



Cascade Caver

Newsletter of the Cascade Grotto of the National Speleological Society

May 1999, Volume 38 No. 5



NCA regional postponed due to snow conditions. Contact Jim Harp: Jharpj@aol.com or 425-745-1010.
NCRC seminar moved to Roseburg. Contact John Punches: punches@wizzards.net or 541-957-5461.

Cascade Caver

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All material to be published, subscription requests, renewals, address changes, and exchange publications should be sent to the Grotto address.

GROTTO MEMBERSHIP

Membership in the Cascade Grotto is \$15.00 per year. Subscription to the *Cascade Caver* is free to regular members. Membership for each additional family member is \$2.00 per year. Subscription to the *Cascade Caver* is \$15.00 per year. Subscription via email is \$11.00 per year.

GROTTO ADDRESS

Cascade Grotto; P.O. Box 345, Mountlake Terrace, WA 98043-0345. This post office box should be used for both the grotto and for the *Cascade Caver*.

GROTTO OFFICERS

Chairman	Steve Sprague	(360) 387-3162
Vice Chairman	Lane Holdcroft	(206) 783-6534
Sec/Treasurer	Katrina Ostby	(425) 823-5107

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* Editor of the current issue.

MEETINGS

Regular grotto meetings are held monthly at 7:00pm on the third Friday of each month at the Mountlake Terrace Public Library, 23300 58th Ave. W. Please see the map on the back cover of this issue.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Please notify Mike Fraley at (360) 424-7297 (email: mfraley@valleyint.com) of any upcoming trips.

- May 21 Grotto Meeting 7:00 p.m.
May 29-31 NCRC will hold a rescue seminar at Peterson Prairie. Pre-registration is required and enrollment will be limited.
contact: John or Michelle PUNCHES
541-957-5461 - punches@wizzards.net
It will also feature a barbecue pork & chicken dinner as an NCA fund-raiser.
contact: Jim Harp 425-745-1010
Jharpj@aol.com
June 4-6 Saddle Butte lava tube system. Details to be announced later.
contact: Jeff Sims ???-549-1609 or Ric Carlson ???-389-5313
carlsorl@transport.com
June 4-6 Cascade Grotto trip to McLaughlin Canyon and Albright Caves in Eastern Washington. Trip will leave after work on the 4th and return to Seattle late on the 6th. Caving and ridge walking are planned. Contact Mark Sherman at mas@tc.fluke.com or 206-365-5386.

COVER:

Caver in a tight crawlway.

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REMINDER

There will be a vote to change the bylaws at the May 21 meeting. Proposed changes to the dues, life memberships, and officers responsibilities are proposed to bring the grotto's bylaws into conformance with current practice.

TRIP REPORTS

GRANITE FALLS

by Dave Hopf

At 9:00 AM Larry McTigue, Michael Frailey, Steve Sprague and myself met at the McDonalds in Marysville for the purpose of looking for caves in the limestone around the Granite Falls. We had good reason to explore this area. There was a report of an old limestone quarry along side of an abandoned railroad grade on the north side of Iron Mountain. There was another ancient report of cave(s) exposed by a cut in the limestone along this grade. In addition, Larry discovered an area of 23 large sink-holes a few miles away on the topo map.

The weather was wet and dreary most of the time, which motivated us to work from our vehicles as much as possible. Thanks to the GPS and maps, we had no problem navigating or locating sites such as streets or topography. However, the information provided about the whereabouts of the Quarry and caves was so sketchy that it was impossible to be certain about their exact locations.

We finally found the site of a large abandoned quarry which roughly matched the description. Finding no other possible sites, we had no choice but to assume that this was the correct site. It was apparent that the quarry was exhausted of limestone except for the occasional rock intermixed with the overburden.

One of the first rock outcroppings we came across looked enough like limestone to warrant a field test. However the field test proved that the rock outcrop was not limestone although it did contain enough calcite for a faint reaction.

