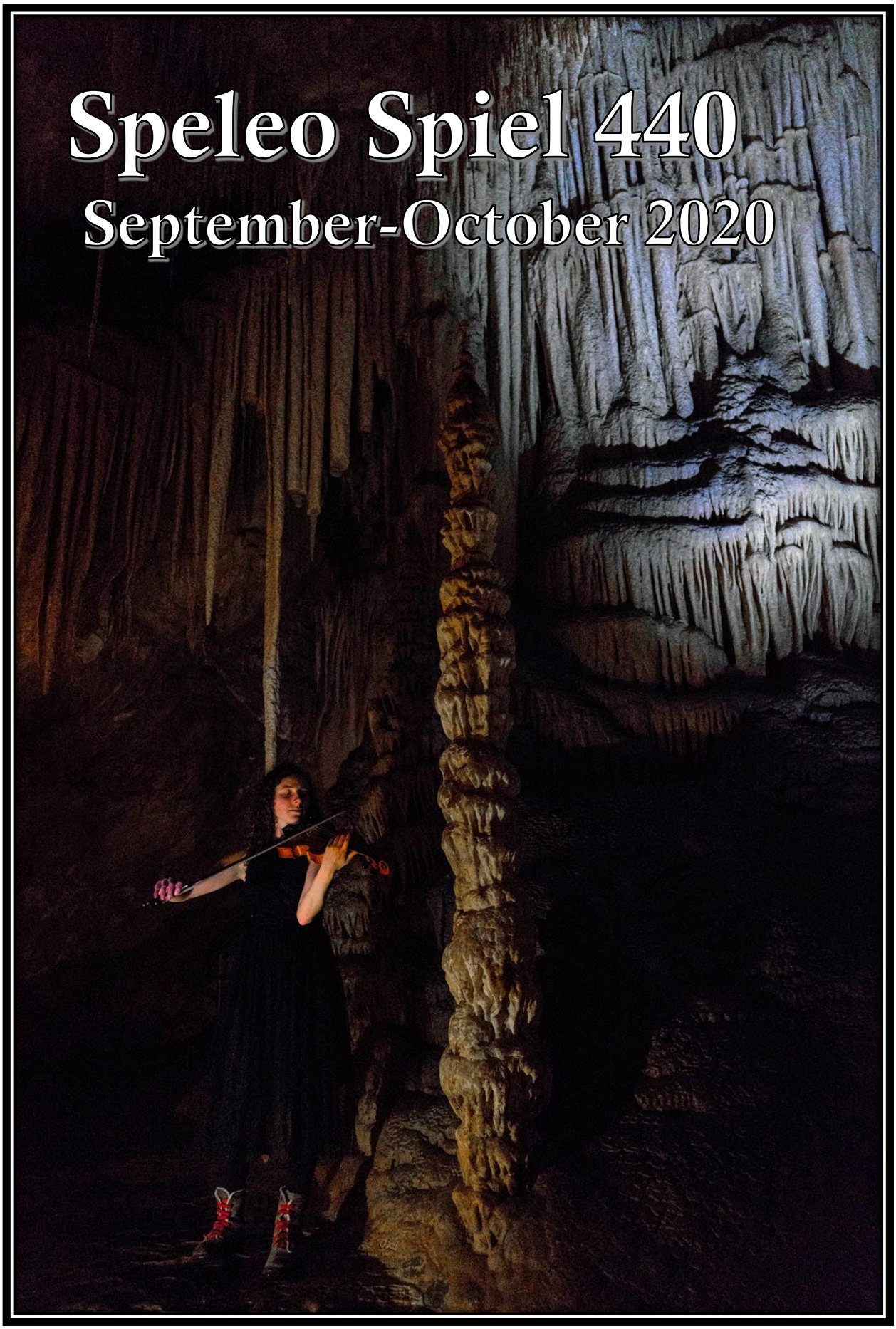
Speleo Spiel 440

September-October 2020



Newsletter of Southern Tasmanian Caverneers Inc. ISSN 2208-1348

STC Office Bearers

President: Chris Sharples
Ph: 0408 396 663
Chris.Sharples@utas.edu.au

Vice President: Alan Jackson
Ph: 0419 245 418
alan.jackson@lmrs.com.au

Secretary: Phil Jackson
Ph: 03 6243 7038
pmjackson@dodo.com.au

Treasurer: Russell Fulton
Ph: 0427 956 297
FultonRL@bigpond.com

Equipment Officer: Alan Jackson
Ph: 0419 245 418
alan.jackson@lmrs.com.au

Librarian: Greg Middleton
Ph: (03) 6223 1400
ozspeleo@iinet.net.au

Spiel Editor: Gabriel Kinzler
Ph: 0473 388 344
gabrielkinzler@hotmail.com

Search & Rescue Officer:
Alan Jackson
Ph: 0419 245 418
alan.jackson@lmrs.com.au

Webmaster: Michael Packer
Ph: 0427 039 198
IamMichaelPacker@gmail.com

Front Cover: *Emily Sheppard performing in Newdegate Cave.*
Photo: Ivi Dodd

Back Cover: *Karina Anders.*
Photo: John Oxley

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

PO Box 416, Sandy Bay, Tasmania 7006
www.southerntasmaniancaverneers.com
ABN: 73-381-060-862
ISSN 2208-1348

The views expressed in the *Speleo Spiel* are not necessarily the views of the Editor, or of the Southern Tasmanian Caverneers Incorporated.

Issue No. 440, September-October 2020

Contents

Editorial

"I am sure you have all heard about the rescue ~~from Midnight Hole~~ at Mt Cripps on ~~13 July~~ 11 October. If you haven't, then you weren't in Tasmania then, or you possibly live under a particularly large rock. The ~~southern~~ northern Tasmanian caving and rescue community did an outstanding job, reaching those of us waiting ~~on the ledge below pitch 4~~ at the bottom of Snowy Mountain Cave in ~~four and a half hours~~ eight hours and completing the rescue to the helicopter at the ~~quarry~~ top of the hill in ~~13~~ 16 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."

This is just a cheeky nod to Janine McKinnon's Editorial in *Speleo Spiel* 421 (July-August 2017), written after the rescue of Isabelle Chouquet. The story repeats itself and, fortunately, the outcome was similarly a happy one. At the time of writing, our very dear friend David Wools-Cobb from Northern Caverneers is recovering from his injuries at the Royal Hobart Hospital. We wish him all the best.

Just like three years ago, the full report of the rescue will be published in the next issue of *Speleo Spiel*, as there was no time (and, frankly, no definitive material yet) to put it in the following pages.

Still, I am glad to report that a lot is happening on all fronts, locally, but also remotely: our caver friends on the mainland might be under lock and key, but it's not stopping them from adapting and being creative and ingenious under some of the harshest circumstances.

Finally, after months of the caving scene being utterly dominated by Bill Nicholson, Alan Jackson seems to have reclaimed his rightful place as the most active caver in the country, going caving as often as three times a week. Mad.

Take care.

Stuff 'n' Stuff

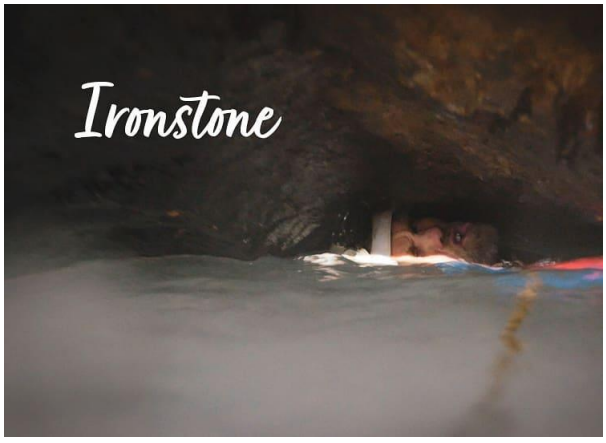
- STC has a new website. Well, actually… it's still more or less the same, but updated and rejuvenated. The address is the biggest change, and we can now be found at www.southerntasmaniancaverneers.com. A new domain name, no more ads, more control and independence from third parties, and more storage capacity for documents such as photos and videos are amongst the main advantages.

STC Southern Tasmanian Caverneers .com

- Sil Iannello compiled the testimonies of dozens of Australian women cavers inside a special edition of FUSSI's newsletter. Check out *Women Cavers of Australia*, an unprecedented read for cavers in Australia, with a few familiar names from STC. It is a work-in-progress and more cavers will be interviewed in time. https://fussi.caves.org.au/newsletters/FUSSI_32_2_20.pdf

FUSSI Editor Sil Iannello. Photo: Scott Lewis

- A new short movie, named *Ironstone* and shot not too far from Tasmania, was released in July 2020. The synopsis: "In 2009, local caver Tony Salmon discovered a previously unexplored cave entrance deep in the wilderness of New Zealand's South Island. Tony entered the cave alone and explored 750 metres before deciding it was too dangerous to continue solo. Ironstone follows the seven-year journey as a group of cavers attempt the first successful through-trip, searching for an elusive entrance to a cave deep underground." You can watch the movie on demand (for free with a discount code) over here: https://vimeo.com/ondemand/ironstone



Source: Sam Thompson

- Stay tuned for *Speleo Spiel* 441 in the closing days of the year. Brian Evans, Convenor of the ACRC: "*Thanks all. For so many reasons: you got him out smoothly and quickly, not to mention successfully! You showed the world how bloody good you are as cave rescuers. You've done an amazing job in sharing this info... and talking to the media. I've yet to look at all of the stories, but what I've seen/heard is excellent. You got a mate out in time :-) Be very proud of what you did, and the history you have in setting up this success - it comes from many years of great work from many of you. Brian*"

Trip Reports

JF-99 The Chairman

8 August 2020

Petr Smejkal

Party: Andreas Klocker, Petr Smejkal

This trip to The Chairman was quiet, only Andreas and I managed to make it that day. We did not have much to carry as the ropes were in the cave with the first pitch rigged since last trip.

We entered the cave at close to 11 am. At the second pitch we replaced the existing spit with a concrete screw and stainless-steel hanger. We also added two hangers for an easier and safer approach to the second pitch via a traverse and added one hanger as a redirect half-way down the second pitch. Everything else is as it was - via naturals.

At the bottom we were following the blue tape and reached what we thought might be the furthest surveyed point at about 3:30 pm. There was clear passage but to get further meant to smash a bit of a rock or take a very unpleasant roof sniff. We decided to keep this for another time. We accomplished a little scientific side mission and started heading back.

Andreas and I had a short pause from the caving which resulted in a rather comic situation, or maybe we were just tired. In any case, first I managed to leave the bottom of the second pitch without my backpack. I realised that about halfway up. Another surprise waited for me at the bottom of the first pitch – there was no rope! Without noticing Andreas dragged the rope behind him and managed to get it out of my reach by about 15 m. By the time I got there he was getting ready for the final length and I had troubles to let him know what happened. In the end we managed to get out and leave the derigged cave at about 6:30 pm.

The way back to the car was in dark and took a good hour and half. For the next trip, a few more tapes on the track would be a good idea.

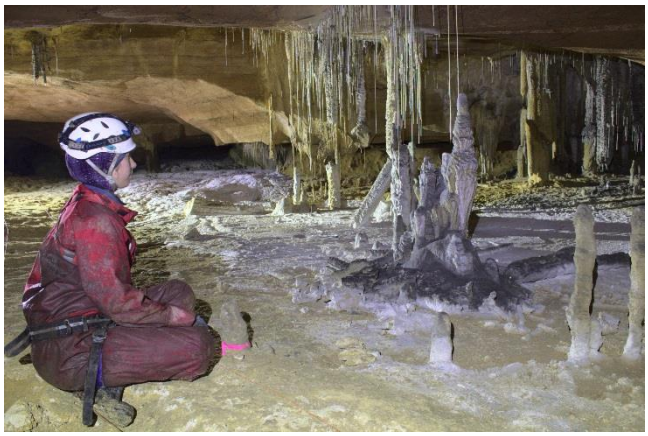
IB-131 Old Ditch Road

24 August 2020

Karina Anders

Party: Karina Anders, Serena Benjamin, Janine McKinnon, John Oxley

It was almost an all-women's trip. Organised by Janine, Serena, John (our male representative) and I undertook a day trip to Old Ditch Road. I have been to Exit Cave before but only to the Mystery Creek Passage sump to help Janine with a dive. I was familiar with the walk towards Exit Cave although this time around it was a lot slipperier.



Speleothems looking at a caver. Photo: John Oxley

A rather exciting trip for me for no other reason than to use my shiny brand-new red trog suit. It served its purpose well from the get-go as it was a muddy entrance. Serena practised her rigging and we made it down all three of the first pitches: 7 m; 38 m; and 12 m on one long 87 m rope. We used a 38 m rope for the last pitch which was 35 m.

Another metre or two on that last rope would have had it reaching the ground but we had no problems with it. We had lunch on the bottom. We decided to check out the Ball Room as I had never been there and John had brought his camera. I saw the Ball Room's namesake; rather impressive. The moonmilk was also spectacular. Janine commented that there were more puddles along the crawl to the Ball Room.

Serena checked out the river height but said it wasn't particularly high. After taking a few pictures we turned back and headed out. Janine lead the way with Serena derigging. Although a little cold the walk back was quite pleasant and we had a beautiful view of the sun peeking through some rain clouds at the top of the Lune River valley. A very pleasant day.

IB-131 Old Ditch Road Rigging notes

August 2020, Ric Tunney & Janine McKinnon

On the first pitch, the hanger is half a metre down the pitch. This makes getting on and off difficult. The tie-back gives something to help getting on and off, and for safety. Do not rely on it though as the stal is dubious. Attach a cowstail into the P-hanger for safety. Reaching the hangers on P2 for rigging can be a little challenging for short cavers.

Pitch	Rope	Rigging
P1 7 m	20 m (if using for tie-back too)	Climb up to the window off the balcony, hanger over lip RHS. Y-belay from hanger and tape around jug. Back up to stal LHS 5 m back. This backup is very useful to get off rope when coming up.
P2 38 m	43 m	Two hangers for Y-belay on wall opposite ledge. Use previous rope to reach hangers.
P3 12 m	16 m	Two hangers LHS for Y-belay. Rub point at -4 m; redirection from jug RHS 1 m further down.
P4 35 m	39 m	Y-hang from two hangers RHS. Rebelay from hanger LHS 7 m down. (This rebelay is not necessary for pull-down trip.)

115 m will do whole cave, but this does not include the backup on P1. Notes: All directions are looking down. Hangers are P-hangers installed 2003.

IB-14 Exit Cave – Re-bolting Valley Entrance

25 August 2020

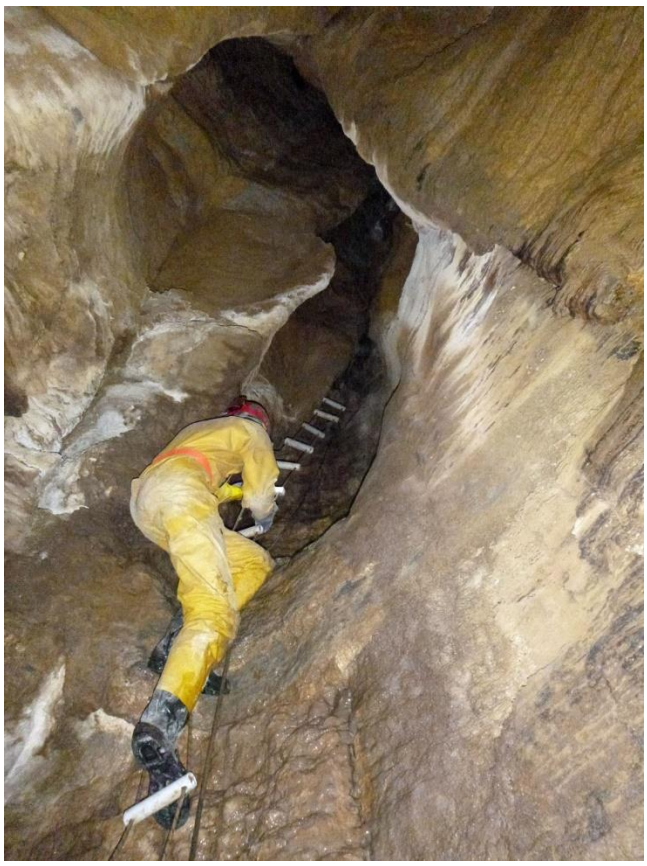
Chris Sharples

Party: Rolan Eberhard, Alan Jackson, Chris Sharples

As part of the Cave Access Policy Zoning Scheme (CAPZS) discussions surrounding Exit Cave, I had suggested that the old bolts and ladder at the bottom of Valley Entrance were starting to look a bit manky (technical term, don't worry about it) and should be replaced. I had been eyeing them over several trips in the last few years, and given that the Valley Entrance through trip in Exit Cave is one of the classic bucket-list trips for visiting (and some local) cavers, I easily convinced Rolan it was time to replace them. So it was that on 25th August 2020 I found myself again making the slightly awkward and annoying descent of Valley Entrance with Rolan and Alan.

We all agreed that the bottom of Valley Entrance needed a new ladder and bolts, with the old ones showing signs of fraying and corrosion, respectively. This 6-metre pitch is the only vertical bit needing some sort of aid in the classic Valley Entrance through trip, and it would be a shame to have to bring SRT gear just for this one spot, hence the ladder. Fortunately, Rolan had brought along some shiny new stainless-steel P-hangers, so Rolan and Alan set about installing them at the head of the ladder pitch while I wandered off downstream for a bit of photography. Nothing worthy of the *NSS Newsletter* front cover resulted, I am afraid. Meanwhile Rolan and Alan finished the installation of the new P-hangers, however they still need to be tested before being connected to a new ladder. That should happen sometime during the coming summer, however anybody planning a Valley Entrance trip before then should be aware they will still need to rely on the old bolts and ladder.

