

June 1989

Alaskan Caver, Volume 9, No. 3, June 1989

William Harvey Bowers

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.usf.edu/alaskan_caver

Recommended Citation

Bowers, William Harvey, "Alaskan Caver, Volume 9, No. 3, June 1989" (1989). *Alaskan Caver*. 46.
https://digitalcommons.usf.edu/alaskan_caver/46

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Newsletters and Periodicals at Digital Commons @ University of South Florida. It has been accepted for inclusion in Alaskan Caver by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ University of South Florida. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@usf.edu.

The

ALASKAN CAVER

VOLUME 9 NUMBER 3 JUNE 1989



The Alaskan Caver is the intermittent publication of the Glacier Grotto of the National Speleological Society. (Copyright © 1989 by the Glacier Grotto.) Materials not copyrighted by individuals or by other groups may be copied by other NSS Publications provided credit is given to author and The Alaskan Caver and a copy is sent to the Editor. Back issues are available from the President for \$1.00 each. Members should send articles, letters, news items, announcements, and so forth directly to the Editor (see below). Opinions expressed within are not necessarily those of The Alaskan Caver, the Glacier Grotto, or the NSS.

Membership is open to all interested in Alaskan cave discovery, exploration, description, survey, mapping, photography, hydrology, morphology, biology, geology, history, speleogenesis and other speleaeen processes, conservation, management, adventures, and the fellowship of Alaskan cavers. Dues are \$5.00 per year in the United States (\$10.00 in US funds if overseas) for the first member of a mailing address and \$1.00 for additional persons at the same address.

Dues are due on January 1 and are sent to the Treasurer (see below) with the application/renewal form. Those paying for the first time after October 1 will be considered paid up for the following year. The year through which each member is paid is indicated on the mailing label. Meetings are called to plan and report on trips or other special events; anyone wanting to have a meeting for any reason should notify the President, Vice President or a Member-at-Large.

Officers	Name	Address	City	St	Zip	Home	Work
President	J Rockwell Jr	2944 Emory St	Anchorage	AK	99508	277-7150	564-8267
Vice Pres	David M. Moll	P O Box 82044	Fairbanks	AK	99701	455-6578	474-6318
Secretary	Jim Nicholls	P O Box 654	Clear	AK	99507	479-0465	585-6213
Treasurer	Sam Dunaway	7301 Chad St	Anchorage	AK	99518	344-4037	762-2171
Memb at Lg	Tom Hallinan	1617 Wolverine Dr	Fairbanks	AK	99709	479-6064	479-7454
Memb at Lg	Kevin Allred	P O Box 376	Haines	AK	99827	via KHNS*	via KHNS*
Editor	W Harvey Bowers	305 S Bartlett Cr	Wasilla	AK	99687	376-2294	279-5582
Asst Ed	Curvin Metzler	P O Box 100738	Anchorage	AK	99510	333-8766	243-7800
NW Reg Rep	Dave Klinger	P O Box 537	Leavenworth	WA	98826	548-5480†	548-5880†
Membership	Curvin Metzler	P O Box 100738	Anchorage	AK	99510	333-8766	243-7800

* Messages may be announced to Kevin daily via radio station KHNS at (907) 766-2020

† The area code for phoning Dave in Leavenworth, Washington is (509) (both numbers)

Cover photo: Looking out from Tidewater Sea Cave, Blackstone Bay, Prince William Sound, Alaska. Photograph by Mike Mauser, summer of 1987; see article on page 3.

Table of Contents:

Tidewater Sea Cave	3
President's Corner	4
Technical Preliminary Report #1: Kid Cave	5
Technical Preliminary Report #2: Carcass Cave	6
Technical Preliminary Report #3: Salmon Fry Cave	8
Technical Preliminary Report #4: El Capitan Pit	10
Technical Preliminary Report #5: Starlight Cave	11
Caves on Coronation Island	12
Safety & Technique Recommendations for Nielson's Well	13
Alaska Cave Rumor: Three-Thousand-Foot Volcanic Pit	15
1988 Glacier Grotto Financial Report	16
Sheep Cave (Bold Peak)	16
Members in the News	17

Tidewater Sea Cave
Blackstone Bay
Prince William Sound
by Mike Mauser

During the summer of 1987, Tim and Gail Jennings, Jeff Towner, Helen Hankins and I took [one single and two double kayaks out of Whittier, in the Prince William Sound,] and paddled to Blackstone Bay. On the second day of our trip, we paddled to the end of the bay for a closer look at the rumble reverberating against the steep cliffs. Drifting quietly among the floating ice, we could hear a constant popping and sizzling from the melting of recently calved ice. Twice we watched impressive ice falls from a hanging glacier--the ice would break loose with a roar and the whole rounded face of the cliff would appear to be flooded with a torrential stream. Fortunately, by the time the ice reached the sea it had been broken up into relatively small pieces and we only experienced a rocking swell.

We explored along the cliffs where we deemed it safe from such falls. There are some small sea caves and two large ones. Jeff Towner and I got out of our double kayak to explore the biggest one. There was no beach, so it was a bit tricky getting out. And the sea level changes rapidly there due to the extreme

tides, so even if you are out less than an hour you must be careful about where you leave your kayak. If you are not, you might find [the kayak] either floating away or high and dry with many yards of treacherous, sharp boulders and deep, un-kayakable channels between you and open sea.

The cave itself is about as deep as it is high at the entrance. I doubt if any but the highest seas reach the interior now. [The cave's] most noteworthy feature is the view looking out. How many caves do you know that look out onto such a beautiful scene?

All of us who have travelled and explored in the Prince William Sound are deeply saddened by the news of the oil spill. What will happen to those seals who kept popping their heads up out of the water to check out our kayaks? How different it will be to slowly paddle mere feet from the shore and, instead of looking down into clean, clear water at all kinds of sea life, to see instead tarry gunk.

I hope it is not as bad as I fear. But the Sound is so precious, even the smallest bit of pollution is cause for concern.

