

NEWSLETTER OF THE TASMANIAN CAVERNEERING CLUB

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At the Annual General Meeting, some discussion centered around the potential withdrawal from, or reduction of membership status of the Tasmanian Caverneering Club within the Australian Speleological Federation. Since this issue is likely to be somewhat contentious, a motion was put on notice for discussion at the next General Meeting of TCC.

Motion on Notice: "That the Tasmanian Caverneering Club withdraw from the Australian Speleological Federation, or seek to reduce its membership status from Voting Member to Associate."

General Meeting: Wednesday May 1, 1985
Committee Meeting: Wednesday May 15, 1985
General Meeting: Wednesday June 5, 1985
Committee Meeting: Wednesday June 19, 1985

As usual all these meetings will be held at 7 Rupert Avenue, New Town, commencing (in theory) at 8pm.

CLUB NEWS, OLD AND NEW

Most of the following was produced in the single sheet AGM notification that was sent out to local members some weeks ago but for completeness it is reproduced in an edited form here.

Growling has suffered another growth - this time from a point not far inside the entrance. This new discovery has added over 1 kilometre of surveyed passage to the system, with more yet to look at and survey! Some of the passage also contains excellent formation, including crystal pools, straw clusters and a huge stal rivalling the Khan! The exploration used a Friend, backed up with a "bomb proof" hex, as a rope belay - I always knew friends were useful for something!

Some months ago yours truly, the long term quarter-master, managed to rid himself of the gear - Andrew Briggs kindly offered to take over as he lives not far from

town and has suitable maintenance facilities at his work. More recently however, the Briggs household has decided that Collinsvale would be a better place to live than Lenah Valley - not really central anymore - so we are looking for another quartermaster. In the interim the gear will probably be returned to its home of many years at Rupert Avenue, but hopefully someone else will be able to take over the job fairly soon. On the subject of gear, does anyone want to buy a complete collection a diving gear? There may be such a thing for sale soon.....

We have official notification that the postponed IUS Conference will now be held in Barcelona, Spain from August 1 to 7, 1986. There will be field trips before and after the actual conference, so if you happen to be in Europe at that time why not pop over to Spain for a few days. For further information, write to 9e Congress Internacional de Espeleologia, Apartado 343, 08080 Barcelona, Spain. No doubt someone in Sydney will be attempting to coordinate the Oz crew going to the show, so we may hear something from there as well.

Back on the subject of gear, predictions are for a hard winter. Why not gear up for this and buy some alpine equipment for those icy trips to work? Stuart has a pair of Galibier Super-Pro mountain boots, size 44 1/2, complete with fitted Stubai Tirol crampons and new neoprene straps (worth \$15 alone), for sale at a mere \$150 the lot! If you know of anyone interested please ask them to contact me - the price is negotiable (a bit).

Who wants to go skiing in New Zealand during late July / early August?? Stu is keen to go but in order to cut costs a bit it is advantageous to go with a group of more than one. See yours truly if you are seriously interested!

El Nikos Hume has apparently arrived OK in Mexico City (that was back in early February), but that is about all we know at the moment. He was last heard of when sitting in one of the city squares, watching the female population go by and consuming some Mex type alcoholic beverage! [Another note was received recently which indicated that they were staying in a rented house on the edge of the San Augustin doline and contemplating..... Not only that but he has actually arrived home as well, since the above was written some weeks ago!] Trev's back too, with a great heap of new caving gear and other goodies.....

Stuart Nicholas
Editor SPELEO SPIEL

PERMITS FOR ENTRY TO LIMITED ACCESS CAVES

The permit system has been in operation for about a year now, so cavers should now be able to assess how well it achieves its proclaimed objectives. It is pointless to grumble amongst ourselves. If we have reasonable criticisms, and can suggest workable changes of procedure, then a JOINT approach to the Director by all three Tasmanian clubs of the ASF would almost certainly achieve these changes.

NPWS has a statutory duty to control access to certain caves. It has chosen to do this by restricting access to "official trips by recognized caving clubs" and has defined such clubs as member clubs of the ASF. Furthermore, party members "must comply with the ASF code of ethics". In effect, NPWS has made the ASF at least morally responsible for the behaviour of party members in these caves. It should be

noted that this was decided by NPWS alone. John Dunkley assures me that not only did ASF not act as a pressure group, but that it was not even consulted about the regulations.

