



THE SPELEOGRAPH

PUBLISHED BY THE OREGON GROTTO OF THE NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Volume 17, number 11

November, 1981





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: \$6.00/year, plus \$2.00/year if mailed outside the U.S.

EDITORS:

Becky Taylor
Rick Pope

PLEASE SEND EXCHANGE PUBLICATIONS TO:

Oregon Grotto Library
13402 N.E. Clark Road
Vancouver, Washington 98665

OREGON GROTTO OFFICERS:

Chairman
Patty Silver
912 N.W. 50th Street
Vancouver, WA 98663
(206) 693-3600

Vice-Chairman
Rick Pope
3539 S.W. Nevada Ct.
Portland, OR 97219
(503) 244-0908

Secretary
Becky Taylor
3539 S.W. Nevada Ct.
Portland, OR 97219
(503) 244-0908

Treasurer
Donald W. Denbo
433 N.W. 6th #3
Corvallis, OR 97330
(503) 757-8358

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

Clara LaMarche
Jo Larson (206) 573-2161
Steve Poulson (206) 693-4402
Roger Silver (206) 693-3600
Dave Smith (206) 254-6511

Grotto Storekeeper:
Rick Pope
3539 S.W. Nevada Ct.
Portland, OR 97219
(503) 244-0908
Work: (503) 641-4141
Ext. 109

Trip Coordinator:
Dave Smith
8912 N.E. 80th Street
Vancouver, WA 98662
(206) 254-6511

Program Coordinator
Clara LaMarche
3963 N.E. 14th
Portland, OR

OREGON GROTTO PRESS:

Roger H. Silver, Pressman
Patty Silver, Assistant

Home: (503) 282-1808

Grotto meetings are no longer being held at The Oregon Museum of Science and Industry (OMSI). Until further notice, meetings will be held at the Southwest Washington Research Unit, 1918 N.E. 78th Street, Vancouver, WA. See directions on the calendar.



COVER PHOTO

Northern California's Catwalk Cave in the Gaping Holes System offers the visitor large, impressive passage.

(From a slide by Rick Pope)

GUANOTES

Happy Turkey day to all of you Grottoites - hope to see a lot of you at the Oregon Grotto holiday caving trip in Bend over Thanksgiving. Headquarters is Wind Cave on China Hat Road south of town. See the display ad in this issue for further information.

The photographs in your October **Speleograph** must have been retouched by goblins. No, really, the machinery that we use to produce negatives has been updated, and it is not geared to fine work like halftones. The ones in this issue have been produced via another positive process, which will be up to the usual standards. Our apologies to those of you who contributed slides and pictures to the last issue and were disappointed with the quality. We were, too!

Last month's cover, by the way, was taken from a slide by Becky Taylor, and is of formations in Thanks Cave, Trout Lake, Washington.

The United States Department of Agriculture, Pacific Northwest Region and the Gifford Pinchot National Forest have distributed copies of the Mount St. Helens Land Management Plan (Final Environmental Impact Statement) and are recommending Alternative 7. There is a great deal more information on the caves, and a copy will be available to peruse at the November General Meeting. However, if you wish a copy of your own (free) write or call the office of Robert D. Tokarczyk, Forest Supervisor, Gifford Pinchot National Forest, 500 West 12th Street, Vancouver, WA 98660. Phone: (206) 696-7500. R. E. Worthington, Regional Forester, in a letter dated October 15th and included in the EIS, indicates that the decision will be implemented on November 30th and that any request for review must be filed within 45 days of October 15th.

See you at the next meeting which will be a good opportunity to nominate yourself or your friend (enemy) for an office in the Oregon Grotto.

--- Rick & Becky

**Have a program?
Contact our
Program Coordinator
Clara LaMarche**

NOVEMBER						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

DECEMBER						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

Cavers Calendar

JANUARY						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

FEBRUARY						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

November 20 - **Oregon Grotto General Meeting** - 7:30 p.m. at the Southwest Washington Research Unit, 1918 N.E. 78th Street, Vancouver, Washington. Heading north on Interstate 5, take the 78th street exit and head east ¼ mile on 78th. You will come over Hwy 99. The facility is on the right, directly across from the Grover Electric Building. Look for a cyclone fence. Parking in the rear. Agenda: Nomination of candidates for Grotto offices. If you cannot attend and wish to volunteer yourself or another, please contact Jo Larson, Nominations Chairman: (206) 573-1782. Slide Program: **Caves of the Bend Area** by Charlie and Jo Larson.

November 27-28 - **Oregon Grotto Thanksgiving Trip to Bend, Oregon** - tentative grouping place: Wind Cave; further information may be obtained by phoning the Trip Coordinator, Dave Smith, (206) 254-6511, or attend the November General Meeting for details.

November 27-28 - **Thanksgiving Trip to Lava Beds National Monument** - Tule Lake, California. Planned by Don Denbo with principal emphasis on study of Crystal Ice Cave in conjunction with the Park Service. If interested, call Don at (503) 757-8358.

December 4 - **Oregon Grotto Executive Committee Meeting** - 7:30 p.m. at the home of Roger and Patty Silver, 912 N.W. 50th Street, Vancouver, Washington.

December 18 - **Oregon Grotto General Meeting** - Tentatively scheduled for Southwest Washington Research Unit in Vancouver, Washington, but subject to change. Watch for details in December **Speleograph**. This is ELECTIONS MEETING. Please plan to attend.

December 31 - **Oregon Grotto New Year's Party** - at the home of Roger and Patty Silver, 912 N.W. 50th Street, Vancouver, Washington. Keg will be provided, but bring your own snacks and other liquid refreshment. More information coming in December **Speleograph**.

ELECTIONS COMING

A. Who may vote: Any Voting Member of the Oregon Grotto (See Constitution, Article III, E).

B. Who may be elected: Any member of the Oregon Grotto who is eligible to vote in Grotto elections, and who is an NSS member.

C. Election Procedure:

1. Nominations for officers may be made by any member eligible to vote in a Grotto election:

a. In person at the November General meeting.

b. In writing if received by an Executive Committee member prior to the November General Meeting.

