

NEWSLETTER OF THE TASMANIAN CAVERNEERING CLUB
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Annual Subscription \$7.00, Single Copies 70¢, Non-Members \$1.50

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FORWARD PROGRAMME

Sat December 17 Hobbit Hole Ida Bay area - the big (two cartons of beer) break-through? A Phill Hill Trip

Sun December 18 Nick Hume's Swimming Pool End of year celebration thing after about 2pm

Christmas Week Various trips with Phill, Steve Bunton, Nick et al.

Sat December 31 New Years Eve shindig somewhere

During the next three months or so, fire bans may limit access to the Florentine, however you can rest assured that something will be happening most weeks so stay tuned and contact Trev, Stu or someone.

STOP PRESS: Change of pub-night venue - we now seem to gather at the "Dog House" on Thursday nights at about 9pm.

EDITORIAL

Hey, hey, my, my or something like that. Here we are at the end of one year and the start of another. It's Christmas time too, when we all hang up our thermal long johns and rubber boots for Santa Trog to put some new ascenders in after he abseils down the chimney.

No international expeditions this summer so may be we'll get some local underworld activity in for a change. How about a trip to Growling Tube or Ice House (in the great southern land), Slaughterdip Grollet?!

Anyway all you dudes, take care of your little bodies because we need them, or more particularly the money they hand out, next year.

Have a happy Christmas and may the New Year bring fame and fortune, well, fortune anyway!

The Real Editor
STUART NICHOLAS

CLUB TRIVIA

- * Not much trivia this month - may be we're all getting too serious! Chris has recently splashed out and bought a Land Cruiser 4 WD thereby doubling the number of these great vehicles in T.C.C. Before long we'll have a convoy, or maybe form the T.C.C. 4WD Bush Bashers Tonight Today Club.
- * If anyone feels destructive tendencies coming on, or perhaps you are "desperately frustrated", Stu (the real editor, etc.) has a solution: Grab a pick, shovel or similar device and help him dig out under the New Town T.C.C. H.Q. Not content with what the Florentine has to offer, he's constructing a custom built cave under the lounge. Actually, it's an addition to the workshop but it looks like a cave at the moment. Only about twenty tonnes of hard, dry clay left, so you'd better hurry!!
- * SPELEOMANIA IS COMING SPELEOMANIA IS COMING SPELEOMANIA IS COMING SPELEOMANIA

It's Tassie's turn again and what a show it's going to be - well that's the idea anyway. The fifteenth biannual conference of the Australian Speleological Federation is scheduled to be held here and it is set down for January 1985. Go to two conferences in one year! Speleomania in January and Spain (IUS) in July - how's that for value (may be we could offer a package deal). More info as it comes to hand or is concocted or something.
- * Thanks to assistance from Bill Tomalin, it seems that our club will shortly receive a grant of \$600 from the Division of Recreation. The application was submitted on the basis of the community trips run during the year by various bods, and the need for lamps and so on to run these trips in the future.
- * Anyone interested in climbing Carstens Pyramid in Irian Jaya? See Alex Marr for an amazingly enthusiastic introduction to the epic of epics.
- * We've had a few new members in the last few months, but what's happened to them (you)? We're not really that unfriendly and we certainly go caving regularly. You've paid your money, who not actually go caving?? Even Martyn Carnes, ex SCS has joined us.

A LETTER IN REPLY:

Dear Desperately Frustrated,

As you probably know, things when over-used tend to fade out, but experience or not, 8 or 9 hours is about the limit. Despite inflation it still only costs 50¢. I can't quite figure the numbers you included - the 19 is OK but the others are a bit weird, or do they combine somehow to give a single figure?

Teachers are certainly available of varying abilities and degrees of hardness. Perhaps it would pay to start with the easier horizontal stuff before progressing to the hard verticals.

