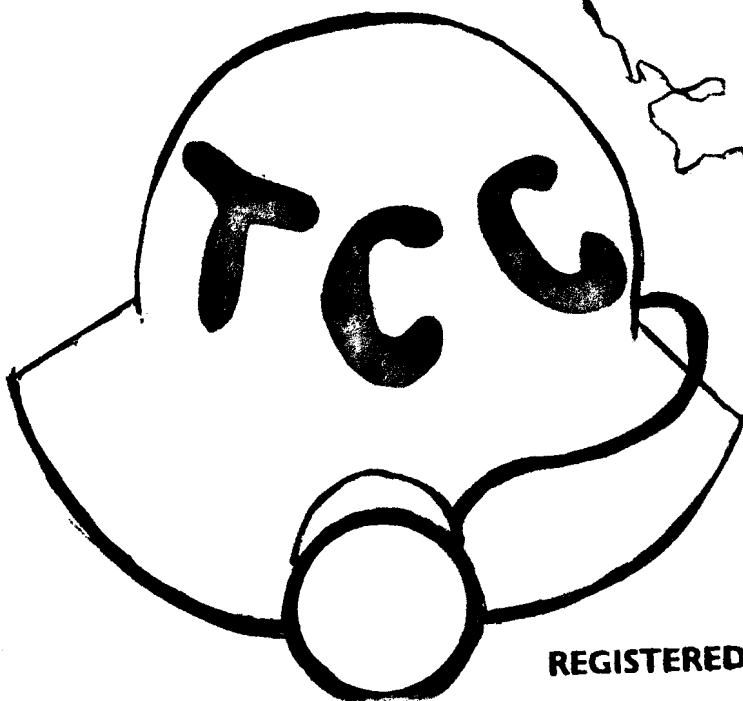
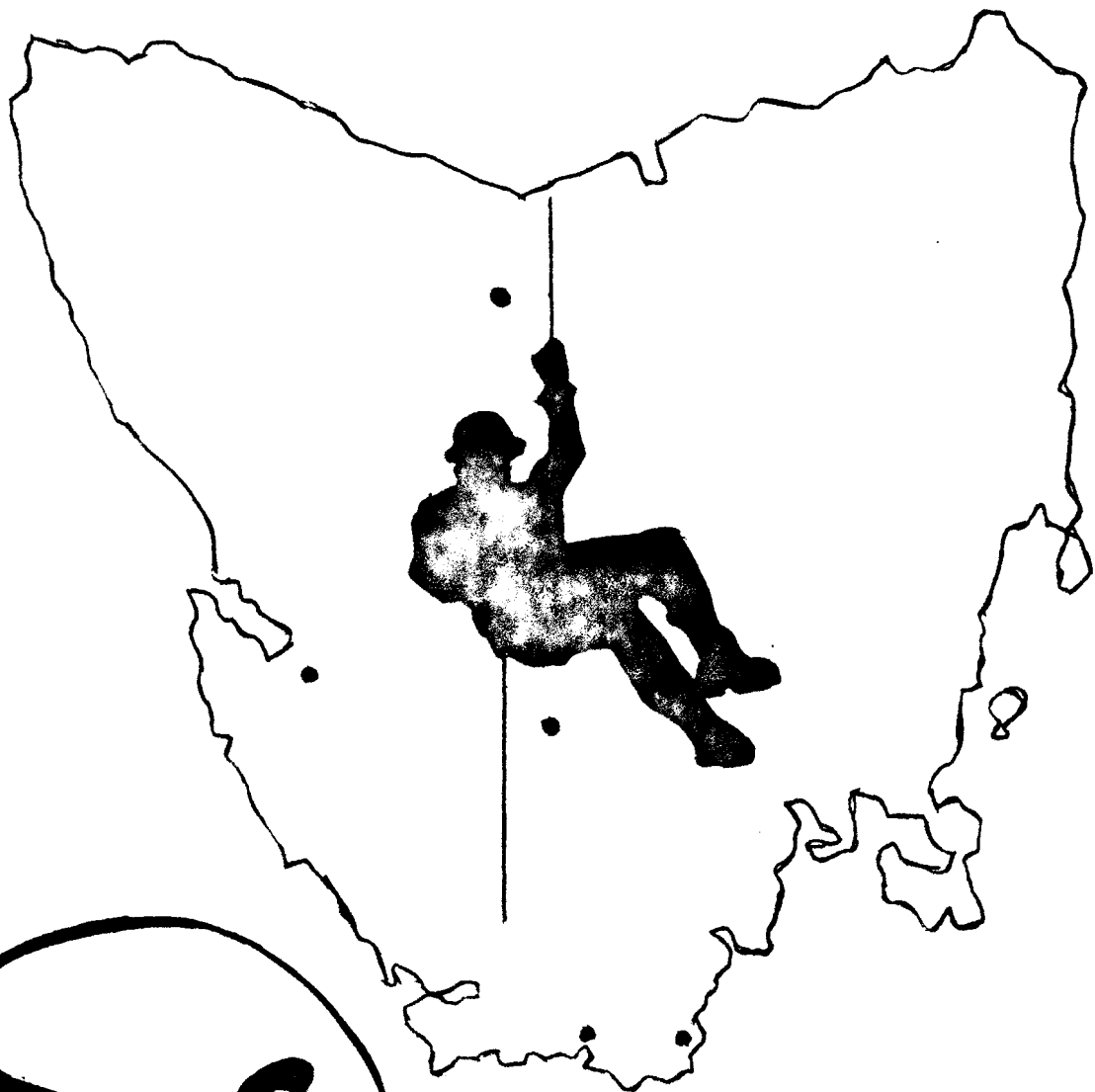


