

SPELEO — SPIEL

NEWSLETTER

of the

TASMANIAN CAVERNEERING CLUB . No. 77

MAR 1973

T.C.C.,
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Hobart, TAS. 7001.

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"THE KHAN" IN KUBLA KHAN.

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periodical - Category "B."

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

Secretary: Peter Shaw, 27 Congress Street, Sth.Hobart, 7000.

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FORWARD PROGRAMME.

- March 21 - Wednesday. Wine and Cheese party at Brian and Jeanette's, 66 Wentworth St., South Hobart. Bring your own wine and cheese.
- March 21,22 - (mid-week) Exit Cave. Finish track marking, carry out remaining rubbish and look/survey eastern extension. Acting Leader: Andrew Skinner - have one VSA, one SCS already, but others welcome.
- March 23 - Friday. Aqua Mire, Hastings - if the creek is low. Acting Leader: Andrew Skinner.
- March 24,25 - Weekend. Mole Creek. Single rope exploration in Execution Pot. Leader: Peter Shaw.
- March 24,25 - Mole Creek. Proposed track marking in Croesus and Georgies. Acting Leader: Andrew Skinner.
- March 28 - Wednesday: ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING at 8 Bath Street, Battery Point. Meeting starts at 8 p.m. Refreshments and slides welcome.
- April 7,8 - Weekend. Mole Creek. Photographic trip to Kubla Khan and other caves. Leaders: Albert Goede and Peter Shaw.
- April 14 - Saturday. Exploration in Splash Pot (JF 10). Leader. Philip Robinson.
- April 20-23 - Easter weekend. Explorations at Montagu in N.W. Tasmania. Leader: Albert Goede.
- April 20-25 - Extended Easter weekend. Exploratory trip to Vanishing Falls.
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CAULDRON POT - AUSTRALIA'S SECOND DEEPEST!

A recent surveying trip to Cauldron Pot established its depth as 862 feet. This cave with its superb entrance pitch and final pitch is destined to become a classic for deep cavers. That surveying trip must be a prime example of unsafe caving. So many violations of the safety code occurred that we should probably be thankful that everybody emerged alive.

The Picton River track is proceeding steadily in a rather patchwork manner with bits of track spread the length of the river in different stages of completion. It should be ready for the big push to Vanishing Falls at Easter.

Peter Shaw.

Picton River Track Cutting.

Track cutting is taking place every weekend. Come for a day or the weekend. If you have not got a slasher, there are plenty to spare. If you can not use a slasher, you can move cut branches off the track or tie markers on trees. All offers of assistance are welcomed. See Briah for further details.

Membership subscriptions.

These fall due at the forthcoming A.G.M. Full membership subscription has risen because of the increase in the A.S.F. levy.

Rates are:

- | | | |
|----------------------------|---|-------------------------------|
| Full members(over 18 yrs.) | - | four dollars and fifty cents. |
| Junior members | - | two dollars |
| Associate members | - | two dollars |

Full membership fee includes \$1.50 contribution to A.S.F. and entitles one to receive the A.S.F. newsletter. Junior and associate members wishing to subscribe can do so by paying an extra one dollar and fifty cents.

Unsafe Caving.

The following incidents, which all took place on the recent surveying trip to Cauldron Pot, highlight the need for a greater

safety consciousness in the club.

1. The rope was rigged incorrectly through a rappel rack on the entrance pitch, forcing the brake bars open instead of keeping them closed. When weight was taken on the rope, the bottom three bars sprang open, before the caver concerned scrambled back over the top of the pitch.
2. A rappel rack was clipped into a waist-length krab instead of the sit-harness krab on the entrance pitch. When the mistake was noticed, ten foot down the pitch, the caver concerned balanced on a small ledge and transferred the rack to the right krab without first setting up some protection.
3. A light failed in the upper section of the bypass passage. The caver concerned returned to the entrance chamber in the dark and returned to the surface alone.
4. At the second pitch, a newcomer to the cave was first down the rope, passed the belay for the third pitch and stopped on a ledge partway down the third pitch, when he had reached the end of the rope.
5. On the final pitch, a caver got into trouble trying to pass the bolts and dislocated his shoulder. This could probably have been avoided by a greater knowledge of the technique required.
6. The rope protector was not placed on the overhang on the final pitch. By the time the last man had prussiked up the pitch, both the outer and inner sheaths of the terylene had been almost completely severed.

