

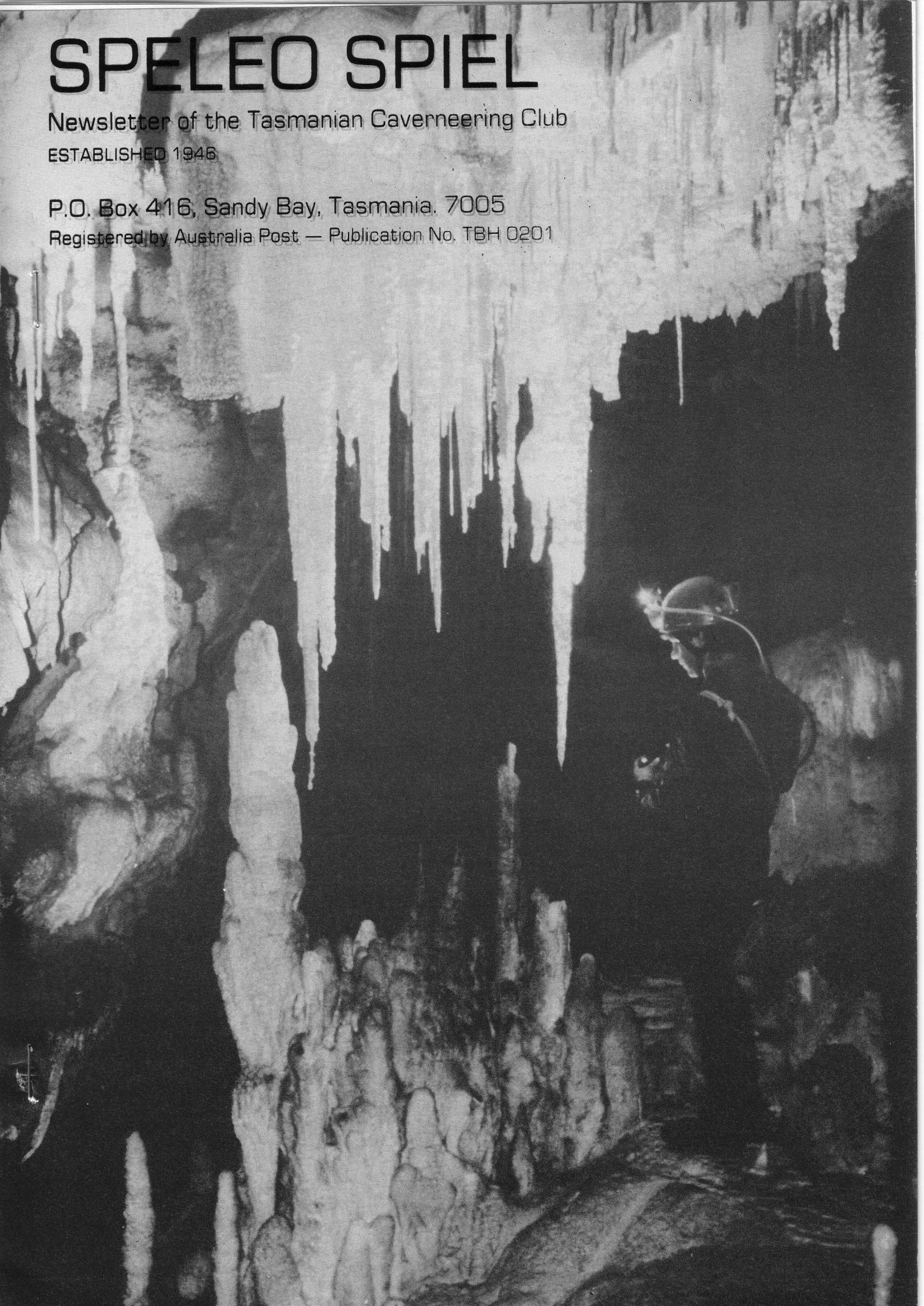
# SPELEO SPIEL

Newsletter of the Tasmanian Caverneering Club

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# SPELEO SPIEL

NEWSLETTER OF THE TASMANIAN CAVERNEERING CLUB, Inc.

