

NEWSLETTER OF THE TASMANIAN CAVERNEERING CLUB

Newsletter Annual Subscription \$15.00, Each \$1.00, Non-members \$2.00

PRESIDENT / QUARTERMASTER;

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

SECRETARY;

Stefan Eberhard 23 Willowbend Road, Kingston. Tas. 7050 Ph 293775

TREASURER;

James Davis 30 Greenacres Road, Geilston Bay. Tas. 7015 Ph 439367

EDITOR;

Nick Hume (C/- Box 416; Sandy Bay, Tas. 7005) Ph 251934

EDITORIAL

Several months ago the club received a grant from the Division of Recreation, to the sum of \$300. Moneys are sought occasionally from this authority, to help assist in replacement/refurbishment costs for the club gear store: notably for caving lamps, helmets, ladders, caving and belay ropes, etc. Most of the usage the gear receives is in supplying schools, wilderness groups, youth schemes, non-club groups guided by TCC personnel, our own provisional members, and to members of other clubs short on equipment.

The costs of maintaining such a gear store is considerable, and to achieve this any financial assistance is very gratefully received. Particularly in view of the small numbers of active cavers within the state, and the limited resources they can bring to bear through membership fees.

In recent years, TCC has been the only repository for obtaining caving gear in sufficient quantity for groups such as schools, etc. The cost to these bodies of supplying their own gear could in no way be justified by them; the amount necessary being in the several thousands of dollars. Hence, the club can very justifiably claim to be providing a valuable service to youth groups in the community, and not just to catering for cavers.

In view of this, it is rather disappointing to find out that the other caving club in the south of the State received a grant from the same authority amounting to \$700. This was apparently in the form of an establishment grant, to assist that club in getting a few lamps together, rather than having to rely on us. They originally applied for the same sized grant as we received, but were later contacted by someone in the authority and asked whether they would prefer to raise their application amount to \$700. Its a pity that TCC weren't offered a similar option.

Various members of this club have put in a great deal of time and effort over recent years, to expand the clubs gear lending service

SPELEO SPIEL 248

for the purposes of supplying youth groups, and to foster club membership by running a variety of caving trips for beginners over every weekend. In the last few months alone, a great many man-hours were voluntarily put into making several gear packs, four complete sets of abseiling/prussiking gear, eight gel-cell lamps, umpteen battery belts, and the reconditioning of twenty five helmets. As well, there is the constant maintenance of the ten existing Oldham headlamps to be considered (which currently retail at \$240 apiece incidentally!).

Recently, a regimen of beginner trips have been run to sites such as *Loons Cave*, *Mystery Creek Cave*, *Midnight Hole*, *Growling Swallet*, *Old Ditch Road* and *Mini-Martin*. Regular rope and ladder training sessions have been carried out at *Fruehauf Quarry*, to impart appropriate skills to intending cavers. Hopefully the voluntary efforts of the more experienced members of the club will remain forthcoming, particularly their resourcefulness in providing the club with gear in an affordable form. The situation alluded to above is poor recognition of their considerable contribution.

Nick Hume

FUTURE TRIPS

Sunday 7th May - Niagara Pot ; a draughting lead within the rockfall needs to be looked at. Even if it bombs out, the cave is an exciting and sporting little trip that is well worth the doing. **Martin Carnes** is chief protagonist for this one, contactable on (002) 25 2659.

Sunday 14th May - JF 341 ; requires a survey team to complete a proper traverse through the newly-found extensions, plus a bit of tidying up exploration in one or two leads. Phone **Nick Hume** on (002) 25 1934.

Sunday 21st May - Cauldron Pot ; the *Au Cheval* pitch near the bottom of this cave has not been looked at since the early 1970's. Join **Stefan Eberhard** in this Florentine Valley classic; a fair bit wet (the cave that is!). Phone (002) 29 3775.

Sunday 28th May - Burning Down the House ; no ropework required at all. Desperately needs a *mother figure* to look after it. Such as a wet-suited person to push in the upstream lead, along with surveying of new (and recently past) finds at regular intervals! **Trevor Wailes** has vast experience at parenting of one form or another. Contact him for the "head-wetting"; (002) 34 4862.

*Please note that the day of the weekend indicated for the trip is negotiable with the trip-leader. A mutually arranged saturday may suit everyone better, and it is best to ring the leader a few days in advance to discuss this.

Speleological Splutterings

Membership fees are now long overdue. So if you have not paid up, you will shortly no longer receive copies of this newsletter. Just some of the reasons for remaining (or even joining for that matter) with the club include:

-Forthcoming expeditions to Precipitous Bluff and Mount Anne, plus regular exploratory trips into the deepest and longest caves in Australia. These trips are advertised in advance, in this newsletter.

