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May - June 2006

Celebrating
60 years of
organised
speleology in
Australia
1946-2006

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Speleo Spiel

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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.

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Editorial

My catch-cry last Editorial was that a change is as good as a holiday. It would appear we'd all had enough holidays recently and the proposed name change back to TCC didn't get through. You can read all about the exciting transpirations of the EGM on page 4.

I assume you all liked the slightly different *Spiel* format or at least didn't find it upsetting enough to motivate any of you to make any comment.

Other recent changes include the order of the caves on the 'deepest list'. The list published in the last issue is now out of date. Tachycardia has moved up a few places to number one! It's all academic really with three caves now all within the survey noise. It's probably best to say that Niggly, Anne-A-Kananda and Tachycardia are all the same depth but at some point someone will want to make a list to separate the three. Based on the currently available survey data Tachycardia is theoretically 40 cm deeper than Niggly. Until someone keen goes back and surveys both caves again then that's the way it'll stay! The general consensus from club members was that we should have fudged the data a bit and made Tachy a clearer winner. We're clearly just too honest.

You may also have noticed that the Forward Program disappeared last issue. This was unintentional but it hasn't caused any great dramas. Let's face it, no trips are ever planned enough in advance to be added to the list and if you can't use a calendar to work out when the first and third Wednesdays of each month are then you're probably too dilatory to drive to the meeting anyway. It won't be returning in a formal manner.

Of particular note this issue is Serena's Rift Cave report. I haven't seen this format since primary school and it brought back many warm and fuzzy memories for me. I think they're called 'acrostics' or something like that. I'm sure Ric will know.

When it all boils down this issue is really all about the exploration of Tachycardia. There are few other trip reports. Go sink your teeth into it and enjoy it. If you get sick of reading reports written by me then get off your arse, go caving and write me a report.

Alan Jackson

Stuff 'n Stuff

CAVES AUSTRALIA: I guess if you want to write rude lengthy diatribes with the intention of getting something fixed then you also need to be capable of writing polite short acknowledgements when the problem is fixed. Well done to Joe Sydney and his team for getting CA back on a timeline that I don't need to consult my grandmother to understand. Keep up the good work. I am still a little perplexed about the combined issue thing though and sincerely hope this isn't done again.

MEETING VENUE CHANGE: We no longer meet at the Republic Bar. We've moved a few blocks to the Waratah Hotel at 272 Murray St Hobart. We still meet on the first Wednesday of each month (except in January when we are

far too busy making use of the nice weather to be talking to one another) for business meetings and on the third Wednesday for social meetings. Enter the building via the Murray St entrance (don't worry, it always looks closed so just give the door a tug) or via the back entrance off the carpark. You should find us out the back somewhere and the barman should be able to point you in the right direction. Most importantly the beer at the Waratah is 10 cents cheaper than most other 'trendy' pubs. Some people are upset that they don't serve Guinness on tap but let's admit it; Guinness is only for old-timer try-hards too nervous to expand their tastes to embrace some of these new fancy fandangled beverages. It's like the transition from ladders to SRT – all the old farts whinged at the time but they eventually realised it was better!

PESKY POMS. A couple of Madphil's pommy mates paid us a visit in late May. They didn't smell or whinge anywhere near as much as Phil does, which was a relief. They helped me deflower some virgin passage in Tachycardia, completed the Overland Track at warp speed and then flapped about in Threefortyone. Thanks Imogen and Kev, it was a pleasure spelunking with you (sorry Arthur, I had to slip that one in).

GEAR-STORE CLEANOUT. Thanks to all those who attended the gear-store clean out in May. Large quantities of largely useless crap were taken to the tip as a result. Even larger quantities of useless crap went to the museum because Arthur couldn't bear to see it thrown out. The important thing is that there is now less crap in the store and what is left is largely useful. A further working bee may be called to organise what's left once Gavin gets some shelves up.

SOUTHERN CAVER. Issue No. 62 of SC is available for download from the website. It contains a history of the Junee-Florentine caves up to about 1980 put together by former TCC president, Laurie Moody, in the 1980s but not previously published. It consists of 83 pages; mainly text but including a few of Laurie's photos from the time and some cave maps. It is comprehensively referenced. *Greg Middleton*

GROWLING SWALLET SHRINKING? Most of you no doubt worked all this out years ago but I only sorted it out recently so I'll include it for the sake of all the other misguided youth in the Club. For a long while the Growling Swallet system was quoted as 375 m deep (see virtually any 'deepest caves' list compiled prior to 1995 including the surveys in the TCC Exploration Journal published in the 1980s). I was a bit perplexed when I observed Ric's list from the last issue which put Growling at 360 m. I tracked down an article by Rolan (in SC59) which kind of covers it. The article states:

"The depth of Growling Swallet, previously thought to be 375 m deep, has been amended on the basis of new survey data."

Exactly which bit of data lead to this chomping of 15 m from the survey depth I'm not sure. Does anyone know? I suppose Rolan would be a good bet.

SEARCH AND RESCUE WEEKEND. The date is set (21-22 October 2006) so keep that space free in you diaries. More info will come.

OUTCOMES OF THE EXTRA-ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING

A total 9 motions (including 1 sub-motion) were foreshadowed to amend the Southern Tasmanian Caverneers Inc. Constitution during an Extraordinary General Meeting held on 3 May 2006. Several rules governed the voting procedure. An amendment would only be passed if at least $\frac{3}{4}$ of the voting members present accepted the motion (STC Constitution clause 12). Only full financial members, student members or household members were eligible to vote (STC Constitution clause 7.1). At least 10 voting members had to be present to achieve a quorum (STC Constitution clause 7.5). Voting by proxy was not permitted (*Associations Incorporation Act 1964*).

Motion 1 - moved by Rolan Eberhard and seconded by Greg Middleton:

to amend the Constitution of the organisation by omitting from clause 1 the words "Southern Tasmanian Caverneers" and substituting therefore the words "Tasmanian Caverneering Club Inc."

Before the motion was put to vote, Chairperson Gavin Brett invited final comments from the 16 members present and eligible to vote. Several members voiced their opinions for or against the name change; the ensuing discussions involved most of the members present.

Vote: 8 members in favor and 8 members against; hence motion not carried. The President spoke after this motion to commend the members who raised the issue of the club name during the 60th anniversary year of the oldest caving club in Australia. The motion succeeded in gathering club members together and debating relevant issues; from the response that the motion generated either way the vote went it would have been good for the club.

Motion 1a - moved by Matt Cracknell and seconded by Greg Middleton:

to amend the Constitution of the organisation by adding the word "Incorporated" after the words "Southern Tasmanian Caverneers" in clause 1.

Vote: carried unanimously by the members present; hence motion passed. This was a minor administrative change that was required by law.

Motion 2 - moved by Matt Cracknell and seconded by Greg Middleton:

to amend the Constitution of the organisation by replacing the first sentence of clause 8.8 with "All cheques, and other withdrawals, from the general account shall be signed by the Treasurer and one of President, Vice President or Secretary."

Vote: motion rejected unanimously; the idea was deemed to unnecessarily complicate the cheque signing process.

