

# 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



VILLA MARIA CELLARS II, MT. ARTHUR, N.Z.

***SPELEO SPIEL... Issue No. 290  
OCTOBER 1995***

Newsletter of the  
**TASMANIAN CAVERNEERING CLUB Inc.**  
P.O. Box 416 Sandy Bay  
Tasmania 7005

Newsletter Annual Subscription: \$18.00. Each: \$2.00. Non-Members: \$3.00  
Full membership: \$25.00.

**OFFICE BEARERS**

**PRESIDENT:-**

Dean Morgan 17 Belhaven Ave, Tarooma, Tasmania. 7053 PH:(002) 279318

**SECRETARY:-**

Trevor Wailes 214 Summerleas Rd, Kingston, Tasmania. 7050 PH:(002) 291382

**TREASURER:-**

Nigel Williams 1/98 Arthur St, West Hobart, Tasmania. 7000 PH:(002) 349403

**QUARTERMASTER:-**

Trevor Wailes 214 Summerleas Rd, Kingston, Tasmania. 7050 PH:(002) 291382

**EDITOR:-**

Dean Morgan 17 Belhaven Ave, Tarooma, Tasmania. 7053 PH:(002) 279318

**MEETINGS**

T.C.C. meet on the first and third Wednesdays of every month at the Shipwright's Arms Hotel, 29 Trumpeter Street, Battery Point. I hope you aren't all reading this fine print again expecting to find another freebie! Meetings start from 8.30pm onwards.

***IN THIS ISSUE:-***

- 2 **FORWARD PROGRAMME;** Mt. Anne, Cave Safety Day, Level 1 Assessments
- 2 **EDITORIAL;** Money matters.
- 2 **CLUB MATTERS;** TCC Annual Dinner, The Club Drill, Spiel via internet!
- 3 **CLAG NEWS;** TCC rep, What's happening, Caving video's to watch.
- 4 **TRIP REPORTS;** New Zealand, Growling Swallet.
- 10 **BIT'S AND PIECES;** For sales, Garth's new address, lot's of drivell.

**FORWARD PROGRAMME**

**TCC Annual Dinner:-** Friday, November the 6th.  
See "Club Matter's" for more details.

**Serendipity:-** 8th October.  
Work off that TCC dinner with a caving trip!  
Contact Dean if you are interested.

**C.L.A.G. Cave Safety 1 Workshop:-** 22nd October.  
**Caving Leader Level 1 Assessment Weekend:-** 4-5th November  
See "CLAG News" for more details.

**Mount Anne:-** 14-15th October.  
Yep, that's right. The North East Ridge of Mt. Anne! Dependent upon numbers as to what we will be doing once we get there but it could be an epic! A serious weekend away. Contact Dean if you are a starter.

**EDITORIAL**

The subject of money was brought up with me recently. What should we be doing with the club funds? \$1000 was just spent on a club drill so we are down to around \$5000 at the moment. Admittedly it is collecting interest but should most, some, or any of it be spent on things for the benefit of members and the club? We are going to have to spend some soon on some reliable club lights but can you think of any other things that we could benefit from or should it be kept in the bank? Come along to a meeting and voice your opinion or you won't be able to complain if you don't agree with the outcome...

I know some people are already getting sick of me hassling them for trip reports but, I would like to thank the people who are putting in the effort at getting them to me as it only means that you will get more regular Spiels. They are starting to flow into my sweaty little palms now, so keep up the good work!

Dean Morgan  
Editor.

**CLUB MATTERS****TCC Annual Dinner, Friday 6th of October.**

I hope you all haven't forgotten to reserve your seat for the annual dinner as mentioned last issue! Don't forget the "Kingston Cottage" at 39 Beach Rd Kingston. It is fully licensed and will cost \$20 per head. RSVP to Stuart Nicholas on (002) 283054 by the end of September.

**!! Don't Forget The Annual Dinner on 6th of October 7pm !!**

### **The New Drill.**

The new TCC hammer drill has now been used in anger and believe me, you are going to get sick of drilling holes before the drill does! 1 battery lasts around 20-30 number tags(!) and there is still a spare battery if that is not enough!

