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# THE SPELEOGRAPH

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PUBLISHED BY THE OREGON GROTTO OF THE NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

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Vol. 16, no. 10

October 1980



The SPELEOGRAPH is a monthly publication of the OREGON GROTTO (a local chapter) of the NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY. Opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of either of the above organizations. The SPELEOGRAPH is distributed free of charge to Oregon Grotto members and is exchanged for the publications of other organizations with interests similar to those of the Oregon Grotto. SUBSCRIPTIONS are: \$6.00/year, plus \$2.00/year if mailed outside the U.S.



The OREGON GROTTO meets regularly on the third Friday of every month at 7:30 p.m., at the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry, 4015 S.W. Canyon Road, Portland, Oregon 97221. Membership dues are: Individual, \$6.00/year; Family of two, \$7.00/year; Family of three or more, \$8.00

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## CAVER'S CALENDAR

OCTOBER 17th, Oregon Grotto General Meeting,  
7:30 pm. at Oregon Museum of Science and Industry.

APRIL 14-17, 1981: The Far West Cave Management Symposium has been re-scheduled, tentatively on the preceding date, to be held in Portland. Additional details and confirmation of the above date will follow.

## PRESENT EDITORS TO GET R&R

Becky Taylor and Don Denbo have generously offered to edit The Speleograph for a few months, which will give your current editors a boost in wrapping up some personal goals. As we have no present home for the grotto's process camera (now resting on Roger's garage floor), Jo and I will continue to do the dark-room work and Patty and Roger will continue to man the (person?) the press. Becky and Don, you can't imagine how we appreciate the relief: thank you.

## MALHEUR CAVE IS CLOSED

Malheur Cave has been closed to the public until further notice, due to extensive vandalism. The road is now posted with No Trespassing signs. The possibility of permits for cavers is being investigated, so don't rock that boat by visiting there until things settle down.

### COVER PHOTO

The Upper McKenzie Pit No.2. Right over the edge to [Craig Skinner's] left is a 95-foot-and-then-some vertical drop. From a transparency by Linda Audrain. See story in this issue.

## \$ MONEY \$

### DROPPED FOR NON PAYMENT OF DUES

Benedict, Earl	Perkins, Mark
Larson, Charlie, Jo	White, Mary, Jr.
Long, George, Cathy	

### DUES DUE JUNE

Chase, David  
Snyder, John, Wanda

### DUES DUE JULY

Nieuwenhuis, Luurt, Janette

### DUES DUE AUGUST

Crowl, James

### DUES DUE SEPTEMBER

Benedict, Ellen, Ben	Schoonover, Wayne
Howarth, Frank	Slabic, John, Vada
Lonegon, Richard	Thelin, Dar

### DUES DUE OCTOBER

Czop, Bernie	Sexton, Dave
Hollibaugh, Trey	Silver, Roger, Patty
Hovey, Carl	Skinner, Craig
Jones, Dave, Grace	Urman, Steve
Rears, John	Zimmer, Gerald

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If you wish to have a receipt or membership card mailed to you. Please send a self addressed stamped envelope.

**LETTERS**

27 August, 1980

Dear The Editors:

Your editorial in the August 1980 Speleograph, concerning the NSS Board of Governors and its recent appointment of a new NSS NEWS editor, raised but did not answer some interesting questions.

One of the more useful activities of grotto newsletter editors can be to view, explain and comment upon the internal workings of the society. This provides information to the membership and feedback to the officers and directors of the society (or a region, or a grotto). It is much less useful to hint at problems but fail to discuss them fully. I, for one, would be very interested in your perceptions of "the bizarre aspects of (the NSS Board's) recent deliberations at the NSS convention".

The NSS has always lacked perceptive analysis of its political activities. Outside the society we may get too much of it but inside the other extreme prevails. Very few newsletter editors, or others, write about the objective and subjective bases for the choices made by the NSS - at any level. Some amount of carefully researched and analyzed exposition of political decisions in the NSS would be quite useful - and even entertaining.

I am not, myself, a neutral observer, but I can detect in the recent appointments of NEWS editors an element of indecision, or rather lack of unanimity, about the nature and direction of the society. If one were to attach labels from traditional political language, one might identify "liberals" and "conservatives" on the Board, and perhaps observe that the appointments of the last and present NEWS editors reflected a shift in the dominance of one or the other "wing." Both decisions were made by narrow margins.

