

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

Hobart, TAS. 7001.

Registered at the G.P.O. Hobart.

Annual sub. 60 cents.

Single copies 10 c.

Merry

Christmas

Happy New
Year.Pres: A. Goede, 8 Bath St., Batt. Pt., 7000.Sec: D. Turner, 79 Riawena Rd., Rose Bay, 7015.

The editors of the Spiel wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Also an enjoyable time to all those attending the A.S.F. Conference and field trips.

As usual there will be NO Spiel in January and NO General Meeting.

FORWARD PROGRAMME.

- Dec. 6 - Sunday: Day trip to JF 5 to place bolts and attempt further exploration. Leader: Philip Robinson.
- Dec. 13 - Sunday: Ladder practice at Blackmans Bay. Meet 10 a.m. at Albert's place. Leaders: A. Goede and P. Robinson.
- Dec. 20 - Sunday: Clean up and improve Junee Homestead for conference. Windows will be covered with heavy duty plastic. Bring tools and nails. Leave 9 a.m. from 8 Bath Street. Leader: Albert Goede.
- Dec. 27, 1970 - Jan. 10, 1971. - A.S.F. Conference and field trips.
- Jan. 23-24 - Weekend: Junee area. Leader: P. Robinson.
- Jan. 30 - Feb. 1. - Australia Day Long Weekend. West Coast. Leader: N. White.
- Feb. 3 - Wednesday: General Meeting, 8 Bath Street, Battery Point. 8 p.m.

EDITORIAL.

The past month has seen major discoveries by all Tasmanian clubs. The Southern Caving Society is to be congratulated with breaking the Australian depth record by bottoming Tassie Pot in the Florentine Valley at a depth of 800 ft. One of our members - Philip Robinson - was invited to take part in the final assault and was one of three to reach the bottom of the pothole. You will find his story in this Spiel.

T.C.C. (Northern Branch) found another entrance to Kubla Khan (Mole Creek). This means that instead of making a strenuous trip to the far end of the cave and back it is now possible to make a through trip. It also makes the spectacular formation chambers at the far end of the

cave much more accessible which may not be a good thing from a conservation point of view. No doubt the through trip will prove very popular with the A.S.F. party going to Mole Creek.

Our own efforts although less spectacular have also been worthwhile. At Mt. Anne Brian and Jeanette Collin were the first to reach the legendary lake to the south of the dolomite ridge to find the waters from the lake draining into two swallets in the dolomite at the eastern end. A trip the following weekend by Brian, Bill and Peter saw the completion of a marked track around the dolomite ridge from the Boyle search camp to the lake. Brian and Bill also made a traverse of the dolomite ridge and using a weighted fishing line plumbed the depth of the "big hole". Two measurements 20 ft. apart indicated free drops of 380 and 410 ft. respectively!! Looks like Mini Martin is going to lose another record on the post conference field trip.

On a trip to Frankcombe Cave Albert discovered the larva of the Florentine cave beetle as well as two adults from this new locality. The beetle was previously known only from Cashion Ck. Cave. The larva is the first to be discovered of any of the five species of known Tasmanian troglobitic beetles.

Club News.

+ The following new members were elected at the last general meeting (when they pay their subs!)

Kevin Kiernan, 10 Meath Avenue, Tarooma, 7005.

Peter Shaw, Fl.3, 25 Broadview Cres., Trevallyn, Launceston, 7250.

Congratulations and welcome to the mob! Their election brings to 12 the number of new members who have joined the club in the last six months.

+ Simon Stephens has left to spend a two months climbing holiday in New Zealand. No doubt he will come back with lots of climbing techniques to try out underground.

+ Tom Forster will be leaving us to start technical training with the Air Force at Wagga, N.S.W. in early January. Sorry to lose you so soon Tom but don't forget to take that geology pick with you! It should make a useful addition to the armament of Phantom jet fighters as well as assuring that some of our party leaders live a little longer.

+ Peter and Joan Brabon will be moving into their own home soon. Their new address is Old Beach Road, P.O. Box 74, Lindisfarne.

Slide and Film Show - "Walking for Pleasure".

