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Speleo Spiel

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Speleo Spiel

Southern Tasmanian Caverneers

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NEWSLETTER OF THE TASMANIAN CAVERNEERING CLUB

Annual Subscription \$7.00, Single copies 70¢, Non-members \$1.50.

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Secretary: Richard Hortle, 13 Fehre Court, Sandy Bay, Tas 7005 Ph 25 2124
Treasurer: Rik Tunney, 11 Conneware Crescent, Berriedale, Tas 7011 Ph 49 3222
Editor: Stuart Nicholas, 7 Rupert Avenue, New Town, Tas 7008 Ph 28 3054

FORWARD PROGRAMME

Sat 14 April Ida Bay trip to assist M Flint & Co push and survey.
16-17-18 April Helpers needed for Hutchins School caving/bush week.
Weds 18 April Committee meeting Stuart's. BYO.
Easter Lots of potential trips - Mt Anne with VSA and trips with SSS
Sat 21 April in the Florentine.
Surveying, pushing, derigging Pendant Pot.
Anzac Day Growling Swallet introductory trip - all welcome.
Weds 25 April
Sat 28 April Pendant Pot if the trip on 21 April does not eventuate.
Sat 3 May Slaughterhouse Pot - Growling through trip.
Weds 7 May General Meeting - Stuart's place, 7 Rupert Avenue - BYO.
Sat 10 May Any suggestions?

'LEO SIPEA MAN' IS COMING

EDITORIAL

Unaccustomed as I am to writing editorials, there is not much to say this month (do I hear a cheer from the peanut gallery?), and in particular I won't say "Well folks ...!" Apparently that is not going down too well with some folks.

Caving is caving is caving and it's still happening as well. So are social diving trips, and social non-diving trips, and also the occasional break through in caves previously known but thought to be choked at the entrance. See next month's Spiel for that juicy bit!

The AGM has happened and was well attended. A brief report and list of newly elected persons appears inside this edition. It's a pity other normal meetings aren't that well attended, but then again not much usually happens at them anyway. Maybe that is something that ought to be changed.

As the assumed editor for this year - someone forgot to have an election for that office (!) - and the editor for the past few (?) years, I would like to express my sincere thanks to our typist, Sue Wailes. Every month or so she battles with a variety of scrawls and scribbles to produce the finished form of the magazine. Aside from that, she also looks after Trev and young Gavin!

STUART NICHOLAS
THE Editor (again, again, again ...)

THE AGM THAT WAS

Another club year has gone and come as of 31 March. Thanks to all those who made the effort to get to the recent AGM. Without your support nobody could be elected, deposed or suffer any other fate.

The next couple of Spiels will (hopefully!) contain the usual reports from last year's office bearers, but for now a list of newly elected (yes, we actually elected people - no press gang this year!) bodies will suffice, together with the financial statement.

- President: Trevor Wailes (who else?!)
 - Vice President: Nick Hume (kool and trendy)
 - Secretary: Phil Hill (A. Pom)
 - Treasurer: Mike Edwards (whiskered figure watcher)
 - Quartermaster:)
 - S & R Coordinator:) Guess who?? Stuart Nicholas! (geriatric branch of TCC)
 - ASF Representative:)
 - ASF Councillor:)
 - Keeper of Archives:) Albert Goede (gentleman caver)
 - Other Committee members: Stefan Eberhard (the renegade branch)
 - Albert Goede (as above)
 - Martyn Carnes (another one of those English persons)

TREASURER'S REPORT 1983/84

<u>Receipts:</u>		<u>82/83</u>
Membership and ASF fees	530.00	285.00
Spiel Subs	118.54	52.00
Donations	82.50	268.00
Lamp Hire	103.60	94.50
Gear Hire	106.00	
Misc	6.40	71.40
Article for Examiner Newspaper	200.00	
Loan	50.00	
Grant - Div of Recreation (note 1)	600.00	
Interest - Cheque account	6.21	12.57
- Savings account	72.15	110.58
	\$1875.40	\$894.05

<u>Expenditure</u>		<u>82/83</u>
Spiel - Printing	229.07	430.69
- Postal Registration	20.00	20.00
- Postage	133.37	382.44 96.72
Secretarial		30.50 18.00
ASF		154.00 98.00
Misc		15.00 41.00
Repay Loan		50.00
Bank fees and taxes		18.90 4.00
Gear (note 2)		1152.79 107.16
		<hr/> \$1803.63 <hr/> \$815.57

Note 1 This grant has been received to assist the Club in providing caving trips for the community. The following gear has been ordered:

- 2 x 30' ladders & traces
- 6 x battery belts
- 6 x helmets

These will cost about \$200.00.

Note 2 Gear purchases:

250 m 9 mm Bluewater	424.00
200 m 11 mm Bluewater	475.75
Carbide	36.00
Survey gear	90.00
Traces, light parts, etc	126.54

Cash Balance

Cheque Account B/F	231.81	Cheque Account C/F	31.43
Savings Account B/F	989.74	Savings Account C/F	1261.89
Receipts	1875.40	Expenditure	1803.63
	<hr/> \$3096.95		<hr/> \$3096.95

Comments

This year everything was bigger and better - more members (and their fees), more Spiel subs and more miscellaneous income - particularly a \$600 grant from the Division of Recreation. Unfortunately, we also had bigger expenses. The greater number of members meant also greater ASF fees. In addition there were enormous purchases of gear, including 450 m of rope and many traces.

