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Southern Tasmanian Caverneers

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NEWSLETTER OF THE TASMANIAN CAVERNEERING CLUB

Annual subscription \$5.00

Single copies 50 cents

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FORWARD PROGRAMME

Weekend, Nov. 15 & 16 THE CHAIRMAN. Another gruelling grovel
inspired by Stuart. If anything inter-
esting is found, we may go again on 22,
23 if rigged during the week.

Wednesday, Nov. 19 COMMITTEE MEETING 7 Rupert Ave, 8 p.m.

One day of Nov. 22 or 23 Is anyone interested in a Tasman's Arch
trip - SRT and maybe ladder (?!). See
Stuart.
Or Trapdoor Swallet? See Trevor.

Weekend Nov. 29 & 30 CLIFF RESCUE EXERCISE at Coles Bay.
Also Trevor's wedding on 29th! Congrat-
ulations Trev & Susan.

Tuesday, Dec. 02 FRENCH UNDERGROUND FILMS Geology Lecture
Theatre at Uni. starting around 8 p.m.
Admission free, all welcome, even SCS
bods! NOTE THE DAY - TUESDAY

Wednesday, Dec. 03 GENERAL MEETING 7 Rupert Ave, 8 p.m.

Saturday, Dec. 13 WOLF HOLE, a Lake Pluto investigation
trip with a few of the Police S&R squad.
N.B. We need sherpas to help haul the
gear! See Stuart.

Is anyone interested in a pre-Christmas informal party somewhere
in the near future?

EDITORIAL

It appears that the occupants of Parliament House in Hobart have
figured out that search and rescue operations in this State are
costing money. The total involved in minimal compared to various
overseas trips, financial salvage operations and other similar
bureaucratic disasters which are occurring with monotonous regu-
larity.

An idea has been dreamed up by the above occupants in an attempt
to recoup this money -

introduce compulsory insurance for all those "Life - Be in It" enthusiasts doing their own thing in Tasmania's shrinking wilderness areas.

Remember that most of the work in an S&R operation is done by volunteers - you and me - who carry out their responsibilities without pay or remuneration of any kind. They are probably losing money by not being at work. During the last couple of years, helicopters have been successfully used in a number of search and rescue operations, however, this has only been possible because of good weather at the time. If the chopper can't fly, the volunteers are called upon to assist at no direct cost to the Government.

Whether choppers are used or not, land S&R operations are cheap relative to the amount often spent on open sea searches which frequently involve tracker aircraft and ships for a period of a week or more. This sort of thing does cost big money and is more often than not to no avail.

Why should we suffer the impost of having to pay a premium to "allow" us to go out and cave, climb, walk, canoe or whatever, to make ourselves fitter and healthier and hence more able to deal with the day to day stress of modern living?

Be at the next meeting when this subject will be discussed and a course of action worked out.

Christmas and New Year Trips

Owing to the A.S.F. Conference in Melbourne at the end of this year, there will be many bods from all over Australia coming down here to do some real caving. I already know of several groups coming over both before and after Cave Convict. No doubt, most will be self-contained, however, I'm sure some of our members would be made welcome on some of their trips so, if you're at a loose end over Summer, why not go caving with some of the North Island trogs?

Swedish Visitor

A few weeks ago, I had a visit from a tall sun-tanned Swedish blonde in the form of Bo Gustafsson! Despite what you may be thinking, Bo is a male and has been in Australia for a few months looking around at the caving scene and the country in general.

Unfortunately, everyone was away or otherwise occupied on his only weekend here, so he missed out on experiencing some of Australia's best caving. He did indicate however, that there may well be a visit from quite a large group of Swedish trogs in a couple of year's time, so watch out!

!!!! MAIL BAG !!!!

Several items of interest to members have been received in the mail recently:-

1. The Division of Recreation representing the Bush and Mountain Leadership Board is calling for applications for their second course which commences at Easter, 1981.

The Certificate Course is designed to enable those with experience and skill in outdoor activities to acquire training and further experience in leading groups. Pamphlets are available at 7 Rupert Avenue.