SPELEO SPIEL

Newsletter of the Tasmanian Caverneering Club

Dec. 1977 No. 130

T.C.C. Established 1946



**T.C.C. P.O. Box 416
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Newsletter of the Tasmanian Caverneering Club.

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M E R R Y C H R I S T M A S A N D A H A P P Y N E W (C A V I N G) Y E A R.

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FORWARD PROGRAMME.

- December 10 - SATURDAY: Visit to Growling Swallet, Florentine Valley, Leader: Stuart Nicholas.
- December 17,18 - SATURDAY or WEEKEND: Sheep roast organized on Saturday by mine host Tony Culberg assisted by Matthew Lewis. Location: Junee Homestead. Caving optional and accidental.
- January 7,8 - WEEKEND: A major expedition to further explore The Chairman (JF 99), Junee Ridge. Many hands required to assist with portering of equipment. Leader: Stuart Nicholas.
- January 21-29 - 1978 Precipitous Bluff Expedition. Access by fishing boat probably leaving from Southport to Prion Beach. Departure day and time subject to suitable weather. For those prepared to walk in and out - come when you can and go when you must. Aims are exploration, sightseeing, mapping and scientific work. A wet suit is required for those wanting to visit Quetzalcoatl Conduit. Interstate cavers are cordially invited to attend. Planning meeting on Wednesday, 14th Dec. at 7 Rupert Ave., New Town. Leaders: Albert Goede and Bruce McIntosh.
- February 1 - WEDNESDAY: 8 p.m. General Meeting at Meeting Room of the Wheatsheaf Hotel, 314 Macquarie Street.

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EDITORIAL.

The last month has seen trips to Exit Cave at Ida Bay, Kubla Khan at Mole Creek and a new cave in the Cracroft Area. Meanwhile John Parker remains busy in the Junee-Florentine finding more promising holes for us to explore.

At Exit Cave Bill Nicholson and party had a little trouble finding the Dribble System and as a result the climbing pole has not yet been used to investigate Devils Stovepipe. A Maydena Branch Party visited the cave on the same weekend and were suitably impressed with its size.

A forced march was made to Cracroft by Bill and Albert together with guide Greg Mihaich of the Hobart Walking Club. The new cave was found and partially explored. A strong cold draught seemed very promising but so far the cave is fairly small, lacking time and a ladder a lower level containing some water was left unexplored.

