

THE TECH TROGLODYTE

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

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1971 NSS CONVENTION

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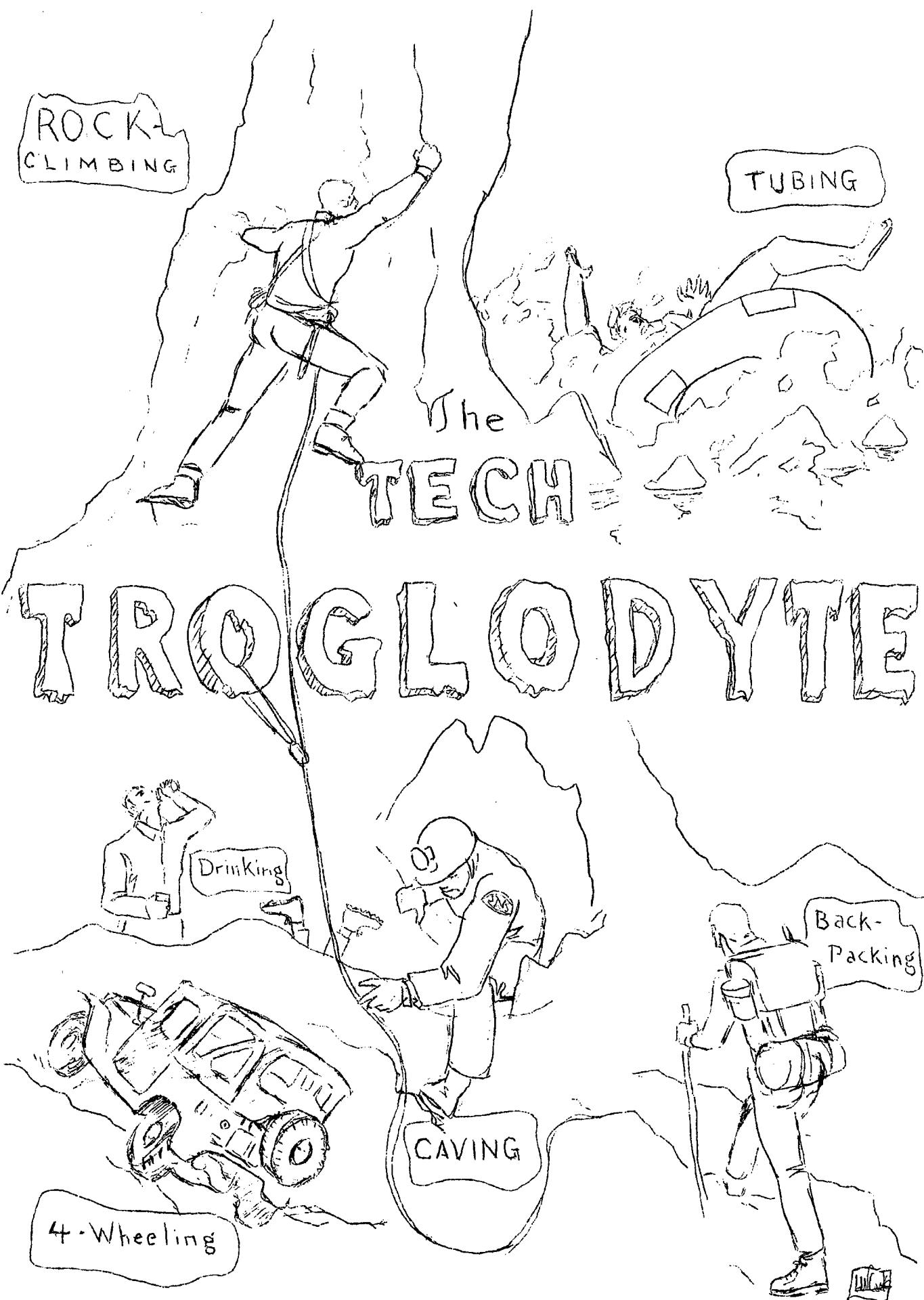
TROGLODYTE

Drinking

Back-
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SPRING QUARTER 1971

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ART WORK	by	Larry Cooke
&		Bob Page
CARTOONS		Mike Dunn

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

I am most pleased to be your president for the coming year. I will work to the best of my ability to attain the proper recognition for the club. This column will outline some of my thoughts.

I hope that our training program will strengthen with respect to introducing trainees (and regular members) to all aspects of caving. Caving is a very diverse science. Exposure to all fields will give one an education from which he will be able to field plays from diverse persons associated with the subterranean environment. For example, an elementary knowledge of geology aids in the locations of new caves and their entrances. Mapping underground passageways is a growing activity and serves many important functions. Vertical expertise is an art that can be a sport in itself as well as serving as a tool for gaining access to the inner depths of some caves. Only after seeing it all may one single out interest areas. Then he can use his talents to investigate his interests. It does not matter whether it is stream tracing or photography, just so long as one is aware of all the various aspects of caving.

Once one has mastered the various caving techniques, it has proven most profitable to visit other caving areas outside the Virginias. Whether it be a muddy cave in Pennsylvania or a pit cave in Alabama, caves in other locales offer new and interesting challenges. But the most exciting part is meeting the cavers of those areas and exchanging techniques, new equipment, and ideas. New mapping techniques, a new vertical ascender, and thoughts on landowner relations are just a few of the many exchangeable subjects. It's a give-and-take proposition. Everyone benefits. For these reasons I am encouraging caving activity by individuals in other states.

My strongest feelings center around club unity. The club's activities have been a way of life for me the past four years. There are already several traditional club activities that promote the fine fellowship I speak of. The picnic, banquet, and club projects have been the major events in the past. An annual float trip has recently become a yearly highlight. Regional events and the Convention promote fellowship among cavers from other areas as well as establishing a sense of identity with one's own Grotto. VPI has the closest knit group of individuals I have ever witnessed. This is evidenced most clearly by our daily gatherings at Owens for meals and our frequent group participation in activities other than caving. In the future I would like to see club caving trips on a scale similar to our club project weekends. I have in mind three specific areas: Bath County,

Virginia; Pendleton County, West Virginia; and hopefully the Central Kentucky Karst. These would be "sport" trips and open to any interested and qualified caver.

Our opportunity for recognition can start NOW with the NSS Convention. Let's demonstrate to all other cavers that we have the caves, cavers and partiers. They will leave the Convention with an impression of us. Let's make it a good one.

Dale

* * * * *

EDITOR'S COLUMN

Annual Springtime elections of Grotto officers are over and surprisingly, they went very smoothly this year. Sure, we had the usual three hour meeting, but at least we didn't argue for one hour of that about precedent and whether or not candidates should stay or leave the room. So, congratulations from the Trog Staff to the new officers, Dale and Pete, and keep up the good work to Liz and Dennis.

With the 1971 NSS Convention coming up fast, we went into the planning of this Trog with hopes for something special. We hoped and prayed for an abundance of articles from our many dedicated explorers and mappers about all the most famous caves of the area. We approached the pestering of Dale for his President's column with renewed vigor. We badgered the guys relentlessly to think of "anything funny" so Bob could cartoon it. We begged for articles - any articles. Then we sat back and miserably waited, just as we'd waited the past three quarters. Then, just as had happened the past three quarters, a select few of you lovely cavers came through, even with all the busy work scheduled in planning this best ever, NSS Convention. Thank you for your support.

So here it is. I guess it's nothing "special" as we'd hoped. Just another Tech Troglodyte, but composed and concocted strictly by cavers for cavers.

And everybody, if you're coming to Convention, have a great time, and if you're not, we hope you wish you were! The 1971 NSS Convention promises to be really fun!

The Editors

MY TURN!!!

Well, it's time for the VPI Cave Club to get a new editor 'cause I'm getting married! (You knew there was gonna be problems with a girl editor, huh?!!)

I've had an interesting time being editor for four issues now; I think I might even miss it a little..... eventually...like in a couple hundred years! Seriously though, being editor of The Tech Troglodyte has its problems - like you make a lot of enemies because you don't publish someone's poem or a trip report (that he must have worked on for all of maybe seven and a half minutes at the lunch table to turn it into Doug because it's required to write one in order to get into the club) or because one or two of the other editors don't like what you're trying to say in your editor's column so you let one of them do it, or because you might have the wrong address of some subscriber in the files and he hasn't received his Trog in about two years and wants to know why, or because maybe it's all your fiancé hears is "gotta get the Trog done - don't talk to me now".

