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Lowell Burkhead

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The INTERCOM is published semi-spasmodically by the Iowa Grotto, P.O. Box 228, Iowa City, Iowa 52240. The Iowa Grotto is affiliated with the National Speleological Society, Cave Avenue, Huntsville, AL 35810, and is dedicated to the exploration and study of caves. We will exchange publications with other organizations with the same dedication. Subscriptions to the INTERCOM are $10.00 per year. Reproduction of material appearing in the INTERCOM by other caving organizations is encouraged as long as credit is given the author and the INTERCOM and a copy of the publication is sent to the Iowa Grotto. Material for the next issue of the INTERCOM is due by November 14, 1990. Send articles and trip reports for publication to:

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The Iowa Grotto meets at 7:30 p.m. on the fourth Wednesday of each month in room 125 of Trowbridge Hall on the campus of the University of Iowa in Iowa City, Iowa.

Air Force Rescue Coordination Center
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This number calls out Iowa Grotto rescue personnel.

Cover: Mike Lace preparing to enter Cave Canem Cave, Clayton County, Iowa.
Photo by Scott Dankof

IOWA GROTTO
National Speleological Society
P. O. Box 228
Iowa City, Iowa 52240

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IOWA GROTTO MEETING MINUTES

Regular meeting July 25, 1990

The meeting was called to order at 7:46 p.m. by chairman, Mike Lace. Nine members were present. A balance of $284.76 was reported in the club treasury. *TRIP REPORTS*: Mike Lace reported on a digging project at Livinggood Spring he participated in with the Nelson's and Greg McCarty. Gary Engh summarized several days of caving activities in Arkansas by Bryan Bain, Stacey Cyphert, Scott Dankof, Steve Thompson, Larry and Beth Welch, Jay Wells, and himself. A trip to Fitton Cave (formerly Beauty Cave) was the highlight of the trip. Lowell Burkhead mentioned trips with Mike Nelson to check leads. The flow at Rimstone River was one of the things that was checked. Al Jagnow reported on a tourist trip to Carlsbad Caverns. Mike Lace reported that he, Stacey Cyphert, and Larry Welch surveyed Fiet Cave. They also surveyed the Postville Ice Cave and did some lead checking. A trip by these same three people to April Cave ended prematurely with the discovery of a beaver in the cave. Marc Ohms told of a trip he took with Mike Lace to Becker Quarry Cave. *FUTURE TRIPS*: The annual Iowa Grotto picnic will be August 4. A survey trip to Timmons Cave is planned for August 11. Coldwater Cave is August 18, 1990. The MSS Cornfeed is also this weekend. September 1, there will be a beginners cave trip to Floyd County. The WSS Hodag Hunt is September 7-9. *OLD BUSINESS*: Caving trips from the picnic will leave at 10:00 a.m. both Saturday and Sunday. The picnic meal will be at 6:30 p.m. Saturday. The original and both copies of the Iowa Grotto Cave File are now at the Grotto Library. Discussion was held about use of the File. No reproduction of the file will be allowed. A Cave File committee was formed to establish future policy. *NEW BUSINESS*: Several new members have joined the grotto. Back issues of the INTERCOM will be sold at the picnic. Photos for the INTERCOM were discussed. The meeting was adjourned at 10:19 p.m.

Regular meeting August 29, 1990

The meeting was called to order by chairman Mike Lace at 7:29 p.m. Eleven members and 2 guests were present. The minutes from the previous meeting were read and approved as corrected. The treasurer reported a balance of $599.02 in the club treasury but noted outstanding debts had not yet been deducted. *TRIP REPORTS*: Jay Wells reported on lead checking at Eden Valley and mentioned setting up another cave display. Jay also mentioned a ranger in the area who is interested in caving. Lowell Burkhead reported on the Saturday and Sunday trips to Engleken Cave from the picnic. Lowell also discussed the tour of Conrad Cave that he led on Saturday afternoon. Mike Lace reported on the other cave tours that took place on Saturday and noted that Evac Cave was surveyed. Larry Welch reported on the drop of a crevice on Sunday after the picnic. Ridge-walking and the opening of a crevice also took place. Greg McCarty mentioned looking for a crevice at the picnic site but could not locate it. Jay Wells reported on a trip in the Flash Passage of Coldwater Cave. A new dome, Tall Tale Dome, was discovered. Mike Lace mentioned that Timmons Cave was surveyed and Becker Quarry Cave was visited. A digging lead near Crystal Lake Cave was also seen. Greg McCarty reported on his cave trips since February. *FUTURE TRIPS*: September 1 there is a beginners trip to Floyd County. The WSS Hodag Hunt is Sept. 7-9. Coldwater Cave is September 15. A survey trip to Engleken Cave was suggested for the future as were trips to Becker Quarry Cave and Wonder Cave. *OLD BUSINESS*: Dave Schwendinger donated his caving publications to the grotto because he didn't have room to store them. The INTERCOM's Dave donated will be added to the grotto back issue stock. Liability of the Grotto for injuries was discussed. *NEW BUSINESS*: Greg McCarty donated an extra NSS Bulletin 13 to the Grotto. Lowell is out of typing paper having used up the 500 sheet box that he had donated. Dubuque was suggested as a possible site for next year's picnic. The format for the picnic was also discussed - having caving trips away from the picnic location verses only caving, climbing, contests, etc. at the picnic location. Having something for everyone was mentioned.

Maquoketa Caves and Backbone Parks both recently had accidents. The Backbone Park accident was fatal. Doug Schmuecker will give a safety class on August 30 at the Marengo EMT building. Larry Welch presented a surveyed cave list - deepest, longest, etc. - which he has compiled and entered on his computer. Six new members have recently joined: Gerda and Wally Hartman, Pat Schenck, Mark Jones, Lila Klar, and Ken Christiansen. Greg McCarty mentioned that cavers may want to purchase "Heat Wave" to carry in their cave packs. It is a renewable by boiling chemical heating packet. Material for the INTERCOM is due September 14. Making the INTERCOM available for the UI Geology Library was discussed and voted down. The meeting was adjourned at 9:23 p.m.

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LETTERS

Dear INTERCOM Editor:

I have enjoyed the articles by Mike Nelson offering tips for inexperienced cavers. There is much one can learn from Mike and I recommend people read his articles. The article, "Meanwhile, Back at Dutton's Cave", INTERCOM 26(3) pp 48-49, however, is so brief that a statement contained in that article may be misinterpreted by inexperienced cavers. While I am not and do not claim to be an expert in vertical work, I feel a real danger exists if one of the sentences is taken out of context. The sentence I am referring to is, "They each ascended first and then rappelled back down". According to the authors of On Rope, pp 210:

> Descent, rather than ascent, should be the first acitivty to take place on the rope. A rappeller can check and verify the safety of the drop from the rigging point down. On the way up, a climber may discover a problem such as an abraded rope against a sharp rock. It would be too late to save the rope for future one rope rappels.

One can also imagine other things that it may be too late to save.

There is no doubt in my mind that Mike verified the safety of the rigging before letting his friends gain some vertical experience. The risk associated with this activity, however, makes caution the watchword. I just want to make sure misinterpretations by inexperienced cavers do not lead to troubles later.

Cave Safely,
Stacey T. Cyphert
NSS 27709

In reply from Mike Nelson

Dear Stacey:

Rest assured that it is only in my trip reports that I have cut any corners. As much as I enjoy writing a complete and hopefully, entertaining report, my obsession for caving and responsibilities to "real life" matters have required that I save some time somewhere. Hence, I have been sending Lowell "just the facts" lately on hand written "generic trip report forms". These take little time, thought, or effort, compared to the more elaborate, typed, thought out, reports of the past. The shortcoming of this change is glaringly obvious to one "in the know" such as yourself. Agreed, the addition of a few short words would have alleviated any ambiguity; "After I tested the rigging, they each ascended first then..."

The practice of having a novice ascend or descend first I largely leave up to them. I went straight off the top on my first rappel, also at Dutton's Cave. However, if they show any appreciable amount of apprehension, I suggest ascend then rappel. It gives them the opportunity to get used to the height incrementally. And if you rigged the rope with that thought in mind, you provided a few options for getting down. The climber may have encountered a real or imagined problem

that you cannot "coach"them through, thus providing them with options imparts a confidence to the novice. A confidence that might not willingly accompany him to the lip on a first rappel, where the commitment, at a given point, becomes total.

I miss the challenge of turning out what I have been told are very readable trip reports. What with the actual amount of caving I do, the amount of time I have dedicated to documenting it is, as you may imagine, considerable. Thanks for your insight. It'll help me concentrate on producing a terse report that does not omit any essential elements.

