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### NEWSLETTER OF THE TASMANIAN CAVERNEERING CLUB

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- \*\* Surveying in the Mainline area of Growling Swallet. If an early enough start is made, the thing could possibly be done in a single day. Not a lot of work to be done, but getting there and back is interesting. See Trev for this one.
- \*\* Beginners trip in Midnight Hole. Also potentially a "caving is fun, really!" type of trip for the more experienced. See or phone Nick Hume (231934) for kick off time.
- \*\* Dribblespit Swallet, for anyone wanting to field test repairs to their trog suits. A demanding little piece, complete with 60 metre pitches and lacerating squeezes. Its a committing introduction to sado-masochism and what's more its still going at over 150 metres.... The sound of distant waterfalls is luring Rolan back there, but he's fast running out of voluntary companions. Ring him for details and start oiling your whip......

\*

# SNIPPETS and SNIPES....

\*\*\* Some acknowledgements are definitely due to those (guilty!) persons involved in March's Calendar issue of Speleo Spiel. Foremost to the redoubtable Trevor Wailes who did a magnificent job of printing all the "bits" that were pushed his way. That the issue came out at all and in such a professional format is entirely due to a lot of effort on his part; well done lad! Many thanks also to Andrew Briggs for the classic cover photo, taken in Kubla Khan. Considerable experimentation and film went into achieving this result and its a pity the black and white reproduction does little justice to his colour original. Maybe next year we can have an all colour photo calendar.....Trev.....!

The artwork was provided by those perverse jokesters, Martyn Carnes and Nick Hume, giving their insights into a lighter side of the milieu that the rest of us simply label as "caving"..... No!, those crosses that appear on the dates of certain Wednesdays aren't public service paydays! They are put there to remind you of club meetings,

circa 9pm at the Wheatsheaf Hotel. There is no excuse now for anybody not turning up to have a beer or two and mumble a few trip suggestions!

\*\*\* Whilst on the subject of accolades, a spread in the Midweek section of the Mercury (16th March) paid worthy homage to "Lowlife's" win in the recent "battle of the bands" competition. To those of you who think "Lowlife" is someone's idea of a name for a bit of scungy cave passage<sup>1</sup>, it is in fact the title of an excellent rock quartet, captained by our very own singing caver, Martyn Carnes.

The group was adjudged the best from among seven other bands in the finals held at the Wheatsheaf Hotel the Friday prior to the article. They played a medley of songs including Bela Lugosis Dead, Love Will Tear Us Apart and the original State of Mind. This, combined with the trash can they used as stage prop (!) won the hearts of the large gathering and they are now \$1000 (worth of Yamaha gear) richer.

If you fancy a bit of "Lowlife" you can catch them still on the occasional Wednesday or Friday nights at the Doghouse Hotel. It sure beats going caving next day....!

\*\*\* On the adverse side of fortune is misfortune..... A recent dive trip to Lawrence Creek Rising was met with some colloidal particulate in the water, reducing visibility to almost nil. The planned push trip/survey/photography had to be abandoned.

The following weekend a trip into Growling Swallet had similar luck when the cave was found to be in flood! Something of a surprise since the area had been experiencing drought conditions for months. A diversion up to Icetube ran into sleet!

The "streak" continued yet again the next weekend. A flat tyre on the Strathgordon Road preceded a blown O-ring and faulty lights on a push dive into Junee Resurgence. (What are the odds of two out of three light sources failing on a dive?) No spares were carried so another abortion. Which just goes to prove... "when you're not, you're not".

As a fitting finale to the last trip, the divers emerged from the sump to find a group of bods setting up a "Mad Hatters" party on the Junee Cave Reserve. The sight of marquees and laneways of banners along the track was almost enough for them to think that chaos had taken over, but I suppose the partygoers thought much the same when the divers appeared!

\*\*\* What about the club forking out for a drum of carbide? We frequently go on expeditions to out-of-the-way places, where the use of the stuff is essential. Are we collectively so stingy that the pioneering ones amongst us (and followers) have to resort to candles to find their way about. Maybe we'll have to modify our Petzl Kabooms to take wicks and petrol!

Sympathisers should petition the club's president (or threaten not to

<sup>1</sup> Yes! just such a piece of cave passage has recently been named "Lowlife". Its the unsurveyed roof sniff extension of upstream Quetzalcoatl Conduit at PB.

vote for him!). Alternatively, try buying him a beer and if that fails, keep "shouting" until it succeeds.....

