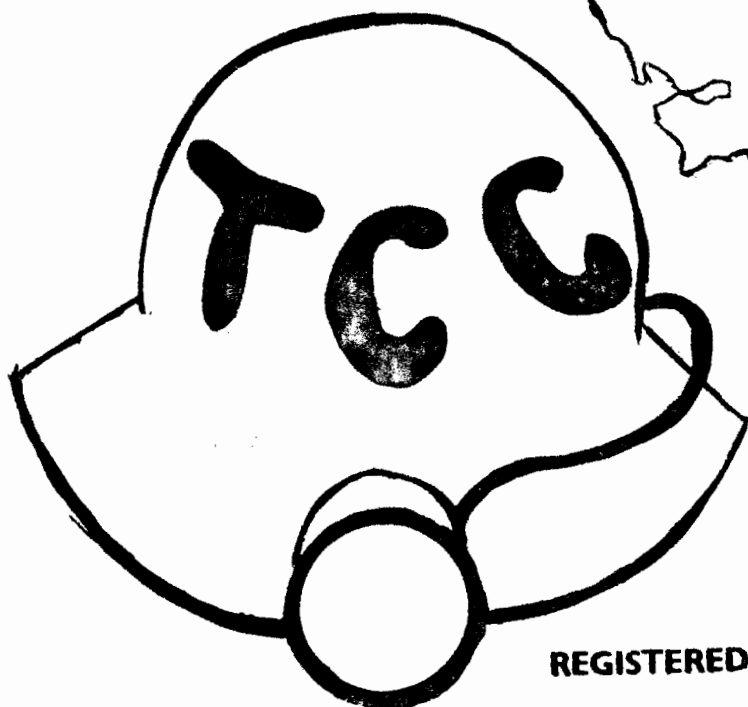
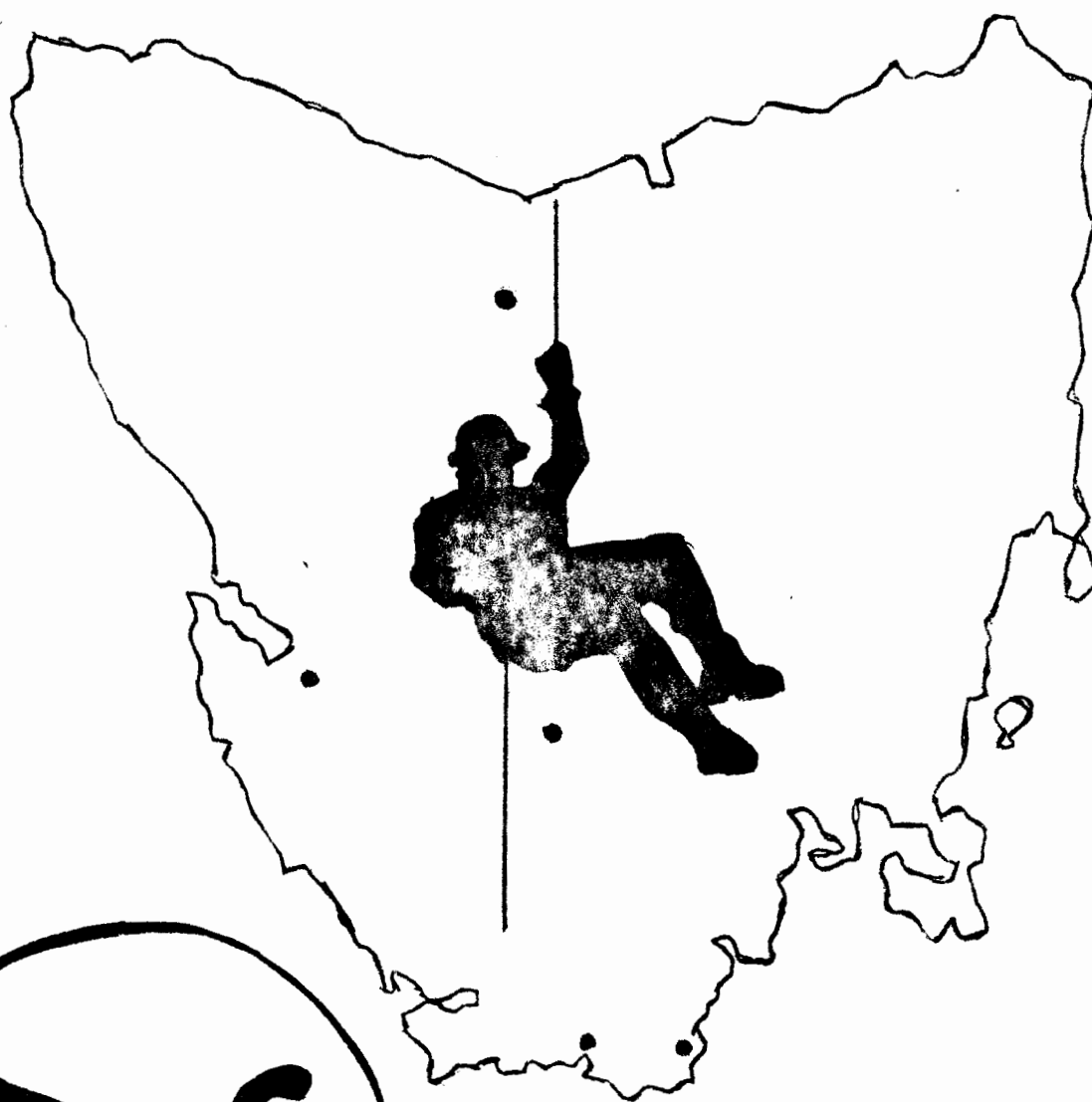


