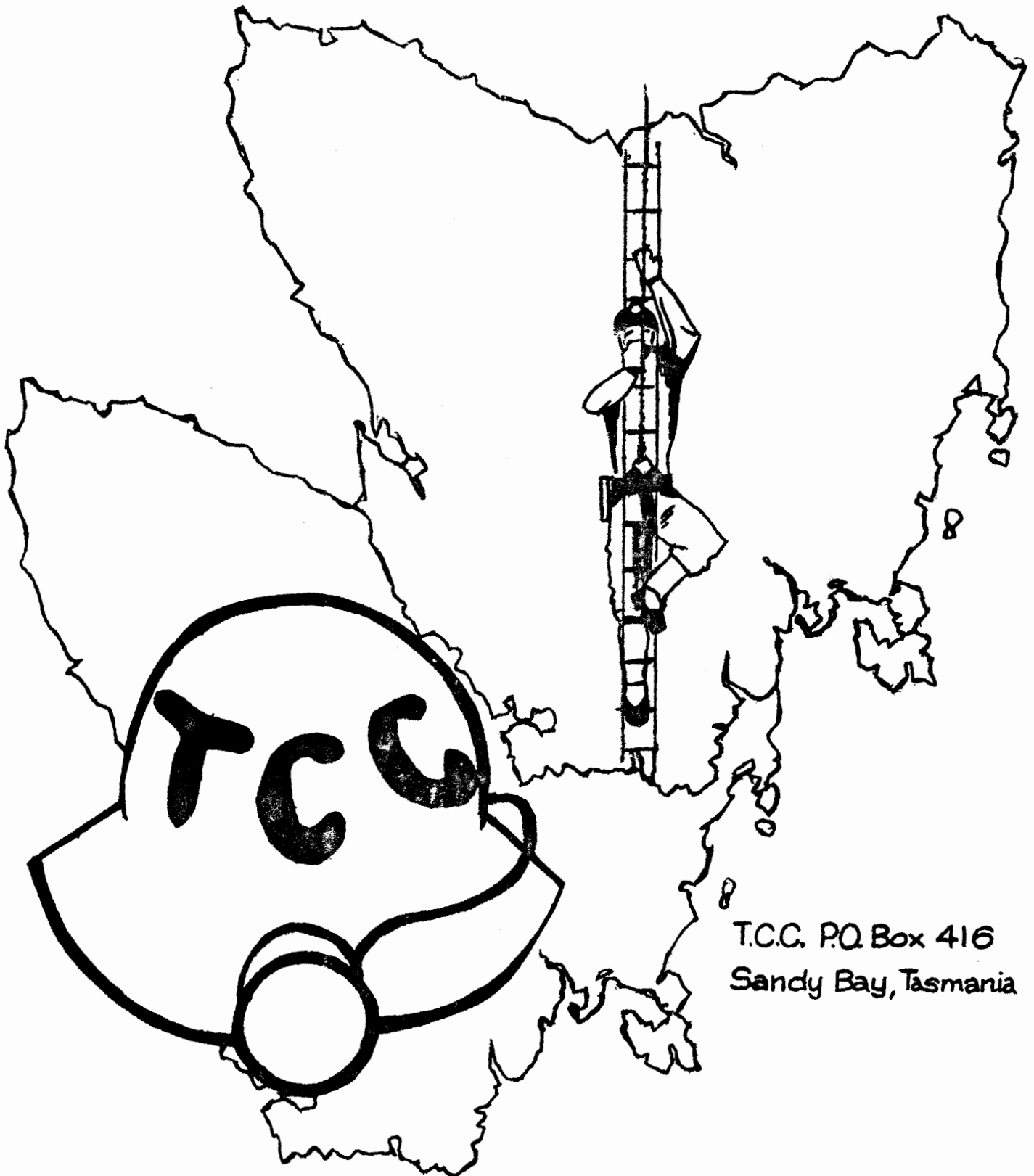


SPELEO SPIEL

Newsletter of the Tasmanian Caverneering Club

AUG. 1978 NO 137.

