

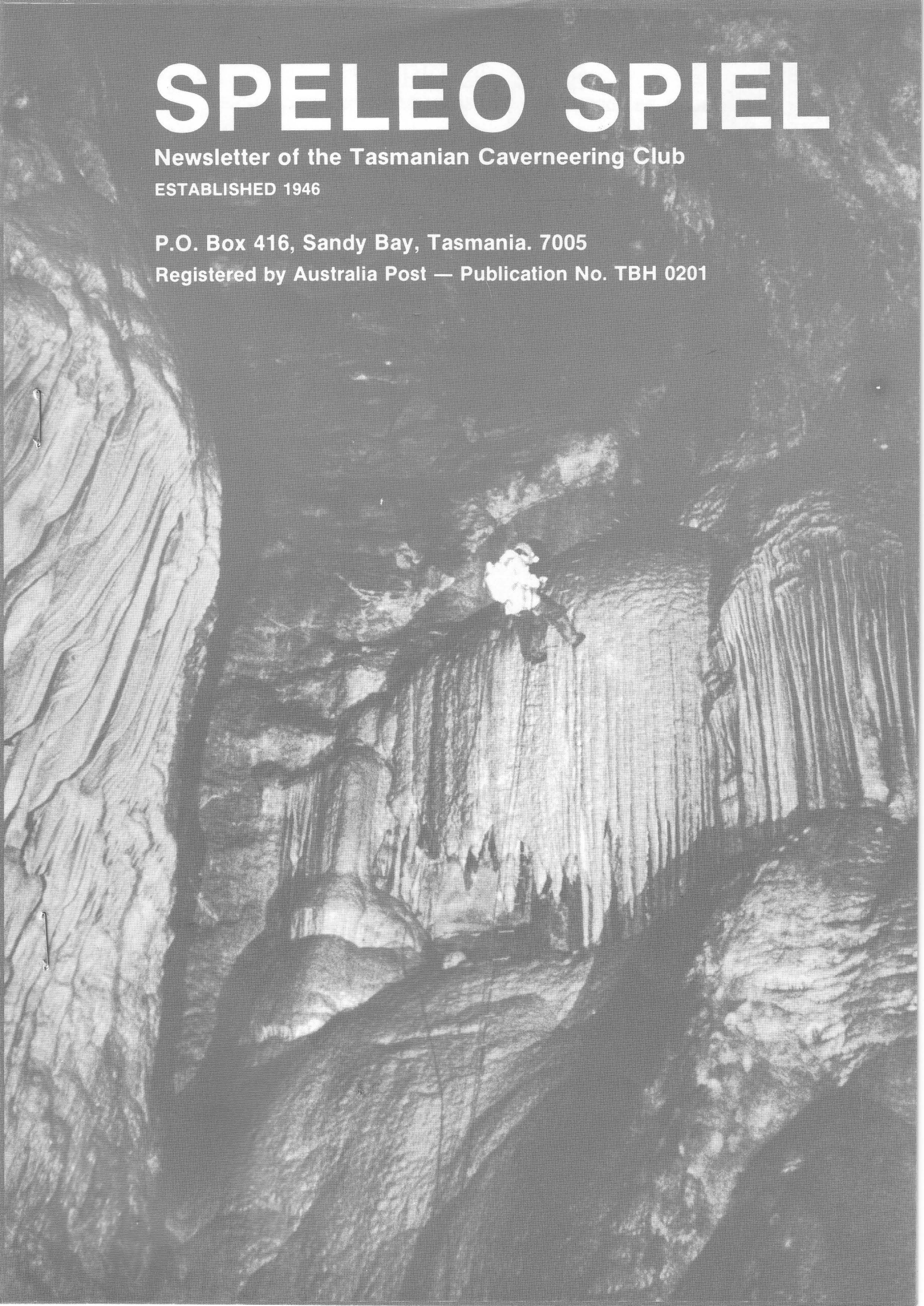
SPELEO SPIEL

Newsletter of the Tasmanian Caverneering Club

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SPELEO SPIEL

NEWSLETTER OF THE TASMANIAN CAVERKNEKING CLUB, Inc.

