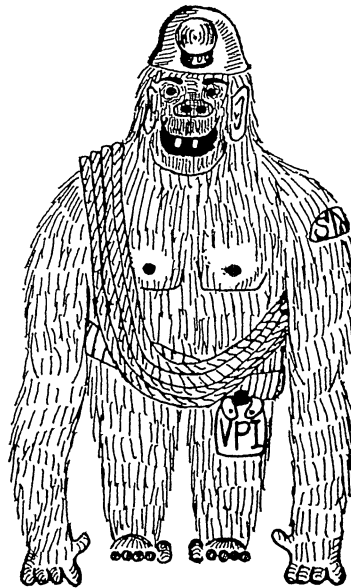


THE TECH TROGLODYTE

A PUBLICATION OF THE VIRGINIA TECH GROTTO OF THE
NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY



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THE TECH TROGLODYTE

Vol. 2, No. 1

1963

a publication of the VPI Grotto of the NSS
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Address all corrrspondence to the editor.

Every now and then we sit back and think a word of praise for the grottoes with the time and energy to get their publications off the table on a fairly reasonable schedule. A lot of time and energy is required.

It's been a long time since this publication last hit the mails but as was once said "we're not dead, just asleep." But then we look at statistics like those found below on caving time and realize we've not been asleep at all, just quiet. We apparently spend so much time caving we don't have time to write about it.

Anyhow, here it is for 1963. A small idea of what's been going on in the VPI Grotto.

We hope to appear often enough in the future to let the world know what's going on down here. In the next issue, whenever that may be, look for a comprehensive report on the caves of Burkes Garden, Virginia, plus other material submitted by individuals whose arms we were able to twist.

This is titled Vol. 2, No. 1, but just for the record, 1963 is Vol. 2, 1964 will begin Vol. 3.

WORLD'S MOST ACTIVE CAVING GROUP

The VPI Grotto has long felt that it was probably the most active local caving organization in this country. In order to substantiate this claim, Gary McCutchen undertook to tabulate all caving activity within the group for the period Sept. 18, 1963 - Dec. 13, 1963. This tabulation accounted for a total of 49 trips to 34 different caves, and accumulative total of 967 manhours underground.

Any organization which feels it might be able to contest these results is encouraged to record similar data for a similar length of time and submit it for comparison. Figures listed here are for the fall academic quarter of school.

For a period slightly less than 12 weeks long, the above statistics breakdown to 4.08 separate trips per week (excluding numerous rock climbing trips) with 19.73 hours per trip. This includes NO time spent sleeping, but all active caving. Although 34 different caves were visited during this period, it fails to show a true picture, for each cave was counted only once although 5 of them were visited 4 or more times, and one cave 7 times. Hours spent on trips taken to simply locate caves were not included.

OBJECTIONS VOICED TO SOME POLICIES ON PRE-CONVENTION FIELD TRIPS

In the March 1963 NSS News was a lengthy article on pre-convention field trips to be held at Mountain Lake in June. This article contained the following two sentences.

"In the interest of safety, EVERY person climbing a ladder and EVERY person rappelling on scheduled trips will be given a dynamic, overhead belay. Because of the large numbers of people involved, the unfamiliarity of most of the drops to the participants, and the inability of the trip leaders to know the respective abilities of the participants, it is asked that all cavers submit to what many may consider a slight inconvenience."

This certainly did not seem to be an unreasonable request, and we felt it to be a satisfactory safeguard for those participating in scheduled convention trips. The primary inconvenience was to be to the trip leader who did the belaying, but we felt it to be an appropriate measure. Every drop that was to be executed had been previously made by the VPI Grotto with an overhead belay and without hindrance or complication caused by the belay.

When a group accepts the task of organizing and leading trips for large groups of varying and largely unknown abilities to caves little known by these people, they also accept no small degree of responsibility. The VPI Grotto attempted to plan convention trips to maximize the enjoyment and satisfaction of participants and yet provide for a maximum of safety.

If was for this reason that the above policy was adopted. It was with the consideration that some individuals might object that the policy was outlined far in advance.

Nevertheless, at Pig Hole Cave the trip leaders were accosted by two outspoken objectors who apparently felt it an insult to their caving ability to be burdened with a belay. The leaders are to be complimented for the firmness with which they stuck to what they felt to be the safest policy;

The Baltimore Grotto News has long and loud cried out against the use of an overhead belay on a rappel, and they are certainly entitled to their opinion on what is an appropriate level of safety. However, they might advise some of their members of a converse to a famous saying, "If unwilling to do as the Romans, do not go to Rome."

DR. MURRAY RESIGNS AS FACULTY ADVISOR

Since the last issue of this publication, the Cave Club has received the resignation of its faculty advisor, Dr. John W. Murray (N.S.S. 248). Dr. Murray, a professor in chemistry at V.P.I., had been faculty advisor for many years, during which he contributed actively to the Cave Club. An active caver himself for many years, he is well known nationally for his work in cave mineralogy, especially as regarding his work in New River Cave and his studies of the calcite-aragonite problem. He was the author of a paper entitled "Report on the Mineralogy of New River Cave," which appeared in Bulletin 13 of the N.S.S., and other cave-related papers.

