

NEWSLETTER OF THE TASMANIAN CAVERNEERING CLUB

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FORWARD PROGRAMME

Many things will be happening during the next few weeks before the Eberhards and Nick-O-Tine Hume head off to N.Z. Hopefully plenty will also be happening while they are away too!

Trips planned include: Niagara Pot
 Cauldron Pot
 Serendipity
 Ann-A-Kananda
 Mt. Weld area
 Growling Swallet

Dates for these are hard to determine so if you're keen to go on any of these let someone know, like Trev or Nick.

Other things happening include the usual array of meetings.

Wed. Nov. 3 SOCIAL MEETING 8pm at 7 Rupert Av.

Wed. Nov. 15 COMMITTEE MEETING Be there if you're on the committee!
Usual time and place.

Wed. Nov. 24 PUB NITE Which pub? See Trev. he's the expert on pubs!

Wed. Dec. 1 SOCIAL MEETING Same old time and place.

Christmas EXIT CAVE See Andrew for more details.
Weekend

Australia Day JUDDS CAVERN See Rick Tunney for this one.
long weekend
Jan, 29-31, 1983

EDITORIAL

Well folks, what a month its been! Big discoveries in Growling Swallet with about 560m extra surveyed in one trip and heaps more found and over 100m surveyed the next week. Combined with a flood this made for both excitement and drama in the one trip.

Other big discoveries have been elsewhere in the Florentine but more of that in a future issue - that piece of info is classified at this time.....

Enough of this raving, on with the Speleo Spiel, Australia's top caving mag.

STUART NICHOLAS

ODD BITS

- * TCC seems to be going through something of a high (should that be low?) at this time. We are even self-contained as far as Speleo Spiel production is concerned. Stuart and Chris have between them recently acquired an offset printing machine, an electrostatic plate-maker ("needs slight repair!") and an IBM Electric golf-ball typewriter. The last two editions were produced with this gear as will this and all future editions. Needless to say the owners are keen to recoup their capital, so if you know of any other club/society magazines and so on that need printing, let us know.
- * Talking about TCC's boom, our club nites have become something to write home about. From the somewhat scrungy surrounds of the Wheat-sheaf we have spent the last couple of months (not literally!) at Winston Churchill's Bar, one of Hobart's more trendy establishments. The club is on a peak, we can only go down!
- * That wild man from way back, Geoff Fisher has settled down to suburban bliss in a house recently purchased by Geoff and Lucy. His new address is 4 Truman Avenue,
Lenah Valley.
When is the house warming party, Geoff??
- * Needless to say, the annual influx of cavers from that large Bass Strait island between Tassie and New Guinea will occur this summer. SUSS will be at Mole Creek from Nov. 30 to Dec. 7, Maydena from Dec. 8 to Dec. 17 and Ida Bay from then until Dec. 26. They are keen to cave with anyone from our club so if you're interested the opportunity is there. SSS will be caving here during Jan. 83. They intend to do or try and do K.D., Dwarowdelf, Ice Tube, Welcome Stranger (that'll be tough!) Kubla, Ghenghis, etc. I guess they would welcome local participation as well.
- * Moan, groan, mumble, etc. These words are often issued by our quartermaster when gear is borrowed and not returned promptly. It is most important that all gear borrowed, particularly lamps, is returned, preferably washed, as soon as possible after each weekend. If you cannot go caving because of a lack of gear that's the fault of the previous borrower!
- * The Tasmanian Wilderness Society has especially requested that TCC supply them with a list of members names for the purpose of mailing a "conservation kit" to people who may have some sympathy with the Dams issue. They have guaranteed to meet the cost of providing addresses, will only use them once, will not post them on to any other organization and will not keep a copy. As there seems little risk of further unsolicited mail we agreed to help them with what they feel is an important project.
- * You may have noticed something different about this edition - it's got a new cover! Taken by Andrew Briggs, the pic is the entrance of Growling Swallet with Trev. in silhouette (a shadow of his former self, you might say). This shot will occupy this prestigious position for about the next twelve months so don't complain if it's boring and you didn't submit a pic for selection.

