

NEWSLETTER OF THE TASMANIAN CAVERNEERING CLUB

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THE YEAR THAT WAS - 1982 REVIEWED

In retrospect 1982 was the most active and productive year in the last decade and possibly in the entire history of the TCC. Five to six kilometres of cave was surveyed to a high degree and surface surveys of about the same distance tied entrances together to form some sense from the chaotic contours hidden under the dense rain forest canopy of the Florentine Valley. Ice Tube was bottomed to a new national depth record of 345 m and Growling Swallet pushed from an easy beginners cave of half a kilometre to a sensational four kilometre multi-stream system that grows every time it's looked at. Tracks have been chainsawed and marked and, in some cases, surveyed to make access quicker and easier. The limestone plateau of Mt Anne was looked at and very promising finds turned up to keep us busy in 1983. Dives into the Junee Resurgence impressed everyone with the finding of large passage 210 m in, apparently against all geological theories although the open passage was short lived.

This year holds much promise which will mean more trips to Mt Anne, more surveying in Growling Swallet, Serendipity and the area around Tassie Pot and Three Falls. Dives will continue in the Junee Resurgence plus much more caving in the Florentine, Australia's premiere caving area.

Thanks go to everyone who aided us in the past year. This includes club members and the staff at the ANM concern in Maydena, the National Park Hotel and Roy's Deli in Maydena. All the best in 1983.

TREVOR WAILES

ODD BITS

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - WEDNESDAY 30 MARCH 1983

Yes folks, it's on again! Not happy with the running of the Club? Why not stand for a position and do it your way?!

All positions become vacant and able bodies must be found to fill them so enable your body and fill one!

Reports from the various office bearers are usually presented at this meeting and also are of utmost importance. SUBSCRIPTIONS ARE DUE as of that night.

Remember TCC AGM
7 Rupert Avenue
Wednesday 30 March 1983 at 8.00 pm
BE THERE (with your Sub)

. WILDERNESS MEDICINE WORKSHOP

This annual weekend is to be held on 19 and 20 March 1983 at Waddamana. Run by the Australian Sports Medicine Federation, these live-in weekends are always good value and enable everyone involved in outdoor sports to learn practical first-aid and treatment procedures. Topics range from dislocated thumbs, through broken feet and include heart attacks, survival, cold exposure, fractures, and so on.

For the meager cost of \$15.00 for four meals and a bed for the night, who can complain? It's probably cheaper than staying home!

Contact Mr Ian Stewart - Ph 43 8074
or Stuart Nicholas

but do it soon as space is limited.

. IUS CONGRESS - SPAIN 1985

Following the recent visit of two Swiss cavers it has become apparent that if there is an IUS Congress worth going to, this is it.

To be held in northern Spain, the field trips before and after the Congress itself will take in virtually anything that anyone wants to do.

So, start saving now and tune up your Spanish for a really great Congress!

. PIX FOR THE PUB

Enthusiasm has been expressed by Ken Britton, the operator of the National Park Hotel (hereinafter referred to as the Pub), for speleo pictures to be hung in the bar.

They would certainly add something to the slightly drab interior and also give TCC a bit of publicity.

Sporting/action photos are called for, and when one or two have been selected, poster prints will be made and the result presented to Ken for the bar or other suitable hanging spot in the Pub.

. FIGURE EIGHTS

Apparently the Yanks have just woken up to the fact that figure 8's can jam if the rope flips up onto itself instead of running around the waist of the 8. NSS News July 1982 has a short article on this problem which can be totally avoided by keeping the free end down, and got out of with the use of an ascender.

STUART NICHOLAS

ERRATA

Things got a little confused in last month's Errata and Andrew Bricks should actually have read Andrew Brigs.

GROWLING SWALLET REVISITED, REVISITED, REVISITED

Several months ago a stream sink in the immediate entrance to Growling Swallet was noted. This passage starts just below the largest boulder on the climb down, still in daylight. A roomy chamber on the left collects two streams which run off at right angles to the main stream. Andrew Briggs followed this passage to the head of what he estimated to be an extremely wet 15-20 m pitch.

