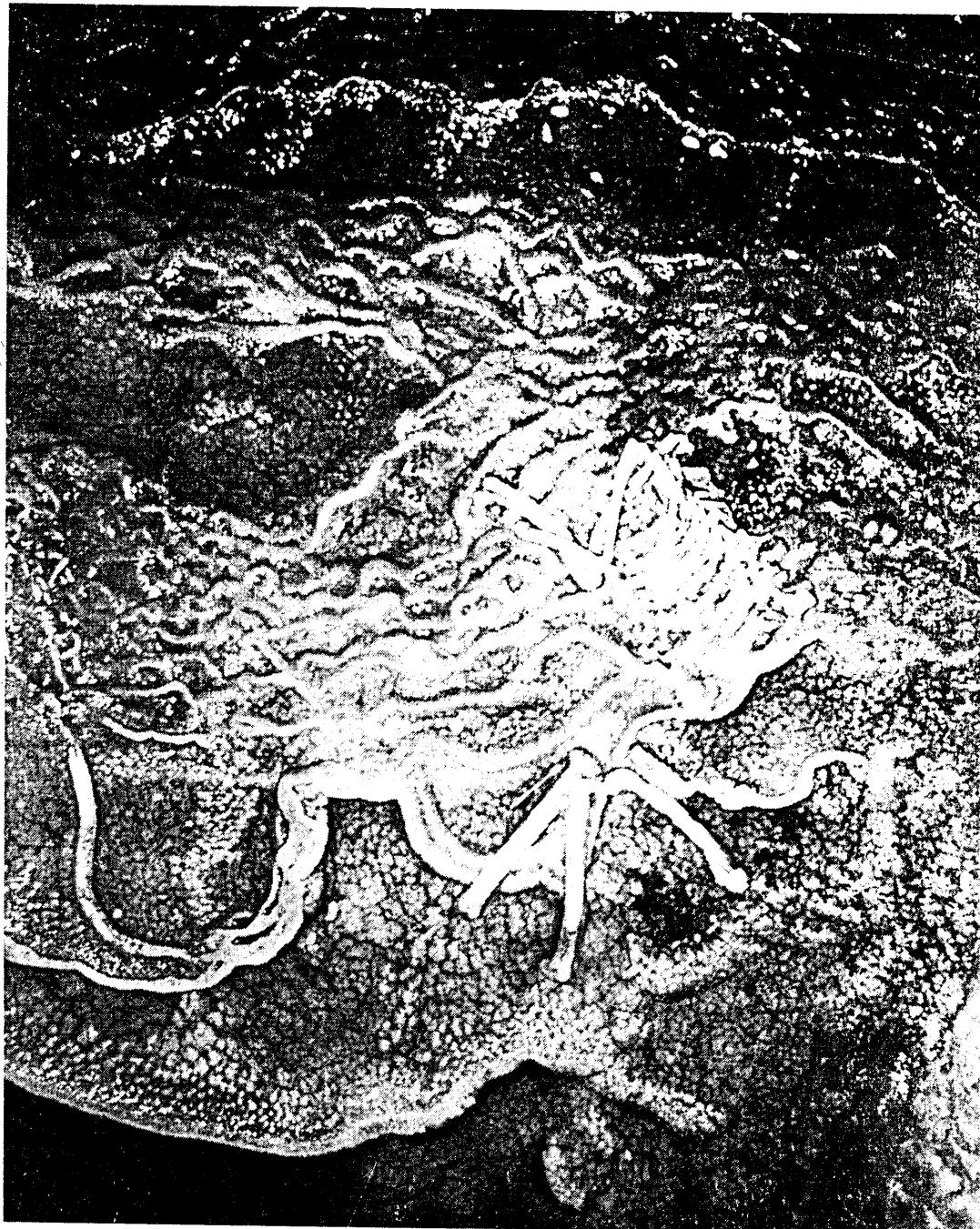


The Tech Troglobyte



Spring & Fall 1997

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

Spring/Fall Semesters, 1997

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Editor	Eileen O'Malley with the help of little elves
Cover Photo	Tough Calf Cave, Giles Co. Taken by Ray Sira

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SECRETS OF AMGINE CAVE

BY JESSICA DORR

This short story was originally written for my freshman English class. The topic of my class was science fiction. This story is completely fictional, but there are a few truths.

A sharp ring fills the room. The sound of the alarm is deafening, but somehow I manage to still be half asleep as I roll out of bed. I prepared all my gear last night. I even left my clothes out. There was no telling if I'd be able to function this morning, so everything is in its place. I pull on my jeans, still encrusted with mud, and my shirt stained brown from its many trips underground. Why had I decided to get up this early? It is Saturday for God's sake. Perhaps the love of going into the dark or maybe going somewhere new is exciting. How can I explain?

I wasn't planning on going underground this weekend, but it is a dare and I am never one to refuse a challenge. Since I first began caving the old farts warned against trips into Amgine Cave. People have gone in, but they never talk about what they see. It's like they're forced into silence by something unknown. Why? Some conjectured that there must be some horrible scene, like dead bodies. Others claim it is a pathway to a lost city. Maybe we'll find Atlantis.

Face first into the darkness, I strain to fit through the narrow passage. They shout back, "The entrance is a pinch, but it opens up." My fearless leaders are waiting in the small entrance room. I turn to see the daylight, one last time, before continuing into the depths of the earth. As we delve deeper the formations begin to appear. Stalactites, stalagmites, soda straws, columns,...all around us, the beautiful formations. Why wasn't this cave mapped? Why weren't pictures taken of its beauty? Those that had entered before must have been crazy for not sharing such a sight.

Last night Tiff and I decided to take Charley up on his dare to enter Amgine Cave. Charley's dad had gone in a decade ago. Whenever Charley brought up the cave his father somehow managed to change the subject. Those that had gone in never said anything on the subject of Amgine, not even to tell others not to go. It was the old timers that had seen what had happened to those that went in, that warned people to stay away.

Charley was determined to get in and show us all that he could conquer this cave. He had plans to tell everyone what he saw. Although Charley was hot headed enough to enter, he knew he must take another caver with him. Tiff, Charley, and I have been close friends since grade school, so naturally he tricked us into going with him. He began by telling us we never pushed the limits any more, and then brought up his idea. How could we refuse such a blatant attempt at making us feel guilty?

Now we are covered with mud and heading to some unknown destination. No one has ever mapped

Amgine so this is going to be quite an adventure. The entranceway leads down to a large room. Our breath is taken away by the pure brilliancy of the room. After some time of staring, wide eyed, we take a crawl down a tight passage. The crawl ends abruptly. Annoyed that the passage doesn't go anywhere, we back out to the large room. The second passage we take is even smaller. Pictures and voices begin in my head in the second crawl. I know we are headed in the right direction. As I slide my body into the small passage, a picture of a stream enters my mind. I think at first that I am just thinking about a stream I have seen in another cave. As I slide through to where I can stand, I hear the sound of running water and see my vision before me. Déjà vu envelops my thoughts. A chill runs down my spine.

Some one is calling me. The voice sounds much like my mother's sweet call. Not the bellow that I am used to now, but the call she had used when my brother and I were young. "Sam, J.C., time for dinner." I follow the sound down the stream bed to a room more immense than any room I have ever encountered. All around me stands the beauty, the gracefulness of the forms. Each formation is alone, but together they form fluidity unmatched by any cave I have seen.

All of a sudden a rush of panic comes over me. What if I break something? The voices explain nothing, but make me feel at home among them. I know as I walk along that they will protect the cave. I sense that if others enter there will be trouble. This force cannot control everyone. Perhaps that is why no one spoke of the beauty. This cave is only for those who dare to go into the unknown.

Another wave of panic comes to my mind. Where are Tiff and Charley? I scan around me, but they are nowhere to be seen. My mind slowly wonders back to the cave. The force guides me through the far reaches of the network. Each room and passage becomes more breathtaking than the other. Soon there is no more and I find myself back in the small room that leads to the entrance. Now the entrance will be my exit. I see Charley and Tiff. We say nothing, just exit the cave together, the way we had entered. Perhaps in the future we will talk freely of the adventure in Amgine Cave. We are half in shock now, thinking of what had happened.

What had caused this? I wasn't sure, but like the others before me, I knew I could not discuss what I had found. This cave has to be preserved. Amgine is too stunning for just anyone to enter. Only those that push the limits and understand the beauty can see the truth. The truth of Amgine cave is not only the beauty that I witnessed. Much like the network of a cave, the truth runs deep. The truth of Amgine is important to the conservation of all caves. Those that went in before me kept Amgine cave a mystery and so would I.

VAR LANDOWNER RECOGNITION AWARD
PRESENTED TO CECIL PORTERFIELD



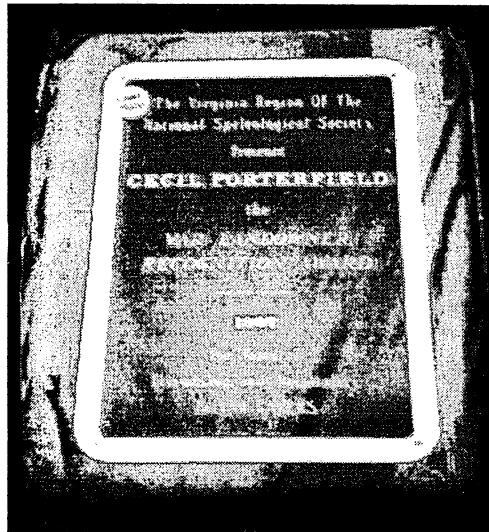
Cecil Porterfield graciously accepts his award from Don Anderson.

On November 9, 1997, Cecil Porterfield, owner of Pig Hole Cave, was presented with the *VAR Landowner Recognition Award*. VPI members gathered with those from New River and Blue Ridge Grotto as Don Anderson gave Mr. Porterfield an engraved plaque and a heartfelt "thank you". The award is given each year to a landowner in appreciation of their good relations with cavers and a willingness to allow us onto their property and into their caves.

Cavers are especially grateful to Mr. Porterfield for re-opening Pig Hole several years after a fatality occurred there. Pig Hole has long been a favorite of many VPI cavers.

Mr. Porterfield was also given the original cave register from Hess' Hollow and a typed, bound copy thanks to the work of Steve Wells and Steve LePera. (They also left a new register in its place, so be sure to sign it on your next trip.)

After the presentation the grotto members mingled over snacks and frothy beverages. Mr. Porterfield shook the hand of each caver as snowflakes swirled onto the field.



MISSION IMPOSSIBLE

BY CHRIS HIBSHMAN

Your mission, should you choose to accept it, is to clean Tawney's Cave of any graffiti or litter and restore it to its natural condition. As always, if you should fail, we will take no responsibility for your actions. Impossible? Some people think so, especially since this cave is well traveled.

So, one Sunday morning in early November eleven of us gathered at the Bat Ranch in anticipation of taking a cave trip into Tawney's. This particular trip was unlike most trips; it was a conservation trip being led by conservation committee chairman Joey Fagan.

Now, you are probably thinking, "It doesn't sound like a lot of fun cleaning up someone else's mess." We all knew in the back of our minds that sooner or later, someone would probably come back and use a can of spray paint to write more obscenities all over the cave walls. Why then, should we spend our time to clean a cave? First, we want new cavers not to believe it is typical for cave walls to display vulgar language. Second, we hope to set an example and discourage people from vandalizing in the future.