# **SPELEO SPIEL**

**Newsletter of the Tasmanian Caverneering Club**

*August 1977* No. 126

**T.C.C. Established 1946**



**T.C.C. P.O. Box 416  
Sandy Bay, Tasmania**

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Newsletter of the Tasmanian Caverneering Club.

Annual Subscription \$4.00.

Single copies 40 c.

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Secretary: Tony Culberg, P.O. Box 36, Lindisfarne, 7015.

Editor: Albert Goede.

Typist: Therese Goede.

Forward Programme

- August 7 - Sunday: Mystery Creek Cave, Ida Bay, for introductory caving trip with barbecue for parents and high school students.  
Leader: Tony Culberg.
- August 27-28 - Weekend: Trip to Exit Cave with Roy Skinner. Route protection and sightseeing in first part of cave on Saturday. Visit to Camp 2 and beyond on Sunday. For those who can not attend the weekend, day visits on either Saturday or Sunday may be arranged.
- August 29 - Sept.2 - Sometime during this period Bill Tomalin will run a mid-week training trip for students if enough interest is shown. Exploration and sightseeing in the Pyramid-Cow Cave system.
- August 31 - WEDNESDAY: Slides of Western Australian Caves.  
7 Rupert Avenue, New Town. 8 p.m. The secretary of the Speleo. Research Group of W.Aus. will be visiting the state and she has indicated that she'll probably have some slides of W.A. caves with her.
- September 7 - WEDNESDAY: General Meeting at 8 p.m. at Roy and Pam Skinner's place, 2 Midwood Street, New Town.
- September 10 - SATURDAY: ANNUAL DINNER at the Bavarian Tavern. Pre-dinner drinks at 7.30 p.m. Dinner at 8 p.m. If you have not yet indicated your intention to attend please let Albert know as soon as possible.
- October 5 - WEDNESDAY: General Meeting at 8 p.m. At Unit 4, 120 Strickland Avenue, South Hobart.
- December 3-4 - Weekend: Kubla Khan, Mole Creek. There is a party limit of nine. Leader: Bill Tomalin.
- January 21-29 - Summer trip to Precipitous Bluff. At the August G.M. it was decided in principle that this would be a good area. Access will have to be arranged by fishing boat. Hopefully more details at the next G.M. If you are interested let Albert Goede know.