Please tell us all your views and interpretations of this (and other) decisions.

Sincerely,

s/Rane L. Curl  
NSS Board Member

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Editors:

In answer to the letter from Roger Silver and page 73-Aug. '80 Speleograph:

Roger asks why the secrecy about the action that the board took about picking a new editor for the NSS NEWS. Feel free to contact me to answer questions about this matter.

I did not know that people felt that there was anything secret. There was no secrecy intended.

At the '80 convention in Minn., the BOG picked a new editor-Jay Arnold-during the board meeting on Friday. Doug Rhodes was present to represent himself; Jay was not there but had two representatives from his So. Cal. Grotto.

Unfortunately, it appears to me that some of the votes were cast based on one's personality rather than how well one could do the job. Final vote was Doug 6, Jay 8.

Jay will start with the Sept. issue and the Oct. issue will be coming out soon after.

Doug had agreed to do through August.

We are thankful that Doug has helped the past editor through hard times and kept the NEWS in circulation.

Remember that the BOG members are voted by the membership. If you don't like the way they vote on the board, vote for others when the election comes up. Speaking of BOG members: we would like to see more people run for board from the West Coast. If you or anyone you know would like to run, please contact me. BOG members should represent members of the NSS-some just represent themselves and their personal views...

Whatever.....

Good Cavin'  
s/ Bob Liebman  
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[While all NSS Board members receive The Speleograph, these are the only replies to the August editorial that were received. We are preparing a reply. The (current) Editors.]

**RECENT ADDITIONS TO THE LIBRARY**

Recent additions:

Halliday, William R. Director, Western Speleological Survey. Post-Eruptive Mudflow Impact on the Mount St. Helens Caves, Washington. Washington Speleological Survey Bulletin #14 (Western Speleological Survey ser.no.61). August 1980, 4pp.

A follow-up to the initial post-eruptive investigations of July, 1980. Emphasis on caves north of Ape Cave and the effect of mudflows thereon and the possibility of some cave being inundated by mudflows.

Clyde M. Senger, Professor, Dept. of Biology, Western Washington University, Bellingham, Washington. Observations on the Cave Basalt Lava Flow, Mount St. Helens, 23-24 August 1980. Washington Speleo-



logical Survey Bulletin #15 (Western Speleological Survey ser.no:62). August 1980, 6 pp.

Details mud flow parameters and observations of effects on vegetation around Ape Cave and caves north of Ape Cave. Observations of mammals, amphibians and invertebrates are included with recommendations for future study.

David R. McClurg, Chairman, NSS Public Relations Committee. Exploring Caves: A Guide to the Underground Wilderness. Stackpole Books, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, 1980, 287 pp.

To be reviewed for a future issue of The Speleograph.

## ERRATA RESIDES IN OREGON

by Mark Perkins

Actually I enjoyed a nice one-week vacation with Nancy in September, and wanted to let you know a couple of things that pertain to OG people. First is of general interest. If you travel to the Lava Beds National Monument to cave, a nice place to spend an hour or so first is at the Klamath County Museum. Much local history is presented here and most of it concerns the two main events of Klamath areas: the Modoc War which took place in and around the Lava Beds, and an excellent diorama of local mammals and birds. The dioramas rival some of those at the Tillamook museum.

Second is a new cave(?) lead. While spending one afternoon in in the Strawberry Mtns. hiking up to the lake, around it and back, I noticed on the Southeast side of the lake a knoll (you are already up 6000 ft.+) which contained an opening similar to shelter caves of central Oregon. We had no time to investigate, but it is still there.



Lastly, we stopped at the John Day Beds and talked at length (at least I talked at length) about bats, and Officer's Cave. The people there still do not know if the cave is on the monument, BLM, or private property, but some work is being done to determine exactly who owns the cave. The person I spoke with also referred to the area as Karst-like, and spoke as if there were more caves. It might be nice to send him some OG information.

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## OREGON'S DEEPEST NATURAL VOLCANIC PITS: Cheap Thrills in Big Holes

by Craig Skinner

Century Pit, formerly reported as Oregon's deepest natural pit at an even 100 feet, is no longer the longest drop around. A newly investigated group of volcanic vertical conduits in the McKenzie Pass region has proven to be significantly deeper. These seven morphologically-related vents, only four of which have been completely explored to date, measure a maximum cumulative depth of 129 feet (so far). More quantification later on (when I collect more rope) will take this down at least another dozen feet, though I'd be surprised if it went too much farther than that.

