SPELEO SPIEL

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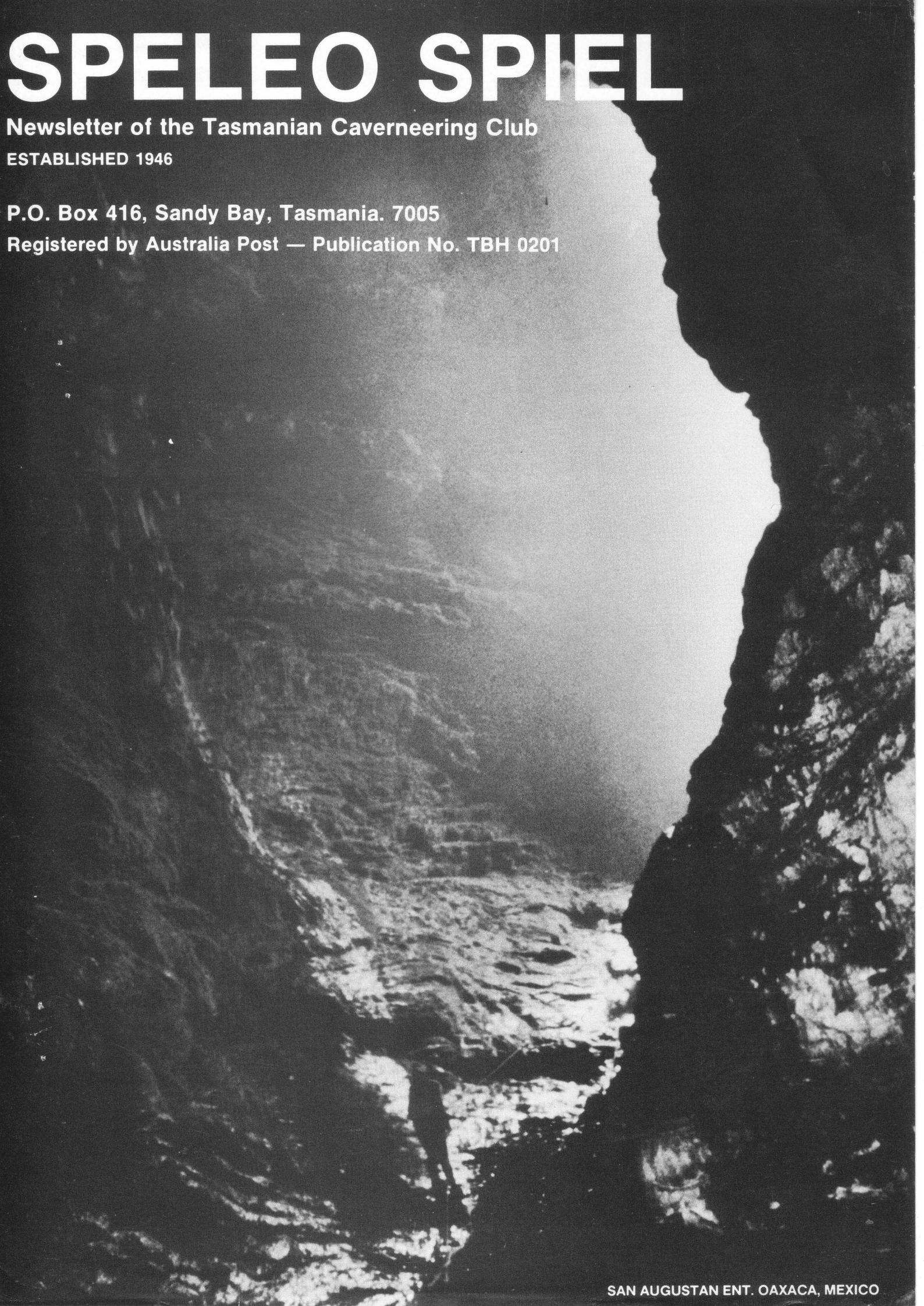

SAN AUGUSTAN ENT. OAXACA, MEXICO

NEWSLETTER OF THE TASMANIAN CAVERNEERING CLUB

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CLUB DINNER.....DEJEUNER DE SOCIAL.....KLUB KRAPNOST.....

Whatever you like to call it, it's happening again. The GOOD WOMAN INN has been settled on as the best venue, being tried and tested before. Come along and have a great time..... be guest speaker! (All our members become guest speakers after the first three reds...) Anyway, the big show is due to begin at (before) 7 pm on Friday September 30. Don't delay... do it right now, before you forget.... ring Trevor Wailes on (002) 344 862, with your intention to go, size of party, etc.

REMEMBER: GOOD WOMAN INN - 30th SEPTEMBER - 7pm.....

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KARSTIC KOMMENTS

DRAC'S BACK.....

