



Vol. 2
No. 4 & 5
July / Oct. 1981

The Gadsden Grotto NEWSLETTER



Elmer,
You still believe in that
prehistoric gerbols?

Joe Hall



The
National
Speleological
Society

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Huntsville, Al 35810
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MINUTES

The regular meeting of the Gadsden Grotto was held July 2, 1981 at the East Gadsden Recreational Center.

Chairman David Teal called the meeting to order at 7:50 PM and asked all visitors to introduce themselves.

George Yates spoke on a trip to Gross Skeleton to see the Big Room. Joe Hall spoke on the S.E.R.A. Cave Carnival where the group saw Cedar Ridge, Crystal, Fireside Well, Coration Pit and others.

We decided to put off the patches again in order to catch up on getting the back newsletters in print.

Like the old business we decided to take patchfunds and have the March/April, May/June, and the July/August issues of the GG newsletter sent to a printer. Whenever the November/December layout is finished. Jim Harrison will have those run off on his own. We appreciated Jimmy's efforts, there is so much he could be doing, if he had finished layouts.

The N.S.S. library has finally filled our order, for slide shows credited to us (Climax again, this was also our 1st of the 3 shows credited). Three more are selected by V-C of Prog.-Proj. I, the Sec/Trea, am sending receipts to Michael Ray for tours guided by G.G. in conjunction with the Explorers Post of Anniston.

George Yates N.S.S. 14628 has donated to us on this night, a complete (minus 6 on the GA. border) set of unfolded Topos covering all caving areas in North Alabama. These will be cataloged in the same order as the Alabama Geographical Index map. George laid down a few simple rules: Founding chairman will retain all maps, no field use, should G.G. disband he will regain ownership, etc., I'm sure this is simple to understand. 8:33: Break and relocate to cooler conditioned surroundings for the slide show.

After the Climax (again) slide show 4 membership cards were issued. The 1st card was #21 reissued to Linda King, from Alexandria, who is with the Anniston Museum Explorers Post. George McClusky (NSS 10829) who was present only in spirit was issued card #26. George Yates (NSS 14628) was issued card #27. Carmal Modica was issued card #28. Carmal also comes to us through the Anniston Museum of Natural History. We the Gadsden Grotto truly appreciate these people who have taken an interest in our new Grotto. 28 members in less than 1 year and 6 months. My fellow board members and I are pleased, especially since the members reach out from states such as Mississippi, Tennessee, Alabama and Georgia. We do need to try to persuade a few new members to also join the NSS. The national organization needs more and more support yearly and our chapter needs the votes in C.O.G.

(Minutes continued)

The July Grotto Trip will be to the Anniston Museum Saturday July 25, 1981 for the purpose of a caving demonstration and speeches for the cause. A complete financial report is in the process again. The next regular meeting of G.G. will be August 4, 1981, 7:30 p.m. at the East Gadsden Recreation Center. Lets all be there and bring a good friend.

Adjourned to the Exchange at 9:15 p.m.

-*--*-**-*-**-*-**-*-**-*-**

The regular meeting of the Gadsden Grotto was held August 4, 1981 at the East Gadsden Recreational Center.

Chairman Teal called the meeting to order at 7:45 and asked everyone to introduce themselves.

William Garrett and David Teal reported on a trip to Guffey Cave. The G.G. has decided to gate the cave.

No dates have been set but there is to be a rappel and climbing (vertical class).

The G.G. trip in October will be at White Sides planned for the 3rd weekend.

The COG Womens Divisions remains the same.

After caving slides of Guffey Cave by Jim Loftin the meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Gadsden Grotto Board Meeting
July 14, 1981
6:30 p.m.

A Board meeting was requested by the secretary-treasure in the month of July. The date was set for July 14, 1981 in the home of Jeff and Ann Steele at 6:30 pm. Due to problems beyond our control the meeting was moved to the home of Joe Hall (V-C of Pub. Rel.) and Deanna.

Chairman David Teal, V. C. of Prog.-Proj. William Garrett, and V-C of Pub. Rel. Joe Hall and myself were all present. One regular G.G. member was there as a visitor, he was Jeff Machen.

