



# COG SQUEAKS

June 1997

## GROTTO INFORMATION

The Central Ohio Grotto of the National Speleological Society meets at 8:00 p.m. 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). Parking is available behind the church. Please contact a grotto officer or committee chairman for information and caving trips.

### COG OFFICERS

Chairman	Kathy Welling	15856	614-481-0408
Vicechair	Doug Burke	41817	614-983-9336
Secretary	Jay Kessel	28342	513-767-9405
Treasurer	Karen Walden	15678	614-965-2942

### Executive Committee

Elected	Dick Maxey	28034	614-888-2285
Elected	Darrell Adkins	29084	614-392-6382

### COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

YOUTH Pat Kelly (38938) 614-885-1270  
(Pat is responsible for Boy Scout activities with the COG.)

BOONE KARST Dick Maxey (28034) 614-888-2285

SQUEAKS Bill Walden (11573) -- editor  
bwalden@infonet.com 614-965-2942  
Kathy Welling and Karen Walden -- Staff

The official grotto address is:

Central Ohio Grotto, C/O Bill Walden  
1672 South Galena Road, Galena, Ohio 43021  
614-965-2942

E-mail address -- dz716@cleveland.freenet.edu

Note Change: Internet list server -- cog@ontosystems.com

Dues: \$15 per year individual or \$20 per year per household.  
Membership includes the C.O.G. Squeaks.

The COG Squeaks is the official newsletter of the Central Ohio Grotto. Subscription is \$15.00 per year per address. The Central Ohio Grotto publishes the COG Squeaks ten times per year.

Articles on cave exploration and study, cave trip reports, cave fiction, cave poetry, cave related cartoons, or cave related art are encouraged. Please send to Bill Walden via mail, disk, E-mail, or fax. 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 Mark your calendars

June 13	Grotto Meeting. Worthington Presbyterian Church. 8:00 p.m. Pizza at Franco's following the meeting.
June 14 & 15	Scout Trip. Call Bill Walden for info.
June 14-21	NCRC Cave Rescue Operations and Management Seminar at Mt. Vernon, KY.
June 23-27	NSS National Convention, Sullivan, Missouri.
July 11-13	Karst-O-Rama 97, Great Salt Petre Cave Preserve, Mt. Vernon, KY. Hosted by the Greater Cincinnati Grotto. Contact Mark Seyfang, 2882 McKinley Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45211-7151, 513-662-2989.
July 12 & 13	Central Indiana Grotto (CIG) Vertical workshop at Hocking Hills. Leader is Joe Oliphant. Contact Kathy Welling for additional information.
Aug 1-3	Indiana Cave Capers at Pic-A-Chic Farms Bloomington, IN. For pre-registration contact CIG, PO Box 153, Indianapolis, IN 46204 or Bambi Erwin 317-783-4687 or e-mail DEHCAVE@INDY.NET (Dave Haun)
Aug 28 - Sep 1	Old Timers Convention near Daily, West Virginia. Membership required.
Nov. 1997	Fortieth anniversary of the COG Squeaks.
Aug 3-7, 98	NSS Convention in Sewanee, Tennessee.

## Contents

Grotto Information	1
Karst Calendar	1
Trip reports	
Welcome My Friends to the Scoop That never ends	2
By Stephen Clark	
Trip Report by Greg Karoly	7
Reports from Speleofest	
Prehistoric Drawings - Crump's Cave	7
by Lacie Braley	
Cool Spring Cave by Lacie Braley	8
Indiana Cave Capers 1997	8

# TRIP REPORTS

## Welcome My Friends to the Scoop That Never Ends!

Fentress County, Tennessee  
Memorial Day Weekend '97  
By Stephen Clark

### Catch Up

Since it has been a while since Scoopville, USA has been mentioned in the COG Squeaks, this may merit a quick review of what's happening in Fentress these days:

So far we have four long caves: *Temple Falls*, *Cornstarch*, *Alastor* and *Red Bud*. All are more than two miles in length as far as known cave and all have tremendous possibilities that can not only link the four of them together, but provide additional trunk passages that lead in different directions along one mountain, two ridges and two major drainage valleys. In other words **BIG!**

Ever since the four have been discovered during 1995-96, big advances have been made in expanding each cave toward a future grand connection that will give us roughly a 15-20 mile base system. If any one of these caves branch off to bore into another side valley, which seems highly probable, then we can expect to top *Sloan's Valley* and think of realistically rivaling *Blue Springs*.

We can fight for being the longest cave in the State and in the top 10 for the nation at large.