If the \$600 grant is excluded, \$600 more was spent than was earned. A responsible Club management cannot allow this to continue.

To the best of my knowledge, the financial reports are an accurate record of the Club's finances.

RIK TUNNEY
HON TREASURER 1983/84

Continued from Page 10 - Hobbit Hole

with the others just on closing time at the Dover Hotel, after which I enjoyed a slow trip to Hobart, sitting on wet rope, overdosing on "Captain Beefheart", in the back of Martin's van. On behalf of the others, thanks Arthur, Mick and "Chook" for a great day, let's do it again soon.

NICK HUME

CLUB THINGS AND OTHER HAPPENINGS

- * Through trips seem to be in vogue at the moment. Phil has done so many on double ropes lately that his rack bars have parallel wear grooves with no sign of the usual single groove! What do you do for thrills after a solo thru-trip??
- * We have achieved recognition at last! At a recent pub-night at the Dog House, a free jug (with beer in it!) was produced by one of the proprietors. Although a cover charge is imposed occassionally, we as "regulars" will generally be admitted free. They also have a spare room which can be used for meetings and so on. Thanks to the boys at the Dog House.
- * One of our "southern members", Helen Sterling (Chook!), has headed off to Melbourne and then further overseas for a while. Where she's going and how long for I don't know, but no doubt we'll hear from her at some stage.
- * For those interested in French rubber gear and other European aids, Martyn Carnes has established a good contact for the supply of Petzl caving and climbing equipment. He has catalogues, prices, and so on, as well as a lock on his bedroom door!
- * Around Easter, Chris Davies is heading off for a three month "random trip" round the north island on his BMW bike. Shortly after Easter he aims to be in South Australia and plans are for "Kool and the gang" or "trendy Nick and the Hillybillys" to join him there for some Gambier sink hole diving. Pity yours truly, the Editor, can't go.
- * Still on diving. Plans are well under way (three months late!) for a big push in the Junee. Gear has been/is being made, consultation of decompression tables is extending late into the night, and everyone involved is actually enthusiastic! Roll on Master Cave
- * Another one of those English persons

A visit, albeit short, by another Pom occurred earlier this year. Unfortunately, only a couple of trips could be arranged, but it is very difficult to take visitors caving when most of us work during the week. The guy's name is Paul Spence and he left the following note for inclusion in the Spiel:

Paul Spence)	Craven Pothole Club
The Rowans)	Ivy Cottage (next door to Crown pub)
Hutton Lane)	Horton-in-Ribblesdale
Guisborough)	Nr Settle
Cleveland)	Yorkshire
England)	

I don't expect to be back home before the 1985 conference time, but you never know.

CAVE NUMBERING - Florentine Valley - Sunday 4 March 1984

Party: Albert and Ben Goede, Max Jeffries, Mick Flint and family.

A perfect day for some cave numbering and easy trogging. We turned off the main Florentine Road into Whats-u-call-it Road (that is its name!). After a short distance this road ends at the junction of two tracks. We took the left hand fork and located an unnamed cave (unofficially 'Briggs Squeeze') on the eastern side of the first prominent limestone hill on the right hand side of the track.

JF 339 - Unnamed cave (Briggs Squeeze). The entrance is at the base of a 3 metre high cliff on the eastern side of a prominent limestone hill within the Dawson Settlement pine plantation. The entrance is an inclined rift and is approx

0.6 metres wide and 1.5 metres high. The number was placed on the left hand side when facing in. A description and a map of the cave were published in Speleo Spiel 162, 8-10.

The only bod both able and keen to get through Briggs Squeeze was Ben. However, he did not want to continue on his own so we returned to the cars for an early lunch.

We then returned to the fork and left the cars to follow the right hand track to The Settlement. The two high level entrances to Settlement Cave were soon discovered. One of them was followed down towards the river but deep mud and water made us decide not to push the passage to where it emerges at the river bank. Some of us then followed the passage in the opposite direction to the second high level entrance. This part of the cave was dry but the whole cave appears to fill up with water during floods. For further details see Speleo Spiel 57, 4-5.

JF 362 - Settlement Cave (middle entrance). This is a vertical rift 4 metres deep, 1 metre wide and 5 metres long. It can be descended without equipment via a sloping log. The number was placed on the south-facing wall above the log.

JF 363 - Settlement Cave (upstream entrance). The entrance is a rock-walled doline approx 4 metres long, 3 metres wide and 3 metres deep. The number was placed on a sloping rockface between twin fissures leading into the cave.

Via the old homestead we made our way to the river bank. Mick and I worked our way south along the steep eastern river bank to find what we believe to be the river entrance into Settlement Cave. Since the connection was not actually proved, this entrance was left un-numbered. We left for home early as some of us were keen to pick some blackberries on the way home.