-A soon to be released Speleo Spiel expose On Precipitous Bluff, with up-to-date surveys and location details of the many new and exciting finds there.

-The forthcoming TCC Explorations Journal, which will contain previously unpublished and highly detailed survey maps of the intricate *Growling Swallet System*, plus exhaustive route descriptions. There will also be a lengthy article on cave diving sites in Tasmania; their location; surveys; the explorations conducted in them thus far; as well as the gear and techniques found most suitable for local conditions. Other detailed articles will cover *Serendipity*, *Icecube*, the caves at Ida Bay, and much, much more.

-Fortnightly get-togethers and social occasions, allowing cavers the chance to find out what has been going, and what is about to happen, in the forefronts of Tasmanian caving. Pub and slide nights are a regular activity in the club.

-Access to a complete store of caving gear. Why shell out a fortune when you can hire gear from the club at next to nothing cost? The only way to go if you are just starting out, or can only participate occasionally. Lamps, ropes, helmets, battery belts, rigging gear, ladders, clothing, harnesses, descenders, ascending gear, cowstails, survey gear, caving packs, there's heaps of stuff ready to take straight away!

Simply pay a \$25.00 (\$18.00 concession) membership fee to the club treasurer: James Davis at the next meeting (Wednesday nights at the Wheatsheaf Hotel), or send a cheque off to the Tasmanian Caverneering Club, PO box 416, Sandy Bay. 7005. Don't miss out. Join up, or be triangular!!!!!!

Frank Salt; esteemed member of the club, recently made the very generous donation of a five cubic foot air tank to TCC's Cave Diving Group. This is much appreciated, and will be used as a back up/emergency air supply for a number of cave-diving projects currently in mind. Small airtanks are highly useful for such purposes, at remote, or otherwise difficult to get to sites deep within caves. Their new price puts them at somewhat of a premium to get hold of normally.

Frank has also sent us a number of caving lamp headpieces. These are to be cannibalised by our quartermaster; Trevor Wailes (always having had a taste for the activity!), for spare parts to keep the club lamps operational. Many thanks to Frank. We are already referring to him as our "Godfather from Savage River"!

New members: Bob Reid and Dean Morgan must be the keenest cavers yet. So enthusiastic are they that it's hard to actually catch them above ground! Over the past few months, Dean and his brothers Simon

SPELEO SPIEL 248

and Cian, have spent every weekend down at Ida Bay, doing such things as *Exit Cave*, *Mystery Creek Cave*, *Loons Cave*, *Bradley-Chesterman's Cave* and *Arthurs Folly*. Some of them several times! They have also been impressing their instructors at abseiling/prussiking practice, held at Fruehauf Quarry and Lost World. Once they've mastered rigging vertical caves, there will be no way of stopping these guys!

Bob has been very active as well. Teaming up with co-worker Steve, Mark Bryce, and several Tasmanian University people, they have been wandering into the far reaches of *Exit Cave*, as well as doing *Old Ditch Road* and sundry other Ida Bay jaunts. Most recently he has taken to the esoteric speciality of surface bashing in the foul re-growth on the south side of *Loon's Sugarloaf* (we need more masochists!), turning up several interesting entrances. Not content with this, he is organising SRT practice sessions in various easier caves, with a view to more adventurous things. Good to see his commitment to the club too, in offering to make up some rappel racks for the TCC gear store. The rest of us cavers are being rapidly taken over by the brave new generation.....!!!!

More of Mexico Madness; mentioned in the latest copy of *Descent* (#86) is the fact that following further computation of survey data, Stefan Eberhards "pet" hole; *R'ja Man Kijao* (Cave of the Black Bull) which he explored during the Australian *Chilchotla '87 Expedition* to Mexico, is now officially 613 metres deep. Formerly it was reported as being only 552 metres deep (Speleo Spiel # 239, 1988). Oh well, if you can't attain the magic 1000 metre deep mark, then -613 metres will have to do. It's certainly better than the local -375 metre effort, according to Stef!

Stefan has also been looking in a few "deepies", or at least caves of some sort, during a recent two week rafting trip down the Franklin River. Performed as part of his statewide cave faunal-survey project, the lucky lad was actually being paid for the privilege! He was also involved with a team helicoptered onto Mount Ronald Cross, for the same reason. Staying on there for several days of general exploration with James Davis. Even more recently, he was off looking for bugs in the caves of Gunns Plains area, finding a few potential diving sites as well. Does this qualify him as a professional caver? He might be forced to dispense with his former amateur status!

