated at all, and if it can be it will significantly constrain pushes beyond this point. Given the finite amount of gas that can be carried during these cave dives, activities tend to be rushed with a focus on exploration and line maintenance. Consequently, little effort has been put into mapping the new passage in Junee Cave and only major direction changes and approximate distances have been noted. Nonetheless, a sketch of the new passage has been drawn and it apparently puts us about four hundred meters from JF-341 (see map above, and survey on page 7).

Reference

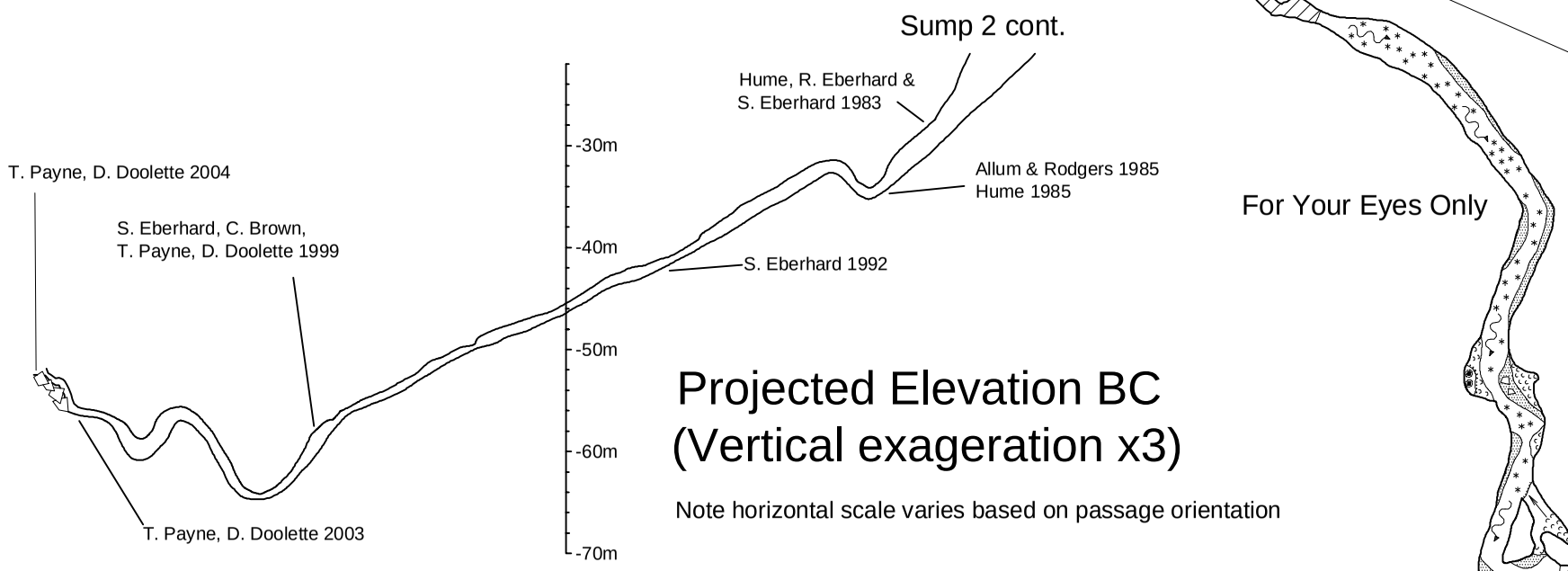
EBERHARD, S. 1998. Plumbing the Depths of Inky Blackness. *Speleo Spiel,* 307:15-19 [also published in *Guidelines*, 66:14 -19]

Juner Cave, JF8

STC Map 7JF8.STC55
Compilation map by Tim Payne, 2004
Survey of Sump 1, For your Eyes Only Passage and Sump 2 (to -21 m) by TCC
Survey of Sump 2 (beyond -21m) by Tim Payne and David Doolette



Survey by Tim Payne, David Doolette, 2003-2004.
Map drawn by Tim Payne
ASF Grade 22
Survey performed with knoted line, compass, depth gauge



Projected Elevation BC (Vertical exageration x3)

Note horizontal scale varies based on passage orientation

For Your Eyes Only

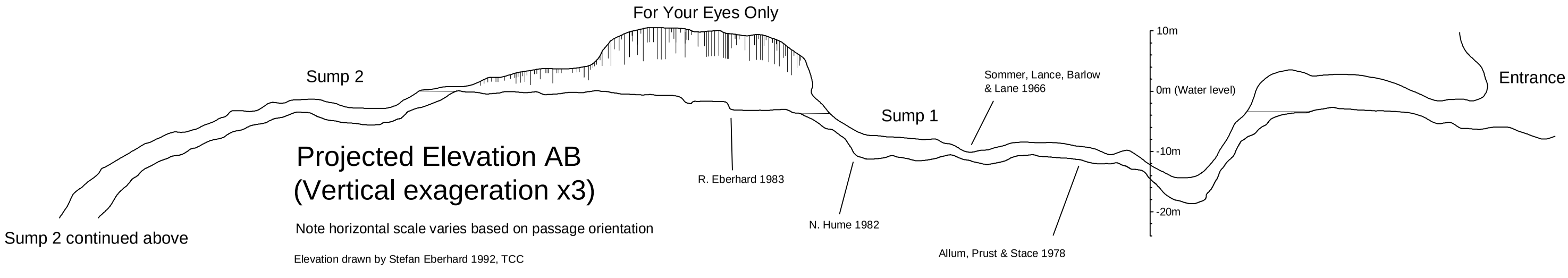
Plan Survey by TCC
Oct 82-Mar 83
R. Eberhard, S. Eberhard
N. Hume, R. Hortle
Drawn R. Eberhard
ASF G54/43

MN

-20m Bottom Depth
Direction of floor slope
Flowing Water
Roof step (Profile shown for Clarification)
Floor step (Profile shown for Clarification)
Straw
Column
Flowstone
Boulder
Rock Pile. (Slope indicated by overlap)
Lake surface
Mud

-20m 0m 20m 40m 60m 80m 100m 120m 140m 160m 180m 200m

SCALE 1:2000



Projected Elevation AB (Vertical exageration x3)

Note horizontal scale varies based on passage orientation

Sump 2 continued above

Elevation drawn by Stefan Eberhard 1992, TCC

EB-10 Trog Dip: June 2005

Amy Ware

Party: Amy Ware, Tony Morris, Peter Freeman

After only 2 caving trips in the 3 months on this cold and desolate island, I decided to return to Victoria for a long weekend that included an opportunity to get underground in Buchan - my native caving area.

The boys wash off in the river after their subterranean grot fest *Photo by Amy Ware*

Trog Dip is a long horizontal cave that centres around a stream passage originating at an outflow on the bank of the Murrindal River. After a stroll in the dry entrance passageway, there is a clamber through rockfall and the wet streamway is reached. Walking through the shallow water, you soon reach sections where stooping and crawling are required, and then after the (not as intimidating as it sounds) Hip-crusher, a flat-out section called the Gravel Grovel. This was actually quite sandy on our trip, which made it much more pleasant, though my fellow cavers Peter and Tony found all the low sections tiring.

We soon made it past the first two sumps (puddles) and reached the third sump to find it completely dry. After the low wriggle through the gravelly sump itself, we popped up through the Pop-hole and negotiated the muddy slopes up into our target - The Vaults! Tony had been left behind at a squeeze just past the sump, so it was a quick turnaround trip for Peter and I to sit atop the rockpile in the centre of the massive space and eat our lunch. The Vaults are big for Buchan, the roof is around 20 m above you and you even get a little tiny echo.

A patch of pretty stuff – Buchan really does have it all… *Photo by Amy Ware*

But we soon turned around and scampered for the entrance, trying to make it out and back to the car before dark. Back through the entrance passages with all their bats (gorgeous!), and out for a dip in the river to wash the sticky mud off in the wonderfully warm water. While the river was a little colder than the cave (about 16 degrees underground), it was still pleasant enough to roll around in. And then back up through the paddock to the car for a drive back to the social comforts of Homeleigh, Buchan's cavers' house.

JF-10 Splash Pot: 25 June 2005

Hugh Fitzgerald

Party: Hugh Fitzgerald, Dave Rasch

A conscience can be a tiresome thing. For four years Dave's had been pricking away at him, urging him to retrieve the gear stashed away in Splash Pot since the heyday of the Jeff Butt led pushes in this delightful hole. Dave and Jeff had ferried a lot of the gear in there, and Dave felt it was up to him to tidy up the mess left behind. And certainly, after five years underground, it was high time the ropes were brought out for a good inspection.

Dave and I had often discussed the idea of returning to Splash Pot to collect the gear, but had never set a firm date for a trip. In the meantime, neither of us had done much caving, and not much else involving serious exercise either. We were both starting to feel old and soft and out of shape. The thought of tackling Splash Pot again was becoming increasingly daunting. It was approaching a case of now or never.

At the STC Midwinter Extravaganza we realised that our busy calendars meant the following weekend would be the only opportunity for a trip in 2005. Mindful of our lack of recent caving, we discussed a leisurely trip to retrieve the gear and leave without getting sidetracked. We considered asking others along, especially those who knew what they were in for, weighed up against the drawbacks of a large party. It was decided that one extra person would be very useful.

We dithered over the week, not extending the invitation far and then only at the eleventh hour. We got no takers.

Saturday came and we set off at 0830 in Dave's Daihatsu. We found the McKinnon-Tunney Subaru at the K-D carpark, indicating that Janine and Ric had left for Dwarrowdelf with Alan Jackson. We kitted up and walked slowly to the JF-10 entrance, taking care not to overexert ourselves too soon. Despite this being a gear retrieval trip, we were carrying enough rope and rigging gear to get down the four pitches to Close to the Bone. We had three caving packs between us, and only one was empty.

Dave had brought a long a pair of little gadgets he had built in Antarctica from spare parts and dead batteries. They were red and green blinking LED devices, accompanying us today as Dave thought they might be useful to indicate the turn off from the K-D track to Splash Pot in the dark. They were positioned accordingly, and we headed up the spur.

At the entrance we found quite a lot of water running into the cave, which meant we were likely to get wet inside. We rigged the entrance pitch around a tree and headed in. Once at the wet pitch series, we pulled out more ropes to begin the descent. This was the first time I had been involved in rigging these pitches, but Dave knew all the good anchors and had brought appropriate hardware and tapes.

