

NEWSLETTER OF THE TASMANIAN CAVERNEERING CLUB
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FORWARD PROGRAMME

Again it is difficult to be positive as high fire danger will curtail our activity in the Junee-Florentine area. However, trips will be run weekly (weakly) when possible to caves such as:

- Growling Swallet - Still an enormous amount of exploration and surveying to be done.
- Satans Lair - We think we know where it is and the surrounding area has potential for a digging team.
- JF341 - A fun trip for introducing up and coming SPTers.
- Two Peanut Brittle - Exploration and surveying should be carried out in this pot, one of the five deepest caves in Australia, "not for the faint hearted".
- Straws Pot

Trips with visiting cavers we hope will also be available. Surface work is also planned to find more caves in the Growling Swallet area.

Anybody interested in any of these future projects should let it be known!

Meetings will be held as usual, ie, General/Social Meets on the first Wednesday of each month and pseudo Committee Meets on the third Wednesday - all at 7 Rupert Avenue, New Town.

Alternate Wednesday evenings are spent (!!) down at the Winston Churchill Public House. See you there!!

EDITORIAL

Well folks, Christmas has been and gone and the Speleo Spiel is late again but caving is still happening and that's what counts.

Trips have gone to Cauldron Pot (again), Niagara Pot (the old classics!), the Junee and Serendipity (again) to mention a few, or most, or something.

Anyway, a belated Merry Christmas and Happy (and prosperous!) New Year to all who read this worthy publication. Don't forget, constant cavers have cool racks!

STUART NICHOLAS

UNDERGROUND ODDMENTS

- The latest (No 14) Caving International magazine is out and about with plenty of excellent reading. Although out of circulation for about a year, this brilliant mag is up and running again. It does however need your support. CI is offering a special subscription rate of A\$11 for one year, A\$22 for two, A\$33 for three or A\$44 for five years. It's worth the risk to subscribe for five years if you really want to support the best English speaking caving magazine in the world. Send your subs now to:

Ross Ellis
11 Arkana Street
TELOPEA NSW 2117

- Still on literary topics, the Wombeyan Caves book is now out for the price of \$20 until the end of March 1983, after which time it will be \$28.50. This is also available from Ross Ellis and a copy may be perused at Stuart's place as usual.

A FEW NOTES FROM EVERYWHERE (MAINLY ASF)

- ASF PRESIDENT The ASF Committee Meeting at the recent Adelaide Conference elected John Dunkley from Canberra as ASF President. John follows on from Ken Lance who did an outstanding job in removing the stigma attached to ASF and bringing it down (or up) to the level of the average caver.
- ASF CONFERENCE In two years time, Tasmania is to host the Biannual Conference of the Australian Speleological Federation! The last one held here was in 1970 and through the hard work of a very small group was a great success. As we have the best caving in the country, we can expect a huge invasion of "mainlanders" eager to sample our systems, be they easy and pretty or hard and sporting.
- The appointment of Tasmania as host State should not be thought of as an inevitable bind, but rather an honorable event in which the State's clubs have an opportunity to work together to provide visitors with a chance to experience and appreciate Tasmanian caves and caving.
- TCC GEAR You may have noted a few moans and groans from the Quartermaster recently, if not you should have. To emphasise the problem, he found a header lying on the road at Tassie Pot a couple of weeks ago. These items are in short supply and costly to produce - please check the area VERY THOROUGHLY before leaving a cave entrance or a car park!
- MEMBER MOVEMENTS Mike and Marilyn Martyn will be moving to Melbourne at the end of this month for a year to enable Mike to continue his studies as an anaesthetist. They will be back here early next year with a new addition which should appear in June this year!

