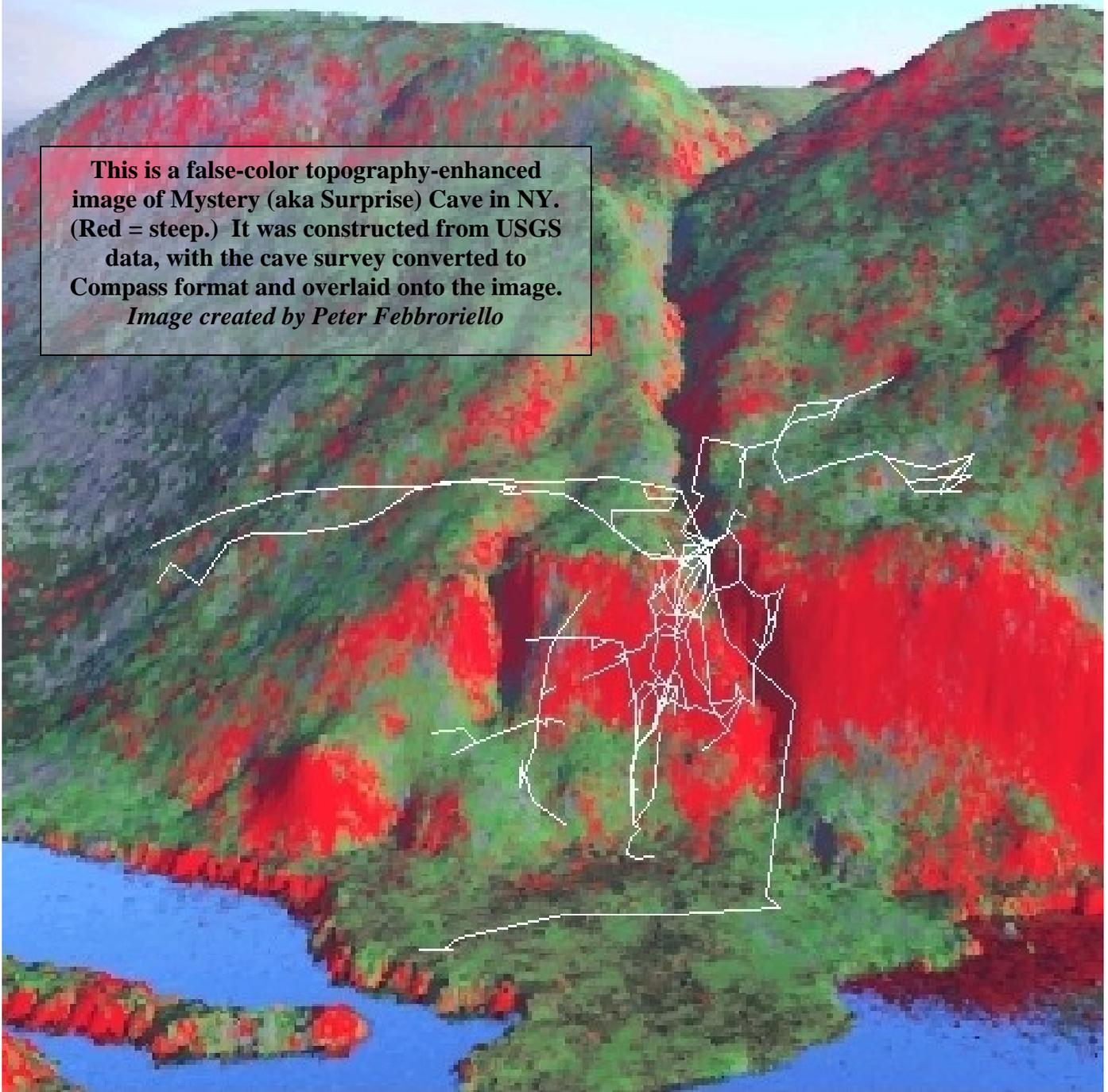


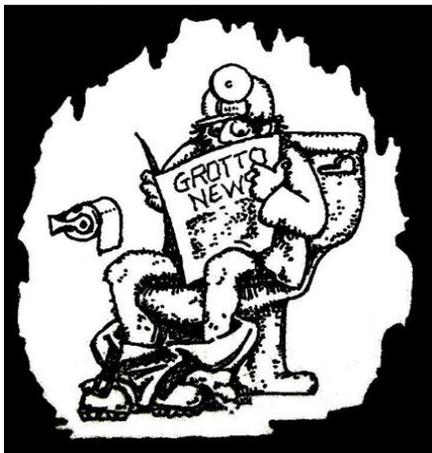
Underground Movement

June 2005

**This is a false-color topography-enhanced image of Mystery (aka Surprise) Cave in NY. (Red = steep.) It was constructed from USGS data, with the cave survey converted to Compass format and overlaid onto the image.
*Image created by Peter Febbriello***



The Central Connecticut Grotto (CCG) invites you to join us in the exploration, study and conservation of caves



The Underground Movement is published monthly by the Central Connecticut Grotto (CCG) of the National Speleological Society (NSS). Reprint permission requires the approval of the Author or UM Editor.

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CCG Website

The CCG website is at www.ctcavers.org

This is an excellent way to keep informed about caving events that come up at short notice, and to review some of our Grotto history and photos.



CCG Meetings

Meetings are held the 3rd Tuesday of each month, starting at 7pm. These are reasonably informal, and generally consist of a short business meeting followed by a caving presentation. Summer meetings are usually held at a member's house in Southington; please contact any CCG Officer for further information. Meetings for the remainder of the year are held at HRP Associates in Plainville. Non-members are always welcome.

Meeting Directions

HRP Associates
167 New Britain Road
Plainville, CT 06062
Contact Bob Simmons on (860) 793-6899 ext 134

- From Waterbury direction, take I-84 East:
Take Exit 34 (Crooked Street). Turn left at the end of the ramp. At the next light, take a left onto Rte 372 (New Britain Ave). Proceed straight through the first light. Immediately after the second light, turn right into the first driveway by the HRP sign.

- From Hartford direction, take I-84 West (or Rte 72 West):
