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Front Cover: *Formations look much bigger with a midget for scale. This specific midget is Anna Jackson.*

Kubla Khan Cave, Mole Creek

Liz Rogers gets credit for the photo, not the whole Spiel.

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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CONTENTS

Regular bits

Editorial	Janine McKinnon	3
Stuff 'n Stuff	Janine McKinnon	3

Trip Reports

JF-387 Porcupine Pot	Stephen Fordyce	4
JF-268 Pooshooter	Alan Jackson	5
JF-237 Niggly	Petr Smejkal	5
Rocky Hollow & Unfair Pot	Nelly Brett	6
Mole Creek caving	Alan Jackson	7
JF-268 Pooshooter de-rig	Alan Jackson	7
JF-201 Rescue Pot	Anna Ekdahl	8

Other Exciting Stuff

Cave rescue training weekend photos	9
From The Archive	11
Further images from Porcupine Pot survey	Stephen Fordyce 13
TCF grant application update	Tony Culberg 13
David Wools-Cobb's awesome table	14

Fun and diversions	15
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The Last Page	16
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Editorial

The first issue of a new year and I suppose I should have something profound, or at least somewhat wise, to say. Unfortunately I don't seem to at this time. I am sure something particularly deep, relevant or witty will come to me as soon as this edition leaves my hands, but for now it is all a bit dull really.

So I will note that we have a few interesting trip reports in this issue to keep you entertained, and informed on what is happening with caving in the last couple of months. You will only be partially informed though as I am aware of at least several trips that have happened but trip reports have sadly not reached me. The words "as yet" can be appended to that last sentence I hope. So I look forward to receiving outstanding trip reports very soon. If you think that's you I am talking to, then you are probably correct. There are several of you, so no particular person need feel picked upon.

Stuff 'n Stuff

- Janine & Ric did a track clean up on 9 November along the track to Dissidence in the JF area. A little birdie tells me that there have already been two trips there since. Nice to know the effort was useful. This includes the track to Growling Swallet turn off from the carpark, however the road to the car park for the last few hundred metres wasn't done. We'd run out of steam by then. This section of road is driveable but has a lot of low hanging branches from the winter snows. So anyone visiting the area is welcome to do some road gardening.
- Tony Culberg and his minions have also had a bit of a wander up the Slaughterhouse / Ice Tube track. They managed to walk to Slaughterhouse Pot entrance and report that this section of the track is easy to walk along now.
- Alan Jackson has offered to run training sessions on Friday evenings at Fruehauf, by arrangement. Contact Alan if you have a particular date and skill set you want to work on. He's very flexible, so anything from basic SRT through advanced rigging and rescue rigging. He will consider other days and times too if they fit into his busy schedule.
- EuroSpeleo 2018 will be held at Ebensee, Austria from 23-26 August 2018. This event is held every two years at differing venues in Europe. It can be a great way to go caving, socialise with cavers from across Europe and attend interesting talks. A week of field trips based in a variety of areas is usually offered both before and after the conference week, at very good prices. If I plug this enough some of you may decide to give it a try. More details can be found here: <http://www.eurospeleo.at/>
- Still on the conference theme, the next ASF conference is to be held in northern Tasmania. Dates are from Sunday 30 December 2018 to Friday 4 January 2019. The venue is in Devonport. More information can be found at the website: <http://www.caves.org.au/events/19-events-and-calendar/71-31-asf-conference>. It

should be an enjoyable event and a chance to catch up with mainland cavers you may know or have met along your caving life's path. It includes New Year, as you see, so a good party is definitely on the cards. There is proposed to be a couple of days pre-conference caving on offer, and a longer post-conference week of caving can be expected at venues around the state. These have not been planned yet, and this is where STC comes in. Alan Jackson has sent out an email to the club in this regard and I think he can tell his own story. Take it away AJ:

"Time to start thinking about the conference in northern Tas in Dec 2018-Jan 2019. Jess Bayles is doing a fabulous job of organising all the nitty gritty but it is expected that STC will do some pre- and post-conference trip leading down in our patches of karst. Dave Wools-Cobb (DWC) sent me the following (below and attached) with some ideas on what to offer and how to market it (to reduce the risk of unprepared dickheads biting off more than they can chew). I'm happy to coordinate STC's efforts but obviously can't lead all the trips. So, volunteers please. Let me know if you're keen, think about what caves you'd like to lead and consider fitting them to the attached system devised by DWC for grading them" (*See p. 11 of this Spiel - Ed*)

- Stephen Fordyce reports a more high-tech way to record survey data than we traditionally use. It sounds nifty and just involves trusting that you won't destroy your expensive Android phone in the cave environment. See his Porcupine Pot trip report (p. 4) for details.
- I am always looking for interesting snippets for this section of the *Spiel* so if you come across any interesting bits of cave related information, or amusing anecdotes, or cartoons, then please send them to me. Attribution too please. Photos come into this category as well, with credits.



Whose feet? Clue below.

Photo: Han-Wei Lee

Trip Reports

JF-387 Porcupine Pot

17-18 August 2017

Stephen Fordyce

Party: Stephen Fordyce, Andreas Klocker, Petr-the-machine Smejkal

This trip report is desperately late and rather than let it fade into obscurity I thought I'd better make a half-arsed attempt before motivation completely died (*better late than never* - Ed).

A 3-day Niggly camping trip was planned for this weekend, but with torrential rains through the week and more forecast, the decision was made to bail out of pushing streamway leads in Niggly, for knocking off some survey work in Porcupine (and pushing streamway leads regardless).

Saturday, we spent all day surveying - mostly stuff the home side of the horrible crawl, the likes of Notre Dame and the tight passages in the areas towards the Gormenghast Sump. Much of this was never surveyed in 1980s, and it was interesting to see how close Notre Dame was to part of the upstream master cave streamway (no chance of connection though). Plenty of water coming in, theorised from Jolly Rogers or some such nearby cave - all big pitches going up.



