
THE CASCADE CAVER

Official publication
of the Cascade Grotto of the N.S.S.

Volume I, #4 (approximately)
November, 1962

HAD YOU WONDERED?

What happened to The Cascade Caver?

Nothing much - just that editor Tom Hatchett was transferred by Boeing to New Orleans, and took all his material along! He promised to publish at least one issue by long distance, but his route was by way of Texas' famed Caverns of Sonora, and for all we know, he may never have gone any farther!

So - The Caver is temporarily on a hit-or-miss basis - but at least it isn't dead.

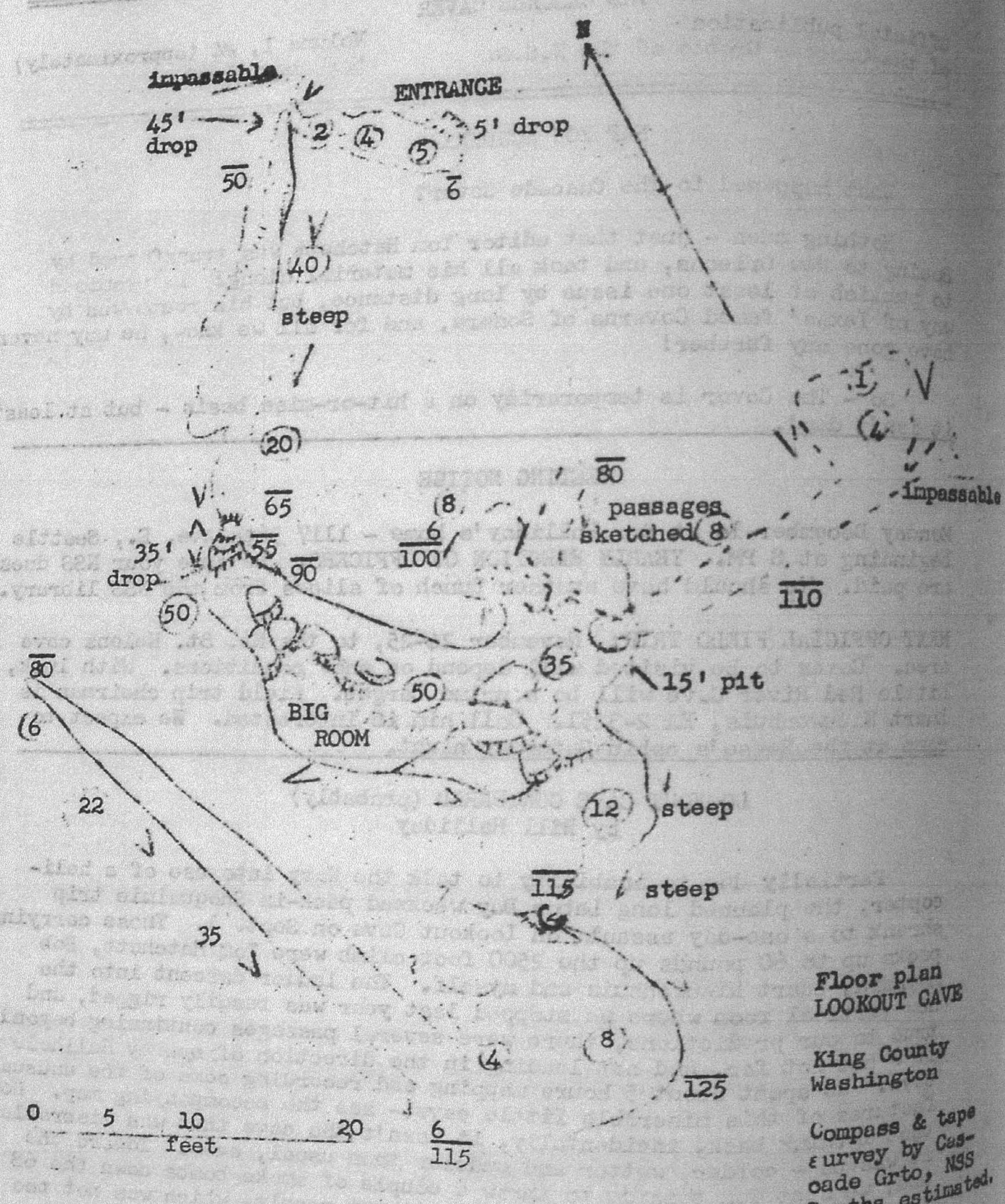
MEETING NOTICE

Monday December 10 at Dr. Halliday's home - 1117 36th Ave. E., Seattle beginning at 8 PM. YEARLY ELECTION OF OFFICERS. Be sure your NSS dues are paid. We should have another bunch of slides from the NSS library.

NEXT OFFICIAL FIELD TRIP: November 24-25, to the Mt. St. Helens cave area. Caves to be visited will depend on snow conditions. With luck, Little Red River Cave will be a prime target. Field trip chairman is Luurt Nieuwenhuis, EA 2-3251. Call him if interested. We expect to camp at the Reese's cabin Saturday night.

