

THE TECH TROGLODYTE

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

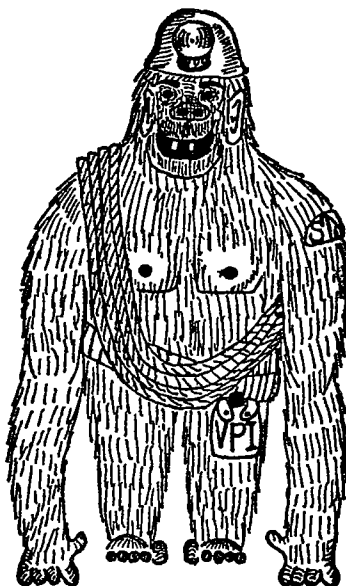
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VOL. XI, No. 3

SPRING QUARTER, 1973



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IF YOU HAVEN'T
SEEN ENOUGH
THIS QUARTER...

URP!



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THE TECH
TROGLODYTE

SPRING '73

... URP!

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THE TECH TROGLODYTE is published by the VPI Grotto on a quarterly basis pending the availability of material. Submission of material and subscriptions should be sent to Box 471, Blacksburg, Virginia 24060. Subscription rate is presently one cent per page or by exchange. Individual copy price is \$.50.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

P.4_ TUNA SPEAKS

BY LARRY JOHNSON

P.6_ GROTTO GRAPEVINE

BY DENNIS WEBB

P.9_ SUBTERRANEAN BELLYACHE
BLUES BY JANET QUEISSER

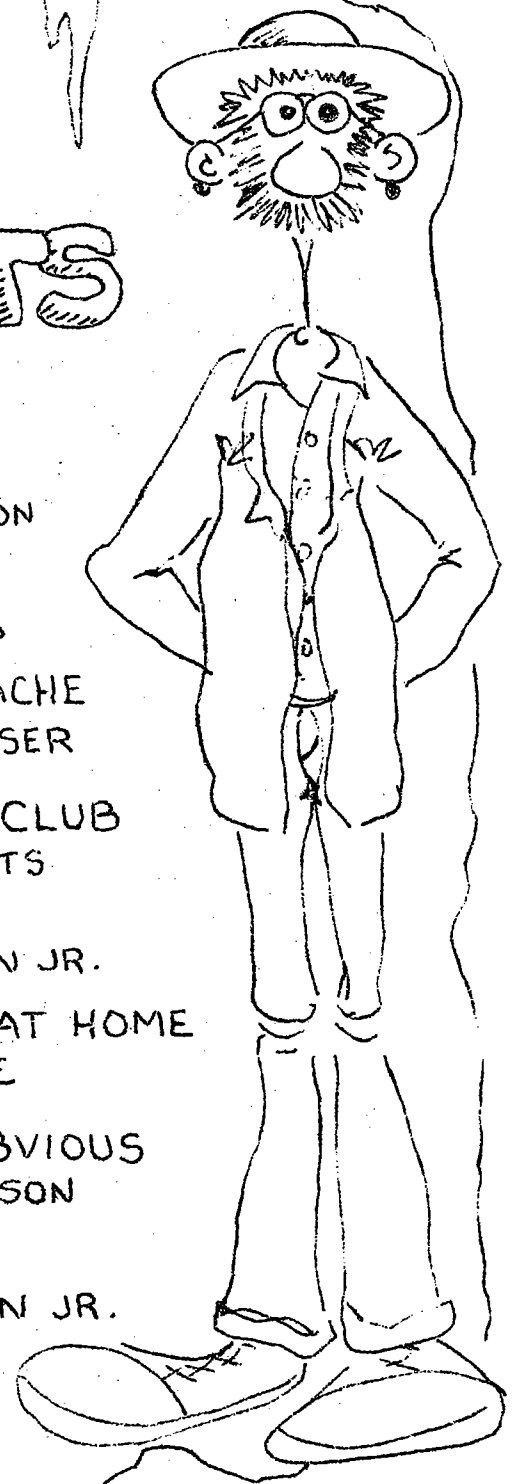
P.11_ A LOOK AT THE CAVE CLUB
BY KAREN YEATTS

P.16_ THE TROGLODYTE
BY DON DAVISON JR.

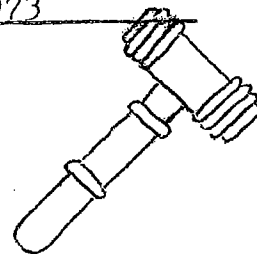
P.17_ CONSERVATION BEGINS AT HOME
BY GUY TURENNE

P.19_ YOUR PROBLEM IS OBVIOUS
BY ED RICHARDSON

P.23_ FIRST GROTTO DIVE
BY DON DAVISON JR.



TUNA SPEAKS



It's that time of the year again. The float trip, picnic, and elections have come and gone, there's a new set of officers and the quarter along with the year is almost over. Now I have the chance to express my views and hopefully, explain what we are going to try to do next year.

There are several things I would like to discuss and the first concerns the Salamander Cave situation. Everything has more or less faded in the past. However I want to say something to clear up the element of mystery concerning the question of whether or not somebody is condemning somebody else for unsafe caving.

I, along with three other members, had the opportunity to talk with some of the group which is currently mapping the cave. The result was not a damnation of the club or the way we cave and at the same time there should not be any criticism levied on our part for their practices. The question centers around the fact the other group uses a prussik safety and a separate belay when rappelling and prussiking and we don't. The reason that we don't is that these methods have proved impracticable. To put it bluntly, we shouldn't be criticized because we don't and they shouldn't be criticized because they do. They are from the old school and have been caving fifteen or twenty years. They started at the time when vertical work was being born and they learned safe methods the hard way. So we can't blame them for engaging in ultra-safe caving practices. We've taken what they and other cavers have passed on to us, developed them, and adapted them to our needs. However this is not to say that we are unsafe, its quite the contrary. Its merely the difference of views. So much for that.

The other thing I want to discuss is the future, i.e., new membership. This is not just an isolated problem but can be tied in with other such topics as rebel caving and conservation.

As you know, the NSS recently adopted the policy of not attracting new cavers, in other words not going out and just grabbing new people, but trying to get free-lance cavers to join up. This is a good idea for if we don't watch it, caving will soon (very soon) become exploited and we'll all be in the same overcrowded situation such as the hikers, rock climbers and campers. However we, as a student grotto, experience a large turnover. The fact is that we must, in order to replace the people that leave each year, get in new people.

The question is how do we attract them. At the meeting of officers and committee chairmen I called recently, some very good ideas were brought forth and tossed around. The ideas ranged from simple flyers to posters and then some. Final decisions along these lines are up to the vice-president

and publicity chairman. However, looking at the past, I feel that no matter how we do it, we will get more than enough new prospects.