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**EDITORIAL**

It would appear that after many months of protracted discussion, conflict and vacillation, the Benders Quarry issue may be all over, bar the shouting. However, don't hold your breath... In August, Ros Kelly closed the quarry only to allow it reopen in a combined commercial production / site rehabilitation operation. The two processes are to most people's minds totally antagonistic in concept and execution. Commercial forces will, in our society, almost always win out over anything resembling conservation.

However, it appears that the parties concerned have reached some agreement with regard to its finalisation and that the quarry must close in the immediate future. To this end, Ros Kelly has again forced it's immediate closure, one hopes permanently. Numerous internal issues no doubt still remain to be resolved including compensation and rehabilitation of the site. I trust that sanity prevails and the issue will be laid to rest in the most expeditious manner possible.

Stuart Nicholas

PS Anyone interested in / keen on / inextricably captivated by the prospect of editing this magnificent journal?? Talk to Stu... He'll enthusiastically reinforce those thoughts and even give lessons in editing the best cave mag in OZ!

**FOR SALE:** This month we have two entries in the Speleo Spiel Calcified adverts...

**Nick's "GETTING RID OF THE JUNK" sale.**

**Premier carbide lamp** - plus heaps of spares (eg 3 brand new reflectors and 2kg of carbide: \$50.00 for the lot.  
**Petzl ascenders** - chest type, near new: \$40.00 each.  
**Rappel rack** - small size: \$20.00.  
**Spits** (self drilling 8mm bolt anchors), heaps of them: \$3.00 each.  
**Wire headers** - with triangular Maillon Rapides: \$20.00 each.  
**Peter Storm thermal top:** \$10.00.  
**Stereo viewer** - for aerial photographs: \$15.00.  
**Letraset** - wide variety of sizes: \$1.00 per sheet.  
**Headlight bulbs** - for Oldham cap lamps: \$1.00 each.  
**U.S. Navy Diving Manual** - tech (high pressure!) reading: \$10.00.  
**Change bag** - for extracting film ends, film jammed in cameras, etc: \$5.00.  
**Pitons and carabiners** - oddments: \$1.00 each.

Free set of my spinal X-rays with every purchase!! **Phone Nick Hume 002-310348 (h).**

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**Pav's "CLEAR THE DECKS" sale.**

**Vertical gear:**

**Jumars** - 1 pair virtually new.  
**Whaletail descender** - 1 only virtually new.  
**Figure 8 descender** - 1 only virtually new.  
**Carabiners** - approximately 12, mostly locking.  
**Slings, etc etc.** - many and various.

**Phone Pavel Ruzicka 002-235913 (h).**

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**Satan's Lair (JF365)**

**July 1992**

**Party:** Vera Wong, Grant Else and Judy Clarke.

Following a wet week in Hobart, we decided to go and experience a bit of sporty caving in Satan's Lair. After reaching the start of the walk-in without incident we headed off, following pink tapes. Within several hundred metres the markers vaporised so we resorted to topographic map and compass to avoid delay. Soon we rejoined the correct route - old blue tapes this time.

On arrival at the entrance we trogged up and rigged the first pitch from handy logs. From here the descent went smoothly (even the rock pile seemed stable) until flowing water appeared after a few pitches. This made life more interesting and considerably cooler. A number of short pitches and wet climbs followed until the final pitch was reached. This long pitch gave us a thorough soaking despite Vera's redirection of the rope as far as possible from the water. At the bottom we scurried around to keep warm before ascending the long pitch in a chilly shower.

Derigging was accomplished rapidly and we were back on the surface after a most enjoyable 5 hour trip. It was a pleasant change to emerge from a cave in such a well washed state. Following the track out proved easier than on the way in so we returned to Hobart feeling entirely satisfied with our day.

Judy Clarke

# The Deepest & Longest Caves in Tasmania August 1992

Rolan Eberhard

Input from Stuart Nicholas and Jeff Butt has helped considerably in preparing these updated deepest and longest lists. As with previous such lists published in this magazine, only caves 100m and deeper or 500m and longer are included.

