

April 1984

Alaskan Caver, Volume 8, No. 2, April-June 1984

Richard A. Hall

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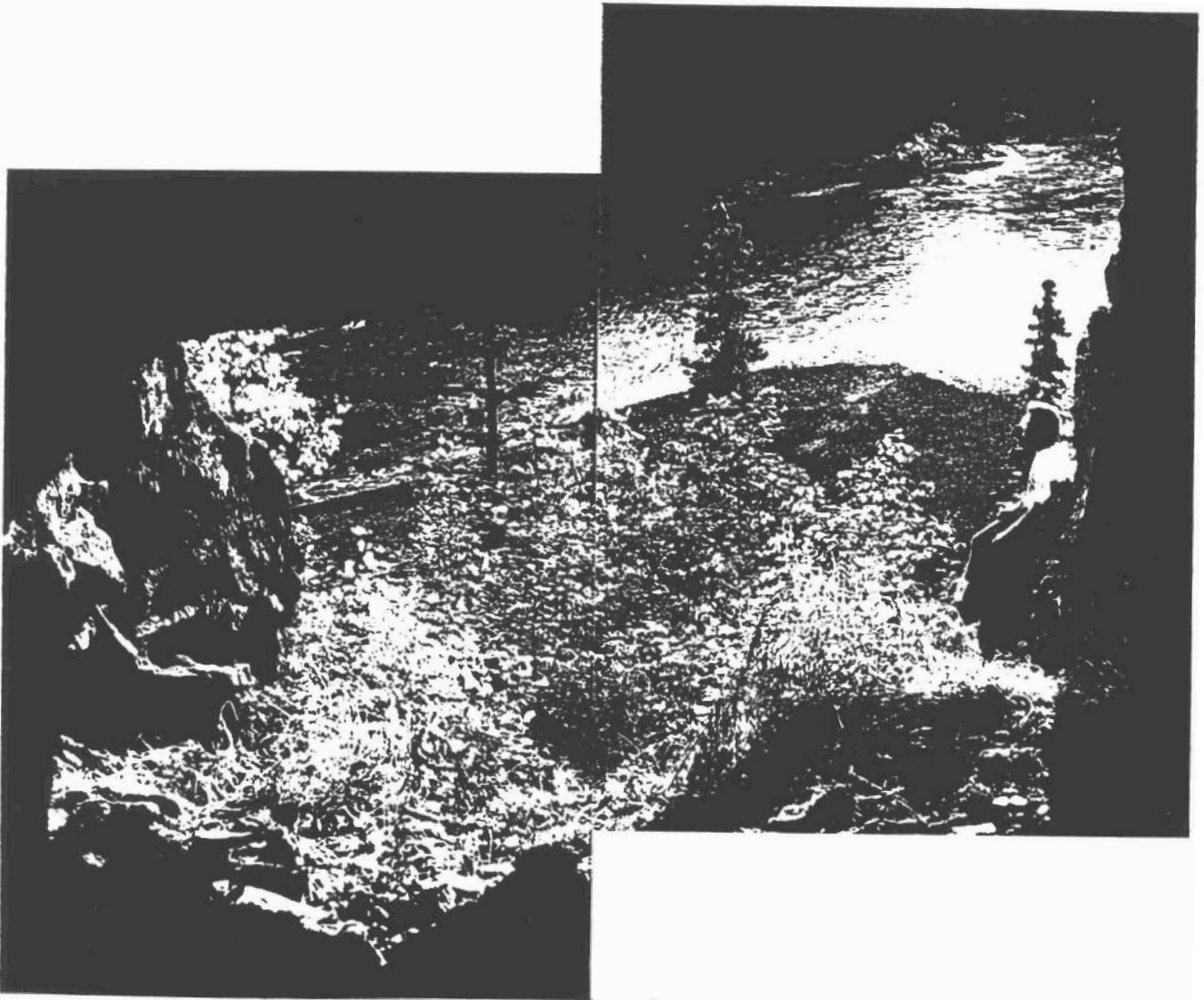
Hall, Richard A., "Alaskan Caver, Volume 8, No. 2, April-June 1984" (1984). *Alaskan Caver*. 39.
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THE ALASKAN CAVER

Volume 8 Number 2

April - June 1984



Chulitna River Cave

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

August 9 Chitistone Expedition planning meeting. Meetings are held in room 312 of Grant Hall, Ak Pacific University at 7:30 pm.

