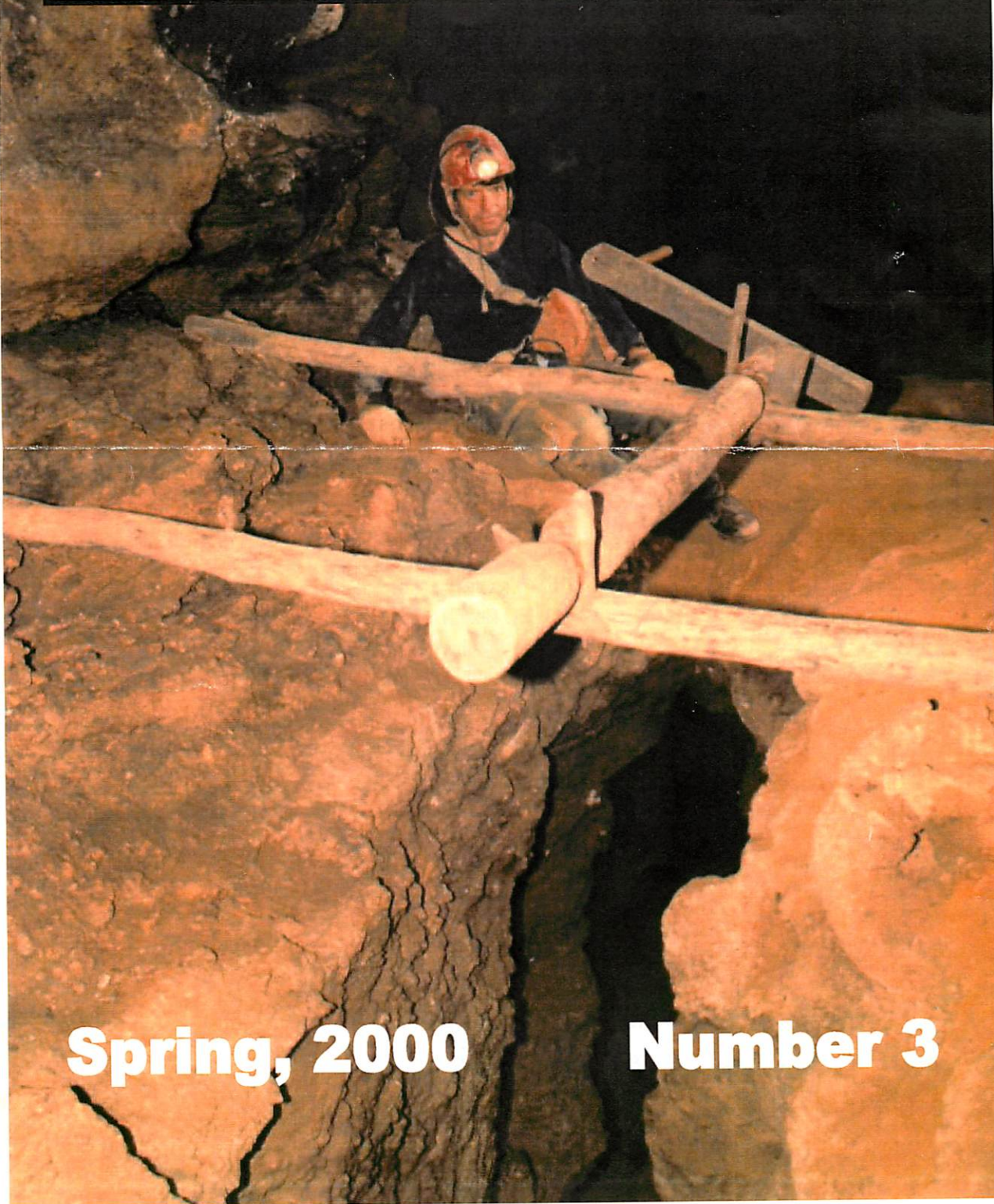


The Open Cave

The Newsletter of the West Virginia Cave Conservancy



Spring, 2000

Number 3

THE WEST VIRGINIA CAVE CONSERVANCY

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

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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, 24938.

