

SPELEO SPIEL

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NEWSLETTER OF THE TASMANIAN CAVERNEERING CLUB

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EDITORIAL

Actions speak louder than words and after the last editorial, which could be considered merely "ego-writing", I've decided to do something about the bolting crisis. The Quartermaster now has a supply of 8mm nylon bolts with plastic flags attached. The idea of these non-corrosive little numbers, my darlings, is that they be left in position in the bolt casings (spits) when derigging and THE HANGERS SHOULD BE REMOVED. Hopefully the nylon bolt will keep the gunk out of the holes and the plastic garden-tag flag with reflective tape attached, will indicate the bolt's position to the next visiting party. A felt pen could also be used to record details of when the bolt was placed if this information is known. Each has a fishing line loop on it so it can be hung from a krab during any fancy riggerizing around. People are warned that the UTS* of these bolt markers is SFA and therefore they should not rig off them. Cavers are encouraged to take some of these with them on their next caving trip, whether they are placing bolts or merely flagging known existing bolts. There are numerous known casings in caves which could use cleaning-up, the hangers removing (take a 13mm spanner) and marking in this manner. Cleaning out filthy old bolt placements and inserting plastic bolt markers might sound like a hassle but it small price to pay for the longevity of our caves and cavers.

No, the idea is not original, it was an Alan Warild inspiration. As to whether this system has been implimented and whether or not it operates efficiently in the overpopulated caves of the mainland...who knows?

Stephen Bunton

(*UTS = Ultimate Tensile Stress which is of great significance even though bolts are loaded in shear.)

SMALL PASSAGES

At last some international recognition for that great Tasmanian institution, the well-renowned, well-trogged interstate and international cavers' drop-in centre, the Stuey Nick hostel. Earlier in the year Stuart Nicholas accommodated Swiss international cave film-maker Gerald Favre and his crew whilst they were in Tassy making their film about Australian caves. Now Gerald has repaid the Favre with a copy of his latest glossy full-colour film catalogue which lists Stuart's name up there in the acknowledgements with other greats such as Jaques Cousteau and Julia James. Seriously though the catalogue is worth perusing, the photography is superb and the Franglais is well worth the intellectual and linguistic exercise.

Still for sale at the Stuey Nick establishment are two Australian Karst Indexes. Surely someone, who is bludging a friend's copy, needs their own mega-reference cave guidebook. Priced to go at the R.R.P. of \$25 they're a bargain! Don't write to the mainland! Save freight charges! Call-in! They're Amazing!

Years of bashing around in the Tasmanian scrub may not sound like everybody's idea of fun but at Ida Bay recently Arthur's Folly has yielded some reward. The latest discovery is a new cave with over a kilometre of interesting sporting and well decorated cave passage. The cave has a 4m entrance pit which Arthur descended solo, unroped and unaided except for the influence of gravity. Arthur's Folly is a significant cave being a major resurgence under Lune Sugarloaf with abundant populations of cave fauna, including "prides of millipedes". It was discovered 1.11.86 and is only partly surveyed at present.

For those of you who didn't save enough pesettas don't despair. According to Lloyd Mill's article, in the last Australian Caver, the International Speleological Congress was not worth attending. The field trips seemed to be poor value and the conference itself was very disorganized, it sounded nothing short of a sham. Fawltly Towers fans may have enjoyed what sounds like a Manuel overdose but most of us could probably do without the hassle of a multi-lingual logistics disaster. As far as making contacts for private post-conference field trips I'm not sure of the successes in that line, though a few Australians visited ice-caves in the Pyrenees and Switzerland. The next conference is in Hungary in 1988 and from all impressions it should be well worth attending, if for no other reason than to visit a country behind the Iron Curtain. Unlike Spain, Een zis countree vee make zings werk! Good luck to them, I hope it's a great success!

Sydney caver Anne Gray and her friend Nick teamed up with Zeehan's recent signing from Sydney club SSS, Vicki Bonwick, for a successful tour of the Junee-Florentine. In just five days they scored victories against local teams Khazad-dum, Growling Swallet, Serendipity, Tassy Pot and Owl Pot, as well as making use of the Stuey Nick Transit Lounge / Spare Gear Store. They have just flown to New Zealand for matches with Nettlebed and Bulmar Cavern and a range of other miner fixtures.