This show will be staged by the North West Walking Club at the Arts Lecture Theatre, Uni. of Tas., at 8.15 p.m. on Friday, 11th and Saturday, 12th. December with a matinee performance at 2.30 p.m. on Saturday the 12th.

The show comprises a two hour programme of slides and colour movies of the club's outdoor activities together with taped music and commentary. Admission will be by ticket sales at the door. Adults 80 cents. Children 40 cents. (30 cents matinee).

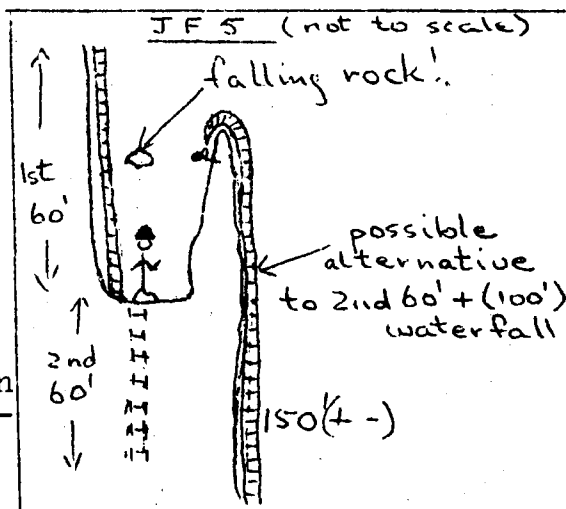
TRIP REPORTS.

Hairygoat Hole and JF 5 - Sunday Nov. 8th.

Party: Noel White, Philip Robinson, Bill Lehmann, Clive and Dorothy Boulter, Mike Robinson and Peter Shaw.

A 7 a.m. start from Franklin Squ. saw us soon past the barrier at Maydena and footslogging up the track towards the caves. It was very humid and the going a trifle sticky. Half way up the dry valley the party split up. Noel Bill, Clive and Dorothy set forth up the side to dig the choke in Hairygoat Hole while Philip, Peter and Mike carried on up the valley to JF 4,5. Despite the dry day there was still a tremendous amount of water cascading down into 4. The dry entrance, JF 5, was descended approx. 11.30 a.m. The easy 30 ft. entrance climb led straight to a small chamber and the first 60 ft. drop.

This is climbable with a rope though a ladder is a little easier. We were all soon down this pitch along with the tackle and a few large sized rocks. A rope was cut in two by one rock. This pitch is unsafe and there is no shelter at the bottom. A further 60 ft. ladder was tied on and the next drop descended. Half way down the JF 4



water can be seen thundering away close by. Rocks thrown down the next pitch were lost in the roar of water. An estimate of 100 ft. is approximate. There seem to be three ways to tackle this waterfall pitch:- (a) Climb straight down the water with wet suit in drier weather. Prior to such a hazardous attempt it would be advisable to immerse oneself in the upper reaches of JF 4, just to test the feel of things. (b) Drive in two bolts 10' up the left hand wall. This will take the ladder away from the main force. A wet suit would still be desirable when driving the bolts among the spray of the previous pitch. (c) Drive in a bolt 10' up the wall at the bottom of the first 60'. Hang 150' ladder(at least) over the top. This may well avoid the 100'(+/-) waterfall altogether. (See diagram on previous page).

The party returned to the surface after 3 hours underground.

It was soon obvious that the dig in Hairygoat Hole was impossible. Explosives are needed to make any progress, although with much mud and gravel removed a sledge hammer may make some impression. Little draught was reported. Dorothy had a good introduction to ladder climbing with two easy 40' pitches. It appeared from the resulting screams however, she was not of this opinion herself. Hooks on the boots were the cause of some concern.

Both parties joined together we spent the rest of the day pottering. Six holes were descended along the yellow track from Hairygoat Hole, depths being 40', 65', 6', 15', '?' and 30'. All were choked at the bottom except '?'. Stones rattled for two seconds. It was too tight after 10'. The 65' deep hole has a beautiful free hanging climb. A way through to a further 15' hole may go at the bottom. There is no draught; whatever that means.

