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#### FORWARD PROGRAMME.

- Feb.7 - Sun. Day trip to Junee. Exploration of shafts between Cauldron Pot and Khazad - dum. Leader: B.Collin.
- Feb.14 - Sun. Day trip to further explore swallet at Ida Bay to try and link with Exit Cave. Leader: B.Collin.
- Feb.21 - Sun. Day trip to Khazad - dum. Exploration of high level from far end of big chamber and preparations for following weekend. Leader: Phil Robinson.
- Feb.27,28 - March 1 - Long weekend. Attempt to explore Khazad - dum beyond the depth of 860 ft. already reached. Many hands will be needed for support so make it a date if you can!! Leader: Phil Robinson.
- March 3 - General Meeting. WEDNESDAY. 8 p.m. Wes Carpenter's, 20 Wellesley Street, South Hobart.
- March 6 or 7 - Surface investigation of Lake Tink area, Mt.Anne. Acting leader: Peter Shaw.
- March 13 - Sat. Complete cutting of track to Weld River. Leader: Albert Goede.

#### A.S.F. Convention -- 1970/71.

The A.S.F. Convention and field trips have passed into history much to the relief of the organizers. The conference proved to be a very memorable one with what was probably a record attendance. Many papers were presented and were generally of a high standard. The symposium with the most popular appeal was undoubtedly the one dealing with photographic techniques and travelogues. For those of us more interested in the scientific aspects of the game the cave biology symposium was a particularly exciting one as it gave a good cross section of much of the very interesting work done in this field in Australia in recent years. The committee meetings were well represented and a remarkably constructive spirit prevailed. There was almost unanimous agreement to increase the capitation fee to \$1.00 per year. John Dunkley was re-elected as editor so we can look forward to an improved and up to date newsletter.

The Caveman's Dinner was attended by 100 odd and turned out to be a riotous and light-hearted affair. Many prominent A.S.F. personalities let their hair down and were photographed in compromising situations. Festivities continued until the early hours of the morning for those who had the stamina to survive that long.

The field trips got under way with many sore heads and a continuation of the foul weather experienced during the conference. Nevertheless they were highly successful. At Exit a major breakthrough was made with a further mile of passage found of which 3,000 ft. was surveyed. The new extension runs parallel to Mystery Ck.Cave(Entrance Cave) and there is a strong possibility that it will link up with a small swallet on the northern side of Marble Hill. At Mt.Anne the "big hole"(now officially named Kellers Cellar) was descended. The entrance pitch proved to be a 420 ft. free ladder drop(a new Australian record) and the depth of the system 510 ft. At Junee the discovery of a new route by the first party in JF 4-5 enabled the second party to reach a depth of -648' as well as commencing exploration of the Serpentine Extension. Even at Mole Creek several new discoveries were made the most spectacular being Tailender Cave near Croesus with some 1,400 ft. of passage.

KHAZAD - DUM(JF 4-5) - a new Australian Depth Record with a depth of 860 ft.!!! and it still goes on! On Saturday 23 January a combined T.C.C. - S.C.S. team with the support of two mainland cavers and led by Philip Robinson(T.C.C.) set a new depth record in Khazad-dum by reaching a depth of 860' at which point the party was stopped at the top of a 100'(+/-) waterfall pitch. The party was underground for 14 hours and also continued the survey started during the A.S.F. Conference field trips. The survey(C.R.G. Grade 4) is now down to -648'.

The weekend before a party of four pushed the exploration of the Serpentine Extension to an estimated depth of -500' without linking up with the main cave. They ran out of gear at this depth at the top

of a 12' drop. This extension could link up with the main cave at -524 ft.

It now seems very likely that given suitable weather the next expedition will pass the 1,000 ft. mark. In fact there is a possibility that the cave will become the deepest in the Southern Hemisphere as the difference in height between the Khazad-dum swallet and the Junee resurgence is approximately 1300 ft. The depth of Harwood Hole in New Zealand - the deepest in the Southern Hemisphere - is given in the New Zealand Speleological Bulletin as 1130 ft. (370 metres). The issue is No.68 (Dec.1968). Khazad-dum replaces Tassie Pot as the deepest Australian cave only a little more than two months after Tassie Pot gained the record. Unlike Tassie Pot which is essentially vertical Khazad-dum has approx. one mile of explored passage most of which has been mapped. (See map and cross sections in this issue.)

