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PRESIDENT: Albert Goede, 8 Bath Street, Battery Point, 7000.

SECRETARY: Peter Shaw, 27 Congress Street, South Hobart, 7000.

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FORWARD PROGRAMME.

January 20 - Saturday. JF 14 - Abseiling/prussiking par excellence. This exploratory trip will determine whether JF 14 connects with Khazad-dum. Leader: Peter Shaw.  
January 27/29 - Long weekend: Khazad-dum expedition and cave cramming trip. Leader: Brian Collin.  
February 7 - Wednesday: General meeting at 66 Wentworth St. South Hobart. Meeting starts at 8 p.m. Refreshments and slides welcome.

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BREAKTHROUGH IN CAULDRON POT !!!

A jubilant team of two has bypassed the talus blockage in Cauldron Pot to emerge in the stream passage at a depth of 400 ft. The way on is wet but open and should be further explored before Christmas. The bypass passage is slightly larger than body sized and is in clean dry limestone. Cauldron Pot is now the major, probably the only, contender in the access to Junee master cave stakes. Watch the next Spiel for further exciting developments.

Niagara Pot was the subject of a disappointing trip. Little prospect remains and the cave will certainly be forgotten while other chances exist at Junee. In the Florentine, exploration in Slaughter-house Pot was curtailed when all the rope protectors had to be used on the first pitch - an object lesson for further exploratory trips. This cave should receive some attention in the future, not too soon though.

On the rope recovery trip in Khazad-dum, the vital connection was made between JF 4 and JF 5 which allows us to claim JF 5 as an entrance to Khazad-dum. Consequently Khazad-dum is now 1,054 feet deep!

As we go into the new year, several exciting prospects are just around the corner in Cauldron Pot and JF 14. We can expect to see exploration start up of the shafts above Exit Cave. Not much prospect of horizontal caves there, but good chances for pleasant vertical trips.

A merry Christmas to everyone and good caving in the new year.

Peter Shaw.

Ladder Practice.

Ladder and prussiking practice is on again at Sphinx Rock on every Wednesday night except the first in the month. Leaves 66 Wentworth Street, South Hobart at 6 p.m. Bring a light. If you want to go on the trip to Khazad-dum in January, you must turn up for practice!

"Bungonia Caves".

A new book(hard back), published by the Sydney Speleological Society. Contains photographs, both colour and black and white, articles on all aspects of the Bungonia Caves and maps of the hundred or so caves. Available from the society for \$7.00 which includes postage. A worthwhile purchase for interested cavers.

New Cave Names.

Slaughterhouse Pot - Two hundred yards South of Pendant Pot in Florentine Valley. As yet un-numbered. Small hole in side of doline leads to 85 ft. free pitch after several hundred feet of grovelling. At foot of above pitch, a climb down a rift leads to an undescended 70' pitch. Exploration incomplete.

New Guinea Expedition.

A four week expedition to New Guinea in August 1973 is being planned by N.Z. cavers in New Guinea. Peter Shaw has the circular. Cost is \$400 once you arrive in New Guinea. Only deep cavers need apply. Purpose of the expedition is to break the world depth record.

Precipitous Bluff.

After a campaign by conservation groups in which this club took little part, the mining warden has recommended that an exploration license for the limestone near Precipitous Bluff should not be granted. Grounds for the decision were that the long term value of the area was of greater importance than the short term benefit to be derived from mining. It is to be hoped that the government heeds the warden's recommendations.

(P.S. It now appears that the mining company concerned intends to appeal against the warden's decision.)

Letter to the Editor.

Just to show that the editor is fair minded and open, the following letter has been published despite its defamatory remarks.

"The Chief Officer,  
Board of Editorial Mismanagement,  
Speleo Spiel,  
G.P.O. Box 641 G,  
Hobart, ---Tas, 7001.

Dear Sirs,

re defamation & libel WITHOUT MUCH PREJUDICE.

I act on behalf of one K.W.Kiernan, the permission of whom I have sought to register complaint in this matter in conflict with his normally cheery and helpful attitude of letting matters rest, invariably leading to escalation of defamatory actions to his loss.

From unbiased perusal of the October issue of the above-mentioned publication I have drawn the conclusion that your editorial policy is to continually besmirch the good name, high integrity and ideals of Mr.Kiernan, who washes regularly.

In the issue to which I refer he has again been attacked by direct naming, inference and pseudo-artistic expression. The attacks are unwarranted and untrue, as is any statement to the effect that anyone has ever hanged himself in the Junee Homestead. It is preposterous, ludicrous and irresponsible to make such claims. Equally it is so to infer that Mr.Kiernan has 'headed' the 'odd cavers' reporting the manifestations. He has been present on only one of three occasions these noises have been heard, and on that occasion heard only the closing stages of the sounds, as it was not until that time he was awakened by the terrified screaming of another member of the party.