August 10 First Chitistone Expedition group leaves. Call Rich Hall (333-2090) for information.

August 17 Second Chitistone Expedition group leaves. Call Rich Hall (333-2090) for information.

August 24 Third Chitistone Expedition group leaves. Call Rich Hall (333-2090) for information.

September 1 Fourth Chitistone Expedition group leaves. Call Rich Hall (333-2090) for information.

Sep/Oct/Nov Glacier Grotto meeting. Meetings are held in room 312 of Grant Hall, Alaska Pacific University at 7:30 pm. but do not meet on a regularly scheduled date. Call Jay Rockwell for info (277-7150).

The Alaskan Caver is a periodic publication of the Glacier Grotto of the National Speleological Society. Subscriptions are free to members. Membership dues are \$5 per annum (add \$3 for overseas members wishing airmail instead of surface mail). Dues can be sent to Sydney Jenkins at P.O. Box 4-2917, Anchorage, AK 99501. Copyright 1984 by Glacier Grotto. Material not copyrighted by individuals or other groups may be copied by other NSS publications provided credit is given to the Alaskan Caver and a copy of such publication is sent to the editor.

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Treasurer	Sydney F. Jenkins	(907)274-1004 H (Anchorage)
Editor	Richard A. Hall	(907)333-2090 H (Anchorage)

The Chulitna River Cave

The purpose of this essay is to document our second expedition to find and explore the Chulitna River Cave. The first expedition was unsuccessful. the second expedition, however, was successful in locating the cave. The notes from our expedition may be helpful in the future.

The members of this second team were: Dr. Jay Rockwell, Curvin Metzler, and myself, Don Williams. We left Anchorage with one goal, to locate, explore, and document the Chulitna River Cave.

At exactly 7:38 am, we left Dr. Rockwell's home on a crisp Saturday morning. The mileage meter was at 758 miles. While driving north towards Wasilla, we discussed the possible locations on the map. We decided to explore a section of the map ten miles further than our first trip.

At 10:40 am, we arrived at the Chulitna River Lodge. According to the mileage indicator, we had traveled about one hundred sixty miles. We had a cup of coffee and inquired about the cave. The lodge owner was very kind and gave us a tip on where he thought the cave might be.

We left the lodge and drove another two miles north on the Georges Parks Highway where we stopped, secured the car, and began our adventure. We headed magnetic west into thick woods. It was now noon.

The trees and shrubs were still wet from the dew. It wasn't long before I was wet up to my knees. The sun was peeking out of the clouds and it remained sunny the rest of the day.

Along the way we recorded many observations. We noted that the dense woods opened from time to time into plush marsh bogs. The golden bogs, alive with a fresh smell, were very hard to cross. At some points the earth was unstable and would roll under every step.

We encountered many small animals along the way, as well as many varieties of birds. The marsh seemed a perfect home for many animals. We observed fresh moose tracks across the bogs. The moose would comb the edge of the bog for food. No observation was as surprising as when we stopped for lunch at 2:23 pm. Across the bog, about forty yards south, was a full grown wolf. It was watching us from a small cluster of wood stumps. It seemed surprised to see us. It crouched low, with bushy grey ears aimed towards us as Curvin scrambled to take a picture. Its nose pointed up to test the wind. As we stood up, the wolf darted off into the dense birch trees. We continued onward.

We reached the Chulitna River bank and named the rest stop "Point Achievement". After making a few wrong turns up and down the river bank, we found the cave which had eluded us. The cave was smaller than I had hoped. But I was very excited to find the cave even if it wasn't very large.

We determined the distance of the cave to be about two miles east, and one third of a mile south from the highway marker. The cave saddled about fifty feet high on a slope on the east bank, overlooking the river. We reached the cave about 5:30 pm. I was surprised that it took five hours to come only about three miles.

