

July 1981

## Intercom, Volume 17, No. 4, July-August 1981

Greg McCarty

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

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*National Speleological Society*



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COVER PICTURE: Entrance to Falling Spring Cave, Fayette County

Photo by Mike Bounk

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## GROTTO MINUTES AT A GLANCE

Thomas Hruska, Secretary

## Regular Meeting July 8, 1981

Room 125                      Called to order: 7:45 PM                      Adjourned: 8:05 PM  
Attendance: 9 members and no guests                      Treasury: \$78.78  
The post office box has been paid. Two hundred pounds of carbide was ordered from Rudy Pruszko's company, Caves Unlimited. The grotto received information about the Hodag Hunt coming up in September. Gwenne Engh gave a trip report on some new discoveries in Coldwater Cave. Coldwater trip on third weekend.

## Regular Meeting July 22, 1981

Room 125                      Called to order: 7:45 PM                      Adjourned: 8:40 PM  
Attendance: 7 members and no guests                      Treasury: \$77.78  
The carbide has arrived and is available for grotto members. They may pick it up as needed from Mike Bounk in North Liberty. Gwenne Engh reported on more, new discoveries at Coldwater Cave. Lowell Burkhead told about working on the Yankee gating project until rain forced them to quit. Gwenne is planning a trip to Monroe County, Illinois, on July 25-26, 1981. Lowell will be returning to Yankee Cave to continue work on the gate at some future date.

## Regular Meeting August 12, 1981

Room 125                      Called to order: 7:55 PM                      Adjourned: 8:15 PM  
Attendance: 9 members and no guests                      Treasury: \$77.78  
Tom Hruska was asked to bring the *Intercom* issues to the meeting to get them ready for mailing to exchanges. Gwenne Engh reported on the activities in Monroe County, Illinois. Mike Bounk told about his trip to the International meet, Mammoth Cave, Cumberland Caverns, and the Huntsville area of Alabama. Gwenne is planning to go to Illinois Caverns on August 22, 1981. Mike Bounk announced the monthly Coldwater trip, the continuation of the Yankee gating project, and a future trip to the West Union area.

## Regular Meeting August 26, 1981

Room 125                      Called to order: 8:00 PM                      Adjourned: 8:50 PM  
Attendance: 10 members and no guests                      Treasury: \$76.78  
Greg McCarty will be working on the 1981 issues of the *Intercom*. Tom Hruska will work on the last issue of 1980. A caving symposium will be held at Southern Illinois University on September 18-19, 1981. Rudy Pruszko may organize an emergency medical technician course to be taught in Dubuque. A conference on the Mines of Spain will be held in Dubuque on September 18-20, 1981. Rudy Pruszko has founded Caves Unlimited, a caving equipment sales company. Rudy reported on a trip to Kemmling Cave. Mike Bounk told about a Coldwater Cave trip. Completion of the gating project in April Cave (formerly called Yankee Cave) was announced by Lowell Burkhead. Mike Bounk talked about lead checking in Fayette County. Rudy Pruszko has been working with John Bowles on bat collecting. Mike Bounk announced trips to the Hodag Hunt, Coldwater Cave, and the West Union area. Lowell Burkhead is planning a trip to April. Rudy Pruszko proposed a trip to the area south of Dubuque. Greg McCarty will be lead checking in Delaware and Jackson counties. A program of slides was presented by Mike Bounk, Rudy Pruszko, and John Johnson.



Yankee Gate Installing 2

July 18, 1981

Lowell Burkhead, Mike Bounk, Gary Engh

Well here we were again and it really looked like rain again. We got suited up and started into the cave just as it started raining. Mike and Gary went and got the gate from where it was stashed on the previous trip and drug it to the wrong spot. That explained why it didn't fit very well.

After moving it to the proper place, we found that it wouldn't quite go in. I got out the hammer and cold chisel and smoothed the roughness off the ceiling. After a considerable effort, it went into place and fit very well. We got it wedged into the exact proper location with small rocks. The next step was to mark the spots for the six stainless steel pins without the gate moving at all. That meant the holes had to be started through the holes in the gate frame.

