Newsletter of Southern Tasmanian Caverneers Inc. ISSN 2208-1348

Front Cover: *Showing why Mini-Martin is such an awesome cave. Photo by Liz Rogers, for those who missed the water mark. Also, although it may seem to be, the whole Spiel has not been copyrighted by Liz.*

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.

Speleo Spiel

Newsletter of the Southern Tasmanian Caverneers Incorporated

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Editorial

I am sure you have all heard about the rescue from Midnight Hole on 13 July. If you haven't, then you weren't in Tasmania then, or you possibly live under a particularly large rock. The southern Tasmanian caving and rescue community did an outstanding job, reaching those of us waiting on the ledge below pitch 4 in four and a half hours and completing the rescue to the helicopter at the quarry in 13 hours from the time of the accident. The seamless collaboration between Police S&R, cavers, paramedics and SES, and the mutual respect visible throughout the exercise, made me proud to be part of this community.

Isabelle - the patient; a caver, nurse, and member of the Swiss Cave Rescue Group - was very impressed with the whole process, particularly the speed with which she was lifted out of the cave.

That's enough of the soppy stuff.

The full report will be published in the next *Spiel*. It will be a whopper. That's why it didn't make it into this one. It is taking quite a while to compile.

The International Speleological Congress is starting in Sydney as I write this column. I am sure we all wish the organisers a successful and enjoyable week. Several of the Northern Caverneers have put in a huge effort. Whilst it may be imprudent, and undiplomatic, to single particular people out, I will anyway. Cathie Plowman and David Butler deserve recognition and praise for carrying much of the load for this national show.

In this issue we have plenty of trip reports to prove that we are a very active caving club. We have had a bit of an influx of young, keen members lately and they are building experience. Here's hoping some of them will hang around to be the Old Bastards of the future. The current Young Guns are rapidly approaching Old Bastards status and we current Old Bastards are getting close to dropping off altogether. New blood is definitely needed.

I have included a couple of new entertainment features. Obviously I have not received enough surveys (none, in fact) to keep me focused on serious caving stuff, and not be distracted into flippancy terrain.

Stuff 'n Stuff

- Track tidying on the Rift/341/Chairman track was undertaken in May by Tony Culberg and his minions. The track is now in very good condition from the KD road to the 341 junction and a minor tart up was completed from that point to the 341 entrance. Nothing was done beyond the 341 junction. Thanks to everyone who helped.
- We seem to be on a track tidying binge. Janine, Ric, Chris, and Amy as moral support (she was full time occupied child entertaining), took a day out of the Queen's Birthday weekend to clear and re-mark the Midnight Hole track. It may have been a bit late for the first lot of bolting horses but it was very fortuitous for the second lot. And these were much, much bigger horses. No-one got lost following the track for the rescue, and now bypassing two big fallen trees made stretcher carrying much easier. Note: The track is not visible from the Mystery Creek track. You still have to find it 30 m up the hill.
- Whilst in the neighbourhood Janine put the new logbook into Midnight Hole.
- The social held at Ric and Janine's on the Monday night after the rescue was very well attended and a great success. Nobody was at a loss for something to talk about. Isabelle was discharged from hospital that afternoon and was very pleased to meet many of the people involved in her rescue in more pleasant surroundings. She also enjoyed meeting other members of the club. We managed to appear to be a big, happy family.
- A rope testing session will be held on 3 September. We haven't had one for a while. They are always great fun and at the same time quite useful. It's nice to know that the rope your life depends on isn't going to fail on you, or to find out which ones might be about to. Alan is organising this funfest and so I am sure details will be provided at the appropriate time. Come along and help, or just watch.
- This assorted group of Tassie cavers recently got together for a trip into Kubla Khan to hatch a rescue plan. This seems a very good idea. Kubla has always struck me as a cave with a high probability of someone needing rescuing sometime. I would have thought more so than Midnight Hole. So far, I am wrong about that.

Height choreographed group photo

Deb Hunter

Trip Reports

Junee Dolines Surface Bashing

5 February 2017

Stephen Fordyce

Party: Andreas Klocker, Stephen Fordyce

On Sunday I was still vaguely keen to do something cave related, but the thought of going back into Porcupine to push the downstream rockpile was too much (must be turning into a soft mainlander?). So we had a surface day instead, checking a few things around/above the Junee Cave area.

There are a couple of massive uninspiring dolines just beyond where the underwater extension of Junee Cave goes to, although we didn't get to check the one right over it.

It was a pretty hard "easy" day, picking our way through chest-high ferns up, down and across steep slopes, and the pickings were slim. We found some small nothingy caves high up on a rocky bluff on the way back (this area had been looked at before, and one cave matched previous attempts), and I spent half an hour wallowing in rotting organic debris (complete with squeal-worthy giant spider at close quarters) at the bottom of a doline, but nothing more. I really wish we'd checked that other doline, because Andreas is going to take a lot of convincing to go back...

Here are the features/areas we visited (and mostly took photos of, if anyone is contemplating visiting again get in touch):

1. JF-259 - Andreas had previously looked at this, we looked again, and although the tag was there, the "cave" was so uninspiring it was a bit surprising it had been tagged at all. It was a tiny crack choked with dirt and barely had any rocks shown - we checked for a draft and none was apparent.
2. Z-74 - having a disconnect between the GPS and the 10m-contour "Rolan's Z-map", navigation was less than systematic and we didn't realise Z74 was another doline Andreas had previously looked at, and the most westerly of the 4-in-a-row. Anyway, they were all one and the same, and the doline looked vaguely promising, although the small entrance in the middle was less than promising. After moving some rotting logs I squished down a crack to gain 1 m of cave, a tiny chamber and sufficient cave crickets/large cave spider to consider adding to the organic debris. There were a couple of other even less inviting cracks and no draft - we moved on.
3. We then checked the other 3 of the 4 un-named dolines next to each other - the topo map was quite accurate with respect to the deep points, and there being 4 of them. They were highly spectacular, epic craters - with nothing exciting at the bottom apart from logs, thick ferns and some scree slopes just to keep things interesting. It's surprising these aren't tagged or designated (or maybe I just didn't do my research again), because they are some ridiculously massive karst features.
4. With Andreas flagging and getting distinctly over it, I followed my nose over the eastern crest of the saddle marking the end of the 4 dolines, but turned around when we lost voice contact. It was relatively open forest and when looking at the GPS plot later, I was heading into the isolated doline shown on the topo to the east of the 4-some. This will have to be checked properly another time - it's right over the current end of Junee Cave, although a long way above. Probably not a great prospect, but the terrain seemed better (less steep, for maybe less choked).
5. We headed back to the quarry and then to the car, staying high, away from the steep-sided dolines (not that the hill was much better) and found a few crummy caves that didn't do much, in an area of previously checked crummy caves. I GPS'd a couple to save anyone else the trouble of checking them (all WGS84):
   If anyone really thinks it's worthwhile, they could be tagged when the final doline is investigated *(Ed: They should be tagged. All reasonable cave features should be tagged. That is why carrying the tagging kit on surface explorations is a good idea. Saves having to go back*).

Looking at "The Through Trip"

Just before wallowing in the rotting debris of Z-74

Photo: Andreas Klocker

Looking into the impressive but depressingly filled-in far eastern doline from our route

Photo: Stephen Fordyce

Cave "C-44" Junee-Florentine

26 March 2017
Norman Poulter

Party: Norman Poulter, Gail ?
(Norman is a past member of STC – Ed)

In an effort to regain lost fitness my ridge-top neighbour Gail had begun a walking program and suggested a walk in the Florentine Valley region. She had surmised that "Timbs Track" would make a pleasant day-trip. She had researched the track and weather predictions via websites and settled on Sunday March 26 2017.

We set off on a cold windswept Saturday afternoon, eventually camping in the large Twisted Sisters carpark alongside the Gordon River Road. The Twisted Sisters Track, and nearby Tims Track, are located 21 km west of Maydena.

Sunday dawned to a thin overcast weather that slowly cleared to a nice sunny day. We set off to first visit the Twisted Sisters (large trees with twisted trunks) before moving along the connecting pathway to the Tims Track. Conservationists had cut Tims Track during the Upper Florentine forestry 'wars' in an attempt to educate the public to the issues of the day. While negotiating the rainforest section my pruning saw came in for a fair amount of use, on the small obstructions anyway.