A party of eight made a worthwhile visit to Kubla Khan but no trip report has been received so far. Henk Meerding felt that a lot of damage had been done to formations in recent years by the use of carbide lamps and suggested that their use should be banned on future visits to this cave.

An increase in caving activity can be expected now that the younger set have finished their examinations. Summer plans include visits to Growling Swallet, The Chairman and Precipitous Bluff.

The last General Meeting at the Wheatsheaf Hotel was well attended and

many members appreciated the proximity of the bar.

PLEASE REMEMBER - There will be NO general meeting in January and NO Speleo Spiel.

Albert Goode.

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Club News.

* Matthew Lewis was seen hobbling around on crutches recently after his motor bike collided on a blind corner with a car containing a large Greek family. He learnt a lot of Greek in a very short time but had a lucky escape from serious injury. Shows that caves are much safer than motor bikes.

* John Parker is still very interested in getting some support from our Hobart members in exploring a number of his promising new finds - especially in the Wherretts Lookout area. Two prospects are very deep vertical holes while there is also a new inflow cave with sizeable stream to be looked at. Anybody interested can contact him by phone on 88 2222.

* A phone call has been received from Phil Prust, a member of a cave diving group in Adelaide, who have extensive experience diving in the Nullarbor Caves. He is keen to bring a team of cave divers to Tasmania in February to dive in Kubla Khan exit at Mole Creek and would like further information. Can anyone assist ? ?

* * * * *

NEWS FROM MAYDENA BRANCH.

Contrary to reports, the Maydena Branch of the T.C.C. is still in existence, following its battering in Exit Cave. Max, I hope, will be writing a full report of the visit that took place from the 4th to the 7th Nov. 1977. For myself it was an incredible experience that put a new dimension on caving - something I shall never forget.

On the following Sunday, 13th Nov., I drove to the Wherretts Lookout area of the Junee Florentine region. Walked up from the road - to fairly near the top of the Lookout - where a high limestone cliff is located. This was followed along towards the Florentine Valley. Cliff faded out to be replaced by a line of five small swallets and a number of dry holes, one with a considerable draught.

The area described above is the area on Wherretts Lookout above the Gap where the road passes between Tim Shea and the Lookout.

Will be returning next weekend - weather permitting - with gear, to investigate the finds.

John Parker.

* * * * *

CAVE NUMBERING.

John Parker has been active again in the Junee Florentine area and has provided the following information.

JF 120 - Inflow cave near Florentine River close to and below Eleven Road on western side of river. Unexplored, requires a wet suit for exploration.

JF 121 - 129: Descriptions previously published. See Speleo Spiel No.127, page 3.

JF 130 - Cave with entrance exposed in Dewhurst Quarry, Junee area. The cave has been explored to a depth of 9 metres and contains good formations. A further 7 metre pitch remains unexplored.

JF 131 - Inflow cave located high up on Wherretts Lookout south of summit. Explored to depth of 20 metres where it sumps.

JF 132 - Located close to JF 131 but out of the stream vallet associated with JF 131 and approx. 80 metres WNW from that cave. A very

deep unexplored hole with rocks falling for many seconds.

JF 133 - Another very deep unexplored cave located approx. another 80 metres WNW from JF 132.

Not Numbered - No suitable place for number found. Cave above Eleven Road on western side of Florentine River. Explored to depth of 18 metres. Very muddy, narrow and dangerous entrance.

JF 134 - Located 200 metres south of un-numbered cave above. Very close to and above Eleven Road. Sloping entrance pitch leads down 13 metres to a stream passage. Passage very narrow and wet with numerous cave crickets.

JF 135 - Cave located on Wherretts Lookout 60 metres S-E of JF 131 in an isolated patch of horizontal scrub. Cave remains unexplored but comprises two closely adjacent entrances with a small amount of seepage water running into one of them.

JF 136 - Located 200 metres NW from JF 133. Cave has sloping entrance with 2 metre entrance pitch. Then a walkable grade passage for approx. 200 metres. This closes down to a squeeze which was not pushed. A low passage leads off on the right just after the entrance pitch - not yet explored.