A small group of Sydney cavers under the directorship of Danielle Geminus (SUSS) visited Tasmania in June. Arriving on the first weekend of the month the group planed to purchase a cheap vehicle before spending a week at Mole Creek and the first two weeks at Maydena. What they actually did I guess someone knows - Stefan would most likely be the best source of info.....

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Underground sellout in Queensland....

Spotted in a not so recent copy of The Mercury was an advertisement for a freehold caving business, inland from the Gold Coast. It could only happen in Queensland! Included in the deal was a kiosk/residence on 34 hectares of prime karst property. All sorts of possibilities come to mind - does it have rising damp, and is it what they term, a "handyman's delight"? Anyway, before I joined the queue of retiring cavers vying for its sale, I was bit put off by the half million dollar asking price!!!

DON'T FORGET THE TCC ANNUAL DINNER: SEPTEMBER 30 - GOOD WOMAN INN

ANNUAL DINNER - SEPTEMBER 30

MAIL CO$T...

This magnificent publication, as we all know, is vital reading every month and without it we would suffer terminal withdrawal symptoms! Australia Post in their wisdom are increasing the mail costs yet again to the point where the minimum fee demanded for registered publications such as this will be greater than the actual total post fee... It isn't the first time this has happened but the present rate of membership increase is nothing like sufficient to compensate for the mail cost increases...

The registered publication thing is still cheaper than paying normal rates, even taking into account the annual fee and the soon to be increased per article fee. The increased minimum fee per posting nearly makes worthwhile the production of editions that are "non-standard", ie thicker, as the few extra cents per mail article are partly compensated by the total cost then exceeding the minimum fee payable.

The only real answer, apart from establishing an opposing "underground" mail system, is the induction of more members into the auspicious ranks of TCC.... We could always raise the annual sub...

Stuart Nicholas (mail Man...)

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OH NO! NOT THE DREADED CAVING LAMP ARTICLE..... (illuminating stuff?)

Nick Hume's been "banging" away in the workshop again lately. Probably stops him from worrying about all the uni work he's not been doing. Anyway the results have been a compact form of home made caving light: maintenance free, a half kilo lighter than the old Oldhams and more importantly, they don't start dying as soon as you enter a cave (like some of the club ones have been doing lately). In fact they keep going for twenty hours! The secret lies in using a commercially available 4 volt sealed lead-acid battery (from SRT or the Powersonic distributors), namely a POWERSONIC PS 490. The case is best made of a die cast electronics box, modified to tightly enclose the battery yet still accept an Oldham headpiece cap.

The cell specifications suggest a lifetime of four years or so (or 1000 cycles) before any appreciable loss of charge retention capacity.

Cell dimensions are:
-height 94 mm
-width 44mm
-length 102mm

While rated at ten amp hours, performance is dependent on bulb rating. Quartz-halogen 0.85 amp bulbs give exceptional output for some twelve hours from a full charge. The Osram 0.5 amp QH's would seem to be ideal and do give some twenty hours of light from a charge. However, suggestions have been forthcoming that these "blow" after only 20 - 60 hours of life. Unsubstantiated by my tests so far, but these bulbs are in any case quite expensive. Cheapo 3.6 volt globes of whatever amperage give very good light, but in my tests have given up the ghost after only one or two cycles. SRT Limited in Sydney claim to rent out a lamp based on this battery, using the 3.6 volt bulb, reporting no problems! Bulbs of 4.8 volts are fine, somewhat less luminous than

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3.6v, but just as cheap. The 0.7 amp variety gives over fourteen hours from a charge.

Despite being home-spun, the lamp is very sound and it could be worth making several to replace the dying breed of club Oldhams. The light output is comparably bright or brighter, and would be perfectly acceptable for any standard of caving. Best part is that the battery costs only some $30 - $35, considerably less than the $100 + for a miner's lamp battery replacement. Not only that but it doesn't ingest water when "swimming", or when hosed down, a problem that's been giving President/Quartermaster Trevor Wailes indigestion!

Nick Hume

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The above info. is quite profound in its implications, almost electrifying really... It certainly is true that the Oldham wet cells are horrendously expensive these days and the present lot owned by TCC are proving somewhat unreliable, despite being comparatively new. Quite a number of older units are outperforming the latest acquisitions! A little investigation by Stuey Nicholas has revealed that one cell is failing in the batteries, the other being perfectly OK. The mode of failure is in some instances physical/electrical (ie broken cell plate connectors inside the battery case) while others are packing up chemically. The failed cells are frequently found to have been marked by persons unknown, from new, with red tape or similar...

What gives? Were we sold a bunch of rejects or seconds?? Can anyone shed any light on this problem? Nick's article currently provides the best solution. The cost of his handmade light is rather more realistic and it looks to be quite robust, although only time will tell.