Out on the buttongrass plain we stopped to admire the view of the surrounding ranges, courtesy of a raised viewing platform (Tiger Valley Lookout), also constructed by the conservation movement, milled from a log left as 'waste' from forestry operations. Continuing on, we passed an offshoot track (Cooks?) that would have taken us to the Adamsfield Track via Churchills Hut, scene of a track clearing party led by Tony Culberg several weeks before. The Culberg party cleared the Adamsfield Track as far as the Little Florentine River.
Churchills Hut was where the very last Thylacine was held after capture.

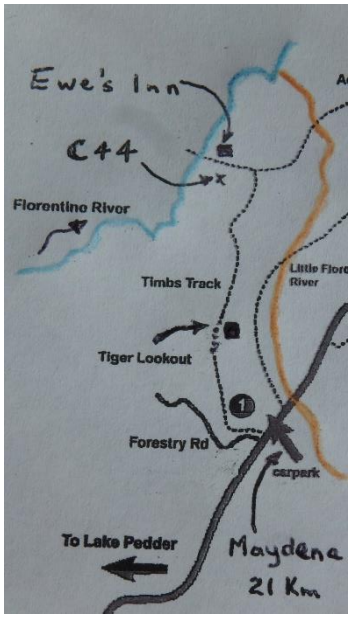
Pressing on through encroaching cutting grass, heathland and a warming day, we eventually re-entered shading forest and joined the Adamsfield Track. My pruning saw came in for a bit more work until we reached the remains of a small 'town' built by Osmiridium miners of the 1920's. Adjacent to this 'town' was a cliff feature that seemed to harbour a small marked cave entrance. There was one restored hut in a clearing labelled "Ewe's Inn" with a large explanatory 'story-board' inside detailing a brief history of the area and hut restoration process during 2014. After taking numerous pictures Gail and I continued on to the nearby Florentine River for a lunch break.

The Tag at issue.
Photo: Norman Poulter

Editor's note: If you look closely at the tag you will see that the "C" is actually a mis-tapped "6". The cave is JF-644 Protestor Cave, tagged by Steve Bunton 7/9/2014 and reported in Speleo Spiel 404.

The river was congested with the forest debris of many floods, which included a bridge where the track once continued towards Adamsfield. Lunch over, we began our return, but paused to allow me to investigate the cave entrance, which is located about 100-200 m from the Inn. A piece of pink flagging tape hung from the cave tag at the entrance to what appeared to be possibly a multi-entrance cave. The large rectangular aluminium tag, attached with nylon-protected nails, was boldly stamped 'C44'. "C! C?" I mused, somewhat puzzled, "I thought we should still be in the Junee-Florentine [JF] region? What could the 'C' prefix possibly stand for? Time was pressing, so after taking a few pictures of the entrance and tag we departed.

So! Who tagged the cave and what does the letter 'C' denote? Does the number 44 mean that this was the 44th feature 'they' numbered, and if so, where are the other 43? Will the answers to these questions forever remain some of life's great mysteries?



Map: Norman Poulter

More Mainlander SRT training: Three trips.

Janine McKinnon

JF-14 Dwarrowdelf

12 April 2017

Party: Stu Halik, Michael Kaczkowski, Janine McKinnon, Garry Mueller.

Unfortunately for you, dear reader, the amount of enthusiasm from the crew for writing trip reports was in inverse proportion to their enthusiasm for actually doing the trips. Thus you have to put up with more beginner trip reports from yours truly, therefore they will lack a new perspective, and detail.

So, this was the first underground trip after training on the Fruehauf wall. We went down to the bottom of the 14 m pitch, and returned of course. All handled the ropework well. No-one had any problems or dramas. I was very pleasantly surprised by the initiative they all showed with passing packs, offering to help with "whatever" and generally being involved in the running of the trip. They are friends at home and all worked brilliantly together.

A short video can be found here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jjc6Ey9P1n0

Michael, Stu and Garry gearing up

Photo: Janine McKinnon

JF337 Slaughterhouse Pot – JF36 Growling Swallet through trip

14 April 2017

Party: Serena Benjamin, Stu Halik, Michael Kaczkowski, Janine McKinnon, Garry Mueller.

As they all went so well on their first trip I decided they were (probably) up for this as their next one. Michael had gone down Growling to Glowworm Chamber with his brother on a cave diving trip to the area a few years ago, and he was very keen to see the whole streamway. The through trip makes for a much more interesting day, in my opinion, so the circuit it was to be.

I was pleased to have Serena along as an experienced "back-up" person. I had faith in the abilities and calmness of my trainees, but an extra hand you know is always comforting on a trip with several beginners.

They all managed the entrance series of tight bits in Slaughterhouse Pot well, particularly Michael who is a big boy (all muscle). His previous experience doing small, tight restrictions on cave dives helped, I'm sure. We moved steadily down the cave with no problems had by anyone. Very cruisy really. They all loved the bottom pitch of Slaughterhouse Pot.

We did the usual quick side trip to Trapdoor stream waterfall before heading into the Windy Rift series. The ladders were no issue and the Windy Rift itself was handled very smoothly. All carried their own bags through (which is MUCH easier than passing packs in there) and negotiated the climb and squeeze with minimal fuss. No belays needed. This I found very impressive from all three of them, on their second only caving trip ever, remember.

The trip up the streamway was smooth and, again, no belays were required on any of the climbs.

This has to be one of the smoothest, easiest and most "no fuss" beginner trips I have ever done on this circuit, and I usually don't take anyone through unless they have done quite a bit more caving.

Here is a short video I took:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PdANTf3n22c&feature=share

JF-4 Khazad-Dum (KD) - Serpentine Route

16 April 2017

Party: Stu Halik, Michael Kaczkowski, Janine McKinnon, Garry Mueller.

The last trip was to do a route I haven't been down for quite a few years. I thought they (and me) would find it fun, and interesting vertical practice for them. I had rigging notes but, as it turned out, I didn't remember the route all that well. Not much at all, to be honest. Still we found our way down and back, so that's all good.

The first pitch has a Jeff Butt installed rebelay. I couldn't reach it. I tried for 10 minutes. Finally, I asked Michael (190 cm tall) if he wanted a supervised lesson in putting in a rebelay. Luckily for the progress of the trip he did. He reached it depressingly easily. The others had fun managing this very offset rebelay, but they all did (with me sitting on the ledge and giving guidance, where needed).

Progress down the rest of the route went uneventfully, however it was all slower and longer than I expected. We had planned to join Ric for dinner in town that evening so we did have a bit of a time limit. However I also had the objective of getting to the main KD stream, and walking back up to the waterfall, if everyone was keen, so we kept heading down. We reached our objective about an hour later than I had anticipated.

The trip back up went smoothly. They all managed the first pitch rebelay well, and Michael took it out very efficiently. Michael and Garry had their own (brand new) SRT kits and some problems were had with Crolls not feeding smoothly. This had happened on the previous days too. I even took Garry's for that first pitch to see if it was something he was doing, and no it wasn't. Hopefully more use, and a little tweaking of their kits, will fix that problem.

We made it back to Hobart for the Restaurant order deadline of 8pm, albeit without getting to go home for a shower first.

Video: https://youtu.be/cy7IoCaEOR4

IB-38 Milk Run and IB-8 Mini Martin

29-30 April 2017

Alan Jackson

Party: David Bardi, James Barnes, Alan Jackson, Gabriel Kinzler, Liz Rogers, David Rueda-Roca, Lachlan Shore, Sandy Varin.

A VSA/STC Victorian Branch weekend jolly to Ida Bay. I figured that if I was going all the way down there to show them where the entrances were that I should drag a beginner or two along and get some vertical caving on their CV.

