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Newsletter of the Tasmanian Caverneering Club. Established 1946



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## NEWSLETTER OF THE AUSTRALIAN CAVE NEERING CLUB.

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FORWARD PROGRAMME:

- August 11,12 - Sat.and Sun. Florentine Area: Welcome Stranger, Frankcombe's, Beginners Luck, etc. Acting Leader: Peter Watts.
- August 15th - COMMITTEE MEETING, 7 Rupert Avenue, New Town, at 8 p.m.
- September 5th - GENERAL MEETING, 7 Rupert Avenue, New Town, starts 8 p.m.  
PLEASE note change of venue.
- SEPTEMBER 14th - FRIDAY NIGHT: ANNUAL DINNER. Unfortunately a venue has not yet been finalized but rest assured that details will be available in plenty of time.
- September 19 - COMMITTEE MEETING: 7 Rupert Avenue, New Town, 8 p.m.
- SEPT. 1st Week - National Conference on Outdoor Education - assistance is required by Bill Tonalin for possible Exit trip. Phone Bill on 30 6214 if interested. N.B. Trip will be at weekend.
- January 12-27, 1980 - ANNUAL TRIP: Cracroft Area - including systematic mapping and exploration.
- Wednesday night GET-TO-GETHERS - Stuart Nicholas' place, 7 Rupert Avenue, New Town.  
If you can't get there but need to know details for a trip Ph:28 3054.  
Everyone welcome - E.Y.O., or slides or anything else of entertainment value!
- In the near future: - Exit Cave: familiarization and general look around prior to the commencement of surveying. N.B. This is NOT a surveying trip!  
Leader: Albert Goede. (Stay tuned for the actual date.)

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EDITORIAL.

What can I write about? Nothing has been happening! I'm sure you are all getting sick of my raves about slackness and apathy and all that sort of thing so I'll rave about something completely different.

As you will no doubt read in a trip report in this Spiel a cave recently explored by the Maydena Branch shows some promise since it has been pursued beyond the usual rock filled entrance into a steeply descending chamber or passage. This cave is just one of many which I am convinced exist in the area commonly referred to as the Junee. Despite about ten years of fairly intensive exploration more entrances are regularly being found. Surely this would make the area almost unique in Australia in that new entrances can so easily be found. Because of that every effort should be made to protect it from intrusions by industry - a lot is in the Mt.Field National Park and hence is relatively safe but some is not and should be preserved for future generations of cavers to enjoy.

Stuart Nicholas.

- \* At the last general meeting, two new people were proposed and elected as full members. They are John Penwill and Dave Southgate. Congratulations and welcome to the mob!
- \* Speaking of new members, Nick Hume has at last revealed his place of abode which turns out to be 9 Primrose Place, Sandy Bay.
- \* Contrary to what you may have read in last month's Spiel, weekly get-togethers ARE being held at Stuart Nicholas' place( 7 Rupert Ave.) Apparently a slip of the finger caused "w" to become "t", thereby converting the word "now" to "not", which all means that not is not right and now is. If you can't understand that jazz, come along anyway and DYO (or anybody else's), slides, pictures or any other forms of entertainment are welcome!
- \* Being an ex-caver must do something strange to some people. This has certainly happened to two of our longer-standing members - Phil Robinson has just been married and Brian Collin has taken up bicycle racing!  
 Congratulations Phil and Jenny and all the best for the future.  
 Congrats. also to Brian who won his first race the other day. Maybe bike racing is an intermediate step between orienteering and lawn bowls.
- \* As mentioned last month we no longer have the beer ticket franchise at the Wheatsheaf Hotel. For the past year and a half or so T.C.C. has used this establishment as a base for meetings and so forth. On behalf of all the members I must thank Dave and Leanne Cook for putting up with us over this period and allowing T.C.C. to make substantial monetary gains from the arrangement. Thanks Dave and Leanne.
- \* Our hard working and enthusiastic CAVSAR Officer, Bill Nicholson has decided to leave civilian life for a while and join the Army. Hence the position of Cave Search and Rescue Officer is now vacant and an election or appointment for this most important position will take place at the September General Meeting. Carrying on from where Peter Watts left off Bill has established an excellent liaison with Police S & R which has helped both parties.  
 Bill will be sorely missed by us all and I'm sure everyone joins with me in wishing him well with his future career and thanking him for his efforts in the past.
- \* The mining lease taken out by BHP extends south and west from the southern boundary of Mt. Field National Park, not from the western boundary as stated last month. The southern limit is in the Snowy Range area and the north-west limit is the area of Tim Shea. The total lease area is 9759 sq.km.
- \* On the weekend of the 11,12 August two trips were planned, one to the Florentine and the other to Exit. This incredible enthusiasm was dealt a death-blow when heavy snow and rain fell late in the week. Despite the fact that the rain in Spain fell mainly on the plain, the rain and snow was a pain and a blow since it stopped us all from going below!?

