

THE MAVERICK BULL

The Monthly Newsletter Of The Ft. Worth Maverick Grotto

August 1998

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The Maverick Bull is the monthly newsletter of The Maverick Grotto, an internal organization of The National Speleological Society (NSS G-322). The editor invites all individuals and other grottos to submit articles, news, maps, cartoons, art and photographs. If the material is to be returned, a self-addressed stamped envelope should accompany it.

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Exchanges: The Maverick Grotto will exchange newsletters with other grottos. Contact the editor.

Complementary Newsletters: The Maverick Grotto will provide complementary newsletters to persons or organizations that provide cave access (i.e. landowners) or otherwise provide assistance to cavers. The Maverick Grotto will provide one free

issue to persons interested in becoming members.

Subscription Rates: Subscription rates are \$15.00 per year for non-members and free for members.

Membership Policy: Any individual with interests, beliefs and actions consistent with the purposes of The Maverick Grotto and The National Speleological Society is eligible for membership. Acceptance of new members is based on payment of dues and a mandatory three trip requirement with at least three different grotto members. These three members shall act as sponsors. At least one sponsor must attend the meeting at which the membership vote is taken. A two-thirds majority vote of the members present will be required for acceptance.

Meetings: Meetings are held the second Tuesday of each month at Smokey's Ribs, 5300 E. Lancaster, Fort Worth. It is located less than one mile west of Loop 820 and next to K-Mart. The time is 7:00 p.m., and the food is good.

Carbide: Grotto carbide is available at the meeting if prior arrangements are made. Carbide is free for the asking. Contact Russell Hill at 220-7108 or Butch Fralia at 346-2039 for more information.

Library: Support your Grotto Library. Russell Hill will be accepting books and magazines on cave-related topics, copies of homemade cave videos, etc. for our library. We wish to thank Russell for his efforts each month to bring and set up the Grotto Library.

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Photo Credits

This month's cover is the dry waterfall looking upstream from Clooney Cavers by Dave Milhollin.

Page 4: A view through the entire length of Clooney Caverns, upstream, back at the dry waterfalls by Dave Milhollin.

Page 6: The Carlsbad restoration crew by Duane Del Vecchio.

Page 7: Martha working? and Joel Working by Duane Del Vecchio.

Other Credits

Editor: Chad Fenner

Editor-in-charge-of-English: Lisa Fenner

Visit Our Web Site



The *Maverick Bull* is available as a World Wide Web site at:
<http://www.fwst.net/np/maverickgrotto>
Web space donated by Star-Telegram Online Services.

Minutes for the April Meeting

Minutes to the July 14, 1998, Grotto Meeting

The July meeting began at approximately 7 p.m. The business portion of the meeting was called to order shortly after 7:30 by Grotto Chairman John Langevin.

Visitors:

None

Announcements:

Fitton Trip Aug 17 and 18.
Possem Kingdom July 18.
Mystic Cave July 18.
O-Nine Well July 18.
NSS convention Aug 3.
Ed Goff got his open water diving certification.

Officer's Reports:

\$704 in the treasury.

Old Business:

Signed up to get a public announcement account for the Star Telegram Startext system.

Russel briefed us on the plans for updating the library. They include new facilities, cataloging, and new media entries. There was a lot of discussion about specific plans. Will be announced as they are finalized.

New Business:

Fall Party! Tentatively set for Sept 26 and 27. Probably at the same location we have been having it at.

Karen Perry has graciously (or foolishly, you decide) volunteered her home for a grotto Halloween Party.

No fair dressing up like a caver! More details later.

OTR is set for October 16 and 17.

Trip Reports:

The Abercrombies went to Colorado and did some cave hunting.

Dave Milhollen and Ed and Laura Goff went to the National Forrest service project weekend. Dave did Black, Laura went to Gunsight and Sentinel for bat counts, and Ed did Madonna.

Program

The closing program consisted of an open slide night.

