

SPELEO SPIEL 413

MARCH - APRIL 2016



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<http://southerntasmaniancaverneers.wordpress.com/>

Front Cover: Janine praying for assistance in surveying JF-459. God knows who or what is lending her a hand! *Photo by John Webb*



Speleo Spiel

Newsletter of the

Southern Tasmanian Caverneers Incorporated

PO Box 416, Sandy Bay, Tasmania 7006

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STC was formed in December 1996 by the amalgamation of three former southern Tasmanian clubs: 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

Guilt and Alan Jackson's bullying got the better of me. After Matt Cracknell crashed and burned as Editor, Alan proved his superiority, rescued the *Spiel* and reinvigorated his ego. Not content with that he suggested it was my turn to undergo trial by ordeal. Would I be the next person to whom he needs to feel superior?

Actually I thought of how much I have enjoyed all the past *Spiel* issues and thought that it was about time that I took my turn... again.

It was in the '80s that I last edited the *Spiel*, much to Stuart Nicholas' dismay. It allowed me to write too much nonsense and this did not appeal to everyone's sense of humour. For those not familiar with it read "Wrath of the Porcupine" SS213:6-7. Critics hated it at the time but those who have been to JF-387 will appreciate the quality of what I wrote. Alan loved it! I hope he likes this. *Stephen Bunton*

Stuff 'n Stuff

AGM

At the 2016 AGM there was another reshuffle of the ministry. Sarah Gilbert stood down as President after three years as one of the best we have ever had. Thanks Sarah for being so calm, sensible and competent in the job. To all other outgoing office bearers, thanks also and to the newbies good luck in performing your various roles this year. If you are vaguely competent you will be re-elected next year.

Emilio Comici.

In another vain attempt to link what Bunton did on his last holiday with something speleological, I visited Rifugio Emilio Comici, named in honour of one of Italy's finest climbers. Comici is most famous for "inventing" the etrier (pity it now gets a French name) and climbing the North Face of Cima Grande (see Photo SS380:21). This rifugio is one of the cafes/bars/lodges in the Dolomites ski area. Actually Comici brought skiing to the Val di Fassa and Val Gardena areas. He is commemorated here for the fact that he lobbed off the cliff above it and totalled. However, before he was a gun climber, check him out, he's one honed dude, he set the world cave depth record as the first person to descend below 500 m. This was in 1927 in a cave near Trieste although some research, even reading his autobiography, fails to identify the name of the cave. Mistakenly it has been quoted as Bus de la Lume. *Stephen Bunton*

Below: Ski-racer Bunton arrived before the bar opened.



Severino Casara in *Il Vero Arrampicatore*
Reproduced in Doug Scott *Big Wall Climbing*
Kay & Ward UK 1978 p.36

Above: Emilio Comici, the first person to reach 500 m depth in a cave, here pictured in the dolomites whilst climbing in 1937.

Captain Eberhard.

Greg Middleton enjoyed a summer trip to the Antarctic Peninsula and spent a little time in Patagonia where he uncovered the exploits of a certain Captain Hermann Eberhard. In Puerto Natales, Chile there's an Agenda Eberhard, a Captain Eberhard Hotel and a life-size statue of *Mylodon darwini* - just out of town is the Milodon/Mylodon Cave, a gaping great hole in conglomerate with stars and where Captain Hermann Eberhard found some *Mylodon* fur in 1895, although the giant herbivorous sloth had died out over 10,000 yrs ago. As a result it was originally named Eberhard Cave, later Cueva del Milodon or Mylodon ('y' on the official brochure, but their web address is www.cuevadelmilodon.cl). Greg said he will write this up for a future *Spiel* and include his exploration of a few other nearby (non-limestone, yet again!) caves. Watch this space.



Above: Immortality in Puerto Natales.

Office Bearer's Reports

President - Sarah Gilbert

This year has been a comparatively quiet one, for me at least. Other people seem to still be crawling, swimming, bottoming and exploring caves, although I have only read the *Spiel*.

The event of the year was the inaugural JF Lame Caving Weekend with special guests from the Northern Caverneers. Lots of people and their kids came out of the woodwork to get underground and much fun was had by all. Thanks to Alan Jackson for making it a great weekend.

We've had an increase in cave diving - Janine has recruited a range of new members with diving roots, but sanity status is still pending (water over the top of my gumboots is out of my comfort zone!). Janine has come close to her long time ambition to dive every know sump in Tasmania in a 12 month period. Maybe next year...

Greg has continued in his attempt to educate STC about the under-appreciated world of non-limestone caves. His perseverance is commendable.

Luckily Andreas, Alan, Janine, Petr and numerous others have continued hard-core caving in the JF. The Black Super Giant has probably been descended more times by a single person in one year than ever before (save your complaints, I know that is a totally unsubstantiated claim). Despite their best efforts to push the limits, nobody needed to be rescued this year - except for a couple of brave volunteers during our annual Cave Rescue with Al Warild Lesson (CRAWL).

There were three STC reps at this year's ASF conference at Exmouth. The caves made up in novelty for what they lacked in depth - hot, humid, red and dusty; and the Exmouth cavers made up in enthusiasm and hospitality for what they lacked in numbers - a population of one. This was also my first introduction to the bureaucratic ways of the ASF council meetings. Yes there was plenty of tedium, but it was also an eye opener for its potential to get other clubs on side and to make changes to the running of the ASF when email negotiations with the executive fail to move the mountain... warning, plenty of political energy required.

In other cave-related news: the long-awaited cave history book has finally been published; and Serena and Stefan have kick-started their acting careers getting involved with the filming of spectacular caves for the 16 Legs project.

This has been my third year as STC President and it's the end of my term. It had an eventful beginning but I think it's rolled on fairly well since then. Most of the time I even enjoyed it! Thanks to everyone who supported / helped / advised me in various ways over the years.

Now it's someone else's turn to get involved in STC's 70th year!

PS. Gin & tonic is my ASF-negotiating drink of choice ;-)

Vice President - Alan Jackson

Tempting to only state 'nothing to report' but I'll refrain. The executive for the last two years has been a pleasure to work with, led by our forever calm, rational and deep thinking President, Sarah. Her ability to wade through ASF paperwork

without the aid of a bottle of vodka is remarkable. Her replacement will have big boots to fill (unless we abandon this ridiculous affiliation with ASF all together in which case she could probably be replaced by a balloon with a face drawn on).

Treasurer - Geoff Wise

The financial statement is included below. The club had a loss of \$2,428.13. This was due to STC's support of the publishing of Nic Haygarth's book, *Wonderstruck*, including a \$1,000 contribution and a \$2,500 loan. This loan will be repaid in 2016. These two items plus the bulk order of the book accounted for the large expenditure on sundries. PO box rental continues its rise. We can only look forward to this year's increase!

Fees for 2016

The ASF has changed its fees for 2016-2017 and based all categories on a percentage of the single membership fee of \$68. This has resulted in a \$1 increase for inactive life members, a \$2 increase of household membership and a \$4 decrease for concession memberships. I propose the following STC membership fees for 2016, incorporating the change to the ASF component but leaving the STC component as 2015. I propose that gear hire and *Spiel* subscription rates remain unchanged.

Category	STC Fee	STC Factor	ASF Fee	Total Fee
Single	30	1	68	98
Life-Inactive	Nil	0	20	20
Life-Active	Nil	0	68	68
Concession (Student/Pensioner/Junior)	22.5	0.75	45	67.5
Household	52.5	1.75	119	171.5
Household including Active Life Membership	22.5	0.75	119	141.5
Introductory (12 months)	15	0.5	20	35

Summary of Membership 2015

STC continues to attract new introductory members although few go on to become full members.

The membership consists of: 19 Single, 5 Concession, 9 Family memberships accounting for 25 members, 2 Active life members, 3 Inactive life members, 2 Family memberships with active life members. There are 11 Friends of STC.

