
JENOLAN - OCTOBER 2015

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PARTICIPANTS: Phil Maynard, Rod Obrien, Greg Ryan & Keir Vaughan-Taylor

Saturday

My dive plan was to dive through to Cerberus Squeeze from Twin Bridges and look for more plunge pools and air spaces along the way.

I began about 10:30am intending to locate a “plunge pool” on the left. There is already a left guide line that, tied off in the first of the plunge pools. Rod O’Brien had previously dived this pool finding an adjacent rounded room followed by more stream passage leading to a gravel crawl, ultimately emerging in the Pool of Cerberus room. Climbs in the aven above have been known since the time

Wiburud visited with Jack Edwards in November 1903 leaving his signature atop one of the climbs. These two early explorers did it with candles. Nevertheless our super LEDs and thermals and cavesuits allow us to do the next section.

We are lured to explore further because more pools and more rooms were partly visible from the Wiburud climb but located around a corner above a rift with a pitch down to a pool of serrated rocks piercing upward through the surface.

The under water section, downstream from Twin Bridges is spacious, smoothly sculpted by the caresses from a million years of water flow. The main drain enhances its beauty with a number of inexplicable features. Near the beginning of the dive on the right side is a substantial outline of a cave completely in-filled with alluvials.

Concentrating on the the roof areas an unexpected surface on the right side just off the line a short distance hosted a substantial aven.



Aven on right side of line
PHOTO CREDIT: Keir Vaughan-Taylor

Capturing a few quick photographs was handicapped by a cautious goal to not silt and not lose the guideline.

A later trip with two divers should allow someone to climb the aven. The position of this shaft is upstream from Guardian Angel ingress and perhaps under the electrical disgard shaft next to the tourist path.

Returning to the main line this time on the left another surface presented. This significant aven seems to be where the climb Plunge Pool climb should be. The trip to Cerberus Squeeze wouldn't be complete without making an examination of the collapse pit on the right just prior to the squeeze. This hole which continues as a mysterious feature especially the cause of its formation.

Is this caused by inflow or outflow? Scolloping would normally suggest whether water blew the sediment out or where it drained somewhere else into that hole in the bottom.

Scolloping does not provide a clue because the limestone, although solid, has a mottled, eaten away appearance. The plunge pools have a similar appearance as though etched away by some powerful acid. Maybe ancient hot water springs.

Through the hole passage descends steeply and although it gives a strong impression of a large tunnel it is largely silt filled and visibly becomes constricted, silt closing inwards the ceiling of the tunnel within two or three meters on the other side.

Because of this no-one has thoroughly really rummaged around in the next section. There is no other known passage on the Cerberus Pool side and the role of this significant hydrological passage is yet to be discovered.



*Hole continuation at the bottom of Cerberus Pit
PHOTO CREDIT: Keir Vaughan-Taylor*

Returning to Twin Bridges I met Rod and Phil to make our way to Cerberus Pool room and thereafter access the Plunge Pool Climbs.

Rigging proceeded quickly descending the first ladder bridging across to the next climb where a protective mat was used to cover an attractive section of flowstone.

A tape climb to the Wiburd/Edwards signature passage heralds a series of manoeuvres requiring a harness for a little rope work.

The passage is short with its exit looking down upon another plunge pool, presumably the one I had surfaced in earlier. Access round the rift above the plunge pool requires three belay points across to a thin vertical wall beyond which are two more plunge pools.



Edwards & Wiburds signature 1903
PHOTO CREDIT: Keir Vaughan-Taylor



Second last plunge pool
PHOTO CREDIT: Keir Vaughan-Taylor

Phil and I abseiled down to the last pool where there is not a lot of room. There is a further easily climbed barrier wall and one last pool than must connect underwater to the other pools. There was a possible in airswimming lead but our group were not stepping up to the starting blocks to go for a dip.

A dive guide line could be seen beneath the surface and so it seems that future progress might just as well be done from underwater. I took a couple of quick pictures.

Then began the process of reversing the layout of tapes, ropes and rigging. Cleaning up and derigging all the paraphernalia with which we had decorated our environment took longer than anticipated and then there is the washing and cleaning back at the hut but nevertheless it had been a great day

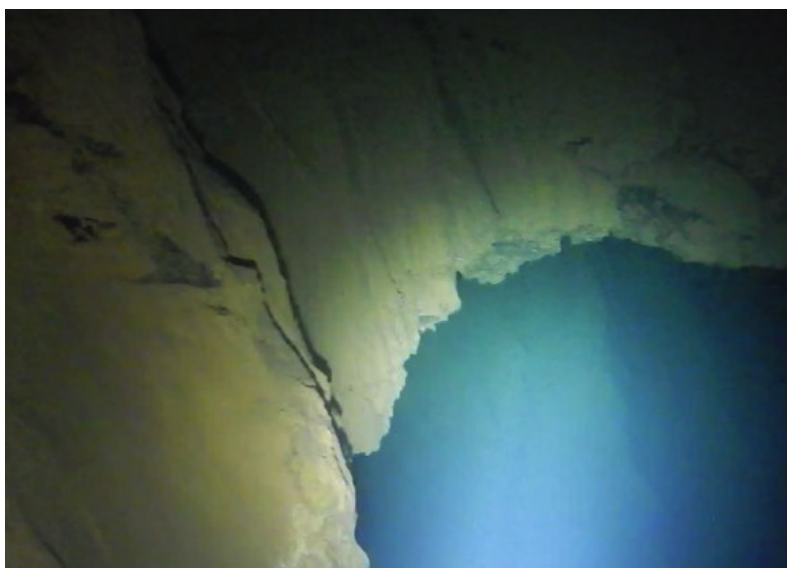


Phil Maynard at Plunge Pools first pitch
PHOTO CREDIT: Keir Vaughan-Taylor

Sunday 11 November

Rod and Phil helped me to set up at the Styx Deep Pool. Greg was going to repeat the Twin Bridges dive. I wanted to relocate and fix line to a deep and very interesting section I had come across on a previous dive. On a previous dive, Rick Grundy had layed line but didn't report very much passage found. Following his line I tied off part way down and followed another section through a hole in a sheet of rock. Along the way there was other holes that may go to other sections. At the bottom room I took a few picture of what I think are biofilm masses. I have never seen anything like these strange features before. Each filament strand is about 2mm thick and maybe 4-6 cm in length. I also searched around for other ways on finding a few archways and holes that may continue but it was necessary to make sure the guideline was safely positioned.

There is the usual challenge finding a secure fix point with some solid rock like protusions collapsing and revealing themselves as a muddy lookalike. A pinnacle of rock provided a very good anchor for the line. My tie off procedure managed to cause a silt out and this then was the end of the dive. I returned to the surface where Rod Phil and I helped to Greg to repeat the dive Twim Bridges to Cerberus. He re-investigated surface areas and began sketching and making notes to adjust the maps. His dive added to our gAfter this we packed gear and returned to the cavers hut.



*Half way down Styx Deep Pool
PHOTO CREDIT: Keir Vaughan-Taylor*



*Filament groups, note group on left
PHOTO CREDIT: Keir Vaughan-Taylor*