

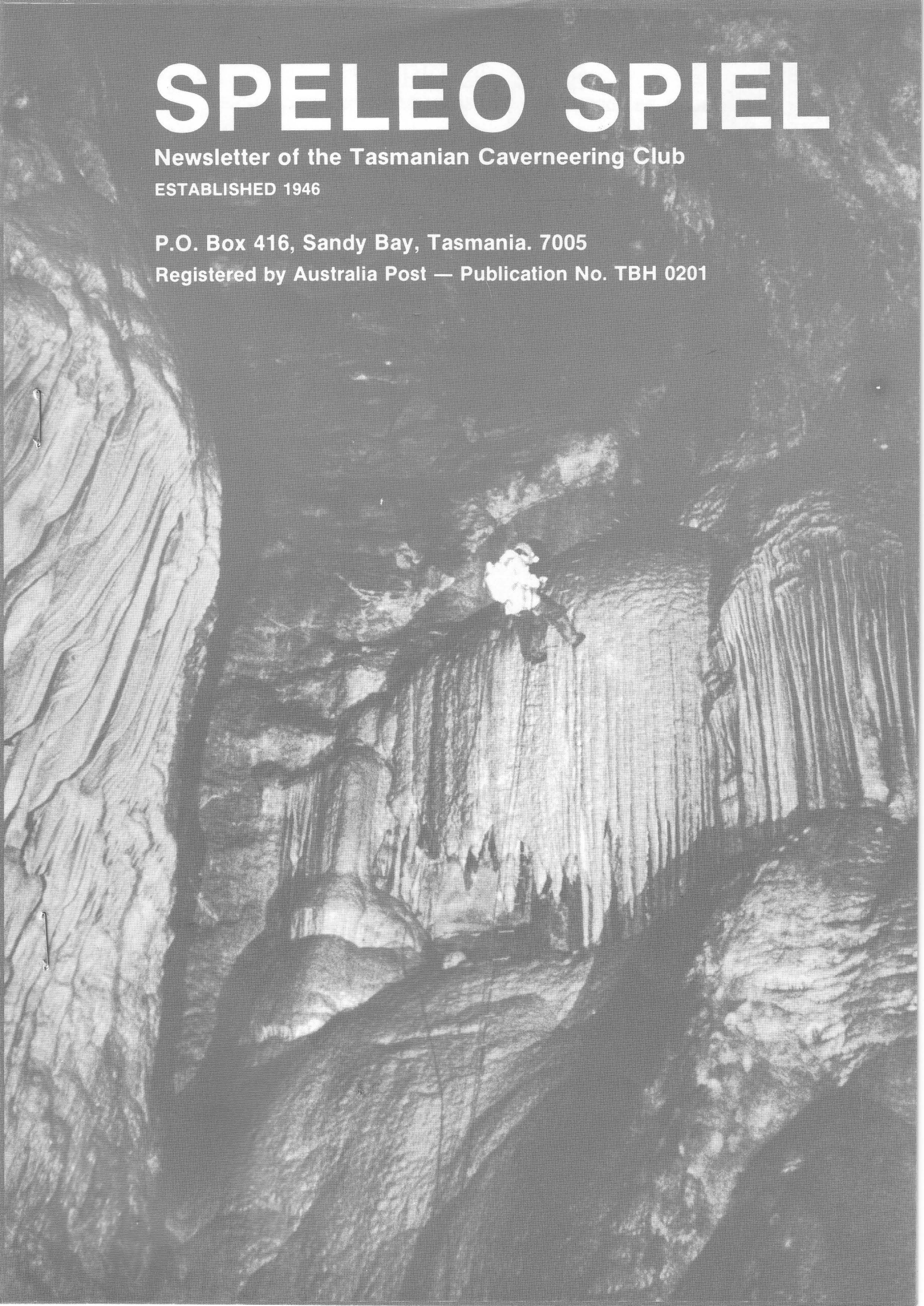
SPELEO SPIEL

Newsletter of the Tasmanian Caverneering Club

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SPELEO SPIEL

NEWSLETTER OF THE TASMANIAN CAVERNEERING CLUB, Inc.