But it's not rally all problems. There's always someone (bless his heart) who tells you "It's a pretty good Trog". Janet, Guy and I feel great about such compliments. We tell Doug Perkins that it's a quality printing job and umpteen-million others that they "sure are a good stapler", and most of all, say thanks to all the writers for getting those articles to us by two weeks past deadline 'cause if we'd really stuck to the deadline we never would have had anything to staple together between the covers!

Thanks again for letting me be editor - it was really a very rewarding experience. And gang, please help your next editor; write articles before midterms come around so you'll have the time!

Boots

* * * * *

They sleep generally in the open air, in winter as well as in summer, subjected to every inclimacy of the weather. They are yet a rollicking set, and occassionally include men of intelligence, who formerly possessed an ordinary amount of refinement. -J.A. Allen

LOOKING BACKWARD

After wading through about 15 years worth of the VPI Grotto's minutes and Constitution, one is completely impressed by the ways in which the club has not changed. The problems which we deem to be pressing were pressing in 1943 and will probably continue to be in the foreseeable future. With the club less than a year old, on February 19, 1943, the problem of the club growing too large was brought up for the first, but certainly not the last, time.

My own particular interest is, of course, the training program of the club for new members, and how and why it got to the point it has reached now. It has been an interesting history, governed by the needs of the club and the methods available to get the job done.

On April 23, 1943, the first stated new member requirements were given in the minutes. These consisted of filling out an application blank, going on two out of three club trips, and being voted on by the club governing council after being discussed by the club. A brief explanation of the club's structure at the time will make this clearer. The club was governed by a council elected every year. Apparently there were not club votes on every matter as there are now. Club trips were planned in advance, usually for a whole quarter ahead, subject to change, of course. The club then went on these trips "en mass". Most changes in the trainee program can be traced to a change in caving conditions, techniques, and methods of leading trips. By 1950 qualifications for members to lead trips to various caves were set up, and certain caves were closed to novices. This no doubt, was brought about by an increase in vertical caving and its inherent dangers during the era of the hoist and later, the body rappel. The "club trip" was still the rule of the day.

During the 1950's the "club trip" system was replaced by the individual trip system, with responsible leaders forming their own trips. This is a theory of mine, relating to available information, for the minutes for most of the 1950's are lacking, or missing entirely. By the early 1960's however, the idea of authorized trip leaders was being challenged by people taking out "unauthorized" trips -i.e.- a caver taking out a trip of his own without approval of a leader or the safety committee. The "leadership system" answered with even more stringent regulations, with an "A class" or vertical leader, and a "B class" or horizontal leader classification being needed to lead vertical-horizontal, or horizontal trips respectively. Needless to say, this did not solve the problem of unauthorized trips, nor

did it encourage caving. The development of the brake-bar method of rappelling and countless other improvements in vertical caving were making vertical caving safer and more easily learnable by the average member or trainee. The safety committee got more and more incidents of safety violation, in which the party involved often saw nothing unsafe about his action -i.e.- an unauthorized trip. The solution was the foundation of the present trainee program, adopted about 1965. This system presumes that a member will use his or her own judgement about leading a trip. Responsibility is emphasized. Trainees may take out trips if they desire to caves they can handle, although no hour-credit is given unless a member is along. The results: an accident record that is free of injuries and only very infrequently referring to any trouble at all. The most unusual item in the trouble listings is the fact that these trips usually involved an experienced member, and the results were never serious. Because of improvements in equipment and techniques, once difficult caves now only present a challenge, with one weekend trips now being done in an afternoon. Hence the system that has now evolved seems to be working, but only the future will tell us what new developments in caving will appear and what steps will be taken to meet them. But for the present, the Grotto is in as good a condition as it ever was. If you don't believe me, read the minutes, and you will find that we have no monopoly on problems at all.

Doug Perkins

* * * * *

There is a caver named Douty,
Who at parties is said to be rowdy,
But give him one beer,
And he's down on his ear,
So goes the caver rowdy Bill Douty.

I'll tell you of Cheryl Jones,
Who among us is not too well known,
But she once went to Spence,
And came out from thence,
Laughing betwixt her moans.

There is a guy called Bobaloo,
Who was president of our motley crew,
When asked how he liked us,
He answered "no fuss",
"But I'd rather preside over a zoo."

MAIL ORDERED CAVER

Hey Gang, this is the Mailbag speaking, Yes, that's right, the Mailbag, more often than not just known as "the Bag". Sure, you know me, I'm the one who gets up at the Grotto meetings during Committee Reports and does her best to bore everyone to sleep with all sorts of trivia and stuff that comes to the Club via the US Mail. After all the time that I have held this position, I still wonder why "Mailbag" is considered a committee; I singly comprise it and I suppose that means I qualify as chairman. Jeez, I've been coming up in front of the Club for quite some time. I've babbled on under the presidential sighs of Vig, Moose, Bobaloo, and now there's Birdman, wow.

Well, for some of you trainees who wonder if I was born with the VPI Cave Club PO box key in my mouth, before me there was Mailbag Mike Kayes, the Polish Guru, and before him was the ubiquitous R.E. Whittemore, and before that I believe it was Glenn Davis. That's as far back as I care to go, but it sounds like a good field for trivia seekers.

We've been known to have gotten all kinds of neat stuff in the mail. A couple of years ago we got a questionnaire from the local congressman who was up for re-election. So, several of us got together, pooled our resources, answered questions concerning opinions of the Draft, Vietnam, and political affiliations, made it totally absurd, signed it A.I. Cartwright and sent it in. Well, a couple of weeks later, we got a response telling us where A.I. stood in political terms. I think we put extremes on the left and right ends of his poll. Oh, well. We also keep getting electric bills for a Burley Lamb and other people who probably don't even exist. For a while the library kept insisting to us that Al Hurt had a book long overdue. We've even gotten scented love letters that were supposed to be in the box under us. Applause for the PO efficiency!

Seriously, I really enjoy reading all the publications and things we get in the mail. We exchange with about 60 other caving organizations and we are looking to exchange or subscribe to more. I just wish that more people would read the exchange mail we get. After I rap about it at the meetings, it lays to rest in Club Files. (See THE TECH TROGLODYTE, Vol. IX, no. 2) Sure, a lot of it is local stuff and private jokes, but if you look closely, there is a wealth of information. All of us get hung up and tied down to our own Grotto and usually become all too familiar with our own problems. Every club has its own hassles and with the exception of names, caves and regions, they are all nearly the same. Grotto Chairmen want more support

from older members, Editors beg for material, Safety and Conservation Chairmen bitch about active consideration, Student Grottoes moan about membership turnover, novices write the same run of the mill trip reports, Grottoes reprint other Grottoes' feature articles and there's always the old conflict of electric versus carbide caving. It makes you come to grips about your own quibbling and fussing when you find out that most every other Grotto experiences the same thing.

Alot of newsletters come to us and they run the full spec rum of excellant to just plain thrown-together, but no matter what the degree of literary merit, they all show the spirit of the individual Club or Grotto. One can learn alot about other cavers and their attitudes and pretty soon you can recognize names and caves and NSS politics begins to mean a little more than someone else's hassels. So, whether a publication is "good" or "bad" it nevertheless has its value. This brings us around to our own publication. VPI has quite a heritage; THE GROTTO GRAPEVINE, started in 1943, I am told, was the first caving publication of its kind in this country. It continued well into the late '50's when it became disorganized, but was revived in 1962 and christened THE TECH TROGLODYTE. In the last year or two, the Trog has gotten alot of support from the Club in the form of material and with the aid of talented artists and a "let's get done and done well" editor, we've put out some pretty decent printed pages.

So, after gettin a little side-tracked and giving ourselves a pat on the back, I'll quit.

Keep those cards and letters coming!

Janet Queisser

* * * * *

The water continually flowed and flowed and yet it was always there; it was always the same and yet every moment it was new. -Hermann Hesse
(The "Eternal River of Darkness", Annie?)

* * * * *

One out of 100 is a leader of men.
The other 99 are followers of women.

PICTURE PERFECT CONSERVATION

Recently I was given the task of putting together the club's Photo Album. I took on the job with great enthusiasm and was very thankful for an opportunity to serve the V.P.I. Grotto, (other than mapping). In working on the Photo Album, I have gained a deeper understanding and appreciation of caves and the need for conservation.

A few minutes ago I was arranging the pictures of Clover Hollow, 1946's and 1949's. I was in Clover Hollow in 1970 and the difference in appearance of the cave is unbelievable. Thanks to the pictures, I can see what Clover Hollow used to look like--I don't have to use my imagination to add on to the ends of broken formations. And an even more fearful contrast is the past and present condition of the Forest Room in New River Cave. Now the Forest Room is filled with broken stalagmites and stalagmites, but once it was un-damaged. Before man came, it kept its own beauty in one piece--instead of shattered on the floor. Thanks to pictures from long ago the original beauty of the caves remains to be exhibited.

