

COOG

SQUEAKS "BY"

JUNE 1980

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LOCALS' COMMENTS

What do you fellas' find in that cave, any arrow heads?

My dog got lost in that hole once for three days. Came out down by Jake's place 15 miles past Union Junction, he did!

What do you boys want to go in that dark hole for?

WHITE LOBSTER TALK

At 6 feet per shot how long do you suppose it'll take to survey this mess?

Anyone seen a map yet?

White Lobsters too tough for some COG'ers - Gee, no wonder none of the passages end!

CRACKERNECK QUACKS

You cave in Crackerneck - you survey!
Ceilings 8 feet high - but you belly crawl!

NOTE TAKER IN INDIAN DOLL CAVE

Hey! This has got to be a record, you guys put in forty seven stations, 1620 feet, and I didn't have to get up once!

Any of this sound familiar? wdw

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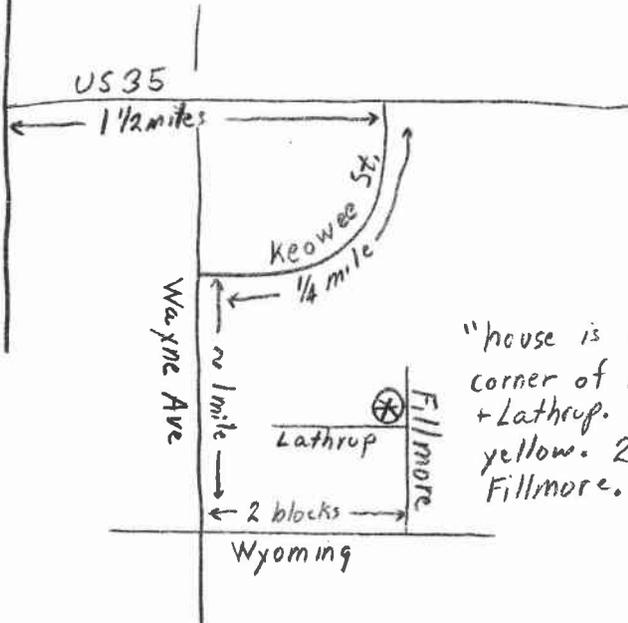
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"house is on
corner of Fillmore
+ Lathrup. It is
yellow. 267
Fillmore."

If you get lost call 256-8344

TIPS FROM A FRUSTRATED PLOTTER

By Paul Unger

As I was plotting the two most recent surveys on the master map, I became confused, befuddled, etc., by the notations, lack of notes, misidentification, etc., which these survey cards exhibited - produced by none other than yours truly. Good thing I was there, in the cave, or I'd never have figured them out. Thus, I was prompted to write this article to remind us of some good survey techniques which may have slipped from our memory.

A good survey, in terms of completeness and accuracy, is like a good rope knot. The best knot is one that is simple and looks good, without extra wraps or loose ends. The same with a map. On a 50' to the inch scale, little detail can or should be included. Every helictite, formation, flowstone, cannot be shown on a multi-mile exploration map. This kind of detail only clutters an already confusing array of passages. Major features, such as formation areas, can be included, as they serve as reference points for discussions and further exploration.

The loose ends referred to above are the missing readings. A haphazard sketch and notes is a real good indicator of the quality of the survey. A survey with holes in the data and sketch doesn't "look good" because it probably isn't very good.

Following is a list of rules which I try to follow, having found them to work well for me:

1. Always include the cave name, date, survey personnel. Every card on the survey should include a tie-in, such as Lobster Cave, June 13, 1980. A single cave name will not suffice, though better than nothing.

2. Circle Station Number (T or F) if station numbers are not sequential (as in the case of room radial shots). This will show that the note taker did not make an error in his intentions. The sketch should confirm the notes.

3. HT, HF, L, R, T, B: should always be in whole numbers. HT and HF can be compensated for by raising or lowering the tape while measuring.

4. Always use a + or - with I reading.

5. 15 stations to a card. If you've ever recorded data, you know groups of 5 are easiest.

6. For T measurements, always record to the nearest tenth of a foot (no inches). 12.0, not 12 (without decimal). This removes all doubt.

7. Circle the compass reading to be used for plotting if readings are not to be averaged.

8. Survey stations should always be on the floor of the cave, never on projections, the wall, etc. This conformity makes for ease of recovering stations without previous note cards, and most importantly, provides the best elevation control. Putting a station in the middle of a piece of breakdown would be acceptable under this rule. Not, however, on the edge of it.

9. Read compasses to nearest 1/2 degree. Readings must be within 3 degrees to be acceptable. Five tries at agreement. If after 5, circle on note card the reading which surveyors feel is most accurate.

