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FORWARD PROGRAMME

Wed. Feb. 17	<u>COMMITTEE MEETING</u> 7 Rupert Avenue, New Town, 8pm.
Fri. Feb. 26	<u>REINHOLD MESSNER</u> Audio visual show by the first man to climb Everest without oxygen and later, solo. See Bill Nicholson at Paddy Pallin shop.
Wed. Mar. 03	<u>GENERAL MEETING</u> 7 Rupert Avenue, 8pm. BYO Entertainment.
Wed. Mar. 17	<u>COMMITTEE MEETING</u> Usual time and venue.
Weekend Mar. 20/21	<u>A.S.M.F. WILDERNESS MEDICINE WORKSHOP</u> at Waddamana. It's probably too late to enrol but, if you're keen, contact Betty Parssey, Ph: 443151.
Wed. Mar. 31	<u>ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING</u> 7 Rupert Avenue, 8pm. BE THERE TO ELECT YOURSELF TO THE COMMITTEE!
Wed. Apr. 07	<u>GENERAL MEETING</u> (informal). Usual time and venue.
Easter Apr. 9-12 or 13	MOLE CREEK - see Trevor Wailes, Ph: 251801(H)

There will no doubt also be plenty of caving as well! Appear at a meeting and get in on a trip somewhere. Various caves will be visited during the next few weeks including Gormenghast, Niagara Pot, Ice Tube, Growling Swallet (again!), JF341.

# EDITORIAL

Well folks, here we are again with a new year and a new look. It's a pity there are no new trip reports for this esteemed publication! Plenty has been happening but everyone seems to be very secretive about it. There are, I am sure, many bodies keen to read of our activities, so if you suffer from a guilt complex after reading this, do something about it!

You may by now have noticed our new cover, with photograph. The new look Speleo Spiel will hopefully have a new picture two or three times per year. For the time being, you'll have to put up with Nick Hume's smiling face as he prepares to descend the entrance pitch of that infamous hole, The Chairman. Thanks are due to Trevor who did, or arranged to have done, all the work including the printing at a very nominal cost!

A.S.F. NEWS

Following the A.S.F. Committee meeting held recently in Canberra, a new editor for the A.S.F. Newsletter has been appointed. He is:-

Roman Lichacz,  
Unit 4/14 Union Street,  
MEADOWBANK. SYDNEY. 2114.

The immediate past editor, Rosie Shannon, resigned at the end of last year after doing a great job for several years with little support from A.S.F. members. It is to be hoped that Roman will receive more support as the A.S.F. Newsletter is the only national caving magazine in Australia.

### CHANGE OF ADDRESS

That phantom caver from Sydney, Mike Martyn, has moved out of a hospital flat and invested some of his accumulated wealth in a house. The new residence may be found at:

90 Knocklofty Terrace,  
West Hobart.

or, if you can't find it, why not give it a bell on 34 8773! Rumour has it there will be a house warming soon...so stay tuned.

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### CLUB NEWS.....

→ And now a word from our sponsor.....As most members will be aware, this summer has been very dry with something like 50% less rain than normal. A.N.M. are only too aware of this situation as the Florentine Valley provides the basis for the company's activities. This fact has led to access permits not being given in some instances and revoked in others. Unfortunately, this has created a little ill-feeling among some members but it should be remembered that our access to that limestone bonanza in the Florentine Valley is a privilege not a right, and must be treated as such.

We can only be thankful that A.N.M. think of us as a group sufficiently responsible to be allowed to wander around in their concession area - which is a back-handed way of saying thank you to A.N.M., Forest and Log Division!

→ The December, 1981 Speleo Spiel contained a report of a trip to Ice Tube in the Florentine Valley. Some rather critical remarks were in that report concerning a mainland visitor from C.T.C.G. No offense was meant, however, it should serve as warning to all concerned that bad incidents can occur to those unprepared.

→ A recent trip to Kubla Khan at Mole Creek revealed some (at that time) very fresh muddy boot prints in the Pleasure Dome. They must have been put there between December 1 and January 9, probably less than a week before January 9.

