



The
Gadsden Grotto
NEWSLETTER





The
National
Speleological
Society

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All unsigned material may be attributed to the Editor. Statements and opinions expressed in the GGN do not necessarily reflect the policies or beliefs of the Gadsden Grotto or the National Speleological Society.

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P.O. BOX 2622
GADSDEN, AL. 35903



Identify Yourself
With. . .

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SYMBOLIC
DEVICES**

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MAIL ORDERS TO:
National Speleological Society, Inc.
Cave Avenue
Huntsville, AL 35810

Coming Events

All trips will depart from the Attalla Waffle House at 7:30-8:00 a.m. unless otherwise stated.

May 3	Grotto Meeting	East Gadsden Recreational Center
May 14-16	3rd. Anniversary of Grotto	Moses Tomb
June 4	Dogwood City-Gadsden Grotto trip	Guffy Cave
June 5	Grotto Vertical trip	Bat In The Pocket
June 7	Grotto Meeting	East Gadsden Recreational Center
June 25th	Grotto Horizontal trip	Tumbling Rock
June 26th	Grotto Vertical trip	144' Secret Pit
June 27-	NSS Convention	Elkins W.VA
July 1		
July 5	Grotto Meeting	East Gadsden Recreational Center
July 10	Grotto Horizontal trip	Tate Cave
July 24th	Grotto Vertical trip	Ellisons (via 586') Cave
August 2	Grotto Meeting	East Gadsden Recreational Center
August 5,6,7	SERA Cave Carnival	Huntsville, Al
August 14	Vertical trip	345' Doodlebug Hole
August 28	Grotto Horizontal trip	Guess Creek

Table of Contents

Coming Events.....	29
Table of Contents.....	29
Cave Vandals Poster.....	30
Minutes.....	31
Trip Reports.....	33
Constitution of The Gadsden Grotto.....	39
By-Laws.....	41
Article.....	43
Membership List.....	44

COVER

This months cover features the emblem of the Gadsden Grotto. Hopefully the patches will be made soon. Someday we will print the history of the Grotto and the "Patch". Ed.

WANTED CAVE VANDALS

\$500 REWARD

**A \$500 REWARD WILL BE PAID TO THE PERSON(S)
PROVIDING INFORMATION LEADING TO THE CONVICTION OF PERSON
OR PERSONS FOR CAVE VANDALISM OR FOR VIOLATING
THE CAVE PROTECTION ACTS OF ANY STATE IN THE UNITED STATES**

**CAVES ARE PROTECTED BY LAW IN MOST STATES
FEDERAL LAW PROTECTS FEDERALLY OWNED CAVES AND MANY CAVE DWELLING ANIMALS**

IN MOST STATES IT IS ILLEGAL TO:

- Write or mark on cave walls
- Litter or dump spent carbide
- Break or remove mineral formations
- Disturb bats or other living organisms
- Remove or disturb historic or pre-historic artifacts or bones
- Tamper with or damage cave gates or signs

Caves are a unique nonrenewable natural resource. They are protected so that future generations can enjoy them and for many other important reasons. Help enforce the law by reporting all persons violating the law to the cave owner or nearest law enforcement authority.

\$500 will be paid by the National Speleological Society.

**For information write to Cave Vandalism Deterrence Reward Commission,
P.O. Box 7017, Richmond, VA 23221.
For more information call 804-353-6776.**

MINUTES

The regular meeting of the Gadsden Grotto was held May 3, 1983 at the East Gadsden Recreational Center.

Chairman William Garrett called the meeting to order at 7:40 p.m.

Editor of newsletter David Teal has talked to a printer in Birmingham about printing the newsletter.

Carol Ray mentioned we should set up a class teaching the techniques of rescuing people in a cave.

The grotto trip is to be the grotto anniversary to Moses Tomb.

The elections of officers was held. The new officers for 1983-1984 are:
Chairman-Bobby Whorton
Vice Chairman Programs & Projects-David Teal
Vice Chairman Public Relations-Michael Ray
Secretary-Treasurer-Susan Manderson

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

The regular meeting of the Gadsden Grotto was held June 7, 1983 at the East Gadsden Recreational Center.

Chairman Bobby Whorton brought the meeting to order at 7:40 p.m. The minutes from the last meeting were read.

The electric lights were brought up. We need to write a letter to Ian Ellis or Bob & Bob about buying lights. We voted to let \$50.00 be our top limit on spending for lights. There has been no definite date set for safety class.

Editor of newsletter pointed out a mistake in newsletters for "83" that have been issued. They should be Vol. 4 not Vol.3.

David said our grotto trips will be planned for the second Sunday and fourth Sunday of every month. There will be an easy trip and a hard trip.

David reported on a State Wide Cave rescue network to be held at Guntersville State Park with the Huntsville & Birmingham grotto.