2. The order of nominations and voting shall be: Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, and Treasurer.

3. The Executive Committee shall mail ballots to the eligible Voting Members in reasonable time for a mailed return to any Executive Committee member prior to the December General meeting.

4. The counting of votes shall take place at the December General meeting, using the ballots received by mail, and those ballots submitted in person at the December meeting.

5. The candidates receiving a plurality of votes are elected. In the event of a tie, it is the responsibility of the Executive Committee to cast the deciding vote.

6. The election results are to be announced at the December General meeting.

D. Term of Office: Elected officers will start their term of office on January 1, following the election, and will end their terms on the following December 31.

**Oregon Grotto By-Laws
Section 1.**

THE RISE AND FALL OF THE OREGON GROTTO CAVE FILE

By Charlie Larson

I'd like to begin this story with an apology. I was asked to write something "historical" many months ago, but have been too busy elsewhere until now. This particular tale is about the Oregon Grotto's cave file and what happened to it. But at the outset, please be aware that other caving organizations have periods of uncertainty regarding their files, too. I recall that at the first NSS Board meeting I attended as a Director (1969), the NSS Cave Files Chairman requested guidance on how to go about denying an NSS member's request for lists of caves for every state in the U.S. A contradiction of purpose that **commonly** occurs with community-owned cave files is best typified by a ruckus three to four years ago when a prominent eastern caving entity was unable to retrieve information from the NSS Cave File for its own use.

It is my personal opinion that community owned cave files are a bust, and always will be. On the other hands, cave files, per se, are an indispensable assist to speleology (as distinguished from sport caving). Private files are effective in filling this need - but that's another story. Having rendered my opinion, I will from this point on do my best to be objective and to that end will limit the use of names.

HOW IT ALL STARTED

The Oregon Grotto had a preoccupation with cave files from its inception. For example, a mailing to prospective charter members advised, "This Grotto is being formed for several reasons. First, it should stimulate interest in caving and the study and mapping of caves and promote a continuous inflow of information to the central filing system . . ." The original Grotto constitution made no mention of a cave file, but a revised version, adopted a few months after the Grotto was chartered included the following provision: "II., C. To compile and maintain as complete as possible a cave file for the benefit of Grotto members and the NSS."

A vigorous campaign to accumulate cave files material followed and members were asked to contribute cave lists. Several different cave report forms were generated; some original, some modified versions of NSS forms. A principal Grotto project, as reported in the 1964-1965 report to the NSS was "Cave Reports Index for Oregon." Material was accumulated in the Grotto

library, then at an officer's home, and in the Fall of 1965 it was reported to members that the cave file was a cave file with ". . . list of over 140 caves. . .," "compiled basically from the NSS printout of caves in Oregon . . .", ". . . plus the cave files of a couple other individuals."

At about the same time, a proposal to publish a "Caves of Oregon" surfaced. It quickly became somewhat controversial and nearly indistinguishable from the cave file effort. Thus began a six-month period of unrest over the cave file, during which various parts of the collection were exchanged, withheld, rearranged, and one Oregon cave list was assembled and subsequently published (in 1966) as **Named Caves of Oregon**. In late 1965, a new executive committee appointed a "Curator of the Files," and began an attempt to collect all the pieces. A committee was appointed to ". . . investigate the cave files for missing material." At one point in the investigation, an attorney was consulted regarding means of securing various elements of the file. By February of 1966, nearly all of the file's original material had been recovered, but confidence in the file as a workable Grotto project had been damaged. Significantly several Grotto members with a great deal to contribute to the files effort were discouraged.

In May, 1966, organization of the files was complete and copies were made available to members. Physically, the files consisted of:

1. A large ring binder, indexed and containing original cave file master sheets for 149 Oregon caves.
2. A duplicate of the No. 1 book, containing prints and xeroxes of all information therein.
3. A post-bound version of book No. 2.
4. A box of file folders, one for each cave, plus ancillary information.

The source of the material in the file was principally the 1961 Oregon Speleological Survey list of Oregon caves (embodied in the NSS printout) and Phil Brogan's files (embodied in **Caves of Deschutes County**). There was little information regarding caves in Washington; that was to added later.

The copies of the file which were to be used by Grotto members (books 2 and 3) were placed in the Grotto library which was then in a utility room at a member's home and available at any time. Tranquility was short lived. At the next executive committee meeting it was reported that a copy, or copies of the file had been offered for sale at the Oregon Dental School (This report was never, of record, confirmed). All copies of the files were immediately relegated to the cave files committee.

From this time (early 1966) until early 1972, there were three "cave filers and compilers." All three were perplexed about who should have access to the file, and how (as, indeed, was the executive committee). One of these custodians created the only significant addition to the file that was ever made, when he *typed* a copy of Caves of Washington so that the caves could be filed by name alphabetically.

During this period, book number 2 became misplaced, never to be seen again.

Following the dental school scare, there was a tacit agreement that existence of the file would not be published. In 1970, an "embargo" was placed on the files and in mid-1971, checkout privileges were restricted to members who were also NSS members. Also during this period there are several references in the minutes to "cooling it" or putting the files "under the table," and in April of 1972 the following cave file policy was adopted:

- "There is a need to have a stated policy:
 - Available to members
 - Can't be checked out
 - One person responsible for files
 - Restricted access for new members
 - Endorsement by officers
 - Location data on basis of need to know
 - Information sorted as to wishes of contributors
 - Have right to withdraw information if policy on use changes
 - File holders must be OG members for 2 years and be appointed by executive committee

Shortly after the above policy was stated, no volunteer could be found to replace a retiring file custodian, so the executive committee placed the file with one officer and another, for about a year, when suddenly it became very controversial.

In early 1973, one of the Grotto officers borrowed the entire file from another officers (then custodian) and announced, at the next executive meeting, an intention to "... give several copies to those Grotto members who are most in need of the information and I feel can properly control their use." Those most needy members, it turned out, were all newcomers to the Grotto, a fact which no doubt contributed to the ensuing furor. The executive committee immediately insisted that the planned distribution be canceled, only to be met with the statement that "... the executive committee isn't competent to administer the files."

