

Newsletter of the Tasmanian Caverneering Club.

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TYPIST: as above.

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FORWARD PROGRAMME

Feb. 5-6 - Maydena area. Contact the Annans 88 2222.

Feb. 12-13 - Maydena, probably the Chairman, contact Stuart Nicholas, 28 3054.

March 2 - General Meeting, 8 p.m., SCS/TCC clubrooms, Davey Street.(up the first lane after the Aberfeldy Hotel).

MARCH 30 - ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - 13 Mason Street, Claremont, 8 p.m.

A trip will also go to Exit Cave some time led by T.Culberg - ph. 438546 for info.

The Maydena branch are still running trips every weekend and on most week days while John Parker is still on holidays - further info. 88 2222.

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EDITORIAL

Welcome to a new caving year. The only significant caving done since December has been by the Maydena branch plus the few regulars from Hobart. The Maydena-Florentine area was also inundated with underworld characters from the mainland, including some from W.A. Your A.S.F. representative(Albert Goede) left the committee meeting for an hour and returned to find himself a Vice-Pres. A full report on the A.S.F. conference will appear in the next Spiel. Ladder making will soon be underway - enough copper tubing and wire for 6 10 metre ladders has already been purchased and the aluminium tubing has been ordered and should arrive in the next fortnight.

T.G.

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CLUB NEWS

- + Former member and past president Andrew Skinner is to be congratulated on his appointment to Maria Island as assistant ranger.
- + The club barbecue, held on the 18th of Dec. almost got off the ground but most of the prospective guests went underground instead, returning at about 9.30 p.m. to find only Therese Goede and John Parker left holding the fort entertaining a couple of cavers from the Northern Caverneers. Steve had unfortunately fallen causing a recent bone graft on his hip to break so both host and hostess were whisked away to Hobart. The plaster came off a week ago and hopefully all will now be well - but please steer clear of bunny holes with those crutches. Thanks to Anne for the magnificent feast which she had prepared and to John for taking over and feeding all the hungry cavers when they finally emerged.

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New Cave Names.

VICTORY '75 - JF 110. For detailed reports see this and previous Spiel.

The name Notelddim Cave for JF 101 was withdrawn.

Have YOU had your thighs pinched lately??

- If not try a homemade ladder!!

MAYDENA BRANCH REPORT.

We have had a flurry of activity over the past month - due to an influx of cavers from Sydney and W.A. , plus a lot of extra cave hunting by John Parker and Max Jeffries.

While searching in the area around the Chairman(JF 99) John has located two small shafts, but having no light he couldn't check them out. Further along the ridge to the right of the forestry trail, he came across a deep fissure.

John has also located an old forestry trail leading off from the Junee Quarry Road - using this trail Rift Cave can be reached in ten(10) minutes, it also makes the Chairman far more accessible.

Above Junee Quarry John has located several holes, but the scrub makes the area rather rugged.

The group from Sydney(John Minchin, Jim Caddey, Alan Warild, Alan ? - (from Bermagui), and Randall King), stayed at the Junee Homestead for a week and during that time did K-D, Tassy Pot, Victory '75, and the Chairman. Victory '75 was pushed past its previous limit of exploration and disappointingly ends in a very tight squeeze, at an approximate depth of 400 ft.

News of the Chairman trip makes for happier reading. After a trip lasting 14 hours, Randall King reports that both up and down stream passages go on and on - there is a cavern in the streamway containing much formation(including 15 ft.straws) As Randall is preparing a report on the cave for the A.S.F. journal and hopefully the Spiel, I will not go into details except to say that they are confident of getting much more length from the cave, sufficiently so to be planning another trip sometime this year.

During his stay Randall showed members of the Maydena Branch slides of his caving trip to the Antare(?) River area in New Guinea - all very awe inspiring; the caves in that area make ours look like scale models.

Laurie Moody made the trip up to show us his caving slides, which were also very interesting.

On Sunday 16th of January Max Jeffries took Rauleigh and Joanne Webb from WASG out to see Beginners Luck and Cashion Creek Caves.

Altogether a very busy month during which we've met lots of interesting mainland cavers.

Anne Annan.

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TRIP REPORTS

Junee - Florentine - 6/12/76.

Party: Laurie Moody and Geoff Collins(visitor).

