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Southern Tasmanian Caverneers

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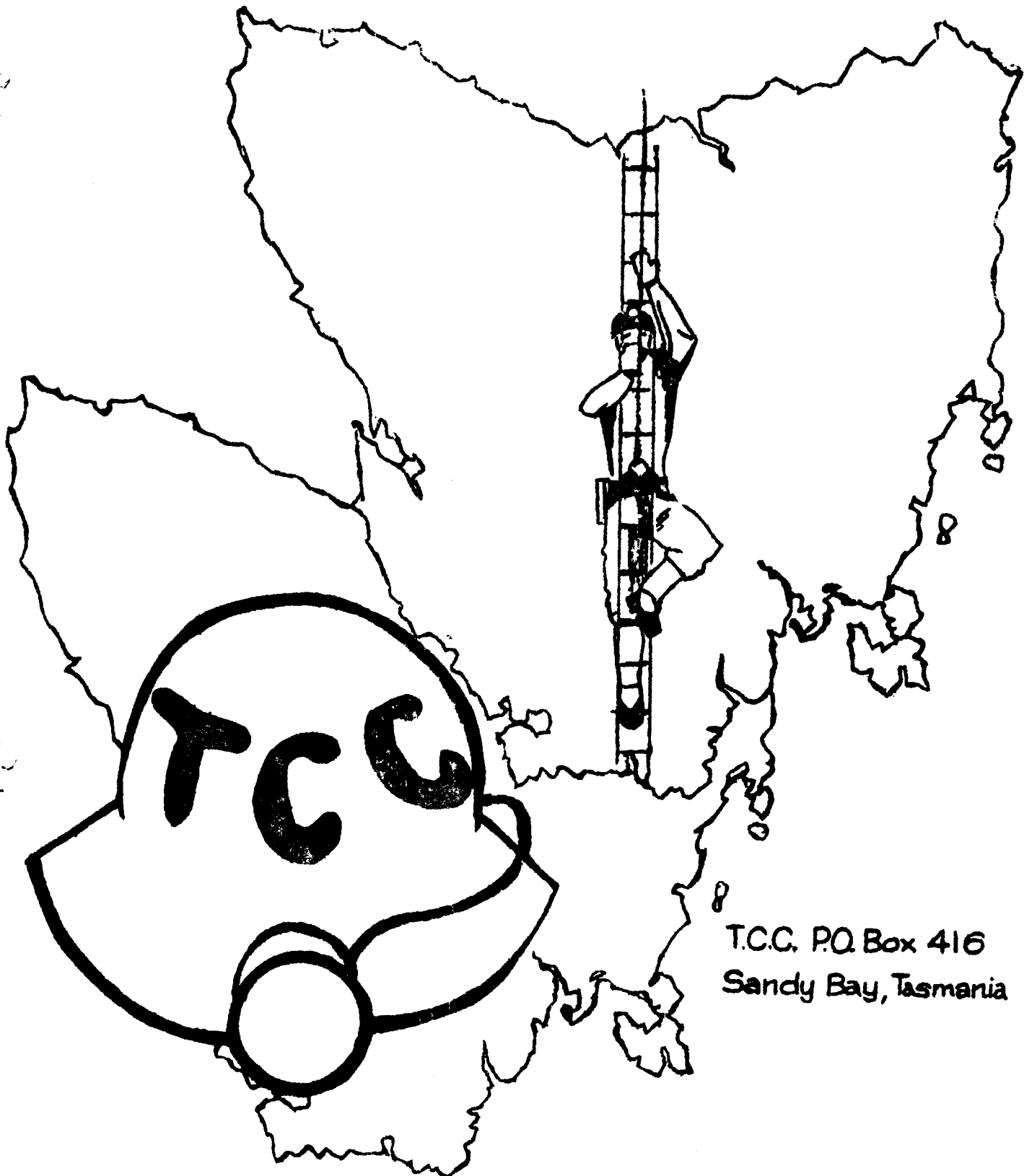
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SPELEO SPIEL

Newsletter of the Tasmanian Caverneering Club

DECEMBER 1978 NO 141.

