

# A BOYHOOD DREAM REALIZED

*New Year's weekend in Mammoth Cave with CRF  
By Michael H. Carter (the one from Arkansas)*

## CHAPTER 1

Once, when I was a young boy growing up in Indiana, my family visited a commercial cave somewhere. I don't remember which cave it was that I went in first, but after that initial visit I began to have the urge to explore the underground. I remember the guides telling us about those brave explorers who entered these caverns for the first time, and I had a nearly uncontrollable urge to jump the railing and enter the dark recesses where the tour didn't go. We visited several commercial caves during my formative years and I remember my dad saying that his parents had taken him to some when he was young too.

Grandma told me that when she was first married (back in the 1920s) that she and Grandpa put on coveralls and crawled around way back in the dark unknown caves. She did not enjoy it very much and when Grandpa took the family to see Mammoth Cave she waited above ground in the park while Grandpa and his sons went on a tour. She had been caving once and that was enough.

But for me, once was not enough. In fact, that first trip to a commercial cave was the beginning of an obsession

that would rage like a river in my soul and forever color the gray matter of my brain.

We lived in southern Putnam County, Indiana at the northern tip of a karst region. Our well water tasted of lime and our water heater would fill with a lime slurry that would solidify until heating water became impossible. We we would have to tear out the old tank, which had become a rolling cylinder of limestone weighing hundreds of pounds. Drinking that hard water may partially explain my craving for caving. I became curious of the ground beneath my feet when my dad told me that our well digger had encountered a large void before hitting water. I wanted to explore that void.

When I was about eight, I learned that my neighbor's house had been built on top of a sinkhole. The neighbor boy and I tried relentlessly to enter that sink, but digging was futile. At the age of eleven, I joined the boy

scouts, and we began to camp in a wonderful woods west of town that was full of hills and ravines and intriguing rock formations along a beautiful creek we called Paradise Point.

On my first trip there, an older scout was showing me around and he took off running. I ran after him, but he had magically vanished. I looked all around for him, up in the trees, and did not

see him or hear him until he hollered. I looked down beneath my shoes and only a few feet away was a crack in the earth. It was a crevice not more than a foot wide into which the scout had dropped in to elude capture. At that point I immediately climbed down into the crevice, and so began my first wild cave trip.

Over the next several months, my friends and I sketch



The mess hall at Hamilton Valley. Foreground, from left: Bob Osburn, Jeff Bartlett, Mike Carter, Marty Brown (hidden behind Mike), Lynn Brucker, and a bunch of crusty bearded guys from Missouri including Spike Crews.

mapped all the little caves on that property where we camped and that just made us want more. We began to visit more and more commercial caves and wild caves. Our scoutmaster promised us if we would all make First Class he would take us to Mammoth Cave. We went to earning badges! We went on a Mammoth tour and the hunger for more caving burned within me. The scouts had some overnight programs for wild caving in cooperation with a couple of commercial caves and my Dad, my brother and I got to spend the night in Marengo Cave and later on in Blue Spring Caverns. We became acquainted with an NSS caver who was also involved in Scouting and he began to teach us about wearing helmets and carrying three sources of light. We had many adventures together.

When I went to college, I joined the student grotto there and began to go on trips with a young man with a bushy afro named Dewayne Agin. While in college I began to read more caving books and in the library I found *The Caves Beyond*, by Brucker and Lawrence. I devoured it and then I read *The Longest Cave*, by Brucker and Watson. I remember thinking, "What would it be like to meet the world's greatest cavers?"

I grew up, got a job, got married and had kids, but I continued to try to go caving and did a fair amount of surveying. Dewayne and I found ourselves living in Little Rock, continuing to explore and map Cushman Blowing Cave. The next thing we knew years had gone by, we had formed the Little Rock Grotto and were considered brothers in the Association for Arkansas Cave Studies. One Saturday, a flooded river caused us to abandon a plan to survey at Fitton with the Cave Research Foundation, and four men went on an illustrious trip to check some old leads along Cave Creek. That led to a little project that is now approaching 20 years of head scratching. Most folks know it as Chinn Springs Cave, but that's six miles of passageways and another story.