Bill Tomalin has suggested a notice be installed at the Pleasure Dome or at each entrance to the effect that: "Novice cavers are requested to observe common etiquette in Kubla Khan by removing boots and muddy overalls when exploring Pleasure Dome and Throne Room in order to preserve the flowstone surfaces."

Think about it and discuss it at the next meeting.

→ Interested in buying climbing gear? One member of the Climbers Club of Tas. is acting as local rep. for a Queensland gear distributor and can supply quite a large range of gear including krabs, stoves, ropes (dynamic and static), sleeping bags and so on. Contact Doug Bruce at 186 Brisbane Street, Hobart, if you're interested. Still on climbing, the NEW Organ Pipes Guide book should be out by the time you read this.

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### GROWLING SWALLET

During the past three months, this classic stream cave has been the subject of an unprecedented number of trips following the discovery of a sizeable extension east of the main sump area. A brief resumé follows giving some details of the discoveries and work done so far.

(a) Several trips during 1981 looking at strongly draughting vertical rift above "mud banks" area at bottom of main cave.

(b) Through the rift and up a couple of climbs beyond a point reached by Phil Robinson, Peter Shaw and company some years ago, into a rift chamber with a small entering stream and sounds of a much larger one beyond a 7m pitch.

(c) Next trip had gear for the pitch which lead to a streamway of some magnitude (300m+ long) with a stream entering from the left (from E) and a waterfall further down on the right. Streams finally disappeared under mud bank in a small tube

(d) Next trip revealed a high level abandoned super-clean streamway leading to a 26m pitch at the bottom of which a boulder choke was found. The main drag was surveyed on this weekend giving about 450m of passage from the main G.S. stream to the small hole in the mud bank. This trip also proved that that 7m pitch is climbable without a ladder!

(e) Further surveying of the dry streamway gave another 156m of passage and the discovery of a loop apparently (but maybe not) leading to the other side of the 26m shaft.

(f) The most recent trip found a little more in the dry streamway area but nothing significant.

## Results

(a) Over 600m of surveyed passage with the left streamway and ascending dry continuation still remaining.

(b) Little, if any, depth increase and little prospect of much unless the main Growling Swallet can be located.

(c) Several avens to climb, particularly the one beyond the grotty crawl at the end where the draught comes from.

Stuart Nicholas.

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## TRIP REPORTS

MOLE CREEK CAVE RESCUE EXERCISE.....5/6 December

Polisar, A.B.N.T., S.C.S., N.C., T.C.C.

Oh! What a glorious day it was!

This year's exercise was, in the general opinion, the closest to an actual rescue so far held. The cave was Kubla Khan and the limit of intrusion was only to and along the streamway a short distance.

Three working groups were set up:

One: To put together the haulage system on the surface.

Two: To experiment with stretcher usage between the river passage and top of the scree slope.

Three: To transport the victim in stretchers and rafts along the streamway itself.

I was involved in setting up the surface retrieval system so, therefore, cannot comment on the results of groups two and three with any authority.

The stretcher lift to the surface operated extremely well considering the lack of room and haulers. It was not a smooth lift however, because with this system, the stretcher goes up in jerks due to the distance between the two ascender brakes on top. Unfortunately, the victim was a real one - Phillip Ling - one of the squad members who was hit by a fist sized rock between the shoulder blades, and was unable to ladder or prusik. He escaped with only an abrasion.

Below are some observations that were made during the exercise:

1. Where there is more than one rope in the one area, each should be colour coded.
2. Bottom of pitches to be cleared of all personnel except one. That person (supervisor) is to have a perspex face shield on at all times in that vicinity.
3. A uniform language, avoiding the word "slack", i.e. up rope, down rope; not up slack, etc.
4. Protectors to be used on all points of contact between rope and rock.

5. Patient and barrel boy also to wear perspex face shield. Barrel boy, depending on situation, may only need normal safety glasses for eye protection.
6. Depending on the situation, extra hands may need to be tied on at points of potential difficulty with stretcher on pitch.

Bill Nicholson.

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#### MOLE CREEK.....8/9.12.81

Party: R. Eberhard, S. Eberhard, R. Hortle (SCS)

Shiskabub provides access to the underground passage of Mole Creek at a point apparently between where it sumps in downstream Herberts Pot and also reappears in Dangerous Cave. Dangerous was recently linked to the Georgies Hall-Wet Cave system, and considering the potential for linking all these caves, a dive in Shiskabub was planned.

