

# SPELEO SPIEL

Newsletter of the Tasmanian Caverneering Club

ESTABLISHED 1946

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

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

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**MEETINGS**

TCC meet on the first and third Wednesdays of every month at the Shipwright's Arms  
Hotel at 29 trumpeter St. Battery Point. Meetings start from 8.45.

**IN THIS ISSUE:-**

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## ***FORWARD PROGRAM***

**C.L.A.G. Cave Safety 1 Workshop:-** 22nd October.

**Caving Leader Level 1 Assessment Weekend:-** 4-5th November  
See last Spiel for more details or contact Dean or Jeff Butt (SCS)

**Slide Nights:-** First Wednesday of every month, see 'Club Matters'

## ***EDITORIAL***

The more astute readers of this fine magazine may have noticed that this is the October Spiel, and the last issue was also an October Spiel. You may also have noticed in the August issue that there were 2 separate annual dinners advertised at 2 separate venues. All I can say is that I have since learnt a new Editorial technique called proof reading and hopefully it won't happen anymore...

It's good to see a few trips are happening. I have been busy the last month, and all this month with CLAG things so that is why there is no forward program this issue as I was the only person putting their name down for future trips!

The subject of a merger between the TCC and SCS was brought up last year, and I was keen to see that happen. Well a merger seems to have fizzed off the agenda but it's good to see that trips are now starting to happen involving members of both clubs together. An encouraging sign that the rivalry from the past has well and truly gone and cavers are cooperating together nowadays. The SCS are now also holding meetings at 22 Clutha Place, South Hobart on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month, as well as the meetings at Shippie's on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays. It would be good to see some TCC members turning up to those as well. Personally I just don't think there is enough cavers in Hobart at the moment for us not to cooperate together.

Catch you all next month.  
Dean Morgan  
Editor.

*"Courage, is having all your butterflies flying in formation"*

<b>CLUB MATTERS</b>
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## ***O.J. is free!!!!***

Yep, that's right! At the recent Annual dinner the orange juice was served up free, as the dispenser wasn't working properly and it was all watery. A moderate turnout was had with around 20 people there. Thanks to all that turned up and don't forget that next years dinner is going to be our 50th!! It gonna be HUGE....

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### **Year Number 50**

This year's (49th) Annual Dinner is past us. However, next year is TCC's 50th year of existence. We are the oldest caving club in the country and possibly one of the older continuously existing clubs in the world. According to common tradition, we should do something about celebrating and / or recording this fact. Has anyone any ideas and if so, will you carry them out?? Some kind of Special Dinner with national / international invites and a noted speaker, perhaps?? A full colour Speleo Spiel with pix and articles from the archives of both TCC and others? Maybe we do it all electronically and have a Virtual Spiel... (sounds like some of the issues we've had in years gone by!)?

All this will take time to organise and do, so we should start some work on it soon, to avoid those last minute rushes that always seem to accompany such things.

Please talk to Stu (yes, he needs more friends!) and also tell him your thoughts on this stuff.

Stu can be contacted via several different electronic mechanisms:

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(home) 002-283054

Fax (work and home) 002-281853

Email [stunich@ozemail.com.au](mailto:stunich@ozemail.com.au)

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### **Chris Davies has a word or two...**

Many thanks to club members for my recent election as a life Member. It was a very pleasant surprise. One correction to the Spiel article needs to be noted. August 95 was my first visit to Ice Tube, even to the entrance!

*(Dean's fault, sorry!)*

*"Courage is having all of your butterflies flying in formation"*

**Chris Davies still having a word or two...**

Thanks also to Hamilton Tomo Group for all your assistance in the recent 'TCC does Waitomo' expedition, and also a recommendation to travellers in NZ. The HTG 'hut' in Waitomo is exceptional, as are the club members, and they welcome cavers and other travellers too. Lucky Strike gets my number one vote.

Chris Davies

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**November and December Slide Nights**

Our slide night for the first Wednesday in November will be Stephen Bunton showing slides of caving in New Zealand (and maybe some others as well). Thanks to Rolan Eberhard for his excellent Nepal slides last month as we were all impressed!