LOOKOUT CAVE CONQUERED (probably)
by Bill Halliday

Partially due to inability to talk the Navy into use of a helicopter, the planned long Labor Day weekend pack-in Snoqualmie trip shrank to a one-day assault on Lookout Cave on Sept. 1. Those carrying packs up to 60 pounds up the 2500 foot climb were Tom Hatchett, Bob Maynard, Luurt Nieuwenhuis and myself. The ladder descent into the new vertical room where we stopped last year was readily rigged, and true to our predictions, there were several passages continuing beyond it - but not far, and not leading in the direction of nearby Hellhole Cave. We spent about 5 hours mapping and recording some of the unusual features of this miserable little cave - see the accompanying map. Now that I think back, incidentally, it wasn't the cave that was miserable - it was us - colder, wetter and muddier than usual, even. Toward the end, we sent Tom topside to throw a couple of smoke bombs down the 68 foot entrance of Hellhole Cave, but without result, which was not too surprising. After the long series of chimneying and ladder pitches, I can rarely recall a pleasanter emergence into the mountain meadow sunshine. This leaves Hellhole Cave the only unmapped and partially unexplored major limestone cave in Washington, although there may still be some leads in Newton Cave, and just possibly maybe someone can force a couple of holes in breakdown near the lowest point in Lookout Cave...



Floor plan
LOOKOUT CAVE

King County
Washington

Compass & tape
survey by Cas-
cade Grto, N3S
Depths estimated.

IDAHO SPELEOLOGICAL NOTES

Ardo Smith has contributed the following old description of Crystal Falls Cave, north of St. Anthony and west of West Yellowstone. Unfortunately, the source of the quotation is lost. If his family succeeds in finding it, we will report later.

"...seen by hardly more than a score of persons and known by name to fewer than a hundred. Entrance is by way of a ragged gulch bedded with piles of stone, but the opening itself is large and vaulted and leads easily to the first chamber. The room is huge and rough with torn ceilings and walls and with countless tons of rocks heaped upon its floor. At its farther end is a rugged passageway that leads down but not steeply to the enormous first corridor of the cave. The ceiling here at the beginning is perhaps 100 feet in height and descends in sweeping curves to the ~~floor~~ walls....comes to a frozen river that lies on half the length of the main chamber. At the end of the river there is a great waterfall of ice that drops 30 feet to a tiny chamber of extraordinary beauty. Close to this chamber, toward the cave entrance, is a jagged basin some 20 feet across and 30 feet in depth and the explorer can descend without the aid of ropes, then turn to the right and follow a short and narrow passage to the other chamber. Upon coming to the other chamber he will probably hold his breath at the unsurpassed loveliness of what he sees. This waterfall of ice looks as if a river had plunged and had been suddenly frozen, because the contour of the descending flood is perfect even to the spilled, frozen flanking structure which looks like tumbled chandeliers and draperies of glass. On either side of the wall is a passage that leads to an inclined floor of ice and to another long and faultless corridor lying exactly under the one above. This chamber should be entered for a view of the ice fall from the other side and because it leads, after dropping in its ceiling until the explorer for a few yards has to proceed on hands and knees to another chamber beyond where ice crystals, studding walls and ceilings, are breathtaking in their perfection. Leaving the chamber, follow the river of ice to its fall and where it cascades down in corrugations as if the ripples of the stream had suddenly frozen, too. Here also is the loveliest corridor of all. From its floor up to and off its arched ceiling down to its floor again is a solid mass of ice crystals that grow in great bunches like flowers each with a thousand flower petals.

Within a radius of 10 miles from this one, eleven other caves have been explored wholly or in part and many remain unexplored."

(Not a bad description of this magnificent two-level lava tube - WRT)

NEW IDAHO CAVE REPORTED

Through the courtesy of the staff of the Nezperce National Forest, information has been received about PAPOOSE CAVE, about 10 miles southwest of Riggins, Idaho and between that town and Hells Canyon. From the reports, this cave appears to be formed on a contact between limestone and non-calcareous rock, contains several hundred feet of sizeable passageways, a succession of pits and drops and is not fully explored.

RECENT CAVING BY THE PORTLAND GROUP
by Steve Knutson

Dynamited Cave was visited the second time this year the last weekend in June. We tried out our 40 feet of new cable ladder. A passage was forced through the breakdown at the end of the farthest lowest level, to the left as you face the breakdown pile. To our great disappointment, there was another, more final breakdown immediately beyond. This pile appears impassable, and very loose. Thus our efforts on two trips added only 40 feet to the total length of the cave.

We did succeed in mapping out to the Big Room. The only thing left to map in the back is the Upper Level (about 500 feet). I believe our survey totalled about 2000 feet - the map is not yet finished.

