

October 1990

## Intercom, Volume 26, No. 5, September-October 1990

Lowell Burkhead

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Published Semi-spasmodically By

THE IOWA GROTTO

*National Speleological Society*



Volume XXVI Issue 5

September - October 1990



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Volume 26 No 5

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 January 14, 1991. 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  
NCRC  
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Iowa County Emergency Management  
24 hour number  
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This number calls out Iowa Grotto rescue personnel.

Cover: A formation in ex-commercial Wonder Cave, Winneshiek County, Iowa. Notice electrical wiring near the ceiling. Photo by Scott Dankof



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

Chairman - - - - - Mike Lace  
Vice-Chairman - - Lowell Burkhead  
Secretary-Treas. - Stacey Cyphert

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## IOWA GROTTO MEETING MINUTES

Regular meeting September 26, 1990

The meeting was called to order at 7:40 p.m. by Vice-Chairman, Lowell Burkhead. Eleven members and two guests (who became members at the end of the meeting) were present. The minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved as read. The Treasurer's report listed \$415.03 in the club treasury. TRIP REPORTS: Stacey Cyphert reported on virgin passage discovery with Larry Welch off of the Pig Trough in Coldwater Cave. Greg McCarty reported on a sinkhole near Strawberry Point he visited with Mike Bounk, on a spring cave project with John Fuhrman, and on a check of sinking streams with several people. Jay Wells reported on Floyd County caving at Jesse James Cave, Wilson Cave, and Hemp Hole. Jay noted that Two Days Digging Cave now has a culvert in it. A sinkhole Bob Wahlstrom remembered and several landowners were also visited on this trip. A vertical rescue class was held at Indian Bluffs Nature Preserve and two caves were surveyed. Marc Ohms reported on lead checking and surveying in Dubuque. He also visited Fence Cave, among others. FUTURE TRIPS: Coldwater Cave is October 20. An Engelken Cave survey trip is being planned and a Dunning Spring digging project may take place yet this fall. OLD BUSINESS: Lowell Burkhead purchased new typing paper and supplies. The cave file policy was briefly discussed - the membership decided to wait for the cave file committee to develop a basic proposal before the issue is further discussed. NEW BUSINESS: Jay Wells mentioned he may have access to someone who can produce Iowa Grotto patches. He will check into prices and report back. Mike Nelson is working on a Siewers Spring basin conservation project with the Decorah fish hatchery. He also may have access to flying around Iowa to look for caves this winter. Anyone knowing of areas with good potential should report to Mike. A mine shaft in Buena Vista needs to be explored and contact has been made with the Iowa Grotto. Grotto funding issues were discussed but no decisions were made. Motions were put on the floor to limit trip reports by an individual to 10 minutes and to limit the number of months an individual could go back in giving trip reports to 2 months. The article by Doc Lewis in the NSS News was noted. Nominations for Grotto officers were decided to be taken at the October meeting. Lowell Burkhead announced he has rappel racks available. Two new members joined the Grotto: Jeff Durale and Ben Keller. The meeting was adjourned at 9:01 p.m.

Regular meeting October 24, 1990

The meeting was called to order at 7:33 p.m. by the Chairman, Mike Lace. 15 members and one guest (who joined) were present. The minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved as amended. A balance of \$284.30 was reported in the club treasury. TRIP REPORTS: Jeff Durale reported on a recognizance trip in Coldwater Cave he took with Steve Barnett. Jay Wells and Larry Welch surveyed in Critter Pass in Coldwater Cave. Jay noted that the space blanket in Coldwater Cave had been washed downstream by the recent flood. Mike Lace reported on a trip upstream in Coldwater he took with Mike Nelson and Marc Ohms to see if the Spong was open. Mike also reported on lead checking during the day. Marc Ohms reported on two survey trips to Becker Quarry Cave and on some other trips in the Dubuque area, including the very unique Crystal Cave lined with dogtooth spar. He also mentioned trips to Glenwood Cave and the Postville Ice Cave. Mike Bounk reported on work at Siewers Spring with the Nelsons. FUTURE TRIPS: April Cave is November 3. Becker Quarry Cave is November 10 and Coldwater Cave is November 17. A trip to Wonder Cave is planned for January and a Cave Rescue Seminar will take place April 6. Trips to Drahm Cave, Engelken Cave, and Buena Vista are being planned. OLD BUSINESS: Reproduction of the Iowa Karst Catalogue is still being done by Mike Lace. The Cave Index status is still the same, although the idea of putting some kind of stamp or mark on pages to identify authorized copies was discussed. A motion was passed that the Grotto Chairman will make decisions about how the meeting will be run so the motions regarding trip report lengths and period covered were dropped. Exchanges with other grottos will be mailed this month. Nominations for Grotto officers were taken. Steve Barnett and Mike Lace were nominated for Chairman, Lowell Burkhead and Marc Ohms for Vice-Chairman,



and Jim Sinning, Bob Wahlstrom, and Jay Wells for Secretary-Treasurer. These people will have until the next meeting to decline or to write campaign statements for publication in the HOTLINE. A dues increase to \$12 to cover increasing costs with INTERCOM subscriptions staying at \$10 was discussed and will be put in the HOTLINE for comments by the general membership. NEW BUSINESS: Information about the Grotto Library will be put in the HOTLINE so new members will be aware of it. Gary Engh will look into obtaining plexiglass to cover the posters at Coldwater Cave. Developing a packet of information about the Grotto for new members was also discussed. Brent Colvin and Steve Moon were announced as new members. Lowell Burkhead announced he has Safety Racks for sale at a price of \$40 plus tax. The guest at the meeting, Jean Sanders, decided to join the Grotto. The meeting was adjourned at 9:11 p.m.