ALBERT GOEDE

LUNE RIVER/IDA BAY - Sunday 12/11/83

Albert Goede, and son Ben, Mick Flint, Bert Smets and Arthur Clarke.

After several phone calls and some wads of old "Spiel" photostats, Albert rang to say he was interested in coming down to relocate the two entrances to Loons Cave and show us, if he had time, the locations of Revelation (IB 1) and Bottleneck (IB-X2). We parked our cars about 200 metres this side of the Limestone Quarry turnoff, still on the Forestry Road.

It did not take long to find the lower entrance to Loons Cave (IB 2). A strong cold draught was emerging from what appeared to be a sumped efflux. This is now blazed from the road with blue plastic tape, courtesy of Albert. A mixture of red and blue plastic ribbons now lead from IB 2 down the gully then up steeply into the dense regrowth mulga of twisted musk and native pear dispersed between fallen rotten logs (from the '67 fires?). After a couple of hours cursing at bush and hollering at each other, Mick and Arthur had found the Loons Cave shaft entrance (IB 3) and several other holes including possibly Hammer Hole (IB-X3) while Albert, Ben and Bert located two or three other promising prospects including a 4 metre wide pothole/shaft just below the old railway line. Arthur's red-ribboned track leads down from IB 3 where it is joined by Albert's blue ribbon from up near the railway, the two tracks becoming one back down to IB 2 and out to the road.

After lunch on the road we drove down to car park near the present quarry and walked the muddy, sloshy 20 minute track into the old quarry then headed west up doline gully leaving the edge of old quarry at the point where the La Perouse/Southern Highlands track commences its climb. First point of interest we showed Albert was a cave at

the base of the very big doline about 150 metres in from the quarry. Albert said this was IB-X 7, listed as having had a stream which was the probable source of Conference Concourse. However, as we showed Albert, it had been given the label tag IB 8 already. We continued westwards with Albert looking for either Bottleneck or Revelation till shortly after 3.00 pm when the Goedes had to leave to return home.

Mick, Bert the Belgian and Arthur decided to check out a hole found at the base of a small cliff south from the taped doline gully track, near the point where the forest starts to open out and ridges and gullies start forming. Mick rigged the pitch using rope from a large tree passing over an even larger log that lay across the top of the entrance pitch between two slbas or fissure sides. On to this we connected a trace, then ladder, after knocking down some peaty soil and fern roots that hampered our entry on one side. This 6 to 7 metre entrance pitch led down to a small stream passage, then around some formation and a few short drops probably totalling 4 to 5 metres. This left us in a 2 to 3 metre high chamber up to about 0.75 wide about 10-12 metres long. About 4 metres along there were some quite large bones, then a few more metres to where the stream passage left at right angles to the chamber and down at about 5 to 10 degree angle, with pools of water. Unfortunately it narrowed down so only Bert the Belgian and Arthur went on. After about 15 metres from the main chamber there was a stand-upable section with some "pretties" in it, then back into stream passage barely 0.3 metres high and 0.5 metres wide removing small boulders. Another couple of metres at right angles to previous passage led into two more passages running off about 1.5 metres apart and parallel to original 15 metre passage. The first of these seemed to widen further on after a super tight contortionist's entry (bottleneck???) which needless to say we piked on. We two could not feel any discernable draught. Our exit was to bring us face to face with two Hostellers who had come down looking for Bert. Mick had heard their voices from near the entrance and raced outside expecting to see us emerging from another hole further down the hill!

On the way back to the quarry we decided to rig the pitch in "number 8" (IB-X 7???). Some 16 metres or so below the point of entry we found ourselves in an impressive 10 to 15 metre high fissure chamber with some decoration and about 3 metres wide on a sloping boulder strewn floor taking a fair amount of water and dropping at about an angle of 20 degrees. This westerly heading passage then turned south at an even steeper angle and seemed to peter out in a small 0.75 metre fissure. This to our surprise led to another pitch we didn't have gear for. On our way out, we found another side passage heading east for about 15-20 metres at least 20 metres high with walls of massive flowstone.

Full of enthusiasm for another trip soon, we left. Could this be the backdoor?

IDA BAY - Sunday 13/11/83

Flint family: Mick, Gill, Pania and Emil.

Further to Albert's visit a search was conducted west of the Loons Cave IB 2 area to find Avenue Junction or Bradley-Chesterman Caves. These are listed as IB 4, IB 5 and IB 6. Basically, it is an in-out-in system. Leaving the car about 75 metres before the quarry road in a small car "park" with a drill casing tube/rod sticking up to catch unwary car sumps, a track of sorts leads through thick cutting grass clumps to the efflux stream. A quarter of an hour upstream through thick regrowth scrub finds IB 4 where the stream emerges. After probably only 15 metres, daylight again where the stream enters at a point labelled IB 5. Walking around the corner in the creek some 15-20 metres there was IB 6 which continued in to what Mick thinks would be 40 metres plus (or the time it takes to burn a quarter of a candle going in and out without any draught!!!), and the cave ends in a talus/boulder heap. No sign of the oil pollution mentioned in previous descriptions.