**Southern Tasmanian Caverneers Incorporated
Financial Statement for Year Ending 31 December 2015**

Income (\$)	This year (2015)	Last year (2014)
Membership Fees	4,458.35	4,328.00
<i>Speleo Spiel</i> Subscriptions	130.00	60.00
Gear Hire	171.00	232.00
Trip Fees	0.00	20.00
Donations (to STC General Funds)	0.00	44.00
Donations (to STC Science Funds)	0.00	0.00
Interest	222.25	339.57
Sundries	770.00	85.00
Total Income	5751.60	5108.57
Expenditure		
<i>Speleo Spiel</i> and <i>Southern Caver</i>	183.33	0.00
ASF Fees	2918.60	2882.87
Gear Purchases	256.50	605.00
Science Equipment	0.00	0.00
Equipment Officers Honorarium	69.60	0.00
Audit Fee	88.00	88.00
Annual Return Fee	59.20	58.40
PO Box Rental	181.00	168.00
Club Administration/Stationary	0.00	12.05
Memberships	40.00	0.00
Sundries	4383.50	0.00
Total Expenditure	8179.73	3814.32
Net Surplus	2428.13	3814.32

Balance Sheet (\$)	2015	2014
Petty Cash	8.55	8.55
General Account	2219.41	4617.54
Science Account	0.00	0.00
Fixed Term Deposit	10,000.00	10,000.00
Less Unpresented Cheques	-40.00	0.00
Plus Receipts to be Deposited	10.00	0.00
Total Cash Position	12,197.96	14,626.09

Account Reconciliation	2015	2014
Opening Cash Position	14,626.09	13,331.84
Add Total Receipts for the year	5,751.60	5,108.57
Less Total payments for the year	-8,179.73	-3,814.32
Closing Position	12,197.96	14,626.09
Reconciliation Error	0.00	0.00

Secretary - Phil Jackson

In 2015 we had ten G.B.M.s, one A.G.M. and zero E.G.M.s. One G.B.M. did not occur due to lack of a quorum. Most of the out-going correspondence and the more significant matters were handled by other members of the executive, who have a better grasp of the issues than I do. The President's efforts, in particular, in updating the Club's rules and constitution, with some contributions from wind-up drum thumpers, were commendable.

From a secretarial point of view it was an easy year.

I cannot continue in the position.

Librarian - Greg Middleton

Since February 2015 the Library has received 43 new paper journals (33 last year); well down from the heady heights of 191 in 2004-05), bringing our holding to 4,905. This reflects the trend towards digital publication.

Digital copies of journals are stored on a 1TB hard disk. Currently these include:

ACKMA Journal: 19 (June 2011-Dec 2015)
ASF Annual reports: 6 (2005, 2009, 2011, 2013-15)
ASF Conference Proceedings: 6 (23 2001 – 28 2011)
Caves Australia: 25 (Jun 2008 – Sep 2015)
Helictite: 3 (Vol. 40 – 41)
The Very Latest (CSS): Vol.1(1)(1960)–Vol.15(1)(2010)
Binomea (JCH&PS): 28 (Feb. 2008 – Feb. 2015)
ISS Newsletter: Vol. 3(2)(1996)–Vol. 21(3)(2015)
J. Sydney Speleo. Society: Vol. 56 to 58 (2012-14)
New Caves Chronicles (NHVSS): No. 21 (Jan. 2004) – No. 35 (Jan. 2011)
SUSS Bull.: Various 1960-1971, 1997-2014
SUSS Journal: 17 (May 1950 – Jul. 1968)
Trog (KSS): Vol. 48(1)(May 2013) – Vol. 51(5)(Nov. 2015)
CEGSA Annual Report: 59 (1956 – 2015)
CEGSA News: 240 1956 – 2015 (Vol. 60(4))
Illuminations (MCCC): 4 (1 1992 – 4 1999)
Southern Caver: Vol. 1(1)(1967) – No. 59 (1995); No. 60 (2005) – 68 (2014)
Speleo Spiel: No. 1 (1966) – No. 411 (2015)
TCKRG Journal: 6 No. 1 (May 1986) – No. 6 (Aug. 1993)
Troglodyte (NC): Vol. 16(1)(2006) – Vol. 24(1)(2014)
Nargun (VSA): Vol. 44(1)(Aug. 2011) – Vol. 45(3-4)(Feb. 2014)
The Western Caver: 1960-1967; 1998-2014

The library received thirteen new books, bringing our holding to 3784. Most of these books were donated by individuals. Most notable additions were Nic Haygarth's (*Wonderstruck*, which STC helped publish) and Ford & Cullingford's *Science of Speleology* (1976 but a classic).

Our CD/DVD collection grew by 2 to 49.

I have continued to collect reprints, photocopies and newspaper articles. These are housed in binders and 755 are catalogued in a database. I have many to add. Donations of relevant items are appreciated.

Since 2005 I have been producing *Southern Caver* in digital format, publishing otherwise unpublished or rare material. No issue was published in 2015 but I have material nearly ready for another issue.

Your librarian has been appointed to an IUS "Publications Exchange Working Group", the main task of which will be to make recommendations for formats for digital serials to facilitate international exchange. We will also advise on procedures for scanning archives of paper-based publications, something we've had a bit of experience with. A draft report has been prepared and will be presented to IUS at the 2017 Congress.

I'm happy to continue in the position.

Editor - Matt Cracknell

Well ... I am potentially one of the worst *Speleo Spiel* editors in the history of the club. Maybe I'm not the worst but definitely I'm a contender. I did not get any *Spiels* out on time and I failed to deliver hard copies. Thankfully someone with either more time on their hands or just a brutal determination to get things done took over late last year ... thanks Alan.

I am not willing to be nominated for this position in 2016.

Public Officer - Matt Cracknell

I have been the STC Public Officer for longer than I care to remember. Luckily I have not been required to do much.

I am not willing to be nominated for this position in 2016.

Search and Rescue - Andreas Klocker

Luckily there were no real rescues necessary this year (apart from maybe some psychological ones after some of Alan's finest character assassinations; sorry but I can't help with that). The annual cave rescue exercise went well and participants have definitely improved since the exercise last year. If we continue this annual exercise in the future we might actually have some people who can help in the case of shit hitting the fan. Al Warild and the other CRS guys were great help as usual - thanks to you guys - and as far as I can tell they're happy to come back again for more fun / teaching us, next year.

On the downside, ASF ACRC has become more and more bureaucratic and incompetent (it's unnecessary to mention names here I think) and reached a pain level at which I'm not prepared to deal with them any more. I'm happy to continue my role as SAR officer, but expect cave rescue exercises to be run without an ASF ACRC contribution (in which case I could probably be replaced by a balloon as well).

One thing which needs to be done in the cave SAR future I think is to find funds for a real stretcher; once I finished my work grants I might look into that ...

Social Secretary - Guy Bannink

Well it was another year of quiet social intercourse for the club.

It was a bit random because of the highly variable performance of the secretary. Having said this, events were organised by the more enthusiastic members to whom I am most grateful.

The highlight was the Lame Caving Weekend perfectly organised by Alan Jackson. This was a family event and I think the only ones to have a bad time were those that said they were coming but didn't! Hopefully it will be on the agenda again next year.

The second unexpected event was Jane Pulford & Tony Veness's visit from Europe, held at the Waterworks.

Finally the traditional Xmas party barbecue took place to finish off the year.

I'm sure there were other events that I have forgotten.

Thanks for all the support to help make the social activities a success.

Happy to do another year and make use of the Fern Tree 'clubhouse' a few times unless there is someone else desperate to take over.

Electronic Archivist - Ric Tunney

Nothing has changed since last year's report, but I won't cut and paste it in here. Last year, one new person was added to the list of archive recipients. The more the merrier. I wish to stand for this position in the coming year.

Training Officer - Petr Smejkal

This year's report is not something that I could be really proud of. The neglect of my role as training officer was due to me being a family guy and due to some renovations on our little house. Well at least finally we've got an OK bathroom.

And now little more about the training: I checked my photo albums and it seems like I've done only six beginners trips, which would mean that I also organised similar number of SRT trainings. The number of SRT trainings was much less than what I had done last year (~20), nevertheless the number of people that actually seemed to be keen on staying part of the STC is comparable with the last year (actually it might get bigger). Namely there is Zach Brown, Ben Armstrong and also Nirved Upadhyay. Ben and Zach are strong young guys and even a trip with Alan did not break them, so the chance that they will stay with us for a bit longer is quite good. Nirved had his three beginners trips as prospective member, his membership expired but he is keen on getting full membership. He is less fit but he is hell keen. After his first trip I actually recommended him not to try again but he persisted and I could see him improving every subsequent trip.

The last SRT training for this year will happen on Tuesday 23rd of February. There is a new young and fit beginner Ben Gaskell who wants his SRT training and three trips. Hopefully he will stick as well.

Webmaster - Yoav Bar-Ness

Yes, the site is still up and running at <https://southerntasmaniancaverneers.wordpress.com/>!

It is available for any web projects we'd like to work on.

I haven't done too much work on it this eventful year, mostly just uploading *Spiels* and things of that nature.

* Most of the traffic has been accessing *Spiels*, which is a good sign that the publication is appreciated.

* We're still hosting *Southern Caver* and Northern Caverneers' *Troglydte*. They are worth a read.

* In 2015 we averaged about 18 visits per day.