Without raiding the STC gear store, we had resorted to using some of my old ropes for rigging. What with the lengths available, we needed a mid-rope knot, which ended up being 3 metres off the deck at the bottom of the first pitch. I was elected first to descend. It had been a long time since I had used SRT gear, and it showed: to begin with I put my chest ascender on upside down, and then I threaded my descender and set off down the pitch without using cowstails. Yikes! I really need more regular practice at this sort of thing.

The pitches turned out wet, which is how Splash Pot earned its name. I had bought a cheap nylon raincoat before the trip to wear under my Cordura suit, but I was getting wet anyhow. (It had no seam sealant, and the waterproofing wore off under my pack straps and chest harness). By the bottom we were both soaked through, but warm enough for the time being.

Close to the Bone took us 30 minutes to get through. After four years lay-off it seems to get narrower. Once through, we found ropes waiting at the top of the last pitches leading to Slash Spot. We rigged these and dropped down to find another rope and a tape measure. Having come this far, Dave thought it wise to check Tend'n Down pitch to see whether it was still rigged, so off we set. On the way, Dave showed me a large side passage that remains unsurveyed and he got momentarily excited at the prospect of further exploration. We spent ten minutes poking around before I gently reminded him of our priority, and the need for a quick trip.

At Tend'n Down we found it was still rigged (damn – more rope to carry out). We removed the bolts and Maillon Rapides, carried them back to the stash at Slash Spot, then ate to reduce the volume in our packs. Back up the pitches we derigged and stuffed the three packs with rope and rigging gear, before entering Close to the Bone for the long haul back uphill.

With three fat pigs between the two of us, the going was slow – very slow. It took nearly two hours to get through this 100 metre stretch, passing the packs between us. A third person would have been really useful. We figured Jeff was there with us in spirit, but now he gets to sit back and enjoy the ride, without having to do the grunt work.

Dave headed up the wet pitches first while I waited. I was getting cold by now, and willed him up as fast as he could go. He was slowed by gear failure half way up. His pulley line between hand ascender and footloop had split its sheath and was fraying alarmingly.

I eventually followed with two packs in tow. Dave had a cold and lonely wait at the top as I pulled gear while ascending. I had hardware fail too: the tiny krab that connected my chest ascender to my chest harness broke. We derigged the pitch head quickly, stuffing more rope into the bulging packs. We were both cold and weary, battered and bruised. Dave told me he had felt the Grim Reaper sitting with him at the pitch head. It was time to exit.

The last stream passage back to the entrance is always hard work, and proved so again. We finally made the surface after 8 hours underground. It was cold and moonless outside, and I was starting to shiver. With minimum delay we set off, finding Dave's old reflector tapes still shining brightly in the dark bush. Thankfully they led us back to the K-D track, where the two blinkers aligned us on the right course.

At the car we found a note from the Dwarrowdelfers on the driver's seat. Apparently we had left the car door wide open. Off came the wet gear, on went the heater, and we set off back for home. Neither of us warmed up over the two hours we took returning to Hobart. Back at home I was still shivering. I guess that's the first sign of hypothermia. A hot shower finally improved matters.

With Jeff gone, the impetus to revisit Splash Pot has evidently fallen off. I must admit that during and immediately after this trip I had no desire to return. A few weeks have passed, and the bruises are at last healing, so now I'm thinking it wasn't too bad. There are plenty of leads left in there, but perhaps some younger, more regular cavers can regather the momentum.

JF-4 Khazad-Dum, JF-14 Dwarrowdelf – Pull-Through Exchange Trip: 10 July 2005

Alan Jackson

Party: Gavin Brett, Matt Cracknell, Rolan Eberhard, Alan Jackson

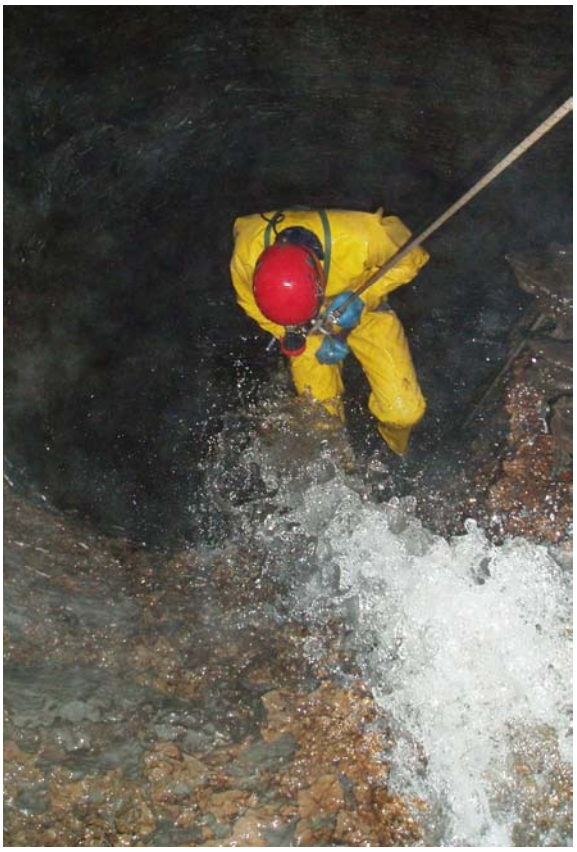
Gavin had one of those rare brilliant moments where all his nerve synapses fired at once – "Could you do a pull-through trip in KD?" was the result. My mind boggled, my imagination fried and I transformed into a possessed freak. What a f*#$@^g brilliant idea! I'd wanted to do a KD-Dwarrowdelf exchange trip for a while, but the lack of cavers in Tasmania made it a difficult proposition – Gavin had provided the answer, but it was more of a question really. Could we?

Rolan prepares to descend a streamway pitch. *Photo by Matt Cracknell*

Rolan is always keen for something big to have his name on, so no worries recruiting him. Matt clearly wasn't excited enough, but was certainly keen to come. Damian was keen too, but eventually bailed, citing some excuse about 'family' and 'commitment' – I really must look these words up in the dictionary one day… I've heard other people use them before.

We did the math for rope requirements and doubled it (a night in KD didn't seem all that appealing in the event of a stuff up; being rescued by the 'Crack Team' seemed even less appealing). In the end we took three ropes in the order of 40-50 m in length, and 25 m of old stiff 11 mm to get us down the non pull-through friendly section of the last pitch.

I was hoping for super high water levels, but we were greeted by less than moderate levels, considering it was mid-winter. This was probably a good thing really. Movement down to the streamway section was pretty straight forward (just the brief hesitation before we pulled the rope out of reach on the Dry 90 Footer). The streamway pitches presented more of a challenge (as expected). None of the party had actually been down here since the p-hangers were installed, so it was like a first trip for us. Those pitches with p-hangers well placed for pulling-through were done the conventional way, but those that required pulling-through off naturals were a bit trickier. The last person down just passed the rope around the back of the anchor and then abseiled down, belayed by the weight of another person at the bottom – Gavin and I even partook in a spot of double abseiling at one point, just for shits and giggles. A few tingly moments were had, but we got to the Brew Room safely and mostly dry.



Rolan descending the final streamway pitch *Photo by Matt Cracknell*

The last pitch from the Brew Room was always going to be a problem – there would be too much friction over the wall/lip and only single p-hangers were placed further down, the first one too far out of reach to get to unbelayed. This is what the shitty old bit of 11 mm was for. We ran a fixed line from the Brew Room eyebolt to the bottom rebelay p-hanger (via the natural on the lip and the first rebelay p-hanger), using long

rethreaded figure 8 knots – no hardware required this way. We then pulled-through off the last p-hanger, which was now backed up to the three anchors above. A quick escape out the already rigged Dwarrowdelf then ensued. We emerged back on the surface, with over 370 m of rope in our packs, in seven hours. It was a very rewarding trip.

It is worth mentioning that although it was a brilliant way to do KD, and we all got home safely, there were plenty of things that could have gone wrong and the trip had a certain element of foolhardiness to say the least. If you're having the urge to repeat the feat, then please have a chat to a member of this party first to get some ideas. Perhaps the most important thing is make sure that you rig Dwarrowdelf first! As Jeff Butt would have said, "KD is not set up for a pull-through trip", and some of the rigging was less than ideal. A good dose of 'young and dumb' came in handy on this trip (I guess Rolan had enough of the latter to make up for his lack of the former…)

Alan checks his cheat sheet for rigging details *Photo by Matt Cracknell*

JF-270 Tachycardia – A Spot of Digging : 17 July 2005

Alan Jackson

Party: Serena Benjamin, Gavin Brett, Alan Jackson, Amy Ware

Serena had returned out of the blue from New Zealand, and was keen as mustard. The rest of us were 'keenish', except for Ric and Janine, who lost any whiff of keenness they might have had when they woke up to snow on the Mountain. The plan was to have a crack at Tachycardia and see if we could muscle our way through the constriction in the boulder fall.

The weather was truly spectacular – lots of snow. The walk in was magical. The cave made for a nice warm spot out of the snow and was draughting strongly and erratically. We bombed on down to the dig, placing two 8 mm expansion bolts at the pitch head, and started drilling and whacking. Slow progress was made until I dropped the cold chisel down the hole. The back up chisel was held onto much more tightly after this. We removed a fair bit of rock, but not enough to make my immense body fit through. We'll be back with better equipment and more of it in the near future.

JF-236 Bunyips Lair, JF-277, JF-278 Charnier and others : 23 July 2005

Alan Jackson

Party: Serena Benjamin, Alan Jackson

Gavin's pecks where still sore from his fencing activities, (poor old man), so Serena and I shot through to Maydena on our lonesome. The plan was to return to JF-278 Charnier and survey it, make sure there were no leads left and have a closer look at the piles of dead animals in the bottom. It's always good to have a plan, I guess.

We powered on until we reached the JF-277 swallet, where we got changed. I wanted to have one more look in here to see if I could squeeze down a nasty tight hole where the water goes. Serena headed in first and by the time I joined her she had found an alternative lead just inside the entrance which we promptly excavated and Serena headed through. This essentially provided a spacious and dry bypass to the squatty wet way I was initially considering. Good job, Serena! We gained a few extra metres of depth, but the stream soon disappears down an ever decreasing flattener – the floor is all loose cobbles that would easily shift though, so enthusiasm is the only barrier here now. I think there was a draught, but can't remember.

