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Southern Tasmanian Caverneers

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SPELEO — SPIEL

NEWSLETTER

of the

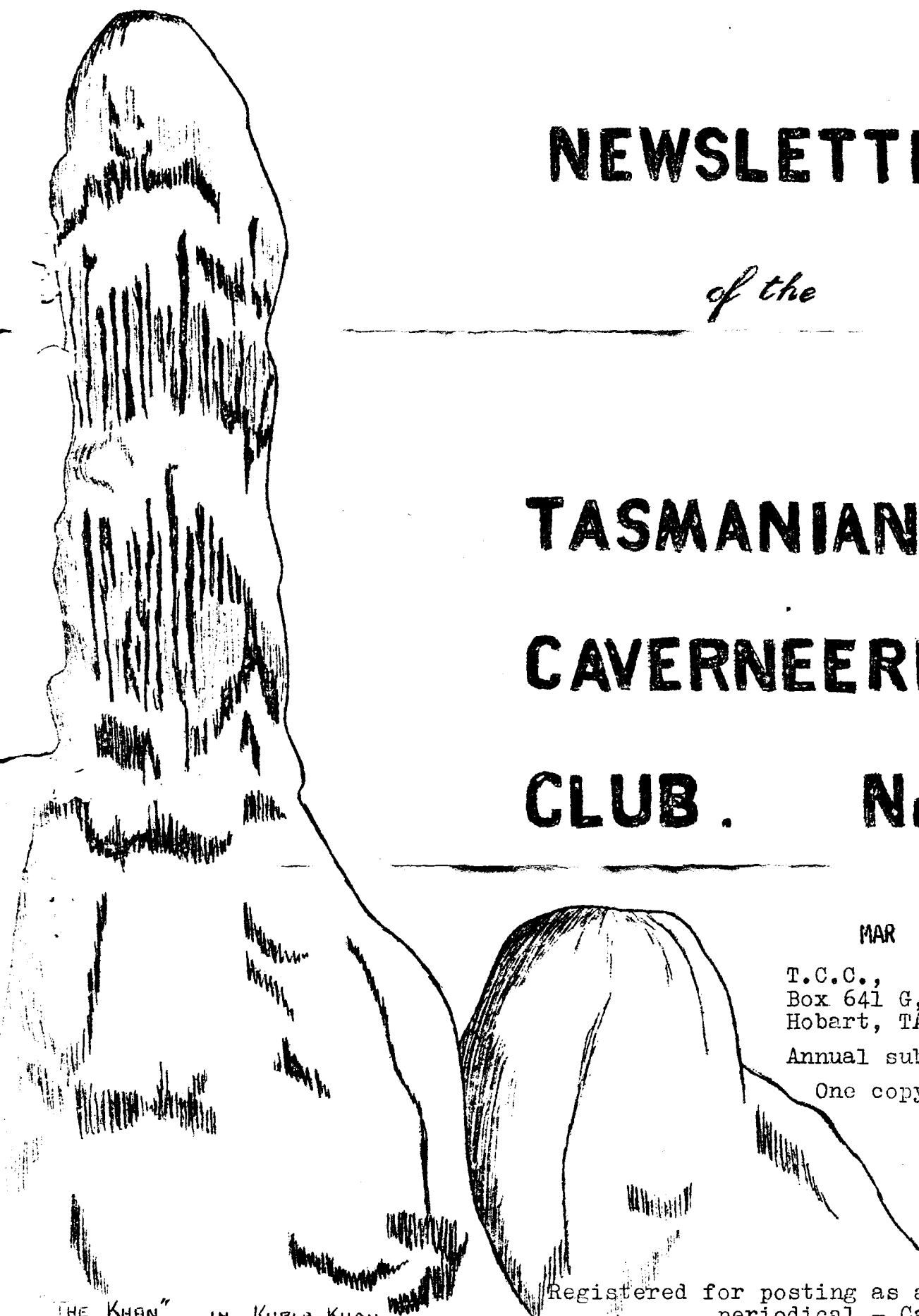
TASMANIAN CAVERNEERING CLUB . No. 88

MAR 1974

T.C.C.,
Box 641 G, G.P.O.,
Hobart, TAS. 7001.

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THE KHAN" IN KUBLA KHAN.

Registered for posting as a
periodical - Category "B"

JF 50: Small cave near JF 48-49. Side passage with draught has been excavated but is blocked by a large rock.

Scotts Peak Area.

Suggested area code is SP.

SP 1-2: Small cave in dolomite near quarry at Scotts Peak. Two entrances, one at river level, the other a 10 metre shaft. Contains a small pool. No decoration.

SP 3: outflow cave. Small creek flows underground, but is too close to surface.

President's Report - 1973-74.

Well, I did warn you when you elected me last March that you wouldn't see much of your President as for the first half of the year 1973 I would be pre-occupied with a double teaching load and during the second half of the year I would be away on study leave. Since I have not been involved much in club activities the secretary has prepared a detailed report which was published in the last Spiel. The year appears to be closing with signs of increasing caving activity, and the exciting discoveries in Judds Cavern on the March long weekend form a fitting finale to the current financial year.

The financial position of the club is not clear as the treasurer is away on sick leave and some large bills (no pun intended) remain to be paid. At the AGM we should have the full picture and some increase in subscriptions may be necessary especially as paper and postage costs for the Spiel continue to rise rapidly.

I would like to thank outgoing office bearers for doing their job and would like to remind members that the election of office bearers is not a matter of 'dobbing' somebody in but to elect those who are likely to make a good job of the position for which they have been nominated.

I have now been president for seven years out of the last eight and feel it is time for a change. I shall therefore not be available for re-election to the presidency. I wish to thank members for supporting the same old face for so many years and I wish my successor to the presidency every success in the coming year.

Your retiring president,

Albert Goede (signed).

Membership Subscriptions.

Members are reminded that these fall due at the AGM. The present subscription rates are:

Full Members (over 18 years)	-	\$4-50.
Family Members	-	\$7-00.
Junior Members	-	\$2-00.
Associate Members	-	\$2-00.

Only full and family members are entitled to vote and the full and family membership fee includes a \$1-50 contribution to ASF and entitles one to receive the ASF Newsletter. Junior and associate members wishing to subscribe can do so by paying the extra \$1-50.

Members are asked to pay as soon as possible and preferably at the AGM as this will save the incoming treasurer and Speleo-Spiel editor a considerable amount of unnecessary work. Members who have not paid by April will receive the April Spiel with a warning. Unless YOUR subscription is received by the time the May Spiel is posted no further issues of the newsletter will be sent.

Intending members of the club are entitled to ONE free issue of the Spiel. If they wish to continue receiving the Spiel they can do so by paying a \$1.00 entrance fee and becoming prospective members. This entitles them to six issues of the Spiel by which time they can reasonably be expected to have qualified for club membership.

Your club needs YOUR support

- Financially!!

In Defence of S.R.T.

by Peter Shaw.

This article is a reply to an article in the October, 1973 issue of the "Southern Caver" entitled "The Ethical Basis of S.R.T." by Kevin Kiernan. In this prolix discourse, Kevin slings mud at S.R.T. and its proponents, with all the directional accuracy of a lump of the proverbial trouser filler hitting the proverbial fan.

The distinguishing features of single rope technique are its comparative physical ease and its speed. Kevin decries these aspects, maintaining that, while laddering is much more tiring, it is the hardship that is the attraction of caving. S.R.T. is said to increase considerably the rate of cave exploration, thereby leaving less exploration for later. I think this is a contentious point, as I don't think that the amount of cave discovered in a period will rise by very much, although it will rise in relation to the number of hours spent underground.

Let's look at the advantages of S.R.T. in relation to a reduction in the amount of physical stamina required. It encourages more cavers to go deeper by converting physical challenges to mental challenges. It allows all cavers in a trip to reach the bottom rather than be left behind as part of the support team for the lucky few.

Less man-made junk is brought into the cave. Instead of large piles of gear and that great caving monstrosity, the caving ladder, you have a single "piece of string" as the only connection between yourself and the world above. Who can forget that epic trip in Khazad-dum when, in an effort to cut down on gear, the 90, 70 and 90 were free climbed by the first person up the ladder?

"A long, difficult, wet, cold, miserable trip lives on, enjoyment of it increasing as accuracy fades into a general aura of bulldust". Yes, it is nice to have an epic trip every so often, but what was the effect of those trips to Khazad-dum? Nobody would go caving for months afterwards and volunteers for future trips were very few. The only reason that Khazad-dum was cold and miserable was because of the duration of the trip. Trips were long and difficult because we were all encumbered by mountains of ladders. We might as well carry fifty kilograms of lead weights. Any cave would be more difficult with this sort of handicap.

"With neglect for the spirit of things, the rebolting SRT-ites answered and Khazad-dum was ravished". This is utter rubbish. Kevin should know, because Kevin was there and took part, that all the bolting in Khazad-dum was done by laddering parties, as a prelude to the push to the bottom, because speed on that bottoming trip was essential. This would not happen nearly as much with SRT parties, where time is not so important. Anyone who thinks that bolts are put in when they are not absolutely necessary, has got his hands in his trousers, as anyone who has bashed away for twenty minutes to put one in, would testify.

SRT encourages caving by allowing deep trips by small parties, which are much more pleasant than the swamp-it-with-manpower approach. Certainly, large numbers of cavers turned up for the bottoming parties to Khazad-dum, but how many were interested in the preparatory trips, or in exploration once Khazad-dum was bottomed? Is this exploration of glory hunting?

"There are many mainland cavers who long for a bit of decent exploration such as the average Tasmanian takes in overdose". If mainland cavers want this sort of thing badly enough, they'll move to Tasmania. Obviously, they don't. Once the hill over Exit is explored, and unless the Cracroft becomes more accessible, the era of grand exploration will be finished, and "nook and cranny" caving as practised on the mainland, will commence.

SRT actually allows more time for exploration on a caving trip because there is less time consumed in gear hauling. There is less of the "rush to the bottom" attitude.

" It may be more comfortable, but it is an intrinsic wasteland" To describe the intrinsic nature of a thing when you have had little if any involvement in it is absurd. Don't knock it if you haven't tried it! Who could forget abseiling the second pitches in Execution Pot and Devils Pot, the entrance and final pitches in Tassy Pot or the two main pitches in Khazad-dum. It is the fierce excitement of sliding slowly through magnificent surroundings, an experience that could never be achieved on a ladder.

Kevin's plea for a return to ladder is a refusal to accept the realities of the situation. SRT will prosper. As Kevin says, the benefit of caving is its primitive challenge. SRT cavers are meeting that challenge with the minimum of equipment and in the process are extending the caving possibilities to their present day limits. Roll on, anti-gravity suits!

TRIP REPORTS.

Exit Cave, Ida Bay - 9/2/74.

Party: Albert Goede(leader), visitors Joe Jennings, Bob Wasson, Peter Downes and Greg Middleton.

The trip was made under fine conditions with the access track reasonably dry. A slight delay was experienced at the entrance as the leader had forgotten to bring the key. We visited and photographed the Colonnades and the Ballroom and continued through the upper level to the talus. On reaching Camp II we visited Edie's Treasure where much photography was carried out. Next we proceeded to the Western Extension where the leader managed to lead the party astray both going and going out. The main purpose was to visit some small debris cones resulting from the wedging action of growing gypsum crystals on the limestone. We returned to the vehicle at about 6 p.m.

Albert Goede.

Exit Cave, Ida Bay - 10/2/74.

Party: Roy Skinner, Fiona Skinner, Max Bingham M.H.A., Peter and David Bingham, Jim and Denise Casey, Greg Middleton, Stuart Gamble, Peter Downes(UNSWSS), Andrew Davey, Peter Coulson, Ken Lane, Doug Denny, Chris Eden, Eddie ?, and Hans ?.

The main purpose was to familiarise Mr. Bingham with the "tourist" section. We met at the Dover Post Office at 9.30 a.m. and entered the cave at 11.30 a.m. The track had been put into better shape by Roy Skinner, Greg Middleton and Chris Eden having cut some of the logs etc. away earlier in the week. The walk in took the party just one hour. The creek was quite low, so most of the party entered the cave by wading the creek, while the others used the high level rope. We visited the Colonnades and the Ballroom. Greg Middleton and Chris Eden went through the talus section to the bottom of Mini-Martin. The rest of the party debated whether to go to the Hammer Passage, but decided against it. We viewed the glow-worms on the way out. They were particularly good. We left the cave at approximately 2.30 p.m. after an enjoyable "tourist" trip.

Fiona Skinner.

Marble Hill - 10/2/74.

Party: Brian Collin and Noel White.

The object of the trip was to locate holes for subsequent exploration by the trained monkeys(i.e. exponents of SRT). Attention was concentrated in the vicinity of Western Creek. The swallet on Western Creek is now open and accessible with some difficulty as the main drop must be approached by a tight narrow passage. Four other holes were located with first drops ranging up to an estimated 80 feet. These should provide good sport. Only a very small area was examined, and even within that area there are no doubt many holes we missed.

Noel White.

Growling Swallet, Florentine - 16/2/74.

Party: Peter Shaw, Phil Robinson and Ross Mansfield.

The aim of the trip was to further explore the draughting passage near the sump in Growling Swallet which had been opened up by Brian Collin and myself two years ago. At that time I had descended a narrow nine metre rift, to find it blocked at the bottom with no sign of a draught. We had not tried climbing in the roof in search of a draught and this the present party proposed to do. After battling along the track to Growling Swallet, we arrived at the cave at 11.00a.m. A lot of fresh dead-fall on the track has made it much harder to traverse. Armed with pitons, bolts two ladders and a rope, we set off into the cave to do battle. An hour later we were at the sump after a pleasant trip down that magnificent stream passage with its little cascades. Ross expressed doubts about the belay for the 30 foot pitch, but past experience won the day, especially when he didn't have to go down first. We headed up the draughting passage to the scene of the previous blockage, where Ross climbed up into the roof with no results. We then traversed along the rift and climbed into the roof again. Here, a larger passage led to the bottom of a short drop up which Ross and Phil climbed. A few metres later, a small trickle of water entered and disappeared into the talus. After Phil had climbed down in the talus, exploration was declared complete. The draught was coming from small cracks, which were too narrow to enter. Total length of the new passage was about 60 metres. On the way out, I spotted another side passage with a draught emerging. A few metres of crawling and thirty seconds of digging in the floor brought a five metre drop to light. A hand line was rigged and we all descended into a passage three metres wide, fifteen metres high and thirty metres long. At the end of the passage, several crawls led off but closed off very quickly. We set off for the entrance, pleased at two new passages discovered and disappointed that they had not continued further. The surface was reached at 4.00p.m. after five hours underground. A pleasant day's caving.

Peter Shaw.

Junee-Florentine - 17/2/74.

Party: Laurie Moody(leader), Max Jeffries, Glenn Pinnington, Ros and Andrew Skinner, Roy, Pam and Fiona Skinner plus Sheena(dog).

The object of this trip was to explore a number of holes located by Max in December of last year plus a "tourist type" trip into Welcome Stranger to clean dirty formations.

We all met at the ANM gate at about 9.15 and proceeded to the turn-off on the Maydena side of Frankcombes Cave via a quick trip to the Junee Homestead. The reason for this slight diversion was mainly to do a bit of friendly stirring as we had been informed that some cavers were still in the area from the previous day. Alas, the Homestead was deserted.

With Max leading the way, we followed a new road which winds round behind Frankcombes and all but drove straight inside the first cave which bore the number 260. The entrance had been slightly damaged due to blasting but access was not affected. The weather had done us proud with the temperature rapidly climbing, so we trogged up and went in for a look. Unfortunately this cave petered out after about 30 metres. Ros, being the smallest, was encouraged to push a tight squeeze with a chamber on the far side but with other holes to be looked at this was abandoned to a later date.

Another entrance was located some 50 metres further along the road and while some of us investigated this, Max and Roy searched for yet another entrance that apparently had got itself lost! Our second entrance proved to contain a pool of water after only several metres and on emerging, were informed that Roy and Max had found the elusive entrance and had already descended. With the exception of Pam, the rest of us plus pooch went inside and several squeezes were then investigated. Andrew and myself pushed through

a muddy passage and covered some distance before finally halting approximately 80 metres from the entrance. This particular passage, in my opinion, could be the one leading into Frankcombes Cave. On our return, another side passage which led back towards the road was investigated by Roy, Max, Ros, Andrew and myself. At the end of this passage, we discovered a small but high chamber which contained a daylight hole. Max informed us that entry had been made through this hole during the road construction by one of the workers. Signs of entry prior to our visit were not apparent in the cave itself.

After regaining the surface, it was agreed that the cave was "Bloody Muddy" and this name was therefore adopted. Andrew then suggested that we number the entrances but our illustrious leader had neglected to bring his drill, so the numbers will have to wait until a future trip.

An hour or so was then spent both "road-bashing" and "scrub-bashing" but nothing else was found. Limestone outcrops are numerous but holes were scarce. It was then suggested by Max that we have lunch at the ANM picnic site some 5 kilometres further out the Florentine Road beside the Florentine River. Our route was blocked by the log crane which was being over-hauled but after a slight delay we were able to proceed.

The site itself was ideally situated beside the river with a "pagoda style" hut that had been built from logs. Seating in the vicinity had also been made from logs and in each case the logs had been coated in varnish. Very impressive, were our combined remarks.

After lunch, we adjourned to Welcome Stranger and temporary relief from the oppressive heat. Leaving Andrew and Ros (who both kindly offered to clean the formations), I escorted the others to the end of the cave where Roy located an Anaspides. It was placed in a tobacco tin of mine for identification purposes but on inspection back at the cars, he appeared to have succumbed to the vast change in temperature. An hour or so was spent inside this cave with Ros and Andrew emerging last. (Many thanks - from all the formations you both cleaned.)

After cold drinks and cold ices at the hot pie shop, we headed home and judging from the remarks, a very interesting days caving was had by all.

Laurie Moody.

Florentine - 24/2/74.

Party: Andrew (leader) and Ros Skinner, Bruce Chetwynd, Mr. and Mrs. Bell.

Three numbers were affixed to the holes discovered the previous Sunday. (see map and descriptions). A draughty side-passage in JF 50 was excavated for about 30 minutes but progress was halted by a large rock. Some scrub-bashing further up the hill towards Frankcombes Cave produced another entrance. A short investigation was made but lack of lights prevented proper exploration. The new hole is uphill from JF 48-49 and maybe the upstream connection of this cave. It should be numbered and explored on a subsequent trip.

Andrew Skinner.

Judds Cavern, Cracroft Valley - 2-4/3/74.

Party: Brian and Jeanette Collin, Atilla Vrana and Peter Shaw.

With the dry weather of the last few months, the long weekend was an ideal opportunity to have a better look at Judds Cavern. With the prospects of a fine weekend we took only one tent and one parka between four of us. On Friday night we walked up to High Camp on the Picton River. From here we reached Judds Cavern at three o'clock on Saturday afternoon. With better lamps than previous parties, we entered the cave, looking for side passages on the way to the sump. Only one major side passage was discovered, entering from the northern side. This passage led for over sixty metres and was draughting quite strongly. Not being in caving gear, we didn't

push very strongly and possibilities still exist. We next turned our attention to the sump. This was a passage with about fifty centimetres of airspace. Atilla waded around in thigh deep water next to the wall and thought that the passage was continuing with a lower roof and requiring a swim. As the water was freezing, we retired to the camp for the night.

Next morning we surveyed into the cave to the sump passage. Here, Atilla stripped off and plunged into the passage at high speed. After thirty metres, mostly swimming, and including a low section with eight centimetres of air space, the passage opened up again and he reached a talus pile with deep water on both sides. A waterfall could be heard. In no state to climb the talus pile, because of the cold, he returned to the rest of the party and some warm clothing. We then headed back to the entrance.

The water in the cave was the lowest ever seen, which was fortunate. If the water had been higher there would have been no airspace.

That afternoon we walked on a north-easterly bearing over the ridge above the cave. On the northern side of the ridge we found a sinkhole with an entrance but had no lights to explore it. By the light of matches, we penetrated the entrance chamber and a short way into a side passage leading off. This cave still continues and awaits a better equipped exploration party.

We followed the ridge onto the slopes of Burgess Bluff and discovered a large doline on the upper edge of the limestone. No entrances were discovered, however.

We returned to camp and that night entered Judds Cavern again to take some photographs. A leisurely return to the cars on Monday saw us do the return trip in nine and a half hours, including quite a few long breaks.

Judds Cavern is a cave well worth the effort of going to see. With over a kilometre of passage, averaging twelve to fifteen metres high and wide, it is a horizontal cavers dream. The next trip there will require wet suits to probe the regions beyond the sump passage. The potential for further cave is enormous.

Peter Shaw.

Scotts Peak, Huon River - 2/3/74.

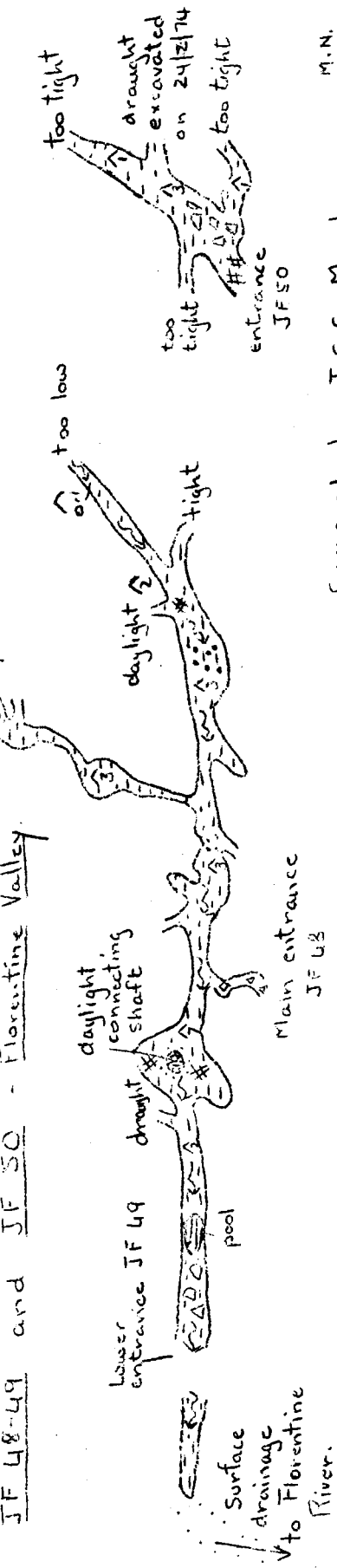
Party: Andrew (leader) and Ros Skinner, Bruce and Margaret Chetwynd, Max Jeffries, Glen Pinnington, Laurie Moody.

Saturday was spent walking up the Huon River from a point near the Red Knoll Lookout road. Max, Bruce, Laurie, Glen and I walked in across buttongrass. Near the river the vegetation changed to thick horizontal scrub, corresponding with the dolomite outcrop. Dolomite outcrops up to 50 metres vertically above the river bed. Upon reaching the river the view was quite impressive - downstream was a real karst landscape, with dolomite pinnacles and small holes large cliffs and small waterfalls. However, we decided to head upstream towards the dolomite quarry near the Scotts Peak dam. Several small holes were investigated, but were not worth numbering. Cave crickets were collected from a fissure cave. After a few hundred metres the bedrock changed from dolomite to quartzite; but this only outcropped upstream for about 500 metres, where dolomite was again present.

Cliffs along the river made bashing through horizontal scrub necessary. After about an hour of toil we reached a small creek trickling through a ten metre deep cut in the dolomite. It was followed up to an outflow cave, but due to the low relief of the rock the water was flowing quite close to the surface. Enthusiasm ebbed somewhat and Max handed around some "Minties". After this short break we again headed upstream and soon arrived at the dolomite quarry. A cave near the quarry was explored but yielded only 80 metres of passage (see map). The rest of the weekend was spent climbing Mt. Anne and sightseeing. The following Thursday evening Bruce and I returned to survey the cave near the quarry and three numbers were also affixed (see descriptions).

Andrew Skinner.

JF 48-49 and JF 50 - Florentine Valley



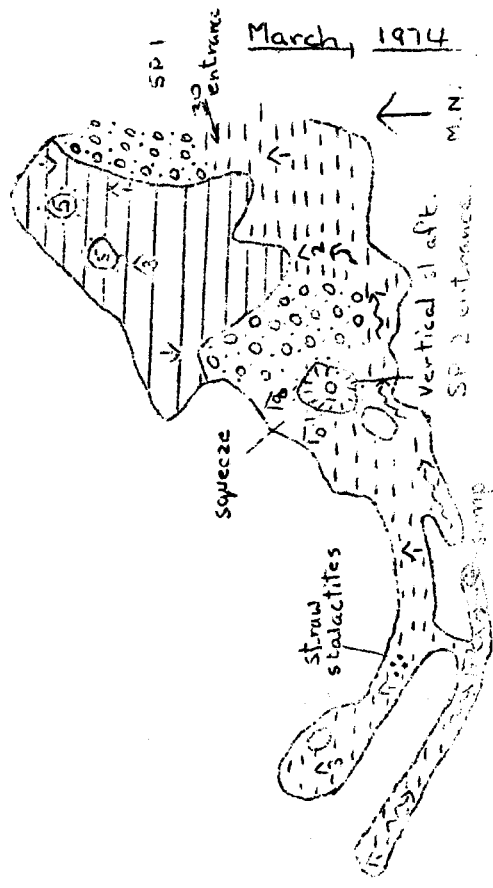
Surveyed by T.C.C. Members on 17/2/74.
 ASF Map No. 7 JF 48-49 and 50
 ASF Survey grade M 32
 Drawn by A. Skinner. Scale 1:1000

A.S.F. Symbols (applicable to both maps.)

- mud
- watercourse
- standing water
- connecting shaft (with height)
- talus
- * organic debris
- ∴ stalactites
- △ roof height (metres)
- ∇ water depth (metres)
- ↘ slope and angle
- ⊙ blind aven (with height)
- gravel
- ∴ sand.

HUON CAVE (suggested name) SP 1-2

ASF Map. No. 7 SP 1-2 T.C.C. ASF Map Grade M 33
 Surveyed on 7/3/74 by A. Skinner and B. Chetwynd,
 T.C.C. Scale 1:500



BE
THERE
A.G.M.
MARCH
27th
8 p.m.

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