POWIE III Travel Pooling Arrangements

Jim Nichols has room for one passenger and can allocate equipment space for two backpacks for travel to/from Prince of Wales Island. His vehicle is a 1984 VW camper; he plans to leave from Haines on July 22 and return to Ketchikan on August 4. Phone 585-6213.

Curvin Metzler seeks passengers/transportation for travel to/from Prince of Wales Island, leaving from Anchorage on August 13/14 and remaining until August 25 (the end of POWIE III). Phone 333-8766.

President's Corner

ANNUAL REPORT: (CONTINUED FROM LAST ISSUE.) The third part of the Grotto's Annual Report of 1988 comprises the Financial Report, found on page XXX of this issue.

MIDYEAR FINANCIAL REVIEW: The greater activity and plans of the Grotto have resulted in a somewhat different Financial Situation than that of the end of last year.

First of all, a special account has been set up for POWIE III, independently of the regular Grotto account. Equipment expenses have exceeded the total "Rope Fees" collected to date. It is urged that all those POWIE III participants who have not sent their \$20 Rope Fees to the Treasurer do so immediately as the Grotto is in no position to operate in the red. The Rope Fee is the entry fee for POWIE III participation.

The cost of producing the 100 Grotto patches ordered will be paid out of the regular Grotto Treasury. This cost, hopefully, will be recovered by sales.

Operating costs of The Alaskan Caver is exceeding original estimates. Since 1982 (our last increase in dues) postal rates and the cost of reproduction of each page has increased. Also, due to the increase of the Grotto activity, the size of individual issues has more than doubled, roughly doubling the costs of reproduction and postage. Although increase in membership has helped considerably, our financial resources continue to dwindle and at least by the end of this year we must either cut back on back size of our journal or increase dues. At the April meeting it was decided that due to the interesting nature of the articles being received, it would be better to increase dues.

Commencing January 1, dues will be increased to \$7.50 for the first member of a household; the \$1 fee for each additional member at that address will remain in effect. Subscriptions for The Alaskan Caver (for Institutions) would be raised from \$5.00 to \$10.00 per volume. Overseas rates would be \$15.00 for those wishing Air Mail postage and \$7.50 for those wishing surface mail. (All pending postal rate constancy.)

Advantages and disadvantages of Non-Profit status are being investigated, but our present membership is not large enough to utilize bulk mailing rates unless we mail two issues at the same time.

JUNE 12 DRAFT OF AGREEMENT WITH FOREST SERVICE SUBMITTED:

The draft Memorandum of Understanding with the U. S. Forest Service was mailed June 14. It was based on other acceptable and smooth working agreements in force throughout the country. Comments have been sent to a number of Grotto and NSS experts as well as to the Forest Service. At presstime comments have been received from the Allreds, Alice Iliff, and Janet Thorne, NSS Conservation Chair. This agreement, when implemented, will describe the working arrangements and relationships between the Grotto and the Forest Service and should greatly facilitate planning and working together and will increase the level of the quality and quantity of our joint accomplishments with respect to understanding the cave resources of this Area of the Tongass National Forest.

Kid Cave
Prince of Wales Island
Technical Preliminary Report #1
by Kevin Allred
October 9, 1988

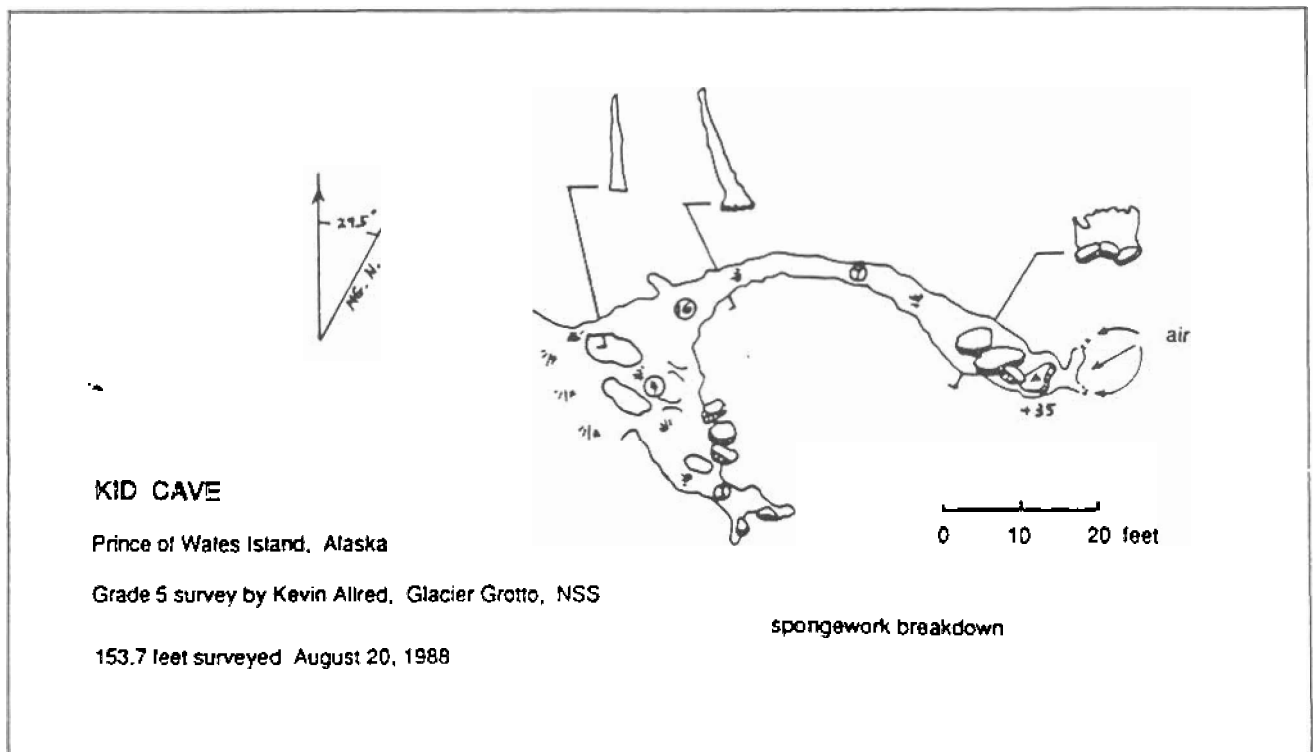
Elevation: 220 feet [67 meters]

Kid Cave was found on the 14th of August, 1988, by Glacier Grotto members while looking for possible lower entrances to the El Capitan Cave system. It had been entered previously, probably by loggers, as it is adjacent to a recent clearcut.

