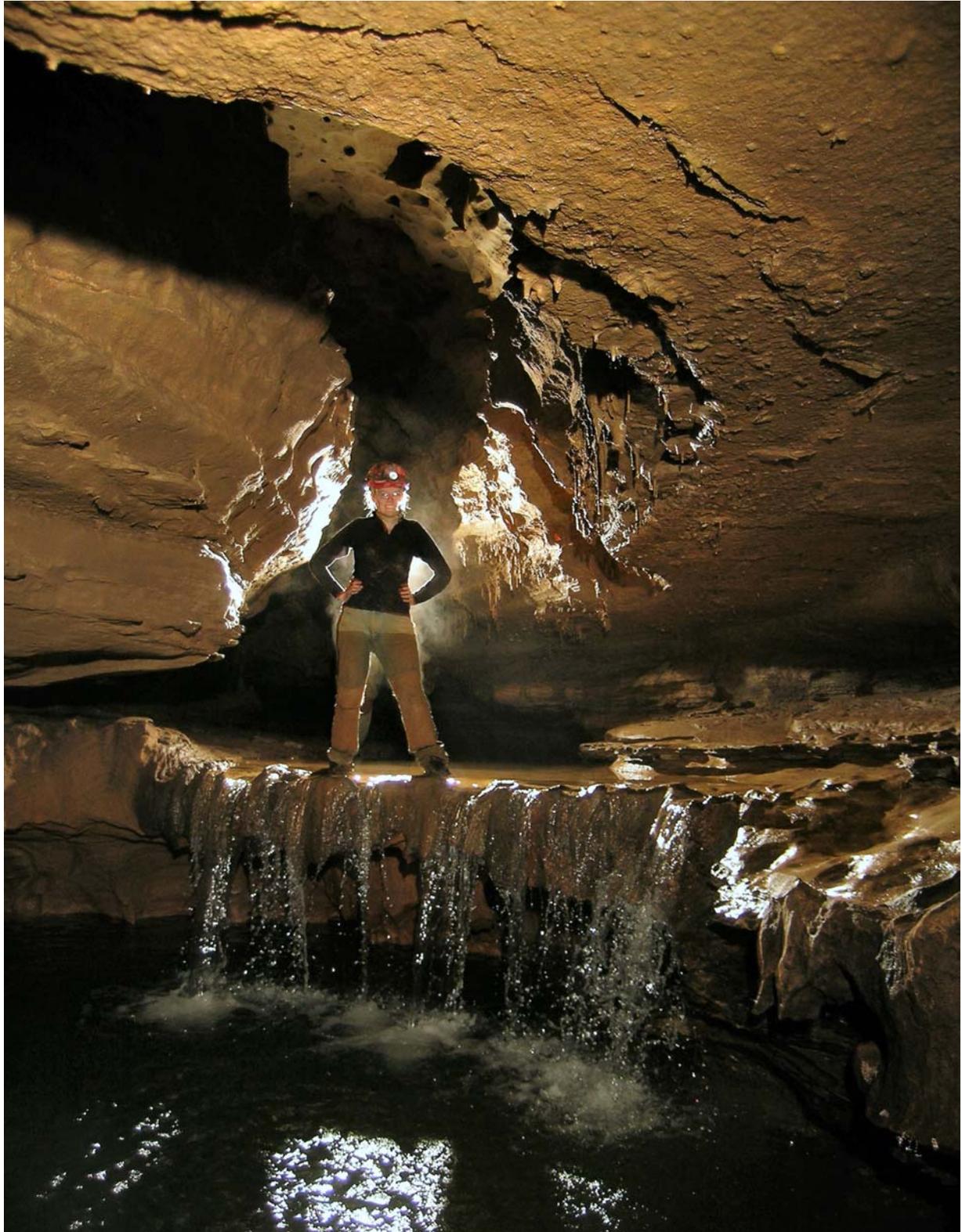
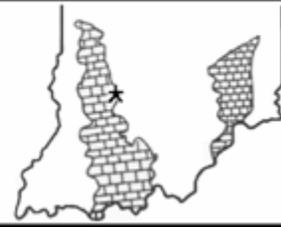


BLOOMINGTON INDIANA GROTTO
NEWSLETTER

Volume 20 Number 4 May 2006





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On the cover:

Marianne Batchelder at one of the waterfalls in Click Cave, Washington County, IN. Photo by Dave Everton with assistance from Tymme Laun.

A few words from the editor:

Greetings to cavers near and far! This is my second attempt at publishing a newsletter and I'm still quite honored to have the opportunity.

Over 3 years have passed since the last BIG Newsletter, and various grotto members are always caving somewhere and doing something! In an effort to broaden the material published by this group, I encourage all readers to consider future submission of anything they might consider worthwhile sharing with other cavers in Indiana and surrounding states as well as a national audience. Today's technology makes it easier than ever to participate. Let's get those submissions into me for inclusion in future (and *perhaps* more frequent; no promises!) newsletters. I'm looking forward to hearing from you!! Cave safely and softly! Dave

Special thanks goes to all contributors of material for this newsletter, as well as those persons who provided editorial assistance and other advising.

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Announcements & Upcoming Events

posted on the BIG website at <http://www.caves.org/grotto/big/2006events.htm>

- **May 5-7, 2006: 19th Annual HogFest** sponsored by the Harrison-Crawford Grotto at Richard Newton's farm north of Marengo. On-site camping, bonfires, food, and of course, lots of caves! For more information visit <http://www.caves.org/grotto/hcg/> or call David Black at 812-738-9822, or e-mail him at dblack@venus.net
- **May 20-21, 2006: Buckner Cave Graffiti Removal Project**, Buckner Cave on the Richard Blenz Nature Conservancy property. This will be the first real 'work weekend' using special sandblasting equipment designed for the purpose, owned by the Peppersauce Cave Conservation Project. For more information, visit the RBNC Web site at <http://www.caves.org/grotto/big/rbnc/Graffiti%20Removal.htm> or contact Dave Everton (info on inside cover of newsletter)
- **May 26-28, 2006: 35th annual Kentucky Speleofest**. at the Hart County Fairgrounds, Munfordville, Kentucky. For more information contact Shelly Wolf (chairman) at cavewolf@hotmail.com or visit the Web site at <http://www.caves.org/grotto/louisvillegrotto/Speleofest2006.htm>
- **June 1-4, 2006: SERA Cave Carnival** at Bucks Pocket State Park, Alabama. Preregistration forms at <http://www.caves.org/grotto/cag/SERA.htm> or call Michael Gilbert at 256-223-2228.
- **June 3, 2006: Tour of Lost River Karst System** led by Robert Armstrong, Chairman of the Lost River Conservation Association. Meet at 7:40 A.M. on the southeast corner of the town square in Orleans, Indiana. (Contact Dee Slater at 317-253-6951)
- **June 23-25, 2006: Cave Capers**, Camp Rivervale, south of Bedford, Indiana. For more information, visit <http://www.cavecapers.com>
- **July 14-16, 2006: Karst-O-Rama**, Great Saltpetre Preserve near Mount Vernon, Kentucky. Contact Dennis Wortman 513-851-2493 or denny1@prodigy.net for details.
- **August 7-11, 2006: NSS National Convention**, Bellingham, Washington. Visit the official Web site at <http://www.nss2006.com>
- **September 23, 2006: Tour of Lost River Karst System** led by Robert Armstrong, Chairman of the Lost River Conservation Association. Meet at 7:40 A.M. on the southeast corner of the town square in Orleans, Indiana. (Contact Dee Slater at 317-253-6951)
- **July 23-27, 2007 NSS National Convention**, Marengo, Indiana. Visit the temporary (unofficial) Web site at <http://www.con7.org>

