

NEWSLETTER OF THE TASMANIAN CAVERNEERING CLUB

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FORWARD PROGRAMME

- Sun. 24 Feb. - Exit Cave - mainly introductory trip for HWC members but others welcome as well. Leader: Bruce McIntosh
- Wed. 27 Feb. - Committee Meeting - Note date change!! It's probably too late to tell you anyway, but still - 8 p.m. at 7 Rupert Avenue.
- Sat. 1 March - A.S.M.F. Conference - Early applications (ie. cheapo reg. fees) close for this potentially most interesting and relevant conference.
- Wed. 5 March - General Meeting - 8 p.m. at 7 Rupert Avenue. Bring slides or any other entertainment type things. N.B. We now have a slide projector which does not have to be registered under the old "London Fire Hazards Act, 1666"!!
- Wed. 26 March - ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - 8 p.m. at 7 Rupert Avenue. Do not miss this most important meeting. Help decide future policies and trends by voting sensibly and thoughtfully for the new Committee and Office Bearers. Remember, the Club is in your hands!
- Wed. 16 April - Committee Meeting - note: there is no General Meeting in April. 8 p.m. at 7 Rupert Avenue.
- Wed. 7 May - General Meeting - 8 p.m. at 7 Rupert Avenue.
- Mon. 26 May to Fri. 30 May - Australian Sports Medicine Conference 1980 See Nov. 1979 Spiel and elsewhere in this edition for more details.

The following trips have not had specific dates allocated but will certainly happen, hopefully, before winter sets in:-

JF341 - Further exploration and surveying.

The Chairman (JF99) - ditto (b.y.o. knee-pads)

Mini-Martin - just a good SRT trip - abseil in, walk out.

Trapdoor Swallet - attempt to clear entrance with winch, crow-bars, etc. Excellent exploration potential (dry weather only!)

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EDITORIAL

Activity strikes again! Although induced by several visiting "North Islanders", action aplenty has been occurring on the local caving scene. The trip to the Cracroft produced quite a number of new finds, mainly vertical, while exploration of JF341 on Junee Ridge extended it considerably. Mini-Martin, the vertical shaft above Exit Cave, has been re-visited after many years of neglect. The track is now well marked and another visit in the near future to this spectacular pot, complete with 110m entrance shaft, is a definite possibility.

As you have probably realised by now, the December 1979 version of the Spiel was something like two months late! Bad news indeed. The Editor, lacking copy for this year's Spiels, despatched himself to NZ for a while in an attempt to capture some exclusive international stories. Unfortunately, in his absence, the production team temporarily abandoned their allotted tasks in favour of social type activities and other non-productive happenings. May they be banished to the far extremes of The Chairman and their lead-acid batteries start leaking!

Anyway, with a new decade ahead of us and some new faces appearing, TCC certainly seems to be on the up, so let's make sure we keep it that way.

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NOTICE OF MOTION

At the last General Meeting, Bruce McIntosh proposed a motion that

"The Tasmanian Caverneering Club proceed to gate the top entrance of Lubla Khan".

Discussion at the March General Meeting.

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CLUB NEWS

- At the February General Meeting, Chris Davies and Geoff Fisher were appointed trip leaders. These two guys together with Chris' wife Diana, are really keen cavers and have recently become SRT converts so now there should be no stopping them! Actually, it must be a few years since the last trip leader appointment, so I guess things must be looking up (or down, to be more accurate).
- Speaking of the February meet, it was definitely one of the best attended and most enjoyable for quite some time with somewhere between 12 and 18 different faces appearing at various times during the evening. Included in those was Peter Allnutt from HWC who was a caver many years ago and Ross Mansfield who now has a job in Hobart with Division of Recreation. Ross is probably better known for his climbing activities but has been caving on and off for quite a number of years.