Mr.Kiernan has memely conveyed this information as an extension of his undying search for truth. He has himself sought to show that possums are responsible, after that rats, then cavers, and after that rationally decided never to sleep in the homestead alone.

Because of your outrageous attack upon the character of Mr.K., and the irresponsible, ill-researched and unwarranted premature release of information regarding the matter, please therefore be advised that any intentions he had in the past to provide your organisation with full details of the incidents to date for safety reasons, are irrevocably withdrawn and such will now appear in the forthcoming issue of that far superior journal of rationality and truth, Southern Caver, published by that altogether more honorable (albeit nearly as thick) organisation, the Southern Caving Society.

Clearly there are strong grounds for a claim for unspecified damages on the grounds of character assassination and premature release of information detrimental to the further organised research of Mr.K. as he seeks to half-heartedly investigate the issue (for fear science impinges again on our art-based environment). He feels he will be forced, as a financial member of your organisation, to bring action unless he receives immediately an apology, a free Speleo Spiel subscription for the next 50 years and his September copy of Speleo Spiel which has continually been refused him. All this rubbish is to be stuffed into the toilet bowls of the Hydro Eccentric Condition building to assist in the project to divert all running waters in Hobart to a place suitable for power generation.

Yours with as little respect as possible,

K.Kiernan(signed)

Parliament House, Parliament Street, Sandy Bay, Tasmania, 7005.

In Praise of Blue Water Rope.

Peter Shaw.

The club is now using three types of rope for abseiling and

prussiking:- Millers No.4 nylon, Marlowe terylene spinnaker cord and Blue Water kernmantel nylon rope. The table below enables a quick comparison of the three to be made. Because it is a lard rope the ordinary nylon is only suitable for non-free drops. A comparison of the terylene and the Blue Water is most interesting, as these are the ropes of most significance for prussiking. The terylene is a loosely woven rope which acts as a giant sponge under wet conditions, but has one advantage in that it has a higher melting point than nylon. On all other counts - price, weight, strength, resistance to abrasion and non-stretch qualities - the Blue Water rope comes out on top. It must be close to the ideal prussiking rope. Tests of the ropes' elasticity were carried out on a 58' free drop at Sphinx Rock. The rope was marked where it touched the ground. I prussiked up the rope until my feet were just off the ground and the amount of stretch was measured.

<u>Rope</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Price/100'</u>	<u>W'ght/100'</u>
Millars No.4.	laid nylon	£16	5.25 lb.
Marlowe Spinnaker cord	double sheathed terylene	£33	9.5 lb.
Blue Water	single sheathed nylon	£19.40	6.5 lb.

<u>Rope</u>	<u>Strength</u>	<u>Stretch</u> (165 lb over 58 feet)
Millars No.4.	4200 lb.	60 inches.
Marlowe S.Cord.	5000 lb.	18 inches.
Blue Water	7000 lb.	4 inches.

#### TRIP REPORTS.

Midnight Hole - 11/11/72.

Party: Philip Robinson, Ross Mansfield, Peter Shaw, Glen Kawle and Bazil Rathbone.

"126° magnetic" said the map and signs. Not another route finding blunder? We wandered into the bush. To my surprise the hole was found without difficulty. Armed with 300' gleaming white terylene, 300' nylon and the usual ironmongery we entered at 11.30 a.m.

Midnight Hole is just a matter of stepping off one pitch on to another. 70', 30', 120', 30', 100', 180' abseils later all were down. A sorry looking rope was discovered on the fifth pitch, presumably abandoned at the 1970 conference. This was duly hurled down the 180' into Entrance Cave. Prussiking out allowed some time to admire the scenery. The big free hanger is impressive. The 'new' rope was disappointing. It is too heavy, soft, the jumars do not slide easily and they slip when muddy. Peter, Ross and Philip all slipped badly on the 120' terylene pitch. This was disconcerting to the extent a nylon rope was lowered from Glen and Bazil.

Trip lasted only 5½ hours emphasising that S.R.T. makes the descent of deep pots much easier. Two main points came from this 'practice' session. 1/Jumar on clean ropes. 2/Rope protection must be taken much more seriously than is done at present.

Philip Robinson.

Khazad-dum - 12/11/72.

Party: Philip Robinson, Glen Kawle, Bazil Rathbone and Ross Mansfield.