Sponsor a Ghost Bat! *Speaking Tube* Cave in Mount Etna is the site of a great colony of this species. The whole mountain is under threat of destruction from limestone mining interests, and the Central Queensland Speleological Society is bravely trying to prevent this through court action. A considerable amount of money has already been raised toward legal costs, from Australia-wide caving clubs and conservation groups. However, another \$20,000 is still urgently required.

Your donation may help swing the odds in the Ghost Bats favour. Please consider assisting CQSS in playing David to the Goliath of "commercial" pressure. Money can be sent either directly to the Mount Etna Committee, at PO Box 538, Rockhampton QLD 4700, or to the Australian Conservation Foundation, 672b Glenferrie Road, Hawthorn

3122. The latter avenue allows a tax deductible form of contribution, but please stipulate that it is to be used for the Mt Etna Campaign. See the club secretary at the next TCC meeting for CQSS literature on the campaign.

The original Irish calendar????? Late in the year though it is, there are still a few Speleo Spiel photographic calendars left in the club warehouse. Aside from being a good visual *expose* of Tasmanian caving, they do have useful bits of information marked on them, such as dates for TCC club meetings. Worthwhile things for selling to your prospective member friends, and they are going for a "song" at \$2.00 or nearest offer (new members get a copy for free!). You can get copies from Nick Hume at the next club meeting, or alternatively, ring him on (002) 251934.

C a v i n g T r i p R e p o r t s

9th of April - Old Ditch Road to Mini-Martin Exchange Trip

After waiting at Trevor Waile's house for a not inconsiderable time, we set out (with several more detours) to Ida Bay for a days caving. A short way along the Exit Track from the quarry, we split into two groups: Trevor, Bob and Mark headed towards *Mini-Martin*, while Nick, James, Dean and myself continued towards *Old Ditch Road*. After a surprisingly short time, we arrived at "Old Ditch", and a crawl or three later, we were at the top of the first pitch. Nick rigged the first and second pitches as one, making the whole thing longer still.

Having a fear of heights had me seriously thinking of turning back, but after recalling an earlier caving trip, in which I sat in a car for a few hours waiting for the other cavers to return, I went ahead and abseiled down the pitch regardless. I was surprised at how much I enjoyed my first big vertical caving experience (previously having only abseiled in a small quarry), and I found myself wishing that there were more than two pitches remaining.

After having to wait five minutes for Dean to get off the rope, when his Screwgate Karabiner decided not to open at the bottom of the second pitch, I was down and waiting for my attempt at the final forty metre pitch.

An abseil and freehang later, I was back on solid ground again, and waited with Dean for James and Nick to abseil down. Once all were down, we had a bit of a snack and headed towards the stream. From there I headed towards the entrance, whilst Dean, Nick and James were off to *Mini-Martin* and the long prussik up to daylight.

When I arrived at the water entrance, I searched for a small (dry) entrance which I supposedly knew how to get to, but was unable to find it. I decided after about fifteen minutes of seemingly endless searching, that my best bet would be to head out through the waist deep water.

Although the tapes disappeared about the same time as the track disappeared, I managed to get back onto it and start the walk (climb?) back up the hill. I considered walking straight back to the

SPELEO SPIEL 248

cars, but a wait (and rest) at *Old Ditch Road* sounded a much better idea for the moment.

Soon after arriving at the top of the first pitch, I could hear the voices of Trevor, Bob, Mark, and a new addition: Paul. I waited about three-quarters of an hour (I think) before Bob was at the top of the pitch; struggling to get past Nick's apparently poorly rigged rebelay. Soon after everyone was up, I left with Trevor for the cars.

Back at the cars we met up with Dean, Nick, James and Lew. After changing, we had to leave to get to the Kermandie Pub in thirty minutes. Trevor explaining that he needed a beer.

Simon Morgan

27th - 31st of January. Mount Ronald Cross: *Scoparia Capers*.

Stefan Eberhard and James Davis

Introduction

The name of this plateau above Surprise Valley, is not unexpectedly named after its original explorer: Ronald. He called it "Ronald Cross", because he was so angry at finding such a spite-ful piece of territory. Being a religious man, he saw no harm in claiming the truth. It wasn't an area that the devil wanted to have much to do with. The purpose of our excursion was to look for a few unique specimens of fauna, and to find the worlds deepest cave system. A simple but challenging formula for the duration of our stay.