Early January saw water levels exceptionally low and after a particularly nasty survey trip down Trapdoor Swallet something a bit more enjoyable was looked for. Growling Swallet was close at hand and relatively dry so the undescended pitch was looked at. I had high hopes for this alien trending passage taking so much water when wet. The pitch was quickly rigged and when descended it proved to be only 10 m to a confused area of breakdown and boulders. A way was found through squeezes in the opposite direction to the disappearing stream to a roomy shaft with waterfall. An easy climb down to the base of the aven led to more crawling into a fine stream passage descending gently. After 200 m the passage broke into a dry chamber with the stream running off down more clean washed stream passage to an area of breakdown. Of course all this was far too good to be true so I retreated to get reinforcements. We quickly returned to the previous limit and a way through was found into more stream passage. Unfortunately this continuing passage seemed to look progressively more familiar until a very familiar climb down of about 5 m into a deep pool was encountered. The short continuing passage finally merged with the main streamway just below the cascades series.

This first traverse of the inlet passage has answered the question of where the water comes from, but the surprising fact is that this passage crosses beneath the main stream, a completely unexpected revelation. Also the inlet passage has many unexplored leads and could add considerable length to an already rapidly growing system.

The Party: Trevor Wailes, Stuart Nicholas, Andrew Torning (from Sydney).

TREVOR WAILES

OWL POT JF221

Party of the first: Andrew Cooper, Chris Davies, McTinneys, Stuart Nicholas

Party of the second: Trevor Wailes, Phil Jackson (from SCS!)

As part of the Upper Nine Road Master Plan (Plan B), it was decided to survey Owl Pot (yes, we know SCS have surveyed it! Say no more!) The Upper Nine Road Master Plan (Plan B) is distinct and different from the Lower Nine Road Master Plan (Plan A) which has also been called the Upper Eight Master Plan (Plan D).

The early risers (party of the first) divided into a survey group, Janine, Stuart, Chris, and a rigging group, Rik and Andrew, and headed off down. The part of the second was to follow later and survey a section discovered previously, starting in the rockpile near the squeeze, and having "great potential".

All went well until we neared the streamway to find Rik suffering in silence(!) from a rock strike to the top of one of his two feet. Apparently Andrew had dislodged a rock while attempting an innovative new free hanging rig for the last pitch. Rik admitted fault, saying he shouldn't have left his foot in the way. Rik and Andrew headed out while the remnants of the party of the first surveyed on upstream to the rockpile. (Question: Would anyone who has been game enough to climb more than 20 m into the rockpile/waterfall at the top end of stream passage, please contact the surveyors).

Trev and Phil arrived at the top of the last pitch as we surveyed to it and we all stopped to admire the rigging. They had met the ambulant party, dropped more rocks on them, and found out to their disappointment that their "new" section was a loop. The derigging of the pitch became the major topic of debate. Nobody was game enough to use the rig and none could find a safe way to climb up to derig it.

The pitch was eventually derigged without incident, well without injury anyway, and we raced to the surface and the gate, catching it just in time (gate, not surface).

There will be more trips in this area soon as the Upper Nine Road Master Plan (Plan B) is only in the formative stages.

CHRIS DAVIES

Plan B is secondary to Plan A or Plan D. Plan A and Plan D are the same, but different. In time Plan B will become part of Plan A or of Plan D. At that stage there will no longer be a Plan A or a Plan B or alternatively no Plan B or Plan D. This will leave either Plan A or Plan D as the NEW MASTER PLAN. Plan A or Plan D will then become Plan E. There is no Plan C.

PROBING IN GROWLING SWALLET

Despite numerous trips into Growling Swallet over the past several months, good leads are still to be had in this complex system. Cauliflower Corner as it is known to some, is an area characterised by soaring avens and various small passage leads. It is located in the vicinity of the top of the second of the series of three pits, all of which drop down to the level that gives access to the Black River. Perhaps the most attractive lead at Cauliflower Corner is a narrow fossil canyon which although rather torturous in nature, unlike most other passages nearby, is heading gradually downwards. It is significant that this lead now named SERVALANE trends in the direction of the Black River Series, and being at a higher level it was thought that Servalane should go somewhere, perhaps even beyond the Black River Sump.