T.C.C. Established 1946



T.C.C. P.O. Box 416
Sandy Bay, Tasmania

Newsletter of the Tasmanian Cavermeering Club.

Annual Subscription \$4.00.

Single copies 40 cents.

President: Bill Tomalin, c/o Division of Recreation,
Kirksway House, Kirksway Place,
BATTERY POINT, 7000. PH. 30 3752 (Business).

President:(Maydena Beh.) Max Jeffries, 16 South Crescent,
MAYDEN, 7457. PH. 88 2256.

Secretary: Ian Gothard, P.O. Box 193, SANDY BAY, 7005.

Editor: Caroline Rees, 9 Addison Street, ROSETTA, 7010. PH.72 6278.

FORWARD PROGRAMME.

- August 5 - SAT. HMC trip. Wolf Hole. Contact Bruce McIntosh for further details. Ph.34 3166(B) or 28 1282.(H).
- August 5 - SAT. Wolf Hole. Acting Leaders: Pavel Ruzicka and Ian Gothard.
- August 16 - WED. Committee Meeting, 8 P.M. Meeting Room, Wheatsheaf Hotel.
- September 6 - GENERAL MEETING, 8 p.m., Meeting Room, Wheatsheaf Hotel.
Points for discussion: Annual trip, Franklin River Expedition.
Slides welcomed.
- September 16 - ANNUAL DINNER. Wheatsheaf Hotel, Macquarie Street.
Pre-dinner drinks 7.30 p.m. Dinner 8 p.m.(approx).
Make your booking by returning form at end of Spiel to the Secretary or by phoning Albert Goede 23 1929(H)
23 0561 ext.415(W).
Cost will be kept to a minimum.
Don't miss out on the social event of the year - BOOK NOW!
-

EDITORIAL.

Due to our editress being otherwise occupied (she makes a beautiful barmaid!) I was requested to whip up an editorial. As will become obvious caving trips are once again the "in" thing. The cave-locating wonder has returned to Maydena and put us all to shame by finding 38 holes in 4 weekends as well as extending the known passages of another cave.

An S. and R. call-out occurred. Fortunately the group concerned didn't require our assistance and our S. and R. set up discovered a few weaknesses which will be discussed at the next committee meeting.

Exploration in the Wolf Hole has resulted in the location of a probable alternative, if tricky, entrance. At the moment there's a big rock in the way, and we have yet to locate this entrance on the surface.

That will do, PHEW!

T.G.

CLUB NEWS.

- * Best wishes are extended to Emily Skinner who is at present recuperating from an operation. Older members will recall Emily's kindness in providing wet and weary cavers with coffee and other life saving refreshments whilst Roy was cave superitendent at Hastings and Emily was in charge of the cafe.
 - * Congratulations are extended also to Ros and Andrew Skinner, former members
- (continued on Page 9)

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT.

As members of this club will appreciate, a wind of change has swept through the ranks this year. The Club is now to a great extent organised by a young executive group (Committee) who meet at regular intervals to try to smooth out the running of our programmes. To date, this band of dedicated and fanatical devotees of cavernearing has plunged into the labyrinths of incorporation, taken over the science of editorial complexities, extended the Club's involvement in Search and Rescue techniques, invented beer-tickets and we are now probing the impossible - leadership qualities and training methods.

Some criticism has been heard (and carefully monitored) that the Committee does not communicate too well with the Club as a whole. It's probably quite true, but this apparent secrecy and subterfuge is such fun - and who can blame us for extracting some enjoyment from our onerous duties?

I am well known for the serious application of presidential control I hold over our boisterous members. Therefore you, my neanderthal grovellers, will believe me when I indicate the utmost praise for the work of your executive. It is a pleasure to work with such a group and to feel that even I, with so many generations between us, can occasionally inject a note of caution into the proceedings without being denied a further rum and coke. I have two requests to make of the members of this Club.

1. Please do not get down on your knees in my presence - a hand salute will do!
2. Support your editorial staff with trip reports, equipment appraisals, questions to the committee, constructive criticisms and so on. Your contribution is needed.