\* \* \* \* \*

KARST IN CHINA KARST IN CHINA KARST IN CHINA KARST IN CHINA KARST

There are still two copies of this book left. Price \$12.00 plus \$2.00 for postage (any change from postage will be refunded). Of the \$12.00 the usual \$4.00 still goes into T.C.C. funds. Further copies are on the way from China but a price increase is possible with this shipment. Contact Therese Goede, 8 Bath Street, Battery Point, TAS. 7000. for your copy.

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Best wishes for a speedy recovery to Sue Feeney - it would appear she has caught the current bug. Please get better soon, this temporary typists fingers are getting notted!

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ORDERS for Norm Poulter's colour prints may be given to Albert Goede not later than at the next Gen.Meeting and a bulk order can be sent. See last Spiel.

TRIP REPORTS:

Florentine Valley, 21-7-79.

Party: Max Jeffries, Geoff Fisher, Chris and Diana Davies(Maydena Branch), Tim Douglass, Leonie Steinol, Geoff Lee (itinerants).

Left Maydena for "the Valley" about 10 a.m. to first check a small hole Max had seen on his last day with A.N.M.

The cave, which we numbered 340, was a few metres off the Tiger Road and about 100 m. before Ken Road. Entry was through a tight squeeze onto a rock pile which had to be moved. Threehundred and forty was a maximum of 6 m. deep with about 30 m. of horizontal chamber and rocky, muddy crawling. Disappointing!

Next was a barbie lunch on the road, then on to 321, 1.5 km. up Leo Thorne Road from the Florentine Valley Road. When visited previously this cave had a crystal clear pond which stopped full exploration. We had been calling this cave "The Pond Cave".

Down the tight sloping squeeze into an antechamber then main chamber where the pond was (was being the operative word!) - the 'pond' was gone! So we all had a rabbit around in the muddy crawling passages, all of which appeared to head back to the surface. Geoff Fisher proved unable to resist joining in the fun, even though he was carrying his own personal  $\text{CaCO}_3$  formation from ankle to groin.

Came out of the cave and it was getting dark so that was it for the day.

Chris Davies.

Florentine Valley, Saturday, 4-8-79.

Party: Chris and Diana Davies, Sue Feeney, Geoff Fisher(Maydena Branch), Stuart Nicholas.

Making an unusually early start we arrived at the ANM gate at 9.30 a.m., having first picked up some gear from Max's place. We went with the aim of investigating a 'potential cave' on the southern boundary of the Mt. Field National Park, approximately halfway along the track between the Junee Road and The Chairman.

Chris had found the cave a couple of months earlier but didn't have the ladders required for the entrance pitch. The cave is about 300 m. south of the track at the foot of a limestone overhang. After thrashing around in the wet scrub we found the entrance and quickly rigged a ladder to begin exploration. Although fairly spacious and consistently descending, the cave gave the initial impression of being a series of gaps in a large rockfall. However, formations and masses of moon-milk gave us added incentive. After a tortuous downhill slide we came into a large, angled chamber. Stuart discovered a large, deep hole in the floor which looked like stopping our progress. A scout-around revealed an alternate descent which was negotiable without ladders. Chris, Stuart and I headed off expecting to soon be at the bottom. Some time later we were well below the floor level of the previously mentioned hole and confronted by a 20 m. sheer pitch. Our exploration had to end there, at a depth we estimated between 80 - 100 m.

Being pleased with ourselves we retreated to the surface and cooked lunch over a (very) slow and smoking fire. The persistent drizzle eventually drove us out but we were keen to return at a later date with more equipment to finish the job.