The meeting closed.

Editor's Ramblings

Happy August.

Well, hopefully, many of you are at the convention when this shows up at your doorstep. By the time you read this, you will be back at home after a week of caving in the hills of Tennessee. Hope you had fun. I'm expecting some trip reports and pictures! Maybe next year. Hey, does anyone know how the print I submitted for the print salon came out? How did our grotto do in any salons? Call me

with the details. Unfortunately, do to an operator error, our newsletter covers didn't make it in time for the Graphic Arts salon, but they can be re-submitted next year.

I had some space this month, so I scammed a trip report off the internet from a web site that Martha McArthur sent out. (Permission granted) I got some pictures also, but unfortunately, web page pictures don't always make the best newsletter photos, but here

they are anyway.

Some parties were discussed at the last grotto meeting, including a Fall party, and even a Halloween party for the first time in a few years. Stay tuned for details.

One of those parties could be a "Library Building" party. We got big plans for revamping the grotto library.

Good Caving.

CF

August Meeting

This month's meeting will be held on Tuesday, August 11 at Smokey's Ribs, 5300 E. Lancaster, at 7 p.m. The program for the August 1998 Meeting of the Maverick Grotto will be presented by Mr. Chris Sobin, and will deal with basic first aid and emergency procedures for cavers. Chris is a practicing EMT for the Waco, Texas fire department, and also works as an equipment consultant for REI in Dallas.

Chris is a present or former member of the DFW, Aggie, UT, and MOLES grottos, as well as the TSA. He has participated in expeditions to Sistema Purification, the 1994 Huatla project, and has survived Golandrin, as well as Colorado Bend and Powell Cave project trips since 1990. In the past Chris has worked as a zoo tech, and elephant trainer, and a high-angle window washer. This should be a great

opportunity to learn about wilderness preparedness or to refresh fading memories.

There are several trips being planned locally and regionally in which the information Chris has to offer could be valuable. It is recommended that all grotto members, their guests, and frequent visitors attend this presentation.

Cooney Cavern

Located South of Ft. Worth
R. D. Milhollin NSS 29962

The enormous entrance beckoned the cavers from far off, they could see that this was to be one of the great caving discoveries of the last few years....

Well, not exactly...

The topographic maps showed a cave symbol denoted as Cooney Cavern, and Butch Fralia just had to have a look. As keeper of the files, a map this close to home that did not have some kind of description was unacceptable, so on Monday, July 6, he called me see if I was interested in accompanying him and his two dogs on a short trip to fill in the intelligence gap. Despite knowing that there would be temperatures in excess of 100 degrees F (37 C), and that once on the trail there would be no relief other than the occasional shade tree (or bush), I agreed. Thus began the short saga of the rediscovery of Cooney Cavern.

The map showed Cooney Caverns located along the northern edge of Bosque County, not far upstream from the waters of Lake Whitney. We drove in air conditioned comfort in Butch's new jeep, kept company by Bear and Molly. We got out long enough for the dogs to play at Kimbel Bend, the ghost town on the Brazos River just upstream from the Texas 174 crossing. Then we turned onto FM 56 for the ride to the lakeside settlement where the caverns were supposed to be located. Along the way we passed a creek that looked like it passed over a series of rimstone dams, but perhaps this was just wishful thinking. I would like to have a look at that creek again.

Arriving at the site we determined that it would be a long hike around the private property surrounding the dry creek the caverns were situated in. The lakeshore is owned by the Corps of Engineers in the form of a park, and the creek extends up into the land from there. We drove around to the farmhouse that