These regulations were originally written by the NSW authority and have been taken over, practically unchanged, by Tasmania. The original intention was that either the ASF should issue membership cards, or supply the authority with a complete list of members. From the point of view of the ASF, both alternatives are impossible, but it should be able to supply a list of its member clubs.

This brings the matter down to the actual caving clubs. If these clubs are to be considered responsible for the behaviour of parties in these caves, they are ENTITLED to a system which limits access to bona fide club members.

To give an example. NPWS is perfectly entitled to frame regulations granting access to the Loatta Senile Citizens Club. However, it is NOT entitled to grant access to the L.S.C.C. because one of its members falsely claims to be a member of N.C., and implies the visit is an official N.C. trip.

Finally, John Dunkley was able to enlighten me as to the reason for two rather puzzling "Conditions", viz:

"3. Party size must not exceed 12 persons.", and

"9. The service will ensure that no more than one party at a time is visiting the cave."

Parties visiting Jenolan at the time the original regulations were drawn up some twenty-five years ago, would normally camp. This camp site was only big enough for twelve people.

That is, these two regulations are meaningless outside NSW - or more strictly, meaningless except to parties visiting Jenolan.

HOW THE REGULATIONS REALLY WORK

1. Any person who CLAIMS to belong to a member club will get a permit.
2. The permit holder may then take ANY twelve people into the cave.
3. Condition 9 guarantees this bogus party freedom from surveillance by any proper caving party.

Point of Interest

The ASF has some control over its member clubs. However, it has no control over affiliated clubs such as the Hobart Walking Club, who do not necessarily conform to the ASF code of ethics. It is purely a matter for the NPWS whether affiliated clubs should be granted permits, but the ASF cannot accept responsibility for the behaviour of parties from such clubs.

Suggested course of action

Any action must be the result of a unanimous decision by the executives of the three Tasmanian Member Clubs. We must sort out any disagreements before we approach the Director.

The following are put forward as suggestions for discussion. Here I only have

Kubla and Croesus in mind. It may be appropriate to treat Exit differently, and N.C. will go along with any suggestions from TCC and SCS.

1. That some form of identification be introduced so that permits are only given to current club members.
2. That a party leader should not be responsible for a group larger than 6, including himself.
3. That the restriction (Condition 9) be removed, so that the number of parties in the cave is entirely at the discretion of the Head Ranger.

This, of course, makes it feasible for both the Head Ranger and the Hobart Office to issue permits. There is also no need for any waiting period and permits could be issued over the counter.

Identification

Each year the ASF would supply the Director with two copies of a list of member clubs, with their addresses and names of the current secretaries. One copy would be kept in the Hobart Office and the other at Mole Creek.

Cavers applying for a permit would show either:

1. A current membership card signed by the club secretary and themselves,

OR

2. Notepaper bearing the club letterhead again signed as above.

The Ranger in charge would then be instructed to issue a permit automatically on sighting such authorisation.

We would welcome comments, and particularly firm decisions on the part of the southern clubs.

I am of course writing on behalf of N.C., but please send questions, arguments or abusive letters to my home address.

Bob Woolhouse
RDE 94
Deviot
Tasmania 7251
Phone 003-947326

EXTRACT FROM NPWS "LIMITED ACCESS CAVE" PERMIT

1. Permits are only available for official trips by recognised caving clubs/societies or to persons undertaking approved research projects.
2. Party members must comply with the Australian Speleological Federation Code of Ethics.
3. Party size must not exceed 12 persons

4. Underground camping is not permitted in any cave.
5. In Exit and Kubla Khan Caves, party members must keep to marked trails and avoid roped off areas. Every precaution must be taken to ensure that mud is not tramped across delicate areas of floor formation, particularly in the Pleasure Dome area of Kubla Khan.
6. In Croesus Cave, sandshoes or similar soft rubber soled shoes must be worn to prevent damage to the flowstone.
7. Copies of all maps, reports and other material prepared as a result of investigations done under permit shall be provided to the Service free of charge.
8. Failure to complete and return this form after a trip will result in refusal of further permits to members of the club concerned.
9. The Service will ensure that no more than one party at any one time is visiting a cave. We hope this will benefit the cave as well as increasing the enjoyment of your trip.

