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SPELEO SPIEL

Newsletter of the Tasmanian Caverneering Club

ESTABLISHED 1946

P.O. Box 416, Sandy Bay, Tasmania. 7005

Registered by Australia Post — Publication No. TBH 0201

SPELEO SPIEL

NEWSLETTER OF THE TASMANIAN CAVERNEERING CLUB, Inc.

Newsletter Annual Subscription \$21.00, Each \$2.00 Non-members \$3.00

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EDITORIAL

Things seem to go from bad to terrible these days.... The Florentine Valley, the mecca for Australian hard sport caving, was always constrained by some limits on access owing to the road network being under the control of Australian Newsprint Mills Ltd as part of the Concession arrangement for logging. That arrangement has recently been rescinded and now "the valley" access is controlled by PWH and public access is via a side road and gate accessed from the Strathgordon Road through the Strathgordon Road Gate. No problem there... except it (the side gate into the Florentine Valley) is only open between 0830 and 1630...

This is just not good enough. In this enlightened day and age, all and sundry (including the Government) are promoting increased wilderness awareness as well as the need for physical fitness and outdoor recreation as a means to that end. What cave trips of any worth can be done in that time window? Bugger all! The option is of course "take your sleeping bag...". Once again, all very well, but what do we do if there's an accident? Maybe TCC should equip each party going into the Florentine

with a pair of bolt cutters... The ANM 'safety watch' was at times a nuisance, but it was also a very comforting facility - at least one knew that exit from the area could be had should the need arise during the night - not any more!

Stuart Nicholas
EDITOR - SPELEO SPIEL

SOME INFO ON THE MT CRIPPS AREA - CENTRAL NORTH/NORTH WEST OF TASMANIA

Exploration of the karst in the Mt Cripps area is continuing with an average of 3 caves being found each trip!

The total number of caves is now nearly 90 with a few providing excellent sport and good formations. The total area of karst now exceeds 25 km² and seems to extend with each new push.

Recent exploration on the southern flank of the area was made by boat from Lake Mackintosh with a major cave (Kilkenny Pot) being only 700 metres north of the lake.

Another find of considerable beauty, The Sanctuary, was made on the southern side of the lake within the S. W. Conservation Area.

(These are areas covered by other parties in the pre-dam days and go to show the luck of the draw.)

Exploration of the area has been restricted up until now by A.F.H. who's logging area covers the Mt Cripps area. No logging has been carried out since the first caves were found and it is hoped that the area may be preserved.

A.F.H. are still considering the options and have not as yet decided on an access policy.

Frank Salt

For your edification, here is another article from the EMAIL network that Bob Reid spends his time perusing at work....

From: cam@swbatl.sbc.com (Cam Spillman - 5-5415)
Date: Thu, 18 Oct 90 12:31:29 CDT
Subject: Tall Tales of Ancient Artifacts

Greetings:

In an attempt to perhaps precipitate a discussion on artifacts, I will share with you all a story...

A business associate recently shared with me a tale about a fabulous treasure find in a Texas cave. It seems that he and his brother were doing a bit of casual caving in the early '70s in a cave unspecified in Texas. They came upon a stash of guns from the 1800's - U.S. Army issue carbines with octagon barrels - packed in a wooden crate. Upon discovering the guns, they eagerly broke open the crate and unpacked as many as they could carry with them. The pieces were wrapped in waxed paper with

U.S. Gov't seals, and were coated with grease. In their excitement they threw away the paper and carried the guns with them.

Some time later the two revealed their find to a gun collector, who informed them that the guns were indeed valuable as they guessed, but had they kept them wrapped and crated they would have been a priceless find.

The brothers returned to the cave to find that the box and remaining guns had been plundered and were no where to be found!

I have no reason to disbelieve this story, since I trust the source's honesty. However, being from Missouri (show me!) there remains more than a slight bit of skepticism about such a tall "Texas" tale. One gun? A *small* crate? Perhaps I will never know....

Cam Spillman,
Stygian Grotto
St. Louis, MO
"The Cave State"

From: Chris Welsh <welsh@cvtl.umd.edu>
Date: Thu, 18 Oct 90 17:16:55 EDT
Subject: Re: #596: Tall Tales of Ancient Artifacts

About a decade ago, a friend of mine, Miles Drake, found a Timex watch in a pack-rat's nest in Simmons-Mingo cave WV. I believe he still has it in working order.