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Jan -> Mar 1992

A New Year... New Discoveries... New Enthusiasm?!

FORWARD PROGRAM

EASTER - APRIL 15 -> 22: SUSS trip to Waitomo, north island of New Zealand. This is limited in numbers, so contact Stu ASAP if you are interested. Total cost would be around \$1000 to \$1200 including airfares, local transport, hut fees and depending on your extravagance level, even food! Its a friendly area, with warm water, good hut facilities (C/- of HTG), 1000 sq km of karst and many caves of varying difficulty.

APRIL 25 & 26: Cave Rescue Exercise - **NOTE CHANGE OF DATE...** yes, that's right, another one of those exercises that everyone hates to be seen going to, but attend anyway! This is going to be in that Junee Florentine classic, Khazad-dûm. The idea, similar to last year, is to haul someone from the horizontal streamway to the surface. Telephone communications system(s) will be installed and tested as well. Hopefully this year we'll have some more sherpa power (in the form of bushwalking type bodies) which will make the show somewhat easier to keep running. The general area around KD is reasonably "user friendly" too which ought to make standing around a bit tolerable! No doubt it will rain, so this is fairly important!
Contact: Stuart Nicholas for further information - but come along anyway!

AUGUST 7,8 & 9: ANNUAL WINTER SEARCH & RESCUE EXERCISE. Come along for a nearly free frolic in the snow, wind, scrub and hills! Again, see Stu if you're keen!

EDITORIAL

Modern caving techniques involve and demand almost total reliance on artificial aids. Included in this armoury of metal & plastic ware are ropes, tapes, krabs and so on as well as bolts and bolt anchors. Reports from Britain in recent times indicate that bolt anchor safety may not be all we think and hope it is. Quite a number have failed when loaded normally, ie with a single person ascending or descending the rope hanging from the bolt. Failure modes have almost all been by stripping of the thread in the anchor. Current bolting technology stresses the surrounding rock somewhat, but maybe the new DMM glued in place anchors are a solution. Certainly in Britain they are being used as replacements for expansion bolt placements. Maybe we should do something similar before we have a disaster...

Through the looking stal...

** The long awaited version 5.0 of SMAPS, that well accepted survey data reduction and management software package, is now available. Many bells and whistles have apparently been added, including an optional Geographical Information System (GIS) package. This will enable the user to ask questions, like "how much passage exists more than 100 m from the entrance, with running water, pink stones in the stream and no violet bats.." and so on. Stu has sent away to SpeleoTechnologies in the US for the complete package and its arrival is eagerly awaited, if only to provide him with another excuse for not going caving!

** By the time this is published and you are reading it, the AGM will have come and gone, no doubt along with some of the current office bearers!

** The Club is receiving more and more literature in the mail asking us to print various advertising pages, offers and so on in our magazine at no cost to the advertiser, or monetary gain for us. There is in fact one at the back of this issue. Do you think this is a good idea, should we be selective, or just say NO to all such propositions? Please give your thoughts on this matter to the editor...

** Come the end of next year, the Australia Post registration scheme for bulk mailing of periodicals will begin a gross overhaul. Small publications such as ours will not be eligible for registration as the minimum mailing per issue will be 500 copies. Hence, after that time, the cost of mailing each individual Speleo Spiel will rise to normal postal rates. There will of course not be the substantial annual registration fee to pay. In fact, unless we undergo a huge membership increase, the annual mailing cost will stay about the same. The bundling, labelling and general buggering around presently necessary will also not be required. I would in fact suggest that we do not renew the registration when it is next due, despite being eligible for another two years.

* Anyone interested in a trip to Wales (the original version, not the New South variety) in August?? There is a rescue conference being held there under the auspices of the UIS. If you're keen, talk to Stu real soon. Airfares, Hobart return, are about \$2.5k (its peak season). There will be plenty of opportunity to cave in other areas of the UK, so it could be a good chance to meet some of the international trogs and tee up enough cave trips to keep you in the jet-setting poor house for life!

