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# INTERCOM

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**The Iowa Grotto**



**May - June 2003**  
**Volume XXXIX Issue 3**



IOWA GROTT0 MINUTES  
May 28, 2003  
Regular Meeting

The meeting of the Iowa Grotto was called to order by Vice Chairman, Ed Klausner, at 7:30 p.m., with 10 members and 2 guests, present. Minutes from the April 23, 2003, meeting were read and approved. A treasurer's report was given which showed balances of \$686.07 in the Coldwater fund; \$298.43 in the General fund; and \$162.97 in petty cash.

TRIP REPORTS: John Kirk reported on his restoration trip to Mammoth Cave, Kentucky. Lis Robertson reported on her trip with Brad Smith to Speleofest, Camp Carlson, Kentucky. They also visited Wyandotte Cave and Squire Boone Caves. Dave Wysocki reported on his trip to the Speleofest where he visited Big Bat and Thornhill Caves. He continued his report on his trip to Coldwater Cave, in Iowa, a visit to Spring Valley Caverns, Minnesota, and a survey project in Wisconsin. Ed Klausner reported on his trip to Shadow Cave, Wisc., with Chris Beck, John Lovaas and two Wisc. cavers. He continued on a survey trip to Jones Co. with Chris B.. At Coldwater, he, Jeff Bushman, Bill Mulder, Jim Roberts and Dawn Ryan went on trips. Pat Kambesis also continued her dye-tracing project on Coldwater. FUTURE TRIPS: See the May Hotline and the N.S.S. News for details. OLD BUSINESS: Volume III of the Cave Map Book is available for \$25.00. Republished back issues of the Intercom are still available. The Grotto picnic will be at Dutton's Cave County Park, Fayette County, August 2nd and 3rd, 2003. The Grotto Library is still looking for library materials. NEW BUSINESS: The Intercom deadline is July 1st. The W.S.S. gave the Grotto Library a collection of over a dozen Hodag Hunt Guidebooks. There was a petition passed around to keep the N.S.S. Library at its present location in Huntsville, Al.. With no additional business, the meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m..

IOWA GROTT0 MINUTES  
June 25, 2003  
Regular Meeting

The meeting of the Iowa Grotto was called to order by Secretary Phil LaRue, at 7:30 p.m., with 6 members and 1 guest, Erica Smith, present. Minutes from the May 28, 2003, meeting were read and approved. A treasurer's report was given which showed balances of \$686.07 in the Coldwater fund; \$298.43 in the General fund; and \$162.97 in petty cash.

TRIP REPORTS: Phil LaRue reported on a orientation trip to Indian Bluff, Doll Cave and Werden's Cave with Hans, Johanna and Nathaniel Bluedorn, and John Kirk. FUTURE TRIPS: See the June Hotline and the N.S.S. News for details. OLD BUSINESS: Volume III of the Cave Map Book is available for \$25.00. Republished back issues of the Intercom are still available. The Grotto picnic will be at Dutton's Cave County Park, Fayette County, August 2nd and 3rd, 2003. There was discussion about the upcoming picnic, and the caves, which may be visited during that weekend. The Grotto Library is still looking for library materials. NEW BUSINESS: The Intercom deadline is July 1st. With no additional business, the meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m..

Mud Slide Slim

Coldwater Cave, Winneshiek County, IA  
May 4, 2003

by Ed Klausner

Chris Beck, Jeff Bushman, Pat Kambesis, Ed Klausner, John Lovaas, Bill Mulder, Mike Nelson, Jim Roberts, Dawn Ryan, and Larry Welch

Even though it had rained quite a bit recently and local rivers were high, the water level in Coldwater Cave was still relatively low. This made a downstream trip fairly easy. Now, the only question was what to do. I found myself saying that we could do Piss Poor Passage. Perhaps that was in response to Larry's suggestion that we try to do a few shots in the Sinus Passage. I thought that the Sinus would be flowing too heavily due to recent rain and didn't relish the idea of surveying until we were too cold to function. Mud Slide Slim was mentioned because the several hundred feet of passage was not included in the total cave footage due to the quality of the survey notes. We settled on Mud Slide Slim.

Pat and Chris spent the day dumping dye in a sinking stream on the surface and then set up to collect water samples every hour at the shaft for 24 hours. John and Mike took a trip upstream to exchange dye bugs. Dawn, Bill and Jeff joined Larry, Jim and me for the short trip downstream to Mud Slide Slim. We took some pictures of the recent excavations for the creation of the new entrance. We also took pictures of the passage going away from the mainstream that goes a short distance to a very nice dome. We noted a fair amount of recent damage to formations.