Or isn't that what you had in mind by artifacts?

NICK HUME'S WINTER (Bargains, absolutely!) CLEARANCE SALE!!

Ultimate Caving Helmet With metal lamp bracket. Mostly been used climbing so is fairly new looking. **\$40.00**

Pitons galore Aid climb Midnight Hole for something different to do! An essential part of any serious caver's rigging gear. Knife blades, angles and bongs of all different sizes. Come and check them out.

Gibbs Ascender Indispensable for your "rope walker" SRT rigs. Absolutely won't slip on muddy rope, would make a useful third/safety ascender. As new. **\$35.00**

Glug Boots Caving footwear extraordinaire. Brand new size 10. **\$15.00**

Climbing Rope 11mm and in good condition. **\$50.00**

Sleeping bag North Face three seasons bag. Useful for dossing out *apres party* as well as low level camping. Hardly used. **\$50.00**

Plus - bits & pieces: premier reflectors, ballistics fabric for packs, plus, plus...

Contact **NICK HUME** on 251934 or catch him at the next TCC meeting at the Wheatsheaf



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Nick Hume
Tasmanian Caverneering Club
P O Box 121
Moonah 7009

Dear Nick,

I am writing in response to an article by Steve Bunton that was published in Speleo Spiel # 266 entitled 'What I thought of the Conference and Caving in Western Australia'. While not denying Steve his 'right' to his own thoughts and comments this society feels that we also have a right of reply and to correct some errors in his text, and, with your indulgence will proceed to do so as they occurred in his article.

Strong's Cave, like most gated caves in WA is not restricted to members of ASF affiliated societies following a directive from the major land manager Dept. of Conservation and Land Management (CALM) some years ago. Prior to this directive the 'members only' rule was for many years the policy of one of the WA clubs. The current Caves Access Committee (CAC) By-Law on trip participants is that they are encouraged to be members of an ASF affiliated society. When Strong's Cave was under the control of the WA Museum there was a sign at the entrance to the cave. It is the intention of CALM that when funds are available all gated caves under its control will one day sport a sign stating why the cave is gated and the procedure for achieving entry. Gating of caves is a rare occurrence these days and only after such action has been authorised by the relevant land manager.

The archaeological cave alluded to by Steve is Devils Lair not Dingo Dig.

The university students mentioned in paragraph 5 were attendees of the Conference and thus eligible for entry to locked caves under the prevailing conditions. They had been in communication with SRG for some weeks prior to the Conference and the only reason they missed out going into Strong's Cave during the initial straw measuring session was that they arrived in the area late. They didn't need to 'suck up' to anyone and to the best of my knowledge they were not members of any university outdoor club.

As for the two major endeavours of the two 'official' WA caving clubs "Cave Gaters P/L and Stal Scrubbers Inc." - that does indeed seem to be an activity of both clubs these days - (cleaning up after numerous cave tickers perhaps) - next time Steve is in this neck of the woods he might like to join us in this work (quite enjoyable really) to give his pencil fingers a rest of course.

I'm so glad Steve enjoyed his trip into the Christmas Star Extension of Crystal Cave, he must have been 'ticking' the cave off in his book as he crawled through the first gate otherwise he would have noticed the SIGN. A fair proportion of the work in the extension was carried out by non-members back in 1973. As for the lack of degradation over the twenty years since its discovery, perhaps that is due to the management practises initiated by the 'Cave Gaters and Stal Scrubbers'. I'm sure both societies will accept the compliment.

As for Dunkley's 'theoretical management exercise' - yes, I agree, they did appear a bit haphazard, I attended part of the second one. I suppose it would smack of elitism to a cave

ticker but I would remind Steve that if Crystal Cave remained an 'open cave' instead of joining the list of locked ones he may have visited a cave with little more than sandy passages. Perhaps he didn't notice all the broken decoration in the stream passage, a legacy of a iron bar wielding visitor before the cave was gated.

Steve made mention of a caver who went to the 'loo' in a cave 20 years ago. Steve was very much in error here - that incident happened last year with a member of WASG whose membership has since lapsed. To the best of my knowledge the person concerned has never applied to join SRG.