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*.

President

Ed Swepston
Rt. 2, Box 384
Ronceverte, WV 24970
eswepston@hotmail.com

Secretary/Treasurer

Lois Lindsay
Rt. 1, Box 11
Frankford, WV 24938
loislindsay@excite.com

Newsletter Editor

Jeff Bray
401 Fairfax Rd. SE Apt.322
Blacksburg, VA 24060
jbray31706@aol.com

Jeff Bray

401 Fairfax Rd. SE Apt. 322
Blacksburg, VA 24060
jbray31706@aol.com

Board of Directors

Sandy Cowan
HC 68, Box 117
Friars Hill, WV 24934
oma00019@mail.wvnet.edu

Robert H. Handley
647 Vorpe Rd.
St. Albans, WV 25177
handy@wvinter.net

Tim Brown

57055 Marietta Rd.
Byesville, OH 43723
tim@timcoinc.net

J.C. Fisher

PO Box 276
Berkeley Spring, WV 25411
jcf@access.mountain.net

Bill Jones

PO Box 490
Charles Town, WV 25414
wjones@intrepid.net

Lonnie Burns

Rt. 3, Box 10 A
Frankford, WV 24938
omb00811@mail.wvnet.edu

Ray Garton

PO Box 200
Barrackville, WV 26559
garton@mammothgeo.com

Cliff Lindsay

Rt. 1, Box 11
Frankford, WV 24938
cliffindsay@hotmail.com

Dave Cowan

HC 68, Box 117
Friars Hill, WV 24934
oma00019@mail.wvnet.edu

Tina Hall

160 Guy St.
Elkins, WV 26241-3927
cnhall@meer.net

Ed Swepston

Rt. 2, Box 384
Ronceverte, WV 24970
eswepston@hotmail.com

This issue's cover is a photo of Fred Grady inside Hayne's Cave in Monroe County, West Virginia.

Thanks To Our Newest Members!!!

The West Virginia Cave Conservancy would like to thank all those who have recently joined or up-graded their membership status! Your help is important, and we hope to continue to receive your help in the future. A special thank you goes out to our newest benefactor members, The Bassett Foundation, and Jim Gildea!!

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Philadelphia Grotto

**Haynes Cave Managed by West Virginia Cave Conservancy
Jeff Bray**

Haynes Cave is located in Monroe County and is owned by Fred Grady. Fred had approached the West Virginia Cave Conservancy about managing the cave. On January 16, 2000, the WVCC adopted a management plan for the cave in accordance with Fred's wishes for the property.

For many that have visited the cave over the years, there will be a few noticeable differences. One thing will remain the same though—the cave will be open for people to visit. There are some activities planned for the property though. Parking has always been a problem at the cave. Usually people will park at the end of Moore Road, where it

is easy to block the neighbors' gates. We plan to improve the road down to where it is adjacent to the property containing Haynes, and making a parking area there instead. This will help minimize problems that could occur if a landowner's gate is blocked while a group is in the cave. The new parking area will take a while to get used to, but in the long run, will benefit everyone and erase possible problems with the gates. A trail will also be made from the parking area to the cave so that access will be easier.

Haynes Cave is also visited by a number of non-NSS or non-affiliated cavers and spelunkers. We plan to construct a informational kiosk that will

provide information on the NSS and the WVCC, as well as contact numbers for more information. It will also have information concerning parking announcements and anything else that is pertinent to folks visiting the cave. This trend has been started by many conservancies in other areas, and seems to work pretty well. It also has worked well in educating people that are not as sensitive to cave environments, but are still visiting caves on a regular basis.

A committee was formed to visit the cave regularly to be sure the property is kept clean, and the register is up to date, and the kiosk is stocked and clean. This committee consists of Bob Liebman, Ed and Mary Ann Saugstad, and Ed Swepston. Jeff Bray was selected as the liaison between the committee and the WVCC board.