27th - One kilometre prior to the Frenchmans Cap car park, we found ourselves waiting with a few other "cargo cultists" for a kind of buzzing noise to emerge from the sky. The helicopter eventually arrived at 10am, and we were away. Before landing atop the mountain, a circuit was made of the western slopes to espy a large black hole visible on the aerial photos of the area. This turned out to be a nested tarn. Probably just as well given the nearby vegetation! We disembarked with a "lizard man", "flower lady" and "rainforest lady", all of whom were involved in scientific activities of one sort or another, for the rest of the day.

Stef and I set up camp, and prepared ourselves for a few days of caving. Our keen-ness was soon blunted by a vista of *richea scoparia* from horizon to horizon. It was thicker than the mould on my bread five days later, and the March flies didn't help a great deal either. The heat, and night prowling tiger snakes were another cause of discalm. Anyway, besides all that we did get out and do a bit of collecting and "speleologising".

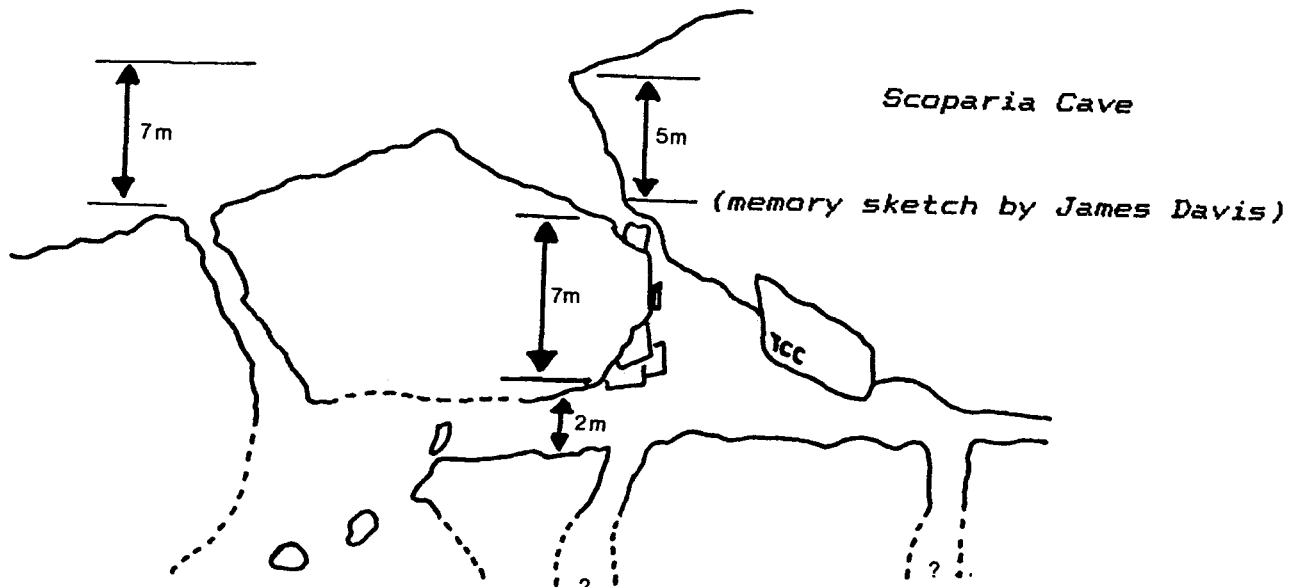
We set off for *Scorpio Cave* (MR209), passing *Capricorn Cave* (MR204) on the way. *Scorpio* features an impressive gash of an entrance, though is fairly short lived: one of the many vagaries of dolomite karst areas. Relative humidity and temperature readings were taken, before a lengthy exercise in faunal collecting began. Five hours were spent setting nets and otherwise "baiting" for bugs, as well as inspecting some of the nice stream passage at the caves far south-eastern end. Stefan found numerous pseudo-scorpions, among

other things in the days catch, and we returned to camp through more of the itchy painful scoparia. Though this time we picked our route a little bit more carefully. The return was made spectacular by a very rare piece of sunset. Shafts of light spewing over the neighbouring King William Range. Even the March flies seemed awed.

28th & 29th - The tent was like a sauna by mid-morning, thanks to the scorching sun. We actually did hardly anything at all through the day, because of the extreme heat. It simply sapped our enthusiasm and although sounding idyllic, combined with the flies it was really a fair bit trying. Next day was just as hot, though this time we had to go out and do something or sanity would be lost! About the worst day you could imagine for a bush-bash, but we did it anyway. Some more-or-less open rainforest to the south-east of the campsite was our objective. The vegetation proved again to be hostile to us "speleo sapiens", and certainly threw everything at us! Once at the rainforest, the undergrowth was almost very pleasant. Many outcroppings of dolomite were visited, but we didn't find so much as a rabbit hole!