It is a pity that Steve was out ticking the wine outlets during my presentation of 'Cave Rights for Troglodites' as he may have been able to offer constructive criticism or perhaps been better able to understand the argument. Instead his article displays his arrogant elitism, Bunton's Done the Dome. Goody Goody Gum Drops. ✓ If he had been around for the paper and the discussion at the Committee Meeting the following day he would have learnt that a sign is intended for Mullamullang as it had been all along and especially now in light of the ASF resolution, everybody needs educating about the damage done to the Dome's fauna. By way of information the Dune sign originated from SRG's first attempt back in 1987 to curtail activity in the Dome. SRG intends installing two Dome signs in Mullamullang during its July expedition, one in the region of the Dune and the other at Camp One. The Camp One sign will be accompanied by a visitors book - about the only useful suggestion from Steve's article but one already in train before his article arrived. If members of TCC are interested in reading my Cave Rights paper it has just been reproduced in the latest edition of 'The Caver's Chronicle' which by now should have found its way into TCC's library.

One of the caves that Steve ticked off his list was Yallingup, a tourist cave that SRG spent time removing rubbish from some years ago. Poorly presented and overlit it certainly is but ugly it is not. SRG did make a representation to the managers about upgrading the presentation of the cave but in this we were mostly unsuccessful. Yallingup Cave was also the subject of a joint EPA/ASF Management Plan study some years before, the findings of which were not taken up by the managers apart from some surface works and minor underground changes.

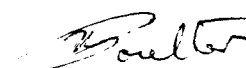
Steve devoted a paragraph to the remnants of the 1966 CEGSA Expedition in Mullamullang. To the best of my knowledge (I haven't been there since early 1990) Mullamullang is now fairly free of reminders of that trip save for the REDUCE SPEED sign near the Southerly Buster and the table and 35mph sign at Camp One. SRG initiated a cleanup of Mullamullang back in 1981 when nails, spent carbide, telephone line and other items of a more modern nature were bought out of the cave. By publicising that initiative members of other societies visiting the cave also removed rubbish from the cave. Did Steve think to carry any rubbish out of the cave or is that sort of activity beneath the dignity of 'cave tickers'?

I cannot comment on Steve's reflections of Warbla Cave, I've never been there but I share his concern for bats for although I don't think Warbla has anything to do with breeding bats, they should not be disturbed unnecessarily. National Park Rangers and some archaeologists need educating too sometimes.

I take issue with Steve in his comment about 'chronic cronyism', 'scientists' and the "same pretence that enabled me to get into Strongs, Jewel". His entry into Strongs and Jewel Caves was on the grounds of him being a Conference attendee, nothing else.

I also take issue with him in relation to his enjoyment of my hospitality before and after the Conference without having the resolve to discuss his Mullamullang views openly. In this I feel my hospitality was ABUSED.

Yours



Norman Poulter
Convenor
11-4-1991

AND NOW FOR SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT.... CAVING MADE EASY!!

NIGGLY CAVE (almost)...

July 22, 1990

PARTY: Dean, Cian and Simon Morgan.

This was definitely the first time I have ever been ordered to go caving. Dean wanted to get the ropes out of Niggly Cave (JF237) and as there was an odd ratio of cavers to rope (1 caver: 250-300 metres of rope), he told me that I was going to help. And it seemed that was that. Cian also somehow got conned into helping and was roped into going! Excuse the pun.

After seeing Nick and Trev on the way up we thought that we may be able to con ourselves a bit more help. Unfortunately (for us) they were off to Tarn Creek Swallet or something and we soon found ourselves alone, standing at Lady Binney Corner, contemplating the unenviable task ahead.

Seeing an old tree fall down while getting changed was good value and almost cheered us up a little.

The walk up to the cave was, as usual, hot and sweaty, gaining remarks from Cian (who had never had this pleasure before) such as "Why don't they build roads near the road?". One can only wonder...

When at last we got to the cave, the first ladder pitch promised to be wet and Dean went down rather quickly. It was more a jump than a climb, or at least that's how it seemed to him. I followed, only to find that the ladder had broken about 1/2 way down and the following rungs were held only by one side. I relayed this to Dean with some difficulty due to the water, but once he got the message it certainly prompted a reaction! Dean did manage to get back up, albeit a little shaky and we pondered what to do. The ladder was quickly and obviously deemed unsafe and we decided the only plan was to go home. However, being only 12 o'clock, we decided to go for a drive.