Later, in the mud...
Mike

TRIP REPORTS

MUDSLIDE PIT

June 16, 1990 by Stacey Cyphert
Larry Welch, Mike Lace, and Stacey Cyphert

It took about 20 minutes to clear away the brush and debris from the opening of Mudslide Pit. Once this was accomplished, a beautiful rock-surrounded opening into the depths of the earth emerged. Larry was first to drop the pit. He noted one cluster of trapped breakdown between the narrow walls that could pose problems. This cluster was carefully avoided. I soon followed with the survey gear and the task was accomplished quickly. (See map, page 82, this issue) A large salamander and a small mole were the only inhabitants observed in the cave.

CARLSBAD RESTORATION

Carlsbad Caverns National Park, New Mexico
Week of June 18, 1990 by Delores Nelson
Delores Nelson and Mike Nelson

What exactly is Carlsbad Restoration all about? It's a gathering of about 25 prople from as far away as Vermont, Omaha, and yes, even Iowa. People from all walks of life, junior high teachers, artist, laborers. They're all there for one purpose. To help restore areas along visitor trails that were covered over with a redish-orange clay during the 1930-1940's early trail building days. These allowed visitors to walk anywhere they wanted and touch formations. We all dug, cleaned, delinted and refilled in an effort to bring the area back as near to Mother Nature's creation as possible.

After hours off-trail trips to areas not usually seen by visitors are planned for two different evenings. Our first trip was to The Lake Of The Clouds. We all took turns following two different ropes down a 150 foot and then a 300 foot slope, quite a challange. I fell twice, but it was worth it. When we got down to the lake, Mike put a large water-proof light into the water. The light cast rippling shadows on the walls and the formations on the ceiling formed like billowing clouds. We spent our time taking photos and admiring the beauty and Dave Ecklund shot video. Coming back up the 300 foot rope was as much fun as coming down.

Our second trip was to the Right-Hand Fork of the Left-Hand Passage; Dave Ecklund, Jim White, Mike, and I. This trip was going quite well. It had been mostly walking passage. I should have known better. We came to a passage that went two directions. To the right was easy walking passage, to the left, the floor was

completely water-filled with a slight ledge a few feet above the water. Naturally, we went left. I breathed a sigh of relief as we left the ledge and water behind only to turn the corner to find another ledge (smaller) and you guessed it, more water. By this time, dam terrified, but with Dave's guidance and encouragement, I made it. At the end of this are two rooms, both looking like dead-ends. The last room has a beautiful flowstone wall with a rope coming out an opening at the top. Dave tells us the story of this Quintessential Right-Hand Passage. We are not allowed to go up. I couldn't bring myself to climb over the flowstone anyway. I have to admit that the trip to Carlsbad from Iowa is a long one but the rewards are many.

KARST FIELD STUDIES-MAMMOTH CAVE

Mammoth Cave, Kentucky
June 23-30, 1990

by Marc Ohms

I recently attended the karst field studies program held at Mammoth Cave and sponsered by Western Kentucky University. I took the cave survey and cartography course and will recieve three undergraduate credits as soon as I finish my project. The instructors were Richard Zopf and John Mylroie. Richard is a well-known Mammoth Cave explorer making the trip of the connection of Flint and Mammoth Caves. John is a professor of geology at Mississippi State and has surveyed caves all over the world. There were nine students including myself. It was a very busy and exciting week and I learned and observed too much to put on paper so I will simply write the bacics without rambling on.

Day 1

I left Dubuque in the morning and drove to the Illinois-Kentucky border where I stopped for the night. I camped at Cave-In-Rock State Park. Cave-In-Rock Cave is located on the Ohio River and is about 200 to 300 feet of large passage.

Day 2

I woke up early and drove the rest of the way to Mammoth Cave. At noon, I arrived at the Maple Springs Research Center where I was to spend the week. The place is new and consists of a house, a bunk house, and a classroom building, all air-conditioned. That evening, we all gathered in the classroom and were welcomed by Dr. Nick Crawford and met everybody else.

Day 3

The morning was started off with lecture on cave map uses and an intro to survey equipment. After lunch, we went into Salts Cave which is a part of the Mammoth Cave system. We were given a map and told to locate three places. While doing so, we were to note things we would do differently on the map. We split into groups of three. My group was two Boston cavers and myself. We headed for A-30, a place way back into the cave. The route there was very confusing, but we did find A-30, 30 feet up in an upper level of a canyon passage. We spent 6 hours in the cave. After dark, we did a practice survey in the yard getting everyone accustomed to the equipment.

Day 4

In the morning, we were taught how to reduce data and we practiced using our yard survey data. We were taught a method that is much easier and more accurate than the protractor-ruler method. After lunch, we went into the cave through the New Entrance. This entrance is used to bring tours out. It consists of over 200 feet of winding stainless steel steps. It is extremely beautiful due to the water sculpted walls and pits. We went into the Gypsum Passage and did our first in-cave survey, doing a loop of 100 meters. This passage has a lot of gypsum.

Day 5

Today, we entered the cave early and entered through the Frozen Niagara Entrance which is another tour entrance. It was fun walking by the tourists with our cave gear on and listening to the guide tell who we were and what we were doing as we jumped off the trail and disappeared in the darkness. Here we were to survey a large loop. We changed teams today and I was appointed team leader. One fellow in my group was as slow as a dead turtle and slowed us up so we did not survey as much as we expected to. Our survey started out in a small phreatic tube full of popcorn and led to a deep canyon passage.

That evening, Dr. Nick Crawford threw us a party at his place in Bowling Green. He had a keg of beer and tons of food.

Day 6

Today was started off with lecture about expedition survey and problems that can occur while surveying. After lunch, we went into the cave through the Historic Entrance and into Audabon Avenue; we were to survey large passage. I mean large! After completing our survey, we explored for an hour. One section I saw had some calcite speleothems, one being a stalactite four feet long and three feet around at the base. After returning to Maple Springs, we reduced our data on a computer using the SMAPS program.

Day 7

Due to the ferry being out of service, we could not go caving until 2 p.m., so we had lecture for a few hours in the morning and after that, I played Adventure on the computer until we could leave. We went into Great Onyx Cave which is in the park but not connected to the system. It was open to the public years ago. The entrance section is the cause for its name; there was mega speleothems, including columns fifteen feet high and stalagmites taller than me! I also saw many cave salamanders. We wandered to the rear of the cave and rigged my rope down a dual pit. The first drop was 35 feet and the second was 40 feet. We then surveyed the pits. Later, while eating supper, Richard told us the first-hand story of the famed connection trip between Mammoth and Flint Ridge Caves. Amazing story!

Day 8

At 9 a.m., the course was officially over and most packed and left for home. I went over to the Cave Research Foundation field house where I was to join a survey trip. When I got there, they were ready for me so I gathered my gear together and we were off. Our goal was to survey as much as we could in a passage above Cascade Hall. We entered the cave through the Carmicheal Entrance and walked to and past the Snowball Dining Room to the Echo River. Here they showed me the Lost River Passage where the connection was made. After finding our passage, we found our tie-in station and started to survey. There were five of us. I was doing book and being very careful to catch everything. All week was practice but this was the real thing. We surveyed 2000 feet total. We were in the cave 14 hours. After exiting, a hot meal was waiting for us at the field house. Then a good nights sleep in the bunk house which is called Floyd's Home.

The following morning, I drove the trip home without stopping. The course was worth the money and I highly recommend it to anyone. They offer many different courses and you do not have to take them for credit.

THE FIET CAVE SURVEY

Fiet Cave, Allamakee County, Iowa
July 14, 1990 by Mike Lace
Mike Lace, Stacey Cyphert, and Larry Welch

Fiet Cave lies in a deep, picturesque valley in Allamakee County. The stream that runs out of the cave's mouth is seldom more than a few inches deep as you reach the entrance but on a hot July day, its cool water is refreshing when it seeps inside your boots. As you walk upslope to the spring, you find a Galena Limestone outcrop that has a small crevice on the right that occasionally drains water but is impassable without serious excavation. The walk-in entrance to the cave is found on the left. The seven foot high entry room is one of the few places where an average person can stand upright but short people like myself may find a few more such comfortable spots.

We unpacked our survey gear and set out to survey the estimated 400 to 500 feet of cave. Surveying a cave of this size in one day was something different for us since most of our survey projects require several trips (or years in the case of Coldwater Cave). The cave consists of a single tube-shaped passage that strongly reminded us of Wet Cave in Fayette County. There were few formations to speak of and only a single bat found in the entry room but the stoopwalking in mostly ankle deep water was comfortable and made for a fairly rapid survey pace.