JF-278, just down the gully, was next on the list. It was here that the plan started going awry. In order to survey a cave one needs survey gear! We headed down until the second pitch, where I looked between my legs and didn't recognise the cave any more. I descended a bit and found that the continuation I had 'tidied up a bit' on the previous trip had decided to do a little tidying up of its own – a few thousand kilograms of rock had repositioned itself. Staying on the rope I did a bit of investigating and kicking – the original way on was now blocked, but a new one had opened up. Everything was loose and keen to reach a lower energy state, except me. I got off the rope to check this little chamber while Serena came down for a peek. She could see the terror in my eyes and soon headed up again, and while doing so we could hear the grinding of rocks as stuff settled in the rock fall. I whipped out a quick sketch and got out – the bones could stay where they were for another few thousand years! A good draught was noticed this time.

We then dumped our vertical gear and wandered around the contact further west, investigating the

numerous entrances I had located and taped in November. Basically we got very grotty and never more than five metres underground. We got excited when we found JF-236 Bunyips Lair – very impressive entrance, but became less excited when I read the accounts of early exploration on the archive when I got home. We turned around here and headed home, not realising how close we were to JF-237 Niggly.

IB-97 Pseudocheirus : 23 July 2005

Ric Tunney

Party: Janine McKinnon, Ric Tunney

We had hoped that, by running this trip on a Saturday, we could tempt a few part-time cavers out for some easy mid-winter caving. Amy Ware almost came, but was stricken by apathy and pulled out at the last minute. So we were reduced to our accustomed two.

A nice late start saw us leaving the car at 10 am. It was fine, sunny and warm for winter; around 10 degrees. The Pseudocheirus track turns off Skinners Track further around the hillside than one always remembers, and the descent of the hillside is always further than one expects, so it took us a strolling hour to reach the cave. For the last 300 m we were followed by a lyre bird, which would run ahead of us and then perch on a fallen log to watch us pass.

The area beside the pot is nice and level and allows for comfortable trogging up. This activity kept the lyre bird amused. She would perch on a rock and eye us for a while and then jump around inside the walls of the pot and knock stuff down into the cave. We started to wonder if she would fall down and turn our trip into a cave rescue.

We belayed off a tree on the lip with a tie-back to another tree. Janine descended and set up the rebelay on the hanger at -10 m. This gives a free-hang to the bottom with a glancing rub about 10 m from the bottom. There is supposed to be a thread that can be used as a redirection, but Janine couldn't find it.

I descended to the rebelay, fixed a new bolt beside it and changed the rope to the new hanger. We were undecided whether we'd remove the old bolt, so I left the bolting gear hanging there and descended.

At the ledge above the rub I found a notch on the left in which I could jam the knot on one end of a 1m tape, so I was able to set up a redirection. This set the rope nicely away from the rub. There is supposed to be a thread anchor here for a redirection, but I couldn't find it either.

As soon as I was down, Janine started up and I followed. It's a fine shaft. When I reached the rebelay I was still undecided what to do with the old bolt. Should I leave it for a Y-hang, or should I remove it as it was so tiny? As the hanger was loose, I decided I'd at least have a look at it so I gave the bolt head a wrench with a 6" adjustable spanner. A quarter of an easy turn caused the head to sheer off, nicely level with the rock surface. At last a decision had been made!

We derigged and had lunch. All up we'd had someone in the cave over a two hour period. This cave is VERY straight-forward and easy. The walk back to the car was quite fast and we were driving by 3 pm.

Some thoughts on the old bolt.

I have since discovered the bolt was placed by Peter Ackroyd (VSA) on 4/5/90 (P. Ackroyd pers. comm.) It was a ¼" 316 stainless steel carrot (i.e. a ¼" hex-head bolt with the threads partly ground off bashed into a slightly tighter hole). The hanger was also 316 stainless steel (and appeared to have been made from a washer with a ¼" hole drilled through its annulus). No wonder the head sheered when I turned it! I had expected an expansion bolt.

The bolt had been placed as a temporary measure by a group exploring the cave as part of the data gathering to stop expansion of the quarry. The bolt is mentioned on this pitch in the Sep. 1990 *Speleo Spiel* (Eberhard 1990).

This is the first 1/4" bolt I've ever seen in rock. Usually the smallest bolt used by cavers in Tasmania is 8mm. (An 8mm bolt has 170% the cross-section of a ¼" bold and should be proportionally stronger, everything else being equal.) American rock climbs seem to have lots of 1/4" fasteners (including hammer-in types) and they are furiously replacing them.

I don't know the actual make of the bolt, but as an example I got the figures for 5/16" Ramset Redhead Stainless Steel Dynabolts (which have a 1/4" bolt). These have an ultimate strength of 6.2 kN in tension and 9.1 kN in sheer in 2000 psi (13.8 MPa) concrete. (This soft concrete represents a soft rock like limestone.) The allowable load (which I think means Safe Working Load) is a quarter of this, i.e. 1.6 kN tension and 2.3 kN sheer. It should be noted that these figures are ideal, and are for an expansion bolt, not a carrot, and don't take into account quality of rock or deterioration due to age. Also, the above figures are for 304 stainless steel, which is stronger than 316 stainless steel. I think that all these would be worth another factor of 0.5 to the SWL of the bolt.

As the bolt sheered easily when I tried to turn it, I experimented with a 304 stainless steel bolt in the vice at home. Using the same spanner, I had to put significantly greater force on to the bolt before it failed. Interestingly, this bolt failed at the vice jaws, not at the head as I had expected. From this exhaustive experimental programme, I think the bolt in the cave was significantly weaker.

A fully-loaded, big caver would mass around 100 kg and weigh almost 1 kN. I don't know how much prussik-bounce would add to this, but I think a fully-bouncing prussiker on 25 m of rope would have been dangerously close to, or over, the SWL of the bolt.

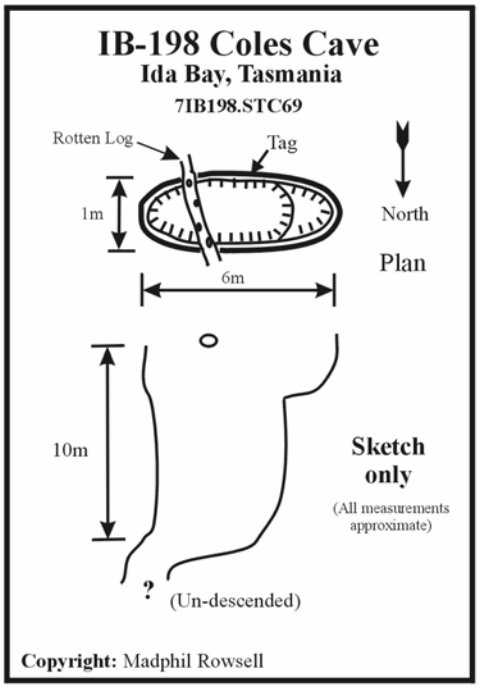
So, it's rather amazing the bolt lasted 15 years. It's also rather amazing we've been using it for 15 years!

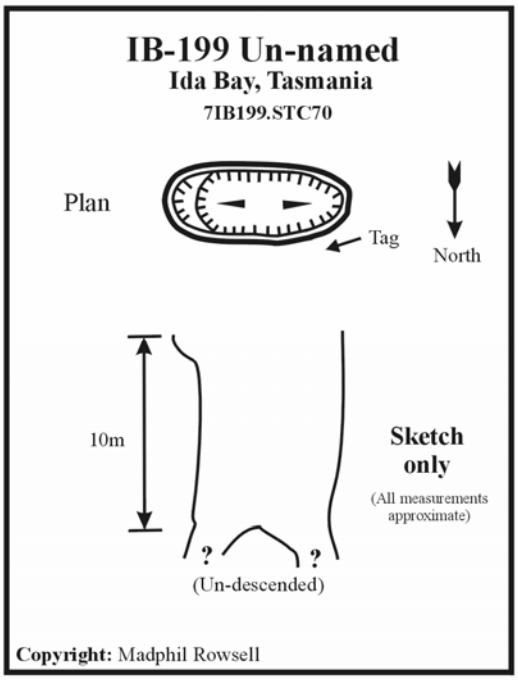
Reference

EBERHARD, R. 1990. Ida Bay Quarry Special Issue. *Speleo Spiel,* 263:3

Ida Bay Cave Maps

Madphil Rowsell





And while we're in Ida Bay, here are two surveys that should have been published with a trip report in *Speleo Spiel* 347 (Rowsell 2005)

Reference ROWSELL, P. 2005. Ida Bay Surface Work – Mystery Creek Area. *Speleo Spiel,* 347:8

JF-270 Tachycardia – 'Popping' on through… : 7 August 2005

Alan Jackson

Party: Gavin Brett, Alan Jackson

If we hadn't of caved this weekend it would have been two weekends in a row. This clearly wasn't acceptable. There had been various expressions of caving interest from other club members, but as per usual when it came to crunch time they all pulled out.

The Styx and Tyenna Rivers were in minor flood and the weather looked ominous, but restricted itself to a couple of brief showers on the walk in. The entrance was a howling gale and almost looked like it was condensing as it hit the cold outside air (i.e. a 'steamer'). There was water everywhere and the nearby swallet, JF-273, was taking a lot of it.

The amount of water entering the cave via numerous cracks and seepages was incredible. All this extra water had saturated the 60 m plus scree and mud slope before the pitch, causing it to be poorly consolidated and even more dangerous than usual.

Even more water greeted us as we descended into the large collapse chamber – we began worrying that the dig site might be wet. The approach to the dig was appallingly wet, but the dig itself was just a little drippy. Five or six whacks of the hammer later and Gavin was dangling through the hole. He signalled that it was all good and I followed him through. The cave dropped quickly over a few climbs, one quite exposed even with a hand line, and we found ourselves in a smallish chamber (bordered on one side by the bed rock wall and boulder collapse/talus on the other – i.e. no different to the rest of the cave!) We spent an hour or so poking our bodies through rock fall looking for a continuation until I squashed my right ankle with a 60-70 kg boulder.

This, we decided, was an omen and we started to hobble back out. At the last second I noticed another lead which Gavin followed for 20 or so metres until it got too loose and scary, but was still going down. Content that we had something to come back for, we limped out to the surface and the freshly fallen/falling snow. Très picturesque! The snow was mostly falling down, but at the entrance to Tachycardia it was getting blown back up again.