Rivalry does not really exist between the groups and I am sure some mutually satisfying arrangement can be made to keep everyone happy. Rest assured that you would be welcomed with open arms. In the first instance please apply at New Town as my experience spans many years and would stand you in good stead for the future.

STUART NICHOLAS

MT ANNE 16-17th October

Party: Phill Hill
Martyn Carnes (S.C.S.)

Having spent a dehydrated night in the concession due to a push survey trip in 'Growling' the previous day, it wasn't hard to crawl out of my pit for some refreshment at Maydena.

Arriving at the Mt. Anne rescue track at a respectable time we set off for Ann.A.Kananda and Martin's first introduction to bush walking.

The object of this excursion was to make a food/gear drop for some exploration on the N.E. ridge the following week. Owing to the heavy snowfalls in June, the track was unrecognizable in places, as so many large trees had been flattened across it (as per most of the South West).

Re-taping as we went, crawling rather than walking up the ridge, over and under large trees we finally reached the top in the record (slow) time of 9 hours.

After digging out the dam next morning, we headed for home, ironically almost swimming all the way due to rain overnight. The previous day had been incredibly dry, the half-way creek only boasting two stagnant pools

MT ANNE N.E. RIDGE 22-27th October

Party: Phill Hill
Alec Marr
Nick Hume (22nd 23rd)
Martyn Carnes (S.C.S.) (22nd-24th)

Reaching the rescue track to find Mt Anne looking resplendent with a fresh dusting of snow, we set off to climb the ridge. Nick and I arriving in time for lunch, were able to enjoy views of Mt Rufus and Frenchmans Cap to the North, Hartz Mtns to the South it was such a fine day.

By way of passing the afternoon, I checked out the dolines alongside Ann.A.Kananda, the nearest being only half as deep as the latter was passed by.

The next doline offered two entrances which would need digging in order to negotiate them further which in view of other findings on the ridge is not really worth considering.

I rejoined the others for an almost 'birds eye' view of Kellers Cellar before retiring into the Ann.A.Kananda doline for the night.

Next day, Nick, Martin and I set out to bottom Kellers Cellar leaving Alec to take photographs as he was unable to prusik due to an accident in Splash Pot the previous week.

Described to me as "abseiling inside a giant pepper shaker" Kellers lived up to this, as it has three entrances and the entire 118M pitch is free hanging if rigged correctly. 'Sheer b----y luxury' as we were using 8.5mm Blue Water.

A few photographs were taken at the bottom, after which Nick and I proceeded to check out the next 8M pitch before returning to join Martyn, who had already made his way out.

The following morning Nick returned to Hobart while we planned to make a deport at Col-in-Cavern, checking out the ridge en-route.

After negotiating Kellars Cellar, which is interesting with heavy packs, we picked up an old, well cut track which I believe was put in by T.C.C. 1970.

Although overgrown, it was relatively easy to follow taking us past five interesting entrances, several of which were partly explored by T.C.C. in Jan 1971.

Unable to resist temptation, Martyn attempted a large rift type entrance, while Alec kept watch and I went on for a glimpse of Col-in Cavern.

Returning to the others, I heard a large 'rumble' from the 'Rift' followed by silence. Martyn had just had a false floor collapse under his feet leaving him suspended on the rope.

Emerging from the hole, looking pale but composed he stated "You nearly had a helicopter ride that time!!!"

Shortly after this Martyn decided that bush bashing was not his idea of fun and would return to Hobart the following day, depositing food and water where we were, we headed for the hole that was 'home' once again.

Due to this evolvement the trip was reduced from exploring new holes to simply and frustratingly looking into them as Alec and I could not manage the tackle between us. We were then carrying fourteen litres of water, none having been seen by us on the ridge.

Awakening to another brilliant day, we set off again, Martyn returning to Hobart, unselfishly carrying as much of our tackle as he could, as Alec and I planned to descend from the other end of the ridge.