Before you go Thank you, with respect

Bill Tomalin.

" IN MEMORIAL " (?) !

On the night of the 11/7/78 Bill's F.C. van(sniff), received fatal injuries as a result of a collision by another car(snuff) whose death was instantaneous. Both cars were extensively damaged and their occupants were very fortunate in receiving only minor injuries.

All those privileged friends and members(sniff) who have travelled and slept in the deceased, will, I feel sure (sniff) sympathize with Bill, on the passing of a great companion whom we all loved . . . (SHIFF).

Let us join together in silent reverie of those memorable occasions(sniff) where "THE VAN" stood out as a gallant steed that carried everybody so ably.

A salute to 21 years of faithful service.

FAREWELL F.C. - Lest we forget.

 Copies of "KARST IN CHINA" are once again available at \$12 per copy !

Letter to the Tasmanian Caverneering Club.re: Midnight Hole.

July 29, 1978.

I apologise to all those inconvenienced by the search for us. Thank you very much for all your efforts. My embarrassment is great, so much so that I find it hard to say anything to console those who were very annoyed when they found we did not need rescuing. I have prayed that such an incident will not happen again. Should anyone else suffer a similar fate, or worse, I will be most willing to help.

The trip went smoothly, except for minor incidents. However, we took far more time to make the descent than we had estimated. Possibly because we made certain that there was a direct connection to the surface in case of any trouble with the ten-year-old bolts. It was initially intended that we all jummar out. The last pitch was descended on a dynamic belay rope which became cut at the beginning of the overhang portion of the 180 ft. drop (ca. 125 ft. up) by the effect of jumaring. The bad section was tied off and the second person ascended and found the rope cut in two places.

At the beginning of the trip we had thought of going out Entrance Cave but had decided to have a go at the ascent for practice, sending out the fourth person to meet us at the top because he had the least experience in jumaring. He would ease things by pulling up the equipment after a good rest. It was obviously not safe for a third person to ascend. In any case we could haul out the bottom rope(s). Essentially to save time (thinking it was about 3 p.m.) and because of the poor condition of part of the track to Midnight Hole, and since I had the best knowledge of the cave two of us left via Matchbox Squeeze. On reaching the entrance after only a few minutes we found that it was already dark, i.e. about 6 p.m.

Realizing that if we were 'lost' in the bush all we had to do was to come down to Mystery Creek when it was light (not to mention that we could hear it from some distance), we decided to have a go at retracing our way up the hill to Midnight Hole. However, the light of the torch proved to be inadequate to see far enough ahead to avoid thick scrub. We retreated after blowing the whistle numerous times. For about five hours we waited near the quarry while blowing the whistle every few minutes.

Neither Robert nor myself were able to stay awake. In fact I could not walk properly due to intense tiredness and 'dreaming' on my feet. We were somewhat worried about the others who did not appear or answer. Since the trouble with the bottom rope we were unsure of the safety of Simon and Phil.

Sometime late in the night they had surfaced, leaving behind a pack which had fallen down the 120' pitch. They intended us to go and get it as they expected us to arrive fresh at Midnight Hole. Their night was spent by a fire next to the hole (with all the food!) Finally Robert and I walked back to the car rather concerned for the other two. We felt that the best thing we could do was to get a good sleep. If I had driven the car the chances were strong that I would have fallen asleep while driving because I already started 'phasing-out' whilst walking back. Also, what if the others were in trouble? We thought sleep was the most practical thing, with the off-chance that the others might turn up while we were there, otherwise we would immediately look for them at dawn.

Our arrival at the hole was heralded by an almost extinguished fire but no people. Whistling brought no response. Minutes later I found a written note saying that all was O.K. The two of us ate what little food was left, and soon heard the others at the top of the third pitch hauling the fallen pack. Within half an hour we were all packed up and ready to go.

After a rather slow descent to the old tramway we rested and drank. Five minutes after arrival at our car the first of the rescue party arrived, "Do you want to be rescued?"

Our party consisted of Simon Parsons, Phil Bigg, Robert Stewart and

Andrew Davey.

