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Scott Dankof

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January - February, 2004

Iowa Grotto

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Iowa City, IA 52244

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Cover Photo: Coldwater Cave, Iowa. Photo by: Scott Dankof

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IOWA GROTTO
National Speleological Society
P. O. Box 228
Iowa City, Iowa 52244

Chairman - - - - - Mike Lace
Vice Chairman - - - - Ed Klausner
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Volume 40

Issue 1

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IOWA GROTTO MINUTES
January 28, 2004
Regular Meeting

The meeting of the Iowa Grotto was called to order by Chairman Mike Lace, at 8:50 p.m., with 15 members and 3 guests present. A visual presentation on the hydrology of the Coldwater Cave System was given by Pat Kambesis, as part of her masters thesis. Minutes from the December, 2003, meeting will be read at the February meeting. A treasurers report was given which showed balances of \$640.86 in the Coldwater fund; \$1041.32 in the General fund; and \$137.72 in petty cash.

TRIP REPORTS: Brad Smith and Liz Robertson reported on Davenport's Bald Eagle Days. Charlie Knight reported on his lead checking trip at Jewel Cave, in South Dakota. Greg and Deb McCarty reported that they visited Cave In Rock, Illinois, after visiting several springs in Florida. John Kirk reported on the Crawlathon at Carter Cave State Park, Kentucky. Ed Klausner reported on two trips to Coldwater Cave. On one trip he, Mark Jones, and Larry Welch did some survey work, and on another weekend Elizabeth Miller, Bill Mulder and others visited the first right hand passage and went back a considerable distance. In December, Ed reported, Jim Roberts worked in his digging lead, while he, Mark J. and Larry W. continued their survey work in downstream Wanda's. He concluded his report on two trips to Jackson Co. where a total of 11 caves were surveyed. FUTURE TRIPS: See the January Hotline and the N.S.S. News for details. The annual picnic will be the first weekend in August in Jackson Co. 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 Library is still looking for library materials. An index of the Grotto library is available and can be searched electronically. NEW BUSINESS: Mike Bounk explained that the IDNR will be changing the animal burial regulations in the drainage basin of a sinkhole in karst topography. In February, Elizabeth Miller will be having Jason Kinley, ISU, give a presentation on the West Nile virus in over-wintering mosquito populations. In March, there will be a slide show on Iowa Caves. The Intercom deadline is March 1st. With no additional business, the meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

IOWA GROTTO MINUTES
February 25, 2004
Regular Meeting

The meeting of the Iowa Grotto was called to order by Chairman Mike Lace, at 8:00 p.m., with 8 members present. A short presentation was given by Elizabeth Miller, on I.S.U. graduate student, Jason Kinley's, "Study On Mosquito Survival". It was determined that mosquito's collected during the winter of 2003 in Iowa caves were uninfected with the West Nile virus. It was reported that over-wintering mosquito's have a survival rate of 5 to 10 percent. This study will be ongoing. Minutes from the December, 2003, and the January 28, 2004, meetings were read and the January minutes corrected. A treasurers report was given which showed balances of \$640.86 in the Coldwater fund; \$1186.86 the General fund; and \$137.72 in petty cash.

TRIP REPORTS: Doug Schmuecker reported on his trip with John Kirk, and two members of the Mt. Vernon fire department at Coldwater Cave to Monument Passage. Ed Klausner reported that Mark Jones and Larry Welch did some survey work in the Sinus

Passage at Coldwater. He continued that during another weekend at Coldwater, Mark J., Charlie Knight, John Lovaas, Dawn Ryan and Larry W. worked on another survey project. Ed then reported on a lead checking trip to Jackson Co. with Chris Beck, Gary Engh, Elizabeth Miller and himself. He concluded his report on a survey trip to Mammoth Cave, Ky. Elizabeth M. reported on a survey trip to Jackson Co. with Chris B., Gary E., and Mike Lace, where one cave was surveyed. FUTURE TRIPS: See the February Hotline and the N.S.S. News for details. The annual picnic will be the first weekend in August in Jackson Co. 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 Library is still looking for library materials, and another four drawer filing cabinet. An index of the Grotto library is available and can be searched electronically. NEW BUSINESS: The Intercom deadline is March 1st. Katie Flippen, Special Programs Coordinator, Science Center of Iowa, Des Moines, Ia., has invited the Grotto to assist with a presentation on caves and cave life on March 27th. With no additional business, the meeting adjourned at 8:23 p.m.