If you are a caver, you live conservation. Conservation should be placed above all else. I am not blaming the "Conservationist" caver for the vandalism of caves, I am only trying to emphasize a very important conservation practice. All caves under normal use and with proper care will still change in appearance. If a picture is taken, the original appearance is preserved. A picture of a cave will not change -- and that is what I label --

PICTURE PERFECT CONSERVATION.

Useless

P.S. Please take pictures of caves and keep them in an album, better yet, give a copy to your grotto or the N.S.S. But if you prefer to keep your own personal photographs of caves--will them to the N.S.S.

* * * * *

And now, for your reading enjoyment, from The Legend of Steve Kark by Steve Kark: (reprint from Fall, 1968 Trog)

SCUPPERNONG

It's not like beer, and not like bourbon
It's effect on cavers is awful disturbin
Some sing, some dance, and others get sick
Some get lovin' with a cute young chick
But me, I'm different, wierdest of all,
I hold hands with a guy named Hall.

EARLY HISTORY OF CLOVER HOLLOW

April 11, 1943, a cave in Clover Hollow near Newport, Virginia was looked into by the VPI Grotto. That same day they put sawdust in the entrance and it came out of Smoke Hole. No exploring of the cave was done, because they were not prepared for a verticle entrance.

The first trip in Clover Hollow was on May 8-9 of that same year. It consisted of Barns, Burns, A. Loyd, R.N. Southworth, H.V. Yarns, and E.F. Moore. They explored passage off Mud River to the stream and "found passage winding; having no end we came to several tremendous rooms, one 200' ceiling, another full of fossils, crystals, formations etc. and another flat angular wall; different structure from everything else." If you are familiar with Clover Hollow, you probably recognize this as the passage from the Canyon Room to the Gypsum Room(fossils, crystals) and the Fault Room or Library (flat angular walls).

The next trip on record in the Grotto files was August 7-8, 1943. This well written report by R.N. Southworth has Dr. H.W. Jackson, who was in charge, surveyers were A. Crabb, T.W. Edminster, G.L. Jones, H.V. Yarus, L.E. Andrew, and R.N. Southworth. Explorers were H.W. Jackson, E.F. Moore, C.C. Beard, R.B. Thompson, Dr. J. Murray, S. Weiss, and McDorman. Four hours after they entered the cave they had all the equipment and they surveyed to the bottom of the Grand Canyon Room. Most of the cave was seen during this expedition, except what we know as the Andrew's Room and the adjoining passage. This passage was believed to go to the Gypsum Room or even be part of it. In the Gypsum Room they found sand that was several feet thick and contained a large percentage of Gypsum crystals. The survey was started there and worked back to the Canyon Room. The Thistle Tube was pushed and many "Devonian Fossils" were found. Then they surveyed down Mud River, "once a river, now only dry clay". (Mud River was not pushed and not on their map). They found a rimstone dam 28' high and surveyed into a small room that is a formation section. Though they did not say, they obviously rappelled 30' down to the Big Stream Room. The survey party followed the stream and pushed it very far, but never mapped it. They named this section Idiot's Delight, appropriately after Charlie Beard. They pushed Idiot's Delight until it cam to another stream (1970-71 Survey was not as lucky). After this they surveyed back to the Canyon Room with only a sketch of Idiot's Delight.

On this particular trip, Jones and Southworth could not sleep, so they went exploring the passage that the Sleeping Room was in and found the Four Foot Soda Straw. The newspapers that were taken in for sleeping pads can still be read in the Sleeping Room, the earliest one being August 4, 1943, The Richmond Times Dispatch.

On October 3, 1943 there was another trip into cave, but all there was was a mention of Idiot's Delight.

The next trip according to the records to Clover Hollow was April 15, 1944, when L.E. Andrews was lowered in the room that bears his name, about 50' and insisted it was a good 200' or more. (The Andrews' Room is the only section named after a person.) An interesting letter was sent to the NSS Supplies Committee on April 23, 1944 asking permission to cut the 600' rope, that turned out to be 1000' to 1200' long, into two parts. This rope had been donated to Grotto for purposes of exploration.

Rainey, Jefferies, Andrews and Bauer finally did the Andrews Room on June 2, 1944. A Speleoplumbometer (a homemade flare of 500 matches and rolled newspapers attached to parachutes) was used to see the rest of the Andrews' Room.

Rainey and Jefferies greeted Andrews as he climbed down the rope ladder to the bottom of the room. It seems that Rainey and Jefferies pushed passage until they found a way to climb down, while Andrews had his own problems on the rope ladder. (It seems that they used some of the extra rope to make a ladder).

November 10, 1946 was when it was reported by E.F. Moore the latitude and longitude were 37-21-26 and 80-27-38, respectively. This was gotten from a topo and Clover Hollow was made an official Giles County Cave.

One of the most important discoveries was made on an overnight trip. (All Clover Hollow trips were overnight for a long while; camping either at the entrance or in the Sleeping Room.) This trip was on November 16-17, 1946. The party consisted of Dr. Jackson, F. Solari, Yarus, Funkhouse, and Englert. While Solari was experimenting with his barometer, Moore and Jackson were surveying from station 23 (junction of the sewer passage and the tie off point for the Andrews' Drop) they discovered "that the present map of the cave was surveyed 180 degrees off so that

all the directions were backwards,, and the map should be redrawn upside down." They also surveyed Mud River, but not the crawl. The warning "FOOLS GO BACK" was in there before this trip. (This quote appears at the start of the climb out of the Andrews' Room.) Solari's barometer read 2100' at the entrance when they went in; 1860' at the bottom of the Grand Canyon Room (240' verticle distance for 1946 as compared with 220' for 1970-71. They have the Grand Canyon Room Drop as a 140' --no way--.) At the beginning of Idiot's Delight 1720' and 1700' at the end. When he brought it out, the barometer read 2200' at the entrance.

Thiery and Griffin did the only flouresin tracing. August 22, 1947 they put 200 grams in the stream 30' above the entrance at 6:30 pm. Aug. 23, 3:20-no sign of floursin in Smoke Hole. Aug. 24- no sign of the flouresin at Smoke Hole or Clover Hollow (the hollow, not the cave.) Aug. 26- no luck anywhere.

April 29, 1949 Southworth led a party in to the bottom of the Andrews' Room for sketch mapping and tying in previous survey stations. This is the first mention of the bosuns chair in the cave. (Slide 19 of the NSS's "Caving Techniques" shows it being used in 1946.) They sketched in the side leads between the Gypsum Room and Library, and the passage from Point Panic to the Garbage Room. Roy Charlton discovered the passage from N 1 to 302 which is the Mud River Crawl.