With the main job done, we spent some time exploring the Southern Passage area as far as the start of Kellars Squeeze and including parts of various side passages. Rolan was on the lookout for big old bones on the basis of a megafauna bone having previously been reported near Kellars Squeeze, but nothing of that sort was located. However, one highlight was a side trip to a rather spectacular aven mapped just south of Kellars Squeeze, which is accessed by a narrow and in places awkward passage leading to a spectacular balcony with views both up and down the aven.



Rolan trying out the old ladder in the bottom of Valley Entrance. Still safe but certainly showing signs of age. Photo: Chris Sharples.

The return back up Valley Entrance was just a bit more annoying than the gravity-assisted way down. So, here's a tip: Exit Cave through-trips which only involve negotiating Valley Entrance in the downwards direction are more fun!

H-11 Big Mama

29 August 2020

Gabriel Kinzler (text and photos)

Party: Alan Jackson, Gabriel Kinzler

Determined not to let this cave drag on any longer, I recently put my foot down and took an oath: I'd go back and finish the job, with no more than a couple of weeks between each trip (which still sounds lazy somehow). And this time, I had a secret weapon: Alan Jackson. No messing around. After all, the only thing Ben Armstrong achieved was to make the cave *bigger*, last time around. Bugger. Anyway, my plan was: 'Veni, vidi, survei'.

Big Mama can be divided into two main sections located either side of the Main Chamber: to the west and level with it, a relatively dry section shooting up into various upper levels and, to the south-east, a wet section draining the hill's water from various directions, including the main entrance streamlet, but also a couple of bigger ones coming from who knows where. Pretty classic setup.

Alan mindfully proposed we survey the dry stuff before going skinny dipping in the wet one. I was on book duty. Serena Benjamin and I had surveyed half of it in 2019 and a few things needed tidying up, including sloping passage beyond Handkerchief Chamber, a vadose corridor named Slice'n'Dice with its prominent drapery blade (The Guillotine) almost blocking the way and making for a giggly work-around, as well as a separate aven located above Handkerchief Chamber, which is partly climbable thanks to chunky flowstone features. We finished the dry section once and for all and derigged the small pitches and traverse that lead to it.

Now onto the pièce de résistance. The wet section is reached through the Durex Squeeze, located directly under the entrance pitch. After said squeeze, a 6 m pitch is encountered, which opens into Lasso Chamber, named so after I chucked a bowline on a small rope and spent 10

minutes trying to lasso my way up a 4 m wall leading to more open passage.

The handy lasso catching on minimal natural.

Lasso Chamber is rather big and fairly decorated in parts, with some very long straws as a centrepiece and a thick stalagmite reminiscent of the one at Lake Pluto. Up the Lasso handline, we pushed ahead, against the flow of a little streamway. The latter gets fairly constricted and pools up at two separate "ducks" that force you to go almost fully immersed for a chance to continue, to the great displeasure of Alan. He whinged and complained so much that this area became known as the Whinge Streamway, with its two "Whiny Ducks". I think that was the first time ever I had to tell him to quit moaning and get on with it. Adults, these days… Not much was found at the end of the streamway, which curls back on itself disappointingly yet expectedly.

Back at Lasso Chamber, another distinct water inlet pops in, seemingly coming from the Main Chamber directly above, and quickly disappears again into a sump under a rockpile I'd failed to check last time. Alan went in and made the cave another 2 metres deeper, to reach a depth of 113 m. I initially believed this was base level, based on a quick calculation: cave entrance's elevation minus Hot Springs Creek's elevation equals approximately 120 m. This was deduced using the LIST 1:25,000 topographic map of the area, but later evidence showed that the map is off by some margin, and the cave would become quite a bit deeper than that.

One of the wet ducks that almost got the better of Alan.

With about 500 m of new passage surveyed, we started heading out, satiated. However, right before rejoining Durex Squeeze, I pointed to an area I hadn't checked out at all. We had a quick poke and… cue the next trip report.

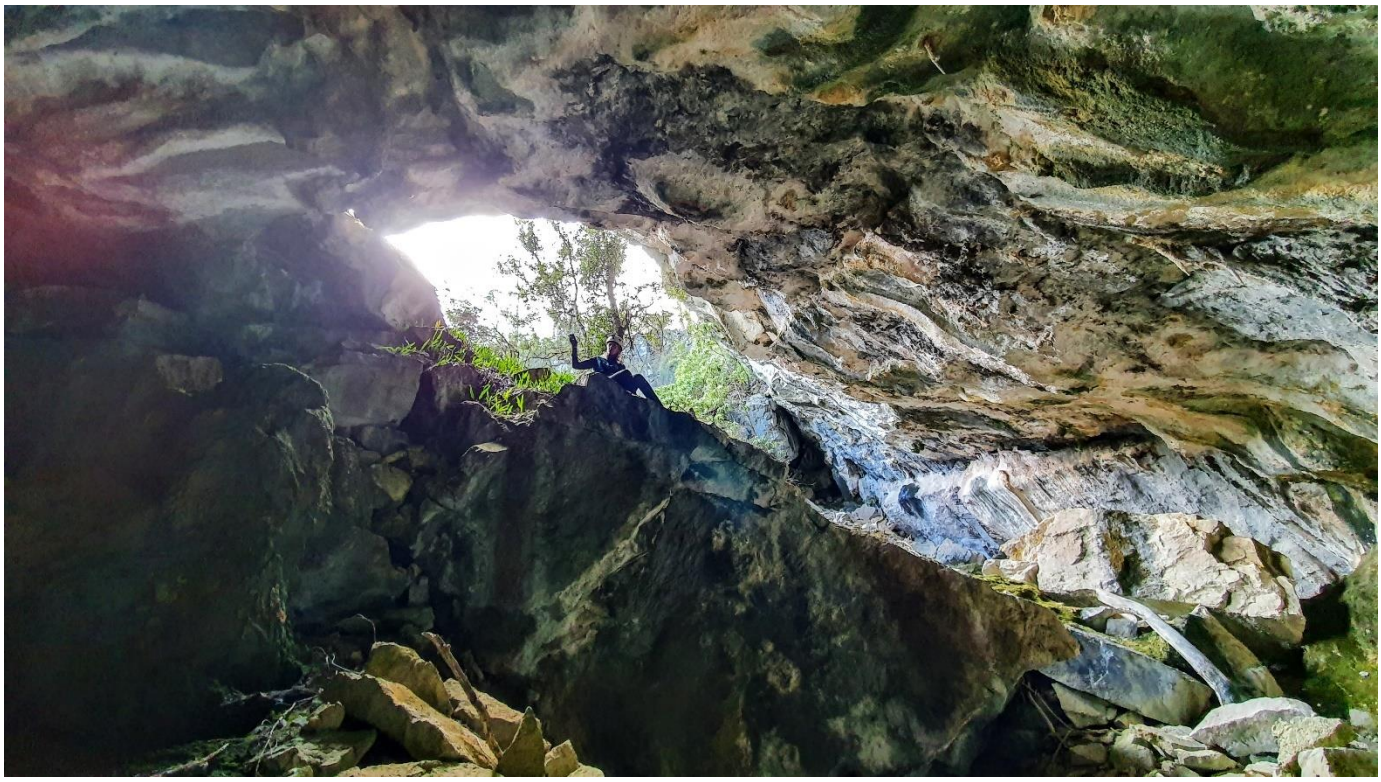
JF-63, 64, 65 Ross Walker Cave, some surface bashing and two new caves (JF-696 & JF-697)

30 August 2020

Alan Jackson (text and photos)

Party: Serena Benjamin, Alan Jackson

The main aim of the day was to locate and survey Ross Walker Cave. The existing survey is dated 1946 and the original data doesn't exist so far as I know. We decided to head there via Junee Cave rather than the semi-traditional traverse from the old Junee quarry and thus parked at the main Junee Cave carpark.



Spoiler alert: they found it.

First job was a mini investigation of the weird water flow I'd observed at JF-31 a fortnight or so before with James. Water had been flowing from the main Junee River into a hole beside the JF-31 entrance and it wasn't clear if it was just swishing around and coming back into the main river or flowing into JF-31 and disappearing. The river level was quite a bit higher than it had been the last time I was there but still doing its weird little flow thing. A very quick and tiny trace indicated that the water was just coming out again in the main channel a few metres away after going under the large log in the vicinity. Occam's razor usually wins.

Next we headed to the weather station I'd installed for Steve near the old Junee Cave track foot bridge to do a card swap but the lights weren't flashing the way they were meant to be so I rang Steve for advice. (Caving in phone range! Luxury.) He diagnosed a fault so I stripped the whole thing instead for posting back to Steve for analysis. Just short of Junee Cave entrance we speared off to the right up the steep ferny banks and more or less followed the gully up above Junee. A small LiDAR target was checked about half way to Ross Walker Cave and it was just a small closed depression choked with mud and crap. The going then got quite steep with limestone scree and moss. The JF-65 entrance was where the GPS said it should be and we commenced the survey, picking up the JF-64 and JF-63 entrances/tags on the way. Nice and interesting cave about 150 m long with a ~35 m vertical range. Quite slippery too (just ask the bruise on Serena's bum).

Sexy bits in JF-696.

Survey complete and entrances/tag locations photographed for the archive, we initially made a failed attempt at locating the JF-64 entrance on the surface (not friendly vegetation), then headed east to my next LiDAR target the other side of the gully. It didn't seem like anything when we got there but to my surprise there was a lovely little entrance near the top of the ridge. It descended steeply through a veil of tree roots for at least 20 m so Serena headed in for a look while I affixed the JF-696 tag on the sloping ceiling slab just inside the entrance on the left.

By the time I joined Serena with the survey gear she was at shouting distance, a black speck in the distance. The cave was descending with the dip (about 35-40 degrees) and went about 90 m, getting progressively taller and wider as it went. Loads and loads of moonmilk in all its forms – very pretty but very soft/delicate and somewhat slippery. A bit of a climb down under blocks at the end reached an end in a moonmilky splodge 'sump'. A very narrow passage with a faint draught headed back under the cave above but was not pushed due to us both being four times too big for the hole. Not a good prospect and, frankly, this cave really shouldn't be visited again as it is simply too fragile. It took a few days but we settled on Angular Momentum as a name – it was a bit hard to slow down if you accidentally got any speed up in there. The engineers and physicists would probably argue that considering the linear nature of the cave that "Linear Momentum" would be more fitting but the day cave names have to make sense is the day I'll retire.

Moonmilk stals in JF-696.

We surveyed our way out (~90 metres long and 54 m deep), taking some photos on the way, then headed down the steep hill into the next gully to check another LiDAR target. Just another choked depression but 30 m away on the way to our next target there was a small hole next to a tiny rock face. This tube was crawled down for 9 m to a perpendicular joint which pinched off in both directions after less than a metre. We tagged it JF-697 on the little rock face on the left just under the dripline and shot a leg down it for direction/angle.

Back up hill again for a bit to a very nice-looking LiDAR feature which Steve had also spotted and sent to me. It was a nice enclosed depression with a small bedrock face on the western side but alas no cave. Nearly all the other targets in this area were uphill and we'd signed up for a soft day, so we barrelled downhill to check two more small features I'd pulled off the LiDAR. Both were just tiny nothings and we stormed steeply down the hill, popping out on the Junee Cave track 20 m from JF-30. I slithered into JF-30 as I could hear running water and I wanted to see if it was possible to set up a dye detector here for a JF-99 The Chairman trace. Under the conditions of the day, yes, it would work, but you'd have to time it well as this only flows during quite high stage.

One last activity was attempted: trying to locate JF-90 Vandal/Vandalisation Cave. Using the dot derived from Rolan's 1990s JF map we headed into the man ferns a few hundred metres back down the Junee Road. We didn't find any caves but we did find a cluster of five or so small enclosed depressions, which had a ring of blue and white flagging tape at a ~20 m radius around it. There was a line of blue tapes to the west (logging coupe boundary?) so we presumed this area will soon be harvested and the ring of tapes was to mark off the sink holes as a machinery exclusion zone. I checked on the Sustainable Timber Tasmania website when I got home and confirmed the whole area is up for logging later this year or early next so I emailed Adrian Slee at the Forest Practices Authority and he confirmed that activity and that the relevant STT planner had located a small cave with two entrances south of where we'd been looking, which sounds like JF-90. He would supply me with coordinates once he'd chased them up.

Trees were starting to blow over in the high winds by this stage, making it a little disconcerting being in the forest, so we headed home at a very leisurely hour.

JF – Clean Up Crew in Aisle Seven

1 September 2020

Alan Jackson (photos Russell Fulton)

Party: Russell Fulton, Alan Jackson

Steve Fordyce had been working so hard collating and sifting through club records to piece together a definitive JF cave location database and integrated whiz bang GIS thingy that it guilted me into doing something about the various untagged caves I've been responsible for throwing into the club GPS over the years. Russell and Greg have been doing a fair bit of LiDAR reconnaissance work in the JF too and compiling their own list of informally documented features, including some in areas that overlapped my own misdemeanours. Rolan had been active in this area recently, too. A day in the bush cleaning up the legacy was in order.

We started at the end of the western branch of Chrisps Road (Tachycardia track start) and bumbled in as far as the JF-568 sink. We then turned left and followed the northern side of the base of the gully. The JF-568 sink is a bit erratic. Sometimes it sinks in JF-568, sometimes it sinks ten metres short of JF-568, sometimes it re-emerges further down the gully and flows on the surface for 40 m before sinking into a wee muddy slot and once I was there and there was no sign of any water within earshot of JF-568. Today it was sinking in the wee muddy slot. Our first real target was to try to locate JF-251 from the 1970s. Interestingly, it is described as being a swallet when first found but upon returning it was dry, so this suggests that the JF-568 stream has been playing silly buggers for decades now.

Before getting to the JF-251 area I found myself a bit too high on the northern side of the gully and stumbled across a cave which I recognised as 'PostPoo3' from a foray in 2015 (Jackson 2015). First clean up job of the day was done. We tagged it JF-698 on the right wall just inside the entrance and I popped in for a look (only David Butler had entered it in 2015). It was much as he described – a short, awkwardly tight ~2 m climb to a small chamber with some decoration and a selection of dead native animals. I took some bone photos for Rolan to inspect (looked like extant species to me, but best to leave that to the experts), did a quick sketch and headed off again.

We found nothing that matched JF-251's description other than the large obvious doline in the base of the gully. Russell had inspected this on a previous visit and reported there was no exposed limestone or cave associated with it and I concurred. But what I did notice was that there has been a very recent collapse all the way round this feature and all the exposed clay and dolerite boulders aren't yet showing any signs of vegetation colonisation, not even moss. So for now we've decided that since it is located in the right place based on previous descriptions, is the right diameter, would take the water if the JF-568 stream decided to make it that far and there's nothing else in the general area that even remotely matches the criteria, that this feature is almost certainly JF-251 but has been lost to collapse. I entered it in the GPS as 'JF-251?' Mystery solved so far as I was concerned.

JF-251 description from Harris (2014):

JF-251 – Location: in valley west of western extension of Chrisps Road 150 yards above level of road. Description: doline 30 ft in diameter taking creek of approximately ½ cusec, doline 15 ft deep, passage appears to run below general valley floor, entrance very small, possibilities not great, probably choked, drop of not more than 30 ft.

We then continued west on the old Adamsfield Track to the ruins of Chrisps Hut. Fascinating little bit of history and various artefacts lying about the place. Interestingly, there is a small surface stream which crosses the track 30 m west of the hut site and I guess its existence was a key factor in why the hut was built where it was, as this is really the last surface water you'll find at this kind of elevation until the track gets well beyond The Gap. We had a bit of a bumble about east of the hut for JF-114 and JF-115 which are supposedly adjacent to the Adamsfield Track in the vicinity of Chrisps Hut (Annan 1977) but we had no luck. In hindsight we should have looked further west of the hut, as Anon. (1977) [presumably John Parker] notes in his JF-114 tagging report that the cave is '¼mile past Chrisps Hut' and I strongly suspect they were accessing the area via the Adamsfield Track off the end of the Chrisps Road logging area. Next time.

Alan at JF-699. On a ladder, in a fabric suit, gosh.

Now we turned up the hill and made our way to 'PostPooCave' (another from Jackson (2015)). This is described as having two vertical options about 5-6 m deep. For this reason I'd just thrown in a 30 foot ladder rather than

rope and SRT gear. The doline is a mess, choked with all manner of rotting logs and vegetation. I located what looked like a black hole and started shifting offending material and the time they took to hit the bottom made me wonder if the ladder would be long enough. We set up the ladder and I started down. Turns out it's a 15 m shaft. I went to the last rung and had a look around. I couldn't free climb the last five metres but I was happy to see that there was passage continuing off and that an easily discernible inward draught was dropping down the quite spacious shaft. We tagged it JF-699 on the back wall a metre or so down the shaft in the first real rock and vowed to return with a bit more equipment. This being the first of the three 'Post Poo' caves, I think it can have the official name of Post Poo Cave, named as such due to it being found after (post) a trip to JF-268 Pooshooter (poo).

Upslope to one of Russell's LiDAR targets was next cab off the rank. We circled it neatly before finally nailing it down and discovered it was just a nice little blocked depression and could be crossed off the list. Further upslope was another of Russell's targets so we headed up and found it was pretty much the same as the last but with a massive tree exploded in the middle of it. No cave.

We were now quite close to where Rolan's red-taped route* to JF-663 traverses the hillside, so we intersected it and followed it up the hill as there was another good LiDAR target in that general direction. Rolan's route traversed only ten metres above the target so it seemed highly likely that it had been seen before. It was a very nice feature with a right angle of ~8 m high cliffs on the top side and a steep muddy slope on the lower side to an inviting walk in entrance. I looked closely for signs of previous visitation and eventually found a couple of boot prints near the bottom, confirming previous exploration. Basically, it descends steeply for ~20 m in a ~1.5 m wide joint/rift to a small chamber with a nice bunch of straws as well as a little side passage halfway down accessed through a tight window to a similarly small chamber with a bit of mud. Not much of a cave in the end but certainly worth documenting so we placed JF-700 on the left wall at around eye height at the entrance to the cave proper, shot a leg down the main passage, sketched a bit, entrance photo and buggered off. Upon reflection and reading, I am convinced that this cave is the last cave listed in Eberhard (2018) found by Petr.