In order to clean the cave we needed some equipment. With help from Charlie Maus and the Cave Conservancy of the Virginias, Joey supplied the group with gloves, spray bottles, brushes, sponges, eye goggles, vinegar, water, and hydrochloric acid mix. Ray Sira came prepared with a pressurized tank of water, Amy Johnson with a toothbrush, and the rest of us (Sandy Knapp, Chris Rourke, Steve LePera, Steve Wells, Mike Horne, Eileen O'Malley, and Aaron Gordon) with lots of elbow grease.



The author attacks some carbide writing.

We all gathered the gear and headed up the steep path to the entrance before Fat Man's Misery. Chris Rourke, Steve and Steve headed deeper into the cave armed with trash bags in search of litter. The rest of us stayed near the entrance to learn the best techniques for restoring a cave. The big room just inside the entrance was the first target of the day. On the left was a beautiful formation of white mold covering a small pile of rotting logs. To the right was a wall covered with silver spray paint, chalk, deep scratches, and black carbon marks left by carbide lamps. The other walls were not as decorated as the right wall, but we still had our work cut out for us. The idea with cave restoration is to improve on the appearance of the cave and to preserve the historic artifacts. Not all the writing should be removed. Some of the inscriptions date back to the Civil War era; these you want to keep. If you are not careful, you might cause more harm than good.



Believe it or not, this wall showed almost no writing when the "cave maids" left.

We first tried using a wire brush to scrap away the black carbon lettering. This proved to be a poor tool because it left many coarse scratches in the delicate mud-caked wall. We next tried using nylon scrub brushes and water. This technique left a much more appealing sight. The brush cleaned away the carbon and even blended in the surrounding cave mud, leaving no scratches. Wet sponges also proved to be great utensils in blending cave mud and filling cracks, but it was not the best to remove stains. Ray's pressurized water tank was very helpful in supplying the water that was used to wash away the carbon and fill the cracks with mud.

On some of the more troublesome stains, we sprayed vinegar onto the stain and scrubbed with the nylon brushes. The silver spray paint proved to be even more difficult, so we resorted to the diluted hydrochloric acid. We cut the concentrated acid at the rate of 10 parts water to 1 part acid. It is very important to dilute the acid with water to prevent any more damage than necessary to the cave walls. The concentrated acid would seriously etch away at the rock and do more harm than good. We found the best technique for applying the acid mix was to spray the affected area and let it sit; and after 10-15 minutes came back and washed it down with water. We all wore safety glasses and rubber gloves to protect ourselves from the acid as well as from the loose particles dislodged by our scrubbing and rubbing.

We applied some final touches to the walls like adding and blending in mud. Amy even went through the trouble of delicately blending and restoring the mud with a toothbrush. It is important to return a thin layer of mud onto the bare walls. This makes it easier to remove future paint and graffiti and clean the walls during future conservation trips. We spent over an hour and a half cleaning the room before moving on to the next room.

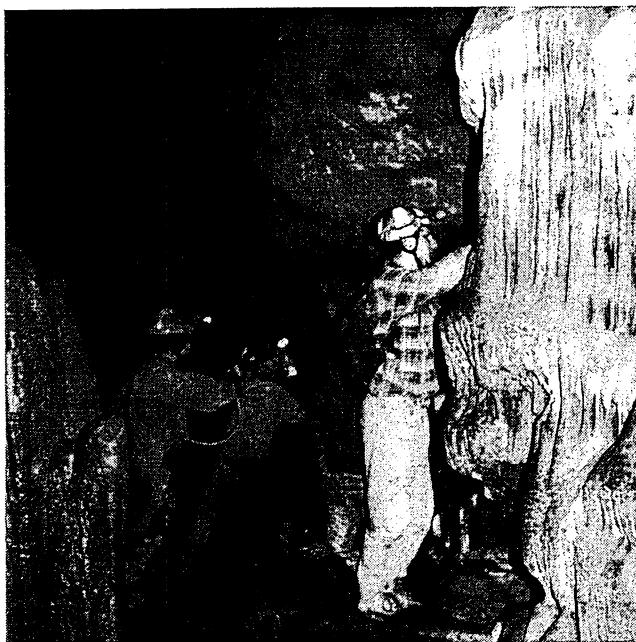
Near the main entrance, the walls of the large decorated room were likewise decorated with the same silver spray paint and carbide lamp soot. We spent another hour and a half practicing our conservation techniques. We also noticed that the Virginia Cave Law sign was missing from the cave. Mike made a mental note to replace it in the future.

In the meantime, we meet up with three separate groups of cavers from Longwood College, Hollins College, and Davidson College as well as a few flashlight toting cavers from Blacksburg. We talked to each group, discussing cave safety, conservation, and the National Speleological Society. Of course we told them about the VPI Cave Club and our fantastic web page. We even invited them to attend one of our Friday night meetings! As we applied the finishing touches to this room, Chris, Steve and Steve came by on their way out of the cave with a bag full of trash.

After three hours of scrubbing walls with vinegar and acid, we lost much of our enthusiasm for scrubbing cave walls. We packed up all the gear and headed back to the surface and the Bat Ranch. We talked about a more extensive conservation project for the future, maybe in New River Cave to remove arrows or to Nellie's Cave to clean up trash. The one thing I did learn from this unique trip is that cave restoration is a challenging art. It takes some practice and a lot of patience, but it is also very rewarding. Lastly, the trip would not be complete without firing up M3's carbide powered potato gun and making some serious noise. MISSION ACCOMPLISHED!

"Education is what you have left over after you have forgotten everything you have learned."

All photos by Joey Fagan.



Aaron Gordon and a swarm of busy cleaners.

CRASH COURSE ON THE FROG ASCENDING SYSTEM

BY CARL BERN

WARNING:

The information contained in this article could get you injured or killed. Caving and vertical ropework are dangerous. You are responsible for getting proper training and preserving your own life. This is not a "how-to" article. The printed word is no substitute for hands-on instruction by competent instructors.

This past January Steve Wells and I decided to put together Frog systems for use on our trip to Mexico. We sought out the few cavers around town who had experience with the Frog and picked their brains for what we needed to know. Then we proceeded to assemble and experiment with our new systems. It was a process of trial and error that involved a lot of error. In March we took our systems south of the border to Sistema Cheve. Over the course of six weeks we compared notes with seasoned expedition cavers and put our own evolving Frogs through some hard-core in-cave use. During this time I discovered that the Mighty Frog is a truly superior vertical system. Now I have made it my mission to preach the good news of the Mighty Frog. It is perfect for those who are looking for something more substantial than "knots" but do not wish to trash a ropewalker in our local mud holes.

BACKGROUND

The Frog system was developed in Europe. It evolved around the European rigging style for dealing with vertical sections of caves. They generally use thinner ropes (9 mm) on the other side of the Atlantic. This means that their margin of safety when dealing with rub points is much smaller. They tackle this problem by installing "rebelays" at rub points on vertical drops. A relay is simply a point where a knot is tied in the rope hanging down a pit and the knot is clipped to a bolt or natural rig point on the wall. A wonderful idea, but you have to remove your ascending/descending system from one side and move it to the other each time you come to a relay. Obviously this is a hassle, and in the quest to make the process easier the Frog was born. Nowadays you will not meet a European caver who has not heard of the Frog, and many of them use it exclusively. The Frog is still not widely used in the U.S., but that is changing.

THE BASIC IDEA

Climbing with a Frog is a lot like climbing rope on knots. Both are sit-stand ascending rigs. The main difference is that unlike knots you never have to remove your hands from the top ascender with the Frog.

The system is set up as such: One top ascender is attached to a cord with foot loops and also a safety tether to the seat harness. A second ascender is attached directly to the front of your seat harness, it is held upright by a harness on the chest. Petzl's Croll ascender is designed specifically for this purpose.

The climbing action is simple. With both ascenders clipped to the rope simply push the top one up the rope while raising your feet at the same time. Then tuck your feet under your butt and stand up in the foot loops, mainly using your arms to stabilize this motion. The Croll will be pulled upward by the chest harness. As you ease back into a sitting position it will hold as you once again slide the top ascender upward.

For crossing rebelays a pair of cow tails will take the place of the tether mentioned above. Cow tails are simply two cords of different lengths attached to the harness at one end and with a carabiner at their other ends. This is one case where non-locking carabiners are better suited for the job than locking carabiners.

DISADVANTAGES

There are no absolutes in the vertical world except "wear a helmet." The Frog is not the best system for every situation. The Frog will not fit in your pocket like a set of prussik knots, and it will not maximize your endurance the way a well tuned ropewalker will. If you need to travel ridiculously light or need to ascend more than 200' of rope at a climb, this might not be the right system for a particular trip. The Frog must be tuned to your own body proportions to be efficient. A seat harness with a low point of attachment is also needed to make the Frog efficient. The Frog can hamper you if not removed before going through a squeeze.

The most important thing to understand about the Frog is the bounce involved in the climbing motion. This will test your anchor more than any other system and aggravate any problems you have with rub points. The only other disadvantage revolves around the type of seat harness that works best with the Frog. This can be difficult to remove if the screw-link has been tightened as much as it should be. The problem arises when your body needs relief that can only be achieved with the harness off.

ADVANTAGES

For the sake of simplicity I put these in list form.

The Frog:

- is not as bulky and cumbersome off rope as a ropewalker.
- is attached to the rope by two mechanical ascenders making it extremely fast for getting on and off rope. You might want to carry a third ascender with you in case of a problem with one of your two main ascenders.
- costs less to assemble than a ropewalker. The only part that really should be stitched is the seat harness. The hardware from a Frog can also be incorporated into a ropewalker.

- is lightweight and compact for a mechanical climbing setup.
- makes it easier to haul heavy loads up drops by using both legs at once.
- is easy to walk around in. Simply clip the midpoint of your foot cord in the cam of your top ascender. Clip the top ascender to your seat harness, and loosen your chest harness. Nothing drags on the ground or bangs against your knees.
- does not get damaged when you walk in it. Chicken loops around the feet and foot loops on ropewalker can be damaged as your body weight grinds them into the cave floor.
- is great for those climbs where you are up against the wall. Simply take one foot out of its loop and brace it against the wall while using the other to push you upward.
- can be a big plus on low angle climbs. Just start free climbing using the top ascender for self belay and "clean" the slack that builds up between the two ascenders. Remember to keep the top ascender near head level. Shock-loading an ascender can severely damage the rope you are counting on to hold your fall.
- is ideal for crossing rebelays. You won't see many of those around here, but there are caves outside Virginia and the US that you might like to visit.
- is truly a system. The ascending gear can remain in place and ready for use while descending and vice versa. Organizing and understanding everything clipped to your harness will take practice however.

TIPS

There is no one specific way to set up and use a Frog. One neat thing about this system is that individual pieces can be easily removed and replaced. The keys to creating a system that will work best for you are interaction with other Frog users and experimentation in a safe environment (i.e. close to the ground). Having stated this, there are a few tips I would like to mention. They might save you some of the trial and error that Steve and I went through.