As for the December slide night, that one will be Arthur Clarke showing his slides taken at this years 'Australian Cave and Karst Management Association' (ACKMA) conference held in Tasmania. Slides are from a few Tasmanian Cavin areas, and a lot of Mole Creek.

Hopefully this will continue to be a regular first Wednesday of the month event, so bring all of your good slides along for a look and come along and have a 'bo-peep' yourselves.

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**Contact List**

Next months Spiel will have the fully updated contact list including all the financial members in other parts of Australia as well. It didn't quite get to this issue in time.

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

Nothing to report here except that the Cave Safety Level 1 day, and Level 1 assessment day are still on for next month. Last Spiel had all of the gory details, or you can ring Dean or Jeff Butt.

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*"Courage, is having all your butterflies flying in formation"*

## TRIP REPORTS

### Searching near JF341

Friday 16 Feb. 1990(?).

Steve Bradford(?), Mark Bryce(?), Nick Hume(???), Bob Reid(????).

*[Eds note:- Yes it is the right date!!! These were all the gung-ho cavers a couple of years back. Bob must be feeling pretty guilty about not going caving anymore to have sent me this one! Thanks anyhow Bob as they all make good reading.]*

**Aim of trip:-** Further exploration of new hole near JF341 and surveying of same plus surface survey of this & JF127 in relation to 341.

While Steve & Mark rigged & descended the new hole, Nick & I did the surface survey from JF341 to entrance, numbered new cave (JF 235) & did survey from there to JF 127.

We then followed Steve & Mark down '235. Found lots of bones, some calcified, mostly Wallaby. Surveyed down and investigated all possible leads on the way. Some draught noted but disappeared at last two pitches. One really nice free hanging 20 m pitch. Nick waited at top of 2nd last pitch while Steve & Mark went out & I went to the sand tube tunnel at bottom - too tight to push it though & no draught. Remains of a Devil there.

Nick & I derigged. By this time a lack inspiration saw only myself keen (?) enough to have a go at '127 (Murder Pot) and so while the three pikers sat in the sunshine relaxing I descended into a tight rift with my prussiking gear in my pack hanging below me (!) - mistake number one... At about 30 m things became even tighter & my ever obliging pack managed to wedge itself in the rift underneath me!

At this point I found things were getting even more squeezey & after considerable swearing & cursing I finally managed to manoeuvre past my offending pack and lift it free & above me. However due to the tightness of the position I now found myself in, it was not possible to extract myself with my pack effectively on top of me!

After some more appropriate language and much effort I achieved nil in the way of upward movement and therefore decided to enlist the assistance of one of the three relaxed cavers above. Much shouting eventually saw Mark arrive on the scene and with his help in moving my pack out of the way, I finally managed to extract myself from the nice little spot where I had spent the last 30 minutes or so. With some more room to move I donned my prussiking gear & with some relief, left Murder Pot to rest in peace.

*"Courage is having all of your butterflies flying in formation"*

Probably not possible to use SRT techniques in this cave as it is so tight that prussiking from the lower part of the rift would not be possible. Apparently John Parker has been further down (using a ladder) to find a large chamber and another pitch when he discovered the cave in 1977 - it also tried to kill him with loose rock & hence the name....

Not a nice cave at all and unless one was *very* desperate for something to do, I for one will be leaving it alone.

*[Eds note (again); I know that Bob's last statement was a lie, as I ended up going back to the same cave again with him about a month later. I will have to admit, his description was true...]*

Bob Reid.

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### **Wandering around the Florentine bush with a GPS.**

July 1995

David Nichols and John Steen.

I have often looked at the surveys of Growling Swallet and wondered what is on the surface above the area around Tiger Mountain and River Lethe. When Dave told me that he could get hold of a GPS (TLA for Global Positioning System) we agreed that a surface tour of Growling was in order.

We got a fix on the car park without too much trouble. At the Growling entrance we finally got enough satellites to get a position after a lot of stuffing around and waving the GPS. The further we went into the Ice tube Valley, the harder it was to get a location. Slaughterhouse Pot entrance was too sheltered, as was Pendant Pot.