T.C.C. Established 1946



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

Newsletter of the Tasmanian Caverneering Club.

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Single copies 40 cents.

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FORWARD PROGRAMME.

January 13 - 29 - ANNUAL TRIP.

for details refer to the green sheet at end of this issue.

Jan. 24-28 - Exit Cave. Surveying trip by Rawleigh Webb from WASG. Also possible Mini Martin trip during this period.(Can anyone find it?)

February 7th. - GENERAL MEETING. 8 p.m. Wheatsheaf Hotel, Macquarie St.

EDITORIAL

Apologies for the lateness of the Spiel. Unfortunately bulk mailing facilities closed on Dec.6th, the day of our last general meeting, and did not re-open until Dec. 29th. so it was not possible to post this issue in time for Christmas. HOWEVER, it is still worth while reading.

It appears that a misunderstanding, or perhaps a lack of communication caused some inconvenience at Maydena recently. Unfortunately the Chairman trip indicated in the November Spiel's forward programme had to be cancelled, owing to exams and so on. The Annans, showing their usual generosity, were all set to offer help and also show some Canberra visitors what "hard" caving was all about but after waiting a considerable time they gave it away as a bad joke.

I feel that everyone in the club can take a lesson from this and make sure that all concerned know if a major trip of this type is cancelled or postponed.

Having got that off my chest I can move onto brighter things. All looks set for a bumper summer season of caving particularly with the Junee onslaught well within sight.

This being the last Spiel for the year I'll take this opportunity of wishing all cavers a Merry Christmas and Prosperous New Year. May your protectors be plentiful and never slip. There will be no January issue of the newsletter but you can expect another thrill packed edition early in February.

REMEMBER - we value each other's friendship - that is what being a club member is all about - so we would like to see you again in 1979.

REMEMBER - no more mate - you're driving!

CLUB NEWS.

* How lucky can you be? Peter Watts, after much saving and scrounging, has packed his bags, put on his boots, and headed off to the land of the long white cloud for a few months. He intends to do a climbing course and then just wander around walking, climbing and so on as the mood takes him.

Good luck Pete, we hope to hear about your activities soon.

* In case anyone is interested - the editor still has a wet suit for sale.

It would fit someone smaller than me and its worth underground is without question.

* Yes, you too can own a piece of great caving history. You can hold it in both hands and breath in with a pride never before experienced. Yes - the one and only, tried and proven Kodak XL 350 movie camera, as used in the great JF 110 exploratory trips. This exceptionally fine piece of machinery can be yours for only \$50. Yes, just think, ONLY \$50.

Hurry and send \$50 in small unmarked notes to Bill Nicholson for this once only offer.

* Copies of the book "KARST IN CHINA" are still obtainable from Therese Goede-Vermeulen for \$12 (of which \$4 goes into club funds).

* TCC has just acquired 200m. of gleaming white nylon laid rope to replace some of our rather ancient belay ropes. Cut lengths are: 3 x 40m.; 1 x 50m.; 1 x 30m.

* Following the recent Kubla Khan trip, a proposal has been put forward that a gate or permanent fixture be installed in the easy entrance to the Dulcimer. This would mean that the only access to this section of the cave would be via an interesting (?) climb.

Opinions on this proposal and the gating of Kubla as a whole should be sent to Bill Tomalin as soon as possible.

* Still on the subject of gates, King George V Cave at Hastings has been temporarily locked by Albert Goede to safeguard an experiment he is conducting in the cave. For anyone wishing to visit the cave the key is available from the cave superintendent at Hastings.



TRIP REPORTS.

Florentine Valley - 12-11-78.

The purpose of this trip was to number caves so far located in the Florentine Valley. Having no official tags left temporary plastic tags held in place with a nail were used.

Began numbering in the Settlement Road area.