I'm not a person of particularly strong athletic prowess or a person with great leadership ability; nor do I have artistic flair, or mathematical genius. I have been lost on a number of occasions and sometimes have trouble making a sketch look like the cave it is supposed to represent. But what I do have is an insatiable curiosity about the unknown and a child-like wonder for natural things.

Everyone knows that The Mammoth Cave System is the largest in the world, and the connection between Flint and Mammoth Ridges was referred to as "the Everest of underground exploration." This winter, I had the privilege of beginning the new year caving with the movers and shakers (maybe not the best analogy for cave explorers). I met and caved with the ones who make the map for the largest cave in the world [*Editor's note: you already knew one of us, ya big lug*]. So with this long introduction, I begin the story of my initiation into the Cave Research Foundation and my first experience of wild caving at the Hamilton Valley Research Facility and Mammoth Cave.

## CHAPTER 2

For many years I have heard friends talk of caving at Mammoth. I toyed with the idea of taking one of the summer courses in speleology that they offered through Western Kentucky University, but was never able to get off work to do it. Several years ago Bryan Signorelli had approached me about going to Mammoth with him sometime because he goes every year. I never thought I would ever be able to make it work. Later, after Aly had gone to Mammoth as well, she began to use her powers of persuasion on me, urging me to go and realize my boyhood dream.

It still seemed like a "pie-in-the-sky" thing to go that far and spend that much. Aly said, "Oh please! You can ride with us!" The next time they went, they took Jeff Bartlett, and when he returned he began to work on me as if his life depended on me helping him survey the far reaches of Logsdon River [*Editor's note: you mean it doesn't??*]. Finally, while on a cave trip in Alexander, Marty Brown and I decided we would accompany Jeff to the caving Mecca: Cave City, KY. Mike Patton also wanted to go, so we all sent off our paperwork to see if we were good enough to be accepted to become CRF Joint-Venturers.

Finally I received a letter saying I had been accepted and the plans began to fall in place. At 8:30 AM on Wednesday morning (New Year's Eve), Marty picked me up and we headed toward Kentucky. His wife's 4-door Ford was half full of caving gear and then I added my gear and filled the other half. We met Bryan, Aly and Mandy at McDonald's in Lonoke, where we ate a fine breakfast and then hopped back in the cars. We ate lunch at Subway at Jackson Tennessee where I



Above left - Mike Carter poses with the recently-installed sign at the entrance to CRF's Hamilton Valley facility; Above right, Mike Carter (sporting a vintage LRG t-shirt) and Marty Brown talk caving over breakfast.

made a mistake and ordered a Seafood Sensation with Pepper-jack cheese. I regretted that the rest of the day and on into the night.

When we reached the exit for Cave City, Aly and I switched places so the Signorellis could be our tour guides. Bryan pointed out to me many interesting sites, including Golgotha Mini-Golf and the Home of over 200 life-sized Dinosaurs. After we passed the Mammoth Cave Wax Museum I realized that these attractions were probably run by the descendants of the people who started the cave wars in the 1920s. Then Bryan began to point out where various cave entrances were located as we entered the park. We came around a curve on a gravel road, past a trailer and Bryan said, "That's where Pat Kambesis lives!" I knew I was getting close.

There was an impressive sign that said, "Hamilton Valley Cave Research Facility," and we followed that road until we could see the bunkhouses shining in the darkness. Bryan said "Beyond those bunkhouses is the headquarters building where it all takes place." My heart was racing as we pulled up beside another car where a man was just getting out. The thin, rugged man had a long gray beard and I knew he had to be a caver. Bryan introduced me to him. His name was Ed Klausner and he said he had heard of me (later, I was to learn he was a major player and a great cartographer).

We went inside the main building and began to mix

and mingle with some of the greatest caving minds in the world. Like everything else in life, it pays to have connections. Thanks to the Signorellis and Jeff Bartlett, many of these cavers from far off states had already been told about Marty and I. We were sitting at a table and Bryan said, "Look over your shoulder!" ...and when I did I saw an older gentleman talking to Mandy. I knew that face immediately as Roger Brucker! He has been exploring in Flint Ridge and Mammoth Cave since the 1950s.

