

Sewannee Mountain Grotto Volume 3 Issue 4

TAG Caver ~ Volume 3 Issue 2 Winter 2012

TAG Caver is the official newsletter of the Sewanee Mountain Grotto & is published on a quarterly basis. Sewanee Mountain Grotto is a non-profit internal organization of the National Speleological Society dedicated to the exploration, mapping and conservation of caves. If you are interested in joining the Sewanee Mountain Grotto we invite you to attend one of our monthly grotto meetings. Meetings are held the second Saturday of each month at various locations in the heart of TAG. A typical meeting starts with a potluck dinner at 6pm CST, followed by the meeting at 7pm. On occasion we also have special presentations following our meetings. Annual dues are \$10 per person and are due in January. Please email <u>sewaneemountaingrotto@caves.org</u> or one of our editors for more information on the location of our next meeting. You may also visit our website at

http://www.caves.org/grotto/sewaneemountai ngrotto/

2012 Sewanee Mtn Grotto Officers:

Chairperson: Jason Hardy Vice Chair & Programs: Maureen Handler Treasurer: Blaine Grindle Secretary: Kelly Smallwood Member at Large: Bambi Dunlap Conservation Chair: Maureen Handler Webmaster: Tina O'Hailey Trip Coordinator: _____

TAG Caver Editors:

Kelly Smallwood <u>Rowland7840@bellsouth.net</u> Jason Hardy <u>wmjhardy@yahoo.com</u>

Email articles and photos for submissions to one of our editors. Content may include articles/photos from non members as well as other caving regions. Statements and opinions expressed in the TAG Caver do not necessarily reflect the policies or beliefs of the Sewanee Mountain Grotto or the NSS.



Inside this issue: Calendar of Events The TAGI Scoop SKTF Cleanup Convention 2012 Awards

Nothing by Stuckey Mapping Marion County Pits Cave Fest Totals SMGI goes to Depriest Branch 2012 Donations

Servance receives a Mastadon Tooth SCCI Updates NSS Luminary Talks Speleofest 2012 Walls of Jericho Hike

B'ham cleans up wire in Blowing Cave Old Caver Photos

Front Cover:

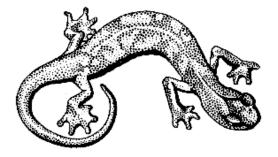
Anderson Cave, August 1969; the late Charles Sands by Tom Whitehurst

<u>Back Cover:</u>

Top: Larry Moore & Fennigan Spencer by Steve Spencer Bottom: Jan 1972, Jerry Reeves by Lin Guy

Both Front & Back Covers Designed by Marissa Lasso

Calendar of Upcoming Events



January 12th, 2013 – SKTF cleanup at Devil's Den in Jackson County, Alabama.

January 12th, 2013 – SMG Meeting at John Attaway's house on the mountain. Potluck dinner 6pm, followed by meeting at 7pm.

February 9th, 2013 – SMG Meeting at Jason & Kelly's house in Jasper, TN. Potluck dinner 6pm, followed by meeting at 7pm.

February 16^{th,} 2013 – SERA Winter Business Meeting hosted by the Nashville Grotto at Cumberland Caverns.

March 7-10, 2013 – Florida Cave Cavort. Pre register at <u>www.floridacavecavort.eventbrite.com/#</u>. Fee \$20, t shirts also available.

March 9th, 2013 – SMG Meeting at Peter "Mudpuppy" Michaud's house on the mountain. Potluck dinner 6pm, followed by meeting at 7pm.

May 24-27, 2013 - 42nd Kenctucky Speleofest hosted by the Louisville Grotto. Held at Lonestar Preserve.

Connect with the Grotto

If you're new to the Grotto, here are a few ways you can get to know other members:





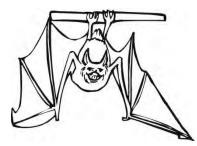
Join us on a Grotto Trip, Survey Trip or a Cleanup.

Sewanee Mountain Remailer

After you have joined the grotto, join our mailing list to keep up to date with cave trips and meetings. Go to: <u>http://sports.groups.yahoo.com/group/sewanee_mountain_grotto</u> and click join. Please provide your real name so we'll know who you are.



Facebook – Join our official unofficial Facebook Page to meet other area cavers and plan trips. Search for Sewanee Mountain Grotto under groups.



Support the Grotto ~ Grotto Merchandise

The Grotto has Baseball Hats for \$15, 14oz mugs for \$5 and 3' patches for \$5. All items have our grotto logo on them. Please contact Kelly Smallwood at rowland7840@bellsouth.net to purchase any of these items.



THETAGSCOOP

Welcome new SMG members: Danja Mewes, Hubert Crowell, Henry Maddox, Maríssa Lasso, Wade

Waltman, Kim Smith, Keith Sutphin, The Davis Family (Steve, Karen, Steven & Kyle), Kazia Mack, Nuke Thompson, Anita Evatt, Jonathan Hobbs, Verl Speer, Don Swart, Susan Williamson, Paul Donis, Jim Corey, Forest Stroud, Carl Bishop, Melissa Harris, & Frank Maynard. This brings our current membership to 87 members!

You can download an updated membership list from the Yahoo group.

Membership dues are \$10. You can pay Blaine at a meeting or send them via snail mail. Send check payable to Sewanee Mountain Grotto, 482 Wild Heart Lane, Sewanee, TN 37375. Make sure to include your contact information (name, address, phone #, email address, & NSS #.

Grotto Merchandise...!



The Grotto has hats featuring our logo embroidered on the front. The logo is approx 2 inches in diameter and the hats are \$15 each. Supplies are limited.



3" grotto patches featuring our logo, \$5.

14oz mugs featuring our logo in black/white. The mugs were purchased for our annual fundraising event and are \$5 each.





Cumberland Gap Cleanup By Cheryl Pratt



In front of the quarry that is west of the town of Cumberland Gap there are springs and a culvert that send water to Gap Creek. Gap Creek originates from Gap Cave in the Cumberland Gap National Historical Park and runs through the town of Cumberland Gap, through farmland, entering and exiting several caves and eventually joining the Powell River. Our cleanup areas were the creek beds in front of the quarry.

I arrived at the site around 10:00 am ET on November 3rd, 2012 and checked out the site. The

dumpster, about 25' long and 3' deep, was placed along the edge of the road 50 feet from the RR crossing. Maureen and Bambi soon followed and we unloaded Maureen's truck with the needed supplies. I flagged the trail to the northern area and showed Maureen the southern area. Volunteers started showing up and we handed out cleaning supplies. We cleaned along the train track and then went into the woods, towards the northern site. There was an oil filter, several empty oil containers, a pile of shingles and vinyl siding dumped on the edge and down the slope to the creek and these were carried to the dumpster. Tires, household garbage and more construction waste were left when we moved to the southern site.