We certainly enjoyed the trip, especially the lower portion of the pot. I doubt if we'll ever forget it apart from the surprise ending.

Again thank you very much to all the would-be rescuers.

Andrew Davey (signed).

P.S. If anyone finds a watch in Midnight Hole or Entrance Cave it could belong to Phil Bigg.

MEMBERS PLEASE TAKE NOTE.

It appears that in the past it has been either practice or "tradition" to emerge from the caves in the Hastings area, proceed to the thermal pool and jump into the pool fully rigged in muddy trogging gear. Whilst this might be of excellent therapeutic value it has now become a health hazard - the Head Ranger is not very taken with the practice. Would those who have previously indulged in this habit please take note (perhaps swimming togs under trogging gear would provide a solution), and refrain from doing so in the future.

MY II NICHOLSON/WHILLANS SIT HARNESS.

As most Whillans Sit-Harness owners who are cavers will testify, with squeaky voices, that in unmodified form these harnesses are unsuitable for vertical caving. Fair enough, as they were primarily designed for Himalayan climbing where prussicking is mostly on an angle and not vertical.

The crunch (no pun intended) comes from the crutch strap which is noted for splitting the difference. As cast-iron jocks are unobtainable I decided to modify my Whillans as an alternative to joining the Rosny Childrens Choir. It would be impossible to reproduce diagrams with enough detail to understand them here, but a photocopy will be available on request soon. All I can say now, is that after rigorous testing, the modification was highly successful.

Bill Nicholson.

"KARST IN CHINA"

Some time ago these books were made available to cavers (Australia-wide) at the price of \$12 (postage not included). For every copy sold \$4 went to the club to help buy gear. These books are now once again available, still at \$12.00. Also available is a set of 12 postcards of Chinese cave scenes for 50 cents per set(of which 40 cents will go to FCC). Anyone interested in purchasing either should contact:

Therese Goede,
8 Bath Street,
BATTERY POINT, 7000.

Description of Gormenghast (JF 35).

JF 35 is situated in the first gully after the "big slippery tree across the track", and only 2 minutes off the main track. Total depth is 420 feet and length of passage is in excess of 2000 ft.

To describe Gormenghast it will be easier if I chop it into three sections, each section represents an approximate third of the cave.

The first section involves most of the tricky climbing, the streamway is composed mainly of dolerite talus and approximately 6 major waterfalls ranging from 9 to 12 feet in height. All of the gear except one handline is used in this section.

Total gear list: one ladder - not under 14 feet in length and 3 handlines - each no shorter than 15 feet in length.

The ladder pitch is 5 minutes in from the entrance and is very obvious if you look. One handline is used on a 12 ft. waterfall, the other two are used on short, dry but awkward pitches. Route finding throughout the cave is fairly obvious but again common sense must be used.

The second section is moderately easy with only one awkward drop and this route bypasses a waterfall and the streamway for a short distance. The third section is the wettest and the most prone to flooding. It involves crawling through narrow streamways with up to 6 inches of water. Extreme care must be taken in this section as it is impossible to turn around in one section of the passage. Formation further on is good. This is the furthest I have reached, but I estimate another $\frac{1}{2}$ hour of similar progress will see you at the sump.

Further information on this cave can be squeezed out of Albert Goede and Peter Shaw who, amongst others, surveyed the hole in 1972.

Bill Nicholson.

- - - - -

REPORT ON MIDNIGHT HOLE CALL OUT.

Sunday the 30th of July marked the first major call out for members of T.C.C. for many years.

The call out was initiated by Albert Goede and followed up by Bill Nicholson. Members were put on standby until confirmation from Inspector Massie, Head of Police Search and Rescue was received. Confirmation was received at 0800 hours and members converged at the Police S.& R. compound in Patrick Street. Those concerned were briefed, equipment sorted out, and members transported down to Lune River.

Command of operations was shared respectively by Inspector Massie with advisors Bob Cockerill and Alex Terauds in Hobart, and Bill Nicholson as head of field operations on site. The advance party reached the Entrance Cave car park and located the overdue party their at approx. 1200 hours, and a state-wide alert had been pronounced if necessary. I will not go into the reasons as to why the party was overdue as Andrew Davey's letter adequately explains their situation.