WEEKLY GET-TOGETHERS - are held at Stuart's place, 7 Rupert Avenue, New Town, and are informal get-togethers and natter nights held every Wednesday except the first Wednesday of the month which is reserved for general meetings. These nights also offer a convenient opportunity to organize trips on the following weekend and collecting the necessary gear from the Quartermaster's store.

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EDITORIAL.

The last month has been a quiet month for the club - no doubt partly due to the wintery weather conditions. The Maydena Branch explored some further holes in the Florentine Valley and there are prospects of more. The August general meeting was very well attended thanks to a large number of prospective members. After a short business session slides of South Africa were shown.

Preparation of the forward programme showed that it is still very difficult to plan a reasonable number of trips due to the fact that very few party leaders are able to get away at present - this for a variety of reasons. It is important that prospective members get their three qualifying trips in without having to wait too long. Also something should be done about training in caving techniques.

As part of a university project the editor is at present spending time (during weekdays) improving the access track to the Cracroft area with the aid of

a field assistant and chainsaw. This should make access next summer a good deal easier. Also the Picton Valley forestry road was extended last summer and it now takes only 20 minutes walking to reach Farmhouse Creek rope crossing compared with the previous time of three hours.

The editor has also been in touch with Greg Mihaich of the Hobart Walking Club who is organizing a session at the annual H.W.C. slide nights to be held in mid-September. He reports the discovery last summer of a promising new hole very close to the access track. A sloping passage into a small chamber is followed by a vertical drop and there is a strong draught. This prospect should definitely be investigated as it is in the right place to give possible access into upstream sections of Judds Cavern. It is definitely a new hole as far as we are concerned.

Albert Goede.

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### Club News.

\* Welcome to the following prospective members who signed up at the August G.M. They were introduced to the noble art of caving by Roy Skinner in Exit Cave. We are looking forward to seeing them on trips. They are:-

Bruce McIntosh, 8 Gregory St., Sandy Bay, 7005.

Anita Truchanas, 18 Beddome Street, Sandy Bay, 7005.

John Walton, 446 Churchill Avenue, Sandy Bay, 7005.

Strato Anagnostis, 756 Sandy Bay Road, Sandy Bay, 7005.

Dave and Leanne Cook, 314 Macquarie Street, Hobart, 7000.

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### Club Archives and Library.

They are in the process of being re-organized.

TCC maps are now kept in numerical order in two map drawers so that individual maps can be easily located. The club collection has now grown to 132 maps of varying size and quality. Many of these can be copied. Copies are available on request at cost (plus 30% for club funds). A number of existing copies will be made available for sale at Club general meetings.

The club library has a number of popular books and it was resolved at the last meeting that these should be available on loan to members. They will be covered and kept in a box at Stuart's place. A loan card must be filled in and the maximum period of loan will be one month.

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### Exiting Date from Titans Shelter (JE 97), Florentine Valley.

Excavations carried out by Albert Goede and Peter Murray in Titans Shelter last summer have yielded bone remains from a number of extinct species of marsupials. They include Macropus titan, Protemnodon anak, Sthenurus occidentalis, Sarcophilus lanarius and an unidentified diprotodont.

The sediments from which the bones were excavated contained some charcoal and this was sent to Japan for carbon dating. The date is approximately 14,300 years ago, not much older than the date obtained for the aboriginal site in Beginners Luck Cave (12,600 years ago). The chances now look very bright that sooner or later we will find a cave site that combines evidence of the presence of aboriginal man with the presence of extinct marsupials.

Albert Goede.

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### Cave Millipedes Identified.