Chairman David Teal called the meeting to order at 6:50 p.m.

The first order of business was the Nov.-Dec. issue: Vol.1 No. 5 of the Gadsden Grotto newsletter. This particular issue has become a concern of not only members of the Board but other paid members and suscribers of the G.G. newsletter also. There have been questions about it, before our last two regular meetings began business, from out of town members. There has been plenty of material for the layout submitted to the editor of G.G.N. Vol. 1 No. 5 and arrangements have been secured to have necessary copies printed for free, thanks to Jim Harrison. After contacting the editor by telephone the Board voted to set a deadline for this issue to go into print by July 17, 1981. Otherwise a quicky issue of Vol. 1 No. 5 will be in print soon after.

The second order of business was agreeing upon a budget for the newsletter. Fast Printing and Copies

July Board Meeting (cont.)

Inc. has finished our last two newsletters and have done a real good job at a rate of \$36.40 for 50, 10 page, copies, this averages out at 18 cents per copy and they had it finished in one day. \$40.00 dollars is all we are taking out of the treasury at this time, the extra \$3.60 is going toward postage. The printer will raise their rates for a while if it remains on a regular basis. Postal rates will be going up soon. For right now we are getting alot of the newsletters to our local members by hand saving postage but this will not work as we grow in members.

Also brought up by the Chairman, was setting guidelines on regular articles to appear in the newsletter and the number of pages etc. "Letters to the Editor", "The Feature Article" (any material related to cavers and caves), a "Cavemap" and of course sufficient trip reports and ads will be printed within 10 pages or less.

We have decided to put off having our patches made up until more funds are available and the newsletter is brought up to date.

The most important issue that I felt a need to discuss was fund raising projects. Our most substantial project has been the guided tours for Explorers Post #8, a great group of people from the Anniston area, who are in conjunction with the Anniston Museum of Natural History.

This groups trust in us has been an overwhelming amount of support for this Grotto, almost as much has gone into the treasury from this program as we have collected in dues. This is fantastic, but not a sufficient amount to support our expenses by any means. There are several projects in the planning. In August the G.G. is supposed to hold rope safety technique exhibition in conjunction with the Boys Club of Gadsden and their Rodeo, Q104 F.M. is supposed to broadcast the ordeal. Maybe the Grotto will receive some support from this. Q104 also wants to hold a cavathon for 48-72 hours, the announcements for this event will be made later. I have talked with 3 captains of the C.A.P. groups in northern Alabama who would be interested in drawing donations to us during a safety rescue siminar. Other groups I've talked with concerning rescue siminars include the Fort Payne Fire and Rescue Squad and the squad from Collinsville. I've gotten negative responses from other Board members like one old answer "I haven't got time to fool with it" but we need to take time for raising funds. These small rescue groups are going to do their part anyway, it would be comforting to know they were rescuing someone out of a canyon or someplace in smooth fast form.

Other projects mentioned were cave photography siminars, posters drawn by our 2 grotto artists, Kathy Machen and Joe Hall. Chairman Teal mentioned hosting the 82 A.C.S. meeting at Noccalula Falls and maybe hosting the 83 SERA Carnival somewhere in N. Alabama, announcements if any will be out later.

July Board Meeting (cont.)

Anyone interested or with ideas please get in contact with V-C of Prog. and projects William Garrett or Chairman David Teal.

Editors note: Newsletter Vol. 1 No. 5 was issued and paid for by Dave Teal costing \$48.00.



FEATURE

ELY BLACK CHEIF OF GROTTO EXPLORATION

By the time it had settled to the bottom of the sea it had already been written off for some three hundred years. But it didn't know it was lost. Somewhere along the way a small meteorite had struck it, damagging a memory bank and sending it off course. Long forgotten by it's makers, but it didn't know it was lost, so it waited surveying the small sea life untill it could see them no more.

He slid over the hump in a small crawlway and over into the cold water. It was chest deep and the ceiling sloped down appearing to run into the water, sealing off the passage. Ely Black knew that it did not. But it did seal off the beer cans, food wrappers, graffitti, damage, people, and problems. He had always felt secure in the dark, the mud and cool rock. He liked to be alone here too.