** Those of us who have "been around for a while..." (OK, the older members!) will doubtless remember that excellent international magazine called Caving International from the late seventies and early eighties. Unfortunately it disappeared from the newstands following some legal problems. Never fear, dear readers, another mag of similar intent has sprung up. Called International Caver, it is produced by Tim Stratford and available from Aven Publications, Shaftsbury Centre, Percy Street, Swindon, SN2 2AZ, UK. From all reports it is a good read and well produced, although at present principally covering European caving activity. No doubt that will change when overseas correspondents start sending in copy. Maybe we ought to start sending info rather than relying on some mainland person to do it for us!! Any volunteers??

FLORENTINE VALLEY ACCESS...

After many years of varying degrees of difficulty in getting into our favourite haunt, the ultimate solution has been acquired - a key to the gate! Thanks to the good offices of ANM's John Simpson, TCC now has a key to the "slip road" gate just along the Strathgordan Road as well as a key to the Junee Quarry Road gate leading up to the KD / Cauldron Pot / Niagara Pot / etc area.

The club is responsible for the control of access via this key. Therefore it is critical that:

- (a) the keys are used **ONLY** on bone fide TCC trips;
- (b) they are returned the same day they are taken, ie kept away from Bob's for the absolute minimum time;
- (c) for safety, and as a record for ANM &/or PWH, a logbook will be sited with the keys - this **MUST** be filled in accurately **before** the keys are taken!!
- (d) the keys must **NOT** be loaned out to "sub-contractors" - other people who haven't registered in the log book;
- (e) the keys and log book will be in a "mail box" on Bob's front porch and the keys will be on a large "tag" - something that will not be easily slipped in the pocket and forgotten!

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Please do the right thing - it is a privilege to have this access arrangement, and it will certainly make life somewhat easier for Florentine visits. Talk to Bob Reid (our quartermaster) for any further information.

Some world cave & karst statistics....

For those aspiring internationalists amongst us, following are some figures on the longest and deepest caves known as of late last year in this planet of ours. The figures were taken from tables appearing on InterNet thanks to the handiwork of Bob Reid. We hope and trust there is no legal problem reproducing the tables!

Gulden's World Long Caves List - 6/91

#	NAME	COUNTRY	LENGTH*	DEPTH**	DATE	STAT**
1	Mammoth Cave System	USA	547177	115.5	09/90	IP
2	Optimisticeskaya	USSR	178000	20.0	04/91	IP
3	Holloch	Switzerland	133050	867.0	Sum89	IP
4	Jewel Cave	USA	127203	133.8	06/89	IP
5	Siebenhengste-hohgant	Switzerland	110000	1020.0	Sum88	IP
6	Ozernaja	USSR	107300	20.0	Sum88	IP
7	Wind Cave	USA	93664	172.2	05/91	IP
8	Lechuguilla Cave	USA	91572	77.0	04/91	IP
9	Reseau de la Coumo d'Hyuernedo	France	90496	1004.0	Sum90	IP
10	Sistema de Ojo Guarena	Spain	89071	0.0	Sum88	IP
11	Fisher Ridge Cave System	USA	82077	88.4	06/90	IP
12	Zolushka	USSR	82000	30.0	Sum88	IP
13	Sistema Purificacion	Mexico	76110	904.0	Sum90	IP
14	Gua Air jernih	Malaysia	75000	355.1	Sum90	IP
15	Friars Hole Cave System	USA	69363	188.4	08/90	IP
16	Rasgill Cave	UK	66000	211.0	Win90	IP
17	Organ (Greenbrier) Cave	USA	60510	148.1	01/90	SC
18	Hirlatzhohle	Austria	57000	612.0	Sum90	IP
19	Mamo Kanada	P N G	54800	528.0	1988	IP
20	Res. de la Dent de Crolles	France	54094	603.0	1989	IP
21	Kap-Kutan/Provezhutochnaja	USSR	54000	200.0	04/91	IP
22	Reseau de L'Alpe	France	53600	614.0	Sum88	IP
23	Red Del Rio Silencio	Spain	53000	492.0	1986	IP
24	Sistema Huautla	Mexico	52100	1370.0	5/88	IP
25	Reseau de La Pierre Saint Martin	France/Spain	51200	1342.0	1989	IP
26	Raucherkarhohle	Austria	48033	725.0	Sum89	IP
27	Crevice Cave	USA	45385	0.0	07/86	IP
28	Compleso Fighiera-Farolfi- Antro Del Corchia	Italy	45000	1215.0	1989	IP
29	gran caverna de Santo Tomas	Cuba	44600	0.0	1977	UN
30	Cumberland Caverns	USA	44444	61.0	08/84	SC
31	Ogof Ffynnon Ddu	UK	43000	308.0	Win90	IP
32	Eisriesenwelt	Austria	42000	407.0	Sum80	IP
33	Bol'shaja Oreshnaja	USSR	42000	190.0	04/91	IP
34	Sloans Valley Cave System	USA	39640	73.2	01/82	IP
35	Xanadu Cave System	USA	38823	62.0	07/86	IP
36	Dachstein-Mammuthohle	Austria	38529	1180.0	1989	IP
37	Cueva de Uzueca	Spain	38169	0.0	Aut90	IP

