

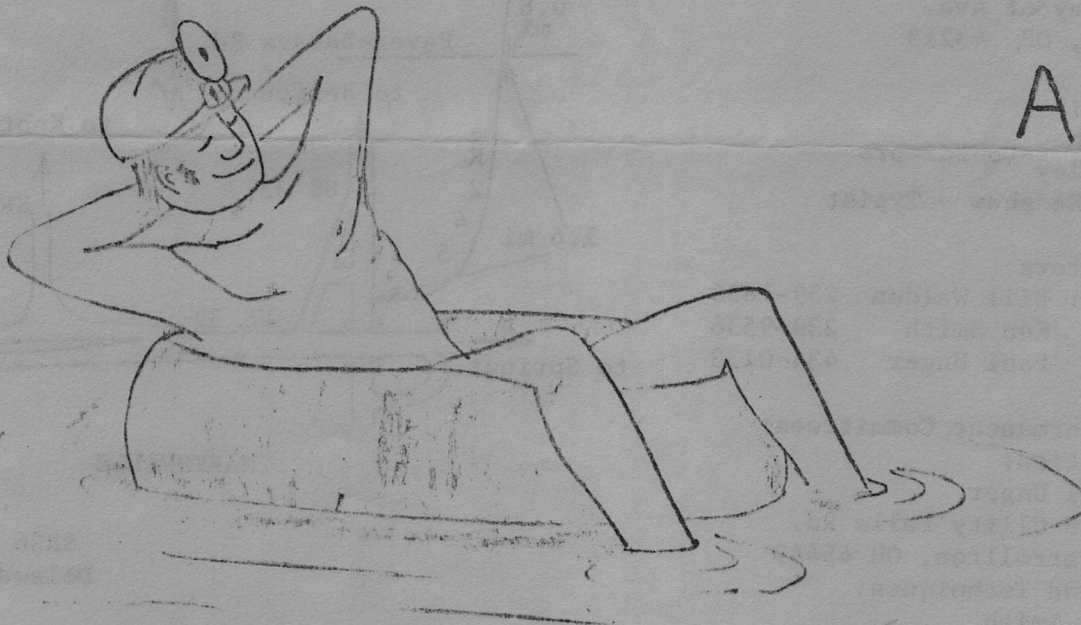
COG SQUEAKS

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Smith

NOTE: THE LAST ISSUE WAS JUNE-JULY—

NOT JULY-AUGUST

The Central Ohio Grotto of the
National Speleological Society

* MEETING NOTICE *

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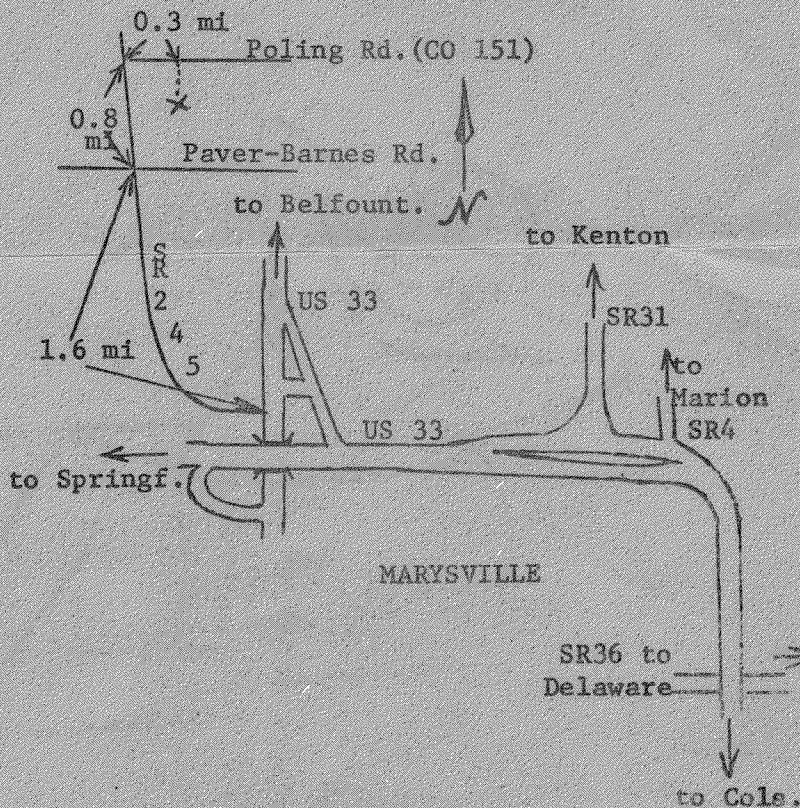
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Paul Unger
2629 Clifty Falls Rd.
W. Carrollton, OH 45449