AUSTRALIAN SPORTS MEDICINE FEDERATION CONFERENCE

The ASMF Conference to be held in Hobart, May 26 - 31 this year, is shaping up to be a very interesting and productive scientific meeting. Unfortunately, Dr Griffith Pugh of 1953 Everest Expedition fame is now unable to attend, however, in his place will be Dr Peter Steele from Yukon, Canada. Peter was the medical officer on the 1970 International Expedition to Everest and he subsequently wrote the book "Doctor on Everest". He has also written "Medical Care for Mountain Climbers". The public lecture on Tuesday evening 27 May is now to be given by him and will most probably have a theme relating to the 1970 Everest expedition.

Due to the organisers having received numerous requests for more time to be given to the finer points of search and rescue techniques, rescue equipment, communications and so on, there is a possibility of two days of workshops and demonstrations on Monday and Tuesday 22 & 3 June. Representatives of interested clubs and related organisations are invited to attend, so if you are interested please write to :-

A.S.M.F. Conference 1980,  
P.O.Box 65,  
LINDISFARNE. TAS. 7015.

Although not certain at the moment, if these two days go ahead as planned, a great deal will be learnt by all those attending so why don't you go?

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\*\*\*\* F O R   S A L E \*\*\*\*

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Having finally disposed of my wet-suit, I now offer for sale the following items:

2 only Dunlop sandshoes - 1 for the left foot and 1 for the right. Originally Size 8 but, owing to the strange effects of NZ galcial water, they have shrunk a little and hence will no longer fit my feet, which did not shrink!

Ideal for squash, tennis or just lounging around in (après-squash!) - as new condition (less than 3 months old), these shoes have walked a maximum of about 40kms.

They cost me \$16, but no reasonable offer will be refused however, all unreasonable ones definitely will be!

Stuart Nicholas is the man to see about this exclusive offer, so, avoid the rush - ring now!

28 3054 (H)      or      28 4691 (W)

P.S. As an optional extra, for a mere \$170, you can also acquire my you-beaut HEWLETT-PACKARD 29C programmable calculator. All accessories supplied including original box and fully corrected Applications Manual.

Reason for sale? I'm moving up to a more sophisticated electric number-cruncher!

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!!!!ANOTHER BARGAIN!!!!

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Due to study and other commitments, Sue Feeney probably won't be doing all that much caving in the near future, and is offering for sale (mainly to boost dwindling coffers):-

CAP LAMP and battery complete with belt and peaked helmet with chin strap - all in good condition, at the very reasonable price of \$50 o.n.o. (my arm can be twisted a little).

So, if you have just launched into the wonders of caving and are sick of scrambling around with a cumbersome torch in your hand, here's the opportunity you can't miss to set yourself up comfortably and cheaply!

Phone Sue Feeney on 23 1699(H) or 34 6299(W).

### CAVE FAUNA

We don't know very much about the smaller animals that live in cave waters in Tasmania although it is obvious there have to be some around to provide food for the larger animals such as Anaspides and amphipods.

On a geomorphology excursion to north western Tasmania last Easter I was rather pleased to meet Patrick De Deckker who has come from Belgium to do a Ph.D. in the Department of Zoology at the University of Adelaide. Patrick specializes in the study of ostracods - tiny crustaceans about the size of a pinhead or even smaller. Despite their small size, the animals have two valves which enclose their body and consist of calcium carbonate - the same material of which stalagmites and stalactites are made. When the animal dies, the valves fall to the bottom of the lake or pool in which it lived and accumulate as fossils. Freshwater limestone at the Pulbeena quarries near Smithton is full of such valves and it was this that had brought Patrick to Tasmania.

When I mentioned my interest in cave fauna, Patrick became enthusiastic about the possibility of finding ostracods in caves. They are well known from caves in the northern hemisphere but none have apparently been recorded from the southern hemisphere.

While in Tasmania, Patrick persuaded me to collect some mud and silt from cave pools at King George V Cave at Hastings and Frankcombe Cave in the Florentine Valley as I had to go there in any case to collect water samples for my own studies. If the animals were there, their valves should be present in the mud and silt. Samples from King George V Cave were barren but those from Frankcombe Cave did contain some valves so ostracods had to be present.