Exit 33 puts you on Rte 72 West. Move to the right lane and take the first exit - Exit 2 (New Britain Ave Plainville). As you approach the lights, move into the second lane from the left (labeled Cooke Street). As you turn left through the light, take an immediate right into the driveway by the HRP sign.

The front door is on your left. Ring the doorbell, enter the building when you hear the door buzz, and take the stairs up to the second floor.

CCG Dues

Regular Membership Dues: \$5 per year
(NSS members can opt to pay \$20 for a 5-year membership)

Associate Membership Dues: \$2 per year
(Non-voting – intended for family, youth, or full-time student members)

Institutional Membership No Charge – yearly renewal
(Open to educational, scientific and conservation organizations)

National Speleological Society

The National Speleological Society (NSS) is the national organization of which CCG is a part. CCG members are encouraged to join the NSS. The NSS website is at www.caves.org

2813 Cave Avenue
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NSS News submission guidelines can be found at www.caves.org/pub/nssnews/style.html

Calendar of Events

Events are not limited to what is on the calendar! Contact fellow grotto members to create your own trips. Please notify the Editor in advance about any new trips, or changes to trips, so the calendar can be kept accurate.

JUNE 2005

- June 11** – Trip to Benson's Cave in NY with Tom Oakes (Vertical gear required)
- June 12** – NCC Meeting
- June 21** – CCG Monthly Meeting at Norm's house from 6pm
- June 25** – Trip to Knox Cave in NY with Bob Simmons
- June 25 to July 2** – NCRC rescue training in Huntsville, AL

JULY 2005

- July 4 to 8** – NSS Convention in Huntsville, AL
- July 16** – Roxbury Mine mapping trip with Bob Jacobs
- July 30** – Valcour Island (Lake Champlain) cave swim-through trip (tentative)
- July 19** – CCG Monthly Meeting at Norm's house from 6pm

