

## SPELEO - SPIEL.

No.33.

March, 1969.

Published monthly by the Tasmanian Caverneering Club, Box 641 G,  
G.P.O., Hobart. 7001.

Registered at the G.P.O. Hobart.

Annual subscription one dollar.

Single copies 10 cents.

Pres: A.Goede, 8 Bath St., Battery Point, Hobart. 7000.

Sec: Mrs.P.Brabon, 122 Augusta Rd., Lenah Valley, 7008.

### Annual General Meeting.

This meeting will be held on WEDNESDAY 26 th MARCH at 8 P.M. The place is 2 Nightingale Ave., Tarmona. Let's have a good attendance for this meeting so come if you possibly can. After the election of office bearers there will be an informal gathering. Ladies are asked to bring a plate - gentlemen are requested to bring liquid refreshments. Our hosts will be Robin and Judy Booth. This meeting offers a unique chance for ambitious young cavers to take an active part in running the club for the next twelve months.

### Subscriptions.

At the A.G.M. all members become unfinancial and subscriptions for the coming year are due.

Full members(over 18 yrs.) - 2 dollars 50 cents.

Junior members - 1 dollar.

Associate members - 1 dollar.

Junior and associate members who want to receive the A.S.F. newsletter can do so by paying another 35 cents to the treasurer.

### FORWARD PROGRAMME.

March 26 - ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

April 4-7 - Easter. Mole Creek. Leader: P.Brabon. or for those with only one or two days to spare - Ida Bay area, Leader: B.Collin.

April 13 - (Sunday). Day trip to put in first stage of Exit Cave gate. We need your support!! Leader:B.Collin.

April 19 or 20 - Day trip to Mt.Anne to do some more track cutting.

April 25 - 27 - Long weekend. Mole Creek or Lorinna. Leader: P.Brabon.

May 4 - (Sunday). Second trip to complete installation of Exit Cave gate.

May 6 - (TUESDAY). General Meeting. 8p.m. at 8 Bath Street, Battery Point.

### Search and Rescue.

On Thursday, 6th March the club had its second search and rescue call in three months and helped to rescue Mr. and Mrs.Michael White from a cave near Maydena. Our search and rescue worked perfectly this time thanks to co-ordinator Brian Collin and public relations officer Doug Turner. See detailed report on rescue elsewhere in this Spiel.

### Club News.

+ Welcome home to several members who found that the grass wasn't so green elsewhere. They are:-

- Sally and Clive Morris with baby David. Their address is now 39 Beach Rd., Kingston.

- as from Easter Kate, Ron and Bruce Kent will be in residence at 234 A Derwent Avenue, Lindisfarne.

- Robin Booth and wife Judi are now living at 48 Malunna Rd., Lindisfarne.

+ Shifty characters in the club. Since the last Spiel the following members have changed their address:-

- Ian and Stella Farley with babies Ruth and Jessica. New address: 41 Windsor Street, Kingston.

- Peter and Carol Helman have also moved. Their new address is Flat 2, 326 Davey Street, South Hobart.

+ Many thanks to Mr.J.Herington for once again auditing our books. We are very grateful for his assistance.

+ Farewell to Neil Walker who has departed for parts unknown after being a member for only a few months. For security reasons his new address is a closely guarded secret.

+ Tasmanian caves received a thorough trogging by three Canberra cavers, John and Mary Mendum and Roger Curtis, who came over here for holidays(?). Mole Creek caves and Exit Cave were explored and photographed from all angles. When they departed they left behind new friends and a steak knife - Mendums or Rog. claim if wanted!!

Trip Reports.Sunday 2/3/69 - Exit Cave.

Day party:- Brian Collin and Albert Goede.

Long weekend party:- Allan Keller and C.S.S. visitors John and Mary Mendum and Roger Curtis.

Brian and I left Hobart at 6.45a.m. and arrived at the usual parking place at 9a.m. We walked in in cool, pleasant weather and reached the mouth of the cave at 10.45a.m. Exit Cave was given its long awaited number(No.14) in the form of an aluminium tag just inside the entrance. We then made a beeline for camp 2 which we reached at 11.50a.m. The campsite was deserted but the long weekend party had thoughtfully left lying around all the ingredients for a good brew of coffee. After having had a bite to eat we headed for the Dribble System but as neither of us had been there before we entered the "wrong" passage. We found a system of narrow winding passages which had obviously been explored before. Finally we found one which appeared rather tight sloping up at an angle and showing no signs of having been entered. It proved easier than it looked and at the end we abruptly emerged into the Dribble System which we soon identified by its survey markers. A short walk brought us to a large chamber where we heard the approach of Allan and company in the distance. A devilish thought occurred and we were soon concealed behind a big rock with lights extinguished. I shall never forget the expressions of horror on the faces of Allan's party when two black shapes jumped shrieking from the darkness. After their knees stopped shaking we were given directions to the Devils Stovepipe. This is a most impressive double shaft - very high and with a waterfall coming in 25 ft. above the floor. Pools at the bottom contained Anaspides. Rather frustrating as I had left my collecting gear further back. We then headed back to camp 2 and after more coffee joined forces with the others to explore some more in the Eastern Extension. Our first find was a high level passage on the north side containing a good deal of gypsum including some flowers. After about 200 ft. this narrowed to a downward sloping fissure. John encouraged by Allan chimneyed down in to what appeared to be a roomy prison - no way forward and no retreat. We were just telling Mary how she would have to come in every week and feed him when he finally managed to rejoin us. After going back to the main passage Brian and Roger disappeared into another north side passage while the rest of us found a high level extension on the south side. Mary discovered the remains of a bat which was collected by Albert before we entered a pleasant low-roofed but wide passage - promptly named the Bat Extension. Some distance along was an impressive pit on the left some 70 feet deep and partly separated from the passage by a natural limestone pallisade. After a while we ran into some nasty talus but managed to get through to extend the passage another 100 ft. where it was again blocked by talus. Back to the main passage. Next John, Mary and Albert followed up the stream passage. This is a recent passage which could not be followed very far. We reunited near the end of the main passage. Brian and I decided to head back as I wanted to collect some Anaspides from the Devils Stovepipe on the way out. Seven specimens were collected. We finally emerged from the cave at 7.05p.m. after making some measurements for the gate. We reached the car at 9p.m. and got home just before midnight. An exhausting but very satisfying trip.