For the first time all lengths and depths have been tentatively assigned an accuracy code to give at least some indication as to the veracity of the data. The following scheme has been applied:

1. Known extent of cave fully surveyed to a reasonable standard (ie. at least ASF Grade 4).
2. Cave mostly surveyed, though part of the depth or length figure is based on estimate.
3. Cave mostly surveyed, but no estimate has been made of additional depth or length.
4. Cave unsurveyed and the figure for depth or length is entirely estimate.
5. Accuracy of figure for depth or length is unknown.

Areas: C: Cracroft, GP: Gunns Plains, H: Hastings, IB: Ida Bay, JF: Juneeflorentine, L: Loongana, MA: Mt. Anne, MC: Mole Creek, MW: Mt. Weld, NR: Nicholls Range, PB: Precipitous Bluff, VF: Vanishing Falls.

	Deepest Caves	Depth (m)	Area	Accuracy
1	Ice Tube (Growling Swallet System)	375	JF	1
2	Anne-A-Kananda	373	MA	1
3	Niggly Cave	371	JF	1
4	Khazad-dum	333	JF	2
5	Cauldron Pot	305	JF	1
6	Serendipity	278	JF	1
7	Tassy Pot	238	JF	1
8	Arrakis	235	MW	1
9	Owl Pot	225	JF	1
10	Niagara Pot	222	JF	1
11	Mini Martin (Exit Cave System)	220	IB	3
12	Milk Run	208	IB	1
13	Sesame	207	JF	1
14	Flick Mints Hole	204	JF	1
15	Porcupine Pot	202	JF	1
16	The Chairman	197	JF	3
17	Threefortyone	193	JF	2
18	Cyclops Pot	192	IB	1
19	Big Tree Pot	189	IB	1
20	Peanut Brittle Pot	186	JF	2
21	Midnight Hole (Mystery Creek Cave)	185	IB	1
22	Deep Thought	183	MA	1
23	Rift Cave	181	JF	1
24	Udensala	181	JF	1
25	Lost Pot	175	JF	1
26	Dribblespit Swallet	166	JF	2
27	Little Grunt	165	IB	1
28	Splash Pot	160	JF	2
29	Three Falls Cave	158	JF	3?
30	Kellar Cellar	155	MA	2

31.	Satans Lair	139	JF	1
32.	Victory 75	130	JF	1
33.	Warhol	130	JF	1
34.	Gormenghast	128	JF	3
35.	Chicken Bone Pot	125	IB	4
36.	Revelation Cave	125	IB	1
37.	Col-In-Cavern	119	MA	5
38.	Hobbit Hole	118	IB	1
39.	Herberts Pot	116	MC	1
40.	Kubla Khan	116	MC	1
41.	Bone Pit	113	JF	2
42.	New Order (Bauhaus System)	113	PB	1
43.	Yodellers Pot	110	IB	4
44.	Rescue Pot	107	JF	5
45.	Devils Pot	105	MC	1
46.	Giotto Pot	100	IB	1

	Longest Caves	Length (m)	Area	Accuracy
1.	Exit Cave System	20000	IB	5
2.	Growling Swallet System	9108	JF	3
3.	Herberts Pot	5730	MC	1
4.	Wargata Mina	4283	C	1
5.	Kubla Khan	4027	MC	1
6.	Bauhaus System	3077	PB	1
7.	Anne-A-Kananda	3000	MA	1
8.	Serendipity	2948	JF	1
9.	Little Grunt	2644	IB	1
10.	Porcupine Pot	2531	JF	1
10.	Mystery Creek Cave	2524	IB	3
12.	Salisbury River Cave	2310	VF	2
13.	Pyramid Cave System	2000	MC	5
14.	Wet Cave System	2000	MC	5
15.	Wolf Hole	2000	H	5
16.	Niggly Cave	1936	JF	3
17.	Quetzalcoatl Conduit	1920	PB	1
18.	Croesus Cave	1915	MC	1
19.	Arthurs Folly	1900	IB	5
20.	Khazad-dum	1774	JF	1
21.	Welcome Stranger	1650	JF	1
22.	Newdegate Cave	1600	H	5
23.	Damper Cave	1282	PB	1
24.	The Chairman	1216	JF	3
25.	Threefortyone	1211	JF	2
26.	Burning Down The House	1200	JF	1
27.	Lynds Cave	1081	MC	1
28.	Rift Cave	1080	JF	1
29.	Cauldron Pot	1071	JF	1
30.	Honeycomb Cave	1024	MC	1
31.	Loons Cave	1000	IB	5
32.	Rat Hole	1000	MC	5
33.	Tailender Cave	1000	MC	5
34.	Maracoopa Cave	910	MC	5