Making up for lost time we reached Col-in-Cavern in 1½ hours collecting our previous day's drop en-route, to be rewarded by a magnificent view of the Col backed by 150 metre + cliffs highlighted by the sun.

Seven hours later found us at the end of the ridge having come across many promising holes on the way. The most appealing being an open shaft 2 metres across which Alec timed as taking a dropped rock 12-14 seconds to reach the bottom with a free fall/rattling combination.

Next morning our boots resembled cast iron they were so dry and we still had not found water, even the yabbie holes were empty.

We started the day by examining an entrance first found by T.C.C. in November 1971, but to which no one has returned since. As reported at the time, it is approximately 30 feet high and 15 feet wide. A 40' entrance pitch leads to another 40' pitch at the bottom of which the floor appears to slope into an indefinable pitch.

It might or might not go, the next few weeks will reveal all!!!

During the rest of the day five more entrances were found in and around the same area. A good camping cave with an elusive water supply nearby rounded the day off nicely.

That evening as the smoke from an A.N.M. burn-off settled onto the ridge, obscuring everything, we felt 'homely', almost like being back in Ann.A.Kananda.

Next day having one last task, we headed for 'home'.

The first third of our height was lost in the first hour descending to a spot that from aerial photos looked promising for resurgences.

Although three entrances were found, after short crawls they went in shafts, so much for resurgences, I thought!

Nine hours later found us back at the road after spending the rest of the day 'walking on air' due not to being 'high' but the atrocious horizontal on the lower slopes, made worse by snow damage as mentioned previously. There is still plenty of room for exploration in the area.

Due to Martyn having taken his vehicle to Hobart containing our clothes, money etc., I hitched into Maydena to phone Trevor, the only person home at the time.

Whilst I waited at Max's Trevor organised a lift home for us in the form of Jenny and Mike who kindly came to chauffeur us home arriving at 2.00 am for a longed for bath and bed.

Thanks again to Max, Trev, Mike and Jenny for saving us from the delights of a night on Scotts Peak Road.

PHILL HILL



SERENDIPITY - EXPLORING, EXPANDING 5th November, 1983

Party: 1st Group: S. Nicholas
J. McKinnon
C. Davies
R. Eberhard

2nd Group: N. Hume
S. Eberhard
T. Wailes
M. Edwards

With the slightly higher temperatures and longer days some of the more demanding, caving trips are actually happening. Serendipity had earned itself a rather foreboding reputation with only 3 bottoming trips in as many years.

The first one was a gruelling exploratory trip which stuck in many of the party members' minds as being the "hardest" trip in the Florentine. This was partly disproved by the second trip in which more cave passage was found but at the cost of leaving gear behind in a partly derigged system while coaxing and cajoling a somewhat hypothermic party member to the surface. The third trip was by a mainland group of Al Warild and Julia James et al.

For once there was no trouble getting volunteers - everyone capable and some not quite so, were queueing up to go. The trip eventually started with two groups of four, the first group was to rig the cave and explore the furthest and presumptuously hoping for a break-through into Growling Swallet! The second group would descend and continue surveying as far as possible, then exit and de-rig: "Brave Fools". The trips were expected to last over 12 hours and everyone wondered just how this highly disorganised attack was going to turn out.

The first group was given 3 hours start with the idea that they would make the horizontal lower level and relieve the waiting around on pitches.

The second group consisting of three of the original bottoming party, plus Mike Edwards squeezed through the entrance slot with very light tackle bags, found their way through the initial boulder collapse and down climbed the waterfall into solid cave.

The stream is followed until it flows into a narrow fissure where a short climb is ascended on the right which leads via a crawlway into larger dry passage with many leads and chambers running off. Cathedral pitch was soon reached and descended. The continuing Castigate Crawl was quickly completed to where the Eagles Nest traverse led to the second pitch, "Deimos". Both the first and second pitches are over 30 metres in superb shafts, the lower portion of "Deimos" is wet. The chamber is the confluence of the original stream plus another one of equal flow; the now larger stream flows down a hardline pitch into Serpentine Passage and to a small area of roof collapse which marks the third and originally wettest "Deluge" pitch.