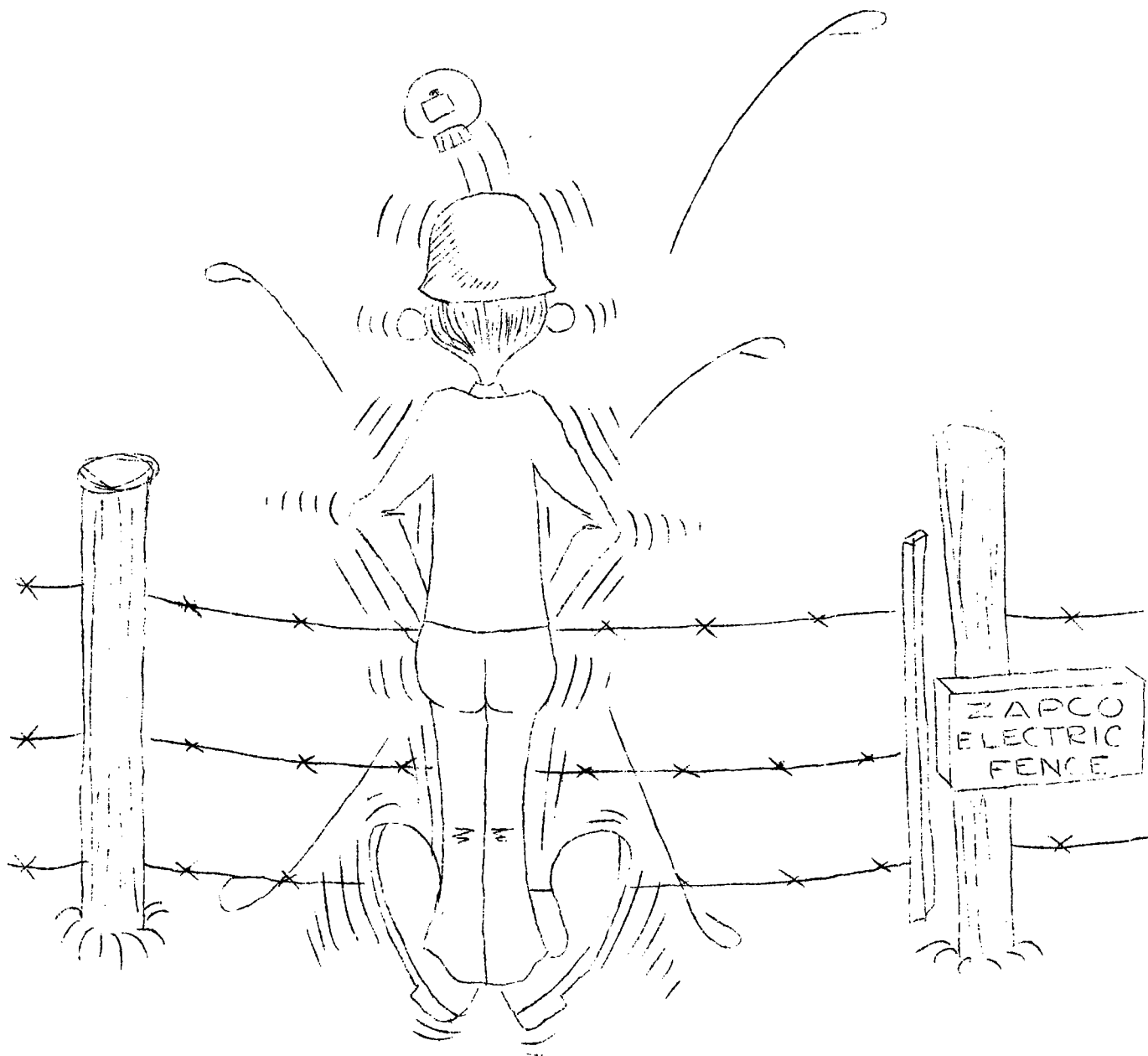
The first map was drawn in 1943, this one was discovered to be 180 degrees off so it was revised in 1948. More passage was found in the next few years, but nothing was done until 1970 when the entire cave was re-surveyed. To date, no new big passage has been found, but everything was surveyed that was new, as well as old.

The author wishes to make a more complete history of the cave. If you have any information on Clover Hollow Cave please send it to me in care of the Tech Trog.

Bill Douty

* * * * *

There once was a caver named Jim,
Some have climbed the Big Frog with him,
When asked why he did it,
He bellowed "ah shit!",
"It was time for things to get grim".



PAGE

SURVEY

VPI cavers are known for many things throughout the campus, the region, the NSS - etc. Some may be good and some bad, but quite a few are interesting. I became interested in the little things a VPI caver contends with while underground, such as how do you carry spent carbide?, and how do you wear your hair? This last question proved quite fascinating. Mike Frieders swears by Pierre's in Paris, but Mike Dunn, along with the long-haired girls, prefers old-fashioned pigtails. Then there are the more truthful ones who replied "not very well" and "seldom". Steve Kark likes his in a bun, but Ed Morgan uses perhaps the most conventional method- the mud permanent.

Out of the 30 surveys turned in there were only 3 coverall wearers (Hixson of course!) and 3 sweatshirt users. Everyone else chose "dirty" or "old" in reference to attire. The only two who professed to wearing sneakers were Nancy and Useless(?!) and everyone else chose some type of boots (really now, Pit-"holy"?)

Four people started their caving outside the VPI Grotto, including our only electric caver- Fred Hines. Jim Hixson holds the longest caving record with 15 years, and Paul Broughton and Ed Morgan have 11 and 10 respectively. There are quite a few who claim about 2 years experience.

Baby bottles outranked everything else as carbide and water carriers, and tied with baggies for spent carbide. Then there's always Kark, who claims he eats it all. The majority preferred to carry gear in packs, though about a dozen let it hang on their belts. Jim Altman uses loops sewn inside his coveralls! Most surveying gear ended up in pockets, and most food wasn't even there in the first place. Spare parts came in film cans, and ropes and ladders for the most part delegated to trainees. There were no differences observed as to experience, sex, or Douty, though the girls and older male cavers seemed to have better handwriting. The best survey, however, came from Alice Cockey who simply states "Michael carries everything for me."

Kiaja

* * * * *

Remember the time when Tuna,
Just as his trip looked ruined,
'Cause his brunton got wet,
But he said "we're not done yet",
For we'll map that cave later or soon!" (ouch)

PIG HOLE

Pig Hole Cave is located under the property of A. B. Porterfield on Johns Creek Mountain in southeastern Giles County, Virginia in limestone of the mid-Ordovician period. Total passage length is just over a thousand feet. It has an entrance drop of 116 feet and the rappel from the Empire Ledge to the bottom of Hess' Hollow is approximately 200 feet. The cave is characterized by large rooms and wells and many bats, the population of which has declined greatly, but they appear to be returning.

A survey led by Bob Barnes in 1948 resulted in the establishing of a sinkhole above the back portion of the cave where leaves had been found. "With the aid of several sturdy diggers (from VPI Grotto?- you've got to be kidding!) and 24 sticks of dynamite a breakthrough was accomplished in two weekends of hard work" (and probably much beer). The back entrance is a 10 foot vertical climb through a sewer pipe. (I don't know why it's called the back "entrance" because most people rappel the entrance drop and exit through the rear)

The cave was first entered in 1943 using a block and tackle rig. Large deposits of bat guano have been found along with brushite and taranakite, which are the first recorded natural prescense of these minerals in the US. In the area of the bat guano (in the rear portion of the cave) markings can be seen on the wall which were first thought to have been put there by early man (cavers!). A study conducted by R. John W. Murray of the VPI Chemistry Department has determined that these markings were formed naturally.

Pig Hole was originally named Earl's Death Cave (I guess someone named Earl deatched in it) and was changed to the present name when a pig, which was very much dead, was found lodged in a crawlway.

References:

1. The NSS News Vol 6 no. 7, July 1948, p 1
2. The NSS Bulletin Bulletin 11, Nov. 1949
3. Brushite and Taranakite From Pig Hole Cave, Giles County Virginia John W. Murray and Richard V. Dietrich
4. The NSS Bulletin Bulletin 20, Nov. 1958

Ed Richardson

* * * * *

Never have so many studied so little, and cared so little

A ROPE'S MEMOIRS

Let me introduce myself. My name is Gold'Line. Perhaps you have heard of me. I'm the one you torture as if you were depraved sadists. You have stepped on me, thrown me down drops, tied me to trees and rocks and pulled on me, dragged me through dirt and cold water, and if that's not enough, you have coiled me, tied me in knots and hung me on the wall. These are not my biggest problems, though. The things that really tick me off are those beings that you call trainees. Clipping metal objects on me and using me as a sliding board are bad enough, but these trainees try to strangle me at the same time.

I feel as if I am in eternal hell sometimes with the incidents that have happened to me. However, I do not give up hope completely. Even though I have been subjected to unbearable pain at times, I do not give up without a fight. I have recalled four incidents that have happened to me during my life. The first two were lost through extreme pain and suffering, but the remaining two were victorious for me.

Incident #1

This adventure turned out to be the most painful I had ever had. It was in a place you people call Newberry's. You had thrown me down a drop as usual and started using me as a sliding board. The first few that decended didn't hurt too much, but the last person down nearly killed me. For one thing he choked me with his cigarette smoke and jumped off without giving me any warning whatsoever. He then let go of me for some reason; I don't know why. That's when the torment started. A shooting, burning pain went through me like the fire of all hell was breaking out. I tensed up and started to kink. That's what stopped him, thank heavens. I don't think I could have taken much more.

Incident #2

This next adventure happened in a place called Clover Hollow. It was a cold morning and there was snow on the ground when you took me to this spot. However, it would not stay that way for long as I would soon find out. You had put me over the drop, used me in the usual way and left me there. I finally could get a little peace, or could I? It started out as a small trickle but that didn't last for long. The water coming over the drop turned into a large fall before I knew it. I was soaked in a matter of

minutes. This was not the end of my agony though. You had back. This was part I always dreaded because the contraptions you used had teeth that knawed at me. You won again.

