



CASCADE Caver

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Cascade Caver

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MEETINGS

Regular grotto meetings are held monthly at 7:00 pm on the third Friday of each month at the Shoreline Community Center in the Hamlin room. The Community Center is at 18560 1st Ave NE in Shoreline.

Please see the back cover for directions.

UPCOMING EVENTS

August 2006 NSS Convention
Bellingham, WA

COVER

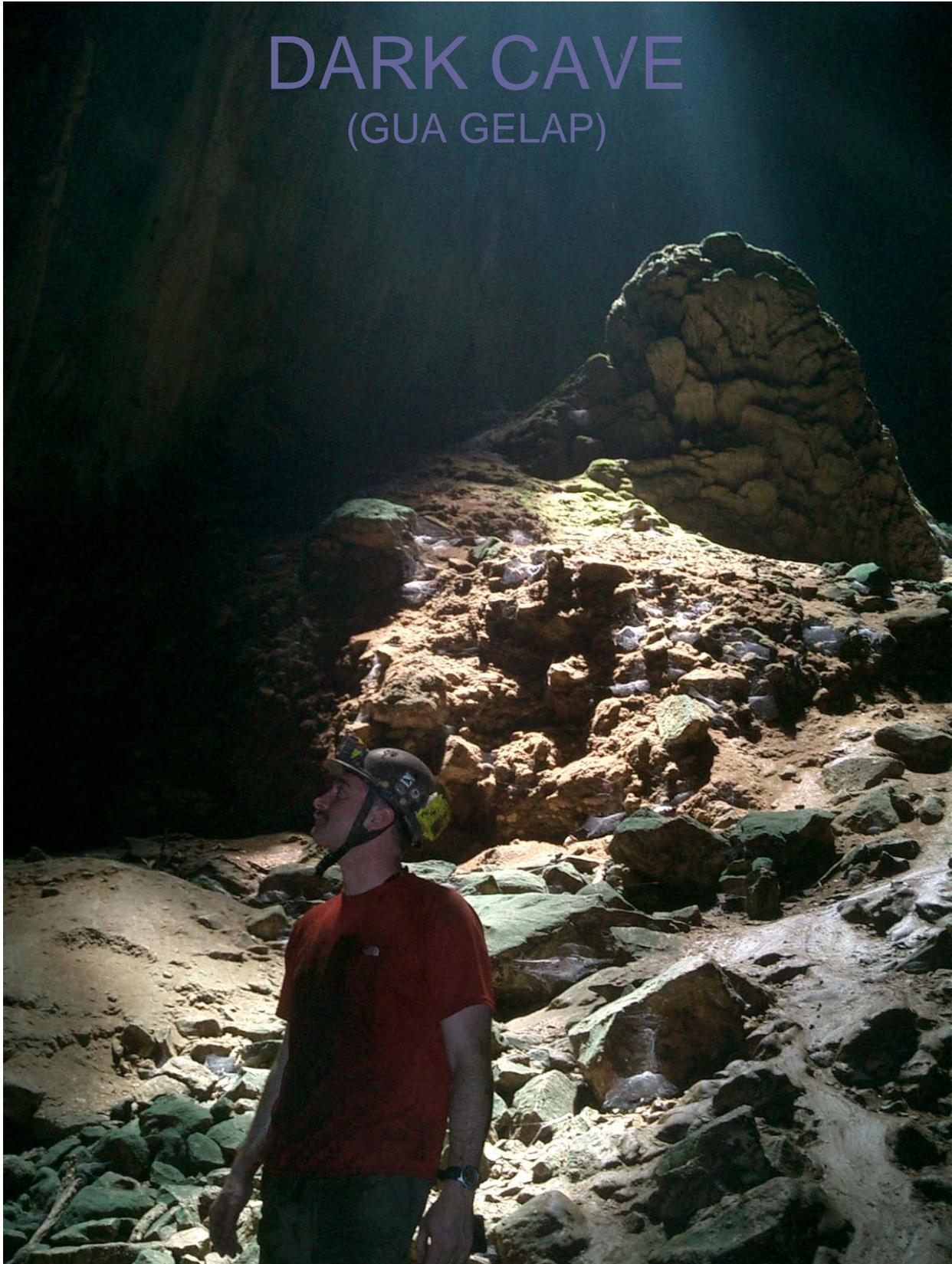
This month's cover art, is a composite created by Michael McCormack consisting of a US Navy Stock photo of the USS Nimitz, a photo of Dave Decker by an unknown photographer, and a photograph of a cave entrance by Dave Decker. The original Photograph of Dave can be found on page 21 and the original entrance photo can be found on page 33.

INFORMATION ABOUT THIS ISSUE

LCDR Dave Decker recently completed a tour of duty on the USS Nimitz. The two articles in this issue are the trip reports from the first half of his tour.

DARK CAVE

(GUA GELAP)



Dark Cave/Batu Caves – 07/01/05 **Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia**

By Dave Decker

Going to sleep at four in the morning after a night of boozing is no way to start a day caving. However, it never seems to stop me and at 10 AM, less than six hours later, I met Collin Tolbert-Smith (Narco) and Mark Matthys (Spaz) downstairs where Liz Price was waiting for us in the Lobby of the Westin Hotel.