Hoping that the misappropriated files could be recovered by formal resolution, the executive committee passed a two-part resolution; abolishing the cave file requirement in the Constitution and then to return all material in

the file to the respective donors. That part of the resolution which would have changed the Constitution failed the required 2/3 ratification at the next General Meeting. (It was important to the future of the cave file that this General Meeting was poorly attended, not because the proposed Constitutional revision had failed, but because upon reflection it could be that a Constitutional revision *had nearly been ratified by a small minority* of the total membership. This realization led to the formation of a Constitutional Adequacy Committee).

At its next meeting, the executive committee emphatically re-affirmed its control of the file, established a study committee and relegated the file to the library on a no-check-out basis. The officer who had misappropriated the file finally agreed to return it through a mutually acceptable "neutral" third party. It was returned, later than agreed and not to the agreed-upon third party but to the officer who had it originally. As a final twist to this episode, the officer who now had the file - apparently persuaded that the file would be dismantled if placed in the Grotto library - decided to keep it. Finally, though, the executive committee had its way and the file was committed to the library, to await the findings of the study committee.

During this stormy episode, enemies were made, lies were told, a period of Grotto instability was initiated, at least two more personal copies of the file had been generated, confidence in the file as secure repository for cave information evaporated, and book number 1 - the book of masters - had strayed.

WHY SUCH A FUROR?

What was the file that could inspire so much feeling? Physically, it was a little less than described above in 1969 (books 1 and 2 were gone) and was due soon to be smaller because a major contributor now demanded return of his material. Growth in the file - that is, additions to it - had been practically non-existent and everyone who ever had custody of it reported that use of it by others was minimal. By this time (late 1973) *all* of the information in the file (and a lot more) was available in **The Speleograph** and various other publications, lists and references - all in the Grotto library or available for the asking from several other sources. It was common knowledge that nearly everyone who ever had the file had copied parts or all of it. That so apparently useless a collection could be the focus of so much emotion is positively phenomenal!

Regardless of the reasons for the controversy over the files, it was now fairly obvious that the cave file had not been a workable or productive Grotto project. Nevertheless, that prospect was not foreclosed and the study committee began its deliberations in early 1974.

The committee eventually reported to the executive committee a very complex list of ways, means and reasons for maintaining a cave file. Fortunately, the report was summarized into a list of seven possible alternatives but none of them addressed an option of no file at all. It was argued - quite logically - that there could no be a no-file option since the Grotto Constitution required that a file be maintained. After a series of winnowing processes, straw votes, etc. the executive committee adopted one of the alternatives recommended by the study committee which closely resembled the policy adopted in April of 1972. About two months later, the committee moved to assert the adopted policy as a completed statement; that is, the policy was limited to the provisions selected.

At about the same time that the Files Study Committee was formed, another committee was appointed to study and recommend revisions to the Grotto Constitution. About two years later (late 1975) a revised Constitution which included

no provision for a Grotto Cave File, was ratified. From that point on, the fate of the files was pretty much a foregone conclusion. In early 1977, surplus copies of **Named Caves of Oregon**, then in the cave file, were transferred to the Grotto store for sale, with proceeds to go to **The Speleograph**. Finally, on February 2, 1979, a resolution was adopted to "Disband the cave files and put the material into the archives."

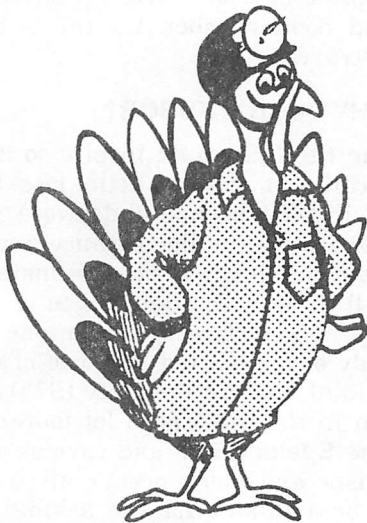
CONCLUSION

These are, I believe, all the important events surrounding the 15 year life of the Oregon Grotto caves files. A current event of interest in this context is that a committee of the NSS is currently (once again) studying NSS cave files policy. I will conclude with an observation based on many years of experience with Grotto and NSS cave files: A caver's enthusiasm for community cave files is usually in inverse proportion to his experience with them.

WHEN YOU'VE GROTTA GO . . . YOU'VE GROTTA GO!

O.G. Cave Trip

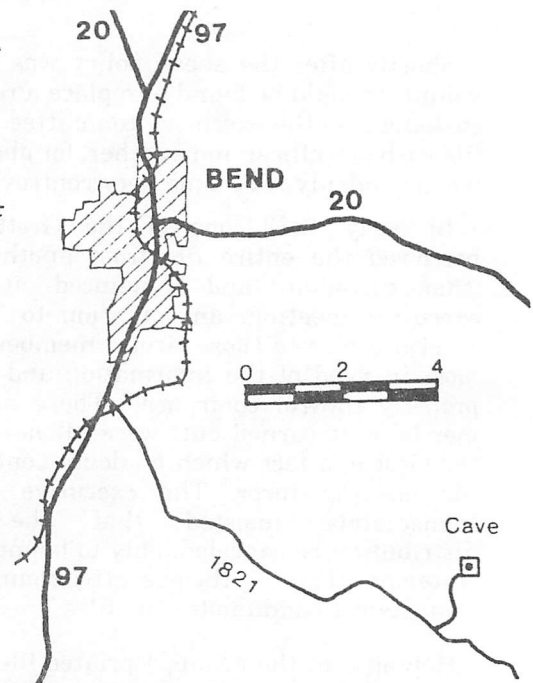
THANKSGIVING WEEKEND
November 27 - 29



- VISITS TO KNOWN CAVES
- CAVE SEARCHES
- CAVE CLEANUP CRUSADE
- SOME MAPPING
- GREAT FELLOWSHIP!!!

Headquarters will be at WIND CAVE, located outside of Bend (see map for directions). Pit toilet rumored to be near the cave. Bring water for drinking, as there are no faucets. Wind Cave is a possible shelter if you do not have a tent, but warm clothes and sleeping bag are a must!

Any questions about transportation: Contact our Trip Coordinator, DAVE SMITH at (206) 254-6511.