Michael mentioned that the Anniston Star has our address. He would like to know when we receive a letter from anyone. It has been 2wks. since they have had our address and we have only received 1 letter.

The NSS Convention was brought up by Jim Loftin and he is going to try to go. It will be held in Elkins, W.V. in June.

WHEN YOU HAVE TO HANG IT OUT, HANG IT OUT ON THE BEST.



Minutes con't.

Jim talked about a cave trip to Guffey Cave with the Dogwood City grotto the weekend of June 4.

David said our hard trip for August will be to Doodlebug.

On July 30 there will be a Guffey Feast at Guffey Cave; cave gating, cleaning up, etc.

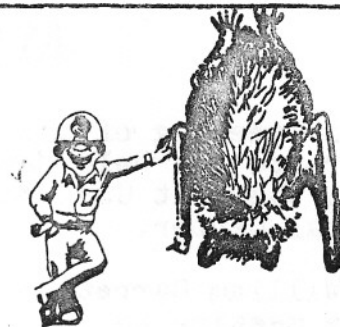
Michael announced that the Anniston Museum Day will be held August 13, 1983.

David has talked to Camp Sumptaga owner about Cave Springs cave. We can go in it after the camp kids are gone. For the time it is shut up.

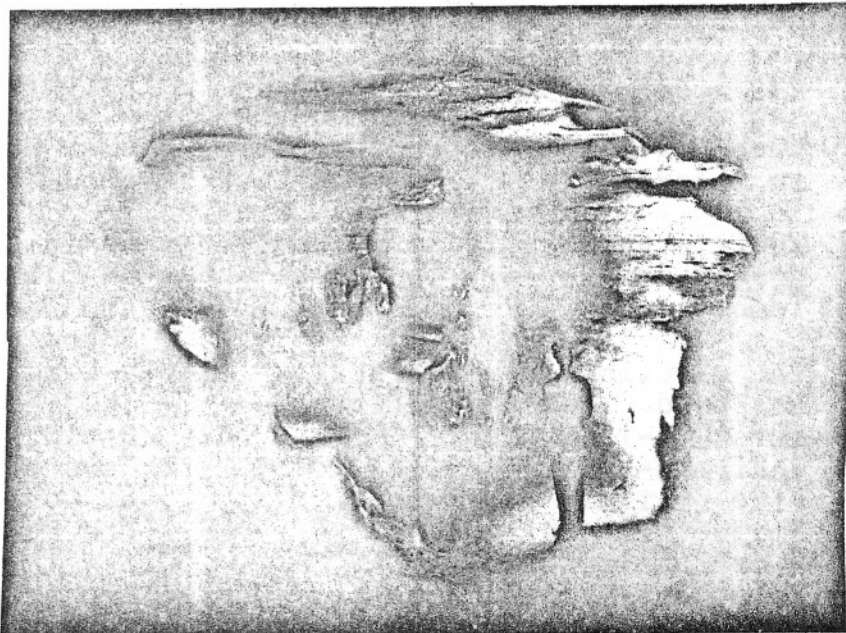
Jim talked about a trip to Bat in the Pocket cave on Sunday-June 5, 1983.

Chairman Dobby Whorton mentioned the last day for pre-registration for Sera "83" will be June 30. It is to be held August 5,6,7 in Huntsville. There is to be a cave trip to Tumbling Rock on June 25.

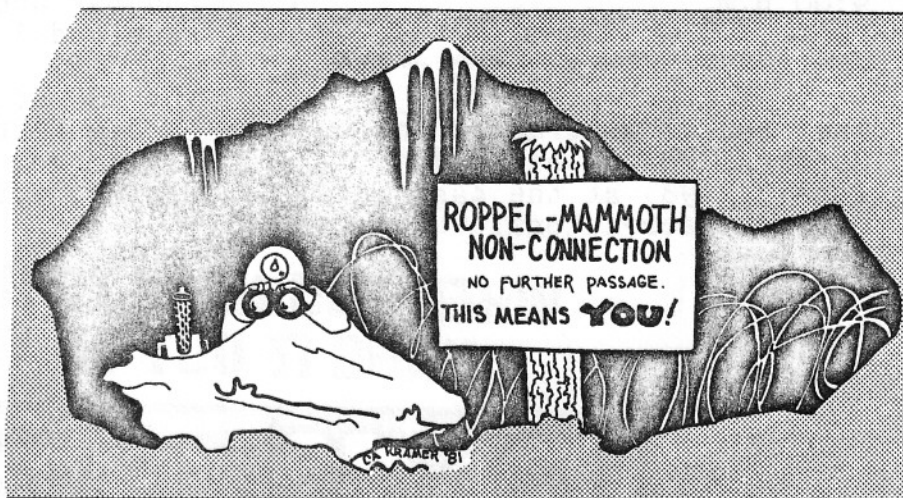
The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.