35	Frankcombe Cave	900	JF	5
36	Mostyn Hardy Cave	900	L	5
37	Tassy Pot	854	JF	3 ?
38	Rift Cave	850	JF	3
39	Sesame Caves	800	JF	3
40	Owl Pot	786	JF	1 ?
41	Junee Cave	775	JF	1
42	Arrakis	720	MW	1
43	Niagara Pot	611	JF	1
44	Gormenghast	582	JF	3
45	Rotuli Cave	520	NR	1
46	Kellys Pot	500	MC	1
47	GP4	500	L	5

The above deepest list differs from that published in *Speleo Spiel* #261 (1990) in the following ways:

- (1) Owl Pot: A check of the 1983 survey data indicates that a previously cited figure of 244m may be too deep.
- (2) Midnight Hole: A Midnight Hole survey in 1983 coupled with recent surveying in Mystery Creek Cave by Steve Bittinger suggests that a previously reported figure of 203m requires amendment.
- (3) Deep Though: This cave's depth has been ammended slightly on the basis of a note in *SUSS Bulletin* 30(2), p.2.
- (4) Rift Cave: Surveying has shown that a previously estimated depth of 180m was out by all of 1m!
- (5) Little Grunt: Previously attributed a depth of 130m, this cave is now 165m deep as a result of discoveries made in late 1991.
- (6) Kubla Khan: Surveying by SCS has provided an accurate depth for this cave for the first time.
- (7) Giotto Pot: This cave appears on the list for the first time as a result of a survey calculations indicating a depth of 100m.
- (8) Thun Junction: Previously listed as 132m deep, this cave no longer appears in its own right due to the discovery of a connection linking it to Exit Cave.

The above longest list differs from a previous list published in *Speleo Spliel* #245 (1989) in the following ways:

- (1) Exit Cave: This cave's length remains controversial. A previously cited figure of 16km has been amended to 20km, although this is still considerably less than some have suggested.
- (2) Growling Swallet: A length for this cave of 11km has been bandied about, though in fact just over 9km has actually been surveyed. The explored extent of the system no doubt exceeds the latter figure, though estimates of how much involve considerable subjectivity.
- (3) Wargata Mina: Explorations beyond the upstream sump in this cave in 1988 and 1990 have added considerably to a previously cited length of 3321m.
- (4) Kubla Khan: A figure of 3657m given previously for this cave has been revised on the basis of recent surveying by SCS plus a 1983 survey by TCC of 1128m in 'Sunless Sea Passage'. This figure should be considered a preliminary one.
- (5) Quetzalcoatl Conduit, Bauhaus and Damper Cave: The surveyed lengths of these caves have been added to in the course of expeditions to Preciptous Bluff from 1986 and 1990.
- (6) Little Grunt: Recent exploration has revealed a far more extensive system than was previously known.
- (7) Porcupine Pot: More exploration and surveying have supplemented a previous length of 1625m for this cave.

