

SPELEO - SPIEL.

No.48.

July, 1970.

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

Registered at the G.P.O., Hobart.

Annual subscription 60 cents.

Single copies 10 cents.

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FORWARD PROGRAMME.

- July 25,26 - Day or weekend trip to Junee area. Leader: A.Goede.  
August 5 - Wednesday: 8p.m. General meeting at Albert and  
Therese's home, 8 Bath Street, Battery Point.  
August 8,9 - Day or weekend trip, track cutting and exploration  
in Weld River area. A good opportunity to explore  
some unusual limestone country. Leader: A.Goede.  
August 22 - Saturday: Photographic and sightseeing trip to  
Exit Cave with New Zealand visitor Les Kermode.  
Slide evening at Roy and Pams home at Hastings on  
Saturday night. Everybody welcome.  
August 29,30 - Weekend trip to Mole Creek. Leader: Peter Brabon.

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Editorial. Since this Spiel comes close on the heels of a late June issue there is not much activity to report. The first two trips scheduled for July had to be cancelled due to ferocious weather but a successful track cutting trip made a good start on a track to the Upper Weld. It is expected that another days work will bring us to the first caves found by the Monash Bushwalking Club last year.

Obituary.

It is with deep regret that we inform our members of the death of Greg Ferris in Sydney at the age of 27 years. Greg was a junior member of the club for several years in the 1950's. He left Tasmania to make his mark in the world of entertainment - in recent years as a member of the well known folk singing group "The Twilighters". The older members amongst us will fondly remember him and we extend our sincere sympathy to John and Mavis.

Visit by Les Kermode. Well known New Zealand speleologist and geologist Les Kermode, will be visiting Tasmania in late August. He will arrive on the night of Friday 21 August and we hope to show him something of Exit Cave on Saturday 22nd while on Saturday night slides will be shown at The Chalet in Hastings. All cavers are invited. On Sunday and Monday Les will visit Mole Creek before departing for the North Island of Australia.

Please note that the trips announced for August 22,23 and Aug. 29 in the June circular have been switched around to fit in with his visit. In recent years Les has been editor of the New Zealand Speleological Bulletin.

Prospective Members.

We usually lose members to mainland clubs and it is nice to see that the tide has turned - at least for the time being. The following three members of as many mainland clubs have come to Tasmania to suffer its climate and have expressed interest in joining the club. They are:

Noel White, c/o Geology Department, Uni. of Tas. Noel is a member of N.U.S.S.(Newcastle) and has been a major contributor to their journal "Cave". The editor is hoping that his journalistic tendencies will be transferred to the Spiel!

John Bluhdorn, c/o 66 Wentworth St., South Hobart. John is no stranger to most of us since like many members of U.Q.S.S. he has caved here before. If you haven't seen him since - he has now grown a beard.

Arthur Clarke, Flat 2, 46 King Street, Sandy Bay. Arthur is a member of V.S.A. He is now a student at the university here and hopes to do some caving with us.

Change of Address.

Terry and Anne Parkes are now at Flat 4, 38 Mellifont Street, West Hobart.

A.S.F. Hobart Conference.

The convention committee has recently met and a circular with detailed information about this event should be out in the next few weeks.

A.S.F. Newsletter. The editors of the A.S.F. newsletter are to be congratulated on the way in which they are catching up on the backlog of issues. They deserve every encouragement. However, we hope that the reports of recent caving accidents in Tasmania will not give cavers from other states the impression that our caves are highly dangerous and discourage them from attending the conference and field trips.

New Descriptions of Tasmanian Cave Fauna.

Two papers have recently been published describing new species of cave fauna collected from our caves by members of T.C.C. and S.C.S. Allan Dartnell of the Tasmanian Museum in this year's issue of the Papers and Proceedings of the Royal Society of Tasmania describes two new species of pseudoscorpions. Pseudotyrannochthonius tasmanicus from King George V Cave, Hastings is described from specimens collected by Albert and Therese Goede and Canberra visitor Barry Moore. Pseudotyrannochthonius typhlus is described from two caves at Mole Creek. Two specimens were collected in Georgies Hall Cave by S.C.S. members Alex Terauds and Bob Cockerill and one from Baldocks Cave by Albert Goede. Elery Hamilton-Smith has collected two pseudoscorpions from Scotts Cave which very likely belong to the same species but have not yet been identified.

Dr. Aola Richards of the Zoology Department, University of N.S.W. has just published a description of another two new species of cave crickets from Tasmania. Parvotettix rangaensis is described from Flinders Island's one and only cave near Ranga from specimens collected by Therese and Albert Goede in January, 1969. The other species - believe it or not - is not from a cave but from the bathroom and backyard of your president's mother-in-law in Battery Point. Therese discovered the first specimen in the bathroom while on the way to a club meeting. A few months later they were found to live in an old sandstone wall in the backyard. They have been named Parvotettix domesticus and must be one of very few species where the address of the type locality can be given. Seven species of cave crickets have now been described from Tasmania and Flinders Island of which six have been found in caves. Paper is published in Pacific Insects 12 (1), 1 - 8. May 1970.

TRIP REPORT.

Weld River Area. 18 July 1970.

Party: A. Goede (leader), Clive and Sally Morris, Noel White, Wes Carpenter, Jeanette Collin and John Bluhdorn.

