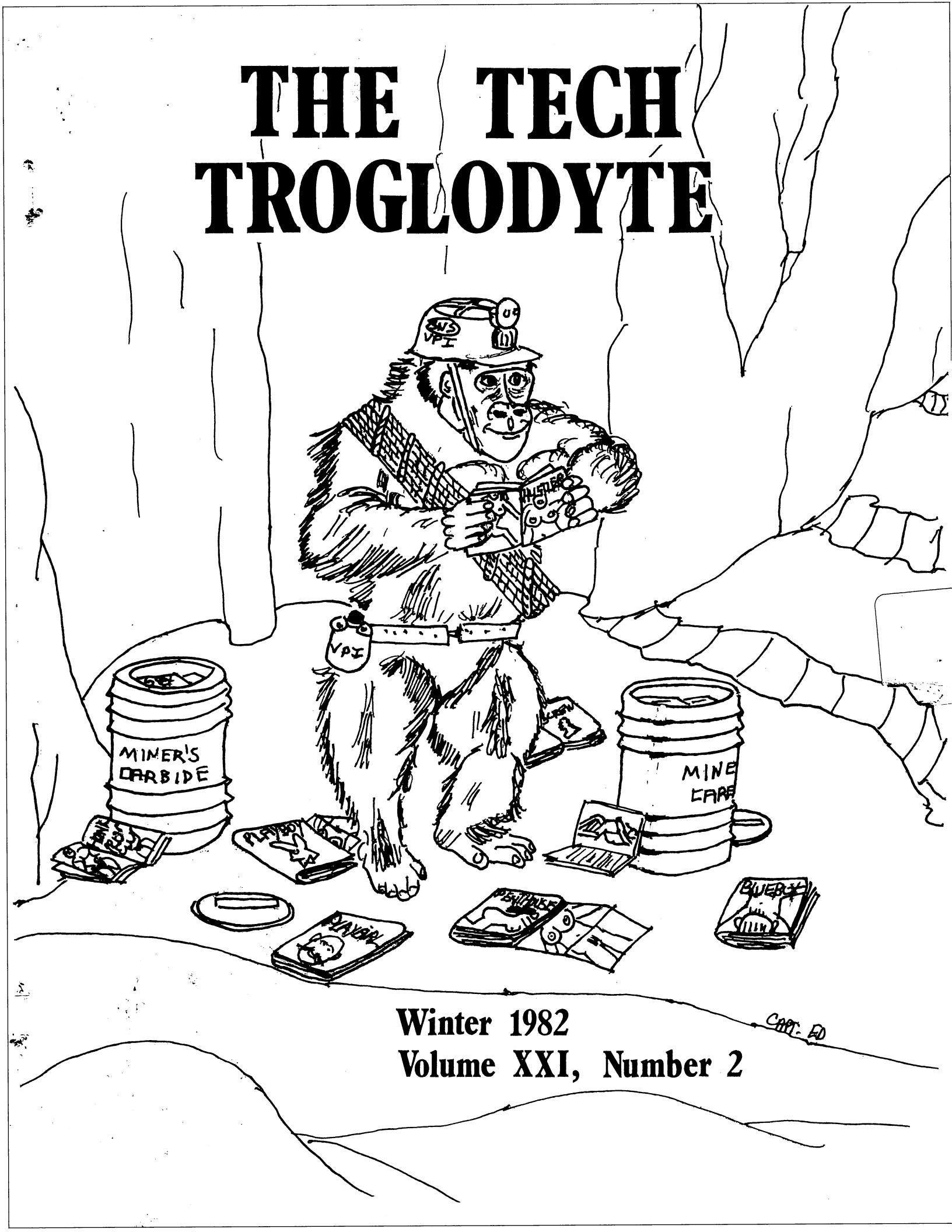
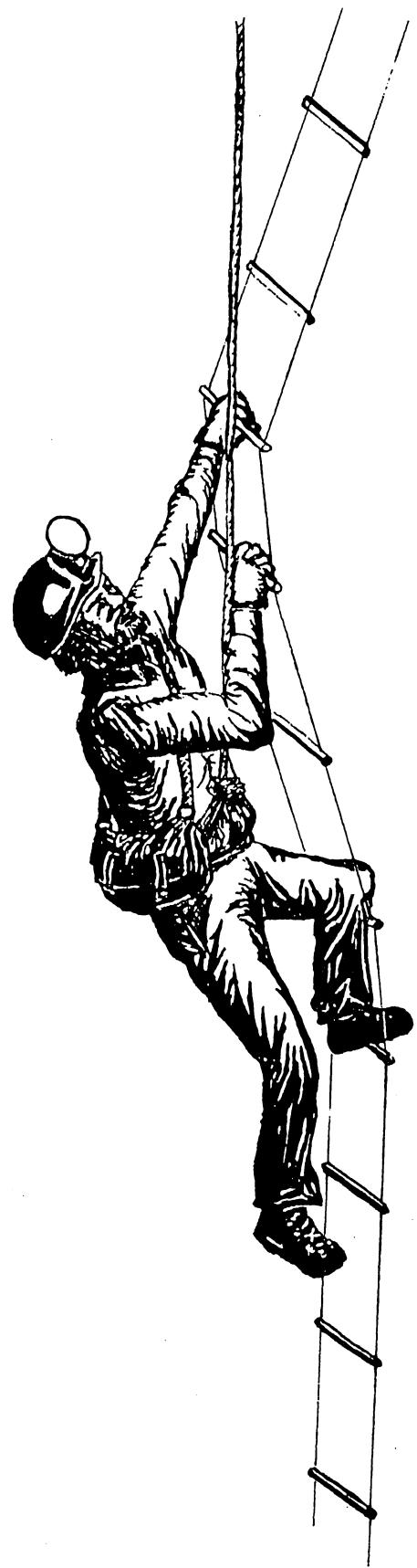


THE TECH TROGLODYTE



Winter 1982
Volume XXI, Number 2

CARTOON BY

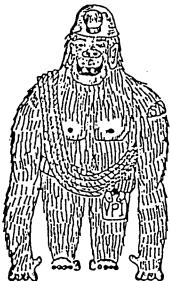


FRONT COVER: A. I. Cartwright doing some light reading in the Library in Clover Hollow Cave.

THE TECH TROGLODYTE

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

WINTER QUARTER 1982



VOL. XXI, NO. 2

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Vice-president.....John Lohner
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Sauvigne

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FROM THE PODIUM...

(The Werewolf Growls)

When Kenny asked me to write a column for the Trog, my first inclination was to dash off a brief and rather pointless piece, bewailing the cruelty of newsletter editors hounding innocent club officers for material. It later occurred to me that there is a topic which needs airing, and that the president's column is the perfect place to wave it about. The subject is the discrepancy which occurs from time to time between the official policy of the club, and the real actions of some of its members.

Two specific problems have to do with the use (or misuse) of the club sign-out sheet, and the practice of belaying (or not!) ladder climbs. The issue of the sign-out sheet has been argued, at some length, on many occasions. Nevertheless, some people still don't bother to sign their trip in immediately upon return to town, but may instead wait until they have eaten, gone to a party, and run past their estimated time of arrival. If this "wolf-crying" continues, some may be hard-pressed to be convinced to prepare for a rescue, because they will be sure that the missing parties are really just off somewhere having a good time. Needless to say, such abuse of the sign-out sheet should be cause for the club to take some sort of punitive action, such as censure.

The matter of belaying ladder climbs has not received as much attention of late, but seems as always to be with us. The club voices the idea that any climb, however insignificant, should be belayed. Ladders being the occasionally treacherous creatures they are, and humans being humanly capable of blunder, this ideal makes good sense -- although there may be exceptional exceptions. At times, someone stating this policy may ring somewhat false -- the words jibe, but the unstated message is "Those of us who are real men don't do this on belay, but if you insist..." Safe practice stifled by the foetid air of machismo! This attitude of he-man caving practice is self-perpetuating and strictly counter-productive. Let's all try to consider carefully before proceeding without belay.

A final point which rarely receives as much as a nod is the announcement of certain types of trips at club meetings. Announcements made at the meetings go into the minutes, and become the responsibility of the club. The club should not be put in a position making it legally responsible for the actions of individuals in the club. What these people do on their own, of course, is not the club's business (unless blatantly against club policy, as in entering closed caves). If some activity requires discretion, please be discrete enough not to involve the organization.

On a less serious note, it is good to notice that the club continues to grow. Good progress is being made in mapping several caves, and the number of people involved in such projects appears to be on the upswing. In general, it looks as if 1982 will be a good year.



Long-windedly,

Richard (Boo) Croft

Editor's Column

Believe it or not, another Trog has been printed this year, and hopefully contains enough quality material to make it worth the price. Many thanks go to Lawrence Britt, Dave Ginsavich, Ed Fortney, and Keith Smith for help in typing and contributing artwork for this issue. Thanks also go to all people who contributed articles to this issue as well as the fall quarter issue. Maureen Handler and Jim Washington will be editors spring quarter, so the only thing I can say is to keep caving, keep partying, and keep writing those Trog articles! We are still one of the most active grottos in the country. Over an eleven week period this winter we caved 1545 person-hours on 56 trips. With that much activity going on underground, and as much shit that goes on around here above ground, there is plenty of material to write about in the Trog.

Since this page is reserved for my use, I will use it to answer a few gripes and make a few more. The first gripe I heard about the fall Trog was that there were a few words in the crossword puzzle that didn't make sense. Of course they didn't! How do you expect me to draw up a crossword puzzle and have every word fit? It just happened that I had to invent some words so the crosswords would fit in. The next gripe I heard about the last Trog is that it didn't have a scratch 'n' sniff centerfold. Sorry, but we did try to save some money. Hopefully this quarter's cover will satisfy you.

Spring quarter is approaching, and as soon as everybody returns from Florida, Alabama, or crawls out of Roppel, we'll have to contend with elections. As always, I'm sure there will be plenty of mud slinging, name-calling, screaming, yelling, and people going into hysterics trying to chose a new leader and officers. The one important thing I'd like to point out is whoever runs for office, make sure you elect people who can work together. It is most important for the growth of this club that the president and vice-president be friends - they need to work together to encourage new membership, get club projects organized, and plan the direction the club will take in the next year. One added note - thanks goes to Dave for bartending during this whole ordeal.

Photo from My Daddy Was a Caver



Ken Bonenberger

Its malignancy is firmly spread throughout the caving world now, ready at any moment to reach out, grasp, and consume any tidbit of incriminating information, striking fear into the hearts of even the most courageous of men. You may run, hide, to try to reason with it to no avail. J. B. Cooper escaped from a Boeing 727 with a load of cash, Papillon escaped from Devil's Island, Houdini escaped countless times from straitjackets, Jerry Falwell has escaped from reality, but there's no escaping the . . .

GROTTO GRAPEVINE

Cupid has fired a salvo of arrows at the club this year and has been hitting the mark quite regularly it seems. (See following article on the '82 Banquet.) Of the most notable of the results are Paul and Roberta's wedding last December and Bill and Marilyn Douty's wedding on Banquet weekend. Chuck and Pat Shorten had a graduation/condolence party for their roomate the Friday after finals. Paul and Roberta Kirchman got married the next day with the reception at Jozo's place. (We were all warned not to be shocked by Paul's parents behavior.) A carload of cavers left the Banquet party at 4 in the morning to surprise Douty at his wedding in Georgia. Word has it that Douty was even wearing a hand-tied necktie.

The weekend before fall quarter finals had some excitement when Lee Little did an air rappel in Clover Hollow and had to be carted out in a Stokes litter. He says he's still looking for some more of those muscle relaxants.

Elsewhere in the club, Dave Shantz is still in Alaska while Mike and Suzanne Frame bicycle through New Zealand. Sharon Brinkman ran off to Morgantown and married Ed Loud. Carol Trexler, Sue Heazel, John Mummery, and Philip (Foul-up) Balister left this quarter to go Co-oping. Hugh Rufus Beard is back in town and announced that foresters don't have a hard time finding a job -- he's had five of them in the past year. Stymie Conner is back from Co-oping. He spent two weeks in Mexico over the Christmas Holiday with some Ga. Tech cavers. They bounced several pits including Golondrinas. Bill Shipman moved into a new apartment and still has trouble figuring out where it is.

Kent Thompson and Mike (Gaydog) Gaydosh held their second quarterly "Furniture Smashin' and Tree Prunin' Party" where everyone showed up in barefeet and cut-offs in -50° weather. Keith Smith went animal, cans and coasters became ammunition, and Dave Cinsavich's car froze. That next Monday morning Kent's truck ran out of gas at 8 in the morning on his way back from campus, and he had to make a phone call for a car, a gas can, and money.

Keith Smith's liquid checkers game has been a big hit at his apartment. Jim Jones slid off the road on his BMW motorcycle, leaving it scarred but operable. Dave Cinsavich and Lawrence Britt, in addition to having Jeep parts strewn throughout their apartment now have a stray sleeping on their couch. Ken Bonenberger has been throwing Friday night parties in his bedroom this quarter. Three Willys

Jeeps in the club are now fully inspected, "totally" legal, and are sometimes seen in running order all on the same day. Randy Wood got a chance to four-wheel his Toyota one snowy weekend in February and ended up pulling everybody (including himself) out of snow drifts. Chuck and Pat found that their Honda is not the best place to store 15 cartons of Coke in freezing weather.

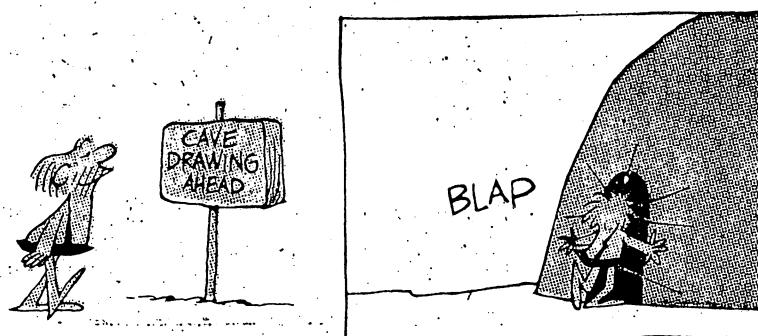
Moving to the real world we all know and love - caving, we find Joe Zokaites making progress mapping Newberry - Banes, although Carol Godla has taken over as sketch. Joe is confined to drawing up data while his ankle is in a cast. Ed Devine has begun to make a comeback and has been seen doodling around in Paul's once again. Chuck Shorten mapped the entire Parker Cave System in one day; Lawrence Britt has mapped 4000 feet in Starnes and is still going strong; Banes Spring is still progressing.

Bill Koerschner and several other cavers from the club attempted to do some mapping in Roppel over Christmas (see WFK's article in this issue) but ended up doing a "sport" trip. Bill Stephens, Philip Balister, Steve Connor, Win Wright, Ben Keller, Carol Trexler, and company plan to go back there this spring Break.

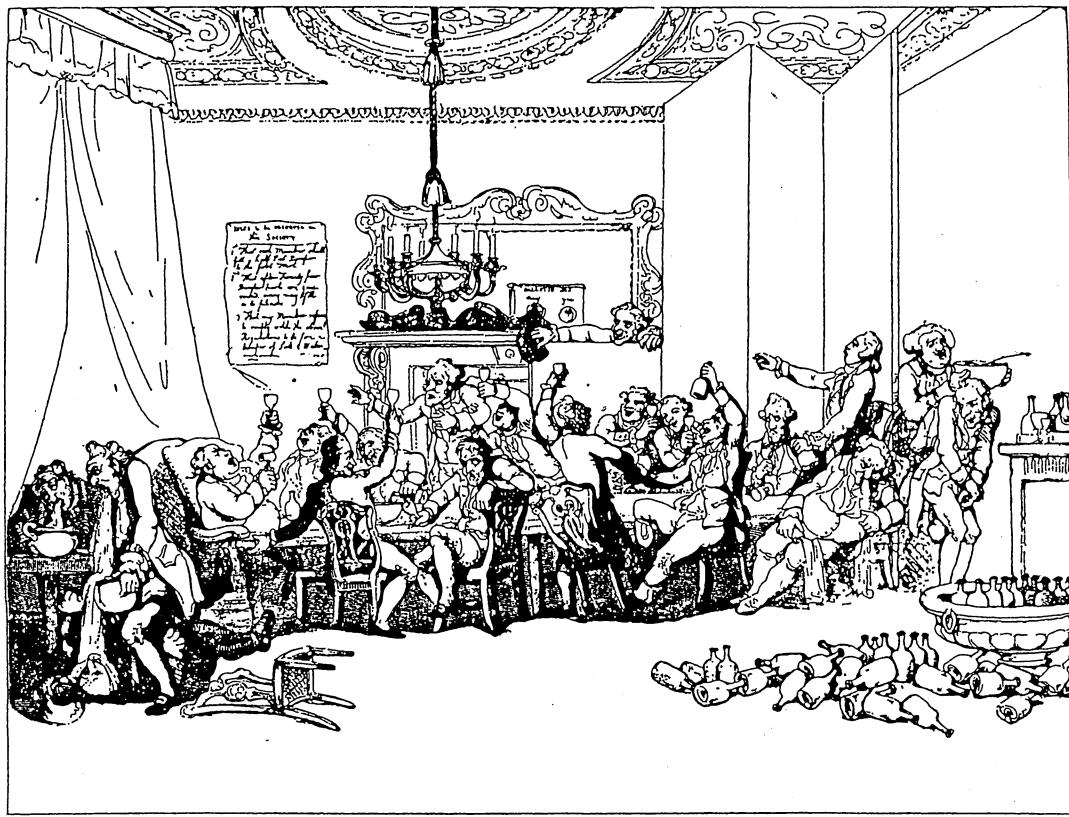
Last November, Jerry Redder, Pete Sauvigne, Don Anderson, and Richard Cobb met Steve Connor and some Ga. Tech cavers and did some pit bouncing in Alabama. They plan to take a cast of thousands there again this spring break to do Valhalla, Trenton Well and a few others.