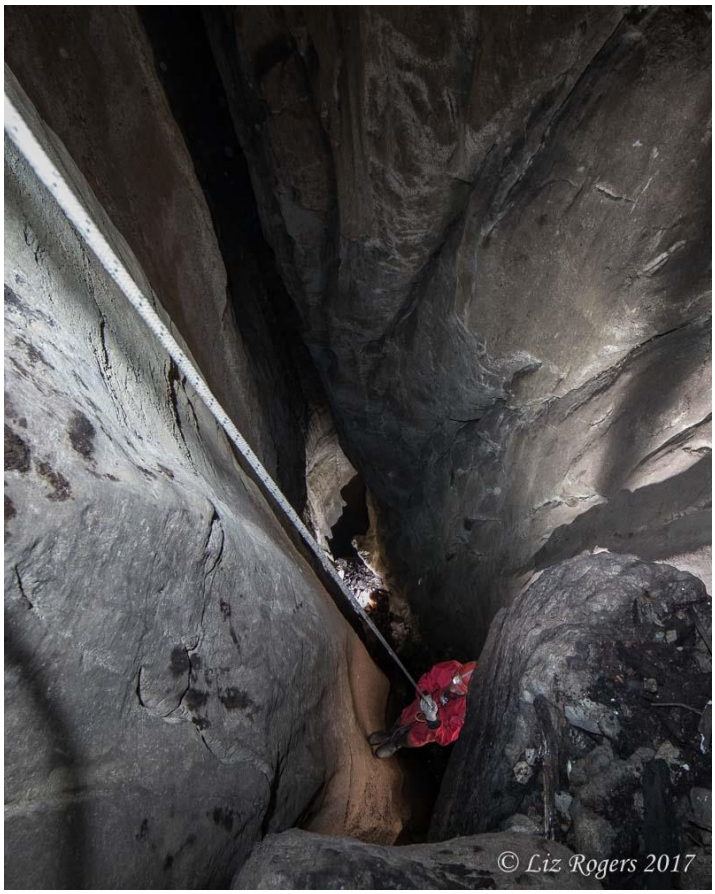
By the time the interlopers flew in, got a car, went to the supermarket, had a second breakfast at Huonville, checked into their accommodation at Ida Bay, sorted kit at the carpark then walked to the entrance(s) the best part of the day was gone. Some went down Mini Martin, others went down Milk Run. James, Gab and I shadowed them on the first five pitches of Milk Run then beat a retreat.

The next day they swapped caves and derigged. I understand fun was had by all (so there's something to work on next time).

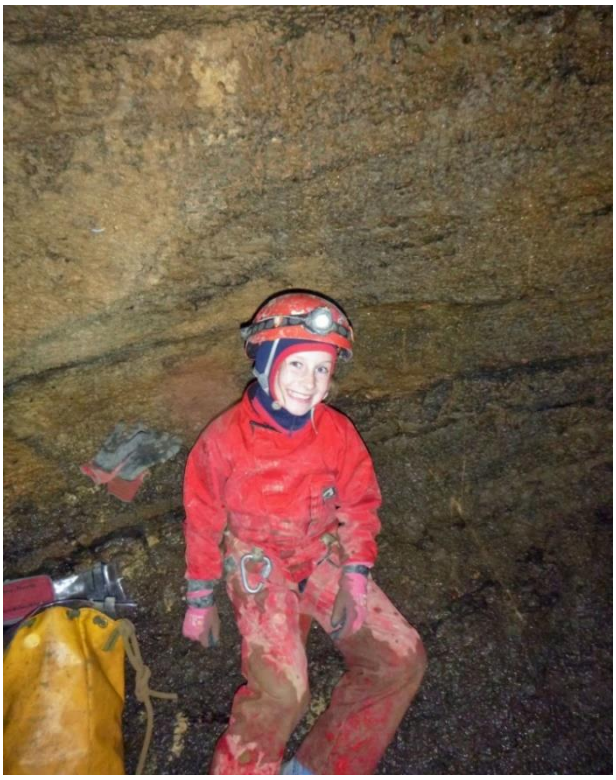
Mini Martin aerobatics

Photo: Liz Rogers

David Bardi looking cool and collected (in Mini Martin).



Why you have to do Mini-Martin at least once in your caving career.



So cute, and capable too. She picked up one of the two from her father. Photo: Gabriel Kinzler

JF337 Slaughterhouse Pot – JF36 Growling Swallet through trip

13 May 2017

Alan Jackson

Party: James Barnes, Alan Jackson, Anna Jackson, Gabriel Kinzler, Nat Pausin, Chris Sharples

It was time to see if James, Gabriel and Nat would come back after a real caving trip (i.e. one with mud, water, exposure, loose rock, tight bits, free-climbs etc.). Anna was the only one with problems in Slaughterhouse Pot, being considerably too light to make any progress on the stiff fat rope and unable to open the very stiff redirect on pitch 2. We all got down eventually, just a little slowly.

Windy Rift caused a few raised eyebrows but with a belay everyone made it through. Growling had more water in it than I thought it would and the usually dry climb option on the first of the three proper climbs approaching the entrance proved to be a straight out deluge (something has moved and is directing water into a different spot). I might have to go back to using the short climb with the slot option there (*Ed: That's what I do now)*.

No one cried and no one died.

JF 387: Surveying Porcupine Pot

13 May 2017

Petr Smejkal

Party: Serena Benjamin, Andreas Klocker, Petr Smejkal, Al Warild,

Al Warild came down here to participate in the cave rescue exercise organised by Deb Hunter. Unfortunately for the exercise, Deb changed plans.. Fortunately for us Al was already here and keen to go caving in the JF. The original plan by Andreas was to go for three days down Niggly. Anyhow, plans changed over the week due to different reasons and we went for a day trip in Porcupine Pot instead.

In Porcupine we had unfinished business from a couple of months ago when we discovered a pitch at the top of the rockpile in the chamber behind the wet crawl. We expected this pitch very likely goes nowhere but it was worth checking.

The trip down went well, water levels were low and we did not get extremely wet. We climbed up the rockpile and Serena started rigging the pitch of interest. When she got down we followed. The pitch was about 15 m deep and the bottom was filled up with rocks. There were a few cracks that all choked off eventually. We had expected that but still it was a bit disappointing. Before the climb up we had lunch and a bit of chitchat about the upper parts of the pitch. From the bottom, we had a chance to have a look into cave that was impossible to see from the top part. We all agreed it seems like there might be another pitch but the access seemed difficult and would require lots of bolting in some seriously unstable rocks. Al, Serena and Andreas started climbing up and doing a survey of what we discovered today and few months ago. I climbed up last carrying the cave pack. I took my time, there was no need to hurry, the mapping was going to take a bit and I didn´t want to freeze to death. While climbing I was checking the difficult climb we discussed while having our lunch. Then I realised there might be a bypass to it. When I got off the rope, I went to check a relatively simple climb that got me into a bit of squeeze crawl. When I got through it, I was at the top of where we were looking from the bottom and yes there was another pitch! Way more promising!

I went back and asked Andreas to follow me with rigging gear and rope. We rigged the top part of the new pitch but the rope we had (25 m) was about 10 m too short. At least I descended low enough to confirm that the pitch goes. This was an exciting discovery. By the time Andreas and I left the pitch Serena, with Al, was finishing the mapping. Al was using his PDA to draw the map and was able to confirm on the spot that the pitches and the rockfall are parallel with the main stream way. The bottom of the pitch that Serena rigged was about 18 m above the stream. The pitch that I rigged with Andreas wasn´t part of the survey so we will need to go there again soon.

When we got out of the cave there was still light. The next stop was our place where Lucy made tortillas for dinner.

H8 Wolf Hole

27 May 2017

Alan Jackson

Party: Patrick Eberhard, Kerrin Huxley, Alan Jackson, Anna Jackson, Gabriel Kinzler, Emily Sheppard

My year of living generously (with time when it comes to beginners) continues. A last minute permit was secured (thanks to Shane Burgess at Parks) and a motley crew assembled. The cave was where it was the last time I went there (about ten years ago). Patrick was given the job of rigging and instructed to install all three rebelays (good practice for his rigging and good practice for the beginners' SRT skills). I supervised Anna and Emily from a separate rope.

Route-finding to Lake Pluto was left to the others and as a result we checked a lot of dead ends. We occasionally cheated and consulted an A3 version of Matt's wonderful map. Lunch was had at Lake Pluto while Emily delighted us with a few tunes on her viola. I think it was my first stringed instrument underground experience. It was quite novel. I have made a mental note to get Emily's rope skills up to doing a Big Tree Pot trip so we can sample the acoustics on the 90 m pitch *(Ed - Now that would be a truly awesome experience. I book my place now!)*.

Everyone passed on getting wet and seeing beyond Lake Pluto. Instead we shot up Hells Passage (Cub Hole) area as I'd never been up there. Interesting. We returned to the entrance via the A-Mazing route and then the skinny passage option for the next bit. I was interested to revisit the gate Rolan, Matt and I installed to see if it had been improved. Indeed some more work had been done and despite attempts I could not pass it. Anna on the other hand …

Progress out of the cave wasn't too bad, with the multiple rebelays allowing lots of people to move at the same time. The weather was turning for the worse as we exited but we escaped it mostly. Anna was kind enough to fall asleep on the drive home for half an hour or so which gave everyone a chance to escape the incessant earbashing they'd received the rest of the day. The child talks significantly more than her father.

