



# The Cascade Caver

Official Publication of the  
CASCADE GROTTTO N S S

Vol. 10 #2  
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Volume 10 no.2      Editor: Dr. William R. Halliday February 1971

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## COMING EVENTS

- February 6, 6:30 PM. Planning session for 1972 N.S.S. Convention.  
Larsons, 13402NE Clark Road, Vancouver, Wash. 695-4143.
- February 12-15. Vancouver Island trip. Call Pflum, ME2-4898.
- February 12-21. Eastern Washington group trip to Papoose Cave.  
Contact Tom Miller in Cheney.
- February 13-14. San Francisco area "Cave-in". Call Halliday, EA4-7474.
- February 15. Regular grotto meeting, Hallidays, 8 PM; 1117 36th Avenue  
East, at East Madison. EA4-7474. Special 20th Anniversary  
program.
- February 20. Not yet scheduled, except for Rescue Assn. training session.  
Freses, 17021 1st Ave. S., RO2-8681.
- February 21. Ape Cave trip. Call Coughlin, PA5-9127.
- March 5-7. Vancouver Island trip, Call Pflum, ME 2-4898.  
Weekends beginning mid-May. High-elevation climbs for Summit Steam  
Caves group.
- Memorial Day weekend. Papoose Cave.
- July 4 weekend. Summit Steam Caves.
- Labor Day Weekend. NW Regional Meeting, Bear Lake area, Idaho-Utah.
- Thanksgiving weekend. Possibly Shasta Lake area, with California Region.

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## NEW NW CAVE RESCUE ASSOCIATION OFFICERS

Chairman: Verne Frese  
Vice-chairman: Ron Pflum  
Secretary: Maurice Magee  
Treasurer: Dave Mischke  
Board member at large: Bob Brown

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This is a  
SPECIAL 20TH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE OF THE CAVER  
FEATURING THE HISTORY OF THE CASCADE GROTTTO

## HISTORY OF THE CASCADE GROTTA

by Dr. William R. Halliday

On February 15, 1951, seven Seattle spelunkers and three from the Portland area applied for a charter for a Cascade Grotto of the National Speleological Society, to include all N.S.S. members in the Pacific Northwest, based in Seattle. Although the future of the group appeared doubtful indeed, it was promptly chartered and promptly set about compiling a record of extraordinary achievement.

The mere organization of the grotto was audacious. To the south, the old Northern California Grotto had folded and the nearest N.S.S. group was its Stanford Grotto, even then showing hints of the disruptive elements which tragically soon were to terminate its brilliant but short existence. To the east, the nearest grotto was half a continent away. North and west was a total blank; Nakimu Cave was known to exist 500 miles to the northeast, but in a roadless area. Washington and Oregon themselves were a virtual blank on maps showing the distribution of caves. The assembled explorers were THE experts on northwest caves, yet within all of Washington and the adjacent parts of Oregon, Idaho and British Columbia their combined knowledge included only Gardner Cave, Ice Cave west of Trout Lake, and Boulder Cave. Gene Hanson had heard a rumor of a cave in the roadless wilderness forest south of Mt. St. Helens but had never been able to find it. Not until 1943 had ANY Washington cave been known to the N.S.S. Yet the grotto blithely asserted its belief that it could "uncover a great deal of previously unknown information for the N.S.S." In view of the outcome of the 20 years which followed, the names of these bold cavers are worthy of record:

Henry Buehner, Portland, Oregon.  
Warren Gibson, Bellevue, Washington.  
Phillip Gilhousen, Seattle, Washington.  
William R. Halliday, Seattle, Washington. (Chairman)  
William E. Hanson, Vancouver, Washington.  
Johnellis Jones, Seattle, Washington.  
Peter M. McLellan, Seattle, Washington.  
Robert L. Middleton, Seattle, Washington.  
Delford M. Neely, Seattle, Washington. (Secretary-treasurer)  
Thornton Sargent III, Portland, Oregon.

The new grotto faced three problems soon outlined in the initial Chairman's Report: "First and foremost is the shortage of caves within reasonable distance of Seattle and Portland. Second is the impermanence of all current members. Third is the necessity for total inactivity each winter due to heavy snow in cave areas." The first field trips reflected two of the problems: on March 4, 1951 the grotto inspected the entire 111 feet of Duke's Cave, largest of the talus caves near Issaquah. Six weeks later, it drove all the way to Bend, Oregon - to see the only major lava tube caves in the northwest! Thus Skeleton Cave, Arnold Ice Cave, Wind Cave and South Ice Cave were the first real caves visited by the grotto. May 13, 1951 saw the first trip to a limestone cave - Albright Cave (we misspelled it Allbright for years and it was almost 20 years before we met its discoverer and namesake).