For this purpose, I had made a special star drill that was slightly undersized so it would fit through the holes in the gate frame with some clearance. I got two of the holes drilled a half inch deep or so before I froze out. I went out to warm up and Mike took over. He and Gary got three more marked then had trouble with the drill slipping sideways on the uneven rock surfaces and binding up in the steel frame. By then I was warmed up, so I went back in to size up the situation and promptly got the bit stuck and broke it.

Then I noticed that the ceiling was getting lower but it was just the water coming up as it had been raining steadily since we started. I determined that the drill would still work but there was no time to finish the job. By the time I collected up the tools, I had to dip an ear in the water to get out. That was at the lowest spot in the main passage where it's only 15 inches high less than a body length out from the gate. We left the gate in place hoping the water wouldn't move it before we got the other holes marked. We left it in place and open and left it for another day.

Eighth International Congress of Speleology

July 18 - 24, 1981

Michael Bounk

I arrived at the Congress on Saturday, July 18, in time for the official opening. That evening, we heard a lecture and slide show Karst of the United States by Dr. Arthur M. Palmer.

On Sunday, the sessions began. I divided my time between the Hydrology and Geomorphology sessions with some time out to meet people and check on the books and equipment for sale. It was impossible to hear every paper that I wanted to hear. However, this was not critical since when I arrived, I was given a copy of the proceedings which contains the text of every scheduled paper presented.

That evening, there was a reception at Lost River Cave, an influent cave in Bowling Green which during the 1930's was used as a nightclub. That evening we saw a series of lectures on the geology, etc. of Mammoth Cave.

On Monday, there were more sessions, including one by Dr. Warren C. Lewis of the Rock River Speleological Society, The Breathing of Coldwater Cave. Other than this, I spent most of the day in the Speleogenesis sessions. That evening we had a tour of Mammoth Cave. We entered through the Main entrance, and saw remains of saltpeter mining operation before proceeding to Lost River and finally ascending through the Runes of Cornock, a shaft complex, and exiting the cave. The tour followed the tourist trails with geological, and historical tours on the way.

On Tuesday morning, I attended the hydrology session and in the afternoon the geomorphology session, taking time out to present an informal paper; An Overview of the Karst of the Silurian of Iowa. That evening I attended the Photographic Salon which was several hours of slides and films of caves and caving. It lasted longer than I did. I went to bed at about midnight.

On Wednesday, I attended a field trip on the Hydrology of the Mammoth Cave Region lead by Dr. James Quinlan. This trip which was almost entirely on the surface started south of the park where the streams sink into Mississippian Age strata, and through a series of stops proceeded to the resurgence of the Lost River on the Green River.

On the way we received a thorough explanation of Dr. Quinlan's work in the area.

That evening there was a barbecue and barn dance at the Congress campgrounds.

On Thursday a number of other cavers and I took the Mammoth Cave Wild tour. On this tour, we saw a wide variety of cave, including single gypsum flowers the size of a small dinner plate.

That evening we saw the Horse Cave Theatre performance of the Floyd Collins accident and attempted rescue.

On Friday, we traveled in busses to Cumberland Caverns for a tour of the grounds, the cave, and a banquet in the cave dining room.

The next day, Saturday, I headed south to Huntsville for a post Congress speleocamp as is discussed in next report.

This Congress was excellent. I consider it to be an experience of a lifetime. I would like to thank all who made it possible. Finally, I would like to thank the Iowa Geological Survey for sending me to it.



NORTHERN ALABAMA POST CONGRESS SPELEOCAMP

July 25 - August 1, 1981

Michael Bounk

Bill Cuttington, Dick Graham, Cherry Graham, Alan Plaschette, Karen Plaschette, and others (camp and trip leaders)

On the morning of Saturday July 25, after breakfast, the Glubbers and I, two English cavers, left the Congress at Bowling Green, Kentucky and drove in my truck to Mosnti Sonto State Park northeast of Huntsville, Alabama.

When we arrived, late that morning, we met Cherri Graham, one of the camp leaders who assigned us to cabins and gave us our guidebooks. Later that morning, Dick Graham, Alan Plaschette, Karen Plaschette, and Bill Cuttington, some of the other camp leaders arrived, and we had a practice climbing session in order to work out any problems in our equipment and techniques and also to exchange information on vertical techniques.

