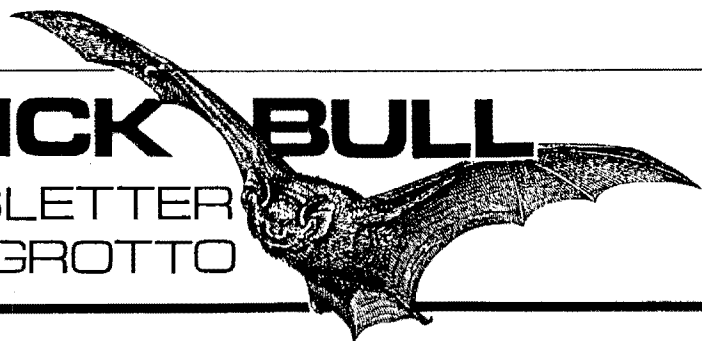


THE MAVERICK BULL

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER
OF THE MAVERICK GROTTTO



VOLUME 5 NUMBER 1

JANUARY 1990



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THE MAVERICK BULL is the monthly newsletter of THE MAVERICK GROTTO, an internal organization in the National Speleological Society (NSS 6-322). The editors invite all cavers to submit articles, news, maps, cartoons, art, and photographs. If the material is to be returned, a self-addressed, stamped envelope should accompany it. Items should be of interest to cavers and be non-political in nature.

Internal organizations of the National Speleological Society may reprint any item (unless copyrights belong to author as will be stated in byline) first appearing in **THE MAVERICK BULL**, if proper credit is given and a complete copy of the publication is delivered to THE MAVERICK GROTTO address at the time of publication. Other organizations should contact the grotto at the address herein.

EXCHANGES: THE MAVERICK GROTTO, will exchange newsletters with other grottos. Contact any officer.

COMPLIMENTARY NEWSLETTERS: THE MAVERICK GROTTO will provide complimentary newsletters to persons or organizations who provide cave access (i.e. landowners) or otherwise provide assistance to cavers. The Grotto will also provide three free issues to persons interested in becoming members.

MEMBERSHIP POLICY: Any caver 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 East Lancaster, Fort Worth. It is a little less than one mile west of Loop 820 East and next door to a K Mart. The time is 7:00 P.M., and the food is good.

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CAVE RESCUE: Call Collect 512-686-0234

CALENDAR

Ongoing	Monthly work trip to Colorado Bend State Park. Weekend of the second Saturday of each month.
January 9	Maverick Grotto Meeting
January 12-14	Colorado Bend State Park Work Trip --- at site across the Colorado River for the first time
February 9-11	Colorado Bend State Park Work Trip
February 13	Maverick Grotto Meeting
March 9-11	Colorado Bend State Park Work Trip
March 13	Maverick Grotto Meeting
April 10	Maverick Grotto Meeting
April 13-15	Colorado Bend State Park Work Trip

ON THE COVER

Our Cover Caver this month is George Crosby, our Louisiana member of the Maverick Grotto. In the cover photo by Donna Anderson, he is shown emerging from a squeeze in Endless Cave on McKittrick Hill in New Mexico.

FROM THE EDITOR

There were no minutes from the December 1989 meeting, because there was no meeting, as such. Instead, the Maverick Grotto held its annual Christmas bash, hosted by Danny and Jane Sherrod. Unfortunately, the Editors could not make it to the party, and no one who was there took the time to send in a report on the goings-on there. (Or maybe no one could remember what went on!)

When you come to the January meeting, remember to bring your \$10 for 1990 dues. If you can't make it in person, send your check, payable to The Maverick Grotto, to our Treasurer Teresa White. Her address is listed in the masthead on page 2. Warning.... If you're not paid up by March, you will be dropped from membership.

(Editor's note: The following article is a trip report written by Donna Anderson's seven-year-old niece, Meta Huzarevich. She was enthused by her first caving trip to River Styx, and wrote this report for her elementary school class. It is reprinted verbatim, as Meta herself wrote it.)