Safety and Techniques:

Ken Smith
523 S. Weyant Ave.
Columbus, OH 43213

The September meeting of the Central Ohio Grotto will be at the home of Jake and Kathy Elberfeld, Marysville, Ohio, on September 10, Friday, at 8:00 p.m. Although the program for the meeting has not yet been determined, the weekend activities include an airshow in Marysville on Saturday. Bring your sleeping gear for Friday night. A map is given below (which I tested and found to be easy to follow and accurate); Jake has promised to post some signs. Please note that the house is about one quarter mile off the road and cannot be easily seen from the road. If all else fails, Jake's phone number is 644-5848.



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CAVE PHOTOGRAPHY

(PART I)

by Ken Smith

INTRODUCTION

The most logical place to begin any overall discussion of a type of photography is with cameras, since without them one cannot put the rest of the material into proper perspective. If, for example, your cave camera will not accept alternate lenses or auxillary lenses, there is little point in studying techniques of close-up photography. With this in mind, let us begin our discussion with cameras and, while we're at it, some of the other hardware that is useful under cave conditions.

THE CAMERA

Anyone who knows anything at all about photography knows that there are nearly as many different types of cameras as there are people to use them. Cameras commonly used for cave photography fall into three broad categories: 1) simple 2) 35mm range-finder and 3) single lens reflex (SLR).

Of simple cameras, the most common type seen today is the Kodak Instamatic. I have seen good pictures (even a couple of blue ribbon Salon quality) taken with this type of camera, but it has so many limitations that it is hardly worth the effort of carrying it into the cave. One is restricted to on-camera flash, since external units cannot be "sync"-ed to the shutter and no variation in shutter speed is possible. On-camera flash will almost always result in a flat picture. In addition the flash bulb is invariably an AG-1(B), which is far from being the world's most powerful light source; it is useless much beyond 8 feet, even under the best conditions. Moreover, the film comes in bulky

plastic cassettes, which cannot be expected to withstand cave conditions. If this is the only camera you can get, by all means use it, but I'm certain the only advantage you'll get from it is the knowledge that you need a different camera. Don't expect to take anything but single flash snapshots.

35mm is probably the best all-around format for cave use. The film and the cameras are reasonably compact, and yet the resulting negative is large enough to permit prints of 11x14" without too much grain (depending on the film type, of course). 16mm (half-frame) cameras do not, in my opinion, offer sufficient advantages (e.g. size and weight) to compensate for disadvantage of the small negatives and slides they produce. Similarly, large-format cameras (e.g. 2 1/4 x 2 1/4), although they produce much larger negatives, do not offer sufficient advantages to offset their bulk and prohibitive cost. Finally, a sufficiently large selection of film types is available in 35mm to make it the format of choice for most cavers.

The basic camera for anyone interested in cave photography, then, is the 35mm range-finder. It permits almost any kind of photograph to be taken easily (with the possible exception of close-ups, for which the SLR is infinitely better suited); it is fairly rugged; and it can be had for quite a bit less than a small fortune. I got my first one in a pawn shop for \$30, and after 6 years of cave use, it is still functional. Not all cameras have the same capabilities, and the one you select for cave use MUST have the following to permit any versatility:

- 1) A "B" shutter speed. Multiple flash pictures cannot be taken without the capability of keeping the shutter open for long periods of time (unless slaves are used).
- 2) A PC adapter site (or a hot shoe to which an auxillary one can be affixed). For one

flash shots (or two or three with slaves) one needs the ability to synchronize the flash to the shutter; otherwise tripods should be used.

3) A manual override of f-stop; i.e. the ability to specify both the f-stop and the shutter speed. Cameras that automatically set the f-stop once the shutter speed has been selected are useless under cave conditions.

4) An attachment site for a tripod.