That everybody emerged from the cave uninjured can only be ascribed to luck. Although the club is usually extremely safety-conscious, the preceeding events show what can happen when we get a bit lax.

Peter Shaw.

New Cover.

The credit for our new cover goes to Therese. Any resemblance between the cover drawing and your friendly neighbourhood phallus is purely co-incidental.

P.S.

North West Report.

Last Saturday, Des Robertson, John Boden, Brian Parsons and I, took a party of 8 Monash Uni. cavers through Kubla. A beaut. bunch of fellahs and one very game girl. She coined a new word in cave-formations when she pointed out (very loudly) an immense "phallac-tite" which she found interesting!?! The trip went very smoothly and the shutters clicked rapidly. The river Alph appears to have diverted itself in Cairn Hall and now disappears under the South-East wall instead of running to a sump at the end of the Hall. True, the water is still high in the sump but there is a dry stretch where once ran the Alph. We're going in soon with lilos to check where the hell it is going.

Anyway, after the trip with Monash, we were invited to the Mole Creek pub where much beer flowed. The landlady was most helpful and offered to prepare sandwiches etc. She actually asked for the captain of the team, (some of the Monash blokes had targs printed on their shirts with "54 B.C." written underneath - it transpired that the lady thought it meant "Bowls Club"!!)

Re. filming in Kubla. We are now getting down to the fine details of making a movie in Kubla. We have decided on an outside generator and a battery of floodlights - less pollution and no noise. If any of your mob find telephone cable in the cave, don't move it yet - we will clear it all out of the way! and incidentally, I wonder what the cave will look like under 3000 watt floods! We will not make any move at all in the filming until we have all details worked out to the Clubs' satisfaction. If you have any technical information re. Movies underground, please let us know. We're amateurs and anything will help.

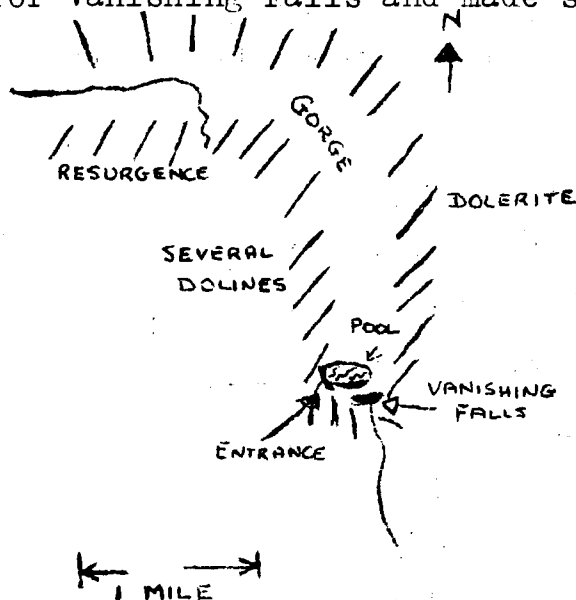
Bill Tomalin.

TRIP REPORTS.

Aerial exploration of S.W. caving areas - 22.12.72.

Party: Peter Shaw, Jeanette and Yvonne Collin, Jim England(pilot).

Purpose of the flight was to survey a route to Vanishing Falls and check that Vanishing Falls was worth visiting. Firstly we headed for Vanishing Falls and made several low passes over the falls. The falls drop into a pool but no water can be seen further down the gorge. Subsequent examination of the slides showed a large entrance on the western side of the gorge while the eastern side appeared to be dolerite. Further down the gorge the water re-appeared and seemed to be coming from a short blind valley leading into the main gorge. Several dolines were visible on the ridge on the western side of the gorge.



