



COG SQUEAKS

GROTTO INFORMATION

The Central Ohio Grotto of the National Speleological Society meets the second Friday of each month at the Worthington Presbyterian Church. The Church is on the north west corner of the square in Worthington, Ohio (intersection of High Street and SR 161). Meetings are in the Woodrow Room at 8:00 p.m. Please contact a grotto officer or committee person for information and caving trips.

OFFICERS

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The COG Squeaks is the official newsletter of the Central Ohio Grotto. Subscription is \$10.00 per year per address. The Central Ohio Grotto publishes the COG Squeaks ten times per year. The club welcomes articles on cave exploration and study, cave trip reports, cave fiction, cave poetry, cave related cartoons, or cave related art. Please send to Bill Walden. Free disks and mailers are available from Bill at the meetings. Contact Bill for information on modem or fax transmission.

NSS organizations may reprint information from the COG Squeaks. Please give credit to the author and the COG Squeaks.

KARST CALENDAR

- October 8 Grotto meeting 8:00 p.m. at the Presbyterian Church in Worthington. Pizza following meeting.
- October 8 TAG Fall Cave-In, Sequoyah Caverns, Valley Head, Alabama. Contact Carl Anderson 404-315-1872.
- November 12 Grotto meeting 8:00 p.m. at the Presbyterian Church in Worthington. Pizza following meeting.
- December 11 Grotto Christmas party. Yes, time to start planning now! How devious can you be? There will be a gift exchange. The idea is humor. Come to the October meeting to get ideas.
- June 20, '94 NSS Convention June 20 through June 24, 1994 at Fort Clark Springs, Brackettville, Texas. Do plan to attend!

CAVE GATING PROJECT

Stanton Ranger District
Daniel Boone National Forest

Stillhouse Cave Gating Report

Submitted by Bill Andrews

During August, 1993 a cave gate was completed at a cave on the Stanton Ranger district, Daniel Boone National Forest.

The primary objective of the project was to protect Kentucky's largest colony of Virginia Big-eared bats. In addition about 1000 Indiana bats use the cave as a winter hibernaculum. The cave currently contains close to half the known population of Virginia big-eared bats on earth. The total combined weight would be approximately equal to that of one Eastern Black Bear.

The cave gate was designed and engineered by Roy Powers and approved by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The project was coordinated by Gary Sherman of the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources and Dan Dourson of the Daniel Boone National Forest.

Bill Andrews of the Boone Karst Conservation Task Force, coordinated the caving community assistance. More than 30 cavers from three states including Kentucky, Indiana and Ohio from four different grotto clubs labored hard for five days to complete the project.

The Kentucky National Guard out of Frankfort airlifted the seven tons of steel needed to construct the cave gate by one of their Blackhawk helicopters. For them it was a training exercise in the field.

The gate is 48 feet long and 12 feet high, made of heavy gage steel and was custom built on site inside the cave. Since a summer colony of Virginia Big-eared bats were present in the cave during the gating project, electric fans were set up to pull fumes from the welding out of the cave. Each evening during the construction, Forest Service biologists and volunteer cavers counted the emerging bats, using night vision equipment to make sure that the gating project was not affecting the bats.

The cave gate project was a cooperative effort among the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources, National Speleological Society (NSS), American Cave Conservation Association, Army National Guard, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Blue Grass Grotto, Greater Cincinnati Grotto, Central Indiana Grotto, Central Ohio Grotto, Kentucky State Nature Preserves, and the USDA Forest Service.

Stillhouse Cave Gating Report

By Dick Maxey, Boone Karst Coordinator

On August 11, 1993, Cheryl Early and I arrived at the camping area at 2:00 a.m. The road was an "old gravel road," 4-wheel drive for a mile. I wasn't sure at first if it was the right road because any gravel on the road was buried under copious amounts of mud and water. In addition, the camping area was empty of cavers (soon to be gaters) and this projected some concern as to the possible lack of people. We unloaded the truck with trepidation as the camping area was a sort of triangle between two streams and a hill, and the weather was calling for more thunderstorms.