## FITNESS: KEEPING UP IN THE NINETIES

by Mike Nelson

Hey, you hard-core, long-distance Coldwater cavers, here's a few words for keeping up with this author who hits the big 4-0 this next December. Two of them are "mountain bike" and the other is "terrain". If you have horse trails (the steeper the better) in parks or in your area or hilly gravel roads etc. at your convenience and a few hours a week to spare, the opportunity to have fun staying fit can be boundless. I still run and do other such things that enhance my ability to cave long and hard but this device has made exercise so much fun that I look forward to it and work at it longer than I should. It also provides a peak workout obtainable only by forced, sustained concentration while running or road bicycling.

Don't buy too cheap. Hardware store bikes don't have the quality components or gearing of the real things. Don't buy too dear either. No one in Iowa will ever utilize the cost of a \$500 plus toy. I got a "last years" \$400 plus model for just over \$300. Most of the fancy costly stuff is not needed for exercise regionally, but do get index shifting, a water bottle, and toe clips. The clips keep your feet on the pedals in rough conditions and add to efficiency on gravel roads and flatter surfaces. Proper use of the toe clips using the foot to also lift as part of the pedaling cycle builds the muscles that are used to walk upstream against flowing water. (I intended this article to be more in-depth but I gotta go for a ride now. Later.... )

Well, I'm back. For the last hour and a half, I have been enjoying one of the most excruciating delights one can have without taking off their clothes. Anyone who has tried it is aware of the shortcomings of running. There is liberal potential for injury. It is a tremendous bore. True, the mindlessness of it affords me time to do some of my best, clearest thinking. That does not detract from the fact that getting ready to run and getting out the front door often takes greater outlays of energy than the feat itself.

On that fat-tired bike, though, I had to use some common sense to come home. I rode to Pilot Knob State Park, 3½ miles away. It is a glacial terminal moraine that seems quite out of place. It is also the second highest spot in Iowa and the horse and hiking trails there never cease to remind one of that. I made my heart pound, my legs burn, and my lungs scream. With the speed, grace and quiet inherent to biking, I spooked and cavorted with two small bunches of white tailed deer. I surprised and scattered a flock of 8 to 10 wild turkeys. Ask any hunter how easy that isn't. I soured with migrating hawks.

Fitness for its own sake is worth it. Being able to cave with the kids is icing on the cake. Give it a try, if so moved. Then grab your wetsuit and reap a few more rewards for your effort.



## OPPORTUNITY?

Siewers Spring, Winneshiek County, Iowa

by Mike Nelson

My caving career has been distinguished more than anything else by dumb luck, being in the right place at the right time (sometimes accompanied by an open yap). So it was again when I started a conversation with Bruce Adair, the manager of the state fish hatchery at Siewers Spring.

It seems that although the state has invested \$3.5 million into the facility to update it, this summer's floods and the resulting silt was almost too much for the fish. Bruce is very interested in information about the recharge basin to the point of joining forces with other interested folks like us. This may open up doors for again diving the spring. It's been 20 years; things might have changed in there. We will most likely be a party to a series of dye traces. With any luck, we may be able to learn as much about this basin as we know about Big Spring.

We are at the earliest stages of the game. We have done a little lead checking, mostly looking at sinking streams. I've seen pictures of Nordness Creek falling into a hole you would not believe. Maybe it was the "big one that got away". We'll never know thanks to a bulldozer and the fact that so few people know of us and the services we can provide.

Thanks to Mike Bounk, we are forming an initial picture of the stratigraphy. One more fieldtrip ought to provide him with enough data to ponder the winter away. One individual with the Winneshiek County Soil Conservation Service was also involved in a study of 6 square miles of trout run and was glad to come into contact with us. His work made him aware that we were also out beating the bush. At first he seemed aware of the diverse aspects of the dynamics involved but later got to talking about plugging point sources of silt input. I believe I convinced him that that is not conservation. Soil must not be just kept out of the aquifer but kept on the hillsides where it can be farmed. Also, I pointed out that that would stop water recharging the system along with stopping the silt.

Things are barely taking shape. Nothing has been written in stone by anyone. We have no idea what possibilities may evolve, but most likely this won't put us into big virgin cave. But to the caver who is interested in understanding caves and karst, does it matter?

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TRIP REPORTS

## IOWA GROTTO SUMMER PICNIC

Fountain Springs County Park, Delaware County, Iowa

August 4, 1990

by Mike Lace

Approximately thirty Iowa Grotto cavers and friends participated.

We had planned on repeating the successes of last year's picnic but at the same time introducing improvements. The general consensus is that we pulled it off. Many of us had never visited this particular park with its rugged, remote hills which is a shame because it offers a lot to picnickers, hikers, fishermen, and cavers alike. It was a lovely spot coupled with near perfect weather that really made for a good days worth of caving, chowing, and the chance to meet new cavers as well as the old faces you hadn't seen for a while.



As the caving trip reports attested, people had a chance to see some seldom visited caves and, in some cases, try a few things they hadn't tried before. Two crevice caves were surveyed and subsequently mapped; this is part of a distinct effort in Iowa Grotto caving in 1990 to expand the list of surveyed caves and I hope that this trend continues.

The meal, of course, was nothing short of awesome. Several cavers were observed seriously lounging on lawn furniture after a feast that would send even Oprah's calorie counter into spasms. Some of the menu included "Grotto Chili", sweet corn, burgers, hotdogs, veggie salad, watermelon, bars, and cookies.

