

THE CASCADE CAVER  
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 INITIAL SPELEOLOGICAL RECONNAISSANCE OF THE DOCK BUTTE KARST AREA, WHATCOM  
 COUNTY, WASHINGTON----by William R. Halliday

An alpine karst area was reported in 1966 by Danner\* but no speleological reconnaissance was possible until late in the summer of 1968. In August, a small Cascade Grotto scouting party investigated the area, finding many sinks and one resurgence cave which was explored for a few yards after rock was removed from its entrance. Similar excavation in another sink permitted entry for a few feet. The area was again visited September 8, 1968.

As presently known, the Dock Butte karst area occupies a roughly L-shaped area in meadow country on the northern slopes of the butte. The shorter arm of the L runs NE-SW along the narrow ridge above Blue Lake. On the east side of the ridge, it begins at several large cliffside sinks above the north end of Blue lake. Danner reports limestone in these cliffs and lists it separately as the Blue Lake deposit; speleologically such limestone would appear intimately associated with those deposits on the ridge and butte above

The west side of the ridge is steep but not vertical. A large sink was noted from a distance, located about 100 yards farther north than any on the east side.

The longer arm of the L extends west along the northern slopes of Dock Butte from the junction of the ridge just mentioned. Small sinks and heavily grooved limestone pinnacles are numerous. Only a single dry streamcourse of any size was noted, all others terminating in sinks within a few dozen yards. The limestone is a beautiful light grey of unusual homogeneity but other rocks crop out within the area also.

Near the southeastern extent of the limestone, a sink of moderate size shows the excavation referred to above.

Two or three hundred yards to the southwest, about fifty feet down a steep, rough slope from a notable sinkhole flat, is the resurgence cave mentioned above. Water temperature is 35 F. Curving slightly to the right, it was explored about 40 feet to an impenetrable choke without finding a ceiling height of more than three feet or any feature of significance. Slightly stratified stream deposits and a poorly developed horizon were noted. Except in very dry seasons, it is not possible to examine the interior of this cave without crawling in the stream.

The area is at an elevation of roughly 4500 to 4750 feet. The steep ridge slopes, particularly on the northwest (the upper slopes of Wanlick Creek Canyon), are very brushy but the ridgetop and butte slope are open alpine heather-grassland meadow, with patches of alpine trees. The scenic resources of the area are immense, except where marred by inappropriate logging practices in the valleys below.

This area straddles the Whatcom-Skagit county line, but appears to lie mostly in the former, in section 32, T37N, R8E. The remainder is in section 5, T36N, R8E.

The Washington Monument karst area also delineated by Danner has not yet been visited. They may prove to be interrelated.

\* Danner, W.R., 1966, Limestone resources of western Washington., Wash. Div. Mines & Geology Bull. 52, 474 pp.

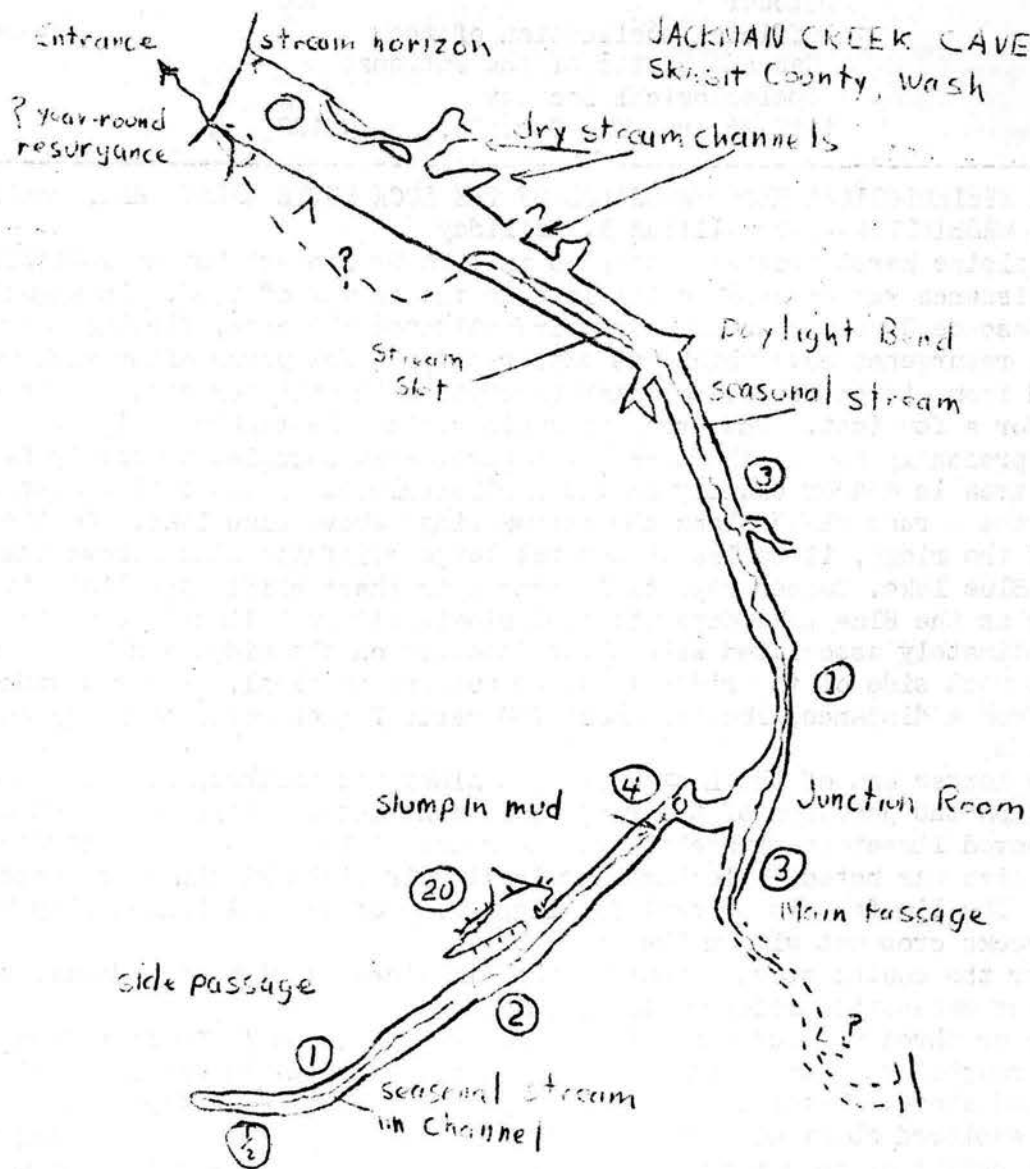
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 In case you haven't already noticed, this issue of the CAVER is dedicated to the proposition that there are, indeed, some limestone caves in Washington, and that all that is need for them to be found is a little bit of work.....so get busy!!!!!!!!!!!!