The objective of this weekday trip was to carry out some photography and to introduce a workmate to the rigors of caving. We passed through the barrier at 10.30 a.m. and made our first stop in the vicinity of Cave Hill, where the entrances to Sesame One and Two were viewed. Keeping a wary eye open for fast-moving log trucks we drove into the Florentine and duly inspected Cashion Creek Cave(JF 8). The water level proved to be a few inches higher than normal for this time of the year and we had fun negotiating the crawl over the stream both on the way in and out.

After a bite to eat we headed up Westfield Road and eventually reached Welcome Stranger. On descending, we found that the water level was much higher than first thought but managed to reach the upper level in a relatively dry condition. Nearly two hours were spent showing the dry upper level to Geoff before emerging. We also noted the decomposing body of what appears to have been a rodent, well inside the cave and it is presumed that it may have fallen into the cave via an aven. The body was not disturbed and remains where we found it.

A very enjoyable day's caving with an equally enjoyable stop at the Gretna Hotel on the way home.

L.R.Moody.

Junee Area - JF 110, Victory '75. - 18/12/76.

Party: Stuart Nicholas, Mike March, Bill Nicholson and Brendon ?(Bill's friend).

With promises of plenty of support from members and a relatively fine day(it was only drizzling intermittently), hopes were high for a continuation of JF 110 beyond the squeeze. As usual nothing came true - support from club members was poor, the squeeze proved a major obstacle and it poured.

We had left the gear in the cave after the previous trip which saved a lot of time and effort on the walk in. On the descent we surveyed the pot, the result of which I should have plotted up for the next Spiel. As Brendon had had no previous ladder experience, Mike and Stuart descended the main pitch(length 57.5 m) with Bill belaying. The squeeze at the end of the dry streamway proved to be a major problem. Neither Mike nor myself could get through it easily so as a final effort and showing great self sacrifice Mike took his gear off and proceeded to negotiate the squeeze - removing several large chunks of skin in the process. All the effort was wasted, however, as it opened out slightly and then closed in again to an even tighter squeeze. (A recent trip by a party from NSW revealed that the second squeeze blocks off with no further leads.)

Nearly an hour later we managed to haul the ladders up the main pitch, a job which proved considerably more difficult than anticipated owing to the gear continuously snagging on the rough rock face.

After about 8 hours of hard but enjoyable caving we emerged with great mounds of gear which we had extracted from the cave. Owing to the lack of people some gear had to be left at the entrance for later removal.

(Later calculation showed the hole to be 125 m deep).

Stuart Nicholas.

Pillingers Creek Area, Maydena (date unknown)

John Parker located Pillingers Creek Cave after quite a deal of searching around - the cave is very dangerous, with lots of loose rock, as those who have been there will no doubt recall. After looking through the cave John walked up a dry creek bed adjacent to Pillingers Creek and located 2 shafts in the bed - with a strong draft coming from both. John entered one of these - it contains numerous passages and deserves further exploration. There are also dolines in the limestone ridge above Pillingers, which suggest that the area would be a rewarding one in which to search for new caves.

Anne Annan.

Area behind JF 110 - Victory '75.

On the 27th Dec. John further explored the holes previously located behind and to the right of JF 110. The two particular shafts block off, but we feel sure that more caves will be found in this area.

A.A.

Vandalisation Cave - 6th January, 1977.

John Parker tried to push past the previous limit of exploration - but was foiled by an excess of mud. Further exploration would be possible.

A.A.

June-Florentine - 10-11/1/77.

Party:(10/1/77) Laurie Moody(TCC), John Minchin, Jim Caddey (UNSWSS), Ray and Cheryl Beelitz (WASG), Peter Clarke (CSS).

Prelude: Some months ago I received notification from Alan Warild (UNSWSS) that he and several others would be coming to Tassie in January with the intention of looking at a few of our 'deepies'. Alan was mainly interested in continuing exploration in Khazad-dum and having a gander at The Chairman and adjacent caves. Two members, John Minchin and Jim Caddey arrived at my place on 7th. January and were duly accommodated beneath my house in the A.S.F. newsroom. As I was working on that particular weekend, they filled in time looking around Hobart. Late on Sunday night(9th.), Max Jeffries phoned to say that two W.A. cavers and one from Canberra would also like to join our party the following day.