"The hills are alive, with the sound of a hammer drill..."

\*\*\*\*\*

### **Speleo Spiel has hit the Internet!**

As of next issue, *Spiel* subscriber's *only* will be able to receive the Spiel via E-mail! The big advantage of this is that you will get it at least 2-4 weeks earlier than anyone else as you won't have to wait for it to get printed and posted out to you! The Forward program may even be up to date! Just as importantly, you will be able to E-mail articles for the Spiel to me! Deans E-mail address is:- dean@ice.net.au Isn't that a nice easy one to remember! Contact me if you want to be on the subscribers list.

\*\*\*\*\*

### **Slide Night's**

As suggested in the last Spiel, we are now going to hold regular slide nights on the first Wednesday of every month. Dean will bring the projector, you just bring along any slides of anything worth seeing. They don't have to be caving shots, just any good photo's. The first night will be on Wednesday the 4th of October from 9 pm. Don't forget to bring some slides!

## **C.L.A.G. NEWS**

### **The New(?) Garth!**

In the last Spiel there was mention of the need for another TCC rep on the Cave Leadership Accreditation Group now that Garth has gone. Well I am pleased to say that Tim Sprod has been voted in as the replacement. Tim has been a member of TCC for many years, although he has been over in sunny England for the last couple. He is an experienced cave leader with many Hutchin's School trips led by him as well as being on the original COOEE caving committee with the Education Department a few years back. With his background and experience I think he will be a valuable addition to C.L.A.G.

\*\*\*\*\*

### **What's On With CLAG.**

CLAG is slowly getting itself going, competencies for the 2 levels of cave leader (Level 1- Horizontal and ladders and Level 2- Vertical) have been pretty well finalised and there is a national ASF meeting early next month to ensure all states are in line with each other and agree with the National standards.

**!! RSVP to Stuart Nicholas 283054 for the Annual Dinner !!**

Logbooks for would be CLAG accredittees have been produced and it is planned that the first assessment of prospective **Level 1 Cave Leaders** will be held on the weekend of November 4-5th, 1995. This assessment process will cost participants \$100 and involve an assessment of caving, and cave-leadership skills during a caving trip. Further details can be made from CLAG, PO Box 416, Sandy Bay. 7005 or from Bruce Morley, Executive Assistant, Tasmanian Outdoor Leadership Council. GPO BOX 399 Hobart 7001 Phone (W) (002)308337.

To assist prospective Level 1 Cave Leaders (or cavers in general) to develop their skills, a **Cave Safety (1) Workshop** is being held on Sunday October 22nd. This full day workshop (costing \$50) will cover all facets of pre-cave/in-cave and post cave safety related issues. Topics to be covered will include:- what is adequate clothing, weather considerations, trip intentions, group communications, backup equipment, first-aid considerations, lost party member, lost group(!), rigging ladders and belay lines, what rescue gear to take, how to rescue someone on belay, a Z-pulley haul system, how to handle potential disasters, care and cleaning of gear, retiring gear and more! A variety of methods (overheads, notes, video, and practical demonstrations) will be employed to make this an informative and interesting day. An essential part of the day is that participants will get to practice the demonstrated skills. For further information contact CLAG or TOLC as above.

Jeff Butt.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### **Caving Safely By Video!**

CLAG has just acquired 3 caving videos called "Cave Safe. Part's 1,2 and 3. These video's were produced in Pommyland and are very well put together and informative with everyone I know that has seen them learning a few very handy tip's. **Part 1** covers organising a trip, choosing the best equipment, safety precautions, negotiating obstacles, how to survive in an emergency, and cave formation and how they are formed.

**Part 2** covers choosing ropes, selecting safe anchors, tying knots, lifeline safety, rigging ladder pitches and avoiding problems and hazards with pitches.

**Part 3** covers SRT with kitting up, abseiling and prusiking, rigging pitches, pull through trips and problems and emergencies.

If you want to hire these for a look ( and I recommend you all do) cost is \$5 per video per week or \$10 for all 3 per week. Ring Dean to book your video night..