Closer to home, 90 foot rappels were made courtesy of the Bell System and the Athletic Association. Fifteen JMU cavers descended on Blacksburg one February weekend to do some caving. Four new members were voted into the club this year: Jim Washington, Maureen Handler, Ben Keller, and Jim Morrisett. Much credit needs to be given to John Lohner for running the trainee program, organizing the verticle session, and printing this year's new member issue of the Trog. Jerry Falwell still has A. I. Cartwright on his mailing list.

Not too many people remember much from the New Years Party held once again at the Richardson's but the hard-cores made it even through a snow storm. Mass consumption of alcohol and hors d'oeuvres from Buckwheat's silver dish preceded the traditional hayride. Meanwhile in Blacksburg, Chuck Shorten has been experimenting with silviculture methods in the Preston National Forest to keep his fireplace going this winter. Hugh tried to eat a "holesome" tree.



Banquet '82



Once again this year, the town of Radford was invaded by drunken cavers, loud music, and the pungent smell of puke. Yes, Banquet has already come and gone. The dinner was held at the Wesley Foundation in Radford. After pigging-out, we were treated with an interesting slide show by Bill Jones who explained the Cannonball and Jackass Theories of Cave Formation.

The Awards Committee did an outstanding job this year, first of all by awarding Jerry Redder the A. I. Cartwright Award without his knowing it (he was on the Awards Committee). Some of the more notable award winners were Doug Yeatts for Flameout (a bottle of Thunderbird), Ruth Montgomery for Safe Driver (a car steering wheel), Boo Croft for the P.W. award (a ball and chain); Trainee-of-the-Year was Hillary Minich. Oldest and youngest active cavers were Daddy Don Anderson (a bottle of Old Grandad) and Ben Keller (a baby bottle full of beer). Daddy Don wasn't there for his award, but the bottle of Grandad was taken care of during the party. Joe Zokaites received the Brain Bucket; John Lohner received a What-Knot; Buddy Penley received a Mammoth Cave tobacco twist; Hugh Beard, Ed and Nancy Richardson received adoption papers; Ken Bonenberger received a voided diploma. Guano Clusters were given to Knox Ward for his free fall into Picnic last spring, Lawrence Britt and Dave Cinsavich for parties, Ed Devine for his scaling poles, and Lee Little for the Clover Hollow Rescue.

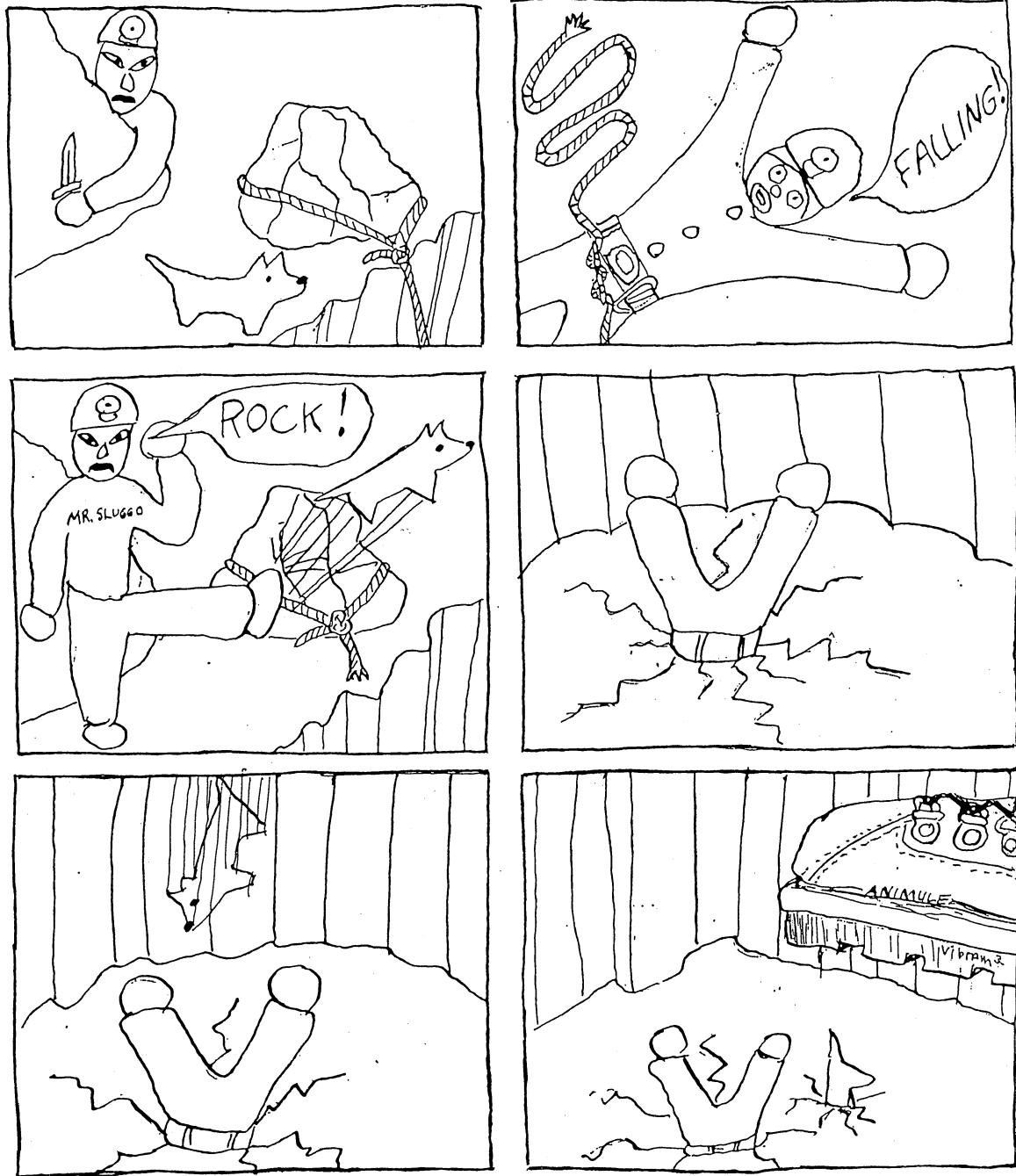
Since so many couples bit the dust, went off the deep end, or were dropping like flies this year, zipper awards were given. First for those engaged, "Dropping Like Flies" zippers were given to Boo and Boo-etta, Jozo and Carolzo, Rich and Binnie, Ken and Brenda, Bob and Chris, and Dave Bell and Jean Nye. "Dropped Like Flies" were given to Paul and Berta Kirchman, Richard and Pat Cobb, Bill and Pam Stephens, Sharon and Ed Loud, Pam and Lor Windle. "Soon to be Dropped" was given to Glen and Nancy.

The party was at the Radford VFW hall where Doug Perkins took care of the music and for the first time in years Stringfellow didn't bartend. For those who were still coherent enough to see, a film of the New River Gorge Bridge was shown upstairs and was followed by slides of Bridge Day and hang gliding. At this point, yours truly blacked out and could not remember what happened the rest of the evening.

Much thanks goes to Boo Croft for doing a good job organizing Banquet this year. Appreciation also goes to those few die-hards who survived the evening and cleaned up the next morning.



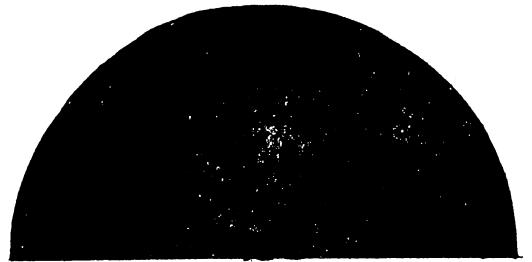
Mr. Thrill & his dog 'Rock' go Caving...



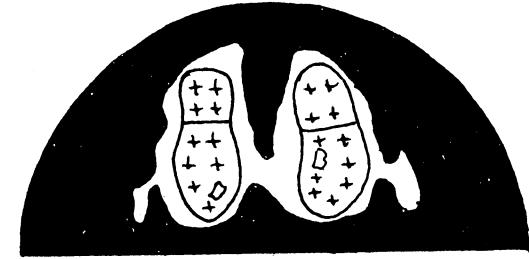
Q: What is large, heavy, irregular and quivers underground?

A: Nervous Breakdown!

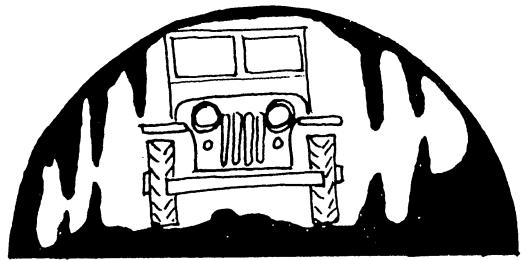
NSS Emblems We'd Like To See



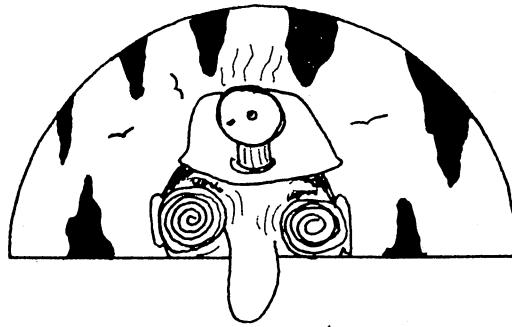
I THOUGHT YOU HAD
THE CARBIDE.



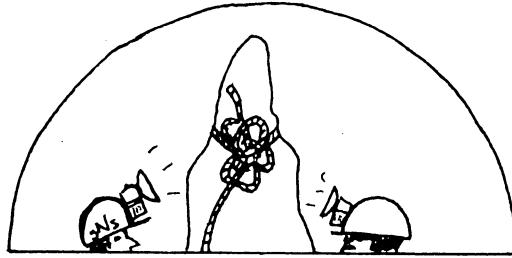
... ALL EXCEPT MY
LOWER CHEST!



BETTER LOCK THE HUBS IN...



IS THAT THE LAST
FLASH SHOT CHIP?



I THINK IT'S A
WHAT-NOT!

NSS 3767
VPI 175

STRESS CORROSION CRACKING OF BRASS IN WARM CALCIUM HYDROXIDE

by Rich Neiser

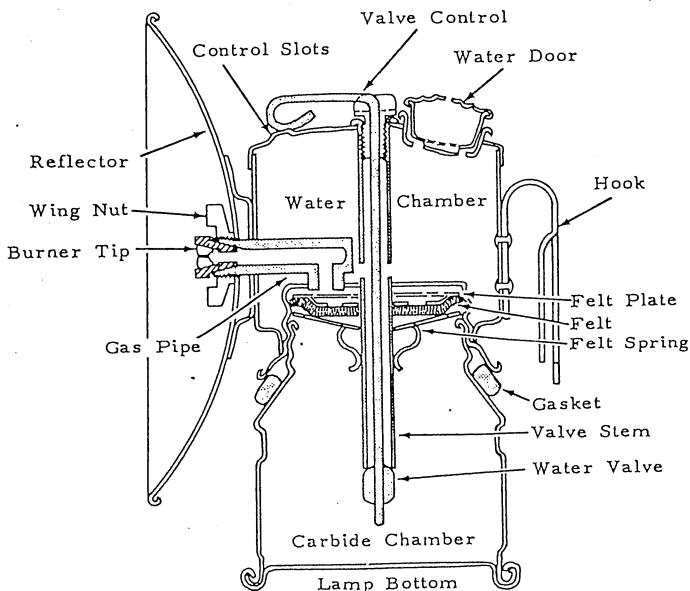
In the past few years carbide cavers have been confronted with the serious problem of cracking bases. The following technical paper describes my findings from an in-depth analysis of two such bases. The manufacturer, Premier Lamps, is one of the last two companies making brass lamps. With the advent of high quality electric lamps the demand for carbide lamps had dropped significantly in recent years forcing the closing of competitors shops. Recent bottoms from Premier have shown a susceptibility to crack after only short usage in the rugged caving environment. Since the lives and safety of cavers depends on the reliability of their light sources an analysis of the failed lamps was considered of paramount importance.

I analyzed the cracked bases with three techniques: 1) Scanning Electron Microscopy (SEM), 2) Metallography or optical microscopy, and 3) Energy Dispersive Analysis of X-rays (EDXA), a chemical analysis using X-rays.

Sections of the two failed bottoms were taken for microscopic examination (See Figure 2). Section A-A looked at the cross section of the failed surface and was used in metallographic analysis while Section B-B presented a normal view to the fracture for SEM and EDXA. Sectioning with a slow speed diamond tipped saw avoided damaging the brass' microstructure near the crack.

During normal operation of the lamp base temperatures approaching 90 C were measured. While this temperature is not high enough to affect the brass by itself, the presence of a corrodent, like calcium hydroxide which is generated by the reaction of calcium carbide and water, at this temperature will result in an accelerated chemical attack of the metal. In normal conditions the pressure inside the base due to acetylene gas was found to be under 20 psi and was considered insignificant in the failure of the part.

I have included references for those who wish to pursue the subject further.



Carbide lamp drawing from Oregon Grotto's The Speleograph, February 1980

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Macroscopic examination of two failed lamp bottoms showed two types of cracking on each specimen: longitudinal cracks on the curved face of the base and circumferential cracks along the bottom lip of the base (See Figure 2). Since the longitudinal cracks did not cause failure in these samples they were not examined. The circumferential cracks swept out nearly ninety degree arcs and ran from the inner surface through to the outer surface.

A cross sectional view of the entire lamp bottom revealed that the lower half of the base was formed by a stamping process. This stamping resulted in heavily cold worked grains along the bottom lip of the base, where the failure occurred (See Figure 2, Section A-A). Metallography showed that the lamp consisted of single phase, alpha brass. It was also noted that the brass was "dirty", meaning that there was a significant amount of non-metallic inclusions in the metal. These inclusions, however, were not believed to play a major role in the cracking of the specimens.

Both examined sections showed multiple cracks originating from the inner surface of the lamp. The cracks branched frequently and formed secondary cracks all along the fracture surface (See Figures 3,5,6;7,8). The cracks ran intergranularly as well as transgranularly, along slip planes, and gave rise to a highly faceted fracture surface typical of brittle failures. Because the cracking occurred on the heavily cold worked edge of the sample and because the crack pattern was brittle in appearance and highly branched, stress corrosion cracking (SCC) was the suspected mechanism of failure in this system.

Stress in the base had three sources: 1) Residual bending stresses from cold work during fabrication, 2) Hard knocking and beating during usage, and 3) Wedging caused by the formation of less dense corrosion products at the crack tips. Of these, the bending stresses were the most important. Microscopically, the residual cold working stresses manifested themselves as strain markings which appeared in virtually every grain along the base's bottom rim (See Figure 3). The strain markings, which are dislocation tangles, lie on brass' slip planes.¹ Transgranular cracks were observed along the slip planes (See Figure 3). These cracks appear because of the accumulation of dislocations and the ease of atom displacement along the slip planes. Residual stresses that result from cold work processing have been found to cause SCC in other alpha brass systems exposed to a corrosive environment.²

Sharp blows directly on the critical rim of the base are common occurrences during usage. Rapping the base on rocks and helmets to assist cleaning would lengthen pre-existing cracks and expose more surface to corrosion. A third source of stress was the wedging action that accompanied the formation of low density oxides on the walls of crack surfaces. The density of brass is 8.5 g/cc while the density of zinc and copper oxides are typically 6 g/cc. As the corrosion progressed the volume of the oxide products increased faster than the volume of the consumed metal decreased, causing the cracks to open mechanically.