\*\*\* Someone must be buying beers for Arthur Clarke! He has just printed up the latest Tasmanian Cave and Karst Research Group Journal (number 3) and its quite something. This edition covers a wide range of topics - faunal surveys, considerations of karst in the forest inquiry, mapping of Mt Anne cave region and a review of the recent Mole Creek Geological / Geomorphological Field Guide written by Clive Burrett and Albert Goede. Included to is a summation of the State's less explored karst areas, plus information on recent discoveries and goings on.....

It clearly represents a great deal of effort by the editor Arthur, exhaustively (if not exhaustingly) so. The same must be said of the many contributors. I believe individual copies ar available from him for about \$5 which is good value for the wealth of knowledge it contains. Now if all of us at TCC went out and got our science degrees....!

\*\*\* Heard around the Easter campfire in the Cracroft "......with an Eberhard good luck charm, you find so much cave passage it becomes boring..... without one, you think you're lucky if you find a blocked doline!!"

Another Rash of Growling Disease, alias A New Members Trip....!

People there: Jean Symes, Mike O'Neill, Lew Mitchelmore and Stuart Nicholas.

New members..... Hmmmmmmm.... Where do you take them after the usual Midnight Hole / Welcome Stranger / have a look at the entrances thing?? A few mumblings of forthcoming GS Dreamtime dive trips suggested that the rigging and rope at the Destiny Pitch should be looked at. This was rigged, well, um like, ages ago and its state at this time was unknown. Any excuse to toddle into GS with a group of partly eager new bods.

A moderately early start nearly sorted the trogs from the sheep, but all was well in the end. Unusually fine weather obviated the need for an umbrella, but wet feet were still the order of the day. The infamous Windy Rift was negotiated and then came the relatively new Hume Ladders - definitely the way to go! These proved to be quite outstanding, in fact quite a step up for TCC fixed rigging!

Lunch was had at one of the pools in Destiny, the rope and rigging checked, then a retreat made with very little help from the esteemed "leader". Funny how different a cave can look going the other way.... Some of the side passages were investigated under the pretence of finding the way out (or was it the other way around?). Anyway, we all duly surfaced after a good fun day enjoyed by all. Checked out the distance remaining to survey up one of the Nine Road spurs and that was the end of another day in "the Valley".

Stuart Nicholas

### CAVES NEAR KANDRIAN. PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Rolan Eberhard

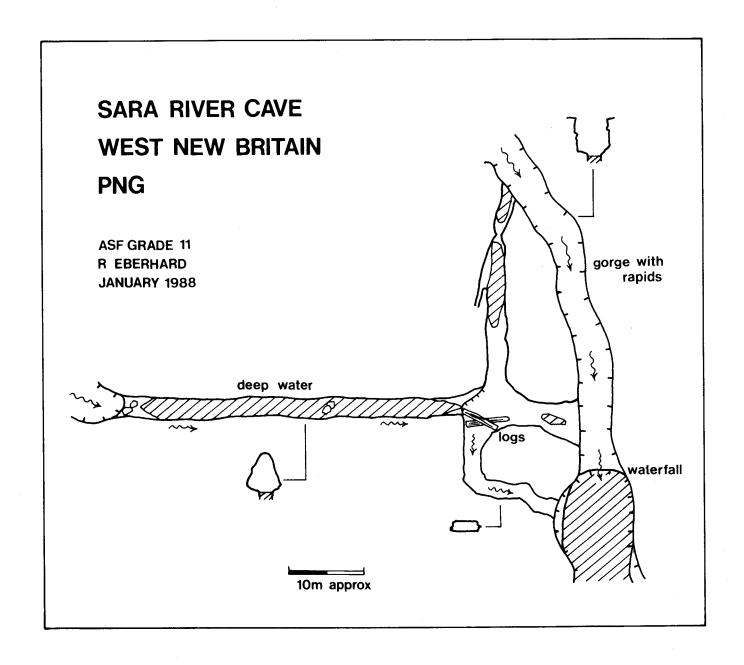
The small town of Kandrian is situated on the south coast of West New Britain, Papua New Guinea. Adjoining East New Britain is famous for its huge dolines and big river caves, but by comparison West New Britain is poorly known. Caves and reports of caves are common from coastal and the more accessible areas inland, some of which are important for archeological reasons. But it is higher up in the rugged Whiteman Range that forms the spine of New Britain, where one can only imagine what awaits discovery. The 1:100000 Namo sheet indicates karst topography occurring up to an altitude of 1880 metres at one point in the mountains. Of course, getting to such locations is far easier said than done. Apparently French cavers spent some time around Kandrian several years ago, but I am unaware of their findings. The following report describes my own observations during a four day visit to Kandrian in January 1988.