So, Tachycardia is still going but I don't think we'll go back until it dries out a bit. The whole place is poorly consolidated at the best of times and with the recent wet weather it was plain and simply dangerous, although the lure of another 200 m of rock fall is pretty strong… not!

IB-1 Revelation Cave – Revelations and Mysteries : 20 August 2005

Ken Hosking

Party: Alan Jackson, Gavin Brett, Claire Brett, Amy Ware, Cameron Hibbert, Ken Hosking

Loaded to the gunwales with cavers and gear, the mighty Cruiser headed south to Ida Bay. Revelation Cave (IB-1) was the destination, and revelations were in store for one of the most dedicated bands of cavers to enter the area in recent times. The dedication of this group to relentless exploration and documentation will become clear as the story unfolds.

The walk in was the usual Ida Bay doddle, with only the occasional deviation off the track (malfunctioning GPS, naturally) adding enjoyment to the trip. When our eager team arrived at the gully where Revelation, Yodellers Pot and other caves reside, we found a massive landslide where once were trees, ferns and undergrowth. From the scale of the regrowth, our resident botanist and editor estimated the landslide was several months old, and was probably a result of the February rains. [*The fact that it was visited during the ASF Conference and showed no signs of landslip kind of narrowed the window a bit too, although it was good to finally use my tertiary education for the first time! Ed.*] Our immediate problem was that the GPS was showing that Revelation was probably somewhere under tonnes of mud and rainforest debris. Of IB-25 Yodellers Pot, there was also no obvious sign.

Destruction scene at IB-1. Note the tiny figure of Alan in the centre of the picture, and Claire to the side *Photo by Amy Ware*

While a few of the group investigated a possible entrance close to the edge of the slip, I crossed the gully to where a pink tape could be seen. (At this stage it should be noted that exploration fever had clearly gripped certain members of the group. In order to build up their strength for the caving which was to come they were lying around in the sun enjoying a leisurely lunch. This is one of the benefits of massive landslides: they create a clearing where the sun can penetrate the rainforest and GPS signals abound.)

Looking from the contact zone down towards IB-1. Once again, note the even tinier figure of Alan in the centre of the picture, just above the large log *Photo by Amy Ware*

Leaving the lunch group behind, I soon lost the taped track but came across a cave entrance instead. This cave had a steep ramp followed by a vertical drop. No tag was in evidence and exploration was in order. The lunch group continued to conserve their energy for bigger things. While I geared up, Alan rigged the entrance. Five metres down the near vertical ramp, the cave became totally vertical and a rebelay was in order. After much swearing and cursing I finally managed to rebelay from a solid looking stal. It was then that the cave seemed to suggest its name: Crossword Cave. On the drive down we had demolished the Mercury crossword [*using the cryptic clues, I might add. Ed.*]and now various cross words had been spoken when, after dangling in my harness setting the rebelay, I found a perfect foothold as soon as I set off down the pitch.

The pitch was about eight metres, free hanging all the way and ended in a chamber from which there was only one way on. A side passage, reached by ducking under a low arch, was followed for about 5 metres before it ended at a gravel soak. This being the end of the cave, and with no other leads in sight, it was time to decamp

and look at another hole near where we thought Revelation might be.

Meanwhile, lunch was still being served, but Amy had located a rifty entrance that she explored until it eventually led into trogged passage, with several downclimbs. This, she thought, might well be an alternative entrance into Revelation. Strangely, there was little enthusiasm from the lunch eaters to follow her into the cave. They must have still been building up their energy for bigger things. (Later discussion with Arthur led to the conclusion that this apparent alternative entrance might actually have been the usual entrance to Revelation, slightly modified by the elements back in February.)

A gaping hole higher up in the bush from Amy's discovery had been noticed earlier. There was no tag, but it seemed unlikely this hole would have gone unnoticed, being so close to Revelation and because of its size. The general view was that it would go nowhere, there was no draught and lunch was still not complete. Being the only one with SRT gear on, Muggins set off again, firstly dropping the nine metre entrance shaft and then slithering down a steep slope to a chute that needed a little digging, not to mention the removal of several logs that were well placed to spear down into the chute to test the strength of an incautious caver's head. The lunch group were quite impatient as these logs were moved. Afternoon tea was mentioned and a distinct shortage of cavers descending after me was apparent. Some sort of singing had begun and it was clear that the best plan was to go further down, if only for some peace and quiet.

On the other side of the chute, a pitch of about twelve or fifteen metres dropped over the side of a rockfall, and an alternative route that looked almost able to be free climbed spiralled around to join the same place, as judged by the fact that rocks thrown down the climb could be seen emerging at the base of the pitch. I wasn't going down there without a rope and dragged the end of the entrance rope down, belayed off a calcited rock and abseiled/climbed down. Much to my relief, the calcited rock must have also been having lunch, as it didn't come down with me either.

We had used quite a lot of rope creating a Y hang at the entrance, and the rope, despite being 39 metres long, reached only to the edge of the next drop, a four-metre pot in clean, solid rock. Foiled by lunch, lethargy and laziness and with insufficient rope to continue, I fumed a little at the side of the drop, noting a gentle but definite draught, and then resurfaced.

Driven crazy by hunger and hoarse from singing, the explorers were all for going to the nearest hostelry. This cave will have to be revisited by a band of more determined explorers (the Methodist Ladies Knitting Club comes to mind).

So ended the day's exploration with nothing but a couple of memory sketches and a good lunch to show for it.

Postscript

Subsequent conversations with Arthur led to the conclusion that this cave is likely to have been an untagged upper entrance to Revelation that he remembered descending some years ago. There are some discrepancies between my description and Arthur's memory of the cave, particularly in relation to the four metre drop that I failed to descend, and I detected no sign of trogging. A return trip to investigate is planned. Does anyone know how to contact the Knitting Club?

If this entrance series proves to be a new cave rather than a known entrance to Revelation, the name Chorale Cave has been suggested in honour of the fine voices of the STC Caving Chorale.

Dicking About at Ida Bay : 28 August 2005

Alan Jackson

Party: Gavin Brett, Alan Jackson

Gavin and I made a pact several months back that we wouldn't ever go to Exit Cave until we found a new way in from the north side of the hill. So far we've stuck to it, despite all Phil's trips during last summer. This was our first trip (except for our earlier work in Mystery Creek Cave – which started the whole crusade) to actually try to achieve our goal.

After hurling abuse at the Milk Run party in the car park we set up base at the western end of Blaneys Quarry. We spent a while scratching around in small holes until we stumbled across IB-68 and IB-69. We had been told by a few people that these caves both had good draughting leads. After a short period spent thrashing around we connected the two caves via their respective draughting leads. They can now be crossed off the list.

We then wandered about the place poking our bodies into lots of tagged and untagged holes, some of them untagged for good reason, others that could do with a tag just to minimise any future confusion. Other tagged entrances we located were 30, 130, 165 and 200. We gave 130 and 200 a good go, but not the other two.

It was a good day – albeit a little lame.

IB-38 Milk Run : 28 August 2005

Janine McKinnon

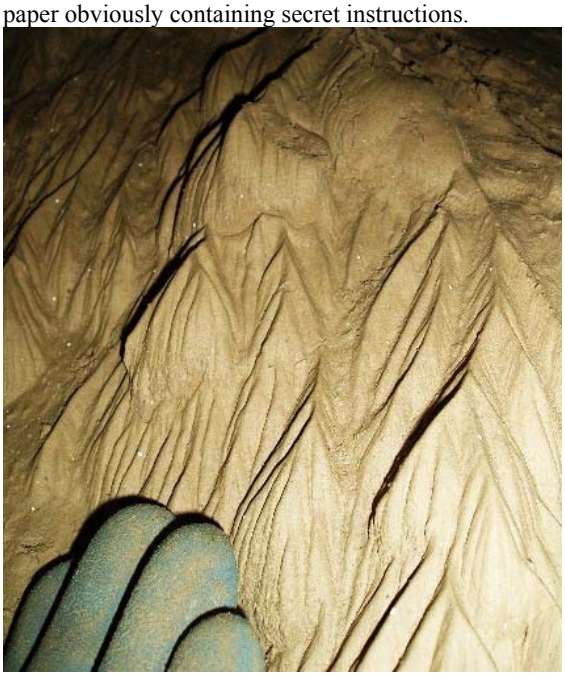
Stop Press!! The Milk Run P-Hangering jinx has just been broken!

Yes folks, we have finally finished the testing on all the p-hangers and the cave can now be declared safe to do without danger of plummeting to your deaths. For those of you who have been following the sorry saga of trip disasters, forgotten gear and other general job-slowing dramas this will come, no doubt, as a great relief.

Now, read on for the exciting revelations of this historic trip.

Party: Ric Tunney, Amy Ware, Matt Cracknell, Janine McKinnon

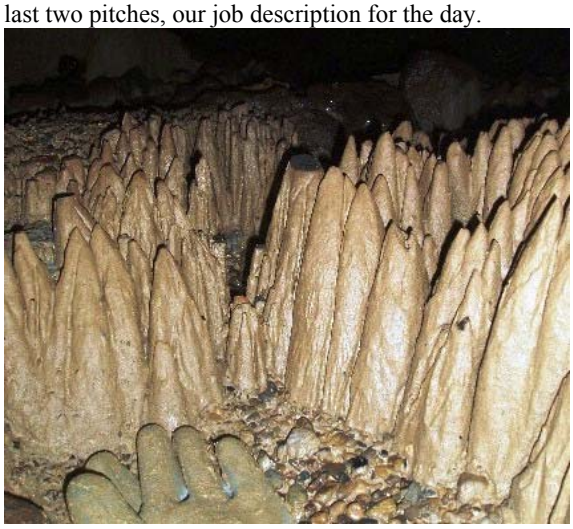
After picking up Matt and Amy en-route we arrived at the car park around 9.30 to find Alan and Gavin (not so) secretly preparing for a (self-described) "secret caving trip". After much banter they headed off in a secret direction (along the Southern Ranges Track, they don't seem to be too good at this secret stuff!) with Alan making a cameo reappearance for a secret piece of paper obviously containing secret instructions.



Fabulous clastic mud patterns on the walls in The Whey *Photo by Matt Cracknell*

We arrived at the entrance just before 11 o'clock. There have been only a couple of new tree falls on the track, all saplings, so we seem to have gotten out of this winter lightly. I headed in at 11.30, with Matt catching up around the fourth pitch. He relieved his boredom as he waited at each pitch-head for me to rig and descend by snapping numerous photos of me pfaffing about.

I was at the bottom in just over an hour with Matt close behind and Amy following next. Ric stayed at the top of the last pitch to start testing the four hangers on the last two pitches, our job description for the day.



Mud towers at the base of the side aven *Photo by Matt Cracknell*

Matt and Amy decided to have a good look around but as I had done that only a couple of months ago (June Dover weekend when we were SUPPOSED to do this job but forgot a piece of the testing kit) I headed back up whilst Ric was testing the bolts on the penultimate pitch.

Amy and Matt waited till Ric had finished testing the last pitch bolts before ascending.

Ric and I amused ourselves whilst waiting for the testing time to pass by discussing the procedures that would ensue if the bolts failed the test…
"…work place safety requirements, we can't have them ascend on unsafe bolts." "No we'll have to go and get the bolting kit, maybe some games for them to play to keep themselves amused." "Yes better sent them down our spare Mars Bars, too…"
As you can see, old married couples of 25 years standing have long ago run out of worthwhile conversation topics [*Is that why you recycle all the old ones so often? Ed.*].

(Never fear faithful reader, we aren't that callous. We (the club) must have tested 100 hangers by now and none have failed test – although the rock failed once, but under extreme load a little birdie told me…)

The testing took the better part of an hour, all up, and then Ric headed out first with the intention of removing the old bolts as he went (in which he was largely, possibly totally?, unsuccessful as they were all too rusted in, we really needed Arnold Schwarzenegger on the trip for that job). Amy followed him out and Matt and I derigged at the rear. We were out by 4.30 and packed up and back at the cars before 6 o'clock, after a stop to remove those Pampas Grass seed heads

Underground Adventures in Extreme Ironing

Joe Farrell

http://www.extremeironing.com/index.php, the official website, reckons that extreme ironing is *"the latest danger sport that combines the thrills of an extreme outdoor activity with the satisfaction of a well pressed shirt"*. The website is full of pictures of people ironing, while riding bikes, summiting mountains, diving, and in public places. The speleological branch of the sport seems to be well established. The bastion for extreme speleo-ironing seems to be the UK. The photos on this page are lifted from website referenced above.

A successful EI mission for these British cavers.

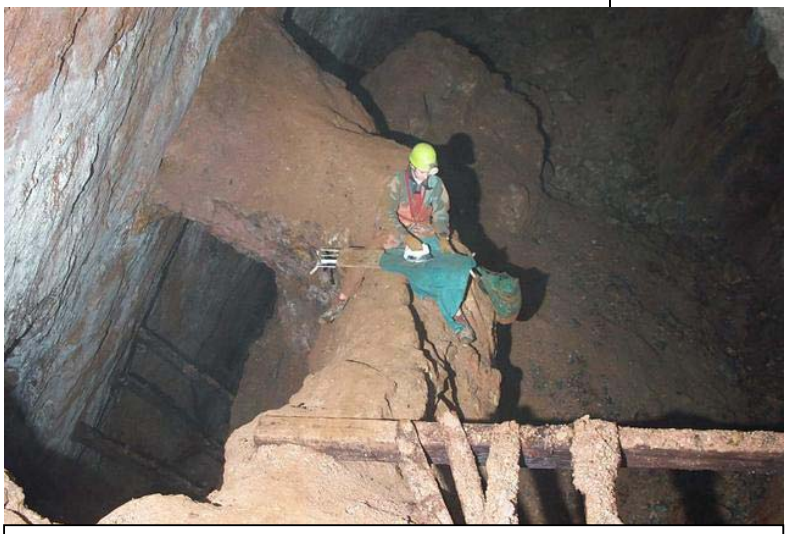
The sport started in 1997, in Leicester, England. A bloke called Phil (Who?!), couldn't face his huge pile of ironing. So after work one night, he took it to the rock face to get it done while climbing.

EI is now an activity popular enough to have its own world competition, sponsored world demonstration tour, and has given birth to branches of extreme ironing groups internationally. Yes, there is one in Australia. However, it was sad to note there are pictures of people doing EI from nearly every state except Tassie. One can only assume no-one here is doing it. After a short brainless-storm, Steve Phipps and I wrote a list of advantages when combining caving and extreme ironing.

- Improvement of caving attire – no more scruffy, wrinkled trog suits, or space blankets.
- Encouragement for greater representation in caving of the domesticated female sub-gender. Staying home to do the housework becomes much less of an excuse.
- The high humidity in caves enables a more effective steam press.
- Caver safety is improved, as irons are a heat source during entrapments.
- Futuristically designed irons are able to double as digging tools.
- Extra hardware to rig with, e.g, the Ironjam. Here, an iron may be jammed in a crack and rope clipped into the handle. Ironing boards could also be used to bridge chasms of death.

Pseudonyms are an important part of extreme ironing. Initially, Phil used the pseudonym "Steam" to hide his real identity. Nowadays, the name bestows pride and meaning. Some classic Australian pseudonyms belong to a NSW man named "Frinkle Wee", and a bogan from SA called "Iron Knob". Some good speleo-ironing pseudonyms are suggested by Steve Phipps (a.k.a. The Flattener), and the author (a.k.a. Starchasm):

- Trogwrinkle
- Deepressed
- Iron Nodule
- Pitch Flat
- Deep Crease
- Iron Pot



Iron Mine ironing in a mine ironically

Regarding technical equipment, it's only a matter of time before Petzl put an iron on the market - probably called the Petzl Hissy, or something along their vein of ridiculous names. It will probably run most efficiently on carbide, but will have an adaptor for the ubiquitous 6 Volt lead-acid battery. Ironing boards will doubtless become streamlined for bending through mazes, rock-falls, and squeezes. They will be a kind of aluminium alloy to allow lightness and safe rigging.

Other considerations for underground extreme ironists are listed below. Some of these are doubtlessly still under discussion by participating speleo-bodies. The first point is a particular concern for over-visited caves, e.g.,

tourist caves.

- What is to be done about lint build-up?
- What is the most effective way of keeping laundry clean while underground?
- What supplies the electricity for current speleo-ironing irons? (This seems to be entirely irrelevant for most people).

In conclusion, if you are inspired to try some extreme speleo-ironing, the Australian EI site is the place to upload your reports and photographs. The URL is: http://www.extremeironingoz.com/. You may just be the first in Tasmania. If someone out there in Tassie has already ventured underground with an iron and board, I'm sure the Editor would love to hear from you.

An Essay –"What We Did On Our Holidays"

Stephen Bunton

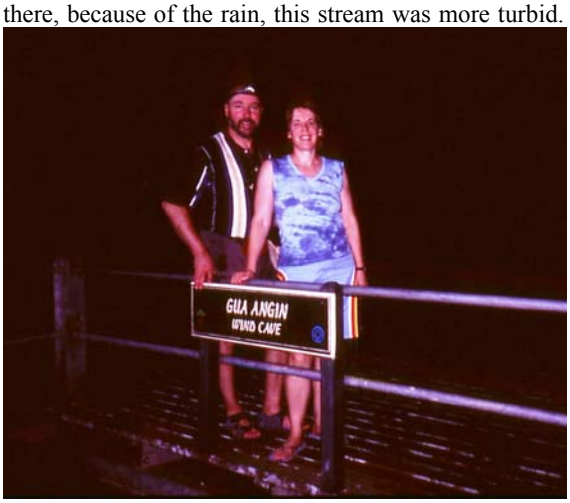
It's amazing how school affects you, that's why we make the most of our school holidays. Kathy and I always have a number of travel objectives, it is just a matter of finding ones which are suitable to share with our daughter, Grace, who is now ten years old. In the end Malaysian Borneo seemed to offer the right mix of interest and adventure. The main objectives were Mulu Caves and climbing Mt Kinabalu both World Heritage Areas.

Mulu Caves were explored on expeditions in the late 70s and early 80s at a time when I was involved in expeditions to PNG. Some of the members of the Mulu trips joined us in Niugini and since that time I always wanted to go there. In the interim Mulu has become a major tourist attraction and whilst there is still potential for original exploration and discovery, this sort of thing was obviously beyond us. We were content to explore the sections of the cave which were developed for tourism.

Mulu boasts the world's largest cave passage, through Deer Cave and the world's largest chamber, Sarawak Chamber. The reason for the development of cave passage of this magnitude is that the limestone is quite pure with good structural strength. The area receives high rainfall and forms large rivers which flow through the limestone. The limestone is not closely jointed and so maze passages don't form, therefore the river maintains its single course through the particular mountain for a long period of time. There is not much in the way of breakdown rockpiles and thus we get the "giant caves of Mulu." They are worth seeing!

On the day we arrived we went for an afternoon tour of Langs Cave and Deer Cave. These involve a 3.4 km walk each way along duckboard. Langs Cave is small by comparison and well decorated. Deer Cave is over 100 m wide 200 m high and the large passage is over a kilometre long. The large passage goes right through the mountain and out into a neighbouring valley, The Garden of Eden, although the tourist trail doesn't extend that far. It is a bit smelly and the floor is rather slippery with bat guano as a result of the bat colony in the cave. These bats exit the cave en-masse each evening unless it's really raining. It was really raining the day we were there and so unfortunately we didn't see that spectacle. We did our 6.8 km in the rain and with the temperature over 30 degrees, even at dusk, it was a toss up as to whether or not to wear our Gore-Tex raincoats.

Next morning we began the rest of our tour with a trip up river to Wind Cave which is most significant for the size of the vadose undercut walls. It was also quite well decorated with massive formations. Wind Cave was eventually linked into nearby Clearwater Cave. Clearwater Cave was originally located by heading upstream along a tributary of the Melinau River which unlike this muddy, larger river, the Clearwater stream was that lovely blue of cave springs. When we were there, because of the rain, this stream was more turbid.