From Vanishing Falls, we headed for a large depression two miles south of Federation Peak. On the Huon map, this is shown as a shallow depression, half a mile in diameter, with four streams flowing into it from opposite corners. As we flew

towards the area in the upper reaches of the New River, several prominent cliffs appeared to be limestone. After locating the depression, we followed the stream in it to where it sank into a large entrance at the foot of a cliff on the N.E. side of the depression. If the cave trends in a N.E. direction, prospects of a large cave are small as the New River is only a short distance away.

On our way back to Hobart, we examined the streams flowing off the western side of the ridge north of Precipitous Bluff. All appeared to be flowing right down into the New River.

Peter Shaw.

Lake Tink - 17,18/2/73.

Party: Peter Shaw, Yvonne Collin.

The original plan was to walk in via Search Camp but the weather was so magnificent that it seemed a waste to spend the day in the forest, so a change of plan was made. Without map or route guide, we headed up Mt. Eliza and lunched on the shelf near Mt. Anne. From here, we tackled the problem of crossing Mt. Lot. By four o'clock we were on the summit of Mt. Lot and looking at the problem of getting down to Lake Picone. After a lot of steep traversing and retracing of steps we finally reached Lake Picone and camped just on dusk. Next morning, we headed past Lots Wife and then down to Lake Tink for lunch. With wet suit on and rope rigged, Peter crawled into the swallet, and then retreated. Although the lake was quite low, there was still a large volume of water thundering down the narrow slot just inside the entrance. Exploration is going to be possible in extreme drought conditions only.

Peter Shaw.

Exit Cave - 17/2/73.

Party: Andrew Skinner(Acting Leader), Wes Carpenter, Ros Bell, Roy Skinner, Fiona Skinner, Kath Medlock(SCS), David Nichols(SCS), and local residents Basil Bradley and Peter Martin.

Roy suggested it would be fun to go via the D'Entrecasteaux for a change. Three hours later ... we reached the entrance of Exit at 1 p.m. After a short lunch the party set off to visit the high level sections before the talus. The reflectorised markers placed on a previous trip in the Ballroom area now seem to need some minor repairs. The reflector tape has peeled off several, but can be repaired with araldite. The Collonade and the Hammer Passage areas were also visited. These areas are in urgent need of re-marking with reflectors. The party split up at 2.30 with Roy taking Ros, Fiona and the locals back to the entrance whilst the others went

TASSY POT.