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PRESIDENT:

Rolan Eberhard 54 Wentworth Street, South Hobart, Tasmania 7004 Ph 348128

SECRETARY:

Trevor Wailes 214 Summerleas Road, Kingston, Tasmania 7050. Ph 291382

TREASURER:

Simon Morgan Unit 16 / 8 Ellison St, West Hobart, Tas. 7000. Ph 348689

QUARTERMASTER:

Bob Reid 21 Haig Street, Lenah Valley, Tasmania 7008. Ph 280983

EDITOR / TYPIST:

Stuart Nicholas 7 Rupert Avenue, New Town, Tasmania 7008. Ph 283054

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FORWARD PROGRAM

TUESDAY 19 MAY - 7PM Radio /communications practice night at Police S&R store, Paternoster Row, North Hobart. For anyone interested in learning correct radio operating procedures, expecially in a search / rescue operation.

TUESDAY 26 MAY - 7PM Cave rope jiggling session! For anyone (and that should eb everyone...) keen to learn and practice self rescue techniques, hauling systems and so on. All the skills you must know but hope to never need.. Police S&R store.

WEDNESDAY 3 JUNE 8.30pm Wheatsheaf Hotel TCC MEETING: Slides and tales tall and true from the Easter Vanishing Falls trip by Rolan, Stefan and Vera. This trip culminated in 2.5 km of big river cave being found and mapped... Be there!

WEDNESDAY 17 JUNE 8.30pm Wheatsheaf Hotel TCC MEETING: More slides - this time for selection for printing in the TCC Journal (yes, it will happen!). Bring your best few slides from GS, AAK, IT, diving in Junee or GS. Do it and be there!

WEDNESDAY 1 JULY 8.30pm Wheatsheaf Hotel TCC MEETING: Ian Houshold - PWH Karst Officer: Ida Bay Quarry and Exit Cave Management.

WEDNESDAY 5 AUGUST 8.30 pm Wheatsheaf Hotel TCC MEETING: Kevin Kiernan - Thailand caves, karst and caving.

WEDNESDAY 7 OCTOBER 8.30 pm Wheatsheaf Hotel TCC MEETING: Stuart Nicholas - RESCON 92 from personal experience... Slides and other descriptive trivia from the IUS 1992 Cave Rescue Conference in Wales.

WEEKEND: Friday night August 7 -> Sunday August 9: The annual Winter S&R Exercise, like you've seen it before! To be held in the King William Range (south of Derwent Bridge / Lake St Clair), this is a state wide exercise, open to anyone keen to go! Conditions in the area and at that time of the year can be quite severe, don't go if your not well equipped... The map is the 1:25000 Arrowsmith sheet.

***** Is anyone doing any caving?** All we seem to have in the Forward Program are Police S&R trips... This is a caving club, not a branch of the local constabulary!

The TCC Meetings list we hope will revive interest in these Wednesday night things and transform them from beer swilling sessions into, perhaps, something vaguely intellectual... It would be good to see some of the oldies (less junior members!) there as well.

NOTES ON KHAZAD-DUM (JF4.5.14)

The purpose of this article is to draw attention to the fact that exploration potential in the KD system is still far from exhausted. It is one of the few deep caves in the Juneo-Florentine that was originally explored in the 1970's, but which has failed to yield major extensions in subsequent years, Depths of Moria excepted. There is the additional possibility of connections with other caves in the vicinity. I have also included details of various routes from the entrance down to the start of the streamway section. These offer more challenging alternatives to the time honoured Scaling Pole - Flattener route. Those planning to "do" KD might like to consider the various options available to them.