Somewhere in the depths of the Porcupine

Photo: Stephen Fordyce

We also surveyed Petr's Miraculous Bypass of the horrible crawl, and Petr conducted a very successful first in-cave test of the dye tracing gear he'd made. A few leads were pushed in the big downstream tunnel - including a long and tight one I pushed up and above the final chamber, but to no avail.

We stayed a luxurious night at Giant's Table and were back in the cave again on Sunday, armed with wetsuits for surveying and exploring the downstream rockpile pushed on a previous trip by Andreas, Petr and Patrick Eberhard. Of course, access to this downstream section is via an improbable little chute at the side of the giant

upward-trending passage, just after where the water disappears. We could utilise the Miraculous Bypass to get here without getting wet, but then donned wetsuits before leaving the big cave.

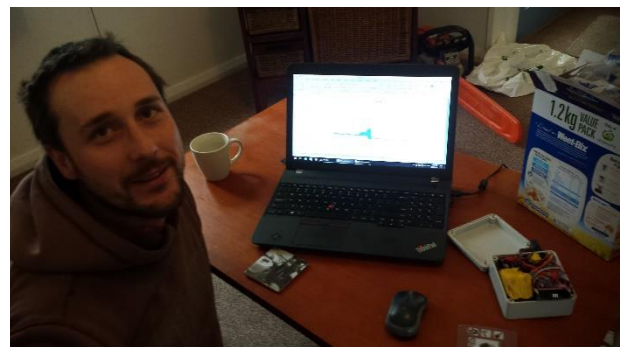
There is an impressive amount of squeezy, nasty, wet, confusing rockpile cave that follows - which the survey proves goes well past the end of the big lead. There is at least one full-body immersion roof sniff (at least it was sniffy with the recent rain) and the way is sometimes in the stream, sometimes in dry rockpile, and sometimes in puddled overflow streamway passage (very puddled for us, the previous trip it was dry).

Just before leaving the streamway for the last time there is a relatively large (8 m cube) chamber surrounded by rockpile - I think there is a chance of an aid climb going (Andreas thinks I'm nuts). Maybe that will get a go this decade, maybe not. I also wouldn't mind a look at the streamway where it disappears, but the guys said it had been well checked last trip. The overflow streamway is followed through rockfall until it gets slippery and muddy and pinches out - I believe Patrick pushed this pretty hard the previous trip, and I did on this trip. The other guys couldn't fit, or at least weren't too enthusiastic about finding out.

As usual, we had the big camera and took some footage for Fraser to make us look super hardcore.

Despite taking nearly 3.2 trillion survey shots (ok maybe a few hundred), the process was greatly improved by using an Android phone in a clear case to collect (via bluetooth) the survey data from Disto as we went. This saved handwriting, data entry and also meant we could look at a 3D plot of our results to check for errors and as an excuse for a break. Petr charged ahead to select stations, Andreas shanghaied the instruments and my sketching skills (still on paper) were given a thorough workout.

The app of choice is TopoDroid, with app Cave3D for viewing - they have their down-sides, but work, and more importantly were pretty easy to set up. Some screenshots are included (*below, and in "other Exciting Stuff" section of this issue* - Ed).



Petr with the new mapping technology

Photo: Stephen Fordyce

JF-237 Niggly

Check after winter floods

22 October 2017

Petr Smejkal

Party: Patrick Eberhard, Petr Smejkal

Spring came, the sun started shining strongly and the winter floods were over. The question was did the camping gear at Mt Niggly enjoy some swimming or did it stay dry over winter?

There was only one way to find out. I asked a few people who would be keen on a quick bounce trip but the date I offered was suitable only for Patrick Eberhard. Rolan joined the trip at the last minute but his plan was to do a bit of a surface bash in the hope of finding some new caves.

The Niggly track was significantly damaged after winter, Pat and I spent a good three hours clearing it. We got to the entrance at midday; by that time Rolan was already who knows where and had probably found heaps of interesting holes.

We bottomed the cave in less than an hour and a half. Quick visit to the camp revealed that the floods hadn't been strong enough to cause troubles. All the gear was dry, sitting safely where we had left it half a year ago.

We dedicated the rest of our time at the bottom to exploring the new passage on the other side of the tyrolean installed by Stephen, Ben and myself on our previous visit (*SS 420, p. 11*). Unfortunately, the end rock-pile squeeze was tighter than I thought; even Pat could not fit in. We could feel some breeze coming through so I am hoping to move a few rocks on our next visit.

We got out of the cave at half past four and met Rolan a few hundred meters down the track. With a bit of disappointment in his voice Rolan reported only one untagged cave.



Pat checking the delicious treats left by the last camping team – Yummo!

Photo: Petr Smejkal

JF-268 Pooshooter

Delusion Proven Truthful

11 November 2017

Alan Jackson

Party: Alan Jackson, Fraser Johnston, Andreas Klocker, Andrew Terhell (plus cameos by Gavin Brett, Nelly Brett & Anna Jackson)

The second coming of Pooshooter was finally ready for launch. The Crows Nest Media boys were super keen to get genuine virgin cave exploration footage in the bag and of course every other living, breathing caver was keen to tag along too. The usual last-minute round of cancellations came in though and it became just the four of us (admittedly two of them parasites who were promising to slow things down, but it was arguably for the greater good?).

Gavin, an original shooter of poo, was one of the last-minute pull outs. He's a bit old and lame these days and had a long list of ailments to substantiate his claim that he couldn't come underground. He did the next best thing though and joined us for the walk up the hill with his and my progeny. I took the opportunity to drive up to the JF in the 'cruisa with Gavin at the helm which invoked all sorts of good memories.