Sometimes he fancied that his Grandfather had been here before him. There was very little he knew about him or his father. His father had been killed in the war and he never knew him. Grandpaw Black he at least knew something about. He was born and lived in the house that Ely lived in now. He had done a little farming, did a little hunting, and made a lot of whisky. Stories had it that his main still was in the mouth of the cave behind the old barn. This cave. His cave. Black's cave.

He felt good dragging his new gear. He had first seen it used when he went with the club. He went enough times to learn how to use all of it. It was fun to go with them but it just wasn't caving, not to him. But he did learn how to use the equipment and that opened up a whole new horizon for him, and today would be the day.

Ely followed the stream, tracing the steps he had been down so many times before. He knew every crack, room and pocket in this and many other caves too. There was only one place in this cave that he had never been, and now with his new equipment he felt that he could.

The sump, he had learned to call it, had always held a mystery for him. A smooth wall with the water simply going under it, and the faint roar of a water fall. You couldn't go under it. He had nearly drowned last year trying that. But there was a ledge above, near the top, and what looked like a passage. Mud and scratches attested to the fact that he had tried many times to climb it before. But now...

He put down the bag on a hill of mud, opened the flap and began sorting out what he felt he needed. The new rope was untied and laid out where it would uncoil itself. God, that had cost a lot, but Ely felt it would be worth it and besides it was kind of pretty anyways. So long, and so white, soft and plyable, but strong enough to pull the gates of Hell off their hinges.

Reach up and POW. The tiny flakes of limestone fell. POW, a little dust. Turning the handel of the drill as he turned the thoughts of his mind.

Wonder what Grandpaw thought of the sump? If he had really ever been this far before him. There had been stories and no one ever knew where he went. Grandmaw said he would often stay gone for days. Some times when he was drunk he would talk of the grottos and the miles of passage in the mountains. Everybody thought it was the whisky talking, but Ely knew. POW! the first lick at the fourth bolt. Slow work, but he wasn't in a hurry. He liked it here, and like his Grandpaw was used to being gone for days. The women of the Black family took it for natural that the men were that way, and took it natural but sad that one day they just didn't come back. Like his paw, and his paw.

POW! set the sixth bolt. Getting close, but he wasn't very anxious. He knew what he would find; mud, rock, but just maybe a passage.

The lip was a little of a problem, and he nearly slipped. But there it was. A strong wind, the sound of the water louder, and a crawl eaten into the very roof of the cave. He went ahead and it ended on a small ledge over a drop. There was a lot of mist and Ely could just make out the bottom. Turning, he went back, pulled up his only rope, fastened it to the last bolt, and drug the rest back to the ledge.

It was an easy drop but his heart was racing. He stepped out of the rope on the steeply sloping floor of the pit. The water was coming out of some large break-down and running down the smooth floor, off into the mist. Now the roar of the water was near, and Ely headed off in the direction of the noise.

continued next page

Walking down and along the wall of the pit he found the source of the noise. A large side room off, through a step through, where the pit had eaten into this one. Walls worn into fluted, scaloped shapes of every kind all hanging in the thick mist. Ely stepped over the low rock wall that separated the twin pits, and his foot struck something. It rattled to the floor in front of Ely. He stood frozen. He had never seen any sign of people past the first duck-under. But there it was, a lantern, old and rusted into pieces. He brought his other foot over and saw the rusted head of a small sledge hammer. Near it the shards of workings in a circle. Ely stepped into the circle and fell. The surface was cold and damp like the rest of the cave, but so, so smooth. He felt around and found the only depression on its surface. The floor moved and gave way, PANIC, and a tingeling feeling, and he never felt the bottom.

Ely Black was a very respected man and paid well for his position. He liked his job, just as his predecessor did. As it was all underground construction he had the honor of being the surveyor, hydrologist, air flow expert, or whatever you wanted to call it. Ely was very pleased with his job; Chief of Grotto Exploration. His predecessor had named it that, and everyone under the surface agreed that Ely Black was the "spit'n image of his Grandpaw".