Corrosion in the lamp bottom took two forms. Plug type dezincification was observed on the inside bottom surface of the lamp, remote from the fracture (See Figure 4).

Zinc leaching is also evident on the inside wall of the lamp, at the initial crack site (See Figure 3). The residue of dezincification is a porous, brittle copper matrix that could easily initiate stress corrosion cracks. Zinc leaching of alpha brass is common in basic, unaerated, elevated temperature atmospheres, like the one found inside a carbide lamp.

The second type of corrosion encountered was the oxidation of copper and zinc inside cracks to form an oxide film of uniform chemical composition over the entire fracture surface. EDXA spot scans were taken at many different points on the fracture surface: Near the inside edge of the lamp, near the outside edge, near cracks and on crack faces. Each scan yielded the same surface composition (See Figure 10). Zinc leaching did not occur inside the cracks because there was no outward flow of material from there to the surface where it could be carried away.

Corrosion was particularly heavy in the failed region because:

- 1) The residual stresses there made the metal more susceptible to attack
- 2) The geometry of the lamp created a difficult-to-clean crevice at the fracture site. Because the spent carbide can never be fully cleaned out from there the crevice is under constant chemical attack from the first time the lamp is used. However, corrosion will be heaviest when the lamp is being used because the temperature is high, and there is plenty of moisture to transport fresh calcium hydroxide to the growing cracks.

The alpha brass carbide lamp bottom failed by stress corrosion cracking. In the first stages of failure dezincification of the lamp interior occurred. The pores in the brittle copper residue in the cold worked crevice metal were the precursors of the corrosion cracks which would follow. In the second stage of failure the pits in the copper deepened and entered the brass. Once in the brass the cracks enlarged by 1) Residual fabrication stresses, 2) Corrosion product wedging, and 3) Usage jars. The new exposed surfaces were then attacked by corrosives either on the slip planes (transgranular failure) or along grain boundaries (intergranular cracking). The cracks grew by this mechanism until failure occurred.

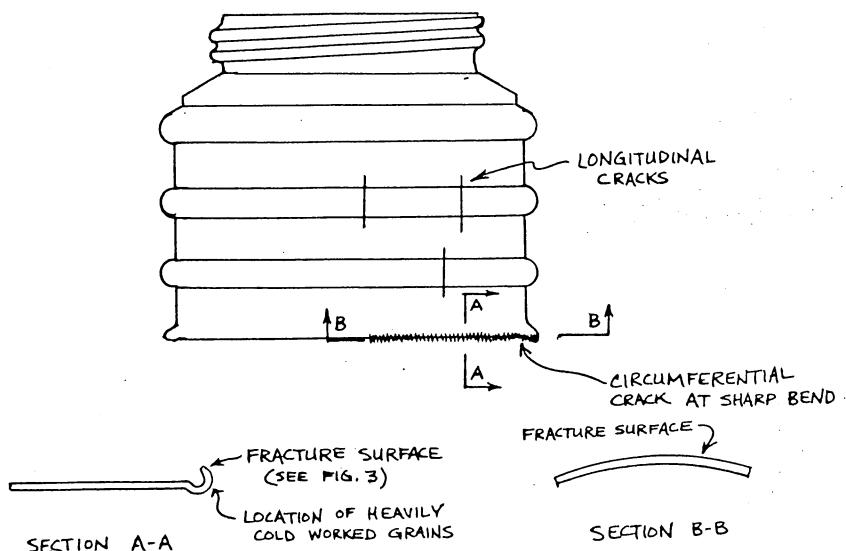


Figure 2) Carbide lamp base showing failure sites. Section A-A was taken for metallographic examination and section B-B for SEM and EDXA.

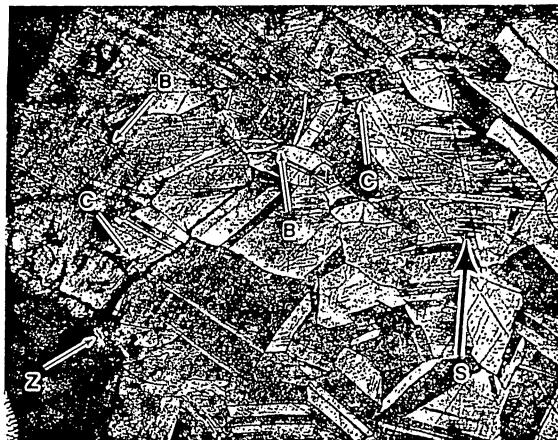


Figure 3) Stress Corrosion Cracking in the strained crevice of the carbide lamp base. 300X $\text{NH}_4\text{OH}, \text{H}_2\text{O}_2, \text{H}_2\text{O}$ etch
See Figure 2 (Section A-A) for micrograph location.
Strain markings in every grain- example at S.
Branching of cracks- example at B.
Transgranular cracks along slip planes- example at C.
Dezincification of inner wall of lamp- example at Z.

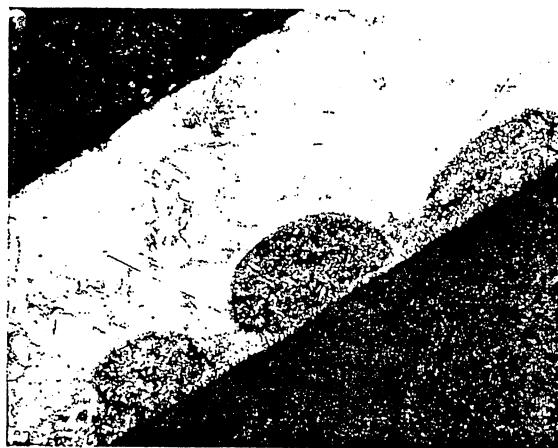


Figure 4) Plug type dezincification observed on bottom of lamp base. Inside of lamp is to the top. 100X $\text{FeCl}_3, \text{HCl}, \text{H}_2\text{O}$ etch

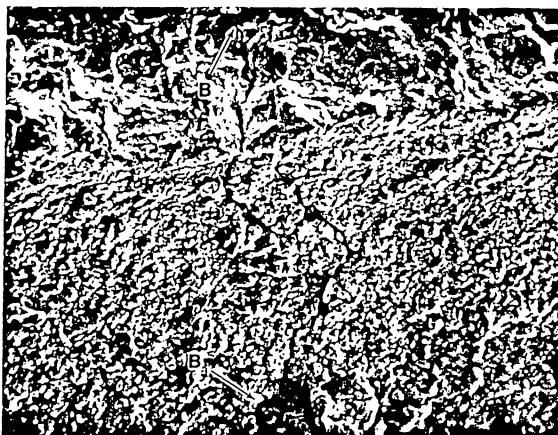
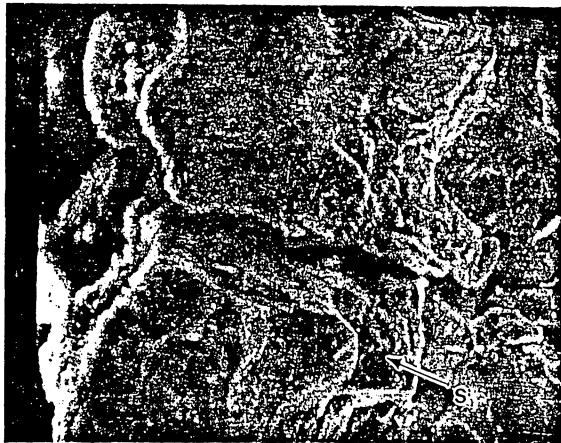


Figure 5) Inside wall of lamp bottom showing branched cracks-examples at B. Fracture surface appears at the top. 100X SEM



Figure 6) Intergranular stress corrosion cracking- examples at I.
Transgranular cracking showing slip plane attack-example
at T. Crack branching- example at B. Inside wall at left.
270X SEM



Figures 7) top and 8) bottom The central crack in each picture connect
to form a single crack which traversed the entire sample. Top (550X)
shows general corrosion of inner wall. also example of slip plane
corrosion at S. Bottom micrograph (600X) shows outside edge of lamp.
Extensive cracking has occurred over the entire surface-examples at C.



Figure 9) Typical microstructure of brass remote from crack tip. Compare with Figure 3. Note that there are no strain markings, but that grains are slightly elongated along the length of the sample (Top rt to lower lt.) 150X
 NH_4CH_3 , H_2O_2 , H_2O etch

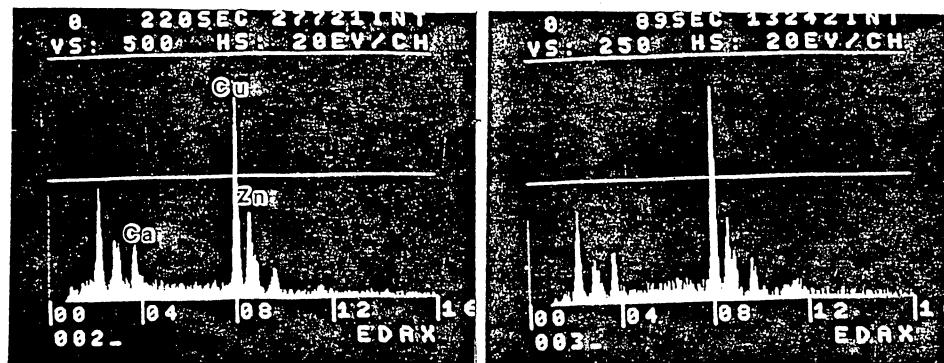


Figure 10) Typical EDXA spectra of the fracture surface. Note how similar the two scans are. The left example shows the spectra of the fracture surface near the inside of the lamp and the right spectra shows the outer edge of the fracture surface. Copper, Zinc, and Calcium peaks are labelled. The peaks at far left are from gold and palladium coatings.

Inter and transgranular stress corrosion cracking caused the failure of the brass carbide lamp base at the sharp, strained bend formed during the making of the part.

A stress relief anneal would most likely be the simplest way to avoid SCC in the base. This treatment would reduce the internal stresses at the sharp bend and yet retain the hardness of the part. A full anneal is not recommended because of the resulting loss in strength that would result. Addition of arsenic (0.1%), phosphorous (0.4%), or silicon (2.2%) in small amounts to the alpha brass creates inhibited brass, which is much more resistant to corrosive attack and could eliminate the problem of dezincification altogether.

For cavers a simpler solution would be to melt ordinary lead-tin solder into the bend of the base when the lamp is new. Care must be taken to keep the heating of the brass to a minimum or else the brass may dramatically lose strength. Finally, regular and thorough cleaning of the base, with particular attention being paid to the crevice at the bottom of the lamp, can extend the life of the base significantly.

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- ⁴ Edelen, C.: "Crack Propagation during Stress Corrosion", in "Physical Metallurgy of Stress Corrosion Fracture", p.90, Interscience Publishers, New York, 1959.

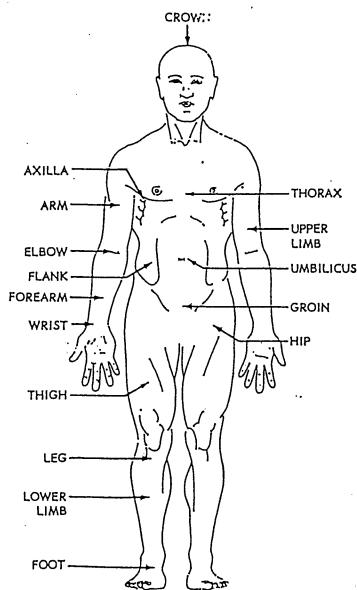
I AM JOE'S BODY

**I MAY BE UNGLAMOROUS,
BUT I DESERVE BETTER
CARE THAN I GENERALLY
GET!**

Joe spends vast amounts of time and money on caving equipment: hard hat and lamp, lugged sole boots, rappelling and ascending gear, and other assorted gear. He cares for his ropes and carbide lamps like they were babies, washing them after each cave trip, and storing them properly when not in use. But he tends to regard me as an ungainly, trouble causing nuisance. I am Joe's body.* I have been described as everything from an architectural nightmare to an anatomical wonder. Joe has no idea what a complex piece of machinery I really am. He crawls through Paul Penley's cave trying to contort me to get through the Crimper or the Fender Bender. Or else he lies in the wet and muddy Wallow Hollow straining his eyes to read a dimly lit Brunton compass, his mind pretty much a blank. Yet a great deal is going on inside me.

First take my collar bone, a single linkage in the complex bone structure of my shoulder. My collar bone helps hold my shoulder in place and at the same time giving it movement and support. But Joe takes one spill from his bicycle on the way to the Cave Club picnic, and look what happens- he ends up in the hospital and is prevented from caving for six weeks. But that's not where Joe stops. He is continually overloading my liver, the virtuoso among Joe's organs, at Friday night parties. The alcohol in Joe's beer— which accumulates in his blood in lethal quantities— is broken down in my liver into harmless carbon dioxide and water. My liver can handle about three-fourths of a can of beer in an hour; Joe can go on indefinitely

* Joe, 24, is a typical VPI caver. A number of his organs have told their story in previous articles (with apologies to the Readers Digest).

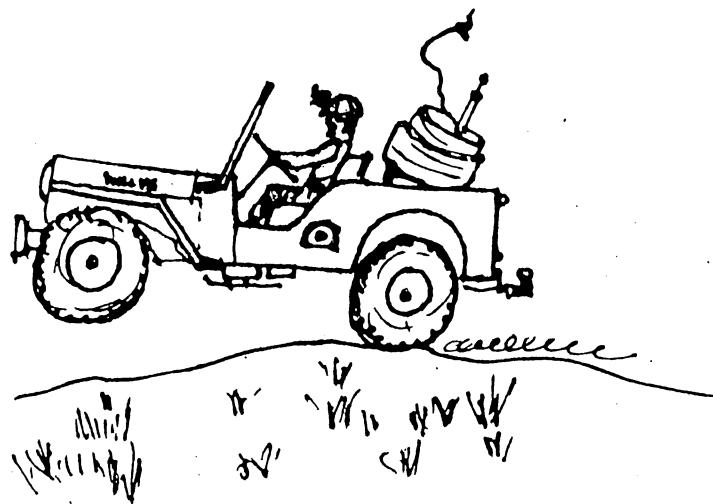


at that rate without feeling any effects. But Joe tends to imbibe at a faster clip—which can leave my liver with an all night job. In fact it was on the night he won the coveted Brain Bucket award for smacking up his bicycle and my shoulder, that he overloaded my liver and pulled ligaments in another important part of me—my foot.

Joe got a good case of "dancing feet" during the banquet party. Of course Joe doesn't realize how complex dancing is for my feet. My heel takes the initial shock load which is then transmitted along my five metatarsal bones to the ball of Joe's foot, just behind the toes. Finally, with the big toe, I give a forward thrust. I'm hitting the cement with a 180 pound jolt about fifty times a minute, and whoops! There goes my ankle. Now Joe can't go caving for another few weeks.

With a minimum of care, I can last Joe a lifetime. Until then, I'll just keep plugging along, getting dragged through tight cave passage, skinning up my knees and elbows, getting soaked and cold to the bone in wet and muddy crawls, and having my eyes dilated from trying to read a Brunton in the dim light of a carbide lamp.