After manipulating all the gear down the 80' entrance pitch and through the main chamber, I donned wetsuit and climbed down 70' of ladder into the middle of a big murky sump. The rest of the diving gear was lowered and Stefan came down to help me get organised and hold the end of the line, quite a task perched on a small ledge on the edge of a very deep pool of water. The sump is about 100' long by 10' wide and, once underwater, whenever I moved, dense clouds of mud became dislodged, reducing visibility to nil.

I finally managed to locate a passage leading off horizontally at a depth of 20', but wasn't game to explore it due to technical problems (a side mounted tank I couldn't keep in place and a buoyancy compensator that wasn't working).

Once out of the sump, we did a tourist trip through the phallic chamber (strange mud formations) before having a bash at the squeeze at Old Jamaica Corner, and decided it's not impossible perhaps. Previously, we had thought there was only one sump, however, a climb through some talus revealed a second one. It seems probable that the first sump is a static one, and may or may not be directly associated with an active stream, as no current could be detected.

(Day 2) - Mole Creek Resurgence was the focus of our attention. A dive revealed this light green pool contains many rotting logs covered with slime and nothing significant was found with very bad visibility.

The afternoon saw Richard and Stefan on a quick trip to Westmoreland Cave which is a swallet that eventually flows into the upstream section of Herberts Pot. The sump is spacious and clear and looks like a good diving prospect.

Although no significant breakthroughs were made on this trip, it served as a useful reconnaissance for future diving ventures. Such dives are not likely to reveal virgin cave systems, however, the physical linking of caves of which great potential exists at Mole Creek, would certainly be a worthwhile and satisfying project.

Rolan Eberhard.

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#### GROWLING SWALLET.....19.12.81

Party: Bill Nicholson plus visitors, Martin Ward and Andrew Roberts (Australian Himalayan Expeditions), Tim Horton (R.M.C. San Diego), Tim Wardlaw (W.O.P.)

Just a tourist trip into Growling Swallet to show some visitors what Tassie has to offer for the sport minded person.

The stream seemed to be fairly low but a bit damp. We looked into a fairly high set of passages near the entrance on the way out but ran out of time - several could go with a bit of pushing.

Bill Nicholson.

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Party: Andy Briggs, Jeanine Davies, George, Bill and Tim Albion.

What were we doing up at Mole Creek anyway? Well, due to the high fire danger, no permits were allowed into the A.N.M. controlled Florentine Valley. So, where do we go but Mole Creek?

The 30th had us meandering thru' Croesus and then the departure of George to Hobart and Andy and Jeanine to Launceston to get my car fixed yet again.

Andrew Briggs.

KUBLA KHAN .....9.1.82

The day dawned fine and a hectic walk in 23°C up the bloody hill lifted spirits high as we approached a more sensible temperature zone. Back at the camp we had left a disconsolate Stuart (Quartermaster Supremo) whose boots had teleported to Hobart and the dynamic duo of Bill and Tim wrestling with delayed delirium tremors. Hopefully, these latter were to rig the lower entrance in their desperate dash for the Pleasure Dome (this should also be recorded as the first ever River Passage traverse involving more than 2000 feet of vertical climbing in 3 hours!).

With frightening speed we abseiled the two pitches with Mark revising his opinion of figure 8's and new, slippery overlay rope. We adapted rapidly to West Aussie language for climbing calls, threw in a few Grade 20's for laughs and photographed our way through to the Great Khan. At this point, someone realised that I was the only one who knew the cave well enough to get out in less than 3 weeks so we sobered up and (don't laugh) belayed the drops out of Xanadu into Sally's Folly. A brief mixture of Tyrolean Traverse techniques was followed by a Tomalin's Deadman (1 loop on sitting man's foot - man held by two behind plus a bit of faith, hope, etc.) and the wet section was reached. A hilarious ten minutes staying dry followed by idiotic leaps into 9°C puddle, brought us to Cairn Hall (chucked in a Grade 3½ on the way). (No lights from Bill N. and Tim in Cairn Hall - hoped they remembered that we were in the cave).