In the center of the site was a low area with many truck tires. The volunteers hauled them to the edge with a rope tied to a vehicle and they were carried and rolled to the dumpster. Everything was put in the dumpster per Mike Russell, who delivered it. The tires and metal were not seperated.

Around 2:00 pm Mike Crockett brought lunch from Hardees and we took a break. When we were finished, we moved to the southern area and used a truck with a rope tied to it to remove several items including a pump tank, couch, oven, car seat and tire. Household garbage was buried under leaf cover and when an item was removed, there was often more behind it. The bags were loaded into Maureen and JP's trucks and driven to the dumpster.

The dumpster was full around 4:00pm so we loaded Maureen's truck and left. Supplies used were feed bags, buckets, ropes, plastic bags, a machete to cut weeds and branches, bolt cutters to cut small trees and branches, trucks and a jeep for pulling large items out of the ravine. There is a lot of garbage left and another cleanup will be organized. The car on the western bank was not removed, the landowner said she would see if she could get something to remove it with, but no one showed up. I will ask if the dumpster can be placed closer next time.

Volunteers were:

Name-From-Roundtrip Mileage-Travel time

Cheryl Pratt Oak Ridge, TN 140 1.5 hr, Russell, Emily, Grace Lawson Corbin, KY 80 2, Lee Powell Lily, KY 80 2, Maureen Handler, Bambi Dunlap Sewanee, TN 450 8, Mike Crockett Cumberland Gap 0 0, JP, Boone McLendon Cumberland Gap 10 .5, Jenny Beeler Cumberland Gap 3 10 min.



Congratulations to the SMG members who won awards at 2012 NSS Convention in West Virginia

2012 NSS Cartographic Salon Winners

HONORABLE MENTION

Doodlebug Hole Blowing Cave, Jackson County, AL

by Jason Hardy **Ben Young Cave, Dekalb County, AL** by Marty Abercrombie

2012 Cover Art Salon Winners HONORABLE MENTION TAG Caver: Vol. 2, No. 4

Layout/Design: Kelly Smallwood & Jason Hardy Photography: Kelly Smallwood

MERIT AWARD TAG Caver: Vol. 2, No. 3

Layout/Design: Kelly Smallwood & Jason Hardy Photography: Jerry Wallace

MERIT AWARD

TAG Caver: Vol. 2, No. 1

Layout/Design: Kelly Smallwood & Jason Hardy Photography: Kelly Smallwood

2012 SYMBOLIC EMBLEM SALON WINNERS

HONORABLE MENTION

Sewanee Mountain Grotto Patch designed by Tina O'Hailey

2012 FINE ARTS SALON MERIT AWARD Cross Stitch of Neversink by Myrna Attaway

CERTIFICATE OF MERIT

Sewanee Mountain Grotto - Continuous conservation efforts directly impacting the Orme Mountain Road area of the Russell Cave National Monument Watershed







ounta

SEWANEE RECEIVES A MASTADON TOOTH FOUND NEAR SINKING COVE

Sewanee, University of the South has received a beautifully preserved American mastodon (*Mammut americanum*) tooth found recently in a cave near campus in Sinking Cove. The tooth is on loan from Kenny Summers, local resident and owner of the cave in which the tooth was found. After it is cleaned and preserved, it will be on display on the second floor of Snowden Hall.

According to Dr. Martin Knoll of the Department of Forestry and Geology, this is the second such tooth found in the area. The first was found near Wet Cave in the 1960s by biology professor Harry Yeatman. Knoll had that tooth radiocarbon dated to 12,769 years before present and hopes to date the new tooth as well.

American mastodons were part of an assemblage of large animals at the end of the last ice age, most of whose members went extinct around 11,000 years ago. Mastodons had the general appearance of woolly mammoths, but differed from them in that they were generally smaller, lacked the large hump on their back, and grazed on leaves and twigs instead of grasses. They inhabited the Sewanee area along with giant ground sloths, giant beavers, mammoths, dire wolves and jaguars. A Pleistocene jaguar was discovered in a cave near Sinking Cove in the 1940s by Vice-Chancellor Edward McCrady. Knoll had this specimen dated to 13,455 years ago before donating the skeleton to the Smithsonian Institution.

The tooth is a welcome addition to the Sewanee fossil collection and will be used in teaching several geology courses.

http://news.sewanee.edu/academics/2012/08/15/university-receives-mastodon-tooth





SCCi Unable to Renew Jacobs Mountain Preserve Lease October, 2012

Due to the pending sale of the Jacobs Mountain property by the current landowner, the SCCi was not able to renew the lease on the Jacobs Mountain Preserve. The lease expired on October 13, 2012 and SCCi members will not have access to the preserve after that date.

We are hopeful that the property will be acquired by an entity that will allow caving, but there remain many unknowns in that process.

Many SCCi members have appreciated the opportunity to visit the many great caves on the property during the two years of the SCCi lease. The SCCi board would like to express appreciation to all the SCCi members who provided financial support for this lease, and would particularly like to thank Brian Killingbeck for doing an excellent job as our preserve manager!

SCCi now has Lost Canyon Cave

The SCCi now owns Lost Canyon Cave! Closed for many years, Lost Canyon is now open to cavers once again. The cave is located in Johnsons Crook, near Rising Fawn, Georgia. With a total depth of 352 feet, Lost Canyon is one of Georgia's deepest caves. Its lower level is also very nicely decorated. Thanks to long-time supporter, Chuck Henson for a fantastic donation to the SCCi! The property manager is Peter Morgan and access is by permit only.



A New (and Free!) Way to Help the SCCi Raise Money!

One of our members, Mike Costello suggested a great fundraising idea that will help the SCCi buy even more caves. The best thing about this idea is that it won't cost you a penny. What's the idea? Get a Kroger's card and use it when you buy gas or groceries. Each time you use your card to buy anything from Kroger or a Kroger affiliated company, 5% of your purchase will be donated to the SCCi.

All you have to do is get a Kroger Gift Card from the SCCi. Each card costs \$5, but \$5 is already loaded onto the card for you to use, so you come out even. Just take your card to Kroger and add money to it. Then, pay for your regular purchases with your card. Add more money to your card periodically and continue using it to pay for groceries and gas. You can use it as long as you want, and each purchase you make with it will help the SCCi.

If you would like a card, mail a check for \$5 made payable to the SCCi to:

Mike Costello, P.O. Box 1474, Franklin, TN 37065 costellomike1 (@) yahoo.com 615-485-4716

For more information about the SCCi visit www.scci.org



The National Speleological Society is pleased to unveil the initial presentations in its long-awaited "Luminary Series" — featuring pioneering cave explorers, karst scientists, and other long-time NSS members. These talks are designed to give young and old cavers alike the opportunity to learn from some of the true superstars in our Society. This program is the brainchild of AVP Geary Schindel, and is produced by Dave Socky and Webmaster Alex Sproul. Recommendations for future speakers are encouraged. To view the video for each go to: http://caves.org/luminaries/index.shtml.