AUGUST 2005

- August 6** – OFMC trip to West Virginia with Bob Simmons
- August 16** – CCG Monthly Meeting at Norm's house from 6pm
- August 20** – Roxbury Mine mapping trip with Bob Jacobs
- August 27** – Trip to McFails Cave in NY

SEPTEMBER 2005

- September 3 to 5** – Old Timer's Reunion in West Virginia
- September 16 to 18** – Fall NRO in Hancock, Massachusetts (Hosted by the Southern New Hampshire Grotto, and Larry Botto)
- September 20** – CCG Monthly Meeting at HRP Associates 7pm

OCTOBER 2005

- October 18** – CCG Monthly Meeting at HRP Associates 7pm



Minutes of the CCG Monthly Meeting

May 2005

05/17/05

Secretary's Report – minutes from last meeting approved.

Treasurer's Report – (Norm Berg) Received approximately \$100.00 in dues.

Conservation – (Garth Varian) no report.

Membership – (Cheryl Kenez) we have two new members, Jennie Lolley and Georgette Cardano.

Communication – (Web Monkey) the membership form was updated on the website and now it opens properly.

Vertical – (Tom Oakes) absent

Safety – (Doug Truitt) absent

New Business – Bob Simmons reported that the campsite for the NRO is all set and everything is a go.

He brought up an issue that was brought to his attention. Steve Janesky and Ken Nichols have been working on a trailer to haul the grill Steve made and they will need money to finish it. The VCA donated another propane grill that will also be hauled on the trailer.

Old Trips – Garth Varian, Mark and Diane Lucas attended the VAR and had a good time. They did Benedicts, Scott Hollow, Friar's Hole, and others.

The Coxes went to Belize on a scuba and fishing trip and while there did Blue Creek Cave.

Upcoming trips – see calendar.

Meeting adjourned. 

News Flash!

From Norm Berg

The CCG inflatable boat has finally been sold! The boat was rescued by CCG members in 2001, from the clutches of an underground river. It was sold on consignment at Pass-It-On Sports, in Southington. The split was 60% to us, 40% to them. They sold the boat for \$950. We got a check for \$570. The paddles with the boat cost \$30, so the profit to CCG is a total of \$540!



EDITOR'S COLUMN

Greetings from the Northwest!

Stacey and I have now left hot and sunny Tucson behind, and moved to a new home in Klamath Falls, Oregon. We visited seven National Parks on the way, hiked into the Grand Canyon, and even went tourist caving. We are now ready to experience what the Northwest has to offer, rainy weather and all.

But first, there is little business in Alabama to take care of. The NCRC rescue training and the NSS Convention are back-to-back this year, in the same area. I hope to catch up with some of you at one event or the other.

Thanks again to all those who recently submitted items for the UM. Don't be shy – share with us your memories of a recent (or not so recent) trip, or perhaps some other caving thoughts.

Safe caving,



Jansen Cardy - NSS 50665 

June CCG Meeting

Cavers,

You are invited to the Central Connecticut Grotto meeting this Tuesday, June 21 at the summer meeting location (Norm Berg's house in Southington). This will be preceded by the usual (optional) dinner and climbing practice.

Bring dinner items for yourself, as this is not a potluck. A gas grill, plates, cups, utensils, condiments, etc are provided. Bringing munchies to share is most appreciated. A rope or two will be rigged from a tree for rope climbing practice, so bring your cave-climbing gear.

The official meeting will start at 7:30 pm, however you are welcome to arrive as early as 5:30 pm. Children are welcome - there is a swing-set and sandbox. The meeting is held outside, and the weather can be cool and windy. In case of rain a covered cooking and meeting area is available.

If you want to show your digital caving photos (or videos), contact call Norm Berg to arrange for computer, projector, and screen set up, or bring your own gear.

Climbing is dependant on experienced climbers willing to rig and supervise the climbing. If that sounds like you, please come and assist. The rope and rack is provided.

A short caving related presentation is being planned.

If you need directions or further information, contact Norm at (860) 621-2080, or email treasurer@ctcavers.org 

Letters to the Editor

Hey everyone:

Just a reminder, we need to replace our Vice-Chair and Secretary - and I would like to do it for next meeting. The Vice Chair position is primarily responsible for organizing programs and activities for the club, such as getting people to run trips, getting videos or speakers for the monthly meetings, and that sort of thing.