Motion 3 - moved by Matt Cracknell and seconded by Greg Middleton:

to amend the Constitution of the organisation by deleting the third sentence of clause 8.8 and inserting a new clause 8.8.1:

"The Treasurer shall maintain a separate Science Account into which shall be deposited such moneys as the Executive or a General Meeting shall decide should be held for scientific purposes and from which may be expended such monies as the Executive or a General Meeting shall decide should be expended for scientific purposes, provided that in every case the Scientific Officer agrees. The Scientific Officer shall be invited to be a signatory for the Science Account. All cheques, and other withdrawals, from the Science Account shall be signed by the Treasurer and one of President, Vice President, Secretary or Scientific Officer.

Vote: the motion was rejected unanimously. While it was generally agreed that further clarification of the science account was desirable, it was not agreed that such limitations on the signatories was necessary.

Motion 4 - moved by Matt Cracknell and seconded by Greg Middleton:

to amend the Constitution of the organisation by adding, before the full stop at the end of clause 8.10, the words "or as required by law".

Vote: carried unanimously; hence motion passed. The current wording in clause 8.10 accords with the present law, however if the law changed we would need to change the Constitution. With this amendment we should avoid having the change the Constitution if the law changes.

Motion 5 - moved by Matt Cracknell and seconded by Greg Middleton:

to amend the Constitution of the organisation by replacing, in clause 9.3 the word "an" with the words "the same".

Vote: carried unanimously; hence motion passed. The existing wording might be held to exclude a member of the Executive moving to a different position after 3 years in a position. This was not the intention of the clause and the change will make it clear that a person can move to another executive position after 3 years.

Motion 6 - moved by Matt Cracknell and seconded by Greg Middleton:

to amend the Constitution of the organisation by adding, in the first sentence of Clause 11.1, after the word "the", the words "end of the".

Vote: motion rejected unanimously; hence not adopted. It was recognised that in practice the office-bearers stand aside before the election is held and hence do not hold office until the end of the AGM.

Motion 7 - moved by Matt Cracknell and seconded by Greg Middleton:

to amend the Constitution of the organisation by replacing, in clause 11.8, the word "Organisations" with the word "Organisation's".

Vote: carried unanimously; hence motion passed. This corrected a typographical error.

Motion 8 - moved by Matt Cracknell and seconded by Greg Middleton:

to amend the Constitution of the organisation by replacing, in clause 11.9, the third occurrence of the word "and" with the words "and/or".

Vote: carried unanimously; hence motion passed. This change simply makes it clear that the Karst Index Officer can

document caves explored by members, and not only those both discovered and explored by members.

Matt Cracknell, Secretary

May 2006

Trip Reports

IB-1 Revelation Cave – Not So Revealing

Ken Hosking

25 February 2006

Party: Fran Hosking, Ken Hosking, Briony Jones

Some trips just seem to start the wrong way. Just as we descended the hill into the Huon Valley I remembered that Fran's and Briony's lamps were still on charge back in Hobart. A quick u-turn and an hour was added to the journey to Ida Bay.

We were armed with digging devices and intended to tackle what appears to be an abandoned stream passage which is now filled with silt but which runs parallel to the present stream. However, by the time we reached the cave entrance, we were seriously late for any intensive digging. More time was lost as I struggled to find a rebelay which was suitable for use by the two young ladies and which would avoid a nasty rub at the pitch head, in the undescended second pitch (the Baguette). After struggling for a while I decided that enough was enough and went back to the squalid little squeeze at the bottom of the entrance pitch and rigged the Violent Crumble slope. By now time was really against us and we decided not to even try to rig the main pitch but merely to have a trip to the pitch head and look at the upper level side passages. One of these was drafting strongly and might have been Arthur's long lost alternative entrance. However, the climb up was rather loose and, given the lateness of the hour, we left it for another day.

Down at the main pitch head, there was a much stronger draft than I remembered from the previous trip. Could this mean that the sump was open? We were not to find out on this occasion, as it was time to head back out.

It continued to be one of those days. As I began to de-rig the entrance pitch, Briony's glove decided to fall back down the pitch. As luck would have it, I was the only one who still had SRT gear on by then, so I got to do the trip to the bottom again. After returning and beginning to haul the rope up, the mattock that was supposed to be tied to the rope for retrieval failed to emerge at the top, and it was down for me once again.



Briony ascending the entrance pitch of IB-1 Revelation Cave.

Despite the trip having been something of a failure in terms of achieving objectives, the young ladies seemed to enjoy it and the trip confirmed the potential for the cave as a training ground for those new to SRT.

JF-36 Growling Swallet

Janine McKinnon

16 April 2006

Party: Janine McKinnon, Dale Pregnell, Ric Tunney

Five new members (four beginners) turned up at the last business meeting and due to this unprecedented interest by potentially new blood, Ric decided he'd offer an introductory trip over the Easter break. Growling Swallet streamway was the obvious choice, that way we find out fast if they are likely to keep caving in Southern Tasmania. Other club members were, of course, invited to come.

As it turned out only one of the prospectives was interested/available so we had a very small beginners' trip.

We got underground at a leisurely 1130. The water levels were up a bit on two weeks ago but not particularly high; just enough to make it nice and noisy (and hopefully exciting) for Dale.

We made our way downstream as far as the keyhole and looked at most of the side passages on the way back up, including spending a bit of time in the lower sections of the Yorkshire Drain.

We were out at 1500 after an enjoyable trip.

JF-270 Tachycardia

Alan Jackson

17 April 2006

Party: Serena Benjamin, Gavin Brett, Alan Jackson

We forgot the measuring tape and stopped in at Max Jeffries on the way to see if he could help us. He gave us an old 20 m tape but we eventually didn't use it as every leg we could have surveyed ended up being over 20 m. It was pleasant to wander up the hill in the sun for a change. We did some minor track work and noted the need for much more. The forest wasn't as saturated as last time and we all hoped that water levels would be a little more pleasant this trip.

The warm (relatively) humid air surging out of the entrance was condensing as it hit the frosty air of the outside world sending a column of mist into the air. The ray of sunshine hitting this column was superb. Gavin destroyed the serenity with his attack on a tree-fall that had been hindering us since the day we found the entrance which released a lot of energy that had been stored further along the fallen trunk. A loud crack, timber flying everywhere and Gavin was lucky not to wind up with two broken legs. A good start.

We made fast progress to the frontline and I descended into the Bermuda Triangle once again. With water levels much lower I continued on from the rebelay I had set on the previous trip and didn't get too wet. About 30 m down from the rebelay, and at the end of my rope, I landed on a ledge where the water went back under the pitch and down an impenetrable slot and a continuing pitch went the other way. I could get safe so I called Gavin down with more rope. The rock was particularly rotten from here on. We whacked a tape around a large rock spike and I started the new 63 m rope. About 5 metres down a steep ramp the pitch became vertical and I tied off onto a very dubious looking rock spike. The pitch hung free from here another 15 or more metres. A steep ramp was encountered which I followed for another 8

metres or so to the edge of a much larger pitch. We would need bolts and I figured that surely it was Gavin's turn at the pointy end.