Now the question becomes how do we separate those who are interested and weed out those who come just for the social life, to find locations, or have no real interest but just hang on.

One way is to take them caving. But not to an easy cave. Take them to a relatively hard cave. Don't kill them but make them realize that caving isn't all easy and can be dangerous.

Then hopefully, if they are not interested, they won't go caving on their own or just hang around. I'm not saying that this is the only way. I'm just saying that this is a possibility.

Now, how do we retain those who are definitely interested. This is going to require the cooperation of the club. Plans for such things as the training sessions, in both mapping and vertical work, and programs are under way. As for the training sessions, they are going to require the help of the people whose major fields or interests lie within the realm of mapping, vertical techniques and associated subjects. Do you have a particular area that you think you can help in or are interested in? Tell Cheryl. As vice president she is responsible for organization and she'll be glad to listen to ideas and if possible incorporate them. Another area is the programs. We are planning on having programs every Friday night ranging from general slide shows on caving and talks by various people on specific caves to specialized subjects and techniques. Do you have an idea for a good program? Let Cheryl, Bruce(program chairman) or myself know. Also if you want to give a program let us know. If you have any suggestions, ideas, or criticisms, by all means bring them up.

Also there are plenty of ways for you to get involved and help the club. Various committee chairmen need help. There's THE TROGLODYTE. Kark(our faithful die-hard editor) always needs people to work with him.

I have all the faith in the world in the rest of the officers and committee chairmen. It's a good nucleus and I'm sure they'll do a good job. We've got a good club with lots of potential and there's no reason we can't become coordinated, help the new people, and at the same time do some constructive caving and have a good time too. Believe me its fun working with new people and a lot of satisfaction can be obtained when you see them developing into productive cavers.

In closing, I merely want to say--- Good luck on exams, have a nice summer, and see you next fall.

Tuna

THE GROTTO GRAPEVINE

BY DENNIS WEBB

CAVER ENTHUSIASM... In thinking of the sport of caving (and of ways to increase the club treasury), members of the club have discussed the possibility of selling non-achievement patches to individuals who meet the requirements, and to organizations that may be willing to purchase large numbers of patches, such as the D.C. Grotto. The "Lazy Eight" patch can be made available to those who successfully make it through eight Virginia commercial cave tours with the least amount of effort and self-achievement, as approved by the Association of Armchair Cavers. The "Virginia Horizontal ten" patch can be for those brave souls who survive the rigours of ten Virginia horizontal - walking passage - cavers, accomplished with a minimum of enjoyment while taking the longest possible time in each cave, as approved by the Committee for the Promotion of Restriction and Negative Attitudes. This committee will establish a minimum of twelve rules that all participants in the Horizontal Ten program must agree to follow by signing a pledge; the committee will hopefully be staffed by members of the Simmons-Gingo Project Committee.

CLUB BUSINESS... It has been generally agreed among our present members that past (as well as present) members and qualified persons who donate \$100 to our club should be considered life members. R. Tommy Watts, F. B. Gilmer, Earl Thierry, and Don Cournoyer deserve this honor.

A totally new slate of officers (they are listed on the cover) promises a good year ahead for the club. Six foot one inch Cheryl Jones, former club bouncer who has a perpetually pleasing personality and boundless caving enthusiasm, is the first female vice-president of the grotto.

Committee chairmen for the new year are: Herb Safford - Safety, Mike Conefrey - Conservation, Tom Calhoun - Project, Jean McCarthy - Publicity, Bruce Byrd - Programs, Jerry Redder - Equipment, Bill Park - Supplies, Bill Stringfellow - Files, Nancy Moore - Historian.

BRIEFS... Congratulations to: Karen and Ned Coleman, Beth and Jim Talmadge, Robyn and Dave Sloan, Margie and Mike Dunn. Newlyweds.

Welcome to the club: Herb Safford (VPI 173) who is a full time librarian at V.P.I. & S.U., and Mike Wolf (VPI 174).

Spring Picnic at Trout Creek Shelter was a huge success. Don Davison's car came to a scrunching halt when the car's bottom struck aground as Don tried to cross the ford. Bill Douty fell off the shelter roof and broke his arm. Polly Wick caught her Bruce Byrd-borrowed jeans afire and burned a spot on her leg. And there were many other surprises.

Our annual New River Floe⁴ Trip was led by Admiral James Douglas Perkins (VPI 98) in the commanding vessel, "Yellow Firefly II", flying the Imperial colors. Another smashing victory for The Committee.

TRAVEL... It would probably be easier to list the members of the VPI Cave Club who did not show up at the Virginia Region Spring meeting and get-together, near Franklin, West Virginia, than to list those who did. Some of us hope, however, that future Region business meetings will be conducted in a more mature manner than this one was, with less disorder and confusion.

Jim Hixson, with Jim Denton and Rick Whitt, took a trip to the Albuquerque, New Mexico NSS Board of Governor's meeting. They also visited parts of Mexico.

Dennis E. Webb (VPI 136) and R. Keith Ortiz (VPI 170) traveled across the U.S., visiting such attractions as Mammoth Cave, Petrified Forest and Painted Desert, Grand Canyon, Sequoia National Park, Pacific Ocean beaches, Yosemite, Carlsbad Caverns, and numerous service stations because of car troubles.

Doug Perkins, Cheryl Jones, Jim Altman, and Jerry Redder attempted to drive through northern Alabama during flood season, and dropped into a few pits, such as Valhalla, Neversink and Natural Well.

Dynamic Duo, Don Davison (VPI 140) and Cheryl Jones (VPI 149), took a one man - one woman trip down and up Fantastic Pit in Ellison's Cave in northern Georgia. On his return, Don succeeded in treating the club with the longest trip report since George Neall's historic record breaker.

Doug Perkins, Cheryl Jones, Keith Ortiz, and Jean McCarthy, drove to Florida to see the launching of the Skylab. They thoroughly enjoyed themselves on the sunny beaches, and managed to miss the launching.

Daring young adventurous Bob Page and Jean McCarthy found a rain forest in the Great Smokies National Park. It was very wet weather for back-packing.

CAVING SPOTLIGHT... The Spring Club Project was devoted to fencing in the saltpetre works in Tawney's Cave, Giles County. The club thanks all who contributed to this project.

More on the strange cave in Big Walker Mountain: It is not in Bland County as reported last time, but in Giles County. It may one day be in contest with New River Cave to determine the longest cave in the county. It has several drops, some provided with ladders. Its name: Salamander

Cave; its twilight zone is a haven for a large number of cave salamanders and other creatures. A gate is planned for the entrance by the group of cavers who are surveying it. Cave visitors are being limited in number at this time.