The meal was followed by the Caver Auction which presented several rare and prized items for bidding. Spirited, but good-natured bidding wars were witnessed. Finally, INTERCOM and NSS News back issues were dragged out for sale and some cavers were seen returning to the back issue boxes again and again until only gas money for the trip home remained! The Secretary-Treasurer tells me that we grossed about \$300.00 that weekend which should support most of our publication costs for the rest of 1990.

Next year's summer picnic is tentatively scheduled to be held in the Dubuque area - previously a neglected caving area that has a lot to offer. If you have any comments or suggestions for how we can improve the picnic, we really appreciate any input you can offer. We are already gathering auction items and are planning a couple of new attractions so stay tuned for future details. Thanks to all who made this year's gathering so much fun - let's do it again!

### THE CHANGING FACE OF FLOYD COUNTY CAVING

Jesse James Cave, Wilson Cave, Hemp Hole, Zimmerman Cave, Floyd County, Iowa  
September 1, 1990 by Mike Lace  
Mike Lace, Bob Wahlstrom, Jay Wells, and Marc Ohms

This trip was targeted toward newer cavers to the Grotto since Jesse James Cave is a friendly dry cave that offers walking-size and crawling passage as well as challenging chimneying. Unfortunately, no novice cavers showed up but at least two of our number hadn't seen any of the caves before.

Jesse James Cave is accessed by easily chimneying down a ten foot entrance drop at the bottom of one of the few remaining sinkholes in the owner's field. After a brief crawl inside the entrance, we entered walking height passage and the intersection that offered two passages for us to follow. We chose the left passage first which leads to a section with, at times, three levels of passage stacked on top of one another. Recent area rains had left their mark in Jesse James with slick walls and sections of passage floor that had been scoured clean with draining water. We took several pictures in this area and hopefully one or two will turn out.

We briefly visited the other "arm" of the cave and then exited to visit Wilson Cave. To enter Wilson Cave, one has to squeeze through a boulder pile, affectionately named "Keystone Crawl", to get into the main passage. Jay, Marc, and I twisted ourselves into the entrance and soon made our way through a rock-cluttered crawlway to honest walking passage. Again, run-off had scoured the passage clean and water was observed draining out of the first right-hand side lead. This one will have to be dug open and may even be body-sized afterwards! We all soon exited without incident but not without complaint at the entrance.

The next small cave visited was Hemp Hole, the entrance of which leads to the



top of a twelve foot drop. We chimneyed across the entry drop and into the crawlway on the other side where Larry and I had tried to dig open a lead two years earlier. We could hear the sound of gurgling water beyond the dig site and everyone commented on how good a lead it was. It looks as if an afternoon's worth of digging would allow passage to whatever's on the other side. We then exited and walked over to the entrance of Two Days Digging Cave.

The owner has been filling some of the sinkholes in order to control erosion of topsoil that is already fairly thin in this area. He has installed a 24 inch diameter corrugated pipe over the entrance to Two Days Digging Cave and is planning to fill the sink itself with rock and soil. The entry crack to this cave has always been a challenge and a useful gauge as to how flexible a caver you are or how badly you need to start that diet you've been putting off, but with a tall metal culvert to descend before getting to the entrance, it may be impassable. Time will tell.

We then drove to a nearby sinkhole that Bob remembered checking years ago. He found it more open this time so we dropped into the entrance and began digging. After following the apparent drainage route, Jay and Bob found themselves unable to continue as the streamway disappeared down a rathole with no other leads in sight. Since there was no recorded name for this short cave, we named it Zimmerman Cave and headed out. We then packed up our gear and took a brief tour of Floyd and Mitchell County springs before driving home.

### MY FIRST CAVING EXPERIENCES

Wildcat Cave and Snake Cave, Wildcat Cave County Park, Hardin County, Iowa  
 September 9; 1990  
 Mike Mosch and Brent Colvin

by Brent Colvin

As a foreword to this trip report, I offer: This was my first caving experience. I've read "The Longest Cave" by Roger W. Brucker and Richard A. Watson not once but twice. I've read the chapter on Floyd Collins one too many times. It's, by the way, an excellent book and I think a perfect introduction to caving. My benefactor and guide into caving is good friend and Iowa Grotto member, Mike Mosch.

On September 9, Mike and I did Wildcat and Snake Caves, local caves that everyone you talk to played in as kids. These caves are situated in sandstone cliffs in our own beautiful Iowa River green belt. They're spectacular in their location if not in their size. Wildcat is a 50 foot tube starting out at 10 feet wide and walking height and ending in a bellycrawl 2 feet in diameter where the quartzite peppered ceiling slopes down to the sand covered floor. Easy digging might push the "cave" further, but is it worth it?

Snake Cave, ¼ mile further south in the same ridge is what I think would be called a fissure cave. It's a series of tight vertical squeezes between angular pieces of sandstone breakdown. You reach three successive levels, each with a little breathing room, ending up at a depth of 35 feet below the entrance. I'd estimate it a 45 degree descent if you could stretch a rope from the entrance to the third level. At the third level a chimney rises about 15 feet to a dome of ominously wedged blocks of sandstone; possible side leads exist. From the third level an extremely tight passage offers a tempting view of a 2 foot square hole 6 feet below. Two bats we had disturbed had disappeared down into this area and concern for their wellbeing prevented Mike from pushing this lead recently opened by this year's torrential rains.