After an uneventful night we left to drive out to May's Grocery to see if #1. anybody showed up, and #2. if anybody needed transport out to the campsite through the slough. Upon arrival at 8:00 a.m. we were greeted by Bill Andrews and a few cavers.

When more cavers arrived, we transported gear and personnel back to the camping area to await the U.S. Fish and Wildlife, the U.S. Forest Service workers and Roy Powers (the man who was to supervise the gating and teach us how to do it). Getting a late start proved to be unfortunate because we ended not finishing until Sunday late afternoon. We actually started about 2:00 p.m. up the hill - 0.6 miles to the cave.

I talked with John McGregor and Dan Dourson of the U.S. Forest Service and learned more of the cave's sensitivity. In fact, Roy said over 50% of the world's Virginia long eared bats hibernate here - 6000 or so!

We put up a brattice-cloth first to keep the fumes from the generators and the welding and cutting torches from entering the cave. The gate was situated 50 feet inside the entrance to give the large colony the maximum amount of space in which to pass through the gate. The entrance is in a small sink hole that became very slick and muddy as the rains came again Wednesday night. We built a walkway of stone to ease carrying the steel angle iron (each weighing from 200-300 lbs.) into the cave. We had seven tons of steel to work with that the National Guard had dropped near the entrance from helicopters. It took five trips for the helicopters to bring it all to the site.

The work on the site lasted till 7:00-7:30 pm. Each night, the bats started flying around 8:45 p.m. and Cheryl and I stayed Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday nights to take down the brattice-cloth after the fumes had dissipated. Thursday and Friday night we stayed till 10:30 or 11:00 p.m. to help John McGregor with his bat count. Cheryl Best (another COG caver) helped Wednesday and Saturday evenings. John had Roy Power's night vision binoculars and two infrared filters for lights to allow us to count bats emerging. Wednesday night they had counted 605 big eared bats. Thursday we only counted about 60 bats due to the rains. Friday night we counted about 265 Big-eared bats.

Normally, at this time of year only 200-300 bats are in the cave. Saturday night Barb Graham counted about 485 bats, so the gate appears to not be a barrier. The really acid test will be when the colony is at full strength and whether 6000 bats can get through the gate!

About 36 people helped with the gating, eleven of us staying the full five days. Roy Powers said it was the best caver help he has had so far (per Bill Andrews' letter).

Next year Cave Hollow will be gated if funding comes through. It was a very satisfying experience and we will be back again next year to help.

Sunday afternoon at 3:00 p.m. Cheryl and I left with the gate 95% done and gave Cheryl Best a lift back to her van at May's Grocery. The Blue Grass Grotto was well represented also; cavers from the Greater Cincinnati Grotto helped with the project.

TRIP REPORTS

Karst Encounters

September 18-20, 1993

Andy Franklin

My oh my, has Karst Encounters grown up! What was originally intended as an end-of-season, quiet, low-key get-together for 40-70 cavers suddenly has more than 200 people attending.

This year's event was hosted by the Eastern Indiana Grotto and held at the Muscatatuck County Park near North Vernon, Indiana. The COG was represented by Andy, Kathy, Sam, and Luci Franklin, Jean and Jay Kessell, and Don Conover. Don was the first to arrive, about 3pm Saturday. It seems we all had rotten schedules that prevented normal departures.

Since we arrived late visiting one of the local caves was out of the question. Besides, that would mean that we would have to go caving, right?

The highlight of the trip was seeing Don Shofstall. For those of you who did not know, Don had a serious heart attack at SpeleoFest. Since then he has had a valve replaced and a single bypass. The doctor said he can lead a normal lifestyle. This by itself is a medical miracle since Don has not led a normal life since he was born! His research led him to the conclusion that sudden death following heart attacks was generally the result of old men 'sleeping' with young women while drinking. He has vowed to only do two out of the three, and since he cannot do anything about his age..... It was so very good to see him.

We spent the evening sucking up beer around the campfire while talking and playing with Don's starscope. I enjoyed talking with the cavers that I had not seen in a long while. That is what Karst Encounters is all about.