Dawn, Bill and Jeff then continued downstream to the area of the downstream breakdown just before the swim. Jim, Larry and I proceeded to survey Mud Slide Slim. The passage itself was relatively spacious. I did lead tape while Larry did book. There was a considerable amount of very colorful language because there was a fair amount of mud and it was difficult to read instrument and find a clean spot on a page to draw. Larry only wanted to do one shot into the passage and then go somewhere else. I managed to convince him that the passage was getting bigger. I think I actually said that there was walking passage ahead and the floor opened up to a canyon where there was a clear pool of water below. I don't think he bought any of it, but we did manage to get five more shots and it was big enough to turn around so we didn't have to back out. All in all, we got almost 90 feet of survey bringing the total survey length close to 16.4 miles. There is still more to survey in Mud Slide Slim.

We packed up and headed upstream none the worse for wear. When we got to the dome complex, we took a look at the recent progress made by Chris Beck and Charlie Knight. It was impressive. They had dug deep enough to be able to crawl to the end of the dig. We each took a turn digging as I just happened to have a trowel in my pack (just in case.) The passage was still easy to dig, as the top of the sediment was dry due to the air movement. From the end of where we stopped digging, it appeared that the sediment slanted down to the right (south). Who knows when it will reach the dome complex? Maybe there really is a dome complex.

Done (finally)

Undeserving, Hole In The Hill and Last Of 'Em Caves , Jones County, IA  
Nettle Cave, Jackson County, IA

May 31, 2003

by Ed Klausner

Gary Engh and Ed Klausner

For several years, we have been coming back to the same stream valley in Jones County. The main valley and several of the side valleys have contained many small caves with a few in the 100 foot range. It was time to finally finish the valley and work on something new. We had one small stretch of rock that we had little hope for, but had to check for completeness. This would hopefully be our last survey trip to this valley.

Gary and I confirmed land ownership with whom we thought was the owner and headed around newly planted fields for the rock outcrop we had previously seen from the other side of the creek. At the outcrop, we found three small caves. The first was a mechanical cave (Undeserving Cave) that was 5.2 meters long. The next two were close by and were both solutional. We named the next one Hole In The Wall Cave, but that name was already taken, so we'll modified it to Hole In The Hill Cave for this 5.9 meter cave. The last was the most promising, but quickly got too small to continue. Last Of 'Em was 5.4 meters, and like so many others in the area, was heavily visited by raccoons.



It was still relatively early, so Gary and I thought we'd do something else before heading home. We were pretty close to a family that we had talked to about two years ago. They told us about some caves that they knew in the area that sounded like Searryls Cave. Lee and Marcey offered to take us to one that Lee had dug open in Jackson County. The shelter opening was easily found and recognized by Gary. The part that Lee had dug open was small, so Gary and Marcey waited at the entrance while Lee and I went on. The tight spot was at the bottom of a short tube that would make it difficult to back out.

Lee had described the cave well and had once attempted to draw a map of it. I explained how we surveyed with compass, clinometer and tape and Lee expressed an interest in helping us survey. The cave was heavily decorated and had one room that had a 15 to 18 foot high ceiling. The cave will probably be in the 200 foot range when we survey it.

### Apple River

Close Your Mouth Cave, Muddy Mine, Not Muddy Cave, Apple River Mine, Jo Daviess County, IL

June 14, 2003

by Ed Klausner

Chris Beck, John DeLong, Ed Klausner, Elizabeth Miller and Bruce Oftedahl

Since it can be difficult to find new caves in the summer when the foliage obscures cave entrances, it's nice to have a few caves that need to be surveyed for which you have GPS readings. We decided to meet in a small town in Jo Daviess County, Illinois to survey several caves that Chris had found the previous winter. Chris had GPS readings for these caves, so we thought we'd have a pretty good chance of finding them.

Even though things looked different in the summer, the GPS readings helped Chris relocate the cave entrances. The first was an interesting natural crevice that had been mined. There were two entrances. One entrance was almost on top of the other. Basically, there was a lower passage, an 11 foot climb to an upper passage, and then an upper passage that doubled back above the lower passage. Total length was a bit over 55 feet. John did book while he explained some surveying techniques to Bruce that he learned from Pat Kambesis during one of her survey courses that John attended. I set one survey station on a cairn. When Elizabeth came to the cairn she wanted to know if the survey station was on the small shrine in the passage. The Shrine of Karen was thus named and may still be there if the raccoons haven't knocked it over. John named the cave Close Your Mouth Cave because that is what you had to do near the entrance to avoid getting mosquitoes in your mouth.

