



KING RAT SERIES, A-A-K, MT. ANNE

# SPELEO SPIEL

Newsletter of the Tasmanian Caverneering Club

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NEWSLETTER OF THE TASMANIAN CAVERNEERING CLUB

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PRESIDENT / QUARTERMASTER:

Trevor Wailes                      47 Waterworks Road, Dynnyrne, Tas 7005.                      Ph 344862

SECRETARY:

Stefan Eberhard                      21 Queen Street, Sandy Bay, Tas 7005.                      Ph ??????

TREASURER:

Chris Davies                      1 Fingerpost Road, South Hobart, Tas 7000.                      Ph 391419

EDITOR(S) / TYPIST(S):

Leigh Douglas, Nick Hume & Stuart Nicholas .....                      C/- Ph 283054

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EDITORIAL

Gee whiz! Stefan Eberhard has returned from his working holiday and is right back into caving in a big way. He and Martyn Carnes are making big caving inroads in a certain limestone area. Has a new era of exploration begun? Trouble is with all this secrecy, nobody dares put in trip reports to the Spiel anymore. Still, the editors of this fine rag have enough material to go on with, but it would be nice to read these new exploration reports, sometime.

The MEGA-WHISKY raffle was very successful, all tickets being sold. Tickets went so far afield however, that a non-member called Marta, a local from the Dr Syntax Hotel, won first prize. Congratulations.... maybe after the hangover she'll join TCC. A snap decision on the night decreed that there should be a second and third prize in the form of a much smaller bottle of whiskey and a dozen stubbies. These we were won by Paul Merhulik and G. Fisher (an under aged student from Hutchins!) respectively.

And now over to Trevor Wailes....

PRESIDENT'S REPORT 86/87

We're still a happy cynical band, but we are getting smaller. Hopefully this year will see some new blood swelling the arteries of the TCC. It hasn't been a good year for discoveries which are of course a requisite for an active and successful club. The decline in exploration is not because we've found everything there is, but old age and procrastination have a lot to answer for. It is true however that circumstances beyond our control have had a curtailing effect on our activities in possibly the most rewarding area.

The Florentine Valley is to us a rose between the thorns of ANM and the Wilderness Society. The Club stands very precariously with regards to the

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access situation. It is to our dismay to be branded "greenie sympathisers", when we respect ANM's right to log the areas within its concession. Unfortunately, the caves we are interested in can only be got to through that concession. To be used as a scapegoat in the access issue and then to be told "we wanted to see what your reaction would be" is disgustingly petty politics. We already feel intimidated when asking for permits; ANM's paranoia has sunk to asking for party members names in advance of entering the concession. The only interest the TCC has in the Florentine is access simply to go caving!

Changing the subject, on one of the few occasions we have been in the valley, Splash Pot was pushed yielding some new discoveries. A very narrow passage (named "Close to the Bone" for obvious reasons) was negotiated with difficulty and two further pitches descended. On another occasion, a small tube was uncovered during a dig in Asteroid Pot. This led to a small bone littered chamber, but no breakthrough into Serendipidity, just more dismal looking digging prospects. The enigmatic draft in Servalane was pursued into some tight rift but to no avail.

The political hassles in the Florentine pushed us south to the ever popular Ida Bay. Arthur Clarke, that well known caving personage from Dover, chanced upon an amazing system he named "Arthurs Folly" (because he fell in it!). This contained a kilometre of fairly demanding cave passage. "Comet Pot" and "Giotto", so close together on the surface, paralleled each other for close to -100m, but never linked up. "Old Ditch Road" proved the adage that "they who seek shall find"..... eventually! It joined into "Exit" at -130m via several very pleasant pitches. This cave could very easily rival "Midnight Hole" in popularity. Prospects for finding more cave around the "Exit-Entrance" area are quite good.

To the north, Mole Creek has received some attention. Rolan Eberhard has spent a few weekends relocating and surveying some little known/forgotten cave entrances and an Easter trip brought about certain cave diving discoveries.