Belize Cave Rescue Training Trip 2003 article & photos by Anmar Mirza

Monday March 17: Jim, Laura, and I meet at Don's to go over last minute seminar and travel planning. We're going to leave from Don's since he lives closest to the airport.

Tuesday March 18: We head to the airport. They won't let Don take his guitar on the plane so he fumes every time he sees someone else with one. No major incidents getting to Belize City, Belize. Small Airport, 4 terminals. We get there in the afternoon and are met by Cameron and Dave. Dave is with the DOA. On the way to Cahal Pech in Cayo district we go over the packet and Cameron drops it off to be copied on the way. We get to Cahal Pech Village and are checked into nice little cabana, one for Don and I, Lamanai, and Pilar for Jim and Laura. Dinner is at 7. We talk with Cameron extensively about the seminar. We meet Richard who is a local guide who hangs out at the hotel. Nice guy. Says he'll take us to some cliffs we can use in the morning.

Wednesday March 19: In the morning we eat breakfast at 7, Belize Breakfast. Eggs, sausage, refried beans, fried jacks (deep fried flour tortillas). I'm drinking coffee because there is a real lack of Diet Mt. Dew in this country. Meet a US couple, expatriots. The wife makes some offhand comment about wishing she could participate in the rescue seminar. I think we scared her with our response (we're looking for a patient...) Meet Richard to go see the cliffs. They'll work, but nothing really good. Close proximity at least. Get back to the hotel and meet Cameron to go to Actun Tunichal Maknal, the cave we're going to use for the mock. Half hour hike from the parking area. Cave entrance is AWESOME! Picturesque as all hell. There are tours in the cave as we go in so we go upstream past them. What great caving. 70°F, water was almost warm. On the way out Cameron gave us a private tour of the artifacts and sites. Lots of pots, shards, skeletal remains, etc. Nothing really tight in the cave for the patient but a good search problem. We get back and after dinner pile five of us into a tiny cab to go down to San Igna-

cio to a hotel bar Cameron goes to. Laura tells me about the great Pina Coladas they have in Belize so I ordered one. Since I don't drink I have little experience with such things, but it was indeed good. War breaks out all over.

Thursday, March 20: Still war when we get up. Don is a news junkie so I am forced to endure the mindless tedium of television. No big deal. After breakfast Cameron takes us to Caracol, one of the major Mayan sites in Belize. Handy having an archeologist as a tour guide. The site is pretty impressive. Temple pyramid ruins indicating a sizable city. Don and I raced to the top of the tallest one and it's pretty high up, we were well above the tree tops. This evening is our first meeting with the students. Intros and class format stuff. Our students are a diversity of people. Some from the DOA, some from the Ministry of Tourism, a couple of US grad student archaeologists, Belize Defense Force, Police, and a lot of tour guides. The class packet looks really good. 36 students in all.

Friday March 21: Vertical day. We break the class up into two groups. A basic and an advanced group. Don, Jim, and Laura take the basic group for his lecture: "Sex, gravity, and nylon fiber." an intro into basic vertical caving technique. I have the remaining four people for haul/lowering system theory, anchor systems, and counterbalances. Then in the afternoon we rejoin Don's group at the river cliff site. We find that the site we wanted to use over the water was probably not good due to the fact that Don's group spotted an 8' crocodile there when they got there... We get the whole class together to have the advanced group rig haul and lower systems and haul and lower some of the basic class. Everyone seemed to have fun. I demonstrated a pick-off, how to rescue someone on rope and we'd had to backtie the hell out of the spindly little sticks they were using for vertical practice so it would hold Jim and I. That evening the four of us went to town for another round of drinking (a lively group, none of the four of us are regular drinkers...). This time I was disillu



sioned to find they made the Pina Coladas out of the same mix they use at home. On the walk back to the hotel we stopped at the Princess Casino so Don could teach us BlackJack (he'd just built his own table we were admiring before we left his place). They confiscated my leatherman at the door... I lost four bucks on the slots while waiting for the table to open. Then, with \$15 in hand we played blackjack for an hour or so, having a lot of fun and we all walked out having made a little money except Laura, who lost a buck in the slots. That brings my total gambling winnings up to about \$8. Time to quit while ahead...

Saturday, March 22: Class bright and early. This is routine for us, just have to change the lectures a little bit to fit local conditions. Lectures go mostly ok. Litter handling in the afternoon, same site as yesterday. First time I've ever had barefoot litter handlers. Never would have this in the US. One of the police was wearing his sidearm. Never had that either :) Different cultures and all. After the evening enrichment session one of the students took us down to a local bar, Coconuts. I swear I've spent more time in bars on this trip than I ever do. It was fun. I finally found someone I could pump for local history, vital statistics for Belize, etc.

