

# Gadsden Grotto Newsletter



First Time On Rope

Inside Story Headline

**Gadsden Grotto of the  
National Speleological Society**

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**Or to**

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**Gadsden Grotto Meetings**

2nd Tues of every month at 6:30 P.M. At the East Gadsden Community Center Across Highway 431 Goodyear plant Parking lot.

(256) 549-4673

Gadsden, Alabama

**Gadsden Grotto Newsletter**

The Gadsden Grotto Newsletter is printed upon submissions and is included in grotto membership for \$10.00 due each May.

Our newsletters are published about two- four times per year due to lack of turning in articles and or pictures.



**Mission Statement**

The Gadsden Grotto of the National Speleological Society (NSS) was established to organize cavers of the East Alabama area to better promote the objectives of the Southeastern Regional Association and the NSS as well as to promote the studies of geology, biology and hydrology and other cave related sciences associated with caves and karsts regions.

## MY FIRST TIME ON ROPE

It all started on Saturday night when we were planning a trip for the next day, which was Sunday November 5, 2006. We were trying to decide on a cave to go where I could learn to rappel. They decided we would go to Devils Well. My fiancé, Mike Davis, told me that the cave we were going to we had to rappel, but not to worry; it would be an easy one to learn in. I trusted him, like always, and said okay, I did not know what to expect. Mike and the rest of the crew always tell me things are going to be easy. You can't always believe them. I am new to caving and this is only my 3rd trip, the first 2 were easy. But something told me this one would be a little different. When they say you are going to "Devils Well", you gotta wonder how easy is this going to be.

I woke up on Sunday, really nervous. First, let me tell you that I am terrified of heights. I have been wanting to learn to rappel but my fear of heights had kept me from doing it. I got a crash course on rappelling in the living room Saturday night from Mike. I hope I can remember everything. Now the time is here, and I can't back out.

Jim Loftin and Mike Pearson, a.k.a. VW Mike met us at our house and we all loaded up and drove over Mark and Kelly's. Hazard was there and we all left to go to Devils Well.

After stopping for breakfast, we finally arrived at our destination. My nervousness was only getting worse. After the hike up the mountain, we come to the entrance. As I look down at the 66 foot dark hole in the ground, I think to myself, "What were you thinking?" Maybe if you start walking back to the car quietly, no one will notice.

Mark takes me on the hill and gives me another crash course as I am tied to a tree. Okay, this isn't so bad; I hope it is this easy when I am going down in that hole.

Jim goes in first, and then VW Mike followed by Kelly. Each one gives me a word of advice as they disappear into the ground. Okay, this looks easy, I can do this. Mike goes down next so I know my time will be after his. I am trying to prepare myself, I think it is working. Mark is going to help me, so I should be okay, Mark is a really good teacher, and Mike will be waiting at the bottom for me. Everything will be fine. I have all the nerve in the world right now, which is about to change.

I step up to the entrance and Mark starts helping me, when I am all rigged in, he has me lean my back against one wall and put my feet on the wall in front of me. I start shaking and look at Mark and tell him that I can't do this and I am just going to wait at the car. Mark tells me that I am already sitting down and gives my arm a little nudge. Now I am hovering over the black hole below me, I can see lights below out of the corner of my eye, but I refuse to look down. Hazard is telling me to smile so he can take a picture; somehow, I manage to smile without showing how terrified I really am. Everyone at the bottom is talking to me, I can feel that I have a death grip on the rope, but oh well, gotta have something to hold on to. I focus on Michael's voice, keep looking straight ahead and keep going down. After what seemed like forever, I finally reach the bottom. WHOA! I made it. That wasn't so bad. But I am really glad to have my feet on the ground.

Before the trip was done, we did a lot of crawling and lots of climbing. There were a few more scary areas, but overall it was a blast. We had to rappel in two more spots, the second one was about 35 foot and the third one was less than that. I had a little trouble on the last one, but next time I will master that spot.

This cave had a lot to offer a new caver. But I kept up. At the end of the day, I emerged from the ground tired and bruised. I can't wait for the next adventure!!!! They tell me that will be "easy" too.