38	The Hole (Boggs Cave)	USA	36838	30.5	03/81	SI
39	Whiggistie Cave (MCNP)	USA	36209	0.0	06/85	IP
40	Blue Spring Cave	USA	35406	?	12/90	IP
41	Atea Kanada	P N G	34500	350.0	1985	UN
42	kef Toghobeit	Morocco	33725	713.0	1989	?
43	Culverson Creek Cave Sys.	USA	33507	121.9	09/85	IP
44	Carlsbad Cavern	USA	33474	316.1	04/91	IP
45	Tantahohle	Austria	33000	435.0	Sum89	IP
46	Ogof Agen Allwedd	UK	32900	160.0	Win90	IP
47	System Amaterskej a Punkevni Jesky.	Czech	32500	497.0	1989	IP
48	Binkleys Cave System	USA	32277	42.7	12/90	IP
49	Pestera Vintului	Romania	32277	31.0	1986	SI
50	Blue Springs Cave	USA	32251	30.5	06/73	SI

Notes:

* In metres

** In metres. These figures were copied verbatim from Bob Gulden's "World Long Cave List, 6/91". The preponderance of zeroes in the last decimal place indicates that it is not a significant digit (I suspect Bob has a database which fills in zeroes in the tenths place, significant or not).

*** Status key: IP - In Progress
SC - Survey Completed
SI - Survey Incomplete
UN - Unknown

Gulden's World Deep Caves List - 6/91

#	NAME	COUNTRY	DEPTH*	LENGTH**	DATE	STAT***
1	Reseau Jean Bernard	France	1602.0	17900	Sum90	IP
2	Shakta Vjacheslav Pantjukhina					
		USSR	1508.0	0	1989	IP
3	Sistema de la Trave	Spain	1441.0	5933	Win87	UN
4	Laminako Ateak	Spain	1408.0	11893	Sum88	UN
5	Sistema Huautla	Mexico	1370.0	52100	05/88	IP
6	Sniezhnaja-Mezhonnogo	USSR	1370.0	19000	1986	IP
7	Sistema Cuicatec(o)	Mexico	1370.0	15000	04/91	IP
8	Boj-Bulok	USSR	1368.0	5000	04/91	IP
9	Reseau de La Pierre Saint Martin	France/Spain	1342.0	51200	1989	IP
10	Reseau Rhododendrons-Gouffre Berger	France	1242.0	20665	Sum89	IP
11	Vladimir V. Iljukhina System	USSR	1240.0	4816	Spr89	IP
12	Schwersystem (Batmanhole)	Austria	1219.0	6101	10/84	UN
13	Complesso Fighiera-Farolfi- Antro Del Corchia	Italy	1215.0	45000	1989	IP
14	Gouffre Mirola	France	1211.0	9000	1988	UN
15	Abisso Ulivifer	Italy	1210.0	0	Sum90	
16	Veliko Sbrago	Yugoslavia	1198.0	5000	Sum90	
17	Sistema Aranonera	Spain	1185.0	5620	Sum88	
18	Dachstein-Mammuthohle	Austria	1180.0	38529	1989	IP
19	Jubilaumsschacht	Austria	1173.0	0	06/85	
20	Sima 56 de Andara	Spain	1169.0	5620	10/84	SC