IDA BAY - Thursday 24/11/83 (IB 22 and others)

Mick Flint, Stephen Copp, Chook and Arthur Clarke

We reached the edge of the quarry about 11.30 am complete with 2 ropes, 2 ladders and survey gear destined to find out if we had a goer in IB-X 7 (with its "8" label). We decided to label this as IB 22 in our attempt to eliminate some of the confusion in numbering in this region. Since there are so many "con-" words associated with this cave ... possible source of Conference Concourse, confusion in numbering and Arthur trying to con everyone that this would be the backdoor ... it has been named "Con Cave". The lip of the doline above Con Cave was estimated at 140 paces bearing 240 degrees from the base of the La Perouse track at western most edge of the quarry floor. The doline is almost elliptic in shape, over 100 metres long with several smaller dry depression gullies emptying into it, and like most in the region filled with debris of fallen trees. This doline is clearly distinguished by a large 2 metre wide stringy bark which bridges across and into the doline. A steep entry over the lip from the eastern side of the doline takes you down a loose dirt slope to the entrance. (Survey included.)

From where the number tag sits on a large boulder, the cave drops down a couple of metres underneath and back towards the quarry down another 2 metres. Both drops require pack hauling. In a stand up fissure running east west for about 8 metres, you walk west under a small cascade to the head of the first pitch. Here we found an old coiled trace rusted together with a similarly ancient corroded karabiner with red and green paint merging with the flaking alloy. (Throw away department). We free climbed the top 2.5 metres down to a ledge step across a 2 m chasm into the main fissure chamber some 2.5-3 metres wide. Below the 2.5 metres the first ladder pitch was taped at 9.5 metres. From here the boulder floored chamber dips at 20 degrees stretching 16.5 metres from base of aven like pitch to then turn south (160 degrees) for another 15 metres, slightly steeper. Too awkward to set up a ladder a rope pitch was organised by Mick back to a structural column beneath the entry point to another side passage. Since Arthur reckoned it was the goer, he was coerced to head off into the unknown, feet first through the low chamber turning 90 degrees and east. Hooking in descender then sliding backwards to free fall isn't everyone's cuppa tea! ... and with survey gear to boot. 7.5 metres of rope pitch under cascading water leads to a sandy floor and 2 m wide chamber bearing 152° for 9 metres. He reckons he saw Alan Keller's boot print down there! Then an east west fissure dropping 2 m westwards into a sandy pebbly bottomed stream at base of the fissure which drained to depths unknown. A few more metres of dry passage till it narrowed. Small shaft 30 cm x 25 cm drops to wider chamber 2.5 m below. Arthur suddenly went quiet and lost his enthusiasm. On the way out Chook and Arthur did a bit of digging, removing some boulders near where they noticed the faintest of breezes, a little below and opposite the tall side fissure. Passing under a "loose" chunk, the fissure descended steeply (at 40°) to a point where there was some formation, under which the passage dropped more steeply and dangerously with loose stone and boulders, eventually bottoming into a 40 cm high boulder strewn gravelly stream bed dipping about 5-10°. Going feet first, Arthur found the going slow but was encouraged by the constant cool of a fresh air supply, missing in a previous effort, and continued till losing voice contact with Chookie. Up and out. The rest of the afternoon was spent looking up the hill towards the La Perouse track.

A cave labelled "9" was found in an impressive dry gully of dolines, fissures and chasms running south about 150 m south-east of IB 22. Number 9 was just a series of silted up fissures running nowhere and seemed barely worth recording as a cave. Several other holes were found by Stephen then we were all on the scent so to speak. Just beside the La Perouse track a hole numbered "7" was located ... a tight fissure, very dry extending at most 15 metres. Above and to the quarry side of the walking track more holes were found. The largest descends some 20 m with three SRT pitches into a winding fissure cave with walls of moonmilk, flowstone and a coral like helictite formation. Out late reaching the Youth Hostel at about 10.30 pm.

IDA BAY -Saturday 26/11/83 (IB 3 and nearby)

Bert Smets, Michael Santemaria, Mick Flint, Chook and Arthur Clarke.

Retracing our steps of 12/11, we climbed up almost to the old railway line before