We were met by Therese back at the cars. She had been with Albert down Cashion Ck.Cave, a successful trip, some very rare critters were found. Their car had stuck in third gear and Albert was attempting to drive it back to Hobart, ditching Therese in case he broke down and needed one of us to tow him. He made it without stopping.

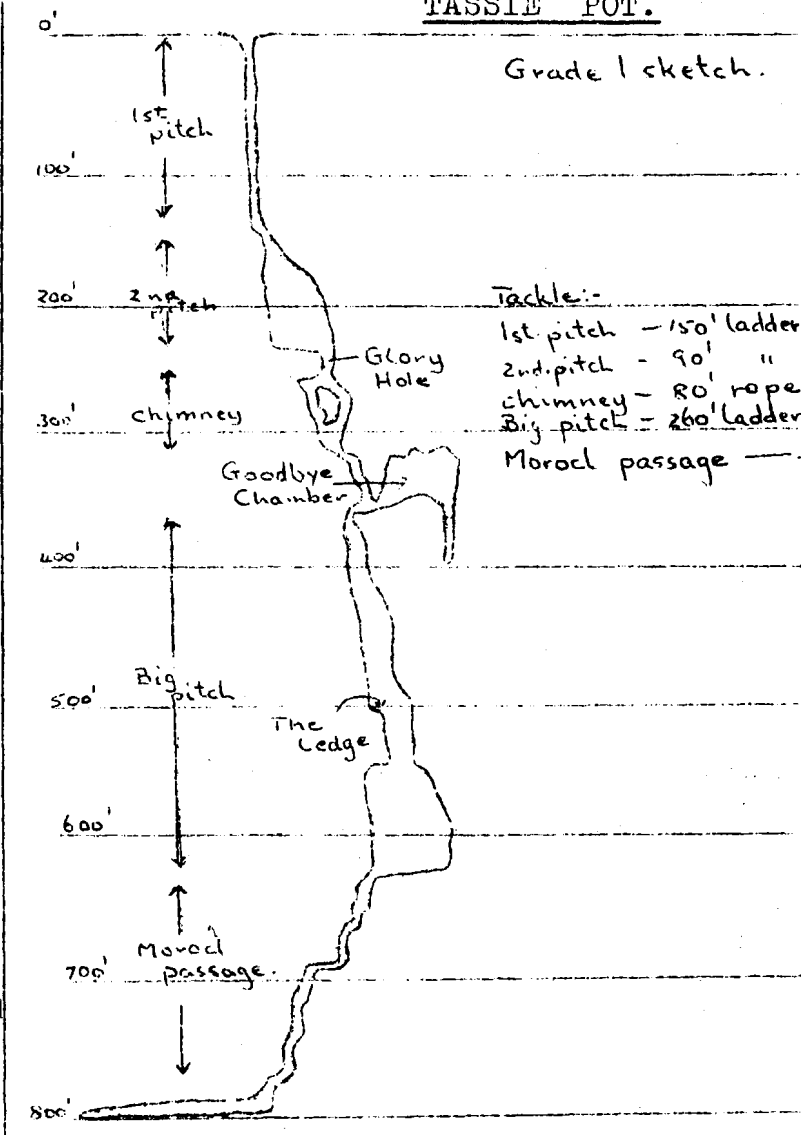
Philip Robinson.

THE DEEPEST POT IN AUSTRALIA.

Sat. Nov. 14th.

Near midnight on Sat. Nov. 14 th a party from the Southern Caving Society bottomed Tassie Pot at 800 feet. I was lucky enough to be with the team during the 17 hour trip. (Previous record: Mini Martin 720 ft. by T.C.C. 1967). The first man descended the 150' entrance shaft at about 1.00 p.m. on Saturday. The seven man team were soon pressing down, with tackle. The second pitch, 90' and the 70' chimney were descended. After a few more climbs we found ourselves in a sizable chamber with a deep chasm off one side. Three hundred feet of wire ladder were lowered over and John Morley prepared to descend. Soon his usual audible voice had disappeared. We were left wondering. His absence on the end of the rope, when it was hauled up, suggested he had bottomed it. 270 ft. of rope had been used. I tied on and descended steadily. The ladder was twisted, caught and heavy, the climb awkward. At 140' a

TASSIE POT.