An Afternoon in Talus

By Mike Lace

Ozark Spring Cave and Annex,
Boodhound Cave, Jackson County, IA
Gary Engh, Mike Lace
9-27-03

It was another day of tracking down and documenting small caves in Iowa ... the other "Cave State". We started in a familiar valley where we had mapped several small caves in the past. A mix of mechanical, talus, and joint-controlled solutional caves dot the valley walls. One cave continued to elude us, however, so with vague descriptions from the late 1950s of a small 30 footer in hand, we combed an overgrown area where we thought it might be. It continues to elude us as we found nothing matching its description. We did map a cute little 15 foot solutional cave we named "Bloodhound Cave" will have to return to find the missing one.

With all the unrecorded caves we continue to locate and map, there are also a few known ones that have gone unsurveyed for many years. Ozark Spring is one of these. It's been known to cavers for over 50 years and certainly known to locals much longer than that. The area has a rich history and ruins of an old mill still stand over the perennial spring that issues from the cave. Steve Barnett had attempted to dive the cave resurgence in the late 1960s but with no success as the passage was simply too small to push. The accessible portion of the cave is entirely composed of talus - stacks of massive rubble forming the cave ceiling which must have collapsed from a larger, intact cavern ceiling long ago.

Gary had never seen this one and I knew he would enjoy the surprising complexity of what is one of the more extensive talus caves in the State. There are at least four entrances which lead down, in and around the rubble confines of the cave. You can see almost all of the cave without getting your feet wet, but where's the fun in that! The cool spring water that snakes along the passage floor isn't that deep but deep enough to fill your boots. While most of the cave is stoopwalking size, the main chamber of the cave is at least 18 feet tall. We mapped over 90 feet before moving on to another talus segment we called Ozark Spring Annex (see map in this issue of the Intercom). Physically unconnected to the main cave, it still carried a fork of the stream that splits from the main spring through a single 40 foot long chamber beneath the rubble. We wrapped up our visit to these unusual caves, but looked forward to a return visit to this peaceful and pristine Jackson County valley.

Keppler's Cave

October, 29 2003

By Dawn Ryan

John Lovaas, Mike Lace, Gary Engh

John and I joined Mike and Gary to survey an ongoing dig of this cave. I was glad to get out and work off a little of the Thanksgiving Day feast from the day before. The landowners have been working on digging this cave out for the last 25 years. As we arrived at the cave entrance, I was amazed. The talus pile outside the cave was similar to some of the mine dumps I've seen in Aspen. It was huge! The cave, from what I understand, was not much more than a coon crack when it was first discovered. The passages are all now walking height. Some of the rooms we were in are 10-12 feet high and higher. The most amusing and interesting thing was the décor. Through out the cave you will find rubber snakes, rats and scary masks that give the cave that Halloween feeling. But all the bats I saw were real, at least I think. Chairs are placed in different passages. You will even see some wall décor, mirrors and vases on shelves. There was a wrought iron candelabrum in the passage we were surveying. We met the landowner in a passage digging away and Mike made the introductions. He brought us over to the new area to be surveyed. It was time to get to work. Mike grabbed a conveniently placed chair and got started sketching. John and Gary did the tape and instruments. Gary started in with a very nice rendition of some show tune. It was music to our ears. I was the official chair warmer and photographer. I watched Mike sketch hoping to pick up a few pointers. I thought staring over his shoulder would give him performance anxiety, but no, he sketched away like a pro. There was probably 75-100 feet of new survey by the time we finished. On our way out, we checked in with the landowner, who was still digging in another passage. His new dig was very impressive. I would have to say it rivals some Wisconsin digs. It would definitely make some WSS members envious.

After exiting this cave, we stopped by a sinkhole that had recently opened up next to a nearby farm field. There were three or four large sinkholes in a row. John and Gary got busy enlarging the opening. John pushed some large rocks down and listened to the hollow kerplunk echo as they bounced down. When it looked big enough to enter, John rigged a line to assist in the ascent. I volunteered to try to enter. I slid down and stopped. It was just a little tight. I could probably push myself through but I was concerned I may not be able to get back out. So I came back up. Darn! We all tried to coax Mike into trying it, but he couldn't be convinced into taking one for the team. I thought I heard Mike saying something about maybe suckering, uh err, I mean talking Ed Klausner into trying it. Needless to say, this one will have to wait for another day.

New Year's Caving

Scallywag, Sub-Meridian, Meridian Caves, Jackson County, IA

January, 1 2004

By Elizabeth Miller

Gary Engh, Ed Klausner, Mike Lace
and Elizabeth Miller

New Year's Day provided us with an opportunity to do a lot of driving and a lot of walking. We headed off to visit a landowner who owned quite a bit of land in an area close to some known caves. The exact location of the farm wasn't known, but we thought we had a pretty good idea where we should go. Let's just say we took a long, winding, ultimately circular route to the farm, talked with the landowner and then headed out to park the jeep. The first part of our visit entailed a long walk across a field to a valley that we walked and looked for caves. We then had another walk across a field toward a promising valley that led to the nearby river. On the way, we met the landowner and family on horseback. One of the horses was quite persistent in investigating whether or not my pack or pockets held anything good for a horse. (Being just a city girl, I didn't know whether the dog biscuit in my

inner pocket was tasty or suitable for a horse, so I didn't offer it.)