Back at the top of the ramp was a flat area suitable for sorting the drill etc... We installed an extra natural anchor here as the dodgy one up above was still giving me the willies. Gavin went down, placed two bolts (after excavating all the crud to find solid rock) and descended to what he thought was a ledge he could get off on. He came back a while later with large eyes and a grin from ear to ear. The ledge was not suitable for standing on; a 40+ m drop hung below him and the rope was about two metres short of allowing good placement of bolts for the next bit.

Serena had been patiently waiting at the top of Bermuda all this time. The continuous nature of the following drops and the background water noise meant we couldn't communicate with her. It was too dangerous to let her come down without her knowing that a dislodged rock would kill us. Gavin decided to head up carefully while I took out the extra anchor we had installed and headed down to the end of the rope with the drill. The extra rope would allow me to gain a spot that Gavin thought looked good for bolt placement for the next pitch. I found a marginally safe spot at the rebelay Gavin had placed lower down while he ascended. Once he was up I descended, soiled my long-johns, soiled my long-johns again and then set about finding some good rock. I chucked in two bolts, one of which I stuffed up a bit (hopefully still useable) and headed out. It was a long way out to the top of Bermuda. We had used 100 m of rope with 5 rebelay, so we probably gained another ~85 m vertically. This pitch will be about 120 m by the time we get down it.

The slog out was horrendously hard work and the walk in the dark added insult. The cave is getting hard now, which you would expect of a ~300 m deep cave. Bring it on. *[Interestingly the survey data put the last rebelay placed on this trip at exactly 300.0 m. So it was a ~300 m deep cave! Ed.]*

Smorgasbord Surface Work

Alan Jackson

22 April 2006

Party: Lorano Agostonelli, Rolan Eberhard, Alan Jackson, Greg Middleton

My partner in crime was wasting time on the mainland so I took the opportunity to rally the troops for some much needed surface work in the Tachycardia area.

We cleared a lot of tree falls and logs and generally made the track easier to follow. Greg put his digital camera to use photo-tagging most of the recently tagged entrances in the Smorgasbord area. Rolan had tagged along to have a better look around the area so we could check if we had re-found the holes he noted during a walk through this area when working for Forestry in the 1990s. Our tagging efforts have slightly reduced the number of 'Z' caves in the Juneeflorentine.

After conferring with Rolan and his map with his 'Z' numbers on it we have decided the following:

- Z78 is the swallet tagged JF-277
- Z38 is JF-276 Hairball Hole
- Z37 is the large doline tagged JF-279
- Z36 is JF-269 Toss Pot
- Z77 is JF-274 Suck It and See Swallet

It is worth mentioning here that after chatting with Stefan and Trevor it seems reasonable to assume that JF-270 Tachycardia is synonymous with JF-X53 Wherretts Cave. According to Clarke 2000 this is also synonymous with Rolan's JF-Z56. This XYZ numbering system is a joke!

We completed the surface survey traverse between the entrance I called 'C35' (Jackson 2004) and JF-236 Bunyips Lair. This allows us to link our various surveys in the Smorgasbord area into STC's master system survey of the JF and, most importantly, tells us if the entrance to Tachycardia is higher than Niggly Cave!



Rolan kneels at JF-270 Tachycardia and prays that someone will invite him on a trip.

On the way back to the car we tagged some previously untagged entrances and photographed them. The cave C35 mentioned above was assigned JF-403 (on the back wall of the small rock face over the entrance, just to the left of the actual entrance). C36 was tagged JF-405 (on the back wall under the overhanging section of the entrance – at about -3 m). A cave 20 m or so east of JF-405 was tagged JF-404 (on the back – north – wall at about -1 m). A small swallet between JF-405 and Tachy was tagged JF-406 (down inside the climb entrance on the RHS as you would walk into the cave at about -1 m). None of the caves tagged have names at this stage and most have only been cursorily explored.



Alan drills the number tag on JF-403 [The Editor takes no responsibility for any 'Photoshopping' conducted on images prior to submission]

The weather was miserable all day but we achieved all the things I was hoping for. Thanks must go to the others for enduring a relatively boring day on the surface for the greater good. Oh, by the way, the survey puts the Tachycardia entrance at ~9 metres higher than Niggly ...

References:

- JACKSON, A. 2004 Chrisps Road – again. *Speleo Spiel* 345:14-15
- CLARKE, A. 2000 A Complete List of the Known Caves in the Junee-Florentine Karst. *Speleo Spiel* 318:13-27

JF-270 Tachycardia – Starburst Extension

Alan Jackson

25 April 2006

Party: Gavin Brett, Alan Jackson

The day had come to finally find the bottom of Tachycardia. The weather was perfect, the freshly upgraded track was a dream to walk on and best of all it was a public holiday so I was actually getting paid to go caving! It was a crushing blow when I realised I didn't have my descender as we trogged up at the entrance. A few rude words were uttered. There was no way we could safely complete the extremely vertical lower sections of the cave while sharing a Stop. We almost bailed but decided that we could investigate some of our other leads after Gypsyland (~130 m down but only one 20 m pitch to get there).

After dropping the first pitch I hauled Gavin's Stop back up the pitch and used it to descend. We groveled through the rock-fall and then squeezed over to the top of the ~5 m pitch that Gavin had found after our first successful navigation of Gypsyland (the same one Serena had dropped on our survey trip and had reported big passage heading on). We confirmed Serena's reports and followed quite large horizontal passage (average dimensions approximately 5 m wide by 6 m high)

for about 50 m. Some water trickled in from a small aven about 30 m along this passage which flowed along for a while and then descended down a pitch (10 m or so from the terminus of the passage). At the very end of the passage was some small but spectacular decoration. A collection of radiating helictites lead to the name Starburst for this passage.

Two bolts later and we were down the 12 m pitch. The passage then continued via much smaller dimensions to a constricted pitch head. Gavin did lots of grunt work and removed plenty of rock and I did the second shift to clear it back to bedrock only. It was probably negotiable but would have been very difficult on a rope with the undercut walls out of reach for pushing feet on the way back up. It looked like a simple capping job for a future trip. The pitch was estimated at ~20 m and had two long projections of rock reaching out from either side and almost touching. This reminded Gavin of the Creation of Man section of Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel work. I feel a pitch name coming on.

We surveyed out, happy with the day's efforts. Bermuda was still waiting patiently.

Once the survey data was entered we had added ~90 m of passage to the system and interestingly the passage sits more or less directly under the entrance series and terminates

directly underneath the limit of exploration in JF-272 Sawn Off Pot, a cave only 15 m from the entrance of Tachycardia. We had expected it to lie more or less over the top of the horizontal development associated with Art Deco pitch below. Exploration in Sawn Off Pot was abandoned last year

at a little over 50 m depth but with a continuing and drafting down-climb in loose rock-fall. A more determined look in this cave may yield the ~70 m of vertical passage required to connect the two caves. This would only make the system about 30-40 cm deeper but every little bit counts!