30th - Not receiving much in the way of "jollies" so far this trip. we were beginning to wonder about this area. We visited Scorpio Cave again to fetch the contents of collecting nets, and to check the "big baits". We pushed every lead in the cave, including one climb that fizzled out near what must have very nearly been another surface entrance. On the return, we came across a small hole that almost looked tempting. Just a few metres away was a large hole that was positively exciting. It held a good inward draught, had a steep entrance rift in line with the dip of the bedding plane, and there were many vertical leads bombing away to great depth. We didn't have any ropes to do anything about it though!

Thus, a going cave is still waiting in this formidable area. A route was marked back to the campsite for some future exploratory trip. From the bluff overlooking the campsite tarn, red biodegradable tapes lead down a spur and into a gully. Pink tapes then follow along the ridge to the entrance of the cave. It is roughly 60 metres up the gully south of Scorpio Cave. "TCC" is marked on an overhanging block just inside the entrance. It has been named *Scoparia Cave* for obvious reasons.



SPELEO SPIEL 248

31st - After a leisurely pack-up, we trudged back down the hill in full caving gear to avoid pain. Ronald Cross bade us a typically drizzly farewell. Great snake "treading-on" country, beads of cold sweat surfacing on my brow at the mere thought of being asked to go first. Surprisingly, we only saw one! I uncrossed my fingers back at the car, and then re-fortified, we went home.

James Davis

26th of February - A Milk Run to Ida Bay

Milko's ; Trevor Wailes, Martin Carnes, Leigh Douglas and Nick Hume.

Martin's own unique brand of humour got the better of him while we were loitering outside of the Dover take-away. He ended up wearing some pastie-and-sauce I was chewing over, after one of his particularly amusing remarks. Anyway, nice to go caving down the channel once in a while. Even if only to keep in with a bit of practice.

Shouts from either end of the Exit Cave Track preceded the final location of the side track to Milk Run. Trev stormed back up from his over-run of the correct way off. His mood needless to say, was lethal! The rest of us tagged along behind in a frug of sweat. Exercise is good for you they say, and the more uncomfortable it is the better.

Trev was also the first to go down the 40m entrance shaft; the fallen-log belay point being watched with curiosity during his descent. A bolted handline/pitch thing followed, usefully backing up the 26m pitch below. This third pitch held a bolt placement some way out along a rift. The consequent rigging performed by Trev and myself had the effect of discouraging Leigh from going any further. Martin in turn, seized the opportunity to leave also. Him having been to the bottom of the cave on several other occasions, his reluctance therefore being fairly understandable. These two then retreated for a surface bash nearby; checking out one of Arthurs many draughting mega-holes instead.

Languishing at the bottom of the pitch, I announced to Trev that I had had enough and wasn't going any further either. He took the jest seriously and wandered off forlornly to rig the next pitch. So much for my excuse as unofficial trip photographer. I gathered up the remaining rope pack and followed after him.

The fourth pitch is a real classic; 49m and a veritable vertical "pipe" with the descent being performed a few metres clear from any wall. Trevs spare/emergency skinny rope proved useful as handline at the drop from narrow rift passage near the top of the next major pitch. Thirty five metres is the claimed length of this other great abseil. I suspect it is slightly less than this, judging by the rope left spooled on the floor from our recently re-measured 35m Czech rope. The last pitch too, is more likely of the order of 20m-22m than the 30m it is indicated to be (Source - Speleo Spiel #213, 1986).

Nevertheless the cave is quite a find, and very worthwhile the effort in doing. Trev raced around madly with child-like enthusiasm; it being his first sojourn into the cave. Charging off downstream into the base-level horizontal development, it was some time before I eventually spotted him again. We both checked the tight "upstream" canyon, crawling along several metres of grot before reaching the previously explored terminus at a gravel choke.

De-rigging of the cave was fairly straightforward. It being a simple matter to tie all ropes together and pull the whole lot up from pitch-tops. Martin and Leigh were lurking outside as we arrived at the bottom of the entrance pitch. Mart's sense of humour again came to the fore, when he nigglingly raised the rope from the top, so that the end of it was some 10m above our reach. The practical joke caused a sudden flash of *deja vu* among its victims.

A little abuse corrected the problem, and we were soon on our way to more hospitable locales (notably for refreshments at the Kermadie Hotel). Trev was the chief instigator of this outing, and highly enjoyed it was too.