Help Save The Caves



The National Speleological Society



Trip Reports

Guffey Cave --Jim Loftin

* *****
 * Melanie Bussey *
 * David Teal *
 * Susan Manderson *
 * Bobby Whorton *
 * Jim Loftin *
 * *****

On Saturday morning June 4, 1983 we met 11 cavers from the Dogwood City Grotto at Guffey cave in Marshall County. We all went into the cave at different times. Melanie and Susan supposedly had gone in first. We couldn't seem to catch up with them. They were not waiting on us in the pump room so we went farther into the cave. David was the only person who saw the two girls walking towards the cave entrance, but did not see them pass through the entrance. We arrived at the Grand Central room (1500' into the cave) and still no girls. I was elected to go back to the entrance and look for them. Lee Holton from Atlanta went with me. Lee and I made it back to the entrance and still no sign. As we were leaving the cave, I hollered in case Melanie and Susan could hear me and meet us closer to the cave entrance.

As Lee and I were going up the trail, we met Jason Holland, the blonde headed kid who lives in the trailer across the street, coming down the trail from where the cars were parked. He aroused our suspicions, as he was quick to meet us where he did without his knowing that Lee and I were coming back out the cave. Jason was not unarmed; he had a small ball peen hammer in a belt loop and a kitchen knife in his back pocket.

Not liking the looks of this, I walked on up to the cars and inspected them for a possible break and entry. The most attractive vehicle for this was a Toyota 4 wheel drive with a camper with loose windows and a lot of gear and ropes. I saw no signs of vandalism so I walked back to the cave entrance with Lee.

We arrived at the Grand Central room as everyone was leaving. David and Bobby had gone on ahead and sure enough, they ran into Melanie and Susan. As a complete group, we proceeded northeast to Little India room, via the Spires of Guffey, and on through to the dead end at unnatural bridge, 3500 feet into the cave. Turning around we headed back to the large room that junctioned 4 passageways. From there we went south down to the stream and on to the Barrier, a wet crawl downstream. We headed back to the Grand Central room and proceeded south to the Pleistocene bear bones area via the badly vandalized passageway. Ed Strausser, Lee Holton and I took a side passage and crawled through to the Blasted room. This was a room beautifully sparkled with gypsum crystals on the ceiling, walls, and floor. We pushed a crawl form here to a 60' pit that could possibly lead to virgin passage.

Turning around we headed back and towards the Pizza room. This room had some interesting eroded features and dreary looking crawls, so we headed back to the group and out the cave.

I personally saw more of Guffey cave this trip than on any of the other four trips I've been on. It was also very enriching to meet other cavers from out of town and out of state and to exchange experiences, ideas, and addresses. There are plans to have another combined grotto's cave trip in July.

Trip reports con't.

Bat In The Pocket --William Garrett

*Jeff Machen *
*William Garrett *

On the afternoon of January 5, 1983, Jeff Machen and I started up the hill in Jeff's jeep.

When we were over half way to the cave it was decided to park and walk the rest of the way.

When we got to the entrance we made ready and penetrated the small wet entrance.

Once inside we made our way through the small passages that lead to the bottom of the cave. It was decided to not push the sewer so we munched and then left the cave. Just as we got back outside David Teal walked down into the sink to see if we were out yet.

After drying off and warming up back at the jeep, we decided to go and celebrate Jeff's first trip to the Bat. We went to Maters and had Mexican beer and pizza.

Fern --Carol Ray

*Michael Ray *
*William Garrett *
*Carol Ray *

Since I was sick and unable to do the 404' pit earlier we went back. Some people from Ohio were using the 404' drop so William rigged the 437' drop and went on down. I followed while

Micheal waited for us at the top.

William put our names in the register and then we talked to the people from Ohio a little. I started the slow climb first with William below me. When we made it back up and out of the cave, Michael and I tried to find the Morugue entrance and the Heart-tongue fern but darkness beat us again so we left.

Guess Creek --Bobby Whorton

*Polly Jones *
*Clyde Roe *
*Wally Schaefer *
*Bobby Whorton *

Polly and I finally made it to Wally's house about 10:30 to find Wally and Clyde waiting for us. We had plans for going to Guffey Cave. When we arrived at the cave we found the lock on the gate had been changed and that we would have to

ride to Whites Auto parts to get the key. We decided to go somewhere else and headed deeper into caving country.

After stopping by Sauta cave for a peek we decided to go to Guess Creek. It was near 2:30 before getting underground. I had never been very far into the cave though it was my fourth time to be in the cave to camp. We poked around for several hours through the main stream channel going up stream all along. We stopped at the waterfall, gazed around for a little while. Wally and I discussed ways to climb the waterfall area to further explore the cave above that point, on a return trip, prepared with food and more equipment.

Trip reports con't.

Before heading back to the entrance we examined several 6" and 8", above surface, crayfish we found in the pools below the waterfall.