We jumped into Liz's brand new green Hyundai and headed off for Batu Caves, a Hindu temple on the outskirts of KL. Less than 15 minutes later we were pulling into the parking lot and getting kitted up under partly cloudy skies. I was admiring the large jungle covered limestone massif as well as the flight of 272 colorful steps that led up to the main temple while we all got dressed and grabbed our gear. On our way in, Liz pointed out some of the new construction going on, one of which will be a 40 meter (130-foot) tall statue of Lord Muruga when completed. As we started to climb the stairs we noticed a group of people loitering around the halfway mark.

Getting closer, we could see that they were all watching a group of Long-tailed Macaque monkeys that were looking for handouts from the crowd. There were six in all, the largest of which stood about 60 centimeters (two feet) tall.

We took a few photos and moved on to the entrance of Dark Cave (Gua Gelap) about three-quarters of the way up the steps on the left.



The management of Dark Cave had recently changed hands as well as their policy on tours through the cave, Liz was able to work out an agreement to be our tour guide (well, kinda-sorta) and luckily enough still had a key that worked in the lock. A small stray dog led the way through the gate and we all followed it up the stairs to the cave entrance. After pausing for the mandatory group shot, we all followed Liz into the large entrance chamber around 10:30.



The first thing we saw was the “No Admittance” or “Dilarang Masuk” sign, which we promptly ignored since Liz was a qualified guide, the next thing we saw were quite a few scaffolding poles and hardware brought in by one of the cave guides and meant to be used for exploration purposes. As we made our way further along the old concrete tourist path we could hear a large number of fruit bats in the chamber ahead.

The room we were in, Cavern “A”, was approximately 20 meters (65 feet) across and easily 30 meters (100 feet) high. The path led a sinuous route through the breakdown and soon we were under a corrugated canopy built to keep the trail clear of bat guano; at our feet were thousands of cockroaches feasting on the bat droppings and anything else unfortunate enough to find itself on the floor of the cavern.

In the distance we could see rays of sunshine pouring in from a skylight far overhead. As we moved closer to the opening, the bat chirps got louder and louder and we could actually start to see them swirling around in the large domed room. About that time we were all startled by a stray dog coming toward us in the gloom! It was a different one than the first dog, a little larger and greyer and not as friendly. Liz told us that the dogs come into the caves to eat dead bats that they find on the floor and that on several occasions she’d had two dogs accompany her on her tours. The bats and the dog had taken our attention away from the

cockroaches and at some point they had stopped swarming around our feet. From here we rounded the corner to the left and entered Cavern “B”.

Not quite as large as Cavern “A”, but still impressive, Cavern “B” started trending down. We followed the path for quite a while and the further we got the more we saw. The path wound around several very large stalagmites, flowstone decorated the walls and way up above we could barely make out stalactites larger than a person.

At one point Liz pointed out some mud that had been smeared on the wall by a well meaning man, but not very gifted in the craft of cave preservation. Now in some caves this will work, and he had the right idea, just not the right place. Several large mud smears adorned a white flowstone wall that had graffiti on it. We went through a small wind tunnel, past an area of micro gours, down a few steps and entered the Great Cavern. This room was incredibly large, so much so that even with a fair sized skylight at the far end, most of the room was left in the dark.

In the Great Cavern we went to see a large white formation, and next Liz pointed out a stalagmite that resembled more so than most a 5-foot penis!



A couple of meters down the passage, a five - centimeter (two-inch) thick drapery jutted into the path. We could see the work of the above mentioned cave conservationist here too, but with even sadder consequences. The drapery had been covered in vermiculations from top to bottom, but the gentleman decided he didn't like the way they looked, so he scrubbed them off as far up as he could reach. Luckily he was a man of short stature, so he couldn't reach very high. The other sad piece of information about this drapery (and, so it seemed, many other speleothems) was that the bottom third had been broken off so that the trail could go directly under it. It apparently didn't cross anybody's mind to build the trail around it which would have been very easy to do considering the large size of the passage.

Beyond the drapery, steps led down into Cavern "D". Leaving the rest of The Great Cavern for later, Liz told us how disappointed she was that the Malaysian cavers weren't more interested in doing research and exploration in the cave as we descended into the depths.

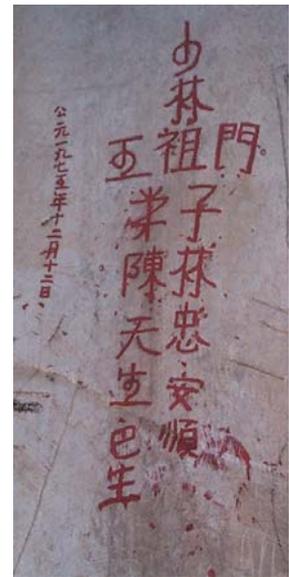
Cavern "D" had many interesting features, a couple of large floor to ceiling columns, many small pools and rim stone dams and a rock



formation that resembled an irregularly shaped stalagmite which had a large round hole about ¾ of the way up the right side making it look like

an eagle face. One of the rim stone dams had a perfect semi-circle shape to it. This cavern was very small compared to the first two we had been in, only about three or four meters wide by about three meters high (10 to 13 feet by 10 feet) and smaller in some places. Of course, if this were in Washington it would be booming trunk passage! We continued further into the cave admiring all the speleothems which graced the way and noting all the graffiti as well.