The Spiel has had its ups and downs due to uncertain editorship. If this is the first you've had for a while don't worry, more are on their way. Steve Bunton made his mark on the editorials but unfortunately not in a permanent capacity. Come back Steve, all is forgiven!

Cavers from Sydney, Melbourne and Czechoslovakia visited various karst areas in the state, notably Mount Anne. These groups had high levels of manpower and still failed to find the system we failed to find three years ago. Other itinerants joined us for short periods, the most prominent being Nick Hawkes, a very able and keen pommie, and resident of Old Ditch Road, England.

Many thanks to Denis Jacoora and barstaff at the Wheatsheaf Hotel where we seem to settle for Wednesday meeting nights. Thanks also to the gate men and staff at Maydena - hopefully the coming year will see some sense return to the access situation in the Florentine.

TREVOR WAILES

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NEWZ , BITZ and TRIVIA.....

POSITIONS VACANT! Arthur Clarke is seeking a surveying assistant to help redo the rather shaky, existing survey of the mighty EXIT CAVE. Seems as though all the new entrances being found aren't tying in too well with the old data. Good chance to get a bit of work experience(!) as well as finding



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out what really is hidden behind all those hills. Contact Arthur if you're interested in seeing Ida Bay mud first hand (ph. 981107).

Caving as practised by TCC could almost be construed as some sort of religion - we have ritual pseudo-meetings in a strangely decorated back room of a certain "institution" and frequently meet again on Sundays in small groups for strange physical rites in secluded areas of Tasmania's bush. We now have the perfect opportunity to further our apparent aims. Recently a real estate sales brochure addressed to TCC arrived in Stu's mail box. Nothing new in that really, but the property advertised was a church, claimed to be "ideal for our meetings and activities"..... What more can be said??

ANM Maydena have become increasingly sensitive recently due to problems of security and what they perceive as a threat from the radical conservation movement. There have been a few problems with permits, but these have been sorted out in discussions with John Simpson. John has agreed to suspend the requirement that all people in a party have to be named prior to the issue of a permit to TCC members. We have been asked to assist ANM, by informing the Gatekeepers of our trip plans during the visit and also by cancelling any permits that have been issued, but which aren't going to be used. This can be done on the Sunday morning, if not earlier, by phoning 882371. It would also be a good idea to introduce new members to the Gatekeeper and/or sign all members present into the book. (Inserted by CHRIS DAVIES - Ed.)

This edition of the mighty TCC rag was produced on a new word processor and personal computer. The recent advent by IBM of their new generation machines prompted the default editor to expend some of his funds on such a system. So there we are - IBM Personal System 2 Model 30 computer with 20 megabyte hard disc, 90mm 720k floppy disc drive and 640k memory, using WordPerfect 4.2 word processing software.

The IBM/DOS version of SMAPS (the cave survey data reduction software) is installed on the new machine and all the data has been transferred. The speed and storage capabilities of the hardware has already enabled rapid analysis of large quantities of survey data and production of plots, with some interesting results.... The SMAPS 4 software ought to be fairly close to appearing. Screen graphics and other advanced facilities will be supported by this package and its arrival will no doubt revolutionise survey data reduction - one will be able to do a cave without leaving home! Maybe SMAPS 5 will have a computer controlled mud squirter and waterfall generator for added realism....

Phill Hill is OFF!.....(and has indeed gone) to England and possibly Europe, Canada, New Zealand and indeed anywhere else that's going. The absence of Phill's distinctive and occasionally controversial style will leave a gap in the mundane lives of us more "stay at home" types. Good luck from all at T.C.C.!

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BOOK REVIEW

" Atlas des Grandes Cavities Mondiales " ( 1986 ) by Paul Courbon and Claude Chabert. Paperback - 16.95 pounds from Inglesport (in England)  
A long awaited update of this classic tome. This edition contains international recognition for those locally known superheroes: Messieurs Eberhards, Monsieur Wailes et ( mon Dieu ! ) "Stuee" Nicholas, all

June, 1987

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"Frogging" their way through the wild caves of Oceania. Included is the latest deepies list for Australia (ie Tasmania !) for all us xenophobes, including surveys of both Anna-Kananda and Icetube. There is also a deepies list for the rest of the world; Mexico, New Guinea, New Zealand and in fact every country sporting any karst worth mentioning. The stuff of armchair caving, definitely worth procuring a copy for dream fodder and reminiscing.