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21	G. de Bracas de Thurugne 6	France	1159.0	6700	Sum90	IP
22	Anou Ifflis	Algeria	1159.0	1600	Sum88	
23	Abisso Vive le Donne	Italy	1156.0	0	Sum90	IP
24	Sistema Badalona	Spain	1149.0	0	12/85	UN
25	Sistema del (Pozu) Xitu	Spain	1148.0	6100	1986	UN
26	Akmatl (Axematl)(Axemati)	Mexico	1135.0	3356	09/89	IP
27	Arabikskaja (Kuibyshevskaja)	USSR	1110.0	2020	06/87	
28	Schneeloch	Austria	1101.0	0	1986	
29	Sima G.E.S.M.	Spain	1098.0	2718	10/84	SC
30	Jagerbrunntrogsysteem	Austria	1078.0	28026	1986	
31	Sotano de Ocotempa	Mexico	1064.0	0	09/89	IP
32	Lammertsofen	Austria	1050.0	14657	Sum90	IP
33	Pozo Della Neve	Italy	1050.0	5000	03/89	IP
34	Meandertshohle (Meanderhohle)	Austria	1028.0	0	Sum90	IP
35	Troca de Uriello	Spain	1022.0	3632	10/84	
36	Siebenhengste-hohgant Hohlensystem	Switzerland	1020.0	110000	Sum88	IP
37	Reseau de la Coumo d'Hyuernedo(e)	France	1004.0	90496	Sum90	IP
38	Kievskaya	USSR	990.0	1820	1986	SC
39	Reseau des Aiguilles	France	980.0	6100	05/85	
40	Schnellzughohle	Austria	972.0	2490	02/86	
41	Kijahi Shunthua (Kajahe Xuntua)	Mexico	970.0	0	09/89	
42	Moskovskaja	USSR	970.0	0	07/89	
43	Berenschacht	Switzerland	956.0	5000	1989	
44	Napra	USSR	956.0	3170	05/85	
45	Skalaria	Yugoslavia	950.0	5000	Sum90	
46	Cow's Asshole Cave	Italy	950.0	5000	Sum90	
47	Abisso di Malga Fossetta	Italy	950.0	5000	Sum90	
48	Pozo de Cuetalbo (M2)	Spain	948.0	0	06/87	
49	Pozo del Llastral (B3)	Spain	944.0	0	Aut90	IP
50	Sonconga	Mexico	943.0	1800	09/89	

Notes:

* In metres. These figures were copied verbatim from Bob Gulden's "World Deep Cave List, 6/91". The preponderance of zeroes in the last decimal place of the depth column indicates that it is not a significant digit (I suspect Bob has a database which fills in zeroes in the tenths place, significant or not).

** In metres.

***Key: IP - In Progress
 SC - Survey Completed
 SI - Survey Incomplete
 UN - Unknown

Just in case you find something of world significance (!), send updates (of either list) to:

NSS Long and Deep Cave Lists
 C/O Bob Gulden
 1333 Chapelview Drive
 Odenton, MD USA 21133-2129

MOUNT ANNE - ANNAKANANDA

22-23 September, 1991

PARTY: Stefan Eberhard and Vera Wong.

The intention of this trip was to push the so-called "Glory Hole" - a narrow slot with an enticing draught which drops straight into a shaft. It had first been noted back in 1983 and at that time we had spent a while trying to enlarge it, before being distracted by other things. Quite apart from the draught, it seemed to hold some promise because the passage was heading directly away from any other known part of the cave. The weather was alternately snowing and clear. Mt Anne and the NE Ridge were still plastered in snow and we had to fight our way through quite a bit of it to get into the doline. The floor of the doline was covered in 3 metres of snow, with deeper drifts and icicles hanging off everywhere - quite an atmosphere to the place!