With this in mind the 5th February saw Chris Davies, Andrew Briggs, Richard Hortle and Rolan Eberhard making their way along the uncomfortable Servalane. No breeze could be noticed and just when the passage looked like it was in fact going somewhere, progress halted at a high rift that was too narrow to negotiate. This caused a few harsh words to be said but these were soon forgotten and exchanged for enthusiastic yelps when Richard climbed up into the ceiling and suddenly found himself in a high and much more spacious rift. After bashing an obstructing blade of rock away at one end of this rift, I emerged in a dry trunk passage. This brought a few

more yelps and we were soon rushing along admiring the wide walls and small delicate calcite encrustations that crunched noisily underfoot.

However, less than one hundred metres further on we were halted temporarily at a large block which had fallen from the ceiling and effectively blocked our path. A bit of sculpturing with a rock and some contortions saw Andrew through followed by the rest of us. At this point the nature of the cave becomes somewhat confusing due to much rockfall, and Andrew reported a mud choke at the lowest point. The rest of us wandered into the base of a very impressive aven. Here we decided that the walking lead "upstream" of our point of entry into this passage (suggested name SPACE RAT ALLEY) would be more productive so we retraced our steps. This was an anticlimax, trending upwards into the inevitable aven after not so many metres (the elusive top entrance?). Well satisfied with a couple of hundred metres of new cave we headed out, impeded slightly by Chris's lamp which flicked on and off at random.

It will be interesting to see the exact nature of Servalane and associated passages, particularly in respect of the Black River. It seems that Space Rat Alley is still above the level of Black River and perhaps could be worth more work if it trends in a suitable direction. We can only speculate such things until a survey is made which so far has kept up with most of the discoveries in Growling Swallet and beyond.

ROLAN EBERHARD

MIDNIGHT HOLE

Party: Richard Hortle, Rolan Eberhard

Although primarily an SRT proving exercise for me, Midnight offered sufficient vertical character to keep Rolan awake and interested, if not on the verge of hysteria.

Not wild fantasies of antigravity packs nor the hot weather lightened our loads of rope but the entrance was eventually reached. The five pitches of Midnight Hole are stacked more or less on top of each other in their descent to Entrance or Mystery Creek Cave. Bolts have been placed but these are intended for ladders and invariably produce extensive protection problems if a rope is used. Rolan avoided this with some intelligent rigging, reducing the number of protectors required and creating some delightful free hanging drops. In particular the third (37 m) pitch which involved a short traverse out above the shaft to where the rope could be hung directly from a piton.



What do you mean Stef? "Let the mountain come to Mahomet!"

One and a half hours after leaving the surface we had descended the final (55 m) pitch and after a few minutes of musing about the peculiar places cavers go to eat chocolate, began the journey up. The top of this final pitch saw us hauling fruitlessly on a rather lengthy rope that refused to be extricated from a rather lengthy pitch. Despite Rolan putting on a good show of pretending to be keen to reverse Jumar to the bottom (we'd left our descending gear in a pack on the bottom) to free the rope, my suggestion of throwing the rope into the

void and reclaiming it via Entrance Cave and Matchbox squeeze, met with approval.

Naturally it was I that eventually found myself grovelling through the squeeze while Rolan made supposedly encouraging and helpful comments from a considerably drier position.

In summary, Midnight Hole provides a short (we spent four hours underground), dry and very enjoyable SRT trip.

RICHARD HORTLE

MIDNIGHT HOLE TACKLE DESCRIPTION

Below is given a description of the rigging used on a recent descent and ascent of Midnight Hole. The pitch lengths are based on those reported during the initial exploration of the pot and it should be borne in mind that these are not surveyed lengths. All pitches except the first have large eyebolts in place, although all appear to be in good condition they were placed for the use of ladders and hence are not in the best position for hanging single ropes. In many cases alternative belays offer much more efficient rigging points, backed up with the existing bolts.

