

NSG's
NEWSLETTER
CAVERNDISH

President: **Andrew** Smith. 5481490 or 0211784160

Secretary: **Bronwyn** Mountford. 5484363

Treasurer: **Bronwyn** Mountford. 5484363

Hut: **Oz** Patterson. 5477395

Trip list: **Oz** Patterson. 5477395

Gear: **Leo** Viersma. 5441355

Archives: **Oz** Patterson. 5477395

Library: **Jane** Furkert 5457457

Newsletter: **Andrew** Smith. 5481490

livelife@paradise.net.nz

Postal: 1/87 Atawhai drive
Nelson.

MAY 06

Hi All

Yes been a while and it appears that you still want a Caverndish SO....

Some Stories from below

Summit Tomo

10th December 2005

Participants, Andrew, Tony, Brian, Aaron, Stephen, Jay, and Dawn.

Chink, chink, chink.....(Silence).....BOOM!

A rock was cast down the darkened hole of the first pitch, telling us it's a long way down to the floor below.

7 cavers had just made their way 80 metres down a rocky scree, stopping to examine the few remains of the unfortunate Moa that met his demise, many moons ago, in Summit Tomo.

Rigging is set up as we wait, checked and double-checked before Andrew and Tony descend to set a rebelay a few metres down the 34 metre pitch. One by one we abseil down.

Meeting my first ever rebelay was a challenge, one that took careful thought. The narrow passage at this point was of help to crossover. Tony seated on a ledge close-by with words of support was very encouraging. Once accomplished the decent from here was exhilarating. A free abseil down.

The passage opened up to show the enormity of the cavern below. Wide open space all around, the ceiling disappeared out of view.

Waiting time for everyone to abseil down gave time to explore, finding more holes leading down and down. We made our way through the labyrinth of passages 'til eventually the sound of water met our ears and soon to fill my boots.

A traverse along a ledge with a hand line found me bridging a dark crevice. Not wanting to know how deep made it an easy task. (26 metres)

More rigging set up to take us through a triple pitch into the water below.

We bridged our way across most of the waterways through marble channels, amazed at the colours, formation and contours of this hard element.

A challenge had been set to pass 3 pools without getting wet feet. Bridging these pools was near impossible for someone under 5ft8. Andrew managed to pass over at a full body stretch while I managed to fall into all three of them, getting soaked to the thighs.

Squelch! Squelch! Squelch! We continued on, Andrew the only dry footed one.

Time we stopped to replenish the energy levels. Hours had flown by, almost 6 hours, felt like 3. After a break we abandoned our harnesses and continued on to "Boots Off", where our journey forth came to an end.

Oblivious to our cold wet feet and overcome with awe at the formations, we reached Boots Off. Calcite crystal pools resembled white coral and sea anemones. A passage, head height, to the right in Boots Off revealed an absolutely stunning sight. A twinkling jewelled carpet leading off into the distance. A no-go zone of beauty to be admired from our viewing place and so now time to turn around and make our way back to the surface. Splitting into two groups we made our way back, ascending and derigging as we went. Knowing we were behind schedule we let the lead make their way ahead to make contacts of our progress and safety to others above ground.

11:30pm the last caver exited Summit Tomo almost 12 hours after our journey began.

Wet, cold and wanting a nice hot cup of tea, it was back to Dawn's, an awesome day caving behind us.

By **Dawn Wood**.

West Coast Caving – September 2005

Jane Furkert spent two weeks on the Coast, and although "it rained all the time and the sandflies were as big as sparrows", she did several brilliant walks, kayaked the Buller River and Lake Rotoroa, and did a lot of caving.

Fellow cavers were Russell Bromley, Dawn Mazzagetti and Thomas Whittaker.
The caves visited were:

Hollywood.

An evening expedition, great as the cave is warm and dry. Twisting along the rift for about half an hour, then crawling through a muddy passage to pop out in formation – wow! Viewed the formations, and also had fun exploring the streamways, which are big enough to move at speed - lots of ground covered!

Eggers Cave, inland from Inangahua.

A cave not known to many cavers but has seen a lot of traffic from locals. It was named for Eggers cave after the bulldozer driver who drove over it when they were milling beech trees above. The area is now totally regenerated. It is a great fun cave, following one main stream passage, with some passages off the sides, but nothing to get lost in. There are several places where tomos open to the surface; and tree roots hang down like shoelaces, the whole cave is not far below the surface. The streambed at the upper end is very slippery - we had no choice but to use it as a slide on the way back down!