There seems to be some doubts expressed as to the claim that Nettlebed is once again the deepest cave in the Southern Hemisphere, as reported in the last Spiel. My own doubt stems from the fact that it wouldn't take 25 hours to descend 800m through Mt Arthur even with a camp. This time is more realistic for a return trip to that depth. It also seems unlikely that such a connection would be made in spring when the summit areas of the mountain are usually still covered in snow and even in particular during this year, when New Zealand snowfalls have been at record levels. It seems more likely that the deepest cave is still Bulmar Cavern, as the rumours have it. This refers to trips held last Easter, the details of which probably have only now filtered through to the press. I hope to clarify this situation with Vicki Bonwick, who returns from NZ to Tassy, in a few weeks.

If you think caving is an adventure then The Wilderness Society agrees with you. Their Christmas raffle currently selling tickets for \$1.00 each, offers as first prize the adventure of your choice. The choices include a photography expedition, gliding, sailing, rafting, rockclimbing and caving with Alec Marr! Armchair cavers could alternatively opt for the safer prize of a copy of the Lake Pedder Book. I know what I'd choose!

Chris Davies has recently joined the ranks of the landed gentry becoming one of the great Midlands Land Barons by acquiring a modest property at Huntington Tier. Chris had a hut warming BBQ lunch recently which was of enormous speleological interest... Chris owns his own caves! Yes there are a few sandstone overhangs on the property which were visited as the major attraction of the afternoon, mainly as therapy for those approaching overhangs of their own.

NOTES ON JF 397

The entrance to JF 397 is rather novel! It is a circular hole situated 3m up the wall of an overhanging 15m high cliff. The cave was tagged and first explored in February 1986 (see Speleo Spiel #216). The entrance was found to lead to a steeply descending tube which terminated at a depth of 10m. However, a short distance inside the entrance there was a draughting rabbit-sized hole suggeseting the existence of further passage and hopefully access to the passages which must be somewhere below.

A return visit was made on 6th July 1986, with the intention of enlarging the constriction but it wasn't until a follow-up trip two weeks later that I was able to pass through the squeeze. The results were disappointing, only a few additional metres of passage and a hopeless silt blockage. Daylight penetrated through a boulder collapse indicating that the draught was simply a chimney effect between the two entrances.

JF 397 is located only 50m away from JF 398, a promising swallet which appears to be blocked with boulders. These two caves and JF 396, which is another swallet further uphill in an adjacent valley, are situated in the network of valleys constituting the headwaters of Chrisps Creek. Chrisps Ck passes beneath the Florentine Rd 500m beyond Lady Binney Corner. Only 50m further up the road a taped track leads a short distance through the bush to The Slip. A few hundred metres up The Slip some old blue tapes lead off on the righthand side. (Further up The Slip another series of tapes lead directly to a small pothole.) The poorly marked route negotiates a portion of the Adamsfield Track before crossing a dry valley where

yellow tapes continue through a patch of Horizontal scrub and into the next dry valley. A few hundred metres up this valley is JF 398. The scrub in this area is particularly maelevalent and total walking time is about 45 minutes.

Stefan Eberhard

RESURRECTION OF THE HAIRY GOAT

10th August 1986

Hairygoat Hole (JF 15) was first explored in 1970. Although only 45m deep it received a number of visits due to the presence of an encouraging draught. Stuart Nicholas participated in some of these early trips to the cave and I suspect one of the instigators of the whole Hairygoat saga, if not the chief Hairygoat himself. (Not so hairy these days! And it was Noel White actually, see Speleo Spiel # 51 and # 52. Ed). There have been no visits since and at the time the cave terminated with mud and boulders blocking a narrow draughting crack. To quote Stuart "Old cavers never die they just grow bigger!" Considering this in context of the promising draught, I believe the status of Hairygoat Hole needs urgent revision. Such well meaning and sympathetic reconditioning projects are all very well in theory but they depend first of all upon being able to find the entrance again. Supposedly Hairygoat Hole lies somewhere south of Splash Pot (JF 10).

A poorly marked route once existed between JF 10 and Hairygoat Hole. JF 10 can be reached by following up the dry valley which intersects the Khazad-Dum track, some 20 minutes walk from the road, and beyond the Cauldron Pot and Dwarrowdelf turnoffs. The dry valley bifurcates a short distance below the contact and Splash Pot is situated in the right-hand tributary whilst the lefthand tributary leads to a small impenetrable soak. Traversing the contact south from here I encountered a small pothole on the boundary between the rainforest and the recently burnt open eucalypt forest. The shaft was blocked some 7m down and did not appear to have a numbered tag. Movement through the burnt out area was facilitated by the recent snowfall which killed off the normally prolific bracken. I spent some time scouring the the flanks of the spur but without success in locating Hairygoat Hole. I crossed over the spur into the next dry valley containing JF 19, a small swallet hole which I didn't bother to investigate. Only some 20m away and slightly downhill is another swallet with a treacherous slope funneling into an entrance shaft at least 10m deep. No numbered tag was visible.