FLORENTINE VALLEY 19-9-82

S. Eberhard, I. Eberhard (visitor)

The skiing conditions at Mt. Mawson were terrible so we left early and drove out to the Florentine Valley.

Firstly, we explored a couple of small holes on the northern side of Settlement Road, only 200m before Beginners Luck. Hole 1 is

approximately 50m from the road on top of the small ridge. The entrance is beside a large burnt log and descends down a 45° slope for 12m to a mud choke. Hole 2 is only 30m N.W. of Hole 1 and is a narrow bedding-plane slot dropping into a small chamber with no continuation.

A further 200m back up the road a small stream emerges from a limestone hillock and flows under the road (N. to S.). The stream can be followed underground for some of it's length with several daylight holes providing access. We did not explore upstream past the last daylight hole so there is still potential for a return trip. We finished off the day with an enjoyable grovel through Beginners Luck and Womguano.

STEFAN EBERHARD

MOUNT ANNE 24th to 26th September

Party: Stefan and Rolan Eberhard, Nick Hume.

On the way up we looked at some karst features at the base of Anne's north east ridge exploring a small cave adjacent to a choked swallet. Including this detour it took us five hours from car to campsite in "Anne-O-Kananda", an impressive doline overlooking "Kellars Cellar" and indeed the highest feature on the ridge. Excellent views of the arete karst, against a backdrop of the South West made a welcome change from the tedious bushscape of the Florentine. A good Ane-tidote, you might say.

"Anne-O-Kananda" has a large overhang reminiscent of another cave. This is a result of the dolomite collapsing from under its conglomerate overburden. The roof was ideal for camping under and the place was liberally strewn with firewood, ice to melt for water and, less usefully, mummified ring tail possums. Smoke from our fire was something of a nuisance in the stagnant air.

Metres from camp was a lead we crawled along to the top of a short pitch with a cairn left by Stefan from a previous trip. We improvised a handline with me as anchor point and Stef "SUSSED" out reasonable chamber worthy of further investigation, preferably after a night's rest.

From the rim of "Anne-O-Kananda" it is possible to throw a stone into "Kellars Cellar"; unfortunately, it takes a while to get there yourself thanks to the hectic scrub. Stefan and I rigged this pitch - at 115metres it is Australia's biggest, and its first and only previous descent was done eleven years earlier on ladder!

We had one 51 metre and two 43.7 metre (marked as 60metre and 50metre respectively)ropes which, as it turned out, left us with only a couple of metres to spare. Descent was made from the easternmost of the three entrance holes and our rigging consisted of a cowtail giving access to the main pitch below the lip. This main pitch was tied back to a header, eliminating the need for protectors - hooray!

I cautiously led off whilst Rolan chanted "We're all going to die anyway", accompanied by a hail of snowballs from Stefan. "What's the difference between a snowman and a snow-woman"? Three knots interrupted this mindbending abseil. The entrance holes merge into a large single shaft of some 30metres in diameter. Up was a sobering view of the bridge we climbed over to get to the pitch-top. Down, it all faded away to the greyness of the scree slopes at the bottom. The end of the rope was too distant to be seen and created the effect of being suspended in deep water - orgasm! I retreated from the rope as Stefan commenced his descent. One of the objects ricocheting about me was the wing nut from his whale tail, a

few distant obscenities were heard, altering to ecstatic yelps.

The chamber was on a scale unique in Tassie, one breakdown boulder being the size of a two story pub. We wandered about surveying, taking photos, soaking it all up. Stefan checked out a steeply ascending inlet passage that went up about 30-40 metres before becoming impossible. Lunchtime was spent largely gazing upward, after which Rolan and Stefan rigged the final 7 metre pitch and proceeded to lose themselves in the maze of the terminal boulder choke.

Our cameras followed Stefan in his fifteen minute race back to the top, while I led Rolan in a more sedate tandem prusik out. The extraneous rope bounce of another prusiker was a bit of a pain during the crossing of knots, spin was interesting too! Hauling the ropes and gear pack was also very interesting - we left two coils on the path to "Col-in-Cavern" for the following day.