Dr. Murray was largely responsible for the establishment of the safety code under which the club now functions.

The Cave Club sincerely appreciates his many years of service.

The new faculty advisor is Dr. David A. West, Assistant Professor of Zoology. Dr. West has a BA (1955) and PhD (1959) from Cornell University where he was in the old Cornell Grotto. He is an avid hiker and outdoorsman.

FALLOUT SHELTERS

Recently the Civil Defense office released a list of all caves which have been designated as fallout shelters. This listing of over 400 caves, approximately 25 of which are in Virginia, is in the hands of Russell Gurnee. It will be circulated when the appropriate time arises for the local grottos to check the caves in their area against a prepared check list.

It is felt that in order to perform any service to the civil defense program and to the idea of cave conservation, N.S.S. members must accept the concept that there are some caves which really would make adequate fallout shelters. There are various reasons, however, why many caves are not so suited. N.S.S. members must admit this to themselves if any progress is to be made. Rather than decrying the whole program as such, we must be able to impassionately point out its shortcomings and inconsistencies, while recognizing its merits.

Many aspects of the program are unrealistic, perhaps because of lack of knowledge by the persons who made the surveys or the inconsistency of evaluations across the country. For example, the listed capacities for Luray and Mammoth Caves are nearly equal, and some smaller Caves in the Ozark region have far larger capacity evaluations.

I feel that we must work with these people where possible in an effort to guide them as much as possible away from undesirable caves and to encourage a high degree of consciousness for the preservation of speleologic features. If we simply cry "no", our cries will be unheard; but if we say "maybe so, but how about this.....", our advice will more than likely be accepted with the sincerity with which it is offered.

ghm

WHO'S IN CHARGE HERE?

Last Spring a quiz was given to 33 members and trainees of the cave club. With a great variety of questions it revealed several interesting things. For example, 15 of the 33 did not know the full name of the club, "The VPI Grotto of the NSS," as stated in the constitution. Only 7 were able to name 3 minerals of which speleothems are likely to be composed. In addition, 11 did not know the club's vice president, 14 did not know the location of the club's files, 22 did not know what governs the temperature of a cave, and 22 did not know the club's policy governing the use of a chest prusik on rappels. Ten knew who was president of the NSS, 6 knew how to spell "pruzzik" (see Baltimore Grotto News, V6, No. 1, p. 18), and 14 thought that Myotis lucifus was a salamander.

Happily the best grades were concentrated among our oldest members, but the test did show an inadequacy in the instruction given to our new members. Apparently most of the information is just picked up with time, as the grades attest. A few "chicken" questions kept the grades down somewhat, but Ed Day led the pack with 95% and "J. Houk," whom we suspect to be Jim Saunders, came home with a 26% - but was given credit for some ~~answers~~ like "One is the minimum safe caving party, ask Floyd Collins.", to destroy a possible zero %.

Questions on the favorite and least favorite caves had 26 different caves mentioned in the former category, 22 in the latter, with 8 being mentioned on both lists. It all depends on what you like. New River was least popular, Clover Hollow most popular.

ghm

FALSE ALARM RESCUE

Last Spring, confusion over the supposed time of return of a caving trip demonstrated the ability of the V.P.I Cave Club to organize rapidly an efficient rescue party. When what was understood to be a short afternoon trip to Pig Hole Cave had not returned by midnight, it was decided advisable to investigate the cause of delay. The original alarm was sounded by safety chairman Tom Bell; within 45 minutes a party of four was on its way to the cave, fully armed for any situation which might be encountered in the vertical cave. At least 5 others had been notified and were standing by in case the situation should require more manpower.

Apparently the caving group and the supposed rescue party passed somewhere along the route for the cave showed no signs of inhabitants. Upon returning to campus just after 2:00 am the rescue party found the victims safely tucked in their beds.

The incident did demonstrate, however, the necessity for establishing a more precise method of noting anticipated time of return of cave trips, but also showed the ability of this club to form quickly and efficiently an effective rescue party.

ARE THERE ANY CAVES IN TENNESSEE?

There are caves in Tennessee. I know there are. After all some guy named Barr wrote a book about them. Besides that, everybody knows they're there. It's just that they don't know where they are. Or if they do, they won't let you in.

At least in Southwest Virginia the people can say it's "over yonder, about as far as from hyere to thyere," and point in the right general direction. But not in Tennessee.

My first experience with a Tennessee cave was Carter County Saltpeter. Barr says it is "a large and well-known cave, but it is very hard to find." Amen, brother.

Buck Cuddy and I looked for it on our way to the Chattanooga Convention. We got directions at a drug store, again at the owner's house, again at a little shack half way up the mountain, each one of these fine personages concluding with the fabled remark "Ya cain't miss hit." Needless to say we did -- for well over two hours. Which isn't easy with an entrance 35' by 10'. This cave did have one of the most beautiful terraces of rimstone dams I have seen.