Jeanne Gurnee

Jeanne Gurnee is one of the most accomplished women in the history of American speleology. In addition to having served the NSS in many ways, including as president, Jeanne is Vice President and Trustee of the National Speleological Foundation, and for a number of years was a member of the board of the National Caves Association. Somehow, all of these administrative duties have not prevented Jeanne Gurnee from enjoying more than a half-century of adventure underground.

William B. "Will" White

Dr. Will White is one of the most prolific, famous, and well-loved cave scientists on the planet. Will's career has taken him to an expansive array of dark, scary, and far-away places while coaxing secrets out of the earth. A long and distinguished career at Penn State University has given Dr. White the occasion to pursue significant ground-breaking science, supervise numerous excellent students, and enjoy a lot of interesting, challenging, and humorous adventures along the way.





Dwight "Dirtdoc" Deal

In addition to being a rock-climber, a mountaineer, a hiker, a scuba diver, a canoeist, a white- water river runner, a pilot, an engineer, and a scientist, Dwight Deal has enjoyed a great life as a cave explorer. Loaded with funny anecdotes, fabulous photography, and a great store of tales and skills, Dwight Deal's presentations are always popular features at caving events. Dwight's talk here explains a thing or two about calcite—and also employs the double-refraction property of calcite as a metaphor for his lifetime of adventure both above and below the ground.



Speleofest 2012 By Kelly Smallwood

Shari Lydy drove up Friday night, May 25th to join Jason Hardy and I for the weekend in Kentucky at the 2012 Speleofest. Shari had previously won

a free ticket for admission at the May Dogwood City Grotto meeting and at the SERA Summer Cave Carnival Tevis Kouts won 2 tickets as a door prize and wasn't able to go so he gave his tickets to Jason and I. We were all very glad to get free tickets as it saved us each \$33 for the admission cost. Saturday morning we stopped by Anne & Blaine's to drop off my dog Jasper and Shari's dog Shiloh. We then made another stop in Murfreesboro for some beer. The drive was pleasant and Jason and I enjoyed Shari telling us many old TAG Caving stories and more about her job at the CDC in Atlanta. By the time we finally arrived at the Lonestar Preserve in Kentucky it was already nearly 90 degrees out. After saying a few hello's to the very few people brave enough to endure the heat in the campground we quickly found a place to camp next to some Louisville Grotto folk and set up some shade. Our next objective was to get into a cave and out of the heat so we headed over to Lonestar Cave which is in the campground. We had previously heard there was a possible lead in this cave so we wanted to check it out. We made our way to the back and pushed several places in the cave. The main goal was to stay out of the heat and we were very successful in doing so for at least a few hours. When we exited the cave there were several other small groups going in. This cave has mostly walking passage so others were quite confused to see us coming out quite dirty. We walked through the campground and back to our campsite to get changed and cook some dinner. After dinner we went to the main pavilion to hand out and see if we won any door prizes. I actually ended up winning a dry sack which will come in quite handy on some float trips. After a few hours socializing I finally went to bed.

Sunday morning we woke up and cooked some breakfast and started finalizing caving plans for the day. Jason wanted to visit a cave he had never been to before so he and Shari got a few possible ideas the night before. They had decided on Spring House Pit. Spring house has an entrance pit around 30 feet to another 95 foot pit. After tracking down a few folks to get directions Don Swart and Ken Alwin agreed to lead us there. We drove back towards Munfordville and finally we



arrived at an Amish farm. The guys took a moment to stop and check in with the landowner before we proceeded up to the pit. We drove back behind their barn and thru the fields. While we were gearing up Ken and Don decided to go and look for the pit. After a few minutes Don came back and felt that we may be in the wrong area so he went back down to get the landowner. Within a few minutes he was back and sure enough we were in the wrong spot. The landowner very kindly showed us the way up to the pit and surprisingly compared to a TAG hike it was a fairly easy walk for a 100+ footer. Once at the top we chatted for a bit with the landowner and he informed us of several other nearby caves. Then he, Don & Ken were off. Jason rigged the pit and one by one the three of us went in. The entrance goes down into a sink about 30 feet to a fairly large ledge that also has some



walking passage off the side. From here there is a diving board rock with some bolts on the wall to get down the rest of the 95 foot pit. Once at the bottom Jason and I took a few minutes taking some photos and then we all explored the rest of the cave, which was only a few hundred feet. There is a really nice large formation in the back as well and another dome that appears to be over 100 feet. Once we were out we stopped back by the landowner to find out more details on the other caves. I must say the Amish are really friendly people. He told us where to go so we went further down the street to one of his neighbors to visit the next cave. He was also a very kind man and told us exactly how to get to the cave and even gave us a few directions

for inside the cave. He opened his gate and we drove up to the parking area. From here it was a very short walk. Once at the cave we were very pleasantly surprised to see the entrance was right under a tree. It looked as if it were a hobbit hole. One by one we made our way in this small entrance but it very quickly opened up to Kentucky borehole. We made our way back until we came to a large room that had part of an oil well right smack dab in the middle of it. We spent a few minutes here taking some photos and then went on thru a small crawl to the rest of the cave. The landowner had told us the cave was pretty but we had no idea it was going to be as pretty as it was. We were all quite amazed at all the formations. There was one really large haystack that we took a few photos of with Shari as our model. I dubbed Jason's new name for the day as "flash boy" since he assisted me with all the flashes for my pictures. We spent some time in this area of the cave taking lots of photos. We started getting hungry so we decided it was time to go. After changing we stopped back by the Amish family's house and thanked them for allowing us to visit.

We headed back to Munfordville in hopes of finding a Mexican Restaurant for dinner. It wasn't hard and we soon found El Mazatlan. Once inside we also found more cavers, Marissa and Wade who were up at the event from Florida. So we got a table with them and all enjoyed some good eats. After a bit we all headed back to the Lonestar Preserve. We hung out the rest of the evening with the Louisville Grotto and we even met a caver from France.

The next morning we got up and packed up for our drive back to Tennessee. We said our goodbyes and were on our way. Marissa & Wade were also on their way back south so we made some plans to take them caving once we got near home.





Noteworthy Hike in TAG: Walls of Jericho Activities: Hiking, Photography, Caving, Nature Appreciation, Camping Rating: Moderate to Difficult

Located in the upper Paint Rock River watershed straddling the Tennessee-Alabama border is the Walls of Jericho, also referred to as the Grand Canyon of the South. It consists of 21,453 acres: 12,510 in Alabama and 8,943 in Tennessee. It has been protected as a wilderness and recreation area for many generations to come.

In the late 1700s, Davy Crockett explored the area since his family owned land there. In the 1800s a traveling minister came upon the Walls of Jericho and was so captivated by the cathedral-like beauty that he declared it needed a biblical name and thus the name stuck.