We walked the second valley, finding a fairly tall, twenty-five foot shelter we named Scallywag for the character of our survey team. We headed down-river after reaching it, but Mike soon recognized that he had walked this area before. We headed back up-river, passed another valley that we saved for another ridgewalking trip, and came across a known cave, Meridian. We mapped a nearby small solutional cave, which we named Sub-Meridian. There is still more area to ridgewalk upriver from the place we stopped, plus some more side valleys. The walk back to the jeep was uneventful but long. At least the drive home was more direct than the trip to our parking spot.

Lost Pyrites

Murine, Coil, Walk Through, Lost Pyrite Caves and Small Shelter, Jackson County, IA
January, 10 2004
By Ed Klausner
Chris Beck, Gary Engh, Ed Klausner, Mike Lace and Elizabeth Miller

From time to time, we like to get out on raw winter days for some ridgewalking. We met in Jackson County and drove to a landowner who we hoped owned a valley with some exposed rock. Fortunately, he was home, owned the valley, and allowed us to walk his land.

We passed some small outcrops with small openings, but it took a while to reach one big enough to survey, a 16 foot shelter with a mouse at the back. There were a few ice stalagmites. We named the cave Murine Shelter for the genus of mouse.

The next cave was bigger at 26 feet and Chris sketched this one. It was named Coil Cave due to the coils of barbed wire in the cave.

The last cave in this valley was a two entranced walk through cave that was 18 feet from drip line to drip line. It had several nice fossils and some crystals. It was named Walk Through Cave for obvious reasons.

With that side valley finished, we headed north to another landowner. When we said we were looking for caves in the area, she said she didn't think she had any, but we were welcome to look. We didn't even have to ask permission.

We did indeed find several caves. We headed east from the house towards the north-south valley. Once at the bottom of the valley, Gary headed north while the rest of us headed south. Icicle Bend Cave was a 19 foot shelter cave in the stream bed. It had lots of ice formations and some fossils. Elizabeth and I surveyed it while Mike and Chris continued down the valley. They found and surveyed a 15 foot shelter cave on the opposite side of the creek that Mike named Small Shelter.

The last cave found was the longest at 29 feet and was named Lost Pyrite Cave. Mike sketched this one with quite a few interesting formations that were dried up and scattered all over the floor. The cave had a shelter entrance and a solutional tube extending back from the entrance.

We came to Lost Valley Cave that we had surveyed a few years ago and knew we had finished this section of the valley. When we met up again on our way to the trucks, Gary had found two additional shelter caves. We'll return to the area and finish surveying those two caves.

Year of the Monkey

Monkey Cave, Southern Breezes, Frozen Digits, Southwestern, Oaks Above, Right Angle, Long Valley, and two unnamed Caves Jackson County, IA
January, 24 2004
By Ed Klausner
Gary Engh, Rich Feltes, Ed Klausner, Mike Lace and Elizabeth Miller

A few weeks ago, we visited Rich's uncle's land in Jackson County and mapped Maquoketa Bend Cave and an unnamed shelter cave. We didn't have time to continue ridgewalking Rich's uncle's land and the neighbor's land for which we also had permission. We picked a rather cold and windy day to return.

Our first stop was a small cave that Rich had previously found. Mike, Elizabeth and I stayed to survey it while Rich and Gary continued ridgewalking. Monkey Cave was a solutional cave with one soda straw and lots of spiders. We named it either for the Year of the Monkey or the fact that there are monkeys who could probably sketch better.

Gary and Rich found and surveyed an as yet unnamed cave on the opposite side of the valley. Continuing down our side of the valley, Mike sketched an 8 meter shelter we found which had more than adequate ventilation. This one was named Southern Breezes Cave, perhaps because we were by then suffering the effects of hypothermia. I guess it was fitting that we named another shelter along the valley Frozen Digits Cave. That one was a 20 foot long shelter with some pyrite deposits.

Elizabeth, Rich and I surveyed a shelter high on the cliff that we named Southwestern Cave because it looked like a miniature version of the shelters that had dwellings in them in the Southwest. It had many small dry stalactites.

While Mike and Gary went down a long side valley (finding and sketching Long Valley Cave - 17 feet), Rich, Elizabeth and I helped Rich sketch Oaks Above Cave, another high shelter cave.

The last cave of the day was Right Angle Cave, a mechanical cave that was a bit over 22 feet long. It was a good day for finding and surveying caves, 9 in all. That brings our yearly total to 17, more than the high temperature for the day.