#### DEEPEST CAVES IN AUSTRALIA.

1. Khazad-dum (JF 4-5) - Junee Florentine, Tas. Depth 860'. Exploration not yet complete - held up at top of 100 ft. waterfall pitch. Surveyed to depth of -648'. Aneroid used beyond this point.
2. Tassie Pot (JF 223) - Junee Florentine, Tas. Depth 800'. Longest ladder drop 260'. Depth measured by aneroid and estimation of ladder pitches. Bottom reached by S.C.S. 15/11/70.
3. Mini Martin - Exit Cave - Ida Bay, Tas. Depth 720 ft. Pothole containing a 360' free ladder drop linked with Exit Cave to provide a system 720 ft. deep. Bottom reached by T.C.C. on 19/8/1967.
4. Midnight Hole - Mystery Ck. Cave - Ida Bay, Tas. Depth at least 665'. Six ladder drops including 180', 120' and 110' pitches. Surveyed down to 645'. Connection made by T.C.C. on 13/10/1968.
5. Growling Swallet - Junee Florentine, Tas. Depth 560'. Steeply descending swallet. Only one 30' ladder pitch. For many years Australia's deepest cave. Surveyed (Grade 4) to depth of 230 ft. Total depth from repeated aneroid readings. Bottom reached by T.C.C. in Feb. 1957.
6. Unnamed Cave - Bungonia (N.S.W.). Depth 540'. Depth probably by estimation. Cave contains several ladder drops and running water. Bottomed at terminal pool by combined SSS/BSS party on 16/1/1971. Deepest cave in mainland Australia.
7. Kellers Cellar - Mt. Anne, Tas. Depth 510 ft. First ladder pitch a 420' ladder drop. Longest drop in Australia. Depth determined by estimation of ladder pitches. Bottom reached by A.S.F. field trip on 7/1/1971.

It is noteworthy that of the seven caves listed as being deeper than 500 ft. no less than four have been explored in the last four months.

#### Club News.

- + New member. At the last general meeting Norman Poulter was accepted as a full member. His address is Sandy Bay Caravan Park and his postal address P.O. box 169, Sandy Bay, 7005.
- + Prospective member: Richard Keddle, Storey Street, St. Marys, 7215.
- + New Names:  
 Khazad-dum (Junee Florentine) - formerly referred to by number only as JF 4-5.  
 Kellers Cellar (Mt. Anne) - formerly referred to as the "big hole"  
 Serpentine Extension - a new extension in Khazad-dum beginning at the entrance to the Serpentine Passage and also at the low crawl above the 15' ladder pitch.
- + There are strong rumours that Sib and Keith Corbett will be coming back to Tasmania soon from W.A. to work with the Tasmanian Mines Department.
- + It was decided at the last meeting to construct 8 lengths of 30' ladder. We hope to make a start on it soon.

Change of address. Southern Caving Society. Postal address now at P.O. Box 121, Moonah, Tas. 7009.

#### TRIP REPORTS.

Exit Cave - Dec.31 - Jan.5th.

Party: (18) Brian Collin, Allan Keller, Ian Wood, Andrew Pavey, Nick White, Peter Matthews, Chris Cosgrove, Jim Seabrook, Tony Culberg, Ted Anderson, Alan Rogers, Rick Counsell, Diana Counsell, Ron Allum, Henry Shannon, Harvey Cohen, John Bennett, Beverley Riley.

For several days the party was restricted by flood waters to several miles of passages adjacent to the inner base camp ( $\frac{3}{4}$  mile underground). At the first respite Allan Keller led a party to the

"Mud Passage" area off the "Eastern Grand Fissure" where Henry promptly found a way into a mile of new cave. With appetites whetted the next session was occupied in detailed pushing of the new section and a compass and tape traverse was made of the main passage (3,000 ft.) Flood waters again restricted movements and a day of rest was declared followed by a leisurely departure from the cave. B.Collin.

Mt. Anne - Jan. 6 - 10.