Venturing Underground - the new Speleo's Guide by Ben Lyon (1983) hardback - \$25 locally available. A small book, yet containing heaps on current caving techniques, gear, survey methods, speleogenesis and lots more. Some nice colour shots from around the world, with very good illustrative black and white photos as well. Very relevant and highly recommended for those just starting out in caving or the "behind the times" types.

"Caves and Caving" - bulletin of the British Cave Research Association (quarterly at six pounds per annum). Subscribed to by this club but rather hard to get on the borrowers list. Probably the best (English) publication of it's type in the world. That means lots of interesting articles of the latest discoveries, past and future expeditions ( Aussies have been getting a mention lately), gear ideas and techniques, etc.

"Cave Science" - also from the BCRA strictly AO (academics only), covering geomorphology, hydrology and sundry other esoteric disciplines.

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ANOTHER OLD DITCH ROW TRIP REPORT (NUMBER FOUR....) - 10 May, 1987

CAVERS - Andrew Bain, James Davis, Marcus Marriott, Phil Oddie, Leigh Douglas and Nick Hume.

After rising horribly early, Nick and I, accompanied by two new comers, set off to Ida Bay to investigate the new find - Old Ditch Road. We collected Phil and Marcus at various points along the way. It was one of those rare sunny days and a pity to go underground but we trudged to the cave anyway.

The way to the first pitch was serpentine in nature and fairly pleasant until we reached something resembling the "toilet bowl" we had heard Trevor talking about. By the time I arrived, Nick was placing the first bolt. Unfortunately, he had not noticed some wear marks going up through a squeeze directly above us. This turned out to be the right way on and led to a chamber with the short, first pitch. Here we left a tape around a sturdy bollard and abseiled to the top of the second pitch.

We patiently waited for another bolt to be placed. While descending, I dislodged a slab of mud from the top. Just on touch down it "whamoed" me on the head and dribbled down my neck. Luckily it wasn't a rock as the mud was enough to stun me for a few seconds. Here Nick placed another bolt and 12 metres later we were on top of the last pitch. This was also a small chamber with a narrow rift running off.

Another fag and bolt later we descended the final pitch into massive chamber - Exit Cave. From here we wandered fifty metres into the Ball Room and toured out of Exit using the streamway entrance, as the water level was low and being preferable to the crawly (geomorphologically and insect-wise) exit of the previous week.

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Back at the cars the sun was beginning to set and the moon to rise. Another perfect day had slipped us by. The trip was enjoyed by all and will probably prove to be a popular beginners trip, especially now it is bolted. Many thanks to everyone for helping with managing ropes and the other mundane tasks, along the way.

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WAYS AND MEANS TO ROW THE OLD DITCH.... (Gear and rigging info.)

The entrance is marked with a streamer of yellow marking tape. A squirm through a shortlived boulder pile leads into roughly fifteen metres of non-descript passage, terminating at the "toilet bowl". Ignore this cesspit and climb up to the wide stance overlooking the first pitch. There should be a sling sitting on a bollard, further up on the left. Weight this anchor point low down, to prevent the (renewed!) sling from slipping off. This eight metre pitch lands you on a wide ledge, suitable for several people.

A Petzl ring hanger resides to the left of the ledge and the bolt could be worth tightening up a fraction. A spanner is best for this type of hanger. The second pitch is about forty metres and subject to a lot of flying mud. Shelter from this in a niche above the third pitch.

A Petzl twist hanger overlooks this next pitch and could be backed with a knifeblade about one metre away, if so desired (the last person removing it). The twelve metre drop leads immediately to the top of the last pitch. A Petzl twist with alloy maillon, is set low down on the left wall of the rift. A wedged block on the floor could be used as another temporary back up. It would be desirable to replace the maillon with a steel one, if suspect.