The next day, we visited Natural Well, a 55 meter open air pit, with 280 meters of passage beginning as high canyon and becoming a crawl off of the bottom. I saw about half of this cave before ascending the pit which is almost entirely free. For this and all other ropework drops, I used a Mitchell system with a Gosset Chest Box to ascend and a standard rappel rack to descend.

That afternoon, we visited Varnedoe's Cave, at whose entrance we met a group of French Canadian cavers. In order to avoid crowding, they waited while our group went in, rigged and descended the first drop of about 28 meters, just inside the entrance. We then followed the passage down a slope and into a narrow passage where we encountered an approximately 7 meter drop which we traversed over and bypassed by means of a loop passage and climb. Finally, we descended an about 22 meter drop and 3 meter chimney to the Rain Room, a large circular shaft at whose bottom we were located. Nearby, other members of our group located an about 30 meter drop, but due to a lack of time and rope, we could not do it. When we reached the drop which we had bypassed going in, we found that the French Canadian cavers had rigged it from previously set bolts. They allowed us to use their rope to ascend this drop, after which we exited the cave.

On Monday, July 27, we dropped Stevens Gap Cave. This cave has two entrances, one of which is a 44 meter drop. Except for two points where the rope just touches the wall, this drop is free.

After lunch, we visited Limrock Blowing Cave. This cave is a horizontal streamway, most of which is walking passage. We saw about 4000 feet of this cave, most of us stopping at a very large mass of breakdown, which some people were able to get through to more passage. The total length of this cave is 14,600 feet.

On Tuesday, we visited Neversink. An about 50 meters deep open air pit as are Notshol Well and Stevens Gap. Of these, Neversink, and Stevens Gap are especially impressive due to their large diameters,



(Neversink is approximately 30 meters by 15 meters). The floors of these are rather gloomy, floored by breakdown, leaves, branches, and logs which have fallen or washed in. Small salamanders are fairly common, and in Neversink, we saw two snakes, one a copperhead. The descents and ascents of of these drops, for a properly equipped caver, can only be described as fun.

That afternoon, about five of us visited Valaholla whose entrance is an about 64 meter drop. This open air pit has a relatively small entrance about 12 meters across. However, the floor is well over 92 meters by 12 meters. More passage exists beyond a mass of breakdown, however, we were unable to find a way to it. We exited the cave and headed home after dark.

On Wednesday, we attended an Anvil Cave Rally. This cave contains several miles of maze passage with five entrances under about 12 acres of land.

For the rally, we were divided into teams each of which was given a set of instructions to follow through the cave. The team coming closest to a set average time for completing the instructions won.

After the rally, we visited the NSS headquarters and Shelta Cave.

The next day, we did Surprise Pit, a 126 meter (402 foot) pit in Fern Cave. After climbing down about 3 meters into the cave, we followed a stream passage of walking height to where it drops into the pit. We then followed a pair of wide ledges with a wide step-across between them partway around the pit to the left. This leads to a breakdown bridge which spans the drop. These ledges were rigged with a safety line. Two ropes were rigged at the bridge from bolts, and a third was rigged on the far side of the pit. We used the two at the bridge to ascend and descend the the drop. The third was used to climb up about 30 meters to enter a large trunk passage floored by house sized breakdown. The purpose of this was to minimize traffic on the dug ledge to the third rope as this would have made the ledge slippery.

The ascent was a new experience for me. With each step, the rope would seem to stretch over a foot, at the beginning. Bluewater does stretch somewhat. My pack was suspended below my feet by a line attached to my seat harness. Whenever I worked up a good rhythm, the rope would bounce with it and the pack would swing with it. I minimized this by avoiding a rhythm as much as possible. My climb out probably took about 30 minutes.

The next day, Friday, we visited Gross-Skelton Cave. This cave which is about 370 meters (1060 feet) long and consists primarily of wet trunk passage. The floor materials range in size up to stream rounded boulders. We entered through the upstream entrance and followed the stream until we reached a breakdown pile, which we climbed to a relatively dry upper level. This level is heavily decorated in places and contains old large 1.5 meter high rimstone dams. At the far end of this passage is a very large flow-stone mound. After leaving this section, we reentered the stream and continued downstream, toward a possible duckunder sump. The "sump" was not sumped so we were able to continue with little difficulty to the downstream entrance, where we exited the cave.