On the same trip, we then headed for the Gouffre with general directions from the discoverer, Bill Cuddington. Everyone in the area knew it was "up the hollow" or "up the ole logging road." After about 6 hours of searching we were heading from one logging road to the next when I fell off the car (at about 45 mph), breaking my arm and messing up a few other parts of my anatomy; so we gave up and headed for the banquet at Cumberland Caverns and thence to a Chattanooga hospital.

The next time I got a chance to go caving in Tennessee was this past summer when Bonnie and I headed for the Smoky Mountains for a week. We found Gregory's Cave by following the fallout shelter signs. The last sign had a mate which read "Warning - Prior written approval from Park Headquarters required before any park cave may be entered." With a few friendly remarks for the National Park Service we decided to look for Bull Cave to see if it too was marked. When we finally found Bull, it was only because of the lane of "Warning... .." signs which led us to it.

The next logical step was Park Headquarters where we looked up the head ranger and explained our desires. Apparently the only way to get into the caves is through a legitimate scientific project. After listening patiently for a while, we let them know in no few words what we thought of National Park Service Policy and then went for a hike to cool off. I still question their policy regarding the Park's caves.

On the way home we decided to stop at Cedar Creek Cave in Greene County. The first man we asked for directions guided us to the parking lot behind the grammar school. It turned out later that he had been correct in every detail except that he had right and left backwards in every instance. The second, third, and fourth groups of instructions were somewhat inferior, so when we got to be half way up the mountain Barr says the cave is at the base of, we decided to head back. The fifth fellow got us in the right vicinity, and we searched until we found it. By then we were so exhausted we explored a short distance and headed home.

And that is what makes life challenging!

ghm

WHITEY EUBANK, HERO

The "Hero" medal was recently presented to Whitey Eubank for "contributions to speleology above and beyond....."

Try to imagine what a female reporter for a small town weekly newspaper might do with a story on a cave explorer and you may get some idea of the lengthy front page spread Whitey got during the summer. Complete with six photographs - one of Whitey with white shirt, tie, and hard hat - the article was yellow journalism plus.

It's inspiring to occasionally be reminded of the dashing heroism of those around you.

The facts of the interview were badly mauled, but Whitey did successfully convey his views on conservation. He also presented a favorable picture of the N.S.S. - what it is and what it does - and generally gave an excellent and correctly oriented picture for non-cavers.

A HARD HAT REALLY HELPS

I noticed on page 30 of the May issue of the Potomac Caver where Jim Fox said, "My hard hat shielded the first blow", and on page 31, "A chin strap would have kept the hard hat on." But in the check list for new members on page 33, what has happened to the hard hat and chin strap? It is felt to be not an "important point" (i.e. it is not marked with an asterik), but is listed for vertical caves only - and the chin strap is merely a "suggestion."

I personally feel, and know that most cavers will agree, that the hard hat is of primary necessity for safe caving and that every person should be encouraged to wear one at all times, in all caves. Mr. Fox seems rather inconsistent, and it seems an effort should be made to correct the PSC's "check list" before it is extensively read by new cavers.

A recent fall by a V.P.I. caver points out the same fact regarding hard hats and chin straps. The climb out of Warm River Cave is not difficult, but one slip on a slippery foothold was all it took. His hard hat protected him on the initial blow, but rolled free because of the lack of a chin strap, and he suffered a few cuts on the head rolling down the slope at the base of the climb.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

I like most of the content of the Tech Troglodyte, but I deplore the use of the hairy ape as an emblem or masthead. Am I alone in my adverse criticism of the beast?

/s/ Jim Quinlan

(a past president of the VPI Grotto)

WAR STORIES

A new term has been coined to describe the typical trip report presented at cave club meetings. It was decided that the term "trip report" should refer only to trips on which some contribution of merit or significant discovery was made (10% of all trips). Reports of typical trips will henceforth be known as "war stories." For an example of a "war story" consult any issue of the Baltimore Grotto News.

Our friends from Baltimore say
That it's silly to use a belay.
They fuss and they feud,
And consider us rude,
And sit on their haunches and bray.

NEWCASTLE MURDER HOLE MAY BE REOPENED

Newcastle Murder Hole, which was closed to cavers nearly two years ago because of excessive discourtesies on the part of many, will hopefully be made accessible to competent cavers within the next several months.

The cave has been passed on to another generation of the Sizer's and its status will be known shortly after division of the estate is completed. The presumed new owner seems quite receptive to having competent, considerate individuals enter his cave. A register will probably be instituted at his home so that he can keep track of the individuals who come and go from the cave.

Future developments will be noted as they occur, but at present it seems wise to proceed with moderation.