We did no further testing, having familiarized ourselves with the chert and marl that was typical of the area. Many of the rocks did tend to look like limestone, but closer examination revealed otherwise. In just about any rocky area it was possible to find the

occasional piece of good quality limestone rock, but never in any quantity suitable for the formation of solution cavities.

It soon became apparent that any sizeable quantity of limestone that may have existed in the area had been quarried away years ago along. If any caves had been exposed by cuts in the railroad grade, the limestone containing the caves was long gone.

As the day wore on, the weather cleared. We parked at another more recent quarry and spent some time looking at the geology and hiking around the mountain. We found no indication of karst or limestone deposits, but it was nice to get out of our vehicles and walk around for a bit. We did find a cavity in the roadbed that would have looked promising had the rocks been limestone.

At this point we decided to track down some of the large sinks Larry had located. We plugged the coordinates into the GPS and actively tracked our location on a computer screen as we were driving to them. The first two were inaccessible as they were on private property that was posted against trespassing. We focused our attention on the larger cluster of sinks on the other side of the river. Access to this property was gated but not posted. We parked and hiked to the location of the first sink, which we found just behind a large gravel deposit. When I first saw the sink, I thought it was a ravine as it was large and the vegetation was dense. The entire area was gravel and provided enough drainage as to prevent the sink from becoming a pond.

The second sink we located was not much of a sink, but rather a dell on the hillside that ended in a small 4' sink. Since the area appeared to be primarily aggregate, we abandoned our search and returned to our vehicles.

Finally, we stopped at the Granite Falls Fish ladder and walked around. The area was beautiful and was the highlight of the day. Huge 400 foot tall granite cliffs on the opposite bank contrasted the gorge containing the raging South Fork of the Stillaguamish River.

While we did not find any caves, we felt that we had accomplished something. All of us had heard tales of caves and limestone in this area and it was good to see to our satisfaction that limestone was long gone and cross this particular area off our list of caving prospects.

[Editor's note: both Dave Hopf and Steve Sprague sent in trip reports on the Granite Falls trip.]

THAT SINKING FEELING: GRANITE FALLS RIDGE WALKING

by Steve Sprague

Date: Sunday May-9-99

Participants: Mike Fraley, Dave Hopf, Larry McTigue, Steve Sprague

Larry noticed that there were a lot of sinks on the topo map NE of Granite Falls and thought they should be checked out. There are a number of limestone quarries mentioned in Danner in the same area so in theory this area has potential. Before the trip, Larry asked me to get the GPS coordinates of a couple of the quarries listed in Danner and save them as waypoints. The highest priority was the Shumway deposit, the only problem was that I couldn't make the written description of the location coincide with the USGS map. I figured we could settle on a likely position over breakfast.

We met at the McDonald's in Marysville at 9:00am and I explained why I didn't have a GPS coordinate yet. Larry says, "I thought you could pull it off the map in Danner."

I said "What map? I didn't see a map."

Sure enough a couple of pages before the Shumway write up there is a map of a number of the deposits. Oh well.

Shumway is located along the old Monte Cristo railroad grade, about two miles further up the line from the Wayside mine. When we visited the Wayside a few years back, access was through the Iron Mountain Quarry. The newer USGS maps showed a road that went right to the Shumway from the opposite direction. It promised to be a rainy day, so we opted for the road instead of the 3 mile hike.

Larry and Mike were getting bored listening to Dave and I discuss GPS esoterica at breakfast so when we car pooled out of Granite falls, it was decided that Dave and I would share a ride with the GPS equipment to make the trip more enjoyable for Larry and Mike in the other car. Dave's van was the unofficial command center for the trip by virtue of all the technology. In addition to the 2 GPS receivers, we had one plugged into Dave's desktop PC running a moving map display. It made my job as trip navigator a breeze.