The walk up the hill was long and sweaty. With a big high-pressure system resting over us, the entrance was sucking in. The girls were sent off prospecting and only made it 30 m away before finding a new cave. There was much excitement and squealing. Each girl found a new entrance at the same time, which proved to be linked to the same cave. Once kitted up I did a quick recce. The western entrance is a bit tight and is a ~6 m pitch. The eastern entrance is more spacious and a ~3 m climb leads to descending passage (which passes directly under the western entrance) to more descending passage and a short pitch to who knows what. The whole lot draughts as much as Pooshooter (and probably connects, considering its proximity). Lovely.

Progress down Pooshooter was slow and tedious. Lots of camera work and interviews combined with a cautious approach to traffic control with two cavers with limited experience in a cave riddled with loose rock. We all got down without killing one another. At the dig Fraser was horrified to find that it was tight and muddy (I don't know what he had been expecting). There was much faffing and organising of gear while I stood (getting increasingly impatient) with the drill poised but awaiting an action call. After a few tantrums from Fraser over muddy camera equipment I was permitted to start rigging.

One can stand quite comfortably at the pitch head and I installed a y-hang directly over the pitch (a free-hang to the bottom) and started down. After twenty metres the floor didn't look any closer and I was mindful of long bouncy ascents for the others so I got to the wall and put in a rebelay. Twenty metres later I was experiencing the same feeling but the wall proved to be unreachable. By holding the hammer in my hand, I could just lunge out

and glance the wall (in the hope of getting some swing up and eventually grabbing the wall) but all it achieved was 30 rpm spin which was making me feel sick after ten seconds, so I bailed for the bottom with haste.

A short sloping floor (mysteriously littered with large volumes of fractured rock) lead to a five-metre pitch. Two bolts saw me down this one and wandering down another short sloping floor to a window to the next pitch. This was only two metres but required a rope. It wasn't looking good at the bottom and on closer inspection the small stream dribbled into a tight vadose slot and the carnival was over. There was no detectable draught. Poo. The others arrived. Fraser and Andy were secretly happy, shot some footage then started out. Andreas and I had a poke around for a higher way on. From the top of the five-metre pitch I traversed over the lower passage and could get a better view into the potential 'up and over' lead we spotted from the bottom of the two metre pitch and it didn't look worth climbing or traversing to. On our way back up the big pitch we looked for ways over but spotted nothing of real interest. There is a small parallel shaft nestled alongside the main drop, starting about 30 m from the top. I tried to lob a few small rocks down it to see if it came out where Andreas was at the bottom of the pitch but I was too scared to use anything reasonable-sized as I might have killed him. The few pebbles I did throw down didn't register with Andreas but with Andy thrutching around above me there were plenty of distracting pebbles flying about. The survey out proved the pitch to be more or less exactly 70 m. It was a super pitch and needs to be scored accordingly on Ric and Janine's Pitch Bagging List (*you must be the only person to remember that list - Ed*).

We decided to leave the possible parallel shaft to a future generation and derigged the 70. The stuffed bags were not much fun through the squeezes and loose climbs above the dig but the surveying provided ample opportunity to rest. We tied in at station PS100 on the little stal above the last tight climb. Without the right-sized spanner for the 10 mm bolts on the next set of pitches we couldn't do any additional derigging (and our bags were a bit spastic already) so we left it for later. We all reached the surface just on sunset. It had clearly been the most fabulous still sunny day. At least we didn't have to worry about getting skin cancer where we spent it.

The survey data put our passage trending off to the NW, away from all the other known parts of the cave. The bottom station was at -194.3 metres, but it was 1.5 off the floor, so it's ~196 m deep (close to joining the 200 club but not quite). The bastard would be in the 350 club if it had done what it was told. Give it a few years and we'll go back again, surely.

Was it worth the three digging trips? Yep – brilliant 70 m shaft.

Photos opposite:

Anna & Nelly watching Alan at work (top)

A bird's eye view down the hole (bottom)

Photos: Gavin Brett

Rocky Hollow and Unfair Pot

11 November 2017

Nelly Brett

Party: Nelly Brett, Gavin Brett, Anna Jackson, Alan Jackson

discovered by: Nelly and Anna

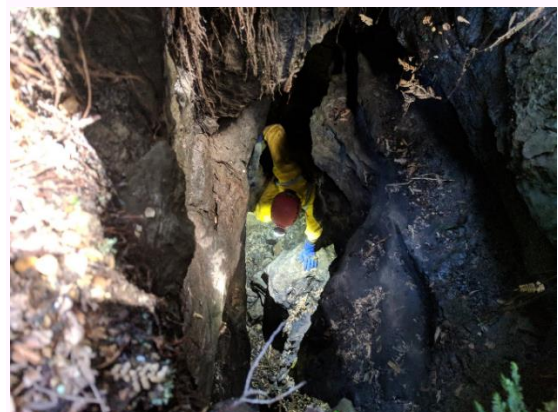
We were cave hunting - Anna, Gavin (Dad) and I. Alan and three others were movie making and going caving in Pooshooter. Anna and I were wandering near it and we found a black CAVE!!!

Straight after that I headed off to find a rock to chuck down while Anna was persuading Dad to come see the cave. I leaned over a log and there was a cave. In a minute, Dad was peering into Rocky Hollow with a torch, saying how its draught was similar to Pooshooter's.

Later, when Alan was deep in Pooshooter and we were wandering randomly above it and below Tachycardia, I came up with the name Rocky Hollow. Anna agreed that it was a good name. It was on this walk that Dad discovered Unfair Pot.

Anna got to name Unfair Pot because she hadn't named a cave yet. She chose it because it was kind of unfair how she hadn't found it.

As we stumbled and pushed our way back through the tough green ferns, I felt so excited! Anna and I had found and named a cave - Rocky Hollow - and we were going to come back to explore it!



Mole Creek Lameness with VSA

18-19 November 2017

Alan Jackson

Party: David Bardi, Alan Jackson, Anna Jackson, Liz McCutcheon, Liz Rogers, David Rueda Roca, Lachlan Shore, Sandy Varin and a Sunday cameo from Janice March (NC).

