

BIRMINGHAM GROTTO
NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2015
VOLUME 45 NUMBER 2



BGN Calendar Details at meeting and on egroup

Feb 20	Reunion show, Danger Judy's band the Ticks, The Nick 9:30pm
Feb. 21	Grotto vertical trip to Rickles Cave Details on egroup, questions to VP Ray Merrill
Feb 21	SERA Winter Business Meeting, Sewanee, TN Community Center. http://caves.org/grotto/sewaneemountaingrotto/
Feb 14-15	NSS HQ Volunteer Work Weekend
Feb 27-28	Grotto Getaway, Paint Rock River Resort. Details at meeting and on egroup.
Feb 27-Mar 1	Cave Cavort 2015, Williston, FL. http://www.cavort.rivercitygrotto.com/
Mar 10	2 nd Tues Grotto Meeting 7pm, Ruffner Mtn Nature Center, 1214 81st St. S. 35206 www.ruffnermountain.org
Apr 11	Alabama Cave Survey (ACS) Annual Meeting, 9am, Scottsboro Library
Apr 14	2 nd Tues Grotto Meeting 7pm, Ruffner Mtn Nature Center, 1214 81st St. S. 35206
May 8-10	2015 SERA, hosted by East Tennessee Grotto at East Fork Stables, Jamestown, TN.. For more info: www.sera2015.subworks.com Early registration deadline: March 8
July 13-17	2015 NSS Convention, Waynesville, MO. More info: nss2015.caves.org

Disclaimer

Caving trips are led by volunteers. No Grotto committee reviews any trip leader's qualifications. New cavers should inquire about the nature of the trip and the experience of the leader in advance. Those participating in the trips should be aware of their limits. On vertical trips all participants are expected to supply their own gear and be knowledgeable about rigging and safe practices.

The *Birmingham Grotto Newsletter* is published twelve times a year by the Birmingham Grotto, Inc., of the National Speleological Society, Inc. Other NSS Internal Organizations may reprint material provided credit is given to this publication and the author. Annual dues are \$15.00 per individual and \$20.00 per family, which is payable on October 1st. Dues are prorated for anyone joining during the year. The subscription rate is \$15.00 per year. The Birmingham Grotto will exchange publications with other NSS Grottos. Exchange newsletters should be sent to:

Birmingham Grotto
P.O. Box 59607
Birmingham, AL 35259

Articles, Trip Reports, Graphics, Poetry, and any other speleo-related material should be sent to the Editors via the email address given. Submissions via email should be directed to: editor@bhamgrotto.org. The deadline for publication is the 27th of the month; however, the Newsletter is limited to 12 pages per month and material may be held for future issues.

Birmingham On-Line!
Find us on Facebook,
CaveChat or
www.bhamgrotto.org

More About Caves and Caving

National Speleological Society

The Birmingham Grotto recommends that all grotto members consider joining our parent organization. More info can be found at <http://www.caves.org/>

Southeastern Cave Conservancy, Inc.

The SCCi is a wonderful organization led by cavers for cavers which purchases and protects caves with reasonable management. Find out more at <http://www.scci.org/>

Birmingham Grotto Officers

President
Alan Cook, NSS 34617
Vice-President
Ray Merrill, NSS 63940
(205) 478-7701
Secretary
Bradley Jones, NSS 63915
nss63915@gmail.com
Treasurer & Member List
Lindsey Bean, NSS 65520
lindseyb1024@yahoo.com
205-913-1650
Immediate Past President
(Executive Committee Member)
Fennigan Spencer, NSS 61677

On the cover...

Getaway Ridgewalk circa 2012
(Kathy King)
Y'all come!

Newsletter Staff

Editors
Dave Howell, NSS13926 FE
& Valerie Howell, NSS 18128
vdshowell@yahoo.com
(205) 591-5127

Proofreaders
Scott Fee, NSS 19797 LF
scottfee@bellsouth.net
Jimmy Sims, NSS 30238
donnaatch@charter.net

Archivist
David Caudle, NSS 13995 FE
olecaveman@gmail.com

Conservation
David McRae, NSS 51358
dirtydavesmcr@gmail.com

Webmaster
Jeff Harrod, NSS 37101
webmaster@bhamgrotto.org

Prefer Paperless?