PITCH 1 21 m
Initial tie off to tree, a short leeper piton drives into a shallow crack 5 metres down used as a rebelay. 2 protectors at lip.

PITCH 2 12 m
The rope was hung from a No 9 hexagonal chock at the top of the pitch, tied back to the bolt. No protectors.

PITCH 3 37 m
To achieve a freehanging rope it was necessary to traverse from the bolt out above the shaft to a crack behind a flake. Here a large angle piton was driven in, backed up with a No 6 hex in the same crack. The piton was left in place during the ascent and could the next people passing through please retrieve this item. No protectors used but a rope is necessary on the traverse.

PITCH 4 34 m
(i) Tie off to bolt and abseil 5 metres to a ledge and the second bolt. 1 protector.

(ii) Tied off to the bolt the rope hangs down the rock face where several potential abrasion points exist. 3 protectors are important, a rebelay would be desirable but the rock is rotten at this point.

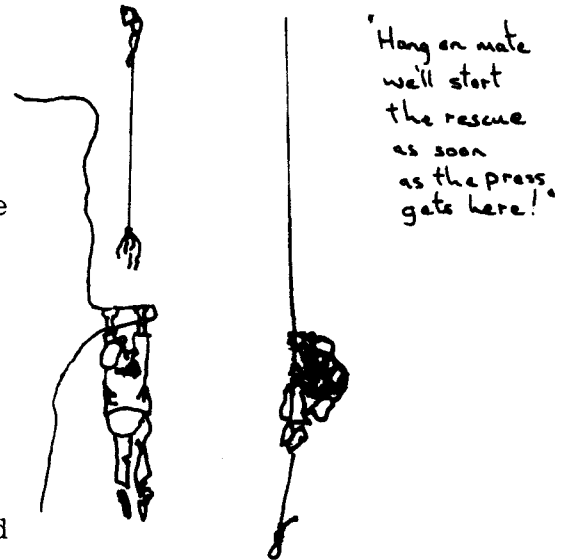
PITCH 5 55 m
The rope was tied off to the bolt at the head of the shaft. A short wire trace around a large convenient jug handle 5 metres down was used to hang the rope down the centre of the final superb circular pit. A couple of protectors of dubious value were used below the bolt.

ROLAN EBERHARD

NOTES ON PEANUT BRITTLE POT (JF 147)

The survey was drawn from memory following a trip down the cave in November 1981 which reached the apparent bottom at an estimated depth (conservative) of -186 metres. For a full report of this trip and tackle description, see Speleo Spiel No 173. The cave had been previously surveyed down to approximately -80 metres and it is hoped the sketch will give someone the incentive to complete the survey.

Peanut Brittle Pot has the reputation of being loose and unsafe, however, the basic structure of the cave is solid, although as the name suggests the rock in places is of very poor quality. Several possibilities still exist in the system; at the base of the final pitch a horizontal passage carrying a small stream is reached. In the downstream direction it soon narrows to a crawl, this was pursued by T. Wailes who reported "it started small and became tighter but not impassibly so if the cobbles were removed". The passage upstream gradually trends back towards the surface becoming vertical, but this area was not investigated to any conclusion. Perhaps the most significant lead in the cave is the undescended pitch in Junction Hall. This is reached by continuing down the obvious route (past the Window Pitch), a sloping 15 metre pitch to a chamber. Here a large aven enters and a narrow slot low down apparently leads to a short drop. It is feasible that this will prove to be connected with the upstream passage mentioned before, however, it is also possible that it is totally separate just waiting for someone with a bit of motivation to discover what lies beyond!



A surface survey connecting the JF 147 and JF 341 entrances has been done but the continuation of this project seems to have been neglected with people's energy being consumed by the recent discoveries in the Growling/Serendipity/Ice Tube area. Who's keen to go back to Peanut Brittle Pot?