NICK HUME

5th March - North East Ridge of Mount Anne

Scrub-bashers; James Davis and Nick Hume

Bob Davies from the Surveying Department of the University of Tasmania, had spotted several entrance-type features on the steep eastern flanks of the North-East Ridge, while on an over-flight of the area back in 1987. Leigh Douglas and myself followed this up with an exploratory reconnaissance in April of that year, finding that one of the features corresponded to a large truncated chamber exiting from the base of a sheer cliff; the Devil's Eye (Speleo Spiel #227).

A strong draught in this cave, plus an upper entrance possibility at the top of the cliff line, led to the supposition that there might be a 200 metre through-trip here for the offing. The upper feature was not checked out thoroughly at the time; due to both a need for haste, and to the general ruggedness of its vicinity. A mistake in retrospect, for an unwitting Jim, along with myself, decided to return with ropes and rigging gear for a closer look-see.

From an overnight stay at the *Rescue Camp*, we carted some 150 metres of rope up onto the ridge. Jeff Butt and Greg Jordan were also in the area at the time, and kindly helped carry some of this burden to the base of the ridge (accessories before the fact!). Needless to say, the hoped for upper entrance proved to be an open gully leading very steeply through a cliff line (from adjacent *Well of Loneliness*). Jim and I managed to downclimb much of this without the need for any rope at all! Typically, only a minor cave entrance was turned up. Below the lowest point reached, was a ramp that probably gives easier access to the *Devils Eye* than the route taken in 1987.

Returning to the edge of the cliff-line, we procrastinated furiously for a time before spotting another possible truncated section of

SPELEO SPIEL 248

cave passage, midway down some cliffs to the south of us. Checking the feature was decided upon as a pleasantly-slacker option to visiting either *Damocles*, or *Goggled Eye's* further afield. The Sydney University Speleo's track was followed from the "hill" above *Well of Loneliness*, over two ridge-lines, to a saddle directly above the relevant point.

Bombing off the ridge in an easterly direction, some impossibly steep ground was soon encountered. "Free climbing" on tree roots gave access to cliffs on the right, and a short-lived piece of cave was found here at the beginning of a snow-grass ramp. Ten metres further along the ramp, the deep overhang we were seeking led into the cliff face for a short distance; narrow inlet canyons being visible above its innermost point. Some wide passage traversed the feature at its southern end; leading to another cliff face hole further south. The cave such as it was, received the name *Through Trip*. A somewhat ironical gesture, given the hopes we had harboured earlier in the day.

From this area of the cliff-line, another large excavated-entrance feature was spotted back over, and to the immediate north of the *Devil's Eye*. Once bitten-twice shy, so we were loathe to return down low enough to check this out. Once again, it could well be the source of draught in the latter cave. Failing this, air flow in *Devil's Eye* may indicate an extensive cave system under the complex of dolines in this part of the ridge. Who knows?, *Damocles* might be just a foretaste of this.

Wanting to justify the presence of our bulky packs, Jim rigged MA-CS 5; the entrance of which is slap-bang in the middle of the TCC track, where it runs off the ridges northern end. An 18m pitch gave access to a rift-chamber, above which many other surface holes could be seen. There were no downward continuations however (survey and detail of the cave appear in Speleo Spiel #240).

From *Rescue Camp* it took us a mere 90 minutes to walk back to the car. Highlighting the present extreme dryness of the South-West, for this is normally a disgustingly boggy track. Similar conditions, plus some more fevered imaginings, might see a return here perhaps next year, or the year after..... Many thanks to Jeff and Greg.

Nick Hume

19th March - Sampling the Grunge in Growling Swallet

Those involved: Trevor Wailes, James Davis, Lew Mitchelmore, Dean Morgan, Simon Morgan, Sian Morgan and Nick Hume.

Growling Swallet is one of those sorts of caves that lure you back time and time again. Finding starters is never particularly difficult, and you usually end up having a great time despite there being one or two irksome bits getting into Trapdoor Streamway. Trev wanted to replace the old ladders at *Avon's Aven*, Lew wanted to go down the pitches in *New Feeling*, Dean, Simon and Cian fancied a poke about in *Necrosis*, and Nick was keen to extract an airtank left behind during recent diving activity in *Black River*. Even with these diverse aims, we managed to stick mostly together throughout

the day.

The trip started well, with Trev sustaining a leak in his fuel tank on the journey up the Florentine Road. Never mind, the Scotsman in him managed to capture virtually all of the spill in various containers, before it was thoroughly wasted by soaking into the road! Watching his improvised repairs was a highlight of the day.