First of all, the right seat harness will make a world of difference with the Frog. A caving harness that closes in the front with a steel half-moon screw-link is what you want. It provides a low point of attachment to make climbing efficient, and also has enough room to easily rack everything that is attached to the harness. Petzl's Superavanti harness would be a good choice. A close copy will probably cost less from a speleovendor. The screw-link that closes these types of harnesses can be a vulnerable point. Check to make sure that the link is closed **EVERY TIME** before getting on rope. You cannot be too anal about this, the links can and do come open. Screw links are much weaker when open, and there is a chance that part of the harness could escape through the opening. Another thing to keep in mind is how the rope will contact the screw-

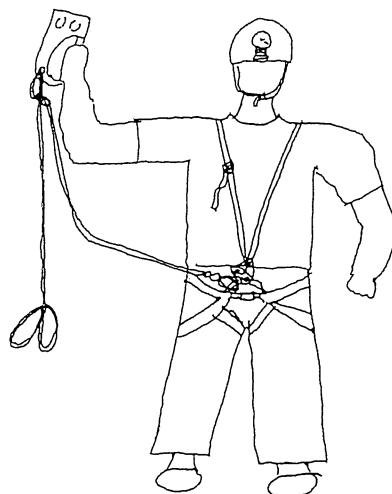
link. As rope moves through an ascender/descender it could spin the gate open.

Having a good chest harness is also important. It should be easily adjustable by the wearer. While climbing you want it tight enough to keep you hunched over when standing on the ground. While you are off rope, however, you don't want it compressing your spine. There must be dozens of ways to tie or stitch a chest harness for a Frog, so do not settle for the first one you try.

The lengths of each tied piece in the system are extremely important for efficiency. The foot loops should be short enough that the foot and chest ascenders almost touch when the legs are fully extended. A tether used to connect the foot ascender to the seat harness should allow you to just reach the ascender's cam while hanging on it. If you are going to use cow tails, the tip of the carabiner on the short one should just touch your chin when connected to the harness. The carabiner on the long one should hook over the bridge of your nose. Use something like 9 mm cord for tethers and cow tails. I have seen Spectra cord used for this purpose, but the general consensus is that Spectra is not suitable for cave use due to its small diameter. A properly applied section of bicycle inner tube will keep the biners in your cow tails properly oriented. Ask Steve or me about this.

FOLLOWING UP

This should have given you some reasons to consider taking a Frog for a test drive. I did not include sections on how specifically to build and use a Frog for a reason. Experimenting with new vertical gear and techniques is much safer with the help of someone who has done it before. There are enough vertically experienced people in the club that anyone who wants to learn something new can learn it from a real live person. Steve Wells or I would be happy to teach you what we have learned, but we are not the only Froggers in the club. If you want to learn more, talk to people at meetings, parties, and vertical sessions.



Author's self-portrait wearing his Frog system.

A WEEKEND CAVING GUIDE FOR TRAINEES

BY MIKE McAVOY, COCKY TRAINEE

Congratulations! You've just taken the first big step in becoming a member of the Virginia Tech Cave Club: you've paid your dues! With a flourish of money your folks back home slaved hard to provide you with, you have at your fingertips all the basic technical knowledge you need to head out underground. However, we here at the VPI Cave Club realize that there are numerous little bits of information that the novice caver does not pick up on before heading into those first few caves. Therefore, this user friendly ten step program to your caving weekend has been painstakingly designed so you can schedule your activities ahead of time in the comfort and ease of your home.

1. FRIDAY AFTERNOON

It's the last day of the week, and you're sitting bored in your dorm wondering how in the world you're going to keep yourself amused all weekend. You could go hang out somewhere downtown and essentially do very little with other people who are also doing very little, or maybe start studying for that Dynamics test on Monday (yeah, right). Well how about spending your Friday evening learning about the best way to have a good time in Blacksburg on a weekend? Yep, that's right – caving! Avoid the listless hordes on campus, and come check out the vast labyrinths that have been under Blacksburg for millions of years!



2. SMYTHE 146

You seem to have found Virginia Tech's darkest corner of campus. This spooky quad houses the grand hall where the VPI Cave Club meets every Friday night sometime after 7 p.m. (see Caver Time). When the meeting does start, you'll get some idea of what the proceedings will have in store for the evening. You can count on some kind of caving program after club business is concluded as well as trips that are being planned for Saturday. If you have any questions, speak up; most cavers would gladly spend the next millennium discussing the ins and outs of caving with you.

3. SPELEO SEMINAR

Hey, don't be shy! Every Friday night a caver volunteers their humble abode for a caving seminar *cough party cough*. This is a good place for you to meet the people you will be with tomorrow, find out more

about that thing called caving, and to do what cavers do best: relax. It's the best way to unwind.

4. CAVER TIME

Well, it's 9 a.m. on a Saturday morning, and you're shivering outside of Smythe with the other prompt trainees, wondering where the heck your trip leader is. Welcome to caver time! It's not that cavers are perpetually tardy, we simply prefer to think that we're really good arriving somewhere in a fashionably relaxed manner (i.e. late). Once you do get going, you'll hit Signout, pick up some club caving gear, and make a food stop at Wades before scooting off to the cave. Keep in mind that the food and water you bring should not only be enough for the length of the trip, but also for any unexpected reason that your trip requires you to be underground longer than you planned on.

5. CARBIDE 101

By now, you've gotten your hands on that quirky little illumination device, the Premier Carbide Lamp. Hey, not only is your lamp your primary light and a valuable heat source, it's also a wonderful source of cheap, flammable entertainment. Please bear in mind that burning either your or another caver's eyebrows off while playing with spent carbide will likely haunt you when you come up for membership!



6. SPELUNKING

"Spelunk" is the sound an object makes when it falls some distance underground and hits water: DO NOT DO THIS! You're a caver – take time to enjoy yourself and your surroundings by caving smart and listening to the suggestions your trip leader makes. If your trip leader says jumping in a cave is bad, take their advice; it'll save you a sprained ankle or worse. Also, don't feel that you have to race through a cave to "keep up" with the more experienced members. Caving is not about speed for trainees, but for making sure everyone is having a good time and learning. "Relax your mind, and enjoy your cave."

7. RETURN THAT GEAR!

We understand that your first cave will probably leave you in a dazed euphoria, but please remember to return all the club gear you borrowed back to the trip leader. It

may look banged and beat up, but it works (usually) and is difficult to replace. Gear that goes missing means more trainees like yourself won't be able to go caving – plus it makes the officers grumpy.

8. PARTY DYNAMICS



Déjà-vu! Hey, weren't you just at a party last night? Besides caving, members of the VPI Cave Club like to have a good time when they're outside of caves, too. There are many social events that take place throughout the

semester at the Bat Ranch or other cavers' homes. They're great places to unwind, meet fun people, and have good food and frosty beverages!

9. WE ARE THE PEOPLE YOUR PARENTS WARNED YOU ABOUT

Your parents love you. This is why you're waking up bleary eyed at 9 a.m. on a Sunday morning to answer your ringing phone. Remember, be non-specific! Mothers tend to get nervous when they hear their babies are doing strange things like caving with fun people, and could possibly blow a gasket. If you feel you must be honest and confess which club you participated with this weekend, remember two words: "Venture Out".

10. YOU AND YOUR QCA

Welcome to the first day of the rest of your week! Thanks to all the fun you had this weekend, you now have a LOT of late night suffering ahead of you to get all of Monday's work done on time. While we want to see you participating in the Cave Club as much as possible, it's important that your school work doesn't suffer from all the good caving you're getting in; too much of any activity can cause disastrous results if you neglect school in the process. Remember, the caves have been there for a mind-boggling amount of time, and we're fairly sure they'll be there next weekend waiting for you.

There you have it; a pretty good start at how to plan out your first weekends caving around the Blacksburg area. Want to get even more information on the VPI Cave Club or any other caving items? Check out the official web page at www.vt.edu:10021/org/cave. It has all the things you could possibly want to know about cavers and caving.

Artwork by Mike McAvoy.



WHAT IS UP WITH THE SAFETY COMMITTEE?

BY DAVE COLATOSTI

Phrases like "Big Brother is watching" or "Resistance is futile" should not come to mind when thinking of the Safety Committee. Ok, so what is the Safety Committee? Perhaps it would be better to first ask who is in the Safety Committee? The Safety Committee is a group of current and past officers of the VPI Cave Club. The Safety Committee chairperson heads the group. When necessary the president, with advice and consultation of the membership body, assigns the position of chairperson. The chairperson should be a member who has a fair amount of caving history with the club and who is regularly interacting with the club body. The last chairperson was Ed Fortney, a.k.a. Captain Ed. With Ed's departure to the dreaded NO-VA, there was an obvious deficiency in the position. So Mike Horne, a.k.a. Mike³, was deemed the next appropriate choice for chairperson.

In the past, the committee was very "ad hoc" and really did not meet as an active group. The committee functioned more as a reference source for the chairperson when dealing with a specific situation. When Mike came into the chairperson position he decided that it would be a better idea to have a more regularly functioning committee to discuss not only any incidents that might need addressing, but also general safety and techniques. So at the beginning of the year Mike made a call for any interested individuals to approach him to become part of the committee. The first meeting occurred with mostly current and past officers, but there were also some new and prospective members present.

The committee has stabilized in its membership and has had two meetings as of this writing. The people that have been at both meetings are: Sandy Knapp, Mike Horne, Steve LePera, Kirk Digby, Dave Colatosti, and Chris Rouke. Attendance of other individuals has varied between the two meetings, and it is too early to say who is a regular participant as of yet. But suffice to say that people are welcome to attend and participate. If you have not been to a meeting before, but would like to attend, talk to Mike or anyone listed above. It should be noted that this committee is not restricted to members only, and it is helpful to get the prospective members' view of things as well. And there are projects that will be popping up from time to time that require additional willing people to help.

Ok, so what has this Safety Committee been doing anyway? A wide range of topics has been covered. The standard fare of the committee is to review any problems that may have been brought to any of our attentions. This might be a small infraction of some standard operating procedure or it could be a preliminary discussion of a major underground incident that will be covered at a full club meeting. The Safety Committee strives obtain multiple points of view on

the situation, discuss the hows and whys of the situation, and come to some sort of resolution. The outcome could be changing a rule, or a one-on-one discussion with a trainee or reaction based on the guidelines set forth in the constitution. The point is not for the committee to walk around with a big stick boinking people over the head and saying, "You did that wrong," but rather to maintain what I believe is an enviable safety record. Letting things slide and keeping the status quo can be bad for safety and that is what the committee is here to prevent.

Additional topics that have been addressed include what the club should do about keeping "Club" or vice president ropes, which are not the same thing as ropes in the rescue gear. "Club" refers to ropes that are for general use on any sport trip, usually in the possession of the VP. The general feeling in the committee is that it is bad for people to use rope on a regular basis that they do not own. The opinion was that individuals treat rope better if they know it is their own rope that they paid for with their own money. One of the points of discussion that came up from this is knowing the history of any equipment you are using. This is relatively easy when it is your own personal gear, but it becomes very difficult when looking at club gear. This brought us into the topic of the rescue gear. The committee started discussing what the useful life of equipment is. Since none of us are experts in metallurgy or polymer chemistry, we decided to do some research with the various equipment vendors on useful life of equipment and when it should be retired. We also determined out of this discussion that a usage log, which would include date of initial purchase, needs to be created for every piece of rescue gear.

Although we have not yet obtained any answers on the useful life of equipment, some innovative ideas were discussed to address aging equipment, in particular ropes. The idea was that rescue ropes would only be used for rescues. Rescue training would use personal equipment. Once rescue ropes were used on a rescue or a yet to be determined period of time elapsed, the ropes would be sold or auctioned at a low price to club membership. This would solve two problems: 1) Keeps ropes in rescue gear in brand new shape with no age problems to wonder about. 2) Regularly brings inexpensive like-new rope into the club for newer members to purchase. This helps alleviate the problem of not having "Club" ropes for the VP and others to use on training trips.