Corpus Grotto



GEOHYDROLOGY OF THE SKYDUSKY HOLLOW CAVE SYSTEM Bland County, Virginia

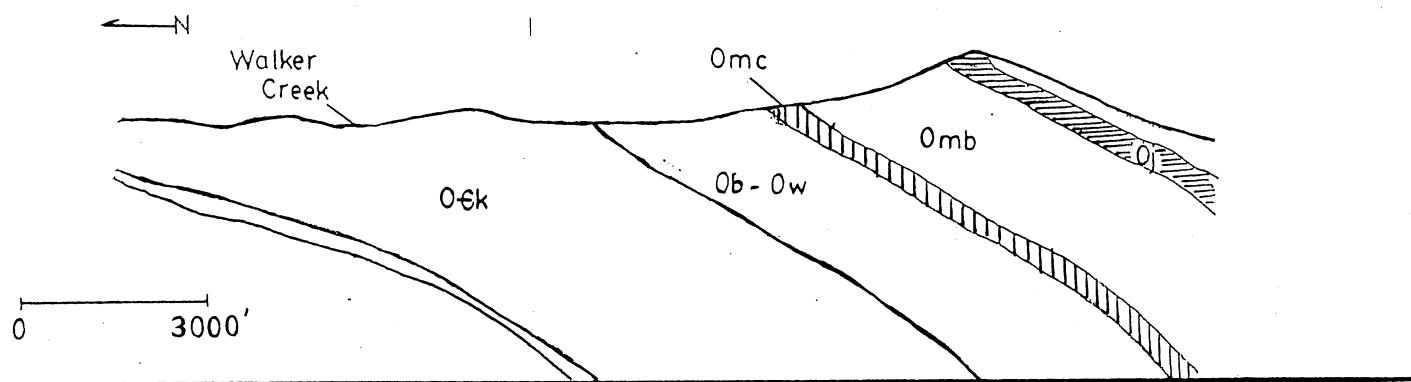
The area of the tracing study is located in Bland County, Virginia on the northwest flank of Big Walker Mountain adjacent to Route 608. The mildly rolling topography, an exceptional example of Appalachian karst, was named Skydusky Hollow by one of the local cattle ranchers, J. S. Penley. There are numerous sinkholes that dot the valley, one of which, called the Big Mother Sink, has been surveyed as having eleven acres of surface area. This, along with the absence of surface streams, indicates a definite existence of karst groundwater flow.

The major cave forming carbonate rocks in the hollow consist of the Middle-Ordovician Witten and Wassum limestones. The Witten varies in thickness up to 350 feet in the area and grades upward into the Moccasin siltstone approximately two-thirds of the distance up the northwest base of Big Walker Mountain. All of the drainage from the mountain along the hollow sinks at the Witten-Moccasin contact which has formed caves of great vertical relief. The survey of the caves by the explorers from the VPI Cave Club has tabulated more than 20 miles of passage and the plots of the cave maps indicate similar fracture patterns in the passage development. These patterns may have contributed to the drainage of the basin and the physical connections of several of the cave entrances.

The average 25° southeast dip of the bedrock has had no great effect on the flow path of the sinking water where instead it finds advantage in the fractures in the limestone and drains down grade towards Walker Creek. As the water follows the piezometric surface, it leaves the more easily eroded Witten and Wassum for the more resistant, chert impregnated Chatham Hill Formation. (Figure 1)

The strike is $N65^{\circ}E$ and most of the passages are not controlled

STRUCTURE OF THE WALKER MOUNTAIN HOMOCLINE



0j- Juniata Formation

Orv- Rich Valley Formation

Omb- Martinsburg Formation

Oe- Efna Limestone

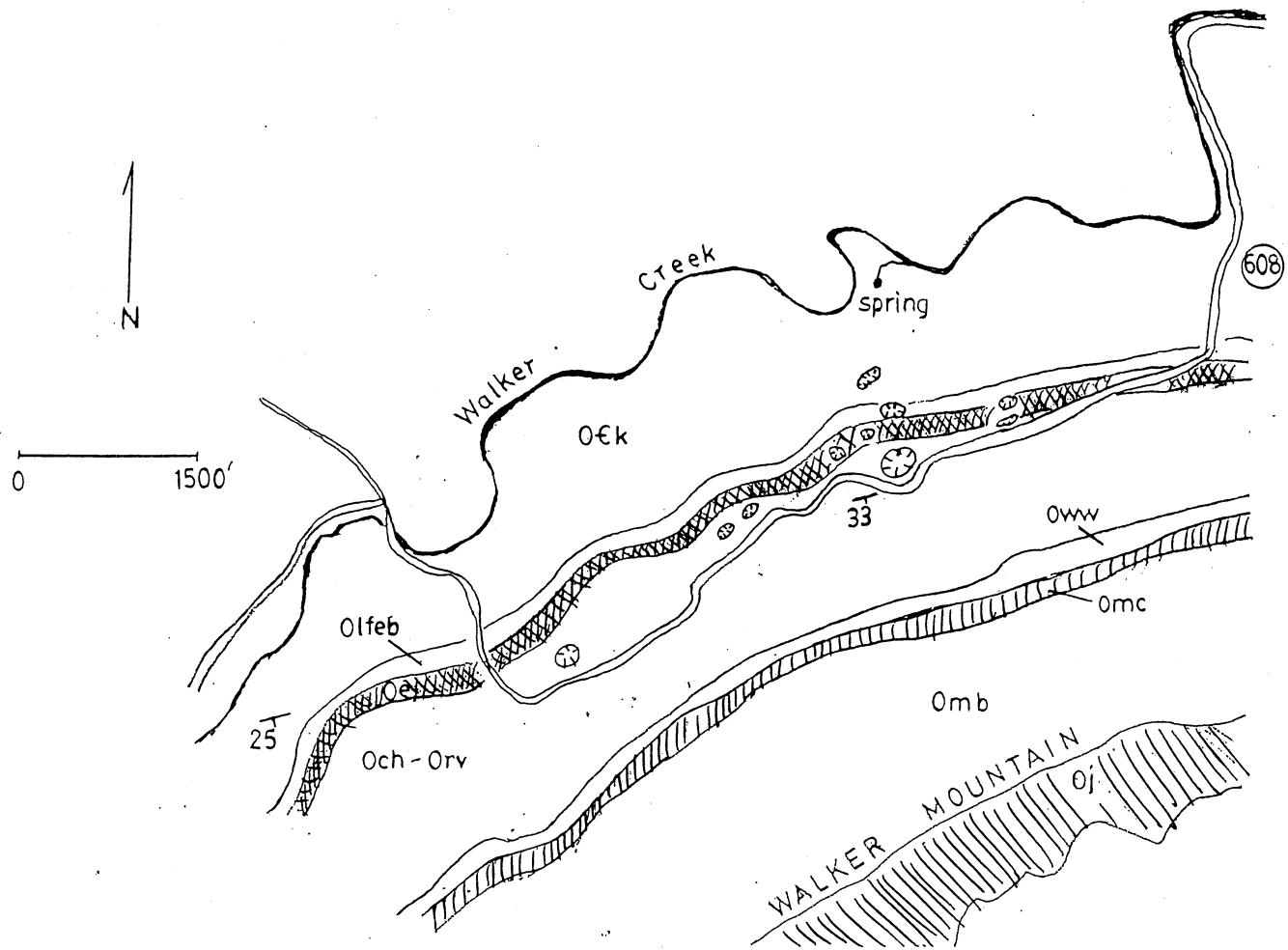
Omc- Moccasin Formation

Olfeb- Lincolnshire Limestone

Oww- Wassum & Witten Limestones

Oek- Knox Group

Och- Chatham Hill Formation



by the strike but are mostly joint controlled in nature. However, it appears as though the existence of large amounts of water created some large borehole type phreatic trunk passage that generally follows the strike. The Main Subway in Newberry-Banes and Whisper Hall in Paul Penley's exhibit this kind of trunk which may have been a continuous river running the length of the hollow at one time.

The tendency of the streams in the caves to flow towards the center of the system was noted. The controlling link was not discovered until a dig in Newberry-Banes located a stream that was estimated to be equivalent to the combined flows of the known tributaries. The dimensions of the stream in "The Tubes" were measured at a particular section to be six feet wide by four inches deep. The stream was calculated by Manning's open channel equation to be flowing approximately $1.2 \text{ ft}^3/\text{sec}$.

The major spring of interest is the Burnt House Spring, which has the most flow of all the springs and is located due north from the disappearance of the Tubes stream. The Big Sink is directly in line with the stream disappearance and the spring but any relationship of the stream to the formation of the enormous collapse sink is uncertain.

From east to west, the springs potentially related to the drainage of the cave system are: Wagner Spring, Otter Spring, Ethel Bane's Spring, Burnt House Spring, Indian Patch Spring, and Brown's Spring (shown on Figure 2). Oak Root Spring and Moorehead Spring resurge to the northwest of Coon Cave but are not shown on the map.

Due to the size and location of the Burnt House Spring, direct correlation to the drainage of the cave system was assumed. However, the possible existence of an interconnecting fracture pattern and the role of the other springs remained a question. Hence, the purpose of the dye trace was to: 1) confirm the connection of

the Tubes stream in Newberry's to Burnt House Spring; 2) verify the connection of the tributary cave streams to the Tubes; and 3) identify the relationships of the other springs to the drainage of the basin by subsequently defining the area of runoff contribution to the cave system.

The first tracing attempt was to place a charge of dye in the Tubes and trap all of the springs. This trace confirmed the connection of the Newberry's stream to Burnt House and did not show a positive indication for any of the other springs. The possibility of a tie to the other springs was not ruled out due to the exceedingly dry conditions that persisted during the first few traces. Due to the nature of the transmissibility or flow regime of the aquifer, higher volumes of flow would raise the water table which might cause the water to search for alternative flow paths.

The Burnt House Spring was measured by the Manning's equation on the same day as the previously stated Tubes measurement and it was found to be flowing about 2.2 cfs. At best, the use of this equation is an estimation but the occurrence of a larger flow at the spring indicates an addition to the system at some point. Whether this contribution consisted of karst flow from one of the caves or from seepage through the soil was to be determined through dye tracing.

A current meter was taken to some of the springs to measure the actual flows during the dry summer of 1980. The Ethel Bane's Spring calculated 0.06 cfs; Burnt House, 1.35 cfs; Indian Patch, 0.10 cfs; and Brown Spring, 0.16 cfs. These values were from a very dry year and the normal or flood flows should be much greater. For example, the Burnt House Spring has been witnessed to be flowing an estimated 12+ cfs at a time of heavy rain and snow melt.

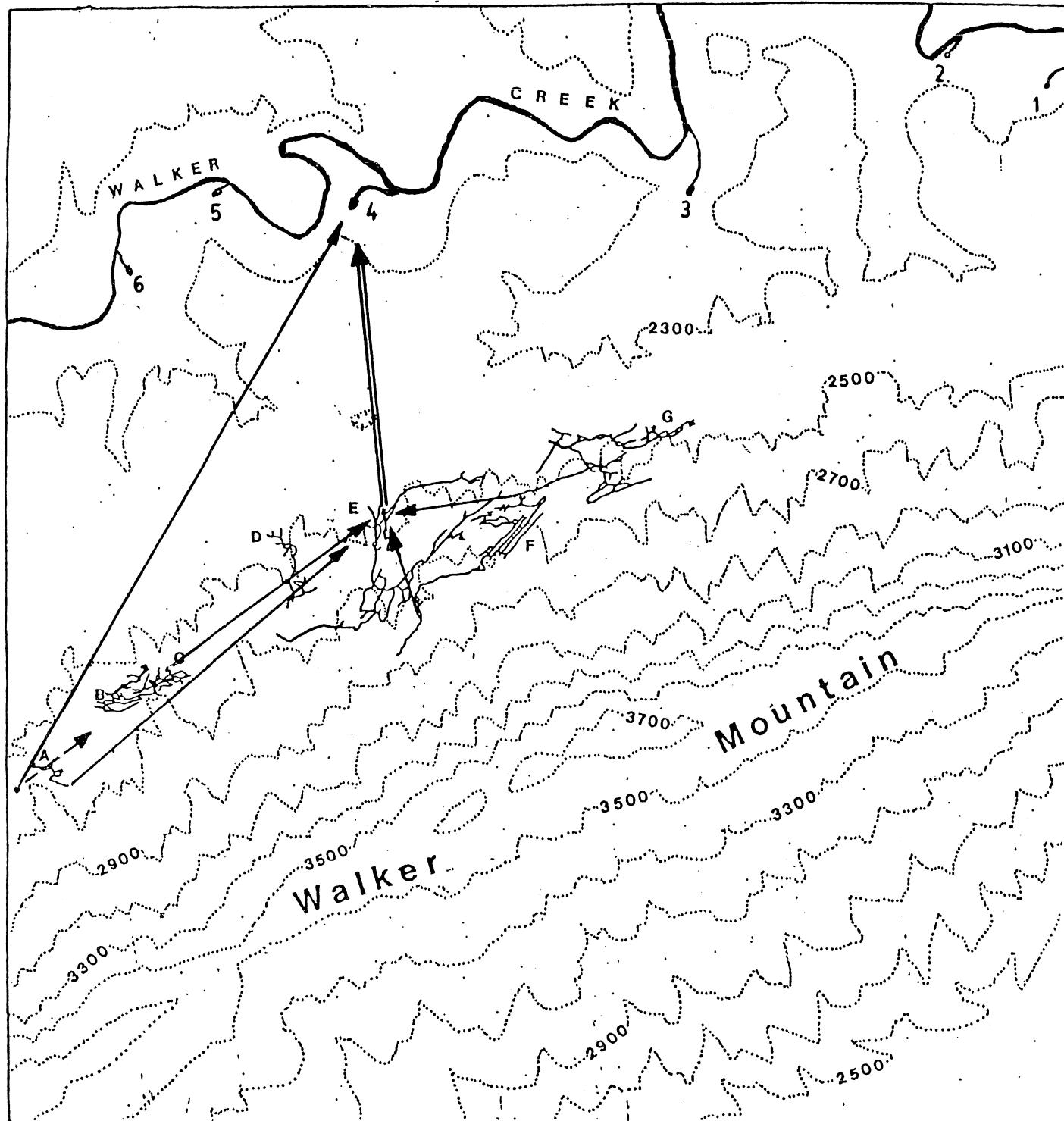
The next objective of connecting the different cave streams to the system required the placement of traps at all of the springs

and in the Tubes. The possibility existed that the subsurface water could take a course along the hollow that would not bring it in contact with the Tubes. Therefore, the arduous task of placing a dye trap in the Tubes for each trace was essential to the procedure.

The cave furthest to the east of the system, Spring Hollow, proved a positive trace to Newberry's and Burnt House Spring in the summer of 1980. This ruled the ties of Wagner and Otter Springs to the system. Then, Paul Penley's Cave was traced to Newberry's and Burnt House in the winter of 1981. In the spring of 1981, Coon Cave verified positive connection to Newberry's and Burnt House. At this point, the Indian Patch Spring and Brown's Spring were ruled out despite the presence of high background readings. Finally, the stream that sinks to the west of Coon Cave was traced to Newberry's and Burnt House in the winter of 1982(the Tubes was not trapped). This trace ruled out any relationship of Oak Root and Moorehead Springs to the system.(Figure 2)

So, all of the water that comes off of Big Walker Mountain within this 2.5 mile stretch of the hollow sinks into the limestone and travels to the center of the cave system where it finds a weakness in the resistant rock and flows out to Walker Creek through one discrete channel. A hypotheses was suggested that a locally structured dip towards the middle at each of the ends may influence the water to drain in such a fashion. Because the geology is complex and difficult to define, this may be a valid explanation to the development of the cave system. Also difficult to define is the contribution of land surface to the basin due to the complexity of groundwater movement. From the apparent surface divides of the watershed, the runoff area draining into Burnt House Spring is about three square miles of land.

The tracing procedure utilized dye traps constructed of activated charcoal of the 1 to 3 mm grain enclosed in an envelope of screening material. The tracers used were Pontacyl Pink



HYDROLOGY OF SKYDUSKY HOLLOW

BLAND CO., VA.

- A-COON CAVE (0.60 mi)
 - B/C-HARMON'S AVA-LANCHE PIT / PAUL PENLEY'S CAVE (4.9 mi)
 - D-BUDDY PENLEY'S CAVE (1.2 mi)
 - E-NEWBERRY-BANES CAVE (5.0 mi)
 - F-BANE'S SPRING CAVE (3.0 mi)
 - G-SPRING HOLLOW CAVE (5.05 mi)
- SPRINGS:
- 1-Wagner
 - 2-Otter
 - 3-Ethel Bane's
 - 4-Burnt House
 - 5-Indian Patch
 - 6-Brown's

(Figure 2)

powder(Sulpho Rhodamine B2) and Flourescein Yellow powder. All traps were tested on a Turner 111 Model Flourometer using the combination 546/590 filters for the pink dye and the combination 2A and 47-B/2A and 12 filters for the detection of the flourescein.

Instrumental to the accomplishment of the dye trace were the cave surveying activities of W. F. Koerschner, E. A. Devine, W. C. Stephens, and the Skydusky Hollow Cave Survey. Procurement of the dye and charcoal was made possible through the help of J. H. Fagan.

Much work still remains to determine the performing characteristics of the karst drainage basin such as the time of travel of the dye. Determining the shape of the flood hydrograph can reveal much information as to the conditions that exist in the subsurface flow regime.