J 19
F 15
M 15
A 25
M 14
J 14
J 18
A 21
S 14
O 20
N 18
D 27

* If you were waiting for some interesting search terms that brought people to the STC site, unfortunately Google stopped passing those on to web stats engines a year or two ago, so that source of information isn't as reliable as it used to be. But since you were waiting for it:

Search Views

janine mckinnon caving	66
southern tasmanian caverneers	56
caving clubs tasmania	12
caving tasmania	8
tasmanian caving club	7
janine mckinnon	6
mystery creek cave	5
janine mckinnon tasmania	4
caving club tasmania	4
stc caving	4
stc	4
wolf hole cave tasmania	4
southern tasmanian caverneers troglodyte	4
caveida	4
stephen buntion	4
speleo spiel	4
growling swallet cave	3
ric tunney	3
janine mckinnon tamania	3
hobart caving club	3
hickmania troglodytes	3
dean morgan caving	3
caving tasmania florentine valley	3
southern tasmania caverneers	3
http://southerntasmaniancaverneers.wordpress.com/spiel/	2
http://southerntasmaniancaverneers.wordpress.com/	2
mystery creek cave tasmania	2
tasmanian caverneers club	2
growling swallet	2
caving at mystery creek	2
albert goede, tasmania	2
tasmamia	2
mystry creek cave	2
squeeze cave	2
janine is serena	2
arthur clarke tasmania	2
underground waterfall australia	2
woolhouse, r. (1983) effects of forestry on caves of the mole creek area	2
niggly cave tasmania	2
hobart caving	2
midnight hole, cave tasmania	2

caving clubs tas	2
janet blanden tasmania	2
caving information on gunns plains in tasmania	2
what animals live in tasmania caves2	
"steve buntion" tasmania	2
midnight hole tasmania	2
"alan jackson" caving	2
midnight hole cave tas	2
used caving ladders for sale	2
forest for sale tasmania caves	2
www.southerntasmaniancaverneers.wordpress.com	1
alan jackson cave	1
northern tasmanian caverneers	1
caverneer.net	1
lune river caves tasmania	1
"linda deer" caving	1
cave in tasmania as big as football oval	1
jennifer and janine mckinnon atlanta ga westminster schools	1
tas cavers	1
ida bay glow worm	1
mckinnon wordpress	1
arthur clarke cave publications	1
greg middleton tasmanian caver	1
caving clubs australia	1
john hawkins salt	1
rolan eberhard tasmania	1
spiel	1
tasmania caving areas	1
prussiking	1
caving tasmania permits	1
matt cracknell tasmanian	1
abby barrows tasmania	1
southern tasmanian caverneers hobart	1
rescue practice dummy	1
riveaux karst + tasmania	1
urk's loop track tasmania	1
midnight hole caving tasmania	1
insulated overalls tasmania	1
caverneers of southern tasmania	1
kubla khan cave mt anne	1
middleton, john and waltham, tony. the underground atlas. st. martin's, 1987. "a gazetteer of the world's cave regions"	1
stephen blanden author	1
hidden caves in tasmania	1
dean morgan climbing	1
tasmania cave club	1
caves tasmania	1
southern tasmanian cavers	1
tasmanian cave matchbox squeeze	1
greg middleton tasmania	1
what plants live around tasmanian caves	1
equipment available in 1970 for cave in rescue	1
tasmania's deepest cave	1
owl pot tasmania	1
tasmanian caving	1
abby browning tasmania	1
deepest cave in tasmania	1
midnight hole cave tasmania	1
caving srt ascent	1
through trip cave florentine valley	1
police caves tasmania	1
cave club hobart	1
deepest cave in southern tasmania	1

beginners luck cave florentine tas 1
 discovery of fraser cave tasmania 1
 tasmania caving 1
 central and southern creek magnesite tas 1
 tasmanian southern caves 1
 lune river tasmania caves 1
 tas caving c 1
 anthony bradley wombeyan caves nsw 1
 day long caving trips in tasmania 1
 house for sale with cave in tasmania 1
 campbell ksw, 1957 1
 newly discovered caves tasmania 1
 tasmanian clubs 1
 gavin brett 1
 greg middleton caver 1
 olaf kaehler 1
 tasmanian cave shrimp 1
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 stephen bunton friends 1
 execution trip report 1
 southern tasmanian caving 1
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 www.voda douat.com 1
 anton lubke caves 1
 phil mackey hobart 1
 ken de trog 1
 arthur cave 1
 stc caving club 1
 steven bunton 1
 lune river tasmania+dean 1
 srt caving 1
 where to get newtrog 1
 tas cave clubs 1
 bats hasting's cave tas 1981 1
 mystery creek cave, 1
 speleo spiel stc 1
 central queensland speleological society incorporated 1
 ida bay tasmania 1
 geofery butt tasmania caving 1
 tasmania caving history 1
 hickmania troglodytes & egg sac in sandstone cave 1
 stephen blanden book on gunns plains in tasmania 1
 southern tasmanian caverneers spiel 1
 caving tasmania club 1
 kubla khan cave tasmania 1
 southern tasmanian caverneering club 1
 geological features of gunns plains caves 1
 caving in tasmania 1
 sts 1
 southern tasmanian caverneers 1
 geoff butt tasmania 1
 mckinnon creek 1
 the mole creek caves by skinner 1
 Unknown search terms

* It's your site, so if you have any ideas or plans, bring it up at the next meeting.

* Happy enough to carry on as webspinner. A few other people know the password so if I fall down a cave it shouldn't be a problem.

Scientific Officer - Stefan Eberhard

As a reference point for preparing this report I looked at the club's constitution, which states the objectives of the organisation as:

3.1 To further caving as a recreation, and speleology as a science;

3.2 To provide training to enable members to obtain knowledge in caving and speleological techniques;

3.3 To conduct investigations and experiments associated with the science, ecology and environment of caves and karst areas;

3.4 To investigate, map and document caves and karst;

3.5 To promote and encourage caving safety and accident prevention;

3.6 To promote friendship and courtesy socially and otherwise, amongst members, land managers, and other users of caves and karst areas;

3.7 To conserve caves, karst areas and karst scenery.

I believe that cave documentation and cave mapping are the essence of speleology and represent the most practical and fundamental contribution that an amateur caving club can make to scientific knowledge. In this respect STC clearly fulfils its objective for scientific investigation, primarily via cave mapping and documentation, as well as trips undertaken by club members with particular geologic, geomorphic and ecological interests.

Experimental research per se is arguably outside the scope of an amateur caving club. I understand that the constitution's emphasis on scientific research is a legacy from TCKRG and the club amalgamation with TCC and SCS.

A quick scan of the last six *Speleo Spiels* (Dec-Jan 2015 to Dec-Jan 2016) showed around 70 caving trips. No doubt there were other caving trips done by club members and not reported in the *Spiel*. This included at least 18 filming trips for the Sixteen Legs project. A breakdown of the trips into broad categories showed that most trips were primarily for exploration and/or survey (37%) followed by recreational / touristic (28%), with filming (20%) and training / maintenance (combined) making up the remaining 15%.

Cave and karst conservation projects, excepting of course those associated with KarstCare at Mole Creek, do not appear to have been much on the agenda in southern Tasmania over the past year, excepting the removal of an old stash from June Cave. Perhaps there is no pressing need at the present time or much club interest in conservation projects? Notwithstanding there is much worthwhile cleaning and restoration work that could be done.

One role of the scientific officer is to "recommend any expenditure of any funds set aside for scientific research." As I understand few funds have ever been set aside for any research projects during the years / decades of the scientific officer role existence, and I must say I find this concept a challenge given the interests and activities of the club primarily revolve around

* Maybe we can get a nice collection of photos from calendar 2015 and then start an annual photo review? Email me a dropbox or google drive link.

exploration, documentation and mapping. In this respect I support the idea of expenditure on equipment (e.g. survey gear, ropes, etc.) that helps the club achieve its speleological objectives, or improves the management of risk involved with undertaking these activities (e.g. rescue equipment).

After 15 years in Western Australia I am really enjoying being home in the island of caves. I am inspired by the current era of hard exploration, surveying and map publication in the *Spiel*. The amount and quality of cave diving exploration is unprecedented. With this level of enthusiasm and strategic persistence major new breakthroughs and connections will continue to flow. Bring on more of the Junee master cave!

I apologise for non-attendance at this AGM due to being interstate. I am willing to stand for this position again, but not for any other positions.

Gearstore Officer - Geoff Wise

The gear store is still there and has a few regular borrowers of gear. Most of the time the gear comes back in a timely fashion.

We have plenty of gear to meet current demands, very occasionally we are short an SRT kit but not enough to warrant purchasing another set. Rope-wise we have enough but some extra mid-sized lengths (25 m – 50 m) would be useful. We should test the ropes this year and I'd recommend retiring some of the older rope and getting a new spool in 2016.

I'm happy for the gear store to remain at my place. Remember not to leave it to the last minute to arrange to collect gear.

Secretary of Friends of Southern Caves

- Chris Sharples

Nothing whatsoever happened this year. Or if it did I wasn't told about it. I suspect that's probably a good thing.

Trip Reports

JF-459 Nameless Spring

John Webb

9 December 2015

Party: Serena Benjamin, Janine McKinnon, Ric Tunney & John Webb

The aim of this trip was to investigate, explore and survey Nameless Spring, which is located at the western edge of the Norske Skog Florentine Valley Settlement Block. If the spring couldn't be pushed far enough to take up the day we had a back-up plan to explore an apparently enterable cave with a confirmed dye trace (Sharples, in press) to a known stream sink. The ultimate aim is to discover and access the master stream cave connecting these two and other karst features in the area. Reality, however, intervened.