JF 137 - Located in the area of the Chairman (JF 99) approx 10 metres WSW of JF 121. Unexplored cave with entrance a small hole in wall of doline. Cave appears to be very deep and a draught is present.

JF 138 - Small cave in low ridge 60 metres NW of The Chairman. Fully explored to a depth of 15 metres. Very mucky with some dirty formations.

JF 139 - Cave located in end of ridge extending SW from Rift Cave (JF 34). Fully explored to depth of 15 metres. Small slit entrance gives access to large chamber. Suggested name "Snake Pit", as a tiger snake was found lodged on a ledge in the cave when it was first explored.

There is still a gap in our club records. Caves JF 114 and JF 115 are mentioned in Spelco Spiel No.123, p.4 but no descriptions or locations are given. I have no record at all of caves JF 116 up to and including JF 119. Have those numbers been used? If so, where are the cave locations and descriptions.? Can someone provide me with the information to keep our records straight ?

Albert Goede,

Keeper of Archives.

* * * * *

TENSILE TESTING OF FIGURE-OF-EIGHT DESCENDERS.

By Stuart Nicholas.

As several people in the Club undoubtedly know, I have always been suspicious of 'figure-of-eight' descenders.

In order to prove or disprove my suspicions, a tensile test was obviously required. The only snag was the need for a sample to test and not being very wealthy at the moment, I was not prepared to buy one for destruction testing. This situation was remedied after a training session at H.M.C. recently when a CM I' brand descender was donated by Bill Nicholson after it had been bashed heavily against the wall.

Being made of an aluminium alloy it was expected that the device would be quite brittle; i.e. it would break like a piece of chalk. It is this fact which has always made me suspicious of these devices.

Figuring that all that would be required was a simple tensile test, a rather crude holding jig was constructed as shown in Fig.1.

Although not a totally realistic set-up it was considered to be sufficiently realistic to give reliable results. As might be expected the $\frac{1}{4}$ " steel

rod fractured at the welds owing to embrittlement due to the weld heat. Some deformation of the small eye had occurred - the P.T.F.E. coating had begun to flake off at the top of the eye and at the neck. No other deformation was noticed. The tensile force when the jig broke was 27 kN.

A couple of weeks later another jig was constructed as shown in Fig.2.

The test ran smoothly (relatively) this time after some minor troubles with the testing machine.

Above about 30 kN severe deformation of the small eye occurred although the stress-strain curve was still fairly linear - see Fig. 3.

Fracture occurred under a force of 45 kN at the top of the eye. More surprises - the fracture was a classic shear and necking-in was noticeable at the sides of the small eye - see Fig.4. Obviously the material used in the construction was of a very uniform nature and quite ductile in nature. Ultimate fracture was by shear rather than normal stress limiting which seems to indicate that the figure-of-eight descender is quite safe as far as breakage is concerned.

Note: (1) 10 kN approximately equals 1000 kg or 1 tonne.

(2) Donations of other hardware will be gratefully received for appropriate testing.

(3) Thanks are due to Frank Andrewartha and Brian Howell of the Civil Engineering Dept. at the T.C.A.E., Mt. Nelson for their advice, assistance and much criticism.

