

October 1992

Intercom, Volume 28, No. 5, September-October 1992

Lowell Burkhead

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.usf.edu/intercom>

Recommended Citation

Burkhead, Lowell, "Intercom, Volume 28, No. 5, September-October 1992" (1992). *Intercom*. 96.
<https://digitalcommons.usf.edu/intercom/96>

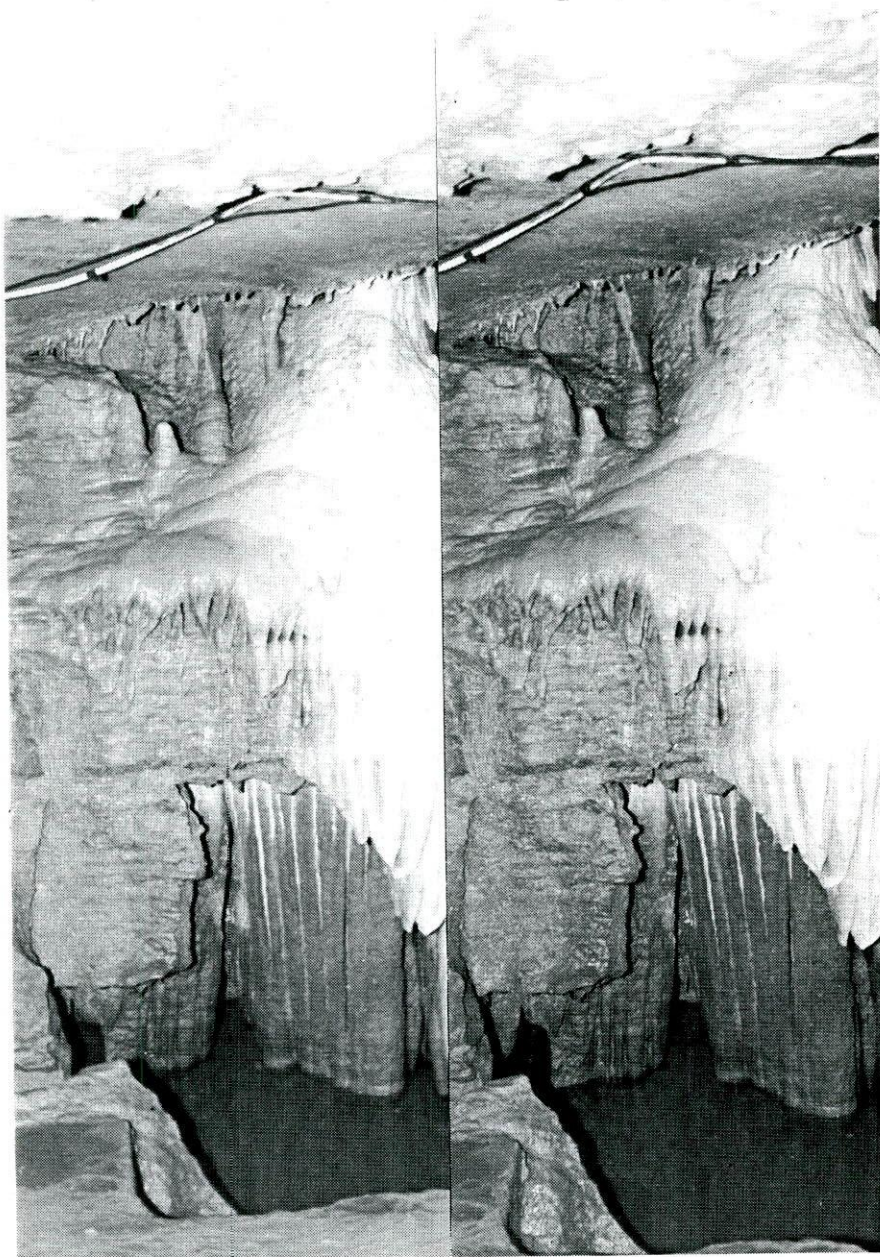
This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Newsletters and Periodicals at Digital Commons @ University of South Florida. It has been accepted for inclusion in Intercom by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ University of South Florida. For more information, please contact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

I N T E R C O M

Published Semi-spasmodically By

THE IOWA GROTTO

National Speleological Society



Volume XXVIII Issue 5

September - October, 1992

The INTERCOM is published semi-spasmodically by the - - - - - Iowa Grotto
The Iowa Grotto is dedicated to the exploration and study P. O. Box 228
of caves. We will exchange publications with other organ- Iowa City, IA 52240
izations with the same dedication. Reproduction of mater-
ial appearing in the INTERCOM by other caving organizations is encouraged as long as
credit is given to the author and the INTERCOM and a copy of the publication is sent
to the Iowa Grotto. Membership to the Iowa Grotto is \$12.00 per year. INTERCOM sub-
scriptions only are \$10.00 per year. The Iowa Grotto reserves the right to decline
membership after or during a probationary period.

The Iowa Grotto is affiliated with - - The National Speleological Society, Inc.
Regular membership to the N.S.S. is \$25.00 Cave Avenue
per year. Subscription to the N.S.S. news Huntsville, AL 35810
only is \$18.00 per year. All Iowa Grotto
members are encouraged to join our parent organization, The National Speleological Soc.

Material for the next issue of the INTERCOM is due in the hands of the editor by
January 1, 1993 with a few days grace for those later trips. This should include mat-
erial covering November and December, 1992. Send articles, trip reports, photographic
negatives, prints, or slides, artwork, cave maps, cartoons, etc. for publication to:

Editor and Typist: Lowell Burkhead 319-854-6650
2611 Alderman Rd.
Springville, IA 52336

INTERCOM Staff: Logistics and Legwork: Mike Lace
Photo Processing: Jim Hannon

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

Air Force Rescue Coordination Center

NCRC

1-800-851-3051

Iowa County Emergency Management

1-319-642-3151

This number calls out Iowa Grotto rescue personnel

Cover Photo: Formations in Wonder Cave, Winneshiek County, Iowa by Scott Dankof.

If this photo looks a little different, that's because it is! The two photos were
taken in full 3-D perspective. (See article, this issue) To get the 3-D effect, they
must be viewed one with each eye, simultaneously. To do this, look beyond the page
until you see three dots at the top. You will see four and must merge the center two
into one. The page must be held level to merge them vertically. When this is accom-
plished, the top of the photo will come into focus. You will also see three photos.
The center one will be 3-D and the other two will be "ghosts". It can take practice
to train your eyes to do this on command. When the 3-D comes into focus, care must be
taken not to try to just crawl into the page! Let us know what you think of 3-D photos
and whether you want to see more of them in this publication.



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

Chairman - - - - - Mike Lace
Vice-Chairman - - - - - Marc Ohms
Secretary-Treasurer - - Jay Wells

Volume 28	C O N T E N T S	Issue 5
Iowa Grotto Meeting Minutes - - - - -		108
Three Demensional Cave Photography - - - - -		109
Trip Reports:		
Crashing Through the Brush - - - - -		110
Survey of Spiral Cave Begun - - - - -		110
Recent Spiral Notes - - - - -		111
Wonder Cave Restoration - - - - -		111
MVOR Etc. - - - - -		112
Curse of the Red Dust - Part 6 - - - - -		113
A Visit to Misery (Missouri) - - - - -		113
Cave Rescue Training - - - - -		115
Some Odds and Ends - - - - -		115
Jackson County Caving - - - - -		117
Buck Creek Cave Trip - - - - -		118
Pleasantly Surprised - - - - -		119
Photos: - - - - -		114, 120
Cave Maps:		
Silica Mine - - - - -		116
Elephant Den - - - - -		121
Odessa Mama Cave - - - - -		122
Stafford's Sandstone Cave - - - - -		123
Wet Reebok Cave - - - - -		124