Winfield Wright



-from Speleology by Moore

Drinking Techniques:

Cup Belay

Picture this situation: You are in the middle of a party for which you have trained for weeks and months. You are attempting to push the unknown limits of alcohol tolerance in the human body. You raise your glass mug to your mouth for another 75 ml injection of the liquid catalyst. Then the accident occurs. The liquid, which is cooled to 3 to 5°C, has caused condensate to form on the glass when it was exposed to proper party temperatures (22-26°C). The glass mug slips from your grasp, resulting in waste of beer, mug, not to mention weeks of preparation (See Figure 1). How could you have avoided this accident?

In the Spring 1977 DTC Column, former chairman Dave Donison expounded upon the construction and advantages of the drinking cup belay. This system utilized a piece of avalanche cord, a plastic cup, and a bowline knot (not to be confused with a what-knot). When the cup was attached to the subject's finger by means of the cord and bowline knot, spillage was reduced substantially. However, this technique could only be applied to plastic cups. Also, it was found that the amount of spillage was directly proportional to the amount of hand movement used by the subject in the course of talking or when searching for that elusive piece of pie.

Further tests, however, have resulted in advances in the Cup Belay Technique. The cornerstone of the latest advances has been the moving of the rig point from the finger to the neck. The neck, it has been found

through constant observation and strenuous testing, is a more stable rigging point than the finger. Thus, barring complete structural failure of the subject, using the neck substantially reduces spillage due to body movement.

One advantage of the Cup Belay is that in its more basic forms, it is easily and cheaply constructed. Of course, there are also more expensive versions. We will attempt to cover the entire spectrum of Cup Belay Techniques.

If you are a student drinker and find it difficult to get financial support, or you are not sure you want to invest that much in drinking, the Simple Static Cup Belay (SSCB) is still within your means.



Figure 1:
No belay



Figure 2: Simple Static Cup Belay

This system utilizes sling, rope, or avalanche cord as the belay to which the cup is tied in at either one or two points. The cup can be attached to the belay either by an approved knot (Good for the glass mugs. See Figure 2) or through the use of bolts, hangers, and carabiners (See Figure 3).

Another technique is the Simple Dynamic Cup Belay (SDCB). Rather than using the same materials as the belay in the SSCB, this method employs shock cord (See Figure 4). When a mug is composed of a brittle substance, this technique can reduce the shock from any fall, thus lengthening the life of your drinking vessel.

At the other end of the expense spectrum is the Adjustable Cup Belay (ACB). In this system a rope is rigged to the neck and the cup is clipped into a Gibbs stop cam. A figure-of-eight on a bight is tied in the end of the rope to keep

it from slipping off in case of failure (See Figure 5).

This is obviously the Cadillac of the cup belays. It can be adjusted for various positions (close to your waist when actively participating; down at your knees when slow-dancing to allow for proper dancing contact). Also, others can use your belay even if they aren't the same height as you. This is especially helpful in situations

where an untrained drinker (i.e. trainee) is in danger and prone to an accident. It may be difficult to use a custom-made SSCB or SDCB in this type of situation. Jumars or Prussiks can be used in place of the cams in the ACB, but keep in mind that cams work even on muddy or icy ropes.

In conclusion, we feel that Cup Belay Techniques have advanced to the point to which only a minimal amount of beer should be lost in a party. Also, the latest advances, while improving the belay, have not greatly increased the price of drinking. Safe drinking is now within our capabilities and resources.

Rufus Beard
illustrations by Keith Smith

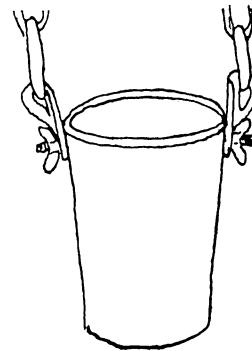


Figure 3:
Double bolts

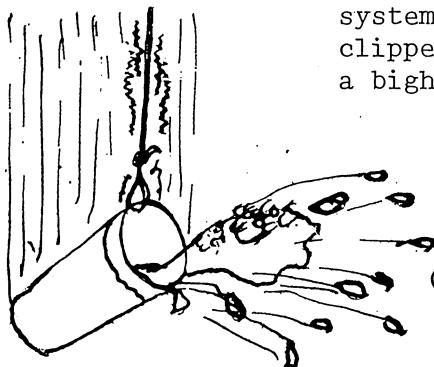


Figure 4: Shock cord

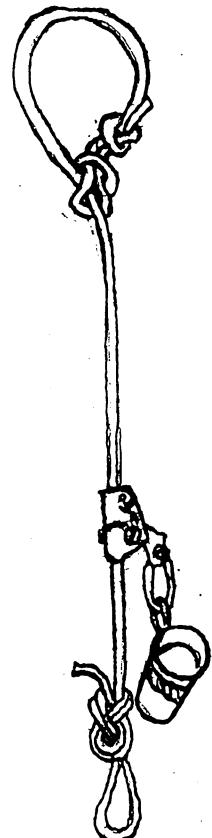


Figure 5: Adjustable Cup Belay

How to Have Cave Formations in Your Home Without Vandalizing a Cave

Have you ever wanted to pick up that one little speleothem and bring it home just to set on your shelf? Have you ever wanted to bring home a bunch of formations? Have you ever wanted to live in a cave? Well here's your chance. Now there is a way to put snow white stalactites and stalagmites in your own home quickly, easily, and legally. Just follow these simple instructions:

1. The next time it snows outside pick a bunch of icicles off of cars, roofs, your nose, or where ever icicles grow, and put them in your freezer. Then forget about them until you get ready to make some fake cave formations.
2. When you feel ambitious, go to the store and get some parafin wax used for canning. Don't worry, it's not expensive. Put that up until you're ready to go, too.
3. When you finally quit procrastinating and decide to make the stupid things you will need the following:
 - A. a stove
 - B. a pot large enough to fit the largest icicles
 - C. the icicles
 - D. the parafin wax
 - E. a spoon
4. After you have all the ingredients, put 2 or 3 inches of water in the pot and boil it. Then put the wax in the water and let it melt. DANGER: Wax is flammable. Do not let it get too hot and catch on fire, because this will melt the icicles and you will have to wait until it snows again to get some more.
5. After the wax is melted, drop the icicles in the pot of wax (one at a time) and fish them out with a spoon. When the cold icicle hits the melted wax, the wax will solidify around the icicle. When the wax coated icicle is removed from the pot the wax gets hard.
6. Put the wax coated icicles in the sink and allow the ice to melt. This may take a couple of hours if you keep your apartment as cold as mine. When the ice does melt, make a little hole in the wax and drain the water.
7. Now you are ready to mount your wax formations in your home, office, car, favorite vandalized cave, or any place else you see fit. Do this by heating up the remaining wax in the pot, and let it cool until it just begins to get a skummy layer on top. Then dip the large end of the formation in the wax and stick it!

Keith Smith

Newberry's Conservation Trip

While hoisting a few beers at Mr. Fooz last spring, the subject of conservation trips came up. High on the list was a trip to Newberry-Banes since the cave contains several carbide dumps which have not been emptied for several years. The trip would be difficult, however, because the dumps were at the bottom of three drops. A large number of people would be needed to rig and carry the spent carbide out. It seemed formidable at the time. Visions of 100 to 200 lbs. of carbide being carried out of the cave haunted me at night. This would be one trip with a lot of trainee "sherpas".

After many months of idleness and sport caving, the trip was finally scheduled for early January of 82. Unfortunately, Mother Nature is a bitch, and she proved it with record cold waves and torrential rainfalls, that cancelled the trip on two occasions. Eventually, Jan. 30 was deemed suitable and a desperate plea was put out for volunteers, that culminated in recruiting 9 others for the trip.

On a relatively warm day, John Lohner, Jerry Redder, Binny Ballou, Rich Neiser, Jim Washington, Bill Ekhaml, Paul Norris, Nick Machara, Johnny Johnsson, and myself set out to do the impossible. After meeting Redder on the road, we drove to the landowners house, good ol' Buddy Penley, and left a note since he wasn't home. We proceeded to drive to the entrance and busied ourselves with checking ropes and gear. We finally couldn't think of anything else to keep us out of the cave and we sallied forth. Most people free climbed to the Balcony, halfway down the 60' entrance drop, but to save time and for safety we rigged Rich's rope aswell. After that we converged onto the Nuisance drop, rigged a ladder, and went to the top of Bill's Rappel.

Jerry had all ready rigged the 160' drop with Binny's rope and asked if anyone had mechanicals in case the rope didn't reach the bottom. Rich and I were the only ones who did, but Rich was busy belaying the ladder so I was volunteered. I thought Jerry was kidding since the rope length was sufficient for the drop and it didn't look like he had used a lot in rigging. Jerry thought it was best, though, and since you don't argue with experience I didn't. After being assured there was a knot in the end of the rope and then a fast rappel, I vowed never to doubt Jerry again. There was about 2' of rope left on the ground! Everybody rappelled the drop in good form. The drop and rockface is so pretty and people rappelling down only enhanced the view from the bottom. John and Jerry stayed up top to rig a hauling system for the carbide. Now the real work began.

At the bottom of Bill's were two metal drums filled with spent carbide. One had almost completely disintegrated. Also, there was a lot of spent carbide that would have to be picked up by hand. Binny, Bill, and myself left for the Vault Room. Jim and Nick cleaned side passages while the rest stayed to clean the bottom of Bill's. The job was complicated, somewhat, by the many hibernating bats in and around the Vault Room. Communication was kept to a minimum and then only by whispering since the shock of waking a hibernating bat is enough to kill it. Binny led us to the Vault Room and we entered with muted footfalls and baited breath.



The two metal drums were overflowing and we placed these drums and all, into two of three denim bags supplied by Jerry. It was an eerie feeling, working feverishly, in total silence and whispering as low as we could. We had to move fast, for even our body heat might wake the bats. Once we finished, we policed the room for trash, left a register and then left. We met Rich on the way out and he helped carry the bags down the twisting canyon passage to the bottom of Bill's where they were passed to others. We felt bad however, since we inadvertently woke two bats. Well, we tried.

The carbide at the bottom of Bill's was collected and placed into the third denim bag along with the rotted metal drums in a plastic garbage bag. John and Jerry had lowered a length of Goldline and rigged a 3 to 1 "Z" system with a stop cam. After some time preparing the bags for hauling we tied all of them, along with some of our equipment, onto the rope and Jerry and John valiantly hauled away. Once they were ready to haul, we decided to leave via the Devil's Staircase around the pit, while Rich climbed along side the

load to prevent snagging. Binny knew the way best, and with help from Jim led us masterfully up to the top of the pit. At the "Coat Hanger" most of the members were put to shame by the new people. They did the climb like pros. Binny's attempt at levitation was unsuccessful, but she was a pleasure to watch climbing. I was behind her of course. We eventually reached the top where John, Jerry, and Rich had finished hauling and derigging.

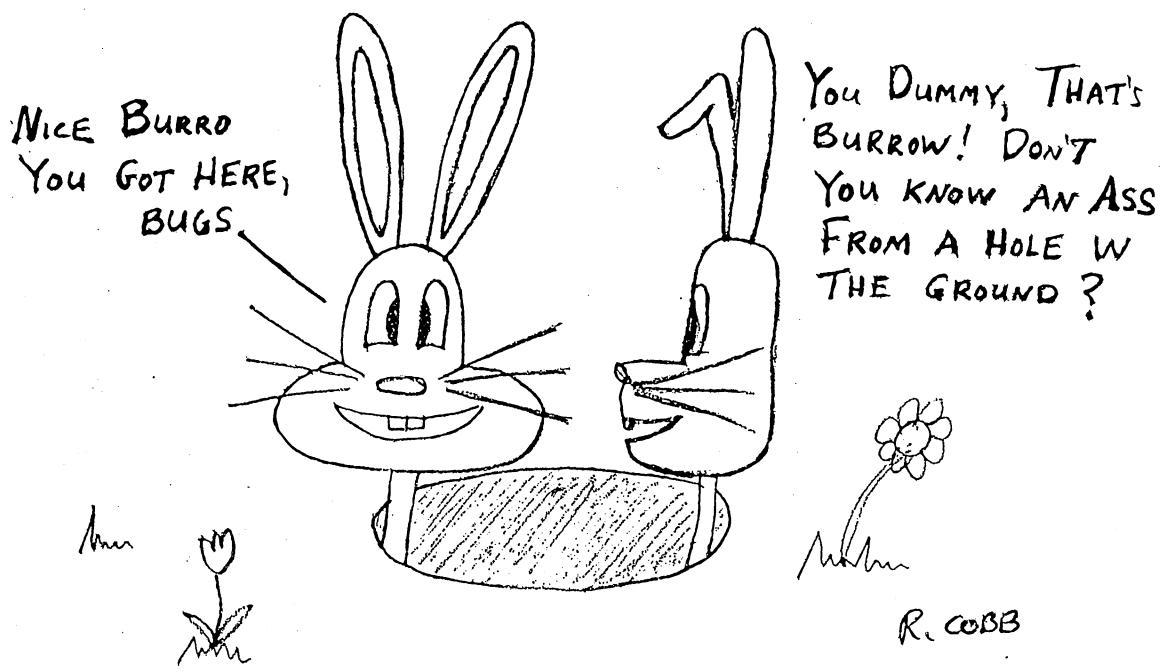
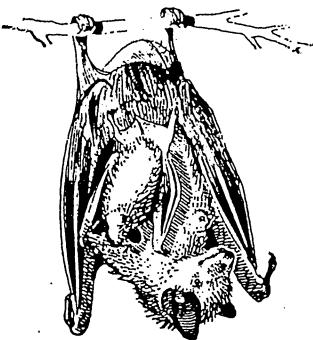
After recarbiding and a bite to eat, John and I belayed each other up the nuisance drop to haul the carbide up. John was nice and strong so it wasn't much trouble. Jim nearly incinerated everyone at the bottom with a carbide explosion, so it was safer up top. John and I belayed people and once there was enough people to carry the bags, John led Paul, Johnny, and Bill up to the balcony, each carrying a hefty load. (There was another group from UNC doing the straddle pit and everyone talked with them since they had caved with Don Anderson before. We forgave them for this transgression and left them to their fate.) Crossing the straddle pit was interesting since you could see their lights 70' below. Stepping over that lit void was a whole new experience. What you can't see, can't hurt you, I always say.

Fortunately the 100-200 lbs. of carbide I forecasted turned out to be only 75 lbs. and they were taken up the entrance drop with no problems. Everyone climbed up the drop with no problem, some taking belays while others didn't. The night was warm and the beer tasted

great as we changed, reflecting on a 7.5 hour bust-ass trip. Our fun wasn't over yet as Jerry's toy ran out of gas near the Bland Correctional Center. He was able to use his "West Virginia Credit Card" and obtain gas from the other two cars and was rescued.

It was a successful trip with carbide being cleaned up, a register placed, and newer people being exposed to special rigging techniques, long rappels, and conservation in general. It was decided to not replace the carbide dumps in the cave since it will help the ecology and access is limited enough to assume only responsible cavers visit the cave. Subsequent trips will prove whether this bears fruit or not. We weren't able to do the Banes drop, and we woke up a few bats so there were some minuses also. Conservation is alive in the VPI Grotto and its cavers prove this year after year.

Ed Fortney



JQ's Jerky*

1 flank steak, about 1.5 lbs.

1 tsp. each: season salt, Accent, onion powder, Liquid Smoke and/or BBQ salt.

1/3 tsp. each: garlic powder, Black pepper.

1/4 cup each: Worcestershire sauce, Soy sauce.

Trim off all possible fat. Semi-freeze meat and slice with the grain into 1/8" slices.

Marinate overnight in the sauce (all of the above ingredients) in a shallow pan.

Lay strips of meat in single layers on oven racks (be sure to lay down foil so that your oven will stay clean).

Bake, with the oven door open a crack, at 140°F for 8-10 hours.

BUT, besure to TASTE occasionally, and remove when the cheweyness appeals to you the most.

Janet usually can't wait the 8 hours, and has found 3-4 hours to be plenty.

*Dedicated to all the jerks I've known in my life.

Prelude

I sat on the floor and turned the switch off. The blackness rushes in as if to knock me over. My eyes are open, but there is nothing; nothing but blackness and inexistence. The ringing starts in my ears; it gets louder and louder. The darkness gets heavier and heavier. A brief moment of panic! Some noise-make some noise! It brings you from the edge of inexistence to nothingness.

I try to relax now, but there is a loud pounding noise! My body is motionless, but the pounding continues. I suddenly realize I am hearing my heart beat: I am. listening to the very thing that keeps me alive! What if the noise should stop? Is it possible to hear yourself die?