The reader is referred to articles by Ackroyd (1988), Martin and Worthington (1979b) and Warild (1986) for rigging suggestions on the standard route down KD. Not mentioned in any of these articles are two terrier anchors of relatively recent origin at the top of the last short pitch in the streamway (9m). Both bolts are on the right wall out above the pitch, though one protrudes alarmingly from the rock surface. See Warild (1981, 1986) for rigging possibilities in Dwarrowdelf.

Entrance Series

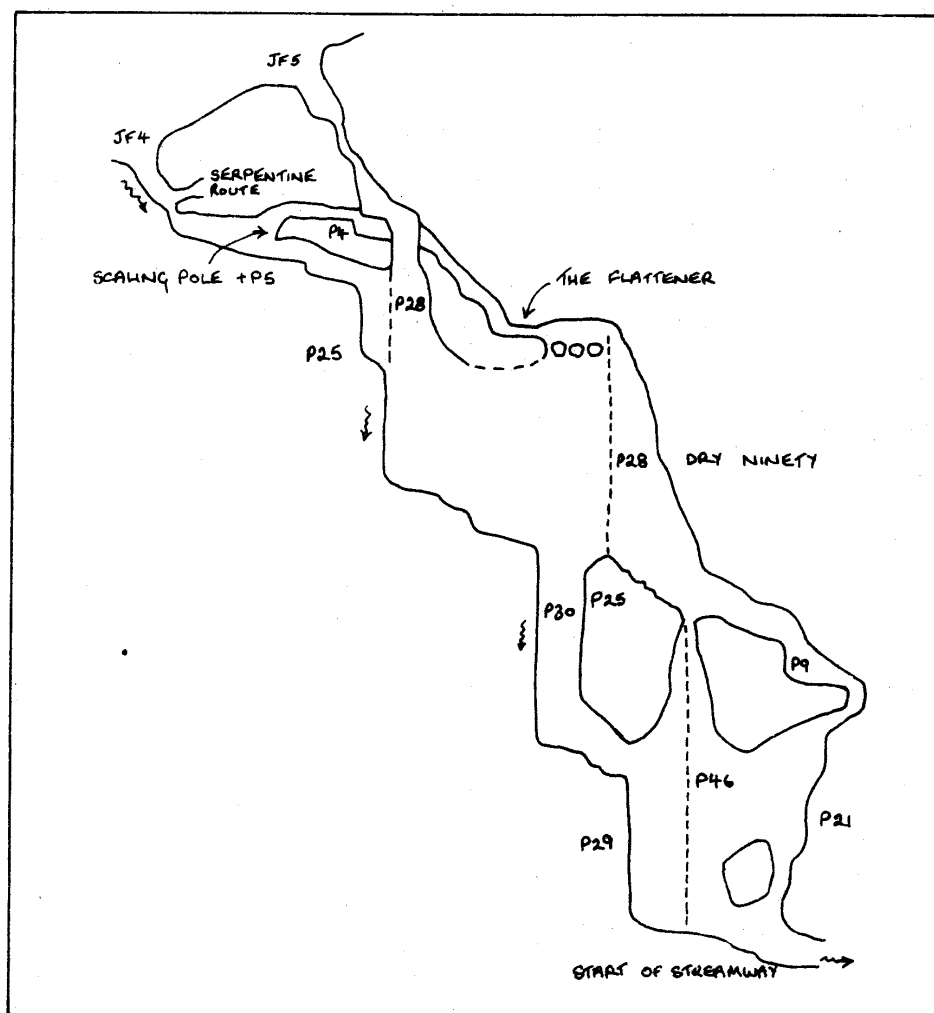
The area from the main swallet entrance (JF4) down to the start of the streamway, is surprisingly complex. There are basically four main routes down to the streamway, though only two are regularly used. The neglected routes - JF5 entrance and the Wet Way - are more interesting propositions, if only because they are rarely utilised. The sketch map that is included may make the various alternatives clearer.

(1) Scaling Pole - Flattener Route: The normal route involves leaving the water via the Scaling Pole Pitch just inside the JF4 entrance (though the scaling pole itself may be bypassed via the start of the Serpentine Route). A 4m pitch, a short climb down, then The Flattener, lead to the top of the Dry Ninety (28m). At the base of

this pitch a side passage with pitches of 9m and 21m leads back to the active streamway again.