*Temple Falls* has always been a bear to launch a visit to. With its 1600 feet of partially flooded belly crawls, tubular sewers and a low, craggy, unforgiving room, the entrance passage, known to all of us as the infamous *Wet Wang*, tended to deter instead of inspire. Impossible to navigate during the chilly months because of the combination of water and blasts of frigid air coming up the passage, the *Wet Wang* effectively shut out any curious caver from seeing the spectacular cascades after the last visit that Todd Bryan and I made in mid October of last year. In fact, *Cornstarch* owes its discovery to this very fact as Vic Ayers, Lou Simpson and I redirected our efforts to the hollow over from *Temple*. Repeated efforts inside *Temple Falls* had failed to locate a second entrance that was high and dry. No one looked forward to being reintroduced to the pleasures of the *Wang* in the coming season.

All this was to change in April of this year

Phil Davis (of DUG fame) has always had a knack for entrance discoveries. Having been involved with the team that discovered the dynamic, wild and waterfall rich upper *Cornstarch* entrance, Phil was to hit gold yet again. During an early April trip Phil & company were involved with ridge-walking above the known *Temple Falls* entrance and located an impressive sink hole that led them into a massive entrance hall. A colossal lead to the left was begging to be challenged, but Phil elected to follow the

tighter right turn to follow the obvious breeze (Fresh air! Times Square! You are my wife good-bye city life).

After weaving several times through breakdown, much of it mud-coated, they came upon a slot in the floor. Possibly five feet long, eight feet deep, between eight & nine inches wide, walls completely smooth and tilted twenty degrees toward them, the channel was blowing strongly into their faces forcing another advance.

Passing through what the 140 pound Phil recounted later as a chest compressor, Phil & company walked into a vast passage and immediately spotted boot prints and a large cairn resting on a slab. It was *Temple Falls*. Come on! Phil shouted, having been the only one in this party to have ever been shown *Temple* by myself and Harry Goepel. Let me show you *Cathedral Falls*, which has never been seen by anyone without a wetsuit!

The monopoly of the *Wet Wang* was broken there was singing in the streets and celebrations everywhere well, not immediately anyway.

Phil decided to name the new entrance *April's Fools* considering the date it was discovered.

It seems that in light of the major importance of the find, Phil decided to sit on it for a while, only leaking to the Black House Mountain Gang that he had found a major scoop, but not disclosing its whereabouts or potential until his party had a better look at it.

As the news spread across our e-mail accounts, the pressure and backlash became immense. The Black House Mountain Gang were cavers possessed long before with a fanatical lust to discover anything that would expand our growing system especially if it dealt directly with additional entrances. Angry e-mail and fiber-optical fire was tossed back and forth until Phil gave in and said that he would show us the new entrance, but not until May's trip. Meanwhile our April outing was partially wasted because of a rainy weekend and in need of a high and dry lead.

But as it turned out it was still well worth the wait

### Intro-Sessions

Oh yes! Another weekend in Fentress County! I always enjoy the build-up to leaving the grind and rub of mindless routine and disappointments of my job for the bag of spiced mixed nuts that is warm caving friends, embellished old timer stories, blowing low crawl-ways and scooping trunk passage. My coworkers always ask me for an update on the countdown, for within three days of departure I'm not worth a damn at the store anyway.

Bruce Warthman and I took the journey South on Friday morning. Our plans were to meet up with Jim Blankenship and Lou Simpson sometime that afternoon, but after arriving at Laurel Creek we were given conflicting directions by the camp manager upon check in, who left us with the impression that we were to wait patiently there at home base. You just missed them! He recounted, but they'll be right back they said. I think you are to wait for them.

I thought Sure why not? I'll make myself comfortable. So I headed out for the pool with my newly purchased Wall-Mart trunks and splashed around like a carefree seal, entertained by a

couple of well endowed twenty-something's in revealing costume.

I can never figure out why women panic whenever their skirt rise merely too far up one thigh, but at the pool they are next to naked and happy! Human culture is fascinating. Personally I prefer naked and happy. (I really need to get to that nudist resort outside Cincinnati someday.)

Actually the pool was the only item that approached the decent at Laurel Creek. Having been out-booked by non-cavers for our usual plush cabins and in particular, Granny's (known as the Black House Mountain Gang's hideout) because of a heavy tourist weekend, we were suffering from what I call Illusory Amenities Syndrome. IAS is when your trailer (in this case) has the appearance of having everything you need, but in reality nothing works. Things like kitchen exhaust fans, toaster ovens, hot water heaters and window blinds were only there for show, while the front door had to be literally kicked open and kicked closed to seal, which was better than the rear door which was missing its hinges and could not be opened at all! The beds were little better than firm foam. I sat on my assigned bed and quickly reached for my air mattress and ended up sleeping on the kitchen floor. It was the first time I have ever paid for a bed and not used it.

While Bruce's berth was more firm, his mattress sheet was split halfway up the middle with the ragged ends tied to each corner. The windows, between screen and pane, featured a good representation of the area's insect life, both living and dead, while the refrigerator was found to be keeping the silverware, still resting inside its extracted drawer, chilly for our use.

I realize that there exist droves of duct tape artists around the country, most of it quite good, but our camp managers seemed to be heavily into abstract and surreal expressionism. I have never seen such displays of bizarre duct tape repair work as there.