Several caves unlisted in Caves of Virginia are being investigated in Russell County as plentiful sites of Indian remains.

Pete Schnaars (VPI 112) announced that he has finished his survey of the Newberry-Banes Cave System, in Bland County. Nevertheless, rumors abound that there are still much unmapped passages.

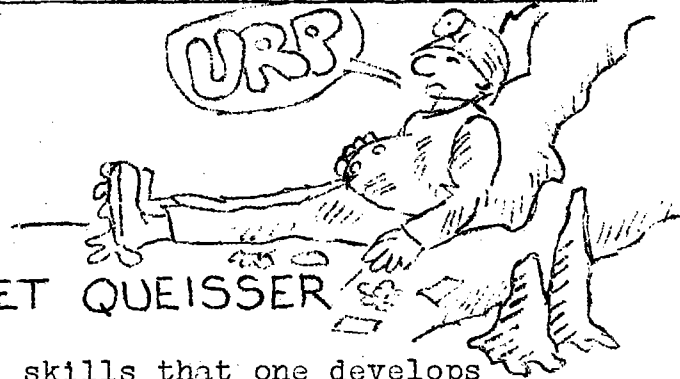
This quarter, several club members took two local groups caving. One was the Blacksburg High School Ecology Club, the other a class of Radford College students. Both groups were taken through Tawney's Cave. The Radford girls were participating in a two credit outdoor recreation program which includes caving, scuba diving, and bicycling.

To diversify his interests, Jim Hixson (VPI 124) has been mapping in Hundt's, Jewel, and Acme Caves in West Virginia.

The following report is accurate up to the time of this writing. (May 29). Out of about 40 different caves visited this quarter, Tawney's Cave is by far the most popular. It comes out ahead in number of club visits, in total number of people visiting, and even in total number of man hours. Last quarter it was also our most frequently visited cave. For the period of Winter and Spring quarters, Clover Hollow Cave is our most popular vertical cave in the above mentioned categories. It ranks third in over-all frequency of cave visits, New River Cave being second; Pig Hole is fourth.

SUBTERRANEAN BELLYACHE BLUES

BY JANET QUEISSER



One of the oft neglected skills that one develops through years of caving is that of coping with gastronomic rumbles while partaking of the rigors of the underground. Savoir-faire in this department is like that in conning neophytes down absurd holes searching for "fantastec formations", extracting newsletter material from unwilling contributors, and convincing skeptical landowners of your professional credentials while at the same time disguising your sex from his 18th century mores. Methods of firing up a carbide lamp and prussiking a drop are fairly standardized, while feeding your face satisfactorily on a long trip is individually acquired, usually by trial and error.

As the novice racks up hours underground, he learns that most candy bars end up in a disgusting chocolate mess, baloney sandwiches become a muddy baloney glob, Space-food sticks are close to nauseating, and comrades don't appreciate beer nuts without beer to go with them. A good cave food should meet the following requirements:

- 1) It should provide quick energy, i.e., have lotsa calories.
- 2) Should be compactly carried and able to take mashing, scrunching, etc.
- 3) Something that needs the minimum of handling of muddy hands.
- 4) It should not be too salty, unless you plan on taking alot of drinking water along too.
- 5) It should have the least amount of packaging, since whatever goes in must come out.
- 6) It should taste good and not be too disgusting to the other on the trip.

With that in mind, aren't you a little tired of the same old garbage? Embrace the spirit of adventure and try some of the following:

PEACH LEATHER (from granma's old timey cook book)

Peel soft ripe peaches. Mash and remove juice. To every cup of peaches, add $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar. Let simmer 15 minutes. Pour into shallow pan and cool. Set pan into oven at 200 degrees and dry until "tough as leather". Cut in thin squares or roll and slice. Sprinkle with powdered sugar and store.

Are you addicted to dried pineapple sold at Appalachian Outfitters and can't bear to pay the price? Try sun-drying (or in a slow oven) fresh or canned pineapple chunks then roll in confectioner's sugar. An unusual snack and good as a pass-around.

For you health food enthusiasts, you just might groove on the following. The confections are a heck of alot of work, but if you can find all the ingredients and have the patience to actually make them, they're very rewarding.

PEANUT BUTTER CONFECTIONS

1/2 cup peanut butter	1/2 cup honey
3/4 cup powdered milk	1/2 cup wheat germ
1/4 cup soy grits	1 TBSP powdered fruit rind
1 TBSP nutrional yeast	(see below)

Mix all ingredients together. Shape into balls and roll in any of the following: ground nuts, sesame seeds, sunflower seeds, wheat germ, shredded coconut, carob powder or soy grits.

BIG SEVEN CONFECTIONS

1/2 cup honey	1/2 cup peanut butter
1/4 cup wheat germ	1/4 cup soy grits
1/2 cup hulled sunflower seeds	1/2 cup sesame seeds
1/2 cup carob powder	1 TSP powdered fruit rind

Powdered Fruit Rind: Use thin shearing of untreated fruit (oranges, lemons, or grapefruit). Wash and dry. Dry in a warm place and pulverize in blender. Put through sieve and regrind remaining pieces. Store in tightly covered jar. Keeps indefinately! Use in breads, muffins, waffles, frostings, topping cookies, beverages, etc.

Remember the good old days of Scouting? Have a craving for the junk you use to take on hikes? Here's the official concoction of Gorp or Bird Seed:

Lots of M&M's

a couple of hand fulls of Sugar Crisps (or any other sticky cereal)

a fist full of peanuts

half a box of raisons

a bag of butterscotch bits

a wad of marshmallows

If you don't like that, just go to the 7-11 with a dollar's worth of pennies and make yourself sick by taking handfulls of everything you see.

A LOOK AT THE CAVE CLUB

THE RESULTS OF A SURVEY BY KAREN YEATTS

In the Spring 1971 issue of The Troglodyte there was a survey of the interesting "little things a VPI caver contends with while underground", and included with these baby bottle and coveralls statistics were the years of experience as a caver. This survey dealt most with the materialistic problems and solutions of cavers.

The survey statistics and elementary theorizing following is not an attempt to copy any previous surveys, but rather it was born from a desire to know "why do you go caving?" It has appeared obvious to me that the group of persons calling themselves cavers is a unique part of the overall human family, showing certain characteristics and behavior patterns not seen elsewhere. (I do feel however, that there are certain parallels to this group found in other groups throughout society.) I have not attempted to deal in any way with those behavior patterns which separate cavers from noncavers, but rather have attempted to gain some insight into the personalities of the different cavers within one particular group; that is the characteristics which make one caver unique from another, or which may even categorize certain cavers into defineable groups. Now granted, no person wishes to be categorized. We all desire to think of ourselves as unique, but there do appear to be separate and specific integrated groups of emotional trends and behavior tendencies found within the caving-oriented circle.