There were several places in this particular part of the cave where bright red Chinese letters had been scrawled on the walls. Liz told us it was fairly old, having been written during "The Emergency", (the Communist War which followed WW II).

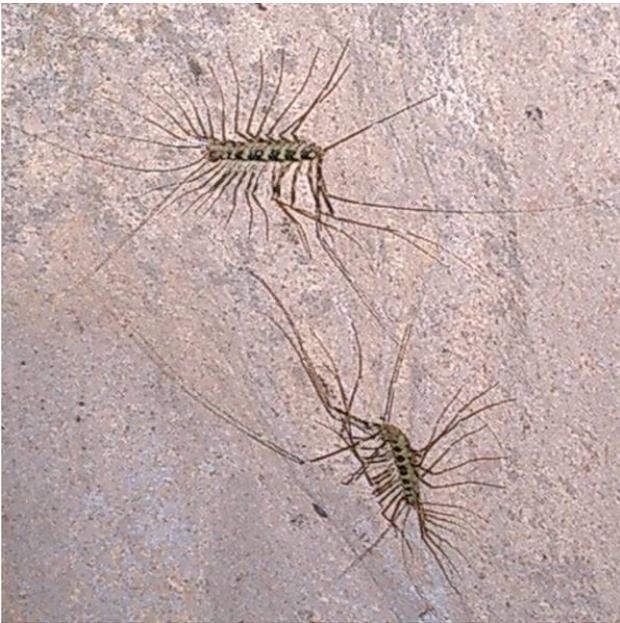


As we advanced further the passage became more phreatic in nature with highly sculpted walls and ceiling, it made me think of what it must be like to walk through Swiss cheese. In the terminus room of this particular side passage there was a profusion of formations, a bright white stalagmite poking up through black flowstone, ocher stalactites reaching for reddish stubs on the floor, helectites, soda straws, what may have been fossil corals and much more, it was a feast for the eyes! When we'd had our fill we headed back the way we had come to resume our tour of the rest of the cave, this had only been a small side passage of the 2- km long void.

Little did we know we hadn't seen anything yet, as we got to the top of the stairs and continued forward we entered the largest chamber in the

cave, Cavern “C”. I can’t even take a guess at how large this part of the cave was, let me just say it was humongous!

The fruit bats were once again screeching overhead, geckos, crickets and centipedes adorned the walls, spiders roamed their webs, millipedes squirmed along the floor and snails filled the small intermittent stream running through the center of the room. The long-legged centipedes, *Thereuopoda longicornis*, weren’t the ones I was used to back home, these were something out of Alien V – Revenge of the Face Suckers! They were easily the size of my hand with large bony legs emanating from brown and yellow articulated bodies. They were fast too, they moved just like the things from Alien.



The geckos were around 12 cm (five inches) long with a short tail and blue eyes. At first we thought the tails had been lost via predation, but then we noticed that they all had very short tails and decided it was natural. (Later, however, we found out that wasn’t the case.)

There were several types of spiders in the cave, one was about 3-4 cm (inch and a half) across, but not very interesting.

The other was a trap door spider, *Liphistius batuensis*, the species of which is endemic to this cave only. We didn’t actually get to see this spider, but the nest was quite interesting. A small mud splotch on the wall about 2 cm wide and 5 cm long that had a trapdoor on the front and a small escape hatch at the back. (This is camouflage for the silken nest inside.) From under the trapdoor, eight trip wires that looked like they may have been the actual spider legs (they weren’t) radiated in a semi-circle. The spider puts a foot on each of the trip wires and when it feels one vibrate it will open the trapdoor and grab whatever set it off and have it for a nice meal.

The millipedes and snails were about the same size and color. The snails were a whitish color and cone shaped, about 1 ½ cm long, while the millipedes were grey and tubular and about 2 ½ cm long. Both were feeding off the guano that covered the floor. Along the route we took was a large boulder that had a hole in it, so Spaz and I took turns sticking our head in from one side while Liz and Narco took pictures.

As we moved on we came across a Cave Racer, *Elaphe taeniura*, a snake a little over two meters (seven feet) long and cream in color, curled up under a rock. We took a couple of photos and moved on, lucky thing we did since we found another Cave Racer just up the trail eating a bat it had previously constricted! Liz was familiar with this particular snake having recognized it from the scars on its back. We theorized how they may have gotten there, dog bite, rat attack, rock fall, who knows? We spent about twenty minutes there watching it consume the 15 cm (six inch) long fruit bat. Once it got its jaws around the wings, which was no small task, the bat went in pretty easily. At that point the snake

reared up and put about one third of its body straight up a rock wall, presumably to help the bat move down its stomach. It was cool watching the bat move down the snake's body, we could see the outline of the wings pressing out against the shiny yellow and red scales. At one point while we were watching the snake, Spaz ventured out onto the "mud" covered floor and sunk in up to his toes. I told him I wouldn't do that if I were you.