The first sharp bend in the passage contains a mud-filled lead that Larry and Stacey troweled at for a while and, although no breakthrough this time, it looks like it has possibilities so we plan on returning with heavier digging tools. The passage gets a little smaller after the second sharp bend in the passage and soon leads to a perpendicular crevice, containing the sump pool. The water was clear enough for each of us to take a quick look with our lights into the pool but we really couldn't spot the continuing passage described by Mike Nelson during his preparatory dive several months earlier. It'll be interesting to hear what Mike finds on future attempts.

We wrapped up the survey and headed out of the cave to clean up and chat with the owner about the 135 meter long cave that runs under his pasture. He and his family were very interested in what we found and made it clear that we were welcome back.

FINALLY

T-38 Cave, Mitchell County, Iowa
July 7, 1990 by Mike Nelson
Mike Nelson and Delores Nelson

Way back when, in late '85 or early '86, Bryan Bain and I crawled into a culvert and looked down a poured concrete storm drain to the entrance of a small cave. The work had been done to ensure the long life of Mitchell Co. T-38 when it received its hard surface. Bryan was aware of it through some obscure cave file.

We had driven past and/or near it for years, only stopping by once to peek into it to make sure we hadn't lost track of it. This time we didn't. The rigging was half the fun of it, and our first attempt taught us a lot. The cave itself was deemed worth documenting, so that was put on our "short term projects" agenda.

RIGHTLY SURMIZED

Livinggood Spring Annex, Allamakee County, Iowa
July 7, 1990 by Mike Nelson
Mike Nelson and Delores Nelson

Delores and I dropped by Livinggood Spring Annex with a dive mask to take a peek into the water and see what we would see. We had not yet heard about the 4 to 5 inches of rain that had fallen on that region earlier in the week. That something had happened was obvious as we neared the dig site. All the weeds growing in the dry run were pointing downstream. The sticks and stones Jerry-built cow barrier, was unharmed but there was mud on the layer of freshly piled rock for about 3 feet down the run. The entire excavation had fresh, ultragloppy mold on all surfaces. The water, which had been pushed up 8 to 10 feet, had returned to the level we had encountered it on the last dig. It was too murky to look into. We didn't care. Our speculation had been confirmed. We were working with an active overflow passage. This was rechecked on July 14. The water was clearer but not enough to evaluate yet.

ANOTHER DR. KNUTSON LEAD

Tweeten Cave, Winneshiek County, Iowa
July 8, 1990 by Mike Nelson
Mike Nelson, Delores Nelson, and Lowell Burkhead

This was an old lead from Dr. Knutson (rest his soul) that told of a 25 foot deep sinkhole with 50 feet of horizontal passage leading to a pit of unknown depth. Tantalizing. The lead was found with the 1970 INTERCOM material while Lowell was typing those back issues.

Although two families of Tweetens live near the lead site, do not bother them. They are no longer the owners. They are fine folks but there is a dog protecting the adjoining homesteads that would just as soon shread you as look at you. This gave me pause to appreciate the simi-official looking but actually phoney balony notebook I carry sometimes when lead checking. This contains lead sheets (lēd, not lĕd), legal release forms, area maps, and other handy but disposable items that I kept between "White Fang" and my lower extremities while hollering,"sit, stay, no", in the squeekiest authoritative voice I could muster until the fine folks subdued him. I would highly suggest getting one of your own and carrying it, if just for this occasional use, only.

Utilizing only a small portion of patience, we managed to catch the current owner at home after we had taken a short picnic lunch up in Canton, Minn. With some information and his permission, we headed out to check the sinks for the lead that probably hasn't seen anyone in the last 20 years, outside of farmers hauling refuse.

We split up to make better use of our time and energies. It was highly reminiscent of lead checking on the Breis property with Larry and Beth Welch and Mike Lace back on 1-9-88, except it was about 115 degrees warmer.

More through the process of elimination than anything else, we selected the sink that contained Tweeten Cave. It appears that 20 years worth of old fence has somewhat altered the entrance that Dr. Knutson had used. A couple of hours of work with a wire cutter and shovel may make a significant difference

The site is nicely located for one of those energetic Sunday after Coldwater

projects. Contact Lowell or me if interested. We'll either join you or send you on your way with all the pertinent info.

We finished off the day by buzzing past Rimstone River Cave to maintain contact with the owner. We want to survey here, sometime. We happened by when he was in need of a hand in getting a disabled tractor off the road. It was nice to be useful to such an amiable landowner.

FIRST SHOT

T-38 Cave, Mitchell County, Iowa
July 14, 1990 by Mike Nelson
Mike Nelson and Delores Nelson

I have been wanting to go back and pick up the loose ends of my caving projects from previous years. So mapping a cave I only entered for the first time last week may at first seem inconsistant. However, I could see no better first cave with which to practice my sophomoric cartographic attempts. It's small, and fairly simple, but does have interesting undercuts and a sometimes hidden, sometimes not, waterway. These features should be challenging for a neophyte to depict. Wish me luck . The finished product will find its way into these pages in due time.

TYING THE FIRST LOOSE END

Wet Rebock Cave, Allamakee County, Iowa
July 14, 1990 by Mike Nelson
Mike Nelson, Delores Nelson, and Ellie Dog

Wet Rebock was the second "new" cave I ever added to the Iowa Cave File. Henkes' Lost Creek was the first and I hope to map it when next in the area in conjunction with the Wild Well project. Due to the lack of vertical relief and the varied directions and the natures of the joint aligned passage, this seemed like a good choice for my second cartographic endeavor.

Delores and Eleanor were less than impressed with Wet Rebock, and I was left to survey it solo. It would have been a cinch with help but did not prove to be that hard alone. At 78.1 feet, it was almost twice as long as my initial estimate. Hopefully, someday, an acceptable map will grace the INTERCOM's pages.

OOPS

Fiet Cave, Allamakee County, Iowa
July 15, 1990 by Mike Nelson
Mike Nelson, Delores Nelson, and the Princess Eleanor Biscut

We jumped right into mapping the easy going, tidy cave and knocked off almost 1/4 of it in no time, stopping at a chip from a previous survey. No wonder Greg McCarty was so sure Fiet was 550 feet long. He obviously knew something we had just found out. Unfortunately, in Iowa, just because a cave has been surveyed doesn't mean that there is a finished, accounted for, usable, accessable, map.

A conversation with Mike Lace two days later disclosed that he, Larry Welch, and Stacey Cyphert had mapped the cave just the previous day.

THREE CHIMEN AND A BEAVER

April Cave, Winneshiek County, Iowa
July 15, 1990 by Stacey Cyphert
Larry Welch, Mike Lace, and Stacey Cyphert

Beavers (Castor Canadensis) are native to Iowa. They can reach a length of 3 ½ feet and weigh 60 pounds. Beavers live in lodges created in dams built on streams and rivers. These lodges are sort of like caves, except beavers don't live in caves, most beavers, anyhow.

Larry, Mike and I entered April Cave about 11 a.m. Sunday morning. The gate to the cave was locked and everything appeared normal including the water level which had been down due to the drought. After opening the gate, we proceeded briskly up the long crawl in ice cold water. Chatter was brief as we focused our thoughts on the survey ahead.

The mud room was quickly reached and we took a chance for a breather. It was not a long one though, because of the funny smell. We thought the smell might have been from chemicals washed in by the recent rains. Soon we were on our way deeper into the cave. But not much deeper. Chip 15 held a surprise. What before our wondering eyes should appear but a beaver who didn't seem very glad we were here.

The beaver jumped into the water and headed away from us deeper into the cave. We followed, not really believing what we saw. April Cave has one known entrance and there was no way a beaver could have gotten through the locked gate. A few more yards into the cave, however, the beaver appeared again. It was like a furry, brown torpedo with teeth.

The water around us was murky from the silt we had raised. This was disconcerting since we were up to our knees in it and couldn't see the beaver when he submerged. Panic prevailed and we exited the cave in record time. We left the gate open, however, so the beaver has a chance to escape.

While it is unlikely that others will encounter a beaver in a cave, encountering animals is likely. The best policy is to leave them alone and to leave the cave if necessary. You can always come back to the cave another day. Guns should never be taken into a cave. Remembering the motto, "Take nothing but pictures, kill nothing but time, leave nothing but footprints" will go a long way toward preserving you, the cave, and the life you encounter there.

VACATION

Marc Ohms and Eric Winch by Marc Ohms

Eric and I took a week vacation to do some caving. Our plan was to leave the 23rd and reach Decorah on the 28th and do a lot of caving in between.

DAY 1 We both worked all day and then left at 7 p.m. and stayed at Backbone State Park for the night.