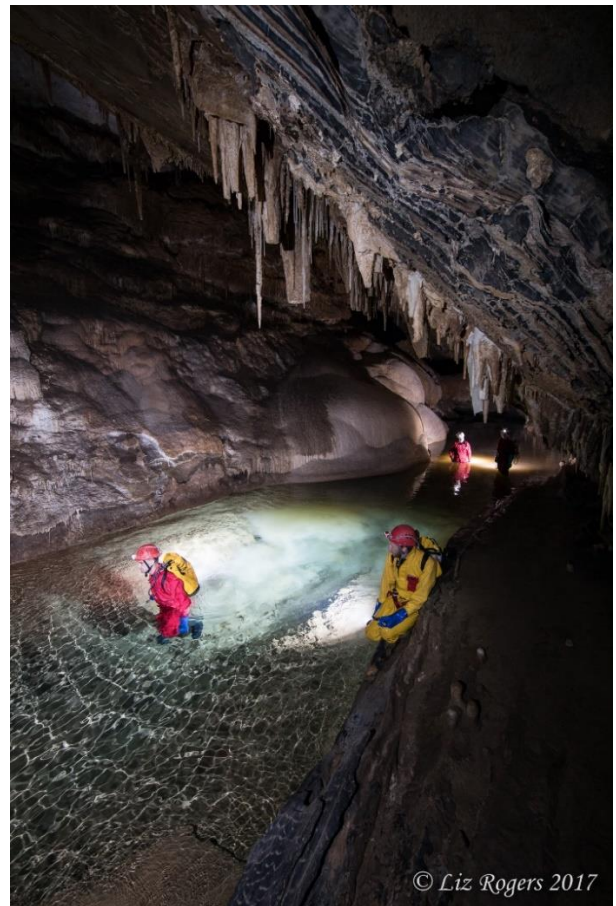
Caves visited: Croesus Cave, Genghis Khan, Honeycomb Cave, Kubla Khan, Lynds Cave.

On the Saturday Dave and Sandy took a tour of Genghis Khan and Honeycomb Cave while the rest of us did a Kubla thru-trip. By all accounts all three caves are still there. It was novel to be in Kubla with my only purpose to keep five punters on the straight and narrow (plus some minor karstcare jobs for David Wools-Cobb).

The TSLC meeting was on at the Mole Creek pub that evening and we got back just in time to get a pizza order in before the 8 pm deadline and to be STC's rep at the meeting.

On Sunday we stayed in the same teams and went to Croesus and Lynds. Janice joined Dave and Sandy in Lynds so they got a better look than they probably would have otherwise. We were all out by about 1 pm and retired to a café in Mole Creek for chips and gravy, beers and iced chocolates.

Mole Creek caving can be so pathetically easy and pleasant. I'm not ready to retire there yet, but I can see it coming.



Pity that water isn't as warm as the colour suggests, Croesus Cave (above)

The Watergate, Croesus Cave (left top)

The back blocks of Kubla Khan (left bottom)

All Photos: Liz Rogers (obviously)

JF-268 Pooshooter Derig

25 November 2017

Alan Jackson

Party: Alan Jackson, Liz McCutcheon, Dan Mitchell

The rescue training finished up around 6 pm - 7 pm at Dewhurst Quarry so we had a bite to eat, set up our sleeping arrangements then left the other campers to be eaten alive by arguably Tasmania's largest mosquito population.

We plodded up the hill in the dark at around 9 pm, derigged the cave in the even more dark, then plodded back down the hill in darkness. A 'minor' unplanned off-track excursion occurred on the walk back down which led to great annoyance and wasted energy. We crawled into our beds around 1:30 am.

JF-201 Rescue Pot

9 December 2017

Anna Ekdahl

Party: Serena Benjamin, Anna Ekdahl, Gabriel Kinzler, Andreas Klocker, Han-Wei Lee, Chelsea Pasutto.

After a couple of weekends of cave rescue training and exercising we were all pretty keen to get out for a tourist trip to check out a rockpile in the bottom of Rescue Pot. No one on the trip was able to elaborate on how the name Rescue Pot came about (*because a rescue was done from there in March 1969. See SS 33, March 1969 - Ed*), the most confident response was that someone may have once had a rock fall on their hand while exploring it although no-one was able to confirm or deny this. It did however attempt to live up to its name on three separate occasions in the form of two near-death experiences for Han-Wei and a twisted ankle for Gabriel. Needless to say, none of us was overly enthused to try out our newly practised rescue skills if we could avoid it.

The cave itself made for quite an enjoyable trip despite the amount of loose rock scattered about precariously. We ambled down a pleasant corridor with a boulder jammed between the walls just above head height. Han-Wei gave the boulder a good nudge and found it to be secure. Then just as he thought it was safe to proceed and began moving forward, half the boulder came crashing down narrowly missing Han-Wei's head.

The first pitch had a tricky redirect which Serena initially attempted using a natural formation which came loose and crashed down on my head a couple of metres after I passed it. I ascended and attempted to fix it. However, after having little luck with this particular formation returned to it with a drill on the return journey which worked a treat.

Further down the passage and a couple of pitches later, and a moderately squeeze squeeze, the cave became much wetter with some small waterfalls that pummelled us as we climbed through them. Chelsea was adamant that she was not planning on getting wet unless it was worth it. Shortly after, a wet but cheerful Chelsea followed, not wanting to be left behind.

My favourite part of the cave was where Gabriel found a nice wet squeeze to explore which required removing his harness. While I was waiting to follow him, I wandered around and found a luxuriously large passage, which brought me to the other side of Gabriel's wet squeeze where I had a fabulous view of his deflated facial expression when he discovered that there was an alternate route.

After determining that there was nothing left to push at the bottom of the passage we commenced the return to the surface. Gabriel was working on resecuring his harness when he slipped and twisted his ankle. Like a trooper he marched on until the top of the first pitch where we had left the first aid supplies and Han-Wei could apply a

pressure bandage and some pain relief (of the boring over-the-counter variety).