Polly's feet were hurting from her new hiking boots before we had a good start into the cave, so, by now it was time we got her back to the car and headed out. We were out of the cave by 6:45 and on our way home.

New Years Eve Party --Carol Ray

Michael and I went to the cabin Thursday December 30, 1982 to clean up and we were later joined by David Teal, Susan Manderson, and William Garrett. The next day we set up the bonfire mainly due to the chainsaw beavers (David and William).

The evening started by Joe Hall grilling dinner for everyone. Afterward we started up the bonfire. Later Polly Jones and Jim Loftin made it to the party. Jim brought out his lite up frizzbee which soon ended up in the lake. Joe, with each leg in a large glad bag waded out to save the frizzbee that was now settled on the bottom of the lake. Joe also found out that one of the bags had holes in it. The usual party things were going on, like drinking, fireworks, fights, etc. When midnight came we had champain at the bonfire and then continued with the party.

Michael and I were the first ones to go to sleep so I don't know what happened between 1:30 a.m. and breakfast.

When I got up people were everywhere. After stumbling to the kitchen, breakfast was started and people started to get up and to get their gear together.

Dave, Susan, William, Bobby, Jim, Michael, and I packed up and went to Tumbling Rock. After we set up camp inside the cave everyone except Susan and I did some caving.

When everyone got back, some of us went to sleep while some of the rest marked up Michael's new helmet.

The next morning we just sat around and ended up not doing anything. It was decided to leave Tumbling Rock and to head to Learning Formattcens Cave. By the time we got out, it was well after noon, so Michael and I went to his parents so I could met some of his relatives.

Fern --Susan Manderson

 * Bobby Whorton *
 * Jim Loftin *
 * William Garrett *
 * Michael Ray *
 * Carol Ray *
 * David Teal *
 * Susan Manderson *

The grotto made plans for a trip to Fern Cave for May of 1982. We met at Stephen's Gap to camp out Saturday night. It was my first trip to Fern.

David and I arrived first at Stephen's Gap. We decided to gather up some firewood and build a big fire. So David and I went out into the woods and we tryed to pick out the biggest logs. Finally we got all we needed. So David starting building the

fire. We ate our supper. It was beginning to grow dark. We were sitting around the fire trying to decide when everyone else would show up. Then we saw some car lights and it was Michael and Carol. They said Bobby, William, and Jim were with them but had decided to sleep at the bottom of the gap. But soon after Michael and Carol got settled in here comes

Trip reports con't.

Bobby, William and Jim, they changed their minds and decided to camp with us. We sat around the fire for awhile, then we decided to get some rest.

After breakfast we started cleaning up our things to get ready to go to Fern. David has told me so many times how awesom a deep pit really is. So I was excited to find out for myself.

We arrived at the bottom of the mountain at about 10:30. We got to the entrance of the cave around 11:45. Once we got in the cave and to the pit David and William started rigging the 404'. William went down first, then me, David, Jim. The first few feet are close to the wall. Then all of a sudden your in mid-air the walls are far from each other. It really is some kind of feeling. After we all looked around the bottom of the pit for awhile, William and I tanded out of the pit. Then Bobby and Michael went down. Followed by David and Jim coming out. Carol did not go down for she was not feeling well.

After we got back to the car we tried to decide where to go for food. We never did decide so we headed home. It was a good trip.

Bat In The Pocket --Jim Loftin

Five of the cavers from the Dogwood City Grotto and David Teal and Susan Manderson spent the night at my house Saturday night after the party. Three of the five had to go back to Atlanta at 11 a.m., so they hiked with us and carried the ropes to the cave located in Etowah County. Which is the deepest cave south of the Tennessee River..

Keith Lynn and Wess Sprunges geared up with plastic trash bags and wool clothing as I put on my newly rezipped wet suit top. It had rained the day and night before, so it looked like a sporting trip through the Bat, this being my 2nd trip through it. It had been two years since then so I had forgotten some things about the cave, like how tight it is.

As we got through rigging the 1st drop, 50', David Teal arrived with Steve Davis who had driven from Atlanta that morning only 2 hours late. He hadn't known where the cave was nor where my house was exactly, but was able to find my house with my directions and then find the cave with the map David and I taped on the front door of my house. However, he did have to follow some footprints on the logging road up the mountain to find the cave entrance.

David and Keith turned around and headed out the cave, as Wess, Steve, and I headed down the cave. The Bat was running water that day. It was so wet and hot (with a wet suit on) that my eyeglasses constantly stayed swated over and almost unusable.

We descended the climb down and rigged our 250' rope for the 2nd and 3rd drops. We got "rained" on during the 2nd drop, as well as the climb down; and due to our inability to find the bolt for the 3rd drop, we had to leave the rope descending straight down in the waterfall. It proved to be sporting climbing up.

We headed out as it took us 3 to 4 hours to go through the cave. It was a good test for my newly acquired wet suit top. I think I'll keep it.