There are, however, two alternative possibilities from the base of Dry Ninety. Off to one side a waterfall may be observed. This is the second pitch in the Wet Way (see below). It is possible to join up with the latter route via a pitch of around 25m, and in fact this route was taken on early exploration trips prior to the discovery of the two pitch side passage way down to the streamway.

A second alternative is to traverse out over talus perched in the rift at the base of the Dry Ninety. Somewhere in the deep void below is the start of the streamway. This shaft would appear to offer the most direct route down, involving an abseil of some 46m. The only recorded descent of this pitch was in 1971 during the ASF Conference field trips.



Khazad-Dum section: JF4 and JF5 entrances to start of streamway. Diagrammatic sketch only, not to scale.

A further variation to the normal route would involve dropping down the rift that is crossed after The Flattener, but before the bolts at the head of the Dry Ninety are reached. This pitch of around 25m in length would appear to land in the Wet Way between the first and second pitches. It was descended on a recent trip down KD, having been mistaken for the Dry Ninety.

(2) Wet Way: This is the most direct route down KD. In the early 70's cavers didn't like the look of all that water, and the racy waterfalls of the Wet Way were neglected in favour of the Scaling Pole - Flattener route. Interest in this part of the cave was recently revived and some enjoyable trips had in investigating the possibilities.

Heading downstream from the JF4 entrance, a 3m climb down leads to the top of the first pitch. It is around 25m in length with a broad ledge 10m down. A section of streamway below precedes the next shaft (circa 30m). This very wet second pitch may be avoided by climbing up to a small chamber on the left near the base of the first pitch. From here a 4m drop lands on chockstones wedged above a deep shaft. An abseil of some 45m drops into the same chamber as the waterfall pitch. This is actually a lower level of the Dry Ninety chamber.

Two passages lead off from the chamber. The dry one reaches a 29m shaft down to the start of the streamway section. This pitch was descended in the early days of KD's exploration and again on a recent trip from the JF5 entrance. A terrier bolt was placed beside an old eyebolt anchor (minus eyebolt) on the right wall at the edge of the drop.

A second passage that carries the stream from the base of the previous pitch also leads to a shaft. It is a rather intimidating drop that was only partially descended on a recent trip before the force of water made a retreat necessary. This waterfall is the one cascading down from above at the start of the streamway. Its length is at least 30m.

(3) JF5 Entrance: Eight metres higher and 50m away from the main swallet entrance is JF5. When first descended the upper entrance was mooted as a possible way of avoiding the water of the first pitch in Wet Way. As it turned out, cavers lost interest in JF5 when the Scaling Pole route was found.

JF5 consists of a mud slope followed by a slippery climb down to the top of vertical drop. A 13m abseil lands on a broad ledge part-way down the first pitch (25m) in the Wet Way. A further drop of 15m brings one to the base of the pitch proper. Continue as per Wet Way.

(4) Serpentine Route: With its five pitches (23m, 15m, 8m, 9m, 5m) and winding sculpted canyons, the Serpentine Passage offers good sporty caving. It has been traversed several times in recent years. Two leads in the passage may be worth a look. One is a low horizontal streamway shown on the 1973 KD survey to intersect the Serpentine Passage from a north westerly direction at a point roughly halfway between the start of the passage and the first pitch in it. It is possible that a small cave located just uphill of the JF4 entrance but within the same doline, is the source of water in this tributary. The cave contains a small stream in a passage that becomes progressively low as one proceeds downstream.

Another lead much lower down in the Serpentine Passage is reported by Wailes (1982). It is a dry passage at the base of the fourth pitch (9m).