Party: (16) Brian Collin, Allan Keller, Ian Wood, Andrew Pavey, Nick White, Susan White, Chris Cosgrove, Jim Seabrook, Tony Culberg, Ted Anderson, Rick Counsell, Ron Allum, Henry Shannon, John Bennett, Bill Lehmann, Ellen Davies.

Over 500' of ladder and 1,000' of rope plus assorted ironmongery including four telecoms, the trip up to the base camp will be remembered by all.

On the second day the No.1 "big hole" was descended by Allan, Andrew and Ron. Of equal credit in this operation was the cool efficiency of the support party and I will long remember the project from this aspect alone.

Technically the first pitch was 420' free into a large chamber from which by devious scungy ways the cave finished at an estimated depth of 510 ft.

On the third day the No.2 "big hole" was descended, the first pitch being about 150' and the cave ended at a depth of about 350'.

Several small holes were looked at without success but further exploration was prevented by rain on the fourth day. The fifth day was occupied in returning to Hobart.

It has been four years since the discovery of the holes on Mt. Anne and without doubt it was a group effort that finally ascertained what was at the bottom. B.Collin.

Midnight Hole - Jan. 12th.

Party: Brian Collin, Ian Wood, Andrew Pavey, Nick White, Chris Cosgrove, Tony Culberg, Ted Anderson, Ron Allum, Henry Shannon.

A one day trip just for the sport of abseiling.

With the fallacious thought that two small parties would be quicker than one of nine the first 5 soon dropped from sight equipped with 2/120' ropes and the 360 footer which they were to leave in position on the last drop (180').

The second party's rapid pursuit halted at the bottom of the first drop (70') when the rope jammed and Nick had to improvise prussik loops. On his way up he had ample opportunity to regret leaving his jumars outside. Henry being the man of ideas in the party decided during this period of enforced inactivity that the first party could use a spare helmet and sent his express mail partway down the next drop.

The second group eventually descended the cave to be met by a rather cold Ron whom I suspect was too relieved to express the many appropriate remarks he must have been thinking.

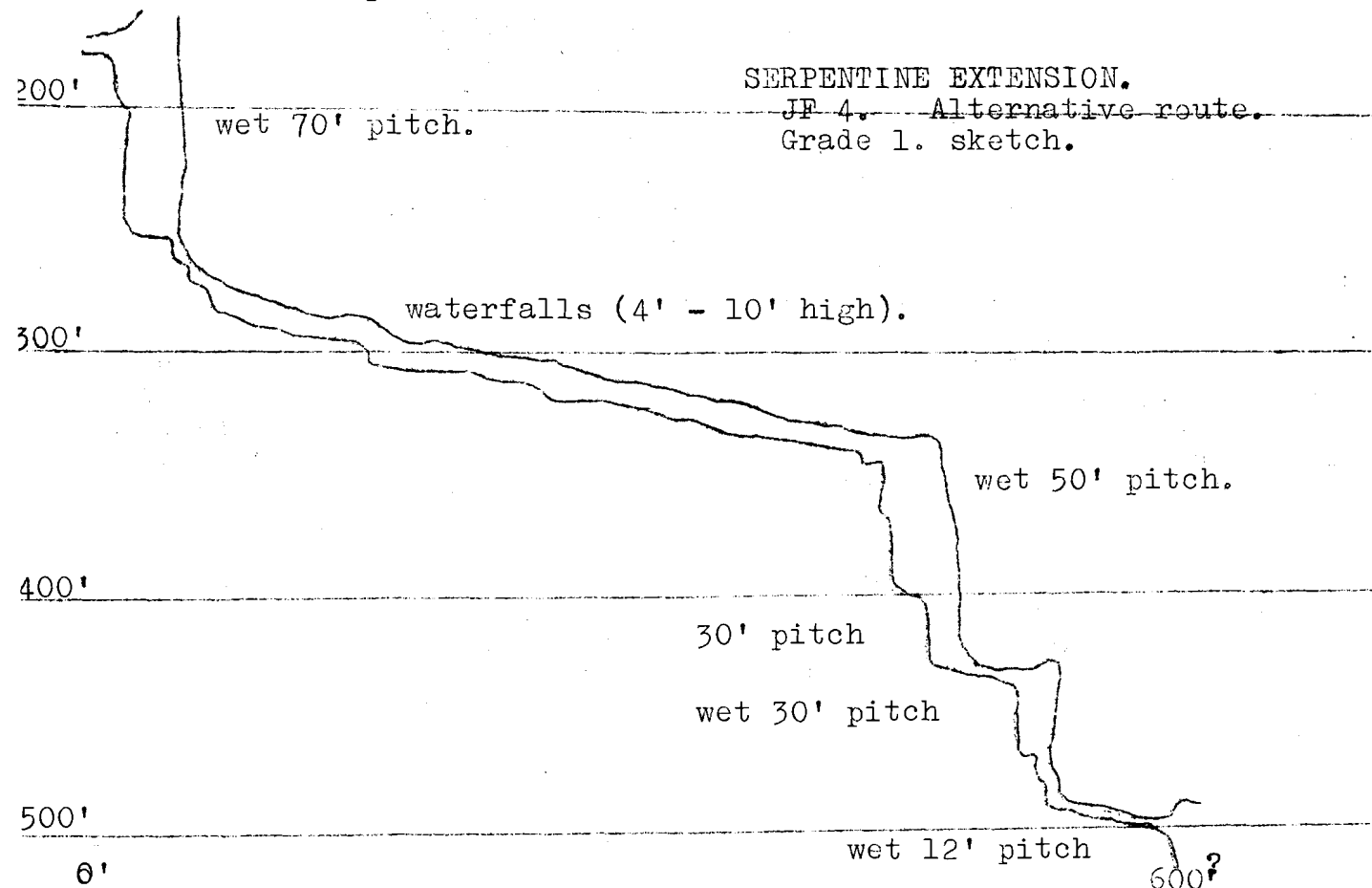
Time was now rather short so only a few minutes were spent in a new cave that could link up with the extension recently found in Exit. A good trip where sightseeing (enforced) prevented the more serious aspects of caving being carried out. B.Collin.