Located 90 vertical feet below El Capitan Cave and some 150 feet down a prominent dry gully which appears to have once been a major resurgence of the system, Kid Cave heads easterly into the gully area. Both branches of this small cave ends in

breakdown; at the point where the northerly branch ends it receives a breeze and is 35 feet above the northernmost floor of the three entrances.

A few speleothems were noted in the back end of the northern branch, namely some moonmilk and what appeared to be some very small (1 centimeter [0.4 inches] and smaller) moonmilk stalactites in breakdown, out of the way. Total passage length is 153.7 feet [46.85 meters]. Because of the absence of pits, this cave is a good cave in which to turn beginners or more inexperienced cavers loose.



Carcass Cave
Prince of Wales Island
Technical Preliminary Report #2
by Kevin Allred
October 9, 1988

Elevation: ~500 feet [150 meters]

Located about 75 feet south-east of Starlight Cave and three feet from a logging road, the main (fifteen-foot-diameter) entrance pit of Carcass Cave drops some 45 feet to a very steep incline littered with logging slash, breakdown and trash. The cave has three entrance pits, and has served as a natural trap for animals for a long while, judging from one half-decayed deer carcass and other deer and bear bones scattered throughout the lower areas.

The cave was first entered and surveyed by Glacier Grotto members when Mark Evans and Kevin

Allred mapped 568.4 feet [173.2 meters] on the 11th of August, 1988. It had been entered before that time by at least one group of loggers, who had lowered themselves down into the entrance pit hand over hand on a 1/4-inch rope and were lucky to get back out alive.

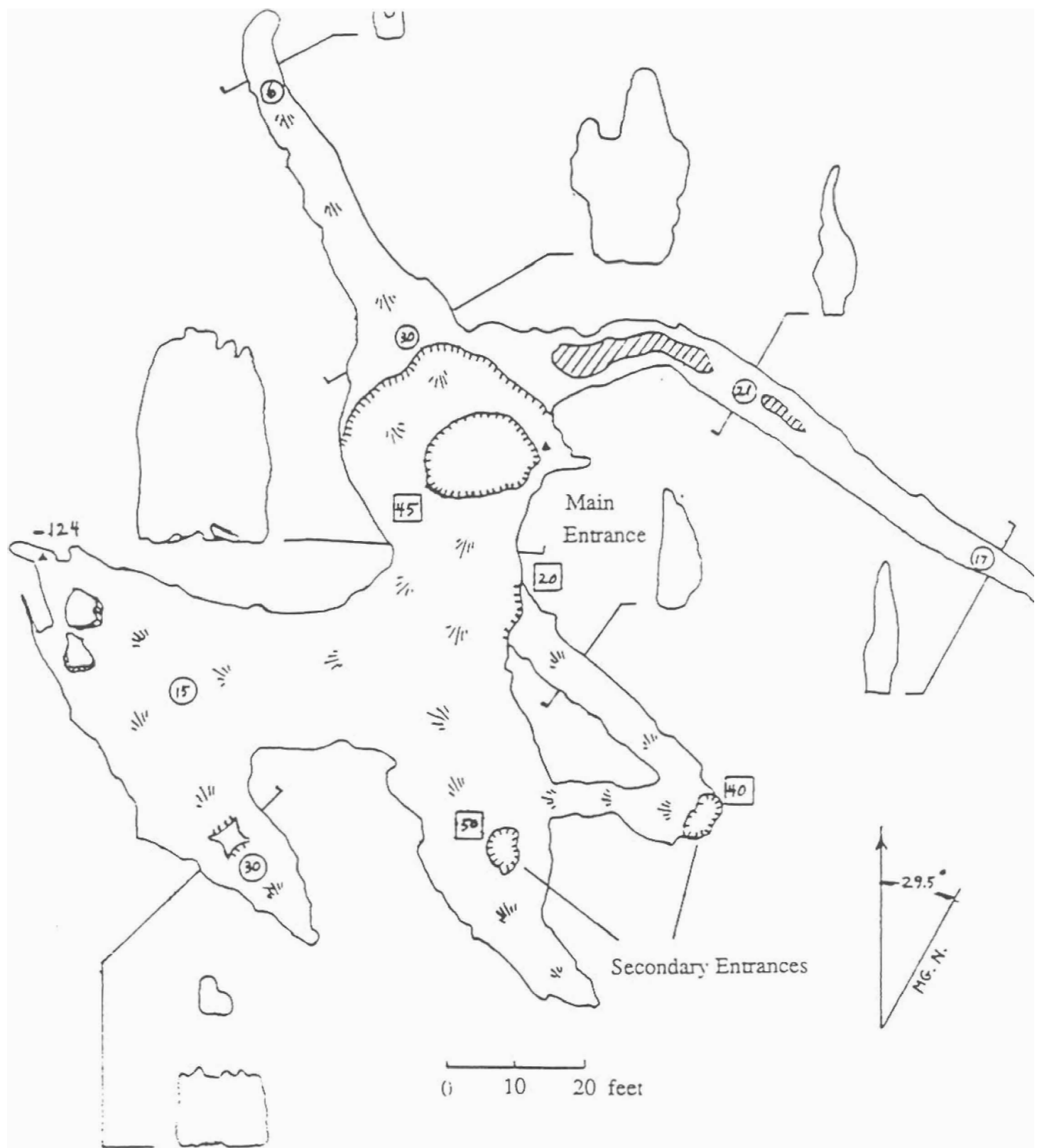
Most passages are well-modified by breakdown and are of large proportions. Chances are small that this cave contains more passages beyond what now has already been mapped. Few speleothems were found in the cave.