Te Ana Puta, off the Point Elizabeth walkway, Greymouth

We went in the only walk-in entrance (Emptee Hole); all the others are abseils. It has an impressive sea cave entrance, crossing waist-deep lakes to get there I followed the noise to the sea cave - it's awesome and powerful!

I lay high up on a sandy rock platform in the centre and watched the waves reverberating around. The sea was booming; every fifth wave or so would fill the entrance so it went completely dark for a moment, then the sun poured in again. Crash and boom! Once I was in the next chamber, the air pressure waves blew carbide out.

Abyssinia, Bullock Creek Road,

A reasonably challenging bush walk to the entrance, we only explored a small part of this huge system. Getting to the first area of formation, we stepped over a narrow but extremely deep rift – in the wet, this rift pumps water upward! Along the smooth-floored passage into a small upwards squeeze, opens into a rift passage and leads to the 'Boots Off' formation area, and a huge chocolate-caramel coloured waterfall. Back to the initial junction room - tight crawls down lead to lots more passage. Dawn and I reached these passages by going several levels higher, then climbing steeply down to the guys. A big sandy floor area, steep and crumbly slopes on the left. Taped formation ahead, jump down to a river passage, then crawl to a chocolate mud area, and a handline going up a very slippery slope - the way on for a through trip.

Wazpretti, also up Bullock Creek Road

This took us a while to find - Russell and I climbed the cliffs in three or four different places, looking for this cave under a rock overhang. It's opposite the deepest part of the river, so naturally this was the last gully we tried!

A sandy crawl in, then parallel chambers of bedding plane breakdown, attractive caramel-coloured and white formation, and huge blocks of stone. The mud was very gluey!

Guillotine Cave, at Springs Junction.

An extremely well decorated cave, seldom visited, it's entrance pitch protecting it from visitors over the years.

Navigation is easy - follow the stream. Huge building-sized blocks suspended from the ceiling, with occasional draughts indicating small inlets high above. Often upper levels, all superbly decorated variety of colour and type - mainly flowstone and stals, the cave is still very wet and active.

By **Jane Furkert**

More stories to follow

but just in the mean time an important announcement.

Air Access

The Kahurangi National Park issue is being worked through with some positive results.

Oz has been in contact on a regular basis with DoC and has outlined our areas of concern.

The Management Plan is still two years away but with this early communication we are assured that Cavers will not be forgotten about.

Thanks to Oz for his efforts with this advocacy.

Nettlebed Trip

March 25th-27th, 2006

I think of you as I compare
Me to you down under there

I close my eyes.....

Pictures of you run through my head
Many pitches for you in Nettlebed

In my house as night-time falls
You have night fall wall to wall

Sitting by my kitchen light
You have carbide hope it's bright

My feet are cold bet yours are too
Add more socks that's what I do

I walk up passage as you do yours
Yours are many but no doors

My rooms are empty
Yours are plenty

You're pleased with the squeezes you can squeeze through
I'm pleased by the squeezes I get from you

We both have a well, well mines not my well
Neither is yours, it's Jacob's Well

But what the hell.....

Well.... So it seems, we're birds of same feather
Maybe that's why we flock together

You have 2 ducks, where I had but one
Here one day, then he was gone

Your 2 ducks are there to stay
Let's hope there's no water to get in the way

You venture on down, down, through deepest cave
Here in my town I think you're so brave

Three long days you journey through dark
It's really not a walk in the park

As you clamber on down to the Soft Rock Café
Hmmm a Café that has no latte

But instead a place
To rest your head

I rest my head in comfy bed
With thoughts of you in Nettlebed

Make your way through underground
Emerge from darkness safe and sound

By **Dawn Wood**

SAR purchases

NSG Cave SAR has just purchased the rescue gear as below.

- 2 X large Prusik minding pulleys
- 5 X small personal rescue pulleys
- 2 X rigging plates
- 5 X rope bags (assorted sizes)

These were all purchased at a good price from "Gear shop" and the hope is that we will receive a \$ for \$ grant.

Collin Daniels NZSS SAR co-ordinator is working on this one.

A letter to the Editor

Hi Andrew

Here's a story for the newsletter from Seb's Mum and Dad when they were here in NZ.

Debs

The article is below.

New Zealand 2006 caving.

Our introduction to caving, half way round the world came about because of our son Seb. Seb joined the Caving Club after moving to New Zealand from Britain. On our visit this February we were invited to go with the club to see a few caves as it was a family orientated weekend. The age gap was just under 70 years between baby Liam and Seb's Dad. We felt very excited to be asked and at the same time a bit apprehensive as we hoped we wouldn't let the side down if we found a situation too difficult.