10. A compass reading of due North is recorded as 360°, never 0°. 0 degrees is used in computer plotting to indicate a vertical passage, though accurate HT or HF can compensate nicely.

Hopefully, we'll all remember these few simple rules the next time we survey. Flawless, good notes and sketches are a result of, not a producer of an accurate survey.

INVITATION FROM THE ESSO GROTTO

The ESSO grotto has sent an invitation by way of Sara Corrie to their annual Carter Caves Weekend, August 22-24. Further details of their plans will be in their newsletter, the ESSO Bee. All COG'ers are invited.

TRIP REPORT - JUNE 14, 1980 - WHITE LOBSTER

By Paul Unger

The smell of sausage, biscuits and gravy seemed to wake everyone early, though most were anxious to get started on to the cave. We had not been to White Lobster for some time and had now decided to resume surveying. Wet cave gear from the day before and fresh, dry survey cards in hand, Bill Walden, Greg and Ron Erisman, and myself, piled into Bill's Scout for the trip there.

The cave has been generally closed to visitors for some time, due to owner concerns and strip mining activities which prohibit trespassing. Ron Erisman, being a "local" now, had spent several days with people in the area and had succeeded in gaining easy access. This means driving, instead of walking, to the entrance.

Ron had decided to take his fishing pole along to "try his luck" in the lake. No sooner than he had thrown in - bang, pan-sized bream. I tried 3 casts, resulting in 2 bream and one channel cat. Bill then reminded me we were here to survey, not fish, so reluctantly I gave up, leaving Ron to his fish.

Lake Cumberland controls access to the cave, as the 200' long entrance passage can be sub-lake. This time, however, there was about 1 foot of water in the 3 foot high bedding plane. The water, plus the roaring wind, cooled us off from the early morning humidity and heat. Crawling through lake water reminded me of the Thanksgiving many years back when Lake Cumberland rose several feet, nearly trapping Woody. Need another entrance.

We proceeded to the Y room past the register, stopping long enough to determine that the register had been underwater and was now useless, everything being saturated. At the Y room, Bill tried, with success, I hope, to take pictures of the 100' high ceiling and 70' wide passage. Multiple M-5 flashes seemed to light to the ceiling, but 3 previous attempts have failed. The right fork waterfall was taken, as were several general shots. Greg was thoroughly bored with the process; wasting time, as he saw it.

Picture-taking completed, consuming over

an hour's time, Bill suggested Greg lead into the Left Fork. That's all Greg needed. Off he went at a forced march pace with Bill and I right behind. We stayed up easily in the walk passage for nearly 500', until we came to the S-Curve Squeeze, which Greg managed to slide through standing up. With Greg commenting something about it wasn't as tight as he remembered it, and Bill and I both stuck, we backed up, Bill climbing up and I electing to crawl beneath the obstruction. On the other side, Greg was nowhere to be seen, so Bill and I, overheated, took it easy and finally caught up with Greg at the top of the First Waterfall. Since Greg had had a 10 minute rest, off he went. This section is known as Slippery Rock, as many of the rocks and most of the bottom is coated with a greenish shale deposit. Up ahead, we heard a splash and the comment, "SHIT!", and when we met up with Greg at the intersection to the Milky Way several hundred feet later, the wet coveralls to mid-thigh attested to the slipperiness of the passage.

The Milky Way is one of the few crawlways yet discovered. It would be an easy crawl, if we weren't concerned about destroying the fabulous cascades and seemingly flowing river of Moon Milk, as we call it. The brilliant white covers ledges, rocks and pools, forcing one to carefully bellycrawl around on banks and ledges. We have even thought of bringing in some wood to construct a bridge across one place where a frozen white lake must be crossed. The first explorers put in stepping stones, but even that will mar its beauty. Fortunately today we were to begin our survey at this point the Milky Way being surveyed on the last trip.

This was new passage for Bill and I, Greg having been here several times before. We surveyed through the canyon to the Double Waterfall. The first waterfall is 10' high and due to the overhang, and squeeze at the top, even Bill got a Kentucky bath. For us slow climbers, it's a real goose-drowner. Immediately I climbed up into the 60' wide passage, bypassing the second 6' waterfall. I was content to let Greg and Bill "play" in the water, mumbled something about keeping the sketch dry. Two shots later, they were up to my level.

This is the point where the cave starts to become very complex, with side leads every hundred feet or so. Most have been pushed on previous trips; none, however, have been found

WHITE LOBSTER REPORT (cont.)

TRIP REPORT - JULY 4, 1980 - CRACKERNECK CAVE

By Paul Unger

to end, only lead to bigger and better things. Greg wanted to go scoop the dozen or so virgin leads he knew about, but, after much discussion, we decided to follow the main passage. This would satisfy the goal of our trip - to determine the trend and direction the cave is leading.

