

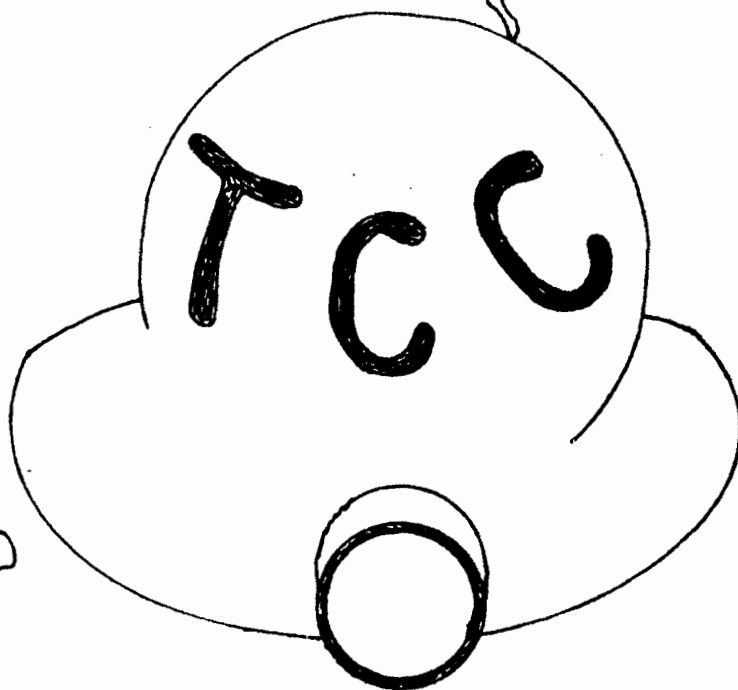
SPELEO SPIEL

NEWSLETTER of the

TASMANIAN CAVERNEERING CLUB

JUL 1974

NO. 92



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President: Laurie Moody, 13 Mason Street, Claremont, 7011.Secretary: Therese Goede, 8 Bath Street, Battery Point, 7000.FORWARD PROGRAMME.

- August 3,4 - Weekend. Mole Creek. Fun and frolics in the narrow passages and deep pools of Herbert's Pot, Mole Creek's most sporting cave. A good trip for keen cavers. Leader: Peter Shaw.
- August 10 - Saturday. Wolf Hole, Hastings. Leader: Albert Goede.
- August 7 - WEDNESDAY. General meeting at Brian and Jeanette's, 66 Wentworth Street, South Hobart. 8 p.m. Slides and refreshments welcome.
- September 14 - Saturday. Tentative date for this year's annual dinner. More details in the next Spiel.
- December '74 - Jan. '75. - Tenth Biennial Caving Conference in Brisbane. See Therese for nomination forms.
- Jan.25 - Feb.2 - T.C.C. 1975 Cracroft Expedition. Leaders: Brian Collin and Albert Goede. See last months Spiel for more details.

EDITORIAL.

Quite an active month with plenty of people caving but nothing fantastic in the way of discoveries. Limestone outcrops along the Florentine have been examined and more caves are sure to be found, especially higher up the side of the Tiger Range. Another good prospect is Max's story of a large stream somewhere between the main road and the Florentine River. Two attempts to find this have failed.

Bad weather access to Exit Cave has been made much easier with the improvement of the high level traverse. Many bolts have been inserted by Noel, Bill and Brian and a handline and steps attached to them(lovingly dubbed the Kiernan Staircase in honour of bolting's most vociferous opponent).

Cave numbering has been going ahead well at Mole Creek with Andrew having numbered quite a few of the well known caves.

Peter Shaw.

Club News.

+ Congratulations to John Richardson who was elected to full membership at the last general meeting.

+ Also at the July general meeting, the following cave names were approved:

Gong Cave JF 51.

Deviation Cave JF 55.

Weerona Cave GP 2.

For description or maps, see later in the Spiel.

CAVING BODIES MEET WITH TOURISM MINISTER.

A deputation of four cavers met with the Minister for Tourism (Mr. Miller) on Monday, 8th July. The deputation consisted of both SCS and TCC presidents and two SCS members, Leonie Smith and Bob Cockerill. I was informed of the meeting only two hours before it was due to take place but was able to attend. The object of this meeting was to elaborate further on the urgent needs regarding cave reserves and development of future tourist caves throughout the state. The meeting was conducted with both Mr. Murrell and Mr. Butler being present. We were granted thirty minutes of Mr. Miller's

valuable time and the meeting began with an apparent sympathetic hearing.

In regard to the question on cave reserves, Mr. Miller stated that although he agreed with the subsequent need, he was unable to give a reply due to the fact that other government ministers would be involved. In other words, consultation between various department heads would first be needed to establish who agreed and who didn't! Mr. Miller informed us that the creation of reserves and extension of present reserves could also cause problems in respect of land settlements and compensation for various parties involved. This could run into thousands of dollars!! We were also informed that an extensive cave survey was to begin in August of the Mole Creek system, kind courtesy of Mr. Murrell, and that it would be conducted by a Mr. Greg Middleton.

Mr. Miller was further enlightened in regard to the wear and tear on the present tourist caves, and the suggested development of Exit, Croesus and Kubla Khan. It was also brought to the Minister's notice that there had been a rumour regarding the area above Kubla in regard to woodchips. Mr. Miller knew nothing of this matter and assured us that it would be investigated.

The Minister was also unaware that Exit was the longest cave in Australia and expressed a keen desire to see this cave. I immediately offered Mr. Miller my services anytime he would be available. However, he had already been made aware that it could be particularly wet at this time of year and an early summer trip was suggested. Mr. Miller also revealed that Mr. Murrell and himself, if time permitted, would be visiting New Zealand next February and special attention would be paid to Waitomo Caves. Mr. Murrell has also expressed a somewhat enthusiastic interest regarding cave development.

On parting, Mr. Miller assured us of his personal concern and I personally feel that we have succeeded in establishing a relatively good relationship through this meeting. Mr. Miller had previously mentioned earlier that, and I quote "Unfortunately, the problems regarding reserves were made many years ago and it is a very difficult job untangling the difficulties that have arisen".