The most accessible cave is located in the town itself. Gallasch (1973) calls this "Police Barracks Cave" for the obvious reason that it is situated behind where the police barracks stood at the time of his visit. These days the prison compound is probably a better guide to where the cave is. It is necessary to climb a jumble of boulders to reach the entrance concealed by vegetation at the base of a limestone cliff. A spacious passage winds along before opening out to a number of chambers where a sizeable colony of bats make their home. An upper entrance to the cave is located in a doline just off the side of the road before Kandrian Primary School.

Bourke (1973) records that the Alinbit River emerges from a cave inland from Kandrian, although no other details are given. This sounded like a report that might be worthwhile investigating. A single main road leads inland from Kandrian, crossing the Alinbit at a village called Laiana. Inquiries in Kandrian found me a local who knew the Laiana area and he assured me that there were caves up there. He sounded quite enthusiastic; one of the caves even had rocks hanging down from the ceiling like women's breasts, ie stalactites. At this stage I had the good luck of meeting up with a fellow by the name of Alphonse Bates. Alphonse had a vehicle and he and friend Ludwig were heading up the road towards Laiana.

Talking to the locals at Laiana elicited a variety of conflicting No one really seemed sure whether or not the Alinbit River came out of a cave. We were shown a muddy looking shaft in a gully just off the side of the path leading from Laiana up to the next little group of huts to the north. At the road bridge over the river This looked like itself there was also supposed to be a small cave. no more than just a rock overhang on the river bank, but we couldn't see it anyway because the water was up. It was driving back towards Kandrian when we bumped into a group of men who did know about Alinbit They had seen the place where water flowed down from the mountains and pored into a hole in the ground. It was described how the thunder of water made the ground shake underfoot, but they also said that the water emerged from underground not far away from where it went under. The feature sounded more like a large arch or natural bridge rather than the sort of river cave that I was hoping for. Unfortunately I didn't have enough time left in PNG to go and have a look at it for myself.

Thirty kilometres along the coast to the west of Kandrian is a place called Sara River, and I had been told of a waterfall there that was worth seeing. On the map it is called the Anu River, near Wasum, although I only heard it referred to as Sara. The problem was how to get there. Alphonse came to the rescue with a dinghy and outboard and he, Ludwig, Alois and I set off to explore Sara River. From the coast we followed the river upstream to the first waterfall - a large sloping ramp down which the whole river cascaded. From here we proceeded through the forest on foot. A bend in the river gave us a view of the next fall. Most of the water was flowing over a drop of about 6 metres at one end of a small amphitheatre, but on the opposite side was a dark hole in the cliff face out of which poured additional There was no alternative but to plunge into the swirling brown torrent and swim across for a closer look. The entrance was about 4 metres wide by 1.5 metres high, and I followed the water upstream to where a barrier of logs nearly blocked the whole passage. On one side it was possible to squeeze through rotting tree trunks and emerge into daylight again, this time through a large porch that overlooked the top of the main waterfall.



Meanwhile the other three had arrived by climbing up the rockface beside the waterfall. After proceeding along a delightful canyon that lay upstream we returned for a closer look at the cave. On the way back down another entrance was located just above water level and this lead back to the log jam chamber via pools of shallow water and slimy guano deposited by numerous bats. The flow of water that emerged from the entrance through which I had first entered the cave originated from a passage that joined the main intersection point above the pile of logs. The four of us climbed up and with the aid of a single Tekna light, clambered along ledges to avoid the deep looking water below. It was a dead straight tunnel that continued for some distance before opening out into the sunlight of a smaller tributary gorge. A sketch map I drew of the cave accompanies this article.

### References

Bourke, R.M., (1973), "Caves of New Britain. A Preliminary Report", Niugini Caver. 1(1): 13-18.
Gallasch, H., (1973), "Caving at Kandrian, West New Britain", Niugini Caver. 1(3): 86-88.
Specht, J., (1982), "A brief reconnaissance of the Kandrian area", Niugini Caver, 7(2,3.4): 96-99.

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### An Easter Extra.....