## A n o t h e r p i t t o d i g o p e n

It was the day after Thanksgiving... and it was going to be a beautiful day. November 24th 2006 Jim Lofting pulled up to the house Friday morning then Mike Pearson drove up our driveway not long after. We were going to go do more digging in the hole that Mark and I found about 4 years ago. We had already dug into it a few times before but there was going to be a lot more digging to get to a void.

The last time we dug... Mark pulled out 2 turtles and I took them down the mountain a little way so they wont fall back into the hole.

The subsurface waterfall was pouring out from under the side of a hole where we were digging. Mike redirected the water so it wouldn't splash on the us while we were digging. After a while of digging we were unable to go any further so we quit digging. This time when we returned there was not any water coming out of the ground but just a little drip here and there. Mark went down the hole first and found the bucket that we left previously. It was full of stinky water and Mark had no choice but to pour it down the hole we that were going to dig in.

The smell.... Peeuww is not the word to describe it. It was almost nauseating.

Mark started digging for awhile until he couldn't stand the smell any longer so he climbed out and Jim took over digging in the stench. Jim dug for awhile and we pulled mud and rocks out of the hole with a bucket, rope and pulley.

Mike was building a little rock wall from the rocks that came up out of the hole. After Jim climbed up... Mike went back down and loaded up some big rocks. After Mike's turn... Mark went back down again and he began digging in a different direction. After a few minutes of digging... he hit a new void which looked large on the other side. Then Mike (VW Dude) went back down and dislodged two large rocks that slid down into the hole. After that... the mud and rock debris slope that we were standing and working on started to become very unstable and was sliding down into the hole so then we had to begin clearing the slippery rock slope. Then I went in... and I cleared lots of five and ten pound rocks off of the slope. One of the large sized rocks fell out of the bucket and hit me on the head. That is one good reason to wear helmets while in a cave or even just digging one open. I then began digging the mud and gravel out from around the wedged rocks that was surrounding the bottom of the slope.

Then Mark went back down into the hole... he noticed a rock about 3ft long 2ft wide and 2 inches thick hanging in the ceiling wall to the left side. He gave it a small push with his finger and it wiggled a little.

Mark began to tap on it with a rock hammer. Suddenly the entire wall collapsed away and fell and slid into the area that we all had been working. This made the bottom of hole now... very much larger.

Now the way on is blocked by four or five big flat rocks which looks like they could be broken up with a large sledgehammer. Next time we hope to successfully "break on through the other side".

~THE END~

Written By: Kelly A. Keener (Gadsden Grotto)

ACS, NSS # 48045, Scci.# 1023.



# Three Days of Fun



***Devil's Well... Walk By Well...  
Neversink... Green Valley Cave!!!***

## C a v i n g T r i p t o K e l l y ' s i n A l a b a m a

Saturday, Dec 16th 2006

After Kelly and Mark picked me up from the Atlanta airport on Saturday, we headed over to Anniston, Alabama. My winter vacation has officially begun, so Alabama here I come! Kelly & I had a chance to get all dolled up and go out that night....We were so excited since we haven't been out in much too long. Once we got to AJ's, we realized we could not go in since we weren't "club members"... FYI, the sale of alcohol is illegal down here, so the bar's way around it is to make their bar a "private club", yes, you gotta be a member to go in...."...the manager was nice enough to let us in as his guests for the night. We decided to leave the club at 1:30 am so that we could get home and catch some ZZZZ before our morning of caving but when we got about 1 mile away from Kelly's place we ran out of gas! We had to call Sadie to come and bring us some gas. We finally made it home past 2 am. I cleaned up and hit the sack.

Dec 17th

After only 3 hours of sleep, Mark, Kelly and I hopped in his Xterra and headed out to Kennamer Cave. We met up with Anthony who rode with us. We made another stop to meet up with Michael Ray, Richard, Becky and Tommy. We were later joined by Dane. The 9 of us headed out to Kennamer Cave. We parked our cars and started the excruciating uphill hike to Kennamer. We headed into Kennamer at 11am. This Cave is over 10,000 feet long. This was an amazing cave. There is even a waterfall inside of the cave and a couple of descent points. There are a couple of low crawling passages...I was worried that the twins would not fit through but they compressed (thank God!). At the very last part of the cave before the exit, we had to go through this small stream of water

that was cold as hell. Halfway through the water, I realized that my camera was dangling dangerously near the water and I did not want to ruin yet another camera within the space of 2 months! I stopped to unclip the camera from my waist loop and caused a traffic jam. Behind me Anthony asked in a pleading tone devoid of patience "DO YOU HAVE TO STOP RIGHT NOW?" In my selfishness I did not even realize that his twins were in the oh so cold water and were fast receding! We finally came out at the Orgy (that is pronounced OR-GUE) exit at 5 pm....