2. Traditional Explorations of Sydney have sent several copies of their 1980-81 Asian Programme. This group specialises in guided tours of diversity and difference. The most notable expedition is to Palawan in the Philippines, where caves of world record dimension are to be explored. The Second Palawan Expedition will take place from December, 1980 to February, 1981. The pamphlets which are Rupert Avenue also have info. on scuba diving trips to the Philippines.
3. The Minutes of the Federation of Tasmanian Bushwalking Clubs Minutes of meeting No. 60 are available for the asking. Also a report on a seminar relating to outdoor leadership training produced by the Federation.

No, this is not another classified ad. from Stuart Nicholas. This is a classified ad. from Nick Hume, so there!

FOR SALE FOR SALE

New Seiko, Professional Model 600m automatic divers watch, bomb-proof, titanium casing; 12 months worldwide guarantee from 13.10.80. Tested to 2,000 ft (water depth or cave depth if you like) \$165
Phone: Nick Hume on 25 1934 (Home) or 20 4778 (Work)

And now, for your edification, a few words from the Atlas of Astronomy and Physical & Political Geography, Milner & Peterson, 1853.

Fissures and Caverns

- Deep narrow fissures, yawning chasms, and great chambered cavities common in mountainous districts, are either monuments of the violent action that has shaped the external envelope of our planet, or of the extensive changes produced by slow erosion operating through a series of ages.
- Caverns, properly so called, are perforations open to the daylight at one extremity, with lateral entrances on the sides of mountains either presenting a single vacuity, or a series of spacious chambers connected by narrow winding passages, which often descend far below the level of the entrance.
- Wind caverns are inexplicable phenomena. From a blowing cave in Alleghany Mountains a hundred feet in diameter, the current of air is so strong as to keep weeds prostrate to the distance of sixty feet from its mouth. But the most extraordinary example is the great cavern of Ouybe, of unknown extent, in Central Asia. The tempests that rush from it are sometimes so violent as to carry off everything on the road, and throw them into the adjoining lake. The wind, coming from the interior of the earth is said to be warm in winter, and so dangerous that the caravans often stop for a whole week till the tempests have subsided.

VAPOUR BARRIER INSULATION

Interested in staying warm in cold environments? Like to stop sweat glugging up the down in your sleeping bag or duvet? Get into VBI!

Stuart has info. on this "revolutionary" concept in human environmental insulation which promises great things and apparently even works.

I can hear you saying "not another outdoor gear fad!" but believe me, this idea does work and is being employed more and more by mountaineers, cross-country skiers and other cold weather bods. At the A.S.M.F. Conference in May this year, Dr Peter Steele, who spends a good deal of his time doing medical research in the Himalaya, enthusiastically advocated VBI having successfully used the system himself.

It probably has little use in caving except for the feet and in sleeping bags. Nevertheless, the info. makes interesting reading especially as a number of our members are into mountaineering and other strange pursuits of similar nature.

MEMBERSHIP LIST

Shown below is a complete list of all financial members including Prospective members with expiry dates. If you have expired, pay up or be scrubbed from the list!

<u>Prospective Members</u>	<u>Membership Expiry</u>
Kerfoot, Greg	16. 8.80
McDougall, Rowena	10.11.80
Mather, Mark	2.10.80
Ransley, Barry	2.10.80
Searl, Biddie	10.11.80
Tedds, Peter	2.10.80
Tranter, Bruce	10.11.80

Other Members - paid until AGM 1981

<u>Associate</u>	<u>Full Member</u>	<u>Life Member</u>
Bridges, Ross	Briggs, Andrew	Brown, Frank (Snr.)
Martin, Dave	Brown, Frank	Carey, Sam
Matthews, Peter	Davey, Andrew	Collin, Brian
Moody, Lauire (Hon.)	Davies, Chris	Goede, Albert
Poulter, Norm	Davies, Diana	Jeffries, Max
Robinson, Lloyd	Feeney, Sue (unfinancial)	
Salt, Frank	Fisher, Geoff	
Taylor, Gordon	Greenhill, Therese	
	Hamilton-Smith, Elery	
	Hume, Nick	
	McIntosh, Bruce	
	Mansfield, Ross	
	Meerding, Henk	
	Nicholas, Stuart	
	Penwill, John	
	Redman, Arthur	
	Shaw, Peter	
	Skinner, Roy	
	Smillie, Steve	
	Southgate, Dave	
	Steane, David	
	Tomalin, Bill	
	Wailles, Trevor	
	Watts, Peter	

The following article comes from our hard man in Scottsdale, Frank Brown (Mk.1). It appears that the condition of Pillingers Creek Cave has changed very little over the past thirty years although the actual structure has changed considerably!