The Mysterious Subway-Size Lead Dome

Coldwater Cave
Winnesheik County, Iowa
February 1, 2004

By Mark Jones

With Big Bill's January report of breeching 1st Righthand Side Passage into the Subway-sized Lead Dome, we were ready to survey the scoop before the water level rose on us. A group of six made the February 1st trip. Dawn Ryan (Super Scooper), John Lovass, Charlie Knight, Ed Klausner, Larry Welch and I arrived on Saturday morning to recover survey from LONG ago and add to it. The story has been told numerous times around the Coldwater Shack of Doug Schmucker's big breakout into going passage past the Subway-sized Lead Dome. During a low water occasion, cavers had broke into a huge dome with potential going upper passage. Due to their limited lights they were unsure of its true nature. Doug was suppose to bring dive equipment to push the stream level lead and bypassed the dome altogether, racking up several hundred feet of going sewer passage. Over the past several years we've made several attempts to just push into that dome and beyond only to be denied each time. With the confirmation that it was indeed wide open we set off in search of virgin cave. Prior to our cave trip I stoked the stove to take the chill off the shed. Dropping the shaft at 11:30 a.m. we easily hiked downstream with Larry at point. His SLOW pace allowed even the OLDEST (Ed) member of our group to keep up. Even with record low water The Swim still was. Further downstream the air got colder and we were shocked to find that The Sinus Passage was dry! The cold wind blowing out of this pocket hurried us along. Soon we were at the mouth of 1st Righthand Side with no water running down the chute! With no flowing water and few pools along the way this looked nothing like it normally does. Several areas had exposed rimstones and breakdown rubble perched well about the water. Near the last survey chips we usually required wetsuit hoods, but we shot through into the Subway-Sized Lead Dome without a second thought. This was truly an unusual event, and we were all glad to be standing in this fantastic room. Shining dive lights upward we saw a huge dome that angled off

toward the sewer passage, unfortunately it doesn't offer any hope of being that elusive

high lead in downstream Coldwater. However there was a crawlway to a side-dome that once routed from the Subway-Sized Lead Dome. As we broke out the survey gear we decided that Ed, John and Charlie would survey the dome area back to the last survey chip while Larry, Dawn and I slipped into the sewer passage to survey the scoop. Dawn led the way with Larry keeping book and me taking shots. Hoods were definitely required here since floundering in the tube would have chilled you out otherwise. As with most sewer passages this one didn't have much to offer in the way of pretties nor rooms. However, it did have several hundred feet of going cave which we'd hope would continue far beyond where Dawn had stopped in January. After an hour, Dawn was starting to chill and Larry was starting to whine about the surveying speed. (Too Fast). Luckily Dawn had reached a cross-joint that allowed us to stand up out of the water for a while. Less than 100' later we'd reached the rimstone constriction she'd slid over on the last trip. We were looking for thousands of feet of going cave, but a rimstone/rock wall to the right stopped us cold in two shots. A tall, narrow canyon slot to the left offered a glimmer of hope. A beautiful gallery covered the walls with several crawdads and minnows in the silent pools scattered across the floor. We called this room Dawn's Decorated Gallery. Popping into the room it became obvious that it was shutting down on the back side. Larry, always the diehard, squeezed to the back of the room and scooted under a rock lip into a "smallish" dome room. From here Larry becomes delirious claiming that "someone" could dive under the rimstone dam, pop up on the other side, and bravely lead into a borehole. Wow! He does have a great imagination. By this time Ed and Charlie had arrived, having finished up their survey, planning to take part in the scoopage. Alas, all they got was Larry's rantings of how to breach this area. Dawn did a good job of setting survey points, with several shots over 40', 24 shots were taken resulting in 578.9' of new survey. With the majority of the survey complete we returned to the Subway-Sized Lead Dome, took one final look around, and exited 1st Righthand Side Passage knowing that our two parties had recorded over 700' of survey.

On the way out I photographed the Sinus, the Downstream Gallery and near Monument to show the abnormally low water level. Charlie and I broke away from the others from here to warm up the shack, but once we'd broken the surface we were pleasantly surprised to find the dying embers in the stove. A toasty fire was soon roaring for the rest of the crew to enjoy. As Larry would say "A fine day indeed."

Winter Caving

Red Tail, Piraat, Mean and Ornerly, Half Skull Caves, Little Bend Shelter
Jackson County, IA

February, 8 2004

By Ed Klausner

Chris Beck, Gary Engh, Ed Klausner and Elizabeth Miller

A cold, windy day with about a foot of new snow seemed like a good day to put on our snow shoes and go ridgewalking. Our destination was a pair of caves that Gary found earlier in the month. We checked with the landowner to see where their property ended. Fortunately, the large shelter that Gary described was not only on their land, but there was another known cave further upstream that we should be able to survey.