Stuart Nicholas

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The caving proletariat are revolting!..... (you already knew that didn't you?) The "dictatorship of", looks set to arise in the guise of a Tasmanian Speleological Federation. Meetings and discussions between senior members of T.C.C., Southern Caving Society, Northern Caverneering Club and the Tasmanian Cave and Karst Research Group, have taken place garnering initial details of formation.

This august body will provide some immediate political clout to issues concerning the caving fraternity. More will be forthcoming on this move as it comes "on line". Rather than being another "club" the federation is intended to be a formalized institution/forum of expertise, from members of existing clubs. All are welcomed to give input! Meetings of T.S.F. will occur on the Thursday night following regular general meetings of Southern Caverneering Society and Tasmanian Caverneering Club (these held on the first Wednesday of the month) and at the same venue, viz. the Wheatsheaf Hotel. Come along and parade your politics!

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Just the thing for a dry change after a winter caving trip. Trev has some excellent quality club windcheaters.—

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for sale, in a multitude of sizes and fashion colours. Probably more appropriate to a night on the town than for grotty use, so surprisingly good are they!

Sporting a T.C.C. appropriate logo on the front (a perceptively drafted caving cartoon by well known artisan, Martyn Carnes), they are sure to become collector's items as only some twenty were made up. They happen to be selling like hot cakes at the bargain price of twenty dollars. If you're interested in being part of "the scene" by appropriating one, wise to get in early and contact Trev on (002) 344862, or write to T.C.C.'s PO box number.

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Haven't got anything decent to wear caving? Maybe you fancy outfitting yourself in a new trog suit for the club dinner? (... that would really jolt some of our semi-retired members!) Well...the Jolly Swagman in Hobart happens to be selling a lightweight lookalike of an Enduro oversuit, for fifty three dollars. They are available in a full range of sizes too. Though possibly un-"suit"-able for a bottoming trip in Nita Nanta, they would be ideal for the occasional caver or somebody fed up with trying to import a hardier model. They are made in a reasonably waterproofed nylon (polyurethane coated) which in common with Enduro suits, allows some evaporative drying out after a bodily immersion. A sewn-in double thickness across the backside, stops "wearing out" and arguably keeps other things in! They sport elasticated wrists, but not ankles, the latter allowing greater comfort when wearing gumboots. Importantly, a hood is incorporated, which can be particularly useful on pitches, at this time of year. An elasticated waist is also a plus factor reducing the "coefficient of drag" through squeezes. External chest and hip pockets are a bit novel, though their exposed entry-zippers could be somewhat problematic. Anyway, at the price, they are worth sussing out if you're in need.

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The latest issue of "Sportdiving in Australia and the South Pacific" number 8 (June/July 1988), contains an article by Peter Rogers on recent underwater exploration in Pannikin Plain Cave on the Nullabor Plain. Reaching depths of 35 metres (with the associated decompression problems for penetration diving), the main tunnel has been pushed for approximately 1.5 km and still going with plenty of side leads. Another brilliant new cave with potential to rival Cocklebiddy.

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THE T.C.C.'s "WISH YOU A HAPPY BIRTHDAY" COLUMN

That (dare I say it) patriarch of the club, Stuey Nicholas, recently kicked off his (AHEM...)th year with a continental bash at the Paris Restaurant. Though they would have been appropriate to the many cavers in attendance, frogs legs weren't on the menu!

Leigh Douglas celebrated her auspicious birthdate (8th of August 1988!), in a fine turnout at The Nose Bag. One lady guest lost "vertical hold" towards the end of the evening and had to be physically propped up! Stefan Eberhard and crowd also joined in (a week prior to his real birthday, but then any excuse for a nosh

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up....) and needless to say, many presents and other "things" were consumed on the night.

The occasions were a good chance to fine tune some hangovers and practice for the forthcoming club dinner.

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MINIATURIZATION IS "GROWING" IN THE CLUB.....

The Cave Diving Group recently acquired an eight cubic foot capacity air tank. Resembling an industrial strength can of Pea-Beu (weighing in at all of two kilograms), the " bail-out-bottle " is a very practical back up air supply for remote sumps, such as Mainline in Growling Swallet. It would also be useful in it's own right for very short dives, eg Coelecanth explorations, Pendant Pot through-trips, and the like. Next thing you know we'll have gill implants.....!

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HELP!..... Leigh Douglas has lost a foot! More specifically one wet suit bootie..... last seen straying onto the Junee Quarry Road at the start of the Chairman track. It has grey and white panels and answers to the name of "bloody boots". Please return to Leigh if found or phone 25 1081.