Emily adding some culture to Tassie caving - at last

Photo: Gabriel Kinzler

JF 387: Exploring the potential of the pitch recently discovered at the bottom of Porcupine Pot

27 May 2017

Petr Smejkal

Party: Stefan Eberhard, Stephen Fordyce, Andreas Klocker, Petr Smejkal

There was a bit of discovery on our last trip to Porcupine on Saturday 13th May. This trip was organised by Andreas and the other party members were Al Warild, Serena Benjamin and myself. For more details read through the trip report but for the introduction purposes of this report I would like to mention that we discovered a new pitch that seemed to have a potential to bypass some of the nasty wet crawls and possibly open some new parts of the cave.

The purpose of the trip on Saturday 27th May was to explore all the potential of the newly discovered pitch. The members of the party were Andreas, Stephen, myself and also Stefan who was at the discovery and early survey of Porcupine Pot but hadn't been down there since. From the last trip we knew the pitch had potential to crack 30 m, so to be on the safe side we packed a 60 m rope.

The trip started really well, on our way down Stefan was talking about the original rigging details and to be honest it gave me a bit of goose skin. I am surprised that those old school guys still walk, stuff they did was more than just bold (*Ed: you had to be there but I spent a lot of time very scared*). I am glad that we have more rope than they used to have back in the 80's. The stream at the bottom was reasonably low, which is always good news (chance to keep your back dry).

When we reached the new pitch I started rigging it. The pitch is massive, good solid limestone with an opening into a horizontal corridor in the last eight vertical meters. I was stoked the corridor we discovered was untouched, and it is a large cave down there. The place was a junction of a few little streams that were almost dry at the time. I suppose the pitch might get a bit drippy in wet seasons and there was another stream coming from the north. While the other party members were descending the pitch I went to have a look up the north-heading corridor but it went for ~50 m and ended up in a vertical shaft and rockfall. It might be worth a revisit but I could not see anything obvious. By the time I got back Stefan was already exploring the south-heading passage. The corridor is filled up with some big boulders. While the others were progressing at the top of the rocks I was trying to find a squeeze in between. Stefan was the first who noticed the streamway, it was about 6 vertical metres under where he was. As I tried to find my way through the rock fall I was the first who hit the water and the first thing that I noticed was a blue ribbon with "TCC survey station" written on it. In fact the spot where I hit the stream was the place where the first explorers entered this part of the cave 25 years ago.

So it turned out the pitch we discovered is a very long bypass if you don't want to get wet crawling through another rather unpleasant roof sniff. To be perfectly honest this was a bit of a disappointment. Anyhow we spent another couple of hours trying to re-explore stuff that was visited last time by members of TCC 25 years ago. Apparently our survey techniques have improved a lot since then - we found three survey stations all labelled as "TCC survey station". The 25 years gap between now and then definitively proved that it is worthwhile to number your stations. Just joking Stefan ☺.

So that was it. We were trying to push the rockpile at the end but no matter where we started the holes between rocks always led back to where we came from. There was some good decoration for JF though, even some gypsum. The last place we looked at was the main stream under the terminal rockpile. Again it ends up in another horrible wet crawl (Porcupine typical). The new generation of cavers is a bit softer than those guys who discovered the cave 25 years ago so we decided not to go there this time but return later, sweating hard in 7 mm wetsuits.

As a last thing before our return Andreas took out his PDA and Alan's Disto X and fairly quickly mapped the newly discovered parts. It was another long, freezing cold and wet day in JF, but we will go back soon and try to push the final wet crawl.

JF268 Pooshooter –

12 June 2017

Alan Jackson

Party: Alan Jackson, Andreas Klocker

It had been 13 years. It was time to do some digging.

Drizzle, a lot of gear between two people and a poorly marked track in desperate need of clearing made for a desperately unpleasant slog up the hill. We made it, just.

Andreas enjoyed learning how we used to rig caves before cordless hammer drills became de-rigueur. He'd never seen so many natural anchors used.

We spent a good five hours at the coal face doing acrobatics and interpretive dance in a confined space. Favourable geological conditions allowed about 1.3 m of progress. If the wrecking bar had been taken into the cave instead of being left at the entrance then conditions would have been even more favourable and I wouldn't have had to say 'gee, the wrecking bar would be handy about now' two-hundred times. The echoes in the big new pitch were encouraging. Spare batteries wrapped in black neoprene are easy to unintentionally incorporate into spoil dumps.

We left the cave rigged and only removed water sensitive digging materials from the cave. The slog down the hill in the dark was almost as bad as the walk up. We saw bits of the track at times (but few of the bits we'd seen on the walk in).

Phase two of Pooshooter's de-constipation will happen soon and hopefully phase three won't be required or will only be a short treatment. I look forward to poking my head out over the draughting void before year's end.

JF223 Tassy Pot

14 June 2017

Ben Armstrong

Party: Ben Armstrong, Patrick Eberhard, Gabriel Kinzler

The team left Hobart at a leisurely 9 am and arrived at the entrance at around 11:30 am.

We needed a while to recover from the arduous 15 metre walk from the car. There was some minor faffing at the top of the entrance pitch in order to keep the new, pearly white 109 m rope out of the mud, but after rigging a redirect on a dubious piece of vegetation we were away. The first two pitches proceeded without incident, however on the third (18 m) pitch the rope (we were still on the first rope) ended a few metres off the floor. We did some rejigging and got the rope down to an acceptable distance from the ground, but ended up eliminating all the slack from pitch two in the process. Pat rigged the 70 m pitch below Goodbye Chamber.

We contemplated doing the final passage/crawl, but decided against it due to lack of motivation, general softness and desire to maintain the relative cleanliness of our trog suits.

On the way back up Gabriel naïvely offered to carry extra gear as some kind of weight training exercise. Pat and I were more than happy to oblige. We were forced to re-group at the base of pitch two so that the previous rejigging could be un-jigged before ascending. We arrived back on the surface just before dark, after almost 5 hours underground. All in all, it was a fun, fairly painless trip which taught me a valuable lesson about the importance of stingy rigging (*Ed - You obviously weren't caving in the era of Jeff Butt (JB) rigging or you would have learnt that lesson on your first JB trip*).

Modern metrosexual cavers, everything shiny clean, including the rope.

Photo: Gabriel Kinzler

JF 387: Splashy splash trip in Porcupine Pot

17 June 2017

Petr Smejkal

Party: Patrick Eberhard, Andreas Klocker, Petr Smejkal

Our last trip ended up with a bit of a fiasco when we connected the new pitch with passages discovered 25 years ago. Oh well, we shook off the disappointment and decided to go down there again. This time we planned to follow the streamway as far as it goes. Stefan was the only one who tried to follow the stream on the last trip and, from what he said, his memories were a bit cloudy, so we thought we should repeat his attempt but wearing warm wetsuits (our generation is too spoiled).

The idea was to get to the wet crawl comfortably wearing regular caving clothes and then change into the 7 mm wetsuits and spend most of the time splashing in the water. Fraser lent us his camera so we were going to make a few videos of this.

As planned, we put the wetsuits on before the cave gets wet. The water level at the first wet crawl was low and wearing a 7 mm wetsuit makes this crawl difficult and very, very warm. The real fun begun at the second wet crawl, this one is a proper roof sniff followed with a bit of a climb to get to where the cave opens up again. It is about five minutes' walk to get to the terminal rock pile. At the rockpile we stayed in the stream and were splashing forward. Another roof sniff, bit of a crawl and bent back walk got us into a chamber with stream on the left side and rockpile on right. At first, we decided to follow the stream. After a while it got very wet and squeezy. Patrick was pushing the front hard, there were two sniffs where we had to breath-hold to get through. Eventually we got to a spot where the passage got too narrow. We did a bit of digging to open up a bypass but Patrick was able to follow it just for few more meters until it became impenetrable for a human body.

On the way back we stopped at the last rockpile we found. Interesting was the pitch black floor of the dry river bed that was heading just under the rockpile. I managed to find a way through and it opened up into straight back walk. Andreas and Pat followed, together we got into an open chamber closed with another rockpile (we should start numbering them, this is like rockpile number 4, it becomes confusing right?). The corridor was continuing under for a little while but eventually it chocked off. Pat discovered a very narrow crawl with a significant draft. It went through loose rocks and it took us a fair bit of time to build up the courage to push it. I managed to move a few rocks that opened the crawl enough to fit through - I slipped down but the passage become uncomfortably narrow and I could not push my fat ass through. That´s where Pat pushed again and managed to find the riverbed. He was able to push it for another few meters but it got too narrow even for him. When he got back, he reported the draft was significant and that it might be worth opening it.