Khazad-dum - Jan. 16th.

Party: Albert Goede, Peter Shaw, Laimonis Kavalieris and Philip Robinson.

After the successful A.S.F. Conference trip the week before the party eagerly set off back to Khazad-dum. It was intended to explore the upper passage and undescended 90(?)ft. pitch, in the hope of finding a quick way down to the main streamway. A torrential downpour the previous night had caused the cave to fill almost to flood conditions. The trickle of water in our route had turned to a fair stream but it was still negotiable. At the cave entrance a trusty tree was felled and chopped up for two stout belays. The cave was entered at 11.30a.m. underneath the entrance waterfall and along the "Serpentine Passage" to the top of the pitch. Depth here is 180 ft. and several hundred feet from the entrance. The logs were placed in position and the pitch laddered. Kav., well protected with waterproofs and Philip with wet suit descended to find a very wet 70' pitch. Trouble was experienced lowering tackle with a ledge 20' below the top. A 10' climb followed then another short waterfall and another. This continued for a few hundred feet the passage winding around. It was difficult to tell which direction we were heading in. The passage is often narrow and high, the rock sharp and weathered. One cannot avoid a soaking in the climbs. Soon another ladder pitch

was encountered, wet and 50' deep. The first 20' are climbable with a rope. At the bottom one lands on a pile of large boulders, sharp with some loose. A 30' vertical drop follows. For once in the pothole this is dry. The stream sinks in behind the boulders and emerges at the base of the pitch. It was laddered. After a short distance another wet pitch was encountered, 30' deep. No tackle left a return to the previous 30' pitch was made. Kav. climbed up, dropped the ladder and tried to climb back down. Unfortunately climbing down without a ladder or rope proved much more difficult than climbing up without a ladder or rope. Never the less he eventually dropped down and the next 30' waterfall was laddered. Philip descended finding two 10' climbable waterfalls and a small chamber. A large rock wedged in the rift was climbed and the stream followed along a crawl to a 12 ft. waterfall. This was overhanging and impossible to climb without tackle. Thus the pothole goes on, wet and sporting. Depth reached down this route is estimated at 500',  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile from the entrance. Depth down the main way in Khazad-dum is -650'. No roar of water was heard at the 12' pitch. Whether the two link up is still to be determined, although it is very likely. Two cold, wet cavers returned to the 70 ft. pitch. At the top we were welcomed by Albert and Peter also very cold after a 2-3 hour wait. The trip lasted six hours. Returning to the car a track was marked with red tape along the side of the dry valley. This meets the old track just before it heads down the valley. Even though a little horizontal is encountered on the new track, a walk in of 30 - 40 mins. with a heavy pack should now be possible. P. Robinson.