narrow 2' wide ledge to one side offers a welcome rest. A candle was lit below and John could be seen vaguely in the darkness. Continuing down an overhang is reached and the last 80' is free hanging in a very large chamber. At 260' the bottom was reached. Climbing up a slope I met John. About 20 mins. later Arthur Clarke had joined us. The altimeter read 640' and the cave went down! We climbed through some loose rocks and down a series of short unstable drops. Below the big pitch to the bottom are many precariously positioned rocks. Care is needed on the descent. We gingerly continued down, down. Where was the bottom? At last it levelled off and we walked for 100 ft. or so. The passage lowered and a tight squeeze was encountered. Eagerly the altimeter was read; - 820' - the record!, easily. We shook hands and felt very pleased. The depth was later amended to 800' + - 20' to allow for error in the aneroid. Arthur decided this wasn't enough and proceeded to force the muddy squeeze. John followed and a further 30' of passage was found. Another cave was entered, in fact another stream, but no way on. The bottom had definitely been reached.

The return was careful and the big 260' pitch planned. We ascended without mishap. Some excellent lifelining by Chris, David, Graham and Kevin was very much appreciated. Also on the surface John McCormack lining on the 150' entrance shaft had a very long wait. Once up the big pitch we were as good as out of the cave. The entrance 90' and 150' ladders seemed like chicken feed. We were all on the surface at dawn, Sunday, weary and jubilant.

Philip Robinson(T.C.C.)

Frankcombe Cave, Florentine Valley - Sunday 15/11/1970.

Party: Albert Goede(leader), Therese and Diana Goede, Noel White, Peter Shaw, Mike Robinson, Bill Lehmann, Clive and Dot Boulter, Clive and Fiona Burrett and Philip Robinson(resting on his laurels).

We left Hobart at a leisurely 8 a.m. meeting Peter at Granton at 8.30 a.m. Near Westerway we met up with John Morley of S.C.S. who told us the exciting news that they had broken the Australian depth record in the early hours of the morning by bottoming Tassie Pot. At the barrier we found an exhausted but rather pleased Philip slumped in his V.W. with further details on the Tassie Pot effort. He even mustered the courage to come with us although he didn't go underground again.

Frankcombe Cave was quickly found and the whole party went through the formation section except Albert who spent the time collecting cave fauna in the overflow stream passage. This proved very rewarding. Not only were two troglobitic trechine beetles found(the first record of them from this cave) but more exciting still a beetle larva was found - confirmed as almost certainly that of the cave beetle. This is the first troglobitic beetle larva to be recorded from Australia. When the others returned we all followed the fossil passage downstream. As this gets narrower as one goes on we were soon well spread out. Noel and Peter pressed on determined to push exploration further and disappeared from sight. They were followed more reluctantly by Bill, Mike and myself. The others stayed back to admire the fossils.

The three of us followed in Noel and Peter's trail well beyond the previous limit of exploration. The going got progressively harder and in several places the floor had been dug out but no sign of them. In the end our lights were getting dim and we got fed up with progressing like earthworms so we made our way back to the surface. Another hour later Peter and Noel emerged. They must have crawled nearly to the Florentine River but still claimed it would go further with a little digging. Any takers?? A pleasant day despite somewhat damp conditions.

Albert Goede.

Mt. Anne area. - 14,15 Nov. 1970.

Party: Brian and Jeanette Collin.

Jeanette now has the honour of being the first person to drink from the un-named lake below the dolomite ridge.

The lake is about $\frac{1}{2}$ a mile long by several hundred yards across with dolomite abutting its western shore. The lake drains out via two holes in the dolomite about 100 ft. apart. The first outlet is a horizontal fissure some 8 ft. long by 9" high and could possibly be entered with the aid of a hammer. The second outlet at the base of a small cliff was not visited, or even seen, but it could be heard. Access to this outlet could be awkward and a length of rope might come in useful.

The penalty of doing in one day what should be done in two days

is the lack of daylight hours. The area is worthy of more exploration, especially when one considers that it would be at least $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles before a possible efflux.

Brian Collin.

Mt. Anne. - 21,22 Nov. 1970.

Party: B. Collin (leader), B. Lehmann and Peter Shaw (Sat. night & Sun.).