Thanks for the article, Frank.

PILLINGERS CREEK CAVE, MAYDENA

The writer was interested to read accounts of a trip to this cave in the September "Spiel" and feel motivated to record a few comments on the early exploration of this pot.

Pillinger's Creek was first entered by the writer and David Elliott in May, 1947. We gained access via a small entrance further along the wall than the present entrance. This leads to a narrow, steeply sloping passage which actually has some solid rock! Well, relatively solid. Our only equipment consisted of 50ft of hemp rope of the brand known as "vintage". This passage gives access to two shafts, one of which connects to the top of the main talus heap and the second to the bottom of the heap. Since the entrance is obstructed by a large, smooth, wet dolerite boulder, we were able to experiment with two new methods of dealing with a shaft. We claim to have pioneered the G.A.D. system (Gravity Assisted Descent) and the G.O.A. (Gravity Opposed Ascent) you fellows can't get away with S.R.T. on your own! The final shaft was measured at 170ft by the D.R.A.C. method (Drop Rock And Count). In the absence of a ladder (we only owned one fifty foot rope and wood ladder then) exploration terminated.

In 1949, the pot was revisited by the above two in the company of Edith Smith and Fay Peterson. Our new 150 ft of wire ladder plus the fifty feet of rope ladder was used and the shaft was first bottomed by David Elliott. On the return climb, the writer got cramp in both arms about 30 feet from the top. This is fascinating when there are no carabiners in the party. Oh yes, it was also noted then that the top of the shaft had collapsed in between the two visits. This prompted the writer to buy his first helmet, an ex-Indian army pith helmet mainly made of paper and held together by spit!

In the winter of 1950, the last descent through the upper level was undertaken by the writer and David Elliott accompanied by Edith Smith, Bob Geeves, Victor Kuciaskus and (unwillingly), Max Banks from the university. This time the first pot was descended and reached the top of the talus heap. The writer descended the talus slope and called back for the next man who was Victor. Now Victor was a splendid climber, in fact, he was a qualified alpine guide. He descended the talus heap by the mountaineering technique known as glissading. The resulting rock fall caused the author to climb the far wall of the cave by means of yet another instantly pioneered technique called "levitation". All the equipment needed for this method is inspiration - and nail holes in the hands and feet!

To the best of my knowledge, the upper passage has not been visited since that date. In fact, the cave was not revisited by the club until 1958/9 ASF conference. This could well have been due to certain vows taken by the various members of the earlier exploratory trips.

In 1958, some members of CEGSA elected to be critical of T.C.C. for not "rising to the challenge of this splendid sporting cave". This trip proved relatively quiet until David Lanyon (CEGSA, last heard of in Africa) was contemplating the best way to descend into a cave below the talus slope. His contemplation was interrupted by the sudden vanishing of the section of cave into which he was about to descend! The party made an almost instantaneous return to the surface.

It is a point to note that no attempt was ever made to survey the system, firstly, it was considered pointless to survey something which changes so rapidly, and secondly, it is impossible to hold a compass when your hands are shaking.

Memories of this cave are still fresh in the writer's memory after 30 years, in the form of the dreams which come after a supper of toasted cheese, pickled onions and flat beer. I feel fortunate that neither my own skeleton nor that of some of my life-long friends has been left here. I suggest that any caver who looks round that huge collapse doline at the entrance and feels a shiver at his neck not feel ashamed of his reluctance.

It is also necessary to point out that a meeting of T.C.C. after the last trip recorded here, placed this cave "under the interdict" and declared it closed to members from 1959. Look up the old minute books!

Frank R. Brown (Mark I)

TRIP REPORTS

Florentine Valley - 5th October, 1980.

Party: Albert Goede, Joe Jennings (visitor), Hilary Goede, Chris and Diana Davies, Jill ?

The purpose of the trip was to show Joe Jennings from Canberra some of the archaeological and bone sites in the Florentine Valley that Peter Murray and I had excavated in recent years.