I personally feel that we succeeded in creating a greater awareness to the problems arising and feel sure that both Mr. Miller and Mr. Murrell are sincerely genuine in their offer to work in a closer liaison with caving bodies.

Laurence R. Moody.

Letter to the Editor:

TASMANIAN COUNCIL OF SPELEOLOGY - DEAD OR MERELY HIBERNATING?

Dear Peter,

The first meeting of this august-sounding body was held in the middle of last year at the SCS Clubroom. A draft charter was drawn up at the meeting and was later approved by the three Tasmanian Clubs. (The charter was printed in both Speleo-Spiel and Southern Caver.)

A second meeting was arranged and was held at the Mole Creek Hut on December 15, 1973. A Secretary/Treasurer was elected (Bob Cockerill), but the position of President was not finalised. It was arranged at that time that the Secretary arrange a meeting - in consultation with the Club delegates - to be held in Campbelltown during April 1974.

It is now July, but no meeting has occurred. I am no longer a Council delegate, but took a keen interest in its formation. It would be a pity for the body to lapse through apathy for I feel it has a vital communication and liaison role. One urgent matter is the position of caving on the North-West coast. The people

already caving there would like to join a club or perhaps form one. I suggest that the five formal Tas. Clubs should meet to sort this out.

How about a little activity from the Council?

Yours faithfully,

Andrew Skinner (signed).

SECOND DEEPEST IN SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE.

An article in Volume 4 No.2 of Canadian Caver described the exploration of La Sima de Milpo in Peru.

This cave has a magnificent gently sloping stream passage with eleven short pitches to a total depth of 407.2 metres (1332 feet). This depth was first achieved in July, 1972 by a British expedition.

CAVE NUMBERING AND DESCRIPTIONS.

Gunns Plains Area - Andrew Skinner.

GP 1,6: Gunns Plains tourist cave. (As described in an unpublished report by S.W. Carey, 1947, in TCC archives). GP 6 is an outflow stream entrance.

GP 2: Outflow cave on Mr. K. Burns property; 80 metres long of fairly small chamber with no decoration; ends in deep sump; cave has been entered for a short distance, but many years ago; new extension discovered by TCC, April, 1974. Suggested name is Weerona Cave, (after the local water scheme which drains water from the cave entrance. Source of stream unknown.

GP 3: Small pothole near the road to Sprent, explored in November, 1973 by Northern Caverneers; 20 metres deep with some decoration; no running water; man-hole sized entrance requiring rope; small chamber at bottom.

GP 4: Outflow cave on Mr. Kane's property; 4-500 metres long of small dimensions except for final chamber; creek divided upstream with right fork ending in a low sump, left fork not fully explored; good decoration but extensively vandalised; stream reputedly intermittent; type locality for Micropathus fuscus.

GP 5: Small pothole on hill behind tourist cave; explored TCC April 1974; 15 metres deep with strong draught; streamway at bottom; no potential for further exploration.

Mole Creek Area - Andrew Skinner.

MC 1: Kubla Khan: (bottom entrance); entrance 6x12 metres on side of hill at base of cliff leads to large underground stream (River Alph); three very large chambers; finest decorated cave in Tasmania.

MC 2-5: Numbers not yet assigned.

MC 6: DIAMOND CAVE: small cave with active stream at bottom.

MC 7: T-BONE CAVE: tiny cave in limestone hillock; two entrances; one a ten metre ladder pitch.

MC 8: RED WATER POT: swallet near road to Alum Cliffs; carries local drainage; partially explored; reputed to be rather dangerous; no decoration.

MC 9: DEVILS EARHOLE: short but spacious cave at bottom of large doline; former inflow cave but now dry; blocked at lowest point by cave fill and decoration; good decoration includes large oolites; discovered autumn 1962; short extension found 11/5/74.

MC 10: Unnamed cave: Small cave near King Solomon's Cave; explored TCC 1973; excellent decoration; small intermittent stream at bottom; approx 30 metres deep; new side passage explored 10/5/74.

MC 11: Unnamed cave: small cave near MC 10; 3 metre pitch at entrance; talus at bottom.

MC 12: QUEEN OF SHEBA: small former tourist cave near King Solomon;

- rotted wooden ladder; good decoration; two main chambers.
- MC 13: CROESUS CAVE:(lower entrance); stream cave about 2 kms. long with three entrances; large chambers; outstanding decoration; outflow entrance closed by gate; gate has been renovated by Northern Caverneers in Jan.1974 and is now quite secure; protected partially by State Reserve declared 1972.
- MC 14: LYND'S CAVE:(lower entrance); cave approx. 800 metres long with permanent stream; several entrances, excellent decoration.
- MC 15: MARAKOOPA II:(lower entrance); stream approx. 360 metres long; good decoration; (several other entrances remain to be numbered).
- MC 16-20: Numbers not yet assigned.
- MC 21: QUARRY CAVE: small cave with steeply sloping entrance; no running water but pool at far end.
- MC 22: LITTLE GEM: cave with good decoration; several low passages; two main chambers.
- MC 23: Unnamed cave; small cave near Diamond Cave; standing pool of water; 10 metres long; not fully explored; located 25/5/74.
- MC 24: RAT HOLE: narrow, low roofed old stream passage; may be part of Croesus system; two ladder pitches.
- MC 25: HIDDEN CAVE: rift taking floodwaters; depth approx. 55 metres no ladder required; tight squeezes; talus; fossils; discovered 1963.
- MC 26: HORRIES HOLE: cave with 7 and 18 metre pitches; near Liena Mill; talus; some decoration.
- MC 27: RUBBISH HEAP CAVE: inflow cave taking water from Kansas Creek; single large chamber; may be source of water in Lynds Cave.
- MC 28: HOWES CAVE: small cave in limestone hillock; small stream runs underground; some decoration including mondmilch.
- MC 29: KUBLA KHAN: top entrance.
- MC 30: Number not yet assigned.
- MC 31: HOWES CAVE: (second entrance); see MC 28.
- MC 32-37: Numbers not yet assigned.
- MC 38: GENGHIS KHAN: clean, dry cave close to Kubla Khan; suitable for close-up photography; crystals, straws, helictites; discovered January 1971.