Dec 19th

After taking a day to recover yesterday, we went out for a short cave today. Kelly, Sadie & I went out to Weaver Cave. It's a beautiful cave but badly vandalized. Weaver Cave is an awesome horizontal cave with a creek running through it. It is a very easy cave with no crawling involved. There are lots of bats inside and unfortunately it is also badly vandalized so Sadie, Kelly and I had to make sure we went before sundown so that we could be back before sundown. Apparently the cops in Weaver County cannot distinguish between cavers and vandals/crack heads so anyone found in these areas is bound to run into problems with them (I'm way too pretty to go to jail, in Alabama of all places!). On our way out of Weaver Cave, we trekked over to Lady Cave. According to Kelly, Lady Cave used to be a Saloon back in the early 1900's. Nothing like a party in the woods, uh! On our way inside of Lady cave, I happened to shine my headlight up ahead of me and noticed something similar to black webbing on the wall...so I said, "Kelly, is that a snake????", after 5 minutes of deliberation, we all came to the conclusion that it was a big ass snake, (yes, it was ~4 ft long). It looked like it was hunting bats. Seeing that I don't get along with snakes, we 86th the idea of going in and trekked back over to the car....

Dec 20th

Today, we were on edge because our secret Girl caving trip almost got ruined... this trip is considered highly classified information and we came to the realization that details of the trip had been leaked to a male!...We had to hurry up and go ahead of schedule just to make sure they wouldn't crash. Sadie, Kelly and I met up with Lauren & Selena, Becky, Rhonda and Ann. The 8 of us set out to find Doghette Cave. We had to make sure all of our bags were packed up and ready to go. I made sure I brought some purple duct tape with me so that I could flag our path since we would be returning after dark. It took us a while to locate Doghette Cave, but we finally did. All 8 of us made it in and out without any injuries...We had an awesome time. The cave was amazing with crystal formations on the ceiling (caused by calcium deposits, I think...)...We made it out before six, but it felt like 10 pm since it gets so darn dark out here! Coming back was easy since I had flagged the area because it's easy to get lost in the dark (I made sure I didn't have a repeat of my Fox mountain trip return with Steve) When we almost got to the car I could hear a lot of dogs barking and as we got nearer, we saw a white pick-up truck pulling up and blocking our cars. I almost pee'd my pants since I was sure that it was the property owner...most likely holding a shotgun (this is Alabama after all!). Turns out that it was the property owner but he was not angry...he asked us a couple of questions (guess he wanted to be sure that we were harmless) and went on his way. Next on my list: and Sinking Cove (hopefully in July with Kelly).

Written By: Sheralyne

Back to weaver cave

Sheralyne, Sadie my daughter, and I went to Weaver Cave yesterday around 4:30pm... Somebody at one point and time mentioned of Weaver Cave about the bats... There weren't any a couple of years back... but this cave has a bunch of bats in there now. They need to be out of harms way.

I don't know what to do because of the landowner is strict and he has it open for anyone and what he calls Worship for rehab groups. hmmm .

It is full of graffiti... and was used for military purposes not alone the cave connects to another cave called Lady Cave. It was once a Saloon back in the early 1900's. I wish that somehow this cave can be saved.

In Lady. It has Walter P Jones in the far back where there are still living formations such as helcetes and soda straws.

We headed into Lady Cave yesterday after going through Weaver... but as we were climbing down the steep climb-down... Sheralyne happened to see a snake on the ledge and we would have to go under it in order to get to the bottom.

Snakes do tend to fall on you and I did not know if it was poisonous or not... so we didn't take the chance. I think it was a rat snake though.