From the beginning, the grotto sought close relations with the press; a journalist accompanied the Bend and Albright trips, and newspaper accounts brought numerous reports of northwestern caves. A very optimistic Chairman's Report

appeared May 21, 1951. Besides the constitution and membership list of the new grotto, it included brief field trip reports on 12 caves and listed 63 other caves in Washington, Oregon and British Columbia. This was the first speleological publication in northwestern North America; it was formalized the following month when Cascade Cave Report #2 appeared. Almost simultaneously, the first limestone cave in western Washington was found - 75-foot Three Mile Creek Cave. Those wishing to see for themselves just how far the grotto has come are urged to read "Current Status of Caving in the State of Washington" in C.C.R. #2. An equally scant companion piece appeared in C.C.R. #3, on Oregon caving.

On July 2, 1951, this writer moved to Colorado and Del Neely moved up to the chairmanship, with Peter McLellan becoming secretary-treasurer. Membership was soon up to 11 and C.C.R. #4 and 5 soon followed; the latter included Tom Steinburn's initial report on Cave Ridge and Gene Hanson's triumphal report of finally locating and exploring Ole's Cave. Yet the leadership gradually became discouraged and after publication of C.C.R.#6, the grotto became inactive in 1954. Officially, that is. Tom Steinburn continued working on Cave Ridge, for example; he and I made the first descent of Hellhole Cave 9-15-56. Homer Spencer of Portland who then was growing roquefort in Cheese Cave led a flurry of discovery in the Mt. Adams area, including Red Cave; it took us 9 years to relocate that one! Several small limestone caves turned up in the North Cascades.

In 1957 I came home to stay and found activity at a moderate level, with McLaughlin Canyon Caves, Gardner and others in eastern Washington about to be visited. The next year saw Gardner, Albright and Ole's Caves mapped. Bill Faria and Gary Maykut became sparkplugs, especially after the famous initial trip to Ape Cave; their guesstimate of 3 miles of lava tube wasn't far off. Its mapping was the final act of an exciting 1958.

Meanwhile, things had been picking up in Oregon also. A Portland group calling itself the Northwest Explorers, led by Peter Alburas, Bill Dailey and Jack Grant turned up several Mt. Adams area lava tube caves, including Falls Creek and Dry Creek Caves. In Bend, Phil Coyner and Jim Anderson also had become avid spelunkers. The three groups began to cave together early in 1959, with two trips to Oregon Cave - the first investigations there by modern organized speleology. By mid-1959, extensive mapping of Washington lava tubes was underway. The first speleological reconnaissance of the Hells Canyon limestone area was 8-17-59, by this writer. Then came the excited reports of a big, multilevel lava cave west of Mt. Adams. And the news of its dynamiting before the group got there November 14, 1959. During this period, most of these studies were technically activities of the Washington Speleological Survey, but the group was a direct continuation of the original grotto.

Actually we had applied for reactivation of the grotto early in 1959, but the request got lost for almost a year and approval did not come until 1960; this writer was again elected chairman. 1960 also brought the first contact of Steve Knutson, a leading sparkplug of the second decade of the Cascade Grotto. This was the year of the first San Juan Islands investigations and of widespread explorations and studies throughout western Washington. The 10th anniversary of the grotto found it planning an all-out mapping trip to Oregon Cave, accomplished in late March 1961; Steve Knutson assembled a sufficiently large party to accomplish voice contact in many intricate areas.



Three months later, Steve also joined 8 of us from Seattle in six and a half hours' backbreaking work reopening Dynamited Cave; an additional 6 1/2 hours' exploration brought us to the lip of the Big Room before total exhaustion set in.