LINK'S CAVE TO BE GATED

At the request of its owner, Link's Cave, Giles County, is presently being gated. The gate of welded concrete reinforcing rods is being constructed by a committee headed by Ed Day. Keys will be retained by both the owner and the VPI Cave Club and will be available to any reliable individuals. A plaque is scheduled for installation, also, to explain the reasons for the gate and how entry may be gained. The second and higher entrance to the cave, some 15 feet away, has been blocked with large fragments of rock.

Link's is a comparatively small but well decorated cave. Mr. Link recently became concerned because of a large increase in the number of visitors and proposed the gate to members of the Cave Club.

MORE PASSAGE IN LINK'S CAVE

Surprises continue to occur in the relatively small Link's Cave, Giles County, Virginia. This summer over 300 feet of cave, not virgin, but previously unknown to this club, were discovered. A zigzag canyon developed along vertical jointing departs to the right of the old part of the cave about 300 feet into the cave and works back toward the cliff face, ending in a 30 foot drop to a fairly large room. The room contained large quantities of nuts, leaves, fecal deposits, and one observed cave rat.

Hoping to establish contact with the surface both from this point and the small room at the end of the crawlway in the back of the cave, cavers with strong lungs were stationed inside while others crisscrossed the corresponding areas on the surface. No voice contact with the surface was made.

Folks call him "Vertical Whitt"
 He's frightened by heights not one bit
 Just give him a rope.
 And in darkness he'll grope
 To rappel down a bottomless pit.

GREENBRIER COUNTY MEANDERINGS

by Ed Bauer

....We drove right to the mouth of Grapevine, rappelled in on two ropes and had a ball checking out the cave - took lots of pictures and were very impressed. My friend Bren didn't have any trouble prussiking out, but the other fellow, Dick, pooped out at the first ledge, and as I passed him he informed me that the VW might be put to some good use and pull him out. Since it was cold as the devil outside, I decided to forget George's hoisting method and instead hauled him out with the VW. It was quite an experience for his first cave.

We then checked into a motel in Lewisburg and washed up, ate dinner and sacked out. Following my ancient topo map we drove 10 miles on back logging roads the next morning to the site of Piercy's Mill Cave and were very impressed with the large portal and stream. I asked the farmer who lived there,

"Is this Piercy's Mill Cave?"

"Yup"

"Is it on your property?"

"Yup"

"I understand it's quite pretty?"

"Yup"

"Can we go in and look around?"

"Nope"

"Had troubles with vandalism?"

"Yup"

So went our conversation and we had to retrace our steps back to Lewisburg in search of another cave. The owner was in church so we headed for McClungs.

I was really disappointed when I couldn't get the key for the gate inside.

Our friend Dick had quite a bit of trouble in this cave, also, since while canyon hopping his light kept falling off his helmet and into the stream. Since we had a 12 hour trip ahead of us we decided to head home. Although I was happy just to go caving I was a little dissappointed at the turn of events, especially not being able to see Piercy's Mill Cave. It might be a good idea to spread the word around that this cave, which is rated so highly by Davies, is closed since the road to his house really ruins the car.....

Editor's Note: In the remainder of his letter, Ed expressed considerable disapproval of his not being allowed to have the key to the interior section of McClungs, and rightfully so. It is unpleasant to think that competent cavers are let into a cave only under the watchful eye of he who installed the gate, and only when their assistance is desired.

Gates which keep out the average passerby are one thing, but gates which keep out competent, conscientious cavers are definately wrong. Some arrangements should be made so that capable people can get admittance without an unreasonable amount of red tape.

FROM THE D.C. SPELEOGRAPH

I recently ran across an interesting paragraph in the D.C. Speleograph. The article is by Lee Gilman and is about Mystic Cave, Pendleton County, West Virginia.

"All of us traversed the first pool with varying degrees of wetness.... All of us went back as far as the second, in which one would have to get wet to get across....I headed up a committee which was searching for a way to get around this pool by way of an upper level. It would be possible to do this, but expansion bolts would be needed."

This points out how dangerous it is to say it's "impossible" because there frequently turns up some fool who's done it. Yes, Lee, it's been done.

The same issue of the D.C. Speleograph announced the resignation, as editor, of Henry Douglas so that he can devote his full energies toward publication of the Virginia Cave Survey. It will be published by a private concern, hopefully in the near future. Lyle Conrad will assume editorship of the Speleograph.

"Our Hero" had no other name
He made every cave seem so tame.
With Marland to lead
We were bound to succeed,
But the fool went and married a dame.

FIVE CRAIG COUNTY CAVES VISITED

During the Fall, five small caves along Sinking Creek Valley in Craig County were investigated. A cave was known to exist at Bent Fisher's, but the information on it was incomplete. Frank Given's was known and well described, but the other three were previously unreported.

Keffer's was the only cave which turned out to be significant. The entrance is on a steep hillside just above a wet weather resurgence. During very high water, water reportedly flows from the cave entrance also. The cave was completely dry as was the spring below on the day of our visit.

