



Cascade Caver

Newsletter of the Cascade Grotto of the National Speleological Society

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Cascade Caver

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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

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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 (425) 398-3799 of any upcoming trips.

September 15	Grotto Meeting 7:00 p.m. Mountlake Terrace Library.
October 20	Grotto Meeting. 7:00 p.m. Mountlake Terrace Library.
October 2001	10 day caving trip to England. Contact Jon McGinnis for information. mcginnis@quidnunc.net

COVER: The cover photo is a picture of Jon McGinnis rappelling into Hellhole Cave. Picture taken by Julie McGinnis. Please see the related article below.

Ridge walking, a pit, and a cave accident.

By Mike Fraley

I stand, looking into the mirror, at the cuts on my arms, the bruises on my legs and shins, the dirt on my cloths and in my hair, at my completely destroyed caving suit and at the pine needles I found in my underwear. I think to myself "what in all of the world draws me out into the woods, beating myself up, destroying my equipment, in order to look for new caves?" Well, about all I can say is if you don't already know, then you will probably never fully understand. On a related note, today is May 13, 2000, marking the third straight Saturday I've spent hiking around the karst of Jackman Creek. I will detail here the more interesting highlights of these recent caving excursions.

Two weekends earlier, in an attempt to get in shape early for what I am hoping will be a spectacular caving season, I enlisted the help of my friend Susan for a hike up the old Jackman Creek logging road toward the caves and karst residing there. The road washed out a number of years back, leaving a spectacular washout and an annoying hike through the brush to bypass that section of road. Although a pain, it has served to keep most people out of the area, being especially beneficial for Jackman Creek Cave, which has suffered over the years from vandalism and excessive use. A check of the cave register showed no visitors since the last time I had visited the cave and signed the register in 1996. The cave had a long area of standing water in one of the low crawlways, making it a bit tougher travel, but we explored the whole cave and made it out ok. I was, however, rather beaten up after the short trip into the cave. About half way into the cave, my carbide lamp blew a gasket and began shooting flames sideways out from my helmet. I turned the water off to the carbide, and sat for probably 10 minutes waiting for the flames to go out, which didn't happen until I emptied the (clean) water out of the lamp. Later inspection showed a clogged felt, presumably forcing gases out places not designed for flame. Almost adding insult to injury, upon exiting the cave, I found my watch had been ripped off my wrist. I had no hope of finding it, and so made it an offering to the great caving god.

The next Saturday I managed to motivate Larry McTigue and Dave Hopf to accompany Susan and myself for a return trip to check out an area up the hill from Jackman Creek Cave. Dave was to meet us at the cave at noon, so Larry, Susan and I checked out the hillside in the morning hours before Dave arrived. We did a lot of hiking, saw some interesting limestone but produced no real leads. We also failed to find some large sinkholes which Larry

had seen years before. After making our way to the rendezvous point, I climbed up a limestone walled creek bed and did some searching while Larry and Susan waited below in the rain. I found a nice piece of marble that now adorns my apartment, and used a stick to dig on a mud-filled hole located behind a small waterfall. I was able to divert some of the waterfall into the hole to wash it open. I didn't have a light and couldn't see into the hole, but it didn't look very promising. Dave arrived shortly after I climbed down. After introductions, we decided to hike up the hill directly above the cave to again try to find the large sinkholes. We were successful, and Larry found what upon first inspection looked like a beautiful cave entrance at the base of a small limestone outcropping. Lights showed it to be a very short passage ending in dirt fill. Larry didn't think it would go, so no digging occurred. While Larry, Dave and I were standing around looking stupid, Susan went to check out a hole she had noticed earlier. It turned out to be a large hole under a stump that went down maybe 8 or 10 feet and opened into what looked like walking passage! Dave volunteered to go down, and discovered that the passage was mostly dirt and pinched out. Dave made a comment about his light being very dim down in the hole, but after climbing back out, he discovered he was still wearing his glasses with the photo graying lenses still dark.