The Secretary's position consists primarily of taking notes (minutes) at the meetings and reading the past minutes at the meetings so they can be accepted by the membership (someone who attends most of the meetings is needed for this position). Please let me know if you would be interested in filling one of these slots for the rest of the year; we really need the help to keep the Grotto running.

Also, the grotto gets quite a few requests for information about caves, caving and stuff like that from the general public. To date, Norm has been answering these emails as he can (thanks Norm), but it would be nice to have someone volunteer to be a sort of outside contact person for the grotto. If you would like to be that person, contact Norm or me.

Bob Simmons
Chair, Central Connecticut Grotto

Editor's Note: Congratulations to Bob Simmons, who was recently elected by the members of the Northeastern Cave Conservancy to be a Trustee of the NCC. Keep up the good work!

Hi all,

As many of you know the NCC is working on purchasing the streambed over Pompey's Cave, including the upstream insurgences. The owner, Wil Neff, is ready to part with the approximately 3 acres.

Anyone out there in caving land know someone willing to pitch in on this purchase by producing a subdivision survey? If you do this type of work professionally, the NCC can send you a letter so you can deduct the value of the work on your taxes.

Please contact me at rockeater@mindspring.com

Bill Folsom,
VP, Northeastern Cave Conservancy, Inc.
<http://www.necaveconservancy.org>

It doesn't pay to make waves.

I thought that as an officer of the NRO I'd be in a position to make some positive changes to the organization (NRO) that could be good for all. But then I found out the hard way that some from the old school did not want change. I also found out that the NRO is actually run by two individuals that are not even officers. The officers of the NRO are just puppets, and have no more rights than a non-NSS member.

I now know not to get involved with caver politics in the Northeast – it's just not worth it. Things in the Northeast are just going to go on as they have been for the last 30 years, except for the fact that membership will dwindle down to a few. Many new members are quickly discouraged from getting involved because of the current politics, some don't like being hassled for money all the time, and others because of the lack of organized trips, and others because they find themselves doing all the work and get little or no recognition for their efforts. Even I find myself in this latter category.

It seems to me that Wal-Mart should not be in charge of economic development in the US, just as Emily should not be in charge of all caving in the Northeast. But she is, and no one else seems to see it. I've been caving now for 22 years, and have seen over 400 different caves on thousands of trips. I've cooked at almost every NRO since 1999, and tried to get a little more involved. But now I finally realize that I'm not wanted – all the signs are there.

So do I throw in the towel? I'm close! I will do the next best thing. I am announcing my caving retirement, with a few exceptions. I will still cook at the next couple of NRO's, until I can find a replacement. I will also participate in any outside (the NE) caving trips, such as OFMC trips. I will not be a trip leader any more, I will not affiliate myself with any local grottoes or the NCC, I will not support Speleobooks in any way, and I will never voice my opinion in the Northeast again.

I'm still hearing rumors about how Steve did this or that (all bad, and things I didn't even do), coming from those select few who screwed up things around here, or just needed a scapegoat for their own wrong doings. Ever since I moved here I have been considered a threat. And it's not just me – Ken has gotten the same treatment since he moved here. I've met other local cavers around here who have had the same nasty experience with those who do no wrong. Now they too no longer bother, and just drop aside.

I've offered to be a trip leader to anyone wishing to see something new in the area, but have had no takers. Not one! Everyone is big on talk – they just want to look good at the time. I just want to go caving when I want with no strings attached, but not here, NOOO it's just not tolerated.

Sincerely,

Steve Janesky
NSS 47988



No-Bottom Pond Cave

By Peter Febbroriello

No-Bottom Pond is in Austerlitz, NY, and sits on top of a mountain. The water in the pond slowly drains out through a small hole, as seen in the aerial photo. The cave is on the Southern shore, and was recently mapped by myself, Carol Hanny, Christina Colpitts, and Mike Eaton. Mapping began in 2001, and is still in progress. The map shown here includes results of the latest dig.