We were underway from New Norfolk shortly after eight in the Norske ute with its now lingering but not unpleasant aroma of Banjos coffee. Not surprising really considering the interior doesn't get cleaned very often. We arrived at the Settlement gate around 9.30 and after Ric's hands were well oiled, following recent lock maintenance, we headed in, parked and geared up for the short walk to Nameless Spring.

The water level exiting the spring was quite low - typical summer flow at 25 cm or so in depth - and a welcome sight following around 5 mm of rain the previous day. Wetsuits were worn from the spring and, with Janine and Serena leading Ric and me, we began a fairly roomy but wet grovel in rockfall passage that unfortunately terminated all too soon with a non-enterable resurgence.

The cave was surveyed on the way out at around 55 m with Ric booking and sketching. Serena found a nice suspected bovine jaw for a photo opportunity in the stream not far into the resurgence passage. A half decent spot on the Florentine River bank was found for lunch, after a 100 m zigzag stroll that featured me dropping a leg in a concealed karst feature. It was noted that pack rafting wouldn't be pleasant with the amount of fallen vegetation in the river.

After lunch we drove the kilometre or so to the start of another, largely-firebreak trail and a short 400 m walk to a low flow

level sink. This sink was dry when Jeffrey Prado first looked at it for his dye trace project. Janine was in sink entry mode in a flash and after 5 to 10 minutes Serena followed. I waited another 5 minutes before taking another 5 to suit up and I followed with Ric chilling out on a comfy well-positioned log near the bottom of the doline containing the streamsink.



Above: Boning up in Nameless Spring.

I managed to make it down to around 6 m into what appeared to be rockfall before meeting a small waterfall curtain on a split passage which I wasn't going to attempt without a known way on. It seemed that I was just going to get stuck and very bloody wet. Serena reappeared just at the other side of the curtain to see if Janine had returned following the discussion they had through rockfall from separate access routes. Janine advised Serena that she was looking for a route back to the split at the waterfall curtain.

It turned out Janine had reached the end of accessible passage on her chosen route. On her return she made a false start by initially entering something tight that wasn't the way out. In the meantime I made a modification to the sink entry to enable more amply proportioned (>80 kg) cavers to return to the surface should any other larger folk ever decide to enter. Not long after this both Serena and Janine returned with tales of tight rockfall passage that didn't go.

It turns out the sink is 5 m from JF73 but that is another story for a return survey trip and with the sink passage described as very tight by Janine I'm out as a survey partner. The sink on

the survey trip and the search for the way into the master stream cave of Nameless Spring will continue.

We were back at New Norfolk before 4:30 and had a cuppa and a chat before the Hobart-siders headed off.

IB-10 Mystery Creek Cave

Arthur Clarke

6 February 2016

Party: Ruy Bendixon and Arthur Clarke.

I decided it was time to test my right knee and visit Mystery Creek Cave (MCC), although it was barely eight weeks since I had been given a total knee replacement. Whilst we were driving along South Lune Road, two vehicles parked below Loons Cave efflux (*Resurgence – Effluxes have shit flowing out of them!* –Ed.) and then a little further along a party of about ten or a dozen cavers just starting their walk into Bradley-Chesterman Cave. Driving around the corner and up the former Quarry Road, I could have sworn I was driving along Collins Street in Hobart. It was definitely single lane access only; there were vehicles parked on both sides of the road, above and below the carpark, with smaller cars parked back towards the Benders Quarry gate.

Together with Ruy Bendixon, a local Dover musician and bushwalker who was keen to go caving, I duly signed the Registration Book; I was pleasantly surprised to see that there were very few visitors signed in for “60U” (Mystery Creek Cave underground). It soon became obvious that lots of MCC cave visitors don't register themselves. On the now very dry and mud-free track from the road to the quarry we passed a party of four recent MCC cave visitors still wearing head torches. As we walked through Blaneys Quarry towards MCC, we met yet another group of four cave visitors, including one person wearing just sandals and another person in crocs (both without socks). During our two-and-a-half hours underground

in MCC, we saw another 19 cave visitors including Dave Merritt (from School of Bio Sciences UQ) and Joe Shemesh (Frontline Films and Sixteen Legs cameraman) both photographing glow-worms. There were also five bushwalkers returning from the Southern Ranges, generally with just hand torches visiting the outer entrance or twilight zone. Although most of the other cave visitors ventured further in towards the deep (dark) zone of MCC, all seemed relatively well prepared in terms of having head-mounted lights, but aside from Ruy and me, plus Dave and Joe, none of the tourists had cave helmets; one group of four visitors included two just wearing flip-flop thongs on their feet.

Periodic flooding events are obviously a feature of stream caves in all parts of the world, and Ida Bay is no exception. On the night of Tuesday 13th January 2015 and early morning of Wednesday 14th, Hobart recorded its highest ever January rainfall. Here at Francistown inland from Dover, 95 mm was recorded in my rain gauge at 0900 am on Wednesday 14th January 2015. The following morning another 31.5 mm fell. Given the sudden downpour in southern Tasmania, it was not surprising to see that some flooding had occurred in MCC. The most noticeable effect in MCC was the downstream migration of several large boulders in the main streamway, providing easier stream crossing stepping stone access but also eroding some of the flowstone-floored sections in the main glow-worm viewing chamber and washing out some stream cobbles and boulders at the start of the Walls of Sorrow passage, just downstream from the glow-worm cluster sometimes referred to as the “Map of USA”.

JF-633 Ring Hole

Alan Jackson

7th February 2016

Party: Serena Benjamin, Alan Jackson, Andreas Klocker, Grant Rees, Petr Smejkal

Ring Hole needed ‘tidying up and tying off’ and frankly I was suspicious of this attempt to do it all in one trip. We came pretty close in the end.

Water levels were fabulously low; one could almost stay dry for the whole trip, even in the entrance. At the 37-way junction after all the nasty squeezes Andreas and Petr headed off for the fossil ‘middle pitch’ series that had been pushed on 22 November (Fordyce 2015a). The rest of us commenced a resurvey of the main ‘north extension’ that Pax and co had spectacularly failed to sketch back in July (Fordyce, 2015b). By the time we'd got to the last pitch the other two caught us up. They overtook us and headed into the upstream rift/rockfall, which Steve had pushed briefly on 21 November (Fordyce, 2015a) at the stream junction 30 m down from the last pitch.

We soon reached the junction too, left a nice pink tape for Andreas and Petr to tie back into and then linked into the sump bypass survey from the 21 November trip. I free-climbed ‘Archaeology Climb’ (for the third time now) and popped the

access rope back in for the others. Serena's self-preservation skills set in at the scramble over the free-climb and she returned to help the others. Grant and I soldiered on to the small rockfall at the end of the nice stream passage and then started back, pushing side leads. The first is up a muddy bank on the right (as heading out), which Steve had pushed briefly while I surveyed on 21 November. Grant powered up the smallish muddy passage with youthful enthusiasm while I tried (unsuccessfully) to keep up with a bag and survey kit in tow; the mud was of a particular consistency such that it provided no friction when you wanted it but refused to let you slip when you needed it to. After a fairly low but brief uphill squeeze it opened up a bit, trending up yet more, then flattened off and terminated in a ~5 m drop down to sizeable passage below with a roaring draught at the window. We got excited but had no rope to get down, so we left a long pink tape and surveyed our way back out with the expectation that we'd find the passage from our second lead further back up the Ring Hole main stream.

30 m back up the main streamway, just after a zig-zag, is another passage joining in on the right hand side (again, heading out). I boosted Grant into this and we started wading through the gumboot-eating mud in this fossil inlet. It soon got wider and started to look very much like the passage we had been looking down into earlier, but we could not see our pink tape at all and only found a couple of tiny bits of mud that

we'd knocked down from above – nowhere near as much as we'd have expected to find considering how much we kicked and threw down accidentally and deliberately. Eventually this passage reached the bottom of a stepped pitch, which was not climbable in our state of total mud encapsulation. We surveyed out.

Back in the main streamway, just downstream of the aforementioned zig-zag, we scrambled up the mud bank into the upper level continuation of the main rift (upstream) but as expected this just reconnected into the sump bypass route we'd pioneered on the previous trip. At this stage we were out of leads and Andreas and Petr turned up. I gave Andreas a quick tour of the main passage and the start of the side leads we'd pushed. Their passage had crapped out in dangerous rockfall, but it had been surveyed.

We opted to derig and surveyed in a stream inlet side passage between pitches 2 and 3 on the way out, which terminated in collapse and avens. Grant reappeared as I was derigging the second pitch to say he'd left his dry bag at the top of the tiny third pitch, so pitch two was re-rigged and he headed down swearing at himself. While he did this I investigated a fossil side passage (right wall as heading into cave) between the first and second pitches. It proved to be quite extensive and ultimately ended in a pitch overlooking the cascade between pitches 2 and 3, as well as having a few other pitch options I'd bridged over which probably connect to the side passage we'd

surveyed moments earlier. I didn't feel like surveying this solo so I committed it to memory and headed out.