I sit and listen. It slows up now; I begin to feel relaxed. A flick of a switch will take me back to existence; complete and utter silence will take me to eternal inexistence.

NSS 3767
VPI 175



THE GREAT ROPPEL DEBACLE

**Starring: Win Wright, Carol Trexler, Ben Keller,
Philip Balister, and Bill Koerschner**

With Special Guest Star: Tom Miller

We arrived late Sunday night at the new, improved version of the Central Kentucky Karst Coalition fieldhouse. We were met by Tom Miller, who was spending the week there. His quiet, unassuming manner I suspected was a reflection of the supreme self-confidence of a supercaver rather than shyness. We discussed the various options for the upcoming trip; should we follow the standard Main Entrance route, which includes an upper 35 ft ladder drop, a lower 70 ft rope drop and $\frac{1}{2}$ mile of popcorny canyon, or go for the newly-opened and largely horizontal Weller Entrance. The new route promised to cut off 3 hours of travel time, but was flawed by a mysterious feature known as the Dread Drain Pool. Philip voted an emphatic, "NAY", but we stubbornly opted for the unknown.

After a restless night spent amid slapping plastic, whining puppies, scurrying rats and our own snoring (or rather Philip's), we awoke bleary-eyed to the sound of sleet lashing the side of the fieldhouse. An inch of freezing rain already covered the trees, cars, roads and Win's down parka, which had been near a rather porous window. Tom grinned as he cooked his own breakfast over the fieldhouse stove - we eyed his bacon and eggs hungrily. Well damn it! We just had to go to town just had to eat; because if you didn't eat, you didn't shit. And if you didn't shit, your worst fears would be realized some 18 hrs later while still in the cave. We skidded the vehicles off Eudora Ridge and into town. Ben had to ride in the back of Philip's truck to keep it between the ditches. We ate heartily and steeled ourselves to the task of getting back up the icy ridge. One vehicle made it - Philip's truck; the other had to be pushed laboriously up the hill in the icy drizzle. Back at the fieldhouse we discovered the secret to Philip's success - a giant log (actually half a tree) filled the back of his truck. Philip dubbed the log "Surrogate Ben" and claimed the resemblance was striking.

As we walked in the door, Tom was just suiting up - he had on an unusual wetsuit with a quilted, rip-proof surface. He said he bought it in France a lot of Europeans used them. I wondered what fantastic European caves he had been in. We asked him to join us, but he declined, saying that he was only going in for a short recon trip. MY GOD! A SOLO CAVER! Enough to make VPI's rescue gear rattle in the box! An hour later we followed his snowy tracks to the Weller Entrance. It had begun to rain heavily, but the entrance passage was bone dry - Heaven by Virginia standards. We bellycrawled through an impressive 100 foot long dig,

bopped down two small domes, and came to an abrupt halt at a depressing little nothing in the floor. But professor, does this mean? I crawled in a bit. Yes, I'm afraid so the Dread Drain Pool. Philip had meanwhile wedged himself into the top of the minuscule canyon - hope springs eternal I guess. The pool proved a little less than dreadful (only one inch deep), and soon we were crouched at the head of Kangaroo Canyon. A small pit blocked forward progress - do we go down or across? I climbed over it and examined the smooth, foothold-free walls - it looked nasty, but well traveled "Oh Winfield, there's an easy little climb here." Win struggled down and reported an apparent no-go. I was glad I hadn't climbed it. We decided to continue across - a decision that was later to prove fateful.

Shortly we climbed into a fine, dry walkway and sped down survey; our footfalls sending up silent explosions of moondust. The walls became studded with huge gypsum flowers up to 6 inches across, and so crowded together that not a square inch of rock remained exposed. This beautiful passage eventually led to a 30 ft deep well - cascades of gypsum sand hissed over the lip as we scouted for a way across. BLOODY HELL! This shouldn't be here the map didn't show any DAMN pit! Where in the #\$\$%& were we? We climbed down and were confronted by a confusing network of shaft drains heading in all directions; most were unsurveyed and some were not even explored. We inched across crumbly ledges, hopped down smooth, one-way climbs and dragged through tiny ragged canyons, transfixed by one thought - follow the numbers. Hours dragged by as we probed dozens of leads searching for the elusive numbers. We passed 4 and 5 way junctions and I began to doubt our ability to retrace our steps. Our only hope was to hit the K survey, which was the familiar route through the bewildering mess. We wandered through one unfamiliar survey after another as patience wore thin and fatigue turned to desparation. WE WERE LOST! We could rattle around in this maze until some future survey party set stations on our gypsum-encrusted bones! Things were bleak indeed when Philip found K24 smoked on the wall - JUBILATION! We stumbled into Pirates Pot, our original destination, after 5 long hours knowing that we still had 5 more hours to go before we could survey.

The hike out Lower Black River was uneventful and monotonous except for the water. Foaming torrents of muddy icewater gushed in from every available side passage. Normally tame Black River was swollen to a full 2 ft deep and tugged relentlessly at our footing. We had to duck past several thundering domes, and some of the passage reminded me of a sinking German U-Boat. As we neared the turnoff to the B.W.O.B., the broad, normally shallow, pools were up over the ledges, and a deafening roar echoed out of the darkness in front of us. We ran into Tom at the climb up into the B.W.O.B.; where the climb should have been, a tremendous twin waterfall filled the passage. The normal

route was totally obscured by the thundering water, so we had to do a tricky wall-climb nearby. Tom helped us up the waterfall and headed out. We ducked past an upper waterfall, and shortly reached Fairyland. The low flowstone passage had become a flowing sump (.8 cfs) and was met with a mixed reaction of disappointment and relief. We wondered what would have happened if we hadn't been lost for 4 hours. We could have ended up on the far side of that sump. We owed our salvation to Winfield for missing the way in that little pit we had crossed hours before.

Back at Pirates Pot we managed to find the correct route into Kangaroo Canyon, and plodded toward the Weller Entrance. We had been on the move for over 12 hrs and had been wet for most of the time. Our buns were definitely beginning to drag, but we were only a $\frac{1}{2}$ hr from the entrance. We ran into Tom again; he was soaked and looked worried. He reported that the entrance had sumped 50 ft from the surface! OH SHIT! The Main Entrance was 4 hrs away, we had no vertical gear, and no hope of rescue for several days! I knew there was a way to bypass the main drop - we just had to find it. The entrance pit (35 ft) had been free-climbed before - could it be done in a slushy waterfall? I tried to put the blacker alternatives out of my mind - we had no choice but to try.

I stopped worrying in the S - Canyon, my mind becoming preoccupied with the mechanics of putting one foot or knee in front of the other. I slipped into a trance-like mode in this familiar passage - movement became automatic. I felt sorry for Trex, remembering how interminable this nasty canyon had seemed on my first trip. We were extruded into Coalition Chasm (main drop) at 9 am, and began the grim search for the bypass. Two 70 ft waterfalls plunged down from above, creating a cold wind - if we failed to find the way in a few hours we would be forced to retreat to warmer passage. Win began to build a makeshift prussik rig, while Philip, Tom and I began working our way to the top of a high canyon. After nearly an hour of poking around at various levels, we popped out at the top of the rope. Tom went to try the entrance climb while Philip and I called back to the others. We could get no response due to the deafening roar from the nearby waterfalls. I waited at the top of the main drop, realizing there was no way I could climb the entrance without a ladder. Philip continued calling without result - I feared they had fallen asleep. Getting cold, I decided to go for the entrance and was soon delighted by the sound of a ladder being lowered. Philip and I made it out by 11:30 am and hurried back to the field-house for vertical gear. Philip got the gear down the drop by 12:30 and the others were out by 2 pm. We all breathed a sigh of relief at having escaped so handily. We began to realize that good caving alone would not have been sufficient - Dumb luck had played an uncomfortably large role. Without Tom's report on the Weller Entrance, we could have easily become too exhausted to make the Main Entrance. Tom admitted that without our knowledge of Coalition Chasm, he might not have found the bypass. The Moral is: If a cave seems to be whispering a warning to you - LISTEN TO IT!!

Bill Koerschner

*** ALASKA ***

I started forth and headed up North
merely on a whim,
To see for myself this frozen shelf;
much lauded as in a hymn.

So here I came seeking fortune and fame
(or enough to get me home!),
I didn't shirk but found some work
not far from Murphy's Dome.

The summer sun never gets quite done;
shines down all nice and warm,
But oh, dear Lord! Get rid of this hoard
of mosquitos that 'round me swarm!

There are wondrous masses of clouds that pass
in the big, blue sky
And the stars at night are so goddamned
bright as to look in your mind and pry!

The mountains rear to the South of here
and reach beyond the sky,
Hess, Deborah, Hayes; a finale - bygosh there's
Denali! Twenty thousand feet high.

The rivers race with a right fast pace
from a glacier somewhere behind,
But the rocks are there so better
beware and keep your eye well shined!

The canoe slides through, with a pal and you,
the branches of a big dead spruce;
But the current snatches, a dry branch
catches and suddenly shakes ya loose.

Now there's likker galore and a lotta good
whores down on Street Number Two,
Give 'em the cash and they'll even
thrash with a lad the likes o' you!

When the temperature's down and the clouds all frown,
the snow it's up to your knees;
And the cold wind blows and you'll lose your nose
if you just so much as sneeze.

And the iceworms jeer and laugh so clear
that the frozen tundra rings,
Why, then the huskie howls and the woodsmoke fouls
the crystalline wind-sting.

Startin' your car when the mercury's far
 below the freezin' point,
 Is not what I'd do, I'll tell you
 if I could be in a warm beer joint!

And to sit in the cold of this land
 so bold ain't really much fun,
 But fun or no (I'm telling you so)
 it's something that must be done!

But when you're skiing alone and the daylight's flown
 and it's somehow wrong to sing,
 Then the silence roars 'til your spirit soars
 to the peaks that 'round you ring.

The woods! The stars! The land! The bars!
 Come up; I'll e'en ask ya!
 Come up and look 'round, then you'll have found
 that I'm right - That's Alaska!

Dave Shantz

Variations on a Theme

"Good food, good meat,
 Good God, let's eat!"

- childhood prayer

Good sound, good show,
 Good friend, the Radio.

Good chips, good cheese,
 Good munchies, these!

Good friends, good beer,
 Good drugs, what cheer!

Good leaves, good seed,
 Good no-shit weed!

Good whiskey, good rye,
 Good questions: "How?", "Why?"

Good tits, good ass,
 Good head, dear lass!

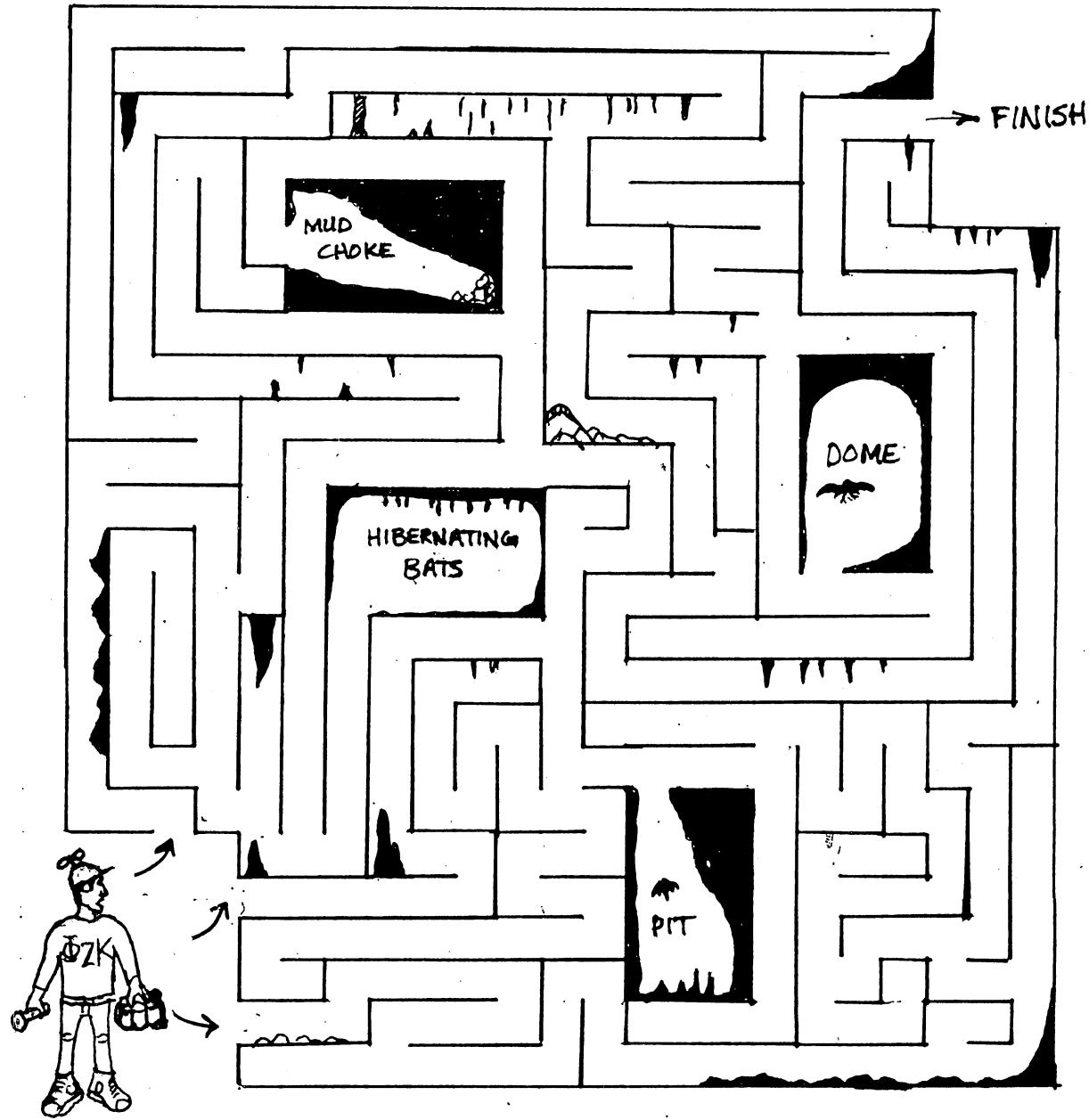
Good fire, good light,
 Good-bye, good-nite!



Dave Shantz

CAVE MAZE

Poor Phi Zappa Krappa brother, Ima Dick, decided to go caving but he ran out of string far back in the cave. Can you help him find the way out so V.P.I. won't have to rescue him?



Favorite Bat Recipes

Here are a few recipes from our culinary experts on bat cuisine that will tickle your tastebuds and certainly impress your future dinner guests:

FLIEDER SCHNITZEL

2 South American fruit bats - filleted (approx. 2 lbs.)
 1 egg beaten
 couple teaspoons flour
 bread crumbs
 salt and pepper

Mix dry ingredients together. Dip fillets in egg, then in flour- crumb mixture. Brown on both sides in butter. Serve with lemon slices and cave fungi. Serves four. (Favorite of expatriated Reich-thinking Germans.)

REFRIED BATS

Take 24 deboned bats. Fry in butter. Put into food processor with:

1 egg
 couple tablespoons flour or bread crumbs
 chilies to taste

Puree. Form into patties and refry in butter.

BAT MASTERSON

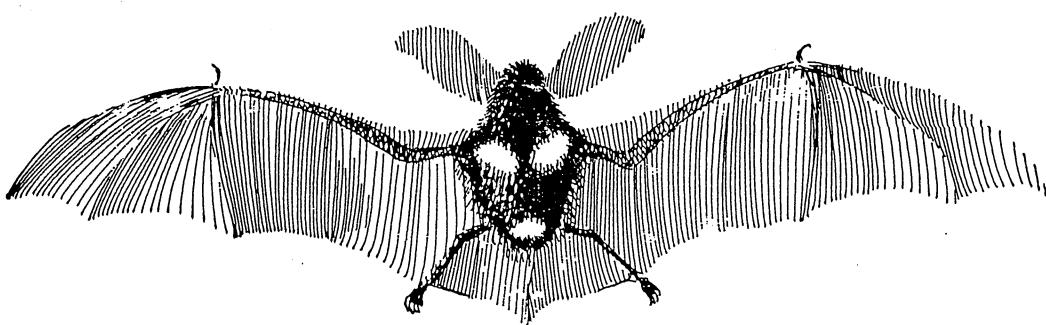
Not a dish, but a character from the old American West. Don't you know anything, stupid!