Florentine Area - Laurie Moody.

- JF 51: GONG CAVE: reasonable sized dry cave in limestone outcrop on western bank of Florentine River off Gittus Road; several tight crawls; some old formation; two daylight holes; approx. 25 metres of passage; complete with own "dinner gong"; discovered by Max Jeffries; explored and numbered by Max Jeffries and Laurie Moody, 15/6/74; (presumed to be the first cave discovered and numbered on the western side of the Florentine River).
- JF 52: Unnamed cave: 20 metre deep shaft with small active creek at bottom; stream sumps after short distance; discovered by Max Jeffries and explored by TCC members on 17/3/74; numbered on 15/6/74; left-hand side of the Felix Curtain Rd. (F).
- JF 53: One of two small caves in small cliff face approx. 100 m. west of JF 52; has several small passages and dry decoration; further potential limited; discovered by Max Jeffries and explored 17/3/74; numbered on 15/6/74. (F)
- JF 54: Unnamed cave containing extremely deep pool of water at entrance; pool can be bypassed but wet suit advised; cave opens up inside on left; further exploration possible; discovered by Max Jeffries; brief exploration by Laurie Moody; numbered 15/6/74; on eastern bank of Florentine River. (F)
- JF 55: DEVIATION CAVE: moderately extensive former stream passage

which cuts off an ox-bow in flood conditions; dry and active formation; false floors; aven; deep pool at far end signifies river; excess of 60 metres passage; one level; impressive entrance; discovered and numbered by Max Jeffries and Laurie Moody 15/6/74; access via Felix Curtain Rd.; largest cave yet discovered on western bank of Florentine River; driest cave in Florentine Valley.

JF 56: Unnamed dry cave close to JF 55; tight passage opens out inside; does not connect with JF 55; discovered by Max Jeffries and Laurie Moody on 15/6/74; also on western bank of Florentine River.

TRIP REPORTS.

Gunn's Plains - April, 1974.

Party: Andrew and Ros Skinner, Joe and Tim Daniel (Northern Cavern - eers).

Several hours were spent in exploration behind the Gunn's Plains tourist cave. The farmer who owns the property has recently cleared the area for woodchipping. This clearing of surface flora could have deleterious effects on the tourist cave (refer to unpublished paper by Albert Goede in 1973 and to remarks made by Prof. Williams at an NZSS Symposium in 1972). I don't know how extensive the cave reserve is but perhaps the Club could take this up with the National Parks and Wildlife Service. One small cave was discovered by Tim but was only 15 metres deep although there was a strong draught.

Andrew Skinner.

Exit Cave - 1, 2/6/74.

Party: Brian and Jeanette Collin, Brian Watson, Noel White.

This trip was planned as a bludge trip to introduce Brian Watson to Exit, and for the pleasure of the cave and the convivial company. It was a great success, much enjoyment being had by all. Western and Eastern Passages were visited, as well as the beginning of the Dribble System, the Hammer Passage, and decorated areas.

One other effect of the trip was that it showed me some parts of Exit I have not seen before. They were a revelation indeed! Just for the record here are a few of the features noted.

All the early part of the Dribble System is in an extensive area of limestone breccia. The clasts are angular and range up to 6 metres long, with an average probably about 1 metre. I cannot say with certainty but gained the impression that the framework may be disrupted (don't ask me how!). The cement is a major portion of the rock and consists of calcite crystals about 15 centimetres in diameter. More breccias were noted along the Eastern Passage.

Very coarse calcite crystals were noted in several places apart from the breccias. Some occur in the talus before Mini Martin. The most spectacular examples occur in the Western Passage. The crystals there are huge; the largest noted is hanging from the roof, all one-metre length of it! Is this a record for Australian caves?

Everyone has seen the gypsum in Edie's Treasure. The amount there is trifling when compared with the vast amounts in Western Passage. There it is clearly aiding in the breakdown of the limestone. I have previously suggested that the gypsum results from oxidation of pyrite in the limestone. This view is no longer tenable. The gypsum must be an original component of the limestone. This is consistent with recent work by Dr. C.P. Rao of the Geology Dept., Uni. of Tas. who has shown that the Gordon limestone at Exit was chiefly deposited in a supratidal environment. The vast amounts present in the large dry passages of Exit, and the absence of limonite staining leave no doubt about a primary origin. Anyway, samples collected on this trip should provide all the evidence needed.

Noel White.

Florentine Valley - 9/6/74.

Party: Albert Goede(leader), John Richardson, Nick Cummings, Andrew Davey and Louise Ellis(prosp.).

Scout party: Peter Walker(leader) and girlfriend, and eight Prince of Wales Adventure Scouts.

We met at the barrier a little after 9.30 a.m., all except one car load of Adventure Scouts which apparently went astray. We were just about to go without them when their car appeared round the corner. We then drove in convoy to the approximate location of Frankcombe Cave where the leader disgraced himself by being unable to locate the cave. Extensive landscaping by A.N.M. has not helped the situation. After a fruitless one hour search we drove to the Cashion Creek turn-off for an early lunch.

After lunch the whole party went through Cashion Creek Cave and some made brave attempts to push the sump, getting rather wet in the process. As it was still early we then made a visit to Welcome Stranger, following the upper level on the way in and returning via the creek. To our surprise the bottom entrance was dry although a little muddy. A good trip was had by all.

Albert Goede.

POSSIBILITIES WEST OF THE FLORENTINE RIVER.

After our succesful foray of June 15th, prospects of locating further caves on the western side of the Florentine are looking extremely promising. Several outcrops of limestone were noted and one was investigated but unfortunately revealed nothing. This was in the vicinity of JF 51.