I began to feel that Seafood Sensation from lunch pushing against my pylorus. I'm shy by nature anyway and now I was face to face with my childhood hero, the one who (literally) wrote the book on caving, the man behind so many connections. He shook my hand and I figured that would probably be it, but several times during the weekend I had great long conversations with him as if we had been friends for years. I got him to sign my copy of *The Longest Cave*. Later on he let me read a couple of chapters in his new book, still in manuscript form, about the life of Stephen Bishop as told by his wife, Charlotte.

It was truly an amazing night. Most of the cavers were in bed before the New Year came in because we had a busy expedition ahead of us. I laid there awake unable to sleep, unsure of where I was going the next day. I was already in awe of my trip and I hadn't even been underground yet.

### CHAPTER 3

We arose and went to breakfast the next day as more and more cavers slowly began to filter in and take their seats. There was a low roar as cavers talked the talk of

trips past and present until a loud voice announced that it was time to start the meeting. The Expedition Leader for this weekend was a clean-shaven, intelligent-looking gentleman with longish white hair and glasses. His name was Charles Fox, and he happens to be an excellent story teller. He made some general announcements and then he had written on the dry erase board about eight different names of caves or areas with an underline beneath each one followed by 3 or 4 people who were going to go to that location.

I noticed that while some of the names were recognizable, like Colossal or Salts or Roppel, some were not familiar. I scanned the board for my name as Charles began to explain that “so and so was leading a group to Salts Cave to check a high lead...” and so forth. Then I saw my name and Marty’s name listed under the name “Cemetery.” *What does that mean?* I wondered. *Probably means there is nothing that they want us on,* I thought. Eventually, Charles got to the description of “Cemetery.” We were to go with Matt Goska to check some leads in a nearby cemetery. Made sense. We went to our safety meeting and the teacher for the safety meeting was Tommy Brucker, another great caver!

After the safety meeting we met our trip leader for the day, Matt Goska. He was pleasant but didn’t have much to say because he didn’t know us. He said it would be a vertical trip. We got our gear, ran the compass course, and drove to the cemetery. When we got there it was icy cold, and there was a sign that said, “Little Hope Cemetery.” The trip looked bleak from the start.

Behind the cemetery, the hill sloped off about as steeply as the climb to Alexander Cave and dropped into a ravine. About halfway down the side of the ravine was a pit that we rigged and prepared to drop. Matt said we were really close to the Frozen Niagara section of Mammoth and we needed to finish the two caves here to see if they would connect with Mammoth.

Matt dropped in first and I followed. Halfway down the pit was a log wedged across the passage that had to be negotiated. Beyond the log, at the bottom of the drop, as I de-rigged, I heard behind me a waterfall coming from a passage about 15 feet up the far wall. We free climbed the wet, slippery wall and at the top of it found water spilling over a man-made dam. Some rugged pioneer had built a dam at the top of the waterfall to harness the cave water for drinking. That seems