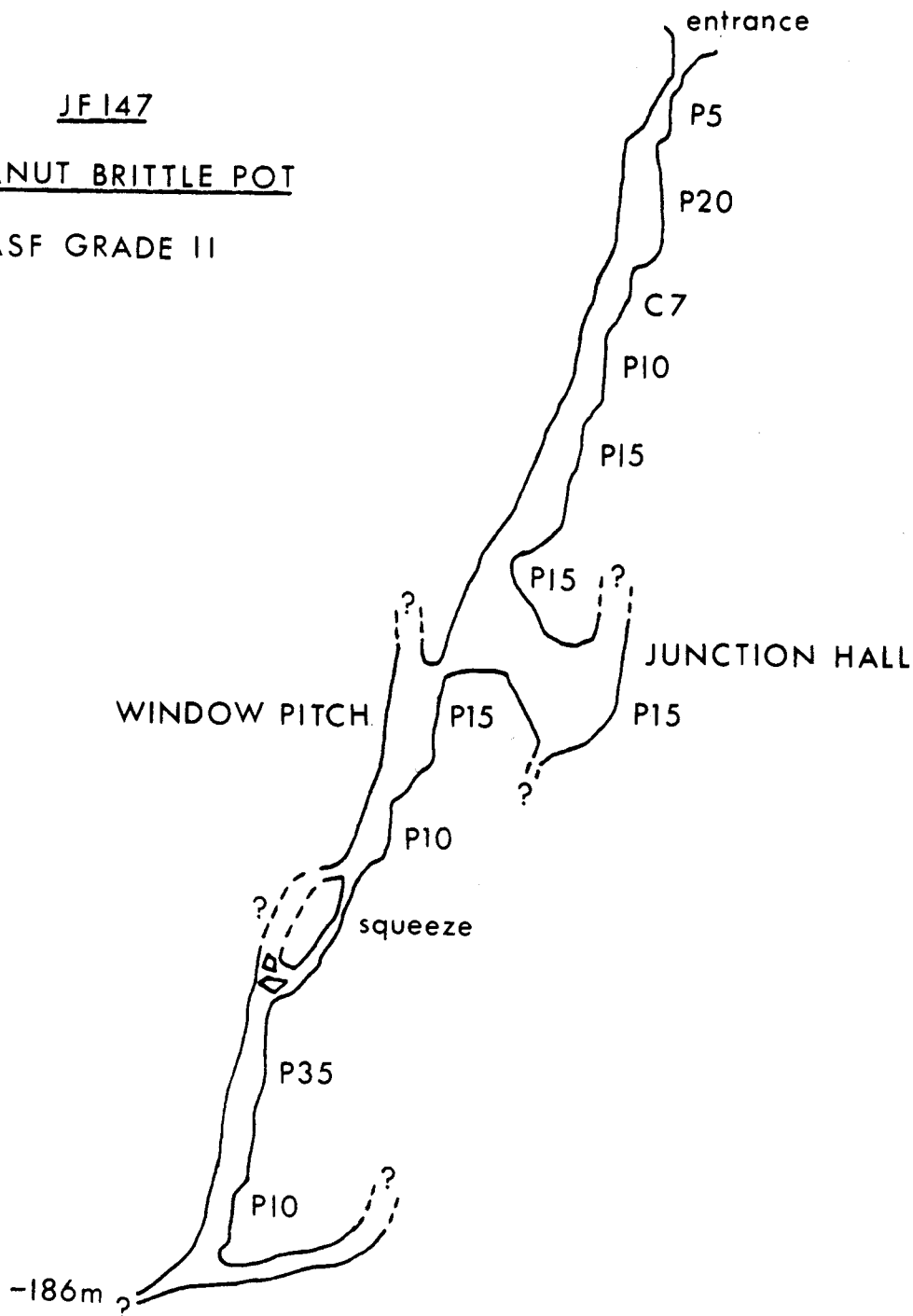
ROLAN EBERHARD

KUBLA KHAN - 12 February 1983

Party: R Eberhard, R Hortle, J Bamford

It looked like shaping up to be a regular tourist jaunt through Kubla, little did we suspect what was to come! It was only a short distance along the Stalactite Traverse that the bad karma struck; Richard who was ahead slipped and fell some seven metres, landing in a shallow pool of water in the stream below. At first it seemed he had only suffered a slight stunning and a complete drenching but closer examination revealed his right thumb to be badly disjointed, shortened with lumps in unnatural places. We suspected it was broken and this seemed a fair enough excuse to pike, so we made our way slowly out through the chest deep pools at the stream level. We rigged a handline up the flowstone wall into the entrance chamber and climbing this was no mean feat for the injured member with only one operative hand. I belayed Richard up the entrance ladder which he handled with surprising ease

JF147
PEANUT BRITTLE POT
ASF GRADE II



R.EBERHARD NOV. 1981

although his hand had started to throb painfully.

Out of the cave our problems started when we searched for some medical assistance. It seems there is a nurse in Mole Creek, however, she was nowhere to be found so we packed up camp and drove to Deloraine. Here an X-ray proved Richard's thumb to be only bruised and dislocated and he left the doctor with a shiny metal splint on the affected digit.

On analysing the accident a few things must be considered. Firstly, despite Richard's claim that he was only testing his new helmet chin strap (which incidentally did hold), it was a piece of rotten rock that caused him to slip and fall. This was an unlucky thing to happen but it was fortunate that he did land in a pool of water which saved

him from more severe injuries. It was also lucky that we were only a short way into an easy to moderate system such as Kubla Khan. I think the moral of the incident is that accidents can happen anywhere and to anyone but treating every cave with respect lessens the probability of an accident occurring.

ROLAN EBERHARD

TRAPDOOR

Party: Trevor Wailes, Stuart Nicholas, Richard Hortle, Andrew Torning

Not ever having been surveyed, Trapdoor was of interest as to its relation to the Growling Swallet system. Before beginning the survey we had to tie it into Trevor's surface survey which presented a problem as his last station was a large tree (readers please note that there are several large trees in the area!). At the close of a stimulating geometrical/botanical discussion with Stuart, Trevor finally picked a very fine tree as IT and the surveying began in earnest.