What a cheesy place. Jim summed it up nicely and laconically for us by saying that Laurel Creek was the resort of last resort.

By late afternoon swimming was getting old and the frolicking dames had long departed. Still no sign of our companions. By dusk Bruce and I were growing disturbed and drove off for dinner, checking all the usual parking lots for a sign of Jim's truck. We gave up and went to bed around ten-thirty, grumbling, but also growing worried too. I laid down on my air mattress poring over a rescue attempt early the next morning.

I must of been dreaming about those twenty-something's when I heard a loud bang on our floppy misaligned door and suddenly the room was filled with light and before me stood a muddy Jim Blankenship firing questions at me. What happened to you guys? Why didn't you show up? Lou was right behind asking what went wrong. After sorting out the accounts we all realized that our host didn't know what the hell he was talking about and ended up costing Bruce & I the half day we left early for in the first place. The gang had been caving all afternoon right where we had planned to go from the start.

Hassle factor 1, Stephen 0.

Steve Lugannani poked his head in the door, but quickly went off for a shower. Lou explained he was dejected over some car

trouble he was having. Steve had broken a front axle on his Eagle four wheel while prowling a loggers road above *Alastor*.

So how's the new entrance? I asked with intense interest.

NnYiiiiYcce. Lou replied, drawing out the vowel with that familiar twinkle in his eye.

We stayed up until five in the morning talking, laughing, story telling, with half of us getting giddy on Bruce's freshly created Black House Mountain Brew made from a combination of leached cinnamon, a moderate dose of anise with a little sugar water, mixed into a half bottle of Jack Daniel's Whiskey. The entire brew was colored black with food coloring and then bottled with Bruce's handmade label complete with duck tape highlighting, an advertisers description of caverns returning from a chilly trip to warm by the bottle and in the bottle, and finally the company logo of a pen drawing of Bruce himself, chest up, staring proudly at the drinker, complete with bolo tie! It was a hit with the party and even I, the dedicated nondrinker of the bunch (besides Jim), tried a tiny sip. It was actually pretty good.

Lou liked it so much that after several drinks Bruce asked in that classic Warthman deadpan voice if Lou was going to save some for the following night.

I guess you had to be there.

### *Into the Bowels of the Earth*

Next morning we got a late start and finally made the famous *April Fools Entrance*. Harry Goepel and I were the first to the area, but it was Steve Lugannani who ended up showing us the exact location. Bruce would make the number of the party four. Lou was somewhere behind us with two visiting Tennessee caver / photographers Steve Capps and Randy Paylor, who we had met in April and had been given a through trip inside *Cornstarch* that weekend by Todd Bryan. Steve is an award winning photographer with the NSS and professionally both Randy and Steve are hydro-geologists. Talk about caving for a living!

Anyway, the plan was for us to look around inside until Lou could reach us with Steve and Randy in tow.

The entrance was a classic sink hole, easily able to admit a human. After doing a could of weaves around some overlooks just inside, we reached the massive breakdown slope. Most everything was shift to the touch, even those boulders that appeared to weigh a ton or more were suspect as we poked and picked our way downward into an impressive entrance room.

Looking left we could see booming trunk passage leaping away from our view, but like Phil before us we went right and towards the floor slot which had been since named *The Butt Crack*.

Several weeks earlier, while e-mailing Lou about Phil's find, I had asked him for a tightness description of the slot: Is it hands and knees, a snaking belly crawl or a butt crack? I asked. Lou immediately e-mailed back that I had named the orifice!

Getting to *Butt Crack* was an adventure in itself. There were a couple of awkward squeezes and muddy slopes, but soon we were in sight of the infamous slot. Sure enough it did look tight, which only served to further intimidate my hopelessness. After Phil's and Louis description I really had no hope of making it inside my own spelo-discovery! My blood was up though and I

was getting pissed inside that I could come this close and be held back like an unworthy.

Soon Harry slid downward, followed by Steve Lugannani and finally Bruce, leaving me up top. Bruce asked me if I was going to try it and slowly, with racing heart, I nodded and allowed my left leg to hang down the slide while holding my body weight with my hands, which were clinging to the top most lip. My right leg rested upon a bowling ball sized rock that was jammed tight inside the crack. Quickly I discovered I could not touch the floor (duh!) with only one foot. It was a leap of faith and suddenly I knew I was going to commit, which set my heart racing. If my chest wasn't small enough to compress I would violently jam myself into the slot and be unable to breath or pull myself back up the crack as there was no foot holds below or hand holds above.

I released my right leg and sent it dangling with its twin limb below me, took a chest expanding breath and forcefully expelled it and then let go of my hand props. Instantly I shot through the slot, feeling the tightest middle section roughly rub my chest and upper back, but I didn't slow. Suddenly I felt the hard floor hit my boots and I allowed myself to fold under onto the floor. I had made it!! The experience sent my confidence levels soaring and I made all my team members give me high five's!

