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# **I N T E R C O M**

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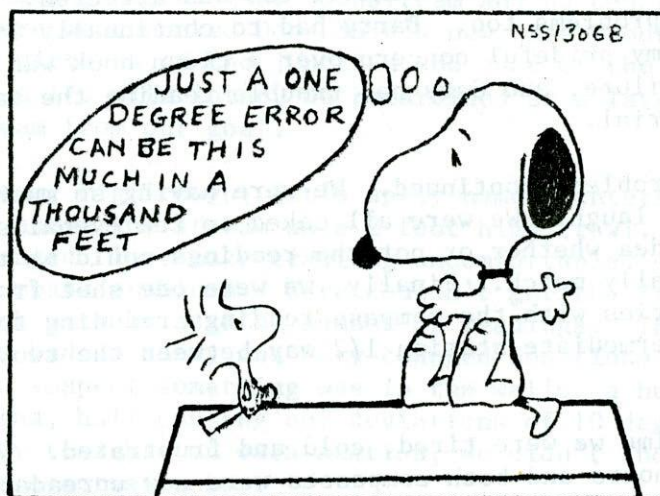
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The students were interested in doing more caving in which I promoted the Iowa Grotto. Also the instructor was interested in a possible future trip for additional members of his classes. He will also inform me of any mines or caves he comes across in his travels.

CARTOON submitted by Lowell Burkhead



#### TRIP TO CRYSTAL LAKE CAVE

February 14, 1981

Rudy Pruszko

Trip Leader: Rudy Pruszko; Trip Members: Mike Bounk, Jeff Rubel, Doug Rubel

We proceeded into the cave to passages beyond the commercial section that we explored on the last trip. One passage contained many speleothems which Mike took pictures of.

Then we continued to the air passage which was pushed beyond the mapped section on the resurvey done in 1956. We followed the passage 350 feet further, before we had to turn back due to time. The passage continued on which should be pushed on the next trip. Most of the passage was narrow belly or side crawl with occasional areas of more room. There was a strong air current thru the passage which would cause our carbide light to flicker.

The air passage is still suspected to connect up with Meunster Cave on the other side of the hill. According to topographical maps the distance between the entrances of Crystal Lake and Meunster Caves is about 3000 feet. Further pushing of air passage is needed to prove this theory. Evidence of pick marks on the walls of air passage were made by someone travelling toward the entrance of Crystal Lake Cave.

We also found a collapsed shaft in air passage which has a passage on the other side of the shaft that continues on and could be entered with some digging.

A passage off of the commercial section heading North could be pushed with very little digging. Surface investigation indicated that this passage leads to an old mine entrance on the North side of the hill. This entrance was supposed to be the original opening to the mine.

There is definitely more work to be done in this cave. The owner Jim Rubel has been very interested and co-operative in our projects. We have covered over 3550 feet of passage so far, but some old records state that there is 8000 feet of passage. By pushing our many leads in this cave, we could very easily find over 8000 feet of passage.

#### FEBRUARY COLDWATER CAVE TRIP

Feb. 21, 22, 1981

Michael Bounk

Pete DeVries (Expedition Leader), Gary Engh, Gwenne Engh, Barry Schuman, John Moses, Terry Blockhus, Joe Blockhus, Ken Blockhus, Keith Fabiah, George Zachariasen, Michael Bounk, and others.

After breakfast, Gary, Gwenne, John and Barry entered the cave to survey, as is discussed in Gwenne's report.

Terry, Joe, Ken, Keith and I entered the cave at about noon and headed downstream to the Fountain Formation on a photography trip. We exited the cave at about 9:00 p.m., and found that everyone except Barry's group had exited the cave.

We then watched a slide show of George's recent trip to New Zealand.

Note: A number of other trips which are not discussed here took place.



## FEBRUARY COLD WATER TRIP - CASCADE PASSAGE - PIG TROUGH CONNECTION

February 21, 1981

Gwenne Engh

Barry Schuman-RRSS-Rear Tape, Compass; Gary Engh-Lead Tape; Gwenne Engh-Book; John Moses-Windy City Grotto-Compass.

After countless hours spent surveying up Cascade Passage, Barry Schuman was finally rewarded with 2050' of virgin passage surveyed, in what began as an unpromising side lead. Last month Pig Trough had driven the 3 of us to the brink of madness with oozing mud, and erratic compasses (see January Cascade Survey Team's report).

For five weeks we plotted our revenge on Pig Trough, preparing ourselves for a long trip. Barry jogged 7 miles a day, Gary shed pounds and jumped enough rope to shake the house down, and I swam harder and longer and ran steps. We had new large packs and canteens, and I had elbow pads for doing book. Barry recruited John Moses from Windy City to complete the team.

We entered the cave at 10:00 a.m., Saturday morning. John took our pictures at the base of the shaft and we were off. We slowly made our way up Cascade and changed carbide at Pig Trough and started the resurvey, fingers crossed that our sightings would match. John had brought a marine compass, waterproof with prism sight and self illuminated. Barry had a good RRSS club compass. We checked our first few stations with the old book from the month before - footages and sightings matched. Amazing.

Instead of surveying through Chester White Dome, we surveyed around it. The passage around Chester is a belly crawl through small breakdown and broken shallow pot holes. As book I had to go through on my back with John unhooking my gear from every projection and hang up the passage could offer.