We all made it out around 5 pm after a surprisingly short but productive day and left us secure in the knowledge that there isn't any gear left in their rotting away while Andreas and I take sabbaticals to the northern hemisphere for caving in the coming months.

The survey data was interesting once it was crunched. It suggests that the two side passages Grant and I pushed are close and probably connected, but there's enough of a gap there which, when combined with the roaring draught, suggests the first one might drop into something other than the second one. The resurvey also identified an incorrectly entered survey leg in the old north extension data, which changed how Ring Hole and Sesame interact at their far ends. The data suggests less than a metre between them in one spot. Goodness knows what the survey error is like, but we can be sure that they're bloody close and the position of the streams in both caves, at these spots, supports this theory. Next job is to push and survey the 1990s Sesame extension while water levels are so fabulously low and have a good poke around from the Sesame side where the two caves are apparently so close.

References:

Fordyce, S. 2015a JF633 Ring Hole. *Speleo Spiel*, 411: 12-15

Fordyce, S. 2015b JF633 Ring Hole. *Speleo Spiel*, 409: 7-8

JF-210 Sesame (and JF-633 Ring Hole)

Alan Jackson

20 February 2016

Party: Serena Benjamin, Alan Jackson, Andreas Klocker, Michael Packer, Grant Rees.

The survey data was in from the last Ring Hole trip (Jackson, 2016) and things looked very good for a connection with Sesame. Grant aborted at the carpark, having realised his trog suit was sitting at home. He spent the day surface bashing, walking up Tim Shea and snoozing in the car. Andreas was being forgetful too, having left his contact lenses at home; he would attempt caving in 100% humidity in glasses ...

The trip to the end of the 1980s extension was uneventful. Andreas abandoned his glasses at the top of the first pitch as a result of impossible fogging problems. This made him half blind instead of totally blind and the Mr Magoo jokes started. The end of the 1980s extension kind of has four levels. The lowest carries a small trickle (which Pax confirmed crapped out very quickly). A short slippery climb just back from this lowest level leads to a spacious tunnel that extends downstream some 30 m past the end of the lowest level. In a couple of spots one can hear a trickle down below, which we had always assumed was the trickle previously mentioned but the new Ring Hole survey data suggested the end of Ring Hole (and it's much larger stream) was right under here. We burrowed and dug a bit in this vicinity but to no avail. Meanwhile, I climbed up to the third level in order to place a handline for the others. After securing a rope I decided to check out the medium-sized side passage Andreas and I had observed previously (but not recorded in the trip report) on our August 2015 survey trip (Jackson, 2015). After cutting some steps in the mud bank I committed to the step across and noted that the fossil passage was indeed an old inlet heading north in the direction of Ring Hole. I followed it for ~50 m until the floor dropped away in front of me and I instantly recognised

the muddy side passages Grant and I had surveyed on the last trip at the base of a ~7 m pitch. Awesome!

I scampered back to the others, called them up and we headed in. Pax rigged a rope from a couple of concrete screws and the connection was confirmed. Pax and Serena went for a tourist. Andreas continued up the muddy crawly thing to the ~5 m drop that had stopped Grant and me previously, while I headed to the start of the second side passage Grant and I had pushed and we confirmed an audible connection between these two passages, as we had suspected. I then dashed up to strip the rope and bolts we'd left in place on the sump bypass (it was no longer of any great use).

Pax and I then surveyed the new connecting passage while the other two derigged in the mud. Following the theme of the day's banter (the name Ring Hole and all that shitty mud can only lead to one conversation topic) we dubbed the connecting passage 'The Perineum'.

Spirits were high and there were a couple of hours to spare so we decided to head up to level four of the area and check out just how nasty the wet crawl to access the 1990s Sesame extension is and maybe survey some of it. Upon descending to the stream it was visibly turbid, which essentially confirmed the theory that this stream is the Ring Hole stream (which we'd just muddled by wandering up and down it 30 minutes before). Serena dragged her backside down to the really wet bit and abruptly stopped. I had a look and understood why. Water levels were about as low as you could ever expect them to be but it looked pretty unpleasant. Pax and Andreas hadn't even seen it (admittedly Andreas probably couldn't focus on it anyway) and they were already espousing the virtues of a return trip with wetsuits. Feeling pretty warm and with two spare dry layers in my bag I figured I'd do a solo recce.

For about 1 m the passage is 300 mm high with 100 mm of that water. A few bubbles and a water-filled trog suit later I was faced with obstacle two: 200 mm high passage for a metre, but

with only 20 mm of water. After this it opens up to ~500 mm high cobble stream passage; almost but never quite high enough to crawl properly. At this point a trechine beetle raced past my face and I had to determine how committed I was to Stefan and his bio-speleological quest. After much swearing and abuse directed at Stefan I dragged my pack up, rummaged around in it and found a sample vial. My bit for science done for the day, I packed it all away and continued on, only to find a de-pigmented aquatic amphipod. Round two of swearing commenced and I went rummaging for a vial again. I then shut my eyes to fauna, ignoring the dozens of symphylans hanging about the place, and continued down the wet grovel. After 15 m or so there was a higher ceiling, a few fallen blocks and I could stoop again, but soon enough it went back to flat out grovelling in the stream. Another 30 m or so on the cobbles came too close to the ceiling and I could go no further. Figuring I'd missed the way on I back tracked, looking left, right and up. At the spot where one could stoop and the fallen blocks were I noticed a narrow draughting slot with an ascending mud slope on the left wall (left as heading out, right as heading downstream). I squeezed through and headed up this in to more spacious passage with mud-covered blocks and a few remnants of 25-year-old Eberhard footprints. It was pretty clear the others weren't going to follow me and do some surveying so I turned around, built a cairn in the streamway at the junction and grovelled out. It was no nicer on the way out and I'd like to retract any derogatory comments I may have previously aimed at Rolan for not surveying this passage when he explored it; using a fibreglass tape and Suuntos in here would be horrendous. After I changed into something a bit drier we made for the surface ... well, three of us did; Mr Magoo wandered off in the opposite direction for a little while.

With Andreas clearly suffering from blindness and Pax suffering from his first decent spell of physical exertion since returning from sitting on his arse eating food all day in Antarctica, I figured it was best if I just shot off at the front and left them to their character-building exit. Serena tagged along with me. At the top of the first pitch I was concerned someone

would step on Andreas' glasses but thought if I moved them or took them with me he'd waste hours looking for them. I decided to highlight them with pink tape but then figured they'd just be interpreted as a survey station then and immediately stepped on or kicked over (in my experience this is what usually happens to permanent survey stations). After enjoying a Cherry Ripe while Serena ascended and packed up her SRT kit the solution became obvious. I placed the empty wrapper on the glasses knowing that even with his eyes closed Andreas can sniff out the prospect of free food so the glasses would definitely be noticed. Much to my delight the discovery of the empty offer of free chocolate by Andreas and Pax went down exactly as I had hoped and a small tremor was detected on the Hobart Uni seismograph as my name was cursed.

Survey data:

The ~1000 m survey loop proved to be about 20 m out in plan and a couple of metres out vertically, so not brilliant surveying but not horrendous either; nothing to be ashamed of. It pushes the lowest parts of Ring Hole east a bit so the connection we were looking for under the end of the second tier of 1980s Sesame extension were never going to amount to anything. Thankfully the little perpendicular connector was waiting for us. The corrected data lines up the 1990s Sesame extension stream with the Ring Hole stream beautifully. The combined data gives a system 2560 m long and 225 metres deep (Ring Hole is the highest entrance, but the JF211 Sesame entrance hasn't actually been tied in yet so it is possible that is just higher than Ring Hole, but I doubt it). Once the 1990s extension is surveyed, and the JF211 pitch series, we should end up with a cave around 3-3.5 km long and 250 m deep. Well done to everyone involved in the Sesame resurvey and Ring Hole push – hard work generates results (sometimes).

References:

Jackson, A. 2015 JF210 Sesame, *Speleo Spiel* 409:8-9.

Jackson, A. 2016 JF633 Ring Hole, *Speleo Spiel* 413:11-12

JF-333 Nanwoon Revisited

Stephen Bunton

28 February 2016

Party: Stephen Bunton, Pat and Tony Culberg, Greg Middleton and David Wilson.

David was the geologist who discovered Nanwoon in 1983 when the Hydroelectric Commission (HEC) tried to find other caves containing evidence of Aboriginal occupation, in an effort to devalue the significance of Kutakina Cave (aka Fraser Cave) on the lower Franklin River, such that the Gordon Below Franklin Dam could be built. It's remarkable that the cave was found at all and what is even more remarkable was that the cave is the only one known to contain human remains, a skull fragment that dates to 7,200 years ago (Goede and Bada 1985).