Geoff Fisher.

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Letter to the Editor.

10 Park St., Wollongong, N.S.W. 2500.  
17th April, 1979.

Dear Sir,

As a vertical caver familiar with Khazad-dum, I would like to make some comments on Bruce McIntosh's suggestion that a permanent telephone line be placed there.

The existance of a telephone line would be of little assistance in many difficult situations, as the efficiency of such a line depends on having someone on the

surface end to communicate with. Generally this would not occur until someone had gone up to the entrance after the party was overdue. An accident could have occurred hours earlier and the line would have been no use because no one would have been on the surface end.

In the light of some previous "incidents" in this cave some steps can be taken to reduce the accident potential. The chances of an exhaustion or exposure case are reduced if efforts are made to stay dry. New bolts should be placed on the second and last waterfall pitches so that they can be negotiated dry. The other four stream pitches can be rigged dry relatively easily. This also allows for an escape if water levels do rise.

A telephone would undoubtedly be invaluable in some emergencies; but what about the accident potential in any other serious vertical cave? A line kept in Maydena or Hobart could be used in other rescues. I do not believe that K.D. has any special dangers which require it to be singled out for special treatment in this manner (other than, that of the deep caves it is more likely to be visited by an inexperienced party). As far as vertical caves go K.D. is relatively free of the dangers caused by loose rocks and rope abrasion problems on pitches. I vote no.

David J. Martin.

P.S. Some rigging suggestions for K.D. will be published in the S.S.S. Journal soon.

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Article reprinted from NSS News: February, 1979. (Of DEFINITE interest !).

#### DEATH IN CANADIAN HOLE.

John Gerber, an active caver in the Philadelphia Grotto, died in Canadian Hole Cave, Pocahontas County, West Virginia on July 3, 1978, during a caving trip with Bob Snyder, Ed LaRock, Linda Baker and Eileen Caya. The cavers entered Canadian Hole at 12.30 p.m. for the purpose of exploring "Monster Cavern". The accident occurred on the return trip at approximately 9.30 p.m. Entering the cave, the group rigged the narrow Bypass Drop with a Blue Water II rope. Bob Snyder, the last caver down, used a sling and carabiner to hold the rope through the widest part of the narrow crevice. Another party with a cave radio followed and it is assumed they left the sling holding the rope in place. Upon returning to the base of the Bypass Drop, John, Linda and Eileen were to go out first, leaving Ed and Bob to derig the drop. John started up the rope first with his two jumars modified Texas system. He commented on the comfort of his system as he climbed up to the base of the slot. He managed to get his head and chest through the slot but had difficulty getting his lower body and bottom jumar through. Without success he struggled for approximately 20 minutes. Eileen was rigged and decided to ascend and help John. We informed John of this but he declined and said he was going to rappel back down. He said he could not remove his chest jumar and asked if anyone had a knife, but no knife was available. It appears that John burned his chest sling with his carbide lamp in order to disconnect it. Linda and Eileen were on bottom belay when they noticed John slip into the crack about a foot and a half. He rasped, "I can't breathe..." We saw his hands struggling in the slot and after a minute his body went limp, his hands fell to his side, and his carbide lamp fell down the pit. We tried communicating with him but to no avail. Realizing that we had to get to John, Eileen started up the rope. She got to John and observed his chin and helmet wedged sideways in the slot. John was wearing a "Joe Brown" helmet with a four point suspension non-elastic chin strap. The strap was secured tightly under his chin. Eileen was able to free John from the crevice so his body was hanging by his seat harness. Eileen thought she could feel a slight heart beat and breathing, but she was not sure. The only noticeable injury was a cut on his chin where it had been lodged in the slot. John was lowered and CPR was administered. The elapsed time from when John slipped until he was lowered was about 20 minutes. At this point no pulse or breathing could be detected. It was decided that Linda would stay with Eileen in the cave and Bob and Ed would go for help. Upon reaching the slot, Bob found John's upper jumar still on the rope. John had apparently burned off the chest harness and fell the length of the slack between his jumar and rappel gear. His helmet and chin caught in the slot, and the chin strap crushed his larynx. A crushed larynx was later confirmed as the cause of death by a medical examination. "