Meanwhile, inspection of the cave structure, almost totally consisting of large sandstone blocks wedged and kept in place by inadequately smaller pieces and I'm sure our dubious good luck, brought to my mind's eye Floyd Collins' bairn, a 50 lb.



chunk of breakdown that ended not only his monumental caving career but his life. "Well Mike," I says, "If you're not going down that squeeze and I'm not going up that chimney, let's get the hell out of here."

There are numerous sinkholes above Snake Cave. Half a mile down river in the same ridge lies a sandstone boulder with "CAVE" and an arrow pointing left carved on it. Local rumor has it that at one time a large cave did exist there but the owner of the property had it dynamited shut. Although there are numerous holes and cracks, we found nothing large enough to enter.

Barbell Cave, Wye Cave, Dancehall Cave, Rainy Day Cave, Ice Cave, Steel Gate Passage, Maquoketa Caves State Park, Jackson County, and Backbone State Park, Delaware County, Iowa

Mike Mosch and Brent Colvin

by Brent Colvin

We arrived at Maquoketa Caves State Park at approximately 9:30 a.m. Our first cave was Wye Cave. A narrow vertical climb down 6 to 8 feet leads to a large room. The cave leads off this room with a rapid narrowing and lowering of the ceiling. A tight squeeze, a short stoopwalk and another tight squeeze led to more walking which eventually produces a "Y". The left lead narrows to nothing in 50 to 60 feet. The right brings you to a vertical squeeze rounding a corner within flashlight range and appearing to once again gain size. While wondering about shoving Mike into this crevice, we were accosted by two men and three boys. They were intent on joining us in this confining lead, 3 to 5 feet wide and 4 feet high. Kind of popped my bubble of real caving when this plump little crew showed up at the same depth into the cave.

A couple of well-aimed kicks and some fist sized rocks convinced the trespassers to exit the passage so we ourselves could turn and leave. We had to crawl under them to get out of the entrance to the passage and find security in another cave. They had only one light, no food or water, and were at least 350 feet into a cave with some pretty tight passages behind them.

Barbell Cave, Rainy Day Cave, and Ice Cave are fun and interesting enough to poke around in with leads in Ice and Rainy Day high in the entrance domes. Mike climbed up to some. They're all small with few outstanding formations.

Dancehall Cave, the main cave in the park, is enormous in comparison. At times, 20 feet high and 50 to 75 feet across. The state has in it's wisdom installed a sidewalk and electric lights which lend a shopping center mall atmosphere to a large part of it. In the west wall of the middle entrance lies the entrance to the Steel Gate Passage, easily the best cave in the park. The last time Mike visited the park it wasn't marked and it's not listed on the map so he missed it. 50 to 60 feet inside the entrance it forks, the left to a tight belly crawl, to the right goes up and to the left. We opted for the right lead. It just kept going, up, down, at times a squeeze or two into small rooms. Really nice formations with 1 to 2 inch diameter brown stalactites and columns, flowstone, and thousands of drops of lime solution on the ceiling that sparkled in our lights.

This main passage ended what we figured was 500 feet from the entrance when once again it narrowed and sloped into the red-clay covered floor. This was the only red clay out of all the caves visited that day. The rest contained black to greenish black clay. On the way out Mike made the squeeze up the left side of the fork ending up with enough room at the end to turn around and crawl out after about 30 feet. We got the muddiest in this cave due to the 2 to 6 inches of water running through much of it, and the liberal floor covering of tacky red clay.



Not far up the right lead some industrious caver molded two faces on a column. He also attempted to give a biology lesson with two crudely fashioned figures 10 inches long on the floor next to it. I'm sure he gained this artistic talent by means of the contents of the empty Olympia Light cans we found strewn throughout the first half of the cave.

Between doing 6 caves and the required hiking to each in  $4\frac{1}{2}$  hours, we found ourselves a little pooped so doffed our coveralls and headed out for Backbone State Park in the rain at 2:00 p.m. Arriving at Backbone by 3:30 p.m. we hiked the Backbone loop and headed for Backbone Cave. Slightly reminiscent of Steel Gate, but only about 150 feet of respectable caving, all stoopwalk or hands and knees, we only spent about  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour there. We arrived back in Eldora at 9:00 p.m.

I'm afraid I like caving quite a bit. In fact, I'm enclosing my membership fee in hopes of being included in a weekend at Coldwater Cave. A little honest ass-kissing never hurt, and if more is required, just let me know.

### VIRGIN PIG

Coldwater Cave, Winneshiek County, Iowa  
September 15, 1990  
Larry Welch and Stacey Cyphert

by Stacey T. Cyphert

The original purpose of the trip was to pick up some survey footage and to explore leads in the Frog Junction area. While the survey footage aspect was accomplished, the achievement of the second part depends on whether or not you count the Pig Trough as Frog Junction area.

Larry and I had barely entered the Pig Trough when a side lead on the right was noticed. It looked like easy survey and we quickly picked up a 50 foot shot. From the mud bank where Larry set the station two leads could be observed. One had a small amount of water flowing from it but was too low to enter. The second lead was a dry route in a dirt choked passage. We chose to dig on the dry lead.

Those of you who have gone through the Pig Trough are familiar with the mud. Larry and I can assure you that the side passages are no different. Soon we were both covered with a thick layer of mud. But we were making progress and repeated shifts at digging finally yielded virgin passage.

After a tight squeeze for 15 feet, the floor drops about one and one half feet. Here you enter a small stream. Another eight feet or so and a canyon running perpendicular to the stream passage is encountered. I could stand up in the canyon and called back to Larry about the discovery. He suggested I explore a little before he came to check it out, which he eventually did.