Keep your eyes and ears open for project weekends at the property that will be announced soon to work on the road, trail, and parking area.

Umberger Sink Cleanup *Cliff Lindsay*

During the summer of 1999, WVCC Trash-master Dave Cowan and his helpers were once again busy cleaning up another old dump in caving country. This time, the target of their efforts was a dump in a sinkhole overtop of the south-west part of McClung's Cave, on land now owned by the Umbergers. The Umbergers had purchased the farm with the old dump, and were happy to have someone clean up the dump for them. We were happy

to remove the material, and eliminate a source of leachates entering the ground water into McClung's Cave. The Nature Conservancy, with a grant from the United States Fish and Wildlife, was happy to pay for the cost of hauling and dumping the trash in the Greenbrier County landfill, as well as paying WVCC an administrative fee. A total of approximately 60 tons of material was removed from the sinkhole.

WVCC Work Day at Haynes Cave *Jeff Bray*

Sunday, April 9 was the first workday at the Haynes Cave Property. A number of folks showed up to help create a new trail to the cave entrance. It was a great surprise to see that the state had decided to improve the conditions of the public road that leads down to the property. The group walked down the now-cleared road and hiked through the bushes on the hillside

looking for the best path in which to cut the trail. After just a little time, it was decided to start the path at the old driveway (which is the clearing on the right side of the road, still in sight of the cars when parked just past the gates at the end of the gravel part of Moore Road). Many weeds and bushes were cleared to make what now is a rather large trail going through the woods and

bushes to the cave entrance. There is no longer a need to climb a single fence, or deal with any greenbriers.

We also decided that we were going to move the parking area for the cave a little further down the road. This spot will eventually be marked, but since the state had cleared the road, it is easy to now park away from the gates where no traffic will be bothered by the parked cars. Then cavers can just walk down the road a couple tenths of a mile and walk up the grassy clearing to the trail head, marked with flagging tape. Plans are being made to mark the parking

area, and an informational kiosk will be placed near the cave entrance to inform visitors to the cave of the NSS and WVCC if they are not already aware, and it will give any other information necessary at the time.

We would like to thank all those that did come out to help at Haynes Cave, and also for those that helped at the Lipps Entrance to Organ Cave for the fence-building project that is being conducted. Please keep your ears open for more announcements of workdays!!

Rapps Cave Update ***Bob Handley***

Archeologists have been selected for our project. They are Drs. Kim and Stephen McBride from the University of Kentucky. She is originally from White Sulphur Springs and he from Lewisburg. They have engaged archeological cave specialists from both UK and the University of Tennessee. These folks are highly respected in their field and if the initial Rapps project proves the site to be significant, their presence will give the project high visibility making fund raising much simpler and the future projects much easier to set up.

The initial effort will be reconnaissance, mapping and some specific digs in the spring of 2000.

A few volunteers will be needed and WVCC members will be first on the list. A notice will be sent out giving as much lead time as possible. Volunteers

will be accepted on a first come - first served basis. A brief seminar will be offered after this initial project is completed to provide WVCC a review of the findings and future prospects. A complete report will be made after all the initial work is finished.

Although funding has been secured from the Cave Conservancy of the Virginia's (CCV), additional matching grants are being sought to lighten the load on CCV. More on this later.

A security fence has been installed by Tim Brown, Mike Phelps, Charlie Maus, Lonnie and Levy Burns, Cliff and Lois Lindsay, and Bob Handley around the Rapps entrance to discourage looters.

Some of the artifacts that have been found and are very hard to distinguish from rocks and other debris. We want to discourage any traffic in the

cave until the archeologists have been able to clear pathways on into the cave. So the cave is still very much closed for

the time being. In the future it will be open - promise.

