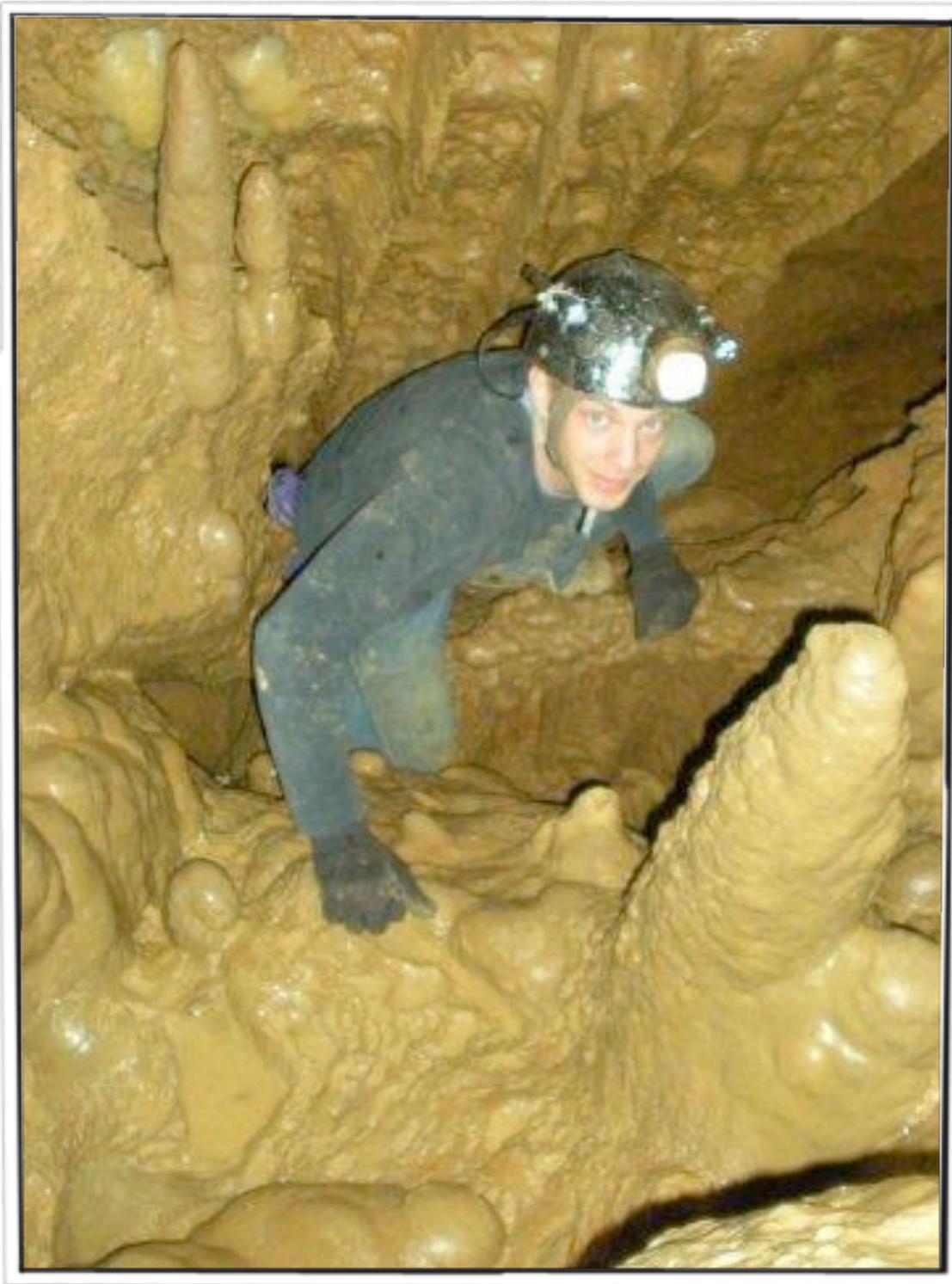


The Carbide Courier



The Dayton Underground Grotto
of the National Speleological Society



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GROTTO MEETINGS

Grotto meetings are held the 2nd Sunday of each month (except for September, December, and the month of Wormfest) at 7:00pm at Roger and Lynn Brucker's house, 1635 Grange Hall Rd., Beavercreek, OH. For directions, see the map on the back cover, or go to the DUG webpage:

www.dugcaves.com

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Cover Photo: Josh Roark in Cedar Ridge Crystal Cav Photo (c) by Bob Ausdenmoore.