The outcrops on the opposite side of the river also revealed little of interest but the outcrops further up-river in the area of JF 55 look extremely promising. The cliff face area containing JF 55 and 56 was only investigated on the southern side and the area to the north and west could also prove rewarding. A trip back to this area is planned for Sunday 23rd June and it is quite on the cards that further finds will be made. Max Jeffries has been working in the area of JF 51 and knows of another cliff on the western bank which has yet to be looked at.

Apart from the area in the vicinity of JF 51, the western banks of the river are heavily timbered and covered by thick vegetation. The limestone is reputed to extend further west than was origo ally thought and this in itself, could lead to an exciting new caving area.

Laurie Moody.

Fig.1.

Area in vicinity of JF 51.

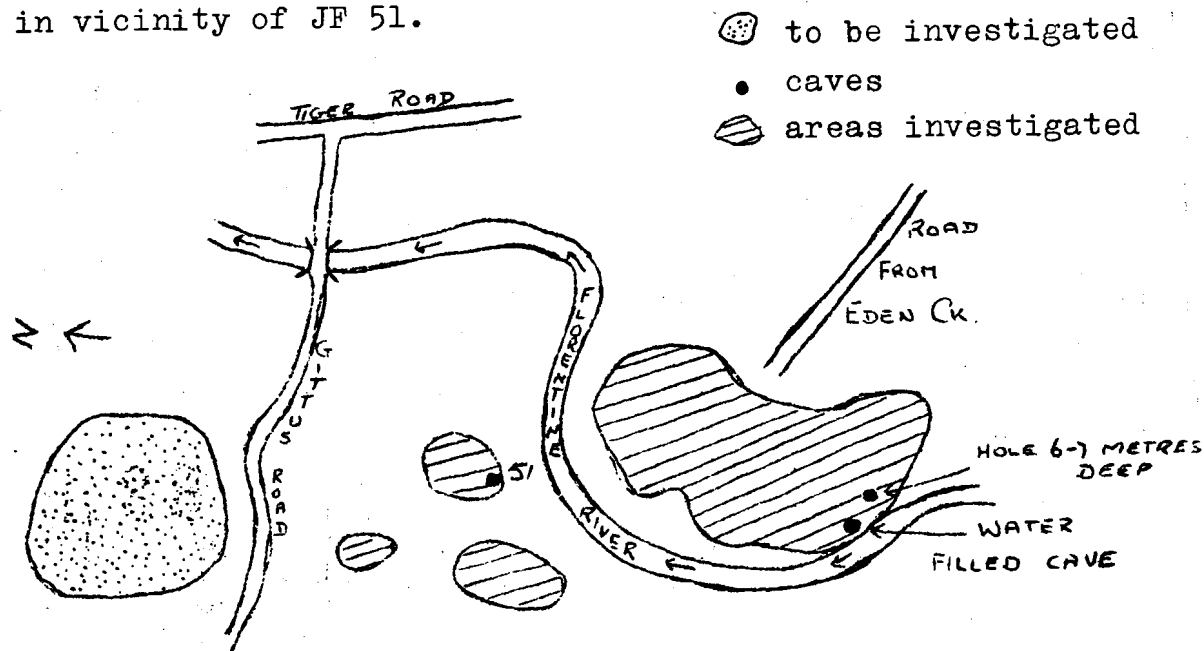
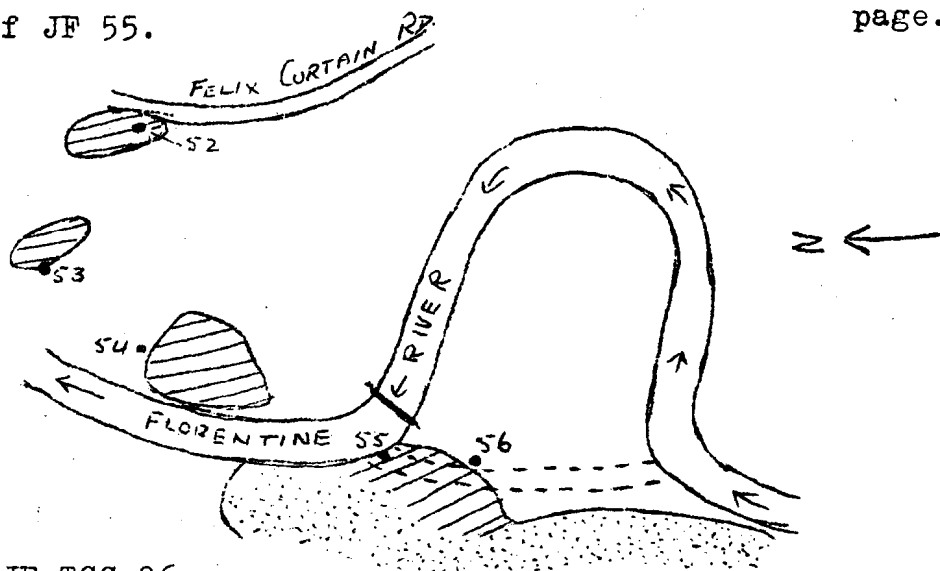


Fig.2.

Area in vicinity of JF 55.

Legend as on previous
page.

Figs.1 and 2 - 7 JF.TCC 96.

Florentine Valley - 15/6/74.

Party: Max Jeffries and Laurie Moody.

Little did we know what the foggy day had in store for us when we arrived at the barrier at 9.45 a.m. El Presidente forgot his boots and luckily for him the gate-keeper had a pair that fitted nicely. The purpose of our spur of the moment trip, was to explore Max's latest find and do some belated numbering. We reached Tiger Road and travelled down it until we found Gittus Road which turned off on our left and crossed the Florentine River. This area is being logged and after donning our trog suits we took a short walk down towards the river. We arrived at an outcrop of limestone and Max indicated a letter-box type squeeze. Lights went on and in we went. After a little scrambling and a few curses from me, we found ourselves in a small chamber (Will you please pull your boot out of my face, Max!). At this point, three passages awaited our attention. Max ducked down and disappeared into the left hand one with me close behind. Several metres later we were able to stand and admire an undermined piece of circular shaped flowstone which, when struck with a solid object, sounded like a dinner gong. The passage ended here so we back-tracked to the chamber with me in front. Not liking the look of the low-lying passage, I worked my way into the largest passage, where after a couple of metres, I was able to stand upright again. This passage extended for some distance before ending in a mud-gravel choke. An aven led up to the surface at this point and daylight could be seen. Daylight was also discernable further back up the passage. Several old stalactites and a couple of stalagmites are also in this section, along with cave crickets and spiders. After making a rough sketch, we made our way out and fastened our first number to the right hand side of the entrance - JF51.