That night after dinner in Huntsville, we had a party at camp. The next day, I started back to Iowa, thus ending the most intense and enjoyable period to date in my caving career. The camp can be best described as excellent. We lived in cabins with air conditioning and showers, which are necessary after a day spent in part hiking through poison ivy. The people running the camp did everything they could to make our stay enjoyable. There were other trips available for non-vertical cavers. Generally we spent the days caving and the nights watching slide shows on caving or talking about caving.

#### August Coldwater Cave Trip

August 14, 15, 1981

Michael Bounk, Tom Aley, Cathy Aley, and Scott Lamb

When I arrived at the Coldwater Cave entrance shed Friday night, I met Tom and Cathy who were discussing the cave with the Flatlands. Scott was asleep in his van.

Late Saturday morning, Tom, Cathy, Scott and I entered the cave. We proceeded slowly upstream, discussing the cave in general and the various features that we passed. When we reached the Jumping Off Point, I showed Tom the fault which is seen in the presently impassable alcove to the right of the streamway which continues upstream. This fault which has a vertical displacement of about 4 to 6 inches and trends in the same direction as the breakdown section of the cave immediately downstream. After continuing about 150 feet further upstream, Tom and I returned to the entrance shaft where we waited for Cathy and Scott who were taking pictures.

When Cathy and Scott arrived, we headed downstream to the dome which occurs in the center of the ceiling of the main stream passage a short distance downstream of Pothole Country. Tom and I then exited the cave. after more photographs Cathy and Scott exited about an hour later.

#### April Cave Gate Final Installation Trip

August 22, 1981

Lowell Burkhead, Gary Engh, Mike Geraldts, Mike Bounk

April Cave has shed its fake name now that it's gated. In case there's anyone in the whole world who doesn't know by now, there is no such place as Yankee Cave. That name wasn't supposed to ever be published. April Cave exploration, surveying, and gating, was dubbed the Yankee project which was quickly corrupted to Yankee Cave. The location of the cave had been published under the real name and the owner didn't want the cave damaged. That's what



prompted the use of the pen name Yankee. Now that the gate is installed, everyone is invited to come and see the cave. The participants of the Yankee project regret any inconvenience we may have caused anyone but we did the best we knew how to do with a difficult situation. So, there is no Yankee Cave; the name is April Cave but the historical name is Glenwood Spring not to be confused with Glenwood Cave which is somewhere else entirely. I hope that sets your records straight.

This final gating trip went very smoothly compared to the trips that failed earlier because of the high water. The water level in the cave was as low as we had seen it. Everything else had changed also. We drove in on the old road that goes across the neighbors property and has been closed for sixty years. The cave owner had stripped the trees from the valley and the logs had been hauled off. Everything else was in two large piles that were smoldering yet. The valley would be turned into a pond fed by the spring from the cave.

We got in the cave at a reasonable hour and I had to beg off again due to problems with my diabetes. The two Mikes and Gary spent most of the day cutting the six 5/8 inch holes five inches deep with a home made star drill and a ball peen hammer. The gate was put in place and the stainless steel pins were driven home. Where the rock of the cave was too rough for the gate to fit snug, it was filled with mortar made with cave water. We were relieved to have finally completed this task after working on it all summer. We locked the gate and gave a key each to the two land owners and they gave us the responsibility of deciding who is qualified and properly equipped to enter the cave. So far all comers have been admitted. We doubt that anyone has ever seen the gate who didn't have the key but if they did, they would have found the stainless steel sign on it with phone numbers of the people who have the key. Presently, the two keys that the Iowa Grotto has are in the possession of Lowell Burkhead and Michael Bounk. Anyone wanting to visit April Cave should contact one of them and arrangements will be made. They are both listed in the N.S.S. membership list along with phone numbers.