The operation ran smoothly and efficiently except for the initial call out where problems were experienced in locating certain persons.

Most important, this call out gave members and police invaluable experience in a cave rescue situation and brought to notice our limited range of rescue equipment.

First Class Constable Keith Harper expressed his thanks on behalf of the Police Dept. to all members who participated.

Thanks for an incredible turnout,

Bill Nicholson

S.& R. Officer.

TRIP REPORTS.

Gormenghast (JF 35), Florentine, - 18/6/78.

Party: Bill Nicholson(L), Julie Marsh, Pavel Ruzicka, Dave Barry and visitor David Sheppard.

As per usual the "Death or Glory Boys"(to quote Bill Tomalin) got off to a late start, lost the track, and took an extra 30 minutes to find the cave. The water was moist and very low, it was also found to be sloppy in consistency. Dave got a bit damp under the armpits when he took a short cut down a 3 metre waterfall and ended up right under it.

The two Daves and I managed to get further than last years trip by approximately 300 ft. which included lying in 4 inches of freezing water!

Thirty minutes later three brass monkeys returned back to Julie and Pavel, who couldn't previously get down to where we were because of Pavel's 'child-bearing hips'. Upon rough estimation, another thirty minutes would have seen us at the sump. At this stage we were approximately 360 - 400 feet below the entrance. Daylight was reached after 4 hours of very enjoyable, moderately wet caving.

The iron wo/men of E.C.C. reached the "van" after 835 paces, crawled into her and rolled off home.

Bill Nicholson.

Florentine Valley area. - 8,9/7/78.

Leader and party: John Parker!

The aim of the trip was to investigate the newly burnt area of the Florentine Valley. Weather on both days was its usual nasty self with rain and snow competing with each other to make things thoroughly miserable.

An area near Frankcombe Cave (JF 7) was first looked at. Three shafts containing numerous formations found near road - none fully investigated. Two other shafts nearby blocked with shattered rock but entry possible when the rocks removed.

The area between Settlement Road and Leo Thorne Road next looked over. Three caves found at the base of first limestone ridge to the left of Leo Thorne's Road. None of these caves have been numbered - they were not explored except for the entrance area of first one.

A shaft was located 300 yards east of Beginners Luck - not looked at.

Next morning searched out the three limestone hills located to the left and at the end of Leo Thorne's Road. Caves JF 70, 71, 72 explored in the central hillock - JF 71 impressive cave with some nice formation; Max informs me it is possible to reach a creek at the bottom of the cave with good possibilities for extension of the cave along the stream.

A large un-numbered cave was found at the end of the central hillock. Laddered down through muddy shafts to depth of approx. 40 ft., sounds of a large creek were heard but lack of gear prevented investigation.

At the base of the third hill - five adjacent caves found feeding back into the hill through narrow crawl passages, none fully investigated.

Lastly, on the crest of the above hill a doline was found with three shafts leading off from it, one investigated to depth of 40 ft. with muddy passages.

As can be seen from the above report, caves abound in the newly burnt area. It is essential that the area be explored and caves numbered before the regrowth takes hold of the area. If anyone can help us please contact Max.

John Parker.

(Good to see our cavity conscious caver is back on the job. Welcome back John!)

JF 71, and others, Florentine Valley area - 16/7/78.

Party: John Parker, Max Jeffries and Tin(dog).

Purpose of the trip was to explore JF 71 on Leo Thorne's Road in the Florentine Valley, and to show Max caves found in the last weekends expeditions in the above area.

Rigged a ladder down the entrance slope of JF 71, then pushed through a narrow passage to the left to enter a large rubble stream chamber. Scrambled through, over and under numerous large boulders, till eventually we entered a narrow rift that led to a chamber with numerous formations. From this a passage passed into a cavern of massive proportions with the walls and roof covered in beautiful formations and the floor made up of large dunes of sandy mud. This was then followed along for 100 yards with numerous passages and chambers leading off and in the floor several large, still pools of water.