\* \* \* \* \*

**!! Don't Forget The Annual Dinner on 6th of October 7pm !!**

**TRIP REPORTS**

**As promised in the last Spiel, here are the...  
NEW ZEALAND TRIPS!  
WAITOMO, EASTER 1995**

**Luckie Strike.**

After the introduction to Waitomo streamway caving in Uranui, (complete with dead sheep at the tight streamway exit!) we were keen to have a look at something else. The locals were particularly fond of a cave called Luckie Strike so Trev, Chris, Simon the backpacking Pom, and I went to have a look. We were told that we may need a ladder for one of the climbs if we weren't that confident on climbing, so naturally we didn't take one! (New Zealand had just won the Challenger series for the America's Cup and some pride in Australian sporting prowess had to be restored!) The trip commenced with Trev giving the hire car a bit of stick (as usual) until he came off the road on a corner. Fortunately the car wasn't visibly scratched, only Trev's ego...

Finding the cave entrance was pretty straightforward as you just park the car and follow the stream running through the paddock until it goes into a cave! Quite a pleasant contrast to the Florentine scrub bashing...

We were told there was a dry upper entrance and a wet streamway entrance so we entered the dry upper entrance and bridged our way along 4m above the streamway. After a bit of this I decided to climb down to the streamway which had become a turbulent series of cascades and were a little like a water slide with a few small (deep) pools in between. Needless to say this was pretty effortless and heaps more fun! At one point I hesitated above one of the pools to enquire about how we were going to get back up, but any foolish thoughts on my part were soon dispelled by an "encouraging" foot-in-the-back followed by a splash and a pleasant swim to the next waterfall.

Other thoughts of the recent death of a local caver in a waterfall were going through my mind too...

At the end of this cascade series was a reasonably large chamber with some excellent decoration and the atmosphere in this chamber was really pleasant. [Eds note: "Pleasant atmosphere!?!?! I thought they went over for some hard caving!"] If you were going to have a party in a cave, this would be the place to do it as it was a more like the Atrium in the Sheraton Hotel! The chamber that followed was more of a Gymnasium. Travelling through this part of the cave was more or less a jog on the flat pebbly stream bed interrupted at one stage by a large waterfall which had to be walked through. Some easy climbing was required in the larger chamber and at the end of this chamber the streamway constricted again and some bridging, climbing and squeezing was involved. After half an hour of this I turned around to go back to look at some leads in the first chamber while the others went on to the Blade waterfall.

Eventually we met again in the first chamber and proceeded to go up the cascades. Simon was wearing a wetsuit and was pretty glad to get back in the water! Going back up was a bit like going up a waterside and required a group effort.

**!! RSVP to Stuart Nicholas 283054 for the Annual Dinner !!**

Usually someone would stand in the pool (if it wasn't too deep) and give someone a leg up and then the person up the top would divert the water and help everyone else up. Sometimes this plan would fail 'accidentally' although this only seemed to happen when Chris was at the top diverting the water causing individuals to go flying back into the pool followed hotly by a surge of water and much hilarity. One waterfall required an ingenious Trevor to climb up and then rig a sling to step in. We later found out that there had been a brief downpour in Waitomo while we were underground which explains the difficulty we were having and we went out via the lower streamway entrance.

This is really a top cave with a bit of everything for everyone. What made it all the more exiting was going in, having a look around by ourselves and not quite knowing what was around the corner.

P.S. Where are you supposed to use the ladder?

John Steen.

### **Black Water Rafting. (the original)**

Three hours, \$55 NZ through Ruakuri Cave.

Being in the home of 'the original cave rafting' I thought I should try it out. The Blackwater Rafting outfit offer 2 basic trips, of either 3 hours or about 6 hours. The longer trip offers the thrill of abseiling in a cave, then rafting through it on inner tubes, while the shorter is simply tubing through part of Ruakuri Cave. I went for the shorter trip (because I'm a cheapskate and can't quite see the point of paying extra dollars for the abseil.

The shorter tour is well organised, (move 'em in, wetsuits on, through the cave, NEXT!) Hmmmm, nine tours per day, 12 people per group, \$55 each..... could be a goer through Growling?????