I visited the cave in August 2014 whilst Andrew Hughes was undertaking his Adventure Class exercise with Bookend Trust (Bunton 2014). Andrew relocated the cave and I was keen to visit it whilst its whereabouts was known, such that it did not disappear from the STC corporate memory. Through Tony's involvement in the Royal Society he met David who wanted a trip down memory lane and I was happy to oblige.



Above: Greg gets into Nanwoon... backwards.

I invited Greg to come along as well. After years on the inside machinations of what, in Tasmania can only loosely be called "the Government", Greg has had his finger on the pulse of all these "developments" and phases in our recent history. I thought it would be interesting for him to visit this significant albeit underwhelming cave and meet the man who put it on the map. It's not Aboriginal land and so it is still on the map.

After securing a key for the West 5 gate from Forestry, that didn't work, we somehow managed to get to the end of the road. (Thanks to the alternative key fairy!) It was a drizzly sort of day. The walk to the cave was uneventful due to us having GPS co-ordinates. It's just too easy and reliable these days! On my last visit I didn't explore the cave to its full extent due to Aboriginal sensitivities and the fact that I didn't want to blunder in and disturb potentially scientifically important bone deposits and suchlike. Greg, who is usually much more sensitive and politically aware with regard to these things, wasn't so fussed about that as the fact that there was Tasmanian cave with a gaping great passage leading off into the unknown.



Above: Pat and Tony Culberg getting that Neolithic vibe in the entrance to Nanwoon.

First David entered the cave's overhanging entrance and peered down the tube to the lower level. To the left, beyond the three impenetrable columns, he spotted the non-human bone deposits. I then grabbed his headtorch and descended the tube that is the only way on. This lead to a small well -decorated chamber where I thought for a brief moment we might find hand stencils but luckily we didn't; that would have opened a whole new can of worms. Greg took lots of photos and then descended to join me and finally David came in the whole way. In the roof of this little chamber was a phreatic tube entering from uphill on the plateau to the south. In the floor was a tight hole down to a section that banked up with water in wetter periods. We observed some more animal bones.

Below the phreatic tube, I squeezed through some formations into another small chamber, which was on the opposite side of

and below the impenetrable columns in the entrance overhang. This is where the main inflow to the cave would have been and amongst the angular cobbles, held together with flowstone there were more animal bones. At the bottom of this little chamber was a second pothole that would flood in wetter periods. The back end of the phreatic tube also connected into this chamber but also extended back into the hillock.

When I last visited the cave I assumed that the Hydro employees had fully explored the cave but David assured me that this was not the case. However, from reading the archaeologist's report (Jones *et al.* 1988) it appears that they fully explored this cave. The section of human skull was removed and studied in great detail, which is good. It was returned to the Aboriginal community and not to the cave, which is bad. The oldest Tasmanian is now gone but not forgotten!

Whilst Nanwoon is a small and underwhelming cave, it is certainly worth some more archaeological and palaeontological investigation if anyone does that sort of thing anymore, or more particularly, if anyone funds that sort of thing anymore and more significantly if the Aboriginal community would ever agree to such a proposal. As soon as I got home I sketched a map of the cave, to supersede the old one (see page 17).

It was an uninspiring and slightly damp trip back to the cars. The leeches enjoyed their day out too, although some of them will experience difficulty in finding their way home, especially those that have moved on to the next world. Gone but not forgotten! Now, leech bites seem to itch for a few days. They didn't used to??

References:

- Bunton, S. 2014 *Speleo Spiel* # 404 pp.11-13. Map p.17.
- Goede, A. and Bada, J.L. 1985 Electron Spin Resonance Dating of Quaternary Bone Material from Tasmanian Caves - a Comparison with Ages Determined by Aspartic Acid Racemization and ¹⁴C. *Australian Journal of Earth Sciences*, 32: 155-162.
- Jones, R., Cosgrove, R., Allen, J., Cane, S., Kiernan, K., Webb, S., Loy, T., West, D. and Stadler, E. 1988 "An archaeological reconnaissance of karst caves within the southern forests region of Tasmania, September 1987" *Australian Archaeology*, #26: 1-23.

(How many blokes does it take to write an academic article!? Ed.)

JF-210 Sesame Cave

Andreas Klocker

12 February 2016

Party: Nat Brennan, Michael Packer, Andreas Klocker

I had been hoping for a long time to re-find the terminal sump in Sesame which Rolan 'for Everhard' and Vera Wong first discovered in the '90s but never surveyed (Eberhard 1995). After all the searching for the elusive entrance to the JF Master Cave downstream of the Niggly rock pile, the location of this sump might be our best chance. Now, after finally re-finding it, I can sum it up in a few words: beautiful and diveable. But this description does not take into account the journey of misery – it makes the Fistula (in Voltera) and Herpes III (in Growling) look like rehab.

Now a bit more detail: Nat, after more than one year off caving due to a visit to her boy in Norway, and Pax, in desperate need for misery due to an extended holiday (some call it work) in Antarctica, and I planned to head past the point where we turned last trip (the wet flattener a short way past the junction to where we connected to Ring Hole) and find the sump. Last trip Alan was the only one tough (or stupid) enough to head through the flattener, which is best described as a wet flat crawl filled with various sized pebbles giving you a chest massage, partially filled with the chilly streamway (water from Ring Hole) for enhanced pleasure. After Alan went through previously (cursing more than usual) he was not convinced my manly chest would fit, so we brought some tools for pebble removal this trip. Surprisingly Pax volunteered to go first to dig (he must have been in Antarctica too long – any memory from previous JF common sense was gone). After only a few

minutes of pebble removal I followed, just fitting through, but because I had minimal wiggle room I got my pack stuck ... but luckily we had young gun Nat with us who ended up pulling two packs through. (I think distant JF memories returned to her at his point in time.)

Once through we had to head up a tight slippery mud hole [insert inappropriate description here] to find much of the same stuff we found before the crawl – MORE MUD! Did I mention it was muddy??? After a bit of searching around we finally found the 13 m pitch Rolan mentioned in his report. At least we think we did – it was the only way on but most marks of previous cavers have been washed away due to regular flooding. And surprise, surprise ... the pitch was tight and muddy! Imagine the Fistula in Voltera after someone had a big shit into it ... and probably recharged with mud every time the cave floods. Once we survived this the cave continued, surprise, surprise ... in another wet crawl. Soon after though, life turned towards the better and the cave opened up and we ran along amazing streamway passage, with several inflows (one of them many times larger than the one from Ring Hole and all of them entering from the left looking downstream, i.e. from the JF202 Tyenna Tomo direction). Sadly it was impossible to follow any of them upstream. Shortly afterwards we found the sump, which looked flat but wide, and I think high enough to fit a diver. It seems to get bigger a metre further in and the bottom is loose so diggable in case we need to resort to it.

Now it was decided to survey out, but due to the wet muddy misery before and increasing cold and the long time it took us to get there we only managed a few survey shots before we decided to head out. (I can hear Alan cursing from Vietnam at the moment.) Muscles were aching by now. After 11 hours underground we returned to the car, and soon after found out that Janine (and Ric) had already got ready to call out a rescue. I'm sure she was sad to miss out coming to join us in the mud!

(Rolan who was the only person who knew the way had just finished a triathlon and I was in the middle of Grace's 21st birthday party!!! Nobody was coming to get you. Ed)

I think gear cleaning after this trip was the hardest cleaning session I can remember. My Petzl Omni is still not working due to mud digestion and I think Alan will be pleased to hear that we might have to get him a new drill. RIP drill, again due

to too much mud digestion, but hopefully Pax the engineer can save it!

So who volunteers to come along for a future dive sherpa mission :)?? Pax already tried to sell it to some of our STC lameland branch, advertising it as: "It's got warts. Really hard, knobbly ones that end up jammed in places you didn't know existed and then glued there with a particular variety of mud that makes Sikaflex look like Clag. You'll love it!" So put your hands up and come along for some character building!

On a side note: On the way down into the cave I discovered that the rope on the longest pitch lost all its sheath due to a rub point...due to multiple mud layers it was hard to see and Pax and Nat went down the rope without noticing it. All I can say is – always check every rope when you descend or ascend, no matter who rigged it or how short or long the pitch! I definitely got quite scared once I cleaned the rope and saw how much of the rope was left (or gone?).



A.Klocker

Above: Every caver's nightmare, prusiking up only half a rope.

Reference:

Eberhard, R. 1995 Recent Discoveries in Niggly and Sesame Caves, June-Florentine Karst. *Southern Caver*, 59: 7-12

JF-459 Nameless Spring, JF-73 and JF-652

Chris Sharples

17th March 2016

Party: Janine McKinnon, Ric Tunney and Chris Sharples.