Only well-prepared and well-equipped persons should attempt this cave due to its vertical nature.

Rates for flights from Anchorage to POWIE III are currently about \$500 round trip! Contact the President, Jay Rockwell, for details.

Anyone interested in being a delegate to this years Congress of Grottos should contact the President, Jay Rockwell, immediately.

The design for the Glacier Grotto arm patch has been sent to the patchmaker, and patches should be available in six to eight weeks.



CARCASS CAVE

Prince of Wales Island. Alaska

Grade 5 survey by Mark Evans & Kevin Allred, Glacier Grotto, NSS.

568.4 feet surveyed August 11, 1988

Salmon Fry Cave
Prince of Wales Island
Technical Preliminary Report #3
by Kevin Allred
October 9, 1988

Elevation: ~40 feet [12 meters]

Salmon Fry Cave was found by Glacier Grotto members Harvey Bowers, David Klinger, and Jay Rockwell on the 17th of August, 1988, after they noticed the large resurgences from the cave welling up out of the stream bed of El Capitan Creek some 100 feet southwest of the entrance sink-hole. The entrance was partially filled with logging slash and some garbage, but a two-foot-diameter hole remained for access into the cave which consisted of two separate streams flowing through the relatively low and broad passageways.

On the 21st of August, 1988, a length of 162.1 feet [49.4 meters] of passage was surveyed. The volume of water going through the cave varied greatly depending on rainfall and runoff. In the month of August, 1988, it ranged from perhaps fifteen gallons per second in the first part of the month down to about four gallons per second in the latter part of the month. The greatest percentage of water flowed through the northern branch of the cave, beginning at a sump three feet deep by five feet wide.

Kevin Allred probed this sump some five feet by feeling along the ceiling with extended

feet, and it continued inward with a flat, level and broad ceiling a foot or so under the water. Wetsuits are recommended for serious exploration of this cave. Both streams in the cave end in sumps which fluctuate greatly judging from the water lines and deposits of foam.

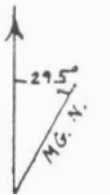
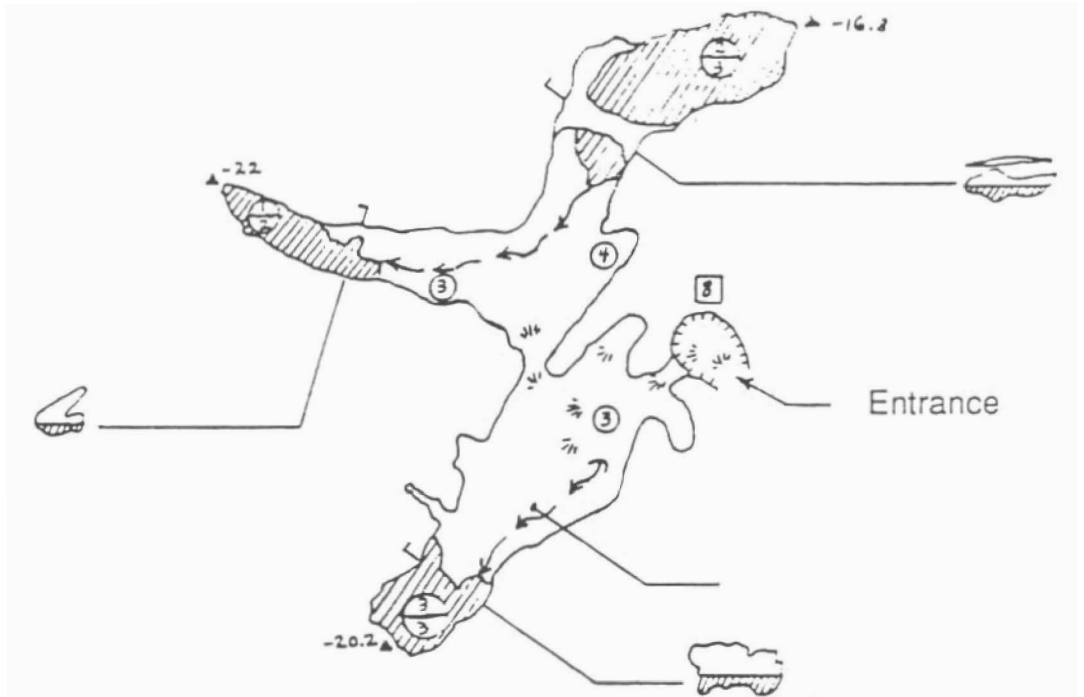
Kevin Allred collected some common blackfly larvae (Simulium arcticum) in the southern branch of the cave, attached to a chunk of breakdown in shallow running water. They apparently do this to utilize the higher concentration of oxygen near the water surface. Several salmon fry three to five inches long were also noted in the large, northern upstream pool. A six-inch-long Dolly Varden trout was also seen in the pool. When aided by the beam of light shown on it from the headlamp of Kevin Allred, it appeared to be feeding on small organisms or other matter moving by in the water.

There is a good possibility that much more passage still lies waiting to be found upstream in this interesting system. These passages could perhaps be accessible by using wetsuits during a dry summer or if one had the proper training in cave diving. Otherwise, the cave is fine for the general public.

All participants in the POWIE III Expedition are required to pay a \$20 rope fee as a means of sharing common costs. A few persons who are scheduled to take part in the expedition have not yet paid the fee. If you plan to be present on POWIE III and have not yet paid, you should send the fee to the Treasurer, Sam Dunaway, immediately.

continues

(3 feet high sump)



0 10 20 feet

SALMON FRY CAVE

Prince of Wales Island, Alaska

Grade 5 survey by Kevin Allred, Glacier Grotto, NSS

162.1 feet surveyed August 21st, 1988

El Capitan Pit
Prince of Wales Island
Technical Preliminary Report #4
by Kevin Allred
October 9, 1988

Elevation: 2320 feet [707 meters]

The opening to El Capitan Pit, measuring five feet by eight feet, was first discovered on the 15th of August, 1988, by David Hatfield (a U.S.F.S. geologist) and Glacier Grotto members Harvey Bowers and Kevin Allred while making a rough search of the surrounding heavily-karsted region for caves. At that time they sounded the pit, and the dropped rocks glanced off the vertical walls a number of times before ceasing, indicating great depth and large dimensions below. A conservative estimate of the depth was assessed as at least twice the previous Alaska record.