the present quarry to look at the largest hole Albert found. Chookie was volunteered to make the first and only descent when it proved to go nowhere - 4 metres across and 15 metres deep. Some more holes were found nearby and two more old quarry sites just above the railway line. To make the most of the day it was decided to go straight back to Loons Cave top entrance (IB 3), since progress down and up would be hampered by only having two sets of gear between the five of us, besides having two rookies. The 30 m shaft was quite impressive though somewhat dirty. The upstream passage reminded Arthur of "Trog Wallow" in the Buchan area of eastern Victoria. Definitely a cave for gumboots if not waders ... to get through the sticky oozy mud. We went upstream past lots of impressive formation to where there was less mud and more gravelly sand with a stream wash of agate and jasper as if coming out of basalt country. A slab of flowstone narrowed the passage down to where a pool which looked to be 1 m deep and had a surface rippled by the strong draught deterred us from going further. Chook, Bert and Arthur followed a narrow high level passage into a small cramped chamber showing gypsum flowers. Back to the shaft and while Michael and Chookie went up under Mick's guidance, Bert and Arthur wallowed through the mud into the downstream section finding an upper level of passages which we did not have time to do justice to. On the way back to Mick we saw some unusual flat lobed fungi growing on short stalks out of moonmilk formation in the total dark. Along yet another passage which led to a higher level back into the upstream system, we found a Brian Collin type blue tag on the floor pointing upwards. As Arthur read it "Shield Hare's Fern Root", though Bert saw it as "Sheila Hore's Fern Boot". After Bert ascended, Arthur had trouble with his CMI's slipping on the muddy rope. No trouble reversing on ascenders. A little disconcerting when your chest link slips back simultaneously or independent of the top grip. Mick's jumars were lowered down and Arthur went up okay. The jumars were sent back down to Mick who then had the same problem with the gritty mud on rope and slipping ascenders. Eventually, after considerable "fart hailure" Mick emerged about 8.00 pm to find nearly all the chocolate eaten. LESSON: On muddy SRT pitches a necessary extra is a coarse tooth-brush for cleaning cams or a portable waterfall to wash ropes!

ARTHUR CLARKE

DIVING UNION CAVE - 23/11/83

Party: S Eberhard, R Eberhard

A moderately early start saw Stefan and I driving towards Mole Creek with the aim of diving Union Cave, a reasonably sized resurgence on the banks of the Mersey River. The sun shone brilliantly as we carried a single steel tank each and the rest of the junk that is a cave diver's tradeware to the entrance. The main entrance is a short vertical drop, however, a small hole nearly bypasses the pitch with a climb down a muddy slope. It took two carries each to transport everything to the first sump only a short distance upstream. Sweating heavily inside wetsuits, it was a relief to submerge oneself in the cool water. Deceptively clear water with a slight greenish tinge, I thought this is going to be a piece of piss.

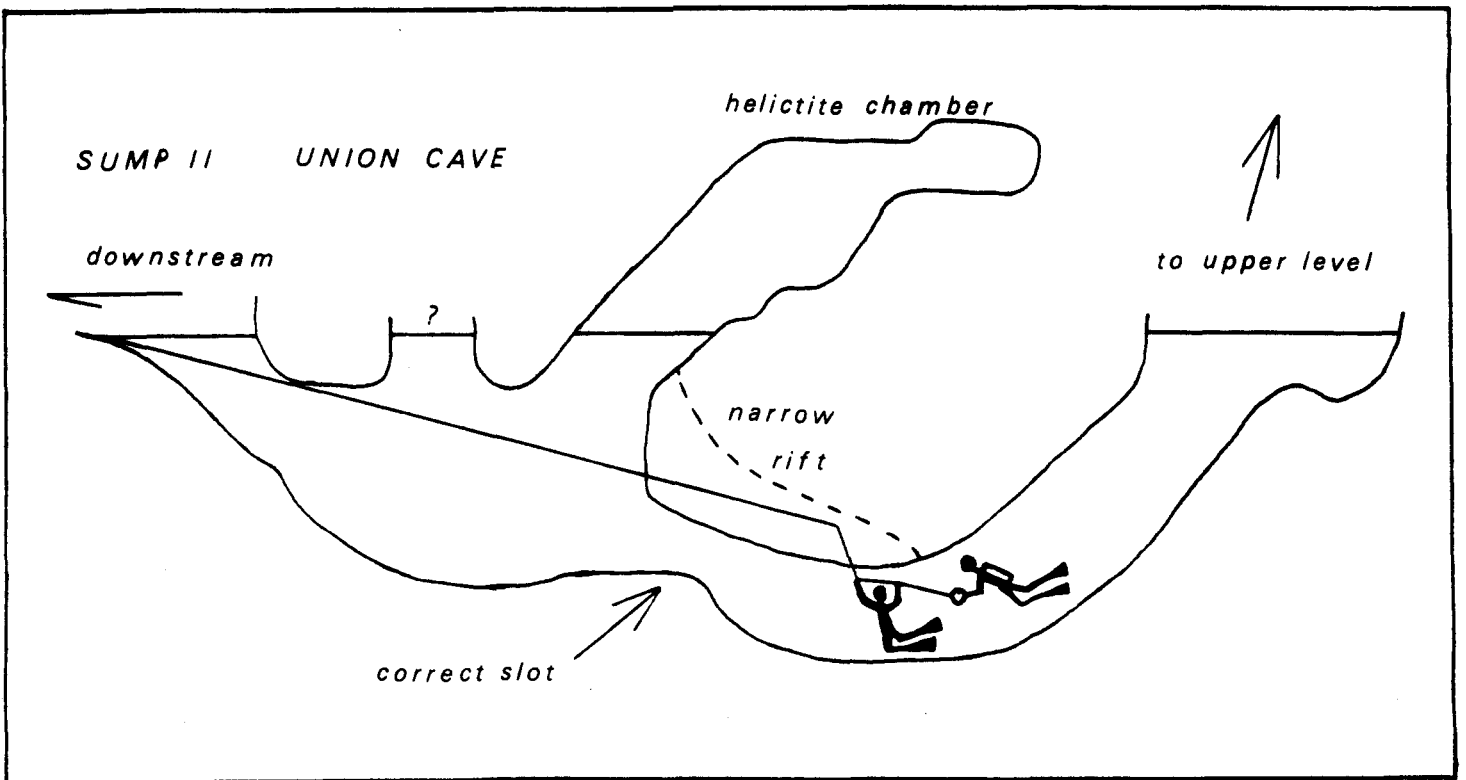
The first dive was not a true sump, but a section of deep water with a few inches of airspace above. I swam slowly through noticing the almost totally rotted remains of hemp rope laid by a couple of NCC divers several years ago. A swim/crawl through some shallow water and the first true sump is ahead. A climb on the left hand side is an apparent bypass, but we took the easier option and dived through, not bothering to lay line considering the excellent visibility and short length of sump. A large section of passage apparently only a short distance below the surface and draped with tree roots, precedes sump 2. I led into the sump, laying line from the reel; again the visibility is excellent, and a short distance in at a depth of about 4 m the passage opened out into a chamber perhaps 5 m wide. The obvious continuation is a small slot straight ahead, but looking upwards I could see two airspaces in the ceiling. Following the rotted pieces of rope, we headed up to a rift on the right hand side. We surfaced in a narrow pool of water and were able to climb onto a ledge at the far end. It didn't look particularly promising and climbing up to the highest point revealed a small chamber containing some helictites hanging from the ceiling and nothing more.