- JF 176 - First entrance in a creek system that crosses Settlement Road before Beginners Luck Ridge. The cave comprises part of the creek cave but sumps off upstream.
- JF 177 - Second entrance into the same creek system - more extensive part of the system - walkable all of the way; many shell fossils of all shapes and sizes.
- JF 178 - This is the other end of JF 177 - very low; up the other way (upstream) it sumps off quickly; may be possible in summer period.
- JF 179 - Cave just north of where the above stream first enters the limestone. Low entrance that opens up with about 200 feet of passage; a small cave was noted 200 feet north along the ridge.
- JF 180 - Cave 5 feet from JF 179 (south towards the creek). Small pitch, narrow, crawly cave, may take water from the creek in high water time; the cave emerges out where the creek turns to enter the limestone for the first time. The exit of the cave was numbered JF 181.
- JF 181 - Alternate entrance to JF 180.
- JF 182 - Entrance where the above mentioned stream system first enters the limestone; passage quickly ends in a large pool of water; worth looking at in low water conditions.
- JF 183 - South of JF 182, situated in a horseshoe-shaped trench; cave consists of high roofed fissure through which the same old creek flows - enters cave through a sump pool, flows through the fissure, then enters another sump. Enter cave via 20 ft. pitch. A few feet south of JF 183 a round muddy shute was noted - 25 ft. pitch into it.
- JF 184 - Extensive cave to be found just east from the above creek system,

in an area just near Settlement Road among trees that have just missed out on the burn. 20 ft. pitch down into the mid-point of the system; downstream the streamway winds through the low-roofed passage with a number of old levels in evidence - stream ends in water filled sump; upstream the passage varies from walkable to a crawl through the stream and finally ends in a low-roofed pool. Stripped off and attempted to push on further - might be possible - but proverbially cold and muddy; some formations upstream, also a number of what I presume are the Tasmanian mountain shrimp.

- JF 185 - Small cave on from Beginners Luck on the same side of the road, very near the road in the face of a small ridge - can be seen from the road - cave consists of a shelter cave with squeeze passage leading off - this passage continues on down to a chamber with a number of formations and central pool.
- JF 186 - Cave to be found again to the left of Settlement Road $\frac{1}{4}$ mile on from JF 185; entrance is in a face that faces east; a sloping passage leads down to a horizontal fissure passage; number of formations, shutes leading down to a sump.
- JF 187 - Cave to be found to the left (going out) at the end of Settlement Road; dry inflow cave, small entrance, walkable at first then a squeeze ending in a small chamber.
- JF 188 - Small cave 30 ft. west on the side of same ridge; shelter cave; numerous very solid stalactites; connection with collapsed doline behind cave.
- JF 189 - Pretty little cave directly above JF 187 on top of ridge; three adjacent entrances.
- JF 190 - Again north of JF 189 for about 200 ft. above a large doline; small difficult entrance into low chamber followed by a squeeze into long chamber with numerous formations; shute down to what appears to be a sump, not investigated.
- Noted a trench between JF189 and JF190 - narrow passage leading off with probable connection with JF 190.
- JF 191 - Next ridge on from JF 190, above a line of dolines; cave consists of 25 ft. pitch into a well decorated chamber.
- JF 192 - Closely adjacent to JF 191 in a northerly direction; walkable shute in small chamber, some formation. Noted a small cave again north of JF 192, small horizontal cave.
- JF 193 - Cave to the right of Settlement Road going out; cave in the last ridge at the end of the road - 50 yards from the road on the northern end of ridge; initial 20 ft. pitch followed by squeeze to a further 20 ft. pitch into a chamber with some formations; a dirty swine of a cave loaded with mud.
- JF 194 - NW of JF 193 - by 40 ft; cave consists of 30 ft. pitch, some formations; similar sentiments as for above cave for this one.
- North of JF 194 there is what appears to be an intake cave at base of ridge; tight entrance but could be possible; has not been investigated.
- JF 195 - What we call "The Mushroom Cave"; when first found it was full of mushrooms; cave to be found on a high ridge just on from Beginners Luck ridge; has a spiral passage of about 150 ft. then blanks off.
- JF 196 - Small horizontal cave close to the road between Beginners Luck and JF 185; three entrances - central one numbered. Noted a small cave a few feet from Settlement Road just down the ridge from JF 196.
- JF 197 - Cave on the right of Frizons Road, $\frac{1}{4}$ mile from turn off, 100 ft. from the road; very small entrance into long walkable sloping-roofed cave; number of shutes down into sump; some formations on the walls, where they are out of reach of the mud.
- JF 198 - Cave to the left of Frizons Road - straight across from JF 197 on the opposite side of road; cave would be 100 feet from road; small entrance with 20 ft. pitch, then horizontal passage; number of bones calcified in the rimpools.
- JF 199 - Cave west of JF 198 at end of ridge; 20 ft. pitch followed by crawl and squeezes with a further 10 ft. pitch into a series of large muddy sumps connected by squeezes.