Getting Serious in Cave Creek

By Lou Simpson

The reader may recall that our earlier attempt to connect Punkin Cave to Goldson's in Cave Creek in April this year didn't. I had purchased much vertical equipment. Dan Flynn had free-climbed into the bolt lead that turned out to have already been scooped. Dan had gotten excited about an echoey narrow canyon crawl, too tight to get through. We had dug in two possibly blowing holes in the eye of the spiral and couldn't find one of the shovels in the debris when it was time to leave. We didn't try to push an obvious drain belly crawl.

I invited Harry Goepel and Jim Odom to go back to Punkin to push the above mentioned "obvious drain belly crawl." Jim called at 9 p.m. the night before the trip with a bad cold and couldn't go, so it was just me and Harry. On Saturday morning, September 11, 1993 we left Cincinnati for the cave, psyched for the big connection scoop. Caving, like sex, is about 90% mental. Other similarities are obvious, too--you can do it alone but it's better when shared with a few close friends, virgin cave is hard to find, kneepads provide protection and extra traction--the list goes on. We set up our tents at Burnside Island. For \$10.50 we would get to take showers both days, not a bad deal. The camp attendant said it would be OK to take showers Sunday afternoon, even after the 2 p.m. checkout.

We stopped at the fieldhouse to try to recruit a caver, but there weren't many available. Jim DeCosta and friends were going to Minton, and Andy McIntire and party were entering Scowling Tom's and exiting Railroad Tunnel. We met Alex Wesley and others from Somerset preparing to enter Garbage Pit. Harry and I signed the sign-out at the barn and drove on to Rufus Hyden's. Rufus said Roscoe was still in the VA hospital in Lexington and had

so far not visited home on weekends, although he could. Their brother Louis and sister Margaret and Margaret's husband were also visiting at the farm, cutting the grass and cleaning the house. The weather was ideal, the caves dry, and we were up for it. We found, with difficulty, the trail past Humongous Pit. If I didn't know there was supposed to be a trail there, I wouldn't be able to find it. Numerous fallen trees add to the trail's obscurity.

We entered Punkin, said hello to a black spotted salamander and negotiated the tight, muddy squeezes. Without a huge pack, I moved so quickly through this part that I didn't recognize where I was because I thought it would take longer to go through. In a very short time we arrived at the south end of the cave, which nearly overlies passages in Goldson's. The passages in Goldson's near Punkin are only accessible by a forty-foot bolt climb followed by a rappel back down 20 feet after traversing pits on chockstones. One other possibility to reach this part of Goldson's would be to succeed in digging out the "mud sump," marked "impassable" on a detailed map of the area. I brought along the survey notes for the Goldson's bolt climb area in my helmet, just in case we did find a way through from Punkin and needed to figure out where to tie in the survey.

I also had a copy of the partial map of Punkin that was published in the June 1990 COG Squeaks. It showed that the main passage past the spiral had not been mapped quite to the end where it passes the "obvious drain bellycrawl" that were psyched to push, so we maintained suspense by mapping this first. While sketching these two shots (70 feet total), I looked more closely at an opening above flowstone on the right and could see some space beyond the ceiling. I hammered and moved some rocks, but decided it was too tight for me. Harry tried and couldn't get through yet, so he slid back down, took off his overalls, and then succeeded in squeezing up through the space. Now he was truly on his own, since there was no way for me to back him up. Actually, since the entrance area of this cave is so tight, anything other than self-rescue is practically out of the question in this cave anyway. Harry scooped in about five directions. He said it is possible to climb higher and there is also a blowing crawl dig straight ahead. Straight ahead seems to be to the south, toward the Tumbling Rock Room of Goldson's, an interesting direction. Harry squeezed back through and we started mapping the drain crawl we had come to do. After a couple stations, we noticed that there appeared to already be survey stations in the crawl, not on the map, so we stopped mapping and pushed the crawl. Soon Harry was digging in virgin passage, but the prospect of getting far very fast looked grim. The prior mapping started through a connection back into the main passage, so we speculated that this crawlway is just a parallel passage and that it probably connects to a feeder in the mapped walking canyon. We went to the walking canyon and

found a diggable drain on the opposite side, pointing more toward Goldson's. This is not too far from the echoey narrow canyon that Dan Flynn looked at in April.