CHRISTMAS 1984, ETC

Prior to the Christmas break (dates uncertain) Trev, Stefan, Martyn and myself connected "Machete Pot" to Exit Cave. Some interesting rigging was involved, eg 8mm rope on the first pitch, a rebelay from a skyhook on the second, etc. A magnificent view across to the principal shaft of Mini Martin is obtained and was worth the bash up the hill. Numerous stuff-ups caused by yours truly plus a sudden attack of measles by Martyn resulted in a midnight return to the cars.

A trip to Growling for the purposes of placing self rescue canisters and to do some more exploration, bombed out due to flood conditions and apathy. Instead, the new entrance series of Serendipity was surveyed and a visit was paid to JF346, the major feature just below Serendip. This was roughly drawn up by Rolan and a lead checked. The lead looked just wide enough to pass through, but it proved anatomically impossible to enter because of a sharp bend. Some general bushbashing to the north of the Serendipity track between Lost Pot and the McCallums Track revealed nothing.

On December 28, Rolan and I wandered past Dwarrowdelf (left side) to a line of pots, all within close proximity to each other. Rolan checked one without success, before we stumbled on a tagged hole, this being Dribblespit Swallet. Dribblespit contains a very pleasant 50 metre pitch (amongst others) though somewhat arduous to rig free. We bypassed some tight phreatic passage at the previous limit of exploration to the top of another pitch of some 10 metres. This lead to even tighter phreatic, containing a very strong draught at water level. A separate pitch of 10 metres lead to the base of a large dry aven. This pointed back toward the current stream, but could not be connected thanks to rubble infilling. A grubbier piece of passage would be hard to find.

On January 2 Martyn and I bashed our way up past Revelation Cave for a look-see and found absolutely nothing! We had a look down the large feature above Revelation but found this to connect back almost immediately. We also had a quick look in Con Cave, finishing the day with a swim/wallow through Loones Cave.

January 3 found Stefan and myself coinciding with Pete Rogers, Cheryl Bass and Ron

and Robyn Allum to push Junee Resurgence. Stefan and I were trying out our dry suits for the first time so decided to fall into a sherpa role for Pete and Ron within "For Your Eyes Only", an act greatly appreciated by them. They also wore dry-suits and triple tank sets into the airspace. They then ferried two single tanks each to the second sump to allow them a push dive on a double set. After considerable consultation with various versions of deco tables, they pushed our previous limit of exploration at 30 meters depth to a point at 35 metres where they discovered abruptly ascending passageway. Here they tied off at 21 metres before returning for a total decompression time of 20 minutes. This new furthest point is located some 20 metres past our previous limit. Poor Pete tore a hole in his dry suit at the beginning of his return from For Your Eyes Only and emerged from the resurgence almost incoherent with cold. A well prepared dive by very competent people and one that may stir the locals into some more diving activity after considerable abstinence (but in fact hasn't! - Ed)

On January 4 Stef and I took the CDAA party out to Lawrence Creek Rising, where due to its fountainous nature we all became awfully shy. Instead we wandered up the Chairman track to tourist, of all things, Rift Cave, one that neither Stef nor myself had done before! I'm not sure that Pete, Cheryl, Ron or Robyn were that impressed as they later proceeded on to Growling Swallet to see a "real cave". Stef and I declined to follow on the grounds of over familiarity with the place.

Then came the conference!!!!!!

Nick Hume

TCC TRIP TO MT BOBS AND FEDERATION PEAK DEC 27 - JAN 4, 1985

The real purpose of this trip was to visit the limestone in the vicinity of VANISHING FALLS. However this was not to be!! Pikers and the ever changing weather soon dampened the initial enthusiasm and the decision not to go to the falls was made at the end of the first day of walking.

A very wet Christmas Day saw the postponement of the trip by 24 hours. It was left to Chris Davies and myself to at least make some sort of effort. The first day saw us walking to the Lake Sydney sinkhole in excellent weather. The lake of course was full so we camped in the surrounding rainforest. A small stick placed at the water's edge by Chris marked its level for our reference. The following evening the level had dropped by about 30 cm which meant that approximately 60 cumecs (????? - Ed) of water was going down the sinkhole and emerging in places as yet unknown. It must be remembered that Lake Sydney is in a depression (most lakes are!!! - Ed). We had climbed both Mt Bobs and the Boomerang that day in glorious weather and had also seen Vanishing Falls from Mt Bobs.