For many years I used nothing in the cave except the "El Cheapo" 35mm that I picked up in the pawn shop. Eventually I was able to see my way clear to buy an SLR, and I must admit that it is certainly much easier to use in the cave. I think that the thing that impresses me most about my SLR is how much easier it is to focus under the dim light available for carbide lamps, flashlights, etc. My range-finder had a split image type of focus (one image clear, the other yellow). It takes quite a bit of light to make the yellow image show up, and consequently the camera is extremely difficult to use at any distance less than 30 ft. (= infinity). My SLR (currently a Canon FTb) uses a ground glass focusing device; I have never had any problem with light levels in achieving a sharp focus. For anyone interested in doing close-up photography an SLR is closer to being a necessity than a luxury, since it completely eliminates the problem of parallax. Finally, although my range-finder would accept auxillary lenses, a "guessimation" correction of the focus was necessary. No such problems are encountered with the SLR. Probably the biggest inhibitory factor for most cavers in choosing between a range-finder and an SLR is the price. Anyone who is interested in buying a camera, SLR or other, should consider ordering it from New York or Chicago. Advertisements for the many photo

dealers who accept mail orders can be found in many photographic magazines (Popular Photography and Modern Photography are especially rich in such adds). You should be able to save easily 30-40% on the price locally, and unless you live in the same state as the store, you will not have to pay any sales tax. Make sure that the camera comes with a FACTORY guarantee.

Once you decide on a camera you should consider buying at least one additional lens (whether an interchangeable for an SLR or an auxillary for a range-finder)-- a wide angle. If your camera is a range finder, it obviously comes with a standard lens, usually 40-45mm (focal length), and if the camera is an SLR, the standard lens is generally 50-55mm. You can get around this with an SLR by buying the body and lens separately, but it's not worth it, since it will almost certainly cost you more and you'll want that 50mm lens anyway. The wide angle lens is used (by me at least) about 50% of the time. The percentage would be even higher were it not that I take so many close-ups, for which I use the 50mm with close-up lenses. Many people do not like to use lenses of less than 35mm focal length; they claim too much distortion around the edges. I swear by my 28mm. Auxillary wide angles are usually closer to being 35mm effective. There is a world of difference between a big room shot done with a 50mm lens and one done with a 28 mm lens. The wider angle lens not only gives a view of a greater portion of the room but also gives it more of a feeling of depth by putting in more detail close to the camera. It is not a good idea to let this nearby detail be too close, since distortion will result, but walls 20 ft. or so from the camera are manageable. In addition, there are instances in the cave when you cannot get far enough away from your subject to use anything but a wide angle lens. And BUY CHEAP! Unless you're a professional, there is no need to pay \$150 for the lens. I never buy Canon lenses for my Canon; I've found Soligor to be just as good for my purposes at half the price. (Cont. Next Mo.)

TALES FROM THE FIELDHOUSE

BY LOU SIMPSON

Back to Bob's Bolt Climb in Goldson's

Encouraged to return before dark by Rufus Hyden's reports of copperhead attacks in the area, Barb Unger, Dave Socky, and I carefully hiked to the entrance of Goldson's Cave, prepared to return to the upper level reached by Bob Wood's bolt climb in 1972. The clothesline Bob had left to re-rig the climb unfortunately broke, and we were faced with the prospect of re-climbing the wall using two bolts and a cable ladder or aborting the trip. Our objective was to survey the remaining three hundred feet in a side lead going to a sixty-foot dome.

Dave volunteered to attempt the climb. I can't remember the exact sequence of events, but somehow we managed to get up to the 40-foot ledge in two hours. It was not certain whether we would do things in the correct order so as to get our hardware back afterwards, but we miraculously succeeded. At one point Dave had to climb down the cable ladder to retrieve a bolt and carabiner, and I recall removing another on the ascent up the rigged rope. Most challenging of all was Dave's repeat of the ladder climb. Even with a belay bolt, it was not safe, since the climb was so high and the rope was Bluewater II, which has very little stretch.

We rigged the ladder to the second drop, down this time, and finally reached the survey. Even here, it was a problem proceeding because of a difficult chimney. We mapped the 300 feet, most of which was fairly challenging surveying because of the low ceiling, level changes, or narrowness. It was ten o'clock when we finally reached the car parked at Hyden's farm. Our hike back was very slow and careful. The connected portion of Cave Creek now has a

length of 73,367.1 feet (13.895 miles).