The next pair of caves were close to each other. John, Bruce and I surveyed the upper of the pair while Chris and Elizabeth surveyed the lower. The lower one was named Muddy Mine because it was mined and was muddy. One shot of 59 feet was all that was necessary as the passage was almost straight. The upper cave was not mined and for want of a better name was called Not Muddy Cave. It was 31 feet long.

The last cave's entrance was at river level and was in the middle of a bluff that had no trail along the base, so we had to wade to the entrance. Bruce did book on this stream cave that had a few formations. It was about 90 feet to an area where the floor rose steeply towards the ceiling and there was only a small hole at the back. Elizabeth was first and found that she could get through it. Chris was next and was too big, so Elizabeth looked around to see what was ahead. She chimneyed up a canyon to an upper level and found an additional 40 feet of passage going back towards the entrance. It had a 20 foot high ceiling. Chris dug enough to get through and the rest of us followed once Bruce caught up with sketching. We had expected a much shorter cave and were cold by the time we were in the back room. Once we finished and were out in the river; the warm water felt good as did the sunshine.

It was late in the afternoon and we were wet, so it was a good time to clean up and head home. There are a few more small caves in the area, so we have some more summer surveying.



### Tres Pozos (Three Pits)

Double Down Pit, Pozo de Lizardito, Bird's Nest Cave, Isla de Mona, Puerto Rico  
June 26, 2003 by Ed Klausner  
Chris Beck, Joyce Hoffmaster, Ben Hutchins and Ed Klausner

We had been told that temperatures on the meseta (plateau in the center of the Island of Mona) had been 135 the previous week. That seemed unlikely to us, but we took plenty of water, a GPS, maps and notes from previous trips and set off for a long hike. The first two and a half miles were along a roadway and going wasn't bad at all. We left early in the morning when temperatures were only in the low 90's. There was also some shade along the way, making it more pleasant. When we came to a bend in the road where the road dropped down to sea level, we stayed on the meseta by following an overgrown trail. We had all brought long pants as protection from the cactus spines and the four species of poisonous plants, but it was too hot to put them on, so we all opted for scratched legs.

The pits described by Edward Frank, et. al. (Karst Development and Speleogenesis, Isla De Mona, Puerto Rico. Journal of Cave and Karst Studies, V60: 2 p73-83) were about three fourths of a mile from the road. Chris had been to this area a year ago and we quickly found the first pit, Pozo Uno. Two other mapped pits were nearby (Pozo Dos and Pozo Tres.) The area was full of cactus, small trees, sharp rocks and shrubs. It was very easy to get lost and we kept in voice contact of each other while we searched for other pit entrances.

We found one fairly big opening and rigged one of our ropes to a handy tree and padded the edge carefully to protect the rope from the sharp edge. Chris and I decided to survey this one while Joyce and Ben set off to survey another pit nearby.

Double Down Pit turned out to have two levels. The first was to a breakdown area with about 30 feet of horizontal passage. From there, it was possible to climb down another 20 or so feet to the bottom where there was a pig skeleton. Chris did the sketching of this one.

Joyce and Ben named their pit Pozo de Lizardito for the small lizards they found. Ben sketched this 30 foot cave (20 foot drop.)

We then found a few other openings, but they presented problems. One had a 55 foot entrance drop but more sharp edges than we had pads. The only other good way down was over the roots of a Manzanillo tree that we knew was poisonous. We finally gave up on that one until we had more pads. Nearby was an opening with a wasp nest very close to the entrance. We declined that one also.

The last pit of the day was a 30 or so foot cave that Joyce sketched. It was getting pretty hot (lower 100's) and there was little shade. After rigging the rope to a handy tree, we did a bit more searching in the immediate area and then sat under the tree playing with pieces of bark that had fallen off the nearby tree.