- (8) Mystery Creek Cave: Previously reported as 1200m, the massive increase in the length of this cave reflects systematic surveying by Steve Bittinger. This figure is not a final one - Steve reports that some passages remain to be surveyed.
- (9) Salisbury River Cave: This exciting river cave at Vanishing Falls was explored early in 1992. The figure for its length is based on 1910m of surveyed passage plus an additional 400m that was explored but not surveyed.
- (10) Niggly Cave: This deep and extensive system was only discovered recently.
- (11) Croesus Cave: A survey by Phil Jackson *et al* has revealed a length slightly less than a previously cited figure of 2050m.
- (12) Burning Down The House: This figure is based on an SCS survey which indicates a length somewhat in excess of a TCC survey of roughly the same time.
- (13) Rift cave: Surveying of new passages in this cave by SCS have added to a previously reported length of 850m.
- (14) Cauldron Pot: The length of this cave was increased substantially by discoveries made in 1989.
- (15) Owl Pot & Tassy Pot: These caves' lengths have been amended following a check of survey data gathered in 1983. The latter cave is almost certainly longer than this data suggests.
- (16) Junee Cave: Exploration in April 1992 by Stefan Eberhard in Sump II has slightly increased this cave's length from a previous figure of 720m.
- (17) Niagara Pot: An extension found in 1989 has added to the length of this cave.

#### Postscript

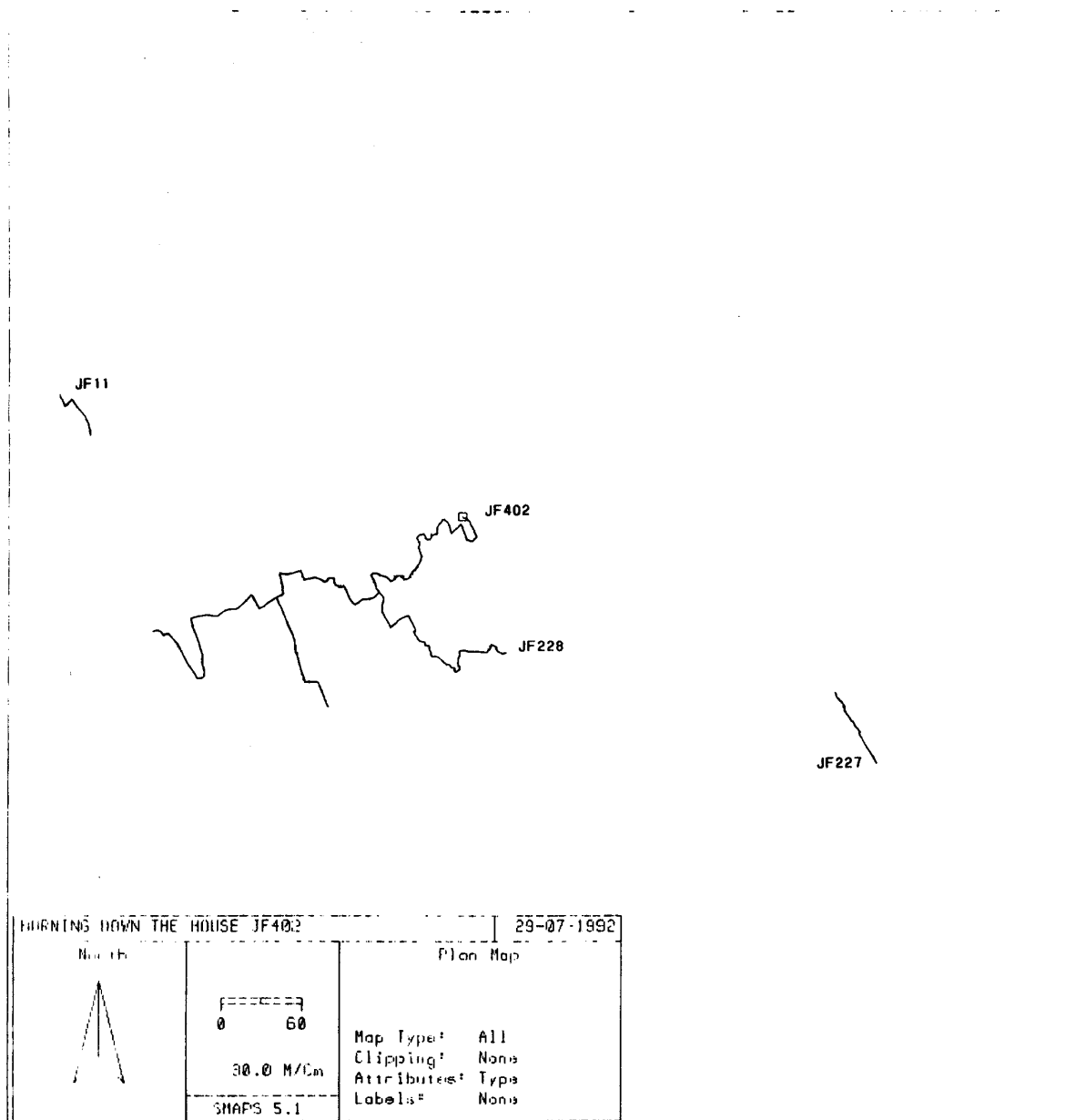
A certain amount of confusion has recently arisen in relation to the precise depth of Ice Tube-Growling Swallet. The deepest point in the cave appears to be a sump in an area known as Coelacanth. New data from an overland survey from Ice Tube to Pendant Pot which allows the depth of the Coelacanth sump to be calculated with far less survey legs than previously, suggests a total depth for the system somewhat less than the figure of 375m cited in the list above. However, until such time as the data can be more fully scrutinised and perhaps additional surveying undertaken, it seems reasonable to stick with the 375m figure.