Noted west of JF 198 at base of ridge a narrow fissure cave.

(I assume that SCS has been allocated numbers from 200 - 299 so I have numbered on from 300.)

- JF 300 - Cave a few yards east of JF 199; entrance halfway along the length of the cave; downstream, towards the Florentine River the cave consists of low, squatting passage with numerous formation - some possibility of extension; back up the cave the cave becomes high-roofed with a number of formations; a chute going down into a farther chamber was not looked at.
- JF 301 - Cave appears to be an old outflow of Frankcombes Cave close to JF 260(SCS); narrow muddy passages.
- JF 302 - Cave a little further along road from JF 301; more extensive formation; stream of non-flowing water; dangerous entrance choked with logs.
- JF 303 - Another hole a little way north of JF 302; small entrance in side of collapsed trench; not explored; entrance very narrow.
- JF 304 - Directly above JF 303 it has two adjacent entrances; 20 ft. pitch into large chamber; not explored.
- JF 305 - Above JF 48; follow ridge up from JF 48 to a remnant of what looks like a shell shattered tree with holes right through it - about 300 ft. ; cave partly explored to a narrow pitch, number of formations.
- JF 306 - Directly up the ridge from JF 305 - about 100 ft.; narrow entrance needs work on it to get in; appears to be quite deep; not explored.
- JF 307 - Cave found in ridge close to the Florentine River on from JF 48; cave is in the southern tip of ridge and is a low-roofed maze of muddy crawls; other entrances around the base of ridge; also pitches lead down from the crest of ridge.
- JF 308 - A little further north from the above ridge there is a low crawly cave in a low relief ridge; two entrances, the one under the heap of logs being the one numbered.
- JF 309 - Cave to be found in the first ridge off the left of Leo Thornes Rd. (going out); cave has two entrances - connecting a loop - with pool of water at the lowest point.
- JF 310 - Cave further along the ridge from JF 309; cave has two entrances with a creek flowing through the cave after rain; some pure white formation on the roof and walls; cave has entrance pitch of 10 ft.
- JF 311 - Other entrance of JF 310; easier entrance.
- JF 312 - This cave is a few feet from JF 311; the creek that flows through JF 310,311 enters the limestone through far end entrance of JF 312; there are four separate entrances to this cave; from the entrances the cave leads off into a series a muddy crawls of some length; not fully explored.
- JF 313 - Cave to be found in limestone hill behind the ridge containing JF 309 to 312; cave is in base of low cliff; consists of low muddy crawl - may take water when very wet; another cave noted 150 ft. to north in a mass of collapsed boulders.
- JF 314 - Cave in a little spur 20 ft. from the above cave mentioned in the boulder pile; cave has 30 ft. pitch then some low passages.
- JF 315 - Directly above 313; has 15 ft. pitch into chamber with formations; from here a squeeze into another chamber again with formation; lastly another squeeze into a small chamber.
- JF 316 - To be found a few yards north of JF 315 along the top of the ridge; three holes - numbered the central one; the two holes to the south join into a sloping chamber with a muddy crawl for some distance, then sloping pitch into further crawls; the northern hole just leads into a muddy chamber.
- JF 317 - Deep fissure drop of about 50 ft. leading into passage; some formations; found and explored by Max and Steve.
- JF 318 - 120 ft. north of JF 316 and just over the crest of ridge facing Leo Thornes Road; very large hole with 25 ft. pitch down to base of hole;

from here horizontal passages lead off through confused rock falls; some formations; passages also lead down to water filled sump. Called "The Patriot Cave", due to Australian flag flying from a nearby tree.