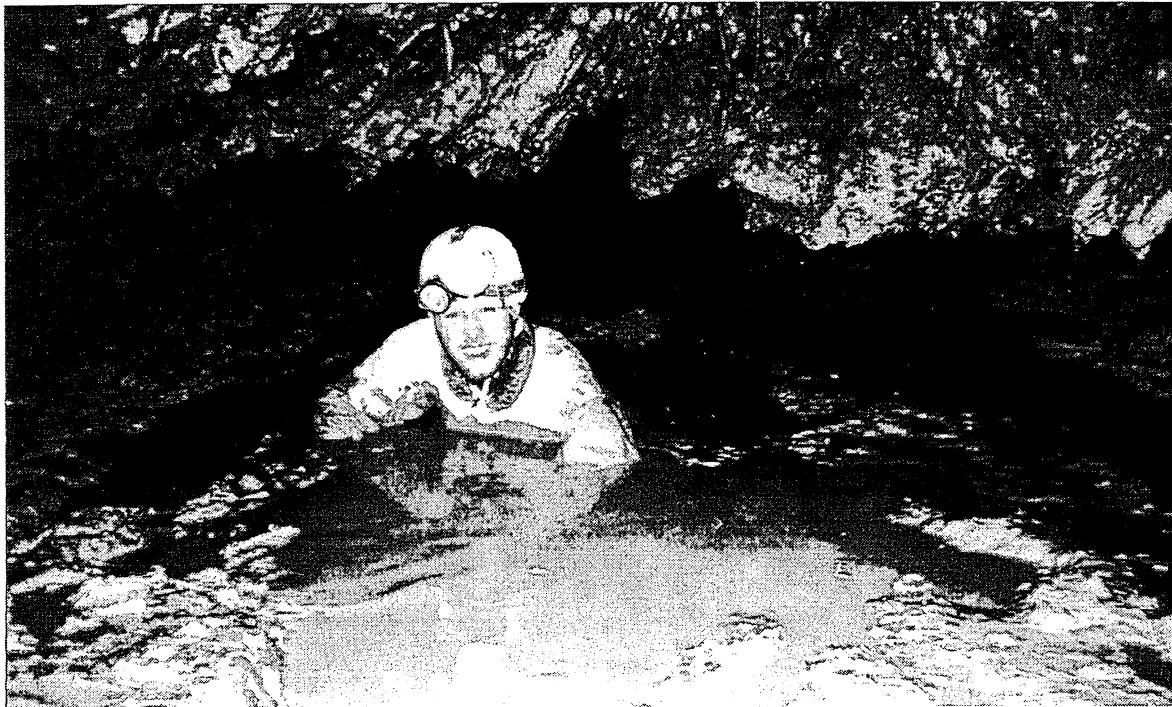
Numerous training ideas were discussed, including setting up sessions run by club members for some advanced, but useful, caving skills. Some of the training programs mentioned were bolt setting, first aid, and advanced rigging. There was also discussion on bring-

ing additional grottos in on bigger, organized training sessions, such as an NCRC type session. Since NCRC was mentioned some ideas were tossed around about making sure that NCRC and the likes realize that there is a valuable pool of well trained cavers available for rescues. The recent and on-going difficulties between VPI and some key rescue individuals has focused the committee on doing some positive restoration work on the VPI image. Working with new local cavers and other grottos had been mentioned as an excellent way to help with our image.

Now before you start jumping up and down and saying, "The club can't afford that" or "I don't think that is a good idea," etc... wait a second. This is a committee that is meeting to wade through things to make any meeting more bearable when any item might come up for a necessary vote. Everyone in this group is really concerned about the club and its member-

ship, enough so to take time out of their schedules to meet and discuss pertinent issues. The Safety Committee is a fairly diverse group discussing these ideas, and believe me there are a number of viewpoints that are being covered. Although the discussions can become pretty heated, we are working towards a common goal of bettering the club. However, new ideas and view points are always welcome and we all encourage active participation in the committee.

As a final note I want to point out to both members and prospective members (trainees) that if you feel something is wrong, be it on a trip or at a training session or just in general, bring it up to the Vice President or any member of the Safety Committee. We are here to help keep up the club's excellent safety and training record, and almost as important, to make sure we all have fun while underground.



Dave Colatosti, conducting important Safety Committee research, discovers mud.

Photo by Ray Sira.

GROTTO GRAPEVINE BY A.I. CARTWRIGHT

BANQUET '97

Terry Brown and Carol Zokaites spoke at Banquet about their continuing efforts at cave conservation and Project Underground for kids. (Thanks, Carol. You can never have too many fridge magnets.) Steve Williams catered the affair and everyone ate and drank to their fill.

The awards, presented by Mike Horne, were many and amusing.

Guano clusters:

Bat Ranch dwellers for their continuing hospitality,

Eileen O'Malley for editing the *Trog*,

Dave Colatosti for resisting temptation on a certain cave trip (you'll have to ask him),

Cecile James for keeping the rescue gear and employing starving cavers,

Glen Davis for maintaining the club store for so many years,

Lawrence Britt for hosting numerous caver functions and taking over the club files and rescue gear,

Cap't Ed Fortney for the organization of many successful practice rescues.

Other awards:

Brain Bucket to Bobby Zokaites for skiing off the beaten track,

Flameout to Ray Sira for ruining a sleeping bag at the previous Banquet,

Driving to Sarah Cosby for destroying the bottom of the minivan,

Crowbar to Steve and Anti-Steve to help pry them apart,

Foot in Mouth to Joe Thompson for "threatening" James Whisenhunt,

Viva de la Santo to James Whisenhunt for not beating up Joe Thompson too badly afterwards,

Trainees of the Year to Joe Thompson and Les Good, Annual Ripplemead Swimsuit Competition to Mike Newsome (and his two buddies),

Salvage Diving to Steve Wells for rescuing Dr. Earlenmeyer,

Honorary Membership to Jackie Hoell for too many reasons to list here.

Don't forget Banquet '98 at the Newport Rec Center. Once again Steve "Tink" Williams will cater the event. This year the festivities fall on Valentine's Day, which gets you off the hook for dinner rather nicely, doesn't it?

COMINGS AND GOINGS

Once again Blacksburg's Dave Quota is maintained.

Dave Colatosti, finding employment in Christiansburg, moved back to the New River Valley. Not surprisingly, Dave Shantz quickly accepted a position in Williamsburg, Virginia. Claims Mr. Shantz, "I wasn't looking for a job; it just came out of the blue. I'm certain it was strange forces acting to preserve the Quota."

Old farts will be pleased to hear that Judy Perkins will be moving back to Blacksburg in January to begin graduate school. Could this be Doug Perkins' long lost daughter?

OTR

Strange people impersonating VPI members caused much trouble at OTR this summer. Accusations range from senseless violence to the more severe "relieving oneself outside of the Port-A-Johns."

The trouble lead to the arrest of Buckwheat Richardson. Thanks to him, the following phrase will probably be banned from subsequent OTRs: "More wood!" Not to be outdone, Philip Balister demonstrated his incredible telekinesis by randomly beating up on women without even touching them.

TRA hearings will take place in upcoming months to determine who deserves a wrist-slap for their behavior.

WEDDING BELLS

Susan Vermeulen and Edwin Lancaster, living together shamelessly, decided to mend their evil ways and married on October 11, nearly two years after he whisked her away to exotic Aberdeen, Maryland.

On November 18, after a brief and surprising engagement, Walt Pirie and Lynn Richardson wed. Said Lynn, "He kept talking to me at parties but I didn't think anything of it. Then suddenly I noticed how attractive he is." Lynn and her two kids plan to move to Blacksburg at the end of the next school year.

OCTOBERFEST

Octoberfest gave cavers the chance to look through club files at their new home in Lawrence Britt's house, but this was small excitement compared to the fish tank which bubbled up when you poured beer from the tap.

Trainees took over the front porch and declared it the "trainee lounge." No reports on whether they'll host tacky bands playing musak.

ELVIS GROTTO NEWS

Rumors that Elvis Grotto co-chairs have been caving recently have sparked media attention. The Elvis Grotto members are outspoken caving opponents because "people could get hurt". Their persuasion methods include riots at Friday night parties and pressuring trainees to espouse their motto, "The Elvis

Grotto rescues cavers." When asked about the rumors co-chairman Craig Ferguson made this statement: "These are very serious allegations. While we have no evidence at this time, the matter is being thoroughly investigated. Any members found guilty will face the Elvis Grotto Spanking Committee™, presided over by the honorable Kristin Possom."

CLUB POSITIONS (HMM....)

An unexpected election took place recently as Amy Johnson asked to step down from her position as club Secretary to focus on her graduate work. A tough campaign took place and finally Matt Burnett won out over his opponent, Matt Burnett.

Former Safety Committee Chairman Ed Fortney moved to northern Virginia to accept a job. (For some of us cave trips aren't as fun without Ed's humor, charm, and peanut M&M's.) The vacancy was recently filled by Mike³ Horne, who jumped quickly into his role and has begun regular Safety Committee meetings (see article by Dave Colatosti, p. 10).

Jackie and Bob Hoell have pulled up stakes and moved to the D.C. area for Bob's new job. Jackie, long-time club Faculty Advisor, has been replaced by Walt Pirie.

The club has gained three new voting trainees: Jessica Dorr, Matt Burnett, and Chris Hibshman. (Now doing shots with the Vice President is optional.)

DANGER! MATURITY ALERT

Dave Cinsavich is finally going domestic. He recently purchased a house on Grove Avenue in Blacksburg, and he and Kim Hansen moved in early November. Dave has been spotted in local stores purchasing fancy rugs and draperies. Suspiciously, the couple won't be hosting the yearly *Trim a Tree* party this December. Some wonder if Dave and Kim are becoming "too good" to have cavers puking in their home, setting coats on fire, and running over their cats.

HALLOWEEN FESTIVITIES.



Dixie Caverns crew before the make-over.

Several trainees and a few members took to the dark side this year at Dixie Caverns' *Haunted Caverns* the week before Halloween. The crew consisted of a dead bride (killed by her hubby on their wedding night), a gruesome butcher (carving a screaming man), an evil executioner, a poor innocent spun into a cocoon, and assorted dead corpses wandering through the cave.

The Halloween party took place at the Bat Ranch. Molly Lucier dressed as Dorothy, Ray Sira as the Scarecrow, and Nathan Sharp as the Tinman, so naturally there was a pair of red and white striped witch legs protruding from under the house.

The Steves were in full force that night. Steve Wells and LePera came as giant mushrooms, and Amy Johnson and Kelly Rose came as Steve Wells and LePera. The more alcohol you consumed, the harder it was to know which Steve you were actually talking to.



Shroom and Anti-shroom.

The Heaven's Gate group passed out pudding and "quaaludes", and laid down covering their faces with purple cloth at the appropriate time.

Over the Halloween weekend several old farts went hiking in celebration of Russ Peterson's 50th birthday. Now that's scary!

CAVER INJURIES

Steve Wells is definitely vying for the "Most Injured Caver" award. He broke his ankle on a cave trip and wore a cast for about eight weeks. Shortly after that healed he went on a Mexico survey trip with Carl Bern. When Carl had the nerve to let a huge rock land on and injure his leg, Steve retaliated by tearing some ligaments in his "good" ankle. Now that he's left with no good ankles, we wonder when he'll start breaking wrists.