That night we went caving, down four pitches to the site of the action. As it turned out, we didn't have to employ equipment we had brought along, as a bit of gardening of loose rocks enlarged the hole sufficiently to squeeze through, even with SRT gear on. The drop was about 14 metres which lead directly onto a further drop of about 20 metres - dropping down through a dry canyon passage with collapse blocks on the floor. We didn't have sufficient rope for this next drop so had to leave exploration for another day. Back at the 14 metre pitch is a large "window" in the wall which looks across to a shaft with dripping water. I suspect this is part of the "Heartbeat Shaft" or nearby environs.

We emerged when very weary at 2am in the morning. At the campsite there is a large stash of wine bladders for water and also a fair quantity of carbide in various states of decay (some is in excellent powder whilst some is amorphous powder). We carried out some of this trash and other relics which no longer serve a purpose in this place. We also carried out our shit as there is some risk of contaminating water supplies within the doline.

Stefan Eberhard

MYSTERY CREEK CAVE (IB10)

2 February 1992

PARTY: Kathleen McLaren and Stuart Nicholas

New members and potential new members seem to be popping out of the limestone quite frequently of late, so a beginner's trip or two is / was called for. Such are the plans of cavers and Stuey Nick that when such a trip is organised people suddenly find other things to occupy their day!

Never mind I guess. Just the two of us wandered into the serene entrance of Entrance Cave (or Mystery Creek Cave - what is the correct name for this thing??). The stream was low and no storms were looming so survival equipment was minimised and a pleasant couple of hours spent wandering some of the lower levels looking at glow worms and the like and then up The Ramp past Broken Column to the high dry stuff. A quick wriggle through a fairly dry Matchbox Squeeze into the bottom of Midnight Hole and back out again had caving gear looking at least slightly used, so all was not completely lost. Slipping down the Laundry Shute had us semi-lost but a couple of recce's into parts unknown soon sorted out that minor problem.

A short trip but certainly not wasted. Home in time for a bicycle ride (must keep up the training!) and then back to the normality of writing the Speleo Spiel! Who else is going to take beginner's trips?? People are keen to take up the sport, but usually need some sort of introduction...

Stuart Nicholas

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GROWLING SWALLET (JF36)**9 February 1992****PARTY:** Dean Morgan, Trevor Wailes and Stuart Nicholas

The plans of mice and cavers... The trip was planned as a multi-purpose trip into the middle bowels of GS. Survey from Mainline to the Mainline sump (not done up 'till now...), look at a lead Trev was keen on ~~above~~ Mothers Passage (?) and take some photo's in the general area for the (fabled?) "TCC Exploration Journal". All in all, a Trevor benefit!

Things were going wrong before getting very far up the road. Whilst enjoying the luxury of Dean's newly acquired dog-less carriage, mention was made of the surveying gear Trev had his survey note pad - pity no-one had any instruments! Dean had a bad headache and had brought his 12 string E-type racing guitar to occupy the time while Trev and Stu were underground...

The tardy troupe did finally get underground, albeit somewhat in the realm of old men rather than spritely and fit cave explorers. Wandering down the streamway in very low stream conditions, it was apparent that Stu was not the best - stomach wobbles were the order of the day, so he opted to turn back at Refuge Aven. This created more of a dilemma as he had the camera gear and expertise, so that was the end of another of the planned options.

Trev and Dean went for the not-quite-a-claytons option - have a look at the area upstream of Trapdoor Stream. This they did, for no real gain, while Stu made his way out to a bright sunny day and blow-flies en-masse at the car. Still, being able to wash one's caving apparel in the GS entrance stream rather than at home was one advantage of an early finish, as was sitting in the sun waiting for the other remnants of this somewhat farcical cave trip!

Stefan had left a note and we did find him just down the Eight Road doing animals counts or some such intellectual activity. A return home via "a scenic route" was eventually made to end what was a very quiet TCC almost cave trip!

Stuart Nicholas

BIG TREE POT (IB9)**8 September 1991****PARTY:** Caleb Pearce and Dean Morgan.

The day started off badly with me forgetting to get a helmet and after going to the Ida Bay youth hostel for a loan helmet, we blew a heater hose in the car! Luckily Peter Gordon from Benders Quarry was home so we had a lend of some tools and got the car mobile again.