Trip reports con't.

Devils Well --Bobby Whorton

 * William Garrett *
 * Larry Hartline *
 * Michael Ray *
 * Dave Teal *
 * Ben Yerky *
 * Bobby Whorton *

"It's a Connection" "Or, Who wants to do a pull down in Devils Well?"

Michael, William, Dave and myself were meeting Larry Hartline and Ben Yerky at the Waffle House off I-59 in Attalla, with intentions of exploring Blow Hole Cave at the foot of Chandler Mt., below Devils Well, a pit cave with a 66' ft.

entrance drop with 1000' ft. of known passage at the bottom. Ben and Larry had already gone on to Devils Well.

Ben had explored the Blow Hole cave and gotten to a waterfall dome and canyon. After discussing where he had been with Dave, (Ed. note: Jim Harrison also reached this point over 2 years before and a connection was known then.) it was believed that this cave may just connect with the lowest point reached in Devils Well.

I decided to keep Ben and Larry company. William, Michael and David were to do the pit and reach the waterfall in hopes of rigging it and finding Ben, Larry and myself.

Larry, Ben and I had to be careful entering the lower cave apparently the owner who lives across the stream from the entrance is not impressed with cavers. It was said that he gets his water there but I never saw any piping, but it was once a known fact that North St. Clair Co. land owners like to shoot guns at people and even friendly cavers were no exception.

We didn't seem to be underground for long before we reached the small but 45 high or 50ft. by 20ft. canyon (real nice) there seemed to be two sources of water feeding this lower cave, one from the top and one coming in from the opposite and lower side.

We were there maybe 15 to 20 minutes when I thought I heard someone talking. I asked Ben and Larry to listen and then there it was, lights from above. I was having trouble communicating with those above us. Finally I heard a suggestion that I look for a way to free climb up, they couldn't find a rig point to come down from. I had already looked around and found where with a bit of help (a shoulder to step on). It looked like it was pretty much simple to free climb, taking into consideration, the loose dirt on the walls and all the bats. I reached the top of the 6ft. climb and didn't find anyone but footprints. I knew I recognized Michael's footprint and knew I was there, the point of connection. We all shook hands and told them that Larry was getting extremely cold and that I wanted to get back down to check the situation and accompany him and Ben back out the lower cave (now lower entrance). I tried to talk one of the guys to climb back down with me to go out the bottom for a "through trip" without success so I bid farewell "see ya, at the car" and with very little trouble excepting the call for a shoulder to step on, over that last tricky lip leading into the dome.

Gathering our gear, Larry had tried climbing the walls and checking things to stay warm, We were on our way to the entrance (which by the way is a 12 to 14 ft. chimney climb). and back up the mountain in time to see the other party just reaching the top. The connection had been made.

Ed. note: Devils Well is 220-250' deep. Drops are 66', 45', and 60'. It is the deepest pull down south of the Tennessee River and the second deepest cave south of the Tennessee.

Trip reports con't.

Rusty's Cave --Carol Ray

 * Michael Ray *
 * Dave Teal *
 * Susan Manderson *
 * William Garrett *
 * Linda King *
 * Jeff Machen *
 * Steve Brewer *
 * Sharon Brewer *
 * Doug Hawkins *
 * Brenda *

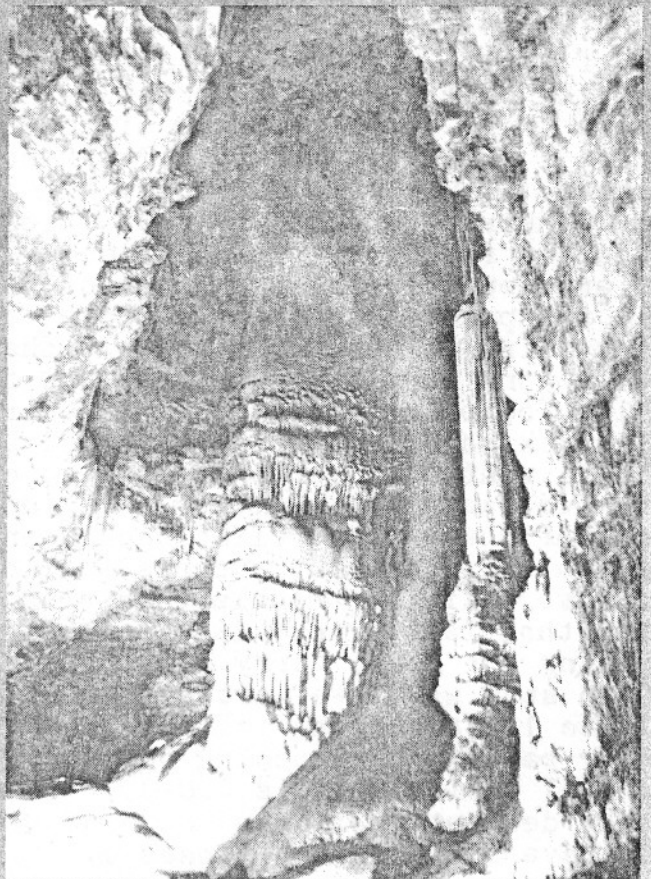
On August 15, 1982 we left the Union 76 gas station late as usual and headed up I-59. We parked along highway 11 and started our hike through weeds and pasture. Some of us chose to go over the highway since our shoes leaked. Once on the other side we found out that the low passage was dry anyways. From there, we headed up the mountain with David in the lead of course.