The first cave was a small shelter with a small passage in the back. The passage, which they talked me into squeezing into, was at least big enough to turn around in. It has a bit of flowstone on the wall and the cave was obviously used by raccoons. We couldn't come up with a name for the cave until a Red-Tailed Hawk flew over the cave and thus helped us choose Red Tail Cave. I finished the sketch for this one while Chris and Gary headed off to survey the large shelter.

The shelter (Little Bend Shelter) was almost 40 feet deep and 25 feet high. When Elizabeth and I arrived, we took a look around the shelter without removing our

snow shoes. They actually helped on the frozen pool forming much of the floor. The ice was very clear and we could see the rocks beneath the surface.

The cave the landowner's brother described was a two entranced solutional cave with lots of dry formations. There were pockets in the ceiling with flowstone and stalactites. This cave, too, was heavily used by raccoons. We surveyed it to 65 feet and named it Piraat Cave for no particular reason other than piraat is Belgian for pirate. I again finished the sketch while Chris, Gary and Elizabeth headed upstream about 100 feet to a cave that Gary found. When I joined them, they had just finished moving some rock out of the way and all I could see was Elizabeth's feet. She backed out and said she thought I could get in. I pointed out that she was smaller than I was, but logic didn't seem to apply here. I could get a bit further and we got 16 feet of survey. Mean and Ornerly Cave probably describes the two of us, if not the four of us.

The last cave was in the last outcrop of rock in the valley. Half Skull Cave was named for the half skull of some mammal found in the shelter. It was 19.4 feet long with several stalactites.

It was unusual that all five of the caves we found had some formations. The landowner said there were also several sinkholes in the area so there will be a return trip. It was too cold and windy to do anything else except return to the trucks and head home.

Edith Avenue

Mammoth Cave, Mammoth Cave National Park, Kentucky
February, 14 2004
Jonas Bystrom, Charles Fox, Ed Klausner, Ben Tobin

By Ed Klausner

This was a trip to clear up some of the confusion at a small dome and check some leads noted from previous trips. We entered via the Violet City entrance because Jonas and Ben had not been to that area. Our destination, Ranshaw Avenue, is about the same distance from Violet City or the Historic Entrance.

Towards the end of Ranshaw there is a small dome. One of the passages off the top of the dome leads to Minna's Way and then to Edith Avenue. There are several other passages that come off the dome (excluding Ranshaw) and I wanted to figure these out. The lowest one leads to Dragon Pit. Dragon Pit and Henry's Dome are the same Dome, but Max Kaemper had them separate on his 1908 map due to loop closure problems. He was using a pace and compass survey. I've heard that he actually knew they were the same dome and were just called two different names as you entered them from a different level and different angle. Anyway, the dragon was a long projection across the dome and the lettering that said "Dragon Pit" was pretty elaborate.

The other passages that come into the dome are cut-arounds. One leads to Ranshaw Avenue about 50 feet before the dome, the other leads to the beginning of Minna's Way and one joins the passage leading to Dragon Pit. In a small area, some of these passages cross over each other.

Once in Minna's way, we went a few hundred feet to a narrow canyon and a small dome at the end of the canyon. The drop into the canyon stopped us on the last trip because we didn't have enough webbing to safely drop the overhung ledge into the pit. This time we did, and found that the only lead out of the dome led to a second dome with no leads out of it. We surveyed this and returned to Minna's Way. Minna's Way continued east to a place where the character of the passage changed. For one thing, the ceiling got comfortably high and we could stand up and walk. This section is called Edith Avenue (identity of Edith is unknown). There was one lead in Edith Avenue and we surveyed it. It was a bit over 100 feet and not very wide or tall.

At the end of Edith Avenue is a considerable amount of breakdown as the passage ends at the valley wall. We poked around as other survey groups had in the past and

found no additional passage.

We returned to Ranshaw Avenue. About half way back along Ranshaw, we came to Montie's Pass (Montie's identity is also unknown) and had to make a decision. We could take a side passage off of Montie's Pass and continue a cut around survey or go to the end of Montie's Pass and fill in the floor detail. Since it was late and we probably couldn't finish the cut around survey, we opted for a trip down Montie's Pass to clean up the floor details on the map. This passage was a dead end and it too ended at a surface valley wall. The passage had lots of cane torch fragments and many long crystals. Obviously, there has been Native American visitors several thousand years ago collection crystals.

The trip out was uneventful and it wasn't even too cold out for February.