SCALE 1:200

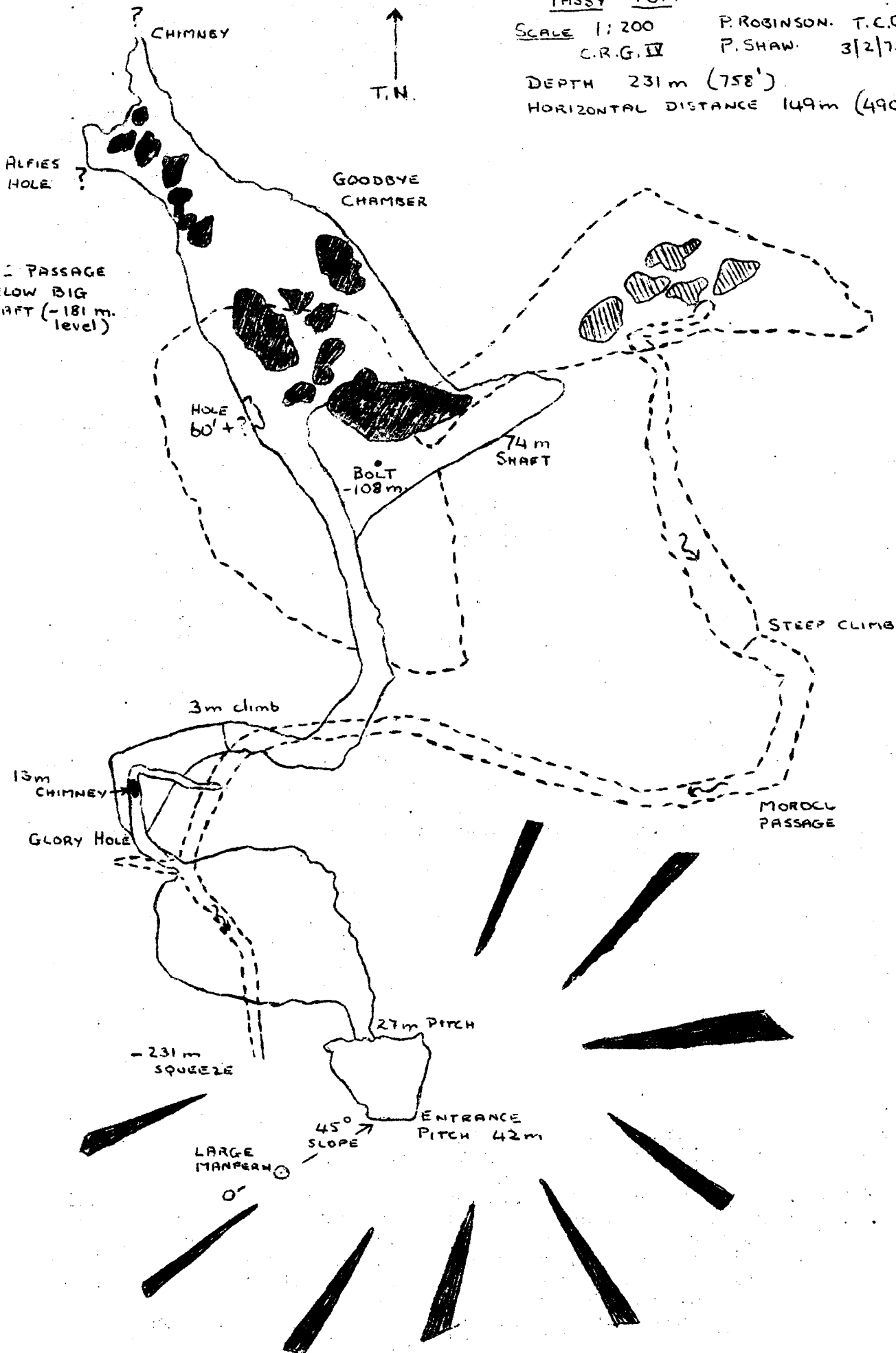
C.R.G. IV

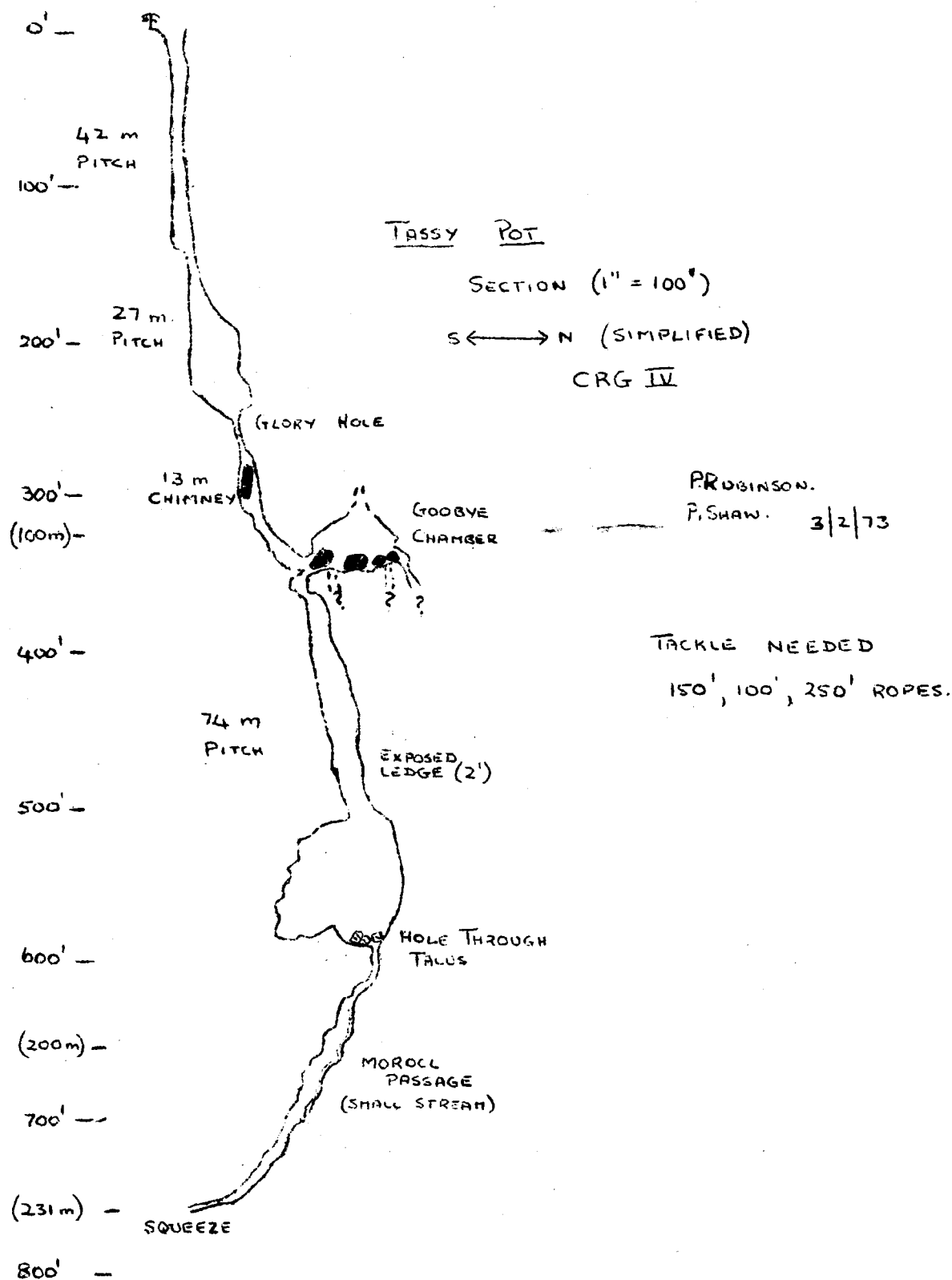
P. ROBINSON. T.C.C.