The group split up again, scouring the hillside for more possible caves. Dave and I became transfixed by some interesting alluvial deposits and walked right past several large pits in the limestone. Dave and I debated between a UFO landing site and some kind of football field sized log landing, but never settled on an explanation for the huge, almost perfectly flat area we had walked into. I made a comment that this would be a perfect spot to camp if we ever found a large cave up there. Shortly after that, Larry found the large pits, not more than 50 feet away from where we were standing, hiding behind a small hill. What Larry found is best described as a rift. It is a line of pits in limestone bedrock, apparently being formed as the limestone slowly fractures away from the hillside and tumbles downhill. There is solution activity apparent in many places however, almost as if running water pours down the pits from time to time. We climbed down into the biggest one, and Dave and Larry climbed down into some smaller holes in the bottom. They reported going passage, one requiring rope, but we had left most of our caving gear in the cars in order to cover more ground. A return trip would be needed to explore these pits fully. After a nasty hike down off the hill to the road, and some time spent soaking in the sun at the bridge over Weber Creek, we departed.

The next Saturday, May 13 Steve Sprague joined Dave and I for a return to the pits. We brought rope and our caving gear and hiked directly there. After gearing up,

we climbed down into the pit that Dave and Larry had explored. I was the first to the bottom and continued down into the holes where the going passage was. I waited for Steve and Larry to join me while I looked around. The following, boys and girls, is a perfect example of why you don't cave alone. After my companions joined me, we were talking about what to do first. Dave poked his head into a hole and said it went. After backing out, I decided to stick my head into the hole also. In order to get there, I had to walk sideways between a large low boulder and the solid rock wall of the pit through a space no bigger than 2 feet wide. As I walked through, I simply put my hand on the wall for support, putting almost no weight of any kind on my hand. Well, the wall wasn't as solid as I thought and a roughly 200 - 300 pound boulder slid off the wall, fell about a foot and rammed me, forcing me to sit backwards onto the boulder I was trying to get past, pinning me there. The boulder came to rest on my thigh just above my right knee. My leg was almost at a right angle, so it was basically like I was just holding the rock on my lap, but I was unable to move. Steve and Dave came to my rescue and was able to lift the boulder off me just enough to slip out backwards. My caving coveralls were destroyed by this action, ripping the crock stitching completely out and shredding the fabric. I walked away almost unhurt by the ordeal, having only very badly shaken nerves and a nasty deep bruise on my right leg, mostly just from the intense weight of the boulder. Had I been facing a different direction, or been slightly to one side or the other when that rock fell, I could have been VERY badly injured. Had I been alone, I'm not sure I could have gotten the rock off my leg. I'm not entirely sure if this qualifies as a caving "accident", but one thing is for sure, don't cave alone.

Eventually, we did do some exploration. We rigged a rope and Dave climbed down a hole about 20 feet. There was passage at the bottom, but it pinched out. When we climbed out of the pit, I went first, never so happy to leave it behind. Dave climbed down one of the other pits with a rope and started beating on the rocks plugging the bottom. After passing him an ice axe, he wedged himself in and started prying. The entire floor gave way and fell out beneath him, leaving him wedged into a crack 10 feet off the floor. Steve performed the fastest tie off in history and Dave was able to lower himself to the floor. After finding no passage, he exited and we left the pits behind. Our final opinion on the pits is they are mostly talus, and probably no solution passages will ever be found there. We hiked some more, poked into a lot of holes, and hiked up Weber Creek Canyon as far as we could and checked the limestone walls for entrances. Clouds were moving in, and it was getting late, so we headed out. A good time was had by all involved. There is certainly more potential in that area, we just need to get out more and check more areas like this one.

JaR and Resurrection Cave

By Ruth Stickney

Ken and I drove to Peterson Prairie, Trout Lake on July 1, 2000. We could only make one day but wanted to meet other cavers who would be at the Western Regional and have some fun doing caves we hadn't done before. We arrived at ten in the morning to what looked like a very quite camp except for Jon McGinnis who was chopping firewood. Eventually Kim Luper arrived with the Oregon Grotto store which was a great success at pulling cavers out of their campers, tents, chairs and trees.