DAY 2 We woke up and drove to Richmond Spring, which is located within the park. The spring is very scenic. We then went to Backbone Cave and surveyed it. Total length is 85 meters. After lunch we drove to Fence Cave only to find the owner not at home. We then went to Pikes Peak State Park, where we stayed the night. After setting up our tent, we walked down to Sand Cave and surveyed it. Sand Cave is a sandstone cave located along a trail that runs through the park. (See map, page 85)

DAY 3 After packing up, we went to Spook Cave and took the commercial tour. After that, we headed over to Fayette County to Dutton's Cave and County Park where we stayed the night. We found and entered Dutton's Cave before dark.

DAY 4 We first located Soward's Cave and Annex. In toward the rear of the cave, it stunk real bad. Eric and I started to get headaches so we retreated for fresh air. After lunch, we located Falling Spring but did not enter it due to no wet-suits. Wet Cave was next. We went to the breakdown section and turned around. As we exited, we discovered it was pouring down rain. By the time we reached our car, we were soaked. We went back to our camp only to find our tent wet. We then packed up and got a motel room in West Union.

DAY 5 After leaving the motel, we drove to Decorah only to find the town full of people for the Nordic Fest. Every motel and campground were full. We went to Dunning Spring which I found very beautiful. We then found the Decorah Ice Cave and explored it, finding no ice. Our next stop was Siewer Spring at the fish hatchery. We spent some time playing with the trout and decided we better find a place to spend the night. We ended up camping at Bluffton.

DAY 6 Mike Lace was supposed to meet us at Hardee's in Decorah at 10:00 a.m. He ran into some difficulties and was unable to make it. After waiting four hours at Hardee's, we called it a day and drove home.

DELAWARE CREVICES

Willard Cave, Evac Cave, Delaware County Unnamed Crevice, Clayton County
August 4, 1990 by Mike Lace
Mike Lace, Larry Welch, Doug Schmuecker, Al Jagnow, Bert Jagnow, Jim Sinning and Mark Jones

It was the weekend of the Annual Iowa Grotto Summer Picnic and there were plenty of cavers willing to poke around in the crevice-laden hills in Delaware and Clayton Counties. Of course, it had rained most of the night before but left us a beautiful day for caving and picnicking. While the others headed over to Engelken Cave and Conrad Cave, our caravan moved to Willard and Evac Caves to do a little vertical work and a bit of surveying.

Doug rigged the 30 foot drop into Willard Cave and helped Mark and Bert get their feet wet with some vertical training while Larry and I rigged and dropped into Evac Cave to survey it. I like most caves, each of them has something a little different that makes it unique, but Evac is one cave that I really don't ever want to return to. It's unpleasant, unstable, and decidedly unattractive. No wonder the old trip reports talk about only one or two cavers unsuccessfully trying to persuade the rest of their group to take a look at it!

The entrance is a squeeze that opens out into a mostly free 20 foot rappel past numerous precariously wedged blocks of breakdown. We wasted no time in getting the survey done and getting ourselves out of there. Doug came over to the entrance with every intention of dropping in but after taking a long hard look at the entry squeeze, decided that he wasn't sure if he could get out after squirming in; this of course made me feel "real comfortable" standing on the bottom looking up at the only exit that seemed to grow smaller the longer we stayed.

Larry tried to get a look at the rumored second vertical drop after we finished the survey. I grabbed his feet while he slid past some breakdown only to find a rathole with little chance of moving the huge rock that blocked it.

Oh well, we were ready to get out of there anyway. Larry graciously let me ascend first since I tend to knock down fewer rocks etc. than he does when climbing. The cave is surveyed with 15.26 meters of passage and no reason, as far as I'm concerned, to go back in it.

We packed the gear to the cars and headed to another hill that Larry and I had looked at several months earlier. There were at least two open crevices there, one we had chimneyed into while the other looked like it might need a belay rope. We found the second crevice after a long hot uphill walk and, after clearing a bit of loose debris, chimneyed the fifteen feet to the crevice floor.

Larry soon found a second drop which, in turn, led to yet another drop that clearly required vertical gear. The lower passages were a chaotic jumble of breakdown some of which slid a little under careful footsteps. Another chimney was found on the second level but Larry decided that he couldn't do it with his helmet on and that he would save it for later. By the time we exited and looked at a few closed sinkholes, it was getting close to supper time so we trudged down the hill and off to a gut-stuffing picnic.

THE REST OF THE PICNIC CAVING

Engelken Cave, Dubuque County, Conrad Cave, Delaware County
August 4, 1990 by Lowell Burkhead
Saturday Engelken trip: Lowell Burkhead, Cyphert, Wilmoth, Dankof, Jones, Engh, Bain, Wells, Wahlstrom, Miller, Schenck, Ohms, and others who's names I didn't get
Conrad Cave trip: All the above people, Mike Geralds and family, and Doug Schmuecker
Sunday Engelken trip: Lowell Burkhead, Rebecca Strang, Håkav Ljungquist, Bert Jagnow, Al Jagnow, Beth Pins, Loren Schutt, Mark Jones, and the UI Geology Librarian

It was grotto picnic day and the overnight rains gave way to a beautiful, almost perfect, day. Just two weeks before, torrential rains in the area had taken out the bridge on the northern road to Fountain Springs Park where we had now gathered for another epic outing. As the time approached to leave for the planned caving trips, the parking area was overflowing with cars jockeying to join the two convoys that were trying to leave the park without losing anyone. We headed east toward Dubuque County and Engelken Cave taking the long way after I missed both turns for the shortcuts. It was a good thing that I had made arrangements with the owner two weeks before because when we arrived, there was no one home.

I led the procession of vehicles back the farm lane and we parked in the oat-field which adjoins the cornfield where the cave is located. As I climbed the fence into the corn, I could hear people thinking, "NO ON, not that direction" as the other way was the North Fork Maquoketa River and at least the possibility of a rock outcrop. I had picked the wrong spot to cross the fence but after several scouting parties were in the corn, Bryan Bain struck cave. The entrance is a metal pipe that was installed in the collapse entrance by the owner, Dubuque County and the Iowa Grotto in the early '60s. In the pipe is a section of windmill ladder that legend has it, was sawed from a neighbor's windmill on a Sunday morning while no one was home to finish off the installation.

The cover was lifted off the entrance shaft and down we went. At the bottom of the 12 foot climb you duck into 10 feet of crawl into walking passage. There is over 100 feet of large trunk passage and several side passages. Several people went to work photographing the fossils and formations in the main passage. The rest split into two groups and headed into the side passages. The entrance into one side passage is a bellycrawl at the floor or up higher both and then becomes a high canyon punctuated with squeezes, climbs, and chimneys. It even has a natural bridge.

The cave has remained much the same in our years of absence from it except for the addition of ample amounts of raccoon droppings. According to the owner, they had mastered the entrance and shaft ladder and more or less taken over in recent years. He has been trapping them there in the winter while they are keeping the snow trampled down and the ladder shined.

The other group headed to the crawlways at the back of the cave. There is a well decorated bellycrawl at the rear where one has to be very carefull not to break formations. Then the two groups switched side passage areas. There is also a swiss cheese area connected with squeezes and contortions. The cave is in light colored rock and has a friendly feeling to it. We spent almost two hours in the cave and the pleasures of every low crawl we could find and squeeze into were enjoyed by most everyone.

From there we headed back to Fountain Springs Park and picked up a few more people for the trip to Conrad Cave. The convoy to Conrad was 8 or 9 cars and again, I missed a turn, but this time it was due to the lack of a sign. I whipped into a field entrance and missed and had to back up to get turned around. By this time there were cars scattering everywhere. A couple of other cars happened by and came to a complete stop thinking that there must have been a major accident. It was the best Chinese firedrill I had ever seen.

I had everyone else park out on the road on our arrival at Conrad Cave. I hadn't made previous arrangements there and we had enough cars to scare someone by pulling into the drive. I talked to the owner who was more than a little apprehensive. We all had to sign a legal release form before entering the cave but permission was granted and we were able to drive back to the cave which I was able to find on the second try.

Again, we split into several groups on entering the cave and went in every direction in the maze type cave. This cave had fresh signs of raccoon habitation. I was the only one who had been there before but I didn't know my way around. I think we saw most if not all of the cave collectively but I doubt if anvone saw much more than half of it. There is 500 to 700 feet of cave and it hasn't been mapped. It is mostly low, wide crawl with flat rooms with squeezes connecting them that had been dug open. They had been dug first by the raccoons and then by Iowa Grotto members which doubled the length of the cave. I think the length could be doubled again with some digging. This cave takes a lot of water but shows no sign of ever flooding. Local stories tell of a long stream passage that ends at a bottomless pit. There is a mud slope all the way around it so you can't look down it. We haven't found this passage or the pit but the water has to go somewhere. Most caves that take water have a pit of some sort or another so this one could to.