Post trip discussions with Steve indicated he was pretty excited about the 700 tag being used and suggested an anti-James Bond (007) joke name was required. Steve asked for antithetical James Bond puns on the Facebook page and we decided the best one was Quantum of Disappointment offered by Russell – a play on *Quantum of Solace* which aptly described the disappointing nature of the cave after promising so much with that lovely entrance. I'm just happy no one suggested Cavey McCaveface.

We figured we were very close to JF-663 by now so decided to continue following the red-taped route so we could get a GPS coordinate and an entrance photo. A couple hundred metres further along the track terminated at this spectacular entrance. The tag was located on the rock arch immediately over the entrance/pitch (textbook location). We did our documentation thing and about faced. This cave is yet to be surveyed.

We followed the red-taped track all the way back down to a ~15 m deep shaft right beside the track which Rolan had found (Eberhard 2018) and Russell and Greg had also stumbled across more recently. Rolan called this Green Frog Cave and jokingly assigned it the number JF-Z111 in private correspondence just to shit stir my hatred of Z caves. I suspected we would be having insufficient ladder length problems again but threw it down anyway so I could have a better look and access some rock for a tag. The tag JF-701 was affixed 1.5 down from the top of the shaft on the eastern wall. At the bottom of the ladder I was a few metres short of the floor but there was a narrow bit I decided I could chimney down so I climbed off the end of the ladder and had a look. At the lower end of the shaft floor a short bit of narrow passage terminated in a little chamber with some dead animals. Sketch, photo, waypoint etc. and time to move on. The other entrance Rolan refers to in Eberhard (2018) in his Green Frog Cave description was located a short distance upslope and being only ~3 m deep and not overly interesting it was not tagged.

About 120 m west of JF-701 was a feature in the GPS labelled 'JF-W27cave' which was an entrance Steve had recorded when surface bashing in this area last year (Fordyce 2020). It was 2 m wide and 2 m deep and filled with loose rock and crap and didn't warrant a tag so we continued another ~100 m west to the last of my three 2015 caves, 'PostPoo2'. This was a marginal feature for tagging, being about 4 m deep and 8 m long but the extent of speleothems throughout pushed us over the threshold and it was tagged JF-702 in the high point of the entrance arch. This was our last clean up job so we wearily but happily headed back to the car.

On the way home I did two short side jobs. First was to visit JF-633 Ring Hole on a mission from Steve and the second was to try to find JF-90 beside Junee Road based on the advice Adrian Slee had given me since my last look two days earlier. It was located very quickly and easily and locked away in the GPS forever. I didn't find the reputed second entrance but that will come in time.

A satisfyingly productive day.

**I should point out that the 'red-taped route' of Rolan's referred to here can't be relied upon to be easily followed for much longer. He used biodegradable paper flagging tape which is in pretty ratty condition already. Good for the planet/bush but not good for long-term tracks, which this route was never meant to be.*

REFERENCES

Annan, A. 1977 Chrisps Hut Area – early January, 1977. *Speleo Spiel* 120: 5

Anon. 1977 Maydena Branch Report. *Speleo Spiel* 123: 2

Eberhard, R. 2018 New JF cave numbers: The Chasm and other holes. *Speleo Spiel* 413: 13-14

Fordyce, S. 2020 Tachycardia Area Surface Bashing. *Speleo Spiel* 437: 18

Harris, C. 2014 71-72/1 Junee-Florentine Area Date: 1/5/71. *Southern Caver* 68: 39-40

Jackson, A. 2015 JF268 Pooshooter. *Speleo Spiel* 410: 10-11

JF-345 Ice Tube – Recovery Mission

9 September 2020

Alan Jackson

Party: Karina Anders, Serena Benjamin, Alan Jackson

There might have been a small incident with a stuck rope in this cave back in February. The planets had finally aligned for launching the recovery mission. The track was in delightful condition (quelle surprise !). Water levels were moderately energetic: P2 (Degenerated Man) was unpleasant; P10 (Killing Joke) was particularly icky and P11 (Maelstrom) was ridiculous.

The culprit. Photo: Alan Jackson.

We discovered the cause of the problem with the P7 (Fabulous Spangley) pull through. Some dickhead(s) didn't remove the knot from the end of the rope before pulling it up. $#%*! Ah well, it was ~40 m less rope we had to carry all the way into the cave for this trip.

I took video of the rigging at each pitch head on the way down so I could suss out what was required to upgrade all the shitty rusty hardware to longer-lasting stainless steel on the next trip from the comfort of my loungeroom and I removed all the skanky non-stainless maillons and chains on the way out.

Pretty. Wet.
Photo: Alan Jackson.

We all went to the bottom of P12 (Never Forever) just to be able to say we've been there (although Serena already had). Normally we get off half way down that pitch and slither into Fallopian Tube. The obvious highlight of the trip was that I've now ascended Ice Tube (I've only ever thru-tripped before) so I can count Killing Joke and Fabulous Spangley in my Pitch Baggers points tally. Anything to titillate Janine.

Speaking of which, does the Big Mama/Chromosomia entrance pitch need to be added to this list? Might be time for a republish, Janine.

Nice easy trip with very little to drag out and back at the car around 5 pm.

H-11 Big Mama – "One Last Trip…"

12 September 2020

Alan Jackson

Party: Alan Jackson, Gabriel Kinzler, Ciara Smart

The previous trip had been framed as a 'tidy up the survey and probably derig it' job. We had succeeded in tidying up all the unsurveyed stuff but at the last second Gabriel admitted he'd not looked at the aven off the side near the short pitch which accesses the south-eastern section of the cave so we did a thirty second inspection which revealed a drippy rift dropping away into the unknown and more bloody question marks. Ugh.

So, this trip was definitely the last one. The rift would drop quickly to some squalid sump, the potential horizontal extension Gabriel wanted to bolt traverse to would crap out immediately and we'd all get home early with a derigged cave. It was not to be.

The rift did what it was told to start with. It proved to be a fairly simple free climb apart from the last four metres (which needed a rope) to the predicted squalid sump (which the survey later informed us was a new deepest point at -12**4** m). In the NW direction (back towards the entrance) the rift closed off as hoped but half way back up the rift climb Ciara, who was choosing survey stations, indicated there was a gear-off squeeze to continuing rift in the SE direction and asked if she should/could push it. The day was young and youthful enthusiasm should always be encouraged so she was sent in. It went at least far enough to warrant a survey so we shed our bags and SRT kits and followed her in, expecting to run a couple of legs at most.

Ciara 'It Goes' Smart past the Rift of Mixed Feelings.
Photo: Alan Jackson

The area accessed proved to be the thing Gabriel had wanted to bolt traverse to from the top of the 'pitch'/climb. The rift was almost totally sediment-filled where Ciara had run out of enthusiasm but she reported a dig was not out of the question. I removed the offending blobs of mud after a few minutes of grunting and slithered through to a small step up

with continuing rift to the SE and a spacious void above me. I called the others through (surveying as we went) and decided the bigger stuff up high was the way on so I'd recce the narrow stuff first just to get it done. We never came back for the upper level stuff in the end.

Near Dalmatian Junction. Photo: Gabriel Kinzler

The SE-trending rift kind of petered out at that level but a steep fine gravel slope hooked left and got us into a higher section of the narrow, inclined rift. To the left (NW) it crapped out after a short distance but to the right (SE) it continued on in increasingly large dry passage with a few straws and pretties then intersected a very nice perpendicular passage with straws, stals, deep exposed sediment and gravel banks with distinct banding/layers and a strong draught. Ciara recced left (NE) and came back smiling with what she found (i.e. no end in sight) but decided we'd go right (SW) first.

There was a nice little grotto, then a narrow bit of passage with a pool and then a bloody four-way junction. Gabriel was certainly earning his stripes with managing the book work in this kind of passage, learning how to deal with multiple side passages. Station M18 was marked then we chose right (back to the NW) first. This quickly opened out into a medium chamber with an aven and drips and an ascending grotty mud and choss slope on the far side. This in turn led to a narrow squeeze between fallen blocks into a more serious aven around 20 m high. A dodgy climb at the far end was considered to allow progress up the aven but it was just too wide to chimney so we called it. Plenty of bones from small visitors from the surface.

Back at the four-way junction we went right again (SW) into a grotty loose pile of ascending choss with various interconnected ways on which ultimately wound their way up and back to the NE via a series of medium chambers with 20+ metre avens and the usual array of small skeletons. The final point reached also had some inviting death wish climbs to get further up the avens which we passed on. The survey later revealed we'd almost finished in the same spot as the previous side passage.

The final option at the four-way junction (which we just might name Dalmatian Junction due to the interesting spotty walls) took the tiny amounts water feeding in from the other two drippy aven/inlet leads (and the pool from the way we'd first entered) and dropped steeply in narrow vadose passage. I was tasked with a quick recce to see if was worth it. A couple of small climbs then the water disappeared down an uninvitingly-narrow rift but a crawl along a ledge at the top intersected a fossil passage which lobbed off a ~6 m pitch. Draughting. With the rope and rigging gear miles away and another good dry lead awaiting we decided to leave this section unsurveyed for later if the other stuff crapped out quickly – it was trending SE, into empty space.

The Rocket Plume reminded me (and Janine) of a rocket lifting off. Photo: Gabriel Kinzler

Back at the nice dry pretty T-intersection (survey station M16) we commenced the survey of Ciara's recced dry passage. It descended through what appeared to be phreatic origin passage which had been totally filled with gravels at some point then eroded back out again (great exposed sediment bedding on the walls). It then got low and wide and appeared to finish. But the draught was howling so it had to go somewhere. We discovered a low flattener hiding underneath with a fresh breeze and squeezed in. It was all very nice and dry in here, in sharp contrast to the grotty horror of the other bits we'd done earlier.

The Coconut Ball. Photo: Gabriel Kinzler

The passage turned to very pleasant walking passage then enlarged further into a spectacular straw grotto with a large white calcite column in the middle. This passage was now trending back to the NW and split into two again. Straight ahead/left was low and delicate and suddenly we found ourselves on a loose sediment ledge overlooking a large chamber. It reminded me of the stuff Gab and I had surveyed the week before, downhill/SE of the little pitch. I conjured enough friction to descend the perilous sediment bank and found footprints, so the connection was confirmed. We about-faced and checked the other lead at the nice column.

This lead only went a few legs to a perilous steep sediment slope to a large cracked mud floor chamber many metres below. Without a rope for a handline I couldn't see a way of getting down there safely, let alone getting back up again. Now knowing that we were so close to the previously explored part of the cave I also had a sneaking suspicion it might be somewhere we'd already investigated anyway, so rather than damage the pristine slope we left a pink survey station marker hanging (M61) which we'd be able to see from the bottom and called it. A quick look further down the main passage to the sump from last week's trip indicated no such passage as sighted from station M61 and the survey data later showed this is almost certainly new passage.

The day was getting on now and we didn't have the motivation to go get our vertical gear etc. for the two main remaining leads (and we'd forgotten about the lead above station M8 by this stage). We headed back to the bottom of the pitch via the sediment slope to last week's passage (avoiding all the smaller crawls etc.) then retraced our route from the morning to retrieve our abandoned gear, which importantly contained some much sort-after lunches. At this point we realised our whole day's survey effort was still floating so we also tied the survey of the wet rift back into the large stal near the bottom of the pitch.

A few brain farts were had retrieving the gear. Gab and I surveyed while Ciara went through the rift squeeze to get her and Gab's SRT gear. I was confident all mine was with my bag. Back at the base of the pitch Gabriel discovered Ciara hadn't managed to find all his SRT gear, so he had to shoot back over to grab it. Upon his return I started putting my SRT gear on only to discover some of mine was also sitting beyond the bloody squeezy rift, so I got to run back over there too. Idiots.

We found a small new vertical entrance on the walk home too which will need to be tagged and explored.

So, the cave remains rigged with three open leads awaiting the next party. In total we added 503 m to the survey and made it 8 m deeper. Big Mama's waistline is growing. It was a great fun trip with varied and interesting caving and plenty of banter/good company. Semi-retirement at Hastings is where it's at, man.

JF-344 Serendipity

13 September 2020

Karina Anders

Party: Karina Anders, Andreas Klocker, Petr Smejkal

Andreas, Petr and I went to Serendipity. Getting to the cave was no problem however we couldn't find the tag on the cave entrance so we did spend a bit of time deciding if it was in fact the right cave. Petr forgot his gloves and Andreas' new repair on his PVC suit broke when he was putting the suit on, we were off to a good start.

Once inside, it was easy to tell that we were in the right cave as the passages were matching the map. A handline was put in over a cascading waterfall (when there is no water it is usually climbed). We made it to the first pitch and I got to rig it under supervision. After the first pitch we scrambled and crawled our way to pitch 2. Whilst Petr was rigging, I dropped his food/spare gear bag down the pitch and it landed half way down on a ledge. Luckily, Petr was able to Tarzan swing across to it. Not too much time was lost.

Shortly after we descended the third pitch which was a short 4 m drop over some cascades. Some more scrambling and crawling brought us to the fourth pitch which was decently awkward. I managed to drop my left glove and continued with only my right for the rest of the trip. Dropping things seemed to be my theme of the day. However, I was very thankful to my new hood which stopped the water trickling down my suit as we descended. We didn't make it down the last pitch due to running out of rigging gear, so it was light work on the way out. To avoid the muddy exit, Petr decided to exit the cave via the entrance that the stream flowed into. I followed shortly but Andreas missed the memo. Whilst we started taking our gear off Andreas was nowhere to be seen, we soon heard him calling that he couldn't figure out how to get out of the cave. It was a few minutes of Petr yelling 'follow the water' and Andreas replying 'I can't find the exit', with me laughing before Andreas got out. All in all, a fun cave with some good obstacles.

IB-14 Exit Cave – Hammer Passage

15 September 2020

Chris Sharples

Party: Chris Sharples, Alan Jackson, Rolan Eberhard, Serena Benjamin, Elise Dewar (DPIPWE), David Holley (PWS)

Discussions around the draft Cave Access Policy Zoning Statement (CAPZS) for Exit Cave took place during 2019-2020 between STC and Rolan Eberhard (wearing his DPIPWE karst management hat). One outcome was agreement on the need for a site visit to review the proposed Special Management Zone (SMZ) for Hammer Passage. As a result, one fine Tuesday the above-named STC representatives accompanied Rolan into the cave along with Elise (from DPIPWE) and David (from Parks & Wildlife), who were coming along to participate in the discussions and see a serious cave. I repeatedly assured Elise and David that the part of Exit Cave they were about to see is the most "cathedral-like" part of the whole cave (which of course depends on one's expectations of cathedrals…). Alan seemed particularly excited by the amount of stringline and pegs that Rolan was carrying into the cave, suggestive of possible management options to be discussed, and in any case providing Alan with an apparently eagerly desired opportunity to video cave management works in practice.

Hammer Passage is an old stream passage now perched high and dry some tens of metres above the present-day main cave stream, the top of whose passage it intersects at nearly a right angle. However, Hammer Passage still preserves evidence of having once been a major stream passage, in the form of sporadic exposures of stream cobbles of Permian-age fossiliferous marine siltstone carried into the cave from outside at a much earlier stage of cave development (much the same as the cobbles in the bed of the present day cave stream). As with some other very old high-level passages in Exit Cave, parts of Hammer Passage exhibit lovely examples of extensive moon-milk deposits and other speleothems, but sadly in some areas with significant evidence of previous damage by insufficiently careful cavers. Previous string lining efforts before Hammer Squeeze have probably minimised continued damage in the outer part of Hammer Passage, however with such deposits being also extensive but much less damaged beyond Hammer Squeeze, the major issue of the day was how best to prevent further damage in the latter area.

A narrow and mostly clearly-defined trail of previous trog-marks was followed to near the far extent of Hammer Passage, at which point it was difficult to see any way on without creating new trog marks across gypsum crusts and the like, so we stopped there. Without necessarily foreclosing management options, Rolan decided it would be prudent to stringline the already-trogged route back through the main decorated section of "inner" Hammer Passage. The crew set about doing this, which not only significantly reduced the load to be got back through Hammer Squeeze, but also made Alan suspiciously gleeful at the amount of video footage he was able to capture of Rolan rolling out the stringline. Try repeating the last bits of that sentence several times. He must be planning to do something with all that video…

Just to round off this report in the accepted manner, everybody got out of the cave and made it back to the cars without trauma. Indeed, it must be said that Serena showing special enthusiasm to get back to town in time for an STC social event involving whisky-sampling at the secretary's place of work (a whisky distillery).

Rolan thinking "But who invited him? WHY?!". Photo: Alan Jackson

JF-685 & JF-686 – The Gormie Sinks

20 September 2020

Bill Nicholson

Party: Philip Jackson, Bill Nicholson, Tamara Shearing

This escape from reality was just a continuation of the previous silliness (*Speleo Spiel* 439), with the goal of actually tagging and survey of both dolines.

Prime tag placement.
Photo: Bill Nicholson

This was achieved with no or little fuss as in line with our professional approach to such matters, leaving us dubious ones plenty of time for a wee tea party amongst the fernery.

One of the Gormenghast Sinks.
Photo: Bill Nicholson

[Editor: see the 'Maps' section further down for a detailed drawing of the dolines.]

White Hawk Creek

29 September 2020

Alan Jackson (text and photos)

Party: Paul Darby, Lyndsey Gray, Alan Jackson, Anna Jackson, Ben Jackson, Janine McKinnon, Ric Tunney

A random phone call from Lyndsey a few months earlier got us planning a trip to Lake Mackintosh. School holidays were selected and a few days camping added to the agenda to make the long trip west worth it. We only spent the one day doing karst-related stuff and cut things short by a day due to inclement weather but all in all it was a delightful outing.