Sloan's Valley Grand Central Station Register

On a brief tour from Railroad Tunnel to Scowling Tom's entrances, Dave Socky and I removed the used paper and broken pencils from the register a Scowling Tom's and replaced them with new ones. Although the pages are in part illegible, it is possible to determine most of what is written on them. Since Jack Sigafos, Jr. was there (May 1976), there have been several other parties, primarily from Williamsburg, KY, and Cincinnati, OH. This register data, as well as trip sign-out data, should be given to the grotto librarian, Paul Rowley. I again experienced difficulty opening the NSS-styled register, and would not have been able to do it at all, if I hadn't had pliers.

SERA Cave Carnival

The 1976 Southeast Regional Association's Cave Carnival was held at Jellystone Park, near Guntersville, Alabama. Barb Unger and I drove there July 23 and met Dave Socky at the park. Dave had spent the first half of his vacation trying to go caving out of Louisville. The next morning Dave got up early and went to Fern Cave to do the famous Surprise Pit, 437 feet deep. After bouncing the pit, ascending in something like 45 minutes, Dave went to another cave to get out of the heat. Barb and I went with a large party, including Bill Deane, to Guffey Cave. The cave consisted of several decent walking passages and some vandalized formations. The barbecued spareribs at the banquet (picnic) were superb. Following this, we watched slides of deep pits in the southeast and Mexico and slides of other regional meetings.

Back to Crump's!

This report is a bit late because I'd hoped one of the others would write it up.

Dave Socky, Carolyn Herel, Barb Unger, Lario Yerino, and I went back to South Crump Avenue May 15-16. Crump Spring Cave is located in Hart County, Kentucky. Lario had begun caving only six months prior to the trip, and has taken an interest in the endurance caving Crump's offers. His background as a long-distance runner explains his interest. Before I met him, he wrote in a letter that he thought he'd like to go from the entrance to the Base Camp in Happy Crawl in three hours. I consider five hours a more reasonable time. We awoke the morning of the trip to the mooing of the cows and the "riveting" of the frogs. This was Carolyn and Dave's first trip to the legendary bust-ass cave. Briefly, the sequence of events during the trip to Base Camp involves a 30-foot ladder climb a few hundred feet inside the single entrance to this ten-mile cave, a few more short climbs down, a 300-foot wet, low crawl, a brief walking passage (no floor), chimney down, climb down another eight-foot ladder, and crawl and crawl and crawl. Then Thin Man's Misery, a narrow, tortuous canyon, then some floorless popcorn bellycrawl, and you are finally in a decent walking passage, Sex Alley. At the far end of this 1500 foot stretch, the fun begins, with some chert crawls, a long, sometimes wet, bellycrawl called The Wimper; and finally, Laceration Lane, a gruelling 3000-foot crawl, low at times, never higher than three feet. You struggle through a constriction at the HST Memorial Dig (Harry S. Truman), crawl some more (of course), and you are at the Chert River. Then a chimney up to Happy Crawl, a nice place. Lario wanted to go there in three hours, but we took five.

There are two sleeping bags and much food at Happy Crawl, but we did not plan to use them. Lario attempted to cook some Vienna sausage over a stove there and ended up dropping

most of it on the sand. We crawled through Happy Crawl, not so happy toward the end, and emerged in the beyond-the-beyond -- Crump Avenue. Our objective was to map an upper level atop a poorly described chimney in a side passage off the south part of this mile-long trunk. The climb, it turned out, was very difficult. Dave and I got up there, with help from Lario. After much searching, an alternate route was found and all made it up to the survey. However, the new passage was not large, and surveying resulted in only a few hundred feet mapped. Dave dropped his carbide lamp down the narrow canyon and used his spare, without reflector, for several hours until he found a way down to get the lamp. We tied in to a precious survey, when we found we were really at the top of a canyon already mapped. So our contribution didn't exactly rate a designation of scoop.

The trip out was the usual drag-ass, taking about seven hours. I don't remember much about it because I was asleep. As usual, we ate and drank everything in sight and crashed, waking in pain a few hours later as the herd of cattle came back to moo at us.

CONSERVATION ALERT

To: Everyone

July 26, 1976

Re: Release of DDT as a Chiropteracide by Environmental Protection Agency.

Astounding, but true, as Ripley's used to say. For control of rabies no less! We all know that DDT is bad stuff, and the consequences of its use on the cave ecosystem could be catastrophic. Write EPA and the Center for Disease Control and tell them what you think of this scheme.