Unmasked Cave Leads I:**THE MIDDLE SISTER
LAVA CAVE****Just Possibly the Best View
From Any Cave Entrance In Oregon**

By Craig Skinner

"The final stage in the growth of Middle Sister was marked by the effusion of dark, scoriaceous basalts rich in olivine... Northward from the summit, these basalts are traceable only as far as the col between the Middle and North Sisters, through a vertical distance of no more than 800 feet; westward and southward, however, they continue down to elevations of about 7,000 feet. Much of the lava is of the block type, but several flows have crude pahoehoe crusts and are traversed by small tubes."

--- Howell Williams (1944)

When I climbed the Middle Sister in Oregon's High Cascades this August, I really didn't expect to find a lava tube almost at the top. But, what do you know . . .

Mention of the Middle Sister Cave (or perhaps caves) has cropped up twice in the reading that I've done - once, in Howell Williams geological study of the Three Sisters area (Williams, 1944) and once in a list of caves leads by Charlie Larson (Larson, 1979). I couldn't resist the prospect of an interesting side trip, and so when the opportunity came to climb the Middle Sister with an old friend, Bill Cattrall, I thought that I'd spend any left-over climbing energy on a look for the caves.

Up on the 10,053 foot summit (with 15 zoomy teenagers - no kidding!) and, sure enough, in addition to a superb view, there was a basalt flow on the west side below us. From the top, though, it all looked like the same loose scoria and cinder that make up the last part of the climb up the north side of the mountain. Didn't look like a likely place for a lava tube. Also, we were beginning to wonder if our tired legs would haul us all the way back to our tent near Obsidian Falls, much less over to the area wherein the rumored caves were supposed to lie.

After an hour rest to absorb the sights (there really aren't many places nicer to be alone than on a mountaintop - the crowd had finally descended), we headed back down the hill and had to have at least a quick look at the basalts. Cutting south across Renfrew Glacier, we ran into, just as Williams described, a pahoehoe basalt flow and, lo and behold, one diminutive lava tube cave.

The Middle Sister Cave is, in reality, a kid-sized, eight-foot long and six-foot wide, nicely preserved surface tube. The three-foot high ceiling is covered with short lavacicles. It's also

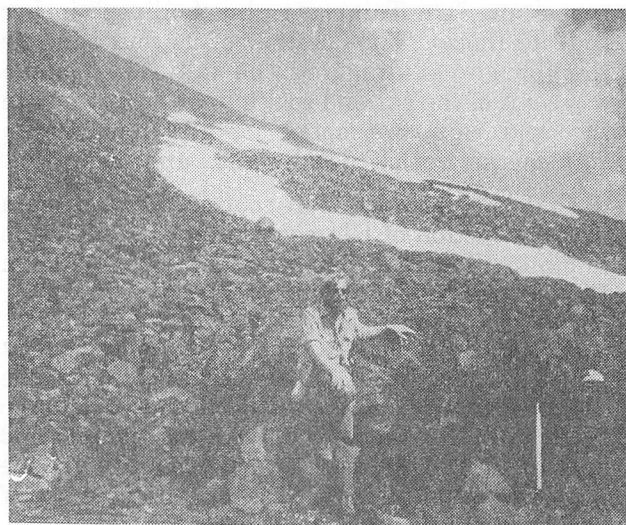
the only obvious lava tube in the portion of basalt on the west side that lies nearest the summit. The Middle Sister Cave isn't big, but it's nice - the west-facing entrance, Oregon's highest at 9,500 feet elevation, quite possibly sports the finest view from any cave entrance in the state.

There may be other lava tubes, almost certainly similar minor surface tubes, in the area, but weary legs kept Bill and I to a zone a few hundred feet from the cave that we did find.

To find this small, but hospitable, lava tube, pick up the Pacific Crest Trail from any of several locations along the McKenzie Pass Highway (self-issuing wilderness area permits are at the trailheads) and head south. At an obvious point not far north of Obsidian Falls, follow the well-worn path towards the summit of the Middle Sister, eventually bearing south onto Renfrew Glacier, one of the major routes. The basalt flow that houses the Middle Sister Cave is located well away from the climbing traffic along the upper southern edge of the glacier (the boulders on the ice come from frequent rockfalls - look out). Don't miss the view from the summit, about one and one-half hours further onward. It's an easy climb with an ice ax as nice, but not necessary.

REFERENCES

1. Larson, Charlie. 1979. "Find A Cave: Leads In the Cascade Range," *The Speleograph*, Volume 15, number 7, pages 90-91.
2. Williams, Howell. 1944. "Volcanoes of the Three Sisters Region, Oregon Cascades," *University of California Publications, Dept. of Geological Sciences*, Volume 27, pages 37-84.



The Middle Sister Cave, a small surface tube on the Western slopes of the Middle Sister. Tired climber Bill Cattrall and ice ax provide the scale. In the left background, about 500 vertical feet up, is the summit.

(From a slide by Craig Skinner)

31 CAVES IN SEVEN DAYS!

By Rick Pope & Becky Taylor

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 26TH

(Rick)

For some reason, I had a bad feeling as we started our weeklong caving trip to northern California. Maybe it was all the last minute scrambling as we searched for forgotten items. Or the late departure time from home. Or the incredible traffic jam in Tigard taking the dog to the kennel. At any rate, we finally left Portland at 5:00 p.m. with a full Subaru and breathed easier as the crowds thinned out to the south. We stopped at Don Denbo's for a visit and watched a few home computer demos (most of which defy description) before returning to the road. A quick stop at _____'s burger stand refueled us for a few hours and by 11:00 p.m., the driver (me) was showing no visible signs of life so camp was made near Willamette Pass. We were asleep before you could say . . .

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26TH

(Becky)

The rain was assaulting our tent with considerable vigor as we awoke this morning (either that, or Shirley Temple was rehearsing "On The Good Ship Lollipop" in her taps up there). Since neither of us could endure the thought of dragging the faithful Coleman stove out of the car and cooking a warm repast in the cold rain, we opted for the tent and a "continental repast" (cold, quick, and scanty).

That completed, we were soon on the road again in the direction of Klamath Falls with the radio humming, the heater heating and visions of Lava Beds in our heads. Ah, what comfort!