Patrick sent me a coffee strainer to use as a collecting net and every month as I went to Frankcombe Cave I tried my luck. The animals are certainly not common. I collected valves of two different kinds but it was not until October that I collected three living specimens which could belong to the genus Candona. Patrick was convinced that it is a cave adapted species that is new to science. Unfortunately, my sampling programme at Frankcombe Cave is now finished and I did not collect enough specimens for the species to be described. So we will have to try some more collecting.

Quite by accident, the samples collected for ostracods also contained specimens of another small crustacean - a copepod which was identified by David Morton of the University of Monash as Acanthocyclops bisetosus. It is a species that is also found in surface pools in Tasmania.

As ostracods occur in Frankcombe Cave, they are likely to be present in other Tasmanian caves. Since they only live in standing water, their presence is most easily detected by scooping up small amounts of silt and clay from the bottom of a pool. The sample can be put in a glass tube and later examined under the microscope to see if valves are present. Any caver who is interested, can help by collecting such samples from any cave he happens to visit.

You can either send them direct to Patrick De Deckker, Department of Zoology, University of Adelaide, G.P.O. Box 498, Adelaide, S.A., 5001 or you can give them to me and I shall send them on. Every bottle must have a label indicating where the material was collected, the date of collection and the name of the collector. Maybe you can help!

Albert Goede.

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### "BARE BONES" CAVE LIST

A letter was received from Peter Matthews, the ASF Speleo Handbook convenor, thanking us for our efforts in compiling the Tasmanian cave list material from the cave summary forms. The information has been received from every state. It has all been typed up and had gone to the printer by the middle of December. It is expected to come off the press by Christmas and will be distributed at the ASF meeting in Buchan at the January long weekend. It will consist of 73 pages and will list the bare facts about all of Australia's caves. Cost per copy to ASF members is estimated to be around \$5.00.

This list is not intended to replace the ASF Handbook, publication of which is still some time in the future. This will not only contain much more detailed descriptions of Australia's caves, but also many papers of general interest to speleologists.

Albert Goede.

### ---GREAT MINDS THINK ALIKE!---

Just after changing our policy for the conduct of General Meetings it was most interesting to come across a short article by Terry Reardon on page 17 of CEGSA Newsletter 24(3), November, 1979. The following is reprinted from the article:-

"General meetings have changed format and style quite a bit. Firstly, the Committee has recognised that the G.M. is a venue for members to get together and have a yarn and hear about past and future trips - a lot of people only catch up with one another once a month, at G.M.'s. The Committee has also realised that despite interpretation of our Constitution, that members intention of electing members to a committee is to administrate the club, the details of which in the main are of little interest to the average member. In the past many meetings have deteriorated into long debates over business and meeting protocol - caves and caving is what people come to hear about.

So now, only interesting business is discussed and formalities kept to a minimum. Usually a guest speaker or film has been arranged which follows for about 1 hour after the business. Trip reports are then given, all trip leaders are encouraged to report on past trips using slide aids, including our map slides. Future trips and projects are presented followed by supper. It is intended to have "gear nights" e.g., lights and helmets are put on display and merits of each type discussed.

It would be good to see as many people as possible take part in the G.M. - to talk on trips, raise interesting points or suggest ideas. New members are invited to ask for trips to be run to areas of their interest. There are a lot of projects in S.A. caving waiting attention - many caves have yet to be surveyed and mapped; there is endless exploration to be done, slide collections to be compiled, a multitude of biological data to be collected and assessed and other special projects as mentioned at the last G.M."

### TRIP REPORTS

Saturday, 15.12.79 - KUBLA KHAN

Despite incredible organisational gymnastics, only six turned up for this annual pilgrimage to Australia's finest cave. Sue and Geoff (Climbers Club), Dave (prospective member), Di and John (honourable members) and, of course, Bill (reluctant beurocrat).