We then passed an exiting stream sink which I later found out was investigated by the omnipresent Rolan Eberhard in the early 1980's. I sometimes wonder if the Eberhards designed the Florentine after Slartibartfarst designed the fiords in Norway...

Moving further up the valley we encountered a small doline on the right of the track, just before the impressive Ice Tube doline. Here we tried to get a position again so we could head off the track in the direction of Tiger mountain. While walking around the area to try and get a clear fix, Dave noticed a tight rift that issued a promising draught. After we removed a log from the rift and had a look over the edge, it appeared that it might widen after the first 5m. Definitely worth another look with ropes.

From here on we abandoned the GPS idea, I think an extended antenna is required. We then passed Ice Tube, located a particularly muddy streamsink, and then followed a blue taped track to the top of the saddle at the end of the valley. I assume this is a surface tie in with Niggly Cave, but I haven't been able to get a definite answer on that.

John Steen.

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**Armchair Caving TCC Style.**  
**JF 345 Ice Tube, August 95**

What began as a plan for a leisurely survey up to Ice Tube with the Wailes boys turned serious when Gavin and Travers decided against a day in the rainforest! As John Hawkins and Bruce Stewart (Mainlanders) were in Maydena working up to a Niggly trip, Trev suggested we join up and drop into Ice Tube to check the survey from the base of the Ramp Pitch up to the base of Degenerated Man.

"Its only 5 pitches down"...

In traditional style we set off in the high speed Escort Van in bright sunshine. As we picked up John and Bruce at the Maydena Chalet the cloud started to build, and as we left the cars tradition was satisfied as the rain commenced. The rainforest walk recharged a few failing memory cells, and the last kilometre or so was a new experience for me.

What a blast it must have been to find this cave. Big doline with stream and a steeply inclined walk-in entrance coming to a 25m pitch with waterfall. The draft is strong, and it goes!

No dramas going in. There is a real pleasure caving in a quiet achiever type caving team. Bruce filmed with a video and floodlight(!). He had high hopes for the footage of Trevor high speed abseiling the Degenerated Man pitch (his namesake). On this 22 metre pitch the last 10 metres or so is in the middle of the waterfall.

After a 'cordon bleu' meal of hot pasta and noodles in the chamber above the Fabulous Spangley Pitch (where Ice Tube starts to get serious), we began our exit. Trevor and I surveying and John and Bruce derigging. Unfortunately the waterproof housing for the video wasn't and neither was my sewer light. Bruce produced a shiny new FX2 light from his pack - thanks Bruce.

I got to be last up the Degenerated Man, no bottom weight, freezing water pounding down and finding that my normally well behaved chest ascender does not work well under water with a soft new rope. I managed to dislodge the borrowed lamp from my helmet and couldn't reattach it swinging in and out of the torrent. A little fear and an adrenalin boost can do wonders and I got it together and prussiked out of the worst of the water.

Of course, no trip to the Florentine would be complete without a wander in the rainforest searching for marking tapes which seemed so plentiful in daylight.

A couple of things are worth noting; A cave rescue from upper Ice Tube would be extremely difficult. From below the Ramp Pitch it would be much harder. It is interesting what passes through your mind when you are hanging in a waterfall!

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I removed the hand traverse line to the single bolt for the first pitch. It was old and inadequate. 15 metres of 9 mm would be an adequate replacement. An extra bolt or two at the head of the pitch would be nice.

Chris Davies

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**Asteroid Pot (JF366) and JF309 ( near Asteroid Pot.)**

August 1995

John Steen and Kelly Miller.

I have heard a lot about this enigmatic mini-cave at the bottom of the Serendipity Valley. After reading the last report (Wailes et al 1994 Spiel No 282) on the possibilities of this pot, I was enthused for a visit. *[Ed's note:- A good reason for people to write trip reports!]*

Asteroid was located with little difficulty. The entrance to the tube at the base of the first pitch (6m) was reopened after a few bucketloads of mud were sent back up the shaft. Looking around the corner down the tube it was apparent that the rest of the tube was clear, so I then set about widening the entrance to the tube with some success until the hammer handle broke.