Of course he replied "why not?" so I told him he was ankle deep in bat guano! He didn't think that was very funny and quickly moved back to the trail, but Liz and I found it hilarious!

Eventually we continued on and left the snake to enjoy its meal in peace.

We continued to see cave fauna everywhere. We saw a long-legged centipede on the wall eating a cricket it had snared. The cave crickets, *Diestrammena* have extremely long appendages, so it looked like the centipede had a moustache!

We even found a part of the cave where insect eating bats had separated themselves from their noisy neighbors the fruit bats. We went from the loud squeaks of the fruit bats to the hushed whispers of the insect eater's wings within a matter of 10 meters (30 feet). Looking up into the alcoves where the bats hung out (ha funny) we could see the bright red eyes reflecting our lamps, now I know where the villainous Halloween bats get their red eyes! It was truly a "National Geographic" moment.



Our concrete trail had ceased to exist some time ago, I don't even recall leaving it. We made our way along the wall where the guano barely covered the rock, passing a plastic corrugated panel that Liz had placed over a year ago to measure the accumulation rate of the guano (none seemed to have fallen on the panel) and then worked our way to the back of the cave passing several deep guano pits on the way. Here we found a dead bird. There were several explanations for it being there, the two most popular theories we came up with was a second entrance (we thought we could smell fresh air, well, fresher air than we'd been in) or that a rat

had dragged it back there. Later we found part of a wing closer to the second skylight so the second theory became even more plausible. At the very back of the cave I noticed a fault which I pointed out to Liz, she had never seen it before. It showed movement along a dip of about a meter (three feet). Since there was no place else to go from here, we headed out.

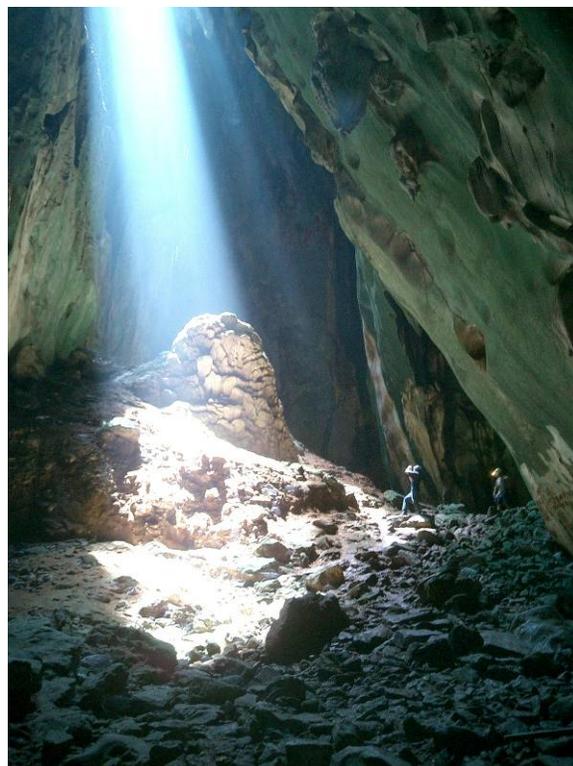
We had entered the room from the south west on the north wall and so we exited via the south wall. The chamber was so large it was like being in an entirely different cavern.

Some things I noticed on the way out was the great number of small flying insects in the cavern, little bits of drifting guano slowly making their way to the floor and the absence of the smell of ammonia from the bat guano probably due to the large amount of airflow in the cave. At one point we passed a small pool that had formed from calcite laden water dripping on top of the bat guano, it even had calcified bat bones in it! Near the middle of the room, lengthwise, we came upon a small side chamber and Liz pointed out an 11-cm nubbin in the ceiling. It resembled a fossilized lizard, but clearly was not. The only thing I could think of that made any sense was something similar to boxwork, a mineral protrusion harder than the surrounding four-hundred million year old limestone. It was at this point that Liz showed us the “crawly bit”. A small 2-meter wide, 60-cm high opening led to an even smaller crawl.

Spaz and I decided to go for it, while Collin remained with Liz. I grabbed my knee pads, gloves and extra batteries, and then handed my pack to Collin for him to carry around the big way. Spaz started in and I followed right behind. At the first squeeze Spaz was a little apprehensive about going in, but finally went ahead and wormed through. The second squeeze almost stopped him cold when his chest

and back became pressed against the floor and ceiling respectively. I told him how to maneuver his body to get through and he popped into the next room no problem, however, he thought I might have a little trouble getting through. He was still turning around while he voiced his opinion, but I was already through and standing up by the time he got done. The passage wound around a bit and at one point my light failed on me. Turns out it was only a loose connection, so I banged it until it started working again and we continued on.

A few meters later we made a sharp left turn followed by an easy scramble up a flowstone wall, over a hump and then down a three meter climb on the other side into another large room. At this point we didn't really know where to go, so we started exploring. We poked our heads into a couple of leads which petered out immediately. I did a slippery climb up a slope on the opposite side of the room from which we came in and it led to a four meter cliff that went into a high lead, OK, this was a possible way



on. Next we tried an arched passage that paralleled the room and it led to a muddy crawl that dead-ended in fill. Our next option was a small tube half-way up the side wall of the arched room passage, so I climbed up and into the 60 cm tube that angled up at about 40 degrees and made my way to the top, only to find myself looking into the larger room that we had just been in.

