

CONCAVE #1

S203

1. (Start with the first slide. Each slide is numbered in sequence)
2. In the fall of 1983, the Cave Conservancy of the Virginias and the Virginia Region of the National Speleological Society sponsored the cleanup and reconstruction Fountain cave near Grottos, Virginia. The slides that follow document the event.
3. The setting was typical Virginia Region meeting much like any NSS region might have.
4. For months, the region newsletter had asked cavers throughout the area to come and help.
5. More than 200 came to participate.
6. Before the meeting the organizers had arranged for all the necessary supplies and now the task was to carry them to the cave.
7. Slide
8. Slide
9. The local press had been contacted and when they arrived, they were given material which they could use in their story.
10. slide
11. slide
12. Supplies piled up in front of the cave.
13. There was plenty of water and muriatic acid to wash graffiti off the walls.
14. and the necessary scrub brushes.
15. slide
16. As the cavers arrived at the entrance each took a brush and a jug of water and headed into the cave.
17. At the entrance cavers were busy welding the old gate to repair the damage done by vandals.
18. Father into the cave someone had thrown yellow paint on a formation and now it was our task to get it off.
19. slide
20. slide
21. slide
22. Paint remover and a lot of wire brushing
23. slide

24. eventually restored the original color.
25. On another formation the paint wouldn't come off with paint remover, so a welding torch was used to burn it off.
26. slide
27. slide
28. slide
29. Deeper in the cave was a section of broken stalagmites.
30. slide
31. After cleaning the top of one,
32. quick setting cement was applied.
33. The broken part of the formation was returned to its original position and
34. more cement applied.
35. When it was all done,
36. the formation was almost as good as new. The process was repeated on other broken formations in the area.
37. slide
38. slide
39. slide
40. slide
41. The cave was filled with cavers cleaning writing from the walls.
42. slide
43. When the writing was thought to be of historic significance, it was copied.
44. before being removed.
45. The cave was filled with historic signatures.
46. slide
47. slide
48. They were photographed.
49. or copied.
50. before being removed.
51. In the 1800's Fountain Cave was popular commercial cave and its beauty was advertised in many of the popular periodicals of the time. However, since then this formation had been broken into several pieces by vandals.
52. With the enthusiasm of the cave restoration running high, several cavers decided to rebuild the stalagmite. After cleaning the stub which remained

53. the bottom piece
54. was carefully lifted to its original position.
55. slide
56. slide
57. Quick setting cement was applied to the base of the piece
58. and the excess was washed off.
59. The next piece was found.
60. and hauled into place.
61. slide
62. slide
63. slide
64. Once in place cement was applied to its base
65. slide
66. and the supporting ropes removed. Meanwhile a local TV station crew was taping the entire event.
67. slide
68. slide
69. slide
70. After supper and a long day restoring the cave, everyone gathered in Grand Caverns, a nearby commercial cave for an evening of cave songs.
71. slide
72. slide
73. CONCAVE #1 was a success. Much of Fountain Cave was restored and the local press highlighted the need for cave conservation. All of us who participated had a great time. Why don't you consider organizing your own CONCAVE. Get the spirit, restore a cave.
74. slide
75. slide

END

(For additional information on cave restoration techniques, contact the Conservation Committee of the National Speleological Society.)