Some way along the road, Dean's speedy driving on the dirt road got the better of him and with the help of a large pothole, alarming cracks appeared in the wind-screen, including one that completely bisected the glass from roof to dash!

By now, feeling slightly discouraged at the dismal failures suffered, we were tremendously glad to have finally found a cave after something an hour's driving. This particular cave is about 1000 metres long and 90 to 100 metres deep. Descent was made considerably easier by the 20 seater mini-bus! Our guide did manage to find a few small stals which was little consolation. Total time in the cave was about 15 minutes or at least until the commentary tape ran out.

Although certainly not as exciting as a wet, vertical cave, the Gordon Power Station did provide entertainment for the day and filled in enough time to warrant going home.

The return trip had a few worrying moments, once again due to the speed of Dean's driving, the potholes and the already damaged windscreen. I just hope that Nick and Trev had a more successful day, as a more unsuccessful day is very hard to contemplate indeed...

Simon Morgan

Trevor had suggested that I go to Porcupine Pot (JF387) and traverse around towards Growling Swallet to see if anything could be found in the way of new caves. I hadn't been to Porcupine pot but did know where the track started from. The area is now very overgrown and I couldn't see any sign of a track or tapes so after a while of bashing through the disgusting scrub, I turned around and headed back to the car.

Following that minor fiasco, I drove up to the 4 Road and walked to the end of that and headed up in the direction of Wherretts Lookout. Once again all I found was neck high ferns and I soon ran out of enthusiasm so gave this up and drove out to the Florentine River, had a cold swim and basked in the sunshine.

Something definitely needs to be done about the lack of enthusiasm in the club(s) at the moment, as nothing seems to have been done in recent months...

Dean Morgan

SLAUGHTERHOUSE POT (JF337)

10 February, 1991

PARTY: Trevor Wailes, Rolan Eberhard, Jason Hamill, Dirk ? and Dean Morgan

Trevor had organised a trip into Growling Swallet through Slaughterhouse Pot for the newer members and he also wanted to survey a section of passage that we had pushed on a previous trip to see where it was headed.

The through trip was pretty slow but we eventually arrived in Growling (Trapdoor Streamway / Refuge Aven) and headed off downstream a short distance to the passage in question. There were a couple of other passages off this one that Rolan looked at but they all seemed to be oxbows. The survey was carried out on the way back and continued upstream to the Trapdoor Stream junction (station GS89 for those interested - Editor).

The water level in Growling Entrance Series was very low, making it a drier trip than usual. Finally we out of the cave after impressing the other with the Grandeur of Growling...!

Dean Morgan

MINI MARTIN (IB8)

16 February, 1991

PARTY: Dave Rasch, John French and Kirk ? (SCS), Dean Morgan (TCC).

Nothing was happening again this weekend so once again I pushed my way onto a Dave Rasch trip as they were headed into Mini Martin for a look. Dave and John had to be back in Hobart early for a dinner engagement so there was no time to spare.

The first pitch was descended on the SCS new 120 metre Bluewater which made for a very nice abseil. None of us had any bolt hangers for the last two pitches so some pretty spiffy rigging was done by Dave to rig them. While Dave and I were waiting for the others to arrive at the bottom we had a bit of a look around behind the bottom of Mini Martin and once they were down we only had time to go to the Inner Base Camp and Edies Treasure before starting out. The new 120 metre rope was lovely to prusik on with very little stretch, but too soon we were slogging our way back to the cars.

Dean Morgan

WELCOME STRANGER AREA - FLORENTINE VALLEY

17 February, 1991

Party: Peter Shaw & Stuart Nicholas

Pete has always been a "thinking / reasoning" type of caver and keen to explore any possibilities when it comes to finding new cave. Well, today was no exception. Early start, some vertical gear, even a packed lunch!

Some weeks prior, Pete had been looking in the area beyond the end of the spur road last before the Welcome Stranger spur off Westfield Road, as well as trogging a strange outcrop and surrounds between Westfield Road and that spur. Many moons ago a certain earth sciences PhD student had led a trip to basically the same area, with some entrances being found but not really pushed. Some numbers had been assigned, and we assume placed as well (the memory fades a bit there...), although try as we might, these have not been relocated... The same student also had considerable influence on the finding of Hairy Goat Hole in the KD area.