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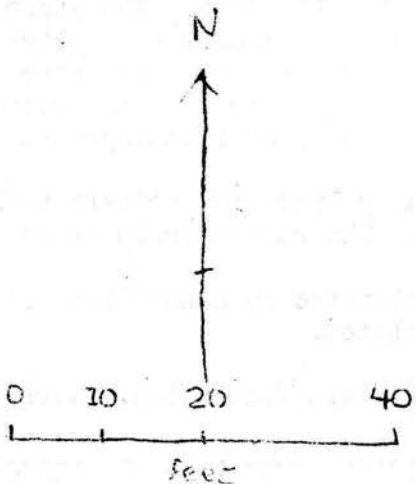
CASCADE CAVER

Floor Plan

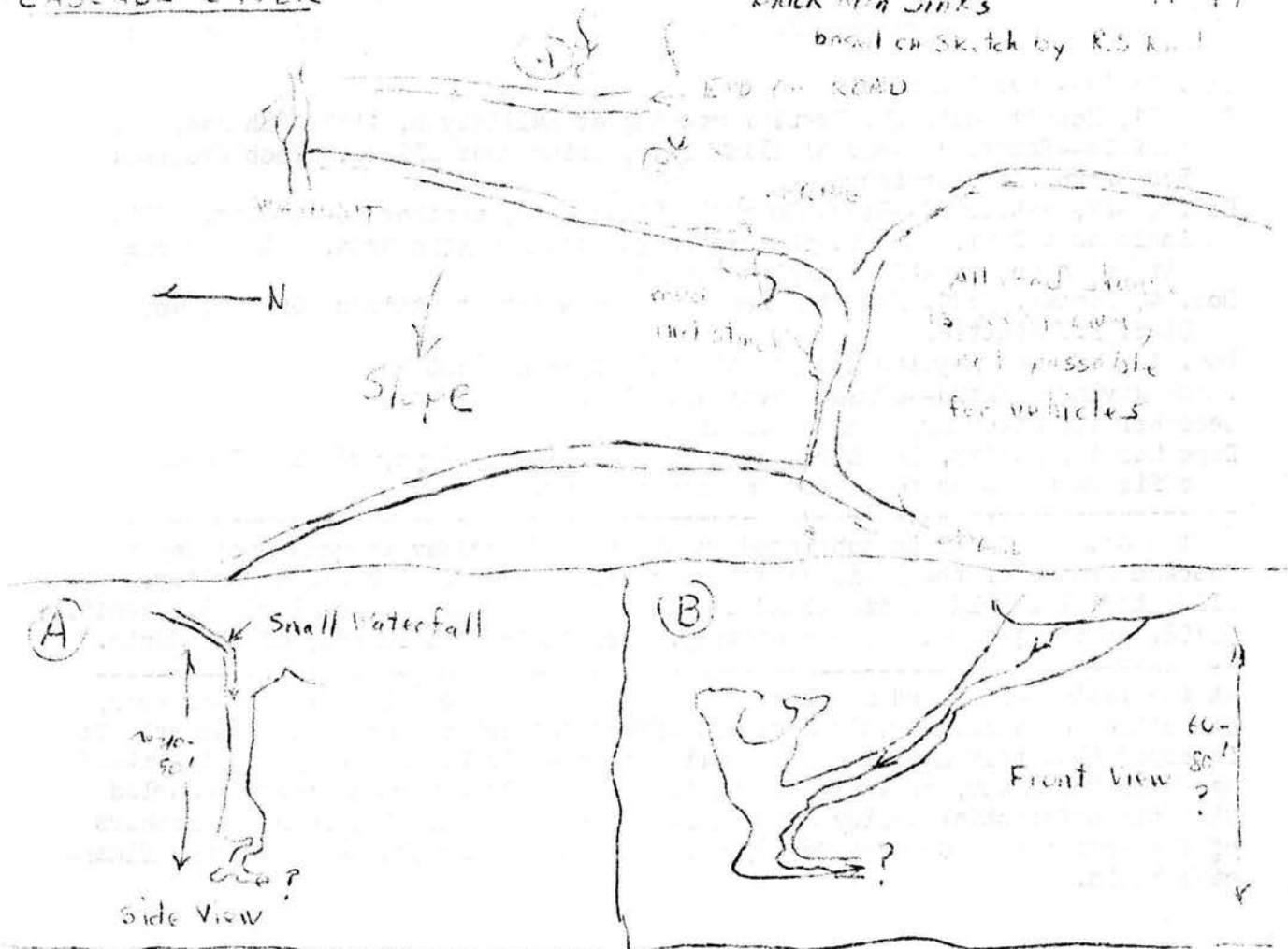
JACKMAN CREEK CAVE  
Skagit County, Wash