Previously I demonstrated great (you may say) wit in dreaming up a name for this stream resurgence cave when Rolan suggested I do so on the occasion of it being assigned a JF number. I took this opportunity to return to the cave, this time with Ric and Janine, whose purpose was to check and edit the draft plan they had prepared after a previous brief exploration. That trip demonstrated to Janine's satisfaction that there is no prospect of diving the first sump (if that's the right term – it's basically a moderate sized stream emerging from numerous tight cracks between rock-fall boulders).

John Webb provided transport to this, the main and seemingly only major karst spring in Norske Skog's Settlement Block in the Florentine Valley. He then left us to it while he went off

with some colleagues to deal with some forestry matters. The spring discharges between large fallen blocks in a rock face set about 100 metres or so back from the banks of the Florentine River, which it reaches via a small gully with one or more little karst tunnels hiding the view from either direction. It took us all of 5 minutes to reach the limits of the accessible cave in a chamber consisting of large neatly-fallen limestone blocks with rectilinear passages between them. Whilst a couple of awkward and nasty looking high-level spaces between overhead boulders might yield a few more metres of progress to a small and unreasonably optimistic caver, none of us felt that way inclined.

Instead, we sat and argued earnestly about where we were in relation to Ric's draft cave plan. Some wet and slightly awkward grovelling along short side passages soon convinced us that the draft plan needed a few additions, which were duly made resulting in a version we could agree on. By the time we returned to the cave entrance, John and his colleagues were waiting, and my one-time vision of hundreds of metres of

pleasantly stroll-able vadose stream passage was spoiled by the reality of a thin-roofed stream cave filled with numerous roof collapses. Which come to think of it explains the chain of sinkholes we had already seen extending in the upstream direction on the surface immediately above the stream passage!

Janine McKinnon

Back in December 2015, Ric, John, Serena and I visited a spring in the Settlement area that John and Chris Sharples had found on one of their many wanderings in the area. Chris had called it Nameless Spring because he has that sort of sense of humour. We explored the cave and surveyed it. When I started drawing up the map some weeks later, however, I realised that we didn't have enough detail in the sketch, so we had to return and "flesh out" the drawings a bit more.

Chris had missed the previous exploration of this cave, so he was happy to be along this time to see what was in there. John, with a couple of Norske Skog mates in tow, dropped us at the car park area and went off to do some real work somewhere ... meeting contractors I think. We spent an hour in the cave adding a lot more detail to the drawing.

When we emerged, John and his mates, were back, and we discussed our plans for the rest of the day.

On our previous trip we had also looked at a small depression, with a very small sink. Water had been tricking down this. At the time, John had thought this was JF-73, a cave he and Chris found some time earlier. Chris had penetrated about 7 m before it became too tight, he thought. We couldn't find the tag. Anyway, I went into this small hole and found it went about 30

m, at a guess. It terminated in a small hole about 5 cm diameter, down which most of the water was going. Serena came part way in, just past a squeeze that determined Chris' end point.

It needed surveying, of course, and I realised I was the only caver I knew who could fit in there, was willing to go there and was able to survey. So today was the day to get the job done.

The plan was thus that John, and co-workers, would surface trog looking for other interesting features, Ric would sit at the cave entrance waiting for me and Chris would decide what he wanted to do later.

I had worn my plastic suit as I expected a drowning. I was surprised to find that the cave was dry. This apparently was how it was on the first visit by John and Chris. So the plastic suit was the wrong choice ... again! It snagged on all the sharp rock, tore, and was way too hot.

But to cut a short story shorter, it took me about one hour to survey. Chris joined me half way down, having demolished a shirt and pair of shorts in the process. He had a look, we decided that it was probably too small for him to help with the survey, so he left.

Meanwhile, Ric and Chris had discovered the JF-73 tag. Luckily before they put a new one on the cave I was in, as this wasn't it. JF-73 was about 5 m away, in the same depression but not connected (that we could make).

So the cave I was surveying suddenly became a new one, with a new number, JF-652.

JF-221 Owl Pot Beginners Trip

Petr Smejkal

19 March 2016

Party: Benjamin Gaskell, Petr Smejkal.

I checked my reports and Owl Pot has not been on my list for almost two years! I thought it would be nice to remind myself all the tricky parts of this '70s deepest Australian cave. After the tremendous number of emails that I sent around I got one positive feedback. The only interested beginner was Ben who has done only SRT training and except for that, had no caving experience whatsoever. First I thought Owl Pot might be a bit of a harsh start for a newbie but then I thought if he is really into caving this trip would prove him well.

We took it easy and left Hobart at around 8:30. We got underground at around half past ten. The trip was slow but steady. At the bottom we managed to take few photos, we shared a block of chocolate and then we started climbing up. We got out of the cave slightly after 3 pm.

Ben certainly showed me that even total beginners are capable of trips that would be considered suitable for more experienced

cavers. Next time I will take him somewhere even more serious. He has the guts for it!



Above: "A classic photo next to the waterfall at the bottom pitch" Petr Smejkal.

Other Exciting Stuff

Foreign Correspondent's Report

Milos Dvorak

Hi STC, There is Milos, a participant as STC member through January 2014 - May 2015. It is more than 8 months, what I have been politely, but quickly kicked off from Tassie by government. I did not to say "Hallo" to you since this time, but I watch life of STC through emails STC correspondence.

Fortunately system send me STC emails and I can keep the touch with you. Please do not delete me from your database. I keep a contact with Peter and with some of you. Sometimes I owe an response for a time. I know, sorry ;).

A recent time, most of my emails correspondence regarding STC has been accidentally deleted on my personal email-box, where I have held all emails, but I watch the group correspondence and I will have contacts on most of you. I'll try to reach my older emails though Yahoo email system, but I could not find login and passwords into STC email system, because probably it has been deleted also :))

Anyway, my report now:

Since the time what I resettled back to Czech republic I worked again at my home University here. I have got a contract for a time for finishing my PhD and I am on the way to really finished now. I have to submit ca May/Jun. My caves activities in Czech were slow down, but not fully. I have seen and I have to complete Petr's training officers report. While he was away for annual leave into Czech Republic last summer, he basically continued in his training function. 11.8.2015 he introduce me into Byci Skala cave group and I, He & his little Patrik went into Byci skala cave and I could contacted a few people from this group. It was nice meeting, because this day visited of this group a couple of people who never been there for a months or years so Petr met a lot of his friends and I was easily introduced in this group. Also the first trip in this cave was curious for me.



Above: Milos Caving Czech-style and it looks like Geoff Wise is in on it too!

Before this trip Petr also gave a recommendation of me to a man from this cave group who gave me a contact on another cave group and I have been visited them personally at the end of action which is called "A Drawing". The cave is called Novy Lopac cave. It has curious entrance – ca 40 m just down through well (see attached picture) and next way is just simple follow a stream down and down, which is ideal for simple lost

people like me. It was actually my first contact with caving in Czech Republic (dated 11.7.2015). I have helped them to finish drawing, and we pushed out hosepipes and some stuff. I have been in a good form, after STC training. Also curious was that I have met here 4 cavers from the some village where I have been born (ca 400 km from this cave). It is a faith? :)

My third trip and for now the last cave trip has been done in the same cave (Novy Lopac), dated 12.8.2015. It was an assistance for diver, but there were a lot of people around, so I had just navigated them through this cave and I obtained next contacts for next possibilities for caving. The trip was basically quick, because the diver went just ca 9 m down. There was a narrowing.



Above: Looking towards Tasmania down Milos' Well

I have seen my last demonstrable activity in STC and I was quite surprised when I have seen myself on the title page of *Speleo Spiel* 408 like happy madly baby which survive the worst part of Ice Tube Fallopian Rift after Never Forever. And also It made me pleasure to see my first publications, which has been printed in this sheet - my report from Ice Tube. Unfortunately *Speleo Spiel* has not a required scientific impact factor, but it is the most significant for me.

So end of summer and mostly at the moment I try to reach finish of my pseudo-study and at the moment I have stopped all of my activities except writing. I have a plan to renew caving activities on this summer, after submitting of my thesis. I am glued in Czech Republic for next 2 years, but I hope once I can I would like to visit Tassie and some of Tassie caves again. In the meantime I keep in touch.

Attached are my pictures from my first caving – standing beside to entrance into Novy Lopac cave and a view down this entrance ... somewhere down is Tassie ;)

Many thanks and hopefully see you "soon".