Monday (10/1/77): John and Jim spent the morning in the city collecting several odds and ends and we eventually left my place for Maydena around 1.00 p.m. On arrival at the barrier, we met Ray, Cheryl and Peter who, fortunately, had transport of their own. After introductions, we learnt that they had spent some time in Exit Cave due to the kind and thorough instructions of Brian Collin. A quick

briefing and we were underway to Welcome Stranger(JF 229) in the Florentine Valley. The weather was very good and we experienced a rather dusty trip. My visitors were rather dubious in regard to the fast-moving log trucks which frequently appeared out of the dustclouds bound for Maydena, but we arrived safely. During the process of donning trogsuits, John sighted a lone figure up amongst the limestone. This person duly identified himself as a University student studying geology and then continued on his way. We entered the cave via the lower entrance and spent two hours or so inspecting the cave and duly reaching the sump where an anaspides was noted. After emerging, we discovered that someone had been busy cutting a track back to the vehicles. That someone proved to be none other than Max Jeffries! Max had decided to say hello whilst on his way home from work and spent ten minutes or so with us before departing. It was then decided to take a quick look at Cashion Ck. Cave(JF 6)(Please disregard its incorrect listing as No.8 in the previous report - Ed.) before heading back to Maydena and the Junee Homestead. We finally arrived at the Junee Homestead at around 8 p.m. where we discovered that the vandals had been at work once again. Two bullets had been fired at the lock jamming it. Entry was eventually gained with the assistance of my screwdriver. (The lock has now been replaced with another). After a bite to eat we headed off for the Annans for the remainder of the evening, which proved very enjoyable (hic) for one and all. Arrangements were made with John Parker to visit Khazad-dum and other caves in the area on the Tuesday morning.

Tuesday (11/1/77): Party: Laurie Moody (TCC), John Parker (TCCMB), John Minchin, Jim Caddey (UNSWSS), Cheryl and Ray Beelitz (WASG).

I awake around 8 a.m. after a goods nights sleep, somewhat disappointed in the fact that the Junee Ghost had failed to make an appearance. (I was the only one game enough to sleep in the middle room). After a certain amount of persuasion, the other members of the party, apart from Peter, managed to drag themselves out of their sleeping bags and a hearty breakfast was devoured. The five starters piled into my Torana and we soon arrived at the Annans. As per plan my car was left at the end of the John Bull Road and Anne Annan drove us to the start of the K-D track, near the top of the Junee Quarry branch road. We set off around 9.45 a.m. and reached Khazad-dum in around 25 minutes. Our four visitors were impressed with the entrance to Aussie's deepest cave and a number of photos were taken. From here, we proceeded back down the track as far as the Dwarrowdelf (JF 14) turn-off. A short walk and we arrived at the entrance. Again cameras were busy. Eventually, we rejoined John Parker who had chosen not to accompany us but instead to do a bit of track-cutting on the Cauldron Pot track. We reached Cauldron and all were very taken with the spectacular waterfall entrance.(What's more - my slide came out reasonably well). The next brief stop was JF 28 which has ten un-explored holes in the vicinity of the entrance. Unfortunately, we were travelling light but we'll be back! From here we proceeded along the now clearly defined track to Rift Cave (JF 34) and after viewing yet another spectacular entrance, stopped for lunch and a breather. In due course, we pushed on and finally reached the magnificent hole known as The Chairman (JF 99). Oohs and aahs, and the clicking of cameras were sounds of the impression it made on our mainland visitors. However, this cave is proving extremely difficult to photograph from the entrance. (It has now been established that The Chairman is most likely at its maximum depth but the size of the system could be staggering to say the least. More details will be forthcoming regarding this aspect of the cave). Victory '75 was also visited plus another of John Parker's recent finds. "Just have a listen to this!"(John drops small rock) -----Thump! .-.-.-.!!!! Bang! ----- CRASH! T H U D ! ! (Reactions - shit! God! Hell! Give it a miss!) (They did!) Eventually we reached my car and the round trip was completed at approx. 2.30 p.m. It therefore took nearly five hours to do the walk from the start of the K-D track to the start of The Chairman track. This extremely interesting and informative trip is strongly recommended to anyone wishing to see the entrances to some of Australia's deepest caves in one easy days walk.