Everyone seemed to enjoy this cave including two who were on their first caving trip. Mike Geralds' two young daughters, Celest and Emily,led Mike into a little more cave than he wanted to see while mom waited outside. On our way out, I talked with the owner to make sure we hadn't damaged relations there and seemingly, we didn't. We were a little late getting back to the park and I had the Chili in my car, all three gallons of it.

The picnic that evening was a huge success. There was more food than could be eaten and it was all good to exceptionally good. There was a valient effort made to eat it all and some of us pigged ourselves into pain. There was corn on the cob, hamburgers, hotdogs, chili, baked beans, potato salid, brownies, salids, chips, deserts, etc. We ate until about dark and then started the auction. We sold grotto junk and donated junk. We sold photographs by Scott Dankof and we sold some caving gear that was donated. We sold some junk that was donated and some

and some from the grotto library. We even sold the grotto library bat that had graced the drapes for two years and had deteriorated into a skeleton with wings and a pile of fur below it. We sold our extra copies of the NSS News and Bullitin and other publications. We sold back issues of the INTERCOM all of which are available except for two issues. We took in enough money to last us through the year. There was some question about that after our printing costs went up by 1/3 at dues time last winter.

Sunday was caving again. I led another group to Engelken Cave. These were people who were on the other trip on Saturday and people who couldn't make it until Sunday. The trip was more or less a repeat of the day before except for the people. We had one local, the owner's son's sister-in-law, and one non-local from Stockholm, Sweden. We had Al Jagnow who did the cave on crutches and the entrance with a block and tackle. Someone said, "I don't believe he does this on crutches", and I said, "How else would he do it", and Al said, "Yeh, how else would I do it?" We had Bert Jagnow, a second generation Iowa Grotto caver. We had enthusiastic people, a good cave, and we had fun. It was a good ending for a good weekend.

GLEASON CREVICE

August 4-5, 1990 by Larry Welch
Larry Welch, Mike Lace, Doug Schmuecker, Jim Sinning, Mark Jones, Bert Jagnow

This trip coincided with the weekend of the grotto picnic at nearby Fountain Springs Park; the proximity allowing us a return visit to the cave the next day. Mike Lace and I had been shown the cave in April by a trapper who lived in the area. We had been caving the day before and were not prepared to go chimneying into a crevice after lugging our bodies up the long trek to the entrance. We had no knowledge of any previous grotto visitation to this cave, but of course it was difficult to confirm any information of this sort. Anyway, with the picnic in the vicinity it seemed like a good time to investigate the crevice in earnest.

The ropes were all left in the cars(at the bottom of the hill) for a reason I cannot recall at present. After the long hike up the hill and a little bushwhacking, Mountain Man Lace located the entrance. My group had missed it by a mile, but we did discover a clearing atop the hill (for the landowner's TV antenna) that offered a beautiful panorama of two valleys to the north. Naturally, the cameras were in the car along with the rope.

The cave itself looked like a classic crevice that would be pretty easy to chimney. A 12 foot climbdown led to a North-South crevice. The north branch led to a smaller second entrance that Mike Lace used to finish his door-to-door traverse later in the day. The south branch dead-ended, but a hole in the floor led to a second level of crevice. Both ends of this level were stopped by rubble, and again only a hole in the floor led onward. This drop appeared somewhat constricted so I made sure to locate footholds before I started. The cave began to get distinctly cooler once this chimney was bottomed to a small dirt landing.

More rubble was to the right, but an obvious chimney led down to the left into a roomy canyon. The nature of the cave had taken a turn for the worse, though, as the passage was now delineated by loose breakdown blocks in addition to a few solid walls. A few rocks loosened by those above rattled down nearby; I was already nervous from the loose walls and this didn't help. Then some tremendous crashes could be heard that were causing many of the surrounding blocks to vibrate. Mike had reached the landing and was cleaning the area of loose rocks by dropping them into a pit to the right that I had missed. I calmed down a bit once he quit cleaning, and we also communicated to those above to be cautious since we were directly below them.

There appeared to be a lower extension of the left-hand canyon where I was standing, but there was no way to reach it beneath the cemented rubble that made up the canyon floor. The canyon continued horizontally around a corner until it met a breakdown pile. Here one could chimney up into an alcove in the pile and view a very tight canyon leading downward at about a 10 degree angle. At the far end of this canyon appeared to be a floorless spot big enough for one to turn around. My bulky helmet wouldn't fit through the canyon. After removing it, the canyon was negotiated feet first with some assistance from Mike. Both sides are lined with 1/4 inch popcorn that snagged cave gear mercilessly. Once through the canyon, I could again don my helmet and see another canyon leading down below me. As the canyon constricted, I got cold feet and didn't trust myself chimneying one-handed into something so tight, so backed up and out.

Mike's Pit was very inviting and everyone took a good look over its lip. Chimneying looked dicey at best. A belay was the minimum requirement for any sane person, and even that was questionable. Being that the ropes were in the car, the pit was to remain undropped for the day. Doug took a good look around and decided that he could rig the drop from some artificial chockstones. This was definitely going to require a non-traditional rigging and a little know-how.

We spent the rest of the afternoon poking through other sinkholes on the hillside without much success. Doug was very anxious to try rigging the pit the next day. Unfortunately, he had to return home that night. No other definite plans were made.

Second Day: Larry Welch, Mike Lace, Marc Ohms, Beth Welch, Jim Sinning, Leslie Sinning, Jay Wells, Pat Schenck, and Gary Engh

After wallowing around the countryside for a while, a group ended up at the Gleason Crevice again the next day. Most had eyes for bouncing the big pit and looking for lower level passage. However, it made sense to push the tight chimney on the left-hand passage first to see if it looped back to the base of the pit, negating the need to rig it. Marc and I went down the left branch while Jay followed to size up the pit and assess rigging potential. I borrowed Mike's thinner helmet for the tight canyon and was able to chimney down 10 feet to a ledge without its removal. The ledge was menaced by numerous rocks wedged overhead that were part of the same breakdown pile negotiated just before the popcorn canyon. From this ledge another chimney with a squarish cross section led down another 15 feet into a perpendicular crevice. The uphill end of this crevice ran into a rockpile that offered a suicidal belly-crawl through its midst. Downhill the crevice formed a T-junction with another very tight crevice that dropped down another 8 feet.

The top of this canyon was very tight and lined with popcorn but the canyon widened below to allow easier passage. We had hoped to see some solutional passage at the bottom of the cave, but no such luck. Neither end of this canyon went, leaving me to contemplate extraction and the rope experts to eye Mike's pit. The tight chimneys were difficult to reverse. My attempts at using footholds and body leverage always evaporated and upward locomotion depended on arms and knees. I was glad to get out of there and let Jay and Jim contemplate rigging the pit.

They ended up with an excellent rig devised by looping around a large boulder just below the landing. Numerous rope pads iced the cake. Beth and I helped Leslie lower rigging materials down to the riggers, being very careful to avoid loosening any rocks, which would be funneled down to where Jim and Jay were working. Leslie did her best to clear all the loose rocks in the top part of the crevice; somehow I still managed to knock one loose which just missed hitting Jim.

Jay was first down the big pit, reporting a second drop below that which could be chimneyed. Jim came down next, then I followed with a belay rope. We ended up chimneying down the canyon without a belay onto a pile of rocks. The rocks were sitting in the lowest part of the canyon and blocked any possibility of dropping further. The canyon heading toward the left branch of the cave was blocked by rubble, but one could go the other way up a slope into a perpendicular crevice. At the far edge of this one could chimney into a small alcove and contemplate dropping into a tight hole that led into a narrow perpendicular crevice. Even Mike's narrower helmet wouldn't fit in this spot. I got in far enough to view most of the crevice which didn't seem to offer any further passage. Escape from the crevice was difficult. Fortunately, Jim came to help me climb back out after some temporary problems.

Jim was going to check out another lead in the lower level but in the process his carbide lamp fell off his helmet and into an out-of-reach pocket in the floor. Not wanting to abandon his lamp, Jim requested some long sticks, which were fetched from the surface by Jay. Using the "chopsticks" method, Jim was able to lever the lamp out of its would-be tomb. Despite Mike's enthusiam, we decided not to survey the cave due to the late hour. He busied himself surveying another nearby cave while we derigged the cave. We taped the depth of the right branch at about 70 feet and I think the left branch is about the same. Good climbers can probably negotiate the big drop with just a belay line. Bottoming the Gleason Crevice put a nice cap on the weekend and we all strolled down the hill and went our separate ways.

RUST REMOVER AND SILK

Roubidoux Spring, Pulaski County, Missouri
August 12 and August 17&18, 1990 By Mike Nelson
Mike Nelson, Aaron Nelson, Dave Ecklund, Sue Ecklund

I took Aaron on two very limited dives into the cavern section of the spring. I realize that I am opening myself up to chastizement for admitting this considering Aaron's degree of experience and training. My judgement though was that between the two of us, we knew infinately more about what we were doing than the entire lot of other divers that we had seen here, all put together. Dave and Sue joined us at the tail end of our vacation for our first cave dive together since we got basic certification.

Our first dive was the rust remover, where we made all the mistakes it was within our ability to do and jogged our memories back into working order. We reached about 275 feet penetration at 55 feet maximum depth.

The second dive didn't start smoothly but we all came to the conclusion, we were diving for practice, not to achieve goals, so everything was hunky-dory. We got back about 275 feet then took a short side line that "Y"ed back to a dome, depth 55 feet. Our third dive went smooth as silk. It was the first dive of a new day as it was intended to be our deepest. We hit the water and tied off the line and reeled out to the permenant line without a glitch. We passed through a relatively horizontal first 275 feet and down a steeply inclined slope to 400 feet penetration and 105 feet of depth (5 feet over basic cave guideline limitations) where the bottom just drops out. It is an impressive sight and feeling to suspend over that ledge. A few moments there and we "thumbed up", called the dive, and returned well within no decompression limits. But we built in 2 stops for safety's sake.

Our first cave dives since certification really helped us get our act together, showed us our weak and our strong points, and were successful in no small part to Dave's significantly longer experience with diving and his keen power of observation. Our "full" certification is on the agenda for early '91.

IF IT WERE IN IOWA

Warner Bay Spring, Reynolds County, Missouri
August 13-14, 1990 by Mike Nelson
Mike Nelson, Delores Nelson, Aaron Nelson, Mick Sutton, and Sue Hagen

I have little interest in being squired about to "do" caves. When I visit foreign lands, I prefer to do as I do at home, caving "of substance". Having last year made the acquaintence of Sue Hagen and Mick Sutton, we have been able to do the kind of caving thet satisfies while in vacationland. There is more work to be done in Missouri than could be done in the lifetime of a cave. Hence, Mick and Sue are always able to supply us with a worthwhile endeavor when we are in their neck of the woods.

Last year we did some legwork to scout out actual karst features. This year we volunteered for a paper chase. The object was to come up with a name and address of the landowner of a spring so that serious study of it could be persued. Supplied with a tatter eared topo map that showed speculative locations of hypothetical roads, we ventured into the general direction of the spring to begin our search.

According to "Springs of Missouri", Warner Bay Spring is one of the more "inaccessable" springs in the state, producing an average of 10 million gallons a day of crystal clear, 56 degree water. But in a state that contains 27 of the 69 first magnitude springs in the country, I must assume many others are overlooked and under investigated. If this spring were in Iowa, it would be hemmed in by a trout hatchery and red tape. It would cause any diving oriented caver to emit a constant stream of drool just contemplating it. In its little "inaccessable" corner of Missouri, it has remained ignored and undived.

Unfortunately, on the sparsely populated road that led to the spring, there was no one who could help us in our quest. Looking on the bright side, however, it was obvious that there was also no one around to discourage us from taking a little peek at the spring. I slipped on an 1/8 shorty wetsuit and grabbed one of my highly portable 10 cubic foot tanks and mask. Thus scantily attired, the water took my breath away. It was an odd feeling to experience with a regulator in my yap.

The rise pool just inside of the dripline was deep and belled out below the joint aligned portion nearer the surface. It appeared that a passage may be running off the right side at the base. A stark white, heavy sand coated the bottom. Warner Bay Spring sure looked inviting to me and worth the effort of persisting. I left a short explanitory note and a self addressed, stamped envelope in the door of one of the cabins on the property then reported back to Mick and Sue.

As long as there was no one around who might consider rousting us out of the spring, Mick and I decided to sort of coast in on the somewhat loose permission he had once obtained to map the spring and its attendent small cave and have a bit more of an in-depth look. I donned an entire wetsuit with hood this time and standard side mount solo dive gear.

The drop was near vertical down to about 35 feet and the water was silt free and beautifully clear. The rise pool chamber belled out, left, but more to the right, giving the false impression that passage may have run off that way. The entrance wall, after first receeding, stepped out and down like a stair composed of steeply inclined pieces of either bedrock or breakdown slabs. The edges were particularly jagged on this side. This front wall stepped down to meet the near vertical but "shelved" back wall. The water welled up from below the bottom jagged step from what appeared to be a bedding plane and followed the joint orientation that controlled the formation.

It would not have been too difficult to have inverted myself for a look into this lower conduit except for one anomaly. Between the last two steps there was a fishing pole. Its monofilament line mostly contained in one clusterf--- of a ball (maybe its reason for being in there) with a generous portion floating around the right side of the cave. The end of the line, with one of those nice gold plated eagle claw hooks, rested on one of the shelves on the back wall overhead of the welling. I chose not to deal with it and emerged after a short 4 minute dive.

I am anxiously waiting, hoping and praying that one of these days I find an envelope in the mail with only my writing on it initiating a correspondence that will lead to ... who knows what.

OTHER STUFF IN MISSOURI

Indian Cave, Railroad Cave, Pulaski County, Missouri
August 16, 1990 by Mike Nelson
Mike Nelson, Delores Nelson, Aaron Nelson, and Bart Rapp

Bart had invited us to join him for some caving while we were in his stomping grounds but Delores had had a bout with one of her recurring mystery maladies. She was not in the pink this day. We settled for taking in an ex-commercial, presently trashed, sacrifical cave; Indian Cave. Not much to it. Then we spent some time looking for Railroad Cave. The entrance Bart was familiar with is now closed. The trail to the second entrance had been drastically altered by some clear-cutting. We struck out.

Delores was too done in to look for a third cave on our agenda. We went back to base camp to rest up. We had planned to look into a near sump that had received a mask and snorkle evaluation earlier. Big cave, long, low airspace, my forte. It was quite disappointing that our host couldn't motivate himself off of the couch to check this out. I missed a chance for the kind of caving I love and, Missouri for now, has less knowledge about that cave than it might. While in the area, we also persued a lead that one of my work associates had given me. He had dug into a big cave while in the service at Fort Leonard Wood in 1957. That was a long time ago and the details were sketchy. We visited Rollin's Cave #1 to determine that wasn't the lead.

BACK TO FLASH PASSAGE

Coldwater Cave, Winneshiek County, Iowa
August 18, 1990 by Jay Wells
Larry Welch, Doug Schmuecker, and Jay Wells

Doug and I arrived at the shack Saturday morning where we met Larry and Beth Welch. We unloaded gear and waited around to see if anyone else may arrive. Larry and I had talked earlier about finishing surveying the Double P Passage. We needed three for the survey so we convinced Doug into going with us. We talked about all the near-walking passage to the near stoop-walking passage followed by a slight crawl to a possible lead that Larry had seen earlier. Doug was somewhat skeptical but agreed to go anyway.

Inside the cave the high CO_2 was very evident as we took several rest stops before reaching the Waterfall Passage. At each rest stop comments kept popping up about the enormous size of the passage. We kept telling Doug the last station was in an area 30 feet high and 10 feet wide. For some reason he was still somewhat skeptical. We headed up the Waterfall Passage stopping at some of the domes along

the way. The air seemed a little better than that in the main stream. We headed up the Flash Passage; it wasn't quite as large as we had mentioned to Doug but the passage was still comfortable and has many nice formations. We finally arrived at Double P Passage.

The passage starts out a good size crawl but quickly drops down to a 12 inch high bellycrawl and just as quickly Doug was cussing at us. We all continued to where the passage pinched. Larry went first and continued on into Larry's Wonder Dome. Doug was next. He tried to go through but decided it may be better to back out and try digging a little. The passage is quite small at this point which made digging very difficult. Doug kept digging until both him and I were getting cold from laying in the water. He decided to return to Flash Passage; I continued on into the dome. Larry was waiting for me. We exchanged the Cylume sticks that we had left on the last survey trip with survey chips. We then decided to check the next lead. It is about 40 feet past the dome. The passage is still very low and fairly wide. We dug the opening out and entered a dome that is about 20 feet wide and 45 feet high we decided to name Tall Tale Dome. We then exited Double P and met up with Doug at the beginning of Flash Passage. We ended the day at Harmony for supper.

A VERY WET WEEKEND

Wonder Cave, Winneshiek County, Iowa
August 24, 1990 by Jay Wells
Stacey Cyphert, Scott Dankof, Mike Lace, and Jay Wells

We arrived at Decorah Friday night with the purpose of a photo trip into April Cave. There was a chance of scattered thundershowers Friday night but was supposed to be clear all day Saturday. We drove to Lester's house and talked for a while. Then we headed to the campsite for a peaceful night; wrong! A downpour started while we were unloading gear. When it let up a couple of hours later, we walked to the bridge where the gushing water out of the cave had raised the stream to within 6 inches of going over the top of the bridge. By the end of the night 3.25 inches of rain had fallen.