Incident #3

This happy event happened on a site near Straley's. You were just about to tie me to something to pull on me when one of you changed his mind. He tied me to himself instead and proceeded to drag me across the ground. This did not last for long for I was picked up by the other two who started to pull on me. I was getting quite up tight over all this and started planning how I would get my revenge. I decided that when they let go of me I would go after the nearest one and try to whip him. Ah, my chance had come for they released me. I aimed for the nearest neck I could find and hit it. The die was cast. Gold Line had prevailed.

Incident #4

This one was a winner. It happened in Spence. You had finished putting me through mud, a bit of burning friction, and a small amount of tooth grinding. I thought you were finished with me, but you just weren't satisfied. You had to tie all of your muddy junk equipment on me and pull it up, didn't you? Well, this was the last straw. I had to do something. There was an overhang near me, the perfect place for a hangup. That's exactly what it turned out to be too. You could neither pull me up nor pull me down so you just left me alone for a while. I caused you plenty of trouble and you deserved it. I was satisfied thoroughly.

Well, I leave it up to you. Are you all going to stand by and watch me suffer? Are you all going to watch me slowly deteriorate? Are you all going to see me rot into an eternal hell? I know you are, you sadistic cavers.

J. Randall Stoutenburgh

* * * * *

Reprint from Cave Pearls, Grotto Grapevine Sept 1, 1944

I asked for everything
that I might enjoy life.
God gave me life
that I might enjoy everything.

BEACON CAVE

Beacon Cave is located near the city limits of Bluefield in Mercer County, West Virginia. To be more precise, the cave is found in the Middle Ordovician limestone of East River Mountain, close to the Virginia line. The exact formation of limestone has yet to be determined.

The cave was originally mapped in August 1958 by R. Janke and others. However, I decided to remap the cave last fall after it was brought to my attention by one Fred Hines of Bluefield (formerly my roommate) that he knew of a great deal of cave not the old map. Several other people also informed me that the original mapping was done by Brunton and pace. So, confident that a good survey could enlarge the cave considerably, I undertook the task.

The cave itself consists of one long trunk channel containing the main stream and at least four known side streams, two of which may be the same stream. Further surveying will decide this. The only passages of any considerable length are to be found along one of these streams. The cave trends along a line that runs N 45 E with the side streams trending S 45 E.

Passage type in the cave is quite variable. The main passage is fairly large on the average being 30' by 30' which is filled with breakdown every 500' to 600' for approximately a mile and a half. Passages along the side streams are quite variable, some of which are of walking height and others crawling. However, they are all wet and tight. These are the passages that hold the greatest likelihood of new passage as none of them are on the old map, although the presence of two of them is noted. The streams are known to contain at least a mile of passage. However, the ends of their streams have not been reached.

There are also parallel passages and passages of different levels that are known to contain roughly one half mile of cave. Passage beyond the downstream pool contains approximately a thousand feet and the cave's most impressive array of formations, a great deal of which has been vandalized.

The cave has two presently known entrances, Beacon and Haines. The Beacon entrance is located on the Applachian Power right of way, and consists of 250' of alternatly crawling through and climbing down breakdown. In the winter access through this entrance is

occasionally blocked by masses of ice in one crawlway. The Haines entrance is located on private property. Although this entrance is at first tight, it soon opens up into a large passage about 500' long which contains two pits of 60' leading to lower levels. Beyond this passage one has a rather tight passage of 200' before getting into the main passage.

On the surface, the main stream in the cave, and most of the passage runs parallel to East River Mountain, along a line of sinkholes. Upstream holds good promise of an entrance as there is considerable organic debris washed in from an area with several large sinkholes. Approximately 1000' downstream from the Haines Entrance the cave goes under the Virginia line and continues for another 1000' to where there are indications of a Virginia entrance. The surface in this area has not been checked out as of yet. Already Beacon is the only cave that goes under the Virginia-West Virginia Line. A Virginia entrance would greatly enhance Beacon's reputation.

The cave is a storehouse of life. It has the greatest proliferation of cave life I have yet encountered.

There have at present been observed three species of salamander in the cave. The commonest of the three is the only aquatic one. These average three inches in length, are pale orange, have a squared off snout, bright red gills and are definitely not blind. They have very tentatively been identified as Desmognathus fuscus. They are quite common in the calm sandy pools upstream from the Haines entrance. The second species is found in only one part of the cave, at a particular rock near the downstream pool. These salamanders are five to six inches long. A dull reddish brown color with black spots. There has been no attempt at identification as yet. The third species has only been observed twice. It is the common cave salamander Eurycea lucifuga, bright orange with black spots and four to five inches long.

The cave also houses a considerable bat population. Several hundred are located in the Bat Room and adjoining areas inside the Beacon entrance. The only species so far observed is the little brown bat (Myotis lucifugus lucifugus). Bats also occur isolated in other parts of the cave.

In quiet upstream pools there can be observed thousands of tiny isopods. These are the only true troglomorphic species in the cave.

Crayfish have also been observed in the main stream.

All the cave life seems to be centered around the main stream passage. As yet no life has been observed in any of the side streams, although there has been a report of fish in one of them.

Mapping is proceeding slowly. 7500' have already been surveyed. At least 2500' is on the old map that has not been remapped. Beyond that another mile may be known. I feel confident that Beacon will be at least four miles long, nearly double the old map.

Guy Turenne

* * * * *

THE

V.P.E.

GROTTO PRESENTS
THEIR

NEWLY BEAUTIFIED

SCRAP BOOK ^{AND}

PHOTO ALBUM

ON DISPLAY

AT THE

1971 NSS CONVENTION

A WRITE-YOUR-OWN TRIP REPORT FORM

Early 1. Saturday morning a party of 1. 4 cavers
 2. Friday night 2. 3 climbers
 3. during a party 3. drunken sots
 4. in the last Ice Age 4. lewd and
 lucidious
 drunken sots

took off 1. from campus in all their 1. automobiles
 2. from the party 2. fourbyfours
 3. their clothes 3. underwear
 4. Clark Kent disguises 4. naked glory

to head for 1. Clover Hollow Cave because they 1. were
 2. the Canadian border crazy.
 3. the nearest ABC store 2. has just
 4. the nearest bathroom received
 their 1-As
 3. were
 thirsty.
 4. had to
 take a
 whiz.

They arrived at their destination in 1. 10 hours
 2. a space ship
 3. a state of wild
 elation
 4. a drunken stupor

only to find that they had forgotten 1. their carbide lamps
 2. Doug Perkins
 3. their clothes
 4. the location of the
 cave
 5. the beer,

but nevertheless they proceeded to rig 1. the entrance drop
 2. a rescue pulley
 3. Hixson's Toy
 4. Douty's shoelaces
 to a nearby tree

and to check the 1. depth of the drop; they threw
 2. the oil level of Loud's car;
 3. their sobriety;
 4. their sense of humor;

down 1. a rock. In dauntless preparation they
 2. the rope.
 3. Bob Page's hardhat.
 4. Bob Page.

quickly changed 1. their clothes, clipped 1. into the rope,
2. carbide, 2. into their seat
3. their minds, belts,
4. into chickens, 3. out paper dolls,
4. out pictures of
Whitt in the
nude,

and rapidly 1. rappelled down the drop only to find
2. fell down the drop
3. got in their cars and left
4. drank all the alcohol in sight

1. the bottom of the drop. They immediately
2. voluptuous girls cavorting around naked.
3. Steve Kark cavorting around naked.
4. Jim Hixson taking a leak.

picked 1. a promising lead which led to 1. a siphon
2. the most beautiful girls 2. beauti-
3. the most beautiful boys ful forma-
4. their noses tions
3. foreplay
4. a GFO
night

and then decided to 1. prussik out. After they
(2. camout).
3. hand-over-hand out.
4. stay with the girls.
5. stay with Hixson.

1. pulled up the rope the whole crew 1. drove back to
2. put on their clothes campus
3. rolled boulders over the 2. drove to Brush
4. entrance Mountain
4. called the CRCN 3. got sick
4. passed out,

which was a fitting end to 1. a rewarding experience.
2. a Roman orgy
3. a better-forgotten experience.
4. excommunication from the NSS.

Steve Hall
(whose name is not
Pigpen, but you can
call him that 'cause
he'll answer to any-
thing)

PAXTON'S CAVE

Paxton's Cave, owned by Burrus Paxton, is located in the Newcastle Quad, near Jordon Mines in Alleghany County of southwestern Virginia. It has a rather imposing entrance set down in an equally imposing sinkhole. A stream flows down from the surrounding hillside directly over and into the mouth of the cave. Mr. Paxton has set up a drum to catch some of this water, complete with a spicket, and although I won't guarantee how many cow pastures the stream flows through, it does, nevertheless, have good tasting water.