The loss of 240' of rope down a deep rift prompted the organisation of a recovery trip. Conditions were somewhat different to two weeks previously. Snow well down on Tyenna Peak, sleet and intermittent heavy rain were sufficient to raise the level of water a considerable degree - from a trickle to a torrent! The narrow rift was descended by Glen, a mere 80' to the JF 5 streamway. The bag of rope was jammed in some rocks near the bottom. A 2½ hour trip, then back out - - to the pouring rain.

Philip Robinson.

Niagara Pot - 18/11/72.

Party: Peter Shaw and Bill Lehmann.

After a prompt start at 7.00 a.m. from Hobart, we reached Niagara Pot by 9.45 and were underground by 10.15 intent on exploring the big chambers at the bottom. At the top of the third pitch, we attempted to place a bolt with no success. We could not find sufficient firm rock to put one in. At the top of the fourth pitch, we placed a bolt in an ideal placement and then continued downwards to the big chambers, which we reached at 12.30. Exploration was carried

out with scant success. All we could find was a lot of loose talus. Only one lead onwards remains which we did not explore to completion. In one corner, a shaft filled with talus heads down to a short pitch, about fifteen feet. As the ropes were a long way away and we were both tired, we did not return to this passage. We started upwards at 3.30 and were on the surface at 6.00 p.m. after a demoralising trip. It is not a very nice cave, although it is not super severe as some people would have it.

Peter Shaw.

Florentine Valley - 3/12/72.

Party: Peter Shaw and Bill Lehmann.

Purpose of the trip was to plumb the estimated 150' depths of a hole we had discovered several months ago near Trapdoor Swallet. Armed with 300' of brand new, never been underground, bright and shiny Blue Water rope, as well as 120 feet of terylene and 100 feet of nylon, we grovelled into the tiny entrance. The 100 ft. between the entrance and the top of the pitch is awkward and very muddy. The top of the pitch is interesting because rocks dropped down any of the holes in the floor end up down the pitch; the floor is perched. After rigging the Blue Water, Peter set off down the drop, touching the wall after twenty feet and then dropping sixty spacious feet to the floor. While anyone is on this pitch, it is imperative that anyone at the top of the drop does not move. Due to the shape of the hole at the top, it was necessary to use a tackle bag and six rope protectors on this pitch. Bill followed Peter down, putting on the rope protectors and cursing as he did so. An examination of the muddy, rubble strewn chamber revealed only one way on, - a narrow rift which looked as though it closed off at the bottom. Clambering down the rift, Peter dislodged a rock - CRASH, CRASH ...?..CRASH! 'We might need a rope here'. The terylene was tied to a large boulder and lowered down the drop. No rope protectors left, just the one tackle bag which we used to pad the edge. Peter abseiled down the slope to the edge which was like a knife. To go on without rope protectors would be foolhardy. The rope hung free for fifteen feet to a ledge and then dropped another forty feet to the floor of quite a large chamber. After Bill had had a look at the way on also, we withdrew, reaching the sunshine after five hours underground. Suggested name for the cave is Slaughterhouse Pot.

Peter Shaw.

Cauldron Pot - 9/12/72.

Party: Peter Shaw and Bill Lehmann.

Cauldron Pot has been laddered three times previously but on each occasion only one person has been to the bottom of its 140 ft. entrance pitch. Theorising that one man on his own will not push very hard, we headed for Cauldron Pot with a couple of ropes to put two people at the bottom of the pitch and have a good look around. If nothing was found it would still be good sport. The pitch was quickly rigged and Peter dropped over. Unfortunately it was rigged from the wrong spot which meant that the last fifty feet was under a stream of water. Bill dropped in, cursing the water, and we had a look around the chamber. Looking up the shaft with its curtain of water was very spectacular. The limestone dips very steeply, causing the entrance chamber to have a flat steep roof. A floor of very loose talus dropped for fifty feet at not so steep an angle until it met the roof, at which point the stream was disappearing. We began clearing the talus out of a likely looking hole, until we realised that what we were trying to knock out was supporting what we were standing on. Fifteen feet from this point in the western side of the chamber, Bill found a small side passage and disappeared into it. It was a very steeply dipping two foot wide passage with dry, non grotty limestone. We shot off down the passage to emerge after some time on the main stream. The entrance blockage had been avoided! Elation! We were standing at the top of two small drops. At a corner in the passage we could see a third drop down which stone rattled for quite a while. Happy with our days exploration, we headed back up, measuring the length of the bypass passage with a waist-length. The prussik back to the surface was fast. Peter covered the first fifty feet up the small waterfall in thirty seconds. Length was 310', which with a very conservative angle of dip of forty five degrees, gives a depth gained of 220' plus forty feet for the entrance chamber plus 120' for the entrance pitch which gives a total depth of 380'. Prospects are very good. From here on it will be wet. Manipulating one bag of gear up. Bill's Bypass will be very awkward, two would be impossible. The structure

of the stream passage is very similar to parts of Growling Swallet. The waterfalls that we can see so far are very steep cascades which are drier than steep drops. Time will tell. Meanwhile Cauldron Pot is a very attractive prospect.