The tour cost entitled the touree to 'free entry to the Waitomo museum of caves' (Trevor had already managed to get us that one), transport, and showers, soup and toast afterwards. And wetsuits and innertubes.

The first hour was spent getting wetsuits and lights together, complete with cute little white boots and spunky purple pants (just to separate us from the other tourists). The group was then transported up to Tuakuri Caves, where we were instructed in the fine art of 'eeling up', and instructed to jump into the pleasantly murky looking Waitomo River with our rubber inner tubes. Then a short walk up the hill to the cave entrance where the guides (thankfully) split the group in two, separating the six (screaming) teenage girls from the rest of us. The water level in the cave was down a little, reducing some of the thrilling aspects of the trip. However, floating through long passages where the roof was covered in Glow Worms was impressive. Of the people in the group, 2 were 50-odd year old Franciscian grandparents, and the other three were thirty something Aucklanders. Not the most athletic of people, but quite able to manage this.

**!! Don't Forget The Annual Dinner on 6th of October 7pm !!**



All up, the trip was enjoyable, if a little short on adrenalin. Probably the most dangerous parts of the day were the BWR guide's driving, and getting into a wetsuit. However, judging from the reactions by the other members of the group, the trip is well worth doing for those who have never been near a cave, and is probably unlike anything they will ever do.

Kelly Miller.

**Urenui, the first part.....  
Easter Friday.**

Chris Davies, Trevor Wailes, Gavin Wailes, Travers Wailes, John Steen, Kelly Miller and Simon the Backpacking Pom.

Although the Waitomo region has caves, pots and holes in abundance, getting into them (legally) is another story. Caves such as the renowned Lost World have commercial trips running so permission is near impossible (or expensive). A limited number of other caves were able to be accessed with permits.

Urenui was suggested to ease our way underground. Access to the Prickle Pot entrance was via what passed for the local airstrip. The Waitomo countryside is reminiscent of Footrot Flats, if this suggests anything about the slope of the runway. Trevor had made a reconnaissance trip earlier - we saw the telltale fish-tails. Imagine a beautiful virgin white Lancer (Mitsubishi that is) after meeting a field full of moist cow pats...

Prickle pot was a nice little 30 metre pitch. We had vague instructions that most of the cave was upstream, and the exit was downstream. Which stream? We spent some time stuffing around looking at the various passages before descending a short watery climb into an ankle deep streamway/bog. The water disappeared over some flowstone into a small hole in the floor. Kelly had a look, deciding that it really didn't look interesting enough to get wet for this early in the week. Upstream was a long series of slowly moving streamway with a few small branches. Travers discovered one of the hazards of NZ caving - after that we muddied the water so that we didn't see the eels!

A large aven with clean blocks of limestone was eventually reached. There didn't seem to be any easy way on, and the wet feet of the party voted to head out. The Wailes mob managed to get ahead as the others explored side passages on the way out.

Back to that uninviting hole in the floor - nah. Chris had a good look around on the higher level before passing on the bad news. It is however, still wet. The hole was wide, but flat, with a sharp right turn to get out. Once through, the streamway was followed, some crawling, some climbing, until reaching a low crawl in the stream, with about 15cm of airspace. Unable to find any way over, Chris took the initiative, helmet off, head first, on his back in the water, with instructions to pull him out should his legs start thrashing around in a wild manner...

Reassuring...

**!! RSVP to Stuart Nicholas 283054 for the Annual Dinner !!**



Through the first constriction, another followed. With comments like "I don't think Trevor would have got Gavin and Travers through here" and much procrastination (KM of course!) we eventually backstroked through. A short flat out crawl through shallow water followed and we were rewarded with a beautiful blue light (some of us aren't used to leaving caves in daylight), followed by a face to face encounter with a sheep skull!

Quote of the day: Travers Wailes as Trevor was clearing out a tight spot:

"Your not digging, are you?...He's digging! *He's Digging!!!*"

### **Urenui, the second part.... Easter Sunday**

Kelly Miller, David Nichols and Peter Verwey.