Since we were out of leads toward Goldson's, we packed up to head for the other end of the cave. I pointed out the two digs we did in April and mentioned that a shovel had been lost. I half-heartedly sifted the gravel in one crawl and a glint caught my eye. The lost shovel! I put it in my pack and we headed for the north end of the cave, noting that this cave is really quite scenic, if you know what I mean.

At a wet crawlway drain in the huge canyon near the north end of the cave, we saw a blind, albino crayfish with a body four inches long and only one small claw. We did not push the possibly unexplored wet crawl, although it appeared to go. We explored a complex breakdown area for over an hour. Harry was down a hole, digging and hammering. He finally stopped and we left the cave, seeing an orange salamander and a frog. Back at the house, we visited with Rufus some more. He read "The Guardian of Graveyard Cave" and said "You know, Louis, there really was a cave in the graveyard. They bulldozed it and filled it in." Ooooo! We took showers (excellent, high pressure, lots of hot water), ate at Giovanni's, and visited Tom Crockett. Tom showed us a home video of the Garbage Pit rescue last year. When we arrived back at Burnside Island campground, the races at the racetrack were just about over, or was that just the sound of the traffic on US 27? The only other noise was when a nearby camper got up at 5 a.m. and chopped a few sticks of firewood. Half the campsites were unoccupied.

We were still psyched for a connection, so we returned to the Hyden residence. But first, a quick look for Graveyard Cave! I photographed the wrought-iron arches and walked around in the high weeds just beyond the fence, finding a sink with a muddy drain, but no entrance--yet. We visited with Rufus and headed for the North Goldson entrance. I wondered whether we might be able to get an aluminum extension ladder in by this route to avoid having to rebolt the waterfall climb. Lake level was 701. We were able to get within 25 feet of the waterfall. The bolts were rusty. Deep water still flooded the pits between us and the waterfall lead. Past the flooded pit and up about ten feet the waterfall canyon begins, but it looks too narrow at that level, with interlocking rock shelves. We could not determine whether there was a safe place to position a ladder because the deep, watery pits obscured any possible floor shelf below the falls.

We located the low crawl that the map shows connecting to the area above the waterfall through the dread mud sump. I entered this crawlway and was confronted with a really low and narrow spot almost immediately. I had

to remove my pack, helmet, and battery pack. These completely blocked the passage ahead, as I struggled to fit through the eight-inch high, less than two-foot wide body length section. With my left arm outstretched in front of me and my right elbow bent under my body, I remember thinking that this was not fun any more. Backing out would be risky. Fortunately the passage widened to several feet ahead after another two body lengths that were one foot high and two feet wide. A possibly unexplored tight side canyon drops to a lower level crawl, but this wasn't the mud sump yet, according to the map. I saw station 17 on the ceiling, so this had to be the right passage. I advanced another 15 feet in this foot high and two foot wide passage. I could see that the passage didn't open up any more for at least another fifty feet and decided that I didn't care if the mud sump could be dug out, which I doubted, and I'd rather rebolt the waterfall climb. I backed out, turned around at the side lead, tried briefly to explore it, and emerged back in the Tumbling Rock Room. I later looked at the field notes and learned that Paul Unger named this passage "Andy's Bust Ass Lead." It goes 500 feet and gets bigger eventually, and I was the sketcher on the survey. I thought I remembered this awful place. I had noted on the sketch that the 8-inch high section was "quite low."

We exited by the South Goldson entrance, traversing above the lake level pool on hacked mudholds. We picked up a couple of old beer cans on the way out. Back at the house we helped carry the air conditioner to the "can house." Louis Hyden told us what he used to do with girls in the now submerged Cave Creek entrance below the boat dock. We stayed talking for another hour and a half and finally drove to Burnside for our late afternoon shower and a couple of Hardee's Frisco Burgers with extra onions. Note: the Hardees in Burnside didn't put any onions on the Frisco Burger, so we had to ask for some onions on the side.