(5) JF40 Connection?: JF40 is the grotty-looking rift beside the track just before it dips down to the entrance of KD. The 1973 survey indicates a complex of rising passages and avens leading off in the direction of JF40 from the start of the streamway in KD. Stefan had a look in JF40 in 1981 and seemed to think that a rock

blockage at the end of the cave could be pushed with some work. A JF40/KD connection would deepen the system by only 4 to 5 metres.

KD Streamway

There are no particularly good leads in the section of streamway between the base of the entrance series and the pitch down to the basal chamber. However, three features are worthy of note.

(1) I seem to remember that one or more small streams - no more than a trickle when water levels are low - enter from upper levels somewhere along the length of the streamway. It is not impossible that this represents water from Splash Pot. This cave is no great distance away and was pushed to a new depth of circa 160 metres in 1987. The extension has not been accurately surveyed and its lower reaches were only cursorily explored. More surveying would indicate whether Splash Pot is likely to connect with KD.

(2) The 1973 survey shows an ascending lead in the ceiling between the last two short streamway pitches. It is possible that Dribblespit Swallet, a cave that is almost certainly connected to KD, joins somewhere in the vicinity. Exploration in Dribblespit in 1988 revealed a constricted draughting rift through which the sound of water could be heard. Dribblespit's location close to Dwarrowdelf, and its depth of 166 metres, make the lower end of the KD streamway a likely point for the connection. A more accurate prediction is not possible in the absence of a surface survey linking the KD and Dribblespit underground surveys. In any event, the very constricted rift at the end of Dribblespit means that physically linking the two caves would be no easy matter.

(3) There is an alternative to the usual way (ie the 42 metre pitch from the Brew Chamber) down to the final chamber. Instead, it is possible to continue down beside the water, and this was the route initially followed during the original exploration. From the Brew Chamber two pitches are involved. A 21 metre pitch followed by a short cascade leads to the edge of the final waterfall. It has never been completely descended, though a part-descent in 1971 set a new depth record of -290 metres. This record was later broken when the drier Brew Chamber pitch was descended. All subsequent descents have taken the latter route.

Following the original route down the last two waterfalls remains a novel possibility. Of additional interest is the fact that Kiernan's 1971 sketch map indicates an unexplored passage entering near the top of the final waterfall. No further details of this lead are known.

Basal Chamber

It is in the massive final chamber where scope is greatest for finding major continuations. None of the possibilities listed below seem particularly promising, but further leads are likely to exist.

(1) Depths of Moria: This is the area downstream of the first sump. A high-level crawl on the left of Sump 1 leads to active streamway again, terminating in a further sump after no great distance. The sketch survey by King (1976) indicates a number of question marks, as do more accurate surveys by Martin and Worthington (1979a) and Bunton and Martin (1981). There is a good draught in the initial crawl, but this is "lost" further in and little extra passage has been added since the extension was discovered in 1976. Sump II has been dived without success.

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explored on a TCC trip in 1986. Further back towards Dwarrowdelf a huge aven soars up into darkness on the eastern side of the chamber. This rather intriguing feature perhaps indicates another Dwarrowdelf-type system above.

(3) Off to the right (if facing towards KD) in the section where the ceiling is lowest between the base of Dwarrowdelf and the main KD chamber, is a well-concealed crawl leading into the ceiling of an active stream canyon. Traversing along horizontally brings one to an aven where a small stream enters. The source of this water remains obscure, though there is at least one small stream sinking on the surface between the entrances of Dwarrowdelf and Dribblespit Swallet. In the downstream direction the passage descends steeply in extremely friable rock. I was stopped at the brink of a short drop here in 1986. It is feasible that this stream is one of the tributaries in the Depths of Moria.

Dwarrowdelf

The straightforward shafts of Dwarrowdelf would seem an unlikely place for leads. However, the 1972 survey of Dwarrowdelf by Montgomery et al shows two descending continuations that may be worth investigation. These are located at the bases of the first and second pitches, perhaps leading to parallel shafts that join back lower down. A number of avens are shown at the top of the sixth pitch.