HELP SUPPORT WVCC

Tim Brown

Help support WVCC by making your purchases from Amazon.com and Karst Sports thru our web site's links to these find companies. A percentage of your purchases from these companies will be donated to WVCC. Its easy, all you need to do is access these sites thru the links on the WVCC web site

and with your first purchase you will automatically be registered as a supporter of WVCC. All future purchases regardless how you access will be credited to WVCC. Great deals for you and a good way to support WVCC.

ATTENTION REGULAR CHARTER MEMBERS

We have a deal for you! Due to numerous request the board of directors has agreed to extent our original offer to upgrade your regular charter membership to a lifetime charter membership for the one time fee of

\$200.00. This a savings of \$50.00 and a limited time offer that will be good thru our the entire year of 2000, so take advantage of this great deal and more importantly help support WVCC.

WVCC's First Annual Banquet

WVCC's First Annual Banquet was held at The Brier Inn at Lewisburg on November 13, 1999. A total of 64 members and guests enjoyed meeting and eating. The meal was great, and Bill Jones gave a great presentation. Members that were present were also recognized.

The event will be taking place again this year over the weekend of November 11, 2000. Be sure to mark your calendars and plan to attend. There will be activities set up for the weekend as well as the banquet on Saturday night in Lewisburg.

McClung's Cave

The Board of Directors recently approved two developments concerning McClung's Cave, in order to make access to the cave easier. WVCC Fence-master Lonnie Burns and helpers will soon be installing a new gate in the pasture fence between the parking area near Mrs. Freeman's house and the cave entrance. The old sagging wooden gate has, for years, presented cavers with a tough decision as to whether the gate could still be opened, or if it was still safe to climb over. On occasions, the gate, once opened, wasn't securely closed, causing Mrs.

Freeman some additional concern. Lonnie will soon install a new metal gate, with an automatic latch.

After a number of comments concerning the length and severity of the release form/contract that has been used for McClung's, the Board approved instituting a simpler, more conventional form. The new form will be in effect before the mailing of this newsletter. Hopefully, any outcome of the currently pending cave lawsuit in Tennessee will not cause any further complications.

Lipp's Entrance to Organ Cave

Lonnie Burns will also be spearheading the construction of a new fence around the Lipp's Entrance. The Deems Family has requested our help. They are relocating the field fence that

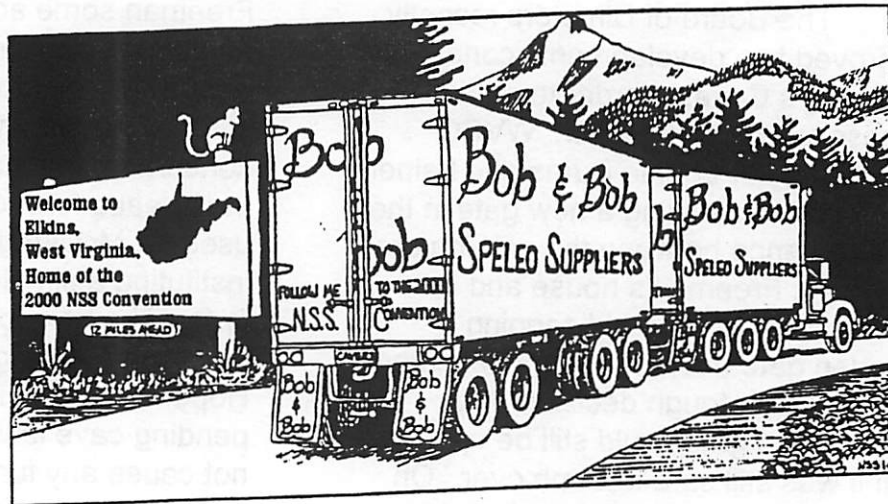
ran near, and was part of, the fencing around the entrance. The fence around the Deem entrance will also be redone.

Maxwelton Sink Update

The option held on the Maxwelton Sink property by the Economic Development Commission recently expired unexercised. We have re-approached the owners through a mutual friend, and have put our original


offer back on the table. We are hopeful that, with the help of this very good contact, we can finally get some deal struck. Keep your fingers crossed - or whatever it takes.

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