Khazad-dum - 23,24 Jan. 1971.

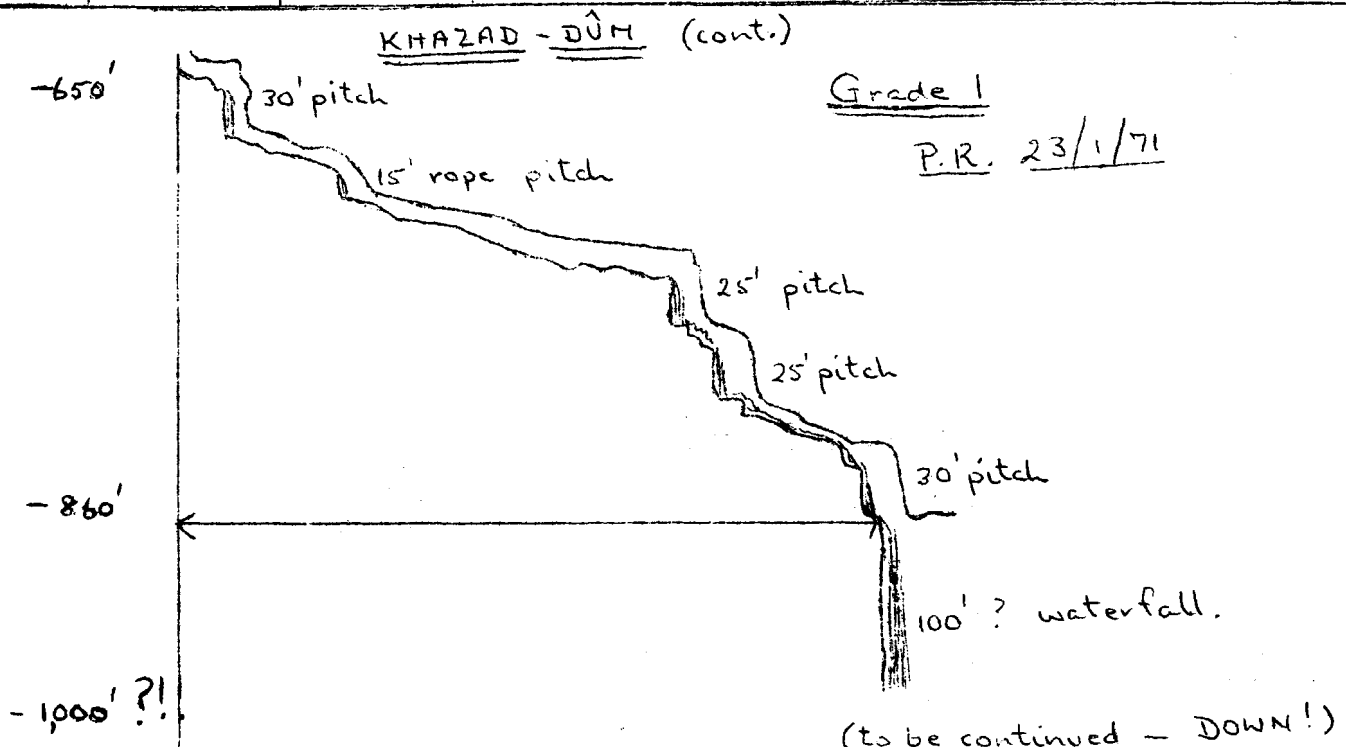
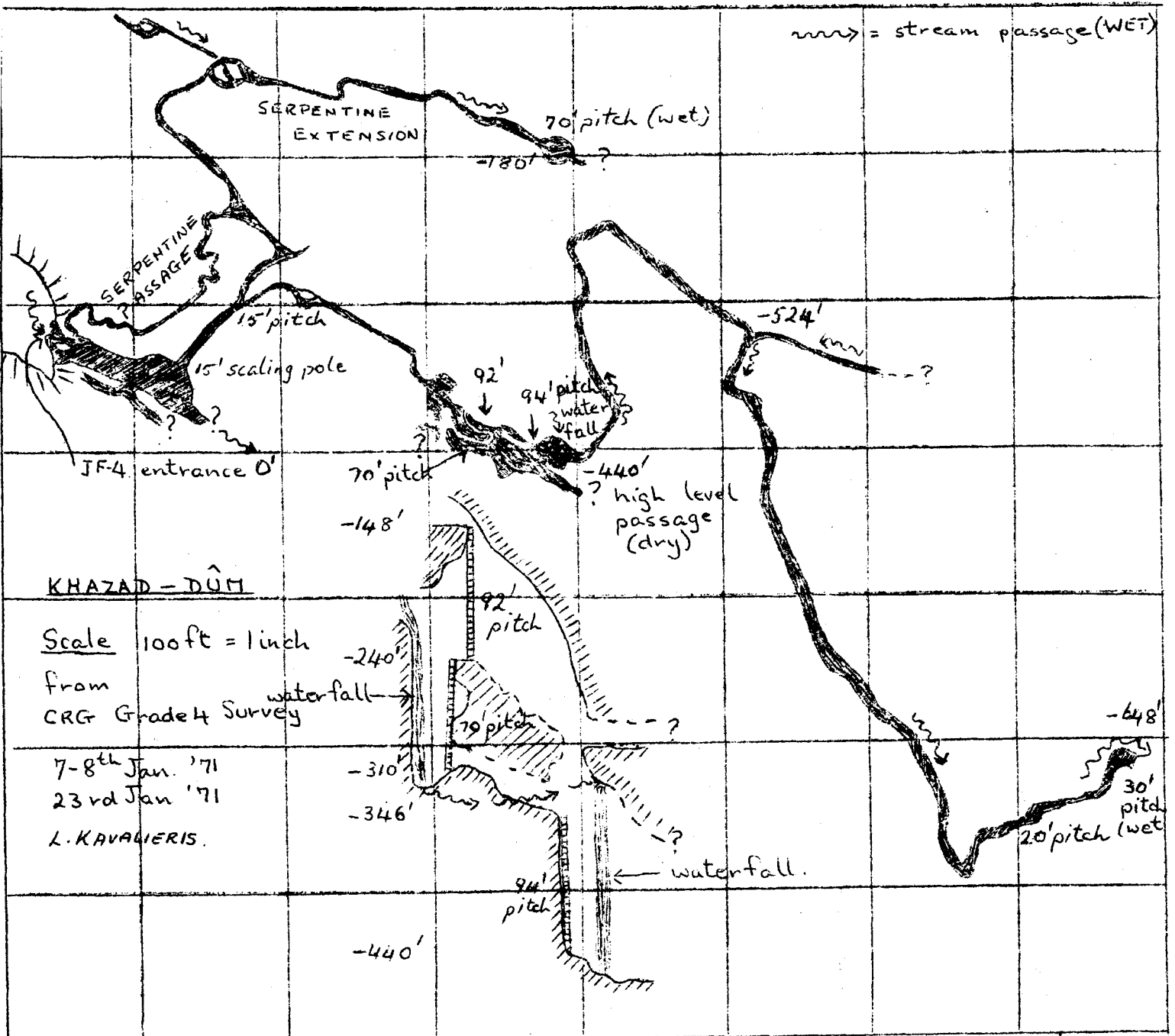
Party: Philip Robinson(leader), Peter Shaw, Kevin Kiernan, Laimonis Kavalieris, Norm Poulter, Chris Harris, Gregg Blake John Morley and Stuart Nicholas.

In a highly successful expedition the Australian depth record has been broken. 860' underground the team ran out of equipment at the head of a 100' waterfall. The cave must surely be at least 1000' deep. Unlike the other deep potholes it is over 1 mile long, 3500 ft. of passage having been surveyed already.

We arrived at the Junee homestead, Maydena on the Friday evening. It was decided to set off Saturday morning and have one long trip, possibly through to Sunday morning. It lasted eighteen hours.