Trapdoor is really a torturous talus pile pretending frantically to be a cave. The surveying was correspondingly torturous. I played that fascinating game of holding the tape under several cusecs of water while trying to decide whether you really can read the tape or are you just hallucinating due to oxygen deprivation and hypothermia! The terminal chamber had one or two almost man size holes between the blocks. Into one of these Stuart insisted upon putting his body. I summised that the thrifty and aging Stuart had decided Trapdoor would be a much less expensive final resting place than one with brass handles etc.

After a short time underground we regained the rainforest whereupon Andrew, our mainland visitor, gazed at his sodden condition and mumbled something about the surprising lack of dust in Tasmanian caves.

Unless you are into whips and leather I'm sure your interest in Trapdoor can be satisfied by Trevor's survey without experiencing it yourself.

RICHARD HORTLE

LOST!!

One bolt hammer last seen at the bottom of Serendipity last December. The hammer was placed in a tackle bag, but unfortunately the exhumation of this and several other bags was somewhat lengthy. If any "light" can be thrown on this subject from speleos either in this State or NSW, please contact R.Eberhard through this publication.

RELEVANT NOTES ON THE TRAPDOOR SWALLET SURVEY

Trapdoor Swallet is essentially a rock pile with a strong flow of water through it. Only two trips have been to the bottom, the gap between them being close to two years. No noticeable change took place regarding the complex route through during this period, however, this does not mean that it is stable! Trapdoor Swallet is very unstable and due to the amount of loose and rotten rock within, it is very dangerous.

The stream is not followed continuously and a bypass of one of the wettest areas can be seen from the elevated section close to the entrance. One entrance has never been pushed due to the flow of water but it is assumed the two streams meet where indicated on the survey.

The cave was surveyed to Grade 5 ASF and cave drawings were made at the time but proved useless when drawing up. The idea of the survey was to note the relationship between it and Growling Swallet.