There is an entry in Douglas' book by Barbara Hagen dated 1957 which indicates the presence of helictites and high water marks found indicate "occasional flooding". All is found in "Devonian Helderberg Limestone" with "sandy material attesting to the proximity of sandstone and limestone beds".

One will notice on entering this sinkhole a fallout shelter sign with a rather small capacity numbered. This indicates a small cave, but nothing could be further from the truth. Roger Baroody, head of West Virginia Cave Survey, undertook the mapping of Paxton's Cave as a result of job he had in 1962 in which he was paid to set up fallout shelters in various caves. After being lost for three hours in the 600 feet of the cave near the entrances (for there are actually about three holes which pose as one main entrance), Roger came to the conclusion that he must have missed some of the cave.

So it took him till September, 1964 to finally return to Paxton's after hearing "stories of wild formations and crystals" from "a group of cavers in Lexington" who visited it. This second trip he made with one of the Lexington people and Keith Evans. After again being lost for two hours, they too found the formation room. So impressed were they by these formations, that they went on to find the First Discovery with its "Worm Garden" of strange helictites.

In October, 1964 Roger again returned, this time with a group from UVa Grotto. One person was sent to push a crawl on the lower level from the First Discovery. After 30 minutes "he came back babbling after opening up the Second Discovery" and they proceeded to discover still more of the extensive upper level maze.

Still later that year he returned with Walt and Barbara Lipton and this time found the Christmas Room. (Contrary to popular belief that this name derives from its white walls and passageways which look to be covered with snow, this discovery was made on Christmas Day; how

appropriate!) This room, and its adjoining passages was truly a climax to the afore discovered formations.

And so, as Roger Baroody puts it, "It took two years and about 30 cave trips to map the cave and get all the damn passage sorted out" and even at that he was still getting lost right up to the end. I personally think it's fantastic what he did - Paxton's is truly a confusing maze of passageways - with 3.4 miles under a relatively small area of ground, but definitely well worth the visit.

I have not included a map of Paxton's with this report for a couple of very simple and I feel, important, reasons. Paxton's Cave is not a cave to visit without someone who has been there before. It's a very easy cave to become lost in, and for that reason you should look up various people like Roger Baroody (WVAC's), George Neal (VPI), Tom Roehr, Ed Morgan (VPI), or myself, who know the cave, before you visit it. This would be more for your personal enjoyment than anything. The second reason is from a conservationist's viewpoint. Should the map get into wrong hands, Paxton's could become so horribly vandalized as to never warrant visits again.

So, all you cavers who would appreciate the wonders of perfect soda straws, helictites, snow white calcite crystals and cauliflower, dogtooth spar, gypsum needles, and massive flowstone walls, get on the photographic trip to Paxton's Cave at the Convention. We'll be leaving Sunday, June 13 at one PM, and should be back about 11 PM. You'll see the "butterfly", "camel rock", Christmas Room, and Worm Garden, not to mention a great variety of geology and fossil covered walls. This would be a good cave for not too young children who have had some experience climbing and chimneying.

See you at the Convention!

Boots

* * * * *

But people can't, unhappily, invent their mooring posts, their lovers, and their friends, anymore than they can invent their parents. Life gives these and also takes them away, and the great difficulty is to say Yes to life. -James Baldwin

Once upon a time
There was a wild, virgin maid
 clothed in the deep blue of oceans,
 fringed with white lace foam
 and the rich green of grasses and foliage
Strong mountains she had,
 with the white of snow
 and ribbons of clear, curling, laughing streams
And her breath was fresh and sweet
 once upon a time.

The maid became mother to many children
 and let them take from her
 that which they needed or wanted
 for nourishment, protection, and adornment
And each time as the children became older
 and grew teeth that bit too hard
 the breast at which they fed,
 she thrust them away
 and, no longer in her favor
 many languished and died.

But some of the children grew strong and smart and covetous
 And took from her the blue of her oceans
 and the green of her grass and foliage;
They smashed her mountains and muddied her streams
So sick they made the earth who mothered them,
 that her breath became fouled,
 and the nourishment she gave was poisoned
And when in final fury she died
 she took them with her
And none were left to wonder at the enormity of the
 destruction.

Or is that not the ending
 and shall the story be:

But some of the children cherished her gifts
 and grew wise in their desire to hold them.
And in a mighty wish for others who might
 one day bear their blood
 and know the warmth and beauty
they forged new knowledge
 and learned a new restraint
And the earth who mothered them
 was grateful
 and paused in the path to death
 and blossomed again.

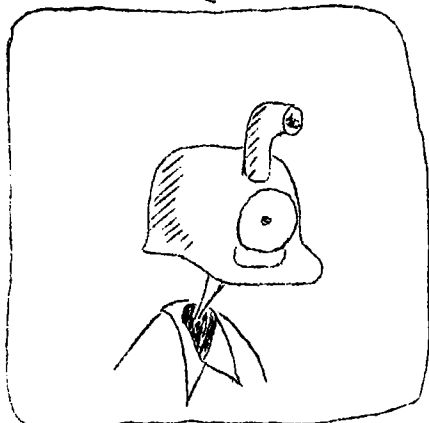
Author unknown

A QUARTERLY
BIT OF SHIT
GARBAGE &
T NONSENSE

S.O.T.

BY:
BOY WONDER

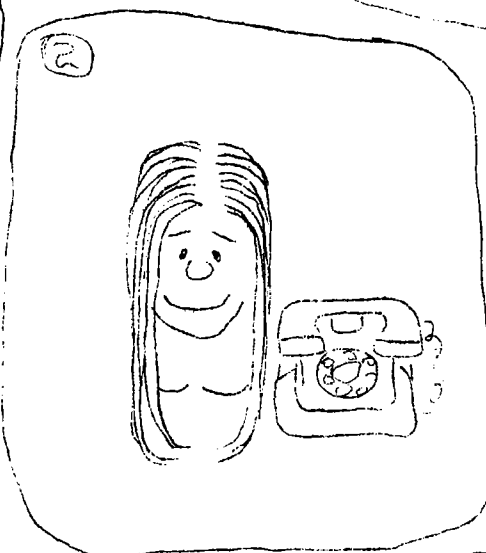
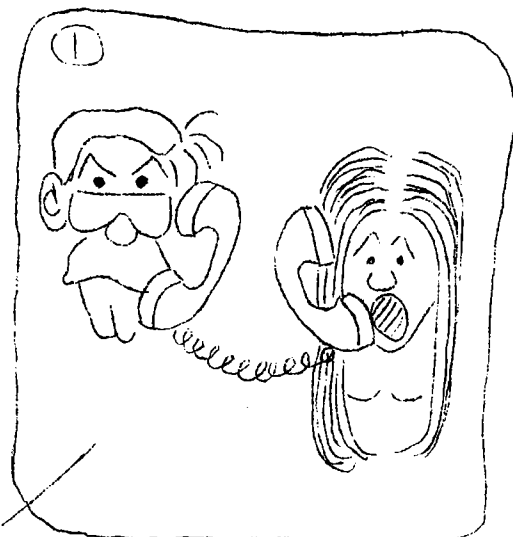
(SPECIAL OPERATION TECHNIQUES)



DON'T BE IN THE DARK
ABOUT CAVING! BE A S.O.T. READER



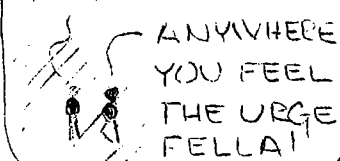
TO BE A CAVER,
YOU HAVE TO HAVE
A VARIETY OF
INTERESTS!