JF-34 Rift Cave

Serena Benjamin

25 April 2006

Party: Serena Benjamin, Janine McKinnon, Ric Tunney, Tony Veness

Really beautiful rift entrance appears out of the forest in a large doline. Clambering down moss covered logs we chose the path to the right, which takes you down a climb involving a bit of a stretch (or leap of faith). Once in the cave itself we investigated the impressive dimensions of the railway tunnel, littered with loose rock, before heading back to the daylight zone to look for the way on. We chose a rather promising looking side passage that I cleared of a few loose rocks before pushing through to a small aven. The passage then turned into a crawl in which a shower of water not so invitingly splashed upon the rocks.

I asked Janine in her plastic suit to investigate the passage, which shortly after joined the serpentine stream way in which we soon joined her. After, of course, she got to go under the shower two more times.

Finally we all got to the head of the 16 metre pitch and I got to rig this under Janine's guidance. All reluctance to go under the shower in the preceding passage was found to be wasted effort. Descending this pitch, I soon found myself in a waterfall.

Tony, Janine and I then went on to investigate the rest of the cave while Ric elected at that stage to go back and look for the reputed other way on.

Crawling and climbing through the rest of the cave, we at first kept to the left-hand wall as much as possible. Down an overhanging climb the passage opened out and descended a rocky slope, only to confront us with a crawl and upward climb into a small decorated aven. Retracing our steps we found a bypass for the climb and went this time toward the right.

After we had exhausted all the leads that we could investigate without rope we turned back, ducking up a side passage along the way only to find that rope was needed there as well. A smooth and easy trip to the entrance then followed.

Venturously, Tony tried the climb in the entrance that we had descended on the way in. Quickly giving up on this endeavor, he conceded that the way Janine and I had decided to try, following the left fork of the stream as it goes in, was indeed much easier.

Everyone met up at our packs and had an enjoyable walk out. We all agreed that this cave would make a good intermediate level trip to take people on.

JF-270 Tachycardia – The secret of Bermuda revealed

Gavin Brett

29 April 2006

Party: Gavin Brett, Alan Jackson

After the major let down of the forgotten Stop on ANZAC day, the excitement for getting to the bottom of the Bermuda Triangle pitch had reached fever pitch (good pun by me, not Ed.). The amount of speculating and dreaming that had been done by us, as well as others, was incredible; Claire and Loretta had certainly had enough. After a few more double checks it was with great delight that we entered Tachy with all our gear.

We had become pretty practiced at getting to the top of Bermuda by now and were there in about an hour. We had 49 m, 25 m, 18 m and 17 m ropes for what we thought would be about 30 m of the undescended pitch. The plan was for Alan to go ahead and we would survey between rebelay, with me holding the dumb end of the tape and Alan doing everything else. It is really hard to hear each other on this pitch so

yelling numbers wouldn't work (there is not a hope that you could hear a 'rope free' call from top to bottom here).

Alan dropped down to the first rebelay, we took a reading and he went on. So I got a call and went down to find him standing on a small ledge off the rope, about 5 m above the next rebelay looking very sheepish. He had become so focused on selecting the next survey station he hadn't noticed that he wasn't at the rebelay! I went down to the rebelay and we took a reading and he came down and passed me, a most unusual manoeuvre. The surveying went as planned past the next three rebelay to the previous limit of exploration. I handed over the 49 m rope and it was rigged. Alan was just about to go and I said "Here, take the 25 m, just in case." Now I just watched him go down, down, down, and eventually call out "I've run out of rope!" He put in another rebelay to get out of the water a bit, descended some more and then tied on the 25 m which just made the next rebelay, which is at a large floor which you can safely get off.

I was going nuts by now and was just getting ready to start prussiking out when the "Rope free!" came. I descended and was pretty cold and miserable as the rebelay I was hanging on was in the water, so I immediately rigged the last 4 m

section to the bottom to get out of the wet. Just as I was about to descend Alan forced me to do a couple of survey legs, and down I went. It was now I could start to get excited. "Holy crap that was a big pitch!" I said this a lot. To temper my excitement was the small passage of about 15 m long that was ahead of us. This came as a real disappointment as when I was descending I had really hoped that Alan had found a way on that turned into a through trip so that I didn't have to go up again!

After groveling around a bit in the small streamway and not detecting a draft, we decided that there was no way on, so we admired the particularly nice mud formations and had a bite to eat. It was now that we estimated the survey depth and

realised we had a ~370m deep cave on our hands, as well as clearly the second biggest pitch in Australia. We headed out, both on the big pitch at once; just waiting at each of the seven rebelay. Alan had forgotten about a section and had a bit of an 'oh bugger' moment when he realised he wasn't nearly as far as expected. A pitch of this size is pretty amazing as it can change form so drastically over its length.

Once we got home the data was entered immediately into OnStation and the magic number 375.2 m deep came up. The Drambuie was cracked open. Bermuda Triangle being 170 m was cream.

What an excellent day out.

IB-1 Revelation Cave – More Revealing This Time

Ken Hosking

6 May 2006

Party: Ken Hosking, Janine McKinnon, Ivan Riley, Ric Tunney, Amy Ware

An early start on this trip found us at the cave entrance in excellent time (before 1100) and the first pitch was soon rigged and descended. We decided to make an attempt to rig the Baguette pitch after my dismal failure on the previous trip. As soon as we got to the pitch head my lamp began to flicker (a problem later traced to corroded contacts on a so-called new set of batteries) and while I tinkered with the lamp, Janine hung out in the pitch and tried to set a rebelay.

In the end she managed to use a rather sad looking stalagmite as an anchor for a deviation, which seemed like the best option given the bomb-proof main anchor and the lack of other options. A bolt is definitely called for here.

The trip to the sump was uneventful and we took turns to dig away the soft fill. Progress was slow but steady but the passage just kept going on. There was no draft – and neither could there be as the passage was filled completely, but flow patterns on the ceiling of the passage suggested that this little tube had taken a lot of water at some time. The more we dug, the more difficult it became to remove the spoil, and progress slowed. The time came to retreat, with the question as to what the passage is doing remaining unanswered.

The cave was left rigged for a return trip in the near future.

JF-270 Tachycardia – Bottom and derig

Alan Jackson

13 May 2006

Party: Serena Benjamin, Gavin Brett, Alan Jackson

Serena was the only taker for the last chance to bottom Tachycardia before we derigged the lower sections. Matt chucked a sickie and Rolan had a birthday party to attend (I'm still laughing).

Gavin and I were hoping to do a swing across about two thirds of the way down Bermuda Triangle into a parallel shaft and potential horizontal development that could just bypass the current 'bottom'. By the time we had reached this point it was clear that we would be doing nothing of the sort. It was bloody wet. Gavin pulled the pin at the second last rebelay and headed back up to save a bit of time. Serena and I had a quick look at the bottom. The final grovel in the streamway would have been even more unpleasant than it had been on the previous trip.

I had a nibble and a better look around while Serena started back up the oversized shower. I noticed a lead that was worth a push in the future but I wasn't going to risk getting stuck when I was down there alone. I then proceeded up the

stupidly big pitch, derigging as I went. Plastic suits were no match for the conditions and we all got horrendously wet.