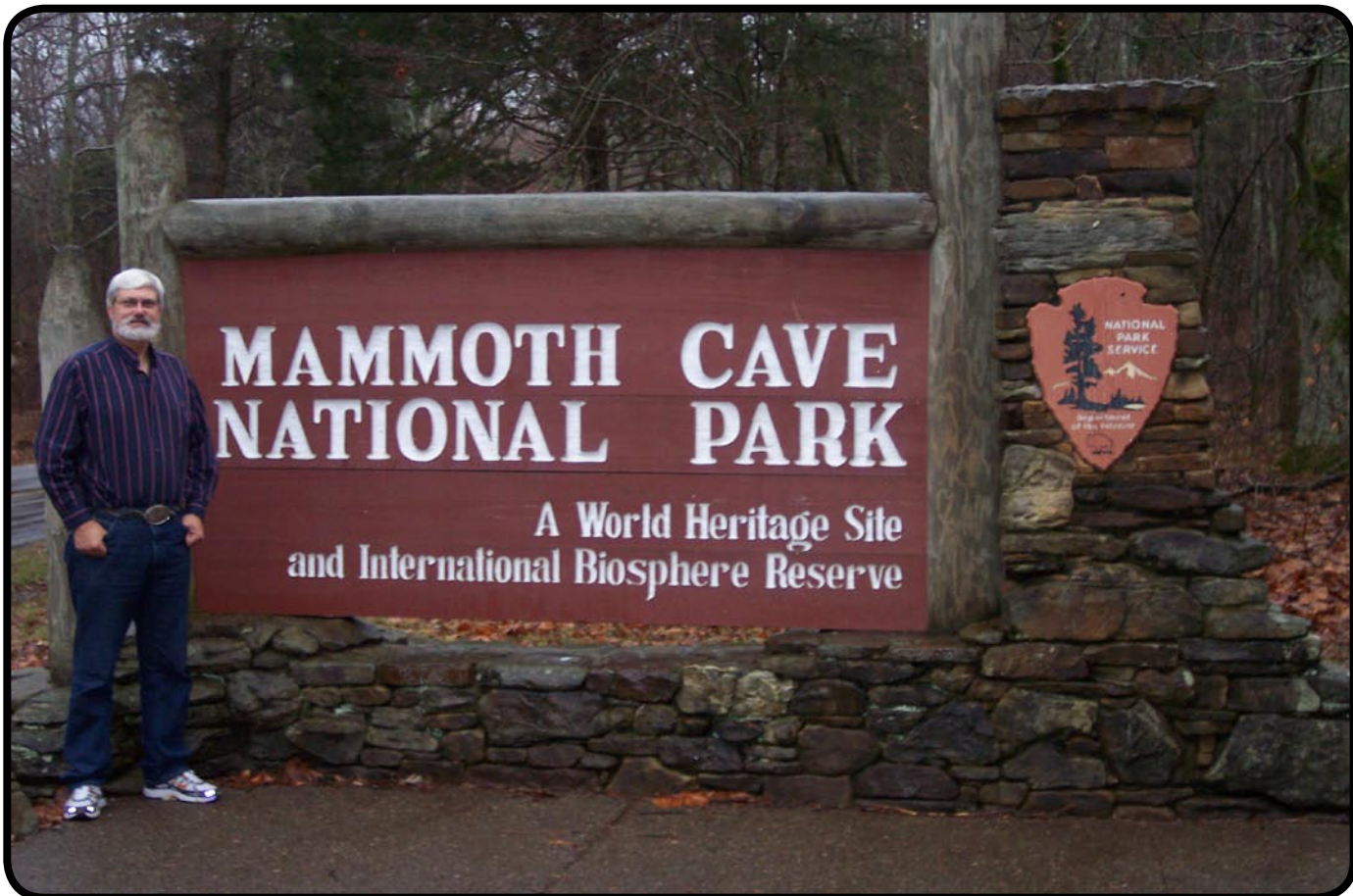
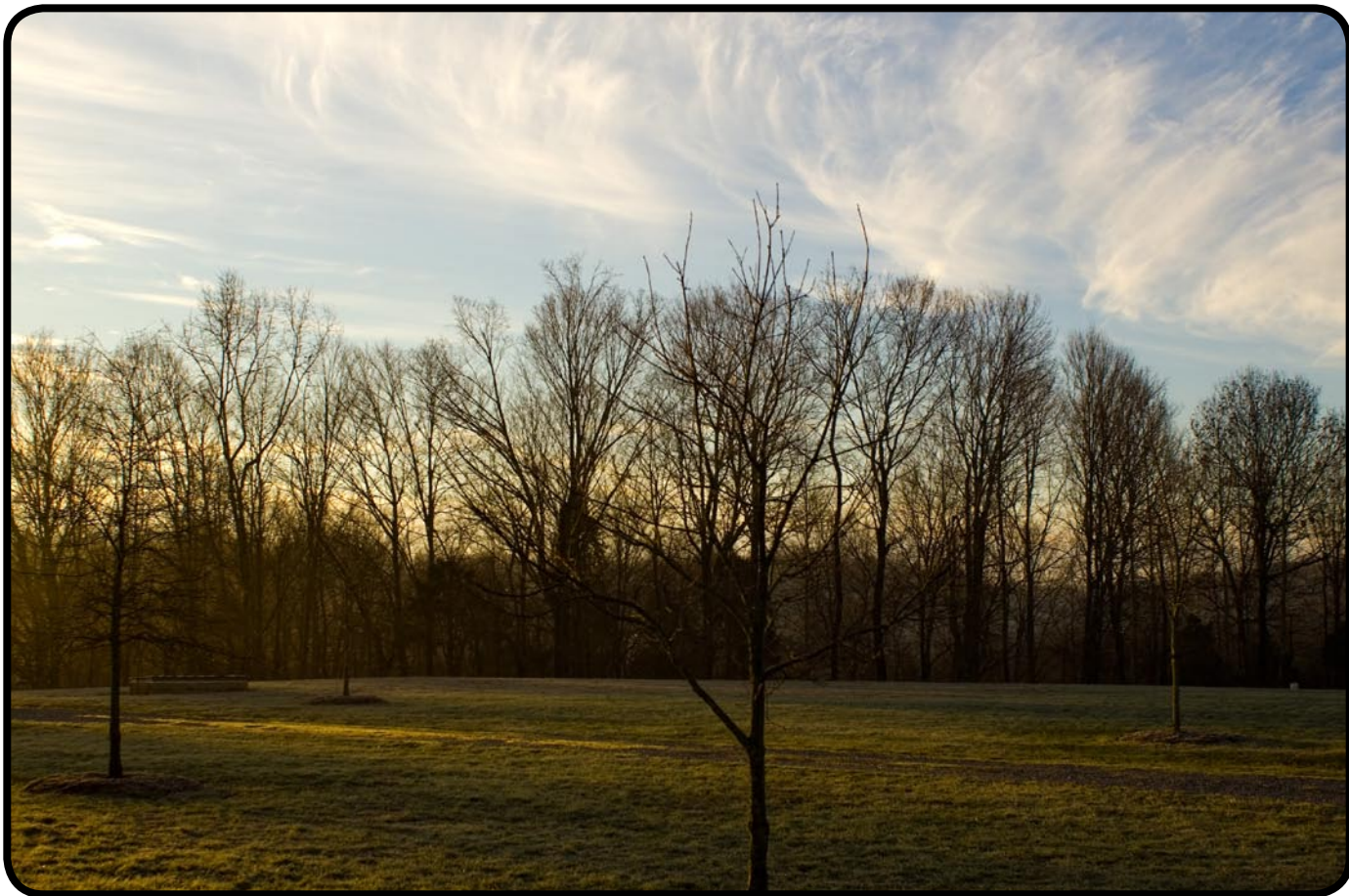
to me to have been no small feat. Matt stepped over the dam ducked under a ledge and disappeared. I glanced back at Marty standing below me near some icicles, took a deep breath and stepped over the dam into the thigh-deep water.