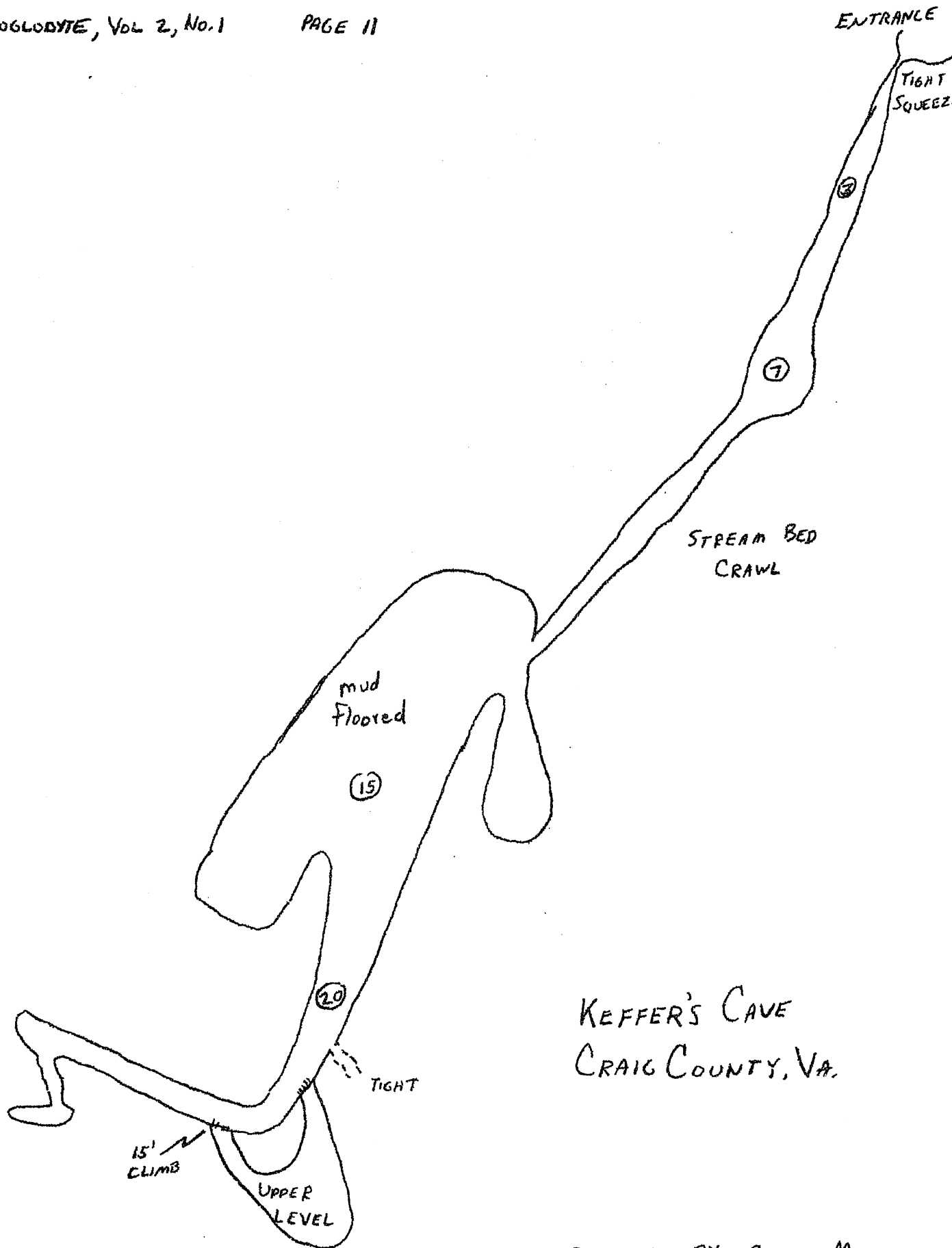
The entrance is a tight squeeze opening between boulders into a dirt floored crawlway. Fifty feet from the entrance is a small room seven feet high. The passage descends from the room to a dry stream channel three feet high which continues for another sixty feet to a quite large room floored with mounds of mud. The stream channel is along the left of the room and is followed to the end of the cave where it emerges from a pile of rubble.

A small upper level is developed above a 90° turn at 190 feet from the entrance. Total length is about 260 feet.

The other caves investigated were as follows:

Bent Fisher's Cave	Waiteville Quad	37-20-10
	35' long x 15' deep	80-24-34
Frank Given's Cave	Waiteville Quad	37-23-30
	150' long x 10' deep	80-19-23
Coffin Cave	Waiteville Quad	37-23-07
	50' long x 15' deep	80-19-24
Keffer's Cave	Waiteville Quad	37-23-05
	260' long x 5' deep	80-19-27
Mile's Cave	Waiteville Quad	37-23-09
	40' long x 12' deep	80-19-08

A caver down VPI way
Is known by the name of Ed Day.
He said "Have no fear,
The Yellow Bomb's here."
And pedestrians gathered to pray.



KEFFER'S CAVE
CRAIG COUNTY, VA.