Despite a grim weather forecast we left Hobart at 7a.m. in two cars. The weather remained reasonably dry until we arrived at our destination - the start of the Port Davey track near Mt. Bowes. As we left the cars at 9.20a.m. it promptly started to rain but fortunately everybody was well equipped with wet weather gear. Slashers and marking tape for our track cutting job were also in good supply. Had the weather been fine we would have climbed South Mt. Bowes to get a bird's eye view of the Upper Weld. However, low cloud and rain changed our minds. At 12.00a.m. noon we rather reluctantly left the Port Davey "highway" to start cutting the new track in thick forest after putting off the evil hour by having an early lunch.

For once the gods smiled on our puny efforts for after 100 yds. we suddenly emerged to find an open buttongrass lead (the only one within miles!!) with a good view of the country that lay ahead. Going rapidly downhill we made good progress until we once more had to plunge into the "murkwood" with only the compass to guide us. We crossed one small stream in otherwise fairly flat and thickly timbered country, keeping on a bearing of 60° magnetic. Finally at 2p.m. as the gradient changed and we were going down a fairly steep slope we decided to give the game away and start the long walk back to the cars. Half an hour later we were back on the Davey track after battling our way up the buttongrass lead in a heavy snow shower which soon turned everything white. Here we separated; Jeanette and John having decided to follow the Davey track north-west to Frodshams Pass while the rest of us headed back over Mt. Bowes. The sun came out for a while and gave us some pretty views of snow covered rainforest and the rocky crags of Mt. Bowes. At one stage we thought that Wes had taken to eating bauera, but apparently it was just the snow he was interested in. What a pity! He would have been a great asset on future track cutting trips with that kind of diet! We arrived back at the cars at 4.40p.m. after a two hour walk - just as heavy snow began to fall. Jeanette and John took only 1½ hours to

walk out but we had the last laugh as they finished up walking through a heavy snowshower to meet the cars. We retreated just in time with snow already several inches thick on the road on the saddle between Tim Shea and The Needles.

A successful trip despite the poor weather. Another day of track cutting should get us to some of the caves and open up a new area for exploration.

Albert Goede.

The following report was written by John Taylor of V.S.A. (Melbourne) and published in Nargun 2(8), March 1970. It is of interest ~~xxx~~ both as a trip report and as a Victorian's view of Tasmanian caving and is reprinted here:

"Tasmania - Dec.1969 - Feb.1970.

Tasmanian cavers are a little more active than we are, due to the great variety of areas, and shorter distances which make day trips possible. Thus I was able to go on 12 trips in an 11 week stay (7 with S.C.S., 4 with T.C.C. and one combined trip). Down south a cave that we(V.S.A.) would number, survey, dig extensions and generally be enthralled with would be regarded as too insignificant to record. Arthur Clarke's attempted diving of a sump(in 45° water) and enthusiastic digging in a sinkhole taking a stream greatly interested the local natives, who sat by staring in amazement.

MAYDENA (Junee - Florentine area).

On my first trip(21 Dec.) we went to look at some new holes found a few weeks previously. An hour and a half walk took us to the first one - a large sinkhole with a river flowing in - and an impressive waterfall over the lip. The efflux is unknown, but is suspected to be 1000 ft. lower down.

We only had 120 ft. of ladder with us, which we rigged on the driest side of the 50 ft. wide opening, about 20 ft. or so below the lip. As it looked dampish, I was given the "honour" of first descent. I was wearing a parka, but at the bottom of the pitch there was so much spray that several cusecs of water were running down my neck and out the bottom of my trog suit. The water was still falling in its first drop to an unknown distance below me and I could only see another 50 ft. The climb up was a little difficult due to near frozen hands(rubber gloves would be a useful item for waterfall pitches). We numbered the hole JF 2 then moved on a short distance to where four holes opened with initial drops of approximately 100 ft. One (JF 3) was laddered to 120 ft. but the bottom was still 40 ft. below. (On a later trip it was found to lead nowhere.) As we walked around the hill, following the sandstone-limestone boundary, numerous gaping shafts were seen but there was no time to explore them.

Soon we arrived at another river flowing underground(JF 4) - a flow of about 10 cusecs roaring into a more horizontal looking cave. The first drop of 10 ft. was negotiated with a rope, then the river passage could be followed for 50 - 100 ft., with numerous glow-worms, to another 10 ft. drop(roped again). Thirty feet further on the river thundered over a great drop into a long fissure. The noise was so great that rocks rolled over the edge could not be heard striking the rocks below, and exploration was halted here until the river was a little lower. On a later(combined S.C.S. - T.C.C.) trip we looked along the surface in line with the fissure, and followed a hole(JF 5) down 30 ft. to a chamber, then a 50 - 60 ft. pitch to a landing, then a 50 ft. pitch to the bottom of the waterfall that had stopped our last exploration. The stream now diminished in volume, cascaded semi-horizontally for 20 ft. then over another drop, but spray was too great for us to attempt it safely.

Given a record drought(unlikely in Tassie) these caves could possibly be bottomed and may prove to be Australia's deepest. The Maydena area is very extensive and a good deal of it is still unexplored: however, scrub bashing is required and it will be quite some time before the area is covered in detail."