The cave is owned by Jonathan Schor, who lives nearby. He would like some help fighting plans to blast the rock cliffs on a nearby bend of the Mass Pike. The blasting is a part of construction that will create a new commercial island on the thruway.

There are artifacts and Underground Railroad locations that may be compromised by the blasting. The cave is open for exploration, and you only need to contact Jonathan for permission.

Jonathon's address is 100 Shoreview Drive, East Chatham, NY 12060. Phone (518) 392-9593.



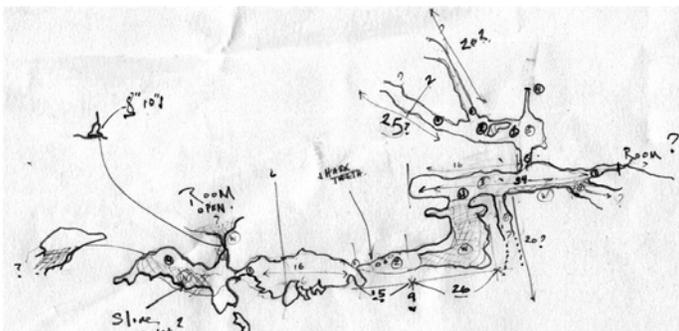
No-Bottom Pond in the winter, taken by Peter Febbroriello from a Cessna flown by Christina Colpitts. The cave survey plot is visible on the left side (South shore).



This is the Eastern extent of the system, seen as the straight angled line in the bottom of the plot shown in the aerial photo.

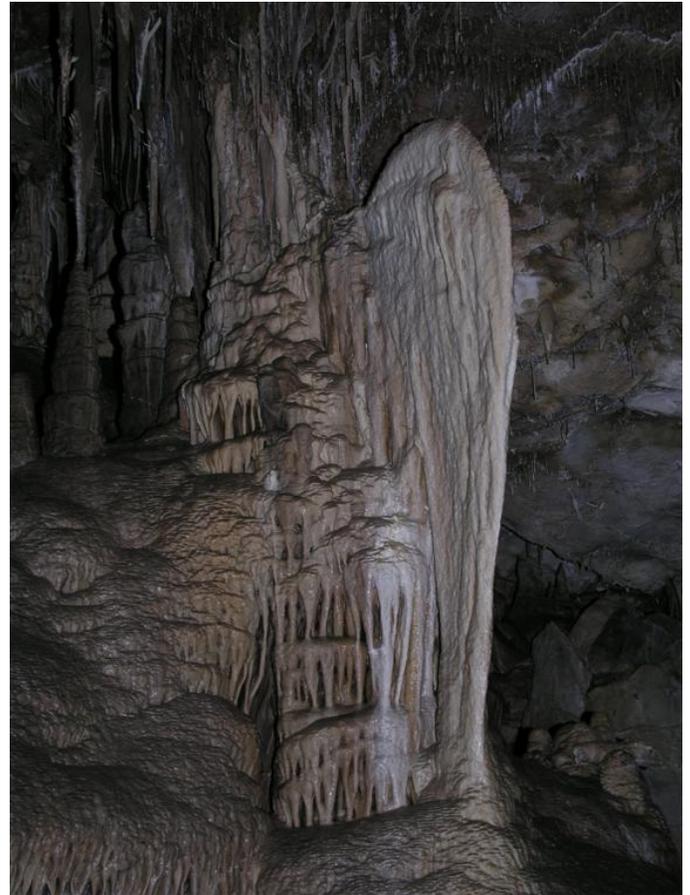


Mike Eaton's sketch map of No-Bottom Pond Cave, alongside a Compass line plot with LRUD-generated passage dimensions. Cave survey using Brunton Compass and tape. Some dimension data estimated from the sketch. Surface survey line plot connects surface sinks and openings.



A close-up of Mike Eaton's sketch map.

Tourist Caving in Nevada



ABOVE: A shield formation known as the "Angel's Wing", one of the highlights of our recent visit to Lehman Caves in Great Basin National Park

BELOW: Our intrepid tour guide, a National Park Service Ranger that I nicknamed "Radar".

Photos by Jansen Cardy



Beyond the Twinkle Room

By Bob Jacobs, with Peggy Gilbert

Editor's Note: *The following article was supposed to accompany the map published in last month's UM. It was accidentally left out, so here it is along with the map again.*

This is a story about which a lot of people probably know a little and a few others quite a bit more. We're writing it to hopefully add a little to the already considerable knowledge of Clarksville Cave, and more hopefully for us, to get some feedback and help from the caving community.

According to my caving diary, it was over eight years ago that I first ventured into the crawl off the Twinkle Room at the end of the Ward Section of Clarksville Cave. My initial impressions were that it was damn tight, but had an intriguing airflow. A few years later, Peggy and I pushed as far as we could into this crawl to the top of the area we call "The Slot" (see map). It looked as though it might go, but there was quite a bit of stream-type cobble and gravel that needed to be removed first. It all looked undisturbed.

Over a few months during 2001, Peggy and I (and occasionally one or two others) visited the site a few times, mostly side trips, once to deliberately dig at the site. On our first trip, we removed the gravel from The Slot and found at the bottom that the passage made a sharp turn to the left. From here, we could see that a very low passage went straight again for about 10 feet and then took what looked like a right hand turn out of view. One immediate problem encountered was a strategically placed rock, which appeared to be both in the way of proceeding and of getting a good view of the passage. The enticing thing was that there was that light, steady flow of air.

The Rock, as we came to affectionately know it, is somewhere in the neighborhood of 24 x 12 inches x 6 inches high. It could be wobbled slightly by hand, but we couldn't move it from its foundation. I'm sure it could have been easily moved if there was just a little room to do so, but in that cramped spot it proved daunting. After a couple of failed attempts (on at least two separate trips) we were at wits end what to do with it.

Peggy started a running joke (likely based on truth) that men just can't see the big picture, instead becoming fixated on something anal like trying to move The Rock. Even if we were able to move it somewhere, it would still be in the way. Instead, we should be trying to figure out if ANYBODY could ever get through the passage ahead, even if The Rock didn't exist.

She, being the smallest person, managed to morph herself around the left-hand turn past the outside of The Rock. She then slithered a foot or so farther forward and became lodged at the hips. She thought that maybe she could have squished forward some more, but knowing that no one else was small enough to get anywhere near her to help, she wisely decided to back out. From her furthest point of entry, she still wasn't sure whether there was enough loose substrate that could be moved for a reasonable size person to ever be able to get through. She also proclaimed that there was another healthy rock behind The Rock (great!).

We were pretty frustrated – I because I'm too big to effectively work in there, and she because she was tired of doing most of the work in a place that might never pan out – and we didn't revisit the site again until 2005. On Jan 29, we took a few people in, and for the first time I got the impression that someone else had been digging around in there. It didn't look like they had gotten any farther than us.

Peggy started digging around the base of The Rock, and we removed quite a bit of gravel by passing it back in canvas bags. Then one of the men (of course) started prying at The Rock with a crowbar and felt really proud to have managed to move it from its nest a few inches. Of course, it was still in the way and no matter where he moved it, it would still be in the way. But, oh my, what a feeling of pride! (Those men!)

Not knowing what to do next, Peggy and I returned on Feb 12 to survey the crawl (see map) and report our efforts to you. It looked like someone else had again been at the dig site within the past two weeks. It looked as if some rocks had been moved around, but no progress was made. Sounds familiar.

Here's a blow-by-blow description of the site for those who wish to visit (or maybe, more comfortably, avoid). The crawl is similar to many in New England where you are virtually wearing the cave most of the time. It was very difficult to survey due to the tightness, and for 190 pounds of me, it's especially a treat. The crawl is pretty horizontal, with a net drop of only one foot over the 55 feet from the entrance at the Twinkle Room to the dig area.

It becomes very low right away and to make matters worse, there are a number of strategically placed rocks near the beginning that make the one foot high ceiling much less so in two spots (labeled "pinches" on map). From there you proceed straight for about 10 feet into what we call the "Big Crawl". The name's a joke of course – it's still very low - but it's one of only two spots in the whole place that I can turn around in.