Recently we also located Diamond Crater Cave #1, near the north end of the Steens Mountains in Oregon, and a few miles from a place called Diamond on the road maps. It contains peculiar lava stalactites 3 to 12 inches long over 100 square feet of ceiling. The map of this cave also will be finished soon. Also found at Diamond Craters were other small lava tube caves, mostly broken down, and some very small tubes in pahoehoe lava. The flows are very recent and support no visible plant life.

After Diamond Craters, we went to Jordan Valley, Oregon. We didn't get to see Rattlesnake Caves, but were told that the large one is several hundred feet long and big inside. We talked to a druggist who says that there are no caves in the newer flows, which he has explored thoroughly. Another person is supposed to know of several large caves northwest of Rome, requiring a rope for entry. Am writing him for details.

We revisited Hells Canyon the first week in June. The road was blocked by the dam construction, so we had to pack in. We found the reported 450 foot cave on the Idaho side, and mapped it as well as finding about 25 smaller caves ranging from 150 feet to 20 feet in length, most of which were merely noted and not mapped. We named the big cave Redfish Cave for the painted symbol of a red fish outline about 20 feet inside the entrance. It is about 200-300 feet above and a bit to the east of the large shelter on the north bank of Allison Creek before the first bend in the canyon.

Above Redfish Cave is a prominent opening about 10 feet square. We entered it by 5th class climbing and found to go straight in for about 30 feet, then end. In Redfish, crawling is necessary at both ends, but is mostly roomy, with a passage height of 15 feet for a short distance. There are two or three short side passages, but the cave is mostly one long winding tubular cave. A few long-eared bats and some pack-rats are present. It gets wetter the farther you go, and is live near the end where flowstone fills the passage. It contains unusually nice speleothems, including a "Christmas tree". This cave and one or two smaller ones clearly deserve protection. Some vandalism has occurred, and more and more people will be entering this area. This entrance and that of Big Bar Cave #1 could both be easily locked up with a gate. I think we should seriously consider such a project. We met a construction worker who said he was planning to go to Big Bar and throw dynamite into every cave entrance he could find.

1962 OREGON CAVES MAPPING TRIP
by Steve Knutson

On Jan. 27, 1962, we accomplished additional mapping in the Dome Series in the south end section of Oregon Cave. We were late in arriving and difficulties in making a fire at Greyback Camp and therefore were able to spend only one 6-hour session in the cave. We were given the location of the nearby vertical cave which was described to us as a 50 foot drop with lateral passages at the bottom but having potential if cleared of clay fill. Two other caves in the area were also reported to us, both having been cut into by bulldozers during road construction and subsequently filled. One is across the valley from Oregon Cave, where a logging road has gone through. The other is somewhere along the Bolan road on the eastern side of French Peak, which was made into a road recently. The former was said to look promising before being closed, and the latter was said to be only a crack too small to enter with a strong emerging air current. Another small 20-50 foot cave or caves were reported along Panther Creek a short distance (1/8 mile) from state highway 46. Also mentioned were "benches" or sinks above Oregon Cave into which trickling streams flow, theoretically joining the cave streams. Dye tests here would be interesting.

The group that took part included Bill Witherspoon, Dwight Reed, Steve Lander and myself, all from Reed College. We entered the cave at 3 PM and proceeded immediately to the south end. Beginning at the Rathole, we mapped south across the top of the "1st Well" and into the bottom of the "2nd Well". Through the passages opening on the far side of this wall was a complex of small passages and small wells which was our objective. This, however, was never reached. Our downfall came when we decided to map through the top of the 2nd Well to a small room just above it which represented the highest known point in the cave, 250 feet above the entrance. Bill Witherspoon took the end of the tape and started up to the hole leading to the small room, about 40 or 50 feet above. The rest of us waited. We were about to read the tape when he yelled down that he was still going. The tape paid out steadily until it approached 75 feet. We yelled at Bill to stop, but heard a muffled reply: "Come on up!" We did, and followed the tape through a hole 1 1/2" in diameter in the ceiling of the small room, and laterally about 15 feet through a tortuous crawl at which point we crawled up through a narrow crack and into the bottom of a "3rd Well" which is about 30 by 20 feet in cross-section and about 60 feet high. The end of the tape was at the bottom and Bill was perched about 50 feet up on the wall in the opening of a small passage. We scrambled up and followed Bill through this tight circular tunnel, angling upward for about 20 feet where we emerged into the bottom of yet another well ("4th Well"). A hole near the ceiling of this 20 foot deep pit went up at a steep angle for about 25 feet that we could see, but an overhang blocked progress. We had found quite a few snail shells on the way up, and think we were quite close to the surface, having increased the known vertical height of this section by at least 75 feet. We spent some time in side passages seeking a way around the overhang, but with no luck. We also explored a small complex off the end of the Breakdown Room, but found it to lead only back to the Shovel Room.

We have called the third well The Bone Room since there are a great many bear bones here. They appeared partially fossilized, and had apparently been washed down, either from the surface or from a presently-unknown trap-like pit entrance of the cave.

N (mag.)

0 10 20 40
feet

Floor plan of Dome Series
OREGON CAVE.

Compass & tape survey

1-27-62
narrow