We decided to follow the obvious slot where the main flow of water enters and donned tanks again. Our descent to the floor of the chamber dislodged dense clouds of orange silt and in contrast to a few minutes previously, the visibility was now atrocious. I was unable to locate the slot and could only feel crumbly rock walls. A bit disorientated I signaled to Stefan and we felt our way back up to the rift airspace. After a few minutes wait hoping the water would clear, Stefan took the line reel and headed down first. Following the line we are apparently through the slot and hit clear water again in a comfortable underwater tunnel. This initially trends slightly deeper, but abruptly a steep mud slope leads up to another airspace perhaps 40 m from the start of the dive.

It is a roughly circular pool of water, and it was only with Stefan floating in the pool holding my tank and fins that I managed to scramble onto a ledge on one side. With an enjoyable sense of growing euphoria, I climbed up higher and found myself in a well decorated upper level passage stretching beyond the limit of my lights. Stefan was still floating gently in the sump, supported by his BC like some large bloated fish. With no rope to haul the tanks up to the ledge with, we hung the tanks in the water tied to the diveline. This allowed Stefan to climb out of the water and we started exploring the upper level. It is very nicely decorated with straws, flowstone and crystal pools, the type of stuff that one is supposed to find beyond nasty murky sumps. Before long it opens out rather dramatically into a spacious rift, and we could hear the stream below. A climb down, and we headed upstream (downstream is a sump) in a high and major stream passage. Although the water was only shin deep, about two foot of soft silty mud underneath makes progress arduous, but with thoughts like "this could be another Kubla Khan" we were not discouraged. Perhaps 250 m of such passage further on, we were greeted by a large oppressive and obviously deep pool of water. Sump 3 was a bit unexpected but we were content for the day and headed back to the diving gear.

A short struggle ensued getting kitted up while floating in the sump. This achieved, I dived first following the guideline while Stefan was not far behind taking in the line on the reel. Visibility was absolutely non-existent, and I kept a firm grip on the line, telling myself to take things slowly and carefully. At first the line was horizontal along the deepest point of the tunnel, but unexpectedly trends straight upward. I was not particularly concerned, as I assumed that we are at the slot that opens into the chamber, but got a shock when I felt the line disappearing into an impassibly small vertical rift. I decided it had slipped into a crack below the correct slot, and by now I could feel Stefan's presence close behind and just see a dull orange glow from his helmet lights only a foot away. There was no way I could communicate the situation to him, and I tried swimming up higher in a wider point of the rift; it too becomes very tight and I retreated showered by pieces of rotten rock and more clouds of the cursed silt. With no vision and an increasing sense of disorientation, I realised we were in a somewhat tight situation. A few morbid images appeared in my mind, and I reassured myself that we still had heaps of air left and noticed a rather unnatural calm sensation. By now Stefan was aware that something was definitely amiss, and out of the solid orange nothingness I felt him squeeze my arm twice, signaling that we should return to our original airspace. At this point I felt the line go slack and I was able to follow it through the correct point in the rift and back to airspace on the right end of the sump. I experienced a rather unique sense of relief and Stefan surfaced a few seconds later, and we spent several minutes saying very unkind things about cave diving and one cave in particular. After that small epic our return to the entrance was comparatively uneventful except that due to the silting we used a line on our exit through the first sump.