Due to the amount of loose rock floating around the cave it was not uncommon to hear a shout of "rock" and the echo of small stones following. On this occasion however, the warning had an almost palpable sense of urgency followed by what sounded like thunder which caught my attention. A large boulder had been dislodged (which we'll put down to Gabriel's twisted ankle) and was rolling down the passage Indiana Jones style towards Han-Wei and Serena. Han-Wei had nowhere to go but managed to squeeze against the wall where the rock brushed his helmet and shoulder.

Once we returned to daylight at a very reasonable hour we wandered up to the entrance to Tyenna Tomo which Andreas assured us was one of the most spectacular cave entrances in Tasmania. Unfortunately, we couldn't see much from the viewpoint however Gabriel had brought his trusty drone for a closer look. We'll put the dodgy flying and crash down to the need for a calibration and not Gabriel's lack of drone piloting talent. The drone luckily lodged itself behind a tree in a precarious position where it was retrieved by Gabriel and Chelsea and everyone headed back to Andreas's with all cavers and drones accounted for.



Happy looking crew somewhere in Rescue Pot

Photo: Han-Wei Lee

Photo montage of the cave rescue training weekends

All photos: Gabriel Kinzler

First weekend - quarry training.



Second weekend – cave practice



Other Exciting Stuff

FROM THE ARCHIVE

In light of the club having had two rescues this year I thought this golden oldie of an almost-rescue might prove interesting to read as a comparison. It certainly brought back memories for me when I stumbled across it whilst browsing the archive.

This is reproduced as written - Ed.

“VICTORY '75" - LIFE IN A DAY **31 July 1983**

Participants; Nick Hume, Phil Hill, Mike Edwards and Alec Marr.

Early morning in Maydena and a car full of Eberhards screeched to a halt outside Roy's shop. They were actually on the way to "Welcome Stranger"!!! A tragic sight! Anyway, Alec and I went to the homestead to collect Phil and Mike and drag them up the Junee Quarry Road to find "Victory '75", no small task in itself.

The track was badly overgrown and after a moment's reflection over the "Chairman" we left it and followed the fall line for five or ten minutes until intersecting an old forestry track. We assumed this re-joined the "Chairman" track way off to the right, so turned left to search for our cave. We kept on this track for half an hour or so without sign of cave, which did not seem right, and after deviating from the track to locate a stream we could hear, decided to head back towards the "Chairman".

Phil noticed a red marked tree off the forestry track and we followed similar markings, with great difficulty, to JF 112, "Victory '75" at last. I sat around watching the others get into their SRT gear and when that was over, I sat around eating while the others were getting into their SRT gear, finally after lighting one up, I sat around smoking (*different times - Ed*) while the others were getting into their SRT gear.

Mike and I eventually rigged a handline into the steep rift of the entrance by which time the others were almost ready. We were surprised to find a short SRT pitch, just beyond this handline, contrary to advice, and considering the time and the single 60 metre rope we were carrying, became disillusioned with the idea of bottoming the cave. The looseness of the floor gave rise to an inevitable close encounter, namely a rock and Phil's ankle (*Alec, later to be of Wilderness Society directorship fame, had the nickname of "Gravity" because "things" were always falling around him - usually rocks he knocked off - Ed*). He continued to rig the short pitch, without complaint, and we all ended up in an unimposing chamber with more scungy flooring. A retie to a piton enabled Phil and myself to abseil/handline to a short, narrow pitch which we descended to the top of the 53 metre shaft and the end of our rope.

This pitch could be rigged free, from a bolt and short header, and looks quite impressive.

A rapid withdrawal to the surface still did not give us too much time to relocate the "Chairman" track before darkness. We relocated the forestry track and on the assumption that it must re-join the right track, followed it to a badly choked section where a couple of fresh blazes indicated uphill. It was the correct direction and up we went confidently expecting to intersect the track, despite there being no further blazes.

After considerable climbing, without success, in the gathering darkness, we further decided to head back down to the forestry track and attempt to relocate the "Chairman" from our original entry point. Darkness thwarted this attempt, in fact we could have crossed these tracks without being aware of it. A council of war was held in which we decided to simply head west in the surety of running into the track, or at very worst, the Junee Quarry Road itself. Little did we know of the ensuing epic! Maintaining a westerly bearing was relatively simple without compass, simply heading into the twilight was just fine. After twilight we followed the occasionally glimpsed Venus (the planet of!) with uphill to our right as confirmation. Eventually Venus set too (!), at which point a certain person began to lament our situation, though generally spirits were surprisingly high, in fact I was thoroughly enjoying myself.

Phil, Mike and I, took turns to walk ahead with a single headlamp going to conserve our battery power. This was painfully slow and eventually most of us ended up using headlamps on low beam, except Alec who elected to do without, with interesting consequences while negotiating the horizontal, ten foot off the ground.

We staggered on guided by Scorpio at this stage, crossing a stream that looked suspiciously like the Niagara/Cauldron Pot area. It was Phil who first noticed an overgrown blaze on the tree he was leaning against! These blazes led uphill a short distance, but were obviously going the wrong way. We headed the opposite way in the direction of splashing water which sounded like and in fact was "Cauldron Pot". It was then we heard faint yells (this was Max Jeffries calling to us from some two kilometres away at the site of our cars!), and promptly yelled in reply. We quickly located "Khazad-Dum" track and came upon the road, some two to three hundred metres above the cars, our headlamps just beginning to fade.

A rescue party and what a party it was. A beaming Chris Davies handed me a bottle of whisky while Rik Tunney had the glad news of my flat tyre and flat battery. Trev actually ready to go caving, flitted and clucked like a mother hen, Max smiled and borrowed a cigarette, Stefan muttered something about an FJ and Janine looked disappointed (*Surely I wasn't so keen to go caving at that time of night? Ah, the energy of youth - Ed*), who else was there?