#### Burning Down The House area, Florentine Valley

Rolan Eberhard

The two entrances of Burning Down The House (BDTH) in the Florentine Valley have been known since at least the 1970s. However, it was not until 1988 that exploration revealed a far more extensive system than was hitherto known, including the existence of a link between the JF228 and JF402 entrances. A subsequent survey revealed a length for BDTH of 1200m, and a total depth from the higher (JF228) entrance of 71m. Neither of the two entrances are currently active swallets, though a major stream is encountered some distance inside BDTH. Water tracing with lycopodium spores by Nick Hume has shown that this stream flows to Porcupine Pot and thence to Junee Cave, 13km to the south-east of BDTH. Nick's results also suggest that some of the BDTH water finds its way to Lawrence Rivulet Rising, 7.5km to the north-west.

As a result of surveying by Dean Morgan and myself, as well as further water tracing experiments, the relationship between BDTH and other nearby caves has become clearer (see accompanying maps). Rainbow Cave (JF11), the sinking point of the small stream in the gully to the immediate north of BDTH, consists of a gently descending rift that leads to a sump some 50m from the entrance. Unlike many swallets in the Junee-Florentine, Rainbow Cave lies well below the contact between the limestone and overlying impervious beds. Interestingly, although the two caves are separated horizontally by only 150m, the Rainbow Cave sump is perched 25m vertically above that in BDTH. Water tracing suggests that Rainbow Cave contributes water to Junee Cave, apparently bypassing BDTH on the way, but probably joining with water from the latter cave upstream of Porcupine Pot.



Plan map showing caves in the Burning Down The House area. BDTH surveyed by T. Wailes, N. Hume and D. Morgan; Rainbow Cave, JF226-227 and overland surveying by R. Eberhard and D. Morgan. Computer plot by S. Nicholas using SMAPS 5.1.

Water tracing has also shown that the principal source of the stream in BDTH is a swallet 300m to the east. Associated with this swallet is an un-named cave system containing 70m of surveyed passage, with probably as much explored passage again which remains unsurveyed. The main entrance (JF227) is an impressive opening where the stream sinks underground into boulders a short distance inside the cave. A large dry passage can be followed from here to a slot that gives access to the active streamway in a strike-guided canyon. This descends steadily to a sump at the deepest point. Above the sump are steeply ascending rifts that lead upwards to a complex of small passages and the upper entrance (JF226). Under dry conditions the sinking point of the stream retreats upstream, being lost to seepage into its bed some distance above the cave. During a visit to JF226-227 several years ago, the sump was found to be completely dry, though a cursory investigation revealed no obvious continuation.