On reflection, what almost certainly occurred was that after passing through the slot, the line was pulled higher up into a very narrow rift when we surfaced in the far airspace. The line jammed in this rift on our return, causing confusion in zero visibility conditions. Fortunately, it pulled free and we were able to locate the wide point leading back to the chamber. To avoid such inclement situations in the future the line should be anchored with a weight at the start of the slot.



ROLAN EBERHARD

HOBBIT HOLE - IDA BAY AREA - 17 December 1983

Party: Arthur Clarke, Mick Flint, Trevor Wailes, Stefan Eberhard, Martin Carnes and Nick Hume.

Trev was mega-keen to assist Arthur and Mick in bottoming this cave and managed to convince the rest of us to come along. Unfortunately upon our arrival at Dover (?) Arthur knew nothing of these arrangements and much indecision ensued. Eventually we collected Mick and headed off to do well, something!

At the quarry car park I was still keen to do the Hobbit; Mick and Arthur weren't sure it was the right thing to do, Trev was easy, Martin was indifferent, then at the last possible moment Stefan piped up with, "..... let's do it", and we did. The struggle up the hill from the old quarry, over the obligatory fallen logs, wasn't as bad as expected, with Martin waxing lyrical over the joys of bushwalking (Trev disagreed).

The streamsink was pronounced drier than in previous weeks, whereupon it was decided it might even turn out to be an enjoyable trip. Arthur and Stefan entered the cave, closely followed by me to do the rigging while Mick, Trev and Martin followed up with some surveying/protecting.

A short downclimb through the entrance log choke revealed an awkward 5 m pitch/rift that was handlined to the top of a tricky 40 m shaft/thing. A side pulling retie, "krabbed" to the rope, enabled most of it to hang free and dropped us into an impressive, albeit wet, chamber with the usual tight, scungy rift leading off to the previous limit of exploration carried out by Arthur, Mick and "Chook". From here a short pitch, initially in tight rift "belled out" to a spray lashed retie over a 10 m shaft. Things were getting wetter, but at least better with depth. There followed further pitches of 11 metres and 19 metres, down sizable shafts, ending with a 5 metre drop into a sand floored chamber that looked suspiciously terminal, and in fact was, at a total depth of 118 metres. There ensued a soggy withdrawal.

Arthur, Mick and myself enjoyed a magnificent feast at the Ida Bay UHA put on by "Chook"; who was eager and somewhat envious to learn of our discoveries. We met up

CON CAVE

IB22

(IDA BAY)

Surveyed 24/11/83

Arthur Clarke

Mick Flint

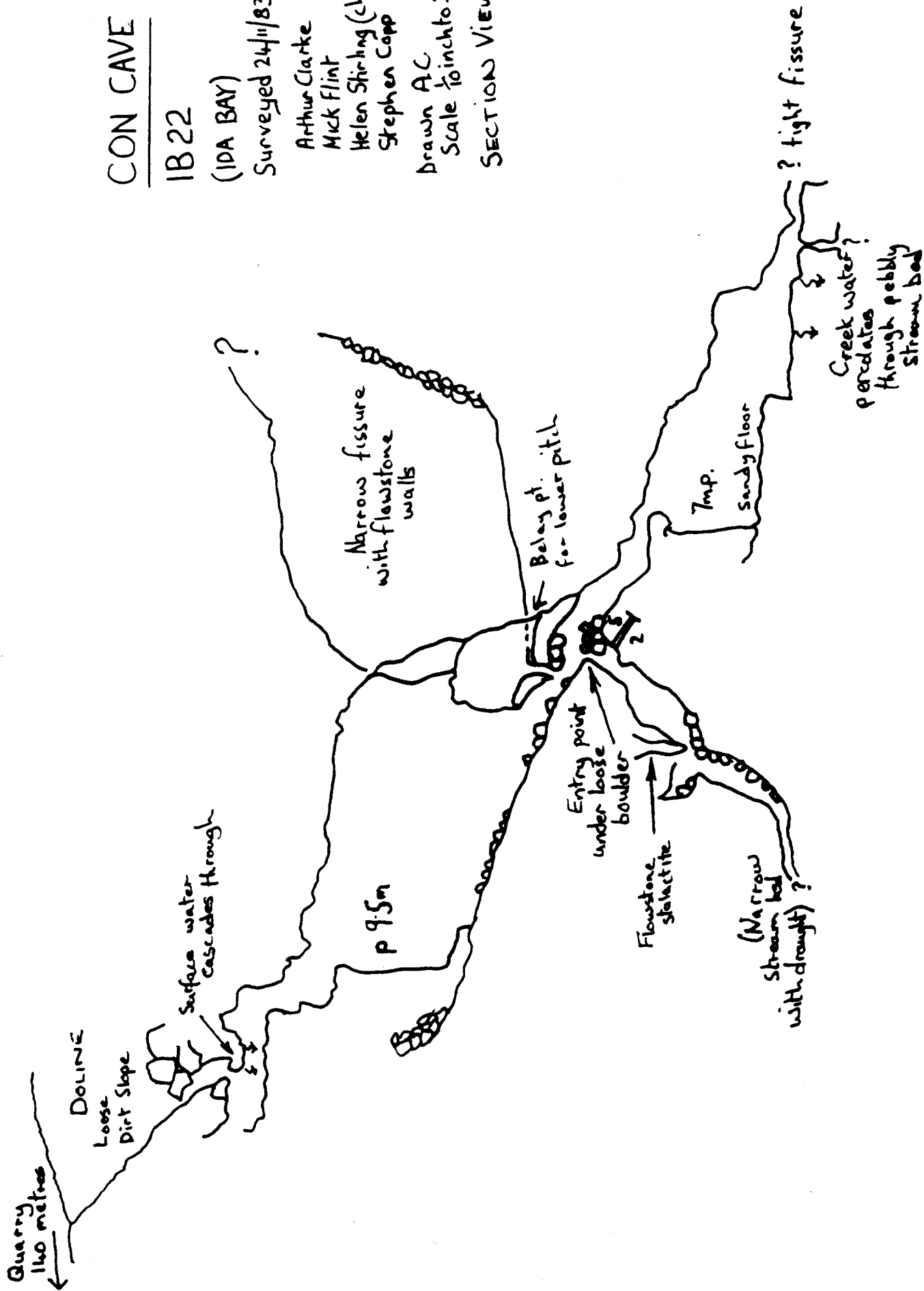
Helen Shirling (chook)