Albert Goede.

Mt Anne - Track cutting.Sunday 9/3/69.Party:- Brian and Jeanette Collin, Allan Keller, Sib Corbett, Peter Helman, Clive and Sally Morris and Albert and Therese Goede.

The track from Scotts Peak Rd. at Sandfly Ck. to the dolomite ridge off Mt. Anne is on its way.

Three hours of track cutting through the bush from the button grass lead has resulted in about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile of track. A bulldozer trail was found on the return trip to the cars that obviates traversing the worst of the button grass.

One weekend devoted to track cutting should see the end of this project, the Mt. Anne area will then be only 4 hours from the cars going in, and 3 hours coming out.

The weather was hot, the mosquitoes numerous and the work at times not truly enjoyable but all was soon forgotten over a cup of coffee at Clear Water Ck. as the sun went down.

B. Collin.

Maydena - Thursday 6 March, 1969 - Cave Rescue of Mr. and Mrs. Michael White.

What happened before the rescue(based on available information). On Thursday afternoon a party of three consisting of Mr. and Mrs. Michael White(aged in their thirties) and Michael Flint(18) were involved in a cave accident in a virtually unknown cave approximately six miles west of Maydena. Both Michael White and Michael Flint are employees of Australian Newsprint Mills and the cave is located in the forest concessions held by this company. None of the party were members of a caving society. Neither Mr. or Mrs. White had any previous caving experience. Michael Flint claims to have had some caving experience as well as being a rockclimber. He has not, however, been caving with any of the Tasmanian clubs. The cave where the accident occurred was discovered two years ago by the Whites but was not explored. The entrance is at the base of a large cliff and a small stream flows into the cave which slopes downward at a steep angle with several short drops. The cave is located in dense, wet forest about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile from the nearest timber road. In the afternoon the party made a first attempt to investigate the cave using manilla rope and a bulky home made rope ladder with wooden rungs. They went down several short drops before coming to the top of a shaft which they estimated to be 100 ft. deep. The rope ladder was fixed and Michael Flint descended but the ladder was too short to reach the bottom. On the way out the party was climbing up a steep talus slope when Michael White dislodged a keystone bringing down a considerable amount of talus on both himself and his wife. He was wearing a ribbed aluminium safety helmet which was severely damaged and undoubtedly saved his life. Flint escaped without injury. Michael White was unconscious with obvious head injuries while his wife Beulah was in considerable pain. Flint made them as comfortable as possible and went for help. When he returned to the car he used a portable radio to alert headquarters in Maydena. The manager of A.N.M.'s timber operations Don Frankcombe made a lightning visit to the cave with some of his men, then returned to Maydena to alert police search and rescue. His staff began the difficult job of cutting a track to the cave using chain saws. Vehicles were also posted at all turn-offs along the route to guide rescue teams.

The Rescue. Police at approx. 5.35 p.m. alerted the club rescue coordinators Brian Collin for T.C.C. and Dave Elliott for S.C.S. Public relations officer Doug Turner was also warned and proceeded to police headquarters to take charge at the radiator room. At 5.50p.m. I was contacted by Brian Collin, told to get ready and stand by. At 6.10p.m. a call came through to report to Brian's home, collect gear and proceed to police headquarters. At this stage we knew that both Mr. and Mrs. White were injured but not pinned down by rocks. It was suspected that Mr. White had a fractured skull and Mrs. White a fractured pelvis.