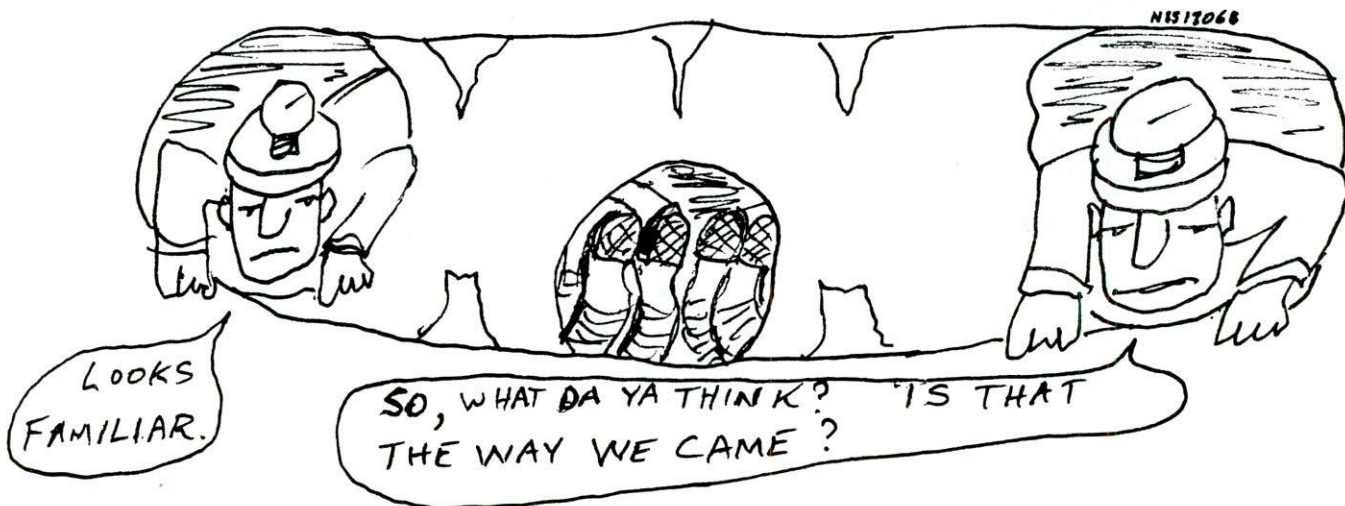
IOWA GROTTO MEETING MINUTES

Regular meeting September 23, 1992

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Mike Lace at 7:36 p.m. in room 125 of Trowbridge Hall. There were nine members present. TRIP REPORTS: Mike Lace reported on a CRF trip in Kentucky where they surveyed in Roppel Cave in mazy, canyon type passages. Chris Beck reported on his CRF trip to Carlsbad Cave. Coldwater Cave trips included a survey trip into Zipper Dome. A survey trip to Maze Cave was reported by Chris Beck. Mike Lace reported on a trip to Searryl's Cave, Thermal Cave, and Quint Cities Cave. Greg McCarty reported on a trip to Day Spring in Decorah. FUTURE TRIPS: Planned trips include the MVOR in Missouri, a Maze Cave survey trip, a mock rescue and training session with the Dubuque EMS, a Wonder Cave restoration trip TBA, and a beginner's trip to Searryl's Cave. OLD BUSINESS: An update on the state sinkhole cleanup project reported that it is continuing on schedule. NEW BUSINESS: A photograph from the Dubuque Telegraph Herald showing a person breaking off formations in a cave was discussed. Oil drilling near Carlsbad Cave was also discussed. The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Regular meeting October 28, 1992

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Mike Lace at 7:36 p.m. in room 125 of Trowbridge Hall. The minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved as read. There was no Treasurer's report. TRIP REPORTS: There were two Coldwater Cave trips reported. Jay Wells told about a surveying trip to the Sinus Passage and Chris Beck reported on a photo trip upstream where they also checked water levels. Marc Ohms reported on a trip to Hatfield's Cave with a reporter from the Dubuque Telegraph Herald. Marc also reported on a survey trip to Sullivan's Cave then to the Pine Creek nature area where one more cave was surveyed and three more were found. Brad reported on the MVOR in Missouri. Mike Lace reported on a Missouri trip to Smittle Cave, Bat Cave, Tunnel Cave, Lone Hill Onyx Cave, and Mushroom Cave. Sue reported on a trip to Buck Creek Cave and Buck Creek Indian Cave. She would like to organize an archaeological dig at the site sometime in the future. Mike reported on the mock rescue in Dubuque. Mike also reported on a trip to Odessa Mamma Cave, 5 Eagle Cave, and Rear Window Cave. FUTURE TRIPS: Doug Schmuecker is hosting a vertical training session November 14&15. A trip to Dubuque County is planned for December. NEW BUSINESS: Caution should be used when dealing with the landowners around the Searryl's Cave area concerning attitudes toward the state DNR. State land acquisitions have been somewhat underhanded and less than fair. Dubuque is again voting on whether to make Roosevelt Park into a golf course. Roosevelt Park does have some caves on the property. Nominations were opened for officers for this year's grotto election. The current officers were nominated over the objections of Jay Wells, the Secretary-Treasurer. Nominations will be accepted through the November meeting and ballots will be sent out with the December Hot-Line. The meeting adjourned at 8:51 p.m.



CORRECTIONS

In the previous issue on page 80, I recommended surgical tubing (which was spelled wrong) for use on vertical riggs. I have since found that Apache Hose and Rubber no longer carries it. It can be obtained at practically any medical supply outlet. Page 86, the photo on the left is of Mike Nelson at Devil's Den Cave, not Wet Reebok Cave. Yes, we have also noticed that some of the maps in this issue have already been published. Any other errors remain to be reported.

ARTICLES

THREE-DIMENSIONAL CAVE PHOTOGRAPHY

by Lowell Burkhead

This issue will hopefully start a new era, one where we will present our 3-D hobby with 3-D photographs in this publication. The only cost will be in time and a little film. The time will be in learning to free-view these photos. Most can master it with little effort. The other cost is that two photos have to be taken for each picture. The rest of the problem is for me to get them mounted exactly right and for Jim Hannon to get them printed exactly right. Taking the photos exactly right takes suprisingly little extra effort. The aim of this article is to explain how that is done with the equipment that you already have.

The first thing to learn is how to pick a suitable subject for a 3-D photo. The pretty formation was fine for the 2-D photo and still looks nice in 3-D but doesn't show off the medium. Go back to that spot that always came out looking flat in photos; the place where no matter what you did to show depth, it didn't work. This is the place for a really good 3-D photo. Pick any place where you can look off into the distance or down a passage or a pit or up into a dome. Pick a spot where there are things in the photo both near and far. Pick anything that will show off the medium of 3-D. If it doesn't, a regular flat photo will do nicely. The INTERCOM still needs flat photos as well as 3-D photos. A nice mix of the two will do justice to the beauty we see in the caves and show them to others as we see them.

The cover of this issue is our first attempt at 3-D, done completely free of special equipment. All we need is a camera, two eyes, and a brain with the normal 3-D viewing program. This photo was taken by taking two photos of the same subject, one leaning on one foot and one leaning on the other. The trick is to get the right scale for proper depth. If the photos were to be printed full size or 1 to 1 scale, then the distance between the two photos should be the same as the distance between your eyes. But since only extreme close-ups are printed in 1 to 1 scale, that distance has to be increased with the distance of the subject from the camera. Shots with distances of two to three hundred feet to infinity with nothing up close, use two feet between the camera locations for the two photos. Shots with distances of twenty to 100 feet, use a little over a foot. Shots with subjects five to twenty feet, use about 10 inches. It may prove that I don't know what I'm talking about, so try whatever you think is correct and we'll see. Any separation will give you a 3-D photo so this doesn't have to be precision. Precision only gets you the correct depth perspective. It could take some trial and error.

The other issue is lighting. Lighting should be exactly repeated for the two photos. That says that a camera mounted flash will not work very well since the camera will not be in the same location for the two photos. It is best to have someone else do the flash or a person on each flash or use repeaters.

A problem exists in the way we must view a 3-D photo. That problem is that we must view one photo with each eye, simultaneously. Our eyes will look straight ahead to a little crossed with little effort, but beyond there, most of us would have problems. Therefore, the two photos can't be mounted any farther apart than our eyes are apart, or about two inches. If our photos were of the normal aspect ratio, wider than

high, they would have to be very small photos. Since we don't want all our photos to be very small, we must take all our 3-D photos with the camera turned the other way so the pictures are higher than wide. Even then, they have to be severely cropped into two inch wide strips for the INTERCOM. Some could be cut in the middle to give us two sets of two inch wide strips or two 3-D photo sets from the same two prints. This makes it difficult to find a suitable subject for the 3-D photo. Some would have to be printed small to include the entire subject. That makes it even more difficult to get the scale of the distance between the camera position for the two shots. The smaller print would be the same as adding distance to the subject and would require more displacement between the camera positions. The problem is, not knowing what size the final print will be when the photo is taken. We may end up printing a few whole photos which would require expert viewers or the use of a 3-D viewer made to view aerial photographs. They would require the viewer to look wider than straight ahead or the opposite of having your eyes crossed. After playing with these things for a while, I can get out to about four inches displacement but it's very difficult.

To summarize, pick a subject that has things close to far that require depth perception to appreciate. Set up flashes or lighting that gets everything you want emphasized lit and can be done twice without moving. Hold the camera on its side for the correct aspect ratio. Pick a spot somewhere between half way and fully out in depth to aim the camera. Place your feet out far enough for the displacement you plan to use. Lean to the left foot, aim and flash. Lean to the right foot, aim at the same target and flash again. Remember to advance the film, as you are taking two photos. Take care to hold the camera level and to center the target both vertically and horizontally for both photos. That target doesn't need to be an important part of the subject of the photo but merely a convenient thing to center the camera identically for two photos. Let's give it a try and see what happens. It may take a while for us to get as good as Viewmaster's, "Cave of the Winds" disk but we can start out good enough to make the rest of the NSS envious of our publication and in a catch-up position. At the very least, we can have fun with it.

----- ## ----- ## TRIP REPORTS ## ----- ## -----

CRASHING THROUGH THE BRUSH

Partition Cave, Jones County, Iowa

July 5, 1992

by Mike Lace

Lowell Burkhead, Loren Schutt, and Mike Lace

The three of us set out to map one of the seldom visited caves in Jones County. Partition Cave, also known as Rattlesnake Den to some of the locals, is about 150 feet of mostly walking passage with plenty of nice formations. It took a while to bushwhack through the small ravines before we found the entrance. It had been several years since either Loren or Lowell had visited the cave and the entrance was partially concealed by heavy brush from an ongoing logging operation in the area. We mapped every noteworthy nook and cranny (as well as a few less than noteworthy pockets in the rock) along the way. One of the most striking features you notice is the rock partition or wall that divides the main passage into parallel forks that reconnect farther into the cave. There is also a short upper level crawl in the larger end room, making it a real two level cave and just plain fun to visit. We wrapped up the survey, heading home after a good Sunday's worth of work. We all decided that we didn't have the energy left to take on another cave even though it wasn't quite late yet.