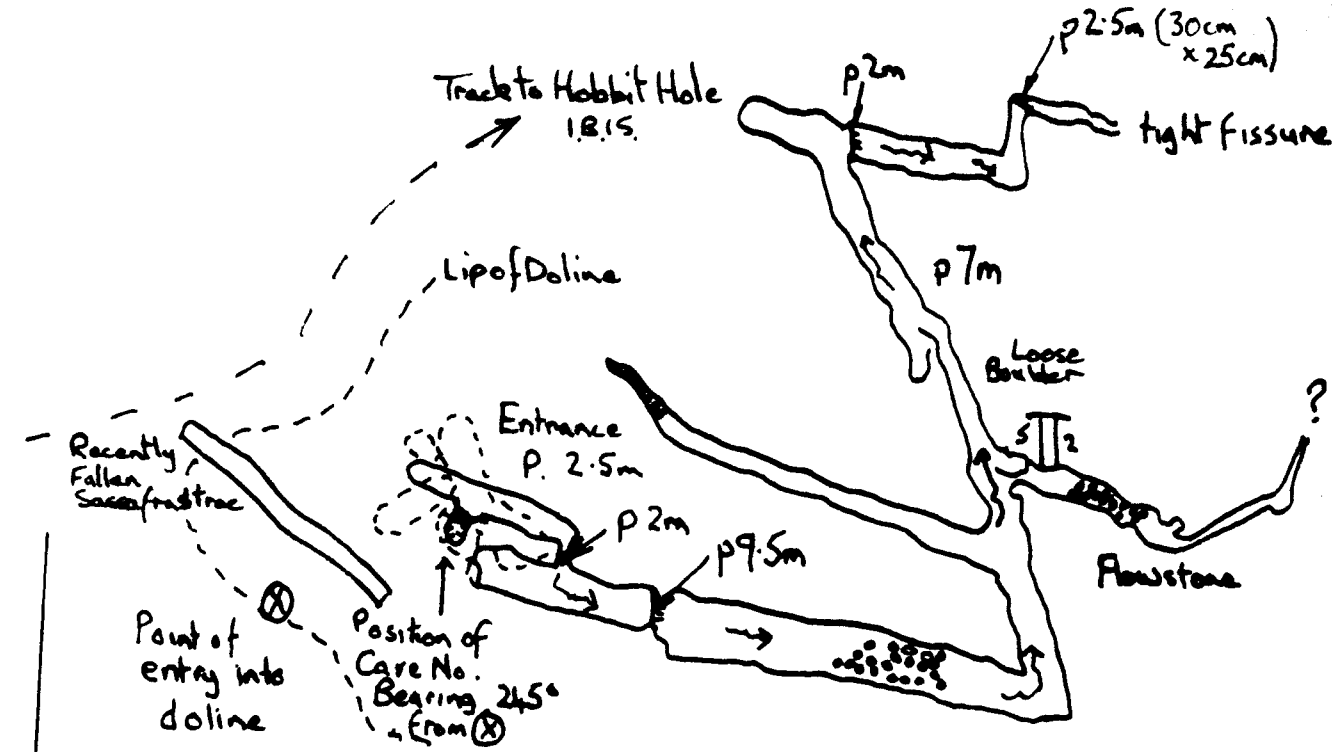
Stephen Copp

Drawn A.C.

Scale 1/4 inch to 1 metre.

SECTION VIEW





North

CON CAVE (IDA BAY)
I.B. 22.
Plan

Surveyed 24/11/83
Arthur Clarke
Mick Flint
Helen Stirling (Cook)
Stephen Copp
(Brunton compass, Suunto diameter + tape)
Drawn A.C.

HOBBIT HOLE IB 15

surveyed T.Wailes

N.Hume

MCarnes

1712.83

scale 1:200

ASF grade 4-4

section on 'X' plane