Our mountain of rope was hauled all the way to the top of On the Rope Again pitch as one length and we stripped Art Deco in the process. On the Rope Again remained rigged for our next and last trip into the cave for this winter. We saved a bit of hassle by shortcutting the bypass between On the Rope Again and Art Deco with the ropes. Unfortunately this route isn't humanly navigable. While waiting for Gavin to strip Art Deco I did some more climbing and gained access to the upper levels of the streamway that joins Art Deco. This is worth a further look and survey on a future trip.

We coiled rope and stuffed our packs to capacity. One 49 m length didn't fit and we left that behind for the next weekend's activities. I had a Jeff Butt pack so even stuffed full of wet muddy rope and rigging gear it was only annoyingly heavy. Serena and Gavin had greater capacity packs and paid the price. They were bordering on dangerously heavy and we fought our way out to the surface with them. In total we pulled 250 m of rope from the cave.

Next trip should see us have a look at, and do a survey of, the partially explored passage at the top of Art Deco pitch and a complete derig of the cave. The rope on the first pitch has been there for well over a year!

JF-270 Tachycardia – Yo Bitches extension and final derig

Alan Jackson

20 May 2006

Party: Imogen Furlong, Alan Jackson, Kevin Welch

Imogen and Kevin were a couple of Madphil's mates from the motherland who had come to sample the delights that Tasmania has to offer. Tachycardia required a final derig and there were plenty of leads to satiate the visitors' appetite for exploration.

Water levels in the cave were moderate and generally tolerable. We bombed on down to the top of the 45 m Art Deco pitch (derigged on the previous trip) and traversed over the top into the continuing rift that Gavin and I had explored briefly on our first sojourn into this area (see page 10 of SS353). This passage had since been referred to as Yo Bitches in an obscure reference to the British *Bromwell High* cartoon on ABC (three stals in a row lead to an initial name of Three Sisters but we considered this to be a bit lame and the sisters soon turned to Bitches). About 20 m of horizontal passage soon begins to slope steeply and a tight serpentine passage has cut through the floor. This can be down-climbed which avoids the steep muddy slope up the top. A little further along the serpentine development pitches again (not free-climbable) and you can pop back out in the larger passage/mud-slope above. From here the slope steepens to near vertical and an impressive aven heads up some 50 m+. This is where Gavin and I had stopped last time.

Kevin tied off a natural thread and I traversed to the left a little to get a better look. A large diameter shaft dropped away on the left some 16 m. The rock was obviously the same band as that on Art Deco, i.e. clean, solid and spectacular – perfect bolting territory! We had left the bolting kit at home and had to make do with some imaginative natural rigging. In place of the bolt kit I had chucked in some rope protectors (reminiscent of SRT techniques gone by). A large natural bollard and a rope protector later and I was down this pitch. The two poms

joined me (although Imogen had a long delay when a pebble jammed in her descender and prevented her from abseiling or opening her Stop). Another 16 m pitch followed off to the side and once again a bolt or two would have been fabulous. A very large boulder (I joined over 10 m of tape to get round it) was wedged precariously above a chute leading to the new pitch head. This gave a reasonable hang (once again with a rope protector on the initial edge) and I headed down. This pitch terminated in a boulder choke (with a very strong draft) and a small climb up above the choke yielded another 15 m of horizontal rift passage that also terminated. Imogen popped down to complete the survey with me and we surveyed back out to Art Deco pitch while Kevin derigged.

It was getting on and the others intended heading on to Derwent Bridge that evening to start the Overland Track the following day so we headed out and derigged the remaining ropes from the cave. We were back at the cars at around 1915 and had spent about 7 hours underground.

Once the survey data was entered we had collected just over 100 m. I had expected this passage to lie more or less over the top of the development between Art Deco and Bermuda Triangle but it all lay parallel and north of it. We need to go back to check a hole on the right hand side of the large chamber/aven about half way down. The pitches we descended headed off to the left but the horizontal passage at the bottom trended off to the right. It is probable that the remaining lead is simply a higher extension of the horizontal passage but it may allow a bypass of the choke. You can't assume anything in this caving caper. The continuing serpentine system probably should be followed for completeness too.

Since Gavin first stumbled across the entrance we have done 12 trips to this cave. Surveying has been conducted on six of those trips and the cave currently stands at 843 m long and 375 m deep. We will now let Tachy have a little rest until we return next summer to plunder her remaining leads.

Maps for the passage explored to date are on pages 15 and 16.

JF-341 Threefortyone – Tourist Trip

Alan Jackson

26 May 2006

Party: Serena Benjamin, Imogen Furlong, Alan Jackson, Kevin Welch

The poms were back from the Overland Track (after doing it in 2.5 days – including walking the lake!) and keen to get underground again. I thought a relaxing trip into Threefortyone would be a nice change from their trip into Tachy the week before.

Kev wasn't feeling well (he'd overdone it a bit in the previous couple of days) and only made it half way down the vertical section before heading back out to the car for a sleep. The remaining three jollied our way to the Dinosaurs Foot

and then set off to see if I could remember how to get to the Dinosaurs Mouth. After a bit of nosing about I found the upper level passage. Serena threw in the towel here citing some poor excuse about not being able to do the climb. Oh well, her loss, not ours.

Imogen and I powered up the passage and then spent a bit of time probing the corners of large chambers for the Dinosaurs Mouth. Eventually we gave up and headed back out but probed a side lead and stumbled across our goal. It's a nice bit of flowstone but I told Imogen that she'd soon forget it once she was in Kubla the following weekend.

We scooted out, collecting Serena on the way and managed to get back to the car (and Kevin) well before dark. What a pleasant trip. It was refreshing to cave with some English cavers that aren't quite as mad as the one we're used to.

IB-1 Revelation Cave – More of the Same

Ken Hosking

27 May 2006

Party: Serena Benjamin, Matt Cracknell, Ken Hosking, Dale Pregnell, Amy Ware

With the cave already rigged and the digging gear being in place from last time, we were on the job in record time. Amy and I took turns in digging away at the bypass passage while the others tackled a couple of climbs in the passage below the main pitch. Unfortunately these proved to be dead ends. The stream which emerges from a rift near the bottom of the cave was also followed a little way but the passage proved to be too tight to go far. It is interesting that this stream is at about the same depth as the stream sink in nearby Hobbit hole (both caves have entrances at nearly identical altitude and have similar depths (Hobbit Hole is reported to have a depth of around 120 metres as does Revelation) and the horizontal separation is not great. Hobbit Hole is on the radar for investigation, but only in dry conditions – the wet and daunting looking entrance is enough to deter most cavers at this time of year.



Matt Cracknell

Dale looking just as silly as all other cavers do in their caving gear at IB-1 Revelation Cave

The digging progressed slowly, with gradual extension of the passage being achieved. However, towards the end of the day, with the passage apparently becoming tighter, either rock fill or the base of the passage was encountered. If it is the latter, the dig is probably a dead loss. If it is the former this might just be the postulated blockage that caused the silting and diversion of the stream. The next trip will hopefully reveal the answer.