I've tentatively and collectively named this assortment of vents and spatter cones the Upper McKenzie Pits.

The conduits, source vents for a Holocene lava flow, are located in the same general region as a number of other previously described vertical conduits - Century Pit, Moss Pit, Santiam Pit and the Little Belknap Cave System. They were located in October of last year by myself and Scott Murdock while on a short trip to check out a lead that reported some shallow pits. They turned out, however, to be none too shallow.

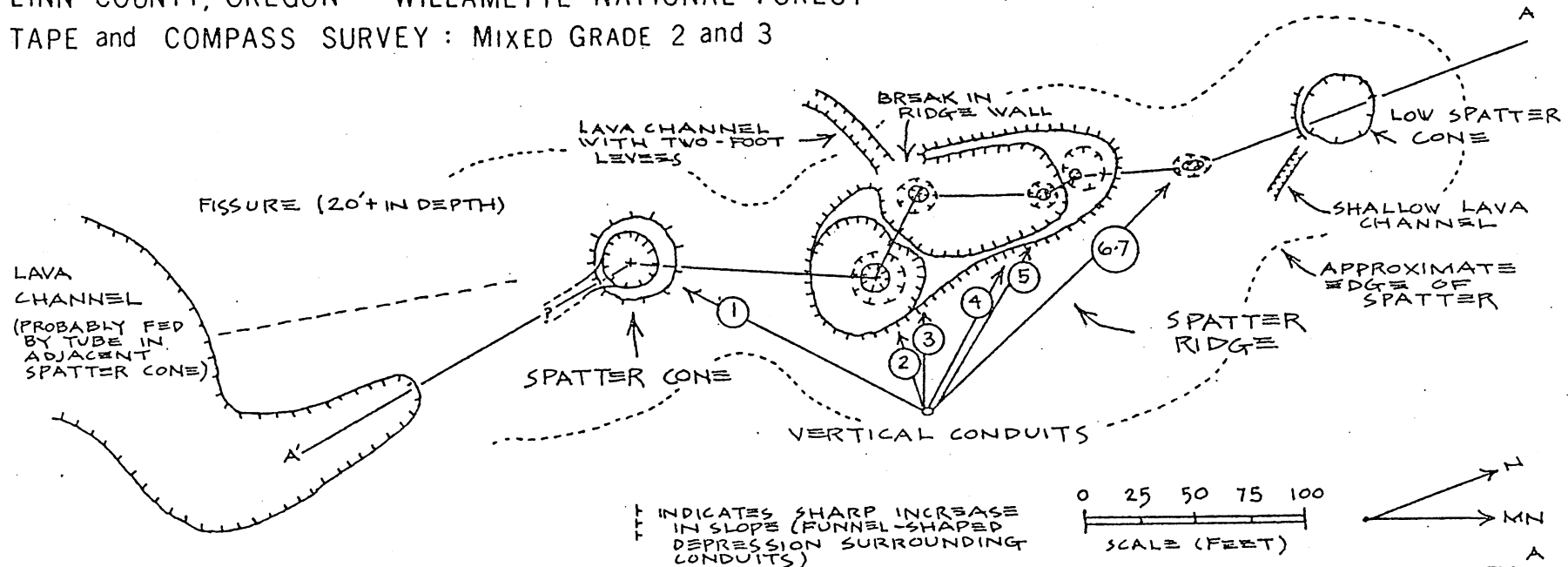
The conduits are as dangerous as they are spectacular, and frankly, climbing around this place gets me nervous and sweaty. Much of the upper portion of the pits is loosely welded spatter that you can disassemble with your hands - all waiting to drop on me and my friends. I'll be mildly relieved to finish my survey - this should be sometime next year. More details then.

I'm currently studying the Upper McKenzie Pits as part of my thesis research on vulcanospeleology and areas of Recent volcanism in Oregon. If these pits sound familiar, I'd appreciate it if you would let me know. I'm gathering any and all background information that I can about my study areas. My address is 2396-1 Patterson St., Eugene, Oregon, 97405.