On the 25th of August, 1988, the U.S. Forest Service kindly provided helicopter support to investigate El Capitan Pit. They air-lifted 70 pounds of rope and gear to within one-half mile of the pit site. Glacier Grotto

members Kathy Tonnessen, Bob Bastasz, and Kevin Allred descended 340 feet into the pit and sounded it again. It took a number of seconds for the sounds to cease with several glances. Bob took a similar sounding at 200 feet from the top which also took a number of seconds to cease.

Pit size increases below the entrance and looks to be joint-controlled. Approximately 100 to 150 feet down, the shaft penetrates a uniform four-foot-thick noncarbonate dike which dips about 30 degrees. It is made of porphyritic andesite with phenocrysts (larger embedded crystals) of amphibole.

The pit is definitely for the experienced vertical caver only and requires specialized equipment as well. Cold water from melting snow runs down the rope from around 200 feet on, so it is recommended that wetsuits or other suitable wear be worn.

New Members

Black, Curt	P.O. Box 162452	Austin	TX 78716
Decker, Dr John E	P.O. Box 100360	Anchorage	AK 99510
Kellstedt, Kelly	Route 6, Box 134A	Santa Fe	NM 87501
Lane, Buddy	40 Hidden Brook Lane	Signal Mountain	TN 37377
Lane, Doranne Mullenix	40 Hidden Brook Lane	Signal Mountain	TN 37377
Messler, Neeld J, II	67 Still Forest Lane	Woodland Park	CO 80866
Moon, Hank	316 Chambliss St, Apt C	Chattanooga	TN 37405
St Denis, Cathy	1103 Chugach Way #3	Anchorage	AK 99503
Sanders, Dr Robert	11661 Rockridge Road	Anchorage	AK 99516
Sattler, Robert Allen	P.O. Box 80466	College	AK 99708
Selfert, Dr Richard D	1196 Violet Drive	Fairbanks	AK 99712
Sims, Steven M	2110 Bula Drive	Colorado Springs	CO 80915
Smith, Marion O	P.O. Box 8276, U T Stn	Knoxville	TN 37996
Strait, Anne Knox	17 Pinehurst Drive	Caswell Beach	NC 28465

Starlight Cave
Prince of Wales Island
Technical Preliminary Report #5
by Kevin Allred
October 9, 1988

Elevation: ~500 feet [150 meters]

Located by aerial photographs, Starlight Cave was first entered and surveyed (2189 feet [667.2 meters]) by Glacier Grotto members Carlene and Kevin Allred on the 1st and 2nd of September, 1987. Approximately 800 feet west of Sinkhole Lake, the main entrance is a collapsed doline 110 feet deep and 100 feet in diameter. The main passage extends to the northwest, while another passage heads easterly. The main part of the cave had evidence of former exploration.

The entrance passage slopes steeply down 150 feet east of the entrance and was finally plugged with breakdown until Kevin Allred dug through the debris. From here two drainages of phreatic and vadose-modified phreatic passage are accessible, each containing a small stream and lake of unknown depth. Even though these lakes are only 120 feet apart, the furthest is 32 feet lower than the first. It is estimated that Sinkhole Lake is over 100 feet higher and only 500 feet away from the further lake, which is 201.1 feet below the entrance.

A few speleothems were encountered in the lower parts of the cave. Soon after entering and descending the second drainage, care should be taken in traveling the westerly passage, where it divides, so as to avoid crushing rimstone dams in the other, easterly passage. The corridor, which trends northwest from the main entrance, begins as a steep breakdown slope caused by roof collapse, and then more or less levels until after 350 feet where two shafts extend to the surface. A short passage to the north ends in a silt fill.

Special precautions should be taken in the lower parts of the cave as the high connection between the two drainages may form a trap if the cave floods in the event of heavy runoff. How much the water normally fluctuates, seasonally or from year to year, is not known. It was an especially dry summer in 1987.

There are some delicate areas in this cave and also some potentially dangerous features. It is recommended that only the experienced and well-equipped caver with gear and a 100-foot rope enter this cave.

A map of Starlight Cave can be found in The Alaskan Caver, Volume 8 Number 6, April 1988, page 4. Large (two foot by four foot) copies of this same map are available from the President, Jay Rockwell.

Address Changes

Head, Joe	21102 NE 242 Avenue	Battle Ground	WA 98604
Remele, James J	7840 Convoy Court	San Diego	CA 92111
Ward, Denise E	390 South High Bench Rd	Alpine	UT 84004

Caves on Coronation Island
by Steve Lewis
reprinted from D. C. Speleograph, January 1988

I was sorry not to have been able to make it over to Price of Wales this summer. We got weathered in for a few days more than expected on Coronation, and that--coupled with an unexpected call to do some guiding in British Columbia made the logistics impossible. I am interested in hearing what you found, though, and perhaps tying in with a future trip.

The map you sent down seems to correlate quite well with the locations of caves we have located so far on Coronation. As both of us had discovered, Egg Harbor has a number of caves on the west side, none of which went terribly far. One did have some nice chimneys with some very interesting formations [and a decrepit ladder]. One fork had some large helectites, I believe--anyway, quite substantial formations coming out almost perpendicular to the walls. This route was impossible to climb without doing grave damage to formations, but appeared to squeeze down to nothing forty feet or so above me.

The SW coast has massive sea caves and tunnels, most of which appear to be being heavily used by puffins and murre. Swells prevented us from going deep into these but, again, they seem to be mostly massive but short. We never did find Folklore Cave--I assume by "decorated" that you mean it has drawings or paintings of some sort.

But there are some very exciting potential leads in the high karst country of the island. Needle Peak and surrounding ridges are pocked with sinkholes a number of which drop over fifty feet straight down. One hole was about thirty feet in diameter, seventy feet deep, with a passage leading off at

the bottom. This was at about 1500 feet of elevation. Unfortunately, when we finally got equipment up to this hole, a gimpy thumb and torrential rain convinced us to put exploration off until the spring field season.