As we rounded the dome, the passage becomes muck-filled, still only two feet high at best. Three of the shots could not be justified closer than a degree and a half, an improvement over last month, but still frustrating enough to cause each station to be taken over and over. After 3 hours we finally came into the four-way junction room. We celebrated the completion of Pig Trough, recarbided and ate, before starting for glory. The crawl was still clean with a flat floor and ceiling. The shots were 60-100 feet long and the sightings matched! It kept increasing in size 'til we were stoop walking and walking, and excitement began to build. Then came a rimstone dam with deep sucking mud backed up behind it. It had to be the deepest I'd ever been through, deeper than the mud near the resurgence downstream, at least 2 to 3 feet deep. Since the passage didn't get smaller, no one was discouraged. On we went stoop walking and walking, the formations becoming larger and whiter as we went.

Then we came upon Hairy Breakdown. Hairy had 2 levels, only 2 feet apart. The upper level was floored with flat slabs forming a large, dryer room, 2-1/2 to 3 feet high. As John slid up to check it out, the edge of one of the slabs broke off and crashed into the passage. He came back to report there were two very small side passages that would have to be dug



open. Meanwhile, Barry had gone into the lower level of the breakdown, a nasty hole of jumbled slabs supported by key rocks, mucky and dangerous. He got through the breakdown and said he was in a room he didn't care for at all. John who had been leaning against a large slab, clear of the breakdown, felt it slip and crash to the floor, scaring us all. Gary then went into the breakdown to join Barry who had named the room he was in Killer Foam Room. It was walled with foam, and very eerie. We couldn't find the passage. While Gary was still picking his way through the breakdown, Barry poked down a wall of foam to find the passage continued. They scouted ahead a bit and then came back through Hairly to resume the survey.

We packed the book into the ammo can and John and I picked our way through the breakdown. John was convinced he could "smell" the surface. The air did seem fresher and crisper. Bits of wood floated in the stream. Maybe we were near a sink hole. Because of the frailty of the breakdown, we were all being as careful as we could, even speaking in whispers. Broken shards of foam made the passage even spookier. As I crossed a bar across the passage to peer into the breakdown, it crashed to the floor, dropping me on my feet. I leaned against the wall and chunks of it broke off and fell into the stream. We finished surveying that section as fast as we could!

The passage then boomed wide open into bore hole, 22 feet wide, 7 feet high, 100 feet long shots. In a large room, Kenny's Ballroom, John took some more multiple flash pictures. We recarbided and ate in the Ballroom and decided we were still fresh enough to go on and on. The adrenaline was working on all of us. 100 foot shots continued and book had a hard time keeping up. The stream disappeared under flat slabs; either the stream was undercutting the floor or the slabs broke off from the ceiling. The width of the passage remained the same but the ceiling steadily dropped 'til we were crawling again, then belly crawling another 80 feet to a junction room.

The passage continued as a low water crawl and we paused to look glumly upstream. We decided I should add up the footage in the 3 books to see if we had 2000 feet while John crawled down to check out the nature of the continuation. He went down 100-150 feet and said it definitely went but we were beginning to fag. I roughly added up around 2000 feet so Gary fixed the last station - #44 and we packed up.

We changed carbide again, knowing we had a five hour slog ahead of us. We all felt satisfied. We'd seen several surveyable side passages and agreed it would be nice to know where we were on the surface before continuing farther. The long way out took its toll. John had carried a 50 caliver ammo can full of camera gear almost the entire way. Down the belly crawl into the crawlways, through the breakdown, through the sucking mud, and on to the clean crawl to the Pig Trough, we went. At Pig Trough I went in first hoping to get a head start so I could rest midway without slowing down the stronger guys. I was glad I'd left my coveralls in Iowa City, but I was very tired. I had to hold my head up with my arms as I slowly shushed along. I could see the lights from the other three illuminating the long shot sections. It looked neat!

In Cascade, the long mile of stoop walk and rimstone dams were covered in silence and at a "sensible" pace. Halfway out Cascade, a small side passage, 2 feet wide and 4 inches high, spewed muddy water into the passage, obscuring the floor and dams the rest of the way out. Muddy water is a sign of rain on the surface and we were all concerned about flooding. The water level remained normal but it was harder not being able to see. We changed carbide in a dome near the junction with Dead Coon. We'd all waited too long and only Gary's lamp was still lit.

We got to Dead Coon and checked the water level. It appeared to be normal but turbid. We wasted no time getting to the main stream. Cascade was running very strong over the falls. The main stream level was up, muddy with a strong current but we were well beyond any choke points.

Pot Hole Country was a nightmare. We were all tired, couldn't see a thing for the muddy water, and the current would toss one's free leg. We managed to get to the shaft in one piece. Up top only Jim Klager and Mike Bounk were still up. It was 2:15 a.m. It took us about an hour and a half to wind down enough to go to sleep.

Early Tuesday Barry called to say Klager had plotted out all the survey data and for me to sit down for some good news. Chester White Dome was under Rose Creek! All the remaining survey extended into a new ridge! Cold Water had just broken loose out of its ridge and into another! Nearly all of our 2050 virgin feet were in a new area, under higher ground!

#### SILURIAN KARST TRIP

February 28, 1981

Michael Bounk

Greg McCarty, Michael Bounk

Greg and I drove to West Union planning to finish the map of Wagon Wheel Pit Cave. However, while in town, we received word from Steve Wuellever, who we were planning to meet, that he could not come due to engine trouble. For this reason, and the generally wet conditions, Greg and I decided that we would be unable to accomplish much in Wagon Wheel at that time. Therefore, we headed south to the Volga Reservoir area. After a brief reconnaissance we drove to Delaware County, stopping at a cave near Manchester. After speaking with the owner, we inspected this cave, which although now dry is of deep phreatic origin. We dug open three leads gaining a few feet of passage. We exited the cave at about 6:30 p.m and returned home.