We then tried to find JF384 by walking up a small dry valley that runs perpendicular to the Serendipity Valley. According to previous reports, this small choked pot, like Asteroid also contains a draught. We failed to find this but found JF309 further up the valley. This has a small entrance pitch with a small window at the bottom to a more roomy, and relatively clean chamber. A draught was confirmed by the movement of cobwebs in the "window".

Undoubtedly the following hypothesis has been mentioned previously but it is probably worth restating. Asteroid is situated right on top of Serendipity and a line of draughting pots exists between Serendipity and the New Feeling area of Growling Swallet. I have limited experience with geology but could there be a weakness in the limestone that has allowed the creation of Destiny and New Feeling that also intersects with Serendipity? Certainly the prospect of a Growling to Serendipity connection suggests more work with Asteroid Pot and the other pots in the area could be worthwhile.

John Steen.

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**Warhol(e?)** (1st September 1995)

John Steen, Nigel Williams, Vaughan Andrews (SCS).

A question mark has hung over this cave since initial exploration some ten years ago. It is interestingly located on the southern slope of the Serendipity valley on roughly the same contour as Serendipity itself. Only two trips had occurred before this year and the cave has been surveyed to a depth of 130m.

Relocating the cave in August this year took the best part of a day. As a result, not a lot of exploration occurred, particularly after my light failed. However some interesting possibilities were noted at the bottom of the 27m pitch at a depth of around 90m. On Sunday the 1st of October, Nigel Williams, Vaughan Andrews and I returned to investigate this complex chamber.

One particular novelty in this cave is the tight squeeze that begins the 27m abseil into the chamber. Being the first and last person through this squeeze last time I was keen to see someone else go down first to see the look on their face. After seeing Nigel and Vaughan go through I can probably say that frustration and anxiety would be appropriate descriptions. Last visit there was a virtual gale coming out of this hole but on this occasion it was much less noticeable. We scoured this chamber thoroughly, noting an aven and a serpentine passage that were not on the survey but neither provided a serious continuation. I can say with some degree of certainty that all obvious possibilities for this cave have been exhausted. The trip out was a bit of an epic because we got lost and somehow found our way out with a compass that was 100 degrees or so out! We did however find an interesting, unmarked entrance on the southern side of the lower end of the Serendipity valley. It is well concealed and according to Nigel, looked a little like the entrance to Flick Mint's but it was rapidly approaching Monday morning so we didn't stick around. Unfortunately it may be difficult to relocate because it was dark and we had little idea of where we were. I think I might have to take a reverse bearing from the "magic" compass to find this one.

It occurred to me that if we were properly lost, a search party would look down the cave as I had left it rigged. In future I will pull up rope from the daylight pitch when I leave the cave to prevent this possibility.

John Steen.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### **Blank spaces**

I don't know why this is here. There just happened to be a few lines spare at the bottom of the page so I thought that I had better squeeze a couple of lines into it. I hope that you don't get too upset at me wasting your time like this.

You may as well go onto the next page now...

Goodbye.

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

### **For Sale**

Brother WP-1450DS word processor. Only 9 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! Contact Dean for details.

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### **Ghost Tours?**

A recent issue of the 'Community Express' urban newspaper featured a photo of two of the tour guides for the recently expanded 'Hobart Ghost Tours' business. Dressed in period costume, one of the two guides looked vaguely familiar. Reading the caption revealed that it was none other than Laurie Moody, a past TCC member.

Laurie did a considerable amount of work in the Florentine Valley during the 1960's through to 1979. He was mainly concerned with the less steep and daunting valley floor and did much to explore and document this now seldom visited area. Following his retirement from the sport, Laurie wrote a manuscript (as yet unpublished) based on his own recollections of the activities, plus using much from the Speleo Spiel. This document gives a comprehensive 'working' history of much of the major exploration activity through to about 1980.

Well done Laurie! We'll get around to doing something about publishing the Florentine document at some stage. Only one question - do all ex cavers end up as ghosts of their former selves??

Stuart Nicholas.

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### **Rolan takes over the drill**

Rolan Eberhard (348126 H) is now the one to ask if you want use of the TCC drill as he is now looking after it. Rolan also is the person with the number tags and ASF Karst index forms for when you do number these new caves.

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### World Cave Diving Record!