The streamway was only in moderate spate, making for a reasonably fast trip. Lew left us half way down the entrance series for the sojourn into New Feeling. Dean and Cian virtually led the rest of the way, saying something about either their fitness, or that of the older ones present! The bulky rope ladders we were carrying proved awkward through *Windy Rift*, but certainly the ones emplaced on the climbs above *Refuge Aven* are proving their worth in terms of durability.

We waded down Trapdoor Streamway and on through *Herpes III*. This latter obstacle is akin to having a bath in wet cement, and Jim plus the other new-comers to this area weren't at all impressed! Trev self belayed on the 20 metre climb up into Avon's Aven, there being a risk that the Bonwick ladders (fixed as permanent rigging here, some 3 - 4 years ago) might have corroded and become unsafe. The ladders wire/rung junctions were very severely rusted, held by only a few strands at some points near the top of the drop. The possible consequences of this were obvious, and so they were removed.

Trev rigged a plastic-runged replacement. Unfortunately, the old carabiners had seized-up on their bolt hangars, and the new job could not be directly transferred to these rigging points for that and various other reasons. Instead, it was rigged from the very top only. While this set-up is perfectly safe in the short-term, future parties are advised not to traffic it unnecessarily until it is properly re-rigged.

Carrying ladders and airtank, Trev, Jim and Nick made their rather weighty way out of the cave. Jim performing a super-heroes role in shifting the heaviest item through *Windy Rift*. The rest of the group raced on ahead, doing an excellent job of route finding through the entrance series. Lew re-joining them, might have had something to do with it! A few immersions under the wet climbs were welcomed to get rid of the glutinous mud still adhering from the wallow in *Herpes III*.

Nick Hume

2nd April - Midnight to Midnight

Participants: Stefan Eberhard, Leigh Douglas, Rebecca Craw, James Davis, Dean Morgan, Cian Morgan, Phil Oddie and Nick Hume.

Social caving is a much under-rated activity. First, you have to get a big group together, and then find a cave that is a pushover to do, which leaves plenty of time for lounging about; socialising; and generally having a wonderfully slack time. Midnight Hole is definitely in this category. Challenging enough to be interesting, but not overly taxing in the physiological sense.

SPELEO SPIEL 248

Jim and Dean joined up with the larger group at Ida Bay quarry, having spent the previous day cave-guiding for members of the Police Boys Club. The heaviest ropes were distributed among the most junior club members (a sort of reverse entitlement according to rank!), and up the track we went.

The group was split into two self contained parties of four people; Jim, Dean, Phil and Nick; and Stef, Leigh, Rebecca and Cian. The former crew went in first, rigging from the entrance sapling utilising a carabiner constraint on one of the doubled strands, allowing abseils to be done on a single rope (great idea Jim!). Some highly organised vertical caving technique ensued. So efficient was it in fact, that no-one had a chance to remain still for more than a few seconds. The pitches "flew" past in a sort of blur, interrupted only by some photography on the last pitch and in Match Box Squeeze.

An improvised conveyor belt was set up to move tackle bags "sausage-style" through the squeeze. Dean and Phil were then firmly on home territory (having visited here via the Mystery Creek Cave main entrance on many occasions), shouldering the heavier packs and making their withdrawal. Jim was still not satisfied, going for a look up the inlet crawl, to the immediate left hand side, just where the squeeze opens out. He estimates that the lead continues for over a hundred metres, and keeps going beyond the point where his knees had had enough. Rumour has it that John Salt explored this a couple of years ago, reaching an aven.

The second group to enter Midnight Hole experienced a bit of a "snag" on the first pitch, Stef having to prussik back to the surface to correct the problem. On the last pitch, the problem of the sculpted grooves in the rock was obviated by using a short sling on the eye-bolt, allowing the rope to be pulled down without so much drag.

While the first group waited at the cars for the return of the second party, some university friends wandered out of the bush and joined us. Namely, Greg Blake and company, who happened to be coming back from a botanical study project being carried out up on Moonlight Flats. A great chat session developed. One that only the impending darkness brought an end to. Many thanks to all those who came along.

Nick Hume

TCC Membership Fees are due for renewal!!!!

Don't let the opportunity pass by. Do it now...