The first snag we hit was a very imposing gate at the end of the county road. The area behind the gate is a mixture of State and private forest land. Judging by the sign, most of the land is owned by John Hancock insurance, managed by Olympic Forest Resources. Luckily we had a key for one of the gate's eight pad locks, so crossing our fingers that we wouldn't have to explain why we couldn't read the "KEEP OUT" signs, we forged ahead.

The road eventually dropped onto the old rail road grade and we started looking for signs of the Shumway Quarry. We found bits of limestone in the road surface and a number of rock pits along the side of the road. Danner states that "production ceased sometime prior to 1936" so the vegetation had quite a head start on us. We poked around in the area Danner had marked on the map for about an hour but didn't really find any evidence confirming that we had located the quarry. We decided to move on to the next quarry site in Danner, "Granite Falls".

We never really got there, but we were close!

At first we headed for a likely bare spot on the USGS topo, but it was a pit used for road surfacing. There were some pieces of limestone here but it didn't appear that there were any large bodies existent. At the pit the road was blocked by a downed tree so we left our cars to explore some of the road system on foot. Unfortunately nothing of any promise was found so we decided to head back and locate the Granite Falls Quarry. On closer inspection we determined that it is about 400 vertical feet below the newer pit on the same ridge. We drove to the end of another road and parked on a saddle above the south fork of the Stillaguamish. We could hear the river in the canyon below. The map showed that the quarry was a short distance to the east from the end of the road. Danner says "The limestone was quarried some time prior to 1910, and was transported by a cable tram across the Shillalah River to a shipping bin on the north bank of the river, where it was loaded onto cars of the Everett and Monte Cristo Railroad. It is not known whether any quarrying was done after that time, but the quarry has been abandoned for many years and is considered to be exhausted."

We made a quick search in the approximately 20 year old Douglas Fir plantation but failed to find the quarry. Danner did say, "Thick second-growth trees and brush cover the area, and the limestone deposit is so small that it can be found only with great difficulty." Anyway that is our excuse for not finding it.

We decided to head back out to the County road to check other sinks to the south that were not noted in Danner. It turned out that these were located in a more populated area and that to reach them we would have to use people's private driveways. Since there are a large group of sinks on the north side of the river that we wanted to check, we decided to relocate to that area instead.

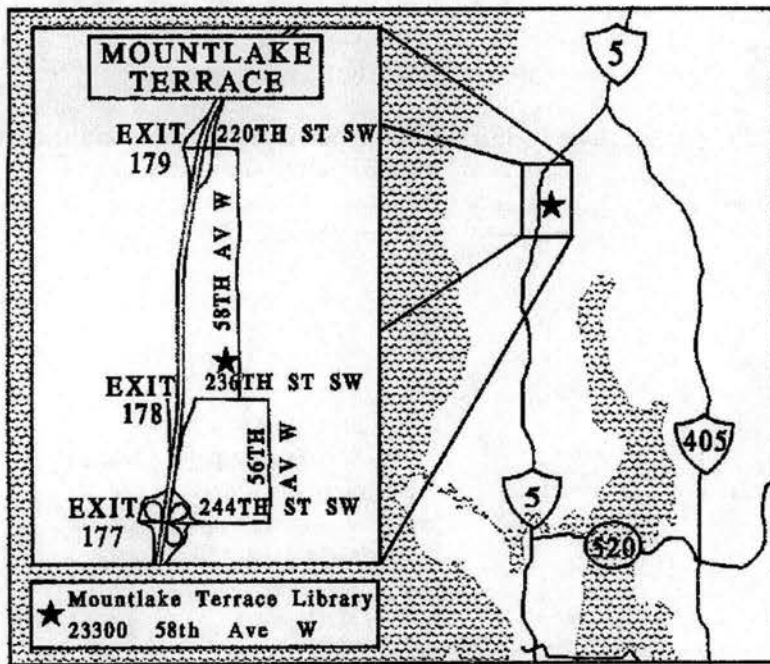
It turned out that these sinks are located in a proposed gravel quarry that Associated Sand and Gravel is proposing for the area. This has been the subject of great concern to the residents of Granite Falls and there has been a lot of public debate about the merits of the quarry. From this caver's point of view, MINE IT ALL! Turns out the "sinks" are likely fossil glacier pot holes, formed as large amounts of gravel deposited around large chunks of glacier ice. When the ice melted a depression that looks like a sink was formed - to fool cavers.