A couple of other leads are also marked on the Dwarrowdelf survey, these being located in the chamber at the base of the final pitch. A short section of fossil stream passage is indicated near the base of the pitch, while a rift at the south-eastern end of the chamber is described as "continuing unexplored". It has been suggested that the water coming down Dwarrowdelf ends up in the Depths of Moria (Bunton & Martin, 1981).

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Rolan Eberhard

TCC NOTES (alias, the President's report)

- Some very sketchy & brief notes re the past year of TCC, Inc.
- Firstly I would like to pay tribute to Trev (alias MR Wailes) for his helmsmanship of our esteemed group through the very vigorous 80's - certainly one of TCC's more active times... Some hard trips were done, some big discoveries made...
- This last year has been fairly quiet - almost in line with the recession we were meant to have, I guess! Still, things are not all what they seem. A few Niggly little things like big shaft jobs and politics (maybe they go hand in hand...) seem to be in vogue, and for better or worse, will continue to be.. We must however avoid becoming too political for taxation reasons, if nothing else! For the first time we are involved in a major conservation issue. I hope & trust that sanity will prevail in resolution of this and other future issues...
- We are a small club but with a great collection of skills & expertise, both practical and theoretical; we are recognised as such by some public authorities but not by others... Relations with the Police are excellent and certainly rapidly improving with PWH. However some others are not so keen.....
- Enough of that. Some other random notes... This was I understand the 45th year of TCC and in fact of organised caving in Australia, as TCC was the first club formed in this country - quite something for a club involved in such an esoteric sport.
- There have been no flood entrapments this (calendar) year! The Speleo Spiel lumbers on - its still the top underground mag in the country - even if I do say so myself! Past years have seen entire issues written by such notables as Nick Hume, the Eberhards, Trev and so on. Now we have Dean (the machine) doing it! Who will be next? Everyone seems to be buying PC's so maybe we can have an EMAIL Spiel soon - think of the trees we'll save - then Trev will be out of a job as well as me!
- Nick Hume used his (and everyone else's) skills and expertise to write a thesis about underground Florentine things in order to avoid work for a while - when's the movie due out? Will there be a sequel?
- Various expeditions / trips / junkets have been organised and done by a few people. There are more on the way I understand.
- We have had quite a number of keen people try to join our group - some have even succeeded! A bit more effort by our older (ie established) members on this front would be good value. SCS are helping people to join their group, so why shouldn't we do something to help them join ours instead?
- Some thoughts for the future - we must consider the value of the information we have in the form of cave maps, and so on - is it sellable, should it be sellable and if so under what conditions, should any of it be published at all, and so on. A thorny but important issue to consider.
- Conservation of, and perhaps conversely, ease of access to cave and karst features is becoming an issue of mounting importance (perhaps not consideration, just importance...) to public authorities as well as clubs such as ours.
- Public interest in outdoor sports is increasing - this could make the legal machine rumble, with litigation being an increasingly popular pastime. We must

establish ourselves as the source of technical and leadership information relating to our sport and not allow others to do it for us.

- Not much more to be said or should be said - thank you to everyone for your support of Australia's best caving club! Keep those caves going down!

Stuart Nicholas
President 1991/92

ANOTHER (NO-)FUSS EASTER EXTRAVAGANCE, or CAVING IN THE FLINDERS RANGES

PARTY: Stuart Nicholas (TCC), plus lots of other people from Flinders University Speleo Society Inc., Adelaide (FUSSI).

A holiday! Bliss and other utterances... The plane broke in Melbourne, my pack was impounded in Adelaide, Karen and Guy were in hot water (their hot water cylinder burst!). That's the holiday spirit, I guess.

A day or two veg'ing at one of Adelaide's beach side suburbs, then off to the Flinders Ranges in no less than the ASF Editor's Morris 1100. The Clare Valley wineries and pubs were all shut on Good Friday when we passed through and the last bottle fell out of the fridge the night before... All that implied a definite lack of holiday spirit! A few hundred kilometres later (a hundred or so more than it needed to be...) the Morry stopped beside a non-descript little hill and it was announced that we were about to go caving. I spent a minute or two wondering if flies could see in the dark. Deciding they couldn't persuaded me to go underground.