Following the so-called main lead proved to be difficult. Three hundred feet past the Double Waterfall, we found an intersection with three large passages.

"Greg, have you been in these passages?"

"Yep"

"Where do they go?"

"I don't know"

"Did any end?"

"Nope, just got bigger!"

With Greg's expert guidance, Bill selected the right lead because he was standing in it. In another 300 feet, a second intersection of passages confronted us, this time we chose the left lead because Bill wanted to see the helictites. Several hundred feet later, at another intersection, we decided to stop surveying for the day. After all, the passage had now gotten down to only a stoop-walk. One clean-up trip would be needed to finish this passage. While Greg poked his head in a hole, I crawled up ahead, around a rock - Wow! A passage 80'+ high, with side leads, and some holes in the ceiling ending in blackness. Greg and Bill took a look. We didn't even push a ways; "It will probably just get bigger," Bill surmised.

So we packed up our gear, taking special care to protect our notes, and headed out. An hour and a half later, we emerged into the late evening to find Ron at home on the bank with his fishing pole. Seems that Ron got hungry, so he built a fire, stuck a stick in the fish's mouth and roasted it over the fire. Since he didn't have a knife, they were roasted "whole." He said that brought the flavor out. I'll bet!

The survey now stands at a mere 3,500 feet of passage in the Left Fork, none being surveyed in the Right Fork. The map shows 18 leads, all of which, I think, have been pushed, but no "ends" have been found. With so many places to survey, who knows where our next trip will start?

By July 3 evening, 10 cavers, including two dune buggies, one Mark 4 and a so-called "car" (Pinto, southern style), had assembled at the Ungerground Estate for a caving holiday. Most intended to participate in the survey in White Lobster to push the length past a mile, with others wanting to visit Lonesome and Bat Caves. After the Thursday evening celebration, there weren't too many early risers and by the time the country breakfast of homefries, biscuits, sausage, and gravy had been devoured, it was raining. Drats. Lobster Cave's owner doesn't want us to use the road when it's wet, as it would cause ruts.

Greg Erisman had met a local earlier in the week whose spring had dried up. Seems that he had a hole that blew "steam" in the winter, and he just knew that there must be a lot of water in that hole. Since no one really wanted very much to hike Lobster's hill in the 90° sun, off we went to find some water.

The hole turned out to be the same hole that I had visited twice before, looking for water for the same man. Nearly 15 years prior, Ron and Phil had been there also, to look for water. None of us had found water, except from an occasional drip-drip. In fact, only a segmented passage 150' long, ending in breakdown, had been found.

After the usual hour chat with the owner, 5 of us decided it would be nice to spend some time in a cool place, so we grabbed our gear and headed off through the woods past the now-dry spring to the cave. The cave entrance, while a walk-in, was obscured and nearly covered by lush poison ivy and grape vines. Being not one to bother Mother Nature, I futzed around long enough for the others to beat the green door in before I entered. The ten foot passage to the first room was covered with moss. Inside, I found the rest sprawled out here and there, enjoying the cave's coolness.

After a 20 minute rest, Greg and Chuck took Dave Erisman with them and Doc and myself followed. Now, I have never been fond of pushing breakdown, so I was perfectly con-

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TRIP REPORT - Continued.

tent to let the others go ahead. Up, down, and around; the mud reminded me of sub-lake, though we were several hundred feet above it. After the seemingly long crawl, Doc and I emerged into the top of a breakdown room. We poked holes for 45 minutes, finding only my tracks in the mud from previous visits. Throughout the area were charcoal bits, presumably left by Indian visitors from long ago who had come in to scrape the gypsum off the walls and ledges here and there.

From down below, Greg yelled that he was going to push into some breakdown and for us to come down. After watching Chuck, who is a much better climber than I, have difficulty climbing down, we decided that I should take Doc and Dave out. My last word was for Chuck to come and get me if he found anything.

After seeing the two out, I decided to return to try to find Chuck and Greg. 30' exposed climbs, alone, have a tendency to raise my adrenalin level. Once on the bottom, I started looking for the other two. After 15 minutes of poking into dead ends and utter frustration, I sat down to wait and turned off my light to conserve energy.

The cave was nearly silent, except for an occasional drip. At the bottom I had noted some flooding signs while pushing leads. Gee, that sure sounds like running water. Where's Chuck and Greg? I turned on my light and looked at the 50 foot flow stone which cascades down one area. There's a flood level mark on it! Well, maybe then I should Go. Yea, that's a good idea. But before I got a start, deep within the breakdown came noises of cavers on the move, which blotted out thoughts of the Flynn Flood.