In general, this was a time of very intensive vulcanospeleology, with the reactivated grotto probably the world's leading authority on this field. On August 20, 1961 it made a start in glaciospeleology, but this was a false start; only about 100 feet of the Paradise Ice Caves could be entered before the way was blocked by summer torrents. Frankly, it didn't look like much. During the year, other trips ranged from the Skagit-Whatcom area to Lava Beds National Monument in California. The Cascade Caver made its debut at the end of the year, listing 14 members from Lynnwood to Corvallis and Salem, and 44 caves visited in three states excluding dozens more in Lava Beds National Monument. Grotto chairman was Ron Stanford, with Tom Hatchett secretary-treasurer and editor. Luurt Nieuwenhuis became very active.

1962 was the year of the first report of Pappoose Cave and continuing discoveries in the Mt. Adams area. Steve Knutson began to contribute to the Caver, leading "the Portland group" all over Oregon and across the Snake River to Redfish Cave. Fired by the eagerness of Victoria's Dave Dunnet, 1963 dawned with the grotto looking toward Vancouver Island for the first time. An unusually large party studied and mapped the main Horne Lake Caves January 5 and 6, 1963 in the first Vancouver Island speleological venture known to organized speleology. Press reports soon brought us in touch with the B.C. Cave Hunters (then Clarence Hronek and Leigh Hamber) who had been to Horne Lake a few months earlier. The enlargement of this nucleus successively became the British Columbia Speleological Society, the Canadian Speleological Society and currently the Vancouver Island Cave Exploration Group; the Cascade Grotto has worked closely with this group ever since. In August, the grotto chartered a float plane and scouted six low-elevation limestone caves in a fascinating low-elevation rain forest karst on the west side of the island. Particular emphasis was placed on bibliographic research on Vancouver Island at this time. However vulcanospeleological studies also continued, especially in the northernmost Mt. St. Helens group. The year was also marked by persuading the state Civil Defense authorities to abandon designating lava tubes as fallout shelters; less success was obtained in Oregon, unfortunately. Caves of Washington was published and a large membership increase resulted. This, too, was the year of the visit of N.S.S. President Tom Barr; it was raining hard in Ape Cave and he never returned.

1964 saw a burgeoning of Oregon caving and by December the Oregon Grotto was chartered; the Cascade Grotto is proud that its scion has surpassed it in size and in some accomplishments even in our own state. Clyde Senger became active with the grotto in bat banding. The Caver began to print vulcanospeleological abstracts, although not yet under that specific heading. The first article (a reprint) on the Summit Steam Caves of Mt. Rainier appeared. The following year saw the first articles on Alaskan caves. Clarence Hronek and this writer worked out close cooperation on Vancouver Island caving. The Cascade Grotto finally got to Pappoose Cave, and initial studies under the leadership of Luurt Nieuwenhuis and Don Dilley were exciting indeed. Bob Brown was becoming very active. Red Cave was finally re-located. Verne Frese led the mapping of Cave Ridge. Further discoveries continued in the Mt. Adams area.

The grotto obtained a special use permit from the U.S. Forest Service for Dynamited Cave, and installed the first (unsuccessful) gate. The Cascade Caver first used the alias The American Journal of Vulcanospeleology; it was only half in jest. Van York was the chairman; I received the N.S.S. Honorary Membership, the greatest honor I have ever had.

1966 saw repeated trips to Papoose Cave despite the intervening 475 miles. Often we were joined by other grottos. Derek Ford, Charley Brown and others from McMaster University were studying Nakimu Caves; the grotto joined them on July 3 for its first trip to a mainland B.C. cave, despite a similar 475 mile distance. At least 6 trips went to Vancouver Island, joining the B.C. Speleological Society in the Skutz Falls and Gordon River areas as well as some lesser caves near Victoria. Joint trips with the Oregon Grotto also were becoming common. The Cave Ridge permit agreement was negotiated and signed, with considerable work done there. Jerry Frahm raised the standard of the Caver to a remarkable level.

1967 was a notable year for accomplishments in vulcanospeleology, especially west of the Mt. St. Helens kipuka; Vancouver Island activity continued. A Northwest Cave Rescue Association was planned. The burden of the Caver became too much for Jerry and several issues were delayed and confused; the Caver retaliated by becoming the Interplanetary Journal of Vulcanospeleology - again only half in jest. The leading event of 1967, however, was the discovery of the extent of the Paradise Ice Caves and the beginning of intensive operations there; the grotto has subsequently pioneered in glacio-speleology as it did in vulcanospeleology.

