
PERMIAN BASIN SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Volume III No. 7

May, 1991

MEETING NOTICE

Date: Tuesday, May 14, 1991

Location: St. Paul Methodist Church, 4501 Thomason
Park at rear of church.

Time: 6:30 PM

MAY TRIP: PINK DRAGON, PINK PANTHER, PINK PALLET, AND DAMN CAVES

Walter has permits in hand for the above for May 18 and 19. The caves are walk-ins, although there are several short vertical drops. Walter recommends you bring vertical gear, and be prepared for a long hike. Pink Dragon includes a pit with a 65 meter drop. Several individuals are contemplating backpacking to the caves and spending the night near the entrances. Several others are planning on not backpacking. Access to the caves is via Three Mile Hill, and a 4 wheel drive vehicle is recommended if you don't want to do a lot of walking. Be at church on Tuesday or call Walter for the expedition meeting location.

SOUTHWESTERN REGIONAL

A Southwestern Regional Meeting is scheduled for May 25-May 27, Memorial Day weekend, in the Guadalupe, with camping on top of Three Mile Hill near the Dark Canyon lookout tower. Practically every cave in the area has been reserved for the weekend. Sign-up for the caves will occur at the campsite. Two New Mexican cavers, Bill Rook and Susan Walker, plan to tie the knot in Cottonwood Cave over Memorial Day weekend. The wedding reception will follow at the bottom of Madonna. Call Linda Starr at (505) 873-2703 for more information regarding the regional meeting.

APRIL TRIP REPORTS

Deep Cave, by Rick Day

As usual, it was cold, dark and windy the night I arrived at our campsite in the Guads. I'm beginning to think the two prerequisites for caving club campsites are cold temperatures and lots of wind. Well, anyway I arrived at 12:30 AM just behind Walter and Ken. Bill and Gralin had already arrived and came out to greet us. Eventually we were joined by Chuck and Jan, their daughter and her friend. Tom Hill arrived later the next morning.

We all got up bright and early the next morning, had breakfast, and then set up the day's schedule. As it turned out Walter, Ken, Chuck and myself were the only ones interested enough to do Deep Cave. Ken, Walter and I discussed the order in which to enter Deep; we unanimously decided the most logical choice was Chuck. Funny, I don't recall Chuck being present during our discussion.

We had about a mile hike to the entrance to Deep. The entrance was a fairly large opening that goes into the side of a hill, then funnels down very steeply. We had to set up a 60-70 foot traverse just to get to the boulder that was to be our tie off for the rappel. We had been told that the drop was 300 feet and we would need all of our rope to reach the bottom. After getting the rope set up, Chuck started his rappel, giving us a colorful play by play commentary as he went. I was next. The rappel was quite interesting. The first 100-150 feet were a steep incline which got steeper as you went. The steep incline finally became vertical and soon gave way to a 100-150 foot open drop. The rappel easily held my attention, this being my first long free drop. Actually, it was a smooth, entertaining descent, and we all agreed later it really was a fun rappel.

T. S. A. PROJECT

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department has requested cover assistance for the Memorial Day week-end, May 25 - 27, 1991, at the Hill Country State Natural Area. Ridge walkers, photographers, mappers, and fauna collectors are needed to inventory known caves and locate/inventory caves on new property which is part of the 5,370 acre parcel in Bandera and Medina County. At this time, there are 24 known caves on the property.

Car camping will be available behind the big house next to West Verde Creek. Electricity will be available in the barn, so bring your Texas slides. Both the entrance fee and the camping fee will be waived for volunteers. Because of equestrians, dogs will not be allowed in the park for this project.

Your contact is Terry Holtzinger. Please call him at 512/445-7340 so that we can get a rough count of participants and begin to form inventory teams.

INFORMATION

Emergency Numbers

Park Manager	512/796-4413
Game Warden	512/796-4621
Sheriff's Dept.	512/796-3771 (Bandera Co.)
Sid Peterson Hospital	512/896-4200 (Kerrville)

Park Address

HILL COUNTRY STATE NATURAL AREA
Route 1, Box 601, FM 1077
Bandera, Texas 78003
512/796-4413

PWD LF-4506 115-4/89

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The cave itself was very large but not very extensive. Much of the cave was still alive, with the formations varying from very large columns that went to the roof to small delicate helictites and fried egg formations. The most popular attractions, however, were the tall skinny totem poles, many of which went to the ceiling. While exploring a tunnel roughly the size of a badger hole, Ken became excited when the small brown formation he was face to face with turned out to be a bat. If the bat was excited at seeing Ken up close he didn't show it.

The climb out wasn't quite as easy as the rappel; it was a lot of work. However, we all did manage to get out, and as soon as we were all able to speak coherently we all agreed this had been a good trip.

Gunsight/Big Door, by Bill Bentley

Date: 4-20-91

Cavers: Jim Jones, Gralin Coffin, and Bill Bentley

We started the hike out to the cave about 9:30AM on Saturday from the parking area. The weather was cool with overcast skies and only a slight wind. The step log proved to be very helpful, only I still don't know if they were supposed to be short steps or long steps. Having Gralin along and him being a surveyor by trade helped in reading the various compass headings. So about 10:40 AM or so we reached the large Big Door entrance to Gunsight cave without too many wrong turns or places where you simply can't get there from here.