Before we even started caving we were regaled with the tap-taping of a Pileated Woodpecker. If there ever is a Woodpecker that looks like Woody Woodpecker, this is the one. He led us through and around bushes, stumps and sunbeams until we tired of following him and left him to his solitude.

The decision for the day was that Jon would lead the main group through Dead Horse Cave. Being in the mood for a cave new to us, Kim, Ken and I decided to try JaR and Resurrection caves. Aaron joined us for this adventure.

We drove a short way and parked at a dirt road with ox-eye daisies marching down the center, their white petals and yellow "eyes" welcoming us. Wild strawberry covered the ground, no fruit yet though the blossoms promised plenty for the wild animals later. Vanilla leaf spread its green "wings" like a butterfly and purple penstemon added color. Even the dandelions looked regal and golden in this environment. I was pleased to see wild rose, perhaps my favorite wildflower, light pink faces peeping at us. We were looking for a sink of vine maple and found it, the winged seed pods of the maple bright red and the leaves a shelter from the hot sun.

(Okay, so are we really on a caving trip or listening to a botany lecture?) Kim says, "Found it," or something like that, and we see the cool, dark opening of a cave beckoning us. I scrambled over the breakdown, desperately looking for someplace shady to gear up in.

Almost immediately a white ceiling stared me in the face. That was startling enough to find in a lava cave, but to see ebony soda straws and helactites hanging from this white ceiling was a real occasion for surprise. We came to a large piece of breakdown with definite splash marks surrounding it and wished we could have seen this when it actually formed so long ago. It seems all so static now, but the awesome power of its formation would have been frightening yet awe inspiring to watch. Much of the cave siding reminded me of stucco I had seen applied to house

exteriors when I was a child. A layer of lava froth lined the tunnels. In some places it had fallen away and I could see the smooth underlayer of lava. We turned in at the tunnel crossing the main one, hoping to find more cave than what we saw on our survey map. I am rather stubborn and don't give up easily, especially when a cave "goes" but after crawling along without my helmet (it wouldn't fit) for quite a ways and realizing no one else was following, I turned back, frustrated again. So what if it really didn't go any farther than I could see? I still hadn't reached the end!

Resurrection Cave had a lovely blocked ceiling, just the kind bats seem to like, but we didn't find any bats though we did look for them. There were lovely, thin-shelled lava bubbles on the floor. Just like you would see in a cauldron of boiling stew. But there was no stew, and no steam. Here we found the old lady. She was bent with age, her long dress wrinkled and sagging, but still very much the matron of the cave. She was surrounded by other, smaller stalagmites or lava drips. We respectfully took a few pictures and then continued on to Luper's squeeze. Now, this was an experience. Luper's squeeze is something like a large toaster with one slot. There are no rocks to move, no dirt to dig, just two slabs of lava, one on top the other with a space in between. Legend says it was named after Kim Luper years ago when he squeezed through and found a treasure of formations beyond it. Me, being the smallest, was volunteered to go first. As there is no "give" to the rock it is a horribly pinching feeling going through, but not difficult if you are the right size. Kim tried next but the years had done something to his shape and try as he might he couldn't quite get through. Ken was next, followed by Aaron who had to exhale to get skinny enough to make it. After a crawl through a tunnel a larger passage opened up with many formations and delights for the eyes. It had taken the two fellows so long to get through the squeeze that I was already on the return trip when I met them in the passage. They then went through a side tunnel I hadn't explored but said the main passage had the most formations. To get back through the squeeze was more of a challenge, especially as the guys went down feet first and found their coveralls doing mean things to their anatomy. Finally, with some help, they emerged from the squeeze and we headed for the entrance. Kim asked if we wanted more of a challenging exit than the entrance we had come through. Of course I said "yes" so we followed the sunlight to a double exit. To the left was a passage carved out under the lava. To the right was a hole with jagged edges, and since it looked more promising to me I went that way.

We walked back to the car and drove to the campground where everyone else had already returned from Dead Horse Cave and was chowing down. We couldn't stay to

hear the stories, but I am sure there are many that will be told again and again around future campfires.