This study, far from as extensive or professional as it should be, has been one lowly Bio major - Psych minor student's attempt at classifying cavers specifically related to the VPI Grotto and determining some insight into their reasons for the desire to populate the underground. It must be recognized that statistics given may or may not correspond in a larger caving circle, say the Va. Region or the NSS.

To begin with a few simple statistics; of the 54 surveys distributed, 44 were given back, filled in. Of these 44, 90% are in the Cave Club now, and 10% once were but are not now. There were 32 males and 11 females involved, and one undecided, (who I think was Tuna). Only 28% of the males were

married, but about 45% of the females were married. So, $\frac{1}{4}$ of all the cavers are females and 32% of the cavers are married.

Ages of cavers in this student grotto ranged from the predictable 18 with $\frac{1}{2}$ year of caving to one 33 year old with 18 years of caving. (Guess who!) Disregarding the 30, 31, and 33 year olds that filled out the survey, average age in this grotto seems to be about $22\frac{1}{2}$ with $4\frac{1}{2}$ years of caving. There were no married men younger than 22, and no single women older than 23. (Sweet young things!!!) But, all of this seems so predictable for a student grotto. So I'll get into some more interesting (I hope) statistics.

One married male caver says he puts in 400 hours/year underground. The next most active cavers after that put in about 250, and they're single! And so I wonder where the married guy finds the time! An average seems to be around 125 hours/year spent underground. Heck, that's only 1.4% of a year or .02% of your life!

Surprisingly for a geology oriented group, only 20% surveyed majored in or had their field of work in geology. Surprising also were the 16% in engineering. Other fields and majors ranged from forestry, to computer science, to biology, to aerospace engineering. You name the field and there seemed to be at least one person in it - even down to another "undecided"!

64% of the cavers surveyed originally heard about caving from an acquaintance, 27% either read about caving or saw it advertised in posters, and only about 9% thought up the idea of going caving all by themselves. If this last is any indication of originality, then it seems that only the married males are original, in that sense.

About 82% were immediately excited at the concept of going underground, and it seems that 86% were really "turned on" to caving with the first cave they entered. Of those remaining 14% who were not immediately turned on, it seems that the major reason was that their first caves were much beyond their means and capabilities. This is an understandable, and I feel, important aspect to consider in taking trainees caving. We must consider their capabilities. Naturally, this survey says nothing about those people who went caving one time and then never came back. Were they just downright scared by their first cave? And if they were, could they have been brought into caving a little more "gently"? Or, is it important to "weed" out the weaker cavers first? I think not, and that careful consideration must be used in picking your first caves for trainee-trips.

About 60% of those surveyed first attended a caving oriented organization meeting due to mainly a curiosity simply about caving. A very few admitted a curiosity about cavers, or an interest in science, or that they came first with friends. One even admitted that he attended a meeting because he liked to party! Of particular interest were the 20% who came to a meeting because they were already private cavers. It makes you wonder just how many private cavers there are, and points out the importance of making these people aware of the beneficial aspects of being a part of a group.

After their first caving trip, about 50% of those surveyed waited one week to go caving again. This is predictable and based upon the set up of a school-oriented organization. Only 10% went caving the very next day, and 40% waited one whole month or longer. A surprising outcome here was that those males, now still single, generally tended to wait longer than one month before their second trip, and in most cases, waited two months or more. So, if you want to get married, don't wait! (To go caving that is!)

52% of those surveyed felt that the most desirable aspect of being in the cave club when they first joined was simply the caving itself. 36% felt it was the fellowship involved. A few favored the sense of accomplishment attained, one just needed a car to get to the caves, and one enjoyed singing "Charlotte" and watching lewd people. Of interest here is that of those original 52% who at first desired the caving over the fellowship, now only 23% put caving first. The vast majority, after a period of "establishing" themselves in the club as cavers, felt that fellowship was much more important than the actual caving.

I'm not sure what it says about people, but about 70% surveyed call themselves "cavers", while only 9% call themselves "speleologists". 18% figured they were both, and one person went as far as to reject both and proclaim herself a "woman"!

Only two, both single females, of the 44 surveyed, felt they would not continue to be "caving oriented" for many years to come. Looks like once you're in, you're hooked.

Activities and interests outside of caving were many and varied. 45%, predictably, claimed camping and hiking activities as high in their interests. 16% claimed photography, and about 9% are rock climbers. Only 13% of the cave club are drinkers. Anybody would swear there are more than that after attending a Friday night seminar! 9%, all females, are animal lovers, especially of horses. Only 2 cavers listed sex in their activities (only 2?) and 2 listed sleeping. Other interests ranged from hitchhiking, to Scuba diving, to computers, to beer cans. One even claimed he

"enjoys" cleaning dog shit! Well, however you get your kicks...

If the cave club met only once a month, more than 75% felt they would go caving the same amount as they do now. 23% felt they would cave less than they do now. If the cave club had no parties after their meetings, the same 75% felt they would still cave the same amount. However, about 10% said they would then probably cave more than they do now if there were no parties after meetings.

When asked if they prefer to party with the same people they cave with, the vast majority said yes, because of the greater trust and closer friendships. Some, however, claimed they would not necessarily cave with all of those that they party with, because many "partyers" are not "cavers", but they would party gladly with those they cave with. Generally the feeling was summed up logically with "I like caving with people I like".

About 40% of those surveyed prefer work trips over fun trips. Only 18% prefer fun trips over work trips. The remaining group claimed no preferences at all, generally with a desire for a 50-50 split in work-fun trips. Interesting to note was that there were absolutely no differences in preference between older cavers (those who have caved for more than $4\frac{1}{2}$ years) and younger cavers (those who have caved for less than $4\frac{1}{2}$ years). That is, of those claiming preferences of work or fun trips, of those who have caved for less than $4\frac{1}{2}$ years, 30% preferred fun, while 70% preferred work; of those who have caved for more than $4\frac{1}{2}$ years, again, 30% preferred fun, while 70% preferred work. Also, those who preferred work and fun trips in even proportions were distributed evenly over the age groups. So, it seems that years of caving experience plays little or no part in what type of caving you prefer. There was also no difference in preference from males to females. The very great majority claimed they would, indeed, enjoy a fun trip with the same people they go with on work trips, and vice versa.

Only 36% of those cavers interviewed were involved in their own special caving projects at the time of this survey. (Middle winter quarter, 1973) Of those remaining without any projects, about 30% are looking for a project of some sort to work on. So it appears that a little less than half those surveyed either don't care or don't have the time for mapping, conservation, cave-finding, etc.

Cavers seem to be evenly divided when it comes to "learning" a cave. Half would rather get to know one cave very well, as opposed to knowing many caves superficially. Perhaps this correlates with whether or not the caver prefers mapping (work trips), and so knowing one cave very well.