SKETCHED BY GREGG MARLAND

TOTAL LENGTH IS APPROXIMATELY 260'

TRIP TO GERMANY VALLEY

by Gary McCutchen

Ed Day and I had planned a trip to Schoolhouse Cave over the weekend of July 5-7. No one else was able to go, so Ed drove to Charlottesville, met me, and I drove on from there.

We got to the fieldhouse about 1:30 a.m., talked for awhile to the seven or eight others there, and hit the sack.

No one was going to School House Cave that Saturday, so we visited nearby Fieldhouse Cave. A 20 foot deep sinkhole and a narrow squeeze lead to a "T" junction with the main passage. We went to the left and crossed one pit before reaching the end of the passage.. Retracing our steps, we reached the entrance squeeze and continued on down the main passage. It soon ends in a series of pits. Ed descended into one, discovering that the water in the bottom was deeper than it looked and also discovering that he could have climbed down into it without getting wet.

A hole six feet up in a wall near the water pit attracted our attention. Inside we discovered a 50 foot deep pit blocking further progress. A four inch wide ledge on one side of the pit was the only possible crossing point. I got into belay position and Ed somehow got across. He was soon back with a report of more pits, but we decided to return to the surface.

It was early afternoon when we emerged, so I was given a tour of the area. We drove through a quarry, ignoring DANGER:BLASTING and KEEP OUT signs, saw Judy Springs, went in Schoolhouse to the Jumping-Off Place, saw Seneca Rocks, and looked down into Hellhole Cave.

After visiting Spruce Knob, the highest mountain in West Virginia, we decided to see Blackwater Falls State Park. It is only 30 miles from Mouth-of Seneca; the main attraction is 65 foot high Blackwater Falls.

There is a dry area in the center of the waterfall where the rock is higher. Water falls on either side of this point. Looking at the falls, Ed and I suddenly decided to rappel it. We went back to the car, changed clothes at the concession area, and got all but one rope in a sack. Trying to look inconspicuous, we crossed the stream above the falls, then jumped to a rock and then to the dry area, both jumps made only three feet from the edge of the falls.

One rope was secured around a boulder upstream. A second rope was tied to it and dropped over the edge. By this time, tourists were gathering and frantically setting up cameras and tripods.

Ed went over first and put on a good show. He then swam the 50 feet to shore. As I began my descent, I caught my hand on the breakover. I couldn't pull it out, and began to wish I was someplace else. Finally, I rolled the rope off of it and descended. Then I discovered what Ed had been trying to tell me: not to try swimming with my gloves on.

We were asked only one question, by several people: "Why did you do it?"

Wet, tired, and happy, we headed back to Charlottesville.

AREA SPELUNKERS FILM CAVE NEAR BURKETOWN

A speleologist, strictly speaking, is a scientist who studies the flora and fauna of caverns. A spelunker, while having an active interest in science, mainly seeks the adventure of cave exploration.

The Shenandoah Valley, often referred to as the "Cave Belt" of the United States, is a Spelunker's paradise. Caverns abound in the thick deposits of limestone beneath the valley floor. There are over 60 known caves in Augusta County alone. The weekend cave enthusiast in Virginia can enjoy his favorite sport right in his own backyard.

A speleology exhibit entered in the General Electric Scogee Hobby Show on Nov. 16 and 17 at the local plant is intended to give the layman a photographic tour of the world of the spelunker. This will be accomplished by the use of both still photographs and motion pictures. Lynn Cave will be the subject of the presentation.

Newly-discovered Lynn Cave is located on the Jack Lynn farm near Burkettown. It was first entered by Jerry Schuder and Bob Snively on July 26, 1963. Eleven separate charges of dynamite were employed to blast an entry hole through solid rock. This venture into a virgin cavern was a climax to the years of cave crawling by the two partners.

The cave consists of three main passages, each distinctly different in character. Formations of many different types are found in some of the rooms. Two deep pits, accessible only by vertical climbing gear, lend an air of mystery to the cavern.

The task of producing an 8mm movie of the exploration of Lynn Cave presented many problems. The first of these was the means of supplying electric power for the photoflood lamps used with the movie camera. This was solved by locating a portable gasoline-driven generator near the cave entrance.

Reels of power cable were strung inside the cave. Special containers had to be designed to protect the delicate photographic equipment. Next a communications network was established using sound-powered telephones to maintain contact between the surface and sub-surface groups.

The final step in organization of the expedition was the enlistment of the team members. They were exploration team, Jerry Schuder and Bob Snively; power technician, Kerford Brooks; cable handler, Larry Woosley; communications, Lida Snively; photography, Al Scarbrough; lighting assistant, Tom Vigour, and support, Bob McDonnell.

In one Saturday's shooting schedule, a total of 12 hours was spent in the cave to produce just 12 minutes of movie film - one hour for each usable minute of film. This will give some idea of the difficult conditions encountered.

