



CHILLAGOE CAVING CLUB

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AUGUST 2012

NEWSLETTER

WWW.CHILLAGOECAVINGCLUB.ORG.AU

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A visit to Eisriesenwelt

Recently I visited the world’s largest ice cave situated near the town of Werfen in Austria. The cave’s name literally means ‘Giant Ice World’ and it is truly justified. As you walk through the cave there are massive formations of solid, blue and translucent ice all around you. These formations are always changing dependent on the wind, snow and rain.



Ice formation (internet sourced)

The entrance is actually near the top of the Hockkogel mountain in the Tennengebirge (Austrian Alps) and is at an elevation of 1641m. It can only be reached by walking from the tourist information centre for about 20 minutes to a cable car. The cable car whisks you up a section of the mountain that used to be another 90 minute slog and deposits you at the start of a walkway (another 20 minutes) leading to the cave entrance.



Cave entrance and walkway leading up to it (W. Weiss).

Once at the entrance you join the tour group and every fourth person is given a hand held carbide lamp. The cave is not electrically lit and this is all the illumination available, except when the guides burn magnesium tape to light up large areas. A word of warning – take care not to burn the warm and bulky clothing everyone is wearing to ward of the below zero temperatures inside.

Once the tour began the cold was soon forgotten however, as we walked through the first kilometre or so of the cave. Formations such as the Eiswall (Ice wall), the Odinsaal (Odin's Hall), Friggas Schleier (Friggas Veil) were just amazing. Much of the ice is a deep electric blue when lit up. Simply stunning.

The other reason for forgetting the cold were the 1000 steps that had to be negotiated on the tour (no exaggeration). A certain amount of fitness is a must for this cave.

Unfortunately no photos are allowed inside the cave, but the photo below is from a postcard sold there.



Climbing stairs in the cave (internet sourced)

A map of Eisriesenwelt will be left at the Clubhouse if members would like to have a look at it. The system is over 40km in length with an elevation range of over 300 metres.

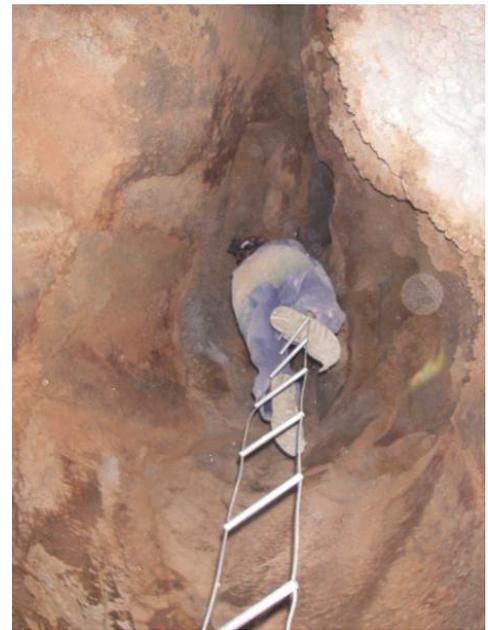
Due to a lack of time I was only able to do the tourist section of the cave, but it is still worth it if you ever get the chance! Next time I am aiming to tee up a proper trip to see the rest of the cave!

CH 543 explored

Recently Mike Tarburton discovered a small vertical entrance in the vicinity of the Beefeater extension on the Queenslander Tower. 'Luckily' for us he was unable to explore it at the time so it was explored on the 26th of August.

The cave entrance is vertical and very jagged, so it was decided to use ladders to explore it. The first pitch is approximately 8 metres down to a small ledge and a few boulders chocked into the slot. A smaller hole then leads to a second, freehanging, ladder pitch of about 10 metres.

This lands you at the bottom of the entrance shaft and from there it is another 4 metres via a ladder to the bottom of the cave itself.



Laddering into CH 543 (B Dane)

The cave develops into one large chamber of about 5 x 10 metres with a rubble slope at one end. A couple of smaller chambers (2 x 4) make up the cave's entirety. There are nice formations throughout the cave.



Swiftlet guano pile in CH 543 (B Dane)

At the far end of the main chamber a swiftlet colony was located. Approximately 40 nesting spots were counted (the swiftlets didn't sit still for us ☺) and a large guano pile on the floor is

evidence that the colony has been there for some time.

Unfortunately the survey equipment was forgotten, so a return trip will be needed to complete the exploration.

Insect Battle

On a recent trip into Castle Cave the following photo was snapped:-



Insect battle – green ants vs praying mantis (W Weiss)

At the time the photo was taken the praying mantis was in dire straits with ants latching on hard. Nature can be a tough place.

If anyone else has an unusual photo or story please don't hesitate to email it to the Club Secretary ☺.

Membership Renewal

The following information has been kept in the newsletter as a gentle reminder ;) .

Chillagoe Cavers are reminded to renew their membership for the 2012/2013 year ASAP.

The fee structure for membership remains unchanged for the 2012/2013 year.

- Single Members \$ 98.00
- Family \$182.50
- Student \$ 78.50
- Novice Members \$ 35.00
- Introductory Student \$ 30.00
- Inactive Life Members \$ 23.00
- Active Life Members \$ 68.00

- Club Members (non caving) \$ 30.00

The executive is considering including another category to the fee structure which will cater for introductory cavers trying caving for the weekend only. This may gather more revenue for the club on the long term.

Up and Coming Events:

September

Caving Club weekend 8th & 9th September

October

Caving Club weekend 13th & 14th October

November

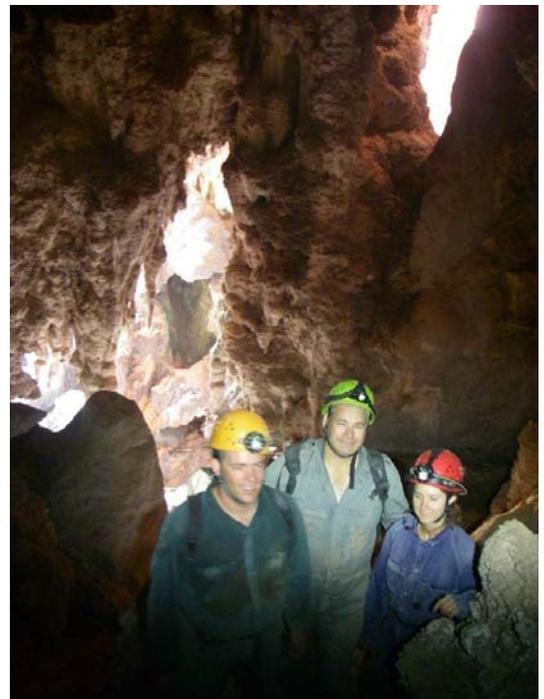
Caving Club weekend 10th & 11th November

December

Caving Club Christmas Party 1st and 2nd of December

Go Caving!

Winfried Weiss (Secretary)



Exploring the Queenslander Main Entrance Section

(A Cummins)