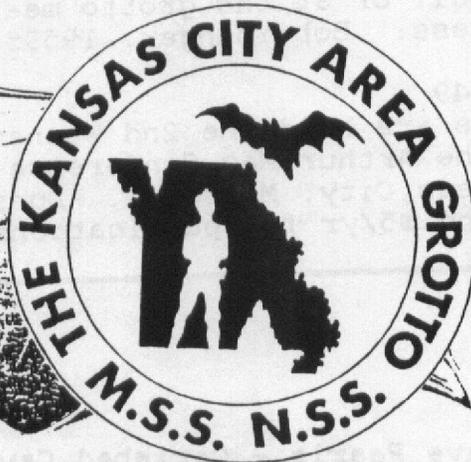




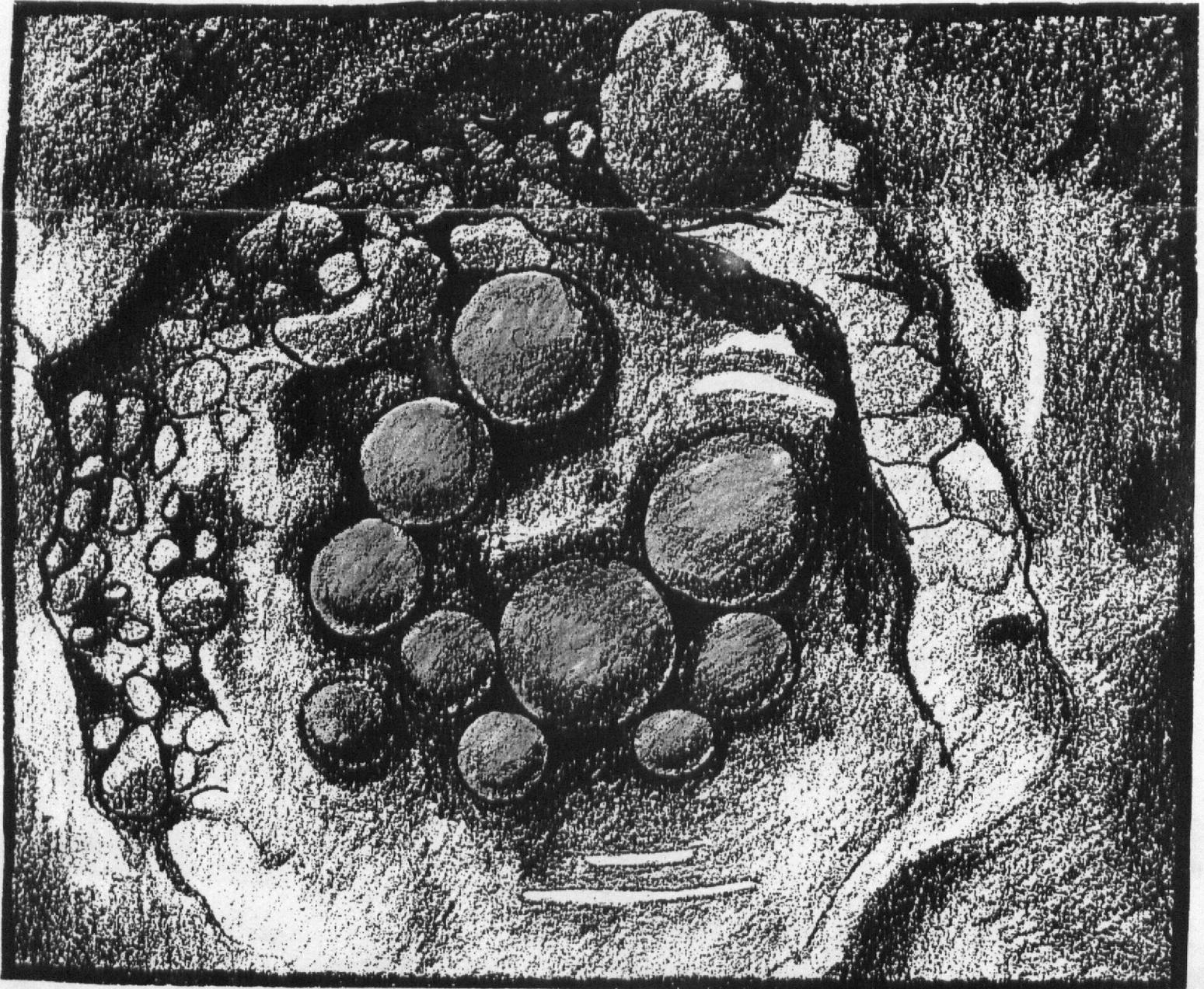
the
month's
gleanings



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The Month's Guano is a publication of the Kansas City Area Grotto of the National Speleological Society. Correspondance and newsletters should be sent to the grotto address: KCAG, 4046 Charlotte, Kansas City, MO. 64110.

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Meetings are held the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 7:00 pm at the Arthur Mag Conference Center at 425 Volker Blvd. in Kansas City, Missouri. Dues are \$10/yr for membership and \$5/yr for publications.

Cave Pearls - Carlsbad Caverns, NM.
Cover Artwork by Mike Jones

Cave pearls range in size from small grains to irregular bodies as much as 15 cm. in diameter. Usually, the smaller pearls are nearly spherical while larger spheres are rare. Mineralogically speaking, cave pearls are known as pisolites (larger than 2 mm. in diameter) and oolites if they are smaller. Their chemical composition can vary, but most are pure calcite (CaCO_3). Manganese, Iron II, and Magnesium can substitute for Ca causing color and specific gravity variances. The colors will range any where from white to blue, grey and even red. The calcite crystals form in coocentric cicles perpindicular to the nucleus of the sphere.