Past the Big Crawl, it gets narrower again with a passage going off to the left. This passage goes straight as an arrow for ten feet and turns abruptly right for about 4 feet until it ends. There is a small hole (maybe 1 x 5 inches) at the ceiling of the dead end passage through which you can make voice contact with the room on the opposite side. You can't see directly through to the other side of this hole, but you can see the glow of a light through it. It looks like somebody's dug a bit at the dead end, but they probably figured out it wasn't worth doing.

Proceeding past the left hand turn, one comes to the first real fun part of the trip, the place we call the "Crotch Cruncher". This is one of those wonderful squeezes where the widest part is closer to the ceiling, but it narrows to about 8 ½ inches in the middle. For me, it's not too bad getting in (when facing forward). You get sideways and guide your body high through the squeeze by using your legs for support.

However, there's no place beyond the Crotch Cruncher where I can turn around, so I have to back out. Holding the body high moving backwards (now using your hands for support) is much more of a challenge. If you slip or relax, you slide down into the tight spot. Anyway, as often as not when I backed through this squeeze, the tight spot would catch me right between the legs. A few bouts of compressing my soft parts led to its name.

After negotiating the Crotch Cruncher, the passage heads left for 7 feet and then takes a right into "The Slot" (where we started our dig). The Slot is another wonderful spot for the circumferentially challenged. It goes downward at 10 degrees and would be a spacious 2.5 feet tall except for a large, flat breakdown slab that cuts the area almost in half and forms the ceiling. Then (of course) there is a smooth bedrock bump jutting up from the floor that narrows the space to about 8 ¾ inches.

Getting down the slot is easy enough with gravity assistance despite the chest and hip squashing, but getting back up is lots of fun. It's too tight and narrow to use your legs. You push backwards with your hands, then while you're still compressed you have to start making the turn with your feet, before you can bend your knees over a six-inch ledge into the room above! (You have to experience it to appreciate it.)

Anyway, here lies the frustration, especially for me. All I can do is get down far enough to peer around the corner with one eye over The Damn Rock. Peggy and other smaller people can actually do some work down there, but it's VERY tight. Most of my description of what's gone on in the dig below The Slot has been vicariously gleaned from others.

The inset on our map shows our survey oriented and scaled to a "Lake Room and Beyond" map by Ernst Kastning et. al, that is on the Northeast Cave Conservancy website. The two surveys line up fairly well. Their Twinkle Room is a little more rotund, ours more gracile, but we didn't spend much time sketching in that area. We only resurveyed the Twinkle Room for reference. The two maps are exactly the same length and key points line up, but things diverge significantly beyond the Crotch Cruncher.

We don't know what they saw during the previous survey. The only things we know for sure are 1) surveying in there is very difficult (our instruments were fogging, and we were getting tired and mud covered), so it's possible our precision was beginning to wane by then; however, 2) we've been in there a bunch of times and we're confident that the passages pretty much go the way our map illustrates.

Peggy thinks a small person might be able to push the dig site and get a look around the corner to see if this torture chamber is worth pursuing. We invite anybody to give it a try, or if someone has already tried it, we would really like to know what you saw. And for you men who are into Rocks – if you can figure out how to move, crack, pulverize, vaporize or transport that thing out of there, go for it. Anyway, there is airflow (although it may be coming from the surface) and the crawl is trending generally in the direction of Pauley Avenue.

There's a bunch of maps and some neat stuff to read about the history and management of Clarksville Cave on the Northeast Conservancy web site:

<http://www.necaveconservancy.org/Clarksville/clarksville.html>

Please contact Peggy Gilbert or Bob Jacobs at uconnjka@mindspring.com or (860) 429-7067 with any information relating to this site.

IMPORTANT NOTE: We didn't actually read the Clarksville Cave Management Plan until after we did the work above. You should know (as we discovered) that you must contact and get permission from the Cave Manager (Thom Engel, Mike Chu or Chuck Porter) before doing any digging in Clarksville Cave, and that any new discoveries made must be surveyed "as you go".