Dave and Pete turned up the next day (after drinking the South Island dry???). There was a lot more to Urenui, so armed with ideas about where to look, Dave, Kelly and Pete ventured back in (Chris wanted some vertical practice, so did a quick in-out trip).

Once back in the large aven previously reached, a way was found up the blocks. There was a large clay-coated passage, but no signs of recently running water. The upper levels were quite well decorated - wedding cakes, flowstone, stals, some crystals. Reaching a fork, we took the upper level passage. The passage was smaller, but in places snow white icing trickled down, coating the walls, even the floors. In one place a mosquito was caught in it, suggesting that the rate of deposition was rapid, and that we were also not far from the surface. Talking to the local cavers later, they told tales of Gypsum Flowers on trashed caves that had regrown in the space of ten years, suggesting that fertilisers were responsible. Whatever the reason, it was quite impressive.

Further down the same passage. Waited an amazing and unexpected sight - The remnants of perhaps hundreds of visits of artistic (and not so artistic) cavers. The passage ended in a small clay-lined cavern, filled with a modern form of cave art: cats, dogs, sheep(!), cars, a perfect replica helmet and a carbide lamp, various ruddy bits and pieces, witches, wizards ect,ect,ect...

There's now also a map of Tasmania (geographically speaking) complete with the inscription "TCC". Don't know who put that there though!

The other higher passage was a large wandering rift, until degenerating into a low crawl over pebbles and getting beyond the point of comfort. There were some very large, and very thick stals growing up from the floor. Somebody later tried to tell us that Urenui was Maori for 'Male Genital'. Not sure about that one...

Getting out was no problem, until that wet hole in the floor. There were two witnesses to Pete's declaration the "maybe [he] should cut down on the Guinness". Definitely a rebirth experience. Uneventful until the digging spot, this time Dave and Pete the unbelievers, Kelly now the brave. its easy when you know how.

**!! Don't Forget The Annual Dinner on 6th of October 7pm !!**

Once out, we discovered a great way to wash off - Floating down the Waitomo River, leaving a wake of mud in an already muddy river - very pleasant.

Kelly Miller.

\* \* \* \* \*

### AND BACK TO TASMANIA AGAIN...

#### Dreamtime/Growling Swallet. Florentine Valley.

On 7th of May, Dean Morgan, Garth Cornelius, Kelly Miller, Leigh Douglas and Nigel Williams visited Dreamtime in the Growling Swallet system. Sometime in mid August, Leigh was instructed to write a trip report *or else* [Eds note; Yeah, it must be working!!] In the 3 months that have passed Dreamtime has become a fuzz. With prompting from Kelly, I shall attempt to retell this fantastic trip. Apologies if the story seems disjointed or important things have been missed out.

The drive down and the walk in were quite uneventful. The Dry Bypass was too wet to bother with so we went down the main passage. The water did seem to be up a little, though it didn't pose a problem. Dean turned out the turnoff to 'New Feeling'. (I was supposed to take the police into it during the last S&R exercise, however, when we got there we could not get through). Soon enough we were at the main streamway sump. I hadn't been down this far for at least 4 or 5 years and I'd forgotten how scary it was negotiating the keyhole climb near Windy Rift with the river rushing below you.

All went well until we got to the second ladder climb up into refuge aven where we found the second ladder was washed up high by the recent floods. Super Dean saved the day and free climbed up and threw the ladder down for us mere mortals to clamber up. Soon we were in new territory for me as we entered the Trapdoor Streamway. We stopped and looked at the parched, cracked floor in Scaling Pole aven and then we oozed our way through the black stinking mud of Herpes 3. ( Herpes mud under ones finger nails make a great memoir of the trip lasting for months). At the 30 metre ladder, Kelly and I clipped our ascenders on the fixed rope for a self belay. I was glad of it when I rested. I'm sure some of those rungs are almost a metre apart!

We stopped for lunch in Mainline and brewed up a cuppa in Kelly's stove. We were surprised to see little white yabby things(?) flitting about in the water. We didn't sit around for too long as we were getting cold. Kelly had frozen feet at this stage, her new army boots she was trying out were great for a tropical jungle, but not for snow melt water at 7 degrees Celsius.