Fig. 1

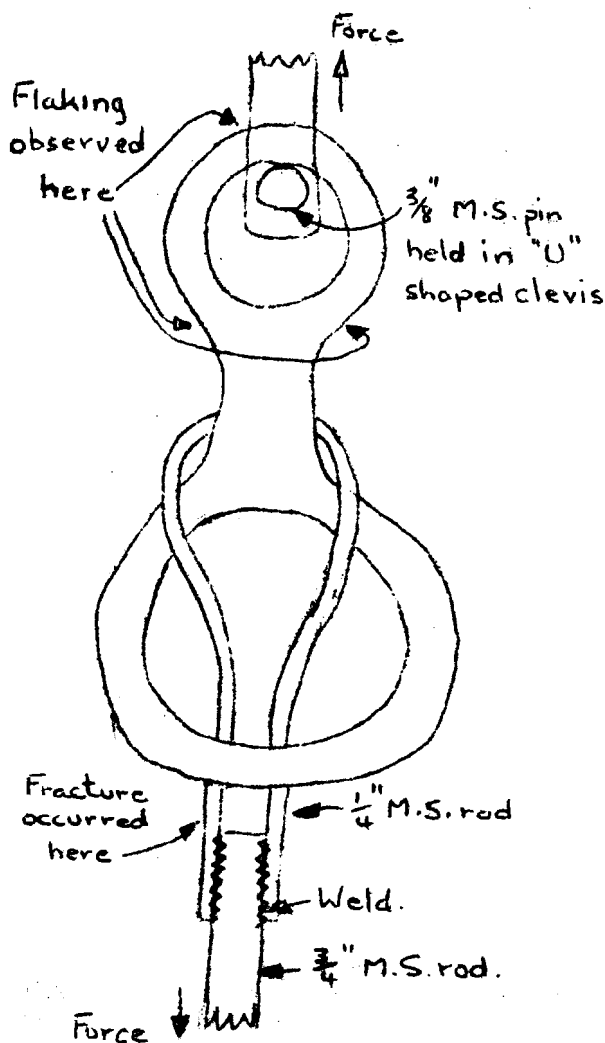
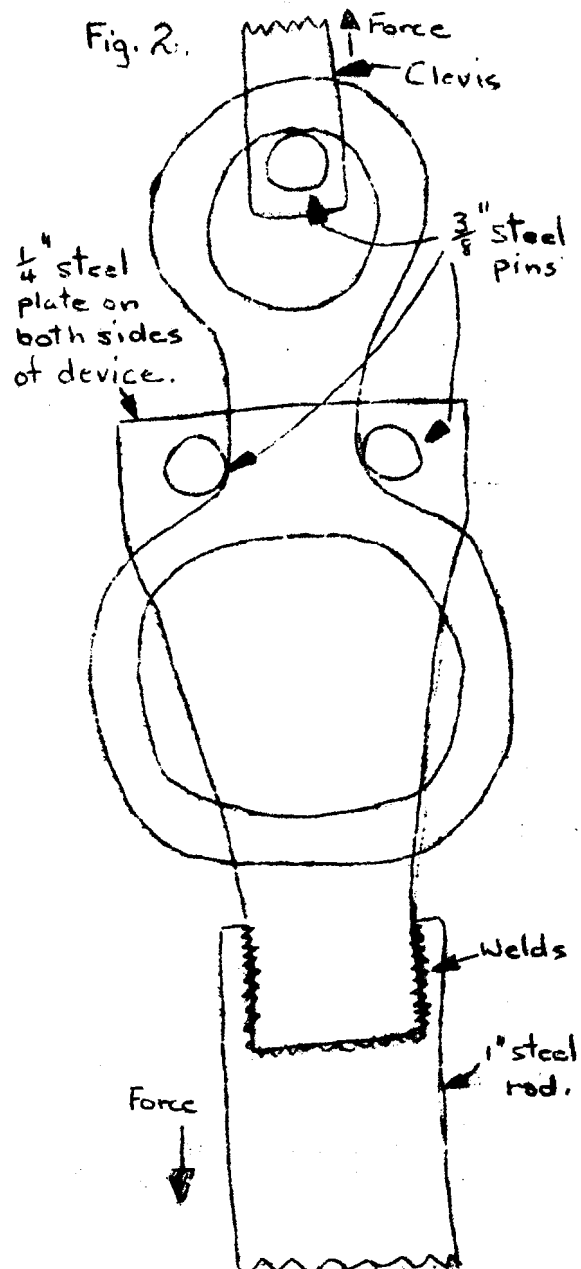


Fig. 2.