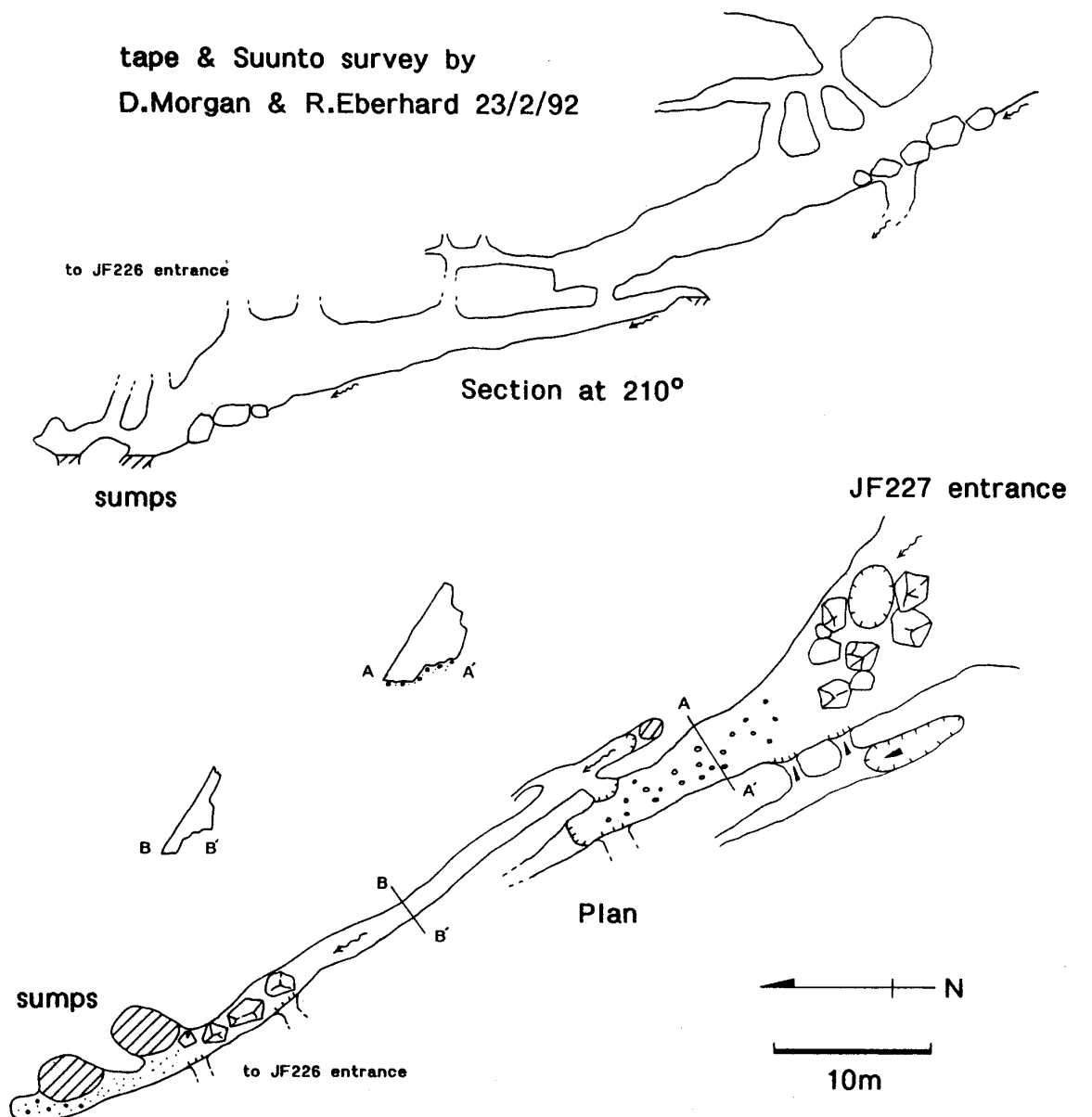
As the most distant known sources of water contributing to the drainage system associated with Junee Cave, the caves described here are of considerable significance in understanding the nature of karst hydrology in the Junee-Florentine. However, their conservation status, and that of the wider karst system of which they form part, is not secure. The boundary of Mt. Field National park, within which lies a significant part of the Junee Cave system, is some distance to the east of JF226-227. Recently, regrowth clearance in preparation for plantation development has approached to within several tens of metres of one of the caves described here. Not far away is a quarry where overlying sedimentary rocks are extracted for roading material, an activity which does not appear to constitute an immediate threat to the karst system but which is undesirably close nonetheless. In the case of BDTH, a road that passes very near to the entrance has made it highly accessibly. These caves are not the longest, deepest or best decorated, but they are still worth looking-after.