- A combined TCC/SUSS trip to Big Tree Pot at Ida Bay recently found the total depth to be 196 m and the main pitch 90 m (the longest underground pitch in Australia) with a further 10 m pitch below it.
- With no intention to downgrade or upset them, it was interesting to note that most of SCS were asked to leave Winston Churchills the other night because of their appearance. TCC needless to say were right on with the other trendys!!
- Cave diving being the sport for the adrenalin junkies in TCC, it is great to see that our lads rate a mention in Ian Lewis's and peter Stace's book "Cave Diving in Australia", now in its record printing. What is going to happen in the Junee? How far will it go? Cocklebidy eat your heart out (see later in this edition)!
- The new ASF Newsletter is now out and contains some interesting comment on a recent search and rescue in NSW. Also included are repeated requests for more articles. This is Australia's only national caving magazine and if you don't like the contents, whose fault is that??
- There is a proposed one day Search and Rescue exercise during March or April 1983. What do you want to do or see happen in this exercise? Who should be involved, what form should it take and where should it be held? Let Stuart have your thoughts on this important matter as he will probably be organising it.
- The subject of gear raises its head yet again. Please search out the attic, garage, shed and even look under the kitchen sink for anything resembling a Bluewater rope or a wire header belonging to TCC. Several of these items are missing but hopefully not lost. There are also two hammers about somewhere. Do it now! (Have a look for the gear, that is).
- More gear talk. We are not in the business of supplying lamp belts. If you do not own a lamp and borrow one instead, you should (read MUST) supply your own belt! They can easily be made up from 50 mm tape and a buckle or two D-rings. Caving Equipment in Sydney can also supply them for about \$5.00 posted. Even a sling and a krab can be used quite effectively (ask Trev). Get or make one this week.
- By the time you read this the NZSS Nettlebed Expedition will be over and hopefully some info may be on hand regarding the results. Stay tuned to the next Spiel.

NB: The next edition will appear early in February - the editor needs a holiday from editing (to say nothing of his work)!

- ERRATA

Please note in the last issue SS 182 the surname of the visiting French caver should read Jean-Paul Sounier rather than Sournier as stated in the "Serendipity Revisited" article. Another error regarding Jean-Paul for which I apologise - he has not done the Berger as I stated last month.

Also, in the Saga of the "Bone Pit" the article was written by Andrew Bricks not Birggs - apologies Andrew.

FROM: CAVE DIVING ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA, NEWSLETTER NO 12

COCKLEBIDDY: A NEW WORLD RECORD

On Wednesday September 8th 1982, a new long distance cave diving world record was established in Cocklebidy Cave, West Australia. A West Australian expedition, organised and led by Hugh Morrison, and including New Zealand and South Australian divers, provided the backup that enabled three 'push divers' (Hugh Morrison, Ron Allum and Peter Rogers) to extend the record by one kilometre, increasing the total length of Cocklebidy to some four and a half kilometres.

In an underground trip lasting sixteen (16) hours, eight (8) of which were spent underwater, the three divers added 550 m of new underwater passageway to the record before surfacing into a new air chamber. From this point Cocklebidy continues above the water table (the new chamber has been named Toad Hall!) for about another 500 m before submerging again.

The next expedition to Cocklebidy, planned for 1983, hopes to use Toad Hall as an overnight forward base camp for a further attempt to prolong the world's largest cave dive.

A full account (including map) of this expedition will appear in the next issue of 'Guidelines'.

PETER ROGERS

SERENDIPITY - THE OTHER VIEW

As Trevor stated in last month's Spiel, Rik, Chris and myself were the party surveying from the entrance to x. However, he forgot (?) to mention beforehand the amount of serpentine passage involved! I feel it's no coincidence that none of us who offered to survey from the entrance had done the cave before, and all those who had done it were very silent when volunteers were being called for.

There's one born every minute, and fortunately for the club, three were found together!

We started into the cave on the heels of the rigging party, but due to the breakdown entrance area we were quickly bogged down with the cries that bring terror to any surveyor's dreams, "0.5 metres, 0.2 metres, ...".

The "10 minute trip" to the first pitch took us an hour or so (or was it 2 hours?). Fortunately, route finding was no problem. The size of the first pitch came as quite a surprise after the nature of the preceeding passage, and raised our hopes for the rest of the cave. Alas it was not to be, after descending our sightings quickly dropped from 10 metres back to the dreaded 0.5 metres. After a couple of more hours of crawling and almost obscuring each other's views of instruments with various parts of our respective anatomies, we reached the second pitch. I must say we found the rigging novel! But certainly worth the effort to keep out of the water. Even despite the fairly lengthy traverse the lower half of the second pitch was still fairly damp. The third pitch/cascade followed straight on the second and then it was back to, yes, serpentine passage!

We plodded on with nothing of great note occurring and eventually reached the fourth pitch. By this time we were half expecting to meet the other group coming out, as we'd been going for six hours or so. Little did we know what they were up to!

At the bottom of the pitch we had a quick look ahead to give us an idea of the type of passage to expect. (Forever optimists)! It took us a further hour to survey to the fifth pitch. This was the 100 m (or so) pitch, and we then had a debate as to whether to continue. We'd been surveying for seven and a half hours straight and were pretty fed up with it, but the main point of concern was that we really expected the other party to be coming out at any time (after all, they'd had seven hours to get down, survey the bottom and start out too!), and we had visions of the three of us getting down the pitch, dropping the tape straight down to get the length, and then meeting the others, thus giving 7 people to get up the pitches together.