On behalf of the overdue party I would like to express sincerest thanks to Noel the gatekeeper, for sounding the alarm; Russell Coker for waiting up half the night to ensure our safety; Max Jeffries for coming out once again; and of course Trev, Chris, Stefan, Rik and Janine. We humbly apologise for disturbing your respective Sunday evenings.

NICK HUME

P.S. Lessons learnt from this episode include:

- don't accept verbal advice on things as important as pitch details; get a survey/description if at all possible.
- take track marking tape plus map and compass on trips to obscure caves, leave plenty of time to locate same, or limit objectives.
- declare intentions to the gatekeeper and leave a contact number in case of becoming overdue.

For all those who are interested in how our inefficient rescue call out works, here is a minute by minute account of what transpired on the evening of 31 July 1983.

Our official SR coordinator was out of town so the initiative was left to the club as a whole. There are faults in this system, but as it turned out to be only an exercise in arriving at the rescue point, many possible errors did not arise.

- | | |
|---------|---|
| 7:00 pm | Stefan Eberhard calls to say Nick's father rang him as the party was overdue - he had been informed by Noel the gatekeeper at Maydena. |
| 7:05 pm | The gate at Maydena was contacted to obtain more information. |
| 7:10 pm | If a rescue was imminent, rescuers would be needed. Stef, Chris Davies, Janine McKinnon and Rik Tunney were contacted and informed of the situation. All prepared themselves to make a move by 10.00 pm if the party was still missing. |
| 7:30 pm | Wives, girlfriends and parents of the missing party were contacted and put in the picture with the probable cause of absence put down to being lost in the bush!? |
| 8:30 pm | Chris Davies arrived and we were of the same mind that the thick rainforest and poor tracks in the area were the probable cause of the delay. |
| 8:58 pm | Noel called from the Maydena gate as pre-arranged. They were still missing and Max Jeffries had gone to check the campsite (the Homestead) to make sure that they were indeed missing. |
| 9:05 pm | The rescue party was informed to check with me before 10.00 pm and, if all was not well, we would proceed to Maydena. |
| 9:10 pm | Chris left to get his gear together at home. Stefan and I would pick him up on the way out of town. |
| 9:15 pm | The Police S & R squad were contacted but would return my call in due course |
| 9:30 pm | Tony Power of Police S & R returned my call and was put in the picture. Everyone concerned |

was not particularly worried, but a move should be made by someone.

- | | |
|----------|--|
| 9:45 pm | Max Jeffries called to say that the vehicles are still in situ and that there was no sign of the missing party. |
| 9:50 pm | Stefan left home to meet here. Janine & Rik will leave Hobart at 10.00 pm. |
| 10:05 pm | Stef Arrived and we left for Stuart's to pick up lamps, rope, etc. |
| 10:25 pm | We picked Chris up and relieved him of 8 gallons of petrol. Called my wife Sue to make sure they're still missing, and set off for Maydena at about 10.30 pm. Both Rik and myself had arranged to call Sue a couple of times on the way to Maydena, who would be contacted by the gatekeeper should anything happen, so that we could abort the whole affair if necessary. |
| 11:00 pm | Rik & Janine arrived at Maydena. |
| 11:30 pm | We arrived, and after conferring with Max Jeffries at the starting point of the track, we geared up for what could be a very long night bush bashing and, if it came to the worst, caving. Max had thought he had heard an answering call to his coo-ees some time ago, but could not be sure. |

Just before midnight as we were ready to set off, lights were seen on the road up ahead and the missing party was found. My wife was contacted to ring the respective next of kin and the Police were informed as to the outcome of our evening.

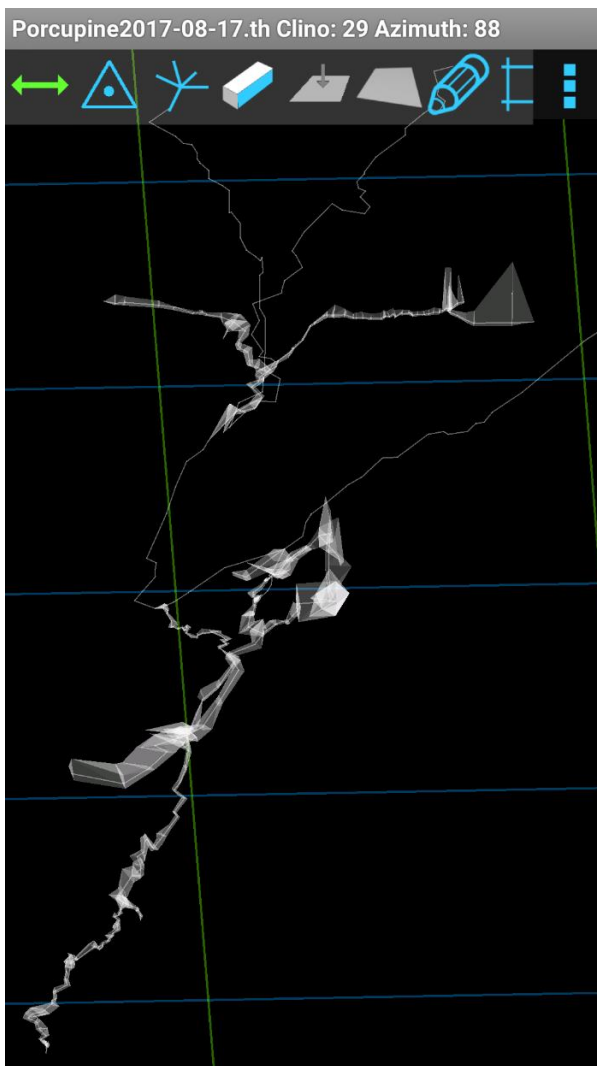
TREVOR WAILES

From: *Speleo Spiel*, 191: 5-8, September 1983

Explanatory notes for the newer generation of cavers:

1. *"The Homestead". The original caving club in Tasmania (TCC-Tasmanian Caverneering Club – the senior parent of STC) had a club hut in the forest near Maydena. It was an old, abandoned farm house. It was burnt down sometime in the later 1980s, or so.*
2. *The gate/gatekeeper: Access to the whole Florentine Valley was restricted and controlled by the logging company with the lease. There were different companies over the decades but access remained the same. Everyone who drove into the JF went through a boom gate, monitored by a gatekeeper. This was situated where there is a road off the highway near the big log, several hundred metres before the current turn into the valley. There were 3 gatekeepers on rotating shifts. Hours of availability varied over the years.*
3. *Roy's shop. The owner may have changed but the shop never does.*
4. *Max Jeffries was a retired logger, and club member, who lived in Maydena and worked in the forests. He found many caves and was a stalwart of the club. He passed away in 2009.*
5. *The names that look familiar are the same people you think they are, just a hell of a lot younger.*

Further images from Porcupine Pot Survey



3D plot from Porcupine Pot survey

Porcupine2017-08-17						
PX28	PX29	1.72	115.9	4.6	[>]	
PX29	PX30	1.22	159.0	-13.1	[>]	
PX30	PX31	4.92	180.5	-1.1	[<]	
PX31	PX32	3.82	199.3	-3.1	[<]	
PX32	PX33	3.28	186.3	-4.4	[<]	
PX33	PX34	1.68	158.6	20.0	[>]	
PX34	PX35	5.01	209.2	3.3	[<]	
PX35	PX36	4.68	179.3	-1.6	[>]	
PX35		0.60	118.8	5.3	[]	
PX35		1.91	314.0	4.3	[]	
PX35		3.84	86.5	78.0	[]	
PX35		1.40	185.3	-83.5	[]	
PX36	PX37	3.93	149.2	16.9	[>]	
PX37	PX38	4.06	115.1	25.1	[>]	
PX38	PX39	8.51	124.0	0.2	[>]	
PX39	PX40	2.99	142.7	-11.7	[>]	
PX40	PX41	12.34	108.5	-5.6	[>]	
PX41	PX42	7.60	129.9	-11.4	[>]	
PX42	PX43	5.80	102.6	15.6	[>]	
PX43	PX44	10.57	127.4	-1.4	[>]	
PX44	PX45	6.39	103.8	0.9	[>]	
PX45	PC36A8	5.11	157.4	-19.3	[>]	

Data from Porcupine Pot trip survey using Android phone and Disto X

TCF Grant Application Update From the December 2017 Meeting

Tony Culberg, Treasurer

The really good news is that the application the club made to the Tasmanian Community Fund (TCF) for a grant to buy search and rescue gear was successful. We asked for \$6790 to buy a Petzl stretcher and a heap of other gear, including lots of rope.

STC needs to complete some paperwork with TCF before the money will be handed over. As soon as the funds arrive the stretcher will be ordered. The supplier is in Europe, so there will be a delay.

Once it arrives, I hope there will be several days spent by all active members familiarising themselves with its idiosyncrasies. I anticipate that the Tasmanian Police Search & Rescue (TASPOL SAR) group will also be allowed to play with the device.

Once we believe we are competent, I would like to see a media event, on a suitable quarry face, so STC and TASPOL SAR can show the stretcher in use and the TCF can see that its grant has been applied wisely.

David Wools-Cobb's awesome table

Northern Tasmanian Caves considered for conference pre/post field trips

Times based on car to cave and return, depending on size of group and on photography – for certain caves, if there is a demand we will operate specific photographic trips.

CAVE	TIME (hrs)	CATEGORIES
MC-13 Croesus	4 to 8	W+, T, D+,
MC-14 Lynds	4 to 7	W+, T, D+,
MC-64 Tailender	6 to 7	W, V, C, D+
MC-114 Kohinoor	3 to 5	C, S
MC-6 Diamond	2 to 4	C, S, D
MC-1 Kubla Khan	9 to 12	V+, W++, C, D+, L
MC-38 Genghis Khan	2 to 4	C, D+
MC-10 Hailie Selassie	2 to 3	V, D
MC-141 My Cave	3 to 4	D, W
MC-32 Baldocks	2 to 3	D, S, C, M
MC-96 Sassafras:	3 to 5	S, W, D
MC-15 Marakoopa 1 & 2:	4 to 6	W, D
MC-130/131E Devils Pot/Anastomosis	6 to 8	V+, C, A, L
MC-4 Execution Pot	4 to 6	V, A
MC-26 Horries Hole	4 to 5	V, C
MC-3 Black Shawl/Spider Complex	5 to 6	S, D, A (or car shuffle) W
MC-X149/148 Hangover/Flyover	5	V, M, S
GP-1 Gunns Plains : beyond show cave	3 to 5	W++, D+.
Great Western (Gunns Plains)	2 to 4	D, S,
MC-Many! Honeycomb	1 to 3	S (optional), C
PhilRod & associated (Mt Cripps)	6 to 8	S, L, D, A, (V may be offered)

LEGEND

- A: Walk to cave entrance more than 2km
- C+: Challenging technical climbs
- C: Challenging free climbs involved: not too technical
- D: Reasonable speleothem decoration
- D+: Extensive speleothem decoration
- L: Longer than 5hrs for trip: allow adequate batteries and food
- M: Considerable mud involved
- S: Some squeezes involved
- T: Temperature noticeably cold: although Tasmanian caves average 8-9 degrees, some caves due to large water/wind flows seem much colder
- V: Vertical pitch(es): full SRT skills required (abseiling and prussiking)
- V+: Vertical pitches with re-belay/re-direction
- V++: Multi pitch with re-belay/re-direction, some long prussiking, challenging
- W: Water, may be knee deep
- W+: Water, up to thigh deep, may involve wading
- W++: Water, very deep, full immersion required: thin wet suit recommended (only for wading)

Fun and Diversions

Ye Olde Farte Zone

I am calling for photos from readers' 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. Here's a good chance to exercise your hidden wit.