Grotto newsletter e-subscriptions are now available on request. Just let the Treasurer and Editors know, confirm your email, and you can get the next issue, in color, before the meeting.

Birmingham Grotto Meeting Minutes

January 13, 2015

Visitors

Ashley, Raine Barnes, Riley Green, and Fennigan Spencer's father, Steve Spencer, who was 1976 Grotto President joined us for the evening.

Minutes

December 9, 2014 Meeting Minutes were accepted.

Treasurer's Report

Secretary Bradley Jones provided the update for Treasurer Lindsey Bean for December 2014

Beginning Balance:	\$4,301.12
Income:	
Dues	\$115.00
Total Income:	+\$115.00
Expenses:	
Printing	\$46.22
Bryant Gating Project:	
Gas	\$75.00
Materials	\$248.11
Food	153.21
Website	\$60.00
Meeting Room (12 mos)	\$300.00
Total Expenses:	-\$882.54
Ending Balance:	\$3,533.58

Unpaid
2014 Auction -\$146 (Magz)

Announcements

02/27/15 – Paint Rock Getaway Weekend

02/27/15 – Florida Cave Cavort Weekend Event

President Alan Cook brought to light some content in the latest NSS issue. Valhalla and some of the dumbest things cavers have ever heard shared by lots of familiar names in TAG region.

Moe Rausch announced in egroup that she would like to donate Jason Wall's grill to the grotto. She said it could stay where it was but the grotto knew where it was if they needed it.

Stephens Gap was recently purchased by SCCi! If you are not already a member consider as its only \$25/yr and the money goes towards purchasing more great caves.

Judy Ranelli brought in some maps of Hatchet and Weogufka Creek for those interested. Anyone for a grotto weekend paddle as both of these are approximately 20 miles and look like great weekend trips.

David Caudle mentioned that the Bryant Mountain Gate project came out under the \$500 donated by Laurence Breeland so nothing came out of the grottos pocket other than volunteer hours. Thanks Everyone!

You may choose if you wish to begin receiving electronic copy of the monthly newsletter via email pdf instead of a paper copy via snail mail or at the meeting. By opting for this you should get your copy before those at the meeting and will also save the grotto some money on printing and postage. If interested please

let Valerie Howell or Lindsey Bean know.

Wanting to join or renew your grotto membership? If so you can send payment to PayPal account, bhamgrotto@gmail.com. You may also still mail in check to P.O. Box 59607, Birmingham, AL 35259 or hand deliver to the treasurer, Lindsey Bean, at the next meeting. \$15 Single | \$20 Family. Add \$1 if paying by PayPal to cover convenience fees. Once paid you will receive or continue receiving the award winning newsletter and access to the Yahoo group for latest date on caving trips.

Old Business

Paint Rock Getaway is quickly approaching and everyone is to vote on beverage suggestions at the February meeting.

Lindsey Bean is having a few last minute items being reviewed so that we may soon renew our nonprofit status.

New Business

01/17/15 – David Caudle and Edna Caudle will be celebrating their 50th Wedding Anniversary at Palisades from 11-3PM. There will also be some rope practice same day at same place.

02/21/15 – SERA Winter Business Meeting

Survey Class - There are some new members interested in learning about surveying and we are looking for someone to possibly head this up.

Fennigan Spencer, Leigh Dudrow, and Alan Cook met with Ruffner before the meeting to discuss ways to strengthen our relationship. They will have another meeting next month and will provide more details then. One thing that was mentioned was that Ruffner had found some old ropes in mines on the property and thought they were grotto members. It was explained that most cavers have no interest in mines and caving ropes were not cheap and not something that any caver would leave behind. The ropes will be removed if not already so that someone coming up doesn't assume they are safe and end up injured.

Judy Ranelli announced that a scout group is interested in going caving 4/18/15 and would like to recruit some volunteers. Tumbling Rock was suggested. Earth Day is 4/22/15 so grotto needs to decide which weekend we will be doing Earth Day cleanup if we are to be able to pull both of these off.

Grotto Trips

01/17/15 – Rope practice at Palisades following David and Edna Caudles 50th Wedding Anniversary.

01/24/15 –Vertical Trip to O'Shaunessey Pit

01/31/15 –Horizontal Trip to Blowing Saltpeter with another attempt to search for the infamous Zerbe passage.

