

# THE WEST VIRGINIA CAVE CONSERVANCY



**SUMMER, 1999**

**NUMBER 2**

# THE WEST VIRGINIA CAVE CONSERVANCY

**"Preserving the cave and karst resources of West Virginia for future generations"**

**Number 2**

**Summer, 1999**

The West Virginia Cave Conservancy is a non-profit, 501(c)3 organization. All contributions to the Conservancy are tax-deductible. Please send all contributions and dues to:

West Virginia Cave Conservancy, Inc., P.O. Box 243, Frankford, WV, 24928.

For more information on membership, visit our website at: <http://www.wvcc.net>.

Please send all contributions to the newsletter to the newsletter editor.

Any internal organization of the N.S.S. has permission to reprint materials in this newsletter with proper recognition given to the author and *The West Virginia Cave Conservancy Newsletter*.

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*This issue's cover shows Charlie Maus standing at the entrance to Rapp's Cave. WVCC will manage an archeological study of the entrance area and adjacent field. See page 4 for Bob Handley's article*

## ***Thanks To All Who Have Supported Us!!!***

The West Virginia Cave Conservancy is continuing to grow!! A big thank you goes out to all who have supported The WVCC in its infancy! We hope to continue to receive your support as we work to keep caves open for cavers.

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(Charter Member)  
West Virginia University Student Grotto

## **WVCC Leases First Property!!**

*Bob Handley*

As of June 15, 1999, The WVCC has leased its first property.....A lease of Rapps Cave.

Rapps Cave (Greenbrier County) and the surrounding property has been sold to friendly landowners with whom we have been eagerly working. They wanted to be a part of our efforts and insisted on a proper approach. Rapps, as most every caver knows by now, is an archaeological site and will be treated as such until such time as the archaeologists have finished inventorying and excavating in and the around the site. The WVCC plans to open the cave to exploration and other studies at sometime in the future. The cave has been closed and the new owners request that it remain closed except to archaeological study. When the project gets under way, there will be plenty of opportunity for cavers to participate.

If any of you have (or know anyone who

has) any artifacts—pottery, shards, or bones from Rapps (or pictures of this stuff), please let us know. We do not want to take anything from anybody. Donations to an appropriate Greenbrier County museum would certainly be accepted, but again, we do not want to take these treasures away from anyone. We want to inventory them, photograph them, and possibly make models of some of them.

On June 16<sup>th</sup>, Ray Garton and I met at the cave with the owners, an archaeologist, and the Director of the Greenbrier Historical Society Museum. At this point we are developing a work schedule and management plan. More news to come.....

## **West Virginia Caves That Cavers Either Own or Manage**

*Bob Handley*

This will be the first of at least two articles on this subject, because I know that all of the caves won't be named in this first article. If **anyone** knows of a cave or caves that aren't listed, then please contact me so that the additional WEST VIRGINIA caves can be included in a second article. We need the owners name, the cave name, and the county where it's located. Some of the caves I've listed are very small, but no FRO's (For Record Only) are included. The WVaSS says any hole over

ten feet long is a cave. Contact Bob Handley at: 1-304-727-1420 or [handy@wvinter.net](mailto:handy@wvinter.net)

In no way am I saying that any of these caves are protected or in any way watched over. Their management may be superior to that of the average property owner, but not necessarily so. It's just a list that I was interested in developing - add to it if you wish.

The totals surprised me.

*(Continued on next page)*

**CAVES THAT CAVERS OWN**

**Peter Allison**

Hanna Caverns	Greenbrier
Hanna Water Cave	"
Hanna Overhang Cave	"
Spout Cave	"
Allison's Cave	"
Al's Chimney	"
Al's Insurgence Cave	"
Another Pit	"
Boothe Cave	"
Boothe Pit #2	"
Briar Patch Pit #1	"
Briar Patch Pit #2	"
Complex Pit	"
Gollyroo Cave	"
Gurgle Pit	"
Hammer Cave	"
Hell-of-a-Pit	"
Hell-of-a-Pit #2	"
Hillside Cave	"
Holy Shit Pit	"
Locust Spring Cave	"
Moose's Nose Pit	"
Pendant Cave	"
Pete's Pit	"
Point Pit	"
Pilgrims Rest Church Cave	"
Pilgrims Rest Church Cave #2	"
Seep Cave #2	"
Sunglasses Hole	"
Split Rock Cave	"
Tin Cave	"