White Hawk Creek is a small patch of Gordon limestone up the Brougham River, partly drowned by the Mackintosh Dam hydro-electric operation. The explorable extent of some of the caves is dependent upon the dam levels. There are twenty-something recorded entrances and a number of reasonable caves. Paul and Lyndsey had some tidy up jobs to do in the area, getting good GPS fixes, locating tags, taking photos etc. and a bit of boating, rainforest and caving is a good excuse to get out. Lyndsey was also keen to improve the botanical records for the area, so I was on fern and general plant hunting duty.

Lunch while lost.

I can't recall all the cave names and numbers but I'm sure P&L will record all that in the next *Speleopod*. We started with a tourist in a sizeable cave and found a giant forest harvestman was also visiting the cave – fabulous bloody great things. Then a tag-finding mission over the ridge (WC6?) in a cave where mineral prospectors had left an old wooden ladder and various bits of sieving and digging implements lying around.

WC-9 entrance.

We then headed up White Hawk Creek searching for some known caves but failed to find them. Eventually we called it lunch time and admitted the map and GPS needed to be consulted. Turned out we were in a tributary and should have turned up a dry valley many hundreds of metres earlier so we straight lined it over the intervening ridge and found our targets where White Hawk Creek sinks. We found and documented the three known caves in this area, as well as having a poke in a new 'cave'. It was very tight and we sent our smallest party member, Ben, as forward probe and it didn't go far. We wandered back to the boat and did some touristing on the lake to round out the day.

Ben's 'new' cave.

Tough times during COVID.

It was a lovely day – good weather, good company, fabulous forest and scenery. Thanks very much to P&L for floating the idea and to Ric and Janine for making it possible with their boat.

H-11 Big Mama – The Last Hurrah (for now)

17 October 2020

Alan Jackson

Party: Alan Jackson, Anna Jackson, Gabriel Kinzler, Janine McKinnon, Ciara Smart, Ric Tunney

This was the third 'final' trip to Big Mama. Third time lucky, perhaps.

On the way up the hill we stopped at the new hole Ciara found on the walk out on the previous trip. Gabriel, Janine and Ric continued on to Big Mama to have a tourist and avoid a six-person traffic jam on the entrance pitch while Anna, Ciara and I recced the new hole. The entrance is quite tight so we opted for lowering Ciara in and lifting her out rather than expecting the extra bulk of SRT gear to fit or be convenient to use. A well-placed tree over the entrance provided a convenient rigging point and Ciara was lowered down the ~5 m entrance drop. Staying on belay, she descended a short slope and reported an ensuing pitch (estimated at 20 m) followed by several seconds of rattling and bouncing rocks. It was tight though.

Super Mario entering the H-16 Warp Pipe.
Photo: Alan Jackson

With only a 16 m rope to hand the recce was complete and a return pencilled in for some time in the future. We then swapped the lower to a simple counterweight and Ciara climbed the lower section of the entrance pitch and I provided anti-gravity assistance for her through the tight entrance. We tagged the entrance H-16 on the small ~1 m high bedrock face to the right (north) of the entrance and moved up to Big Mama.

Ric was just heading down as we arrived, so nice timing. By the time we got down the other three had done their basic tourist of the main chamber below the entrance pitch and Ric was preparing to depart (the lure of new passage beyond the squeeze wasn't strong enough to get him to stay). We joined the other two at the top of the first of the two pitch leads we'd left undescended on the previous trip (Gargoyle Pitch at labelled pink tape survey station M61).

Anna passing the Incumbrant Straw at Gargoyle Pitch
Photo: Janine McKinnon

Two screws in the ceiling saw us down the steep sediment bank and poking around for a way on. Ciara stripped down and pushed the tight continuation at the lowest point but to no avail. Gabriel pushed the lead up the mud bank and made a visual connection with the 'coconut ball' decoration in the direction of Lasso Chamber but we opted not to exit that way as it was fragile and well-decorated and thus not acceptable to impact upon it when we had an alternative route.

Coarse and fine sedimental layering in Gargoyle Chamber
Photo: Janine McKinnon

On the way back up the pitch I traversed over the top of the big exposed sediment cliff to double check it closed off in that direction, which it did. So not much new passage but very interesting exposed laminated sediments with alternating coarse and fine particle size layers which might get some scientist enthusiastic in the future.

We derigged and moved along to Dalmatian Junction to push lead number two (turning left immediately after labelled pink tape survey station M18). Gabriel went off on a solo sketching mission to get some extra floor detail for his map while the rest of us headed down the muddy tight, ephemeral streamway lead I'd looked at quickly on the previous trip.

Patience is the mother of all virtues.
Photo: Janine McKinnon

At the pitch head (~6 m) we installed two screws and toddled down the splatty mud obstacle which had stopped me last time. The passage turned 90 degrees to the right, crossed a static pool, turned 90 degrees left and dropped over a ~3 m pitch. We harvested the tail of the rope from the previous pitch and installed two more screws to get us down the next drop. From here the passage descended into the distance in nice open dimensions.

Mud in all shapes and forms.
Photo: Alan Jackson

About 30 m down a junction with a small stream was intersected. Both upstream and downstream appeared open and appealing. Gabriel re-joined us at this point. We chose downstream, scaling a small free-climb to low, wide, steeply descending passage which we slipped and slid our way down for ~40 m to a reasonably inviting-looking sump. We couldn't convince Janine to wade in and see if it was just a duck. We commenced the survey out.

At the earlier junction (labelled survey station G17) Ciara checked upstream and was presented with two ~ 3 m climbs. The one on the right was fairly simple and lead to tall vadose rift with sketchy loose climbs up through large boulders at the end. Ciara made an attempt and threw some choice boulders down in the process so we called it a 'future generations' climb and retreated. The passage atop the left-hand climb looked quite inviting but getting there proved too risky so we filed that in 'future generations' too. Perhaps a short bolt traverse from atop the right-hand climb would be a safer/simpler approach rather than the direct route. We continued the survey out and derigged the two pitches. About 150 m of new stuff in that section.

We took the alternative route out to the entrance so we could check the up lead in the crawly mud and gravel passages (in the vicinity of unmarked stations M8/M9). Gabriel made one failed attempt at scaling the slick muddy climb, re-zeroing his altitude in a particularly comical slide. I got a couple of metres further to a vertical section and could see a further 10+ m up into spacious aven/rift but it couldn't be free-climbed safely and didn't look particularly interesting so we left that for future generations too.

The slog through the low crawl and the traverse and climb of the muddy, drippy bottomless rift wasn't particularly enjoyable but all soldiered through with minimal whinging and up the final rock fall climbs to arrive back at the bottom of the short pitch below Durex Squeeze and queued up for the exit.

Gabriel derigged the entrance pitch and had an exciting altercation with a large log which decided to launch itself from above (the pitch is littered with large pieces of rotting timber which until now had seemed fairly secure). It landed in his lap, bridged on his cowstails between him and the rebelay. Two cave rescues in two weeks would have been too much, so thankfully he managed to shove the cumbersome load down the pitch and escape significant injury.

We returned to Ros Skinner's house, tired and sore, for an evening of too much food and gossip. (Thanks very much to Ros for putting us all up for the weekend – much appreciated.)

H-11 Big Mama – Janine's Perspective

17 October 2020

Janine McKinnon, with closing notes by Gabriel Kinzler

Party: Alan Jackson, Anna Jackson, Gabriel Kinzler, Janine McKinnon, Ciara Smart, Ric Tunney

It's not often we arrive at the carpark at 8:30 am. Staying the night at Ros Skinner's place at Hastings, a 10-minute drive away, had a lot to do with this early arrival. Everything actually.

The walk to the cave was almost precisely the hour that we had been told it would be and the gymnastics required through the forest had not been exaggerated either. It was a delightful forest though, and well worth the ramble in itself.

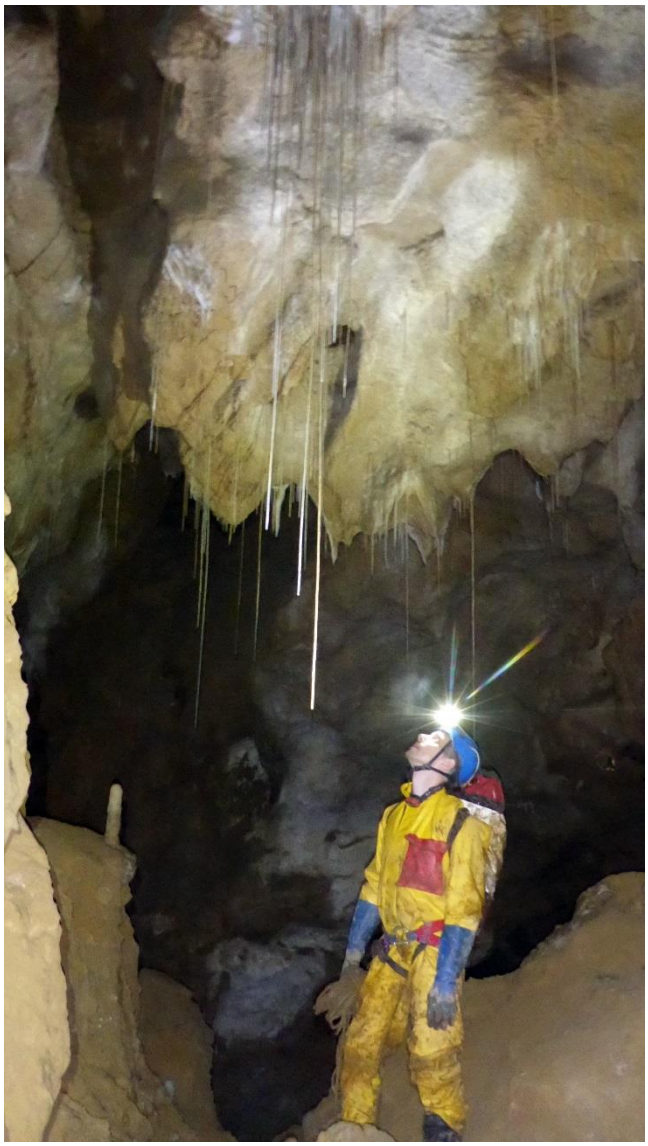
Only 5 minutes before our objective a small vertical hole was passed. Enthusiasm to drop down was not to be denied, so Ciara volunteered to check it out. Gabriel, Ric and I left the others to it and continued to Big Mama, to start down and save the delays on the entrance pitch.

Girthy individual near the Durex Pitch.
Photo: Janine McKinnon

The objectives for the day were to continue exploration down a couple of short pitches, survey what was found, tidy up some sketches from previous trips and de-rig the cave if we could finish it all up today. Ric, Gabriel and I abseiled to the main chamber down the entrance pitch and Gabriel sketched whilst we looked around and generally chilled.

The others hadn't arrived by the time Gabriel had finished sketching so he and I proceeded through the squeeze to the next section of cave. Ric wasn't keen on that so he headed out.

The straws and decorations in this part of the cave were a real surprise to me. They were quite significant. We took photos, looked around for leads they had missed on previous trips, and waited for the others to arrive.



>5 m straws hang from the roof in Lasso Chamber
Photo: Janine McKinnon

The Editor is quite fond of the Coconut Ball. Photo: Janine McKinnon

Once reunited we moved to the restriction leading to the first undescended pitch. This led to a moderately-sizeable chamber and a few leads, all of which ended quickly, except for one which led back to a previous chamber we had been in; circuits and roundabouts in this cave. This was surveyed and we moved back to known ground, and on to the next undescended pitch (via a rather convoluted route).

H-11 contains numerous well-preserved critters. Photo: Janine McKinnon

Gabriel stayed back to finish sketching and the rest of us dropped a short 6 m pitch, and soon found another short pitch. With no rope left Alan cut the spare rope off the one we had and this gave us enough to get down this last pitch. Gabriel rejoined us somewhere along the way. The cave wandered a little and then we found a steeply descending rift, which ended in a sump. A not very enticing-looking sump. Despite Alan desperately trying to con me into wading around in it and attempting to free dive it, I declined. I don't see it having any potential, but I could be wrong. So any super-keen divers of the future can give it a go.

We surveyed out from there, completing the surveying of the cave. A few more leads were checked on the way up from the sump, most heading upwards. A large rock (small boulder?) crashed down as Ciara pushed up one lead in a high passage. Alan played dodgems below and easily avoided being skittled. The noise was booming and that moment of fear before they called out "safe" wasn't pleasant.

Crunchy salt sticks. Photo: Janine McKinnon

The Rocket Plume.
Photo: Janine McKinnon

A couple of these leads haven't been totally written off so there is a little potential still in there for future generations. We are such a considerate lot of cavers.

A (not) scenic and crawly route back to near the squeeze into the entrance chamber was taken. Personally, I think this was just for masochistic purposes but at least I can say I've visited most of the cave.

Janine inspects the 'Icing on the Cake' sump.
Photo: Alan Jackson

Gabriel was last up the pitch and he had a fateful moment or two when one of the logs part way down the pitch decided to move itself further down the pitch as he prusiked up. The noise was a bit scary but he was safe. Disaster averted. The second "heart in throat" moment for the trip.

The walk back to the cars took almost as long as the walk in due to the steep hill making downhill progress not much faster than uphill. We were back at the cars around 7.30 pm.

Postscript: The hole Ciara checked out on the walk in was still going. She found another one on the walk down the hill at the end of the day but no one was keen to look at the time. So that is two reasons to go back to the area.

Additional notes by Gabriel

A final depth of 146 m was reached at the aforementioned sump (G10x) from the highest point (H-15 Chromosomia tag). A total of 1501 m of passage was surveyed. H-11 spans over a surface area of approximately 178 m by 151 m.

One important thing I learned: if you're hanging your survey pouch from your harness with a carabiner, use a locking one! I used a non-locking krab and lost my book without noticing. D'oh! Luckily, Janine found it for me.

Finally, I want to again thank everyone who participated in the exploration and mapping of this cave. It is not entirely over yet, as the newly found H-16 cave could well connect, but I'm glad the bulk of it is done and dusted.

H-11 Rigging notes (photo Janine McKinnon)

From the H-11 tag, when standing at the limestone outcrops over which water trickles down into the cave entrance, a careful 15-metre scramble around the pit leads you to a small alcove near two sturdy fern trees. Those fern trees are your primary belay. The clear rock face at the back has a 6 mm drill hole that can ideally be used as a backup.

Run a 70-80 m rope from that backup anchor to the fern trees with 2x alpine butterflies and go over the edge. Rig high on the ferns, so the rope passes above and right of the point of contact at the lip (a tree root with a big hole in it). It is advisable to use a rope protector 2-3 metres down where there is a slight rub.

Drill holes have been left unmarked at the time of writing, but they're there if you look in obvious places. When facing the wall, 1st rebelay is located approx. 10 m below the main anchor, sheltered to the left, where the roof of the cave starts. 2nd rebelay is another 10 m down to the right, underneath the behemoth log, where both access ways merge. 3rd rebelay is after the debris pile on the left wall when looking down.

IB-10 Mystery Creek Cave

18 October 2020

Alan Jackson (text and photos)

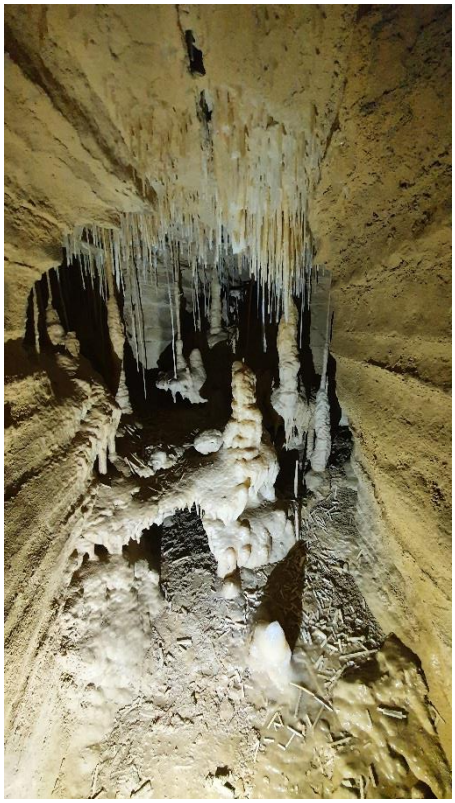
Party: Alan, Anna & Ben Jackson, Amy, Linda & Ray Robertson, Petr & Buddy Smejkal

A delightfully easy jaunt into MCC with the kids to wind down after the previous day's efforts in Big Mama.

Miscellaneous side leads were thoroughly investigated on our way to the bottom of Midnight Hole and back.

All children who went in came out again and all three adults were still smiling so I guess you could call it a success.

Cave critters.



Left – Anna sensibly giving Matchbox Squeeze a miss. Middle – pretty stuff. Right – Linda and pretty stuff.

Other exciting stuff

IB-11 Midnight Hole – Glue-in Anchor Situation

Alan Jackson

The Midnight Hole glue-in anchor situation continues to drag on, I'm afraid.

Back in January this year James reported a wobbly bolt on the last pitch in Midnight Hole. It was the single remaining original bolt (2001) placed by Jeff Butt on this pitch. I tested the bolt a couple of weeks later (Jackson 2020) and it was indeed a little wobbly but passed the 7.5 kN tensile test. I noted that one of the two 'new' (2008) bolts was wobbling too (but also passed the 7.5 kN test).

I reported all this to Parks and Wildlife Service senior engineer, Tim Chappell, and we scheduled an inspection for later in the year when our calendars lined up. That inspection was performed on 24 September and yielded some disappointing findings – the majority of bolts in the cave were now wiggling and one didn't even pass the 7.5 kN test. The cave was formally closed and won't be re-opened until we've actioned Tim's engineering assessment (published below).