What to try next? I had a phone conversation with Darrell Adkins, who will try to send me survey data so we can plan a possible voice connection attempt. I would like to get access to the North Goldson waterfall lead area, since this has only been visited twice ever. The field notes for this area show many possible leads. I've got connection fever.

CAVE FICTION

The Guardian of Graveyard Cave By Lou Simpson

1. June 7, 1993

"Some people think those Graveyard Cave stories that Dad wrote are partly true," Renee Radisson said to her caving

companion, Mike Caruso. "Maybe he really did go somewhere like that in Stone's Valley. Whatever happened, his mind's certainly messed up."

"You can see him now," said the nurse.

"It's sad," said Renee, "Lou had a brilliant caving career and now he's practically a vegetable here at Longview."

"Is there really a Graveyard Cave, Lou?" Renee asked the emaciated Lou Simpson.

Lou's eyes darted back and forth wildly. "Who told you that? I made it up. Don't go there. Promise me you won't go there." Lou was gripping her shoulders, pleading.

"How could I go to a place that's made up?" Renee wondered. It didn't make sense, but not much that Lou said these days made sense. Lou's breakdown had occurred during a cave trip to Stone's Valley, but none of the other cavers who were with Lou had much to say about it, just that Lou had kept muttering something like "Those aren't lights! They look like eyeballs!" Weird.

Renee and Mike stayed a little longer, but Lou didn't seem very responsive any more.

"Where does Lou keep his cave maps?" Renee later asked her mother, Lynn.

"Up in the attic," Lynn replied. "What are you looking for?" "Oh just curious. Did he keep cave stuff in his file cabinets?" "I guess. I never could understand his filing system."

Renee opened a file drawer. There didn't seem to be a file for Stone's Valley or Graveyard Cave. Nothing seemed to be any order, anyway. "Wait, here's something odd." Renee picked up a folder labeled "Cave Myth." In the folder was a page torn from Hamilton's Mythology. Renee read,

"All the monstrous forms of life which were first created were permanently banished from the earth when they had been conquered, with the single exception of the Cyclopes . . . Odysseus and those of his men who had not been eaten escaped from Polyphemus by putting out his eye and holding onto the underside of Polyphemus's sheep as the cyclopes, now blind, felt the backs of the sheep when he rolled away the stone blocking the entrance and let the sheep out so he could hunt for the men . . . At first there were only three, but later there were many . . . There were a hundred of them, all as big and as frightful as Polyphemus . . . Zeus gave them a home in a fortunate country." These last words were underlined and in the margin was written "KY?" Lynn said, "It's so sad. This

is probably just the random wandering of his poor mind. We could see the deterioration even before he snapped. Still, you have to wonder if there is really a cave in a graveyard someplace that gave him the idea."

2. 1954

The Guardian slumbered on. If he were needed again, he'd know. Stalactites grew long around him. On the surface, life forms evolved, mutated, became extinct. Finally, water lapped at his body, unexpectedly raised to this level by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. He awoke. And he was hungry.

3. June 10, 1993

"Are you sure we're allowed to do this?" Mike whispered. "Somebody might think we're desecrating a grave." Renee shuddered. "I know, but we're just looking. If there is a cave here, we'll try to get permission." The gate was unlocked, the letters "Stone's Valley Cemetery" artfully done in wrought iron arched over the gate. "Well, the death dates all seem to be at least 50 years old," Mike observed. "I'm surprised this is so well-tended. This grave off by itself in a depression looks fresh, though." Renee dusted off the crude stone, which almost looked like a natural limestone rock, not a tombstone. It says 'DP 76'. There's something else after that, but I can't make it out. And you're right, the ground around the stone looks disturbed."

"DP . . . David Perry?" Mike offered. "Could this be the stone that covers the entrance in Lou's story? It would take a winch to move it. If we got caught doing that in a cemetery, we'd be in big trouble."

Renee was looking at a tree at the edge of the cemetery, beyond the fence. "It almost looks like somebody did winch it. There's a mark on this tree like from a cable and the tree is in the right place. Let's get out of here. I'm getting a bad feeling about this."