About this time I heard Liz shouting for us and then saw her light pop around the corner of the only lead we hadn't tried yet. As she came around the corner Spaz went out to greet her and I extricated myself from the tube then joined them in the big room. A short climb up a two meter cliff, doubling back over the top of the original way we had entered brought us into an upper level room with a large aluminum ladder leading up to a small grotto near the ceiling. This had been brought in by an explorer (the same guy who brought the scaffolding in) several years ago and left behind when he found the lead didn't go.

We traipsed along the room until we came to a small permanent pool, which, according to Liz, was very low for this time of year, and waded through it. The mud was shoe-eater deep, but we made it through with no losses and few battle wounds. On the other side we could see sunlight coming from the skylight we had seen earlier in The Great Cavern, only this time we were on the opposite side of it. We could see Collin in the distance taking pictures so we all made haste and met up with him in the shaft of light illuminating the breakdown pile below. We took a few minutes here to get some pictures and then headed out. Liz told us about the only part of the cave we hadn't seen, the Pothole Series, as we made our way back to the cement path.

On the way back, Collin was startled momentarily by the same dog we saw on the

way in. It was sitting right along the trail and didn't move until Collin was almost on top of it. It would have startled me too if I'd have been the first one through, something that big moving just outside of your field of illumination in a cave can be quite disturbing! (Can you say Hodag, or in this case, Hodog!) Just after that we heard voices up cavern and shortly thereafter ran into one of the cave guides employed by the private company running the cave. Liz and Suja had known each other for years, so we stopped to chat for a couple of minutes. Suja noted our muddy shirts and commented on the "grotty crawl" then let us continue out while he and his two wards moved off into the cave.

Upon exiting, we locked the gate, wiped off our shoes and then continued up the steps to Temple Cave amidst calls of "coal miner" from the locals and stares of horror from the tourists. Temple Cave is a large wang (doline) with an arched entrance. The entire floor has been concreted over and there are several statues and alters within. Near the back, we could look straight up over 100 meters and see the sky framed by jungle while monkeys played along the cliffs. We noted that there was quite a bit of graffiti and I wondered aloud why it was tolerated in a shrine. Liz told us of several more caves within the bukit (hill) including one that looked out upon the very spot we were standing. I'll tell you, it sure whetted my appetite for Malaysian caving! Speaking of appetite, we were all starving, so at 14:00 we made our way back down the steps, past the monkeys, across the street and into one of the local outdoor restaurants. Liz ordered for us and we ended up getting chicken curry served with rice, green beans, potatoes, sliced green peppers and coleslaw served on a banana leaf! Spaz and I shared warm coconut milk straight from the nut and Liz had lime water while Collin went without. After lunch we went back to the car, changed discreetly in the parking lot so that we wouldn't pollute Liz's brand new car with cave

mud and then headed back to the hotel. That evening we repeated the exploits of the night before, only this time Liz joined us and we stayed out until 5 AM.

I'd like to say terima kasih (thanks) to Liz Price for the grand tour of Gua Gelap, all the information she has provided that made our liberty call in Kuala Lumpur so successful and her continued friendship since we've departed Malaysia. Much of the technical information and translations in this report come from her book "Caves and Karst of Peninsular Malaysia" available from her website at <http://www.geocities.com/cavingliz/MalaysianCaves.html>, Speleobooks, and the NSS book store.



GUAM - 06/18/05 – 06/22/05

By Dave Decker

Senior Shore Patrol, what fun. Cecil and the XO picked Begwi and I up at the pier and then took us on a quick tour of the areas we'd be working in. They'd been here for two days already and had a pretty good lay of the land. First stop was the Hagatna Police Station where all the processing would take place if it was necessary. Then we went down to Tumon where all the party spots are located. They showed us where all the strip clubs and dance clubs were, all the gay bars to stay away from (lots of transvestites), and all the regular bars as well as the local police station that we'd be based out of. Begwi and I then went to our hotel, the Outrigger – Guam, and checked into our hotel room. After changing into our whites, we headed back down to the police station to get our in-brief and then I stayed there while the XO, Cecil and Begwi went back to the ship to pick up our first batch of watch standers. Not too much was happening that night, so they let me off to go and do whatever I wanted. I went back to the hotel and did some laundry, then caught a ride with Cricket down to the admin. Everybody had already left by then, so Cricket and I, along with Millhouse, stayed there and drank beer for awhile and enjoyed a pizza. Fez, Narco and Gerbil showed up an hour or so later and then Cricket, Fez and I headed out into town to find the rest of the squadron. They had been dropped off by the hotel shuttle at Pleasure Island, which wasn't one of the places we'd been shown as shore patrol, so I had no idea where it was. It turned out to be the whole downtown area of Tumon! So much for finding that group! The rest of us (including Middie Humphries and Francis who we ran into on the street) headed up to a bar called Club USA, where we had a couple of beers and enjoyed the

local entertainment. That was pretty much it for the first night.