Midnight Hole bolting history

Jeff Butt instigated the whole glue-in anchor system in the late 1990s. He did much investigation and eventually settled on copying the British system. There's plenty of background in Butt (1999a, 1999b & 1999c). Phase two was installing some test anchors in limestone at Benders Quarry, Ida Bay (Butt 2000 & 2001a). Then Midnight Hole was the first underground installation (Butt 2001a, 2001b & 2001c). Everything seemed to be going swimmingly until a wobbly bolt on the last pitch was reported in late 2004 or early 2005. That bolt was tested in March 2005 by Rolan Eberhard and Damian Bidgood and passed what was at that point a 5 kN tensile test but was condemned regardless and removed. Two new bolts were installed on this pitch by Rolan and Damian at the same time but, alas, both these bolts got the wobbles only two years later. Both bolts were condemned in late 2007 (despite passing the 5 kN test).

2008 saw Tim Chappell arrive as PWS Senior Engineer and Rolan invited him to come and assess what was going wrong in Midnight Hole. In the process a wobble was detected on one of the two original bolts on pitch 2 also. The main theory advanced was that perhaps the typical pull-through loading on these anchors was resulting in a bit of torsional load, effectively trying to twist the anchors in the hole, placing the glue-rock interface under atypical stress. To eliminate this all the anchors were fitted with equalising chains and rings in 2008 and the three condemned bolts (on P2 and P6) were removed and replaced. We also reviewed the bolting installation guidelines and changed the load test to 7.5 kN based on the relevant Australian Standard.

Things settled down for a bit after 2008 and everything seemed to be holding up well. In the interim I raised glue type issues with Tim in 2017 after I did some reading which indicated the polyester resins we'd been using for ~17 years were prone to deteriorating in the presence of water (see my whinge in Jackson (2017)). As a result, we moved away from polyester resins and specified that only true epoxy resins or the fancy new hybrid epoxies were to be used.

Midnight Hole 2020

The September 2020 inspection raised a few eyebrows. We decided we'd load test every bolt in the cave while we were there. To our surprise both bolts on the entrance pitch exhibited significant wobbling and one of the bolts popped out a little but both held the 7.5 kN test ultimately. The pitch 2 bolts behaved themselves, on pitch 3 both wobbled, pitch 4 was fine, pitch 5 one wobbled badly and one very mildly and all three wobbled on pitch 6 (refer to the Engineering Assessment for full details). The wobbliest bolt on pitch 5 was the biggest concern, though, as it failed the 7.5 kN load test too (consistently letting go at ~6 kN). A read of Butt (2001c) sheds some light on what might have gone wrong with this bolt, with evidence to suggest that improper resin mixing occurred during installation.

When is a pass a fail?

A few people have questioned me on the 'pre-use inspection' test and the load test in the last couple of weeks, mainly wondering why if things are wobbly but still pass the 7.5 kN test then why is that still resulting in condemnation and removal. A 7.5 kN tensile load is a serious load and in practice these bolts are nearly always loaded in sheer, so what do we have to worry about? I'm conflicted on this one, as there's no doubt they're still bloody strong but ultimately, I have to go with what the expert with a professional qualification in the field has to say on the matter. If the glue is degrading with time/water as suspected then it is presumably only going to get weaker and weaker and is that a risk worth taking? Engineers work in mysterious ways and sometimes it's easier to just let them have their way!

What Now?

The current theory is we are suffering the anticipated polyester resin water degradation. The next question is why are we only seeing the effects in Midnight Hole to date? It certainly has a much higher level of use and all that flexing and loading could be the difference. There are a lot of other caves out there installed with polyester resins and it looks like we'll have to check them closely on future trips.

Midnight Hole will be rebolted AGAIN in the near future with the best glue money can buy and re-opened as soon as practicable. I truly hope I'll be well dead before any more reports of wobbly bolts come out of this bloody cave.

REFERENCES

BUTT, J. 1999a Glue-in Bolting Technology trial. *Speleo Spiel* 311: 3

BUTT, J. 1999b Glue-in Bolting Technology trial-part 2. *Speleo Spiel* 312: 3

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

BUTT, J. 2000 The P-Hanger Bolting Project - A Report of Some Progress and a 'Field Trip'-12/8/2000. *Speleo Spiel* 321: 13-15

BUTT, J. 2001a The P-hanger bolting Project-an Update-25/8/2001. *Speleo Spiel* 326: 13-17

BUTT, J. 2001b Midnight Hole Rebolting Trip-Take 1: 26th September, 2001. *Speleo Spiel* 326: 20-21

BUTT, J. 2001c Midnight Hole Rebolting: Completing the installation. Saturday 6. *Speleo Spiel* 327: 8-9

JACKSON, A. 2017 What is the Future for Long-Life 'Permanent' Bolts in Tasmanian Caves? *Speleo Spiel* 421: 16-17

JACKSON, A. 2020 IB-11 Midnight Hole, 30 January 2020. *Speleo Spiel* 437: 13

Department of Primary Industries, Parks
Water and Environment

Tasmania

Engineer Assessment

Asset Name:	Midnight Hole Abseil Anchors		
Asset No.:	14731		
Location:	Lune River, South West National Park (TWWHA)		
Description:	Adhesive Gr. 316 stainless steel “P” anchors, fitted with maillons, chains and rings. The majority of anchors were installed by the Southern Tasmanian Caverneers (STC) in 2001, but some were replaced (also by SCT) following the PWS Engineer inspection in 2008. The earlier bolts are thought to have been installed using the discontinued product “Reids Swiftchem” resin (believed to be a polyester), whilst the more recent installations used Ramset 101 (also a polyester resin). The anchors are owned by Southern Tasmanian Caverneers Inc (STC), but are installed and maintained with approval and technical oversight by PWS.		
Certificate No.:	EA_561	**Date Issued:** 28/09/2020	**Rev:** 0

Personnel Present:	Tim Chappell (PWS Engineer), Rolan Eberhard (DPIPWE Karst Officer), Alan Jackson (Southern Tasmanian Caverneers Inc)
Date of Inspection:	24/09/2020
Previous Inspection:	21/05/2008 (refer to EA_008)

Inspection Notes

Location	Finger/Visual Test	Load Test	Recommendation
Pitch 1, L	Fail, approx. 1mm rotation	7.5 kN pass, 10-11kN fail (spall/release 8-9mm), 14.5kN held.	Replace
Pitch 1, R	Fail, approx. 1mm rotation	7.5kN pass	Replace
Pitch 2, L	Pass	7.5kN pass	Optional: Replace to match other new installations if practical
Pitch 2, R	Pass	7.5kN pass	Optional: Replace to match other new installations if practical
Pitch 3, L	Fail, rotational movement	7.5kN pass	Replace

Pitch 3, R	Fail, rotational movement	7.5kN pass	Replace
Pitch 4, L	Pass	7.5kN pass	Optional: Replace to match other new installations if practical
Pitch 4, R	Pass	7.5kN pass	Optional: Replace to match other new installations if practical
Pitch 5, L	Marginal, slight rotational movement	7.5kN pass	Replace
Pitch 5, R	Fail, significant rotational movement	6kN fail (release 6-7mm)	Replace
Pitch 6, old	Fail, rotational + longitudinal movement	7.5kN pass	Replace
Pitch 6, L	Fail, rotational + longitudinal movement	7.5 kN pass	Replace
Pitch 6, L	Fail, rotational + longitudinal movement	7.5 kN pass	Replace

As per email correspondence (R. Eberhard to S. Burgess, 25/09/2020) for safety reasons the cave has been temporarily closed to the public immediately following this inspection. A sign to this effect will be installed at the cave entrance over coming days. The STC has been advised, noting that abseil anchors should always be checked for looseness prior to use and any failures reported.

Recommendation:
Out of a total of 13 anchors inspected, at least 9 anchors must be replaced before it is safe to reopen the cave for public access. Although the remining 4 anchors passed the required tests, they should be replaced (if time and resources permit) for both consistency and to avoid likelihood of similar problems in the future.

During the replacement, the following improvements should be made:

- Move anchors to optimal positions for access and rope positioning, generally to higher locations.
- Replace large captive rings with smaller rings, to reduce the risk of knot pull-through.

Anchor specification:

- Gr.316 stainless P or U anchors, 100mm embedment length preferred, to the approval of PWS Engineer. Minimum load rating 25kN (e.g. Raumer Superstar 316 Long Ring Bolt).
- Adhesive: Hilti RE 500 (preferred) or Ramset 801 (if faster cure time is required).
- Ensure holes are clean, adhesive is correctly mixed and installed with no voids.
- Load test (7.5kN).
- Tag and record on STC spreadsheet.

The removal of the failed existing anchors and new installation work should be undertaken by experienced and competent members of STC in accordance with the above specification and the methodology discussed during the inspection. On completion, the test results and full installation records should be forwarded to the PWS Engineer for approval.

Discussion:
The reason for the failure these bolts is not known, however there are several factors that may have contributed:

- The majority were installed almost 20 years ago and have been subject to high usage and occasionally high loads (e.g. haulage systems during rescues).
- At the time of installation (2001), resin anchors were relatively new technology and the importance of hole cleaning and installation techniques to eliminate voids may not have been fully understood or properly implemented.
- The adhesives used are a lower standard (both strength and durability) than is currently recommended (i.e. polyester rather than epoxy).
- Some bolts are positioned such that they are subject to high torsional loads.

After reviewing some online forums, it is evident that similar issues have occurred in limestone caves in the UK and that most of these issues relate to anchors that were installed in a similar period (particularly the late 90's).

The international consensus (in both rock climbing and caving) appears to still strongly favour adhesive style anchors (rather than mechanical anchors like expansion bolts) in the softer rock types, particularly sandstone and limestone.

Assessor Details:

Name:	Tim Chappell
Accreditation No.	CC4916I (Engineer, Civil)

Distribution List:

Jeremy Hood	Parks and Reserve Manager
Ian Marmion	Ranger in Charge
Shane Burgess	Ranger
Rolan Eberhard	DPIPWE Karst Officer
Alan Jackson	Southern Tasmanian Caverneers Inc
Andy Smith	Manager Infrastructure

Attachments:	1. Photographs

Attachment 1: Photographs

Anchor failure, rock spalling

Typical rigging arrangement

Anchor failure

Whisky and Film Night

15 September 2020

Philip Jackson & Kirsten Laurie

Sixteen members, associates and Sullivans Cove staff attended the event held at Sullivans Cove Distillery one night in September.

Photo: Philip Jackson

Features of the evening were a viewing of the still and a brief description of the distillation process, a guided tasting with Kirsten and two great films “Push Day” and “Winter on the Blade”.

The evening began with a viewing of the still and a brief explanation of the process of distilling whisky. Many of those present had seen Push Day previously but not so many had seen it on a larger screen or without lights casting shadows across the screen.

At the intermission Kirsten talked about the differences in taste achieved by using different source barrel for whiskies. of a double cask whisky, an American oak re-fill whisky and a brandy.

Two films were shown, "Push Day" and "Winter on the Blade".

Push Day was a film about an attempt to link Niggly Cave, Australia's deepest, to Growling Swallet, one of the longer caves in Tasmania of about 18 km by diving in the stream sumps at the bottom of the cave. It highlights the risks and hazards of solo diving in these large systems. While there was a support team to get the diver and camping gear to the bottom of the cave, Stephen Fordyce was the only diver.

Winter on the Blade is a film about climbing the Blade on Federation Peak in Winter. Few sensible people attempt Federation Peak in Winter via the normal route let alone the Blade. This film highlights the pleasure of trekking and camping in Tasmania's south-west in Winter and the incessant rain, snow and sleet. Both films had an element of excitement and risk, cheek clenching in fact.

We used a computer, projector, screen, speakers and mixer.

The large speakers and mixer hired from Ruffcut Records were not needed as a pair of smaller portable speakers plugged directly into the computer did the job. These speakers were a little bit tinnie at high volume but a higher quality set would be ideal. The screen, hired from Ruffcut, was placed to the right of the FOH side door. The air con had to be turned off because it was blowing on the screen and warping the image.

The whisky tasters were all impressed by the tasting and Kirsten's explanation.

All participants were impressed with the venue and the ambience and the films. The space was comfortable, warm and relaxing.

Both film producers (Fraser Johnston and Andy Terhell) considered it a fine venue and concept for show casing short films such as they produced. All those attending expressed a desire for similar events.

The only thing we need to do these on a regular basis is a screen, a computer with 3 USB ports, the SC projector, a reasonable quality set of small speakers and some films.The film producers recommended contacting the Cradle Valley Film Festival operators for suitable films.

Many thanks to Ally and Cam for organising the furniture, to Kirsten for the tasting Spiel and Fraser and Andy for the films, to Sullivans Cove Whisky for providing the venue.

Tammy said it was a wonderful event and she enjoyed every bit of it.

Still and barrel storage. Photo: Joy McConnochie

'MoonMilk' – Cave Music

Emily Sheppard

My debut album, MoonMilk was written during Arts Tasmania Wilderness residencies in Marakoopa and Newdegate Caves in 2017. The music is inspired by cave acoustics, decorations and local stories.

'Aeons' is a reflection on the deep time evident in the slow-growing yet strikingly large crystal formations. This is written in Zen shakuhachi meditation form, where time is measured in breath.

'Drip Organ' is a reference to the organ-like formation in the Cathedral of Marakoopa cave. Blu-tacked violin strings create the eerie sound, and the pizzicato is a response to the constant drips breaking up the silence.

I went on many brilliant tours led by Park Rangers, learning many interesting and important things about the caves. When I asked about the original inhabitants of this area and their use of the caves, very little was known. At the same time, I was reading Lynne Kelly's 'Memory Code', which describes how indigenous people memorised encyclopaedic volumes of knowledge through dance, storytelling, painting, place, stories and song.

I was struck by the inadequacies of written tradition in remembering history. The song 'Memory Palace' is dedicated to the Lylequonny people, the original inhabitants and stewards of the region around Hastings Caves, and the preservation of Indigenous knowledge.

Many thanks to Ivi Dodd for the photography in the cave, and album artwork.

You can hear the album here:
https://emilycloud.bandcamp.com/album/moonmilk

Rocky Tom Caves, Caves Hill, Meehan Range

Greg Middleton (text and photos)

Rocky Tom, a prominent sandstone outcrop on the western end of Caves Hill, in the Meehan Range at the back of Lindisfarne, is a popular rock-climbing spot and was occasionally used for rope and ladder practice by TCC and SCS from the 60s to the 80s (Collin 1967, Jackson 1982).

Ros Skinner and I heard there were some caves there, got some location information from Phil Jackson and went to have a look on 25 May 2015. We approached the area from the end of Flagstaff Gully Road from Warrane. We parked near the gate to the large stone quarry and walked north on a maze of fire trails and tracks to Seager Saddle, from which we climbed up the western approach to Caves Hill.

It was a bit confusing that the topo map we had showed "Rocky Tom" about a kilometre to the south-east of Caves Hill. For the time being we ignored this and found the very obvious caves on the north-west slopes of Caves Hill.

Later I learned that back in the 1980s the old Mapping Division of the Lands Department had wrongly labelled "Rocky Tom" as a trig point that should have been called Flagstaff Hill, which they had wrongly located just west of Flagstaff Gully Reservoir. The relocations are shown on Fig. 1.

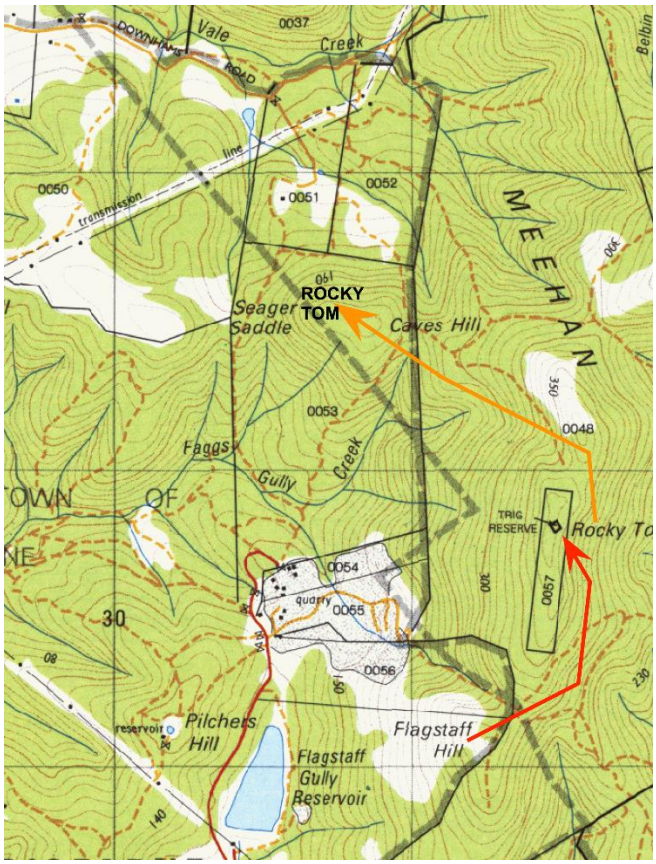


Fig. 1. Extract from 1:25,000 Hobart map showing relocations of Rocky Tom and Flagstaff Hill.