appeared to control road access to the site, but no one was at home. Studying the map we determined the closest, most direct hike to the site and set off at a decent pace, equipped with water bottles (both of us) and sun protection clothing (some of us.) Within 20 minutes we located the dry creek, and I climbed down the thicket into the bed to begin looking for karst formations. The map seemed to indicate downstream, but that played out soon, although the scenery was great. The north side of the stream bed featured a nice limestone ledge that would make for nice vertical practice. Turning upstream I wandered along the dry creek bottom until I noticed the north rim beginning to show signs of outside channel erosion. This became more pronounced as a distinct rock roof began to appear above the erosion channel, and the temperature was somewhat cooler in the shade (but not THAT much cooler.) This extended overhang continued along the north side of the draw for about 80 feet (25M) where the stream bed formation I was walking in abruptly ended. At the head of the little canyon was a dry waterfall complete with dried mosses, and a relic pool of

greenish-looking water. I looked along the walls for signs of writing, but the limestone here was flaky, and if there had ever been any paint applied it would not last long. The floor showed signs of being frequently scoured by flash floods, so the presence of any cultural artifacts was not expected, and none were identified. I backtracked to tell Butch about this discovery, which must be the formation the mapmakers called Cooney Cavern. I think Butch and the dogs had been observing siesta, for it took a few minutes to locate them in the shady recesses of the ringing woods above the draw. We all went back to the site and took photos and continued to recuperate a little from the heat.

The hike back was hotter than the way in, and the water was no longer cool. We cut across a hill to make the walk as short as possible, but this at the expense of shade. Even the dogs were hot and tired, stopping to sit in the shade of any shrub we happened to walk near. Back at the Jeep we gained a new appreciation for conditioned air and cool beverages from a well-stocked ice chest. World class caving?..maybe not, but this trip did allow us to see a small oasis seldom visited by



anyone, and to set straight the description of the deceptively named Cooney Cavern.

Texas Topos On-line

If you have a computer (you know that thing that catches email), and some sort of software that can view a TIF file, you can download any Texas topo map for free off of the following Web Site:

<http://www.tnris.state.tx.us/gispage.html>

Select the option to "DRGs" and then browse or select the map you want. It takes their computer about 15 minutes to find the file that you are after and post it. Simply logoff after you have made the request and come back later to download it! File sizes are 3-5mb depending on the complexity.

"Tales of DIRT, DANGER and DARKNESS" Now Available

Twenty-Six stories from the dark mind of Paul Steward takes the reader on a roller-coaster ride of hell-filled passages.

Paul's stories have appeared in various grotto newsletters around the country and as far away as Australia, South Africa, North Wales and British Columbia.

To order this 128 page paperback, contact Paul Steward at: pddb@juno.com or your nearest speleo bookseller.

Edward James, Builder of Dreams

A documentary film by Avery Danziger

(Many cavers who have caved in

Mexico have either camped at, or are familiar with Las Pozas, sometimes called "the Birdhouse". The famous structure was built by the eccentric poet/architect Edward James, and a documentary on him and Las Pozas has been airing on PBS recently. The video is available at the address below. The following is a description of the video taken from:

<http://www.jungle.gossip.com/home.html>

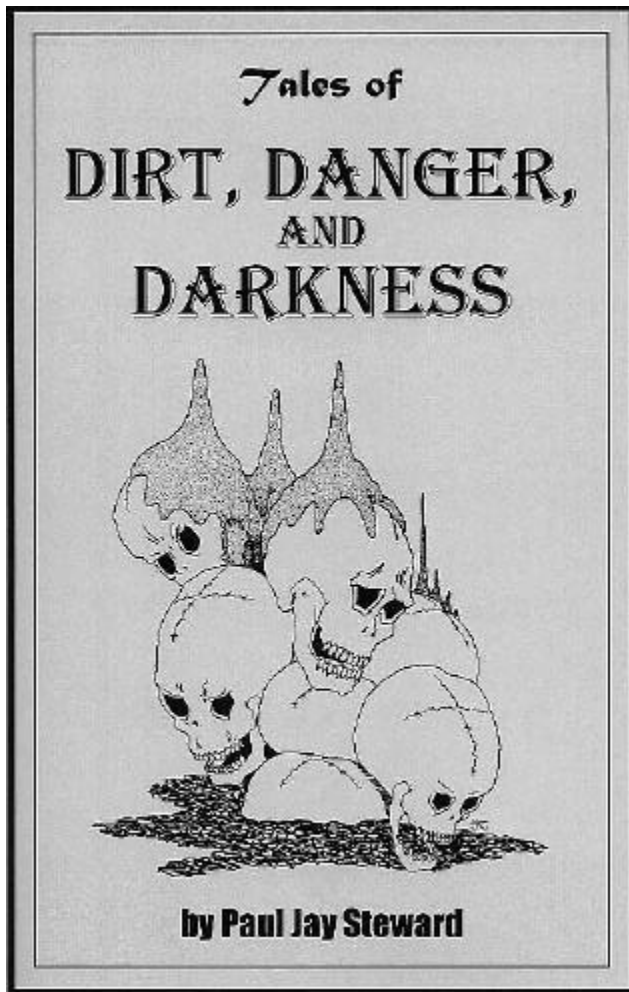
This film takes you on an extraordinary journey into the world of the Surrealists as the life and accomplishments of the surrealist collector, poet, and architect Edward James unfolds. For the last 20 years of his life, aided by 40 full time laborers and craftsmen, he built one of

the biggest and yet least known architectural monuments of the 20th century, dedicated to Surrealism and hidden in the jungles of Mexico. He created over 36 extraordinary concrete structures, some over 100 feet high, at a personal cost exceeding 5 million dollars.

Born into extreme wealth and luxury (he was rumored to be the bastard son of King Edward VII), he turned his back on the rigid aristocratic circles of Edwardian England, and befriended, supported, and collaborated with fledgling artists who would become household names in later years. Those artists included Salvador Dali, Leonora Carrington, René Magritte, Kurt Weil, Bertolt Brecht, George Balanchine, Aldous Huxley, Man Ray, and Sigmund Freud.

Although he has been called "A legend among the legendary", few people recognize his name or know of his artistic accomplishments. Cine "Golden Eagle" (1996) "Chris" award (Arts and Culture) Columbus International Film Festival, Ohio (1995) "Bronze Apple" Nat'l Educational Media Network (1996) Metropolitan Museum of Art Film Program (1997)

Edward James (Builder of Dreams) is available on VHS cassette at \$30 per copy + \$4.50 postage and handling. Send checks to Tara O'leary at the following address. (The film is also available in 16mm and 3/4" U-Matic Cassette format. Please contact Tara O'leary for further information.) TARA O'LEARY, AGENT TOP DRAWER PRODUCTIONS 260



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Speaking of Public TV . . .

Anyplace Wild Television, a film production company out of Camden, Maine, will be airing its second season of Public TV specials during July and August. Of particular interest to cavers will be the fifth presentation in the series entitled "Heavenly Delights in Hell Below, Caving in New Mexico's Guadeloupe Range". The broadcast date differs from station to station so check with your local Public TV station to find out the specific time. Most likely it will be broadcast in early August.

The half-hour film follows three cavers and their guest host who specialize in their own particular field of caving interest through Hell Below and Cottonwood Caves in the Guadeloupe Mountains of New Mexico. Dave Jagnow discusses the geology of the caves' development, Lois Lyles talks about cave conservation and restoration and photographer Peter Jones talks about cave photography with guest host Annie Getchall. Annie brings in her own perspective on cave mythology and concocts a strange brew to feed the cavers.

Carlsbad Restoration (or how to be a Spelo-god)

By Duane Del Vecchio

(Editors note: This was pulled from Duane's virtual trip report at: <http://www.sirinet.net/~ddv>)

What other way to spend Independence Day than to work on one of Nation's Greatest Wonders? That's what four members of the North Texas Speleological Society (NTSS) did during the days of July 3-

5, 1998. Martha McArthur was our trip leader to Carlsbad Caverns in New Mexico to do some cave restoration. Pictured from left to right (top to bottom for you slow ones) are Joel, Martha, Paul, and Duane.

