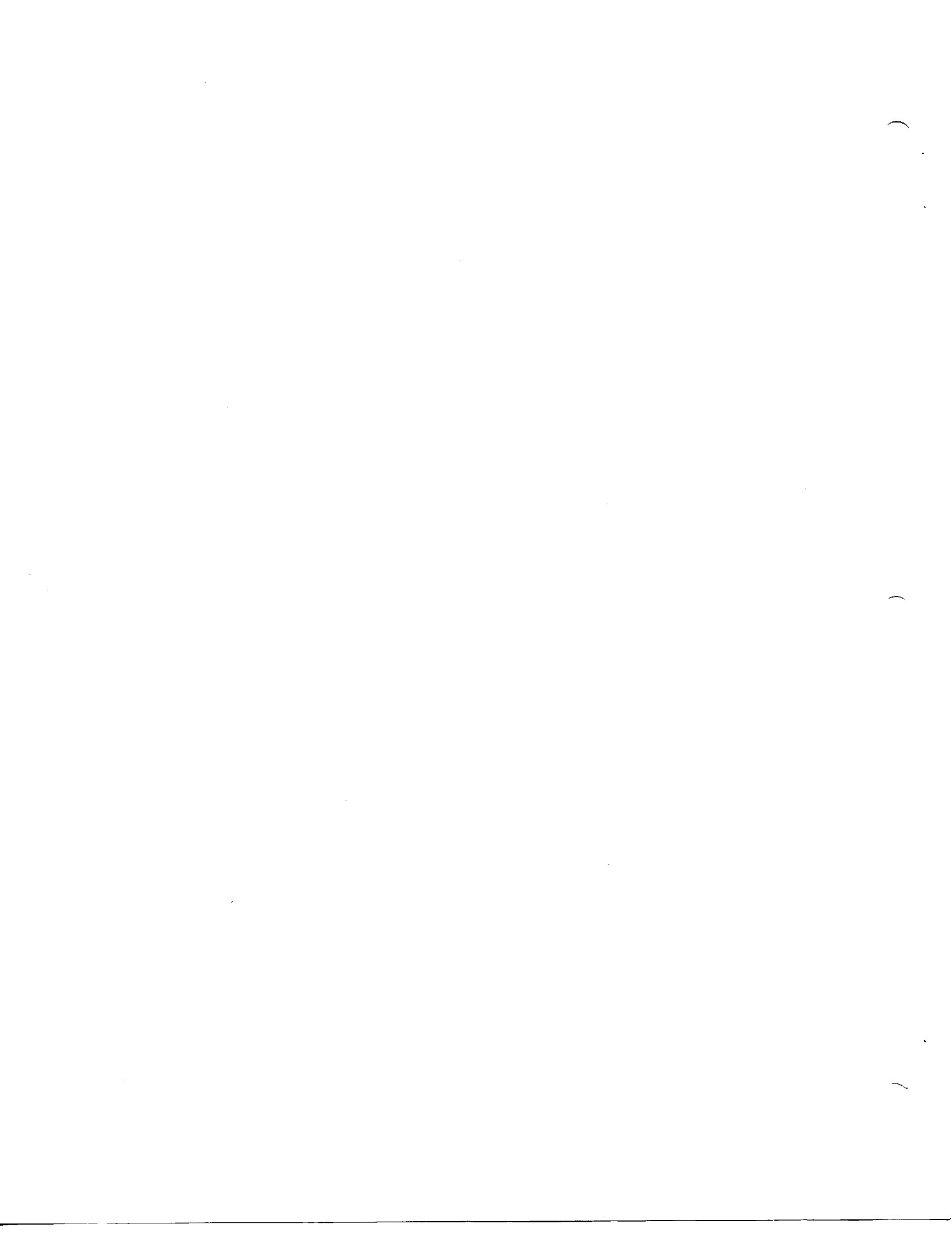


BIRMINGHAM GROTTO NEWSLETTER

NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

MARCH 1975





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Editor's Page*

The Birmingham Grotto Newsletter is published once monthly by the Birmingham Grotto.