After crawling for a little while, the passage gradually ascended to a stoop walk and the water grew shallower. Soon we were out of the water and walking in a dry narrow canyon. The ceiling was getting higher and higher as we tied into the old survey station and began our new survey. We followed the high canyon for about 80 feet until it twisted up into some breakdown. We entered a larger room, and while Matt sketched we chatted and discovered that he had lived in Missouri for a while. He had caved with Clownsbury. He had even been to green-taped AACCS events, and we had many mutual friends. After that he warmed up to us.

I was setting point, so I pushed on into a tight gravel crawl with blowing air. I pushed and struggled with all my might until I could see that I was not going to connect to Mammoth from there no matter how hard I tried. We finished the cave and ascended back to the top of the pit. I was last, and remembered the reason why I hate my ropewalker on short drops. The foot Gibbs will not catch rope until you have a good bit of weight on the rope below you. This forced me to have to hand feed all the rope through it. I was reminded how much I need a Frog system for short climbs. When I arrived at the top, Matt and I de-rigged the pit and went to join Marty who was already installing a ladder in the other cave.

In the second unnamed cave we had a high lead at the top of a dome that we checked using a 4-piece deer stand ladder. It was a dead end. On the other side of the entrance room we saw a pit, and on the far side of the pit going passage. I dropped the ladder down the pit and we all climbed down. On the other side of the pit, I moved the ladder against the far wall of the pit and Marty climbed up. We continued on, surveying as we went. From a stoopway the ceiling began to rise until we were once again standing in tall canyon passage with horn coral fossils embedded in the wall. Matt Goska told us this type of passage is very typical for this

[Page 21, top - A winter sunrise as viewed from the bunk houses at Hamilton Valley; bottom - Mike Carter found another sign to pose next to!](#)





Above - Stephen Bishop's signature smoked onto a smooth limestone wall in Mammoth Cave.

particular limestone bed.