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT 1987-88

Looking back on the past year, activities of a caving nature appeared low key and lacked the fervor of previous years. However the lack of interest in the Florentine Valley forced renewed interest in some of the more distant karst regions of Tasmania. Not only has the club been looking further afield, individual members have been seeking out new pastures as well. A reconnaissance of Papua New Guinea and New Ireland by Rolan Eberhard at Christmas proved useful, particularly should the T.C.C. decide to look to this area for future diversions.

Stefan Eberhard joined the Mexico Expedition in an intense caving sojourn that discovered many deep systems but unfortunately could not crack the magic -1000m mark.

The T.C.C. mounted its own small expedition to Precipitous Bluff in the south with good results. Perhaps the most important of these was a surface survey linking three known systems with a potential length of 5.5 km. A full report of this will be published in the Speleo Spiel shortly. A follow up trip this coming Christmas should see more success in this distant karst area.

The only other "trip away" was an Eberhard cave diving expedition to Mt Gambier in South Australia.

Caving discoveries closer to home have been limited. The "Devils Eye" was found on a trip to Mt Anne. Meanwhile down at Ida Bay, Dismal Hill Pot was bottomed but neighbouring Great Ex(pectations) still has to live up to its name. A dig in the latter produced some tight passage with a very strong draught that still awaits attention.

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Trips into Growling Swallet saw the extension of Servalane to no real conclusion. Dives in the Mainline and Dreamtime sumps were inconclusive but a dive in the Coelecanth sump to -19 metres by Nick Hume and James Davis, appears to have just set a new Australian depth record at -375 metres.

As a club, the T.C.C. did enlarge somewhat over the last year. New members with caving experience are always a boon to a club, requiring less attention from older members and their keenness is already proven. We were fortunate to attract several of these people from interstate and they seem to have adjusted well to the local caving conditions. Membership, while not booming, is very much more healthy than it has been for many years and the club must foster this by offering more social type novice trips.

S.R.T. rigs for club use were assembled this year and along with cave packs, helmets and lamps may be hired from the quartermaster store. Thus keen new members wanting to get some vertical caving experience, no longer have to beg, borrow or steal heaps of gear and the large cash outlay is avoided (to find out that you didn't really like "it" anyway).

Relations with A.N.M. seem to have normalised now that we no longer go there! Maybe the past friction was a matter of familiarity breeds contempt; hopefully good relations will continue into the coming summer and our access will not be hampered by petty politics. Some access restrictions in other parts of the state are problematical. Although there is no real malice intended, the Herberts Pot area is still off limits until clarification of land owner/National Estate problems. This will require some shrewd and common sense proposals all round.

The managing committee of T.C.C. would like to thank the management and gatekeepers at A.N.M. Maydena, Denis Jacoora and staff of the Wheatsheaf Hotel and Mick Garland of the "Margaret B" for help, support and entertainment in the past year.

Trevor Wailes.

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MEXICO UPDATE..

The latest 87-88 winter caving season in Mexico witnessed considerable exploratory activity by various international expeditions, particularly in the southern states of Oaxaca and Puebla.

In Puebla State the Americans returned to Sotano de Ocotempa, a giant 300m shaft initially explored by an earlier Belgian expedition. The cave continued steeply downward to a final depth of -1041m.

In addition to a recce trip to Belize, the Belgians were back in this general area in 1988 already having some respectable holes up to -700m deep, as well as an extensive resurgence cave system. Meanwhile in Oaxaca State we had brief contact with a group of Quebecois who were having some trouble gaining access to the lower foothills of Xincinteplt. It seemed that the burros would not cross the swinging wire bridge over the Rio Petlapa. Xincinteplt is an impressive 3250m high limestone massif immediately to the north of the Chilchotla/Zongolica cave area.

The upper slopes of this mountain had previously been recce'd by the Belgians and also the Australians in 1985, but with disappointing results. Al Warild, Mark Wilson and I also made a brief trip down to the Rio Petlapa looking for possible resurgences of the Zongolica caves, the maximum depth potential is greater than 2000 m. The French-Canadians were subsequently joined by Steve Worthington and we later heard that they had found a circa 270 m shaft...!

Just a few hours walk south of Zongolica, along the Sierra Mazateca lies the -1353 m deep (and 70 km long!) Sistema Huautla where the American cavers have been operating for many years now. Dye tracing located a principle resurgence to the system and confirmed a depth potential of 1700 m. The Pena Colorada was previously considered to be the main resurgence and has seen a number of diving expeditions. However it now appears that it represents a perched overflow conduit for the Huautla waters. Climbing attempts at the lowest levels in Sotana de San Augustin did not produce any high level bypass routes and there seems little prospect for extending the depth of Sistema Huautla, just "booty scooping" as the Yanks would say.