Trip Reports

Fennigan Spencer read a trip report, written by Ken Kifer, on one his early trips in March 1979.

Andy Zerbe mentioned that Posey Cave now has a new owner. He met with the owner and also visited White Cave.

Ray Merrill and Jerry Saulsberry pushed some new leads on Jerry's property. One was a qualified with going passage and the other was a wet stream crawl into another potential just waiting to be pushed. Ray, Tim Harris, and Juan Santiago also paddled

See MINUTES on page 12

Grotto Articles of Incorporation

The lack of trip reports received this month provides the opportunity to share our origins. I've retyped from the scanned documents but will ask for the original documents to be available on the grotto webpage. Thanks to Jay Clark who used his resources to acquire them for us and to Scott Fee for sharing them.

STATE OF ALABAMA)
JEFFERSON COUNTY) COURT OF PROBATE

TO: HONORABLE J. PAUL MEEKS, JUDGE OF PROBATE;

WE, the undersigned natural persons of the age of twenty-one years or more, acting as incorporators for the purpose of forming a corporation under Article 3 of Title 10 of the code of Alabama(1940), Section 124 et seq., have associated ourselves together and have agreed upon and adopt this Certificate of Incorporation, to constitute and become its charter upon filing hereof pursuant to law.

I

The name of the Corporation shall be the Birmingham Grotto.

II

The purpose and objects for which this Corporation are formed are to promote an Interest in and to advance in any and all ways the study and science of speleology, And to promote fellowship among those interested therein for the betterment of Birmingham, Jefferson County, Alabama.

III

The location of the principal office of the corporation in the State of Alabama shall be Birmingham, Alabama.

IV

The name and postoffice of the agent designated by the incorporation to act for it is J.W.Blackwell, 1710 South 12th Street, Birmingham 5, Alabama.

V

The names and addresses of the incorporators, and the names and address of the trustees and the officers chosen for the first year are as set out below:

Incorporators:

- 1. Walter C. Anderton - Chairman
19 Glen Iris Park
Birmingham 5, Ala.
2. Charles Harris Armstrong - Vice-Chairman
1032 South 19th Avenue
Birmingham 5, Ala.
3. J.W. Blackwell
1710 South 12th Street
Birmingham 5, Ala.
4. William B. Connally
2414 15th Avenue South
Birmingham, Ala.

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5. John B. Cotton - Publicity Director
Route #1
Trussville, Alabama
6. Frank V. Dansby
7219 Division Avenue
Birmingham, Alabama
7. John Dansby
Aniston, Alabama
8. George M. Howell - Trustee
1056 Green Street
Tarrant City, Alabama
9. Ronald C. Nelson
Route #1, Box 403
Gardendale, Alabama
10. Kurt D. Russell - Treasurer
8209 8th Avenue North
Birmingham, Alabama
11. Harrison R. Steeves - Trustee
1419 Milner Crescent
Birmingham, Alabama
12. Wilfred J. Smith
123 Dabbs Avenue
Bessemer, Alabama
13. T. S. Taylor
1801 11th Place South
Birmingham, Alabama

VI

The Corporation shall have perpetual life unless dissolved in accordance with the law.

VII

The following provisions for the regulation of the business and for the conduct of the affairs of the Corporation are hereby adopted:

1. Membership in the Birmingham Grotto shall be limited to all active members of the National Speleological Society residing in the Birmingham area, subject to the approval of the Birmingham Grotto.
2. The governing body of the Birmingham Grotto shall be composed of the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary, and Publicity Director.
3. In the event of dissolution of the Birmingham Grotto and personal property acquired by the Grotto shall revert to the National Speleological Society.
4. This constitution may be amended by a two-thirds favorable vote at any meeting of the Birmingham Grotto, provided that notice of the proposed amendment be in the hands of each Grotto member two months next preceding the date of the meeting.

BYLAWS

1. The Governing committee shall have full power to conduct and supervise all business of the Grotto, draft and adopt the bylaws, and make changes therein, appoint committees, assess dues, and perform all other functions incident to the proper conduct of the Grotto.
2. The officers of the Governing (sic) Committee shall hold office for a period of one year.
3. Meetings of the Governing Committee shall be called at the discretion of the Chairman. Notice of the meeting time shall be given to all Committee members a reasonable time before the meeting shall take place.