We returned to the car, after noting a burnt-off section of limestone on the eastern side of the river. After several slight detours, we ended up at the end of 73 road which turns off near Eden Creek. This brought us to the area that we had seen from the other side of the river. After a quick lunch we trogged (surface) several outcrops but nothing of significance was found apart from a water filled entrance on the river and a small, tight hole above and to the right. It appeared to be 3-4 metres deep.

It was then decided to number three caves down Felix Curtain Road which had been looked at briefly on 17th March, 1974. The first was numbered JF 52, and lies halfway up a limestone outcrop only several metres off the road. The hole slopes down steeply and is best descended with the aid of a rope. A tight passage which contains a small active stream, runs two or three metres to a sump.

A couple of other passages are also evident but are impossible to enter. Depth at this point was estimated (by me) to be 20 metres.

I emerged but had to go down again as the rope got stuck. From here a 100 metre walk brought us out to a small cliff face which contains two caves. The furthest one to the west was numbered JF 53. The other was not numbered due to the fact that it doesn't go out of sight of daylight. JF 53 has several dry crawls and squeezes and an exceptionally thin person could possibly venture further.

Further down, towards the Florentine River, another cave which has previously been described as requiring wet suits for further exploration, was duly numbered JF 54. The number is on the left hand side of the entrance and clearly visible from some distance.

From this cave, we skirted around the limestone outcrop containing JF 54 and walked parallel with the river which was less than ten metres away. We were keeping our eyes peeled on a roundabout way back to the car. Suddenly, it happened - - - the following conversation ensued. "Hey Max, get a load of that cliff face across the river!" I had noticed a large vertical cliff face dropping 30-40 metres into the river on the western side. "Looks interesting," Max replied, "It would be O.K. if we could get across the river." "Not much chance of that" I replied, "it's too damn wide!"

A small, round hole was visible halfway up the face but entry was virtually impossible except from the top. We wandered on, scrambling over dead trees which had been bulldozed to the edge of the river. Max was slightly ahead of me when I heard him shout.

"Laurie! Looks like an entrance at the southern end - and there's a way across!" I hurried to the edge of the river which was around a sharp bend and saw Max halfway across a fallen log which spanned the river like a natural bridge. "Wait for me! I yelled eagerly, sighting what looked like a cave entrance behind some man-ferns. Testing my sense of balance to its uttermost extent, I gingerly ventured onto the log and noted happily that the water was relatively shallow. By the time I reached mid-stream, Max, aided by his spiked boots, was across. (I'm glad I didn't meet Little John out there!) As we had earlier discussed the possibility of finding a decent cave, our hopes had risen considerably. On reaching the other side safely, I soon joined Max at the entrance.

"Rather impressive" I remarked as we stood admiring the beckoning darkness. "Dry too", Max answered, "I'll bet it only goes to that corner. It looks too good to go any further!" Silently, I tended to agree with him but our lights went on, just in case. "What's the bet it doesn't go?" Max muttered. "Lead on!". "Looks like ---" Max began. "It goes!" I yelled, flashing my light into a low lying passage, "it damn well goes!!"

Down on hands and knees and away we went. It went all right. On and on and on! It was plainly evident that it was an old stream passage and from the amount of debris, it was apparent that it still carried water in flood conditions. The floor was dry and solid with an outstanding feature - - no mud. Old formation accompanied us all the way. Several stalactites were broken to enable us to continue. Ten, fifty and finally seventy metres of flat passage were negotiated before we reached a small chamber which appeared to be close to the surface. A clear deep pool suggested that we were very close to the river and disappointed but nevertheless happy, we slowly headed back out. We were very happy in the regard that we had found another reasonably long cave and so far the longest discovered on the western side of the Florentine River.

We investigated several side passages but apart from an aven about 6 metres high they went no distance. Toadstools were observed growing in complete darkness and a false floor was noted in one section. On emerging we proudly attached a number - JF 55 and decided that it was worthy of a name. I have since come up with Deviation Cave, which is appropriate in the fact that it diverts the water from the Florentine in flood.

Another cave was located a short distance away and at first we thought that it may connect with JF 55 but on inspection by Max, this theory has been dispelled. It was numbered JF 56.

All in all, it proved a most profitable trip. Three new discoveries, all of which were on the western side of the Florentine River and of which one at least is well worthy of a visit by cavers - - JF 55. (Inadvisable after heavy rain, however!).

We arrived back at Max's at 4.40 p.m. to celebrate our successful day with coffee and biscuits. Many thanks again to Max for the use of his ute and for his knowledge of the Florentine area.

Laurie Moody.

Exit Cave - 16,17/6/74.

Party: Brian Collin, Bill Lehmann and Noel White.

This trip should go down in the annals of the club as the biggest gang-bang yet! A total of 22 holes were drilled in super-hard limestone for the purpose of enabling easy entry and escape from the cave under high water conditions. Instead of dangling from a rope above roaring water when using the high-level traverse, you will now be able to nonchalantly stroll down 8 steel steps (2 loxins each) holding onto a tight guide-rope (4 eye-bolts). At the bridge you will now follow a newly secure rope that goes the right way and is firmly attached (another eye-bolt) instead of following the rope the wrong way only to find it tied around a frighteningly small loose block. Having reached the end of the rope you will now be able to maintain your dignified mien as you descend a specially prepared and securely attached (yet another eye-bolt) ladder.