Soon we came to a place where the passage stopped in a twisting hallway three feet wide. I looked up at the ceiling, and fifteen feet above my head was crawlway continuing onward. I set the station high on the wall where we had to chimney up twelve feet to read the instruments. I moved into the high dry crawl but there was a keyhole that I was unable to get my overgrown physique through and the rest of our team was too large also.

We turned back and trudged up the massively steep hill to the Little Hope Cemetery, where we changed out of our wet muddy clothes and caught our breath in the frozen night with millions of stars twinkling above our heads. Marty and I returned to Hamilton Valley feeling that good tired feeling that comes after a cave trip. Maybe for those two caves there was "Little Hope".

As the groups began to trickle back to the fieldhouse we got to hear reports of other trips and the antics of those explorers in other realms of the world's largest cave. We got to know some of the people a little better that night. Jeff Bartlett and Mike Patton arrived from Arkansas, giving us a total of seven members of Little Rock Grotto present for the weekend. I went to bed fairly early.

## CHAPTER 4

Friday morning arrived and I went in to eat breakfast. There was a white board there when you walk in and

on that board were three columns. People were signing up in the column with the appropriate label: CAVING FRIDAY, DON'T HURT ME, and NOT CAVING. Each day the number on the "not caving" and "don't hurt me" list continued to grow. I learned that "don't hurt me" means you want an easy trip.

I was really excited and you could feel the tension in the air. I wondered where they had decided to send me today. Would be to small, insignificant caves that might connect or would I be going somewhere in the big one? Soon Charles was ready to announce the trips, and I saw my name on a list with Bryan Signorelli and some others to Roppel. I knew from the books that Roppel had a great history and that it was now part of the big one! Today I was to enter the "Weller Entrance" and descend hundreds of feet on ladders.

I was ecstatic. I was to resurvey some borehole in Arlie Way with Ed Klausner who is such a good cartographer that he is drawing four separate sheets of the Mammoth Cave grid including the Historic entrance. Today our goal was to take two teams to Arlie Way; one would go to the far end, near Logsdon River, and the other team would begin at the opposite end. We would resurvey until we connected to each other.

We drove to the Weller Entrance and suited up. We entered through a concrete building where Dave Weller and friends had blasted the top out of a dome many years ago, breaking into a series of pits that we now descended through on a series of long steel ladders. We opened a trap door in the floor of the building that acts as an airlock and began our descent. Bryan Signorelli was in front of me giving me the royal tour as we went down, down, down through the pits until we popped

out in Crowbar Dome and began to move horizontally. It was a very dry passage with lots of gypsum, similar to Fitton back home. Bryan moved on, with his team being led by Bob Osburn, the head cartographer of Mammoth Cave.

I stayed with Ed and a guy named Todd, and we began the survey with me reading instruments. We eventually rejoined the other team and completed a quarter-mile of resurvey through borehole where many of our shots were 100 feet long. We needed to do some more work in Lower Arlie Way, but it was crawling and only had room for one team. Part of the team had to rest and sleep for two hours, while I was chosen to read instruments with Bob, Ed and Todd.

When we were returning we ran into Bryan and Ann, who had grown cold and had come to check on us. We made our way up all the ladders and out through the entrance gate into another beautiful starlit sky. It was another successful trip and we had accomplished our objectives once again.

## CHAPTER 5

That night and early the next morning I wondered where I would be sent next. Bartlett and Patton had been sent to the far reaches of Logsdon River to wade 2 miles of river with strong current and I knew they would be exhausted. The “going caving” list was shorter than ever that morning and I saw Jeff’s name on the “don’t hurt me” list. I waited for the trips to be listed but I didn’t see my name anywhere.

I kept scanning the lists. Roger Brucker was sitting beside me and he said “Where are you going?” Then I saw it on the last trip posted: I was going to Calypso. *What is Calypso?* I thought. *It must be another small cave somewhere.* I had to wait until Charles gave the trip description to learn that Calypso was a passage in Historic Mammoth! I began to tremble and I could feel tears coming into my eyes when I learned that I would be privileged enough to get to leave the tourist trail in Mammoth and survey in passages where aboriginal Kentuckians had crawled with cane torches and where so much history has taken place. Ed Klausner, who had befriended me the day before, was about to take me on the journey of a lifetime.