Such booty did turn up in the form of Tarrantula Cave where I was able to participate in some of the initial exploration. A consistently narrow stream canyon necessitated liberal use of a hammer particularly where calcite obstructions were concerned! Needless to say it may provide an upper entrance to Sotano Agua de Carrizo (836 m), one of the deep Huautla caves that has so far eluded a physical connection with the rest of the system.

La Grieta (-733 m) has been connected to San Augustin and short sump dives respectively have realised connections through the -1000 m + Li Nita and Nita Ninta feeders. Sistema Huautla is the deepest cave in the western hemisphere and the "ultimate" through trip has yet to be attempted. That is, descend through the upper entrance of Nita Ninta and down to the bottom at -1353 m and then back up some 862 m via San Augustin. Such a traverse would involve more than 100 rope drops, a 10 m sump dive and an awful lot of narrow testing passage!

Cerro Rabon is also part of the Sierra Mazateca and has massive depth potential, although remoteness and accessibility problems hindered exploration. Recce trips have been undertaken by the Americans, and also the Australians in 1985. A Swiss/Californian team located some large shaft entrances during the previous season and rumour has it that they were to return during 1988. A large contingent of British cavers were back in Mexico this year and doubtless they had a good time. Mexican cavers have been active too, accompanying the British and also undertaking their own explorations at the base of Mexico's highest mountain, Pico Orizaba (5600m). At the time of my departure in late February they had pushed a stream cave here to -200 m and it was still going.

The quantity of unexplored limestone with record depth potential, in southern Mexico is quite considerable. Al Warild had his eye on the next range to the south of Huautla, the Sierra Juarez. Needless to say, a party of Californian cavers had got there first and partially explored Cueva Cheve to 750 m. This group was planning to return during drier conditions in March. However, the lads on the Huautla Project under the particular encouragement of one Don Coons went off to pirate this cave in late February. A depth of -1038 m was reached. Al Warild and Anne Gray attempted to join the Californians on their

return trip later, but were subsequently dissuaded by Speleo-political and ethical problems.

Well, what did the Aussies find? An awful lot vertical cave was explored and surveyed, but the magic -1000m remained elusive. Sonconga provided plenty of sport and excitement but sumped out after -946m of verticality (39 pitches). Some desperate pushing in Guixani, which went to -940m in 1985, produced a few extra metres of depth. A cave affectionately known as "Animal" was initially pushed to about -460m, but another route was eventually found that zoomed down to -894m. Yua Nita (Suck Cave) contained a fine 147m shaft, but -704m was as deep as it got. Cueva del Toro Negro (cave of the black bull) was a tight and sporty swallet hole, located high up on the range at 2000 m asl. Unlike the majority of Zongolica caves there was considerable horizontal development and a connection into the main drain, a superb section of big river passage which terminated prematurely in a boulder choke at -555 m.

In addition to these systems a plethora of other caves less than -400m deep were investigated. Three hundred spits (8 mm bolt anchors) were taken on the expedition but there weren't many left unused after 4 months of caving. The Zongolica area is unusual in that there is a high density of fragmented cave systems which drop very steeply to great depth. There are few apparent connections and no evidence yet of a major base level drainage conduit. The cave potential in this area is rather phenomenal, the best is still to come, and the Aussies will probably be back there in 89-90!

Stefan Eberhard.

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JF341.....or should it be JF 5.....4.....3.....2.....1.....

The bold team included: Trevor Wailes, Stefan Eberhard, Leigh Douglas, Lew Mitchelmore and Nick Hume.

Despite being officially known as "Threefortyone" it seems to me that the cave could do with a real name. The thing deserves it, as there appears to be reasonable promise of it doing something significant (more on that later). As a suggestion, Bunty emerged from his first trip there, coated in what he described as caramello. "Caramello Cave" may not get approval from the discoverers of the cave, but at least its worth chewing over!!!

Anyway, aside from a grubby entrance series, the rest of the cave is quite tame; almost pleasant in fact. The only thing novel in our descent of the some 150 vertical metres of it, was Stef's bolt placement overlooking the final forty metre drop. This obviates a nasty rub point over the end of the steep ramp, that constitutes the topmost part of the pitch. The hazard almost put paid to a prior trip, when a rope was half severed. The casing, by the way, is on the left, some ten metres down from the main anchor point and gives a complete freehang.

The pitch was decidedly damp during our visit, feeding a stream that exits from the base of the aven via a reasonable passage. The stream eventually disappears in a lead pushed by Phill Hill in the recent past. Rumour has it that be dislocated his shoulder in negotiating a tight squeeze here, much the way snakes dislocate their jaws, to

swallow sizable carrion. Whether true or not, it would certainly be a useful capacity for any caver to have!

The passage continues, minus the stream, to a large chamber, signified at the point of entry by a "crystal pool". This could in no way be described as decorative, but interestingly has been dry on recent visits. Immediately on the right, heading away from this feature, is a narrow canyon/rift (leading off the chamber). Some squirming and downclimbing along this, brought us to the site of an old dig.