Crossing a small spur into a neighbouring dry valley I passed a large doline and a series of small sinkholes further to the west. Further up the valley from these features was a large (5m x 2m) unnumbered shaft entrance. A fine 25m pitch and a narrow passage led to a further drop of perhaps 7m which I did not have the equipment to descend. The entrance was marked with double blue tapes.

On the way back I wandered along the margin of the rainforest - burnt area. Which roughly parallels the KD Track. Some 100-150m downhill from the contact and only 10m proximal to the rainforest, I came across a pothole 1m in diameter, well concealed at the base of a Sassafras tree. The entrance was also marked with double blue tapes.

Stefan Eberhard

MINI MARTIN - SKYHOOK POT EXCHANGE TRIP

3rd August 1986

Present: Stefan and Rolan Eberhard, Russell Fulton,
John Salt, Geoff Watson, 1 New Zealand caver and another SCS caver
(I'm sorry I can't remember their names).

Hearing that SCS were planning a trip down Skyhook Pot, it seemed an ideal opportunity to combine forces for an exchange trip down Mini-Martin. The plan was for two teams to rig the respective shafts, meet at the bottom in Exit Cave and then ascend the other route. John, Geoff and myself were to do Mini-Martin first and about halfway down the first pitch the sound of pitons being hammered-in told us the others were on their way too. The darkness of the Skyhook Pot side of the shaft meant that I could only see the glow of Stefan's lamp through the huge fissure that connects the two shafts. The situation was a novel one... two cavers dangling on ropes in more-or-less separate shaft systems but close enough to exchange a few shouted words.

At the base of the pitch we surveyed down the muddy slope to the top of the next drop where a terrier bolt on the lefthand side gives a good hang for the rope. This pitch was measured as 25m in length before a rock chute leads on to the next shaft not far ahead. While rigging this pitch the thunder of falling rocks above caused some concern and we optimistically shouted up to them to ensure that none came our way. In fact the rocks were falling down Skyhook Pot and were no real threat, never-the-less it was an unnerving sound. The last pitch has a rockclimbing bolt well back from the edge and a further tie-off to a terrier several metres down which gives a freehanging abseil to the bottom.

The Skyhook Pot team had yet to arrive so we strolled over to Camp II and had a look at the gypsum formations in Eddies Treasure. On the way back we met Stefan and the kiwi who informed us that the two others had already started out. We began our ascent of Skyhook Pot behind them. On the way out there was time to admire the splendid view across to the main shaft of Mini-Martin. The twitching rope indicated a caver was on his way out and I had a fleeting glimpse of a "ropewalker" zooming past in the misty half-light. Soon we were all back on the surface again and packing seemingly endless coils of rope into our packs for the walk back. To complete the survey the length of the rope on the first pitch was measured to reveal a length of 106m. It was a very enjoyable day in spite of the derogatory remarks one of the party made about the interminable prussik up Mini-Martin.

Description of the rigging used on this trip:

Mini-Martin

- P1 : 106m Belay to tag tree with a rebelay, using two short wire traces behind a flake on the wall a few metres down, gives a freehang for the rest of the pitch.
- P2 : 10m Handline for the muddy slope.
- P3 : 25m Terrier bolt with a rusted rapide in place on the lefthand side. Freehanging.
- P4 : 22m Rusty looking rockclimbing bolt on the righthand side before the edge; needs a hanger. Rebelay to a terrier on a rock bulge several metres down on the same side; needs a hanger.

Skyhook Pot (See Survey, Speleo Spiel # 208)

- P1 : 14m A sling over a rock spike inside the entrance, backtied outside the entrance.
P2 : 28m A variety of tie-offs including a few chocks.
P3 : 20m This pitch is really a continuation of the previous one, Some pitons were used to rebelay on the sloping ledge.
P4 : 47m Terrier bolt with no hanger on the righthand side out over the shaft, backed-up with pitons.
P5 : 11m Dubious tie-off with a sling over a krab.
P6 : 8m A tricky freeclimb on which some may prefer a rope.