We left at 10 a.m. from Wichita Falls, TX and headed to the New Mexico desert. Duane's pickup didn't have a working air conditioner so it was a rather sticky trip down there. We arrived at 6:00 p.m. (our time) (5:00 New Mexico Time), checked in with Ranger Dale Pate and got our key to the CRF hut in which workers get to stay in. The hut (shown to the right) was our home for the next two nights. Inside is a living room with two mattresses propped up on the wall....your swamp cooler (lifesaver!), a bathroom (with real running water!) a bed room with 2-triple bunks of wood mattresses ...groan... and a kitchen with fridge to keep the beer cold!! I worried a bit when Martha said, "I knew I forgot something the flea powder for the carpet!"

Oh boy! Let's talk about early morning!!! LIKE 5:30 A.M.!! But it was well worth it. That is the time the bats return from their evening eat out! They seem to suddenly appear about 200 feet above the entrance and then drop like a rock straight into the pit and on into the cave. They come down so fast that their wings make a strange rapid rattling/flapping sound!! Though not easily seen (even in this picture) it is really the audio part of the morning return that

makes it so unique!

Before any work could be done inside the cave, we first had to get everything clean. Tools that would be brought into the cave were: Buckets (for putting in items such as rocks, mud, gravel, etc.. for dumping in a specified location), Brushes (of all assorted sizes from toothbrush to hand brush), Dental picks (to get really detailed), Sponges (to absorb water that we put on the formation) (I learned that these are NOT used for scrubbing!), and water spray bottles (to spray the formation to loosen up the dirt.) A caver doing restoration does not leave extra water or dirt in a cave that was not there, nor brings in extra from outside. Keep it as balanced as possible. So, clean out the buckets, brushes, etc....before going in and getting them all dirty again!!!

It was time to go into the cave. Our gear ready, we head off for the office and look up the new guy in charge, Stan! It is Stan who will give us the job of where to go clean up. We finally meet him (he's late) (some excuse about helping the Japanese Film Crew there film until 3 a.m. in the Big Room!). He says there are three places to work on. His first offer was near Historical Entrance, next to Whales Mouth...but he ruled that out as loose rocks could fall on the visitors walking the trail below and since they were expecting about 4000 - 5000 that day, that wasn't a good idea! Good...since I would have probably been the one that let the big boulder loose that killed 20! Second choice was in Lower Room - out of site and out of mind...quiet working but far from fresh water (and bathrooms!). Third choice (which we selected) was the Big Room right next to Caveman Junction. There was some flowstone that needed cleaning. It was right next to the trail and we probably would need to interpolate for the guests down there. No problem...so buckets and all, down we all went to start the work. It wasn't a big area, and had been worked on before, but it was still very





dirty, muddy, had lots of broken popcorn, and tons of little black pebbles of asphalt which were called emery chips.

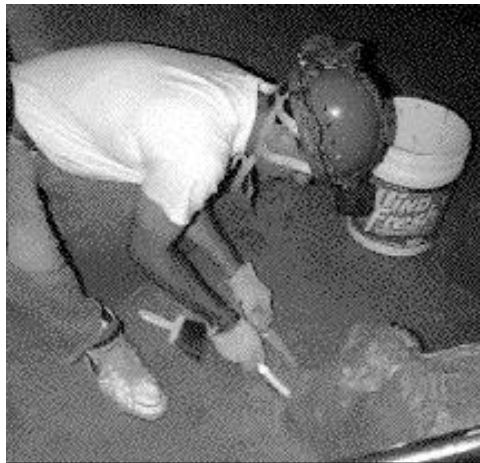
But it was on a slope, and a bit wet in places. There were even spots in which were cleaned by the last crew in February that were active again (had to be careful not to touch those!) After a while, whether sitting or kneeling, the slope was just a big pain in the butt....quite literally ...a pain in the butt! :) Paul was told where to dump the broken fragments and the mud & goop we were able to get off of the flowstone. He also was shown an area on the other side of the trail in which we were on that was scattered with emery chips. The work, while not hard, is very slow and monotonous. You sweep, you spray, you sponge up, wring out the water in a collection bucket, sponge, and back over again. Patience is a virtue.... yeah right! You work for two hours and it is hard to see progress. Though after six hours, it was dramatically better.