Twice as many cavers prefer trips to well-known caves with friends as those that prefer trips to unknown caves with strangers. Apparently this is due, again, to a feeling of security when with friends, rather than a feeling of "knowing" a cave. 12% went as far as to say they would prefer an unknown cave, but only with friends.

Again, almost twice as many prefer horizontal over vertical caves. This preference for horizontal caves seems to have little to do with fear, for all but 4 claimed they have been scared at times while caving. These 4 who have never been scared were all single males, and 3 cave only about 30 hours/year. This seems to correspond with number of years caving though. Those cavers who have been caving for more than 5 years tend to prefer horizontal caves. 32%, however, have no preference, and in fact seem to enjoy both horizontal and vertical caves in equal proportions, just as they do work and fun trips. It seems though that those cavers who have caved for more than 5 years have made up their minds as to exactly what kind of cave they do prefer, for only 21% of those who claimed they enjoyed both vertical and horizontal were cavers with more than 5 years.

All of this seems to point out that cavers are well divided into groups within one large general interest group, centered around the out-of-doors. The boundaries of these groups are fuzzy, and tend to overlap in some areas. Generally, vertical cavers seem to enjoy fun trips, whereas horizontal cavers enjoy mapping (work) trips. Overall, though, is a feeling of good will and comradery among cavers, few leaving the overall, large group for social functions. When partying time comes, all boundaries of preferences in caves and caving methods seem to be lost. Yet it is these very preferences themselves which determine the presence of these social gatherings.

TRUCK ON DOWN

To
SPELEO-A-GO GO

July 13-15

AQUA CAMPGROUND



The Troglodyte

BY DON DAVISON JR.

The inspiration for this song is A.I. Cartwright, the V.P.I. Grotto mascot, who appears on our patch. Various principles, lore, and experiences of the grotto form the basis for much of the lyrics.



Standin' on the mountain, lookin' all around,
when this thing comes at me a movin' like a hound.
All at once it disappears, no more to be seen,
must be a Troglodyte, he's going subterrean.

Oh they're big and hairy, though small ones oft
are found,
they like it fine just to dwell beneath the ground,
where it's damp and muddy, and darker than the night.
Places that give normal folks always quite a fright.

Pack on his back, or on his hip or rear.
Carbiners rattlin', that ain't half his gear.
Baby bottles full, full of what you ask.
Carbide and water to make the burnin' gas.

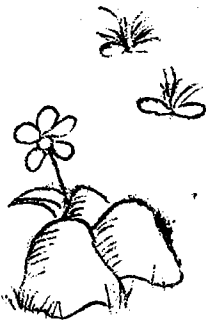
Light on his head and rope across his chest.
Patch on his arm of the family he likes best.
Canteen on his hip. On hear the brake bar ring.
And in the still of a late spring night you can al-
ways hear them sing.

Some go horizontal, and others hang on rope,
up and down and up and down like records that are
broke.
Jammin bodies into cracks, where lizards cannot go.
Comin' out a soakin' wet at five degrees below.

Crawlin' and a wallowin' in dusty bat guano.
Wonderin' if histoplasmosis' gonna show.
Fightin' off the rabid bats and rats with teeth that
gleam.
It ain't no wonder he often gets obscene.

Once an old Troglodyte, he thought that he could drive.
Oh, well he totalled it, but managed to survive.
Now if one tries people head for the hills.
Cause if a Datsun don't get you then a Volkswagen will.

Their feet are made of Vibram lugs. When drunk they
are serene.
They love the cave formations and try to keep them
clean.
But if you see one walkin' ridge or enterin' the cave,
keep your distance far away and your soul you will save.



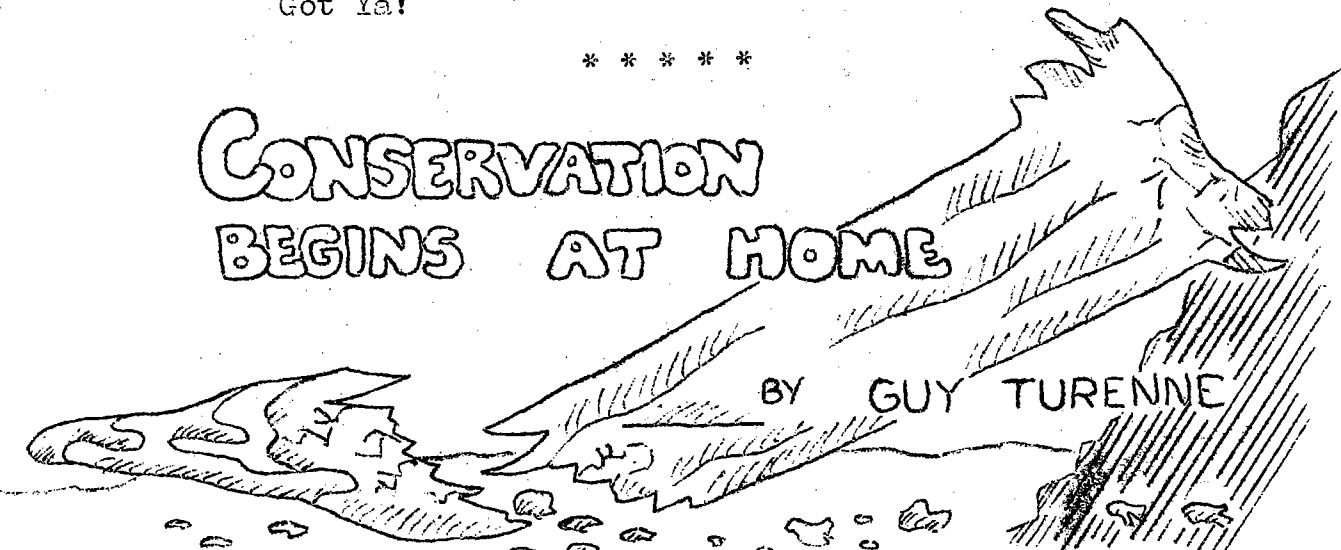
For many a man Lord, a thinkin' he was brave.
Has drifted into ear shot or seen old Troggy wave.
And then a spell took over as in the cave they wound.
And ever ever after his sole dwelled beneath the ground.

Got Ya!

* * * * *

CONSERVATION BEGINS AT HOME

BY GUY TURENNE



Currently there is a great cry from organized cavers concerning cave conservation; cavers are undergoing increased vandalism, cave gates are being torn off and caves are increasingly being closed. What can be done about the problem?