On the way to Brian I alerted Sib Corbett and Peter Helman. At Brian's I found that Rodney had already collected gear and went straight to police headquarters. Arrived there at 6.50p.m. to find advance party consisting of police search and rescue, Frank Brown, Barry James and other members of S.C.S. had already left. I was later joined by Bill Hodge, Bill Peterson and Rodney Hughes. We left in police car at 7.15p.m. but were stopped at Glenorchy and returned to police headquarters to collect 4 portable radios. Made second start at 7.45p.m. and proceeded to Maydena. When we arrived at end of road nearest to cave we found Don Frankcombe and St. Johns Ambulance officer who had returned from cave to collect blood plasma. We carried in food, sleeping bags and lights and Rodney also carried blood plasma and transfusion equipment. Met Rien de Vries who had driven up from New Norfolk on the way up to the cave. Arrived at cave mouth at approx. 9.45p.m. to find that Mrs. White had just been brought to the surface. She was being examined by a doctor and transferred to another stretcher before being carried out. Little could be done until Mr. White was ready to be brought to the surface and some of the time was spent assuring an anxious ambulance officer that we had not seen his silver braided cap nor were we responsible for its disappearance. We did eventually find it for him among the soggy moss and rotting timber surrounding the entrance. When Michael White was brought up at approx. 10.45p.m. we were able to help pull up the stretcher inches at the time to prevent further injury. He was then transferred to a Neil Robinson stretcher after having been examined by a doctor. We were able to help carry out the stretcher

which proved a back breaking task as it was not suitable for the terrain and kept on tipping to one side. Michael White at this stage was fully conscious. His face was badly cut and his left shoulder was causing him some discomfort. We reached the ambulance at about midnight under the glaring lights of the T.V. cameras. The rescue teams were invited to Don Frankcombe's house in Maydena where we were regaled with coffee and tea and loads of delicious pikelets and jam. Marjorie was kept more than busy keeping up with the appetites of a pack of hungry rescuers many of whom had missed out on their dinner that night. We are very grateful for their hospitality. We arrived back in Hobart at 3a.m. While I am writing this Michael and Beulah White are still in hospital but are in a satisfactory condition. Michael has head injuries a broken collar bone and broken ribs, while Beulah has a double fracture of the lower leg. We wish them a speedy recovery.

(Albert Goede).

Stop Press. Caving must be good for the complexion. A prospective member of Sydney University Speleo. Society has won the Miss Australia Beach Girl 1969 competition. Congratulations Carolyn - but beware of losing that suntan in those dark, eerie holes.

Ed.

TASMANIAN CAVERNEERING CLUB

-

ANNUAL REPORT 1968 - 1969.

During the last year there has been a marked drop in caving activities mainly as a result of quite a number of club members leaving the state. At the same time there have been very few new recruits to fill the ranks. In recent months talks have been given to the scouts and members of Y.H.A. The club has also taken on the caving side of the Adventure Camp early this year. Despite these efforts the number of members has declined.

Exploration. The most notable achievement was the exploration of Midnight Hole and the discovery of a link with Mystery Creek Cave to give us Australia's second deepest cave - a depth of at least 665 feet. Another pothole (Chockstone Pot) on the north side of Marble Hill was explored to a depth of 100 ft. Despite the presence of a strong draught attempts to dig a way through the talus at the bottom were unsuccessful.

Also at Ida Bay the length of surveyed passages now stands at  $7\frac{1}{2}$  miles and more has been discovered. Unfortunately little surveying has been done during the year. New discoveries have been made in the Hammer Passage Extension and the Eastern Extension but do not yet appear on the map.

Mount Anne has been brought much closer as a result of the construction of the Scotts Peak Road. Track cutting has started from Sandfly Ck. and we hope to have a well marked track to the north-east ridge soon.

Trips were also made to Mole Creek, Gunns Plains, Loongana and Eugenana, but no new discoveries were reported.

Techniques and Equipment. The equipment situation has continued to improve. New equipment included nylon climbing rope, a set of jumars a climbing pole and carabiners. Lack of active members however, has meant that only limited use could be made of new equipment.

Search and Rescue. The search and rescue team had a busy year. The very difficult rescue of Timothy Walter from a dolerite cave near Claremont last December showed up a number of weaknesses in our system. Improvements made received an early test when we were called out earlier this month for the rescue of Mr. and Mrs. Michael White from a cave west of Maydena. None of the people rescued were members of caving clubs. There would be fewer accidents if prospective cavers joined a club rather than attempt exploration without the necessary experience and equipment. Unfortunately caving accidents are widely publicized and caverneering in Tasmania is rapidly acquiring a bad name despite the fact that the clubs have an excellent safety record.

Interstate visitors. A number of interstate visitors were welcomed during the year. Elery Hamilton-Smith, President of the Vict. Spel. Assn. showed a very interesting collection of slides from caves in many parts of Australia and South-East Asia, while cavers from Queensland and Canberra made their contribution to the exploration of Exit Cave.

Speleo - Spiel. The Spiel saw another year of successful publication. Issues 23 to 33 were produced. I am grateful to my wife who continued to cut the stencils and to Joan and Peter Brabon who looked after the distribution. Many thanks also to the party leaders whose faithful writing of trip reports has made the Spiel a valuable record of our activities.

Finally I would like to thank the outgoing office bearers for their efforts during the year. After three years as president I have decided not to stand for re-election. My three years in office have been memorable years and I had the good luck to be associated with a number of spectacular discoveries.

Your president,

*Albert Grede*