That night Stefan fancied another look at the lead in "Backyard", with Rolan eventually volunteering to assist. For my part I promised to have a brew ready for their return. Much later, "... hey Nick, wake up you know that chamber below the hand-linewell, Rolan pushed a really animal squeeze at the end of it and found a pitch that looks like it really goeswhere's our cup of tea?" "Groan, Grumble, was I still dreaming?"

Next morning snow was falling outside as we headed off to further explore this lead, not "Col-in-Cavern". A bypass around Rolan's squeeze was found to the top of a short pitch, rigging was effected from a dubious neck between two blocks, backed up by an even more doubtful boulder. We all shared my rack to descend this and found a substantial chamber, walled in blackened helictites and the unstable breakdown of the floor required caution of movement. Through this false floor a further large chamber could be seen some 15 metres below, the number of obvious ways of reaching this all required rigging, but we found a steep ramp at the north end of our present chamber that led down over enormous, malevolent looking blocks into the same general area.

Stefan had quite a task drawing up this complex place for a survey. The major leads here required more rigging gear which we didn't have to descend to what looked like another sizable chamber, however, we managed to downclimb into a different area, where a narrow, phreatically developed rift continued the westerly trend of the cave. Rolan and Stefan attempted to push this but we were running out of time to achieve any success, though a good draft through it indicated sizable chamber beyond. We shared the one SRT rig out of the place. After collecting the ropes at "Kellars" another three hours saw us "sucking tinnies" at the car.

"Anne-O-Kananda" seems to be evolving from the scrungy breakdown of its upper levels to more promising development as it goes deeper and it is pleasantly dry throughout. A future expedition, held over several days, exploring the undescended pitches of this site, plus the many other dolines in the area, would be most worthwhile. The incentive of 700metre potential is enough for a return trip, trouble is when?

Stefan's surveying revealed a total of 260metres of explored passage for this cave, with a plan length of 211 metres. For "Kellars Cellar" our 115 metres for the main pitch is at variance with the 1971 estimate of 128 metres, although we were in agreement with 155 metres for total depth. Beware of being caught short on TCC ropes, their current labelling is in direct defiance of the Trade Description Act!

NICK HUME

Florentine Valley 9-10-82

Trevor Wailes, Rolan and Stefan Eberhard

Originally destined as a no-nonsense Growling Swallet push trip, the three of us arrived at the end of the F8 road in cold dismal weather before deciding, instead, to explore some of the holes above Serendipity. An impressive series of shafts occur on the contact at the head of the Serendipity valley. We began investigating the shafts at the northern rim of the valley and systematically worked our way back along the contact. All the caves were surveyed as explored whilst Rolan and Trevor started a surface survey linking all the entrances.

Benson Pot, the first hole checked out, was narrow and scrungy and was laddered to a depth of 13.2m before choking off. The next three pots are all very close together and were descended as Trev. lit up yet another cigarette. Hedges Pot (hole 2) was simply a 12m pitch to an abrupt end. Hole 3 was only 7.3m deep to the bottom of the ladder; a bit of digging may allow access into a further shaft continuing below. Hole 4 was a 9m pot which could be free-climbed down a steep muddy slope. Unfortunately no more progress could be made due to a log and vegetable debris choke. Hole 5 had a tree growing just above the small entrance which formed a convenient anchor point for the 13m of ladder required to reach a small pool at the bottom. A 5m climb up one wall revealed a high aven extending right up to a roof of the Permian caprock.

The sixth hole (Pitta Patta Pot) was a significantly larger shaft with a small waterfall cascading over the eastern rim. A 21.5m pitch was followed by a 7m slope heading to a small hole through which the stream flowed before dropping into another shaft. This was the most promising hole investigated and warrants a return in drier conditions. Only 4m from Pitta Patta Pot is a small entrance beneath an overhang - two horizontal passages lead off but both become too tight after a few metres.

Hole 7 is situated on the eastern rim of a large doline; it is a strikingly cylindrical shaft carrying a small stream in wet conditions. From the base of the 25m entrance pitch a short section of passage leads to a very wet 4m drop requiring a handline. Disappointingly, the stream soon flowed through a rabbit-sized hole which could probably be enlarged with some work. Total depth equals 33m.