Cave Ridge Trip

Saturday July 22nd

By Jon T. McGinnis

We were scheduled to meet everyone at the trail head at 9:00 a.m. In attendance for the hike were Wendel Pound, Aaron Stavens, Chris and Michael Whittenberg, John, Julie, and Cameron McGinnis. As usual, Wendel flew on ahead and left everybody in the dust. Since we were all carrying packs with vertical gear, ropes, and supplies for the big 9 day backpacking trip on August 12th, it was nice to be able to do the hike up in the morning fog. The weather had been great all week and we were hoping that the sky would clear up when we got to the top of the ridge. After the customary whining and complaining we managed to convince ourselves that we really did want to do the hike from hell and soon found ourselves at the boulder field where we took a quick snack and a much needed breather.

Just as we loaded up and got ready to head out again we were joined by Kim Luper, Ruth Stickney, and Ken Stickney from the Oregon grotto. They were only carrying daypacks, and graciously volunteered to trade us a pack or two and help shoulder some of the load to the top of the ridge. So with big smiles and words of thanks we switched packs and were off. Sure enough just as we crested the Ridge at Lookout Cave the sun came out but it was obvious it wasn't going to stay. We all sat down and shared lunches and made our plan of attack. It was decided that after lunch we would head for Hell Hole Cave and start rigging the front door. The plan was for Ruth and I to descend the front door and explore the cave, while Aaron and the others rigged the back door.

The cave was very wet and dripping continually since it had been closed off with snow only a week before. We climbed upwards and around to a descending canyon. It was Ruth's first time to the ridge and Hell Hole turned out to be everything she had expected and more. When we came back into the main room the rope from the back door was being lowered for our ascent. I climbed out first with Ruth reminding me that it takes less effort to maintain a vertical position while using the frog system.

I was surprised to find the amount of beautiful Speleoflora that cover the walls just inside the squeeze of the rear door. Chris had brought my camera in and as I was taking pictures I could hear the sound of something falling to the boulder floor below. Apparently Ruth's helmet does not contain a chinstrap and after a short distance up the rope her helmet fell to the floor. I was very impressed that she was prepared enough to have a spare light readily available. Even more impressive was the calmness in which she handled the mishap.

Since Ruth was fairly new to caving we had discussed and reviewed her vertical experience before descending. Apparently the only maneuver she had not practiced was a changeover. Luckily, we had discussed the procedures before entering the cave. Nothing like learning when it counts. She managed her first change over and very quickly retrieved her helmet form below. Ruth's calmness and efficiency are truly something to be commended.

We quickly de-rigged Hell Hole in order to allow time to take the rest of the new people into Cascade Cave. As the afternoon passed the weather seem to be turning nastier by the minute. Everyone on the trip was prepared for nice weather since it had been that way all week and the weatherman said we could count on descent conditions.

After waking up from his nap while the others were in the cave, Wendel decide he would head down off the ridge. He hadn't been feeling to well and figured it would be best if he didn't try to cave.

As soon as we rounded the corner to Cascade Cave we ran into some hikers who told us there were more people from our grotto headed up to the Ridge. Just as Chris, his 11 year old son Michael, myself and Cameron my 10 year old son decided to duck inside the cave to get out of the elements I spotted Xandon Froggart, Tianna Wall and Tisch Korbly coming over the rise next to lookout cave. Talk about determined cavers. New to the area, new to the grotto and even thought they showed up late to the trail head they gave it their best and headed up the mountain. There is a lot to be said about the energy of a new caver.

Chris and Cameron entered first followed by Michael who only made it a short way into the entrance before turning to me and stating that he wanted out. With words of encouragement and the assurance that we would take him to into a huge cave with lots of people and lots of lights where he would feel much more comfortable he and I exited the cave. Michael stayed out side the cave with my wife Julie and Tisch and took on the very important job of gear watching. Julie graciously loaned her helmet and gloves out and once everyone was properly geared we proceeded to go straight down the hand lines and through a very tight side passage leading to a large marble room.