Day two – I rented a car and drove over to the northeast side of the island. Andersen AFB is up there, so I got a base pass and headed out to the beaches.

Star Sand Beach was my first destination, the sand is made almost entirely of foraminifers, tiny plankton that leave star shaped skeletons when they die. They are a light orange color and give the beach an interesting look.

Tarague Beach was also here, along with two flank margin caves. The first one I found was Mergagan Point Cave which had collapsed in an earthquake several years ago. There were two large Banana spiders (body about an inch long, half an inch wide with legs out to two inches, brown in color with a speckled yellow belly) which had taken up residence there, so I couldn't even poke my head through the collapse without disturbing them. The next cave I came to was Tarague Cliff Cave; it was marked as no trespassing, so I couldn't go in there either!



I continued on down the beach where I found a tree full of black butterflies with blue spots on their wings, there must have been hundreds of

them! It was neat to see all the butterflies flutter by.

By this time the afternoon was starting to wear away and I still had a couple of other places I wanted to go, it was 90 degrees out and 100 % humidity, so I was sweating like you read about. I started hoofing it back to my car and got more drenched by the minute. On the way back I spotted a large grasshopper in the sand below one of the overhanging cliff faces, so I stopped for a quick picture.

On the drive off base I stopped to see the remnants of a B-52 that had been torn apart in a Typhoon and strewn about the forest, not much was left, only the tail section.

Once on the road again I headed for Ritidian Point National Wildlife Refuge. This was located on the northwest side of the island, but it took me only 15 minutes to get there (small island). There were several caves marked on the map here as well, so I figured I'd be able to get into at least one of them. As I pulled into the refuge, I spotted Ritidian Gate Cave off to my right. I found a parking spot and then spent the next ten minutes trying to find a way to get to it. Finally I found a small path behind a bus stop shelter that led into the jungle in the general direction of the cave, so I followed it.

After ducking under spider webs, pushing past giant plants and stepping over arm size vines, I made it to the entrance. The cave was in the side of a limestone cliff, with vines hanging down and jungle plants all around, absolutely beautiful! I put my helmet on, found my



way around the Banana spiders and entered the cave.

Once inside I could see that it was well decorated. Flowstone covered the walls, large columns reached from floor to ceiling and stalactites hung everywhere. There were a couple of small passages heading off in several directions, but since I was alone I stuck to the main room, which was quite large. Near the back were several fried egg stalagmites, microgours on the flowstone and an interesting false floor. After exploring this room, I took several pictures and then made my way out of the cave and back to my car. I found a park ranger who was able to answer several of my questions including what type of spiders were all over the place and what type of lizard I was seeing everywhere (Blue Tailed Skinks). She also told me the Banana spiders weren't poisonous, so I stopped worrying about them.

We chatted for a while; she told me all the caves in the preserve were off limits for various reasons including RGC, which I told her I'd been in. They were in the middle of a restoration project, I couldn't tell and told her they were doing a great job and sorry I went in without permission. She said not to worry about it since it was obvious by our conversation that I wasn't there to vandalize anything. I also asked her if there were any fruit bats around, she said the only place on the island they could be found in the wild was on Andersen AFB where I'd just come from and they were on a part of the base that was restricted. By this time it was getting late and I had to be back to the police station by 5 PM for my evening shore patrol stint. I headed back, but not before stopping at the Ritidian Point overlook for a grand view of the ocean. The shore patrol went by with hardly any incidents, I got to ride around with Officer Chris Dellucio in his patrol car. He showed me some more of the local spots including the hidden and gated Devil's Punchbowl (a 90 foot

pit cave) right there in down town. Unlike Begwi, who didn't get to bed until 5:30 AM (things picked up a bit after I left), I was in bed by 3:30 AM.

Day three – My first full day off. I was awakened by a phone call from Spaz who said he'd be interested in going caving with me today; it was about 10:30, so I jumped out of bed, showered, dressed and grabbed my gear. I met Spaz downstairs and we went to breakfast of Chamorro sausage and eggs at Shirley's, a local restaurant (Guam's version of Denny's) before heading to the south side of the island.

A quick trip on Route 4 brought us to Pago Bay and then further south to the Talofofu area. Here we were able to locate Talofofu Caves fairly easily thanks to the "Field Guide to Caves and Karst of Guam" by Danko Taborosi. The seven caves here are all that remain of a larger cave that has since collapsed; they are all side passages to the former mother cave which looks by the map to have been fairly substantial.

Since I hadn't been expecting anybody else to go caving with me, I'd only brought one helmet off the boat. I took one of the lights off of the helmet and let Spaz wear it while I went bare headed. The first cave we went into was cave #2, it had two small openings, one of which opened on to a 10 foot cliff, the other opened onto a down-climb to a small ledge and then a scramble down a flowstone wall to a large room with three large columns covered with microgours and cave curtains. The floor was false as was evident by the five foot wide, two foot deep hole in the back of the room. We could see under the floor for up to ten feet in some directions and one spot even had another small hole that we could climb through back to the secondary floor. I was surprised at how clean and graffiti free the cave was since it is a very popular and accessible tourist destination, there was hardly any trash and the only

markings were boot scuffs and some mud on the formations. The first room was easily the most decorated, with columns, stalactites, stalagmites, curtains, cave coral, flowstone and a false floor. I even found a spot with a small calcite rim deposited by blowing air. Spaz and I continued further into the cave through the second room and into the third where there was a column in the middle of the floor that had been broken, I suspect, by an earthquake.