Ganter Confused

Mammoth Cave, Mammoth Cave National Park, Kentucky
February, 15 2004
Jim Borden, Shanna Borden, Bob Hoke and Ed Klausner

By Ed Klausner

For the second day of the Cave Research Foundation February expedition, I had hoped to either go the Ganter Avenue and clean up some of the leads or find someone to take me to Janet's River via Albert's Domes and Luana Falls. Since there was no one available to both show me the way to Janet's River and climb the falls to throw down a safety line, Ganter Avenue became the clear choice.

As long as we were going to Ganter, Tom Brucker remembered a lead along Ganter and drew a sketch map of its location. We found the general area and then searched for the lead with no luck. Since this was a lead Tom saw 10 to 15 years ago, we figured it was in a different location and went to our next objective. There were two side passages off Ganter that needed to be surveyed. Jim, Shanna and Bob started surveying while I went back to the area of the lead and not only looked for it again, but did some cross sections and tried to figure out this multi-level area. I found what I thought was the lead only to later discover that this was not it. (It ended in fill after it crossed back over the top of Ganter Avenue.)

When I was through with my sketching, I continued along Ganter Avenue and saw Bob emerging from the second lead. He wondered how I snuck past him as he was turned around. The passage they surveyed started off north of Ganter, crossed over the top, twisted around and rejoined on the south at the entrance of the second lead. That knocked two leads off at once.

The next stop was Welcome Avenue. This is a passage modified in the 1800's that was used as an escape route when the Echo River flooded. There are rocks stacked against the walls and the passage is a comfortable height. It starts off as a canyon and after several hundred feet, the top separates and heads off in a different direction. Jim followed the upper section to confirm that it stayed separate. It went for 30 survey stations to a loose fill at the end. Since there were survey stations, we tied it into the Welcome Avenue survey in hopes that the old notes were good enough to use (if they could be found.) A check later showed that the notes had no floor detail, used only foresights on compass and had only two clino readings in the 590 feet of survey, so it will probably be resurveyed.

For the remainder of the trip, we returned to an unnamed passage to tie in some hanging survey, check leads and clean up some map detail. The area turned out to be surprisingly complex and we found new passage in an area that we didn't expect it. It will take additional trips to survey these new finds, so I should have plenty to do to keep me occupied.

Echo Hall of the Sinus Passage

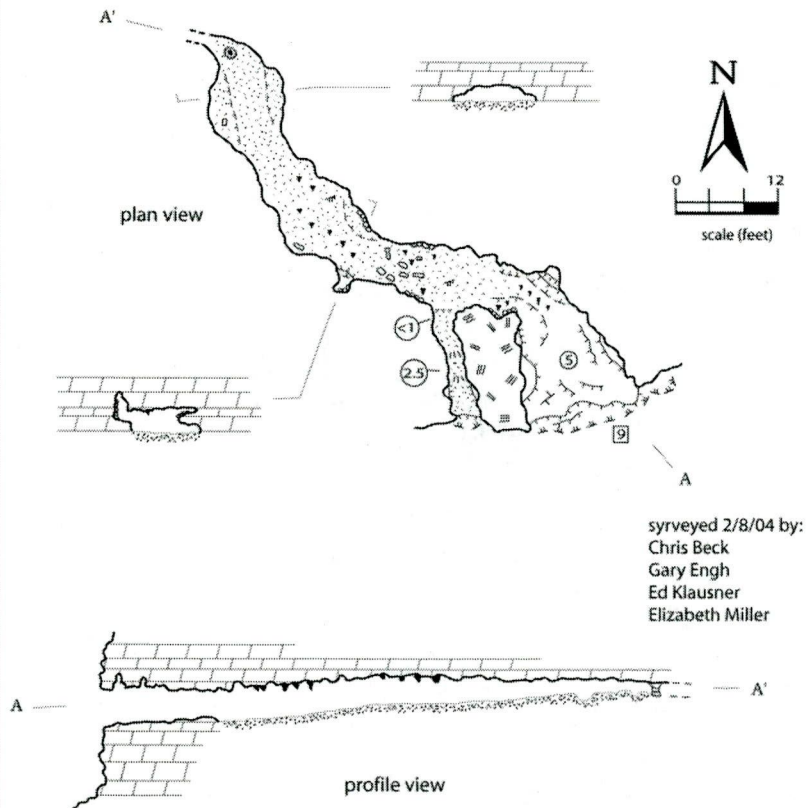
Coldwater Cave
Winnesheik County, Iowa
February 21, 2004