MEMBERSHIP INFO

Annual membership is \$15 per individual, or \$20 per family (\$5 additional for those wanting a paper copy of the newsletter). Membership includes the monthly publication of *The Carbide Courier* in paper or electronic format. Memberships are renewable on October 1st. Dues can be mailed to:

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Please make check payable to:
Dayton Underground Grotto

You can also pay online using PayPal at:

www.dugcaves.com/joindug.htm

From the Editor:

Now that summer has arrived, no doubt many of you will be doing outdoor activities (caving, hiking, traveling, etc.). Your adventures can make good fodder for your newsletter! So, send me stories to publish here!

The first Wormfest west of the Mississippi will be held this year. Look for more information about the Las Vegas Wormfest a bit later this summer.

Thanks to Ron Fulcher for his story in this month's issue. Enjoy!

Mike

Volume 19, Issue 6 June 2010

The Carbide Courier is sent electronically the last week of the preceding month and also sent to the printer at the same time. Submissions must be sent to the editor by the Friday preceding the last week of the month at carbidecourier (at) yahoo (dot) com.

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Calendar of Upcoming Events

- June 13th** **7pm - Grotto General Membership Meeting**
Roger & Lynn Brucker's House (See back of Courier for Map)

- June 25-27** **57th Annual Indiana Cave Capers at Delaney Park, Salem, Indiana**
<http://cig.caves.org/pages/capers.html>

- July 11th** **7pm - Grotto General Membership Meeting**
Roger & Lynn Brucker's House (See back of Courier for Map)

- July 15th-18th** **Karst-O-Rama at the Great Saltpetre Preserve**
<http://karstorama.com>

- August 2nd-6th** **NSS Convention, Essex Junction, Vermont**
<http://www.nss2010.com>

- August 8th** **7pm - Grotto General Membership Meeting**
Roger & Lynn Brucker's House (See back of Courier for Map)

June Birthdays

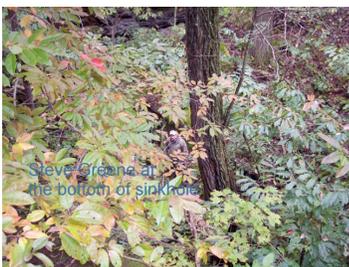
- Will Seehawer - 9th
- Pam Carpenter - 11th
- Tom Cottrell - 13th
- Dan Dimiduk - 17th
- Tim Hale - 18th
- Brianna Bowman - 19th
- Michael LeMay - 19th
- Noah Bowman - 19th
- Taylor Bowman - 19th
- Toby Bowman - 19th
- Jeff Conarroe - 25th
- Jim Perkins - 26th
- Keith Richardson - 26th



In the “Hart” of Cave Country October 16th through the 18th, 2009

By: Ron Fulcher

Sometime during our not so distant past some 157 years and 9 days prior to our visit, Kentucky was the Civil War battlefield near the quiet little town of Perryville. In the fall of 1862 the Southern armies of Braxton Bragg and the Northern armies under the command of Don Buell engaged each other in violent combat and with considerable loss suffered by both. The end result was the Confederate victory at Perryville and the rapid withdrawal of the their forces to Tennessee. Our objective for this weekend would be to try and authenticate an old story about a local Confederate General holding Union prisoners in a sinkhole near his home.



