
PERMIAN BASIN SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

August, 1993

MEETING NOTICE

Date: Tuesday, August 10

Location: Murray's Delicatessen, 3211 W. Wadley. Murray's is on the south side of Wadley, in the strip shopping center east of Midkiff and Texas Burger.

Time: Food consumption and socialization are optional and begin at 6:30 PM; the meeting starts at 7:00 PM.

AUGUST TRIPS

The BLM is soliciting help for a work trip to Fort Stanton Cave near Ruidosa, New Mexico, on Saturday, August 7. Anyone is welcome. The group will be installing a gate and conducting a precision survey, among other things. Fort Stanton is a very extensive horizontal cave. At least a couple of members of PBSS are planning on attending.

Torgac and Crockett Caves are scheduled for August 14 and 15. The permit is probably full, but you are encouraged to contact Walter and get your name on the alternate list, as someone will likely cancel. Both are horizontal caves in New Mexico. Torgac is particularly beautiful.

0-9 Well, a vertical cave southeast of Midland, is scheduled for Saturday, August 21. The cave requires a wet suit. The list is full, but again, someone will undoubtedly cancel, so call Walter and get on the alternate list if you'd like to go.

Contact Walter for more information regarding any of the above at 367-8253.

UPCOMING TRIPS

Trips are tentatively planned for September 18 and 19 to caves in New Mexico, and a work trip to Powell's Cave is planned, I think for October 23 and 24. Call Bill Bentley at 697-3079 for more details. He's looking for someone to obtain permits.

NEW MEMBERS

Tom and Debbie Brannon have joined PBSS. Both are avid and knowledgeable outdoorspersons, who have experience organizing expeditions. The two Noels, Rick, Walter, Allen, Rose, Bill Sawyer, Candace and Ken had the pleasure of caving with them on a recent trip to Three Mile Hill. They will certainly be an asset to PBSS.

TRIP REPORTS

CAVING IN NEW MEXICO

by the British Bloke

Notes for reading this article:

1. It is written in REAL English.
2. All American translations are in brackets.
3. It's shortened to save space. I could write a book!

Chapter 1. History

My name is Chris Wright. I live in Essex, England and have been caving [splunking] as a sport for 17 years. And this trip broke some records!

I contacted NSS through my Mum [female parental unit] who lives in Fort Worth, Texas, about caving close to my base in Fort Worth. From the list Mum received she contacted Mike Huber in Carlsbad, who set me up with two trips over a particular weekend with Ken and Brad, as Mike was to be out of town. My thanks to Mike for setting it all up and for the loan of some vertical gear [rope walker]. On arrival at Carlsbad, I called various people to arrange a lift and get to our base camp. Don picked me up and we started on our way to 3 Mile Hill.

Chapter 2. Camping

We drove for some 45 minutes before we went on to a gravel [stone] track, and then did what seemed like miles (lots) on some rocky offroad track in Don's poor truck to reach our campsite in the late evening hours. We waited for a while, and waited, as Ken had kindly arranged a tent for me to be brought up by Alan. But Alan had a major truck problem, so I slept under the stars on a pleasant night.

Chapter 3. Cave Trip - Sentinel

During the morning hours, the other cavers arrived, who I was to join up with on this trip. The group, lead by Ken, included Don, J.D., young Richard, Allen, young Sean, and myself. We loaded up and drove a few miles on some sort of track. Then, with my heavy rucksack, I walked across the wild country for an hour - a new record for me. I never walked more than 30 minutes from a main road to a cave before. I changed in to my caving kit, and we descended into the cave.

For a cave with no live or active formations, it was still very well decorated, indeed, and only the best French caves come close. We did the 50 ft. traverse and a further soft descent, but decided that would do us, particularly with Ken and I going on Sunday's trip to Virgin Cave. We then all slowly made our way out -- a 4 hour trip which was a good insight into caving in New Mexico. I must point out that young Sean did very well on his first caving trip, plus lugging that huge battery.