Next on the amended agenda was Federation Peak and with this in mind we strolled down to Judds Cavern. The large quantity of snow damage made progress slow from the Bobs junction down to Judds. Our next camp was at the foot of Moss Ridge - when I say camp I am referring to our bivi bags and tent flies, a system that worked well although it restricted us to camping below the tree line.

Day 5 saw the both of us bouncing up Moss Ridge with day packs, the only way to go..... The weather was looking a bit unsettled by now but that did not stop us from climbing the peak and visiting Hanging Lake for a swim and a bit of lunch. A leisurely return was made to the top of Moss Ridge before an exciting rush down the tangled maze of tree roots and vertical mud slopes. The day trip took 9 hours and will go down as one of the most enjoyable days in the bush ever.

Day 6 and back to Judds for lunch and cheese cake with jelly and coconut, pikelets for afters! This was to be the caving part of the trip and we suddenly became really slack. The next day we went up to Matchlight Cavern and also dropped rocks down a virgin shaft that Chris had found nearby. Almost enough to induce me start caving again. The Judds area is certainly worth another look although the scrub leaves a lot to be desired... A return trip is being considered.

Day 8 saw the both of us strolling out to the cars in light drizzle. When we arrived at Chris' "Tojo" it started to rain, the only rain we had in 8 days of walking. This is something of a record for me!! Overall a very good trip, not hard, but enjoyable all the same.

Andrew Briggs

SERENDIPITY - 12 JANUARY 1985

PARTY: Trevor Wailes, Don Fraser (NZ), Stefan Eberhard, Martyn Carnes, Mike Edwards and Nick Hume

A later than usual start set the pace for the rest of the day and it wasn't 'til noon that we actually got underground. On the second pitch we met up with some conference visitors who were also taking advantage of a pre-rigged Serendipity. Andrew Pavey, Judith Bateman, Robyn Allum and Phil Toomer were enjoying a photographic session in the mists of the stream passage as we raced through. Our team completed the pitch series in slightly more than an hour from the entrance.

Trev and I selflessly (stupidly!) volunteered to survey the section from the downstream sump to "French Connection" via the alternate route. A laborious process given the tortuous nature of the initial rockpile. Mike's caplamp, borrowed from TCC and stated to have a good 12 hours life, died after three hours duration and he had to continue on carbide.

Meanwhile Don, Stefan and Martyn were able to push the lead I had looked at on the previous trip. Immediately beyond the point I had reached they found further passage and some sizeable avens containing dead crickets and animal bones, evidence of reasonable proximity to the surface. Survey calcs indicate this area to be in the vicinity of the Serendip turnoff on the McCallums track!

Trev and I caught up with them as they emerged from the lead, whereupon we all helped survey from the rockpile back to the survey station in the brew chamber. We then derigged the whole cave, most of us on failing illumination systems, to emerge on the surface at around midnight. A few drinks and jokes at the cars put us in good "spirits" for the drive back to the homestead, where we arrived at 2am, much to the anguish of several people resident there!

Nick Hume

This is a report of the trip described above, but written by Stefan Eberhard.

SERENDIPITY 12 JANUARY, 1985

Word processors are funny things - see next page for start of report proper...

PARTY: Don Fraser (H.T.G.), Mike Edwards, Trevor Wailes, Martyn Carnes, Nick Hume and Stefan Eberhard

The derigging trip was long overdue - Serendipity had been rigged for some three months. Nevertheless, the practise of leaving this cave rigged "permanently" proved its value because it allowed several successful push trips to the far end, without the epic problems associated with de-rigging on the same trip.

Masquerading as the official TCC post-conference field trip it was a good opportunity to show the New Zealander some real Australian cave. On the way we passed Judith Bateman, Phil Toomer, Robym Allum and Andrew Pavey who were having a look at the upper sections of the cave. Arriving at the bottom, Nick rigged the World's Shortest Pitch (1 metre), but promptly pulled the belay (a large lump of bedrock) down on top of himself. Nick, Trevor and Mike valiantly prepared to survey the squalid alternative route leading to "The French Connection".