We drove to the visitor’s center parking lot. As we were

putting on our gear, a man came over with a teenage girl. He said she was a foreign exchange student from Turkmenistan and she wanted to get her picture made with real cave explorers. So we smiled for the camera. We answered her questions and then walked to the Historic Entrance, unlocked the gate, and entered the underground world. We walked down the tourist trails in the dark with only our headlights shining out in the massive trunk passage. We saw hollow log pipes made of Tulip Poplar, *Liriodendron Tulipifera*, that had been placed there in 1812 to carry water for the saltpeter operations. We moved on down through Houchins Narrows to The Rotunda, a large room where the saltpeter leaching vats are located. This room is at least 150 feet wide and 150 feet long. We followed the big, wide Broadway Avenue through the area known as Main Cave.

Just before we got to an amazingly recognizable dogleg in the passage known for centuries as the Acute Angle, we looked to the right side of the passage and gazed upon a gigantic boulder known as the Giant’s Coffin. Here we caught up with a group of tourists on the historic tour, with their head guide being the infamous other Michael Carter that I had heard of for years but never met until yesterday.

We listened for quite a while to his interesting tales of the history of this wonderful cave, until the tourist group went past the Giant’s Coffin and slipped around behind it. We followed until they went on down some steps toward the Wooden Bowl Room, where we discretely hurdled the railing and disappeared down Ganter Avenue, following the paths of tourists from the 1800s.

We were now in a lower level of the cave in a passage with torch marks on the ceiling where native Americans had tapped their torches long ago. We traveled under the Acute Angle until we passed a pile of old shoes. These were mostly ladies’ fancy dress shoes and boots from the 1800s, many with heels. They were laying where they had been discarded by aristocratic Victorian ladies, who had come to tour the recesses of Mammoth Cave thinking of style yet unaware of the beating their feet would take on this rugged limestone carpet. I presume the ladies exited the cave barefooted, or perhaps being carried by chivalrous men, gallant wannabe knights who had come here to impress their princesses.

Momentarily pausing, we mused at the ancient display of discarded footwear and then bounded off through a crawl that would take us on into Calypso Avenue. Here, some leads needed to be checked and some surveying was to be done. I was setting point today, John DeLong from Wisconsin would be reading instruments, and Ed Klausner would be sketching. We surveyed some leads off of Calypso that snaked back and connected with Ganter Ave. There was one hole going off to the left away from Ganter that needed to be checked. Ed crawled up it to some breakdown then returned saying, "Mike won't fit."

I said, "I will try to if I need to." I slipped into the Keyhole and stayed high at first where it was wider. Later I had to drop down low, and still later I had to remove my helmet. I made it to the breakdown where Ed went but then had to back all the way out. I noticed a survey station on the ceiling, E3, and later E5. Ed did not have any notes with him that told what that was. I slowly wormed my way backward, but without eyes on the bottom of my feet I was unable to see where I needed to go high when it got skinny. I missed my climb-up and kept backing until I could go no farther, then went forward some until I could wiggle my legs up three feet and from there returned to Calypso again.

I agreed with Ed that I could not fit. I resolved that I must lose some weight and body diameter. Days later, Ed found the old notes that said that passage went 680 feet and ended but remained that tight the whole way and contained no leads. I was glad that it was surveyed and did not need to be done again.

When we ran out of time surveying in Calypso, Ed said that he would give me a quick tour. We followed Calypso back to Ganter Avenue past the antique shoes,

but this time we went the other way down Ganter and turned right onto Jessup Avenue. A little ways down Jessup we came to a room and laying on the floor was an old ladder. Ed said, "Come here and look at this!"

On the ceiling of that passage was one of those historic items of interest. There, looking as fresh as if it had just been written, was the signature of Stephen Bishop. He was the black slave cave explorer who had explored so much of Mammoth before anyone else besides the native Americans. This man was a pioneer caver whom I greatly admire. Some of his letters were backwards, and I remembered that he wrote on the ceiling with a tall candle looking in a mirror so the wax wouldn't drip in his eyes. He probably had done that in the 1830s.