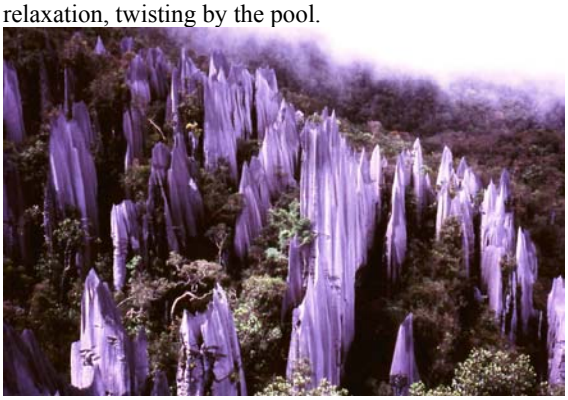
Kathy and Steve Bunton in their "Chinese safety boots" (thongs) exploring Wind Cave [*It certainly looks dark enough to be a cave. Ed.*] *Photo by Grace Bunton*

The water rises from beneath a cliff at river level and forms a wonderful swimming hole. The stream bank in this area has been developed into the most beautiful wooden platform picnic area. We lunched and swum here in what was a real paradise. The entrance to Clearwater is almost a 100 m (or 211 steps) higher.

Clearwater Cave is fantastic! It is big and contains a ferocious river. The tourist trail takes you across a bridge and over the fast flowing water, even faster now due to the recent rain, to a point where you just look upstream into this most enticing stream passage with undercut walls. My heart began to race, I couldn't wait to get into it. I would have loved to explore this cave. Stories of 50 m survey legs up clean washed passages, exciting climbs and enough water for underground body surfing. At the time of exploration it was pushed to beyond 100 km in length and was the world's

seventh longest cave, it now ranks 11th with 109 km of passage mapped. The only drama with exploring this cave though would have been the heat. At sea level near the equator it was significantly hotter than we experienced at 2000 m in PNG.

The remainder of our Mulu Trip involved visiting The Pinnacles, wonderful limestone spires on the side of Gunung Api (1711 m). This involves a three day round trip from Mulu. From Clearwater Cave we continued upstream as far as is navigable on the Melinau and then followed the first 8 km of The Headhunters Trail to a delightfully rustic Camp 5. This was a flat walk on a wide trail through primarily rainforest and was absolutely lovely. The only drama again was the heat and humidity; I was drenched in sweat and couldn't have been any wetter if I had fallen into a pool. From Camp 5 The Pinnacles Trail climbs 1200 m in 2.4 km to a small overview of the pinnacle karst. This track was like half a dozen Southern Ranges tracks stacked one on top of each other. The final third is "via ferrata" with 14 stainless steel ladders, numerous gang planks over yawning pits, U-bolt reo-rod handholds and numerous hand lines. It took us 4 hours to ascend and then 5 hours to descend. That's the longest daytrip Grace has ever undertaken and she did remarkably well. It wouldn't have been so arduous except that I carried all the water, 7 litres for the three of us, which again was immediately converted into sweat. Day three involved a return to civilisation and then some relaxation, twisting by the pool.



The (45m high) Pinnacles on Gunung Api *Photo by Stephen Bunton*

We did build some recovery time into our schedule because the next objective was the great granite massif of Mt Kinabalu (4095 m a.s.l.), South East Asia's highest mountain . This involves an ascent from 1800 m to a lodge at Laban Rata at 3272 m in 6.4 km. Then the climb to the summit over the final 2.7 km starts pre-dawn the next morning. After returning to the lodge for breakfast you continue your descent. Most people, like us, suffer stiff thighs and we met people who didn't get up The Pinnacles because they had done Mt Kinabalu only two days previously.

Our other cave related tourist trip was the birds' nest caves at Gomantong. This involved a 2.5 hour car trip where the only scenery was Palm Oil plantations. What remnant vegetation remained was now a wildlife sanctuary and the other objective this day was to see the proboscis monkeys. We had seen the orang-utans at Sepilok the previous day.

Grace Bunton climbing to The Pinnacles *Photo by Stephen Bunton*

The main cave at Gomantong is Simud Hitam (Black Cave) and architecturally it was fantastic. It was mostly just one huge chamber with a far entrance and numerous daylight holes. It was the smelliest cave I'd ever been in and the floor was crawling with cockroaches. I can't for the life of me see the attraction in becoming a bat cave biospeleologist, nor can I see how anyone could get into bird's nest soup but at some stage back in humanity's past someone must have had the thought; "I know we climb up these bamboo poles and rattan vine ropes and get a nest made of swallow saliva and boil it up for the protein into some sort of soup and charge people a fortune for it - we might be able to make a living." Amazingly a colleague must have replied "Yeah, that sounds like a great idea!" The nests are either white, pure saliva or black consisting of saliva and feathers. The feathered ones fetch $A1000 per kilo and the white ones in the order of five times this amount. I estimate one nest would weigh about 10 grams. At the entrance to the caves was the long house where the harvesters live and in the cave various guards were stationed. There was even a guard at an outpost high on the hill, so valuable is the product. We never saw it for sale anywhere although it was advertised everywhere in Chinese grocery shops.

I didn't get any photos of this cave because we had to pay an exorbitant $A10 permit fee to take a camera. Whilst I generally pay National Parks for these sorts of things, it is sometimes the only revenue they receive, I thought that was too steep. Actually I didn't hold out much hope of getting any decent cave photos this trip. Unless you are well set-up for it, photography in big caves is problematical. At Mulu there is a 10 kg weight limit on the flight in and all the signs stated "No Tripod Photography" which I think was rather poor. The other interesting aspect was that throughout the trip I really

felt like an endangered species. I was the only one shooting slides and Kathy shot prints, everyone else shoots digital.

All in all I recommend Malaysian Borneo to anyone as a destination, the wildlife and landscape were fantastic. It was safe, clean, the town water is treated so you can clean your teeth and have ice in your drinks. It was well organised, all our tours went off without a hitch and the whole trip was relatively cheap. Above all there was something of interest for all ages. It's also a good destination for diving but we contented ourselves with a few days snorkelling.

Milk Run P-Hanger Rigging Guide

Alan Jackson

As most should be aware, Milk Run has undergone rebolting with p-hangers under the Wildcare Cave P-Hangering Program. Being an easy, straightforward cave (in terms of route finding and dimensions) and its relative popularity (although, what determines a popular cave in Tasmania these days is along the lines of 'visited more than once in the last five years'), it was an ideal candidate for rebolting. Also, the existing bolts in the cave were both varied and dubious, and not all ideally located. All the p-hangers installed have now been formally load tested and have passed. The following is an updated rigging guide for the cave listing p-hanger placement, rope lengths and ideal rigging (in my humble opinion…)

All 'sides' referred to are as one descends along the passage, facing forward (i.e. not abseiling backwards!)

All hangers, (except for one of the two on the entrance pitch), have had small retro-reflective tags attached which should make hanger location easy. Please be careful not to dirty or break these reflectors, and if you do then please clean or re-attach them for future cave users.

Pitch 1 – Pint Bottle, 41 m

Back-up/approach line tied off to the tree approximately 3 m from entrance.

2 x p-hangers on back wall of entrance (above and right of the number tag) – double figure of 8 knot gives a free hang down entire length of pitch.

51 m rope is sufficient to reach the next belay.

Pitches 2, 3 & 4 – The Churns

P2 – 6 m: single p-hanger on RHS. It is necessary to descend several metres past the original floor of the entrance pitch, down the steep rocky slope, to locate this hanger.

11 m rope required.

P3 – 4 m: single p-hanger on LHS.

10 m rope required.

P4 – 4 m: two hangers located on the RHS for a Y-hang.

8 m rope required to reach the back up for Pitch 5

Pitch 5 – Cheeses, 26 m

This pitch is now rigged down low on the RHS (originally high on the left with an exposed climb to a poorly placed bolt). A single back up hanger is located on the RHS at chest height about half way between the base of P4 and the head of P5. This provides a better approach line to the pitch head than the P4 anchors. Another single hanger is located down low on the RHS (left when approaching by abseiling). This is essentially the only hanging rebelay in the cave, however it is possible to bridge between the two walls. A free hang ensues to the base of this pitch.

32 m rope required from back up hanger to floor.

Pitch 6 – The Separator, 49 m

A large natural thread/column at the base of the fifth pitch, at the head of the rubble slope leading to the sixth, can be used as an additional back-up if desired (this is not allowed for in the rope estimate for this pitch).
A single p-hanger is situated at waist height on the RHS 7 m from the pitch head for an approach line (at the immediate top of the loose rock slope approaching the pitch head)
2 x p-hangers at eye level on the RHS achieve a free hang to the bottom – double figure of 8 knot.
61 m rope required from back up hanger to floor

Pitches 7 and 8 – The Curds and The Cream

At this point the cave divides into two separate pitch systems to a common bottom – The Curds ('a' series) and The Cream ('b' series). Only The Cream pitches have been p-hangered, as it is more open and safe.

Pitch 7b – 8 m: 2 x p-hangers on opposite walls to create a y-hang.

Pitch 8b – 30 m: 2 x p-hangers on LHS (you will need to be on rope to previous pitch to safely reach these hangers). Double figure of 8 knot achieves a free hang to the bottom.

43 m rope required from the head of P7b to floor of P8b.

Pitches 1 through to 6 can be easily rigged with the one piece of rope, however it would need to be some 173 m long (not the most manageable rope length in a cave!). If using individual lengths for each pitch they should be tied back into the previous for added safety while traversing the generally steep and loose sections between pitches (the rope lengths recommended above allow for this). Pitches 7b and 8b should ideally be the one rope length, but could be rigged with two if the first rope was between 10 and 14 m long.