W.S. Schaefer

Trip Reports

Guffey Cave --William Garrett

* *****
 ** Dave Teal **
 ** Jim Loftin **
 ** Rhonda **
 ** William Garrett **
 * *****

We Set out on a Monday morning, for Guffey cave.

The purpose of this trip was to take pictures for the Anniston Museum cave project.

When we entered the cave, we headed first for the lower level of the cave. In one of these passages we found where vandals had destroyed hundreds of pounds of formations. One such item was 4' tall and weighed about 100 LBS. It is obvious that the assailants took care and time to make sure the job was done correctly.

The owner of Guffey has offered to furnish the material to gate the cave since the old gate no longer works.

If anybody is interested in helping us with this project please let us know.

Four Wells --Susan Manderson

* *****
 ** William Garrett **
 ** Joe Hall **
 ** Bobby Whorton **
 ** Dave Teal **
 ** Susan Manderson **
 * *****

On Sunday, July 19, 1981 at 12:00 William, Joe, Bobby, David and I headed for Four Wells. Being my first pit I was really excited. We arrived at the foot of the mountain at about 2:30. We got our gear ready and climbed about a quarter of a mile up the mountain to the pit.

Continued

Trip reports cont'd

David and William descended first, then Joe and I, then Bobby. I went down slowly taking in all the beauty. Words could not describe what I felt.

When we all climbed back up to the top, we decided to head for home. It was 5:30 when we left. We stopped at Guntersville park and took a dip before returning home.

The story is not over yet. Let me tell you. We got back in Gadsden at 8:30. We were all so hungry so we throw some stuff together. We made some real cavers beef stew that I will never forget. The ingred.-as follows-beef stew, peaches, rice, kidney bean, hot peppers, barbcue sauce, spices. In spite of all this it was delicious.

Four-In-A-Row

--Jeff Machen

This cave was discovered by James Worthington and Wally Schaefer in 1976. On Jan. 4, David Teal, William Garrett, and I decided to go to the cave and attempt a 30 ft. wall climb that had stopped previous exploration. We found the entrance to the cave without much effort. The first drop is about 25-30 ft. deep and is located about 30 ft. from the entrance. We rigged the first drop and descended into a 25x25' room. We decided to attempt the climb which we accomplished in about fifteen minutes. A rope was rigged and soon all members of the party were standing in another small room. We explored a small passage and discovered another pit of unknown depth. Due to prior commitments we left this for a return trip.

On Jan. 7, David and I, once again made ready to enter Four-In-A-Row. We rapidly descended the first drop and jumared up the wall (which we had left rigged). David placed a 3/8" bolt while I assended the pit. We descended through a 1.5x2' entrance onto a natural bridge. We then rapelled about 45' to the bottom. We were in canyon passage with a 70ft. ceiling. Unfortunately this ended after about 80ft. A small waterfall fell from the ceiling and its stream disappeared under a mud filled ledge. We could see passage on the other side of the mudfill. We decided to return again for an attempted dig.

March 8, 1981 saw a party of four once again return to challenge what had become one of St. Clairs counties classiest grundge holes. David and I had returned with two new unsuspecting victims; Joe Hall, and King Wiggins. On the way out, at the top of the second pit, we found that the rope was imbedded about 12" into the mud, this made for an interesting scramble over the lip.

We made it easily to the waiting room above the second pit. David, Joe, and I rappelled down the second pit. King remained at the top for safety. The waterfall was now fairly strong due to recent rains and the second drop was wet. We remained at the bottom digging until the first signs of hypothermia forced a retreat. In spite of the conditions we made it 1 1/2 body lengths into the crawlway. Due to the caves potential, 400' above the valley floor, a return trip is planned during drier weather.

Trip reports cont'd

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Trip reports cont.