Just one word of warning - DON'T try it yet! There are two steps missing, and, well, we were a few eye-bolts short, so - - - Still, it will be great when we finally find the strength to poke the appropriate objects in the holes we so laboriously knocked in the rock.

Noel White.

Exit Cave - 15-17/6/74.

Party: Andrew and Ros Skinner (TCC), Peter Dowde, Richard Schmidt, Bill Hardmann, Tim Daniel, Michael Butler, Mathew van der Molen, John Pailthorpe, Ian MacAullay, Chris Dwyer (Northern Caverneers)

Exit Cave was visited under dry conditions during the June long weekend. The purpose of the trip was primarily photographic. We entered the cave on Saturday afternoon and arrived at Inner Base Camp by 4 p.m. After a brew we entered the Western Passage to look at the avens and decoration. Some photographs were taken in this area. On Sunday the North West Ck. was visited. Chris and Tim investigated the high level passage which had not been entered previously. However, our carbide supplies were low and exploration was suspended. About fifty metres of passage was discovered but further chamber is unlikely. After lunch/tea in the Grand Fissure we visited the Mud Passage and the Chamber of Damocles, but nothing new was found. We had a leisurely trip out of the cave on Monday, visiting the high level formation areas en route, and meeting Brian, Noel and Bill at the gate.

Andrew Skinner.

Western Florentine - 23/6/74.

Party: Laurie Moody (leader), Albert Goede, Peter Shaw, Yvonne Collin, John Richardson, Max and Tim Jeffries, Don Holmes (P), Leonie Smith and Dave O'Brien (SCS).

After spending a week wondering about how we would cope with the crossing of the Florentine River, due to heavy rain, the parties arrived at the barrier before and up to 9.15 a.m. The intentions of the trip were mainly to take a further look at JF 55 and surrounding area.

We arrived at Felix Curtain Rd. but not without incident. Laurie's car blew a rear tyre coming down off the Gap but with plenty of help and advice, we were soon under way again. Trög-suits were donned and we set off down the track which was littered in places with

recently fallen trees. Hopes had fallen considerably in regard to crossing the river via the log. This was soon confirmed. Water was pouring over the log and our chances of crossing at this point were dashed. After discussion the party split up with Peter, Yvonne, David, Don, Tim and Leonie going upstream and Max, Albert, John and I, heading down. It was hoped that one of the parties would possibly find a way over. Eventually, Max located a suitable spot approx. 300-400 metres downstream from the cave and returned to the cars for rope. Albert and I headed back upstream, "Hey-bobbing" on the way.

Apparently the other party had had no luck and were already heading back towards us. Whilst waiting for Max to return JF 54 was further investigated. This cave contained an exceptionally deep pool of water which was easily a metre deeper than usual. Peter gamely ventured in and was accompanied by John. This cave apparently extends a little further than was first thought but will have to wait till summer for a full investigation.

Leaving Yvonne to wait for these two intrepid explorers to emerge, the rest of us joined Max, via his "new bridge" complete with handrail and all, on the other side of the river. Max then commenced blazing a trail along the river bank a short way, then headed slightly inland intending to come out close to JF 55. In the meantime Albert chose to investigate a small sloping tube above the crossing. After deciding that it was a bit too tight, he inched his way out then tossed a few stones down - - SPLASH!

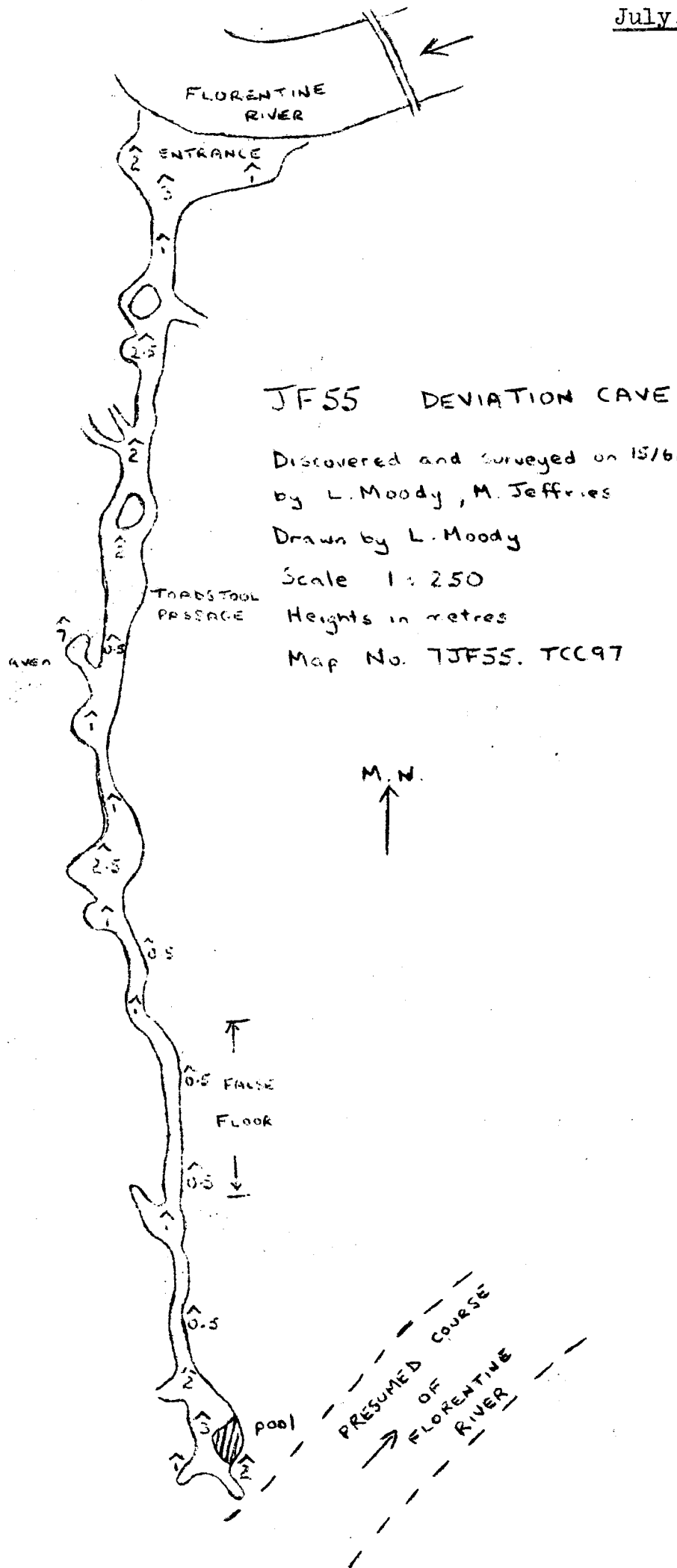
A straggled line of cavers headed off following Max's track but somehow, the short walk developed into an overland trek which eventually brought us out some distance above JF 55. Several dolines were noted and investigated on the way but nothing of interest was found. Finally we ended up at the cave and the party was conducted through. At the far end Albert collected bugs etc and David investigated the aven and located a side passage leading off it. However, it proved to link up again with the main passage. Leonie ventured head first into a narrow side passage but did not proceed out of sight. Due to heavy rain, the former dry cave of the previous weekend was now wet and Max and I were constantly reminded of this fact.