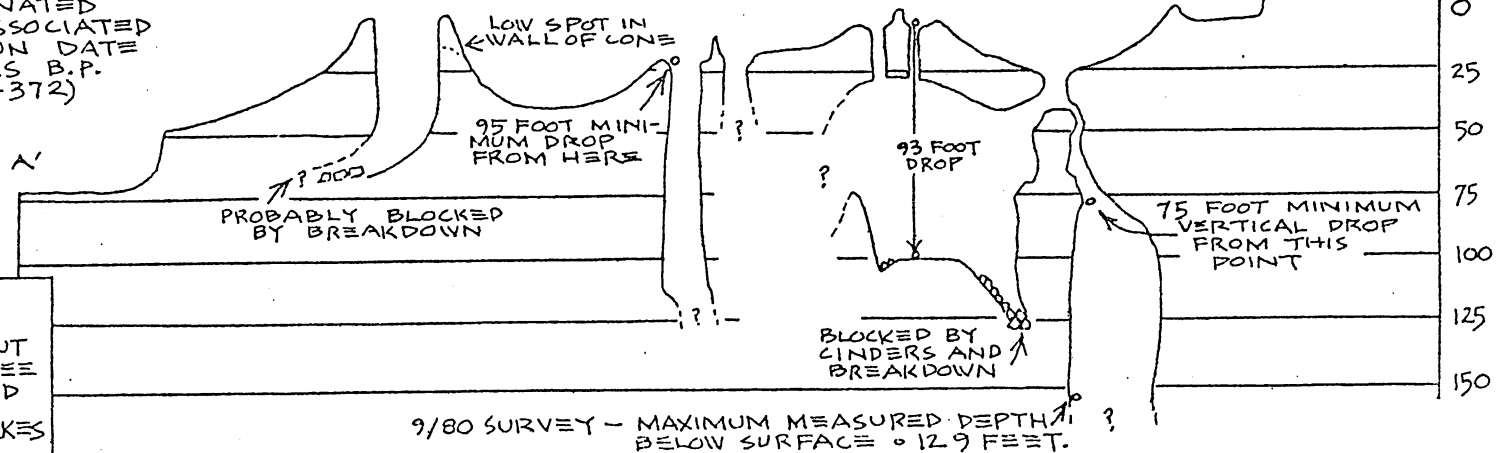
# UPPER MCKENZIE PITS : A PRELIMINARY MAP

LINN COUNTY, OREGON - WILLAMETTE NATIONAL FOREST

TAPE and COMPASS SURVEY : MIXED GRADE 2 and 3



THE FLOW THAT ORIGINATED AT THIS VENT IS ASSOCIATED WITH A RADIOCARBON DATE OF 3850 ± 215 YEARS B.P. (TAYLOR, 1967, WSU-372)



CLIMBING NOTES:  
 FULL VERTICAL GEAR  
 REQUIRED ON ALL BUT  
 #7 CONDUIT. GOOD TREE  
 ANCHORS BY #3 AND  
 #6-7. LOOSELY  
 WELDED SPATTER MAKES  
 FOR RISKY ENTRY.

SURVEY BY G. SKINNER AND S. MURDOCK 10/79 - 7/80 - 9/80

DRAFTED BY G. SKINNER 9/80

## LEE'S CAVE

My nephew Lee was coming for vacation so I decided to take a 5-day camping trip to the Newberry Crater area. After a stop at Larson's I was armed with some interesting cave leads in the area southeast of Paulina Peak. On Monday Lee and I packed up the car, picked up Julian, an old friend of Lee's, and leisurely made our way over McKenzie Pass to Bend. After a pit stop and an orientation side trip to top of Paulina Peak we set up camp at South Ice Cave.

Tuesday morning we set off to an area northeast of East Butte where we ran into one of the major problems with finding anything in this area. The cave leads in this area nearly always refer to fire roads as landmarks—and as you all know, fire roads multiply like rabbits. So, after some car mapping of the fire roads and dead reckoning of the position of the "X" marked on the map, we chose one of the major fire roads. After about an hour of searching, Lee spotted a deer disappearing into the ground—and Lee had discovered a cave entrance.