The second bottoming trip saw the placement of a bolt in the traverse over the pitch to avoid the main torrent of water. As this was badly placed, a second bolt was placed by Al Warild on the following trip. After this pitch of 20 metres more narrow serpentine leads to another break down area above the final shaft. The pitch is rigged from the balcony through a window to a ledge 30M down where it is rebelayed for the next drop of 20M past a false floor of breakdown to rejoin "the" stream of "a" stream before the final 6M pitch. A climb down over boulders gives way to the base of a large water fall which flows off down a low crawl into the final section of active stream passage to a low sump-like gravel crawl (.S.S. 182)

We commenced the survey from a point close to the base of the large waterfall, along the continuing fossil passage mentioned in S.S. 182. Trevor Wailes took book while Mike Edwards held the dumb end of the tape. Stefan Eberhard read the instruments as Nick Hume checked out the various leads. The survey ran smoothly to a T junction, down stream led to a sump (pseudo) and a couple of avens issuing a small amount of water. A side passage was noted which Nick looked at. As he had not returned when we retraced our steps, we followed him finding a good draught blowing inwards. The phreatic passage opened into a low chamber partly filled with talus. Here we met Nick who reported squeezing between blocks to an area containing two rifts, one of which carried the draught. As the survey was the main concern this area was ignored but well noted.

On our return to the T junction the other group was met on their way out. Rolan reported what they had found and drew a rough sketch of the leads we should either push or survey. It was fortunate we met the other group here as the survey shows the continuing upstream passage was less than 0.5M wide and passing each other would have been awkward. This narrow high serpentine rift continues for the next 500m with only one rather novel distraction; an aven appears to terminate the stream passage but a climb up to a torrent lashed ledge revealed a small slot (The French Connection) which led directly to a down climb into a parallel unconnected streamway. The narrow serpentine passage continued at a steeper grade and finally began to widen. On some of our survey sheets the longest legs recorded were 5M on one and 7.5M on another - all very tedious. The widening passage was joined by another inlet which seemed to mark a change in character of the cave and very soon gave way to a large chamber with several different ways on.

The first group had looked around this area and after a bite to eat and consulting Rolan's sketch map, we continued surveying with relief up the largest passage we could find. The passage we chose was wide, high and dry. The mud climbs over blocks proved awkward but the nature of this part of the system was very refreshing. The large passage finally lowered to a calcite choke and a lead was followed that Rolan had marked. This was surveyed through some small classic phreatic development until a stream could be heard down a rift. Rolan had noted this but not descended. Nick and I free climbed down only to find it was the same serpentine rift that we had surveyed through to the large chamber previously. Stefan and Mike returned the way they had come looking at a couple of leads as Nick and I followed the shorter route back to the chamber. Here we ate, had a brew and took stock of our situation. Mike's lamp had already failed and he was using Stef's carbide, Stef's lamp looked sick so he conned me out of my carbide, my lamp appeared O.K. as did Nick's. To continue any more surveying could eventually drain our light resources as well as us mentally. It was decided to terminate our aims here and head out.

The half kilometer of narrow serpentine was hard on cave packs and clothing as the best forward motion was gained by sliding shoulders along the passage wall. At length we reached the spot where we had left our S.R.T. gear next to the "Phobos" waterfall. We quickly geared up and started out. Mike was already having trouble with the carbide which later turned out to be a leak in the carbide reservoir, however, we all ascended to the Balcony after some readjustments to the protectors. Nick and I agreed to derig so Mike and Stefan would be together with the carbides and the packs containing ropes from Phobos. "Deluge" pitch is still wet for the first ten metres of the ascent and freeing oneself from the rope at the head of this pitch is awkward. As I arrived Mike and Stef were still playing carbides but eventually moved off as Nick and I began to derig. The narrow serpentine to the "Handline" pitch is very frustrating with heavy tackle bags, but with this section completed Nick derigged as I waited for Mike to finish the ascent of "Deimos". As communication on this pitch is non existant, Mike and Stef tandem prusiked to their shared disgust. Stef couldn't get off the rope at the head of the pitch because of Mike's weight and Mike couldn't see anything as the carbide lamp had expired long beyond hope. It was on this pitch that I discovered my lamp, too, was on the way out, in more ways than