The idea of sitting around at the bottom of pitches waiting for 6 other people to prussik up didn't really inspire any of us, so we decided that was a good time to finish. Besides, it was past dinner time and we were hungry!

We were amazed at how quick the trip out was (we weren't de-rigging)! Passages that seemed endless on the way in seemed to have shrunk by kilometres on the way out! It took us two hours to reach the surface.

We were starting to get concerned about the others, but there wasn't much we could do at the time. We sat and debated the situation at the entrance. We were hungry, slightly cold, had been underground for 10 hours, so our lights were pretty low (Rik's was rapidly dying), and decided that if we sat at the entrance for a couple of hours we'd be in no shape to go back in. So it was decided to go back to the hut, get some food and sleep, and if they hadn't arrived back by 4.00 am (roughly first light), we'd head back up to the entrance and raise the alarm if they weren't there. The idea being that maybe they'd get out with basically no lights left and have to wait until daylight to find their way back.

Fortunately they came banging their way into the hut just after Rik and I got to bed, at around 2.30 am.

The next morning (later that morning!) we heard their story, and the saga of the gear which leads to our next trip in there

JANINE MCKINNON

MOUNT ANNE 6-8 NOVEMBER 1982

Rolan Eberhard, Stefan Eberhard, Nick Hume and Trevor Wailes.

The purpose of this return trip to the dolomite of Mount Anne's NE ridge was to continue exploration of ANN-A-KANANDA, a cave which initial exploration down a crawl carrying a strong draught had revealed a couple of hundred metres of passage and many promising leads. The walk up was easier, packs lighter without tents and stoves, these proved redundant with Ann-a-Kananda being an almost perfect camp cave, lacking only in a reliable water supply.

With the first day spent on the trek up we got an early afternoon start the next day with a survey from the top of the doline down into the entrance chamber and campsite. We continued surveying along the entrance crawl, down a short pitch, along and up a short pitch, before grunting along the ORGAN GRINDER and down an 8 metre drop to a T-junction. We decided to start systematically dropping the pits of which there are several at this point, the previous limit of exploration.

The first was a 10 metre abseil into a rock strewn chamber (it is possible to climb down the side with a 4 metre handline only). A crawl led to a high rift with three apparently separate vertical holes through the talus we were standing on. These were later found to all be connected. Nick abseiled down 10 metres to a ledge with a pitch on either side. He continued down one side for 7 metres to a chamber apparently choked, before prusiking up to the ledge again. Stefan abseiled down and joined him in re-rigging the rope for the other drop, while Trevor and I continued the survey. Eventually it was our turn to drop down the two 13 metre pitches, where in a moderately sized chamber there were two obvious leads. One being a climb up into a crawl several metres long before a pit was encountered with the ever present breeze making itself known in the constriction. Due to a deficiency of rigging points we opted for the other possibility, a hole through the talus in the floor of the chamber. This dropped down to a 10 metre pitch onto a rock bridge above a further shaft. Unfortunately we had now expended all our ropes and thus were forced to leave the KING RAT SERIES, named after the presence of several decaying rodent carcasses.

Back at our initial exploration point (the T-junction), we abseiled the next obvious lead, a 13 metre shaft in the floor of the passage. This led into a chamber seen from a different route on the initial trip into the system, but not actually explored because of a short pitch in the way. We followed a steep bedding-plane half filled with talus to yet another bifurcation, a nice walking passage and a pit. Trevor and I surveyed along the spacious dry passage which eventually was blocked by rockfall. Meanwhile Stefan descended the pitch which although only short proved to be on the top of a further shaft, this one more massive in both diameter and depth than anything encountered previously in the cave. This was beyond the scope of our meagre supply of rope and we began our retreat from DESSICATOR.

Ann-a-Kananda is clearly opening up into an extensive system, so far containing some 10 explored pitches and surveyed to a depth of -133 metres. The number of leads seems to increase depth, and all the time a noticeable and in places strong air current persists. It seems we have penetrated beyond the heavily weathered surface conditions that have blacked such giant shafts as Kellars Cellar and Col-In-Cavern. Possibly Ann-a-Kananda will lead into the apparently massive systems that lie beneath the ridge. The next push into the cave should be over several days, leaving the pitches rigged and systematically exploring leads. Although the location is isolated and without a helicopter all caving and camping gear must be carried in, the pleasant dry conditions underground and the 600 metre potential are incentive enough.

ROLAN EBERHARD

SERENDIPITY (AGAIN REVISITED) 10 DECEMBER 1982

Party: Rik Tunney, Janine McKinnon, 6 visiting SUSS members.