The pulldown on this forty metre pitch is decidedly tricky and care should be taken not to twist the rope around itself, or some of that caver's favourite, overlap jam, might result. Follow the wear pad to the left, leading to the Ball Room some fifty metres away. This is probably easier than trying to get directly down to the stream.

The trip requires two preferably fifty metre ropes, used doubled. A third rope of thirty to forty metres could be worth carrying, for easier management on the shorter pitches and as a way out in the unlikely event of a jam occurring on the second pitch. We tied back to the spare rope of the previous pitches and/or used slings/piton backups as a comforting measure, with the last person down removing the arrangement.

LEIGH DOUGLAS AND NICK HUME

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A SPLASH IN THE POT IS WORTH TWO IN THE BUSH - Splash Pot: MAY 1987

Participants: Nick Hume, Martin Carnes, Stefan Eberhard and Rolan Eberhard.

Almost three months had passed since Trev and I savoured the delights of this nasty little hole. It had been long enough to patch all the rips that my trog suit sustained, and to forget the number of squeezes one had to endure. I started to remember as the four of us stood around rather

apathetically at the top of the road. No-one showed undue enthusiasm to leave the relative comfort of the car, but perhaps that was just the persistent rain. It always seems to rain at Splash Pot! With a vague notion that we should at least go and look at the entrance, we set off. Where is that old enthusiasm....?

Having had a good look at the entrance it didn't seem such a bad idea to go as far as the first pitch. The first part of the cave was quite pleasant; narrow and somewhat awkward but it didn't take long to reach the pitches. By now apathy was on the decline and rigging the ropes went smoothly, although what are normally only splashes became literally buckets. Nick waited at the bottom for a while before continuing, unsure if the others were coming down or not.

The passage that follows has been named "Close to the Bone". The reasons for this will be appreciated (perhaps understood is a better word) by anyone who goes there. The squeezes themselves are not exceptionally difficult, there are just a lot of them and some need thinking about before tackling. Eventually we arrived at the exploration front - a short pitch that had been partially descended on the last trip. A rope was rigged and I abseiled to a broad ledge a few metres down; by descending slightly further I could swing across to another ledge on the opposite side. Ignoring a passage that went off horizontally (which is likely to join the succeeding pitch), I continued to the base of the pitch proper. From here a convenient window opened out into a dry shaft, and I didn't delay to rig a rope and escape the drenching spray of the waterfall.

This new pitch proved only slightly longer than the previous one (estimated lengths - 12 & 14 metres), and deposited me in the middle of a comparatively spacious chamber. An aven entered from one side, but an obvious continuation passage led off beneath the water cascading from the ceiling. Rather surprised to find a bit of decent passage for a change, I followed it eagerly. Before long the tunnel broadened to form a wide but low chamber, floored with large talus blocks.

The stream disappeared down a hole in the floor and this appeared to hold a short pitch. However, I continued along the chamber, past some straws of respectable length. I reached a point where it was possible to descend a loose rubble slope and the sound of rushing water beckoned. A squeeze under a large boulder brought me back to the top of the active streamway. Two short cascades hinted that the cave might turn out to be a goer after all, but optimism was short lived. A crawl under a huge fallen block led into a small room, and here the stream flowed into a slot against the far wall. By digging a few cobbles it would be possible to squeeze through, although to be honest it did not look encouraging, more likely a low crawl or sump. Some narrow phreatic tubes in the ceiling did not look promising.

I retraced my steps and was thankful to find Nick still waiting at the top of the pitch. By this time Stefan had arrived, and without much further ado we started our exit from the cave.

Despite my far from complimentary description of Splash Pot there are a few points worth recording. Perhaps they will encourage a return trip one day.

- Splash Pot is at roughly the same altitude as Khazad-dum, and therefore has the potential for reasonable depth. Although a connection does

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not seem probable, it would be interesting to see a survey showing the relationship of the two caves (as well as getting an accurate depth of Splash Pot).

- My exploration at the deepest point was very cursory. The ascending continuation of the rockfall chamber would be worth following.

- There is a noticeable draught present at some points in the cave, although apparently not so at the deepest point.