The Huntsville Grotto 25th Anniversey ---Dave Teal

On Friday Sept. 13, 1980 Bobby Whorton and I drove to Bucks Pocket for the HG's 25th anniversary celebration. I had first joined the Huntsville Grotto in 1970 and was glad to see many old friends. On Saturday Lin Guy, Debbie Guy, Foxy Ferguson, Bobby Whorton and I drove to the top of the cliffs to rig a rope for play. Once there we found Bill Cuddington who had two ropes rigged on a 100' wall drop. We moved back along the edge and rigged an 80' free-fall and everyone in our little group did the drop amidst lots of picture taking. Soon Jim Hall, and J.V. had ropes rigged at the highest point and people were everywhere waiting to rappell. After we finished we left and drove over to Sauta Cave, where over 40 cavers were waiting to get the key from the Govt. Next we drove over to Gross Skeleton, entered the cave and met Greg & Lynn McGill. Our growing crowd then headed to a banquet hall at the Guntersville State Park Lodge. And on Sunday we left Bucks Pocket and took Marion Smith, Lin & Debbi Guy and Foxy to Yo-Yo some of Dekalb and Etowah countys news finds. We started with Enle Single a 50' free drop in Dekalb, next did Dog Gone Pit a 67' pit in Dekalb and finished off the day with Yum Yum Sink an 80' drop in Etowah County.

Cedar Mountain Cave ---Michael Ray

* Michael Ray *
* Carol Huling *

This Calhoun Co. Cave is well hidden in a maze of limestone out croppings. The many small sink holes in this area with short openings would soon cause normal mortals to give up, but not true trogloliths. We found a clogged up entrance which we "fell" into and quickly came to a crawl space which would require many hours to clear the breakdown. We plan to return. -To Be Continued-

©bservations



Trip Reports continued

Digging Anyone?

--Dave Teal

Back on March 11, 1972 while leaving Cedar Tree Pit Al. 1307 I discovered a sinking stream. Located at North 221 mm x East 19 mm on the Glencoe Quad. A quick check found two holes. One taking water and the other sucking air. At this time it was forgotten. There was obviously a lot of work involved to open a cave.

While cleaning some old caving gear out I found several dye traps and several packs of dye. It was early Friday morning Jan. 2, 1981 so I walked back up Colvin Mt. dumped the dye into the stream and then set the traps at the bottom of the mt. at the spring. I returned on Thursday Jan. 8, 1981 to find the dye traps filters had worked to prove the water enters 280 above. After the discovery of Bat In The Pocket (-311') and the North East Trending Fault was plotted it was found the Stream and associated spring live on the same fault. So if anyone is interested a little work might turn up another nice(?) cave.

Daugette No. 1 Cave

--Michael Ray

* Michael Ray *
* Carol Huling *

After many tries of finding 784 by the ACS survey we finally abandoned this method. We launched an attack on the northern slope of the mountain at an elevation of 790ft. Only after walking to the top did we find the entrance at 830 ft. atop the mountain. The coordinates should read HJN instead of NJP. We were impressed with the accuracy of the cave map after finding such as error in location.

The layers of limestone were extremely thin with sand and sandstone between each layer. Many kids had obviously been in the cave leaving string, wire and trash streched through out the cave. However, the aragonite crystals are holding up well and are still a beautiful snowy haven. In a later trip Jim Loftin took many excellent pictures. Most crystals are a bit muddy and broken. Little brown bat population seemed to be holding up well in this cave. One even took a free ride out on my pants leg without an invitation. He even complained an extremely loud amount about the bumpy ride and stuck its tongue out to add to my humiliation.

For educational purposes, aragonite is chemically identical to calcite but crystallizes different. By repeated twinning, pseudo-hexagonal forms results. Aragonite maybe columnar or fibrous, occasionally in branching stalactitic forms called flosferri. Its name is driven from Aragon in Spain.

To steal a line from Aldo Leopold-"No 'fortuitous concourse of elements' working blindly through any number of millions of years could quite account for why caves are so beautiful.

Trip Reports continued

4th Annual TAG Fall Cave-In

--Susan Manderson

 *William Garrett *
 *Jeff Machen *
 *Bobby Whorton *
 *Dave Teal *
 *Susan Manderson *

Friday-Oct. 9th

David & I loaded up my car with all our gear and headed for Tag country. We arrived at the campground about 9:00. I have never been to an event like this one. We registered in the set

up camp. About an hour later the rest of them showed up. We didn't do very much Friday night. We needed to get up early Saturday. The caving trips started early.