That's the news. Hope to see everyone at Banquet!

Photos by Eileen O'Malley

TRIP REPORT: CALDWELL CAVE

BY MATTHEW M. BURNETT

It was pretty nice for 9:30 when I met Carl and Mike at Signout. We gathered our gear, loaded it in my car, and set out to Wild and Wonderful West Virginia. Caldwell is just past Honaker Cave on that really narrow, winding road that leads out to nowhere. Of course since it's a little bit further down the road, we had to drive a little past nowhere.

It was about noon when we pulled off the road to change. It was not any warmer than it was earlier that morning; in fact, I thought it was quite colder. But at least it wasn't snowing. I vow I will go on a caving trip on a beautiful day just so I won't freeze my butt off changing.

The entrance to Caldwell is pretty impressive. You enter by going down a mild breakdown slope into the side of the hill. It's a fairly big entrance. Once inside, we climbed up a 12'-15' drop into a narrow passageway and began to rig the first drop.

The path we took to get through Caldwell had four drops. Since there are not many rig points at the top of the first drop, Carl and Mike rigged it about 10' away from the drop. It was a pretty interesting rig in that the passageway had to be padded more than the actual drop. It took about an hour to get that rig set up and I spent the time watching the sunlight come through the entrance. Finally the first drop was rigged and Mike went down first. I followed behind him and learned that he had already rigged the second drop in the time it took me to rappel down.

The third drop was more of a nuisance drop that could be free climbed or avoided by taking tubes to the left of the drop. Carl chose to climb down the drop while Mike took me through the tubes (being the true adventurer that I am I chose to postpone the climb as long as I could).

It was just after this section that we entered into what I considered the most interesting room of the cave. This room was very active and it was covered in flowstone and cave popcorn as a result. There was a very narrow foot path to use to cross the room without causing any more damage to the room than was necessary.

Eventually we made our way to the fourth and final drop. There were two methods of rigging this drop. The whole drop could be rigged at the very top (and again the rig point was a good distance from the drop itself), or, since it was a three tiered drop, we could climb down the first two tiers and rig the last part. Mike mentioned that Steve and Steve had climbed down to the last tier and rigged that drop. This didn't make me feel any better since Steve and Steve are considerably better climbers than I am.

After about 15 minutes of deciding how they had climbed down and how we were going to set the belayer, we decided to try this approach. Mike and Carl

dug out two footholds for the belayer to set his feet since there was no good place for him to sit. This was a quality belay method. It was a 40' drop in all with the first tier being 15', the second being 10' and the third being about 15'. Carl thought that if he fell he would just bang all the way down to the bottom while I took a different perspective: I was just going to fall straight down the 40'. It was impossible to fall straight down I later learned, but I was confident that I could find a way. The climb was much easier than it looked. The hardest part was stepping off onto a ledge on the opposing wall and straddling the drop. After that it was just an easy chimney down. I went back later with Steve LePera and found out that he didn't like that climb at all since the rock you had to step out on didn't look too stable.

The second part of the drop was a very easy climb down through a little running water and the last part was a simple arm rappel. Before I went over the last drop, Carl told me to watch out because I would be rappelling over a lip and if I banged my hand on a rock, it would automatically let go of the rope and I would fall. I don't know what I was doing but apparently I wasn't listening. I went over the side, banged my hand, let go of the rope and gave myself a heart attack as the ground began to rush toward me much faster than I would've liked. Luckily I wrapped the webbing around my arm twice so my hand caught before I completely lost control and landed on my face. Climbing out the fourth drop was also pretty eventful. I was climbing up the middle part when a drop of water splashed just right (or just wrong) and extinguished my carbide flame. There I was, in the middle of a climb without any light (I gotta get an electric helmet light) when I muttered a short prayer and for the first time ever managed to light my carbide light with one hand while it was still mounted on my helmet.

By this point in my trip my backpack was completely destroyed. I had to keep it closed using a 10' piece of webbing, a carabiner, and a rock. It was a pretty ugly set-up, but with a lot of work, it barely stayed together. The rest of the trip out was pretty uneventful. Mike and I climbed up the third drop while Carl crawled through the tubes and on the second drop I performed what is becoming my signature move: prussiking into a tight squeeze.

We left the cave at about five and it was still cold. It's spring, it's not supposed to be cold. I figured that it was just my imagination until I saw the snow flurries. I have got to go caving when it's warm.

Epilogue: I went back to Caldwell and it wasn't as exciting as I remembered, although that could have been because I didn't fall off any rappel lines or climbed out over any drops, although I did destroy another cave pack. Damn that cave! It's going to make me buy decent equipment despite all I can do.

AND NOW A WORD FROM OUR SPONSORS

BY BOB AND JACKIE HOELL

(Scene opens on poor, underfed, muddy, and worst of all, sober cavers.)

Sally: Have you ever seen cavers like this and wished you could do something? Well now you can. In just a few minutes I will provide you with a toll free number you can call to help needy cavers right here in America. But first, let's look at their plight through their own eyes.

(Scene switches to small meeting room, filled with young, unfed, sober cavers.)

Mike: It's been nearly two weeks since I've had my last beer. (Crowd gasps.)

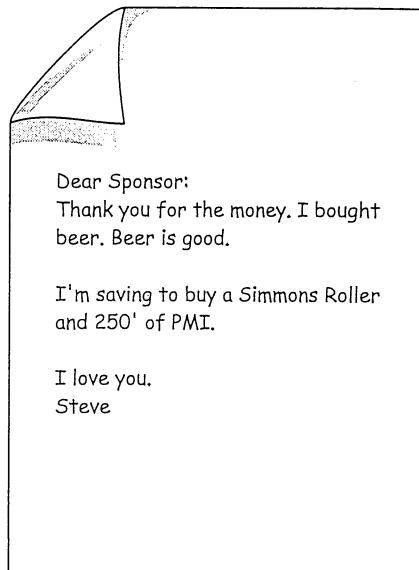
Mike Continues: And I have been forced to hitchhike out to Pig Hole and Buddy's. I borrowed a rack from Dave but now he wants it back. I don't know what I'm going to do!

Steve: Well, at least you can hitchhike still. Ever since I started caving with VPI I haven't had the money for a shave OR a haircut. And laundering clothes is out. No one within miles will pick me up. At least my dues allow me to get carbide. Otherwise I'd be trying to cave in the dark!

(Scene switches back to Sally outside cave entrance.)

Sally: You've seen these pitiful souls (muddy cavers emerge from cave in the background). In fact, you might have been one years ago. Wouldn't you like to sponsor a needy caver? Just a dollar a week or a dollar per cave visited could be used to help a needy caver. Ten dollars a month will get you a picture of your needy caver, and you can choose a boy or a girl. For 15 dollars a month your own personal needy caver will write you a letter, explaining how your money has helped them.

(Scene switches to letter.)



(Change scene back to Sally.)

Sally: Other sponsorships are also possible. For twenty dollars a month you can receive a "special" picture of you boy or girl caver. Or, you might choose to simply adopt your needy caver and have them live with you. You decide, but make the choice that will allow these helpless souls face mud and darkness with the thought that you care about them!

WHAT IS THE CAVE CLUB ABOUT? BY BILL STEIER

While sitting at a party recently the someone asked the question, what is the Cave Club all about anyway? Parachuting was the snappy response offered by one of our club members. At the time this seemed to be a joke of an answer offered to the party crasher who obviously was only looking for a keg and some free beer for the evening. But the more I think about the this question, though, the more I wonder if parachuting could be a reasonable response. We need to look no further than the German club to find an organization whose name offers no clue to the purpose or activities of the club. Delta-Delta-Delta, Phi-Sigma-Chi, what do these names represent? The Greek letters which represent so many fraternities and sororities also give no hint of the organization's goals and activities.

Back to the question at hand: What is the cave club all about? What is in a name? I think most people, even those of us who are non-cavers would say the cave club is about caving. But what does caving mean? This answer is too simple; we must look deeper. Our group must be defined by what we do, and how we do it. This article is meant to be a challenge, a spark, an inspiration for our active club members to help define what the cave club is about.

Octoberfest this year was an exciting time for many club members who got their first chance to browse through the VPI Club Files. I was certainly impressed to find five four-drawer metal filing cabinets, nearly completely full of past Trogs, publications by other grottos, cave maps and various other tidbits of club

history. The files are a wonderful example of what the cave club is about; they have preserved the many accomplishments of our club over its 54 year history. Unfortunately most of the information seems to be from long ago, when the "old farts" actually went caving. It's exciting to read about what these people did and think about what we know about them today. But I also wonder what people will think in 20 years from now, what will they read about the cave club of the 1990's? How many of us have preserved our names in the club's history, by putting our names on a new cave map, or writing a memorable *Trog* article? We all should want to leave our mark in the club history. We are the old farts of the future, scary thought I know.

So the challenge is to go out and define what the cave club is all about. Exploration, discovery, science, mapping, preservation, caving safety, rescue techniques, parachuting, making life-long friends, and beer drinking, of course. Everyone needs to take some type of initiative. The files are filled with maps and trip reports from caves all over southern Virginia, not just Giles and Montgomery County. So just do it! Go caving in a new place, start a new tradition; the club belongs to all of us and we are the ones who need to define what it is about. And after we do these things we should write a wonderful *Trog* article so Eileen won't need to bug people!

Parachuting, you know I have never been parachuting, would anyone like to join me for a jump?



MAÍSTJARNAN, HRÚTAGJÁRDYNGJA ICELAND. MY EXPERIENCE IN A LAVA CAVE.

BY AMY JOHNSON



el the majority of the island. I had to take it. The volcanoes, glaciers, and waterfalls were all spectacular, but as a caver I have to say that one evening that will remain incredibly vivid in my memory is the day I visited a lava tube.

My knowledge of lava tubes was limited before I visited Maistjarnan (may-styar-non: the May Star). Sure, I knew that as lava flowed, it could possibly form underground channels, but I really had no idea what to expect. Would this be like the large tubes in Hawaii that one sometimes sees on the Discovery Channel? How different are these caves from limestone, besides mineralogy? This is what I found.

The first thing that I learned is that it is incredibly tough to find a caver in Iceland. I got a few links from people in the caving community, but none that could really help. Finally, I was surfing the net and found a page that had escaped me in all my searching: The Icelandic Speleological Society. After looking through the page and finding some information about these caves (like the temperature, a "balmy 32 °F"), I immediately sent an email to the address and within 24 hours, I had a reply. Sigurdur (Siggi) Jónsson, the ISS president, had agreed that he would personally take me caving during my stay. It took a couple of weeks in Iceland before the cave trip was possible, but when the evening came, I was ready.

Maistjarnan is a small lava cave located in the basaltic Hrútagjárdyngja (hroot-a-gyowr-ding-ya: the Ram Fissure) lava flow. Lava caves form as lava flows through specific channels, much like a river. As it flows, the channels can close or connect as the lava cools along the edges and top to form a tube. The lava is then directed over the tube, enclosing it. These tubes are opened later by seismic activity (earthquakes!) or sinking due to the weight of the rock. Although this cave was small, it was well chosen by Siggi. It told me some stories of its formation.