SURVEY OF SPIRAL CAVE BEGUN

Spiral Cave, Dubuque County, Iowa

June 27, 1992

by Mike Lace

Chris Beck, Stacey Cyphert (in his last appearance as a bachelor), and Mike Lace

Three of us dropped into Spiral Cave to take a bite out of the survey. We follow-

ed the right-hand branch of the main passage which led us along a crawling-to-walking route complete with many passage junctions. We made it through a small crawlway, connecting to a small passage we had dug open on the last trip, and into a comfortable room. By this time, we were all getting chilled, something that is rare when working in nearby Maze Cave. Air movement has been detected in both caves but Spiral seems much cooler and does have a few spots where moisture seeps down along the walls. Maze Cave, however, has no drainage at all that we've noticed. Portions of Spiral appear to be shallower in the hill than most of the Maze Cave passages and perhaps this is a factor influencing its temperature and air movement.

We did see a bat flying about this time where none were spotted on the initial reopening trip (a good sign!). After mapping a few smaller dead end leads, we decided to wrap it up with 92 meters completed. As with the Maze Cave survey, don't expect a finished map in the near future because there's still a lot left to do and drafting the maps will be a real challenge. We rounded off the day with a small bachelor party tour for Dr. Stacey Cyphert through scenic East Dubuque.

RECENT SPIRAL NOTES

August 1, 1992

by Mike Lace

Mike Lace and Gary Engh

We intended to map some more passage but made it all the way into the cave before realizing that we had no survey tape. Gary hadn't seen Spiral yet so we decided to look for a potential connection to nearby Maze Cave. Several little rubble and orange dirt-filled pockets were dug into but no booming passage led into Maze. We managed to dig open 50 feet of passage for Marc to draw on the next survey trip. It's not a huge passage but complicated and uncomfortable enough. Gary commented on how refreshing it was to be temporarily lost in an Iowa cave. We retreated to Iowa City and Oxford, respectively, to count and contemplate all the accumulated bruises.

WONDER CAVE RESTORATION

Wonder Cave, Winneshiek County, Iowa

August 23, 1992

by Mike Lace

Mike Lace, Paul Rechten & friends, Marc Ohms, and Chris Beck

One of the Grotto picnic trips included a trip to clean up Wonder Cave. Several of us gathered inside the entrance to try to remove as much of the first old stairway as we could. Chris and Marc rappelled to the bottom of the stairway first to try to pull the rotting supports from underneath the platform while the rest of us waited up on top. After some creaking and groaning (most of it from Marc and Chris), it was clear that it wasn't going to go and would have to wait for more tools.

We began pulling up the steps and clearing away all the rubble that had been stashed underneath the stairs so all of us could safely rappel to the bottom. It took quite awhile but we finally pulled up enough rotten wood to descend through the gap made by the missing steps. Meanwhile, Chris and Marc had almost finished removing the wiring that had stretched along the passage walls and across several formations. There were at least half a dozen coils of the white coated wire (see cover photo, this issue) and a monster TAG pack full of old light bulbs. Some of the wiring has become part of a large flowstone mass and that section was left in place to avoid damaging the formation.

With the wiring and assorted trappings gone from the upper trail, it's beginning to look like the beautiful cave it really is. Many of the Rock River folks who came along on the trip had their first shot at vertical caving during the short ascent to the entry section and all did well. My sincere thanks to our guests not only for coming to the picnic but helping out in our latest clean-up project.

MVOR ETC.

August 22 through September 27, 1992
Liz Robinson and Brad Smith

by Liz Robinson

I had to go to a conference in Atlanta just before the Old Timer's Reunion so we took the long way and did a few caves. Our first stop was Bluespring Caverns in Indiana. We missed that just after the NSS Convention due to heavy rains. The trip is a nice boat ride through the commercial portions of the cave. Except for the entrance room, the cave is lit only by the guide's light. We had flashlights with us so we could see several cave crayfish and blind fish in the water. The cave had some nice formations and speleothems in it also. It was worth seeing.

Our next stop was Marengo Cave. We were too late to see both commercial trips but we saw one. The cave was impressive. Maybe we can see the other part on another trip. They did show us where the passage was near the recent discoveries.

We spent a day and a half at Mammoth Cave. We went on a self-guided discovery tour. We saw the Frozen Niagara which we had done after the 89 convention, the Echo River, and the Gothic. The best part of the Frozen Niagara is the long trip down the series of impressive domes. We had a bat join the tour here and it followed the tour until we exited at the Frozen Niagara exit. It was a pipestrell according to the ranger. The Gothic went through the oldest part of the cave. It is called Gothic Avenue because the formations are weird shapes and are covered with lots of popcorn. Cave visitors helped clear the trail by making piled up rock monuments to their visits. A number still have wooden signs on them listing who they were and where they came from. They are preserved of course, as historic artifacts. There was also a mummified bat that the ranger showed us. Echo River was a nice trip also. The river trip was rather short, but they showed us where the Grand Kentucky Junction came out. There were some impressive passages in the Echo River tour, which was much more walking than boat riding. All in all, we had a good time. We had hoped to get in on a Great Onyx tour but they didn't have it. Kentucky schools reopened on August 24 and a lot of student aid guides had to return to school.

After my conference in Atlanta, we went to DC for my medical appointment. Then we went to OTR. OTR was nice this year although it was crowded. I was in the fun run but I also did a number on my foot. I am now in physical therapy and taking medication for it.

We went to the MVOR this past weekend but we got there late. On our way back from OTR and Watertown, NY to deal with my house, Brad decided we had a gas line leak. He pulled off the gas tank and found one of the hoses needed replacement and the tank itself needed a rust and stoneguard treatment. He got that done about 2:00 a.m. on Thursday night, so we were not able to repack and reload and get out until 2:15 p.m. Friday. We got to the campground by about 11 p.m. The next day we put up the hottub with help from George Holland out of Memphis. We had a leaky pump which drained it but by the time the banquet was over, the thing was good and hot. Since we were parked right at the bonfire and by the hottub, it was most convenient. Unfortunately, it rained rather heavily Saturday afternoon but the hottub fire kept going. (It is heated by circulating the water with a pool pump through a 50 foot coil of copper tubing which is placed in the bonfire.) A lot of people used it and enjoyed it although we had to rotate in and out because it got pretty hot. The water came out of a cave spring, and even in the hottub, was clear all the way to the bottom.

The banquet speaker was the naturalist from Onondaga Caves State Park which was nearby. The slides and speech explained the karst geology, the animal and plant life around, and in the case of the animals, in the cave. There were also some good shots in the cave itself. There was also a talk on the history of the cave, including the discovery and social and legal hassles that took place before it became a state park and a National landmark. We got home about 2:00 a.m. Sunday night but it was a good trip. The next MVOR (Mississippi Valley Ozark Region) will be April 29, 1993 weekend.

CURSE OF THE RED DUST - PART 6

Maze Cave, Dubuque County, Iowa
September 12, 1992
Mike Lace, Chris Beck, and Jay Wells

by Mike Lace

Hibernation season was close at hand so we decided to make a lengthy mapping trip into Maze Cave before it became filled with our furry sleeping buddies. We checked a high lead in the Big Drift Passage that couldn't be safely freeclimbed. Chris had brought along a climbing pole. After shinnying up into the walking size lead, he found nothing but blank rock wall and no going leads; this was the welcome exception to the rule in this cave. Usually, every little hole leads to winding, looping passage complete with even more leads to check.

We ran the survey through the end of the Dismay Passage to the former "end of the cave" and up through an obscure upper lead into the new section. It grew chillier here with the air ripping out of the passage. We still have no clue as to where the air is coming from! The survey was extended through rooms with roosting bats, following the main drag to the Great Wall, a miner-made wall of stacked rocks some eight feet high and 12 feet wide. We speculated that it must have been made as a dare because it looks like every stone is the keystone that, if removed, could bring all of it down. There's a climb here that leads to the Miner's Attic, a set of small crawlways that dead-end. We saved this for a later mapping trip. Instead, we followed the rest of the new section into Mike's Terminal Nightmare; loops, over and underlying passages, holes in the floor that lead to more cave, and some very "busy rooms". This was the end of the line for the day.

On the way out, a twisting set of passages called "Doug's Dilemma" claimed another confused caver when Chris began crawling down a small dead-end side passage instead of toward the entrance. What can you say? It's a mess to navigate in! We dragged ourselves out of the entry shaft, each remarking how disgusting the other looked wearing that telltale gritty, orange/red coating. No one could mistake where we'd been and all three of us knew we would be back.