After that, we started heading back. We believe this passage might be an overflow, there were a few flooding marks and some leaf debris but no other signs of water. We need to get back with a disto and find out more about the orientation.

That was it - we were exhausted and ready to start splashing out. We managed to get some videos for Fraser and discovered some new stuff - not a bad result for another day in Porcupine.

JF37-Pendant Pot

24 June 2017

Janine McKinnon

Party: David Bardi, Serena Benjamin, Gabriel Kinzler, Janine McKinnon, Grant Rees, Ric Tunney, Sandy Varin.

Grant politely listening, Serena's probably heard it before. Photo: Gabriel Kinzler

Winter had arrived, finally, and on the day we were going caving. There was snow in the trees as we drove over The Gap and the temperature at the car park at 9:30 am was 2˚C. At least it wasn't raining, just a light mizzle.

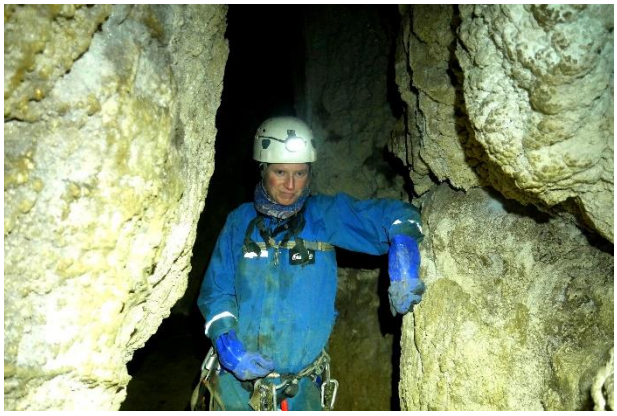
Once at the cave entrance we sorted ourselves into order and I started up the entrance pitch first, with Sandy close behind. It didn't take long to get to the first (down) pitch but then progress stalled somewhat. I took ages rigging the pitch on the naturals. I won't bore you with details but finding a good back-up point, getting the right tape length, changing my mind several times, were all prominent players in the saga. Eventually I was off and away, and I headed down cave to find Pandemonium Rift whilst Sandy came down the pitch. It was reasonably close to where I remembered. A couple of small cairns as you start into it helped with navigation.

I rigged the handline down the rift and Sandy and I made our way to the top of Pel Mel, where we waited for a while for someone else, and the rope, to arrive. Then, of course, we started a small queue happening as I rigged the pitch. This pitch has 5 bolts; 2 sets of two and a hanging rebelay. The bolts are Thrubolts and the hangers were removed on the last trip, so I had to put them back in. I think my poor fingers are getting a bit too old and arthritic for this sort of fiddly job. At least I didn't drop anything. I was quite proud of that, and somewhat surprised.

Whilst I was rigging the pitch head Serena arrived and announced she was going out. I then discovered Ric hadn't made it past the entrance climb up. Attrition was starting to hit hard, and early. The rest of the party were still keen to progress downward though, so on we went.

Ultimate Man and Boltezar were rigged much more quickly and we remaining few (well, 5 anyway) all found ourselves looking at the invitingly clear, wide, spacious sump that leads to Growling Swallet 3 hours after we started in. The line is still intact heading away under the lip of the passage.

We went for a quick look at the sump on the other side, which has the line tie-off securely attached to a knob of rock, and nothing else. The dive line itself has disappeared. This is a significantly less scenic sump. It is quite wide, with clear water, but much shallower. Still, it doesn't look desperate either and has only been pushed once, to my current knowledge, way back in the day. A bit of research is on the cards here, I think. I need a project to investigate. Getting dive kit to there wouldn't be too hard, IF it seems worthwhile.



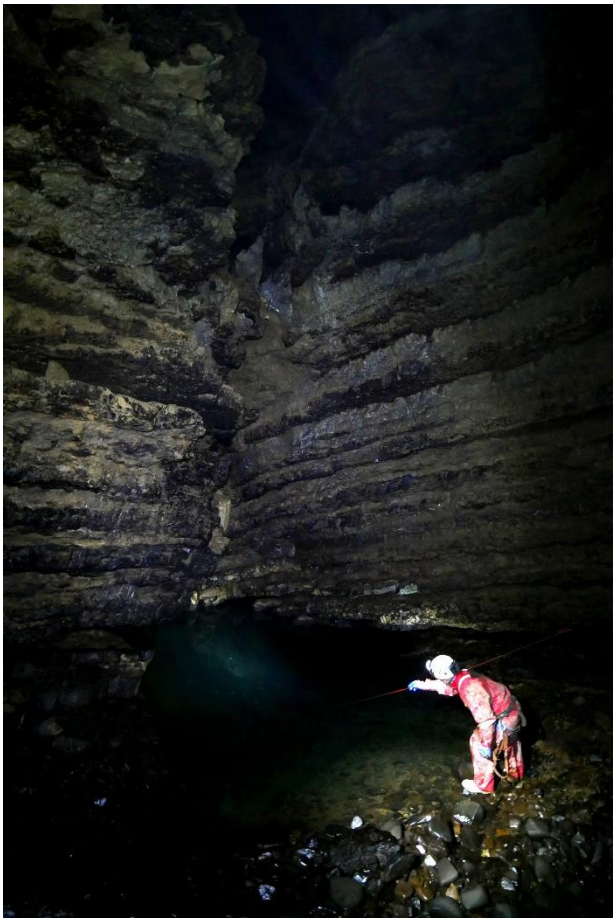
Serena striking a cool pose. Photo: Gabriel Kinzler

Having mused and enjoyed the ambience to our fill, we discussed the order of egress, and Sandy and David volunteered to de-rig, so Grant headed up, followed by Gabriel and then moi.

All went smoothly until Gabriel was climbing up Pandemonium Rift on self belay. He got his packline caught under a projection of rock, and then his croll jammed because he kept climbing up until the pack was very taught. He was unable to extricate himself so I climbed up to free his pack. This slowed our outward trip a bit, particularly as we had also decided that each person would climb up the rift with all other down gravity party members staying back at the start of Pel Mel, and the climber would not call clear until up the self- belay rope. This was to minimise the risk of the down cave party being hit by falling rocks. Pandemonium Rift is very aptly named and the supply of rocks waiting to hurtle down has not reduced much over the years. Probably because the cave isn't done very often.

No other dramas enlivened the exit and we were all out and starting the walk back in the freezing cold by 6 pm, after something a bit more than 6 hours in the cave.

We found Serena and Ric rugged up to the eyeballs and shivering in our Subaru with the heated seats turned on and occasionally running the motor for the car heater.



Pendant Pot/Growling Swallet sump

Photo: Gabriel Kinzler

Points to note:

- Sandy reported the rope on pitch 5- Ultimate Man- was damaged when she prussiked up, with the rope cut almost to the core. Obviously there is a bad rub point. It has not affected the rope on the previous couple of trips for some reason but it can't be left that way. The next party needs to fix this. It is about half way down the pitch.
- The hangers have all been left in-situ. They are stainless steel and should last many years. The bolts themselves are in excellent condition, from visual inspection. There are white plastic markers behind the hangers, to aide in spotting them.
- Ric replaced the old fixed rope up the entrance climb with a reasonable quality second hand one from the gearstore. He then used the old rope as a safety/hand line off the top of the pitch. This is a nice improvement as it has always been a very exposed climb on and off at the top.

Now this is taking colour coordination to extremes.

Photo: Gabriel Kinzler

JF221 Owl Pot

25 June 2017

Alan Jackson

Party: David Bardi, Alan Jackson, Anna Jackson, Sandy Varin

Sandy and David were looking for company and Anna was keen to bottom Owl Pot so we rugged up and braved the forecast. The previous day's snow had melted and the cave was at about 6 on the moistness scale. Pitch two was splashier than preferred but bearable. The last pitch was pretty noisy, with the waterfall pounding away. Sandwiches and race cars refuelled us and we about-faced (S&D's flight had been moved from 9 pm to 6 pm so we didn't have time to smell the roses).