We were pleasantly surprised to find an unlocked lock on the lock ("Bob, with love") and entered Top End with a minimum amount of fuss. We all learnt to use the Italian Hitch very rapidly and abseiled off to pleasures untold.

The cave is as dry as I've seen it (in approx. 80 trips) and we stayed comfortable until Sally's Folly. Some exhaustive photography took place in Forbidden City including some close-ups of the fine crystal growth in the chatiere between Arbora and the City. Some pollution of the pools near Lunchspot is still evident although obviously much improved since my mid-year jaunt. The usual hang-ups occurred trying to photograph the Khan - trying to decide on a long shot (50 flashes) or a close-up (miss half of it) - I'll be interested to see the results.

We used slings for the descent into New Section (only 10 feet but nasty) and fixed line to climb up into the Forest Section (it's getting slippery). Single rope classic abseil into Cairn Hall is not recommended for the sensitive but is very effective and safe.

Pleasure Dome is remarkably clean - no apparent boot marks although I find the floor somewhat painful on the feet (sandshoes recommended but rarely carried). Much flashing occurred and the results could be outstanding.

Great fun along the River Passage as usual - somewhat nervous moves were observed in the more difficult sections (Trapeze) and an electric light died about half-way along. The climb out into Entrance Chamber is now strictly for lizards with an unbelievable co-efficient of friction - still by chimneying on the ceiling, we managed to get a fixed rope set up (my electric light gave up the ghost  $\frac{1}{2}$  way up!) Laddering out proved no problem despite the occasional waterfalls. We emerged still in twilight (8.30 p.m.) after a nine-hour pleasant ramble.

- Notes:
1. I hate new-fangled electric lights that focus 10 feet ahead of your feet and go out half-way up nasty climbs. Vive le carbide!
  2. Why don't more people use the Italian Hitch for abseil instead of those revolting clanking metal monstrosities - is it racism gone mad?
  3. Thanks to my companions for getting me through Kubla safely once again - the odds are mounting against me!

Bill Tomalin.

Junee Ridge - THE CHAIRMAN (JF99) - 22 & 23 December, 1979.

Party: Gordon Taylor, John Briggs, Tim Rudman(NUCC), Stuart Nicholas (TCC)

Trudging in along the "Kokoda Trail", we finally arrived at the impressive entrance shaft about an hour and a half after leaving the car on the left branch of the Junee Quarry Rd. A quick and efficient descent saw all four of us at the streamway in good time armed with plenty of enthusiasm plus photographic and survey gear.

The stream level was low although there were signs that it had been much higher in the recent past. Thanks to the blue marker tapes left by Bill Nicholson, our progress through the twists and turns of the sometimes torturous route downstream was fairly rapid interrupted only by a couple of photographic sessions. Thanks to yours truly not having looked at the previous survey very closely before the trip, we were unsure as to where to recommence surveying. After some deliberation, a traverse was started of an object that bears some resemblance to a stretched version of a lemon (I have a picture of it!) and carried on for about 75m ending at a cairn on a large flat sloping rock.

This is situated in an open "chamber" about 5m across and high enough to stand up in - an unusual feature of this cave! Later perusal of the previous survey indicated that there is a considerable gap between it and the new section. Given time to forget the knee tearing, body wrenching nature of this cave, we'll be back to fill in the gap and hopefully add more to the far end and high level sections of the survey.

The very nature of the far downstream section of The Chairman is making exploration very difficult since so much time is needed just to do the round trip, without further exploration. Thus far, the shortest trip has been 10 hours and the longest 15, so future visits could well develop into epics of the type not seen here since the initial exploration of K.D., Couldron Pot, Tassie Pot and so on. Any takers for another trip later this year?!

A fairly quick exit had us all back at the Homestead about 3 a.m. after staggering in the rain back along the sometimes elusive track to the car.

Note: Good solid knee-pads are definitely a necessity!

Stuart Nicholas.

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