We stepped into a brief narrow canyon and then into a large passage where an oversized cairn greeted me. I was stunned and simply stood there in silence, with needles and pins all over my skin and waves of deja-vu washing over me. It was the same cairn that I had built last October during the final trip to *Temple Falls*. Vic and I had worked ourselves to this point before turning back. I don't quite remember if we looked up through the *Butt Crack* or not, for the area is craggy enough, but that cairn was no more than twenty feet from it.

As we exploded into the main passages of the cave, we went straight for the waterfalls and took a tourist tour of the sights. I kept exclaiming how wonderful it was to be back inside *Temple*. To renew my relationship with the cave, like an old lover. Harry Goepel catching the humor of the situation compared my story to a sailor just returning from several months at sea. Do you need to be alone with her? Harry quipped.

At one point we stepped into the *Temple Falls Reception Room* and peered down into the termination point of the *Wei Wang* where last August Vic Ayers and I had crawled out of the sewers like two evolving amphibians and into grand cave. I'm sure all of us were grateful that we didn't need to suffer in there. It almost seemed as if we had beamed into *Temple* and were cheating the cave some how.

After spending a good hour reliving our scoops, the team began heading back toward the *Butt Crack* to meet up with Lou and the film twins. Bringing up the rear and climbing up *Guard tower Dome* I heard Lou greet the others. Where is Stephen? I didn't see him at the entrance? When the others said I was just behind them Lou instantly doubted their word, but suddenly I popped my head over the edge and gave him a big smile. Incredible! He exclaimed. How did you make it through the *Crack*? I nearly suffocated.

I happily recounted my story and ended with I told you I'd make you proud of me. In many respects I wasn't being

sarcastic. Ever since I graduated from the Dale Harmon cave or die boot camp for novice cavers, I had always considered Lou to be my caving mentor and father. You'll be my legacy and carry the torch after me. He'd always say to Harry, Vic, Jim & myself.

On the heels of Lou were Steve and Randy, hot to photograph and already getting into the tranquil mood of *Temple Falls*.

After taking a shot of the *Castlemountain Room* they moved on, deeper into the cave, with Lou as guide. Meanwhile the four of us began a survey from the *Butt Crack* to the last known survey point that Todd & I had plotted the preceding October, which was the last trip inside the cave before Phil's fabulous discovery.

After surveying (by the way, thanks be to Steve Aspery and Doug Burke who arranged that class last year. I'm a competent surveyor for it) we met up with Lou returning from the photo shoot. Steve and Randy had elected to press on for the delights of the *Second Floor*.

Lou wanted to exit the cave and since we had finished surveying, we followed him. Lou was sweating it out over trying to get back up the *Butt Crack* and frankly I was a little nervous about it too. Allowing gravity to shoot you through was one thing; fighting it up-crack was another.

I volunteered to back Lou up and once we got to the *Crack* Lou began disrobing. First was his battery pack, helmet and then his coveralls. Finally he took off his pants belt. Hell, I just might do this in the nude just to make it sound good in the trip report! He joked nervously.

With a heave ho, I provided Lou with the all important foot hold and with some hesitation of struggle, Lou battled his way up and was soon on the lip peering down at me.

Suddenly it was my turn.

Feeling a surge of confidence and electing not to disrobe, I stood up inside the slot and then wiggled my way upward and passed my chest through the tightest middle point, wedging myself inside the *Butt*, hanging there, until Harry could reposition himself to give me the flat of his back instead of an aching shoulder. As Harry shifted, Lou became very concerned about me and began showering concern like a caring father should. You're jammed aren't you? You can't breath can you?

No Lou, I'm fine, really. I was flattered.

With Harry squaring his back I was able to get a firm foothold and up the chimney I rose (not unlike Santa) to the sounds of Lou cheering.

At the entrance we left Lou while the rest of us took the bold right turn that led directly to big and bigger cave. This was the second hopeful door that had been opened to us by Phil & company and provided us with a major lead that would push us further West along the mountain's Southern skirt towards *Cornstarch* for that future grand connection.

After stooping along a lower level we broke out into huge cave since named the *Upper West Side* and what a massive place it was too. Strongly reminiscent of *Tremendous Trunk in Wolf River*, the place seemed endless and bottomless too as we soon discovered. In several places we were crossing over twenty or thirty foot openings that were obviously lower levels, but it was difficult to tell if these were natural levels or simply breakdown levels because the sheer size of the passage. Everywhere rested

luxury car-sized boulders and dangerous gaps between them. After a few minutes it became obvious that this originally had been much grander, but the size formation had been its own undoing causing massive breakdown, but fortunately the pieces were huge allowing for us to walk on any level top or bottom.

Following the upper level we eventually arrived at a point where the breakdown was filling the passage completely, which was no small feat considering how immense it was and suddenly we lost the air flow.