one. At the top of the pitch sat Mike with a hole in the base of his lamp, Stefan with a severely clogged jet and myself with the last fading remnants of voltage. Nick ascended and with difficulty I helped him derig. We finally all set off en mass with Stef leading with a "Tekna" light, Mike holding his shoulder as I held Mike's and Nick with a light that blinded us all showing the way from the rear.

"Castigate Crawl" passed slowly and we sat in the dark at the base of "Cathedral" having a smoke letting our dying batteries accumulate some power thinking this last pitch and it'll be all over. We ascended and sat in the dark again having another smoko then pulled up the tackle bags, sat in the dark while Nick prusiked up, then headed slowly out to a miserable raining night in the Florentine "rain" forest.

The trip back to the cars was interestingly squalid with only Nick's light giving any indication of the track ahead.

It had been a good productive trip lasting 12 hours with over 800 metres of cave surveyed and more leads to look at next time.

TREVOR WAILES

THROUGH DIVE AND SURVEY OF KUBLA KHAN RESURGENCE, PLUS TWO FREE BONUS CAVES

13th-14th November, 1983

The drive up was "kool and froody" as usual with innumerable encores of Stefan's "sex" song on his new cassette - radio. Later that morning I found myself standing in a small water filled hole, weighed down by twin airtanks with three line reels attached to various parts of my anatomy, while a similarly attired Stefan sorted through the massive tangle in our line reel. Thus began a typical cave diving weekend at Mole Creek.

The initial resurgence passage was submerged because of recent heavy rains, enabling us to swim over a shallow section that is normally an awkward portage during summer. I set off first, laying the 500 odd metres of lifeline into the first airspace not bothering to surface in the numerous airbells along the way. After finning for some 200 metres the first line reel ran dry, at which point I tied on the second and continued on, bumping into the walls and roof on occasions. A further 200 metres had exhausted the second line reel, therefrom I went onto the third and final one which hopefully, would leave sufficient in reserve for the next two dives into Kubla proper.

I arrived in the first airspace after some 35 minutes under water and proceeded to lie perfectly still. Stefan surfaced 10 minutes behind me, brandishing compass and slate, coughing numerous complaints about trying to survey in the wake of my siltation. Here we broke open my watertight ewings bag extracting — suuntos, book and some tobacco, continued with the survey. Dense smoke makes for difficult surveying we soon realised.

After reducing the visibility even further we set about splitting the twin air tank sets into fresh singles for the next dive. The dive proved to be longer than expected at 117 metres and effectively used up our remaining line. We decided to leave our gear at the start of the second airspace and do the survey to the third and final sump, climbing over impressive mud dunes through a couple of roof sniffs until roof finally met water. The whole airspace remains on the roughly 300° bearing of the rest of the system and in places (see included survey) it is very spacious indeed.

Nearly all survey legs were 50 metres; the extent of our measuring tape.

We returned to the first airspace to see if we could scrape together enough line to finish the cave. Fortunately there was 50 metres of it on a half buried reel left over from our previous dive of 18 months ago. This was wound on to a proper line reel and tested out O.K. After some discussion of our position, we went back through the second sump and transported a single set of gear to the third.