Now that Mole Creek is a bit limited as far as caving goes, some members of the TCC decided to hold the annual Easter gathering in the Cracroft Valley. A good choice it was too! In a single eight hour trip, three divers pushed the terminal sump in Judds Cavern to find 1.4 kilometres more mega-streampassage. Just to prove that ethics are alive and kicking, they surveyed it as well!

The new section of streamway has to be the most easy going bit of cave discovered for quite some time. The stream bifurcates into three or four lesser ones leading to sumps / boulder piles. One or two leads remain which could be enough to make the Cracroft sojourn a once a year event. Just long enough to dim memories of the atrocious walk in with diving gear! A full report out soon.... (see later in this mag.)

#### GEAR FOR SALE....

Gibbs ascender (as new)	\$30	(\$58.15 new)
Knee Pads (never used)	\$10	
Choinard adjustable chest harness (never used)	\$30	
"Hummingbird" ice hammer (with interchangeable		
picks for the steep stuff)	\$60	(\$129 new)
Tubular ice screw 30cm (never used)	\$20	(\$40+ new)
Whaletail descender (has done some big pits) (	nly \$ 5	(\$58 new)

Contact: Stefan Eberhard 293775.(h)

# April, 1988 subscriptions are due - PAY UP NOW, or else...

# TCC TREASURER'S REPORT 1987/88

Receipts Membership and ASF Levy Speleo Spiel subscriptions Lamp and Gear Hire Lamp Cell Sales Rope Fund Raffle Income T-shirt Sales Other (mainly used gear hand)	ing)		632.00 171.00 309.00 275.00 40.00 400.00 135.50 206.98	
Bank balance (cheque acct 1403 Bank balance (SI account 1403 Cash on hand Total Receipts (1+2+3+4)		ril 1987)	30.93	(1) (2) (3) (4)
Expenditure Speleo Spiel Printing Speleo Spiel postage Equipment (see Note #1, below ASF Capitation T Shirts Raffle Prizes Contribution to rope for Mexic Other (see Receipts)			196.45 158.90 482.05 116.00 117.00 168.00 200.00 185.00	
less Cheque Number 154381 not	yet presented	<u></u>	1623.40 -165.00	
Bank balance (cheque acct 1408 Bank balance (SI account 1403		eb 1988)		(5) (6) (7)
Total Expenditure (5+6+7)			2986.31	
Note #1: Gear purchases - Asce Bull 200		137.00 70.05 pe 275.00		
		482.05		

# Other notes:

The Club hopes to gain some rope from the Mexico Expedition.

18.50 Profit from T-shirt sales Profit from Raffle 232.00

Receipts inexplicably exceed expenditure by \$0.06

Bank accounts balance at April 1987 800.39 Effective Bank accounts balance at Feb 1988 1362.91

> Chris Davies Hon Treasurer TCC 1987/88

## Judds Cavern - An easter of Discovery in the Cracroft Valley

Bunnies (Easter type): Stefan and Rolan Eberhard, James Davis, Leigh Douglas, Adrienne Van Schie, Trevor Wailes (!!!), Roger "Ramjet", Stuart Bailey and Nick Hume.

Mole Creek was out of contention..... going anywhere near the Florentine inferred a return trip to that beastie, Dribblespit Swallet. So what other venue could we direct our attention to over the Easter break? Everyone was keen, even making a few suggestions..... The consensus was to take our Easter eggs (air tanks!) into the Cracroft; now that sounded sensible??!!

The Eberhards, Jim and Roger went in on Saturday, Stef and Rolan returning for more gear to take in the following day. Rumour has it that Jim strapped a day pack on his chest as well as having the more usual back mounted job! The rest of us turned up on Sunday, not really looking forward to a four hour walk with diving + camping gear, but we set off all the same.

Actually the Farmhouse Creek track is not real bad, many of the 946 or so logs across it having been moved by contract clearers from the Forestry Commission. Thus the pace was brisk if a little weighty up to near the saddle of the watershed.

Thereafter it was slow, cumbersome packs being cursed in their obstruction through the "kiddies play gym" of overgrowth. With a fatalistic attitude and plenty of time we made the Judds Cavern campsite with psyches intact.

The usual night of caving reflection was followed by a day of hard yakka! Diving gear for three was split among everyone making for a reasonably pleasant stroll along the voluminous streamway of Judds. At first siphon, Stef, Rolan and myself bade farewell to the others who, lacking wetsuits, had to be content with a day exploring more hospitable parts of the cave. Jim however did follow us through the brief duck which with its 5cm airspace, resulted in virtually 100% immersion. He couldn't hang about in such a state unfortunately and had to "hot-foot" it back to the other group.