Pointing our heads into a small side canyon we could feel the air flow once again, but the canyon overlooked a deep pit, possibly forty feet deep. The pit's floor seemed to rest inside a large room and quickly we began to look for a way to find it.

While the others were studying the overlook, I picked my way back to an area I had seen earlier that bridged an obvious void and carefully making my way down, I discovered the enchanted lower passage that led to three dome pits (since named *Papa, Momma & Baby Pits*) all connected by a lusciously high and wide canyon now called *Lower West Side*. Boot prints indicated that Phil and company had been here on the virgin trip the day before, but being on the Apollo 12 mission suited me just fine. I didn't mind seconds.

I delighted everyone by calling up to them through the pits and then shining my light into their eyes.

The grand gorge unfortunately ended in a mostly flooded belly crawl, which also had to be dug out, but it didn't diminish the importance of the find. Besides, we all knew that the trunk continued in a big way on several levels it was simply a matter of finding the doorway.

Harry and I stopped to take a quick look at a side canyon to its bigger brother and concluded we had found that door. Nestled in a corner of a short belly crawl-way Harry and I discovered a shallow slot in the floor even lower than *Lower West Side*. Easing our way to the bottom we peered into another waterworld crawl-way that has become so familiar to us over the last few explorations. Harry crawled inside briefly and reported that he could see a long way into the future, but that it was thoroughly wet. The exciting part for both of us was the fact that we could feel the breeze being sucked into the crawl it was moving a vast amount of air and strongly reminded me of the enticing breeze that kept Vic and I going in the *Wet Wang* originally. If comparisons are valid then whatever rests beyond the *New York Sewer* (its assigned name) may well be at least as large as *know Temple* currently. That would easily make the cave much longer than anything we currently have in *Cornstarch*. But as Todd Bryan and I are so fond of saying It doesn't matter because it's all one cave anyway.

After returning to our lovely accommodations Jim told us all about his adventure with Tom Patton, the landowner we have come to rely upon so heavily. Along with David Goodman, a close friend of Tom's, Jim dramatically recounted how they had broken in his ATV by leading him on a thirty-five mile journey through gorges, mountain tops and valleys clear up into Kentucky to some hamburger place that was the talk of the area. Jim related to us that upon coming upon a gorge with a natural bridge he happened to run into the Erisman brothers returning from a cave trip! Talk about coincidence!

## Photo-Buzz

The next day we arrived embarrassingly past noon for Sunday's excursion, having dragged ourselves out of bed late and gorged at Ruth's buffet. Harry Goepel, Bruce Warthman, Steve Lugannani and I planned to return to *Upper West Side* to begin mapping.

Halfway back to the pasture area where we park our vehicles and set up a base camp, Harry and I ran into a van coming around a bend in the access road. Harry backed up to allow the vehicle to pass, but the van would not move. Finally I looked at Harry and smirked "Tell my wife I died bravely" and got out and walked over to the vehicle. A fairly young woman was driving, Sunday dressed, with two children in the back seat.

Hello. I began, giving my best smile. Everyone is off the road and you can pass now. I explained, but her face was angry looking with stern eyes glaring at me.

Just who are you people and where do you think you're going? She fired at me with that distinctly nasty go home Yankee accent.

I tried to explain that we were cavers from Ohio (I considered to pronounce it O-hi-a to somehow bond with her linguistically, but thought better of it.) and we were just on our way to the caves in the gorge. Her face didn't relax.

And just who gave you all permission to come up here? She demanded.

I thought, now I've got her. She'll relax once I pull Tom's name out of my hat.

Why of course Tom Patton. I said, allowing the name to drool off my lips like a gambler turning over his natural 21 at a blackjack table in Vegas.

It didn't work.

Well that Tom Patton doesn't own all the land back here. She barked more menacingly. You tell him that he needs to tell us when goes and invites in strangers like this.

Yes ma'am. I verbally bowed, not dare saying what I really wanted to.

Then in a dismissive tone she told us to be careful and then prepared to leave. I thanked her for her kindness and then walked back to the truck grumbling under my breath. As she passed I thought to myself there goes another magnanimous Christian going off to Church to celebrate benevolence to strangers and ardor for all humanity. Too bad most seem to leave it at the Church door on the way out!

Just before departing for the cave Tom Patton came roaring up on his ATV with good friend, David Goodman, just behind. Tom Patton has always been friendly and more than kind to us and not in just providing access to our treasure chest of caves. He is a jolly fellow; loving his lifestyle of Tennessee backwoods, loving people. He knew well the landscape and had pointed out to us several entrances that provided clues to discovering major cave. (Funny that he doesn't consider himself religious.)

I asked him who owned the last house before the grand pastures begin and then related my experience. He laughed out loud and revealed that the rude woman I had spoken to was his first cousin and the man in the house, who she was picking up, was his Uncle.

Don't worry about them. They're a strange bunch. We don't get along and I don't much care. If they bother you again just remind them that I do own the road access. He chuckled.