The final cave of the day was visited as Rolan and Trevor began the surface traverse back to Serendipity. It is a small grotty swallet in the base of the valley; it was possible to grovel and squeeze one's way down to the top of a talus blockage.

From Serendipity, the survey was continued on down the valley, taking in a couple more entrances en-route, including Frost Pot which is 55m deep.

A fast pace back along the track eventually saw the survey tied into the entrance of Growling Swallet, just in time to be out of the gate by 5.30pm. A very productive day with nine new caves explored and 2kms surveyed.

STEFAN EBERHARD

Further exploration in Growling Swallet
Towards the Black ~~Sump~~

Over the last year Growling Swallet and its surrounding water-shed has come under a lot of attention from the TCC. This has come about initially from the discovery and sustained exploration in the high rift area just up from the first sump. With the determination and

effort that has been spent on just a few of the known leads, the length of GS has risen from just over half a kilometre to what is now estimated at almost 3 kilometres. Very little has been published regarding this continual steady growth due partly to secrecy, crossed fingers, writer's cramp and the desire to publish a full account of the recent discoveries in what many of our members would like to regard as an Exploration Journal of the Junee Florentine (Early Eighties). Here is the briefest possible description of what is known at this time in what is the most complex and fascinating cave system in Tasmania (possibly Australia).

Gaining entry to this system is so far by the single entrance of GS. This river passage is followed to a very FLOOD prone area close to the first constricted sump. A second sump follows in the continuing passage. A rift leading from the left of this area leads to two fixed handline pitches upwards to fossil passage and some high avens. A 10 metre ladder pitch drops into a short walk down to a second separate streamway possibly originating from Trapdoor Swallet which sumps after about two hundred metres. A side passage on the left of this streamway brings one to Destiny, a high, dry, wide phreatic serpentine passage leading to a 26m pitch first descended by Trevor Wailes and Tony White and followed to a boulder pile. Out of Destiny (high passage) is yet another side lead, again on the left, which joins a fossil rift leading to the top of the already mentioned shaft but at the far side where a small stream enters. A three metre climb to a ledge and squeeze leads through to more avens and walking passage. There are several going leads in this area but only one has been pushed to any result. This is where the last trip into GS was headed.

A strong party of Nick Hume, Stefan Eberhard, Rick Koch and Trevor Wailes entered GS in low water conditions carrying five 10 metre ladders. After the squeeze through into the avens area a 25 metre pitch is encountered. At the base of this is a narrow rift passage leading via climbs up and down to more avens and a 10 metre pitch onto a boulder pile that covers the floor of a large high rift. Here we stopped briefly for chocolate and mandarin oranges but Stefan impatiently set off on his own over the rock pile and returned to report an aven. He then disappeared in the other direction and did not return. Until now we had been surveying but as Stefan had clino and compass around his neck we set off in the same direction to see what had kept him and so abandoned the survey thinking we could survey back. Almost immediately we climbed down out of the talus into high wide rift with the obvious stream passage ahead of us. A small stream entered from the left and we were soon wading in a metre of water covering a metre of mud. The passage which was two metres wide and straight, lowered to a stoop and the returning Stefan was quite excited and telling stories of Master Cave. Turning to the right lead into a wide chamber with another large stream entering from the left and running into large wide passage on the right. This was indeed Master Cave but short lived, the passage 10 metres wide, cobble floored with a sizable stream ran for about seventy metres but the roof lowered and forced us onto hands and knees into the final sump (temporary, I hope). Smiles all round, infact outright laughter but the sump took the edge off our success; leads were looked for but for once were missing! Our survey was resumed with Nick standing in the sump holding the tape on the far wall. The streamway was followed for nearly half a kilometre past flowstone, stals and crystal pools to a roof collapse that is negotiable. With Rick feeling the cold and tiring from all the excitement and boredom of surveying we terminated the survey and headed back (quite a long way) to the junction where Rick was waiting. Here we started to tie in our new streamway to the abandoned survey back at the boulder pile. At this stage we had spent