ROLAN EBERHARD

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MIDNIGHT HOLE EN MASSE - May 1987

Participants: Rolan, Adrienne, Luke, Phil, Alex and Susan.

Several months previously while involved in a Div. Rec. camp, I had promised to take a group of people caving. All had done a bit of abseiling, so that old favourite Midnight Hole seemed a reasonable introductory trip. As it happened, most of us were at Stef's, Leigh's and Phil's party the night before, so the sounds of Martin's band "LOW LIFE" were still resonating in our ears when we got off to our sluggish start on Sunday morning.

The eyebolts provided convenient anchor points and we quickly descended the six consecutive pitches. Using Italian Hitches combined with a jam knot to one side of the eyebolts, allowed the others to abseil without problem. I noticed that Terrier Bolts with hangers had been placed at the top of the third and fifth pitches, probably by Arthur Clarke. Matchbox Squeeze presented no difficulties, except possibly for Phil who was dragging an H-framed pack behind him.

We walked out into the daylight at the entrance of Mystery Creek Cave after about three hours underground - much less time than I had predicted. It was a relaxing trip that has given the participants a taste of vertical caving, and hopefully whetted their appetites for bigger and better things.

ROLAN EBERHARD

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KHAZAD-DUM (JF 4/5/14) - Diving the sump

Party: Vicky Bonwick (SSS), Jeff Butt, Greg Jordan (SCS), Phil Hill (TCC)

Being one of the major stream sinks in the Florentine Valley, K.D.'s second sump has been of interest for some time as a possible way into the elusive master cave terminating at the Junee Resurgence to which the stream has been traced.

Over a year of dropping in on SCS meetings I was greeted each time by friendly "no we're not carrying your diving gear!". They finally "caved" in. A week of fine weather, a weekend permit for the valley, a few phone calls and we were ready to roll.

Vicky had been away surveying on the West Coast and was delayed a day by bad weather. This resulted in a delay in starting the trip. We met at Maydena



June, 1987

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at 2.30 pm and were kept waiting at the gate until 4.30 pm due to uncertainties. Dwarrowdelf (JF 14) was selected as the best option for accessing the K.D. sumps, so in rapidly diminishing daylight the party set off. The first person was underground by 6 pm.

Steady progress was made through the cave, Vicky and Jeff rigging with Greg and Phill bringing up the rear.

At 10:00 pm, while on the fourth pitch, Greg decided to head back to the surface. He was cold and tired, so it was probably the best option for him to have taken. This proved beneficial later on, as Greg was the only one of us capable of driving home.

Vicky descended the final pitch around midnight, to find that my "70 metre" rope left her suspended some 10 metres short of the floor. Having only diving gear in her rope pack, she then had to ascend to allow the pitch to be rerigged. Jeff then descended to stash the diving gear. We had decided to postpone the dive for the following weekend. The cars were reached by 5:00 am.

SUNDAY 24th MAY - Khazad-Dum continued

Party: as before, but this time including Lindsay Hicks.

The usual Sunday permit meant the pressure was really on, with a 7:30 am to 5:00 pm time limit on diving and derigging the cave. Greg announced that he had forgotten his boots, which brought considerable laughter. He spent yet another day languishing at the cars - there must be better ways to occupy weekends.....

We were underground by 9:30, Vicky and Phill bottoming Dwarrowdelf by 11:00 am. The sump was reached by 12:30, by which time Jeff and Lindsay had caught up. The weather had changed things from the previous week, the sump being a muddy brown and rising (20 cm while we were there). We decided to attempt the dive anyway.

I swam around the walls of the sump pool, finding a continuation that appeared to double back on itself, heading in a roughly northerly direction (ie away from Junee Resurgence !). A three metre, shallow duck led me into a large aven with no apparent leads above water. The walls were coated in a peculiar "tree root" type growth. I continued the dive along a narrow rift, for a further 35 metres distance, reaching a depth of 10 metres. At this point the rift became too narrow to negotiate. The rock of the walls was very friable and it looked hopeless trying to penetrate further. A great disappointment!