Steve Greene had met a member of the family `at now owns the sinkhole we would be exploring on a cave clean up effort five years before and had been waiting that long to follow up on the local legend of the sinkhole prison. Rose had related the story originally and gave us permission to visit

the sight now. Into the back of Steve’s trusty Jeep we loaded metal detectors, GPS, shovels, cave gear, and an assortment of other bags. It was hard to tell what we might need to really effect an artifact recovery from the sinkhole but we felt confident it was somewhere in that pile of gear.

A chilly wind chased us down the highway Friday night until the distant sign for Horse Cave, Kentucky was in view. Manny had reserved us a great room at the Hearthside with an all to convenient restaurant next door. Our conversations swirled about the events and the soldiers involved in the Kentucky Campaign. General Simon Buckner served in many positions during the war but his home near Munfordville known as Glen Lily afforded him a unique knowledge of the battlefield and in particular the sinkhole. Looking over the map it is clearly possible that Buckner made use of this geological oddity directly north and in the hills surrounding his farm.

Once we reached the private driveway owned by Rose’s family it was clear why the 4X 4 would be a necessity. The recent rains had turned our

graveled and rutted road into a, clay slickened, mudhole interrupted, path where few, at least with any sense, might tread. Our luck held though and Steve carefully picked our way through the woods and overgrowth until we reached the once cleared fields near the sinkhole. Today our research subject is in a remote location and the forest have replaced once active farms and homesteads and may have been much easier to reach by foot and horseback in the 1860s.



Steve and Manny grabbed their respective metal detectors and I grabbed the camera and gear bag. After hiking for a terribly exhausting few hundred feet we found ourselves in the high walled sides of the sinkhole and cave complex. It is easy to see why it could have been used as a short term holding pen, with only one easy way in or out and the sheer walls some 100 feet distant from each other, it would have been relatively

easy to guard many men with just a few.



Eagerly the detectors began swinging through the few spots that afforded a clear shot at the ground. The ground is littered with giant boulders, trees and limbs and a generous amount of old leaves. I followed the path into the cave located at the very bottom of the Sink depression that marks the contact between the sandstone and cave forming limestone beds famous to the area. The Mississippian age beds compare favorably to the Union limestone beds found in the Cave belt of West Virginia and the Upper Newman formation we find in Rockcastle County, Kentucky.



At the bottom of the horizontal and winding passage, a 50-foot plus pit may be the final resting-place of artifacts but, we

did not have the vertical gear with us. The sand-floored rooms that we could reach had been scoured during the clean up efforts and the passage of time itself. Steve and Manny joined me later and found it just as precarious near the shear drop off so we all backed out of the cave and worked our way out of the sinkhole.

On top we continued looking for any evidence of Civil War occupation. The coils were singing in and around the trees but the many items that were dug all proved to be twentieth century in origin. Next to the parking area is an abandoned building with a large wooden porch and all the haunting noises one can expect. We sent Manny to the door but there was no answer and as he neared the half-open screen the boards around him seemed to “sing” a haunted creaking tune. We soon loaded the equipment and decided to visit some of the Civil war battlefields in the neighborhood.

The roads quickly took us to Munfordville and the old Louisville & Nashville Bridge famous for not only the fight but the surrender as well. We parked at the Anthony Woodson House and walked

down to the battlefield. Surrounding the sinkhole plain field is a mowed path with markers describing the September 1862 actions. Visiting these once blood stained fields commands reverence and silent repose. It is easy to see how the Union troops were able to repulse four advances of the superior Confederate forces.



Very prominently on display are signs saying, “Relic hunting is forbidden.” Understandably so, the private property owners and local historical society have preserved these areas for all to visit and enjoy in an undisturbed fashion. We followed the path and read all of the markers detailing the fight for this very strategic railroad bridge. We are reminded of how important a crossing this is when a CSX freight train rolled out of the hills and across a newer span just a 1/2-mile away. This “Battle For the Bridge” and the impromptu victory set the stage for the coming “Battle of Perryville.”