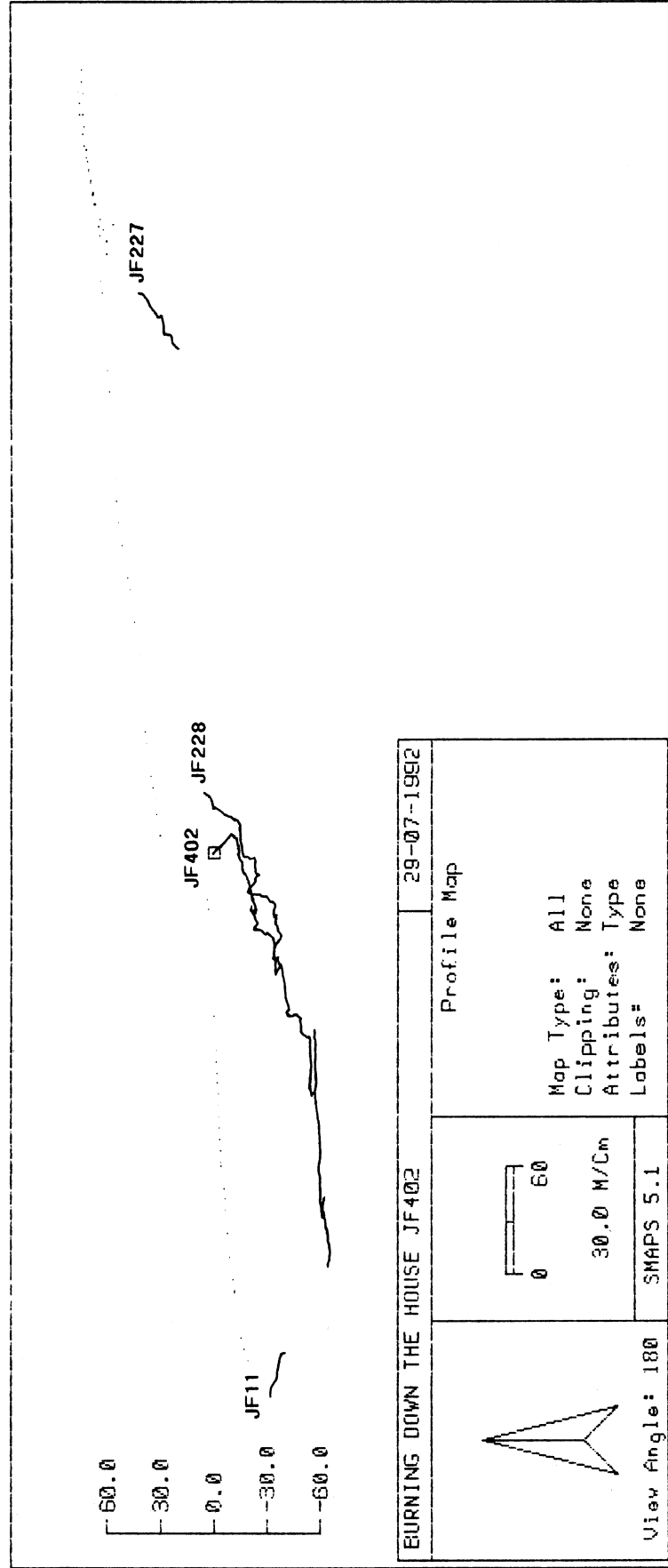
**JF226-227**

**Florentine Valley**

**JF227 entrance**

tape & Suunto survey by  
D.Morgan & R.Eberhard 23/2/92





Profile view (as viewed from due south) of the caves shown on the preceding page.  
The approximate surface contour is shown in faintly dotted outline.

**Rainbow Cave (JF11)**

**Florentine Valley**