After thanking the deer, we entered a crescent shaped opening leading to a small, sand covered ledge and from there to what we eventually found to be V-shaped cave with the entrance at the apex. The right hand passage is fairly short with an almost completely sand covered floor ending at a collapse where two small entrances mark the top of a sand pile which completely blocks the tube at this point. Further exploration on the surface revealed a corresponding collapse sink about 20 feet in diameter with small entrances to animal burrows all along the edges.

From the entrance the main section of the cave goes off to the left (north) and is easily traversed for about 100 feet to where the tube narrows down to about an 8-foot cross section which requires some crawling to get to the next room. This passage is fairly close to the surface as there are roots hanging into the cave from the ceiling.

This next chamber is a large S-shaped room with a 10-foot lava fall about half way down the east wall. Care is needed to avoid bumping the lavacicles here and there on the ceiling of this room. The lava fall leads to a flat, oval shaped room that resembles a flat apple with a bad spot in it. The large room leads to a smaller room which marks the end of the negotiable cave, about 500 feet from the entrance.

After leaving the cave we made the following observations: We decided to name the cave Lee's Cave; there was no evidence of human visitation—only the tracks of the deer we found hiding in the entrance; there was no ice in the cave (the lead referred to an ice cave); this is probably not the cave described in the lead.

The second attempt to locate any other cave east of East Butte was unsuccessful. We did locate an old camp that has been used for many years. It is in a (mostly man made) clearing about 0.3 miles off Road #2012, down an unmarked fire road about 200 yards. South of this camp, on another fire road, we found an 8-foot hole approximately 75 feet from the road's edge. It was blowing cool air but rock fall has made it impenetrable without excavation.

We struck out on the lead at Box Butte. We walked into the brush about 1200 feet on the northwest side of the butte but found nothing. Visibility is poor there.

## PICKINGS CAVE: A Trip Report

by Bob Davis

Because of the Red Zone, my caving activity had been nil until Labor Day, when I made a short trip to Picking's Cave. I called Dick Cheney on Sunday, and he told me to meet him at the Forest Service Fire Camp at Trout Lake (He is a member of the Red Zone fire suppression crew.) After leaving work at 2:00 pm., I rushed home to scrape together (literally! , some gear. Somehow, I found enough mashed, gray garbage to feel satisfied. Thereafter, I sped to Trout Lake, nearly falling asleep several times along the way.

The Fire Camp at Trout Lake is the main base of operations in that area, complete with supply tent, large trucks, and a security system. I had to wait nearly an hour before communications finally reached Dick. I went to his tent, where I stumbled upon a three-handed poker game. One of the participants accompanied Dick and I to my car—her name was Sue Hollenbeck, and she turned out to be a more hard-core crawler than either Dick or myself.

After thrashing through ubiquitous vine maple, we reached the lower entrance of Picking's at about 4:45 pm. As we had noticed before, the tightness of the lower entrance is rivalled only by—ironically enough—the upper entrance. Once we squeezed over the inconvenient, mushroom shaped chunk of breakdown that gives the lower entrance a nasty quality, I opted to lead. Of course, I promptly got us into a side tube, even though Dick kept saying, "Say, Bob, don't we always stay to the right on the way in?" We eventually reached the main junction in the cave's lower end, and we proceeded to explore the end of a previously unexplored, breakdown-choked lead. Sue insisted on going first; she soon proved her worth as an excellent caving "ferret." She slipped into a pocket in the rockpile. After some furious squeezing and squirming, she decided to remove her helmet. Finally, she slid through, calling to us that the passage "opened up." Unfortunately, this "good"

news was only short-lived. Just as Dick and I bulldozed through--losing skin and gaining bruises--Sue made the understatement of the day: "Wait, I think this is the end." Great! we thought. Dick insisted on further exploration and some furious digital quarrying but he came up empty. We departed, slowly and carefully, and headed for Owen's Crawl.

We zipped through the crawl in record time, due in part to the layer of soft mud that coated the floor. The keyhole at the end of the crawlway is an impressive formation, extending for several feet. Also, the "end" of the cave is filled with much loose silt. Sue and I did some excavating, while Dick explored a side lead. He came up with nothing; we had been there before. Next, we agreed to explore the only remaining "new" passage we knew of, a relatively roomy crawlway leading roughly to the east of the keyhole. Again, Sue eagerly volunteered to lead. That was fine with me, as my headlamp decided to go out at that time. Dick and Sue moved onward. In a few minutes, I followed. As with two other areas of Picking's this crawlway was littered with stream deposits, including charred wood, sediment, and bones. A few small insects took turns bothering us. Aha!, we thought, another entrance. A few minutes later, Sue yelled back, "Hey, haven't I been here before?". Indeed, upon Dick's arrival at her position, we realized the crawlway was just a side tube, and that it rejoined the main Owen's Crawl after going for a mere 75 feet. Relief was mixed with disappointment, as Dick and I realized that five years of exploring new cave had come to an end. Of course, we may be wrong--other passages might exist.