- JF 319 - 150 ft. north of JF 165 (alternative entrance into JF 87); cave in small rock face that faces south; pitch of 10 ft.; some horizontal crawls; extension possible with work; draught.
- JF 320 - 40 ft. north of JF 319; log choked entrance with small pitch leading into sloping chamber; from here a squeeze passage up into another chamber - close to the surface.
- JF 321 - North again from JF 320; narrow entrance with 20 ft. pitch leading into muddy chamber with crawls horizontally up into the roof and down into another water filled sump; it may be possible to push the cave on past the sump.
- JF 322 - Cave to be found in the only substantial ridge on the right of Leo Thornes Road - JF 322 is in the northern end of the ridge; 10 ft. pitch into well decorated chamber; through a squeeze into another chamber again with formation; then a passage leads downwards pinching off at the end.
Eastwards is a low adjacent ridge in which there is a small spiralling crawl cave.
- JF 323 - South along the top of above ridge near the southern end of it is a small cave; two entrances; some formations.
- JF 324 - Cave located between JF 322 and 323; sloping entrance through a squeeze into a small chamber, then through another squeeze to where a number of passages lead off; cave quite extensive; some nice decoration.
- JF 325 - Alternate entrance to JF 71 a few feet south of main entrance.
- JF 326 - North of JF 71 at the north west corner of the ridge; cave has a large entrance; 15 ft. pitch with the cave continuing on under large boulder amid mountains of mud; a creek can be heard in the base of the cave; not fully explored.
- JF 327 - In base of ridge north of 326; dry, low crawl along twisting passages to a small chamber with formations; crawls lead off from here.
- JF 328 - 10 ft. west of the above cave along base of ridge; small entrance; very similar to above.
- JF 329 - Cave in the easterly face of the same ridge as JF 327, 328; entrance under a mass of logs; has been intake cave at some stage; narrow entrance then the cave opens right up; a pitch of 20 ft. follows and leads into a sump - with creek flowing through; crawl passage above sump passes through nice formations into large chamber, well decorated; still continues but not fully explored.
- JF 330 - North along face of ridge from 329 near crest, about 200 ft. along; narrow entrance then opens up; some formations; narrows right down near end.
- JF 331 - Northeast of 329 in separate ridge that can be found if followed right on from the end of Leo Thornes Road; small entrance through hairy boulders opening out into large chamber with formations; from the entrance to the chamber, a pitch of 30 ft.; passages lead off from here and a further 25 ft. pitch in sight; not fully explored.
- JF 332 - Very close to un-named road on from Leo Thornes Road; to be found in the first ridge on the left behind a collapsed intake cave; cave has a small entrance dropping through some nasty boulders to a muddy sump; a small cave noted right over the intake cave among collapsed rubble.

Two active intake caves remain to be explored in Leo Thornes Road, one crosses the road and enters the end of Limestone Ridge, the other passes into a large doline just before the road - would need low water to explore.

On the way back stopped to look at Cashions Creek after it crosses the road. Within 20 ft. of the road the creek enters a face of limestone - continues through this for 150 ft., walkable all the way, with low side passage coming in from the right; from here it veers to the left in a collapsed hole. Above a 30 ft. pitch leads down into the creek again but water level high so could not explore.

The scrub in the area is really vicious, but with this result in half an hours looking the area does look promising.

Sorry about this lengthy report but had to get the b...y job finished - that cave in the Chairman area sounded like a real stinker.

John Parker.

Florentine area - 16/12/78.

Have at last tagged all the caves with permanent number plates - that is up to JF 332.