In the 1940's, Texas oil baron Harry Lee Carter acquired approximately 60,000 acres in Franklin County, TN and Jackson County, AL which included the Walls of Jericho. Mr. Carter graciously allowed public access to his land however there were no trails so very few actually knew how to get to the Walls of Jericho. In 1977 when he died the land was sold and closed to visitors. For the next 26 years it would remain as a wood source for a paper company and serve as a hunting preserve.

The Nature Conservancy recognized the Walls of Jericho as one of six national hotspots for biodiversity and purchased the Tennessee and Alabama Walls of Jericho properties totaling 21,453 acres in December 2003 from the Stevenson Land Company. In 2004 they then sold a 12,500 acre tract which included the Walls to the State of Alabama's Forever Wild Land Trust for \$9.4 million. The Alabama Forever Wild Land Trust then began preparing the land for public access as part of its mandate to acquire land for public use and it reopened in August 2004. Alabama Governor, Bob Riley officially dedicated the area in April 2005. The Walls of Jericho became the 40th acquisition since voters created the Forever Wild Land Trust in 1992. The organization gets most of its funds from a percentage of the interest from offshore natural gas leases. It has spent over \$74 million acquiring more than 110,000 acres statewide.

The Tennessee portion of the Nature Conservancy's purchase, 8,943 acres, was presented as the Walls of Jericho project for consideration under the 2005 Forest Legacy Program funding cycle. Tennessee's Forest Legacy Committee ranked the project as its number one State priority and in 2006 the Forest Legacy program provided the majority of funding to purchase from the Nature Conservancy the



8,943-acre Tennessee "Walls" tract that contains the signature amphitheater. The Nature Conservancy matched Forest Legacy Program funding by donating the nearby 5,100 acre David Carter Tract. Both tracts in Tennessee are currently managed by the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency as the Bear Hollow Mountain Wildlife Management Area. The 750 acres surrounding the prominent gorge and amphitheater are managed by the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation, Division of Natural Areas as the Walls of Jericho State Natural Area.

The Walls of Jericho Project also abuts Alabama's 27,000 acre Skyline Wildlife Management Area and between the two states, over 48,000 contiguous acres of upland hardwood forests have now been protected on the Southern Cumberland Plateau.

Over 10 miles of trails have been built to provide access to the Walls of Jericho and its waterfalls. Access is available thru both the Alabama and Tennessee tracts. The Alabama red blazed trail is a 2.5-mile hike one way, downhill to Clarke Cemetery, with an additional half mile remaining to travel into the Walls. The Tennessee white



blazed trail is approximately 3.2 miles one way, downhill to Clarke Cemetery. After passing a field clearing (which is also popular campsite area for overnighters) the trail continues on the south side of Turkey Creek on an often muddy and slippery path. At mile 3 or 3.7 (depending on which route you chose), you'll reach the Walls of Jericho natural amphitheater, which is a 50-yard-wide limestone bowl with 200-foot-tall cliffs on each side. In wet months, the amphitheater is filled with water from its two main falls and it's a bit harder to meander around. After

enjoying the sights and sounds, return to the Mill Creek log bridge and begin the 1,000-foot ascent through rock outcroppings back up to the Alabama trailhead. The walk back will be mostly uphill and strenuous. Hikers should wear comfortable shoes and bring plenty of water. The trail is a well marked and hikers have to cross several shallow streams. However, stream levels rise quickly during thunderstorms and crossing them can be hazardous due to swift currents. After a rain shower, the trail can be muddy for days. On dry days, hikers should plan on a minimum of six hours to make the round-trip, which includes a two-hour stay in the gorge.

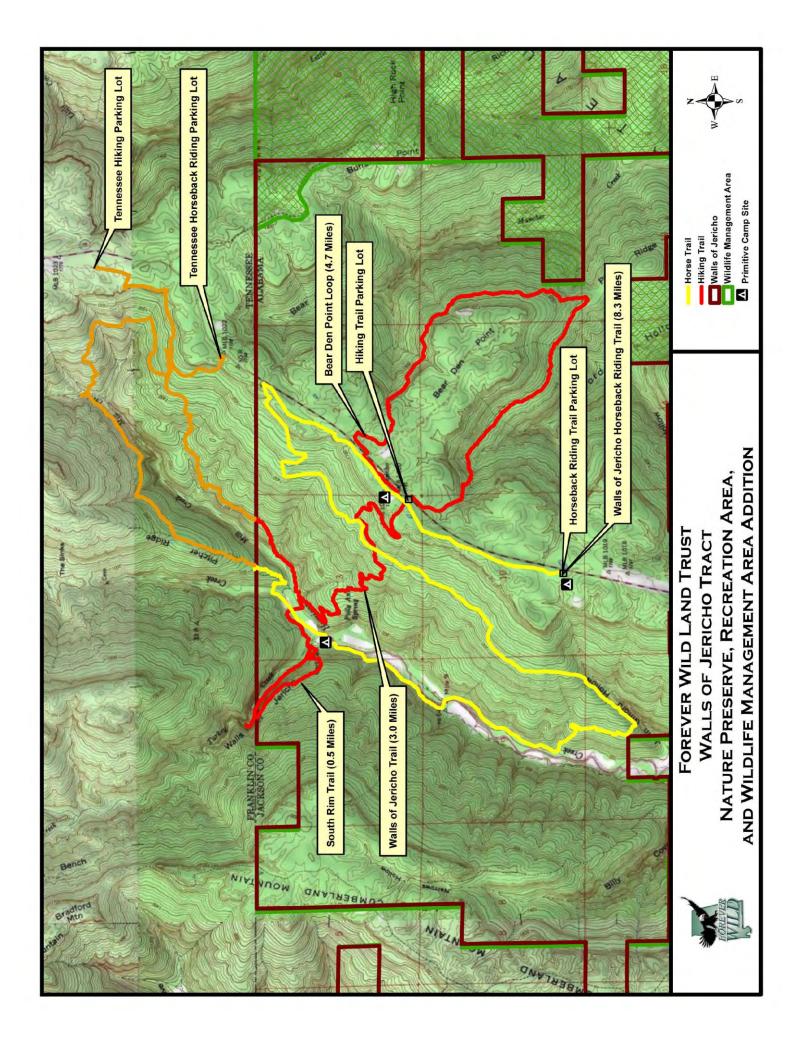
A separate 8.3-mile-long horse trail leading into the gorge is also available. Primitive camping is allowed in designated areas, including the parking area for the horse trail.