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9029 Bel Air Drive
Birmingham, Ala. 35206
833-4773

Printer: Joe Domnonavich
871-3597

All material for the Newsletter should be submitted to the Editor at the meetings or sent to the above address.

APRIL MEETING: April 7th
7:30 p.m.
Alabama Gas Corporation Building
1918 1st Avenue, North
Birmingham, Alabama 35203

PROGRAM: Gary has ordered a slide show from NSS. Also George Brockman, geologist from UAB may be persuaded to give part of the program.

FIELD TRIPS

March 16 - Byers Cave Ga. 6:00 a.m.
Krystal in Roebuck. Led
by David Howell

April - Big Bone Cave Tenn. Date
to be set at meeting.

March 15 - BOG Cincinnati, Ohio

April 19-20 - Huntsville's Yo-Yo Session
Fall Creek Falls, Tenn.

May 24-26 - Speleofest, Park City, Ky.

AFTER MEETING MEETING PLACE:
After the March meeting we will adjourn to Oak Street Restaurant on Morris Avenue for further socializing. Joe D. has talked with the management there and we are welcome to come!
(Amazing!)

BANKHEAD SURVEY recently received a letter from Doug Welker, the originator of the Bankhead caving. Doug gave us some encouragement and further leads. Anyone interested in just going on a weekend caving venture, contact Kathy or Steve Spencer-833-4773.

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W A N T E D.

(Editor)

Bankhead National Forest
Falling Spring Cave

Another chapter in the continuing saga of the Bankhead Cave Survey. The weekend of Pearl Harbor Day seemed only appropriate for the second Bankhead Survey trip of this winter, not because each trip bombs, but because we always have such a blast at Bankhead. (Sorry about that!)

Undaunted by the cold, rainy weather, Vivian Kingry, Tom Lamb, Joe Saloom and I set out on Sunday, December 8, for the wilds of Bankhead. Having decided beforehand to concentrate our efforts in one area of the forest toward the objective of locating the known caves (i.e. those listed in the Alabama Cave Survey) in this area, we began our day by searching out Cemetery Cave, Ala. 1224. We found this cave to be a very short (47') dry crawl, with only a few rather lacklustre formations. Since the cave was unmapped, we mapped it with tape and compass. After finishing at Cemetery we walked down the hill to search for nearby Bridge Cave, Ala. 1226, and succeeded in finding its entrance without trouble. This cave, located on the very edge of Borden Creek, is apparently completely inundated when the creek rises ever slightly. Since the creek was already high and since the sky threatened, we declined to enter Bridge Cave.

We next visited the entrance to Braziel Creek Cave, Ala. 1225, another creekbank cave. This cave is particularly interesting in that it penetrates completely through a small hill. The creek

flows into one entrance and out of the other, leaving a dry bed around the end of the hill. Again due to high water levels and impending rain we did not enter the cave, but we looked forward to visiting it on a future trip and exploring the leads indicated on the existing cave map.

After a short and fruitless stint of ridgewalking in the Braziel Creek area, we moved on to look for Crisscross Cave, Ala. 1255. The area where Crisscross is located is particularly interesting also; it is an area in which a flat bed of limestone is cut into a checkerboard pattern by fissures, which range from several inches to several feet wide and from less than a foot to as much as twenty feet deep. We found two such fissures large enough to enter, but were undecided which might be Crisscross Cave. One was 12-14 feet deep while the other was a measured 19 feet deep. Both had the possibility of some horizontal passage at the bottom. Postponing further exploration until a future trip, we left the forest with the work of our next mapping trip cut out for us.

The following weekend, December 14 and 15, Glenda Fleming and I drove up to Chattanooga to meet Lin Guy for a weekend of caving. For the past year, Lin has been working on the mapping of Falling Spring Cave, Ala. 1302; he had wanted to finish the map by last August, but the cave yielded new passage and more leads with every mapping trip, so this was not to be. On Saturday morning the three of us and Ray Lewis of the Chattanooga Grotto

Falling Spring Cave

drove up to Jeffries Cove to make yet another contribution to the mapping effort.