Saturday morning there was a wild river flowing out of the cave entrance putting to rest any hope of a trip into the cave. We loaded gear up to go for breakfast and to decide how to salvage the trip . One problem, my truck would not make it up the washed out road. After several tries, we decided to leave it until that afternoon. Hopefully, the road would dry up some. Scott's truck made it up the hill with little trouble so we switched the gear over.

At breakfast it was decided to try going into Wonder Cave for a photo trip. We couldn't let all Scott's cameras and ammo cans just sit there and not get used. We found the owner, signed the releases, and drove down to the cave.

The cave must have recently taken a lot of water because it was washed very clean. The formations were spotless and in their full glory. We rigged a rope over the last set of steps. The main steps had rotted out but the iron frame is stable so you must straddle the frame on a safety rope. Once on the old cement platform, Mike and Stacey went to work rigging the main dome while Scott was trying to figure out the best photo shots of this large dome. Stacey made the drop first and I followed. We set up a camera for a few shots of Mike and Scott. Mike descended third. We got a few photos of him. Last, Scott descended with an ammo box full of cameras and gear. Unfortunately, the strap broke allowing the box to descend 30 feet sooner than Scott. Miraculously, the cameras survived the fall while the ammo box has only a few more dents in it than before. We shot a lot of

photos of the pit and all the way out the return trip. The formations are plentiful and very clean giving us several good photos.

We drove back to April Cave to try to get my truck out. After several more attempts, Lester came down sith a skid loader. The road was still slick and he was having trouble getting traction so we started loading up the truck with rocks. This let me get almost all the way up the hill where Scott was able to chain onto me and pull me over the crest. I was finally out with a lot of thanks to Lester and Scott.

I drove on home while the other three decided to go up to Coldwater for a possible photo trip Sunday. Sunday morning they checked the stream level recorder. There was a large flood spike that went completely off the chart. They decided to descend down to the platform as the water was still up to flooding level. The water was within 8 inches of going over the new platform.

The flooding in April and Coldwater Caves only stresses the fact the weather has to be taken into account before entering any cave.

LEADS AND LOAFING

Pine Spring, Twin Springs, A.J. Spring Cave, Livinggood Annex, and Dunning Spring
August 26, 1990 by Mike Nelson
Mike Nelson and Delores Nelson

A couple of minor considerations and possibly an attitude caused us to blow off our plans for the day and just lead check and look at springs. There had been a significant rainfall 4 days earlier. Our lead checking brought to us the acquaintance of a hunter and trapper who has long held an interest in caves. Personal business will keep him indisposed for a couple of months but there is some interesting potential for when we can get together.

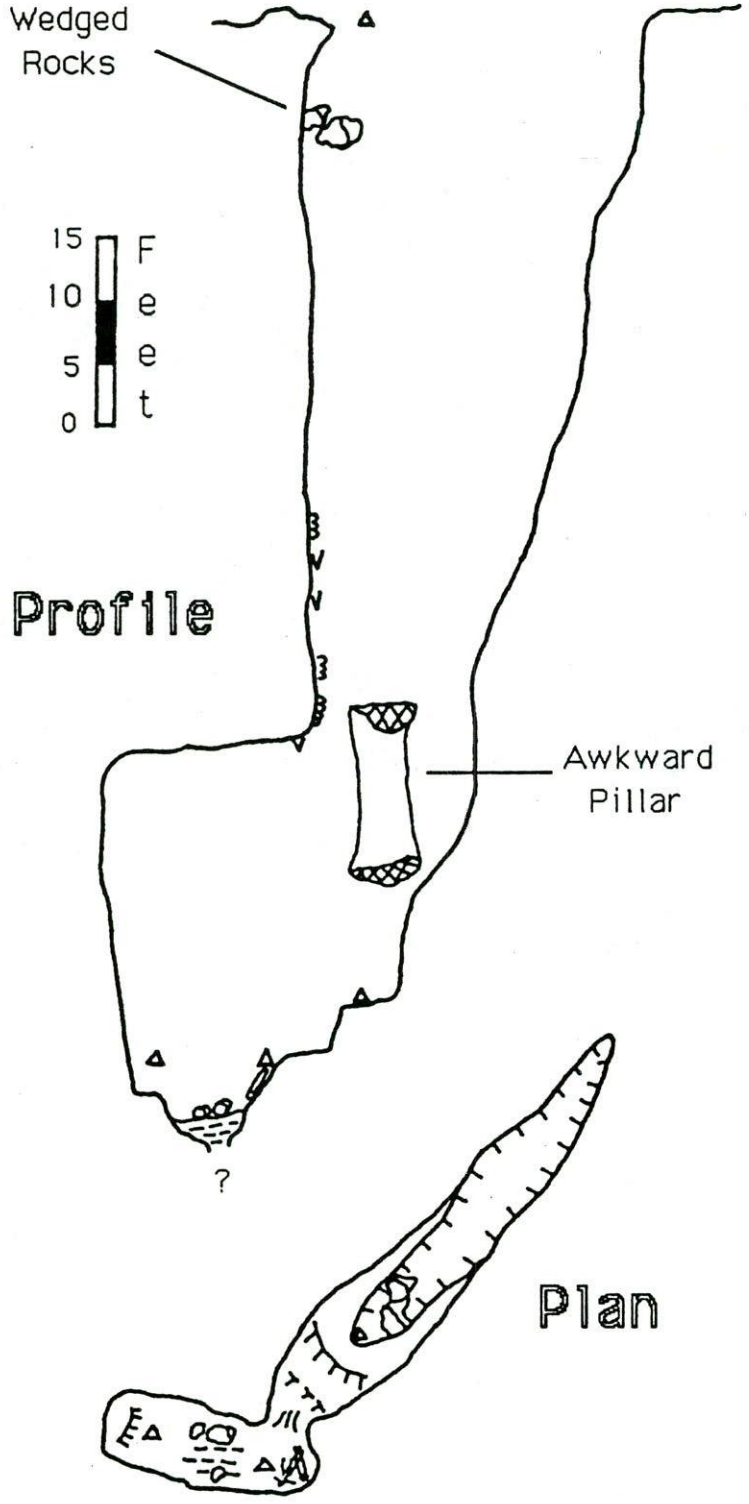
One lead he gave us brought us to what was once Pine Springs Farm, hence, Pine Spring. It is now Heritage Farms, the home base of the Seed Savers Exchange. This is a group devoted to preserving the multitude of noncommercial, basically heirloom seeds, things that were brought to this country and handed down generation to generation. It is open to visitors (June 1-Sept 30, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.) 5.5 miles north of Decorah on Ia. Highway 52, then 1 mile north on W34. Please don't pester them about the spring, contact me for any info. Contact them at Seed Savers Exchange, RR 3 Box 239, Decorah, IA 52101 if you share this interest or can supply them with seeds from friends, family or neighbors.

The spring feeds a small trout pond and was much too dirty for any evaluations after the aforementioned rains. We have been invited back when it clears, for that purpose. The proprietor also showed us some crevice sinks on an adjacent ridge that we will check at that time too.

We then made the rounds to the other sites listed to see the telltail signs the high water conditions had left behind. The most impressive was Livinggood Spring Annex, our dig project. The water had turned over our cow barricade and run 2 to 2½ feet deep down the run. According to the owner's father, it had run for the previous three days. The water had receeded less than half way back to the level we initially found it at. Suprisingly, vertually no mud or silts had been deposited in the run beyond the immediate area of the dig. I did some repairs to the barrier.