The three of us struggled on in waist-deep streamway, enlarging to a thumping great boulder pile. Many blocks were loose and our encumbered movements were cautious. A mega-chamber awaited on the other side of this ground; a way to the left giving access to the surface via King Billy Hole. (We couldn't use this other entrance, not precisely knowing where it was in the forest.)

The major stream issued from a passage more off to the left on the chamber's far side. This was followed for several hundred metres through a "lowish" crawl at one stage to the terminal sump, being the previously known extent of the cave.

The line of the passage finished blindly; the headwall of the sump was actually against the left behind a niche into small "tube". Clearly the lead followed across the bedding plane and plenty of mud plus the "unknown" factor made the prospect of the dive unpleasant.

I was keen to let an Eberhard do the dive, knowing their record for finding cave. Rolan relinquished however, leaving it up to Stef or me. Cowardice prevailed and Stef tentatively entered the waters with my 30 cubic foot tank strapped to one side, the back-up 25 cubic footer on the other. Rolan and I "fished" with his departing guideline.

After a wait sufficient to signify death-or-glory, Stef's lights reappeared without warning from the exhaust-bubble drift. Once above water, he was all flailing arms and WHOOPEE! YEEEEHA! which prompted the question, "..... did you find anything?" Apparently he had, meaning it was our turn next!

The dive was 30 metres or so in length. Rolan only possessed an 18 cubic foot tank and so was given a complete pair of flippers, there being a pair short for the three of us. Stef and I made do with one flipper each; interesting because we were a little underweighted and the "rocks" (blocks of mud) stuffed up our wetsuits were little compensation. Stef went back through with a carbide light bracketed to his diving helmet, a trifle odd I thought at the time.

The sump was not spacious, constricting further in, thanks to a block at the deepest point. This was met with rather suddenly due to the poor visibility in the wake of everyone's movements. The deepest part of the dive was perhaps 7 or 8 metres and only some 200 pounds pressure drop occurred in the larger airtanks in traversing one way.

We emerged with a few torpid WOWS! into the same sort of mega-passage that prevails in the rest of Judds, perhaps slightly smaller. This had to be the major find of the last few years; not only was it big, but it was sustained-big as well! Much adrenalin-rush followed due to the obvious kilometres waiting to be discovered here.

The floor to roof height was ten metres or so, but there was surprisingly little evidence of aven development to any surface connection. After a couple of hundred metres the passage split, the left (eastward) branch being followed to a scungy tight sump against a wall of rotten rock. Here we surveyed our way back to the junction and then ran off after more exploration.

We followed the major, but lessened stream until it bifurcated yet again into roughly equal parts. The leftmost component was ignored, but was probably the more major way on. We kept following the roughly south easterly trending passage, huge mud dunes here leading to some nice flowstone walls.

A boulder-pile fill obstructed the route slightly and a significant draught was noticed. This dispersed somewhat at twin large avens on the left, some few hundred metres further in, suggesting a definite dry entrance to this part of the system. The way on eventually bifurcated into a labyrinth of feeder passages, the side streams largely issuing from breakdown.

We eventually left the stream altogether, following the bigger passage. The ground here was mixed chamber+passage, with the occasional crawl. Our prior excitement had degenerated to tedium: where was it all going to end? Finally we were barred by a blockage somewhere, beyond an aven I think for the maze had confused my less than enthused memory at that stage.

Surveying began again, only this time the prospect looked far more time consuming. It will be very interesting to see the cave layout, relative to the topography when Stef draws it up. I suspect we were well on the way towards the closed depressions downhill of Lake Sydney, our furthest point being well over three kilometres to the south east of Judds entrance. The major side streams very likely represent the waters sinking into dolines on the saddle between the Picton and Cracroft valleys. All this is speculative at the present stage, though.

Frog skeletons and vegetable detritus were seen below some draughting (fresh) breakdown back from the terminus. Higher level leads were noted at a number of spots, but not looked at, being deeper meandering oxbows most probably. One side passage at floor level was followed to a narrow rift in deep water. This was an upstream sump issuing murky water, disturbed in our travels upstream.

After seemingly ages, we had returned to the large unchecked passage juncture. A thumping great boulder was negotiated into yet more impressive borehole. This went for a few hundred metres to a drafting boulder pile. One or two possible ways through this presented themselves, but were not pushed. In retrospect this could be worth a return visit on our part. This section of passage is certainly the main drain and may well yield more cave.