At this point my light failed, so we exited rapidly to the surface for spare lights.

Next we explored a narrow tube, from which the sound of water could be heard. We let down 60 ft. of ladder and battled down through slimy, clinging mud to a small creek that flowed in a completely unexpected direction and which sumped off after a short distance.

It appears that the first chamber located was the original first level, only flooded during high water periods - the creek now having cut down to a level at least 25 feet below the original level.

Much exploration remains to be carried out in this fascinating cave especially if a passage can be found to the main creek.

From here we followed the same ridge along to see some other caves located last week, Tin accompanying us through a small tunnel crawl outflow cave.

Two new caves were located at the far end of the ridge, one deep shaft on the crest of the hill and another being a dry inflow cave at the base of the ridge, but we did not have enough time to explore them.

John Parker.

Florentine Valley area - 22/7/78.

L. and P. - John Parker and Tin(dog).

The aim of this trip was to further explore the area at the end of Leo Thorne's Road.

Firstly looked at the last limestone crest on the left of the road - 3 un-numbered pots looked at. All contain numerous beautiful formations - and one of the caves has extensive passages.

One ridge back from the above crest a 'crawl' cave was found but not explored.

Further along the valley two adjacent caves were found, one being a dry inflow cave - not explored; the other being a scrambly, crawl cave through massive fallen boulders with very dangerous talus still hanging in the roof - some decoration exists in protected parts of the cave.

One last cave was discovered just before it got dark - an entrance pitch of 30 ft. involved, to enter what appears to be a large chamber.

Again, as I have stated in previous reports, cavers wanting to look at some unexplored caves instead of tramping off to the usual few that are constantly looked at "get up off your asses" and explore some of the caves in the Florentine and Junea area that remain uninvestigated. There certainly is no shortage of caves.

John Parker.

Florentine Valley area - 29,30/7/78.

Leader: Max Jeffries, Party: John Parker.

Again the purpose of the trip was to investigate caves at the end of Leo Thorne's Road. On the Saturday I located a number of new caves in the above area, partially exploring some.

Sunday: Saw Max and myself prepared for a big caving day loaded up with gear and Mars bars to look at the caves found on the previous day.

All caves were on the Settlement Road side of Leo Thorne's Road and the un-named road. The first cave looked at was within feet of L. Thorne's Road - consisting of a low crawl passage of 40 ft. ending in a pitch of 10 ft. then continuing on in a muddy shute - some decoration, draught.

The next cave explored must rate as the biggest entrance hole in the lower Florentine Valley, being at least 60 ft. by 25 ft. with an entrance pitch of 30 ft. Some passages, walls well decorated, draught present - marks of a platypus across the floor.

Four other adjacent caves looked at, all numberable - one with further prospects for exploration.

In the next limestone crest four other caves were looked at. The first was an abandoned inflow cave - exploration involved muddy crawls, several places had to be dug out; cave certainly not fully explored; three entrances located. The other three caves are further along the same ridge. Two of these were found to link up in a loop and the other cave consisted of a low entrance continuing on in a long muddy crawl - numerous passages, exploration incomplete.

Three caves were looked at near the un-named road. Two consisted of rubble filled crawls, but the third had a thirty foot entrance pitch into a large chamber with a well decorated roof. From here a number of passages led off and a further 25 ft. pitch was found. Exploration incomplete.

The last cave looked at appears to be an old inflow cave, long since abandoned by the stream. Low, difficult entrance into a large high-roofed chamber, well decorated with a number of side passages. Laddered down 20 ft. into collapsed chamber with a small stream flowing through at the base of it. High up a sloping mud bank a passage leads off. Looks like the old first level stream passage but we did not continue explorations.

After scrambling out of this cave two very muddy and tired cavers toddled back to the car after a most successful caving day.

John Parker.

FRANKLIN RIVER TRIP.

Some members would like to go on an expedition to the Franklin River. The banks of the river are limestone in many places and some caves are situated near the river. The trip would involve rubber-rafting and/or canocing down the Franklin River then on to the Gordon River returning to Strahan via the "Denison Star", the total trip taking between 5 - 10 days.