We started at 9:00 and took a lunch break at 12:00 and was back at it at 1:00. By 3:30, we (the guys) were all getting pretty worn out! Cramps in the most unusual places were telling

ones body that you have been sitting, kneeling, stooping, in a most particular manner all day. Martha wouldn't quit though. She being our fearless leader kept right on going ... even when Joel squirts water for her as she scrubs. But by 4:00, even the amazon woman Martha gave up the scrub. We packed it up and headed for the elevators. Our small part was done. Others would follow and pick up were we left off. In another couple of workings, this area will be an area again capable of growing.

On Being a Speleo-god

Probably the most amazing thing to me was the tourist! I was warned about them before we started and how we would be an interpreter for what we were doing, but I did not expect the nonstop curiosity! People really wanted to know what was going on and readily kept with you while you explained. They gathered, they watched, they even took pictures and video tapes of us working! It was kinda cool being the center of so much attention. Next



time, I believe we'll leave a collection plate by the trail - We'll be rich!!!!!!!

Afterwards... We came out, took those great showers, and took our group photo before we went two different ways. Paul & Joel went out on the town to put a few back (well in Joel's case) and do some dancing with the locals. Martha & Duane went with two park rangers who Martha had known before they were rangers. Tom & Rebecca invited us out to a local lake for some beer & pizza and to watch Tom shoot off his \$75 worth of fireworks. It was quite an evening watching grown up adults go into childlike antics such as blowing up cow patties with Black Cats and putting fireworks out on the pizza box floating in the water. Well....lets say Tom and Duane had a great time.... Rebecca and Martha just kept shaking their heads ... but hey!! We were having fun!! The evening finalized when fireworks war began between our group and a group on the opposite side of the peninsula from us. Luckily no one got hurt, but we tried!

Maverick Grotto
C/O Chad Fenner
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Ft Worth TX. 76133

Calendar of Events

September 4-7, 1998, Tentative Bustamante/Gruta del Palmito TSA Labor Day Project. Contact Gill Ediger, (512) 441-0050, gillie@worldnet.att.net.
September 11-13, 1998, Colorado Bend SP Project. Contact: Terry Holsinger, (512)443-4241, trhii@sprynet.com
September 26, 1998, Carlsbad Bat Appreciation Day, Contact: Rick Lobello, rick_lobello@nps.gov.
September 26, 1998, PBSS Grotto Trip to Fort Stanton Cave, Contact: Walter Feaster, (915)694-1824, walfeast@marshill.com
October 304, 1998, Gypkap, New Mexico. Contact Joli or Chris Lee, (505) 585-8406, jlee@wazoo.com
October 8-11, 1998, Colorado Bend SP Project. Contact: Terry Holsinger, (512)443-4241, trhii@sprynet.com
October 16-18, 1998, 21st Annual Texas Cavers Reunion. Site to be announced!
October 23-25, 1998, Powells Cave Project. Contact: Terry Holsinger, (512)443-4241, trhii@sprynet.com
November 13-15, 1998, Colorado Bend SP Project. Contact: Terry Holsinger, (512)443-4241, trhii@sprynet.com
December 11-13, 1998, Colorado Bend SP Project. Contact: Terry Holsinger, (512)443-4241, trhii@sprynet.com
July 12-16, 1999, NSS Convention, Twin Falls County Fairground, Filer Idaho. Contact: David Kesner, (208)939-0979, drdave@micron.net