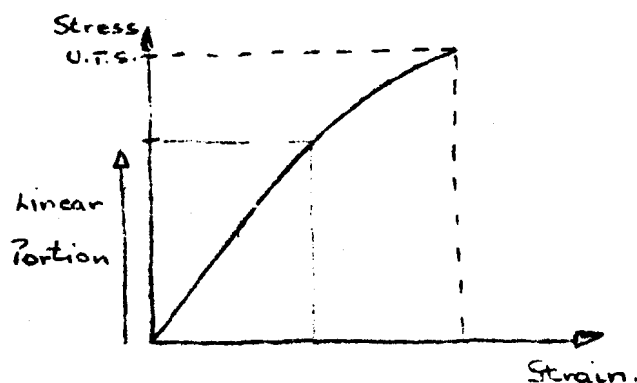
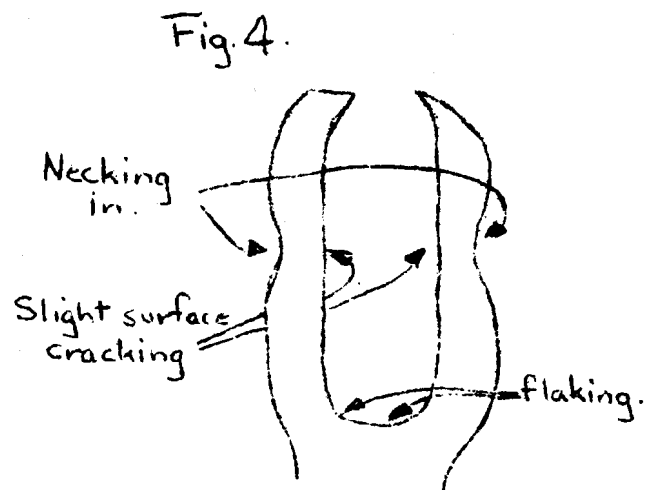


Fig. 3.



CAVERS AND WHISTLES.

(Prompted by an article on Equipment by Bill Nicholson.)

Contrary to popular belief, not all cavers are Neanderthal throwbacks with hairy knuckles and 45° sloped foreheads to facilitate smooth entry to grotty little holes. Some are highly developed Homo Sapiens and Erectuses with scientific knowledge pouring out of every orifice, whilst others are Arts oriented -- vociferous and generally incomprehensible. Take me for instance -- I am a trained teacher of French and Music with a distinct aptitude for saying the simplest things in the most convoluted manner.....Not that this blurb has anything to do with the subject matter of this article, ('Whistles' in case you had forgotten) but it does make up the page a bit.

Now Whistles:- Some years ago whilst oozing my sinuous self under some antisocial joint-blocks in Kubla, I had occasion to use my whistle. I was found and extracted very rapidly but my rescuers advised me that they had followed my swearing (in French) rather than my whistle (in English). I was using an Acme Thunderer Mk.4 with 270 decibals at full puff! Amused at their senseless prattling, I put my 1974 brain to work with the following results:-

- (1) I got a headache.
- (2) I discovered that at full grumble, my voice resonates at 64 cycles per seconds.
- (3) An Acme Thunderer Mk.4 resonates in excess of 586 cycles (Middle C).

This lead to some startling conclusions:-

- (1) A grumble or rumble, although not directional, does penetrate a confused area of rock more efficiently than a squeak, whistle or burp.
- (2) French swearing is more effective than English whistling.

--- which leads me to suggest the following additions to Bill Nicholson's extremely succinct(short) article two months ago:-

- (1) Ideally, your whistle should have a low resonance-factor (preferably around the 64 cycle).
- (2) The longer the barrel of the whistle, the better for distance penetration.
- (3) A discarded 303 shell works well although puff runs out.

- (4) A short length of 3/4" hose-pipe is better when played "sotto voce".
- (5) Police-whistles are probably the best compromise to date although policemen are reluctant to part with them.

----- which prompts me to ask that any Physics-oriented caver should bend his or her attention to producing a whistle with the specifications as follows:-

1. 60-120 cycles at 200-300 decibel output
2. Self-blown and unloseable.
3. Preferably home-constructed with provision for indestructible name-tag in case one of those cavers first-mentioned in Paragraph 1. happens to be using it.

(Il y a une lutte éternelle
Entre les choses sérieux et
La perpétuite du crottinage.)