Another exciting passage is apparently on the transition between the limestone and diorite areas between Egg Harbor and Aats Bay. We followed a spiralling crawlway until it steepened to what appeared to be rope-requiring angles with the limited light and time we had. There was a small stream running into the sinkhole, and the main stream leading to Egg Harbor pours out of the side of a pile of loose rock several hundred vertical feet below. We have also flagged and marked on our map a number of other pits with holes for which we have not yet found a bottom.

Ann Ruggles and Don Hampton, grotto members here in Fairbanks, have expressed some interest in trying to get an exploratory trip going which could coincide with my winter spring field season on Coronation. Current plans are for me to be on the island from mid-February to probably early June. We are using a cabin at Egg Harbor, which gives good access to most of the cave areas and, with a bit of extra fuel, we have a Zodiac which could be used to shuttle gear and/or people to shorten the distance to Needle Peak. The possibility exists that I might be able to help fund a boat trip out if we could get all of the scientific gear off the island with it at the end of our field season. I am sure that I could convince the Wildlife unit to pay a portion or all of the cost if it were less than the cost of hauling us out by plane. ... Hope we can pull something off!

SAFETY & TECHNIQUE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NIELSON'S WELL

By Jim Nicholls
(NSS# 15216)

Nielson's Well is, at the time of this publication, the deepest, single vertical shaft in Utah. It is, for all I know, the deepest single-drop vertical pit in the western United States.

It's realm should not be taken lightly or with too much confidence. Every time I have visited the cave, I have met a different set of problems and conditions. I have returned more a dozen times during the past 12 months because I experience a humbled awe no other cave in Utah can match.

The cave environment is typically alpine. It is a hypothermia high risk cave with no easy way back to the surface, if you become overwhelmed. Any rescue attempt in retrieving a victim would require all the resources of the cave search and rescue organizations in the Intermountain West.

The main shaft has appeared stable so far and does not present any risk of large rock fall or collapse. The cross section of the shaft is large and can best be described as "TAG Like" in its proportions. The two main ledges are a nuisance and rob the pit of its potential of being a free drop all the way from the surface, the last hundred feet or so are the "best". The final drop heightens the spelunker's senses to an acute condition. (What happened to the walls? Where did they go?) The "snow cone" is a common feature in other alpine caves of the area and while providing a needed smear of color at one end of the large breakdown-filled Big Room, it also creates a host of problems for which most vertical cavers might not be prepared.

I do not believe any checklist of basic or luxury items should be published to ensure a safe and comfortable time at Nielson's Well. What anyone who reads this should realize is that there is no margin for incompetency or inexperience in this cave.

There is no easy method of communication from the top of the pit to the bottom. The first trip was very spooky. I was not able to communicate with Ken Stahley except by shouting at the top of my voice. If slightly incapacitated or hypothermic, I might not have been able to let him know of my condition. I doubt that whistle signals would make

the situation any safer. Any sound wave traveling up the pit will encounter all kinds of interference along the way. We have never been able to successfully shout back and forth and understand what the other was trying to say.

As far as I am able to tell, after spelunking in the Intermountain West for 4 years, bats found to be hibernating in an alpine cave environment are unique. Bats have been encountered in this pit. Is it essential for their well being to shun the use of personal two-way radios or should it be left to one's personal preference? No matter what the personal cost of a communication system, the flying mammal's welfare is more important. Not being a zoologist, familiar with bat population studies in Utah, I would recommend that their privacy be honored and respected. A moratorium on visitation to the pit should be observed by all cavers between of October through June.

Voice activated two-way radios have proven to be an asset in maintaining clear and instant communications between the surface and the far side of the Big Room, at the bottom of the shaft. I can recommend two simple and inexpensive modifications that will enhance and protect the communications system.

When the conditions in the cave are very wet and humid it would be wise to keep the radios inside zip-lock plastic bags. If the units become wet, their performance may be degraded. The use of duct tape and several rubber bands will help in the sealing of the bags. Be sure to tape the voice activation switch "open" to ensure that it will remain on during the descent. A transmission wire is a small gage wire that allows the radio signal to travel unimpeded up the shaft to the surface. The wire can become entangled the your rope while descending. Some ingenuity is required to devise a smoothly operating reel that enables the caver to take the transmission wire down the shaft as he rappels.

Ken Stahley, Mike Beer and I have tried various techniques of "laying" a transmission wire down the shaft. Each time was a marginal success. What may be needed is for the first descending caver to rappel to the first ledge. There, the wire should be lowered to him. The first descending caver should carefully attach it to his shoulder or helmet and gingerly drop the pit. Once at the bottom of "snow cone" and out away from the rope, the caver should take the transmission wire to the nearest wall and secure it. If it can be installed in such manner, then subsequent cavers could safely rappel and ascend without becoming entangled in the transmission wire.

The cave air temperature is similar to another Utah cave, Jim Peck's Ice Cave. It ranges from 35 degrees F to 39 degrees F. It is colder than Little Brush Creek Cave. Anyone not wearing the maximum weight in wool or polypropylene or even Capalene underwear will not enjoy themselves in Nielson's Well. Large areas of ceiling drips and small waterfalls have been encountered sometimes and then not found again other times. You will get wet and should be prepared not to get chilled. A metal-lined thermos bottle filled with hot cocoa or tea, a hardy lunch, a small piece of ensulite or foam, a large trash can liner, a carbide lamp or numerous candles and a ballaclava should all be considered "basic" items to help the last person waiting at the register rock keep from drifting off into never-never land while other cavers ascend.