CAVER'S TONGUE-IN-CHEEK

Take three cavers with:

macabre sense of humor

Stuff tongues firmly in cheek. Season to taste and serve.



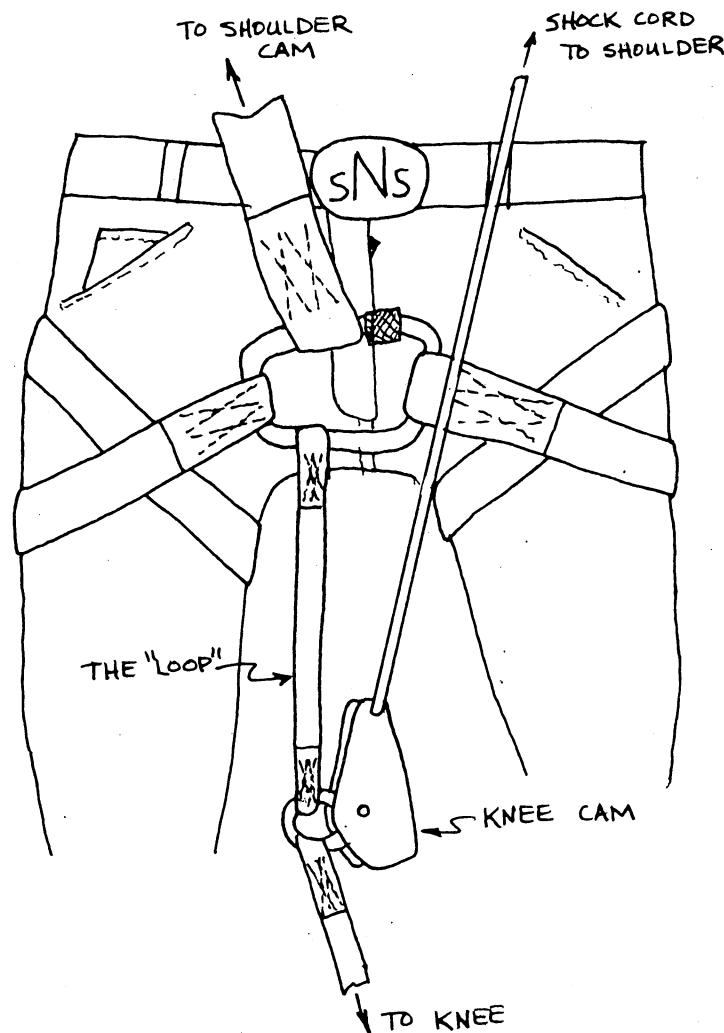
The Loop

Last summer when I was sewing together my cam rig a friend of mine pointed out that the shoulder cam should have a backup. "A backup?" I said. I was consciously over-building my shoulder cam. "Sure," he says, "You don't want to end up hanging upside down in a waterfall, do you?" "Well hell no, I don't," I thought. So after some more thinking I came up with what I think is a good backup.

Now this is not a new idea as I found out later, but it is a good one. What the backup consists of is another piece of webbing sewn into the floating knee cam with a loop in the other end. This loop clips into the seat harness. After completing this loop I took the rig out and tested it. The test involved unhooking the shoulder cam and falling backwards. Aaaagg!!! Lo and behold I ended up face to face with my floating knee cam. The loop had prevented me from going completely upside down. This could come in handy in a strong waterfall someday.

The loop is not hard to make as compared to the rest of the rig, and I think it should be included to assure maximum safety. By the way, another advantage I found with this loop is that when I pull the shock cord off my shoulder, the cam doesn't fall to the ground, it just sort of hangs there suspended. With this loop you don't have to worry about tripping over the knee cam. So make one, dammit!

Steve Lancaster



Pissed Off

During the American Civil War the Confederates to provide nitrate for making gunpowder had to resort to all sorts of devices, such as digging out and leaching the earth from old smokehouses, barns, and caves and making artificial beds of all sorts of nitrogenous matter, having agents for the purpose in every town and city.

The officer at Selma, Alabama was particularly energetic and enthusiastic in his work and put the following advertisement in the Selma newspaper on October 1, 1863:

"The ladies of Selma are respectfully requested to preserve the chamber lye collected about the premises for the purpose of making nitre. A barrel will be sent around daily to collect it. John Haralson, Agent, Nitre and Mining Bureau, C.S.A."

This attracted the attention of army poets and the first of the following two effusions resulted. It was copied and privately circulated over the Confederacy. Finally it crossed the line, and an unknown Federal poet added the "Yankee's View of It."

CONFEDERATE VIEW OF IT

John Haralson, John Haralson-- you are a wretched creature;
 You've added to this bloody war a new and useful feature.
 You'd have us think, while every man is bound to be a fighter
 The Ladies, bless the pretty dears, should save their pee for nitre.

John Haralson, John Haralson, where did you get the notion
 To send the barrel 'round to gather up the lotion?
 We thought the girls had work enough in making shirts and kissing,
 But you have put the pretty dears to Patriotic Pissing.

John Haralson, John Haralson, pray do invent a neater
 And somewhat less immodest way of making your saltpetre--
 For 'tis an awful idea, John, gunpowdery and cranky
 That when a lady lifts her skirts, she's killing off a Yankee.

YANKEE VIEW OF IT

John Haralson, John Haralson, we've read in song and story
 How women's tears, through all the years, have moistened fields of glory--
 But never was it told before, how 'mid such scenes of slaughter
 Your Southern beauties dried their tears and went to making water.

No wonder that your boys were brave; who couldn't be a fighter
 If every time he fired his gun, he used his sweetheart's nitre?
 And vice versa, what could make a Yankee soldier sadder
 Than dodging bullets fired by a pretty woman's bladder?

They say there was a subtle smell which lingered in the powder
 And as the smoke grew thicker and the din of battle louder
 That there was found in this compound one serious objection--
 No soldier boy could sniff it without having an erection!!!

-From the ACS Philadelphia Section's Catalyst

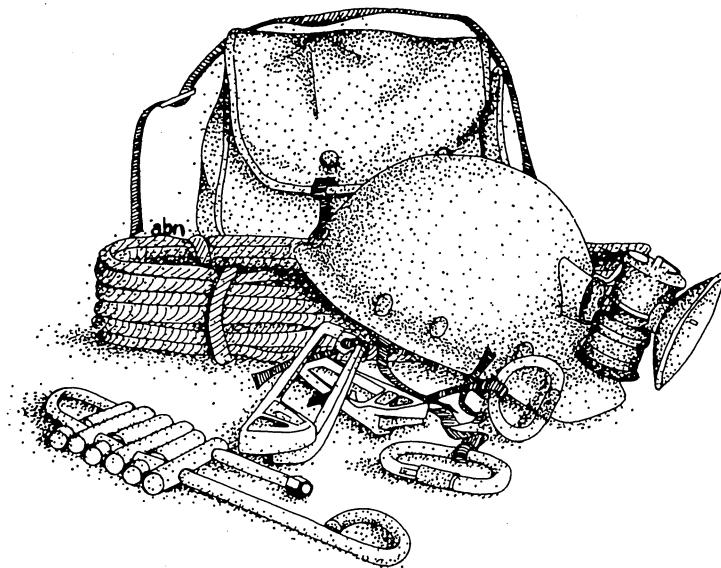
A Massachusetts Yankee at VPI Grotto

Last September, I left the security of New England, the only home I had ever really known, to attend school at VA TECH. I had always been active in one club or another during high school and my first two years of college, but when I came here, I was looking for something new and different. One day early in October a friend told me that she had gone to a Cave Club meeting and had had a fantastic time at a party on a mountain and then caving the next day. Now being from Massachusetts, where caving is an almost unknown sport, (mainly because there are almost no caves in the state) I was a little wary but decided to try it for the fun of it. I went to my first meeting Friday, October 9, and was on my way to becoming a confirmed caver. That following Sunday was the vertical session and I began to meet some of the most friendly and unusual people I have ever known.

My first caving trips were the following weekend: a 3 hour trip into Starnes and a 4 hour trip into Tony's. I was converted! My first vertical trip was into Pighole and then I realized that it was always meant to be. Vertical caving gave me such a feeling that I have always been looking for in a year-round sport. Now you must all understand that being from New England, I am an ardent skier and every winter that I am away leaves me longing for the slopes of home. However, I can honestly say that this winter brought as much fun as ever, even though I skied barely more than 10 days.

Subsequent caving trips have brought me to New Castle Murder Hole, Spruce Run Mountain and Newberry's, as well as an exciting weekend in West Virginia. I have loved every minute I have spent underground. Friends from home have asked "Why would you want to spend a day underground where it is cold, wet and dark?" I answer with a smile and say, "Come visit and you'll find out." As of yet, I have not had any takers. In closing, I would like to thank all of the members of the club for making my adjustment to the South not only easier but a hell of a lot of fun.

Maureen Handler



Self Rescue at Kimbleton Mine

October 25, 1981 saw a real carnival heading into Mine cave; Pete Sauvigne, (Big) John Lohner, Kent Thompson, Mike Gaydosh, Steve Lancaster, Lee (air rappel) Little, Keith (animal) Smith, (Captain) Ed Fortney, Paul Norris, and myself. We met at 9:00 at my place and rendezvoused with Pete at the turnoff this side of Pearisburg. A stop at the main plant, a walk through white limestone dust, and we gave the foreman a release form signed by everyone on the trip.

Kimbleton Mine is an active limestone mine and has two main portals underground, north and south. When the mine was first put into operation the south portal broke into a cave. The cave was virgin and apparently had no natural entrance. It caused big problems for miners because every now and then they would hit a section of the cave which caused roof collapse and general havoc. Cavers were called in a year and a half ago when a lower portion of the mine began flooding. Pete Sauvigne and Bob Alderson, both of whom had been in the cave before, began trying to trace the stream to a place it could be blocked, but to no avail. Apparently the floodwaters were coming from a separate source. As a result the south portal was impassable and was used only for ventilation.

Enter: Cavers! Trips, however, were only allowed on Sundays because of blasting the other six days, and permission could only be obtained by select people.

As we entered the thirty foot archway entrance of the south portal, a deep gloom settled around us. Voices became hushed and visibility went down to twenty feet. A hundred feet down the roadway a "streetlight" became visible and you felt as if you were in London on a foggy night. The gloom was limestone dust, thick in the air. The underground chill added to the effect.

By this time the ceiling was no longer visible and the road seemed like it would stretch on forever. Another "streetlight" glowed feebly in the distance but it was time to turn off the road and clamber over some large pipes into a breakdown area on our right. As we stumbled over rocks and visibility reduced to ten or fifteen feet, we became aware of a wall on our right and a void on our left. Another fifty feet up a mud slope and we reached the base of a wooden ladder punching its way up through the fog into a circular hole in the ceiling. Thirty vertical feet later I was in a completely different world. The air was clear, the temperature was 54 degrees, and the walls were familiar sleazy mud! Nine more people up the ladder and we started chimneying across pits.

The year before when I had been in the cave with Pete

and six others the pits had been full of water, some twenty feet deep. Now they were bone dry.

More clambering over breakdown and straddling holes and we reached a passage several hundred feet long and an almost perfect subway tunnel. I expected to hear a train whistle any minute and do a Wiley E. Coyote train ride. What was disappointing was that the water was only ankle deep where there was any at all. Before, it had been thigh deep. Because of the low water I resigned myself to a boring trip. If I had only known!

The first obstacle to show itself was a steep climb up a mud bank. To save time and a possible fifty foot slide to the bottom, a piece of Goldline had been permanently rigged above several years ago. Once everyone had made a clown out of themselves on the ascent, we continued on.

This entire trip was through mud caked rooms and climbs, most blackened by the mine ventilation. The next passage was no exception but there were some nice columns on the right wall. The ceiling got lower and, once on hands and knees, we crawled through two large columns to a plateau overlooking a room. Here a rope was rigged and people started the twenty foot rappel.

Once down I slid the rest of the way to the bottom. A steep climb up the opposite wall and I popped up through a small hole to another plateau in the same room. It was at the same level as the first one but forty feet away. We threw mudballs at the stragglers awhile and then moved on.

Now things really got interesting! Some more crawling through soda straws and columns and another pit was reached. It was thirty feet in diameter and funnelled downwards to its forty foot depth. I put my seat on and clipped in to the permantly rigged tyrolean belay rope. Once securely in, I climbed downwards five feet and started traversing across the left wall.

When Pete had rigged the rope, he pounded two 2 foot steel rods into the walls with a carabiner on each. This redirected the rope so you couldn't trip on it. At each carabiner you had to stabilize yourself and unclip the one connecting the rope to the rod. After you passed the seat carabiner by the rod the other one would be reclipped to the rod. At no time was your seat carabiner unclipped from the rope so you were constantly on belay. Once on the other side you got to watch everyone else get unnerved by the

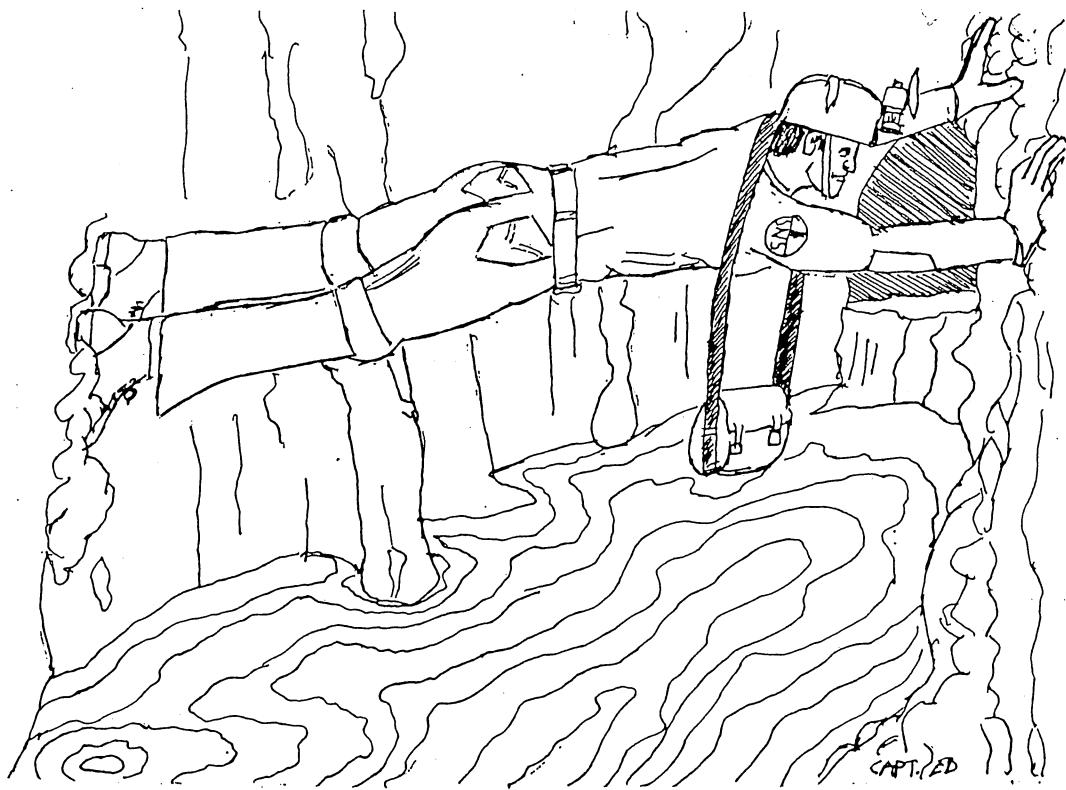
traverse. Then it was time to move on to make room.

Finally we reached a large trunk passage which sloped down steeply on the right. About half of the group was moving noticeably slower so Pete and I decided to split up. He took the faster group on down the trunk passage to a large room called Dupont Circle. He knew of a good high lead he wanted to check out. I took the rest down the bank on the right through some holes and sleazy mud in the direction of the loop out of the cave.

We soon came to another permantly rigged rope. This one wasn't going to be as easy as the other one. Mud was everywhere and the rope, once you chimmneyed up to where it was rigged, went over a slight overhang and down ten feet. This was a real nuisance drop as you couldn't safely arm rappel it with the angle at the lip. If you fell it would be down a deep drainage ditch. So, everyone had to put on rappel gear for a piddly little eight foot drop. Where you touched down was a spot called "Goes-into-Lake". Once again disappointment hit me because the lake level was a foot lower than before. That drought sure did spoil a good time!