We then had a long, hot walk back to the trucks and back to camp for some rest & supper. My thanks to Don and J. D., young Richard, Allen, Sean, and Rose for their company and an enjoyable cave and camp.

Chapter 4. Cave Trip to Virgin

After Ken and I had read the writeup in J. D.'s book about the Virgin trip, we were very apprehensive about the trip that day. Ken and I broke camp and drove miles to meet up with Brad and Trent and a couple from Chicago to do the cave. We did another few miles on rock tracks and prepared ourselves for the trip down in Virgin Cave. A 20 minute walk and we were at the entrance.

So we put on our descending gear (racks, harness), ready ourselves and make our way into a small hole, just like at home. It soon opens up, and we make our way through the maze to the first pitch (pit) of 80 feet. Once set up we all descend, then encounter a further maze, and our big descent, 300 feet with a hanging belay [caribeener belay], which, for me, was my biggest single descent ever. Record 2! Then straight on to a 360 foot traverse over a 200 foot-deep crack, with six-to-eight anchor points. My longest traverse - record 3 - felt like going 600 feet! Then straight onto a 120 foot descent to the bottom, deepest point. The some 560 ft. of vertical rope descent represented record 4. Then a climb up 80 ft. in to a final room. The decoration from the 300 ft. descent onwards was spectacular compared with what I have seen in any previous wild cave (record 5).

To keep the group on the clock, we quickly started our ascent up. Except for 50 feet the day before, I had not used the ropewalker ascending system, and found it quite easy and not so tiring as our frog system. Records 6 and 7 were my first rope walker experience and longest vertical rope ascent, and record 8 was my longest single pitch (pit) ascent. A fabulous trip, which took us about 8 hours and required very hard work, but a very good experience. I need to check, but I believe I may have broken a ninth personal record, by being the deepest in a cave, 600 feet in total depth from the entrance.

Chapter 5. Before I Go

My thanks to everyone who made the trips possible, and to Brad and Trent for the Virgin Trip. Great!! To Ken for driving me around and some great trips. I look forward to caving again in New Mexico, and hope it's with you all. I am planning a trip to the USA in 1994 and have heard that Madonna and Three Fingers are the next to do if possible. Hint!!

Many thanks and regards to you all. Cave safely, and I will be back. If you are ever planning a trip to the UK, call me up and I'll help you out, as to where to go and places to do -- real wet small sporting caves.

Many regards,
Chris Wright
East Essex Caving Instructors Team
Essex, England

Apology

I made a statement in an uncensored version of the last newsletter that an individual found deeply insulting. I won't repeat the statement or name the individual, as the uncensored version went out to a minority of members, but desire to apologize to the individual, as well as to everyone else who received the letter and found it in poor taste. I have in general attempted not to print anything someone would find truly insulting, as I value my friendship with every member of PBSS. We really have a unique group of individuals.

Which leads to something else. I've typed the newsletter for a couple of years, and want out. I believe I have slipped over the edge, and it's only a matter of time before the feds show up at Don's house (His return address appears on PBSS newsletter) with a warrant for his arrest, on charges of distribution of pornographic material.* In addition, I'm not going to have as much time as in years past, and content will suffer as a result. If you have a computer and printer and would have any interest in taking this on, please call me at 699-7192 or 686-0720. Galin and Kari have agreed to continue helping with copying and mailing, and I can also help with the grunt work, as my recovery progresses.

Ken Kamon
Glenwood Mental Health Center, Room 145

P. S. Thanks for all those helpful cards and letters that have come from Wichita Falls. My doctor believes they are having a very therapeutic effect. The nice pictures are helping me to stop objectifying people. *I will reprint them in next months newsletter unless a replacement typist is found. Don - want the job?

MISCELLANEOUS

Steve Franks, James Cullen, Kenneth Knight, and Charles Fox are making plans to skydive into a 1200 foot pit in Mexico. But first, they need to learn how to skydive. If you're interested, please call one of them.