Once in the canyon most of the passage is to the left as you enter. A very unstable tower of breakdown is about 12 feet in front of you but can be passed on the left side. The canyon continues another 20 feet to a tall dome on the left with dripping water. Another 15 feet or so of walking passage continues beyond the dome. After going up a rise in the floor I continued pushing this lead in hands-and-knees size passage. The floor here is covered with white nodules. After 40 feet of hands-and-knees passage a collapsed dome is encountered. I thought I could see passage above some of the collapse. It looked like it would not be too difficult to remove some of the breakdown but I did not attempt to do so on this trip. Because our compass had as much mud on it as we did, this virgin passage still needs to be surveyed. A push beyond the collapsed dome may also be possible. Stay tuned for future reports.



ODD

Pine Spring, Heritage Farm, Winneshiek County, Iowa  
September 23, 1990

by Mike Nelson

I dived the trout pond at Heritage Farm to evaluate Pine Spring. I assumed I would find a small horizontal slot at the bottom of a short cliff or limestone face under the water at the base of the hill behind the pond. I was surprised to find that the spring issued from a vertical vent in the floor at 10 feet depth. It was surrounded by a "reef" or cone like a volcano from the deposition of its silt load which rose half way to the surface. The rest of the pond was a consistent 10 feet deep. I was more surprised to find that the spring was not flowing. There was no current to move the silt that arose as I moved a few rocks from the vent. The visibility quickly zeroed out but I dug as long as I felt I was being effective.

I'd like to speculate on the lack of flow but I'll settle for another look someday and monitoring the overflow and some other springs further down the run before doing so.

GOOD SHOWING

Coldwater Cave, Winneshiek County, Iowa  
October 20, 1990  
Mike Nelson, Mike Lace, and Marc Ohms

by Mike Nelson

We spent the day lead checking on the surface above and north of Grappling Falls. I imagine the leader of that trip will submit a separate report. (Ed. I imagined that along with Mike. I also imagined that several of the other reports in the Trip Report sections of the meeting minutes would be submitted. Thanks for the vacation; this is the thinnest issue since Steve Moon restarted the INTERCOM back in 1987. Call me a dreamer, but I imagine that those reports will be in the next issue and Mike will have more to read next time than he wrote.)

That evening after pizza, we three made a quick recon up to the Spong Siphon. The amount of water off the last step of the platform gives me a good idea of conditions upstream but I wanted a first-hand look also. I wanted to make the connection between actual condition and the reading on Mike Bounk's newly installed staff gauge. The guage read .70.

There was very little clearance in the siphon, about as much as when Larry Laine and I made the upstream breakthrough June 20, 1987. We used scuba on that occasion. It would have to lower another 3/4 to 1 inch to be as low as I've pushed through back before I knew better, lower yet to be safe for general access.

The summer's floods altered some upstream areas dramatically. Several deep areas are no longer so. There is a considerable amount of soft, sucking mud in these areas and much more, liberally distributed randomly about.

The highlight of the trip was Mike Lace's pace. He led us up and back in a very respectable hour and a half. He graduated from "sprout" a long time ago. Now, if he can perform like that while toting a torpedo, he can call himself a man. The only higher honor that will be left then for him to earn will be honorary "Scandawhovian"! Good Luck.

Oh, by the by, I don't recall hearing from Marc what he thought of his first wetsuit cave trip.



## WILD WELL PROJECT

Wild Well Cave, Clayton County, Iowa

October 2?, 1990

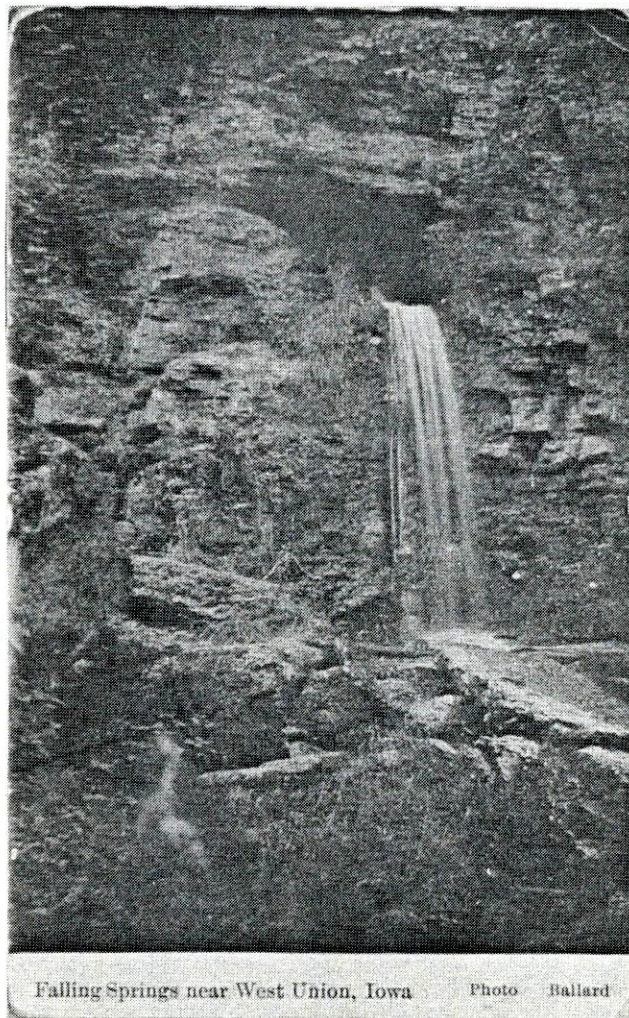
by Mike Nelson

Mike Nelson, Randy Kwiatkowski (Ka-tow-ski), and Art Dahms

I set up a trip for Randy Kwiatkowski and Art Dahms in October. As they were only free on a weekday, I could not attend. Their intention was to install a new mappable line to the first large room, 500 feet, then remove the old line. On a subsequent trip, this new line would be mapped and then the next segment would be re-strung in a like manner. Over several trips the whole line would be replaced and the entire cave mapped.