*[Eds note:- This snippet appeared via Ozcaver, and is quoted from the Adelaide Advertiser September 27, 1995, page 7. I assume it is true...]*

An Adelaide man has broken the world cave diving record! Christopher Brown navigated 6.26km of underground cave, below the Nullarbor Plain - an improvement of 20 metres on the record set in 1983. His support team in the water with him and at the entrance of Cocklebidy Cave, where the attempt began, were all delighted yesterday.

"We'll start a celebration on what we've got down here," Brown said from below ground. "I don't suppose you could throw a few beers down, could you?"

He departed, Toad Hall air chamber, beneath the Nullarbor in Western Australia, on Saturday night. Cocklebidy is about 250km from the SA Border, roughly midway between Eucla and Norseman. He set off with a motorised scooter but, as the cave narrowed, he abandoned powered vehicles. Hoping to find another cave or huge air chamber, Brown had to push his oxygen tanks in front of him because the cave had become so narrow. Then, 97 minutes after leaving his crew at Toad Hall, Brown decided it would be too risky to carry on.

"I couldn't negotiate any further, with or without packs, so I decided 20m was the best I could do," he said.

Brown, who spent a year preparing for the dive, praised his support team. They are expected to be back above ground late last night.

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### Heres one to keep in mind!

Appearing via Ozcavers was a new method of breaking up rocks inconvenient to handle. This involves detonating a 'Hilti' (nail gun) cartridge at the bottom of an 8mm hole drilled in the rock, using an 8mm rod propelled with force by a lump hammer. The system is accredited to be quiet (relatively), safe and fumeless, and more or less legal. Is anyone brave enough to try it, because I'm not!

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***Don't forget to keep those Spiel articles rolling in,  
if you want to receive a new Spiel every month!***

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## ◇ SCS WAREHOUSE SALES ◇

Did you know that the SCS have the following for sale? There are some hard to beat prices here! Have a good look at our range.

### NEW ADDITIONS:

>>>>> Edelrid 25 mm tubular tape. Ideal for rigging, chest harnesses etc. \$2.00 per m

### and the REGULAR ITEMS

>>>>> Duracell 4.5Volt flatpack batteries (for your backup Zoom). Very fresh \$6.50 each

>>>>> Cavers Helmets with metal light bracket \$20.00 each

>>>>> Plastic light brackets (with fittings) for helmets \$3.00 each

>>>>> Jets (21 litres/hr) for petzl kaboom \$5.00 each

>>>>> Charging sets (clip, key and ammeter), build your own charger! \$8.00 each

>>>>> Elastic chin straps for hard hats \$0.50 each

>>>>> Miscellaneous second hand pieces for Oldham headpieces. Contact us for details.

>>>>> 5 cm flat tape (ideal for harnesses, rigging, gear bags, battery belts etc)  
(Royal Blue) \$1.50 per m

>>>>> 2.5 cm flat tape (ideal for handlines, rigging, gear bags, battery belts etc)  
(White) \$0.80 per m

>>>>> 9 mm Beal dynamic rope (ideal for cows tails, safety loop) \$3.50 per m

>>>>> CARBIDE NOTE: CARBIDE MUST BE USED RESPONSIBLY! \$3.50 per kg

>>>>> Yuasa 6.7 Gel Cells (6 V, 7 AHr, weighs 1.3 kg) \$26.00 each

>>>>> 6 volt bulbs to suit the above Gel Cells  
a variety of Wattages (1, 1.5, 2, 3) are available from \$1.00 to \$2.50 each

>>>>> Female spade connectors to suit Gel Cell Terminals \$0.20 each

>>>>> Metal light brackets (with fittings) for helmets \$5.00 each

>>>>> 8 mm alloy D Maillons, ideal for main harness 'krabs' \$16.00 each

>>>>> Methylated spirits, (stove fuel), refill your empty containers. \$2.50 per litre

When you need any of the above please contact Jeff Butt on (002) 325302 (W) or (002) 238620 (H), or write to us: SOUTHERN CAVING SOCIETY, P. O. BOX 121, MOONAH 7009.

## ◇ SCS WAREHOUSE SALES ◇

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