compass & tape survey  
Cascade Grotto of the  
National Speleological Society  
July 15, 1968



based on sketch by R.S. Knutson



SOME NOTES ON THE BLACK MOUNTAIN SINKS AREA

The maps above were provided by Steve Knutson of the Oregon Grotto, the text seems to be missing. According to Jan Roberts, based upon Danner, "There are at least two karst areas, a couple of resurgents, and three sink-holes, two of which have sizable pits in them." According to Jan, the Oregonians stated "that there are blocked crawlways at the bottoms of two pits", apparently the pits shown above. There may be more in the area. According to Danner, "a rather wide band of limestone is reported along the crest of Black Mtn. into Canada, in sections 4, 9, 8, (?) and 16. The estimated tonnage is 15 million tons."

UNAMED CAVE ON ORCAS ISLAND, WASH. by Ted Danner, U. of B. C.

A new cave for you: at the Imperial property on the western coast of Orcas Island. A previously unknown limestone outcrop lies about 225 ft. SE of the old quarry and near the base of the westfacing hill overlooking the Imperial deposits. The limestone consists of an elongate mound about 4 ft. hg., 60 ft. lg, and 15 ft. wd. Volcanic rocks are exposed a few feet to the east but all contacts of the limestone with bedrock are concealed. Three small cave openings are found along the west side of the outcrop. they average about one foot in height and several feet in width. I did not have time to examine them but they look as if they lead into a small cave system.

I also noticed solution cavities in a mound of limestone at the southwest side of the drain leading into the old quarry. None of this looks accessible. This mound is at the west end of the drain cut and is a separate body of limestone from that in the quarry.

COMING EVENTS--for further information on trips, call Bob Brown, WE-5-2064.

Oct. 12-13--Cave Ridge trip

Oct. 21, Monday. 8:00 PM, Regular meeting at Halliday's, 1117 36th Ave. E., Seattle--Program: General slide show, bring your slides. Tech Program: Bob Brown, Carbide Lamps.

Oct. 26-27, Sat. Sun.--Black Mountain Sinks trip, weather permitting. This includes a 2 mi. walk to the exciting Black Mountain area, with several sinkholes and beautiful alpine scenery.

Nov. 4, Monday, 7:30, Executive committee meeting at Stitt's, 600 Lk. Wn. Blvd. E., Seattle.

Nov. 18, Monday, Regular meeting at Halliday's at 8:00 PM.

Thanksgiving weekend--Oregon Caves area trip.

December 14, Saturday, Annual Dinner Meeting

December 16, Monday, Regular meeting at Halliday's, 8 pm, w/ election of officers and exec committee for coming year.

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The CASCADE CAVER is published on the second Tuesday of each month by the Cascade Grotto of the National Speleological Society. Rob Stitt, editor. All material should be submitted to the editor at 600 Lk. Wn. Blvd. E., Seattle, 98102, or brought to a grotto meeting. Deadline: 1st Tuesday of the Month.  
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At the last Exec. Board meeting, the Grotto dues were raised to \$3 per year, effective in January. This does not affect subscribing members, however. It is hoped that this dues increase will enable us to bring you some multilithed pages in the CAVER, an increased Grotto store, and other services. Coupled with the differential policy adopted at the previous meeting (non NSS members of the Grotto pay 50% more dues), this should put the Grotto on a sound financial basis.

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