,They re-layed that first 500 feet with 1/8 inch line and removed the old one, but, because of low visibility, are not sure it is straight enough to map yet. They may need to place a few artificial anchors to accommodate things.

Randy noted that the water and air were particularly foul, like Coldwater Cave in late summer. They both suffered nasty headaches afterwards. Considering the amount of air they imported, it seems the content of the water is to be considered part of the problem.



A 1909 penny postcard belonging to Grotto member Jim Vavricka





Wonder Cave, Winneshiek County, Iowa August 24, 1990  
Jay Wells and Stacey Cyphert check rigging for descent of 50  
foot pit. Photo: Scott Dankof





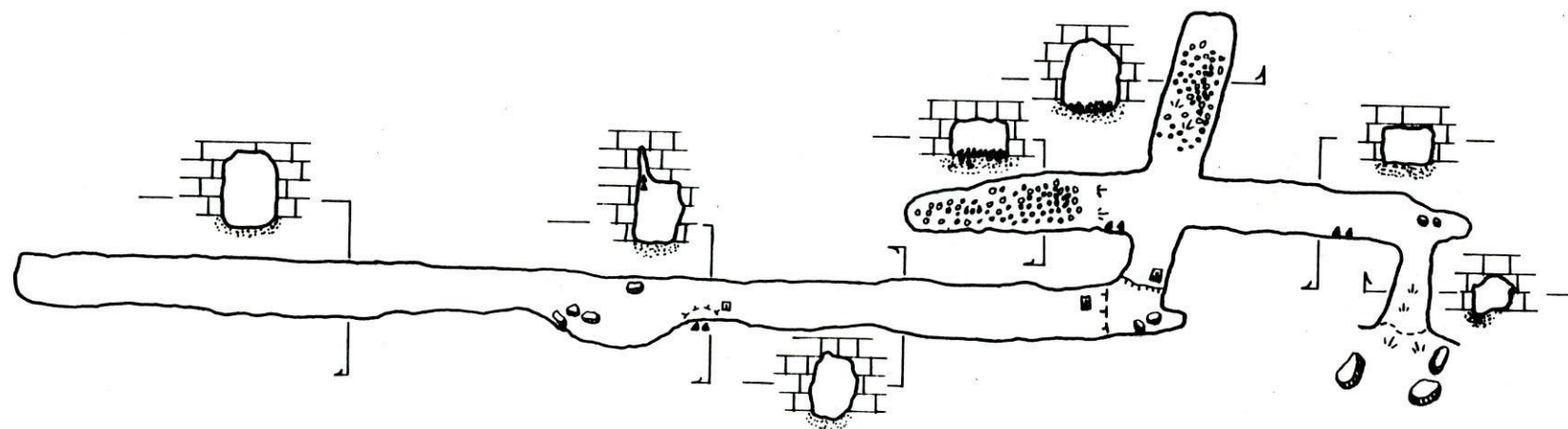
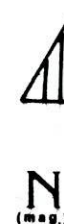
Wonder Cave, Winneshiek County, Iowa                      August 24, 1990  
Stacey Cyphert on stairway above pit.   Photo: Scott Dankof  
See Volume 26, issue 4, page 80 for trip report.