This was the intended trip to retrieve the gear left behind two weeks previously. Rik and I were planning on getting it out ourselves, but we were very pleased when a group from SUSS who were staying in the area, offered to help us as a chance to get a bit of a look at the cave.

We arrived at the ANM gate around 3.00 pm after having met up with SUSS at the shop, and after a few problems we headed for the Eight Road.

5.00 pm saw us trogged and heading in after a pleasant stroll up the hill. The trip in was pretty unremarkable and we soon arrived at the top of the second pitch. (Well, fairly soon considering there were 8 of us moving through the cave together so no-one would get lost). 4 of the SUSS crew decided they would descend the pitch to have a look at the scenery whilst Rik, myself and the 2 remaining SUSS members moved the packs out. We figured that they should be out around the time we managed to get the gear out.

We re-emerged on the surface around 8.00 pm after a pleasant uneventful trip and proceeded to wait for the others, amusing ourselves by lighting a fire and trying to find dry wood.

By 9.30 pm we were getting very cold in our wet trog gear, so 3 of us headed down the hill to try and warm up and Rik stayed to await their arrival. At 10.30 pm, just as he was about to go back in, they emerged. I certainly didn't envy them having to get up early to do Cauldron Pot the next morning!

JANINE MCKINNON

CAULDRON POT JF2 - 11 DECEMBER 1982

Party: Trevor Wailes, Nick Hume, Rolan Eberhard (TCC)
Phillip, Judy, Richard, Mark (SUSS)

This was a joint TCC/SUSS tourist trip down Cauldron Pot. The rigging party of Nick, Phillip and myself set off down the 40 metre entrance shaft first, stopping briefly to admire the spectacular view from the bottom. Bill's Bypass was a bit of a grunt but not too bad on the way down. The streamway pitches were slightly wet, fun and sporty, capped off with the final bolt traverse and 35 metre abseil into the terminal chamber. Sardines and chocolate were eaten waiting for the second party to arrive who were not far behind. Their task was to derig and thus those of us in the initial party had a very pleasant trip back to the surface, which was reached after some 5 hours underground. All in all a very smooth and enjoyable trip down this classic Junee Florentine pot, with thanks to SUSS who were conned into derigging the cave.

ROLAN EBERHARD

NIAGARA POT JF29 - 11 DECEMBER 1982

Party: Chris Davies, Stuart Nicholas, Rik Tunney, Janine McKinnon

Whilst SUSS and several TCC members were planning a joint trip to Cauldron Pot a few of us headed off to do Niagara Pot which had not been visited for 10 years or so. Stuart was the only member

of the group to have been there before (the only current member of the club too), but as we had a full gear list we weren't expecting any problems.

Niagara is located around the hill a bit from Cauldron, roughly on the same contour, and a taped route leads off the Cauldron track to the entrance. It took us about an hour from the car to get there as the scrub bashing through the rain forest was a bit slow once we were off the KD freeway. We were a bit apprehensive about the amount of water we were likely to encounter, having dreamed up all sorts of images from the name, but these misgivings were dispelled on reaching the entrance.

A stream runs over a short waterfall into a small doline choked with vegetation and breakdown. The entrance is a scramble through the rocks following the water and the first pitch is encountered right there. We used a short ladder and found ourselves in a small chamber. After a bit of hunting around the way on was found through the rock-fall. The stream flows in all directions through the rocks here, but there's essentially only one navigable route which is easily found

through trial and error. The second pitch was another ladder, and turned out to be very wet.

The rest of the cave we rigged with ropes, although the third pitch too could be done just as well with a ladder.

A rift follows down from the bottom of the third pitch to the fourth and was described as needing a handline but it's pretty unnecessary.

The last three pitches are really one, but we'd brought gear for two separate pitches which turned out to be more convenient anyway by allowing a couple of people to be on the pitch at the same time. There's also a bolt on the ledge before the final drop which makes rigging easy.

The bottom pitch leads out into a large breakdown chamber and a fair amount of passage leads off from one end through and into another large sandy chamber which was quite impressive.

The round trip only took 4½ hours, so it's a pretty short cave but quite sporting.

There is a possibility of a going lead in the bottom chamber where the stream goes through the rocks, but the stability of the rocks was pretty obvious and none of us felt enthusiastic about crawling in the narrow, wet, fragile looking section. Maybe on another day, or any hardier souls may care to have a go.

JANINE McKINNON



Right You Guys, BRIGGIES
THROUGH WHO'S NEXT?!



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