Saturday-Oct. 10th

When we had our breakfast we went to watch some of the contest they were having. They were giving nice prizes to the winners. It was soon time for us to leave for our caving trip. David, William and I along with some of the Birmingham grotto went to Hurricane Cave in Georgia. You have to enter this cave through a drain pipe. This is where some of my problems began. I was using a carbide light which was fine. The problem was my helmet, it would not stay on very well. There is a lot of chimneying. The cave doesn't have to many formations. When we were exiting the cave another group of people were entering. They had small children with them.

After we left the cave we headed back to camp to get ready for the banquet. We toured Sequoyah Caverns. It is a beautiful cave through the commercial part. There are little ponds of waters that reflect off the formations. After the banquet everyone gathered around the campfire.

Sunday-Oct. 11th

We packed up our gear. Before heading home we went to Sauta Cave. It is a nice saltwater cave. I have never seen so many bats as there were in Sauta. We decided to head for home it was getting rather late. The cave-in was a success. I hope to go again next year.



Trip Reports continued

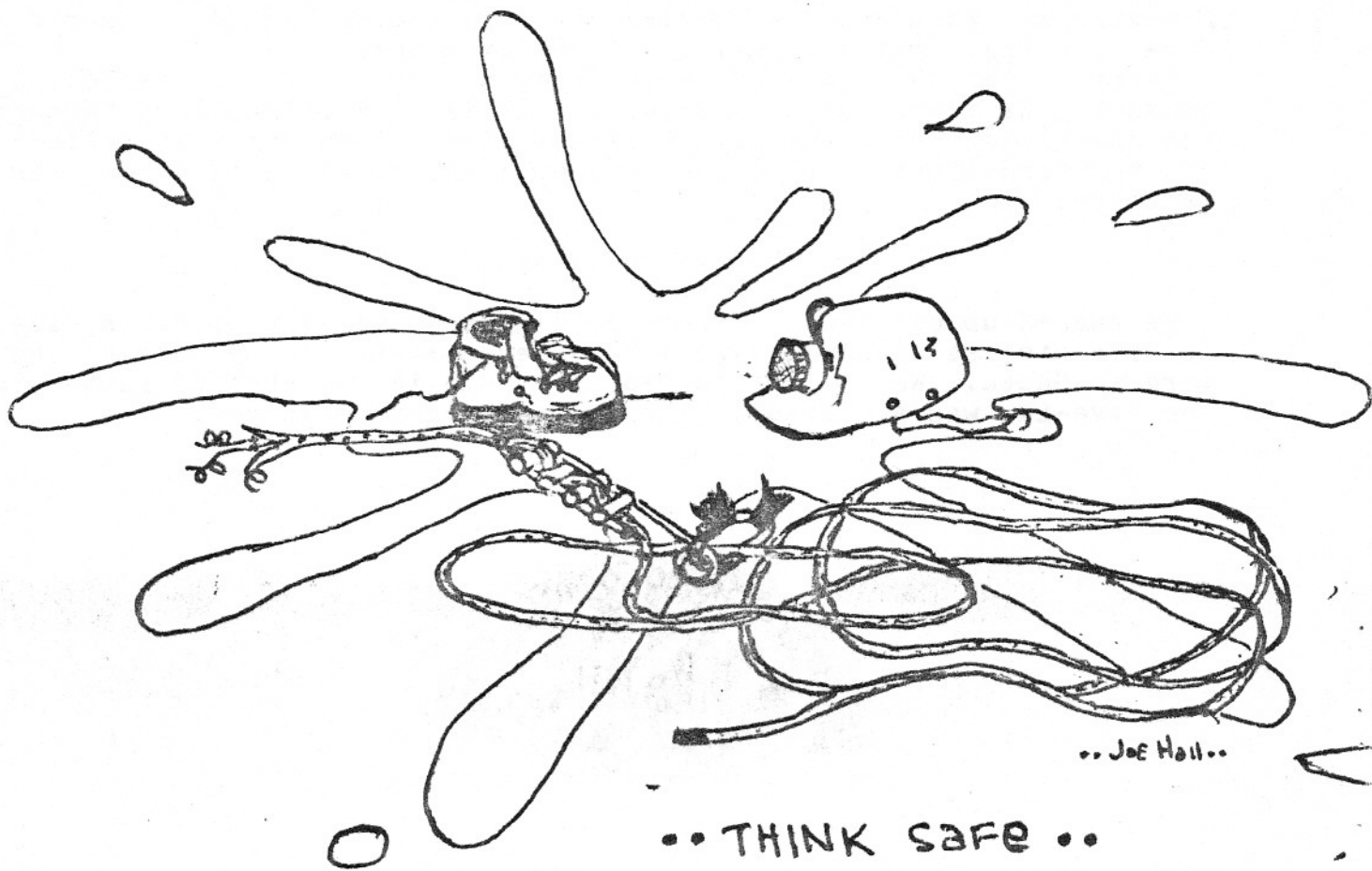
Neversink & Four Wells

--Robby Whorton

Joe Hall and I were to meet Lin Guy and David Teal and others by 9:00 a.m. at the old barn site on the road to Val Halla, something new had been found in the area. Well, we were 25 minutes late, nobody was there and didn't know it then but the group was parked less than an eighth of a mile up the mt. road, between us and Vast Caverns. Joe wanted to see Neversink he had painted a picture of it with oils for me after seeing the cover of the Prusiking Book. So on to Neversink. About the time I was getting out and packing up, David Teal popped his head from over the top of the sink then William then Debi Lightfoot.