When we made it to the top Michael found his cave suit missing so he and I walked back to find it at the bottom of the mountain. When we got back to the cave we went on in by going down the rope for 30ft. Rusty's is one of the prettiest caves around, it was almost impossible to walk around all the formations, as we got further back and started to chimney, there were fewer formations. Once we reached the back of the cave and rested, we headed back out.

Jeff was the only one that had problems getting back up the rope. Linda with the support of others, was giving him a shower of Kool-aid, leafs, etc. as a revenge for a beer shower he had given her earlier. When Jeff finally made it back up we headed on home.

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VI. This Constitution may be amended by a 2/3 majority vote of the Regular members present at a regular grotto meeting. All members shall be notified in advance of the meeting.

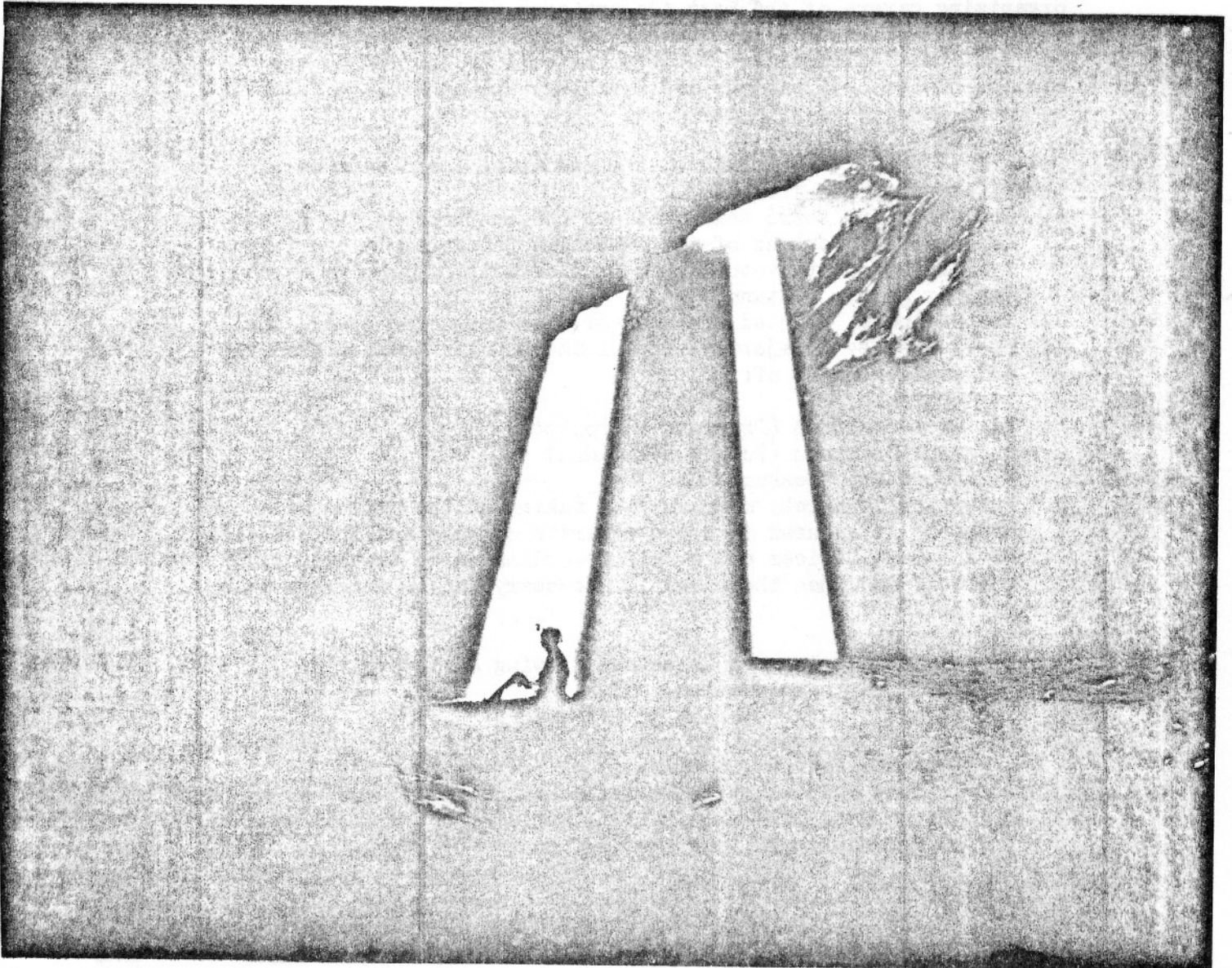
CONSTITUTION OF THE GADSDEN GROTTTO

OF THE

NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

- I. The name of this organization shall be called the Gadsden Grotto of the National Speleological Society.
- II. The purpose of this grotto shall be the same as those of the National Speleological Society with the additional purpose of organizing cavers of the East Alabama area to better promote the objectives of the Southeastern Regional Association and the National Speleological Society, as well as to promote the studies of Geology, Biology and Hydrology and other cave related sciences associated with caves and karst regions.
- III. The grotto shall be governed by the Executive Board made up of the officers of the grotto.
 - A. The Executive Board shall conduct the business of the grotto. Decisions or actions of the Executive Board may be overruled by a 2/3 majority vote of the Regular Members present at a regular grotto meeting
 - B. The Officers, elected annually or when vacancies occur, shall be elected by a majority vote of the Regular Members present and shall consist of:
 - 1. Chairman
 - 2. Vice-Chairman (Programs & Projects)
 - 3. Vice-Chairman (Public Relations)
 - 4. Secretary/Treasurer
 - C. Provision is hereby made for the making of the office of Secretary/treasurer into two separate offices and the addition of a Safety Officer and a Trip Co-ordinator by the Executive Board if and when they deem it necessary and to describe thier duties.
- IV. Regular Membership is open to anyone showing an interest in Speleology or cave exploration.
 - A. There shall be two classes of membership:
 - 1. Regular membership is open to anyone who is in good standing with the National Speleological Society.
 - 2. Student membership is available to those who are not members of the National Speleological Society, but must preside by the rules and regulations set down in the by-laws.
 - B. The privilege to vote on grotto matters and to be on the Executive Board shall be vested in the Regular Members.
 - C. All persons signing this Constitution are Charter Members. All Charter Members are Life Members.