Excavations here had been tortuous, requiring a downward-headfirst entry, to a point where a crevice gave issue to a goodly draught. The cause of all the attention was more than the draught, for the sound of a major stream can also be heard. For us, a continuation of the digging didn't hold much appeal, so we cast about for other possibilities leading in the same direction.

Lew and Trev spent some time exploring the leftmost branch passage, giving access to apparently hundreds of metres of crawly unproductive stuff. Leigh and I hauled ourselves into a gravelly tube paralleling the other dig and set to more excavations. At least this time, the position was more comfortable, but it became obvious a lot of work would be required.

Regrouped, Lew noticed a hole in the ceiling which he climbed into, finding some tight rift going back over the old dig. This held a very promising draught and was heading in the right direction to connect with the elusive streamway. Stef and Trev sized up the possibilities and began enlarging /negotiating the new lead. So vigorous were there efforts, that at one stage the whole cave seem to lurch through several degrees, sending me scattering up a wall in retreat from imagined rockfall. More effort was still needed to achieve the breakthrough. Unfortunately Stef's chronic hangover had turned into an acute lurgy and it was agreed that we best make a strategic withdrawal.

The club lamps also had the lurgy, expiring in droves (a common complaint recently), interesting in negotiating the rebelay back at the top of the major pitch. Holdups here were chilling to those queuing below. Nightfall, illumination and navigation problems back on the surface resulted in us being "lost in space" for a time. Thanks to Trev's bush instincts (must be the new beard!) we eventually found the main Chairman Track, though several hundred metres beyond where we should have been!

Anyway, as far as future prospects for the cave go, the major streamway should be reached reasonably easily on the next trip. Such a body of water is interesting for the area. Nothing similar is present in the rest of Threefortyone. It could be derived from the influxes of Peanut Brittle Pot, Rift Cave or Washout Cave and may even be a combinant of these sources.

Whatever, the sizable stream passage implied could be fairly extensive. Suggestive too, is the basal level commonality with and proximity to, the hypothesized line of master drainage, leading to the Junee Resurgence. Threefortyone could be in for a lot of exploratory visits yet.

Nick Hume

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RIFT CAVE (again!) JUNE '88

PRESENT: Marc Bowman (N.Z.S.S.), Martin Carnes, Danielle Geminus and Steve Keenlyside (S.U.S.S.), Stefan Eberhard.

The purpose of this trip was a general tourist jaunt through the -180m deep extension recently discovered by S.C.S., and also to further investigate a lead partially explored by Leigh Douglas a few weeks previously.

The beginning of the new extension is a narrow draughting tube on the true right hand side just beyond daylight and immediately below a three metre climb, over a large boulder blocking the passage. A nineteen metre pitch (rigged from two bolts) leads into a steeply descending series of chambers. At the bottom of this is a tight squeeze upward through a phreatic tube, with a short pitch beyond. Needless to say it didn't go anywhere. A short distance back up slope, there is a dry fossil canyon leading off on the true left hand side. Rolan, Nick and Leigh had explored a couple of blind 10 metre deep pits here. By climbing up higher into the roof, an exposed manoeuver gave access to a descending fossil stream passage, terminating at a pit. It turned out to be a fine 20 metre pitch with a small trickle of water entering and then disappearing into rubble blockage. Somewhat of a disappointment as that enigmatic all pervasive draught hints at greater things beyond. How many frustrating, bombed-out leads must one pursue before hitting the Big Time - I've lost count of the former! To the best of my knowledge only one stal was broken.

Stefan Eberhard.

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CONFRONTING THE CHAIRMAN 26-6-88

Present: Paul Boustead, Mark Bowman (N.Z.S.S.), Stefan Eberhard.

The purpose of this trip was to retrieve some gear left installed in the 160 metre entrance series since September 1987. Below the 90 metre entrance shaft is the 15 metre Chimney Pitch which has always been a narrow awkward grovel but which can be rigged freehanging with a number eleven hex. I placed a bolt 4 metres down, and around the corner, on the next 30 metre pitch. Nevertheless, there is a ledge situated at a rebelay some 20 metres down. The final 15 metre pitch drops into a spacious tunnel carrying a prominent draught. Some 30 metres downstream is an intersection with a tributary which was followed up a steeply inclined fissure but losing the draught. The draught was relocated back at the intersection, flowing over the top of large collapse and into the downstream crawlways. There must be substantially more to The Chairman than what is presently known!

Retreat and derigging was uneventful except that we saw a dead jumper lying on a rock (one of Trev's lost pets?)

Stefan Eberhard.