While numbering at the end of Leo Thornes Road came across three new caves - one was numbered with a tag - not included in the list sent in a few weeks ago - JF 200. Cave consists of a muddy pitch of about 10 ft. into a sloping chamber with two near parallel passages leading off; passage on right is dead straight, 12 ft. high - explored for 120 ft. still going; the other is a twisting passage of 6 ft. height, 100 ft. long, narrows at end. Numerous shell fossils in walls. Cave is situated in the southern face of limestone crest on the left of Leo Thornes Road - crest near end of road - best found by following the first creek that crosses road down to the face - then follow hill around towards river - cave close to base.

The other two - either side of the above cave - will be described when permanently tagged.

The burnt areas in the valley are now being transformed by the growth of millions of thistles and the regeneration of manferns making location of caves rather difficult - snakes abound, especially on warm days.

On the way home again looked at the downstream cave of Cashions Creek mentioned in the last report. Pushed along a low stream passage to area where the main creek is joined by a stream flowing out of a very low passage - will return with a pair of swimming togs to investigate this further.

About 100 ft. west of this cave a large pool exists at the base of a limestone face; no passages lead off, may be submerged tunnels. In the water saw a trout - at least $1\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. swimming around.

When passing through The Gap stopped to investigate a hole found by Phil Voss a few days ago. Cave consisted of small entrance pitch into a muddy chamber, followed by a low mud slide and pitch into a muddy rubble filled chamber that is blocked by rock fall. The whole cave looks and feels as if it is being held up by a hope and a prayer.

John Parker.

P.S. Sorry if this sounds like you have heard it before - but we need a few more of those aluminium oblongs.

Florentine area - 26/11/78.

Affixed permanent tags 176-197. Also 309-312. New cave dug out near Beginners Luck, no light so will explore later.

John Parker.

Florentine area - 2/12/78.

Purpose of the trip was to continue putting the permanent tags on caves located in the Florentine Valley and to look at a few remaining holes near Beginners Luck.

Saturday turned out to be one of the best days seen in the valley for a long time, with a beautiful cloudless sky and crystal like clarity of the surrounding mountains - not really the type of day to go underground.

As mentioned in the last report a new hole was located near Settlement Road with a temporary tag JF 333 affixed. On investigation the cave turned out to be quite extensive alternating between low muddy crawls and walkable passages - cave not fully investigated but digging will be required; cave contains numerous shell fossils - some of very large size. Three other caves looked at - those beginning in the ridge just east of Beginners Luck - all of similar layout, with a steep entrance shute tapering off into crawls - temporarily numbered 334, 335 and 336 - will be fully described when permanent tags fixed.

From here went over to Leo Thornes Road to continue numbering; tags fixed to caves JF 313 - 321 and also 323 and 324 numbered. As can be seen further tags will be needed not only for the above but also for caves Max knows of on Tiger Road and caves in the area of the Wherrett.

John Parker.

Florentine Valley - 12/11/78.

Leader: Max Jeffries. Party: Geoff Fisher, Chris Davies, Diana Davies and Sue Feeney.

Off as usual to an early start, arriving at Max's a little after nine. We settled down to a cup of coffee and chewed over plans for the day. Max decided to come with us despite the fact that he was recovering from a bad cold that had laid him low for a few days. We headed for Cashions Creek Road aiming to have a look at 88 and to find a cave Tim had mentioned to Max. 88 was located easily and after pulling away all the stinging nettles (damn stuff!!!) away from the entrance we made our way in - an interesting horizontal cave with some nice formation and plenty of tunnels to explore.

Back out; time for lunch and for spotting the fish in the creek. Then we were off to find Tim's cave with only a few vague clues as to its whereabouts - "at or near the end of the road, on the ridge to the right, near a big stump or tree". Of course, in that area neither big stumps nor big trees are uncommon, so it was a case of spread out and hunt. Geoff and Chris headed off to the right while Max, Diana and I started covering the left.