MUDSLIDE PIT

Winneshiek County, Iowa



Surveyed June 9, 1990
by:

Stacey Cyphert
Mike Lace
Larry Welch

Feet
0 5 10 15

4°
true
mag
N

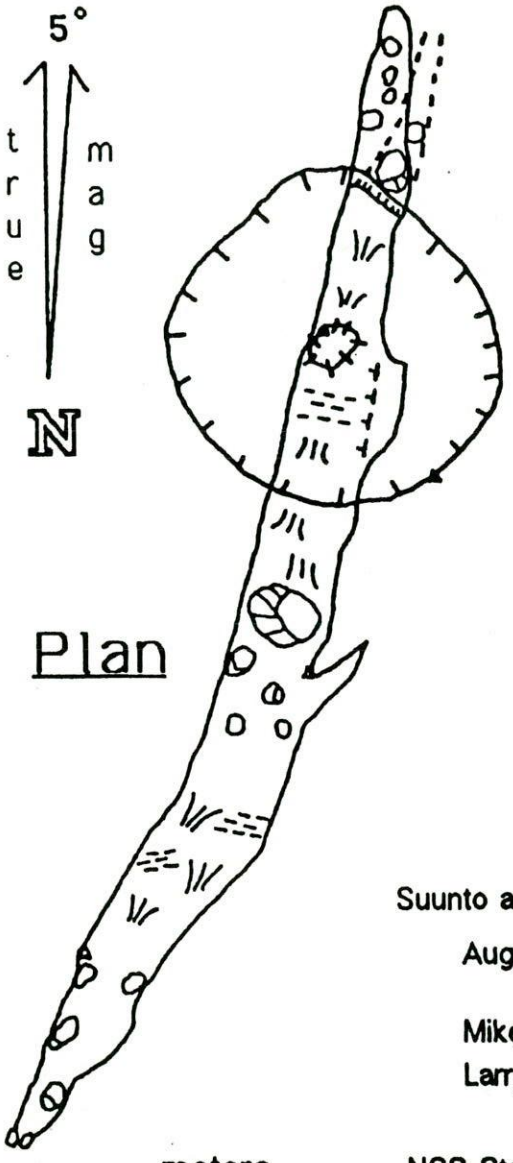
Cartography
by
Larry Welch

IOWA GROTTO
N.S.S.

Surveyed Length 101.70 feet

EVAC CAVE

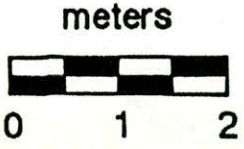
Delaware County, Iowa



Suunto and Tape Survey

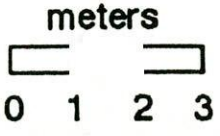
August 4, 1990

Mike Lace
Larry Welch



NSS Standard Map Symbols (1976)

Surveyed Length 15.26 Meters

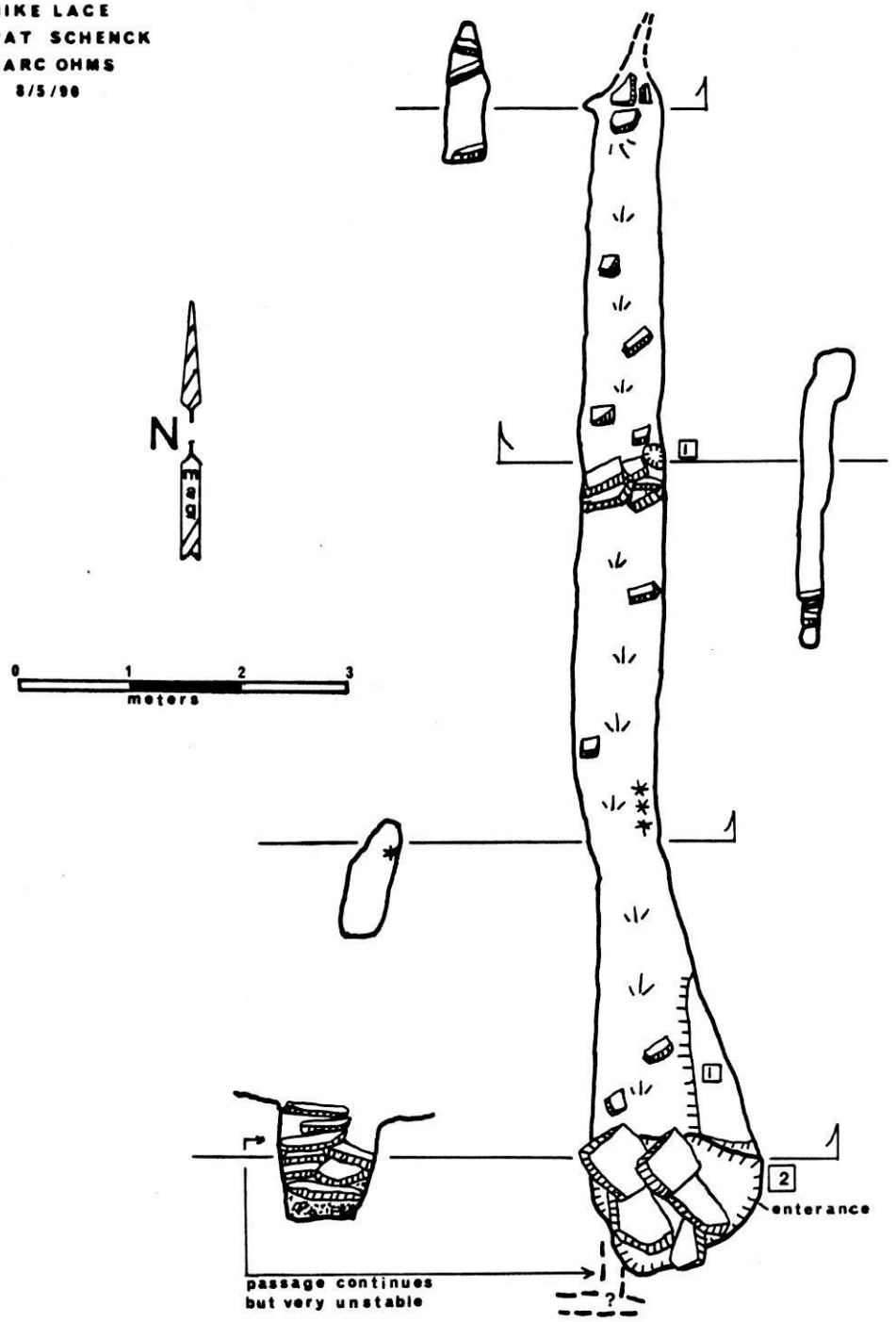


Cartography by Larry Welch

KUHSE'S CREVICE

CLAYTON COUNTY, IOWA

COMPASS & TAPE SURVEY
MIKE LACE
PAT SCHENCK
MARC OHMS
8/5/90



*— popcorn

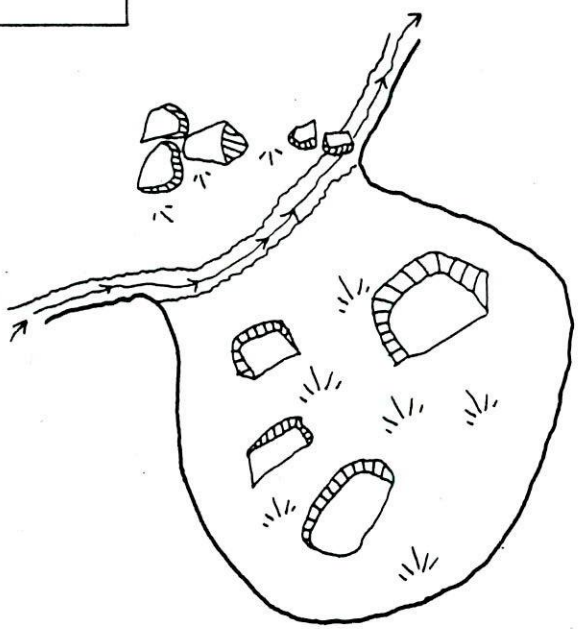
total surveyed length — 11.99 meters
cross sections are 1/2 scale

MARC OHMS

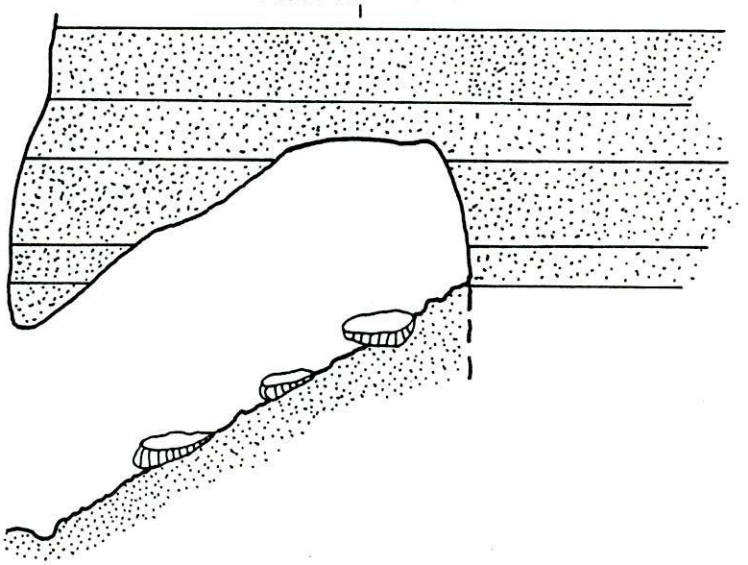
SAND CAVE
PIKES PEAK STATE PARK
CLAYTON COUNTY, IOWA
COMPASS & TAPE SURVEY
BY OHMS and WINCH
7-25-90

N

0 1 2 3
meters



PROFILE VIEW



MARC OHMS