We set off from home at 8.15 am by car and arrived at a caving hut at the top of Takaka Hill. It is just off the main road, through a gate and up a track about a 200 yards. The hut nestles amongst the small hills and is a delightful place to stay with all the necessary facilities. We met Debs who is in charge of the club and Bran and his son Robert who had come with her in her VW camper van. They immediately put us at our ease and made us very welcome. So much so, we felt we could tackle anything.

After establishing ourselves and unpacking, we left in Debs' van with our lunch and tackle and went to visit our first cave, which was called Kairuru. We had overalls to put on which belonged to Seb, and helmets, which were borrowed from the club, along with the special lighting equipment, which we were shown how to use. It was a surprise to find a live flame on top of our heads, and a little disconcerting, but we were assured we wouldn't get blown up and once in the cave we saw how affective it was. Kairuru was a great little cave to start us off and we gradually gained in confidence, as we learnt the rules of caving and got accustomed to the gear. We then had lunch before going to the next cave which was called Hawk's. This was a larger one with a very steep opening concealed by foliage. There was a rope already there which helped us get down. There were then many boulders to scramble over and right at the bottom was a skeleton of a horse, which must have fallen in at some stage, poor thing. We also saw some spiders, and in this cave we saw our first few stalactites and stalagmites. Near the end of the cave there was a very long drop which is not at all obvious to those who don't know, and this just shows how dangerous the caves are unless you go with experienced cavers. Debs had me sitting near the edge where I could see down a little way, and when stones were thrown, there was a tense gap before we heard them drop to the bottom. At that moment, we felt very relieved to have experts looking after us. The walk to each of these caves was enjoyable as well, seeing different areas around the top of Takaka

Hill. So by the time we arrived back at the hut, we were feeling a little tired, but also confident that we had achieved new skills at the hands of our excellent teacher, Debs.

That night Bran and Robert, as well as ourselves, slept in tents as the hut was full on the Saturday night. Little did we realise that a very wild storm would hit us with strong winds and heavy rain which were relentless, and we were all so relieved the tents were still in one piece by the time morning came. We then enjoyed a hearty breakfast before leaving at 10am with other family members: baby Liam with parents Kev and Bronwyn, and Ken and son, Robert. This time we travelled down to the valley and along through Takaka to the foothills where there is a cave called Council. En route we picked up a key to unlock the cave's gate which had been recently fitted to safe guard it from vandals. When we arrived, Debs found that we had been given the wrong key. Not to be put off and much to our relief, she found a gap wide enough for us all to squeeze through! What fun that was, and from the photo you can see that Brian only just managed it. This particular cave took our breath away immediately. It is so beautiful with all sorts of different shaped stalactites and stalagmites and those, which meet in the middle, had become columns. The water droplets have made this cave into a wonderful cathedral of shapes and colours ranging from pinks through to pale browns. Every corner that we turned was another spectacular view. There were little side areas to explore as well, and one of the boys found a spider, which we photographed. Little Liam had his first cave exploring experience at the young age of 6 months. Have taken some good photos of the caves and our friends at home are very impressed.

We cannot wait for our next visit to New Zealand, and hope we may be invited again to explore more with Debs and all the lovely people who belong to the club in Nelson.

By **Mrs Head**

Some dates to note on your calendar are:

18th May 06 **NSG Meeting**.....Mike Brien's
10 Chelsea Ave
Richmond

20th May 06 **Pete Entwhistel's Party**.....
47 Marsden Rd
Stoke

21st May 06 "LIVE LIFE" **Tower rigged** from 9.30am till 1.00pm all welcome.
SRT/SAR Practice. Andrew
Ph 0211784160

27/28th May 06 **Intro to Caving**.....Oz
Ph 03)5477395

3/5th June 06 **Charleston**Alice Shanks

8th June 06 **SAR meeting**.....Dion's
36a Arrow st
Wakefield

15th June 06 **NSG Meeting**.....Leo's

24/25th June 06 **Mid winter Doo**.....Theme "MASK" or "Masquerade".

9th July 06 **Caving Takaka Hill**.....Trips co-ordinator

20th July **NSG AGM**.....Deb.'s and Oz's

Look for a new trip list soon.

See you in the Entrance,
Ed.

Andrew Smith
Live-Life Experiences
1/87 Atawhai Drive
Nelson
Free Ph 0800 LIVE LIFE
Land line 03) 5481490
Answer Ph 03) 5446642
Mobile: 021 17 84 160
Web: www.live-life.co.nz