Don, Martyn and I pressed on to the new passage located on the previous trip. This passage is consistently and tortuously tight, just large enough to fit through.

Arriving eventually at the previous end point, Don and I found ourselves in larger passage which became more complex further upstream. The main stream passage terminated in an aven with bones and cave crickets, testimony to the close proximity of another entrance. Don began scaling the aven but his attention was diverted when we found ourselves at the top of a pitch dropping into a "Great Big Room". A convenient side passage bypassed the pitch and we wandered with awe across this large chamber then into another chamber with a flowstone floor and profusely decorated, including some large stalagmites.

Some 300 metres of new passage had been explored but it still keeps going and going. This region of the cave is only some 100 metres beneath the surface. The next step will be some concerted surface exploration to try and locate another entrance. Serendipity is a fascinating system although it is becoming increasingly tedious to get to such a remote locality. Meeting up with Trev and Nick another 260 metres of surveying was completed before an uneventful exit. We even de-rigged it!!

Stefan Eberhard

GROWLING SWALLET

JANUARY 17, 1984

PARTY: DON FRASER (NZSS / HTG), STUART NICHOLAS & STEFAN EBERHARD

Ever since the initial breakthrough in GS the waterfall at the upstream end of the Trapdoor Streamway has presented a promising and challenging climb. Indeed, the scaling poles have lain redundant in this section of the cave since 1981.

On the way in Stuart re-injured his hip so had to abort. Continuing on we were impressed with the extent of flooding over the Christmas period. The ammunition box containing emergency supplies had been swept away although I suspect it is now resting at the bottom of Windy Rift.

At length we had 10 metres of pole assembled next to the waterfall and with two stablising ropes Don prusiked up, carefully, as the pole bent alarmingly. He was still some 5 metres below the overhanging lip of the waterfall, but there were no cracks for placing protection. Bolting was out of the question in such a precarious

position as the pole threatened to topple over backwards!

Further downstream a drier alternative presented itself and using the pole again we reached a ledge part way up the wall. The pole was hauled up and the exercise repeated. With the top of the pole leaning out over 18 metres of space, Don completed the climb onto a slippery and treacherous ledge where a further 12 metre pitch / handline led to the top of the shaft proper. Time was running out but a further slant pitch led back down to the streamway which ascended into loose rockpile - just like Trapdoor Swallet itself. The climb was left rigged and there will be another trip to survey and finish exploring this passage.

Stefan Eberhard

ICE TUBE - GROWLING SWALLET THROUGH TRIP 18 JANUARY, 1985

PARTY: Don Fraser, Nick Hume and Stefan Eberhard

The aim of this trip was twofold: (a) To explore an alternative shaft leading off from the base of Fabulous Spangle Pitch, and (b) To re-rig Ice Tube for through trips.

Unfortunately the previous party had removed all the original rigging which included tapes with steel rings for pull-downs, but more importantly, all the bolts and hangers placed on the original exploration trips. Alas, our good intentions of greasing all the anchors and fitting them permanently with Petzl ring hangers, to simplify the rigging for through trips, were not fully realised. The majority of anchors were so badly corroded that the bolts could only be screwed in a fraction of their length. The result is that all the bolt belay points must be regarded as extremely suspect and anyone using them does so entirely at their own risk.

It is a great pity that the original hangers and bolts were removed in the first place. The rigging of Ice Tube is now far from satisfactory and I would request that anyone going to the trouble of whacking in bolts should be prepared to sacrifice the hanger. PLEASE LEAVE THEM IN. I hope IT does not become infested with semi-useless corroded anchors, as is the case in many European caves.

The unexplored shaft turned out to be a 20-24 metre pitch into a large sloping chamber which curved round onto a 20 metre shaft where the main stream could be seen below. It may represent a drier alternative to Killing Joke Pitch. Three new bolts were placed in order to improve the rigging - on the second pitch, the Ramp Pitch and Fab. Spangle (part II).

A good trip but somewhat disappointing because the rigging in IT is now stuffed.....