Due to rains during the week-end and week before, Falling Spring's water levels were high, which was immediately obvious by the large amount of water flowing out of the entrance. Despite this, we effected an entrance and went immediately to the dry upper area to check out some of the 14 leads which had been spotted there. We mapped a few hundred feet in two dead end crawls, then discovered about 1,000 feet of virgin passage and rooms through the third lead we checked. True to form, this new area was extensive enough to preclude our completing its mapping or even its exploration that day. Thus, having begun the day with 14 leads to check, we ended it with 16 leads! Perhaps the map will indeed be finished by August!

With what we mapped on the 14th, Falling Spring's total length is now just over 15,000 feet and the cave is unofficially number 10 in the state in length. We believe that it will attain the position of number 6 without trouble, and of course, are hoping that it will eventually become one of the top five. This, however, remains to be seen; in the meantime we must keep pushing those 16 leads.

On the following day, due to heavy rains in the morning, we decided that any attempt to return that weekend to Falling Spring would be abortive, so we went

instead to Tiftonia Pit near Chattanooga. Beneath leadened skies, Glenda bounced the pit to test her new jumar rig. The weekend ended on a double note of satisfaction born of accomplishment and of tantalization born of hints and suspicions of subterranean sights as yet unseen by the eyes of man.

Due to the recent trip report of David Caudle, a collection will be made at the next Grotto meeting for a new light for MILO WASHINGTON. We wouldn't want him to get lost wandering around in those dark ole caves without a light!

JANUARY FIELD TRIP REPORT

Tom Lamb-Reporter	
Kathy Spencer	Vivian Kingry
Steve Spencer	Gary Barnes
Fenn Spencer	Ken Kifer
Shorty Mayfield	David Caudle

After breakfast at Bartee's in Gardendale, we headed for Valhermoso Springs, Ala. As we were following the directions provided by the Huntsville Grotto, we had some problem finding the right turn off of Ala. 36. However, we felt that the street sign labeled "Talucah Road" was the right one (they only said "a road 1/4 mile before Valhermoso Springs). There was some question as to the exact house to stop at, but it is the first trailer on the left. We gained permission from the owner, Mr. Henderson, and cut across his pasture to the first entrance. We passed this up and decided to enter on the wooden

Field Trip Report

stairway that goes through the "hole in the ceiling". At the bottom of the stairs, seats are arranged in the large room in rows with a wooden stage down front. Kathy later discovered that Mr. Henderson did this elaborate construction (often alone) for use as a church. But the damp climate inside rotted the wood.

We then proceeded to the Igloo Room, which later proved to be a welcome sight. The Igloo is a perfect half-sphere approximately 15 feet in diameter. The whole room and one behind the church room contain massive formations. Here, we encountered the stream, which we crossed. (it was $1\frac{1}{2}$ feet deep). Here also Kathy and Fenn went back to the cars as Fenn had already had enough caving for this day.

Following the mud road, we crossed the stream another time and came to Boiling Springs. Here the sand on the bottom of the spring bubbles up from water action. The spring was $1\frac{1}{2}$ feet deep and about 60 feet around.

We then went to the Waterfall Room, which was spectacular. It was an open-sided dome room, with a waterfall we estimated to be 60 feet high.

Taking the Holland Tunnel, a tube 20 feet wide and 10 feet high, we headed for the dry left side of the cave. We ended up in a huge lake room called the Big Room. After Gary and Steve decided they couldn't fill the lake with rocks, we went back around to find the entrance on the other side. This was

unsuccessful, so we took a very enjoyable (?) crawl back to the Tunnel.

The shock came at the end of the Holland Tunnel at Boiling Springs. It was now 15 feet across and 4 feet deep. This group of seasoned cavers, wanted out of this cave -in a hurry. After collecting our wits and getting everyone across the pool, we decided to get out as fast as possible. Since our whole bodies were now wet, we had no traction whatsoever on the slick mud sides above the stream.

The water level was rising and one passage was completely blocked. We did find an upper passage and by-passed the stream. It was great relief to all of us to see that Igloo again! We split up here and some of the party exited through the lower entrance. We discovered sunshine outside, but Kathy said that it had rained hard for three hours. We spent six hours in Talucah.