Some sweating later, we arrived at the bottom of a gully in quite a large area of water washed cobbles - presumably the result of sudden reduction in water flow rates giving rise to the dumping of cobbles being swept along in the flow. Apparently further upstream there are similar areas. The small stream was sinking in a fairly non-descript hole at the base of the endwall of the gully - no chance of entry there. On the right side facing upstream (approx. west) a limestone bank exist with a number of small dolines and a couple of fairly spectacular entrances. With much eagerness, we dropped into the first one just up from the gully - climbing down... looks good... "Have you been in here before, Pete?". "No". I wonder who's (reasonably fresh) boot print was in the mud just at the top of a narrow steep rift? Oh well, so much for that - with some work it would be worth another look as the rift certainly seems to continue on down, although little draught could be detected.

Some of the less spectacular holes were looked at, but the only major excitement came from an unexpected encounter with a snake. The gully obviously contains a considerable quantity of water at times and it must go somewhere, but not unfortunately via human enterable conduits. The stream is about in the correct position to be the main feeder for Welcome Stranger and having a stream (at the time of our visit) of the correct proportions to be just that.

Next on the itinerary was a stream sink approx. NE of our position, so off we went through quite open forest. A large blocked gully feature was reached after some walking with a small stream sinking at the bottom. The way in is via one of those funny little "wriggle down / turn and squirm / hold your face right" type holes. Yours truly did the act in the correct sequence and found a continuing wriggle down through rock pile to a depth of probably 10 metres. Certainly worth another look: if a rock can be moved with safety there is a fair chance of getting beyond the surface collapse and into solid rock.

Continuing on down towards Welcome Stranger, a small depression in some regrowth just up on the knoll above WS itself was looked at. The entrance was a steeply sloping mud slide leading to quite a spacious steep chamber. It must be within a trog-dog's back leg of going through into WS as we dropped probably fifteen or twenty metres in height and the bottom area was very WS'ish. No doubt it links through via one of the side passages in WS but is not humanly negotiable.

Back to the car after some lunch and along the spur road a little further to look at a hole in an outcrop left isolated after the clear felling in the area. Heavy packs, much rope, lights and so on. A scramble down one side gave way to, well, basically nothing really!

That was basically the end of that - despite much reading of old Spiels and consulting of maps before the trip, we didn't find the numbered caves or much else, except

as noted. Nevertheless, a most enjoyable day, finished off with the obligatory orange juice and bag of chips from Roy's shop in Westerway.

Stuart Nicholas

SATAN'S LAIR (JF365)

4 March 1991

Party: Trevor Wailes, Stuart Nicholas, Bob Reid and Dean Morgan.

When I heard that Bob and Stu were going to Satan's lair, I jumped at the chance to come along as I had never been there before. Even Trevor shirked all his responsibilities for the day and came along.

An enjoyable smash through the scrub was made and the entrance located after not too many detours. Even if you were bushwalking by Braille, it would be difficult to miss the gully, such is the size of it.

Bob headed in first with all of us tagging along behind, making a delicate climb over a very precariously balanced boulder at the top of the second pitch... When Trev reached this boulder, he got all excited at the thought of pushing it down, but (from below) we talked him out of it!

The rest of the cave is straightforward - with the water as low as it was - and once at the bottom the group headed off in all directions for a look-see. I followed the water to where it disappeared down a hole and after removing a couple of rocks managed to force my body through. The water wasn't very happy about me trying to occupy it's space so attacked by flowing over my head and down my back, making things somewhat uncomfortable and cold. Three metres later the passage choked off completely anyway! With some help from Bob I managed to extract myself, feeling rather cold.

At the bottom of the last pitch there is a flowstone ramp and Trevor followed this up to a well decorated chamber with a 7 metre pitch at one side. It wasn't climbable and we had no spare rope, although it looked promising. Subsequently, Rolan indicated that he had been down this pitch on a previous occasion, but threatened flooding of the cave forced his retreat - may be worth a return trip sometime.

Everyone was starting the retreat and I was keen to get out as I was rather cold from my battle with the water so a hasty return to the surface was made. Trevor came out last so he could send the boulder to a lower energy state, as he was so keen to do. Stuart and I were out of the cave when we heard the rumble as it plummeted into the depths with very, apparently, little persuasion...