A VISIT TO MISERY (MISSOURI)

September 24-27, 1992
Scott Dankof, Mike Lace, Jay Wells, and Doug Schmuecker

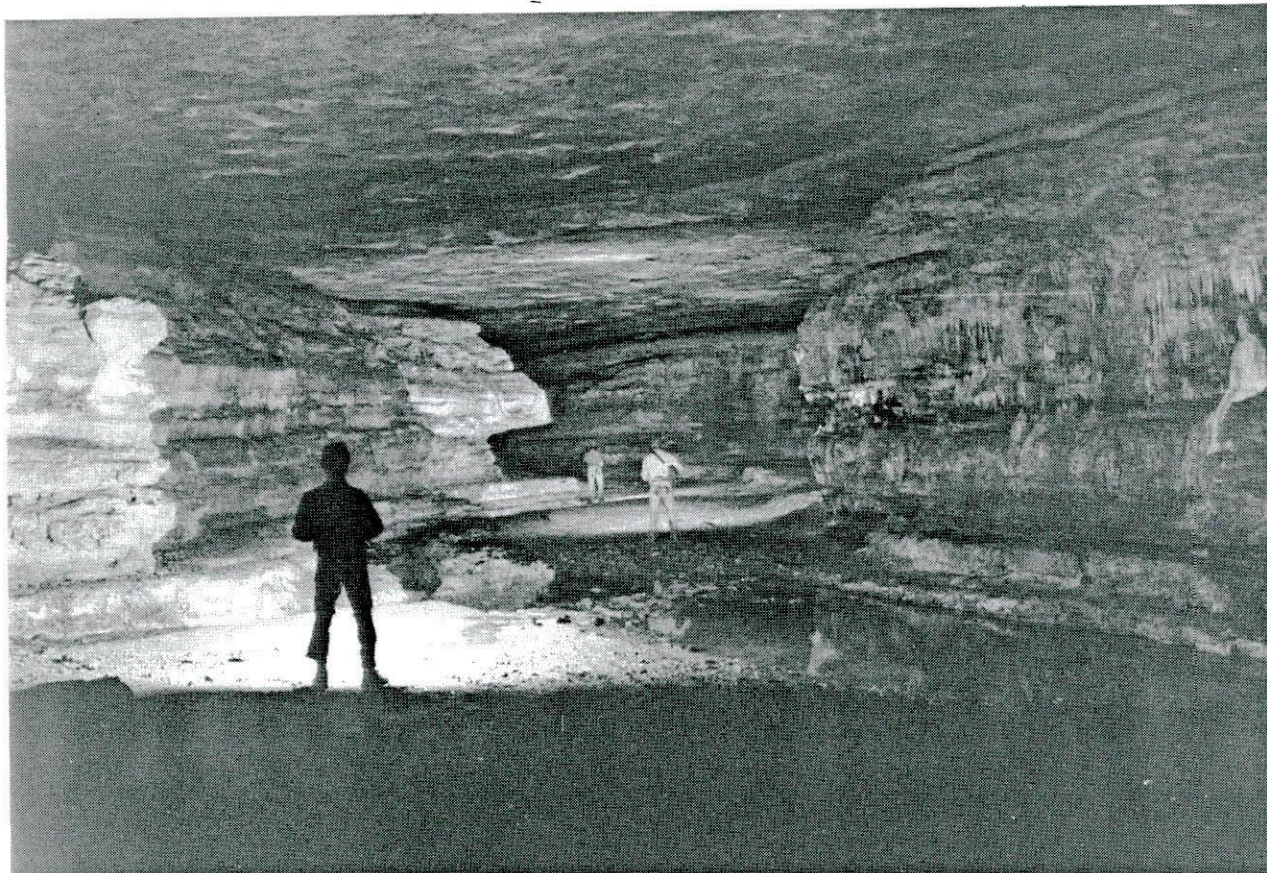
by Scott Dankof

I hadn't been to Missouri for a while and Fall '92 MVOR seemed like a good excuse to go. Permission from the little woman was obtained and I was off. Accompanying me on this trip were Mike, Jay, and Doug. We met at Ha Ha Tonka State Park, then drove the rest of the way to an area just north of Hartville, Mo. The cave we were visiting that night was Smittle Cave. It's on a permit system through the Missouri Dept. of Conservation, and is open only two months out of the year due to its endangered bats.

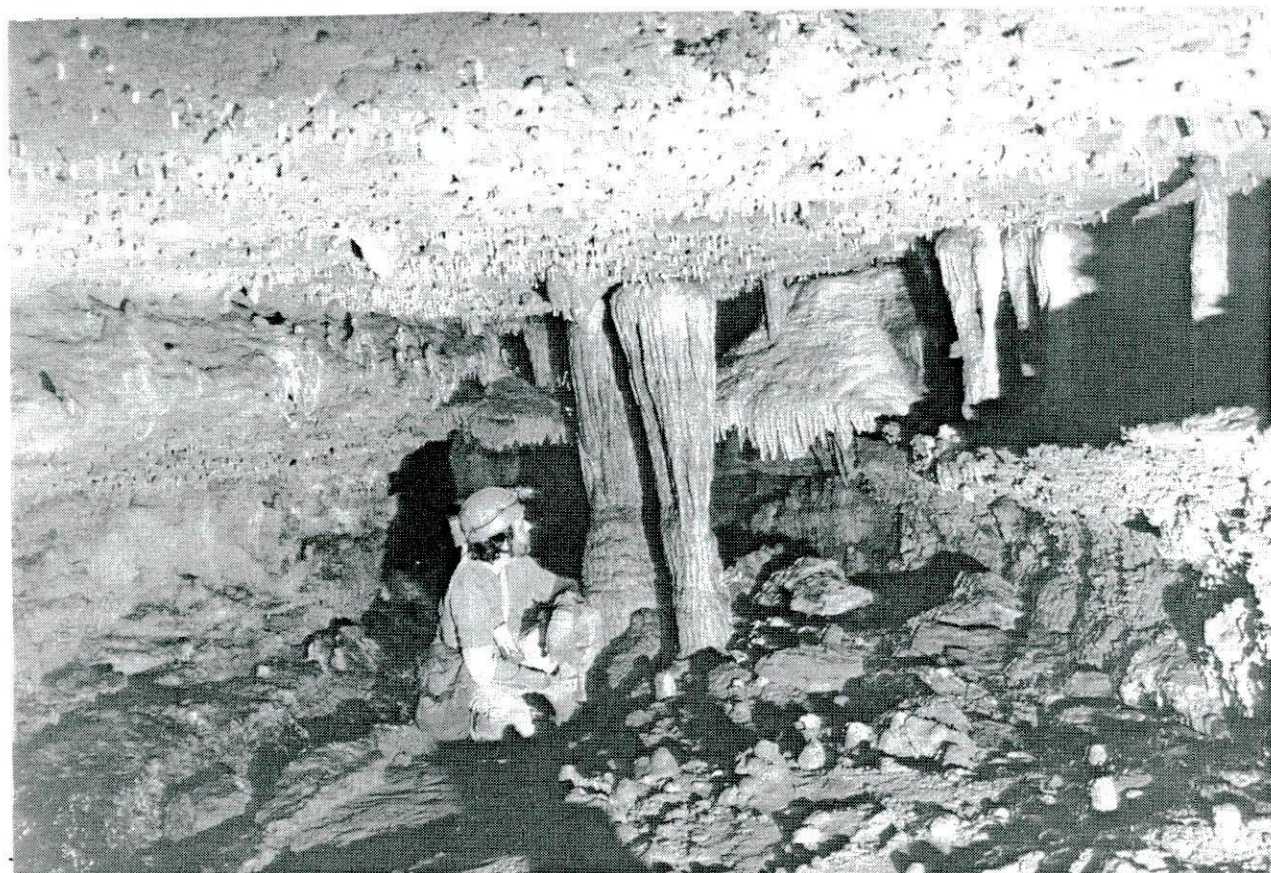
After setting up camp in front of the cave entrance, we geared up and proceeded toward the gate. There was a 10 foot high fence built across the large 40 foot wide by 20 foot high gaping mouth. The padlocks clicked open and we entered an immense trunk passage that extended out of sight. A few remnants of wooden walkways were all that was left of past commercial operations.

A side lead on the left presented itself and we started down a nicely decorated walking height passage. The comedy soon began as we took pictures of the numerous formations. Jay began to find out about some new features his camera has, highly technical things like focus, and that ring deal called an f-stop adjustment. We finished up by touring some of the side passages and taking more pictures in the main passage. A few places were as much as 30 feet high and 40 feet wide.

Friday was spent in the Waynesville area. We visited Roubidoux Spring, Tunnel



Mike Lace, Jay Wells, and Doug Schmuecker in main passage, Smittle Cave, Mo.
Photo by Scott Dankof



Mike Lace in side passage, Smittle Cave, Missouri. Photo by Scott Dankof

Cave, and Bat Cave. Tunnel Cave is a very clean stream-washed passage that passes underneath the local highway. It has an upper entrance on one side and lower entrance on the other. We then hiked down the valley to Bat Cave. It has multiple entrances and large passages. We spent about an hour visiting this cave. Unfortunately, it is or was heavily used and had a large amount of trash and graffiti throughout. A bat colony was roosting in a ceiling pocket near the entrance.

The MVOR was being held near Onondaga Cave State Park, so we headed in that direction. It was the middle of the afternoon when we arrived so there were still some choice camping spots available. After pitching our tents, we broke out the binoculars to check out our speleo-neighbors and visited the vendors booths.