Here are the results:

Trapdoor Swallet is 42.5 metres deep which puts it 5.5 metres below the entrance height of Growling Swallet. Therefore, about 108 metres of cave is unknown between the surveyed end of Trapdoor and the reappearance of the water at the top of the upstream waterfall in the Trapdoor stream passage of Growling Swallet.

In the lower section of the cave there is some evidence of "solid" bedrock walls but at the lowest point (down the Glory Hole) below the final chamber, this evidence is not borne out.

The plan is not very clear as the route spirals down and overlaps continuously, this gives no impression of the various levels the surveyed route shows as a "clear" blank path. Please note the rocks are not to scale as many of them are as yet unsurveyed and were guesstimated to enable the survey to be published this century. All in all not a very nice place to be.

TREVOR WAILES

WOLFHOLE HX8 - HASTINGS AREA - 20/2/83

Party: Andrew Briggs, Jeanine Davies, Chris Davies, (Stuart Nicholas)

Andrew has of late been keen to develop his underground photography techniques and, with this in mind, asked Stuart to show the party the way to Wolfhole. On Sunday morning at 0825 hours Trevor rang to say that Stuart couldn't make it as Stuart was going to Growling Swallet. Not to be thwarted, Andrew contacted Peter Watts for some rough directions and we reorganised vehicles and set off.

After about an hour's searching in the described locality we gave up and did the 2 hour return walk to Adamsons Falls as a substitute. This proved to be really worthwhile and is recommended to frustrated cavers who should then proceed to the Thermal Pool kiosk for delightful home made meat, spinach and cheese or egg and bacon pies, or bean tacos.

CHRIS DAVIES

A request has been received from Mr Tony Stagg seeking information and any existing survey on "Wet Caves", Mole Creek. He is familiar with the system and has visited it many times. Anyone able to assist Tony should either contact this magazine or Tony personally at 31 West Goderick Street, Deloraine, 7304.