P. SHAW. 3/2/73

DEPTH 231 m (758')

HORIZONTAL DISTANCE 149 m (490')





through the talus. The bottom of Mini Martin provided an interesting diversion on the way to the Grand Fissure. We left some gear near Camp 2 with a candle burning. The markers in the Eastern Grand Fissure have also deteriorated a little but could easily be repaired. Time was short so we turned back at the beginning of Conference Concourse. The gear was picked up near Camp 2 and track marking work commenced in Edies Treasure. Aluminium pegs and plastic tape were used to "fence off" the less damaged areas. The final chamber at the end of the low passage was closed off. To further use this chamber would ruin the only remaining extensive gypsum needles in Edies Treasure. About half the remaining rubbish was removed from Camp 2. One rucksack full remains. The remainder of the rubbish from Camp 1 was also removed. The padlock was placed on the gate. The party reached the road at 9.30 p.m.

Andrew Skinner.

Hastings - 18/2/73.

Party: Andrew Skinner(Acting Leader), Kath Medlock, David Nichols went underground whilst Ros Bell piked out at the first pitch. Fiona and Roy Skinner poked around on the surface.

The trip was initially planned to go downstream in Newdegate to scrub-bash some talus. However, Steven Jager, part-time guide at Hastings had located an entrance upstream from the bridge on Hot Springs Creek. The entrance is at the base of a dolomite cliff, not three metres above creek level. (The creek was dry). The first chamber was a large fissure with a slope of 30° . Following this there was a 22 metre pitch, rather tight and descending through typical Hastings mud. The top of the pitch was below the level of the creek. At the bottom there was a horizontal passage with ample mud. To the right (towards Newdegate) a tight, slippery vertical squeeze was negotiated to a small ledge, about 7 metres vertically from the bottom of the ladder pitch. A further climb down over talus brought us to a small chamber with a passage leading off steeply in the direction of Newdegate. This was not pushed. The lowest point reached in this section was approx. 45 metres below the entrance. Returning to the bottom of the pitch after a hairy, muddy squeeze-climb, a passage leading downward towards the creek was noticed. A tight low crawl was pushed to a larger chamber which trended downwards on a 45° angle towards the creek. The fissure was descended without gear until it became hairy. At this stage we were 50 metres below the entrance and 47 metres below the creek. The fissure was still trending downwards strongly, showing no sign of becoming smaller.

Hydrological possibilities:

The fact that the cave was up to 150' below the creek makes for interesting speculation. Next day(Mon.19th) an SCS party found it full of water up to about 30 metres below the entrance. Two inches of rain had fallen the previous night and the creek was full to the brim. Mystery Creek in Newdegate started flowing 17 hours after the rain started. It is unlikely that any(or little) water is flowing underground along this section of Hot Springs Creek in summer as it seems to run along an anabranch. After rain, the holes in the dolomite under the the creek may slowly fill up with water when the surface creek starts running. If there is enough rain, the underground drainage may spill over into Newdegate's Mystery Creek and run down that channel. Mystery Creek may be an anabranch at a higher level than the main underground flow, taking the spillage in high water. Also fossil creek swallet in the neighbouring gully to Newdegate further complicating the matter. Due to "mismanagement" a fluoroscein test of the water in fossil creek was inconclusive. The possibility of understanding the subterranean hydrology at Hastings makes the new cave a very major find.

P.S. SCS have adopted the name "Aqua Mire" due to its most outstanding features --- water and mud.

Andrew Skinner.

Mole Creek - 3,4/3/73.

Party: Peter Shaw, Yvonne Collin and northern branch members, Frank Brown(on Sat.), Bob Woolhouse(on Sun.), Richard and Lorna Schmidt, Peter Dowde, Martin, Richard, Godfrey; and Harvey(from SUSS).

Saturday was spent in a very leisurely manner. Frank took us up Little Trimmer valley and showed us the entrances to Execution Pot and Long Drop. On the way back, we visited Little Trimmer cave and spent a pleasant hour or so underground. After lunch we moved around to the cliffs above Maracoopa and abseiled and prussiked for a couple of hours.

On Sunday, the key to Kubla was collected from the Howes and a through trip took place. Signs of cave degradation were seen at the Jade Pool where the previously white formation had been dirtied by cavers who had traversed in the water rather than around the edge of the pool. Carbide dumping in the area at the foot of the Khan was also noticed, although what at first appeared to be carbide on some of the formations turned out to be natural on closer

examination. We emerged after a pleasant five and a half hours underground. Surely one of the spectacular sights in this cave, as well as the Khan and the Pleasure Dome, is the view of the foot of the ladder pitch, from the top of the chimney into the stream passage. The ferns glowing in the daylight are in marked contrast to the darkness of the entrance chamber.

Peter Shaw.

Cauldron Pot - 10/3/73.

Party: Philip Robinson(Leader), Peter Shaw, Stuart Nicholas, Leigh Gleeson(SCS), Chris Harris(SCS).

Having failed to persuade a party of mainland "heavies"(??) to survey Cauldron Pot(presumably due to its aqueous nature) a Tasmanian party had to be organised. For Chris and Leigh it was their first real S.R.T. trip.

At about 11.00 a.m. we abseiled the 135' entrance pitch. Though raining the water level was reasonable. Peter, Leigh and Stuart disappeared with all the rope. Philip and Chris surveyed down the bypass. It is a constricted tunnel 4' x 1' in places, sloping at 45° - 55° for 280'. Eighty feet down this passage Chris's light refused to work. There was no alternative but to return to the surface. Leaving a survey cairn, Philip shot down to join the other three at the last pitch. The rope traverse rigged, Peter jumared down to below the third bolt. Leigh then managed to get across but Stuart had some difficulty. With frozen hands he eventually had to retreat. To add to his discomfort, climbing back up the short cascade, he slipped and pulled an arm out of joint. Now this was serious and very painful. He rested as Philip crossed the traverse and abseiled the 115' pitch to inform the others. Leigh soon prusiked out with the stove and brew. Philip and Peter quickly recovered the ropes from the high level passage and surveyed from the sump.