On the way out Amy and I took a lower, and we hoped, easier track out of the gully than the direct climb. As we traversed past a small limestone cliff in the failing light, I noticed a hole against the wall. It was a tight tube that appeared to go vertically down about 6-8 metres to a floor. The hole had plenty of vegetable matter stuck in it and with a bit of gardening it might just be able to be descended. Could this be Arthur's alternative entrance? It's in the area that he described it as being, and it's adjacent to a small cliff, as he had said. One for the next trip.



Cave-caps (that's what Matt called them and he's been to university!) in IB-1 Revelation Cave

JF-384 Eagle Pot – Forgetfulness, Finding New Caves and Tagging Old Ones

Alan Jackson

27 May 2006

Party: Gavin Brett, Alan Jackson

Plan A was to go capping at JF-384 Eagle Pot and JF-290 Cap It Cave. It was a good plan until we realised we'd forgotten the 8 mm drill bit. Bummer.

Plan B. We popped into Eagle Pot to find a lot more cave than we were expecting (we'd been told the offending restriction was right inside the entrance). The nice draft at the entrance couldn't be found in the cave and we crawled back out disheartened. We then decided to head up the gully to near JF-368 Armadillo Pot and finish the number tagging I'd almost completed in January (Jackson 2006). We kept to the north side of the gully and followed an open ridge (the soil profile is too thin to support any significant vegetation) and located two new entrances which were promptly recorded with a number tag, GPS and entrance photo tag. Very thorough! They just need surface surveying, exploring and passage surveying and they'll be ticked off.

JF-407 is a small vertical entrance estimated at least 15 m deep (from drop tests) and drafting well. The tag was placed on the lip of the entrance on the Southern side (right hand side when standing at entrance facing up hill).

JF-408 is a slightly larger vertical but climbable entrance some 15 m from JF-407 (slightly up hill and south of). No draft but is at least 6 m deep and needs checking by a caver equipped with a helmet and light. The tag was placed just inside the lip of the entrance (i.e. on vertical rock face just inside the actual cave) on the down hill (Western) side.

Both these caves are located about 60 m South-West of the end of the New Feeling extension of JF-36 Growling Swallet (and about 250 m above!)

Continuing up the ridge we failed to locate any new caves but intersected our new track to JF-338 Lost Pot. We traversed from here and dropped back into the gully to find our holes. Hole 2 (see Jackson 2004 for 'hole' descriptions and map) was tagged JF-409 on the southern (right hand side when facing up hill) lip. Hole 1 was tagged JF-410 on the southern lip (right hand side when facing up hill) about 0.5 m down inside the small tube entrance.

The energy to look for holes 7 - 9 couldn't be mustered so we headed back to the cars with a short diversion to the top of the cliffs above Growling's entrance.

References:

JACKSON, A. 2004 JF-368 and Surrounds – Armadillo Pot Valley. *Speleo Spiel*, 344:5-6

JACKSON, A. 2006 JF Tagging and Relocating Old Holes. *Speleo Spiel*, 352:14-15

JF-407, JF-408 and a few new ones

Alan Jackson

4 June 2006

Party: Gavin Brett, Matt Cracknell, Alan Jackson

Our intentions were to check out JF-407 and JF-408, the two new holes we had found the previous weekend. If they didn't go then we'd head around to JF-290 Cap It Cave and do what we originally intended the previous weekend. We had almost arrived at 407 when we noted another new hole. It looked good from the outside but was only a few metres deep (JF-411). Gavin also found a small vertical entrance nearby (JF-412) while Matt checked the previous one. We then stumbled round to 407 and its encouraging draft.

Gavin got suited up and prepared 407 while Matt and I surface surveyed between 407 and nearby 408. Matt then toddled off looking for new caves and tapping things in a 'future geologist' kind of way. A cap, a bolt and a chock later and the entrance constriction was widened and Gavin was heading down. He abseiled out of sight and called me down. I placed a redirection 7 m down and joined Gavin to rig the continuing pitch. A rebelay off a projection and another redirect later and Gavin was searching fruitlessly for a way on. The draft seems to disappear, most likely into a high but extremely narrow continuation on the bottom section of the pitch. Matt came down too, we had a bit of a poke and then surveyed out. Matt informed us that the redirect I had placed about 7 metres down snapped off while

he was wrestling with the tape to derig it! Great. We called it Wait Cave due to the flurry of 'wait' commands given on the day of discovery to the unmentionable members of the discovery party to prevent them falling in the hole. Use your imagination.

A quick look in 408 confirmed our suspicions that it didn't go far. At about 9 m deep it petered out with a small dig in the floor that didn't really hold much promise.

Next we surface surveyed over to the two new holes we had found earlier in the day. These will both require tags at a later date. The first one (411) had already been confirmed a no-goer. The second one (412) proved a bit more interesting and it was Matt's turn to go first. A couple of chocks got him down the initial 7m pitch to a constriction. Gavin joined him and assisted him with the expansion of the constriction. I acted as surface support raising and lowering the materials required for the expansion. Five or so caps later and a further 13 m of tight vertical tube was descended to a dead end by Matt. Time to go. I named this hole Ethical Dilemma in response to Matt's mixed emotions regarding cave conservation and digging efforts at the bottom of the first pitch.

Gavin wandered off for a pee and found another small cave, only 3 m deep (413). It was surveyed in and will be tagged. I found three Red-Bellied Pademelon (*Thylogale billardieri*) skeletons at its base.

We bush bashed straight down the hill to the pack track and out. A good day. Cap It Cave will have to wait. Hastily drawn surveys for 407, 408 and 412 appear on page 14.

Other Exciting Stuff

JF-270 Tachycardia Rigging Guide

Alan Jackson

Main Route

Entrance – grotty and slippery free-climb – 5 m hand-line would be handy after long trips.

Pitch 1 – 20 m hand-line on steep and loose slope to access pitch head proper. Two 8 mm expansion bolts on LHS for 20 m pitch. We need to put in some bolts for the approach line as the naturals we used are slowly disintegrating.

The Dig – difficult traverse and climb below the squeeze at The Dig – 10 m hand line or short ladder is best (tied off to the projection above and beside the precarious chock stone – don't use the chock stone under any circumstances! It's more of an 'anti-gravity stone'.)

Gypsyland – numerous difficult free climbs. One particularly awkward muddy climb on slope as you descend through the main large chamber before On the Rope Again pitch. Recommend a 7 m knotted hand-line tied off to a boulder in the floor.

On the Rope Again pitch – 16 m. Back up to floor boulders on approach, main natural anchor on LHS of passage at edge of drop (high) and a thread on RHS a little lower. Free climbing down 3 m back from the pitch gains excellent access to the pitch once rigged.

Climb – muddy 3 m climb up on RHS at downstream end of On the Rope Again chamber. Jug and thread on lip and/or thread further along passage at top to rig a ~7 m knotted hand-line.

Art Deco pitch – 45 m. Numerous natural anchors for back-ups in the sloping passage approaching this pitch – excellent big thread immediately above the pitch at the junction of the re-emerging stream passage from On the Rope Again pitch and the intersecting approach rift. The stream passage can be followed up to the cascade and down-climbed to the pitch head proper. Two 8 mm expansion bolts placed in the perpendicular rift to form a Y-hang on the left of the passage intersection. Two more 8 mm expansion bolts at a Y-hang rebelay at a passage constriction about 10 m down from initial Y-belay. A further 32 m to the floor.