Most, probably all, grottos have standing conservation committees, and that is exactly what they do, stand. I do not mean to imply that they do nothing. However, all of their activities are grotto related. For example; the grotto sponsors a trip to clean up a cave, or to gate an entrance, etc. These are all selfish interests. The cave is cleaned up so that organized cavers do not have to look at trash. The cave is gated to let only organized cavers enter. As you can see this leaves out a rather large portion of people, the non-NSS cavers. Which contains many more cavers than does the NSS.

What can we as conservation oriented cavers do to help ourselves? The answer is quite obvious. We must bring our conservation ethic to the mass of cavers. This will require a larger amount of effort than many cavers are willing to expend. In caving areas this will require involvement with the community. On a large and continuing scale.

In my years here in Blacksburg I have seen the President, and Secretary read many letters from local and distant groups visiting Blacksburg who would like programs presented or competent leaders to take trips caving. Most have immediately gotten a long round of laughter and then eventually found to do the task. If possible I try to volunteer first because I enjoy introducing people to caving and more important these are excellent opportunities to stress cave conservation.

Recently I had the unique and fortunate experience to do something other than just leading a trip. I presented an hour and a half long demonstration and slide lecture to an elementary school. Basically I was doing something I enjoy doing, talking about caving. However the opportunity for selling conservation to kids who will undoubtedly be visiting local caves was unique. Being a photographer of sorts I have a large inventory of caving slides including a sequence relating to cave vandalism. This sequence provided the basis to my low key selling of conservation.

It is unbelievable how receptive elementary school children. They were literally hanging on each slide of people caving and formations. When the first slide of broken formations came along the entire school just went silent. Without my having to say a word they had already got my message. The remainder of the sequence of broken formations, writing on walls, and general trash merely served as reinforcement of the idea of conservation.

Surely the children could not understand the concept of conservation but they knew what the results breaking formations and writing on walls would be. In fact during the question period afterwards, the majority of questions were related to conservation and whether I practiced what I preached.

Following the program I felt I had really accomplished something for conservation. But, I also realized how little of this type of thing was done. Once again the request had come to the club. It is in this area that I believe conservation should move. We should actively make ourselves available to local schools and groups for just such presentations. Most schools have yearly programs of speakers that are invited to speak to the schools. They are constantly looking for people to speak on different topics. I daresay they would jump at the chance to get a caver to speak. It has that air of excitement and danger that automatically insures audience interest. It is this almost captive interest that provides the opportunity to deliver a conservation message.

I feel that it is the grotto's responsibility to volunteer for community speaking. We should not have to wait to be asked. And, laughing at such a request only goes to show just how weak conservation really is.

SEE YOU AT THE

NSS CONVENTION



JUNE 16-24
BLOOMINGTON, INDIANA

YOUR PROBLEM IS OBVIOUS!...

BY ED RICHARDSON

Picture yourself in a room. A room the size of a small auditorium. A small auditorium with seats, stage, blackboard, and a movie screen. There seems to be nothing unusual about this typically small auditorium. However, once a week a very drastic change occurs. A change as hideous as that of a werewolf at full moon begins every Friday evening at approximately 6:45 and is completed by 7:00. Let's go to this room. The time: 6:45; the place: Aggie Auditorium; Virgin Tech, Bleaksburg.

All is quiet and peaceful. Then something begins to happen. All of a sudden you are hit by the deadness and coldness of the place, like that of a mausoleum, the calm before the storm. Then the storm strikes!

Oh, my God! I must be at Daytona! With the roaring of engines, screeching of tires, and blaring of horns, THEY begin to arrive. Wearing jeans, denim jackets, and boots. Smelling faintly of musty dirt, of alcohol and the devil, killer weed, they enter. Some stagger in laughing and giggling; others enter very dignified, straight and serious.

You know these people. It's the Cave Club! Horrid! Go ahead, mingle. Let's listen to some conversation. Over there is a group of "ladies".

P.W.: "I hear it's been so long since Frame has been to bed with a girl, he has regained his virginity."

C.D.: "Really! I didn't know you could do that."

R.O.: "I castrated a Pete....I mean a sheep with my teeth today."

T.F.: "Oh, look at me everybody! I'm so great! I'm too smart for my own good. I even beat Tuna on a geology test. I graduated number one out of 18,923,692 other idiots. I can even recite the Declaration of Independence; "Four score and seven years ago...."

Suddenly the room gets very quiet. You look around to see everyone on their knees. What are they bowing to? Then HE comes in. No! Holy bat shit, it can't be! A 200 pound Tuna fish!!? Wearing a crown? What is he doing with that Victorola horn in his ear? Surely this can't be right. Why would anybody elect this power hungry maniac to such an important position of honor and prestige? I bet they'd even elect a female vice-president. He is followed by his loyal followers. All three of them.

T.J.: "Bam. Bam. Bam."

"I'd like to call the meeting to order. Kathy Andrandy-are you sure you're not Siamese twins-read the minutes from the last meeting."

K.C.: "Last week Tuna said nothing, we passed nothing, didn't pass nothing, and nothing was put off till next week. The nothing meeting was adjourned."

T.J.: "Thank-you." "Randy-the treasurers report."

R.W.: "We have 37 kegs of Schlitz, 20 Barbie dolls, and 27 G.I. Joes. There are 47 trainees and 69 members of whom 68 are not capable of voting."

T.J.: "Thank-you." "Committee reports. Park."

B.P.: "We have received a package of flavoring for guano. I thought it would be a good idea for caving purposes so you wouldn't have to carry food. I tried some and it makes really good guano. It weighs only 17½ pounds and costs only \$9.99."

"I also have a flashlight made especially for cavers that runs off amplified starlight..."

15 minutes later

"...dildos, rubbers, vibrators, whores, and stud service are also available."

T.J.: "Huh? What did you say? Repeat all that."

T.F.: "Take that horn out of your ear and you might hear something."

T.J.: "Twila, stand up!" "Mailboy."

Kark stumbles forward giggling and snickering.

S.K.: "We got newsletters from HVG, SVG, WVACS, NSS D.C., VAR, MAR, PFC, SSS, and VPI-VPI! We haven't heard from them in a while."

"What am I doing up here anyway? I can't do this. I'm too wrecked, and don't call me mailboy."

T.J.: "Announcements."

B.B.: "Hall stuck one finger in his mouth and another in his ass and waited for someone to tell him to switch hands."

S.H.: "Byrd went to bed with nothing but a child last night."

T.J.: "Hall, stand up."

B.B.: "Hall wishes he went to bed with that child last night."

S.H.: "Byrd eats dirty donkey dung."

B.B.: "Hall was 24 when he turned 17."

* * All hell brakes loose. * *

Shouting to be heard.

B.P.: "Hall, you're out of order."

T.J.: (sobing) "Order. Order."

T.F.: "...our forefathers came in their pants..."

