

Trip to Mount St. Helens area - March 3-4, 1967

Rob & Kay Stitt & Oregon Grotto
Investigated caves around Green Mtn.

A cryptic note with directions "follow the footprints", led us into the snow-patched lava flow, where we wandered for an hour or so until rescued by two members of the 14 member Oregon Grotto group. At this point it seemed that it should read "...leave nothing but footprints--lots of footprints."

Beaver cave is on the east side of and parallel to the mountain, running south. The upper level is right on the surface, with a wall only one foot thick in places. After several hundred feet, of stoop walking, it drops via a spiral about twenty-four feet to a lower level, which is quite large and high, with a cross-section similar to a lopsided, inverted pear and with smooth walls, and a cinder floor. At one point a constriction in the passage caused large waves in the cinders, height as much as twelve inches, with length two-four feet. At the end, several hundred feet farther on, the ceiling drops to seven inches, but more cave can be seen beyond. The air flow downtube at the top of the spiral was estimated at 100-200 ft.³/sec.

Dollar and a Dime cave is on the west side. The faster route is over the top of the mountain from Beaver (1 hour vs. 2½ going around). Important features include: solutional formations (stalactites & fluting) on ceiling in several places; numerous lava helectites, stalactites, and soda straws, some up to eight inches long; spiders (daddy long legs) in room uptube from entrance. At one place the spiders were clustered so thick on the wall that their legs seemed to make a beard on the wall. Could they be hibernating? The cave has two entrances.

Between Dollar and a Dime and Bat cave we found a new sink which looks quite good--appears to go in both directions. We didn't have time to check it out.

Dollar and a Dime, the new sinkhole, and Bat cave are all right at the edge of the flow, quite close to the break line of Green Mountain. They are probably all part of the same system, since they have similar orientation and are all about the same distance from the edge of the flow.

On Green Mountain, there are the standing trunks of large trees apparently destroyed by fire well before the growth of the present forest. Might this fire have been caused by the flows around the mountain, and thus offer a good example for radio carbon dating the flows?
- R.S.

VULCANOSPELEOLOGICAL ABSTRACTS

- by Bill Halliday

Lindsley, Nan. 1966. Lava caves. Texas Caver, 11(7):86 July and 11(8):95, August.

A pleasant introductory-type article based on mostly early standard sources together with some fairly recent southwestern spelunker reports. Included is mention of the potential of lava caves as lunar shelters, based on Jack Green's 1963 discussion. Nothing in this "International Journal of Vulcanospeleology" nor the W.S.S. Bulletins is included. No lava tubes are known to exist in Texas, incidentally.
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Sloane, Howard and Gurnee, Russ. 1966. Visiting American caves, Crown, N.Y., p.8.

Includes a concise, nicely written summary of the older concept of vulcanospeleogenesis, ending:

"This is the extent of the growth of a lava tube. Born in the fiery flash of the flaming lava, maturing in the moments of the draining of the tube, it remains in a suspended state until the roof collapses or it is filled again by later lava flows."

This is followed by a nice photograph of Valentine Cave in Lava Beds National Monument, California, showing multiple lateral ridges and gutters, neatly negating the simplicity of the concept expressed by the text.

VOLCANIC FISSURE AT LEAST 600 FEET DEEP

Unofficial but reliable reports from the new Gem State Grotto indicate that they reached a depth of 600 feet in the South Grotto of the Crystal Ice Caves rift, without any sign of bottom. This was achieved over the February 22 weekend. See DEPTHS OF THE EARTH for basic information on this one. It's near Craters of the Moon and may well be significantly related to lunar rills.
- W.R.H.

VANCOUVER ISLAND SPELEOBIOLOGICAL NOTES - BILL HALLIDAY

Dennis Richards writes that the supposed cougar skull from Whiskey Jack Cave has been identified by H. Burkholder of the B.C. Provincial Museum as being black bear. Blacktail deer also was identified in material from that cave.

Dr. Hatch at the University of Washington reports that the beetle from Hourglass Cave is the common *Scaphinotus angusticollis*.

HELP STAMP OUT THE BUREAU OF RECLAMATION!!!

Other newsletters please copy slogan above, cribbed from THE WRETCHED MESS NEWS (West Yellowstone, Mont.) Vol. 4, #3, p.1 - and the Seattle Times Magazine Section, Jan. 29, 1967 p. 10.