1968 began somberly with the death of Edith Anderson returning from a February Paradise Ice Cave trip. This was a year of problems, partially continued from late 1967; the Caver was not published for four months. Although a newcomer to the northwest, Rick Rigg was elected chairman; Rob Stitt became editor and publisher. Yet for the first time a grotto party reached the Summit Steam Caves. Unfortunately it was too exhausted for a productive study. Dynamited Cave was regated by the U.S. Forest Service - in such a way that cavers can go over or under the gate. Exploration and mapping of the Paradise Ice Caves continued under the leadership of Charles Anderson. Bob Brown took the lead in the grotto's invitational First Northwest Speleological Convention at Papoose Cave; the Northwest Region of the N.S.S. emerged. Frankly, however, it was a year in which debating hindered both caving and speleology - a valuable lesson other grottoes have also learned the hard way. The problem was only partially resolved in 1969, as is readily visible in the Caver. However some notable work was done in lava tubes, in the Paradise Ice Caves (by now the world's longest mapped glacier cave system) and the Big Four Ice Caves. Under the leadership of Charles Larson, the Oregon Grotto was particularly productive in vulcanospeleology during this period. Most of both grottos were at the N.S.S. Convention in Lovell, Wyoming, to see Charley Anderson's slide of the Paradise Ice Caves win the gold medal of the photographic salon.

Most of the debaters withdrew from the Cascade Grotto at the start of 1970, and a year of remarkable productivity ensued. Charles Coughlin succeeded Bob Brown as chairman. A new constitution was adopted, limiting debate at regular meetings and permitting non-N.S.S. members in the grotto for the first time. The Caver regained much of its old quality and - as N.A.S.A. and other institutions also began to look to the moon for lava tube caves -

happily resumed its alter ego as the Interplanetary Journal of Vulcano-speleology. In March, however, it became the American Journal of Glaciospeleology, as the significance of the grotto's pioneering in that field became more and more apparent. Particular achievements included the first subglacial traverse of the Paradise Ice Caves (by Ron Pflum and Bill Zarwell), the first productive trip to the Summit Steam Caves, the vertical survey of Dynamited Cave, Charley Anderson's 100th trip to the Paradise Ice Caves, discovery of a new cave at Twin Lakes and the mapping of Eudataw Cave with the V.I.C.E. Group; the second descent of Crest Cave was made on the same trip. Much of the year was occupied with the successful effort for the 1972 N.S.S. Convention at White Salmon, Washington, but time was found for training sessions of the Northwest Cave Rescue Association including a joint King County Search and Rescue Organizations operation in four feet of slush in December; there was also a successful rescue in Papoose Cave of an Idaho caver. For several months, there was at least one grotto field trip each weekend. And even with the Northwest Regional Convention 800 miles distant in eastern Nevada, there was a large contingent from the Cascade Grotto,

As the grotto approaches its 20th anniversary, new officers are Ron Pflum chairman, Jan Roberts vice-chairman and Chuck Coughlin secretary-treasurer. In retrospect, the Cascade Grotto indeed has a proud record: pioneering in two entire new branches of speleology. Increasing 100-fold the number of nearby caves, and their total passage lengths. The exploration and study of the world's longest lava tube cavern, and the longest mapped glacier caves. The basic exploration of the fourth deepest limestone cave in the United States. The discovery of entire new cave areas. The establishment and maintenance of friendly relations with caving neighbors to the north and south, the organization of the regional organization, and of an effective rescue organization. Many valuable scientific contributions. And much more. The Grotto has survived repeated crises and emerged stronger than ever. Today it is hardly possible to conjure an accurate picture of northwest speleology before the Cascade Grotto.

And yet, as the accomplishments of the Cascade and other grottoes, and of the V.I.C.E. Group mount, the frontiers of northwest speleology seem ever more distant. Ever more clearly, the Northwest looms as the region of America's greatest speleological variety, its greatest challenge. Today, its potentials seem even more limitless than 20 years ago. Even though the first 20 years of the Cascade Grotto are a continuing record of achievement perhaps unparalleled anywhere in the world, the challenge of the next 20 years mandates even greater future accomplishment. Each member of the Cascade Grotto can draw strength from a review of its proud past, and encouragement for the effort to come - free of smugness, for the challenges of the next 20 years will be no less than those of the first 20. Yet the mettle of northwest cavers is such that I personally am certain that in 1991 I will be as proud to have been a charter member of the Cascade Grotto as I am today. In the meantime - Good Caving!

Cascade Grotto of the  
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