Back up the big pitch Stuart had managed to force his arm back in. Needless to say this had been an unpleasant operation. Philip and Stuart surveyed out as Peter and Leigh derigged. Somehow the survey book remained quite dry despite the copious supplies of water. We gathered at the base of the bypass with heavy haversacks 5 in all, full of wet rope and hardware. How to finish the last bit of survey and also remove the tackle? Peter and Leigh volunteered out with two bags each, a fantastic effort up the very awkward bypass passage.

The survey was thus completed. At -862' Cauldron is Australia's second deepest cave. Pitches of 135', 50', 48', 36', 45', 115' (all with waterfalls) lead to the large chamber(160' x 70'), then onto the sump. Trip lasted 12 hours. See next Spiel for survey.

Philip Robinson.

(Please turn to page 8 for start of Annual Report.)

But remember it takes two to make a wedding.

Finally I would like to thank the out-going office bearers for a job well done. I have been president for six years out of the last seven and as I shall be away from Hobart for approx. six months during the coming year I shall not be available for re-election. Anyhow, it's time for a change!

Your President,

Albert Golden

TASMANIAN CAVERNEERING CLUB.

Annual Report 1972-73.

The past year has not been as active a year for the club as the previous one but that was perhaps not to be expected considering the hectic pace of 1971-72. There has been a decline in membership despite the fact that four new members joined the ranks. Most of the caving was done by a small core of very active members and the trips have generally been difficult ones. We should keep in mind that this is not everybody's cup of tea and that the club programme should include a variety to suit all tastes. For example, exploration of sea caves has recently become very popular in N.S.W. and with our coastline there is almost unlimited scope for exploration. In any case exploration is not the only aspect of caving - interest in surveying, photography, fauna collecting, etc. has declined despite the tremendous potential in our caves for a wide range of activities.

Exploration. Once again the Junee-Florentine area seems to have been the focus of our activities. In Cauldron Pot a major breakthrough was made enabling the cave to be extended to an estimated depth of 740 ft. Niagara Pot was also in the news with the discovery of several large chambers. JF 14 offered plenty of excitement and was finally linked with Khazad-dum on a combined trip with Victorian and N.S.W. cavers. Hopes of extending Khazad-dum were not realised and the Junee master cave - if it exists - continues to elude us. In the Florentine Valley Gormenghast was surveyed and a good deal of surface exploration carried out in the vicinity of Growling Swallet resulting in several new finds. At Mole Creek several new caves were discovered and a number of trips also went to Ida Bay. At Mt. Anne scrub bashing had its reward when the probable resurgence of the Lake Tink drainage was discovered - unfortunately there was no way in. Recently interest has switched to the Gracraft area which has considerable caving potential and a lot of work is being done to provide a better access track via the Picton River Valley.

Techniques and Equipment. There has been a spectacular change in our caving techniques during the year. The introduction of single rope techniques has revolutionised exploration of deep pots and several members have made a considerable investment in specialized personal equipment. The club equipment situation has also continued to improve with the purchase of a considerable amount of rope and new ladder bags. A club charger for miners' cap lamps was built by Bill Lehmann and thanks to our quartermaster has been used very effectively.

Speleo Spiel. The Spiel has now completed seven years of continuous publication and has recently required a cover and new(metric!) format. I am grateful to Peter Shaw who has been the editor and to my wife Therese who has continued to cut the stencils and take care of the distribution. The Spiel continues to fill a real need - some members even read the forward programme! Back handed praise for our publication has come from as far away as South-Australia!

Conservation. This continues to be a major issue and one in which the club has not taken as much interest as it should. Precipitous Bluff appears to have been saved from limestone mining for the time being. The proposed state reserve at Ida Bay is at last receiving serious attention from the National Parks and Wildlife Authority and a decision can be expected in the near future. The club has assisted with the gating of King George V Cave at Hastings while a new chain and lock have been provided for the Exit Cave gate which is now being kept permanently locked. The cleaning up of camp sites in Exit is an example of practicing what we preach.

Inter-club relations. Close ties have been maintained with a number of mainland clubs and also with the Southern Caving Society. There is talk among the younger members of working towards a union between the two clubs and this would undoubtedly have a number of advantages. The annual general meeting seems an appropriate time to test the feeling of the membership as a whole on this matter.

(Turn back to page 7 please).