I could hear Chuck and Greg's muffled talking, Chuck saying, "Boy, that's neat." "Chuck, where are you?" Through several exchanges, I was able to locate the lead. After 25 feet, the breakdown ended, and a solid passage 4 feet high went 50 feet to an overhung drop of 7 feet. The drop was negotiated using the Unger Technique (jump in, figure how to get out later), and one minute later I crawled up to where Chuck was sitting on a rock several feet above me. "What did you find?"

"You won't believe it." Chuck responded with a smile. Standing up, I didn't believe it either. "Oh, my God, you're shitting me!"

Before me was spread a Sloan's-like passage, 25' high, 50' wide, with two leads, both ending in blackness. But most heart-skipping were the hundreds, even thousands, of formations.

"You're shitting me!" Columns, helictites, broomsticks, soda straws, teardrops, flowstone, cascades, gypsum.

Greg said, "You ain't seen nothing yet!"

Chuck and Greg decided that one trip through had not been enough, so they decided to follow. We immediately laid some rules - single file movement only, slow one step at a time, and pick up and move the hundreds of fallen soda straws which in places littered the ground. Picking our way through to choose the least damaging path was difficult, sometimes resulting in sideways movement between broomsticks 2" in diameter and taller than our heads. Step, look, step, look. The passage became taller and around the bend was a sight to behold - an underground cathedral. There were so many formations that the continuance of the passage was obscured by the slender, up to 4' long, stalactites. Below each were lines of pagodas, some in candelabra form.

On and on we went, ooo-ing and aah-ing. We even bellycrawled beside walking passage to preserve white flowstone floors and other wonders. After reaching an intersection point some 800 feet and 45 minutes later, we stopped to reflect. But we really didn't have too much to say, other than words meaning "SCOOP!"

Since we had already been in most of the afternoon, and the owner would be concerned about us (in his 200' long cave), we elected to leave, and return the next day for photographs and scooping.

Upon returning to his trailer, we spent the next two hours relating to him and his family of the wonderland beneath his valley. He wanted pictures, of course, but was unexpectedly quite concerned about preserva-

MORE TRIP REPORT (continued)

tion. Seems like some years back he caught some "people" from Indiana in his cave, carting off formations, which is why he hasn't let cavers in except ones looking for water at his request. Since he has now agreed to rent the pasture field surrounding the entrance to us, he will have a good reason to refuse permission to even his friends. Thus solving his problem.

But the trip had one big disappointment for him. We didn't find water, only dry virgin cave!

MEETING REPORT - July

Also by Paul Unger

The July meeting was held on the 11th at Chuck Daehnke's parents' place on the banks of Mill Creek, near Ostrander in Delaware County. Early arrivals were greeted with hot juicy steak off the hibachi. Unfortunately, they didn't seem to last very long.

First on the agenda were several games of volleyball, which were followed by some rather violent matches of Kill-Birdie, a COG badminton game where there exist no back boundaries. Two points are scored each time an opponent is hit with a birdie. Games of horseshoes and frisbee worked their way in also. Voluminous amounts of refreshments quenched all thirsts. After an informal meeting, a feast of sorts was consumed.

Topic for the evening centered around the new discoveries in Wayne and Pulaski counties. Pictures of the Cathedral Room in Crackerneck Caverns had not been returned from the processor, to everyone's disappointment. Late evening serious discussions were held, with nothing of importance said or remembered.

Saturday morning, Katie Walden woke everyone up, as usual. Following the tour of Delaware, looking for a restaurant, canoeing down Mill Creek (or a hike dragging a canoe) was the order of the day. Due to the storm warning, we adjourned to Columbus for

a pizza party. Walden's pizza was so hot it would knock your socks off.

MEETING REPORT (continued)

Sunday again found us in Delaware County, and due to the heavy rains, Mill Creek was at flood stage. Actually, this made the trip very pleasant, calling for little or no effort to be expended. Owls, ducks, and a great blue heron were seen along the way.

Thanks to Chuck, and his mom and dad, for letting us use their place for our fun and games.

BRIEF UPDATE (Rather Outdated) ON SLOAN'S VALLEY LANDFILL.

The last we heard, the proposal for a landfill dump which is being fought by the residents of the Sloan's Valley area, was approved at the state level and is to come back to the local level, where the local people are supposed to be allowed to present their case in opposition to it.

Our grateful thanks to Paul Unger, who contributed everything in this issue of the Squeaks.

AT LAST! CAVING is being done; sounds like some great stuff to be done. It even moves me off my duff to get on down to Kentucky again for once.

- Ed.