4 m pitch – free-climbable but not recommended (remember, you'll have a 170 m pitch under your belt by the time you get back to this one). Originally rigged from the large obvious boulder at the pitch head and a small chock placement higher on the right.

4 m pitch – free-climbable but not recommend. Tape between jammed boulders above entrance window.

Bermuda Triangle pitch – 170 m. Back-up to previous short pitch and other naturals in small chamber. Two 8 mm expansion bolts as a Y-hang over widest slot in rift. This belay ultimately places the caver in the cascade in wet

conditions. A rebelay at -13 m accessed by a sketchy swing and traverse gets you out of the water for the following 30 m. This rebelay (1) is at two 8 mm expansion bolts forming a Y-hang in the narrow section of rift just below the ledge. Rebelay (2) is 30 m below (1) and is a large natural spike on the true left. Rebelay (3) is a further 6 m below (2) and further to the left (true). It is a very dubious-looking natural projection encrusted in mud and grot. A free-hang from here ensues until a steep slope is reached which leads to the lip of a circular shaft. Two 8 mm expansion bolts placed on the RHS (true) form rebelay (4) – 30 m below (3). The next section is a very steep ramp to rebelay (5), 19 metres below (4), and is a further two 8 mm expansion bolts on the true RHS. A 45 m free-hang follows and is possibly actually a 70 m free-hang but water spray forced the installation of rebelay (6) at the 45 m mark – off a large natural spike on the true RHS. Rebelay (7) is a reachy natural thread to allow the final 4 m to be dropped (or you could just continue down on the rope from the previous rebelay). A large platform at (7) allows one to get off the rope safely and gallivant about if required.

Starburst Extension

After exiting Gypsyland head to the opposite side of the chamber and a narrow ramp leads down to a short pitch (probably with a small stream in it). Climb up over the top of this through a squeeze rift, past the aven with the stream and through a second squeeze rift to a pitch at the end of the horizontal development.

P6 – short pitch with a step $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way down. Various naturals allow for a less than perfect rig but it's only a short pitch! Get off the rope at the ledge and post yourself through a slot on the true left. Continuing the extra couple of metres to the bottom of the pitch leads to a difficult climb up through the talus to the same point reachable from the above ledge. I recommend the easy way.

P12 – Follow the water near the end of this large passage to the pitch head between the true right wall and the large boulder. Two 8 mm expansion bolts are high on the right wall. A protector against the large boulder may be required if we haven't fixed the rub.

P? (Creation of Man) – We haven't been down it yet so we'll get back to you when we have.

Yo Bitches Extension

Traverse over the top of Art Deco pitch to gain access to this section. After a little way the passage steepens. When it starts to get scary (at the three little stals in a row) free climb the narrow serpentine development below.

C6 – Downclimb through serpentine described above. The serpentine then pitches again (unclimbable) so pop back out into the larger passage above and keep to the true left wall.

P16 – At the pop out point described above there is a nice natural thread. Use this to traverse along the left hand wall

and out to the large muddy bollard. A long wire header around this is used to effect a rebelay over the lip of the shaft.

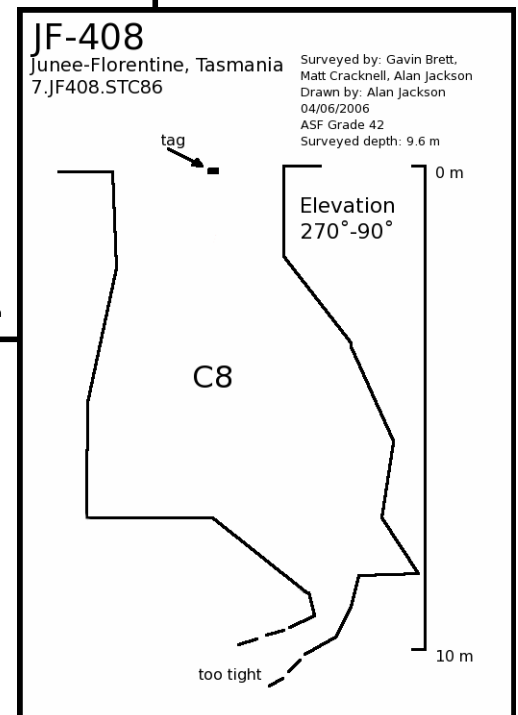
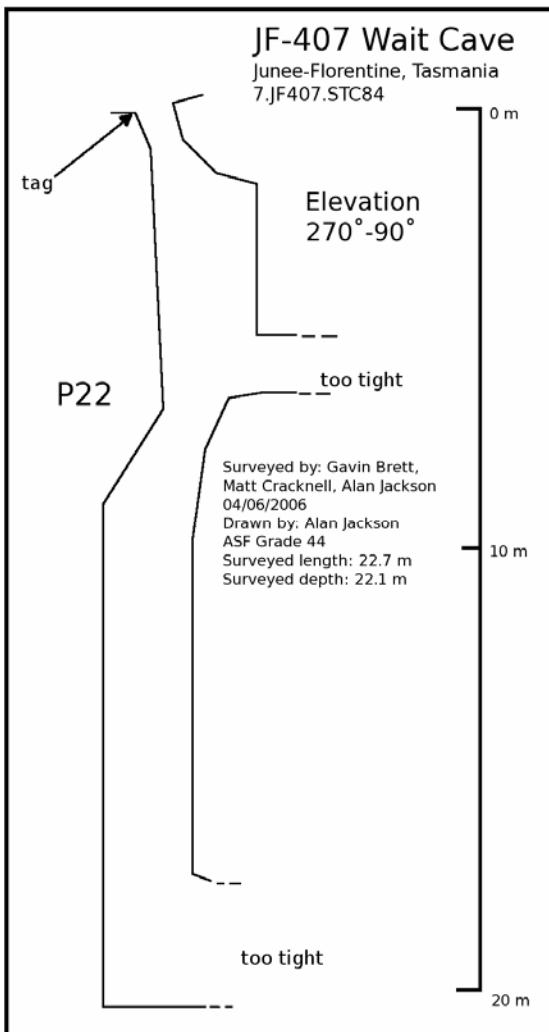
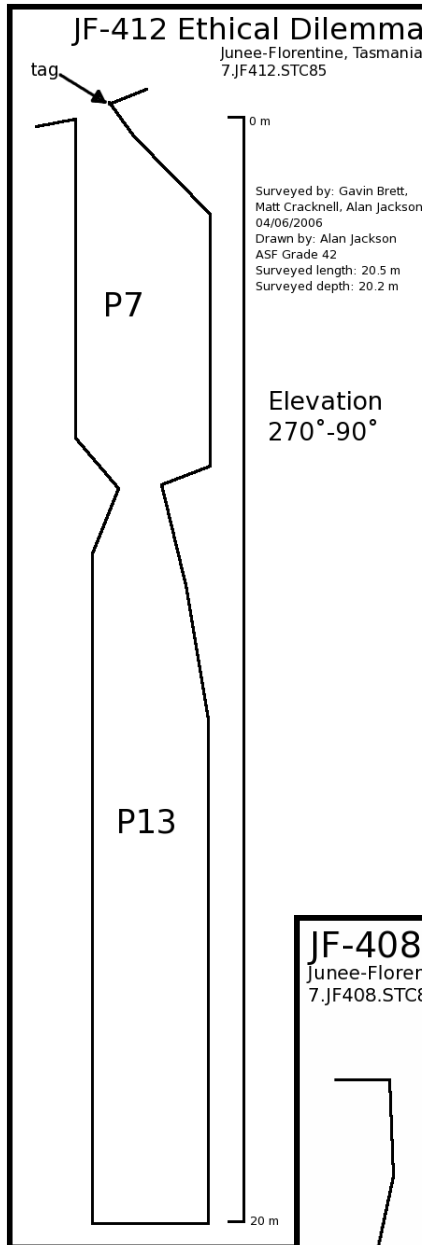
P16 – A large boulder wedged between the walls forms a tube to access the next pitch head. A very long tape (~10 m)