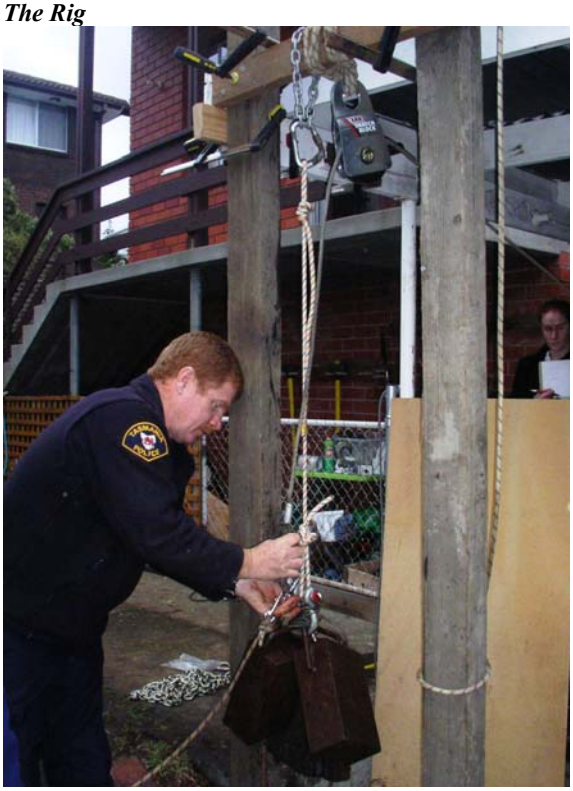
On the trip from which these rope lengths were derived the cave was rigged with three ropes in the following order – 120 m, 55 m, 45 m. The 120 m rigged from the back-up tree at the entrance all the way to the head of P6 (i.e. including the 7 m approach line from the base of P5 to the Y-hang for P6). All pitches were rigged generously with plenty of rope length to comfortably gain the base of each pitch and move to the next (with Jeff Butt 'minimalist' rigging one could probably take a metre or two off each pitch length!) 15 locking karabiners minimum are required (but it's always a good idea to have a few spares in case you decide to throw one down a pitch for fun!)

STC Rope Testing 2005

Alan Jackson (on behalf of our illiterate Gear Store Officer, Gavin Brett)

Since the passing of Gear Store Officer extraordinaire, Jeff Butt, we had let the rope testing regime slip a little. Some of the more regular rope users in the club started to worry about this, particularly as they hung 50 metres off the ground on a piece of the Club's old 9 mm rope. All our fears have been allayed following the testing day we held in August. Here is a brief run down of the day and its findings:

The Rig



The new testing rig and its Crack Team operator *Photo by Amy Ware*

The first thing we had to do was to set up a new test rig (dragging all the ropes back up to Sarah's place and Jeff's old testing tree didn't seem like much fun). A new rig was soon engineered off the end of Gavin's car port. The new rig had some shortcomings that were mostly ironed out during the course of the afternoon. Height was the main one, but we overcame this by making a new 80 kg weight that was half the length of the old railway track sections that had been used previously. The main differences between the old and the new rig, however, were its improvements! The winch on Gavin's Landcruiser was used to raise the weight and the old method of tying it up with baling twine, which would then be cut to release the weight, was circumvented via the use of a quick release latch. These two improvements brought the time between each drop down from about 3-5 minutes to 30-60 seconds. Room for more improvements to the system was noted and will be incorporated into the rig for future testing sessions (particularly an even smaller weight – lead instead of steel would be good, and some longer pieces of timber to make the whole system higher).

The Aims and Methods

All the ropes in the STC store originate from about seven or eight 'parent' rolls. This is represented in the rope labeling (e.g. all the 'A' ropes are 9 mm ropes of the same brand and age, and so on for 'B', 'C', 'D' etc…) We wanted to test at least two representatives from each parent roll (extra from the 9 mm rope though). For a good rundown on our logic behind our rope testing refer to Butt (1998), but essentially each test piece is subjected to a series of fall factor 1 drops with an 80 kg weight (actually an 86 kg weight this time!) until they fail. If a rope survives 3 consecutive falls then it is deemed 'safe'; if it fails on the first or second then further testing of that rope is required to be sure of its condemnation.

The Results (briefly!)

We didn't quite go to the same level of detail as Jeff Butt used to when he was in charge (once again, see Butt (1998) for details). Basically, if a rope survived six or more consecutive falls then we were pretty happy with it – we didn't see the need to continue dropping it till it failed (I remember dropping some sections of rope in excess of 15 times in the past, and they still didn't fail. We didn't think that rope testing was a fun enough exercise to warrant this!)

'A' ropes – these are 9 mm and are about 13 years old. We were expecting these to perform poorly as 9 mm rope is notorious for failing once it reaches even a few years of age, even without actual usage (i.e. still on the roll). We were pleasantly surprised. Of the 14 or so different lengths of 'A' rope in the store, we tested 10 of them. All of them survived three falls. Two failed on the fourth drop, some on the fifth, and others we got sick of it after about eight!

'B', 'C' and 'D' ropes are all 10.5 mm diameter ropes of varying age. All this rope survived in excess of six falls.

The numerous 'R' ropes constitute a variety of diameters and ages, but are generally 10 mm or 11 mm and up to 20 years old. All survived an excess of six falls, but some didn't behave all that nicely after the first fall – they still didn't break, but looked ugly and very static (no bounce left in the rope).

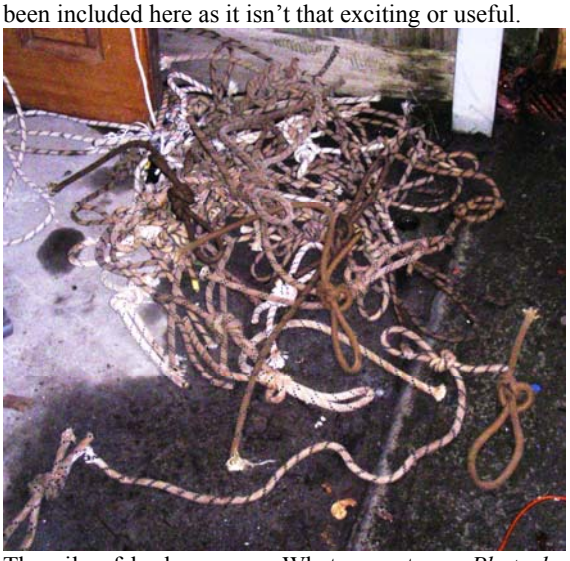
A few miscellaneous ropes were tested too:

A short 10 mm rope that was recently rescued from Splash Pot, after being left behind for about five years, failed on the fourth drop.

Gavin's retired dynamic cowstails that failed on the second drop!

Alan's retired dynamic cowstails that failed somewhere around the fifth or sixth drop.

A summary of how many drops each rope survived is available from Alan Jackson or Claire Brett, but has not been included here as it isn't that exciting or useful.



The pile of broken rope. What a waste… *Photo by Amy Ware*

The Conclusions

All the 9 mm 'A' ropes have been returned to service. Some broke on the fourth drop, which is starting to get scary, but still well within our safety parameters. This rope needs to be tested again within 12 months if it is to remain in service.

All the 10.5 mm 'B', 'C' and 'D' ropes are fine and remain in service

Of the various 'R' ropes we have only kept the 11 mm Bluewater lengths in service. The other main 'family' of 'R' ropes were retired, as while they didn't actually fail any tests, they did loose any signs of 'dynamicness' after the first drop. These retired pieces were all short lengths (less than 12 m) and didn't make much of a dent in the rope stores.

The miscellaneous Splash Pot rope has been retired (any 10+ mm rope that fails on the fourth drop is too sick in our minds).

Gavin's cowstails were an interesting situation. It was dynamic rope, but he had not used the traditional figure 8 or 9 knots in the ends. Being an ex sailor and having once worked in a chandlery he is quite taken with whipping (no, not that kind of whipping!) The two ends of the cowstails had been internally stitched and then whipped to form a loop. On the first drop the internal stitching failed and the whipping was looking pretty sick. The whole lot failed on the second test. Conclusion – maybe whipping is not a good idea for cowstails.

Alan's cowstails were 10 mm dynamic rope of about 3-4 years of age. Unfortunately the testing process was a little flawed for this rope, as the stretch generated in the first two falls was not allowed for in the height of the test rig and they both allowed the weight to hit the ground. Nonetheless, these first two drops certainly would have removed a significant amount of the dynamic properties of the rope. The section was then tied shorter and subjected to drops that didn't deck out. On the first proper drop the outer sheath on the rope ruptured most of the way round. The second drop caused the outer sheath to completely fail and two of the nine internal cores also snapped. The third drop caused additional snapping of internal cores, but still no failure! The fourth drop completely failed the rope. This was an interesting result – none of us could believe how long it held on even after the sheath and central cores had started failing. Conclusion – this was a good set of cowstails, what a shame they'd been ruined!

In addition to all the testing that was going on all the ropes in the store were inspected visually and by feel – looking/feeling for damaged sections of the sheath or core. Where damaged sections were found these were cut out and used as the test piece for that rope. All the ropes were re measured and re labeled at both ends. The rope has been re sorted onto the rope rack also. Ropes have been sorted by diameter and length, i.e. all the 9 mm rope is at one end of the rack and is placed on the rack from shortest to longest, and likewise for the 10.5 and 11 mm ropes. This should make selecting ropes for future trips a little easier. Table 1 below is a

list of the current labels and lengths of all rope in the store, so now you can organise which ropes you want before you even get to the store – the twenty first century sure is an exciting time to be alive…

Thanks to all those that turned up and helped. We had a good team going testing, recording, measuring and labelling. Amy should be encouraged to cook more scones at any opportunity. Maybe we could have a scone testing session next?

Retired rope is available for sale for non-life saving roles, e.g. pack haul lines, trailer tie down ropes, dog toys… Contact the Gear Store Officer for prices (just don't ask him to write them down and send them to you)

Reference

BUTT, J. 1998. Safety Assessment of the STC Ropes. *Speleo Spiel* 308:13-17

Table 1. Current STC rope labels and lengths. Ropes are grouped into diameters, and from shortest to longest within each diameter. The store also has an unused 200 m roll of 11 mm static rope. Generally we have a lot of short to mid-length 9 mm ropes and a lot of mid to long length 10.5 mm ropes – some rope cutting may be required soon to provide a more useful range of rope lengths.