See ARTICLES on page 11

ARTICLES continued from page 10

- 4.The Committee shall have the power to authorize such publications of the Grotto as may be deemed necessary or desirable.
- 5.A semi-annual report shall be prepared by the Secretary of the grotto.
- 6.The Grotto shall meet the first Thursday in each month. Notice of the time and place shall be given each member by the Secretary of the Grotto. Each succeeding meeting place and time shall be decided at the meeting instant.
- 7.Membership in the Birmingham Grotto shall be five dollars (\$5) per annum.
- 8.These BY-laes may be amended by a two-thirds vote at any meeting of the governing committee,provided that notice of the proposed amendment be in the hands of each member one month prior to the date of the meeting.

In Testimony Whereof,Witness the hands of the undersigned incorporators on this the 13th day of August, 1958

Walter C. Anderton	George M. Howell
Charles Harris Armstrong	Ronald C. Nelson
J.W. Blackwell	Kurt D. Russell
William G. Connally	Harrison R. Steeves
John G. Cotton	Wilfred J. Smith
Frank V. Dansby	
John Dansby	

I,J.W.Blackwell, the incorporators' Attorney, being first duly sworn,state that I have the authority and consent to affix the foregoing signature.

/s/J.W. Blackwell

ATTORNEY FOR THE INCORPORATORS

Before me Clara Mae Weaver a Notary Public in and for the said County and State, personally appeared J.W. Blackwell,the incorporators' Attorney,and being duly sworn,who appears for the purpose to acknowledgement says the the (sic) foregoing is a true and correct resolution of the incorporators of the proposed corporation.

/s/ Clara Mae Weaver
Notary Public for Jefferson County,Alabama

STATE OF ALA.JEFFERSON CO.
 I CERTIFY THIS INSTRUMENT
 WAS FILED ON 115P492
 AUG 14 9 58AM '58
 RECORDED AND \$ _ MTG.
 TAX \$ _ DEED TAX HAS BEEN
 PAID ON THIS INSTRUMENT.
 /s/J Paul Meeks
 JUDGE OF PROBATE

Amendment to Grotto Articles of Incorporation

Thanks again to Jay Clark who used his resources to acquire these documents for us and to Scott Fee for sharing them.

STATE OF ALABAMA)
JEFFERSON COUNTY)

COURT OF PROBATE

TO: HONORABLE O.H. FLORENCE, JUDGE OF PROBATE

ARTICLES OF AMENDMENT
TO THE
ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION
OF
BIRMINGHAM GROTTO

Pursuant to Article 4 of the Articles of Incorporation the undersigned corporation adopts the following Articles of Amendment to its Articles of Incorporation which were approved by a two-third vote if those present at the meeting of June 22, 1977.

FIRST: Item II of the Articles of Incorporation shall be amended to read:

The purpose of this Corporation is to promote and foster interest in and to advance the study and science of speleology for the betterment of Birmingham, Jefferson County, Alabama, within the meaning of Section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954.

SECOND: Item VII of the Articles of Incorporation shall be amended to read:

In the event of dissolution, the residual assets of the organization will be turned over to one or more organizations which themselves are exempt as organizations described in Section 501(c) (3) and 170 (c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 or corresponding sections of any prior or future law, or to the Federal State, or local government for exclusive public purpose.

THIRD: Item VIII is added to the Articles of Incorporation and shall read:

Notwithstanding any other provisions of these articles, this corporation will not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on by: (a) a corporation exempt from Federal income tax under Section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 or the corresponding provision of any future United States internal revenue law or, (b) a corporation, contributions to which are deductible under Section 170 (c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 or any other corresponding provision of any future United States internal revenue law.

DATED this 22 day of June, 1977

BY: Joe Domnanovich, Its President
Valerie Howell, Its Secretary

STATE OF ALA. JEFFERSON CO.
I CERTIFY THIS INSTRUMENT
WAS FILED ON
Jun 27 1 59 PM '77
O.H. Florence
Judge of Probate

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 22 day of June, 1977.

John W. Clark, Jr, Notary Public

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the Cahaba from Grants Mill at 7000cfs.