Of course Cameron protested at all of the usual tight spots and tricky free climbing throughout the decent. But once we were on our way out the protest soon turned to smiles cause he got to listen the struggling of people larger than himself trying to fit through the squeezes that he managed to navigate without so much as a grunt. I was very impressed with my sons improved climbing abilities on the way out. Not one complaint! I guess it's

always much more heartening to be headed towards the light.

Chris climbed first followed by Cameron and at the first up climb he noticed a loose rock that Cameron had used as a foothold. Xandon had elected to not go through the last squeeze with the others and watched as I tried to pry the rock out of the wall. I finally gave up realizing that it was wedged in.

When Chris came out of the cave he decided that he should get his son moving and warmed up so they headed down the mountain. Tisch had already headed out do to the cold. That left Julie, Cameron and I to wait and make sure everyone exited the cave safely. We broke out every stitch of clothing we had in the packs and I ended up covering Cameron with a garbage bag while he held a candle under it to warm up. He was nice and warm in no time. We hung just inside the cave entrance to try and stay out of the mist that had decided to definitely turn to rain.

Finally after almost an hour we heard the sound of voices below. By the sounds of the conversation it sounded like someone had been hit by a falling rock. All I can think was "Oh no, that rock that I tried to pry loose fell out of wall and injured someone".

Ken, Kim, and Ruth were next out and apparently a rock was loosened when Kim use it for a foothold and it fell, landing on Ken's arm. Then bounced off and struck Ruth in the hip. They said they were a little bruised but nothing was broken. We all agreed they should head out before stiff inning up to much to travel. They agreed knowing we would be following behind them in case they had problems getting off the mountain.

Aaron, Xandon, and Tiana exited next and we headed out. I was relieved after discussing the rock incident with Xandon and discovered that it wasn't the rock I had tried to get out of the wall. Apparently there was a large rock lying in the passage above the one that I was worried about.

As we entered the parking lot we were greeted by Chris, Michael and Tisch who had waited almost two hours just to be sure that everyone would make it off the mountain. It's nice to be with a group of people and feel very secure that everyone is watching out for each other.

When I talked to Chris to get his impressions of his first trip to the ridge his response was "That was one of the most grueling hikes I have ever been on"!

In all it was a lot of fun and we learned a lot of new things. Everyone agreed we would be doing it again soon!

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Please select and indicate one of the following types of grotto membership. If including household members in this application then please list their names also.

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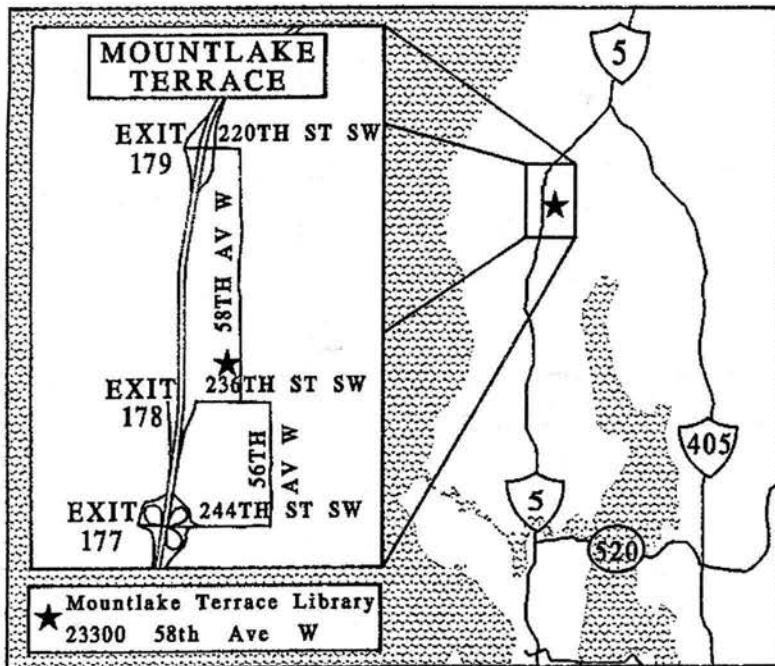
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**Cascade Grotto
P.O. Box 345
Mountlake Terrace WA.
98043-0345**



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.



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