A BRIEF
FAUSE

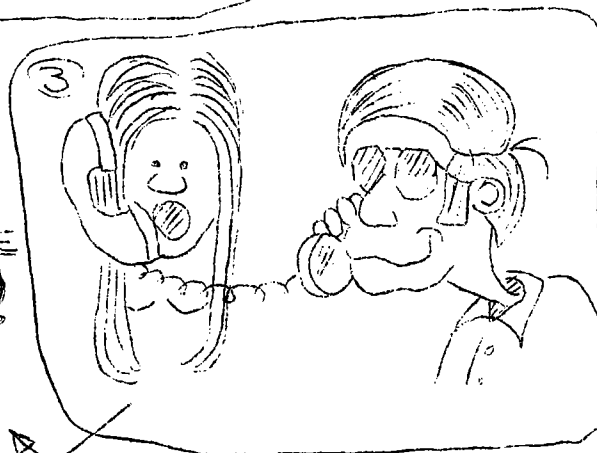
→ GEE, I'M SORRY
JACK, I'VE GOT TOO
MUCH TO DO TO GO
CAVING

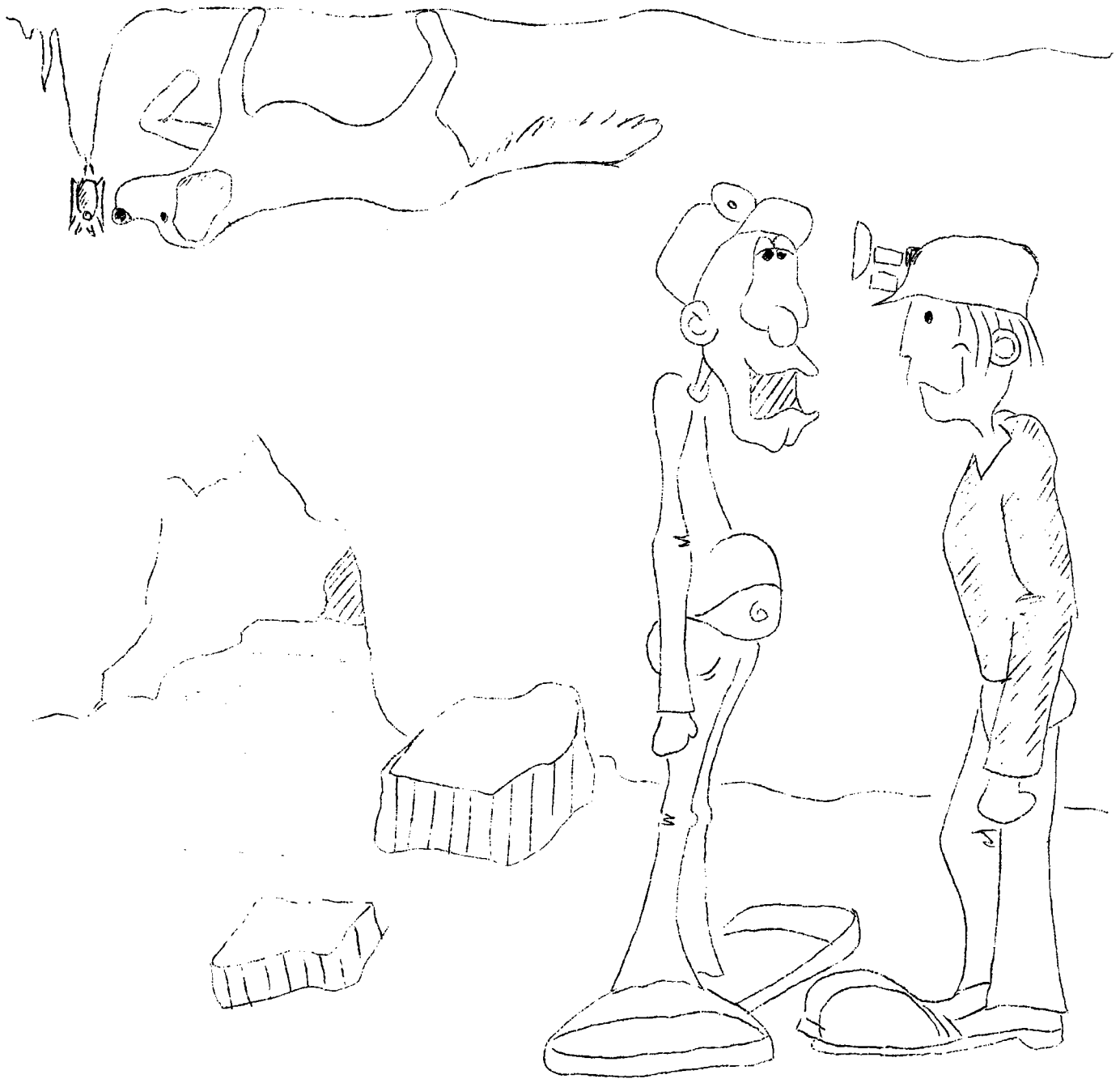
CAN YOU TELL
ME WHERE THE
THE BATROOM
IS?



ANYWHERE
YOU FEEL
THE URGE
FELLA!

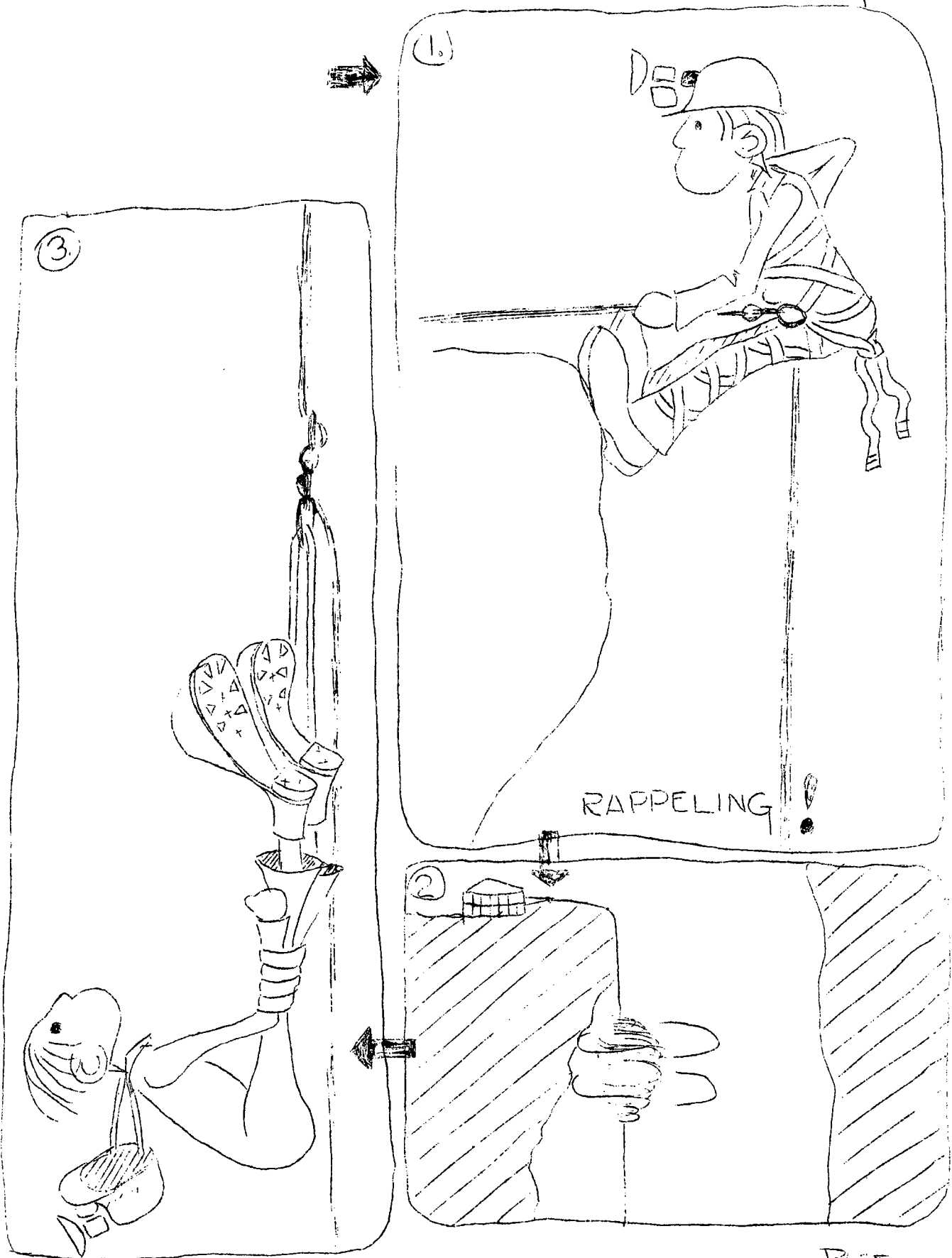
RALF!?
SURE, I'D LOVE
TO GO CAVING!
I'VE HAD
NOTHING TO
DO ALL DAY





IT'S A 'BAT-DOG'
OF COURSE!

TESTING A NEW SWISS SEAT RIG



Recently, some secret documents stored in the hallowed administrative halls of Burruss were made public to the students, much to the distress of some of our superiors. Here is the text of a telephone conversation, printed completely without permission, between the Supervisor of Buildings and Grounds and the chairman of the VPI Grotto. Some of the names have been withheld to protect the innocent and those names stated are of individuals who are anything but innocent. So, here it is,

CONVERSATION: CLASSIFIED

Third floor Pritchard.

Yes, this is Mr. , Supervisor of Buildings and Grounds. I'd like to speak to someone of authority in the Cave Club.