We still had a couple of hours to spare and the weather was magnificent, so a trip was made up the adjoining gully to a known choked swallet, in the hope that it may have unchoked itself. It hadn't, so we started back to the cars, going straight up the hill, rather than via the marked track back down the gully. Just up the hill from the swallet a waterfall could be heard. This was tracked to a massive cliff lined doline with two streams flowing into it. Trev and Stu were the first down to what looked like a large walk-in entrance, but was in fact choked with logs and debris with no way in without a considerable amount of digging. Maybe in another few years TCC will have a "digging section" (with Trev as president!).

Dean Morgan

NIGGLY CAVE (JF237)

23 February, 1991

Party: Stuart Nicholas, Lew Mitchelmore, Rolan Eberhard and Dean Morgan.

There was a lead in the form of a 30 metre pitch that no one had looked at, but was found during initial exploration of the cave. The pitch is accessed via careful traversing across the top of, and beyond, the 86 metre pitch for a distance of 60 to 70 metres. Chimneying down 10 metres or so to a large sandy ledge enabled a bolt placement to be found and backed up with a couple of pitons, Rolan rigged a rope and descended into the unknown. A second bolt was placed about halfway down this 15 metre pitch. Looking around the bottom, Rolan reported another pitch so I headed down with more rope. Stu in the meantime was wandering around waiting and looking for Lew who seemed to have disappeared into space!

A short section of rockfall and then 1½ metre wide passage led to the top of a couple of short pitches. Rolan dropped down these, reaching the top of another 20 metre pitch, but time was against further exploration. This next pitch looked like it dropped into a chamber with a big pitch on one side, although all of the newly found passage seems to be heading back towards the other known passage and shaft series. It would be fairly amazing if it connected into the top of the aven that the 104 metre pitch joins in the middle - this has the potential for a 150 to 180 metre pitch!!

The cave was derigged as no one was very keen to return in the immediate future for further exploration - we'll have to wait until after Easter to see what really happens. Stuart did an exceptional job in lugging all the extra rope that Lew had dumped in the cave (before going back to the car!) and it was a slow plod back down to the road with heavy packs.

Rolan did a temperature check in the cave at the top of the 86 metre pitch and it turned out to be a cool 5.5°C! We always thought this cave was very cold - now we know! The water temperature at the entrance was a pleasant 8.5°C... I especially noticed these less than ideal temperatures as I had forgotten some of my caving gear and had to wear a pair of denim jeans (American style) into the cave, making for some very cold legs!

Dean Morgan

TASSY POT (JF223)

24 January, 1990

Party: Glen Robinson and Dave (?) (Hills Speleo Soc. - NSW), Dean Morgan (TCC).

The mainlanders had only arrived in Tasmania at midnight the night before and after driving to Maydena, didn't get into the tents until 3 am. They were to meet me at the ANM gate at 9 am but no one told them about daylight saving, so they didn't arrive until 10.00 am, thinking they were on time! I spent an hour or so talking to Granville at the ANM gate and found out that there would no access to the Florentine during the week from tomorrow and no overnight stays allowed at all. This little revelation somewhat stuffed the visitors' plans for the week!

After the late start, Tassy Pot was about the only option and was descended quite quickly. A good look around in the final rockpile at the end of the horizontal passage and some other side passages near the end was had, but to no avail. The cave was surprisingly dry considering the rain that had fallen over the previous four days.

The return to the surface only took a couple of hours and we even had time to drive to the top of Tim Shea and laze in the sun for a while as I did the Florentine Valley tour guide thing for Glen and Dave.

Contrary to Stuart Nicholas' views, we all agreed that Tassy Pot is quite a worthwhile cave with the exception of the mud on the first pitch. Maybe we will get to do something better next week to really impress our visitors.

Dean Morgan

CAVE DIVING: JUNEE RESURGENCE & LAWRENCE RIVULET RISING

DIVERS: Vera Wong and Stefan Eberhard

Dive 1: Junee Resurgence

10 March, 1991

Dived Sump 1 (220 metres long, 18 metres deep) into the airspace "For Your Eyes Only". Water levels were very low. Both divers wore twin back-mounted tanks. The condition of the line is OK, but it is a bit slack in some parts and also needs repositioning. There is a pile of weights at the start of Sump 2. A useful recce and first dive for VW.