Not much luck for a while until I found a promising looking hole although not fitting Tim's description. We cleared the rubbish from the opening to reveal about a 10 ft. drop with enough rocks sticking out to climb on down. At the bottom a narrow passage branched off the well, did a u-turn and opened to stooping height only to come to an end after about 20 ft. Surfaced again via a ladder Max and Diana had dropped and managed to put my hand right on some nettles. OOoch, that smarts!!!

Back to searching. While Max went off through some of the thicker fallen timber, Diana and I headed for the small knoll beside the road. Yet another hole which Diana descended by ladder only to come to an abrupt end about 20 ft. below the surface.

Max, Chris, Diana and I congregated in this area, thinking it was about time to give up when a shout from Geoff sent us all in his direction. Again, only a 20 ft. hole to nowhere. Geoff and Chris were inspired nevertheless and headed off into the fallen timber with new enthusiasm. Max also decided to have another look around while Di and I headed for the knoll again, running a bit short of enthusiasm after clambering around for a good hour in overalls.

It was from here that we heard Max's shout and headed once again back up the ridge. He had found it. Quite a large opening covered by a lattice work of logs one of which we used to secure the ladder. We put down two ladders as it was difficult to decide just how steep the slope of the floor was. A crumbly soil slope from the mouth dropped over an 8 ft. rock face to the floor which, on arrival, was only gently sloping and easily covered without aids. It was a bit slippery though as my aching rear end can testify.

The main chamber is quite large. A second entrance in the ceiling to the left must have been the one Tim found but could not enter as he ran out of ladder. Max and I explored some passage that lead off under the rock shelf below the entrance. We found some nice formations but the tunnel became too narrow and blocked with formation after about 40 ft. The others had ventured off through a small hole at the bottom of the slope to find an exquisite rim-pool surrounded by formations at the end of a 30 ft. crawl. Up the slope opposite the entrance Max found another smallish cavern but no prospect of going further.

We all emerged feeling quite sated after our difficult search and then headed back to Maydena. Accepted Max's tempting offer of another cup of coffee then bade him farewell until next time.

Sue Feeney.

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Reports on trips to The Chairman, JF 137, Kubla Khan have been received and will be published in the next issue.

T.C.C. ANNUAL TRIP

13th - 29th JANUARY, 1979

JUNEE - FLORENTINE AREA.

Members of other Clubs are invited to join the T.C.C. for as much time as they can spare during this period. The task of exploring the new finds in the Florentine Valley is enormous.

Home Base : The Junee Homestead. Ask at the Maydena Shop how to get there.

Lodging under cover for up to 20 people. Level grassy areas available for those who prefer camping or living in vans. Bread, milk, petrol, etc., available in Maydena. Lead-acid batteries for caving lamps can be charged overnight by arrangement.

Saturday 13th : Clean up the Homestead for occupation - get in a wood supply, dig a toilet, etc.

Sunday 14th : "Welcome Stranger" - a nicely decorated cave, five minutes' walk from the car, admirably suited to less-strenuous caving. Party will meet at the Maydena Shop at 9:30 A.M. Bring the appropriate goodies for a barbecue lunch.

Past and less-active members are especially welcome on this trip. Come and stay at the Homestead overnight or join us at the Shop in the morning. Some overalls and lamps available.

Sunday 14th - Monday 29th : Exploration of new discoveries in the Settlement Road area. Priorities to be decided in consultation with John Parker and Max Jeffries - there are over 60 new entrances at present being numbered. (We had to buy a new sheet of aluminium and a cordless electric drill specially.) An all-out effort will be made to look at as many of the promising ones as possible. Maps : The Tasmans 1:100,000 "Wedge" sheet. Large scale copies of the appropriate section of this sheet will be duplicated.

barbecue
Sunday 28th : An evening ~~Sheep Roast~~ at the Homestead. Bring the family up to Maydena for the afternoon/evening and we'll celebrate all the beautiful things we've achieved. (K.D./Exit arranged when we see you, Rawleigh).

QUERIES : Bruce McIntosh, "Springvale", Midwood St, Newtown. 7008.
Phone 281282, or leave a message at the Wheatsheaf Hotel
in Macquarie St. (Ph. 231836)