If anyone is interested in this expedition could they please appear at the next General Meeting at the Wheatsheaf Hotel at 8 p.m. on September 6th. OR write to the Secretary, Box 416 P.O., SANDY BAY, 7005 preferably before the date of the above meeting.

ANNUAL TRIP.

The possibility of making Maydena the venue for the Annual Caving trip was suggested at the last meeting and discussed. There is a lot of work that needs to be done in this area - the Junee Ridge needs surveying to tie up the positions of all the caves, significant caves could be surveyed, and as can be seen from John Parker's trip reports there is plenty of horizontal caving as well for those who are not keen on the vertical. Those who want a break from caving - well the homestead needs a face lift!

Another asset is that the area is not isolated and participants could arrive and depart when convenient. Despite the fact that the Junee-Florentine

is one of the longest known caving areas in Tasmania there is still a lot of scope in the area and a lot of (under)ground work still remains to be covered.

T.G.

(Continued from Page 1.)

of this club, on the arrival of a second daughter, Anne Michelle. Andrew and Ros are currently residing on Maria Island.

* John Parker has returned from the wilds of New Guinea and has been making up for lost time locating caves in the Florentine Valley. Welcome back!

* Alex Tubb, subject to A.Goede's trip leaders approval (and the paying of his subscription) has been made a full member. Welcome to the mob.

* Articles for the Spiel may be left with Bill Nicholson at the City Disposals Shop in Murray St. He will then pass them on to Caroline.

* Ask Max about the difference between tubes and "tubes" - he's sure got a tail to tell.

* A book in which to record all club trips is being prepared and will be left at the quartermaster's residence. People going on a trip should register before departing indicating intended area to be visited, time due back, party, etc.

WOLF HOLE.

On the 5th of Aug. a party consisting of Bill Nicholson, Ian Gothard, Pavel Ruzicka, John Walton, Peter Watts and Alex Tubb, battled their way up Hell's Passage and after much negotiation of waterfalls and narrow passages located what may well be an alternative entrance to the Wolf Hole. It has been suggested that this entrance might be what was known as the Cub Hole but was dynamited in the early days of the club's caving activities. A proposed further exploratory trip is planned for the 19th or 20th of August. - see Ian Gothard.

I will be attending the Annual Dinner:(tick if attending).

There will be in my party.(Please indicate extra people you are bringing).

RETURN TO SECRETARY PLEASE.

Annual trip - alternative suggestions.

Any other suggestions concerning the Annual trip please, either send suggestions to the Secretary before September 2nd. or make your views known at the General Meeting, September 6th, Meeting Room, Wheatsheaf Hotel at 8 P.M.

Area: Dates:

Aim of trip:

Special equipment(?)

Prerequisite capabilities:

Party limit(if applicable):

Other comments:

.

.

.

Mag. North.

GORMENGHAST - JF 35

Florentine Valley.

Surveyed by T.C.C. 16/4/72 & 5/8/72.

(P.Shaw, W.Lehmann, A.Goede, J.Donnelly.)

Drawn by Peter Shaw.

SCALE: 1:1200.

Instruments:

100 ft. fibron tape Accuracy: nearest 6 inches.

Suunto Compass " nearest degree.

Suunto Clinometer " nearest degree.

Passage widths and heights estimated.

Total surveyed passage length: 1907 feet.

Total depth: 420 feet.

Extract from trip report, Speleo Spiel No. 71.

August 1972.

" The weather was fine but overcast as we set off from the F 9 Road at 9.30 a.m. Just before the turn-off to Gormenghast, we investigated a small stream that flows across the track and found that it sank ten feet from the track. After opening up the hole into which it was sinking, we found a body-sized steeply sloping slot with 100 percent friction and no footholds, at which stage we realized that we were late for Gormenghast and had to go". Has this entrance ever been further investigated?

Shrimp
Squeeze.

12' waterfall

9' waterfall

12' waterfall

10' waterfall

10' waterfall

ROCKFALL
VERY
LOOSE
TALUS.

ENTRANCE.