The technique for crossing "Goes-into-Lake" (seven feet wide, water twenty feet deep), was to put both feet on one wall, both hands on the other wall (nose six inches above the water) and start "walking" your way down the passage. Bear in mind that hands, feet, and walls were gloopy mud. The beginning was the easy part. Once you had gone fifteen feet the passage bent to the right and you had to struggle upwards to get five feet over the water as the walls widened to eight feet. Another ten feet farther a dilemma presented itself. You were straining to stretch eight feet, your arms and legs were trembling badly, your breath was coming fast and rapid, sweat rolled off your face and fogged up your glasses, you were four or five feet above twenty foot deep water, your lamp was almost out, and now some jerk told you that you had to transfer over to the wall your feet were on, all without falling into the water! ESADMF! The technique, of course, was to throw yourself blindly backwards and hope you landed with a squish of mud instead of a splash of water! Most people did okay.

But the fun was not over! With trembling limbs and fogged up glasses a vertical fifteen foot flowstone climb had yet to be surmounted. The water flowing down it didn't help and the ragged faces of the group were convincing enough to rig a handline. About this time Pete's group came within earshot so much yelling ensued. Their high lead was impossible to get into. Any splash from them

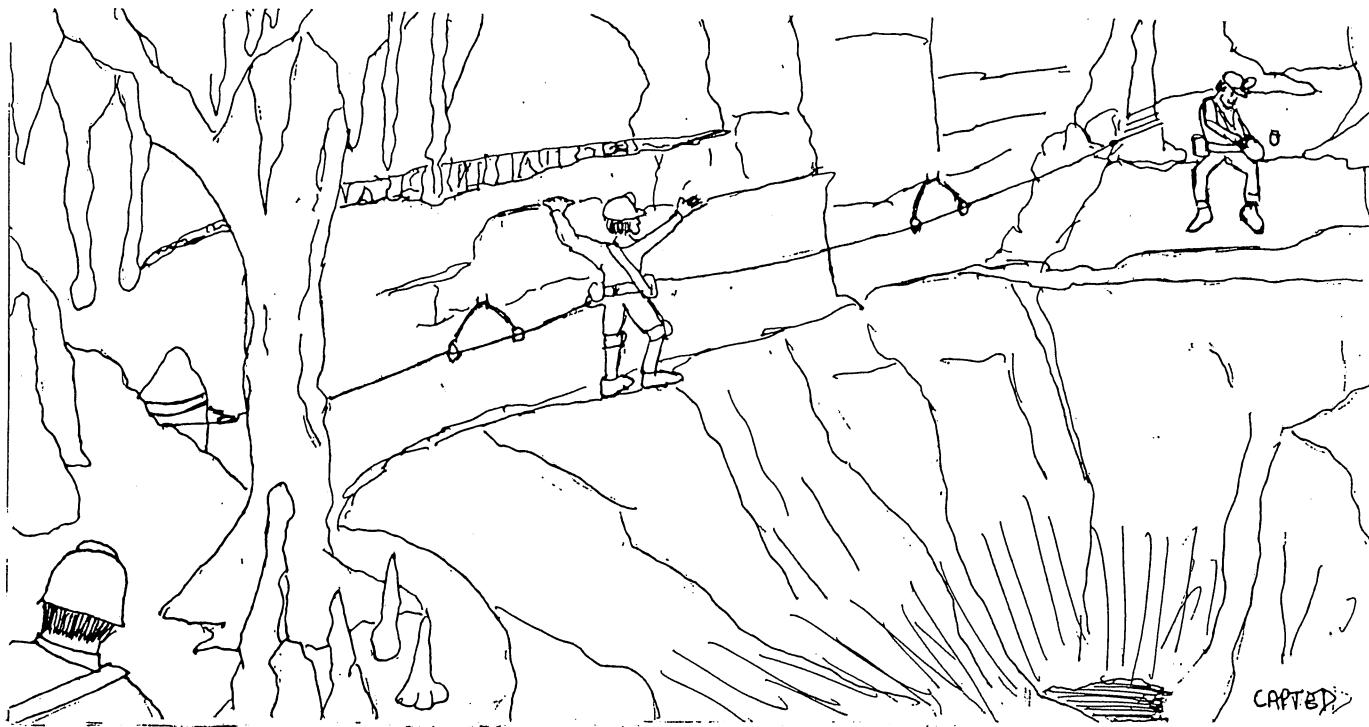


Goes-into-Lake

at "Goes-into-Lake" brought instant giggles from us.

Above the flowstone climb a hole in the wall led into walking passage. One end was a huge window which overlooked the piddly eight foot rappel thirty foot below. The other end funneled down, yes, a pit! And guess what? Another permanently rigged piece of Goldline led down into the depths. Once again the rope was checked for cuts or animal bites and we started down the sixty foot rappel. The first ten feet down the funnel was easy—you dropped as the rope stretched. The next twenty feet was down a long but body width wide slot that tore at your clothes. The final thirty feet was free as the walls belled out.

When there were several of us down, I told them to follow me down the slope. What was next was an eighty foot horizontal chimmney, possibly the hardest thing in the cave. I started working my way upwards into the ceiling channel. As I started chimmneying in the two foot diameter hole with almost sheer walls, the floor dropped away



Tyrolean belay

twenty feet below and became deep water. It was possible to move with your back on one wall and your knees on the other or by facing forward and using elbow and knee jams. The outward force required to stay in the chimney was such that only ten or fifteen feet were possible between rests. Finally, after eighty gruelling feet, I started down and dropped gratefully to the floor. I knew from memory that now I had to walk thirty feet forward, climb up on a pile of dirt, and pull myself up into a hole in the ceiling. So I walked forward fifteen feet and stopped. I stopped because there wasn't any more floor. It was gone! A ten foot by twenty foot section was missing. I could see down fifty feet to a black zone where the walls narrowed to five feet. There was no debris visible so the canyon was considerably deeper. Ten feet up and twenty feet out in empty air was the hole that was now unreachable.

I didn't say anything until Pete dropped out of the chimney and walked to the edge.

"Hey Pete, didn't there used to be a floor there?"
(Pause) "Yep".

He stood there a minute looking down, looked up at the climb, turned around to us and said "hey fellows, looks like we have to turn around!"

This was received with unbelieving cries and expletives.

By this time everyone was through the chimmney except three. They also complained but turned around. Pete and I started pushing any leads around to bypass the collapse but found none. Since he had helped to map the cave, he knew that we would have to completely retrace our steps.

On our last trip no one had realized it was anything other than solid floor because we had had eight people standing under the climb. So, the collapse must have been caused by mine blasting since it didn't disintegrate under us then.

I wearily looked at the hole that was only fifteen minutes from the entrance and turned back toward the chimmney.

We got back to the bottom of the drop after we had been in the cave five and a half hours. Everyone went through their gear and we came up with three complete knot rigs. Pete went up first and Lee and I started putting people on rope assembly line fashion.

With five people up, I tied on a four wrap helical and got ten feet off the floor when the knots and I slid back down to the floor.

"Wow, that was fun! But it's not going to work".

As I untied, Lee quickly put the next guy on with prussiks above me and sent him up. The problem was mud. The rope had been rigged in the cave for one and a half years and was a solid cake of the stuff. Solidly caked feet and gloves didn't help the knots either.

I tied on the set we had at the bottom with four wrap prussiks. Five feet off the floor and I was back down again.

"Pete!", Lee yelled, "The knots are slipping, you are going to have to haul us up!"

"Okay, sit tight" was the muffled reply.

Four of us remained. Lee, Ed, Paul, and myself.

The way the rope was now I believed that even a new set of knots would slip. The option remained, of course, that someone above could pull the rope up and take it to "Goes-into-Lake" to wash it. The problem was the cold. Everyone was exhausted and shivering and the last thing anyone wanted to do was put their hands in cold cave water. Anyhow, it seemed Pete would rather haul us up and I'll take a free ride anytime.

Paul started shivering uncontrollably so I broke out the space blanket and he and Ed huddled under it.

Even through the exhaustion and cold, the high good humor of the trip never faded. Bawdy songs and sick jokes rose from the depths and no one was really concerned about our situation. We were in the best of hands-ours!

Soon the rope came slithering down.

"Ready to haul!"

We tied Ed in. (Better him than us to test their rig!)
 "Hauling!"

Up Ed went. Ten feet, twenty feet.

"Lowering!"

Down Ed came. Five minutes later, "Hauling!"

Up Ed went. Twenty feet.

"Lowering!"

Down Ed came. This went on a third and fourth time before "Hauling!"

Ed went up fifteen feet on the first yank, fifteen more to the ceiling on the second. On the third yank as he entered the tight slot "Ow! #*?/*#"

"Lets haul a little slower fellows" someone yelled.

Finally Ed was up and the rope came slithering back down. Still not sure their rig was safe, Lee and I tied Paul in.

The first yank he almost hit the ceiling.

"Hey! Slower!"

The second yank he disappeared up through the slot amid numerous falling rocks and curses.

I looked at Lee and he looked at me. Who next! I figured by the time they hauled the third guy up, they might be so tired they would drop the fourth one so I jumped in and tied myself in.

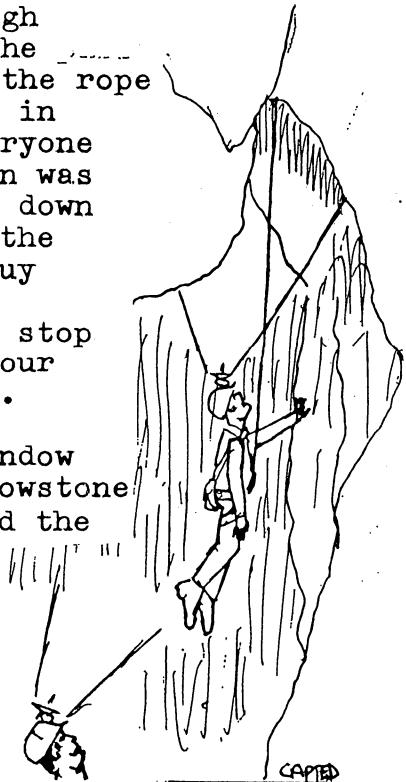
I waved goodbye to Lee as I shot to the ceiling in two yanks. As they prepared for the third yank I pulled myself to the widest part of the slot and exhaled. Even so, a few things got caught, but I made it up.

Now I got to see how they were doing it. The passage was perfect. Flat, level floor, standing room, and it went back almost straight for forty feet to the big window.

The rope came up the hole, changed direction through a pulley Pete held in place, and went straight down the passage. Each person had a prussik knot attached to the rope to pull with. At the start of each haul everyone was in a line sitting down near the lip. With "Hauling" everyone stood up and struggled backwards until the last person was near the window. Then everyone but the first guy sat down and kept tension. The first guy then walked back to the beginning, sat down, and resumed tension. The next guy would repeat the process and so on until the starting line was complete again. There was no where to rig a stop knot so this process worked just as well. Three or four hauls had each person out and soon Lee was up with us.

The rope, once freed, was dragged down the passage and lowered out the window. By rappelling out the window and swinging to the other side we could bypass the flowstone climb, the strenuous straddle of "Goes-into-Lake", and the

Hauling
up



piddly eight foot climb.

Pete started down first and found the rope stretched about five feet as he went over the lip. He made it down and swung over fairly gracefully. I was next, so...

"Ready to rappel!"

"Belay on!"

"Rappelling!"

Over the lip, down, a not so graceful swing, and I was next to Pete. The rest of the trip started down. Poor Mike. He seemed to have forgotten about the stretch in the rope as he started sitting into the rappel. Crash, bang, whoops! And there he was, hanging upside down five feet below the lip. The belayer lowered him and we pulled him over. The only injury was a bruised ego.

Big John did a close imitation and finally everyone was on our side of the drop.

A quick conference about the time and Pete decided to take Steve and Lee out and make a phone call to his wife Linda. Our sign-out in Blacksburg was okay, but he had told Linda we would be out by six. It would be seven by the time he got to the phone.

The rest of us sauntered out (as well as you could saunter in this cave). As we climbed over the pipes onto the mine roadway we had already gotten reaccustomed to the thick gloom. A few minutes of walking and the entrance archway glowed ahead. Headlights came on from the arch.

"Hey, what took you so long?" Pete yelled from the Scout. They had been waiting fifteen minutes after buying some beer and making the phone call. And to top that off the inconsiderate bums had already drunk all the beer—none for us! We considered rolling the Scout on its roof but someone held me back.

Our trip took almost ten hours. The normal through trip would have taken about six hours, so we were real proud of our efforts. Two lessons were to be learned. The first was that anytime you go down a rope, even if you don't plan to return that way, take a set of cams. The second lesson was if you get into a difficult situation, you have to try hard to not be able to effect a self rescue. We had several options and the first one worked. If it hadn't, we would have tried something else. This is much preferred to calling a rescue.

With high spirits (even with lack of spirits), we changed and headed back to Blacksburg for food, drink, and sleep after a trip none of us would ever forget.

Lawrence Britt

Upon Meeting a Trainee Trip Underground

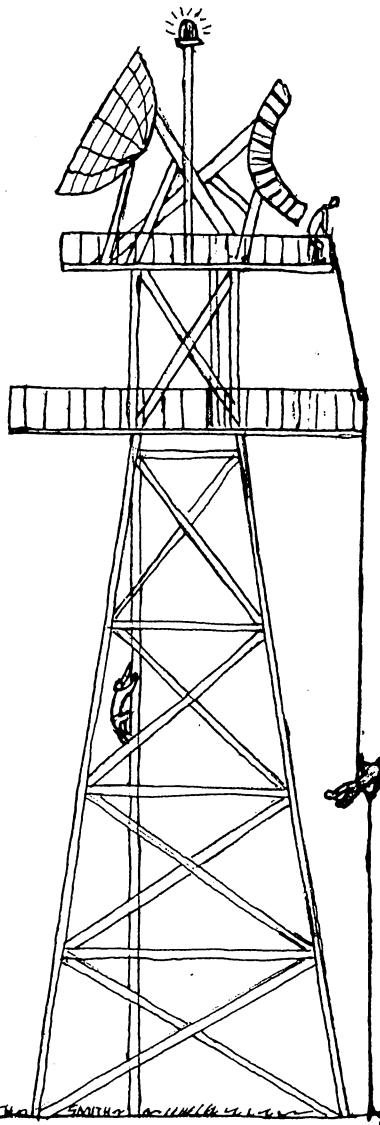
I stopped just short of the first ledge and waited for my turn to squirm through the keyhole that led to the bottom of the nineteen foot drop. A nostalgic wave swept over me as I sat and listened to the conversation up ahead. How excited and intrigued the voices sounded! How strange their terminology. Their equipment was crude and their manner of exploration so carefree that it appeared to be utter chaos.

My mind wandered back to high school and my first trips underground. How excited and intrigued I was. My equipment was crude—the manner of exploration carefree. For a moment I tried to think of what right I had to interfere and change all of this. Who is to say what is proper?

Where in the past have I encountered myself?
"Good taste, last and vilest of human superstitions,
has at last succeeded in silencing us where all others
have failed".*

* G. K. Chesterson

NSS 3767
VPI 175



Ode to Spruce Run or "You can make it, but it may be a bit tight..."

We entered then this cozy one,
All set to cave and have some fun;
But shortly things did narrow down,
Until the walls my shoulders found.
My shirt off now -- I'll try again;
Behold, opon the wall my skin!
Methinks that once I exit here,
In direst need I'll be of beer!

NSS 3767
VPI 175

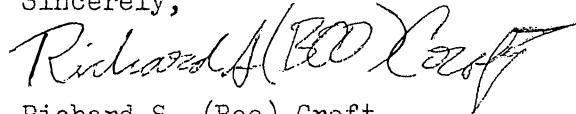
A SPECIAL NOTICE

Recently a rumor reached our grotto that a few individuals, under the name "Council of Appalachian Volunteers Engaged in Speleology" are attempting to form a new Southwest Virginia Region of the NSS. The rumor also stated that two-thirds of the VPI Grotto was in support of the CAVES group. A brief survey revealed that of all current members of the VPI Cave Club, only two or three had even heard of CAVES, and none of these were in support of that group or its political endeavors.

At the 12 March meeting of the VPI Grotto, a motion passed stating that no person other than an officer of the grotto may use the club name for any political business without first obtaining the club's permission at a meeting. Permission will only be given by a majority vote.

Another motion passed, stating that the VPI Grotto is at this time opposed to the formation of another region of the NSS, and offers no support to the CAVES group. We want the Virginia region to remain intact.

Sincerely,



Richard S. (Boo) Croft
President, VPI Cave Club
VPI 201, NSS 18884