News has been received from Alison Green of the Tasmanian Museum that a number of cave millipedes collected from caves have been identified by Dr. Peter Johns of the University of Canterbury, New Zealand. A specimen collected by Roy Skinner in Newdegate Cave in 1972 is Lissodesmus modestus (Chamberlin, 1920). Specimens collected by Albert and Therese Goede from Cashion Creek Cave and Beginners Luck Cave in the Florentine Valley from 1970 to 1975 were all Pseudopronopeltis hardyi (Chamberlin, 1920) and

this same species was also collected from dolerite caves in The Quoin (Eastern Tasmania) by Peter Murray. None of them are true cave dwellers and they may also be found in surface localities.

The most exciting cave millipedes collected from Tasmanian caves belong to a new genera and species and have not yet been described by Peter Johns. They are true cave dwellers. One species occurs in caves at Ida Bay and another closely related one is known from Gormenghast in the Florentine Valley. Both species belong to the family Dalodesmidae.

Albert Goede.

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Exit Cave Reserve.

A recent announcement by the Minister of National Parks appeared in the daily press that the state government had decided to declare the Marble Hill area at Ida Bay a reserve and had agreed in principle with the proposals of the scientific consultants (Dr. Aola Richards and Dr. Cliff Ollier) which were put to the government last year. While this is very good news it appears that the matter is far from cut and dried. Inquiries made it clear that no boundaries have been decided on yet and that consultations are going on with the Dept. of Mines concerning the revoking of some mining leases on the northern side of Marble Hill around Mystery Creek Cave. So it may be some time before definite boundaries are drawn and the reserve is officially declared. Whether these boundaries are going to be adequate remains to be seen.

Albert Goede.

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Weld River Caves.

The cave potential of the Weld River area remains largely unexplored despite the fact that it has become a lot more accessible of late as a result of the building of the Mueller Road by A.N.M. which passes through the head-waters of that river. The road was built to enable construction of the power lines from Strathgordon and also to serve as a timber extraction road. It is part of the A.N.M. road net work and branches off the Styx Valley road to meet the Scotts Peak Road a short distance east of its junction with the Gordon Road. A locked gate is installed here and no access is possible from that end.

Cavers from Hobart and Maydena have a splendid opportunity to do some exploration in this area. A trip report by Don Weston of the Monash Bushwalking Club was published in full in Speleo Spiel No.41 (Nov.1969) and refers to a trip made by a party of six in May of the same year. We republish it here in full in the hope of stirring up some renewed interest in the area.

Monash Bushwalking Club

Report: Don Weston.

Date of trip: 17 -25 May, 1969.

Party: Leader: C. Rose.

G. Newton, D. Weston, I. Enting, B. Enting, C. Handfield.

Log of Trip.

Party flew to Devonport, hitched to Prodsham's Pass on the Gordon River Road and walked along the old Port Davy track to Damper Inn. The track is in fair condition though overgrown in spots, but Damper Inn is not habitable. The creek at Damper Inn was then followed South to the first Campsite ("Wedge" MR 441.0, 728.0). The first evidence of limestone was seen at approx (MR 439.8, 729.0) Going along the creek was slow, especially in the gorge sections which were littered with fallen trees. After a day of exploration the campsite was shifted to (MR 441.2, 727.3) The flat area shown on the map on the west side of the river from the campsite would be suitable for airdropping.

The country in this region could be divided into three zones:

river banks - overgrown, steep and mossy with many fallen logs.

limestone areas - mainly flat with many sinkholes and 'limestone castles'.

Covered with fairly open beech forests.

ridges - Steep-sided. Many huge mountain ashes. Covered with three foot high bracken and tangles of fallen logs.

After exploring the river banks from campsite 1 to the cave W 6 (see map) most exploration was carried out by straight, compass-course trips. About 60 sinkholes were investigated, but with one exception they were blocked.

The party returned on an approx. N.W. compass course from campsite 2. The going was much easier than along the river except for some very thick scrub about (MR 439, 729).