Leaving Hobart at 7 p.m. on Friday night we arrived at the "search camp" sight at approx. 11 p.m. after a walk along the bomber track by torch light. On Saturday morning it dawned fine and clear so Brian decided that we should do the trip along the ridge top while the weather was good.

Leaving camp at about 7 a.m. we climbed up past "Wireless Pt." (so named because the radio was situated here during the Boyle search last year) onto the northern end of the dolomite ridge. From here we could see a considerable portion of Tasmania. We then moved along the top of the ridge towards Mt. Anne. Whilst the climb up the end of the ridge was reasonable the top of the ridge has more ups and downs than in a yo-yo competition. This combined with the scoparia scrub made it quite a trip along. About half way along the ridge we found a reasonable camp site with what looks like permanent water and good shelter. It was while we were resting here that I discovered that my parka and jumper had fallen out of the day pack I was carrying and we debated whether to go back and look for them. We retraced our steps and fortunately found them within 100 yds. of the camp sight.

We continued along the ridge to the first of our objectives, the No.2 big hole that Jeanette Collin and Tim Walkden-Brown had found previously. They had only seen it in the fog but in clear day light it was over-awing. A four hundred foot sheer wall to the bottom. But the easy way down is on the other side where the wall between the two holes goes down about 100 ft. and with the assistance of a rope it would be possible to get onto a natural bridge about 150 ft. off the floor of the hole. This would make a good jumping off point for the assault on the hole as it is approx. 5-6' wide. Rocks dropped down the deep side of the hole took 5 - $5\frac{1}{2}$ secs. to hit before bouncing on further.

After a bite of lunch and a drink of snow water from one of the numerous snow banks still on the ridge we headed further round the ridge to the prime objective, the "big" hole. This turned out to have a very unpretentious entrance but a rock dropped down disappeared from sight before hitting the bottom. I could see what I took to be the bottom and threw the rock to land on this spot but could not see it do so. Brian went "fishing" in the hole and took two measurements which turned out to be 380' and 410'. These were taken about 20' apart and with a weighted nylon fishing line so the hole is obviously a bit more than this as the nylon stretches a bit. We then scaled the face up to the look out rock 400' further up in a vertical direction and then walked along the ridge to the track going back to the "Fern Camp". Leaving the packs here Brian led on along the ridge to the biggest cushion plant that I had ever seen. I took a couple of photos but unfortunately some idiot, who we met camped along the ridge a bit, had stamped his foot into the plant and damaged the surface a fair bit.

With another bite to eat we then headed back to camp to find Peter had arrived about two hours before. A good hot meal and then to bed as we had been going for 12 hours.

Sunday dawned just as good as Sat. but we couldn't go back to the ridge as we would have liked, as the other objective of the trip was to cut a track into the as yet un-named (officially) lake below Mt. Anne. This was done in $6\frac{1}{2}$ hours with minor excursions to look at such things as a small resurgence, the "Moses" rock which is a small stream flowing out of a solid 100 ft. rock face, and some of the numerous collapses and faults in the rock, none of which appeared to go anywhere but could do with further work. We arrived at the lake at about 2.30 p.m. making us part of the so far exclusive group of 4 people to actually visit the lake so far, Brian and Jeanette having visited it the previous weekend from the opposite end.

After trying without success (hole too small) to get through where the water flows out of the lake we headed back, packed up camp and arrived back at the cars on the road about (5.30 p.m.) From there it was back to the cold pie shop for a HOT pie, milkshake and icecream to sustain us till we got home.

Bill Lehmann.

Exit Cave, Ida Bay - Sunday, 22/11/1970.