From the Waynesboro News Virginian

"CAVING" IN NEW JERSEY

We hear big things from our "foreign correspondent" Ed Bauer who has graduated from this area to the "big cave country" of New Jersey. He writes:

"My first trip with the NNJ Grotto was a real fiasco. Two caves were real poor. N.J.'s largest was a complete crawl, mostly through mud, and I could have had more fun and seen more, crawling under my side porch. The second cave actually had what could be called a room, although it was impossible to stand up. Because part of the cave was flooded we saw as much as possible in 15 minutes, 10 being spent getting in and out the entrance."

We pause for the shedding of a tear.

"We drove up to Northern Vermont (Middleburg) Friday night and camped on the lawn of the park ranger's house at a State Park. We really caught the devil about 6:30 AM and left soon after.

"The first cave of the day was Vermont's newest and largest called Weybridge Cave. We tested our ropes and ladders and I proceeded to go caving. In short it amounted to a small sink, a narrow canyon, a 15 foot climbable pit, another canyon, a 30 foot pit, which I climbed into first, and then about 600 feet of crawls and duckways - very little of interest with a few small formations. I did get directions to two of New Forks best caves."

Tom Bell gave up caving for a pen
He wrote our constitution o'er again.
the fellow's really swell
But his leader code's hell.
I wish he'd realize we're only men.

VICAR ROAD CAVE

Last summer Sam Dunaway and myself visited nearby Vicar Road Cave (37-12-06: 80-24-54) near Price's Fork. The entrance is at the base of a small sinkhole which is somewhat difficult to distinguish from the numerous similar ones in the once cleared, but now heavily grown up area.

It descends steeply to a "T" intersection some 50 feet from the entrance. Upstream, to the right, the cave goes under a very low ledge which requires laying in the water; it then opens up to walking height and continues for about 150 feet through a very narrow but attractively decorated passage to the small impassable hole through which the stream enters.

Downstream the cave continues as a narrow stream passage, sometimes a high canyon more easily traversed at higher levels. In about 250 feet the cave opens into a moderate sized room with some attractive stalactites, and the stream plunges over a

small climable drop to a lower, muddier level. A muddy "S" curve crawl, tight enough that your body partially dams the flow of water, leads to another muddy little room and a siphon. A small torturous lead heads to the left and tends vaguely toward the entrance for over 300 feet, and a high lead permits one to climb over the siphon and continue for 75 feet before it, too, becomes impassable.

The cave is extremely muddy and cannot be seen to any degree of completeness without getting wet. Total length must be in the vicinity of 700 feet, making it one of the 3 biggest caves in Montgomery county. It is probably subject to some flooding as the sinkhole it is in and the numerous others around it drain a quite extensive area.

(map on Page 16)

ghm

George Fairer, a rock-climber grand
 Can scale any cliff with just one hand;
 But his head got kinda hard
 And he thinks that he's the Lord
 So he preaches safety to our sinful band.

INTERESTING COMMENTS FOUND WHILE ROAMING THROUGH THE CLUB'S FILES

"Don't let a cave biologist's terminology fool you. When he finds one spider, he says it's 'present', when he finds two, it is 'common', and three from an afternoon's work make it practically a pest." (Dr. H. W. Jackson)