Uneventful descent into Cairn Hall and plod up to Pleasure Dome where we were greeted by a track of recent (3 days) muddy boot-prints straight up the flow-stone. (Should we put an advisory notice up at Pleasure Dome?) More frustrating photography in a bone-dry Dome and then.....the River Passage!!!

My thanks to Barry W.A. and Peter W.A. and Mark Tas. for great company - and congratulations at having survived your first traverse of Kubla with yours sincerely.

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A deserted stream passage littered with blocks is high and roomy until it merges into a large high aven - "Mr Hooper's Hall". In the right hand corner at the lowest point in the hall is the short low crawl into "Sesame St.". In wet weather, a small stream sinks at the foot of the 1m step into the main passage which runs both ways.

A high narrow passage with clothes ripping projections leads on into more roomy, impressive stream passage minus stream. The water there is, disappears down a crawl but the main way on is up over a mud bank and into the hall above "Big Bird's Nest". A hand line is used to descend a 20m slope to the more solid "Nest" area where a further 20m ladder pitch leads down the rift to the start of "Snuffbeupacas' Serpentine Passage". This handline and ladder pitch is what was previously referred to as the "big pitch" and the "Nest" was the termination of our original trip.

We were still surveying and caught up with Chris at this point. Craig was still above and Geoff had gone on ahead to the next pitch for which we had no tackle. We continued surveying as Geoff passed us on his return.

The spacious serpentine passage has a unique false floor which makes for easy going. We had surveyed about a hundred metres before I started to feel faint from lack of food and we decided to call it off and return, leaving the system rigged for Chris to solo it the following day.

As usual, motivation was difficult with damp clothes from the day before. The TCC party was diminished as Craig Crossby and Geoff Fisher had returned to Hobart. But as a party of the SCS were staying with us at the Homestead, they were convinced that they should do some caving (!) and so their ladders (plural) were commandeered to use on the last three pitches. It was decided the survey party should go in first and continue towards the pitch an unknown distance away.

Chris Davies and Ross Chapman (RANCA -ex!) were to follow immediately and continue rigging with the SCS group generally having a good load round. Well! The best laid plans!! It took us 20mins approx. to reach our last survey station and a further 15mins crawling to cover the remaining 35metres through Snuffleupacas Crawl to the top of the next pitch - "Oscar's". We sat in the large chamber and waited for our rigging party. Janine passed the dry breadrolls round (ughh!). Rick ate his and I chewed mine. Janine ate hers and I still chewed mine. Then, for amusement, ignoring the imagined rattles of our rigging party catching us up, we did the I spy thing. R for rock had them baffled for a while but B for bread was the killer.....I was still chewing it! After 45mins waiting, we thought something was amiss and returned to the foot of the 20m pitch in time to find Chris down and Ross well on the way.

We quickly returned to Oscar's pitch, rigged it and descended a superb 10m pot to a small pool and continuing passage. Chris and Ross went forward but were beaten to the next pitch, after two short climbs by the survey team. This pitch, the Count's, posed a problem as there was no belay point obvious. Chris climbed out over the pitch and found a suitable anchor but it was impossible to gain access to the ladder. A free climb down 3m of the pitch was the best method so a long trace and a 4m ladder was used from the original belay point. This is another superb streamway "pot" to a pool and high rift continuation 'Ernie & Berts Rift. A surveyor's dream with 10 to 20m legs, roomy high passage and obstacle free until the rift dipped down and closed in to a point where we had to climb up to gain further access.

Chris and Ross were looking for a suitable belay to descend to the rapidly dipping floor of the rift as further horizontal traversing was becoming impractical. Chris launched avalanches of loose talus into the void below. Having found a suitable concreted rock in the vertical rift, we threw down all the ladder we had (20m) and I descended down an easy climb with 1m between the walls. Only 10m of ladder is necessary to reach a gently dipping sandy floor. When a stream flows here, which of course it must have, it heads off at 90° down to a chamber on the left. The rift, however, continues upwards for a short way before closing down completely to a narrow crack issuing a trickle of water. The chamber on the left is roomy but not large. A rift at right angles to the one just vacated drops 10m and is easily free climbed to another small chamber with blocks to confuse the way on. A further climb down of about 2m shows what is possibly the end(?).

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