N.B. All pitches were tied-back to the tail of the previous rope.

Rolan Eberhard

PENDANT POT DERIGGING TRIP

28th September 1986

Trevor Wailes and Stephen Bunton

Everyone including Uncle Tom Cobbly and all his sons, daughters and other relations had managed to time a trip down Pendant Pot during the period that it was left rigged, but no-one had really got around to pulling the ropes out. Trevor wanted to do a bit of surveying in the cave and I wanted to take a few photos so on the n-th trip down the cave we were the only two starters. We added a few other objectives to the day's proceedings; I wanted to bottom the cave and we felt obliged to derig the thing. Would we succeed with all four undertakings?

We got off to a gentleman's start which turned into an inauspicious start when, as we sped past Claremont, I discovered I'd forgotten my wellies. Returning to town wasted sufficient time to inject an air of urgency into the rest of the day's proceedings. The trip to Maydena, up the Florentine, up the Eight Rd, to the cave and down the cave were all uneventful and fairly routine. First priority was to complete the suveying of about 200m of passage above the last pitch. This appears on the existing maps but is hardly accurate or detailed a situation now remedied. Next priority was to bottom the cave, only I could be bothered. Trev cooled his heels at the top of the pitch while I cooled mine by falling into the plunge pool partway down the shaft.

That formality completed we began the derig proceedings. Photography was abandoned as punishment for my earlier forgetfulness and also because of the shortage of models, having not having enthused anyone to hold the flashes nor anyone more photogenic than Trev. (He has since shaved off his beard and settled for a sophisticated looking moustache.) The No Frills derigging team quickly cranked into gear, stuffing rope, prussiking, pulling up rope, leap-frogging out... you take this one while I shoot through. It wasn't long before we were at the entrance and the ladder replaced with rope. Trev abseiled and an Indian Rope Trick retrieved the rope. We toddled back to the car and then still in semi-trog gear were let out only several minutes overdue.

The pace slowed a bit at the National Park pub with a few ales and some electronic media moronism.

Stephen Bunton

GROWLING SWALLET SYSTEM : NEW FEELING AND SLAUGHTERHOUSE POT

5th October 1986

Parties: New Feeling - Peter Cover, Richard Foster, Geoff Hosking, Neil Mulcahy and Tim Sprod.

Slaughterhouse Pot - James Davis, David Fowler, David Lyneham, John Salt and Randall Tapp.

This trip resulted from a Hutchins School Geology excursion which had visited Growling Swallet previously. Many of the students wanted to come back and look at it properly - from the inside! Thanks to Peter and John we were able to run these two trips.

John's party had an uneventful trip through Slaughterhouse, derigging as they went, though John had nasty comments to make on two topics; the dubious bolt on the third pitch and the foul smelling tin of half-decayed bully beef they encountered. The comments from the boys were of the ultra-enthusiastic kind.

Our party also had no hassles. We didn't have anyone who had been into New Feeling but John's directions were easy to follow (except when he describe 10m of passage as 100m). We found the pretties and were suitably impressed. Not wishing to muddy the floor we turned back and then continued downstream to look at the sump and the start of Windy Rift. Whilst there we heard the Slaughterhouse party coming through (grunt, wheez, *!#!%* etc.) and assisted them in carrying out the gear. It was a beautiful day on the surface and so we made a liesurely return to the gate, emerging a scant three minutes before witching hour (5pm in the Florentine).

All the boys enjoyed the trip. Following John's and Martyn's work on our Grade 10 Camp (25th-27th August 1986) which included trips to Wolf Hole, Midnight Hole and a slightly cicuitous route to Lune's Cave, there is a growing interest in caving at Hutchins. At present many of these young people are competant on ropes at least in a downward direction and are keen to get more experience. So if you are planning a trip that could accommodate a few people of this standard, let me know. Who knows? we might even gain some new members.

Tim Sprod

ERRATA

The map of Warhol (JF 392) which appears in Speleo Spiel has an incorrect dimension on the scale bar. The 27m fifth pitch, if measured against the scale bar would appear to be closer to 70m in length. To correct this anomaly the total length of the scale bar should be changed to 20m not 50m as shown and each graduation should therefore represent 4m not 10m. Rolan Eberhard apologizes for this error.



I DON'T SEE
WHAT'S SO HAIRY
ABOUT THIS
CLIMB !?

* Ways to become a
Rockstar *

HMMM!

HMMM!



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