En route, we made two interesting stops: one at the Collier Logging Museum and the other at the Favell Western Museum. The former had to be the biggest and more varied collection of old and new logging equipment ever assembled in one place. It included, as well, several homesteaders' dwellings and many signs exhorting everybody to "work hard so that there will be more for everyone to share." Some of these machines were not living up to advertising as they had obviously not worked in years. The museum didn't prohibit climbing, and we did so with gusto, pretending to log entire forests (just kidding of course, unless

your name happens to be Watt), and taking numerous slides. Soon the rain returned, and we made for the Roo where we consumed edibles and described a scenic route to Seattle through Bend and The Dalles for the benefit of two Californians. They were particularly interested in cushy resorts along the way, but they had obviously asked the wrong people about that. Finally, they sped off in their Audi, and we continued on to Klamath Falls and the Favell Museum.

Mr. Favell, the proprietor of this Western Museum, situated in a brand new circular building encompassing three floors, is obviously well off and has successfully indulged his longing for indian artifacts, craftwork and original western paintings in a big way. The central vault included a complete collection of miniature guns, and an original Charles Russell painting, among other things. Many award winning paintings covered the walls, and two floors were given over to artwork sale. Some of the artists are incredibly prolific; we noted one who must have completed a picture a week, if one could judge by the dates (why can't I do that?). Rick was particularly intrigued by the many miniature dioramas and I could hear chuckling many times during our visit as he encountered tiny trappers, teensy indians, and itsy bitsy taverns in various situations involving flying water, running horses, etc. etc. They were really well done. The visit left us \$4.00 poorer, but was definitely worth the time and money invested.

It was quite late in the afternoon by the time we pulled into the town of Tule Lake and soon after, entered the boundaries of Lava Beds National Monument. This was my first view of Tule Lake and its hundreds of waterfowl; this is impressive in and of itself, but the wind in the grass and the angle of the sun made it even more so. We stopped for a few photographs, then



This passage in Silver Cave is about as perfectly formed as they come.

(From a slide by Rick Pope).

decided to head straight for the campground and snag a spot before backtracking to cover the tourist attractions such as Captain Jack's Stronghold. A name on one of the points of interest intrigued me, however, and we made one stop at Hospital Rock, which is a lava outcropping that had served as a U.S. Army base during the Modoc Wars. It was geologically interesting, but did not seem very defensible to me.

Two of our friends who are members of the Portland Audubon Club had recommended a particular spot as being sheltered and secluded, and we were lucky enough to find it unoccupied - probably because it really wasn't clearly numbered. By now, the rain had nearly ceased and we prepared and ate a quick dinner before making our caving plans for the evening.

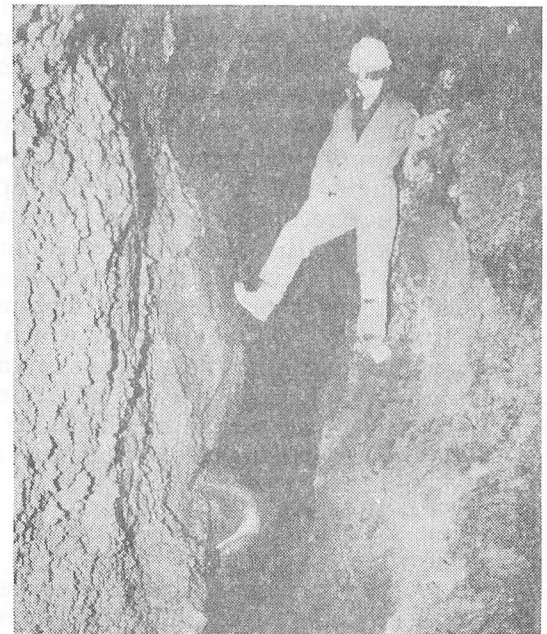
Because a number of the caves are easily accessible from Cave Loop Road (a dead giveaway), and appeared to be clumped into two groups, we set boldly off for the solitary Indian Well Cave, located in the opposite direction at the road junction to the campsites. Although it appeared to go in both directions, we were not willing to push the tiny odiferous entrance on one side in the failing light. The other side sported an easily negotiated path into a rather nondescript, straight shot cave ending in breakdown after only one ladder, about fifty feet, and a little ice. Well.

That didn't take very long, so we headed out Cave Loop Road in search of bigger game. Our first stop was at an interesting looking opening which identified itself as "Lava Brook." A stile of sorts was located in the middle of an opening (or skylight, take your pick) and a ladder led down either side where trails disappeared into holes in opposite directions. We opted to follow the one closest to us.

Maybe I expected a little cave, but certainly not what we encountered. From the beginning, there was a welcome amount of complexity. The floor was very smooth and there were a number of side passages looping back into the main throughway. We followed one in particular which had a lava falls leading into a small upper room, the floor and opening of which were worn so smooth with traffic that they resembled limestone. Backtracking, we found another passage which went and went and went! After traveling for so long that we were beginning to wonder about turning back, a ladder came into sight. I thought that it might be the other side of Lava Brook, but Rick, more observant, remarked that it was not steep enough and didn't have the platform that had distinguished the entrance to Lava Brook. So we traveled on. Eventually, we arrived at a place where the paths diverged, and we decided to take separate paths. After a few minutes, I emerged in a sink with cave continuing on the other side. A moment later, I heard a jubilant and slightly

confused cry; Rick had also surfaced and was at the entrance of Thunderbolt! A bit of backtracking to the ladder that we had earlier discovered served to identify that entrance as Labyrinth Cave. By this time, we had begun to realize that there was only *one* cave here with many entrances; a system instead of individual caverns. It was all incredible, but puzzling at the same time.

Although we wanted to continue across the trench into which I had emerged, it was getting dark and drizzly, and we returned instead to the other entrance of Lava Brook for a quick look-see. Surprise! In no time at all, it had connected with Thunderbolt via a small, low passage which had appeared to go nowhere when we were heading through Lava Brook to Thunderbolt the first time, from the first entrance. Confused? Me too. A good thing that it was bedtime, because our fuddled minds needed the time to refuel so that we could figure this whole thing out on . . .



A challenging passage in one of Lava Beds many varied lava tubes.