It is fun to go caving. When we got in at the first we had to crawl a little ways. We had to duck because there were bunches of bats. After a little more crawling we got to the Junction room. When we got at the Junction room we stoped to rest from crawling. Then we started again. We took the longest way. We saw holes in the walls they are called windows instead of holes. We went on then we came to a rocky place. We stoped to rest again. My cosin Andrew found a hole it circled around and you came back to the hole. We went through that too. Then we went to look for my friend Dale because he want to see if some of the catfish were still there from the flud the fish were in the pudle still. Finally we found Dale at the pudle. He was looking at a catfish. We had to walk in some mud some of us sliped and got our hands muddy too. We walk some more, we came to the river entrence we stoped to warsh our hands. Dale left again so we went to find him. We had to crawl some more we went to the 2nd bat room but he was not there then we went to the first bat room. But he was not there either. We past the 2nd bat room and after we past it we saw Dale. I asked where he had been, he was sleeping in the race car room he said. Then we started to go, we went back the way we came in. It was fun. And we got some rocks too.

By Meta V. Kuzarevich

(Editor's note: Meta's Aunt Donna pointed out that the rocks she picked up were gathered outside of the cave. Since the River Styx trip, Meta has also gone to Gorman Cave in Colorado Bend State Park. We hope she will continue to write trip reports for us.)

A CAVE REMEMBERED

By Jimmy Thomas

Destination: River Styx Cave; King County, Texas

Date: November 25, 1989

Personnel: Bruce & Donna Anderson, Dale Ellison, Andrew Roe, Meta Huzarevich, Gene Regen, Pat & Jimmy Thomas

The day trip to River Styx started from different parts of the metroplex early Saturday morning and was finally united at the Green Frog Restaurant in Jacksboro. From there we headed westward to the home of Mrs. Bateman, the owner of River Styx, to inform her of our interest in visiting the cave. Most of the locals have never heard of the name River Styx, but only know of the cave as the Bateman Cave.

This would be my first trip back to River Styx after 20 years. As a high school student from the area, my first trip to the cave was one of the most exciting times of my youth. I had little information about the cave on my first visit and I was more than a little scared, but the excitement of an adventure overcome the fear. I wondered if the cave would be the same as I had remembered, little changes in this part of Texas.

Before going to the entrance, we enjoyed a spectacular view over looking the Wichita River and surrounding landscape of the county. King county is mostly ranch country and one of the least populated counties in the state. After the sightseeing, we were finally down to some serious caving. Dale lead the way to the 1963 entrance and soon we were preparing to enter. This would be the first experience in a wild cave for a couple of the party members.

Soon into the cave, we discovered a large population of Mexican Freetail bats through out the cave. Care was a must to move through the crawl ways without disturbing our resting bat friends, as we are merrily visitors in their world and home.

The cave was much the same as before my 20 year absence. Unfortunately, some of the locals were still leaving their mark on the cave walls with spray paint. When Indians painted on cave walls its art, but now its only vandalism and graffiti. What a different a few hundred years make. Maybe with cave education, someday the caves will be respected for their natural beauty and left for only mother nature to leave her mark.

River Styx was of interest to me for another reason. I was writing a paper on dolomite and its development is classic at River Styx. Dolomite is simply limestone which has been altered and the presence of gypsum enhances this process. Dolomite and gypsum are found through out the cave area in alternating layers.

We explored most of the dry passages of the cave and left the wet passages for another day (a warm day), as River Styx has some of the states coldest water passages. Afterwards we enjoyed a warm meal at the Ranch House restaurant near the cave and then began our journey back home.

passage to Gnome passage. Gnome is a large passage with many small stalagmites. The route was marked with flagging tape to avoid impact. From here we climbed down a boulder choke to a fixed rope. Before descending I left the group to go see a large formation called the Judge. Beyond the rope, we followed narrow winding stream passage with a ceiling height of 140 ft. down to a fixed ladder. At the bottom of the ladder we made a pretty hairy climb down to the main stream passage which was two feet above normal level. The streamway is 10,000 ft. long and ends at Top Waterfall. Past the waterfall before the sump, we climbed up into the Great Oxbow (I think that's what it was called) to go around the sump. Jay and I were glad to get into some dry passage; several hours in 50 degree water makes your toes numb even with neoprene socks. The dry passage was the usual crawling, climbing and traversing; crawling, mostly. Jay and I were glad to get back into stream passage because we were burning up in our furry suits. Back in the stream and OFD1, we followed main stream passage for about 2,000 ft. At one point we came to the "Slalom," where we sat down in the ice cold water and rode down the flume, banking high on corners due to the high volume of water that day. This was so much fun, Jay and I went back to do it again. Our trip lasted eight hours.

