

# Alexander Turnbull Library

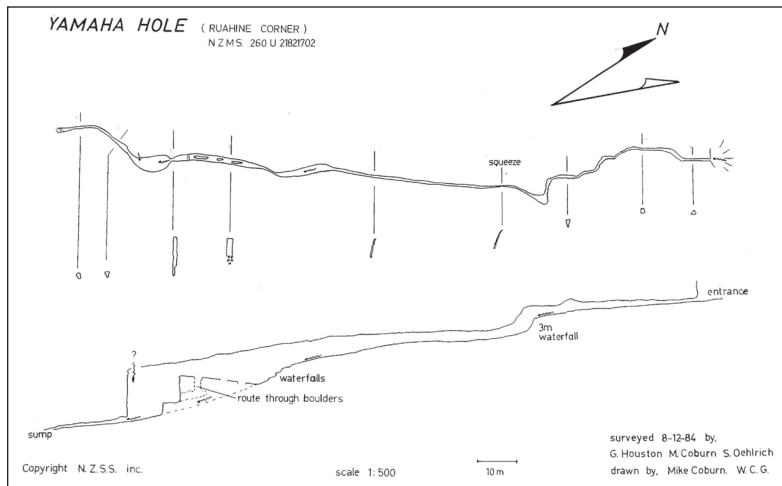
## New Zealand Speleological Society: Cave Maps

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The New Zealand Speleological Society was founded on 1 October 1949 by Henry G Lambert who served as president to 1959. The collection comprises 237 maps documenting cave systems across New Zealand, many of which were produced by regional clubs and special interest groups under the auspices of the New Zealand Speleological Society.

Many of the maps were originally deposited in duplicate by Jonathan Ravens in the early 1990s, but under current policy only a single copy of each map has been accessioned to the collection.

The arrangement and description involved selecting the best copy of each map and assigning a unique identifier to each sheet (MapColl-NZSS-001 to MapColl-NZSS-237) which was then described in a descriptive record, linked to a collection record (MapColl-collection-NZ-speleological-society).



Printed map of cave system. Reference: MapColl-NZSS-162/Acc.56498, Alexander Turnbull Library. Photo by Flora Feltham.

Identification of the geographic location documented in the map was one of the many challenges, and once located maps were indexed using Geographic Name authority terms.

A new genre/form authority term was created for “Cave maps” (and non-preferred “Speleological maps”), terms which have joined the growing family of cartographic genre/form headings in the Alexander Turnbull Library collection management system (Tiaki), which have recently also been augmented by the addition of “mining maps” and “orienteering maps” for example.

Name authority records (created in accordance with the EAC-CPF standards) have also been linked as indexing terms and new ones created for selected contributors to the collection.

The maps provide a fascinating and valuable record of a large number of New Zealand cave systems, and this collection represents the results of numerous surveys. Many of the maps were joint efforts by a number of contributors, in some cases indicated as “draughted by” and “drawn by”, but in other instances only discernible from small initials in a lower corner.

The name of the renowned New Zealand scholar and leading expert on the moa, Trevor Worthy, appears on a large number of the maps. Other name authority terms have been created for some of the regional clubs, such as the Taranaki Caving Club.

Cave maps are an invaluable record of surveys of landforms which are in a state of constant change, and many of the maps in the collection are based on the initial survey post-discovery. Some record the date of discovery and the names of members of the party who first explored the caves systems, or extended existing surveys into ever less accessible parts.

Undoubtedly, as archival records the greatest value lies in the record of features named on the map. The named features of these subterranean geological formations do not appear anywhere else, and often show evidence of considerable creativity and even a sense of humour on the part of the speleological explorers and cartographers.

Physically, this map collection is interesting and challenging, as the maps range in size from sheets smaller than an A4 sheet of paper to large plans. Some of them are originals drawn on paper, but many are printed facsimile copies and diazotypes on paper.

The descriptive records aim to capture the metadata which is in the item, including a transcription of the title, date information, names of contributors, geographic locality; and a physical description, comprising the physical material (in this case all on paper), and the



Examples of different names and printing methods in the collection. Reference: MapColl-Collection-NZ-Speleological-Society, Alexander Turnbull Library. Photo by Flora Feltham.

dimensions. But there are also material specific data, in this case specific to maps: for example, the scale is represented in various ways, including Representative Fraction (RF), Verbal Scale, and bar or graph, depending on the object.

While some of the maps have previously already been available reproduced in reduced format in *The New Zealand Cave Atlas*, this collection represents the information in original size.

This collection of 237 New Zealand cave maps were first deposited with the Library in 1991-1995, and a quarter of a century later these have now been accessioned and described, making them discoverable and available to researchers.

The collection may be found on Tiaki at (MapColl-Collection-NZ-Speleological-Society).

#### Endnote

David V May, "Speleology in New Zealand", *Bulletin of the National Speleological Society*, vol. 23, part 2, July 1961, pages 31-38.