(From a slide by Rick Pope)

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 27TH

(Rick)

The first order of business was stopping by the Visitors' Center to find out how we got so lost. The Park Service employee on duty was Rick Jones (officially a *Park Service Technician/Interpreter*) who is a seasonal Arizona caver. He knew of the Oregon Grotto (reads the *Speleograph!*) and was very helpful giving us information on the area, including arranging a tour out to the gated Fern Cave.

Meanwhile, there was lots of wild caving to do and since Mushpot Cave was only 50 feet away, we prepared for a full exploration. This didn't take too long because Mushpot is Lava Beds' only lighted and developed cave. I brought my camera gear down and the lighting was good enough that I could take short time exposures with a tripod. There are several lighted interpretive signs throughout the passage that explain lava tube development with spotlights to highlight features. Overall, they have done an outstanding job in making a lava cave look like an attractive place to visit.

Back at the surface, it was time to hit a "wild" cave, so we drove a short distance up the Cave Loop Road to the entrance of Golden Dome Cave. This time we did it up right with helmets, lights, kneepads, coveralls, and a crude sketch map of the cave system. We followed the passage upslope occasionally splitting up to try diverging routes. Golden Dome is apparently named for the sparkling sand/cave slime coating on the ceiling and it did seem very prominent in certain parts of the cave. Eventually, we popped out an upper entrance and ended up in a maze of collapsed trench segments, all of which seemed to have cave entrances. Our sketch map wasn't detailed enough to help very much, so we stumbled around until we thought we had found the upper entrance to Blue Grotto. Since this cave runs back downslope towards the car, we decided to do Hopkins Chocolate Cave nearby first because it dead-ended after a short distance. Hopkins is near a feature called "Garden Bridges" which is a series of natural bridges. These were very nice, but a bit wet to explore since it was now raining quite hard. Hence we turned our backs to the weather and retreated to the welcome dryness below ground.

Chocolate Cave seems to be named for the unusual brown color prevalent on the walls and ceiling throughout the cave. Most of the passage is smooth-floored and reasonably high, although there were a few crawls towards the end of the passage. There is also a very nice pillar part way in that divides the passage into two duckwalks for a short distance. I resisted the urge to take a photo since I had a shot of the pillar taken in 1970 on a family vacation.

We could hear the rain splattering on the rocks as we neared the entrance, so we stopped for a moment to plan our next move. Since we were supposed to be near the Cave Loop Road, we dashed through the showers to see how far away it really was (about 50 feet) and then returned to the trenches to find one of the Blue Grotto entrances. There were several likely looking passages and it turned out they all went the same way. All, that is, except the one running upslope. This one, which looked promising, ran in about 80 feet and then stopped. Or it seemed to. A side

crawl was blowing good air and Becky had to take a look. I followed in a few feet until a very tight spot and then sat back in a small chamber to watch the fun. After many minutes of squirming, it was obvious that only a hobbit could fit through so I unhooked her pockets and helped to haul her back out.

Downslope was another story. While the cave contained a fair amount of breakdown, a path had been cleared through the worst and it made for pleasant walking. Just the thing for a cave bagger! We continued at a fast pace, once again splitting up at divisions and always rejoining shortly down cave. We came across several collapsed trench segments and at one I popped up on the surface to get a bearing on where we were on the Cave Loop. To my surprise, the clouds had dropped to the ground and I could only see a hundred feet or so. Feeling very lost, I returned to the cave passage and we pushed on. Finally, we came across a familiar looking passage and stopped to think. Aha! We were in the main tunnel in Thunderbolt Cave. The passage we had used to get here was the one that Becky had started to check out the day before. Retracing the previous day's steps upslope, we eventually came out right on the road several hundred feet from Roo.

The rain was letting up a bit, and we drove back to the Visitors' Center to make lunch. Since we were to meet our guide for Fern Cave at the center at 2:00 p.m., we spent more time at the map display following our travels thus far.

Soon, the park guide appeared and we got organized. There were four people who were on a volunteer job at the park in one car and two "independent" cavers from the Marin County area in another. It was mentioned that the road into Fern might be muddy, so the guide went with us (must have faith in 4-wheel drive). As it happened, the road was messy but nothing that the conventional cars couldn't handle.

The entrance to Fern is just off the end of the road, a large metal grate with a swinging door that is locked. After opening the gateway, we followed him down an aluminum ladder to the top of a fern covered mound. There was a path leading down the mound to the floor of the cave. We gathered around the guide and he led us to a nearby wall that was plastered with graffiti - the historic kind. Hundreds of indian pictographs were outlined on both walls of the cave near the entrance and I spent the first ten minutes photographing everything in sight. Some of the symbols had been retouched by an early **National Geographic** expedition, but they had done a nice job and it was hardly noticeable to a novice archeologist like myself.

After all the oohs and aahs were over, we ventured to the end of the cave and took a few

more pictures. The floor was very flat and smooth with the exception of a few piles of breakdown, and walking was no problem for the volunteer group, most of which seemed very new to caving. Once regrouped at the entrance, we ascended the ladder and climbed into the cars for another round of mud rally. Again, no one had any real problems and we split up back on the main road.

Shortly after dropping off our guide at the headquarters, we met up with the two "independent" cavers (Brent Ort and Bill Doty) and we talked caves for while. Brent, as it turns out, has been caving at Lava Beds for at least 12 years, and it wouldn't surprise me if he knew more cave locations than just about anybody else. His partner Bill was a little newer to the sport, but was quite gung-ho to try anything. We agreed to meet after dinner and do a wild cave or two. Thus, we parted to chow down.

Apparently, we eat a little faster (if it don't come out of a can, it ain't worth messin' with) and I caught them in the middle of a 14-course Italian meal. We settled on the cave to do and the gear required and then I returned to round up Becky and equipment. Soon after, we were looking at the entrance drop to Silver Cave and I was trying to figure out how to rig it. It was only about ten feet down, so I hooked two sets of stirrups to the main line with prussiks and all got down safely. The eastern portion of the cave, while short, is very photogenic with beautiful ledge development and a nice S shaped curve. I spent some time making sure I got a decent photo with help from Brent and his extra strobe. Sometime during the posing, a mouse was discovered scurrying over the breakdown.