Hilary and I collected Joe at Christ College at 9 o'clock and arrived at the ANM gate at twenty to eleven. Here we waited for the other half of the party while Joe and the gatekeeper swapped reminiscences about their medical histories. Chris, Diana and Jill caught up with us and we drove to Settlement Road. Here we discovered that Beginner's Luck was already occupied by a school party from Rosny Matric with one of the teachers and Bob Cockerill from SCS in charge.

We had a bit of fun fitting out Hilary for the cave as the trog suit she had borrowed was several sizes too big and we could not find a belt with enough holes in it. We went down the sloping entrance using a rope and inspected site P. Joe and I then took some photographs with the assistance of Diana and Chris. We then met Bob Cockerill who was very surprised to see Joe as he did not even know of his presence in Tasmania.

Back to the surface and the cars for lunch on what proved to be a very mild and pleasant day. After lunch we went to Titans Lair to have a look at the excavations. Jill and Diana decided to explore the small cave (?JF96) at the foot of the hill instead. Those of us who entered Titans Lair were surprised by the strong animal smell until we discovered the presence of a devil and her young in the tight passage that leads off from the lowest point of the cave.

The final visit of the day was to the Lawrence Creek Rising. As a result of the recent rain, the amount of water was very impressive. Several of us came close to falling in as we scrambled around on rotting logs to discover just where the water was coming out. We then headed back to Hobart after a very pleasant, if not particularly strenuous, day.

Albert Goede.

Footnote:

Not wanting to share Titan's Lair with two devils (no wonder it hasn't been pushed!), Jill and I headed back to the base of the hill to have a look at JF96. It didn't look very inviting even after cleaning a goodly growth of nettles and cobwebs. The cave consists of a phreatic maze with mudfill almost to the top of the passages; standing room in one chamber with a mudbank having really good regular cracking. A little formation and a good number of crickets and spiders.

Diana Davies.

JF341 - 19th October, 1980.

Party: Chris and Diana Davies, Nick Hume, Cam Douglas and the author, Mr Andrew Briggs. 9 o'clock B.Y.O., free sheilas.

Having heard so many fairy tales about this cave, I was at last able to see if they were true or not and if not, to be able to snort the person concerned. To expound further on the previous statement, certain members of our ignominious club opened their mouths recently and a constant stream of b.....t has been forthcoming ever since. (Please see the author for further information on this positively smelly subject). Well, enough of this guano and on with the fairy tale.

A long, long time ago it was decided that there should be a trip to JF341 to tidy up some surveying and combine it with further exploration (joke). Arrangements were forthcoming and we met at the Maydena convalescent home on Saturday evening. This was to stand us in good stead for an early start into the cave, twas actually 9 a.m. which I believe is a record for the club.

Anyway, all records aside, we descended thru' the tedious top half of the cave which is very muddy and generally rather silly, consisting of a small rockfall and then a steep riff down to the pitch top. Diana was the first down and rigged the pitch. Some of us continued to the main chamber after abseiling down the rope, while Diana and Chris had a look around the top of the pitch and did some surveying in the main chamber.

Many photos later, we regrouped to survey thru the last chamber with the 2m plus straws in it. The troll princess must grow big potatoes down here somebody remarked. Anyone sighting the troll princess is asked to contact Geoff Fisher who has been looking for her for many years.

As the time was now 1 p.m. we decided to beat a retreat to the surface, but the retreat won the race so on the way back Chris had a look at a previously unexplored rift leading from the main chamber. He climbed up about 20m before it became just too silly and some protection was required. The name "Sonic Rift" was suggested by Chris as his echo, echo, echo floated about the immense cavern for a short millenium. For those ignorant bed-wetting types who don't know what a millenium is, just refer to your local smart person.

Meanwhile, overhead Cam and that devil Nick who shall now be called "Volta", had continued on towards the surface taking as much gear as possible but, naturally, not derigging any of the rope or ladder pitches. Chris, Diana and the author arrived at the bottom of the pitch as Cam was leaving. The author's jokes were enough to send anyone up the pitch, so I was commanded to stay down till last. Anyway, at least I did not have to put up with their sick jokes.

Derigging and movement out of the cave commenced with the promise of dry clothes etc. to spur us on. We arrived at the surface just after .5 p.m. to see brilliant sun and blue sky. The constant flash of the reported cameras was almost overwhelming as they jostled for the best action photograph. But, back to reality, to find it was only Nick Hume who piped up and told us we were all just wet behind the ears.