about 6 hours underground and felt we'd done enough. The return trip was quickly executed and the decision had been made to leave the system rigged which would speed our return, or so we thought. Things were too good to be true until we passed through the rift leading to the first sump in GS main passage. The draught was a gale and biting cold at the bottom of the mud slide where Nick pulled up short to find the sump had filled up. The frothing water eddied ominously as Nick lowered himself into it for a swim - a few apprehensive smiles and jokes were exchanged and a self rescue was put into effect by withdrawing to a safer higher elevation. Twigs were placed at water level to estimate the rise(!) or fall(?) and an hour was spent contemplating Rick's confusing lateral thinking games. The cold was destructive and after checking the water level which appeared to be subsiding, we moved back through the rift (much to Rick's dismay) to the base of the first handline pitch which should now be named "Refuge Aven". Here we huddled together for warmth in the dark for perhaps 3 hours. At length Stefan went to check the water level and on return reported it had fully subsided but the stream was still pumping in. A decision now had to be made if we set off now for the surface we would get cold and wet so if we didn't make it we would be in a worse position than our present one. Three of us had been in GS in high water before and it was classed as sporty. Our decision was to go as quickly as possible in case there was more water to come. Whilst in the cave and trapped our thoughts had turned to Andrew Briggs and Jeanine Davies who had been photographing in the entrance series. It was obvious to us that they would have noticed the rise in water and with us being somewhat late returning may have raised the alarm. At the time that we first saw the sump up we had no knowledge of how quickly it would drain.

So with Stefan's relative good news and our resolution to go for it, we ate chocolate and sultanas, redressed, ie. helmets, lamps and packs and set off down the rift once more. Indeed the sump had cleared and froth on the walls testified the depth to have been five metres above the normal stream level (not the sump level). The waterfall pumped resonantly and the air reverberated almost enough to cause headaches. Many of the climbs on the way out had obviously seen a lot more water as they were still dripping. The return to the surface was uneventful apart from the waterfall in the "dry" way in which Stefan fought his way through and dropped a rope down for us. The return was indeed sporty and the rain soaked night air smelled good; we were out, safe and very confident after a 13 hour trip. The time by Stefan's watch showed 11.30pm and a stone with a message scratched on intimated Max Jefferies and Andrew had been there at 10.30pm and had gone for help returning in about an hour. So to avoid inconvenience and keep warm we headed directly for the car. Once there it was only a matter of ten minutes before our Would be Rescuers arrived in the shape of the Maydena police, Max Jefferies, Andrew Briggs and Kim Creak; they informed us reinforcements were on the way from Hobart with the main S and R group on standby! Stefan's watch was over an hour slow.

Party: Stefan Eberhard, Nick Hume, Richard Koch and Trevor Wailes.

THE CONSEQUENCES!

Many points of interest and concern have come to light due to this our latest sortie into the far reaches of GS. The nature of the system consists of three stream passages all independant of each other linked together by independant fossil passages, this in itself is a problem for would be rescuers, simply by locating the missing party. Fortunately much of Growling Swallet is surveyed but not fully drawn up, also to describe where a party maybe to cavers unfamiliar with the system poses vast complications as very few areas have been named. This naming of

areas should be a priority. To rectify this anyone who has been involved in exploration should put their nomenclature suggestions no matter how inane.

We had assumed A.B. would have noticed the rise in water and that this would be the cause for concern. However, it was nt! The main watershed for GS is high in the peaks of Mt. Field West. On the morning in question it was noted that a fair covering of snow covered this high area, rain during the day obviously melted the snow and the run off was rapid and direct taking perhaps 3-4 hours to reach GS entrance with perhaps a further hour to traverse the system to the sump. This estimate would have put the maximum of flow at about 6 to 7 pm possibly an hour before we discovered the water rise. Other streams within the system did not seem over swollen although an increase in air movement was perceived. The first sump although very high receded relatively quickly ie possibly 3-4 hours. The cause for these constricted sumps is not fully understood at this time.

Effort has indeed been spent at locating an alternative entrance, unfortunately as yet none has been discovered. This need has always been evident as the dangers of this first sump area has been noted well in the past with unseen sump levels estimated at as high as 30 metres! With the failure to produce a second entrance emergency supplies should be left in a suitable area possibly at Refuge Aven which is out of the main air blast although if the sump were higher the air flow would be also?!