Anna and I moved out through the cave slowly but surely (1.3 m tall people encounter a lot more obstacles than 1.8 m ones do) while the others derigged. At the two small climbs below pitch two I raised an eyebrow at the volume (and colour) of the water cascading down them. Hmmm, a little rain might have fallen; pitch two was going to be unpleasant. We were now at moistness scale 8.5 and this was going to be a good character test for the lass.

I headed up first and while Boulder Jenga didn't enter my mind I was beginning to doubt if Anna was going to tolerate this. It was awful all the way to about 5 m from the top. I stayed about that far below the top and installed myself as a human redirect so Anna would only have 15 m of horror instead of 25. She arrived with frozen hands and a pronounced scowl on her face a short time later. I can't find descent waterproof kids gloves. Amazingly she was dry inside her suit though (no hood but a neck muff had prevented the old 'down the back of the neck flow'). Chirpy and cheerful we continued up and hid inside the entrance, out of the rain and the frigid outside air, for the other two to appear shortly after.

Anna's harder than I thought. She'll be hauling tanks for Andreas before long.

JF-37 Pendant Pot Rigging Notes

P1 (+7 m) Climb; rope in situ.

P2 Penthouse (18 m)
23 m rope
Backup from bedrock knob 1.5 m above alcove on RHS with 4 m tape. Y-hang from jammed boulders 1 m above drop RHS & from bedrock at head of slot at floor level; 2 tapes, one 3 m.

P3 Pandemonium Rift (15 m)
25 m rope
Free climbable but self-belay rope useful. Small tape wrapped around projections above rift, immediately below constriction, with backup to multiple chockstones above restriction. When climbing up, start from extreme right and climb diagonally left.

P4 Pel Mel (29 m)
60 m rope
Y-hang from 2 bolts at pitch head, 3 m along ledge. Rebelay from 2 bolts at -5 m, offset 2 m from direct fall line. Rebelay from bolt at -15 m, below obvious ledge (and 50 cm below old spit).

P5 Ultimate Man (19 m)
25 m rope
Naturals at start of restriction before pitch head. Rebelay on bolt at -5 m, below ledge.

P6 Boltezar (22 m)
28 m rope
Tape around natural RHS as traverse line over pool. Rebelay on bolt near old spit LHS.

Notes.
Bolts are 8 mm x 80 mm SS Thrubolts. Those at pitch head of P4 were installed July 2006, remainder installed Sept 2012. Spits around March 1984.
Hangers left in situ June 2017.
Directions facing downwards.
P1 rope replaced June 2017. Requires 9 m for drop and further 6m for backup.

R Tunney Sep 2012
Update J McKinnon Jun 2017

JF341

9 July 2017

Alan Jackson

Party: Serena Benjamin, Stefan Eberhard, Alan Jackson, Andreas Klocker

Andreas and I had been talking about going to the far end of 341 to check the sump's 'diveability' for about three years now. Out of the blue Stefan raised it with me two weeks ago and it all came together. That part of the cave is interestingly-placed with regard to the back end of Junee Cave – i.e. close to the main drain.

Just as the night is dark and full of terrors, 341 is equally so. The terrors come in the form of endless muddy, frictionless climbs and traverses. We made it though and checked out the sump (well, I didn't, because it required getting wet feet ten metres before the sump and I'm smart/soft). The other three came back with a glowing sump reference in hand (beautiful and 'balls-deep' apparently). Very 'diveable'. Minds then turned to the prospect of carting diving gear all that way past all the darkness and terrors. I'll be busy that day, I suspect (busy somewhere else, that is).

We then moved to the bloody great big chamber further along the cave for a general tourist and lead check. It seems pretty obvious from the map that the stream beyond the sump will travel beneath this ~150-250 m-long chamber so it'll probably just be jammed up with mud and rockfall. But cavers are optimists. In the muddy, low, straw-choked passages between the sump and the final chamber there are two spots where you can hear the stream running down below and by our reckoning it is definitely beyond the location of the sump, suggesting the sump will be less than 20 m long (just a breath-hold for real cavers). We tried moving offending boulders and mud to get down to the water but it wasn't doable without more persuasive tools than hands and feet.

We had a quick foray in upstream Enterprise Streamway, as I'd never been up it. It proved to be a bit small, scrambly and punctuated with rockfall so we quickly lost interest and headed out.

It is worth mentioning that the long piece of yellow flagging tape demarcating the path in the muddy upper levels above Enterprise Streamway had been partly sucked down to the lower levels in a flood event. There was an obvious high tide mark about 10-15 m above stream level, below which nearly all traces of previous footprints had disappeared under a fresh new coat of mud.

Back at the car we could hear odd noises which later proved to be shooting in the pine plantations. Food had been laid on the road and it was crawling with wildlife. The contractor had blocked the gate with his vehicle to prevent unwanted targets wandering in so we found ourselves trapped inside. John Webb wasn't answering his phone (we figured he'd know the contractor's phone number) so we resorted to driving around the plantation looking for the spotlight until we stumbled across two slightly surprised-looking blokes with guns who kindly let us out.

JF223 Tassy Pot

15 July 2017

Janine McKinnon

Party: Serena Benjamin, Alan Jackson, Ola Löfquist, Janine McKinnon.

After the travails of Thursday's Midnight Hole trip I decided to take our remaining uninjured European visiting caver to Tassy Pot. To be more precise Alan kindly offered to take Ola caving if I was too tired - I suggested Tassy Pot, and then decided to come along. Serena decided she could handle another day's caving too, so we all assembled at Alan's at 7:30 am, as usual, planning a more typical Tassie caving trip than we had just endured.

It was lightly snowing when we arrived at the car park. We quickly kitted up and Alan headed to the cave to start rigging. Ola pulled out his phone to do a video "hello" to a friend at her Hen's night, back in Sweden. Serena followed Alan. I stood and got cold until Ola finished.

The trip down the cave was quick. Alan knows the rigging better than the back of his hand. We were all in the bottom chamber at 11 am, an hour after Alan started down the cave. A brief discussion ensued as to whether we would continue to the horizontal passages. Did I mention that the cave was wet? No? Well it was the wettest Alan and I had ever seen. As it is normally dry this wasn't a problem, but it was wet... Luckily Alan's enthusiasm carried the day and we all headed into Morocl Passage. Serena alone kept her SRT kit on. I'm not sure why.

Despite a lot of water flowing down the pitches there was not much in the crawl or the stream at the bottom.

We quickly headed to The Mouse Trap, and Alan and I climbed down to inspect the pool. Alan kindly donated his helmet to check underwater for passage. It was questionable but possible so we planned to come back another day with mask and snorkel. We then retreated to the top of the pit, but Alan decided he would try to get across the pit this time (he had failed in the balls department on a previous trip). He made it across, headed down passage, and returned to report that the passage ended after about 50 m with water coming through gravel from the pool side. So the pool is not a diveable sump. That is one future trip involving immersion in cold water for no result that I am saved.

We started back, but investigated a few of the side passages along the way. Alan and I discussed the possibility of exploration. We decided that a trip in the summer to carefully investigate all leads was warranted.

We then headed back out through the crawl.

Serena headed up first, and straight out of the cave. Alan waited at the top of the 70 m pitch, took that rope, and headed out. Ola and I came out together. Ola last, practicing de-rigging.

We were all out by mid-afternoon, after a pleasant 4 hour caving trip. A detour along the drive out of the Florentine to show Ola some scenery completed a great day.

Other Exciting Stuff

What is the Future for Long-Life 'Permanent' Bolts in Tasmanian Caves

Alan Jackson

In the late 1990s and early 2000s STC member Jeff Butt became concerned about the number of relatively short-life, mild-steel caving bolts being installed on popular routes ('bolt-rash'). The availability of cordless hammer drills was making cave bolt installation a sport rather than a last resort. Cave pitch heads only have so much rock to work with and eventually one runs out of room to place the next new bolt. Jeff spent years researching different bolt types and eventually settled on the DMM Eco-Hanger glue-in, which the Poms had recently adopted to address the same issue in their caves. Butt (1999) provides a thorough analysis of the options and thoughts at the time.