The team was reduced to eight when Stuart developed stomach troubles. To save time Peter, Philip, Norm and Kav. set off in advance to ladder the early pitches. A 45 min. walk through the scrub and we were down the cave at 11.00 a.m. Mounds of ladder and ropes were ferried through. 100 ft. inside the entrance the 15' scaling pole pitch was ascended. This led along a walking passage to a 15 ft.

ladder pitch. A 100' rope was lowered for the next climb, the gear lowered down into a small chamber. From here the passage lowers to less than one foot high "the flattener", a nuisance to drag the gear through. Luckily it only lasts for 15 - 20 feet. Another small chamber and a terrific roar of water is heard. Pressing on under some rocks a rift is followed over a deep drop to the head of a 92' free hanging pitch. The ladder lands on an enormous pile of talus jammed in the rift. If it wasn't for this a drop of 200 odd feet would be encount-



ered. Here we were joined by John, Chris, Gregg, Kevin and the rest of the gear. The 70' pitch was rigged opposite a very impressive waterfall. Underneath the talus pile the next pitch, 94', was ladder-ed. This runs next to another waterfall 100' high.

Gregg, Philip and Chris pressed on down an exciting streamway 800' long to the top of a 20' waterfall. The ladder can be hung to one side of the water. Soon after the head of a 30' waterfall pitch marked the end of previous exploration(an A.S.F. conference trip 9th Jan.) No way to avoid the water was obvious so we all got saturated. A short passage led to a 15' drop in the water once more. Walking on yet another short waterfall pitch followed, 25' deep. Here Gregg had to stay. His sole gave way and he had to last the rest of the trip with one boot. John arrived with further bad news. Trying to avoid the 30' waterfall a rock had bounced, bruising Norm's ankle. He had returned with Peter. This left three of us to continue, Chris, John and Philip. Kav. and Kevin were behind doing a splendid job surveying.

Down two short climbs a 25' pitch was ladder-ed out of the water. A 10' waterfall was climbed, the passage followed for a short way to another 10' climb, then a 30' pitch. With one ladder left a frantic search for a belay point was made. Using a 60' rope(the last of the tackle) John belayed the ladder way back in the passage. Philip, half-drowned, descended what seemed the wettest pitch of all. 20 ft. later an enormous black chasm engulfed the whole water. Rocks thrown down took several seconds, a 100' pitch is the estimate. The water must be avoided on this drop. It will be difficult. The cave was as dry as ever this summer, the water thundering down still fearsome. In anything but these dry conditions the lower waterfalls would have to be avoided. Altimeter checks back to the 1st 30' waterfall showed a drop of 210' +/-10'. Kav. and Kevin surveyed down 650' to this point. Thus the depth reached is 860'.

A strenuous return was made back up the waterfalls. John did some exciting acrobatics on Norm's "dry pitch". Although Norm had avoided the water a severe climb at the top was needed. John rerigged the 30' pitch back in the water for Philip, Chris and Gregg to ascend. The strain of many hours underground was now beginning to tell. People were weary mentally and physically, dragging all the gear out 520' ladder, 800' rope in all. All eight gathered at the base of the 92' free hanger, foolishly left unlined. No one at this stage was confident enough to climb it without rope. Twenty minutes later Gregg, freezing and wet with one boot, set off with sling, had several rests but finally made it. The rest of us followed. It is surprising how such a short pitch is an obstacle after many hours continuous effort underground. The rest was routine. All were out of the cave at 4.00 a.m. Sunday morning in front of a roaring fire. Waiting till daylight a return out of the bush was made to the cars.

The party was an excellent one. Everyone did a wonderful job. The next expedition??

A party of four or five purely for support would be very welcome. They would spend several hours ladder-ing the early pitches. Another party could then enter and hopefully push right down below the 100' waterfall. Met by the rested support party on their return they could all haul the gear out together.

Philip Robinson.

#### A Thought On Khazad-dûm.

The wise man gratifies every appetite and every passion while the fool sacrifices all the rest to pall and satiate one.

Fielding.

P.S. Khazad-dûm should be spelt this way but my type writer does not possess one of these things ^

Ed.