I'm chairman of the Grotto, what can I do for you?

I'll get straight to the point, As you may have noticed, a rather large portion of the Drill Field has sunk considerably into a rather deep hole and...

Oh, yes an impressive sink; 157' by 296', with an average declination of -37.8 degrees. Very impressive, indeed.

Ahem, yes. I'm getting in touch with your organization to look into the possibilities of this critical situation. I was carried bodily from the Geology Department when I mentioned "cavern" and we have no one else upon whom to call. This is a very grave situation, for certain.

Actually, the whole thing seems to be quite promising.

Oh really? My, what a relief, we feared that there was possibly an CAVE protruding its ugly head in our midst. Fine. Then the filling operations can begin as soon as...

Wait a minute, I mean that there's more likely than not a rather extensive system right here under campus. Possibly another Windy Mouth.

Heavens! (pause) What's a Windy Mouth?

That's a cave in West Virginia that is approaching fourteen miles in length.

My, my, that's a large one isn't it? (cringe)

Now we're not sure, but analyzed sand samples, by our own geologist, indicate a possibility of a very large cave, indeed. Our overland survey crews have determined that the likely direction of passage travels in a N 45 W direction.

Is that any where toward town, hopefully?

No as a matter of fact, it appears to run in a beeline toward the administration building...

Oh. no, not Burruss' Hall!!!

Oh, don't worry, it's not too likely that the weight of the building will collapse the cave.

Oh my goodness gracious.... Is there anyway that you can do anything about it? To determine where this forboding menace will strike? Burruss topple! Ohhhh!

Well first of all, we'd have to make a detailed map, then an extensive structural geologic analysis, of course flouresien tracing, and naturally thorough phycological, mycological and zoological studies...

Excellant, excellant! How soon can you begin?

Tonight. But wait a minute. Cavers, after all are human, and such a project as this will take several years, and unless properly motivated the Club may abandon this project...

Oh no! You can't do that! What is needed to motivate cavers?

Well, we'll need some good strong leaders and some relief crews.

Such as?

Well, first we'll have to try to get Jim and Linda Hixson.

Sounds good; a caver and his wife.

Linda's not his wife, that's his dog. Best damned passage pusher we have.

(shudder!!)

Then there are of course our close allies from Alabama, Tennessee, West Virginia and Texas. The more the merrier - uh - the more the efficient, I mean.

But these people are not Tech students. We can't have any non-students, university policy, you know.

Gee, it sure would be a shame if we didn't know when old Burruss would go. Such a nice structure. Tsk, tsk.

All right! All right!

Oh, we won't be greedy, just provide us with all the equipment we will need for exploration and surveying, academic considerations, D room in Owen's to serve us steak every night, also access to the Stadium and Coliseum for training purposes and, of course, a field house.

A field house! What do you need a field house for?

What do the jocks need one for?

Ahem. We'll have to see...

By the way, one of our Club members is in architecture, and he'll have the blue prints ready for you by next week.

Is that all?

No, as a matter of fact, we would like to make an extended budget request of \$1200.

What on earth for?

We need some working capital for our or- uh, speleo-seminars. Must take breaks from all the hard work. And one more thing.

(gasp!) What now!?!?

We would like to arrange diplomatic immunity for all the cavers at the NSS Convention in June.

And how many is that going to be?

Oh, 600 or so. Maybe more.

(Silence, then the sound of collapsing body and the swinging receiver against a hard surface.)

* * * * *

BUYING IN BLACKSBURG
A convention-goer's guide
to purchasing equipment

There you are; you've finally made it to Blacksburg for the 1971 NSS convention and you're going to do some caving in all those great caves roundabout. But suddenly you find you left your rope at home. Or you don't have any carbide. Or you've lost your carabiners and sling. Or maybe your skrungy caving coveralls (which haven't been washed for at least the last five trips) finally fell apart. Time to panic?? Not while VPI Grotto is taking care of you!

Below you will find a list of places to buy all kinds of gear that you might need; anything from spare parts for your lamp to Kelty packs and ropes.

First of all, two supply sources are worthy of special mention:

Appalachian Outfitters of Blacksburg-
900 C Palmer Drive
552-9600
Hours: 6 PM-9 PM Mon.-Fri.
noon-6 PM Sat.

Bob Smiley runs Appalachian Outfitters of Blacksburg, a branch office of Appalachian Outfitters in Vienna, Virginia. Here can be found all sorts of goodies for caving, climbing, camping, and backpacking. A few items of interest (usually in stock) are ropes (Goldline, Blue water, and perlon), carabiners, break bars, racks (yup!) sling, back packs, sleeping bags, tent, stoves, hiking and climbing boots, pitons, piton hammer, cabbie ladders, and lots of other stuff. If you need something, Bob doesn't have, he may be able to get it sent from the Vienna store by bus, taking 2-3 days to get here. At any rate, stop in and see Bob when in town.

The VPI Grotto Supplies Committee-

The VPI Grotto will be running its supplies committee during convention and here you may obtain such goodies as lamps and lamp parts, tip cleaners, carabiners, break bars, sling, and avalanch cord. Ask for the location of the supplies committee at the information booth at convention headquarters or ask any VPI Grotto member.

The following list is of supplies which the average caver might find himself in need of. The stores listed are either in Blacksburg or Christiansburg, but a trip to Roanoke or Radford might bring results in a search for hard-to-get items.

Baby Bottles-useful for carrying fresh or spent carbide water or whatever. Available at:

Gables Pharmacy
Gables Shopping Center, Rt. 460
Blacksburg
552-4381

Corner Drug Store
239 N Main St.
Blacksburg
552-2741

Carbide, carbide lamps and lamp parts--also Justrite electronics (for people insane enough to use them) can be obtained at:

Ridinger Hardware and Gift Co.
235 N. Main St.
Blacksburg
552-3001

Western Auto
208 N. Main St.
Blacksburg
552-1211

Hard hats- available at inflated prices at:

Ridinger Hardware and Gift Co.
(see address above)

Gloves-leather and cotton:

Rose's
125 N. Main St.
Blacksburg
552-1441

Western Auto
(see address above)

Denim Clothing-

Hills Department Store
Roanoke Road.
Christiansburg
382-4943

Cheds
Triangle Shopping Center
Rt. 460
382-4716

Prussik supplies-tenstron, manila and rope eyelets

Ridingers Hardware
(See above address)

Western Auto
(See above address)

Photo supplies - for film and any other camera
goodies you may desire, I personally recommend only one
place.

Burt's Photo Shop
Next to Blacksburg Post Office on Main St.
552-2331

The following category of supplies, while not
essential to caving, are often in demand -- at least by
VPI cavers.

Music supplies- strings for all instruments, picks,
new and used instruments and other such odds and ends:

Kittinger Piano Co.
123 N Franklin
Christiansburg
382-3791

The Music Shop
Rt. 460
Blacksburg
on the left just before Radford Brothers
Grocery Store

Stereo Tapes--for that tape deck in your 4-wheeled
vehicle of course!

The Band Box
131 College Ave.
Blacksburg
552-7604

Books, Strings, and Things
214 Draper Rd. N.W.
Blacksburg
552-8633

Freak Supplies--goodies for all you freaky cavers
such as pipes, popers, headbands and other junk:

New River Trading Co.
117 S. Main
Blacksburg
951-1063

Humble Pie
102 Roanoak St.
Blacksburg
951-1948

One last note, boot repairs, as well as freak supplies
can be obtained at Joe's Jail, at the old Blacksburg jail
behind Western Auto. So come on down to Blacksburg for the
'71 convention and have a ball. See you there!

Mike Conefrey
VPI #128

* * * * *

From Fall Trog, 1968, by Steve Kark:

SWILL

A can of beans, a bottle of
beer,
A loaf of bread, a rabbit's
ear.
A jug of wine, a cricket's
leg,
A dash of salt, a turtle's
egg.

A slice of pork, a chuck of
ham,
A piece of cheese, a potted
lamb.
A cup of flour, a speckled
newt,
A pair of pants, a dirty
boot.

Ol Vigour grabs his spoon,
And Yeatts, he grabs a cup.
While Pablo's already chewin',
Big Moose is throwing up.

Someone says "it's good for
you,
Puts hair upon your chest!"
Yes, these are the priviledged
few,
Who achieved the highest crest.

Somewhere in a quiet land,
Behind the farthest hill,
There sits this grubby little
band-
A'dying on their swill.

We gather round the old tin
pot,
At the bottom of the hill.
We cook it till it's boiling
hot,
And then we eat the swill.