Auteur:- Bill de Tomalin.

* * * * *

TRIP REPORTS.

Nov. 5-6, 1977 - Exit Cave, Ida Bay.

Leader: Bill Nicholson. Party: Ian Gothard, Matthew Lewis(TCC) Garry Melville(appointed Expedition Photographer) and Alex Tubb, visitors.

When we arrived the E.C. car park was full, almost, by Northern Caverneers including a smattering of the Maydena Branch converging around a tube of fermented hop juice.

The cave was entered at 12.30p.m. and the exit was exited same time following day. But, to cut this silly report short I shall be brief.

The river was noticed to be high but dropped over 60 cm. overnight but meanwhile we grunted through the talus and up to the climbing pole pick up spot where, after a unanimous vote, we rested and decided to catch the 2 p.m. bus to inner base camp. Bus was late so we left in disgust.

Near the entrance of the Dribble System(our objective) we play a game. I spy with my little eye, a system starting with "D" - - - which wasn't found until much later that night. In our wanderings we trogged the Western Passage with glee and following a brew(courtesy Northern Caverneers) Camp 1 was reached at around 11.45 p.m. Oblivion came at 12.15 a.m.

In conclusion: The Dribble System as far as Devils Stovepipe and including both entrances which face Camp 2 and now marked by red reflectors.

Bill Nicholson.

Cracroft Area - Saturday, 26th Nov. 1977.

Party: Albert Goode, Bill Nicholson and Greg Mihaich(Hobart Walking Club)

The aim of the trip was to investigate a cave entrance in a doline which had been found and cleared out by a Hobart Walking Club party last summer. We originally intended to make it a weekend trip but changed it to a day trip to avoid having to carry heavy packs.

We left Hobart not long after 7.00 a.m. and by 10 a.m. we had crossed Farmhouse Creek and were heading up the valley. A little over two hours later saw us at Pine Camp by which time the weather was getting rather hot. We had lunch a little short of Saddle Camp with water from some miserable puddles sucked out with the tubes that Bill and Greg were carrying.

It was nearly three o'clock when we reached the doline with the cave entrance. It is well down the western side of the divide and only a short distance from the buttongrass plains. It was obviously too low down to

provide a way into the upstream part of Judds Cavern but the strong, cold draught seemed promising. Bill and I went down the sloping entrance to a rubbly ledge from where we laddered 4 metres into a small cavern below. Bill pushed the only obvious way onwards - a rather restricted route between a sloping rock roof and a sloping floor of cave fill. We then emerged into the higher level of a fissure which continued for only a short distance at that level. About 5 metres below us we could see the floor of the fissure with a trickle of running water. We could not descend without a ladder and as we were running out of time we were forced to return. To mark the spot a tree along the northern side of the track was festooned with four blue tapes. Although not wildly exciting at this stage the cave needs further investigation.

The walk back seemed never ending with all of us suffering from the hot conditions. After numerous stops along Farmhouse Creek we finally reached my vehicle at 8.15 p.m. We found a half-flat tyre which we could not change as the wheelnuts were rusted on so the load was redistributed and we had a very slow drive back to Geeveston.

At Geeveston we stopped at Bob and Zan Geeves (one time club members) who kindly loaned us a pump and also provided a piece of wire to tie on the muffler which was in the process of falling off - being held in place by one of Bill's bootlaces. We were very glad to get back to Hobart at 11.30 p.m. after a very exhausting day. The conclusion was unanimous - one day caving trips to the Cracroft are a bit too much of a good thing.

Albert Goede.

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*** Senseless VANDALISM doesn't usually occur amongst cavers, so it would be appreciated if the person(s) responsible for deliberately damaging a privately owned orange caving helmet after a recent caving trip could make restitution to the owner.

Contact Bill Nicholson (Ph. 43 8110)

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LIST OF FINANCIAL MEMBERS AND SPELEO SPIEL SUBSCRIBERS 1977-1978.

- | | |
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| FA - Family Member (4) | AM - Associate Member (5) |
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