In the early 2000s STC, led by Jeff, embarked on a project to place long-life glue-in anchors on popular routes and it has continued until as recently as earlier this year. For the first few years the DMM Eco-Hanger was available from the UK (this model was the only glue-in anchor that was considered removable/replaceable at the time) and many were installed using Reids Swiftchem epoxy resin. Circa 2004, after Jeff's death, the DMM Eco-Hanger become unavailable and we looked for an equivalent bolt but nothing that was 'removable' could be found and we settled on the Fixe Eyebolt model (and then more recently the Raumer Superstar model) – note that the Bolt Products 'twist' hanger was assessed but I was unable to remove the bolt using the method they provided (sample size of one though). The Reids Swiftchem glue was also proving hard to source (and very expensive) so we started using Ramset Chemset 101 glue instead (some installs have been done with Hilti HIT-HY 150 MAX and HIT-HY 200-R glues). It now appears that this was less than ideal. It turns out these glues are a 'polyester' epoxy and less durable than a true epoxy. Studies in the rock-climbing world (where glue-in anchors are used extensively) suggest they're only good for ~10 years before they start to deteriorate (Cujes 2009).

This is all rather disappointing when one considers the vast quantities of time we've spent drilling massive holes and mucking around with tedious glue application with the expectation that we were doing something that would last ~50 years (i.e. after I was dead and no longer concerned with cave conservation).

All this raises two questions:

1. Are the bolts installed with Chemset 101 glue safe (some are just over ten-years-old now)?
2. What do we do from now on?

Question 1 is annoying in that we're having to ask it so soon but we did expect that the glue life length was always going to be questioned at some point. The technique has only been used for ~25-30 years in caving/climbing and all the statements on longevity involve words like 'should' and 'expected to'. All the glue in bolts we've installed (including those with allegedly inferior glue) have passed the post-installation load test (of either 5 kN or 7.5 kN in tension – the test changed a few years back). I recently visited IB38 Milk Run (which is the first cave we glued with Chemset 101, in June 2004, and the bolts are now 13 years old). The bolts were secure-looking and didn't fail on us. It is reasonable to expect that in the stable, cool, dark environs of a cave that the glue would degrade more slowly than on a cliff face exposed to high UV levels and large daily and seasonal temperature fluctuations, but that's just an uneducated hunch. Although, James Titt (bolting expert) does have this to say on his exhaustive Bolt Products website:

(http://www.bolt-products.com/Glue-inBoltDesign.htm):

"The glues themselves when cured are chemically inert and should not degrade though some weakening from water has been observed with polyester."

Water is a pretty regular feature in our caves.

It is important to note that the quoted references suggesting 'deterioration' and 'weakening' of polyester glues don't have any explicit examples of failures or how severe the reduction in strength is. Tim Chappell (Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife engineer) has assisted with the development of the current approved p-hanger installation procedures and while he agrees it would be better if we were using better glue he equally doesn't believe we need to panic about the situation and condemn all the polyester installs. Considering Tim's experience and knowledge in the field, and that engineers are infamous for being nervous and deliberately 'over-engineering' everything they recommend, then I think we can relax.

Obviously we need to do some re-testing of the older Chemset-secured anchors and remember the 'pre-use visual inspection test' already recommended for any bolts – i.e. don't hang off any artificial (or natural) anchor until you've given it a wiggle and a pull and that you're convinced it is safe and secure.

As for question 2, I have two lines of thought. My expectation is that after some testing, further research and mucking around we'll see a change to the glue specification in the formal installation procedures to avoid the polyester resins.

In the interim we won't be installing any new glue-in anchors.

This situation has caused me to distil a few frustrations and doubts I've always had about the glue-in anchor approach (it is important to point out that these are my views and are not currently supported by Parks). I personally believe the answer to question 2 is to move away from the glue-in approach. I believe it was an appropriate solution at the time but that technology has now improved and the glue-in anchor has been superseded for our purposes. Concrete screws have revolutionised exploration bolting over the last few years. They're cheap, strong, easy to install and, critically, even easier to un-install. We are no longer leaving any hardware behind after trips, just a 6 mm hole in the wall which can be reused on the next trip – the 'bolt rash' issue is effectively eliminated.

Having said that, I still believe popular routes/caves should have 'permanent' bolts that facilitate easy rigging (i.e. clip and go). Without them there is still a risk that cavers in the future will arrive without the right bolt to fit the historic hole in the wall, or not be able to find the existing hole due to lack of a marker, and install something new and non-temporary.

The 6 mm versions we use for exploration are a bit on the flimsy side and not suitable for long-term, 'permanent' rigging. The good news is that they come in 8, 10 and 12 mm sizes (in both mild and 304 stainless steel). It seems a no-brainer to me that we should be using 8 or 10 mm 304 stainless steel concrete screws for 'permanent' rigging from this point forward. Put a stainless steel hanger on them, wind them in and then if 5, 10, 20 or 50 years down the track we want to replace or remove them for any reason then we just screw them out and put a new one, or put whatever the next new technology is, into the same hole. This is something we currently can't do with glue-ins and essentially all we're doing is facilitating a slower version of traditional 'bolt rash'.

No massive holes to drill, no mucking around with shitty glue, no having to come back on a separate trip to load-test them, no difficulty removing them when/if they become redundant or their safety is questioned. Easy, easy, easy. I also propose that we ditch the formal load-testing regime (so long as we've done enough in a 'test bed' situation to be confident that they're strong enough).

So, are they strong enough? Multi Monti make and sell concrete screw anchors in Europe and they're marketed by Raumer (Italian bolt and gear manufacturer) and other caving specialist supplies stores as a fit for purpose anchor. MM have done extensive testing on their range (Google it) and have published average failure values for sheer and tensile (6 x 60 mm bolts fail at 15.8 and 18.6 kN in tension and shear respectively, 8 x 70 mm bolts fail at 25.4 kN and 26.7 kN respectively). They're strong. Most carabiners fail around the low to mid 20 kN range. MM don't do a stainless steel range. We've been using bog-standard Hilti screws (designed for construction industry use, not for hanging people off). Al Warild has recently done some testing on the 6 mm Hilti screws in NSW marble and achieved very encouraging results (Tirfor hand winch with load cell in the system with bolts not failing at loads around the 1500 kg mark, at which point damage to the Tirfor was feared) (Al Warild, pers. comm. & unpublished data) . Nothing similar has been done on the 8 mm stainless range of Hilti screws but with an 8 mm circle being almost twice the cross-sectional diameter of a 6 mm circle, I can't see them being anything but stronger. The MM testing certainly indicates that more is more for their range of screws.

I'll have more to say on this topic in the future, after Parks and I have investigated the glue issue more thoroughly, but for now I believe the glue-in regime is all but finished and 8 mm stainless steel Hilti concrete screws with 10 mm stainless rated hangers is the way of the future (note – the extra diameter of the thread on concrete screws means an oversized hanger is required, i.e. 6 mm screw has a total clearance of 7.5 mm and takes an 8 mm hanger, 8 mm takes 10 mm and so on).

If anyone has any opinions on this matter then I'd like to hear them (both on the merits of the bolting methods and the bureaucratic/political consequences). And don't forget – just because it's big, thick and shiny doesn't mean it's guaranteed to hold your weight – CHECK ALL ARTIFICIAL ANCHORS FOR CORROSION, LOOSENESS, CRACKS, DAMAGE AND GLUE INTEGRITY PRIOR TO USE!

References:

Butt, J. 1999 Long-life bolts – what are the options? Which is the best one? *Australian Caver* 146: 19-29

Cujes, L. 2009 How to bolt rock climbs, and how not to. Upskill Climbing (blog): http://upskillclimbing.blogspot.com.au/2009/02/how-to-bolt-rock-climbs-and-how-not-to.html