JF 38

TRAPDOOR SWALLET

SURVEYED 08-01-83

S Nicholas

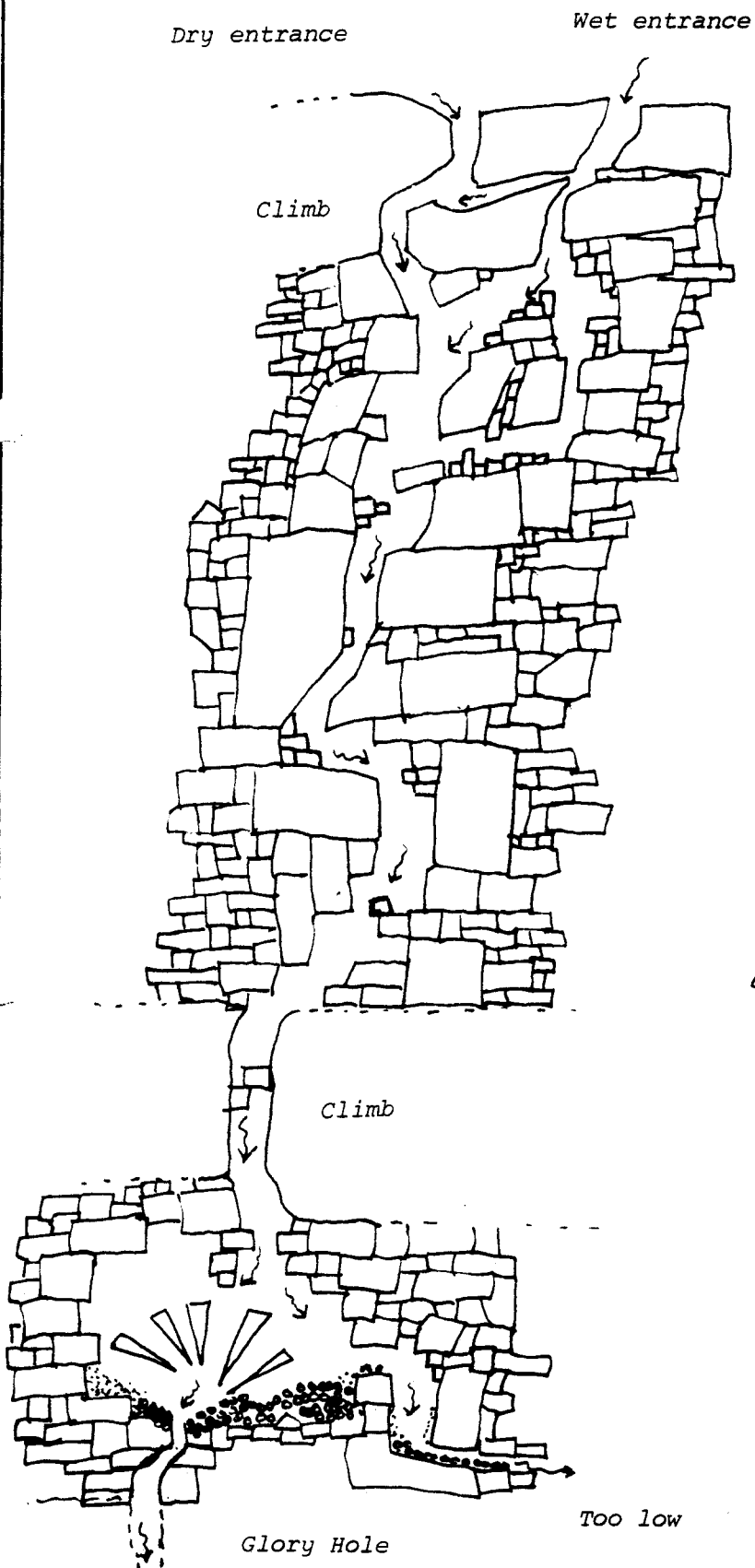
R Hortle

A Torning

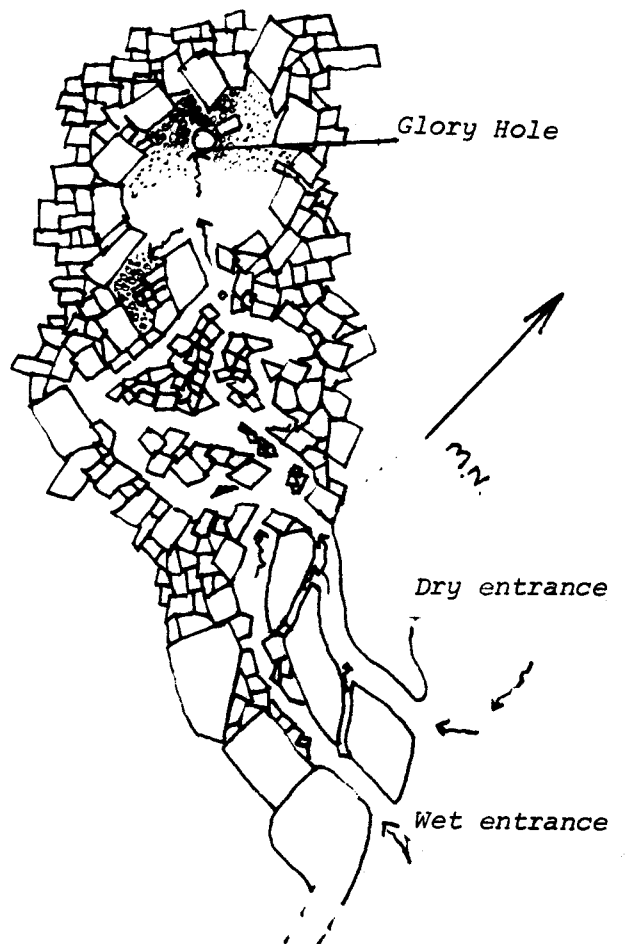
T Wailes

A.S.F. Grade 5.1

Scale 1 - 175



0 2m 5m 10m



Drawn by T. WAILES Feb 83.