The cave entrance is huge, even by Texas standards, and once inside the archway of the opening we had one beautiful view of Gunsight Canyon. After dropping jackets and straightening our gear and packs we entered the cave. I always wondered through the years if Gunsight and Big Door were one in the same. Now I found out they were. We went into the first chamber, and I will not try to guess the ceiling height, but will just report it is very high. There were even a few trees and green things growing in this room and on the rubble slope. After searching all of the nooks and cracks and climbing up every place possible, we finally left the cave around 1:30 PM TST (Texas Standard Time) and noticed the wind had blown the clouds away and the sun was shining. We made it back to the vehicles about 2:45 PM and back to campsite by 3:30 PM; the others were still at Deep Cave and would return later that evening.

Sentinel Cave, by Bill Bentley

Date: 4-21-91

Cavers: Walter Feaster, Ken Kamon, Gralin Coffin, Bill Bentley, and Tom Hill

Awakening Sunday, feeling the stiffness and soreness from the previous day's activities, a roll back over in the sleeping bag, trying to sleep amidst the howling, unrelenting Guadalupe winds. Consciousness creeping in as one becomes aware of the sounds of cavers talking, around the stove drinking coffee. Where's my glasses? What's a medddor pincher? Can I crawl from Shield City to Mud City? Another plate of Bob & Bob beaners please. Then suddenly fully awake. What a dream.

After fighting the wind and Coleman stove for some sausage and egg burritos, a quick repacking of gear and checking the lights, we were off to the cave. We decided to try our luck at remembering the way on the top of Gunsight Ridge, and we only got lost a couple of times. Ken spotted the entrance, and since he had been there before he made finding it look easy. I can't begin to describe the wind on this day. It blew from the mountains all the way home to Midland, and on to Dallas. I was glad to get in the cave (no wind).

We rigged the cave from the lowest point of the entrance pit. This made the rope free for about 20 to 25 feet, but getting off the rope was hard because of a rubble breakdown slope. The loose rocks were sloped at such an angle that it was a less-than-ideal place to get off a rope. We all rappelled in except for Tom, who declined because he wanted to chase packs down the ravine from the entrance. Anyway, we had no real trouble going in the cave by way of rope, except that Walter's super duper high impact, heat treated, lead reinforced, thermoplastic, rock masterblaster knee pad from Wal-Mart became independent of its owner, the cave wall and the rope, and whizzed through the air, landing in the area of least resistance at the bottom of the breakdown pile. After the rest of us made our way down the slope I retrieved the now

lifeless knee pad from its resting place. It somehow looked smaller than it did in flight. At the bottom of the slope we went to the left and, after a 3' to 4' drop, explored a small room. The room had two shelf levels, one about 4' up, another about 6' above the first. Ken climbed up and saw a big room through a crack. Later we realized it was a continuation of the main passage. Well this didn't go anywhere, so we went back to the main passage, then past an old fire spot. There was a fire there before, how long ago is anybody's guess. Was this Sentinel Chimney? No it was not! The next big chamber had a high ceiling with a dome I assume was the elusive Chimney. From this room we rigged a hand line down a short drop to a slanted flowstone slope. This led to a small room about 20' to 30' in diameter. A crack near the flowstone slope about 2' wide just to the left of the rope led to a drop that, according to the map, was McCollom's pit: an impressive black hole of some unknown depth (unknown tome). We left the rope at the entrance so we wouldn't be tempted to drop this pit. We all left the cave around 2:30 PM, and I was back at the vehicle by 3:30 PM TST . We ate, then talked, and I drove home and got there about 9:30. The wind pushed me back -- I used less than 1/8 of a tank.

MISCELLANEOUS

We still have several of Tony Grieco's cartoons that have not been published in the newsletter. The remaining cartoons are pencil copies, and won't show up by Xeroxing unless they are inked. Although not quite up to the quality of his previous illustrations, which have caused some to call Grieco the up and coming Berke Breathed of the caving world, his remaining unpublished work would prove a valuable addition both to the proposed PBSS cartoon compilation and future newsletters. Please call Ken Kamon if you would consider inking the remaining drawings.

Chuck proposed including reviews of products in future newsletters. So if that Petzl shunt left you hanging on a rope for two hours, here's your chance to get even, or at least vent some rage. Please submit reviews to the PBSS typist (address on following page).

PBSS Newsletter

Please mail material for newsletter to Ken Kamon, 400 W. Texas #1100K, Midland, TX 79701

PBSS MEMBERSHIP

Last Name	First Name	W. Phone	H. Phone	NSS #
Anderle	Chuck	685-3119	685-3119	31477
Anderle	Jan	685-3119	685-3119	31478
Bentley	Bill	694-7721	697-3079	21977
Brinson	Debbie	699-4081	687-4443	31306
Brinson	Will	699-4081	687-4443	31905
Carlton	Don	335-3265	687-4352	30417
Coffin	Gralin	684-5548	563-0764	----- 33471
Day	Rick		523-9665	-----
Dickens	Henry	563-0421	367-5275	-----
Feaster	Walter		367-8253	31624
Fincher	J. D.		694-4381	-----
Scott	Melissa		694-4381	-----
Fincher	Richard		694-4381	-----
Glossa	Jeff	682-9731		-----
Hill	Patrick		689-8347	-----
Hill	Tom	560-5065	687-2122	27888
Kamon	Ken	686-0720	699-7192	-----

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