It was about 11am before we finally arrived at the entrance of the cave fully prepared for a day full of mishaps, but luckily everything went smoothly from there on. All of the ropes we had were of very minimal lengths for the pitches, so there was some doubt if we could quite get to the bottom of the cave... It wasn't too critical as the trip was more a vertical exercise for Caleb to practice some underground SRT.

The rope for the first pitch was about 4 metres short of the bottom so a knot crossing was made there. It was possible to jam yourself in the rift which made things a lot easier. Things went well then until the top of the 90 metre pitch was reached. We had free climbed the short 5 metre pitch just before this big pitch as the rope intended for this had been used on the end of the top pitch rope! All we had left was one 90 metre rope and one 12 metre rope - this necessitated a very

minimal rigging system using a couple of bollards on the floor and a rebelay at the head of the pitch. I descended first and when I arrived at the bottom of the rope I wasn't quite at the bottom of the pitch! Only about 1 metre above the floor, so no real problem, except for the need for another knot crossing exercise - with the rope unweighted, the end was some 5 metres off the floor! Caleb was next and last down (he was the only other person in the party!) and with me standing virtually next to him I explained how to cross knots while hanging in space.

With our last rope we just had enough to get to the bottom for a chocolate stop before beginning the prusik out of the cave. After a bad start, the trip turned out to be quite enjoyable. We had no bolt hangers, so none of the bolts placed during the S&R exercise last year were used. The casings were still in place with plastic markers in most of them.

Dean Morgan

GROWLING SWALLET (JF36)

15 September 1991

PARTY: Trevor Wailes and Dean Morgan.

There was a lead in the Third World area of GS that Trev and I had visited a while back. Sufficient time had passed for us to forget what an unpleasant area this was, so a return visit was made for more exploration. There was still plenty of snow on Mt Field so a very wet trip was made down the main streamway with evidence of very heavy sumping a long way back from the normal sump. It had obviously been a very wet couple of months. A short while later we arrived at the Space Rat Alley / Servalane junction and we chose to take the Space Rat Alley route as I hadn't been that way before. Once back into Servalane there was a fair bit of arm exercise getting through to the Third World. The previous trip had run short of time, but we had the gate key on this trip, so no problem now. From the chamber I had quickly looked at on the previous trip there were a couple of walkable passages going off. We chose the obvious one first. This was carrying a small stream as we followed it up but it soon became steep and eventually became too narrow with only digging potential. Back at the main chamber, we split up for a general look around. I went through some open rock fall and came to another 2 metre wide meandering stream passage sloping up at about 10 degrees. Following this in mainly walk through passage for about 100 metres, it finished at an aven about 5 metres higher with smaller passage leading off from the top of it. Climbing this looked a bit dodgy without protection so I headed back to the original chamber and met up with Trev.

Not much had been found, so we started the grind out of the cave. Thankfully upon arriving at the streamway, the water level hadn't come up so we were able to get out that way to be met with a glorious sunny day outside. We even got back to the gate by 4.30pm!

Dean Morgan

MESA CREEK - Hastings / Ida Bay area

22 September 1992

PARTY: Bob Reid, Simon and Dean Morgan.

I had been to Mesa Creek about 18 months ago with Arthur Clarke and on that trip there was a 10 metre wide streambed that was completely bone dry. Arthur and I followed that streambed up for about 2 km, surveying at the same time, and eventual-

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ly came to a swallet in the streambed. This was taking a stream similar in size to Growling Swallet. The plan for this day was to have look around the swallet and into the bush surrounding it to try and find a way into the cave system. Unfortunately, upon arriving at the streambed, we were met with a raging torrent pouring down the river, making it impossible to walk up the streamway.

It would have taken hours to walk up next to the stream in the bush so a hasty retreat was made back home. It only takes an hour of easy walking to get to Mesa Creek so is anyone interested in going again when it dries out a bit?? (Like about now.....!!)

Dean Morgan

MIDNIGHT HOLE (IB11) & LOONS CAVE (IB2)

29 September 1991

PARTY: Grant, Gary, Danny and Nick, plus Dean Morgan.