Stefan Eberhard

CAULDRON POT

FEBRUARY 1, 1985

PARTY: Don Fraser (H.T.G.), Martyn Carnes and Stefan Eberhard

There had been heaps of rain the previous few days so Cauldron promised to be a

wet and sporty trip. By rigging the 41 metre entrance pitch from a tree immediately adjacent to the waterfall it is possible to avoid the bad protection problems associated with the original riggin position near the number tag.

The rock in Cauldron is good quality and there is tremendous scope for chock placements (and cliff hangers for those who are into them). Through various re-belays and re-directions we were able to rig most of the pitches dry and eliminate the need for the antiquated practise of rope protection. Rigging pitches free-hanging also helps preserve the rope because protectors never work anyway! The final 35 metre pitch has a notoriously bad rub point which has chewed numerous ropes. This pitch can be rigged free hanging with a small wire as a running belay right at the lip.

We spent a while poking about in the terminal chamber. The sump appeared a worthwhile diving prospect - there was little mud as evidence that the water backs up, suggesting that the sump is not constricted or (hopefully) only very short. Having resolved this fact as an excuse for not de-rigging we made an uneventful return to the surface, thankful for only having to extract ourselves, and not gear, from Bill's Bypass.

CAULDRON POT CONTINUED - FEBRUARY 2, 1985

With the intention of diving the sump in Cauldron I found myself standing at the entrance wondering how the hell I was going to fit all that gear into one caving pack. The gear was cut to an absolute minimum, but even so it weighed some 20 kg - the pack will never be the same again!! I wore a wetsuit on the way in and also a cave diving helmet, which must have looked rather silly but happened to be about the same width as Bill's Bypass. A new rope was placed on the 15 metre Chute Pitch as the previous one had been about 4 metres short.

The sump trended down dip then appeared to head upwards but disappointingly narrowed to a jagged "S" bend squeeze. An intimidating prospect, not safely negotiable without line weights. Peering through I could see the sump continuing along strike, then it silted out. A pity that it was not a straightforward through dive because Cauldron still has considerable depth potential. Nevertheless, I would consider the sump worth a more organised push, maybe in ten years time.

With hardly any of the air in the tank used, a leisurely return to the surface was made.

Stefan Eberhard

GROWLING IS GROWING AGAIN....

FEBRUARY 15, 1985

Only ten minutes inside the entrance of Growling Swallet is a feature known as Stal Corner. A narrow, cryptic passage leads off, carrying a reasonable draught. A crawl is followed by a climb down into a large elongated chamber. The only way on is up in the roof where exploration in August 1984 produced a complex maze of phreatic tubes. Extensive pushing failed to locate any significant passage and the source of the draught remained a frustrating enigma.

With no aspirations of finding anything new I found myself grovelling back into this section of cave only because it is less evil than anywhere else in the system. The first passage examined was almost sealed by flowstone but squeezing through

revealed some excellent pristine formations. Around the corner and I couldn't believe it when I popped out into a BIG borehole. Turning right led over a floor carpeted in flowstone and fragile gour pools before ascending into large open rockpile. Two leads led into the rockpile - one of them carried the draught whilst the other led through into solid passage again.

Not content with grovelling, the left hand direction of the main borehole was followed down past more massive formations then up into a long crawl, interrupted occasionally with splendid crystal pools. Expecting the inevitable boulder choke to appear at any moment I was pleasantly surprised to find myself running down a clean phreatic tube which spilled abruptly over a 12 metre pitch.

Having explored some 300 metres of new passage I knew that this was only the beginning of a major new series in Growling Swallet, and it's about time too. Unlike the majority of Florentine caves these passages contain a good deal of formation, furthermore the quality rivals anything in the valley. Unfortunately in some places it is impossible to avoid muddying the formation, particularly flowstone floors and crystal pools. I urge all visitors to exercise extreme care and follow the same and only path over flowstone floors - this stuff is worth preserving!

Stefan Eberhard

OUT OF SIGHT, OUT OF MIND. [OR - MAKING LIGHT OF A NEW FEELING!]