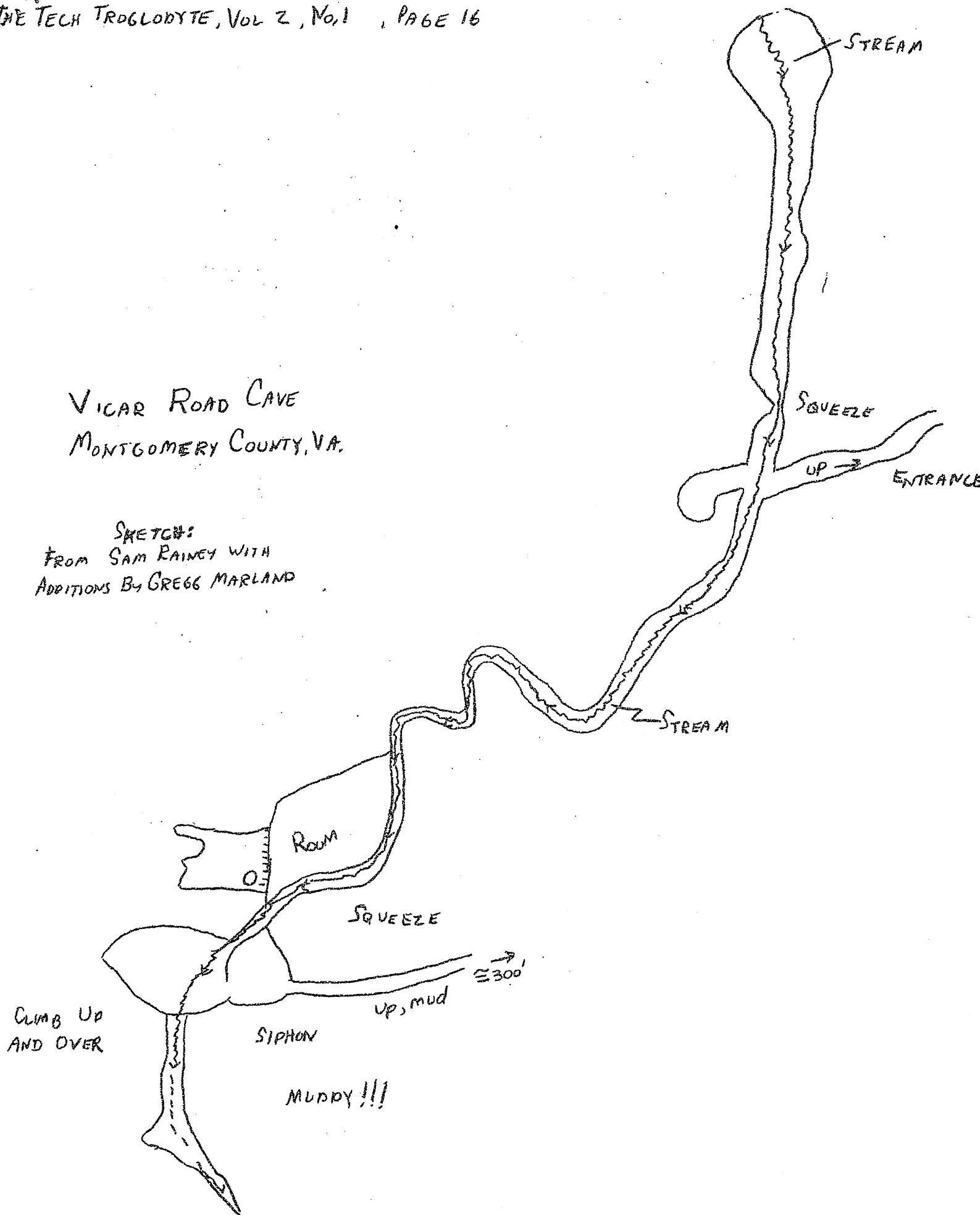
"Many short passages all leading to mud banks. May be good cave in a couple of thousand years." (Peggy and Al Mueller)

"For a technical report may I suggest you refer to the annals of Moore for complete details - he wasn't there but then was that necessary?" (annon.)

A fellow whose nickname is Joe
 Can talk like the wind can blow
 You'll see what I mean
 When he comes on the scene
 Other cavers find somewhere to go.

VICAR ROAD CAVE
MONTGOMERY COUNTY, VA.

SKETCH:
FROM SAM RAINEY WITH
ADDITIONS BY GREGG MARLAND



TRIP REPORT FORM

This form is for all of the gung-ho VPI Grotto members who are too busy caving to write about their trips. Just check the appropriate word or fill in the blank with one of your own.

We left ☐ home
☐ the Golden Gobbler
☐ just before exams
☐ for good
☐ _____

on ☐ Bastille Day
☐ my wedding day
☐ somebody's birthday
☐ don't know
☐ _____

only ☐ two hours
☐ one day
☐ a week
☐ never got started
☐ _____

late and headed for ☐ Radford College
☐ Mammoth Cave
☐ Keystone, W. Va.
☐ Fort Lauderdale
☐ _____

for a big ☐ day
☐ weekend
☐ month
☐ may never return
☐ _____

of caving. When we got there,

we ☐ couldn't find the entrance.
☐ told jokes.
☐ chased girls.
☐ chickened out.
☐ _____

Finally, ☐ someone fell in.
☐ we remembered how to tie a bolen.
☐ the farmer caught us.
☐ the girls quit running.
☐ _____

The entrance was ☐ small
☐ medium
☐ large
☐ filled with dead sheep
☐ _____

and the cave was

☐ grubby.
☐ wet
☐ forget it!
☐ I'll never be the same again.
☐ _____

While we were in the cave, we
☐ broke formations.
☐ followed the string.
☐ chased girls.
☐ looked for Fallout Shelter signs.
☐ _____

We reached the entrance

- ☐muddy
- ☐wet and muddy
- ☐cold, wet, and muddy
- ☐half dead

and immediately notified

- ☐U.Va. Grotto
- ☐LBJ
- ☐the Pentagon
- ☐John Holsinger
- ☐_____

of our discovery of ☐black widow spiders

in the depths of the cave.

- ☐Lady Bird
- ☐an aircraft carrier
- ☐a lizard
- ☐_____

Tired but happy, we returned triumphantly from our dangerous journey to find out that ☐our wives had deserted us.

- ☐Bill Plummer had published another paper.
- ☐no one had missed us.
- ☐a troop of boy scouts had already explored the cave.
- ☐_____

Editor: The author of the verses found throughout this issue has chosen to remain anonymous; however the following verse seems appropriate:

There was a young caver named Gary
 Who thought that pits were so scary
 So he said I'll stay home
 And write me a pome
 While you guys go see what's in therey.

Property Of
 VPI CAVE CLUB
 Please Return