Andrew Briggs.

P.S. Enough of this manure, let's get back to reality - copies of this extremely well written report will be available on request from the following address: Andrew Briggs, Government House, Rosetta. Cost \$1.00 per copy or \$10.00 per 9 copies.

HOW TO CATCH POLAR BEARS

(Also by Andy Briggs - Ed.)

Polar Bears live in the Arctic and they love eating green peas. Make a hole in the ice about 2m wide and 3m deep, then put green peas around the outside. Do this for about a week or so until the polar bear gets over-confident and then, when he is eating the peas, you will be able to sneak up and kick him in the ice-hole.

Florentine Valley - 1st November, 1980.

Party: Max Jeffries, Chris Davies, Geoff Fisher, Diana Davies,
Dale Madden, Bruce Tranter, Rob Mitchell.

The weather was no disappointment with every combination of snow, sleet, rain and the very occassional patch of sunshine being hurled upon us. Frist up, we headed out to the Settlement area to have a look at a small "shelter" cave (no number) infested with wildlife and surface search along the top of the ridge where it had been too rocky for logging. Despite numerous solution holes and night rifts no entrance was gained however, the area shows promise and warrants another look.

After a shuffling of vehicles, Max lead us to a promising looking hill near a small lone pine with outcrop and a not overly large entrance (alas we forgot to bring the tags!). Plenty fo room for all, moonmilk "hanger downers", straws, a little flowstone and a small pile of bones made the cave a pleasing find.

While everyone else was wandering about looking, Andrew was being forced, protesting loudly, into an unbelievably small hole in the wall. Just as we were congratulating outselves on disposing of the pundit of puns, he muttered something like "chamber". Mean-while the more cunning members of the party had retreated. Tight would have to be an understatement....Dale had to remove a wool shirt to get through but it all proved worthwhile. A mudbank eventually stopped progress but it could possibly be dug as the airspace only required enlarging. On the way out Dale, Andrew and Geoff took to climbing around in the roof space while I did the survey sketch.

A little further around the hill another small entrance and not very extensive cave was found. Further around still, was a small vertical rift cave. The floor was about 10m from the surface, but climbing was too tight at about 5m. Also, at the base of the ridge was a 10m horizontal cave with two entrances and resident devils.

After lunch, we headed back to Wherrets Lookout and walked up the slip to a line of caves of which JF118 was one. Dale and Geoff entered the cave closest to the slip but were stopped by a few chockstones. Meanwhile, Max and I sidled around the contour throwing rocks into every hole we found. Stuart reports that although these caves were looked at shortly after the slip occurred, a considerable quantity of mud stopped progress and that those caves having streamways, may have cleared themselves by now. The slip itself is spectacular for its size and well worth a visit.

Diana Davies.

June Ridge-The Chairman - 15th & 16th November, 1980.

Party: Stuart Nicholas, Diana Davies, Geoff Fisher and Andrew Briggs with Chris Davies and Len Smith helping to sherpa the gear.

After several abortive attempts to pay a visit to this hole, we finally got a trip underway on this beautifully fine weekend.