On the way back to camp, We stopped at Cueva Doña Heña before the long, hot hike back. Doña Heña lived on the island in the 1940's. While we were hiking back, a truck from the Puerto Rican Department of Natural Resources with a ranger and two naturalists who were studying the giant iguanas found on the island, passed us on the road. We got a ride back, which was much appreciated. Once we were back at our campsite, we asked the ranger about the poisonous plants on the island. He drove us back up to the meseta and pointed out the four species. One we had correct (Manzanillo), one we thought was poisonous was just dangerous due to its spines, and the other three we photographed for future reference. It turns out that the tree we used for an anchor on all three pits and sat under and played with the bark while Joyce sketched was Papayo, one of the poisonous species. Ben had the worse reaction, blisters and welts. Fortunately, medication that we had eased the reaction and it didn't interfere with caving on Mona during the next week.

## Cueva de los Mariposas

Cueva de los Mariposas, Isla de Mona, Puerto Rico  
June 27, 2003

by Ed Klausner

Chris Beck, Dave Bunnell, Joyce Hoffmaster, Ben Hutchins, and Ed Klausner

One of our goals for this expedition to Mona was to find and survey the small caves near Playa Pajaros, our usual camping site. We thought we could complete this and finish the survey of the last two remaining large caves in this area in two expeditions. The remaining large caves are Cueva Basurero and Cueva Cabillo (a section is known as Cueva Pajaros and is also connected to Cueva Erickson.)

On the previous expedition, Mike Lace had found Pirate Cave (Cueva Pirata) north-east of our usual campsite and Chris Beck had found several caves south-west of our campsite. During this expedition, we had completed the survey of Cueva Pirata (just over 2000 feet) and nearby Lair of the Iguanas. Also completed was Cueva Cabillo / Pajaros and a good portion of Cueva Basurero.

Chris, Dave, Joyce, Ben and I set out for a cave south-west of our campsite at the end of the causeway. The causeway was built by the guano miners in the late 1800's and has since been abandoned and is overgrown. In sections, it still offers an easier route than the steep, overgrown cliffside. Chris had relocated the cave earlier in the expedition and had cut a trail through some of the Manzanillo, a poisonous plant that was thick in many places.

Our route followed the beach, past Erickson's cave, around the point, past Cueva Sopressa and then past an area where the cliff and the ocean are next to each other. Dave dubbed a traverse "Ed's Traverse of Death", perhaps due to the look of horror on my face as I realized that we would have to cross a small ledge that was along a sheer wall, that was wet from ocean spray, that offered few good handholds, and the drop was onto some large rocks sticking out of the ocean. The traverse was actually easier than it looked, and we were all quickly on the other side. We thought the crossing would be harder later in the afternoon when the tide was higher and rock wetter from the spray, but it was actually easier on the way back.