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ANNUAL DINNER: FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 30, 7PM - PHONE TREVOR NOW... 344862

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NEW HORIZONS IN THREEFORTYONE (JF 341 that is.) 23rd JULY

PRESENT: Lew Mitchelmore, Stefan and Rolan Eberhard.

The aim of this trip was to continue work on the lead that had been discovered a fortnight previously. This was a rubble choked tube in a dry passage, that leads off the "Crystal Pool" chamber. At a depth of over -150 metres and with a strong draught present, there was good reason for optimism.

Stefan and I reached the dig and started work. A spot of blasting on the previous trip had helped to break up the matrix of cobbles, sand and calcite that were impeding progress. It was not long before the loose stuff had been scraped out and we were chipping away at a crust of further cemented cobbles. Lying flat out while digging in the crawl was uncomfortable, but the effort paid off. Before long we were able to worm through to a slightly larger space beyond. Another floorlevel squeeze led into a more spacious tunnel, enough to stand up in! Lew, who had not come down the last pitch of the cave for some reason, was missing all the fun!

A flowstone ramp on one side of the passage led up to a large chamber. In the centre was a modest "mountain" of flowstone with tiers of small gours extending outwards to the walls of the chamber. The flowstone had a rather soft milky consistency somewhat reminiscent of the moonmilche so common high up in the cave. Nevertheless, some impressive features had been formed. These included a further crystal pool much larger and deeper than the original one, and its entire floor was covered with a most unusual series of formations. A veritable forest of calcite growths bearing a strong resemblance to marine coral stretched from wall to wall. A desire to inspect this unique feature closer was restrained in the interest of preserving the site in as pristine condition as possible. There was lots else to look at anyway.

At the opposite end of the chamber a scree slope led down to where a stream could be heard. The volume of water was not large and possibly it represents water that flows out of the crystal pool on the other side of the dig. We headed downstream and found ourselves in a narrow meandering canyon. This became very low after a short distance, however a side passage some distance beforehand bypassed this section and led us back to the water further downstream. This sumped after a very short distance, and after looking briefly at a muddy phreatic level in the vicinity, we headed back to the main chamber.

By traversing along one wall of the chamber we gained access to an obvious fossil continuation. This was a series of spacious chambers floored with large talus and profusely decorated in spots (!!! perhaps the passage should be called Dalmation Drain - Ed.). The pretties were interesting in their own way, but what we really wanted was to find a way back down to active streamway. Finally a point was reached where it was possible to descend a long slippery ramp, down to water level again. Unfortunately it was but a short section of streamway and sumped at both ends. While retracing our steps back through the chambers a second descending ramp was found, likewise leading to the streamway and likewise sumped. Whether the stream below this fossil level was the same water flow that we had encountered earlier is hard to say. In volume it appeared more or less the same, but it is not impossible that two separate streams exist in the extension.

We left plenty of leads for the next trip. It would be nice to imagine the possibilities of gaining access to some sort of main drain, collecting water from the various stream sinks in the area. Roughly 300 metres to the northwest of Threefortyone lies the entrance of Rift Cave. The underground trend of this takes it away from Threefortyone but the distance between the two is still not great. A survey of the Threefortyone extension will allow further speculation.

Rolan Eberhard.

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THE NORTH-EAST RIDGE OF MOUNT ANNE - PAROCHIAL PERSPECTIVES.

The Czech expedition to this area during March 1987 turned up a number of interesting new discoveries. To repay the hospitality offered to them over their stay (largely from Stuart), the group promised to send surveys and descriptions of what they had found. Sure enough, a large dossier arrived some months ago and hopefully this will fill (entirely!) some future issue of the Spiel. Meantime I have been poring over the stuff to fill in the day and some clarifications of nomenclature are offered here.

Refer to the Czech's overview plan of the "tip" of North-East Ridge, attached. MA 29 is the major entrance within SUSS's (Sydney University Speleological Society) so called "Well of Loneliness". This cave was first descended by a T.C.C. party in November 1983 (Speleo Spiel 193). Consisting of two consecutive thirteen metre pitches, leading from the impressive ten metre high entrance rift, to a squeeze below some boulder pile. The leader of that trip, Phill Hill decided to name the cave "Damocles" and a survey was carried out.

The upper entrance of MA-CS-5 was used as a camping cave on the '83 trip - the notorious "Posturaepedic Bivvy Cave". Close by Damocles/ Well of Loneliness is an unnamed doline, a spring on the north wall of which, provided fresh water during that stay.

MA-CS-5 is the "stepover" shaft crossed on the taped track on the very end of the ridge. The track was marked by T.C.C. as an easier way to this area (starting from the Lake Timk track) the shaft being one of the first features that was noticed, on gaining the ridgetop. On a recent trip the above number was noticed marked at the entrance, in already very-faint red paint.