Send \$25.00 (\$18.00 concession) to PO Box 416

Sandy Bay. 7005, or pay the Treasurer at the next meeting

MILK RUN (IB 38) IDA BAY

ASF Map No. 7 IB38 · TCC 194

Longitudinal Section (In E/W Plane)

ASF Grade 44

Surveyed April / June 1985 :

A. Clarke, T. Porritt, L. Williams,

M. Frankhauser & D. Carr.

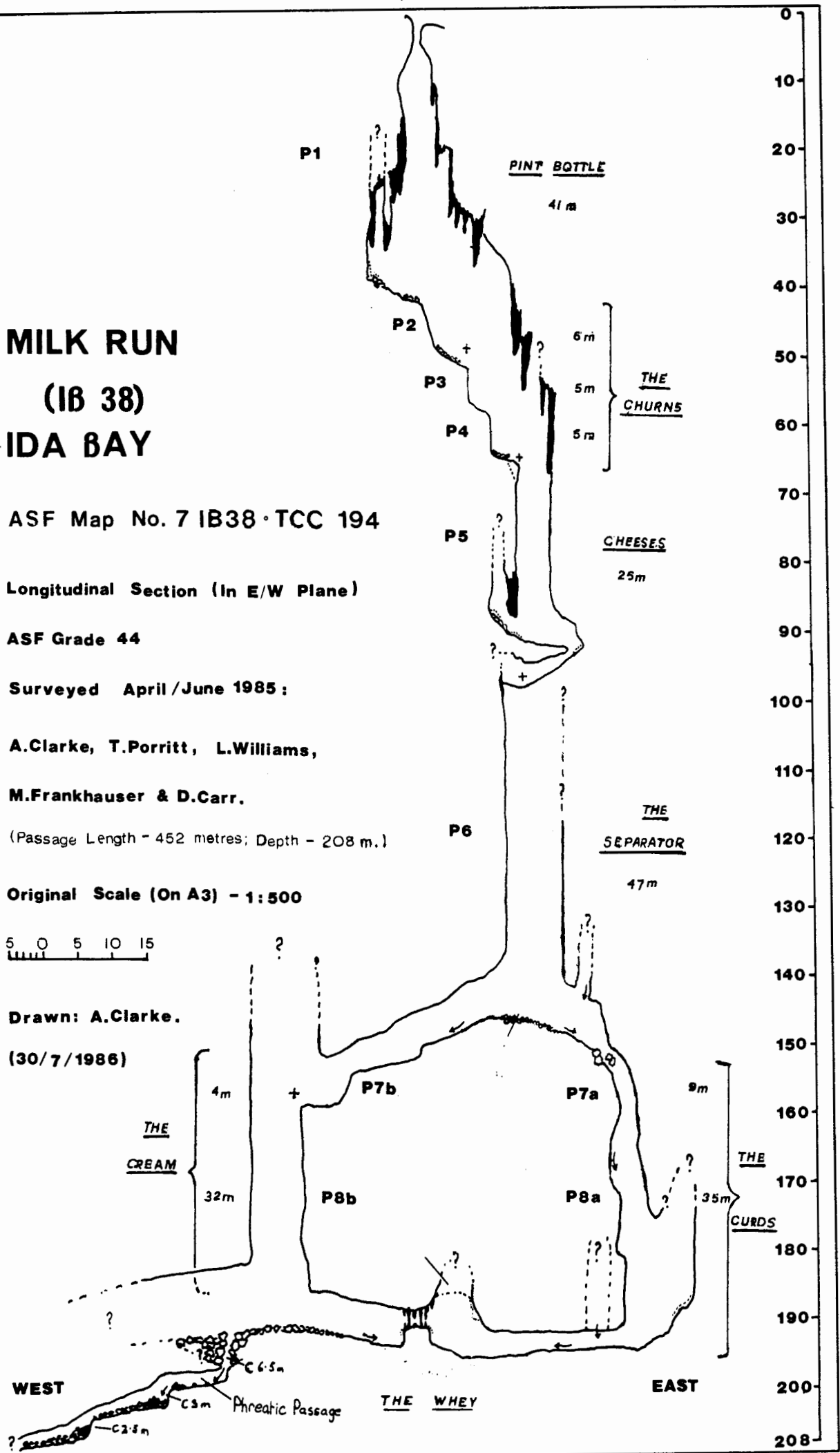
(Passage Length - 452 metres; Depth - 208 m.)

Original Scale (On A3) - 1:500

5 0 5 10 15

Drawn: A. Clarke.

(30/7/1986)



MILK RUN (IB 38)

IDA BAY

ASF Map No. 7 IB 38 -TCC 195

Very Narrow
? a2 (-208 m)



C2.5

C3

C6.5

P7b

P1

P2

P8b

P3

P4

P5

P6

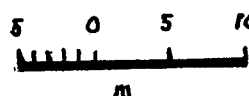
P7a

P8a

Plan Section

ASF Grade 4.4

SCALE (On A4) 1:500



Surveyed April/ June 1985 M. Frankhauser, L. Williams, D. Carr,
T. Porritt, A. Clarke.

Drawn A. Clarke