This is a very pretty cave, well worth seeing. The owner is very friendly, so stop long enough to chat and do a little P.R. for the Grotto.

SINGING SPRING CAVE Jan. 26, 1975
Reported by Tom Lamb
David Howell Sterling Smith
Vivian Kingry Ted Kessler

David Howell noticed a cave marked on the Moulton Quad that was not on the Survey. So two weeks ago, Dave, Vivian and I decided to drive around in the snow up around Bankhead Forest. We found two large bluff entrances to this cave

Singing Spring Cave

but were not prepared to go inside.

The party went up to Moulton on January 26 to map and explore the cave. The first or Skull entrance (named for the bovine skull inside) is a 3 foot crawl back to a stream passage 12 feet high. After a hundred feet it branches in a T. The right passage led for another 400 feet to another entrance four feet high. Here, the water goes underground. After mapping from this area back to the T, we went straight ahead. 200 feet ahead there was a side passage (rough crawl on jagged rocks in water). We mapped 100 feet of it and left Ted to push on as he liked.

The rest went back to the main passage and mapped another 200 feet. Then, because of time, we pushed on without mapping and found another entrance. It was partially blocked with rocks and Dave tried digging it out. Sterling and I pushed on ahead.

Due to the time, we went on out. The cave, even though the entrance is littered and shows much traffic, is in very good shape. The only signs of vandalism are two groups of writing on the wall. There are some beautiful formations.

We mapped 800 feet and explored another 500 feet. Ted's passage never got smaller, but branched. The main passage never narrowed, but actually got much wider. There is an extensive amount of water flowing through the cave, usually 3 feet deep. We are going up Sunday(Feb.2) to continue exploration and mapping and hopefully to report the cave to the Cave Survey.

(Editor's Note-Another trip is planned for February 9, with the report on the Feb. 2 to be published in next Newsletter. At this point the cave is over the 1,300 mark and still going).

MAX WELLBORN CAVE Feb. 9,1975
Kathy Spencer-Reporter
Steve Spencer Vivian Kingry
Tom Lamb,Jr. Ken Kifer

Steve and Ken wanted to revisit Max Wellborn, as it was one which they originally mapped back in their college days and put on the Survey. The cave is near Jacksonville, Alabama.

Max Wellborn is not a particularly large cave, but is worth the visit. The outstanding feature is the aragonite walls found in the cave. However, Ken and Steve both saw in a hurry that 11 years has made a difference in the appearance of the cave. Apparently folks,who didn't think much of the beautiful pure white aragonite walls, threw mud at them and one particular wall had been completely destroyed.

It was an enjoyable 2½ hour trip, even though we froze to death when we came out of the entrance!

GOSSIP

Is is true what we hear about Dave Howell and the Chattanooga Grotto?

Is it true that Steve Spencer and Tom Lamb,Jr. are really apes in human disguise?

NOTES & NEWS

Jay Clark reported at last meeting regarding the SERA meeting. Said there wasn't a whole lot accomplished but did mention that they vetoed spending the SERA funds on a SERA Newsletter as it would only be duplicating Grotto Newsletters in most cases.

Also Marion O. Smith was chosen as the new SERA correspondent.

Jay also mentioned that SERA will recommend to NSS that the annual dues for NSS not be changed from \$10.00 to \$15.00. This is the present proposal to go before NSS.

The Birmingham Grotto endorses SERA'S recommendation heartily.

NEW MEMBER

Tom Whitehurst
Box 11255
Pueblo, Colorado 81001
(Tom is an Alabama resident but is attending school in Colorado)

A POEM

by Editor

Everyone seems to be caving,
I wonder why the reports you're saving?

Talucah, TR, Guffey, Anderson too!
These cave names are all familiar to you!

Do it now, for time is fleeting
AND please, please have it at the next meeting?

TAKE NOTHING BUT PICTURES, KILL NOTHING BUT TIME
LEAVE NOTHING BUT FOOTPRINTS.