After all had emerged, comments seemed to acknowledge that it was a cave! As it was well past lunch time we returned to the cars, just as it started to drizzle. After lunch we took a look at a recently burnt-off area further up river. Several large dolines betrayed the presence of a possible cave system on the eastern banks of the river and eagerly we set about searching for a way in.

During this search the eager leader suddenly lost his keenness for cave hunting! Whilst scrambling down a small cliff on the banks of the river, El Presidente lost his footing and took a tumble, landing rather heavily on his back. Have you ever had to try and answer how you are with the wind knocked out of you? It's damn awkward! Anyhow, the search yielded nothing of importance and it was then suggested that several members would endeavour to locate a resurgence that might possibly be that of Growling Swallet. We then adjourned to an area at the foot of the Gap and Max led Albert, Tim, Peter and John into the scrub. Their search was in vain and they eventually returned cold and wet.

We arrived back at the barrier around 4.30 p.m. and set off for home with the exception of Leonie, David and myself who called into Max's for a welcome cup of coffee. Not a rewarding day by any means (and I've got the bruises to prove it) but you can't win them all. Our prospective member seemed rather dejected with the whole idea of caving and remarked that he thought he would stick to climbing.

Laurie Moody.



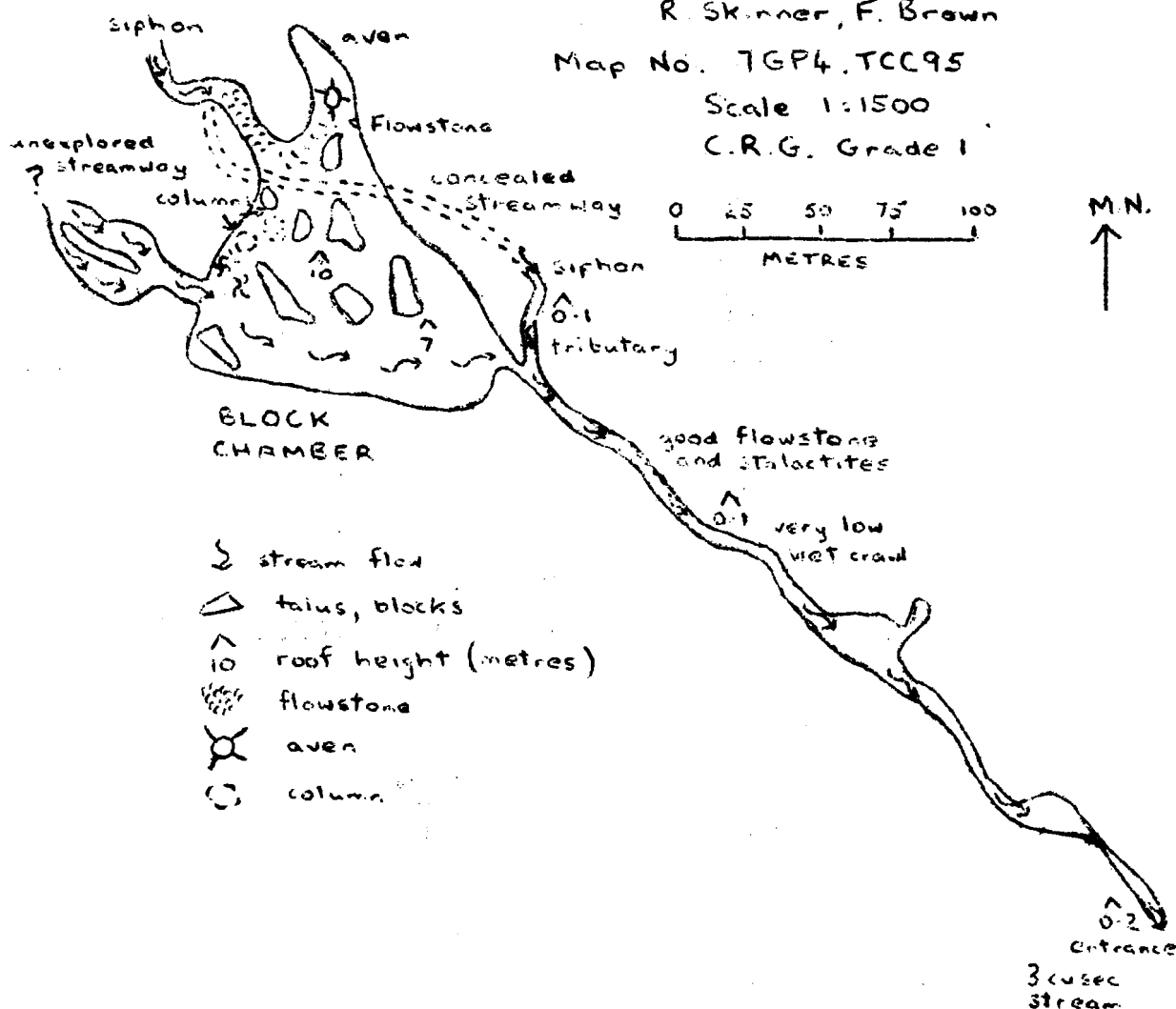
GP4 GUNNS PLAINS, TASMANIA

Surveyed on 15.4.74 by A. Skinner,
R. Skinner, F. Brown

Map No. 7GP4.TCC95

Scale 1:1500

C.R.G. Grade 1



GP2 WEERONA CAVE

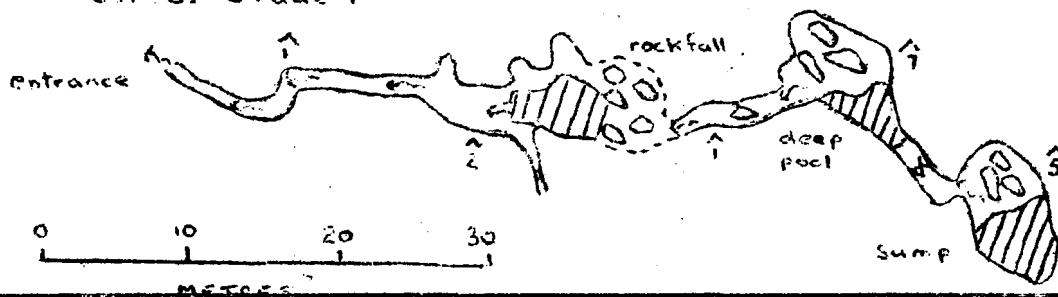
GUNNS PLAINS, TASMANIA

Explored and surveyed on 14/4/74 by
A. Skinner, R. Skinner, F. Brown

Map No. 7GP2.TCC94

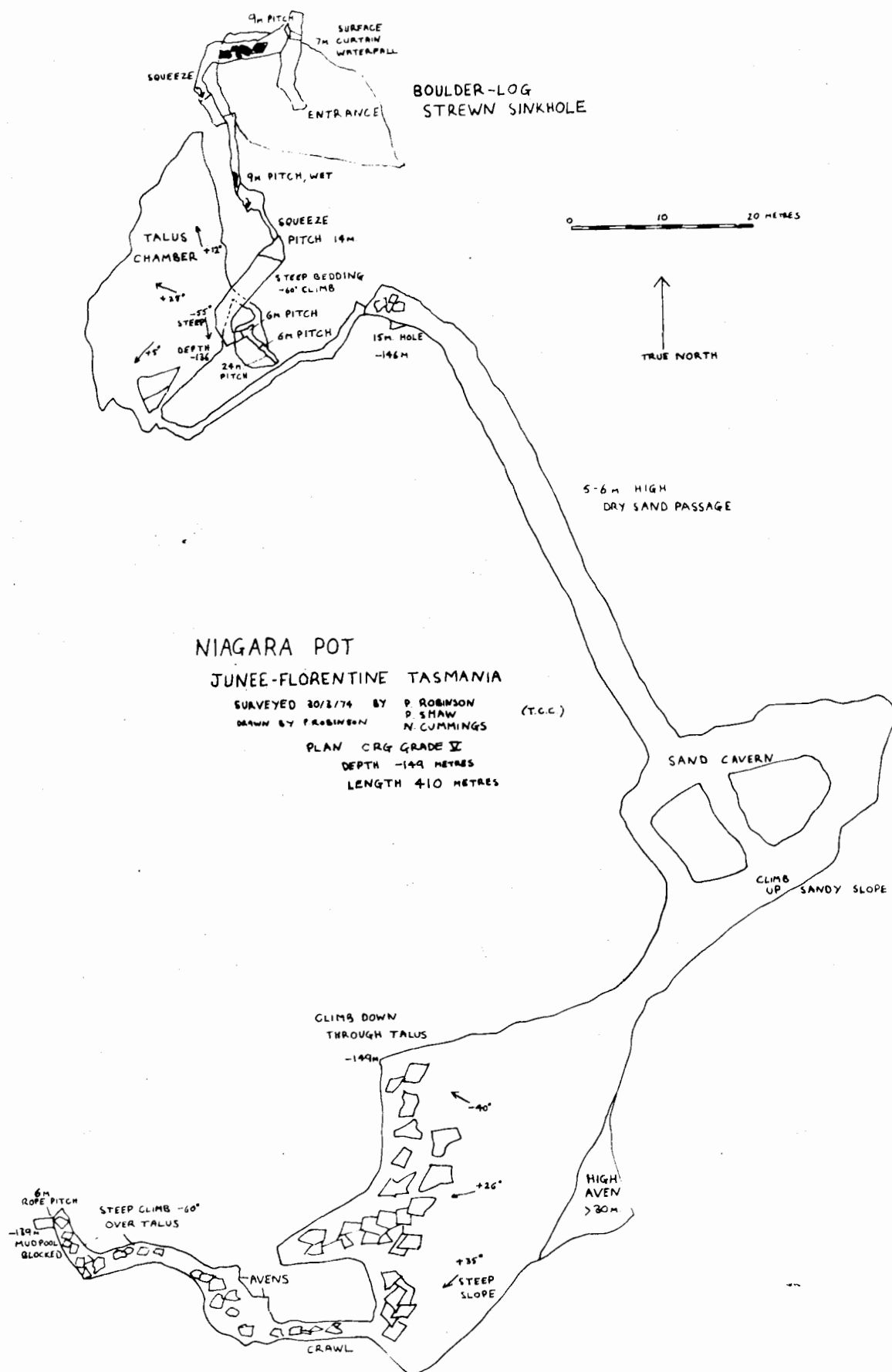
Scale 1:500

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Club annual dinner will be at the Black Buffalo Hotel, 14 Sept.1974.
Cost \$5-25 per.pers. Bookings to club secretary with \$2.00 p.pers.
deposit as soon as possible. DON'T miss THE event of the year.



7JF29.TCC88