We fought our way back out through the cramped passages and entrance. Upon reaching the outside, we encountered a small bat dive-bombing the entrance. After pausing a few moments to observe this intrepid creature, we struggled back through the tangled forest in the driving rain. Back at Fire Camp, I downed plenty of good coffee and weak soup to prepare for the trip home. After all, I had to be at work at 5:30 the next morning.

[Bob has left Hood River for college. We hope school doesn't curtail his caving and consequent cave stories. His new address is: Bob Davis, P.O. Box 11100, Stanford, California, 94305]

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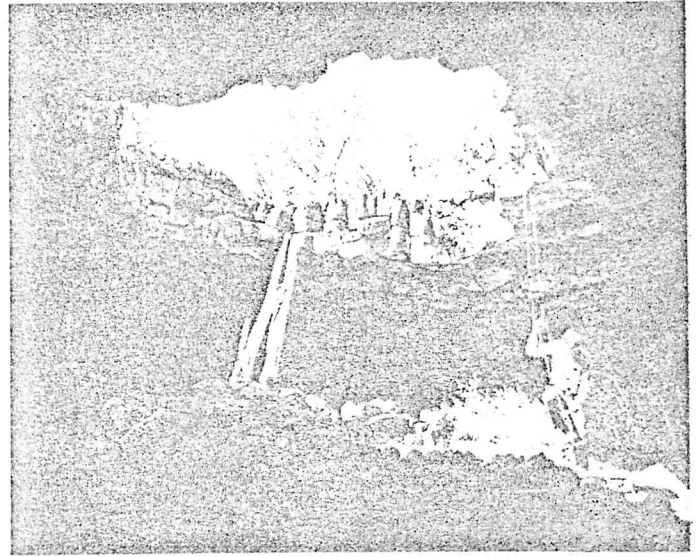
## 15 YEARS AGO IN THE SPELEOGRAPH

### GROTTO STORE

Ethan Scarl has made arrangements with the Justrite Company to obtain Justrite equipment at retail minus 25%. He also has some Fibermetal hats ordered and will have them at the next meeting if they arrive in time. He also has carbide and emergency lighting kits. (Vol. 1, no. 3, p. 1)

## DERRICK CAVE REVISITED

by Charlie Larson



Entrance to Ben's Cave, from a b&w by the author.