***Carroll Bassett***

**Mike and Pat Dore**

***Dave and Sandy Cowan***

**Cricket Maze Cave Assoc.**

***Linda Devine***

**Friars Hole Cave Preserve**

***Fred Grady***

**Greg and Tiki Hall**

<b><i>The Boar Hole</i></b>	<b>Greenbrier</b>
<b>Scott Hollow Cave</b>	<b>Monroe</b>
<b><i>The Portal</i></b>	<b>Greenbrier</b>
<b>Cricket Maze Cave</b>	<b>Berkeley</b>
<b><i>Elkhorn Mountain Cave</i></b>	<b>Grant</b>
<b>Friars Hole System</b>	<b>Greenbrier/Pocahontas</b>
<b><i>Haynes Cave</i></b>	<b>Monroe</b>
<b>Cutlip Cave</b>	<b>Pocahontas</b>
<b>Hills Creek Cave</b>	"
<b>Razorback Spider Cave</b>	"
<b>Bubble Cave</b>	<b>Greenbrier</b>

***(Continued on next page)***

*Bob Handley*

*CB Blowhole  
Leona's Cave  
Komatsu Cave  
Our Cave  
Spencers Cave (\*BCC)  
Spencers Waterfall Cave  
Spencers Trap Cave  
Wake Robin Caverns*

*Greenbrier*

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*Estyl Lambert Cave Preserve*

*Bead Cave  
Cutter Cave  
Fox Den #1  
Fox Den #2  
Pack Rat Cave  
Skunk Cave  
Turkey Vulture Cave  
Wastres Cave #1  
" " #2  
" " #3  
" " #4  
" " #5  
" " #6*

*Pendleton*

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*Cliff and Lois Lindsay*

*Fullers (Culverson Cr.)  
Oh-No-No-Truck (Culverson Cr.)  
Jackson #1  
Phil's Phally  
Tricycle Pit*

*Greenbrier*

"  
"  
"  
"

*Randy Rumer*

*Dick Sanford*

*Gene Turner*

*Fox Cave  
Sites  
Buckeye Creek Cave  
Buckeye Overflow Cave  
Nellie's Cave  
Apple Cave (\*NC)  
Hit'N'Head Cave (\*NC)  
Turner Pit #2  
Clutetown Cave  
Clutetown Pit  
Lost Glove cave  
Maus Hole  
MC Cave  
MC Pit  
Old School Cave  
Pignut Pit  
Post Hole Pit*

*Greenbrier*

*Pendleton*

*Greenbrier*

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*(Continued on next page)*

	Raceway Pit	"
	Rock Spring Cave	"
	Short Stuff Cave	"
	Sissler Steam Hole	"
	Super Trash Pit	"
	Trillium Cave	"
	Trillium Pit	"
	Turner Breakdown Cave #2	"
	Turner Crawl Cave	"
	Turner Pit #1	"
	Whoopie Cave	"
<i>The NSS</i>	<i>Trout Cave</i>	<i>Pendleton</i>
	<i>Trout Rock Cave</i>	"
	<i>Hamilton Cave</i>	"
	<i>NSS Flood Cave</i>	"
<i>Southeastern Cave Conservancy</i>	<i>Lobelia Saltpeter</i>	<i>Pocahontas</i>
	<i>(managed by WVCC)</i>	

\*BCC is part of Buckeye Creek Cave


\*NC is part of Nellie's Cave

**CAVES MANAGED BY CAVERS**

<i>The Nature Conservancy</i>	<i>Piercys Cave</i>	<i>Greenbrier</i>
	<i>(managed by Monroe Co Cavers)</i>	
<i>Potomac Speleological Club</i>	<i>Sinnit Cave</i>	<i>Pendleton</i>
	<i>Thorn Mountain Cave</i>	"
	<i>(both managed by PSC)</i>	
<i>West Virginia Cave Conservancy</i>	<i>McClungs</i>	<i>Greenbrier</i>
	<i>(managed by WVCC)</i>	

<b>Totals:</b>	<b>Cavers .....</b>	<b>101*</b>
	<b>Managed by Cavers.....</b>	<b>4</b>
		<hr/>
		<b>105</b>

\* one cave removed for \*BCC, 2 removed for \*NC, and one removed for Culverson Creek – (only one entrance counted per system).