Joe Domnanovich

SERA BM 75 was held at the Oak Ridge Playhouse, Oak Ridge, Tennessee the weekend of February 1. Jan Clark, Lawrance Breeland, Gary Barnes and myself represented Birmingham.

The meeting started, after the usual bull sessions, with a slide show by Bill Deane and others. Bill's slides being that he is a professional, made ours look like instamatic shots.

The BM itself saw Foxy Ferguson (Chatt.) take over as chairman and Bill Deane (Nashville) as Vice Chairman (Chairman 76), Nancy Bridges (Chatt.) Secretary, and Marion Smith (Knoxville) as regional representative.

The Vertical Session included some highly technical data on brake bar heat (a favorite subject at these sessions) by Kyle Isenhardt and showing of new equipment, esp. boxes.

The Session on cave surveys showed that SERA is going the way of the N.S.S. Between the TSC and the cable-snatcher SERA will be nothing more than individual groups in a few years, each with their own secret caves.

As for the proposed rise in dues for the N.S.S. all of SERA was against it but for different reasons.

The idea of cutting out the Bulletin would probably cost us our tax exempt status, but we could publish the News without justifying the columns.

The party afterwards was great, plenty of beer, pizza and bull. Out tanks go out to all the people at Oak Ridge who made this SERA such a great time.

Nashville Grotto will have the summer carnival.

Huntsville the Winter BM.

NSS SERA CORRESPONDENT

Marion O. Smith is the new SERA correspondent. Anyone with information or articles for the NSS News should send them to Marion who will try to get what he can in the News.

His address is Marion O. Smith, Apartment 3, 1632 Clinch Avenue, Knoxville, Tennessee 37916.

Lim Rock and Other Wet Spots

Joe Domnanovich

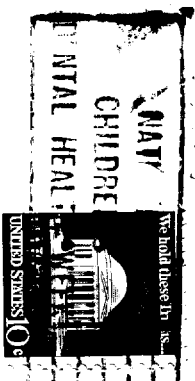
Bob Smith

On February 23, Bob and myself decided to check on high water conditions after the weekend rains. Starting at Salt River Cave we worked our way down the Paint Rock Valley, but to our amazement the surface streams were flowing strong but the caves along the valley had not picked up the flow yet. The final insult was that Lim Rock's mouth was dry, dry, dry!

With this lack of water we went on across the Chattanooga meeting Lin Guy and Glenda Fleming and planned a trip to Blue Springs Cave in Indiana, we know they have water.

BIRMINGHAM GROTTO NEWSLETTER
c/o Kathy Spencer
9029 Bel Air Drive
Birmingham, Alabama 35206

David & Edna Caudle
150 Chalkville Rd.
~~xxxx~~ Trussville, Ala. 35173





JEFFERSON COUNTY CIVIL DEFENSE CORPS
EMERGENCY OPERATING CENTER

709 NORTH 19TH STREET - BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA 35203
AREA CODE 205 254-2039

February 24, 1975

GEORGE G. SEIBELS, JR.
MAYOR, BIRMINGHAM
GENERAL CHAIRMAN

TOM GLOOR
PRESIDENT COUNTY COMMISSION
CO-GENERAL CHAIRMAN

CORWIN Q. WADSWORTH
DIRECTOR
AND
COORDINATOR

APPOINTMENT DIRECTIVE
No. 1 (1975 Series)
RESCUE SERVICES

Pursuant to the authority vested in me, and by mutual consent of the Birmingham Grotto of the National Speleological Society, Civil Defense Cave Rescue Missions will be accomplished by the following volunteers listed hereon. All mission assignments by Civil Defense will be given to the Cave Rescue Team Coordinators listed at the head of this directive. If neither of the coordinators cannot be reached, contact the President of the Grotto or the team leaders as listed.