Saturday morning we drove to Meramec State Park and explored Lone Hill Onyx Cave. It consists of a stream passage that alternates between walking and stoopwalking. After a couple hundred feet, the passage splits. The right side leads to a fairly large room and the left leads to more stoopwalk that quickly degrades to a hands and knees crawl. Unfortunately, we picked the left. After seeing this passage, we decided to head out. The cave is very popular locally and was starting to get quite busy.

Mike, Jay, and Doug had to head home that afternoon but I stayed for the banquet that night. As is normal for my out of state trips, the weather turned nasty and it poured rain that afternoon but stopped in time for the banquet.

CAVE RESCUE TRAINING

Becker Quarry Cave, Dubuque County, Iowa
Sunday, October 4, 1992

by Doug Schmuecker

Dubuque Fire Department and Dubuque County Search and Rescue
Iowa Grotto members, Doug and Nathan Schmuecker, Stacey and Rosemary Cyphert, Mike and Delores Nelson, Al and Bert Jagnow, Mike Lace, Chris Beck, Marc Ohms, Alex Krakinovsky, Jay Wells, and Eric Winch

The rescue drill was set up with Dubuque County Search and Rescue in charge and Iowa Grotto members supporting. Rosemary and Nathan were placed in the cave as lost cavers with Rosemary injured. The searchers weren't aware of the victims' location or the number of victims. Search teams were sent in with maps of the cave.

When the victims were located, they were treated, packaged, and transported from the cave. The drill took about 90 minutes... A critique followed. I was pleased with how well Iowa Grotto and Rescue personnel worked together. Plans are underway for next year and another session.

SOME ODDS & ENDS

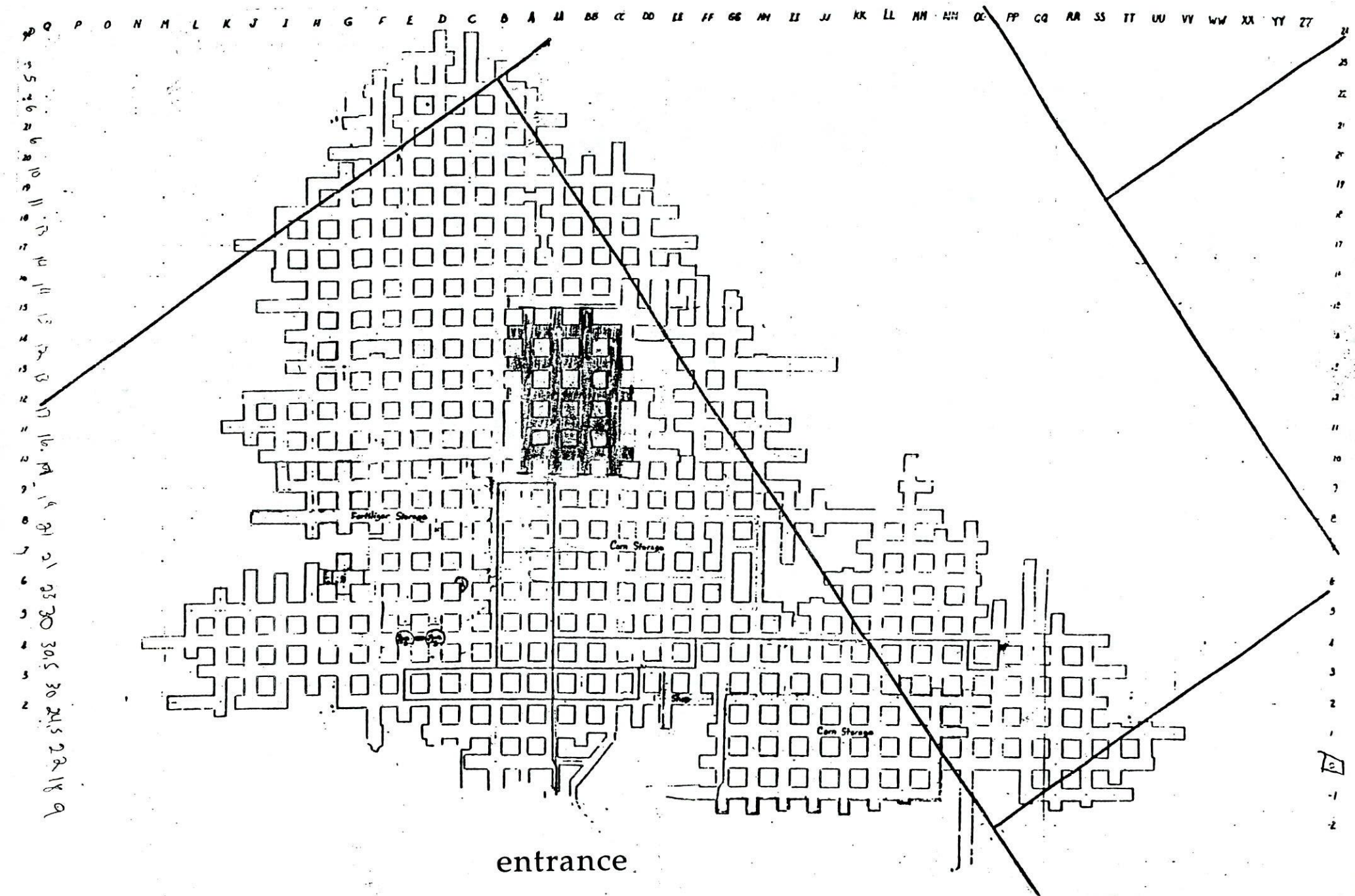
October 4, 1992

by Mike Nelson

Delores and I attended Doug Schmuecker's rescue class for the Dubuque Fire Fighter's and EMTs. On the roundabout way home, we dropped off a map and photos of Stafford's Sandstone Cave for the owners. Then we checked a spring lead north of Decorah. Though picturesque, it was of little interest beyond documenting its existence.

October 13, 1992 I checked out the sandstone mines south of the Clayton County town of Clayton. Our club files speculate at 13 miles of passageway. The terminal supervisor, Ray Pope, says that to try to drive up and down every aisle in the place would put 42 miles on the odometer according to the tails he's heard. I figured my mileage using the average dimensions of the place. The passages average 35 feet wide and supporting columns 53 feet square. I feel this is an acceptably accurate way of figuring as in cases like this, errors tend to cancel themselves out as opposed to compounding like in every other situation. Using these figures and a map Ray provided allowed me to come up with 11.08 miles of passage. (see the map on the following page)

Silica Mine, Clayton County, IA



The deepest passage extends 2253 feet back into the bluff and the extensions parallel to the bluff run about 3025 feet from one extreme end to the other. The distance across the junctions was figured in just one time in one consistent direction. If all these junctions were surveyed in across them from both directions, it would add about another 2.4 miles to the total length. That would bring the milage close to the 13 miles in the files but seems to me like it would be "counting heads" twice. (This count includes the area marked "sealed May 18, 1991" simply for historical perspective. It does make one curious as to why it was sealed and what it may contain, doesn't it?)

The vaults averaged 30-35 feet high and some reached as high as 60 feet. In some places, the mining encroached into the narrow but well defined layer of shale between the sandstone and the limestone above. They employ scaling machines to periodically test the roof for loose areas. It is estimated that there is 65 acres of open area within the mine.

Though I viewed only a small portion of the mines, it was apparent that only a minute amount of the space was used at any one time for storage. Two large vats contained liquid fertilizer. Dry fertilizer was stored in the open several tiers back. Grain was stored some distance away. They also occasionally store coal and cement and cotton seed and fish meal used in high protein cattle feeds. Various odds and ends, like oak logs destined to become veneer in japan, are also stashed on a rare basis. A new addition is the storage of used tires. Keeping these out of the weather, safe from fires and free of water which promotes insect breeding, has met with hardy approval of the DNA. All these activities keep 25 men employed year round. There was no data on radon levels, but there are several very large fans that keep air circulating in at least the near end of the mines.

On the way home from here, I swung up past Cresco to check out an improbable lead. The story goes that there was an underground tunnel from Lime Springs to Cresco. It was framed of wood much resembling railroad ties, and used to herd livestock to the Howard County fairgrounds. The accurate location of a window into it via a collapse, led me to a site that was obviously filled in the recent past. The settled area was readily apparent. Kenny Flatland, owner of Coldwater Cave, verified its existence. He gave me the name of an individual he once worked with who would slip out on his lunch breaks to explore this subterranean wonder. I'll report back once I've interviewed him.

October 16, 1992 Delores and I stopped by to visit a friend who had provided a steady stream of interesting if not productive leads. When a different lead we were intent on turned out to have been bulldozed long ago, we pursued his lead. It led us to a small spring cave south of Bluffton. Prof. Knudson of Luther Collage had checked it out once in the past or at least inspired someone else to don a wetsuit and do it for him. According to the landowner, it was supposed to have gone back 60 feet to a point "with no good prospect of continuing". As it is not on file, it deserves a little look see just for the record, which I will try to talk someone into one of these days.

October 17, 1992 I assisted Scott Dankof in a photo session upstream in Coldwater Cave. He'll submit a report. (We're waiting, Scott. Ed.)