T.J.: "Twila, stand up."

His eyes begin to flash lighting as his temper builds and his hearing aid starts emitting a dense yellow smoke.

The noise builds to a dull roar.

T.J.: "Order. Order."

B.P.: "This is entirely out of order."

The meeting erupts into total chaos. Stringfellow is throwing rocks; Don is hitting Bill; Cheryl is bouncing

Buckwheat; Tuna is crying; Kark is giggling; Hixon is humping Linda; Redder is beating the wall with a hammer; Loud is calmly in the back taking it all in, drinking his beer. Finally everybody settles down and Doris dries Tuna's tears. Tuna manages to stammer out, "trip reports.--Don."

With muscles rippling, threatening to burst his T-shirt and skin tight pants, Davison rises. He checks to make sure his belt buckle is in its proper position, mounted on his left hip, and hikes up his skin tight trousers to make his white socks and penny loafers more visible. With a commanding voice comparable to Hitler, he booms out his message of self-glory and fame. His hand movements dramatically emphasize the highlights of his words, sometimes with such ferociousness that broken chairs, blood, and teeth can be seen strewn about the auditorium after meetings.

Super D.: "There I was at the bottom of Ellisons with 300 feet of rope above me. I rigged in with my super fantastic cam rig that I (WHAM! There goes a chair) developed especially for Bill Cuddington. Well, it turns out that the rig I built especially for Bill Cuddington, I should have built especially for myself. About halfway up, it got jammed. I gritted my teeth and flexed my muscles, but I couldn't free myself. So I went hand over hand for 250 feet (WHAM! There goes Cheryl's teeth) to the top.

Then I went to Doodleburg and....

....15 minutes later....

Then I went to....

....and then on the way back there was this wreck and I helped a rescue squad carry out bodies and look for people in a field. I found a head lying by itself with blood out of its ears....

....and then there was this gorgeous blond who wasn't breathing and I gave her artificial respiration and saved her life and in payment she....(RIP! There goes Super D's pants0.

T.J.: "Old Business"
"No Old Business"

K.C.: "It's not that there isn't any old business, it's just that nobody's really sure what happened last week."

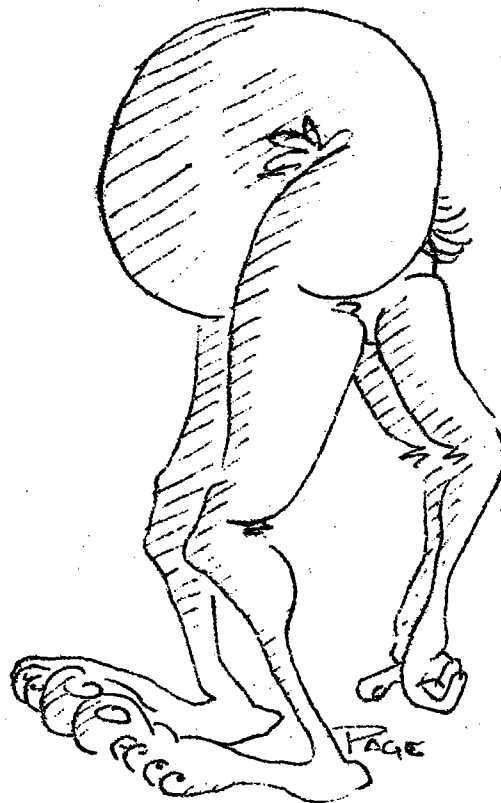
T.J.: "New Business"
"Frieders"

A.F.: "I move that we censure Twila for having small boobs."

D.W.: "I second it."

T.J.: It's unanimous."
"Trip Plans."

Well, by now you all ought to be thoroughly disgusted with this article, but not nearly as disgusted as you should be with these totally ridiculous meetings. Let's start worrying more about the VPI Grotto and less about the "Blacksburg Grotto" and other such trivia, such as the 30 minutes spent on arguing about the color of the membership cards. Our club is rapidly going down hill, and it's going to take ALL of us working TOGETHER to put our club back on it's wonderfully, drunken, staggering feet underground.



YOUR PROBLEM IS
OBVIOUS!

Trip Report — First Grotto Dive

— DON DAVISON JR.

Back when men were men and Paul Broughton still lurked beneath the ground in Virginia, a trip report was written but not published. For it was the story of an unsafe trip and the editor of this publication felt its release would stain the image of caving at VPI. Now the story may be told. This is the trip report of the unsafe trip. Read and weep.

The map of Gray's Cave (Lebanon quadrangle, Russell Co., Va.) has remained unfinished for almost 3 years. When the water was low, one caver claimed to have seen passage at the far end of the second lake. The means of crossing the lake were not available at the time. The water rose and the rumor of the drowned passage grew. Cavers would float out onto the lake on air mattresses to plumb and speculate. On April 11, 1970, Don Davison (D²), Jim Talmadge (T), Paul Broughton (PB), and Steve Hall (H) of the VPI Grotto NSS set out to solve the riddle. D², and experienced diver, would attempt to press the mysterious passage.

We arrived at the cave about 11:00 AM and proceeded to climb into our caving gear. T was descending into the entrance sink when a very incensed landowner arrived on the scene. (Mr. Buddy Gray, Route 1, Lebanon, Va. lives in the house with the white fence around it, on the right going downhill from the cave entrance.) Prior groups had not contacted the landowner and we had assumed the cave was on public land. After some discussion, with PB playing the leading role, as STAR REDNECK, we were given permission to explore. On exiting the cave a more congenial landowner greeted us. The cave was entered at 11:30 with H hauling a duffel bag containing wet suit, light, regulator, etc.; T carrying the 71.2 cubic foot tank on his back; and PB carrying the weight belt and 60 feet of Goldline. The diver remained unburdened to conserve energy.

After proceeding about 300 feet through heavily vandalized walking passage (sledge hammers had obviously been at work) a crawl was encountered. The Goldline was attached to the duffel bag and fed to D² as he pushed the crawl. At the end of the passage was a small hole about 1½ feet in diameter. The duffel was dragged to this point and with D² pulling and H pushing from the rear it was cleared through. The tank was dragged through the crawl, valve first. The bottom of the tank was the only part in contact with the rocks, glass, and cans forming the floor.

Next came a stoop walk leading to walking passage, a short climb, and a tight crawl. This crawl was a horizontal slit. In the center was a pool of water and an 8 inch clearance forming the only body-sized passage. We nearly drowned but cleared the equipment after some effort. On returning the last man through had a dry crawl; seven sets of clothing had absorbed all available moisture.

The first lake was passed and the second lake was achieved. It is fed by a shallow rushing stream at the dry

end of the 70x30' room. The ceiling was about 8' high where we stood. As one looked down the lake the walls closed in and the ceiling dropped. The lake was bordered by sheer rock on three sides with a small beach and stream on the other. The room looked like a funnel which has been placed on its side in a full dish of water.