Alan Cook and Cassie Perry visited The Kids Cave, Starline Cave with Jeff Harrod, Randall Donaldson, Dave McRae, Chris Garrison, Moses Tomb for Foxhole with Jeff Harrod, Randall Donaldson, Shiori Ito, Ray Merrill, Tim Harris, Rob Thomas and Foxhole Cave with Randall Donaldson, Shiori Ito, Tim Harris, Juan Santiago.

Bradley Jones visited Anderson with Jerry Saulsberry, Tim Harris, and Juan Santiago to push 2 leads found on previous visit on the polecat side. Had hopes of connecting to Lake Purdy Corkscrew. Ray's pit was a no go and Juan and I pushed the tight crawl only to find no exit etched in mud on the other

side. We pushed all the leads anyways. Also did some ridgewalking and exploring near Bacon Ridge Rift with Joseph Krawczyk. As feared the trees were marked with what appeared to be the path of the Northern Beltline so if you would like to see any of these caves before they are gone now is the time.

Program

JB Hubbell is now a ZebraLight distributor and did a presentation to show us the latest

Respectfully submitted,
Bradley Jones

News & Notes

Dave Howell

*** February. A dull month, many say, nothing goes on in February. Wrong-o. Witness the multitude of events that take place during the second month: Valentine's Day. Groundhog Day. Fat Tuesday. Ash Wednesday. Mardi Gras. Washington's birthday. Lincoln's birthday. Chinese New Year. American Heart Month. Black History Month. Great American Pie Month. Candlemas. National Pancake Day. Umbrella Day. And! The Kaiser Silver Dragon made its debut on February 6, 1951! Now tell me this is an uneventful month!

*** Valerie and I spent a few days in San Francisco early this month, visiting for Shay's birthday (yet another occasion taking place in February!), and she showed us a place of speleological interest in the city. While not riddled with caves as are some cities, e.g. Orlando, Bowling Green, and Huntsville among others, San Francisco does have one spot of subterranean note, at SUTRO BATHS on the Pacific coast just north of Golden Gate Park. As you're facing the Baths with the Pacific Ocean beyond, look to your right (north) and you will see an apparent walk-in cave entrance. The level-floored walking passage goes a couple hundred feet through the rocky headland to emerge at a jumble of boulders at the

water's edge on the other side. Although this is a manmade tunnel, at intervals it intersects natural sea caves in which the surf below and nearby daylight can be seen. Interesting place, but you have to be careful: it's tempting to scramble down the boulders to the water, but signs warn that people have been swept away and drowned by the surf and currents in this area, both of which are treacherous. Moreover, when the tide is high and the surf is up – the waves are coming all the way from Japan, after all – the passage itself can flood. So take care, but Sutro Baths is worth a visit if you're in San Francisco. It's shown on city maps, or ask Shay or anyone else in the Upper Haight.

*** It seems that there is a plan in the formative stages to build a hotel and convention center in OAK MOUNTAIN STATE PARK. Don't know where the proposed site is, but I can't think of anywhere in the park where such a development would be unobtrusive. Many others feel the same way, as there is a Keep Oak Mountain Wild effort on Facebook, with a 501(c)3 also in existence. Check out the website keepoakmountainwild.org for further info.

*** This month marks the 90th

anniversary of FLOYD COLLINS' entrapment in Sand Cave, Kentucky, which began on January 30, 1925 and ended with his death from hypothermia and dehydration on February 13. Could Floyd have been saved if this incident happened today? I have read several discussions of this question, one of which is currently featured on the Mammoth Cave website, and the consensus seems to be "maybe – maybe not." How reassuring. I think this is one of those things that would have to actually happen before we would know the outcome. But I sincerely hope it never does. Unforeseen occurrences notwithstanding, the best thing is to not get trapped in the first place. While this is not necessarily under our control, it's a good idea to keep thoughts of what *could* happen in mind when we go underground.

*** Reminder: the GROTTO GETAWAY will take place the weekend of February 27-March 1 at the PAINT ROCK VALLEY LODGE & RETREAT in Estill Fork, Alabama. This party with a cave trip or ridgewalk attached is a not-to-be-missed Grotto annual event, so be there! And don't forget your donations of goods for the Grotto auction. See you there!

*** A true friend is one who turns into a pizza at four in the morning.

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED