



FUSSI

Newsletter

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C O N T E N T S

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LED LENSER H14 HEAD TORCH REVIEW

Michael Meynell-James

The LED Lenser H14 is a very light head torch. It fitted well to my caving helmet and the adjustment of the straps was an easy process. The on/off switch is on the back of the battery pack rather than, as is normal in caving lamps, on the front. It did not present a problem, however. It is powered by 4 AA batteries. At 210 lumens it has enough light to fill the chambers and passages and even made a fellow caver with non-halogen head torch check their light was on, then double check their batteries.



At full spread it cast light in a very wide dispersion. This did, however, create a quite noticeable dark spot at the centre of the beam. This was easily adjusted out by reducing the spread using the LED Lenser

adjustable focal beam. Once I did this I found it had more than enough light for all the caving we did on this trip.



The flexible battery cover allows dust to penetrate and is not water proof.

On occasions through long crawls or just spaces with a low ceiling I thought it would have been good to be able to adjust the head lamp to effectively 'look up'. This would have been useful when there was not enough head room to put my head back, but would have allowed me to illuminate the path ahead, rather than just the floor below me. This was countered by the great angle that the LED Lenser could be tilted down, 90 degrees. This made it great for social situation where I could illuminate the floor and immediate area, while still making eye contact and looking at my companions' faces

without flash blinding them in the process.

The cave we tested the LED Lenser H14 in had no stagnant water and very little moisture. The net result of this is that it is quite a dusty environment. I believe these fine dust particles can penetrate deep into any apparatus or equipment. One clear advantage of the water proof lamps we were using is that, once outside, these lamps could be easily rinsed clean, while the LED Lenser had to have a more delicate approach to cleansing it of dust.



LED LENSER H14 HEAD TORCH REVIEW

All-round, people were impressed by the amount of light and the sharp white spectrum the LED Lenser put out. I would suggest that this model would be a great light source for camping and all-round outdoor activities including fishing and hiking. I think it would make an excellent addition to any cyclist or mountain biker that ever rides at night or for the rock climbing enthusiast that often does the late pack-ups and haul back to camp or car.

LED Lenser has certainly made their mark on the hand-held torch market and I personally own both a P7 and an M14 from their range. I am very proud of these two torches and on a minor warranty matter I found the LED Lenser to be both very agreeable and prompt with their after sales service. As for their breaking into the specialised headlight market for cavers and other extreme activities I think it's a case of 'watch this space' and just a matter of time before LED Lenser will shake the tree as it has done successfully with their hand-held torches for the security and hunting industries.

REBIRTHING AT CORRA LYNN

Margaret Ting

April 10th 2011.

Members on Trip: Romain Bochet, Trudy George, Thomas Giraud, Jasmine Hart, Almar Lambaco, Michael Meynell-James, Allison Thompson, Thomas Varga.



The crowd at the entrance of Corra Lynn

All the signs pointed towards us having a great time caving on the 10th of April 2011. The pouring rain cleared soon after all the participants met, and multiple big, vivid rainbows (even overlapping double rainbows!!) accompanied us on the drive towards our caving destination. Needless to say, the 2 hour drive, upon departure from Gepps Cross at 7.30am, including a 20 minute quick stop at the BP station in Port Wakefield, was pleasant and passed quickly. As soon as we knew it, the 3 cars carrying all 9 participants, had arrived on the farmland where the Corra-Lynn caves were, and our underground adventure was about to begin...

Having never done caving, (except for touristy, fully lit caves where women wearing stilettos could still quite manage), getting ready by securing colourful neon helmets to our heads, attaching fully charged headlights to them, packing first aid kits, spare batteries, spare lights, snacks and water, and learning how to read a map of chaotic

squiggly lines of 3 different shades superimposed on top of each other, indicating the 3 different subterranean levels, made me feel slightly apprehensive. What was to come? What was I getting myself into?

REBIRTHING AT CORRA LYNN

It all felt very surreal. Being in the middle of nowhere, 9 fully geared participants walking single file through the trees, down into what seemed like a dead end of a rock wall. A single metal gate covered an opening in the oppressive rock. Questions of 'what lies behind the gate?' filled my mind, as we all waited for the gate to be unlocked with a precious key procured earlier from the farmer who owns the land the cave lies on. After a bit of jimmying, the gate unlocked and opened into a brown land of tunnels upon tunnels. At 10.30am, we entered the cave.

I felt like I was in Jules Verne's 'Journey into the Centre of the Earth'.

Once the metal gate was shut, we were immersed in complete darkness. The trusty headlights we wore were our only source of light to illuminate our paths, but it strew the place with an unnaturally white glow. We proceeded in single file due to the narrow paths and our worldview for pretty much most of the time was the shoes and bottoms of our companions! There was brown earth everywhere. And we were soon covered in it. There were tunnels of all shapes and sizes. Big, high ones where we could walk down easily like a corridor; low narrow ones which we had to bend over to cross; even tunnels the size of a sink, forcing us to manipulate our bodies as a contortionist would. Crawling on our knees, duck walking, slithering forward on our bellies replaced our normal movement mode of walking upright. I even tried rolling sideways, when getting through a passageway which was broad but had a low ceiling. It was certainly efficient and rendered less impact to my knees, not to say, very enjoyable!

We did 3 'loops' in the Corra-Lynn cave. After the entrance, we turned right and went down Bushwalkers Run into Bushwalkers Chamber. At Bushwalkers Chamber, we stopped for some rest, food and some individual exploring. We then headed back to where we started from, taking turns in leading the way out.

Leading the way is by no means easy. Not mentioning the immense pressure of being in charge of 8 other people, there are high stakes involved in leading people down the wrong track, since getting anywhere is tedious and time consuming considering the narrowness of the paths and the number of people following. Backtracking is simply not a pleasant thought. The similarity of landscape and the many options to choose from (each passageway has a few tunnels which each open up to even more tunnels) also compounds the difficulty of the task. I have utmost respect for our leaders who were experienced and led us in and out of the caves successfully!

The second loop we did was to and down Rope Crevasse. This entailed an exhilarating rope abseil down a narrow crack in the rocks. (Imagine 2 buildings so close to each other, you can only pass through sideways.) It was so narrow that many a times we could not look down to see where we could place our legs, and had to depend on feeling and the directions given from the team mates below. It also involved a leap of faith at the very end, when we still could not look down, but the rock wall had ended. Rope Crevasse was my favourite loop of the day. We all completed it successfully and I felt a sense of accomplishment doing it.



REBIRTHING AT CORRA LYNN

Following that, we went back to where we started from (again, taking turns in leading) and then on to Grand Central. From Grand Central, we made our way to Beard Squeeze. Beard Squeeze was... a real squeeze, as its name suggests! At one point, instructions were passed down to go 'right arm forward and left arm behind' when on our bellies, so as to be able to fit through the tight gap. I am fortunate enough to be on the small side, and hence had an easier time with this loop!

It was hilarious how getting through the squeeze was compared to the process of 'birthing' and we each welcomed each other into the 'new world' once we were through. A huge part of the caving experience was the companionship. The concern, support and witty comments made by the fellow cavers made the sweat on my face, dirt in my nails and bruises on my knees caps so insignificant compared to the overall enjoy-ability of the activity.

We had a short rest after Beard Squeeze, and headed back through Beard Squeeze again (rebirth?) and back to Grand Central. From there we exited the caves and ended our time underground.

Altogether we spend 4.5 hours underground, exiting at approximately 3pm. After a quick clean up of helmets and lights and a change of clothes, we were on the way again and back at Gepps Cross by 6pm, with a short stop at the BP station at Port Wakefield. Petrol cost was \$24 per passenger.

This was certainly a memorable experience (especially happening 3 days after my 21st Birthday! Thanks for the well wishes!) I have a feeling I will be back for more caving adventures since I loved my first time so much!

CLUB NEWS

Facebook

It was proposed at the AGM to have a Facebook account set up for our club. This would NOT have any photos of club people on it, and it was pointed out that providing links on the Facebook page (such as to our website) is the safest way to set things up. [After the AGM there was much subsequent discussion about this, leading to a test page being set up by Thomas].

Newsletter distribution: limited to financial members of the club and those organizations we exchange newsletters with or have cave related management dealings with and Flinders Uni Library.

Gear hire fees: A flat gear hire fee is to be re-introduced for all caving trips. The details will be sent out as part of the organization of each specific trip.

FUSSI electronic correspondence will be conducted using the FUSSE email address and not on members' work or private email addresses.

The May meeting with Trevor Arnold from the SES was a night of great fun and learning about useful cave rescue stretchers. Demonstrations of the Troll stretcher proved its suitability for use in cave rescue situations. For the person lying on it, you will feel every rock underneath. Importantly, we have now a good idea of what the SES has, so we can tell them which stretcher would be of the most use in what cave rescue situation. (Con't p.18.)

FUSSI TASMANIAN BAKERY TOUR

Heiko Maurer

Day 1. Saturday 29th Jan.

Darkness engulfed the house, threatening chaos to the pre-packaging of the night before. On the morning further mysterious objects were inserted into minute spaces of the car, followed by four sleepy Mavis-like beings. At 7.10 AM the Red Creek Road gravel proved difficult, but little did we know of the terrors that lurked ahead. It was, after all, a Tassi caving trip ...

Terror number one: an appallingly leisurely drive allowed us time to explore the Ackland St cakeshops. Surrounded on all sides by the Melbourne proletariat we hid in terror in "The Ackland Cake Shop" where we were forced to blend in with the anonymous crowd and ordered the first of what was to become a signature ordeal of the trip: trial by coffee and cake.

Terror number two: Barely able to waddle out of the bakeshop and battling the increased force of gravity, Thomas heroically drove us to Station Pier, where, having passed muster by the state security apparatus, we found our tiny prison cell (reserved for only the most desperately stingy cheapskates) for the night on the eerily named 'Spirit of Tasmania' which sailed smoothly over the terrifying abyss that is the oil-rich Bass Strait. Upon the command of a disembodied voice, we sought sustenance from the mysterious 'Buffet', only to hear the unspeakable: 'The oven's not working'.

Day 2. Arrival and Ghengis

After a pleasantly smooth night the hidden zombie voice raised us from our righteous slumbers at 5am (that's right people, Five! - an ugly and ominous precedent) for the so-called disembarkation (or 'early' (pun intended) parole for 'good' behaviour), where the failure (or lateness) of the Tassi raspberry crop foiled our planned breakfast menu on arrival in funland. We settled for breakfast at ETC cafe just outside Devonport to calm our shattered nerves. Thus somewhat lulled into a false sense of security, we then braved the portal to the hell-hole known as a 'supermarket' in Deloraine. Chastened by our ordeal and some 280 dollars poorer, we struck out for the delights of the NCC hut at Marakoopa. Our accommodation at Possum Palace (aka the caver's hut) was meet with unbridled delight at the sight of mattresses, warm fire, freshly manicured lawns and the outdoor bath. Unfortunately anxiety rose, forcing a bottom lip to tremble at the lack of gin and tonics and pappadams. But we digress.

Ghengis Cave awaited (obviously, since the weather was warm and sunny). Our photographic disorganisation, a brief mix-up with cave location (now de-finitely GPS'd), keys, 'lubricant' and clearing cut wood that had materialised on the track, allowed us to sort out which button to press to get flash lights working in time with shutter buttons on this terrifying 'Digit Al Camera' thingy. An ominously pleasant (surely this was a trick!) 2 hours was spent scrambling into and wandering about what is essentially a well decorated (aragonite crystals), sloping single chamber. It also



In SA they'd kill for such wooden abundance

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proved useful to sort gear, but on exit there was the dilemma of whether to leave the farmers' gate locked or unlocked: we decided that the golden rule was "Leave it as you find it". Same



Argonite Crystals in Genghis Khan

with the NPWS gate. All done and dusted by 7:30, and back to the hut, 'solar shower' (ie a wine bladder left in full sun on a black plastic box lid, had marginally warmer water than the creek did) and a carbohydrate-loading dinner. Definitely a non-epic day.

Day 3. Croesus Cave

Wetsuits? Prospects for a warm day of caving just plummeted as we viewed the leaden skies. After a morning coffee at the Marakooa Cafe 'Just-Up-The-Road' at 9am we were at the designated car park by the Mersey bridge by 10:45, whereupon we inflated the "Good Ship

Coorong" using the car pump and carried it to the cave entrance (an 'unusual' sight for any cars on the road - helmeted and wetsuited people carrying a boat through the Tassie wilderness, AWAY from the Mersey river).

We headed inland from the seventh (ie. last) guidepost, found the creek and followed the track up the hill to the cave. After a return trip to the car to collect the gate keys (kinda critical), we entered the cave where the stream flowed out and we got wet immediately. But it was worth it - the stream passage was beautiful! Carrying the ship upstream proved cumbersome but easy and we used it around the Masterlock, but left it at the rocky scramble before the Golden Staircase, where we actually needed it! Not your usual SA cave.



Captain Thomas & his motley Crüe

Having decent caving lights allowed us to see the upper, well-decorated parts of the cave: one day we'll get to see them up close. Platypus droppings were in evidence, though not their originators. We decided that we and gear were well and truly sorted (really?!) so we skipped Lynd's cave, returned home, where Ric and Janine had joined us in their camper van after their trip to the 'Walls of Jerusalem' National Park, and prepared for the next day. Much light banter and sage advice was exchanged.

Day 4. Kubla Khan Cave.

An epic day! We rose early, and, having sorted out locations on day 2, (relatively) quickly made our way to the top entrance while Ric and Janine rigged the bottom exit. We trigged up while battling a vicious (laughable according to Janine) onslaught of leeches. By 8:30, and with Janine leading (scared of Leeches are we?) we slowly abseiled into the void and assembled in

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the Waiting Room. First stop the Opium Den. We spent far too much time there taking innumerable pictures of the almost un-photographable aragonite crystals, meaning we had reduced time to admire the delights of the Pleasure Dome and river Alph.



The Intrepid Mainlanders –
dressed to thrill!

Eventually we continued. The cave was more challenging than I remembered - that just meant it wasn't as easy a stroll as imagined. The Khyber Pass needs strong soles on the boots, and I bypassed the went squeeze up into Cairn Hall going around a stal on the right hand wall.

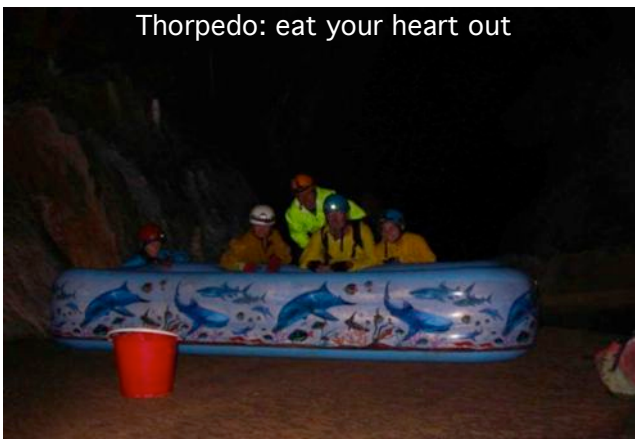
Others found a short part of the Stalagmite Shuffle used to avoid the last whirlpool in the River Alph challenging. Despite having done them all before, the abseil (rather than climb down) into Sally's Folly was a welcome safety feature. But we're getting ahead of the story.

After the Khyber Pass crack was passed we did much photographing in the Forbidden City and the Khan's Army, then did a few laps of the near-Olympic sized pool. Ric, Janine, Thomas and Bronya had a short side trip into the Silk Shop while Clare experimented with her camera and, when they returned at about 2, we all had lunch.

Onward and upward (again more than just the imagined stroll) into the Khan chamber. Ric had brought his fire stick and its penetrating light beam meant that we could really appreciate the size of the Khan Chamber (and Cairn Hall). Clare's 450 lumen Scurion did give the firestick a run for its money. Bright lights are GOOD! (unless you get blinded by it). After much admiration for the sheer size of them (and a quick side trip to The Begum) we tackled Sally's Folly.



Opium Den Pendulum



Thorpedo: eat your heart out

We found it full of water, something not previously seen, and wetting (pun intended) the appetite for the Pleasure Dome, making for some serious boot soaking and scrambling around the edges to keep dry-ish. While Ric provided expert guidance, the odd curse-splash was heard. Mud was also more of an issue that on previous visits.

And so we came to Cairn Hall, finding it surprisingly mist-free for good viewing (using Rick's afore-mentioned firestick). The abseil over the flowstone, after Janine had once again

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pioneered the way, was also more of a struggle trying to keep right (but not too far right), but the grippy flowstone helped and it was all fine. Thence onto the Pleasure Dome.



Rim pools in the Pleasure Dome

By now it was 7pm when we detoggled and Ric was urging us a speedy sight-seeing. A couple of lights had used up their batteries (on the philosophy that one might as well shed as much light as possible, ie, high beam, since you want to see as much as possible and batteries are light and cheap), so new battery packs were fitted. The 'Dome' did not disappoint, but only the far right side was flowing - it seems a recent decent downpour, rather than a long wet season, switches the Pleasure Dome's fountain fully on. Thus lay ahead the serious part of the river Alph.

Ric again was our expert guide showing us how to (mostly not) find the deep holes in the riverbed. The stalactite Shuffle detour above the plunge Pool was mostly easily passed, though by this stage we were getting tired and cold. Ditto for the shimmy up to the gate, which was made easier by Janine's handline. And only the exit to negotiate.

This was a reasonably awkward prussik up a muddy ~20m 85 degree slope with the take-off point trashed by the log that had fallen the year before. This left you perched uncomfortably on a muddy slope, hindering getting the gear on and slowing our exit. It just took a small while and Ric acting as rear gunner was out after last light: almost 9 pm.



A pleasurable day's Tassie caving epic.

Lesson: Tasmanian caves are second to none.

Gear scrubbing effort number one!

Day 5. Washing Day and Hobart.

No gain without pain might be the Tassie cavers motto. Or more accurately, no caving without cleaning the gear afterwards. So, after a leisurely breakfast of pancakes cooked by Bronya and

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farewelling Ric & Janine, we carted crates of sodden, muddy 'stuff' to the creek at the back of the hut and cleaned it all up to 'near' new condition in its icy waters. We then re-assembled the contents of the car (no mean feat - see day 1) to the musical accompaniment of light 'Tassie sunshine' or drizzle as it is known on the mainland (or 'the monsoon' in South Oz).

The hut was restored to good order. And before we knew it (well 5pm) we were on our way. Alas, the Longford bakery was well shut, so on to Hobart and Guy and Karen's place, for a wash, conversation, a fine feast with Thomas taking 'pot luck' with the custard, and a fiendishly comfy bed to keep the past nightmares away. Thomas shared his bed with George the dog.



Heiko descending into Midnight Hole

Day 6. A lay day.

Our cave gear might have been spick and span (-ish), but the rest of the 'stuff' was decidedly not suitable for description in a family-friendly publication such as this. Suffice to say that it was a case of braving the laundrette and we managed not to lose any socks. A signature achievement. We also met up with two recidivist Adelaide burgers, Rob and Ivan to plan the next day, gain local knowledge and plot for the Mt Field field trip. A sunny pleasant caffe latte sort of day (for some), with another feast at Guy & Karen's.

Day 7. Midnight Hole.

All up and on the road by 7.45 AM to Lune River for a trip into Midnight Hole as a bounce trip. Obviously via the Dover Bakery. This time we were joined by the aforementioned Ivan, whose main aim was to make sure we added more mud to our modest collection. So up we trekked to the quarry and then uphill to where the cave might be.

Alas, storms had ripped through the area since last we visited and it was really only Ivan's local knowledge that allowed him to say, just at the point of 'This is bloody useless', "Look over there". Where we found a large tree had newly fallen right at the cave entrance so a bit of pick up sticks was played until we had cleared our way in. (Really needs a chain saw to 'do deals' with other largish bits).



Happiness is hauling up 110m of rope!

Ivan rigged, entering at 11:15 and Heiko and Thomas followed up with various bags of rope and assorted bits of metal. Bronya and Clare cruised along at their own photographic leisure.

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All went smoothly enough and the party had a go at Matchbox Squeeze by 2pm while Heiko made an early start for the exit. However the lip at the first 49m pitch caused some rather uncouth utterances, even more so when Ivan came up and negotiated the pitch head with unbelievable ease! Busterd!! Still there were 6 more pitches to negotiate and it took a fair effort. Out of the cave by 6pm and back at the Dover Woodfired Pizza place for drinks and desert by 8. 50pm. The trip was really a practice run for Mini Martin, making sure all the gear hauling, prussiking, and associated cursing was sorted out. Oh, yeah, there was the need to make sure we could all ascend 165 metres and pass re-belays etc. An easy day.

Day 8. Lumberjack Day.

While some people who shall suffer in guilty silence henceforth, enjoyed the festival atmosphere of the Salamanca markets on a warm and sunny Hobart morning, shopping for supplies (mainly extraordinarily expensive punnets of raspberries) the more responsible members of the team set about restoring the gear to near-used condition with sundry technical aids (that is, Guy's high-pressure water cleaner) and elbow grease. The more arboreally inclined gave Guy a hand with pruning and mulching, while those taken with *wanderlust* walked to the nearby waterfall. The day ended on a high with a surprise chocolate cake cooked by Karen and the girls to celebrate Bronya's Birthday. Yummo.

Day 9. Mt Field

Left at 10am to drive to Mt Field National park. A pleasant day but with clouds hanging over the high country. Stopped at Possum Shed, Westerway, for coffee and cakes after disappointment of closed raspberry farm. Cakes made up for it. Onto Mt Field National Park office to pick up key thence to the Government huts (Fagus) where we unpacked under ominously grey skies. Decided to case the joint by walking to and around Lake Dobson. Pleasant, few people, chilly, damp. Settled in for night.



Fussi Members
contemplate dinner!

Day 10. Mt Field

Well rested, fed and warmed we braved the wind, drizzle and cold at 10 and set off for a walk past Lake Dobson, Twilight Tarn and return via Tarn Shelf. Well, it was merely damp in the sheltered parts, but blowing gales of ice crystals (by SA standards.) - Probably good picnic weather as far as the locals (although there were none - almost none, two actually - evident) were concerned. The gail made for an adventurous crossing of some of the exposed parts, with the occasional involuntary detour, (being tossed about by the wind), off the otherwise good tracks. Little mud seen, but enjoyed some fine views, when the clouds pretended to lift. Quite pleasant, in a freezing, walking-at-a-slant sort of way, making the shelter of the huts welcome when we arrived back 'home' by 6pm. There Ivan and Rob had prepared an ambush of wine and cakes which were consumed with much joy.

Day 11. Epic preparation

Departed our lovely warm cabin at 9:30 and drove down to the Park Offices to return keys. Robert&Ivan sought a walk in the sunshine while we settled for a walk to Russell Falls. More cakes for lunch at the Possum Shed cafe and thence to Hobart where we picked up Guy & Karen's ute (for later car swap on the Picton) and drove down to our final Taswegian accommodation, Smugglers Rest cottages in Dover, arriving at 5pm.

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Day 12. Mini Martin

Met up with Ric, Janine & Ivan at the old Benders Quarry at 7am on a fine and sunny morning. After lugging 220m of rope and much else besides, mainly by willing pack-horse Thomas, Janine is first to start descending (and rigging) Mini Martin at 10am. All made it safely, even if some gymnastics were required, down the awesome 110m first pitch and we assembled by the river at 1pm.

Ric & Janine went off to survey while the rest of the party headed off up river to the Grand Fissure, resolving to meet again at 5pm for the prussic out. Only a few hundred meters on Clare lost her grip while negotiating a rock and fell 3 metres. The obvious injury was a badly cut left index finger and pain in right knee and left shoulder. Having inexplicably left the first aid kits at the re-assembly point we made an improvised wound dressing and made our way back to the stream at the bottom of Mini Martin. Ivan went looking for Ric&Janine after we had dis-infected and dressed Clare's wound half properly. Having re-assembled we decided to split into two parties because of Clare's injuries: Ivan, Janine & Thomas would prussic out and de-rig (carrying a lot of heavy gear), while Ric took Clare, Bronya and Heiko down river and out the valley entrance.



So off we went at about 5pm. Ric proved an excellent guide and up to the challenge of negotiating alternative routes through the rockpile to cater for Clare's injuries, but it proved slow going and difficult with Clare needing the occasional 'leg-up'. By 7:30 we had gained the daylight at the entrance and changed clothes. Clare went on ahead up the track, followed 5 minutes after by Bronya and then Ric & Heiko. Bronya was soon caught, but Clare maintained her head start. Since the day was dry and the track slippery in only a few places, we gained the top of the quarry by 8:30 and got to the quarry gates by torchlight, where Clare and Ivan had just taken off for Hobart hospital, via Dover. Driving through the gloom to our digs, we managed to avoid a horde of Zombies, lured by the prospect of feasting on fresh (if smelly) humanoids. Ric & Janine stayed in the cosy comfort of their camper. At Dover, we bade Ivan and a washed Clare a safe journey and went to bed. An epic day.

Clare and Ivan got to the Royal Hobart hospital by 11:30 and Clare had the finger wound washed and stitched with 3 stitches. The left shoulder and knee were diagnosed as severe bruising. The emergency doctor had studied at Flinders and was doing a residency at the RHH. She had Clare out by 1:30. The finger and shoulder took a few weeks to heal; the knee is awaiting surgery for a torn meniscus.

Lessons: Take your first-aid kit with you always; include steri-strips for treating serious cuts, as well as band-aids; Tasmanian Cavers are second to none.

Day 12. Picton. (Ed's note: although not really cave related it was part of the planned trip so this bit is included. It contains a few salient lessons).

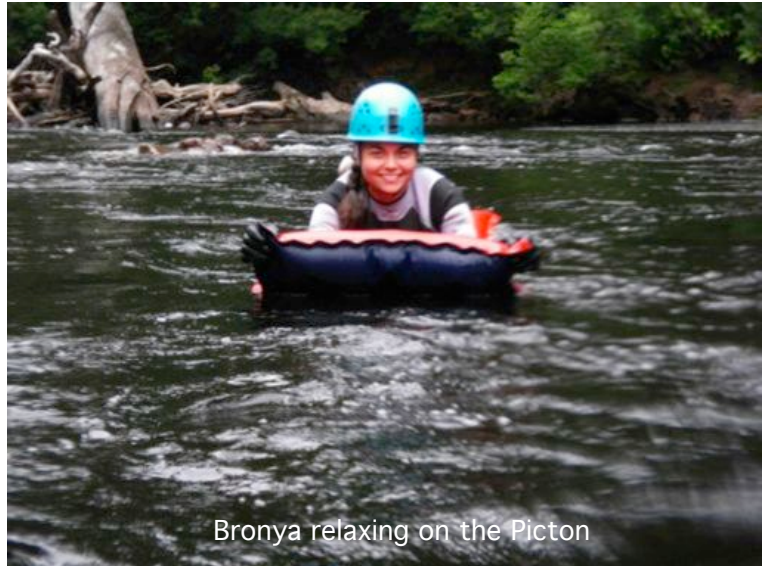
After a night's rest, ascertaining Clare was OK, the weather reasonable and getting good directions from Ivan, we opted to continue with our plans for a leisurely breakfast at the Dover

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bakery followed by a 2 hour float down the Picton and a Tahune Air Walk (time permitting). Despite some apprehension we easily found the right place, left the ute at the downstream bridge and drove to the second, upstream bridge with the road mostly following the river. In wet suits, high spirits and on lilos we hit the (cold) water at 12:45, under cloudy skies. It was hard to tell the river level, but it seemed about normal.

My main memory of it was the pain in constant paddling on the slow, deep sections of the river, and the varying rushes as you hit the rapids. We determined a gentle float was just the thing after the previous day's epic.

We soon hit the rapids, but water levels were such that the less featherweight members of the party were constantly rubbing their lilo bottoms on boulders, slowing progress. Of course, choosing not to paddle didn't speed things up neither. Still, it was delightful just floating through the scenery, despite the cold. On we went, slowly, slowly, getting colder and colder for nigh on three hours when we figured the second bridge should be just around the bend. Not doing much paddling at all meant little heat was generated by muscles and Heiko became quite cold. So we pulled over to the bank to re-warm him. Off with the cold wetsuit, on with the dry thermals, and energy foods and an hour of exercises to re-warm. In the meantime Thomas went off downstream to look for the end-point we all believed imminent or for a short bush-bash to the road. Neither was even remotely feasible and Thomas was somewhat worse for wear when he returned after the hour. There was nothing for it but to continue on the river. By now it was raining lightly and almost immediately Heiko's lilo got an irreparable tear in it and sank faster than a brick.



Bronya relaxing on the Picton

Well, the rain didn't eventuate, we struggled safely to the riverbank and walked around the rapids and (thank you Clare!) we had taken a spare lilo with us. So on (and on and on) we went, paddling furiously (not least to keep warm) and with Bronya & Thomas helping Heiko for another two hours until, in the fading light and with mist settling atmospherically on the river, our destination hove into view; and there was much rejoicing. By 8:30 we had driven back into mobile phone coverage and rang to say we were alive. The crew in Hobart, were just about to leave and mount a rescue operation. A definite Epic day!

Lessons: Start early, taking along spare energy food and spare dry, warm clothes and spare lilo was invaluable; use a map and/or GPS to keep an accurate location at all times; bring along a spare lilo for each participant; to cover the distance we travelled you need to be paddling from the beginning.

Day 14 Wash and dry day.

Over a breakfast cuppa at Dover we debated our options. We still had a lot of wet and dirty gear, spare car and Clare missing-in-action. Plus we had a lot of road to cover the next day and needed all the help we could get doing the washing. We'd been given directions to a good washing spot in a fresh-water creek in Longley, so after we returned the ute (Bronya again doing the driving: we had to prise her hands off the steering wheel because she had fallen in

FUSSI TASMANIAN BAKERY TOUR

love with it!), we picked up a bruised and bandaged Clare. We then parked ourselves by the creek and got into yet more washing, scrubbing and cleaning. Then took the clean booty to our digs to lay it all out to dry as best we could and packed as much as we could. Thank you to our hosts for agreeing to it.



Day 15. NCC BBQ and ferry home. Another crack-of-dawn start. We had a 'hot date' near Ulverstone at the Wools-Cobb home for an NCC BBQ at 2pm. So breakfast, yet again pack the car in the pale early morning light and off by 7:30. And we bade farewell to the charms of our last sleep in Tasmania at Smugglers Rest cottages. Once again, we had the road to ourselves and quickly reached Hobart, where we picked up a nic-nac or two in the Salamanca markets and headed for Launceston. This time Longford Bakery was open and we indulged for the last time in our Tasmanian coffee and cake ritual. Our GPS led us straight to the NCC BBQ, where much fabulous food, wine, conversation and warm sunshine made for a most delightful finale. We barely made it back to the Devonport ferry in time for the evening departure and peaceful cruise back to the north island.

Lesson: Tasmanian hospitality is second to none!

Day 16. Drive home.



Once again, a disembodied voice woke us from our slumbers before the crack of dawn and we had cleared the dock area by 7am and were on our way. Desperate for coffee, we managed to find a cafe just opening up near Bacchus Marsh in time for us to partake of an emergency infusion. We were all 'tired and shagged-out' after our long adventure, and Thomas was the only one to keep his eyes open long enough to give a passable impression of being awake, helped by coffee in Great Western and Keith. So, home in good time by 7pm(?) and a deserved long rest.

A truly Excellent Adventure.

Final Scoreline:

Bakeries & Cafés United: 12. Caves: 6

FUSSI TASMANIAN BAKERY TOUR

Goal Scorers for B&CU were:

Dover(3), Possum(2), and singles to: Ackland, ETC, Marakoopa, Longfords, Baccus Marsh, Great Western and Keith.

SpiritOfTasmania was twice ruled 'off-side' and a free-kick was awarded after the whistle to Woodfired/Pizza Dover.

Goal scorers for Caves were: Ghengis, Croesus, Kubla, Midnight-Hole, Mini Martin and Exit. Goals for Mt Field and Picton were disallowed.

Raspberry Patch ruled unfit to play for B&CU; Clare injured slipping due to a late tackle during time-on. Best players for B&CU: Possum (MVP), ETC, Keith, Dover. Best players for Caves: Kubla (MVP), Mini Martin, Croesus, any and all the rest.

Total cost to stage the match: \$2000 (of which \$400 went to B&CU).

A special thank you to the coaches: Ric, Janine & Ivan, and NCC for use of their 'stadium' and after-match feasting.

The rematch is in December.

Other important information.

Over the course of two weeks we washed approximately 2km of rope. Each harness, cows tails, SRT gear etc at least 3 times, as well as sundry bags, helmets, tapes, and hardware. We packed and repacked the car some 10 times. This must be some new definition of holiday we were previously unaware of!

RIGGING DETAILS

Kubla Khan: Ropes needed: 2 X 50 metres. A couple of 5 to 8 metre hand lines: Abseiling gear and SRT gear.

Pitch details: On all pitches use double rope or cordelette for pull down. Or re-rig into double rope for the last person down.

Top Entrance pitch. 15 metres: Rig from gate.

Second pitch. 15 metres: On the left hand side wall or floor, can't remember.

Third Pitch. 10 metres: rig from double tape and maillon around a large rock on the floor. Make sure you can pull down the rope before the last person abseils down. Be sure to follow the approved route through this section.

Handline comes in handy for the descent into and out of the silk shop area and for the climb to the Forbidden City.

Sally's Folly: Abseil from 2 P hangers placed in the rift near the previously used choke stone.

Fourth Pitch: The Flowstone wall abseil, anchor onto a stal in the floor. The rope likes to swing out to the left when on the abseil so make sure you stay to the right or you will end up landing in the freezing water.

Bottom Entrance. 30 metres. Rig before entering the cave if you are doing a through trip from the Top entrance. Rig from 2 P hangers as a "Y hang" on the pitch rebelay, just above the tree usually used: allows 2 climbers on the same rope.

FUSSI TASMANIAN BAKERY TOUR

Hand line from gate to River Alph. Rig before entering cave.

No permit is required for Midnight Hole. However, at the car park at the beginning of the walk into the cave there is an intentions book for walkers and cavers. Fill it in no matter what!

Midnight Hole. IB11. Rigging details:

There's two stainless steel bolts on each pitch. The rope must be threaded through **both bolts**. Two karabiners for each pitch.

Pitch lengths:

Entrance pitch: 21metres

Second pitch: 11m

Third pitch: 39 metres.

Fourth pitch: 8 metres.

Fifth pitch 34 metres.

Sixth pitch is around 50 metres.

The bolts in Midnight Hole have been replaced so the rigging length details in Bunton. S. & Eberhard. R., *Vertical Caves of Tasmania*. are **not** correct, as the new bolts are positioned differently. This is pertinent for the last pitch which has various stated pitch lengths. Some say it is 50m and some say 60m.

Mini Martin. Ida Bay

Rig from bloody great tree at entrance to first bolt which is about 10m after the lip. Total rope length needed for this pitch is 120m. Back up first rebelay with a tape around a flake just above it. Second and third pitches 35 m each. The first 35m pitch must be backed up to the two eye-bolts at the bottom of the 110 m pitch. All rebelayes are passed as hanging rebelayes. Two karabiners needed per rebelay.

STRETCHER DEMONSTRATION

At right: combination of a Troll stretcher and a Ferno Dyna. (Model 125). The latter is used for stabilising spinal injuries. As a combination it works really well. The Troll is a light weight piece of kit, easy to bring into a cave. Similarly with the Ferno. Cost for the set up is around, \$1400.00

We thank Trevor Arnold from the SES for his time presenting this demonstration.



MT REMARKABLE BLOW HOLE

Clare Buswell

Some reprobate, who shall remain nameless, mentioned rigging practice post the Mini Martin trip of February, so a trip to the Blowhole was organised as part of a run up to the Bunkers and cave exploration. After a bit of time spent locating the cave and mention being made of a certain type of snake that only resides in this area, and is of course more poisonous than any other snake in the country, we started the rigging process.

Problems here include, a lack of good anchors outside of the cave, sharp rock, and long distances to backup to something half reasonable. So a suitable rock was located, backed up by a miserable tree for a hand line, with the real rigging of the cave starting inside at the first two bolts.

Rigging notes mentioned: 2 rebelay, and a re-direction, and the need for 50m rope. What it does not mention was the fact that the rock is crap and likes to come with you as you descend, so anybody on the pitch cops it. As this was Thomas' first time in rigging such a setup, time and lots of discussion was the order of the day. Between the three of us, we quickly set up the entrance hand line, and then Thomas and Clare disappeared into the earth so as to deal with the rest of it. Heiko (sensible lad), decided to have a look around for other cave possibilities and went for a walk.



In the meantime, Thomas reported that there was a dead snake half way down the first climb down at the entrance. The question "Is it really dead" was asked. "Well, it seems to be pulsating, or else something is either eating it or it is not quite done in. It smells though and the fly population is multiplying", came the reply. Mmm. We continued bravely on. Locating the first two bolts, Thomas reached out over the pitch head and tied in the necessary bits of thread on which we place our lives. All was good except for the flies.

Next there came a mix-up, and rather than tying the redirection as such, it was tied as a rebelay then the rebelay below that was tied as the redirection. Clare came down and retied the mistakenly tied redirection as a rebelay and then all the "re" stuff sort of made some sense. Well it did to us, if it not to anyone else.

As there is not much to do at the bottom of this hole, apart from a climb down to a small lake or in this case a damp bit of soil, we decided to retreat, beating off the flies that followed our lights. Honestly I have never caved with so many flies!

Trip number two, May 21.

MT REMARKABLE BLOW HOLE

Once again Heiko, being a sensible lad went for a walk and it was the Clare and Thomas show again. This time we would get it correct and we did. (No snake, except a skeletonised one), rope tied into the thread at the half way mark on the entrance pitch, then rebelay, the 100mm redirection, then final rebelay. The rest was rock fall, and a slightly too short a loop in the last rebelay. Curses! We could not have more than one person on the rope at a time. This slows up the process considerably, and makes for small trip numbers. But is the safest way of doing this one cave.

Great fun, and practice. When is the next effort? Answer: Wooltana Cave and its biscuit rock that really loves to crumble on all within range.

WHAT IS ON

Rock climbing in the Gym	19 th June.	Edwina co-ordinating
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Flinders. Cave exploration	June 10 th - 12 th	Clare co-ordinating
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Uni Exams Period. 20-30 June

Corra-Lynn trip:	Sun. July 3 rd	Michael co-ordinating
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Flinders Uni Semester Break July 2nd – 25th July.

Naracoorte	23/24 th July	Contact: Clare.
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General Meeting	28 th July	Which rock bands really matter. Guest speaker. Rm: TBA
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Caves Ridge	12/14 th Aug	Contact: Alison
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General Meeting	25 th Aug.	Bats and Batman! Guest Speaker
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Corra Lynn	28 th Aug	Contact Michael for organisation
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Flinders Uni Mid Semester Break 10th Sept – 3rd Oct.

Nullarbor	Sept 17 th to Oct 2 nd	Contact Michael
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General Meeting	27 th Oct	Who's bone is that? Guest Speaker
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Southern Flinders	Oct 15/16 th	Bat Counting and Track Marking
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Tasi	Dec 2-4 th	Trip is full
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End of year get together	11 th Dec	Venue to be announced.
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