Since this incident much talk as ensued as to rescue callout procedure. To the initiated 2 hours is not a long time to be over due on an exploratory survey trip indeed it could be a lot longer. Our party as it happens was one high in experience, capability and confidence although cold waiting around we had sufficient light and food for 24 hours. The main danger as usual in Tasmanian caves was the cold, damp and inactivity.

The club's policy to callout procedure was followed efficiently and sensibly by A.B. and M.J. although the cause must have seemed a little obscure at the time.

The caving party in question would like to thank Kim Creak and the ANM management for their concern, Noel on the gate for finally letting us out (if somewhat unsteadily) at 2am, the Maydena Police branch for their obvious desire to do some night caving. Max Jefferies and Phyllis for coffee and biscuits and all the TCC callout group who arrived promptly ready and prepared to do what was necessary.

Apologies also are offered to these people for the inconvenience although it was felt by some that we (TCC) were slow to act at the possibility of serious injury. Certainly our callout system could be more efficient but until something serious happens little will be done unfortunately, as is always the case!

TREVOR WAILES

KELLARS CELLAR MOUNT ANNE

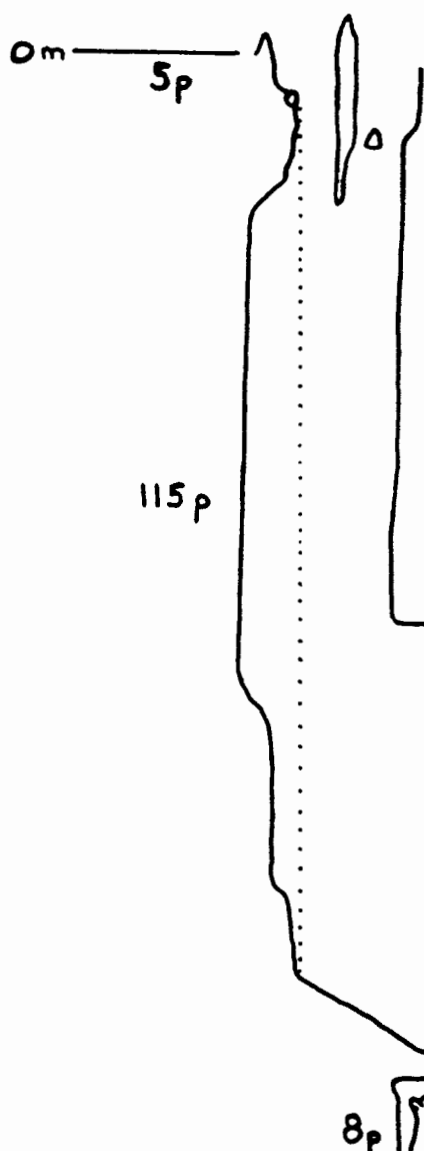
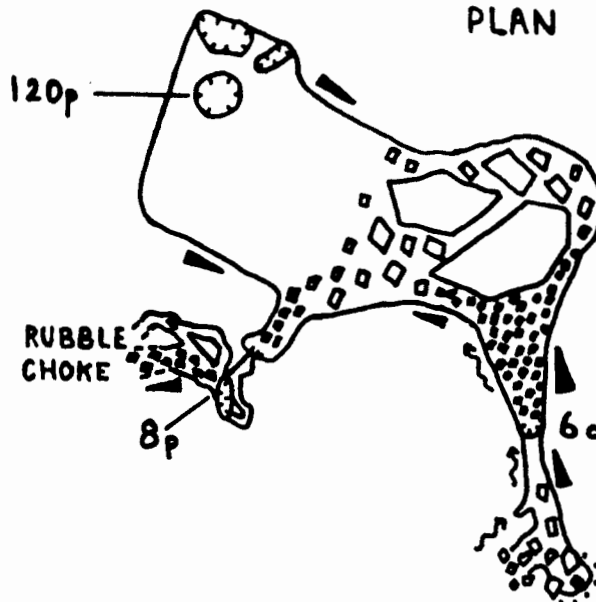
ASF GRADE 33