Dive 2: Lawrence Rivulet

24 March, 1991

Both divers descended to "The Squeeze" at 19 metres depth, approximately 40 metres in. The line was found to be nearly cut through not far inside the entrance - this was tied off. The line here was fairly slack, but was later tightened up a bit. After a bit of digging, The Squeeze was found to be easily negotiable with twin back-mounted tanks. VW was down to "thirds" (1/3 air supply used) so terminated her dive here. SE continued along the fixed line finding it to be cut in at least two places, with loose line trailing everywhere. Tied on new line and proceeded to the previous end point, estimated to be 10 metres beyond The Squeeze. Extended the fixed line another 20 metres, through open, straightforward passage which is trending gently upwards from a maximum depth of 23 metres. On return, the pieces of old line were removed. A good dive,.

Future Dives:

- 1 Kubla Khan tourist trip.
- 2 Extending the line Lawrence Rivulet Rising.
- 3 Junee Resurgence. Equipment is being purchased in order to tackle Sump 2, possibly next summer! In February 1992, South Australian cave divers Phil Prust, Chris Brown and Sonia Tucan are planning to visit Tasmania and do some diving.

Stefan Eberhard

Potting Porcupines: Porcupine Pot (JF 387) - Trevor Wailes and Nick Hume. April '91

Porcupine has a reputation of difficulty from the long cold survey trips suffered during its initial exploration. Negotiating vertical squeezes on the way out of the cave can test one's patience and strength after muscling through the half submerged crawlways at stream level. Trev and I had planned a fairly abbreviated trip this time, hopefully to avoid such an epic. Rigging the cave went smoothly (see Speleo Spiel #211 for pitch details). We reached (basal) stream level in little more than

an hour, fortunately, as neither of us are particularly early starters (closing time on the gate these days is 4.30 pm).

Once at the bottom of the pitch series, Trev, bless his heart, wanted to have nothing at all to do with the downstream crawlways. Instead, he was keen to look upstream, which he believed to have been little explored (though Stefan Eberhard and Al Warild had made brief forays there). His solo wanderings turned up another 200 metres of passage beyond previous signs of activity. There is now some 400-500 metres up there which is in need of surveying. Meantime, I had no choice but to half swim/half crawl the shallow tube connecting through to Porcupine's main streamway. This was essential to rig up nets and detectors around the main stream junctions (part of a cave-tracing exercise for uni post-graduate studies).

One net and detector was placed immediately upstream of the junction, the other downstream near the boulderpile. The idea is to check for possible hydrological linkages to such caves as Burning Down the House, Udensala, etc. Tracing through to Junee Resurgence from Porcupine is also a distinct possibility. The flounder back to the base of the pitch series was survived with psyche reasonably intact. Here, Trev and I met up again. Wet and cold, we did not hang around for very long, and began the prusik out. After just one or two struggles (and a blown caplamp bulb) we were surprised to reach the surface without too much effort at all. This dispelled some of the epic quality surrounding the cave, but a return does have to be made to retrieve nets and place some more tracing agent. More floundering.....what fun!

NICK HUME

April '91 A Burning Down the House through-trip.

Social arsonists: Leigh Douglas, Paul Tabbart, Nick Hume.

Some tracing agent needed to be carried into the major stream way in this cave, to hopefully confirm or negate any hydrological relationship with Porcupine Pot/Lawrence Creek Rising, or whatever (as per previous article). So to liven up an otherwise academic (!) exercise, a through trip to that other entrance (JF ?) was envisaged. Anyway, the prospect was sufficiently enticing to lure Leigh and Paul out to assist.

Dyed spores were introduced into the major stream near the junction of major passage with streamway. Water flow was high enough to disperse the agent fairly rapidly. After which we negotiated the occasionally tight (in one place almost sumped!) connection through to the roomier chambers below the alternate entrance. Scarcely more than two hours underground, the retreat homeward was made at a delightfully early hour.

A look at the survey of the streamway in Burning Down the House suggests that drainage may well flow north west from here towards Lawrence Creek Rising, rather than join with Porcupine Pot, etc, waters, in a drift towards Junee Resurgence. If so, it may indicate some drainage divide between BDTH and Porcupine Pot, probably due to structural reasons. Results aren't in at the time of writing, but wait for the thesis, or catch the movie, and hopefully all will be revealed!

NICK HUME