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## CONSERVATION PROJECT

Dave Cowan

Lobelia Saltpeter Cave - About two years ago, the owner of Lobelia Saltpeter Cave was looking for a cave conservation organization willing to accept title and manage the property and cave. WVCC was barely in the process of organizing at the time and was unknown to the owner. The Southeastern Cave Conservancy was approached and agreed to accept the property. The owner had apparently held title to the property ever since the death of Peter Hauer (of spelean history fame). When we found out about the acquisition, we contacted SCCI and offered our help.

Last spring the house on the property was consumed by fire. The fire was apparently caused by lint build up in a clothes dryer left running while she was away. The property was littered with the remains of the of the old house as well as a dump site in the creek bed of the stream resurging from the cave. Last summer we contacted SCCI and told them about the fire. SCCI indicated they wanted to remove the trash and remaining structures and clear the site. They asked us if we could organize a clean up. Several WVCC Directors made an inspection trip last winter to determine a course of action. During the inspection of the cave we discovered intact (although in poor condition) a trough and some wooden tools - presumably the remains of the saltpeter works. We also noted a number of bats on a low ceiling near the saltpeter works. We could not come to a consensus among ourselves just what species we were looking at so we decided that we should get a bat expert in to determine if they were a species of concern.

This spring Craig Stihler and a team of biologists from Dept. Of Natural Resources did a bat count and determined that most of the bats were Little Browns (~200), but there were a few rare or endangered bats (4 Indiana myotis & 1 Small-footed myotis). It was their opinion that the

cave was not a significant hibernaculum and no access control measures were needed at this time.

Next we had to determine whether any protection was needed for the saltpeter artifacts. The area in around the house site is level, immediately adjacent to Lobelia Road and once cleaned up, a perfect camp or party site for the locals. Our concern was that some inappropriately dressed inebriated partyers might go into the cave, find this dry source of wood and recognize it as a readily available source of warmth rather than valuable artifacts! It was decided to approach the Droop Mountain Battlefield State Park Superintendent to see if they were interested in displaying the artifacts in the park museum. The park is only a couple of miles from the cave and the saltpeter works may well have been associated with the Droop Mountain campaign. The superintendent visited the cave and agreed to place the artifacts in the museum.

April is "WV Make It Shine" month. The Dept. of Natural Resources, Dept. of Environmental Protection, and Div. of Highways have a program where they provide help during the month of April each year to approved cleanup projects. Gloves and trash bags are provided, DOH provides trucks and loaders and transports the trash to the land fill. Tipping fees are waved at the land fill.

We decided to make an application for the Lobelia property cleanup. On April 9th one of the WVCC directors used his backhoe to pull trash out of the creek bed and move it to the house site constructing a local version of Mt. Trashmore in the process. The next day a team of volunteers from the Viet Nom Veterans Association of the Denmar State Prison along with WVCC volunteers picked up the remaining

*(Continued on next page)*

trash and placed it on Mt. Trashmore. The following day WVCC volunteers made a final cleanup of the site while waiting for DOH to pick the pile and take it to the land fill. After many

telephone calls and many excuses Mt. Trashmore remains to this-day as the most significant landmark in Lobelia.

**Still Looking for That Newsletter Name**

We're still waiting to hear from more of you about what you would like The WVCC Newsletter to be named. We will be making a decision at our next board meeting, which will take place during OTR. We've heard from some

of you, but we would love to hear from many more of you!! Send your ideas to any of the board members or stop by our booth at OTR and give us your idea. Just be sure to do it soon!!