The western passage was of a totally different character. It gets very small, very fast. The large, walking height passage is reduced to a jagged belly crawl (the kind that likes to tear pockets off). I managed to get through with my helmet on, but swore that I'd take it off on the way back. The rewards for our push were soon evident.

The passage past the squeeze was about five feet high with nice "bathtubs" in the floor and drip form stalactites covering the ceiling. As we continued, the passage got larger and there were enormous areas of red-colored lava. Finally, the tube seemed to end with only a small hole at the top of a lava tongue. Crawling through the hole brought us to the last room which was blocked by a large, rafted boulder. After poking around the boulder room for a minute, Brent told us that the best was yet to come. A low side passage near the lava tongue was pointed out and we all crawled through, following Brent. He showed us where a thin shelf of lava had been last year (it was now broken much to his disgust) and then led us to the end of the room.

Here, the floor dropped away in a rift that was climbable and we all dropped down to the next level. A short distance away, the floor once again dropped away into a huge passage that ran back beneath us. This was the famous Post Office Cave connection. Post Office is officially off-limits due to unstable breakdown near the entrances but we felt legal perched at our viewpoint near the ceiling. It was a really impressive drop and Brent and I again combined our strobes for a couple of shots (thank heaven for ASA 400). Since it was getting pretty late by now, we turned back and headed for the squeeze. I snuck through easier without my helmet and got a photo of the others as they squirmed out. Looking up the entrance drop, we could see stars and knew that good weather had returned to the desert. We walked back to the campground together and exchanged addresses before turning in for the night.



This complex passage in Lava Bed's Catacombs Cave proved a challenge in photographing and exploring!

(From a slide by Rick Pope)

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 28TH

(Becky)

Monday began with a brief skirmish involving Rick and some scrub jays who could not believe that we didn't want ringside spectators while cooking breakfast and were hanging over the griddle ready to add topping to our victuals.

Brent and Bill, the freelance cavers, had tried to talk us into visiting Deep Ice Cave with them, but we did not want to range that far away from Lava Beds just yet, as we had not seen the famed Catacombs. We were just leaving the camping area when we were surprised to see Bill run out into our path and flag us down. It seemed that his new battery, just purchased and installed in the Mercedes, was refusing to function and the smell of diesel and the sound of futile fumings filled their campsite. After deliberations, Rick helped Brent attach jumper cables to Roo and the

bumped-out Benz and ten minutes were fruitlessly spent trying to fire it into life. Finally, we gave up and gave Brent a lift to the maintenance area of the Park Service buildings where he assured us he could find someone to tow the car and offer mechanical assistance.

We proceeded on to Catacombs, donned our gear and, equipped with a mental vision of the cave, as well as a traced map from the Visitors' Center, began to make our way through the myriad of interwoven passages. Catacombs is composed of two main, basically parallel passageways which eventually separate after weaving through several upper and lower converging levels. The only other connection between the two occurs about three quarters of the way downtube and is easier to spot from the righthand passageway, so we bore to the right.

Rick Jones, of the Visitors' Center, had warned us that the connection was at eye level and after a little crawling, we successfully spotted it and clambered inside. It involved slithering steeply up, entering a small room, up again, then through a very tight squeeze and d-o-w-n at an angle and headfirst.

After emerging, we found ourselves in an area known as "Cone's End." You really couldn't miss it because the name was emblazoned on the rafted and lava covered piece of breakdown known as "Cleopatra's Grave," for its sarcophagus-like form. We later learned that this was very old graffiti indeed and has been there since the 1920's when the first visitors to the caves were less ecologically minded. What I can't believe it that someone managed to drag a can of red paint through that crawl!

The next half an hour or so was frustrating and confusing as we sought a way out of the Grave area and into the other passage without immediate success. I followed a trail of garbage down the evident path, which ended in a very low, nasty crawl which I was certain did not continue. Rick tried an opening high in the left wall adjacent to the Grave, but found nothing and had to back out in a very uncomfortable manner. I plumbed a breakdown-strewn passage which we were sure ran in the wrong direction, but we were perturbed enough to try anything. After all, why couldn't it turn 180 degrees around the next corner?

Finally Rick and I returned to the garbage-strewn area and spotted a pair of clipon sunglasses and a kleenex package leading off to a crawl on the right that I had missed in my previous haste. Soon we were back in moderate sized passage and all was well. We cut over to the primary side as soon as possible and returned to the entrance area where five corridors are visible from one spot, and Rick set up a tripod shot utilizing six flashes which (we discovered later)

turned out excellently. After about 2½ hours, we emerged from the cave, quite satisfied with our efforts. What a switch from Oregon-Washington lava tubes!

Cave baggers have to keep moving, and so after a quick lunch, it was on to Skull Ice Cave, down the road apiece, where we arrived at about 2:30. Skull has the distinction of having one of the largest entrance areas I've ever seen in any ice cave. After passing through the first area (approximately 40 feet wide by 60 feet tall) we encountered a ladder. Another stretch, and another ladder. Finally, the ladders ended and the cave cut under itself and was filled with ice. We took several pictures, as the ice and the ladders were both impressive.

Leaving Skull, we sought out Merrill Ice Cave and arrived at about 4:00. Guess what? More ladders! Merrill is composed of two levels and four drops, ending in a walkout ramp and breakdown covered ice slope. For some reason, this ice was not as solid as that found in Skull, and it was covered with a thin layer of water.

Just uptrench to the west and in sight of the parking lot was a large entrance which the familiar painted directions assured us was "Bearfoot Dave Cave." This really looked like it went somewhere, although we had never heard of it, and so we dashed in and clambered up a large breakdown pile to find that it ended almost before it began in a small opening which looked out on hundreds of feet of collapsed trench. No wonder no one talks about it.

5:30 found us at the Castles area where we had located a cave which the Lava Beds map indicated was nearby, after poking around some small surface tubes. We hiked back to the car via Merrill Ice Cave Road and took a few minutes to admire and photograph the spatter cones. Then home (our campsite sweet campsite, that is) for dinner and regrouping.