Sunday, March 23: Mock Rescue day. I get out with the first group and meet Dave and Eleanor L., our patients. I take them in and place them, flagging off the archeologically sensitive sites on the way. Eleanor will be our walk out patient and Dave is the carry out. Dave is placed in a little side passage off the main stream. I'm to be his guardian angel. It wasn't ten minutes after I got him placed that we heard the students in the main passage. They quickly found him with a bit of yelling. The two barechested men who found him (another thing we wouldn't have in the US with our much colder caves and liability-scared society) quickly got word back out of the cave. The next two in had a little bit of first aid training and securely duct taped Dave's arm and leg. Duct tape and SAM splints, gotta love it, can't remember how many patients I've taken out of a cave so trussed. The medic arrived and

soon had Dave in the litter. Then started a marathon evac. Normally the guardian angel stays within a short distance of the patient but I could not, the litter team was moving too fast. I almost got trampled a couple of times until I backed off a hundred feet ahead. I had images of bootprints on my back. Funniest event in the whole evac was one student diving under the litter to be a turtle in a deep spot. He didn't quite make it to the surface and all we heard was somewhat urgent spluttering from under the litter. They made it out a few minutes earlier than our time estimate of 3pm, so did a great job. On the way home Don and I spotted the home of the running W. Inside joke.

Monday, March 24: Our big day off. We're so tired and it's gloomy and rainy outside so snorkeling and tubing don't sound as appealing as they did when we were hot. We decide to walk around town, our first real chance. While downtown we started to get hustled while waiting for Jim and Laura to pick out some stuff in a store, so once they came out we got away fast. Back at Cahal Pech village we went to the Cahal Pech Mayan site. We split up there and Don and I hung around the site exploring while Jim and Laura went into town for lunch. Later that afternoon I embarked on my quest to find a working internet site and managed to find one whose connection was working sporadically. After dinner we packed our stuff for the trip home.



Don Paquette in the entrance to Actun Tunachil Maknal
photo by Anmar Mirza

Tuesday, March 25: Dave (the driver, not the patient) picked us up in the DOA van and took us to the airport in Belize city. I almost lost my leatherman forgetting to put it on my check through baggage but they took pity on me and let me back in the back to stuff it in. The flight out was uneventful until we got to Houston. We had 50 minutes to get off our aircraft, go through immigration, pick up our bags, go to customs, check our bags back in, go through security, and board the same damn aircraft. Naturally we were in the back of the plane. Naturally we were at the end of every long line. I discovered that if you take a picture of friends while in line at immigration it causes a lot of excitement. Wish they'd posted signs like they did down in customs. Fortunately since I was using digital they let me erase the picture instead of taking the camera. We barely made the aircraft. I was running barefoot since I took my boots off to avoid being hassled at the stupidly hyperparanoid security. Jim and Laura made it into the aircraft at the last possible instant. We got back to Indy on time and made it back to Don's ok. I made it home around 2am.



1200 year-old skull in Actun Tunachil Maknal
photo by Anmar Mirza



Mock Resucue in Actun Tunachil Maknal
photo by Anmar Mirza

Motorcross Cave by Landon Parks

The cave is located approximately halfway between Bedford and Mitchell, Indiana. Although it is not a real long cave, I find it interesting nonetheless. I first heard about it from my Mom. She had grown up nearby and had always heard a lot about it. She has told me of some pretty wild tales about it. One was that a panther escaped from a circus and was found dead inside the cave. I really do not hold too much trust in that story, but find it interesting anyway. Another story I heard from a friend was that a few years back (1940s?), a man connected it to the Spring Mill area. I highly doubt this, although I am not ruling anything out at this time.

So, I decided to tell a friend of mine, Dave Everton, about the cave. He offered to go down there

and check it out. A few weeks later, Dave, Sam Frushour, his wife Patti Cummings, and I headed down to the cave. Upon arriving, we talked to my uncle a little, and then got our caving gear and headed to the entrance, which is not very far from the road; I would say about 1000 feet or so. Getting to it is no problem, although there is a *large* amount of trash in the sinkhole containing the cave, and inside the cave is a fair share of trash as well. I would say a good cleanup is due!

After we checked out the area around the cave, I headed inside, followed by Sam and Dave. (Patti stayed outside to read.) After about seven feet in, you come to a place were you're required to squeeze through a one-foot high section for a very short distance. After the small crawl, you come to



a passage that goes both left and right. The passage to the right contains most of the cave. Upon turning right, you will notice this passage is also taller than the left hand passage.

The right-hand passage is about three to four feet high and has a large amount of trash, including a few old tires. The passage soon ends, as it becomes too tight to continue. The passage to the left of the entrance crawl is about 20 feet long and is very tight in places. The ceiling is also very loose, and care should be taken. The average height is around one foot, but gets as tight as seven inches in one spot. There may be an opportunity for a dig in this section, where some breakdown shows that there might be a

passage under it. I hope to dig in the future.

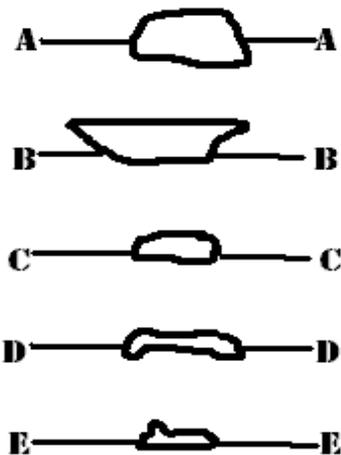
There are a lot of other sinkholes in the area, and I intend on checking some out. Hopefully, I can find more than one entrance to the cave (in case the owner fills in the current entrance). The reason I worry about the owner doing this is that a few years back, my Mom and I walked back there to find it had been completely covered up. At the time I had thought, "Well that's a cave I will never know about." However, a few months ago, I walked back there while visiting my aunt to find it was open with an entrance height of about 3 feet and the width at the drip line being 16 feet.



MOTORCROSS CAVE SKETCH MAP BY: LONDON PARKS

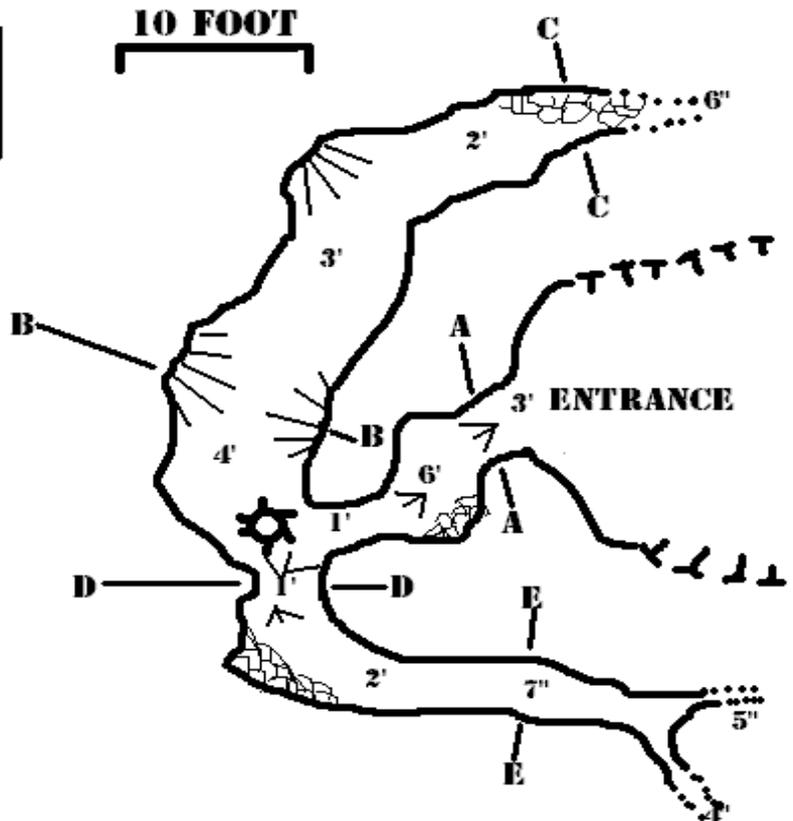
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TRIP ATT:

- DAVE EVERTON
- SAM FRUSHOUR
- LONDON PARKS

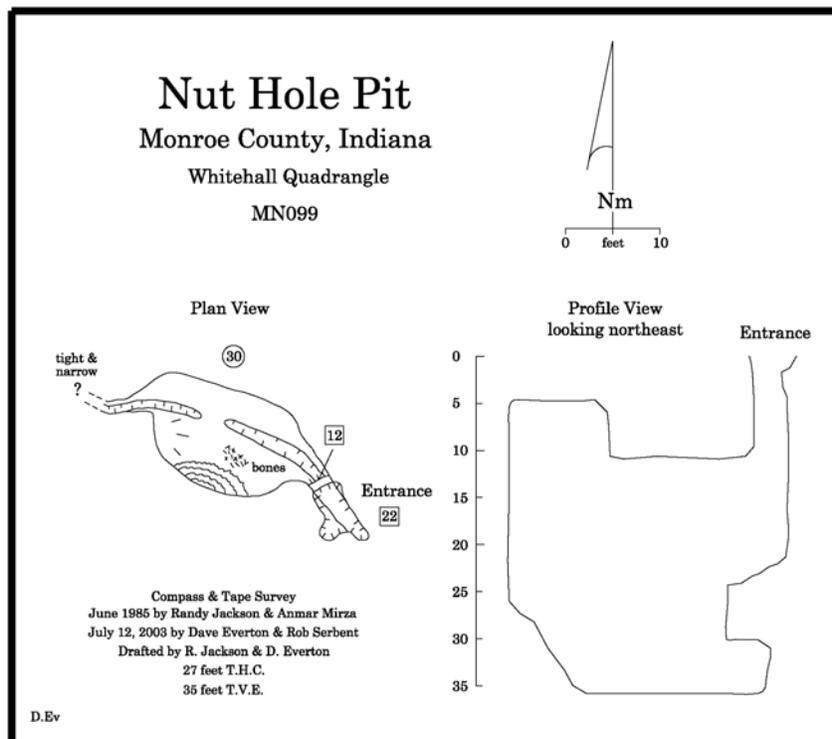


Nut Hole Pit by Dave Everton

Nut Hole Pit is located on the Scales farm west and slightly south of Ellettsville. The first known caver visitation and documentation was by Randy Jackson and Anmar Mirza in June of 1985, at which time Randy drafted a map of the small cave but didn't publish it. Early in 2002, Dave Everton's barber Kenny Scales (the Stylemaster of Ellettsville) mentioned the existence of a small cave with a vertical entrance on his property near Mallory Road. From the initial discussion, Dave believed it might not have been previously recorded by cavers, but after a visit on July 12, 2003 and another look at the Nut Hole map Randy had shared with him the previous year, as well as Randy's reported location, it was easy to determine it was the same cave.

Kenny had always been curious about his cave, and graciously took Dave & Rob Serbent there in his truck on a path his visiting brother John from Florida made easier by bushhogging. John also visited the cave that day, as well as their nephew Bob, who is into rock climbing.

The cave may be free-climbed, but vertical gear is suggested. The 3-foot by 4-foot entrance opening is a slot dropping 22 feet to a pile of logs and mud, most likely on top of rock. A second, slightly offset drop of 12 feet leads into a single dome room containing a small amount of flowstone. There is a crevice in the floor and along the west wall heading in what appears to be an upstream direction from the drain, and at one point widens out underneath, but would require physically moving solid rock to access. No significant airflow was noted, however. The limestone is sculpted and clean, and the cave contained some small bones. Life noted on the 1985 visit included salamanders, crayfish, a fly, and a worm. Only salamanders were seen on the recent visit. The cave is in line with three other sinkholes, none of which contain any accessible passage or noticeable airflow. Dave and Rob surveyed the cave on their visit, and Randy agreed to combine their efforts with his 1985 plan view to produce a map including a profile view and publish it with landowner approval.

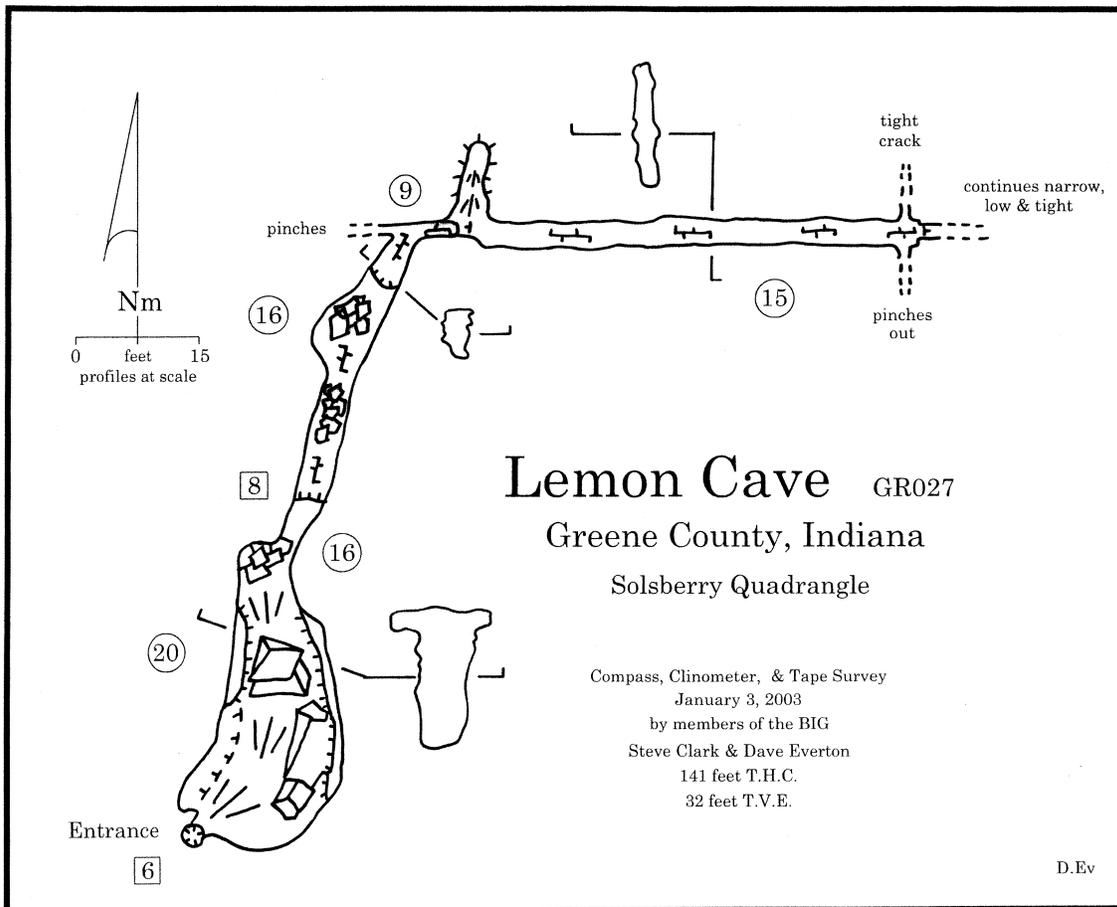


Lemon Cave by Dave Everton

Lemon Cave was visited and documented by George Murphy of the Southern Indiana Speleo Group (SISG) in 1972. The state files indicated that he, Art Gahimer, and George Murphy Sr. had mapped 243 feet. Personal communication with George Jr, Art, and Buddy Rogers did not come up with a map, and I couldn't come up with any evidence that it had been published (although a map was later found by Keith Dunlap). At the time, this warranted a resurvey to take place, and provided a nice short trip for Steve Clark and me.

The cave is developed in the Beech Creek limestone and is located on a hillside about a mile northeast of Sharkey Church, which is west of Ridgeport along IN54 in Greene County. The entrance is located in a shallow sinkhole measuring eight feet in diameter and two feet deep at

most. At an elevation of 635', the opening is an 18" diameter hole in sandstone requiring one to climb down six feet into a room that slopes downward, contains some breakdown, and has a ceiling height of about 20 feet. The passage leading on contains some breakdown and requires climbing up and down to negotiate. A small dome is soon encountered, and after a junction is reached with passages too small for humans, the passage continues narrow, low, and tight. Steve Clark crawled in part way and we then terminated the survey. A smaller person could likely continue, and perhaps accounts for the difference in horizontal cave length between the 142 feet we surveyed and the 243 feet reported to the files. We didn't notice any other negotiable passages in the cave on our visit of January 3, 2003. The only cave life noted was some spiders in the entrance room.

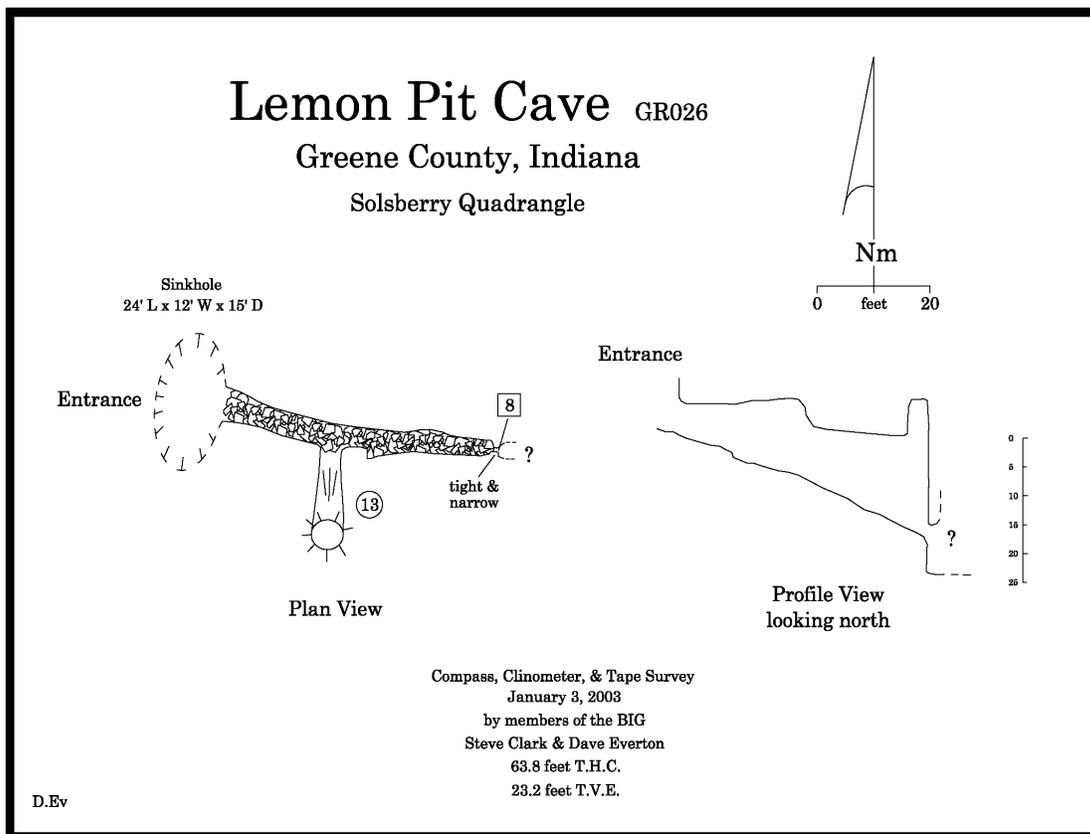


Lemon Pit Cave *by Dave Everton*

Lemon Pit Cave was visited and documented by George Murphy of the Southern Indiana Speleo Group (SISG) in December 1970. He reported it to be in a large sink opening and contain two pits measuring 8 and 30 feet deep. I'd located it in the fall of 2002 and returned to survey it with Steve Clark on a cold day with snow on the ground in January 2003.

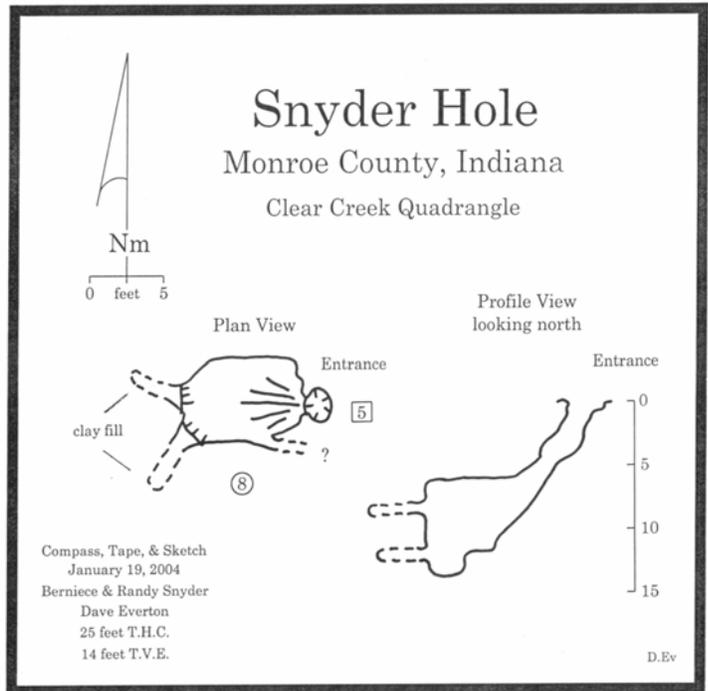
The small cave is located about ¼ mile southeast of Lemon Cave and slightly higher, at an elevation of 660'. The oblong sinkhole is indeed large for that part of Greene County, measuring 12 feet wide by 24 feet long by 15 feet deep, with the walk-in 10-foot high and 4-foot wide entrance located in the east side of it. The floor is comprised of very loose, shattered rock and the walls are about the same. Steve identified it as classic Beech Creek limestone. A short distance inside on the right, an offset joint contains a small dome of

sorts. Continuing down the sloping floor in the main passage, one reaches a small hole through which cave passage can be seen. It appears to be approximately 4 feet in diameter and Steve taped it at eight feet deep to a mud floor. Unlike the rest of the cave, the walls and floor appear to be very solid in the area of the constriction. However, we did not attempt to go through it. The way I understood it from talking with George Murphy prior to our visit, he believes this area holds some promise, although it didn't seem very appealing to me, nor did airflow seem notable at the time. Perhaps the 30-foot pit is beyond here unless it has been covered. I was certainly tentative while traversing the passage due to the combination of not knowing where the pit might be and the very loose rock making up the floor that shifts greatly with every movement. No cave life was seen, although an empty bird nest was seen on a ledge near the entrance.



Snyder Hole by Dave Everton

This one-room cave was found by local cavers Randy and Berniece Snyder close to their property near Kirksville. The entrance is in a sinkhole and requires climbing down five feet to the top of a mud slope that continues down into the cave at a 45 degree angle. The cave consists of a small room measuring approximately eight to ten feet in diameter and eight feet high at most. There are a couple of small passages that appear to leave the room but both appear to end quickly in clay fill. A small drain is present as well, but is clogged with rock. It doesn't appear promising, either. There wasn't any noticeable air flow on the day of the survey in January. The only cave life noted was a couple of crickets. Nothing else of interest was noted in the cave, although Randy found some deer bones on the discovery trip.



Linthicum Spring Cave by Dave Everton

This cave was reported and documented in 1970 by the now long-defunct Mid Illinois Grotto (based out of Champaign-Urbana). They were very active in cave exploration and surveying in various parts of Indiana and Kentucky. Although the cave files reported there to be 30 feet mapped, scouring of their old newsletters in the BIG library failed to come up with a map or even a mention of it in a trip report, although they had also surveyed and published nearby Linthicum Pit. Somehow (as has happened with various cave names), the spelling had been improperly recorded as Lithicum, but has since been corrected, since Linthicum was a family name.

During the process of doing some entrance verification work for the Indiana Cave Survey in early 2003, I left a note at the home of Brad Swain after a neighbor told me he owned the land I believed the cave to be on. Brad promptly phoned me and agreed to allow me to come out and take a look at the cave. He also mentioned meeting Jim Johnson one time while taking some extended

learning courses at Indiana University and had told him of the cave. I later phoned Jim to ask if he'd be interested in going to look at the cave together, and we agreed to check it out in warmer weather.

On May 13, 2003, Jim and I were cordially led down to the entrance in his 4WD truck by Brad in his Jeep. The water issued out from under a ledge. Jim plunged in and checked it out, reporting very low airspace and a possible squeeze of sorts. There was also an overflow tube, and after crawling a few feet into it and squeezing through a short low spot, he reported it to open up. I eagerly followed, and we subsequently checked out what I estimated to be between 150-200 feet of cave with an upper level lead. We departed unsure if the upstream end continued or not since we weren't fully prepared for caving. What we did see turned out to be a pleasant surprise, and for little to no effort, at that. It had paid off to look at it, and although it certainly can't be considered among Indiana's finest, it wasn't a slop hole.

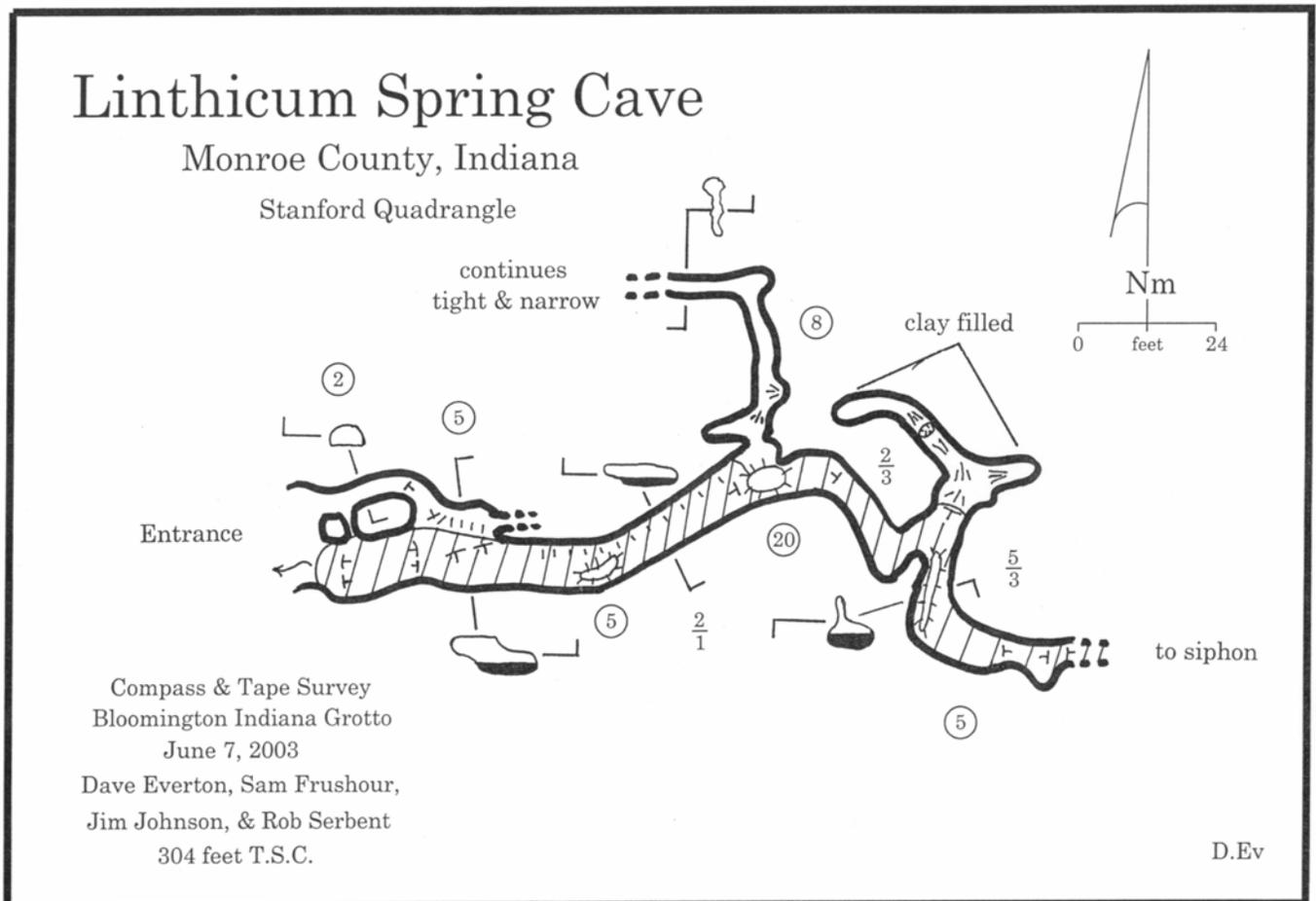


Saturday, June 7, 2003 found Sam Frushour, Rob Serbent, Jim Johnson, and me at the cave with the intention of surveying and exploring further as needed. We spent about two and a half hours inside, tallying a little over 300 feet of survey and taking a few photos (none of which turned out due to my camera messing up). Rob pushed the upstream area by holding his breath through a short 3-inch airspace spot, and popped into another airspace area with an 8-foot ceiling height. However, the cave sumped for sure in that room, and may be the future site of a cave dive by Sam. While exiting the cave, instead of taking the tube entrance crawl, Jim stayed in the stream and found it comfortable and easy in his wetsuit through the low area.

The entrance to the cave is 6 feet high by 10 feet wide, with a stream issuing from the right side. 25 feet left of the entrance is an 8-foot wide annex-type entrance that pinches out al-

most immediately after entering. The cave is entered using the arch-shaped 3-foot high overflow tube. After a short section of hands & knees crawl and then a very short squeeze, the passage opens up and is easy to traverse, averaging 5 feet high with a foot or more of water. Soon, a dome is reached, where a dry, narrow canyon passage eventually heads back toward the entrance. Further upstream, another parallel passage may be entered, but both ends are clay-filled. A little further in the main passage, the near-sump and sump are reached. Spiders and salamanders were noted in the dome junction room. The cave contained a few small speleothems here and there, but nothing special.

2006 Update: Sam and Chris Parks returned and dove the siphon at the upstream end of the cave, and the passage continues. They hope to return for further exploration.



Sullivaners Reunion *by Sam Frushour*

You know you have been going around the block a while when the people you caved hard with for years are no longer caving. That was the feeling I had, when on the 40th anniversary of the second Sullivan Cave Expedition, people showed up to celebrate who were a part of the endeavor to complete the mapping and further psychological testing of isolated groups in a cave. Three people were contacted who wished to participate, but could not do so. So there we were on August 16, 2003 gathered near the Sullivan Cave entrance with a picnic setup and reminiscing about how things were in 1963. Gathered at the outing were Fred Steinhoff, Darrell Kirby, Tom Rea, and Sam Frushour. Unable to attend were Leigh Lawton, Richard Blenz and Larry Mullins. Other expedition members not in attendance were Mike Wischmeyer who is reported by Darrel to be in Texas and had sold his soul to the Exxon Oil Company where he is an executive, Richard (Dixie) Dickson's whose whereabouts are unknown, Bob Larsen who was not found as well, Rodney Grant who is in ill health somewhere in Colorado, and Mike Mann, who also could not be located.

A brief recap of events leading up to the expedition is provided here for those who were likely not even born when the event took place. This was a time when we really did not know what worked best for getting a large cave mapped. The mapping of Sullivan Cave had begun in 1958 under the direction of Art Davis who (along with John Danner) discovered the lower level of the cave in 1956. In bits and pieces the cave map grew, but with several mappers losing interest in the late 1950s, effort lapsed until Art turned the effort over to Mike Wischmeyer in 1962. Mike organized six of his cave friends into an effort to map the cave by staying in it for two weeks in August of 1962. They had some logistic problems with supplying the underground camp and running a phone line for outside communication and up to the Quarry Room. These things cut into the time allowed for mapping, as did taking a couple of psychological tests for Dr. David Torbet of Butler University. They did map several thousand feet of passage, but the whereabouts of the main stream

in the north end of the cave eluded them and posed a haunting dilemma. On September 23, 1962 after the end of the first expedition, Mike Wischmeyer, Tom Rea, Leigh Lawton and Sam Frushour were working their way up the Flood Route of Sullivan River securing the phone line laid for the expedition. Just before the North Y they encountered a small canyon on the left that none of them had previously entered. While Tom and Leigh continued fastening up the wire, Mike and Sam squirmed into the canyon on their sides and after about 40 feet negotiated a tight left-hand right angle bend that led them into a muddy room with a canyon leading upward to the north. This led to the Bat Room and several leads that did not go, but one to the west was not taken due to lack of time. A couple of weeks later on October 7, Leigh Lawton, Ron Pflum, and Frushour followed that western lead through Side Crawl to a junction where they found themselves in known passage called Endless Crevice (also Crevice Passage). Arrows on the wall at this junction indicated that someone had previously come from both directions, but did not know what they had accomplished. Mike Wischmeyer's group coming from the entrance area had gone into the Waterfall Crevice area and the two groups never joined



Members of the Sullivan Cave Expedition at the 40-year Reunion from left to right: Tom Rea, Sam Frushour, Darrel Kirby, & Fred Steinhoff



that day. Mike had with him Richard Dixon, and Calvert Jarod. A week later, to the day, the connection of the entrance area and Side Crawl was made by Pflum, Lawton, and Frushour during mapping and with Wischmeyer going down Endless Crevice. As the survey progressed through Side Crawl to Endless Crevice voices were heard and the two groups joined whooping it up. The area from the Flood Route to Connection Y at Endless Crevice is known as the Crevice Connection Area.

Finding new passages helped spur renewed interest in the cave and especially for finding passages north of the Quarry Room. In 1960 a group of cavers that included Bob Armstrong and Patricia Humphrey went through a bathtub and into a room that required negotiating a bathtub to continue beyond. They passed a second short bathtub and found themselves in a small breakdown room with a side passage and a larger passage ahead. They continued ahead to a junction and went left scrambling through breakdown; eventually finding they had to climb a mud bank and scramble through more breakdown. They did not know it at the time, but they bypassed the main stream passage and a great discovery when they climbed the mud bank. They turned around in a breakdown-choked passage and left the cave. On the first expedition the side passage at the Safety Room was mapped and the way north not found. Wischmeyer, Lawton, and Kirby realized this mistake after the first expedition and wished to go north to find the way on from the Safety Room. On December 15 of 1962 Wischmeyer, Lawton, Pflum and Frushour slogged up to the Quarry Room and 3000 feet beyond to the First Bathtub. The water was reasonably low, so going through the bathtub meant you had to close one eye during the last ten feet of submersion. After going through the Bathroom and the Second Bathtub the breakdown of the Safety Room was climbed. On the first expedition the Safety Room was given that name because it was the only high ground found that did not appear to totally flood. Instead of going around the side of the rock pile as was done on the first expedition, when Safety Room Crawl as found and mapped, the group now went right over the top of the breakdown and encoun-

water going north. This passage brought them out on a high mud bank T-ing into a larger passage containing a partially breakdown-choked passage ahead. To the right a short distance was a breakdown room, but they were still looking for a major stream so they retraced and went west. After only a couple of minutes they climbed a breakdown slope with a dark void above and found themselves in what is now named the Coliseum, a huge room without a mountain in the center. Continuing on after oohing and aaahing in the room, they scrambled through more breakdown and found themselves at the base of a mud bank and after climbing it, another breakdown room was found. They noted that the 1960 group must have surely taken the side passage just beyond the room and did not take notice of the gaping darkness downhill to the left that was the main stream passage. On this discovery date the group walked and scrambled upstream past several breakdown rooms and high mud banks until they reached they reached the base of a gigantic breakdown slope that trailed off and up into a huge gaping dark void. They climbed what seem like forever and found themselves at the top of a great breakdown mountain approximately 100 feet high with a flat ceiling 20 feet above. This was the Colossus, the highest room in the cave. That December day of great discoveries set the stage for more exploration and ultimately for the Second Sullivan Cave Expedition.

Now there was a large stream chugging off to the north and seemingly no end to the cave. Subsequent visits found more passage and rooms. There was Room Five beyond the Colossus, then a four hundred-foot long near-bathtub, and finally Room Six located just before a Y junction where streams came from two directions. To the left was found a long rectangular room with a semicircular breakdown (Room Seven) at the north end. The right hand stream passage went to a room where the stream disappeared into breakdown at a the start of the room. Frushour moved some rocks along the right wall and climbed down to the hidden stream below.



They waded waist-deep through a small forest of rock pillars, eventually finding a stream crawlway on the right (Salamander Crawl) and breakdown on the left. Climbing between stone blocks they entered another large breakdown room. (Room Eight). Unknown to the explorers, they were standing within a few feet of where the main stream of the cave rises from a flooded passage. This fact was not found until surveying was going on only a week into the Second Expedition.

And so there we were on a warm August day, 40 years later, enjoying the company of our friends and loved ones with caving done and a good meal. Many of the attendees had gone caving the previous day or on this day and several guests did entrance to entrance trips so they got wet swimming out the Speed Hollow entrance. A great time was had by all.



The entrance to Buckner Cave on the Richard Blenz Nature Conservancy Property (photo by Jess Deli)



Richard Blenz Nature Conservancy *by Dave Everton*

It has long been the intention of property owner Richard Blenz to bequeath his land and underlying caves to the [National Speleological Society \(NSS\)](#) upon his departure. In 2005, a formal organization was formed and subsequently incorporated, with goals of establishing a solid management plan for the property that will enable a smooth transition in ownership when the property transfer eventually takes place, as well as for the future. It is now known as the Richard Blenz Nature Conservancy, Inc.

Access to the property and Buckner Cave will be determined in part by a person's membership level within the Conservancy. Non-member visitation is being permitted, although arrangements must be made a minimum of one week in advance. To ensure the greatest possibility of being granted access, it is of vital importance that each visitor reviews and understands the property rules and regulations before requesting permission. Each visitor must also sign a Release and Waiver of Liability Agreement prior to visiting the property.

The Conservancy Board

President: Anmar Mirza
Vice President: Patti Cummings
Secretary: Dick Blenz
Treasurer: Sam Frushour

Graffiti Removal Project

A project is underway to remove graffiti in Buckner Cave using some special equipment owned by the Peppersauce Cave Conservation Project and managed by Ray Keeler. Cavers and groups from all over the region are invited to participate in the massive project. Project workday summaries will be posted to the website (below).

If you know of any scout troops or other groups that may be interested in participating, or if you are interested in participating or supporting the effort, please contact Dave Everton (info on inside of front cover).

To visit the Richard Blenz Nature Conservancy Web site, go to:

<http://www.caves.org/grotto/big/rbnc/rbnc.htm>