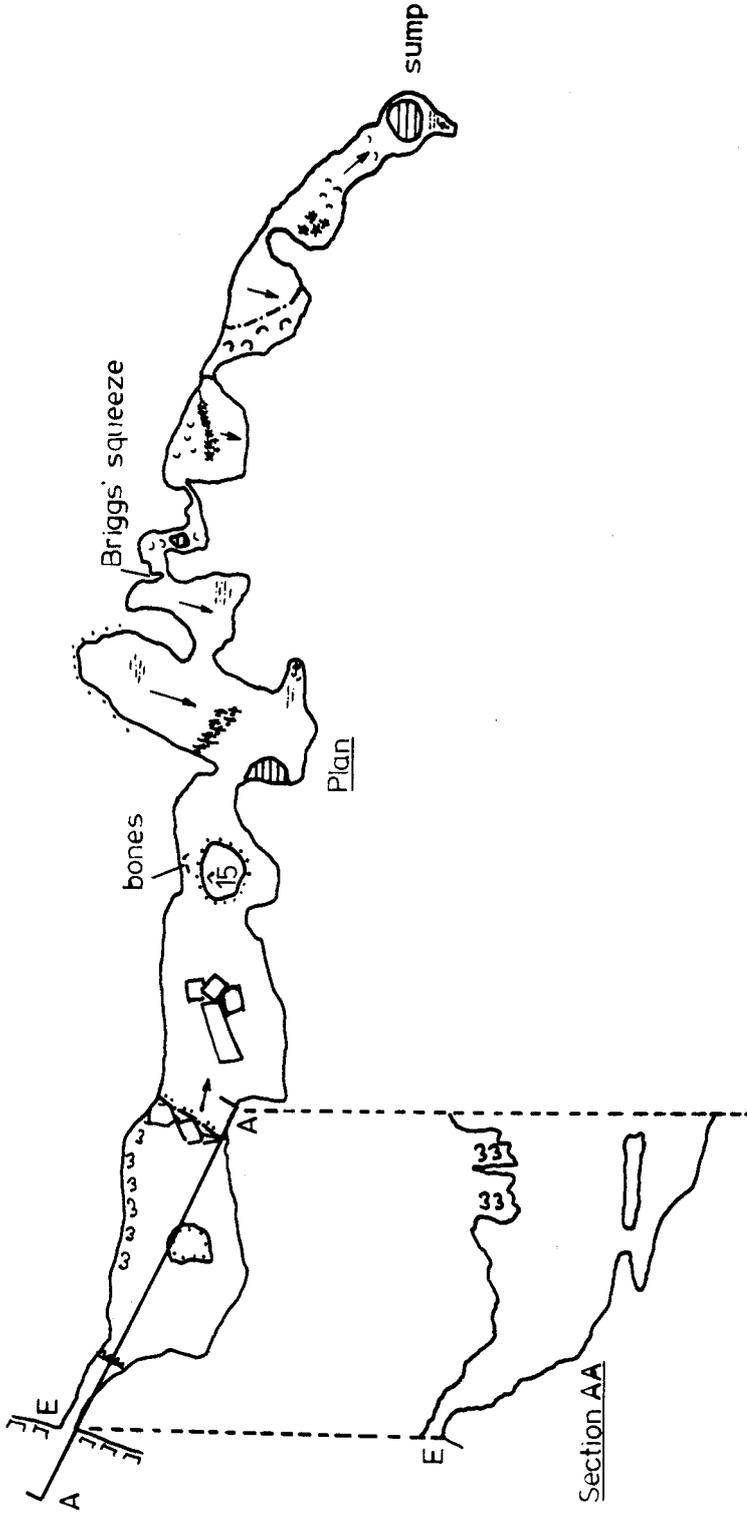
A fairly early start and a surprisingly fast walk in saw us at the entrance soon after 10 a.m. The 84m entrance pitch was soon rigged from the usual trusty trees and by means of a long (9m) header, was tied off at the mud ledge in such a way as to obviate the need for any protectors. This certainly made for great peace of mind during the prusik out!

Everyone eventually made it to the streamway and after consuming quantities of food, we headed into the relatively unexplored upstream section of the cave. A brief look around revealed a couple of hundred metres of walkable passage with several small streams joining the main stream from the numerous side passages. Two steep rifts were climbed to heights of about 50m and 80-100m respectively with excellent prospects of them reaching the surface somewhere NW of the entrance. We will know more when the survey is drawn up. Other leads were looked at but most (not all!) either blocked completely or became too low for easy passage. An only just dead frog and some complete animal skeletons were found in this area indicating positive links with the surface.

The consumption of more food was followed by a surveying session upstream, investigation of more side passages and after all that, a brief look downstream, although not to the brotty stuff at the limit of exploration. A fairly slow but uneventful retreat was made, the leader carefully organising the exit so that Andrew was sent out first thereby sparing the rest of us the torture of his bad jokes. We were all on the surface by midnight and sat around for some time enjoying the exceptionally mild evening (fine too!) and the cups of tea provided by Chris and Len.

During our underground jaunt, Chris and Len had done some track clearing for which we were most thankful on the walk out. They had also looked at the possibility of cutting a new shorter track to Growling Swallet from the end of the F8E road straight up the ridge to join the old track a short distance before the turn-off. This seems feasible and may provide quicker access to the Growling area.

Stuart Nicholas.



JF TCC
SCALE 1:200
ASF 2.2
SURVEY D.Davies 1-11-80