Sorry for self-appointment of myself by function "foreign reporter". It came me nice to say "Hi" to you right at this moment of submitting reports ;)

If somebody will be in Czech republic, do not hesitate to contact of me ;)

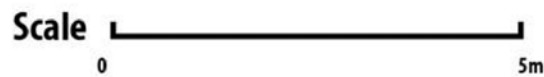
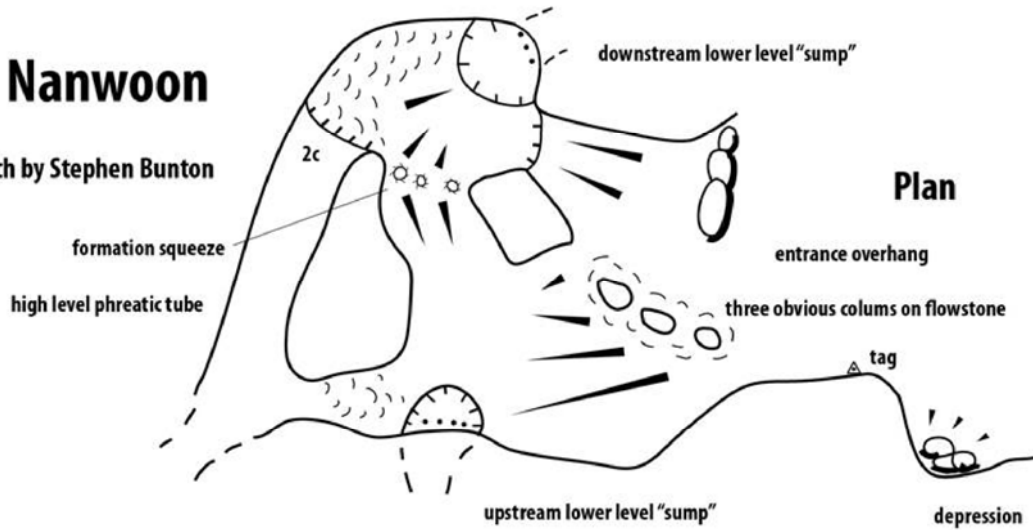
Regards Milos Dvorak

(This report contains more words than Milos spoke during his whole time in Tasmania, so I congratulate him on his effort. Because it was rather quaint, I didn't correct any of it and besides this should serve as a lesson to anyone trying to learn a foreign language... this is what you really sound like. Ed)

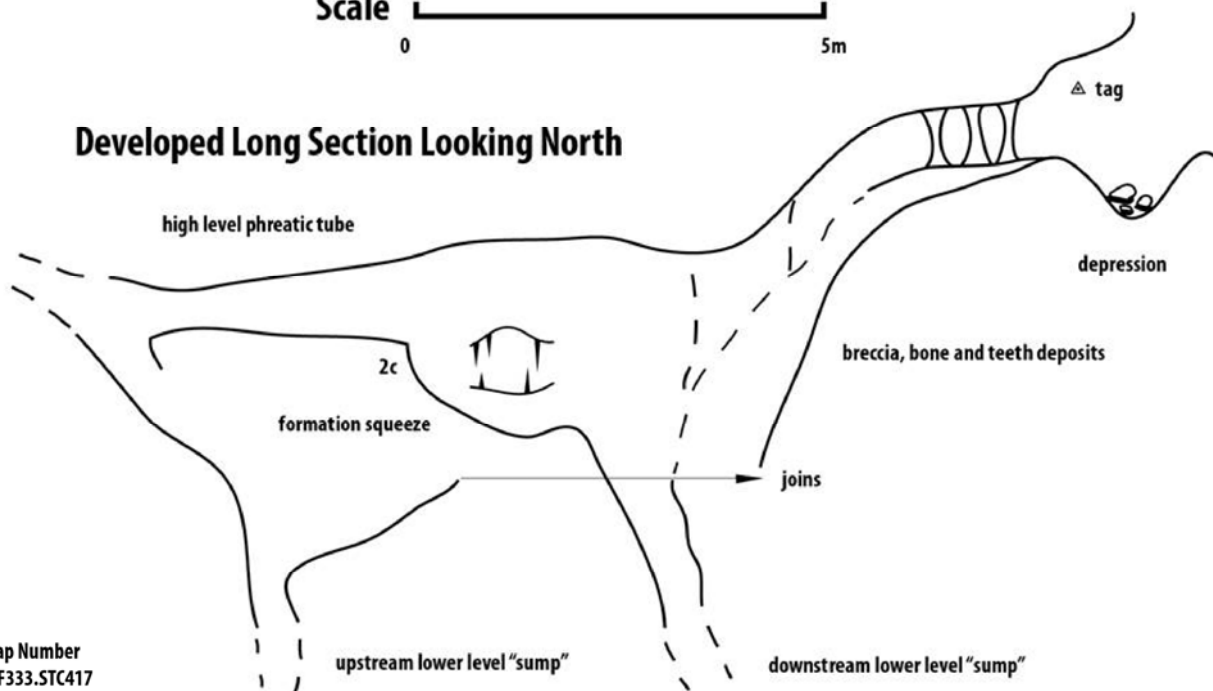
Surveys

JF-333 Nanwoon

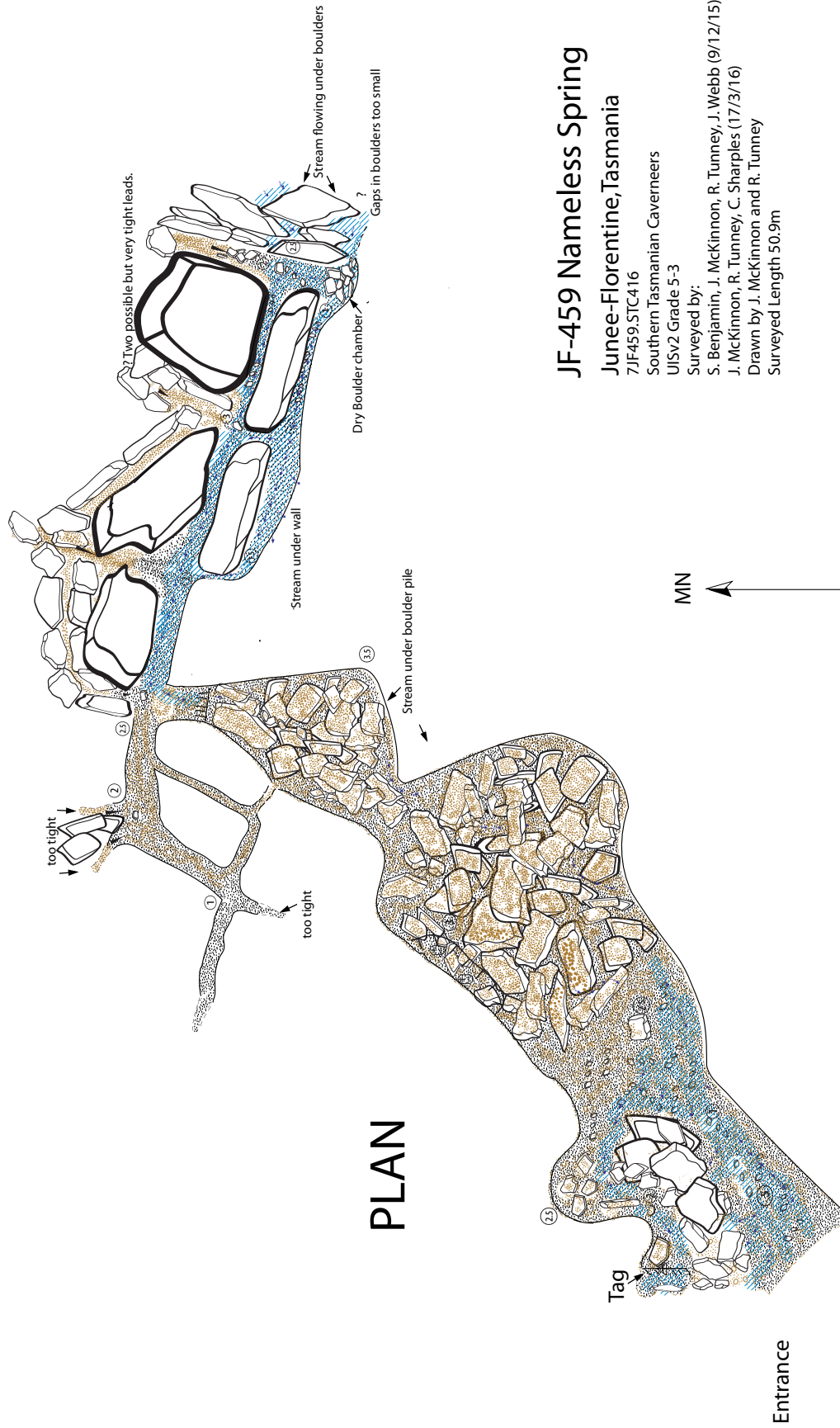
Memory Sketch by Stephen Bunton
28 / 2 / 2016
ASF Grade 2.2



Developed Long Section Looking North



Map Number
7JF333.STC417



JF-459 Nameless Spring

Junee-Florentine, Tasmania

7JF459.STC416

Southern Tasmanian Caverneers

UISv2 Grade 5-3

Surveyed by:

S. Benjamin, J. McKinnon, R. Tunney, J. Webb (9/12/15)

J. McKinnon, R. Tunney, C. Sharples (17/3/16)

Drawn by J. McKinnon and R. Tunney

Surveyed Length 50.9m