Rope No.	Length (m)	Rope No.	Length (m)	Rope No.	Length (m)
9 mm		A6	21	B75	52
A11	7	A21	29	C2	63
A1	11	A10	44	D1	112
A2	13	A8	58	***11 mm***	
A3	15	***10.5 mm***		SH83	6
A9	16	B79	29	R20	10
A20	17	C3	32	R24	14
A5	17	D2	38	R22	17
A12	18	B76	40	R64	22
A13	18	C5	42	R82	32
A4	19	C4	47	R65	36
A7	21	B81	49		

Some photos to fill the gap…

1. Some imaginative rigging in Nettlebed Cave, New Zealand *Photo by Ric Tunney*
2. More imaginative rigging in Nettlebed Cave, New Zealand *Photo by Ric Tunney*
3. Damian Bidgood, a.k.a Man Mountain carting the old steel drum out of Mystery Creek Cave *Photo by Rolan Eberhard*

Given name	Family name	Postal Address	Phone (H)	Phone (W)	Mobile	E-mail
Members						
Serena	Benjamin	33 Coolamon Rd, Taroona 7053	62278338		0404 424 363	serenab@utas.edu.au
Damian	Bidgood	c/- Police S&R, 76 Federal St, North Hobart 7000		6230 2267		damian.bidgood@police.tas.gov.au
Claire	Brett	4 Clutha Pl, South Hobart 7004	6223 1717		0419 731 969	claireb@keypoint.com.au
Gavin	Brett	4 Clutha Pl, South Hobart 7004	6223 1717			gavin@keypoint.com.au
Andrew	Briggs	2/28 Sawyer Ave, West Moonah 7008	6228 9956	6220 3133		andrew.briggs@hobart.tased.edu.au
Paul	Brooker	19 Franklin St, Morwell VIC 3840			0418 384 245	paul@pitchblack.com.au
Darren	Brooks	14 Fyfe St, Exmouth WA 6707				dbrooks@westnet.com.au
Kathryn	Bunton	PO Box 198, North Hobart 7002				
Stephen	Bunton	PO Box 198, North Hobart 7002	6278 2398	6210 2200		sbunton@friends.tas.edu.au
Liz	Canning	124 Wentworth St, South Hobart 7004	6223 7088	6233 6176		Elizabeth.Canning@dpiwe.tas.gov.au
David	Chiam	40 Wyett St, West Launceston 7250	6331 1653			davidchiam@dodo.com.au
David	Chitty	PO Box 230, Beechworth, Victoria 3747	5728 1804		0419 280 614	agati@netc.net.au
Arthur	Clarke	17 Darling Pde, Mt. Stuart 7000	6228 2099	6298 1107		arthurc@southcom.com.au
Tony	Culberg	PO Box 122, Lindisfarne 7015	6243 0546			culbergf@bigpond.com
Matt	Cracknell	PO Box 14, Geeveston 7116		6298 3209	0409 438 924	crowdang@yahoo.co.uk
Jol	Desmarchelier	C/o 25 Delta Av, Taroona 7053				jol.desmarchelier@anu.edu.au
Gerry	Doherty	PO Box 315, Geeveston 7116	6297 6219			gerdoh7@iprimus.com.au
Rolan	Eberhard	18 Fergusson Ave, Tinderbox 7054	6229 3039	6233 6455		rolane@dpiwe.tas.gov.au
Stefan	Eberhard	2 Churchill Ave, Margaret River, WA 6285		08 9757 7411		scientist@westnet.com.au
Joe	Farrell	157 Bathurst St, Hobart 7000	6231 5133		0427 320 501	joefarrell@intas.net.au
Hugh	Fitzgerald	124 Wentworth St, South Hobart 7004	6223 7088	6226 1740		Hugh.Fitzgerald@utas.edu.au
Albert	Goede	69 Esplanade, Rose Bay 7015	6243 7319			goede@tassie.net.au
Phil	Harris	PO Box 413, Glenorchy 7010		6273 7722	0408 127 714	phil@aardvarkadventures.com.au
Kent	Henderson	PO Box 332, Williamstown, VIC 3016	9398 0598	9398 0598	0407 039 887	kenthen@optushome.com.au
Kenneth	Hosking	11 Marine Terrace, Battery Point 7004	6223 8031	6231 2434	0418 122 009	hosking@netspace.net.au
Alan	Jackson	207 Albion Heights Drive, Kingston 7050	6229 8365	6231 5474	0419 245 418	ajackson@lmrs.com.au
Max	Jeffries	18 South St, Maydena 7140				
Simon	Kendrick	1 Wellington St, Huonville 7109	6264 1273	6234 7877	0414 908 466	kend_sim@yahoo.com.au
Ron	Mann	10 Swinton Pl, Rose Bay 7015	6243 0060	6220 5246		
Janine	McKinnon	PO Box 1440, Lindisfarne 7015	6243 5415			jmckinnon@tassie.net.au
Greg	Middleton	PO Box 269, Sandy Bay 7006	6223 1400			ozspeleo@optusnet.com.au
Dean	Morgan	15 Cades Dve, Kingston 7050	6234 3113	6234 5061	0438 294 405	dmorgan@tesa.com.au
Heather	Nichols	13 Willow Ave, Kingston 7050	6229 4362		0414 294 362	nichols5@iprimus.com.au
Steve	Phipps	207a Strickland Ave, South Hobart 7004	6223 3939	6226 2251	0422 460 695	sjphipps@utas.edu.au
Tom	Porritt	PO Box 60, Millaa Millaa, QLD	07 4056 5921	07 4056 5921		
Phil	Rowsell	C/o Alan Jackson				pj.rowsell@virgin.net
Aleks	Terauds	60 Belair St, Howrah 7018	6244 3406	6244 3406		
Richard	Tunney	PO Box 1440, Lindisfarne 7015	6243 5415			rtunney@tassie.net.au
Keith	Vanderstaay	754 Hastings Caves Rd, Hastings 7109		6298 3209	0429 983 209	hastings.caves@bigpond.com
Tony	Veness		6231 1921		0417 100 320	
Trevor	Wailes	214 Summerleas Rd, Kingston 7054	6229 1382	6229 1382		trite@ozemail.com.au
Amy	Ware	12 Fords Rd, Geeveston 7116	6297 9999		0407 651 200	amyware@yahoo.com
Mick	Williams	PO Box 288, Geeveston 7116	6297 6368			
Geoffrey	Wise	117 Upper Maud St, Ulverstone 7315	6425 3645		0408 108 984	Geoff.Wise@don.tased.edu.au
Friends of STC						
Bob	Cockerill	14 Aruma St, Mornington Heights 7018	6244 2439	6233 6832		
Mike	Cole	1/17 Twentysecond Ave, Sawtell, NSW 2425	02 9544 0207		0408 500 053	mikecole@tpg.com.au
Brian	Collin	66 Wentworth St, South Hobart 7004	6223 1920			
Chris	Davies	3 Alfred St, New Town 7008	6228 0228			
Therese	Gatenby	PO Box 153, Orford 7190			0428 391 432	pelicansrest@yahoo.com.au
Steve	Harris	17 Derwentwater Ave, Sandy Bay 7005				
Nick	Hume	202A Nelson Rd, Mt. Nelson 7007				
Phil	Jackson	8 Malunna Rd, Lindisfarne 7015	6243 7038			
Barry	James	52 Edge Rd, Lenah Valley 7008	6228 4787			
Kevin	Kiernan		6239 1494	6226 2461		Kevin.Kiernan@utas.edu.au
Armchair Cavers						
Robyn	Claire	c/o 17 Darling Pde, Mt Stuart 7000	62282099	62981107		c/o arthurc@southcom.com.au
Geoff	Crossley	44 Pradham St. Farrer ACT 2607	02 6286 1113		0417 437 931	gkcrossley@bigpond.com

The search and rescue questionnaire overleaf is to be filled in and returned to Alan Jackson ASAP. You are not obliged to complete the form, however, I urge you to do so promptly as the information supplied may be useful in the coordination of a real cave rescue.

The questionnaire is essentially a self assessment on what you believe your personal skills and experiences are in relation to a cave rescue event. I ask that you fill out the questionnaire honestly – you won't be helping yourself or anyone else by supplying misleading information. The information supplied will be reviewed by myself and Damian Bidgood (Police SAR and STC member) and any amendments we see fit will be made following discussion with the individual concerned. Copies of the forms will then be kept on file by myself and Police SAR for reference in the event of a real cave rescue.

Prior knowledge of club members' skills and experience could greatly reduce the time required to delegate roles and responsibilities to rescue attendees. Remember, it is quite plausible that those club members that already have good knowledge of the skills of other club members could be the ones that require rescuing!

All personal information collected from this questionnaire will be subject to the privacy policies of the two parties involved (STC and Tasmania Police). The STC privacy policy is currently under development – contact the Treasurer, Claire Brett, for details regarding this policy.

Thank you

Alan Jackson
(STC Search and Rescue Officer)

SEARCH AND RESCUE QUESTIONNAIRE

PLEASE RETURN TO Alan Jackson at a meeting, or post to P.O. Box 416 Sandy Bay, 7006

1. Contact Details

Name:_____

Are you willing to assist in Search and Rescue call-outs?____If so, then please complete the remainder of this form.

Home Location (postcode):_____Phone:_____

Work Location (postcode):_____Phone: Mobile:_____

2. Caving/Rescue Skills/Resources

- Please rate your caving ability (i.e. horizontal, ladders/SRT, single pitch, multi-pitch, cave diving)

_____

- Approximately how many caving trips have you done in last 3 months?_____, in the last year?, _____ in the last 3 years?_____
- What is the most difficult caving trip you have done in the last 3 years?_____

  _____
- How many Search and Rescue exercises have you participated in?_____
- Have you ever completed a First Aid certificate?_____If so, what level was/is the certificate and when was it completed?_____
- Please indicate (via 'yes' or 'no') which of the following skills you possess:
  - able to rig pitches (on both natural and artificial anchors) in a safe and efficient manner_____
  - able to install artificial anchors (bolts)_____
  - able to rescue someone from a rope_____
  - able to install and use and underground phone system_____
  - familiar with stretcher carrying_____
  - familiar with stretcher hauling_____
  - able to set up hauling systems_____
  - able to navigate on the surface using a map and compass, by day_____by night_____
  - able to navigate using a GPS unit_____
  - able to safely use a chainsaw_____If yes, do you have formal training/ticket?_____
  - able to camp overnight in the bush or other isolated area_____

Do you possess any specialized skills and/or knowledge? (e.g. medical doctor, extensive knowledge of a particular cave system or cave area etc…) If so, then please give details:_____

_____

_____

In what capacities do you think you are best suited to help in the event of a SAR callout (e.g. surface work, underground work – horizontal and/or vertical caves, logistics/cave system knowledge support at search HQ, making tea and scones for personnel…) _____

_____

3. Preparedness & Availability

Is your employer amenable to you attending SAR callouts?_____

Would your employer require a letter from Police SAR to allow you to attend?_____

If you received a callout, how long would it take you to collect your gear and arrive at SAR HQ in North Hobart? From home (hrs)_____From work (hrs)_____

If the situation ever arose, would you be able to assist with an incident interstate?_____