JACKSON COUNTY CAVING

Sullivan's Cave, Unnamed Cave, Dirty Hand Cave, Burr Cave, Pine Valley Cave, Critter Crevice, Blue Cave, and Horsethief Cave, Jackson County, Iowa

October 18, 1992

by Marc Ohms

Marc Ohms and Eric Winch

We started the day dropping some cave maps off at the owners of Sullivan's Cave. Eric has never seen the cave so we drove down into the valley and took a quick tour of the cave. We stopped back at the owner's house on our way out to let him know that we were out when he told us of a cave on his other farm. He gave us directions to the

cave and we found it with little difficulty. It has a fairly large entrance and once inside, it is of walking height for 40 feet. The entrance chamber is nicely decorated with speleothems and has a floor with 6 to 10 inches of goopy cow crap. A small crawlway led off the rear of the chamber. I crawled in for about 30 feet until the stench of coon poop overwhelmed me. There were bones and piles and piles of fresh and moldy coon poop everywhere and I was quite tired of crawling through it. I have seen a lot of cave in my life and I plan on seeing much more, but this is not the way I plan on doing so.

After a lunch at Bluff Lake, we went to Pine Creek Wildlife Area. I have been searching this area for caves off and on for the last year and have found plenty. They are typically small but they are plentiful.

My goal for today was to survey Dirty Hand Cave and check a few leads. We walked into the valley and headed upstream to Pine Valley Cave, a shelter cave that I had already surveyed. We took a quick look at the cave and headed upstream to Dirty Hand Cave. The cave consists of a crawlway that extends for 65 feet. We surveyed the cave and moved on to check my leads.

My first lead turned out to be a cave that I have been searching for for a long time. It is called Horsethief Cave and it is a large shelter cave. It was pictured in a newspaper article on Pine Creek in the Des Moines Register. We surveyed the cave then quickly toured nearby Blue Cave.

Walking further upstream, we found another new cave. It is a single room of about 18 feet long and 10 feet high. We named it Burr Cave. Not far from this we found another cave. This one is a mechanical crevice with some solution around the entrance area. I started in and got about 15 feet in when something ahead started making loud noises. I decided it was best to leave the cave and the animal. We checked a few more holes but found nothing and called it a day.

BUCK CREEK CAVES TRIP

Buck Creek Cave and Buck Creek Indian Cave, Delaware County, Iowa
October 17, 1992

by Bob Wahlstrom
Sue Duncan, Paul Miller, Andy and Becky Marshall, Bill and Barb Meredith, Bob and Linda Wahlstrom

We wanted to take another trip to this area to give our Grotto archaeologist, Sue Duncan, a chance to see the drawings on the walls of the upper cave. She had been able to obtain some information about about these caves from the office where she works at the University of Iowa.

When Andrew, the new owner of the land across the road from the caves was contacted for permission to go on his property, he was also interested in joining us on our trip. Shortly after our arrival at the cave area, we were joined by Andrew, his wife, and another couple. Buck Creek Cave is located at the base of a cliff and is approximately 100 feet long, and the Buck Creek Indian Cave is located near the top of the cliff with access along a ledge near the top of the cliff. Paul rigged a rope along the ledge and tied it off to a large rock in the cave. Everyone in our group was able to get into the cave and quite a few pictures were taken. Sue plans to talk with her boss at the university and maybe sometime, an archaeological dig can be done at these caves with the owner's permission.

Paul and I searched the timbered area and cliffs to see if we could find more caves, but nothing was found. There is a dry creek running by in front of the caves and if you follow this upstream about a half mile, there is a flowing creek that stops at a small pool of water. It must be soaking into the ground at this point.

One small dew covered bat was found in the lower cave and none were found in the upper cave.

PLEASANTLY SUPRISED

Lanus Quarry, Humboldt County, Iowa
October 24, 1992
Mike Nelson and Stacy Hippen

by Mike Nelson

Despite its established reputation as a limestone producing area, karst features are not evident in this part of the state. My last trip hereabouts cost us two caves that could not be verified from the file information. So I was somewhat apprehensive about finding anything notable on this trip.

My search for divers who had been in this quarry who might verify the lead and give me some hint on where to commence the search, was fruitless. After another visit with the landowner, I realized my search was misdirected and that I should have been checking with the fire department rescue units in the larger towns in the area. However, after a little deductive reasoning and an insight from the owner's son (who had worked in the quarry most of its productive life) concurred, we opted to begin our search on the north end of the western shore.

I briefed Stacy on what we should look for and how we would search. As we dropped into the water, I fully expected to look long and hard for something that would make full use of the imagination to discribe as a cave. You couldn't grasp my surprise at almost immediately happening upon a karst feature once in the water. We swam north along the wall, Stacy searching in the 20 to 25 foot depth range while I scanned from 25 feet on down. We swam along the face to feature after feature. It was rife with them. We swam to the N.W. corner of the quarry and then east along the north face. It changed from sheer wall to a sloped bank so we retraced our path back past our starting point and found several more features before exhausting our first air tanks.

Stacy grabbed another 80 cu. ft. tank while I switched to my sidemounts to better access some of these small openings. This is as deep as I had dived with this setup without a bouyancy control device weighted to neutral bouyancy. I had suspected 40 ft. to be the range in which I would start to get a little negative due to compression of the nitrogen bubbles in the neoprene of the wetsuit. This was so.

We got back in the water above the farthest south feature and worked our way north along the wall getting a compass bearing of the general alignment of each feature, its depth in the water and a sketch of each with notes to help in this report. The first one was just an overhung shelter sort of affair with a 4 to 5 foot swirled alcove above it in 38 feet of water bearing 248 degrees. The second would have been a good dig lead if not in 40 feet of water. It extended into the wall for about 5 feet and was wide enough to get my shoulders into. The phreatic arch was obvious on the ceiling and vadose cutting was evident below that. It was choked by steeply inclined fill and had a compass heading of 270 degrees.

The third one was my favorite. In the recess in which it was formed, there were two large swirl cuts in the jagged wall. This one was evidently in a protrusion that was not mined out of the wall as several compass shots into the actual passage beyond the cutting gave me a consistent 20 degrees bearing. However, this strictly phreatic tube that was just a little too small for me to get into, immediately took a smooth walled 90 degree turn putting it into the same general trend as the others. It was in 39 feet of water, and unlike the rest, appeared to not be choked with clastic fill. The next two were nice little shelter type overhangs with classic "rat holes" going out the backs of then sans raccoon tracks. They were 245 degrees at 39 feet and 285 degrees at 35 feet.

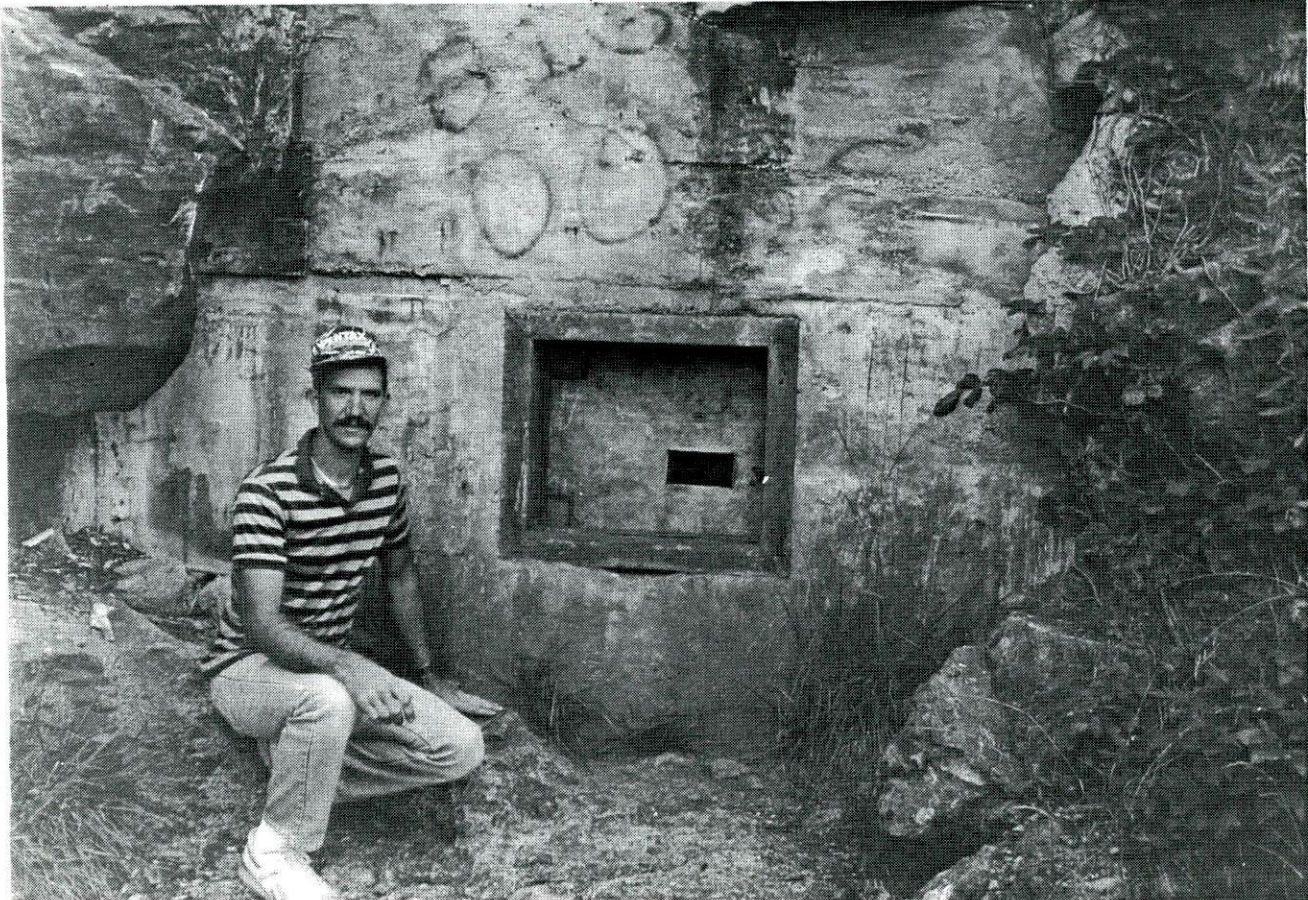
Next there was a tight entranced little grotto that opened up a little more in a little ways. It may have been 6 feet from front to back and was filled with a steeply inclined mass of very fine white clay. There were lines on it that reminded me of stratified material but it actually appeared to be a continous deposit. A profile of this one definately bespoke of vadose actions. It lay in 30 feet of water with a trend of 270 degrees.