Photo credit too please, if possible.

Time period is from when TCC was founded until 5 years from current issue.

Email address: jmckinnon@caverneer.net.au

As I have received no submissions (again), here's another from the Tunney/McKinnon archive. This is becoming a bit of a mantra, isn't it? Maybe someone should run a book on how long my perseverance continues with this.



This is just begging for a clever caption, alas, it won't get one. Photo: Ric Tunney

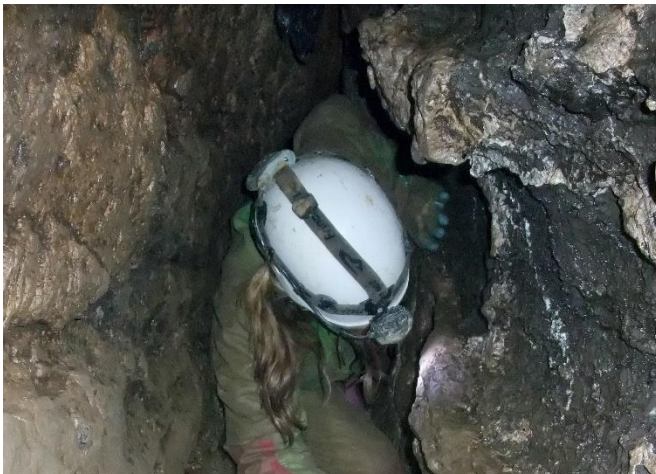
Nick Hume, Trevor Wailes, Janine McKinnon at the entrance to KD. Circa 1982 (up to 1984 maybe)

I seem to have a lot of photos of helmets. Here's a few to try your luck at identifying the occupants. I will be amazed at anyone who gets all four. If you can identify the location too, then you are truly awesome.

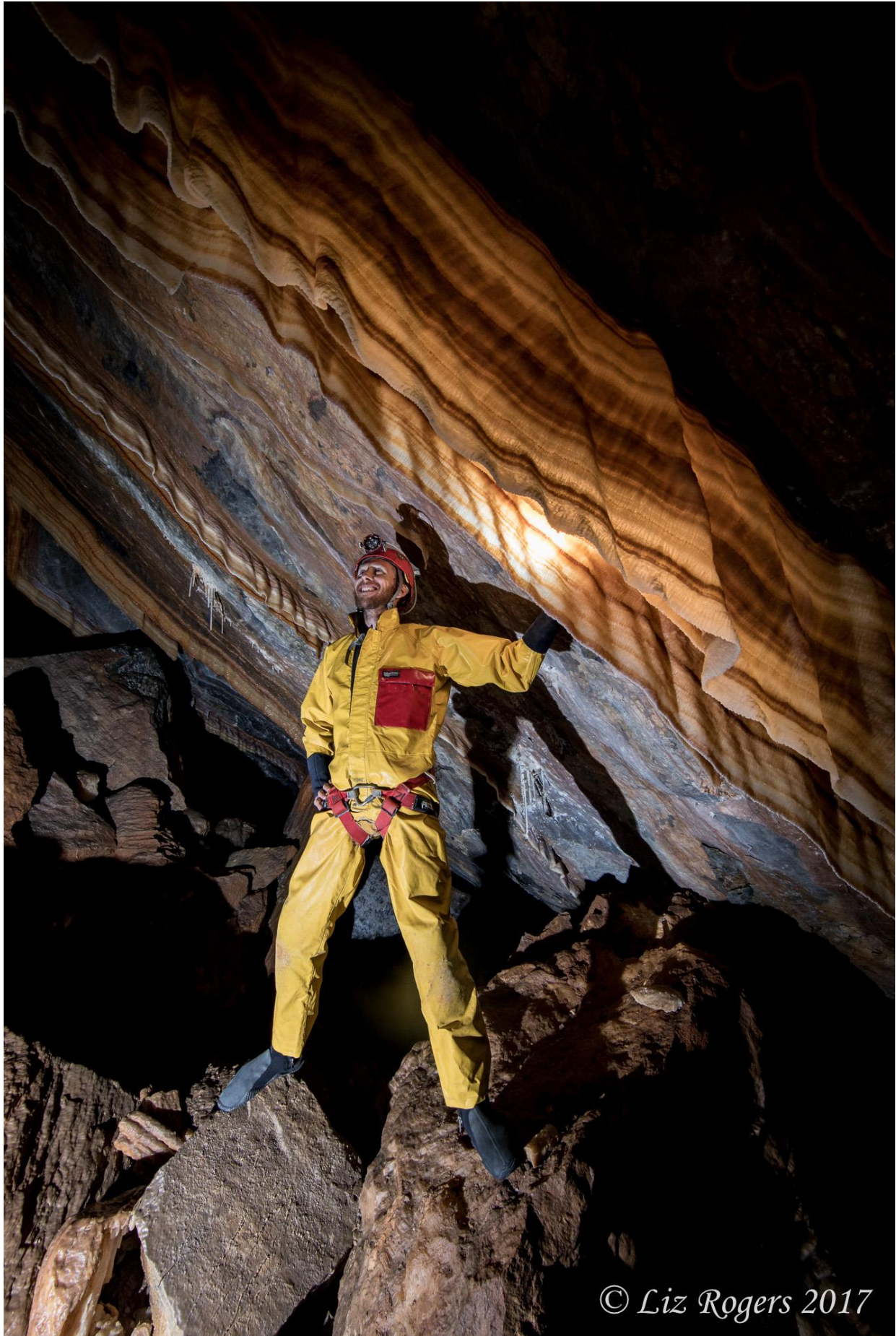
Email guesses to me - Ed.



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The Last Page



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Pose reflecting self-image.