By Mark Jones

With survey footage piling up over the past several months, Larry Welch and I were optimistic about our chances of stretching survey in February. No doubt about it that the area is experiencing a severe and chronic drought that has given us access to passages seldom seen but often discussed. Larry's short term memory must have been suffered a relapse since he was itching to get back to the end of 1st Righthand Side Passage to push a very iffy lead. Being the more practical one I offered the Sinus Passage survey since last month it was not moving any water. The only drawback I could see was the possibility of a howling wind blowing in our face chilling us out. With several other trips scheduled Larry and I were on our own to recapture footage scooped long ago by the original Coldwater crew. Sinus normally is flowing at a good rate prohibiting a survey crew from more than a handful of turning points before hypothermia sets in. In the past two groups had traversed up Sinus, but didn't stick around too long due to chilling out and being spooked out by the waterfall sounds. When we arrived at the mouth of Sinus there wasn't a hint of water flow and with a moderate outside temperature there wasn't any wind being drawn into the cave. Dumping our packs at the mouth we crawled over the first of many rimstone dams that cut across the 3' x 3' passage. These dams came close to the ceiling, resulting in deep pools behind each one. With any kind of water flow this would result in several eardrums along the way, but we had no such problems. Within the first 50' we hit the tightest dam that required us to remove the survey gear from our wetsuits to continue. Another 50' and we found the survey chip from the last survey. Larry took point with his book and crawled over more dams to set the first station. Unlike the past three months there were no long shots to be had in Sinus. 6 to 31 foot shots were our stations today. The entire survey did not change much from the boxy 2' wide by 3.5' high rimstone cut passage. A lot of twisty short shots would follow a decent 25' survey. Slowly we moved along getting our rhythm down. All along the way we found very positive echos so I wanted to call this Echo Hall, Larry thought this was too generous a compliment. (Insert laugh track here.) Larry found a distinctive rock collection behind a rimstone dam he called the Coal Pile, but otherwise there just wasn't much change. Observing the debris field on the walls and ceiling along the way, (or lack thereof), I can see how it would have been darn near impossible to make any usable survey when water was flowing. At station 25 I was ready to call it a day, but we couldn't find a suitable tie off point so we trudged on. Finally (Station 31) we reached a fissure joint along the right wall with a very nice tabletop that was perfect for a survey chip tied to a rock cairn. The character of the passage seemed to be changing to a more oval shape beyond here. Larry figured there was another 200' - 300' of scoop that ended in a (What else?) dome. We tallied the score to find we'd covered around 500' of new survey! (Afterwards Larry's calculations revealed we had 513.6') We left Sinus with little problem, save at the mouth where I misjudged the depth of the rimstone pool and overshot my intended stopping point. I shot photos on the return trip and topped my rimstone slide by walking off the end of a submerge rockslab falling into a deep pool. We exited the cave at 7:30 p.m. to clean up and grab some pizza in Cresco. The total surveyed length of Coldwater Cave stands at 16.958 miles. Could the 500' surveys continue????? Is mile #17 coming in March????

Piraat Cave

Jackson County, Iowa

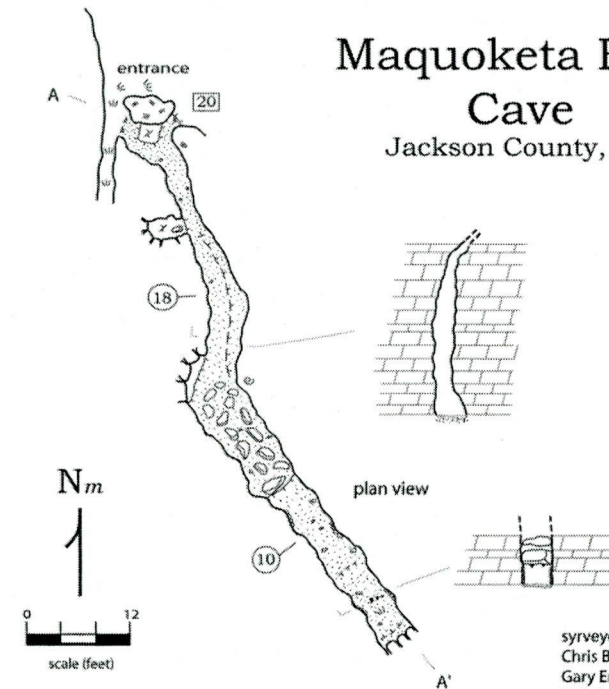


N.S.S. standard map symbols
total surveyed length = 65.6 feet (20.0 meters)

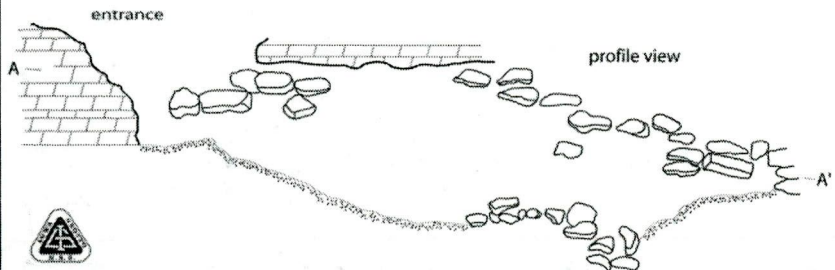


Maquoketa Bend Cave

Jackson County, Iowa



surveyed 12/28/03 by:
Chris Beck
Gary Engh
Rich Feltes
Ed Klausner
Phil LaRue
Elizabeth Miller