Laurie Moody.

Chrisps Hut Area - early January, 1977.

Party: Max Jeffries, John Parker, Anne Annan and Terry Elliott(P).

The purpose of this trip was to explore three holes close to Chrisps Hut that John had located the previous week. These caves are only a short walk from the Florentine Road which is a welcome change from the usual slog we go through, to get to caves. The first two of the holes are about twenty yards from each other in beautiful rain forest just off the Adamsfield track. Terry entered the first cave, which has a fairly large entrance and descended to a depth of 70 feet to a small ledge, from where he could see another ledge about 10 ft. below, followed by a deep pitch. At this point the belay rope ran out - much cursing for not having brought more.

The adjacent cave has a tremendously strong draft coming out, which seems to change from cold to warm. John descended through the narrow entrance to a depth of 80 feet, from here he walked along a passage for a short distance which opened out into a large cavern. The passage on was blocked by a boulder which John estimates could easily be moved by two people. Another passage leads off from the main entrance shaft but this was not explored.

It seems almost certain that these two caves join up. (Incidentally the second cave had two old tin cans in it, possibly thrown down when A.N.M. surveyers camped at Chrisps in the 1940's). Considering their low level location and position in line between Growling Swallet and the Junee efflux, these two holes could prove to be very exciting finds.

The third hole turned out to be one of two holes explored by a party led by Max Jeffries some time ago. It contains some interesting skeletons. (Max, what have you been up to? - Ed.) We hope to further explore the first two caves in the coming week.

Anne Annan.

(Proposed names for the first two caves:

Terry's Debut - for the first hole.

Tom Hallam's Cave - for the second cave. (Tom Hallam was a surveyor in the area (now deceased - which should suit the Nomenclature Board).

Chrisps Hut Area - Jan, 1977.

Party: John Parker and Anne Annan (TCC), Terry Elliott(Prosp.), John Minchin, Jim Caddey and Alan Warild (UNSWSS), Alan ? (BSA).

This trip was organised in order to further explore the two caves near Chrisps Hut referred to (somewhat glowingly) in the previous report.

John, Terry and myself descended the second cave and despite the tremendous draft coming from it, it ended in a small chamber at a depth of approx. 40 m.

John Minchin, Jim and the two Alans used SRT to go down the other cave but reported that it ended in a filthy, stinking, muddy sump at the approximate depth of 57 m.

Altogether a rather disappointing day - but we still hold hopes for significant finds in this area.

Anne Annan.

West Florentine Area - 31/1/77.

Party: Max Jeffries and John Parker.

An exploratory trip to the West Florentine. One cave was discovered - off Tiger Road in a burnt out area. The cave is horizontal, approx. 100 ft. long and contains some formation.

John Parker.

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Have you heard the one about the corpulent caver? -

- He's a stick in the squeeze!

Caving is alive and well in the Maydena area -

it appears all one needs is a dentist with an interest in cavities.

Glen Campbell's Wettas.

During January we also had a visit from Glen Campbell, a biologist from a Sydney university. Glen is completing a thesis on cave crickets (wettas). John Parker took Glen to Cashion Creek Cave (JF 6) which has a large cricket population; Glen intends returning next summer to camp at the cave for two weeks to observe the crickets.

Incidentally, our caves seem to have a much larger cricket population than mainland caves and appear to be of a sub-species, living wholly within the cave instead of relying on outside sources for food, as do the mainland crickets. (This is a point Glen hopes to prove or disprove in his study).

Anne Annan.

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LADDER MAKING

This should get under way shortly. Anyone interested in helping make up the ladders can get in touch with Stuart Nicholas, 28 3054, to find out further details.

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QUORUM

At the last meeting it was resolved to leave the required number of voting members necessary for a quorum at 6. However, it was decided that this should be reviewed annually.

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2 ND. CONFERENCE ON CAVE TOURISM AND MANAGEMENT

2 - 6 MAY, 1977.

Venue: HOBART.

Further details may be acquired by writing to:

Second Conference on Cave Tourism,
P.O. Box 36,
LINDISFARNE, 7015, Tasmania.

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And for those really adventurous souls there is a trip on to the
"Lost World caves of Mount Wellington"

Interested participants should contact the Y.M.C.A. before Feb.17th,
phone 72 8077.