That was it for the day, we regrouped at our cars back in Granite Falls. Dave had to get going but Larry, Mike and I paused for some pretty good pizza in town. Over our pizza we concluded that this area seems to have low potential for cave bearing limestone. But it was an interesting search; there was a bit of limestone mixed with some history of the old Everett and Monte Cristo railroad.

UPCOMING TRIPS & EVENTS

Please notify Mike Fraley at (360) 424-7297 (email: mfraley@valleyint.com) of any upcoming trips.

- May 29-31 NCRC will hold a rescue seminar at Peterson Prairie. Pre-registration is required and enrollment will be limited. Contact John or Michelle Panches at 541-957-5461 or [<panches@wizards.net>](mailto:panches@wizards.net) to reserve your spot. It will also feature a barbecue pork & chicken dinner as an NCA fundraiser. Contact Jim Harp for information on the non-vertical stuff. Jharpj@aol.com or 425-745-1010.
- June 4-6 Cascade Grotto trip to McLaughlin Canyon and Albright Caves in Eastern Washington. Trip will leave after work on the 4th and return to Seattle late on the 6th. Caving and ridge walking are planned. Contact Mark Sherman at mas@tc.fluke.com or 206-365- 5386.
- June 4-6 Saddle Butte lava tube system. Details to be announced later. Contact Jeff Sims at ???-549-1609 or Ric Carlson at ???- 389-5313 or carlsori@transport.com
- June 12-13 Hike to the Tubal Cain mine and also see a B17 crash site near Squim on the Peninsula. Mountain biking to hot springs planned. . Contact Scott Davis at scott.davis@weverhaeuser.com or 253-862-1035
- June 14-July 9 The Kosciusko Project in Alaska needs cavers this year due to a shortage of international participants. Don't miss this opportunity to walk in the unexplored caves and karst of the Tongass. Contact Kris Esterson at kae7077@garnet.acns.fsu.edu , or 850-402-9775, or see www.angelfire.com/dc/kos99/tongass.html
- July 3-10 1999 Cave Rescue Operations and Management Seminar to be held at the Tulelake Fairgrounds in Tulelake, California. Lava Beds National Monument is close by for caving opportunities. See <http://www.altadena.net/ncrc-west/ncrc1999/#seminar> for more information or snail-mail to: NCRC Seminar 1999
Marianne Ruso, Registrar
P.O. Box 230
New Castle, CA 95658-0230
- July 12-16 NSS convention at Twin Falls County Fairgrounds - Filler, Idaho. Contact David Kesner at (208) 939-0979 or email at drdave@micron.net
- August 12-13 Hike to Washington Monument to look for new caves. Dave Hopf would like to have 2 teams, one below to act as spotters and one above to rappel down the cliffs to look for entrances. May want to bring snowshoes just incase. Trip will go ahead if the roads are clear of snow. Contact Dave Hopf at ibis@cnw.com or 360 766-6978.



The Cascade Grotto meets at 7:00pm on the third Friday of each month at the Mountlake Terrace Public Library, 23300 58th Ave. W.

To get to the Library from the Eastside, take Bothell Way to Ballinger Way. Head North on Ballinger and take a right on 19th Ave. NE (this turns into 56th Ave. W. at the county line). Turn left on 236th then right on 58th Ave. W. Go North 3 blocks.

We look forward to seeing you at one of our meetings.

Cascade Caver
 P.O. Box 345
 Mountlake Terrace, WA 98043-0345



Windy City Grotto
 c/o Ralph Earlandson
 802 S Highland Ave
 Oak Park IL 60304-1529