The shift was fairly obvious, about two inches. To the right was a flowstone wall with a blue and white marine rope coming down from above. I decided to climb up and see where the passage led. Avoiding the rope, I scampered up the ledge and into another passage that had a loud roar emanating from the opposite end. Of course I had to check this out, so I called to Spaz to come on up, not to use the rope since it wasn't secured very well and I'd meet him at the backside. As I got closer to the other end the roar got louder and eventually turned into a

gushing wind pouring out of a very small hole leading out.

We'd found the third entrance! Since it was too tight to get out we turned around and made our way back to the third room and then down a side passage that led nowhere. We squirmed past each other so I could lead the way back. Once in the third room again we looked around for the way on and found a very narrow passage leading to the last room. It was in the shape of a "V" about twelve inches at the top and about an inch at the bottom, so a little difficult to get through. It also required a bend to the right and then back to the left to negotiate around a stalactite in the way. I didn't feel comfortable dragging Spaz through that type of squeeze, so we left the final room for another day.

We took some pictures on the way out and stopped to admire the first room again, noticing the pure white calcite flowstone near the ceiling and the two inch long cockroaches hanging upside down from the stalactites.

When we got back to the surface we made our way along the cliff face to caves 4 and 5 which weren't much more than shelters and then out to the arch which overlooked the beach from a couple of hundred feet up. What a view! The wind was howling through the area we were standing in making quite an impression on both of us. Cave # 3 was right here at the arch, so I ducked in there real quick, but it didn't really go anywhere. We backtracked to a fork in the trail that we had seen earlier and made our way over to cave #7 which was a large pit cave over 100 feet deep. My powerful helmet light didn't even illuminate the bottom, but we could see across the pit to several small passages.

We also saw light entering from the other side of the room and we determined it must be the "front" entrance. Spaz climbed down to a small ledge on the right side of the room we were in

for a better look and found a large diameter manila rope tied off on a stalagmite. I advised him not to use it since he had no idea who put it there or when, the history of the rope or what condition it was in after being in the hot, humid cave environment with so many hungry bugs! He agreed, so since there was no place else to go without vertical gear we continued to the next cave, cave #6. Here we were greeted with another small diameter opening, about 14 inches high and 36 inches wide, blowing like crazy, so much so the swiftly moving air was picking up small rocks and hurling them at us with a vengeance. I went on ahead to where the passage opened up and let Spaz know the wind died down to nothing there.



He came on through and we made our way to the second entrance which came out on a ledge overlooking the valley and beach below. Since we were cliffed out here, we turned around once again and made our way back through the tempest to the entrance and then back to the car. Along the way we saw some very large toads, almost the size of Bullfrogs! I didn't know if they were poison, so I didn't try to pick them up.

Our next stop was Talofofa falls. It was definitely not what I was expecting. I thought it would be a small parking area off the side of the road with a trail leading into the jungle that went to an idyllic setting with a waterfall and a

pool at the base which we could swim in. What we got was a tourist trap; concrete buildings, gift shop, museum, cable cars, ghost house and lots of pigs and stray dogs.

There must have been ten to fifteen pigs, at least five of them little babies, at the ticket booth. We had to pay \$10 each to get in (\$20 if you weren't military), so we shelled it out and took our tickets.

On the way to the cable car we went through the ghost house, Spaz was startled pretty badly when the first "show" started right in front of him with no warning. Since we were expecting them after that they were no big deal. At one point I came around the corner and fell over! In front of me a tunnel was turning clockwise with a small bridge going through it. It was extremely vertigo inducing! Spaz took one step on the bridge and he nearly fell over too! Once through the ghost house, we got on the cable car which took us over to the falls.

A sign at the upper falls said no swimming, so we were a little disappointed at that, but we continued to the lower falls via the gift shop where I picked up some postcards and a coconut bowl for Johanna. At the lower falls were several guys and gals from the ship who were jumping off the top of the falls and into a small pool at the base. Spaz joined them while I took some photos of the fun. After that we both headed up the trail to see Yokoi's cave. A Japanese soldier had hand dug a small cave to hide in during WWII and wasn't discovered living there until 1972 by local farmers, 38 years later! There wasn't much to see except the opening since we weren't allowed to actually go in the "cave".

At this point we were pretty much done with the tourist trap thing, so we went back to the car and then backtracked to Talofofa Bay where I picked up some very unusual magnetite sand.

I've seen plenty of beaches with magnetite in the sand, but never one where the entire beach was made up of it! Very cool, I got at least ten samples worth just because it was so interesting.