The cave was Clara St. Dora Cave, F4 to its friends. Immediate impressions were different - a mine adit for an entrance, a very short walk from the car and the underwear that local cavers do not wear under their cotton overalls.... My bush-walking thermals (only one layer!), running shorts and neoprene knee pads looked a little out of place, if not risqué.

In we went, past the dead kangaroo, down a wooden ladder to a cross passage, replete with more carcasses. The very dry nature of the cave was in contrast to Tassie experiences - dust in the eyes was a major hazard! Turning left, a daylight hole above illuminated the passage a little, just before a steel gate. The gate lock clasp was broken and the lock jammed - obsolete one key. Apparently the cave, like a number of others in the area, had been mined at some time for bat guano - hence the adit entrance and timbers littering the entrance section of the cave proper.

The aim of the trip was to look for some minute cave spiders as they had been noted in this cave on a previous trip. Pushing on through some small wriggles, we peered intently at the dry and dead formation looking for something that I was assured that I would recognise when I saw one... Emerging into a medium sized chamber (around 10 metres diameter) was a revelation - decoration was good, albeit mainly dead and somewhat damaged. A further couple of similar chambers existed beyond here. Water is, like in Tassie, the gold prize to cavers. Only the scale is different - cavers in the Flinders look for drops on the ends of straws, not roaring streamways.

A couple of hours of sweating in the humid and hot (approx 20°C) atmosphere and dry cave environment had us locate a few little animals plus a couple of single strand webs. Enough - we still had an hour or so of outback roads to negotiate before dark to reach our campsite and the other FUSSI people beside a river course - no water, just a few trees and lots of rocks in the bottom.

Next day, organisation struck. With the FUSSI precision of a military exercise, people were allocated caves and groups - two caves per group per day! Off we went to do a cave near yesterday's effort - in fact in the same little hill rangette as F4. This was Mairs Cave (F3) or Clara St. Dora South Cave. Big stuff - the entrance pitch was rigged from the gate structure (again, another abandoned mine entrance). Ladder set up + belay rope + abseil rope + yours truly in the same thermals, shorts and knee pads. An awkward start to the abseil soon had me 17 metres down sitting on another dry rock pile in pleasantly cool surroundings. The others followed by one means or another and off we tramped down a steep rock pile into quite large, long and impressive passage - around 120 metres long and about 10 metres high and wide. Good decoration was evident at the end of the chamber and in passages beyond. Here, either the temperature and / or the humidity was higher, or perhaps the CO2 concentration was up a bit as I was sweating for no apparent reason. Definitely a new experience. Some excellent helictites could be seen in a low section at the end of some flowstone lined passage. Unfortunately, as noted above, most of the stals are dry and dead.

Again, after a couple of hours we headed out to the hot flies above. After some minor drama on the entrance pitch we finally had all the team outside, just as the group from F4 appeared. Our group trundled back to the car for lunch and then into Clara St. Dora again - this time not on a mission for science (or from God!).

The party at the camp site that nite was something out of the box - fairy tales were told, balloon objet d'art, bulk food and we even acquired some plonk from somewhere. Next day the organisation was less - we went up to Wilpena Pound and did some walking, complete with US style marked trails. A stunning and remarkable place.

Back to Adelaide (the wineries were shut again, dammit!) and the now drier seaside flat. Karen was caving on the Nullarbour with Rauleigh Webb et al from Perth. Guy was hatching an expedition to the Northern Territory. Fairly active these Adelaide cavers! Finally, back to the realities of Hobart (are there realities in Hobart??).

Thanks to Karen and Guy for a roof, Clare and Heiko for a steed, Richard for half a tent and everyone else in Adelaide and FUSSI for their generosity, happiness and pleasant company - a great trip was had.

Stuart Nicholas

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