Your personal vertical gear should be capable of operating soaking wet, covered with slime, and occasionally frozen. The delights of the snow cone may provide an interesting backdrop for photos, but it also creates some problems. Depending on the type of rope used, the ascending caver has to fight a portion of slack rope when starting the climb. All static ropes stretch to some degree. During the beginning, cavers will "march in place" to walk out the slack. In doing so, the caver will stomp up and down in a mud-hole. The bottom edge of the snow cone is similar in consistency to chocolate mousse. Consequently, the rope becomes very slimy. As the ascending caver achieves some progress up the cone, the mud on his boots and ascenders is carried up also. The first caver up the rope has the least difficult time, but what is left behind makes the remaining cavers' climbs a real chore.

Jumars have to be "thumbed along" until you break free of the "ice-slime" and reach the free vertical portion of the rope. After the free ascending position is achieved, the rest of the ascent is easy. I strongly urge anyone who does not own a sewn harness and sewn accessory straps not attempt this cave. Under conditions just described, hand-tied knots may come loose and pose a real danger to the user and all those involved. A well made, store-bought harness or well designed, hand-stitched harness, tested for conditions similar those found in Nielson's Well, should be considered a "basic item."

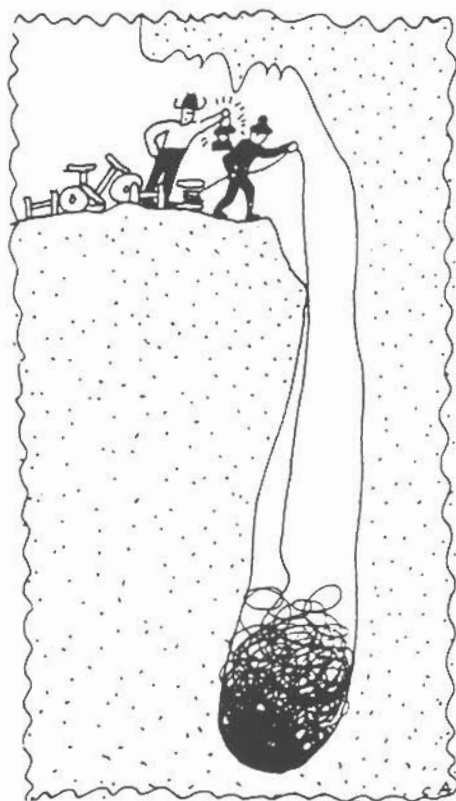
At least two rope pads are necessary to properly rig the pit. The first lip at the surface requires a 4-foot long pad. The edge is almost a 90-degree change of direction with several sharp parallel ridges. The second recommended pad should be located 30 feet down at the second ledge. That location demands rope protection because of the 15-degree change in direction the pit makes. From there, the rope

unavoidably follows the shaft wall. While dangling 300 feet below the second lip, the actions of climbing are transferred up the rope. The bobbing and jerking motions cause the rope to move back and forth across the second ledge. The rope will be subjected to constant sawing action against the dolomite if a pad is not used at this location.

Any attempt at a rebelay to avoid using rope pads at the second ledge would demand a level of technical rock climbing skill that no caver in Utah possesses. Any attempt at a rebelay at the second ledge would expose the caver to a risk few cavers should have to endure. Sturdy rope pads that can be secured to the pit walls are an absolute must for this and any pit.

If you do not possess the proper equipment or have not achieved the required experience of deep vertical caving, please do not attempt to test your skill at Nielson's Well. Vertical caves similar to Nielson's Well are common in the Tennessee, Alabama, and Georgia (TAG) region of the eastern United States. While caving in Tennessee, I was fortunate to have successfully dropped many of them repeatedly. I offer these recommendations to the Utah caving community hoping they are not considered too "genteel."

Cartoon by Carlene Allred



WOW! THAT MAKES 3 MILES
OF BAILING TWINE AND THE
PLUMB-BOB STILL HASN'T HIT BOTTOM!

Alaska Cave Rumor:
Three-Thousand-Foot Volcanic Pit

Rumored by: McCarlstrum

Reported by: Kevin Allred

Rumor Date: July 1980

Report Date: May 13, 1988

Location: Lion Mountain, Shoal Cove, 20 miles east of Ketchikan

Background: The rumor comes from a wiry, middle-aged prospector who moved to Ketchikan in July of 1980; he was working in the Haines area at the time the rumor was told.

Description: A cave "three thousand feet deep" of volcanic origin has its entrance down from the summit of Lion Mountain at Shoal Cove, near Ketchikan, Alaska. A thousand-foot plumb bob did not reach the bottom. McCarlstrum could not hear boulders hit the bottom. He described the mountain as flat on top like a plateau. There is a hanging valley of sorts just below this plateau, which he described as the remnant of a crater. The cave goes horizontally at first, from near or within this bowl-shaped crater. He thought the vertical part of the cave was where lava had come up at one time. He knows what is a mine and what is not. He also mentioned that there were "as many garnets as you could carry", but said they were all ruined by volcanic heat.

1989 CORONATION ISLAND TRIP

By a second-hand telephone message on June 14 we learned Curt Black, Steve Lewis, Ann Ruggles, Don Hampton and others have safely returned from Coronation Island, where they surveyed caves for a week. About 10 caves, including one 90-foot pit and two 80-foot pits, plus many sink holes, lots of blowing potential, and much more were found. Curt said Don Hampton will be coming up with a more detailed report. We look forward to hearing from Don.

PORCUPINE (RIVER) CAVES EXPLORED:

Archaeologist member Bob Sattler wrote that he has worked in this area and that he will send a report about the caves after he finishes his thesis in December 1989.

DAVE KLINGER WARNS NEW VISITORS TO PRINCE OF WALES ISLAND:

"Persons visiting the island should plan on being completely self sufficient. Gas, ice and very limited groceries are available at Whale Pass. The nearest phone is at Thorne Bay and emergency messages could be passed through the USFS Thorne Bay Ranger Station to the USFS El Capitan work camp. If you have to drive south to a phone go to Klawock or Craig and avoid the road to Thorne Bay. There are showers and a laundromat in Klawock. Unleaded gas prices were: Whale Pass - \$1.60; Klawock - \$1.37; Craig - \$1.45. The best grocery on the island is the Thompson House at Craig. Mail is picked up from a mail drop at Whale Pass once or twice a week. Letters are then mailed from Ketchikan."