We eventually got to Route 17 which led to Tarzan falls, but it was only about 30 minutes to sunset. We decided to see if we could find it anyway and headed on up. We got there in about 10 minutes. This was more like what I described above, a small turnout in the road etc. The sign there read "1.4 mile hike, it will take you 3 hours to complete". We had 20 minutes to sunset, but we decided to do it anyway since we had our helmet lamps. We started hoofing it down the trail expecting it to take us about 30 minutes to reach the falls, so when we got there in 10 minutes we were taken aback.

It took us about another five minutes to make it to the base of the falls, and yes, we were in the



right place! We decided the sign meant 1.4 miles round trip and three hours for fat people!

Anyway, it was still light when we got there, so we took a few pictures then climbed the cliff next to the waterfall instead of taking the steep jungle path back to the top. We actually made it back to the car with a little light to spare. We were pretty close to Naval Base Hagatna by this time, so I dropped Spaz off at the boat and headed back to Tumon where I grabbed a shower, washed my clothes and headed out to watch the buffoonery going on with the shore patrol vs. drinking sailors.

Day four – I had intended to go diving, but I stayed up way too late the night before and ended up sleeping until noon. I ate lunch with the XO, Begwi and Cecil at the Hardrock Café and then took a little driving trip up the beach. I stopped at the Hotel Nikko – Guam and walked through their lobby, very nice place. I'd recommend staying there. Anyway, I made my way down to the beach where I found an old gun emplacement and a small nature trail.

I hiked along the cliff face to a board walk that was cut into the cliff and followed that to another beach where I could see Two Lovers' Leap, a scenic overlook north of downtown. By this time it was getting late and I had to return the rental car before I went on duty for SP, so I went looking for a gas station and couldn't find one, I decided to take the \$9 hit on the gas and just turn it in with half a tank rather than get charged for an extra hour.

Shore Patrol that night was pretty intense. We had drunks puking in the street, mouthing off to us, pissing in their jail cells after we had them arrested. People were ditching their restaurant and bar bills, stealing shoes from the shoe store, assaulting police officers (Chris, the guy I was riding with, is the one that got hit.) – all sorts of stupid stuff. We ended up arresting three people and throwing about 20 in the drunk-tank. The night before, on Begwi's watch, some moron tore apart his hotel room and was throwing the

furniture out his 11 story window! When I say tore apart, I mean drywall gone, electrical wiring ripped out of the wall, coffee pot and glasses smashed and furniture destroyed. I had several people come up to me and ask what made people act that way; I answered simply “alcohol”. I’m sure all those idiots will be pretty upset as well as their shipmates when they discover they won’t be allowed off the boat at our next stop! Anyway, we finished up about 5 AM, checked out of our hotel and headed back to the boat. It was an exhausting, but interesting and fun port-o’-call, I would go back to Guam any day.

Index to Callsigns:

Begwi: LCDR Ed Grohe
Cecil: LCDR Dennis Mills
Cricket: LT Doug White
Fez: LT Owen Schumier
Francis: LT Matt Mulcahey
Gerbil: LTJG Robert Breakiron
Millhouse: LCDR Chris Middleton
Narco: LT Collin Tolbert-Smith
Spaz: LCDR Mark Matthys
XO: CDR Scott Hogan

References:

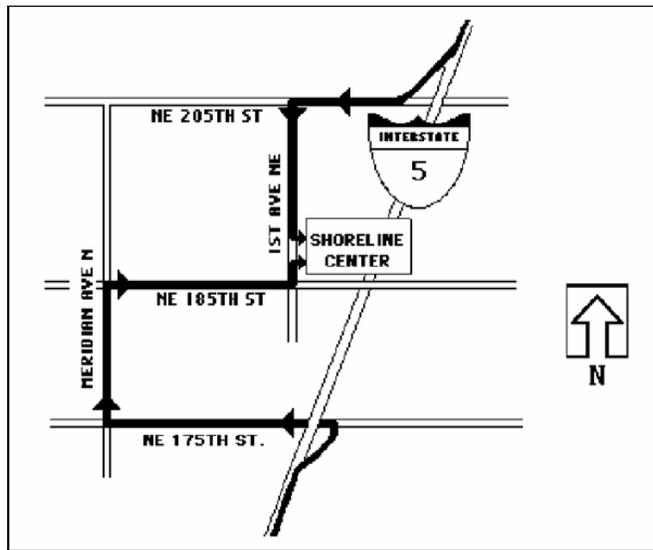
“Field Guide to Caves and Karst of Guam” – Danko Taborosi; Bess Press 2004



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Proceeds support conservation and exploration in the Pacific Northwest. Bottles are 10.00 each. Contact your nearest Cascade Grotto Officer.

The Cascade Grotto meets at 7:00pm on the third Friday of each month at the Shoreline Community Center. The Community Center is located at 18560, 1st Ave NE in Shoreline. To get to the Community Center from Seattle, take Exit 176 on Interstate 5 (175th St. N) and turn left at the light at the bottom of the off ramp. At the next traffic light (Meridian Ave. N) turn right. Turn right at 185th St. N (the next light). Turn left on 1st NE, which again is the next light. The Community Center is on the right. Don't get confused with the Senior Center, which is on the end of the building. Enter the building on the southwest corner and find the Hamlin Room.



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