Not a caver himself, Tom always seemed fascinated with our explorations and we always made it policy to clue him in to our newest adventures. Today Tom was in for an adventure! Using his polished suck-in tactics, Lou, combined with Jim Blankenship's disarming charm, managed to overcome Tom's fear and lure him into *Cornstarch* for a quick tour. Lou is such the master.

With our photographers, Steve & Randy, still to show up Lou needed another caver to assist him with the guests so he asked me to share in the journey. I excused myself from Harry's mapping party, with lots of apologies and jumped on the back of David's ATV's, with Lou riding on the back of Jim's, and away we went.

ATV's are the only way to cave! We were zipping along the same trails in seconds that normally take several minutes for us foot-slogging caving infantry. And arrived at the entrance in no time at all. Wow! Where can I get one?

Ducking inside the entrance we opened up an entirely new world to Tom and David and I had to smile down deep in recalling my own reactions when first being introduced to the pleasure.

Passing along the familiar trail, the roll-over slabs, the step-over's, the stoop-walks and further inside to the solitude, we reached the beauty of airy passages and large chambers. As Tom Patton needed to rest frequently, his face was pouring rivers of sweat and exertion (he enjoys eating and beer), I told Lou that I would meet them at the grand junction of *Whole Wheat Way* much further in. Having time to spend alone deep inside the cave, I rested my head on my helmet, turned pillow, laying upon a sandy bed to meditate. It was so peaceful and soothing that I openly understood the fascination of caving solo.

Within twenty minutes we were reunited and walking upon the wide sandy floors of *Whole Wheat Way South*. Tom & David were impressed beyond measure and our landowning friend was beginning to get into the spirit of the venture by looking into side leads. Did you guys check this out? he would holler over to us.

His friend David claimed that he hadn't broke a sweat, but poor Tom was still flowing, even when sitting down resting. David ate everyone's cave food and was still hungry! But Lou and I thought that it was pure nervousness on his part instead of actual famine.

I spent my time trying to relocate, in vain, a series of hands and knees passages that went off to the right and were discovered on the virgin trip by Lou, Vic, Earl & I, but never checked. For some bizarre reason they remain a mystery by eluding my search.

After a good chat session, we headed back out to the entrance when we met Steve and Randy coming in. Steve had kept insisting that with novice cavers there was no way we could have gotten that far in, but Randy knowing better had come in to locate us. After Steve followed, we set up a photo-shoot to capture Tom and David (with Jim as designated ATV buddy) in their hour of initiation and glory. Steve Capps recognized instantly that such a glossy image, combined with the tour itself, would cement for all time our caver-landowner relationship.

After assisting Jim in leading our guests out of the cave, I returned to the crew, who had advanced back into *Whole Wheat Way* and were preparing to shoot their first frame of film. And so it continued for several hours. Lou and I served as the light slaves by holding modified aluminum pie pans with flash bulbs, whose glass globes were filled with magnesium filaments of various thickness depending upon your light requirements. A triggering button behind the metal shield sent a tiny charge from an attached transistor battery to ignite the filaments for a split second, dazzling wall of light. Lou and I had fun standing like sentries and flashing our cave frame after frame.

At one shoot Steve insisted getting a wide angle shot of *Whole Wheat Way* with the discoverers posing in some manner. Since only half of the original team were present (Vic Ayers was stuck at home working and Earl Bailey is AWOL), Lou and I stepped out into the passage. Discussing our poses while Steve took readings, Lou ended up thrusting his belly out in an exaggerated bulge, while I faced the camera with large rock in hand in a throwing stance.

Early on in our photo shoot, Phil Davis passed through showing off *Cornstarch* to a number of newly interested cavers from around the region. As everyone greeted one another and stories were tossed back and forth like they were playing 4-square, I joined Lou, who was off to the side laying down on a steeply tilted slab, watching carefully and amused.

You know Lou, I began, plopping down beside him. If this keeps up and the word spreads much further we won't even have to do any caving. The only thing necessary will be to give out scoop leads and send the hordes in charging.

Now you're catching on. Lou chuckled. Pretty soon we won't even need to leave home, just send me a map and your trip report!

Phil Entrance Finder Davis (sounds like a Shawnee to me) went on that day to discover a third *Cornstarch* entrance above *Five Domes*. You can survey down it, but some blasting is needed to open her up. Phil later reported.

As we all gathered at the bottom land pasture after dark there was a rabid exchange of humor, stories and accounts from the day's journey as everyone bared their souls while getting dressed and washing the sand out of their ears and hair.

Harry, Steve & Bruce had done quite a bit of survey during the afternoon, adding several hundreds of feet to the raw data for Bruce's cartography project. Harry related to me how they had gone for broke to penetrate the mass of breakdown to reach the continuation passage, but though they had pushed a good distance off their map, they became bogged down in the tumble of rock and barred from further progress.