1988 Glacier Grotto Financial Report

Income	
Memberships	160.00
Prepaid Dues	37.00
Sale of Publications	37.00
NSS Exploration Project	250.00
Total Income	484.00
Expenses	
Publications	184.10
Postage	27.07
Exploration Project	250.00
Bank Charges	7.20
Other	3.00
Total Expenses	471.37
Summary	
Total Income	484.00
Total Expenses	471.37
Net Operating Gain	12.63
End of Year Assets	
Cash in Bank	711.51
Net Worth	
Balance 12-31-87	698.88
1988 Operating Gain	12.63
Balance 12-31-88	711.51

Note: Deposits held at 12-31-88 5.00

Sheep Cave Bold Peak Chugach Mountains by Harvey Bowers

On Sunday, June 25, 1989, Harvey Bowers and Dan Kennedy entered a small cave on the south side of Bold Peak (elev. 7522 feet), at the head of Eklutna Lake, near Anchorage, Alaska. The cave is located on the left side going downstream in a small stream gully that drains the south side of Bold Peak. This gully is the common route for climbing Bold Peak. The location is the 1700-foot elevation at N $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ Sec 16 T14N, R3E of the Seward Meridian, which can be found on the quad-range map Anchorage B-6.

The cave is being used by Dall Sheep for shelter and the floor is covered with sheep droppings, estimated a foot or more in depth. The cave is in Jurassic greenstone/graywacke and runs east for thirty to forty feet with a width of approximately ten feet. At the entrance it is only about four feet high, for the first ten feet, but then it opens up to a height of six to eight feet. I think it is one of the more interesting caves in the Chugach Range, and it may be of importance because of its use by Dall Sheep.

Members in the News (Contributions invited)

Kevin Allred's and Bill Halliday's names appeared several times in Rodney D. Horrocks' Probing the Depths of Utah: The Explorations and Surveys of Neffs Canyon Cave in NSS News 47(5):105-122.

Kevin and Carlene Allred. The Allred's map of Cave Lake Cave appeared on page 28 of SpeleoDigest, 1982.

Fire! and Karl L. Fraccus. Fire!'s and Karl's article, Anaktuvuk Caves appeared on pages 2-3, SpeleoDigest, 1980.

Rich Hall. Rich's article, Drip Grind Cave (and others), appeared on page 3-4, SpeleoDigest, 1980.

Rich Hall. Rich's article, Grapefruit Rocks Caves, appeared on pages 4-5, SpeleoDigest, 1980.

Bill Halliday's letter on FCRPA changes appeared in the NSS News 46(11):415.

Buddy Lane's name appeared in a somewhat unclear letter by Mike Rogers in the NSS News 47(2):31 & 49 (Feb. '89). The letter raised the question about how far we should go in cooperating with "the press". Having been contacted by reporters who were going to write a story anyway, we too, have been faced with the choice of being sure they got the preferred view on the subject and hoping it would come out O. K. when published, or simply withdrawing into one's shell and refusing to talk. Deft side stepping is sometimes in order. Further comments on this subject appeared on NSS News 47(4):84(Apr. '89), under Caving Publicity.

Frederica de Laguna An abstract of her letter to Dr. Warren Smith, Prince William Sound Caves, appeared on pages 5-6, SpeleoDigest 1980.

Alice Iliff. Alice's article, "The Caves of Hope," appeared on page 7 of SpeleoDigest, 1979.

Matsuzaki, Hiroshi, Kazuo Ikutka, Manishiro Iwao, et al.'s article, Japanese Team Explores Alaskan Glaciers appeared on pages 1-2 of SpeleoDigest, 1980.

Rick Robinson. Rick's article, "Exploring Lava Tubes," appeared on Pages 26-27 of SpeleoDigest, 1982."

Julius Rockwell, Jr. Jay's article, "Some Glacial Caves in Central Alaska," appeared on page 4 of Speleo Digest, 1975.

Marion O. Smith's name appears in Bill Steele's article "An April in Huautla" on page 244 of SpeleoDigest 1982.

Bill Halliday's article, "Mt. St. Helens, October 1982," appeared in SpeleoDigest 1982, pp. 194-195.

GROTTO NEWS: OUR FIRST GRANT

NSS Check Number 532 for \$250 was written to the Glacier Grotto to help on the expenses incurred by the 1988 Prince of Wales Island Expedition II (POWIE II). Kevin Allred submitted the request for funds. This was our first grant and an incentive to seek non-profit status.

Glacier Grotto was mentioned on pages 5, 10, 13, and 41 of the new NSS Members Manual (NSS News 47(5A).).

PRINCE OF WALES ISLAND CAVING EXPEDITION III

Dates: July 25 to August 25, 1989

Leaders: Kevin and Carlene Allred

1. Each participant must be self sufficient: will need own tent with extra tarp, food, stove, camping gear, caving gear, vertical gear, and a complete set of raingear. A poncho will not do. P.O.W. Island is a rainforest. Helly Hanson, top, pants, hat/hood work best. Also, you will need more than one set of coveralls.
2. Cave temperatures are 40 degrees or colder. Bring warm clothing for under your coveralls. If you have a wetsuit, bring it. It may be cold outside too. Bring survey gear if you have any.
3. Make arrangements as soon as possible. Flight or ferry reservations may be needed well in advance. Let us know as soon as possible if you plan to come.
4. Basic foods and gas are available on P.O.W. Island in the Craig- Klawock area during the day. Gas and a very limited amount of food are available in Whale Pass. Nothing is available in Hollis.
5. Transportation: fly or take ferry to Ketchikan. From Ketchikan take ferry to Hollis. Need your own vehicle or make arrangements with expedition leader. Hollis is 100 miles from El Capitan USFS work camp on north end of island where caving area is located. Make arrangements early. Vehicles can be rented in Ketchikan or possibly Klawock. Contact Jay Rockwell.
6. This project has received support from the NSS and Forest Service. Participants should be NSS and Glacier Grotto members. Contact Jay Rockwell.

Glacier Grotto
2944 Emory Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99508-4466

Address Correction Requested