A taster photo report of Midnight Hole rescue

13 July 2017

Amy watching the helicopter arriving with rescuers

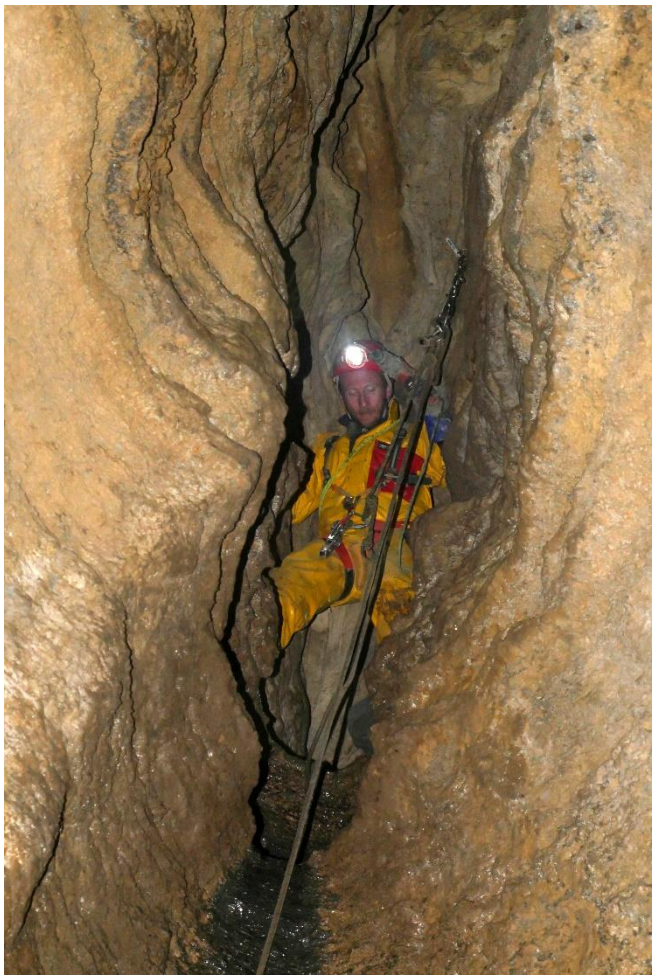
Photo: Ola Löfquist

Isabelle and Serena on the walk to Midnight Hole. Little did they know….

Photo: Gabriel Kinzler

Alan and paramedics starting out to the cave.

Photo: Ola Löfquist



Alan in a bolting frenzy.

Photo: Gabriel Kinzler

Here is a new, occasional feature for you all.

Caption the photo competition.

Prizes will be along the lines of those given for ABC competitions. That is, the nice, warm fuzzy feeling of having won. PLUS your name printed in bold type in the next Spiel as the winner!

All captions will be printed in the next Spiel, unless I get hundreds, and then I'll have to rethink it. For the sharp witted amongst you (or those that think they are), there is no limit on how many entries you can do. I get to pick the winner, 'cause I am the bod in charge of this rag. All complaints about the choice will be ignored. Bribes will be considered.

Rules are basic. I want wit, humour, cleverness. Something to make us all laugh, possibly think, and appreciate your smarts. Nothing abusive, derogatory or generally insulting will be printed.

If it goes well maybe it will become a regular feature.

If you have cave related photos you think will be good subjects for this feature, then email them to me.

They can be recent or golden oldies, although older ones might go better in the next section (see column opposite)

Email your gems to me at:
jmckinnon@caverneer.net.au

Here is the first one. Go for it. Impress us.

Caption:……..

Photo: Gabriel Kinzler

Ye Olde Farte Zone

We seem to be having an influx of new, young, members recently. As our previous new, young, members are not so new, or young, anymore, I thought this might be a good time to introduce brief forays into the not so recent, and positively archaic, past. My plan is to do this pictographically.

So I am calling for photos from reader's archives. Dust them off and email them to me, with captions identifying the people, place and hopefully time (aeon at least). You can put a brief description if you like. Photo credit too please, if possible.

Time period is from when TCC was founded until, let's see…5 years from current issue. Being an Old Fart isn't always as old as you think.

Email address: jmckinnon@caverneer.net.au

I will include one in each issue if I get enough input. Or until I run out of my old photos, which could take a while.

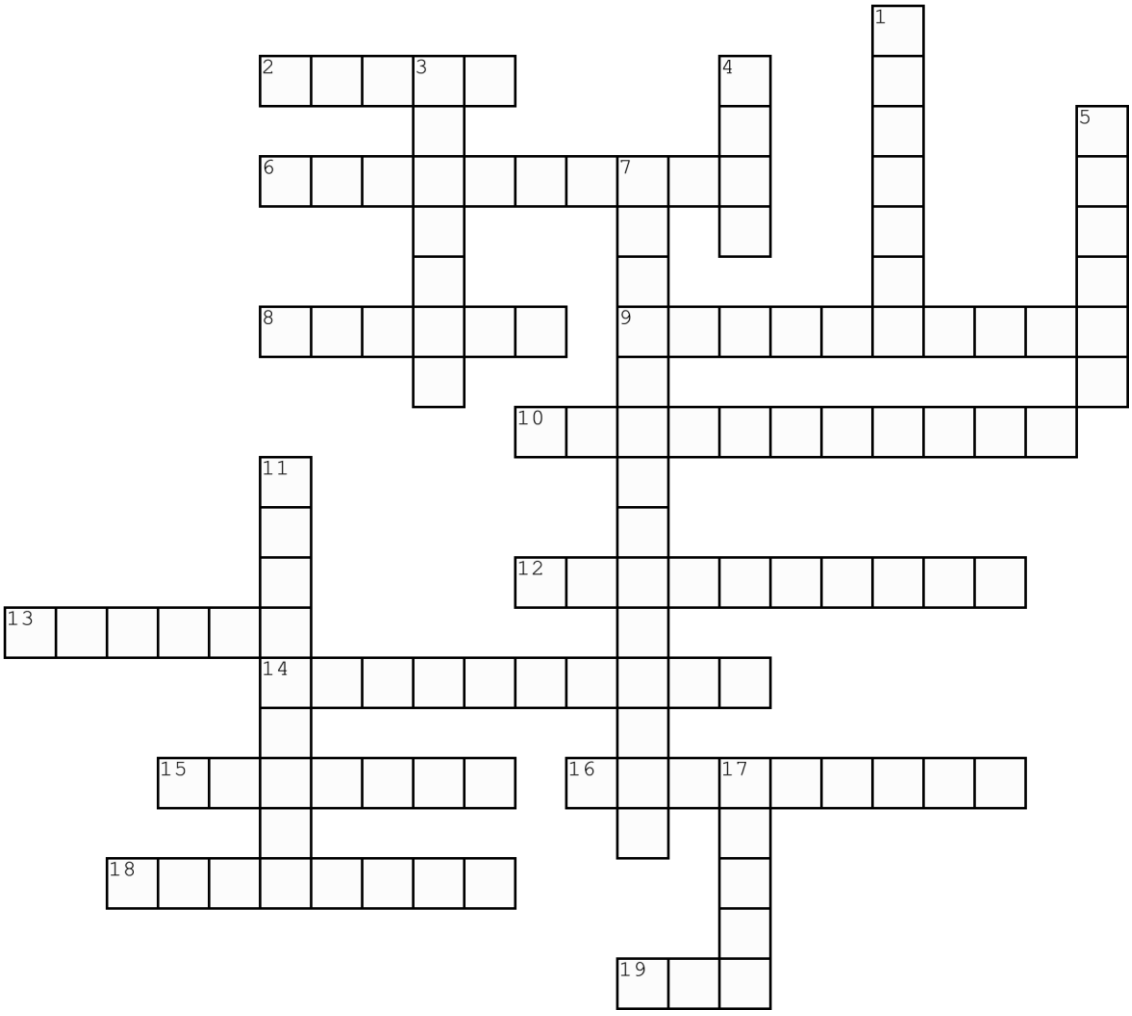
I'll start it off.

Stuart Nicholas and Janine McKinnon @ Pitch 2; Degenerated Man, Ice Tube 1984.

Photo: Ric Tunney

This was the second ever through trip of Ice Tube to Growling Swallet. It turned into a not-so-minor epic when Martin Carnes got seriously hypothermic at the bottom of Ice Tube. Getting him to keep moving to get out was a close-run thing (*March 17 1984, report SS 198)*. Note the lack of belays or safety lines. "Old School" could be scary. Very scary.

Cave Related Terminology



Across

2. Vertical drop requiring a rope

6. A structure formed in a cave by the deposition of minerals from water

8. Type of rope used for caving

9. Cave dwelling animal

10. What happens when you get really cold

12. Stream or river rising from underground

13. Sinkhole

14. The study of caves

15. Side view in a cave map

16. Genus of Tasmanian cave spider

18. Cave passages formed below the water table by water flowing under pressure

19. Acronym for vertical caving

Down

1. A caving area on north island of New Zealand

3. The most stable polymorph of Calcium Carbonate ($CaCO_3$)

4. A passage in a cave that is submerged under water

5. Protects the brain

7. Fungal infection of the lungs

11. A type of rock in which many caves are found

17. Topography is a landscape formed from the dissolution of soluble rocks

And yet another new, occasional, feature (I'm on a roll here). To get you thinking, and test your cave related knowledge. I am starting easy. Answers in the next issue, perhaps. I don't want to encourage you to cheat by putting it within reach.