The Southern Cumberlands of Tennessee, the greater area surrounding the Walls of Jericho, is home to the highest known concentration of cave ecosystems known in the world. This area is also home to the highest diversity of subterranean invertebrates in the world. The temperate hardwood forests in the area are extremely important for the long-term conservation of priority neotropical migratory birds in the Central Hardwoods and Appalachian Regions. The headwaters of Paint Rock River can also be found in the Walls of Jericho, which is one of the few remaining high quality free-flowing rivers in the entire Tennessee River Basin. The Paint Rock River watershed also supports a diverse array of wildlife, including salamanders, 100 species of fish, 45 species of mussel and a wide variety of birds. Some of the most notable are: The rare Tennessee cave salamander (which can be found only in Alabama, Tennessee and Georgia), five globally imperiled mussels and 12 globally rare mussels (which are found in the Paint Rock River and its tributaries), the Pale Lilliput and Alabama lampshell mussel as this is the only place in the world where they exist, the federally endangered palezone shiner which is a fish confined to the Paint Rock River and one stream in Kentucky, and three globally imperiled fish – the sawfin shiner, blotchside logperch and the federally threatened snail darter.

Plant loving hikers will also be rewarded with the sight of lobelia, maple-leaf viburnum (an endangered rare species), snake root, horsemint and strawberry bush (more colorfully called hearts bursting with love). Visitors will also encounter the rare wild columbine, seen popping out of cracks in the limestone rocks. Monte Sano Mountain and Desoto State Park are the only other locations in the State where it can be found.

Directions: The Walls of Jericho are located off of Highway 79 about 25 miles north of Scottsboro, Alabama. There are two trail heads for hikers: one in Alabama and the other 2 miles north in Tennessee. To experience the entire trail, it is recommended to enter the Alabama red blazed trail head and hike out via the Tennessee white blazed trail. In order to do this you would need to leave a vehicle at both trail heads. You could also of course hike out the same entrance you entered and if you choose just one, I'd highly recommend the Tennessee side. Plan on a minimum of 6 hours to enjoy the hike.





Nothing By Stuckey McIntosh

Nothing on Earth clears the mind like Dropping down into its thin crust, Breathing the other worldly air Dancing pencil beams light The narrow way past Byzantine landscapes that deny the sun, Admit no single speck of dust Nothing On Earth

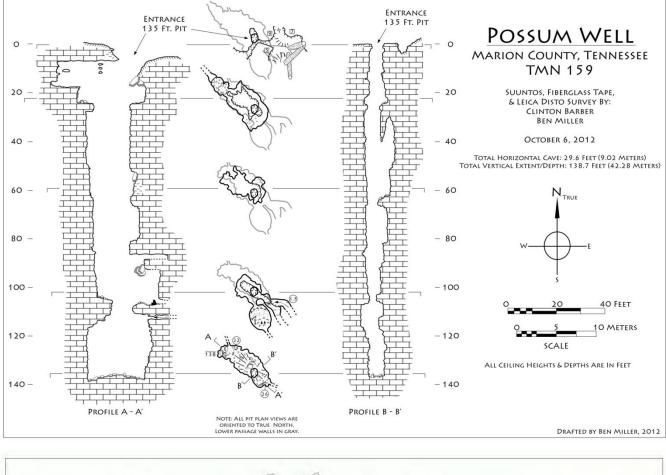
Mapping a few Marion County pits By Ben Miller

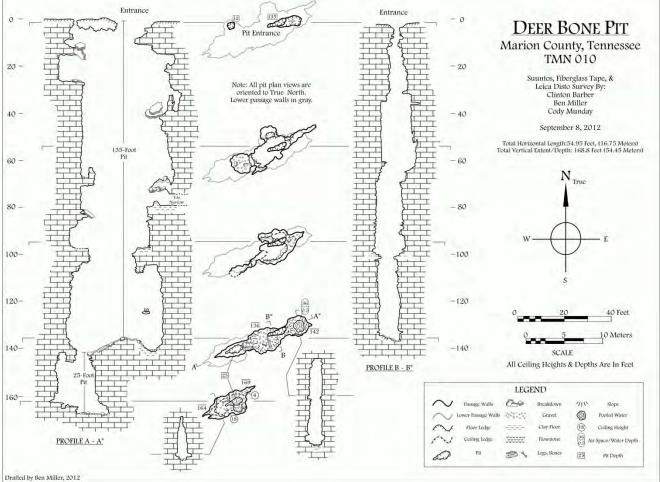
Over the past few months several members of the Green River Grotto from Bowling Green, Kentucky have been travelling down to various portions of the Cumberland Plateau to map some of the deeper unmapped pits. Thus far we have mostly been working up in the Putnam County area along the western edge of the escarpment. Having knocked out surveys of several of the nice silo-like pits up north we decided to head further south into Marion County which had also had a large number of unmapped deep pits. We had several caves we were interested in and contacted Kelly Smallwood to ask about access and to make sure we weren't going to be mapping anything they had started or had their eye on as a project. Kelly was super helpful and was able to provide us with landowner and access info which she and Jason had obtained through many countless hours caving in the area.



Our first journey down to the area was September 8th, 2012 and on this day Clint Barber, Cody Munday, and myself found ourselves driving down I-24 heading to the Battle Creek Valley. We were headed to Deer Bone Pit, a 150 foot-deep pit that was only supposed to have 50 feet of cave at the bottom. This worked well for us since we were only planning for a day trip, having to be back in Kentucky the next day to continue surveying a large stream cave we'd started. We were following some of the old directions from the old 1989 Convention guide which had directions to a landowners house. Knowing the info was over 20 years we expected it to be a bit off but figured it was a start. Luckily the guidebook was pretty damn close and we only had to stop at a couple of houses before finding the correct owner. The owner was very nice and told us we could go to the cave but would have to follow a road up a significant hill, just to go back down said hill into the cove and finally back up another hill to get to the cave. Somewhat unfortunate but we didn't mind, especially since we'd been granted permission to go to the cave.

We geared up and began the long hike to the cave, luckily it was a little cooler due to a light rain and the hike passed without too much grief. Deer Bone is located on the very ridgeline of a narrow ridge and as we made to the top of the ridge we knew we must be getting close, our GPS confirming this. However the location appeared to be off and we ended up searching for the cave for about 30 minutes or so. We eventually found the relatively obvious pit entrance and after rigging began to suit up for the survey. In all of our surveys we've had to vary the method but generally we try to begin from the entrance and try to get as large a vertical shot down the main pit. As Clint descended the pit he found that there was a ledge that was blocking our current vertical shot. After a quick discussion we decided to begin the survey from the bottom up, a method which had worked well for us in Slime Nasty Pit. Descending the main pit we found a shorter drop offset which led all the way to a small dome at the true bottom of the cave. Dropping this small pit we set up a quick shot across the base and then shot back up to the base of the main pit. We also were able to find the deer bones, for which the cave is named (?) at the bottom of the second drop. After a few shots around the base of the main pit, Cody climbed back up the main drop and set a vertical shot that was not blocked by the large ledge and tied of the tape to a tree on the surface. Clint climbed out and then I began the long climb out, stopping about every 20-30 feet to disto to the walls from the hanging tape, sketching the profiles and occasional plan views of the main pit. From a sketcher's perspective the pit was very different from the pits we'd mapped in Putnam County, whereas the big pits up north are large round shafts this pit was much more joint determined than any of the other pits we'd mapped so far. Possibly this is a result of local factors or possibly the geology, Deer Bone is developed in the Bangor Limestone and the bulk of the other pits had been Hartselle-Monteagle contact pits. This made for two very different looking profiles when the shaft is sliced in two directions: one oriented along the joint being much more complicated





than the narrower profile cutting perpendicular to the joint. In all, I probably took 40-45 minutes to climb and sketch the 135 foot main pit. The sun was setting as we derigged and thus we hiked out in the dark. As we headed back north that night we were all satisfied and happy having spent another awesome day in Tennessee.