The dive was terminated and everyone started to head out. We were met by raging waterfalls on seemingly every pitch, which slowed us somewhat. Vicky had zoomed ahead by 3:00 pm, attempting to reach the gate by the 5:00 pm deadline. The rest of us battled water, falling rocks and massive packs to eventually emerge at 8:30 pm, having decided on the way up that the derigging of the bottom three pitches was enough.

Greg was down to his last candle and had been having adventures of his own, in and about the cars during his day. In the end Steve Summers ended up

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driving us home, but that's another story..... Many thanks to all of the people who helped make the dive possible.

PHILL HILL

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10th MAY - JUNE: a Resurgence of interest.

Those involved: Rolan Eberhard and Nick Hume.

Another "wet run" in preparation for the long awaited push dives in the second sump. Rolan led off through the first sump, hoping to reduce the attained depth with a bit of line straightening. This proved impractical due to the nature of passage at the deepest point, so we are stuck with the same old cumulative decompression problems.

I followed, towing a local version of the Cocklebiddy sleds - a sizeable section of sealed stormwater pipe. This was a bit tiresome due to buoyancy problems, but at least allowed us to carry some dry gear into "For Your Eyes Only", for future use. The container worked well (ie no exchange of caverniferous body fluids). It had to be flooded for the return trip, to neutralize buoyancy. This had interesting consequences, for the pressure seal could not be broken on emerging from the sump. Thus I got to carry 40 litres or so of Junee sump water home to Hobart!

The intention was to do a push the following weekend. Our luck changed for the worse - heavy rainfall intervened. Marginal weather subsequently has wrought a return to apathy. No doubt enthusiasm will be rekindled in some future pub conversation.

NICK HUME

THE TCC. ANNUAL CLUB DINNER WILL BE  
HELD ON OCTOBER 2ND POSSIBLY AT 'WALTERS'  
RESTAURANT HOWEVER WE DO NOT AS YET  
HAVE CONFIRMATION. MORE INFORMATION  
WILL BE FORTHCOMING! IF YOU WISH TO  
ATTEND THIS RATHER VAGUE EVENINGS  
ENTERTAINMENT PLEASE CALL T. WAILES  
ON 344 862 IN THE NOT TOO DISTANT  
FUTURE.

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TCC TREASURER'S REPORT 86/87

Receipts

Membership and A.S.F. levy	\$ 408.00	
Speleo Spiel subs.	\$ 98.20	
Lamp fee	\$ 262.50	
Lamp cells	\$ 140.00	
Bank interest	\$ 72.74	
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	\$ 981.44	(1)
Bank balance (cheque account 1405/11612)	\$ 66.29	(2)
Bank balance (S.I. account)	\$ 551.93	(3)
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Total (1)+(2)+(3)	\$ 1599.66	

Expenditure

Speleo Spiel printing costs	\$ 120.00	
" " postage	\$ 212.62	
Equipment (see below *)	\$ 239.67	
A.S.F. capitation	\$ 96.00	
Other (see below #)	\$ 121.98	
	-----	
(at 04 April 1987)	\$ 790.27	(4)
Bank balance (cheque account 1405/11612)	\$ 30.93	(5)
Bank balance (S.I. account 1403 8634)	\$ 769.46	(6)
	-----	
Total (4)+(5)+(6)	\$ 1590.66	

\* Equipment purchases:

- used cap lamp heads	\$ 50.00
- cap lamp parts, new	\$ 30.17
- survey tapes	\$ 40.50
- used ladders with traces (2 of each)	\$ 90.00
- plastic rock bolt protectors	\$ 29.00

# Other expenditure:

- TCC dinner, drinks plus 1 meal	\$ 82.00
- copy of Vertical Caves for ANM	\$ 10.00
- Christmas cheer for ANM	\$ 24.50
- taxes on bank transactions	\$ 4.21

The treasurer apologises for a "misclosure" in the budget; receipts somehow exceeded expenditure, by nine dollars (closer than the Growling-Icetube closure - Ed.).

CHRIS DAVIES  
Honourable Treasurer TCC

# SPLASH POT JF-10