- V. The Constitution and By-Laws of the National Speleological Society shall be binding on this grotto. All action inconsistant therewith shall be null and void.

- VI. This Constitution may be amended by a $3/4$ majority vote of the Regular members present at a regular grotto meeting. All members shall be notified of the proposed amendment by mail at least one week in advance of the meeting.
- VII. This Constitution may be superceded by a new Constitution by a $3/4$ vote of the Regular Members present at a regular meeting. All Regular Members shall be mailed a copy of the proposed Constitution at least one week in advance of the meeting.
- VIII. In the event of the dissolution of the Gadsden Grotto all property belonging to the National Speleological Society shall be immediately returned to the proper committee.



BBBBLLLLIIIIINNNDDEEEEDDDD

BY-LAWS

As pertain to the operation of the
GADSDEN GROTTTO

- I. The duties of the Officers shall include the following:
 - A. Chairman: Preside at Regular Meetings, Called Meetings, and Executive Board Meetings.
 - B. Vice-Chairman (Programs & Projects): Perform the duties of the Chairman in his absence, plan programs for regular meetings, and fund raising projects.
 - C. Vice-Chairman (Public Relations): Keeping in contact with other grottos notifying them of special trips, and notifying them of Called Meetings
 - D. Secretary/treasurer: To keep an accurate record of the Executive Board Meetings, Regular Grotto Meetings and Financial Statis of the grotto.

- II. A member who violates any of the following rules may be brought before the grotto for expulsion and may be expelled by a 2/3 majority vote of the Regular Members present at a Regular Meeting.
 - A. No firearms or fireworks shall be taken on any official grotto trip
 - B. No member shall litter, deface, or damage the cave or cave owners property.
 - C. No member shall deliberately endanger the well-being of any other caver on a field trip by refusing to follow safety standards set down by the Executive Board.
 - D. No member shall endanger in any way the reputation or well-being of the grotto, the Southeastern Regional Association, The National Speleological Society, any other caver, or caving in general.

- III. Grotto Membership Plan
 - A. Regular Members alone shall have access to the files of the grotto.
 - B. Regular Membership shall be open to persons who satisfy the requirements below:
 1. Demonstrate the ability to use safely such caving equipment as determined by the Executive Board.
 2. Have the personal equipment necessary for safe caving as determined by the Executive Board.
 3. are members of the National Speleological Society.
 - C. Any Regular Member can question the ability of any other Regular Member to satisfy any requirement for Regular Membership. The member under question must demonstrate the ability to satisfy said requirements before a meeting of the Executive board. In order for a member to lose his or her qualification, an approval of a majority of the Executive Board Members present at the meeting is required. If a member is disqualified, he or she is reduced to the status of a Student Member until all of the requirements for a Regular Member are met.