# BIG BAT CAVE

## Dubuque County, Iowa

COMPASS & TAPE SURVEY  
BY OHMS & SCHENCK  
7-17-90



0 2 4 8  
meters

Marc Ohms

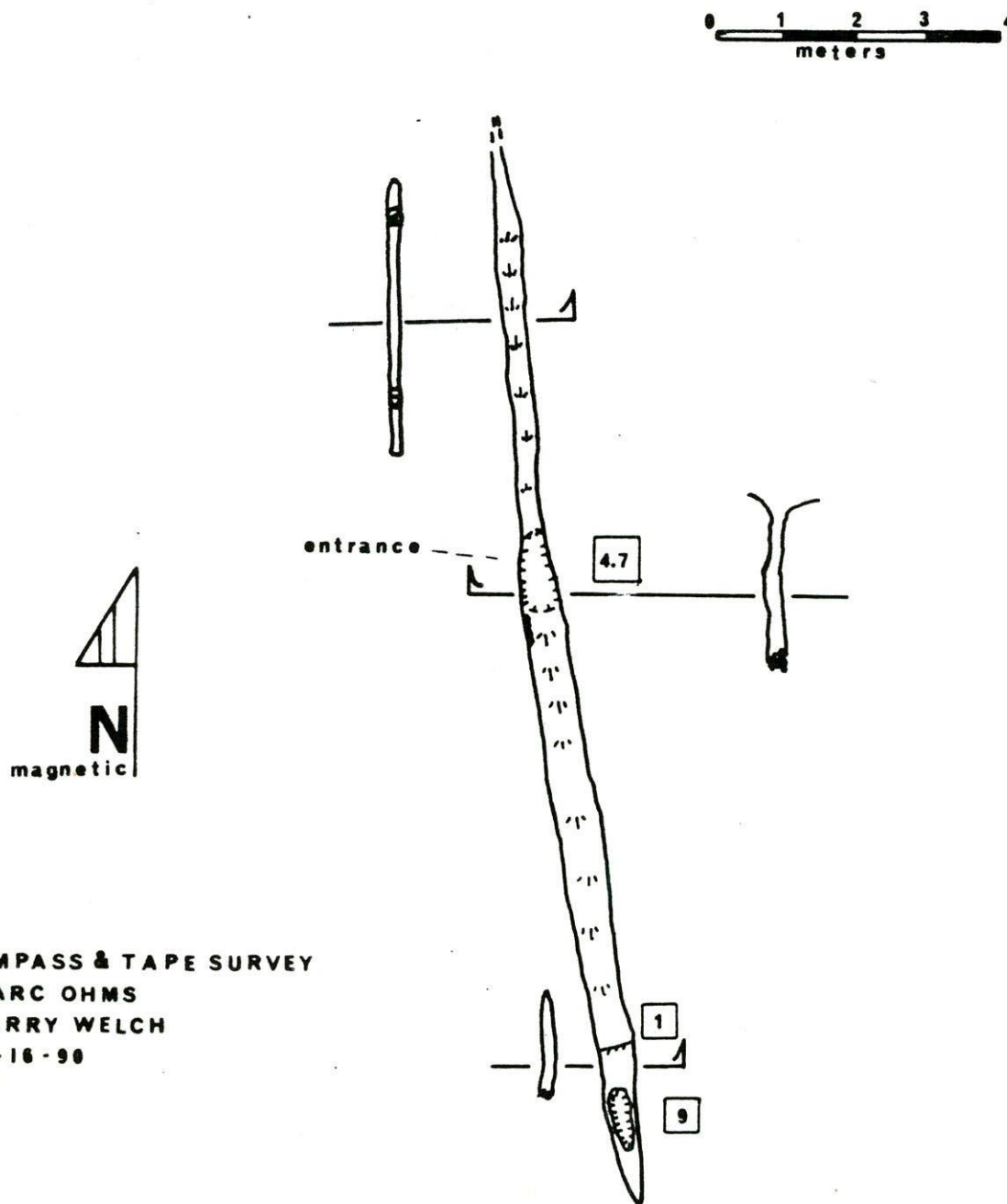






# CACTUS CREVICE

ALLAMAKEE COUNTY, IOWA



COMPASS & TAPE SURVEY  
MARC OHMS  
LARRY WELCH  
9-16-98

CROSS SECTIONS ARE 1/2 SCALE  
TOTAL LENGTH - 15.3 meters

MARC OHMS





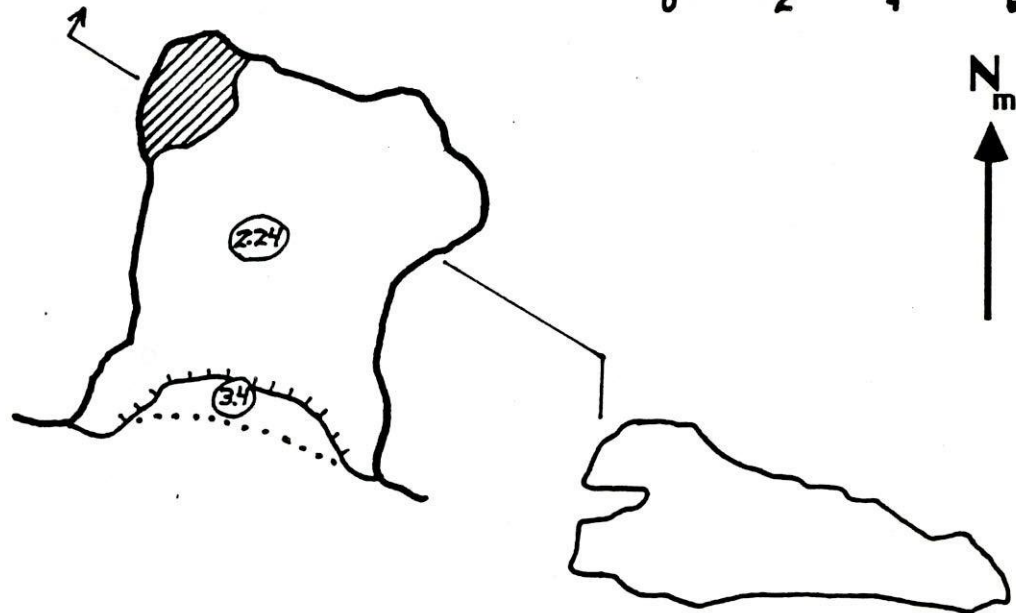


# Jordan Creek Cave

Jones County, Iowa

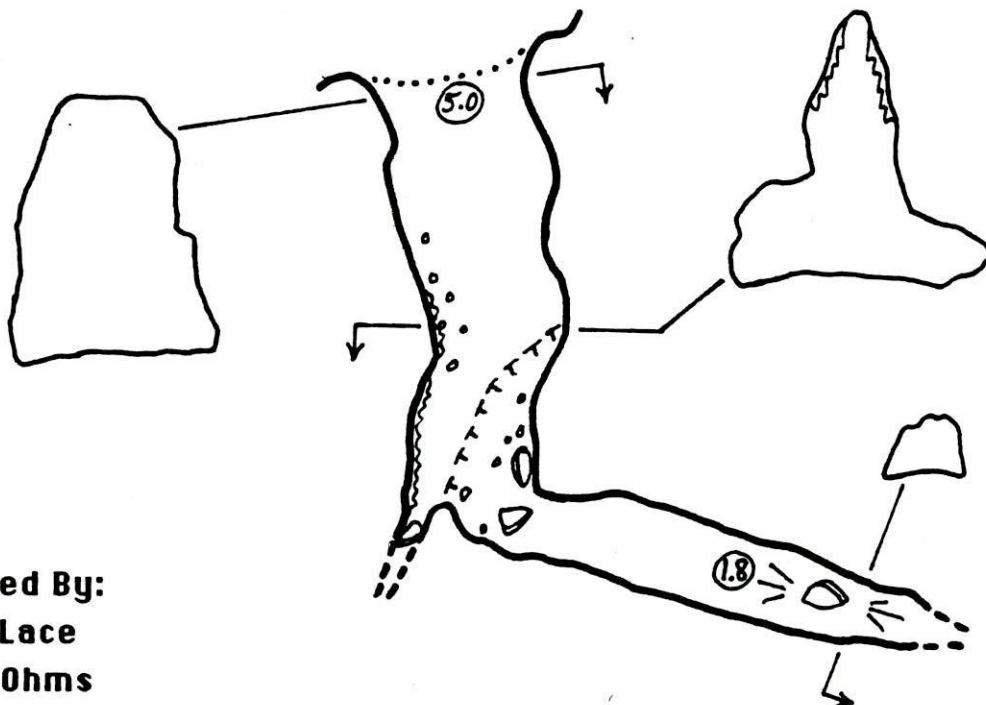
NSS Standard  
Map Symbols

Scale/meters



# Pinnacle Canyon Cave

Jones County, Iowa