William told me there was a surprise for me and to just follow them, they had found something. I figured out the surprise when we turned down Jackson Co. #1. They must have finally located Four-Wells. We have been in the area 3 previous times, one of those, I lost a primere lamp looking for the pit on the opposite side of the stream bed.

Joe wimped out so William, David, and I took off. When we got back Joe and Debi had a campfire going the stoves were hot and chow time had almost arrived. Another day of TAGging along.



A Chapter Of
The National Speleological Society

is dedicated to, bringing into union, interested people believing in the preservation, conservation, study and safe exploration of caves.

All memberships expire May 13 of the year at hand

Memberships dues are as follows:

Joining Time	circle one	Non N.S.S., Minor	Individual	Family except minor (one address)
May-June	1	\$7.00	5.00	5.00/2.00 ea. ^{under 12}
July-August	2	6.25	4.25	4.25/2.00"
September-October	3	5.50	3.50	3.50/2.00"
November-December	4	4.75	2.75	2.75/2.00"
January-February	5	4.00	2.00	2.00/2.00"
March-April	6	3.00	1.00	1.00/2.00"
Renewal Rates	A.	7.00	5.00	5.00/2.00"
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Family Members Names (Family membership only)

Other Affiliation (Grottos Etc. Clubs)

In consideration of my(our) Membership, I(we) agree not to hold the G. S. or N.S.S. nor any of its members or organizers, liable for injury or damage, however caused, which may result from participation in any event sponsored by the Gadsden Grotto cave exploring organization.

Signature _____

Spouses signature _____
(FAMILY mem. only)

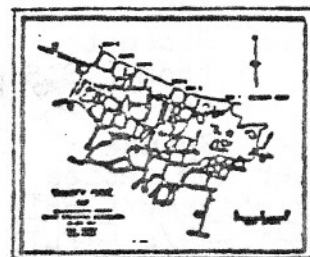
Guardian signature _____
(minors only)

Gadsden Grotto
PO Box 2622
E. Gadsden, AL 35903

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ALABAMA CAVE SURVEY



P.O. BOX 3302 BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA 35205



**Control
when it's
needed**

OUTDOOR SUPPLY



- BIKES
- CANOES
- KAYAKS
- CLIMBING EQUIP.
- TENTS
- OUTDOOR CLOTHING
- BACKPACKING EQUIP.
- FREEZE DRIED FOODS

2221 W. Meighan Blvd.
Gadsden, Alabama 35904
543-7833