4. April 1980

A rich source of nutrient materials began entering the cave. Metals not found in such concentration naturally, and even exotic man-made substances called polychlorinated biphenyl found their way down from the new landfill on the surface. The salamanders adapted, grew larger. Some mutated, became large, monstrous, with extra appendages, even an extra head. They were hungry, and the cave provided what they needed. They didn't need to venture out on the surface, where their larger size would have created a sensation.

The Guardian was finally finding enough to eat. These larger salamanders provided much more sustenance. A

dim memory of even larger but more troublesome creatures surfaced in his dim brain. Yes, these creatures had cost Polyphemus his sight so long ago. But they were tasty. Oh, my, yes. Not like these overgrown amphibians. They tasted like excrement.

5. July 3, 1993

"Yes, there does seem to be some dark space under this rock!" Don Fink could scarcely restrain himself from shouting. Since they were winching a rock in a graveyard under cover of darkness, they had to be discreet. Jim Oldham was excited too. "Renee was right, Don. It looks like there really is a Graveyard Cave. Too bad we're scooping her and Mike, though, but I can understand that they didn't want to try it for fear of getting arrested."

"Aw, nobody's gonna see us way out here. We parked on the other side of Great Crystal Sink anyway. Hey, that'll do it, Jim. We're in!"

6. July 3, 1993

Polyphemus could smell them before he even heard them. His blind single eye so long useless, the other senses sharpened accordingly. They smelled so good and tasty. He licked his lips in anticipation.

7. July 3, 1993

Don and Jim entered a large chamber. Don was somewhat ahead of Jim, shouting SCOOP! The sound of his voice echoed. Drowned in the echo were other sounds, cries of pain. Don looked back toward Jim and saw nothing. "Jim? Where are you?" Suddenly Don felt himself pinned to the rock, his electric headlamp smashed, his heart pounding with fear. He was being carried! Finally, he was thrown down roughly. A hideous roar, almost a laugh echoed. Bruised and bleeding, Don still had his cave pack. He frantically struggled to open it and get a flashlight. It worked. Oh horrible! Don saw Jim lying unnaturally nearby and . . . Don threw up . . . Jim was obviously dead, horribly mangled, half eaten! Eyes peered at Don in the darkness. This can't be happening! Movement caught his eye. Something large loomed over him. A large creature on two legs . . . chewing on something . . . Oh God! . . . one eye that looked blind. Got to do something. What are those creatures on the ground? They look like huge salamanders. God, the horrible smell of them. Some of them seem to have extra legs and even heads!

The huge creature seemed to be confused, groping for something. For me! Must keep still, not breathe. It'll find me anyway, there's nowhere to hide in here except among those disgusting salamanders. Suddenly the cyclops grazed the top of the salamanders. The cyclops

seemed to be pushing the salamanders out the entrance of the room so he could more easily find Don. A salamander ran right over Don and he clung to the lower side of it.

The giant pushed all the salamanders through the doorway, including Don's. The cyclops was roaring now. It almost sounded like a language. The salamander rushed onward, with Don clinging to it. Dim light was ahead. The salamander stopped, as if fearful of going outside. Don dropped to the ground and crawled out into the moonlight.

8. July 14, 1993

Hermitage Herald, July 14, 1993. Hermitage, KY. SEARCH FOR LOST CAVER ABANDONED. A US Air Force officer named Don Fink was found near Stone's Valley Saturday suffering from exposure and wounds of unknown origin. Captain Fink is stationed at Wright Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio. Capt. Fink had apparently been injured in a wild cave near Stone's Valley and had managed to get out of the cave somehow. A search was conducted for his companion, James Oldham, but no trace of him has been found. "We're not even sure what cave to look for him in," said Pollack County Rescue Squad Chief, Adrian Meadows. "Some people think Fink doesn't know what he's saying, because his story about being captured by a one-eyed giant and riding a huge lizard out of the cave is laughable, to say the least." Fink, AWOL from the Air Force, is being examined by Air Force psychiatrists.

CAVES

by
Katy Lusch

Dark, wet, small, Big -- a place to
get together. Bats flying above your
head. Seeing once in a lifetime events.