The passages criss-crossed like a braided stream, illustrating its formation by the flow of liquid rock. At one point two channels or pathways crossed at right angles to each other. Siggi informed me that this was the only known occurrence of this in Iceland. The floor of the cave mainly consisted of smooth pahoehoe lava,

This past summer I had the opportunity to see one of the most fascinating places on earth, at least for a geologist. I had been planning to go to Iceland for some time, but I had no idea when. The opportunity arose to study geology and geography and travel

which was very easy to walk on and easy on the boots. Some areas were almost perfect tubes surrounded by very smooth walls. Some of these walls were covered with silver water droplets, which are replenished very quickly, unlike those that take thousands of years to replace in limestone caves. Contrary to the belief that lava caving is just underground hiking, we did a lot of crawling. The crawlways always seemed to be filled with the sharp aa lava which made the fact that I had no knee pads painfully clear. Siggi explained that most tight passages were like this, making the smallest people unable to get through them. Usually they go untouched.

One thing that was surprising was the formations found in the cave. There were stalactites and stalagmites within the passages. Although different chemically, they resembled those found in limestone caves. The stalactites were the width of soda straws and curled at the ends, reminding me of helictites in limestone caves. The stalagmites were also thin and resembled an upside-down calcite stalactite. Although these formations have moisture on them and many of the stalactites have that familiar droplet of water at their ends, the cave is not still growing. The formations were created as the lava was degassing, forming local cooling, and will not change unless they are broken. The minerals found in these formations are plagioclase, silica, clinopyroxene, sphene, hematite, and magnetite. Secondary alteration (new minerals formed by hot vapors in the system) did occur, but again the processes that formed them are not still occurring. The secondary minerals present are hematite and gypsum. The deposited gypsum resembles calcite flowstones here. The hematite even looked much like a flowstone, but formed from oxidation of lava that broke through the tube from the surface and collected around existing rock within the tube.

During our trip, Siggi pointed out a wide crack. This crack was not caused by contraction during cooling; he said it was too large. Tectonic activity (rifting, or the pulling apart of the island which is setting on the Mid-Atlantic Ridge) created it. We were walking through an area full of faults! This was a great reminder of how not only this cave came to be, but all of Iceland.

Since this trip, I have grown even more interested in lava caves. I'm not saying that limestone caves aren't wonderful. It's nice to squeeze through a pinch and not have to worry too much about ripping your coveralls. It was a unique experience that I hope to have again. Anyone want to go?

(Just a quick note. If you want some more info on lava caves, there's been some recent articles in the NSS News and a great scientific paper on the formation of one lava tube cave in Hawaii. Surprise the keeper of the files and ask for them.)

A REVIEW OF *MIRRORS KILL*, BY JACK CURTIS BY JERRY SHAPIRO

Published 1995 by Crown Publishers, Inc., NY, NY.

I was puttering around in the Fairfax County Library one day and did a search in the card catalog for Speleology. To my pleasant surprise, I was referred to the heading "Caving". Must be a caver or friend of cavers assigning subject headings for the Library of Congress. I wrote down the call numbers of a few books that sounded interesting – the library has a decent collection – and was intrigued to find a heading "Caving–Fiction".

A novel about caving!? This I had to see.

The dust jacket reviews of the author's previous novels promised a great treat in store: "extraordinary", "intricate plot", "will be taking its seat in the hall of honors", "stunning", "mesmerizing", and "a pleasure to read".

Well, Jack Curtis may have written some fine novels, but this is not one of them. The characters are shallow and unbelievable, as is the plot. The writing is pedestrian. To say something positive: he does succeed in unraveling the plot slowly enough that I kept reading the book to see what would happen.

Briefly, the story features caver Tom Bullen. Bullen had been used as a courier by a secret British version of the CIA (the Friends). His international cave trips gave him good cover, and the spooks paid his way around the world. He is now recruited into finding out about the mysterious killer(s) of his uncle, a prominent politician. As the novel progresses Bullen uncovers a multi-continental illegal nuclear arms sale, finds the murderer of his uncle, and links it to other murders which had been unsolved, all the while leaving the CIA and its British counterpart panting in his wake. He also shoots and kills a few people, kicks another to death, and beats up a few others. Sounds just like the life that cavers I know lead.

As it turns out, the subject heading in the library must have been some caving cataloger's joke. Caving plays a minor role in the novel, although Bullen's chimneying skills play a crucial role in a couple of desperate escapes from men with guns. I get the impression that the author has caved once or twice, and had a terrifying experience. Here's his description of a first time chimmier as they are exploring for a potential hiding place in a small cave: [Note: It is the author's choice, not mine, to refer to the male lead by last name, and female lead by first name. I am not even sure what her last name is, it is used so infrequently]

"She was...pretty well dressed for climbing, but it took her four goes even to find a horizontal balance. Each time she slipped back, she felt the sting of a graze on her back, through the tweed, through her shirt. Bullen said, 'Lift your head up, move your

whole body backward, and push with your feet.'

"I can't look up in to darkness. I don't know what's going to fall on my face.'

"Sonia got her shoulders to the lip of the ledge and Bullen caught her under the arms. He said, 'Keep the pressure on with your feet, or I'll be taking your weight. Keep walking.' She went a couple more steps and he was able to haul her back onto the shelf. She sat with her head bowed for a moment."

It should be noted that this tense climb was about ten feet. They get down from this spot, but later have to quickly go up there again as the bad guys are on the prowl. Here is the description of Sonia's second climb.

"She threw herself against the wall, slammed her feet against the rock, pressed back with her arms, and started the climb. Each time she gained height with her feet, she pushed up with her arms, then jammed her back against the rock in order to stay suspended. There was pain she was going to feel later; while she was climbing she knew only the headlines of panic.

"A moment arrived when she knew she wasn't going to make it. Her back slipped several inches down the rock face and although she tried to compensate by maintaining pressure with her feet, she could tell that if she lost any more height she would fall backwards down the shaft. It wasn't far to fall, but the noise would be enough. She was taking the skin off the heels of her hands trying to lever her torso upward."

This is not the end of Sonia's terrors in that little cave. She and Tom believe that their pursuer has left the cave, but they are not sure. She hears a rustling sound. Is it the killer still stalking them? No, it is worse, it is BATS! And they are using the chimney as their exit passage.

"One of the bats nicked her hair, another touched her cheek, and then they were all around invisible but thick in the air, clogging it, passing in a tangled cloud inches from her eyes. If they had a smell, she could smell it; if they had a taste, it lay on the tip of her tongue. Sonia gave a little shriek of revulsion and threw herself sideways...."

And finally Tom calms her down by covering her head with his jacket.

While I found Sonia's adventures in the little cave amusing, they are not unrecognizable as a first timer's experience with caving.

But what does the author think that cavers do when they are not encumbered by novices? We first meet Bullen in a cave in somewhat desperate circumstances. The cave is flooding, he is lost in virgin ("uncharted") cave, and he is solo caving. He is rappelling ("roping") eighty feet down, using an interesting

technique, "paying out rope through the rappel rack attached to his chest harness." He walks through the flooded room, towards a passage leading out, and steps off a ledge hidden by the water.

Recovering as he falls into now chest deep water, he finds a narrow squeeze heading up, and advances through it by the "coffin length". "His shoulders brushed the sides." Horrors! He gets stuck in a curve, and passes out from panic. "He felt the weight of thousands of tons of rock above him and darkness everywhere; darkness lapping him; darkness like something solid he must push through." He comes to, gets unstuck, finds that the passage opens up, and leads into the entrance room. As he leaves he thinks "Not dead then."

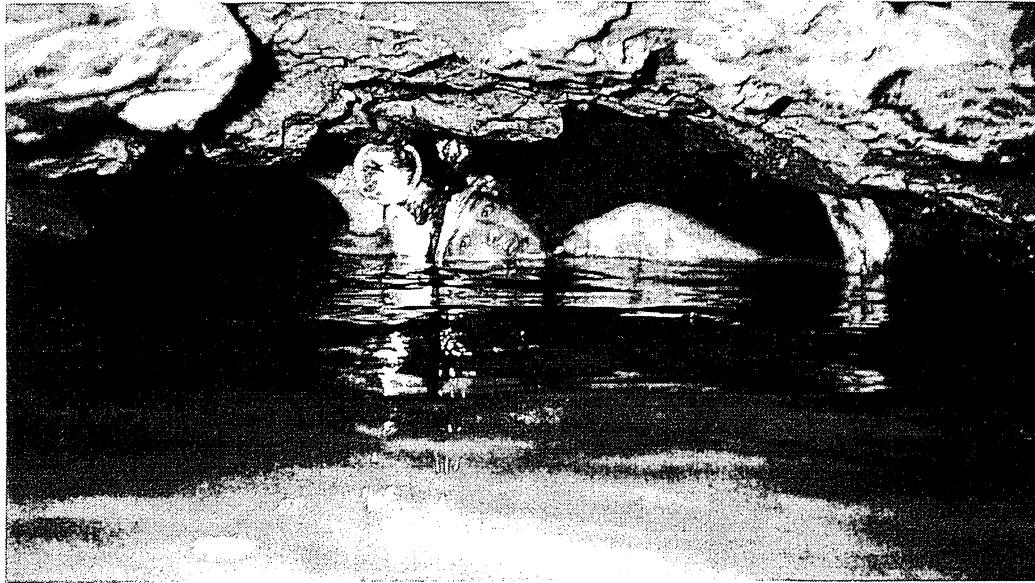
What is really strange is when the author expounds on what cavers (who think nothing of chimneys and bats) must actually be like. I have already mentioned the comic-book superheroish adventures of Bullen as he single handedly thwarts an international criminal enterprise. But why does he go caving?

"Easy to work out", [Tom] told her. "People descending into the dark to look for caverns older than time. Think of caverns, think of Mother Earth, think of being in the dark, think of Doctor Freud".

When asked by someone else what he looks for "down there in the dark", he responds only "Dark gods." He caves alone, he says, "to test himself against the darkness."

And when a person is needed to conduct a life-threatening sting operation to trap the last of the bad guys, it is his caving psyche that makes him volunteer. "Bullen remembered the narrow tunnel, the dogleg that had trapped him, the unending, stifling blackness. He remembered that there was only one way out and that was to keep going. He felt himself edging forward into the dark once more. 'Me,' he said, 'it'll be me.'"

So, dear reader, if you are a budding author, it seems that the field of espionage caver fiction is still in search of its great novel. And when you've written it, I'll be waiting to read it.

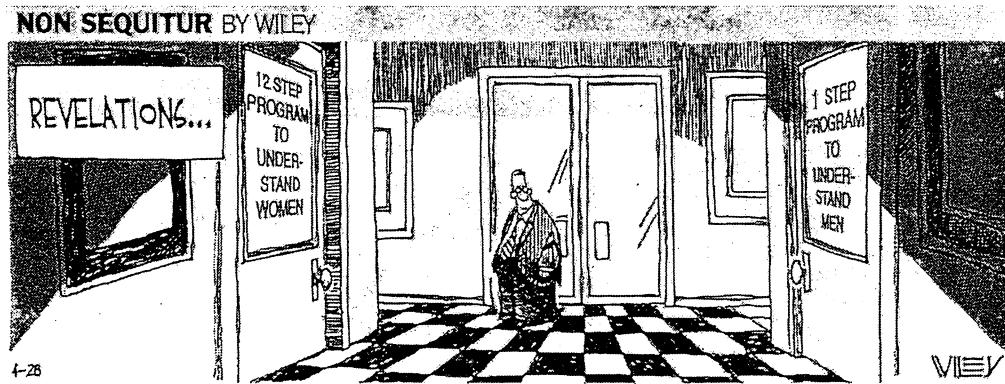


Sonia? No, it's Missy Columbo navigating the water exit of Smokehole.