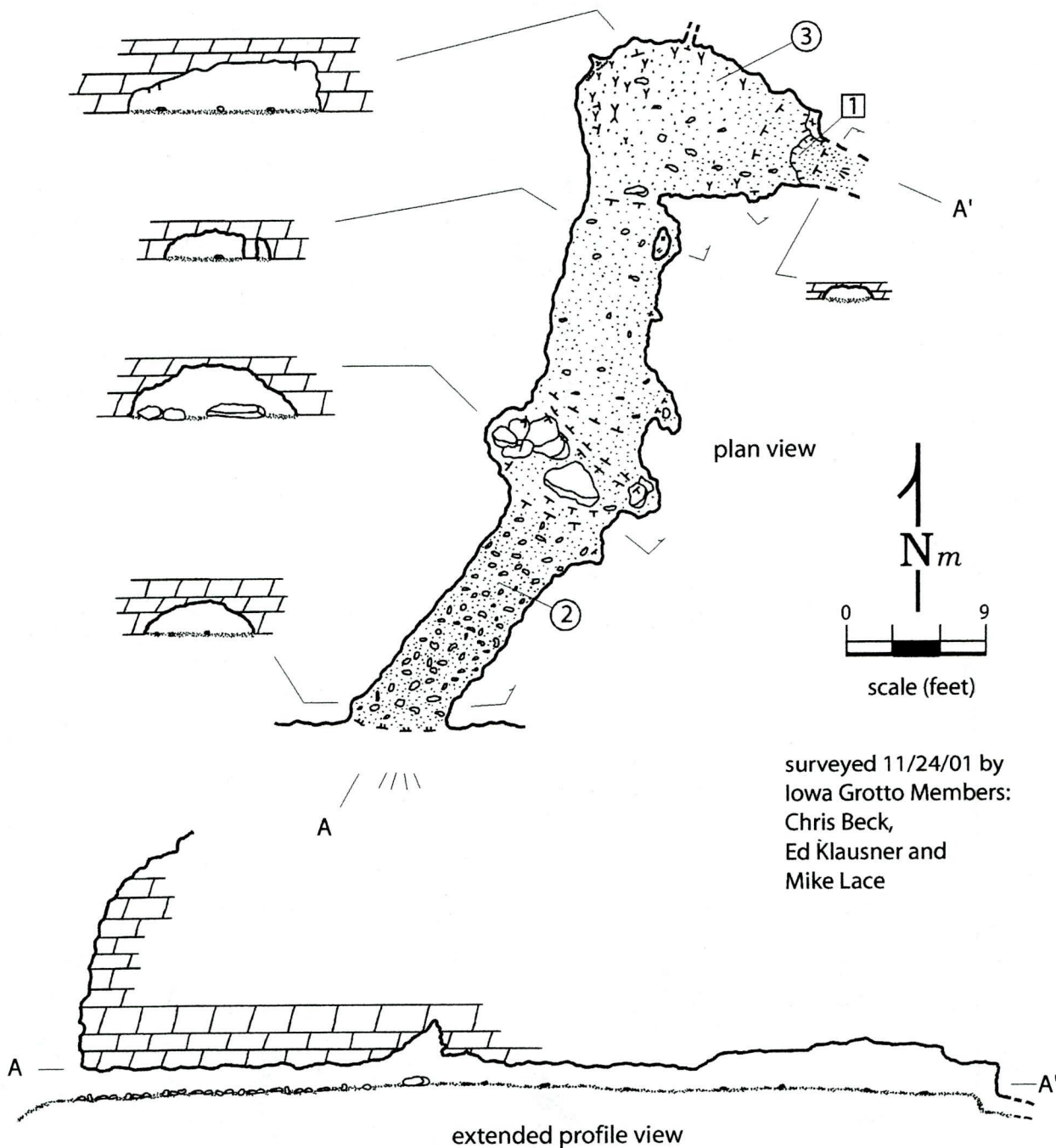
Along the way, we passed three other small caves that we left for later as we wanted to get to the biggest of the caves in the area. Chris had originally called the cave End of the Causeway Cave, but there were plentiful white butterflies at the entrance, so it was named Cueva de los Mariposas (Cave of the Butterflies). Dave, Joyce, Ben and I surveyed this 827 foot cave while Chris went off to find and survey another small cave in the area. I sketched the upper level, Ben sketched a small lower level shelter section. There was evidence of mining activity and we found an old miner's wedge in a back section.

Chris finished up his survey of a cave that he tentatively called Plank Cave. He will probably rename the cave. It had been raining, so we sat around a while to give the rocks a chance to dry off a bit before crossing Ed's Traverse of Death. We had planned on at least one return visit this expedition to survey the other known small caves and look for additional caves past the end of the causeway. I don't know where the time went, but we never had a chance to return to this area, so it will have to wait for the next expedition.



# Decent Cave

## Jackson County, Iowa



surveyed 11/24/01 by  
Iowa Grotto Members:  
Chris Beck,  
Ed Klausner and  
Mike Lace

N.S.S. standard cave map symbols  
total surveyed length = 57.8 feet (17.6 meters)