- IV. Honorary Membership may be awarded to individuals who have contributed to the advancement of Speleology. It is awarded by a 2/3 majority vote of the Regular Members present at a Regular Meeting.
- V. Life Membership is given to outstanding persons in Speleology by a 2/3 majority vote of the Regular Members present at a Regular Meeting. Charter Members are Life Members. Life Members have the privileges of Regular Members without paying dues.
- VI. Student Membership is open to individuals who are not members of the National Speleological Society. Student Members do not have access to grotto files, and are not allowed to vote. Student Members may become Regular Members by meeting all requirements set forth by the Executive Board.
- VII. A Regular Meeting is a meeting on the first Tuesday of each month, having at least a quorum of Regular Members present. A quorum shall consist of 1/2 of the Regular Members on the roster exclusive of life members. No Called Meeting shall carry on business without a quorum as described above.
- VIII. Grotto dues shall be determined by the Executive Board by a majority vote.
- IX. Officers shall be elected to serve a term of one year. Vacancies in office shall be filled in a manner to be determined by the Executive Board. Regular election of the Officers will take place at the May Meeting of each year.
- X. A roster of Regular Members shall be presented by the Secretary at the third meeting after the beginning of each year and may be added to and corrected as the Grotto Membership changes.
- XI. Any publication of material concerning trips made by the grotto or any publication of information from the grotto files must be approved by the Executive Board.
- XII. The Gadsden Grotto and its members assume no liable responsibility concerning the well-being of any of the grotto members. All participation of any individual in any grotto activity is with the understanding that the individual must assume full responsibility for his or her own well-being.
- XIII. Any minor must have a release form from his parents or guardian before he or she will be allowed to participate in any grotto trip.

A R T I C L E

A CRY FOR THE BAT
by Michael A. Ray

"Every morning I see a bat perched on top of my car, waiting for me!" "A bat flew right at me. If I hadn't ducked it would have attacked me!" "Most bats have rabies." These are just some of the comments we have all heard at some time. Superstitions and fears have been embedded in our minds since childhood. Vampire movies and TV have added fuel to the myths. "Ripley's Believe-it-or-Not" and "Those Amazing Animals" have recently aired programs on bats and of course they dwelled on the sensational vampire bats. Its time we cried out for the bat?

Merlin D. Tuttle, curator of mammals at Milwaukee Public Museum and associate professor at Marquette University and the University of Wisconsin, is known as an authority of gray bats. He states:

"Despite constant work with bats world-wide, not one of hundreds of bat researchers is known ever to have been attacked. I have come into close contact with millions of bats of some 150 species in a dozen countries over a period of 20 years. Repeatedly I have been impressed by their gentleness."

(Nat. Geo., 1979)

Few bats are ever rabid and their fleas do not favor man as a host. (Palmer, 1975). Only 10 cases of bat-transmitted human rabies have been recorded since 1946 in the U.S. The bats even groom themselves thoroughly as a cat would do. Far more people die every year just from man's best friend, the dog, than from bats.

What good are those devil looking night vampires? Only about two species of bats are carnivorous. (The rest are insectivorous. A bat may eat about half its weight in insects every day. 100 million Mexican free-tailed bats eat an estimated 100,000 tons or more of insects each year (Moore). A single gray bat may eat more than 3,000 insects in one night. A colony of only 500 can easily catch 500,000 insects in one night (Palmer, 1975). These efficient insecticides make up to 1,665 dives per hour in pursuit of food (Palmer, Fowler 1975). Let's see chemicals be so selective and complete.

What humans can't understand, see, or control, they kill. Many caves are being bulldozed closed because of myths and fears. Overuse of chemical pesticides eventually kill bats who eat the polluted food supply. The estimated 1,500,000 gray bats in 1969 has decreased 54 percent today. Cavers are not "holier than thou." Hibernating bats which are awakened fly outside to their death in the cold winter. If that doesn't get them, the lack of winter food will! Their stored fat reserves soon deplete. Disturbed maternity or hibernating roosts kill thousands of bats every year.

"... conservation of wildness is self-defeating, for to cherish we must see and fondle, and when enough have seen and fondled, there is no wilderness left to cherish."

Aldo Leopold

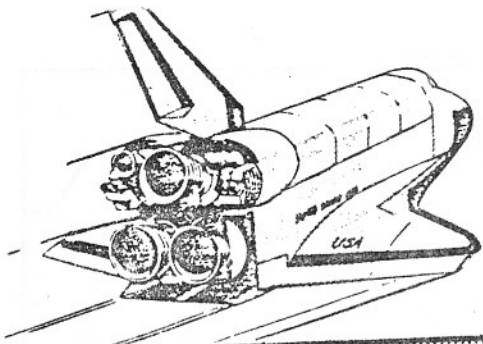


Gadsden ^G_G Grotto

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