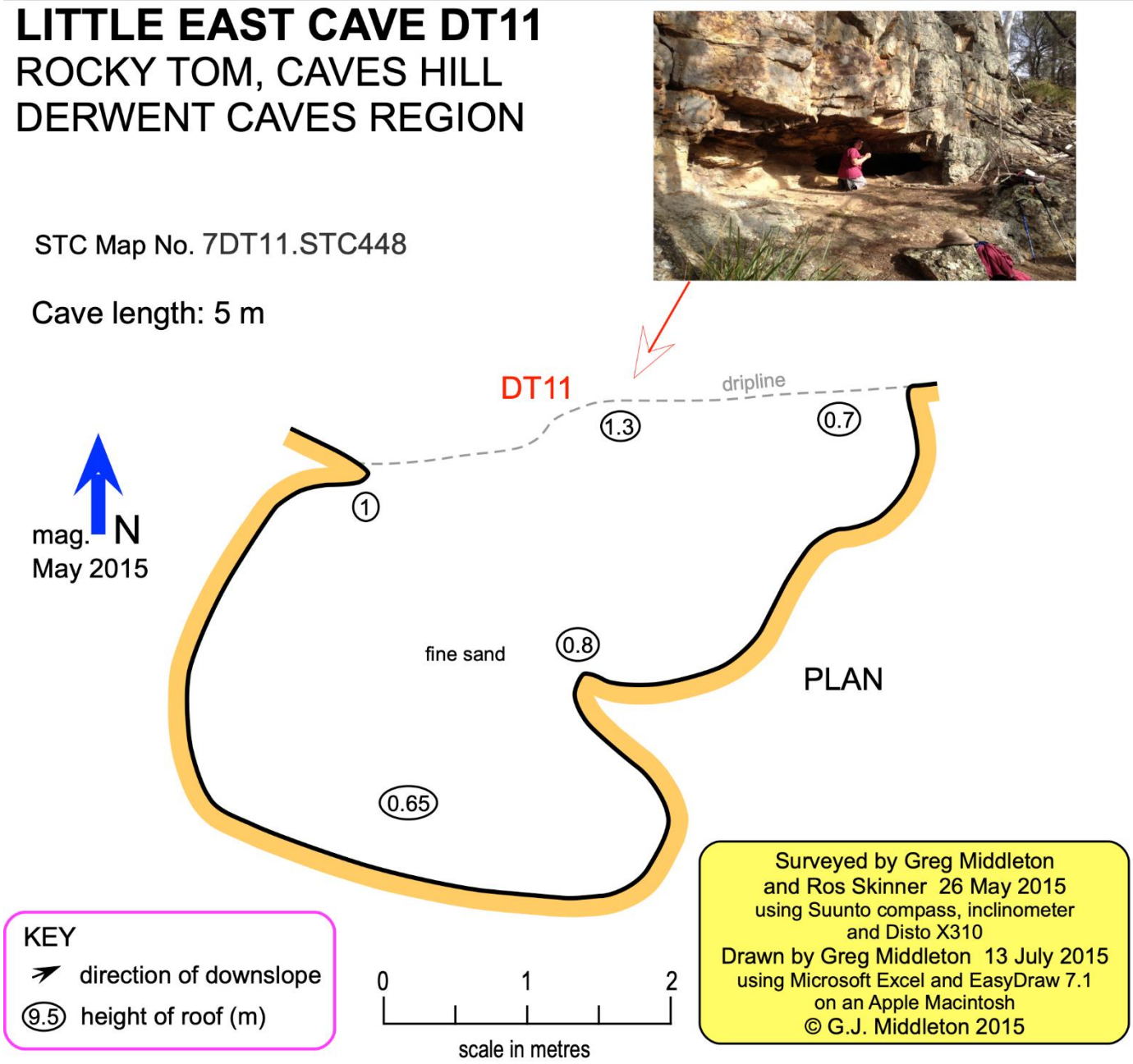


Fig. 2. Plan of Little East Cave DT11, Rocky Tom.

We walked to the most easterly limit of the main sandstone cliffs and found a small cave at its base. This seemed like a sensible place to start so we surveyed it, called it Little East Cave (as it was a little cave to the east of the main group); as this locality is within the Derwent Caves Region it was later assigned DT11 (Fig. 2).

Moving back west along the base of the cliffs, we came to a most impressive high cave on two levels which, following a flash of inspiration, we called Two-Storey Cave. If anyone has called it something else already, sorry, I haven't come across another name. I assigned it DT12, with DT13 being allocated to a small hole immediately to its east, Adjacent Hole, which is included in the same survey. Adjacent Hole is a very small chamber which would not have warranted a survey in its own right but could not be ignored, and could not be called part of DT12. Due to a couple of questionable bits of data, we had to come back later to complete this survey. This we did on 19 June 2020. On that occasion we came in from Downhams Road, directly to the north. This requires walking across private property but we encountered no difficulty when we asked the property owner. (Apparently school groups come to rock climb here and they are let through by the owner immediately to the west of the block we came through. The blocks are numbered 0051 and 0052 on Fig. 1.)

The plan and a bit of a section are Fig. 3; photo of both caves and cliff, Fig. 4. As this is a popular climbing site, it features on a few websites, including one (Nermut 2017) with a great sketch of the cliff - and caves - by Peter Jackson (Fig. 5). Apparently, the climbers call this bit of cliff 'Castle Rock'.

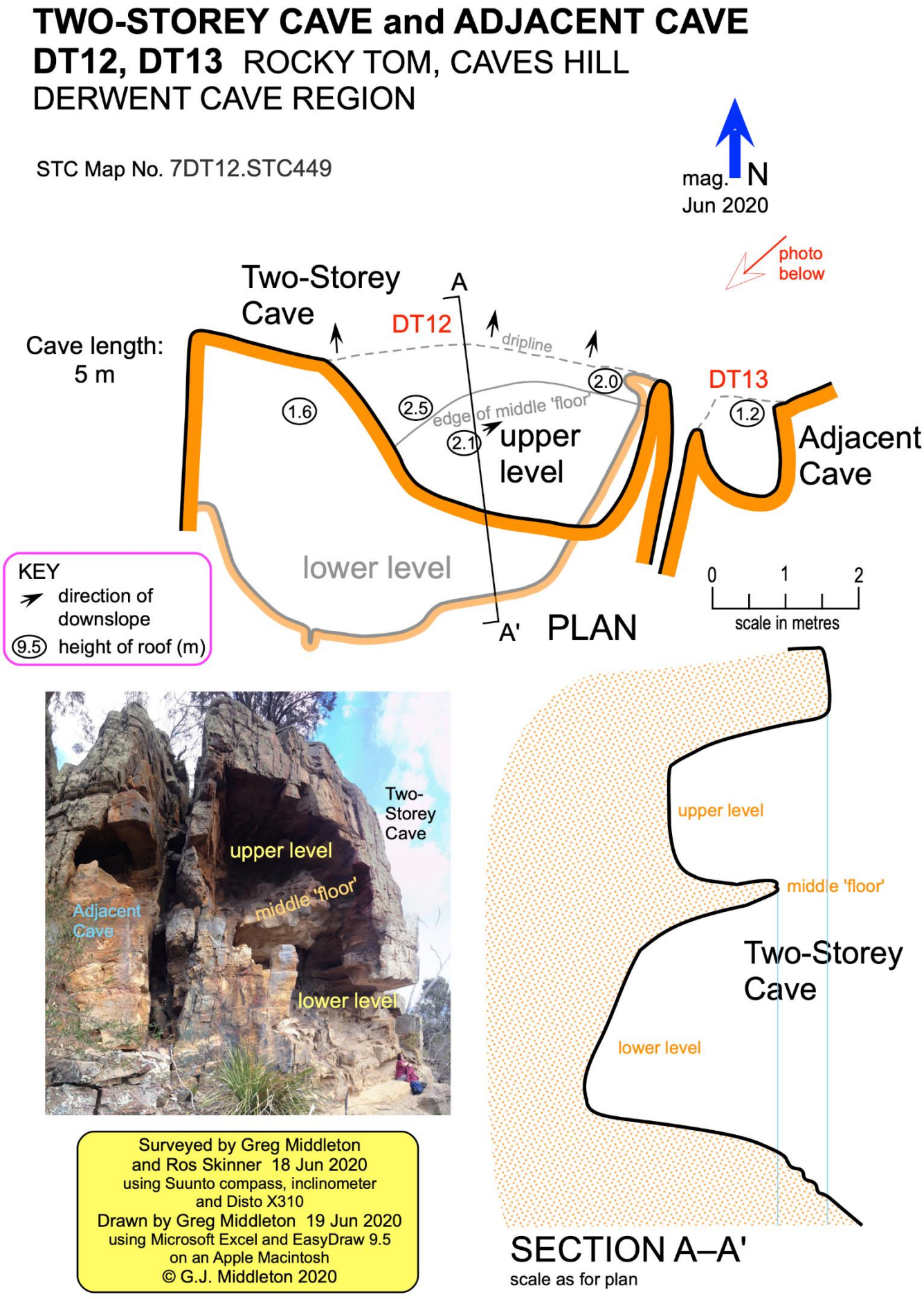


Fig. 3. Plan and section, Two-Storey Cave and plan of Adjacent Cave, Rocky Tom.

Fig. 4. Cliff face at Rocky Tom with Two-Storey Cave and Adjacent Cave.

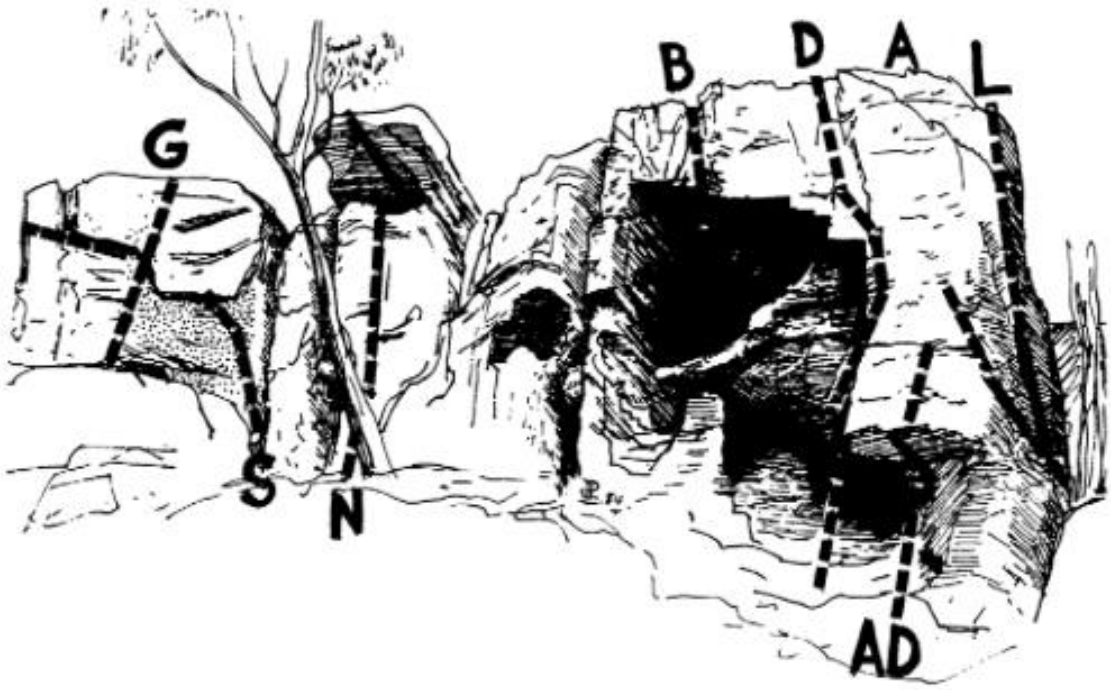


Fig. 5. Sketch of climbing routes (and, incidentally, caves) at Castle Rock, by Peter Jackson.

Moving further west, in another prominent mass of sandstone (Fig. 6), we came to a lower, longer cave which was sort of in two parts but with a continuous dripline, inspiring the name Semi-Detached Cave (to continue the housing analogy).

Near the right-hand (western) end there is a residual pillar of sandstone which creates an arch and second entrance. DT14 was assigned to the main entrance and DT15 to the small one facing west. The survey is at Fig. 7.

Fig. 6. The massive cliff with Semi-Detached Cave DT14-15 at its base. The entrance at far right is DT15.

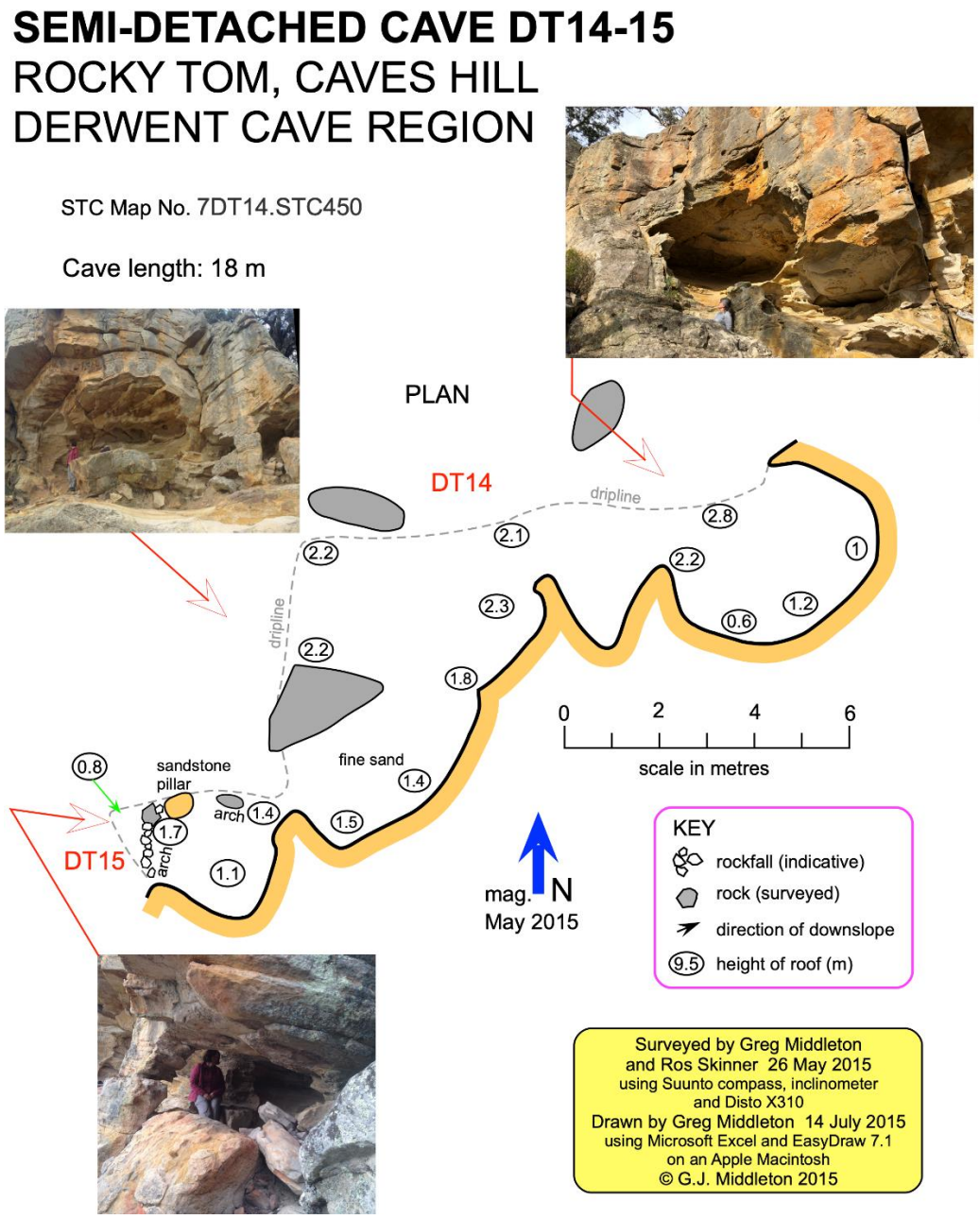


Fig. 7. Plan of Semi-Detached Cave DT14-15, Rocky Tom.

Stepping back from the main cliff line, descending to the north, you come across a large isolated sandstone boulder, no doubt long ago detached from the main outcrop. It is big enough to contain a cave, however (Fig. 8), and on our return visit we surveyed it (Fig. 9). Because of its lower elevation we called it Lower Rocky Tom Cave, DT16.

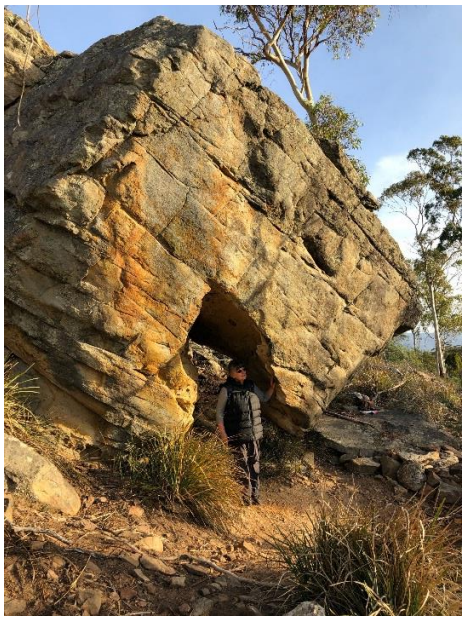


Fig. 8. Lower Rocky Tom Cave under an isolated sandstone boulder.