General Simon Bolivar Buck-

ner played a key part in the surrender of the Union troops at Munfordville and is the closest documentation of his involvement with prisoners in the vicinity of our still unproven sinkhole prison sight. On Sunday our trip continued north and to Bardstown where Confederate General Kirby Smith bivouacked his troops for nearly a month. Near the center of Bardstown Steve stopped at an antique store. A local metal detectorist owns one of the more prominent booths and had several finds on display for sale.



Confederate Memorial at Perryville

Manny got a call into him and he brought down a whole bag of minie balls he had found. He had detected them at a picket post on the Salt River where guards on the opposite sides of this river and the war fired at each other. What a find! Manny bought the bag and we quickly drove on towards Perryville while enjoying the roadways the troops would have relied on so long ago. Just past the small-town we are in the Battle of Perryville State Park. The gently rolling green hills surrounding Doctors Creek do well to hide

the evidence of the bloody carnage on October 8th, 1862.



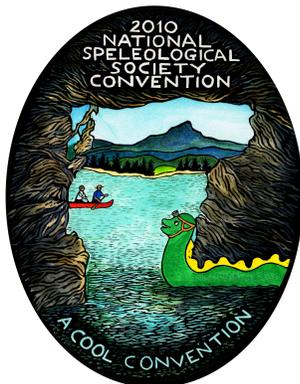
Current Railroad Bridge across the Green River

The marker for the Confederate mass grave bears silent testimony to the aftermath of the brilliant and shortly enjoyed victory for the south. After having matched and beaten back the northern armies, the outnumbered confederates moved away during the night on an well-orchestrated retreat to Tennessee. Manny toured the Museum while Steve and I toured the battlefield by jeep.



Diggin' it at the Perryville Battlefield

Although our opportunity to explore the boundless caves and detect the many fields had been few we all had a great time on our visit in the "Hart" of Cave Country. Until the next time,

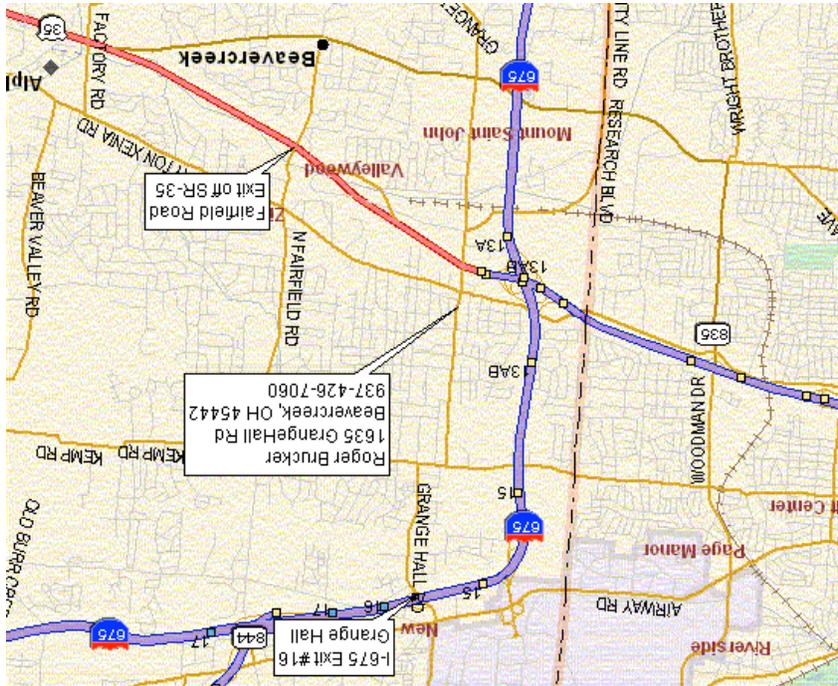


2010 NSS Convention

August 2-6, 2010

Essex Junction, Vermont

www.nss2010.com



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