On the way back uphill to the SWCC headquarters, Matt and I did another small system called Powell's Cave. It took us about fifteen minutes to go through. The cave ran vertically between the roads that switch back. That night we went to a pub called the Ancient Britain Inn where we had dinner, got trashed, entertained the girls behind the bar and talked the owner into making us breakfast on Tuesday morning.

Monday morning, hungover and happy (Linda the bartender gave me her name and address), we all left for Dan-Yr-Ugof Cave. DYU is on the western side of the Swansea Valley. My cavers' guide book CAVES OF SOUTH WALES described this cave as one of the major Welsh systems, providing a sporting trip with many interesting formations. The first part of the cave is commercial, or show cave, with cement paths and steps. We were permitted to enter, but were advised by the manager to proceed with caution because the morning rains had not reached the cave's lakes yet. At the lake,

we wimpy Americans yelped and cried out in the very cold water. Halfway across the lake it was sumped, so I swam back to shallow water very quickly. Back at the SWCC headquarters we left the mandatory notice of our trip back to OFD1. Later that evening, we exited the cave, visited with the landowners who invited us in for some tea, went back to the SWCC to shower and change. We went back to Pen-Y-Cae and the Ancient Britain Inn to eat and get trashed. Later that night, drunk and happy, we found a note left for us that chewed us out for not removing our notice. With the notice still on the board, it looked as though we might be in trouble in the cave. Fortunately, a rescue was not organized (they found our gear in the drying room), and Alan made a few calls to smooth things out for us.

Tuesday morning I was sore, tired and hungover bad. Putting on my wetsuit for DYU was quite a chore. The water in the lake had dropped a foot and a half and was passable at the area sumped the day before. This time only Alan, Jay and I went and once again were advised that the early morning rains would reach the cave in four to six hours. From the lake, we chimneyed up into a higher section that had semi-easy passage. This led to the dreaded 600 ft. crawl where we spent half an hour squeezing through and over stony calcite floors. At the end of the crawl, we climbed down into a slippery hole that ended 20 ft. over a large chamber. Here we got on a permanent fixed cable ladder which was a bit tricky. Next we came to the Crystal Pool. We traversed around the pool on fixed handlines and proceeded to Flabbergasm Oxbow. Here we observed some soda straw columns measuring ten feet floor to ceiling. Alan said DYU had some that were nearly fifteen feet. From here we climbed up to the Green Canal, a fifty meter swim that seemed to take forever. This led to the Camel's Back, a difficult, steep, narrow slot which we had to chimney. Over the Camel's Back we went down the abyss, nicknamed the Elephant's Asshole, which was fairly easy. On the way out, four hours later, we were happy to see that the water level had dropped four inches. Food drops with whiskey are in the cave, should a party get trapped. That evening, dinner and pints (20 oz.) at the Old British Inn, a tradition I wish our club would start.

Wednesday, we traveled from South Wales back to Bristol, where we were introduced to more Hades members (Hades has over 300 members). Several pints later, we were off to Yorkshire. Wednesday and Thursday nights we stayed in a trailer park, or caravan; Friday and Saturday we slept in tents because the owner of the caravan kicked us out. It seems cavers tend to get pretty wild on the weekends. Hades member Mike Chappel (a PHD) boasts of how he threw Grugg on the table in one of the trailers and had to make a new table top for Ms. Molley, the owner. We pleaded with Ms. Molley to let us stay, but the old @#%*! said NO.