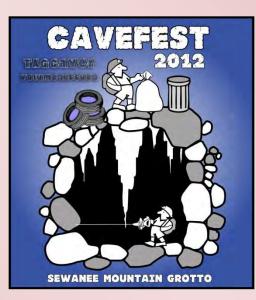
We returned to Tennessee several more times in weeks to come, returning to Putnam County to begin the map of Massive Well and to attend TAG Fall Cave In. During the Cave In we decided to return to Marion County and the Battle Creek watershed to map a few more unmapped deep ones. On Friday, October 5th Mike and Natalia Tennant from Missouri joined Clint and I to map Jackpot, a nice 190 foot deep pit with a bit of cave at the bottom. The next day Clint and I returned to Marion County to map Possum Well a 135 foot-deep pit located not far from Kelly Chasm and the Sinkhole. Once again Kelly Smallwood hooked us up with the landowner info which was spot on and after talking to the two brothers who own the property we were on our way to the cave. Compared to the long and steep hike to Jackpot the day before the hike to Possum Well was a breeze.



We found the pit without any problems, finding that the TCS location was spot on. The entrance is located in close proximity to a small ravine and is in a scenic little area with several bedrock ledges that somewhat obscure the pit opening. Because of the tucked in nature of the pit we decided to set up a redirect to a tree so that we could drop straight into the pit without having to touch any of the potentially unstable breakdown that makes up one of the pit edges. This pit was wonderfully simple and a 90 degree vertical shot was possible directly from the entrance. After a shot to the entrance I rappelled down the pit with the tape and upon reaching the bottom set up a station and then tried to hide myself as much as possible in the little space that is somewhat out of the rockfall zone. Clint dropped in and we did a couple of quick shots around the base and as Clint sketched the base of the pit I went ahead and began the climb out, sketching as I went. Similar to Deer Bone Pit, Possum Well is formed along one primary joint though this joint being somewhat less complicated than Deer Bone or Jackpot. I reached the top and once off rope had a chance to enjoy the beautiful fall weather.

Clint came up the rope sketching plan views at key changes in the pit , his second time sketching on rope following his first at Jackpot the day before. He exited, we derigged and headed down the mountain where we found one of the landowners and had a couple of beers while talking about the many caves of the area, as well as some potentially new leads he offered to turn us onto. We decided to head back to TAG so that we wouldn't miss the party, especially since surveying and a Trampled by Turtles concert had caused us to miss the first two nights of socializing.

There are still many unmapped pits in the Battle Creek watershed as well as lots of others spread out along the escarpment to the north. We will certainly be returning to continue this work and can only hope for surveys as simple as Deer Bone Pit and Possum Well were able to provide for us.



Cave Fest 2012

Income vs Expenses By Blaine Grindle

Yard Sale \$79.00	\$350 Band
Aution \$3,415	\$203 Mugs
Mugs \$540	\$25.83 Shipping
Cotton Shirts \$350	\$442.89 50 Shirts
Moisture Shirts \$500	\$393.30 3 Kegs
Patches \$5	\$71.55 Homebrew
Member dues \$50	\$225 Pig/Processing
Misc. Donations \$83	\$25.71 sign materials
Miree Donation \$100	\$150 Port O Potties
	\$28.97 Popcorn & Supplies
	\$78.93 foil, plates, etc
Total Income \$5,122	Total Expenses \$1,995.18

Gross Total \$3,126.82



SMG Trip to DePriest Branch Cave By Anne Grindle & Kelly Smallwood

Earlier in the summer while attending Speleofest in Kentucky, Jason Hardy and Kelly Smallwood saw Ron Johnston, who is the owner of DePriest Branch Cave. Ron extended an invitation to the Sewanee Mountain Grotto to visit his cave in Hohenwald, TN. A few weeks later, Jason phoned Ron and set a date of September 22nd. Kelly put a post on the grotto remailer & facebook page and within hours the limit was filled!

On the morning of September 22, Blaine & Anne Grindle, Lynn Buffkin, Danja Mewes, Nancy Aulenbach, Kim Smith, Marissa Lasso, Wade Waltman, Shari Lydy, Kelly, and Jason all met up at the Shenanigans parking lot in Sewanee, TN to caravan over to Hohenwald Tennessee. Caves over there? Yes! After a 2 hour drive through middle Tennessee, we met Ron, Stephen Collins, and Bambi Dunlap at the Wal-Mart. To our surprise we also saw Gerald & Avis Moni and Matt Niemiller. Gerald, Avis, and Matt had come over to conduct a survey of critters in the cave for the TN Cave Life Database. Ron led the way to his beautiful land, which was also our camping spot for the night and the location of both entrances of the cave. The lovely stream flows out of the smaller entrance and the main entrance is only 70 feet away. We then geared up for horizontal caving into one of the state's prettiest caves. Ron opened the gate and in we went. We divided into 3 groups, for easier caving with a crowd of 15. Gerald took Matt to the stream passage, to search for invertebrates for his cave critter study and the rest of us headed for the pretties.

The first, dry part of the cave was keyhole shaped and reasonable sized, with some flowstone here and there. Interesting colors too! Lots of mud plugged intersecting passages, which humans will never see. When my caving heroine (Avis) came to a large rock in the middle of the passageway, she calmly leaned against the side wall and flopped her legs up and over the obstruction, no sweat! At a major junction, half of us went left to see two well decorated areas, while the other half went



right to see a different section.

Anne's group headed to the Hodag Cemetery...how delightful! A small but wide crawlway led into a highly decorated room, with some delicate formations. Again, there were unique colors all throughout the soda straws, flowstone and totems. We marveled and photographed and then headed out to see the next gallery of decorations. To get to this area, one must squeeze through a birth canal, with your helmet off! Yikes! Wade went right on through, then Kim (go girl!). Blaine had to back out and remove his cave suit, to get through. Anne put herself into the beginning and saw the left hand turn and backed out. Marissa tried and backed out, but then persevered and made it! Bambi went through with no qualms. By herself, Anne enjoyed what she longs for with caving:

complete silence. Hard to come by when you are caving with 7 people....Plus, it was highly amusing to hear. "grunt, slide, grunt, slide, more grunts", with each caver as they came through the 100 foot canal. Blaine pushed his helmet through right side up and later put the helmet back on. After caving, he had a huge clump of mud on the back of his head...very funny!