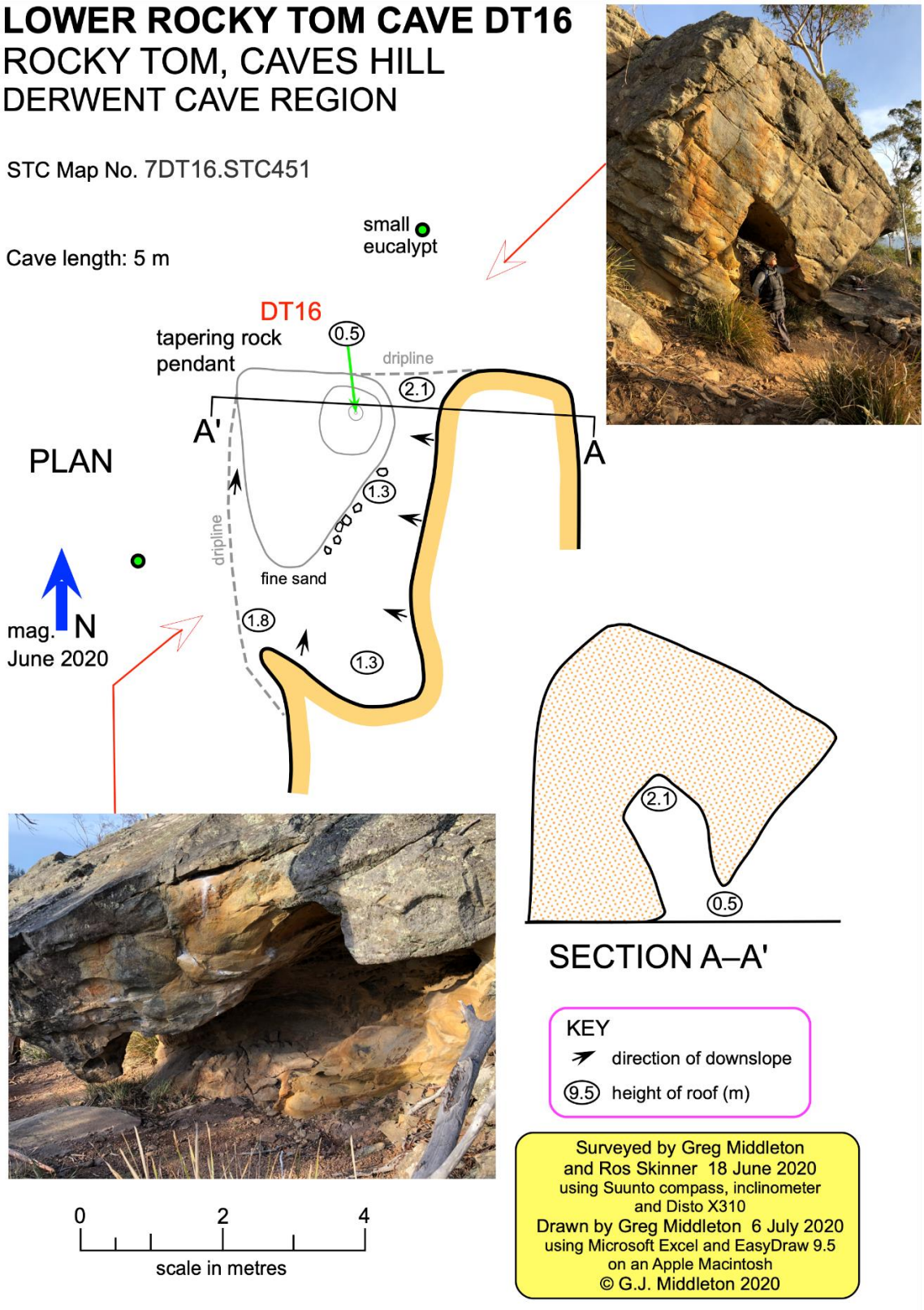


Fig. 9. Plan and section, Lower Rocky Tom Cave DT16.

Rocky Tom and Caves Hill are prominent features of a pleasant walking area only a few minutes' drive from Hobart. The sandstone caves are a decided bonus.

REFERENCES

Collin, B. 1967 Rocky Tom 8-1-'67. *Speleo Spiel*, 10: 4.

Jackson, P. 1982 Area Reports – Oct. 1981 to Aug. 1982. *Southern Caver*, 50: 23.

Nermut, Jon 2017 Rocky Tom.

http://www.thesarvo.com/confluence/display/thesarvo/Rocky+Tom

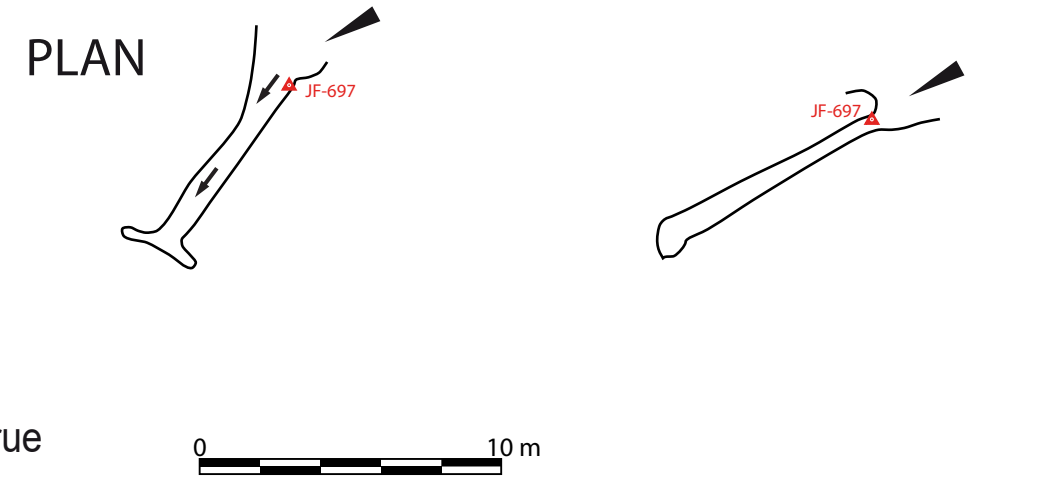
Maps

JF-697

Junee-Florentine, Tasmania

7JF697.STC455
Southern Tasmanian Caverneers
ASF Grade 44
In-cave notes by Alan Jackson (30-08-2020)
Drawn by Alan Jackson (September 2020)

SECTION 220° - 40°

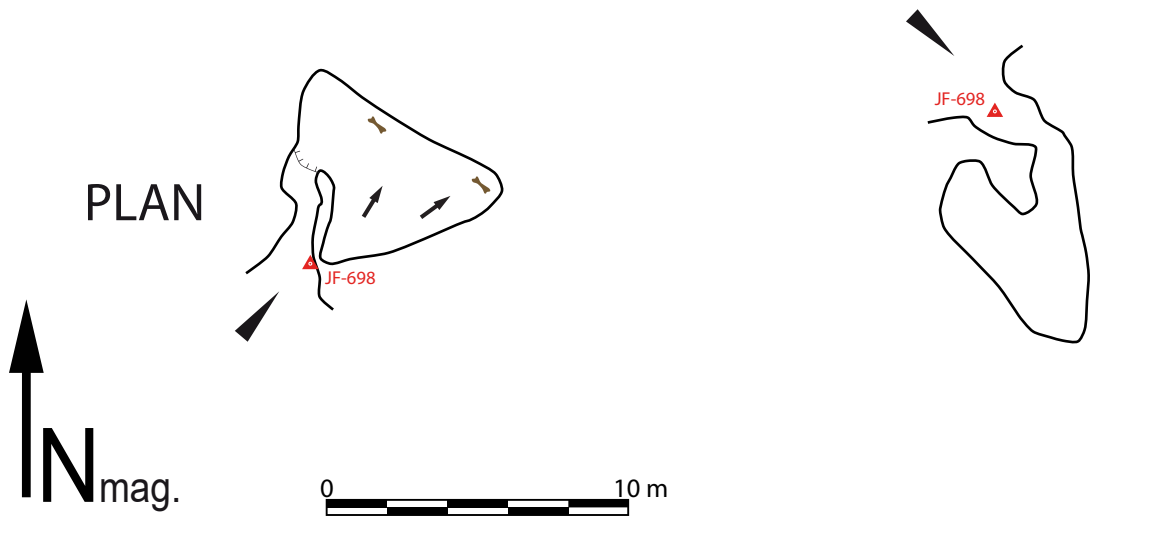


JF-698

Junee-Florentine, Tasmania

7JF698.STC456
Southern Tasmanian Caverneers
ASF Grade 44
In-cave notes by Alan Jackson (01-09-2020)
Drawn by Alan Jackson (September 2020)

SECTION 240° - 60°

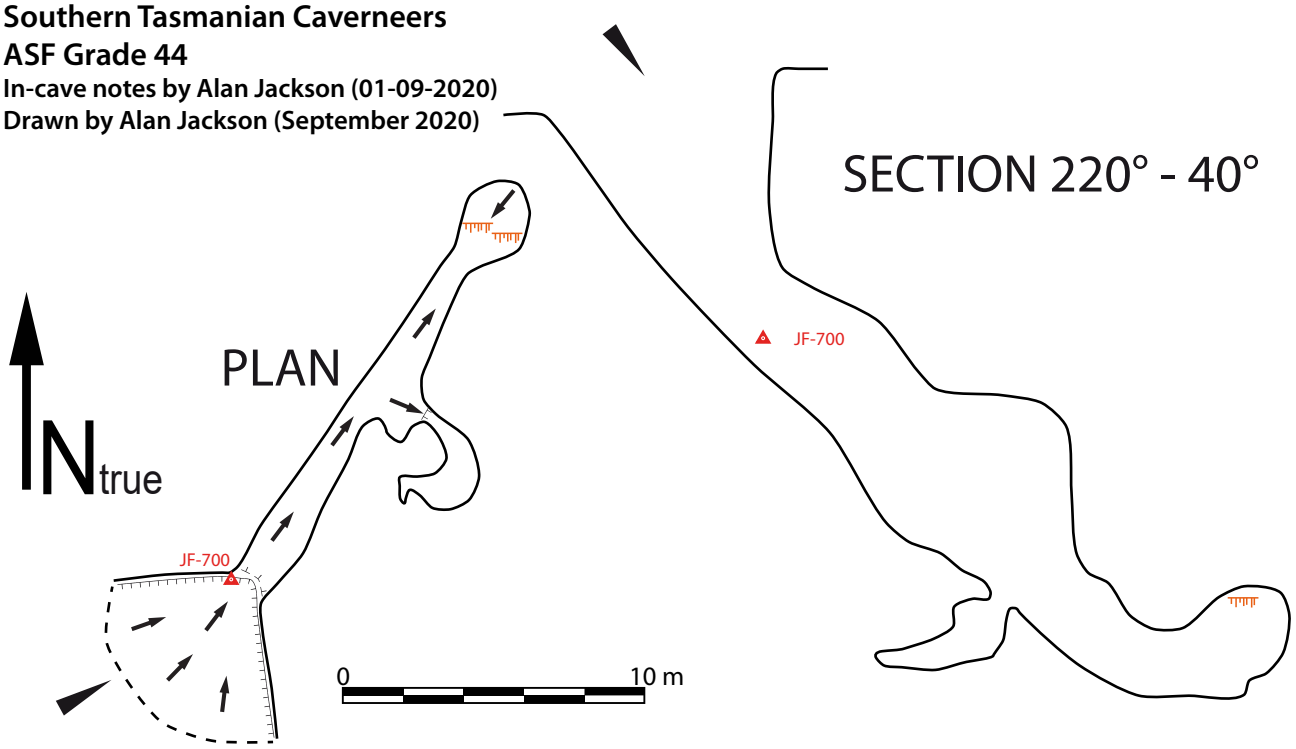


JF-700 Quantum of Disappointment

Junee-Florentine, Tasmania

7JF700.STC473

Southern Tasmanian Caverneers
ASF Grade 44
In-cave notes by Alan Jackson (01-09-2020)
Drawn by Alan Jackson (September 2020)

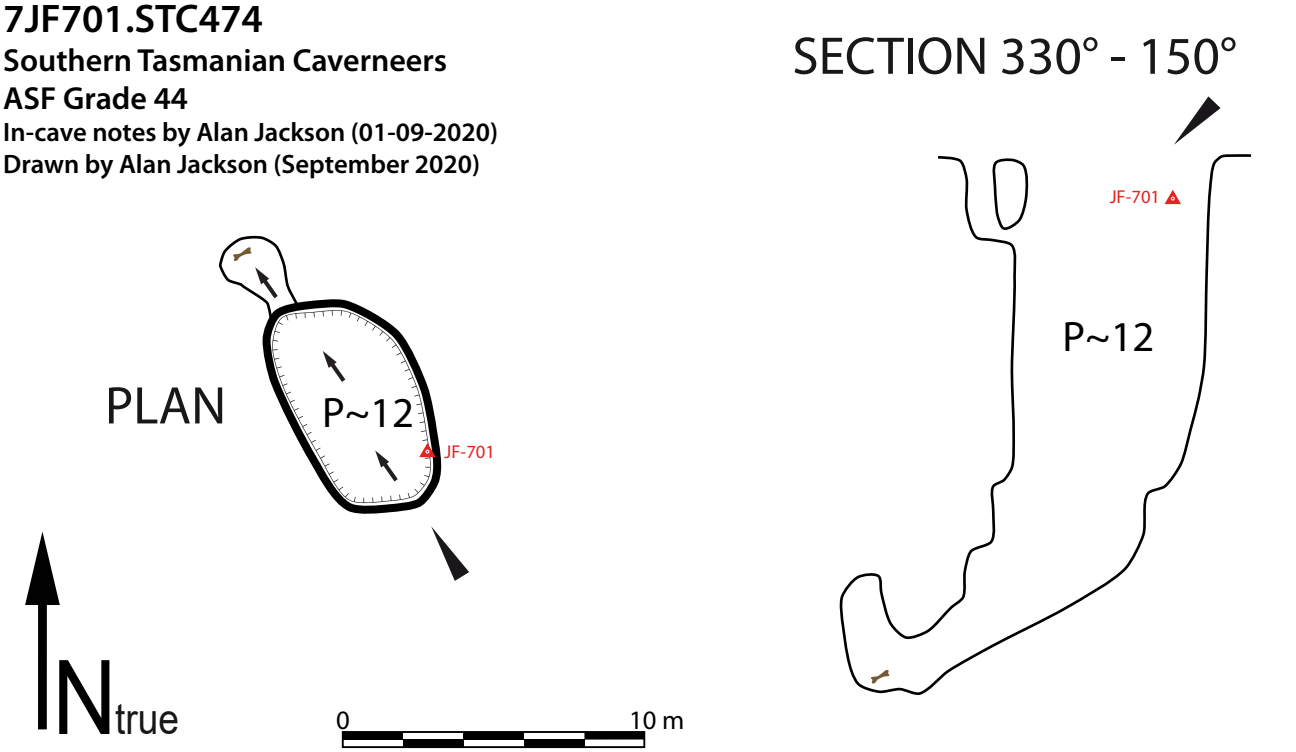


JF-701 Green Frog Cave

Junee-Florentine, Tasmania

7JF701.STC474

Southern Tasmanian Caverneers
ASF Grade 44
In-cave notes by Alan Jackson (01-09-2020)
Drawn by Alan Jackson (September 2020)



JF-702

Junee-Florentine, Tasmania

7JF702.STC475

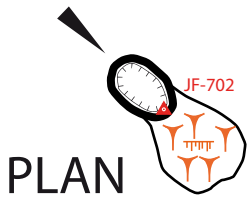
Southern Tasmanian Caverneers

ASF Grade 44

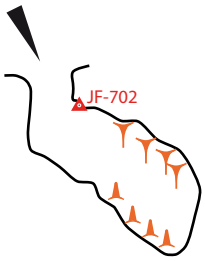
In-cave notes by Alan Jackson (01-09-2020)

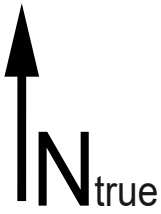
Drawn by Alan Jackson (September 2020)

SECTION 310° - 130°



PLAN





H-14 Helter Shelter

Hastings, Tasmania

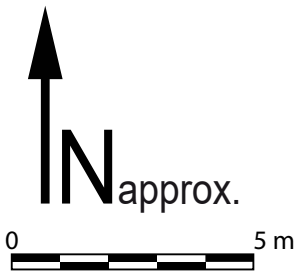
7H14.STC457

Southern Tasmanian Caverneers

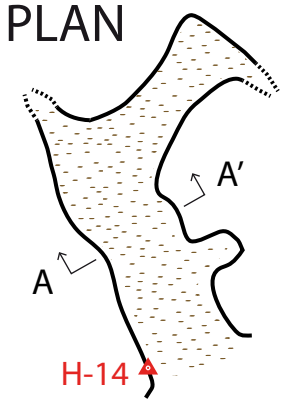
ASF Grade 22

In-cave notes by Gabriel Kinzler (06-07-2019)

Drawn by Gabriel Kinzler (September 2020)