The next one was typical of the rat holed ones but larger, also choked with steeply inclining fill and had another gap next to it that seemed to be more of a shattered blast fractured sort of thing. There were a couple more of these blast fractures noted but they ran more parallel with the face. The karst feature was 25 feet deep at 300°.

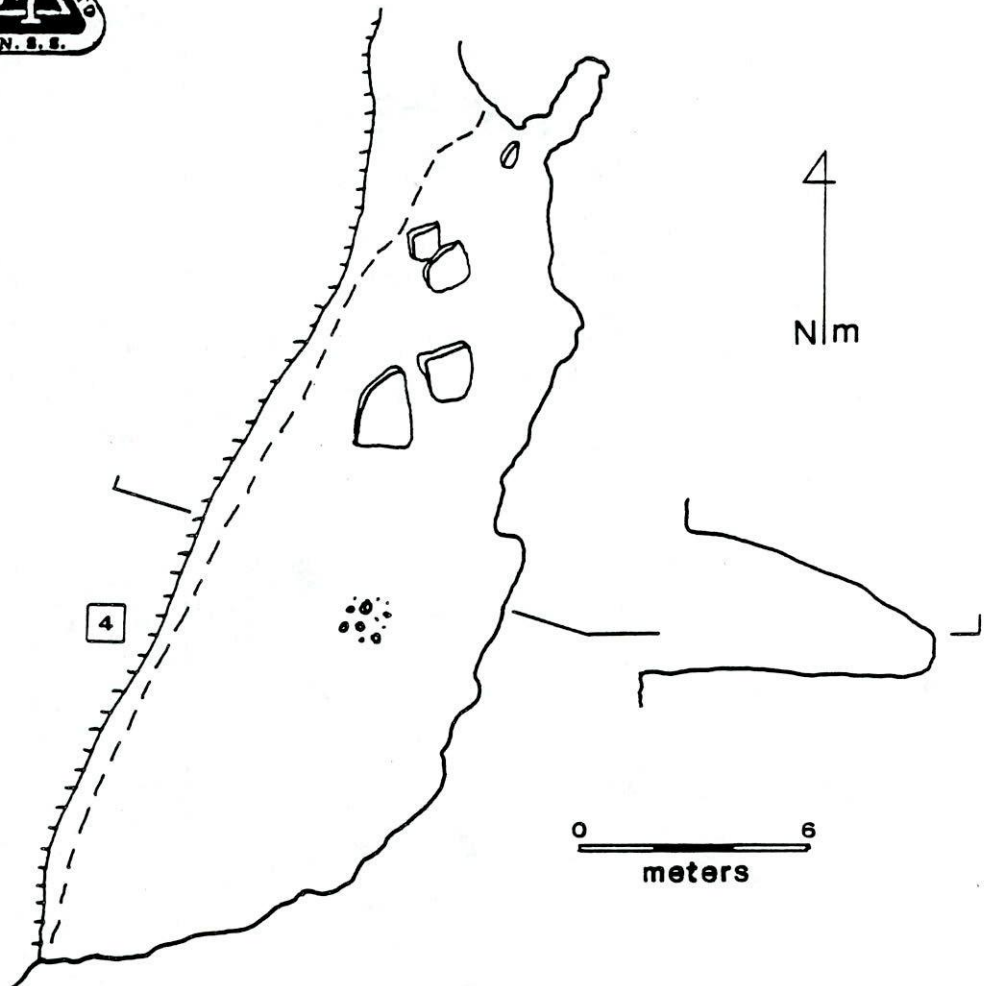
The next one was in 25 feet of water with a heading of 295 degrees. Poking my head into it, I saw that the floor rose steeply like most of the others, but instead of rising to a pinch or rathole, it rose into a small dome. The ceiling was about 12 feet above the entrance and my bubbles gathered there before working their way up into joint aligned anastomoses. Although this was not the 15 feet long necessary to qualify as a cave by Iowa standards, I'm still tempted to proclaim it as one since it is possible to completely insert oneself in it and be out of sight to anyone peeking in the entrance.

The final one was no doubt a cave. Rounding a corner we were confronted with a scree slope of fairly large rock, rather fresh and clean looking with no alge growth on it. Swimming up the slope, we found a large entrance 3 feet wide and about as tall in 18 feet of water. In a few feet, it widened to 8 feet but remained 2½ to 3 feet high. I got back in 10 feet and if I had wanted to scootch off to the right and work at it, I could have touched the rear wall about 18 feet in from the entrance. There was breakdown on the left that seemed to be blast dislodged as opposed to natural. This one trended off at 220 degrees.

We had covered only a small portion of the shoreline of this 33 acre quarry, maybe 1/12 or 1/15th of it. Our best bet would be to finish searching the west wall. The opposite corner of the quarry, roughly in line with the orientation of these documented features may also prove interesting. Although we have been encouraged to come back, I am somewhat awed by the effort it will take to thoroughly examine this quarry but its wealth of karst features so isolated from other Iowa cave bearing strata begs for more in-depth study (pun intended).



Chris Beck at the entrance gate at Cedar Ridge Crystal Cave, Tennessee. Photo by Dankof



Elephant Den

Jackson County, Iowa

compass and tape survey
by
Ohms 8/92

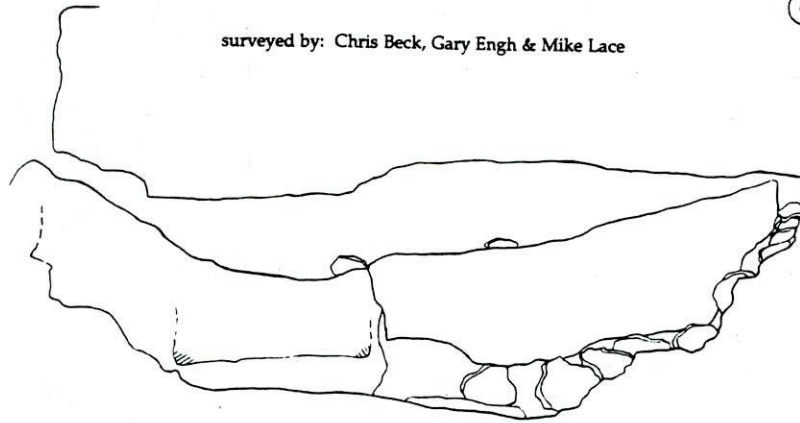
Odessa Mama Cave, Jones County, Iowa

surveyed length = 74.21 meters / 243.41 feet

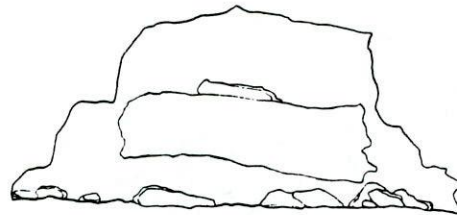


surveyed by: Chris Beck, Gary Engh & Mike Lace

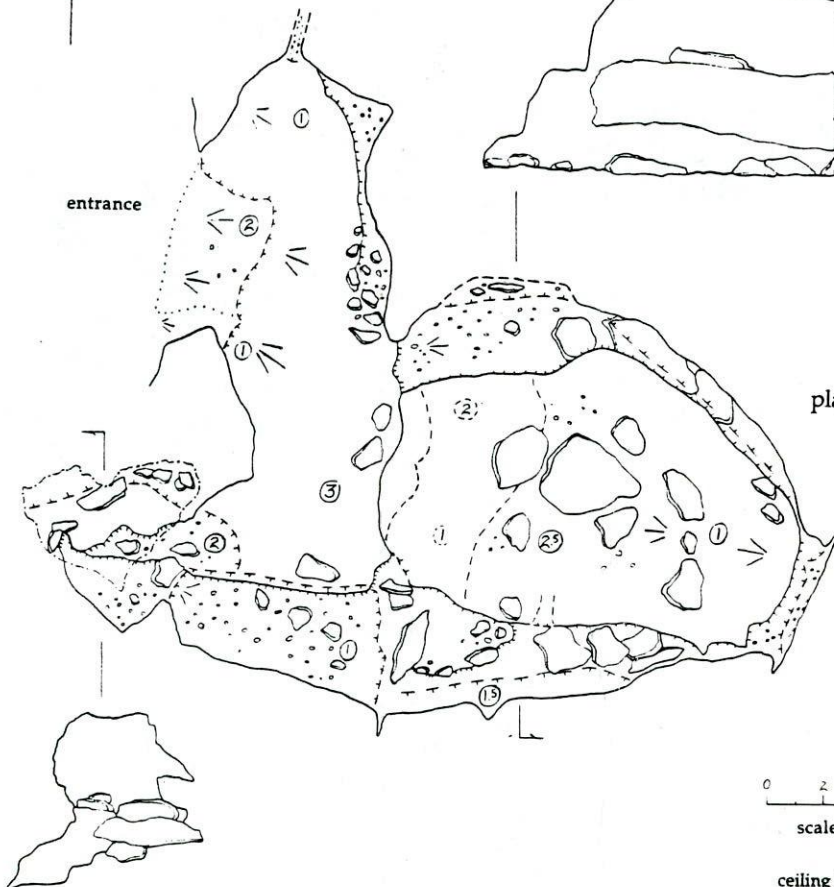
N_m



profile view



entrance



plan view

0 2 4 6
scale(meters)