From memory, the Dreamtime area was a roomy streamway passage with a mostly sandy bottom. Garth commented there were no footprints in front of him which indicated heavy flooding had occurred in the not too distant past.

**!! RSVP to Stuart Nicholas 283054 for the Annual Dinner !!**

At the rockpile at the end of Dreamtime we all lay down for a siesta while Garth continued on looking for the way through. He returned after some time cursing his 'Slut's in Hell' for some thing or another. I assumed he didn't find the way on. I was quite relieved as I was ready to head back and it was getting late.

The trip out was slow for me and I was grateful as Dean and others patiently waited at the bottom of ladders and other less obvious places. You sure lose your cave legs when you haven't caved for a while! By now, Kelly's feet were quite numb from the cold and by the time we reached the Growling main streamway, my light had died. Thank goodness for the spare lamp that Dean had lugged in and almost out. It was difficult to tell we were out, as it was now night and very dark. I felt stuffed, but quite fantastic.

The clock in the car said 7pm or thereabouts. We'd been underground for around 9 hours. On the way through Maydena we stopped at a takeaway called Harry's. I can definitely recommend this place as he gave us a hot chocolate on the house, and his chips were excellent. Also the service is friendly and fast.

All those years of hearing Nick, Stefan, Rolan and Trev's stories of the mythical Dreamtime, I was very pleased that it had become a reality and what's more was - I could do it.

Thanks to Dean for a great trip.

Leigh Douglas.

### ***BIT'S AND PIECES***

#### **Bigger than God's Underpants!**

According to informed sources there has been a *501(!)* metre pitch found in a cave called "Jama" in Slovenia. Can you imagine carrying that rope up Wherret's Lookout! Drop a rock down there and you probably won't hear it hit the bottom! Whoa!

\*\*\*\*\*

#### **For sale(s).**

- Brother WP-1450DS word processor. Only 8 months old. 3 1/5 inch disk drive, IBM compatible, Built in printer with excellent print quality, framing programs, spreadsheet programs, spell checker, file management programs, nice and portable and *very* easy to use. What more do I need to say? New \$1100, sell at the bargain price of only \$650! A mere spit in the ocean! also-
- Black Diamond rock climbing harness. Just like the one that broke in Cliifhanger! Don't believe the movie though, try it out for yourself. Only \$60. Ring Dean for details on either of these excellent products!

\*\*\*\*\*

**!! Don't Forget The Annual Dinner on 6th of October 7pm !!**

# **Garth's new address.**

Garth and Tanya's new address is:- 15 Andamifi Court. Mildura, South Australia 3500  
Phone (H) (050) 212569 and (W) (050) 212244. I know the poor boy will be lonely  
over there so we should all write him letters telling him how much fun we are having  
in Tasmania!

\*\*\*\*\*

# **Locally Made Caving Gear.**

Are your knee's poking through your caving suit? Perhaps you have worn the arse out  
and decide it's time for a new one! Don't muck about sending away to England for one  
wait for week's or even month's. Dave Ross can make an "English Replica" for around  
\$150 within 2 week's or so. He is also able to patch worn or damaged caving suits for  
a reasonable price. Cave packs made of heavy weight rip-stop PVC are another of his  
amazing skills and sell for around \$60. The more you order, the cheaper they are.  
Give him a ring to find out more details on (002) 369110.

Leigh Douglas.

\*\*\*\*\*

# **Midnight Hole Hazards(?)**

On the last pitch in Midnight Hole there is a piece of rope and an O-ring attached to  
the bolt. *Use it at your own risk* or remove it next time your in there.

\*\*\*\*\*

# **Spiel sub's**

If any of your caving friends are wondering why they have not received this copy of  
the Spiel, then it is because they are not financial! All they have to do is send  
cheques, money orders, credit cards, cash or any other thing to the value of \$25 to  
Nigel Williams as per the header of this magazine, and they will again start receiving.

\*\*\*\*\*

Once again...

# **Don't Forget the Annual Dinner!**

\*\*\*\*\*

**!! RSVP to Stuart Nicholas 283054 for the Annual Dinner !!**