Cost of trip	air fares (approx) \$24	= \$34
	food (approx) \$10	

#### Caves Explored.

W 1 The Chasm - A hole at the bottom of a deep sinkhole on the ridge, S.E. from camp 2. A 20 ft. vertical pitch led to a horizontal passage which after 20 ft. became too narrow for further progress.

W 2 Black Hole - The entrance is located by a huge black stump on the edge of a large collapse area near W 1. A vertical shaft led down through loose earth and rocks. It narrowed after about 25 ft. but seemed to continue vertically for a long distance after this point. It was decided that it was too dangerous to explore this cave any further.

W 3 Gail's Hole - The entrance was located at the base of a limestone cliff on the Weld 100 yds. North of camp 2. The cave becomes too small after 6 ft. for further progress.

W 4 Bone Cave - A large entrance in the limestone bluffs on the Weld 150 yds. downstream from camp 2. The cave is shallow and contains many small bones.

W 5 Stream Cave - This cave has been cut by a tributary which joins the Weld at (MR 441.1, 726.2). The stream flows underground for about 50 ft, then drops into the Weld. A 30 ft., dry side-passage led to a chamber with some decoration.

W 6 Upstream Cave - 150 yds. upstream of W 5, the stream drops into a 20 ft. deep pot then flows underground for about 100 yds. The water in the passage was about 3 to 5 ft. deep and the passage was not explored beyond the entrance.

Note: Ropes were used to explore W 1 and W 6.

#### Potential for Future Investigation.

The high rainfall and the prolific plant growth of the Weld River area have contributed to the extensive solution of the limestone seen by the party. However, these factors are probably also responsible for the blocking of the sinkholes in the area. The only sizeable caves found were associated with running water. Exploration further downriver may reveal other such caves but it is felt that the thick vegetation and difficulty of access will limit the investigation of the Weld Caves for a long time to come.

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#### The local press reports.

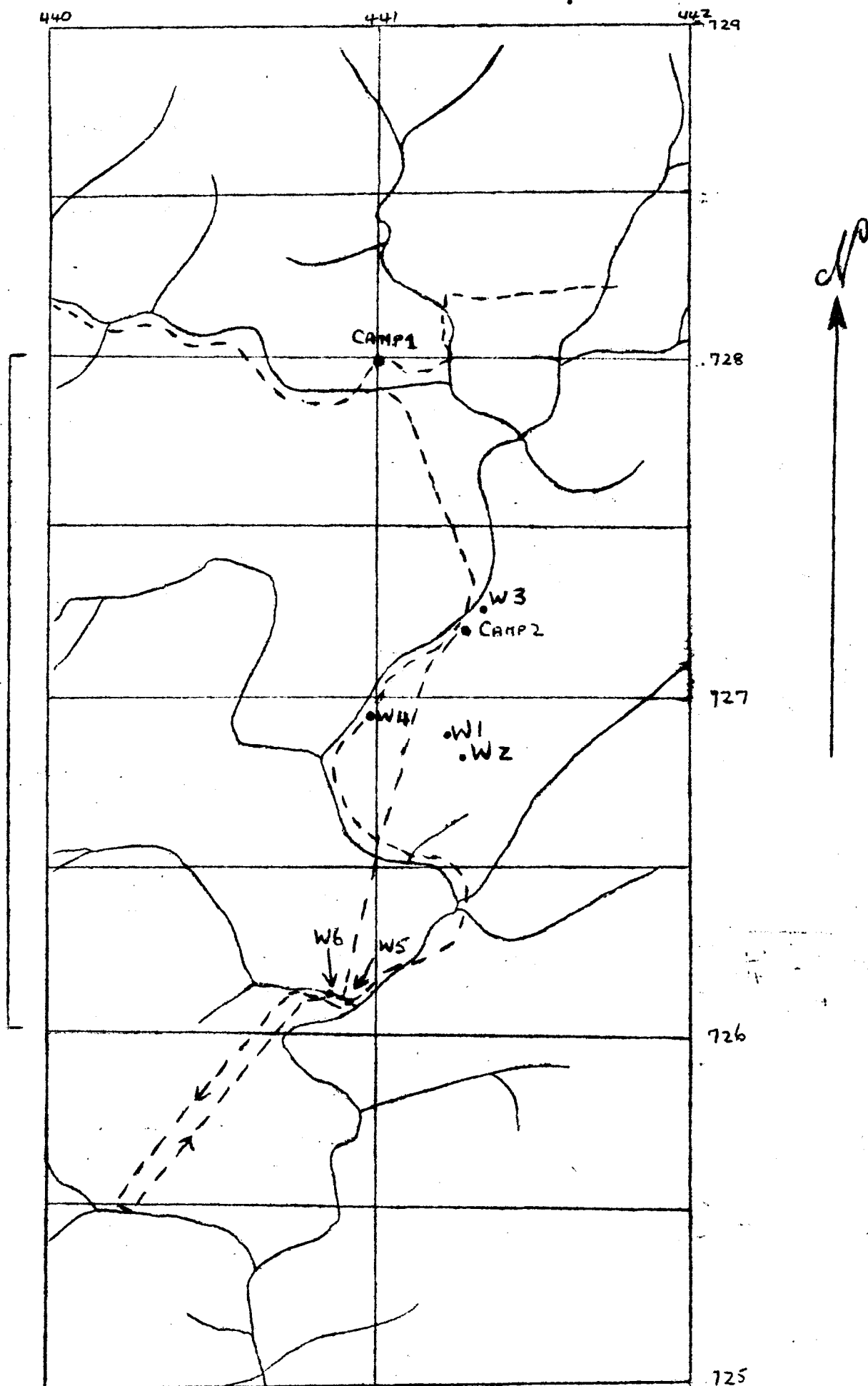
No less than three items referring to caves have appeared in the local press in the last few weeks. In case you haven't read -