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ENTRANCE PITS

PLAN



EXTENDED VERTICAL SECTION



RUBBLE CHOKES

155 m

SURVEYED 25-9-82
S. EBERHARD

ANN-A-KANANDA

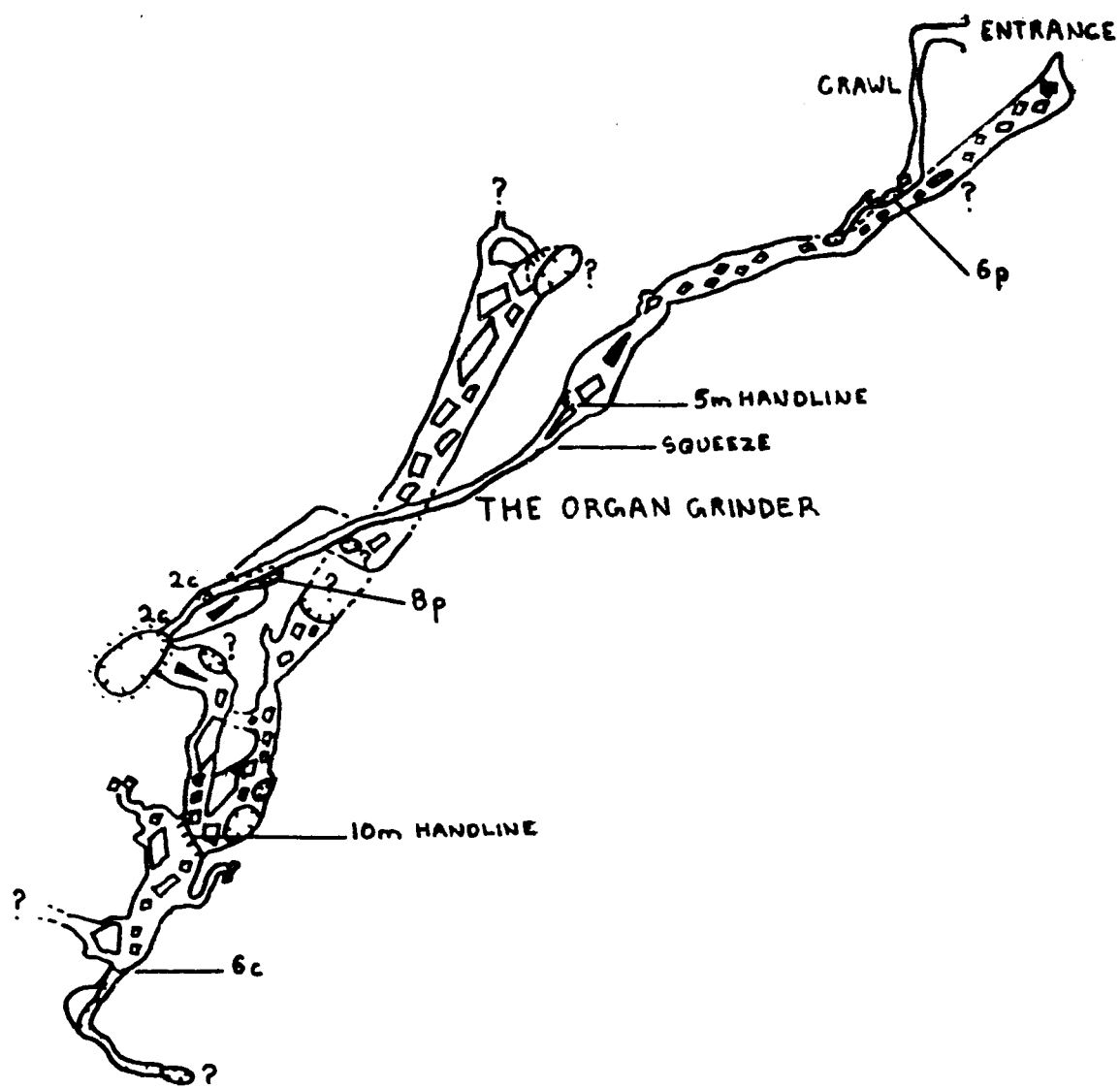
MOUNT ANNE

PLAN

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SURVEYED 25-26 SEPT. 1982
S. EBERHARD