The caving scene has been virtually non-existent for the last couple of months and it looks like being that way for a while so I had to resort to taking people from work through things like Midnight Hole. This cave does get rather boring after the umpteenth visit, but all of the others were mightily impressed with it. Once back at the cars they were still keen so I took them for a grovel though Loons Cave trying to find the wettest and muddiest parts of this cess pit. They enjoyed that one even more! The next day at work, they were telling everyone how fantastic caving is, but unfortunately they don't seem keen enough to join TCC...

Dean Morgan

MOONLIGHT FLATS

9 October 1991

PARTY: Bob Reid, Vera Wong and Dean Morgan.

Bob and I had spotted some big cliffs on the back of Moonlight Flats last year (1990). Bob saw them from out at sea and I saw them from Southport Lagoon. From 20km away they looked like they may be limestone and were about 700 metres above sea level. They were an unbroken line of cliffs over 1 kilometre in length.

We decided that the best plan of attack would be to walk up to Moonlight Flats and drop off the top until we found them and this is what we did. Finally we reached a position some 500 metres off them but the alpine scrub would have meant that it would take another couple of hours to actually reach the cliffs. From our vantage point it was apparent that they were not limestone, but it would have been good to be able to see what was at the bottom of them.

If anyone is interested in having a look, the best approach would be to walk halfway along the Moonlight Flats track towards Hill One and then walk down towards Many Falls Creek. You couldn't miss the cliffs as they aren't small and are only about 400 metres down from the top.

Dean Morgan

MIDNIGHT HOLE (IB11) / MYSTERY CREEK CAVE (IB10)**March 15, 1992****PARTY:** Kathy Kamsec, Steve Bunton, Karen Magraith and Stuart Nicholas.

A trip for some oldies and newies! Which is which from the above list, I will not elaborate on.

Bunty was keen to take Kathy through Midnight Hole, Karen was a visitor from Adelaide / Darwin and Stu was keen to keep up his average annual number of caving days, so all was set. An unusually fine day in the far south saw some perspiration on the brow while ascending the hill from the old quarry. Despite Bunty being in front, we managed to find Midnight before midday, which augured well for the rest of the trip.

Gearing up beside the tree, some unusual skull-duggery had Stu deciding to go down helmet first, with the owner some 40 or 50 metres and ten minutes or so behind! Never mind, an invading force from SCS arrived shortly after - always guaranteed to divert one's attention from the job at hand.

The TCC troupe descended into the dark (dry) depths of Midnight and with the great "Bunton miraculous flying circus" in full flight, rope handling / hauling / etc nearly went off without a hitch.

Less than two hours later we were assembled at the bottom of the final pitch. "We'll just haul the rope down and then wriggle out through Match Box Squeeze.." Some time later and not without the odd puff, pant and droplet of sweat, the familiar whistle of high speed rope was heard.

It appears the 12 to 15 mm deep grooves worn immediately below the eyebolt at the pitch top are such that there is rather more than a fraction too much friction, especially with thin (8mm or 9mm) ropes. Something needs to be done about this in order to avoid a disaster caused by someone prusiking up in an attempt to free the rope and having it come unstuck. Perhaps a thick stainless steel plate or bar, suitably shaped, should be bolted (with small bolts in order that the rock is not overly stressed in the vicinity of the main bolt) or glued, immediately below the eyebolt and replaced as required? The existing eye-bolt eye is showing very little signs of wear and as it is not screwed in and out of the Loxin anchor, thread degradation should be minimal. Some would say put another bolt in to hang the rope free. If this can be placed high up and a sign installed pointing it out, well and good. Maybe all the eye-bolts in Midnight Hole need to be backed up with higher level bolts and, say, chain or wire rope between the then two bolts. Whatever the solution it needs to be simple and safe because this cave is a **VERY** popular cavers and "non-cavers" SRT / abseiling trip. Think about it and let Stu know your ideas.

Some wanderings in Mystery Creek, with a remarkably low stream level and high crowd density, finally had us outside in more typical weather conditions - rain! The car park at the end of the track was somewhat overflowing with various TCC, SCS and other cars. The Dover shop provided the usual fair fare on our return drive and, all up, a good time was had by all!

Stuart Nicholas

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