The cave itself was not large as caves go. The opening of the cave was about ten feet wide by seven feet tall. From the opening of the cave I paced off eighteen feet to the rear of the cave. The floor was an incline to the back wall. There were many various-sized crevases reaching up into the ceiling. Near the rear of the cave there was one final crevice measuring twenty-two feet high.

As you entered the cave you could feel the cool moist air. There was a sweet flower-like smell emanating from green and black moss growth near the rear wall. Water seeped down from narrow gaps in the rock. Near the opening of the cave we found an abandoned swallow nest. The view of the river from the cave was strategic, making the cave a safe shelter. We could tell, by droppings, that small animals made their home in the cave at one time. It was now starting to get dark, as the sun slid over the opposite cliff.

After we took some pictures and recorded all our observations, we broke camp and headed home using the same route as before to ensure our safe return. We reached the highway at 9:30 pm, where we rested. We were all very hungry, having finished the last of our trail snacks hours before, so we stopped along the way for dinner. By the time we finally got home it was 2:30 am the next morning.

We were all very tired, but agreed the trip was a success. The key to our success was organization and a sense of purpose. we set for ourselves some demanding goals.

1983 GLACIER GROTTO FINANCIAL REPORT

Annual Income and Expenses 1983 Balance Sheet 1984 Anticipated Budget

Income

Membership dues & donations	<u>115.00</u>	<u>25.00</u> ¹
TOTAL INCOME	115.00	

Expenses

Alaskan Caver Printing ²	127.50	240.00
Postage ³	0.00	84.00
NSS Audio Visual Aids	11.50	15.00
Deposit Slips	<u>6.79</u>	<u>0.00</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES	145.79	339.00

Summary

Total Income	115.00
less Total Expenses	<u>145.79</u>
NET OPERATING LOSS	30.79

End of Year Assets

Checking Balance	270.18
Cash and Checks on Hand	<u>26.00</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	296.18

Year End Balance

End of year liabilities	none
Net Worth	
Assets Beginning of 1983	325.47
1983 Net Operating Loss	<u>30.79</u>
End of Year Net Worth	294.68 ⁴

¹ 1983 Subscriptions are extended to cover 1984 because only one issue of The Alaskan Caver was published. Dues for members are still \$5 for 1984.

² Paid for two 1982 issues and one 1983 issue.

³ Postage was donated again in 1983 by Rockwell and Hall.

⁴ Disagrees with Total Assets.

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YES THERE STILL IS AN "ALASKAN CAVER"

I would like to apologize to all of you who thought that the Glacier Grotto had died because you stopped receiving your "Alaskan Caver". Grotto meetings and activities have continued but the news never got out. The "Caver" stopped because I have spent the last year building a house and because I lost my access to a word processor and because I couldn't get anyone to put it out while I was unavailable. My house is now complete and I have purchased a Corona PC with the Multimate word processor and an 80 column matrix printer. This means I don't have all the fancies that I did before but at least I can type at home. This issue will attest that the system works and I have figured out how to do some basic editing. HOWEVER, the future of the "Alaskan Caver" depends upon people sending in articles; in the fourteen months that there was no "Caver" only one article was received!! I'll edit but you need to write.

Rich Hall, Editor

DUES

Because there was a lapse of over a year in the Alaskan Caver, no one ever put out the word to pay dues. Well, don't be too concerned. There won't be any 1984 dues but since it costs more to produce the Caver than dues bring in, all donations are appreciated.

NEWS SCOOP

After four years of neglect, the Glacier Grotto is again heading for the Chitistone Valley. In July Jeff Bennett, pilot Jim Remele and Todd Mueller made a quick stop, entered Star Cave, explored the main passage to a sump and had to quickly leave to meet their flight plan. They reported some cross passages but did not get a chance to explore them.

Meanwhile, some other folks were planning some back to back trips into the valley and now four trips are scheduled starting August 9 and ending September 4. There should be much more exploration going on there this summer than in all of the past six years. The next issue of the Alaskan Caver will report it all.

PLEASE NOTE THE NEW ADDRESS FOR THE EDITOR
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