Lady Cave is connected to Weaver Cave which is a very low crawlway... It was really warm in the climb-down entrance. There is a passage that connects both caves together. and there are many clusters of bats now in Lady now due to the warmth. Lady cave is pretty warm and dry... which Weaver Cave has a small winding creek running through it.

The weather here has been in the low 70's and I have seen bats fly around in our driveway "in December". Hummmm.

The End

Written By: Kelly Keener

Photos By: Sheralyne and Sadie.



Kelly and Sheralyne at the mouth of Weaver Cave  
Photo By: Sadie Jones



Sadie and Sheralyne at the back entrance of Weaver Cave  
Photo By: Kelly Keener

C A V E P O E M  
A Date With Mother Earth's Womb  
(Based on Kennamer Cave)

As I slide slowly into her open dilated hole... I immediately feel a gush of her juices saturate me... so thick... that I to quickly moved... moved to the other side of her... Stretched open wall... while her juices flow naturally from her shapely form.

I then get on my hands and knees, and I began to gently crawl into her...

Right at that same time... I begin to feel her open up... Just enough to let me begin my exploration of her beautiful body.

I start squirming my body forward and backward hard against her Moby Dick... sliding and grasping her form until I drift atop of her slippery wet walls...

As I am drifting further into her tight moistness... I am finally on top of her small crack...

I pause just enough to take a good short breath, and to wipe of some with my squirt rag.

My face and body is saturated with every bead of my sweat. Ahh YEEEEAAhhh... pure satisfaction.

**Then I force myself again... back into her... pristine... shiny slippery innards.**

All I want do now is just lie there... and fascinate myself with the beauty of her form.

**She is so breath taking... so unbelievable.**

As I began to move myself against her huge shapely boulders... they were so unbelievable...

**that I could not believe her giangiantious size... as I stared her down with a gazely stare**

After playing and squeezing her beautiful boulders... I attempted to squirm and slide through her tight crevice once again... thrusting into her forcefully. DAMN!!!... she is tight...

So tight that she gave me rub burns.

After I ease off into her abyss... I curiously slid my elongated self into her other hole...

which gave out such an odd odor... I had to raise up and gasp for air.

I knew that I would have shower off after I slid out of her rimmed formation.

**I began the feel some what fatigue, sore, and more rubbed burned...I was pulled out of her...**

I was saturated from head to toe. I exited her OGRY entrance...

I left behind parts of me...

sweat, tears, and more...

*Written By: Kelly A .Keener NSS# 48045*

*(December 25, 2006)*



## No Guys allowed on this trip Daughette cave

.Dec 20th

Today, we were on edge because our secret Girl caving trip almost got ruined... this trip is considered highly classified information and we came to the realization that details of the trip had been leaked to a male!... We had to hurry up and go ahead of schedule just to make sure they wouldn't crash. Sadie, Kelly and I met up with Lauren & Selena, Becky, Rhonda and Ann. The 8 of us set out to find Dogette Cave. We had to make sure all of our bags were packed up and ready to go since we were trespassing (Lie # 3: Property owners love cavers!).

I made sure I brought some purple duct tape with me so that I could flag our path since we would be returning after dark.

It took us a while to locate Dogette Cave, but we finally did. All 8 of us made it in and out without any injuries... **We had an awesome time.** The cave was amazing with crystal formations on the ceiling (caused by calcium deposits, I think...). We made it out before six, but it felt like 10 pm since it gets so darn dark out here! Coming back was easy since I had flagged the area because it's easy to get lost in the dark (I made sure I didn't have a repeat of my Fox mountain trip return with Steve). When we almost got to the car I could hear a lot of dogs barking and as we got nearer, we saw a white pick-up truck pulling up and blocking our cars. I almost pee'd my pants since I was sure that it was the

property owner...most likely holding a shotgun (this is Alabama after all!). Turns out that it was the property owner but he was not angry...he asked us a couple of questions (guess he wanted to be sure that we were harmless) and went on his way.

overall, it was a great day. It wasn't as challenging as I had hoped but fun!

next on my list: Sinking Cove (hopefully in July with Kelly).

Check out the pictures from this trip!



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