You may well think that this should have been enough caving for one day, but it was not. We had no sooner finished dinner, than we hot-footed it through the fog to Sentinel Cave, which we had been informed had an upper and lower level. We parked at the Upper entrance and worked downtube, exploring side passages en route. The lower section has been permanently grated to discourage tourist entrance and since we had received conflicting information about the legality of entering it, we thought quite deeply about the subject before moving on. Who, us enter the lower level?

Exiting the cave, we emerged on the road where we made our way through the fog and headed back to camp for a well-earned sleep.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 29TH

(Rick)

Our last day at Lava Beds. We packed up camp after searching the car for a finky mouse that got my gorp supply. We then headed toward the south entrance, intent upon doing one more cave. Valentine is right on the way out, so we turned off the main road and geared up for a look. Valentine has probably the nicest walking floor of any cave we saw at Lava Beds and the wide passage made me feel like I was in a commercial cave. We pushed both passages until they required low crawling and then returned to the car to get my tripod. I wanted to get a picture of the entrance pillar from several angles and Becky and I both tried our luck. While I was putting my gear away, Becky spotted a small cave with a painted number near the parking lot. We returned with flashlights, but could see the end from the outside, so not much time was spent there.

Finally, we really did leave Lava Beds and took an ill-advised short cut to a Forest Service road that leads towards McCloud. We had directions from Brent to Deep Ice Cave and we navigated by antique map through road detours until we reached the Shastine Crater area. Jot Dean Ice Cave is right on the road nearby, so we started there and had lunch (the cave was even less interesting than our peanutbutter sandwiches).

Armed with a full stomach, we started from the crater and followed the lava flow downslope until we came to an interesting-looking sink. The cave passage at the bottom continued down at a fairly steep angle for a lava tube and went through several crawls before we hit "the maze." For lack of any other information, we called this Deep Ice #1 and it had an amazing confusion of tube-shaped crawls in a three-dimensional maze that led further downslope. Survey stations throughout the cave told us that cavers had

preceded us but no one we ran into over the next few days seemed to know anything about it. The maze eventually rejoined itself and led us to a hole in the floor of a dead end passage. Dropping through, we entered a larger tube that ran a short distance both up and down slope. The terminal room in the lower end was really interesting. It was a breakdown chamber with a wall and ceiling of solid ice. The whole place looked very unstable, so we took a picture and beat a hasty retreat.

Further down the flow, we came across a way far huge sink that included the entrance to Deep Ice #2. This would be a fun cave to enter in the winter, but at the end of a hot summer the entrance crawl across the ice floor was more like a swim. The first ten feet of passage was three feet high with one foot of water. This could be negotiated on a rotten log. The next 20 feet was firm ice but had a film of water on it and the ceiling was more like 18 inches. At the end of this, a triangular hole led to a long, steep ice slide which can't be managed without a rope (like the one we left back at the car). We were already getting cold lying on the ice so we took a few photos and slid out to the warm and dry outside world. We made a note to return someday in the spring with the proper gear.

I took a few compass bearings on local landmarks for future reference (these were later used to generate sketch maps of all the caves visited on our trip). It was getting late and we wanted to get down to the Gaping Holes system before dark to set up camp. It is only a 30 mile drive, so we made it in good time and picked out a campsite near Hambone Butte. This put us only a few hundred yards from the Double Window entrance to Catwalk Cave which promised great adventure for the next day.

To be continued in the December Speleograph!



OREGON GROTTTO STORE

Rick Pope, Storekeeper
3539 S.W. Nevada Court
Portland, Oregon 97219
(Home): (503) 244-0908
(Work): (503) 641-4141
Ext. 109

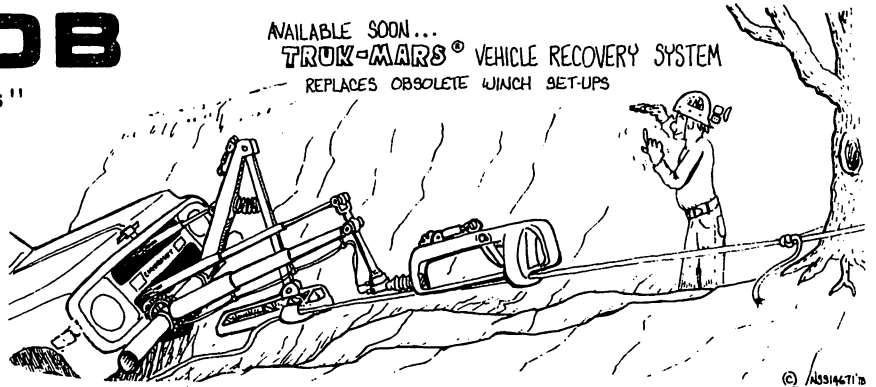
Prices are for OREGON GROTTTO
members only. There is a 10%
charge for non-members.

Sorry - No Mail Orders!

BOB & BOB

"Cavers Serving Cavers"

AVAILABLE SOON...
TROX-MARS® VEHICLE RECOVERY SYSTEM
REPLACES OBSOLETE WINCH SET-UPS



- CARBIDE
- KNEE PADS
- TUBULAR SLING
- BLUEWATER II
- BLUEWATER III
- PREMIER LAMPS
- REPAIR KITS
- GEER ADAPTORS
- GIBBS ASCENDERS
- JUMARS
- BUMPER STICKERS
- PREMIER LAMP PARTS
- PIGEON MOUNTAIN ROPE

- JUSTRITE HAND LAMP PARTS
- FIBRE-METAL HELMETS & PARTS
- WATERPROOF MATCH CASES
- JUSTRITE BRASS LAMP PARTS
- CARABINERS & BRAKE BARS
- JUSTRITE PLASTIC LAMP PARTS

*MORE ITEMS
COMING*

WRITE FOR PRICE LIST
BOB & BOB
P.O. Box 441
Lewisburg, W.Va. 24901
(304) 772-5049



THE
SPELEOGRAPH

A Publication of the OREGON GROTTO
of the NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY
13402 NE. Clark Rd., Vancouver, Washington 98665

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Permit No.223
Vancouver, Wa.

CRAIG SKINNER
2396 1 PATTERSON STREET
EUGENE, OREGON 97405