There is a way through it, but like the *Butt Crack* it may simply be a small slot that everyone's missing.

Afterwards it was off to Pizza Hut, or as we call it, Pizza Slut, for an evening of riotous socializing. We all got into an exchange of our favorite Monty Python skits and scenes from their movies and ended the evening with a round of whistling from *Always Look on the Bright Side of Life*.

## Another Yesterday Born

The morning of departure is always a sad thing. Cavers who were so jolly, carefree and confederated are suddenly feeling the gravity of home, job and obligations yanking at them like a persistent tapping on the shoulder, which increases in strength as you procrastinate deeper into the day. It's a tug of war really, between wanting to hold your children & kiss your wife and the strong desire to cave until you drop & camaraderie with your closest friends.

I guess this is why Medieval military campaigns were so popular. By tradition and, let's admit it, sexist law, males could take off for months and maybe years with one's buddies to fight for God, King & Country and not worry about who was going to get the castle in divorce court. Hell, the Crusaders for over two centuries made an art out of it, staying their whole lives in the Holy Land (that would be Fentress County for us cavers) fighting the Arabs (this would be hostile local landowners), building fortified cities (field-houses), patrolling an enchanted land (ridge-walking to us) and worshipping God and chanting inside cathedrals (Shouting Oh dear Lord! [in a prayer of gratitude] as you discover virgin trunk and then chanting Scoop! Scoop! as you run & dance across its floor).

What a life! The Crusaders, though often married back home, freely took concubines and had camp followers to help them drag out that separation. Mmmm I wonder if we could get away with that on weekends?

For Jim and Lou the pounding on their shoulders must have been bone crunching, for they elected to ATV around Fentress County the entire day with Tom Patton, eat a dinner of fresh bass that evening at Tom's home, followed by a jawing session. The bastards.

Lou didn't see Cincinnati until one o'clock the following morning, while Jim walked in his front door two hours later!

Unfortunately, I wasn't nearly as lucky. Bruce and I left the area around 10:30am and spent a quiet evening at home.

I held my children close to me, listened to their stories of the weekend, feeling that special parental glow; kissed my wife gently and was reminded just how much she means to me. I was glad to be home.

Sometime just before we retired for the night, during the afterglow, I began to pre-plan our next cave trip, arranging scoop leads in priority and thinking about what new equipment I should purchase.

Off to the side, hanging in my bedroom closet, my now polished crusader armor caught the reflection of the street lamp from outside briefly and flashed into my eyes.

## **Trip Report**

By Greg Karoly

On Sunday May 25, 1997, I took some Lucent Technologies summer students for a caving trip to Tarkiln cave. Tarkiln cave is located on a farm just outside of Olive Hill, Kentucky. Of the 7 of us, one was from Peru (the only woman in the group), one

was from Lebanon, one was from Cuba, one was from India and one was an American Native from Fairbanks, Alaska. None of the summer students had ever caved before and were looking forward to a great adventure.

Shortly after entering the stream entrance, I introduced the cavers to the "Sea of Screams." They asked why the place was called the "Sea of Screams." I told them that they would soon find out why. The water is about 3 to 4 feet deep and all screamed to add to the atmosphere of the trip.

It has been about a year since I last explored Tarkiln cave. On this trip, I noticed a lot more sand and silt than I had remembered. I was able to locate the area of the side entrances, but they were sanded in and a very low belly crawl was necessary. I proceeded as far as I could but never actually found the exits. There was still a lot of cave to explore, so we proceeded with other areas of the cave. Later, we exited and re-enter the cave at the waterfall entrance. We had a good full day of caving. All said that they enjoyed the trip; or at least that is what they said.

During the first week in June, I will be returning to Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Some of my co-workers in Saudi will be taking me to a different cave than Heet cave; which I explored on several previous trips. I'll provide a trip report when I get back.

---

## **Reports From the 1997 Speleofest**

### **Prehistoric Drawings – Crump's Cave**

May 25, 1997

By Lacie Braley

The Speleofest in Cadiz, Kentucky featured archaeologist Valerie Haskins as guest speaker after Sunday's banquet. In 1989 Valerie was told of possible prehistoric drawings in Crump's Cave in Kentucky. Eventually their existence was confirmed. Deep in the cave the drawings line both sides of a long, low clay covered passage. Stick figures, clearly female, and continuous squiggle lines are among the rare designs found. A green patina that covers the drawings helps to confirm their age. Unfortunately, more modern "artwork" also covers the lines and figures. Many of the drawings dating from two the four thousand years ago are difficult to separated from newer impressions in the soft clay. Close examination of the drawings revealed bits of bark still left in some places. Also found were impressions from woven baskets placed on the sloping walls.

Once the age of the drawings was confirmed the investigators were faced with a new problem: how to prevent further damage to the delicate figures. In 1975 centuries worth of history of occupation from the cave's entrance area was destroyed by vandals. The decision was made to gate the cave. Using the expertise of well known designer, five tons of donated steel and the help of over seventy volunteers, the second largest cave gate in the world was installed at Crump's Cave. Bill, the cave

owner, still allows access to the cave provided the cavers are aware of the drawings and their delicate nature.

