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Speleo Spiel

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August 1967

### Speleo Spiel

Southern Tasmanian Caverneers

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(Published monthly by the Tasmanian Caverneering Club,  
G.P.O. Hobart, 7001)

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President: A. Goede, 8 Bath Street, Battery Point, Hobart. 7000  
Secretary: Mrs. J. Brabon, 122 Augusta Road, Lenah Valley. 7008

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Editorial - A New Australian Record!!!

No, we haven't broken the Australian depth record (yet), but on our first attempt to link "Mini Martin" with Exit Cave we have set a new Australian record of 360 feet for a single ladder pitch. The previous Australian record was a 288 ft. pitch in the Big Hole near Braidwood, New South Wales.

The descent was made on Saturday, 22 July. We spent Friday night at the Hastings Hut and got up at the unearthly hour of 5.30 a.m. At 6.30 a.m. we were ready to leave and we reached our usual parking spot at daybreak. After the huge pile of equipment had been distributed we set off along the track. The equipment included nearly 500 ft. of flexible ladder, 100 ft. of which was made available by T.C.C. (Northern Branch) and a new 360 ft. coullene rope to be used as a safety line. In addition both underground and surface parties were equipped with 2-way radio to enable communication between them and with the man on the ladder.

At Exit Cave we parted company. The underground party consisting of Brian Collin, Bill Hodge and Donald Fraser entered the cave while the others struggled up the hill along the "Kokoda Trail". The surface party consisted of John Marshall, Allan Keller, Albert Goede, Sib McIntyre, Jeanette Collin, Lyn Marshall and Rodney Hughes. We arrived at "Mini Martin" at 10.45 a.m. and waited for radio contact with underground party at 11.20 a.m. However, were not able to make contact. We waited until 12.15 p.m. to give underground party time to get clear before laddering pitch with 290 ft. of ladder. We nearly abandoned the attempt when Rod Hughes gave himself a nasty cut with his machete but when he started to feel better we decided to give it a go. John Marshall was first down using transistor radio in breast pocket for communication and loops to enable him to clip onto the ladder for rests. He went down 200 ft. but reported ladder some 60 ft. from bottom of hole. He came up and 100 ft. of northern branch ladder was added to give 390 ft. After lunch Allan Keller went down. Communications were excellent and we were fascinated as 360 ft. of coullene rope disappeared loop by loop into the hole.

When Allan had nearly reached the bottom the rope ran out and a nylon climbing rope was knotted on. Allan reached talus slope at bottom and reported hole had widened into huge fissure up to 150' high. He scrambled down the slope and found himself at the top of another shaft estimated to be 100-150 ft. deep. Then began the weary climb to the top with three bods handling the safety line. Great cheers when Allan's grinning countenance appeared at the edge. Then began the agonizing task of pulling up 390 ft. of ladder and then coiling it. It was 5 p.m. and beginning to get dark when we left the hole - a free ladder climb except for the first 15 ft.

Near Exit Cave we met the underground party who told us that they had heard voices when John first went down the ladder so there seems no doubt that there is a connection with Exit Cave. A two-way altimeter survey between the entrance of Exit and "Mini-Martin" was surprisingly accurate due to calm conditions and showed that the difference in height between the two is no less than 720ft.

An attempt to link the two systems will be made on August 19 - come if you can make it. We need all the manpower we can get. The northern branch has offered to provide an additional 200 ft. of ladder for the attempt. We wish to thank them for the 100 ft. they made available last time.

#### CLUB NEWS.

+ Mike Jagoe has resigned from the committee due to pressure of work. Mike was the club's vice-president last year and has been a great help in getting the *Spiel* printed. At the last general meeting Sib McIntyre was elected to take his place.

+ Donald Fraser has moved to Perth, W.A. We were sorry to see him go and hope he will keep up the good work out west. Good luck mate.

+ A first-aid sub-committee was formed at the last meeting and  
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consists of John Marshall (convenor), Brian Collin, Sib McIntyre, and Bill Hodge. As has been pointed out at several meetings the club's first-aid kit is far from satisfactory and the sub-committee hopes to do something about it.

+ The Mt. Anne sub-committee was formally disbanded. Further exploration of the area will have to wait until the new H.E.C. roads have been built.

+ Living High. Simon Stephens and Albert Goede went to the "Lost World", Mt. Arthur to collect some of the cave crickets Simon had seen the previous weekend in dolerite fissure caves at a height of 3400 ft. Some specimens were collected. Cave temps. were 40.5 to 42°F. The coldest cave in Australia in which cave crickets have been recorded. It is also the first Tasmanian record from a non-limestone area.

+ As from next month *Speleo-Spiel* will be registered as a periodical to save postage and in order to comply with post-office regulations the following club rule was adopted at the August general meeting: "The club will publish a periodical to be known as *Speleo-Spiel*. Issues will be made at least quarterly and all copies posted to the private address of members or contributors will be forwarded regularly. The annual subscription to *Speleo-Spiel*, 60 cents, is to be set apart from each member's annual subscription and to be separately accounted for in the Annual Balance Sheet, which must be duly audited." The secretary was elected as editor of the *Spiel*.

+ The following members should be added to last month's membership list:-

Peterson, Bill - 43 Augusta Road, New Town.

F.

Spate, Andrew - Flat 2, 63 Brougham St., North Melbourne, Vic. A.

Vince, Stephen - 90 Montague Street, New Town.

F.

+ The list of new names for Exit Cave features published in the last *Spiel* has been approved with two exceptions. Decisions on "Mini Martin" and the Lost Squeeze have been deferred for further discussion. Two other names were approved:

The Chamber of Damocles - the talus chamber at the eastern end of the Grand Fissure (stations 53-57.)

The Mud Passage a side Passage leading off the eastern end of the Grand Fissure (stations 49 - 49E,58).

+ The club Christmas trip will be to Loongana. Very pleasant camping on the banks of the Leven River with good prospects for new discoveries in this little explored area.

+ Twenty-first Birthday Annual Dinner. This will be a combined Birthday - Christmas dinner. It will be held on Saturday, November 25, at the Waratah Hotel, Murray St. Cost will be only \$2.50 per head for a four course dinner. We meet at 6.30 p.m. in the lounge. Dinner will be served at 7 p.m. DON'T miss this very special occasion. Make it a date now!

#### Prospective Members.

R.A. Chuter, Forestry Commission, Geeveston, 7116.

J.R. Cunningham, Forestry Commission, Fingal, 7214.

#### Lethal Jargon.

The following piece of prose is culled from the pages of the last *A.S.F. Newsletter* (No. 35) - "The head is very much more vulnerable to a lethal blow than any other part of the body."

#### TRIP REPORTS.

Exit Cave - 24-25 June, 1967.

Party: A. Goede (leader), John Fairhall, Simon Stephens, Sib McIntyre, Keith Corbett.

John, Simon and Albert left Hobart at 8.45 a.m. on Saturday morning and reached the parking area on the Catamaran Road at 11.40 a.m.

The walk along the "Brooker Highway" was uneventful but wet and we reached the camp site at 1.45 p.m. The level of the stream was still high following the recent rain. After a quick lunch we went to the cave entrance where we met Sib and Keith who had camped in the "Wind Tunnel" and had just woken up. So much for Friday night starts. We decided to join forces and entered the cave at 3 p.m. using the "escape" route as the bridge was well and truly submerged. We set up camp in the "Wind Tunnel" and made ourselves another meal. We set off at 4.45 p.m. to have a look at the new extension beyond Keller's Squeeze. As none of us were familiar with the high water route we took a long time to negotiate the first part of the cave. Sib dropped her carbide lamp in a deep pool and John finished up diving for it after performing a daring strip-tease. The crossing

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at the D'Entrecasteaux junction held us up for some time until we figured out how to cross it. Once past this point the water was much lower. We visited Collins Corner but found it deserted. Marching on we met the other party (their trip report would be appreciated - Ed.) returning to camp. Finally we reached Keller's Squeeze with Sib bravely leading the way. We shall not repeat what we said about Allan for discovering a way through this seemingly impossible crawl and in the end just gave up trying to stay reasonably dry. After a makeshift meal of sardines, cheese and chocolate we pushed on into the new extension. We covered a lot of territory including the Skeleton Passage where Sib identified the "tiger" skeleton as that of a ringtail possum. Keith

discovered the first *Idacarus* beetle ever found in Exit. After numerous attempts Albert finally persuaded the unwilling beast to enter a glass tube. We reluctantly returned through Kellers Squeeze as nobody knew the Camp Pie Circuit. The way back seemed unending as we were all very tired. We silently filed past Collins Corner where everyone was sound asleep. We finally reached "home" in the "Wind Tunnel" at 2.30 a.m. and retired after a quick meal. We woke up at 11.45 a.m. Sunday morning and left the cave at 1.50 p.m.

A. Goede.

Exit Cave - 8-9 July, 1967.

Party: Brian and Jeanette Collin.

Sat: The top of the "Big Log Hole" was found within 100 ft. of the spot indicated by survey. Rock dropping indicate a possible direct descent although no rock could be made to fall the whole distance without ricochet. The hole is some 200' uphill from the "Kokoda Trail" and about 100' uphill from "Big Tree Pot".

The boundary between the limestone and the overlying sandstone was found.

Sun: Reconnaissance trip made up the creek on the western side of Cave Hill. The source of some of the water in the far end of Exit Cave was found entering a cave just below the boundary of limestone and what appears to be a layer of shale. It is doubtful if entry can be made in this cave more than a few feet due to an apparent blockage by rocks and gravel. Several other holes were found in this area but no air movement was observed.

Technical: A good check on the reliability of the survey has been established; 3,500 ft. and about 70 stations underground and 4,000 ft. and about 170 stations above ground and a closure within 100 ft. indicated.

B. Collin.

Exit Cave Track - 16 July, 1967.

Party: Roy Skinner, Albert Goede, Donald Fraser, Brian and Jeanette Collin, Bill Hodge and Roland Wallace.

Two chain saws were used and the track was cleared of numerous logs. The second "loggy" section was 90% completed, button grass 100%, bauera 70% and first "loggy" section 50% completed. One more day with one chain saw and some slasher work would complete the track. Many thanks to those that lent the chain saws, they proved far superior to the axe, even though some of the party still persisted in using the old method.

B. Collin.

### Forward Programme.

- August 19-20 - Descent of "Mini Martin" to try and link up with Exit Cave Leader: B. Collin. Come if you can.
- August 23 - Committee meeting, 5 Bayley St. Glebe.
- September 2, 3 - Mole Creek. Leader: P. Brabon.
- September 6 - General Meeting at Doug Turner's, 79 Riawena Road, - Rose Bay. NOTE. This meeting is on Wednesday Night at 8 p.m. - not Tuesday.
- September 16-17 - Survey trip to Exit Cave area. Leader: B. Collin.
- September 24 - Sunday. Ladder practice at Sphynx Rock. Acting leader: W. Hodge.
- Sept. 30-Oct. 1 - Maydena, Florentine. Day or weekend trip. Leader: P. Brabon.
- October 3 - General Meeting 8 p.m. Flat 9, Grosvenor Flats, Sandy Bay.
- November 25 - Christmas-Birthday Dinner!!!! December 26-31 - Christmas trip to Loongana. Leader: A. Goede.