Thursday morning, Russell and I joined Matt Ward and Frosty on a caving trip to Meregill Drop, a six pitch system. Meregill's normal entrance was flooded so we used the alternate, less desirable crawl entrance in cold water with a nasty right angle to boot. At the end of the crawl is a 60 ft. pitch which you chimney out onto, then rig into the rope. Ten feet down was a re-belay bolt which required an easy changeover then down to a high-volume torrential stream passage waist deep. Communication was almost impossible due to the roar of the waterfalls, so we used a whistle to alert the next caver rappelling that you were off the rope. We followed meandering passage to the next 100 ft. pitch which required a traverse up and over the waterfall. A belay rope was bolted into the wall so that we could hook our cow's tails in (webbing connected to our seat harness with a carabiner on the other end).

The next pitch, 100 ft., was similar in the traverse, but dropped down onto a ledge where the water was hitting. We traversed across the ledge in the spray without a belay, hooked back into the rope, and dropped down into a deep, cold pool. The fourth pitch, 30 ft., left us very wet and cold due to the high water.

We didn't have enough rope for the sixth pitch, so we began the climb up and out. Our rope walking system is very different from the popular European frog system. On vertical change-overs going up, it's quite easy with the frog system that unbooks easily. Russell and I found it difficult (a royal pain in the butt) to unhook our Gibbs and re-attach them up over a bolt on the rope from a dead hang while water was pounding on us. Russell was out first, then me, followed by Frosty and Matt. The trip lasted eight hours with an additional

two hour hike in the rain and sleet. We were so late getting back to the pub (Mason's) that we only had time for bread and soup - and only two pints!

Saturday was a day of rest: we did some sight seeing, went pub crawling (bar hopping), and got trashed big time.

Sunday morning, I woke up in a white room on a bed, not in a tent! My first thought was that it was a hospital until I saw Geoff asleep in the bed across from me. Downstairs I discovered it was a pub and I owed the owner eleven pounds for bed and breakfast. Breakfast was interesting, as I listened to Geoff and Arthur roar about all the beer and double shots of Old Bushmills they had had the night before. After breakfast, Russell and I joined Mike Chappel and his two brothers for a trip to Gapping Gill. The two hour hike up the hill cleared my head some. We walked past the entrance we were using to look at the large stream pouring into the hole. Back at the entrance, we rigged a fifty foot cable ladder which we each descended followed by a 120 ft. rappel. Another half hour of hands and knees crawl led to a large chamber and the most spectacular site I've seen caving, a 365 ft. waterfall, dropping free (not running down a wall) from a hole in the ceiling while the sun was overhead. This was the perfect finale for our ten day caving trip/drink. That evening, back in Bristol, several of the Hades members who had caved with us the previous week, met us at a pub to toast us off. We closed the pub, then went to a restaurant down the street for wine and pizza. At 6:00 a.m., we were on a bus to the airport. The airport was closed for 5 hours due to fog. However, we were lucky to catch a connecting flight home at Kennedy. After 27 hours of sleep, I was back in Petrolia and back at the office Tuesday morning. The only drawback to the trip was the jetlag I suffered later.



The following is a release form for use by Maverick Grotto cavers.
You may want to photocopy this page for future use on caving trips.

THE MAVERICK GROTTA
RELEASE AND WAIVER FOR CAVING

COUNTY/STATE: _____, _____

DATE SUBMITTED: _____, _____

In consideration of the granting of permission to the following Caver:
_____ (herein called "subject")

to enter upon Premises known as: _____,

and owned or controlled by: _____,

for the purpose of exploring underground holes, caves, crevices and passageways, the undersigned do hereby release the owner of said premises, and the lessee or other person having control of the same, from any and all losses and damages which may occur to the person or or property of subject while engaged in such exploration. The undersigned acknowledge that such exploration may be inherently dangerous, and it is their intention by this release to waive any claims which they may have, to assume all risks, known and unknown, which may arise from such exploration, and to hold harmless from the same the land owner and lessees or others having control of the premises with the land owner's consent.

(Subject or Guardian)



REMEMBER TO BRING \$10 FOR 1990 DUES TO THE JANUARY MEETING !!!!