Yet more surveying by the three "glazed" explorers saw a return to the diving gear. One and a half kilometres of survey data had been put to paper over the five or so hours of exploration. The temptation was just to sit there and not leave at all.

Amazingly, Rolan's carbide light was still going on the other side of the sump, an eerie greeting at our re-emergence. The way back to the entrance was a slog, the diving gear hanging off us until we gained our packs on the other side of the first siphon. We were very tired and contented, Rolan setting a good pace and keen to inform the others of the day's finds.

The comfort of the campfire was very welcome. Jim, Leigh, Adrienne, Roger and Stuart had spent the day exploring various "things" in the main stream of Judds. Trev turned up out of the greenery, much to our surprise, for Trev and bushwalking rarely coincide. He was a welcome sight though, providing us with celebratory drinks and his own peculiar brand of yarns (good work, lad!).

Next day, five of us decided to leave on this high note, wishing to return to pressing needs in the "real" world. Trev, Stef, Jim and Roger remained to carry the TCC banner. I believe they actually went caving as well. In retrospect I would have liked to stay longer myself - the weather was good and the area very hospitable for social caving. A return would be worthwhile next Easter.

## Nick Hume

PS Many, many thanks to all those who went on the trip. Without their help the diving would not have been possible. Judds is now high on the "longest caves" list, with well over three kilometres surveyed!

SPELEO SPIEL 236 April, 1988

# subscriptions are due - PAY UP NOW, or else...

An exceptionally good turnout at the AGM witnessed the return of political underachiever, Trevor Wailes to the Club Presidency (and by popular vote too!). Other election successes were:

- the also modest Nick Hume as vice president
- the hard working Stef Eberhard as secretary
- (6% in his commercial practice exam!) James Davis as treasurer
- that doyen of study, Rolan Eberhard, as librarian
- my Geography "guru", Albert Goede, as archivist
- the very diplomatic Leigh Douglas as public officer

The Committee is now composed of Chris Davies, Paul Merhulik, Arthur Clarke, Dave Weltman and Jeff Watson. Seems as though we have an

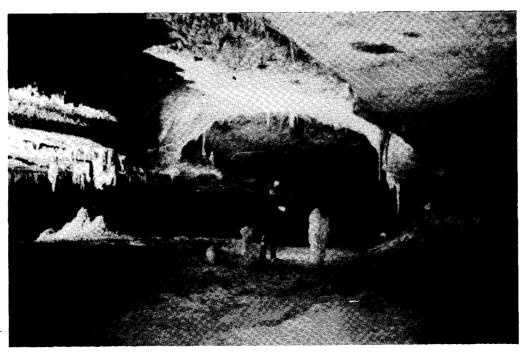
additional social events committee in the form of Jeff Watson and Greg Jordan. On the night they provided an impromptu floor show consisting of impersonations and an exhibition of Judd!

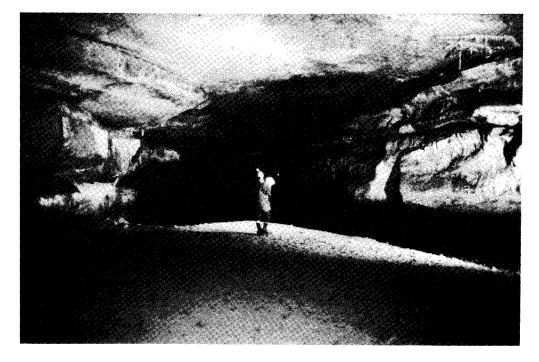
Much praise needs to be showered upon the outgoing treasurer Chris Davies. He not only "kept books" very tidily over the past several years, but was also instrumental in curing "bank balance anorexia", providing most of the effort involved in fund raising during the same period. Well done and many thanks from all of us, Chris!

Quartermaster duties remain with Trev, which is hip, because he is the hub of Hobart's caving scene anyway! In the shortened general meeting that followed, many "delicate" issues were discussed (incorporation, ASF, blah, blah, blah.....), but decision making was left in abeyance for future gatherings (don't forget to attend these and "air" your views!). An entertaining night, particularly thanks to Mutt.... errh Greg and Jeff.

PS A note from the "editor" - we, you, us, them, everyone, someone, whatever, forget (?) to appoint an editor. Does this mean I am finally free of the shackles tying me to the green screen???







Photographs by N. Hume taken 1988 shows Leigh Douglas in Judds entrance series streamway.