Environmental Protection Agency
Charles L. Smith
Special Registrations Officer
401 M St. SW
Washington, D.C. 20460
(continued on page 68)

MAPPING WOLF RIVER CAVE By Lou Simpson

Wolf River Cave, in Fentress County, Tennessee, is considerably easier to get to than Zarathustra's Cave, and just as interesting. Barb and I first went there on July 3 with Dave Socky and Tom Patterson. We began mapping at the entrance, while Tom and Dave mapped toward us from a point farther in the cave. It was soon apparent that one could not map the huge passages quickly, and we tried to put in enough stations to aid sketching so that no great distances remained unmeasured. Leapfrogging the other survey team, mapping a loop or two, we finally came to a black void where the only reasonable thing to do was to map around the edges. We finished our first day's surveying with 3336 feet mapped, allowing for radial shots. Near where we stopped the stream passage continued upstream on a lower level, and we climbed up into upper levels into the hot fog. How about the name for the place being "Towering Inferno?"

Mary and Greg Kalmbach returned with the three of us on Independence Day (Bicentennial Day), and we continued the survey to the sump on the lower level, mapped a short lead to a dome and a long crawl that finally got low. Except for some minor clean-up, the lower level was now complete. Our total for the second day was 1363 feet.

Barb and I returned on July 17 with Joe Martin, and we mapped into the beginning of the second level, through "The Only Crawl," stopping at the beginning of a nice walking passage that leads to the rest of the cave. Several side leads that we did not expect go, did. Our total for the day was 1463 feet, which put us over a mile (6162 feet).

We finally got to see the rest of the cave on July 20, when Bill Deane and Mark Stock took us on the grand tour. Imagine the Big Passage of Sloan's Val-

ley, only dry. After an exciting eight hours of walking, Barb and I attempted to map some short leads farther out that wouldn't end, and Mark and Bill scooped an entrance near the Towering Inferno. We should have realized that the hot air meant an entrance.

Barb and I returned two days later and mapped 1469 feet, quitting in frustration when the side leads kept opening up into virgin cave.

We drove all the way to the cave from the SERA Cave Carnival, following Dave Socky, and mapped 853 more feet on the second level. What Bill Deane told us was a couple hundred more feet beyond our survey turned out to be another full day's survey, so we left it for another day.

Trips to Wolf River from the field-house in Pulaski County, Kentucky, involve a gruelling 55-mile drive over secondary roads. Therefore, we only went to the cave every other day. We returned three more times that week, mapping 1249 feet Tuesday in the third level, the big trunk. Sometimes the hundred foot tape was inadequate to measure the width of the room in one shot. We zig-zagged to more accurately define the rooms, and I triangulated on the lights of the other two for additional points. One room was 150 feet wide and 50 feet high, with a deep lake in a lower level at the bottom of the room.

July 29 we finished the survey in the second level (except for about a mile of loops and clean-up) and mapped 772 feet to the wet breakdown. After this we went to the third level to explore. Touring the already known huge passage, we chanced to push a crawl on the way out and emerged eventually in virgin trunk. On and on it went, finally to many fine formations, often difficult to get past. We also found a room with large gypsum crystals. We

were so dumbfounded we didn't want to leave, so we just sat there for an hour. We named our discoveries "Enchanted Forest" and "Treasure Chamber."

We were so excited we called Greg Kalmbach on Friday, and he and Mary came down that night, arriving at 3 a.m. We mapped to the wet breakdown in the big third level for a total of 2053 feet for that day, or a grand total of 12,697 feet (2.40 miles).

I can hardly wait until the next trip!

* * * * *

Conservation Alert - cont.

Send a carbon to:
Helen C. Fenske
Environmental Groups Liason
Environmental Protection Agency
401 M St. SW
Washington, D.C. 20460

Dr. William G. Winler or Dr. Everette Baker
Rabies Control Unit
Virology Division
Bureau of Epidemiology
Center for Disease Control
Dept. HEW
1600 Clifton Road
Atlanta, Georgia 30333

Haste is everything in this matter. We have learned that several state health officials have already petitioned for and been granted use permits for DDT on supposedly rabid bat colonies.

What next? Mustard gas for the snakes?

- Nick Noe, Chairman
Conservation Committee

(I have it on good authority, Dr. William J. Collins, Assoc. Prof. of Entomology, OSU, that amounts of DDT lethal to bats would also be lethal for all other cave life, both vertebrate and invertebrate. You might use this fact in your arguments. - Smith)

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