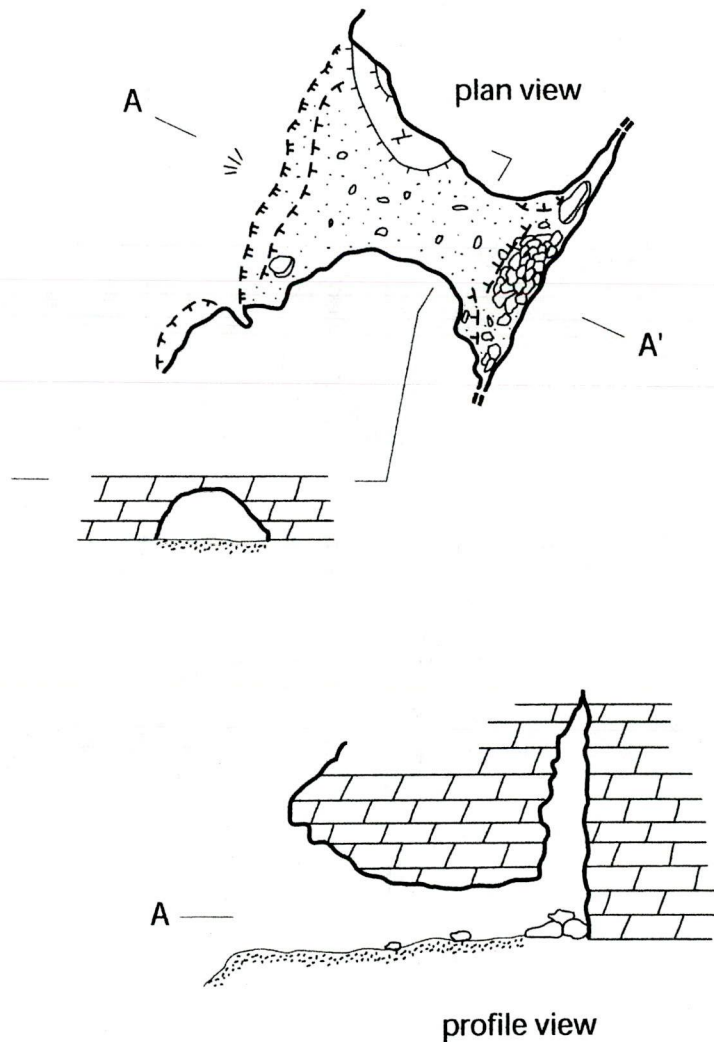


Klausner 2001



# Cottonball Cave

Jackson County, Iowa

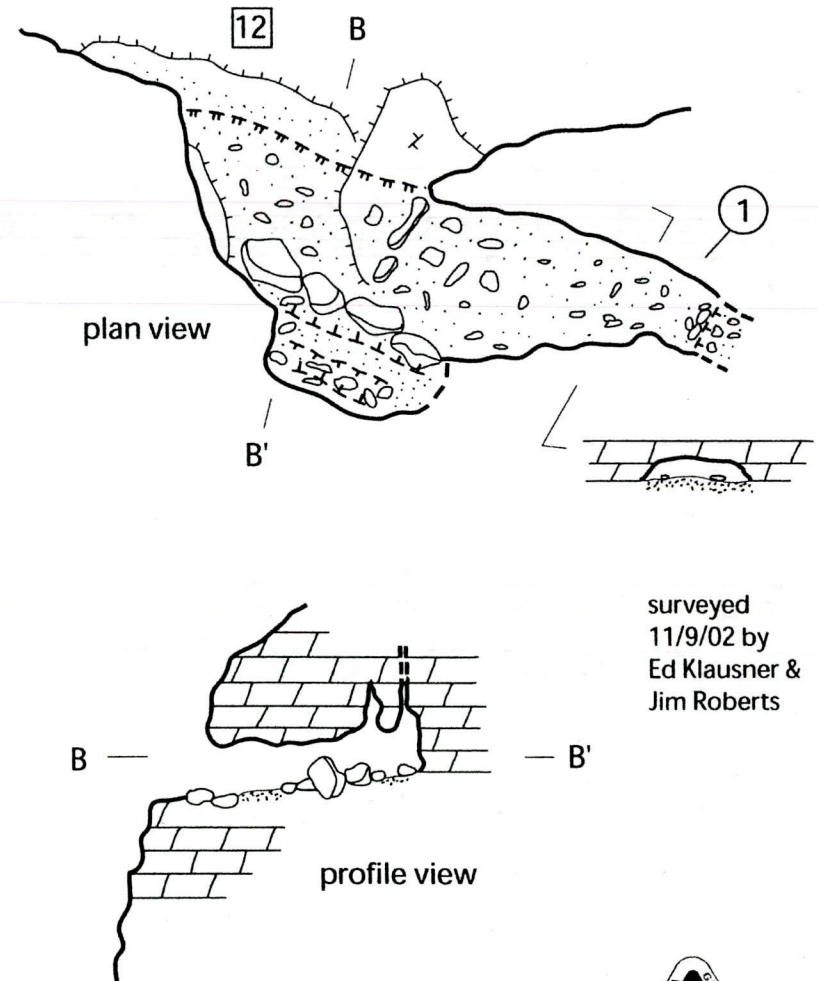


total survey length = 16.0 feet (4.9 meters)

surveyed  
11/9/02 by  
Ed Klausner,  
Mike Lace and  
Jim Roberts

# Good Breeze Cave

Jackson County, Iowa



total survey length = 26.0 feet (7.9 meters)

surveyed  
11/9/02 by  
Ed Klausner &  
Jim Roberts



Klausner 2002