ceiling height in meters

cartography by M. Lace 9/92

Stafford's Sandstone Cave

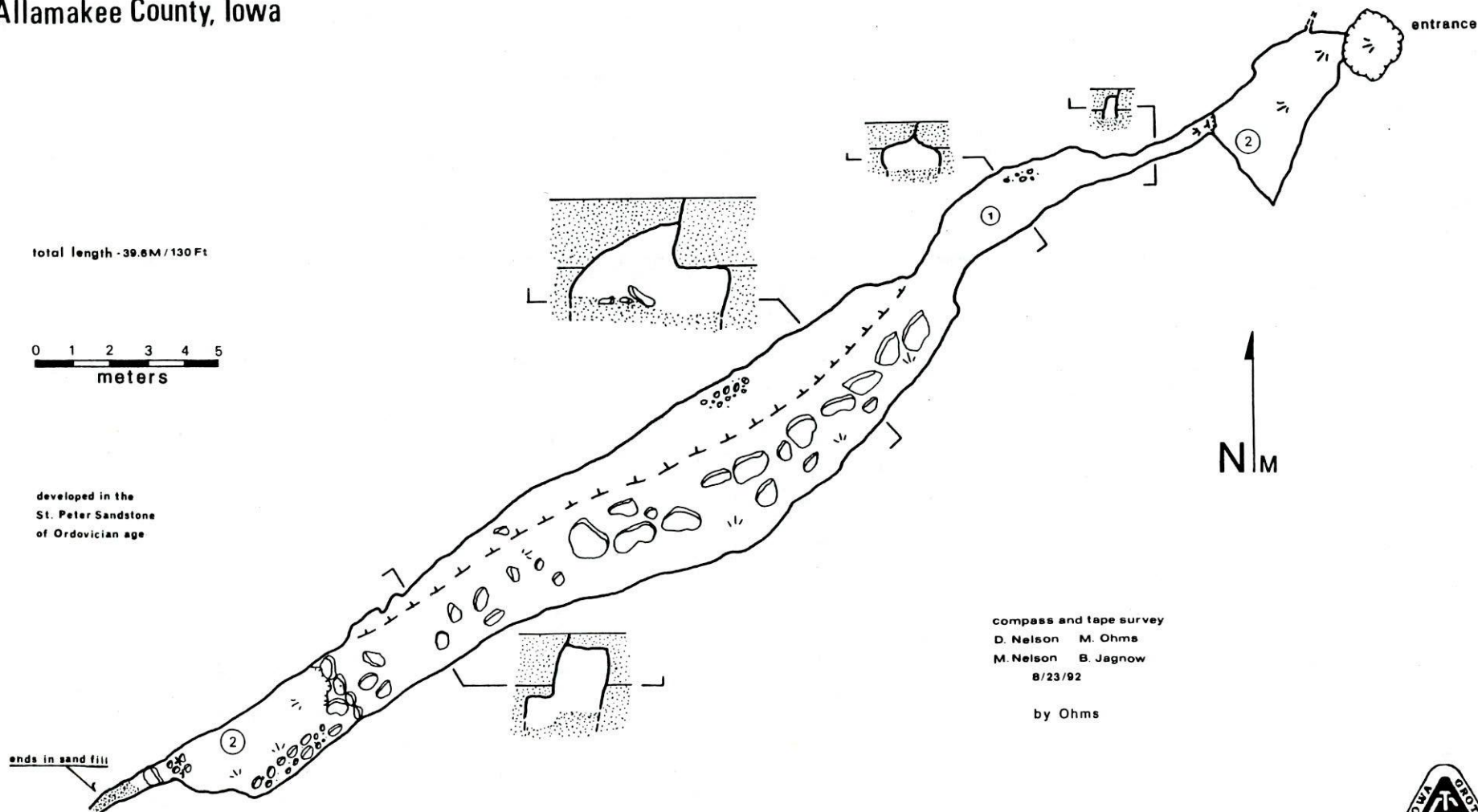
Allamakee County, Iowa

total length - 39.8M / 130 Ft



developed in the
St. Peter Sandstone
of Ordovician age

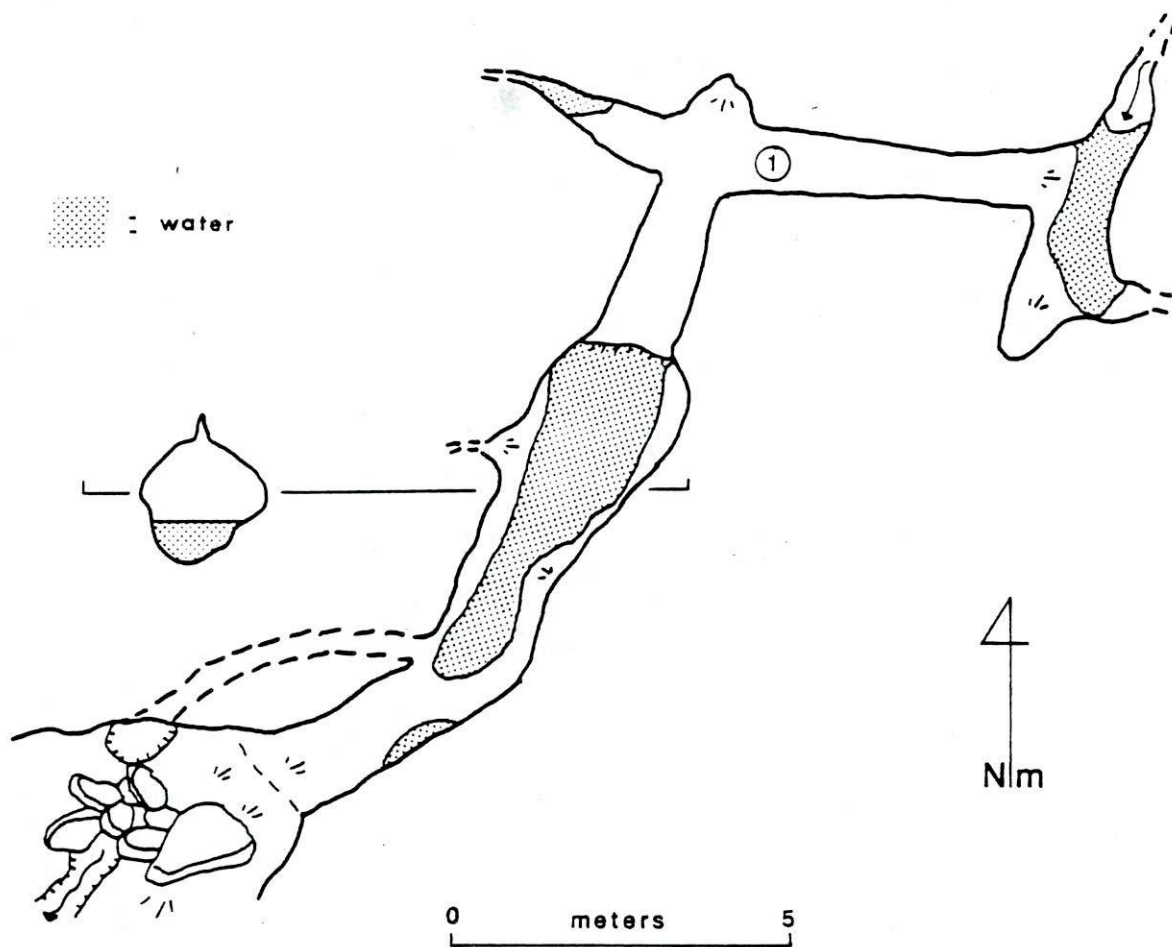
ends in sand fill



compass and tape survey
D. Nelson M. Ohms
M. Nelson B. Jagnow
8/23/92

by Ohms





WET REEBOK CAVE

ALLAMAKEE COUNTY, IOWA

T.H.L.=24m/78ft

compass and tape survey by
by M. Nelson and D. Nelson



Marc Ohms