Photo by Ray Sira.

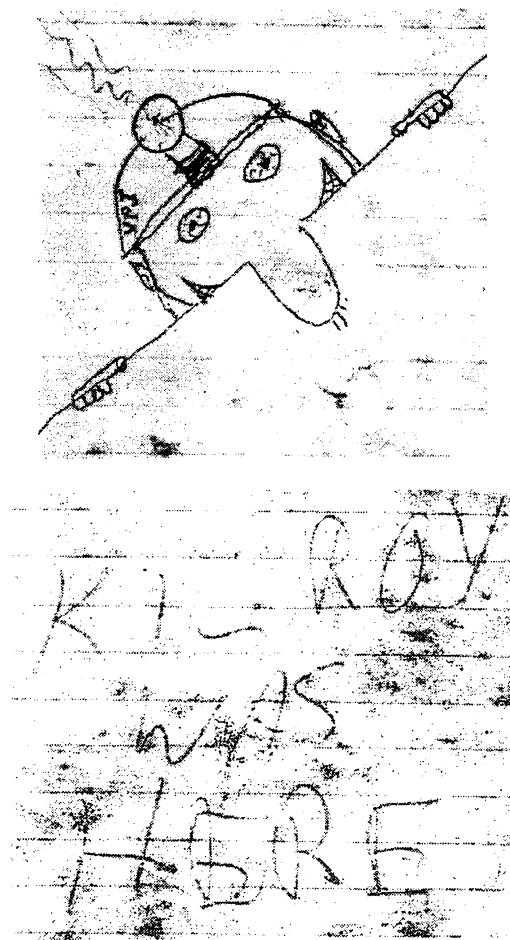
**QUOTEABLE QUOTES
BY VARIOUS FOLKS (CAUGHT UNAWARES)**

- VST to PB: "How much have you had to drink?"
PB to PB: "Well sir, that's a difficult question to answer at this time."
- AD to SL: "Holy Shit! I wasn't looking for something this big."
- CR to KS: "You've caused more bruises than caving."
- CR to AJ: "Are you getting married?"
AJ to CR: "Are you kidding? I can barely support myself. Forget about supporting [boyfriend's name]."
- CG to EOM: "We've had some tests already."
SK to EOM: "Yeah, because next week is the drop dead date."
- PB to CG: "One day you wake up and discover you've married an idiot."
- DC to KH: "I've been shushed at a Friday night party!"
- SL to BS: "Mike's super small. I'm not that small...well, I guess I am pretty small."
- KR to SW: "Caving with Nathan and Kirk is like caving with a stereo."
- JD to trainees: "If you're not dead, you've made the right choice."
- ER at OTR: "Every time my sister gets married, I get arrested."
- EOM to SK: "He said I compliment myself too much. If that's the worst thing about dating me, I must be pretty awesome."
- AW to SK: "Jim outranks guano."
- SK to SL: "Well you can tell she's not a guy; she doesn't have that third arm."
- WO to crowd: "Why do old farts have beer bellies? So the trainees can keep up!"



HESS' HOLLOW CAVE REGISTER FROM PIG HOLE CAVE
SUBMITTED BY STEVE LEPERA

November 15th, 1981 to November 9th, 1997



11/15/81

This is not a 'bide dump. Please No Graffiti on walls! We now do not have to destroy and deface the beauty of this cave. This register was contributed to Hess's Hollow, Pig Hole Cave, Giles County, Virginia, on November 15, 1981 by the following:

Mike King
Scott Love
Ralph Fortune
Greensboro, N.C.

Please sign on following pages

1/16/82

Myra E. Numan
Michael A. King
Greensboro, NC
919-288-7068
Don Anderson where are you!

Mike Loves Myra!

Great drop why doesn't anyone descend into it?

2/6/82

Maureen Handler VPI *→ we did!*
Great drop but what a hairy lip
Knox Worde 4 harelipps NSS 19926
Mike Moore - 3rd time!
Bill Kelly NSS 22794
fun!
Jim Washington VPI 247 NSS 22333

2/26/82

Doug Feller BRG

3/15/82

Susan Brooks BRG
Larry Arrington
David Rose BRG NSS 18378

5/22/82

Richard Brubaker
ITT Cave Club
Would you believe i came down here for a lost glove

7/25/82

We found your glove! The remains are on the rock! We're psyched! Someone else is as stupid as we are to come down this hole! But, it's a great hole! We are on our way out the ass end to go drink a beer with Cecil.

Scott Love
Mike King
Greensboro, NC CGG
(Cave god grotto)

9/26/82

Stephen Lancaster
NSS#21312 VPI 134
Here I sit again belaying, writing, and watch a moldy glove.
George Clotfelter
VPI Cave Club Trainee
John M. Macdowall
Pretty fuckin' awesome!!!



Al Ostrowski
Another trainee lost his virginity - felt great!
Jim Washington here again
Ed Fortney VPI #231
Teaching Trip
Karen Michelsen - trainee
James Cummins
Danny Sebolt
Jim Costain
Who needs ropes?!

12/7/82
James Cummins
Bob Dawson
Peal Harbor and Hess's Hollow

12/11/82
Keith Smith VPI 239 NSS ????
Neat Drop!
Kay Jacobsen
Linda Oxenreider
My device is too slow!!
I'm 2 yrs older - Becl Himmelman
Ed Fortney #231
Chris Smith
Colleen McBane

3/12/83
RASS Steve and Jane Silverman
George Langley
Scott Harry
Keith M. Smith VPI 239
Jim Washington VPI 247

3/25/82 [PROBABLY MEANT 3/25/83]
Mark S. Banks
Kent Garvis NRSC

6/22/83
John Costain
From the far east to Hess's Hollow what a trip
James Cummins
This beats the hell out of Wind Cave S.D.
The only place better than this is Mr. Fooz!

7/8/83
Ben Johnson
NSS 16374
VPI 202
BRG
on to dope's drop
Tom White Jr.
NSS 22540
Tidewater Area Grotto

9/18/83
Bob Alderson VPI 162 NSS 14667
David Socky NSS 16334
Linda Vest 22712
Keith Goggin 23572
Blue Ridge Grotto
(Keith Smith, Jim Washington, & Ed Fortney sure
come here a lot - they must not have anything better
to do) Bob A
Boy, and they said my rope was dirty!



11/13/83
Fuck you Bob Alderson
Ed Fortney
God's mercy may be infinite, but there's always work
for a good paramedic -

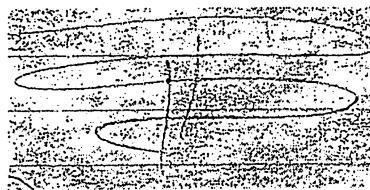
10/11/83
Radford University Recreation:
Lyle Tefft: 35 Radford Village, Radford

10/23/83
found soft virgin passage at the bottom of dope's drop.
Lawrence Britt
Mike Futrell
Kogi Hirota
Topo Ford

11/12/83
Explored whole cave pretty much - neat
Mick Foot NSS#20574
Bill Foot NSS#13420

Howard Kirkland NSS#23788

Hank Heidt



11/13/83

John D Lohner VPI 227

Fucking A NSS 20908

"Bandaid" Bob Wright

New to VPI - It's been good fun

12/17/83

Ed Fortney VPI#231

I was inthused by the free

Chris Smith VPI

the echo's pack one

Dell Olgman

Chip Brosseau Baltimore Grotto

Barb NAPPEL Virgin Caver

12/18/83

Danny Sebolt

Mark Clark

May Mays

good trip!

2/25/94

Tom Hay

Jack Davis

Karl Karch

Rocky Ward

3/17/84

Mike King NSS#24421

Boy, sure has been a long time since I've been down here. Feels good to see people using this damn register I put down here. Going to check out dope's

drop and lead back up. Great cave! Found part of a flip-flop - wonder if it belonged to the guy who lost his glove -

The free is always great. I thought there was a beer stand down here, but someone lied.

It's been fun, but if we are to make it back to Greensboro by 7:00 PM we had better get our asses on the move! We will be back in a year or so to check on things. -Carl H. Shytle

8/27/84

Bert Behlow Clemson (NSS)

Rick Jones VPI

10/7/84

John Dawson

John Costain

two of a kind

A hell of a caving team.

12/28/84

VPI

Keith Smith

Larry Britt

Alex Handler Shit!

Mike Moore

Alessandro Villa-gomez Mexico

1/12/84 [PROBABLY MEANS 1/12/85]

Jeff Jablonski VPI 274

Koji Hirota VPI 275

Marty Hanson

Shawn O'Dowd

Ladies and Gentlemen, Yes, that is Koji Hirota that actually went caving!

4/14/85

Ed Fortney VPI 231

You'd think by now I'd know my way.

Mavtin D. Leggi

Dorothy Allard

This place is crawling with cave herpes

They told me there was beer down here. Bill E.

4/27/85

Mark Hanosky

John Jockelt

Kenny
& me, Margaret Lake
What a lip!
Thanks for the paper!

7/14/85
Dan Folts
David Engel NSS 13057
Praise the Lord!

8/23/85
Carl Shytle

I came back to this cave for the beauty it offers, but awaiting me at the bottom of the entrance drop was dead cow. At least it appeared dead, i.e. no pulse, extreme decomposition, eyes fixed and dilated, rigor mortis, etc. You could at least let the unfortunate one be the missing Jimmy Hoffa or someone I could tell my grandkids about. Well, it's about dinner time and I know where I can get my hands on some free "prime rib". Take Care!

Mike King

Well, I'm back down here. Been here twice this year and didn't get to rap down. Well, Carl and I did it a new way for us - from the Empiors Ledge. Feels great to be down here! And boy to Carl and I have a great feast in store PRIME RIB. Oh maybe a week or so out date. But cavers are a tough breed and raw meat is tasty. But really folks, Cecil is going to haul it out. Well, we are heading to smoke hole next.

Think Mud

12/14/85
Jim Washington
Cecile Pirie
Susan Setzler

May all you meet have their hearts turned toward you.
If not, may God turn their ankles!
Sue's first vertical trip! And she's enjoying it so far.

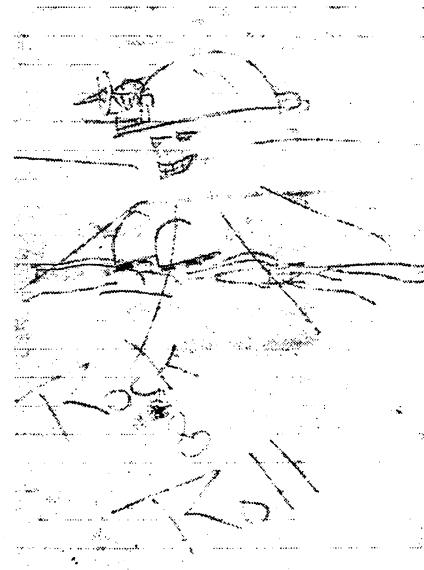
1/5/86
Incredible 0100 hours. So much prettier at night my first time down here. Prusic. My first time for both
Michael Lee Shuim
It's been real! 2nd time down and still lovin it!
David Alan Faulstf

5/18/86
M. "Kamikazi" Dyer - good drop! Fun! Fun! Fun!
RASS - NSS

Darrel Worsham - 25410
First time down here. Great drop down here.
Steve Faison NSS
Pat Hicks
Clover Hollow too wet today.