A couple of days earlier, I had been talking to Roger Brucker about the new book he is writing about the life of Stephen Bishop through the eyes of his wife, Charlotte. On the other side of the room, carved neatly in the limestone wall, we found Charlotte's autograph as well.

Stephen had been the first person ever to cross Bottomless Pit and had made many discoveries. Roger had told me that Stephen's signature can be found in a remote section of the cave that requires a 22-hour trip. Charlotte's signature is there also. Ironically, the next passage heading to the right past Jessup on Ganter Avenue is called Flint Avenue and leads way on out past Albert's Domes to Janet's River and on into Flint Ridge.

We left Jessup and went to the Wooden Bowl Room, which is shaped like an upside-down wooden bowl.

[Below - while Mike surveyed nearby, Jeff Bartlett helped replace an old survey beneath Bottomless Pit.](#)





The claim is made that early explorers found an Indian wooden bowl in that room many years ago. From there we continued on up Calypso until it took us to a connection that led into Black Snake Avenue. Black Snake is a long sinuous passage that undulates back and forth like a snake and the walls and ceiling are very dark black. We walked down this passage for a long way. We passed an opening that led to the Labyrinth and Gorin's Dome.

We came to the Bottomless Pit. This is the massive hole that early explorers found to be foreboding and were unable to cross until Stephen Bishop placed a homemade cedar ladder across the abyss and crawled across the darkness to find many miles of new cave on the other side. Ed Klausner showed me a crawl that Stephen had taken that bypassed Bottomless Pit. So, in fact, Stephen knew that there was passage beyond Bottomless Pit before he laid that ladder across and led a paying customer to the far side of the pit. The tourist thought he was the first to see that area, but Stephen had been there before. But this is something only us cavers know.

We gazed at the Bottomless Pit and thought about what a formidable obstacle it had been for so many years. We crossed it on a steel walkway and continued on through Reveler's Hall past Pensacola Avenue. We stoop-walked through the Valley of Humility and Scotchman's Trap and on to a narrow passage called Fat Man's Misery. This led under Gothic Hall and Broadway and below Harvey Hall, and eventually to the underground rest room facilities at Great Relief Hall.

A wonderful experience that I had always wanted to participate in was now mine as I entered this fine porcelain rest room in full caving gear, did my business and flushed! We went out through the mop closet and saw the amazing cast iron pumps and pipes that carry the refuse of tourists to the surface. We marveled at the engineering involved in defying gravity in such a useful way. I became misty-eyed as I thought of families with young children so happy to find solace here at Great Relief Hall.

I shook my head in amazement as Ed showed us pas-

sages that lead off in several directions behind the bathrooms. Ed said there are some errors in the survey there that cannot be fixed because of compass error from all the metal. We exited the mop closet, went back through the Men's Room and continued through Odd Fellows Hall. When we reached Vanderbilt University Hall we got onto Sparks Avenue and passed Sylvan Hall to Mammoth Dome.

Here we climbed 138 new steps up the new stairwell that lead to the top of the 192 foot tall dome. From there Little Bat Avenue took us to Audubon and back to the Rotunda around the back side of the Saltpeter leaching vats where an extremely large boulder had fallen in 1983. We exited the cave and locked the gate behind us. We trudged slowly out of the Historic Entrance and walked the sidewalk up the hill to our Jeep. As we slipped off our muddy packs, a deer was

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watching us from across the parking lot. It had been a day I would never forget.

I returned to Hamilton Valley that night in a state of mind that was indescribable. I really felt fulfilled. It was as though my caving career had reached a new zenith. I watched my comrades in the lodge visiting about their various trips and I chatted a little but mostly I was reflective, gazing with child-like wonder at the maps on the wall. I had learned so much this week. I had been places and seen things that caused me to run out of superlatives. I just don't have a grasp of the English language that will allow me to properly verbalize this experience.

Sunday morning, I arose and went to the dining hall for breakfast, and helped put away the tables and chairs and clean the building for next time. Then Marty and I took some pictures and headed out of the park on our journey back to Arkansas. My boyhood dream of exploring the largest cave in the world was now history. I want to thank Bryan and Aly Signorelli, Jeff Bartlett, Mike Patton, and Marty Brown, as well as my good friend Mandy, for helping me reach the fulfilment of my boyhood dream.