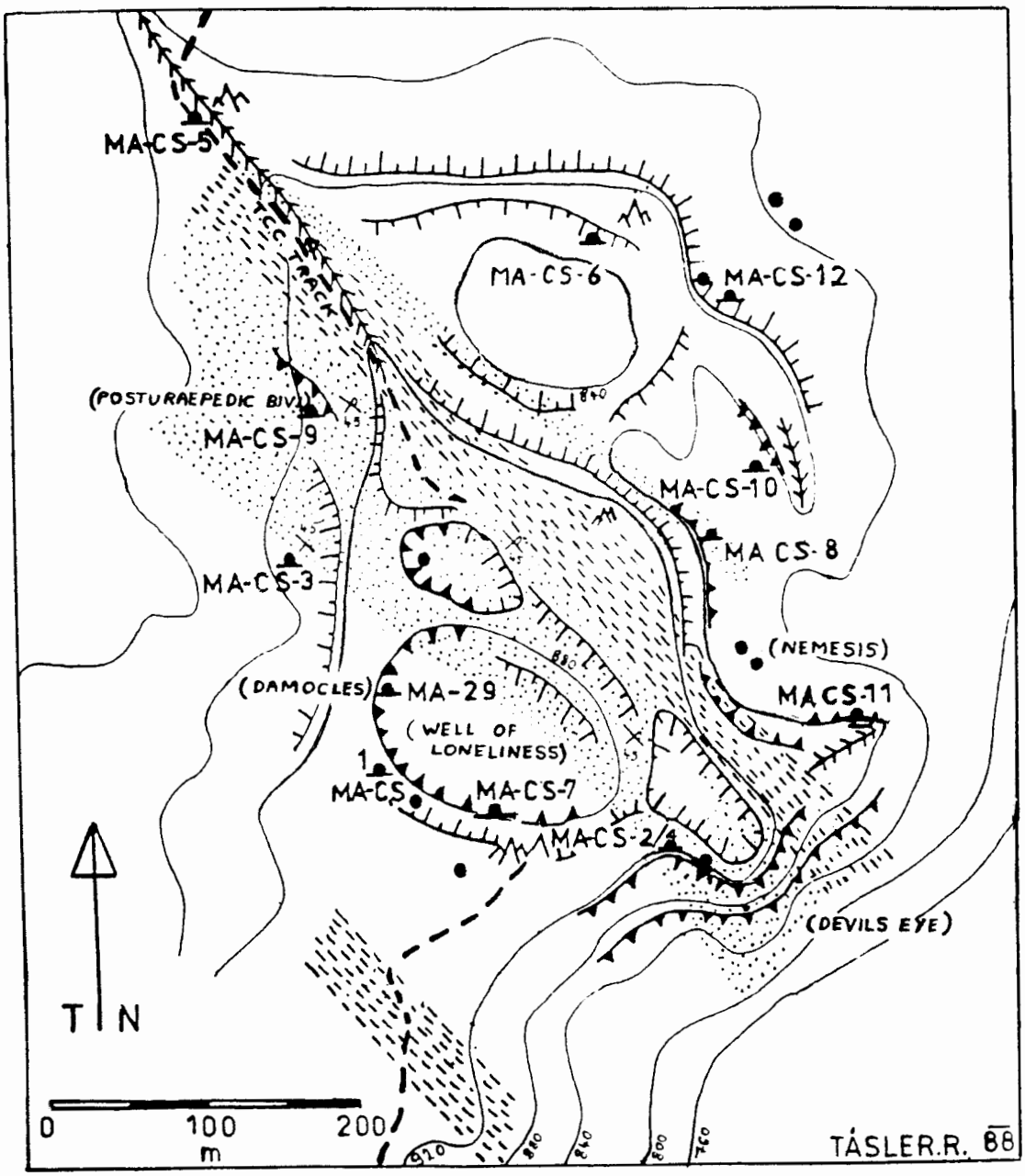
MA-CS-10 is one of a pair of large entrances visible to the North-East of the ridgetop. Though remarked upon in past trips, foul vegetation discouraged attempts to get to them. The cave links to another entrance, MA-CS-12, making up "Goggled Eyes", the major find of the Czech's stay.

The two cave entrances indicated between MA-CS-8 and 11 correspond to the doline holding the cave "Nemesis"; also found by T.C.C. during '83 (Speleo Spiels 193 and 194). Hopefully these notes will obviate problems in nomenclature created by recent (and in one case overzealous) visits to the area.

NICK HUME

MOUNT ANNE — NORTH EAST RIDGE

"NORTH PLATO" - sketch plan



sheer rock slope

striking rock

vertical rock step

path

rock ridge - rib

cave small hole

bedded dolomite, largely oolitic grainstone

quartzite

strike and dip of bedding - overturned