was used to sling this boulder and the pitch was descended from this. It results in a rub a metre or so down but it's not so bad – chuck a protector or two on it if you're scared. If it went somewhere it would need a bolt rebelay but at this stage the rub is fine.

Cryptic Caving Crossword – Solution

(From SS352) – Ken Hosking

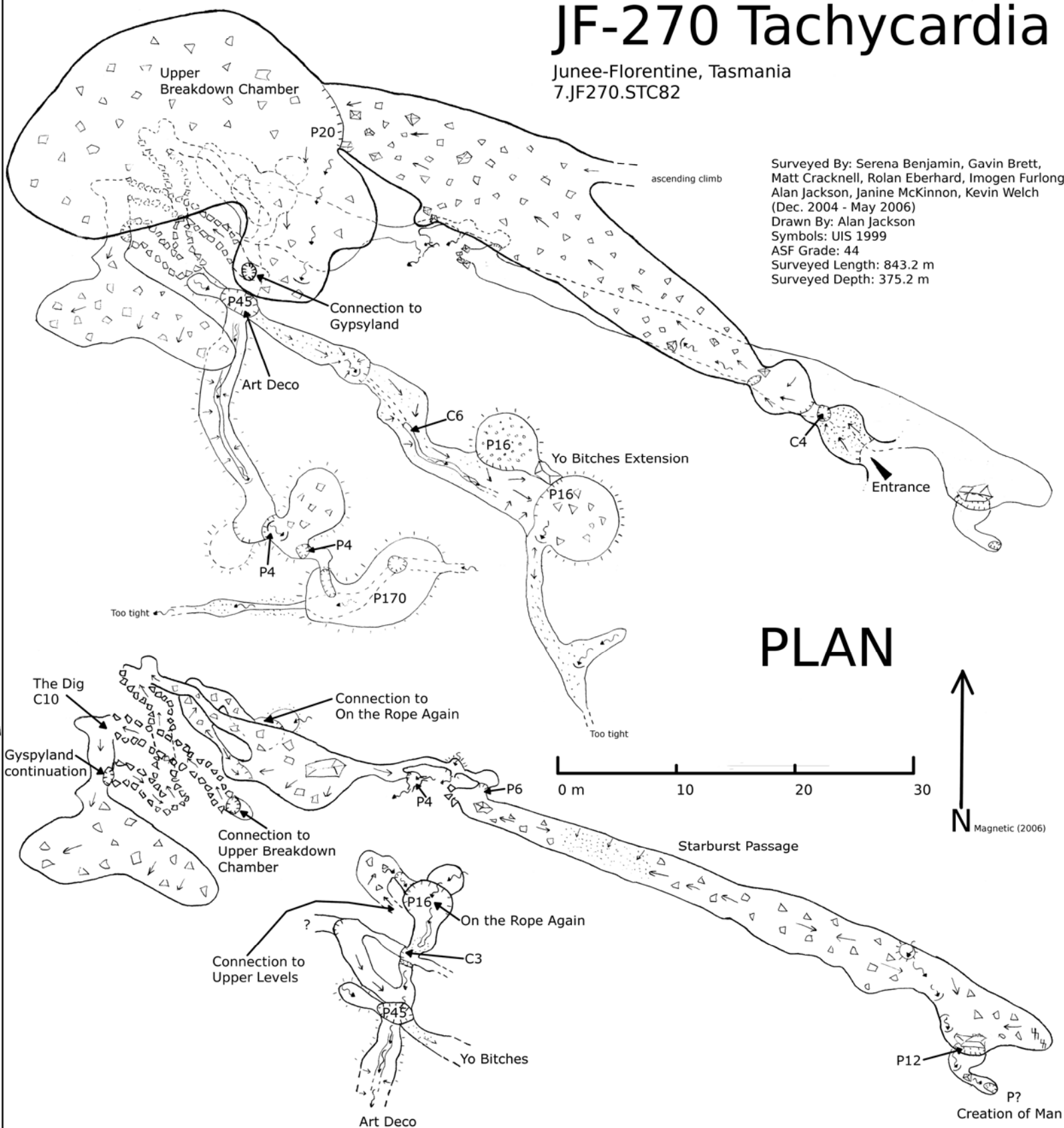
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| A | B | S | E | I | L | | | X | | |
| | | C | | | I | | | I | B | |
| A | V | E | N | | M | A | R | T | I | N |
| | | N | | | B | | O | | G | |
| M | A | T | T | | | | P | | | |
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| L | | | M | A | | | | | W | |
| E | | | | P | | | | M | I | L |
| | | C | R | E | E | K | | D | | |
| | | | | S | | | B | A | Y | |



JF-270 Tachycardia

Junee-Florentine, Tasmania
7.JF270.STC82

Surveyed By: Serena Benjamin, Gavin Brett,
Matt Cracknell, Rolan Eberhard, Imogen Furlong,
Alan Jackson, Janine McKinnon, Kevin Welch
(Dec. 2004 - May 2006)
Drawn By: Alan Jackson
Symbols: UIS 1999
ASF Grade: 44
Surveyed Length: 843.2 m
Surveyed Depth: 375.2 m



JF-270 Tachycardia

June-Florentine, Tasmania
7.JF270.STC83

Upper
Breakdown
Chamber

Surveyed By: Serena Benjamin, Gavin Brett,
Matt Cracknell, Rolan Eberhard, Imogen Furlong,
Alan Jackson, Janine McKinnon, Kevin Welch
(Dec. 2004 - May 2006)
Drawn By: Alan Jackson
Symbols: UIS 1999
ASF Grade 44
Surveyed Length: 843.2 m
Surveyed depth: 375.2 m

True Elevation
330° - 150°

The Dig
C10

Gypsyland

Starburst Passage

On the Rope Again

P?
Creation
of Man

Yo Bitches

Art Deco
P45

P4
P4

Bermuda Triangle
P170

too tight

Entrance

0 m

50

100

150

200

250

300

350