SEM 30/7/77 - page 37 - A report that Russian potholers have bottomed the Soviet Union's deepest cave - "Kievskaya" south of the Central Asian city of Samarkand. The depth reported is 1000 metres which, if correct, would make it rank very prominently on a list of the world's deepest caves.

Mercury 25/7/77 - page 5 contains two items.

Greek anthropologists have unearthed the skeleton of a man in a cave in Northern Greece, near Petralona. The skeleton is believed to be some 700,000 years old making it the oldest ever discovered in Europe. There is evidence at the same site of the use of fire as burnt bones have been found in the same deposit. The skull was well preserved as it was protected by a layer of flowstone.

Archaeologists in the U.S. were also in the news with the discovery of



an extensive burial ground in and near a spring-fed limestone sinkhole at Sarasota near Florida. The site may contain up to 2000 human burials dating back some 7000 years ago. Preservation of brain matter is reported from one burial. According to the news item an extinct tortoise was discovered skewered by a stake 12,000 to 13,000 years ago and also a 10,000 year old boomerang, possibly the oldest ever found.

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Maydena Branch Report.

24th July - Maydena group drove out through heavy snow and rain to road eleven to look at a cave Max had located a few weeks earlier. The cave itself did not extend further than a few feet but the area is very promising with large areas of exposed limestone extending back from the Florentine River - all new territory.

In the area north of JF 113 below Rift Cave (JF 34) a series of five small swallets, - three have now been explored - one to a depth of a little over 100 feet.

South-West from those swallets at the end of the same ridge two pots have been located - one consists of a drop of 50 ft. ending in a large chamber, but no continuation. The other has been explored to a depth of 80 ft. with scope of further exploration provided one can put up with the terrible mud that infests the entire cave.

While looking at an old mine tunnel in a ridge at the end of The Needles it was seen that in part of the tunnel formations were developing - some of the walls being covered in flowstone. We are debating whether we should number this "cave".

John Parker.