D² suited up with assistance from the support team. Clothing was hung from the chert nodules and the passage dubbed "Ye Olde Wardrobe." The diver entered the water tied to shore with 125' of heavy duty avalanche cord. T was on the control line. Diving equipment included $\frac{1}{4}$ " wet suit, underwater light, depth guage, knife, mask, snorkel, control line, weight belt, tank with J valve, single-hose regulator, and fins. A system of pull signals had previously been established.

After clearing the air from his suit, D² proceeded along the bottom towards the drowned passage at a constant depth of about 6 feet. Visibility was 3-4 feet. Upon finding the left wall he turned and proceeded down towards the presumative passage. The depth increased until a small 4' high wall was encountered at a depth of 16 feet. The wall contained a foot wide hole but further progress was not possible. No current was detected but a steep mud slope began immediately on the far side of the hole. Exhaled air struck the chert nodules overhead and resounded as if hammers were beating on a metal drum. The sound was loud and reverberating. The diver returned and discussed the situation with a disappointed support team.

The right wall was explored, starting from the beach, until the small hole was again encountered. Thus the only passage was impassable to a diver. During the exploration of the right wall a white crayfish with transparent telson was observed. White cave isopods were very common on the underside of rocks and brown conspiral snails were frequently encountered.

The least likely place to find passage was in the left wall, along which the stream ran. Of all the walls it was the most vertical and the least marked. But we'd come this far. D² proceeded to follow the left wall from the entrance of the stream. As he moved along he saw a slight rise in the coarse gravel floor. On the other side was a slope which lead down to a slit 6-8' wide and 2' high, at a depth of 6'. D² returned to the support location and thawed out. The water temperature was probably about 50° F but movement had to be fairly slow in the poor visibility and thus the fins were used very little.

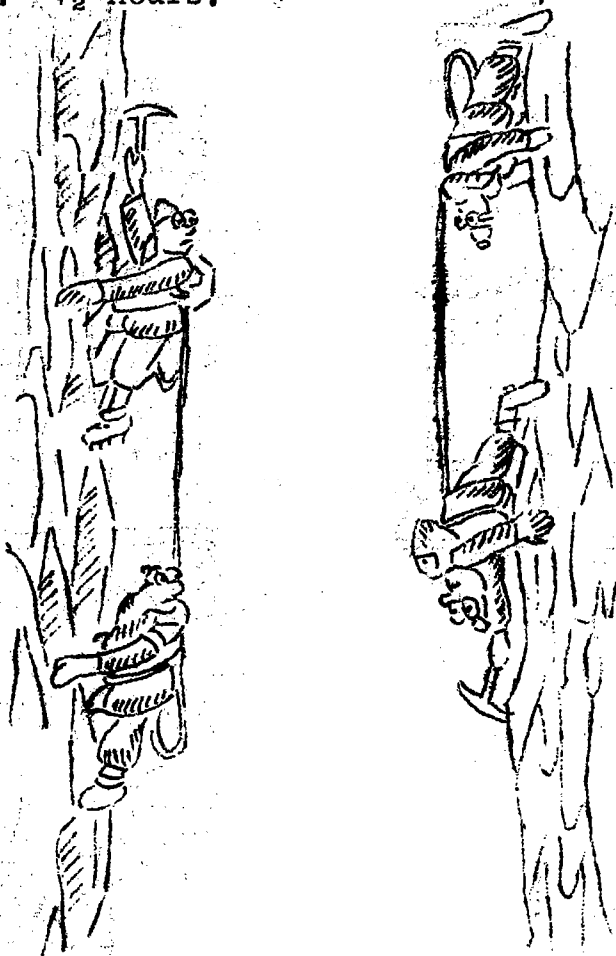
After warming slightly, the slit was entered. The air bubbles were hammering again and visibility was 2-3 feet. The only color was orange-brown. In between exhalations there was only eerie silence. D² followed the ceiling with his hand. After proceeding slowly there was a tug on the line. The line was stuck. D² slowly retraced his path and found the problem. He then left the slit to tell the crew that the passage was continuing. The diver then returned to the slit. Visibility was about 6" to a foot. About 30 feet into the

slit the ceiling rose and a free surface shimmered overhead. D² cautiously broke surface with his hand above his head. He was facing in the direction from which he had swum. The ceiling was about 8" high and the distance between walls was about 3 feet. He appeared to be in a small air pocket and would have to descend to push further on. Then he turned to descend and the largest room in the cave was lit for the first time.

He swam out into the room and through an arch to the left and entered a second room. The second room was a branch of the first and had its long axis perpendicular to the first. All the effort had paid off he thought and noted a high lead in the ceiling of the second room. The first room was 50-60 feet long with a 25 foot high ceiling. It was about 25 feet wide. The branch was 30-35 feet long and 25 feet wide with a 20 foot ceiling. The rooms were steep mud slope and sheer rock wall. D² attempted to climb out onto a mud-slope but slid back into the water. Only a slight current was detected and drainage of the lakes appeared to be by seepage through the gravel bottom.

After several more dives to check the rooms for further passage, the diver reentered the silted slit and finally emerged into the lake. D² desuited and told the team of their victory. During the process of changing the diver caught cold (occupational hazard #351.2 b).

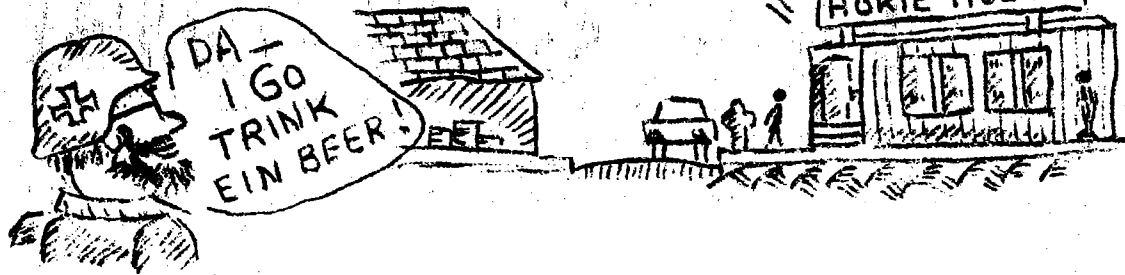
Trip time: 4½ hours.



NASTY COMIX PRESENTS

PERKINI MEETS THE POLISH DOG

PERKINI HEADS UPTOWN FOR A DRINK BEE BOP ALOO



ONLY TO FIND THE POLISH DOG AT HIS FAVORITE TABLE



— AND CONFRONTS HIM!



KARK