Peter Shaw.

STOP PRESS STOP PRESS STOP PRESS STOP PRESS STOP PRESS

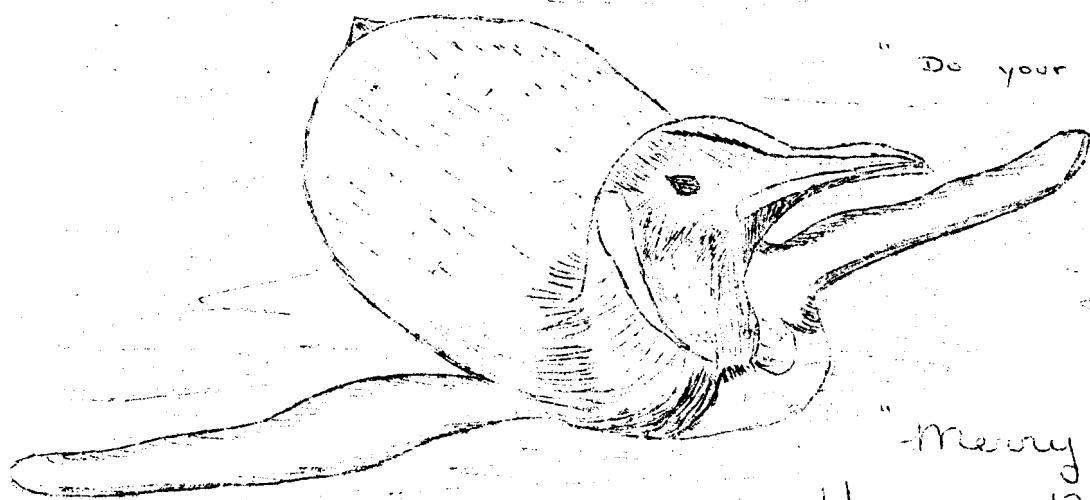
More news of Cauldron Pot has just come to hand.

Cauldron Pot - 16/12/72. (C.P. now approx. 550' deep.)

Party: Peter Shaw, Bill Lehmann and Brian Collin.

With good prospects for a deep cave, we could not wait to get back to Cauldron Pot. The rope was rigged, differently to the previous trip, from the tree near the number, which gave a free drop, after the initial thirty feet down the wall. A tackle bag at the top and two rope protectors at the start of the free section were needed to protect the rope, with a tail hanging down the section against the wall to avoid having to move the protectors on the way up. The trip down Bill's Bypass was more difficult with tackle bags, but we soon arrived at the previous limit. A bolt was placed and sixty feet of rope rigged to get us into the stream and down the next two ten foot cascades. Another bolt was placed with the limestone proving rather reluctant to take it. A 120' rope was tied to it and Peter descended the waterfall. The first twenty feet was down a steep slippery dip chute, and then a tension abseil for 20' enabled the worst of the water to be avoided. The rest of the rope was anchored to a large talus block and thrown down the next drop. This was a fifteen foot section which could be climbed, followed by a 25' pitch. Here again the water could be avoided by skilful abseiling. Following the passage down steeply around several corners we arrived at the next drop. A third bolt was placed and Bill abseiled down to one side of the water. This pitch was about forty feet. At the foot of this drop, a climb up into a small chamber gave some respite from the thundering water. Down the streamway, a 120' rope was tied to a large block of talus and Peter descended with some misgivings. A ten foot drop, ten feet of passage and then nothingness. The water was crashing down into a wide shaft with an estimated depth of 100 feet. There was no immediate way of avoiding the water, and progress was halted. The next party must either use wet suits or avoid the water. At the top of the pitch is a steep slab across which it would be possible to place a bolt traverse. At the foot of the pitch, the character of the cave seems to change to large chambers rather than steep narrow passages as was the nature of the cave so far. Back up the waterfalls, we went to the foot of the bypass. From here, it took us an hour and a half to negotiate the three hundred feet of constrictions to the entrance chamber. A welcome break was had in the entrance chamber, as we admired the rope hanging down the centre of the shaft. No trouble was experienced in prussiking up the 140' to the surface and the change over to the tail went smoothly. The gear was hauled up and we were away after an eleven hour trip. Practice will now be had in horizontal bolt traverses. Cesare Maestri, where are you now?

Peter Shaw.



"Do your own sump diving."

"Merry Christmas

& Happy New Year"