Valerie Haskins says cavers are a great resource to archaeologists in their search for similar cave artwork. Generally these types of drawings are found deep in caves in hard to reach places. The stick figures have long necks and round bodies. Lines and designs are usually done two to three fingers/sticks wide and may be cross-hatched.

The exact meaning, if any, of the drawings is unknown. Perhaps the discovery of similar artwork in other caves can provide clues to what led the ancient inhabitants to journey deep into the cave and draw.

## Cool Spring Cave

May 25, 1997

by Lacie Braley

Sunday morning of the Speleofest in Cadiz, Kentucky dawned cool and cloudy. Doug Davis and I double checked the trip time for nearby Cool Spring Cave and prepared for departure. Our trip leader, Curtis Beasley, took our group of twenty three in through the main entrance of the cave. Large as this group sounds it was much nicer than the previous day's thirty plus at Glover's Cave.

The main stream entrance at Cool Spring Cave is one of three known entrances, all quite near each other. We traveled along the stream passage for 475 feet until it opened into a large chamber. Curtis then went to check on the status of a bat colony. When he returned we headed off to the right down a passage, through a hole and back to the stream. After a short distance we came to the 10 foot (?) (sure looked longer to me!) handline climb mentioned in the Speleofest Guidebook. Doug noted the use of natural fiber rope. Two people were unable to make this climb and headed back out the stream passage.

The rest of us proceeded along the upper level alternately crawling and stoop walking. We eventually climbed back to the lower level using a second handline.

The high, narrow passage turned and we entered an area with many live formations. There we saw the Lake Room which appeared to extend beyond the actual "lake." The other direction led to a dry area containing rimstone formations and more.

Curtis then offered us a choice – a walk back to the stream passage and out the "short cut" through Cockroach Crawl. Cockroach Crawl is a fairly short, tight, (10 inch clearance) crawl to the dry entrance. Doug and about half the group chose the walk through pretty Pathos Parlor. The rest of us elected to try the crawl.

Midway through I noticed a salamander making it's way across in front of me. I gently urged it along and continued on my way out. I emerged above and to the west of the main entrance.

After a look at the sink entrance I joined Curtis and some others on the short, rainy walk back to the vehicles. Cool Spring Cave was well worth the trip. However, landowner permission was granted for Speleofest cavers on Memorial weekend only.

"The wetter the better" "The deepest and freest" "More mud for my blood" If these phrases are missing in your life then maybe you ought to try.

## Caving In Indiana

THE 44<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL INDIANA CAVE CAPERS WILL BE ON AUGUST 1, 2, 3 1997 AT PIC-A-CHIC FARMS, 10 MINUTES SOUTH OF BLOOMINGTON, INDIANA. The Central Indiana Grotto is pleased to return to the Bloomington area after 14 years. This area of Monroe County has had Land Owner relation problems in the past and we hope to encourage all of you to treat Land Owners with respect. Perhaps a kind word and an extra effort on everyone's part will make a difference. Please check the status of local caves at registration before heading out. We have managed to get a few special trips into some old favorites and a few normally closed caves. Please remember access to private property is a privilege, not a right.

The 70 acre farm at Pic-A-Chic includes a large, air-conditioned community building that will be the site of another great Capers BANQUET. The banquet will feature a couple meat choices, vegetables, salads, deserts, and drinks. There is plenty of camping area, both shaded and sunny...plus quiet and not very quiet sites! Flush toilets and drinking water will be available but you will need to bring your solar showers...unless you don't mind good old cave mud stuck to ya.

Capers REGISTRATION will open around noon on Friday and stay open around the clock till 5 p.m. on Saturday. FRIDAY evening will start with an open forum. Come equipped with your favorite slides and music, or just mill around and visit your friends. SATURDAY will be busy so get an early start! Guided and self-guided CAVE TRIPS will leave from the registration area. Pic-A-Chic Cave is within walking distance and will probably be very popular. Later in the evening we will have an excellent BANQUET on site, which will be followed by two GUEST SPEAKERS. Mike and Andrea Futrell will excite you with "The 1997 Gunung Buda Cave Project". Sarawak, Malaysia is one of the world's most impressive and rewarding places to explore caves. In 1995, American cavers were invited to document the caves and karst of Gunung Buda, Sarawak, Malaysia as a contribution to the development of a new national park. Gunung Buda is located just north of Gunung Mulu National Park, home of some of the largest and most extensive caves in the world. After the program a fine selection of DOOR PRIZES will be given away and the evening will conclude with some GOOD MUSIC. Also remember, voices and music carry, so keep it down from 12 midnight to 7am. In years past, banquet tickets and T-shirts have sold out early, so be sure to PRE-REGISTER.