Stefan dived first, while I waited as high out of the water as I could get to keep warm, holding onto the end of the line as it was the only suitable anchor point thereabouts. Feeling what was going on through the line "vibes" helped pass the time. Stefan's return included a lot of eye rolling and animal yelps from which I concluded that he had been successful, then it was my turn. We quickly exchanged gear and I raced through the murk to surface in a lake of foam (funny how foam surfaces look like solid from below) next to an insane object I soon realised was a stal. A short flounder later, I was standing on a dry floor in "Cairn Hall", feeling modestly satisfied and after turning out the lights, returned to a waiting Stefan.

Our exit from the cave was speedy and pleasant despite the considerable gear stowing and checking required back in the first airspace. The final dive (our eighth that day) dragged on, alleviated only slightly by reading the elapsed distance on the marked line. A small leak in my second stage gave me something to think about, whilst unbeknown to me, Stefan was suffering minor entanglements somewhere behind me. I waited about 10 minutes at the cave entrance before he finally surfaced, still swearing through his regulator. We both had had an extremely enjoyable eight hour trip under water/ground.

MONDAY 14th November; KOHINOOR

Unloading the mountain of gear from the Subaru made us very vulnerable to well meaning passing motorists who stopped to ask if we were O.K. Despite this nuisance, we crawled into soggy wet suits and carried the thirty cubic foot air tank the short distance to Kohinoor's only promising sump.

Once again the highwater level came to our aid, this time entirely eliminating a greasy mud slop we would normally have had to negotiate. Stefan was pretty keen to "get his face wet" and proceed to dive the very clear water. He was still clearly visible about 4-5 metres below the surface until coming in contact with the slope, then the siltation came on. Finding the previously open looking sump to narrow off into a less than promising looking rift he attempted to push this, but reported it to be doubtful, even assuming a side mounted tank (he was using a back pack). Total distance penetrated was perhaps less than 20M, so concluding one more question mark!

That afternoon we located the entrance to Union Care. It went through to the ducks for a look see

DIVERS:
Nick Hume
Stefan Eberhard

MT ANNE N.E. RIDGE 19-21 November, 1983

Party: Phill Hill
Nick Hume
Mike Edwards
Alec Marr

Returning to the North East Ridge via a new route the going was found to be surprisingly easy, almost pleasant. Six hours after leaving the car, found us comfortably situated in the "Posturepaedic Bivvi" as named by Alec in an inspired moment.

The ridge is worth visiting, if only for this Bivvi Cave as it offers a view along the ridge to Mt Anne and the Pedder impoundment below.

Next day dawned bright and sunny, a bonus for navigation on the ridge. First on the agenda was the doline with a 10M high entrance. Unfortunately, as thought, the cave choked off after two 13M pitches, in a large talus pile.

Retracing our steps along the ridge towards Mt Anne, in the hope of finding the large shaft which Alec and Phill found on their previous trip. This shaft proved elusive, however, several other entrances were found that had been missed before. Mike was nominated to descend into one of these shafts which after the initial 10M pitch, went into a further short pitch that was also descended to end in another boulder choke. Some of the other shafts could be worth a look at sometime in the future.

To round the day off, we had a look at a cave, high up on the end of the ridge "Nemesis". The entrance is a short 7M crawl to a 28M pitch which Nick and Phill descended. The chamber at the base of this pitch had several refts leading from it, one of which lead to another pitch that was partly blocked, but should prove easy to clear for the next keen party!!!

Arriving back in camp at 8.00pm we settled down to cook dinner while watching the sun set behind Mt Anne, before retiring for the night.

Next day we arose late and headed back to the vehicle and a refreshing bathe in the pool at the car park, 3½ hours after leaving the ridge.

The North East ridge of Mt Anne holds the deepest cave in Australia - Ann.A. Kananda, the two longest single shafts 'Kellers Cellar' and 'Desicator', 115m and 120m respectively, an outstanding topographical feature in Col-in-Cavern as well as some of the finest karst in the state.

With all of these features, the N.E. Ridge remains outside of the S.W. National Park Boundry and is therefore unprotected. Why?????

PHILL HILL