This trip demonstrated the advantages of a small fast party. Having left Hobart at 7 a.m. in Philip's car we were at the cave mouth at 11 a.m. The cave stream was very low following nearly a week(!) of dry weather but the cave was still damp with plenty of evidence of recent flooding. A quick detour was made to the Colonnades and through the upper level then through the talus to camp 2 and a quick look at the gypsum needles in Edie's Treasure. We then pressed on upstream eventually passing through Keller's Squeeze. We passed Skeleton Ck. Passage to the next large chamber. Here instead of pressing on upstream we climbed up at one end of the chamber. Here a crawl led off to the left (obviously unexplored) while a dry stream passage went to the right. Albert followed up the passage for some distance without reaching the end. The first part is particularly interesting consisting of an elliptical passage with an 8' to 10' miniature canyon cut in its floor. Philip pushed through the crawl and found it opened out into a passage. Neither passage was pushed to the end due to lack of time. There is a lot more exploring and a good deal of mapping to be done in this part of the cave. We emerged from the cave at 6 p.m. reaching the car at 7.30 p.m. We got to Huonville at 9.30 p.m. just in time to get some fish and chips before the last shop shut. A strenuous day but well worth the effort.

Albert Goede.

Gray (near St. Marys), Nth. East Tasmania. - 28, 29/11/1970.

Party: Albert Goede (leader), Therese and Diana Goede, Bill Lehmann, Delia Maloney, Philip Robinson, Stuart Nicholas, Tom Forster, Peter Shaw and Judy Chambers.

The purpose of the trip was to investigate the caves in the Permian limestone in the vicinity of Gray (5 miles south-east of St. Marys). We left Hobart at 7 a.m. meeting Judy and Peter shortly after 11 a.m. at Gray. Judy had obtained the key to the old farm and former post office kindly made available by the owner - Peter Rubenach. Paul Denney, a young local chap interested in caves acted as our guide. Philip and Albert went off to find him and he agreed to come with us after lunch to show us the caves. The first one just below the farm was an overhang with an extensive rockfall and some wombat sized passages leading off. The second one - known as the Bottomless Pit - proved more interesting. It is a 60' shaft ending in a chamber with a pile of twigs and leaves at the bottom. With the aid of an old wooden ladder a side passage 20' above the floor was investigated. It was an old low roofed stream passage becoming too narrow to follow after approx. 100' but contained some formation. Tom nearly maimed Philip by throwing his geology pick back through the squeeze. A while later Albert had a narrow miss when the same weapon came hurtling down the shaft having become dislodged from Tom's belt on the way up. Several further holes - mostly soil collapses into underlying limestone - were investigated without success. They were all west of the main road. The limestone seems to get purer as you go east and at the furthest point reached well developed surface fluting was seen. The limestone to the east of the main road may be worth investigating some time. Rumour has it that an extensive cave was found there during the last century but was blocked up by the owner. Peter Rubenach came down on Saturday night and showed us his collection of antiques. We also sampled some of his home made plum wine. Therese discovered three cave crickets (Parvotettix sp.) in the laundry. We had seen none in the caves. The next day we had a lazy trip back to Hobart via the east coast getting sun burnt at Bicheno. A. Goede.

JF 5 - Sun. Dec. 6 th.

Party: B. Collin, P. Shaw and P. Robinson.

The reason for this trip was to size up once more the cave and prepare it for the conference. This has been done. Three bolts are now securely driven in and a 100' dry pitch avoiding the waterfall awaits exploration - a gift indeed! An hour's walk with heavy pack & we reached the cave near noon. Despite heavy rain during the previous night the creek was lower than usual. The 30' climb led to the 1st. 60' pitch. A bolt was driven and the ladder thrown down. The 2nd 60' was climbed. It was decidedly wet, as per usual at the bottom. Returning to the bottom of the first 60' a further bolt was driven. It is approx. 15' above the floor. A traverse round above a deep drop leads to a small hole. 30' ladder was lowered down the hole and a ledge reached. The drop off is around 100'. A bolt was driven again into some very solid looking limestone. Unfortunately only 30' of ladder was left. The chasm was inspected off two sides of the ledge. One led to

a boulder chockstone about 30' down, but the best way in is along the side. A traverse led to a pile of loose rock. Gardening ensued for several minutes ending in a climax of one five feet long boulder. The whole cave shuddered as it shattered to the bottom. Peering over the lip of the drop in the order of a hundred feet was seen.

Seven hours were spent underground on a very useful expedition. Returning we walked along the side of the dry valley, missing it altogether. This is infinitely better than walking down in it. Joining the marked track once more we were at the cars 40 minutes after leaving JF 5.

Philip Robinson.