10/25/86
Well, the cow is marbled very fine - excellent prime rib in store. We won't let the bones get in the way. Vertical always great. But we forgot the T-P so Ed (Boynton) may shit in his coveralls on the way up. Could stink up my damn rope! Ed's first vertical trip - he's done super (of course he had great teachers). Out to smoke hole - very dry today.

Michael King NSS#24421
Carl Shytle NSS#25408
Cave God Grotto Greensboro
Is not "King" full of shit! = E.B.
Ed just shit - man this place stinks!!
People with bowel problems should not be allowed in a place such as this. Ed Boynton just created an environment that caused the bats to wake. I would write more, but the smell forces me to move on. P.S. That is the worst embalming job I have ever seen i.e. The dead cow. Later, Carl H Shytle NSS 25408



A rainy day outside. Nice and dry inside. 1st time down - and most largest time! You've got monster balls to do this stuff. Thanks to the master cavesmanship of Mike King and Carl Shytle I've come this far. If I ever get to write another term paper I can talk about this. Until next time... Ed Boynton

12/6/86
Darkness is an enemy not a fear so we came we saw we went down and we overcame.

With balls and guts and all the B-S
Ho Yah!
Go Ranger
Go Marines
Mike Fogg
David Faircloth

12/20/86

This trip is almost exactly 1 year after sues trip on 12/14/85. Of course she is on her way to mexico to do Golden Adrenus or however you spell it and we are here.

Oh well, it is a pretty interesting pit.

David McClurg

Dave McClurg & R Reid

Good day for losing things and dropping things. Fun pit. Had to come back - another pighole squealer in the works? Ask Dave.

WAKE UP TIME TO DIE

4/12/87

In again
Wet Again
Muddy Again
Happy again
Gone again
Howard Kirkland #23788
In too
wet too
muddy too
happy too
but I aint made it out - yet!
Martin L. (Free at last) Ernst

5/2/87

Oh Yea! The ropes a might too short - kept things interestin'. This was my first trip. Way back to trainee days.

Slow rope.

Doug Bruce

R Reid

3/8/87

Darrel Worsham

Here we are again. Clover Hollow is too wet and Newberry-Bane is taking water also. Don Grossman His first time in the Hollow

Steve Fairson

Getting ready to mitchell over that hairy lip at the top

3/7/88

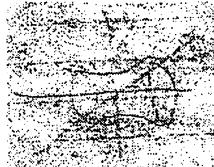
Jim Washington
Beth Wichterman
Jim Gamble
VPI was here again.
We came
we saw
we GCCS'ed

3/19/88

Cecile Fannes
Hi mom! Doug Bruce "Mr. Plastic"

4/1/88

E.L. Sanford
Keith Furrow



April Fools day and I have finally done hess's hollow.
Tom Bank
Jim Washington led trip

4/10/88

High Lead GCCS Cavers
Doug Bruce
Craig Roberts
Dave Colatosti
GCCS!!!

9/24/88

Joe Zokaites
Knox Worde
Mike Futrell

RESCUE?

10/2/93

Here via empire ledge drop Joey Fagan VPI 224 NSS 10666
Steve Wells VPI 336
Pete Sauvigne VPI 193
Amy Stirgwolt VPI 342
Raymond Sira VPI

Jennifer Savage VPI
Steve LePera TBA
Dave Warren VPI 309

11/26/93
Bill Steier VPI 341
Steve Wells VPI 336

12/4/93
Steve Wells VPI 336
Bryce Bolton VPI 327
Preparing for Golandrinas and Wa-was - mex 93 - in 2 weeks. The ox is hitched and we're ready to go - Yufi-size!
Bob Cosby VPI #339
Finally [something] after 4 trys about time to get in this damn cave.
Jim Thomas 35708
Kingsport Tenn Powell mtn grotto

2/19/94
Rob Boyd
Mark Nelson
Chris Malack
Doti Eckert
Philly Grotto / CCCC / NSS
Long weekend of trips at lovejoy's farm, Craig Co. VA



5/4/94
Steve Wells VPI 336 NSS 38022
Mike Mirro VPI 346
Ray Sira VPI NSS 22440
Bob Cosby VPI 339

5/7/94
Steve Meyer
Western MD Grotto
Great Cave
Bitchin!! Lee Blazeh

11/11/94
Dr. Guano
Wendy Guano, Jr.
Murph

12/8/94
Day after Pearl Harbor Day
Mike Mirro VPI 346
Carl Bern VPI 350

2/9/95
RU Rock&Cave Rescue Team

4/29/95
Steve Wells VPI 336
Nathan Sharp VPI 353
Steve LePera VPI ISE [351 upside down]

7/23/95
LDR Jen Savage VPI
Got here:
Tim Wortley BOSTON
Mark Scott -----"
Kevin Harris -----"
Lavren Sherman -----"

11/1/93
Here I sit by myself having enjoyed the drop. For everyone complaining about the lip - Rig a aider on a short pig tail over the lip - Then just walk out.
Page Ashwell NSS 39880

11/18/95
First time since '87 and cool as ever.
D. Colatosti VPI 305
Pig Hole Squealer Award going at it again
Reggie VPI 296

12/3/95
John Deighan 1st time
Viktor Sinkovic 1st time
That crawl is kinda cool and stuff It made me feel all tingly inside, but not as much as the drop. Burt.
Janice Matheson - wow! My first vertical cave.
Nathan Sharp VPI 353
Steve Wells VPI 336
Jessica Dorr eww! My arms hurt.
Todd Pinsonneault
Wheeeeeeeeeee!!!!
Loved the mud slide!

12/9/95
Steve Wells VPI 336
Steve LePera VPI 351
John Deighan

1/27/96

Standing Stone Grotto
Mike Oatney 8222
Tom Baker 41----

3/1/96

Page Ashwell 39889

5/17/96

G Nussbaum
W. Stanley
J. Hrinkevich
A. Bailey

5/24/96

G Nussbaum 15449
S. Moulton
A. Baker
S. Muldoon
Shannon Carey

5/24/96

Erich Christophersen RU - YeeHa
Catherine Dawn Anderson RU We had a blast
Kirk Felton - Strength, Wisdom, Perseverance
Stacey Shifflett RU We conquered
Bill shorton - Thanx to passing time
Dave Dunghoo
Wendy St---[couldn't read signature]

6/14/96

W. Hanson 35577
P Ashwell 39889
Dumb drop too!

6/22/96

Benjamin Townsend
Linda Waters
James Kruger
Reggie Reid

3/9/97

NUSS 15449
J. Hrinkfuluh [couldn't read]
A40000 (?)

3/14/97

J. Branet
Aooo Owen
Hutch Hutchinson
Brian McGrath
Mark Rostafin
J. Hrinkevich
Jody Marshall
Becca Holt
Jeff Wasserman
Poppy Goforth
Jotu Regentrl [couldn't read]

4/4/97

Amy Johnson VPI 359
John Deighan VPI 361
Chris Rourke VPI 360
Matthew Burnett

5/23/97

Zander Hendrick
Jim Basham
Chuck Baldth
Kristen Hicks
Kristen Sullivan
Eric Laprad

10/2/97

Mike King
Rob Helton
Greensboro, NC

11/8/97

Steve Wells VPI 336
Chris Rourke VPI 360
Katherine Shelor VPI
Jeremy West VPI
ANDY YEAGLE VPI
Steve LePera VPI 351

Register removed by Steve Wells VPI 336 and
Steve LePera VPI 351 on 11/9/97.

HOPING FOR VPI HELP WITH SPRING VAR!

BY JOHN FOX, NEW RIVER VALLEY GROTTO

The Virginia Region spring meeting will be hosted by New River Valley Grotto celebrating their 10th annual Cave Escape. The date is April 30 to May 3, 1998. Camping will be at Horseshoe Campground in Draper (exit 92 off I-81). Cost will be \$20.00 per person (camping Thursday night, April 30, is free). There will be a catered dinner Saturday night, and music both Friday and Saturday nights. Beside caving trips there are activities along the New River Trail, Claytor Lake, and children activities.

For up-to-date information on this meeting visit our web page at www.runet.edu/~jfox/nrvg/vars98.html.

We are looking for volunteers for vertical trip leaders and help with children activities. If you are interested, please contact George Maurnich at mtrogit@swva.net for cave trips and Tex at bandycrow@aol.com for children activities.

New River Valley Grotto Web Page:
www.runet.edu/~jfox/nrvg

Host VAR Spring '98 meeting:
www.runet.edu/~jfox/nrvg/vars98.html

Other cave listings:
www.runet.edu/~jfox/nrvg/ocl.html



Lee postcard purchased and submitted by Bill Steier. (Hey, big spender!)

FROM THE SIGNOUT
COMPILED BY YOUR LOVELY EDITOR

VPI cavers logged in 4827 caver hours from 11/9/96 to 12/6/97.

1/29/97	Cheve, Mexico	Steve Wells, Carl Bern	Lots of loose rock and car troubles.
3/15/97	Starnes	Chris Rourke, Sean Keane, Sara McNally, Matt Burnett, Carl Bern, Judi Wasilewski	I want it to be spring.
3/22/97	Paul Penley's	Steve LePera, Steve Wells, Matt Burnett, Chris Rourke	A lot like Newberries...only small and wet. Full of sleeping bats.
6/1/97	Caldwell	Steve LePera, Matt Burnett, Daryl Gardner, Kirk Digby	Always rappel with your pack. (Especially when your knots are int it.)
7/12/97	Cass Cave	Steve Wells, Dave Colatosti, Sandy Knapp, Ed Fortney, Ray Sira	Ed has been reinstated as a trainee nicknamed "Rock!". Private Ed.
7/27/97	Pig Hole	Steve LePera, Steve Wells, Walt Pirie, British guys and girls	Funny accents but they cave fine.
8/5/97	Tough Calf	Steve Wells and Brits	Cable ladder, photo, photo, 3D photo, photo, cable ladder.
8/27/97	New River	Steve Wells, Kelly Rose, Joe Rasnack, Steve LePera	Always remember your clothes.
9/7/97	James	Sandy Knapp, Eileen O'Malley, Chris McClaning, Aaron Gordon, Joel Bergstein	Here's a tale of the flame thrower, the 30 ft. belt, and the magic socks.
9/13/97	Stay High	John Deighan, Matt Burnett, Joe Thompson	"Hey, is this the right way out?" "Well, no. But it goes."
9/20/97	New Castle Murder Hole	Steve Wells, Steve LePera, John Deighan, Mark Morton	For once, Steve LePera wasn't the whiner of the trip.
9/20/97	Tawney's - Smokehole H ₂ O	Chris Rourke, Matt Fimrelli, Patrick Ryan, Chris Cherg, Rob Marshall	I wish I put more mud in Matt's ear.
10/4/97	Newberry - Baines	Chris Rourke, Dave Colatosti, Kirk Digby, John Deighan, Katherine Shelor, Sarah Matsch, Chris Garguilo	Long trip. Good trip. Big rappel. Some climb. Little mud. Much tired.
10/18/97	Giant Caverns	Steve Wells, Mike McAvoy, Jeremy West, Steve LePera, Chris Rourke, Suzie Warren, Jake (Chris) Brown	Chris looks funny with his eyebrows on fire.
11/8/97	Pig Hole	Steve LePera, Chris Rourke, Steve Wells, Katherine Shelor, Andy Yeagle, Jeremy West	Everyone who matters feels great.
11/8/97	Starnes	Dave Colatosti, Kirk Digby, Chris Garguilo	It's too bad you won't live...then again, who does?