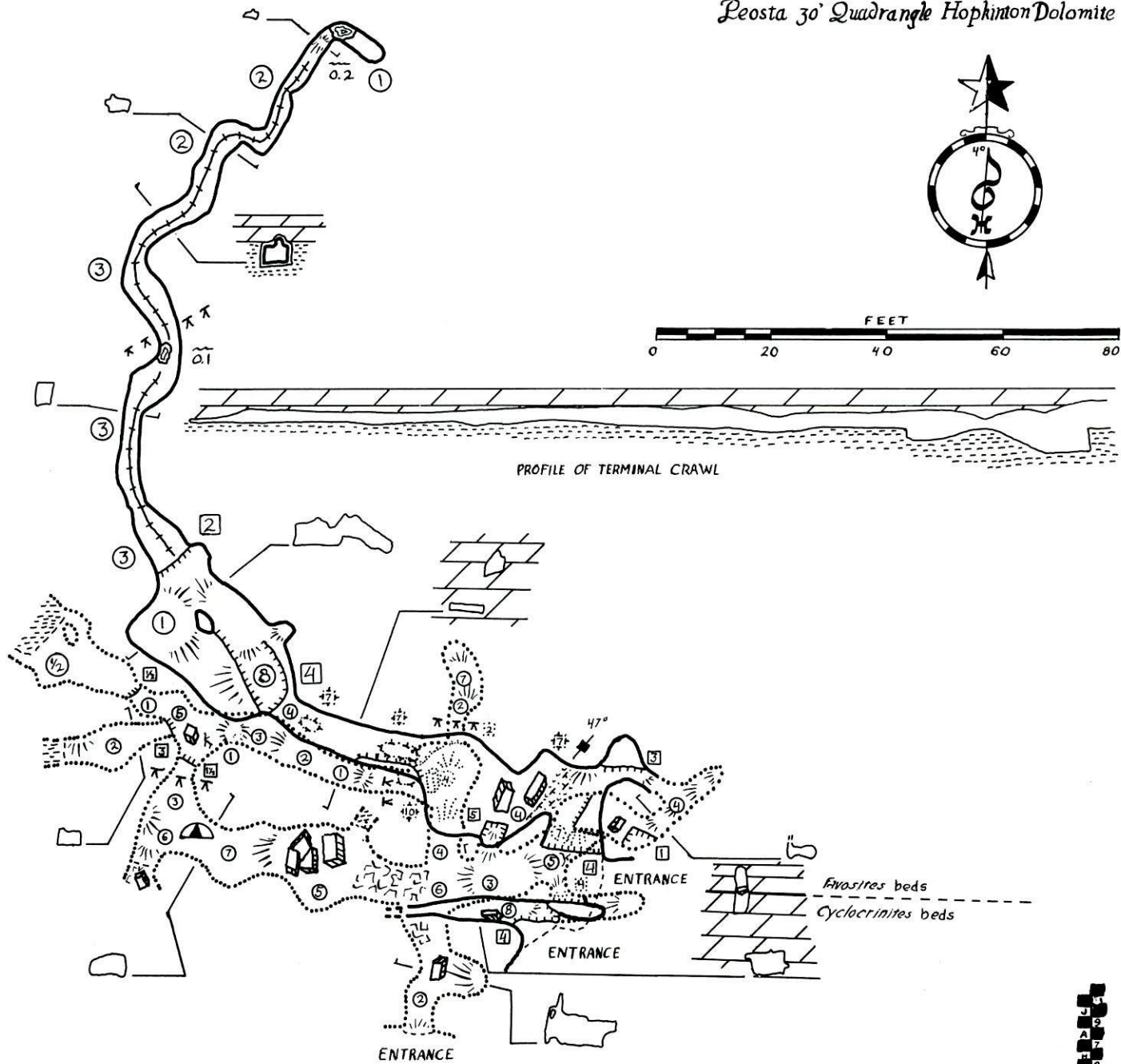


—DOLL CAVE—  
Jones County, Iowa

*Main cave surveyed 20 June 1971 by James Hedges and David Culver; terminal crawl surveyed 15 January 1974 by James Hedges and Greg McCarty; field check 1979 by Mike Bounk and Steve Wueliver.*

*N. S.S. Standard Map Symbols (1976) – (water shown by water lines)*

C.R.G. Grade 6B. 575 feet total length.  
SEISEISE 29 85 1W, 840 feet AT.  
Peosta 30' Quadrangle Hopkinton Dolomite



△ E1100