Cave pearls are most often formed in shallow pools below dripping water or in flutes made by a steady flow of water. Constant agitation is necessary for growth. The highly saturated water will suspend a grain of sand or silt onto which minerals can precipitate. The constant agitation and suspended movement continues as does the growth. Eventually, the weight of the pearl becomes greater than the ability of the water to keep the pearl aloft. It sinks to the bottom of the pool and is eventually cemented.

Annual Spring Ennis Fling

Please join us for an incredible weekend at one of Arkansas' biggest caves. Explore miles of passage in an expansive underground riverbed (dry). Ennis Cave, located a few miles east of Mountain View, AK. is well noted for it's large rooms and queer wonders. Lots of good times and good company awaits. See an entrance sink that will blow your senses!. This annual trip is a favorite of our grotto and others in the area, so come on down!! Camping space is usually limited, so the earlier you are, the nicer the campsite. If, by chance, you wish to stay in one of Mountain Views fine inns, a list of prices and numbers follows. (Prices and information are based on recent phone calls).

American Inn (29 rooms) 501-269-3775
Fiddlers Inn (48 rooms) 501-269-2828 \$35/nt. Best Western, color TV w/ remote, telephone
Red Bud Inn (52 rooms) 501-269-4375 \$25/nt.
Dogwood Motel (30 rooms) 501-269-3847 \$26/nt.
Mtn. View Motel (18 rooms) 501-269-3209
Scottish Inn (56 rooms) 501-269-3287 \$26/nt.
Ozark Folk Center (60 rooms) 501-269-3871 \$37.90/nt.
Jack's Fishing Resort & Motel (42 rooms) 501-585-2211
Commercial Hotel (8 rooms) 501-269-4383 \$47/nt. NO TV no telephone. A vintage guest house
The Inn of Mtn. View (9 rooms) 501-269-4200 \$39/nt. Breakfast.
Owl Hollow Country Inn (6 rooms) 501-269-8699

"Let us be content to tell what we believe that we have seen: let our one desire be that others may see more clearly. We are presented with a vast geologic poem; it is enough for us to have read, and possibly to have misunderstood one half of the first page..."

-Franz Schrader, noted speleologist at the turn of the century.



TRIP REPORT

Tim Bagby and I went riddewalking around the Buffalo River recently (November 24 and 25). The weather was outstanding - mid-70's, cloudless and a slight breeze. The scenery must be the best that Arkansas has to offer, and that's saying a lot. If our purpose had been something other than finding caves, the weekend would have been perfect.

It wasn't a total bust. We went through two well traveled caves and discovered two holes that nearly counted as caves.

We started out in Indian Creek near the towns of Sherman and Low Gap. We chose this creek because it seemed so steep on the topo that we assumed it would be lightly traveled. Instead, we met up with about a dozen hikers some of which were children! So much for theory. Fortunately, two of the hikers were Gus and Carl, members of the Kansas Speleological Survey. They knew of a couple of caves and let us tag along.

The first cave (name unknown) had two entrances about 20' above the creek bed. Near the upstream entrance is a drop of about 25' that Tim and I thought better of attempting. We went to the other entrance and got to the bottom of the drop through a more sensible chimney. The entrances were about 40' apart and I'd guess the total cave length to be about 300'.

Gus thought the second cave may be named Horseshoe Cave. It reminded me of Tunnel Cave in Missouri. They're similar in that they both have two entrances, large passages and streams travel through both. The water that runs through Horseshoe is the stream that disappeared from Indian Creek several hundred yards uphill. I'll guess that the passage length was 500'.

This cave is closed during the summer because it is a maternity colony for Gray bats. There were a few mats of bats that we avoided disturbing, though I wonder if the hikers in back of us could claim the same. Well, if they even noticed them, they probably thought they were formations.

On Sunday, Tim and I walked in Bear Creek, just east of Indian Creek. Tim found a small entrance to a tight passage that he estimated at 20' long. There is a vertical crack at the end but it was too narrow to ascend. Later, I climbed about 80' up a breakdown slope and found an entrance on one side. There was a single room that at one time was the top of a dome. All but the top 30' was filled with breakdown. There was dried flowstone along the walls and some small stalactites. The room was about 15' wide and 30' long.

Neither discovery counts as a cave by our reckoning but we were happy we weren't completely blanked. The scenery and glorious weather left both of us happy that we made the trip.

Richard Cindric
11/27/90

BOX WORK - WIND CAVE



The darkness is no darkness with Thee.
-Psalm CXXXIX

Origin of Boxwork - Taken from The NSS Bulletin, 12/89

Boxwork consists of resistant fins of calcite projecting into the caves in an intersecting pattern, surrounding box shaped voids where the intervening bedrock has weathered or dissolved away. It occurs in most Black Hills caves but is prominent only in Wind Cave, which contains more boxwork than any other known cave in the world. The traditional explanation for boxwork is that of simple differential solution, in which the coarser crystals of the calcite veins protrude from the finer grained and more readily soluble bedrock. It is believed that the veins are related to cave origin and that vadose water seeping through the porous dolomite begins to lose CO_2 through the pores to the cave atmosphere before reaching the cave, thus depositing less soluble minerals which would be the calcite in this case.



the month's grotto

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K.C.A.G. NEWSLETTER