Surveyed By:

Mike Lace

Marc Ohms

Jay Wells

Bert Jagnow

Doug Schmuecker

Dean Zimmerman

Drafted By Mike Lace  
9-19-90

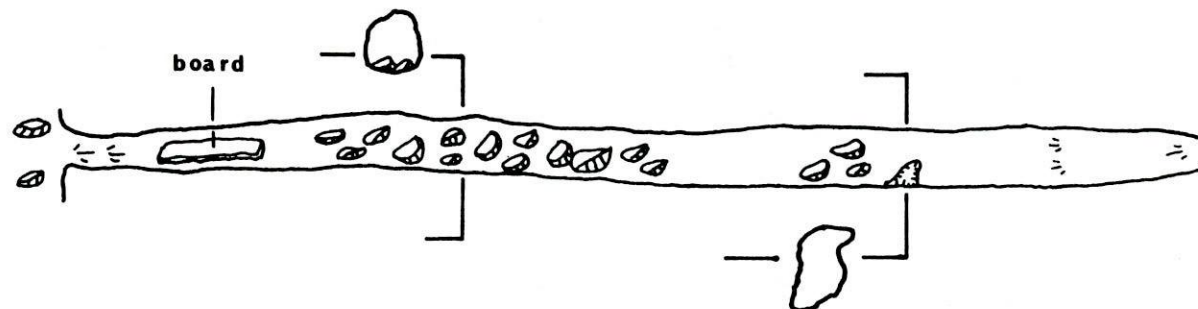
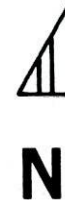






# BILLBOARD CAVE #2

DUBUQUE COUNTY, IOWA



COMPASS & TAPE SURVEY

JAY WELLS

MIKE LACE

MARC OHMS

9-22-90

0 meters 10

M. OHMS



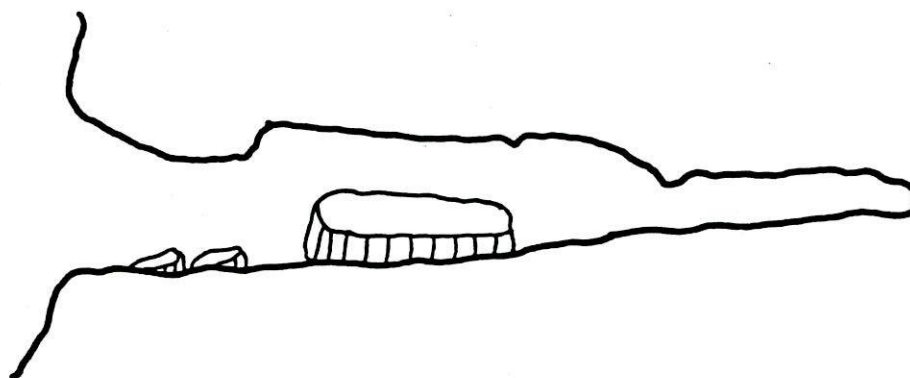
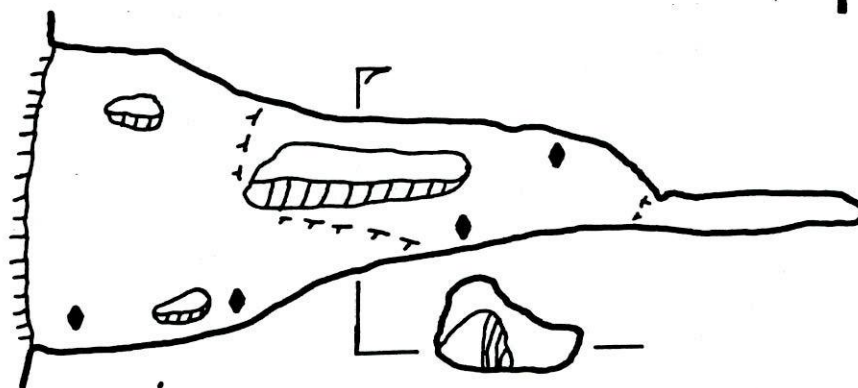
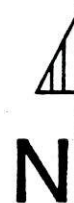




# CRYSTAL CAVE

## DUBUQUE COUNTY, IOWA

COMPASS AND TAPE SURVEY



MARC OHMS