The groups swapped out and they then took their turns going thru the Birth Canal. Danja and Nancy went right in and were gone fairly quickly. Kelly & Lynn hesitated for a moment and decided to let Jason go ahead first. Lynn then went followed by Kelly. Shari poked her head in but decided not to go. For some reason when Ron was telling Kelly that he's been stuck in that passage before and Stephen was saying you could literally feel your heartbeat when in it, it didn't really sink in how tight it was until she was in there for herself. Once on the other end everyone was rewarded with some more pretties.

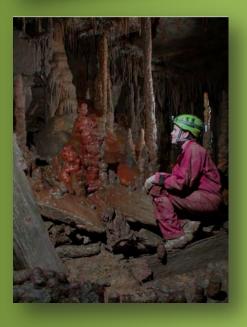


Back on the other side, Anne's group went through some fun canyon passage, interrupted by a couple of mud mountains. The pretties did not disappoint including an interesting fried egg formation and more gorgeous colors everywhere! Before taking the stream route out of the cave they had to skirt around the edge of a huge room. Anne spotted some nice fossils in here too. Great trip, fun people, and a wonderful land owner. Thanks, Ron, you are kind to share your delightful cave with us!



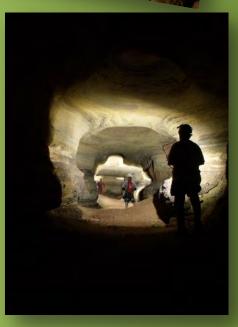






More pics by Kelly Smallwood from the Grotto Trip!









To Sewance Mt. Grotto: On behaff of the family of pr. Ralph Sheppard, el Wanted to thank you for your generous donation in his memory to Sheppard his memory to Sheppard Darden We hope to carry on parden We hope to carry on his tradition of love of mature his tradition of love of mature and his community. Sincerely - Geu Sheppard Loorey Thank you

2012 Sewanee Mountain Grotto Donations By Blaine Grindle

January – SCCI General Funds \$1,000 January – SCCI Tumbling Rock Brick \$100 January – NSS New Building Fund \$1,000 January – SERA Karst Task Force \$500 January – Dr. Sheppard Memorial Garden \$100 April – SCCI in Memory of Hazzard's Mom \$50 April – NSS Brick for Pup & Shelly \$50 May – NSS Team 404 \$300 September – SCCI Matching Contributor at TAG \$1,000 October – NSS New Building Fund \$1,000 **Total Donations for 2012: \$5,100**



The Birmingham Grotto removes the phone wire left by fellow members back in 1959!

After reading my article about Jason's survey at Doodlebug Hole / Blowing Cave, Jonathan Hobbs first brought up the idea for the B'ham Grotto to remove the wire from the cave while we were at Convention in West Virginia. He felt this would be a good conservation project for the grotto to remove it. After obtaining permission from the landowner, we scheduled a date. On 12/01/2012, thirteen B'ham members showed up and removed the phone wire that was left in 1959.

Photos by Dave McRae.



Caving Photos From Days Past...



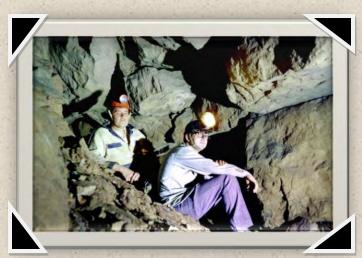
1972 Doug Strait, Don Hunter, George Martin, Eileen Vogt, Anne Knox, & Lon Hamby at Snowflower Pit. By Lin Guy



1977 Foxy Ferguson follows Will Chamberlin into a new Spring cave on the Verona Quad in Tennessee. By Lin Guy



1977 Valerie Howell, Lin Guy, Will Chamberlin & Dave Howell at the red stone where the TAG states connect.



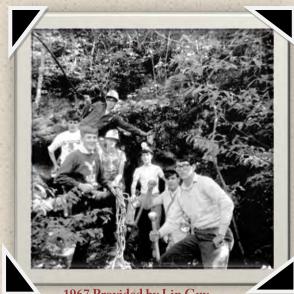
November 1973 Gerald Moni & Jerry Reeves in Prestage's Pothole named for John Prestage. By Lin Guy



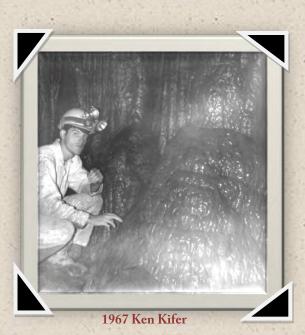
1957 Jim McDowell



1958 Guffey Cave by Jim McDowell



1967 Provided by Lin Guy





1974 Jerry Reeves & Gerald Moni by Lin Guy



1975 Neversink by Will Chamberlin



1982 Maureen Handler Mud Wrestling at OTR



1977 The late John Reid is ready to push down to the bottom level in Bicentennial Cave by Lin Guy



1975 Neversink by Will Chamberlin



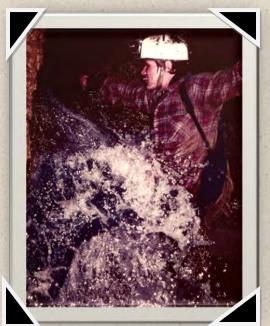
1979 Lin Guy, Greg Jordan & Foxy Ferguson returning from the last mapping trip in Allen Cave



1970 UF Florida Speleological Society Student Grotto By Roger Moore



Ann Davis in Ulla Cave by Jeff Harris



1980 McBride Cave by Will Chamberlin



1992 Maureen Handler & Andy Walker Sawmill Well



Early 70's Don Hunter & Allen Padgett with another caver.



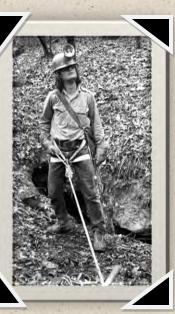


Brent & Nancy Aulenbach 1998 NSS Convention in Sewanee Bob Lenderman, Chuck Watford, & Lin Guy Maryville Cave 1966



Jerry Reeves 1964

Jim Young By Tom Whitehurst

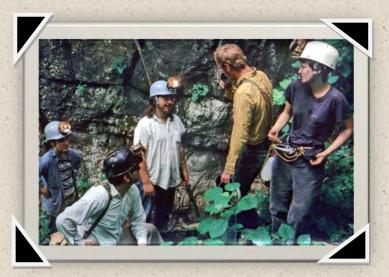




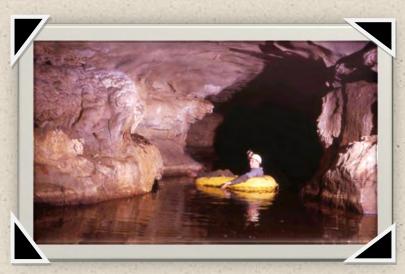
Andy Zellner 1989 Xiliha Plateau, Mexico by Shari Lydy