**Maxwelton Sink Update**  
Jeff Bray

We are still waiting on news concerning the property with the entrance to Maxwelton Sink Cave. It has been thought that the property has been included in a long-term option involving the Greenbrier Valley Economic Development Corporation. Even though we have met with this

group, we are forced to wait until this option is expired, or the property changes hands. We want to thank you for your patience and we'll be sure to update you as soon as we have some news.

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## Organ Cave- Caver Access Policy

Submitted by Bob Handley

From Janie Morgan 417 Masters Road, Ronceverte, WV 24970 Phone 304-645-7600

1.. Permission to enter Organ Cave through the Organ Entrance must be arranged at least one week (7 days) in advance. There may be crowds of visitors at the cave for special events - these times are to be avoided.

2.. A Liability Release must be signed by all cavers using the Organ Entrance. No one younger than 14 years will be allowed access. 14 yr. through 17 yr. old cavers must be accompanied by a parent or guardian.

3.. An experienced leader is required for each party. Experienced is defined as a caver who knows his or her way out of the cave. There will be a list of those who are recognizes as experienced.

4.. Party size will be limited to 8 persons. Larger groups must divide to achieve the 8 person party limit, but remember Requirement #3.

5.. Cavers will stay on the tourist trails when passing through the commercial part of the cave.

6.. Cavers are not to interfere with commercial tours. Give tours the right-of-way and do not subvert the commercial guides interpretation. Just say "HI" or "HELLO" - that is enough!

7.. The gate, just beyond the Chapel Room, is locked when the cave is closed. Parties planning to exit the Organ Entrance must plan ahead. The gate will be electronically monitored when the cave is closed. There are other ways to get out.

8.. The Morgan's are not, and cannot, be responsible for caver coming into the System through other entrances. The Morgan's want serious cave exploration, study, and mapping to continue and realize that access through the Organ Entrance will greatly facilitate our efforts. They are very reasonable people who are completely engrossed in making a success of their new business. PLEASE TREAT THEM and THEIR EMPLOYEES WITH COURTESY AND RESPECT. We will all benefit.

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*News and Notes.....*

Bone Cave and Upper Bone Cave are located in a large limestone large quarry. The quarry is located on the left bank of the Greenbrier River about a mile up stream from Renick, WV. The property has to be surveyed, and when this survey is completed, I have been assured that the property (or at least the quarry part of it) will be sold to WVCC. No price has been mentioned to date because the landowner does not know how much land is involved (the property was inherited). More later....Bob Handley.

Dues are going to be due for many people very soon. We hope that you will continue to support The West Virginia Cave Conservancy by renewing your membership. There is a membership renewal form on the last page of the newsletter. Please return it to:

The West Virginia Cave Conservancy  
P.O. Box 243  
Frankford, WV 24938

Thank you again for all your support so far, and in advance for your help in the future!

The next WVCC board meeting is going to take place during OTR. If you are interested in attending, watch for the announcement in the OTR Daily Newsletter or stop by our booth.

Plans are underway for the first WVCC banquet. The banquet will be a great opportunity for the membership to meet each other and the board. It will also recognize the Conservancy's Benefactor members. It is being planned for November 13, 1999 in the Lewisburg area, so keep your calendars clear that day!

***The West Virginia Cave Conservancy Financial Statement—March 5, 1999***  
*Lois Lindsay*

Balance Forward from December, 31, 1998	\$21,524.81
Income:	
Membership Dues	\$875.00
Maxwelton	\$1,734.00
Contributions	\$510.00
Cave Bucks	\$167.80
Interest	\$176.20
Total Income	\$3,463.00
Expenses:	
Altalab (logo design)	\$175.50
Sandy Cowan (Postage)	\$41.25
Local Net (web page)	\$67.50
Total Expenses	\$284.25
<b>Balance as of 3/5/99</b>	<b>\$24,703.56</b>
<b>Balance as of 6/6/99</b>	<b>\$24,928.88</b>

**The West Virginia Cave Conservancy**  
*Membership/Renewal*

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\_\_\_\_\_

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Donation for specific project (please note project) \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail form to: The West Virginia Cave Conservancy, P.O. Box 243, Frankford, WV 24938.  
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