Bill Bentley, Bill Sawyer, Tony, J. D., Richard, Allen, Rose, Mike Huber from Carlsbad, and friends of Bill and Mike had a good time at Virgin Cave recently, despite having the wrong key. It was Rose's first time on rope.

Don has supplied a copy of the National Speleological Society membership form for anyone who would like to join NSS. As you are probably aware, PBSS could get kicked out of NSS if not enough of us are members (as if we really care). A better reason for joining - the NSS News is an entertaining publication, and the yearly accident reports issue, describing every recorded death, accident and mishap in a cave, is worth the \$25 alone.

PBSS Membership

To join PBSS, mail \$5.00 to Don Carlton, at the address that appears below. Make checks payable to Don, and include your address, phone numbers, and, if you have one, NSS number.

PBSS MEMBERSHIP				
Last Name	First Name	W. Phone	H. Phone	NSS #
Abernathy	Tony		694-7919	-----
Abner	Rich	267-4100	264-0023	-----
Anderle	Chuck	685-3119	685-3119	31477
Anderle	Jan		685-3119	31478
Bentley	Bill	694-7721	697-3079	21977
Brannon	Tom		697-2806	-----
Brannon	Debbie		697-2806	-----
Carlton	Don	335-3265	687-4352	30417
Cargile	Terry		697-8700	-----
Coffin	Gralin	684-5548	682-1904	33471
Coffin	Kari A.		682-1904	33472
Cullen	James		(214)412-1632	-----
Day	Rick		523-9665	-----
Day	Kevin		(817)491-1026	-----
Eddy	David	(817) 287-8350	699-6451	11830
Feaster	Walter		367-8253	31624
Fincher	J. D.		558-7248	31859
Fincher	Richard		694-4381	-----
Fox	Charles		(817) 692-5770	-----
Franks	Stephen	697-7672	683-3305	35245
Glasson	Larry		523-9772	-----
Gray	Kim	523-5675	523-6409	-----
Gray	Larry	655-6957	653-3823	19588
Guad	Slut		(505)393-5604	-----
Harter	Gary	523-9758		-----
Hill	Tom	560-5044	687-2122	27888
Hunt	Doug		697-1885	-----
Kamon	Ken	686-0720	699-7192	34637
King	Joel	(210)498-8829	438-4049	yes
Knight	Kenneth		(817)696-8713	-----
Laman	Allen	550-0910	550-0910	-----
Laman	Rose	550-0910	550-0910	-----
McArthur	Martha		(817)723-9890	35327
Nance	Jim		563-5208	27723
Pando	Noel M.		523-9294	-----
Pando	Noel D.		523-9294	-----
Parent	Laurence	(512)280-2843	280-2843	-----
Qualls	Patrick		(505) 397-0884	-----
Sawyer	Bill			
Scott	Melissa		694-4381	-----
Seefeld	Cheryl		570-1124	-----
Terrett	Tiffany		685-3119	-----
Wall	Denise J.	(214) 637-5297	553-5740	-----

CONTRIBUTED BY DON CARLTON

BOOK REVIEW

How can any caver pass this one up? From the dustcover of Midnight's Lair by Richard Laymon ---

Mordock's Cave is one of the spectacular wonders of the world, a place where thousands of sightseers every year take an awe-inspiring boat trip on a lake deep beneath the earth's surface to marvel at Nature's handiwork. But the darkness is also home of things Nature never intended - things violent, bestial, and obscenely evil.

When a sudden power failure incapacitates the elevator to the surface, a group of tourists is trapped in the underground depths. Cold and scared, without lights or food, their only hope is to find an escape route through the sealed-off end of the cavern. But their explorations uncover a nest of horrors that has lain hidden for generations, and their idyllic underground journey becomes a nightmare trip through hell, as they find themselves battling for survival against creatures of the abyss....

Sounds like some tourists encountered PBSS on a Ca Ca restoration trip.

This book may be as entertaining as one of Martha's trip reports.