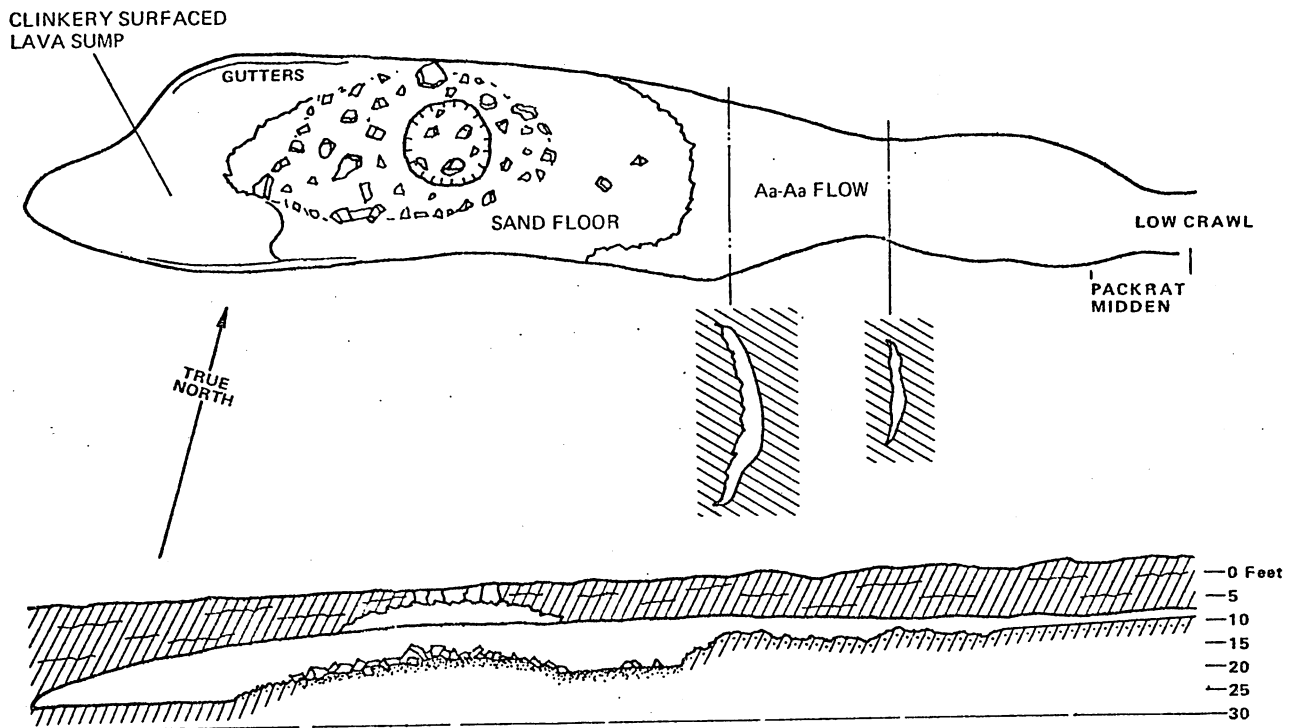
Over the recent Labor Day weekend Jo and I rambled through the Fort Rock District (Deschutes National Forest visiting familiar caves, a newly discovered cave and following up leads. We were joined at Derrick Cave by Ed and Kathy Block.

Sunday mornig Ed and I mapped Ben's Cave. [Formerly known as Ben's Whole: see photo of Jim Wolff sitting in a boat like lava block, on the cover of the July, 1971 Speleograph.] The cave was mapped in 1971 by Larsons and Talent but the notes were subsequently lost. Despite its proximity to the main entrance of Derrick (750 ft.), Ben's isn't easily found because of the conformity of the surroundings and the lack of any surface expression of the entrance.

### RE-SURVEY NEEDED

O.G. Library and OSS files include several maps of Derrick Cave and the smaller caves around it; some published, some not. None, however, recognize the existence of Ben's Cave. Comparison of all the available maps indicates that Ben's just about has to an upper level of Derrick. Pope's Derrick Cave Profile (published in the Speleograph, vol. 14, pp. 142-43) doesn't show Ben's but does show just barely enough overburden, at the appropriate location, to accomodate it. According to Pope's account, the surface survey was done after dark, so Ben's could easily have been overlooked as there is nothing to indicate its presence. Since the entrance to Ben's is a 12-foot overhang all the way around it may be fortunate that Pope's after dark survey missed it.

Like Derrick's entrances, the entrance to Ben's Cave



**BEN'S CAVE**

LAKE COUNTY, OREGON  
 From a survey by Charlie Larson  
 and Ed Block, 8-31-80

is a picturesque opening with a sandy floor surrounding the pile of breakdown which once occupied the entrance. Downtube the floor is the congealed surface of a lava slump. The uptube section is occupied and nearly occluded by an aa-aa flow. Near the end of the uptube section there is a remarkably large packrat midden.

**VANDALISM AT DERRICK NEARLY COMPLETE**

Vandalism of the lower level of upper Derrick Cave, once stocked with civil defense provisions is nearly complete now. Only one or two water cans remain and someone has even removed the steel door which once closed the chamber. It was removed by burning through the rather substantial steel hinges. Why anyone would lug a torch and tanks all the way to Derrick and down into the cave, just to recover \$10.00 worth of steel is beyond understanding.

**GROTTO TO PLACE AND MAINTAIN SIGNS FURNISHED BY B.L.M.**

The Vale District, BLM, has agreed to furnish aluminum signs warning of the illegality of digging in and around archeological sites (most often caves in Oregon) without permission from the managing agencies. The grotto members will place, and replace if necessary, the signs inside the entrances of caves where unauthorized digging has been taking place. Please check with the conservation committee regarding availability of the signs and the known locations of pot hunter's activities.