PLAN



JF-696 Angular Momentum

Junee-Florentine, Tasmania

7JF696.STC454

Southern Tasmanian Caverneers

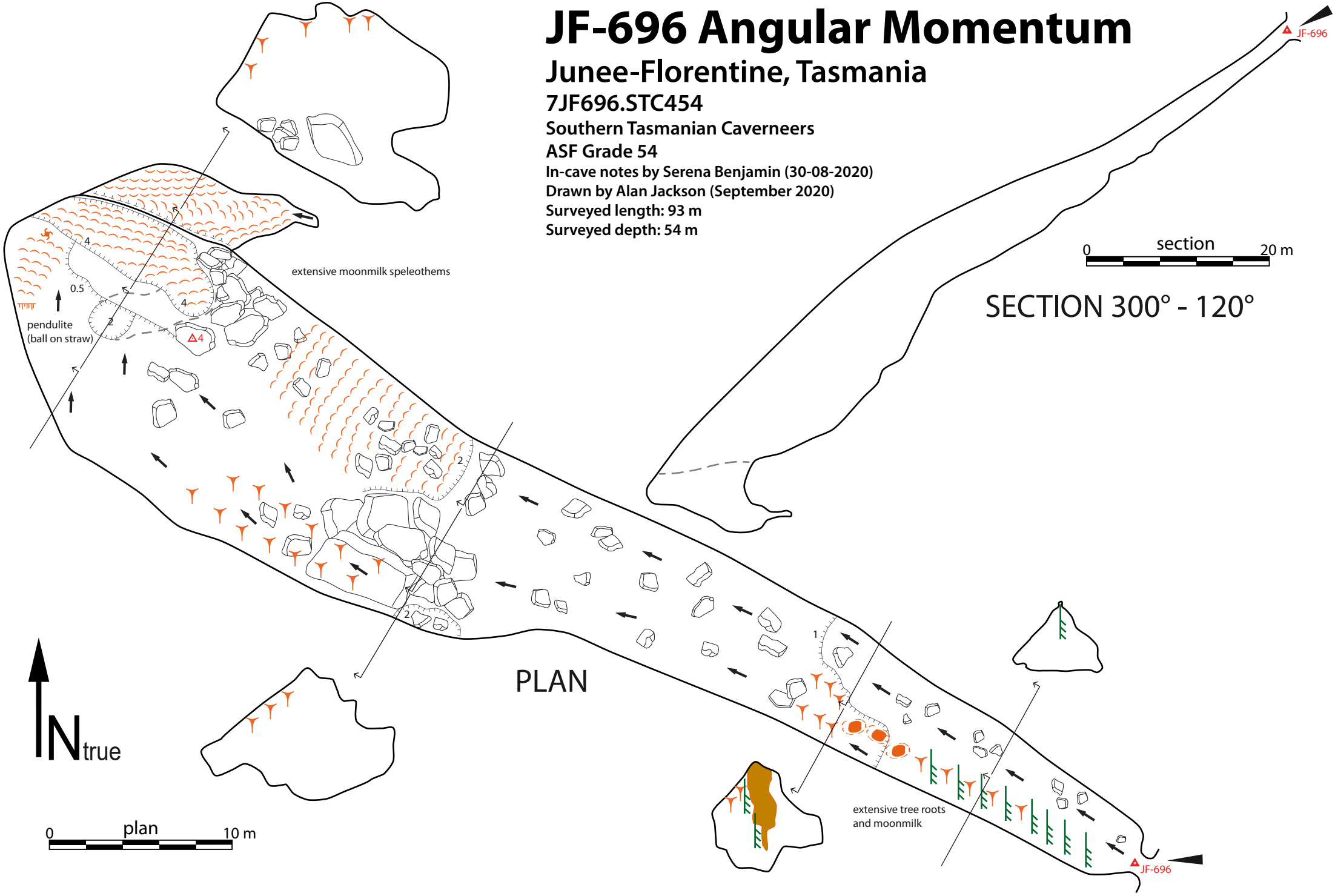
ASF Grade 54

In-cave notes by Serena Benjamin (30-08-2020)

Drawn by Alan Jackson (September 2020)

Surveyed length: 93 m

Surveyed depth: 54 m

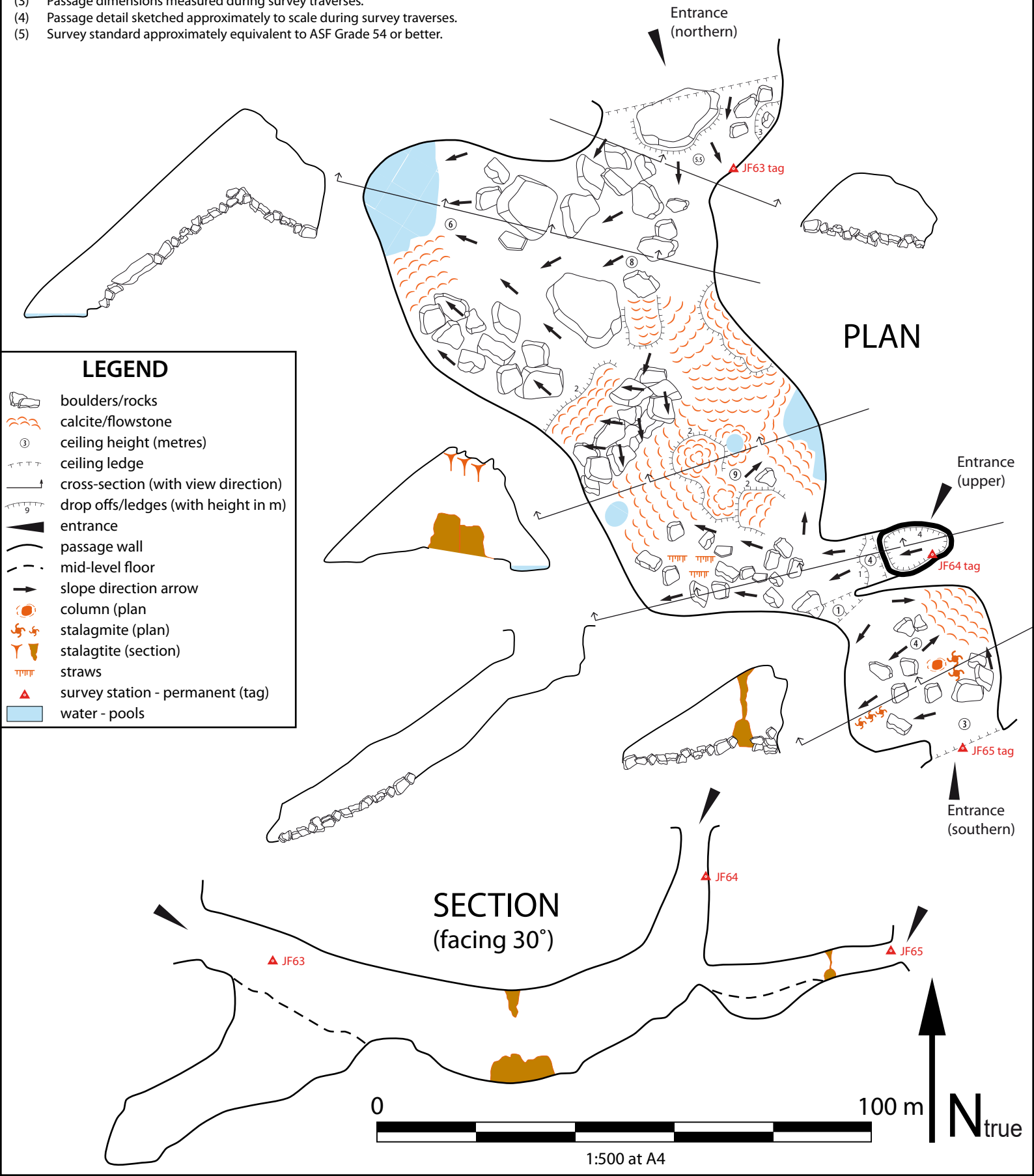


JF63, 64, 65 Ross Walker Cave

Junee-Florentine karst
Tasmania

Map prepared by Alan Jackson (Southern Tasmanian Caverneers) for the Natural and Cultural Heritage Division, Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water & Environment, Tasmania.
Surveyed by Alan Jackson & Serena Benjamin (30-08-2020)
Surveyed Length - ~145 m
Surveyed vertical range- ~54 m

Notes on survey methods:
(1) Passage alignment based on survey traverse of all passages shown.
(2) Survey instruments: DistoX2; est. precision of readings ±0.1° & ±0.01 m.
(3) Passage dimensions measured during survey traverses.
(4) Passage detail sketched approximately to scale during survey traverses.
(5) Survey standard approximately equivalent to ASF Grade 54 or better.



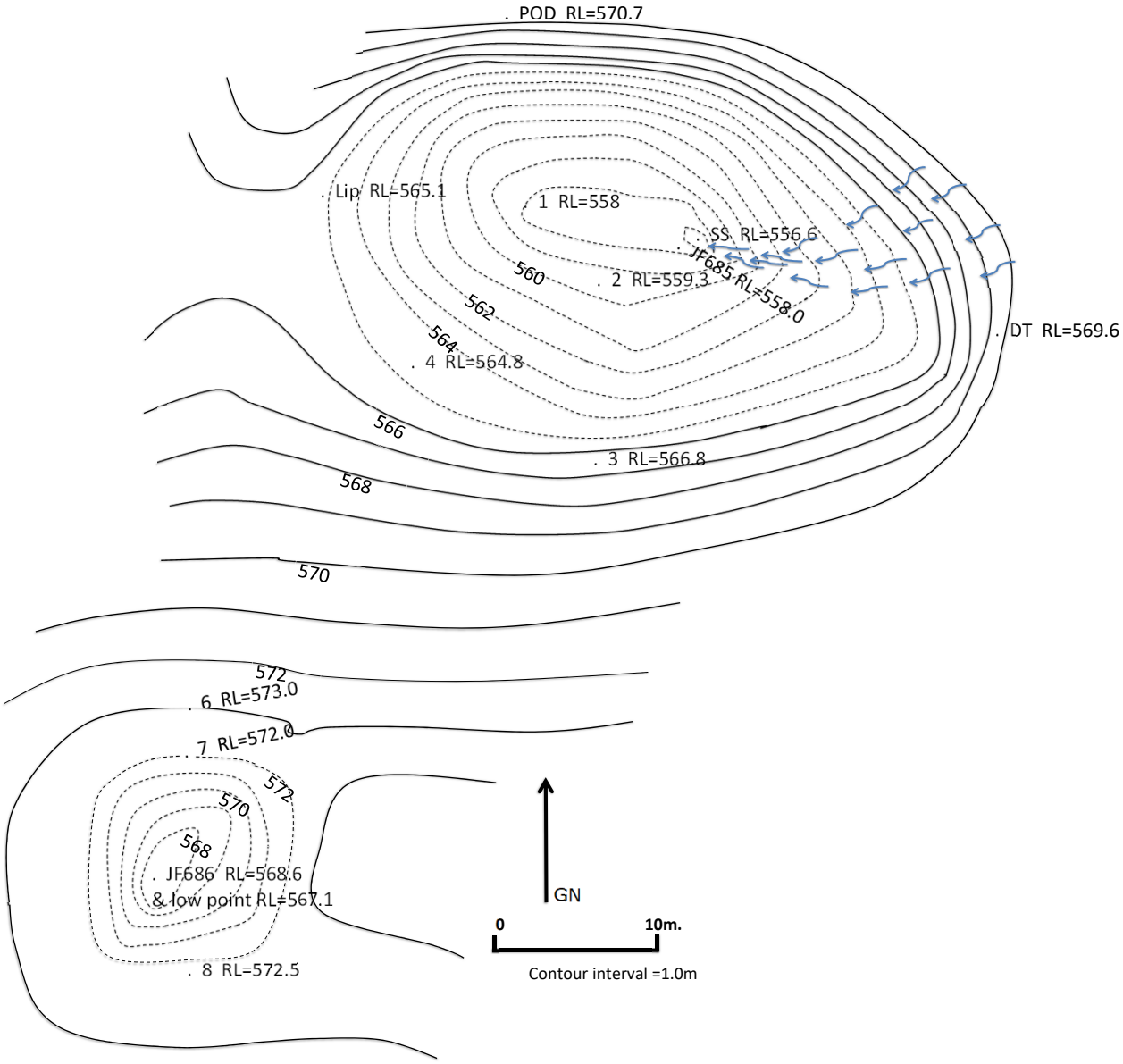
JF-685 Gormie Junior Swallet and JF-686 Off the Chain

Junee-Florentine, Tasmania

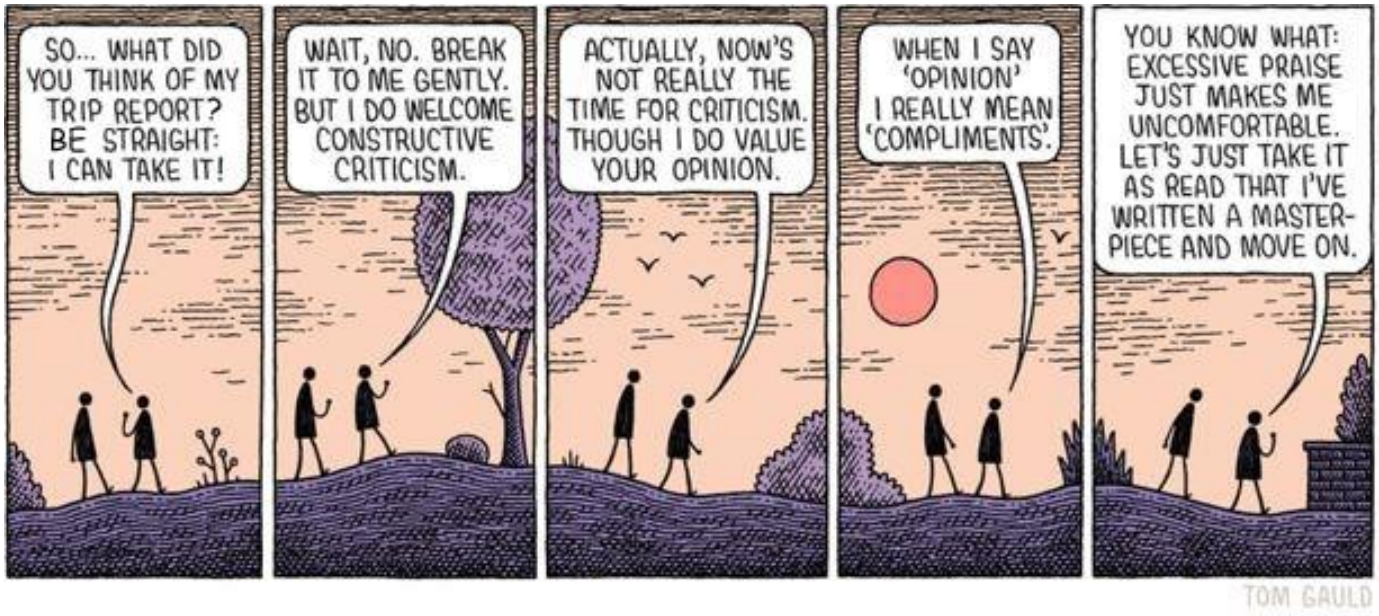
7JF685.STC477

Southern Tasmanian Caverneers

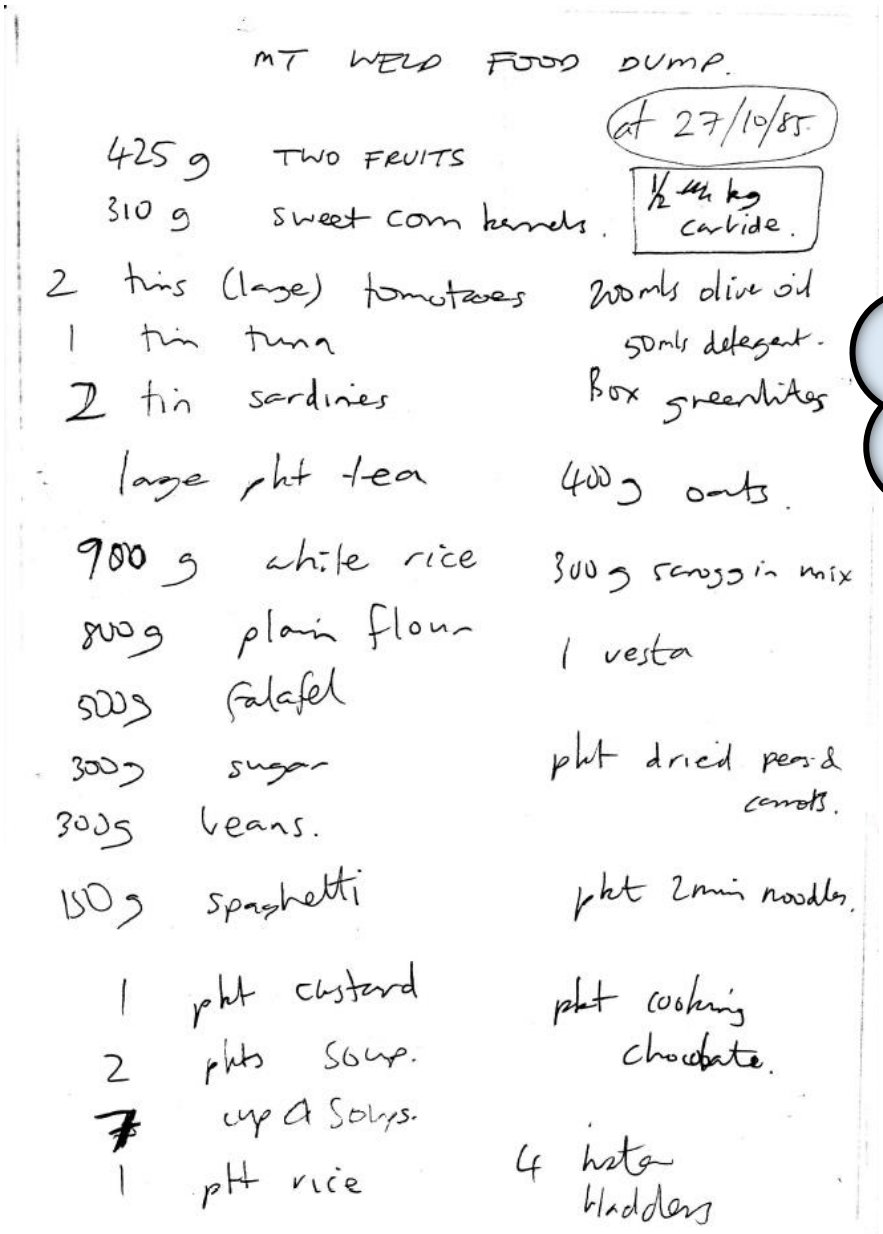
Drawn by Philip Jackson (October 2020)



Fun and Diversions



The pressures of writing for Speleo Spiel (adjusting a Tom Gauld cartoon)



MT WELD FOOD DUMP.

at 27/10/85

425 g TWO FRUITS
310 g sweet corn kernels.
½ kg carbide.
2 tins (large) tomatoes
1 tin tuna
2 tin sardines
large pkt tea
900 g white rice
800 g plain flour
500 g falafel
300 g sugar
300 g beans.
150 g spaghetti
1 pkt custard
2 pkts soup.
cup a Sobys.
1 pkt rice
200 mls olive oil
50 mls detergent.
Box greenlites
400 g oats.
300 g sanogo in mix
1 vesta
pkt dried peas & carrots.
pkt 2min noodles.
pkt cooking chocolate.
4 insta bladders

Whilst delving through the hard copy archive, I came across the attached food dump list from a Mt Weld project back in the 80s. Might be fun to see if anyone knows if the listed items are still available for use?

Michael Packer, STC Archivist

The Last Page