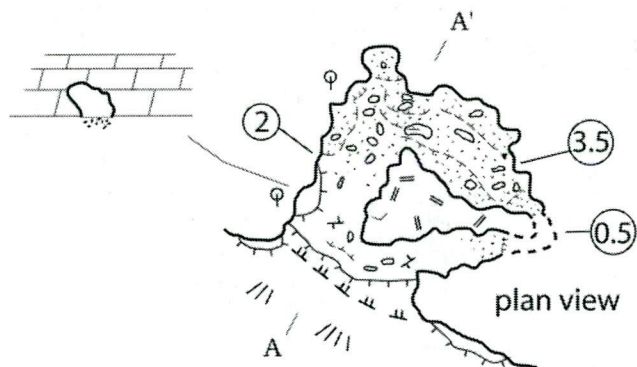


total surveyed length = 83.4 feet (25.4 meters)

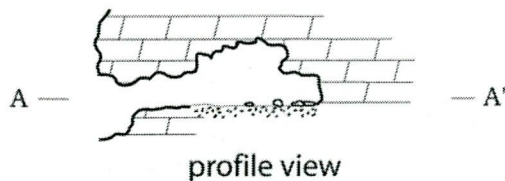


Monkey Cave

Jackson County, Iowa



syurveyed 1/24/04 by:
Ed Klausner
Mike Lace
Elizabeth Miller

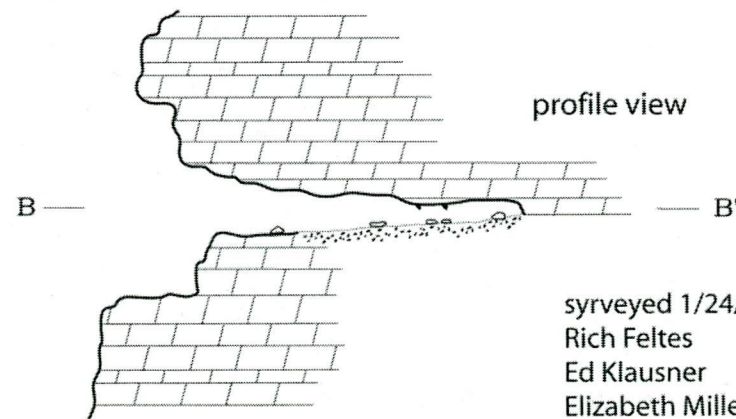
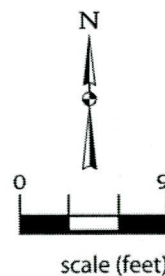
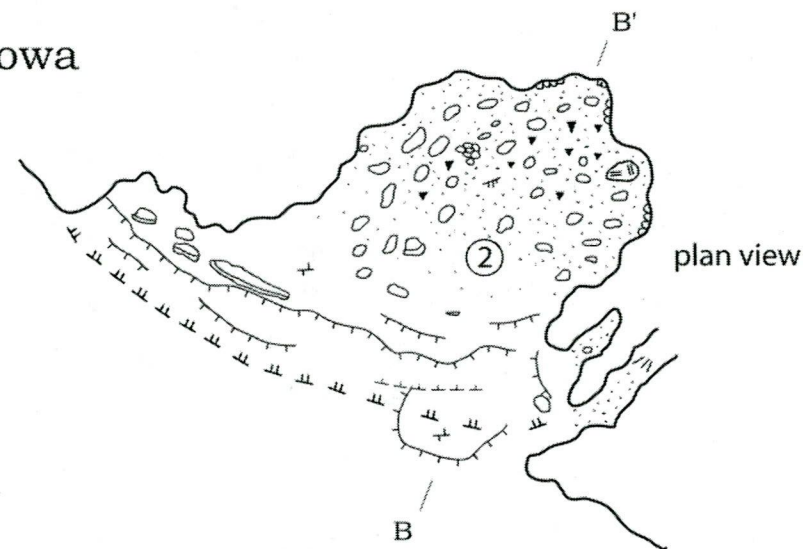


total surveyed length = 21.3 feet (6.5 meters)



Klausner 2004

Southwestern Cave



syurveyed 1/24/04 by:
Rich Feltes
Ed Klausner
Elizabeth Miller

total surveyed length = 25.6 feet (7.8 meters)