GROWLING SWALLET - THE NEXT NEW BIT, 17 FEBRUARY, 1985

PARTY: Stefan Eberhard, Rolan Eberhard (part time only!) and Stuart Nicholas

Some time ago, Stefan rolled in home after obviously having been caving, sat down without really saying anything, and well just sort of sat there! Being alert to these syndromes I enquired as to his activities during that day and was told that he had found a bit of new cave. The exact location was not revealed except that it was not far in from the main streamway entrance of Growling Swallet.

The following weekend we set out armed with something like six lights in the car, some vertical gear and aspirations to find another few kilometres in GS. At the feature known as Stal Corner about halfway down the main streamway, we turned right instead of left and proceeded through the low crawl into a short passage surveyed some time ago and ending in a "pit" which apparently does not go. Just to the left and before this feature there is a rock "nose" up which Stefan disappeared followed by yours truly. We had previously banished Rolan to the car after his lamp dimmed to the extent that oncoming glow-worms could pass untroubled by bright lights. He was TEKNAlogically enlightened by Stef as to the route to take upon his return.

Surveying as we went, the route went through some rockpile in the roof of the chamber, and then on through a variety of passage forms including an upward trending section through some flowstone nearly blocking the passage. Emerging at the top of a large elongated chamber, it was apparent that Stef's lamp was also showing signs of attempted glow-worm emulation - an interesting situation as I had the only good lamp and we had no back ups at all! Rolan had not yet re-appeared with Stef's TEKNA and a good light from the stock in the car.

Stef eventually used my lamp to find Rolan who had missed the way in and had gone back to the start of the new section. The surveying was restarted from the top of the big chamber and proceeded to a rift at the bottom carrying the draft, but not negotiable, and then on up through a crawl on the right hand side. This passed some

quite spectacular crystal pools and everyone going in there should make an effort to preserve these, as they are, I think, unique in the Valley. In sections there are also some good straw clusters as well - quite unusual for a Florentine Valley cave to have so much formation!

The piece de resistance is a short but most impressively clean phreatic tube ending in an undescended pitch. With failing lights (Rolan's second one was now not at its brightest!) this was rigged with a little help from a friend (and a nut!), and down the 12 metre pitch we went. This stuff was now totally new as Stef had not the gear on the previous trip to descend the pitch. A short distance to the right the passage dropped a couple of metres into a chamber containing a replica of The Khan! Not quite so high but still most impressive - its just a pity we couldn't really see anything because of the lights, or lack thereof! After a quick "look" around we headed out with the almost exciting prospect of a return trip on our minds to descend a pit in the floor of this new chamber. A total of around 300 metres of passage had been surveyed with hopefully more to come.

Stef ran out with only a Tekna torch for light and still beat Rolan and myself despite our having vaguely operational cap lamps - how fast would he be with a real light???

Much food consumption at the Westerway shop finished off a most illuminating day. A "New Feeling" that this could be the start of something big was had by all, although Rolan was content to sleep on such thoughts.

Stuart Nicholas

GROWLING SWALLET: MORE SURVEYING AND EXPLORATION - STAL CORNER AND BEYOND.....

FEBRUARY 20, 1985

PARTY: MARTYN CARNES AND STEFAN EBERHARD

Equipped with reliable lights on this occasion we were able to admire the enormous stalagmite which dominates the large chamber discovered last time. Surveying as we explored, a 12 metre pitch at the bottom of this chamber dropped into a large trunk passage. It was dry - upstream choked off shortly but downstream kept going with a floor made entirely of flowstone and delicate gour pools. Ignoring numerous side passages the main route eventually choked with mud. It seemed like the end, however a climb up into the roof revealed a small twisting phreatic tube containing a pool loaded with some most exquisite calcite crystals. A 6 metre pitch (The Passover) dropped us back into the main passage on the other side of the choke. A further 3 metre drop landed us in a chamber intersecting a small stream passage. Upstream was exceptionally muddy and piked out after some 90 metres. Downstream led 50 metres to a sump. This portion of the cave is only 250 metres from the furthest surveyed section in Serendipity.

We had surveyed some 300 metres of new passage but there was more, more, more of it. At this point we suddenly became very apathetic so had to leave early.

Stefan Eberhard

STOP PRESS Alec Marr has for sale one only Enduro suit, size M, near new (worn once) for the very reasonable sum of \$60. This would have to be the bargain of the year with the Aus dollar being the way it is at the moment.