BIRMINGHAM GROTTTO OF THE NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY
CAVE RESCUE TEAMS

Cave Rescue Team Coordinators

Kathy SpencerWork Phone 322-0627 Home Phone 833-4773
Lawrence BrelandWork and Home Phone 787-9468

Team #1

Shorty Mayfield*
Jim McDowell
Sonny Aldridge
David Caudle
Ken Kifer

Team #2 (Vertical)

J. B. Welden*
Jay Clark
Kent Burchfield
Chuck Lawley
Bill McIntosh

Team #3

Milo Washington*
Charles Brammer
Joe Domnonavich
Lynn Beck
Gary T. Barnes(Pres 1975)

Team Alternates

Team #1

Thomas Lamb
Vivian Kingry
Larry Moore

Team #2

Chet Ellis

Team #3

Lawrence Breland
Steve Spencer
Kathy Spencer

*Team Leaders



CITIES IN JEFFERSON COUNTY

ADAMSVILLE
BESSEMER
BIRMINGHAM
BRIGHTON

BROOKSIDE
BROWNVILLE
CARDIFF
COUNTY LINE

FAIRFIELD
FULTONDALE
GARDENDALE
GRAYSVILLE

HOMEWOOD
HOOVER
HUEYTOWN
IRONDALE

KIMBERLY
LEEDS
LIPSCOMB
MAYTOWN

MOUNTAIN BROOK
MORRIS
MIDFIELD
MULGA

NORTH JOHNS
PLEASANT GROVE
ROOSEVELT CITY
SYLVAN SPRINGS

TARRANT
TRAFFORD
TRUSSVILLE
VESTAVIA HILLS

WARRIOR
WEST JEFFERSON

ALPHABETICAL LISTING WITH ADDRESS AND TELEPHONE

<u>Name</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Work Phone</u>	<u>Home Phone</u>
Aldridge, Sonny ID #75-01	7505 S 4th Ave B'ham 35206		836-6326
Barnes, Gary T. President - 1975 ID #75-02	5068 Juiata Dr B'ham 35210	934-5687	595-3000
Beck, Lynn ID #75-03	1709 Shades Park Dr B'ham 35209	323-6551 ext. 306	871-6959
Brammer, Charles ID #75-04	232 Poinciana Dr B'ham 35209	879-2154	870-7707
Breland, Lawrence* ID #75-05	1649 Cleveland Dr B'ham 35211	787-9468	787-9468
Burchfield, Kent ID #75-06	5521 Terrace J Ensley 35208	870-7404	786-2002
Caudle, David ID #75-07	150 Chalkville Rd Trussville 35173		655-3433
Clark, Jay ID #75-08	3634 Knights Bidge Rd B'ham 35206	251-0232	967-1838
Domnonavich, Joe ID #75-09	1424 - 28th St Ensley 35218	871-3597	786-6647
Ellis, Chet ID #75-10	826 Dartmouth Ct Bess 35020		425-5074
Kifer, Ken ID #75-11	1927 S 15th Ave B'ham 35205		
Kingry, Vivian ID #75-12	1600 S 9th Ave #8C B'ham 35205		933-9139
Lamb, Thomas ID #75-13	1619 S 11th Pl B'ham 35205		322-4996
Lawley, Chuck ID #75-14	294 - 12th Ave Midfield 35228	425-4332	787-4719
Mayfield, Shorty ID #75-15	542 Main St Gardendale 35071		631-3156
McDowell, Jim ID #75-16	1139 H Greenspring Ave B'ham 35205	323-4611	324-7163
McIntosh, Bill ID #75-17	10 Memory Ln B'ham 35213	324-2588	879-3289

<u>Name</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Work Phone</u>	<u>Home Phone</u>
Moore, Larry ID #75-18	2340 Forestdale Blvd B'ham 35214	871-3501	798-2728
Spencer, Kathy* ID #75-19	9029 Bel Air Dr B'ham 35206	322-0627	833-4773
Spencer, Steve ID #75-20	9029 Bel Air Dr B'ham 35206		833-4773
Washington, Milo ID #75-21	8333 N 9th Ave B'ham 35209	252-3924	833-9052
Welden, J. B. ID #75-22	1421 Highland Dr B'ham 35215	252-3924	853-8642

*Cave Rescue Team Coordinators


 Corwin Q. Wadsworth
 Director-Coordinator *SN*

CQW:SRN:ct