Bill Cuddington 1960's



Caving in Coon Creek Gulf by Jerry Reeves



1968 Guffey Cave by Jim McDowel



1986 Jim Smith at Obscure Magnificance by Shari Lydy

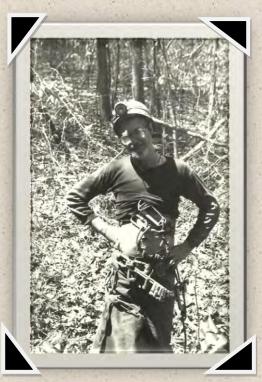


Karen & Allen Padgett "Carbide Kiss" by Jeff Harris

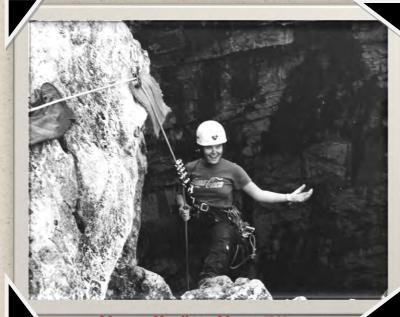


November 1977 Will Chamberlin & Gerald Moni getting ready to go on a ridge walk in Gentles Cove by Lin Guy





Marion O. Smith by Jerry Reeves



Maureen Handler in Mexico 1980

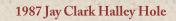
Tumbling Rock in flood 1972



S. Malt. 11



Shari Lydy 1989 NSS Convention





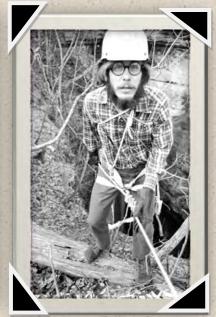
1991 Doug Strait



Leo Sullivan in Cemetery Pit 1975 By Will Chamberlin



Chuck Watford, Randy Thorp, & Lin Guy Little Creek Cave 1967



Carl Seaquist at Falling Cave 1972 By Tom Whitehurst



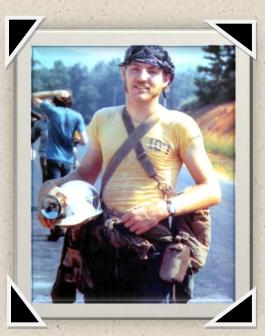
1983 Jerry Reeves By Lin Guy



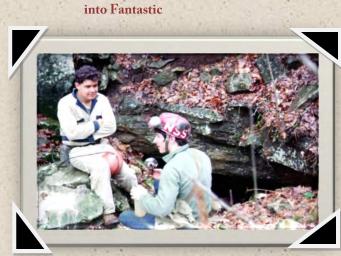
Della McGuffin on the 1st descent



Diane Cousineau & Jim Wilbanks



Don Hunter 1970



Gerald Moni & Lin Guy – Surveying at Crownover Saltpeter Cave 1974 by Dave Howell



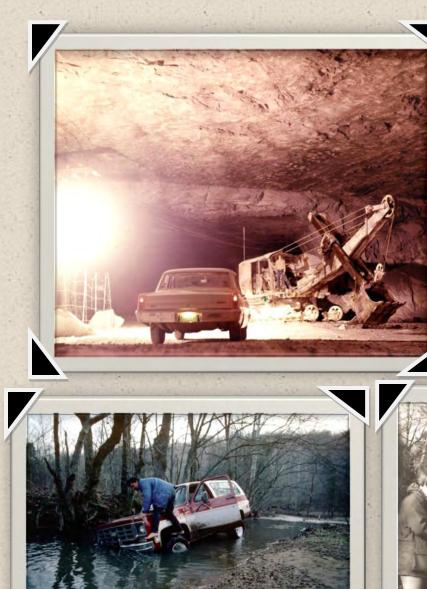
JV by Tom Whitehurst



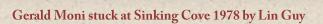
Maureen Handler's 1st TAG Pit, Pighole 1984

Marion O. Smith By Jerry Reeves





Anderson Quarry Deep Thrust Cave By Lin Guy





March 1975 trip to Neversink by Will Chamberlin (Dan Twilley far right)



Photos by Don Black



1973 Stephen's Gap Parking Lot



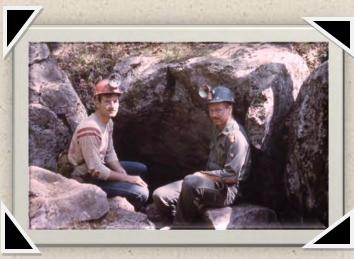
The Old TAG House by Jim Wilbanks



David Young, Audrey Duncan, Will Chamberlin & Dan Twilley – Fern Trip July 1975



"My Stuff" 1975 by Will Chamberlin



Richard Schreiber & Marion O. Smith Rusty's Cave by Jim Wilbanks



Chris Sneed at Soda Straw Cave (AKA Cedar Ridge Crystal)



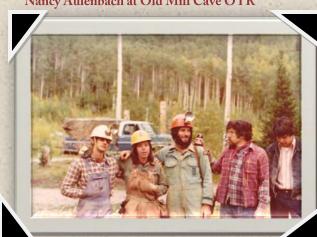
Maureen Handler 1980's



Nancy Aulenbach at Old Mill Cave OTR



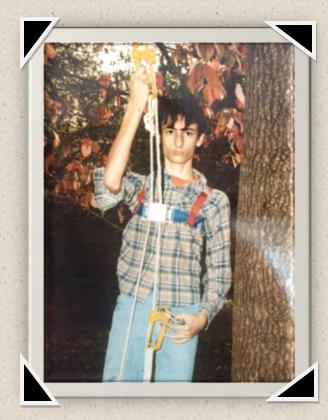
Milo Washington by Jim McDowell



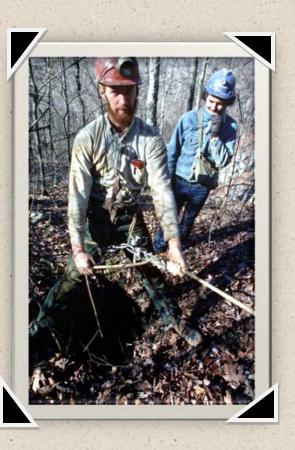
Shari Lydy & Others at Fulford Cave 1975



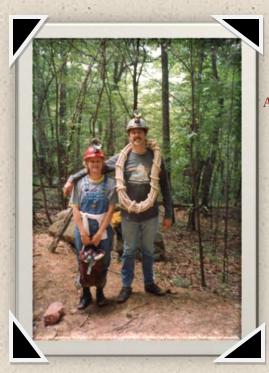
Ken Kifer at Cave Mountain Cave



Mark Medlen 1983



Marion O. Smith by Lin Guy1978



Anne & Blaine Grindle

Jim Pounds & George Foster at Soda Straw Cave (AKA Cedar Ridge Crystal) April 1969 by Joel Sneed

